



Thunder Run

Vol. 16 – NO. 3 “Together Then – Together Again” 3rd Quarter, 2001

The 11th Armored Cavalry’s Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia

The 11th Cavalry “Charges” into Washington DC

■ 1,380 Troopers and Families Attend Historic Reunion

by Ollie Pickral

It must have sounded like the “last Cavalry charge” when veteran and active duty troopers poured into Washington DC’s Hyatt Regency Hotel on Capitol Hill.

I arrived there on Wednesday, two days prior to the actual reunion dates and the place was full of Blackhorse troopers. Many attendees were doing the tour thing and seeing all the sights of our capitol city and others were there to start the party early. To hear their reasons, they professed they were the early advanced party, some really stretching it by claiming to be there early to secure the hotel for our arrival. Same thing Thursday.....we had to open the “Bunker” early because there were so many troopers there. By Friday morning, we of the Reunion committee were starting to get a little worried if we could handle the numbers that were coming in.

What a great reunion !! The three organizations, active duty 11th ACR, The Blackhorse Association and 11 ACVVC put it all together and it turned out to be one, if not the best reunions

ever. Many thanks to our reunion chairman, Jack Burns. What an outstanding performance! Many volunteers who go nameless because they just want to help out, make our reunions so splendid. What really makes the reunion are when the Troopers and their families get to the hotel. Every year I witness our troopers seeing a buddy for the first time in 30 – 35 years. That is the reason we come and continue to attend each year thereafter.

This year we gave out seven awards to deserving troopers that give of themselves to keep our organization the “best there is”.....John Poindexter, A Troop; Otis Carey, F Troop; Jim Murray, 1st How Btry.; Ben Hotchkiss, B Troop; Adrian Vaaler, HHT Regt.; Pete Echon, F Troop; and John Sorich, A Troop.

The John Quilter Memorial awardee for 2000, Homer Pittman of K Troop presented the 2001 award to Jim Settle of K Troop.

This year’s *Trooper of the Year Award* was presented to Gene Johnson, E Troop and Air Cav Troop. Gene rode point for two years on this 100th Anniversary reunion, truly making it one of our best. Congratulations to Gene and all the recipients of our annual

awards.

In This Issue

▪ If you didn’t make the Sat. night banquet, you now get a change to read the keynote speech by the Secretary of the Army, Tom White. As you are aware, Tom served two tours with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Vietnam.

▪ Also, check the long list of donors to our Scholarship fund. Many, many thanks to all of you who contributed. Your donations are helping our member’s children get a college education whom ordinarily might not finish had you not given.

▪ Chaplain Larry Haworth has his
Please turn to **REUNION** on page 4

100th Anniversary logo challenge coin for sale



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Ollie Pickral, President
11th ACVVC

I'm still winding down from the reunion, one of the best thus far. Deb, April and I "rediscovered" Virginia, our home state just after the reunion and had a great two weeks with friends and family. Now it is

back to the business of leading our great organization.

As described in the cover page article, over 1,300 troopers and family attended this special 100th Anniversary reunion saluting the 11th U.S. Cavalry's first century. What an exciting reunion that culminated a two year effort by three organizations, 11 ACVVC, The Blackhorse Association and the active duty 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. My special thanks go out to each of those who attended and especially those that helped with the planning and execution of a finely tuned, organized weekend. We were fortunate to honor our Killed in Action and those who died in the line of duty on several occasions. We visited the Vietnam Memorial and laid a Blackhorse wreath, visited the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and laid a Blackhorse wreath, then again at our memorial service at Fort Myer, Va.

We now set our sights to the next reunion in Nashville, Tennessee at the Sheraton Music City hotel. Along with the members of the Reunion committee, Steve Page, the reunion chair will be riding point. He has already booked the 129th military band to entertain us. We are also working on a possible appearance of a popular country music artist. There is a lot to see and do in the Nashville area so start making plans to attend. The dates are August 8 - 11, 2002.

There were several things discussed and passed at the 16th reunion in Wash. DC this past month. We passed a motion that allows 11 ACVVC to dictate the

We now set our sights to the next reunion in Nashville, Tennessee at the Sheraton Music City hotel. Along with the members of the Reunion committee, Steve Page, the reunion chair will be riding point.

degree of control over the reunion program. We also chose the leaders of 11 ACVVC for 2002 - 2003. I'm proud to announce that all our Officers and Directors were re-elected for the next two years.

Your Officers and Directors are:

- Ollie PickralPresident
- John Sorich.....Vice President
- Frank CambriaSecretary
- Bill HolfordTreasurer

Board of Directors

- Chuck Schmidt
- Eric Newton
- Mike Forbes.

Your Officers and Directors just passed two additional motions. One was to solicit bids to have our "Blackhorse Salute" slide and music program, professional done (your President regrets the projection problem that washed out the slides at the Saturday banquet). One solution might be that we place all our slides on a video CD and dub in the music. We will keep you apprised of the results of this. The second motion passed was to increase the current maximum of our scholarships from \$2,000 to \$3,000 per

award. The feeling on this matter was that the cost of college has grown substantially over the last 12 years that we have provided scholarships, without any increase in funds over those years. Also, because of the special efforts of John Sorich, our Scholarship Chairman, we have increased the amounts of money we have for this purpose. John's raffle and silent auction has provided more funds than in the past. This will provide each scholarship winner with \$1,500 per semester for two semesters.

As you are aware, we select a city, two years out for our future reunions. At the membership meeting, three cities were presented: Eugene Oregon, Colorado Springs, Colorado and Pensacola, Florida. After the votes were tallied, Eugene, Oregon was selected. Our reunion committee chair will be Adrian Vaaler. This will be a first for us going to a city in the Northwest part of the country. Oregon is a very beautiful state and I for one look forward to going there in 2003.

Until next time

Allons

MOVING?

We want you to get your copy of **Thunder Run** without a lot of trouble? Complete this form and mail it to: **11th ACVVC Membership Update, Warren Swinford, 2300 W 400 S., Clayton, IN 46118.**



Name: _____

Old Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

New Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone _____ Effective Date: _____

Nashville prepares for 11 ACVVC reunion for 2002

By Steve Page
Chairman Reunion XVII

Reunion 2002, August 8 -11, 2002. It's never too early to start thinking about the next reunion. Mark your calendars and plan for your vacation.

Nashville, the Music City will welcome us with open arms. A full weekend is being planned with music, food, golf and some shopping added for a fun filled time. The Sheraton Music City Hotel is located at: 777 McGavock Pike, Nashville, TN 37214 and will be our headquarters. With room rates of \$75.00 (single or double), free parking and free

airport shuttle.

The hotel is only 15 minutes from the airport as well as 15 minutes from downtown. Your committee looks forward to hosting this reunion and making it an event you will remember. More information will be posted in the next newsletter as well as on our website.

Reservation phone numbers are (615) 885-2200 direct with the hotel and (800) 325-3535 with the central reservation office, Be sure to mention 11 ACVVC Reunion. I can be reached at 396 Pleasant Street; Holyoke, Ma. 01040 Tel (413) 534-0720.

11th Annual Blackhorse Picnic

Come Join Us! Everyone Welcome

The 11th Annual Northern California 11th ACR potluck BBQ sponsored by Ron and Janet Krueger will be held Saturday, October 6, 2001 from 11:00 AM - ????. The event will be at Slidehill Park, in Davis ,CA. Here's another chance to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 11ACR. This will be our biggest picnic yet.

Directions:

Take Interstate 80 to Davis. Take the Mace Blvd exit off Interstate 80. Proceed north around the bend (Mace becomes Covell Blvd.) to Monarch Lane. Turn Left, then 1st right on Temple. The Park is one block ahead on left. Watch for balloons and signs.

RSVP: Ron Krueger: (530)758-0351, or Email at: ronkrue@hotmail.com

Allons, Ron and Janet

Newsletter Deadlines

The following are the due dates to submit articles for *Thunder Run*

First Quarter.....Jan 15
Second Quarter.....Apr 15

Third QuarterAug 01
Fourth QuarterOct 15

11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia (11ACVVC)



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Thunder Run covers present and future interests of the organization that includes membership and reunion information, various fund raising activities, and other items relative to the membership. Submissions are welcome and encouraged. All correspondence or inquiries should be made in writing to: Editor, "Thunder Run," Ollie Pickral, 1602 Lorrie Dr., Richardson, TX 75080-3409 <ktrp11acr@aol.com>

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Web Site Adds New Features

by Eric Newton

www.11thCavNam.com

A new feature has been added to our web site. The Trooper Chat Room has made it possible for our members to meet and talk in real time. So go to the Home Page and click Trooper Chat Room and see who's there. Best time is in the evening and on weekends when people are not at work. Remember the time difference from the East Coast to the West Coast.

