

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello from the snowy Midwest. 'Tis the season to wish each and every one of you a Merry Christmas and just as important, Happy New Year. I dare say 2025 should be interesting to and for us all. Knowing so many of you who read this newsletter, I can safely say that most of us will be closely monitoring just how this "new" leadership takes care of the American citizenship going forward. As veterans we don't need to be reminded that we should always respect the office of president, whoever sits in the Oval office. That person is our Commander In Chief no matter what.

One of the good things 2025 will do is get us all close to the next greatest reunion ever in Oklahoma City in Spring 2026. At this time next year you will be getting all kinds of urging to make your reservations for one of the best times of your life. I am anxious to see and read about Dave Allin's plans for all of us to experience the hospitality of Oklahoma. I already hear that it is first rate.

Again I wish you all Seasons Greetings from me and mine and hope and pray that we will all have a great year coming up...

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



EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Happy holidays to all my brothers. Frankly, I am both surprised and gratified that we have all lived long enough to celebrate over five decades since we were in the land of the little people.

In the next few months I'll begin making arrangements for the next reunion, here in Oklahoma City, which I intend to make the best ever. The OKANA resort, with a huge indoor waterpark, just across the river from downtown, is opening this spring. We're probably too old for a waterpark, but you could bring your kids, grandkids, and maybe even great-grandkids. If you have suggestions on what you would like to see or do at the reunion, please let me know.

The spring weather here in Oklahoma tends to be mild or even warm, but almost always windy. You might even get to experience the excitement of a tornado or two, but don't worry, they never hit downtown OKC. For some reason, tornados are particularly attracted to trailer parks, and the reunion will be in a big strong building.

Please enjoy this edition of the newsletter, and if you have anything to contribute, please send it to me. Thanks.

Deeds, Not Words

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

TRIPLE DEUCE DEPLOYMENT

Our battalion has been deployed to the Middle East. Alpha Company is in Baghdad, and the other companies are in Kuwait. The soldiers would undoubtedly appreciate letters and CARE packages from anyone in the States, but it would be particularly appropriate if those came from us veterans. Lon Oakley, John Poggi, Pete Gaworecki, Mark Woempner, Skip Fahel, Steve Irvine, Jim May, and Dick Nash have all offered support, information, and suggestions. It is too late to send Christmas cards at this point, but if you want to send CARE packages or letters, they would certainly be appreciated.

As to what to send, remember the SP packs we got in Nam? Things like that, such as hard candy, beef jerky, peanuts, pretzels, Chex mix, ginger snaps, Oreos, peanut butter crackers, and gum. Lon recommends using boxes the same size as the SP boxes we had in 'Nam (12"x 12") so they can be pushed down to squad level. You could also include games, playing cards, reading materials, personal hygiene products, ear buds, USB charger cords, and anything else you think they might need that the Army doesn't supply.

All packages must be sent to a specific person, including full name and rank. For Anvil Company, you can send it to 1SG Zachary Grado or CPT Andrew Lee. That address is:

CPT Lee, Andrew
SECFOR Unit 6060 Box 1001
DPO AE 09870

For the other companies, here are the addresses and POC:

1SGT Franks, Michael
TF Commando, HHC 2-22
APO AE 09330

1SGT Brooks, David
TF Commando, B2-22
APO AE 09330

1SGT Hollingworth, Jacob T.
TF Commando, C 2-22
APO AE 09330

1SGT Corry, Timothy
TF Commando, D 2-22
APO AE 09330

1SGT Ossias, Darlson
TF Commando, G 2-22
APO AE 09330

Meanwhile, your leadership team is working on a systematic approach to sending packages to the deployed troops. Hopefully you will be able to donate money to a fund that will purchase and mail items after consulting with the Points of Contact to determine what is needed or preferred. You will, of course, still be able to send packages on your own, but we aim to make the process easier for everyone. I have attached a copy of the latest newsletter from Anvil Company, 2/22, for more information about their deployment.

