

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

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

**22nd Infantry Regiment**

**Viet Nam Veterans**



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

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



Editor: David Allin, DMOR A&HHC 69-70

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

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*I just spent a weekend in Nashville at the tenth-year celebration of the existence of Creativets. As you know that is the nonprofit that uses art and song writing to help vets deal with PTSD so successfully. I was asked to be one of the four speakers who talked to the audience a little bit about ourselves and how Creativets has helped us in life. It was a tremendous experience talking in front of 450 people, most of whom had been drinking, but we got through it with many fine results. Of course I had to go first of the four, adding that much more pressure, but it ended up a wonderful experience and memory. Here is the transcript of that speech:*

Good evening. I am one of the Vietnam vets who have experienced Creativets. I wish it had existed half a century ago.

Very simply put, this time spent is hard to label. Is it a program or a treatment or an adjustment? Or is it all of those things combined with meeting a group of people who have dedicated their time and lives to helping vets deal with the monster of PTSD? I offer that it is all of those things and more.

No matter what your job in a war setting is, you go to bed every night on a target. There is no such thing as a good night's sleep. Many times a rocket or mortar eliminates any chance of relaxing from the pressures and terrors of daily combat. PTSD becomes a permanent part of you. And it stays with you for the rest of your days at various levels.

Until I met these outstanding people the only tonic I had used to deal with my PTSD were my reunions. 37 months in the Army Infantry had put me on the rolls of

those who have to deal with PTSD and the Vietnam experience has been well documented.

I was found by a locator of my old Vietnam outfit's veteran's organization in 1998. Since then I have found and benefited from the many great exposures of meeting every 18 months with a large group of the Brothers I walked the walk with in Asia 54 years ago.

PTSD and the bad memories still come up at those reunions but are dwarfed by the closure, healing, patriotism and the knowledge of a job well done. You also return into the brotherhood and the realization that we vets are all one giant family of those who answered the call.

Creativets offered me the chance to put those feelings and facts into a song titled Just As Red.

I was referred to the program by my good friend, Amy Hess, who had previously gone through the Creativets experience. Even with her telling me about it, I didn't know what to fully expect. But from the moment my mentor, Chris Bickel, called me I felt like I could trust this organization. I drove to Nashville, and we got to write the song backstage at the Grand Ole Opry, which was special to me.

That experience with Dave Turnbull, Chris Bickel and Lewis Brice and so many others has expanded the size of my veteran family by a considerable amount. I never thought sharing my story with a few strangers in a room could affect me so much...the writers were able to take my thoughts and organize them into a song that I still listen to and share with friends.

Then seeing it come to life in the music studio the next day was a moment I'll never forget. I never knew musicians could be that talented to listen to a song one time and then play it perfectly.

And since that initial exposure I have joined the ranks of mentors for other veterans who are just meeting this wonderful organization. Vets helping vets has been my mantra for a long time now, and Creativets is the greatest tool against PTSD I have ever found. I think any veteran suffering with it should give them a chance because it truly helps.

Thank you Creativets for all you have done for me and other members of this huge family. I will forever hold a special place in my heart for all of you. Thank YOU for listening. This night has been pretty good tonic too...

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

## **EDITOR'S COMMENTS**

We are making progress in updating our unit roster, but we still need your help. Remember, if you are receiving this newsletter both by email and paper mail, you need to keep paying your dues. If you don't want to pay dues, you don't have to, and you will still receive the newsletter by email. Please let me know your preference.

I was asked to reprint George Dahl's article about the Battle of Suoi Tre that had appeared in the newsletter long ago. If you want to know more about that battle, there is a lot of information posted on our website. You can also read my book, BODYCOUNT, which has fictional characters, but the events are as accurately portrayed as possible, based on after-action reports and memoirs like George's. The book is available on Amazon.

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

## **DUES**

If you receive this newsletter on paper, look at your name on the address label. The number following your name is the year through which your dues are paid. If that date is not 2024 or later, it's time to send a check to Jim May. It's \$10 per year. Make the check out to Vietnam Triple Deuce and mail it to

**Jim May  
PO Box 665  
Norridgewock, ME 04957**

## **REUNION PHOTOS**

Lots of photos are taken at our reunions. If you have some, please send them to Steve Irvine, [steveirvine@gmail.com](mailto:steveirvine@gmail.com), so he can post them on our website. Please include information about the photos, such as when and where they were taken, and who are the people in the photo.

