

# The Viet Nam Triple Deuce, Inc.

An Association of 2 Bn. (Mech) 22nd Infantry Regiment  
Viet Nam Veterans

Editors Dan & Vera Streit D 2/22 1969

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&...Welcome Home

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**The Vietnam Triple Deuce  
Website**

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

***Please Visit Today!***

**Mario Salazar**

## **A Message from the Past President**

I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Board of Directors, Lynn, Gary, Dick, and Jim for all the support that they have provided me over the

years. A special thanks to Mario for his outstanding work on the web site. Dan, thank you for taking over the newsletter. Now we just got to get members to provide you some input.

I also want to express my appreciation to "Magnet", Mike, Brad, and David for their constant input.

It was my honor to be on the Board and serve as your President. I look back at the two times that I was able to carry the Guidon of the Vietnam Triple Deuce at Ft Drum, and how the current members of the "Triple Deuce" looked up to that Guidon and who it represented. We can all take pride in our time with the battalion. We can look with satisfaction, the long and honored history of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment and what the "VN Triple Deuce" did to add to that history. It is a history that we should record so that it is not lost.

We must work even harder now to locate our brothers so that they can share with us the experience of getting together and being welcomed home.

Again, it was my pleasure to serve, and looking forward to seeing you at our next reunion.

**E. Q. Skip Fahel B/67-68**

## A Message from the Current President

And so begins another chapter in the history of the Vietnam Triple Deuce. To recap events of the Kansas City reunion, Bob Babcock decided to step down after ten years as the president of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society, and our fine leader, Skip Fahel moved onto the top spot in that organization. The election of a new Board of Directors and officers for the Vietnam Triple Deuce came out with Jim May, Dan Streit, Bill Matz, Lynn Dalpez and myself being chosen. The new president is me, VP Lynn, Treasurer Jim, and the new secretary is Joe Esser. Dan is still in charge of putting out this fine newsletter, and Mario is staying on to maintain our web site. Bill is keeping a sharp eye out to keep us all straight. I am confident that this Board will face many challenges in the next 18 months, but is up to it.

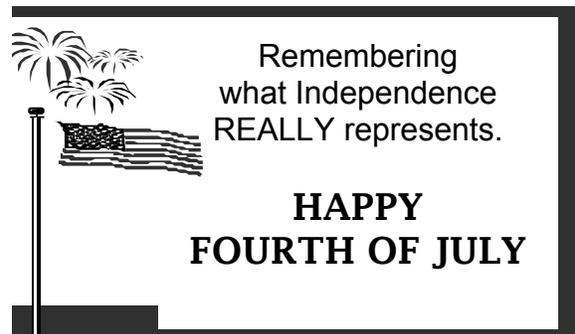
The reunion was another great one, and Ival & Renea Lawhorn and their support group deserve all our thanks and praises for a job well done. I hope they have caught up on their rest by now, but I doubt it. I think the high point of the reunion for many of us was the attendance and participation of the active soldiers of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of the 22<sup>nd</sup> battalions from Forts Hood and Drum. These young men helped capture Saddam, and they are truly a credit to their country. We wish them well in the future, and are confident that they will get any job done that comes their way.

A major subject of the business meetings held by both the Vietnam Triple Deuce and the 22<sup>nd</sup> IRS was the cost of our reunions, and how to increase our atten-

dance at them. To make a very long story short, a reunion planning committee was established with Awb Norris leading a group of nine of us on a mission to determine when & where the next reunion will be, who will be it's host, and what changes need to be made to make it easier for our vets to attend. We have a goal date of October 1<sup>st</sup> for naming the next reunion site and time. Hopefully we can announce it in the September news letter this year. As to changes that may or may not be made in the reunion format, Awb is still recording the results of a written survey taken at the KC reunion, and will be reporting the results to the rest of his committee soon for action on the matter. Stay tuned on this one. It will hopefully make it much easier to get more new vets and old reunion vets to get to the next one.

I want to thank Skip Fahel for setting such a high standard for the president's job, and also Gary Hart for his term on the board. We will need their input to continue, and will seek it as we face the needs of this organization, and I challenge each of you to get involved as you can. This board needs the opinion of every member when we can get it. So if you have something to say that will improve VN222, take the time to let us know. It's the best way we can represent you.

**Dick Nash A/HHC 69**



## Editor's Comment

The 22nd Regimental Society Reunion was held in Kansas City, May 26 - 29, 2005. It was a time of remembering. We reminisced about the people we knew then and embraced the ones we now know. We revisited (through photos and slides) the places where we were as brothers. We recounted experiences that made us the men we are today. It is difficult to put into words what attending the reunion means but. . . .

