

TIGER TRACKS

Spring 2007

The Newsletter of the Steel Tigers 77th Armor Association

Rollin', Rollin', Rollin' . . . To the 2007 Steel Tigers Reunion in Scottsdale, Arizona

Reunion 2007 will be held in Scottsdale, Arizona from November 9-11, 2007. Scottsdale has become internationally recognized as a premiere and posh tourist destination, while maintaining its own identity and culture as "The West's Most Western Town." Today Scottsdale is widely known for its affluent culture and high society. The city boasts many luxury restaurants, bars, nightclubs, golf courses, art galleries, and other cultural diversions.

Scottsdale was originally inhabited by Hohokam, an ancient civilizations known for building some of the most ingenious irrigation canals the world has ever known. The remnants of their ancient irrigation system were adapted and improved upon in 1868 by the first Anglo company to stake a claim in the Valley of the Sun, when Jack Swilling set up the Swilling Irrigation Canal Company.

Twenty years later a U.S. Army Chaplain, Winfield Scott, paid the paltry sum of \$2.50 an acre for a 640 acre stretch of land where the city is now located. Winfield's brother, George Washington Scott, was the first resident of the town that was then known as Orangedale and later changed to Scottsdale in 1894.

In 1937, internationally renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright set up his "winter camp" at the foot of the McDowell Mountains, creating what is now known as Taliesin West. Scottsdale, and the rest of Phoenix, have seen an everlasting influence from Frank Lloyd Wright. Many buildings throughout the region were designed by the famous architect. Today, a Frank Lloyd Wright memorial stands in North Scottsdale and a major street bears his name.

The West's Most Western Town prides itself in its rich Western cowboy history, preserving while heavily promoting its plethora of "western" activities and events. Perhaps the most famous present-day cowboy event is the Scottsdale Parada del Sol, an annual month long event held in Scottsdale since 1954.

Getting There: Scottsdale is located along Arizona State Route 101, which provides access to nearby Phoenix, Tempe, Mesa, Chandler, and other cities in the metro area. Commercial air travel is served primarily by Sky Harbor International Airport in Phoenix. The city is also home to Scottsdale Municipal Airport, a single-runway airport with over 500 operations per day.

Reunion 2007 promises to be a wonderful opportunity to renew friendships and experience another great American city. Check out the tentative Reunion Agenda on the reverse side of the Reunion Registration Form.

Rollin' Rollin' Rollin'. Keep movin', movin', movin' . . .

MAKE YOUR REUNION RESERVATIONS!

PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS EARLY. DUE TO OTHER EVENTS BEING HELD IN SCOTTSDALE THE SAME WEEKEND, HOTELS IN THE AREA ARE EXPECTED TO SELL OUT.

REFER TO "STEEL TIGER'S REUNION" TO SECURE THE GROUP RATE!

SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA
NOVEMBER 8-11, 2007

CHAPARRAL SUITES
1-800-528-1456 (Reservations)
(480) 949-1414 (Hotel Phone)
www.chaparralsuites.com

PLEASE CONTACT CHUCK WINSLOW IF THE COSTS ARE BEYOND YOUR MEANS. WE WANT YOU TO ATTEND AND WILL ARRANGE TO MAKE IT MORE AFFORDABLE FOR THOSE IN NEED.

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Membership Update

Congratulations and thanks to all of you who are paid-up Members for 2007. We are especially thankful that so many of you paid the full dues so early in the calendar year. That makes keeping track of you and funding the recurring expenses of the Association so much easier. The praise for the success lies mostly with our hard workers, Don Cummings, Bob Basner, Chuck Winslow, Bruce Goldsmith, Floyd Robertson and Don Brown just to name a few. All of you count who help us keep up to date on prospects and info about yourselves and your buddies as it changes keep us from losing track of you.

Now, four requests for help that only you can provide. Remember that we have received very few rosters or lists, or individual names since many of you provided them to Peach. She has those lists, which is of no help to us. Please re-send copies to me or one of those listed above.

Also, think about people deserving special Membership consideration, those who should be Associate Members-your spouse, children, brother veterans from other battalions with whom we worked closely, anyone associated with us in the past or now who we want within our Association. We need those names. Remember, someone has to pay the dues fee. I believe that right now my wife is the only spouse signed up (she paid for it with her own money, too). Associate Members are really "one of us," and will help strengthen our Association.

We can use nominations for Honorary Members. These would be those who have done something special for the Battalion or the Association, and are deserving of our highest recognition. We probably need to limit new awards to one or two a year, and maybe not even that many. Too many takes away from the meaning. Please send your nominations to our President, Secretary or me, and the name(s) will first be presented to the Board for deeper research before being brought before the Membership in session.

Probably the most help you can give is to become a direct point of contact from the Association to your company, platoon, section, squad or crew. Please send me your name and best contact info, and what unit you are volunteering for.

Thanks for your strong support, and please keep it coming. There are a lot more deserving persons who need us, as we also need them.

Tom Miller
Membership

Adopt a Steel Tiger

Adopt a Steel Tiger Program - The purpose of the program is simple: to connect stateside Americans with soldiers deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The adoption is simple – Would be adopters send a monthly care package and or letters of support to your soldier. These are soldiers who may or may not have an extended family who can send the soldier “Home Town” support.

What is a care package? – Care packages are boxes of “Creature Comforts” that a soldier may not have access to or time to obtain himself. This one simple gesture of support on your part can help keep up the morale of those who are making huge sacrifices for us.

