



Knights of the Roundtable Lancers



Volume 2024, 4th Quarter

Co B 158th Avn Bn 101st Abn Div

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Editor's Corner

Gary Bowman



I hope that everyone had a great holiday season as we look forward to the new year. 2025! Wow! Who'd a think we would all be around to see this?

In recent news we saw that the Syrian regime has fallen, and that's a good thing. However, it has fallen to another Islamic group that the U.S. has labeled a terrorist organization. While they claim they will be open and fair to "all" of the Syrian people, we have heard that before. Let's all just hope and pray that it doesn't become yet another Middle East crisis that puts our young men and women in harm's way.

For everything there is a season ...

On a personal note, I have made a difficult decision. This will be my last newsletter. After three years and 17 issues (plus a few supplements) I have decided that I just can't do this anymore. My heart is just no longer in it, and you deserve more than I can put into it. The last few editions have been a struggle for me to get out, and it is just wearing thin on me. As you all know, I have said from the start that I can't do this by myself, that I needed your help. But with the exception of a handful of participants, it has been very hard to get support. To those who have been willing to share their articles, opinions, lies and damn lies, I sincerely thank you. Your contributions made the newsletter possible. You know who you are.

For the most part, I have enjoyed doing this, and I hope you have enjoyed getting the newsletters. Thank you for allowing me the honor of representing the Lancers in the form of this newsletter. If anyone wants to pick up the mantle and carry on with your version of the newsletter, whether it be quarterly or whatever, I will gladly hand over all of my materials – templates, pictures, cliparts, etcetera, along with any tips I can offer. Or, you can create your own version to represent this wonderful brotherhood.

As you will see, this newsletter is very short compared to previous editions. A testament to my struggles to get content, and my willingness (or inability) to improvise. I will still be a regularly unwanted intrusion in the email group, so you haven't gotten rid of me. 😊



President's Message

Barry Beard



Flight,

Looks like this will be the last time I will have the opportunity to write this quarterly letter at least for the time being, which I know is blow to many of you, HA. I want to begin by thanking Gary Bowman for his yeoman effort in publishing a truly spectacular newsletter. The difficulty in getting content and the time requirements to put these letters out is massive. To the extent I added to that burden by procrastinating writing this letter, Gary, I publicly apologize. Hopefully he will agree to put out a short letter announcing our yearly meeting in the future. [Editor's note:

thank you, Barry, for the nice comments!]

There seems to be significant amount of excitement generated by Bill Walker's gracious invitation for us to stay at his house for a reunion in Ohio! Just kidding Bill, but seriously there was a flurry of excitement when he mentioned there was someone that would consider videoing our stories. Regardless we need a reunion somewhere and since the MDL's will still be deployed, Ohio is nearly as good as Texas for having it. I am sure Gary will write up what details we have so far. Bill is working on getting a place to stay, a venue for our meeting, and maybe some local restaurant suggestions. Hopefully the Holiday Inn in Hopkinsville Kentucky does not talk to the Holiday Inns in Ohio. More to come.

I have been in contact with the Chancellor of the Sugar Land campus of the University of Houston, which is home to the following: The Computer Information Systems (CIS) program at the University of Houston's Sugar Land campus includes a strong emphasis on Artificial Intelligence (AI). Students

have opportunities to engage in faculty-mentored research in AI, alongside other areas like Data Science and Cybersecurity.

The program aims to equip students with the knowledge and skills to apply AI technologies effectively within organizational contexts, addressing complex problems and contributing to innovation and success in today's digital landscape.

The Chancellor has a professor that has expressed an interest in using AI to try to sift through our emails and condense them down to just the relevant stories. Hope something of mine will remain! More to come on that after the holidays!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Barry
Lancer 19er, Lt Greenhouse



A Small Town's Heart

Brian Weltch

Editor's note: Brian is a former MDL, former mayor of Burkeville, VA, and current Chief of the Burkeville Volunteer Fire Department. What makes this story really compelling is the fact that as of the 2010 census, Burkeville had a population of only 432 people. I am truly awestruck at you and your people, Brian! The following is from an email Brian sent on October 26.



Fellow Lancers,

Some of you might know, I took over as Fire Chief of the Burkeville Volunteer Fire Department in Burkeville, Virginia back in July.

As you all know Eastern TN and Western NC took incredible hard hits from Hurricane Helene last month.

