

FOR THE MEN, AND THEIR  
FAMILIES, OF THE 2ND BATTALION,  
173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEP)

**WE TRY  
HARDER!**

**2/503d**  
**VIETNAM**  
\*\*\*\*\**newsletter*



Contact: [rto173d@cfl.rr.com](mailto:rto173d@cfl.rr.com)

November 2010, Issue 21

## 2/503d PHOTO OF THE MONTH ~ DAK TO 1967



See all issues to date at: [www.firebase319.org/2bat/news.php](http://www.firebase319.org/2bat/news.php) or [http://corregidor.org/VN2-503/newsletter/issue\\_index.htm](http://corregidor.org/VN2-503/newsletter/issue_index.htm)



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## ACRES OF DIAMONDS

**Dr. Ronald Reese Smith**  
1LT, FO, B/2/503d, 3/319<sup>th</sup>  
[ronaldreesesmith@gmail.com](mailto:ronaldreesesmith@gmail.com)

**LT Ron** Russell Herman Conwell was an American Baptist minister, orator, philanthropist, lawyer and writer. Born in Massachusetts on February 15<sup>th</sup>, 1843, Russell is remembered as the founder and first president of Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and for his inspirational lecture, "Acres of Diamonds."

The son of Massachusetts farmers, he attended Wilbraham Wesleyan Academy and later Yale University. Before graduating from Yale, he enlisted in the Union Army for the War Between the States. From 1862-1864 Conwell served as a captain of a volunteer regiment.

After the Civil War, he studied law at Albany Law School, worked as a lawyer, journalist and lecturer in Minneapolis and later, Boston. He published about ten books including campaign biographies on three U.S. Presidents: Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes and James Garfield. In 1880 he was ordained as a Baptist minister and took over a congregation in Lexington, Massachusetts. Two years later he answered a call to pastor The Grace Baptist Church of Philadelphia.

In 1888 Conwell founded Temple University. He raised \$7 million by traveling all over America, telling a true story, "Acres of Diamonds", more than six thousand times.

"An ancient Persian by the name of Ali Hafed owned a very large farm; it had orchards, grain fields, and gardens; he had money and interest and was a wealthy and contented man. One day there visited that old, Persian farmer, an ancient Buddhist priest, a wise man from the east. He sat down by the fire and told the farmer how this old world of ours was made.

He said the world was once a mere bank of fog, and that the Almighty thrust his finger into the bank of fog, and began to slowly move his finger, increasing the speed until at last he whirled this bank of fog into a solid ball of fire. It went rolling through the universe, burning its way through other banks of fog, and condensed the moisture without, until it fell in floods of rain upon its hot surface, and cooled the outward crust. Then the eternal fires came bursting outward through the crust, up the mountains and the hills, the valleys, the plains and prairies of this wonderful world of ours. If this internal molten mass came bursting out and cooled very quickly, it became granite; less quickly, copper; less quickly, silver; less quickly, gold, and after gold, diamonds were made. The old priest said, 'A diamond is a congealed drop of sunlight.'" Now that is literally, scientifically, true; that a diamond is a deposit of carbon from the sun.



"The old priest told Ali Hafed that if he had

one diamond the size of his thumb he could purchase the county, if he had a mine of diamonds he could place his children upon thrones through the influence of his great wealth. Ali Hafed heard all about diamonds, their great value, and went to his bed that night a poorer man. He was poorer because he was discontent, and discontent because he thought he was poor. He said, 'I want a mine of diamonds,' and he lay awake all night."

As the old tale goes, Ali Hafed sold his farm, collected his money, left his family in charge of a neighbor, and away he went, in search of diamonds. He spent years wandering over the land, eventually into Palestine and then on into Europe. At last, when his money was spent and he was in rags, wretchedness and poverty, he stood upon the shore of the Bay of Barcelona, in Spain, when a great tidal wave came rolling in between the pillars of Hercules. The poor, afflicted, suffering, dying man could not resist the awful temptation to cast himself into the incoming tide. He sank beneath its foaming crest, never to rise in this life again.

Meanwhile, the man who had bought the farm found a large and unusual stone in one of the springs. The stone turned out to be a diamond of enormous value. He soon discovered other diamonds on the farm. It became one of the world's richest diamond mines.

Every tale has a moral. And the moral is this: You and I are standing in acres of diamonds. You do not need to look elsewhere for opportunity, achievement, or fortune. The sources to achieve all the important things in life are already available for you. The most awesome power in the universe is available to every one of us—the power that spoke the cosmos into being, created the miracle of life, and rules over all that is. This power is as close to you as the air you breathe. True wealth comes from the spirit of contentment that rules in one's heart when you have yielded your life to God through Jesus Christ. 🙏

**This photo sent in by MG Jack Leide, former CO of C/2/503d.**



**"Me (arms folded) and one of my platoon leaders, Lt Moose Mozden with Chaplain (Father) John McCullogh after we just went through some bad shit and lost a few guys. I believe this was taken in Song Be in June or July 1966. We look pretty beat up don't we? I have this picture in my office. When I think I'm having problems I look at this picture and say 'this is nothing compared to that picture.' Take care brother. Jack"**



# WELCOME HOME VETS

By **Dr. Scott Fairchild**  
Psychologist  
LTC, 82nd Airborne (Ret)



## Welcome Home

**Vets** is needed now more than ever (see Chairman Admiral Mullen's words below). We anticipated the need. We responded by expanding our mission to stretch every penny of our current resources.

Welcome Home Vets continues to expand its Florida mission to support the 5,000 troops and additional 5,000 family members of the 7th Special Forces Group who will descend upon the Panhandle beginning in December, fresh from the combat zone.

*"Communities and community resources aren't going to know what hit them." The VA has said, "We aren't ready for this."*

Welcome Home Vets now helps host the new military/retiree/contractor Welcome Center at the new Beaches International Airport outside of Panama City and is partnering with Goodwill Industries and local businesses to provide needed groups and clinical support services.

Welcome Home Vets has coordinated with Congress affirming the need for legislated resources for not-for-profit organizations and with the DoD Suicide Task Force to share valuable information about Neurofeedback assessment and interventions in consultations and a White Paper which has been provided to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Welcome Home Vets has extended clinical resources as far as our budget permits.

Welcome Home Vets is currently preparing for a massive empowering "Force Multiplier" Restoration Retreat called *Loosen Your Grip* in Orlando, Florida to be held in the Spring for 65 providers who work with Veterans and their families. More information is available at:

<http://whvets.org/WHVets/Welcome.html>

We thank each of you for your support, your dedication and your determination in supporting the warriors who have so valiantly served us, and their families who so selflessly support them.

**Doc Scott**

From Admiral Mullen's Desk.....

## What's Behind the Rise in Military Suicides?

**Katie Drummond** Contributor  
*News Surge Desk*



(Sept. 30) -- After four apparent suicides in a single weekend, troops and their families are reeling -- but they need to be braced for more.

That was the warning from Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, at a conference this morning.

*"The emergency issue right now is suicides," Mullen told reporters. "I think we are going to see a growth in that before we see a decline."*



### What's Behind the Increase?

In part, it's the fact so many troops have been fighting for so long. The risk of developing mental health problems, most notably post-traumatic stress disorder, increases with repeated deployments.

A 2007 Army-funded survey warned that rates of PTSD and depression soared to 27 percent among troops deployed three or more times. [Shazam.... *I think we said that eighteen months ago, long before the \$50 million study. Doc Scott*].

*(continued....)*



Of the 2 million troops deployed since 2002, an estimated two-thirds suffer from PTSD. Far fewer -- around 14,000 since 2008 -- have actually been diagnosed.

And as thousands of troops start coming home from Iraq -- the largest numbers since 2003 are expected to flood bases across the country -- the military needs to be prepared for the myriad challenges of their reintegration into civilian life. But by all accounts, they aren't.

### What's Being Done to Help the Troops?

Pentagon-backed efforts to aggressively tackle PTSD and suicides are ongoing and ambitious in scope, but they won't be making any major strides as troops return in the mere weeks and months ahead.

A three-year, \$50 million collaborative research project by the Army and the National Institutes of Mental Health anticipates making dozens of recommendations on changes to the military's management of mental health. *"It's a comprehensive examination of the Army's programs, policies, procedures,"* Col. Chris Philbrick, director of the Army Suicide Prevention Task Force, said in a *YouTube* video. *"Do we have the right resources? Are there gaps in our policies, for example?"*

### What Are the Challenges?

But a dearth of resources, combined with policy gaps and mismanagement, have already affected today's troops. And while many are going undiagnosed, others are relying on cocktails of psychiatric medications -- still the Pentagon's go-to treatment of choice.

More effective treatment approaches, from comprehensive monitoring and counseling to out-there ideas like ecstasy therapy, are showing promise.

But the implementation of any revolutionary innovation could be years off. Which makes Mullen's prediction for veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan seem more like a statement of the grim, obvious and altogether predictable truth. 

## MORE FROM DOC SCOTT *Welcome Home G.I.*

My Friday calendar alone included the following:

A Gulf War officer Vet who had lost his home, his family and his job. He was staying at a local flea-bag hotel. He was extremely suicidal. I referred him directly to the VA for admission to the VA facility, either Tampa or West Palm Beach for immediate inpatient psychiatric care. Because he had TRICARE,

he was told he would have to be Baker-acted and sent to a local civilian hospital for psychiatric care. Suicidal.... he agreed to the Baker Act.

He was admitted to a local facility and released after a couple of days,

returning to my office **Doc Scott. Always helping vets.** yesterday and reporting that he got some medication, but no therapy. He described that a female patient had urinated and defecated on the floor at the facility and it was three hours before it was cleaned up. He indicates that he didn't shower for the entire time he was there because the shower had hair and bloody bandages in it. He reports that he was in the bathroom when there was a fire drill on the ward and he came out to find himself locked in his room with everyone gone.

In his session yesterday, our veteran reported, *"Suicide would be painless, next to what I experienced this weekend."* He was steered to the Veterans Transition Facility. *Welcome Home G.I.*

Another veteran, a three-time wounded Vietnam Marine vet came in for the first time in years to seek help. Suck it up and drive-on for 40 years. He had worked three jobs all of his life to avoid thinking about it. His wife finally left after 22 years of hell. As he sobbed telling the story he had repressed for all that time, he didn't notice he was digging into his arm with his thumb and forefinger. By the time I noticed it, his arm was dug down to the flesh in a patch about the size of a Post-It note and his arm was dripping blood. He was scheduled for a full veteran's evaluation work up. *Welcome Home G.I.*

My third veteran on Friday was sexually abused in the Navy by her seniors, and then referred by the Navy to a civilian physician who continued to sexually abuse her. The session addressed and processed some horrid aspects of the abuse. She will be treated with EMDR a rapid trauma resolution therapy. *Welcome Home G.I.*

(continued....)



My last veteran of the day suffered a Traumatic Brain Injury while on a mission in Baghdad. He has been back about two years fighting for care and just had his first appointment at the Brain Injury Clinic in Tampa. After a three-hour drive, (accompanied by his mother, because he couldn't drive alone), he was told it was a get-acquainted meeting which lasted 10 minutes. In order to get care there, he would need a primary care physician and that process would take about three months. He will be provided with a Neurofeedback QEEG and follow up brain retraining. *Welcome Home G.I.*

Unfortunately the need for Welcome Home Vets is radically affirmed.

*Some wounds don't end with the war. The severity and extent to which veterans suffer with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder is a direct response to our culture's willingness to Welcome Home and care for its Warriors.*

*We are Welcome Home Vets,  
Veterans Caring for Veterans.*

**Scott Fairchild, PsyD**  
**Welcome Home Vets, Inc. (WHV)**  
**1370 Bedford Drive, Suite 106**  
**Melbourne, FL 32941**  
**Phn: 321 253-8887, Fax: 321 253-8878**

**Note:** Dr. Fairchild performed much of the early research on PTSD for the U.S. Army at Walter Reed Army Hospital. He has provided PTSD treatment to countless Sky Soldiers and veterans from WWII thru the Middle East, from privates to colonels and their spouses and partners from throughout the country, as well as evaluations to support VA claims. Photos were added to the above releases. Ed 

Don't wait until you break...



**P.T.S.D.**

Learn to cope through counseling.

*“If we get involved in that bitch of a war my Great Society will be dead.”*

-- Lyndon Johnson --



## LANCE H. VOGELER

### *A Ranger, Ever More*

A U.S. Army Ranger was killed in action on Oct. 1 during combat operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



Sgt. 1st Class Lance H. Vogeler was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, in the battalion mortar platoon of 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, at Hunter Army Airfield, GA.

Vogeler was killed by enemy indirect fire during a heavy firefight while conducting combat operations in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

A native of Fredrick, Md., he enlisted in the U.S. Army in May 2001. For nearly nine years he served as a mortar man in 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment. The battalions of the 75th Ranger Regiment have been continuously deployed to Afghanistan since October 2001.

*“I wish the American people could truly understand the dedication and sacrifice that Lance Vogeler made for his country,”* said Col. Michael E. Kurilla, commander, 75th Ranger Regiment. *“Since December 2001, Lance has either been in combat or training for combat. This was his 12th combat deployment. Lance was the quintessential Ranger; he is a hero to our Nation, the Army, and his family.”*

Vogeler previously served on seven deployments to Afghanistan and four to Iraq.

*“In an organization full of great men, Lance Vogeler stood out for his leadership, dedication and all of his talents,”* said Lt. Col. Michael Foster, commander of 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment. *“He has done so much for his Nation over the past nine years of combat action it is hard to put it into words. His loss will be felt across the whole Battalion and our thoughts and prayers go out to his family.”*

Vogeler is survived by his wife, Melissa Lee Vogeler of Savannah, Ga.; his son, Kyle Vogeler, and his daughter, Madison Eyler, both of Frederick, Md.; and his parents, Timothy and Donna Vogeler, also of Frederick, Md.

~ Sua Sponte ~



## *"Papa, do you always think about them?"*

One can suspect most combat soldiers carry some form of survivors' guilt. We wonder why we survived when better men died next to us so long ago. While there will never be an answer to this question, we can only conclude that we were selected to carry on to reproduce and to always remember those who did not make it.

My wife, Kathy, and I recently visited the Vietnam Memorial for only the second time in spite of the fact I live within 125 miles from Washington, DC. This was our first visit with our 6 year old grandson, Tanner. As we stood before panel 30E reading all the names of so many friends, Tanner asked his 'Papa' if I knew all of the names on the Wall. I told him I served with about 350 men who lost their lives in a place called Dak To, but no, I did not know all the men.

He then asked, "Will your name be there when you die, Papa?" I told him, "No son, this wall is reserved for the real heroes who died so long ago and our job is to never forget them." He then asked me, "Papa, do you always think about them?" I told him, every single day.

Tanner then asked his grandmother, who he calls Lulu, "Did you know these men?" My wife said, "No, but Papa has finally reached a point in his life where he will talk to me about them."

I carried a photo of Kathy with me during my time in-country and we were married 12 months after my return home from Vietnam. Like us, she also carries the scars and memories of this place in Southeast Asia where we served so long ago.

**Roger Dick, C/2/503d, '67-'68**



**Papa, Tanner & Lulu at The Wall**

## **CRACKS IN THE WALL**

Washington, DC: The *Associated Press* reports small cracks have been appearing in the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall since the 1980's. Officials have been unable to determine their cause.

Hager-Richter Geoscience was hired in 1986 to document the cracks. An unusual vertical crack was identified, and they're inspecting it again.

Every panel is being checked for new cracks, and most are invisible to the naked eye, says Dorothy Richter, president of Hager-Richter. A fund is available to replace damaged panels if and when needed. She further stated the *Wall* should be able to stand for several more decades.



**As long as a Vietnam veteran, or a family member of a Vietnam Veteran, or a friend of a Vietnam Veteran walks this earth.....they will never be forgotten.**



## 2/503d Sky Soldiers.....

### *FALL IN!*

Following is a call-to-arms by Mike Montie, C/4/503d, inviting Sky Soldiers and friends of the 173d everywhere to support the worthy causes described below.

Personally, I've decided to forego one round of golf and one evening of multiple rums and cokes at the Cocoa Beach, FL VFW and instead, will send \$100. to the **173d Airborne Brigade Foundation** in support of these good programs.

Over the years paratroopers of the 2/503d, other 173d units and friends of our battalion have stepped up to the plate with their P's when called on. Whether to support 2/503d reunions in Florida, our battalion receptions at 173d reunions, to defray the cost of bringing Gold Star family members to the brigade reunion, or inviting our WWII 503rd PRCT brothers to attend our reunion as our guests this past June in North Myrtle Beach, SC; every time you've been asked, the 2/503d has come through.

And now, again, I'm asking my brothers and friends of the 173d who are able, to join me and your fellow Sky Soldiers, and make a donation to this common cause. If our "*We Try Harder*" history holds true, the 2/503d alone will easily help achieve the initial objective.

I'm asking all our 2/503d officers and senior NCO's to match this poor E-4 RTO's \$100. donation, and all our enlisted men to send \$50. or what you can. Please read the following note from Mike, and send in your donation by November 15th.

