

# **The Viet Nam Triple Deuce, Inc.**

**An Association of 2 Bn. (Mech)**

**22nd Infantry Regiment**

**Viet Nam Veterans**



**Together Then.....Together Again!.....**

**Thanks for Being There...&...Welcome Home**



**Editor: Dan & Vera Streit D 69 DMOR - HMOR**

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**website [www.vietnamtripledeuce.org](http://www.vietnamtripledeuce.org) for current contact information.**

**Vol. 25, No. 2 September 2019**



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello again from the hot and dry Midwest. I hope all is well and good with you as this summer winds down. The next reunion is only nine months away so we had all better start making those plans to attend. June 4<sup>th</sup> and Dallas will be here before you know it.

As president of this outfit one of my jobs is to throw a few words at you in every newsletter. The subject matter always seems to be on the same subjects, but those subjects are worthy of these occasional reminders that are so important to Vietnam Triple Deuce and its survival. Pay your dues, bring another Brother to his first reunion, and send some memories of your Nam service to Dave and Dan so they can get them included in a newsletter are possibly getting boring to read after my saying them so many times, but Brothers we are getting old whether we admit it or not, and according to my wife we need reminders quite often. So pay your dues, bring a Brother, and send in a memory while you still can.

The recent project to send all current members a certificate of appreciation for their Vietnam service has met with universal approval from the membership. Thanks to Steve Irvine, Dan Striet (and Vera), Dave Allin and the Board for making this long overdue thing happen. If you are a currently paid up member and did not recently receive one of these parchments please contact any Board member to fix that error.

I missed my first reunion last October in twenty years for health reasons. It was four of the most miserable days of my adult life as I thought about every activity of each day without me being there. I will not miss another until I check out of this life, so I hope to see you too in Dallas from June 4-7<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

**Dick Nash**, A Co. & HHC, 69

## EDITOR'S COMMENTS



It might seem like this edition of the newsletter is mostly about the guys who were in Alpha Company. One could assume that it is perhaps because I, your humble editor, was in Alpha, or maybe because the guys in Alpha were smarter, braver, and better-looking than the guys in Bravo, Charlie, Delta, and HHC, but neither assumption is correct. Well, maybe they're partly correct, especially the better-looking part. But no, the real reason is that I happened to get a lot more input from the Alpha guys this time. We need you guys from the other companies to send in material for the newsletter, whether it be announcements, ideas, events, occasions, or personal histories. Send me whatever you have, and don't worry if it isn't professional quality. My job as editor is to clean it up, make it read well, and embellish it if necessary. The purpose of the newsletter is not just to keep all of us informed about things that concern us, but it is also to entertain and to memorialize our experiences.

I would especially appreciate interesting or humorous stories about things that you did or witnessed in Nam. Tell us about your first firefight, or the time the tracks got stuck in the mud, or your encounter with the mogators. How about the great job the cooks did at Thanksgiving? I still have the printed menu for that meal, served at the FSB. Please, send me your stories, your anecdotes, and your photos that illustrate them. Share your memories with the rest of us, and get them in print so they are not lost forever.

**David Allin**, A Co. & HHC, 69-70

## STEVE IRVINE REQUESTS

**Wanted:** pictures from the Atlanta Reunion. If you were at the reunion in Atlanta and have any pictures of it, would you please forward them electronically to the webmaster? ([svirvine@gmail.com](mailto:svirvine@gmail.com)). We currently have no pictures at all!! If you have trouble or need help with the forwarding process, just send him an email and he will work with you to get it done. We also lack pictures from the 2014 Branson Reunion.

### Also Wanted:

We are looking for the following to include on our website, to insure that as much of our history is recorded as possible. We are hoping you can provide any or all of the following:

Descriptions of operations you may have remembered or made notes of (see Skip Fahel's extensive notes under "Battles" on our website). Maybe a Diary or Journal you kept.

Names and dates of locations where we stayed: Firebases, LZ's, Basecamps, Laager Sites. I have a book that can probably convert those names to a location on a map of III Corp.

