



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



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The Vietnam Triple Deuce Website

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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As your newly elected President my agenda is simple: to do what I can to follow the agenda of our membership, and assist the VN222 Board of Directors in making our members agendas come to pass.

Our main agenda is finding the many lost Brothers of the VN222 and getting them to join us. We also want to put in place, and/or upgrade the tools that will help us accomplish that task—our website, locator support, newsletter, and reunions, etc.

We will continue to support our parent organization in the causes the membership of the 22nd Infantry Regiment Society participates in, such as: the main reunion, welcoming home our veterans that were, or are serving in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, and getting them to join us upon returning home, and contributing to monuments honoring our fallen Brothers, and their families, as well as ourselves and our families. I am very honored to hold your trust as President of the VN222, and will do my best to advance our cause together.

While I am still getting used to being your President, I must say that the Board of Directors is making a few changes in our organization that many of you members have indicated that you wished to see. You will see some changes very soon, but I do ask you for patience until we get the jobs done. Your continued support, suggestions, and on time dues paying will ensure that we do make our society better all the way around.

Deeds, Not Words,
Lynn William Dalpez, D.M.O.R.
 President, Vietnam Triple Deuce, Inc.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

It's that time of year. . . reunions reunions reunions. The wife and I participated in the 45th anniversary of high school graduation (different schools). There were multiple family gatherings on Memorial Day weekend and throughout the summer. There is always reminiscing, about times past, renewing old friendships and rekindling the bond that initially existed,

Technically one might define a reunion as the coming together again of things or people that have been divided BUT we of the Triple Deuce do not have to be divided between our reunions. Many mechanisms have been established to help us keep the Brotherhood strong. The website has much valuable information. E-mail and telephones offer instant contact. The Newsletter bridges the gap in a different way.

We are receiving some excellent short stories and articles for publication. They are greatly appreciated. One Brother sharing an experience connects with countless others. Stirring our memories and dealing with them is beneficial to us all. So keep the contributions coming.

As I set fishing and consider the ripples in the pond and their far-reaching flow, it is similar to sharing our stories with other 2/22 Brothers. Anyway that is how it seems to me.

Dan Streit D/69

REUNION SUMMARY

The last best reunion ever is now but a fond memory. The accommodations were outstanding, the food superb, the trip to Fort Benning memorable, the carving of the Hemingway Turkey historically significant, the empty chair an apt tribute, the raffles fun, the business meetings efficient. All involved did an excellent job.

As always, the highlight of the reunion was the Brotherhood. Whether sharing in the fine breakfast buffet, indulging in the hospitality room, chatting in the hallway or participating in viewing pictures and discussing the happenings of war, the sharing between Brothers always has and will remain the focus of the Triple Deuce Reun-

ion. Start planning now for the next best reunion ever in Colorado Springs during the Fall of 2012.

PETER HOLT SEEKS MEMORIES

Peter Holt, in Viet Nam with Co A 2/22nd Infantry 1967-68, has recently announced he is donating \$1 million dollars and will match a second million dollars in contributions, to help establish the Education Center at The Wall in Washington D.C.

Holt, owner of pro basketball's San Antonio Spurs, is spear-heading the construction of the Education Center at The Wall. This building will be located next to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in the nation's capitol.

The goal is to display all 58,267 photos along with the stories behind the brave men and women and remember their sacrifice to this nation's freedom. As Holt puts it, "we want people to know that these people were someone's family or friend." He states he personally knew 54 soldiers listed on The Wall and cannot think of a better way to honor them than by this center becoming a reality.

Plans call for a WALL OF FACES that will showcase large scale photos of our "fallen brothers and sisters" on their birthdays. In addition, A COLLECTION WALL will provide a selection of the over 100,000 personal mementoes that have been left at The Wall. Finally, TIMELINES will feature the key dates of the Viet Nam War and how The Wall was created.

If you are interested in contributing photos or sharing stories about your brothers and sisters on The Wall those are being solicited, along with any monetary contribution you might want to make to honor someone, then please go to the website www.VVMF.org for additional details.

Lon Oakley Jr A/69
VN 2/22 Vice President

RAFFLE HELD FOR 2-22, 10TH MTN "COURAGE OF CAMARADERIE"

A special raffle was held at the Atlanta reunion for the benefit of the 2-22, 10th Mtn "Courage of



Camaraderie" fund. The item being raffled was a hand inlaid 22nd Unit Crest. The Inlaid Crest was made in Italy. Various species of wood were used in the making of the crest, which measured approximately 24 inches long by 18 inches wide. The Crest was made for and donated for raffle by LTC **Mike Loos**, immediate past Commander of Triple Deuce.

The raffle raised a little more than \$500 for the "Courage of Camaraderie."