Remember. "*Money ain't no good unless you spread it around.*"

*Airborne Brothers, All The Way!*

Smitty Out

**Note:** If you are having financial difficulty, please make no donation. 

### **To: Association and Chapter Officers Sky Soldiers & Friends of the 173d**

I am sending this correspondence in my capacity as a board member of the 173d Airborne Brigade Foundation.

Below is the donation-request form which kicks off a one-year fundraising effort to support the mission and programs of the **173d Airborne Brigade Foundation**. As you know, the Brigade Foundation maintains

programs in three areas -- **Bereavement, Scholarship, and Sky Soldier Support**. A description of the Foundation's programs can be found on the Association web site ([www.skysoldiers.com](http://www.skysoldiers.com)).

To get the drive off to a running start, we're inviting Chapters, members and friends of the 173d Airborne to contribute to this first month initial effort to raise a minimum of **\$2500** needed primarily to provide support to Gold Star families of our Sky Soldiers killed in action (KIA). The target date of this initial effort is **15 November**.

Chapters are requested to publicize this initial drive, assist in bundling donations, and assist in forwarding donations to Gary Granade, the Foundation Treasurer. Donations may also be made through the Association PayPal system, and should specify the donation is for the *Foundation*.

Individuals who contribute \$100. or more will be recognized with a certificate. Individuals who wish to make a large donation (e.g., \$500. or more) are invited to contact Foundation President, Eric Hitchcock ([eric@blastincorporated.com](mailto:eric@blastincorporated.com)) directly.

Chapters contributing \$200. or more, either as a Chapter donation or as bundled checks from Chapter members, will receive a recognition certificate. The Chapter contributing the largest amount by 15 November will receive a plaque. The cost for the plaque is being donated separately by an anonymous donor, and will not come out of funds contributed in response to the solicitation letter.

For fund drives to have a good chance of being successful, publicity and follow-through are key ingredients. Chapter officers, you are asked to see that your members are advised of this effort and follow-up action is taken. Something as simple as forwarding this notice on with your endorsement explaining how the Chapter would like to collect donations is a good start.

Most, if not all of you will hold events in support of Veterans Day. That would be a good time to run your collections. And please get the donations in to Gary Granade with postmarks not later than 15 November.

Thank you for your efforts,  
AATW,

**Michael E. Montie**  
173d Airborne Brigade Association  
C/4/503d, '68-'69  
[memontie@aol.com](mailto:memontie@aol.com)



~ Donation Form ~

Please print this page, complete the form, and attach your check with your tax deductible donation payable to the 173d Airborne Brigade Foundation and mail to:

**173d Airborne Brigade Foundation**  
Attn: Treasurer, Gary Granade  
18117 Kuykendahl Road  
Spring, TX 77391

Thanks for mailing your donation before  
November 15, 2010.

- Please Print -

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

173d Unit or Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
for the 173d Airborne **Bereavement, Scholarship**  
and **Sky Soldier Support Programs**.



**AIRBORNE.....ALL THE WAY!**



~ Note ~

If you're a 173d officer, E-7 or above, you're not allowed to read beyond this page until you've sent in your donation. E-6's and below and all former RTO's of any rank and from any battalion may continue to read and donate once done. *We're watching you.* ☺ Ed



Coast-to-Coast Runner  
Honors Fallen Troops



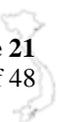
**Veteran Mike Ehredt**

**Associated Press:** An Army veteran who pounded the pavement from coast-to-coast to honor the nation's fallen troops has finished his grueling journey in rain and high winds in Maine.

Mike Ehredt of Hope, Idaho, placed a U.S. flag in the ground every mile to honor military personnel killed in Iraq. He placed six flags on Friday including the final flag to honor Marine Maj. Jay Aubin, a pilot from Waterville who died when his helicopter went down near the Iraq border.

The 49-year-old extreme runner kicked off his journey in May in Astoria, Oregon, averaged about 29 miles a day and took only four days off. He ran 4,425 miles.

Wind and rain howled at the finish. Supporters wore yellow T-shirts emblazoned with "Thanks Mike!" 



## SAIGON, 1968



## HO CHI MINH CITY, TODAY

(It still stinks)



## Bùng Binh Chợ Sài Gòn

~ Excerpt From *The Battle at Bau San* ~

In 2005, 2/503d troopers Gus Vendetti, Bill Vose and Lew Smith returned to Vietnam to find LZ Zulu-Zulu (Operation Silver City), site of the 16 Mar 66 battle in the "D" Zone jungle.

*"Saigon has undergone noticeable development since our last visit here. Many of the streets are cleaner, more modern buildings are being erected, but the population has grown from 7 to 9 million people. There are many more automobiles on the streets, and one day this will over-burden the roadways here. According to Viet Nam News, the daily English language commie rag, 30,000 American tourists visited Vietnam in June, and this number is expected to continually increase. Finally, I understand the purpose of and the great investment and sacrifices made for that war; we were securing a tourist destination."* 

## SYDNEY WITHOUT BEER IS A CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

"Returned to Sydney, bridge still there, Opera House completed, went to two performances. Went back to Taronga Park Zoo, looked different after all these years. Didn't get blind, knee walking, pole hugging, toilet puking drunk this time...what a nice change. Doc"



Col. 'Doc' Tim Cloonan Down Under.  
173d Airborne Brigade Surgeon from LZ English.



## ~ 173d MEMBERSHIP NEWS ~

Fellow Sky Soldiers:

Recently our new membership secretary had to resign due to family issues and I have taken back the membership secretary position. I will be reviewing ALL memberships done since 1 June and processing any outstanding applications. I ask for your patience, as it will take me 2-4 weeks to catch up.

If you mailed in a check or used PAYPAL in the last 6 months and have NOT received your membership, please allow me to catch up (wait 2-4 weeks). If by then you have not received your memberships please email me at [Membership@SkySoldier.org](mailto:Membership@SkySoldier.org)

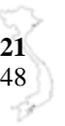
If your chapter (or unit) has sent in a packet of memberships please let me know ASAP. I apologize for any delays and will make things right ASAP.

**Jim Bradley**  
Membership Secretary [membership@SkySoldier.org](mailto:membership@SkySoldier.org)



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# Army Bids Goodbye to Last Draftee

September 30, 2010  
Atlanta Journal-Constitution

He was a kid who didn't want to be a Soldier. There was a war in Vietnam and a peace movement in America.

But then he got the government's letter and soon found himself on a cold December morning in 1970 in front of a post office in Sumter, SC, listening to a Soldier read names until he heard his: "*Clyde Green!*" With that, the 20-year-old kid climbed on the bus headed to a U.S. Army base.

*"I didn't want to join the Army," Green said last week. "The Army came and got me."*

When he retired as a chief warrant officer in a ceremony this morning at Fort McPherson, GA --- after 39 years, 9 months and 15 days of continuous active duty -- he became, by the best accounting, the last U.S. Army draftee who fought in Vietnam.

*"It's hard for us to speak in absolutes," said Richard Stewart, chief historian for the U.S. Army Center of Military History. "We're not good at keeping records like that. As soon as we say he's the last, another four will pop up. But he's certainly one of the last."*

## Finding a purpose

It is hard to imagine now the days when soldiering wasn't always by choice, when supporting the troops could involve a great deal more than car decals and applauding troops in uniform in airports. Often, it meant you might be one of them. It also meant you might go to war and it meant you might not come back.

Green, 60, is perhaps the last human link to those days.

The Army ended the draft in 1973 and at least one other draftee is still on active duty. But he was drafted later than Green and didn't serve in Vietnam. Green couldn't imagine serving in Vietnam either. At the time, his brother Willie was already in the Army, serving in the Signal Corps and stationed at Fort Gordon in Augusta. But Green wanted no part of this man's Army.

*"When I got that letter, I thought my whole world was ending," he said.*



**Clyde Green with his wife Veria**

The bus ride, induction and boot camp in Fort Knox, KY, in January confirmed there was, indeed, a new world order and Green was at the bottom of it -- freezing his fanny.

*"It was cold and really tough at first," he said. "But then I kind of got where I enjoyed it, once I figured out who was in charge."*

The discipline of military life he had feared became a comfort.

*"I liked the order," he said. And his uncertainty about what to study in college was suddenly a riddle solved: "I really liked the idea of military intelligence."*

For the next four decades the kid who grew up on a farm in South Carolina, whose dreams had once stretched no farther than Orangeburg and South Carolina State University, traveled the world and lived a Soldier's life. Over time, the reluctant draftee became the career Soldier.

## Attitudes change

He rose from enlisted man to chief warrant officer in military intelligence and served extended tours in Italy and South Korea. He visited 41 countries and posted in places -- the Middle East, Asia and East Africa -- he barely knew of, along with two stretches in the place he can least forget: Vietnam.

Green served his first stint there from June 1971 to May 1972 as an "intelligence Soldier," deciphering information gathered in the field. He examined captured equipment to determine, for instance, how many rounds an enemy anti-aircraft gun could fire. He interrogated captured enemy Soldiers in a war that a growing number of Americans opposed back home.

*(continued....)*



That experience, as a Soldier serving his country without any choice and risking his life, without much appreciation, still stings.

*"At the time, we weren't really loved by the American people," Green said. "I never personally experienced it, but there was hostility. It was a different time. People weren't as supportive of the military."*

It would be 23 years before Green returned to Vietnam. By then he had fought in his second war, the Persian Gulf in 1990. And he found America a different place for a returning Soldier, even an old draftee, by then a bit grizzled, who had served in Vietnam.

*"If you were in uniform in public, people would come up and start talking to you," he said, "and tell you what a good job you're doing."*

His second trip to Vietnam came with the Vietnam Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (MIA/POW), to seek any prisoners of war still in captivity and determine what happened to more than 1,700 Americans still missing in action in Southeast Asia. From 1995 to 2001, he and his team searched, scoured for remains and interviewed scores of witnesses.

They found no POWs but determined the fate of three MIAs, one of them an Army captain who served in Green's unit when he was in Vietnam the first time. They didn't find Capt. Frederick Krupa's remains, but they determined he was killed.

*"He was shot in a helicopter and fell out during an extraction, so we were able to list him as KIA [killed in action]," Green said.*

### 'Served ... with distinction'

At today's ceremony, Lt. Gen. Richard P. Zahner will praise the man believed to be the Army's longest serving draftee as a Soldier who *"has served his country with distinction and has touched the lives of countless men and women in uniform,"* and who has contributed immeasurably to the Army's Military Intelligence in his 30 years as a warrant officer.

Green's family from all over the country will be there: his sons Brian, 29, and Stephen, 27, and wife of 34 years, Veria. He'll live at Fort McPherson for two more months -- *"I have to pay rent now"* -- in what, fittingly, is the oldest house on base, built in 1887.

After that, he has a farm in North Carolina where he might settle, unless Veria wins that argument and they move to Arizona.

*"I hope I can talk her into it,"* he said.

And if he doesn't, it won't be the first time Clyde Green's plans for the rest of his life changed.

[Sent in by Bill Nicholls, A/2/503d]



## ~ 2010 Outstanding Veteran Award ~

Olaf Guldmar Hurd, Jr. (Sp4 - U.S. Army retired, Recon 2/503d, 173d Airborne Brigade) is the recipient of the *2010 Outstanding Veteran Award* for Martinsville-Henry County, Virginia and the presentation will be Saturday, November 13th, 2010 at 1500 hours, in the Bassett High School Auditorium, Bassett, Virginia.



*"I bet the damn Tommy gun doesn't work either!"*



## YOU CAN TAKE 'EM OFF THE FARM, BUT....

Dear Ma and Pa,

I am well. Hope you are. Tell Brother Walt and Brother Elmer the Army beats working for old man Minch by a mile. Tell them to join up quick before all of the places are filled.

I was restless at first because you get to stay in bed till nearly 6 a.m. But I am getting so I like to sleep late. Tell Walt and Elmer all you do before breakfast is smooth your cot, and shine some things. No hogs to slop, feed to pitch, mash to mix, wood to split, fire to lay. Practically nothing.

Men got to shave but it is not so bad, there's warm water. Breakfast is strong on trimmings like fruit juice, cereal, eggs, bacon, etc., but kind of weak on chops, potatoes, ham, steak, fried eggplant, pie and other regular food, but tell Walt and Elmer you can always sit by the two city boys that live on coffee. Their food, plus yours, holds you until noon when you get fed again. It's no wonder these city boys can't walk much.

We go on 'route marches,' which the platoon sergeant says are long walks to harden us. If he thinks so, it's not my place to tell him different. A 'route march' is about as far as to our mailbox at home. Then the city guys get sore feet and we all ride back in trucks.

The sergeant is like a school teacher. He nags a lot. The Captain is like the school board. Majors and colonels just ride around and frown. They don't bother you none.

This next will kill Walt and Elmer with laughing. I keep getting medals for shooting. I don't know why. The bulls-eye is near as big as a chipmunk head and don't move none, and it ain't shootin' at you like the Higgett boys at home. All you got to do is lie there all comfortable and hit it. You don't even load your own cartridges, they come in boxes.

Then we have what they call hand-to-hand combat training. You get to wrestle with them city boys. I have to be real careful though, they break real easy. It ain't like fighting with that ole bull at home. I'm about the best they got in this except for that Tug Jordan from over in Silver Lake. I only beat him once. He joined up the same time as me, but I'm only 5'6" and 130 pounds and he's 6'8" and near 300 pounds dry.

Be sure to tell Walt and Elmer to hurry and join before other fellers get onto this setup and come stampeding in.

Your loving daughter, Alice

[Sent in my Rev. Ron Smith, B/2/503d]

## He Ain't No Umpire



In last month's issue of our newsletter we asked if anyone could identify this 2/503d trooper. He is George Scott Colson, II, retired SFC and who, in 1965/66 with HHC 2/503d, was known as



“Scotty”, but mysteriously became “George” on his second tour with our battalion in '67, when he served in Bravo Company during the battles at Dak To. George-Scotty made the army his career and after retiring from the military has worked for the State of Florida as a Regional Emergency Response Advisor with the Office of Emergency Operations, Region 7 Domestic Security Task Force. We were hootch buddies and boys from California in '65/'66, and for over 40 years I searched for my old friend to no avail, only to find him living not far from me in South Florida with his special lady friend, Dee. What a thrill it was to find him after all those years. Ed





# 173d REUNION ITINERARY

(Tentative, subject to change)



## June 22 -- Wednesday

- 1200 - 2000 Registration
- 1300 - 0100 Hospitality Room
- 1300 - 2200 Vendors
- 1800 - 2000 President's Reception



## June 23 -- Thursday

- 0900 - 1200 Board of Director's Meeting
- 1000 - 1700 Registration
- 1000 - 2200 Vendors
- 1300 - 2400 Hospitality Room



## June 27 -- Friday

- 0730 - 0900 Gold Star Reception & Breakfast
- 0900 - 1500 Registration
- 1000 - 2400 Hospitality Room
- 1000 - 2200 Vendors
- 1000 - Board buses for trip to Fort Sam Houston
- 1030 - 1500 Tour Fort Sam Houston
- 1700 - 2300 BBQ, Mariachis, Dance at Maverick Plaza

## June 25 -- Saturday

- 0900 - 1100 Registration
- 0900 - 1200 General Membership Meeting
- 1000 - 1200 Ladies' Brunch
- 1000 - 2200 Vendors
- 1000 - 1200 Hospitality Room

### BANQUET DINNER

- 1815 - 1850 Cocktails
- 1900 - 1910 Post Colors
- 1930 - 2035 Dinner
- 2035 - 2130 Speakers & Awards
- 2130 Retire Colors
- 2135 - ??? Entertainment & Dancing

Maverick Plaza

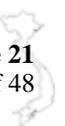
## June 26 -- Sunday

- 0830 - 1000 Continental Breakfast
- 1030 - 1130 Memorial Service, Arneson River Theater
- 1130 - Reunion closing. Depart or stay and see more of San Antonio.



The Alamo

Reunion web site: <http://www.skysoldiers.com>





# 173d AIRBORNE BRIGADE ASSOCIATION

## ~ REUNION 2011 ~

22 June – 26 June 2011, San Antonio, TX

Hosted by Texas Chapter 13



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Unit served with in the Brigade \_\_\_\_\_ Dates served \_\_\_\_\_

Circle Shirt Size: S M L XL 2XL 3XL Male/Female \_\_\_\_\_

Exact hat size \_\_\_\_\_ (Note: A cowboy hat will be given to the 173d member above if Registration Form and hat size are received by March 1, 2011.)