Known names so far: Wood, Wood II, Wood III, Dau Tieng, "Hard spot", FSB Burt, Suoi Tre (FSB Gold).

Pictures of your tour (if not already published on our website)

**Steve Irvine, B Co., 68-69**

## 22<sup>nd</sup> INFANTRY REGIMENT SOCIETY REUNION 2020

There will be several bus trip tours available, and a golf tournament, along with the usual reunion buffet and banquet. For more information, see the latest 22<sup>nd</sup> Inf. Reg. Soc. newsletter. For your convenience we have included a registration form with this newsletter, and be sure you send it in by May 18. This will be a great reunion, and everyone who can should Now is the time for all Triple Deuce veterans to start planning to attend the next

reunion. It will be June 4-7, 2020, at the Embassy Suites Dallas Park Central, 13131 North Central Expressway, Dallas, TX 75243. You can make your hotel reservations now by calling (972) 234-3300, or go to the [22ndinfantry.org](http://22ndinfantry.org) website for an online registration link.

Room cost per night: \$113.00 plus tax (129.95 total)

Free parking, free made-to-order breakfast, free reception, free Wi-Fi.

Please plan to attend. I know I am looking forward to seeing all my old buddies again.

## DAU TIENG COWBOY

*Editor's Note: A version of this story appeared in the newsletter about twenty years ago, and I felt it deserved retelling, since some of us weren't in the organization back then, and others of us have CRS.*

Here is a funny story about how Dick Nash, at the time a second lieutenant platoon leader of Third Platoon, Alpha Company, took a butt-chewing to help keep morale up. It was February 1969, and I was a "shake-and-bake" E-5 fresh from the NCO course at Ft. Benning, in charge of Fourth Squad in Dick's platoon, and a favorite son of the great state of Texas. When I was the AIT Honor Graduate at Tigerland, at Ft. Polk, MG Williamson had presented to me a Texas State Flag that had flown over the Texas State Capitol, and I had brought the flag with me to Viet Nam. Dick Nash. Who was always thinking of the welfare of his troops, became my mentor and made sure I was put in with good people who would break me in right without diminishing my role as a squad leader for the platoon.



I named my squad's armored personnel carrier the "Phantom 34", since it was the Third Platoon, Fourth Squad track. But I digress. A couple months into my tour we had been outposting near Dau Tieng for a couple days when we got a call to go back through the base camp and out the gate into the Michelin rubber plantation. Reportedly some Wolfhounds from the 2/27 Infantry were there and needed a resupply; for some reason the powers-that-be didn't want to do the resupply by air. Our platoon scurried out the gate and moved three or four clicks on the road before we took a right off into the rubber.

We broke out of the rubber and into some heavy brush with scattered trees that caused some problems. Several of our tracks had run-ins with the dreaded Mogators, the big red ants that nested in trees and loved to jump down on unsuspecting soldiers and bite the heck out of them. Those encounters made for a long morning getting to where we were to meet up with the Wolfhounds. Typically I was screwing off on the radio, piping in AFVN radio songs along with snide comments whenever possible, while trying to avoid raising too much suspicion that it was me. Just a few seconds here and there, not hogging the airwaves. Finally we found the wolf-puppies and handed off the C-rations, ammo, and water they had requested.



As I remember it, when we left the 2/27<sup>th</sup> location, Dick Nash made a command decision that we would not return to the main road through the ant-infested brush, but instead go through an open area. To say the least, we all welcomed that decision ecstatically, and I felt like this was an appropriate occasion to fly the Lone Star Flag, believing it was always better to ask forgiveness than seek permission. I ran the

flag up on our radio antenna and took the three-four track out into point position as fast as the old papa-charlie would go. It was probably not a smart idea, but remember, I was only 19 at the time. Since I had seen a couple of the "flying football" LOH helicopters and a Cobra gunship in the air near us, I figured that Sir Charles (VC) was not likely to harass us that fine afternoon. As we deployed farther into the open area, I turned to see two other flags had been attached to antennas: a Georgia state flag, and, for some unknown reason, the flag of Pakistan. It was a blast, and morale was smokin', until suddenly things changed. A command Huey came over the tree line and set down in a blocking position to our front. Dick Nash pulled his track up in front and ordered the rest of us to form a defensive perimeter while he went to see what was up. We assumed it was nothing more than a change in mission. I could see Dick was meeting with a field grade type, and it seemed to be a very animated conversation.