Also visit the Online Museum. This is a tour of the Blackhorse Museum at Fort Irwin, California complete with photos of the displays and a timeline of the 11th US Cavalry from 1901 to present. This is located in the Members area. Many troopers got to see the museum firsthand at the 100th

The Trooper Chat Room has made it possible for our members to meet and talk in real time.

Anniversary Celebration this February when they were treated as royalty by the troopers of the active regiment.

Also check the Reunion Information section for the latest reunion schedules, changes and tips. Check this section frequently for the names of those who have registered. Be patient as it takes several weeks to be listed once your check has been received.

As of this writing our web site has been accessed one hundred and twenty two thousand times in just three years. Many thanks to the web staff for all of their dedicated workwww.11thCavNam.com

REUNION from page 1

usual good message to us all. Larry still gets his word across in a fashion just like our chaplains did while we were in Vietnam and Cambodia. His articles are geared toward and understood by us all.

▪ We've included a poem from our membership and a few stories you will enjoy as well.

▪ Be sure to check out the Quartermaster Store on the inside back page. Now is the time to let your "better-half" know what you want for Christmas.

We've a full page of clothing and other Blackhorse items that will make excellent Christmas gifts.

Allons

100th Anniversary Calendar

- ❖ Last Chance to get a 100th Anniversary Color 2001 Calendar
- ❖ 11 U.S. Cavalry, Blackhorse. Makes excellent Christmas Gifts.
- ❖ Proceeds go to the Scholarship Fund.
- ❖ The 100th Anniversary Calendar is the perfect gift for any 11th U.S. Cavalry Veteran, family member or military enthusiast!
- ❖ Each month shows a different photo or print depicting the 11th U.S. Cavalry with a descriptive caption.
- ❖ Includes special dates of interest pertaining to the 11th U.S. Cavalry.
- ❖ Annual 11th U.S. Cavalry Reunion listed.
- ❖ The 100th Anniversary calendar will become a collector's item!
- ❖ Oversized (Big) 17 x 11 inch glossy color format!

As you read this, the calendars have already been printed and the supply will be dwindling. Orders are coming in for multiple copies. There are five Limited Edition Prints included within the calendar. Some are no longer available and most originally sold for over \$100.00 each. For a preview, go to the front page of our web site at www.11thcavnam.com.

Final Warning

There will be no mailing of the annual black and white calendar this year to all members for a donation to the scholarship fund!

To commemorate the once-in-a-lifetime occasion of the 100th year of the 11th U.S. Cavalry, we are producing a large (17 x 11 inch) glossy color calendar—much larger than the typical calendar. Everyone who has seen the proof copy has been blown away. It is simply awesome. The word has spread and even civilians, cavalry enthusiasts and other Cav units are ordering copies. The clerk at the Post Office who helped wrap the proofs was so impressed; she ordered one for herself and more for gifts.

The theme will cover me Regiment from 1901 to present and will feature five commemorative prints from renowned artist and photos

Order Form

Please enter my order for ___ copies of the 11th U.S. Cavalry 2001 Calendar – Only \$ 10.00 each. – Add \$5.00 shipping and handling for up to three copies, \$1.00 for each additional. Kentucky residents add 6% sales tax.

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Ship To: (Please print)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Better still, pick up the phone! Visa/MasterCard orders call: (270) 443-0121

with period scenes from museum archives. A history of the last hundred years, operations awards and other historical events will make this calendar a keepsake. There is a B&W photo taken in 1902 of the landing on the Philippine Islands.

There were only 1,500 copies planned for the over 6,000 members because we had no idea this calendar would become so popular. You must order right now or risk extreme disappointment. When they are gone, they are gone. Pick up the phone and get your credit card ready. Call now 1-270-443-0121.

Copies must be ordered from Turner Publishing (see below for mail/credit card orders). The 11th ACVVC and the Quartermaster Store do not have copies for sale.

Reserve Your Copies Today!

Send all mail orders to: **11th U.S. Cavalry 2001 Calendar, Turner Publishing Company, PO Box 3101, Paducah KY 42002**

Scholarship Update

Scholarship Recipients Named

By John Sorich

Here are the Scholarship recipient's for 2001. We wish them all the best in furthering their education and are proud of them.

- Nicole DeLyn Bostick
Tulsa C.C. Northeast Campus
Tulsa, OK
- Lacey Elizabeth Bromley
University of Buffalo
Buffalo, NY
- Amanda Vesey Cambria
University of Washington
Seattle, WA
- James T. Forman Jr.
Tri-State University
Angola, IN
- Robin K Morris
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL

- Aaron Malnarick
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, MA
- April Michelle Pickral
Stephen F. Austin University
Nacogdoches, TX
- Britton Elizabeth Reese
Eastern Tennessee State University
Johnson City, TN
- Genevieve Raseman
Boston College
Chestnut Hill, MA
- Jerold Clifford Shelton
Westwood School of Aviation Technology
Broomfield, CO
- Stephen Andrew Shogun
University of San Francisco
San Francisco, CA
- Maria Helen Sorich
University of Wisconsin
Stevens Point, WI

Letters of Appreciation from our Scholarship Recipients

The following letters of appreciation have been received by recipients of scholarships awarded by 11 ACVVC.

April M. Pickral

It is a great honor to have received the 11th ACVVC Scholarship for the 2001-2002 school year. I am a senior at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas and will be graduating in August 2002. Thank you for helping my family and me financially for my last year of college. I am blessed to have been a part of this organization since I was five years old. I remember helping my dad, stuff, seal, and stamp envelopes when he first started the 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia. Many people of this organization have watched me grow up into the woman that I am today. Every summer I looked forward to seeing and enjoying your fellowship. Although I have not always been able to attend every reunion, I still think of you during that weekend.

I hold the deepest respect for each and every one of you. Spending just one weekend with the members out of every year has taught me so much about how important brotherhood is. I do not think I have ever spent a weekend celebrating that my father and many others of this organization are alive and at the same time, mourning the deaths of so many that did not survive. I feel so lucky to have been able to experience the wonderful camaraderie between the members of the 11th ACVVC. I do not know many people my age that can say that they have spent a weekend with the outstanding members of the 11th Armored Cavalry veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia!

Again, thank you so much for allowing me to have this scholarship. I appreciate all those who have supported me through the years. I look forward to seeing each and every one of you in Washington, D.C.!

Allons!

Sincerely,
April Pickral

Amanda Vesey Cambria

Dear 11th ACVVC,

I want to thank everybody who is affiliated in any way with The Blackhorse 11th ACVVC for my scholarship. It will help relieve much financial pressure that lingers in a college student's conscious.

The Blackhorse Vietnam veterans and active duty soldiers hold a special place in my heart. That is one of the many reasons why I have attended four 11th ACVVC reunions, and still counting.

I thank 11th ACVVC again for continuously helping veterans and their families. I am very proud to be a recipient of that generous help.

University of Washington
School of Business
Amanda

PHOTO FILE...



"Bustn' Jungle" A typical day for a Blackhorse Trooper – H-Co. near Loch Ninh with Trooper David Stark atop tank. Photo by Robert Jaronowski.

Troopers celebrate 100th Anniversary in area of it's founding

By Glenn Snodgrass

On the 2nd of February, a magnificent Friday, about 40 troopers gathered at 10:30 AM for a brief ceremony in Conmy Hall at Fort Myer – we had a color guard from the Old Guard, using the 11 ACVVC's colors. A singer from the Army Chorus sang the national anthem, a bugler from the Army Band who sounded Attention, a chaplain from Fort Myer, and Public Affairs help from Ft. Myer. About 5 former Blackhorse troopers helped me get things lined up. Of the 40 troopers, we had people from Oklahoma, Connecticut,

Pennsylvania, South Carolina, in addition to several relatively local guys. I read the Fiddler's Green poem and the actual activation order for the Regiment, and then General Starry made some excellent and appropriate remarks.

We then hopped onto a bus (provided by Fort Myer) and went directly to the Tomb of the Unknowns, and participated in a wreath laying ceremony in beautiful sunshine. Four of us participated directly with the wreath, being led, of course, by a member of the Old Guard. The playing of taps in that environment and setting was

especially emotional.

