



PANTHER TRACKS



1/69th Armor Alumni - this is JR do you copy - over -

Hope this newsletter finds everyone in good health and spirits! Ole man winter has gone away and spring time is here. Some have had harsh winters while others were boating, fishing and driving with the AC on. I personally enjoy the turn of the seasons.....

I want to thank everyone of you who contacted me and gave permission to send the newsletter via e-mail or hard copy. A spreadsheet with the mailing preferences has been implemented. I received letters, cards, e-mails and phone calls from members who were thankful to receive the Winter/Holiday newsletter. Some had questions which I could not answer so I directed them to our association officers. I did however inform those that inquired that I volunteered to write the newsletter for this term and I will do my best to ensure all of you are well informed of what is going on within the association. I also want to thank everyone who paid their dues and all who donated to help offset postage cost. That is why all of you are elite men, you hear a call for assistance and WHAM you are on it.

I would like to have you partake in our newsletter. If you have something you would like the alumni to be informed of: an anniversary, vacation trip, won a turkey at a meat shoot, etc. Some of us have classic cars, motorcycles, etc. I am sure the guys would enjoy seeing your "Please Don't Touch" ride. So send a photo(s) and a short story about your big boy toy(s). Warning: Profanity will not be printed in the newsletter. With utmost respect for all our

fine ladies and children who may read the *Panther Tracks*. So I ask that you please be discreet when sending in an article to be published.

My wife and I along with 69th Armor members, Larry/Donna Lingle, Larry/Patti Stephenson, Eddie Stewart and lady friend Judy went to Branson, Missouri over Veteran's Day week in November 2014. We all saw great shows and enjoyed our time together. Each November, Branson holds a Veterans Homecoming week where there are events that cater to veterans. We were all able to mingle with Veterans from all over the US.

You will notice "*Panther Tracks*" is once again the letterhead. In the last issue, it was I who assumed (and we all know what assume means) that our association wanted to make changes to many aspects including the newsletter. Well my error landed me an Article 15, three weeks on KP and I had to run (more like limp) around the parade field five times. Our association Vice President, Lt. Grover Bishop, informed me that the *Panther Tracks* letterhead should be re-instated long before I ETS. I told him it will be corrected Sir! I have been a civilian for how many decades now and the BRASS is still on my A**! Grover also explained that the *Panther Tracks* goes back to our NAM days, that he had to put out an issue for the *Panther Tracks* in Nam. Naturally being the smart A** EM, I asked was this a communication thing between officers only back then because I had never seen or heard of the *Panther Tracks* back then. Maybe the reason being I was in the field 95.9% of my tour. I am not being sarcastic, just stating a fact, Jack! Grover did say he did not know when the *Panther Tracks* got started in Nam nor did he know if this was just a communication between officers. So my question to all 69th Armor Alumni is, do you have any knowledge of who, what or when the *Panther Tracks* got started and who were the recipients that it was issued to? I for one, would like to be educated on the history of the *Panther Tracks*. On a side note, hold on to the one and only "*Speed and Power*" newsletter, it may be worth \$100.00 at an Antique Road Show for future generations as it was the one and only edition.

What was one of the first things we learned in the military? Never volunteer for anything! What did I do, I volunteered to write the newsletters. I should be tortured by yawl, throwing end connectors at me. Who would of thought, volunteering in civilian life I would still be saying, "No Sir, Yes Sir, Right away Sir, Consider it done Sir". With this being said, if the Brass can't appreciate my sense of humor, I'll have to prepare myself for a brass attack. Get busted down to a maggot buck private. You know that's not sooooo bad. Zero rank equals zero responsibility. Everyone above me has to answer for my miss-qs. All I get is more details which will keep me busy until I ETS!

The Winter/Holiday 2014 newsletter showed our President, Ron Martin, did not have a computer at that time, well miracles do happen. After badgering from yours truly, our President now has a computer. For those of you who want to raise some cane with our President, here is the vital information:

President Ron Martin - e-mail address: ronaldmartin49431@gmail.com

Please be patient with Mr. Pres., he is still learning how to use the keyboard. So far so good, he has mastered this thus far..."The little brown dog, ate the big fat cat." Applause! Encore! Bravo! So feel free to e-mail Ron and praise him.

Mini Reunion in Kokomo, Indiana, Check-in September 17th 2015, check-out September 20th 2015.