When Dick came back, he told us pull the flags down and police up our emotions. To this day I am not sure what transpired in that conversation between Dick and that senior officer, and Dick says he has put it out of his mind and doesn't remember it either. But if you think about it, maybe the Great State of Texas flag was too close a match to the Viet Cong flag for that field grade officer that day! We'll never know, but I have frequently thanked Dick if he did, in fact, take a butt-chewing for my flying my flag. Dick lives in Iowa now, and that can't be all bad, since my wife grew up in Iowa.

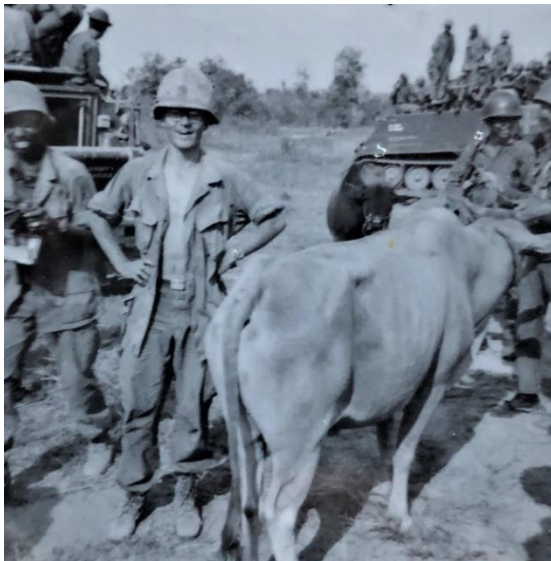




That incident always reminds me of the day of the Great Cattle Capture that happened a couple months later. Our company had been assigned to transport a group of ARVN soldiers and escort a bridge-laying tank that was supposed to create a crossing over a small tributary of the Saigon River in the woods south of the Ben Cui rubber plantation, southwest of Dau Tieng. The area around the creek was so soggy that the bridge-layer itself almost got stuck in the mud long before it reached the stream, so that mission was scrubbed.



Meanwhile, however, the ARVNs had located a small herd of cattle that looked to me like Brahma bulls. Deciding that the cattle were Viet Cong cattle, the ARVNs confiscated them and insisted that we transport the beasts back to their compound in our tracks. I suspect the ARVNs were looking forward to steak dinners all around.



It was determined that the mortar tracks were the only ones with enough space inside to accommodate the animals, and the four steers were unceremoniously herded inside over the protests of the mortar crews and transported, along with the ARVNs, to their compound near the Bravo hard spot.



Apparently the ride inside our vehicles scared the crap out of the cattle, and the mortar track crews spent a lot of time cleaning up the mess later. Worse, none of us got to share in the steak dinners. The things we would do for our allies.

Postscript: That Texas flag traveled with me throughout my Army career, going to Korea, Germany, Egypt, Iceland, Hawaii, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait.



When I retired in 2006 it was flown in my honor at the USAA headquarters where I had served for 15 years.

**Lon Oakley A Co., 69**

## THE PHANTOM 34

In April of 1969, which is fifty years ago, if anyone is counting, I arrived in Cu Chi, Republic of Viet Nam, a lowly PFC with an 11B MOS. When they handed out the assignment orders, I was actually thrilled that I had been assigned to 2/22, because it was a mech unit, and I hated walking. The next day I was loaded in a deuce-and-a-half and driven out to the Alpha Company night laager, where I was assigned to Third Platoon, Fourth Squad, and I met my new leaders: Captain David Crocker, Lieutenant Dick Nash, and Sergeant Lon Oakley. They made me feel right at home, as much as an M-113 in Viet Nam could ever feel like home. For the next few months A-34 was indeed my home, and I grew to love that old track.