**Jim May, HMOR  
Prov. Co. 1968**

## **ATTENTION CHARLIE BOAT ORIGINALS**

Steve Irvine, webmaster for [vietnamtripledeuce.org](http://vietnamtripledeuce.org), has been working on a project to fix some of the problems with the current CBO Web Site. As of today, he has it stabilized, however the flashy colors are no longer there. Somehow the site was corrupted after Jim passed away. The long-term plan is to fold the website into the current [vietnamtripledeuce.org](http://vietnamtripledeuce.org) website, with a section devoted to you CBO guys.

Steve is now looking for help in identifying individuals whose photos are on the Site. He needs the help of CBO's to do this. So, please contact Steve at [svirvine@gmail.com](mailto:svirvine@gmail.com) or 916-749-0923. Steve lives in California, so be mindful of the time difference from where you are contacting him.

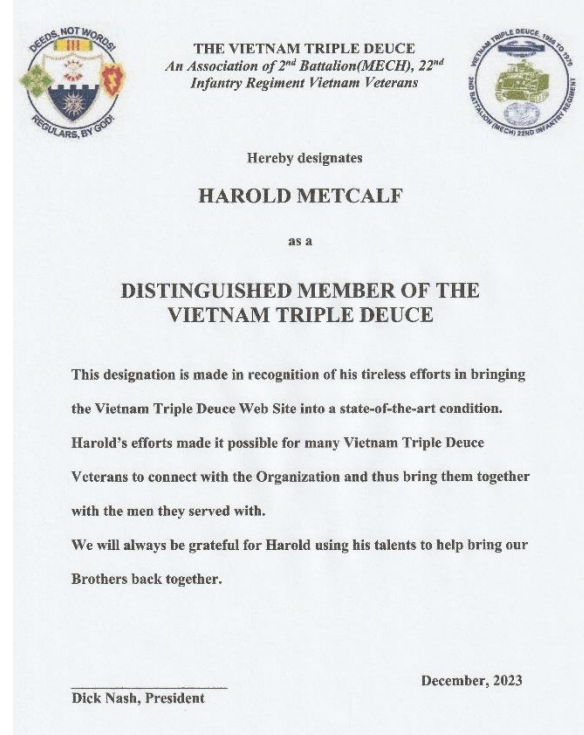
This effort is part of a history project. Steve is attempting to gather as much information as possible about the activities and events that the Battalion was involved in during the Vietnam War. It is his hope that a true and accurate account of those activities and events will be available to future Historians.

Anyone from Charlie Company can assist with the effort and it will take very little time to accomplish. Steve will provide guidance via phone in the effort. You only need a personal computer, or a friend with one, and that is it! Well, plus a little time to help out.

**Jim May, HMOR  
Prov. Co. 1968**

## HAROLD METCALF

Recently Steve Irvine, webmaster of the [vietnamtripledeuce.org](http://vietnamtripledeuce.org) website, suggested that Harold Metcalf be recognized as a Distinguished Member of the Regiment for the work he did in building and maintaining the website prior to Steve taking it over. The board considered the request and the motion was carried unanimously. Below is a copy of the certificate.



## I WAS A REPLACEMENT

In September of 1968 I arrived in Vietnam as an 11B replacement. I had spent 5 months at Ft Ord learning how to be a "leg". It was drilled into me that my first job was to locate and secure as many canteens as I could, because there would be little water on search and destroy type operations.

The first week in Vietnam had all of the replacements go through an indoctrination course so that we would acclimatize a bit (a very little bit) and learn some of the basics of the country. Then, at the end our assignment orders were posted on a bulletin board, and we clamored to see where we would be.

Reading down the list, I found my name. It was one of only three that had the following letters next to my name: 2d/22d (MECH).

What the heck did MECH mean, and what was the 2d/22d? So the following dialogue took place with someone who had been around for a while (meaning he had older jungle fatigues and boots).

Me: What the heck does MECH mean after my name?

Answer: It means you are in a mechanized unit.

Me: What the heck is a mechanized unit?

Answer: You move around in tracks, you know, APC's.

Me: What is a track? What is an APC?

Answer: Like a small tank, with a 50-cal instead of a cannon in the turret. You ride inside of them. (wrong I found out later).

Me: Well where is this 2d/22d?

Answer: (Map is pointed to) its up there around the Iron Triangle right now (that I had heard of). They call themselves Triple Deuce.

