

Gathering IX

Vol: 3
Issue: 3
3 July 2011



Honor past and present soldiers beloved memory

*Give tribute to their unexcelled bravery
Patriotic spirit's burning within patriot heart's rife
Preserving our sweet liberty
Borne beyond great honor in duty
... for us*

*Remember these brave warriors who gave their all
Standing brave and standing tall
... for us.
For us they paid a suffering debt
May we never forget...*

*To cherish freedoms they gave us without regret.
To make our liberty and freedom stand for something
With Star Spangled remembrance loudly sing
May our freedom bells with proud joy ring...
Enough to warm the very face of God
Bring eternal peace to America's greening sod.
(Contributed by Joaquin Martinez)*

WE ARE GETTING SHORT!!!

Only a month away to the 9th Gathering
in Louisville, 3-7 August 2011

Hotel reservations deadline for the group
rate is 13 July! Don't miss it!

The Gathering will be held in Louisville,
Kentucky. Our hotel is the Holiday Inn
Hurstbourne – lots of parking, easy access,
close to the airport and good restaurants.
We will have a hospitality room that can be
stocked with snacks and beverages (bring
something special to share!). A continental
breakfast will be set up daily in the lobby to
accommodate our group. There is also a
restaurant on site.

Any questions, concerns, or problems
involving the hotel should be addressed
directly to Kathy via email at:

kblackstone5272@yahoo.com

Holiday Inn Hurstbourne / I-64 East

1325 S. Hurstbourne Pkwy

Louisville, KY 40222

502-426-2600

Or 1-800-HOLIDAY

RESERVATION CODE: V V T

Terrace rooms are our first choice for all of
us to be in the same area. Rate is \$69.00
plus tax. Dates for the Gathering 3-7 August
2011; special room rates will be honored
as early as 31 July for those who want to
come early. **In order to get the group rate,
it is imperative you use the reservation
code "V V T."** If you try and book under "The
Gathering" as we have in the past, you will be
told there are no rooms under that heading.

Inside this issue: Gathering IX info

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Gathering Schedule

Below is a list of planned activities for August 3-7, 2011 in Louisville, KY. I hope this will give you an opportunity to plan your time to visit the many attractions this area offers to visitors. All events are self transportation and carpooling. Please allow ample travel time to be at the event by the start time.

Wednesday, August 3, 2011 ALL DAY

Arrival and registration – get your name tags, buy your tickets and patches, meet and greet old and new friends.

Thursday, August 4, 2011 9AM

Knob Creek Gun Range
690 Ritchey Lane, West Point, KY
<http://www.knobbcreekrange.com/>
Gun range fee is \$10 each to shoot, free to spectators (not allowed on range), your guns or rental guns. Bring ear plugs, or we will have disposable pairs available for 25 cents at the registration area.

Questions, please direct to:

Larry Fiandt at:

driver523rd@aol.com

Friday, August 5, 2011 9AM

The Kentucky Derby Museum
704 Central Avenue, Louisville, KY 40208
<http://www.derbymuseum.org/directions.html>
\$16 each

This includes a walking tour of grounds, museum, virtual race activity (pre run races that our group bets on with “funny money”, allow 2-3 hours

BBQ: 4-6pm, Place and cost to be determined. Raffle immediately following BBQ Friday.

Saturday, August 6, 2011 1PM

Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory
800 West Main Street,
Louisville, KY 40202
<http://www.sluggermuseum.org/>
\$9.00 each

Tour, gift shop: You can also order a personalized bat at the start of the tour and pick it up when you leave for a fee.

As organizers we had many things we wanted to include and not enough time or funds to actually pull it off. One example was a lunch cruise on the Louisville Belle on the Ohio River. To reserve for a group of 100 required a fee of \$1700 to hold a reservation in advance. This was to actually combine the Belle and the Slugger into a package deal. We regret not being able to secure this package for our group due to the costs associated. I would encourage

you to plan for the Louisville Belle for your own small group should you so desire to include this experience. They have limited space so book soon.

<http://www.belleoflouisville.org/>

Reservations: 502-574-2992

We could use some help!

