



Thunder Run

Vol. 35 – NO. 4

“Together Then – Together Again”

4th Quarter, 2020

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

Joe Minor Thomas Honored

‘It’s time they were recognized’: Decorated Vietnam medic from Tulsa recognized with day in his honor, street renaming

(Reprinted with permission of Tim Stanley and the Tulsa World)

A young Army medic from Tulsa who was killed 53 years ago in Vietnam was formally recognized in his hometown for the first time Thursday.

A ceremony honoring Spc. 4 Joe Minor Thomas was held at Pine Street and North Hartford Avenue near his former family home in north Tulsa.

“Tulsa’s community has never honored Joe in any way. Today is the start of that,” said Mike Lapolla, ambassador for the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame.

Thomas is believed to be the only Tulsan since World War II to be awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation’s second-highest decoration for valor after the Medal of Honor.



Joe Thomas’ Grave

A city proclamation declaring Thursday, Sept. 24, 2020 — the anniversary of his death in 1967 — Joe Thomas Day in Tulsa, was read and presented to Thomas’ surviving family, including a sister and brother.

Honorary street signs were unveiled,

Please turn to **THOMAS** on page 8

Our Stories, they need to be told

Van Marosek

I really enjoy reading *Thunder Run* every quarter when it comes to me in my mail. I look forward to reading about the upcoming events, but what I really love are thoughts and stories that are shared by the readers.

One of the most memorable responses from the audience was, “Up until you spoke, no one ever told me how appreciative they are of us, only our family.”

Reading them, I learn about the military, its equipment and terminology, and especially the experiences of those who had been in my country, Vietnam.

But one article hit a nerve with me, “Vietnam, Lost and Found” by Keith H. Elliott that was published in the newsletter (Vo. 35 - No. 2, 2nd Quarter, 2020). It compels me to think about how powerful stories are. It serves as a healing process for both the writer and the readers and secondly, it is a very effective way to call to action (whether it intended to or not), which as evidence, has caused me to write

Please turn to **STORIES** on page 18

4th Quarter 2020

State of the Reunion

The 35th Reunion in Indianapolis was a very different one. By my count we had 161 at the Banquet on Saturday night. Bob had a count of 148 that picked up Registration material. The difference in numbers can only be attributed to those bypassing Registration after Bob had closed. The Bunker had maybe a dozen on Wednesday night. The numbers slowly went up by Friday and the bulk of those attending showed up on Saturday. The protocol of wearing masks and social distancing was well adhered to in public places but in the bunker and at the Banquet they were mostly gone, that was not a problem with anyone. We served 5 Kegs of beer, 200 sodas and an unknown number of Margaritas for the entire event. A few of us even learned about DD214 SPN numbers. Look yours up, you may get a chuckle

The 2021 reunion will be in Dallas Texas at the Hilton Anatole. This is a very large hotel on 46 acres. It has ample room for us and our functions.

The small number of troopers and guests was disappointing, but it did allow for making new friends and getting to know each other a little better. The Banquet tables that only had one or two seated were invited to sit with others that had extra seats and that created a more engaging environment. Chaplain Bill’s Memorial service was, as always, a moving ceremony that brought out the Kleenexes. The Quartermaster Store was quiet but sales were commensurate with attendance.

Please turn to **REUNION** on page 23





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. Correspondence and inquiries concerning *Thunder Run* should be made in writing to: Editor, "Thunder Run," Peter L. Walter, 8 Tallowood Dr., Westampton, NJ 08060-3721.

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President's Message

By Pete Walter

I hope this edition of Thunder Run finds you all doing your best to survive in this “strange new world”. Our lives have changed as we have all been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are no longer living in our normal routines. Hopefully receiving this issue of Thunder Run and the 11th ACVVC 2021 calendar will bring you some sense of normalcy and a sense of reliability.

All of our reunions have their own unique “flavor”, but our 35th reunion, held August 26 – 30 at the J. W. Marriott in Indianapolis was truly unique. Like every other public event, our reunion was subject to COVID-19 restrictions. Nevertheless, 161 stout-hearted souls attended and enjoyed themselves. Vice President and Reunion Chairman Frank Church provides more detail in his “State of the Reunion” article.

I need to give a public and heartfelt “Thank You” to Frank for not only doing his typical excellent job of organizing the reunion, but for serving as the Acting President in my absence. A quiet, steady, nose-to-the-grindstone guy, I can always count on him. Thank you, Frank, for all you’ve done for the 11th ACVVC, our reunion attendees and for me.

At the annual Business Meeting, there were – as always – a few surprises. Russ Sanford of Redford, Michigan (C Troop Medic, 1966-67) passed the Quilter Award to Don Brown, Tigard, Oregon (Medic, HHT, 1/11). Congratulations Don!

Elections were held and Chaplain Bill Karabinos was elected to a three-year term on the Board of Directors. I was reelected to a two-year term as your President. Thank you for your confidence in me (I was unopposed!), I enjoy working for you and I will make the only promise I know I can keep. I promise to do my best. We had one office that was contested, the position of Secretary. Jerry Beamon (our Quarter Master) won the election over Greg Mason, our incumbent Secretary. We all look forward to working with Jerry. Congratulations to Bill and Jerry!

Our next reunion will be August 25 – 30, 2021 at the Hilton Anatole Hotel, 2201 Stemmons Freeway, Dallas, TX 75207.

I want to personally thank Greg Mason for his service to our country, to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment and for his faithful and routinely excellent service to the 11th ACVVC as our Secretary; thank you Sir! Jerry, while you have big shoes to fill, I know Greg will help you in any way he can.

There were three sites offered for the 2022 reunion: The Rosen Plaza in Orlando, Florida, the Marriott in Columbus, Georgia and the Sheraton in Birmingham, Alabama. After a detailed presentation by VP and Reunion Chairman Frank Church, the Sheraton Birmingham won a close contest. The dates are Sep. 5 – 11, 2022.

Our next reunion will be August 25 – 30, 2021 at the Hilton Anatole Hotel, 2201 Stemmons Freeway, Dallas, TX 75207. Rate: \$139 Single/Double and \$149 for Triple/Quad. Hotel Registration Cut-off date: July 23, 2021. Ph: 1-800-774-1500. Group code: VVC On-line booking link: <https://book.passkey.com/go/5ce4394f>

At the annual banquet, Bill Suhre, Esq. (I Troop, 1968) of Greeley, Colorado was honored as the “Trooper of the Year, in recognition of his dedication and sage counsel to the 11th ACVVC.

Trooper Jim Young (HHT, 2/11, 1969-70) of Germantown, Kentucky received a “Special Recognition Award” for his continuous contribution and devotion to the 11th ACVVC.

Troopers Terry Stivers (B Troop, 1967-68), of Jeffersonville, Indiana and Mike Cricco (I Troop, 1967) of North Haven, Connecticut were both recognized with perfect “35-0” awards for attending every reunion.

Congratulations to Bill, Jim, Terry and Mike!

There is a story in this issue by Van Marosek. Many of you who attended the

2015 reunion in Columbus, Georgia may remember Van speaking to us at the Members Business meeting. Van emigrated from Vietnam after the war and her perspective is one you need to read.

Our annual Scholarship fund-raising begins when you find your 11th ACVVC 2021 calendar in your mailbox. There are many excellent photos in this edition and I want to thank everyone who submitted photos and/or slides, CDs, etc. I am always looking for clear, good quality images, slides are usually the best. A note about the credits for the photos, sometimes I am given photos that have passed through many hands and I am not sure who took the picture. So, if a photo is published with no credit assigned or with the wrong name, please let me know so I can give proper credit in a future issue of Thunder Run.

While on the subject of errors, I apologize to George Ruggles (XO How Bat, 3/11, 1966-67), of Redmond, Oregon. The story on the front page of 3rd qtr. 2020 Thunder Run, “The Hardest Job in the Army, 2.0” was written by George. I incorrectly attributed authorship to Chp. Bill Karabinos, Sorry George!

On September 24, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, an event was held honoring one of our Blackhorse brothers. On that day, 53 years earlier, Spc. 4 Joe Minor Thomas, a Medic attached to G Troop, gave his life in the battle of Quy My. Mike Lapolla, an Ambassador with the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame orchestrated the affair. Mike is a 1965 graduate of West Point and formed the original LRRP unit for the Second Brigade, 4th Infantry Division in November 1966. He served a second tour of duty in Vietnam in 1969-70, serving as an advisor to the ARVN First Division based in Hue and the Ashau Valley. Mike is on the faculty of the University of

Please turn to **PRESIDENT** on page 6

The AGVVC Annual Reunion XXXV



The Bunker



The Bunker



The Bunker



Don Brown, Quilter Award Recipient



Chaplain Bill



Memorial Service



Terry Stivers and Ruth Majewski.



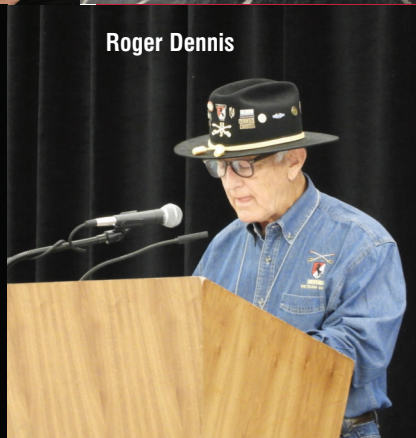
Val And Mike Cricco With Ron Krueger



After The Banquet



Mike Cricco & Terry Stivers receive 35-0 Awards from Acting Pres Church



Roger Dennis



Bob And Barb Moreno

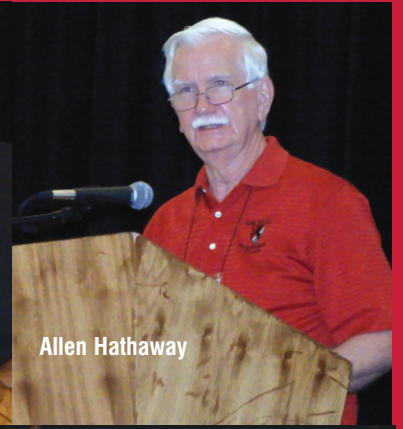
Indianapolis, IN



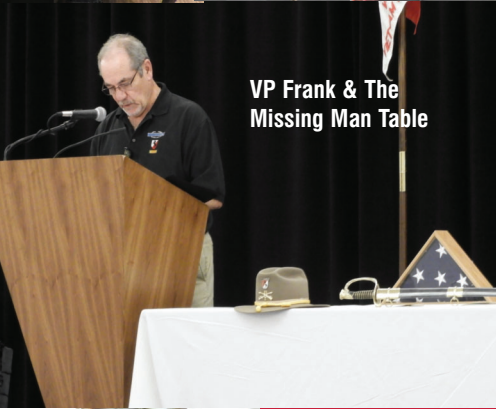
The Bunker



VP Frank Church



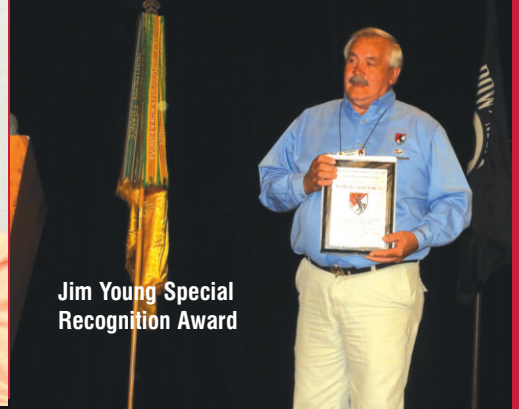
Allen Hathaway



VP Frank & The Missing Man Table



Quarter Master Jerry Beamon



Jim Young Special Recognition Award



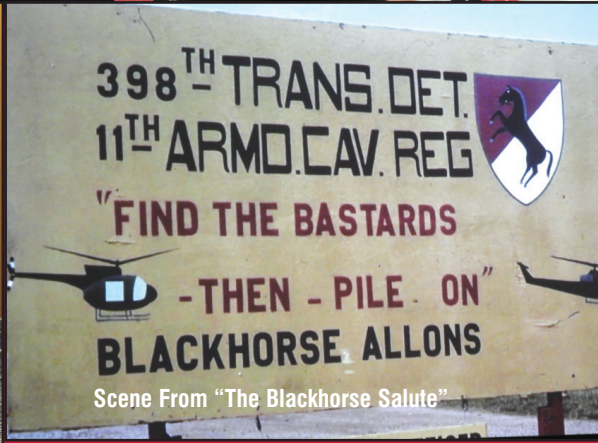
Docs Dan Brown & Ray Majewski, Quilter Award Recipients



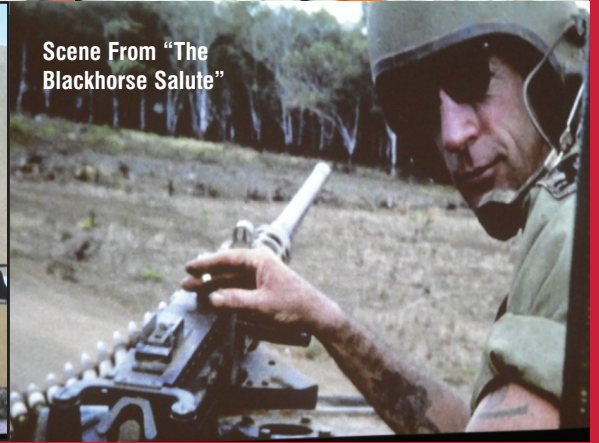
Registration Chm Bob Moreno



Tiny Dancer



Scene From "The Blackhorse Salute"



Scene From "The Blackhorse Salute"

Biography

Colby Reithoff, 11th ACVVC 2020 Colonel Charles L. Schmidt Leadership Scholarship Award Winner



Hello there. My name is Colby Heithoff, and I grew up on a farm just outside the small town of Coon Rapids, Iowa. I was raised by my Mom, Brenda, and my Dad, Danny. I have one older sibling, Chase, and two younger siblings, Corey and Ella. I am also a descendent of two grandparents who are both veterans, and I could not be more proud of them. Growing up on a farm certainly had its benefits. For one, my siblings and I got to ride in numerous tractors and combines

which always fascinated us. We also had a large, open yard to play around with no neighbors in sight. We spent most of our time driving around our ATVs and exploring the nearby timber. When my Dad is not busy farming and we have time off from school, our family travels to different states and embarks on a multitude of unique adventures. These would include skiing in Colorado, kayaking in Minnesota, and building sandcastles on the white beaches of Florida. In addition to this, we take our camper to Lake View and spend time on the lake. Between the farming, traveling, and other fun experiences, I couldn't have asked for a better childhood.

Throughout my high school career, I attended Coon Rapids-Bayard High School and was involved in many sports and student leadership opportunities, as well as a few advanced classes. Most notably, I was Student Council President my senior year. In this position, I was responsible for planning and carrying out numerous school activities, including Homecoming, our Veteran's Day program, the senior prom at the nursing home, and many other events. I enjoyed this leadership opportunity because it not only allowed me to speak to the students and get involved, but to also involve other students in these exciting programs and events. I was also selected into the National Honor Society my junior year and was elected Vice-President my senior year. Being a part of NHS allowed me to engage in volunteer services, including meal packaging for the hungry, and our "Stuff the Bus" food drive that helps stock our town's food pantry. Another program I got to be a part of outside of school was being a Youth Leader for my Church. As part of this, I got to participate in countless volunteer services. These would include fundraisers for people battling cancer or struggling to recover from a storm.

We also went to Pacific Junction to clean out an EMS building after the town was devastated by a flood. It was these leadership and service opportunities that led me to being awarded the silver cord at graduation. Throughout high school, I was also involved in 4 sports: basketball, cross country, track, and swim team. Basketball was by far my favorite, and my senior year I was elected to be a team captain. As far as academics went, I made a commitment to excel in the classroom to set myself up for the future. I graduated with a 4.0 and had the honor to be named co-valedictorian with my fellow student and friend, Jacob Hoffman. In addition to this, I was able to graduate with 15 college credits, giving me a head start at my next destination: Iowa State University.