### Guests:

Circle Male or Female and Shirt Size for each guest

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ M / F size S M L XL 2XL 3XL

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ M / F size S M L XL 2XL 3XL

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_ M / F size S M L XL 2XL 3XL

### Registration/ Event Fees

- \_\_\_ \$173.00 per Association Member
- \_\_\_ \$125.00 per Guest
- \_\_\_ \$125.00 per Gold Star Family Member
- \_\_\_ \$ 75.00 per Active Duty Soldier (Not on Orders)
- \_\_\_ FREE Active Duty Soldiers on Orders (i.e., Command, Color Guard)
- \_\_\_ \$ 75.00 per Vendor Table
- \_\_\_ FREE Gold Star Brunch – 173d Gold Star Families
- \_\_\_ Brunch Ladies Brunch (Included with registration)
- \_\_\_ Please check if planning to attend.
- \_\_\_ \$ 15.00 Trip to Fort Sam Houston per person
- \_\_\_ \$ 15.00 Sky Soldier Adoption Program "Have a meal on me" for active duty soldiers



Hilton Palacio del Rio, San Antonio, Texas

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed

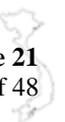
Make Checks Payable to: [Texas Reunion 2011 – 173d Airborne Brigade](http://www.texasreunion2011.com)

Mail Checks to: John Rolfe, 100 Oleander Road, Comfort, TX 78013

**For Hotel Reservations:** Hilton Palacio del Rio, \$119 + tax per night. Call 1-800-HILTONS and request the group rate for The 173d Airborne Brigade Association, Inc., or use the unique group code ABA.

**Overflow Hotel:** Menger Hotel, \$119 + tax per night, Call:1-800-345-9285 and request the group rate for the 173d Airborne Brigade Association.

To Register Online, visit [www.texasskysoldier.org/reunion2011](http://www.texasskysoldier.org/reunion2011)





tested here in 1939-41. Aeromedical evacuation of casualties was first developed here as early as 1917.

At the end of the Second World War, the Army decided to make Fort Sam Houston the principal medical training facility. In conjunction with this decision, came the determination to develop Brooke General Hospital into one of the Army's premier medical centers.

### Current Status

Fort Sam Houston is an active U.S. Army base and is the largest and most important military medical training facility in the world. 

Source: [http://www.fortwiki.com/Fort\\_Sam\\_Houston](http://www.fortwiki.com/Fort_Sam_Houston)

## Fort Sam Houston History

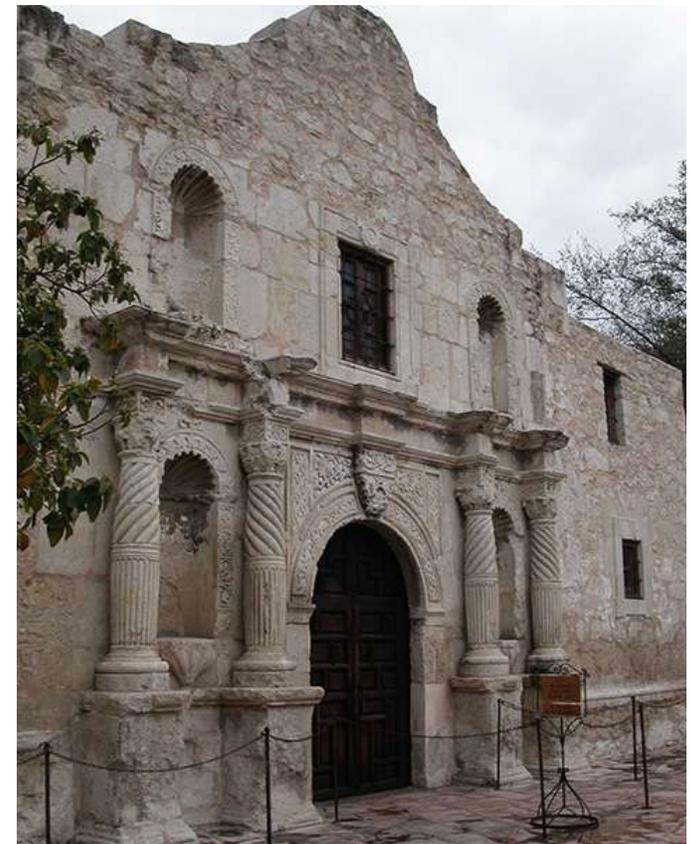
The U.S. Army has maintained a presence in the Alamo City since 1845. During that time, the installation has performed five distinct and important roles: that of a headquarters, logistical base, mobilization and training site, garrison and provider of medical support.

At first, the Army leased facilities in the City of San Antonio, including the Alamo. In fact, the Army repaired the Alamo structure and added a roof so it could be used as a headquarters.

In 1876, the Army began to move its facilities to the present site of Fort Sam Houston upon completion of the Quadrangle. The post has since increased in size from the original 92 acres donated to the Army by the city, to approximately 3,000 acres today.

As it expanded, additional facilities were built to meet the Army's needs. The headquarters and garrison always have constituted one of the Army's most important commands. Prior to the Civil War, the headquarters controlled 25 percent of the Army's forces. From 1910 until World War II, Fort Sam Houston was the largest Army post in the continental United States. Many of the most distinguished American soldiers have served here, including no less than 13 Army Chiefs of Staff and two United States presidents. The post's prominence led to significant tactical and organizational innovations. Military aviation was born here in 1910 and revitalized during the 1940's and 1950's. Large-scale troop maneuvers have been conducted, including the first effective use of the Command Post Exercise in 1911. Field exercises in the 1930's developed the Triangular Division. This streamlined, mobile organization was the foundation of the Army combat power in World War II. The delivery of troops to the battlefield by air also was

## The Alamo History



Originally named Misión San Antonio de Valero, the Alamo served as home to missionaries and their Indian converts for nearly seventy years. Construction began on the present site in 1724. In 1793, Spanish officials secularized San Antonio's five missions and distributed their lands to the remaining Indian residents. These men and women continued to farm the fields, once the mission's but now their own, and participated in the growing community of San Antonio.

*(continued....)*





In the early 1800's, the Spanish military stationed a cavalry unit at the former mission. The soldiers referred to the old mission as the Alamo (the Spanish word for "cottonwood") in honor of their hometown Alamo de Parras, Coahuila. The post's commander established the first recorded hospital in Texas in the Long Barrack. The Alamo was home to both Revolutionaries and Royalists during Mexico's ten-year struggle for independence. The military — Spanish, Rebel, and then Mexican — continued to occupy the Alamo until the Texas Revolution.

San Antonio and the Alamo played a critical role in the Texas Revolution. In December 1835, Ben Milam led Texian and Tejano volunteers against Mexican troops quartered in the city.

After five days of house-to-house fighting, they forced General Martín Perfecto de Cós and his soldiers to surrender. The victorious volunteers then occupied the Alamo — already fortified prior to the battle by Cós' men — and strengthened its defenses.

On February 23, 1836, the arrival of General Antonio López de Santa Anna's army outside San Antonio nearly caught them by surprise. Undaunted, the Texians and Tejanos prepared to defend the Alamo together. The defenders held out for 13 days against Santa Anna's army. William B. Travis, the commander of the Alamo sent forth couriers carrying pleas for help to communities in Texas. On the eighth day of the siege, a band of 32 volunteers from Gonzales arrived, bringing the number of defenders to nearly two hundred. Legend holds that with the possibility of additional help fading, Colonel Travis drew a line on the ground and asked any man willing to stay and fight to step over — all except one did. As the defenders saw it, the Alamo was the key to the defense of Texas, and they were ready to give their lives rather than surrender their position to General Santa Anna. Among the Alamo's garrison were Jim

Bowie, renowned knife fighter, and David Crockett, famed frontiersman and former congressman from Tennessee.

The final assault came before daybreak on the morning of March 6, 1836, as columns of Mexican soldiers emerged from the predawn darkness and headed for the Alamo's walls. Cannon and small arms fire from inside the Alamo beat back several attacks. Regrouping, the Mexicans scaled the walls and rushed into the compound. Once inside, they turned a captured cannon on the Long Barrack and church, blasting open the barricaded doors. The desperate struggle continued until the defenders were overwhelmed. By sunrise, the battle had ended and Santa Anna entered the Alamo compound to survey the scene of his victory.



While the facts surrounding the siege of the Alamo continue to be debated, there is no doubt about what the battle has come to symbolize. People worldwide continue to remember the Alamo as a heroic struggle against impossible odds — a place where men made the ultimate sacrifice for freedom. For this reason, the Alamo remains hallowed ground and the Shrine of Texas Liberty. 🇺🇸

Source:

<http://www.samhouston.army.mil/sites/about/default.asp>

*“You can't teach an old dog  
new tricks,  
but you sure can make him think  
like hell.”*

*Father of Ed Kearney  
B/2/503d*





# 173d Arlington Memorial Stone

On 2 May 1998, the Society of the 173d Airborne Brigade dedicated a Memorial stone and tree in Arlington Cemetery to commemorate the heraldry of the Brigade and to honor our fallen. It was the collective judgment of the Society leadership at that time that years of trying to get the Brigade reactivated would continue to be unsuccessful and so the marker was inscribed with activation/deactivation dates and focused solely on Vietnam.

Sadly, we lacked faith in the Army and its leadership. Within two years, the Brigade Color was unfurled in Italy and the vaunted “Wing and Bayonet” patch reappeared on the shoulders of a new generation of Sky Soldiers. In recognition of their demonstrated valor and staying power, the Association leadership -- spearheaded by Sigholtz Chapter President Terry Modglin and Project Officer Ed Anthony -- have the task of replacing the original memorial stone with one that reflects more accurately the history and status of the Brigade.

The current 173d Airborne Brigade Association officers, in their wisdom, have declared the Arlington Memorial a Sigholtz Chapter responsibility and while agreeing with the need to replace the marker, have assigned the Chapter responsibility for raising the \$3,000.00 needed for this project. Consistent with past practices, including the funding of the original Arlington marker, the Chapter leadership has decided to solicit donations from individuals rather than using Chapter dues for this project.

Arlington Cemetery Officials have approved the changed wording and Ed Anthony, who was project officer for the 1998 effort, has contacted the craftsmen who will produce the new marker. Chapter leaders plan to dedicate the new stone next May. **But we need your support to make this happen.**

MG Williamson, who with then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Hugh Shelton – one of our own – presided at the 1998 ceremony. While MG Williamson will not physically be with us at the coming dedication, he will be there in spirit. In his honor, in memory of all our comrades with whom we had the privilege of serving, and recognizing the valor, service, and sacrifices of our Sky Soldiers currently serving, I ask for your financial support for this project.



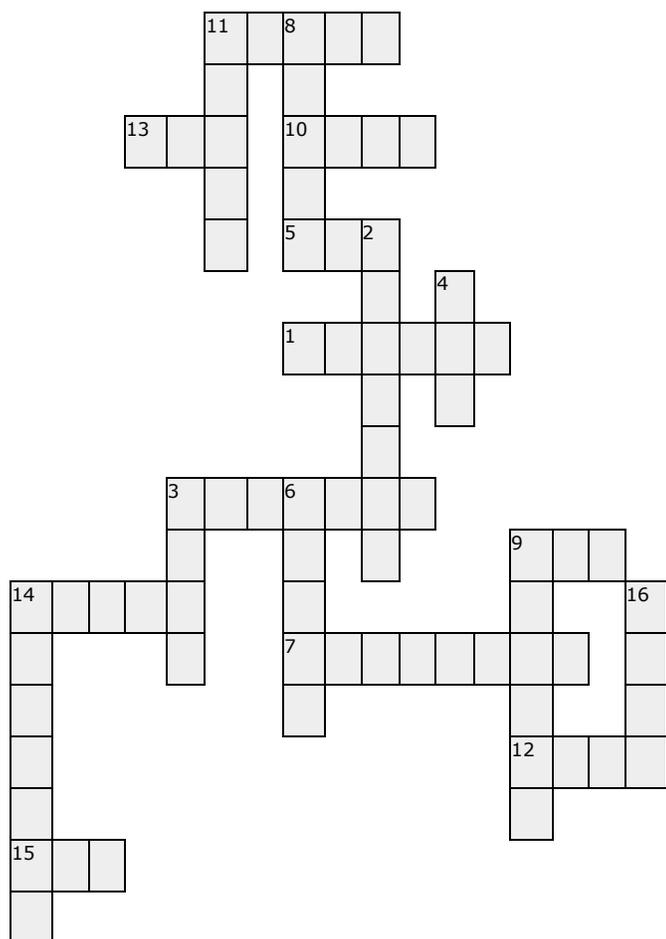
Photo by Richard E. Miller

Please make out a check payable to the “**Sigholtz Capitol Chapter**” and marked “**Arlington Memorial**” and mail it to **PO Box 15133, Arlington, VA 22215-0133**. Contributions to the Memorial may be deductible under Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code and each donation will be acknowledged.

**Ken Smith**  
Treasurer  
Sigholtz Capital Chapter



## 2/503d Crossword Puzzle



### Across

- 1---Sorry 'bout that
- 3---Beer drinkers from OZ
- 5---A vehicle with guns
- 7---What's all the way?
- 9---Radio
- 10--\_\_\_\_ the Magic Dragon
- 11--Chow
- 12--A chopper
- 13--Phoney money e.g.
- 14--A sad famous hill
- 15--End of radio transmission

### Down

- 2---Water holder
- 3---Left without permission
- 4---Your job title
- 6---Small group of men
- 8---A company
- 9---Cisco and \_\_\_\_\_
- 11--City of tunnels
- 14--Search and \_\_\_\_\_
- 16--Third to last letter

(answers and name of winner coming next month)

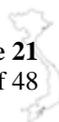
**Note:** Whoever is first to send in an email with the puzzle having all correct answers or a list of correct answers with corresponding numbers across and down, will be mailed a bottle of Cruzan Rum, the editor's favorite grog from St. Croix, VI. The Islanders say, "If you drink too much Cruzan, you'll get Cruzan Confusion."

Send to: [rto173d@cfl.rr.com](mailto:rto173d@cfl.rr.com)

## 503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT Reunion in Texas

Our national reunion this year was very calm. There were 14 veterans and about 30 family and friends. There were the usual stories told in the hospitality rooms. I think we have gotten to the point where we are drinking more coffee and sodas and less alcohol. They are not as noisy as they used to be either, or maybe my hearing is going bad. As always, it was nice to see old friends. That is what it is all about. I believe next year it will be in Denver, Colorado.

**Chuck Breit**  
503rd PRCT, WWII



# MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT'S FAMILY SHUT OUT OF SCHEDULED WHITE HOUSE VISIT A DAY AFTER HIS BURIAL, BECAUSE GRANDSON WORE SHORTS

**Nicholas K. Geranion**  
*Huffington Post*

SPOKANE, Wash. — The White House apologized Thursday for turning the family of a Medal of Honor recipient away from an exclusive tour last week because the late veteran's 10-year-old grandson was wearing shorts.



**Vernon Baker**

Vernon Baker, the last surviving black Medal of Honor winner from World War II, was buried Friday at Arlington National Cemetery after dying in July from complications of brain cancer at age 90. He belatedly received the military's top award from President Bill Clinton in 1997, after historians concluded he'd been wrongly denied because of his race.

On Saturday, his widow and grandson went to the White House for a special tour of the West Wing, which includes the Oval Office and rooms that are in use.

The staffer who was to lead the family wasn't sure whether 10-year-old Vernon Pawlik's attire – shorts and a T-shirt bearing a picture of the boy's grandfather – was considered appropriate, officials said. Another winner of the military's top award, Thomas Norris, also was turned away because he was not previously cleared for the tour.



**Thomas Norris**

Norris and the Baker family had turned down a previously arranged East Wing tour for the more exclusive visit to the West Wing.

"This is an unfortunate misunderstanding," White House spokesman Adam Abrams said Thursday. "We would

*have loved to have hosted 10-year-old Vernon and his family at the White House and we have reached out to the Baker family and Lt. Norris to communicate our deep regret and invite them back to the White House."*

A message left at the home of Baker's widow, Heidy, who was also on the tour, was not immediately returned.

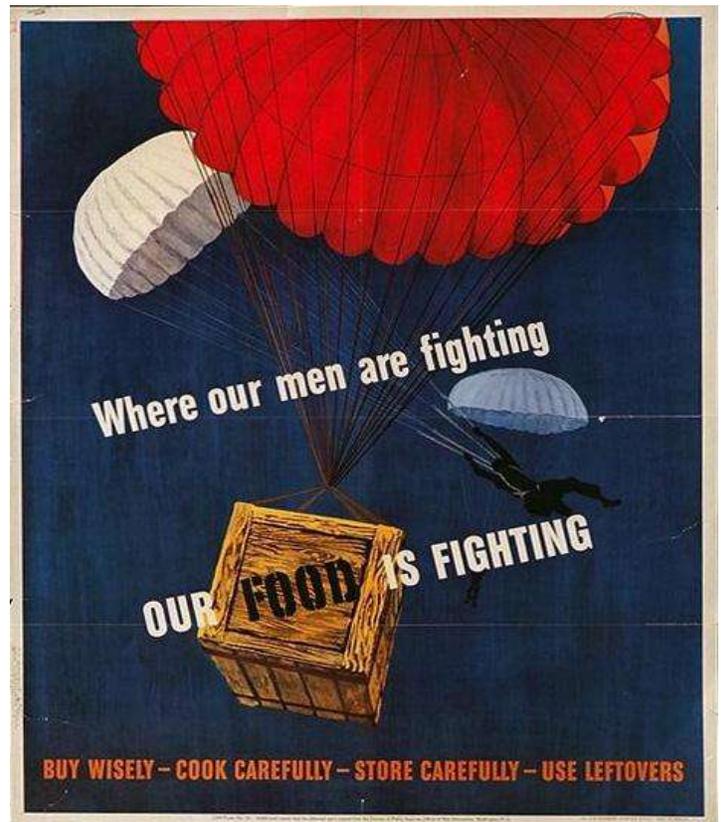
In 1945, Baker rallied black troops after their white commander deserted and they captured a German stronghold in Italy, taking out three machine gun nests, two bunkers and an observation post. But he did not receive his award for more than half a century, and no black soldiers received the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest award for battlefield valor, during that era. An Army study initiated in the early 1990s concluded Baker and several other men had been denied the award because of racism.

