

Clair R. Palmer / 3d Platoon

1. My wife Ilene and I live in Lehi, Utah, about 30 miles south of Salt Lake City. We will celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary in August of 2017. We have four grown children with families and are therefore blessed with 14 wonderful grandchildren. They, of course, are the light of our lives. I am mostly retired, but still see patients two days a week, mostly to keep myself busy and, hopefully, keep my mind somewhat sharp. I have been practicing optometry for 40 years and still enjoy it. In the past I have been active in Kiwanis and Rotary, as well as optometric activities, but now I mostly just have time for family and travel. Our favorite way to spend time is with family: ball games, Sunday dinner, Lake Powell trips in the summer, Thanksgiving in St. George, and any other excuse to get together. Our favorite hobby is travel. Ilene has been a travel agent for over 30 years, so we have been able to go to a lot of places together and hope to get in a few more trips before age and/or health slows us down. Our favorite destination is anywhere in Europe, and we have been able to visit most of the countries there. We also greatly enjoy visiting places in the U.S. and only have two more states to visit until we can check off all fifty from our list.

2. I was one of the very lucky OC24-69 graduates who had the privilege of being stationed at Ft. Lewis, Washington. I had the "honor" of being the training officer in a basic training company and went through basic three more times. One fun sidelight was surprising the NCO Drill Sergeants by stepping in and teaching, without notes, any of the classes they usually taught. I guess, by the time we had gone through Basic, AIT and OCS, we all knew how to do those things rather well. One of my best memories was when I was trying to stay awake in a battalion meeting, sitting in for my CO. All of a sudden they announced that all of the 2LTs in the battalion would be staying on base for ten (rather than four) months before shipping to Nam. That got my attention! My wife and I treasured the extra time together. When I got to Vietnam in 1971, like many others, I was on a MAT, attempting to help the locals take care of themselves. I didn't see a lot of action, but enough to earn a CIB, and made it through without a scratch. The last three months of my tour I was reassigned to Can Tho and worked with CORDS ("winning hearts and minds") as a pay officer for hundreds of Vietnamese employees. I handled a ton of money, had it pretty soft, and didn't get shot at anymore.

3. Upon my return to CONUS, I picked up my wife and daughter in Utah and enrolled in optometry school at the University of Southern California. I graduated four years later in 1976 and returned to Utah where I have lived and practiced optometry ever since. I work with the Moran Eye Center which is a large eye care and research center, part of the University of Utah School of Medicine. Back in Utah, a friend talked me into giving the Air Force National Guard a try. I joined a medical unit as their optometrist and managed to hold on for 18 years until I retired as a LTC. I felt I played an important role as I was able to keep a lot of flyers flying. I also was able to go to Belarus and Morocco on humanitarian missions.

4. Remembrances of OCS? Does anyone else remember the day when we returned to the company area for chow at noon and Captain Smith announced that, from now on, the last platoon for lunch would run the Airborne track with him? Well, the good old Third Platoon was last that day, so we stripped off our shirts and took off with the CO to do a little run. As we were running nothing was said, but we all realized that we ran this track almost daily and CPT Smith didn't. So, as one, we slowly increased our speed so that before long we were actually running and not jogging like we normally did. We were fine, but the CO seemed about ready to collapse as we came back to our company area. For some reason, he never showed up at lunch time again. The other five platoons should realize that they all owe Third Platoon, and big time.

Gary L. Pals / 1st Platoon

1. I live in Clinton, Iowa and maintain a large yard and garden. I also do some volunteer landscaping work at my church. I have four children and eleven grandchildren. In September 2013 my wife was diagnosed with bile duct cancer; I spent the next 22 months as the primary care giver. She passed away on July 8, 2015. My children live in Oregon, Michigan, Indiana, and Missouri, so I spend a great deal of time traveling to visit the grandchildren. I also do some snow-birding in Florida just to get away from the Iowa winters for a while.

2. The Monday after graduation I had hernia surgery, so I spent a week in the hospital at Ft. Benning. A month later I got married, and a month after that I went to Schweinfurt, Germany assigned to the 1st BN, 30th Infantry, 3rd Infantry Division. I was a platoon leader, Executive Officer and Company Commander. Schweinfurt was near the East German/Czechoslovakian border. I got out in March 1972.

3. After I got out I went back to school for a while and then started working at Ralston

Purina. I spent 38 years with the company, mostly in Quality Assurance and Food Safety. Everyone wants their dog food to be safe and high quality. I retired in April 2011 and spent a couple of years doing some of the projects I promised I would do, when I had the time.

4. As for OCS, the first thing that comes to mind is "cooperate and graduate." It led to a close-knit group of people, and I know the support of others helped me get through. I remember spending all the money I had in my pocket on ice cream treats the first time the pogy bait truck came around. I think it was during the compass course. I remember walking tours when the red flag for heat warning went up, so we stood at parade rest until it came back down and then finished our tours. I remember the brass pickers knowing where we were supposed to have our ambushes on the FTX. I also remember a small homestead overgrown with Kudzu and an old man sitting on the porch in a rocker. I remember how really loooong the Airborne track was the first morning, especially when we started around it for the second time.

I remember Bob Winship doing his “cool-down” laps faster than I was running for time in the PT test.

Roland Pascua / 6th Platoon

William (Bill) N. Pascual / 1st Platoon

Bill passed away October 25, 2017. Please see his obit in the “In Memoriam” section of this website

Brooke Pearson / 5th Platoon

1. I am a fully recovered attorney. After 27 years of practice, mostly for the State of Vermont, I "retired" in 2002 and began a second career teaching at Montpelier High School. After twelve fun years at that, I really retired in June, 2015. After retirement, Betty (my wife of 49 years) and I moved to Fripp Island, off of Beaufort, SC. As we headed south to our retirement home (I driving an 18-foot Penske truck and pulling my car on a trailer and Betty following in her car), we realized that Hurricane Matthew would offer a few obstacles. As it turned out, the hurricane tore off shingles and siding, destroyed windows and doors, and flooded our entire first floor with 37 inches of sea water. Repair work has taken six months, but we're almost there, and we're looking forward to having the life here we imagined and also to introducing Fripp Island to our Seattle son, daughter-in-law, and three grandchildren and to our St. Louis daughter.