The decision to attend Iowa State was not a difficult one to make. I've been a Cyclone fan for many years, not to mention Iowa State seems to run in my family. My mom and all three of her siblings attended ISU, and my brother was starting his junior year there. The choice to attend Iowa State may have been easy but deciding what to study was a bit more difficult. I chose to enter Iowa State as an open-option major, taking a variety of classes to explore different subjects and possible majors. The college experience this year has certainly been different than years past due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but I'm making the most of it.

By the time that I graduate, I hope to find a major of study that I am passionate about. If I had to guess right now, it might be something in journalism or psychology, but I'm keeping my options open for the time being. After I get my degree, I want to find a job that allows me to travel around the U.S. Eventually, I'll find a place to settle down, maybe even in my hometown, and start a family. That's my long-term plan for now and I'm excited to see where life is going to take me. Once again, I want to thank the generous members of the 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia for awarding me the Colonel Charles L. Schmidt Leadership Scholarship award. I am honored to have received this scholarship which will help me reach my goals and dreams at Iowa State University and beyond.

PRESIDENT from page 3

Oklahoma College of Public Health. He teaches in the graduate program and also performs health and public policy research in Oklahoma. Mike says "any LRRP travelling through Tulsa has a free room and board at his home". Thank you Mike for hosting "Joe Thomas Day"!

There is a detailed story about this event in this issue, but I want to make a few points about Joe Thomas Day:

1. Next summer, Spc. 4 Joe Minor Thomas will be considered for enshrinement in the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame. Let's hope he is accepted.

2. Mike Bloese (M Co., 69-70) and Tommy Sloan (SGT, A Trp., 69-70) both Life members of the 11th ACVCC attended. Thank you, Mike and Tommy.

3. Joe Thomas' siblings were in attendance and would like to hear from anyone who served with their brother Joe. (Contact me if you served with Joe.)

About eight weeks earlier and over a thousand miles away in Freehold, New Jersey, another Blackhorse Trooper was being honored with the presentation of his second Silver Star. Bart "Doc" Fabian was presented the award by Congressman Chris Smith on July 18. Doc's story is also in this issue.

There is a common thread woven throughout the fabric of Blackhorse lore that binds these two events...we never forget our brothers, living or dead.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *Thunder Run*. I am honored to work for you!

REUNION from page 1

I need to thank all of our members and Officers that felt a greater need to attend than a concern with the Virus. The hotel waived all of our financial obligation in return for us not cancelling. If they had not done that and if a small number of our guys had not been there it could have put us in a very difficult fiscal situation. I also must say to the members and Officers that chose to not attend that we all understand that is was because the risks to their health were just too great. I much prefer that you miss this "one" than not be here for the "many more to come". What I am most thankful for is that as of this writing there have been no reports of anyone becoming ill with COVID-19 as a result of being in attendance at this year's reunion.

Four awards were presented during the Banquet program. The Trooper of the Year was awarded to Bill Suhre for his past and ongoing contributions to the 11th ACVVC. Bill is our financial auditor and our legal advisor; his knowledge and sage advice has been invaluable. James Young

was presented a special recognition award for his long and continuous work in the Quarter Master store. Anyone entering there no doubt has experienced his salesmanship. Terry Stivers and Mike Cricco were awarded very special awards for going 35 and 0 in attendance at Reunions, and yes, they were both there with their Ladies Robin and Val. They have shown their dedication to the 11th ACVVC and their fellow Troopers over the years and it was a pleasure to present them their plaques.

Birmingham, Alabama was chosen as the reunion site for in 2022. Sherri and I did make a visit there and were impressed with what they had to offer. Its history is more than just a civil rights town. It is known as the "Pittsburgh of the south" for its past steel production and has a very interesting museum that tells of that and the role that the Greek God "Vulcan" plays in the cities past and present lore. It also has the world's largest motorcycle museum that is huge. It will take a full day

to see it all. If you are a rider you will not want to miss it and if you aren't it is still cool. The hotel guest rooms are not large but are in the process of renovation. The ones I looked at were completed and are quite nice, with a coffee maker in each room. There is an entire block of very affordable restaurants with a few upscale venues just outside the hotel. I will have more info on Birmingham in coming issues of *Thunder Run*.

The 2021 reunion will be in Dallas Texas at the Hilton Anatole. This is a very large hotel on 46 acres. It has ample room for us and our functions. If you have rented a scooter in the past you will definitely need one here and they will be made available. More information to come.

The room rate is \$139+ tax per night. The dates are August 23 to August 29. Self -parking is 50% off the prevailing rate, currently \$22, and \$29 valet. Registration fee and hotel reservations line have not been set up or debugged at this time. That information will be in the next issue of the Thunder Run.

There is a water park on the property and it is open to us for a separate fee that can be purchased by the day. This fee also includes, in addition to the water park, discounted parking, in room Wi-Fi, health club access, spa access, 2 Starbucks coffees and kids eat free at the Media Grille.

There is much to do in Dallas. There is a DART line close to the hotel that will get you downtown and free trolley and street car service when you get there. There is an outstanding Western wear store downtown, owned by a fellow Nam-Vet, if you need new duds or a hat. A must-see location that is historical, sorrowful and strangely familiar, is Dealey Plaza. The old news reels played through my head and a chill came over me as I stood on the spot where JFK was taken from us. It truly must be experienced.

By August of next year, I am hoping that travel and social restrictions will be gone and concerns of our health will be reduced to a point that will allow all of us to be "together again".

*Frank Church, Reunion Chair/
Vice President*

2020 Election Results

The results of the elections held at the Membership Meeting on August 29, 2019 at the Indianapolis reunion are as follows:

Elected for 2 year terms beginning January 1, 2+020:

- **President-Pete Walter**
- **Secretary-Jerry Beamon**

Elected for a 3 year term:

- **Director-Bill Karabinos**

Greg Mason, Secretary

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, Allen Hathaway, 13194 Rettew Dr., Manassas, VA 20112; Email 11thcav1966@Comcast.net



Name: _____

Old Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

New Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone _____ Effective Date: _____

Email: _____

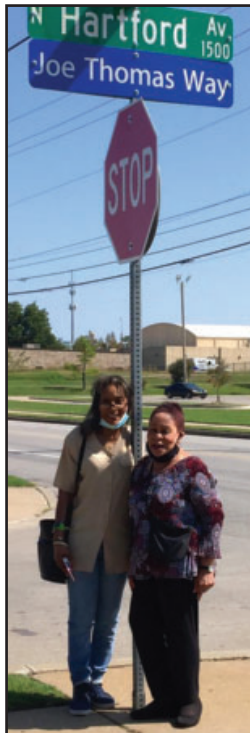
THOMAS from page 1

designating a stretch of North Hartford “Joe Thomas Way.”

Lapolla said the Hall of Fame is always looking for Oklahoma military veterans who deserve to be honored, and that Thomas’ name surfaced during research last year.

“We started to ask around to see who knew Joe Thomas. And it turned out, not many people did,” Lapolla said.

“We looked at his record and we realized he needed to be recognized. ... He is the most highly decorated soldier from the city of Tulsa in the last 75 years.”



Under the street sign is Annette Thompson and Joe’s sister-in-law DeLores Thomas.

Thomas, a 1965 Booker T. Washington High School graduate, was just 20 years old when he died serving with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

He was killed during an attack on his platoon, during which he saved three wounded comrades then singlehandedly took out an enemy bunker.

Dr. Art Williams, a classmate and friend of Thomas at BTW, also spoke at the ceremony:



In the presentation photo, City Councilor Vanessa Hall-Harper and Jed Cochran of the Mayor’s office present proclamation to sister and brother of Joe Thomas - Annette Thomas Thompson and Lucas Thomas.

“I met Joe in 7th grade right across the street,” he said, pointing at Carver Middle School. “We sat at the same table.”

Another friend at that table, Isaiah Wilson, would also be killed in Vietnam, he said.

“In our era, African Americans represented 24% of those who fought in Vietnam, while being only 10% of the population,” said Williams. “It’s time they were recognized.”

As she presented the city proclamation to the family, City Councilor Vanessa Hall-Harper broke down briefly, noting that Isaiah Wilson was her uncle.

“He was my dad’s baby brother. I never met him,” she said.

“Thank you for this opportunity and for this work you all are doing to honor fallen

men that have not been recognized.”

Thomas’ older sister, Annette Thompson, was among family members on hand.

She said afterward the recognition for her brother “means a lot to me. ... He was the best friend that you could have. He was the kind of person who would put others ahead of himself.”

Thomas was posthumously awarded the DSC and Purple Heart, after having been previously decorated with a Bronze Star for valor.

Lapolla said the General Tommy Franks Leadership Institute and Museum in Hobart is preparing a special exhibit on Thomas and will provide a permanent home for his medals.

Tim Stanley, Tulsa World



Mike Bloese, Mike Lapolla and Tommy Sloan



Mike Lapolla presents roses to Family Members

Battle of Quy My (2)

The battle for which Joe Minor Thomas was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

One of the most important lessons learned about the enemy in I Corps Tactical Zone (CTZ) was that they virtually always approached their targets from the west, where their base camps were located in the mountainous terrain. They invariably withdrew after a battle to the west as well. Second Squadron (2/11) Troopers had also learned that Highway (QL) 1, while considered generally secure, was a favorite objective for North Vietnamese Army (NVA) attacks. These lessons led to the squadron devising a plan of attack that placed the majority of its forces between the enemy and his safe havens in the mountains; they executed their attack from a direction that the enemy commander had not anticipated.

The Troopers had also learned to have a healthy respect for their enemy in I Corps (pronounced 'Eye Corps'). These were not village Viet Cong (VC), farmers by day, amateur soldiers by night. These were well-trained, well-led professionals; hard-core NVA with a mission. Fox Troop's Specialist 4 (SP4) Tom Thornburg admires them to this day, especially the ones he encountered in the battle on 24 September. "These were Recon Scout 'Killers' and they were really good ... These were professionals who fought the Japanese, the French, and now the Americans ... without ever taking a break." But, Tom concludes, "Losing to them was never even a consideration."

Having an understanding of whom they were facing and developing tactics to overcome the foe were central to the squadron's success in decimating two NVA companies and preventing an NVA division from launching a devastating attack.

In mid-September, the squadron was conducting Operation Golden Rose (part of the larger Operation Wheeler), in a fire support base (FSB) located around Hill 29. Although Hill 29 was, as the name indicates, only 29 meters high, it 'towered' above the surrounding rice paddies. Just to the west, however, the terrain rose sharply, reaching almost 500 meters elevation less than 20 kilometers

*THOMAS, JOE MINOR

Specialist Fourth Class, U.S. Army
2d Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment,
Date of Action: September 24, 1967

Citation:

The Distinguished Service Cross is presented to Joe Minor Thomas, Specialist Fourth Class, U.S. Army, for extraordinary heroism in action in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with 2d Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. Specialist Four Thomas distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 24 September 1967 while serving as medic of an armored cavalry platoon on a combat mission deep in hostile territory. While moving along rice fields in search of hostile elements, his platoon was savagely attacked by a Viet Cong force firing automatic weapons from well fortified positions. He saw three comrades wounded by the intense barrage and sprinted three hundred meters across an open rice paddy under a hail of fire to aid them. With bullets striking all around him, he remained in the open to treat the casualties and move them to safety. He detected the Viet Cong emplacement and fired furiously into the attackers. Completely disregarding his own safety, he stood up in the midst of the firefight and fearlessly assaulted the enemy bunker alone. Firing lethal bursts as he ran into the face of the enemy weapons, he reached the fortifications and destroyed them with grenades and rifle fire, killing three enemy soldiers. He was mortally wounded while gallantly defending his comrades in the face of grave danger. His fearless actions completely defeated the determined insurgents and enabled his men to successfully complete their mission. Specialist Four Thomas' extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty, at the cost of his life, were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

General Orders: HQ US Army, Vietnam, General Orders No. 6017 (November 21, 1967)

Home Town: Tulsa, Oklahoma

* Denotes Posthumous Award

from the squadron's temporary FSB.

Ten days into the operation, Fox Troop, under the command of Captain (CPT) Bill Crouch (radio call sign Cowboy 6), was in a night laager atop Hill 10 (a ten-meter high mound of earth overlooking the rice paddies) with a work party from Charlie Company, 9th (USMC) Engineer Battalion. The Fox Troopers had been escorting and providing security for the Marines for several days while they worked on improving trafficability on QL 1. The engineers had plenty to do, as the enemy was particularly active that month, blowing five bridges and eight culverts along the highway between Chu Lai and Thang Binh, a distance of only about 15 miles. There was no doubt that the enemy was close, so the 2/11 Troopers were alert for any opportunity to preempt the enemy sap-

pers from doing any more damage.

Just before 0200 hours on the morning of 22 September, 15 to 20 rounds from 82mm mortars landed in and around the night defensive position (NDP) perimeter on Hill 10, wounding one Fox Trooper, 17 Marines, and one Navy Corpsman. Per SOP, the Armored Cavalry Assault Vehicle (ACAV) crews had buttoned up upon receiving incoming mortars, but the Marines were very vulnerable in their shallow foxholes. The mortars caused significant damage to their equipment as well. Fox Troop scouts quickly identified the source of the incoming (about 200 meters west of the NDP), and the consolidated squadron mortars and the 2/11 Howitzer Battery (Second-HOW) responded, raining over 50 rounds on the enemy mortar crews. That return fire was right on the money,

for when Fox Troop searched it later, they found that in his haste to get away from the return fire, the enemy had left his mortar aiming stakes and other equipment behind. There were impressions in the soft earth from four 82mm mortar base plates, as well as 18 freshly-dug, but unoccupied, fighting positions at the same site.

Released from their work party escort duties while the engineers repaired and replaced their equipment, Fox Troop went looking for the enemy that had mortared them – and they had a pretty good idea where to look. About 0920 hours on the 24th, the squadron received a message that a South Vietnamese Popular Force (PF – village militia) soldier had spotted an NVA unit south of Hill 10. The 2/11 intelligence officer (CPT Robert Palmer) was generally skeptical of reports from South Vietnamese sources, but the details provided in this case seemed to jive with what was already known. He remembers: “This to me sounded a little bit stronger than most of the reports that we’d had. I put all my marbles in one bag and said okay, I think they’re there, and I told Colonel McSpadden [2/11 commander] that they were there.”

By 1000 hours, Fox Troop was on the road headed for the village of Quy My (2). Applying the lessons learned about how the enemy operated, Fox Troop (minus one platoon) headed north along Highway 1, then turned west above where the enemy was reported to be. After traveling along an unimproved road for about four kilometers, they turned south, just short of the railroad tracks that paralleled the highway.¹

Golf Troop was standing by to react should Fox develop something. The plan was to come at the enemy from the north, not from the east as would be expected. By mid-afternoon, Fox Troop’s 15 ACAVs found the enemy just a couple hundred meters from where they had destroyed the mortar position and right where the PF said they would be.

Staff Sergeant (SSG) Ron Walls was the track commander (TC) of F-21,² one of the lead ACAVs when they approached a hedgerow just outside the village of Quy My (2). He told a reporter after the battle: “A 75mm [recoilless

rifle] round hit just in front of my vehicle, injuring two of my men. We returned fire immediately, and then they were shooting at us from all directions.” The 2nd platoon leader, Lieutenant (LT) Franklin Green, remembered it “took us about 1 minute, at the most, to gain fire superiority.”