Six other black World War II veterans received medals posthumously at a 1997 White House ceremony where Baker got his medal. (Huffington Post)

[Sent in by Ed Kearney, B/2/503d]



## WWII POSTER



[Sent in by Jack "Jackattack" Ribera, A/2/503d, '66]



## Correction

In Issue 18, Page 29 of our August newsletter a story appeared describing the circumstances behind how the parachute from the Corregidor combat jump on display at the Infantry Museum at Ft. Benning, GA got there. Chuck Breit, of the 503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT, who jumped the chute, mentioned the report contained some errors. To set the record straight, I asked Chuck to give us his first-hand account of how his chute made it from the landing zone on Corregidor to the museum. Thanks Chuck. Ed



### Regarding my Parachute

The Rock force left Mindoro for the jump on Corregidor with one thing in common, and that was to retake the island fortress. Our flight to Corregidor was less than an hour and strange as it may seem, I fell asleep. A short time later I had a very good view of the

island because I was standing in the doorway ready to push out my equipment bundle.

After pushing out my flame thrower I followed in a diving position which caused me considerable oscillation when the chute opened. I looked down but I never really saw the ground because I was there. I landed in the downward slope of a shell hole which made for a comparatively good landing. I figured my time in the air from 400 feet was about 23 seconds. I got out of my harness and climbed to the top of the hole. Strangely enough, my equipment bundle was only about 50 feet away. I put it in the shell hole and covered it with my chute. At this point in time, I needed to be able to move quickly to accomplish our mission of securing the barracks.



**Chuck**

About a half dozen men from my demolition squad were already beside me and we continued on to the barracks, a 3 story building about 500 yards long. It took us about an hour and a half to make our way through to the other end. Because of the shelling and bombing before our jump, most of the enemy were holed-up in the tunnels and caves. Our jump was a complete surprise to them.

After the first couple of hours the resistance increased and by noon, even though we had secured the jump areas, the men in the second wave of jumpers were fired upon more than we were. Before the day was done we set up a hospital area and Regimental Headquarters in the barracks and then set-up a perimeter around the parade ground.

On our area of the parade ground we placed one man every 20 feet. No foxholes, you just got behind whatever would give you cover on the ground. It was a very lonely feeling but we did not have many men to cover a large area. We had two banzai charges through the night.

When morning came, I noticed I was very close to where I landed on the jump. I found my chute was still there so I cut the suspension lines loose from the canopy. I rolled it up and put it in a wooden ammunition box and took it with me back to our HQ area along with my flame thrower. One of our bazooka men, Vincent H. Minkler, had been wounded and was being sent back to Mindoro. He took the box with him and mailed it home for me.

When I got home I gave it to the 503rd Association. They gave it to the National Infantry Museum in Ft. Benning, Ga. It is on display there in honor of all the men who helped to retake Corregidor.

**Chuck Breit  
503rd PRCT WWII**



**Chuck's chute on display in the  
Infantry Museum at Ft. Benning.**





## THOSE UNHERALDED CREW CHIEFS

By Tony Geishauser, Maj.  
Cowboys, '65/'66

There was nothing better in a helicopter unit than a really good crew chief - most I worked with were damn good too. These guys would fly everywhere we went and then they would spend hours after our flying day was over getting the aircraft ready to fly the next day. Lots of maintenance in keeping a helicopter flying.

In addition to flying with us and maintaining our a/c, they also manned one of the 60s on each bird. The crew chief and the gunner usually had standing orders to shoot when we were going in on a combat assault or extraction whenever they had a target. It was a little startling sometimes to be flying along fat, dumb and happy and all of a sudden have a sixty open up on someone or something on the ground. I never knew a good pilot who didn't take care of his crew chief, because we depended on them so much.

Two quick stories about crew chiefs:

We were going to be on a big extraction to pick up the Herd who had been out in the field for a week training new guys. There was going to be about 40 helicopters involved in the extraction. We had rotors turning, but were sitting on our pads back in Bien Hoa a few miles away from where we were going to make the extraction. The Falcons, our gunships, were flying up and down the LZ seeing if they could draw enemy fire or to see where the enemy was.

We had taken several hits over the past week re-supplying the troops, so we knew there were Charlies in the area. The Falcons reported back that the LZ was cold. Our crew chief immediately got on the intercom and said, *"That's bad news, sir. Better fasten your seat belts. This is going to be a rough extraction. Charlie is just waiting in the weeds for us to come in."*

Sure enough -- of the 40 helicopters that took part in that extraction, 19 of them were hit and two pilots were hit. Our crew chief knew his shit.

The second time I was shot down, it was the crew chief who figured out how to get us out of there. I had a new pilot I was breaking in on how to corkscrew down over an LZ we were going to go into to re-supply. The idea was to get down really fast and stay as close to the perimeter as you could.

In peace time a good rate of descent would be about 500 to 700 feet a minute. In a combat situation, a good combat pilot would kick the aircraft out of trim so it could fall faster, lower the collective pitch stick and fall about 3,500 feet a minute. That might wrinkle the thin skin of the tail boom sometimes if it wasn't done right, but better the chopper's skin be wrinkled than the crew's by bad boy bullets.



**Cowboys & 2/503d troopers on the move.**

*(continued....)*



## A little longer story:

I had been doing all the landings and the new guy was doing an adequate job taking the a/c out of the area. He finally wanted to try a landing, but he fucked up and didn't get down fast enough. He thought 750 feet a minute was a fast drop. He was an ex Navy pilot; not a good sign. At any rate, before I could physically help him lower the collective, we started taking hits. Luckily the rounds didn't hit anything that made the ship un-flyable like in LZ Zulu-Zulu (Op Silver City '66), but we did get hits in the fuel tank, rotor blades and a few other places.

The crew chief got out of the helicopter as soon as we landed and assessed the damage pretty fast. He said we were not safe to fly. He told me to get our maintenance officer - "Horse Thief" - and he'd tell them what we needed to fix our bird to fly out of there. We made the call, Horse Thief arrived with the parts he took off an a/c in a secured LZ, and they got the a/c fixed pretty fast. The company commander wanted us out of his AO ASAP as we were a magnet for bad guys.

The maintenance officer reported to me that the a/c was good to go. I said, "Great. Here's what we're going to do. I'm going to fly your helicopter out of here and you're going to fly mine. You're a test pilot; I'm not." He thought about that for a second and thought he might want to take another look. He did and we swapped places and I followed him out. While the crew chief was right again on all the things that needed to be fixed were, the fuel leaked out of my bird like it was pissing in flight. That was before we had self-sealing fuel bladders. We made it back to base camp because of the good work of a damn good crew chief. 🍷



## 2010 REUNION ITEMS AVAILABLE

Chapter 30 reports they still have a few collectible items left over from this past June's 173d reunion in North Myrtle Beach, SC. Items still available include:

### MEN'S SHIRTS:

Small, Qty: 1 Large, Qty: 2 Triple Large, Qty: 1

### WOMEN'S SHIRTS:

Small, Qty: 2 Medium, Qty: 2 Large, Qty: 10

### TRAVEL BAGS WITH 173d PATCH:

17

For each item purchased, Chapter 30 is donating \$5.00 to the 173d Airborne Brigade Foundation. For prices and to order items contact [Tom Hanson @ cross173@sc.rr.com](mailto:Tom.Hanson@cross173@sc.rr.com)

On behalf of our Chapter much thanks. *AIRBORNE!*

**Wayne Bowers**  
C/2/503d, Chapter 30



You gotta luv them  
funny fly boys.



*Guten Tag mein Herr.*



## 2/503d First Blood

The recent article about the "Razorbacks" (October newsletter, Pg. 7) brought to mind one of the first unreported combat engagements of the 2/503d.

As XO of the 2/503d I was missioned to take the advance party of the 173d Abn Bde (Sep) into Vietnam.



We landed at Bien Hoa AFB Republic of Vietnam on 5 May 1965. We flew direct from Okinawa on a 90 day TDY, the rest is history.

After making contact with local Air Force and Army receiving parties and setting up a secure cantonment area, I was anxious to see as much of the local Bien Hoa area as possible. As luck would have it a local Huey Gunship Unit called "The Razorback's" heard of my interest and offered to take me on their next recon mission.

Their motto "*Death is our Business and Business is Good*", should have given me pause, but being a 39 year old Airborne Major with 22 years service, I said to myself, "*What the hell, how bad could it be?*"

The mission for the day was to "Recon by Fire" an area of about ten (10) miles circumference around Bien Hoa. We were armed with two (2) door mounted M60's and six (6) rocket pods.

It started out as a real cake walk, during which time I was permitted to stand up behind the pilot as he pointed out some of the terrain features and known hot spots.

This lasted for about twenty (20) minutes when "**The Shit Hit The Fan**". Our Recon by Fire had dug up three (3) different hot spots from which we were receiving 50 cal resistance – each tracer looked like a basketball. As part of my briefing before boarding I was given my combat position and duties, which consisted of sitting on my flak jacket on a pile of M60 ammo cases and insuring that the door gunners were properly supplied with ammunition.

We expended all of our M60 ammo and fired all six (6) rockets in about 20 minutes, which from where I was squatting seemed like an hour. The mission then called for us to return to base and re-arm.

The pilot, an older Captain with more sense than I, told me I need not go back up. I asked if the days' mission was completed? He said that they still had 2/3's of the area to cover.

Completely out of my element but not wanting them to think ill of the FNG Airborne Troops coming into country to "Kick Ass and Take Names", I signed on for two more combat missions that day.

Having been in country for only five (5) days, the 2/503d had three (3) Huey Gunship Combat Missions under its belt, and although only serving as an ammo bearer, was probably responsible for drawing first blood.

**William E. White, LTC (Ret)**  
**XO 2/503d, '64/'65**

**Note:** Thanks Bill. That's history being made before we made history. Ed 

## *HOOK UP!*

I'm trying to help my father find some buddies he was with over there. His name is Larry Ernest Bernard. He was in C/2/503d and in country from March '67 to March '68. Please contact me if anybody knows him, at [Larrysharley96@yahoo.com](mailto:Larrysharley96@yahoo.com) Thanks,

**Larry Bernard, Jr.**

## WHO IS THIS YOUNG 2/503d MASTER BLASTER?



**He ain't no Charlie, but then again, he is.**



# THE LIGHTER SIDE OF WAR?



## ~ Beware the Floaters ~

I have words of advice from an experience I had while during the monsoon season at Dak To in 1967. Never build your hootch downhill from the latrine when at the FSB. The latrine fills up during the rain and things will float through your hootch. Below is a picture of Father Peters saying Mass by the Dak To airstrip. A lot of guys might remember him. He and Father Watters were great guys and as you know Father Watters was killed on Hill 875. He was awarded the MOH for his actions there. [See Issue 3, Pg. 8 of our newsletter. Ed]



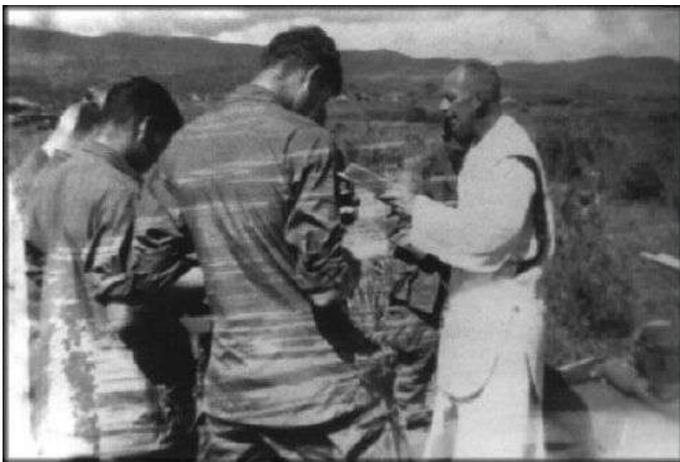
**LT Allen**

an M-151 and as I approached the Hq. Company entrance a bolt of lightning struck the concertina wire. The wire suddenly seemed to light up in a quick blue arc like flame and then became enveloped in a thin shroud of acrid smoke. The guard shacks, as I recall, were constructed of 2bys and 4bys covered over with corrugated tin or aluminum AND they served as an anchor point for the concertina wire. Well, consequently, when the lightning struck the wire it also lit up the guard shack. After a moment's pause, the guard who had been sitting in the shack staggered through the door and looked around to see what the hell had happened. I'm sure he thought that we were under attack – but what a weapon! It was a serious incident and the guard could have been killed or injured but after we realized that the guard wasn't hurt and the immediate concern had passed it looked almost like a cartoon.

**Jim Bethea**  
HHC/2/503d, '65/'66

**Bob Allen**  
D/4/503d, '67/'68

## ~ Coconut Attack ~



**Father Peters**

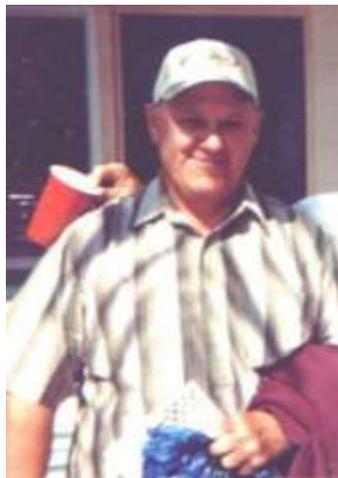
I was out at a place called LZ Orange a MACV base where we had a forward TOC. I went out on a night mission with the advisers and some Ruff Puffs (VN NG locals) . This MACV E-7 and I were at the center of the village and were lying on the ground next to a big palm or coconut tree. Everything was quite when this dog started barking on the other side of the village. Suddenly something about the size of a fist or frag lands between us – talk about two guys beating the record for the low crawl in different directions. Then we waited for the frag to go off, and waited and waited. We finally raised our heads and saw a palm frond or some young coconut lying where we had been. We had a good laugh after we quit shaking.



**Terry & Doc O'Donnell**

## ~ Lightning Strike ~

Perhaps you remember the perimeter around Camp Zinn, 100 meters by 100 meters, it was six to eight feet high and surrounded by barbed wire. On three of the four sides there were vehicle entrances and at each entrance there was a guard shack. I'm pretty sure this incident happened during the monsoon season but at any rate it was right after a rain. I was coming back to camp from Bien Hoa in an



**Rifleman Jim**

**Terry Boggs**  
E/3/503d

(continued....)





**Camp Zinn '65/'66** (George Dexter photo)

~ Pig Breath ~

Please understand I am recalling this event from a 43 year memory. While the story is still clear in my mind some of the details are not as clear. Sometime in the middle of 1967 while serving with C 2/503 in the Dak To area, I, along with about five or six other grunts and a young Sergeant, was sent on a night LP/Ambush. We were to go about 1000 meters outside the CP and set up on the banks of a small river. The plan was to get in place just at dark and lay along the edge of the river. We were to lay in a line with our heads toward the river just far enough apart to touch the guy to our left or right. The radio was to start with the first man in line and be passed down the line every hour or so. Those without the radio would catch a nap. I was somewhere in the middle of the line and the plan was going well until I was awoken by a noise coming from the jungle about 10 meters from my feet. Those of us who have spent time in the jungle know how dark it can get. This was one of those "can't see your hand in front of your face" nights. I lay there for a short time as the noise got closer. By now real fear was setting in. Moving as slowly and quietly as possible, I reached to my right for the fellow next to me. Unable to touch him I again moved quietly trying to find the fellow to my left. You guessed it, nobody there. Now that "can't control your bladder," fear set in. Meanwhile the noise was a bit louder and much closer. My mind was racing with thoughts. I began thinking Charlie had come in while I was sleeping and cut everyone's throat. Now he was coming back for me.

I could hear my heart pounding and was trying hard to control my breathing. I didn't want to fire my weapon, which would give away my position. I was thinking, ***"What the hell, I'm about to die anyway might as well take some of them with me."*** I began to smell something like bad breath and thought I could feel someone breathing on me. By now I had positioned my rifle to where I could squeeze off a few rounds. Just at that time a muzzle flash appeared and for a split second the darkness disappeared, just long enough for me to see the biggest hog standing at my feet. We heard him squealing as he ran back into the jungle. For the rest of the night, which we thought would never end, we lay shoulder to shoulder wide awake. The next morning while discussing the previous night's events we discovered we all were awake and experiencing the same thoughts. After laughing at ourselves, when we returned to the CP and shared our "pig story" we were the brunt of the joke for several days. Everyone wanted to know how five or six battle hardened paratroopers could be so frightened by one little pig. It was funny the day after, and whenever I recall that night it brings a smile to my heart, but I must admit, I've never been so frightened in my life. If anyone is out there who was with me that night, I sure would like to hear from you!

