

# Texas Caissons Alumni Association

Dedicated to Serving The University of Texas Army ROTC Program

January 2004

[www.txcaissons.org](http://www.txcaissons.org)

Edition 2004-1

## NEW CAISSONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS FOR 2003 - 2004

The Annual General Meeting on October 18, 2003 elected our Caissons Board of Directors and Officers for 2003-4. The **Board of Directors** consists of the dedicated folks shown below. Also shown is the year in which their term expires.

Ernie Banasau - 2006	Roger Booker - 2004	MG Raymond Barrett - 2006
Jim Landrum - 2006	Bob Smylie - 2004	Frank Henderson - 2005
Keith Maxie - 2003	Steve Stevenson - 2004	Lawson Magruder III - 2005
Kathleen Meilahn - 2006	Charlie Busbey - 2005	LTC George Soriano - 2006

### **The Caissons 2003 - 2004 Officers are:**

Vice President: Lawson Magruder III  
Corresponding Secretary: Steve Stevenson  
Historian: Jim Landrum

President: George Soriano  
Treasurer: Bob Smylie  
Recording Secretary: John Boswell  
Marketing: Joe Gonzales

## DECEMBER 2003 ARMY ROTC COMMISSIONING CEREMONY

The University of Texas Army ROTC program commissioned eight Second Lieutenants on December 19, 2003. Our new Army Officers are:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>HOMETOWN</u>	<u>DEGREE</u>	<u>BRANCH</u>
Scott B. McFarland	Dallas, TX	Psychology	Aviation
JoAnna M. Orozco	San Antonio, TX	Kinesiology	Medical Service
Jeremy R. Percy	Bastrop, TX	Master Public Affairs	Intelligence
Andrew E. Short	Fairview, TX	Mechanical Engineering	Engineer
Carlos L. Sigcho	Houston, TX	Sociology	Adjutant General



2LTs Orozco and Short, Caissons Scholarship Recipients

The December AROTC commissioning ceremony was held in the renovated Geology Building, across the East Mall from RAS. BG James Bisson, ADC-Maneuver, 49<sup>th</sup> Armored Division made an excellent speech as the Guest Speaker and then presented each new Lieutenant with a 49<sup>th</sup> Armored Division coin. Following their commissioning, each new Lieutenant participated in the Silver Dollar Salute Ceremony, and received a unit coin from the Longhorn Battalion. The Caissons presented a free one-year membership and a new \$2 bill for good luck to our new US Army officers.

## PAST CAISSONS SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

The December commissioning was also a special occasion for the Texas Caissons as two of the new Lieutenants are past recipients of our Caissons Scholarship. This is the first time that two winners have been commissioned at the same ceremony. JoAnna M. Orozco received the scholarship in 2000 and Andrew E. Short was a recipient in



New Caissons with certificates and \$2 bills

2001. Since the Fall Semester of 1996, the Caissons have made thirteen scholarship awards and to date six recipients have been commissioned as Second Lieutenants.

### **COMMANDER'S CORNER – LTC KATHLEEN J. TAYLOR**

This is my first article as the Chair and Professor of Military Science at the University of Texas at Austin, so I should briefly introduce myself. My family and I are joining the UT ROTC after serving with 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division as the Deputy Provost Marshal. I am the product of the Rutgers's ROTC program. I arrived in July to be heartily greeted by the Caissons Alumni Association. I am deeply honored to serve here and appreciate the hard work and selfless service of our Alumni in helping develop our young leaders of tomorrow. The Army Service Commissioning served to highlight last semester. We commissioned 2LT Joanna Orozco, 2LT Andrew E. Short, 2LT Scott B. McFarland, 2LT Jeremy Percy and 2LT Carlos L. Sigcho. We are very happy to have 2LT McFarland and 2LT Short working with us until they go to their Officer Basic Course in February. The men's Ranger team took 6<sup>th</sup> place in the Ranger competition and the mixed team took 5<sup>th</sup> place. The dinner hosted by the Caissons in conjunction with the Veterans Day celebration was a huge success!