### The Reunion wasn't

- the carving of the Hemingway turkey although that was traditional
- the never ending flow of beer although that was refreshing.
- the tours of KC and the Steamship Arabia although that was awesome.
- the raffles of many prizes although that was fun.
- the passing of the torch from Bob Babcock to Skip Fabel although that was pivotal
- the POW/MIA presentation although that was powerful
- the posed picture with Troy Evans although that was great bragging material
- the awarding of the Order of the Red Ant membership although that was special
- the joy of the first time attendees although that was moving
- the tears of a long awaited reunion although that was heart wrenching
- the great food although that was excessive.
- the sharing with the young soldiers from Ft. Hood but that was filled with pride
- the multiple wins of Martha John Alli-

son although that was a hoot

- the wonderful Chamber Family music although that was magnificent.
- the emotion of the two sisters of the deceased, although that was inspirational
- the quilt donated by Nancy Gross although that was charming.
- the enthusiasm of Julie Milewski winning every raffle prize although that was comical
- the presentation of Steven Russell and his song at the Memorial Service although they were divine
- the hard work of Ival and Renee Lawhorn and their committee although that was evident
- the words of Bill Allison although they were heartfelt

It was all of this and much more which allowed for fellowship and retrospection. The reunion has passed---and now we can look forward to the next time we are together.



Newsletter Editors Dan and Vera Streit pictured with Troy Evans in the Hospitality Room

**Dan Streit D/69**

## Reunion Reflection

This is printed with permission of the writer----- Forwarded Message: -----  
 From: "Stanley M. Tarkenton" <stan@pinn.net>  
 To: "Bill Matz" <DocMatz222@comcast.net>  
 Subject: Thank you  
 Date: Fri, 3 Jun 2005 03:14:51 +0000

Bill:

Jo and I were happy to meet with you again. I am happy that you were able to make it to the reunion in Kansas City. I think that Ival's production of the reunion was one of the best that I have attended. It was one of the most expensive, too. I felt as though I was being robbed every time I ate in that restaurant in the hotel. \$33.00 for two people to eat bacon and eggs for breakfast is just a little out of my expectations for a reasonable breakfast. I would settle for a South Sea Island \$10.00 early morning meal. You know what that is? It's a hard-boiled egg and a coconut.

I thank you and the fellows from the Vietnam Triple Deuce contingent for the Medal for "The Order of the Red Ants" that was given to we old farts from the WWII 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry. That was a most commendable and welcomed gift. I am extremely thankful. I have already enjoyed the occasion to wear it in public. Since we arrived back on Sunday, I was able to attend the Memorial Day festivities on Monday morning. In Virginia Beach, we old hard-nosed combat veterans wear our dress uniforms with full Medals and we form at the splendid Veterans Memorial erected at the Pavilion area near the Ocean front.

Well, I want you and the officers and men of the Double Deuce to know that I proudly wore "The Order of the Red Ants" with the red ribbon at these ceremonies on Memo-

rial Day. The Base CO of Fort Story (who is a friend) asked me, "What is that Medal?" I said to him, "Wes. This medallion was given to me by the finest combat soldiers to walk in the rice paddies of Vietnam. The Second of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry." He backed up and said, "Then I salute you and the Double Deuce of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment." And, we exchanged salutes. Stay happy and have fun in life. Stan

**Stanley M. Tarkenton (DMOR)**  
**U. S. 22nd Infantry Regiment**  
[stan@pinn.net](mailto:stan@pinn.net)

## Unprepared by Uncle Sam

When the country started running out of eligible young men for the draft in 1966, and announced the possibility of drafting married men, I had been married for 2 years. A deadline was announced, and men married after that date would probably be drafted. I wasn't too concerned. I was the first married man drafted out of Lamar County Texas even though I had been married for 2 years.

My greetings letter was received in October 1966, and I was sent to Ft. Polk Louisiana for basic. It rained every day for 3 weeks. Nothing worse than wet sand and pine nettles, or so I thought.

After all the testing and training at Ft. Polk, I was hopeful that testing well enough would get an MOS other than Infantry, and I wouldn't end up in Tigerland. I was given an MOS of 91 A 10 medical training at Ft. Sam Houston. This was good, or so I thought, 91 A 10 was a combat medic. How in the world did the Army pick me for a medic?

When medical training was completed the three previous classes were sent straight to Vietnam. Everyone in my class from A through G was assigned to Vietnam. When they called my name next it was Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri. That wasn't too bad I thought. I ended up as a dispatcher in the ambulance section of the hospital. From there I was transferred to the 12<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital. It wasn't a hospital though, it was a STRAC unit and everything was in warehouses. We had to set up the complete hospital every 3 months in the hills outside the post for readiness training. Hoping I would serve out my active duty there, I received orders for Vietnam with one week and one-year left on my active enlistment, and arrived in Vietnam on September 28, 1967.

It was dark when we approached the coastline of Vietnam, and the Captain announced over the intercom, our flight was diverting to another landing site because the original site had been receiving mortar fire. The first thought through my mind was "I don't even have a weapon". The sky had artillery flares everywhere, and I also wondered what the heck they were. When we stepped out of the plane it was like jumping into a hot tub, the heat and humidity was stifling.