2. After OCS, I spent ten months as a 4.2 inch mortar platoon leader in a mechanized infantry battalion at Fort Hood, TX, getting to know David Young, Mike Myers, and Tom Edgren, among other classmates also stationed there. At the end of that assignment (typical Army), I was sent back to Fort Benning for six weeks of 4.2 inch mortar platoon leader training (after which I never saw a mortar of any size until I was in the Reserves, years later). Then, on July 4, 1970, it was off to Vietnam with many other graduates of OC 24-69. I was assigned to MACV and for six months, I served as Team Leader of MAT 14 in and around An Loc in Binh Long Province in III Corps near the Cambodian border, the last month or so with John Foote as my assistant. Happily, that area was pretty quiet after our invasion of Cambodia and our operations with local RF companies were uneventful. I spent my last five months in country with USAID in Bien Hoa, theoretically helping the Vietnamese master public opinion polling and putting into English the survey reports that they had prepared. I was hired for the job by an obnoxious and obsequious civilian, not because of any particular skills or experience, but because I, like his boss, Ambassador Richard Funkhouser, had graduated from Princeton and he thought he would get in the big guy's favor by bringing me on board. On Memorial Day, 1971, I flew home with many OC 24-69 classmates and no plans of ever putting on a uniform again. Four years later, however, I joined the 1035th USAR School, at which I taught for ten years. Among other military courses, I

finally got back to my specialty, 4.2 inch mortars. During that time, I branch transferred to the JAG Corps. When the Army insisted that I transfer to a line unit and become an S-3 in order to stay in the Reserves, I graciously declined and “retired” as a Major.

3. After returning from Vietnam, I went to graduate school for a year at the University of Pennsylvania in its Master of City Planning program and then to Georgetown for law school. In 1975, Betty and I decided to move to Vermont, where I practiced with a law firm in Burlington for four years before moving to the state capital, Montpelier, and working for the next 23 years in several different legal positions in State government. Then, at the end of 2002, I took early retirement from the State in order to follow my dream of going into teaching. After a year of graduate school at UV-Montpelier, I began an incredibly fun and rewarding 12-year teaching and coaching career at Montpelier High School, from which I retired in 2015.

4. One of my first memories was volunteering to be platoon leader at our first platoon meeting with LT Sullivan. Of course, we all knew better than to volunteer for anything, but after what seemed like an interminable amount of time waiting for someone to step forward, I just said to hell with it and raised my hand. I fondly remember singing “Scarborough Fair” with Tom Edgren at our Intermediate Status Party, the program for which Betty designed. With bemusement, I remember hitting the APC (Armored Personnel Carrier) shell target on my first attempt with a 60 mm mortar and receiving a rousing cheer from my fellow candidates in the bleachers at the range. And I remember being the “narrator” at our graduation ceremony on 1 August 1969 and Betty pinning on my bars afterwards.

Lawrence (Larry) R. Peterson, JR / 3rd Platoon

1. My wife Janet and I (we’re going on 50 years!) are living happily in Salt Lake City, Utah. I am still working as a lawyer. We have been blessed with six children and sixteen grandchildren.

2. After OCS I was sent to Ft. Carson, Colorado and served as a scout platoon leader for the 3rd Battalion, 11th Infantry (Mechanized). I then spent 11 months in Vietnam with MACV pulling operations in Binh Doung Province, in the “Iron Triangle,” just north of Saigon, with the Vietnamese Regional Force/Popular Force (village defense) units. I returned and was discharged from the Army.

3. After spending two years as a public affairs representative for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Manhattan, New York, I returned to Salt Lake City, Utah and attended the University of Utah Law School. I have practiced law in Salt Lake City since 1974. Currently, I am writing Java (Oracle) programs for my law firm.

4. My special OCS memory was meeting my wife and baby son in the parking lot each week to exchange the candidates’ laundry for new starch.

Stephen C. Porter / 3rd Platoon

1. Phyllis and I have been married 33 years and live on a golf course in Allen, Texas where the sunsets are free. I have two daughters from my first marriage – Hillary lives in the Dallas area and has two sons aged 21 and 6. Her younger sister, Hester lives in Hamburg, Germany where she is trying to decide what she wants to do when she grows up. I'm still working and we spend time taking care of our fathers - hers is 93 and mine is 97. They will probably outlive us. We enjoy jazz and in April we will be back in Colorado Springs for our 10th Weekend of Jazz at the Broadmoor. I try (emphasis on try) to play golf every weekend and I have written short stories over the years. Some are based on my Army experiences and several have actually been published. We are fortunate to have friends here and to have been able to travel as frequently as my schedule allows. Mike Myers and I are still good friends. He's in Ft. Worth, but we see each other several times a year.

2. My first stop after OCS was Amarillo, TX to appear as a fuzzy-headed groomsman in newly-minted 2LT Mike Myers' wedding. Then it was off to lovely Ft. Polk, LA where I spent a year in a Basic Training company. I was XO, training officer, mess officer, supply officer and possibly latrine officer. For most of that year I lived off-post in a mobile home with fellow 50th Company grads Lou Lallo and Dean Derthick. After a detour to Jungle School in the Canal Zone I reported to Travis AFB to ship out to Nam. Because of a paperwork delay, Lallo and I missed the flight with the rest of our 50th Company mates and arrived in-country several days later. We were both assigned to MACV. Lou went to a team in Nha Be at the mouth of the Saigon River and I was assigned to a district team in Tan Binh District, Gia Dinh Province (the province that surrounded Saigon.) I filled an intelligence slot – part of the Phoenix program – and became a “spook.” [*Editor's Note: For an account of his time as a “spook” in the RVN, see Part Three, Section Five, “Vignettes from Vietnam.”*] I returned to the world with a Bronze Star, several air medals and, to paraphrase J.D. Salinger, most of my faculties intact.