This week our Department made a dream come true for a small town in Eastern TN. The Town of Erwin lost a 1997 Pierce Fire Engine and 2 utility pick up trucks while trying to evacuate a hospital in Erwin, where the firefighters ended up having to be rescued themselves. Yesterday, we transported one of our ready-for-service fire engines to them along with a truck load of other miscellaneous equipment and clothing items. Below are a few of the pictures.

The destruction is unbelievable and hard to comprehend. They have a VERY LONG ROAD to recovery! May God Bless them!



Picture taken in Burkeville, VA across the street from my fire station. (Left to right; County Emergency Services Coordinator Buddy Hyde, Blackstone FD Deputy Chief Zac Beares, myself, Christy Bennett Former Chief's Daughter, Burkeville FD Asst Chief Shaun Dumont and Burkeville Mayor Gerald Smith.)

Retired Chief Bill Killen (worked for NASA on astronaut recovery missions in the late 60's into 70's) and myself on the closed portion on I-26.



Asst Chief Dumont, Retired Chief Killen, Erwin Fire Chief Jason Harris and myself.



Some Destruction along I-26 in Erwin TN



It's an Honor to represent the Lancers and continue to serve in my community while blessing others when possible.

Brian Weltch
Iraq Combat Veteran
101st Airborne Association Life Member



Summary of the November 11 Zoom Meeting

Barry Beard



Let me take this opportunity to kind of go over last night's meeting with a few takeaways:

The present slate of officers was approved by unanimous acclamation. (Which of course means no one else wanted to do it!)

Discussion of Association finances and what to do with the money, which was largely contributed by one donor. Among the things discussed coalesced around, I believe, using money to further the Association objectives. Included in that discussion was using some of the money to untangle the relevant stories from the bs chatter. Which of course concerned me that my slate may have been wiped clean!

Walt gave an update on the website, which we greatly appreciate all his efforts. He has worked to extract relevant stories out of the morass of 77,000 emails, but that is more than anybody can be expected to do.

I gave an update on reengaging with the Sam Johnson Vietnam archives at Texas Tech university. They only seem interested in hard copies of things. They are not interested in a data dump. Maybe we can send them copies of the books Lancers have written and the box of items Lanny has collected from the beginning days of the Association. This led back to further discussion of using AI to sort through our emails using key words. The University of Houston Computer college is close by, maybe I can interest them in taking that on as a project. Any further suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

WAKE-UP THERE IS MORE!!

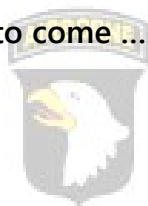
We remonstrated the lack of attendance at the last few reunions. No doubt there is a myriad of reasons for that, but we really want to see if we can't get more enthusiasm. As part of that we discussed focusing our efforts on one reunion at Fort Campbell. Additionally, there was discussion

of joining with the reunion that the 158th Battalion has every summer at Fort Campbell. More to come on that.

One other suggestion I have received would be to try to invite SOG/CCN guys using Bud Gibson's network. Maybe we can invite the FAC/Covey guys as well. I think if we can do that, we would have a well-attended event.

More to come ...

Barry



Knights of the Roundtable
Lancers



A Lancer reunion this coming summer



Bill Walker has proposed to have a Lancer reunion this summer in Ohio, and it seems to be well received! It's a work in process, but here is what has been proposed: the reunion may be held in Dayton, Ohio, with a tour of the National Museum of the United States Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Times, hotels, etc. are TBD, but Bill is shooting for three days towards the end of June, 2025. Everyone is invited to stay with Bill and Denise, if the divorce isn't finalized by then! I'M KIDDING! Stay tuned to the group email for future details.



Brotherhood

Gary Bowman



As a parting note, I just want to say that this brotherhood we share as Lancers is something special. I was one of the last Vietnam Lancers, leaving the company in mid-December, 1971, towards the end of the standdown. Although there were some who ran missions into January of 1972, like Tom Sieker, who was my pilot for many missions, and the most permanent pilot I had. I did not have enough time in-country by the cutoff date, so I was moved to C Troop, 11th ACR at Phu Loi (near Saigon) where I finished my tour. Robin "Fuji" Fujiura was the only

other Lancer to wind up there with me.