The enemy, an NVA recon company that appeared to be the advanced party of a couple of battalions looking to move into the village as a staging area for an attack (maybe against Fox Troop), was dug into the hedgerow and throughout the tiny village. They were well armed with rifles, light machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), recoilless rifles (RR), and mortars. Although they had not been looking for a fight, they stood their ground – and paid a heavy price for that bad choice.

The 2nd Platoon swept through the village, while the 3rd Platoon provided suppressive fire from a small hill to the northwest. From this overwatch position, the ACAVs could provide fire support and prevent the enemy from escaping to the west. Shortly after the 2nd Platoon reached the southern edge of the village, helicopter gunships arrived on the scene, as did two medevac ships to evacuate the eight Troopers wounded in the initial engagement. Cowboy 6 concentrated the gunships on the southern and western edges, as his Second-HOW forward observer (FO) called in artillery, using a large white house in the center of the village as a reference point. The medevacs landed and evacuated the wounded. The time was now about 1600 hours, two hours into the engagement; Golf Troop arrived, having followed the same route used by Fox Troop earlier in the day.

Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Garland McSpadden (call sign Battle 6), overhead in an OH23 light observation helicopter, directed Crouch to put his two platoons into blocking positions along the western edge of the objective, then ordered Golf 6 (CPT Jon Collins, call sign Roughrider 6) to bring all three of his platoons on line and sweep through the hedgerows and into the heart of Quy My (2). A stream north of the village was designated the line of departure, and the three platoons crossed on line. Collins remembers:

The terrain was fairly open at this point for about 5-800 meters. The objective itself was a village with hedgerows. Visibility in the objective area was 50 meters, often it was as close as 10 or 20. Once we crossed the line of departure proceeding to the objective, the going was rather slow. We had experienced this many times because of the [rice paddy] dikes in the area that restrict your movement; however, they can be crossed. A few vehicles got stuck in the process.

SSG Buddy Yeomans, a two-war veteran, won a second star for his Combat Infantryman’s Badge (CIB) that day.³ As the TC for the lead Golf Troop ACAV, he too came under heavy fire as soon as he approached the edge of the village. “Just as we came upon a hedge row, I saw movement, and just by instinct, I fired, killing a VC,” Yeomans recounted later. The two side gunners on Yeomans’ ACAV, Privates First Class (PFC) Larry Stromness and Walter Flick, were both FNGs,⁴ each with less than 90 days in country. But, as Larry said afterwards: “We had a job to do and we did it.” Fellow side-gunner Flick said: “I couldn’t see the VC from my side at first, but when the bullets started coming my way, I saw Charlie and let him have it.”

PFC Erral Smallwood also understood that he had a job to do. Erral was a mechanic. Normally, his job was to fix the Golf Troop ACAVs when they broke; but on 24 September, he was driving one of them. He was in the thick of the fight when he noticed an NVA soldier aiming an RPG2 at one of the other vehicles. Without hesitation, he turned toward this threat. PFC Smallwood’s posthumous Silver Star citation describes his actions that day.

Realizing he had no time to warn the crew, he drove his vehicle through intense fire toward the enemy’s position. Then fearlessly exposing himself, he destroyed the enemy bunker with hand grenades just before being fatally wounded. Private Smallwood’s heroism and quick thinking not only saved the crew of an assault vehicle, but resulted in the destruction of an enemy anti-tank crew and the capture of their weapon.

The weather, which had shifted from sunshine in the morning, to rain showers in the early afternoon, to dark clouds and

heavy rain by this time, restricted the further use of gunships.⁵ Air Force airstrikes were called off at least twice because of the low clouds. The only alternatives that remained were artillery – time-consuming, one round adjustments because of the limited visibility – and direct assault by the ACAVs. The village had not been cleared of vegetation, so there were hedgerows, trees, and scrub brush throughout, providing the enemy plenty of places to hide. The hard-core NVA recon soldiers had to be blasted out of their holes, one or two at a time, by the mounted and dismounted Golf Troopers.

CPT Collins' ACAV led the charge. He describes the action: “[W]e had to go and dig them out of their holes. This is how we got the majority of our kills, by either throwing a grenade or firing directly into a hole ... [T]hey did stay and fight in one and two man spider holes. This worked to their advantage as long as we didn't see the hole. Once we did, it worked to their disadvantage.” At least three of the NVA were killed when they were run over by a Golf Troop ACAV as they tried to escape.

SP4 Bruce Watson was driving G-16 that day. Six months earlier, he had been living large in a small town in central California. Then he was “caught in a compromising situation” with the daughter of the president of the local draft board. Bruce hastily joined up; he picked Armor “because of course nobody would think of using a tank in the rice paddies and jungle of Southeast Asia.” Now, here he was in the middle of a war. It was a shock to see “what happens to a human body when a tank runs over him.”

Back in The World in late September, the Nation was transfixed by Hurricane Beulah as she slammed into the Texas coast with 160-plus mile per hour winds, dumping 29 inches of rain in just one day. Texans fled for higher, drier ground as homes and businesses were flooded. For young SP4 Joe Thomas from Tulsa, Oklahoma, the news had to hit close to home. The winds and rains that were battering Corpus Christi would inevitably find their way northward up tornado alley, and Tulsa lay right in the path of whatever Beulah had left in her purse.

As worrisome as the effects of Beulah might be on his family back home, on 24

September 1967, Joe Minor Thomas had more immediate concerns on his mind. He was a medic attached to Golf Troop, and when he saw some of his fellow Troopers wounded, he sprang into action. Despite the heavy fire coming from the dug-in enemy, he sprinted across 300 meters of dry rice paddies to reach the first group of wounded. His posthumous Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) citation relates what he did next.

With bullets striking all around him, he remained in the open to treat the casualties and move them to safety. He detected the Viet Cong emplacement and fired furiously into the attackers. Completely disregarding his own safety, he stood up in the midst of the firefight and fearlessly assaulted the enemy bunker alone. Firing lethal bursts as he ran into the face of the enemy weapons, he reached the fortifications and destroyed them with grenades and rifle fire, killing three enemy soldiers. He was mortally wounded while gallantly defending his comrades in the face of grave danger. His fearless actions completely defeated the determined insurgents and enabled his men to successfully complete their mission.

Kevin Henry remembers the day he was wounded and treated by Joe Thomas.

Joe, when I was wounded on 16 July 67 you came running to help me. You put my safety ahead of yours as so many medics have done. I wish I could have been there to help you on that terrible day in September. When I was told that you had died I saw the image of you running through the rice paddy to help me. That is the image I still see today, 35+ years later. We all liked you and missed you tremendously. I will never forget you.

Both Fox and Golf Troops remained on the battlefield overnight, just in case the enemy came back to recover the bodies, weapons, and equipment left behind. They did not – they had had enough of Blackhorse firepower. Of the estimated 60 NVA soldiers who comprised the 3rd Company of the 3rd NVA Regiment in Quy My (2) on 24 September, 48 were killed – 80 percent casualties, not including any wounded who managed to escape.

Fox and Golf Troops' success on 24 September 1967 was built on the founda-

tion of hard training, superb teamwork, individual courage, and great leadership at all levels. It was also built on tradition, the heritage of the 11th United States Cavalry. Sixty-five years earlier, on the 27th of March, 1902, Golf Troop also conducted a reconnaissance against a guerrilla force. This operation took place in Batangas Province in southern Luzon in the Philippines. On that occasion, there were no casualties amongst the Blackhorse Troopers, but 56 insurgents were captured inside their jungle base-camp. The Troopers destroyed 40 wood and thatch structures and captured 500 bushels of rice.

Bill Barner's diary entry for 24 September sums up the day for most 2/11 Troopers. “Today has been one of the busiest days I have had in the F.D.C. [Fire Direction Center]. We have been firing almost continuously since 0800 [hours]. Most missions were contact. Hellraiser 94 [the FO with Fox Troop] had heavy attack and his 50 cal and M60 almost drown his radio out ... Out of the last 20 hrs I have had hardly 45 min to myself at different intervals ... Fired 395 rds [rounds] in 24 hrs.”

*(Courtesy of Don Snedeker,
1th ACVVC Historian)*

¹Fox Troop's SGT Ken Jones, the F-30 ACAV driver, describes the railroad: “A narrow-gauge railroad track stretches parallel along the west side of the highway. It's built along the top of an embankment to keep it above the rain that collects in the flat land during the monsoon. There haven't been any trains on the track for years. Now it's just an obstacle we have to traverse.”

²All military vehicles have a “bumper number” on the front and back. The letter indicates the unit, the first number the platoon, and the second number the vehicle. “F-21” was the first vehicle of the 2nd Platoon of Fox Troop.

³Indicating close combat with an enemy in two different wars. He was awarded the first for Korea.

⁴F**king or Funny New Guys.

⁵Bill Barner in the Second-HOW Fire Direction Center noted in his diary a few days later that the “wind hit 52mph tonight with very heavy rain”.

Blackhorse Hoofbeats

Echoes from the Regiment's Service in Vietnam 1966-1972

By Don Snedeker, 11th ACVVC Historian

Blackhorse Chaplains

In 1912, Father George Waring, the Regimental Chaplain for the 11th Cavalry, published a guide for Army chaplains. His opening lines, written in 1912, were equally valid for his successors more than 50 years later. "No chaplain who confines himself to the limitations of Army Regulations concerning his duties can hope to be a success. For while Army Regulations provide for certain fixed duties, they intentionally leave much to his common sense and good judgment." Chaplain Waring went on to say that his primary function in the Army was to "look after the spiritual, moral, and intellectual interests of the soldiers". He stressed the need for chaplains to spend as much time as possible amongst his Troopers, visiting them where they lived rather than just waiting for them to come to him in a church.

In garrison, some military chaplains accomplish their spiritual and military mission from an office in the chapel. The chaplains who were assigned to the Blackhorse Regiment fifty-plus years after Chaplain Waring published his advice didn't sit in the chapel and wait for the Troopers to come to them. They went to where the Troopers were.

Third Squadron's chaplain, Captain John Schumacher, understood that, like Father Waring, they would be breaking new ground. Years later he wrote: "No one had written the book on how a chaplain can operate most effectively in that kind of environment [counterinsurgency] and we had to work it out for ourselves. Many had ideas on how it should be done, but the guy on the ground had to find his own way."

Chaplain Dalton Barnes was another one of the "guys on the ground" who went to war with the Blackhorse Regiment in 1966. He understood Chaplain Waring's philosophy very well. A former sergeant in the Air Force during the Korean War, he watched countless numbers of soldiers go off to war. This experience convinced him that there was "a tremendous need and possibilities to do work of a religious nature with military people." He chose the Army to be "able to work more closely with people, sort of person-to-person." He arrived at Ft. Meade in 1965 after a tour in Germany. Recognizing that macho soldiers might be reluctant to seek out the chaplain on their own, he tried to just 'be there' in case someone needed to talk. As the Regimental Chaplain, he was there in the snow on the PT fields, rifle ranges, and overnight bivouacs at Ft. Meade as the raw recruits evolved into Blackhorse Troopers. He was there at Camps AP Hill and Pickett as the Troopers trained and formed into cohesive platoons and troops. And he was there aboard the USNS Sultan as the Blackhorse Troopers steamed ever closer to war.

After serving 20 years in the Army, Dalton Barnes became the first chaplain in the Oklahoma City Police Department. In 1983, he told a reporter that "he gained a new understanding of what it means to survive, both mentally and physically, during mortar patrols and reconnaissance missions with the U.S. Army 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment." Of his tour in combat with the Blackhorse, Dalton Barnes said it was "the most rewarding experience of my life. The soldiers were very receptive and attendance [at religious services] was great in a combat zone."

Five years later, Chaplain Bill Karabinos was the 2nd Squadron padre in

the waning days of the Regiment's combat service in Southeast Asia. He describes how he made himself available to the Battle Squadron Troopers. "I tried to make the acquaintance of all the troopers, both on the ground and in the air. During my visits, I stayed with the guys on line, even taking my turn on night watch when a crew was short a man or two. I played Pinochle with the NCOs, shared an eating space with troops in the shade of an ACAV or with our feet in the muddy waters of [Fire Base] Andrews, learned to change torsion bars under the belly of those ugly green machines, and played basketball with the guys behind the mess hall at the west end of Phu Loi. I learned to respect and love those guys in the field and it was an honor to serve with them."

Obviously, being a chaplain in the only armored cavalry regiment in Vietnam set the chaplains apart from their peers in other units. But it wasn't just membership in this exclusive fraternity that accounted for this uniqueness. Take for example Chaplain Bob Hawn, the Regimental Chaplain in 1968-69. A WWII and Korean War veteran, he already had 23 years of service when he joined the Blackhorse. By April 1969, Chaplain Hawn (described as a "gnarled, battle-scarred former armor officer") had been in the 11th Cav for over 10 months, so he was well familiar with what the Troopers did on a daily basis. He and his chaplain's assistant were operating out of Dau Tieng on Operation Montana Raider. By the time Sunday services were over at the field location, the temperature was climbing well into the 90s, so Bob Hawn was looking forward to the ride in his open jeep back to the base camp. His sermon that day centered on the biblical verse 'seek and ye shall find.' He didn't realize it at the time, but he could not have chosen a more prophetic theme.

The chaplain and his driver had not driven far when he shouted: "Stop the jeep!" The Blackhorse [newspaper] picks up the story from here: "The chaplain moved to the center of the road and marked a pressure detonated anti-tank mine. 'We were driving along when I happened to glance at the road [Chaplain Hawn said]. I looked at one patch of ground and I knew that the mine was there. Don't ask me how I knew that mine was there. It's just a feeling that you get after being around armor and enemy mines a lot.' Within minutes 919th Combat Engineers arrived and detonated the mine."

Among the chaplains' primary duties, taking care of the troops ranked the highest. But the Chaplains' School at Fort Monmouth generally had the spiritual health of the soldiers in mind when they taught this to novice military chaplains. Once in the combat zone, however, taking care of the troops took on a broader meaning. Tet of 1968 was one example. Chaplain John Borley was visiting with the Vietnamese priest whose congregation included the residents of Widow's Village. The Vietnamese priest passed on to the Blackhorse Chaplain what members of his congregation had been telling him: "Long Binh - Bien Hoa is to be attacked [by the Viet Cong] the night of 17-18 Feb." When he reported the conversation to the Regimental intelligence officer, it provided the needed confirmation received earlier in the day from a South Vietnamese citizen who had told a similar story of impending attack.

High alert was ordered across the Regiment, and, sure enough, the VC did indeed launch an attack on Long Binh and Bien Hoa during the hours of darkness on 17 to 18 February.

Chaplain Larry Haworth – who had the “fastest Corvette in Van Nuys” before joining the Air National Guard – was on his second tour in Vietnam when he joined 2nd Squadron in 1969. He thought he was already a ‘veteran’, but two weeks with the Blackhorse convinced him that he was just learning about being there. Maybe it was the Quan Loi mud that convinced him; the mud that turned the vehicles, your jungle fatigues, your hair, and your sweat red. After his initial introduction, he said to himself: “I can’t live like this ... What have I gotten myself into?” It wasn’t too long before Larry found out that he could live like that. “And what I had gotten myself into was real life on the edge and real opportunity to be a chaplain and minister where it counted.”

Collectively, the Blackhorse chaplains were affectionately known as the ‘God Squad’. When the situation permitted, they would gather together on Sundays and fly via helicopter to the squadron fire bases and troop/company night defensive positions, dropping a chaplain off and then leapfrogging to the next. Over the course of the day, each unit would have the opportunity to hear services. Although the chaplain wasn’t always from their own denomination, the Troopers didn’t seem to mind. As Chaplain Jim Cooke noted, “the closer troopers are to combat, the higher attendance at services.”

Bill Trobaugh was the Regimental Chaplain in 1970. Bill had served a hitch in the Navy during WWII, so he had seen the elephant before. He had a reputation for being where the action was; he sought it out, and it sought him out. The rumor was that units seemed to get hit whenever he came around. Was he an NVA magnet, or did he just have bad/good luck?