My biggest challenge over the next several years is recruiting and retention. Over the past several years ROTC enrollments and retention have decreased. My intent is to create an atmosphere that cadets want to be a part of and work toward common goals of becoming quality leaders and officers. Activities planned for next semester include a staff ride to a battlefield in order to broaden cadet's experience and understanding of military history and deepen their understanding of the principles of War. The military ball is tentatively schedule for May 7, 2004. And, the awards ceremony will be 1 April 2004. And, the corps of cadets is excited and preparing to take part in the Bataan Death March.

A special thanks to the Caissons for their untiring efforts and support to the Longhorn Battalion. I look forward with each of you the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Hook'em Horns!

### **ANNUAL BAR-B-QUE**

The annual Caissons Bar-B-Que was held before the kickoff of the Texas Tech football game (Nov 15<sup>th</sup>) at the UT ROTC Building. A steady rain in the morning drove the festivities inside but dampened neither spirit nor appetite. This year, in addition to the Caissons support for the Longhorn cadets, the BBQ was honored to have approximately a dozen active duty soldiers from Fort Hood. The Austin chapter of the Purple Heart Association sponsored the active duty folks at our pre-game meal and arranged bleacher seats down on the field for the football game. All of the active troops were Iraq war veterans and they brought a very unique perspective to the festivities associated with our Caissons BBQ and a major college football game. One of the Apache pilots, CWO Joe Goode, was in the attack flight in the early portion of the war that had an Apache downed and the two warrants captured. Joe Goode told of intense anti-aircraft and RPG fire; but, amazingly, his Apache took no hits that night. After the BBQ, many adjourned to the Tech football game, which turned out to be a tremendous game. The Horns won when Tech missed a field goal attempt as time ran out. We are already making plans for next year's Caisson sponsored BBQ. More details later; but plan on joining us for the food and friendship.



**CWO Goode and cadets**

### **WEB SITE**

Hooray... our web site established and operational. It's a work in progress, but its up and running. A very special thanks to Joe Gonzales for taking the lead in this project. Also thanks to Bob Smylie for having some of his folks actually build the site and for hosting it. Thanks also to Roger Booker who coordinated the effort to design the homepage and other graphics. Take a look at: <http://www.txcaissons.org>.

### **ATTENTION ALL COMBAT ZONE DEPLOYED UT ARMY ROTC GRADS: WE WANT YOU!**

(To tell us where you are)

The Texas Caissons would like to keep in touch with you while you're doing heavy duty overseas. Please send us your address by e-mail to [jboswell@accd.edu](mailto:jboswell@accd.edu) or by snail-mail to John Boswell, 114 Brittany Dr., San Antonio, TX

78212-1720. And if you know of other UT Army ROTC grads deployed to a combat zone, please let us know their addresses as well. Starting from near the top, MG Barrett, UT '72 informs us that COL Fred Rudesheim UT '81 is the Brigade Commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bde, 4<sup>th</sup> Inf Div. Let us know where or with which units other Longhorns are serving.

**NEW AROTC AND CAISSONS SNAIL MAIL ADDRESSES**

The USPS gods have updated the mailing address for the Army ROTC office at UT, and accordingly the Caissons' new address is:

**The Texas Caissons Alumni Association Inc.  
The University of Texas at Austin – Military Science  
1 University Station C3603  
Austin, Texas 78712-0315**

If you have mail for the AROTC Office or the PMS, insert the name of your correspondent in place of the Caissons title. The powers swear this will make the snail mail on the UT campus more efficient. **Update all those address books, both virtual and paper.**

