



## The Official Newsletter of the Seventh United States Cavalry Association

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### 7TH CAVALRY MEDAL OF HONOR - JAMES MICHAEL SPRAYBERRY

#### JAMES MICHAEL SPRAYBERRY

Rank and organization: Captain (then 1LT), U.S. Army, Company D, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile).

Place and date: Republic of Vietnam, 25 April 1968.

Entered service at: Montgomery, Ala.

Born: 24 April 1947, LaGrange, Ga.

Citation:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. CPT Sprayberry, Armor, U.S. Army, distinguished himself by exceptional bravery while serving as executive officer of Company D. His Company Commander and a great number of the men were wounded and separated from the main body of the company. A daylight attempt to rescue them was driven back by the well entrenched enemy's heavy fire. CPT Sprayberry then organized and led a volunteer night patrol to eliminate the intervening enemy bunkers and to relieve the surrounded element. The patrol soon began receiving enemy machinegun fire. CPT Sprayberry quickly moved the men to protective cover and without regard for his own safety, crawled within close range of the bunker from which the fire was coming. He silenced the machinegun with a hand grenade. Identifying several one-man enemy positions nearby, CPT Sprayberry immediately attacked them with the rest of his grenades. He crawled back for more grenades and when two grenades were thrown at his men from a position to the front, CPT Sprayberry, without hesitation, again exposed himself and charged the enemy-held bunker killing its occupants with a grenade. Placing two men to cover his advance, he crawled forward and neutralized three more bunkers with grenades. Immediately thereafter, CPT Sprayberry was surprised by an enemy soldier who charged from a concealed position. He killed the soldier with his pistol and with continuing disregard for the danger neutralized another enemy emplacement. CPT Sprayberry then established radio contact with the isolated men, directing them toward his position. When the two elements made contact, he organized his men into litter parties to evacuate the wounded. As the evacuation was nearing completion, he observed an enemy machinegun position which he silenced with a grenade. CPT Sprayberry returned to the rescue party, established security, and moved to friendly lines with the wounded. This rescue operation, which lasted approximately 7 1/2 hours, saved the lives of many of his fellow Soldiers. CPT Sprayberry personally killed twelve enemy soldiers, eliminated two machineguns, and destroyed numerous enemy bunkers. CPT Sprayberry's indomitable spirit and gallant action at great personal risk to his life are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.

LTC (Ret) James "Mike" Sprayberry was presented his Medal of Honor by President Richard M. Nixon in a White House Ceremony on 9 October 1969.

