

NEWSLETTER

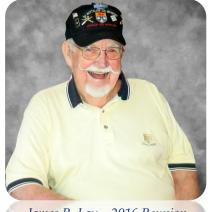


Serving in Vietnam (1966-1970) as Task Force Warrior, the men from 1st Battalion,12th Infantry Regiment, B Battery 4/42nd Artillery, and B Co. 4th Engineers, 4th Infantry Division (<u>redwarriors.us</u>)

COL James Lay (1927-2017) RIP

Battalion's First Commander Succumbed to Fatal Heart Attack

The 1/12th Regiment's first battalion commander in Vietnam, COL James Richard Lay, passed away January 17th. He was 89. To say he was a respected leader is an understatement, as he was truly loved by the men of his regiment. He served as Battalion Commander from 1966 to 1967 and led the advance party before the being joined in Pleiku by "Boat



James R. Lay – 2016 Reunion Photo credit: Dennis Witt Photoshop: Jim Daniels

People" who sailed from Ft. Lewis to Vietnam on the USNS General Nelson M. Walker.

Active in the Red Warriors Vietnam Association, COL Lay attended our most recent reunion in San Diego, California this last October where, once again, he renewed the friendships with his beloved Red Warriors.

COL Lay began his military career in 1949 and retired in 1974, having served in Turkey, Germany, Korea, Vietnam, and many stateside assignments. Red Warrior, Jerry Keller, C Company 1968, has written a comprehensive bio of COL Lay and it can be accessed by clicking this link.

SPRING 2017

FEATURED STORIES



pg 2 - COL Lay writes about the creation of the first Red Warrior Shirt



pg 3 - Red Warrior, Frank Evans, tells of his journey when he wrote his book "Stand To ...a Journey to Manhood"



pg 5 - Red Warrior Terrence Sund, finally laid to rest after 48 years. Navy vet corrects wrong.



pg 6 - Red Warrior KIA Irving C. Pierce, Jr. laid in an unmarked grave. Bob Harik finds family and initiates grave marker.



pg 8 - Next reunion September 2018 in Milwaukee, WI Registration opens September 2017.



pg 9 - Squad members reunite. Red Warrior, Jerry Rayala, looks



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pg 12 - President's Message - Herb Taylor

Having been led by love of country

Red Warriors Honor COL Lay - Serve as Pallbearers

Surrounded by friends, family, and brothers-in-arms, COL James Richard Lay was laid to rest with military honors in his home state of South Carolina. His special connection to the 12th Infantry Regiment was evident as members of his regiment, Red Warriors, served as pallbearers carrying him to his graveside and final resting place.

Rest in Peace, our beloved leader. To watch a brief video of the funeral ceremony – Click <u>here</u>.



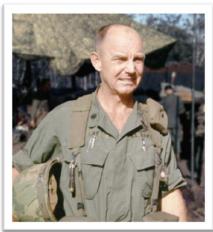
The History Behind First Red Warrior T-Shirt

By COL James Lay - Summer 2016

I have been asked by some Red Warriors about the history of the Red Warrior T- Shirts. Since I have personal knowledge, I thought I would summarize the history thinking it might be an appropriate article for the Quarterly Red Warrior Newsletter.

In 2005, I was a member of a Men's Fellowship Group at our Church. We met at 07:00 every Thursday morning. The program was rotated and when it came my turn, I talked about the Red Warriors and that our next reunion would be in Bismarck, SD. After the program was over, John Helberg, a member approached me and said he wanted to do something for the Red Warriors. John was a professional draftsman who drew patent specifications that were attached to patent applications.

We discussed several things such as caps and shirts. His detailed questions could be best answered by going to my home and showing him our Regimental Crest, the



LTC James Lay - Vietnam 1967

12th Infantry cross rifles, a Combat Infantryman's Badge, a 4th Infantry Division patch, etc. So, that is what we did. We sat in the den of my house and I answered his questions until he said he was satisfied with what he had seen and learned and suggested that he design the front of a Red Warrior T-Shirt. I agreed, and several weeks later he

called and said he wanted to show me what he had designe. He had drawn the face of Chief Red Cloud as the centerpiece, surrounded by the Regimental Crest, the Combat Infantryman's Badge and the 12th Infantry Cross Rifles. Across the top in bold letters **RED WARRIORS** and across the bottom

1ST BATTALION 12TH INF REGIMENT 4TH INF DIVISION RVN, 1966-1970 It was perfect!!! We went to a shirt company that he had used previously and discussed the production of the shirt. We decided to select the best quality red shirt (no fading). We asked that they be mailed to Bismarck, SD so as to arrive prior to the reunion. The answer was yes, so shortly thereafter when I had gotten number needed by size from Roger Hill, I placed an order for 125 be shipped to David Kraft in Bismarck.