We came back to the main club at Myer and had a good lunch, and played two tapes – the one we prepared for the Fulda reunion last year, and the one which the Regiment prepared for the Las Vegas reunion. think that all who attended really enjoyed themselves, as we properly marked the actual 100th year anniversary on the actual date on the actual site of our humble beginnings.

Glenn Snodgrass
8301 Greensboro Dr., Suite 290,
McLean, VA 22102
snodgrass@saic.com

Donations to 11thACVVC Scholarship Fund – (\$7,387.00)

The following troopers have made donations to our Scholarship Fund:

Lawrence Abrams	Ralph Demasi	Ludwig Hoge	Charles E. Morrow	Eldridge Sonnier
James Alexander	Tom Devine	Joe Holston	Michael Moses	Robert M. Soule
John Atkinson	John Donaldson	Fredrick W. Hotzman Jr.	Anthony Musico	Paul M. Spivey
Kenneth Ault	Dennis Drake	Charles Huffine	Lewis A Nissen	Michael G.Huml Sr.
William Clifford-Basnett	Stephen Dubravac	Robert S. Hunt	David Niwa	Anthony Stanfa
Robert Bays	Stephen Dunkle	GR Bob Hyatt	Chuck Nute	Robert E. Stone
John J. Beas	Ronald E.Huggins	Robert Jaranowski	James W. O'Brien	Kenneth W Stottsberry
Barry Beaven	John Effinger	Charles L Johnson Jr	Richard Obenschain	Edumnd V. Suberla
Joseph Berenda	Frank J. Ekert	Margaret B Johnson	Angel E Pagan	Ben J. Tate
Richie Bernard	James Englebracht	Harold E. Jones	James G. Palmer	Hardy Terry
Harvey G. Blank	Ernest Enloe Jr.	Charles L Johnson Jr.	John Pearl	Jay D Thompson
LTC. Michael Blose	Richard Ertel	John Keaton	John Peckham	Ernest Tietz
Ralph M Bourgeois	William Fenner	Robert Keefer	N. Pellegrino	Mrs. Diana Trabanco
Jerru Brombley	Jose Fierro	Ronald F. Kelley	Bruce Pelvas	Samuel Tricoli
Edward Buening	Jose Fierro	Keith Kendy	Charles H. Pennebaker	Ivan L. Trifon
Joseph Burke	Patrick Flynn	Timothy R. Knoche	Ollie W. Pickral	John W. Turner
Paul Burkett	Patrick Flynn	Norman R. Koch Jr.	V. Allen Pittsic	Merna Upp
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Ben Butts	Gary Foster	Christopher Kopecky	William Puskarich	Col. Richard Vail
Christa I Carothers	David Fowler	George Krcelich	Richard Quick	Frank E Varljen
Patrick Carroll	Martin Franklin	C W Kuchenbuch	R.A.Cowell	Liezette C. Vavrina
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John J. Cavabetta	Gary Gehrig	Howard R. Lytle	Ronald Rego	Rick Walters
Cavalier & Associates	Robert Gilbert	William Madej	Daniel Reid	Charles G. Watkins
Philip M. Cenicola	Ross S. Glatzer	Raymond Majewski	Mark E. Relyea	Amos Webb
Stephen R. Chipman	Douglas Gloege	John J. Malan	Andy L. Richmound	Wayne L. West
Arnold B. Christensen	Michael Gorman	William Mann	Riverridge Excavating Inc.	Albert Westbrook
William Cleveland	Raymond Gorospe	Harold E. Mann	Frank Roberts	Thomas E. White
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Benjamin Curti	Reinhold Hinz	Patrick E. Money	Robert B. Sinclair	
Donald Davidson	William C. Hipps	Rosalio Montelongo	Walter Slomienski	
Larry Davidson	Peter J. Hoffman	Douglas Moriarity	Sherman Smith	
Ronald Deal	George C. Hoffmaster Jr.	Jack Morrison	Donald C. Snedeker	

(Remember all donations are tax deductible)



“MEDCAPS”

Medcaps and My Lai. What do they have in common? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. OK, they both begin with the letter M. They both involved American soldiers in Viet Nam. But you know what I mean. One is good. Completely good. The other is bad. 100% bad. So they have nothing whatsoever in common regardless of what the media and the movies would have you believe. If you saw “Born on the Fourth of July” or if you read some of the other stuff the media put out you could get a real complex. Sure, I’ve read a lot about My Lai. It was an unspeakably rotten, abhorrent thing for our side to do. No rational person would deny it. But it wasn’t normal. It wasn’t how we believe in treating people, how we fight wars or how we do anything else. There was no excuse for it even considering adrenaline charges, rage and how men react under combat pressure. I also know that it was an American helicopter crew that came along and helped stop it from getting worse than it was. They intervened at the risk of their own life and health.

Regardless that it happened, My Lai was an aberration. It was abnormal. Even in that dirty war, it was not what America stood for. It was not how we operated. Not ever. It violated everything noble and right that we were there for. It also violated what our buddies and brothers gave their lives for in that far away place. We didn’t get away with it, either. It haunts us to this day. Let me say one more thing about My Lai and then I’ll move on to something a lot happier. If My Lai had been normal, you would have never heard about it because it would not have stood out for the media to notice and report on as if it was an everyday thing. It stood out because it was so horrifying and so alien to everything we have ever stood for as a God-fearing nation with high moral, human and spiritual values.

There are a lot of ways to prove the point. Orphanages, kids running up to tanks in jungle villages for the candy they knew soldiers would give them, POWs who weren’t tortured when we took them in and old women who smiled when our tanks, ACavs and howitzers roared through their villages. These things proved the point of who was the good guy and who was the bad guy.

Regardless that it happened, My Lai was an aberration. It was abnormal. Even in that dirty war, it was not what America stood for.

Don’t get me wrong, we did plenty we need to repent of. I’ve talked about that before. But our guys still weren’t the baby killers, pillagers and rapists that some want you to believe.

Remember Medcaps? Of course, you do. You probably went out on a few. So did I. Medcaps were what we did normally. Our troopers wanted to do them. At least the ones I rode with did. If you want to look at something that represented who we were, why we were there and what sort of people Americans were, even in the jungles of Viet Nam in the middle of a messy war, then look at Medcaps. Medcaps were regular activity. Blackhorse troopers liked Medcaps. Maybe there were a few who didn’t, but I never met one like that. And I went on plenty.

There was one Medcap where we went out to a Montagnard village somewhere on the edge of the jungle between Loc Ninh and the Cambodian border. Some of our guys set up the ACavs in sort of a perimeter for security while our medics and whoever else set up a make-shift clinic in a shady area. It was a great little village. The bamboo huts were built up on stilts so the pigs, dogs, and chickens could have a place to scratch around, sleep in the shade, and stay out of the house. Little kids running around naked or with just a shirt and no pants on (very practical for busy mothers). The people came and got shots, pills, and medicine to drink down. And, of course, just like back home, the little kids got a band-aid for their scraped knees. Were they proud of their band-aid? You better believe it. Just like you were when you were a little kid and Mom would give you a band-aid. It sure made your knee better. Vietnamese little kids were just the same. Even in the jungle. Remember? You guys were the ones who did it. Be glad. Be proud.

I remember another Medcap. This one was in the jungle somewhere in a Montagnard village too. I don’t remember just where. Sorry. I don’t remember which recon troop I was out with that day, either. Sorry about that too. But I do remember a couple of things about it. One was that a

bunch of old folks were sitting on this bamboo platform having a mid-afternoon party. Half their teeth were gone and the ones that were left were black with beetle-nut juice from years of chewing and spitting. They were having a great time. No wonder, they were getting loaded on rice wine. Remember their rice wine? I expect you do. It was almost pure alcohol!! It looked like white lightning from the hoots and hollers of old Appalachia. They were drinking out of glasses that were black with smoke or something which I don’t even know what. They invited us to join their party. Here’s where my memory gets fuzzy, and not from the booze either. I don’t remember any of our guys drinking any. Not from being teetotalers, either. Just from the looks of those glasses and the foul smell of the “wine.” I’ll admit that the “ambiance” didn’t help. (Look that up in the dictionary).