These were questions the Golf Troop Commander had to consider when Trobaugh came around on the third day of the Cambodia operation. He’d heard that Frank Cambria had been badly wounded in action during the border fight, leaving his 3rd Platoon without an officer. Bill Trobaugh had already spoken with the Squadron Commander, and it was alright with him if it was alright with Captain Sewall Menzel. Bill Trobaugh, lieutenant colonel and chaplain, was volunteering to take over as a recon platoon leader in the middle of the biggest operation the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment had ever conducted. Platoon Sergeant Elijah Brown, was an experienced man, so he would still be running the platoon. Menzel made it clear that even though he was two ranks his senior, he would be the one giving the orders to Brevet Lieutenant Trobaugh. The chaplain readily agreed.

For the next several days, Trobaugh led the 3rd Platoon with distinction, including being up front during the assault on the rubber plantation airfield outside of Snuol. Menzel described him as “the epitome of the Army’s fighting chaplain tradition, going back to those Indian-fighting days of the wild west ... This was a guy who could not only praise the Lord, but also pass the ammunition – Blackhorse style!” Donn Starry considered him “one of the greatest .50 cal guys I ever met.” He earned his nickname “The marauding Methodist” honestly.

Chaplain Trobaugh, however, placed all of the credit into the hands of the Blackhorse Troopers. In his farewell column in the Blackhorse Newspaper, he wrote: “Because of your bravery and devotion to duty, I can always speak with pride of my association with the 11th Cav.”

Remembering Smitty

By Ward Abbett, (Platoon Leader, L Troop, 3/11 ACR, 1967-68)

I read in a previous issue of Thunder Run notice of the passing of Patrick R. Smith (known to us as Smitty). Smitty was an E-5 Sergeant and commanded the 1-1 ACAV in our platoon. That’s the Lead ACAV, the one in front, the scout. When there was contact, it was usually Smitty’s track to first experience it. I chose Smitty for 1-1 because of his character, leadership and calmness under fire. Smitty’s crew loved him for good reason.

On a reconnaissance in Loc Ninh on 11 January 1968, Smitty’s track sustained four RPG hits, igniting it and injuring the entire crew. True to his character, Smitty fired on the VC, killing some and driving the rest to retreat. Seriously injured, Smitty stayed with the burning track pulling out his driver and two gunners before accepting medical attention. Smitty was evacuated, awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and soon returned back again as my 1-1 Track Commander.

After Vietnam, I lost track of Smitty.

Many Troopers in the 11th ACR displayed heroism. To me, Smitty was the “furthest point North”.
(Patrick R. Smith passed away Sep. 29, 2019)

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM
APO San Francisco 96375

GENERAL ORDERS
NUMBER 3117

29 June 1968

AWARD OF THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

1.TC 320. The following award is announced.

SMITH, PATRICK R RA17738393 SERGEANT
E5 United States Army, Troop L, 3d Battalion, 11th Armored
Cavalry Regiment, APO 96257
Awarded: Distinguished Service Cross
Date Action: 11 January 1968
Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: For extraordinary heroism in action in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with Troop L, 3d Battalion, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. Sergeant Smith distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 11 January 1968 as an armored assault vehicle commander on a reconnaissance-in-force mission near Loc Ninh. His column was taken under an extremely heavy volume of automatic weapons and small arms fire from an insurgent force concealed in dense vegetation along the roadway. The dismounted elements which flanked the formation were pinned down immediately. Seeing this, Sergeant Smith directed his track against the enemy positions. Four direct rocket hits inflicted severe wounds on him and several of his crew and caused his vehicle to burst into flames. Although dazed and in great pain, Sergeant Smith continued to direct a lethal volley of machine gun fire on the insurgents, enabling the ground troops to maneuver into a better defensive position. He then began evacuating his wounded crew members from the flaming vehicle. Observing several Viet Cong rushing the track to take its weapons and ammunition, Sergeant Smith quickly returned to it and annihilated the onrushing force with machine gun fire. Flames in the vehicle caused it to explode, blowing him out of the commander’s hatch. Disregarding his additional wounds and burns, he freed the trapped driver and evacuated the man to an aid station. Refusing medical attention for himself, Sergeant Smith continued to fight until the enemy was routed and driven into the jungle. Sergeant Smith’s extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

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Smith, William
Solis, Francis
Soule, Robert
Stone, David
Sucato, Richard
Sugihara, Martyn
Swan, Val
Taylor, Michael
Tealdi, Leo
Tepper, Elliott
Thomas, Richard
Timmons, Donald
Vanderbogart, Kirk
Vargas, Luis
Varljen, Frank
Vicario, Raymond
Villarreal, George & Joyce
In Memory of Edward Stahl - KIA
Walker, Dan
Watkins, Michael
Wheatley, Larry
Whitson, Thomas
Williams, Ray
Williams, Jeff
Williams, Keith
Wolfe, Fred
Young, Thomas

Silver Level

Andersen, Kevin
Ballantyn, J
Birch, Manuel
Birmingham, Hal
Blankenship, James
Bowen, Bob
Bradford, Howard
Caldwell, Ron
Carr, George
Chase, Randy
Christenson, Kathy
Christeson, Frank
Crider, Stephen
Daniels, David
Davison, Donald

Dickensheet, Joseph
Dirska, Alfred
Drew, Donald
Farrell, James
Fixx, Darrell
Frayne, Clifford
Fry, Hunter
Gill, Charles
Glass, Wayne
Gochenour, Sam
Gray, William
Haynes, John
Hennings, Verle
Higden, Ross
Holsbeke, Leon
Holt, George
Hukill, Wayne
Ingram, Glen
Iseman, W.F.
Janairo, Antonio
Jeranek, Richard
Jolly, John
Knowlton, William
Kotwica, Jerome
Lambdin, Robert
Lestock, John
Like, David
Lopez, Jeff
MacDonald, Clifford
MacDonald, John
Madelle, James
Mann, Harold
Marotta, Robert
Mason, Greg
McDonough, John
McGrail, John
McVicker, James
Miller, John
Murphy, L.K.
Nash, Dane
Norris, George
Nute, C.B.
Oracz, Robert
Ostrander, Gary
Pemberton, Donald
Perea, Carla
Phillips, David
Richmond, David
Roberts, Bruce
Roppolo, John

Russell, Arthur
Scholz, C.E.
Selch, William
Sheldon, Dennis
Simmons, Michael
Smart, Donald
Smiser, Dennis
Sorich, John
Steinwachs, Michael
Tallent, James
Terry, Gary
Thompson, John
Tufankjian, Haig
Vail, Richard
Vassallo, Patrick
Vied, Charles
Villwock, Jay
Wherley, Steven
Wickstrom, Eric
Williams, Thomas
Witzel, Terrence
Woodson, Rod
Ward, Shelby
In Memory of Larry J.
Ward
Yocum, Ken
Zajac, Eugene

Bronze Level

Bystrak, Paul
Carabetta, John
Howerton, Jerry

Assistance Fund

Gold Level

Bowman, Alfred
Coopet, Joe

Silver Level

Ward, Shelby
In Memory of Larry J.
Ward

Bronze Level

Bowen, Alfred

Memorial Fund

Platinum Level

Hand, Rocky
Gold Level
In Memory of Hugh V.
Best KIA '67
Czaplewski, Randal

Cox, Ralph
Craig, Michael
Fredrick, William
Helm, Robert
Krinock, Gregory
Long, John
Morrison, Jack
Rouland, James
Rozsypal, Wednesday
In Memory of Larry J.
Ward
Van Atta, Mark

Silver Level

Krueger, Ron
Burns, Jack
Cornelius, Calvin
Darrin, Roy
Epperley, Mason
Scheumann, David
Woodruff, Doris
In Memory of Leon
Woodruff
Young, Jim

Bronze Level

Allen, Richard
Anonymous
Arnold, Charles
Atkinson, John
Bacon, Dean
Bailey, Ben
Baker, Edward
Baker, Robert
Barrows, Elwood
Belionas, Edward
Bohr, Joseph
Bonesho, Thomas
Brennan, Paul
Brennick, Robert
Burke, Joseph
Burke, Thomas
Cassen, Sam
Castle, Rod
Coley, Michael
Commons, Joel
Crommett, Charles
Cullerton, Thomas
Damron, Harlon
Daub, Herbert
Davis, Henry
Davis, Thomas

Derepkowski, Arthur
Dewitt, Leray
Dietz, John
Dilling, Eugene
Eager, Michael
Evans, David
Fegenbush, Ed
Felizardo, Carlos
Ferguson, Doyle
Foggin, John
Franklin, Martin
Franks, Richard
Gabbert, Rod
Glatzer, Ross
Goff, Robert
Graham, William
Greene, G.A.
Gwinn, Ted
Hadfield, William
Hanson, Jeff
Harris, William
Hauser, Stanley
Hawkinson, Charles
Hein, Dwane
Hertel, Herbert
Hicks, L.R.
Hoffman, Peter
Hofmann, William
Hoponick, Dennis
Humbert, John
Hunt, Robert
Kays, Dan
Kelly, Ron
Kurihara, Harry
Kvale, Greg
Lathrope, Edward
Leeson, William
Lloyd, Clarence
Lovering, Joel
Magnarelli, John
Maker, Richard
McDole, Harry
McVay, Mark
Merideth, Glen
Michaud, Randolph
Middaugh, Thomas
Miller, David
Mowery, Robert
Musial, John
Oliver, John

Owens, Joseph
Paul, George
Reichgeld, Blake
Ritter, J.H.
Robinson, Charles
Roshier, Galen
Schmersahl, Thomas
Schneeman, Fred
Schoonmaker, Tracey
Selvitella, Dennis
Spangler, Robert
Steedley, Richard
Stevenson, William
Sutton, George
Tanney, Melvin
Tiedeman, David
Tips, George
Tonks, Glenn
Wallen, Harry
Wierema, Ronald
Windemuller, Paul
Zimmaro, Richard

Calendar Fund

Gold Level

Gardenhire, Gary
Hobbie, William
Poorman, Clair
Stoll, Ned
Tallent, James
Trubeck, William

Silver Level

Broadnax, Wallace
Frank, Dale
Funk, Robert
Manzo, Joseph
McRoberts, Gerald
Witzel, Terrence

Bronze Level

Coopet, Joe
Gehring, Joseph
Long, John
Loya, Atanacio
Sevigny, Richard
Spino, Floyd
Zeller, Larry



SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM UPDATE

by Mike "Doc" Rafferty, Director and Scholarship Chairman



Our 2020 Scholarship Winners

Since the inception of the 11th ACVVC Scholarship program in 1996, our organization has awarded 583 college scholarships totaling \$1,858,000! This total includes the 47 scholarships totaling \$143,000 we were able to award this year! Our 2020 scholarship winners submitted outstanding applications and are well-deserving of their awards. The list is below. You can view most of the recipient's photos and their feelings about receiving a scholarship on our website (11thcavnam.com). Unfortunately, because of the large number of scholarship winners, we are not able to publish their photos and notes of appreciation in our newsletter.

This year 46 of our scholarship winners were grandchildren of our members. In fact, I received a total of 124 applications of

which 122 were from grandchildren and only two were from children of our members. 92 applications were from females and 32 were from male applicants. Most of the applicants fell into the 18-20-year-old age range.

Each year one applicant is selected to receive the Colonel Charles L. Schmidt Leadership Scholarship Award. This year's winner is Colby Heithoff, grandson of Kenneth Joseph Heithoff, F troop (68-69). He was selected for this award by Bonnie Schmidt, Colonel Schmidt's widow. Congratulations Colby on this well-deserved honor!

As we have done for the past few years, each scholarship is dedicated to one of our Blackhorse brothers who was killed in action in Vietnam or Cambodia. Each recipient received a certificate suitable for fram-

ing honoring the KIA name assigned to their scholarship. Next of kin were notified their loved one was being honored whenever possible. We received several thank you notes from next of kin who were very appreciative their loved one was honored and remembered in this manner. To date, 369 of our brothers who died in Vietnam and Cambodia have been honored!

The fact we have been able to help so many children and grandchildren of our members attain their educational goals over the past twenty-four years is a tribute to your generosity. Your support of the calendar, raffle and silent auction have provided the bulk of the monies given to these deserving students. Thank you so much for your outstanding generosity!

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SPONSOR	UNIT	KIA DEDICATION		LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SPONSOR	UNIT	KIA DEDICATION	
				LAST NAME	FIRST NAME					LAST NAME	FIRST NAME
Bayless	Kylie	Ernest Bayless	E troop	Allison	Sam	Marchand	Julianna	Larry Tenderella	541 MID	Scott	William
Blakney	Brenden	Loren Berndt	C troop	Williams	Johnny	Miller	Morgan	James Kaszubowski	HHT 3/11	Demond	Donald
Brown	Taylor	Danny Brown	How 2/11	Rushing	Edward	Moseley	Mystelle	Carlos "Bill" Gregory	H Co.	Greenlee	Steven
Bruce	Jaret	William Chesarek	B Troop	Combs	Virgil	O'Hagan	Sarabeth	Kenneth Henyan	HHT,1/11	Berry	Kurtis
Cantrell	Blake	George Gunderman	C troop	Raptis	Angelo	Ossont	BrierMae	James Ossont	HHT 2/11	Cook	Charles
Chase	Celia	Randal Chase	C troop	Brinkley	Larry	Pytlak	Tiernan	George Pytlak	HHT 3/11	Reese	Chester
Clarke	Kaitlyn	Roderick Chisholm	HOW 3/11	Nadeau	Robert	Richmond	Abby	David Richmond	HHT 2/11	Morrow	Joseph
Cox	Catelyn	Daniel Cox	HHT,1/11	Dennis	Larry	Roser	Riley	Earl Grundy Jr.	K Troop	Jenkins	Isadore
Cribbs	Ellis	Wayne Cribbs	409th RRD	Shaffner	David	Salinas	Emilia	Craig Taylor	K Troop	Anderson	Melvin
Davis	Elizabeth	Luis Vargas	L Troop	Hunt	Calvin	Sangren	Drew	Tommy Lyons	HHT Regt	Collins	Francis
England	Jaclyn	George Wright Jr.	HHT Regt	Cabot	Anthony	Schnack	Nicole	Richard Sack	K Troop	Sayers	Paul
Flick	Emily	Walter Flick	G troop	Martin	James	Smith	Alyssa	Dale Smith	37th Med	Thomas	Daniel
Forshey	Sofia	Henry Morris	F troop	Holder	Leonard	Smith	Eli	Danny Vancel	I troop	Zielinski	John
Green	Malilah	John Stanley	409th RRD	Nicholson	Glenn	Smith	Emma	Grover Smith	720th MP	Matuska	John
Heithoff	Colby	Kenneth Heithoff	F troop	Chuck Schmidt	Winner N/A	Stewart	Anderson	Monte Murdock	398 Trans	Shannon	John
Hsu	Richard	Ronald Jackson	B Troop	Bailey	George	Stines	Sophie	Harold Stines	I troop	Richards	Charles
Hufford	Lane	Bryan Cupp	A troop	Roberts	Theodore	Vadnais	Ethan	Patrick Vadnais	HHT 2/11	Chun	Reginald
Jarvis	Carley	Roger Jarvis	Air Cav	Flores	Fidencio	Valenti	Jenna	Thomas Valenti	HHT, 3/11	Dickinson	Eugene
Jennings	Jack	John Hays	KIA/B Trp	Hays	John	Wanosky	Juliet	James Biana	E troop	Vaughan	Carver
Joel	Ariel	Michael Joel	Air Cav	Moorhouse	William	Whitley	Hayden	James Bland	919th Eng	Morton	Charles
Kallem	Evan	David Dalton	HHT 2/11	Dorsey	George	Whitlock	Molly	James Yunker	HHT 3/11	Barnhill	Larry
King	Declan	Gary Marks	How 2/11	Murphy	John	Wiskur	Addison	Robert Wiskur	M co.	Schaefer	Roger
Kissell	Bella	Eugene Burns	I troop	Oliver	Roger	Wood	Rachel	Kenneth Wood	919 Eng.	Vesey	Jerrold
Kitten	Blake	Jerry Van Matre	HHT Regt	Spencer	Buford						



Membership is Our Strength

It's not the price you pay to belong, it's the price you paid to become eligible to join



2021 11th ACVVC Calendar Appeal

Pete Walter, 11th ACVVC President

In this year of 2020, what many of us are calling “a lost year”, very little of our normal life seems to exist. Hopefully the arrival of the 2021 11th ACVVC Calendar in your mailbox will confirm some elements of normalcy still exist!

