

The *VietNam* Triple Deuce, Inc.

An Association of 2^{Bn} (Mech) 22nd Infantry Regiment VietNam Veterans

Edited by Linda Nishikubo

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Presidents Message

There is still time left to make your plans for the Reunion in San Antonio! Take advantage to renew friendships made over thirty years ago in the sweat, mud, rain, and red ants. As I wrote in the last newsletter, San Antonio is a great city to visit. The food and attraction are first class, and don't forget, the chance to see the World Champion Spurs. This is in addition to the late night beer calls.

The service for the placement of the memorial paver for the Heroes of the Triple Deuce from Vietnam is schedule for 4:00pm on Thursday October 22. This will be at the Gallagher building located next to the Alamo. It will be a short service so that we can be back in time for the carving of the Hemingway Turkey at 6:00pm.

Our business meeting will be held on Saturday, October 25, immediately after the 22 IRS business meeting. This meeting should be less then 1 hour in length. Having the meeting at this time will enable the members in attendance to get to talk with and better know the individuals that are on the ballot for election to the board of directors.

"To assist its members and their families in times of distress and to provide them mutual understanding and support; and to participate in and support veteran's functions and programs"

The above is the purpose that is stated in the Articles of Incorporation of the Vietnam Triple Deuce, Inc. The questions: Are we as an organization working towards achieving this purpose. If not, how do we move in

that direction? What can each of us do to move the organization in that direction? The Board of Directors wish your input on this. You can call, e-mail, or discuss this with us at the reunion.

This will be the last newsletter to be edited by Linda Nishikubo. I want to express my appreciation for a job well done, and her time and efforts in editing the newsletter. I also want to express my admiration and thanks for work and words of wisdom provided by Mike Groves, Norm "Magnet" Nishikubo, and David Milewski as they retire from the Board in October.

See you in San Antonio

Skip Fahel, B 2/22 VN

Business Matters

Co-editors: As I indicated in the last newsletter Lynn Dalpez and Gary Hartt will be co-editors of our newsletter starting with the 12-03 edition. Lynn was with Charlie Company in Vietnam and was an Original. Gary was with Alpha Company in Vietnam and also was an Original.

Here is their contact information:
Lynn Dalpez

Gary Hartt

Starting from now please send any newsletter material that you feel is appropriate to Lynn and Gary. I know that they will appreciate and consider anything that you send.

Election of Directors: As of this time two additional nominations for the Vietnam Triple Deuce, Inc's. Directors that will be elected in San Antonio have been received. They are, Jerry Rudisill and Dan Striet. Jerry served in C/2-22 and Dan served in D/2-22. The names of the other nominated persons for Director's Positions are: Lynn Dalpez, C/2-22, Skip Fahel, Incumbent, Gary Hartt, A/2-22, Bill Matz, A/2-22, Jim May, Incumbent, and Dick Nash, A/2-22.

No recommendations for Officers have been received from you. It is not too late for you to send in nominations or recommendations. So if you wish to, please do so. Of course you will also be able to nominate candidate Directors and recommend people for Officers' positions at our business meeting in San Antonio.

Magnet

22nd Infantry Regiment Vietnam Memorial

On Thursday, July 10, ground was broken for the 22nd Infantry Regiment monument to memorialize the over 825 soldiers of the 22nd Infantry Regiment who gave their lives in the Vietnam war. The monument will be on the grounds of the National Infantry Museum at Fort Benning, GA.

Attending the ceremony were:

Ed Annable, Registrar, National Infantry Museum

Bill Allison, C/2-22 Vietnam (67-68) - Director of 22nd Infantry Regiment Society

Ed Schultz, HQ/2-22 Vietnam (67-68) - Sr VP of 22nd and Monument Committee Chairman

Awb Norris, HQ/2-22 Vietnam (67-68) - Honorary Colonel of the Regiment

Bob Babcock, B/1-22 Vietnam (65-67) - President of 22nd Infantry Regiment Society

CSM Jim Pickering, HQ/1-22 Fort Hood (00-01)

CPT Matt Martin, 2-22 Fort Drum and Bosnia (99-02)

Gary Erlandson, Dye Granite - contractor who will build the Monument

If all goes as planned, the monument will be completed by the first of September 2003 and a formal dedication will be held in the last half of September. Details on the formal dedication will be posted once they are finalized.

Bob Babcock, President, 22nd Inf. Regt. Society

Holiday Support Fund

Once again this coming Holiday Season Soldiers of the 22nd Infantry Regiment will be in 'harm's way'.

1-22 will be in Iraq, in the Tikrit area, which continues to be a 'hot spot'. Ambush attacks and sniper attacks against our Soldiers occur almost daily in that area. 2-22 will be in Afghanistan supporting the War on Terror. As all of you know the War on Terror is not over and Afghanistan is far from stable.

All of us who were in Vietnam and spent a Holiday Season away from home remember how much we missed our family and friends during that time of year. 'Care Packages' from home were especially meaningful to us at that time because they were a very tangible link we had to the 'World'. Now, how much stronger would that link have been if soldiers of a former era showed open support for us? Folks think about the question I just asked. OK you have thought about it. I am pretty sure you now see where I am going with this.

We need to support the troops who have replaced us in the 22nd Inf. Regt. and are presently deployed overseas in a 'hazardous duty' area. (I never did like that term, so lets call it what it is. COMBAT ZONE.) I am asking you, the old soldier, to show support for the soldier who is now in 'harm's way'. I am asking you to give them the support we never got because I know how much that support would have meant to us if we had received it.

Now to the punch line, I am asking for monetary donations which will be used to bolster 'unit supplemental funds' which will be used to make life a little nicer for our deployed troops during this year's Holiday Season. The donated funds will be distributed to 1-22 and 2-22.

Your checks should be made out to the 22nd Infantry Regiment Society with a notation that it is for the Holiday Support Fund. The donations should be sent to:

Nathan Palani... P.O. Box 53070
Reno, NV 89513-0370

Magnet, C/2-22 VN

Reunions

22nd Infantry Regiment Society

Folks the time for our reunion is approaching fast. It is only seven plus weeks away. I am starting to get excited about it. Like what a small child experiences when Christmas is just around the corner. I am anxious to see all of you again. Especially my friends that have not attended a reunion before because I have not seen you in thirty five years. There are several of you that have been located since the St. Louis Reunion such as Allen Sperry and Jesse Rivera. There are new friends that I have not seen face to face yet such as Lynn Dalpez, Jim DePree, Bill Matz and Mario Salazar. Though Bill served in Alpha Company he is still my friend. I must be getting soft in my old age...smile.

If you plan to attend the reunion but

have not yet made the arrangements now is the time to do so. All of the information that you need to register for the reunion and make your hotel arrangements is contained on the reunion registration form included with this newsletter.

See all you in San Antonio,
Magnet

New Finds

Michael F. Kush, A/2-22 VN

Ronald V. Preston, A/2-22 VN

Roger D. Rosin, C/2-22, VN

Wayne W. Steffey, C/2-22 VN

Comments / Questions

Ronald Preston, A/2-22: I would like to contact John D. Smith from East Orange, NJ; Joe Paige from DC and Barry A.A. Brown from Chicago. *Anyone out there who can help Ron, his address and phone number are in the New Find Section.*

William E. Stiefvater, HHC/2-22 VN would like to contact Reubin Martin, William Curl Parker and Jacky Clement.