Thinking the chances were good I would end up in one of the hospitals or any one of the numerous assignments for medics in Vietnam, I was sadly disappointed. When I left the 90<sup>th</sup> replacement detachment, I was sent to Chu Chi and the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. I thought my chances for assignment were still good. Badly fooled again. The following day at Chu Chi I started up the steps to the PX and ran into a guy named Norris Ferris whom

I had known from my hometown of Paris Texas, and was drafted the same day as I. We had gone through basic together. He had stayed at Ft. Polk Tiger Hill for infantry training. He was an E-6 and I was a PFC! How the heck was he an E-6? He told me he was with the Wolfhounds, and at 8 months had been in his unit longer than anyone there, the rest were KIA or WIA. Nothing could be worse than the Wolfhounds. Or so I thought.

The second day at Chu Chi we were all issued M16's, and taken outside the camp to fire and zero in the weapon. The third day they took the M16's back.

After about a week we were all lined up to receive assignments. Everyone in line had their names called for assignments in Chu Chi, or Tay Ninn. I was the last one remaining in line, and the officer looked at me, and said, "I feel sorry for you, you are going to Dau Tieng, and there's a gook behind every rubber tree". Rubber tree? Wolfhounds? Triple Deuce?

My instructions were, be on that chopper pad at daylight tomorrow morning and catch the flight going to Dau Tieng. What time was daylight? After sitting on the pad about an hour before daylight the chopper came in and I boarded. We landed at Dau Tieng and I received instructions on how to get to the 2/22. When I arrived there the person in charge told me the unit wasn't there, that they stayed in the field. He said, "Be on that chopper pad at daylight and catch the supply flight to your unit" What time was daylight?

I can vividly remember the first sight of A2/22 on that morning. It had been raining—naturally-- and through the morning haze I could see smoke rising and the outline of APC's as the chopper landed.

What was an APC? I wasn't prepared for this! I just thought the rain at Ft. Polk was bad! I was assigned to a platoon, no introductions, and no instructions, just "Here's your new medic boys." I had never seen an APC, a 50 caliber, a 60 caliber, and had no idea what the heck I was supposed to do. It took only about two weeks to know exactly what my role was. At 23 years old, I was also the oldest person in the platoon. After only a couple of weeks with Alpha we were sent to relieve an element of the 2/12 who had walked into a Viet Cong base camp, and were in trouble. It was late in the afternoon, and we went into the bamboo with 50's blazing. That lasted about 20 seconds and we were tangled in the bamboo so badly the 50 was pointing straight up and couldn't be moved. Three seconds later a RPG came straight through the track, and fortunately the wet clothes we had piled in the corner helped contain the blast.

That didn't save the track though. A guy in my squad we called Frenchy was hit by friendly fire from the 2/12 guys who were now behind us. I crawled out to get Frenchy, and everyone else pulled back leaving me there with a mortally wounded Frenchy ;my guys, the 2/12 guys shooting at the VC, and the VC shooting at them and me and Frenchy in between catching it from both directions. He was dying and it was almost dark. After patching his wounds, I started dragging him back staying as low as possible. It was then completely dark. After about 25 yards or so of this, my guys realized what was happening and quit firing, and came out to help me get Frenchy back. Unfortunately he didn't survive. That incident that early in my assignment probably saved my life, because the guys in my squad came to an under-

standing, and they never left me in that position again. In fact a platoon medic wasn't a bad assignment. Only when someone called medic, which they did quite often, was my life in more danger than anyone else's.

There were numerous times of peril during my tour, including ambush patrols in heavy contact, Tay Ninn City, Burt, and too many other small engagements that were just as frightening. I finally got lucky and was relieved in the field and returned to base camp to work in the aid station. I have thought over the years of the guys I served with when we were so young, and that one-year was really a short time in my life. Those friendships endure and after 30 plus years of not having any contact with them, it all came roaring back when I attended my first reunion in Cleveland. Not all men have the interpersonal feelings and still have vivid thoughts from a year in their life that happened 36 years ago. These bonds are still strong, and I will never forget those who served with me, and those who did not come home.

For years the thoughts plagued me that I could have done more. I could have been a better Medic. I should have done some things differently that could have possibly saved the lives of some of those I tried to save and didn't. Over the years those thoughts finally faded, and I have come to realize that at the time and under the circumstances I did the best I could, and certainly more than the Army trained me for.

I am eternally proud to say I served in Vietnam. I was a medic with the 2/22 Infantry

**Denny R. Head**

A-HHC 2/22

Sept 67, Sept.68

## My Recall of March 13, 1968

A day fogged a bit by the years but never, ever forgotten. I, too, remember us being close to Dau Tieng but a good piece out. Maybe 10 kilos outside the gate. Right after the rubber plantation ended on our right was a small village—the one across from which we had to dig up the fresh NVA graves one day. On the 13<sup>th</sup> we ventured 4-5 more kilometers and made a hard right into an open rice paddy area. I remember it being an unusual operation as, at one point, we put the APCs on line and advanced toward the woodline directly to our front. It was pretty disorganized and we had to stop several times for the lieutenants to hustle up to the CO's track for additional instructions. For a while, I thought that this might be a light day spent practicing war maneuvers for some officer's enjoyment.