The 11th ACVVC 2021 Calendar will once again feature 13 new photos submitted by you the members of the legendary Blackhorse Regiment! We thank all who have sent in photos for consideration. The calendar contains significant historical events of your regiment in Vietnam with the photographs documenting many of

our daily activities. Based on your comments and incredible generosity you made it clear that the 2020 calendar was well received by our members.

We once again appeal to your generosity as we ask for donations to support our Scholarship Program. The Scholarship Fund is a separate, self-sufficient fund: all scholarships awarded as well as the printing and mailing costs associated with the calendar are paid directly from donations made to the Scholarship Fund. The number of scholarships awarded each year depends on the total donations made during that year. Without your support this program would not be the incredible suc-

cess story it has been.

The calendar is yours to keep whether you donate or not. But we do ask for your support with any tax-deductible donation that you can make to assist the children and grandchildren of 11th ACVVC members begin or continue their post-secondary education. Scholarships can be used for college, trade school, or other post-high school educational training.

Your donations to the 2020 calendar appeal allowed the 11th ACVVC to award \$143,000 to 47 members of the 11th ACVVC family. To date, your donations have awarded \$1,858,000. In 2021 we will surely surpass a total of \$2,000,000 awarded in scholarships!


For the 2021 calendar appeal, our goals are simple – keep up the great work! Your generosity is astonishing. If anyone now receiving the calendar does not wish to receive it in the future, please notify me or Allen Hathaway. Printing and mailing costs continue to rise and we can reduce costs by not mailing the calendar to anyone who does not want one. If any member has a suggestion as to how we can improve on this project, please contact me or any Officer.

A limited number of extra calendars will be available while they last. Instructions on how to order extra copies are included with your calendar. Watch for your calendar to arrive between Veteran’s Day and Thanksgiving. Use the convenient enclosed envelope to return your donation. Every donation helps, regardless of the amount.

I also ask our members to submit any photographs or slides you have from Vietnam to be considered for publication. Preferred format is a color print, but slides provide the best reproduction quality. Digital images are also accepted at a minimum of 300 dpi. Clear photos of interesting activities and/or group photos are the most suitable for quality reproduction. As always, “Thank you!” to those who have submitted photos in the past...keep them coming! I look forward to seeing your photos!

We thank you in advance for your generous support!

11th ACVVC Calendar



2021

11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia

The 11th U.S. Cavalry was formed on February 2, 1891 at Ft. Myer, Virginia. In December it was assigned to duty in the Philippines where, in 1902, the 1st Squadron would earn the first of the Regiment's many battle streamers, "Samar 1902."

In the Mexican Expedition of 1916-17, the 2nd Squadron engaged Pancho Villa's men on May 5, 1916 at Ojo Azules, Mexico, killing forty-two enemies in the last mounted cavalry charge in U.S. History.

The Blackhorse Regiment would see action in World War II where it earned five more battle streamers, but the Regiment's finest performance would be in the Republic of Vietnam and the Kingdom of Cambodia. Blackhorse Troopers served there for 2,340 days and earned eleven battle streamers.

From December of 2004 to January 22, 2006, the Blackhorse deployed to Iraq earning the Regiment's most recent battle streamer for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The 11th Armored Cavalry returned from Iraq in January 2006, and has once again assumed the challenging task of training America's Army in the desert environment of Fort Irwin, California. Although the primary mission is preparing units for deployment to the war in Iraq, our Regiment is simultaneously training intensely to remain the best Regiment in the United States Army! During the recent deployment fighting in "Operation Iraqi Freedom III," the famed Blackhorse Regiment continued to uphold the great legacy established by Troopers who fought the war in Vietnam and Cambodia.

Philippine Insurrection
Samar 1902

Mexican Expedition
Mexico 1916-17

World War II
Normandy
Northern France
Rhine area
Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe

Vietnam
Counteroffensive Phase II
Counteroffensive Phase III

Tai Counteroffensive
Counteroffensive Phase IV
Counteroffensive Phase V
Counteroffensive Phase VI
Fall 1969 Counteroffensive
Summer-Fall 1969
Winter-Spring 1970
Security Counteroffensive
Counteroffensive Phase VII

Operation Desert Storm
Southwest Asia Cease Fire

Operation Iraqi Freedom
Iraqi Governance 2004-2006

“War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things. The decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse. A man who has nothing for which he is willing to fight, nothing which is more important than his own personal safety, is a miserable creature and has no chance of being free unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself.”

(John Stuart Mill)

STORIES from page 1

this piece today.

And thus I am called to tell you the power of stories, to ask and urge you to tell your stories and to listen to others’.

Some of you may have heard me speak at one of your conferences of how I was privileged to express my gratitude to the members of the 11th ACVVC who served in Vietnam and saved thousands of Vietnamese like me.

But I don’t know if you know the impact of that day. One of the most memorable responses from the audience was, “Up until you spoke, no one ever told me how appreciative they are of us, only our family. Thank you for saying that and acknowledging us.”

And so from that day, I started to reach out to more veteran groups to express my gratitude and give thanks to them. But let me tell you another story about storytelling and how much the world needs to participate in this incredible process.

I work as an interpreter at the courthouse so I meet many “bad” people charged with DUI, burglary, child/spouse abuse, and possession of drugs. A few will go to trial and may be found guilty, but most will end in negotiated pleas where details of the cases, the hows and the whys don’t get disclosed. But from one assignment, I realized that they are important, even life changing. From the most unlikely individual, I learned about human potential and our capacity to help one another whether we intended to or not. Through our stories we can touch others’ lives for the better.

With one glance, seeing him scrunched up and dwarfed between the people next to him on the back bench of the courtroom, I knew my day would be interesting. He didn’t look like he belonged there, but rather like a character from an old Chinese movie with his thinning gray hair tied back in a ponytail with a rubber band and Fu-Man-Chu mustache. Although small and diminutive, he had an attitude of a rebel, the leave-me-the-hell-alone expression: don’t come to me, don’t talk to me, don’t mess with me. His eyes, naturally narrowed, but appeared to be more so by the angry look he displayed as he saw me approaching.

I introduced myself as his interpreter. He barely nodded. When I asked whether he knew why he was here, without a word and making no eye contact, he pulled out an arraignment letter and pushed it to me. As his callous hands touched mine, I instinctively knew he had lived a rough, hard life. I asked again, “Do you know the reason why you are here today?”

In his native language he grunted, “They said I was speeding. I didn’t.” I knew I had to prod him in order to get him to act, to decide. He, like many people in court for the first time, are confused and overwhelmingly indecisive. Sometimes they ask me what they should do, and I tell them I can’t advise; I’m only their voice box, to relay messages from one language to another. I asked if he wants me to speak to the solicitor. Looking down, curtly he responded with “Uh.” Annoyed, I thought, you don’t get it. I’m here to help.

The courtroom was full of attorneys talking quietly with their clients. I relayed the message from the solicitor: simply, a fine of \$200. Staring at the floor, not caring about the somber and quietness of the room, he ranted loudly and defiantly, “I have no money. I don’t work. I take care of my mother. Go shopping for her food. I collect food stamps. I have no money. They can put me in jail if they want.” Feeling all eyes on us, I motioned him to lower his voice. He paused, his face reddened, his hands trembling. This could be a long morning, I thought. I waited, feeling very uncomfortable, like a child who has done wrong, waiting for her disappointed father to just say something. Finally, he ordered, “Go tell them I will go to jail. I have no money.” Hearing his decision, the exasperated solicitor displayed a sympathetic look, sighed, and asked in a hopeful tone, “Ok, \$100. Can he do that?” He accepted.

While waiting for the paperwork, he wandered out of the room towards the balcony and looked down with a forlorn expression. What is he thinking about? I thought. I asked cautiously, “Do you have \$100 in cash?” He nodded and flicked his finger towards a young woman standing a few feet behind me. (I brushed off his rudeness.) It was his daughter. She had

been outside the courtroom the entire time, away, not helping. Why? I wondered.

Casually, I started, “This is so inconvenient, the waiting around and going to court, isn’t it? Such a waste of time, don’t you think?” He decided to speak. “I have been driving since 1995 and have never gotten a ticket,” he mumbled. When I politely suggested he learns English to speak to people and even police officers in the event he gets pulled over again, he forcefully declared, “No, I don’t mess with them,” nodding down at a policeman who happened to walk by on the first floor. Curious, I asked, “Them?”

Staring blankly, not caring whether anyone is listening, he robotically recounted his life as a prisoner, as if it has been recited in his head many times, only this time, someone is listening. He was in a reeducation camp, a prison camp operated by the Vietnamese communist party. “You just do as you’re told,” he asserted. “Put your head down and work,” he continued, “and don’t talk back.” He was abused, beaten, and witnessed other older men subjugated by guards who took pleasure in having power and dispensing punishment. After five years, he was released because of good behavior, but he was a broken man.

While in the camp, the communists tried to teach him the benefit, the goodness of communism through coercion. Can goodness served through coercion ever equal benefit? I thought. He languished along, pretending, suppressing, and detaching. Years later, as he has practiced well, he shrieved into an aloof but obedient son, an unemotional and distant father, and an unapproachable grandfather. Disconnected, disengaged, defeated.

After he finished, the earlier signs of his rebel attitude were gone; what’s left is resignation. A look of there-that’s-my-story-do-what-you-will-with-it fell on his face. He walked away. I was still digesting his story when a touch on my arm drew me back to reality. His daughter was standing next to me. She timidly asked, “What did he say to you? I lived with him for over twenty years, and as long as I can remember, he hardly uttered more than a

For days I couldn't stop thinking about them. Then I thought of my own family members, who had been through the trauma of the Vietnam War, losing their beloved country, and fleeing to a new one.

few sentences to me.” She continued, expressing her sorrow, “He is angry, all the time. My children don’t care for him. We come to see him out of obligation.” My heart was already broken by his story, now...her despair engulfed me. I wish she could take my place. I wish it was she he was talking to. I wish I could take her hurt away. But I can’t so I gave her the only thing I have - I gave her his story. I desperately wanted to share the story as a friend, not as a voice box.

I began, “Did you know that your father...” She listened intently as I retold his suffering during captivity: the physical torture that resulted in his inability to walk without a limp and the mental anguish from the incessant cries and moans of pain he heard every night. But more insidious, more intangible and damaging is the effect not only on him, but the people around him. The repercussions of being in the camp: the brainwashing to conform, the reinforcement to obey by brute force and cruelty, and the elimination of human

connection with one another.

Physically, he survived; emotionally and mentally, he was still trapped. He had unknowingly succumbed to and followed the communist’s teaching. The “put-your-head-down-and-work” he applied to his elderly mother, and the “don’t-talk-save-your-thoughts” he inflicted onto his children and grandchildren. The very doctrine he pledged to accept only as temporary, until he was set free, became the credo he now lived by.

I am reminded of the passage in “The Tale of Despereaux” written by Kate DiCamillo: “There are those hearts, reader, that never mend again once they are broken. Or if they do mend, they heal themselves in a crooked and lopsided way, as if sewn together by a careless craftsman. Such was the fate of Chiaroscuro. His heart was broken... these things helped him to put his heart together again. But it was, alas, put together wrong.” The daughter thanked me. With all my heart, I hoped it helped her, the new piece of

information, that is. She understands him better now, and can teach her children from a new perspective, because - understanding may bring acceptance and possibly, forgiveness.

For days I couldn't stop thinking about them. Then I thought of my own family members, who had been through the trauma of the Vietnam War, losing their beloved country, and fleeing to a new one. Some of my family members are hard-hearted, unemotional, and jaded. “Gee, I wonder...”

I realized what an angelical experience it was, that three strangers, the old man, his daughter, and I being at the right place and time, as if we were deliberately placed there - to listen, learn, share, and most importantly, somehow - to help. We came through this experience with an understanding about ourselves and our families: freeing painful memories, letting go of hurtful feelings and resentment, accepting, and being healed, even if just a little.

Everyone has stories, all kinds, especially ones that although hard to tell, would ultimately ease the pain and suffering; bring peace and tranquility to our soul. So please, participate in this process.

Share your stories.

Freeze. Do Not Flinch

In '72, Major General James Hollingsworth recognized 2nd Squadron's performance at the stand down ceremony at FSB Fiddler's Green ... “as something special.” To quote from Don Snedeker's history *The Blackhorse in Vietnam*:

“Were it not for the gallant efforts of the Blackhorse Troopers of the 2nd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, this task could not have been accomplished. Over the course of what came to be known as the Ho Bo Cut, 2/11 paid a price. A dozen Blackhorse Troopers were killed and another 116 wounded in action. Their sacrifice did, however, bring some impressive results. The traditional “secure” bases of the Ho Bo and Boi Loi Woods were opened to aerial observation and ground interdiction. The VC and NVA units that had occupied these long-standing base camps were driven out and their bunkers

That was the second time in the Boi Loi Woods, that “Jenks” saved Jim from tripping a bobby-trap; a grenade wired charge that would have blown his head clean off.

destroyed. In effect 2/11 troopers were slowly, but surely, working themselves out of a job.”

Don's book, published in 2020, is a marvelous piece of research and just one well written history. But back about 2015, another Blackhorse veteran had already told me a story that could be cut and pasted in an After Words section, if Don writes a second edition.

That story was told by Fox Trooper, Jim Staffieri of Connecticut, who credits his life, not once - but twice, to the due diligence, leadership and concern for his men of Sergeant Burkley Jenkins. “Freeze. Do not flinch; not even a hair,” screamed Sgt. Jenkins and Jim froze. And

Jim lived. That was the second time in the Boi Loi Woods, that “Jenks” saved Jim from tripping a bobby-trap; a grenade wired charge that would have blown his head clean off. The trip wire was right at his shoulder as he started down to check out a “spider hole.”

It took a while for Jim to tell me the whole story about how “Jenks,” his platoon sergeant, saved his derriere, not once, but twice. Jim, or exactly Eustachio Staffieri, who we only knew in Vietnam as “Spaghetti,” was properly nick-named as he is a native-born Italian with a first and last name not common among volunteers from Tennessee or draftees from

Report of the Reunion Registration Chairman

The 2020 Reunion is now over and as far as we know everyone who attended seemed to have enjoyed themselves. I certainly hope all our 1st Timers will attend next year's reunion in Dallas, Texas. As we start planning and locking things into place for our Dallas Reunion, I want to take this time to remind you, that this is your reunion and your input is important to us, the Board of Directors. So, if you have an idea or a suggestion be sure to let someone on the Board know.

Usually about here I would start to explain how to fill out the registration form but I want to take the time to thank Sherri Church for her support in the registration booth again this year, and to welcome our newest member of the team, Sara Evans. Barb and I look forward to working alongside of them and of course, our protector "Jack".

I also want to thank the rest of the Board of Directors and their Support Teams. They all work so hard and long hours on making this the biggest and best Military Reunion group in the Nation.