3. Once back in the US, I went back to law school, transferring from Baylor to SMU. I graduated in 1973, took the Texas Bar and began practicing with a former college roommate. Our general practice firm grew, split, re-grouped and eventually imploded. In 1990 I joined a firm that represented mortgage banks where I was chief litigation counsel for 23 years and oversaw the work of as many as 21 lawyers. I left that firm in December 2013 and am now General Counsel for a corporation that provides services to the mortgage industry.

4. I watched Neil Armstrong land on the moon from a motel room in Columbus, GA, and a few days later we were back on Ft. Benning for our final field exercise. I was RTO for the student company commander who was declared KIA by a TAC officer. The student XO took over but he already had an RTO. So I tuned my radio to a local TV or

radio station and for the rest of the day I listened to the splashdown coverage of Apollo 11 (while trying to look involved in the action around me.)

Joseph (Joe) W. Rausch / 6th Platoon

1. I am a “recovering” lawyer (semi-retired) living with Jackie, my wife of 49 years, in New Orleans. The OCS experience seems like yesterday; it was not the best way to start our married life. We are blessed with three children and six grandchildren in New Orleans, Houston and D.C. They are the focus of our lives, which keeps us on the road a lot. I am active in Rotary and for the last year have volunteered at the new VA Hospital in NOLA doing admin chores in the Mental Health Clinic. (Note: the VA needs are great, but new leadership is trying to correct past sins.) Service in Vietnam affords VA nonservice connected medical eligibility with a waiver of the income limit, and you can often beat the Medicare co-pay. Volunteering in the VA returns one to the old Army days, and the warriors (both men and now many women) tell amazing stories when simply asked, “How’s it going?”

2. As a newly-minted Medical Service Corps officer, I was assigned to Fort Sam Houston, TX as the training officer of the only Basic Training company in the Army for conscientious objectors. We trained the CO’s hard and sent them to Medic AIT. They were guaranteed a ticket to the RVN. In Vietnam, I served first at MACV HQ (Long Binh) running a large dental clinic (next door to LBJ, the largest stockade in Vietnam). Reacting poorly to Pentagon East, I immediately requested a transfer to the Central Highlands (Pleiku) running a medical advisory team of doctors and medics. I spent my mornings running the only civilian General Hospital in the Province and my afternoons in the field providing public health services. This included well-baby care, shots, water sanitation, basic first aid, and generally enjoying the company of our Montagnard neighbors. I found them kind, brave, smart, and loyal to the death. These indigenous people served us well and suffered greatly in post-war years. Service to these native tribes was the highlight of my tour. My team also served a leper orphanage run by Catholic nuns. I found an obscure regulation and got my unit an extra \$50 per month as a special hazardous duty pay. Before reassignment, I taught basic reading skills to GIs who could not read but who had been pushed along even by the Army. Returning to the “World,” I closed out my military life at Fort Polk, LA where I ran a mental health clinic trying to explain to young privates who claimed to like boys or wanted to be girls (nice try!) that Vietnam was still in their future.

3. I then attended LSU Law School, after which I was appointed assistant Dean of the University of Kentucky in Lexington. There I ran the administrative side of the shop for a few years. (Lexington was great, but this was before university administrators made millions.) I have since practiced law in both large and small firms. I also served for a while as Special Assistant Attorney General for the State of Louisiana. In the margins I raised a family and engaged in a variety of professional, civic, charity, and school activities.

4. All along, I suspected the OCS PT drill was largely a game, although the extremes sometime tested my theory. Polished floors you couldn't walk on, beds you never slept in, great food that was never eaten... it puzzled me how all this would somehow "save my life in NAM." And having TAC officers who would end the day exchanging stories about us, as if we were monkeys in a zoo, escaped me. On a lighter side, while most of us placed a gold bar in our helmet liner as motivation, the Tackaberry twins had, as I recall, five stars. Finally, to our brothers who were not selected for RVN duty, you didn't miss a thing.

Charles E. Richardson / 4th Platoon

1. My wife, Ann of 47 years, and I are retired and living in Woods Cross, Utah (ten miles north of Salt Lake City). Ann and I have six children. Our oldest son got Reyes Syndrome at age seven which gave him severe brain damage. He lived another 13 years before passing away. Our other children have given us nine grandchildren – age 1 thru 15. They all live within 45 minutes of our home. Since retirement in 2010, I continue to serve in my faith in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. That service includes serving two days each week as a temple worker in the Bountiful Utah Temple. I also have a calling as the Stake Clerk in Woods Cross. (A stake is an organization of 7 to 12 congregations.)

2. After OCS, I was assigned as a Company XO in an Infantry training battalion in Ft. Carson, Colorado. That assignment was to be for only two months prior to an overseas assignment. However, no orders came until mid-February of 1970. I reported to Ft. Knox, Kentucky for eight weeks of training – to be a Maintenance Officer of an artillery unit in South Korea. After arriving in Korea, they did not have a need for such (*great Army planning*), so they gave me the option to serve as a Class B Finance Officer in the 7th Artillery Division (just off the DMZ). I was responsible for payroll to the Infantry and Artillery troops, as well as payments to the Korean Nationals working for our military. When the 7th was combined into the 2nd Division, my assignment was transferred to Camp Casey, as the 2nd Division Finance XO. Separation from the Army came in May of 1971.

3. I had received my MBA Degree from the University of Utah prior to my military experience. I found employment with Beneficial Life Insurance Company in SLC, Utah for the next 12 years with responsibilities initially in agent financing and payroll; then, reinsurance administration; and finally budget & planning. In 1983, I accepted an offer to become a VP at Deseret First Federal Credit Union where I continued for 27 years, until my retirement. I have also been very active in my Church. (The LDS Church has a lay ministry, which means no paid ministry.) Special opportunities of service have come to me in teaching and administrative callings. One of my most cherished callings was that of serving as a Bishop of our congregation for 5 years during the mid-1980s.

