

The *VietNam* Triple Deuce, Inc.

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

Edited by Linda Nishikubo

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Gentlemen, if you have been thinking about sending in a story to the Triple Deuce, please do so! The newsletter is only as good as what you send us to place in the newsletter.

Congratulations to Mario Salazar for volunteering to set up and administer our website! While construction is in the early stages, you can take a look at it by going to <http://www.VietnamTripleDeuce.org>

Please remember that Mario is just now getting the site up and the guest book etc. may not be working at the time you get this newsletter.

Mario Salazar is looking for anyone who would like to help him build and administer the website. If you have skill in this area or if you just want to help him in anyway you can, please contact Mario. Thank you Mario for finally making this possible for the Triple Deuce!

In 2000, Congress authorized the Library of Congress to collect and store the histories of all living combat veterans. They are looking for volunteers to film and document our nation's heroes.

Bob Babcock has founded an organization "Americans Remembered, Inc." to work with the Veterans History Project. I have joined "Americans Remembered, Inc." and plan on contacting various organizations to set up interviews and videotape the stories of our veterans.

If you wish, take a look at the website www.americansremembered.org for details about the organization and its

mission statement

Americans Remembered, Inc.
Post Office Box 682232
Marietta, GA 30068-0838
Phone 770-587-2383 Fax: 770-587-2419
Email: babcock224@aol.com

Mike Groves, President, A/2/22

Business Matters

Newsletter: Folks at this time Linda is asking if any member of the Vietnam Triple Deuce is interested in becoming its Newsletter Editor. If so please let either one of us know. All of the information needed to contact us is contained in the header section of page one of this publication.

She wishes to relinquish the responsibility of Editor at any time between now and the end of September 2003.

Linda and I regret that projected circumstances in our lives after September, 2003 will not allow her to continue to be the Editor of the Newsletter.

Financial Assistance Committee: In the June 2002 Newsletter I informed our membership, at the time, that the FAC had been formed for the expressed intent of providing monetary help to members of the 22nd Inf. Regiment Society, who are in need, so that they could attend a reunion. I also indicated that we all are or should be members of the Society.

The donation response rate to this

worthy cause has been dismal. In fact one could say that the response rate has been virtually non-existent. (*One person has donated to date.*) I hope the situation changes. **Those members in need who would like to be with us at a reunion are our Brothers. Remember our Mother's name is Combat!! Today the vast majority of our Combat Brothers are Vietnam Vets. They covered us and we covered them in Vietnam. We need to cover them now because we are able to do so. If the roles were reversed they would cover us.** Please find it in your hearts to give to this noble cause. Your checks should be made out to the 22nd Infantry Regiment Society with an indicator that it is for the FAC. They should be sent to Nathan Palani... P.O. Box53070... Reno, NV 89513-0370. Your donations are tax deductible.

22nd Infantry Regiment Vietnam

Memorial: I know, here I go again asking for money. Just keep in mind, if I were not the one asking you for money someone else would be doing it.

Now down to business. Though the response to the request for donations has been good during the past 90 days it was not good enough to close the collection of funds task for this project. Currently approximately \$7,250.00 has been collected. This figure is roughly \$1,750.00 short of our goal. All of you know what is required so lets get the job completed by the time the March 2003 Newsletter is sent out.

Once again send your checks to Nathan Palani. His address and instruction on how your check should be made out are contained in the prior article (FAC article).

Vietnam Triple Deuce, Inc. Financial

Report: Our finances have been audited by Nathan Palani who has no vested interest in our organization. All was found to be in order. Currently we have \$7,018.35 in the treasury which means that we are financially sound

and healthy. Your Board of Directors reviewed the Treasurer's Report and Nathan's Report then voted to put both Reports into the permanent record of the Vietnam Triple Deuce, Inc.

As in the past your Board of Directors will exercise due care with regard to how your dollars are handled.

Many thanks to Nathan for his fine work. It is greatly appreciated.

Elections In San Antonio: The reunion in San Antonio is just about a year away which means that only four chances to communicate with you via the newsletter about the 2003 election of the Board of Directors are available.

Now is the time for all of you to start thinking about the people you will elect as members of the Board of Directors for the Vietnam Triple Deuce, Inc. Currently three of your incumbent Directors will not seek nor accept re-election as a Board Member. So you need to give serious consideration to who will be their replacements.

Your current Board of Directors is very interested in receiving input from you relative to your recommendations for persons for the following positions: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. We would also like to have you recommend people or volunteer for the five Unit Locator positions.

In order to keep your input process for the above easy and straight forward just contact me and state your recommendations / nominations. I will then present your input to the balance of the Board. Once again all of the information you need to contact me is on page one of this newsletter.

Dues: Please keep in mind that dues for the VN/2-22 will increase to \$15.00 per year for 2003 and subsequent years.

Now here is some advice about paying your 2003 dues, David Milewski is going to put a price on my head for this one: Pay your dues before 12-31-02. If you do just send in \$10.00. If you pay

after 12-31-02 you have to send in \$15.00. Trust me on this. Take advantage of the 'loop hole' we have in the '*dues increase notice*' that was in the last newsletter.

If you see a 'P' or a 'C' after your name on the mailing address label attached to the envelope this newsletter came in you have paid your 2003 dues. If you don't see one of the foregoing characters after you name, you owe 2003 dues.

When you send in your dues payment please us the Membership Application/Renewal Form included with this newsletter. All of the information that you need to make a dues payment is on the form.

Magnet, C/2-22Vietnam

Correction of Errata & Omissions

In the September Newsletter's Recently Passed Away Section Terrance Castrow's, C/2-22 Vietnam, last name was incorrectly spelled as Castro. My apologizes to Viki and all of you for the error.

In the September Newsletter's Unit Locators Section Thomas Petro's, Recon/2-22 Vietnam, last name was spelled incorrectly. My apologizes Tom.

In the September Newsletter Clark Lohmann, B/2-22 Vietnam sent in the poem A Soldier Died Today. My apologizes Clark, for not noting your contribution when you first sent the poem to me.

Magnet

New Finds

Robert 'Butch' Bergeron, C/2-22 66 Vietnam

Roger L. Brickey, A/2-22 Vietnam Roger wrote: I served in A/2-22 then I and a few others were transferred to the HHC/4-23. I finished my tour at Cu Chi on 10-05-67.

Troy Evans, A/2-22 Vietnam

Norm's comment: Troy is an Actor. Those of you who have seen the TV series China Beach may recall the Motor Pool MSG who had a love affair going on with the 04 in charge of the nurses. Troy played the MSG.

Ronald L. Henderson, A/2-22 Vietnam

Dan Michalec, A/2-22 Vietnam

Charles 'CR' Otey, C/2-22, 1st Plt. 67-68 Vietnam

Jesus 'Jesse' A. Rivera, C/2-22, 4th Plt. 67-68 Vietnam

Both Charles and Jesse were RTOs on Tiger One during the battle of Burt on 01-01-68 & 01-02-68. Jesse was on the Company Net and Charles was on the Command Net. Both were instrumental in the efforts to ensure the Patrol's survival that night. Charles helped coordinate artillery and air support for us and Jesse called in suppressive mortar fire that eliminated enemy that were advancing on our position all night long. Additionally both relayed information to the FSB about enemy groups advancing on the southern perimeter of the FSB so that effective artillery fire could be brought in on them. Also, Jesse was the most seriously wounded member of the Patrol. His wound resulted from the air strike that was called in on our position.

To both of you, thanks for doing your job whenever you and I were on a mission together, especially the night of 01-01-68 and the early morning hours of 01-02-68. If you had not, more than likely we would have died in that pit just under 34 years ago.

Magnet

Comments / Questions

Robert 'Butch' Bergeron, C/2-22 wrote: I was in Charlie Company...got wounded in Nov. 66. Spent 4 months in Japan then went to Korea until I got out in Oct. 67. Butch's address and phone number are in the New Find

Section.

Ronald L. Henderson, A/2-22 wrote: I would like to contact 'Smitty', Larry Daily and SFC Edgar Ryan. I would like to see pictures in the newsletter. *Ron, Pictures may be in future newsletters because I am starting to run out of articles. Magnet*

Dan Michalec, A/2-22 wrote: I only knew the other members of my unit by their nicknames. It may be advantages to list the nicknames of various members for recognition purposes. *Dan, whenever I am given the nicknames, I provide them. Linda*

Sub: C/2-22 AP at Burt 01-01-68 & 01-02-68. I have been able to come up with 11 names for the members of Tiger 1 at Burt. However, I believe that 12 people were on the Patrol. Can anyone out there tell me what the missing name is. Here are the 11 names that I have:

Sam Favata - deceased
John Marts - located, OK
Charles Otey - located, OK
Mark Ridley - located, OK
Jesse Rivera - located, OK
John Walters - status unknown
Chris Facio - located, OK
Bill Thompson - status unknown
John Golden - status unknown
Ed Grystar - located, OK
Yours Truly

Norm Nishikubo

Chuck Haney, A/2-22 Vietnam would like to locate Larry Hanson, Andy Leach and Chuck Peek. *Chuck has been given Larry Hanson's address and phone number. Hope he enjoyed making contact with his long lost Buddy.*

Vincent Carrozza, HQ 3rd Bde Vietnam wrote, 'Excellent stories in the Sept. issue'. *Folks the stories are not mine they are yours. So the newsletter is only as good as what you make it with the stories you send in. Keep sending in your stories.*

Thomas Buck, HHC/2-22 Vietnam 09-67 to 05-68 wrote: 'I enjoy the letters, brings back good memories of great men doing great work'. He is also looking for Mike Mitchell.