Dennis “Tex” Holt

Editor’s Note: The following was sent to me by Jay Moore, of Abilene Texas. He is a friend of Dennis’s, and he wrote this for his email group for Veterans Day. Dennis, like myself, was a member of Nash’s Nitwits, Alpha Company, Third Platoon, in early 1969.

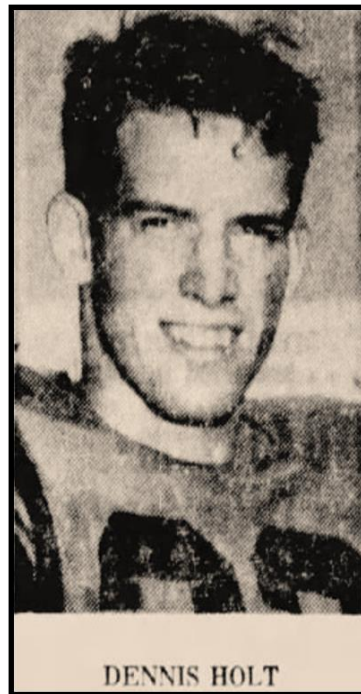


Jay Moore and Dennis Holt

Four months after taking office in January 1969, President Nixon went on television to lay out a peace plan for ending the war in Vietnam. His proposal was broadcast on May 14 and called for U.S. and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) troops to simultaneously pull out of South Vietnam over the coming twelve months. That same month, American troops were at their high-water mark with more than 540,000 stationed in S. Vietnam. Leaders in Hanoi rejected Nixon’s peace plan.

Earlier, that same day, NVA troops pressed a coordinated attack on scores of S. Vietnamese villages and U.S. bases in one of the most wide-ranging assaults since the

Tet Offensive of 1968. South Vietnamese and American troops across S. Vietnam fought back. One who was in the fight on May 14, 1969, was Dennis “Tex” Holt of Abilene.



I met Dennis nine years later in 1978. I was a high school senior working for my dad who was in the homebuilding business and Dennis oversaw the construction efforts. We spent a fair amount of time together, driving from job to job and occasionally eating lunch together. I was 17, barely on the edge of adulthood. Dennis was 31 and, in my eyes, a grown man, and one who was awfully easy to like.

One of the first things you notice about Dennis is that he smiles a lot, and that he wears an eye-patch over his left eye. One day I decided to ask him about it, and he told me the story. And now, 40-plus years later, I vividly remember the setting. We were driving in a pickup heading south on Treadaway Boulevard when Dennis told me what happened on May 14, near Nui Ba

Den — the Black Virgin Mountain — northwest of Saigon and a perennial hot zone during the Vietnam War. I have admired him ever since.

Dennis is a native Abilenian. He went to Ben Milam and Travis Elementary, then to Franklin Jr. High. He was a Little League All-Star and attended North Park Baptist Church. He was a member of the Abilene High class of '65 where he was the student council vice-president and ran track as a sprinter. His senior year, he skillfully quarterbacked the Eagle football team. With two games left, he replaced the injured tailback, excelling in that position too. Following graduation he enrolled at McMurry College in Abilene, going to class during the day and working at the Timex plant on N. 2nd at night trying to earn enough to pay for school. During his junior year, he was out of money and then out of school. Then, the draft board came calling. Dennis entered the U.S. Army on May 15, 1968. By October, he had landed at Tan Son Nhut air base outside of Saigon as a GI in the 25th Division, 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment — often referred to as Triple Deuce. Dennis was 21.



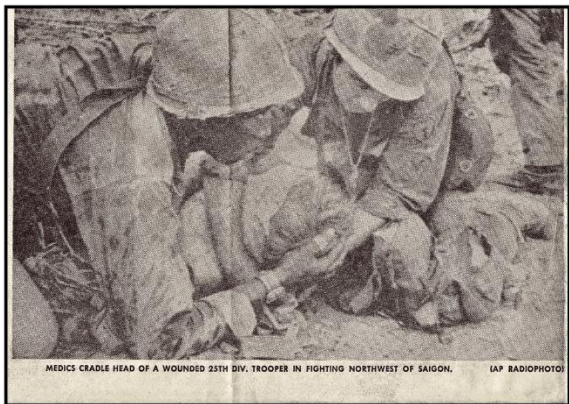
Three days before Nixon went on TV in May 1969, NVA troops unleashed scores of surprise rocket and mortar attacks,