BG Nathan C. Vail, USA Retired: Enjoyed the Military Man article in the last newsletter. My thanks to Clark Lohmann for sending it. Also, liked the Ann Margaret article sent by Dan Striet. *(The foregoing is paraphrased from a letter sent to Linda by Nathan)*

Dennis Zollo, D/2-22 VN is looking for someone to share a room with in San Antonio during the Reunion. His address and phone number are:

Dean Springer, B-2-22 VN: "Vietnam Nights"...I just received a letter from a Vietnam friend, John "Pete" Cresong. I know that with each contact with the past that I will have a Vietnam night with the thoughts and memories flowing through my mind. It is 3 A.M. as I am writing, also knowing that each contact will bring further healing with the strong friendships that are renewed.

And speaking of Vietnam nights, do you remember how dark they were? My second night in the field, I went to Cpt. Briscoll for the next day's orders. While returning, I walked within two feet of my APC and heard a voice right beside me saying "HALT". Quite a feeling!

The only thing that I am really bitter about on Vietnam is the way the politicians lined their pockets at our expense.

How many alcoholics did Vietnam produce with the free beer in the field and Chivas Regal scotch at Base Camp for \$3.25 a bottle? It took marriage to straighten me out on that and a lot more.

We had a scout dog once spot a tripwire 10 foot up in the rubber plantation where an APC antenna could trip it. I'm sure he saved some lives that day. Thanksgiving Day, 1967 when someone "lost it" and pulled a pin on a grenade and dropped it with his buddies around him. Christmas Eve, 1967. We were laagered by a small hamlet. I saw a small Vietnamese girl with a snake in her hand. I asked her what she was going to do with it but she didn't answer. She came out later with a bowl of rice and snake for me. That family had C rations for Christmas.

The ARVN base in Dau Tieng traded 5 AK 47's for a new USAF Deuce and a half in Saigon.

Does anyone remember the President Hotel in Saigon? I sat on the roof (13 floors high) by the swimming pool one night watching a firefight a half mile

away thinking that this is the only way to be in a war.

WHERE IS MY AIR MEDAL

There was around 10 times in Vietnam I should have been dead. This one from a retrospective view was kind of funny but not at the time. Some of the details are fuzzy after 36 years, but some are as vivid as they occurred yesterday.

After being wounded on March 19, 1967, I was in the 36th Evac. Hospital in Vung Tau. About 10 days later, I was informed that I was being released for return to my MECH infantry unit. I said my goodbyes to my buddy Danny Ryan whose leg wounds were serious enough for a trip stateside. I was instructed to board ground transportation Bien Hoa AFB and get a flight to the Dau Tieng base camp. To my knowledge this was only 4 months after the Dau Tieng base camp had been built and occupied. I guess regular ground transport was not available for whatever reason but I thought a short half hour chopper ride sure beat a dusty convoy.

I reported to the in country travel section at the AFB and was instructed to get on board a small single engine plane just outside. I was the first one to board the 8-10 seat plane with one seat on each side of a narrow aisle. While waiting for the other passengers and pilot, I noticed a small bronze plaque on the cabin wall above my seat. It read "CANADIAN OTTER-manufactured Jan 1936". Other information maximum weight and other specifications were just a blur to me, as I was focusing on 1936. I thought to myself "HOLY S__T!! THIS PLANE IS 8 YEARS OLDER THAN I AM". Prior to being drafted, I had flown a couple of times but it was in big commercial planes usually less than 10 years old. This sucker was built in the middle of the GREAT DEPRESSION and sure must be technologically obsolete. Then the real fun began, 2 ARVN and 2 CIDF soldiers boarded the plane each

carrying 2 live chickens. Next, a couple of Special Forces soldiers get on and are loaded with lots of gear. I don't remember who else boarded but we seem to have a really, really full load.

My mind goes a little crazy, should I try and get off this potential death trap? I did not mind helicopter flights but this ancient single engine plane bothered me. All the other array of soldiers are talking to their buddies and appear unconcerned. I was getting too scared to talk or move. Then I thought to myself, "you are just being paranoid". So I calm down and then the pilot gets on the plane. I check the guy out and again get really nervous. MY GOD HE IS OLDER THAN THE PLANE and looks like a cross between Gen. George Patton and Jimmy Stewart (Spirit of St. Louis) but older, MUCH OLDER! He is dressed in a bush hat, has flowing white hair like my 80+ grandmother and a white scarf. On his web belt is a pearl handled pistol. This guy is dressed for a 1930's era Hollywood movie. The pilot is doing his pre-flight check and then cranks the engine, which sputters and dies. He restarts the engine and it idles, sputters and coughs. The engine coughs like it has a bad cold from the damp Vietnam weather. The pilot revs the engine up to full throttle and we take off down the runway and after some more engine sputtering and coughing, I am amazed that we actually get airborne. With a huge sigh of relief, we start climbing and level off to 5000 ft. Everything is okay for about 2 minutes and the engine starts sputtering and dies. We immediately drop to 2000 ft. and the pilot finally gets the engine started and up we climb back to 5000 ft. Another 5 minutes goes by then we hit a little turbulence and the engine dies and we quietly start dropping. The pilot adjusts his engine settings and at about 1000 ft the engine roars back to life and we climb back up to 5000 ft. Everything is fine for the next half hour and then we start our descent into what I thought was going to be Dau Tieng, but it does not look familiar no rubber trees, just jungle. We are landing at a special forces camp close

to the Cambodian Border. It is a very short runway. The landing is a little bumpy, but otherwise uneventful. (No VC used us for target practice) The 2 special forces guys and their gear get off the plane and we immediately take off again. The engine does a little sputtering but by this time, I am getting numb to the fear of the situation (or just plain stupid or unaware of the unknown danger). As we regain altitude, we fly what seems like another half-hour and start heading in for a landing. MY GOD THIS LANDING STRIP IS SMALLER THAN THE LAST ONE. I think to myself "that COCKY A_S, WHITE HAired HOLLYWOOD PILOT IS AS CRAZY AS HE IS OLD". We land and clip the top of the trees coming in. We have a hard landing and he shuts the engine down and revs to full reverse thrust. Or whatever pilots do to slow the plane down. The plane stops with a whole 50 ft of runway clearance left. The 2 ARVN soldiers and their 4 chickens exit the plane and HOLLYWOOD (the pilot) taxis to the very end of the runway with a whole 5 ft to spare. HOLLYWOOD pilot revs the engine to full throttle and it is a pure miracle we get airborne. He clears the trees at the end of the runway by a whopping 10 ft.

By this time my fear is gone and I am in a self-survival mode. I start thinking, 'why hell I am an FO used to reading maps and almost always know where I am in this unfriendly country'. I start looking for landmarks, but nothing is recognizable. There are too many low clouds and it is all jungle below. It is either northern Tay Ninh province or the province just north of it or Cambodia ???

We have 2 more landings and takeoffs, just as hairy as the first 2. All the other passengers are gone and it just me and HOLLYWOOD and we start heading southeast. Finally I see the Black Virgin way out to my right and have a sigh of relief. If I survive a crash, I think I can find my way back to a base camp. I have no weapon, compass or anything of use if we crash. I decide if we crash, I will take HOLLYWOOD'S pearl handle pistol

and web belt. At first this last leg of the flight is calm, then the engine sputters and we drop from 5000ft to 2000ft before HOLLYWOOD adjusts the engine settings and we zoom back up to 5000ft. The entire flight I had not uttered a word to anyone and with the loud engine noise would not have been heard. I think this was the 5th or 6th time the engine had sputtered and died and the plane had done its 5000-2000-5000 YO-YO thing.