This is a message for all who are coming to the Gathering in Louisville. Many of the items needed to conduct this event are almost always provided by us...the ladies of the tables - out of our own pockets. This can get costly year after year. We do not collect dues or registration fees as we want everyone to be able to attend and enjoy themselves. I am asking for volunteers to help provide the following items:

- 2 part raffle tickets....one roll will be just fine
- Name Tags....1000...stick on are fine and cheaper than the ones you have to print
- Black magic markers for the name tags....2 or 3

- Printing....I need 1100 copies of handouts to be given as people arrive for the Gathering...events, maps, directions. Print at home or take to an office supply (i.e., Staples) to have printed.

If I could get volunteers to either bring one item or 50 copies each of various event files, we'd be good to go.

Contact me at:

kblackstone5272@yahoo.com

If you want to volunteer for any of the others, please contact me as well.

So, pack your bags, tune up the car, bring items for the Raffle!! And John Dodd says to bring lots of money for the fuel fund! We look forward to seeing you all!

TRUCK NEWS:

Fort Drum, NY:

Several trucks displayed during the weekend of 18-19 June for the Fort Drum History Timeline Event in conjunction with the Army birthday. Vinny Schwartz brought the gun truck "Untouchable" and John Tennis brought the gun truck "Aces & Eights." Jeff Houghton brought a 5-ton tractor, and also on display was a 2-1/2 ton truck called "Buttercup." The 8th Group was well represented, and were able to meet Mike Dahl, son of Spec 4 Larry Dahl, Transportation Corps Medal of Honor recipient who was assigned to the 27th Trans Bn, 8th Group when he was killed in action during an ambush on An Khe Pass in Vietnam, 1971. What an honor! See further on in this email to learn more about Spec 4 Larry Dahl. (Photos from Kathy Blackstone)



TRUCK NEWS (continued)

Five Flags, FL:

Ron Smith took his truck “Black Widow” to open the Speedway car races.

I couldn’t find a digital photo, but Rich May sent a video link that will give you goose bumps!

<http://youtu.be/8p0GjCshEwY>

Flint, Michigan:

Logan Werth took his reproduction gun truck “Uncle Meat” to an event in Flint, Michigan recently where many children enjoyed learning about gun trucks and how they supported the soldiers in Vietnam. (Photos from Logan Werth)



Crossville, TN:

The gun truck “Ace of Spades” and several of our veterans attended a Welcome Home event in Crossville TN 3-5 June. In photos below, Sammy Seay, owner/operator of the “Ace of Spades,” and Jack Cole raise the flag on the “Ace”, and Claude “Robbie” Roberson and his wife Martha stand in the truck bed, and in the last photo Sammy poses with Ron Dyer, organizer of the event. (Photos from Deb Masonis)



TRUCK NEWS (continued)

88TH TRANS REUNION: In the last newsletter, the reunion of the 88th Trans at LaPorte, Indiana in February was reported, but no photo was available. Thanks to Rhonda Weston, we now have a photo!



Front L-R-Wayne Nelson, Butch Weston, Lenny Stryffler, Tim Timiney, and Alan Runingen.
Back L-R -Larry Lofts, Mike Sukow, Paul Otte, Frank Lockhart.
Charlie Sims and Bob Anderson missed out on the picture.

LOST AND FOUND:

Lost – the contact name for the man who brought the 1st Log Command earrings to the Gathering in Carlisle last year. They were sold in the registration area and all proceeds went to the truck fuel fund. We have a request for more and need to know who to call!



1st Logistics Command logo
(OK, the 'leaning s—thouse')

Lost: I have lost emails for the following. Please provide if you can!
Paul Otte, Seymour IN, 88th TC, 1970, attended Gathering at Carlisle 2010
Rich Williams, North Cape May, NJ, 541st TC 69-70, attended in 2004
Blaine Story, 515TC and 523rd TC, attended in 2009
Mark Wallach, 88th TC

NEW EMAILS:

Several changes in email addresses:

George Frymeyer: ohiogeorge523rd69.70@gmail.com

Bill Finn: mickfinn6768@gmail.com

OTHER REUNIONS:

359th Mini-Reunion, Las Vegas, Nevada, 9-12 Nov 2011 at the Golden Nugget Hotel and Casino. Contact John Porter crowbar1@comcast.net 432-267-1733 or Bob Dye dyceracing53@att.net for more information, rates ,etc.

