

Grand Saline Sun

Serving Van Zandt County Communities Since 1894

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Vol. 120 Number 41

October 15, 2015

Fifty Cents

Dan Flynn to Speak to Tx-DOT Retirees

TYLER--The TxDOT Tyler District Retirees Group will welcome State Representative Dan Flynn as guest speaker at their semiannual meeting in Traditions Restaurant in Tyler from 11:30 AM until 1:30 PM on Friday, October 23, 2015. Rep. Flynn represents the citizens of Hopkins, Hunt & Van Zandt Counties in the Texas House of Representatives. Along with many other assignments and activities he is Chair of the House Pensions Committee. Retirees, prospective retirees, family and friends are welcomed to join us for a Dutch-treat cafeteria-style lunch, good fellowship and an informative visit with Rep. Flynn. For additional information or special needs please contact Danny Aylor, TxDOT Retiree (2003), at 903-469-3433 or danayaylor@earthlink.net.

County Commissioners Retain Burn Ban

BY VY TOWNSEND MALCIK
Staff Writer



Left is Sgt. Burns, center is Crystal Mayer with the East Texas Crisis Center, and right is Randy Bowles with the Wills Point Police Department

CANTON--With Van Zandt County's drought rate at 758 out of 800, Emergency Director Chuck Allen again recommended to commissioners that the county-wide burn ban be kept active.

Those with burn barrels with screened covers can continue to burn their trash in them.

Allen said they have had many big fires, one 60-acre loss with some outbuildings. He said, "We have been fortunate that there have been no losses of homes. We want to keep it that way."

He cautioned that low humidity and a wind of between 15-20 mph is the most dangerous condition for fires to start.

Many guests wearing purple ribbons were present for the county's proclamation of October 2015 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Save The Pool 5013c

GRAND SALINE--Save the Pool 5013c will be having their yearly meeting at the Red Dome in Grand Saline on the 19th at 6:00 p.m. Anyone is invited. save the pool GS@gmail.com

V.Z.C. Retired Teachers Association Meeting

VAN ZANDT-- The October meeting of the Van and County Retired Teachers Association will be on Tuesday, October 20, 2015, at Roseland Plantation at 10:00 a.m. The program will be a tour of the historic Roseland Plantation. Please call Becky Rosson at 903-385-2017 by Thursday, October 15th to reserve a place and/or to add guests.

Roseland Plantation is located on Highway 64 toward Tyler near the East Van Zandt County line.

All retired teachers and school personnel are invited to attend the meeting. All retired school personnel are eligible and encouraged to join the Van Zandt County Retired Teachers unit even if you are not retired from a school in Van Zandt County.

After the meeting and tour of Roseland Plantation the members will adjourn for lunch at Moore's Store in Ben Wheeler.

See BURNS, Page 2

Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Awards County Hay Growers

BY VY TOWNSEND MALCIK
Staff Writer

VAN ZANDT--Guests at the 2015 Van Zandt County Hay Evaluation Clinic, Hay Auction and Supper were treated royally. Barbecue and all the trimmings was the menu, then on to the main events.

Tommy Phillips, county extension agent, introduced his staff and gave a quick lesson on the scientific testing that determines what makes a great bale of hay.

He also lamented that the floods back in May and the drought since have not helped hay growers in this county. Nevertheless, he announced...

See AG, Page 2



First place winners! Teri Perez produced the best bale of hay, and Rozzell Sprayer purchased it.

Lady Indians Rank 2nd in District--Continue Winning Against Edgewood

By BR FITE
Sports



See DISTRICT, Page 10

Viet Nam Veterans Who Fought Together 45 Years Ago Come for Reunion

BY VY TOWNSEND MALCIK
Staff Writer

GRAND SALINE--Grand Saline native, Bill Woodrum, once again gathered his "brothers" from the Viet Nam War last week. Some had not seen each other in 40 years, as they came for the very first time. Others have been coming for the seven years Woodrum has offered his farm in the countryside outside the city for four days of camaraderie.