resulting in some of the most intense fighting of the war. (On May 12, another AHS student, James Harrison, age 22, was killed in a mortar attack near Tay Ninh, only a few miles from where Dennis was located.) In response to the attacks, four infantry companies were sent to recon an area dubbed “The Crescent.” Dennis’ squad was part of the Third Platoon, Alpha Company and they were out on reconnaissance. Along with them was a photographer from the Associated Press. It was May 14, 1969. Dennis had been in the Army for 364 days.

Each squad was supported by an armored personnel carrier (APC) with a top-mounted 50-caliber machine gun. Troops often walked, rather than ride in or atop the APC, with only the driver and the gunner riding. As Dennis’ squad moved through the dense jungle the APC hit a tree, causing a heavy branch to fall. It hit the gunner, breaking his arm. Someone needed to step up and take his place. An unwritten rule in the Army is “never volunteer for anything.” Dennis volunteered. The rest of the afternoon was tense but uneventful and word finally came that they were to head back to their fire support base. And, true to form, as they started in that direction, the NVA launched their ambush.

The members of Dennis’ squad were caught; sandwiched between their trailing APC and the NVA, making it impossible for him to fire his machine gun at the enemy without possibly hitting his own men; he began firing into the trees hoping to hit snipers. Dennis Holt — a kid from Abilene, Texas, who had never been farther from home than El Paso — now found himself on a Wednesday afternoon in May of 1969 halfway around the world, in a sweltering jungle, manning a machine gun in a full-fledged, honest-to-goodness, real-life war;

in a firefight with real artillery, real mortars and real rockets, all fired by a very real enemy; both sides frantically trying to kill the other in order to keep themselves alive; all of it happening at a level of compressed intensity and violence most of us are never forced to experience. Dennis fired back in a storm of adrenaline. Then, his world went black.



Dan “Doc” Michalec and another medic tend to Tex’s wounds, May 14, 1969

To put it mildly, when he first told me this story back in 1978, I was quite surprised. I had assumed Dennis lost his eye in an accident, maybe out hunting or from some childhood mishap. I *never* dreamed he wore an eye patch because he had been in a war. At the time, even Dennis did not have all the details of that day. He would not fully learn what had occurred on May 14, 1969, until he began attending Triple Deuce reunions in 2012. Dennis lost his eye — and came within a literal inch of losing his life — when another APC gunner, located some distance away, squeezed the trigger on his machine gun, firing in the direction of the enemy, and one of the 50-caliber bullets — a half-inch wide piece of lead traveling at 3,000 feet per second — hit Dennis on the left side of his head. It cost him his eye and it changed his life from that moment on.

In and out of consciousness, the medics began bandaging his head to stop the blood loss. The AP photographer raised his camera and took a photo; two medics cradling Dennis’ head as he was lying on the ground in a Vietnamese jungle. He was strapped into a rescue basket attached to the outside of a helicopter and was evacuated to the nearest field hospital where quick medical treatment kept him from bleeding to death. After being stabilized, he would leave Vietnam for more care in Japan, then Okinawa, then to Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio.

Within a few months of being discharged from Brooke, Dennis married Linda Wistl in 1970. They had been friends at Abilene High and she often wrote to him while he was in Vietnam. They moved to Irving but returned to Abilene in 1978. They bought a house near Cooper High School where they raised their two daughters. We met soon after.

Over the past 40 years, I have probably run into Dennis only a handful of times. But each year, when I taught about Vietnam to high school students, I thought of him. And although I no longer teach US history, I find that I still think of him. Recently, I got his number and texted to see if we might meet up for a cup of coffee. We did. We got caught up. And we talked about Vietnam and May 14, 1969. I learned he had been in a number of earlier firefights. On January 8, his platoon lieutenant, a sergeant and a medic were all killed. I can only imagine how utterly dumbfounding and disturbing such jarring moments like that must be; of course, Dennis doesn’t have to imagine.