PUBLICATIONS:

Two publications from our veterans!!
Congratulations!

The Hard Ride: Vietnam Gun Trucks, Volume 2

in COLOR by James Lyles.
If you remember, the publisher took license to print Volume 2 in black and white with a glaring canary yellow cover (which James hates!). James has now republished it in the original color throughout.

James is offering 150 signed copies to anyone interested – contact him at:

lyles289HP@aol.com

They will be available at the Gathering in Louisville also! By the way, his third and newest book from Squadron Signal will be out later this year.

Fighting PTSD One Poem at a Time

by Jim Rose.

A book of poems relating to PTSD, Agent Orange, homeless vets, present day military, Gold Star families and a few poems with a little humor when he needed a break from all the serious stuff.

Ordering information:

ISBN13 Hardcover: 978-1-4628-9067-5,
\$29.99

ISBN13 Softcover: 978-1-4628-9066-8,
\$19.99

ISBN13 e-book: 978-1-4628-9068-2

Published by Xlibris

To order:

Call 888-795-4274 ext. 7879

Order online at <http://www.xlibris.com>,

<http://www.amazon.com>,

<http://www.barnesandnoble.com>

Contact Jim Rose at:

jhr0545@comcast.net

Battlefield Tour, Vietnam:

There is still availability on the 7 day Long Tan Trek Tour departing 12 October, and the following-on 12 day Decisive Battlefields Tour to Vietnam 18 October, both hosted and guided by Dave Sabben. The 2010 tour was a huge success (please go to <http://www.longtantrek.com> and select “the 2010 Long Tan Trek Tour Report” or download the full 2011 itinerary from “the 2011 Long Tan Trek Tour Details”). You may

do either or both of the tours. Tour numbers are limited but we do require a minimum number to operate. The website includes itineraries for both tours.

http://www.nntravel.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=13&Itemid=34

http://www.nntravel.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=13&Itemid=34

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Hector F. Soto Diaz - Hector was born on June 19, 1947 and passed away July 30, 2009 in Maunabo, Puerto Rico. Hector was the acting NCOIC on the gun truck "Brutus" the day when Larry Dahl was killed, assuming the position of the regular NCOIC Richard Bonds who had been detained at HQ that day on official business. We have all heard his name at the Gatherings, but he never attended one. (Courtesy of James Lyles)

MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT SPEC 4 LARRY DAHL:



VIETNAMESE CONFLICT 1961-1975

*The President of the United States of America,
authorized by an Act of Congress,
3 March 1863, has awarded posthumously in the name of
Congress the Medal of Honor to
SPECIALIST 4 LARRY G. DAHL
for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity, extraordinary
heroism, and intrepidity at the cost of his life,
above and beyond the call of duty in the Vietnamese Conflict.*

The Medal of Honor is a symbol of the spirit that lies at the very heart of our democratic society -- a spirit that recognizes someone for what they are and do, not for any accident of birth or background.

Medal of Honor recipients, regardless of rank, race, or religious belief, are linked by an ideal that springs from the deepest roots of all that is best in humanity: at a time of trial and crisis, their first thoughts were of others. Their actions exhibit a spirit of self-sacrifice that is universally recognized and respected. When they could have done less without blame or dishonor, they gave more, responding "above and beyond the call of duty." The Medal of Honor is a symbol of those high ideals. It is this nation's expression of gratitude and recognition of those individuals whose uncommon valor sets them apart from others.



MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT SPEC 4 LARRY DAHL (continued...)

The Transportation Corps has four Medal of Honor recipients, the low number representing the fact that under normal conditions Transportation Corps soldiers are considered a support branch and generally are not in the fore front of battle. However, in Vietnam this was different in truck companies that were constantly under ambush. Two of our Medal of Honor recipients served in gun truck companies – Sergeant William W. Seay, 62nd Trans Co, and Specialist 4th Class Larry G. Dahl, 359th Trans Co. In this newsletter we will cover Larry Dahl.