So a little while later a sergeant came walking near the bulletin board and hollered "anyone going to the Triple Deuce, come with me". I joined up with him and got my first look at an APC. (Ft Ord had no such vehicle). He said. "Get inside" (the last time I ever rode on the inside of a track). We joined a convoy (I was told later) and drove out to a fire support base somewhere (I didn't know they named them until much later).

When we got there, (all three of us with MECH after our names), we stood around a headquarters track until squad leaders came to "pick us". Like a pickup baseball game, my future squad leader pointed and said "we want that guy". I asked later, "Why?" and he told me "Because you are a big guy (6'1", 190 lbs)

and you're going to be our 60 gunner, cause the Hogie is going to take over driving the track and you're going to take his M60". (Note: I returned to the world weighing 143 lbs).

That was my intro to Vietnam, the Triple Deuce (B Company) and my squad (2-2).

So, what was your introduction to Vietnam and the Triple Deuce?

**Steve Irvine**

**B Co., 9/68 to 6/69**

## HISTORIAN

It has come to my mind that we do not have a Triple Deuce Viet Nam historian, someone who will preserve any artifacts we have (digital and physical) so that they do not get lost as we age out! It requires someone who has a passion for this type of activity, but it does not require technical skills.

It was pointed out to Steve that all of us are aging, and the historian should be someone younger who can carry on as we fade away, perhaps a child or grandchild. Steve commented:

It would be nice to find a grandchild, but much, much better to bring the recent Triple Deuce Vets from Iraq and Afghanistan into the fold. I think at the next reunion we should make a special effort to have an event that lets us mingle together and start forming the bonds that will give us people interested in taking on the positions. That may mean we work with some of them to have a Triple Deuce organization, of which vietnamtripledeuce is a subset. If we leave it up to the "regiment" to take care of, we get left out. Remember, while the Regiment was once a viable organization, it

has not existed since the sixties and people are more aligned as follows:

My squad, my platoon, my company, my battalion. That doesn't mean that the Regimental idea shouldn't continue, but they need to take part as an organizer, not a unit. The Regiment could have one place to purchase hats, shirts etc, the Regiment could sponsor a forum to let us talk to each other better, and the Regiment can negotiate for reunions etc. But if you ask anyone currently, "Were you in an active duty Regimental HQ position?" the answer will be ...uh....no.

Just my thoughts It's time to worry about our succession plans.

**Steve Irvine**

**B Co., 9/68 to 6/69**

Steve has made some very good points. If you have any comments or suggestions, please forward them to Steve, Dick Nash, or me so we can collect and collate them into a coherent plan of action that we can present at the Nashville reunion. Our contact information is on the first page.

**David Allin, DMOR**

**A Co/HHC 1969-70**

## **HARD DRIVES FOR WEBSITE**

Steve Irvine asked the Board for permission to purchase two LACIE rugged Hard Drives, 1 Terabyte each, to use as backup for our [vitenametripdeuce.org](http://vitenametripdeuce.org) website. They will be rotated back and forth so that there will always be one with the current website data, and one with the last backup of the website. They will be kept in Steve's one-hour fire-rated safe. The board voted unanimously to approve the purchase, and the hard drives have been ordered. Total price, with discounts and tax, was \$165.00.

## **LENS OF A NINETEEN-YEAR-OLD**

*(Editor's Note: This is a reprint of an article from years ago.)*

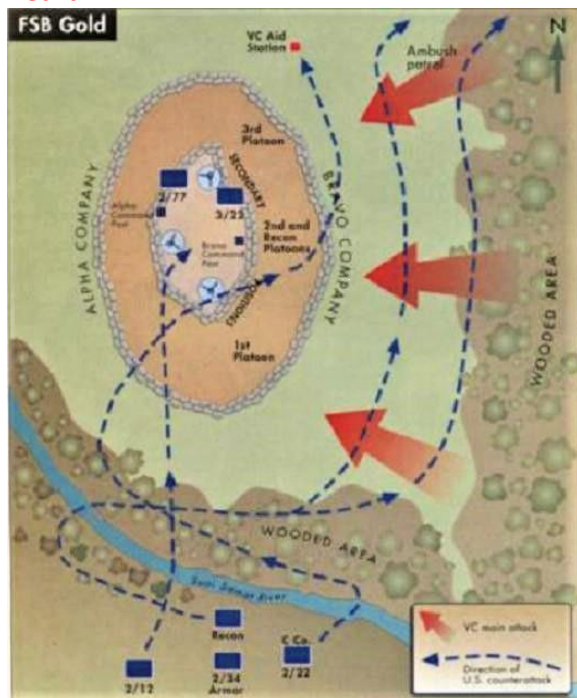
I don't know how many of you think about various specific times during the Vietnam War. I relive Soui Tre many times and often wonder what other perspectives guys had. I have talked to Captain White and 1lt Frydrychowski. My lens is that of a 19-year-old squad leader drafted in the US Army with a bunch of guys and sent off to a place I had only read about in the newspaper, but now forty years later. C/2/22 Mechanized had trained at Fort Lewis for almost a year before arriving in Vietnam.