My other memory of that Medcap was that the people our medics treated had pretty severe burns from a VC attack the night before. Who do you think these people feared and who do you think they trusted? I never heard of a VC or NVA medcap. Anyway, I’ll never forget one of the burned villagers. It was a young woman with her baby. Both had been burned. They were OK, walking around and such. The medic put salve on the baby’s burns which pleased the mother, naturally. Then he put some on the mother’s burns too. Now, you have to remember that Montagnard women didn’t generally wear tops. It wasn’t part of their culture. The girls only covered their breasts when American GIs came through ogling them. But no one was ogling these women. Our guys were treating them with the greatest respect. Even the medic treating this mother whose breast had been burned was treated very gently, professionally and with complete respect. I was proud and the villagers were grateful. Remember? The guys who I’m talking about might be reading this even as we speak. Thanks, men, if you’re there.

Like I said before, our side wasn’t always squeaky clean by a long shot. I could tell you stories of things our own people did that I was ashamed of and I expect they are too. Now, if not then. You have your own stories.

Many of them. We've talked about these things before and we will again. But now we're talking about our good side. And I want to make a point very clear that all this good stuff and virtue on our side as Americans didn't just come out of thin air. Having these values didn't just happen. The good and noble side of what we Americans in Viet Nam stood for and fought for came from our heritage. These values and virtues came from a foundation of principle and a strong belief in God and the Judeo-Christian world-view handed down by our forefathers. A high view of human life doesn't just happen. Psalm 33:12 says, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord." I guess you know what our American national motto is. It's on our coins. It's "In God We Trust." That didn't come from nowhere. It's our national heritage too. It's what this nation was founded on. It's a lot of what motivates us. We, as Americans, are truly blessed of God. It's this heritage that makes us what we are and drives what we do.

The Puritans came over on the Mayflower. Then a lot of other people came on more boats (OK, "ships" to the Navy). They brought a strong belief in God with them. They knew Jesus Christ as the Son of God and just felt like worshiping Him without the government telling them how to do it. They weren't perfect either. But they did know what they believed and that was that God is God and that people are of infinite value and deserve to be loved and respected. And that, in a nut shell, is the heritage handed down to us in our own day. That's why we treated people properly, so far as possible in the context of a war that we believed was just. That's why even to this day the Vietnamese people on the streets of Saigon and Loc Ninh will smile and be friendly when they find out you're an American and not a Russian. Even the Montagnards, Cambodians and Vietnamese knew what we stood for. For that matter, even the VC and NVA knew what we stood for. Maybe we'll talk about that sometime. That's why we built schools. That's why we built orphanages. That's why we were there to begin with.

That's why we did Medcaps.

God bless you. God loves you. So do I.

Chaplain Larry Haworth
1634 Holly Ave.
Darien, IL 60561 (630)-434-4362
LEHaworth@aol.com



Women's Corner

Hi Ladies

Another reunion has come and gone and we have a lot of new memories about it to treasure for the rest of our lives. As we arrived at the hotel on Thursday afternoon, quite a few folks were already there and reminiscing about their tour of duty in Vietnam and catching each other up on their current lives. Learning about moves some have made, job choices or new additions or deletions to their families. It makes a person stop and thank the Lord for all he has given us.

Did you all get a chance to look at and bid on the items in the silent auction? I hope you got to see the quilt I made and donated. I guess I'm bragging, but I was very happy with it. I can't take all the credit for it though. A lot of folks helped. When I had the idea for it, I knew that I would never have enough time to it all myself so I turned to some of you and to the 11th ACVVC web site. I simply asked for help and the response was awesome. The designs you all came up with were great and words can never tell you how much I appreciated your help. By the way the quilt brought \$150 to the scholarship fund. Again THANK YOU so much. And yes I am planning another project for next year. I'll let you know if I need some help.

The attendance at our ladies meeting was down from last year but being in DC, I sort of figured that it would be. Washington is an amazing city. But ask anyone who did attend and I think they will tell you we did have a lot of fun. We learned about each other's families, which include, besides husbands and children, dogs, cats, fish and etc.

After spending a couple of hours just having fun we got down to some serious discussion. Carol Ioannis presented a wonderful discussion about PTSD. Carol is not only married to a Blackhorse trooper but is also the co-chair of a PTSD group in her local community. She had some interesting facts, materials and personal examples of PTSD and how to deal with it. I for one

Carol [Ioannis] also received the very first 11th ACVVC Wives Rose Award that weekend. I decided that since the guys get all kinds of recognition that we women deserve some thanks too.

learned things about it that I never knew. Carol, I know I thanked you several times that weekend for doing this program for us, but again I want to say thank you. You are truly a friend and caring person to our troopers and their loved ones. Carol also received the very first 11th ACVVC Wives Rose Award that weekend. I decided that since the guys get all kinds of recognition that we women deserve some thanks too. So I had several red rose sun catchers made and one will be awarded each year. So it's real important for you ladies to stay in touch with me throughout the year and let me know what your up too.

You can e-mail me at Moreno@Tomah.com. Who knows you would be the recipient next year in Nashville. Since my husband and son are going to be at a Star Trek convention this weekend, I will have time to sit down and work on this years' "Ladies Address Book." So watch for it in your mailbox soon.

If anyone has something they would like to see us do or discuss please, please, please let me know. I am open to all ideas. And to those of you who e-mailed me saying you think we should be recognized at the banquet, well thank you. It's nice to know that you are happy that we have this program available. It's 'our' program and I hope to see it grow and grow and grow. So plan on attending in Nashville and invite a friend along. Thank you and I love you all.

Barb

*Barb Moreno
Moreno@Tomah.com
Women's Coordinator 11th ACVVC
(Barb is the wife of SFC (retired) Bob
Moreno, G Troop 68-69)*

The following is the text of the speech given by the Secretary of the Army to the attendees of the Reunion in Washington, DC, Saturday, August 4, 2001.

Thanks, Gene, for that overly generous introduction! Wow, what a gathering of warriors! Ollie Pickral, President of the 11th Armored Cavalry Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia, CSM John Stephens, President of the Blackhorse Association, General Don Starry, our Honorary Colonel of the Regiment-and one of my personal mentors, and Leddy Starry, CSM Don Horn; Honorary CSM, Fellow former Regimental Commanders and Command Sergeants Major, John Ballantyne, young Benjamin Patton, Bill Cobb, Jimmie Leach, Bob Sunell, Joe Driscoll, Guy Swan, And, our current commander, Mike Davis - great show last night!

Troopers of the Blackhorse and your wives-past and present, active and National Guard, Family members-particularly those of our honored Blackhorse killed in action, Distinguished guests-especially our friends from the city of Fulda, Germany, led by the regiment's long-serving PAO, Renate Stieber, Ladies and gentlemen, My dear friends and colleagues, thank you for allowing me the privilege and honor of speaking here tonight. This reunion is truly a fantastic event-from the "Stable Your Mount Party" last night to the memorial service earlier today to this wonderful evening with you all! My compliments to everyone who has worked so hard to organize and support this great centennial celebration of the Blackhorse!

Before I begin, let me caution you that Gene has me slotted in a potentially deadly position in tonight's line-up—namely, the post-dinner speaker. This situation reminds me of an annual corporate conference that I attended not too long ago. Upon the completion of dinner, the guest speaker stepped up to the podium—and proceeded to drone on and on until the audience was about to expire.

Finally, a member of the audience picked up the chairman's gavel and threw it at the speaker. Unfortunately, he missed and the gavel hit a women guest who happened to be in the line of fire. When everyone rushed over to see if she was o.k., she sat up and said: "Hit me again. I can still hear him!"

Reunion XVI

Tom White, Secretary of the Army, addresses Troopers

So I'm sensitive to this problem! And Susan has made me promise to keep this short tonight. But I'd like to spend a few minutes talking about the Army and our beloved regiment-its magnificent history, its experience in Vietnam and Cambodia, and its bright future.

As the 18th Secretary of the Army, I am always proud to represent our soldiers and their families. But I am especially proud to represent the Blackhorse. You represent what is most noble about our nation-courage in times of adversity, devotion to duty, and a sense of honor and respect.

I take great pride in my service with this grand old regiment and so should each one of you. And your very presence at this reunion indicates that you do.

Now, as everyone in this room knows, the 11th Cavalry's motto, "Allons," means "let's go"—and the regiment has been doing just that ever since it was activated by an Act of Congress as a horse cavalry regiment at Fort Myer on the 2d of February 1901-one hundred years ago this year.

That was a busy period for the Army. The Spanish-American war had just ended, and Elihu Root, Secretary of War, was instituting reforms-trying to change the Army to keep it relevant-and the 11th Cavalry was a fundamental part of that change.