Tom, I would also like to find Mike. On his birthday in '67 my platoon, C-1/2-22 was attached to Bravo Company and we spent the night in the field while the balance of the Bn. went back to Dau Tieng. I wound up with Mike and his Command Group. During a good part of that night I had to listen to Mike gripe about not being at the Officers Club celebrating his birthday. I'll bet we would have a good laugh about it today. Magnet

Dennis Zollo, D/2-22 from 9-69 to 2-70 stated, 'I am looking for anybody that I served with'. His e-mail address is: dsz94129@aol.com

AWOLS & Ship's Bakery

In May of 2001, I called Capt. BOTH (A/2/22 C.O. from JULY 66 to MAY 67) He answered the phone and I said, "HI Capt. Both, my name is Gary Hartt and I don't know if you remember me but I served in your unit in Vietnam 35 years ago." There was silence for about 30 seconds and then he said, "Hartt most guys I don't remember, but you I do. I had just taken over Alpha Co. about 3 weeks earlier and there was a Battalion formation. It went something like this. Bravo 1 AWOL, Charlie 1 AWOL, HHC 2 AWOL, Alpha 23 AWOLS !!!!! Within a half hour I was sitting in Col. Garth's office trying to explain why there were 23 AWOLS and why I did not have a clue." I next said to him "But Capt. Both you court- martialed me on the ship to Vietnam"! He said, "Yeah I know but I had to." I responded, "Hey its okay I had a great time with those 16 extra leave days". We then proceeded to discuss our memories of Vietnam in between senior moments of forgetfulness.

FLASHBACK TO DEC 1965. We were drafted on Dec 7, 1965 (Pearl Harbor) and spent the next 2 weeks in the FT.

Dix reception center. Of course we all hated the Army and as Metro NY area fun-loving and free-spirited guys, we looked for angles and soon discovered it was easy to escape from KP and getting up for the morning roll calls. About 5 guys would go out and say "here" for about 40 guys' names when announced. I also managed to go AWOL for a weekend. I had a great weekend and said my final goodbye to the girls at the Gold Coast Bar. Then the Army did their first real bad dirty deed to us. We boarded a prop plane and were shipped to Ft. Lewis, WA. We arrived around Dec 23 and they told us Basic training would not start until Jan 2. They said anyone with paid airfare would be granted a 7-day holiday leave. Almost all the Alpha guys were from Metro NY area or Michigan and 2000-3000 miles from home. We were mad as hell, since of course most of us were drinking our money away after the induction notice and before being drafted. The airfare was \$700-1000 and few had the money. We got 14 days leave after basis training in late March 1966. Then we did 8 weeks of AIT, followed by 8 weeks of BUT (Basic Unit Training) and finally 5 weeks of AUT (Advanced Unit Training). By this time, it was around Aug 12 and we knew the 2nd and 1st Brigades had left for Vietnam. And we knew our hopes of Germany were pure illusion. Then they hit us with another bombshell. We expected 30 days leave like our friends from back home who were going overseas as replacements. They told us the company's leave would be in 2 shifts of 14 days. Now the Army had really pissed us off. We continued our bitching and whining and I convinced about 60 guys to take 30 days leave instead of 14. We figured if there were enough of us, how would they punish us? Send us to Vietnam? We were already going!! It did not take much to convince the other guys. But 30 of the 60 were in the 2nd wave of the home leave time. So we wound up with 24 guys AWOL from 3 to 16 days. Guys with 3 days leave got ART 15s' and guys 3-14 days got Summary Court Martials and me because I was special!!!! They found out I was the ringleader and gave me a Special Court martial which is just below a General Court Martial. My punishment was KP & other extra details in Ft.

Lewis, KP on the ship for 20 days, reduction to E-1, fined \$67 per month for 6 months and 6 months hard labor. All the court martials took place on the ship to Vietnam, mine being the final one ending Oct 5, 1966. Then on Nov 12th, they reduced my sentence slightly by reducing the hard labor to 4 mos and the fine to \$60 for 4 months. Of course a funny thing had happened in between the initial sentence and the revised one. They realized I was the only guy in Alpha trained as a FDC (Fire Direction Center for 81mm mortars). So of course 4-6 months hard labor was suspended. I was the lowest paid guy in Vietnam and because of a prior ART 15 in Ft. Lewis for a jeep incident (another story) and the \$100 per month priority allotment to my mother, I never received a paycheck in Vietnam and only received a pay stub with a lot of deductions. The first time I actually received cash was in the Oakland Army Terminal on separation from the Army. The fellow AWOLS I remember were Tom Murray (14), Tyrus O Rourke (14), Eugene Tyres (14), Lou Gross (7), Ken Gengler (7), Richard Martin (7), Ed Schell (7), Jack Van Fleet (14), Ken Brady (7), and Jeff Snellenberger (3).

At the St. Louis Reunion, I asked the AWOLS present if they regretted going AWOL, every man said HELL NO!!

The KP duty on the USS NELSON M WALKER turned out be a blessing for many of the AWOLS, I and Lou Gross, Kenny Gengler, Ed Schell, Rich Martin, and Bill Matz (awol for 4 hrs.) were assigned to the bakery in the bowels of the ship. The work shift started about 8-9PM and lasted to around 4 AM. Because we worked nights, we did not have to observe daytime duty hours. This was great since the LIFER NCOS and GUNG HO OFFICERS could not harass or mess with us. The bakery was run by this 40-year-old merchant marine guy who showed us a picture of his young 20 something wife. We looked at the picture and had the hardest time not laughing in his face. She was fat and hit with an ugly, ugly stick!!! We lied to him and Ed Schell said something like, "what a foxy chick" with us guys snickering behind his back. Boy was she ever ugly!! The bakery was easy duty

with frequent smoke breaks on the fantail. We baked bread for the whole ship and we would steal loaves of hot bread and do some profitable bartering with it. Bill Matz reminded about also making pastry, which was for the officers, but once again some occasionally, became bartering goods.

A funny postscript to the AWOLS story. When I located Jack Van Fleet, we were talking about how we left Vietnam. I mentioned that I left Vietnam on Sep 21st and got an early out. He was scheduled to leave Vietnam in Aug, but thought he was cool and extended to have exactly 89 days left in the army so he would get an early out. So he extended his DEROS date to Sep 10th. But in Oakland they added his 14 days AWOL time and he had to report to Ft. Carson, Colorado and did not get out of the Army until Dec 23, 1967 and almost missed his 3rd Christmas in a row away from his New York home. When he realized that I had been AWOL for 16 days, yet got an early out, he got really upset. "How did you pull that off Hartt?" Son of B*&%, they f%^&d me again and I did not realize it for 35 years. (I had to hold the phone a foot from ear to avoid his 1 minute tirade.) I sure know how to push the wrong button of a guy even when it's unintentional!!! I am not sure if JACK VAN FLEET will come to our San Antonio reunion. . If he does, we might need a bomb sniffing dog!!!!

All of the Alpha AWOLS served their country with HONOR in Vietnam. Ed Schell was KIA on Feb 6, 1967 during a firefight while the point man. He was an excellent soldier and good friend. I am sure the 7 extra days leave he took to be with his girlfriend was also not regretted.

Gary C. Hartt, A/2/22 Vietnam and Devoted Proponent of, 'Fun, Travel & Adventure'

Ship's Bakery

Strangely enough, the troop ship is one of my fonder army memories. I was assigned KP duty on the ship for jumping off early to go on leave. Gary Hartt we weren't the only

ones who got tagged. This turned out to be pretty bad for most of the guys working in the ship's sculleries.

I lucked out, and ended up in the ship's bakery, working for the Merchant Marine baker. He turned out to be a pretty nice guy. The duty wasn't too bad and it gave me something to do during the voyage. Besides, I got to buck the chow lines and watch movies in the crew's quarters. Funny how things sometimes turn out. I enjoyed the experience so much, I thought about joining the Merchant Marine after I got out of the army.

I recall a little bit about my KP schedule. As I said I lucked out with pretty soft duty. I think I reported to the bakery sometime in the evening. The baker would start us out by cleaning a few pans. Then we would knead the dough for the next days bread. While the yeast was rising we would do some chore or another while the baker worked on fancier pastries (For officer's country of course). Then we would bake the bread, and store it in a special cooling pantry. The aroma of the fresh bread, just out of the ovens, is a pleasant smell I'll always remember. Of course we had to clean up after each chore; but it was pretty easy and we had plenty of breaks. Like I said earlier, the baker was a pretty good guy. Towards the end of the shift he would go to the galley and bring us back a lot of lunchmeat and cheeses. We would enjoy hot baked sandwiches, and some of the pastries which never made it to officer's country. After the shift, we could go to the crew's mess and watch the movie with them if we wanted to. I've always considered being assigned to the baker as a truly lucky break. It was soft duty, and it kept me busy during the trip. I really think I was better off than the guys who didn't have much to occupy the time.