We then briefly opened fire with the 50s straight into the woodline then stopped about 50 meters short. As luck would have it the 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon (Charlie Co.) was given the "privilege" of dismounting and venturing into the woodline. As I best remember it Herb Mock was on point I think Charlie Loveless was behind him. Beyond that I haven't a clue where people were. I was the RTO and was with LT Clemente about mid column. We (the LT and I) had broken through the initial brush and happened upon a trail. No sooner had Clemente asked for the "horn" to report that we found a trail than we heard Mock holler up ahead: "There's human shit up here". Within just a few seconds Mock hollered something like, "And I see the @#!#" and commenced firing. After that all hell broke loose.

I remember jumping backwards to get down but my radio got hung up on some

bamboo and I dangled there for what seemed like an eternity. Being more interested in the integrity of my body (over some piece of Army equipment) I squeezed out of the radio harness and, by the grace of God, I fell next to an ant hill (about 3 1/2 foot high). I immediately took cover behind it then realized that the LT was lying on the trail having been hit. I first reached up and grabbed the radio (it was closer) and as I did a green tracer kicked up dirt in my eyes and mouth. I secured the radio on my left side then reached around the right side of the bunker to get the LT. I can't remember if I held a rifle out for him to grab or if I just extended my arm. (Maybe he extended his rifle to me). Nevertheless, I was able to pull him behind the anthill with me. He was shot in both legs and in a lot of pain. I remember lying there on my stomach with my radio handset on my right ear. I was disoriented a bit having moved a bit down that diagonal path. I, nevertheless, got on the "horn" and talked to whom years later I found out to be Awb Norris. I think that he was Colonel then. I remember him being calm and collected and trying to get me to give him a "sitrep" (situation report). As I said, in the pandemonium somewhere I had lost my bearings. He was trying to talk with me but the shooting was so intense and loud I had a hard time hearing him. Also, the LT was in a lot of pain and was yelling comments like "Leave me here and get everyone out...call in air strikes on them". In an effort to hear Norris I switched my handset to my left hand and placed a finger in my right ear and yelled at the LT to "shut up" because I couldn't hear. As I made that movement I think the same sniper saw me again and fired several more rounds—most kicked up dirt in my face and eyes but I'll always remember that one that traveled directly under my

left armpit missing both my bicep and ribcage. I resumed my original position closer to the LT.

Sometime during this chaos someone hollered "medic". I didn't know who else was hit other than the LT but almost immediately the medic appeared to my left. He was hit instantly and fell forward. I remember his body jerking several times from being hit by additional rounds. He was no more than 18 inches away from me and I felt powerless to do anything. About that time Sgt. Ditch appeared on all fours over the medic's body. He, too, was hit instantly. And, he, too, fell forward and was partially on the medic's body. I felt powerless but remember foolishly saying, "Are you all right?" I saw him take one round then I remember the grimace on his face as if he knew it was a serious hit. He then reached down and pulled the medic's bag out from underneath him as if to get some relief in that area. The bag was completely covered in blood. And then the enemy zeroed in on him and, like the medic, his body jerked several more times before he fully slumped to the earth. Like the medic he was immediately to my left but was probably 12 inches away.

I established comms with Norris and he calmly said, "I'll have the APC's rev up their engines so that you can hear where we are". I think I yelled that out once so others could listen as well. I told him that based on the sound they were immediately to our rear probably 25-75 meters. He then said, "OK, I am going to have several of the 50s start firing above your heads and, as best you can, crawl out under the fire". I hollered that instruction to any of the men who could hear me and when the 50s started everyone who was alive started low crawling toward

that sound.

I, of course, had the LT next to me, a PRC-25 (Radio) and an M-79 grenade launcher. I decided to take the LT and leave the rest. He was still awake and still had upper body strength and was able to assist the crawl by holding on. I initially tried first moving my body a few feet then reaching back and pulling him by the shirt up with me. I did that for what seemed like a half a mile (in reality it was probably 10 feet) then remembered something we were taught in Basic Training—I think it was called the "Slow man's crawl" or something like that. What I did was straddle the LT's body with all fours and had him interlock his fingers behind my neck. In that position I was able to crawl slowly but steadily and get us back to where the tracks were making the noise. I remember Loveless waited for us right outside a tree line that obscured my view of the tracks. He signaled for me to come in his direction, which we did. It seemed like it took forever but we finally made it to the tree line.

I thought that our worries were over but inside of the tree line was a small area of trampled bamboo where the APCs had been maneuvering in place to pick us up for evacuation. Crawling through that bamboo was probably the hardest piece of the journey. It was like having a giant pile of "Pick-up-stix" (the kids game?) and, as I crawled, parts of the LT or me would drop down two or three feet. We'd have to stop pull the body part out then move another few inches. I think that one of the drivers sensed that we weren't progressing well and decided to back his track up closer to us. As he did he swirled around on his tracks and placed the left rear corner of the APC directly over our bodies. I was sure that after all of that we

were going to be squashed to death by an APC! Others and I hollered, as it was impossible to tell if the driver saw or heard us. Thank God he stopped and the back of the track door opened. I finally was able to stand and the guys helped me then the LT inside the track. I remember we sat on the right bench and I rested the LT's head in my lap. I then remember feeling an incredible sense of relief and safety as the APC noise increased and I could feel the APC rumble and bounce our way back to the rear.