4. Memories have to be summarized by the camaraderie and growth we all experienced as we trained and struggled through tremendously difficult challenges - physical, mental and emotional. Though, close friendships have not continued since the military, I never-the-less reflect on conversations and associations from so many of you who were my Ft. Benning friends. One particular experience that I recall was that first week when LT Toolson tagged me as the Platoon Leader of the 4th Platoon. I was completely overwhelmed and stressed. I recall one activity chore when the TACs and CPT Smith were to play a basketball game against another company of officers. I was charged with getting a pair of gym shoes (size 10 1/2) for LT Toolson. How could that happen when we could not leave base? Fortunately, one of you in our platoon had a wife who performed what I thought was a minor miracle - by buying and delivering that pair of shoes. Disaster to my tenure was averted. Thanks again to whoever made that delivery possible.

Thomas (Tom) L. Roberts / 2d Platoon

1. I continue to practice law in the firm of Greene, Roberts and Rasmussen in Las Vegas, Nevada. I commute from Mesa Arizona, where I have lived for the past 25 years. My wife Glenda of 49 years and I have four children and seventeen grandchildren. These are the focal points of our lives.
2. After OCS I remained in the 50th Company as a TAC officer and then as XO, so I got to enjoy six more months of early morning runs. After serving as XO of 50th Company I went to Airborne School, then Military Intelligence School in Maryland, and then to Vung Tau, Vietnam for more schooling. I wound up with MACV in IV Corps.
3. After the Army I went to law school at the University of Utah and practiced in Salt Lake City for a couple of years. I then went to Plano, Texas where I was in business for 12 years. We then moved to Mesa, AZ and I ended up practicing law in both Arizona and Nevada.
4. My main OCS Memory was that there were a great bunch of guys in the 50th Company.

Stephen L. Roeder / 2d Platoon

1. Jan, my wife of 47 years, and I are now retired and live in Kansas City. We initially retired to a small island community near Hilton Head, SC but grandkids began to arrive. So we sold our house and moved back to Kansas City where our oldest son and his wife and two of our grandkids live. We recently sold our house and moved into a high rise condo downtown. We are really enjoying condo life.

2. After OCS I was assigned to the 2nd Armored Division at Ft. Hood, TX as a mechanized infantry platoon leader. I was in that assignment for about 6 months and then attended Rotary Wing Flight School at Ft. Walters, Texas and Ft. Rucker, Alabama. After graduation from flight school I was the executive officer of a student training company at Ft. Rucker for a year. We trained door gunners and crew chiefs. In 1971 I went to Vietnam as a Huey pilot with the First Air Cav. I was a Captain by then and served as an operations officer and pilot in Charley Company of the 229 Assault Helicopter Battalion.

3. Upon completion of my tour, I returned home and went back to my job at IBM in Rochester, Minnesota. I ended up working for IBM for 31 years as a Financial Executive. We lived in several locations around the US, and I ended my career as the Chief Financial Officer of an IBM joint venture company in Australia.

4. I don't know if it is my favorite memory of OCS, but I certainly remember the Ranger problem. Everyone knew I was afraid of snakes. We were wading through the swamp and someone killed a snake. They snuck up behind me and threw it around the back of my neck, draping it down on both sides of my face. I had no idea the snake was dead. I think I screamed like a little girl. Everyone else died laughing.

George A. Schmalhofer / 1st Platoon

Address: he is believed to live Gainesville, Virginia.

Rodney D. Seefeld / 2d Platoon

1. I work as a part-time lawyer in Baraboo, Wisconsin. I am a guardian "ad litem" (court appointments primarily for kids in conflict) at the rate of about one day per week. Linda and I have now been married for 41 years and have four children and four grandchildren. I am active in my church and play softball about eight months out of the year. Linda is still working and maintains the health insurance.

2. I was assigned to Fort Carson, CO with the 5th Mech. I served as platoon leader and then S-2. After Jungle School, on July 4, 1970 I flew to Vietnam and was assigned to a MACV team located in the Northwest corner next to Laos and the DMZ. I was blessed to have a quiet year, though I was bucked off an APC when it hit a land mine with injuries only to the APC driver. I was not happy to be on the command track with the American Captain leading the convoy when we hit the mine. At the end of the tour, I took an early out instead of time with a National Guard unit.

3. I returned home to Wisconsin and worked about a year until I got accepted into law school, which was my career goal. While in law school in Tacoma, WA Linda and I got married. Following law school I returned to Wisconsin, passed the bar exam and got a job with a lawyer in Baraboo. After 40 years of general practice law I have substantially retired. I served on numerous committees of the Bar Association and

several local civic organizations. Perhaps my most significant activity is playing softball, mostly with men in my 65+ age bracket. This year I plan to play on three different teams, if my body will allow. (My mind says “yes,” but my body slowly responds by saying “maybe.”) I spend a fair amount of time helping our children and grandchildren with whatever they need.

4. I was a track and cross country runner in high school and college, which made the trips around the Airborne field much easier than for most other candidates. I remember helping drag a member of our platoon across the finish line. One memory is running a ten mile race on a hot July day as part of the three-man team from our unit. Robert Arnold did much better than I did, but I did better than expected. The Battalion Commander congratulated me and I had to tell him I needed to keep walking to avoid cramps. He accepted my demand. Another memory is the lack of sleep and being tired all the time. I could almost sleep standing up in formation or riding in the back of a deuce-and-a-half. I see our training was similar to that the Navy Seals get today. It did prepare us for Vietnam! Many times I asked myself whether it was worth the effort. Today I can answer, YES. Another memory is the morning formation when we fell out with black belt buckles instead of the shiny brass. I was then the company commander and attempted an explanation of our actions to Captain Smith before moving to the rear of the formation for extra pushups. Shortly thereafter the XO, first sergeant and some platoon leaders joined me to do push-ups while CPT Smith “gently” explained that HE would let us know when we could switch out of the brass buckles. Of course later there was additional time spent walking tours. Lastly, I hated filling out bayonet sheets. Nearly all candidates were college grads and in pretty good physical shape. I struggled to find fault with other candidates, but the sheets were required to pressure them to quit or be removed.

Steven L. Senneff / 4th Platoon

1. I am living with Connie, my loving wife of 40 years, in Parker, Colorado. She’s a southern girl. We have two daughters and six grandchildren, three girls and three boys. I am still working, currently with a company that delivers heavy equipment to the oil, mining, and wind energy firms throughout the U.S. and Canada. I am deeply invested in my spiritual journey with Galilee Baptist Church.