At sea I recall the flying fish, which occasionally glided along side our ship. I also once saw porpoises frolicking in our wake from the fantail. (Or were those the Russian submarines tailing us?) Since I was working in the bakery at night, I

would sometimes go on deck, wearing my baker's hat, hoping our MP's would cut me a break. (Troops weren't supposed to be on deck after sunset) They did. That is when I think I truly fell in love with the ocean. It was beautiful, and I could smell the tang of salt air. On a calm clear night, when the moon was out, the Pacific really lived up to its' name.

We wore low quarters with our combat fatigues aboard ship. This was so we could get them off in a hurry if we ended up in the drink. This is the only time low quarters are proper uniform with fatigues. We also had ration cards which were supposed to be punched every time we went through the chow line. I don't know of anyone who actually filled his up. The smell of diesel or machine oil seemed to permeate most areas of the ship below decks, and only partially masked the rank smell of too many men who've gone too long without fresh water showers.

When our ship laid over briefly, in the harbor at Okinawa, there was an Air Force SGT at the docks who was throwing bottles of Coca Cola up to us. I was lucky enough to catch one of those Cokes. I even managed to get a couple of swallows before splitting it with friends. (In a situation like that, the whole brigade becomes your friend.) I seem to recall that we were throwing that Sgt. money to buy cokes, so he wasn't exactly altruistic.

Bill Matz, A/2-22 Vietnam

Catch the Pig

The events of 02-10-67, as I remember them: Somewhere in the Tay Ninh jungle C/2-22 stood down for Tet, a Vietnamese holiday period celebrating the lunar New Year, or whatever. We were told that a cease-fire had been negotiated with the enemy, as I remember it. Our cadre planned a treat for us--hot chow and ice-cold beer were to be delivered via chopper to us out in the jungle. We could only have a few beers each and were warned that

we must rotate sober, alert guards to man our positions. Plans were made to retrieve the allotted beers from the non-drinkers, but I may be speaking for myself there.

3rd Platoon, my Platoon, closed its perimeter so that we could all see each other and some of our brothers in platoons near by. It was morning when the word quickly spread that it would soon be party time. The iced beer and chow were being loaded onto the choppers and the mood was turning festive. Brothers started wandering over to visit with platoon and company members, a few poker games broke out, and then the farm boys in 3rd Platoon challenged us to a game of Catch the Pig.

We had what some of us referred to as a VC pig--a captured pig, our humorous POW that was still around for some reason. Many wanted to barbecue the pig, but saner minds prevailed. We greased or wet down the pig and turned the squealy thing loose. Off it went like a bat out of hell, but where ever it ran a Brother was waiting to catch it. All failed to catch the pig until Charles 'Plowhorse' Pohlman stepped into the ring. Plowhorse calmly walked up to the pig and grabbed it as if it was the simplest thing in the world. We howled with laughter and begged Plowhorse to hold the pose so some of us could take pictures. Charles got the nickname Plowhorse way back in training, in Ft. Lewis because he was a big man that grew up on a farm. Everybody knew and loved him, so putting him on center stage with his conquest was fun for all of us at the slight cost of some embarrassment to Plowhorse.

We never got our beer that day. Shortly after Plowhorse's conquest the enemy hit us hard. The enemy had planned it well by hitting us while we were wandering around away from our posts. Confusion reigned as we scrambled back to our tracks to deploy against them. Bullets were cracking by and explosions abounded around us. Then Charlie Company returned its awesome firepower and expanded the perimeter to meet the enemy wherever it could. The events following

Plowhorse's pig catch are a blur in my mind as it is with all firefights I was in, with some exceptions. When the battle finally ceased five Brothers had made the supreme sacrifice. Charles Paul Polhman, our beloved Plowhorse, was one of them. Along with Charles we lost Merrill McKillip, my Squad's 50 Gunner Peter Barbera, Mark Holte, and Otis Lewis. Many others were wounded and all were shaken by the event, our first big firefight. Oh we were in skirmishes and very near other battles, but this was the first time we were in the thick of it to this degree.

Speaking for myself and probably many others, I learned a great deal about combat readiness that day. Never again would my M-16 not be right beside me, locked and loaded, ready to go. Never again would I trust anyone in that country that was not wearing the green and walking our walk. Never again would I feel safe inside an APC. Never again would I care the slightest bit about that holiday called Tet. To hell with Tet and their loony...er New Year.

I still have my pictures of Plowhorse and the pig he caught, as well as two pictures of what was left of the C/3-4 track after the enemy hit it with an RPG round, a perfect shot. Charles Paul Polhman's end came inside that track. I look at those pictures today not only as a reminder of Charles and his sacrifices but also to remind me that we had some great fun time together as well. Thank God I was allowed one more fun time with Charles before he left us. Thank God for Charles, Merrill, Peter, Mark, and Otis, and the privilege of allowing me to know them. Rest in peace my Brothers.

I believe things went down pretty close to what I have stated here. I do apologize if my memory has once again tricked me. The timing of the attack may have been different than I stated---I actually believe that I ran back to my track with my camera still in hand---that the attack came within minutes after I took Charles' picture. Anyone wishing to tighten me up on this matter, please e-mail me with your thoughts. My e-mail address is:

dalpezc222@yahoo.com

Lynn W. Dalpez, C/2-22 Walker Boat
Original, Proud Of It

CHERRY PIES

In mid February 1967 Company-B was providing security on the supply routes between Dau Tieng, Tay Ninh, and Cu Chi. It had not been a good mission because of all the mines that the tracks were hitting. Our base camps were being hit with rockets and mortars during the day and night. The Dau Tieng base camp had the distinction of being the first one to be hit with 107mm rockets. Several men had been wounded and the company had 8 tracks damaged. As Executive Officer for the Company, I was responsible for insuring that the company had the supplies needed to properly support their mission in the field. Every day, I would run a supply convoy and deliver the needed materials to the company. The most important item I delivered was the mail.

The company was scheduled to come in to the base camp at Dau Tieng for a one-day maintenance stand down. The Company Commander requested that during the time that the company was in, that we prepare a good meal. He also, as a special treat for the company, wanted fruit pies. He especially wanted a cherry pie. I tasked the mess sergeant to prepare the meal, and make the pies.

The mess sergeant was able to find the ingredients for the pies, and was prepared to make over 30 pies for the company. The Company returned to the base camp and began pulling maintenance on the tracks. The dinner was schedule for 16:00 hours and the company would have its dinner and then depart the base camp at 20:00 hours to get back in position for security.

At approximately 15:00 hours, I was

driving in my jeep checking the perimeter bunkers of the battalion, when I heard the sound of rockets being fired at the base camp. I pulled off the perimeter road at the next bunker and got out of the jeep and ran into the bunker. The VC/NVA fired a total of 6 rounds at the base camp. After the rockets hit, I waited for another 2 to 3 minutes, and then ran back to the jeep and got on the radio to find out where the rockets had hit. I contacted the battalion operations center and found out that two of the rockets had hit in the B-Company area. I hit the gas peddle and made my way to the company area.

Two rockets had hit the company area. The first hit in an open area and caused little damage, but the other rocket hit the mess hall, right over the kitchen area. The six men in the kitchen were injured, but none in a serious way. The company was lucky that most of the men were in the maintenance area with the tracks, and were able to take cover inside of them.

However, the company did suffer a great loss. All of the pies the mess team had made for the company were destroyed, as was most of the dinner that was being prepared. It was upsetting for the men, but it was also funny that they were looking forward to the pies so much. The VC/NVA had no idea that they had hit us hard by taking out the pies. The company would not be able to get any pies for some time now, because it was going back out to the field. The men had to settle for a meal of C-rations.

With no reason to stay in the base camp, the company departed the area earlier than planned for their security mission. The mess sergeant was later able to get the supplies for the pies, but the company did not get back into base camp until May.

Skip Fahel, B/2-22 Vietnam

BUILDING A BUNKER

The simple act of constructing a bunker sometimes required great skill, daring feats, and downright theft. That's what the Medics found out, when building the large bunker behind the new Battalion Aid Station, in Dau Tieng.