The Crest was won by **Richard Stoltz**, Alpha Co, 1969-1970.

I'M BACK FROM ATLANTA

Printed from and e-mail of Doc Matz with his permission

I hope everyone had an enjoyable Easter. I got back from my reunion in Atlanta last week, and am feeling pretty good. I guess it was good to break routine and get out of Nashville for awhile. I enjoyed the "official" reunion in Atlanta, and Alpha's "unofficial" reunion on top of the mountain in South Pittsburgh. I had a nice experience in Atlanta when I saw Dennis Perkins. The last time I had seen him I was carrying him on a stretcher. He had been hit on the back by a tree limb which was knocked down by a VC mortar shell. He couldn't feel his legs, and I was worried he might be paralyzed for life. He still has problems with his back, but he is walking. It was a really good feeling to see Perk walking towards me at the reunion. It was one of those experiences you often read about.

"Doc"

"REMEMBERING LT. WARREN"

I'm not sure of the date Lt. Warren came to C Co. but after seeing him my thoughts were....."This is going to be a GOOD one {officer}." The last time I saw Lt. Warren alive, he ran into the jungle, as his men were in contact with the enemy. The foliage was so dense I couldn't see the enemy or our troops in front of the tracks. The next thing I saw they pulled the Lt. from in front of the bunkers. It was too late to save him. {what a loss.....} Little did I know at this time that Lt. Warren would be a medal of honor recipient! Lt. Warren had thrown himself upon an enemy grenade in order to save his men. Lt. Warren's picture can be viewed on the wall of valor at Fort Benning National Infantry Museum. If anyone remembers this incident in more detail than I can, please send it in to the newsletter.

Harless Belcher

C Co. Sept. 68 to June 69

PLEDGES FUNDS FOR MONUMENT

During the Business Meeting of the Vietnam Triple Deuce at the Atlanta reunion the Members voted to pledge to pay for inscribing the names of the VN 222 KIAs onto the 22nd Infantry Regiment Monument. This Monument will be erected at the Infantry Museum at Ft Benning, GA. The pledged amount is approximately \$6,500. **Brad Hull** will provide the official list of names to be inscribed. This list will include the names of those who served in VN 222 but were KIA while with another unit. The names of any that were KIA while attached to VN 222 will also be included.

Steve Russell, CO, 1-22, 4th ID 2003-2004 is heading up this effort. Steve has provided an excellent letter explaining the Monument concept and where the project presently is regarding design and funding. Steve's detailed letter together with artists concepts can be seen at the 22nd Infantry Regiment Society web site, www.22ndinfantry.org I suggest you spend a few minutes to familiarize yourself with the project and then consider making a donation to the Monument Fund.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask all **Members of Vietnam 1-22** and **3-22** as well as those who served with **1-22** and **2-22**, **GWOT** to consider doing what **VN 222** has done. There is no better way to immortalize your KIAs than to have their names inscribed on this Monument together with the names of all who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in the 22nd Infantry Regiment.

Jim May, HMOR

PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION

Hi Charlie Company 2/22, and the 22 Battalion

After reading this, which I am very glad & happy they all received the Presidential Unit Citation, but I think we all got kind of cheated!

First, we didn't know for sure we got one ... (signed by Lyndon B. Johnson, Sept.,1968. 1 year after we were discharged! I guess the Federal Gov. didn't have our addresses!!)

Second, after we found out we did get awarded the PUC, we had to apply for it and in which some still didn't receive it. (Applied?...Well, Begged for it!)

Third, When we did get it, there was no General...or President pinning it on us. No "Thank You" letter, no certificate with it, just came in a little brown box.

Fourth, it only took just over 43 years to get it. The mid-west Charlie Company brothers are just now applying (Begging) for it, and the ones for whom we have no addresses **will never receive it.**

I am, and I am sure all of you, are proud and happy that you received it, but it is just a shame that our Government, just doesn't take the time to search out the ones that are due this award and "Make it right". As said before, **our brothers that we have no contact addresses for, will never see this nations second highest award.** (America's Highest Unit Award!)

So, I am asking all of you, if you know of any of our Brothers that haven't received the PUC, have them download an SF180 form from the VA (under Forms) fill it out and send it to the address listed. Tell your Senators & Representatives that we need help in getting the VA to find these Brothers and give them their award! To me this is unthinkable that the Government can't take the time to find these people...If you need help, contact me.

Jim Neeley

C/2/22 Fourth & 25 Div 66 & 67

WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT

The following was forwarded for the Triple Deuce Newsletter and we sought and received permission to publish it from the author.