But like all new organizations, there were some growing pains. In fact, the magnitude of the problems confronting the organization of the new 11th Cavalry caused the 1st Squadron Commander-one of my predecessors in command of the Ironhorse-to include the following woeful

statement in a dispatch to the War Department pleading for more officer personnel:

'Bengal 6' said, "I have 400 horses that have never seen a soldier, 400 recruits that have never seen a horse, and 4 second lieutenants that have never seen a trooper or a horse." Despite this rather inauspicious beginning, the regiment grew quickly in size, capability, and reputation-deploying around the world in the defense of our great nation. Baptized by fire while putting down the Philippine insurrection, Deployed to Cuba to boldly assert American presence, Conducted the last mounted cavalry charge in our nation's history on the 5th of May, 1916, while pursuing Pancho Villa's rebel army across Mexico, During the interwar years, experimented with scout cars-the first mechanized cavalry vehicles, Survived the trading of horses for steel mounts-then redesignated and fought bravely in World War II, Deployed to southern Germany during the early years of the Cold War and patrolled the German-Czech border, Became a legendary fighting force in Vietnam and Cambodia-5½ years of valor, 14 battle streamers, and three Medals of Honor-Hal Fritz, Jerry Wickham, and Rodney Yano.

Returned to Germany and guarded the Fulda gap with diligence-the famous border legion-America's first line of defense on the "frontiers of freedom," Safeguarded a tense cease-fire in Southwest Asia after Operation Desert Storm.

Today, the 11th ACR is the Army's premier maneuver unit-the opposing force at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California. There, the Blackhorse trains the United States Army-one unit at a time-in the brutally harsh climate of the Mojave Desert.

Consequently, the tough and uncompromising standards of the 11th ACR have become the yardstick against which the rest of the Army measures itself.

Ultimately, as every combat veteran knows-tough standards and uncompromising training are what make the difference in the bloody crucible of combat. Tough, realistic training provides that vital edge that has allowed soldiers since the time of Caesar's legions to accomplish their mission at least cost in lives. This was true then. It is true today.

Thus, it is no exaggeration to say that today's Army strives to match the quality of the Blackhorse.

Our mission has continuously changed during the past century, but one thing remains constant. The Blackhorse Regiment has faithfully served our nation when called, and will continue that proud tradition in the years ahead.

Having traced our great regiment's century of illustrious achievements, I'd like to take a moment and highlight a time that-for many of us-was probably our most profound human experience of a lifetime. I'm talking, of course, about the war in Vietnam and Cambodia.

Vietnam changed my life, just like it did for so many of you. In my case, when I graduated from West Point in 1967, I wasn't really sure the Army was for me. A combat tour in Vietnam with the Blackhorse changed my view.

Back then, we called it "seeing the elephant." And many of us in this room-as veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia-have "seen the elephant."

For those of you who haven't, this term comes from an old Indian tale about three blind men who went to the zoo to see the elephant. One reached out and caught the elephant's trunk. To him it was plain to see that an elephant was much like a large snake.

To the one who grabbed a stout leg it was obvious that an elephant was like a strong tree. The one who reached out and grabbed an ear exclaimed that it was obvious, even to a blind man, that an elephant was like a blanket.

The point of all this is that combat is an intensely personal experience-and what it is depends on where you see it from-your own personal perspective.

For me, combat-with its brutally effective way of scraping away the parade field nonsense and focusing on what it took to accomplish the mission-showed me why we have an army and what that army must be.

The great NCOs and soldiers in my platoons in M company and K troop and the aero rifle platoon-the finest group of men ever put on God's earth-stouthearted men like Jack Stoddard, Rollie Port, Lewis Souder, Frank Saracino, and countless others-taught me my business, corrected my

mistakes, and convinced me that leading them should be the focus of my life. Leaders like Patton, Starry and Bahnsen reinforced that view.

We were all young men who, at the time, never concerned ourselves with the grand strategy, or the politics, or whether the Vietnam War was right or wrong. The war was there, and we were there, and we were going to accomplish our mission to the best of our ability because that was the best way to stay alive.

We were proud of our unit, valued our friendships, did the best we could to care for our buddies, and won our part of that war, down in the mud where it got very personal.

Together, we experienced days of boredom interspersed with moments of sheer terror, miserable weather, anger, sadness, lonesomeness, and just putting up with the daily crap that goes along with any war-everything from hand grenades to hemorrhoids!

Through it all, we developed everlasting bonds of friendship, trust, honor, and hope that bind us together, even today, like no other people on earth. It's not like being a member of a football team in high school or like the bonding of college fraternity brothers.

It's so much more than that. Soldiers belong to a unique brotherhood of war. We share a common heritage left by those who served with honor and dignity. We share a special camaraderie unique to those who enjoyed the best of times together and survived the very worst-a bond so strong that we wouldn't, and didn't, think twice about sacrificing our own life to save a fellow soldier. I believe that special bond is our reward for doing what we knew was right when we were in the arena of combat, even though some hand wringers on the side lines back home thought it was wrong.

Many times a soldier's normal day would be an average person's worst, and each of our worst days is kept buried deep inside our souls only to be shared, if at all, among fellow troopers. It can't easily be talked about with our civilian friends or family, no matter how close they may be. That also goes for the family and friends who lost loved ones in Vietnam. They, too, find it hard to share their hurt and loneliness. To those families, I want you to know

that there are many of us who knew your husbands and sons, and share in your great loss and in whose memories they will remain forever. We returned from Vietnam to a hostile society that seemed to blame us for a bankrupt national strategy; we watched as the government of South Vietnam gave up in 1975; we ached as we saw the overwhelming support accorded Desert Storm veterans that had been denied us; and we were angered when those who deliberately avoided the war were elected to positions of high public trust.

For these, and a number of more personal reasons, many Vietnam veterans still feel bitter-believing their sacrifices are unappreciated by the country they so selflessly served. The Roman orator Cicero once said that gratitude is the greatest of virtues. Those of you who are currently serving in the Blackhorse-and the veterans who have served, in peace and in war, -and your families-deserve the gratitude of our nation. Because a nation that forgets its defenders will, itself, be soon forgotten. I know sometimes you feel unappreciated. Yes, there are days set aside to officially honor our soldiers and our veterans: Veteran's Day is set aside to honor those who have served in our nation's wars. But it is only one day.

On Memorial Day we pay our respects to those who have given that "last full measure of devotion"-including many of our Blackhorse comrades who are now memorialized forever on that long black wall not so far from here that we visited today. But again, Memorial Day is only one day.

Armed Forces Day is dedicated to those currently serving in uniform. One day. And, because it is not a national holiday, most people don't even know its date. But I want you to know that the vast majority of Americans do appreciate you. And they don't need a holiday to do it! So, let me express my gratitude to you personally, and on behalf of the American people, for all that you do, and all that you have done, in service to our country. We owe you a debt of gratitude we can never repay. It is not enough, but I just want to say, on their behalf: "Thank You."

Let me close tonight with a quote from Shakespeare. Now, being a cavalryman, I cannot stand up here and pretend to be some sort of devotee of the bard. But I always recall a play about a Soldier-King of

England entitled "The Life of King Henry V."

As history tells us, Henry and his army are at Agincourt, the year is 1415, and they are preparing for a battle with a much larger, better-equipped, French army. The very survival of England is at stake. On the morning of the battle, King Henry happens upon several of his leaders bemoaning the nearly overwhelming odds facing them. Seeking to put steel in their spines, Henry proceeds to give perhaps one of the most inspirational speeches that have ever been uttered in the history of warfare. Now, you'll have to watch the play or rent the movie to hear the whole speech, but there is one short phrase that seems particularly appropriate to the Blackhorse-and I'd like to highlight it tonight: Henry V said, "We few, we happy few, we Band of Brothers; for he today that sheds his blood with me, shall be my brother. Be he ne'er so vile, this day shall gentle his condition." Inspired by those simple yet powerful words, King Henry's men went on to win that famous battle, just as the Blackhorse have shed blood together for 100 years as a "Band of Brothers," a happy few, unique among our fellow citizens, prevailing in battle after battle in the dust, dark, rain, and mud of far-away places-noble by our sacrifice, magnificent by our performance, and respected by all.

The Blackhorse is now part of the heart & soul of the Army-part of our heritage and our history. 100 years of selfless service-that is our legacy, my brothers. And America's Army is stronger because of us. It has been said that what we do in life "echoes in eternity." And what we all have done in service to our nation, will, in fact, echo with a special resonance-thanks to the courage, selflessness, and unhesitating devotion to duty displayed by all the brothers of this proud regiment gathered here tonight. And the thousands like us, dead and alive, who are with us in spirit.