My next memory was sitting on the ground next to the liter that the LT was on. By now I think he was delirious with pain and morphine and he told those around us that I should to be put in for the Congressional Medal of Honor! I don't think that anyone there—my self-included—thought that he was rational by that point. I helped put him on the medivac then went to a track where Loveless and others were gathered. I remember that that was the only time that I cried in Vietnam. I don't know if it was because of Doc and Ditch's death or from the physical and emotional exhaustion I felt at that point. But I cried and it felt right.

I was vaguely aware of people off to my side arguing about going back to get Ditch and Doc. I think that it was an officer who came over to me and asked how sure I was that the two of them were dead. I told him of the bullets riddling both of their bodies and how motionless and unresponsive both of them were. In my opinion both of them were dead when the LT and I crawled out of there. He seemed satisfied with that and I think shortly thereafter the napalm strikes started. I have absolutely no memory of the rest of that day and night.

I work at a VA and part of my job involves evaluating veterans for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. One of the better questions I have found to separate the "real thing" from the fraud is "What was your worst day over there?" The legitimate cases usually don't have to stop and think. They know THE day that changed them more than any other. Like everyone else in Charlie Company and the hundreds of thousands of others who saw the real "stuff" in Vietnam they know. I went through the Battle of Fire Base Burt and other horrific events during my 12-month tour but THE date for me has always been March 13, 1968. Thirty-seven years and one week past.

May God rest the souls of Doc, Ditch and the many, many other great, young guys we were privileged to know over there. And may their families gain some small comfort in knowing that in such a short period of time their boys became true heroes who touched and helped the lives of so many others.

### **Jeff Condit** **03-20-05**



This photo was taken at the Dining Out, from left to right are: Pete Garworecki, Ed Schultz, Mike Groves, Jim Tobin, Jim May, Awb Norris and Skip Fahel.

## March 13, 1968 - Republic of Vietnam

After so many years, the details may be somewhat cloudy, but I'll try to remember the important issues.

It was March 13, 1968, in the Republic of Vietnam, I was squad leader in 2<sup>nd</sup> squad 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn (Mech) 22<sup>nd</sup> Inf 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. We awoke about 5:30 am somewhere in the field. I've never been able to tell anyone exactly where we were, due to the fact that almost everywhere we worked in Vietnam looked like the same area to me, except for the Michelin rubber plantation. I believe this day we were North East of Dau Tieng, possibly East of Tay Ninh. The day started about like all the others in the field, I was hot, tired, filthy

My platoon leader, Lt John Clemente, informed me while I was eating some breakfast (c-rations) that today would be my last day with the Triple Deuce. He said that I (and a few other men in the company) was to be part of an *Infusion* plan with a leg unit somewhere. He said infusions were necessary because some outfits would lose a lot of men at the same time, so they would take some men from other units who had more time to go in Country, and swap them for men with short time left. I was originally part of a massive replacement in September 1967 into the Triple deuce so they needed to swap some September men for men with other deros (projected leaving) dates. I never found out what leg unit I was supposed to go to.

Since I was to go in the infusion, Lt Clemente told me that my job that day would be to *ride the hatch* over the lead track and guide the driver with a com-

pass. I don't remember exactly what time we started out, but it probably was by 7:00 am. We were moving across a clearing into a massive cluster of bamboo and brush. It probably was at least a mile or more wide and I have no idea how deep. To my knowledge, we were not told by Army Intelligence what was expected that day.

Breaking the brush that day to lead the men was difficult, at best. We had flank security out left and right, (men walking on the left and right side of the track about 20 to 30 meters off) but we could not see them because everything was so dense. I was constantly tapping our driver on the side of his helmet to move left or right, as he kept drifting off the azimuth (compass heading) due to having to go around large trees and stumps. I recollect we were at this for a few hours when all of a sudden, I saw in front of us, running from my left to my right, a sandy trail and brush that had been cut back somewhat. Immediately, as soon as I saw this, I smacked the driver on the helmet to stop and all hell broke loose. Machine guns started fired from our front and I heard at least one RPG (rocket propelled grenade) and simultaneously I fell backward into the open top hatch and landed inside the track.

Right away the radio started with reports of men down.....our Platoon Sergeant, David Ditch, and our medic, Todd *Doc* Swanson, were hit immediately. To the best of my knowledge, Dave was on point on the left flank. I heard that Dave was hit immediately and *Doc* was behind him and as he moved up, to tend to Dave, he got hit also. It was mass confusion within minutes. No one could see where the enemy really was, except to know they were somewhere right in front

of our track. Within a few minutes, I was monitoring the radio while the 50 gunner was blasting into the brush in front of us, when the back door of the track opened and wounded men were passed inside. One was gut shot, I believe he was Captain Cass' RTO (radio telephone operator). The Captain was pinned down with everyone else behind our track in a hazardous file.

