



8th Battalion 4th Artillery Association

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<http://www.8th-4th-arty.com>

News From The Battalion

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Notes from the President

Hello veterans of the 8th Battalion 4th Artillery who served in Vietnam. This letter is primarily to inform everyone of the Reunion for 2008. The reunion will be held in Washington, D.C. next spring. Preliminary details are included in this newsletter. Reunion information will be updated from time to time on our website at:

<http://www.8th-4th-arty.com/reunion2008notice1>

I would urge anyone who is coming to register so that we will have a headcount and know how many to plan to attend. These reunions just keep getting better and better each time we have one. If you don't know until the last minute, come on anyway. I am looking forward to seeing you there.

The first week in this past August, several of us and our wives met in Wall, South Dakota for a get-together. We had a wonderful time, and I met members of the Battalion whom I had not known previously.

If you are not a member of the Association, I would urge you to join. The dues are \$15 dollars a year. The money goes for many useful things, such as the cost of printing and mailing the newsletters, maintaining our web site, flowers for funerals of deceased members of the entire Battalion whether or not they were a member of the Association, and other related expenses. For Association information, see:

<http://www.8th-4th-arty.com/assn>

Come on and join us in DC, for the time of your life!!! If you have never been to the "Wall," the next reunion in May, 2008, is the time to plan to go.

Carl Lanier, President

Notes from the Reunion 2008 Committee Chairman

Information for Reunion 2008 - Join us in Washington D.C.

More information will be included in a subsequent newsletter. In the meanwhile check our web site from time to time where this notice will be updated.

Reunion Headquarters: Sheraton National in Arlington, Virginia

Arrival Date: Friday, May 2, 2008

Departure Date: Tuesday - May 6, 2008

Hotel Information: Sheraton National in Arlington, Virginia

Room rates are \$98.12 per day, including tax -- for 1 or 2 per room.

Parking in the hotel's garage: \$5 per day

When calling for reservations, BE SURE to say the reservation is for the 8th Battalion, 4th Artillery Reunion - to get the discount rate. Reservations: 888-625-5144. Anyone who wishes to stay beyond Tuesday (like for a vacation) will pay \$120.17 per day, including tax -- for 1 or 2 in-a-room.

More Reflections on the 2006 Battalion Reunion

I have been requested to provide more information about Reunion 2006 for the benefit of those who have never attended one of our reunions. Hopefully, the following reflections of Reunion 2006 will encourage everyone to join us in Washington, D.C. in May 2008.

In the summer of 2006 there were numerous meetings to plan, coordinate, and prepare for the reunion of the battalion scheduled for August 11-12, 2006. There were so many unknowns and so many decisions that still had to be made. At this reunion we were going to dedicate a memorial to the brave men that lost their lives in Vietnam. We wanted everything to be perfect.

We did not reach the goal of perfection, but the memories of those two days will never be forgotten by the men and the ladies who did attend the reunion. It all started on August 10 as people began to gather at the hotel from all over the United States and even from Australia. While the ladies observed in awe, and admiration, the back slapping, the hugging, the crying, and the laughter went on well into the night. Those that were responsible for the next two days were still scurrying around trying to get the "perfect expectation goals met".

It promised to be a hot day in the Lawton-Fort Sill area as we boarded the busses on August 11 to get to the site where we were to dedicate our memorial. With our prayers and with the orders of the general the heat did not materialize. It was a beautiful day at Fort Sill. Fluffy clouds provided the setting and a soft breeze caused our 27 flags to wave proudly throughout the ceremony.

The program itself was conducted with the utmost dignity. Without a master of ceremony each program participants reacted on their cue. The eloquent words spoken by General Smith and Brian O'Neil, the moving prayer by Don Brodie, and the remarks made by the commanders at Fort Sill made this a moment in time that will never be forgotten. The name of each of our fallen brother was read aloud and then the beautiful monument was unveiled. The program ended with the haunting notes of "TAPS" drifting across the plains of Oklahoma causing more tears to be shed as we once again had time to reflect.

The memorial is a master of art. It was designed by Frank James, and is placed in a prominent location

at Fort Sill and it will last through the ages as a reminder of the 27 brave men who gave their lives that others might live. It is also a living reminder to each of us that but for the grace of God our name is not chiseled in that beautiful piece of granite.

After the ceremony there were more hugs, tears, laughter, and picture taking. We then boarded buses to travel to our host battalion where we were greeted by the unit commander who had escorts to take us to his dining facility. We spent the remainder of the day visiting with the soldiers and watching them train. . We all watched in awe as these young kids conducted realistic training and of course we were reminded that we were all young once in a more serious environment and we realized that some of these same young men were soon to be deployed to a war zone to take up where we left off some 35 odd years ago.

It was a long day that culminated with an excellent buffet meal around the pool at the hotel. I am told that some extended the day even longer as they tried to tell and retell some of the same stories in the bar area of the hotel.

August 12, was another busy day. We were escorted back to Fort Sill and met there by Bill Kindt who spoke of the history and the long traditions of the artillery here at his post. It was fun to watch the men crawl over the 175 gun that is in the Fort Sill Museum. It seemed as if each had a story to tell, and all had to sit in the seats and reflex. We had a great lunch at Furr's cafeteria and then a tour of some of the places of interest here in SW Oklahoma. The evening was reserved for our banquet and once again the food was great, the program light and entertaining, but also included moving remarks by Mrs. De Herrera as she told stories of the memories of her father, 1st Sergeant Pedro De Herrera, who was killed in Vietnam. Some will say too many door prizes caused some restlessness but no one left afraid they would miss out on one of the prizes. As the evening drew to a close we were all quite tired but none wanted it to end so soon.

The next morning good byes were said over breakfast and soon the hotel was empty. As quickly as they had appeared three days earlier they were gone. Now as these same men read this they are deciding if they are going to be in Washington for the next reunion, I certainly hope so, as what other bond could draw men closer together than what we experienced in a place called Vietnam.

Joe Talley

Association Officers and Executive Committee

<u>Officers</u>	<u>Members of Executive Committee</u>		
Carl Lanier, President	Charles Adams	Bill Kindt	Larry Martin
Brian O'Neill, Vice-President	Gene Ghio	Terry Johnson	Bill Prichard
Bill Prichard, Secretary	Dan Hafeman	Carl Lanier	Brian O'Neill
Charles Adams, Treasurer	Fred James	Gerald Mazur	Charles White

Reunion Committee

Gerald F. Mazur, Chairman	Carl Lanier
Terry J. Johnson	Ed Rutherford
Chris Cunningham	Ike Smith - Maj. Gen. - Retired
Gene Ghio	
Terry Johnson	

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