I was no longer scared, numb, self-survival etc. I was feeling ANGER towards the USA, the ARMY but most of all to this pilot who to me appeared to have obtained his pilot's license and training from a Dale Carnegie correspondence course. Granted I don't know JACK about flying a plane, why did this still fragile soldier have to return to his combat unit via a HOLLYWOOD jerk of an ancient pilot and his equally ancient plane?

This flight was worse than the firefight I had been in 10 days ago. I had experienced a wide array of emotions, none pleasant! Finally we landed at Dau Tieng. It was relatively silent after the plane stopped and the engine shutoff. I was still speechless and only could muster up a real nasty glare at the pilot. I left the airstrip and headed for the alpha Co. area and walked into the duty room tent. Don Smith, the company clerk, greeted me and was shocked to see me as everyone thought by the severity of my wound, I would not be back so quickly, if ever. His next comment was, "Gary you look white as a ghost!! Are you okay?" I don't remember my reply but it definitely would have been full of gutter words. My half-hour direct flight had taken between 5-6 hours and without a doubt was the worst flight of my entire life. Later in the tour, I did a lot of helicopter flights on the extremely vital mission of beer re-supply. (another story) I never tracked my airtime but it was in excess of the 100 hours to qualify for an air medal. Okay my MOS was 11 Charlie a minor detail, but flying with that cocky, ancient, white-haired, SOB HOLLYWOOD entitled me to 5 or 6 air medals by any reasonable and

compassionate awards clerk. That night, I got good and drunk at the “TY I on” and the cold beer I enjoyed was worth a 1000 air medals.

Gary Hartt, A/2-22 VN

We Should Have Known

I should have known the very moment that I arrived at Sea-Tac Airport, Washington State, from the Fort Ord processing center in California, in route to Fort Lewis, Washington, that my life in the US Army was not going to be the usual sort. The norm in 1965 being that a young man could expect to be drafted, sent to Basic Training, then Advanced Individual Training, and then to some unit that was either preparing for war, an emergency, disaster relief, riot control, or other possible scenarios that may involve the military in the future. There was combat action going on in a little country called Vietnam, and troops were still in Korea and Europe, but the big thing that was on the minds of people in those days was the cold war. That was soon to change. The writing on the wall was standing before me. It was still “me” in those days. The concept of “we” had not really set in yet. Standing before me were the men whose task it would be to change that manner of thinking – that self centered “me” posture.

Forty or so young Privates were met by the Officers, and Non-commissioned Officers of Charlie Company, 2nd Bn. (Mech), 22nd Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division, that day in December 1965, around midnight. All wore class ‘A’ uniforms with a blue cord around the shoulder and blue background for their brass. All wore multi-row ribbon displays with the most beautiful badge I had ever seen placed above them. The Combat Infantryman’s Badge, or C.I.B. Many wore Ranger Patches, Air Borne Wings, and Special Forces Combat Patches. My God, a Silver Star was Present! I knew many of these awards because I had been an armchair soldier ever since I was a small child. My father and I spent

many hours talking about war, and the Army. He was a US Army Combat Amphibious Corps of Engineers Tech. Sergeant. He was in the Pacific Theater clearing beaches, and building bridges for the US Marines. Their motto was “Semper Fi, My Ass.” General Douglas McArthur was our hero, we knew all about Audie Murphy’s medals, and the sacrifices one had to make to be awarded them. I knew what stood before me. Decorated US Army Combat Soldiers.

We walked down the concourse into their presence. The Sergeants all wore the same Drill Instructor Caps, the famous Smokey the Bear Hats. However, these Sergeants wore them differently, like they were new to them, somehow not right. This cadre addressed us as, “Gentlemen.” I wondered what happened to the term, “low-life-scum-of-the-earth-mamma’s-boy-buck-ass-private-cruit!” Drill Sergeants in Fort Ord made the word recruit sound like, “cruit”, in such a manner that indicated that they were somehow dis-served by having such rotten examples of humanity before them. Drill Sergeants yelled. The gentlemen before us were firm in their speech and their manner, but polite. I was stunned that a person such as myself, a nineteen-year-old buck-private-last-class-scum-of-the-earth, was even allowed to be in their presence, let alone hear the words, “Gentlemen, if you will please follow your Drill Sergeants we will get you bunks assigned and bedded down for the night.”

As we followed out new cadre out of the Sea-Tac Airport, we began to compare mental notes quietly. I believe the bonding between us started at this point. The “we” mentality. For instance, we knew that we all had scored high on our US Army entrance exams, and had all been held over for another battery of tests. Others had been marched off to Basic Training already. Our Basic Training was not normal, as we understood it either—marching around Armored Personnel Carriers with 50 cal. machine guns perched on top. We would stare at those machines on guard duty at night.

One day we were “familiarized” with the machines—while still in Basic Training. We stood formation with regular Army personnel not attending Basic Training, and other similar signals pointing to our future were present all around us.

One day very soon we would be decorated as the gentlemen we followed were. All would receive the C.I.B. Many would wear the Purple Heart, and two of those forty or so would make the ultimate sacrifice for his Combat Brothers and our country. A little country called Vietnam, would become the single most defining point of our lives. The bond between us would be for life. We were to become Combat Soldiers. We should have known.

Sent in by: Lynn Dalpez, C/2-22 VN

The Kool Aid Gift

One day in 1967 my father, Henry William Dalpez, a grocery man, was speaking with a salesman from Kool Aid, or the parent company that owned it. When the salesman found out that we used Kool Aid to kill the taste of those purifying tablets we had to put in our water, he told my father that he was going to send him a package. That was all. So my father didn’t think anything of it.

About a week later a master case of Kool Aid packets, all flavors, arrived at my father’s home. Dad shipped it off to me at C/2-22, somewhere in the Tay Ninh province. There must have been thousands of packets in that case. I took it over to Capt. White who had it distributed throughout the Company. I was the proud recipient of the thanks that my father and the Kool Aid salesman had earned.

I offer this in memory of my Father, Hank, who touted the Triple Deuce and our actions to anybody that had ears. He was a Triple Deuce kind of guy. Deeds, Not Words. We should have hired him as our press agent.

Sent in by: Lynn Dalpez, C/2-22 VN

What Happened to Dalpez

After being pulled out of C/2-22, sometime around July 1967, I was transferred to the 509th MP Battalion in Saigon. We were Port Security. MP's and Infantry in the same unit, the same compound. Touchy situation there!

I was placed in front of a promotion board and made the grade as a Buck Sergeant E-5. An A.C.M. was pinned on me for meritorious service while serving with C/2-22, and the 509th. I was then, and now, proud to receive the honor. The very compound I lived in for the remainder of my tour, was overrun by the VC during the Tet of 1968 (I had been home for three months). During my time with the 509th, I only had one "close call" incident with the enemy. I ended up under an overturned Jeep where the M-60 gun mount saved my butt. After rolling the Jeep off of me, the medic found an elbow scrape that required a band-aid. Once again I had dodged the Purple Heart by a whisker.

