



## RWVA Members Visit Fort Carson

### “VISIT IS MOVING FOR RW VETS

*...standing ovation from the 600 plus at the event. An honor for us to attend. Ed Northrop*



*L to R: Ed and Joan Northrop, Dennis and Kathy Witt, Tom and Barb Hedin*

*By Dennis Witt*

Three RWVA vets and their wives visited Fort Carson, CO from Wednesday, January 30 through Saturday, February 2 at the invitation of the 1/12<sup>th</sup> commanding officer. Attending were Ed and Joan Northrop (Ed is officially the Honorary Colonel of the 12<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment), Tom and Barb Hedin, and Dennis and Kathy Witt. Tom and Dennis both served in C/1/12 (66-67) when Ed was the CO. Dennis was Ed's RTO during that time, Tom was a rifleman in 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon. The visit proved to be a very busy one.



All three couples flew into Denver on Wednesday afternoon, rented a mini-van, and drove together to the Elegante Hotel in Colorado Springs.

On Thursday morning, while the gals were having a leisurely breakfast and quiet morning, the guys drove into Fort Carson to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Headquarters building where both the 1/12<sup>th</sup> and 2/12<sup>th</sup> battalions have their offices. There, they met up with the 2/12<sup>th</sup> XO, Major Mumford, and also briefly met with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Commander, Col. Zinn.





## Warriors Given Royal Tour



*L to R: Dennis, Tom and Ed get a feel for the weapons of today.*

After the meeting, the guys were driven to a firing range to observe soldiers attempting to qualify for the EIB (Expert Infantry Badge). Marksmanship is one of the qualifying tasks needed to earn the EIB. After discussing how the rifle range was handled and the various EIB qualification requirements with many of the soldiers running the qualifying exercises, the veterans were asked if they would like the opportunity to shoot the M-4's currently carried by the troops. Their answer, of course, was an enthusiastic 'Yes!'.

A shooting station was assigned to each of the vets and each was supplied with a borrowed M-4 from one of the soldiers waiting to qualify. After a brief introduction to the M-4 (basically still very much like the M-16's carried in Vietnam), the vets were given 40 rounds of ammunition to fire. All the while they shot, they were watched by about 30 to 40 soldiers. All the vets were able to finish their allotted ammo without undo embarrassment and had a great deal of fun.

# Final Gala Ball Tops - off Trip

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The group later proceeded to the Fort Carson Special Events Center to attend a Change of Command ceremony for the 2/12<sup>th</sup>. LTC Dennis was being replaced by LTC Vasquez. The building held 600 to 700 troops and guests. Two 2/12<sup>th</sup> Vietnam vets also attended, Arnold Krause and Craig Schoonderwoerd. The RWVA veterans and their wives were introduced as special guests by the outgoing commander. After the introduction by LTC Dennis, the Vietnam veterans were given a standing ovation by everyone in the building. It was again, a very moving moment for all the Red Warriors and their wives.

After the ceremony, the group headed back to the hotel to get ready for the 1/12<sup>th</sup> Ball that was being held that evening at the hotel. Over 600 soldiers and guests attended the event. At the beginning of the Ball, The RWVA group was introduced to the attendees as special guests. The veteran's group that evening also included RWVA member Ron Reddy. That introduction was also followed by a standing ovation from all.

Soon there after, Ed Northrop presented engraved and decorated tomahawks to the CO of the 1/12<sup>th</sup>, LTC Mills, and to the 1/12<sup>th</sup> CSM Simonetti. LTC Mills will soon be replaced as the 1/12<sup>th</sup> CO by LTC Palmer.

After an enthusiastic Grog ceremony, dinner was served and was followed by music and dancing. Needless to say, the RWVA vets and their wives retired a great deal earlier than the current 1/12<sup>th</sup>



*L to R: Dennis & Kathy Witt, Tom and Barb Hedin*



Left: 2nd Brigade HQ - LTC Mills and CSM Simonetti (1/12<sup>th</sup>) - Ed Northrop presented both with keepsake engraved Tomahawks at the Gala Ball.



This 19 inch Tomahawk was presented to LTC Mills on behalf of the Vietnam Era Vietnam Vets. CSM Simonetti of the 1/12<sup>th</sup> LTC Dennis and CSM Speichert, 2/12<sup>th</sup> were also given Tomahawks which were inscribed with Regimental Crest, Red Warriors Forever, recipients name, Unit Motto "*Having Been Led By Love of Country*" and rank. Red Warrior's own Joe Yazzie created the decorations.



# Brotherhood Continues Thru Generations



*L to R: 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade HQ – CSM Speichert (2/12<sup>th</sup>), Tom, Dennis, Ed, LTC Dennis (2/12<sup>th</sup>), Arnold Krause and Craig Schoonderwoerd (2/12<sup>th</sup> Vietnam vets)*



*Above: Change of Command ceremony for the 2/12<sup>th</sup>*

VIDEO PANORAMA OF THE EVENT LOCATION - [CLICK HERE](#)