



Christmas Newsletter 2008

Class 24-66 Artillery O.C.S. ~ Formed 1 May 1966 – Graduated 11 Oct 1966

Honoring Those Lost In Service:

James F. Fuhrman, Michael L. Phillips, Donn L. Sweet, Warren L. Wozencraft, John S. Hughes, Jr.

Web Site www.ccil.org/~wambinam

Web Update – Jim Wambold

During the 33 months our web has been available on the internet, we've had nearly 7,000 visits to the site. Not bad for a small, low-budget operation with a narrow scope.

During the year we have found an additional 3 class members (Lin Accurso, Mike Herring and Bob Brown) along with a former class member who graduated in another class (Ron VanDyck).

Of note is that Lin Accurso completed over 32 years of military service and retired as a Colonel. I have informed him that he qualifies as an inductee to the Artillery O.C.S. Hall of Fame.

We still need your help in locating several grads who we have not accounted for yet. They are: Bloodgood, Bowen, Dowling, Griffin, McCauley, McLaughlin, Mullholland, O'Neill, Parrish, Peake, Shelton, St. Clair, Taylor, Thompson, Williams and Wolf. If you have any leads, please contact the webmaster.

If any of you have not submitted your military career updates for inclusion on our web, please take a few minutes and bring us up-to-date on your life after O.C.S. You may use the form on our site, write it in an e-mail, send as an attachment, or mail it.

Chaps' Corner – Rev. Sam Dauer WHAT IS IMPORTANT?

Many of us are retired now and the rest are nearing retirement. From my early days as a young officer candidate, I wanted to do 30 years (Hey, I was a "lifer") and then I would retire to a life of leisure. Well, my life took many twists and turns, I was always on overload, working long hours, doing evening college classes, C&GS and War College by correspondence. I had to make some "bold range" changes along the way, but I had my target in sight and I was going to get there. Fortunately, OCS prepared me for that life style. Remember how we had more to do than we had time to do everything? Also, recall how we had to decide what was important and how we let other stuff slide, paying the price, sometimes painfully on the MB4? Well, I've been retired now for over three years and the life of leisure still hasn't happened. During my "working" years I let stuff slide, particularly the "honey do" list, now it has all caught up with me. The back stairs needing replacing, the dripping faucets, painting of window frames, and the rest of the endless list. The fishing has risen on my things to do, but not as far as I had hoped. Still, one very important thing has risen high on my list, I regret that it took forty years for it to do so, and that is getting in touch and keeping in touch with my friends. We were contemporaries, friends and brothers-in-arms, we still are. Get in touch, stay in touch, and make it an important part of your life.

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

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Share Your Photos – Larry Swank

Nothing takes you back like a photo or snapshot of that souvenir. Below is a photo of Warren Wozencraft working over some underclassman. It was sent in by Bob Brown.



Below is a keepsake I got as a much younger man ...



If you have some photos to share please contact me at this address: lswank@aol.com. I provide a service that works well. You can send slides, photos and documents and I will scan them and run them through Photoshop CS to bring them back to life. I can also send you some recommended standards if you want to do the scanning on your end.

Thanks to everyone who has sent in photos. They bring back some good memories.

40 Years Ago This Month !! "Coming Home", by Jim Wambold

As background, I spent my first 6 months in-country as Artillery liaison officer to the 1/20 Infantry and the 1/1 Cavalry. I then "volunteered" to become an advisor to the Vietnamese RF/PF forces in the Quang Ngai area. My MOS was changed to that of an Infantry Advisor and the last half of the tour was spent in the field with the most poorly supplied, ill-trained, unmotivated bunch of soldiers on earth.

Finally, on 8 November 1968, my replacement arrived. I spent the next three weeks introducing him to the leadership of the RF/PF Battalions and Companies we advised and taking him along on the daily field missions. On 26 November, with the Major's permission, I took myself off the field duty list and began packing my meager belongings for the anticipated trip home.

After several days of out-processing I hopped a transport plane from Da Nang to Saigon on 1 December. I was assigned to a sleeping barracks and given a departure time for the "Freedom Bird" on 3 December. While in the barracks I was approached by a Major who seemed to remember me from our time in Hawaii. He was from either the 4/3 or 3/1 but I immediately remembered how much I hated the guy (I forget why). We shook hands, talked for a while and congratulated each other for "surviving". Toward the end of the conversation he inquired if I'd join him for dinner that evening in downtown Saigon. Well, putting my dislike aside, I agreed to a free dinner.

We, and two other officers he had invited, walked several blocks to a large hotel. We trekked up the seven flights of stairs to a huge ballroom on the top floor. The maitre d', dressed in dark slacks, white dinner jacket and black bow tie, greeted us and put us at a table near a large open window. The whole perimeter of the room was lined with windows and the view of the bustling town below was strange to me.

After several gin Martinis we ordered steaks, French fries, salad and a couple bottles of French red wine. I even started to like the Major ... at least he had style !! After dinner and dessert we headed back to the barracks via every honkey-tonk beer bar we passed. We managed to get out of town before the mandatory curfew of midnight.

The next day was spent with additional out-processing, debriefings, and picking-up our packets of orders for the flight home and our next duty assignments.

On the morning of 3 December I boarded the "Freedom Bird" for an uneventful flight to Oakland, California and, believe it or not, more processing. I do not remember any feeling of emotion in leaving RVN or returning to the states. I was still alive with only minor dings and dents ... another survivor.

Before departing Oakland on a flight home to Philadelphia I found a discarded field jacket in a trash can, ripped-off the name tag and stripes, and draped it on my skinny, tanned body. It was chilly in California and I knew it would be even colder in Philly.

My parents met my flight at the Philadelphia airport. They didn't recognize me at first. The field jacket was a size or two too large, I was carrying a huge duffel bag, my SKS rifle war trophy, and my handle-bar mustache extended a full 10 inches from side-to-side.

The first words out of Mom's mouth were, "you can leave that gun here, the war's over. You can shave when you get home". I guess she "didn't get it".

Anyhow, I arrived at my home, stowed my gear, cleaned-up a bit (left the handlebar on), put on a set of civvies and began telephoning my old buddies from town to see if they wanted to get together for a night of drinking. Shit, after nearly four years, most had graduated college and had begun their careers, others were still in graduate school (a deferment ploy), and the rest were serving our country.

After one week at home I decided to fly to my next duty assignment at Fort Sill, Oklahoma and spent the next three weeks of leave decompressing there ... among those who "got it".

I stayed in the service for another couple of years. This helped tremendously in my readjustment to being back in the "world". I've been married to the same gal for nearly 40 years, retired four years ago from a job I had held for over thirty-two years, and still wear that little silver and blue CIB every chance I get.