The shirts arrived a day before the Reunion began and were a gift from me. What a thrill it was to see these proud Veterans all wearing their Red Warrior shirts!!!



Above, Chief Red Cloud, an Oglala Lakota leader, was an inspiration for the shirt design. COL Lay purchased the shirts for the 2002 Reunion.



Above: 2005 in Bismarck, SD. Reunion attendees wear their Red Warrior shirts for the very first time.

Frank Evans Reflects on Why He Wrote "Stand To ... A Journey Into Manhood"

By Frank Evans

As we of the Red Warriors know, combat is a unique and highly personal experience. For those of us who survived, it remains an important part of our memories. Thoughts often turn to those we remember who didn't survive and those who sacrificed their futures. They have forever influenced the survivors in some way and helped shape the individuals we have become.

Over the years, I have often thought of my time in Vietnam. Like many of us, I did not talk about my service there even when my children asked me, "What did you do in the war, Daddy?" Thirty-five years later I decided to write a journal of my time in Vietnam. Thus, it began as a journal for my children and developed into a series of vignettes in chronological order. I did not plan to publish it although I had been told that I was a good writer. That remained to be seen.

As my journal developed, it wrote itself. I was reliving my experiences and just captured them on my PC. One day I printed a copy and took it to my work to edit it during my lunch. Two of my fellow government contractors saw me editing it and asked to read it. I did not know that they were both published poets. To make a long story short; they said that I needed to publish it and helped me get it ready to go to a publisher.

My wife had terminal cancer at that time so I opted for the quickest way to get it in book form. It was published a few weeks before she died. From there I have two more books ready to publish and I own a small publishing company: Franklin Morrison Publishing. I used my father's last name before he went into the Army during WW II. That story is for another day. My book describes combat without a lot of blood and guts. Although technologies and weapons change, all soldiers throughout the ages experience similar emotions: loneliness, self-doubt, apprehension, joy, and sadness.



Red Warrior and author, Frank Evans

Stand To...A Journey to Manhood is my personal reflection into a crucial period in my life. That brief period served to mold many of my beliefs and ideals. A highly controversial and emotional time in our nation's history, I have tried to boil it down to how I felt and what I experienced. This is not a political commentary. I was a soldier performing my duties as I saw them. I intentionally left out any comments about what I thought about the war, the protests, the political maneuverings, and I have not passed judgment on anyone else. That is not what my book is about. I hope my readers take it as I meant it to be taken: a highly personal look into what I saw and felt during this period of my life.

I always knew how my book would start, but the painful memory kept my words inside all these years. What finally prompted me to act? Perhaps it was accepting that I am mortal and that age is creeping up on me. Prior to this realization, the physical act of putting these words to paper was simply too painful. I wouldn't allow myself to think about the agonizing circumstances that led me to volunteer for Vietnam. The devastating incident that caused me to volunteer for Vietnam was the death of my best friend. When my life was interrupted in a way that I couldn't foresee, it took a sharp turn that led me in a direction I hadn't imagined. Now I was a leading character in a dangerous war far removed from my innocent and

Continued Next page: STAND TO...

STAND TO...

Continued from page 3 - Red Warrior Author Frank Evans

carefree adolescence. I had to learn not only to survive but also to lead others in jungle combat. I salute all my brothers and sisters that served in combat. Only we know the loss of innocence we felt. We also know the feeling of brotherhood with those who served their country in uniform. My salute is also held steady for those that continue to serve.

Frank E. Franklin Evans. 2016

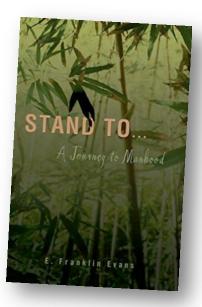


1LT Frank Evans served in Alpha Company 1968/69

Editors Note:

You can order Frank Evans "Stand to... A Journey to Manhood" through Amazon at the link below.

https://www.amazon.com/Stand-Journey-Manhood-Evans/dp/0595450539



Stand To... FACTS:

- Silver Award by the Branson Stars and Flags Association
- Editor's Choice and Publisher's Choice awards
- Founder's Award by the Military Writers Society of America
- Buy now on <u>Amazon</u> or Barnes & Noble

Check out our "Post a Message" page on our Red Warriors Website. Buddies are looking for buddies. Can you help? Click below.

http://www.redwarriors.us/tinc?key=AWdJP92P&start=-1&reverse=1

RED WARRIORS PX

http://www.redwarriors.us/regimental books.htm



COFFEE MUGS

Above, the Red Warrior coffee mugs reveal our regimental crest and the RW Association Logo designed by Red Warrior Joe Yazzie.