Big bear hugs for men who fought together, laughed and cried together, went without food for days, wore clothes so tattered that their nakedness was barely shield-




See NAM, Page 6&7

Good News!

61 But your hearts must be fully committed to the LORD our God, to live by his decrees and obey his commands, as at this time."

1 Kings 8:61

Weather 10/05 - 10/11	
High Temp- 90 10/8	Rainfall:
Low Temp- 56 10/11	Mon.- .00"
Parcipation Totals:	Tues.- .00"
Weekly Total - .0"	Wed.- .00"
Monthly Total - .0"	Thurs.- .00"
Yearly Total - 41.23"	Fri.- .00"
	Sat.- .00"
	Sun.- .00"



Chris Bell



Praying for COACH BACHTTEL



ed. They went from a platoon of 30 to 12 in two days when they fought in Cambodia to break the supply lines of Ho Chi Minh Trail.

They lost their youngest, barely 18 year-old Chris Kaffalos, whom they fondly nicknamed Shakey.

Their biggest battle – lasting two months – took a North Vietnamese stache and was named Shakey's Hill.

They stayed off the North Vietnamese trails where they were certain to be ambushed, traveling instead through the jungles surrounding them, contending with water and mud that seeped into their boots, fighting leeches that fell from the trees onto their bodies, killing snakes, brushing off red ants crawling over them. All this while try-

ing not to make a sound that would give away their positions to the North Vietnamese fighters who were also in those jungles ready to kill them first. Though the word "embedded" was not used in 1970 when Norman Lloyd, an Australian photojournalist who worked for CBS, joined their trek from Viet Nam into Cambodia. Lloyd took photographs to document the horror of those battles, the wounded being cared for, the medical evacuations which were dangerous in themselves, those who held their "brother" in their arms while they died, the times they could laugh in a whisper and smoke a cigarette. He sent his photographs back to Richard Threlkeld and Ed Bradley of CBS, and he never forgot the Bravo Company of the 5th Battalion of the 7th Cavalry of the first Cavalry Division of the United States Army. (General George Custer's division) Before "retiring," Lloyd ultimately received 10 Emmy awards for his war documentaries as well as other pieces for CBS 60 Minutes and CBS Evening News, but he never forgot the men who took Shakey's Hill in 1970 from the North Vietnamese in the Cambodian jungle. He told their story in photographs and in their own words. That documentary, Shakey's Hill, was the 2007 winner of Best Documentary Short at the GI Film Festival. It also won the Storyteller Award at the Redemptive Film Festival in 2007. Leslie Stall of 60 Minutes called it "a shining triumph of a movie!"



Beautiful Wives

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With permission from Norman Lloyd, we reprint here the description of the movie: "In 1970, one cameraman followed a battalion of American soldiers into the jungles of Cambodia. The mission was to seek out substantial weapons/supplies caches being used by the North Vietnamese Army during the Vietnam War. As the battalion closed in on the location of the caches they encountered a growing resistance from

Back at the Farm...

The veterans of Bravo Company gathered October 1-4 for the seventh year at Woodrum's farm where they found cool breezes, plenty of shade, comfortable chairs, beverages of every kind, views of lakes and hay fields.

sign, "SLOW. Men at play." That tells a lot about the man and his delightful philosophy of retirement life.

One sees the expanse of 32 acres of farmland, lakes, a herd of Black Angus, farm equipment and a two-story "shop" that Woodrum calls his pride and joy. "It's exactly like I dreamed it would be," he said. One sees everything from funny signs and neat rows of supplies to tables and chairs, enough tools to stock a Home Depot, refrigerators, freezer, hunting trophies, restroom, large covered patio flown over by the stars and stripes of the American flag and the black and white flag remembering the Prisoners of War and Missing-in-Action. Woodrum graduated from Grand Saline High

called the biggest cache discovered in the war.