I asked him if he thinks much about Vietnam these days. He smiled, “Every morning when I put on this eye patch.” Yet,

Dennis feels fortunate; fortunate that he came home. While he was in Vietnam, he turned 22. Months later, after he was back in Texas, he was asked what he got for his 22nd birthday. He said, "I got the chance to be 23." Last Friday, November 1, Dennis turned 78. He is now Poppy to four granddaughters and one grandson. After 42 years of marriage, Linda passed away in 2012. He still lives in their home by Cooper. And he is still one of my heroes.

That week in May of 1969 saw 430 US troops killed in Vietnam and 2,185 wounded.

Jay Moore, Abilene, Texas

Way After Action Reports

Steve Irvine has made an interesting suggestion. We ought to collect reports of small unit actions that occurred during our tours that didn't make the papers or the unit history. These would be included in the newsletter and also compiled on our website to add more context to the role of Triple Deuce in Viet Nam. We came up with a tentative template, and I have filled it in with an example of an event I was involved in. The description is from a letter I wrote home just after it occurred, so it is relatively accurate. Let us know what you think of the idea, and any suggestions you might have regarding the format. And, as always, I would appreciate receiving such accounts for the newsletter.

(Way) After Action Report Example

Your Name: David Allin

Your unit (Co, Plt, Sqd): A Co., 3rd Plt, 4th Sqd

Dates of Service: Apr 1969-Mar 1970

Date of Action/Event (approximate): August 13, 1969

Location (Approximate): Boi Loi Woods

Time of Day/Night (Approximate): Morning

Description of the event (As detailed as you can remember, including names of other soldiers involved and their actions):

We were sweeping through the jungle this morning when First Platoon stumbled onto a bunker complex loaded with ammo and weapons, and they saw a gook disappearing into the jungle. We came down to help chase him. We went about 100 meters, then stopped while they brought in an air strike ahead of us. As we waited, John Rice happened to look back and see an NVA soldier with a pack and an AK-47 trying to sneak by behind us. The gook's AK jammed, but John's M-16 didn't, and he wounded the gook badly. The gook took off running, with our whole platoon in hot pursuit. It was easy to follow him, since he was leaving a heavy blood trail. We quickly caught up with him, and John and some others finished him off. I hated to see him killed, and wished he could Chieu Hoi instead of running. Among his personal effects we found pictures of his family.

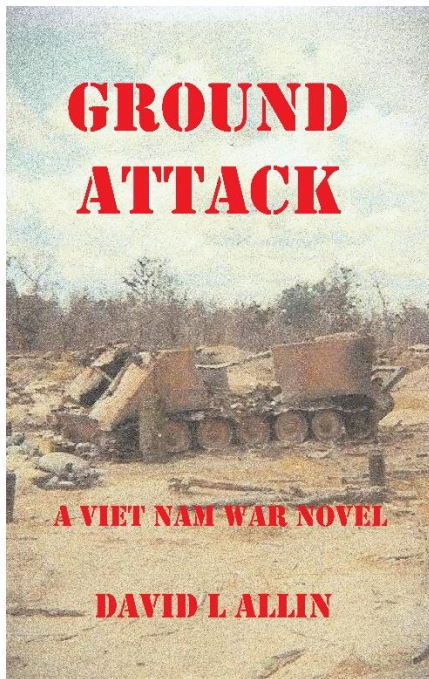
Outcome (Damage, KIA, WIA, Body Count, items captured, etc.): One body, one inoperable AK-47, VC diary and family photos

David Allin, DMOR

A co/HHC 1969-70

NEW BOOK

For those of you who are interested, I have just published another of my Viet Nam War novels. It is available on Amazon.com as an e-book, paperback, and audible book.