**Wayne Bowers**  
C/D/2/503d, '67/'68  
[bowway@aol.com](mailto:bowway@aol.com)

(continued...)



~ Remembrances ~

1 -- On 2 January 1966, we were in a chopper coming into a hot LZ and trying to find a spot to land in the rice paddy. The new, cherry Radio Operator was sitting on the floor facing out. He looked a little peaked so I bent down to reassure him; at that exact moment a VC shot through the chopper right where my head had been just before I bent down. Not a scratch, thanks to the Radio Operator. Guess who that RTO was???

*(I ain't tellin. Ed)*



**2/503d XO, Maj. Bob Carmichael and his peaked cherry RTO Smitty. Operation Marauder, 2 Jan 66, Mekong Delta.**

2 -- After we landed things went from bad to worse. The wounded were migrating to the chopper Evac point.

Three troops appeared, one supporting one trooper on each side. He was also carrying a helmet with the top blown off. He had a very bloody bandage on his head with only one eye functioning. I asked him if he could make it and he said, "Yes, but I have one helluva headache." No doubt about that.

3 -- The Bn was road clearing near Phouc Binh. We reached some higher ground. C Company's 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Desmond 'Hammer' Jackson and I were visiting near a clump of bushes. Three VC with automatic weapons popped out and started shooting. Although he was shot in the leg Sgt. Jackson killed all three, although his first weapon jammed. He grabbed a bystanders' rifle and finished off all three. To this day, I feel I am in Sgt. Jackson's debt.

4 -- We were finishing off what had started with about 6 mortar rounds hitting the top of the smaller corner I slept in. I couldn't help admiring the fact they were able to shoot a mortar that accurately. Having been a mortar platoon leader we were never able to do something like that. Some VC were caught in our wire trying to get in and they were eliminated; one was captured alive but apparently wounded, though not that you could see. We evac'd him to the hospital. Later as things quieted down we went to the evac point, and there was the wounded VC. He apparently recognized me and put out his hand, then died. Sad ending for just a young kid.

While not all necessarily amusing, these are just some remembrances of many from that time.

**Bob Carmichael**  
2/503d, '65/'66

~ Now *That's* Some Funny Shit!

We had been in the bush a good 30 days. We had humped all day and being tired as hell all I wanted to do was finish setting up. All of a sudden I had the urge to take a dump, so I proceeded to go outside the perimeter to scratch out a place to relieve myself. While squatted and enjoying being able to relieve one's self, my only spoon fell out of my pocket and guess where it fell?? It stuck right in the pile of shit... Well, I just picked it up and put it back into my pocket and ended up eating with it about 30 minutes later. Amazing what you do when you're in the jungle.

**Harry Cleland**  
B/HHC//2/503d, '66/'67

*(Airborne brother!! Harry, your story gives a whole new meaning to being shit faced. That should give our civilian friends a taste of what it's like to be in combat....so to speak. Ed)*



**Hootch buddy Harry's lips are still puckering after all these years. Ed**

*(continued....)*



~ That Wasn't Beer! ~

I served in Vietnam with the 173d MP Platoon from June 69 to June 70. I was first assigned OJT to the platoon and was the butt-end of many jokes. I would usually spend any spare time outside the bar at the main platoon area of LZ English, sitting in the evening on the top of a bunker which was turned into the bar patio (of sorts) with the NCOs, hoping to also learn tidbits from the seasoned platoon members to help stay alive and be out of harm's way

Around the end of July or early August, I was sitting on the bar patio with Buck Sergeant Dennis Lowry and several other NCOs and acting jacks. I was listening to the war stories in the darkness when I smelled something burning. Soon, the source of the smoke was found. A cigarette was thrown over the edge of the bunker patio and fell on an old workout bench that had been discarded on the side of the bunker.

The butt fell in the old cotton stuffing and began a small but roaring fire which was making much smoke from the burning Naugahyde covering.

The NCOs, in unison, lined the patio edge and pulled out their fire hoses with their sirens wailing from the top of their lungs and attacked the fire about ten feet below. The Platoon Sergeant at the time was SFC Billy Martin, a leg. He came up with a little bitty Dixie cup of water and poured it on the fire. He then shouted, *"Pour your beer on the fire, not me!"*

We were all laughing so hard; we almost fell off the bunker. The truth was finally known; you really could not tell the beer from piss.

Here is the bar, beside the full tank to the right. The door of the bar is open to the patio on the top of the bunker for the platoon area. In the middle of the picture is the platoon bulletin board.



In the following picture you see SFC Billy Martin to the left, acting sergeant Johnson to the right, and I think Sergeant Doss in the middle.



Doss just passed away this past year. Both pictures were taken from the side of PMO.

**Jerry W. Colwell**  
173d MP Platoon, '69/'70

~ Skinny Dipping ~



**Boc Si...Doc Evalt**

We were by the south China Sea where there was this small lake with water filtering into it. It was a bit of R&R; this was June '68 or close to that. Now you don't have to repeat this verbatim but I'm going to tell you the fucking truth. There was this small ledge we could dive off of. I am a diver so I dove in only to get my head stuck in the mud. God did that hurt!!!! As I am recovering from my headache someone is yelling *"Doc, Doc!!!!"* Here comes Rodger Koefod running up to me with a 6" leech hanging off his left testicle. I did what any good Medic would do....

*(continued...)*



I try to cut it with a razor to no effect, then I tried to put a lighter to it with no affect, then I put insect repellent on it...then the fucking thing finally fell off. Rodger would always say to me, *"If it's my time Doc, it's my time."* The guy could sing like a bird. I would try to keep up with him but there was no comparison. He got killed in an ambush. I never loved a man so much. He was my Jonathon. I'm no fucking David but I came to love that man. Rodger's name is on the Wall. I'm not sure if I spelled his name right but believe me Rodger's name is on that fucking wall.

**Bob "Doc" Evalt**  
2/503d, '68/'69

**Rodger Magnus Koefod**  
Corporal  
B CO, 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn, 503<sup>rd</sup> Infantry, 173d Abn Bde  
USARV, Army of the United States  
Moscow, Idaho  
July 7, 1948 to April 27, 1969  
Panel 26W Line 064

~ Outhouse 1 CO 0 ~



**Paul, on day promoted to Captain**

When I was at Dak To (airfield) running the perimeter defense, we used to get rockets often during the day. In fact, our mess hall among other facilities was hit numerous times, so we did not assemble in groups. I kept track and after a few days noted that we never got rockets at 3:00 PM. So with that data in hand I would make my daily constitutional to the six-holer every day

at 3 in the afternoon. On this particular day as I was doing my business a freight train (122mm) went over head and hit about fifty yards down range. Now, what I failed to say is that to get into the outhouse one had to step up two stairs. So this means to get out one had to step DOWN two stairs. Well, as I was at hole number three about four or five steps from the door I had a good head of steam generated when I got to the door without my steel pot on my head. So that means when my forehead made contact with the 4X4 cross beam I saw stars and planets and a sharp pain to my forehead. I still had 100 yards to go to cover as rounds were still incoming and when I rounded the corner to get into the bunker I tumbled over the desk just inside the bunker. Lifting myself up the BN Commander said, *"Paul, what happened, you're bleeding?"* I put my hand to my forehead still throbbing from my contact with the outhouse and my hand came away filled with blood. You know foreheads, small cut big bleeding. After the attack he made me go to the Aid Station; I went, band aid applied the Doc said, *"What about statement for the Purple Heart?"* I said forget it and went back to the command bunker. That night at the Bn staff meeting the BN Commander in front of the staff said the Doc told him I did NOT want the Purple Heart for my wound during the attack. I told him never mind sir. He persisted and I told him he would laugh if I told him, so never mind. He really insisted, so I told him about my foreheads meeting with the outhouse crossbeam. If they had not DEROSSED, the entire staff would STILL be rolling on the ground laughing about my heads contact with the Outhouse cross beam. NEEDLESS TO SAY, NO PURPLE HEART FOR THE OUTHOUSE...did not deserve it.

**Paul Fisher, LTC (Ret)**  
CO, HHC/3/503d, '69/'70

Thinking I would catch the 6 off guard, I sent the Colonel the following reply to his story. Ed

*"Hey Cap. The first thing I learned in-country was to 'Duck!' Guess you missed that class. Ouch!"*  
Smitty Out

The Colonel replied: ***"You do realize when you 'duck' in a crapper there is only one place to go."*** Paul

**Score:** 3/503d 1 / 2/503d 0

*(continued....)*



## ~ Chef's Surprise ~

This story is the one from back at Camp Zinn after operations. We'd be partying pretty hard, getting into all sorts of mischief and upsetting some of the NCO's and ossifers. Late at night after heaps of drinks, we'd get pretty hungry, so the brothers would ask me to break into Graham Rolling's mess hall and get something to eat.

Mind you I was starving just as well. We'd been on the slurps for about 6 hours and around midnight or beyond, the guts would rumble. I'd get myself inside the mess hall, knock off some tuna fish cans, mayonnaise, a



*The Singing Aussino*

couple of onions, and some chocolate chip cookies. After returning back to the party, we would take the liner out of somebody's steel pot, mix the lot in it and dip into the goodies with the chocolate chip cookies. Man, that was terrific and filled the belly!! Graham Rollings found out years later after I told him of our escapades, and that I was the culprit raiding his mess hall. Every time I'm in his company, he relates that story to everybody. He tells everyone within ear shot, "This man used to raid my mess hall!" I'm proud of it too I tell ya.

**A.B. "The Aussino" Garcia**  
HHC/2/503d, '65/'66

## ~ Air Police at Tan Son Nhut ~

One of the first things you saw upon landing in Saigon was the Air Police. Now, this ain't no bullshit. They were all over the air base in their shiny jeeps. There were three in each jeep which had the windshield down on the hood, protective metal bar mounted on the front bumper and an M-60 machine gun mounted in the center of the vehicle. Each of them wore tailored, starched jungle fatigues. Their boots were spit shined to perfection. They each wore black Aussie-type hats with chin straps. And, around their necks, each had a white, silk ascot. At first, I thought there was a movie being filmed along the lines of "The Green Berets" and that

these Air Force-types were the stars who were going to do some fantastic things – like killing Gooks. That thought was blown away when I saw the expensive 35mm cameras each was wearing around their necks. I'm guessing they were for photographing the USO beauties who came over to entertain the troops. As it turned out, they were the security folks at Tan Son Nhut Air Base. I saw them there every time I flew in or out. Except for Tet of '68, I always wondered if they ever ran into any of the VC or NVA as they rode around the air base?? They probably were paying the local Vietnamese to shine their shoes/jeeps and starch/clean their uniforms. Something the Green Berets called Garrison Troopers. **AIRBORNE, ALL THE WAY!! RAGMAN**

Bob Getz  
2/503d Task Force CO

## What Goes Good With A Coke? A Rubber Tree Stump??



**Mike on guard duty at Zinn**

I remember one story. It was serious at the moment.... but I can kinda laugh about it now. We were on an operation and the area got secured pretty good and these little kids came along selling gook soda-pop, and another good buddy of mine was buying one along with me.... and bout that time our platoon Sgt. saw what was happening and told us not to buy any of them. Well, when he got out of sight, we went ahead and bought a couple of gook soda-pops anyhow. Yes, he saw it and found us out.... and we suffered for it when we arrived back at base camp. We all had to secure our gear & weapons....but usually we had free time. But, not so for my buddy and me.....while everyone else was relaxing and writing letters home, etc....my buddy and I had to dig-up those awful rubber tree stumps....while that platoon Sgt watched us from the door opening of our tent. Now that is a LOL....but it wasn't then! Blessings,

**Mike Guthire**  
A/2/503d, '65/'66

(continued....)



~ For All To See ~

In 1965, while on a mission after only a month or two from arriving in Nam, myself and another trooper were sitting on what we thought was a termite hill. Not once but twice fellow soldiers would walk by and tell us we were sitting next to a snake. Finally one guy came over and pulled us to the front and lo and behold there was the biggest snake I'd ever seen, and this monster was curled up. One of the guys wanted someone to jump on top of the hill and his plan was to cut the head off when it came out. After that didn't work someone got the idea to shoot the poor thing and two guys let loose on full automatic. You'd think it would be dead but instead it started making its way out.



**Vietnamese cobra liquor.**  
*Drink anyone?*



**Joan & Steve Haber in Thailand**  
**at George Farris' home in Bangkok**

It took another full mag to stop it. If memory serves me right, which it doesn't, we stretched it out to 16 feet. I'm sure someone remembers as the head was taken off and the mouth opened and brought back to base camp and impaled on a pole for all to see.

**Steve Haber**  
**C/2/503d, '65/'66**

~ Mashing The MASH Huts ~

Funny you mention the 173d. I was in Vietnam in '66 working in the 3<sup>rd</sup> MASH hospital (hospital admin, admissions and dispositions) which just happened to be located in the midst of the 173d's Brigade Area. We were located just off the end of the Bien Hoa Air Base runway at the time. Their chopper gunships were just about 2 hundred yards from my office door – pointed in my direction. A CWO pilot with a little too much time imbibing “brewed products” got in his Huey and

accidentally fired a rocket right past my office (next to the ER). Right after I left in December of '66 the hospital moved to the Delta and was housed in “inflatable” quonset huts. The idea didn't work well as I understand it. Shrapnel tended to collapse the buildings.”

**Richard King**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Mash Hospital, '66**



**Front of Admin. Office, 3<sup>rd</sup> MASH Hospital**

~ A Couple From The Aussies ~

Guys from the early days at Bien Hoa will recall (Gen) Butch Williamson declared that the brigade was to be alcohol-free (Mission Impossible!). One of our second lieutenant platoon leaders got himself down to the VN AF Officer's Mess at the airbase, tied on a load, but remembered his friends and colleagues at the battalion – so he bought several cases of beer, piled them in the center of the road and waited until a 173d jeep appeared. The guy in the front asked if he could give the young officer a lift; agreed -- “Take me to the Australian battalion!” This happened smoothly. The guy from the front of the jeep walked with our platoon leader to 1RAR HQ. It was Butch Williamson himself....one second lieutenant with 30 days straight duty officer. No beer.

On the very first shake-down operation we did, June 1965, just down south of Bien Hoa, the RRU guys with us heard a Viet Cong on the radio relating what he could see of the helicopter activity. From what he said, they worked out where he was, told our CO, and it was decided to fire some artillery onto him. Sure enough, he yelled that artillery was falling near him and he was moving, but from what he said later, it was possible to chase him with artillery every time he got back on the air. Great fun and only possible in the combat zone.

*(continued....)*



The Australian equivalent of the US hot dog at sports events is the meat-pie, with tomato sauce (ketchup). In 1970 the Australian Football League combined with Qantas Airlines to fly a shipment of frozen pies to Vietnam for the guys in the field. But these were unloaded by mistake at Bangkok and thawed out. Sometime later, one of the sergeant majors of a small specialist outfit sent into the internal mail system of the Aussie field formation a notice that more pies would arrive, on a certain date, and would be issued from the Amenities Officer's location; units should telephone him ASAP with numbers required.

There were a number of clues in the letter to show it was a joke, but this letter was on official Army paper and people believe what they want to believe.

So the unfortunate Amenities Officer got phone calls from every outfit, and despite his protests, people believed the letter – hell, it was on official paper! Then he started to get threats – those pies were for the combat troops, not REMFs. Well, on the day, hundreds of people arrived to collect their unit pies – M113s, engineer dump trucks, jeeps, you name it, it was there, hundreds of soldiers, including a grunt platoon about to leave on patrol who walked down to get their pies. The Garrison Military Police had to be called to disperse the crowd and tempers were high. Naturally, command wanted to know who was responsible, but no one was going to admit it. For weeks, at conferences, people would wave that letter and ask about the pies. Victor Charlie never had as much success as that one letter created.

It will not get into the official histories, but from 1965 some Aussies would leave cartoons and letters for the VC/NVA at places where we had found their food and ammo caches, and this started in the early searches in War Zone D, with ball-pen drawings showing grinning ARVN on trucks loaded with bags of rice and a sarcastic 'thanks guys' letter to the VC. We did this one time in about August '65, with an invitation to the VC to go to Tan Uyen and have dinner with the ARVN battalion there (I forget which one). Well, a few nights later, the sounds of heavy bombardment came from Tan Uyen.....oops!

One of these letters 'to and from' got right out of control.

**If there is one activity Aussies and New Zealanders like, it is giving the finger to the other bunch.** The Aussies had New Zealand people merged throughout some battalions, which became six-company battalions, and with NZ officers in the HQ staff. One battalion S2 was a New Zealander. It was a quiet day and the S2 had one of

the Aussie linguists write a 'Viet Cong' letter to the Australian field HQ, requesting a copy of an Australian field manual, with catalogue number. So far, so good, and if the letter arrived alone it would have been recognized as a joke.