In approximately May of 1968, the new aid station for 2/22 had been completed and the medics decided we needed a large bunker directly behind and attached to the aid station. After several days we finally convinced the engineers to dig a large hole approximately 20 feet wide by 25 feet long and 10 feet deep. We then prepared to construct our bunker. The engineers were kind enough to give us some large timbers for framework inside, but that was it. As usual there was a shortage of materials, and acquisition of what you needed was left to the imagination and skill of those needing the material. Believing in the concept that everything belonged to Uncle Sam, ownership was whoever possessed the items at the time. We set about borrowing what we needed, and most of the time not asking. We were extremely lucky. A helicopter company on the opposite end of the runway was moving, and they had just some of the items we needed, and most of the time they were not around. The first thing we spotted was a big stack of new sheet iron, and after three attempts we were able to allocate this to our material needs. The most important item needed was more lumber, and as luck would have it, those folks had this item also. Since they were moving, the tents had been removed, leaving the floors made of good 2x6 lumber just setting there waiting for us. They were entirely too large to load on a 2 ½ ton truck so they needed to be sawed to the correct size for our floors and walls of the bunker.

My experience was enhanced during this allocation process, by realizing the value of not wearing a shirt. Just as it was my turn on the hand saw, and right in the middle of sawing through

the middle of the floor, it suddenly became very quite, and I realized my partners in crime were not around. The person who was there however was a MAJOR, standing right behind me. I'll never forget his words, but I will leave out some major ass chewing being received, he said, "WHAT IN THE HELL ARE YOU DOING, THAT'S MY FLOOR YOU ARE CUTTING UP." WHO THE HELL TOLD YOU TO DO THIS?" I had to think quickly, and his last question gave me the answer. "LT. Vogel Sir." Was my reply. He was the 90-day wonder no one liked, and naturally the first one to come to mind. The Major jumped in his jeep and took off to find the person who gave the order to cut up his floor. We took off in the opposite direction. Lucky for me, in his rage he forgot to ask who I was and since none of us were wearing shirts, didn't get our names. We stayed clear of his area for a few days too let things cool off, and I still don't know how I got out of that mess.

As determined, as we were to complete our bunker, we took another chance at this prime building materials source. IT took two more attempts, but we were finally successful in procuring this floor, and two more just like it.

The final thing we needed was 2x4s. As foolish young men sometimes do, and since we were having such a hard time getting materials, we took the quickest route, and did the most foolhardy, stupid thing imaginable. We stole the rafters out of our own NCO Club!!

There was hell to pay the next morning when SGT. Ramos walked out and saw the club with no roof, and the tent laying on the tables. The first person he blamed was who else? Lt. Vogel. We realized there was no way out of this and quickly replaced the 2x4s with ones borrowed from my old company Alpha. That's only because they were the closest around. Believe it or not, there were no repercussions from this stupidity.

When we finally finished our bunker, it was beyond a doubt the finest, and

most secure bunker in Dau Tieng. Probably the best in the brigade. It had offset air vents with screens to prevent grenades from getting in. Large timbers on top, with a complete steel roof, PSP also borrowed, a row of sand bags, another complete steel roof, three more layers of sand bags, complete wooden floors and walls, and finally a total sheet iron roof attached to the aid station. When rockets or mortars came in we didn't even look up, just kept drinking beer and watching Star Trek on the armed forces network. We also had lots of visitors.

I envision men of the 2/22 using this bunker years after we left Vietnam, and thought they might get a chuckle when finding out how it was built.

DEEDS NOT WORDS was the correct motto, and we lived up to it. Sharing the feat and blame were Medics: Borchert, Mtrey, Conners, McGuire, Bollinger and Huff. Sent by: Denny Head, A&HHC 2-22 Vietnam

NEVER VOLUNTEER FOR ANYTHING

The old rule of never volunteering for anything always held true for me through Ft. Polk, Ft. Sam Houston, and Ft. Leonard Wood. The only time I had a complete memory lapse, and uttered the words I will was in all places Viet Nam. It didn't take long to realize the blunder, however I did learn something, while in the process of completing the task I stupidly volunteered for.

Sometime around December of 1967 the Triple Deuce had set up a logger, and word was we would be there several days. I had prepared for just such an event by acquiring of all things a commode seat! The first day there I dug the seat out of the track, found a nice secluded spot, dug a hole, built a box, and installed the commode seat. For once in quite a while I could set down and do my business like a normal human being.

Things were going pretty well until the

next morning CPT Wetzel walked up to a group of us and said we looked pretty ragged, especially the "Chief". Don't remember his name, but he was an American Indian, and everyone called him Chief. Boy was he ragged with that long black hair growing over his collar. CPT Wetzel said "DOC, you know how to cut hair"? Before I knew it I blurted out "DANG SKIPPY SIR". My heart sank at that moment, because I realized not only had I violated my stanch rule of not volunteering, but also realized who was going to cut the Chiefs hair. What I didn't realize that over the course of the next few days I would be cutting every ones hair , even the old mans. Alpha Co. had a barber and it was me, and I had never cut hair in my life..Pretty stupid.. CPT Wetzel proceeded to give me what he called a barbers kit. It was nothing but a comb and a rusty dull pair of hand clippers. Blisters were forming on two fingers before I even finished the Chief!! Over the next few days all I did was cut hair, the last few I did a better job of because of all the practice. One of the last ones whom I gave a haircut to, was a young man who was scheduled to go on R and R. He had been putting peroxide on his hair to bleach it out, and the only place he could get this from, was my aid bag. I proceeded to give him a real haircut and cut off almost all of the bleached part. He got a little upset, but soon cooled off. It seems he had another problem that he needed my help with since I was the medic. He had "CRABS". I gave him the usual correction techniques, proper ointment, and asked him where in the hell he got crabs from out here the other side of nowhere? His reply was heart wrenching. "Oh I found this neat little homemade toilet with a seat and everything on it, so I must have gotten them there".

Not only had I become a barber with blistered fingers, but it also broke my heart to have to burn the only toilet I had to sit on in two months.

Sent by: Denny Head, A&HHC/ 2-22 Vietnam

The Groves Saga, Con't.

7 February 1969 Got a different job. Still here in the base camp (Dau Tieng) though. Rest assured that I'll never be in the field again, too short. I'm a generator man. They have a generator that supplies power to the company area. Needed someone to take care of it so I was elected. Also, I'm a jeep driver. Getting to be pretty talented, huh? Something that'll make you happy, I went before the "board" for sergeant. I thought I did terrible but one of the officers on the board stopped me yesterday and said I did really well. He couldn't tell me the score, but I did well. So looks like I'll be getting my orders for sergeant the last of this month or the first of March.

13 February 1969 Everyone here is apprehensive of the coming TET. As it is, we expect things to break loose on the 19th. Every day we hear B-52 strikes all around us. A week ago, the company caught a gook trying to recon the company's position. After interrogation, it was learned that he was part of a reconnaissance squad from an NVA battalion. That would be about 800 NVA. Everyone is wary and waiting.

20 February 1969 Well, tonight is kind of noisy. Seems to be quite a bit of action going on around us. Flares are in the air all around the base camp. Can hear artillery exploding not more than a mile away from us and I just watched two helicopter gunships saturate an area with rocket and machine gun fire. I just hope that all this action does stay away from us. God give strength to the one's fighting.

24 February 1969 Mom has probably told you about us getting hit on the 22nd. Whew! That was the longest night I think I've ever spent. Here I was reading a good book at about twelve midnight when everything started breaking loose. Mortars started dropping on the defense perimeter and tracers from bullets were flying everywhere. I was outside trying to

figure if any were dropping around our headquarters when Kawbloom! They started dropping the things not too far away. You ought to see how fast I can move under those circumstances. Standing in the bunker, I was listening to sirens when the phone rang and we were put on a red alert. A red alert is called only when an all out attack against us is imminent. They were right. I woke everyone up and we grabbed our weapons etc. and ran out to the part of perimeter that we were assigned to. Everything was happening then. The whole base camp was shooting at the insurgents. Enemy mortars, rockets, and machine gun fire was pouring in everywhere. Almost like "Combat" on TV, only this was for real. I don't need to say I was scared. I stayed awake the whole night praying they wouldn't hit our sector. Thank God, they didn't. Where they hit, they hit hard, breaking through the wire. There were firefights all over the base camp. We had to level one village near us because the NVA were coming from there. Civilians were there and a lot were killed and wounded. It's sad, but the civilians brought it on by not informing on the enemy. The village isn't standing anymore. The NVA ,that did get in, were running up and down the air strip, shooting up everything and placing satchel charges on planes and blowing them sky high. A platoon of APC went to react and the NVA got two of the APCs, they were hit by RPGs and lost two killed and five wounded. They did kill twenty and capture fifteen NVA. You might have heard me mention John Caldwell. He and I went through A.I.T at Ft. Polk and drivers training at Ft. Knox. Well, he was trapped in the library for six hours. The NVA had the place surrounded for six hours. They were saved by the APCs that came to help. I wasn't near any of this so I wasn't in too much danger. The enemy finally withdrew at about 5 a.m., but it still wasn't over.

We had a lot of the NVA running around the base camp and they had to be hunted down. I think we caught the last one at around 2 p.m. the next day. We have some old French mansions

left over from the French. The NVA hid in these and it was quite a job flushing them out. All in all, Dau Tieng lost twenty-two killed. We killed seventy-one. That's the number of bodies we found. It's hard telling how many they dragged away with them. So it's been very tense here. Intelligence expects another attack, but we don't know when for sure. Last night we were probed and tonight there's been some action. A few rockets have been roaming in every now and then.