Specialist 4th Class Dahl distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity while serving as a machine gunner on a gun truck near An Khe, Binh Dinh Province. The gun truck in which Specialist Dahl was riding was sent with two other gun trucks to assist in the defense of a convoy that had been ambushed by an enemy force.

The gun trucks entered the battle zone and engaged the attacking enemy troops with a heavy volume of machinegun fire, causing a large number of casualties. After a brief period of intense fighting the attack subsided.

As the gun trucks were preparing to return to their normal escort duties, an enemy hand grenade was thrown into the truck in which Specialist Dahl was riding. Instantly, realizing the great danger, Dahl called a warning to his companions and threw himself directly onto the grenade.

Through his indomitable courage, complete disregard for his safety, and profound concern for his fellow soldiers, Spec 4 Dahl saved the lives of the other members of the truck crew while sacrificing his own.



Spec 4 Dahl's conspicuous gallantry, extraordinary heroism, and intrepidity at the cost of his life, above and beyond the call of duty, are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on himself, his unit and the U.S. Army.

Ambush at An Khe Pass

On February 23, 1971 elements of the 27th Transportation Battalion left Pleiku with a convoy of 5,000-gallon jet fuel tanker trucks. The tankers were broken down into several groups and escorted by gun trucks. As one group approached the top of the An Khe Pass, an NVA company of about 50 soldiers initiated an ambush by disabling the gun truck *Creeper*, blowing out its tires with a rocket and hitting one of the fuel tankers which began to burn.



An Khe Pass

MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT SPEC 4 LARRY DAHL (continued...)

Sgt. McCatchin, NCOIC of the *Creeper*, called for help and the guntruck *Playboys* immediately responded. The crew of *Playboys* drove into the kill zone, stopping about 30 yards from *Creeper* next to the tanker truck. Both gun trucks began laying down suppressive fire as enemy soldiers pressed their attack.

The convoy commander riding in *Playboys* called for additional support, and a tank located at a nearby checkpoint responded. Three more gun trucks from the following group also answered the call and sped into the fight. *Brutus*, *Misfits* and *The Untouchables* from the 359th Transportation Company joined the other two gun trucks and the tank in the battle with the NVA soldiers.

Meanwhile, the commander in *Playboys* ordered Walter Deeks, filling in as *Playboys*' driver, to go look for the driver of the disabled fuel truck. He wanted to rescue the driver and clear the kill zone. Deeks ran over and picked up the wounded driver and carried him back to *Playboys* under fire.

Sgt. Grailin Weeks, *Playboys*' NCOIC then ran to the disabled fuel truck and despite the great danger, drove the truck out of the kill zone with the gun trucks following. The entire battle lasted for nearly an hour before infantry troops could be brought in to secure the area.

Sgt. Weeks received the Silver Star and all other members of *Playboys* received Bronze Stars, with V device. Larry Dahl was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for sacrificing himself for his crew.



Dahl (right) and crew sit near Brutus



Dahl (right) and friend

MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT SPEC 4 LARRY DAHL (continued...)

On October 2nd, 1998, the US Navy honored Larry Dahl by the launching of a Roll on, Roll off ship, built by NASSCO steel of San Diego, California. In a joint venture, of the US Navy and the US Army, the USNS DAHL is one of eighteen such ships, designed to carry thousands of APC's, tanks, helicopters and other heavy military equipment. The Navy plans to deploy the sealift ships, around the globe, to shorten the time it takes, to mobilize, American armed forces.



USNS DAHL (T-AKR 312) Large, Medium-Speed Roll-on/Roll-off Ship

- Length: 950 feet
- Beam: 106 feet
- Draft: 34 feet
- Displacement: 62,644 long tons
- Speed: 24.0 knots
- Civilian: 30
- Military: 5

We are doing our best to keep you informed and conduct the Gathering. If you have suggestions, please let us know! And a special thanks to Deb Masonis for the formatting of our newsletter – looking so professional! If you can't read the Adobe version, let me know and I'll send you one in a regular email (bbower1@cox.net).

Supporting Our Vets!

Barbara, Kathy, Mary Ann and Penny



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Mary Ann Deeks: deekslee@verizon.net
Penny Throne: tpthrone@madisontelco.com