Skip forward five years, and I was back in the Army after a three-year hiatus, assigned to the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, CA. It was a college campus-like atmosphere, and I had extra time on my hands, so I resumed my lifelong hobby of model building. A Japanese company called Tamiya had just issued an excellent plastic kit of the M-113, so I decided to build a model of A-34, or as Lon Oakley had named it, The Phantom 34. It took a lot of effort to make the model look just like my former home, but I was pleased with the result, and that model has followed me around the world in the many years since.

At the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry reunion in Atlanta, I showed photos of the model to my former squad mates, and Lon was particularly enamored of it, asking if I could build him one. Without committing to him, I decided to look into the possibility. Searching eBay, I found that the Tamiya kit was still around, and relatively inexpensive, so I bought one. I used old photos of the real one, and close examination of the original model I still had, to remind myself of what it had looked like. Then I began acquiring the additional supplies I would need: the correct shades of green paint, strip and sheet styrene plastic, balsa, and petticoat fabric.

The fabric was needed to make the chain link fencing of the RPG screen, and I remembered from the first time I had built a model of the 34 that petticoats were made from a wide mesh that was very similar to scale chain link fence. I went to a fabric store (the only man there) and

searched through the bolts of what I learned was called "tulle". I had to dodge around a woman who was also looking in that section, and finally I found some that was just the right size. I took the bolt to the cutting desk and told the lady I needed the minimum amount they sold, which turned out to be 1/8 of a yard. The lady asked me what I needed it for, and I told her it was for a modeling project. The woman who had been in the same section earlier was right behind me, and said she had been looking for the same thing, for her husband's modeling project. We discussed what scale his project was, and she bought some of the same fabric as I had, which she hadn't seen earlier. When I checked out, it cost me all of 27 cents. The coincidence of two people looking for scale chain link fence at the same time was remarkable.



The Tamiya kit is for a factory-fresh M-113 destined to be used in Europe, so it required some modification. I left off the side skirts and added a turret around the 50-cal. The kit comes with a complete engine and drive train, and I installed those, but didn't detail them, since the engine cover would be glued shut. Inside I cut the benches short to make room for the stacks of 50-cal ammo cans, which I fabricated with sheet plastic. I also fabricated a 90-mm recoilless rifle and ammo for it, and a couple cases of C-rations. Using spare parts from model car kits, I made a track radio and mount, with a coiled cord leading to the porkchop mike. On top I made ammo crates out of balsa, and ammo cans out of sheet plastic. Olive drab construction paper was used to make the folded seat cushions and tie-down straps. A section of the tulle fabric was cut to size and spray painted silver, then rolled and tied in place, along with stakes made of plastic angle iron. The radio antenna was a leftover from a model cop car kit,



and I added a coiled cord, antenna, and backpack straps to the prick-25 that came with the M-113 kit. The white lettering was done free-hand with a fine-tip paint pen, and the Texas flag was downloaded from the internet, printed out, and artfully furled. I have since been reminded that the flag was much larger than mine appears, and Lon has told the whole story about the Great Texas Flag Controversy in another article in this newsletter. Finally the model was weathered with a wash of thinned sand-colored paint to give it that authentic used look.

At Hobby Lobby I found a display case for miniature football helmets that was just the right size for the model, and I thought I had properly secured the model inside it. I boxed it up with plenty of padding, but the post office managed to get around all my precautions and damage the model in shipment. As I told Lon, if he brings it to the next reunion, I will fully repair it to its original pristine condition, and replace the flag with one more appropriately sized.



Building the model was a labor of love, in more ways than one. It reminded me of the good times we had back then, as well as the bad, and the affection I felt for that humble piece of machinery. It also reflected the great admiration I have for my fellow soldiers from those days, and the tremendous appreciation I have for Lon's leadership in those trying times. As Bryan Adams sang, "It was a killing time, we were young and restless, and needed to unwind." Those were the best days of my life, back in the summer of '69.