**LIFE MEMBER HONOR ROLL**

PMS Robert P. Higley	1966 BG (Ret) Robert L. Herndon	1974 Brian Shivers
PMS David Sain	1967 Keith Maxie	1976 Ernest Banasau, Jr.
PMS LTC Brian Cooper	1967 Edwin Dorn	1976 Charles P. Busbey
PMS Cadre LTC Matt Faddis	1967 Bob Binder	1977 Phillip Umphries
1951 James Sutton	1968 Preston C. Hunt	1980 George Soriano, Jr.
1952 Bob Hallmark	1968 Greg Choban	1980 COL Robert Roach, Jr.
1952 Ross Blumentritt	1969 Charles Baker	1980 George Soriano, Jr.
1955 Robert A. Bell	1969 Gary Gosdin	1985 Albert Lara
1955 Frank Moody	1969 Bruce G. Luna	1988 MAJ Rene Rodriguez
1955 Jack Painter	1969 LTG (Ret) Lawson Magruder III	1988 C. Wayne Marotto
1957 Gary Hite	1969 Michael Moran	1990 MAJ Kathleen Meilahn
1958 Andy Hebert	1969 James Shaw	1990 Michelle McCassey
1958 Donald L. Carmichael	1969 James A. Smith	1991 Katherine Graef
1962 Thomas Knapp	1969 Robert P. Smylie	1992 David S. Dougherty
1964 W. Keith Setzer	1970 Joe Gonzales	1994 CPT Sherri Shadrock
1964 Gregory Wene	1970 Manuel Nunes	1995 CPT Brett Jackson
1964 MG (Ret) Frank Henderson	1971 William Knox	1995 Steve Sin
1964 Herbert Evans	1974 Dr. Wesley Stafford	2002 LT Jennifer Rossie
1965 John Seawell	1972 Philip Winnsborough	2002 Liv K. Medrano
1966 Carroll Kirkpatrick	1972 MG Raymond Barrett	2002 Raul Medrano

**CAISSONS DUES REMINDER**

Thanks to those of you who have paid their membership dues. If you are not in that august group, please take a moment and do so. Annual dues are \$25. We offer a 3 for 2 special that allow you to pay for three years' membership for the equivalent cost of two single year memberships. The total is \$50. The Board recently approved the creation of a **Family Life Membership** category, pegged at **\$400** per couple. A dues form is on the last page of this newsletter. Remember that we are a totally voluntary organization, so 100% of your dues go to assisting the UT Army ROTC Department, primarily through emergency loans and scholarships to cadets. Thank you for your continued support. You can use our great Caissons web page and PayPal to make your dues payment.

**PayPal.** For those of you who want to use the Internet for more than email, PayPal is now available to pay your Caissons membership dues and / or make a contribution to the Caissons Operations Fund. Under our Caissons Web Page at <http://www.txcaissons.org/>, go to the xlink "How To Join". Scroll down and you can select the type of membership that applies to you. I paid my 2004 dues with three clicks! Make it easy on yourself to pay or

upgrade your Caissons membership. PayPal is a completely secure means of electronically paying bills through your credit card or bank account. **Make the leap!** Go over to the Caissons web site now ([www.txcaissons.org](http://www.txcaissons.org)) and make that payment.

**Contributions to the Texas Caissons Scholarship** should still be made by check, **payable to The University of Texas**, annotated for the Texas Caissons Scholarship in remarks, and mailed to the **Texas Exes**, The Ex-Students Association, Attn: Scholarships, P.O. Box 7278, Austin, TX 78713-7278. This also makes the contribution tax deductible **and** eligible for corporate matching funds, if your firm has that great program.

### **FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK: George Soriano**

Greetings to all Longhorn Battalion Alumni, Family, and Friends:

2004 promises to be a great year for the Caissons and the University.

Our membership is increasing and we are always looking for new members from the ranks of our alumni. We are looking for active alumni participation and are always eager to welcome back former Longhorn Battalion Cadets when they stop by to visit. The Longhorn Battalion is in good hands and continues to uphold the proud tradition of Army ROTC at The University. Alumni support is vital to our mission of producing some of the finest future leaders of our Army.

Texas Caissons members play an active role in the mission of the Longhorn Battalion and the development of cadets throughout their training. We are heavily involved in fund-raising, training, military social activities, and awards. Texas Caissons participation rounds out the program and demonstrates the commitment of the alumni to the cadets.