We are, indeed, a happy few. And I am confident that each of our lives will continue to echo in eternity for as long as there is this great republic we call the United States.

May God bless us all!

May God bless the Blackhorse!

The Blackhorse forever, Allons -

Let's Go!!!



Welcome Aboard!

New Members of the 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia, (11th ACVVC) as of 4/30/01

Bachan, Luke G	HHT, 1/11	70-71	Mcafee, Clifford E	G TRP, 2/11	71-72
Baker, Van A	HHT, 2/11	67-69	Mcshane, William G	HHT REGT	69-69
Blanchard, Larry L	G TRP, 2/11	69-70	Mcswain, T Dean	M CO, 3/11	67-68
Cavanagh, Michael J	HHT REGT	67-69	Mullen, Kenneth J	H CO, 2/11	68-69
Connerty, John E	919TH ENGR	71-72	Neeley, James	919TH ENGR	67-69
Eckhardt, Thomas J	37TH MED CO	69-70	Pablo, Vince S	I TRP, 3/11	66-67
Fordyce, Kenneth A	HHT REGT	67-68	Penrose, Larry D	HOW, 2/11	66-67
Frantz, William T	919TH ENGR	70-70	Porter, James E	HHT, 1/11	70-70
Garabedian, John	HHT, 3/11	66-67	Powell, Delbert	HHT REGT	66-67
Garcia, Manuel A	B TRP, 1/11	69-71	Restituto, Norberto R	37TH MED CO	69-70
Hardesty, John	H CO, 2/11	69-70	Shookla, George	HOW, 2/11	66-67
Hull, Blaine	G TRP, 2/11	68-69	Sloan, Charles W	HHT REGT	66-67
Knox, Henry L	C TRP, 1/11	66-67	Stuart, Freeman N	L TRP, 3/11	69-70
Lariviere, Paul R	M CO, 3/11	69-69	Teague, Dennis	A TRP, 1/11	66-68
Lasiuta, Ronald M	L TRP, 3/11	68-69	Turner, Lonnie	I TRP, 3/11	66-67
Linnabary, Howard R	HHT, 3/11	66-67	Weigand, Henry J Iii	53RD SIG BN	69-71
Macheta, Michael V	HHT REGT	70-70	Weller, William H	AIR CAV TRP	70-71
Markowicz, Carl	A TRP, 1/11	67-68			



Journey to Fiddler's Green

We're sorry to report the following Troopers have taken the journey to Fiddler's Green. Our deep-felt sympathy and sincere condolences to their families and friends.

Thomas Leroy: Tom served with HHT Regiment in 1970. He passed in November, 2000. Cause unknown, body was discovered at home after two weeks.

Richard Lockwood: Rick was a medic in Vietnam and Cambodia with Troop I, 3d Squadron, Blackhorse Regiment in 1969-71. In May 1970 he was awarded the Bronze Star with 'V' device for heroism during a battle on 26 February, 1970. He died on 24 April, 2001 at his home in an accident with his car.

Larry Glenn Bennett: Larry was a member of 11 ACVVC and served with E Troop, 2nd Squadron. Larry died 2 years ago from a tumor caused by agent orange.

Daniel Ristau: On May 21, 2001. Dan was a Life member of 11 ACVVC and served with C Troop 1/11. In 1971 after being wounded, he had his spleen and a kidney removed. He died after having a brain tumor removed and it was discovered he had hepatitis C probably from the blood transfusions he received in Vietnam.

Bruce Jordan: Bruce was a Life Member of 11 ACVVC and served with 398th Transportation Company from Sept. '66 - Sept. '67. Date of death is unknown.

Richard Loose: Richard was a member of 11 ACVVC and served with I Troop from Aug. '69 - Sept. '70. Date of death is unknown.

Curtis Cole: Curtis was a Life member of 11 ACVVC and served with the 409th RRU. He died from Leukemia as a result of Agent Orange in Nov 1998.

Richard L. Boyer: Richard served with I Troop in 1969 - 1970. He was killed in an auto accident on June 6, 1970, in California shortly after returning from Vietnam.

Col. Donald P. Boyer Jr.: died on 30 April, 2001. Don died after fighting cancer for the last two or three years. He was the Regimental Commander of the Blackhorse from January 1964 until January 1966. Colonel Boyer took command of the Regiment from Col. Chester Kennedy in Straubing, Germany. He led the Blackhorse back to Ft. Meade in July 1964, reorganized it there and did the initial preparation for the move to Vietnam.

CSM. Edgar Hammond: Ed was a Life member of 11 ACVVC. He served with Hq. Hq. Troop, 3d Squadron from December 1970 until March 1971. Prior to that he was Regimental S3 Sgt. Major. He passed away on June 29, 2001 at age 73. His family's address is 103 Chestnut Road, North Syracuse, NY 13212.

Gary's Story

by Ty Dodge

For Vietnam vets, many things bring closure. Some return to Vietnam. Some visit The Wall. Some find closure in reunions. All of us, I think, find it in the brotherhood of those with whom we've shared the boredom and terror of combat.

Over the past thirty years I've done all those things. And they were good. But the best have been the reacquaintances along the way. The finding of an old friend—someone with whom I shared one of the most significant experiences of my life.

This is a story of one such reunion. It's also a story of courage. But I'm getting ahead of myself. Allow me to begin at the beginning July 1969.

I'd been in country less than a month as I Troop's 3rd platoon leader. I had a lot of great guys in my platoon, and Sgt. E5 Gary Pinion was one of the best. He was one of my Track Commanders. Well liked. Respected. Dependable. In the pressure of the combat experience you quickly learn about a person's character. Gary was one of those guys you wanted to have around when things weren't going exactly your way.

July 8th was a typical rainy season day as I Troop reconned the rubber plantations and jungle around An Loc. Being fairly close to the Cambodian border, the NVA and VC were a constant threat in our AO, and we'd been sent to find them. Just another day at The War.

Because the 11th Armored Cav regularly operated in that area, the enemy regularly mined it. As such, the engineers were sent ahead to sweep the area where I Troop would spend the night. Late in the afternoon, as my platoon moved into its NDP, Gary was ground-guiding his track into position.

Suddenly an explosion ripped the air! "Man down! Pinion's down!" Gary had been standing next to his track when it hit the mine, and now men were running in his direction! You need to understand the bond among men in combat. These guys were jumping into a minefield from the relative safety of their tracks to help one of their brothers. Gary lay motionless on the ground, much of his face blown away. Our medic performed an emergency tracheotomy,

Our medic performed an emergency tracheotomy, put him back together as best he could, and we called for a dustoff. So began the longest journey of Gary Pinion's life.

my, put him back together as best he could, and we called for a dustoff. So began the longest journey of Gary Pinion's life.

As often happens in combat, you wonder what becomes of those taken suddenly from the field of battle—and just as often, you never know. I've wondered over the years what became of Gary. Given the severity of his wounds, I suspected he didn't make it. Or if he did ... well, I didn't really want to think about that.

Plagued, though, by a thirty-two-year-long feeling of business left unfinished, I went to the internet a few weeks ago to see if I could find him. I knew he was from Clinton, Ohio, so that's where I started my search. I eventually found a Gary Pinion in Akron. Would he be the Gary Pinion I'd had the honor of serving with ten thousand miles away in a little country called Vietnam? And after thirty-two years, would I have the nerve to make the call?

It took a few days to summon up my courage, but finally I went to the phone one evening and dialed the number. After several rings a low voice answered. "Hello." My heart was in my throat.

"Is this Gary Pinion?" I asked. "Yes it is," came the reply.

"Are you the Gary Pinion who served in Vietnam?" "Yes, I am," answered the voice.

"Gary, this is Ty Dodge, and I think I was your platoon leader." With no hesitation he said, "I remember you, LT."

I can't begin to describe the flood of emotions that drained from me during the next half hour as we renewed our acquaintance after all those years. But I can say this: for me, our reunion on the phone tied up one more of those loose ends that combat veterans so often deal with.

I think it may have connected a loose end for Gary, too. You see, Gary never knew what hit him. The shock of the blast that July day left him with no memory of what happened. And the medical staff at his next stop—and at the many, many more stops he made reconstructing his body and his life over the years—had little idea either. All he'd known was that something terrible happened that day, and he was left blind. Now he knows.