It took the platoon 16 days to take Shakey's Hill, named for Chris Kaffalos. He was a special guy, 18 years-old but looked like 15. He was nervous and sometimes couldn't get his words out right, so I nicknamed him Shakey. Everyone had nicknames in the platoon. "We felt like much older men, though some of us

any other, and it's certainly worth fighting for. Now, I am just enjoying life." A big part of that enjoyment is staying in touch with many of the men he fought beside. In 2004 the Bravo Company had their first reunion at Woody's and between 12 and 20 veterans have been coming every October since that first gathering. "We invite all the neighbors and kinfolks to join



Bravo Company

were only 19, and when he died, we later found a piece of wood, painted "Shakey's Hill" on it and nailed it to a tree right there in Cambodia. "When we captured the hill, there was a medical evacuation by helicopter of the wounded and dead. The North Vietnamese shot at the helicopter, and there was no place to land, so the men were hoisted up from the ground to the helicopter in the air."

One man in the platoon, Mike Lewis, accompanied Shakey's body to his home in New Mexico, planned the service, spent time with the family, then came back to fight again with the platoon. fact that it was going on but I guess everyone has a right to his own opinion. "I didn't ask to go to Viet Nam, but we did what we were told to do. I don't believe the war was fought right – the politicians in Washington wouldn't stay out of it. In a war you ought to leave things up to the military. Tell the soldiers to win and give them what they need to do it. "Those who served there did what they were asked to do and more. They were noble warriors who deserved national respect and gratitude. They didn't get it. The families who stayed behind supported us every day, and we owe them more than

us, and it is just good fellowship. We usually had to whisper in Viet Nam, but now we can talk loud and laugh. We dress comfortably, kick back, eat delicious food and spend time with each other." Veterans enjoying the cool weather on the patio began talking with this reporter, telling their stories. The first question I asked was, "Why are you here?"

J. W. Shiring

"You are never so alive as when you are so close to death." J. W. Shiring of Pittsburgh, PA, said, "These are all my brothers, this is my family. You don't go through what we did without it changing you. There were 130 men

It was also a time set aside for remembering and healing, for sharing photographs of their grandchildren, for petting Annie, the farm's Aussie who felt completely at home lying among the feet of the soldiers, for being with those who understood a defining year, so long ago, in each of their lives. It was a very good time to pull away from the noise in the rest of the world. To get to Woodrum's farm, they drove, they flew, they brought RVs, and they drove with their wives who share a bond of living that year alone and terrified that they would never see their sweethearts again. Some veterans are widowers, some divorced, but they all received the benefits of having war-weary, wise and compassionate women there who have become much like sisters. They are among those women who know what war does to a man, and they are there to honor them as well as share their own quiet stories of what the last 45 years have been. Many of those wives brought all the "trimmings" for the Friday night feast of catfish and shrimp, fries and hushpuppies, cooked up by Woodrum's neighbors and good friends, Beverly and Ted Echols. Saturday evening brought barbecued brisket and ribs – beautiful fruit salads, bowls brimming with green salads, desserts so worthy of the name, home canned delicacies, cornbread, you name it. A feast for the eyes as well as for the palate. Much of this preparation was done around and between the times the wives banded together to go to First Monday. One year Woodrum said the guys got into trouble by planning the reunion on a weekend other than that amazing event in Canton. Lesson learned!

Bill Woodrum (Woody) Starting to tell the story, Woodrum invited me to his farm. Entering under a silver fence gate that bears his name, winding by his home of 20 years, through another gate into the pasture you see a delightful

School in 1968, worked for the Union Pacific Railroad for a few months, then enlisted in the Army. His initial training took him from Ft. Bliss in El Paso to Ft. Ord, CA, Ft. Benning, GA, for the NCO Academy, back to Ft. Ord, then to Viet Nam as a member of the Bravo Company. He spent his entire year of duty in the field in Viet Nam, then Cambodia. The platoons of 30 were further divided into squads of eight to 10 men. Woodrum was first a line squad leader, then the machine gun squad leader. He took shrapnel in the back (which he still has) but did not have to be evacuated for his wounds. He was later awarded the Purple Heart. He remembers, "We lost two of our original platoon at the end in Cambodia, and a hellava lot were wounded. Soldiers in the North Vietnamese Army were much better fighters than the South Vietnamese. They were hard-core, organized with sniper groups everywhere. "We were sent to destroy the North Vietnamese supply routes that went from Cambodia to Viet Nam. "It was pure hell from day one until we left two months later. We usually had a three-day supply of food though sometimes that was delayed, and our clothes were not very good but we weren't naked. We found all sorts of caches, hospital supplies and equipment, a transportation depot in that mountain. It was later