2. After OCS I went to Fort Carson, Colorado where I spent about eight months before being assigned to Fort Knox, Kentucky to attend the Army's Motor Pool Course. Following that, I was assigned to Korea. I spent 11 months there and was discharged at Kent, WA on May 28, 1971. The reason I remember that day is that nine years later my youngest daughter Amy was born on May 28.

3. After the Army I got a job in the insurance industry as a Loss Control Safety Engineer, which I did not like. I was living in Minneapolis at the time and decided I wanted to come back to Colorado. So I quit my job and moved back. Once there I

became a salesman for about eight years and then started a printing business, which I ran for 20 years. I then started a direct mail marketing business and ran that for eight years. I then went into Wheels America Advertising, a mobile billboard company franchise, but two years later the impact of the 9/11 attack destroyed that business nationwide. I decided I wanted something less stressful, so I started making deliveries in the Rocky Mountain region and am now working for a company that delivers equipment throughout North America.

4. I remember when we were being trained in night vision class. We had really developed our night vision and were using red lights. At the end of the class they told us to look up at the ceiling and then shot off that bright white light which killed our night vision in a very painful way. We couldn't believe we were so stupid to look up at the ceiling. Another "delightful" time that I remember was spent in the Dahlonge Swamp. We all were returning to the base camp in the late afternoon and it rained on us, soaking everyone. Then they told us to bed down for the night, so we got our ponchos and tried to sleep. It continued to rain. I remember freezing and shivering all night, longing for the sun to come up and give us some warmth. That was the most miserable night I remember spending in OCS. I do remember that Captain Smith allowed us to watch the astronauts land on the moon, which was pretty cool to watch. I was grateful for that.

Roy A. Sigurdson

1. I've been retired for about 5 years (as of 2017) and we live a quiet life in Seaside, Oregon. My wife, Jeanne, suffers from a series of health problems including Fibromyalgia. I am in good health, but fell from my roof last summer and sustained a broken hip, 3 broken ribs and damage to my left leg and knee. It's been a long recovery. I won't be making the trip to Ft. Benning for the reunion.

2. After OCS, I stayed at Fort Benning to become Airborne qualified. Then I entered the Special Forces Officers Course at Fort Bragg, N.C, where I came near to dying on a night jump. (My chute deployed with only about 2 seconds before hitting the ground). After receiving a Green Beret, I was expecting to be sent to the 10th Special Forces in Viet Nam or possibly to the Special Forces unit in Panama. But, wouldn't you know, they sent me to the 2nd Battalion, 36th Infantry, 1st Brigade, 3rd Armored Division (Patton's Army) in Kirchgoens, West Germany, where I served as a platoon leader and eventually as the Battalion Intelligence Officer (S-2). I served in Europe for over two years and my oldest son, Erik, was born in Frankfurt.

3. I exited the Army and came back to Seaside, Oregon to join my family business (A seafood processing company). My wife, Jeanne, and I had 2 more sons along the way.

4. Ah, the OCS memories: I remember Chiggers, push-ups, hot drinking water, a tarantula, ice cream on the night compass course, low crawling on the parade field trying to touch a Tac officer's boots, the unflappable/affable dispositions of the Tackaberrys and Jay, water moccasins in the Chattahoochee River under the rope bridge, taking a shower in my mummy bag, and being in the best physical condition in my life. Didn't we set the company record average for the PT Test?

Ratko I. Sikovic - Deceased

Ratko Sikovic was born Jan. 5, 1945 in Zagreb, former Yugoslavia. He passed away on Dec. 9, 2005 in Abington, Maryland and is buried at the Garrison Forest Veterans Cemetery in Owings Mills, MD. He is survived by his wife Katherine and two children. They currently live in Alabama.

James (Jim) W. Smith JR / 4th Platoon

Robert B. Smith / 5th (?) Platoon

1. I'm retired and live in Sterling, Colorado, a small rural community 100 miles northeast of Denver and about 50 miles from Nebraska. My second wife died of a heart attack ten years ago and I've never remarried.

2. After OCS I was assigned to a Basic Training company at Ft. Lewis, WA and went to Viet Nam in July 1970. In Nam I was assigned to MAT 51, but instead of training villagers to defend themselves our team was attached to the 21st ARVN Division (Regular South Vietnamese Army). The Division was headquartered at Vinh Loi in Bac Lieu Province in the Delta (way south!). Our team's mission was to plant and hide listening devices and seismic devices along paths, trails, waterways, canals, anywhere that might be used by the NVA or Viet Cong. After three or four days in the field, we'd go back to the base camp. At night we would listen. When we heard sounds of activity, we'd call in artillery. The bottom line is that I spent most of my time in the U-Minh forest.

3. After the Army, since I had already completed one year of law school, I went back and completed the final two years at the University of Wyoming Law School. I was a solo practitioner until 2000 when I was appointed to a judgeship; I retired in 2014.

4. Memories of OCS? I'm not sure if these are my favorite, but in addition to those already mentioned by others, these are the stories I tell those who ask about the experience. I remember that Captain Smith arranged (what a gentle word "arranged") for the company to travel to Atlanta to see the Braves play baseball. I had never seen a professional baseball game, let alone Hank Aaron. The night before the game I had assisted the TAC duty officer with his overnight shift. We were both up all night. I slept through the entire game and don't remember a thing. I remember that we attended classes in a big air conditioned building. The instructors had a tendency to bark out a

last name to get a cadet to answer a question. Since they didn't know names of anyone in the class, they would call a common name such as Johnson or Brown or Jones or Smith. Odds were in their favor that there would be someone with that name. There was at least one other Smith in our company, Jim I believe. When the instructor called on Candidate Smith, neither of us moved. Finally I stood up and asked if he wanted Candidate Jim Smith. When the instructor said yes, I sat down and the other Smith had to stand and answer. (Sorry, Jim.) It only worked once. After that, when the instructor was asked which Smith they wanted they would ask, "Which one are you?" When you said your name they would say, "You'll do."