**David Allin, A Co./HHC 69-70**

## ART IMITATES LIFE



A few months ago Lon Oakley was surfing the net and came across this model kit of an M-113ACAV. He thought it looked awfully familiar, and emailed the picture to other Alpha Company members. Larry Gallagher had a photo that confirmed what others suspected: the track on the cover art had exactly the same markings as Captain Crocker's track did.



While the model has the ACAV teacup turret and side-mounted M-60's, it is otherwise identical to the Alpha Company commander's track as it appeared in 1969, complete with the track name, "To The Alps," and "Rommel's Army" on the trim vane done in Gothic letters. But who is that dashing fellow behind the fifty, with his shades and mustache? The decals included with the kit allow the builder to exactly replicate the markings. Presumably the model company had found a photo of the real track and decided to copy it, but Ruth Crocker, the captain's widow says she never gave them permission to use it. Jim May suggested suing them for theft of intellectual property, but Ruth passed on that opportunity. Nonetheless, it was a remarkable coincidence.

## DENNIS “PALOOKA” LUIZ

On July 9, 2019, we lost Dennis “Palooka” Ruiz, a much loved and respected member of our organization. Below is the obituary provided by his family:

*Dennis Edward Luiz was born July 1, 1948, in Napa, CA to Edward and Lydia (Duta) Luiz. He passed away on July 9, 2019, in Tacoma WA at the age of 71, surrounded by his three daughters, Louann, Marly, and Whitney, along with his grandchildren and other loved ones. He was preceded in death by his wife of 49 years, Adell “Pennie” Luiz.*

*Dennis grew up on a family owned dairy farm with his sisters Patricia and Shirley and his brother David. He loved the outdoors and the hard physical work of the milking business which aided him in the challenging transition into military service and the Vietnam War. Dennis served as a ground combat soldier and was medically and honorably discharged from the Army after 18 years.*

*After his military career, Dennis worked as a school bus driver and ultimately retired from civil service on Ft. Lewis. He continued to work after retirement as a regular volunteer at the VA golf course in Lakewood, WA for more than eight years. Dennis was a very caring and generous person to anyone who crossed his path. He was known for his bright smiles and boisterous heart. We know that his reunion with his beloved, Pennie, and the others who went on before was joyful one. We love you, Dennis, and look forward to our future reunion with you.*

*Dennis was put to final rest in a brief service with military honors at Tahoma National Cemetery on August 15 in Kent, WA.*

*If interested, donations can be made in his honor to Fisher House Foundation, an organization that provides free temporary lodging to the loved ones of veterans who are receiving extended medical treatment at military hospitals or VA medical centers.*

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

Lon Oakley sent his condolences to the family, in a letter that read, in part:

*I have no words to express our sadness at the loss of our brother in arms, Dennis “Palooka” Luiz. The world is a lesser place without him, but we brothers know he is with God and even Heaven is a better place with his presence. We know you, too, are sure of this, yet this knowledge cannot diminish your loss or grief.*

*Without love and respect to the family, we join to say goodbye to Dennis, for with us he saw war and in the silence of the night he continued to hear the call of his great nation. This was Palooka’s story and this was our story in Vietnam, for WE WERE SOLDIERS ONCE AND YOUNG.*

*On a personal note, as a young Sergeant squad leader in Vietnam I was blessed to have this hero in my squad in third platoon of Alpha Company, 2/22 Infantry, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. I always viewed him as a giant of a man who relished in humor and driving determination to help others even in the worst of times. No mission was too small for him to show he was totally dedicated to its success. More times than I can count he was “on point” as we engaged the enemy. A true leader of men! There is truly a special place in Heaven for men like Dennis Luiz.*

Lon added the following in an email to other members of the organization:

A mountain of a man who could hump the M60 with extra ammo dropped on his body while having a (AN-PRC 25) a.k.a. “PRICK” strapped on his back and laughing all the time busting the brush in the Ben Cui or Michelin Rubber Plantation in the ‘Nam. I was so proud to have him in our weapons squad. Dennis will long live in the memory and legacy of A Company Third Platoon of 2/22 in 1969. (Palooka always had so much energy and was always good for a midnight phone call (2AM Central Time) to check on your morale!!!)