Christopher Gaynor Please feel free to use my letter any way you wish: Sgt. Christopher Gaynor. 2 nd Bn, 77th Field Artillery, 25th inf Div. In country 1/67 to 2/68. Supported Triple Deuce who were at the time based with us out of Dau Tieng.

I am not always so hot at keeping in touch with everyone who is important to me, but I think about all my brothers every day, so here's my letter to y'all.

Since beginning to dig into my long buried war memories a couple of years ago and exposing them to air, sunlight and scrutiny, my life has changed dramatically. In fact, my life has been transformed. I have been blessed with an ever expanding circle of friends who have given me comfort, support and the motivation to make serious commitments to myself and by extension to my VN veteran's community. It is my hope that I have been able to give some of myself in return. I never imagined how my world would expand at a time in my life when I had been feeling lost and depressed.

Over the past 2 years I have devoted much of my energy toward preserving the personal stories of 'our war' that I documented in my photos and letters and sharing these when I have had an opportunity. In the process I have lived intimately with this material and also been able to accept the young soldier who had been a stranger to me for more than 40 years. It has been rewarding, exhausting and painful in equal measure. I feel that our history is so important that I am asking, even nagging, all of you to take care of your letters, pictures and other memorabilia like the treasures that they are and if you are able, write a book, some poems or just

short notes about your experiences. I can tell you that the personal rewards are worth the effort.

All this has kept me moving along. However, in the past few years I have been in a wrestling match with a son of a bitch.

It was in 2007 that I got news that was like a kick in the gut. After the second and finally the third neurologist who examined me said 'What you have is Parkinson's Disease' they had my attention. For the second time in my life I would be forced to look at the reality of my mortality, this time not from an AK-47 round or RPG shrapnel but from a mysterious degeneration of my brain and an inevitable progression towards the absence of everything that makes my life both livable and enjoyable; that is the loss of my ability to think, move and ultimately speak. But, I learned some pretty valuable lessons in Viet Nam about survival, making do with what you've got and knowing that your buddies have your back. I am a pretty tough old piece of shoe leather and It is going to take more than a damn brain disease to stop me.

So, I want to send all my combat brothers my profound thanks for being the true men of honor and heroes that you are, my respect for the sacrifices you have made, my deepest thanks for your service to your country and your comrades and my love for your friendship and support for this old soldier.

Chris.

THE LANDING. . .VUNG TAU. . . GETTING ACQUAINTED. . .

*Second in a series submitted by Karl
"Doc" Bergeron
of Northwood New Hampshire.*

October 11, 1966

Darkness was upon us. The sky was clear yet our first taste of war was evident in the air around us. We anchored within sight of land this afternoon. In the morning we will debark from the Walker. We'll board smaller landing craft and head for shore and the unknown. The Port of Ste. Jacques, (Vung Tau) was our port of entry. Sporadic flashes accompanied by the sound of artillery reminded us that our real tour of duty had just begun.

Tonight those rounds were trying to make someone's life miserable. Tomorrow, for the first time in our lives someone could be trying to do the same to us. With this thought in mind a very quiet mood was predominate aboard the ship. I seriously doubt anyone will sleep very well tonight.

October 12, 1966

The navy shuttled back and forth between the ship and shore. In short order the inexperienced future combatants were ashore. The 3rd Brigade of the Fourth Infantry Division hit the beach without a shot being fired. A rather un-historic event.

On the beach the men fell into their prospective squads, platoons, and companies. We were assigned vehicles in a long convoy. Once in the trucks ammunition was passed out to the newly arrived brigade. The route to our destination was secured by what seemed to us to be combat seasoned troops from various units. Members of the famed 173rd Airborne, reclining on air mattresses casually waved as our convoy passes. It was surreal. Armed Forces radio could be heard

over the constant rumble of the truck tires. As if a truce had been called to announce our arrival, a group of Aussies played Frisbee. In contrast, a group of Koreans seemed far more concerned about our welfare. Each position was manned by well-disciplined R.O.K (Republic of Korea) soldiers. They were all facing away from their positions ready for action. Those little guys made us feel a little more secure than the care-free Americans and Aussies did.

The contrast in attitude between the Caucasians and the Asians must have been a cultural difference rather than a situational one. What do you think?

The forty-kilometer trip from Vung Tau to Camp Martin Cox took us through Ben Hoa, an exceptionally poor hamlet that resembled some of the Mexican border towns I had seen when we were at Ft. Sam. A temporary base camp for our in-country orientation, Martin Cox was mostly occupied by the Big Red One. We arrived late in the afternoon covered with dust and perspiration. Our introduction to the elements of Viet Nam has just begun.