Be sure you keep an eye out for the registration form either in an upcoming issue of *Thunder Run* or on our web site. Remember it is never too early to register,

Be sure you keep an eye out for the registration form either in an upcoming issue of *Thunder Run* or on our web site.

and for you who register by mail think about using those address labels you get each year in the mail. They help with correct spelling of your name and address. This is also a good time to make your hotel reservation. Note: If you want to pick up some more raffle tickets at the reunion bring a page of address labels and use them on the raffle tickets.

Remember that if you live in the vicinity of the reunion site you still need to pre-register to attend the reunion. So please register early. Note: Once the meal count is turned in to the hotel your meal is paid for, that is why after the registration cutoff date you cannot get a refund for your registration. Even If you miss the cutoff date for a refund, please call me or Ollie and inform us that you will not be attending the reunion. This way we can pull your packet and put it to the side.

We sure missed all that did not make it to the reunion this year, but with the current state of things it was understandable. Put aside the money that you would have spent this year and use it for next year's reunion.

I will not be talking with you until next year so from our family to yours we want to wish you all a Happy Holiday and a Happy New Year.

Here is a little history that I think some of you might like. The Eagle, a majestic symbol, the Eagle represents power, honor, strength, and wisdom. The Eagle became a National Emblem in 1782 when the Great Seal of the United States was adopted. The Eagle has come to represent Freedom and Bravery to Americans everywhere.

If you have any questions, please call me ph.# [home] 608-372-5892 or [cell] 608-387-3346 or email me at gtroop-bob@gmail.com

From Barb, Raleigh, and Myself.

Stay safe and stay healthy.

"ALLONS"

*Roberto "Bob" Moreno
G troop 2/11th [12/68 - 12/69]
Member of the 11th ACVVC Board of Directors
Reunion Registration*

Blackhorse Women's Group Offers Tote Bags For Sale!



Handy and custom made tote bags. These two colored black and red heavy duty totes are offered for \$10 each, plus postage/shipping as follows: **1-3 bags \$7.00; 4-8 bags \$14.50.**

Remember this is a fundraiser that helps support the group's Prayer Shawl and Wreaths Across America projects.

Please complete the order form below and mail, with payment to:

Marguerite Austin, 4189 11th Ave. SE, Willmar, MN 56201

Name _____



Shipping address (all bags in an order will be shipped to one address.)

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Provide your Email address and phone number should we need to contact you about your order.

Email _____ Phone _____

Number of bags _____ x \$10.00 each =\$ _____

Shipping amount as listed below\$ _____

Grand Total\$ _____ (Check or money order only, sorry, no credit cards).

For the Bags: 1-3 bags \$7.00 Postage, plus cost of bags at \$10 each. 4-8 bags \$14. 50 postage plus cost of bags at \$10 each. Fill out form above and send with payment in full in check or money order only (sorry, no credit cards) to the address above.

Thank you for supporting the Blackhorse Women's Group!



Welcome Aboard!

New Members of the 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia (11th ACVVC) since our last issue of *Thunder Run*. Are you looking for an old friend? Please contact any Officer or Board Member listed on page 2 for help.

NAME	DATES	NAME	DATES	NAME	DATES
919TH ENGINEER COMPANY		HHT, 3/11		HOWITZER BATTERY, 3/11	
Woodall, Donald W	66-67	Nunn, Lowen M	69-70	Summers, Ronald A	67-68
D COMPANY, 1/11		2/11			
Mason, Clinton	67-67	Jones, David D	66-67		

VSO INFORMATION

Chuck Bosko
Medic F Trp 69-70

For the third quarter 2019 issue of *Thunder Run*, I addressed the situation when the VA proposes to reduce a veteran's compensation percentage. For this issue, I will share an example of when and how a veteran should submit a claim for an increase for an existing service-connected disability. The following narratives are from an actual rating decision for a veteran for one condition.

The medical condition- an injury to the left ankle of an airborne trooper after landing. The injury occurred at Ft. Benning, GA and was the final jump for the soldier during Airborne training. The injury was treated in service many years prior, but time caught up with the vet and the injury had manifested as to cause the vet serious discomfort. Hence, the veteran submitted acclaim for a left ankle injury. The VA did schedule a compensation examination, receive the vet's service treatment and personnel records. The personnel records did verify the vet attending airborne training and the medical records did verify the vet receiving emergency care and a cast at the Army hospital. The VA did award the veteran the following.

First rating:

Service connection for status post non-displaced fracture left cuboid, with arthritis and metatarsalgia (claimed as left foot fracture and traumatic arthritis)

We have assigned a 10 percent evaluation for your status post non-displaced fracture left cuboid with arthritis and metatarsalgia based on:

Unilateral involvement.

This is the highest scheduler evaluation allowed under the law for status post non-displaced fracture left cuboid, with arthritis (metatarsalgia)

A higher evaluation of 20 percent for arthritis, traumatic is not warranted unless there is X-ray evidence of involvement of two or more major joints or two or more minor joints groups, with occasional incapacitating exacerbations.

Eventually, the condition had worsened, so the veteran did submit a claim for an increase to include new medical evidence to support the above requirements.

Second rating:

Service connection for status post non-displaced fracture left

cuboid, with arthritis and metatarsalgia (claimed as left foot fracture and traumatic arthritis) currently evaluated as 10 percent disabling.

The evaluation of status post non-displaced fracture left cuboid, with arthritis and metatarsalgia (claimed as left foot fracture and traumatic arthritis) is increased to 30 percent.

We have assigned a 30 percent evaluation for your status post non-displaced fracture left cuboid, with arthritis and metatarsalgia (claimed as left foot fracture and traumatic arthritis) based on:

Severe symptoms.

Granted, the above ratings are rather "wordy" at the very least. What is important however is the VA includes within the rating narrative what is required for a higher rating(s). Once a veteran is service connected for a disability, the difficult task is achieved. When the veteran believes his/her condition has worsened, the veteran needs to refer to the paragraph wherein the VA states "what is warranted"

I usually advise a vet to share with his/her medical provider the rating narratives for any disability and simply ask the doctor "do I have the symptoms for a higher rating?" If the doctor provides a medical opinion supporting a higher evaluation, then the veteran has a "good" claim for an increase for a current service-connected disability. Further advice- make sure that medical opinion is included in any medical records whether those medical records are VA or private.

When submitting a claim for an increase, enter the service-connected condition and include the supportive medical notes (if private) or which VA medical facility where the medical records are located. The Veteran Benefits Administration folks will obtain those. And as I always advise, obtain the service of an accredited veteran service officer to assist you.

So many veterans travel the rough road for compensation benefits. Why stress when the VA (usually) tells you what you need?

Oh, by the way- this is my claim. Yea, I did fracture several small bones on my left foot during my fifth jump. However, I did receive my wings! Should we ever meet during an annual reunion, I will share the story of how this occurred. (Only after a couple of medicinal drinks of course)

Allons, airborne and welcome home.

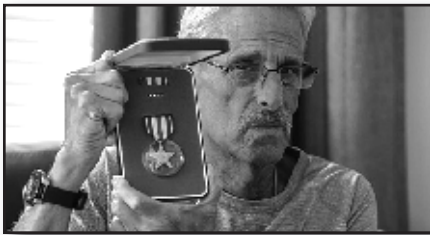
Chuck Bosko
Veteran Service Officer/Appeals Specialist

Aberdeen Vietnam War medic gets Silver Star 51 years after defending wounded GIs' lives

Armed with just a pistol and eight bullets, Bart 'Doc' Fabian saved several men during a 90-minute fight that claimed the lives of 19 Americans.

Jerry Carino, Asbury Park Press

(Editor's note: The 11th ACVVC gratefully acknowledges Jerry Carino and the Asbury Park Press for granting reprint permission for this article.)



Bart “Doc” Fabian saw a fellow American on the ground, badly wounded, and ran to help. As the senior Army medic on hand, that was his job when his outfit got ambushed in Vietnam on April 13, 1969.

“I picked the soldier up and put him over my shoulder,” Fabian recalled. “By the time we got to the safe zone, he was already dead.”

He went back into the firefight and treated the next wounded man he could reach.

“His head was over my lap, and maybe eight feet from me a Viet Cong comes out of a bunker and kills the guy I’m working on,” Fabian said.

Armed with only a .45-caliber pistol, Fabian gunned down the aggressor.

The Brooklyn native, who lives in Aberdeen today, was 20 years old then. He’s 71 now, and the memory remains fresh. Some things, you don’t forget. You can’t.

“I remember feeling such rage — not that my life was threatened, but I just remember thinking, ‘The guy is half dead, and this is the guy you shoot?’” Fabian said. “All I had was a clip with eight bullets in it. I started working on this other guy and another (Viet Cong) came out of a bunker and started firing, so I eliminated him. The guy who I was

working on survived, and I brought him back.”

During training, instructors used to pound a mantra into Army medics.

“Your job is to get them onto the helicopter breathing and we’ll do the rest,” Fabian recited. “Most of the people I put onto the helicopter were still breathing, but you usually don’t find out if they survived. You like to think that they did.”

Doc treated at least 10 men that day, and most of them made it after a 90-minute fight that claimed the lives of 19 Americans. The next day, his commander told him he would be recommended for the Silver Star, the Armed Forces’ third-highest personal decoration for valor in combat.

It took 51 years, but last month, Doc Fabian finally received the medal.

‘It’s really unusual’

Fabian, who was drafted into the Army, didn’t choose to be a medic. He was assigned the position with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, and he never found out why. It’s a difficult job that he performed with distinction, earning two Silver Stars, two Bronze Stars,



two Purple Hearts and an Army Commendation Medal (ACM) with Valor.

“When you look at the accomplishments in your life you look at that and say to yourself, ‘That’s not bad; I guess I did OK,’” he said.

The first Silver Star was bestowed for his actions during an ambush on Jan. 11, 1969. He recalled responding to a fallen soldier who “had been burned all over, he had shrapnel all over, he had a punctured lung.”

It was a welcome-to-war moment.

“I’m working on him, and I’m a 19-year-old from Brooklyn who six months ago was hanging out in front of a candy store,” Fabian said.

His commanding officer that day, 1st Lt. Harold Fritz, received the Medal of Honor. Reached by phone at his Illinois home, Fritz, now a retired colonel, praised Fabian’s gallantry.

“It’s really unusual for a medic to get a Silver Star, and in this case two Silver Stars. That’s unbelievable,” Fritz said. “The enemy’s object is to shoot as many medics as they can because it’s demoralizing, so there was a lot of fire directed at Doc.”

It was nerve-fraying duty, but Fabian never portrayed that in his letters home to Brooklyn.

“He would write things like, ‘Things aren’t bad here, it’s OK’” said brother Mark Fabian, who also served during Vietnam and now lives in Manalapan. “He’d send us a picture of him sunbathing alongside a tank. He didn’t want my mother to worry.”

‘A genuine hero’

After the April 13 ambush, his second in the span of three months, Bart Fabian forgot about the second Silver Star he was promised.

“To be honest, I was just numb,” he said.

Why did Army brass never follow up? Unfortunately, Fritz said, these things sometimes fall through the cracks when



there are changes in command.

Only decades later, during Fabian's reunions with fellow soldiers, did the subject of the promised medal come up. Everyone, including Col. Fritz, encouraged him to pursue it.

"I said, 'Doc, you owe it to yourself, the men you saved, the men who died in that battle and to the nation, to show that there's valor in those who served in the U.S. Armed Forces,'" Fritz said.

Word reached retired Brig. Gen. John Bahnsen, who helped see it through. So on July 18, during a ceremony in Freehold — where Fabian lived for many

years while running a trucking company — U.S. Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., presented him with the Silver Star.

"The record shows that Doc Fabian saved 10 U.S. soldiers, and stopped two enemy soldiers who were trying to kill wounded GIs," said Smith, who helped get Fabian the medal. "In an era when people admire fictional superheroes and Hollywood stars portraying heroes, Doc Fabian is a genuine uncontested hero."

His brother agrees.

"This is something I always wanted for him," Mark Fabian said. "It's just incredible. Like the Congressman said, 'This is what movies are made of.'"



Recently, Col. Fritz said, he was advising a young Marine who was training to be a medic. One exemplar came to mind.

"I emphasized if you're going to be a medic, you're really going to be counted on by people to be there when they need you," Fritz said. "I told them about Doc Fabian, how this is what happens, and this is how you react. You do the right thing."

Jerry Carino is community columnist for the Asbury Park Press, focusing on the Jersey Shore's interesting people, inspiring stories and pressing issues. Contact him at jcarino@gannettnj.com.



The Other Convoy

21 November 1966: The construction of the Blackhorse Base Camp below Xuan Loc was well enough that the Regimental Headquarters could move from the Long Binh staging area to the site on 21 November 1966. En route there, the large convoy was ambushed on National Highway 1 near the village of Ap Hung Nghia. The VC 274th Dong Nai Regiment had moved into position along the highway during the night. The resulting battle and the following mop up operation by the 1st Squadron lasted all day.

Another convoy of approximately forty trucks and vehicles left the Blackhorse Base Camp that morning heading to Long Binh for resupply. The eight ACAVs of the 2nd Platoon, Troop E provided convoy security and I was the Platoon Leader. As we moved along Highway 1 just past Ap Hung Nghia, I saw two Vietnamese men squatting on the shoulder facing away from the highway and looking north. They never once turned to look at our passing vehicles as my track passed them. I thought it strange behavior at the time but soon dismissed it as an Oriental

quirk. Twenty minutes later we met the Regimental Headquarters convoy and waved as they passed by. Another fifteen to twenty minutes passed, and even with my crash helmet on and the vehicular noise, I heard loud explosions to the rear. I turned and saw black smoke billowing up from the highway and also saw aircraft making an air strike.

I was totally baffled by this as our convoy had just passed through the same area a short time before. I called Troop E Headquarters on the radio and reported these events to Captain Richard Miller, the Troop Commander. Miller informed me that the Regimental Headquarters convoy was being ambushed and for me to continue my mission of getting my convoy to Long Binh.

On arriving at the former Regimental staging area, the trucks all went to their respective supply points to load up. The plan was for our convoy to return to Blackhorse that afternoon, but Miller told me to spend the night there as it was not possible for us to get through the ambush site.

The next morning we headed east back toward Blackhorse and as we drove through the battle area, we saw two destroyed ACAVs and the burnt-out trucks. We also noticed a small, white Vietnamese bus that was caught in the ambush and it too was burnt out. I never heard if there were civilian casualties.

To this day, it is amazing to me that we drove through two VC battalions of the 274th Dong Nai Regiment, approximately one thousand men, without some of them getting nervous and shooting at us. No one in our convoy reported seeing any Viet Cong as we passed by. The Viet Cong must be given credit for exceptionally good camouflage and fire discipline. Their mission was to destroy our Regimental Headquarters convoy. They were not interested in our convoy vehicles. I'm guessing many of our convoy men have since had nightmares of passing within thirty yards of a VC Regiment and getting away with it totally unscathed.

By former L=2Lt Bruce E. Johnson, 1215 Jim Fox Road, Greenville, TN 37743



Halfway Down the Trail to Hell

Driving northeast from Indianapolis I couldn't help myself. I was morose; saddened that the 35th Annual Reunion had been so sparsely attended. No one's fault. Just another sink hole in a sunken road. Another negative in a year we would all like to cancel.

When I flew back from Vegas in August, 2019, I celebrated with my fellow trooper, Wayne Glass, one exceptional reunion. It was inspiring and uplifting. We had over 1100 attendees. We had been welcomed and feted by the active-duty Regiment at Fort Irwin; we back-slapped old friends and fellow veterans we hadn't seen in a year or maybe even 48 to 50 years. We wanted to keep on; to run and jump and go play. Chills ran down the back of our necks and straightened our spine when the Colonel of the Regiment, Scott Woodward, stood before us at the parade field in the Mojave Desert and introduced himself as one of us. *"I am Scott Woodward, and I am a Blackhorse Trooper."*

Not so this year. We had less than 150 in Indianapolis, and we did not have any active duty troopers as our guest or even a Color Guard. No one's fault. The pandemic year. The year of the minus sign, a negative. I couldn't let it go. All I could hum as I drove toward Michigan was *"half way down the trail to hell in a shady meadow green."* Why so glum?