The night of 20 March 1967, we were told to remain in the tracks as we may be trying to provide support for 2/77 Field artillery and the 3/22 Infantry. So we put out some LP's in front and waited. We listened to constant artillery and air strikes during the night, then air assault gun ship Hueys at dawn. We were told that 2/22 Recon was trying to find a way through the bamboo to get to LZ Gold and would be doing so during the night. The 2/12 Infantry Battalion was also trying to get there, but it was running into a lot of contact. (We had never done stuff like that at night with the APC's). At morning twilight Captain White had us moving in the fog. My track was last of the Charlie Company column on that morning. Abruptly we were halted, and everyone did an about face, putting my track in the lead. Roger and Recon had made an opening through the bamboo. We were without a platoon leader for unspecified reasons and Sgt Sammy Kay, who had been in my track, had switched the night before and was now switched over to Sgt Joe Dietz's, 31, the second track in line. Kay was the acting platoon leader.



We followed our tracks back and came to a place where Recon had made a way through the bamboo. There was an urgency that years later would be debated, about who would get there first. There was no river, just mud and bamboo. It was thicker than a dog infected with ticks.

We were told that the LZ was being overrun and we would go in guns blazing. I am 19 years old and not related to John Wayne. A lot of things were going through my head at that point. One of the first things on my mind was, I have the rest of Charlie Company coming in right behind me, and probably the rest of the battalion. Later we would find out 647 VC/NVA were killed in that battle, and we had 37 KIA with about 130 WIA. **Forty years later I learned Lance Crum was hit WIA, round to the head, and has had trouble receiving a purple heart.**



We found Recon about 100-200 yards to our rear with one of the Recon guys standing there and pointing to his left for us to turn in to their path through the bamboo. Recon's engines were smoking;

they had pushed the bamboo aside and were resting the tracks on top of some of it. I remember seeing Roger in his APC on the radio to my left as we went by.

Someone from the 2/77 or 3/22 came over to my track and I asked him which way should we go? He said, "Anyway you want." I remember he had on a green T shirt with a helmet. Today I wish I would have had him climb in. Like to meet him.

I told Larry Mason, my driver, "Go fast and don't stop until I tell you, about 75 yards and pull a 90 degree right into the sun, and hold." As we did, I saw the 105's off to my left with some of the barrels parallel to the ground, and the faces of some GI's with a sign of relief on their faces I hadn't seen before. Their Quad fifty was further to the north with no one on it.

We started taking rounds from our front and right. They were ricocheting off the track. Dan Morris, my 50 gunner, could see the VC crawling and opened up. We also were handing grenades to him with the pins already pulled, as the fifty had jammed. He threw them, and said they were coming back. We brought up the M-60 on the right side of the track and opened up.

It was at this point the track became hung up and both treads were spinning high off the ground. My concern was an RPG hitting with everyone in the APC. I told Larry and Dan we were getting out, and to get a bump off of the high ground and find us. When we opened the hinge door in the ramp, more rounds ricocheted off the door but soon stopped. Today I believe the incoming rounds ceased because the VC/NVA might have been caught in somewhat of a crossfire, as the rest of the company was doing business with them. We faced somewhat towards the entrance Recon had made. An eleven-man squad inside the track seemed to never exist, and we got out

with our squad of four. The four of us got out in front and to the left in the open with 30-40 yards between us.

I remember checking out an LP with the legs of three Americans sticking out, all KIA. We were moving forward towards the east.