It took three days of soldiers working 24 hours a day to recover and carry down the trail all the supplies from the hill. Two thousand guns and millions of rounds of ammunitions were captured and carried back to Viet Nam. When the supplies were on their way, the men of Bravo Company began walking back to Viet Nam. They lost more men as they walked. In 1970 Woodrum returned from Viet Nam to Grand Saline and went back to work for the railroad. "I didn't tell anybody anything, and I didn't have any problems to speak of," he said. "I married Bren-

we can ever describe." Woodrum gave time and thoughtful answers to the question, what lessons did you learn from your experience? "Appreciate life" were his first words. "I hate war. It never accomplishes anything. I always heard that if the nation's economy was in a bad situation, the politicians would decide to start a war. "I have a simple view of war – we hate it, but as loyal, patriotic Americans, we done our duty. "Once you have faced death, it really touches you, makes you appreciate your own country. It isn't perfect, but it's better than

in our company, and 65 came back, but the North Vietnamese lost twice as many of their soldiers. "I was the point man because I could quickly see and even sense signs of danger. I saw the forest through the trees, saw broken pieces of bamboo indicating someone had been there recently. There were hundreds of trails, but we had to stay off them; you get on a trail and you are ambushed real fast. "What did I learn? To live every day to the fullest and that after Viet Nam, every day is a good day. It's all good."

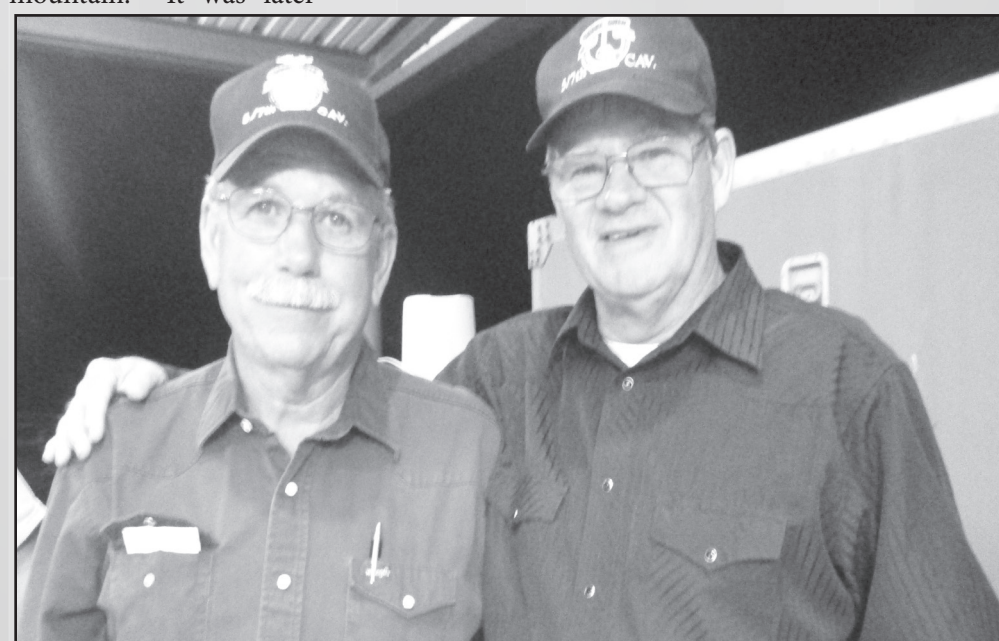
Eldon Erlenbach

Eldon Erlenbach came from Columbus, OH, with his wife Gail. He was a printer's apprentice when the draft called him, and he joined the group with the second platoon that was ordered in to help the original struggling Bravo Company as they fought to take the hill of North Vietnamese supplies. Men in the first platoon were the most experienced fighters so they were usually asked to walk point, making them the most vulnerable to enemy fire. Looking around the reunion area, he commented, "These are the nicest people.



