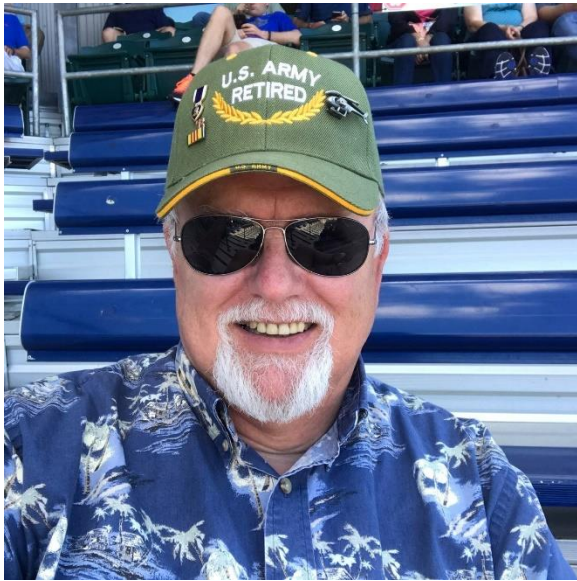


## Lion of the month

### Chris Cole



**Chris Cole**, our Lion of the month, served in **4 different branches in the Army** throughout a 20-year career; finding good reason for making the branch change every time an opportunity presented itself.

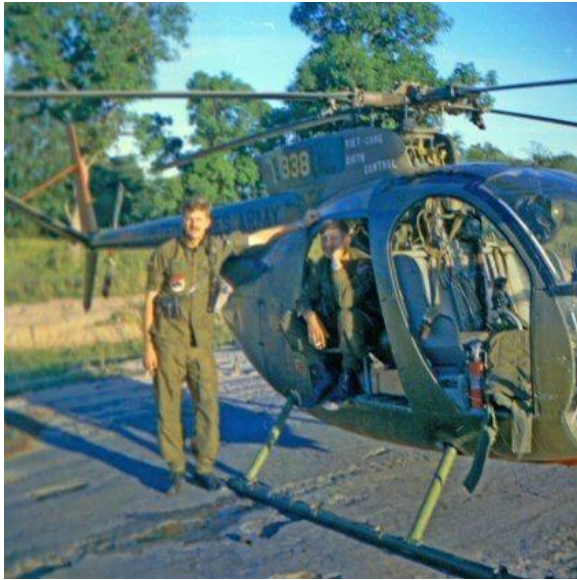


He was born in Piqua, Ohio in 1949, in the middle of a family of 4 sons. He attended the University of Chattanooga, graduating in 1971 with a degree in Social Work, and joined the Infantry Branch of the Army. He went to Infantry Branch school at Fort Benning; decided he wanted to be a pilot and joined the Aviation Branch to fly Helicopters.



After 9 months of Flight school, he was sent to Vietnam during "the Cease-Fire Campaign"; the final drawdown of American forces from the Vietnam war. He was a command pilot of a OH-6 "loach" helicopter; a small 2 man, heavily armed helicopter. He flew many reconnaissance and rescue

missions, and in less than 5 months, his “chopper” was shot down twice. In the second incident he was seriously wounded.



After a period of recuperation, he was reassigned to Fort Campbell as an Infantry Officer. While there, he transferred to the Military Police branch, and was assigned to the Provost Marshall there. During this assignment, he met and married his wife **Kathy (nee Gillett)**, from Oswego, NY. They have one daughter, **Casey**, who lives in Trenton, Ga.

Next, he went to Schweinfurt, Germany, this time as a member of the Air Defense Artillery Branch for 3 years. One of his roles there was Battery Commander of an Air Defense Battery.

His last Army assignment was at the Presidio of San Francisco, still

in the Military Police Branch as Deputy Commander of the 6 region Criminal Investigation command, then a Lieutenant Colonel.



He retired from the Army in 1992 and returned to what was now UTC to get a BS in Education. After 2 years with the Department of Human Services in Sequatchie County, he filled a position with the Department of Defense as the Tennessee Veterans Employment Representation for 16 years. In this role, he was responsible for providing employment support for the Tennessee National Guard and Reserve units. Few people in his organization had a more

comprehensive background for this role than he did. He retired, again, in 2012.



He joined the Signal Mountain Lions Club in 1995, and in 1997 he was elected to the Board of Directors as the Lion Tamer responsible for properties and setting up the meeting room at the Signal Mountain Country Club.

After the Charity account was formed, he was appointed by the board to file the tax reports for the club & charity Accounts. Several years later, he became the Club and Charity Accounts Treasurer; a position he filled for 12 years. Out of his 27 years as a Lion, he has been on the Club Board of Directors for 22 years.



He has represented the Club with Hamilton County Lions Sight Service Association for 25 years, many years as secretary and 3 years as president. He is also a Melvin Jones Fellow and Melvin Jones Fellow Progressive recipient.

Oh yeah, he also takes pictures, going back at least 20 years on film and now digital. He was also known as the Fire Starter for our 4th of July & Labor Day BBQs, when the Bar-B-Q pits were in service.

Chris is truly a credit to our club and to our nation

By George Davenport

October 2022