Life in the south was a different animal. Instead of a cot and sleeping bag, there were bunks with real mattresses, a grassy area in the middle of the compound where we had actual morning

formations (no exercises – we were still aviation, you know), and hootch maid mamasans who cleaned our AOs and washed our clothes for just a pittance. A far cry from the life we all led at Camp Evans. My flying days came to an end there because of a “disagreement” that a former Phoenix crew chief and I had with our executive officer about the very little flying time we were given. It ended in a shouting match and my friend and me ending up on permanent guard duty until the end in March of '72. I only flew twice - as a door gunner – while there. It was frustrating for us, as we had much more experience than the other crews there in actual combat experience.

I am by no means comparing life at Evans to the hardships the grunts endured. There is no comparison to that short of being a POW, at least in my mind. But, life for us was a step or three below a Motel Six, you have to admit. But that shared experience, along with the often-unpredictable missions is what made us all brothers. I wish that as young men we would have recognized that. It took almost 30 years and the efforts of Gary Whitty, Dave Mussey and Lance Ruck to bring us together and finally allow us to realize that we are brothers in arms. And we always will be.

After Vietnam I spent my final army months in a Mechanized Infantry unit at Fort Hood, starting in the motor pool as a track mechanic (of which I was clueless) and ending as head clerk of that motor pool. The reason I bring this up is this: there is no brotherhood from those two units like the brotherhood we share, we Lancers. While I remember those guys with fondness, I don't feel the closeness to them that I feel for all of you, even those of you I have never personally met. I feel like I know you all, and would rather share a foxhole with any of you than any of them. Because I KNOW that you will have my six. I KNOW THAT! That is what makes all of us brothers.



Happenings

Snowbird Reunion



Snowbird Reunion in Tampa, Florida will be on February 12th-15th, 2025, at the Marriott Tampa Westshore, 1001 N Westshore Boulevard Tampa, Florida. Hotel Reservations must be made by January 21st, 2025. [Book online](#)

VHCMA Reunion

(from the VHCMA website)

VIETNAM HELICOPTER
CREW MEMBERS
ASSOCIATION



37th VHCMA REUNION 2025, June 11 - 14, 2025

The next reunion Will be held at the Doubletree by Hilton, San Antonio Airport, 611 N.W. Loop 410, San Antonio, TX. (210) 340-6060.

VHPA Reunion



Marriott St. Louis Grand 800 Washington Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63101

\$132 + tax over the dates of 20 August, 2025 – 23 August, 2025 BASED

ON AVAILABILITY (VHPA room rate availability limited pre & post

reunion dates) Cutoff date for VHPA hotel rate is Sunday, 27 July, 2025

Hotel Reservation information will be provided with Reunion Registration confirmation email PLEASE consult www.vhpa.org for the most current Reunion information and details.

VHPA 2025 PRELIMINARY REUNION SCHEDULE Skyline Dinner Cruise Set sail along the Mississippi River in a 19th century paddle boat. One of the highlights of this dinner cruise will, undoubtedly, be the sight of the Gateway Arch shimmering against the landscape. Enjoy a relaxing evening with dinner, drinks and the views of the city skyline. This will be one unforgettable adventure for VHPA guests.

Soldiers Memorial Military Museum Journey to the heart of military history at Soldiers Memorial Military Museum in downtown St. Louis. Soldiers Memorial Military Museum is a state-of-the-art museum facility that honors military service, veterans and their families. Soldiers Memorial shares American military history through the lens of St. Louis and a definite must see.

Anheuser-Busch Brewery Tour The hub for innovation brewing of over 30 brands, like favorites Budweiser and Michelob ULTRA. Guests can explore the Anheuser-Busch brewery and learn why the beer is second to none. Packed with history and stunning views of the property, you'll learn all about the life of an Anheuser-Busch beer from seed to sip and to its crisp taste as the finished product!

St. Louis City Tour This tour will give VHPA Guests all the secrets and sights that St. Louis has to offer from the beginning to present day. Packed with sights like Gateway Arch, amazing mosaics of the Cathedral Basilica, Soulard Market, Lafayette Square, Fox Theatre and much more. Guests will learn all the secret spots for local breweries and bites to eat as well.

101st Airborne Division Reunion



The 101st Airborne Division Vietnam Veterans reunion will be held at Orlando, Florida, in conjunction with the 101st Airborne Division Association. Dates are August 20-24, 2025. Reunion information will be updated under the upcoming reunion page as information becomes available.



Thank you all very much for allowing me to represent the Lancers through this newsletter. It was a privilege! Maybe I can be convinced to do a special edition every now and then. Maybe. Or not.



Gary B

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