Charles and Linda Walter

Woody and Mike Lewis



Woody and Mike Lewis

They would do anything in the world for you. This is my third reunion and it is so enjoyable. The wives take each other in and have a great time. Bill is very special to have us here. "We are a close-knit group and we keep in touch throughout the year. We went through hard times, and coming here reminds me how much I appreciate my country. I feel proud. My family knows and appreciates what this group went through together.

"If you can believe it, friends in my hometown made me a purple heart quilt. Yes, I was wounded, but I didn't think it was a big deal. Most

war and her husband having to go and fight. "I'm still mad!" she says with a fierce sparkle in her eyes.

Charles was in the fourth platoon to join the fight for Shakey's Hill. He was wounded and received the Purple Heart medal. Still he can say, "It wasn't very pleasant, but it was a learning experience."

Charles was older than many of his fellow soldiers, but he says they became his true, life-long friends. "Out in the field we became brother caring for brother; we lost so many men that we became a very strong group. We lost over half of our guys so we are lucky to be here.



Bill Little

of us were wounded."

Ian McCalister

It was the first Bravo Company reunion Ian McCalister had attended, though he had been invited and thought about it every year. Coming from Santa Paula, CA, McCalister was in the third platoon that was sent to be part of Bravo Company as they fought to take the hill of North Vietnamese caches.

"I know it's weird but when I left Viet Nam I put everything behind. I never talked to anyone, even my wife, about any of the things that happened but it tore me up every day.

"I didn't think anyone could understand or would want to hear. It was private, just between God and me.

"When I saw the picture of Norman Lloyd repelling out of a helicopter to be with us and tell our story, I felt a real connection with him. He has kept that connection, and it means a lot that he is here with us."

McCalister was not wounded but contracted malaria and was so ill he had to be evacuated out. Many in the company never knew what happened to him and thought the worst.

He had no addresses of his war buddies, only names and memories. He found them again at the larger reunion of the 7th Brigade in Jacksonville, FL. "It was like I saw them yesterday," McCalister said. "Hugs and hugs and hugs."

"These guys still have my back, and I've got theirs. I would go anywhere with this group."

Charles Walter

Charles and Linda Walter had a short drive from Waco to the reunion. They had just celebrated 50 years of marriage.

When Charles left for Viet Nam, he left his 19-year-old wife and one-year-old son behind. But their bond was strong. They wrote each other every day and still have those letters. Each day they read the same passages of the Bible. Linda sent Charles three care packages a week, with canned fruit, candy, tooth brushes and soap and those precious photographs of his son. She even sent a Christmas tree!

While he was gone, this energetic, ambitious teenage wife and mom got a job, bought a house and furniture, even planted flowers to surprise and welcome him home. She said much of her energy came from being angry about the

ily farm that has chickens, ducks and guineas.

"A lot of what we went through was pretty bad. I lost touch but thought about it a lot. These guys were the ones I was with, and it means a lot to be with them again in a beautiful place."

'Doc' Joe Roberts

This was the sixth reunion for 'Doc' Joe Roberts, one of the medics for Bravo Company. He was trained as a medic because he was a conscientious objector.

He arrived in Viet Nam January 10, 1970, and left, seriously wounded, on June 12. He was treated in hospitals in Long Binh, Tokyo and finally The Presidio before being released from care on November 16.

He and four other medics sent in were all wounded. One of his wounds severed the brachial artery. He tied a bandage around it and asked another soldier to help him pull the knot tight to stop the bleeding before he went into shock.

The North Vietnamese offensive was so fierce that the wounded had to "shelter in place" for many hours. The U. S. Army artillery came in and rained bullets all around on the North Vietnamese until it got quiet. Finally, a helicopter could land in the clearing and take out the wounded.

It was many hours before he had any pain medication, then lay in Saigon for triage a full day before being flown out for care.

Doc said, "Going to a far-away land and killing people I didn't know didn't make sense to me. But trudging through the jungle can give a lot of time for reflection.