If you are interested in participating in the program, please send your name and contact information to: cathy.j.jacobi@us.army.mil

Armor Warfighting Conference

Armor: Strong Today—Strong Tomorrow

It was my privilege and honor to represent our 77th Armor Regiment at the Armor Warfighting Conference held at Fort Knox April 30 to May 3, 2007. The Conference was very well attended and there were a great many interesting and timely seminars, lectures, and VIP briefings. While I couldn't attend many of the sessions, I got a lot out of the informal and personal interchanges I had with other old soldiers. Permit me to provide some of my personal observations and impressions.

THE SOLDIERS. If I was impressed by anything, it was the outstanding characteristics of our young soldiers and the way they are coping with their service to country. To a man, they well conditioned, well groomed, articulate, highly motivated and marvelous ambassadors of our country and profession. In a heartbeat, I'd be ready to sign on to soldier with such a band of brothers. They expect to be in combat and without their families for one out every three years. Some have seen three and four tours in Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Commanding General makes the point that 81 percent of every enlisted tanker or scout is either in Iraq or will be there within three months.

MOVE TO FORT BENNING. As part of the Base Realignment Plan decreed by our Government, the Armor School and Center will be integrated with the Infantry School and Center at Ft. Benning. Last year, there were many non-believers who prophesized that it would never happen for reasons such as politics, tradition, local economies, training ranges, budget considerations, the environment. But this year, the fact is that it is happening. The plan is in place; the budget is adequate; the shovels are in the ground; the environmentalists are on board and the Army leadership has decreed that it will happen. Ft. Knox will be expanded to accommodate The Human Resources Command, The Recruiting Command, the Cadet Command and other odds and sods that will be transferred from high rent districts such as Washington. The Kentucky politicians are appeased as the Patton Museum stays in Kentucky. The actual movement of units take place from FY 08 to FY 11 as soon as the necessary facilities (barracks, classrooms, training areas, tank ranges, wash racks, maintenance facilities and dependent quarters) are completed. Cost is \$2.4 billion and it is being contracted.

THE 77TH IN IRAQ. The soldiers of our regiment are doing a superb job in a challenging location near Baghdad. Some of our comrades have paid the ultimate price and this subject has been reported separately. When the tour of the 1/77 is complete, they will return to Germany for what is now called "dwell time." They will start all over with the reequipping, retraining and reinfusion of young soldiers from the training base. When the necessary barracks and quarters are finished, they will be repositioned at Fort Bliss and reflagged with the 1st Armored Division.

MEDIA COVERAGE. In a candid exchange with the soldiers, a reporter from the Wall Street Journal admitted that the American Press was getting a biased view of the war but that it was not completely the fault of the press. These days, newspapers do not concentrate on breaking news because TV and the internet can report it more quickly and vividly. So the press concentrates on analysis of tomorrow's events and human interest. This demands that reporters be imbedded in units and presents the opportunities for soldiers to tell their own stories. Soldiers must move past their mind set that "we are trained to kill people and break things." The Army must broaden their historic mission of fighting battles to performing whatever task our government demands of it, whether it may be building schools, pumping oil, running prisons, developing a judicial system or distributing money. Like it or not, the US Army is the only world organization even remotely organized to do these tasks.

THE REGIMENTAL SYSTEM. In a professional exchange with the Honorary colonels and sergeant majors of the Regiment, the CG brainstormed ideas of how we could support the Army's mission while the Army would encourage the current soldiers to align themselves with veterans of the regiment from previous wars. Ideas presented included making the young veterans honorary members for a small period of time, visits to the wounded and impaired, communication with the families of the KIA, attendance at Change of Command, Dining Ins, Reunions, and similar post activities

COL Carmen P. Milia (Ret.)
Honorary Colonel of the Regiment

Steel Tigers Iraq Memorial

The Steel Tiger Iraq Memorial discussed in the Spring 2006 Association Newsletter was temporarily placed on hold following the receipt of orders and deployment of the Brigade back to Iraq. However, as the current deployment has progressed, we have begun to refine the memorial plans to encompass our Fallen Heroes from OIF II and OIF 06-08.

The Battalion Commander, LTC Johnson, has just approved the initial memorial concept. The design that LTC Johnson just gave approval on is a bronze memorial piece (boots, rifle w/ Kevlar on top, and dog tags) placed on a stone base with three placards: one tribute, and one each listing the names of the fallen from the separate tours.

The Battalion currently has approximately \$4,000 for the memorial. We estimate that the memorial cost will be approximately \$7,500. If people are interested in donating to the memorial, they can make checks payable to the "Steel Tiger Memorial Fund." The checks can be mailed to: CPT Tom McMurtrie, CMR 464 Box 1988, APO AE 09226.

The Steel Tigers are doing some great stuff down in Ramadi and Baghdad. We all look forward to getting them safely home as soon as possible. There are a lot of great pictures and newsletters sent back from our TF and Battalion units on the 1-77 AR Steel Tiger webpage at: <http://www.1-77ar.2bct.1id.army.mil/Default.htm>, then click on the NEWS

Thank you for all that the Association does to help Steel Tigers current and past.

Sincerely,

CPT Tom McMurtrie
D/1-77 AR
TM Sentinel

Cut along the dotted line to mail form

2007 Membership/Change of Address Form

- New/Renewal Membership Address/Information Change
 Donation

Select Membership Type

All Association members receive newsletters and a Reunion Registration discount. Membership period: January-December.

Price

- Veteran \$20.00
 Active Duty Army 1/77th (includes free Steel Tiger hat) \$20.00
 Charter Members \$20.00

Total: _____

Email

Service Dates & Company (if you remember)

Method of Payment

- Check Visa
Please make your check payable to "Steel Tigers 77th Armor Association."
 MasterCard
 American Express

Credit Card #

Exp. date

Signature

Please mail this completed form to: Robert Basner, Treasurer, Steel Tigers 77th Armor Association, P.O. Box 38, Birch Run, MI 48415



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