William (Bill) L. Snodgrass / 2d Platoon

1. I have been married to Debbie for 36 wonderful years; God has given me the perfect partner. I met her as a fellow employee; we were both Agricultural Biologists in Bakersfield, CA (a nice place to be from). We have three children and five grandchildren scattered throughout California. We live in Camino in the foothills. It is half way between Sacramento and Lake Tahoe in an agriculture setting surrounded by apple orchards. We have the best of all climates. We enjoy traveling and have been to Europe and all over the US. We also enjoy bird watching, National Parks, hiking, history and visiting the Presidential Libraries.

2. After OCS, I had orders for Fort Carson, CO but two days before graduation I received a transfer to Quartermaster and reported to Ft. Lee Commissary School for five months, then to Sharp Army Depot in Sacramento, CA for six months. I had orders, of course, for Vietnam. But while I was at the Sharp Depot an opening came up for a Rations Breakdown Officer in Bangkok. It was a long tour and I would have to extend for a year; but I could take my family! I jumped at the chance and my second daughter was born there. [*Editor's Note: For an account of Bill's "hardship tour" in Bangkok, see Part Three, Section Two, "Branch Options other than Infantry"*] At the end of my twoyear tour in Bangkok I received orders for Tan Son Nhut Air Base. This was late in '71 and the war was winding down. Before I went I received a letter saying they had promoted too many people to Captain and asking if I planned on making the Army a career. It offered me an early out, which I took and served a short time in a MP Reserve unit. One year after I was discharged I received the Army Commendation Medal.

3. I returned to my job as an Agricultural Biologist in Bakersfield, planning on staying only five years. I took advantage of the GI Bill and received a Master's in Public Administration, something that would help me in my career and that I would never have received if it were not for the Army. After 19 years (as Buck Owens would say, happiness is seeing Bakersfield in your rearview mirror) Debbie and I moved to San Diego, CA where I was the Assistant Agricultural Commissioner, and then to Placerville for another job. I retired in 2003.

4. Do you remember when we had the display items in our OCS dresser? All the items in each Candidate's display had to be exactly the same. At one point someone changed the brand of toothpaste in his display and everyone else had to change the brand to the one he used. I wonder if said Candidate is still using that same brand (Crest). In OCS I learned that I could do things beyond my physical and mental abilities; I learned leadership skills that I would use throughout my career; and most of all I learned about the value of team work. I am eternally grateful for my OCS classmates who (literally) carried me through OCS. I had problems with my knees and with all of the running they started aching, but I would not go to sick call. I remember my knees being so sore that I could not bend them (I learned to run stiff legged) and I was having trouble walking up the stairs. You guys took turns carrying me up those stairs. I was not at the top of the class in PT, but after six months I finished the mile in the top ten. Thank you!

John A. Spain

John Spain is believed to have passed away in December 2015.

Elliott L. Stringham / 5th Platoon

Unfortunately, Elliott suffered a major stroke and now requires a fulltime caregiver. He lives in Manhattan. He cannot take phone calls, but personal visits can be arranged with his caregiver, who Lin Zimmerman has been in contact with. Check with Lin for additional details.

Ronald G. Stryker / 6th Platoon

1. I've been married to Cheryl for 22 years. (We reconnected at our 31st high school reunion in Chicago.) I have two grown daughters from my former marriage. After owning two Ohio based small businesses that specialize in the marketing, manufacture, and distribution of branded food service concepts (primarily fried chicken and donuts) for 40 years, I sold them effective 1/1/17. Having failed miserably at implementing a plan to scale down to a four-day work week several years ago, Cheryl and I purchased a potential retirement home in southwest Florida. I look forward to moving to Florida fulltime at the end of this year after my consulting commitment in Ohio is fulfilled.

2. After graduation from OCS I received orders for Germany and due to a shortage of captains was assigned command of a mechanized infantry company. During the next few months additional 2nd LTs joined our battalion, but none of them could be assigned to my company because they (mostly West Point types) all had more time in grade than I did. Finally, I was notified that I would be receiving a recently graduated OCS lieutenant. It turned out to be 50th Company grad Clark Yokley on whom I had ten minutes seniority...only because "S" comes before "Y." Clark had been the first person I met while standing in line to begin Basic Training at Ft. Dix, and we ended up being in the same platoons for Basic, AIT, and OCS. Sometime in 1971 I was assigned as

Battalion Assistant S-3, promoted to Captain, and at the end of that year received orders for Thailand, finishing my last seven months of service there.

3. After the Army while conducting job searches I found that there weren't many companies that placed much value on applicants with military service on their resumes. I eventually found employment with a builder/land developer in Chicago, starting as a financial analyst and ending as its corporate controller. At the beginning of 1977 I purchased a small business in Ohio that has evolved into the companies that I recently sold.

4. OCS memories? Without question it was during a session with our TAC officer, LT Hook. I believe it was sometime during our 20th or 21st week. As a result of a minor infraction, he ordered Clark Yokley, Paul Mansky, and I to do 50 pushups. Paul was recuperating from an injury at the time and LT Hook suggested that if he wasn't fit to complete the task at hand, he could be recycled to a 12th or 18th week company. Paul's response: "I wouldn't take a recycle back to breakfast!"

Charles (Ken) K. Sutton / 6th Platoon

1. I am finally retired after three careers and counting the days until my wife Debbie retires from her elementary school counselor job the end of May 2017. I am looking forward to hanging out with her all day every day. She is my second wife (of nearly 27 years) and we have five great kids and eight even greater grandkids between us. I usher at church, play a little golf, read a good bit, piddle around the house/yard, drink three beers a day, and try to be a good house spouse. I finished up my GI Bill with a two-year cabinet making course at the local technical college. I'm vertical and still getting paid. Life is good. Ft. Benning was my last active duty assignment and since Deb's family was here, we stayed in the local Columbus/Ft. Benning area. Address: 415 Grey Smoke