**Aussies & Kiwis at work:**



But, the battalion had a contact with the very VC unit that supposedly sent the letter, and in the system the joke-letter got mixed with the real stuff. Uh-oh. The proverbial shit hit the fan, because the field manual requested was classified '**Secret**' – **Escape and Evasion**. How did the enemy know this Secret manual existed, and worse, how did they know the Ordnance catalogue number? This got real big real fast, up to Saigon, back to Australia, to Army HQ, to Logistics HQ; the commanding general was hauled out of bed at oh-dark-thirty to get his staff in to the office and track down this security breach. Then word started to leak that it was a joke started by a New Zealand officer. The Aussie command wanted him boiled alive, but as he was not under Aussie jurisdiction, no New Zealand commander was going to punish him for creating such an upset in the Australian army. That officer probably has not had to buy a drink since that day.

**Lex McAulay**  
1RAR, '65/'66

*(continued....)*



~ Sucking In Cadence ~

Being fresh meat to the Army and to Viet Nam I was never given an orientation on the country of Viet Nam. You know, like its people, history, wildlife or anything associated with it. This was in April of 1966. My company was just issuing M16s but since I was new and my company was moving out in a few days they gave me a raggedy shotgun. Anyway, during this first operation I saw a lot of old timers going through many body gyrations, lots of swearing and breaking silence when we were in the jungle.

I finally got a chance to ask one of my squad buddies what the problem was and he said it was the damn leeches. Now I'm from Kansas and these leeches looked like, what I call inch worms. So the next time we stopped I checked myself and found a few. Now I didn't go crazy like some of the others so I started to wonder if I was missing something. That evening after making camp I asked my Platoon Sgt. about the leeches and did I have anything to worry about. He said you only have to worry if you get over a hundred on you at once and they start sucking in cadence. Needless to say I didn't lose any sleep over the leeches. Now the termites are another story.

**Jim Montague**

**Weapons Platoon, C/2/503d, '66/'67**

~ Is That A Squirrel In Your Pocket Or Are You Just Happy To See Me? ~

I transferred from Recon Platoon just after the Battle of the Slopes. Anyway, since I came from Recon Plt, CPT (Ken) Smith, our company commander, thought it would be nice to have a Recon Squad walking point every day. So here I am walking point, trying to be as quiet as I can when this damn ground squirrel runs out of the bush and starts running up my leg!

Picture this GI, armed to the teeth, swatting at this little squirrel and still trying to be quiet. All of a sudden the guy walking behind me knocks me off of the trail and opens up to the front. When the shooting stopped, we walked further down the trail and here's this gook shot all to hell. I asked what the hell happened, and the guy that opened up says, "There was a sniper ahead, but he was laughing at you and that damn squirrel so hard he couldn't get off a shot at you."

**Everybody** in the recon squad was rolling in laughter!

**Ed Perkins**

**Recon/A/2/503d, '67/'68**



*"You gotta have balls to walk up this trail!"*

Rocky

~ You Goofin' On Me Bro? ~

I don't know where we were, but I was in country about 4 or 5 months at the time – this was after a pretty good fire fight. Mike Sturges (my hero) and I were told to watch over some dead gook bodies (why, I don't have a clue, they ain't goin' anywhere). So while I piled a couple together (so they couldn't escape) I heard some talking on the other side of this mound. Locked and loaded I carefully looked over. There was my hero lighting a cigarette for this dead gook. Mike had him propped against a tree, legs and arms folded! He's telling him to *inhale!* Now, was he goofin' with me or being a good American soldier? Hmmm?



**L-R: Jackattack & his hero Mike**

**Jack "Jackattack" Ribera**  
**No Deros Alpha 2/503d, '66**

~ A Reluctant Warrior ~

After graduating jump school in the early part of 1966, I received orders for Vietnam. I was to report to Ft. Dix for my flight, which was mostly Paratroopers destined for the 2d Battalion. After leaving Dix we landed in Anchorage, Alaska to refuel – we were to be there at least an hour or two so being good soldiers we headed to the bar for libations and fun. During our time there, there was a couple sitting next to us who kept buying us drinks and we, of course, did the same for them.



**Pat in VN '66**

Anyway, at one point the lady excused herself and left for the ladies' room. While she was gone they called for us to board the plane. The lady's husband, who had insisted the whole time that he wanted to go with us, stood up as we were leaving so we gave him a field jacket and took him on the plane with us. (The bastard even kissed the stewardesses on the way to the plane).

*(continued...)*



Once airborne and several head counts later they figured out they had one too many; by this time the gentleman had started to sober up and realized he was in the wrong place. When we landed in Japan the MP's were waiting and we never heard from him again. I always wondered what his wife thought when she returned from the restroom, or got the phone call from Japan? He had a great story to tell.

**Pat Sirmeyer**  
E Troop, 17<sup>th</sup> Cav, '65/'66

~ The Propel LP ~

I think it was Operation Cedar Falls, 1966. I was the "D" Maintenance rep and platoon leader forward at the fire support base (FSB). We were in rubber adjacent to an airstrip. The FSB had been mortared a few times but not directly assaulted. The maintenance platoon was the FSB quick reaction force because we had numerous crew-served weapons in the maintenance float and people who knew how to use them.



**Steve on guard.**

The 173d Support Battalion XO, an infantry major with SF experience and more than one tour in RVN and I think served as the FSB OIC. Late one night I got a call from the TOC directing me to get my gear and bring a Starlite scope to the TOC ASAP. I did as directed and upon arriving at the TOC was told that they had lost contact with an LP manned by Propel soldiers (319<sup>th</sup> I think) and that the major and I were to go out and find these guys. The major would lead and I would follow with my eye glued to the Starlite scope. After confirming the "running password" we headed out into the rubber, the major in the lead. The major would stop about every ten or fifteen paces and whisper "Propel LP." Receiving no response we moved further out into the rubber. I guess after six or seven times he got a response. Meanwhile I'm still glued to the Starlite scope. Challenge and password were exchanged. "Advance and be recognized." So we did. The major slid into the hole with three soldiers. He asked, "Didn't you hear the TOC trying to contact you?" "Yes," replied the sergeant. "Why didn't you reply?" asked the major. "Sir," replied the sergeant, "we're a listening post."

**Steven Skolochenko**  
"D" Maint., 173d Spt. Bn, '66/'67



**AN/PVS-1 Night Vision Sight "Starlight Scope"**  
(1<sup>st</sup> Generation) used on M14 Rifle (circa 1965-70)

**Type:** Passive "starlight" scope intensifying ambient light  
**Weight:** [estimated] 8 pounds complete with battery  
**Effective range:** same as with conventional sights

~ Sandwich Anyone? ~

I may have already told this story in a previous newsletter, but it's the only amusing thing I remember about that damn war. In late 1965, I had been in-country only a few days when a hard chargin' combat



experienced vet Sgt. had me ride shotgun with him into Bien Hoa so we could get our "jeep washed." We stopped at a roadside cafe where we met two other Sky Soldiers for lunch; one, another experienced combat vet, and the other a Cherry like me, neither of us having been on a mission as of that date. We all ordered hamburgers for our meal (dog burgers?). We two Cherrys listened intently to the two combat vets, hanging on their every word, hopefully learning something from them which might help keep us alive over the upcoming year. Our burgers were served and the Cherry to my right bit into his sandwich. He then immediately spit out the mouthful of hamburger, including half of a giant dead cockroach, slowly putting his sandwich back down onto his plate. The hard chargin' Sgt., who had been on numerous operations since May, asked our Cherry buddy, "Don't you want that sandwich?" Meekly, the other FNG said, "No." The Sarge reached over, picked-up the Cherry's sandwich with the bite missing, pulled the remains of the dead giant cockroach out, and ate the burger. I put my sandwich down and went without lunch that day while trying not to throw-up. Welcome to the Nam G.I. It wasn't many weeks later I could eat hamburger-cockroach sandwiches with the best of 'em. After lunch our jeep was indeed washed.

**Lew "Smitty" Smith**  
HHC/2/503d, '65/'66

(continued...)



## ~ At The Ready On Full Auto ~

One of my favorite experiences happened on ambush one night. It had been a terrible night; slipping in the paddies, lit up by the moon, reports of a lot of enemy activity, etc.

At any rate, I took my ambush out that night, and we planned to set up on the edge of a ville facing the trail that went up into the high ground. As we approached the hootch we intended to use on the side of the trail, we started to fan out and set up. I wasn't watching where I was headed and tramped in a bucket which stuck on my foot. After a whole lot of clanging and banging, we had to call in for new ambush coordinates. I think even Uncle Ho heard us that night.

On another night, we went to basically the same area and set up around the back of the village waiting for them to come out of the high ground after firing up Charlie Company. We hunkered down tight and had drifted into to our 1-on 1-off routine when I heard something move to the side of the hootch.

I nudged my RTO and motioned for him to pull the pin on a frag. I went to the corner of the hootch and was stumped...I can't yell "Dung lai" or pop around the corner without getting a few rounds center mass. But I couldn't bring myself to fire around the corner on the off chance it might be a kid that got out of his hootch or something.

I stood there for what seemed like an eternity when I decided to whisper Dung lai, and if there was any movement, I would let go on full auto. I did, and I heard a rustling sound that stopped as quickly as it started. Still uneasy about firing, I said it a little louder and lunged around the corner with my '16 pointed out in front and on full auto. I immediately hit something that was moving...I then said Dung lai in an excited street voice. I immediately got a reply this time; it was a calf tied to the side of the hootch, and I hit him in the head with my flash suppressor. He let out a little "MOO-O-O" and my RTO and I fell against the side of the hootch with our hearts beating like a blown engine and we started laughing. Couldn't hold back the laugh, and we each were trying to stifle the laughter. Bolt, the RTO, was trying to put the pin back in the frag while laughing and tears rolling down his cheeks.

Someday I'll have to tell you about the ambush where I turned to find a suspected VC stopped dead at my right rear. Freaked me out!

**Jerry Sopko**  
D/4/503d, '69/'70

## (Editor's choice. Funniest story of the lot):

### ~ They're Right Over There, LT ~

We had just got a new cherry Lieutenant and he had been in the field with us about a month. Remember now, this is in '70 so our platoon was only at half strength all the time and was broken down into what we called Hawk Teams. That's 5 man teams and each team was assigned a grid square butting up to the other team's click. It was the usual ambush every night and search and destroy patrols every day, at the same time looking for a good ambush site for that next night. Every fourth day we were given coordinates for all the teams to meet for resupply. During this particular resupply I helped unload the chopper and saw a nice, large, yellow onion rolling around in it, so I grabbed it and stuck in my side pants pocket.



**Bud in the boonies**

Also, we had mail on the chopper and I received a care package from home. In this package I got a can of Wolf brand chili and a can of old El Paso Tortillas (can't find those anymore). So for lunch I took some C-Rat beefsteaks and broke them up into pieces and cooked the chili, chopped up the onion and beefsteaks in my canteen cup and shared it with everyone. We would smear it on the tortillas for a homemade jungle enchilada. The cherry LT thought it tasted very good and asked me where I got the onion. I told him, "*Over there among those bushes, Sir, they grow everywhere around here. You just have to know where to find them.*" We lounged around for a while before moving out to our new grid square, and in about an hour I saw the Lieutenant over in the weeds digging around for onions.

**Bud Sourjohn**  
A/2/503d, '70

(continue....)



~ Every Soldier's Nightmare ~

On one of our daily humps of search and destroy we crossed this river which was about waist deep. After crossing we sat down for a little rest. Timothy Johnson decides he's gone long enough between baths and drops his ammo belt, M-16 and all his clothes and back in he went. Ole Timothy was in that river buck naked when he lets out a scream that would curdle your blood, and high steps it for dry land. We all scramble for our 16s thinking Timothy has spotted the whole North Vietnamese Army. Not seeing any enemy we figure Timothy has other distress. Up on the bank he's yelling, "Get 'em off! Get 'em off!"



**Vietnamese leeches**

We had to get close to see the big fat gray leeches spread all over his glistening body. They were big suckers and scattered from chest to ankles. Now we all know that leeches don't hurt, but boy can they give you the willies. We all gathered around Timothy and showered him down with bug juice till the leeches all fell off. We all then looked at our empty bug juice bottles and wondered what the hell we were going to do when the mosquitoes would come at us later that night.



**Good buddy Ed Swauger.  
He's on the left.**

**Ed Swauger  
B/2/503d, '68/'69**

~ Going On Patrol In Civvies ~

By 28 February 1945, we were still doing a little patrolling, but activity was lessening every day. We found a large supply of men's clothing. There were cotton slacks and various colors of slacks and shirts. I remember many bright yellow shirts and many blue colors. Someone, I believe General Marquat, said the Japs had emptied the merchandise out of the stores in Manila and brought it out here and stored it. This was also the reason for the large amounts of alcoholic beverages out here.

We put on some of the clothes to lounge around in. It was so nice to get out of the board-like, hot fatigues. Then someone wore a yellow, cotton shirt on patrol. The patrol moved across the Parade Ground and was seen by some in regimental headquarters.



**LT Calhoun on LST returning from Corregidor to Mindoro.**

(Bill Bailey photo)

Orders came out immediately threatening the most dire consequences for anyone caught wearing any civilian attire. I guess they were right. Parachutists really did not look dressed for the part attired in jump boots, blue trousers, yellow shirt, steel helmet and wearing a rifle belt and web suspenders with the pouches filled with 8-round clips and frag and WP grenades hanging from the suspenders.

**LT Bill Calhoun  
503rd PRCT, WWII**

(The culprit, who was wearing the yellow shirt and blue trousers, can be named after all these years, was..... Lt. Calhoun).

**Submitted by Paul Whitman  
503rd P.R.C.T. Heritage Battalion Web Site**

~ WHOSE IS IT? ~

While we were operating out of Bien Hoa in 1967 in War Zone C, I was walking point when I came upon a VC slit trench, which were almost always outside their perimeter. Well, it smelled like a VC had just used it, so I turned around to the guy behind me and whispered,



**Chargin' Charlie Zac in Vietnam**

***"Pass the word back that I found a slit trench and it smells like fresh shit."***

(continued....)



I no sooner got the words out of my mouth when there was a couple of shots came my way. When I hit the dirt I was facing the other guy. I said to him **“Now that’s fresh shit!”** He replied, **“Yeah, and I think it’s mine!”** Luckily, the VC just shot a couple of times and took off.

Ray “Zac” Zaccone  
C/2/503d, ‘67/’68



## ~ REMEMBERING HARRY ~

Why I’m compelled to write this I don’t know, maybe to purge some of my demons? Why do I write this, maybe to keep his memory alive? Why? After all I wasn’t that close to him. We had so little in common. He was very outgoing, always smiling, never complaining and liked by all of us, but he was different. His conversations were mostly of God, his mother and his home in Virginia. He didn’t smoke or use colorful language like the rest of us. As nineteen-year-old boys, we spent our down time playing cards, talking about girls and telling *war stories* of our R & R’s. When he spoke of girls it was in a more respectable tone.

I don’t know if he had or has siblings, I don’t know if his parents are still living. Surely he must have aunts, uncles and cousins. Am I the only one who thinks of him, and if so, why? There were other guys I became closer to, some died some lived, but their memories never cross my mind as often as his. And, then there is that silly little song he was always singing....”*Every time I go to town the boys always kick my dog around.*”

I knew Harry Stephens for less than one of his nineteen years. Just like his face keeps appearing in my mind, he kept showing up in my life in 1967. We first met in jump school and then fate placed us together in Charlie 2/503d in March. We were in different platoons but would run into each other during stand-downs. Later that year, September or October, we were both assigned to the newly formed Delta Company. This time we were in the same platoon so we had more frequent interaction. Still, he was just a guy in my platoon, we weren’t that close.

It’s nearing the 43rd anniversary of his last smile and I still see it clearly. Harry died on Hill 875, 19 November 1967.

Shortly after the initial contact we began to dig in. We paired up in twos and began digging. Harry paired with Clarence Hall, a veteran of “The Jump”. They were about two meters to my left and on the downhill side of me and Frank Carmody. Harry and Clarence were able to dig down about two and a half feet when the mortars

started coming in. When it was over we all began to check on each other and discovered Harry and Clarence had taken a direct hit. Although Clarence was black and Harry was white, it was difficult to tell one from the other.

Isn’t it strange how fate works? If anyone should have lived it should have been Harry -- there were many more of us who were less deserving. As I stated earlier, Harry and Clarence were about two and a half feet below ground while Carmody and I were only about one foot down. They were only a couple of meters from us and we weren’t scratched. I’ll always wonder, WHY?

Wayne Bowers  
C/D/2/503d, ‘67/’68

**Harry Edward  
Stephens  
Specialist Four  
D Co., 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn  
173d ABN BDE  
U.S. Army  
20 Oct 1945 ~  
19 Nov 1967  
Richmond, Virginia**



Harry

**Clarence Hall  
Specialist Four  
D Co., 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn  
173d ABN BDE  
U.S. Army  
17 Mar 1948 ~  
20 Nov 1967  
Newport, Kentucky  
(no photo available)**



Card found on a WWII web site. *Airborne!!*



# A SIMPLE BLOOD TEST CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

Don't believe me? Read the following report, or ask Sky Soldiers Don, Bob, Craig, Floyd, Jim, Ray, Tom and other buddies whose names I can't recall right now....all whom were diagnosed with **Prostate Cancer**. Fortunately, each trooper underwent a PSA blood test and they are still here with us as a result.

