

From: gary gilliam [ggilliam@centurytel.net]  
Subject: **Week of the Eagles after action report**

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My Friends,

My wife Debbie and I arrived at Ft Campbell on Thursday evening August 13<sup>th</sup>, meeting up with Jim and Trisha Roesch; along with their granddaughter Haley. Jim and I arranged to meet with SGT Jeff Tews at Charley company ward room at 9:00 am after PT (theirs definitely not ours).

We arrived early and introduced our selves to the new First Sergeant Roberto Colon, who had previously been attached to the 10<sup>th</sup> mountain. He was very courteous and gave a good welcome but only after he saw the welcome that Capt Savin, Charlie Company's new commander, did he realize the true connection with the old and new Currahees. Capt Savin was very excited and gracious as he welcomed us into his office. Welcomed with a big smile and firm handshake he encouraged and invited to make ourselves at home while there. He remembered us from the White Currahee and admitted he had wanted to be able to spend more time with us that evening.

Frank and Kathy Matsko along with Dave and Sandy Weindorf arrived Friday afternoon. We had a great time visiting through out the afternoon.

Frank and Dave stood rear guard at the hotel to welcome those coming in late Cal Kato and Randy Parmley, Friday evening; while Gary/Debbie, Jim/Trisha and Haley were enjoying Hank Williams Jr at the concert. Frank fell asleep on guard and missed Cal and Randy when they arrived but made up time awaiting their return after they enjoyed dinner out with Dave and his wife Sandy. We ordered in some pizzas and visited late into the night. It was so great to see Dave Weindorf again after 38 years but I must say some things never change and his antics are still as zany as they ever were; thanks "Wizard", I pray you never lose that zany sense of humor. We all laughed until our sides ached. All agreed if Steve Bago, Bob von Almen and Dave Weindorf get together we will sell tickets to the funniest show that has ever landed in Ft Campbell. Frank said if we have to put him in a wheel chair and carry him from bed he doesn't want to miss that reunion. I'm with you Frank!

COL Seitz arrived around 11:00 am on Saturday morning and we all gathered to go to the air show. As usual it was a great show, with static displays. We were excited that Glenn and Clara Green also drove into Ft Campbell Saturday afternoon and joined us. We had planned a dinner on Saturday evening and after the air show, a shower and yes; I admit, a nap we were ready to go. The dinner was at Charlie's Steakhouse just a short distance from the hotel. We had 8 old vets from Charlie with 5 wives and a granddaughter, totaling 14 representing the unit of 1970-71 and 13 of the new Currahees. Lt COL Hill and staff along with the captain and a sergeant from each company; Capt Savin and SGT Jeff Tews represented today's Charlie Company. We enjoyed a wonderful evening of great food and fantastic camaraderie with the old and new Currahees. At the end of the evening Bn Commander Hill presented each old Currahee a command coin representative and created for the Battalion in memory of the Afghanistan campaign. Some saluted, some hugged, some shook his hand and some shed tears at the presentation. CURRAHEE!

Sunday August 16<sup>th</sup> MG Campbell the new commander of 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division invited all Viet Nam vets to attend a welcome home celebration as it is done to welcome the new Currahees home after each tour of duty. They were expecting 800 and 1500 Viet Nam veterans arrived. There were 3 groups of veterans as the hanger could not contain the total that had turned out.

Our families were bused to Hanger 3 in advance of us. We were bused to hanger 3 and as we off loaded the bus a continuous line of soldiers from private to COL greeted us with a firm handshake and a strong welcome home. We were escorted by the soldiers and placed in formation outside facing the hanger. With a command the doors separated and a huge roar of screams and yells of welcome home came pouring out into the formation as we moved forward into the hanger. At first the thrill of the grandeur with a huge flag and 101<sup>st</sup> banners hanging on the front wall, from the ceiling battalion battle flags. The next emotion was the emotions welling inside as the band begin to play to welcome us home, as we looked about at all the signs about us welcoming us home. (Welcome home Dad, Welcome home PAWPAW, THANK YOU, WE LOVE YOU, ETC) Here we were 38 years later walking into our Division Welcome Home Hanger and being greeted as returning Currahees; the emotions as we walked in together hit all of us at the same time and we gathered arms around each other no longer fighting to hold back the tears. We circled together and formed the circle of true and lasting brotherhood. No one ashamed of the tears but overwhelmed with the moment as we took the moment to say a prayer of thanks for making this moment possible. Our next thoughts expressed by all; we wish all of our unit were together to share this unbelievable moment of time.

As we reloaded on the buses and were transported to our parking area, Randy and Cal began to holler for everyone to look to the right side of the bus. There was a 2 star general at attention and saluting us as we passed. OMG no one thought to snap a picture.

Later that evening Randy asked how we will be able to describe what we had just experienced on our website. The answer: An indescribable emotional moment that words will never convey.

This email can not end with out reaching out to a great Currahee champion that was not able to be with us on this great week. Without the motivation and clear love for the unit; the 2/506<sup>th</sup> our Band of Brothers, this reunion of old and young brothers would not be possible. For your devotion and love we thank you our young brother. KERRY BASSETT you were greatly missed. We expect to see you next time.

Bob von Almen, Roy Skeggs, John Beebe, Steve Bago, Jerry O'Neill, Tom Weides who has joined with us in the past were all truly missed by all attending.

Currahee Brothers, Gary Gilliam

<http://company-c--2nd-bn--506th-inf.com> Check out our "Charlie Company" website & the WOE photos.

Take a close look at this picture; do you know who was missing? Answer is below picture..

Left to right Gary Gilliam, Capt (COL) Bob Seitz, Jim Roesch, Frank Matsko, Dave Weindorf (hugging), Cal Kato, Glenn Green, Randy Pamley and Lt COL Don Hill (506<sup>th</sup> Battalion Commander 2/506<sup>th</sup>)



**YOU!!!**

**Sunday Evening Dinner:**

Cal Kato, Randy Pamley, Trisha Roesch, Debbie Gilliam, Gary Gilliam, COL Bob Seitz, Jim Roesch, Haley, Glenn Green, Clara Green, Sandy and Dave Weindorf. Frank and Kathy had already left for home.



**The WOE Wives Support Group “Behind every good man is a great woman”**

Kathy Matsko, Sandy Weindorf, Debbie Gilliam, Trisha Roesch, Clara Green

