



# Hill 4-11 News



Winter 2012 Newsletter February 14, 2012

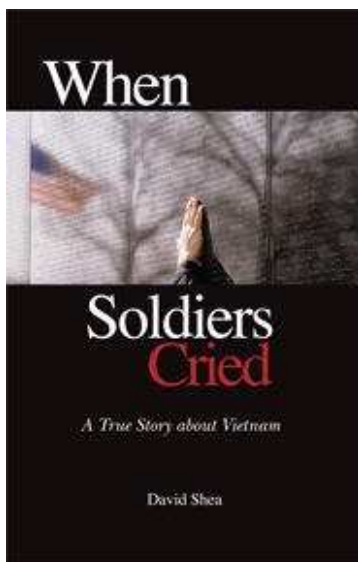
## Picking up the Pieces: A Life After War

By Anna Knecht

On chilly autumn mornings for years, young men said goodbye to their loved ones and headed into a fate they had no hand in choosing.

Over the course of the Vietnam War, over a million and a half men were drafted into a branch of military service, and 61% of the men killed were twenty-one or younger. The choice to serve was not their own, but their commitment to their country was steadfast.

David Shea was one of those men. Drafted into service in the summer of 1967, he served for nineteen months in Vietnam in an Army infantry unit, and was awarded a Bronze Star for meritorious service. He shares his experiences from the war in his new book, *When Soldiers Cried*, published by Brandylane Publishers, Inc. His story is told as a narrative rather than a documentary, and the harsh reality he portrays in the book is powerful and candid.



Like many soldiers, Shea experienced both the positive and negative aspects of war. His book is an uncensored look at the physical and mental rigors draftees had to face in Vietnam, but he says he also gained self respect and learned skills that prepared him for life in and out of the military.

The book shares scenes from the battlefield, as well as how difficult it was to return to civilian life once the fighting was over.

"I wanted to bring the reader into the story, to bring them into the foxhole, onto the helicopter and to know how it felt," Shea said. "We lost a lot of great guys and it needs to be captured and understood."

Shea tells his story through the character of twenty-year old Sean Kelly, who struggles with the injustice of being old enough to fight for his country while still being too young to buy a beer.

"It was different when my dad flew in World War II. They were fighting to keep the world safe. With Vietnam there was no threat to America," Shea said.

The story follows Kelly through training camp and onto the battlefield, and no details are withheld when describing accidents in the field, injuries, and interaction with other soldiers.

Shea bares his soul when recounting painful events, like the loss of close friends and com-

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### Hill 4-11

#### Association:

President—[Greg Smith](#)

Vice President—[Bob Frank](#)

Treasurer—[Dick Hill](#)

Scholarship Chairman—[Ed Grabowski](#)

2013 Reunion Host—[Frank Terry](#)

Newsletter Editors—[Dick Hill](#) and [Charlie Wood](#)

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rades.

For him, writing this story was an internal war. There were nights he didn't think he could keep writing. "I struggled writing some scenes. There were times I cried so hard that I couldn't see the keyboard and I don't know how I formed the words or made the spaces between the words," he says. "But it had to be told. I would scream and pound the floor drenched in sweat. I had an incredible amount of guilt for what I had been trained to do, but I knew I had to do it. I wanted to pull the heart out of the reader, to make them realize that we can't do this again."

When Kelly returned home, the world was a different place. War had changed him. The final line of the book is a plea, "Please, Lord. Please tell me it was all just a bad dream."

Shea says returning from war was no easy task. He enrolled at the University of Virginia for summer school and hoped it would offer a distraction. Unfortunately, school turned into a reminder of where he had been. The college days he longed for were no longer there.

"There were riots at UVa while I was there and the Kent State shootings happened, too. People were trying not to be drafted to Vietnam; they didn't understand what they were even fighting against," Shea said. "They were trying to not go where I had just come from. It didn't seem right."

Shea's life has been forever altered by the choices others made for him, and the images and effects of what occurred while in war will never leave him. He says he wrote the book as an inspiration for others-to show that hardships happen but that there are ways to heal.

"Survival is about the process of loss and rebuilding," Shea said. "People coming back from serving need to realize that it was a role they were asked to play, and they need to focus on themselves and figure out how to function. You've got to find a way to survive what happens to you."

Shea says he is torn as to whether or not he would want to avoid the draft if he had the chance to relive the past. Although the experiences he faced changed him and will remain with him for the rest of his life, he also knows he would not be the man he is if he had not had to endure the trials of war.

In the end, he has hope. "I hope future generations will never have to endure what I and others had to endure."

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**Note from the Editor:** If you are a 3rd Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment veteran of the Vietnam War and have written a book about your experience, send a write-up about your book to the [editor@hill4-11.org](mailto:editor@hill4-11.org) if you would like to have an article about your book published in this newsletter or posted on the [hill4-11.org](http://hill4-11.org) website.