2. After OCS I went to Germany (Kitzingen) and stayed until 1971, long enough to get promoted to Captain. I spent time there as a Brigade HHC XO and then went to the 1st of the 15th Infantry as a platoon leader, assistant S-3, and the S-3 Air. From there it was off to Viet Nam (II Corps) Ban Me Tout to command MACV Detachment Team 33 for 7 months. I spent the rest of the tour as a Deputy Senior Advisor to an ARVN Regiment and rode a Huey into a rice paddy at a hundred knots the day before the cease fire went into effect. I returned to Benning for the Infantry Officers Advanced Course. Next was 40 months in Panama (which I loved) and then a tour at the Field Artillery School at Ft. Sill. I finished a Master's Degree in Management while I was there. Next was a twoyear accompanied tour in Korea, first at Osan AFB with the Air Defense Brigade doing their deactivation planning and to Yongson (Seoul). From Korea I went to Ft. Hood and was assigned to the 1st CAV Division as the Deputy G3 then to XO 2/7 CAV (Garry Owen). While there, I completed CGSC by correspondence. From Hood it was to Ft. Bliss to be the Director of Training Development at the Sergeant Majors Academy and then to the Office of the Chief of Air Defense Artillery to do proponent stuff. From there I went back to Benning as the Chief of OIP (Office of Infantry

Proponence). My final active duty job was to create and stand up the TRADOC System, the Manager-Soldier office to modernize the soldier as a system. In 1990 a couple of iron Majors and I wrote the charter, wrote the Soldier Annex to the Army Modernization plan, structured the office, set up the policies and procedures, and went to work. I served as the original TSM-Soldier (TRADOC Systems Management Soldier) until we could get a boardselected Colonel and then took over management of the Soldier Enhancement Program.

It was a multimillion dollar program for commercial off-the-shelf solutions for soldiers. THAT was really a fun and rewarding job.

3. When I retired the end of August in 1992 after a 24-year career, I went right back into the same job as a government contractor for the next 17 years. I finally got fed up with the corporate crap and retired from that and started my own consulting business to do strategic planning, business development and management consulting for small companies who wanted to do business with DOD. After seven years of that, the combination of politics, sequestration, and the severe lack of a realistic defense budget translated into no paying clients, so I retired for the last time.

4. In OCS I had a good time for the most part. Having had four years of ROTC, (three in High School in Wyoming and one at the University of Missouri) I was fairly well prepared for it. I remember we started out 220 strong, almost all were college graduates, and only two were prior service. I know we had some attrition along the way and gained some recycles. I can't remember how many of us graduated. I remember learning very early to "move with a purpose" and still do it to this day. One morning at reveille formation all 220 of us fell in wearing the same name tag: SMACK, OC. And there was the shock reveille, compliments of the Senior company next door, and low crawling all over in our mummy bags; foot locker drills; and late night room changes. We did PT twice a day: mornings with the TAC officers on the Airborne track and afternoons with the Ranger Committee. We trimmed the lawn with the scissors from our sewing kits; broke starch three times a day; and melted the Simoniz Wax to buff the floors and then removed our boots and walked on the furniture so as not to mess up the floors any more than necessary. We broke into Lt. Hook's office in the middle of the night, filled his canteen with quinine water, sewed the sleeves shut on his field jacket, and filled the office with balloons. (Speaking of Jack Hook, I ran into him several times later in my career. He worked at MILPERCEN in Arlington, VA for a while, retired as a full Colonel, and went to work as a recruiter for MPRI – Military Professional Resources.) We turned Lt. Travaline's office into a small basketball court for small basketball players. One of the other TACs lifting Tiny Tony up so he could shoot a basket. And here are a few more memories: pogeys; someone getting a care package in the mail with a cake or cookies and having to eat the whole thing all at once; having to do a ton of pushups, ten at a time, over a piece of cherry pie; eating dessert first; turning Blue; graduation; and, lastly, my Ex-Navy dad and my wife pinning on my butter bars.

Burt S. Tackaberry / 6th Platoon

Kief S. Tackaberry / 1st Platoon

1. I retired from a military career in 1996 and began 18 years with Northrop Grumman in various positions. I retired in May 2016 after serving as Director for Army Aviation & ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance) programs.
2. After graduating from OCS I attended Ranger and Jump Schools and was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division. I deployed to Vietnam and served as a Platoon Leader with the 2/8 Cav, 1st Cav Division until being wounded. I was reassigned to the 82nd Airborne Division.
3. I made the military my career. I attended flight school and was again reassigned to Ft. Bragg, this time with the 18th Airborne Corps. I spent the rest of my career serving in both Infantry and Aviation Units - commanding an Infantry Rifle Company in the 82nd Airborne; an Aviation Company (Huey) in the 101st Airborne Assault Div.; an Attack Helicopter Company in the 1st Armored Div. (Germany); an Aviation Battalion (UH-60 Blackhawks) in the 101st Airborne Assault Div.; and an Aviation Brigade in the 7th Infantry Division. I retired from the Army as a Colonel in 1996 after 28 years.

Robert (Don) D. Tarr / 1st Platoon

1. Life is good! I retired at the end of 2013 after selling our business and becoming the landlord of our business property (leasing it back to the buyer of our business). Barbara and I settled in Glen Mills, Pennsylvania, just southwest of Philadelphia. I now spend a lot of time with our grandkids and am trying to get some leisure travel as well.
2. One week after OCS I got married and then went back to Ft. Benning where I stayed on at OCS as a TAC officer in 60th Company and stayed with that Company until graduation. Then I got my orders for Vietnam. I left in April 1970 and was assigned to MACV to a Mobile Advisory Team (MAT Team). A full team had 2 officers and 3 NCOs. Our mission was to upgrade the night operations (ambushes) of the RF/PF (Regional and Popular Forces which were platoon-sized units in the different local villages). I was based with a unit in Phouc Heip Village in Ci Chi District, about 10 miles from the 25th Division Base Camp at Cu Chi. About 5 months later I was moved to MACV Headquarters in Saigon to help set up a staff for an Economic Analysis of our pullout. This was to give MACV an independent analysis. (I guess my MBA helped get me out of the boonies.) By the time I left in April 1971 our office was headed up by a Brigadier General and had about 8 officers and an office staff.
3. After the Army, I worked for the Insurance Company of North America (INA) in Philadelphia and helped set up a service office in Phoenix, AZ where we lived from 1973

to 1975. In 1975, we moved back to Philadelphia where I joined a family business doing industrial high pressure water cleaning. I did that until the end of 2013 when we sold.