Within a very few minutes there were 4 or 5 wounded inside the track and I was trying to help them and yell out to Captain Cass that the men on the ground were reporting on the radio that they were taking more wounded and we needed to get out of there and regroup. During this time, I started first aid on those inside the track. We seemed to be pinned down for at least 1½ to 2 hours. I spoke on the radio to each squad leader and confirmed they had all their men accounted for, so I told Captain Cass we could start to pull back. He said okay, so I finally gave the order over the radio to pull back.

Once we had pulled back sufficiently to take head count, I realized that no squad on the ground had accounted for Dave and "Doc" Todd. They were left up there, but from all accounts, they were both dead almost from the start. I don't remember a lot of details at this time, other than our LT Clemente was seriously wounded, his RTO was wounded, our Platoon Sergeant was KIA (killed in action) along with better than half our platoon wounded and they were Medevac'd (air lifted by helicopter) out. Someone came and got me and told me the Battalion Commander wanted to speak with me. I was a SP4 and was the highest ranking man left in 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon at this time. I didn't know his name at that time,

I later found out he was Lt Col King James Kaufmann. He was told I had been on the lead track and he wanted me to lead an element from Bravo 2/22 back up to recover the bodies.

I remember telling him that it was crazy to send men back up. Dave was very special to me, sort of a father figure because he was 26 and most of the rest of us were 18 or 19. But I knew if we went back up, we'd lose many more men and Dave and Todd would not have wanted that. Dave and I, along with quite a few of the Charlie Company September 1967 replacements, were alumni of *Tiger Hill* in Fort Polk Louisiana. I didn't know Dave there, but we got close once we got to Nam.

Kaufmann told me that I was going to take men back up, and at first, I told him I would not go back up. I was scared to death. I had just escaped after being pinned down for almost two hours, and I did not want to go back and get killed. I honestly do not know why, but finally I started out leading a squad or platoon from Bravo company. Each step I took, I felt was going to be my last. I was petrified to be going back in. Just as we reached the area where I could see the sandy trail, all hell started up again. We all hit the dirt and I heard men behind me cry out that they were wounded. I yelled for the RTO to tell them (Kaufmann) to bring us back out and I believe I was told to push forward. At that I freaked out. I got up and ran to the rear without thinking and got in Kaufmann's face and started screaming that he was sending men up to die. I really have no memory of all that I said, I received no punishment and do not remember much else about the rest of the day until later that night, I remember that 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon had

about 6 or 7 men left in the field to pull guard duty all night. After fighting all day, we pulled guard duty for four hours each during the night.

I remember, the next day, we pounded that place with artillery for hours and hours. Then, some outfit went up and recovered the bodies, and did not find one single enemy body, or live ones for that matter. Somehow, during the night the enemy had “di di mou’d” (escaped). Later that day we were directed back into base camp. There I learned the Captain Cass had been relieved of duty. I assumed that it was due to pulling out and leaving Dave and *Doc* up there.

I requested and was allowed an audience with Lt. Col. Kaufmann. I was angry about Captain Cass being relieved and explained that I was responsible for telling Captain Cass we could pull out and that he should not be held responsible. I also told him that I *would not* be part of an infusion, since we had lost so many men, that I felt that I was needed now in the platoon. Kaufmann would not discuss Captain Cass with me, but did allow me to stay with my platoon.

For thirty one years, since 1968, on March 13<sup>th</sup>, I remembered Dave and *Doc*, and I remembered those men who followed me up to the front. All those years, I honestly believed that one or more were killed in that instant when the firing started again. Then in Dallas, Texas, in May 1999 I met Bob Price and found out that he and a buddy, Clark Lohmann, both from Bravo 2/22, were part of that element and they had both been wounded. I have always felt that I ran out on them that day. It felt good to be able to tell Bob Price this story in Dallas, and to tell Clark this story in Cleve-

land in October 2000. They both gave me absolution!

**John Eberwine** March 15, 2001  
Charlie Company 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon 2Bn (Mech)  
22<sup>nd</sup> Inf Rgmt 25<sup>th</sup> Inf Div Sep 15, 1967 to

## A Brother Departs

What a Guy! Special. A true brother. Loyal. Whatever word you used to describe him—friend was always part of it. Who could forget Dennis. His conversations and emails were often pointed, sometimes chaotic but always heartfelt. Dennis so exemplifies the need to find our brothers before it is too late.

With much persuasion we got Brooklyn to the reunion in San Antonio. He loved it. He found much that had been missing since Vietnam. He shared, He reminisced.

Dennis Zollo died on March 31 in the VA Hospital in San Francisco. He was buried in the VA Cemetery in Orange County New York on April 14th.