12 March 1969 We have been a little busy here. We still get quite a few rockets and mortars and we have been on a red alert the past four days and will continue for at least another six to eight nights. So, I have been awake at night and sleeping during the day. They expect us to be hit some night. When, we do not know. I hope we don't. I have lost another good friend. He was standing on top of a track when a rocket came in and shrapnel to the head killed him. His name was Daniel Irrezery, a Puerto Rican. He was from my platoon. I was pretty close. Yesterday the company was in a firefight. We had five wounded and one killed. The five wounded were from my platoon. Now my tour is over and I return home.

Mike Groves, A/2-22 Vietnam

This concludes The Groves Saga. Many thanks to Mike for sharing His chronicle of Vietnam with all of us.

Magnet

Visit to Ft. Drum

At the 22nd Infantry Regiment Society Reunion held in St Louis, several members of the 2nd Battalion 22nd Infantry stationed at Fort Drum were there to represent the active Army. On the last night, after the dinner, Bob Babcock called them all forward to introduce themselves. CPT Bill Sabbagh introduced himself, up until

that time I did not know the B Company Commander was at the reunion. I went up to CPT Sabbagh and introduced myself, we had only a short time to talk, but he did invite me to visit the Company. I said that I would like that and gave him my e-mail address so that he could contact me. A few weeks later I received an e-mail that started the ball rolling to get me to Ft. Drum. We had one date set, but it was cancelled, and then scheduled the visit for the 1st of August. I made my reservations.

I arrived at Ft. Drum on Wednesday evening and checked in at the Main gate. One of the MP's on duty took my identification and information on the rental car while I called B Company to let them know I had arrived. CPT Bill Sabbagh answered the phone, and said that it would take him about seven minutes to get to the gate. While waiting, I visited with the MP. He was a reservist whose unit was activated for the mission of providing extra security at FT. Drum. The unit was from Philadelphia. I asked him how long he would be on active duty. He said about 2 years, and that it would be a difficult two years for him.

CPT Sabbagh arrived, and I followed him to the Ft. Drum Inn. The Company had already notified them of my arrival. I put my belongings in the room and then went out to dinner with CPT Sabbagh. During dinner we discussed his army career, the deployment to Bosnia, and the training that was recently completed. The company returned from the field today after completing platoon live fire training. They had been in the field for a week. I told him about my experience in the Army, and what I had been doing for the last 35 years.

After dinner, CPT Sabbagh took me back to the Inn. He informed me that the Company XO would pick me up at 0630 hours the following morning, and the XO would have a T-shirt for me to wear during PT.

I was down in the lobby at 06:25, and the XO, 1Lt Philip Denton, presented me with the T-shirt for PT. When we

got to the Company, I went to the CO's office and put on my new PT shirt. CPT Sabbagh told me that the shirt was purchased with funds that the 22nd Society sent to them in December. He said that the gift was greatly appreciated by the men, and it had special meaning to be supported in such a manner. The shirt that CPT Sabbagh gave me had the additional lettering "B Co Commander." It was one of two that he received.

We then went to observe PT. The platoons were already doing their stretching for the morning run. The company XO and 1SG Silbey joined us as we observed the platoons. We then walked out to the front of the Battalion area. Across the street were the 1st Brigade Commander and Brigade CSM, and I was introduced to them.

We then started our run. Our run was at a very, very, very slow pace, and the CO was kind enough to go back to quick time at the half-mile mark. We then began to walk and discussed the Company's mission, the training that they had just completed, and future training that was scheduled. We walked to the Division Headquarters and there the XO was able to locate LTC Mike Steele, who had been the Battalion Commander for the last two years. He expressed his appreciation for the Society and the support they had given to the Battalion and also his appreciation for me taking the time to visit Ft. Drum and the Battalion.

We left Division Headquarters, and our next stop was MaGrath Sports Complex. This facility offers the troops a variety of indoor sports amenities including a swimming pool, racquetball courts, a weight lifting room with TV's, saunas, locker rooms, basketball courts, and an indoor running track.

After completing the tour of MaGrath, we continued back to the battalion area. Just before arriving at the Battalion area, we met with the Battalion medics that were completing their PT. I enjoyed having the opportunity to talk to the "Doc's" for a

short while. After that, we then returned to the Company area where we met the 3rd Platoon. I joined them doing push-ups and I was able to knock out 4. The Platoon Sergeant then called the Platoon to attention, and called me forward. He introduced me to the Platoon, and I explained that I had been the platoon leader of the 3rd Platoon in Vietnam. I told them how young they appeared to me, and how proud the old soldiers of the Triple Deuce were of the job they are doing.

I completed my short talk, and to my surprise, the platoon Sargent called the platoon to attention, and ordered the platoon, by squad, to come forward to greet me personally. This was a very emotional moment for me. Each man came forward, shook my hand, saluted and thanked me for my service by saying "Deeds not Words" or "welcome home" or "thank you for your service", or "thank you for leading the way" or "glad to have you here" or "its an honor". After the last man came forward, I moved off towards CPT Sabbaugh, and told him it was very difficult for me to control my emotions. I did a good job of holding back the tears. He said it was a surprise to him.

After that emotional moment, CPT Sabbagh and I then went to the Brigade dinning facility for breakfast. The mess hall had definitely changed.

This facility would put most restaurants to shame, with breakfast consisting of eggs to order, bacon, sausage, hash browns, biscuits and gravy, home fries, grits, fruits, cereals, fruit juices, soft drinks, coffee, and more. The decor was like Applebee's with sports and movie posters and televisions in every corner. Breakfast for me included a ham and cheese omelet, sausage links, hash browns, watermelon, cantaloupe, milk, and a cup of coffee. We sat at a table with some other troops and discussed the difference between this dinning facility, the old mess hall and the progress that has been made in army food. It is still not a good as mom's cooking.

After breakfast, the Company XO took

me to the Ft Drum Inn. It was 09:30 hrs and we agreed that he would be back to pick me up at 10:30 hrs. I showered and changed and was ready to get back to visiting the Company. The XO was back at the appointed time, and we were off back to the company.

Linking up with the CO, he then took me to the arms room and turned me over to the company armor, Corporal Rathmann. He and SGT Mumaw showed me every piece of equipment contained in the arms room. We started out with the basic weapon, the M-16 rifle. I don't remember all the model numbers. They showed me the laser aiming sight, with the red dot. Once zeroed, you just put the red dot on the target. They showed me the 40mm grenade launcher that is mounted under the M-16, the automatic M-16, M-60 machinegun, the Javelin anti-tank weapon, the 9mm pistol, and night vision sights. We turned the lights out and shut the door to demonstrate the devices and also took aim with the M-16. We examined the GPS and the 60mm mortar. We went outside where they set up the mortar for me. Afterwards, back in the arms room, we looked at the communication equipment, including the company and platoon radios and the individual radios that all the troops carried. With each weapon that they handed to me, they provided a description of the weapons positive and negative aspects. It was very interesting to hear what the men had to say about their weapons. They had some of the same complaints that the troops had 35 years ago.

When it was time for lunch, SGT Mumaw and SGT Elliott joined me. The meal consisted of chicken parmesan, potatoes, fruit, juice and milk. We talked about their career in the Army thus far and what they wanted to do in the future. SGT Mumaw was nearing the end of his enlistment, and was looking at his options.

After our meal, SGT Mumaw took me on a tour of the Company barracks, the day room, laundry room, and then

showed me his room. Each of the troops shared a room with one other soldier, and shared the bath with one other suite. The rooms were like dorm rooms in college. SGT Mumaw's room had a TV and computer. His roommate was using the Internet to look for some civilian GPS.

After visiting the troop areas, it was time for the company formation. The formation was originally scheduled for the end of the day, but was moved up because of the officers' call made by the Battalion Commander. The CO had the company form around him so he could speak. He said a few words on what the company would be doing for the rest of the day, and then he introduced me. CPT Sabbagh called me forward. He said a few words about me and my time with B Company in Vietnam. He thanked me for coming and visiting the Company. He then presented a Company coin and Triple Deuce sweatshirt to me. Then SGT Mumaw presented me with a poster that was taken off a wall in one the troop's room with pictures of weapons. The title is "Knight's Armament Company." The poster is now framed and hanging in my office at work.

CPT Sabbagh then let me speak to the company. I expressed my appreciation for their welcome, and told how I had looked forward to the visit. I told them it was more rewarding than I could have imagined.