A paver engraved with Dennis’ information has been purchased and will be placed at the National Infantry Museum at Ft. Benning. In the next newsletter we will have an article and forms for purchasing and placing such pavers for all our brothers, including those of us still alive.





## Return to Vietnam

By D. Bing Bingham

**Combat veteran Larry Mason's first tour in Vietnam was in 1966-67. He returned 42 years later. However, the second time around he went not to fight, but to make peace with the past.**

Larry Mason was distinctly uncomfortable. Horn-blaring taxis dodged pedestrians on the crowded streets of Ho Chi Minh City, formerly Saigon. Bicycles draped with live ducks careened through traffic, inches from catastrophe, while food vendors shouted in fast, high-pitched syllables about the quality of their cuisine. On the sidewalk, people gathered and stared as Larry and the other returning American veterans climbed out of their rented van. No other tourists were in sight. The bedlam quieted as the small entourage made its way to the backside of a pool hall, to the home of a former North Vietnamese Army officer. The graying warrior, Col. Duong Ngoc Tan, looked like someone's kindly grandfather. The Americans spent two hours talking with their former enemy. He was gracious and his mind was still sharp. Through an interpreter, he spoke of his country and his people being at peace. But it was in the colonel's eyes that Larry could see the message: "I have put all the fighting behind me." That was a moment of self-realization for Larry. A 40-year-old fist of anxiety unclenched in his gut and relief filled him like a monsoon rain in a dry rice paddy. He realized he didn't have to fight his own personal war anymore, and his "ghost" rode easier on his shoulder that day.



## A Life-Changing Experience

A farm boy from The Dalles, Oregon, Larry was drafted in 1965. The following year, his Army unit, the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, deployed on a troop ship bound for Vietnam. During his combat tour, he drove an armored personnel carrier (APC) in a sector about 75 miles northwest of Saigon.

Larry made a lot of friends in Vietnam, but he and Charles Paul Pohlman were more than Army buddies. Charles was the machine gunner who protected Larry as he maneuvered their APC through combat. They depended on each other every time they went into harm's way. While on a mission in early 1967, a rocket-propelled grenade destroyed their APC. Larry managed to crawl out of the vehicle moments before a secondary explosion blew it apart. In that instant, his whole world changed—and he was never the same. Charles died in the attack and became Larry's ghost—a ghost that is with him even today. Larry returned from Vietnam in September 1967. It was a time for farmers to seed their fields for fall wheat. For Larry, it was a time to decompress. "I helped my brother-in-law," Larry says. "I was by myself on tall ridges with blue sky around me and the wind blowing in my face. I was able to let a lot of (raw emotion) go." The following year, he married his girlfriend, Vicki Morgan, and went to school on the GI Bill. Then life got rough. He moved from job to job, holding 18 of them through the years. "Vicki was understanding when we'd move," Larry says. "She's the rock." Larry didn't know it at the time, but his difficulty in holding down a longterm job stemmed from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The anxiety disorder is associated with serious traumatic events, such as combat. Symptoms range from repeatedly reliving the traumatic events in dreams or flashbacks to general emotional numbness, which often causes sufferers to withdraw from family and friends. According to the National Center for PTSD, an estimated 480,000 of the more than 3 million men and women who served during the Vietnam War suffer from PTSD as a result of their wartime experiences.