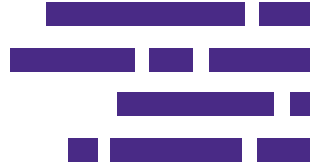


There was a truce on New Year's Day, 1968, and Third Brigade of 25th Infantry Division used the respite to build a new fire support base near the Cambodian border, in a vast forested area of Viet Nam called War Zone C. They called it Fire Support Base Burt, manned by two infantry battalions and three batteries of artillery. When the truce ended at midnight, January 1, the Communist forces in the area responded by launching a massive assault on the base. Vastly outnumbered, the American soldiers repelled attack after attack and eventually forced the enemy to withdraw after suffering terrible losses. This book describes the buildup of Burt and the long night of deadly action, as seen through the eyes of three fictional young soldiers whose lives are forever changed by that battle. The events are real; only the characters are imagined. Experience the vulnerability, the fear, and the everyday heroism of American soldiers just trying to survive an unrelenting ground attack.

David Allin, DMOR
A Co/HHC 1969-70

NEWSLETTER ANVIL CO

| DECEMBER - 2024 |



The Forge

BEC Mailing Address:

RANK, NAME-SECFOR
UNIT 6060

Box 1001

DPO, AE 09870

OUR MISSION

Our reason for existence is to close with and destroy the enemy through combined arms fire and maneuver.

Our company motto – “*Forging Victory!*” should encapsulate everything we say and do. Our daily actions will forge the very outcome that we want. Victory comes from continuous preparation, rehearsing, and refining.

People and Readiness. This means setting up every Soldier and family for success in our current mission and the next. An Anvil Soldier is a team player, takes care of themselves and their team, student of their craft, problem solver, and athlete.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT:

Blaize Barnes Jr

Hailey Miller

Harvey Howard

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!





THE FORGE

Disclaimer: Everything in this newsletter is unclassified but is on a need-to-know basis. Please keep Operational Security OPSEC in mind.

Anvil Company company's mission in Iraq is twofold: To enable the United States to conduct diplomacy in Iraq and to be good stewards of the United States.

Settling into Life at the Baghdad Embassy Compound (BEC)

Greetings from the Soldiers of Anvil Company! It's been about a month of transition, adaptation, and teamwork as we continue to settle into life at the Baghdad Embassy Compound (BEC) alongside our colleagues from the U.S. State Department. While the State Department shares some similarities with the Army as a federal entity, we've discovered key differences in operations and culture that have provided both learning opportunities and challenges. These experiences are helping us grow individually and as a team.

Navigating the Transition

Adjusting to a new operational environment always comes with its challenges, and our time at the BEC is no different. However, we're proud of how quickly Anvil Company has embraced these changes. Your Soldiers are operating on shift work to manage multiple missions supporting security and rapid response to emerging situations". Despite the demanding schedule, the team has been incredibly adaptive, showing resilience and determination every step of the way.

Making the Most of Free Time

BEC offers an array of facilities and activities to make off-duty time enjoyable and enriching. Soldiers have been taking full advantage of two well-equipped gyms, a variety of team sports (pickleball, tennis,

basketball), and the 25m swimming pool. These activities not only promote physical fitness but also strengthen camaraderie within the company.

Looking ahead, our Soldiers will have the opportunity to contribute to meaningful programs, such as helping Iraqi Soldiers improve their English. This initiative not only fosters cultural exchange but also underscores the importance of our partnership mission in Iraq and being good stewards of the United States.

Looking Toward the New Year

As we move into January and February, training intensity will ramp up to maintain both mission readiness and our capabilities as Infantrymen. Additionally, we're excited about upcoming opportunities for Soldiers to compete for foreign badges, an experience we're all eager to embrace. These badges will be a testament to the skill, determination, and professionalism that Anvil Company consistently demonstrates.

A Warm Welcome

The State Department has been incredibly welcoming, providing support and fostering collaboration as we integrate into the BEC community. This partnership is a critical component of our success, and we're grateful for their hospitality and cooperation.

In closing, we're proud of how far we've come in a short time. Anvil Company continues to represent the Army with excellence, dedication, and adaptability. We look forward to the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead and remain committed to our mission here in Baghdad.

Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to write the next chapter of our journey.

If there is anything you would like to see, or know about in future newsletters, please contact A CO's SFRG Advisor Mrs. Hannah Lee.

Merry Christmas and a happy new year!

Forging Victory!!

CPT Andrew Lee

1SG Zachary Grado

Anvil Company