"I recognized that I was not there of my own volition, but I was a person of value. I began feeling



Doc Joe Robert and Gregory Penny

come here to Bill's place to visit with each other."

Gregory Penny

Gregory Penny drove down from Red Wing, MN, with his brother Dan. He remembers clearly going to Viet Nam on September 8, 1969, and leaving on September 8, 1970. It was not a good year.

Earning the Purple Heart for his wounds, he served as the statistician for the group. He kept an updated map for all the companies and the battalion. He was in daily contact to inform the "brass" what was going on. He was also serving as the radio operator for Captain Millineaux and was wounded four days after the captain was killed and just three days shy of leaving Viet Nam.

He left to convalesce in several hospitals, then went to Ft. Leonard Wood, MO, where he instructed new soldiers in an infiltration techniques class. The men in basic training learned to manage such problems as barbed wire and explosions before they left the states for combat.

Returning to Red Wing, Gregory worked 30 years for the U.S. Postal Service, retiring 11 years ago at age 54. He spends much of his time caring for the fam-

ily more and more justified in defending myself. Once I was there I was there - and given responsibility for the well-being of these guys.

"Later, once I had kids I began to feel I would certainly avoid violence unless I had no choice. Then my choice would be to defend my family."

Doc returned to northern California to work again as an EMT in the California Department of Forestry and Fires. It is a family tradition - his father, uncles and cousins all fought the fierce wild fires, and he lost friends in that environment, too.

Since retiring Doc enjoys gardening and landscaping. He is the volunteer director of facilities and maintenance for the Jewish Community Free Clinic in Santa Rosa.

Bob Kihara

Bob Kihara of Vacaville, CA, was part of the assault to take Shakey's Hill also. He volunteered to serve as the radio transmission operator, carrying the heavy equipment and staying with the commanding officers because as he said, "I wanted to know what was going on.

"It was a good experience though I probably wouldn't do it again. I met really good people from

all walks of life, and this is my fourth reunion to spend with them. They are like my brothers.

"I experienced no prejudice or trouble being a Japanese-American, and I bonded with the other men. I value these friendships.

"War is stupid! The hardest part was that no one respected you for your service in Viet Nam. They called us names. Think about it - 50,000 Americans didn't get any respect for doing what they were ordered to do."

Bill Little

Bill Little is an organizer, tireless host and still carries on like a platoon sergeant at these reunions. Describing himself as a "take-over kind of guy," he and Woody

made in the United States."

Paul Nechanicky

Paul Nechanicky came to the reunion for the third time, from Albert Lea, MN, where he and his wife Marilyn have an antique store.

"These are the greatest bunch of guys you could ever get together. We talk about the war, sure, but we also talk about what goes on in our lives. Keeping up with each other is what keeps us close."

Mac Coffman

Mac Coffman and his wife Leanne came from Oklahoma. Mac works in Houston where he is a petroleum land manager.

"I came to see some of my brothers. In Viet Nam we were all about self-preservation plus looking out for each other. It was scary but also like

from soccer games. The father told his son of Lewis' fighting in Viet Nam.

The young man wrote, "Your service has helped lots of people and changed lives including mine. You are my hero. Thank you for your service." Lewis was so touched that 40 years after one horrible year for him, his service means something to a young man.

During the two evenings of the reunion, this reporter spoke briefly with David Monk who was called Sgt. Buck by his buddies. John LaDu ke spoke to me briefly as did Mike Sprayberry, Tim Kasprovicz and Harry Lea - who his brothers called Harpo during the war because of his curly hair. They sat at a table together for



Harry Lee and John LaDuke

have always worked well together, so Bill spends lots of time at the farm with Woody, cleaning up from one reunion and planning how to make the next one even better.

And then they just sit for a while with good memories piling up from the seven reunions. Little reminisces, "Norm is our hero. He got us together again - seven of us the first time, and we've been getting together every year since. He started this whole reunion plan."

Little was wounded in Cambodia, receiving the Purple Heart, but he says, "I was there to take care of those 25 guys."