If anyone would care to send a card to Dennis' son the address is:

Cpt. Louie Zollo  
2304 Pinehurst Estates  
Lakehurst, NJ 08733



## Life is What Happens While You're Busy Making Other Plans.

The year was 1969 and if memory serves me well it was August, possibly a Tuesday. I had married several months before and was about two rungs from the top of my ladder of success. I'd been following the war in Viet Nam since 1966 and felt sure the war was winding down to a point where the chances of me being drafted were slim to none. And now, some 35 years later, I've discovered at least one thing I know for sure. I didn't have a clue when the "Greetings" showed up in the mail, my life as I knew it, took a turn that would change not only my life, but it would rearrange my thought processes to the point of self-destruction.

### Delayed Entry: Part One

The Impossible Dream Composed by IB DaPhish

Summer of 66 was winding down and my senior year of high school was soon to arrive. This, I thought, was my year. I could almost see me winning the city championship and possibly the state championship in wrestling and then continuing on to the 68 Olympics. Oh well, I still had my music if all else failed. I just didn't expect failure to show up that quick. Not my failure but the systems. The wrestling program had been cancelled due to circumstances beyond my control. I won't go into details, unless of course I find anyone who would care to listen. Once wrestling was gone my spirit died and slowly spiraled down and it was still September.

**To Be Continued**

I guess this is a good place to stop. I've been thinking (which is not a good thing for me to do) and the more I get into this spilling my guts I had to ask myself a few questions. I've invested most of my life to listening as opposed to talking and finding anyone outside of family that would find enjoyment in my life or even a small portion of it. God knows I've retraced my life on more than one occasion and not to complain about it but to focus on the trip. I can only imagine how my family views my life. Which brings me to this conclusion, I will find enjoyment in letting my family in on the voids that continue to exist in my life. So with that said: to the family—I would like to take this time to apologize for any and everything I did that caused you pain. You were always there for me and you deserved better. To all the members of the Vietnam Triple Deuce Family: Well You'll be the ones to decide if I have anything to contribute to these news letters.

Private Pounds at least for now.

**Mike Pounds B/70**



Awb Norris presented with ORA during visit to Ft. Drum. Details of Ft. Drum visit will be in the September NL.

Editor's Note: There were too many stories to be included in this issue and these stories will be in the September issue.

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Delta Co. Dan Streit  
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All of the above are here to serve the organization. Please, never hesitate to make contact.

## Reunion Reflections

Following are a few random photos of the recent reunion. Just remember the photographers were amateurs.



From left to right are: Joe Dietz, Lynn Dalpez, Rich Miller and Terry Clark caught chatting in one of the hospitality rooms.



Carving the Hemingway Turkey  
A tradition when members gather.



Raffle prizes were varied and plentiful at the banquet and the women's brunch.



Food and drink were plentiful in two hospitality suites. The relaxed atmosphere was conducive to reminiscing and renewing bonds of brotherhood. The Suites were popular for sharing photos and memories.



One of the greatest honors of the reunion was time spent with active duty soldiers. Pictured here are Sgt. Joshua Holien and Sgt. Sheldon Brandon. They are stationed at Ft. Drum, NY in C /2-22. They are awaiting return deployment to Afghanistan and Iraq.



Family members were volunteered to do all sorts of tasks to make the event run smoothly. Here they are selling raffle tickets.

### Web Site Hits

Name **Richard Tucker**  
 Email [focus52x@ctc.net](mailto:focus52x@ctc.net)  
 Date 3/29/05

Comments: **Bill**, do you remember **William (Bill) Lambert**? He was also a boat original, a medic attached to Bravo Company. KIA 12/06/66. We were high school friends, drafted on the same day. I was a FO attached to Bravo Company.

Name **Bill "Mad Doc" Matz**  
 Email [DocMatz222@comcast.net](mailto:DocMatz222@comcast.net)  
 Date: 3/29/05

Comments: **Richard**: Yes I do remember **Bill Lambert**. He was a close friend. We trained together, at Ft. Sam, and then Ft. Irwin. **Bill, Rich Farrell**, and myself, used to hang together. It is my understanding that Bill was with Recon Platoon when KIA. He and **Lt. Murphy** were killed when an APC hit a mine outside of Dau Tieng. **Bill Lambert** was one of the most gentle, honest people I've ever met. PS: Are you coming to Kansas City? **Doc Matz**

Name **Alan Lee Killinger**  
 Email [alan.killinger@ocs.apg.army.mil](mailto:alan.killinger@ocs.apg.army.mil)  
 Date 4/01/05

Comments: Served in Charlie Company 2/22 1969 to 1970, but remember just a few people's names from 35 years ago. **Allen Barthomew**, (Barf), Kirby, 8-Ball, Tripper, **Sgt Sanders**, **Lt Johnson**, **Rick Ressenger**, **Rip Bodman**, **Terry Silky**, MR. Clean (I think his name was **Sgt. Paris**), **Tommy Dail**. I remember the firefight we got into with the Wolfhounds when **Daughtery** got killed inside the mortar track. I remember the Hobo's, The Bo-Loi woods, our 2 month field trip into Cambodia. I remember seeing the Volkswagen between the trees and the triple canopy on the Ho-Chi-Minh trail.