PRICE DROP: Mugs are \$8 each or two for \$15. Visit our Red Warrior PX on how to order this and other Red Warrior related items.



MONUMENT CARDS

Package of ten cards for only \$13.50. These Ultra high quality blank interior note cards can be used for all occasions, including holiday greetings. Show your Regimental roots. Includes envelopes.

Back of card tells of Monument Dedication. Artist: Michael Pearson.

Visit Red Warrior PX to order

VISIT RED WARRIOR WEBSITE NEWS PAGE FOR LATEST ASSOCIATION NEWS

Terrence Sund, KIA 1967 Remains Not Buried Navy Vet Took Action

It's one of those sad stories you hear about every once and a while. A soldier is killed, brought home and is somehow forgotten and never buried with the respect due. This is what happened to Red Warrior Terrence Sund, a Bravo



Company SP4 who drowned while searching an NVA tunnel in December of 1967. He was 20. A Wisconsin native, his remains were returned February 1967 and his ashes were placed in a storage room where they lay for 48 years because his family was indigent.



Somehow Navy veteran, Steve Conto, learned about this and, with the help of the American Legion and other veterans, raised \$5000 to move Sund's remains to the veterans' section of the

Wisconsin Memorial Park. There he was buried in 2016 with full military honors.

Since the discovery of Sund, the American Legion and the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs have partnered to ensure no other Wisconsin veterans are neglected. Together, they are working to reach out to the more than 450 funeral service providers in the state and crosscheck any names of possible veterans against the Department of Defense list of veterans. Now, the Wisconsin Legislature is taking up the issue in a bill that would release the remains of veterans to the VFW or American Legion if no next of kin claims them within ninety days after cremation. Then the Wisconsin VA will be able to arrange for burial in one of the state's veteran cemeteries. The goal, of course, is to insure that no one, like our Red Warrior, Terrence Sund is ever forgotten.

12th Infantry Regiment Monument Dedication May 31, 2017 National Infantry Museum



To honor the men who have so faithfully served in the 12th Infantry Regiment, the Regimental Chapter of the 4th Division will conduct a dedication ceremony that will take place on May 31, 2017 at 1 PM. Every 12th Infantry Regiment soldier is invited to attend. Additional information regarding the dedication event can be found by clicking this link:



Walk of Honor – future site of 12th Regiment Memorial Photo credit: Ed Northrop

The Walk of Honor is located behind the National Infantry Museum and Soldier Center, outside of Fort Benning, GA and is a site dedicated to the foot soldier of the U.S. Army.

If you are planning to attend the dedication ceremony, reserve your room at the <u>Hampton Inn Columbus/South-Fort Benning</u> 2870 South Lumkin Rd, Columbus, GA. Telephone 706-660-5550 [Group code **IRE**]

Unmarked for 49 Years, PFC Irving C. Pierce, Jr.'S Grave Now Has a Headstone... It Was Bob Harik's Last Wish.



Bob Harik's last find. Bob was on the trail for yet another missing

It was the late

Bob Harik

photograph of one of our fallen Red Warriors. In over two years of searching various leads, he had found over 100 of our 253 Red Warrior casualties. One man that eluded him was PFC Irving Clarence Pierce Jr.

Bob had followed dead-end leads for over a year searching for Irving Pierce, a Charlie Company private from the third platoon. Pierce was killed on February 11, 1968 during a battle on Hill 721, just north of Kontum City. Then Harik tracked down Irving's sister, Anna Pierce. Did she have a photo of her brother? Yes! But the story wasn't over yet.

Bob, who was in northern California, and Anna, who was in Maryland, communicated several times and it was during one of these chats that Bob learned that Irving's grave was unmarked. This so disturbed Bob that he was willing to pay for a grave marker himself. Red Warrior, Jim Daniels, developer of the casualty honor photo page on the Red Warrior Website, and who spoke with Bob often, coaxed Bob out of that idea. Daniels said that this was something that the Red Warriors Vietnam Association would take

care of. Irving was, after all, our brother. Daniels then worked with Anna through the steps for the Department of Veterans Affairs paperwork and he obtained various certifications required for the VA grave-marker application.