October 17, 1966

There was a great deal of confusion when we first arrived here. No one knew what they were supposed to do, but we soon discovered that the Army has a game the call "Fill the Sand Bag". Of course this game has a purpose. The bags are filled and placed around the tents to protection from incoming rounds. Bunkers are also made from the filled bags. Actually, they make an excellent building material and they will help keep us safe. The process of filling and placing of the bags is also a good physical conditioner for us, as we are a little out of shape from that long voyage across the Pacific.

**October 19, 1966
Camp Martin Cox, Viet Nam**

Yesterday, my platoon went on our first patrol. We left early in the morning around 7 a.m. Be-

cause it was the first patrol for Bravo Company, the C.O. was there to bid us farewell. He told the boys in the platoon that he had faith in them and that they had nothing to worry about. . .”You have an excellent platoon leader and a good medic.” He said. With these words we departed from our friendly lines and headed for the jungle, little comforted by the C.O.’s remarks.

Shortly after we started out a mine was discovered. Everyone was warned and we continued on avoiding the mine. Shortly after we entered the jungle.

In single file we proceeded on keeping our spacing as we had been taught. . . stopping. . . listening. . . everyone was very apprehensive. My nerves were on edge; I had never felt more alert and scared.

The sound of someone cutting wood came from in front of us. Slowly, we pushed on toward the distinct sound. The second squad moved out to the left flank. The third squad took up the right flank; the first squad remained on the trail. I was in the first, with the command group, the platoon leader and the radioman. As the sound gained intensity our advance slowed. . .our apprehension grew with each moment.

Everyone was projecting images of what might happen. . .”our first firefight”. . .or perhaps it was a trap, an ambush, or snipers waiting for us. No one knew what to expect. . .I could taste the tension. . .for most of us it was a new sensation, an experience we knew we would have frequently throughout our tour.

As we advanced we came upon a small clearing where four men were cutting firewood. It was a very awkward moment for all involved.

Our inexperience and inability to speak Vietnamese contributed to the awkwardness. The men were gathered up and escorted back to base camp to be interrogated. The second squad was assigned this task. In their absence the remain-

der of the platoon set up an ambush and waited for them to return.

Around 11:00 a.m. the second squad returned. As plans were being made to continue on our vague mission we received a call from our company commander requesting our return to base camp. Everyone was relieved to hear this. Even though we hadn’t been out very long none of us wanted to stay out any longer. Fear of the unknown filled everyone with a strong desire to return to the security of our base camp.

As the day had progressed it had gotten very hot. Our clothes were completely saturated with perspiration. The air was motionless, providing little relief from the heat. From the top of a tree a strange monkey watched us plod along the path. He seemed to be smiling at us, as if he knew something we didn’t know. We were as foreign to him as he was to us. A more observant group of greenhorns this Army has never produced. I couldn’t stop thinking that something was going to happen at any moment. I was constantly on alert looking for potential danger in every direction.

When a snake slithered across the path at the point man, a Black kid from the Bronx, he hit the ground. . .not a shot was fired, yet everyone followed suit diving to the ground in anticipation of all hell breaking out. For a few moments dead silence prevailed. No one moved. . .no one spoke. . .no one took a breath.

Slowly the point man got to his feet, Someone yelled, “Stay Down!!!!”

“What for? It was just a God Dammed snake” the man on point said.

Later we learned that Bo, the point man, thought the snake was a trip wire for a command detonated mine and when he saw it move he thought it was all over for him and his squad. He told us that the reason he didn’t get up immediately was because he was saying the first prayers he had ever said in his life.

We all learned a lot from this little trek into the unknown. We learned that the forest houses many amiable and not so amiable creatures. The least amiable of all are the mosquitoes. They are relentless and all exposed skin area looked like a dart contest had taken place. . .I wonder. . .Do dart bites itch this much? We are becoming acclimatized to our new environment.

November 2, 1966

By now you must think something has happened to me. I'm writing to let you know that I am okay. Today is our seventh day of a seventeen-day operation. This is the first day since the operation started that we haven't been on the move. At night when not out on patrol, we have to maintain light discipline, so I haven't been able to write. . .Now, it doesn't look like I'm going to be able to finish this note either. The call just came down from the C.O. we're boarding the APCs and moving to a different location.

November 3, 1966

Yesterday, we moved from one Michelin Rubber plantation to another. No one explained why we made the move, but that's typical. To my relief, no night patrols were sent out, so I spent the night around our track.

As it stands now I've been on six patrols and numerous sweeps through the jungle. So far we haven't made contact with any enemy forces. This won't last forever. Today it could happen, all Hell could break loose. Hopefully it won't though. We've hardly learned how to deal with the elements, let alone the enemy.