Name: **Howard Lewis**  
 Email: [11864@midwest.net](mailto:11864@midwest.net)  
 Date: 04/27/05

Comments: Just checking back in to see if anyone I was with in Nam had checked in. Anyone with Co. "B" 2/22 (Mech) Infantry 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, especially during 11/66 to 12/67, please e-mail me. I'd love to hear from you.  
 Take care, **Howard Lewis**

Name: **WK Irish**  
 Email: [agpro@usa.net](mailto:agpro@usa.net)  
 Date: 04/27/05

Comments: Gentlemen: Would appreciate anyone's help in locating **Louis B. Smith (Big Lou)** who may have transferred to the 2/22<sup>nd</sup> from our unit, 2/12<sup>th</sup> sometime early in 67. He was a 4 deucer, so may have been assigned to yours, as that was his MOS. He was, to the best of my knowledge, from the Midwest (KS, MO or nearby state) and was, despite his nickname, not of large stature. His picture can be seen on our website: <http://www.southern-customs.com/4-2.html>  
 Thanks much for any help you might provide. **WK Irish**  
 4 deuce/HHC/2/12/4<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> ID,s (65-7)

Name: **Bill Noyes**  
 E-mail: [trplducer@aol.com](mailto:trplducer@aol.com)  
 Date: 5/6/05

Comments: Just learned of Col D. Hackworth's death due to bladder cancer on Wed. At his site there are already 64 pages of condolences. Thus passes true VN hero and a great American soldier. Deeds not Words.

Name: **John Fassett**  
 E-mail: [jfassett@snelsonco.com](mailto:jfassett@snelsonco.com)

Comments: I just want to say thanks to all the 4 guys in C2 22

**COMMENTS  
FROM OUR COMRADES**

**Charles H. Jackson**, Charlie Co., 25th ID, 1968 to 1969. Charles writes, "I wanted to let the Guys know that my wife Elaine died on June 26, 2004, Thanks, C.J." I spoke with Jackson last week and he told me that he and Elaine had been married for 37 years. Jim NFS

**Anatol Kononenko**, 54 W. Cheltenham Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19120-1002, (215) 548-2125, [vietvet67@att.net](mailto:vietvet67@att.net), HHC, 4th & 25th IDS, 66-67. NFS

**Michael L. Keown**, Bravo, Charlie & Delta Cos., 25th ID, Feb 70 to Nov 70. Michael would like to contact James David, Mark Nash, Paul Richmond, and Dennis Aurilla. NFS

**Gary N. Mortellito**, [grjmor-telito@comcast.net](mailto:grjmor-telito@comcast.net) Alpha Co., 4th ID, Sept. 66 to Aug 67.

The following individuals were listed in the Winter 04-05 Edition of the Tropic Lightning Flashes.

**Billy G. Arflin** ... 109 Haynie Mill Rd.... Belton, SC 29627 A/2-22 11/69 to 11/70

**John T. Felz**.... 1944 Plainfield Ave, S.... Planifield, NJ 07080 2-22 4/68 to 4/69

**James N. Pitts**.... 13102 W. Coal Hopper Ln, 2A.... Midlothian, VA 23113.... D/2-22 1969

Submitted by: **Norm Nishikubo**

**Mike H. Pounds**  
150 Tidwell Dr.  
Alpharetta, Ga. 20004  
770-475-3915  
[kjpounds@msn.com](mailto:kjpounds@msn.com)  
B Co. 25 ID Aug. 70 to Nov 70

**James N. Pitts**

13102 W. Coal Hopper Ln, 2A  
Midlothian, VA 23113  
(804) 379-4404.

[SunDwnJim@aol.com](mailto:SunDwnJim@aol.com)

(a letter received in response to our contact)

Dan,

It was great to receive your letter. I was with D Co. 2/22 Infantry, in Tay Ninh from July 1969 to Jan 1970 then was transferred to the 11th Cav. I was on one of the tank retrievers and a mechanic. I was a Sp5 over there and spent some time at Fire Support Base Wood. My brother was also with the 22nd in C Co. in 1968 to 1969. We spent almost 5 months together in Tay Ninh. I have tried to get in contact with some of the men I was with, but have been unsuccessful in doing so. It is really great to finally hear from someone who served in D Co.

Peace Brother, **Jimmy Pitts**

**Steve Cowlthorp**

16924 NE Davis  
Portland, OR 97230  
503-255-3792

[stevecowlthorp@netzero.com](mailto:stevecowlthorp@netzero.com)

Charlie Co., 4<sup>th</sup> ID, 65-67

**Michael G. Wager**

5119 Trail Creek  
Houston, Texas 77017  
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**4<sup>th</sup> & John S. Yoshikane**

98-833 Lanikuakaa St  
Aiea, HI 96701-2753  
Bravo Co. 25ID, 9-67 to 9-68

**John J. Coffey**

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