But the rest of the story is that Gary Pinion is a survivor. He lives today in his own home not far from his mom, his daughter, and his two granddaughters. He's a man who has suffered greater adversity than most of us can even imagine. Yet the voice that spoke to me this Christmas Eve was full of hope and love. And when I told his daughter, Lynette, he was a man of whom she could be very proud, she answered with certainty, "I am proud of my dad."

I'm not exactly sure how you define the term "hero," but I do know this: Gary Pinion is one of my heroes.

Ty Dodge
December 28, 2000
(3rd Platoon, I Troop, 1969)

Flashback

It was Christmas Eve 1984, in Capitola, CA Steve Rice and I had just finished watching Apocalypse Now. After the movie I shared war stories Then I said goodnight and left. While walking across the Cement Bridge, Out of the sky! Popped a parachute flare! And I was back....In country! (Vietnam). Watching the shadows dance! As the flare swung....back and forth above me, A man asked me if I was OK? You see, I was lying on the ground, against the bridge. He told me I hit the ground yelling, "Incoming". Then he smiled and assured me what the date and the time was. Then he wishes me a Merry Christmas

By George "Beau" Suchorowski

Arthur the A Troop Mascot

By John Sorich
Vice President, 11 ACVVC

Arthur didn't like the jungle. He was more at home in his ACAV. Our Troop mascot was a monkey whose name was Arthur. His friends called him Art. He wasn't the only pet we had, I believe there was a deaf dog who we called C-Ration. Arthur was the Boss.

Butch Kopsolias who was my TC when I came into country had purchased Art from some Mama-san about June 1968. The price was \$25.00 and a carton of Salem cigarettes. Needless to say, Arthur was raised in a very dysfunctional family, A Troop. He did have some bad habits.

When Butch DEROS'ed in April 1969, he gave Art to me and told me to take good care of him. I figured with some kindness, I could make Art a better monkey.

He was smart and at the first sound of a round being fired he was down inside and wouldn't come out until the coast was clear. I recall several times during a firefight going down inside to grab another belt of M-60 ammo and there was Art. He would be touching himself in an impure manner and giving me monkey smiles. I don't know where he learned this, must have been those guys in the motor pool. His bad habits made him tough to live with. You could never tell when Art needed to relieve himself until it was too late. Whenever he felt the urge, no matter where he was, watch out! Butch showed me what to do before Art went to bed at night. He grabbed Art around the neck extended his arm so Art was over the outside of the vehicle and shook him and yelled at him so he literally scared the crap out of him, then he was usually good for the night.

Art loved to sleep with me, usually draped around my neck making me hot and sweaty.

He really liked Top!! Ed Tinney was our Top. He would call Art and Art would go running and climb up on Top until he was holding both of Top's ears. At this point Art would do something to the back of Top's neck that really showed his lack of military protocol. Top would just grab Art and give him some jellybeans, which would ensure similar behavior again.

There were times when Art would assert his dominance over other pets in the Troop.

Each day when we cleaned our weapons on the front of our vehicles, Art would sit there and watch.

Sometimes less savvy pet monkeys were introduced to Art. Once a nice looking girl monkey was brought over to meet him. He was smaller than she was and she flat punched him out and didn't show him any respect considering his time in grade. He got even by showing her how hard core he really was. He drank Diesel fuel and ate C-4. She followed and that was the end of her.

Once I remember that we had just made our NDP for the night and they were bringing in chow. Do you remember how hard it was to walk to the chow line get your food and try not to spill it as you tippee toed through the mashed down tangle of jungle? Dave Sherwood had just gotten back to his track and not lost too much food only to remember that he had forgotten his kool-aid. He put his plate down and went back to get it. When he returned Art was sitting in his mashed potatoes eating his peas. Dave grabbed Art around the neck and started to scream at him, well you know what happened!! This was not the first time Art had done this to Dave. Dave being short, and wanting to even the score, did to Art what Art had just done to him. You can see why teaching Art good habits were so tough. He was always tearing up things like cigarettes and unread letters. So whenever you took him anywhere, people would be on alert. He could tell who liked him and who did not. Sometimes someone would get him going by slapping him and then pointing to someone else and saying "he did it Art", where as Art would lower his ears and pounce on the innocent victim. By the way he could BITE!

He possibly was the longest lasting pet we had. When I left in January of 1970, I gave him to Dennis Cedarquist. He hated baths and getting cleaned up. The photo above was taken in April 1969 when we were by a river for a few days waiting for reinforcements. Every day we took a bath, he hated it. The photo appeared in the Star's And Stripes on May 18 1969. He also fit just fine in a steel pot, which we used to bathe him in. He was true to the Troop to the end, he was always there. No R&R. no DEROS, no shaming in the rear..... just the battlefield for him.

Alas, Art may have met his demise at the hands of some hungry ARVN soldiers. Dennis Cedarquist said the last he saw of him was after coming back from Cambodia. He was last seen going down the road in an ARVN duce & a half the wind blowing through his hair as he road on top of the cab. Sin- loi Art!

He was a great pet and we had many a laugh at his expense and he took our minds to gentler times.

Thanks, Art.

Trooper's donations provide for family

We are happy to report that donations to assist the Harris family topped \$1,500.00. After reading the article from our 2nd qtr. newsletter, troopers started sending in checks to cover the expenses of getting the family to the reunion. Donations covered gasoline for the trip from Kentucky to Washington and back, registration for two adults and three children, hotel expenses for two nights, and monies to cover food expenses.

The following troopers provided these funds:

- David Avery
- Randy Bodo
- Michael Bourdeau
- Larry Burwick
- L.W. Clodfelter
- Bill W. Cobb
- A.F. Cochran
- Herbert Daub
- Ernest Enloe
- Ed Fegenbush
- Paul Garell
- John Gary
- Luther Gee
- Joseph Gehring
- Bob Hersey
- Robert Heuston
- Paul Joseph
- Bill Leeson
- Patrick Money
- Charles Morrow
- Dane Nash
- Mayo Neyland
- Homer Rusteberg
- Clayton Scholz
- Anthony Stanfa
- Jay Thompson
- James Trier

While at the reunion, the Harris's participated in the placing of a battle streamer for our honors ceremony on banquet night. The family also escorted a Blackhorse wreath to the apex of the Vietnam Memorial on Saturday morning.

Many thanks to all of you that made this effort a success. The Harris family is so grateful to have their brother's medals back and all the assistance that you provided for a very memorable reunion.

Thomas L. McRoberts of 3rd How Btry, 1966-67, has successfully completed the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, El Paso, Texas. Tom, an Army National Guard Command Sgt. Major, received instruction on the Army's enlisted personnel management system, resource management, and U.S. foreign policy. Selection for attendance at the Army's highest level enlisted education system, is made by a Dept. of Army board from among noncommissioned officers with fewer than 23 years service, who have demonstrated the highest standards of performance and job proficiency. Tom also graduated in 1968 from the University of Missouri - Columbia.

♦♦

John Berry of 541st MID sends the following:

Those of you who attended the Louisville reunion in 1996 may remember Madame Le Linh; she was the widow of Sgt. Le Chau, who fought with the 11th Cav in Vietnam from 1966 until his death in 1969. Linh passed away of breast cancer in Paris last year, survived by her mother and two children who had fled Vietnam with her in 1979. Hers was an indomitable fighting spirit, an example of how the human can triumph over adversity.

About the Cav's motto: In full realization that I may sound terminally picky, it does bother me that the French word "allons," meaning "let's go!" is being so widely mispronounced in the Cav. It is obviously a very minor point, but since it is the famous watchword of this esteemed unit, and since it is commonly used as a verbal "bond" among current and former troopers in conversation and correspondence, I wonder if the members would consider this minor change. The French pronunciation can be approximated by saying, "alone," but stopping just short of fully pronouncing the "n" sound, so that the end of the word has a nasal sound.

Thanks to all the board members and officers for all the work that has to go into maintaining the organization and

providing for its future. I was glad to see that the 11ACVVC and the Blackhorse organization merged in certain functions in a spirit of brotherhood. It is these and other such groups who keep us reminded of what should never be forgotten.

♦♦

John Ballentyne the 46th Colonel of the Regiment notified us that Jimmie Leach, the 40th Colonel has been promoted to Brigadier General in the South Carolina Militia.

MG Stan Spears, TAG of South Carolina, did the honors to a crowd of about 200 local and state leaders. Jimmy is a mainstay in the community and in South Carolina - this was certainly an overdue promotion. His resume reads like a model of service and courage to the nation and for the past 30 years to the community.