Despite the fact that we haven't engaged "Charlie", we have sustained casualties. Sadly, the casualties in our battalion have been inflicted by our own men. Three nights ago three men from the second platoon were wounded, one seriously. They were on a night ambush patrol and tried to regain entrance into our perimeter without making radio contact. Why this happened I don't know. The results could have been lethal.. Fortunately it wasn't. A fifty caliber round entered the inner thigh of one of the men severing the femoral

artery and exiting from the outer side of his leg. Amazingly enough his femur was not shattered by the round. He did lose a lot of blood, but we were able to stop the bleeding and get him evacuated.

Moving out again. . .today we clear out our first suspected V.C. village. . .wish us luck. . .I'll complete this whenever I get a chance.

November 4, 1966

We lived through yesterday without acquiring a scratch. . .the gods must be with us. . .this will be short so I have it ready when the chopper arrives this afternoon to resupply us.

After searching the village we moved on to a different rubber plantation. We spent the night here. Currently, I'm setting on my poncho with my shirt off. It feels as if I'm next to an old wood stove. This afternoon we'll move out again. Always on the move to keep the Cong busy. That seems to be our new motto. . .when we find him I don't know. . . will write more later.

November 9, 1966

Since my last note one of the boys from my platoon was killed. Shorty Jackson, a Rebel from North Carolina, never knew what hit him. He didn't suffer, which I guess is a good thing.

We were moving across an open area headed toward a tree line when a single shot rang out. Everyone hit the ground and someone yelled, "Medic".

When I got to Shorty I knew he couldn't survive his wound. The bullet entered the back of his head and ripped through exiting from the front causing severe damage to his skull. It was gruesome. The only thing I could do for him was cover his head and help take him back to our tracks. It was bad enough for me to see him. I didn't want the other guys to.

With a poncho wrapped around his body and covering his head I carried Shorty to the Aid track, about a hundred meters from where he

was hit. As you can imagine I was a wreck, especially when some of the guys asked if Shorty was going to be okay. It was our first experience with death. . .Shorty was the first one from our unit to be killed. . .it was a horrible experience. Only three weeks in Country and I've gained two years experience. By now Shorty's parents have received the tragic news, "Killed by hostile fire". . .A SMALL MAN DIES, BUT IS A BIG PRICE TO PAY. (Shorty was actually a victim of friendly fire but we didn't comprehend that at the time. Everyone assumed it was from sniper fire.)

None of us had seen anything like this. I know that no matter how many times I encounter this type of devastation I will never get used to it. . .I am glad I prepared myself. . .I think I handled it as well as I possibly could. . .We had a memorial service for Shorty today. It was "SHORT", which was quite appropriate.

At this time I would like to ask a favor. Would it be too much trouble for you to send me a bottle of J&B? Out in the field we get free cigarettes, but no booze and a coffee-royale would sure perk me up. Not only me, but the whole platoon. If I ration it out. . .I'll write again soon. . . when I can. . .take care. . .my overall mood is still reasonably good considering the conditions.

PORTLAND'S MEMORIAL

After hearing this presentation, Gary Hart contacted the author/presenter and obtained permission to share it in the Newsletter.

May 26, 2009 by [karenzach](#)

The similarities between the war in Iraq and the war in Vietnam, the war that my own father fought and died in, have been the topic of much debate. Everyone it seems has an opinion about it, from the local news anchor to the barrista at the local coffee shop.

They claim both wars were poorly conceived and poorly executed. Both misguided and hastily entered into. My friend and fellow compatriot military correspondent Joe Galloway says the parallels between Vietnam and the war in Iraq

didn't begin overseas, but in DC. Never one to mince words, Galloway doesn't shy away from putting blame where he thinks it's most deserving.

"It took Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon nearly a decade to fail in Vietnam," Galloway said. "Cheney and Rumsfeld could do it in Iraq in a year."

I suppose the wrangling over these wars and others to follow will continue long after you and I give up the ghosts of our nightmares past.

At least I hope they do, because for me FREEDOM means living in a country where wars should always be a matter of fierce debate, not a matter of accepted fate. But it's not the similarities between these wars that I want you to consider today. Rather it's some of their differences that I bring you:

- Today's troops eat better. They don't have to raid the chicken house in hopes of having a hot boiled egg. Their meals are often catered by American contractors. Although to be fair, the Vietnam veteran did have a better choice of drink – warm Tiger beer instead of blue Gatorade.

- Unless he was a career soldier, the Vietnam soldier did not have to serve more than one tour. He could volunteer for more, and many did.

- During Vietnam, exceptions to military service were rare. Today only one-half of one percent of today's population serves in uniform. They carry the burden of freedom for the rest of us, over and over again, on multiple tours to the front lines. Many of those troops serving and dying are women.

- An average 66,800 casualties were carried off the battlefield of Vietnam during the peak years between 1966 and 1969. The average for Iraq during it's peak between 2004 to 2008 was 6,500. There are a lot of reasons for that, but it's due in part to the small percentage of people caring the burden for the rest of us.

