

# TIGER TRACKS

Fall 2006

## The Newsletter of the Steel Tigers 77th Armor Association

### 77th Armor Active Duty Update

"Our" Battalion is back in Iraq. 1-77 Armor arrived in Kuwait in August 2007, where there was additional live fire training in the heat, and in their Task Force organization. After a short time in Theatre Reserve, they moved into Iraq. TF 1-77 was sent to Camp Ramadi in the city of the same name, deep in the central-west part of Iraq, one of the most dangerous places. The TF has it's HHC and C Co. Attached are B Co., 1-18 Inf, B Co., 1-26 Inf and C Co., 9th Engineer Bn. 1-77 Armor's own A Co. is attached to TF 1-18. B Co. is attached to TF 1-26, stationed in FOB Shields.

Thus, our brothers are in the thick of the action every day. Their Tiger Stripes newsletter is so good that we thought you would enjoy reading it. It is the heart of this issue. We hope you enjoy it, and that you will join with many of us in the "Adopt A Soldier" program (explained on page 12 of Tiger Stripes). We all remember how much we enjoyed our letters and packages from home, and will want to help our own in Iraq. Remember, this is the second tour there for many of them.

### Return to Vietnam

Steel Tigers and Friends, It's time to register for Return To Vietnam 2007.

Join with your best buddies in a professionally led, 1-77 Armor directed tour to Vietnam, all the places special to us. Return to LZs Nancy and Sharon, Combat Bases Quang Tri and Vandergriff, DMZ Fire Bases C-2 and A-4, Routes 1 and 9, Wunder Beach and the Laos border, Khe Sahn and Leatherneck Square-and any other place of your special choice where we lived and fought together. Contact your friends from anywhere in the 1st Brigade, 5th Mech Div to join with us. Compared to our first trip to Vietnam, this will be a luxury trip also suitable for spouses and adult children. For a brochure and more detailed information call Tom Miller at 703.476.1798, or e-mail [HQ66Tom@schach.org](mailto:HQ66Tom@schach.org).

Sign up now to have planning time for passport and visas!

### REUNION UPDATE...IF YOU WEREN'T THERE, YOU MISSED A GOOD ONE!

The 2006 Reunion was held in El Paso, Texas on October, 12-15. We held a brief business meeting on the morning of the 12th and then boarded buses for a trip to historic Old Mesilla, New Mexico – home of Billy the Kid and Pat Garret. Old Mesilla has lots of interesting shops and restaurants and the weather was perfect. Most of the attendees ate lunch (Mexican) on the patios and (more than a few) beers were consumed.

After lunch, we boarded the buses for a tour of the Pecan orchards that have altered the desert landscape by adding brilliant green and shade from the intense sun. The pecan orchards are made possible by diverting water from the Rio Grande, which is reduced to trickle by the time it reaches El Paso.

Later we stopped at La Vine Winery for a tasting session and a tour of the production facility. Wine making is a complex process and this establishment does it properly by aging its

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### Send a Thank You Card to Troops Serving Overseas

If you go to this web site, [www.letsaythanks.com](http://www.letsaythanks.com), you can pick out a thank you card and Xerox will print it and it will be sent to a soldier that is currently serving in overseas . How AMAZING it would be if we could get everyone we know to send one! It's free and only takes a few seconds.

Please show your appreciation and support for American military personnel serving far away from their families this holiday season.

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## REUNION UPDATE CONTINUED

wine products in genuine Oak Barrels imported from France at a very high cost. Apparently, there is something special about the French oak that makes it essential to the process of making fine wines.

Friday the 13th brought no bad luck or black cats. Instead we took a tour of nearby Fort Bliss and the Air Defense Artillery Museum. The museum has a heavy duty self propelled AD Artillery piece built on an M48 chassis that was retired because it cannot keep pace with the M1 Abrams tanks it was designed to protect.

Fort Bliss, originally a Cavalry Post, will be returning to its roots. The Air Defense people will be moving to join the Field Artillery at Fort Sill, Oklahoma and armor will be returning to Fort Bliss. Sadly, these base changes are expected to end the role Fort Knox has filled as the home of Armor, and the Armor School that most of us remember.

Lunch at the Officers Club was followed by a scenic drive along McKelligon Canyon enroute to our hotel, the Holiday Inn at Sunland Park.

Joe D. and Jean Offutt hosted a Texas Barbeque and beer bash in their backyard. It was delicious, refreshing and a great time to meet up with our old friends and some new ones as well.



**Old and New Friends at the Offutt's BBQ**

Saturday was the day of our Business Meeting and Election of Officers. Newly elected officers are listed to the left of this article. We ordered 18 pizzas for lunch and proceeded to attend the active 1/77 briefing presented by MSG Mark Oldroyd who is temporarily stationed at Fort Bliss while attending the Sergeant Major Academy. Previously he was a First Sergeant with 1/77 in Germany and Iraq. He has maintained close contact with the battalion and prepared an excellent slide show showing the recently completed second deployment to Iraq. We are sincerely grateful for MSG Oldroyd's briefing and his attendance at the banquet on Saturday evening.



**Five Retired Colonels  
at the 77th Armor Banquet  
Spiller, Grace, Miller, Milia and  
Pickarts**

Cocktails, Dinner and Dancing were served up on Saturday evening and awards were presented to the 2004-2006 Officers and Board Members. MSG Oldroyd was a handsome figure in his dress blues and we were treated to some excellent music by Katelyn and a surprise visit by The Air Defense Pipers.

Sunday morning's Memorial Service with Chaplain Jim Spiller and music by Kathy Brown was an uplifting experience enjoyed by all. Most attendees departed shortly thereafter.