♦♦

Steve Cyr, from Maine, served with M Co from March or April 1969 to Jan. 1970. He needs help with a VA claim with witnesses stating they knew of him. If anyone remembers his tank hitting mines or remembers him doing some mine sweeping, please contact him. Anything that would tie him with the Cav, jungle, danger, et al. He remembers serving with Tom Jones, Lonnie Burris, Sgt. Dykes.

Anyone who remembers please write him at: Stephen R Cyr, 4 Watermill Road, Van Buren, Maine 04785

♦♦

Ruth Ann Maynard, sister of one of our KIAs brought a photo album to the reunion to add to the display she had in the bunker. She reports that the photo album is missing and is asking everyone who attended the reunion to check their own photo albums to assure her's wasn't picked up by mistake.

She has checked with the hotel and everyone she knew to no avail. She stated that it can never be replaced and the loss has devastated her family. Please contact 11 ACVVC headquarters if it is found.



Rodney H. George

Greetings to all. We have successfully concluded another reunion in Washington DC. The ceremonies were especially gratifying & poignant this year with the participation of such dignitaries as the Secretary of the Army, the Command Sergeant Major of the Army and the laying of the Blackhorse wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier by the Honor Guard of the 3rd Infantry Regiment (the official guards of the Unknowns). I would like to take this time to thank some very important people of our own. These people were of great assistance at the sales desk of the QM store during the weekend. They are first & foremost, my wife

100 year Commemorative hats, Cavalry Blue w/100 year logo. Supplies limited to stock on hand.

Elida without whose support this would be almost impossible. Our other assistants, whom I can not thank enough, were Debbie Pickral, Janet & Sarah Krueger and Marianne Ashley. My deepest thanks to

you all for your splendid help.

There are still some Washington DC reunion items available for purchase. If you would like to order any of these items just drop me a note requesting any of the following:

Golf Shirts with the VN service ribbon and full color direct embroidered patch and 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 1966 - 1972, Blackhorse-Vietnam, Washington DC Reunion 16-Black POW patch direct embroidered on left sleeve: Sizes available:

Medium - 4 red: XL - 6 red: 2XL - 32 red 30 white: 3XL -21 red 26 white

All items require \$4.00 postage and handling and the regular golf shirt or hat will be substituted if stock of the ordered item is depleted. Order shirts by color and size. Cost is \$30.00 for golf shirts and \$10.00 for hats.

Reminder: It is not too early to start your Christmas shopping for that trooper or wife! We have a limited stock of the Blackhorse in Vietnam history book so buy now for those sons & daughters that you want your legacy passed on to. Also order early on the jewelry items so that you are not disappointed by late delivery for Christmas.

Allons,



Quartermaster

11TH ARMORED CAVALRY'S VETERANS OF VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA

ORDER FORM

Product Description	Code	\$ Amt	Size	Qty	\$ Total
Coffee Mug, white 11oz w/full color Blackhorse insignia	B	6.00		_____	_____
Hat, Black Poplin adjustable w/full color direct embroidery Blackhorse insignia.	A	10.00		_____	_____
Key ring, 1.5 " Acrylic square w/full color Blackhorse insignia	A	3.00		_____	_____
Bumper Sticker "I Rode With The Blackhorse w/full color BH insignia	A	2.00		_____	_____
Window Sticker, full color BH insignia and Vietnam service ribbon	A	2.00		_____	_____
History Book, "Blackhorse Regiment in Vietnam"	B	25.00		_____	_____
Watch, BH insignia on face, leather band (indicate choice) Man's Woman's	A	20.00		_____	_____
Blackhorse Shoulder Patch, (indicate choice) colored subdued	A	4.00		_____	_____
Blackhorse Challenge Coin, Antique silver 1.75" BH insignia/VN map on faces	A	12.00		_____	_____
Blackhorse 100 year memorial coin, 1.75" crossed sabers/BH insignia new	A	12.00		_____	_____
Belt Buckle, solid brass w/crossed sabers & BH insignia	B	15.00		_____	_____
Flag, indoor/outdoor 3'x5' with color insignia	B	50.00		_____	_____
Lighter, "Zippo" style brushed chrome w/full color BH insignia	B	15.00		_____	_____
License Plate, metal red & white background with crossed sabers & 11	B	5.00		_____	_____
License Plate Frame, metal, black w/Blackhorse - 11th US Cavalry in white	B	6.00		_____	_____
Attache Case w/shoulder strap 11.5" x 15.5" w/dir emb. BH insignia & VN rib	B	30.00		_____	_____
Tote Bag, white, 12x12x6 w/full color BH insignia new	A	20.00		_____	_____
Barbeque Apron, white, 24x30 w/full color BH insignia new	A	25.00		_____	_____
Blackhorse Pin	A	3.00		_____	_____
11th ACR Regimental Crest	A	3.00		_____	_____
Pin, "Xuan Loc"	A	3.00		_____	_____
Blackhorse Cavalry Pin, brass, 11 over crossed sabers	A	5.00		_____	_____
Reunion pin (indicate choice), Indianapolis, Las Vegas, Appleton New Orleans, San Diego, Buffalo	A	1.00		_____	_____
Blackhorse Women's Pendant w/chain, 10k gold w/full BH insignia	B	70.00		_____	_____
Gear Bag, red with color BH	B	35.00		_____	_____
Men's Ring, 10k gold w/full color BH insignia on face (specify size)	B	275.00		_____	_____
Note: all clothing items are available in size medium through size 3XL Specify size and color preference of item requested.					
Blackhorse T-shirt, 100% cotton, pre-shrunk, full color BH insignia. Specify color: <input type="checkbox"/> Ash <input type="checkbox"/> Black (check one)	A	16.00		_____	_____
Henley Shirt, 100% cotton, short sleeve, round neck w/full color BH insignia and VN ribbon. Specify color: <input type="checkbox"/> Red <input type="checkbox"/> White	A	20.00		_____	_____
Golf Shirt, 100% cotton w/full color BH insignia on left front. Specify color: <input type="checkbox"/> Red <input type="checkbox"/> White (check one)	A	30.00		_____	_____
Blackhorse Sweatshirt, 50% cotton, 50% acrylic w/full color BH insignia. Specify color: <input type="checkbox"/> Ash <input type="checkbox"/> Black (check one)	A	25.00		_____	_____
Blackhorse Jacket, 100% Nylon, snap front, quilted lining w/full color BH insignia, (6" back), crossed sabers (front right) and Allons insignia (front left)	A	70.00		_____	_____
Shipping Costs: A items = \$4.00; B items = \$6.00 (max shipping is \$6.00 per order)					
Subtotal					_____
Shipping and Handling					_____
Total					_____
Prices effective to 12-31-01. All price lists previous to 04-01-01 invalid					
Name _____					Phone _____
Address _____					
City/State/Zip _____					
<input type="checkbox"/> Check if address change					
Please include the largest of chosen items S/H costs with your order. Maximum per order form charge is \$6.00. Checks or Money Orders should be made payable to "11th ACVVC." Allow six weeks for processing and delivery. Prices effective until 12-31-01. Previous price lists invalid. Mail order to: 11th ACVVC Quartermaster, c/o Rodney H. George, 21450 West Ninemile Road, Huson, MT 59846					

11th ARMORED CAVALRY'S VETERANS OF VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA

Membership is open to all troopers who served with or were attached to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment while in the countries of Vietnam or Cambodia from August 1966 thru March 1972. Membership is also open to the wives, parents and children of

our Troopers killed in action.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

UNIT _____ DATES: FROM _____ TO _____
(Troop, Sqdn) (Mo/Yr) (Mo/Yr)

SER NO RANK (during tour) _____ SSN NO _____

OTHER INFORMATION _____

TYPE MEMBERSHIP: NEW RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP NUMBER _____

ANNUAL (\$15) LIFE (\$100)

LIFE Plan (\$25 enclosed, plus 3 payments of \$25 in 3, 6 and 9 months)

IN ADDITION, PLEASE ACCEPT MY TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION FOR \$ _____

I authorize the release of my address/phone number to other Troopers who served with the 11th ACR
(Sign) _____

Please make checks/money orders payable to: **11th ACV VC**. Mail this form with your check or money order (no cash) to: **11th ACVVC Membership, Bill Holford, 8515 Shoal creek Blvd., Apt. #108, Austin, TX 78757-7548.**

☆☆☆ **Membership is Our Strength** ☆☆☆
It's not the price you pay to belong,
It's the price you paid to become eligible to join



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