Chester Harbour and a couple of other C/2-22 Brothers were with me at the 509th. We never allowed any trash talk about the Infantry in our presence. "Dems fight'n words boy!" We finished up our tour in Saigon, and then rotated home, to the "World".

I struggled with the American status quo upon arriving home. I became bitter about the attitude towards Viet Nam Vets. I dropped out and roamed the west coast for a couple of years until I met the most beautiful woman in the world, Linda Ann. We got married and I took the US Army up on a job as the Security Sergeant for a NATO missile site in Germany. We lived there almost three years with our new son, Justin Matthew. Military life as a married couple did not suit us, so I got out and finally joined the American status quo, for better, or for worse.

Now days I am a Customer Service Manager and a struggling fine artist on the side. We live a modest, typical life near the city we were both born in, Portland, Oregon. Our big pride is our college honor graduate son, who will now go to work making us, we hope, grandparents. Maybe, I should have told him how that is done. Anyway, I am still the scrawny 140 lbs man that I always was. Less hair and teeth than when you guys knew me, but we all have our own stories there don't we? In my work, I am in contact with people from all over the world including active members of the 22nd Infantry, and the 4th Infantry Division, who directed me to the 22nd Infantry Reg. web site. While surfing that site, I spotted an entry from Frosty (James Frost). "Hey I know that guy!" I said, "That's my old Combat Brother! My old Squad Brother!" That started the ball rolling for me to get off my dead butt and reach out to my personal Combat Brothers, and Combat Brothers everywhere. My attitude now is that I cannot forget all that happened to us anyway, so I might as well share with, and help my Combat Brothers anytime that I can do so. I'm not leaving the Triple Deuce again.

Deeds, Not Words.

Sent in by: Lynn Dalpez, C/2-22 VN

A Woman Goes To War In A Man's World

By Kirsten Scharnberg
Tribune staff reporter
May 18, 2003

After learning that I was to be the Tribune's only female embedded journalist, I promised myself never to write the woman-on-the-front-lines story. It just wouldn't be an issue. I would find a way to blend in. I wouldn't be treated differently because I wouldn't let anyone treat me differently.

Wrong. I got my first inkling of this on the chilly March night that my unit--the 1st Battalion of the 187th Infantry

Regiment--arrived at Camp New Jersey, one of the rudimentary tent cities that had sprung up in the Kuwaiti desert just a short Humvee ride from Iraq.

The 187th, part of the storied 101st Airborne Division, is an infantry rifle unit, which means there are no women in the ranks because U.S. servicewomen are not allowed on the front lines. So it was me and about 800 men standing in the inky desert that night, listening to a gruff first sergeant bellow out the rules. We had been traveling for several days, so I was in a sleep deprived daze, largely tuning out what was being said. But when talk turned to the showers --really just a few spouts inside a filthy single-wide trailer --my ears perked up.

"We'll designate a female shower time for the reporter," the first sergeant said. "We'll post a guard for her so she can use the showers privately once a day. I'll let you know the time we decide."

I hadn't showered in about four days. I anxiously awaited the announcement of my special shower hour. A day passed with no word. Two days. A week. Finally, I took matters into my own hands and hiked the couple kilometers to another camp where there were female soldiers and thus female shower hours.

It was a minor thing, and I actually grew to relish that solitary 5 a.m. hike through the desert haze. But it made me realize how singled out I was, how the littlest things would be the ones to trip me up and cause me to do the very thing I had wanted to avoid: stand out.

Once the war started, those moments and circumstances only became more common. Hours after my unit had set out for Iraq, an alert came over the Humvee radio that a surface-to-surface missile had hit near our convoy. It was believed to be a chemical attack, and the voice on the radio shouted for everyone to get into their chemical suits.

Everyone jumped out of the vehicles and--because those chemical suits are oppressively hot in the desert heat--first stripped to their underwear before wiggling into them. Except for me. For the next three days I thought I would die from the mistake of putting my chemical suit on over my clothes because I didn't want to stand in my underwear in front of an entire infantry unit in broad daylight.

The modesty had to go. Try finding a place to go to the bathroom where no one can see you in the middle of a flat, not-a-tree-or-bush-in-sight expanse of sand. Keep in mind that I had finally used the cover of darkness to shed the clothes underneath my chemical suit, which is a bulky set of interconnected garments that had to be almost entirely removed in order for me to do my business.

One day--sick to death of having to pee in front of men I'd later have to attempt to interview with professional grace--I rejoiced to find a little lean-to dash behind. As I reveled in the first privacy I'd had in weeks, two Apache helicopters flew over so low that I could see the shocked expressions on the pilots' faces.

And these were the little dilemmas. I had made a pact with myself that no matter how tired I was or how physically strenuous a mission became, I would never let one of the soldiers lug my rucksack or equipment for me. I wanted them to see me as completely capable of pulling my own weight, as a traveling companion who was not a liability but an equal.

One night, hating myself, I broke that rule. It was pitch black and we were taking constant mortar fire at a checkpoint just outside Najaf, the holy Shiite city in central Iraq. I had my rucksack, which weighed well over 70 pounds, my computer and satellite phone, my gas mask container, several bottles of water and some food.

I had been bumming rides with military vehicles for a little over a day to get up to the embattled city, and

both my computer and phone were out of power, so I had added to my load a battery taken from a blown-out car, hoping that, with some alligator clips and a power inverter, I could charge my equipment.

The soldiers I had met up with said I could accompany them into the city--a 4-mile hike. I didn't know whether I could hike 4 feet with all that gear, let alone 4 miles, but we set out.

At about mile 2 1/2, I was about to give out. I was contemplating saying something needlessly melodramatic like, "Go ahead, save yourselves," when a soldier asked, "Ma'am, can I carry that battery for you?"

All my resolve failed. I handed the battery to the young man--who already was lugging a much heavier load than I was, including a fully loaded M-4 assault weapon that he would be expected to use in case of an attack.

The decision nagged at me for days. Not only had I not been able to pull my own weight, I also had potentially put that young soldier at risk. What if he had not been able to aim his weapon effectively had we been ambushed in that wooded expanse of territory approaching Najaf? What if he had fallen on the rough terrain and misfired his weapon, injuring someone?

As tough as I think I was out there, as proud as I am to have lived for more than two months in conditions I never dreamed possible, those questions bother me still.

Back in Chicago recently, the Tribune had a welcome-home party for a bunch of us who had covered the war. A female editor asked me whether my experience had given me an opinion about putting female soldiers into the infantry and on the front lines.

I told her about the car battery and also about the many times I watched big, tough, burly male soldiers nearly collapse during 10-kilometer hikes

with rucksacks, ammunition, TOW missiles, radios and machine guns.

I'm not qualified to say that no woman could do that job, but I suspect that it would be a rare one who could. I had run a marathon not long before the war and worked out almost every day. I grew up on an Iowa farm where manual labor was part of the bargain. But I had been bested by a car battery, and when I handed my load to that soldier, I admitted that I never could have cut it in the Infantry.