Forty plus years, and how long an engagement occurs in combat defines my sense of time here. I think it was 30-40 minutes at most for us. We faced the sun coming up to the east. We checked out the VC bodies as we passed them, making sure they didn't roll over on us. We arrived at the edge of the bamboo that encircled the LZ and proceeded a little further. We came upon a huge termite mound with VC feet sticking out from behind it, two sets. As we came around the mound, they looked like they were asleep or praying. I poked one with my M 16 and checked his pulse...none.

At this point, my track, C 34, Sgt Kay, RTO Dalpez, and Sgt Dietz's C 31 track pulled up beside us. Neither of the VC had a mark on them. They were pristine. Shirts were beige muslin with clean black bottoms, long black hair. I took their pulse at the temple and they were cold with no pulse. Someone said the older one, maybe about 25, had a wedding ring on and to cut his finger off and take it. The other one looked about 14. I said if you want the f--- ring come and get it yourself. Those who were there remember who said that. Lynn Dalpez and Roger Borgheiinck. I thought the VC were medics. I do not know what their back sides looked like.

Larry Mason, my driver, caught up with us about this time and the rest of the morning was policing bodies, as Chinooks and Hueys were coming and going. We had shot up most of our 50 ammo and were concerned about resupply. That was when I saw the first tank coming across the LZ as C 34 was more center to the LZ. The 2/34 Armor had

arrived also and interspersed between us.

At this point Sgt Kay said third platoon would be used in support of Recon going out to recover a body of a pilot in an OE 1 Bird Dog that had been shot down. Lt Frydrychowski and his Recon platoon led out about 3k, and we halted and waited for 5-10 minutes half way out, when they came racing back with the two recovered bodies from the plane. Roger personally knew the killed pilot.

It is difficult to remember 24/7 from 40 years ago and little things come back with conversations with guys. Today, 6-17-2009, after talking with John Mersinger, he said his squad turned left as they entered the zone and after the last red smoke there were no Americans still in fox holes. When the VC/NVA saw the APC's, the jungle came alive with black pajamas hauling ass, and going down like dominoes. What a waste of life. I do not remember anything about red smoke.

A lot of brass decided this was a good time to fly around and come down to see what went on. Safe NOW!

As we left the LZ the next day, the last image I have is the Anti-aircraft gun sitting tucked up in a corner of the LZ coated with napalm.



I would like to know who the colonel of the 271 and 272 VC Regiment was that kept trying. First Soui Tre, then Burt, then Dau Tieng. Larry, a few years ago, met the



commander of the 271 VC Regiment on his trip to Vietnam and he wouldn't talk about that day. LTC Ralph Julian was also on a trip back and met him and talked to him. I do not know the results of that conversation. Larry said the VC LTC lived in Nui Ba Den for most of the war.

Norm, you were right. We really pissed them off at Soui Tre. Norm was not at Soui Tre, but later was a Squad Leader at LZ Burt, January 1968. The movie "Platoon" by Oliver Stone is based on LZ Burt. Stone was in C Company during that time, as was Peter Holt, San Antonio Spurs owner and owner of Caterpillar Inc.

At the Seattle reunion Joe Engles told us:

1. We felt we had 5 minutes to live before we would have been completely overrun.
2. We didn't know you were coming....silence in the room. Really hard to hold back the tears here for me.

In Pittsburgh, Aberdeen, and Colorado Springs in September 2012, men and perhaps some women from the 22nd Infantry will meet for our annual national reunion. Been to Nashville also now with many from Alpha and really big guns guys-- 175mm and 8 inch artillery.

**George Dahl**

**C Co. 1967**

March 21, 2012 What a coincidence. Since I originally wrote this, I have come across two guys at the Minneapolis VA who were also at Soui Tre. Stewart from Cloquet, MN, was with the 196th LIB, and he said they came in the following morning and did patrols from Soui Tre and came up with a further body count of 200 more, found in and around the jungle and bamboo, leaving blood trails all over the place. John Bauer from Northfield I met in the Blood Lab at the Minneapolis VA, stopped me, extending his hand, staring at my hat, embraced me and said "you saved our

lives". He was in 2/77 that day. He saw Soui Tre and the 22nd Infantry crest on my hat.

## TRIPLE DEUCE HOLIDAY PARTY

Today's Triple Deuce is a light infantry battalion based in Fort Drum, New York. Here are some photos of the Holiday Party that was thrown for the single soldiers in the battalion.





**HELLOS & COMMENTS**

**GUEST BOOK HITS**

**NEW FINDS**

**TAPS**

