

THE RANGER LEGACY LIVES ON

From Charlie Ochoa

I was in the locker room at Life Time Fitness (Fitness Center in San Antonio, Texas) one day in mid February and speaking to a young man, I estimate in his early thirties, as had been the case for the last several months. As we were talking and getting dressed for work about 7 AM he asked if I had served in the military. I said yes, I had served in Viet Nam. He said to me that his father-in-law had also served in Viet Nam in the LRP's. Is that right I said? Well, I served as part of the 1st Cavalry with a LRP unit also I said. He tells me that he thought his father-in-law served with the 1st Cav but that his father-in-law had recently passed away. So I ask, "What is your father-in-law's name"? He says, "**Rudy Torres**".

My stomach sank to my feet. I ask, "Please tell me your name again". He says, Jay Hernandez. While trying to hold back my emotions I tell him that I knew Rudy Torres and that we served in the same company but his tour was in an earlier time. I also mention that I read about Rudy's passing in our Ranger Newsletter. I explain that I met Rudy in Killeen, Texas at one of our Ranger reunions. He then starts asking several questions to validate if we are really talking about the same Rudy Torres.

He asked me if I knew Doc? I said yes, Doc **Gilchrest** whom I also met at a Ranger reunion. We were both stunned and we didn't speak for a few moments as if trying to ask ourselves "Now what?" I said to Jay, if you are ready to leave I will walk out with you. I showed Jay my Toyota Pick-up with the Ranger Scroll as the front license plate. We talked for a moment and I told him I would bring the newsletter for him and his family to read and copy. Jay said that would be great since his wife, Cynthia had prepared a website about Rudy and this newsletter could be scanned into the website.

I brought the newsletter and shared it with Jay who looked at the picture of Doc **Gilchrest**, Bennie **Gentry**, and Tom **Campbell** at Rudy's funeral. Jay says, "Oh my God! These are the guys that were at my house". I mention to Jay that the newsletter has some very kind comments about Rudy by many of his Viet Nam buddies.

I wanted to share this story with everyone because I feel that in some small way this will go a long way toward the healing process for Rudy's family which includes Rudy's wife, only daughter Cynthia, Jay, and Rudy's grandkids (one of which Rudy took to Killeen to a Ranger reunion). I am also here to tell you that our Ranger legacy lives on as our pride and spirit is passed on and felt by those that mean the most to us, our family.

Thank you
Charlie Ochoa
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