Hospitalized for a month at the Great Lakes Naval Station, north of Chicago, Bill says he chose that hospital because his sweetheart Pat was then a flight attendant for American Airlines and flying in and out of the Chicago airport. He knew he could see her.

He says after getting back to the states in May of 1970 he felt he was returning to a safe haven.

He had a successful career in home furnishings - drapery and furniture, and he and Pat have enjoyed traveling to Germany, Switzerland, Italy and most recently, Australia.

He wanted to see Australia in part because of Norman Lloyd, the Australian photojournalist who documented the fight of the Bravo Company in Cambodia.

Originally from Cleveland, OH, he and his wife Pat made Texas their home in 1977 when they moved to Flower Mound.

Bill says his Army experiences helped him to grow up and learn a lot about when to depend on other people.

"The Army is an experience that every young person needs to develop respect for authority and their country. Young people today have a lack of discipline and I would like to see a reinstatement of the draft so they could spend two years in organized groups learning about different countries and seeing what real poverty is.

"I thought it was a privilege to serve. We have it

a job - keep all of us alive and kill the enemy.

"No one else can imagine what it was like. We became kin, like brothers. An explosion blew me 40 feet from where I had been crouched and I realized my leg wasn't working. I thought 'my time has come.'"

Michael Lewis

Michael Lewis of St. Louis was fighting with his buddies the day Shakey was killed. His death hit all of them hard because he was like a scared kid brother although he fought with real dedication and valor.

At the age of only 20, Lewis was the one who took on the incredibly difficult task of accompanying Shakey's body back to his home in Bloomfield, NM. "The whole town clung to me the three days I was there. I had to follow a certain military protocol - presenting the flag from his coffin to his family and giving a memorized speech.

"I had to say certain things to the family, telling them of his bravery and the way he died. It was hard, extremely hard.

"Then I got back on an airplane and returned to fight with the others who were still trying to take that hill in Cambodia."

Years later the town dedicated a public memorial to Kaffalos, and many of the Bravo Company veterans went for the ceremony and to meet Shakey's family.

Lewis hasn't missed a single reunion and he says he wishes more could come. "They are still healing, and we all respect that. I thought I was the only one with problems from the war, and these guys have done more for me than any doctor could do."

He and his wife Alice have a farm in southern Missouri where he goes to maintain the property and enjoy "the alone time." Now he is also enjoys hunting and fishing with his grandsons.

At the reunion he proudly showed others a letter he received on May 20, 2015, from a 13-year-old Vietnamese boy, Jesse Au. Lewis had spoken at a "Visit with a Veteran" function and knew the boy's father

a long time, swapping stories and memories.

Norman Lloyd

When I finally sat down with Norman Lloyd who made the documentary of Bravo Company's two months in Cambodia, he was giving all the credit to the veterans while they praised him as the one person who finally told their story.

He was a cameraman in his native Australia who bought a one-way ticket to Viet Nam because he wanted to record war stories. He talked to CBS personnel who gave him a chance. He met Sean Flynn and Dana Stone who were combat cameramen for CBS. Those two were later captured and killed in Cambodia.

Lloyd would go into a battle with a group, then get the film to Saigon and go back to the front again.

"I have great respect for American troops. They are my heroes. I found that a bond forms with the men in really difficult situations, even with a civilian like me. I went up the hill with them. I was only in the country for two weeks, but we never forgot each other."

Lloyd retired from CBS in 2004, sort of. He still makes documentaries for Sixty Minutes, and he never forgot the men of Bravo Company.

He says, "My hips went out, so while sitting around I started looking for these guys. I had always dreamed of making a film of them and their experiences. I received permission from the Army and started to meet these remarkable people.

"For example, Mike Sprayberry received the Medal of Honor because he went back and back into the jungle to retrieve his dead comrades after a particularly bad fire fight. He is a wonderful man who I found living in Tennessee, although he is from Alabama.

"We finally got seven guys together at a reunion here, and now we are enjoying the seventh one. I hope for many more because none of us will ever forget Shakey's Hill."

Oorah!