Sadly, Bob passed away of prostate cancer in late summer of 2016, but was content in the knowledge that he had found Irving's missing photo, and that a grave marker was in the process of being made.

This past November, the headstone was finally installed at the grave of Red Warrior, Irving Pierce, Jr. Still, it was not the end of the journey.

Red Warrior, Wilfred Plá, now enters the picture. Believing a ceremony was in order, he contacted Anna to explore her feelings about a graveside ceremony. She was very much interested. It was late fall and the holiday season was just beginning. Wilfred suggested February 11th, the anniversary of Pierce's death in Vietnam. They agreed and committed to being at the gravesite, even if they were the only two in attendance.

Wilfred contacted the Army Casualty Affairs Office at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst and secured the approval for the military honors ceremony. He worked with Anna to procure the documents required by the Army in order to provide the honor guard and bugler.

Continued Next page: Irving Pierce Jr.



PFC Irving C. Pierce, Jr.



Red Warriors Wilfred Plá and John Bauer laid a wreath on behalf of all Red Warriors. It was placed next to the new grave marker for PFC Irving Pierce, Jr.



Irving Pierce Jr. Continued from page 6

As the February day approached, he emailed the Vietnam Red Warriors in the New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Maryland area, hoping to have some in attendance. He and Anna spoke often through the month of January and he was excited to learn that Anna had invited family members to attend the ceremony.

On February 11, 2017, exactly 49 years after he was killed in action in Vietnam, Private First Class Irving Clarence Pierce, Jr. was given a military honors ceremony and a religious graveside service.

Approximately forty Pierce family members attended the ceremony. Wilfred's wife, Karen and his brother, Army veteran, Felipe Plá and his wife Helen, were also in attendance. Alpha company Red Warrior, John Bauer and his granddaughters, Carly and Kendra, drove from Bloomsburg, PA to honor PFC Pierce. John and Wilfred laid a wreath at the graveside. The wreath, provided by the Red Warriors Vietnam Asociation, had the colors of the 12th Infantry Regiment crest and ivy leaves, symbolic of the 4th Infantry Division.

Rest in Peace, Irving!



Anna Pierce, Irving Pierce's sister, accepts his flag during the February 11, 2017 ceremony. Red Warrior Wilfred Plá stands next to Anna.

Words of Appreciation

After the ceremony, Wilfred Plá received this message from the niece of Red Warrior Irving Pierce, Jr.

"Wilfred, we appreciate everything that the Red Warriors have done for our family! Words can't even describe how overwhelmed I am and just how grateful we are. I never got the chance to meet my uncle and for my mom there was really no closure until yesterday! I feel like she accepted the fact that he died but closure was definitely given yesterday! God Bless you all! Just know we are truly appreciative of your time that was given and how much you all were so warm and welcoming!"



Red Warrior, John Bauer, salutes after laying a wreath at the grave of brother-in-arms, PFC Irving Pierce, Jr. Bauer traveled from Pennsylvania to attend the ceremony.

Red Warriors Reunion: September 3 – 5, 2018 Embassy Suites by Hilton Milwaukee Brookfield



Embassy Suites by Hilton Milwaukee Brookfield has been selected as the site of the 2018 Red Warriors Vietnam Associations Reunion to be held September 3-5, 2018. A feature that's bound to please everyone is the complimentary breakfasts that are included with your room reservation. The result should be a much lower registration fee that we've had in over four years. And, for the first time, a professionally prepared reunion photo book is being offered.

Information on our 2018 reunion will be posted in the weeks ahead on our Red Warriors website News page and via email notifications. We hope to open reunion registration on September 1, 2017. Dennis and Kathy Witt, our Wisconsin reunion hosts, are planning a wonderful time in Brew Town – Milwaukee!

To learn more about the hotel, <u>click here</u>.

TripAdvisor reviews





Local cuisine specialties include German and Polish fare, but a must for every visitor is hot deep-fried cheese curds. It's a Wisconsin tradition, just like bratwurst. They'll melt in your mouth! Cheddar and a beer anyone?



Viewed from Lake Michigan, the downtown Milwaukee skyline with the Art Museum front and center. It's famous moveable sunscreen with a 217-foot wingspan that unfolds and folds twice daily; and the Reiman Bridge, a pedestrian suspension bridge that connects the Museum to the city.