I watched as endless corn fields, acres of lush green soybeans, piles of straw bales and even a few acres of bright yellow and gold sunflowers rushed by. What a nation of abundance. The sky was Carolina blue, the clouds were Clorox white, the highway was straight and smooth, and my car was swift and cool. Why so glum?

Please God, let this virus run its course, let it pass away. Bring back the cheer, the smiles, the laughter, the electricity that we feel when we can hug a friend, the spark in our eyes when we shake a hand, the lilt to the laughter we share setting knee to knee.

I seldom play the radio as I drive, I love the solitude. Once in a while classic music,

or at Christmas time: Crosby, Como, Sinatra or Louie Armstrong. But on the long road back I turned it on and played with the dial until I came across a familiar song. Nelson Eddy was singing Stout Hearted Men.

Who you ask? Nelson Eddy was an American singer and actor who appeared in about 20 musical films in the 1930s and 1940s, often with Jeanette MacDonald. Most of those musicals celebrated the America spirit, patriotism, self-reliance, high degree of morality, respect for one another and self-sacrifice to make this country a better place. And his song, Stout Hearted Men - "who will fight for the right they adore" - was the perfect closing number.

That Sunday afternoon I had just left behind some stout-hearted men, who once stood *"shoulder to shoulder and bolder and bolder"* as they turned to face the enemy in Vietnam. That song made me smile, forget my glumness, and realize that I will stand by those men again on Veterans Day in Washington, at the Tomb of the Unknowns, and again laugh with them at the Dallas Reunion next August. Nelson Eddy sang *"start me with ten who are stout-hearted men ... and I'll soon give you ten thousand more."* We had 25,000 men like you in Vietnam from 1966 through March of 1972 and that string started with the "Boat People" in 1966. What a legacy.

In Don Snedeker's excellent and easily readable book, General Frederick Franks speaks of his time with our regiment with unabashed pride:

"...there was not a day in Desert Storm commanding VII Corps that I did not remember Vietnam and Blackhorse. It was a powerful force. I remember those lessons of combat for sure. Many I learned right there

in Second Squadron. But I remember more than that. I remember the names and the faces. I remember the sacrifice and the pain. I remember a generation who went, and did what the country asked. Who did their duty and did it with skill and courage, and at such sacrifice?"

He goes on to praise the men who got

no thanks when they came home to tell of how proud he was to wear the Blackhorse patch on his right shoulder as they moved across the arid desert and how it was also on the right shoulder of his VII Corps chief of staff, on the shoulders of three of his brigade commanders, and countless platoon sergeants and sergeants major.

What a tribute, but so too is Don's book, *The Blackhorse in Vietnam*. After your Bible, it may be the best book you'll ever read.

The music, the remembrances made me happy. Happy that I had dismounted at "The Bunker" with a few of you lads and your ladies. I was proud too. Proud that some of us were still able to gather. Proud of Mike Cricco and Terry Stivers, both of whom have attended 35 straight reunions - all of them. Proud that despite all the crisis we endured in 2020, the 11th ACVVC (your donations) was still able to award another \$ 143,000.00 in scholarships. Next year we expect to pass the two million mark. You guys never stopped serving when you left Vietnam, or when you left the Army. You carry on and on as patriots, guardians, friends, brothers, daddies and grandpops, you are an incredible bunch. Not just those who attend reunions, but all of you who chip in and send your donations for the calendar and the raffle, who buy bricks, who keep Jerry Beamon busy at the Quartermaster Store.

The Reunion, like our gatherings at Washington on Veterans Day and Memorial Day, like those in Texas or California or Colorado, like standing on the cold marble slab at the Tomb of the Unknowns in a bitter February to celebrate the birthday of the Regiment, have been all happy and proud events in my life. I swell when I'm there, seem to grow taller, even though age has shrunk me three inches since my Army days, and I am so proud to have served with you in the best damn regiment the world has ever seen.

You make me smile, make me sing and make me shout with old warriors like Fred Franks and new dynamic troop leaders like Scott Woodward: *I am a Blackhorse Trooper.*



Blackhorse Women's News

By Sheryl Myers, Women's Group Co-coordinator

Dear Blackhorse Women's Group Members and all others that support our group,

We certainly missed seeing all of you in Indianapolis! So, for our 4th Quarter Thunder Run News article, we will be bringing you up to date with reports from our Treasurer, and our Prayer Shawl Project Chair. You will notice that we have 6 additional entries to our "Remembering 11th ACR KIA's" scrapbook, 3 from Kentucky and 3 from Nebraska. A heartfelt thank you to all who have traveled to place memorials and honor our KIA's. If you would like to be a part of this project, please write or call for more information. sheryl.e.myers@gmail.com or 571-721-9189

Message from our Treasurer, Margarite Austin

Blackhorse Women's News Sept. 2019 - Sept. 2020

1. Sept. 2019 - 300 lanyards were sold at the 2019 Las Vegas Reunion.
2. A Blackhorse Thermos was given to Doc Beavens as a Thank you for speaking to the Women's Group (2019).
3. The Blackhorse Women's Group has sold

and sent out 96 Blackhorse totes since the 2019 reunion in Las Vegas. Lajaunda Williams has been reimbursed for the postage to mail these totes out. We have 408 totes remaining to sell during the year and at the reunion in Dallas.

4. In October 2019 the Blackhorse Women ordered 21 wreaths at \$15.00 each from Wreaths Across America to be placed in Arlington Cemetery at Christmas time.

5. March 2020 the Blackhorse Women's Board was planning and preparing a Women's Outing at the Indianapolis Propylaeum during the reunion. A deposit of \$320.00 was sent to the Indianapolis Propylaeum and a deposit of \$1,000.00 was sent to Chef Suzanne for lunches. After cancelling the Women's Outing in April because of COVID-19 our deposits were requested back. \$270.00 was received on April 29 from Indianapolis Propylaeum and \$1,000. was received from Chef Suzanne on Sept. 3.

6. The Blackhorse Women's Board voted to donate \$2,000.00 to the 11th ACVVC Scholarship Fund in Memory of the 11th ACR KIA to add to scholarships funds since there was not a silent auction this year.

7. The Blackhorse Women's Group will be ordering 21 more wreaths from Wreaths

Across America in Oct. to be placed at Arlington Cemetery again this year.

Respectfully submitted, Marguerite Austin, Blackhorse Women's Treasurer

Message from our Prayer Shawl Chair, Cherry Platt

Since our last reunion we have sent out 68 prayer shawls to the spouses, and/or family members of Troopers who have recently passed on to Fiddlers Green. You can help us reach out to the spouses or family members, by first notifying 11th ACVVC President, Pete Walter of the Trooper's passing. If you would like to join Cherry's group of ladies who knit or crochet these beautiful shawls, please contact Cherry at (770) 445-7534.

In closing, I would like to send out a big Thank You to all who have supported our fundraising efforts, by purchasing a Blackhorse Tote Bag. Because of you, we have recently made a generous donation to the 11th ACVVC Scholarship Fund. THANK YOU! Please look for an Order Form in this issue, to place your order for yourself or as gifts. Looking forward to seeing you all in 2021 in Dallas!

Love from, Lajaunda, Marguerite, Renee, Cherry, Cathi, Jan, Kathy and Sheryl



Six additional entries to our "Remembering 11th ACR KIA's" scrapbook; 3 from Kentucky and 3 from Nebraska.



Fiddler's Green

We are sorry to report the following Troopers have taken the journey to Fiddler's Green. We send our heartfelt sympathy and sincere condolences to their families and friends. We honor their service to our country and to our regiment by posting their names. Over 500 U.S. newspapers are checked daily for the keywords "11th Cavalry" or "11th Armored Cavalry". Information is then posted on our website to allow us to post notices. Please check the "Funeral Honor Guard check daily" at www.11thcavnam.com

John N. Albright, HHT Regiment (1966-1967) passed away on March 2, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Fort Collins, CO.

Mateo Arredondo, A Troop, 1/11 (1966-1967) passed away on May 11, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in San Antonio, TX. He was laid to rest in Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery, San Antonio, TX.

Edward B. Atkeson (MG Ret), 541st Military Intelligence Detachment (1966-1966) passed away on July 9, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Fort Belvoir, VA. He was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA.

Kenneth D. Barnes, Howitzer Battery, 1/11 (1966-1967) passed away on August 27, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Louisburg, KS. He was laid to rest in Saint Mary's Catholic Cemetery, Louisburg, KS

Joseph L. Bearer, E Troop, 2/11 (1968-1969) passed away on August 5, 2020. He resided in Carrolltown, PA. He was laid to rest in Saint Benedict's Catholic Cemetery, Carrolltown, PA.

James W. Bradin, Air Cavalry Troop (1969-1970) passed away on September 14, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Sun City Center, FL. He was laid to rest in Beaufort National Cemetery, Beaufort, SC.

John D. Bumpus, H Company, 2/11 (1967-1968) passed away on August 25, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Fort Pierce, FL. He was laid to rest in Cape Canaveral National Cemetery, Mims, FL.

Michael J. Charles, K Troop, 3/11 (1967-1968) passed away on August 11, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in New Orleans, LA. He was laid to rest in Biloxi National Cemetery, Biloxi, MS.

Stephen L. Coughenower, A Troop, 1/11 (1968-1971) passed away on November 4, 2006. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Knoxville, IL.

Micheal Coyne, D Company, 1/11 (1967-1968) passed away on August 9, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Ireland.

Neal Creighton Sr (MG Ret), HHT, 3/11 (1968) passed away on September 15, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Prairie Village, KS. He will be laid to rest in the United States Military Academy Cemetery, West Point, NY.

Gordon Crupper, G Troop, 2/11 (1970-1971) passed away on July 4, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Beaufort, SC.

Ronald A. Darnell, HHT Regiment (1969-1970) passed away on August 24, 2019. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Lakewood, CO. He was laid to rest in Ft. Logan National Cemetery, Denver, CO.

James F. Davis, K Troop, 3/11 (1969-1970) passed away on August 24, 2019. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Paw Paw, MI. He was laid to rest in Great Lakes National Cemetery, Holly, MI.

Charles L. Day, Air Cavalry Troop (1970-1971) passed away on April 16, 2020. He was a member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Williamsport, IN. He was laid to rest in Bunnell Cemetery, Frankfort, IN.

Anthony C. Dietz, HHT, 1/11 (1969-1969) passed away on July 31, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Fayetteville, NC. He was laid to rest in Sandhills State Veterans Cemetery, Spring Lake, NC.

Richard D. Erhart, HHT, 3/11 (1968-1968) passed away on July 18, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Rotonda West, FL. He was laid to rest in Sarasota National Cemetery, Sarasota, FL.

William W. Hadix, G Troop, 2/11 (1969-1970) passed away on April 28, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Harbor Springs, MI.

Raymond D. Hampson, G Troop, 2/11 (1966-1967) passed away on April 2, 2020. He

was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Bakersfield, CA. He was laid to rest in Bakersfield National Cemetery, Arvin, CA.

Urban T. Hellerman, 506th Supply & Services Company (1969-1970) passed away on July 25, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Saint Paul, MN. He was laid to rest in Ft. Snelling National Cemetery, Minneapolis, MN.

Daniel W. Hodson, I Troop, 3/11 (1969-1970) passed away on July 18, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Pensacola, FL.

Gary F. Ingram, HHT, 2/11 (1967-1968) passed away on June 9, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Quarryville, PA.

Robert W. Jensen, 919th Engineer Company (1966-1968) passed away on July 1, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Marquette, NE. He was laid to rest in Aurora Cemetery, Aurora, NE.

Daniel F. Jones, 541st Military Intelligence Detachment (1968-1969) passed away on September 9, 2019. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in South Windsor, CT. He was laid to rest in Silver Lane Cemetery, Manchester, CT.

Richard A. Kearnes, Howitzer Battery, 3/11 (1967-1968) passed away on August 3, 2019. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Fort Wayne, IN. He was laid to rest in Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Boulder City, NV.

Paul D. Kendrick, B Troop, 1/11 (1970-1971) passed away on August 10, 2019. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in McAlester, OK.

Jerry W. Lagavier, K Troop, 3/11 (1966-1967) passed away on October 9, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in College Station, TX. He was laid to rest in Ten Mile Cemetery, Madisonville, TX.

Larry D. Mullinax, L Troop, 3/11 (1966-1967) passed away on September 29, 2020. He

was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Gaffney, SC. He was laid to rest in Mount Ararat Baptist Church Cemetery, Gaffney, SC.

Mayo W. Neyland, HHT Regiment (1970-1971) passed away on May 5, 2013. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Georgetown, TX.

Louis F. Montes, H Company 2/11 (1968-1969) passed away on September 24, 2020. He was a member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in San Jose, CA.

Murray A. Pledger, HHT, 2/11 (1968-1969) passed away on August 7, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Smiths, AL. He was laid to rest in Fort Mitchell National Cemetery, GA on August 11, 2020.

Frederick F. Quinn, HHT Regiment (1968-1968) passed away on January 18, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Troy, NY. He was laid to rest in Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery, Elwood, IL.

Joseph A. Rehyansky, HHT, 1/11 (1968-1969) passed away on June 21, 2019. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Chattanooga, TN.

Carl N. Riccelli, Howitzer Battery, 3/11 (1968-1969) passed away on August 27, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Tahlequah, OK.

Windell R. Roberts, L Troop, 3/11 (1969-1970) passed away on January 3, 2019. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Joppa, AL. He was laid to rest in Hebron Cemetery, Joppa, AL.

Larry K. Rogers, K Troop, 3/11 (1969-1970) passed away on September 6, 2015. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Fairmont, OK. He was laid to rest in Collett Cemetery, Fairmont, OK.

Van E. Vermillion, F Troop, 2/11 (1970-1971) passed away on July 11, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Indio, CA. He was laid to rest in Black Hills National Cemetery, Sturgis, SD.

Ronald H. Werner, Howitzer Battery, 2/11 (1970-1971) passed away on August 17, 2020. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Austin, TX. He was laid to rest in Saint John'S Lutheran Church Cemetery, Wien, WI.

William Wise, K Troop, 3/11 (1968-1969) passed away on August 20, 2019. He was a LIFE member of the 11th ACVVC and resided in Berlin, MD.

FREEZEfrom page 19

Nebraska. "Jenks" was short for Burkley Jenkins who earned two Purple Hearts in Vietnam and continued to serve on active duty for 23 years. He served honorably in the tradition of the Bedford boys of WW II, so many of whom died on the beaches of Normandy. Sergeant Jenkins indeed, was from Bedford, Virginia, location of the excellent D-Day Memorial, erected not only to honor Bedford's 45 sons who landed on the coast of France in 1944, but in addition to the 43 who did not survive that day, all the American soldiers who died on that beach.

Jim (Spaghetti), served in Vietnam in 1971 and 72, and would eventually become a tank driver himself in Germany, before he completed his service commitment. Once back in the states, he became a U.S. Citizen, married above his station, as his wife Carmen, is just one special lady and a real sweetheart. In Connecticut, Jim continued to serve in the National Guard for a total of 28 and a half more years.