My excitement was like when I was a child and waiting to go to Disneyland. I let them know that COL Norris, the Honorary Colonel of the Regiment, and Bob Babcock, the President of the 22nd Infantry Regiment Society, and Mike Groves, President of the Triple Deuce Vietnam Association sent their best wishes, and that the "Old Soldiers" of the Regiment were there to support them with "Deeds not Words." I conveyed Norm Nishikubo (Magnets) words of guidance, "Don't forget the f__ing details." I said a few more words, and then called CPT Sabbagh forward. I told him that I had a presentation to make to the Company. I presented the Company with a print of the picture painted by

Jim Nelson (C 2/22 Vietnam) titled "Trapezoid". I gave the Company a brief background of Jim Nelson and history of the Thanksgiving battle. I explained that the painting depicted the 3rd Platoon B Company maneuvering to the flank of C Company. I also presented to the Company the stories that I had written about my tour with B Company in Vietnam. CPT Sabbagh asked if there were any questions. After a few questions were answered, the Company was ordered to fall in and the CPT Sabbagh turned the Company over to the 1SG.

After the formation, I was turned over to six men of the 3rd Platoon. It was their mission to take me around the Battalion area and a tour of Ft. Drum and be back at 1500 hrs. The first place that we went was the Battalion Headquarters.

At the Battalion Headquarters I was able to look at all the pictures that were on the walls of the hallway. The pictures showed the history of the battalion and current pictures of the battalion in action. Standing under the Battalion Colors, I began talking about the history of the Regiment, and the history of the battalion in Vietnam. I talked about what the Army was like when I was drafted, the bases where I took my training, and the NCO's that helped me along the way. They asked questions about Vietnam, and I shared a few war stories with them. I talked about the difference between now and then. The big difference was that when I was drafted, the Army still had NCO's that served either in WWII or Korea, or both. There was a wealth of experience that could be handed down to the young troops. My drill sergeant in basic training SFC Allison served in Korea. The 1SG Murray of my unit after getting commission was a WWII and Korea vet, and when I joined the B Company 2/22 in Vietnam, 1SG Werner was with Merrill's Marauders in WWII.

As I was talking with the men, CSM Wilcox who I had met at the reunion walked up to us and greeted me. Shortly after that the Battalion

Commander LTC Joe Dichairo joined us. He greeted me and asked about my visit, I told him that it had been great so far and it was exceeding my expectations. I told him how impressed I had been with the men. I also made the comment "that if the officers look out for the men, the men will take care of the officers." He said it was great to have me here and if there was anything to make the visit more enjoyable to let him know. He then said, "carry on", and I went back to telling war stories. I shared a few more with the men, answered a few more questions, and then moved on.

We then went to the HHC areas where I saw the Battalion medics' area and spoke with the only medic that was present. The others were at the motor pool.

The next stop was the PX, commissary, and clothing sales store. We walked around the areas. Things have changed. It looked more like the local small shopping centers. We drove around the post and out to the airfield where the troops flew to Bosnia. Along the way we drove by a motor pool that had some M-113's lined up. We returned to the Company area at 14:30 hrs. I then stood around waiting for CPT Sabbagh. It was time for CPT Sabbagh to attend a briefing at the post theater held by the Assistant Division Commander. I was asked to accompany him to the briefing. The briefing was about the requirements of the 1st Brigade for the training mission that was starting the following week. I was able to sit in the back of the theater and listen to the briefing. The briefing lasted about 30 minutes. Afterward, CPT Sabbagh drove me back the FT. Drum Inn. On the way we drove by the Commons, where the Battalion Officer call was to be held. I would meet CPT Sabbagh back at the Commons at 17:00 hrs.

I showered and changed clothes and was ready to go to the officer's call. I pulled into the parking lot of the Commons just as CPT Sabbagh pulled in. We went into the room where the officers were beginning to show up. The Commons is a club that is open to

all ranks, and is used for functions and meetings. There is no officers club at Ft Drum. The area that we were meeting in had a bar, and several of the battalion officers were standing around talking. We got our drinks, and CPT Sabbagh took me around introducing me to the officers of the battalion.

After about 20 minutes, the Battalion Commander asked the officers to form up in an area to the side of the room that had a long table. Most of the officers sat at the table, but there were still several standing, including me. The Battalion Commander greeted the officers and stated the purpose of the meeting. It was to acknowledge the new officers in the Battalion, and what better time to do this than after the competition of the Battalions platoon live fire training that was just completed on Wednesday. Each new officer in the Battalion, to include the Battalion Commander, was presented with Crossed Rifles with 2/22 on them that was to be worn on the fatigues. CPT Sabbagh, as the senior company commander, presented the Battalion Commander with his. After this presentation, the Battalion Commander talked about the history of the Regiment, and that part of that history was with them tonight, and called me up. He presented me with Crossed Rifles that were just like the ones presented to the new officers. He thanked me for my service to our country and to the battalion. After my presentation, the meeting was over. We stood around and talked for another 30 minutes. I enjoyed talking with the officers. The Battalion Chaplain said that when I was with the Battalion, we had a unique Chaplain. I said, "You must mean Chaplain Tobin." I told him of my introduction to Chaplain Tobin. I shared some additional war stories and listened to what they did when they were in Bosnia.

That evening, CPT Sabbagh, LT Denton, 1SG Silbey, the Company FO and I went off post for dinner. We went to a Chinese buffet restaurant. We sat around, ate, and told stories. It was a pleasant evening. After dinner I

returned to the FT Drum Inn for the night. Sleep came easy. It was a very rewarding day. The next morning I would drive to the Company area.

At 06:20 hrs, I left for the company area. The schedule for the day was the Battalion run, and after the run there would be a Battalion formation. After the Battalion formation, I would be leaving to return to Sarasota.

When I got to the Company area, the men were getting ready for the run. The Company had been up early because it was their time to take drug tests. Men were lined up to get the bottles to urinate in, lined up to go into the latrine, and lined up to turn in their samples. The troops were making the typical soldier comments about the test as I walked in. I went to the Company Commanders office and got ready for the run.

We then went out for the 07:00 hrs Battalion formation. The Companies were getting into formation. The Battalion CSM called the Companies to attention and LTC Dichairo came forward taking over the formation. He told the Battalion that they would be running at an 8-minute per mile pace, and no one would be allowed to drop out. He then moved the Battalion out on its 4 mile run.

LTC Dichairo was in the lead, followed by Battalion Colors, and then the Battalion Staff, HHC, A Co, B Co, and C Co. I was with B Company. Once the Battalion was on the road, LTC Dichairo gave the order for double time. The run had started.

I was running at the front of B Company. CPT Sabbagh was to the left of the Company with guideon and I was to the right. I ran the company for a little less than a mile and then peeled out of the formation, and the company continued on. The Battalion S1 then escorted me back to the Battalion area to wait for the Battalion to return.

The Battalion came down the road returning to the area. As LTC Dichairo got to the Battalion HQ, he

peeled off with the Colors and Battalion staff to let the companies run by. As each Company passed, he saluted the Guideon and Company. The Battalion ended the run in formation, and formed in the back of the Battalion HQ. The CSM then informed the Battalion that 14 men had broken rank (not including me), and told the Battalion to get down and knock out 14 repetitions of push-ups. The whole Battalion went down and did the push-ups.

LTC Dichairo then took over the Battalion, and called them in around him for a little talk. After his brief talk he formed the Battalion, and turned the Battalion back to the companies. He wanted to meet with the Company Commanders. I went back to the company area, and talked with the men waiting for the CO.

The CO came back, and we went over to the dinning facility for breakfast. Afterward, we returned to the company area. I then was able to put on some body armor to see what it was like. It was a lot heavier then I remembered from that of the flack jackets that we wore in Vietnam. I talked to the men some more, and then they got out some Meals-Ready to Eat. They open one for me, showed me how to heat the meal and what was included in each packet. There was quite a bit in it. The meal that they prepared for me was chicken breast and potatoes. It tasted pretty good. After this I returned to the FT. Drum Inn to shower and change for the Battalion Formation at 10:00 hrs. I returned to the company area, CPT Sabbagh was in his office talking with a soldier about reenlisting. After talking with him, we moved out to the battalion area for the formation.

The purpose of the formation was the promotion and presentation of awards to some of the men of the Battalion. After the presentations were made, LTC Dichairo had the Battalion fall in around him. After they formed around him, he called me forward. He told the Battalion that I was an old soldier from the Vietnam era, where I served with Bravo Company as a platoon

leader, XO, and Company Commander. He then presented me with a Certificate of Appreciation and then presented me with the Battalion coin. I asked if I could say a few words to the Battalion.

I said the following to the Battalion: "I am proud to be an American. I am proud to be called an old soldier from the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry. May God bless and protect you. I salute you (rendering the hand salute), Deeds not Words. Thank you".

LTC Dichairo then gave a safety briefing, to include a few words from one of the soldiers that he caught speeding. After this he formed the Battalion back up, and turned the Battalion back to the Companies. He asked for the Company Commanders to report to him again.

LTC Dichairo had the Company Commanders and me line up for pictures. We took two pictures outside, and then moved in to the Battalion Headquarters for a picture under the Battalion Colors. I again thanked LTC Dichairo, the Battalion staff officers and the Company Commanders for their kindness during my visit. LTC Dichairo said I was always welcome, and to come back again. I then walked back to the company area.