LTC Bob Carmichael, our battalion XO/CO in '65/'66, a survivor of prostate cancer, has been after me for the longest time to publish some thorough information in our newsletter about this heinous disease. He promised me I still have a chance at that third stripe, so here it is.....

The Veteran's Administration has found a direct correlation between **Agent Orange** and **Prostate Cancer**. Hell, those of us who served with the 173d in Vietnam used to tramp thru vegetation treated with that chemical and others, and we'd often even sleep in the stuff.

Do yourself, your wife or partner and kids or grandkids a favor (even if you don't read the report below)....

*Get your prostate checked with a rectal exam or a simple PSA blood test....TODAY!*

**Smitty Out**

**P.S.** If you opt for the rectal exam, be sure to ask for dinner and a movie.



## ABOUT THE PROSTATE

The more you know about the normal development and function of the prostate, where it's located, and what it's attached to, the better you can understand how prostate cancer develops and impacts a man's life over time – due either to cancer growth or as a result of treatments.

### Normal Anatomy

The normal prostate is a small, squishy gland about the size of a walnut (20 milliliters). It sits under the bladder and in front of the rectum. The urethra – the narrow tube that runs the length of the penis and carries both urine and semen out of the body – runs directly through the prostate. The rectum, or lower end of the bowel, sits just behind the prostate and the bladder.

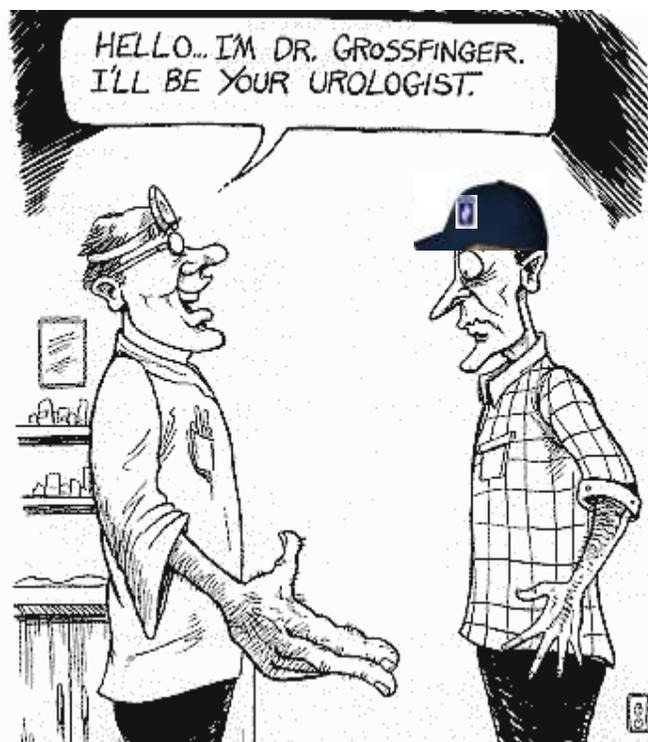
Sitting just above the prostate are the seminal vesicles – two little glands that secrete about 60% of the substances that make up semen. Running alongside and attached to the sides of the prostate are the nerves that control erectile function.

### Normal Physiology

The prostate is not essential for life, but it's important for reproduction. It seems to supply substances that facilitate fertilization and sperm transit and survival. Enzymes like PSA are actually used to loosen up semen to help sperm reach the egg during intercourse. (Sperm is not made in the prostate, but rather the testes).

Other substances made by the seminal vesicles and prostate – such as zinc, citrate, and fructose – give sperm energy to make this journey. Substances like antibodies may protect the urinary tract and sperm from bacteria and other pathogens.

The prostate typically grows during adolescence under the control of the male hormone testosterone and its byproduct DHT, or dihydrotestosterone.



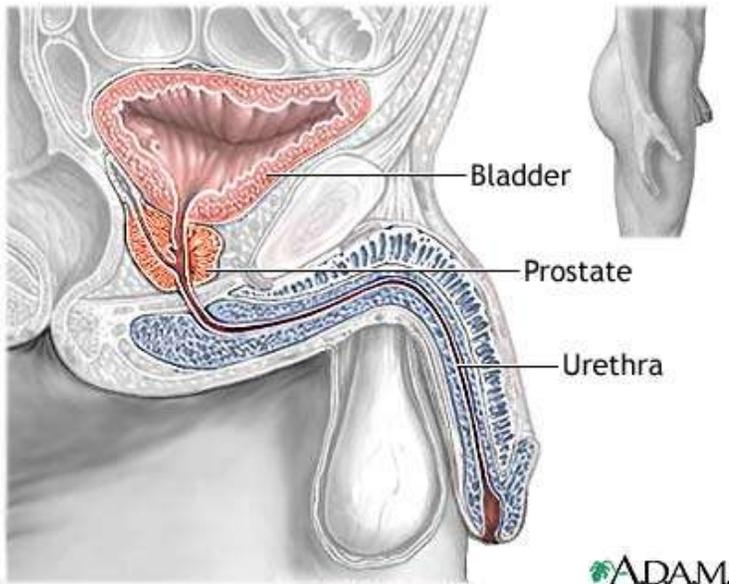
### Prostate Zones

The prostate is divided into several anatomic regions, or zones. Most prostate cancer develops from the peripheral zone near the rectum. That's why a digital rectal exam (DRE) is a useful screening test.

(continued....)



BPH, a non-cancerous prostate condition, typically develops from the transition zone that surrounds the urethra, or urinary tube. This explains why the condition is typically more symptomatic than prostate cancer.



The prostate gland is an organ that surrounds the urinary urethra in men. It secretes fluid which mixes with sperm to make semen.

### Treatment-Related Changes

Because the prostate is close to several vital structures, prostate cancer and its treatment strategies can disrupt normal urinary, bowel, and sexual functioning.

**Urinary function**—Under normal circumstances, the urinary sphincters (bands of muscle tissue at the base of the bladder and at the base of the prostate) remain tightly shut, preventing urine that's stored in the bladder from leaking out. During urination, the sphincters are relaxed and the urine flows from the bladder through the urethra and out of the body.

During prostatectomy—the surgical removal of the prostate—the bladder is pulled downward and connected to the urethra at the point where the prostate once sat. If the sphincter at the base of the bladder is damaged during this process, or if it's damaged during radiation therapy, some measure of urinary incontinence or leakage will occur.

**Bowel function**—Solid waste that's filtered out of the body moves slowly down the intestines, and, under normal circumstances, the resultant stool is excreted through the anus following conscious relaxation of the anal sphincter. Damage to the rectum caused by radiation, or more rarely, by surgery, can result in bowel problems, including rectal bleeding, diarrhea, or urgency.

**Sexual function**—If the erectile nerves are damaged during prostatectomy, which was standard during this type of surgery up until the mid-1980's, the ability to achieve erection is lost. Sexual desire is not affected, but severing or otherwise damaging the nerves can lead to erectile dysfunction. These nerves can also be damaged by radiation, though this process usually occurs much more slowly over time.

Modern techniques in surgery (nerve-sparing), radiation (intensity modulated radiation therapy, positioning devices, 3-D conformal technologies), and seed placement (brachytherapy) have been developed to try to minimize these side effects, and this process continues to improve.

**Fertility**—About 10% of men with prostate cancer have what is known as seminal vesicle invasion. This means the cancer has either spread into the seminal vesicles or has spread around them. If that occurs, seminal vesicles are typically removed during prostatectomy and targeted during radiation therapy. The loss of the prostate and the seminal vesicles renders men infertile. After surgical removal, ejaculation is dry, but orgasms may still occur.

### PROSTATE CANCER SYMPTOMS

Not everyone experiences symptoms of prostate cancer. Many times, signs of prostate cancer are first detected by a doctor during a routine check-up.

Some men, however, will experience changes in urinary or sexual function that might indicate the presence of prostate cancer. These symptoms include:

- A need to urinate frequently, especially at night
- Difficulty starting urination or holding back urine
- Weak or interrupted flow of urine
- Painful or burning urination
- Difficulty in having an erection
- Painful ejaculation
- Blood in urine or semen
- Frequent pain or stiffness in the lower back, hips, or upper thighs.

You should consult with your doctor if you experience any of the symptoms above.

## **DADDY, GRANDPA, PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO GET YOUR TEST**



# FLY **X** GIRLS



*And we had to join the damn Army Airborne.*



*And then we joined too early! Ed*

## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERAN'S AFFAIRS

### Veterans' Benefits Act of 2010 Sent to President's Desk

*House passes legislation to enhance, expand  
And modernize benefits for veterans.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Washington, D.C. – House Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Bob Filner (D-CA) announced that the U.S. House of Representatives voted to approve H.R. 3219, the Veterans' Benefits Act of 2010. Amended and approved by the Senate earlier in the week, today's House action sends the bill to President Obama for his signature. The legislation improves and modernizes certain benefits administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for veterans and their families.

Chairman Filner said, "*H.R. 3219 is the result of numerous productive hearings and markups, meaningful oversight and bi-partisan compromise – all*

*to ensure that those who were willing to lay down their lives for our country and their families and survivors, receive meaningful, world-class, 21st Century benefits. This bill will make a big difference in the lives of many of America's brave veterans."*

### H.R. 3219, as amended – The Veterans' Benefits Act of 2010

#### Enhances Employment Opportunities

- Reauthorize the recently expired VA work-study program and expand the type of work available for participating veterans. The extension allows for veteran students to complete work study in congressional offices, state veteran agencies, or any position working jointly between the VA and an institution of higher learning.
- Require the Secretary of the VA to verify small business ownership and operate a database of veteran-owned small businesses and service-connected veteran-owned small business in an effort to end contracting with businesses that fraudulently claim to be owned by a veteran.
- Increase job opportunities for veterans by reimbursing energy employers for the cost of providing on-the-job training for veterans in the energy sector. Specifically, the bill would create the pilot "Veterans Energy Related Employment Program" which would award competitive grants to three states that are able to serve a population of eligible veterans, boast a diverse energy industry, and have the ability to carry out such a training program.

#### Prevents Homeless Veterans

- Reauthorize the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program through fiscal year 2011
- Authorize an additional \$1 million to provide dedicated services for homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children. Grants would be made available to provide job training, counseling, placement services, and child care services to expedite the reintegration of veterans into the labor force.

#### Ensures the Welfare of Veterans and Their Families by Increasing Insurance Limits

- Increase many of the outdated insurance policy amounts and terms for our veterans, many who are severely disabled or have suffered traumatic injury.
- Increase the maximum loan guarantee amount under the Veterans' Mortgage Life Insurance program.

(continued...)



- Allow totally disabled veterans to receive free Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance coverage for two years following separation from active or reserve duty. Gold Star Wives Government Relations Committee Co-Chair Kathryn A. Witt provided the following support for the insurance provisions in the bill: ***“Gold Star Wives of America, Inc. is happy to support the Veterans’ Benefits Act of 2010, H.R. 3912.... Section 401 increases the amount of supplemental life insurance available to totally disabled veterans to \$30,000. This is a much needed increase in this insurance benefit.”***

### **Secures Compensation, Pensions and Other Benefits**

- Increase the number of veterans to receive independent assisted living services and the quality of those benefits.
- Provide greater automobile and adaptive equipment to veterans with severe burn injuries.
- Increase the automobile allowance for disabled veterans from \$11,000 to \$18,900.
- Allow low income veterans currently receiving a VA pension to receive payments of up to \$5,000 from state or municipalities without offsetting the pension benefit.

Congressman Brian Higgins (NY-27) offered the following statement: ***“Included in this legislation is language I introduced as the Veterans Pensions Protection Act which reverses existing policies that limit veterans from receiving their full benefits offered by state and local governments and makes it easier for our combat veterans to receive the benefits they deserve.”***

Paralyzed Veterans of America National Legislative Director Carl Blake offered support for the bill: ***“The increase in the cap for Independent Living services administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Vocational Rehabilitation program will prove beneficial to the most severely disabled veterans who simply want to become productive members of society. Once again, we thank the Committee for its continued emphasis on improving benefits for severely disabled veterans and their families.”***

### **Protects Service Members Called to Combat**

- Allow the U.S. Office of Special Counsel to receive and investigate certain Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act claims. The provision builds on OSC’s extensive expertise and experience in investigating and resolving federal employment claims and will go a long way in protecting veterans who file USERRA complaints as a result of their service in the Armed Forces, National Guard, and Reserves. For three

years, a random selection of claims will be sent directly to the OSC to be resolved.

- Prohibit early termination fees for certain contracts like cell phone service and residential leases after service members receive notice of military orders to relocate to a site that does not support the contract.
- Allow the Attorney General to bring a civil suit against any violator of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, which provides a wide range of protections for service members.

### **Honors Fallen Service Members and Their Families**

- Allow a parent whose child gave their life in service to our country to be buried in a national cemetery with that child when their veteran child has no living spouse or children.
- Increase burial and funeral benefits and plot allowances for veterans who are eligible for a burial at a national cemetery or who died in a VA facility from \$300 to \$700.

Congresswoman Shelley Berkley (D-NV), long a champion of increasing funeral benefits and plot allowances to reflect modern costs, offered the following statement: ***“Veterans deserve to be laid to rest with full recognition of their military service and by increasing these benefits, we can defray costs for families who might otherwise be unable to cover such an expense. This legislation increases payments so that veterans and their loved ones can have peace of mind when planning for their final arrangements. Veterans who proudly served our nation are entitled to benefit payments to help cover the cost of their final arrangements. But over time, inflation has eroded the purchasing power of these payments, leaving it to families and states to cover any extra costs.”***

### **Strengthens Education Benefits**

- Extend the life of the Veterans’ Advisory Committee on Education, a committee that offers short and long term recommendations for improving the educational benefits of veterans.

Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick (D-AZ) offered this statement explaining the need for the Advisory Committee on Education: ***“Our service members should have access to a first-rate education that will prepare them to excel in new jobs once they leave the military. The expertise and insight of this advisory committee help our fighting men and women get the opportunities they have earned.”***

*(continued....)*



*The new G.I. Bill marks a great victory for our Veterans, but passing that legislation is just part of repaying the debt we owe them. The next step is ensuring that these benefits work for our Veterans, and this committee is a valuable tool in that effort."*

### **Addresses Housing Needs of Disabled Veterans**

- Authorize the Secretary of the VA to make grants of up to \$200,000 per year to recipients that develop assistive technologies for use in specially adaptive housing.

In a letter to Chairman Filner, Disabled American Veterans (DAV) National Legislative Director Joe Violante wrote, ***"Overall, the 'Veterans Benefits Act of 2010' makes important improvements to an array of federal benefits that help to compensate and support veterans transitioning back to into civilian life, especially those who return with disabilities from their service. DAV supports approval of this legislation..."***

### **Invests in Research for Gulf War Veterans**

- Allow the Institute of Medicine to carry out a comprehensive review of best treatment practices for chronic multi-symptom illness in Gulf War veterans and develop a plan for dissemination of best practices through VA.
- Extend the review and evaluation of chronic multi-symptom illness by the National Academy of Sciences of veterans of the Persian Gulf War and Post-9/11 Global Operations.

Chairman Filner concluded: ***"This Congress has been extraordinarily productive for America's veterans. Speaker Pelosi's strong leadership has been critical as this Congress passed caregiver legislation, approved advance appropriations for veterans' health care, raised the VA budget to adequately care for veterans during wartime, and passed a G.I. Bill for the 21st Century. I am privileged to work with the Members of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee who set an aggressive agenda and stood together to ensure that the cost of the war includes the cost of the warrior. They have truly shown love and compassion to America's veterans evidenced by their hard work to keep the promises made to our Nation's heroes of the past, present, and future."***

## **VA ANNOUNCES \$41.9 MILLION TO HELP HOMELESS VETERANS**

WASHINGTON – Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki has announced that 40 states will share more than \$41.9 million in grants to community groups to provide 2,568 beds for homeless Veterans this year.



*"These grants wouldn't have happened without the extraordinary partnerships forged with community organizers," said VA Secretary Eric K. Shinseki. "These investments will provide transitional beds to Veterans who have served honorably, but for various reasons now find themselves in a downward spiral toward despair and homelessness."*

The Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program provides grants and per diem payments to help public and non-profit organizations establish and operate new supportive housing and service centers for homeless Veterans. The \$41.9 million is broken into two categories.

About \$26.9 million will help renovate, rehabilitate or acquire space for 1,352 transitional housing beds. A second group of awards, valued at \$15 million, will immediately fund 1,216 beds at existing transitional housing for homeless Veterans this year. The awards will cover daily living costs based upon the number of homeless Veterans being served in transitional housing.

A key component of VA's plan to eliminate homelessness among Veterans within five years, the grants and per diem payments helped reduce the number of Veterans who were homeless on a typical night last year by 18 percent to about 107,000 Veterans within one year.

VA's strategy to eliminate homelessness among Veterans is to implement a "no wrong door" approach, meaning Veterans who seek assistance should find it in any number of VA's programs, from community partners or through contract services.