Jim and I renewed contact almost forty years after we left Vietnam and from the beginning of our stateside contact, he has always asked me about Sergeant Jenkins. For a long time, I could tell him nothing. But once I learned of the 11th ACVVC's Masterfile I was able (with then President Allen Hathaway's help) to locate an address for Burkley Jenkins. That was the good news, the bad news was that "Jenks" died in 2003. I relayed what information I had to Jim, and that the Masterfile had no record of a surviving spouse or children. The news saddened Jim as he wanted the opportunity of thanking "Jenks" personally for saving his life in Vietnam. More so than that, Jim wanted to thank him for giving him the opportunity to live a comfortable, fulfilling and rewarding life in Connecticut with a great wife, two wonderful children and grandchildren. Jim is a thoughtful, gracious and proud Blackhorse Trooper.

His sorrow gave way to determination, and so he tracked down a nephew of Burkley Jenkins in Bedford, Virginia, Travis Jenkins. Jim made the connection, had someone to talk to, some family member to whom he could express his gratitude. Jim found someone he could

ask to touch the grave marker of Sergeant Jenkins and transmit (in faith), Jim's love.

Burkley S. Jenkins of Bedford, Virginia was the platoon Sergeant for Jim's track (Tank 35) in Vietnam in 1972, and a really good man. His crew called him "Jenks," and he would retire from the U.S. States Army over two decades later. "Jenks" took care of his men in Vietnam, not only a tank crew, but as his service career extended, he took care of his platoons, his companies, maybe even his regiments or battalions. He was a "Lifer."

In Vietnam, Jim recalls, "Jenks" saved his life the first time, on a dismount, as the crew went out to set up a night ambush position on a trail in the Ho Bo Woods. Jim was the point man; and as he tells it: "I was concentrating at looking forward, scanning the horizon and the immediate tree line. Thank God, my Sergeant, the second man in line, was watching me. And especially my feet. As we walked the trail quietly near dusk, Jenks whispered: "Freeze, don't move." I stopped dead in my tracks as Jenks moved up and held the wire just an inch from the top of my boot. The trip wire was just about three feet from a grenade that would have caused a mortal wound – 'good bye Jim.' But that was only the first time, that Jenks saved my life. A few weeks later, the lead tank spotted movement in the elephant grass and before the column continued our crew went down to check out the area. We found a bunker complex hidden in the high grass and a number of Spider holes."

As mentioned earlier, Jim was about to enter one of those holes "to check it out" when Sergeant Burkley Jenkins, stopped him and revealed another trip wire, this time almost even with his head. That was the time he sternly said to Jim: "Do not flinch, not even a hair."

Jim didn't flinch and he left Vietnam in one piece, as did all of "Jenks" crew. But they all remembered, that a stern shout, that might sound like anger, is also lifesaving and loving concern.

The rule of thumb for Drill Sergeants: right?

*Blandin Karabinos (71-72)
June 2020*

The 11th Armored Cavalry's Veterans of Vietnam and Cambodia QM Store



#1 Coffee Mug \$15.00



#2 Key Ring \$6.00



#3 Bumper Sticker \$3.00



#4 Window Sticker \$3.00



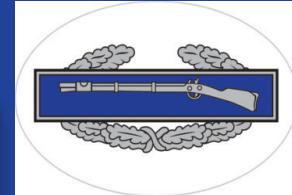
#7 Blackhorse Patch Colored \$5.00



#8 Mouse Pad \$12.00



#10 Web Belt with buckle \$25.00



#9 CIB car magnet, 3"x4" \$6.00



#13 License Plate, Blackhorse \$9.00



#11 Flag, Indoor/Outdoor \$60.00



#16 Tote Bag, Embroidered \$22.00



#17 Blackhorse Pin \$5.00



#14 License Plate Frame, Black w/white letters \$13.00



#15 Attache Case \$30.00



#18 11th ACR Regimental Crest \$5.00



#19 Blackhorse Cavalry Pin \$5.00



#26 Large Magnetic Patch (8" x 7 3/4") \$7.00



#20 Vietnam Blackhorse Pin, Wreath \$5.00



#21 Small Magnetic Patch (5" x 4 3/4") \$5.00



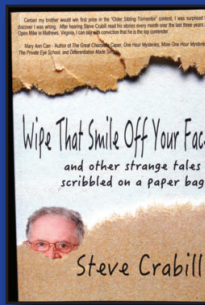
#23 Leather Gear Bag \$45.00



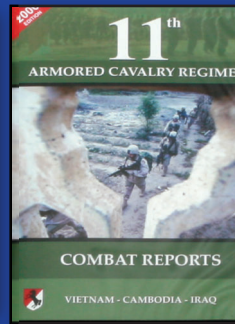
#22 Overnight Bag \$25.00



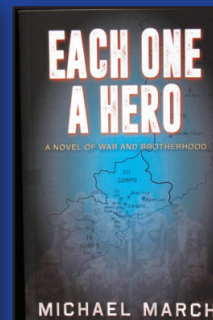
#5 Hoodie Sweat Shirt \$30.00



#27 Book, "Wipe That Smile Off Your Face" \$16.00



#28 Video (DVD) Combat Reports \$30.00



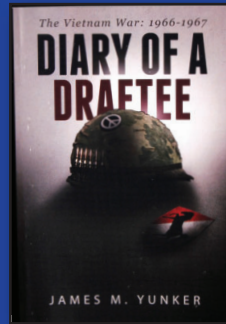
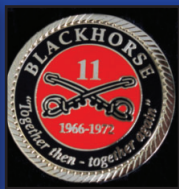
#31 Book, "Each One A Hero" \$20.00



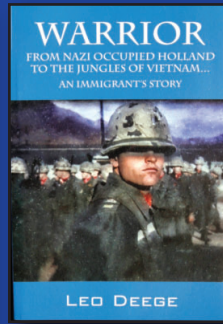
#33 Book: Heroes of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment



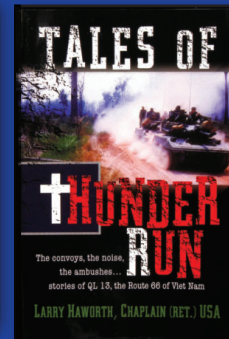
#25 Blackhorse Coin \$15.00



#32 Book: Diary of a Draftee \$22.00



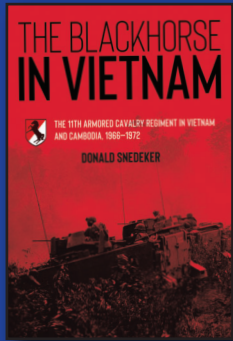
#35 Book, "Warrior" \$16.00



#37 Book, "Tales of Thunder Run" by Chaplain Larry Haworth \$11.00



#30 Car Flag \$25.00



#34 "The Blackhorse in Vietnam" \$25.00



#29 Ladies Necklace \$18.00



#36. Sweatshirts w/ BH patch, \$28.00

#40 Specialty T-Shirt: sizes S, M, L, 2X, 3X, 4 X \$20



#38a



#38b



#38c



#38d

#38 Poplin Hats \$17.00



#39 a/b T-Shirt, Light Gray & Green \$20.00



#43 Windbreaker, black w/snap front & BH Insignia & VN Ribbon, \$35.00



#41 Light (A) or Dark (B) Denim Shirt, w/BH & VN Ribbon \$35.00



#42 Blackhorse Jacket (lined), 100% Nylon \$95.00



Hello Fellow Blackhorse Troopers! We are coming to the end of another year. Jan and I want to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas and a New Year all in advance. Our hope is that everyone stays safe and well during these trying times. If you haven't heard we had a great time in Indianapolis, Lots of you were not there and that is very understanding. Those who braved the COVID-19 scare we all had a real good time making new friends and just being able to visit with one another.

Frank Church did an outstanding job hosting this Reunion and making sure that everything went smoothly. Even our banquet was top notch. We may have been small in numbers, but very large in our Blackhorse family.

So get your boots shined, your hat dusted off and make plans to be in that GREAT state of TEXAS next year August 23rd to the

29th. Yee haw.

Make your plans now to be here. Remember you can make reservations now, and if you are not able to come you can cancel out if need be. Please take time to read all of the Thunder Run, there is some interesting stuff in this issue.

So before I close I would like to personally thank all our helpers we had in Indy. Jan and I really appreciate their help. Without all our volunteers we would be lost.

Congratulations to Jim Young on his award (one of our faithful helpers). Very much deserved. Yeah...Jim!

Many of you have been having trouble with the website, please be patient we are having someone look into this and hopefully we will get our problems worked out.

Again thank you all for making another year possible. Looking forward to serving you in 2021 and the rest of this year.

Allons, Jerry

Newsletter Deadlines

Due dates to submit articles for *Thunder Run*

1st Quarter	Jan 1
2nd Quarter	Apr 1
3rd Quarter	Jul 1
4th Quarter	Oct 1

All submissions for publication must be sent to: Peter L. Walter, 8 Tallowood Drive, Westampton, NJ 08060-3721; email basepiece70@verizon.net.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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 (\$50)

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) _____

Visa Mastercard Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Please make checks/money orders payable to: **11th ACVVC**. Mail this form with your check or money order (no cash) to: **11th ACVVC Membership, Ollie Pickral, 571 Ditchley Rd., Kilmarnock, VA 22482.**



Quartermaster

ORDER FORM • 4thQtr 2020

11TH ARMORED CAVALRY'S VETERANS OF VIETNAM AND CAMBODIA

Item No.	Product Description	\$ Amt	Size	Qty	\$ Total
1.	Coffee Mug, white, ceramic (glass) 11oz w/full color Blackhorse insignia	15.00	_____	_____	_____
2.	Key ring, Plastic	6.00	_____	_____	_____
3.	Bumper Sticker "I Rode With The Blackhorse" w/full color BH insignia	3.00	_____	_____	_____
4.	Window Sticker, full color BH insignia and Vietnam service ribbon	3.00	_____	_____	_____
5.	Hoodie Sweat Shirt	30.00	_____	_____	_____
7.	Blackhorse Shoulder Patch, Colored	5.00	_____	_____	_____
8.	Mouse Pads	12.00	_____	_____	_____
9.	CIB car magnet, 3"x4"	6.00	_____	_____	_____
10.	Belt: Military style 'web' trouser belt with Blackhorse buckle	25.00	_____	_____	_____
11.	Flag, indoor/outdoor 3'x5' with color insignia	60.00	_____	_____	_____
13.	License Plate, metal red & white background with crossed sabers & 11	9.00	_____	_____	_____
14.	License Plate Frame, metal, black w/Blackhorse 11th US Cavalry in white	13.00	_____	_____	_____
15.	Attache Case w/shoulder strap 11.5" x 15.5" w/dir emb. BH insignia & VN rib	30.00	_____	_____	_____
16.	Tote Bag, red & black, 14x1x6 w/full color BH insignia and VN rib	22.00	_____	_____	_____
17.	Blackhorse Pin	5.00	_____	_____	_____
18.	11th ACR Regimental Crest	5.00	_____	_____	_____
19.	Blackhorse Cavalry Pin, brass, 11 over crossed sabers	5.00	_____	_____	_____
20.	Vietnam Blackhorse Pin w/wreath	5.00	_____	_____	_____
21.	Small Magnetic Patch "Blackhorse" (5"x 4 3/4")	5.00	_____	_____	_____
22.	Overnight Bag	25.00	_____	_____	_____
23.	Leather Gear Bag w/Blackhorse Insignia and pull handle	45.00	_____	_____	_____
25.	Blackhorse Coin	15.00	_____	_____	_____
26.	Large Magnetic Patch "Blackhorse" (8" x 7 3/4")	7.00	_____	_____	_____
27.	Book, "Wipe That Smile Off Your Face" by Steve Crabill	16.00	_____	_____	_____
28.	Video: "Combat Reports" (DVD Only)	30.00	_____	_____	_____
29.	Ladies Necklace	18.00	_____	_____	_____
30.	Car Flag	25.00	_____	_____	_____
31.	Book, "Each One A Hero," by Michael Marsh	20.00	_____	_____	_____
32.	Book, "Diary of a Draftee," by: James M. Yunker	22.00	_____	_____	_____
33.	Book, "Heroes of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment"	20.00	_____	_____	_____
34.	Book, "The Blackhorse in Vietnam" by Donald Snedeker	25.00	_____	_____	_____
35.	Book, "Warrior," by Leo Deege	16.00	_____	_____	_____
36.	Sweatshirts w/ BH patch, gray only. Size: <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL <input type="checkbox"/> 2XL <input type="checkbox"/> 3XL	28.00	_____	_____	_____
37.	Book, "Tales of Thunder Run," by Chaplain Larry Haworth	11.00	_____	_____	_____
38.	Hat, Poplin adjustable <input type="checkbox"/> 38a, <input type="checkbox"/> 38b, <input type="checkbox"/> 38c, <input type="checkbox"/> 38d	17.00	_____	_____	_____
39.	Blackhorse T-shirt, 100% cotton, preshrunk, full color BH insignia. Specify color: <input type="checkbox"/> Light Gray <input type="checkbox"/> Green	20.00	_____	_____	_____
40.	Specialty T-Shirt: sizes S, M, L, XL, 2X, 3X, 4 X	20.00	_____	_____	_____
41.	Denim shirt (men's) <input type="checkbox"/> Light (A) <input type="checkbox"/> Dark (B)	35.00	_____	_____	_____
42.	Blackhorse Jacket, 100% Nylon, zipper front, fleece lining w/full color BH insignia, (6" back), and ACVVC front left	95.00	_____	_____	_____
43.	Windbreaker, black w/snap front, BH insignia & VN Ribbon	35.00	_____	_____	_____

Subtotal _____

Shipping and Handling _____

Total _____

Note: unless otherwise noted, all clothing items are available in size medium through size 3XL
Specify size and color preference of item requested.

Shipping Costs: (Includes multiple items)

- A) \$3.00 — \$5.00 = \$3.00 C) \$10.00 — \$35.00 = \$15.00 Gear Bag Only = \$25.00
- B) \$6.00 — \$10.00 = \$9.00 D) \$36.00 and up = \$20.00 Gear Bags with other items = \$28.00

Visa Mastercard Card # _____ Exp. Date _____ CVC Code _____

Signature _____

* If paying by check, please write your drivers license number on the check.

*Name _____ Phone _____

*Address _____ Email _____

*City/State/Zip _____

Check if address change

Please include the largest of chosen items S/H costs with your order. Checks or Money Orders should be made payable to 11th ACVVC. ALL PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Previous price lists are invalid. Mail order to: 11th ACVVC Quartermaster, c/o Jerry Beamon, 15926 Cedar Bay Dr., Bullard, TX 75757. JerryLBea@aol.com

* Required info to process your order



11ACVVC
13194 Rettew Dr.
Manassas, VA 20112-7800

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THIS ISSUE

DEPARTMENTS

President’s Message3
 Blackhorse Hoofbeats12
 11th ACVVC Donations14
 Scholarship Program Update16
 VSO Information.....21
 Welcome Aboard21
 Chaplain’s Corner24
 Blackhorse Women’s News.....25
 Fiddler’s Green26
 QM Store28
 From the Quartermaster30
 Membership Application.....30
 Quartermaster Order Form31

NEWS & NOTES

Joe Minor Thomas Honored.....1

Our Stories, they need to be told1
 State of the Reunion: 4th Quarter 20204
 The ACVVC Annual Reunion XXXV.....4
 Colby Reithoff, 11th AVVC 2020 Colonel Charles L. Schmidt
 Leadership Scholarship Award Winner6
 Remembering Smitty13
 2021 11th ACVVC Calendar Appeal.....17
 Freeze, Do Not Flinch19
 Report of the Reunion Registry Chairman20
 Aberdeen Vietnam War Veteran medic gets Silver Star 51
 years after defending wounded GIs’ lives22
 The Other Convoy23
 2020 Reunion Schedule16
 State of the Reunion.....17
 My ‘Top’ Sergeant; Rosalio C. Montelongo (Monty)18
 Our Dark Place.....22
 Starry’s War College Advisory Rings True Today24