## The Road Back

Healing a 40-year-old PTSD wound is a challenge. Part of the process for Larry involved going back to Vietnam, visiting the battlefields where he had fought, sitting across the table and

looking in the eyes of Colonel Tan, and trying to come to grips with the past. Larry isn't sure why he started down the road to healing his old emotional scars. Perhaps after so many years of Charles' ghost riding hard on his shoulder, he had enough and realized it was time to heal. His healing process began May 25, 2006. "I told my wife we needed to go to the traveling (Vietnam Memorial) wall," Larry says. "I had to see if my gunner was on the wall. He was." While at the wall, Larry was getting directions for how to find his friend's name when someone volunteered, "I know where he is." It was a former radio operator from Larry's unit, Lynn Dalpez. They walked to the wall together and paid their respects to Charles. It was a quiet, reverent and revealing moment. Afterwards, they talked about things Larry hadn't spoken of for years. PTSD sufferers tend not to talk about their experiences, not even with family members. Those who have never experienced combat don't know or understand its harsh realities. That is why it's difficult for others to relate—at a gut level—to PTSD. But that creates a strong bond between those who have shared similar experiences. The following day, Larry was invited to a reunion of 20 other vets who had sailed with him on the troop ship to Vietnam in 1966. He had finally found people who shared the same experiences and could understand his situation. Larry's healing process was under way. However, a momentous step remained ahead of him. In 2007, friend and fellow Vietnam veteran Karl Karlgaard brought up the idea of a trip to Vietnam. Karl had made his own healing journey in 2001, and was ready to return and locate additional sites with special meaning to him. "I'm pushing 63 years old," Larry said when Karl invited him to come along. "I think it's time. I better go." Larry was apprehensive. He wasn't sure what he would find in Vietnam—or in himself. As his jet taxied toward the terminal in Ho Chi Minh City, Larry noticed the old concrete revetments built by U.S. forces to protect their aircraft from mortar and rocket attacks during the war. These days, the structures are used to house vintage Huey helicopters still used by the Vietnamese. Larry and his fellow travelers discovered the sights, sounds and smells of Vietnam were still as vibrant and exotic as their first time in country. The amount of rain hadn't changed much, either. However, there seemed to be a lot more people than they remembered, and it seemed they were all on the road at the same time. The group traveled through Vietnam for more than a week, stopping at former

battlefields and saluting brothers in arms who didn't make it back home after the war. One of the vets planned to bury a plaque at the site where some of his comrades had fallen. However, the area had been built up and changed so much through the years there was no safe place to leave the memorial.

### Face to Face With the Past

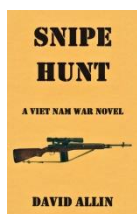
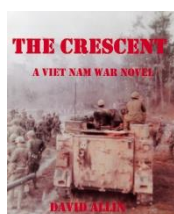
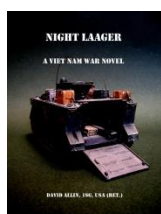


Part of the trip took them to Cu Chi. The ancient city is near a vast network of underground tunnels built by the Vietnamese in the 1940s, '50s and '60s. Cu Chi was the location of the 25th Infantry Division base camp during the Vietnam War. Now it is a base for the Vietnamese military. More than 40 years ago, Larry passed through the very same gate of the massive military compound outside the city. An American flag was on the pole back then. Nearby is a memorial to 45,000 North Vietnamese soldiers who died fighting in the region. In front of the memorial, the Americans encountered a group of North Vietnamese veterans who were doing the same thing they were doing—touring battle sites. "I was taken aback," says Larry. "I stood off a little bit because I really didn't know how to accept it." Initially, it was an awkward, uneasy meeting for everyone. Through an interpreter, both groups learned they had a lot in common as veterans of the same war. They were all following their own path to healing and recovery. "Realizing we were mending both sides of the fence, we shook hands and hugged each other," says Larry. Perhaps the most memorable and intense experience for Larry was when they visited the site of the battle of Suoi Tre. It was one of the biggest battles of the war. Larry normally isn't much for words, but he was especially quiet looking out over that tangle of field and jungle.