We have a block of 20 rooms reserved for the 69th Armor Association waiting to be booked at the Best Western Plus, 4936 Kaybee Drive, Gas City, Indiana, 765-998-233. The room rate is \$96.00 a night plus tax. Any rooms that are booked over and above the 20 room block will also receive this room price. Please make your reservations early as the block of rooms are only going to be held until August 17th. When you make your reservation at the Best Western Plus make sure you advise them that you are with the 69th Armor Association. The Best Western Plus is a beautiful, clean hotel. You will not be

disappointed. They have a fantastic free breakfast I am sure you will enjoy. There is a Cracker Barrel Restaurant that you can walk to from the hotel. Who doesn't enjoy browsing and dining at a Cracker Barrel Restaurant? A variety of other restaurants are also near the hotel. There are other things to do and see besides visiting the LZ where 1000's of veterans will be camping, etc. A list of these other places will be in the August, Summer/Fall newsletter or you can search online for attractions near Kokomo, Indiana.

I am a life member of the Howard County Vietnam Veterans Organization, this is the organization that runs the Vietnam Veterans Reunion in Kokomo, IN. I applied for a camp site at the Reunion location, but will not know until sometime in June if we are lucky to get a camping site this year. The campsite will be a watering hole for 69th Armor Alumni to gather and relax after exploring the LZ. I will inform everyone in the Summer/Fall issue of the newsletter on our camping site status along with a list of other things to do and see in the area. If no campsite is available, we will decide on a Plan B which will be in the Summer/Fall issue of the newsletter. To get an idea of what to expect at the mini reunion, go to www.hcvvo.org and click on the links.

I am checking on restaurants that we can all dine at together on either Friday or Saturday evening. Thus it will be a pay out of pocket for each person, family, etc. More information on my findings will be in the Summer/Fall newsletter issue.

If you never had the opportunity to attend the largest Vietnam Veteran reunion in the USA, you should at least check this out. It is a once in a lifetime experience.

Other News:

The 1/69th Armor PX has many items to offer, shirts, hats, pins, etc. If any of you are interested, please contact Bob Zepernick.

It is with high hopes that our alumni brother, Larry "Cruit" Lingle will be able to attend our mini reunion in Kokomo, Indiana. Cruit was a crew member of mine along with Lt. John Edwards on Alpha 2-6 in the highlands. Cruit is confined to a wheelchair but we never let that stop us from taking him on many trips in the good ole US of A.

Great news !!! John Edwards informed me that his wife, Margaret, is doing MUCH better health wise! We look forward to seeing John and Margaret at upcoming reunions.

Our Association's original Regimental Chaplin, Paul "Preacher" Limerick continues to have treatment and sounds more positive each time we talk. God Speed with your healing - Preach.

In sending out the last newsletter, we found out that the following alumni are Mike - India- Alpha (missing in America), if anyone has a current address or e-mail address for these individuals please advise us so that they too can receive the newsletter and we can update the roster.

William Albrook	Jean Alton
Larry Bakers	David Doverspike
Dennis Garcia	Ron Goehring
John Hodgson	Burke Jeseinik
Ms. James C. Johnson	Robert Kinzek
Jesse Jones, Jr.	Dene Leonard
Douglas Maritalo	Roy McClain
Simba Roberts	Frank Ruberto
Robert Rude	Jeffrey Sanderson
Christopher Smith	David Stevens

Walter Wilson
Gerald Werner
Ralph Zumbro

Bill Weaver
Thomas Wright

On a sad note in the past nine months we lost members of our association. Please open the links to read the obituaries.

General Ronald James Fairfield, Jr., (10/18/19 - 9/19/14) -
<http://www.adairfuneralhomes.com/book-of-memories/1954044/Fairfield-Ronald/obituary.php>

Judy Stovall, (1/11/43 - 7/5/14) - Life Association Member - a heart of gold. Judy always made sure everyone was having a good time. Judy was also Capt. John's main clerk keeping Capt. on track at all times.
<http://www.bookergilbertfh.com/notices/Judy-Stovall>

Homer Dudley - (12/7/38 - 3/23/15) - http://www.thenews-gazette.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2144:homer-clinton-tink-dudley-76-of-lexington-went-to-be-with-his-lord-and-savior-on-march-23-2015&catid=82:obituaries&Itemid=400

We also learned that William Dorsch passed away in 2009 - his daughter called when she received the Winter/Holiday newsletter. Saying her dad passed away in 2009, but was so proud to be a member of the 1/69th Armor Association.

President, Ron Martin - Home phone - 231-843-1843, ronaldmartin49431@gmail.com
Vice President, Grover Bishop - Cell phone - 574-721-4967, grover.bishop@gmail.com
Secretary, Rose Bowers - Home phone - 419-399-3936, mbowers@roadrunner.com
Treasurer, Bob Zepernick - Home phone - 330-821-2731, ztank32@aol.com
Honorary Colonel, John Stovall, capstovallb169@aol.com
Regimental Chaplin, Will Savidge, Home phone - 419-396-7564, wfsav@aol.com
Newsletter Volunteer, Bob (Jr.) Donat - Home phone - 636-933-0605, M48A3delta@aol.com

JR Out!

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