- During the Vietnam war military widows and their families were given 30 days to vacate military housing following the death of a loved one. Today they are allotted a year.

- The death benefit for families during Vietnam was \$10,000. It had remained unchanged since

World War II. Today Gold Star families receive up to half-a-million dollars, as long as their loved ones pay for and plan for that option.

These changes are a direct result of the advocacy work of Vietnam Veterans and their families and military organizations like VVA, DAV, American Legion, VFW, Gold Star Wives, Gold Star Moms and many others.

There's one final difference. When my father died in 1966, I was 9 years old. I was in college by the time that war ended. From the time he died until I was in my late 30s I did not talk about my father or how he died. I felt a shame I could not explain. As if I had done something very bad that had caused his death.

Throughout my growing up years, Vietnam veterans were vilified for doing what America's policymakers had called them, alas, commanded them to do – serve their country. Vietnam veterans were treated with disdain, and their families were treated even worse. Right here in Oregon, war widows were threatened by so-called peace activists.

As a child I didn't understand that the people burning effigies of soldiers weren't necessarily mad at my father. As a child I couldn't make the distinction between the soldier who served and the unpopular war he served in. And neither could most of our citizenry. We weren't only at war in Vietnam, we were at war with ourselves. It took me buckets of tears and hours of prayer to sort this all out but I've finally come to a peaceful place. A place where I proudly speak the name of my father – Staff Sgt. David P. Spears – and of the life he gave for his family and his country.

Contrast that to my friend Destre Livuadais. Destre's father, Staff Sgt. Nino Livaudais, was killed in Iraq. Destre and his brothers Carson and Grant spend a week during the summers with my husband Tim and I. We go hiking. We make trips to the Hermiston's library and pool. We watch the pelicans feed at McNary Dam. Sometimes at night, after I've read Destre and his brothers a bedtime story and said a prayer with them, my heart aches so badly I find it difficult to breath. I see in Destre the child that I was, the child who misses the father who loved her.

Destre was 5 and living in Alabama when his daddy died. He's 11 now and lives in Salt Lake City. During his last visit to our home I asked Destre if he tells the other kids about how his father died.

"No," he said.

"Why not?" I asked.

"Because it hurts to talk about my dad," he said.

"I understand that."

"And there's one more reason."

"What's that?" I asked.

"Because the other kids think it's cool when a soldier dies in war. I know it's not. I know it hurts."

If Destre's right. If kids think it's cool to die in war, how then do we differ from the jihadists?

A Vietnam veteran friend recently shared these words with me. They were penned by his son, who has been serving on the front lines in Iraq:

Looking through the eyes of those before my generation, I see strength. Combat medic, supply, infantry, or whatever you may have done. You have seen the horrors of war. Families awakened in the middle of the night, houses blown into particles, kids running through the street because their family has just been killed, your friend dying in your arms. When I look at myself, I know that my eyes have not seen the worst. Only a glimpse of what happened to you. So as I lay in bed at night, why do I have nightmares?

As a nation we have learned some hard lessons. Because of the promise you made to your fallen comrades, to never forget, today's soldier is given a warm send-off and a hero's welcome home. Just as it should be. Just as it should have been when you and my father served.

But as Vietnam veterans and their families, our mission will never be complete until we help this nation understand that for children like Destre and men like this young soldier serving now the pain of war continues long after the bombing stops.

Thank you for your faithful service to this country – then and now.

Welcome Home, friend. Welcome Home.

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2D BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM CHANGE OF COMMAND

Pete Gaworecki and I attended the 2D Brigade Combat Team Change of Command on 29 APRIL 2011. We were invited by COL Dennis S. Sullivan, CO of 2-22, 10th Mtn from September 2006 to February 2009.

After a very warm greeting by members of the SD BTC Pete and I found ourselves seated front row center with the family and close friends of Dennis Sullivan. The VN 222 Guidon was also posted in a conspicuous place by the 2D BTC personnel.

The ceremony was held in an aircraft hangar at Wheeler Field because winter hadn't quite finished beating on the "North Country." Cold rain accompanied by a stiff breeze is only marginally better than snow. It is good to see that the Change of Command ceremony is still conducted in a traditional and simple manner. The outgoing Commander, COL David M. Miller, spoke to the Soldiers of the 2D BCT thanking them for their service and their high level of performance. I, like most I assume, have always liked being thanked for my efforts.

Pete was hungry and when Pete is hungry it is best to get him to a chow line, so after the completion of the ceremony and visiting with old and new friends, we went directly to the PX food court. (Yes, the PX has a food court. In fact, if it weren't for all the Soldiers in uniform you'd think you were in a mall in Any-Town USA.)