2016 Reunion - Squad Members Reconnect After 46 Years

October 2016 - Two Red Warriors show up for the Vietnam Red Warriors Association reunion in San Diego. It's the first reunion for both of them and neither knew what to expect.

In June of 1969, twenty-six year old Jerry Rayala was a "Shake-n-Bake" E5 Sergeant sent to Charlie Company. In retrospect Rayala was considered an "old guy." Assigned as squad leader in the 1st platoon he entered the field just days after the June 27th battle which had diminished the ranks of Charlie company by sixty percent, and one in which the battalion commander, LTC Robert Carter, had been killed. It was a spooky time for the battalion. His first taste of combat would arrive just days later on June 5th.

Weeks later, Randy Lee, joined the unit as yet another FNG replacement. He too was assigned to 1st Platoon as a member of Rayala's squad. The following days turned into months and the two shared the daily routines of deterring leeches, eating Cs, humping mountains and crossing the rivers of the Central Highlands. Both saw action and received Purple Hearts. Both soldiers finished their tour in the field and had last seen each other in early 1970 as they left Camp Radcliff, then the 4th Infantry Division's base camp.

Of course, it was during the October reunion that they reconnected after 47 years. Rayala recalls how he decided to attend the reunion.

"I could feel the tension begin to drain away"



Sgt. Jerry Rayala 1969

"Attending my first Red Warrior reunion in San Diego was a gift I never expected. To back up for a minute, my journey to San Diego actually began about four years earlier when fellow Red Warrior, Jim Daniels, tracked me down where I was living in Northern Wisconsin. Up to that time I had no idea the

organization existed, let alone had been holding reunions for a number of years. Jim quickly got me up to speed and introduced me to the Red Warrior website. There I found a wealth of information.



At the 2016 reunion, Jerry Rayala and Randy Lee share memories and catch up on each other's lives since their Vietnam tour.

I didn't know what to expect and I was somewhat apprehensive about the whole reunion experience. Returning from Vietnam had been difficult for me, and like many Vietnam vets, I had to stuff my feelings in the closet and move on with my life as best I could. The thought of opening those doors again was causing me some anxiety. But I had one strong factor working in my favor. Earlier in the year I had undergone posttraumatic stress counseling through the VA and it provided the lift I needed.

Once at the reunion and meeting with the other guys, I could feel the tension begin to drain away. Before long I was feeling the camaraderie...much like we experienced in Vietnam. Talking became easier and it was comforting to start making connections after all these years. I was especially pleased to connect with one of my squad members, Randy Lee. He and his wife Bobbi were also first-time attendees at the reunion. It had been 46 years since I last saw Randy but some of the stories still seemed fresh in our minds.

The reunion programs certainly helped give me a better perspective of the role the Red Warriors played in the war. Beginning with the "Boat People," we all faced grueling conditions and a tenacious enemy during the years the battalion was deployed there. Our sacrifices were brought to the forefront at the reunion when a somber tribute was paid to the 253 men who gave all for our country.

I highly recommend that everyone who can, attend the 2018 reunion in Milwaukee. It is truly a rewarding and healing experience. I look forward to seeing many of you there!"

Jerry Rayala Charlie Company, 1st Platoon (1969-70)

2016 Reunion in San Diego, California A Time to Renew Old Friendships, and Make New Ones



A reunion is a time to renew old friendships and to meet new buddies. San Diego was no exception. Above, our battalion group photo.

Tours to the USS Midway, a harbor tour, a shopping trip, a visit to our fallen Red Warriors' graves, and good chow. It all fit into our three-day event.

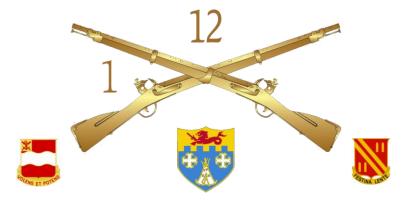




TREASURER'S REPORT

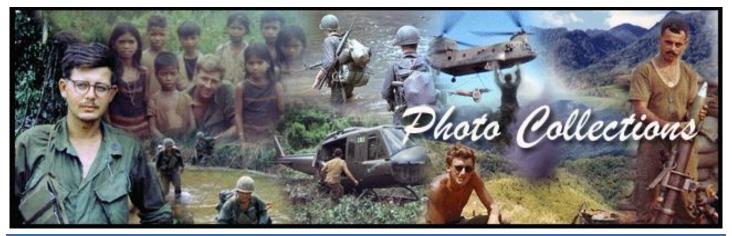
John Beckman Association Treasurer Red Warriors Vietnam Association