The 1SG had the Company in formation. I went to get my belongings from the CO's office and took them to my car. By this time the CO was talking to the Company. He gave them a safety briefing and outlined what the Company would be doing the following week. He completed his talk and turned the Company back to the 1SG. We then walked back to his office. I expressed my appreciation for all that he had done for me during my visit, and let him know that I was heading out to the airport. As I walked out of the building, soldiers that I passed stopped to shake my hand and offer their appreciation for my service to our country.

My visit was over.

As I reflect on my visit to Ft. Drum, I recall several highlights. These included the greeting of members of the 3rd platoon, the time spent in the arms room, talking with the troops in Battalion Headquarters under the Battalion Colors, the Battalion Run, the presentations made to me by both the Bravo Company and the Battalion, and the individual greetings by the troops. To me, the troops were just the same as they were 35 years ago, constantly complaining about everything and always looking for ways to get out of working. But they are always ready to fight, and were always proud of their country and regiment.

This experience made me proud to be part of the history of 2nd Battalion 22nd Infantry.

E. Q. Skip Fahel, B/2-22 Vietnam, April 1967-April 1968

Honor Among Soldiers

If you have fed from a steady diet of Hollywood movies about Vietnam you probably believe that everyone who wore a uniform in America's long, sad involvement in war in Vietnam is some sort of a clone of Lt. William Calley---that all three million of them were drug-crazed killers and rapists who rampaged across the pastoral landscape. Those movies got it wrong, until now.

There is one more Hollywood film now playing called *We Were Soldiers* and it gets it right. Ask any Vietnam veteran who has gone to see the movie. In fact, ask any American who has gone to see it. It is based on a book I wrote with my lifelong friend Lt. Gen. (ret) Hal Moore; a book written precisely because we believed that a false impression of those soldiers had taken root in the country which sent them to war and, in the end, turned its back on both the war and the warriors.

I did four tours in Vietnam as a war correspondent for United Press International---1965-66, 1971, 1973

and 1975. In the first three of those tours at war I spent most of my time in the field with the troops and I came to know and respect them and even love them, though most folks might find the words "war" and "love" in the same sentence unsettling if not odd. In fact, I am far more comfortable in the company of those once-young soldiers today than with any other group except my own family. They are my comrades-in-arms, the best friends of my life and if ever I were to shout "help!" they would stampede to my aid in a heartbeat. They come from all walks of life; they are black, white, Hispanic, Native American, Asian; they are fiercely loyal, dead honest, and entirely generous of their time and money. They are my brothers and they did none of the things Oliver Stone or Francis Ford Coppola would have you believe all of them did.

On the worst day of my life, in the middle of the worst battle of the Vietnam War, in a place called Landing Zone X-Ray in the Ia Drang Valley of Vietnam, I was walking around snapping some photographs when I caught a movement out of the corner of my eye. It was a tall, lanky GI who jumped out of a mortar pit and ran, zig-zagging under fire, toward me. He dove under the little bush I was crouched behind. "Joe! Joe Galloway! Don't you know me, man? It's Vince Cantu from Refugio, Texas!" Vince Cantu and I had graduated together from Refugio High School, Class of '59, 55 boys and girls. We embraced warmly. Then he shouted over the din of gunfire: "Joe, you got to get down and stay down. It's dangerous out here. Men are dying all around". Vince told me that he had only ten days left on his tour of duty as a draftee soldier in the 1st Battalion 7th U.S. Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile). "If I live through this I will be home in Refugio for Christmas." I asked Vince to please visit my mom and dad, but not tell them too much about where we had met and under what circumstances. I still have an old photograph from that Christmas visit--Vince wearing one of those black satin Vietnam jackets, with his

daughter on his knee, sitting with my mom and dad in their living room. Vince Cantu and I are still best friends.

When I walked out and got on a Huey helicopter leaving Landing Zone X-Ray I left knowing that 80 young Americans had laid down their lives so that I and others might survive. Another 124 had been terribly wounded and were on their way to hospitals in Japan or the United States. I left with both a sense of my place, among them, and an obligation to tell their stories to any who would listen. I knew that I had been among men of honor and decency and courage, and anyone who believes otherwise needs to look in his own heart and weigh himself.

Hal Moore and I began our research for the book-to-be, *We Were Soldiers Once...and Young*, in 1982. It was a ten-year journey to find and ultimately to bring back together as many of those who fought in LZ X-ray and LZ Albany, a separate battle one day after ours only three miles away in which another 155 young Americans died and another 130 were wounded. We had good addresses for perhaps no more than a dozen veterans, but we mailed out a questionnaire to them to begin the process. Late one night a week later my phone rang at home in Los Angeles. On the other end was Sgt. George Nye, retired and living very quietly by choice in his home state of Maine. George began talking and it was almost stream of consciousness. He had held it inside him for so long and now someone wanted to know about it. He described taking his small team of engineer demolitions men into X-Ray to blow down some trees and clear a safer landing zone for the helicopters. Then he was talking about PFC Jimmy D. Nakayama, one of those engineer soldiers, and how a misplaced napalm strike engulfed Nakayama in the roaring flames. How he ran out into the fire and screamed at another man to grab Jimmy's feet and help carry him to the aid station. My blood ran cold and the hair stood up on the back of my neck. I had been

that man on the other end of Nakayama. I had grabbed his ankles and felt the boots crumble, the skin peel, and those slick bones in my hands. Again I heard Nakayama's screams. By then we were both weeping. I knew Nakayama had died a day or two later in an Army hospital. Nye told me that Jimmy's wife had given birth to a baby girl the day he died---and that when Nye returned to base camp at An Khe he found a letter on his desk. He had encouraged Nakayama to apply for a slot at Officer Candidate School. The letter approved that application and contained orders for Nakayama to return immediately to Ft. Benning, Ga., to enter that course. George Nye is gone now. But I want you to know what he did with the last months of his life. He lived in Bangor, Maine; The year was 1991 and in the fall plane after plane loaded with American soldiers headed home from the Persian Gulf War stopped there to refuel. It was their first sight of home. George and some other local volunteers organized a welcome at that desolate airport. They provided coffee, snacks and the warm "Welcome home, soldier" that no one ever, offered George and the millions of other Vietnam veterans. George had gone out to the airport to decorate a Christmas tree for those soldiers on the day he died. When we think of ourselves we think Shakespeare, Henry V, Act IV, and Scene 3: "We few, we happy few, we band of brothers; For he today that sheds his blood with me Shall be my brother."

Honor and decency and uncommon courage were common among these soldiers and all the soldiers who served in Vietnam. I think of how they were, on patrol, moving through jungle or rice paddies. Nervous, on edge, trying to watch right, left, ahead, behind, all at once. A friend once described it as something like looking at a tree full of owls. They were alert for sign, sound or smell of the enemy. But they also watched each other closely. At the first sign of the oppressive heat and exhaustion getting to someone the two or three people around would relieve him of some or

all of the heavy burden that the Infantryman bears: 60 or 70 pounds of stuff. Rifle and magazines. A claymore mine or two. A couple of radio batteries. Cans of C-Rations. Spare socks. Maybe a book. All that rides in the soldier's pack. They would make it easier for him to keep going. They took care of each other, because in this situation each other was all they had.

When I would pitch up to spend a day or two or three with such an outfit I was, at first, an object of some curiosity. Sooner or later a break would be called and everyone would flop down in the shade, drink some water, break out a C-Ration or a cigarette. The GI next to me would ask: What you doing out here? I would explain that I was a reporter. "You mean you are a civilian? You don't HAVE to be here?" Yes. "Man, they must pay you loads of money to do this." And I would explain that, no, unfortunately I worked for UPI, the cheapest news agency in the world. "Then you are just plain crazy, man." Once I was pigeonholed, all was all right. The grunts understood "crazy" like no one else I ever met. The welcome was warm, friendly and open. I was probably the only civilian they would ever see in the field; I was a sign that someone, anyone, outside the Big Green Machine cared how they lived and how they died. It didn't take very long before I truly did come to care. They were, in my view, the best of their entire generation. When their number came up in the draft they didn't run and hide in Canada. They didn't turn up for their physical wearing pantyhose or full of this chemical or that drug which they hoped would fail them. Like their fathers before them they raised their right hand and took the oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. It is not their fault that the war they were sent to fight was not one that the political leadership in Washington had any intention of winning. It is not their fault that 58,200 of them died, their lives squandered because Lyndon Johnson and, later, Richard Nixon could not figure out some decent way to cut our

losses and leave the Vietnamese to sort the matter out among themselves.

As I have grown older, and so have they, and first the book and now the movie have come to pass I am often asked: Doesn't this close the loop for you? Doesn't this mean you can rest easier? The answer is no, I can't. To my dying day I WILL remember and honor those who died, some in my arms. I WILL remember and honor those who lived and came home carrying memories and scars that only their brothers can share and understand. They were the best you had, America, and you turned your back on them.

Joe Galloway, Former UPI War Correspondent Vietnam

Norm's Comment: I was told that Joe was with 2-22 several times in Vietnam.

THE WAY IT WAS

"Hey Dad," one of my kids asked the other day, "what was your favorite fast food when you were growing up?"