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## New Life Time Members for 2011

By Dick Hill

The following Vietnam Veterans became life time members of the Hill 4-11 Association during the year 2011:

Bob Hunter  
Versailles, KY

James Thomas  
Olathe, KS

Mike Gray  
Stollings, WV

Wayne Dillon  
Forest Hill, WV

Charles Wood  
Goldsboro, NC

Joseph Monday  
Spring Hill, FL

Steve Cunningham  
Forest Lake, MN

Wieslaw Szela  
Shirley, NY

Hudson Deaton  
Independence, KY

Karl Landis  
Grantville, KS

Walter Robinson  
Wyalusing, PA

## Leslie J. Stottle Memorial Scholarship for 2012

By Dick Hill



High school seniors and college students who would like to apply for a Leslie J. Stottle Memorial Scholarship for the year 2012 should request an application from the committee chairman:

Ed Grabowski  
95 Meadow Street  
Rutland, VT 05701-4321

Applications may also be printed from the [hill4-11.org](http://hill4-11.org) website. The deadline for submitting completed applications is May 15, 2012.

## Contributors in 2011 to the Leslie J. Stottle Memorial Fund

By Dick Hill

Since 1999 and earlier (records not available), the Leslie J. Stottle Memorial Scholarship Fund has awarded over \$14,000 in scholarships to the children and grandchildren of members in our association. The generosity of our members has made it possible to continue this program in the memory of the fund's founder, Colonel Leslie J. Stottle.

During the year 2011, the following members of our association contributed to the Leslie J. Stottle Memorial Scholarship Fund:

Alan Vitters	George Hardman	Kenyon Kugler	Robert Mushtare
Angel Gutierrez-Camacho	Greg Smith	Larry Finch	Ron Pettie
Bar Delk	Huey Fautheree	Mark Callahan	Sandor Tomasini
Bryan Ergang	Jerry Dinkel	Martin Buys	Ted Neiss
Dick Hill	Jim Vitale	Mickey Stottle	Tom Petty
Ed Grabowski	John Hillier	Mike Gray	Walter Robinson
Frank Terry	Karl Landis	Nolan Cross	Wieslaw Szela
George Ellis	Ken Gentry	Richard Linehan	Willie Williams

## Contributors in 2011 to the John Walker Memorial Fund

By Dick Hill

The following members of our association contributed to the John Walker Memorial Fund:

Alan Vitters	George Ellis	Mark Callahan	Richard Linehan
Angel Gutierrez-Camacho	Greg Jackson	Martin Buys	Robert Mushtare
Bar Delk	Greg Smith	Michael Burr	Sandor Tomasini
Bryan Ergang	Huey Fautheree	Mike Jarmus	Wieslaw Szela
Ed Grabowski	Kenyon Kugler	Mickey Stottle	Willie Williams
Frank Terry	Larry Finch	Nolan Cross	

## 2013 Reunion Update

By Dick Hill

Our next reunion will be held June 20-23, 2013 at the Harrah's Tunica Casino Resort in Tunica, MS. Our reunion hosts are Frank and Mable Terry. Further information about the reunion will be provided as it becomes available.

Harrah's Tunica is the largest casino resort between Las Vegas and Atlantic City. For more information about Harrah's Tunica and what they have to offer, visit their website at <http://www.harrahstunica.com/casinos/grand-casino-resort-tunica/casino-misc/hotel-overview.html>.



## Pictures from the Past

By Charlie Wood

The following pictures have recently been posted in the [Hill 4-11 Photo Gallery](#):



Vietnam Veterans from Bravo Company during the reunion in Tampa, FL. (Photograph by Dick Hill)



Four photographs make up this panoramic view of LZ Cork while it was manned by Delta Company. (Photograph by Mike Jarmus)



“Big Jim” Hollerman, who served in Bravo Company, passed away in 1980 during open heart surgery. (Photograph by Sandor Tomasini)



Chaplain Norton in the field with his slingshot. (Photograph by John Friess)

## Taps for 2011

By Charlie Wood

The following Vietnam Veterans who served in or supported the 3rd Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment passed away in 2011:

Harry G. Sheppard, Jr.— passed away on January 27, 2011. Harry served in Delta Company during two tours between 1968 and 1970.

Andy J. Sager—passed away on May 30, 2011. Andy served in Delta Company.

Elbert R. “Bert” Franklin—passed away on June 21, 2011. He had registered and planned to attend his first reunion in Tampa. Elbert served as a squad leader for the 4.2 inch mortar in Echo Company during 1970-1971 and was also known as “Chicken Man.”

Frederick J. Painter—passed away on December 12, 2011. Frederick served in Delta Company during 1969-1970.



**From:**

Dick Hill  
Treasurer  
Hill 4-11 Association  
630 Woodside Drive  
Kent, OH 44240-2664

**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**

**[HTTP://HILL4-11.ORG](http://hill4-11.org)**



**To:**

## Hill 4-11 Association — Dues Payment Form

Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Email:

Vietnam Unit:

Dates of Vietnam Service:

Annual Hill 4-11 Dues \$25.00 or Lifetime Membership \$150.00

\$

Leslie J. Stottle Memorial Scholarship Contribution

John Walker Memorial Fund Contribution

\_\_\_ Copies of Hill 4-11 History @ \$17.50 Each

Total \$

Make checks payable to Hill 4-11 Association and mail to:

Dick Hill  
Treasurer  
Hill 4-11 Association  
630 Woodside Drive  
Kent, OH 44240-2664