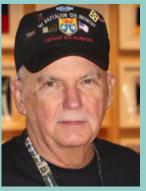
Date	Category	Withdrawal/Payment	Deposit/Credit	Balance
12/28/16	Opening balance		\$1,434.52	\$1,434.52
01/10/17	Registration fees - Milwaukee reunion		1,295.00	2,729.52
01/12/17	Food & Beverage - Milwaukee reunion	1,000.00		1,729.52
02/27/17	Refund - San Diego reunion	540.00		1,189.52
02/28/17	Returned check	81.00		1,108.52
03/02/17	Postage	49.00		1,059.52
03/07/17	Donations to RWVA		4,290.00	5,349.52
03/07/17	Funeral tributes	534.00		4,815.52
03/07/17	Supplies - bank checks	23.08		4,792.44
03/07/17	Miscellaneous - reunion supplies	545.95		4,246.49
Total		\$2,773.03	\$7,019.52	\$4,246.49



VISIT OUR PHOTO ARCHIVE PAGE

OVER 6000 PHOTOGRAPHS WITH OVER 2 MILLION VISITORS WORLDWIDE





President's Message - Herb Taylor

Greetings to all Red Warrior friends,

The holiday season is behind us and hopefully everyone had a great Christmas holiday and I wish all of you a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. As everyone knows, we lost our battalion Guiding Light, COL James Richard Lay, this past January. He will be sorely missed at our future reunions for sure. I always enjoyed the reunion greetings that he delivered.

The contract for the 2018 Milwaukee reunion is signed and the initial deposit has been made. The plans are well under way and we should all look forward to the things that Dennis and Kathy Witt are putting together for us. We plan to open registrations as soon as the Embassy Suites by Hilton in Brookfield, Wisconsin begins to accept reservations on September 1, 2017. Look for information soon on our website.

The dedication ceremony for the 12th Infantry Regiment Monument is on schedule. It will be held May 31, 2017 at 1:00 PM at the National Infantry Museum in Columbus, Georgia. We would really love to see as many Red Warriors attend as possible. There is absolutely no doubt that the Red Warriors have knocked themselves out with donations to make this undertaking a reality. Your donations, large or small, have been a Godsend to the project. We do have a block of rooms at the Hampton Inn Fort Benning South. Phone reservations can be made by calling 706-442-3961. The room rate is \$115 + tax per night. Use Group Code "IRE" when you call to get the discounted rate.

Our hats off to the late Bob Harik and to Jim Daniels and Wilfred Plá for their work on the tribute to our fallen brother, PFC Irving C. Pierce, Jr. (story on page 6).

I extend also, my sincere thanks to the dozens of Red Warriors who helped us with their generousdonations to the Red Warriors Vietnam Association. We raised over \$4K. I appreciate it greatly. Although some of our Vietnam Red Warriors have held company and mini reunions over the years, I believe that it is because of our association that we, as a battalion, have been able to assemble in large numbers. Since 2003, we've held battalion reunions in Fort Carson, Bismarck, St. Louis, San Antonio, Washington, DC, and San Diego. These have become wonderful opportunities to rekindle the spirit of brotherhood that binds us and to stroll down memory lane with the only people who truly understand our journey. Your donation reflects your commitment to ensuring that our association will remain able to have these wonderful reunions and continue its work to document the history of our Vietnam service. This is a legacy that we will leave for our children and the generations that will follow them.

Sincerely,

Herb Taylor
President











RED WARRIORS NEWSLETTER

Volunteers publish the Red Warriors Vietnam Association Newsletter periodically. We solicit contributions for future newsletters in the form of story articles, photographs, and events that would interest our fellow Red Warriors..

For this edition, special thanks to John Beckman, Jim Daniels, Frank Evans, James Lay, Wilfred Plá, Jerry Rayala, Herb Taylor and all photo contributors. Any photo, article contribution, comments or suggestions should be sent to: jimdaniels1410@gmail.com You can call Jim at 715-383-2662. Views or comments in this publication are those of the authors and do not express the opinions or views of the organization. The Red Warrior Vietnam Association is a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated to preserving the memory of the men who served in Vietnam with the 1/12th Infantry Regiment, B Battery 4/42nd Artillery and B Co. 4th Engineers - 4th Infantry Division 1966-1970.