4. My favorite OCS memory was being Company Commander for about two weeks while we assembled our class.

Joseph J. Terhar / 6th Platoon

Michael P. Thornton / 2nd Platoon

1. My wife Susan and I live in Mt. Prospect, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago. I left my corporate job in September 2015 and am learning how to be a retired person. I enjoy reading modern history and am a very good cook. I had heart bypass surgery in May 2015 and now keep as physically active as I can with exercise machines in the basement and a bicycle that I ride in good weather.

2. After OCS, I served in the 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized) at Ft. Riley KS until the spring of 1970. Then it was off to Airborne School back at Ft. Benning, Jungle School in Panama and then on to Vietnam. Once "in country" I served as a platoon leader and later battalion staff officer with the First Cavalry Division (2/12 Cavalry). [*Editor's Note: see Mike's description of a First Cav air assault in Part Three, Section Five.*] When the First Cav was re-deployed to the US, I accepted an "early out" and was discharged in April 1971. OCS classmates Ken Knudsen, Jim Dupont, and David Doe were with me during the training schools en route to Vietnam and later with the First Cav, although Dave and I were with the 2/12 Cavalry while Jim and Ken were with the 1/5 Cavalry.

3. My post-Army career has been with large global companies and for the past 30 years in High Tech. My early assignments were as a supply chain manager and for the past 24 years I have worked with customers who were applying technology to their supply chains. This is my second time in Chicago. The first time, 1972-1976, I met and married Susan. In between I lived in the New York area, Cleveland, and near Boston. In 2002, I was laid-off from Compaq at the age of 55. (Yikes!) I did contract work for the next 5 years, including an assignment in England in 2004. In 2007 an opportunity opened up at SAP (a multinational software corporation that makes enterprise software to manage business operations and customer relations) and I worked there until I left with an early retirement package in September 2015.

4. My favorite OCS memory is of the last day of the Ranger Problem. When we got off the truck at the assembly area the cadre were popping smoke grenades in celebration. The colors mixed yellow, purple, and white, and the combination made me think that we were nearly done. It was a time to celebrate.

William (Bill) E. Thoroughgood / 2d Platoon

1. My wife Joy and I live in suburban Philadelphia in a town near Collegeville, Pennsylvania. I am now retired. Joy and I bought a condominium in Ocean City, MD where we try to spend as much time as possible relaxing. We enjoy traveling and doing a lot of activities at our church. I have been blessed with a wonderful wife, three good children, and terrific friends at church. I love to read, especially biographies, the American Civil War, and English History. I also enjoy woodworking and fixing up this old farm house that has been our home for 35 years. I recently bought a 1948 Packard Custom Convertible which Joy and I plan to take to Packard Club events.

2. Despite a warning from CPT Smith that no one would be able to get a branch transfer, I applied for an Armor commission (along with perhaps 20 others) and received a branch transfer. My first assignment was to the Armor Officer Basic Course at Ft. Knox, KY. I then went to Fort Hood, TX where I was assigned to the 1st of 81st Armor, First Armored Division (Old Ironsides) as a platoon leader and later company XO. I received orders for Vietnam in July 1970. When I arrived "in-country" on the 10th of October, I was assigned to the 11th Armored Cavalry (Blackhorse) Regiment where I served as a platoon leader with L Troop of the 3rd Squadron in III Corps near Di An. I was then appointed assistant squadron maintenance officer and later squadron maintenance officer. When the 11th Cav stood down in March 1971, I joined the 1st Squadron of the 1st Armored Cavalry at the old Marine base at Khe Sanh where we supported the ARVN incursion into Laos known as Lam Son 719. I was located in a defensive perimeter next to an artillery fire base in Lang Vei, several miles from Khe Sanh. I accepted an early out and left Vietnam in early June 1971.

3. After the Army, I went back to college and got a Master's Degree in Education and spent 33 years teaching at a local high school.

4. There are too many OCS memories to record here. Overall, looking back, I can mostly remember the humorous stuff.

Robert B. Tomes / 3d Platoon

1. I and my wife Barbara of 36 years reside in McKinney, Texas (35 miles North of Dallas) where we are partners in, and operate, a Ford and Subaru dealership along with our only son, Brandon. The McKinney, Texas area has undergone phenomenal growth over the last 15 years, going from 17,000 to a city of 170,000. We are especially proud of our two grandchildren, Evie (3) and Emmett (1). I am considering attending the reunion and am looking forward to renewing old acquaintances.

2. After OCS I was assigned to be a 4.2 Mortar Platoon Leader in Ft. Riley, KS but then received orders for the Airborne and Jungle Schools. I was then assigned to MACV and was sent to IV Corp in the Mekong Delta where I served on a MAT (Mobile Advisory Team), working with South Vietnamese Popular Forces, Regional Forces and PSDF

teams. I served in Chau Doc Province along the Mekong River in the northwestern part of the Delta. I accepted one six-month extension in Chau Doc and returned stateside in January of 1972, where I rotated out of the Army.

3. I joined the Ford Motor Company in the Omaha District Sales Office in May '72. I trained as a Zone Field Sales Manager and went to South Dakota, Iowa and Nebraska before being promoted to the Houston District and assigned to advising Ford Dealers in the San Antonio area. I met Barbara, who was employed by Ford Motor Company in the Parts & Service Division in Houston, and we were married in her hometown of Denton, Texas. I applied for and was awarded the open point for a Ford dealership in McKinney in Dec. '82 and we opened the doors in Jan. '83 with 17 employees. We are still going strong 34-plus years later with 185 employees. Our son Brandon was awarded the Subaru franchise in 2009.

4. I recall painting the OCS class logo on the parade ground practice field where many hours of drill practice and calisthenics were put in. I have renewed acquaintances with fellow classmate Wayne Ferrentino, who is now retired and resides in Rockwall, Texas (45 miles East of McKinney). Wayne was also a MACV MAT leader in the Province south of me, known as the "Twin Sisters" mountain area. Wayne has become a very good customer and a valued friend.

Royal H. Tyler / 4th Platoon