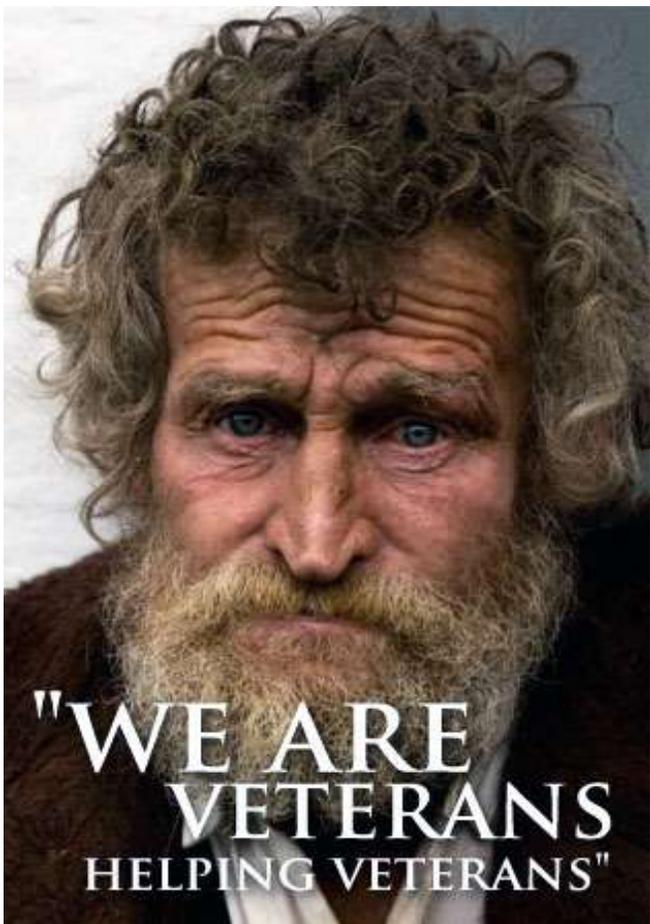
*(continued...)*



Under the Secretary's action plan to end homelessness among Veterans, VA will continue to offer a full range of support necessary to end the cycle of homelessness by providing education, jobs, health care and counseling.

In addition to housing, VA will increase the number and variety of housing options available to homeless Veterans and those at risk, including permanent, transitional, contracted, community-operated and VA-operated housing. Most importantly, VA will target at-risk Veteran populations with aggressive support intervention to try to prevent homelessness before it starts.

For more information, visit VA's web page for VA's National Homeless Providers Grants and Per Diem Off. at [www1.va.gov/HOMELESS/NationalCallCenter.asp](http://www1.va.gov/HOMELESS/NationalCallCenter.asp).



## How Many Homeless Veterans Are There?

Although accurate numbers are impossible to come by, no one keeps national records on homeless veterans – the VA estimates that nearly 200,000 veterans are homeless on any given night, and nearly 400,000 experience homelessness over the course of a year. Very conservative figures estimate that one out of every three homeless men and women who are sleeping in

doorways, under bridges, in alleys or in a box in our cities and rural communities has put on a uniform and served this country and received an Honorable Discharge. Convergent sources estimate that between 23 and 40 percent of homeless adults are veterans. Recent media accounts highlight a small but growing number of veterans from the Iraq wars are showing up in shelters nationwide. Nearly 1000 in 2008 alone. (Dated report)



## HISTORICAL VETERANS DAY MESSAGE TO SOLDIERS

During this Veterans Day, we pause to remember the sacrifices our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen have made in serving our Nation where and when they were needed. From one generation to the next, young men and women have willingly joined the ranks of America's Armed Forces. Aware of their obligations as citizens of the greatest Nation on earth, they answered its call; they served the United States with courage and commitment.

For more than two centuries, American Soldiers have preserved the liberty our forefathers earned by their willingness to fight for it, whatever the cost. Our Army has a long and proud history, filled with tradition and pivotal moments in service to our Nation. From the battlefields of Lexington and Bunker Hill, to Normandy and Manila and beyond, American Soldiers have stood firm against those who would deny basic human dignity to others.

We honor each of you, America's veterans, who served so faithfully and honorably. Through your sacrifices you have secured for millions of others the blessings of freedom, democracy, and the unmatched opportunity that we enjoy in the United States today.

May each of you have a safe Veterans Day. God bless each of you and your families, God bless our Army, and God bless the United States of America.

**Peter J. Schoomaker**  
General U.S. Army  
Chief of Staff

**R.L. Brownlee**  
Acting Secretary of  
the Army

**Note: Army Secretary Les Brownlee was commanding officer of B/2/503d, 173d Airborne Brigade, 1966.**



James A. Thorne, 65, of Wormleysburg, died Sunday, October 17, 2010 in Claremont Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, Middlesex Twp.

He was a graduate of University of Scranton, a stockbroker for IFS Investments, Mechanicsburg, an Army veteran of the Vietnam War serving with the 173d Airborne. He was a member of Good Shepherd Roman Catholic Church, Camp Hill and former President of the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 542. He was a dedicated member of VFW Post 7530, Lower Allen Twp., West Shore Elks Lodge No. 2257, West Shore Knights of Columbus Council, and American Legion Post 730.



Jim received various awards from Toastmasters International for his skill in public speaking. He is survived by his fiancé, Joyce Elfreth of Mechanicsburg; four daughters, Kelly T. Boyle of Wormleysburg, Kerri A. Kenney of Phoenix, AZ, Karen T. Bolus of Lewisburg and Kathleen E. Baddick of Harrisburg; one sister, Maryann Briggs of Allentown; his stepfather, John R. Bellesfield of Allentown; six grandchildren, J.P., Madelyn, Brady, Maxwell, Preston and Katelyn.

Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Thursday, October 21, 2010 at 12 Noon in Good Shepherd Roman Catholic Church, 3435 Trindle Rd., Camp Hill, with Rev. Paul C. Helwig, his pastor as celebrant. Burial was in Indiantown Gap National Cemetery on Friday at 9:00 am with full military honors. A visitation was held on Thursday from 11:00 am until 12 Noon in Good Shepherd Church. Arrangements were handled by Wiedeman Funeral Home, Steelton. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Veterans Administrative Medical Center Hospice, 1700 S. Lincoln Ave., Lebanon, PA 17042.

*Rest well Sky Soldier*



## ~ Letters Home From Vietnam ~

November 1967 Reflections

**From: Wambi Cook, A/2/503d, '67/'68**

*The following are excerpts from letters to my wife and mother:*

2 November, **Mother**-----We were called off the last phase of operation (Tuy Hoa) to secure this fire-support base [Black Horst Mt., I believe] It seems the 2 units who replaced us in Dak To have been making heavy contact ever since we left. The 4th Battalion has already moved back. I doubt seriously if the entire Brigade will be moving back, but there's a good chance the 4th batt will alternate between here and there. Right now I'm doing some "wild" babysitting. I'm taking care of a guy's monkey while he's in Tuy Hoa getting paid. He's a real mess. Why, the little @#%#\*\* just peed on my air mattress. I guess I'll have to tie him to my bunker for punishment. [That monkey died soon after ingesting a heating tablet. I'm convinced some asshole poisoned him however].



**Wambi with his late heating tablet eating pal.**

6 November, **Mother**-----Well, I'm back in Tuy Hoa again instead of returning to the fire base. We got in yesterday and are moving back into the Dak To region in a few hours. We'll fly into Pleiku and convoy from there just as we did almost 5 months ago. I convinced myself it just couldn't happen again [referring to the Slopes AO], but "Sam" says different.

*(continued....)*



I regret returning, but with 101 days left, I'm not worried....Rumors are they can't land planes in Dak To because the VC has its big guns zeroed in them from the mountains. I don't know if there's any truth in it or not.

7 November, **Anita**-----Since we got in, we've been more or less the Brigade's flunkies. We dug got hit pretty bad yesterday and this morning in last night and moved out this morning-dug in again and now we're on ½ hour standby. The 4<sup>th</sup> Batt.....There's boo coo NVA in the area. No sooner than we left, the 4<sup>th</sup> Division who replaced us numbers twice our size, caught hell. The gooks were again about to overrun Dak To and surrounding hamlets. We know where they are and they're just as strong (manpower) as us. I expect some pretty hard fighting these next 2 or 3 months. I also expect to make it out of them. No, I don't expect. I know I will!

14 November, **Mother**-----This letter leaves me well, but shaken. Soon after reading your latest letter yesterday, we moved out and hadn't gone 400 meters before we were hit again. B Company was lead and they got hit in the initial contact. My platoon was lead for Alpha and when reaching Bravo's position, you couldn't help to hear their screams of joy. We lined right in front of them, but VC was all over the place—mainly in tall trees.

We couldn't move forward and we couldn't withdraw because of our many dead and wounded. Our only alternative was to stay and fight. Which is exactly what we did. From 12:00 noon until 8:30 the next morning we gave the VC all we could.....I'm sick and tired of this place and war. I could easily extend for 6 months and be home for Xmas on leave, but I'll take my chances till February. I couldn't stand returning to this country I've come to loath.

### **A & B Companies 11-12 KIAs, 25 MIAs.**

24 November, **Mother**-----Yes, I'm all right. I guess the newspapers reported on the 5 day battle for Hill 875. I didn't ask, but had my picture taken by numerous broadcast companies. They asked questions, but I had very little to say. I did want my photo taken because I knew Anita, you, and everybody else was worrying about me. I was informed by one photographer they'd be shown in the world in 2 days.....Mother I've never been so nervous in all my 10 months over here. I jump at every unordinary sound. I don't think I can take it anymore. June 22 took a lot out of me, but I never expected the same thing to happen again. The Lord almighty has seen fit to let me live again.

27 November, **Anita**-----Things are still pretty hot. We're down to 40 men, but with fresh replacements,

we'll be up to 104. I guess we'll be back in the boonies before you know it. Don't worry, I'll make it.

28 November, **Ma**-----We'll I'm still making it. This cold still has me down. But who am I to complain, it took me 10 months to catch it.....I want to be a peace-loving guy. I hope I don't have any trouble with the war protesters or hippies. Knowing me, were I not in the army I'd probably be right with them. I might just grow a beard and play it cool. (Smile)

29 November, **Hey Girl** (Mother) -----It's hard to believe we have 123 men in a company. We left Hill 875 with less than 30. The "cherries" are really, hmmm—uninformed. I was a dumb, dumb when I first got here, but not half as bad as these guys. I give them till February and they should be in the groove.....I should be leaving the field around December 16. (I got a second R&R to Hong Kong]

### **\*\*\*\*\*Return to Hill 875\*\*\*\*\***

If all goes as planned, I and three comrades will revisit Hill 875 this coming February 2011. Our first attempt in 2008 was summarily rejected by the RVN government. However, our travel agent appears to have done the impossible:

**Friday, February 22:** After breakfast, the luggage will be loaded on to the mini-coach and we will travel to **Tu Mo Rong** which was a site of a major battle of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade in June 1966. For the journey to **Hill 875**, passengers will transfer to a four-wheel-drive vehicle. The road is narrow and subject to frequent flooding and landslides. We will stop at the base of Hill 875, where the famous battle took place in 1967. If guests wish to climb the hill, the round-trip trek will take approximately 4-5 hours, and can be done only if time and weather conditions permit due to the dense jungle terrain.

To the best of my knowledge, we'll be the first American combatants to do so. If this presumption is incorrect, we welcome your feedback.

**Wambi**



From John "Top" Searcy, HHC/2/503d, '65/'66





# THE 503<sup>rd</sup> P.R.C.T. HERITAGE BATTALION **Online**

## The 503d Australians

of WWII. In 1943, prior to the attachment of the 462nd Parachute Field Artillery Battalion, the absence of artillery became critical to the 503d P.I.R. combat jump on a Japanese fortified area at Nadzab, New Guinea.

Elements of the 7th Australian Division, A.I.F were hastily chosen to jump - in the form of 33 men of the 2/4th Artillery Battery under command of Lt. Pearson.

After two days of hasty parachute training, two of the originals were injured and ruled out. On 5 September 1943, when the 503d P.I.R. went through the door over Nadzab, the 2/4th Artillery Section went out the door with them. Making up for the two injured were two men who made their first jump their combat jump.

After hitting the field, they had one of their 25 pounder guns up and firing within 2 hours. Those gunners of the 7th Australian Division, A.I.F., didn't know then that they were setting the pace for another Australian unit to join with

the 503d, some 22 years later on another foreign airstrip when 1st R.A.R., whose lineal history goes back to the 7th Australian Division, A.I.F., were to join with the sons of the 503d P.I.R. at Bien Hoa, Vietnam. 



*33 Artillerymen of the 2/4th Field Regiment, under the command of Lt. Pearson, participated in the paratroop drop over Nadzab, 5 September 1943. AMW 030141/24*

Remarkably, the Heritage of the 503d includes the 1st Royal Australian Regiment, which joined the "Herd" in May/June of 1965 when the two line Battalions of the Brigade were the 1/503d and 2/503d. When 1st R.A.R. joined up, it became the THIRD battalion of the Brigade and remained so till it returned to Australia. It was replaced by the 4/503d, although it was not until the following year that 3/503d was created to fill the gap in the Brigade. The lineage of the line Battalions of the Brigade were: 1/503d, 2/503d, 1<sup>st</sup> R.A.R., 4/503d, and 3/503d. Then of course there were the later US Infantry units that were attached.



**Sgts. 1RAR, 1965**

1st R.A.R.'s lineal history goes back to the 65th Battalion, 2nd Australian Imperial Forces (A.I.F.)



## HISTORY OF VETERANS DAY

World War I – known at the time as “The Great War” - officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of

**“the war to end all wars.”**



**Soldiers of the 353rd Infantry near a church at Stenay, Meuse in France, wait for the end of hostilities. This photo was taken at 10:58 a.m., on November 11, 1918, two minutes before the armistice ending World War I went into effect.**

In November 1919, President Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: *"To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country's service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations..."*



The original concept for the celebration was for a day observed with parades and public meetings and a brief suspension of business beginning at 11:00 a.m.

The United States Congress officially recognized the end of World War I when it passed a concurrent resolution on June 4, 1926, with these words:

*Whereas* the 11th of November 1918, marked the cessation of the most destructive, sanguinary, and far reaching war in human annals and the resumption by the people of the United States of peaceful relations with other nations, which we hope may never again be severed, and



*Whereas* it is fitting that the recurring anniversary of this date should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nationals; and

*Whereas* the legislatures of twenty-seven of our States have already declared November 11 to be a legal holiday: Therefore be it Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that the President of the United States is requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on November 11 and inviting the people of the United States to observe the day in schools and churches, or other suitable places, with appropriate ceremonies of friendly relations with all other peoples.

An Act (52 Stat. 351; 5 U. S. Code, Sec. 87a) approved May 13, 1938, made the 11th of November in each year a legal holiday—a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated and known as "Armistice Day." Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I, but in 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen in the Nation's history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the veterans service organizations, amended the Act of 1938 by striking out the word "Armistice" and inserting in its place the word "Veterans." With the approval of this legislation (Public Law 380) on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.



*(continued....)*



Later that same year, on October 8th, President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the first "Veterans Day Proclamation" which stated: *"In order to insure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all veterans, all veterans' organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in the common purpose. Toward this end, I am designating the Administrator of Veterans' Affairs as Chairman of a Veterans Day National Committee, which shall include such other persons as the Chairman may select, and which will coordinate at the national level necessary planning for the observance. I am also requesting the heads of all departments and agencies of the Executive branch of the Government to assist the National Committee in every way possible."*



applied to all subsequent VA Administrators. Since March 1989 when VA was elevated to a cabinet level department, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has served as the committee's chairman.

The Uniform Holiday Bill (Public Law 90-363 (82 Stat. 250)) was signed on June 28, 1968, and was intended to ensure three-day weekends for Federal employees by celebrating four national holidays on Mondays: Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Columbus Day. It was thought that these extended weekends would encourage travel, recreational and cultural activities and stimulate greater industrial and commercial production. Many states did not agree with this decision and continued to celebrate the holidays on the original dates.

The first Veterans Day under the new law was observed with much confusion on October 25, 1971. It was quite apparent that the commemoration of this day was a

matter of historic and patriotic significance to a great number of our citizens, and so on September 20th, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed Public Law 94-97 (89 Stat. 479), which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of November 11, beginning in 1978. This action supported the desires of the overwhelming majority of state legislatures, all major veterans service organizations and the American people.



**President Eisenhower signing HR7786, changing Armistice Day to Veterans Day. From left: Alvin J. King, Wayne Richards, Arthur J. Connell, John T. Nation, Edward Rees, Richard L. Trombla, Howard W. Watts.**

On that same day, President Eisenhower sent a letter to the Honorable Harvey V. Higley, Administrator of Veterans' Affairs (VA), designating him as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee.

In 1958, the White House advised VA's General Counsel that the 1954 designation of the VA Administrator as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee

Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week on which it falls. The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important

purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.





~ Some Veterans of the Sky Soldier Kind ~



*Airborne.....All The Way!*