Sent by: Nick Dragon, C/3-22 VN

FIRST CONTACT

May 17, 1967

Company B was conducting searching operations in an area 10,000 meters south of the junction of highway 13 and 22. This operation was in concert with the balance of the Battalion. At 07:30 hours, the 2nd and 3rd platoons of Company-B departed the company laager position to conduct their sweeps to the north and northeast. The 1st Platoon remained in the laager acting as Company security and the reaction platoon. One hour later, the Company moved out of the laager and followed the path of the 2nd Platoon. The Company continued its movements until 14:30 hours when the Company Commander directed that the 3rd Platoon rejoin the company and help establish a new laager position for the Battalion. The other units of the Battalion were moving up from the south. He also directed the 2nd Platoon to move to the junction of highway 13 and 244, which was approximately 1,000 meters from its current position. The purpose of the 2nd Platoon movement was to locate a path to the junction for the movement of the Battalion the next day. At approximately 15:00 hours, the 3rd Platoon joined up with the Company and began preparing the laager position.

The 2nd Platoon was moving slowly

through the dense jungle with some of it troops dismounted. Because of the slow movement, the Platoon Leader decided to mount all of the troops on the M-113's. Mounted, the Platoon shifted the movement from a general north direction to the west to travel on a small trail that ran north to the junction. Once on the trail, the platoon was just 700 meters from the junction, and continued to move to the junction with all of the troops mounted.

As the Platoon reached the junction, the Platoon Leader directed that the lead squad continue through the junction without dismounting any troops for security. The lead M-113 entered the junction and hit an anti-tank mine, killing the driver, 2 other men, and wounding 4 others. The platoon leader, in the 2nd M-113, moved up to the side of the burning track, still without dismounting the troops. The M-113 was hit by an RPG-2 setting it on fire and killing 3 additional men. The troops in the 3rd and 4th M-113's dismounted, and began laying down a base of fire. The 3rd M-113 moved up firing its 50-cal machine gun, and was hit by 2 RPG-2s, but did not catch on fire. The 4th M-113 remained in place laying down a base of fire to the northwest and northeast.

The initial burst of enemy fire had lasted less than a minute, but during this minute the enemy destroyed 3 M-113s, killed 6 US troops, and wounded 12. The effective fighting force of the platoon was reduced to 11 men, with 7 of these men with the 4th M-113 and under the command of the Platoon Sergeant. The Platoon Sergeant contacted the Company Commander, described the situation and request medical help and assistance. The Company Commander ordered the 1st and 3rd Platoons to move out with the 1st Platoon in the lead. The order of march was the 1st Platoon, Command Group, 3rd Platoon. The Weapons Platoon remained in the laager position waiting for the balance of the Battalion. The Battalion was still 2,500 meters to the south of the laager position. During the movement of the

Company, the Company Commander requested both artillery and air support. The Battalion Commander who was in the air and heading to the contact area, would be over the contact area within five minutes to direct artillery fire support. Until the Battalion Commander was over the area, the Platoon Sergeant of the 2nd Platoon was directing the artillery fire support. The artillery fire was directed to the north, northeast, and northwest of the junction, but was at least 500 meters from the junction.

The Company moved with all its troops mounted following the path of the 2nd Platoon. When the lead element of the 1st Platoon was within 150 meters of the contact area, the Command was given to dismount all troops, with the 1st Platoon to continue to move to the contact area in order to relieve the 2nd Platoon. The 3rd Platoon was to hold in place as a reaction force. By this time, the Battalion Commander was directing the artillery fire and walking the fire into the contact area, keeping the fire concentrated to the north and northeast.

The 1st Platoon moved into the contact area and received some small arms fire from the north and northeast. The Platoon Leader requested that the 3rd Platoon be moved up to the east and northeast to provide security in that area. The Company Commander directed that the 3rd Platoon move out to support the 1st and 2nd Platoons to the east and northeast of the contact area. The Platoon moved out with the 1st squad in the lead, followed by the 3rd, 4th and 2nd squads.

The 1st squad reached highway 13 and moved across the roadway, with the 2 remaining squads staying south of it. Once across the highway, the 1st squad received some small arms fire, but the fire was from a great distance away. Consequently they did not return fire. All indications were that the enemy was withdrawing from the contact area. The Battalion Commander then directed the artillery to fire on likely routes of withdrawal. The 1st squad then moved to the west to make

contact with the highway that ran north-south. As the 1st squad moved to the west, the 1st Platoon started its movement to the north and northeast to link up with the 1st squad of the 3rd Platoon. Once the 1st and 3rd Platoons linked up, they held in position. The Company Command group moved up into the contact area to begin providing medical aid to the men of the 2nd Platoon.

The Battalion Recon Platoon moved up to provide additional security to the south and aid to the 2nd Platoon. Accompanying the Recon Platoon was the Battalion Surgeon and the maintenance section of the Battalion. The rest of the Battalion had closed into the laager position, and secured the area. The wounded were moved back to the Battalion laager position for medivac. Once all the wounded were cleared from the area, the maintenance section determined that only one of the damaged M-113s could be repaired. The M-113 was then towed to the laager position. The 1st and 3rd Platoons then closed back to the contact area and began their movement back to the laager position, and closed the laager at 21:30 hours.

Later that night, it was discovered that the remains of one of the men killed was left in the contact area. B-Company would have to go back to the area in the morning to retrieve the remains, wait for the medivac, and then link up with the Battalion as it moved out to FSB Fang.

The results of this action were 6 US troops killed, 11 wounded (with 5 returning to duty), 1 M-113 damaged and repaired, 2 M-113s destroyed and left in place. There were no signs of any enemy killed or wounded. It was determined that the size of the enemy force was squad size. The fact that the 2nd Platoon entered the road junction area with the troops mounted enable the enemy to inflict such terrible damage. The platoon leader of the second platoon was medivac back to the States. The Platoon Sergeant of the 2nd Platoon received the Bronze Star "V" for his actions during the battle.

Up until this date the company had been under light and ineffective mortar attacks and received sniper fire. This date was the first real contact that the Company had since I joined it. This was my introduction to combat. It was my first opportunity to lead the Platoon in the face of enemy fire. If I had any fear, I blocked it from my mind. I reacted as I had been trained to. I believe I provided leadership, thereby gaining the respect of my men.

I gave the commands to the Platoon in a calm voice, and kept that same calm demeanor when talking to the Company Commander. By the time the Platoon got to the contact area, there was very little, and if any enemy fire, we did not know if the enemy had fled or was waiting to hit us again. As darkness came, the threat seemed to be present even more. Once the Platoon was in a position to provide security in the contact area, I took a deep breath and waited for something else to happen. I was on a high. When the Platoon got back to the laager, I called the squad leaders and platoon sergeant together to have an after action report session. I wanted to know from them what we did right and what we need to do better.

I wanted to make sure that I learned from the actions of the day. The big lesson, never take the easy way, have your security out no matter how difficult the movement is or how much the men complained.

Sent by: Skip Fahel, B/2-22

Self Inflicted Wounds

We had been patrolling for several days northwest of Dau Tieng near the Cambodian border. This was in February/March of 1967. We had the HQ of the battalion operating with us. That was a mixed blessing, better supplies, but everything was geared to keeping them safe while they contributed nothing. We had setup in a perimeter that had our 3rd platoon slightly in the woods. It was kind of nice because the shade kept us cooler. The night had a little excitement. We

could hear activity in the two PCs to our left. When queried, they said they heard noise moving across their front toward us. We put the Starlight Scope into the driver's hatch and started scanning on passive. The driver chuckled and told me it was a little green rabbit (in the scope that is what it looked like). We passed the word as to what we found and everyone calmed down.