Before leaving, he offered a salute to the men who had died there in 1967. The journey home was an endurance test of 24 hours. However, for Larry this trip was much easier than the one 40 years earlier. These days, he is still on a path to healing. He plans to return to Vietnam in 2010. This time, he will take his wife. "I'm looking forward to it," Larry says. "I want to show her the country—the pagodas, the temples and the noon (Cao Dai) service at Tay Ninh ... the beautiful pinks, yellows, blues and reds ... a breathtaking service. It's a very beautiful country." These are the colors Larry now sees when he pictures Vietnam in his mind's eye. They are very different from the black smoke, red and green tracers, and charred gray hulks he saw before the healing process began. Larry understands part of healing is really a matter of coping. He admits his ghost will ride his shoulder forever, but now it will ride a little easier. □

## SHAMELESS SELF-PROMOTION

As many of you know, I, your humble editor, write Viet Nam war novels, based at least in part on my personal experiences in Triple Deuce. Due to countless requests (well, at least one), I am listing these books in order of publication. All the books are available on Amazon.com in both e-book format and in paperback, for ridiculously low prices.



**NIGHT LAAGER** – In 1968 a mech company sets up their night laager, expecting to have a stand-down the next day for the Tet truce. Instead they are surrounded by NVA, lose comms with Battalion, and must survive the night on their own.

**THE CRESCENT** – During the battle of the Crescent a mech platoon sergeant (Samples) and his new lieutenant (Carr) are mistakenly left behind and must make their way on foot back through enemy-infested territory.

**THE PARROT'S BEAK** – a straight-leg infantry platoon goes searching for possible US POWs,

and finds more than they bargained for at an old French fort. Pursued by a company of NVA, they are rescued by Carr and Samples.

**THE BA NHA INCIDENT** – Carr's and Samples' platoon escorts a MACV Phoenix Program team to a tiny village deep in the Boi Loi to arrest a Viet Cong leader, when it all goes wrong.

**ATTACK ON NUI BA DEN** – Fictional characters experience the real attack during which the Viet Cong overran the American radio relay camp at the peak of the mountain.

**SNIPE HUNT** – An inexperienced Army sniper team led by Nash Jaramillo is sent on a mission into the Michelin. What they find makes them a target for both the communists and their supposed allies. Carr and Samples come to their rescue.

**FIREFIGHT** – Carr and Samples are sent on a late afternoon mission to rescue the passengers on a helicopter that crashed in the Boi Loi. Separated from their tracks, lost in the dark, and pursued by the enemy, they must hole up in an old temple and defend the people they rescued.

**PREY FOR THE SNIPER** – Nash teams up with Carr and Samples to hunt down a VC sniper south of Tay Ninh, unaware of an NVA agent on a secret mission to end the war.

Coming Soon:

**DELTA TANGO** – Fictional characters help repel the real NVA sapper attack on Dau Tieng that occurred in February, 1969, in which Triple Deuce saved the day.

David Allin, A Co./HHC 69-70

## NOTICE

**If your mailing label shows  
"2018" then your membership is  
expiring and you need to send  
in your dues.  
ASAP**



## HELLOS & COMMENTS

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## GUEST BOOK HITS

Name Charles Boaze

Location Marshall Texas

Email [cboaze@msn.com](mailto:cboaze@msn.com)

Anyone with Alpha Company 2/22nd on April 13th '68?

It was not a good day,6 KIA and many WIA.

One of the KIA was a good friend of mine,

Wayne Rhodes, and another was our Arty F.O.

We supported 2/22nd from a small FSB.

2/77th Arty.

Would like to know more about that action.

Thanks! Welcome home brothers!

## Taps

**Roy R. Mattson**

B Co. 25<sup>th</sup> ID, 69-70

By Victor Diver, B Co

**Donald R. Crawford**

C Co. 4<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> ID, 65-67 Silver Star Awardee

CBO Historian

Died 8-1-2019

By George Dahl

**Dennis E. Luiz "Palooka"**

A Co. 25<sup>th</sup> ID, 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon 69-70

Died 7-9-2019

By Lon Oakley

**Charles G. " Charlie" Raas**

He was an ABO and member of the 3rd platoon.

Died 7-20-19

**Leland W. Potter, Jr.**

C Co. & HHC 25<sup>th</sup> ID, 69-70

Died 6-24-2019

By his wife Elizabeth Potter