Once we were done eating and shopping Pete and I headed for the 2-22 Battalion Area where we visited with LTC Mike Loos, MAJ Lawrence Walton and the S-3 personnel and then went on to visit with some of the Company personnel. It seems that we are no longer novelties at 2-22. Only the new-bees stare at us, while those that have seen us many times extend familiar greetings.

Dennis Sullivan invited Pete and me to attend a dinner that evening at LeRay Mansion. We had believed it would be attended by Dennis' family and ranking members of the 10th Mountain Division. To our surprise the dinner was at-

tended by family members and life-long friends of the Sullivan family. Pete and I were warmly received to what was actually a family gathering. Dennis' parents are Irish immigrants and follow a tradition of storytelling and entertaining. After dinner, Dennis' mother gathered up the attendees and brought us into one of the large sitting rooms where chairs had been arranged so that all were facing the center of the room. This all seemed normal to everyone, except Pete and me. We soon found out what the arrangement of chairs was for. Daughters, cousins and friends all took turns at singing songs while reminiscing about times past. I was amazed and impressed by the sense of family that was on display. (My Grandmother May was also an Irish immigrant, however, she came from a tradition of arguing, not singing and storytelling.) The attendees' display of talent was accompanied by their good sense in not inviting Pete and me to sing or perform. The only song that Pete and I know is *Silent Night*.

Pete and I want to express our thanks for being invited to the Change of Command and, more importantly, being invited into the family gathering.

Jim May, HMOR

DINING OUT 2-22, 10th Mtn APRIL 1, 2011

Once again, the Old Goats Squad, Ed Schultz, Skip Fahel, Pete Gaworecki, Roger Frydrychowski and I, found its way to Ft Drum for the official Welcome Home for 2-22, 10th Mtn after their deployment to Afghanistan. The Battalion returned just prior to Christmas, but with leaves and settling in it was thought best to hold the Dining Out so that as many Soldiers as possible would be able to attend. The plan worked. There were 800 Soldiers and their guest in attendance. More on the Dining Out a bit later.

We arrived at Ft Drum and took up residence in the two smaller quarters at the LeRay Mansion site. Pete announced that he and Roger would take the two room building. This was a change

to our usual living arrangements and, after Ed Skip and I discussed the matter we came to the conclusion that Pete and Roger wanted to exchange secret Polish recipes without concern that these recipes would fall into the wrong hands.

We settled in and then made our way to a Bistrotro in Watertown where we met LTC Mike Loos, MAJ Lawrence Walton and MAJ Cloyd Smith for drinks and dinner. Sergeant Major Franceschi wasn't able to attend. He was missed. What wasn't missed was Roger's charm, especially where women are concerned. In fact, the next two days were filled with Roger charming just about every woman he came in contact with. There isn't room enough here to detail Roger's escapades, however, you will be pleased to know that Skip kept a photo journal and has every intent on presenting this now titled journal, *War Is Hell, Lt Frydry*, at the Colorado Springs' Reunion. (I expect that the first three rows at the showing will be filled with CBO's)

Dinner, in spite of the constant comings and goings of Roger's new found friends, was very enjoyable. It was good to catch up on what went on in Afghanistan. About half the Battalion was involved in training Afghans in Basic and Advanced Infantry training. The rest of the Battalion was spread out in many locations and separated by many miles. Spread out in many locations is not unusual for Vietnam Vets, but it is unusual for the way the Army operates today. Good news was that there were no Combat Losses during the deployment. We learned that the training was very successful, so successful that LTC Loos has been ordered back to Afghanistan to work in 10th Mtn G-3. This quick turnaround for LTC Loos is difficult for his family, but important for the mission to get the Afghans trained up and prepared to defend themselves. After dinner we went back to our quarters knowing that any of Roger's "friends" would be stopped at the gate. We turned in earlier than usual in preparation for the next day's busy schedule.

Breakfast was at the Golden Unicorn, famous for pancakes that are bigger than the Full Moon hubcaps that my cousin Ray had on his 1954

Mercury. Once we figured out that we would not be able to eat all the food that was on our plates we paid the bill and headed for the Battalion Area. After saying hello and disturbing as many members of the Battalion Staff as we could find, we went to visit the History Room. This room, while small, contains memorabilia from all of the Battalion's service periods. Also posted are the names of all the KIA's from the earliest to the latest. SSG Jason McClure has done a fine job on the History Room and deserves a special Tango Yankee for doing so. We moved on to the Company Areas where Roger volunteered to help mop the main corridor. We later learned that Roger asked if any of the NCO's he was assisting had a sister living nearby. After our mandatory visit to the PX and the off-base surplus store we returned to our quarters to rest and prepare for the Dining Out.