Next day was slack time. Some were writing letters, cleaning weapons, or just taking it easy. I sat a mirror on the back of the PC and was shaving. Two fellows were sitting on a log behind me, cleaning weapons. One had finished his M16 and was working on a little .32 revolver he had. Several of my squad had some sort of personal weapon, and given the reliability of the M16, I had no objection. They were talking of home when there was a small pop and I turned around. Both of them were sitting there but not talking. I went back to shaving when I heard one ask, did you shoot yourself? I got very interested when the other said yes. He had been holding the little .32 by the barrel when he somehow fired it. The bullet went through the third knuckle on his index finger. I had the medic take a look then took him over to the battalion medical track. The bullet severed the nerve so they evacuated him. I packed his personal gear and they flew him out latter that day.

He did not do it on purpose and I never did see him again.

Sent by: Jim Hardin, C/2-22 VN

ON THE ROAD

One of the advantages or disadvantages of being in a mechanized unit was the amount of road security missions that we were assigned to it. With our mobility, the Mech units could cover a lot of territory on the road, and could respond to a situation very quickly. The battalion usually got assigned to secure the road between Dau Tieng

and Tay Ninh and the roads north of Tay Ninh. A few times we got cover the roads south of Tay Ninh to Trang Bang.

On some of the missions, all that we had to do was run the road before the convoy would pass and then go on to some other mission. On others, we would not only run the road, but also provide security along the road. The set security missions were some of the most boring days that we had.

After running a stretch of a given road, each platoon would be assigned a sector of the road to secure. The sector of road to secure would vary depending on the type of terrain we were in. In a jungle area, the platoon would have a much smaller area to cover. In the farming and rice paddy areas, we would have great distances of responsibility. The platoon would secure the area in squad locations, with each squad setting up its own position. I was always with the 3-1 track. We would pull into position and have the two fire teams set up away from the track, and then just sit around the rest of the day. We would be in position until the last convoy or vehicle would pass and then the platoon would joint up. We could either just stay as a platoon, or go and link up with the company.

The day would go by slowly just sitting there. We could read, sleep, eat, or if the locals came around, play and talk with them. In a lot of areas the children would come up to us and ask for food and just hang around us. We always felt a little better if the kids would stay around. That would mean that "Charlie" was not around. If the kids would come and then go, we would be on a guard a lot more. Nothing much happened when we were on security missions. We did hear stories of the VC having the kids come up to the tracks and throwing a grenade, but these were just stories.

We would have the prostitutes, and you could do nothing to stop the men from using them. If they would approach my area, I would run them off, but there were times that the men

with me would sneak off with them. Most of the prostitutes were not attractive at all, some were down right ugly and I could not understand why the men would want to have one. It must have been that they were available, and the price was right. Most were very young, but some looked like they were grandmothers.

If we would be in one position all day, I would take the track and run the platoons' sector several times just to check on the men. It was also something to do to make the time go by. When I did this, I would have just the driver and my RTO with me, since I was not expecting anything to happen in the open farm and rice paddy areas. In the jungle areas I might take a fire team with me.

When assigned this type of mission, I always hoped that I had a book to read. If you just had to sit around doing nothing, you would think the day would never end. On one of the missions, we were on security for about 4 days. I was lucky that we had just got some books in and one of them was "*Gone with the Wind*." I was able to finish the book during that time. I was glad that I had that down time to read it, because once I started, it was hard to put the book down. I really got caught up in it. This was the only book that I can remember reading during these road missions, but I know that I read more than one book.

The advantage of the road missions was that nothing much happened and you could take it easy, the disadvantage was the boredom.

Skip Fahel, B/2-22 VN

The following is from a speech made by Capt. John S. McCain, USN, (Ret) who represents Arizona in the U. S. Senate.

As you may know, I spent five and one half years as a prisoner of war during the Vietnam War. In the early years of our imprisonment, the NVA kept us in solitary confinement or two

or three to a cell. In 1971 the NVA moved us from these conditions of isolation into large rooms with as many as 30 to 40 men to a room. This was, as you can imagine, a wonderful change and was a direct result of the efforts of millions of Americans on behalf of a few hundred POWs 10,000 miles from home.

One of the men who moved into my room was a young man named Mike Christian. Mike came from a small town near Selma, Alabama. He didn't wear a pair of shoes until he was 13 years old. At 17, he enlisted in the US Navy. He later earned a commission by going to Officer Training School. Then he became a Naval Flight Officer and was shot down and captured in 1967. Mike had a keen and deep appreciation of the opportunities this country and our military provide for people who want to work and want to succeed.

As part of the change in treatment, the Vietnamese allowed some prisoners to receive packages from home. In some of these packages were handkerchiefs, scarves and other items of clothing. Mike got himself a bamboo needle. Over a period of a couple of months, he created an American flag and sewed on the inside of his shirt. Every afternoon, before we had a bowl of soup, we would hang Mike's shirt on the wall of the cell and say the Pledge of Allegiance. I know the Pledge of Allegiance may not seem the most important part of our day now, but I can assure you that in that stark cell it was indeed the most important and meaningful event.

One day the Vietnamese searched our cell, as they did periodically, and discovered Mike's shirt with the flag sewn inside, and removed it. That evening they returned, opened the door of the cell, and for the benefit of all of us, beat Mike Christian severely for the next couple of hours. Then, they opened the door of the cell and threw him in. We cleaned him up as well as we could.

The cell in which we lived had a concrete slab in the middle on which we slept. Four naked light bulbs hung in each corner of the room. As I said, we tried to clean up Mike as well as we could. After the excitement died down, I looked in the corner of the room, and sitting there beneath that dim light bulb with a piece of red cloth, another shirt and his bamboo needle, was my friend, Mike Christian. He was sitting there with his eyes almost shut from the beating he had received, making another American flag.

He was not making the flag because it made Mike Christian feel better. He was making that flag because he knew how important it was to us to be able to Pledge our allegiance to our flag and country.

So the next time you say the Pledge of Allegiance, you must never forget the sacrifice and courage that thousands of Americans have made to build our nation and promote freedom around the world. You must remember our duty, our honor, and our country.

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Sent by: Gary Hartt, A/2-22 VN & Dick Nash, A/2-22 VN

THE FENCE

Once upon a time two brothers who lived on adjoining farms fell into conflict. It was the first serious rift in 40 years of farming side by side, sharing machinery, and trading labor and goods as needed without a conflict.

Then the long collaboration fell apart. It began with a small misunderstanding and it grew into a major difference, and finally it exploded into an exchange of bitter words followed by weeks of silence.

One morning there was a knock on John's door. He opened it to find a man with a carpenter's tool box. "I'm looking for a few days work" he said. "Perhaps you would have a few small jobs here and there I could help with? Could I help you?"

"Yes," said the older brother, "I do have a job for you. Look across the creek at that farm. That's my neighbor, in fact, it's my younger brother.

Last week there was a meadow between us and he took his bulldozer to the river levee and now there is a creek between us. Well, he may have done this to spite me, but I'll do him one better. See that pile of lumber by the barn? I want you to build me a fence; an eight foot fence so I won't need to see his place or his face anymore.

The carpenter said, "I think I understand the situation. Show me the nails and the post hole digger and I'll be able to do a job that pleases you."