This year, we will finalize and establish our Distinguished Alumni Program. Although the details are not yet completed, this "Hall of Fame" will recognize our alumni that have distinguished themselves through outstanding service in the military services, government, industry, or other venues for public service. Many graduates have served with distinction in their chosen vocation and the Texas Caissons and the Longhorn Battalion wish to recognize them and institutionalize this recognition. If you know of any graduates that may merit this recognition, please contact the Texas Caissons through our website at [www.txcaissons.org](http://www.txcaissons.org).

I wish everyone a prosperous and successful 2004.

LTC George Soriano, UT Army ROTC Class of 1980

### **IN THE SHADOW OF THE BLADE (ITSOTB)**

Perhaps the finest testimony to the UH-1 Huey helicopter, and the folks that flew or rode in them, was presented at the world premier of a full-length documentary movie, on the UT campus at the LBJ Library on 7 and 8 November 2003. Caisson Ernie Banasau and the Austin Chapter of Order of the Purple Heart graciously provided invitations to several Caissons Board members for the two-day event. The film was produced and directed by a non-Vietnam vet, yet he did a great job of documenting the Huey's place in history and the people who went to war in it.

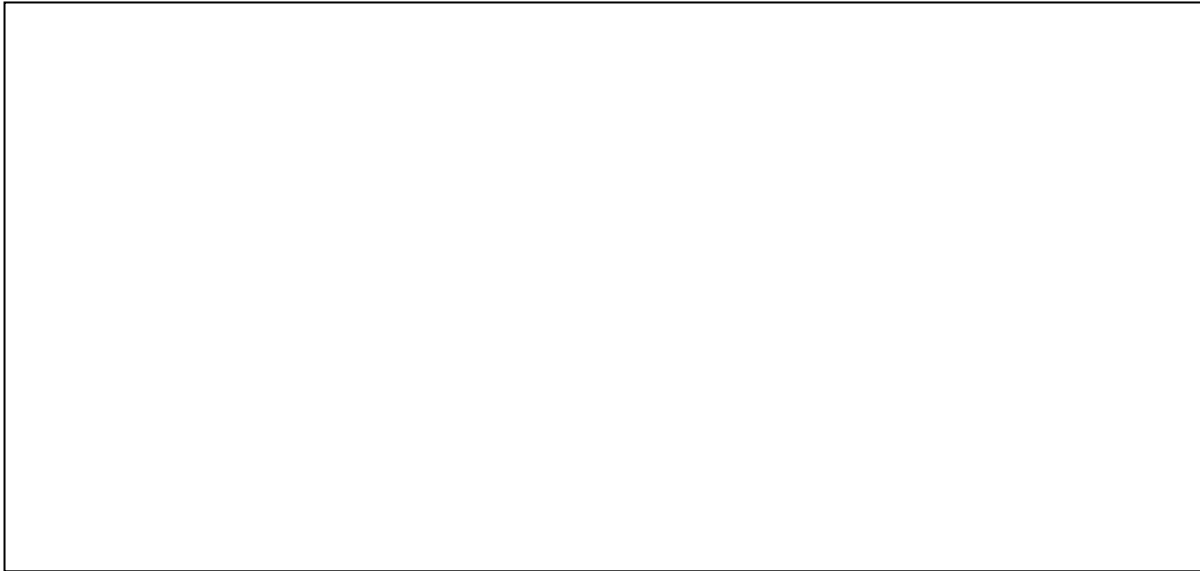
The movie's web site is [www.intheshadowoftheblade.com](http://www.intheshadowoftheblade.com). The site has numerous photos from the parties, ceremonies and the making of the film. It seemed that every veterans organization in America was represented at the gala; and I had not seen so many black pony soldier cavalry hats in many years. The movie has been released for distribution, but the producers do not know if TV will pick it up. If you have an interest in Army History, aviation history or the Vietnam era, I recommend that you go out of your way to see ITSOTB. There is a screening of the movie in Albuquerque's Madstone Theatre on Feb 11, 2003. Call (505) 872-9712 for ticket information.

*-Steve Stevenson '66*



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