"We didn't have fast food when I was growing up," I informed him. "All the food was slow." "C'mon, seriously. Where did you eat?"

"It was a place called 'at home,' " I explained. "Grandma Stewart cooked every day and when Grandpa Stewart got home from work, we sat down together at the dining room table, and if I didn't like what she put on my plate I was allowed to sit there until I did like it." By this time, the kid was laughing so hard I was afraid he was going to suffer serious internal damage, so I didn't tell him the part about how I had to have permission to leave the table.

But here are some other things I would have told him about my childhood if I figured his system could have handled it.

My parents never owned their own house, wore Levis, set foot on a golf course, traveled out of the country or had a credit card. In their later years

they had something called a revolving charge card. The card was good only at Sears Roebuck. Or maybe it was Sears AND Roebuck. Either way, there is no Roebuck anymore. Maybe he died.

My parents never drove me to soccer practice. This was mostly because we never had heard of soccer. But also because we didn't have a car.

We didn't have a television in our house until I was 11, but my grandparents had one before that. It was, of course, black and white, but they bought a piece of colored plastic to cover the screen. The top third was blue, like the sky, and the bottom third was green, like grass. The middle third was red. It was perfect for programs that had scenes of fire trucks riding across someone's lawn on a sunny day.

I was 13 before I tasted my first pizza. It was a Luigi's Pizza on the west side of Cleveland and my friend, Ronnie, took me there to try what he said was "pizza pie." When I bit into it, I burned the roof of my mouth and the cheese slid off, swung down, plastered itself against my chin and burned that, too. It's still the best pizza I ever had.

We didn't have a car until I was 15. Before that, the only car in our family was my grandfather's Plymouth. He called it a "machine."

I never had a telephone in my room. The only phone in the house was in the living room and it was on a party line. Before you could dial, you had to listen and make sure some people you didn't know weren't already using the line.

Pizzas were not delivered to our home. But milk was.

All newspapers were delivered by boys and all boys delivered newspapers. I delivered the Cleveland "News" six days a week. It cost 7 cents a paper, of which I got to keep 2 cents. On Saturday, I had to collect the 42 cents from my customers. My favorite customers

were the ones who gave me 50 cents and told me to keep the change. My least favorite customers were the ones who seemed to never be home on collection day.

Movie stars kissed with their mouths shut. At least, they did in the movies. Touching someone else's tongue with yours was called French kissing and they didn't do that in the movies. I don't know what they did in French movies. French movies were dirty and we weren't allowed to see them.

If you grew up in a generation before there was fast food, you may want to share some of these memories with your children or grandchildren. Just don't blame me if they bust a gut laughing.

Sent by Ralph Julian, HQ/2-22
The Second Fullback 6, Vietnam

HUMBLED

By 1970, I had been away from Viet Nam for 3 years. I was stationed at Fort Knox and running a Field Fire rifle range.

For those that might have missed it, the Army decided that we needed to fire for record at night. You got 36 rounds at 25 meters and 36 more at 50 meters. It was fired on auto and you had to have 10 hits to pass. It was pass/fail but you could not graduate from Basic until you passed. You would fire the course in daylight - sights taped, then fire for record that night. One Friday afternoon I was informed that I would be taking over the Night Fire Record Range starting Monday. The Range officer had received an unsatisfactory rating on Thursday night and was being relieved. I was given manuals, lesson plans, and the weekend to get ready. I was told the two NCOs on the range were an E7 and a Corporal with 18 years of service. It seemed the Corporal had a drinking problem. He was fine for a while, then would go AWOL for a month or so... I was warned that the E7 was forgetful and

stuttered.

I went out and met them Friday night and watched how they ran it. The two NCOs seemed OK to me, but I did see several changes I wanted to make. Monday was not a good start! Daylight savings time was that weekend and it was time to "Spring Ahead" My NCOs did not turn their clocks ahead, so were an hour late. By the time they arrived I was firing the first order.

The E7 was forgetful, and was really having trouble with some small changes I had made. We were being evaluated weekly and although we were back to excellent, I was under a lot of pressure. After a few weeks, I requested a replacement for the E7. Of course one could not be found right away. My Corporal went AWOL again.

One particularly frustrating afternoon, a Basic Training Company arrived with a "Field First" that I admired. We had worked together many times and I had the greatest respect for him. Watching me running in circles, he commented on how lucky I was to have my E7! I burst out laughing, until I noticed that he was not kidding. He went silent and I really had to pry to get anything out of him. He finally told me that he and my E7 served together as cadre, at the 7th Army NCO Academy in Germany. He explained that my E7 was an honor graduate and top instructor while they were there. He continued, telling me how my E7 held his Company together in Viet Nam after being overrun and all the officers were killed. He had suffered a grenade fragment in his head and was evacuated two days later, *after* they sent out some replacement officers. By now I am standing about 6 inches tall. Then he took me down a little more, telling me how my E7 has withdrawn since the fragment left him stuttering and forgetful. I walked over to the range phone and called my boss. I told him to forget about a replacement, the problem was me and I just got straightened out.

The inspections dropped off and the E7 and I were alternating with the classes. His conduct of the classes was excellent. He stuttered very little when teaching, and when he did it was actually effective. In a short time we were starting to get off duty visitors and dependents, who just came out to watch the classes and tracer demo. We even had one inspector who showed up with his inspection form already marked Excellent, and just asked me to sign it so he could go. My E7 was giving the class and I suggested he watch a little while. He left an hour later, missed Happy Hour, but asked if he could bring his wife back some night.

We worked together for another four months then had an accident one night. We lost one kid but my E7 and I worked together like one person. Whatever I thought of, he had already taken care of it. I made sure that he was absolved of any responsibility for the accident, which was true.

After the investigation, my boss decided to transfer me to another range. I didn't want to go, but he wouldn't budge. I took my replacement aside and we had a little talk about *his* E7.

Jim Hardin, C/2-22 Vietnam

Best Military Branch

A Soldier, a Sailor, an Airman, and a Marine got into an argument about which part of the military was "the best." The arguing became so heated the four servicemen failed to see an oncoming truck. They were run over by the truck and killed instantly.

Soon the four servicemen found themselves at the Pearly Gates of Heaven. There, they met Saint Peter and decided that only he could be The ultimate source of truth and honesty. So, the four servicemen asked him, "Saint Peter, which branch of the United States Armed Forces is the best?"

Saint Peter replied, "I can't answer that. However, I'll ask God what He thinks the next time I see Him. Meanwhile, thank you for your service on Earth and welcome to Heaven."

Some time later the four servicemen saw Saint Peter and reminded him of the question they had asked when first entering Heaven. The four servicemen asked Saint Peter if he was able to find the answer. Suddenly, a sparkling white dove landed on Saint Peter's shoulder.

In the dove's beak was a note glistening with gold dust. Saint Peter said to the four Servicemen, "Your answer from the Boss. Let's see what He says."

Saint Peter opened the note, trumpets blared, gold dust drifted into the air, harps played crescendos, and Saint Peter began to read the note aloud to the four Servicemen:

Memorandum From The Desk of The Almighty One

TO: Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines

SUBJ: WHICH MILITARY SERVICE IS BEST

Gentlemen, all branches of the United States Armed Forces are Honorable and noble. Each serves America well and with distinction. Being a serviceman in the United States Military represents a special calling warranting special respect, tribute and dedication.

Be proud of that.

Sincerely,

GOD, U. S. Army Airborne (Ret.)

Sent by: Larry Gunnels, C/2-22 Vietnam

22nd Infantry Regiment Society
Reunion 2003

The 2003 22nd Infantry Regiment Society Reunion will be held October 23-26, 2003 in San Antonio, Texas at the Four Points by Sheraton Riverwalk North.

Please make your reservations early by calling the Four Points by Sheraton Riverwalk North at 1/800-288-3927.

Rooms are blocked under the name of "22nd Infantry Regiment Society". Please identify yourself as part of this group to get the negotiated room rate of \$99.00 for a single or double room plus 16.75% tax. Parking is \$6.00 per day.

On Friday, October 24, 2003, Peter Holt will host the group for a tour of San Antonio's new SBC Center, a dinner, and a pre-season NBA basketball game, starring our very own San Antonio Spurs. John Bradley and Peter Holt are planning other "Texas fun" times for you and are hoping to make your visit to San Antonio memorable.

Please contact Christine Padilla in Peter's office for additional information or help in planning your visit: phone (210/648-0000); e-mail, cpadilla@holtcompanies.net; fax (210/648-0078).

The Reunion Registration form will be sent to you with the Mar. 2003 Newsletter.

Closing: Folks this is it for now. Expect the next newsletter in the late Feb. to early Mar. time frame. Have a very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Send in your stories!!! My pool of articles for the Newsletter is extremely small. Norm will have to be very creative for the next publication if you do not send in articles....He will be very irritated during its assembly is more like it. Please do not subject me to the Sgt. from hell. You guys know what I mean!!!(Big Smile)

Love, Linda