The older brother had to go to town, so he helped the carpenter get the materials ready and then he was off for the day. The carpenter worked hard all that day measuring, sawing and nailing. About sunset when the farmer returned, the carpenter had just finished his job. The farmer's eyes opened wide, his jaw dropped. There was no fence there at all. It was a bridge -- a bridge stretching from one side of the creek to the other! A fine piece of work, handrails and all-- and the neighbor, his younger brother, was coming toward them, his hand outstretched.

"You are quite a fellow to build this bridge after all I've said and done." The two brothers stood at each end of the bridge, and then they met in the middle, taking each other's hand. They turned to see the carpenter hoist his toolbox onto his shoulder. "No, wait! Stay a few days. I've a lot of other projects for you," said the older brother. "I'd love to stay on," the carpenter said, "but, I have many more bridges to build."

REMEMBER THIS:

God won't ask what kind of car you drove, but He'll ask how many people you drove who didn't have transportation.

God won't ask the square footage of your house, but He'll ask how many people you welcomed into your home.

God won't ask about the clothes you had in your closet, but He'll ask how many people you helped to clothe.

God won't ask what your highest salary was, but He'll ask if you compromised your character to obtain it.

God won't ask what your job title was, but He'll ask if you performed your job to the best of your ability.

God won't ask how many friends you had, but He'll ask how many people to whom you were a friend.

God won't ask in what neighborhood you lived, but He'll ask how you treated your neighbors.

God won't ask about the color of your skin, but He'll ask about the content of your character.

God won't ask why it took you so long to seek Salvation, but He'll lovingly take you to your mansion in heaven, and not to the gates of Hell.

God won't ask how many people you forwarded this too, but He'll ask you were you ashamed to pass it on to your friends.

Sent by: Clark Lohmann, B/2-22 VN

THE WORLD DOESN'T LIKE US - SO WHAT

This one is definitely NOT tongue in cheek. Sig, the author, was a teen-aged Marine who marched and fought as a rifleman to and from the Chosin reservoir in Korea in 1950. He switched to the Army, and served as a Special Forces officer in Vietnam.

After Vietnam he joined the CIA, and went back to Korea. He's been there, done it, and has some specific thoughts on countries that don't "like" us.

Why They Don't They Like Us

Is there anyone else out there who's sick and tired of all the polls being taken in foreign countries as to whether or not they "like" us? The last time I looked, the word "like" had nothing to do with foreign policy. I prefer 'respect' or 'fear'. They worked for Rome, which civilized and kept the peace in the known world a hell of a lot longer than our puny two centuries-plus. I see a left-wing German got elected to office recently by campaigning against the foreign policy of the United States. Yeah, that's what I want, to be lectured about war and being a "good neighbor" by a German. Their head honcho said they wouldn't take part in a war against Iraq. Kind of nice, to see them taking a pass on a war once in while. Perhaps we needed to have the word "World" in front of War. I think it's time to bring our boys home from Germany. Outside of the money we'd save, we'd make the Germans "like" us a lot more, after they started paying the bills for their own defense.

Last time I checked, France isn't too fond of us either. They sort of liked us back on June 6th, 1944, though, didn't they? If you don't think so, see how nicely they take care of the enormous American cemeteries up above the Normandy beaches. For those of you who've studied history, we also have a few cemeteries in places like Belleau Woods and Chateau Thierry. For those of you who haven't studied it, that was from World War One, the first time Europe screwed up and we bailed out the French. That's where the US Marines got the title 'Devil Dogs' or, if you still care about what the Germans think, "Teufelhunde". I hope I spelled that right; sure wouldn't want to offend anyone, least of all a German.

Come to think of it, when Europe couldn't take care of their Bosnian

problem recently, guess who had to help out there also. Last time I checked, our kids are still there. I sort of remember they said they would be out in a year. Gee, how time flies when you're having fun. Now we hear that the South Koreans aren't too happy with us either. They "liked" us a lot better, of course, in June, 1950. It took more than 50,000 Americans killed in Korea to help give them the lifestyle they currently enjoy, but then who's counting? I think it's also time to bring the boys home from there. There are about 37,000 young Americans on the DMZ separating the South Koreans from their "brothers" up North. Maybe if we leave, they can begin to participate in the "good life" that North Korea currently enjoys. Uh huh. Sure.

I also understand that a good portion of the Arab/Moslem world now doesn't "like" us either. Did anyone ever sit down and determine what we would have to do to get them to like us? Ask them what they would like us to do. Die? Commit ritual suicide? Bend over? Maybe we should follow the advice of our dimwitted, dullest knife in the drawer, Senator Patty Murray, and build more roads, hospitals, day care centers, and orphanages like Osama bin Laden does. What with all the orphans Osama has created, the least he can do is build some places to put them. Senator Stupid says if we would only "emulate" Osama, the Arab world would love us. Sorry Patty; in addition to the fact that we already do all of those things around the world and have been doing them for over sixty years, I don't take public transportation, and I certainly wouldn't take it with a bomb strapped to the guy next to me.

Don't get me wrong: I'm not in favor of going to war. Been there, done that. Several times, in fact. But I think we ought to have some polls in this country about other countries, and see if we "like" THEM. Problem is, if you listed the countries, not only wouldn't the average American know if he liked them or not, he wouldn't be able to find them. If we're supposed to worry

about them, how about them worrying about us? We were nice to the North Koreans in 1994, as we followed the policies of Neville Clinton. And it seemed to work; they didn't re-start nuclear weapons program for a whole year or so. In the meantime, we fed them when they were starving, and put oil in their stoves when they were freezing. In a recent visit to Norway, I engaged in a really fun debate with my cousin's son, a student at a Norwegian University. I was lectured to by this thankless squirt about the "American Empire", and scolded about dropping the atomic bomb on the Japanese. I reminded him that empires usually keep the stuff they take; we don't, and back in 1945 most Norwegians thought dropping ANY kind of bomb on Germany or Japan was a good idea. I also reminded him that my uncle, his grandfather, and others in our family spent a significant time in Sachsenhausen concentration camp, courtesy of the Germans, and they didn't all survive. I further reminded him that if it wasn't for the "American Empire" he would probably be speaking German or Russian.

Sorry about the rambling, but I just took an unofficial poll here at our house, and we don't seem to like anyone. Happy New Year.

Sig

"We sleep safely in our beds because rough men stand ready in the night to visit violence on those who would harm us." George Orwell

Sent by: Dick Nash, A/2-22 VN

Norm's comments: I am sure that Sig realizes that the World Situations are not as simple as some of his implied solutions may suggest. More than likely his statements are born of frustration. However, I don't blame him for his feelings. I wish they were that simple. Nothing would please me more than to see some countries just swing in the wind, then get on their knees and beg us for help instead of always expecting it.

The Things They Carried

They carried P-38 can openers and heat tabs, watches and dog tags, insect repellent, gum, cigarettes, Zippo lighters, salt tablets, compress bandages, ponchos, Kool-Aid, two or three canteens of water, iodine tablets, sterno, LRRP-rations, and C-rations stuffed in socks.

They carried standard fatigues, jungle boots, bush hats, flak jackets and steel pots.

They Carried the M-16 assault rifle. They carried trip flares and Claymore mines, M-60 machine guns, the M-70 grenade launcher, M-14's, CAR-15's, Stoners, Swedish K's, 66mm Laws, shotguns, .45 caliber pistols, silencers, the sound of bullets, rockets, and choppers, and sometimes the sound of silence. They carried C-4 plastic explosives, an assortment of hand grenades, PRC-25 radios, knives and machetes.

Some carried napalm, CBU's and large bombs; some risked their lives to rescue others. Some escaped the fear, but dealt with the death and damage. Some made very hard decisions, and some just tried to survive.

They carried malaria, dysentery, ringworms and leaches. They carried the land itself as it hardened on their boots.

They carried stationery, pencils, and pictures of their loved ones - real and imagined. They carried love for people in the real world and love for one another. And sometimes they disguised that love: "Don't mean nothin'!" They carried memories for the most part, they carried themselves with poise and a kind of dignity. Now and then, there were times when panic set in, and people squealed or wanted to, but couldn't; when they twitched and made moaning sounds and covered their heads and said "Dear God" and hugged the earth and fired their weapons blindly and cringed and begged for the noise to stop and went wild and made stupid promises to

themselves and God and their parents, hoping not to die.

They carried the traditions of the United States military, and memories and images of those who served before them. They carried grief, terror, longing and their reputations. They carried the soldier's greatest fear: the embarrassment of dishonor. They crawled into tunnels, walked point, and advanced under fire, so as not to die of embarrassment. They were afraid of dying, but too afraid to show it. They carried the emotional baggage of men and women who might die at any moment.

They carried the weight of the world.

THEY CARRIED EACH OTHER.

Author Unknown

Sent By: Gary Krek, HHC/2-22 VN and Ralph Julian, HQ/2-22 VN

Norm's comment: Folks I know that the above article has appeared in a past newsletter but in light of the upcoming Reunion I felt that it was appropriate to put it into this edition.

"THEY CARRIED EACH OTHER", WE CARRIED EACH OTHER.! This is why we attend reunions. Each of us has a need to see, once again, those we carried and those who carried us. Because we carried each other we formed a bond which was forged during the 'heat of combat'. It is a bond that is impossible to break. It just can't be done.

No matter what your station was in Vietnam , Enlisted or Officer, we bonded.

*See you at the Reunion **Combat Brothers.***

The Rebel Monk

Rebel Monk was the name given to the 1st squad, 3rd platoon's M-113. This

Track was the one that I used during my time as platoon leader. The unique name came from two sources. The first was from the three Texans in the 1st squad who wanted the name of the track to reflect something to do with the South. The other influence on the name came from the men in the 1st squad who were from Chicago.

The Texans wanted the word "Rebel" in the name but could not come up with anything else. The Chicago boys could not think of anything, but were sure that they did not want the name to be completely about the South. Then one early morning, when the platoon was providing security at the quarry at the base of Nui Ba Den the track received its name. I was walking back down the hill from one of the other tracks of the platoon, there was ground fog, and at first no one could see me coming towards the track. Then out of the fog, they saw me. One of the troops said that I looked like a monk. This was because my hair was cut very short, and it looked like the way the Buddhist monks had their hair cut. One of the boys from Chicago laughed and said that we could name the track "The Monk." A Texan said, "What does that have to do with the South?" Then one said, just call it "The Rebel Monk." Someone else said "why not!" Then one of the troops said that could be the name of the track. "The Rebel Monk!!" They looked at each other, nodded and that was that.

The "Rebel Monk" became the name for my home for the next 7 months. That morning, SP4 Priesthoff, the driver of the track, got some white paint and painted the name on.

Sent by: Skip Fahel, B/2-22 VN

Growing Old

Growing old is mandatory; growing up is optional

Forget health food. You need all the preservatives you can get.

When you fall down, you wonder

what else you can do while down there.

You get the same sensation from a rocking chair that you once got from a roller coaster.

It's frustrating to know all the answers but nobody bothers to ask you the questions.

Time is a great healer, but a lousy beautician.

Wisdom comes with age, but sometimes age comes alone.

Sent by: Gary Krek, HHC/2-22 VN

Four Stages Of Life

- 1) You believe in Santa Clause.
- 2) You don't believe in Santa Clause.
- 3) You are Santa Clause.
- 4) You look like Santa Clause.

Also sent by Gary Krek

A Quote

May those that love us, love us; And those that don't, may God turn their hearts. If he can't turn their hearts; may he turn their ankles, That we may know them by their limping.

Sent by: Gary Krek, HHC/2-22 VN

Another Quote

Difficulties mastered are opportunities won.

Winston Churchill

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Closing: Folks this is the last edition of the newsletter for which I am the Editor. The experience has been very enjoyable and rewarding for me.

During the past few years I have heard some very interesting things about your time in Vietnam. To me you are all Heroic Individuals. As a person who has never undergone the horrors and resulting suffering of Combat, I will never fully know what you faced. However, because I have come to know quite a few of you I have a better understanding of what you went

through. Thank you for what you did for your Country. Thank you for what you did for me. Those of you who served with Norm, Thank you for covering him. If I did not know better I could very easily feel that he had a 'death wish' mind set over there. You had your hands full whenever he was in a direct combat situation...smile.

I want to wish Lynn Dalpez and Gary Hartt the very best in taking over their new adventure of editing the Newsletter. As everyone knows, I have been taking orders from the "Sgt. From Hell" in assembling the Newsletter. You guys know how he can get! It wasn't easy, but was a lot of fun. *Note, Norm just made me list the "Chargin Charlie" Guy first-Lynn...Smile*

However, I do want to offer Gary and Lynn all the help they need and a beer in San Antonio.

My best to all of you, always.
Continue to 'advance' and fight the good fight.

Linda

Now a few words from Norm:

When I first became involved with our Organization back in July 1997 it was just starting to get on its feet. In fact it could hardly stand. Through the efforts of John Eberwine and Bill Allison's support of John's efforts, the Organization became anchored and began to grow.

As I became more involved I set two goals for the Vietnam Triple Deuce. They were to make it financially stable and to make it a strong cohesive unit. I feel that both of the goals have been attained. The foundation, which will allow the Vietnam Triple Deuce to become better, has been set in place. The Board of Directors that you elect in San Antonio this October and the cadre of Officers that they appoint will be responsible for making our Organization to become better. However, their responsibility can't be met if you don't support them. So please do so.

Earlier I stated that one of the goals that I set was to make us a strong cohesive unit. The primary tool used to do that was the newsletter. I have always felt that the newsletter was of prime importance. As a result I spent a great deal of time on it. Not enough time to make sure all of the punctuation and spelling was correct though ... smile. Reunions also help keep us cohesive but they only take place every eighteen months. The newsletter reminds us of our common ground every three months. It renews our cohesive status every ninety days.

I think you know where I am going with this. **There is no newsletter if you do not contribute to its content.** Please do not leave Lynn Dalpez and Gary Hartt flapping in the wind because you failed to send them your stories. Lynn and Gary will do their job if you do yours.

OK, enough of the lecture. I take this opportunity to thank each of you for the support that you provided Linda and I for our efforts concerning the newsletter. A special thank you to David and Judy Milewski for their tremendous efforts to distribute the newsletter to our members. David provided a lot of direct cover for me in Vietnam and he has covered me a lot back here in the 'World'.

My experience with publishing newsletter was very enjoyable. To all of you: **Keep Chargin Fullback Battalion.**

Later Combat Brothers,
Magnet