Those of you that have read these Ft Drum stories before know that Skip, who has never had an alcoholic beverage, is the Designated Driver during our visits. You also know that we use my Ford Expedition, plenty of room, as the Official 22nd Infantry Regiment Staff Car. This system works. So, when Ed, Skip and I drove from our quarters to pick-up Pete and Roger we were surprised when Pete said, "We're taking two vehicles." About the same time Roger came to my vehicle and handed me a shirt. He then turned and walked back towards his quarters. At that point, Ed, Skip and I left for the Commons. After driving only a short time Skip noted that Pete was behind us and then added that Pete was turning around. We assumed that they had forgotten something and we continued on to the Commons. Well, as it turned out, what was forgotten was Roger! Pete assumed that Roger was with us and we believed that Roger was with Pete. Roger was more than justified in being upset with being left behind and, since none of us had a sister living close by, let us know how upset he was when he finally got to the Commons. Pete denied any responsibility for leaving Roger behind. Ed, Skip and I found a great deal of humor in the screw up. Pete blamed us for not taking Roger and Roger blamed all of us for leaving him behind. As of

this writing, Pete's announcement, "We're taking two vehicles," has yet to be explained.

None of the transportation screw-up had any ill effect on the evening's events. We visited with Glenn & Penny Sweet, parents of Jack Sweet, KIA 8 FEB 2008 and Dawn Esposito, mother of Michael J. Esposito, Jr., KIA 18 MAR 2004. It is good to know that these folks are part of the Triple Deuce Family.

This Dining Out had some of the characteristics of a Dining In. One young Lieutenant found himself wearing the *Cone of Shame* after being found guilty by the Vice of the Mess for improper attention to his cell phone. The *Cone of Shame* is actually the largest dog anti-scratch collar I've ever seen. It measures about two feet across at the open end. Hard to enjoy a beer with this device around one's neck. The mixing of the Grog was also done at this event. Many types of beverages, alcoholic and non-alcoholic, as well as other ingredients are used to represent events in the Battalion's History. These ingredients are poured into the Battalion Pinch Bowl while the person doing the pouring explains what the ingredient represents. Skip poured "swamp water" into the Punch Bowl while explaining how this was representative of the Battalion's experience in Vietnam. Skip addressed the group as follows, *"Our Regiment enjoyed peace for a time, but by 1963 diplomacy had failed and the 22nd was called upon to stop aggression in a small Southeast Asian nation called Vietnam. A bitter and confusing war to the Soldiers, and thoroughly unsupported at home, the Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment displayed incredible bravery and tenacity in the battles of Operation Attleboro and Junction City, at Soui Tre, Trapazoid and FEB Burt. We add Budweiser, always kept cool and safe in the tracks, and swamp water, made safe to drink with purification tablets, we honor those who fought in the rice patties and jungles of Vietnam."* We were well represented by Skip. Tango Yankee, Skip. We sat with our respective Companies during dinner. I sat with Echo Company, the Support Company, and want to thank CPT Brian Knutson for his hospitality. Brian explained that Echo Company found itself in a mission it had not

trained for, Base Security. It all sounded very familiar to me as it would to you. Mechanics, supply types and truck drivers found themselves manning check points and berm bunkers. To their credit, they did an outstanding job. This was confirmed by LTC Loos.

I had a long chat with CPT Jason Byers, the Battalion Chaplain. Chaplain Byers was my contact point for the "Care Package" effort. The Chaplain told me that the packages were well received and much appreciated. We discussed why notes of thanks were not sent and agreed that there were two reasons. One is that many of these young Soldiers don't know that they should send a note of thanks and the other is that the only way they know how to communicate is electronically. So, for all of you that sent a "Care Package" know that it got there and it got to the Soldier it was addressed to. Also know that Chaplain Byers asked that I extend his personal thanks to all of you for supporting those Soldiers who have little or no support from home.

Once dinner was completed the dance floor was opened. Yes, Roger was, as you would expect, out there dancing. In fact, he danced quite a bit and with some of the finest looking ladies at the event. Again, photos will be shown in Colorado Springs. It is more than fair to say that everyone in attendance had a fine time. It is also more than fair to thank CPT Clint Hauger for all the attention he paid, not only to the Old Goats, but to the entire event. Once he saw that things were going as planned, he joined in on the fun.

In closing I want to thank LTC Mike Loos for the invitation and I want to thank all the Active Duty Soldiers for the fine way we were greeted and treated.

Jim May, HMOR

NEW FINDS

Charles L. Allison

1185 Jessi's Meadow Way
West Bountiful, UT 84087

801-294-0568

jncallison1@msn.com

A Co. 25th ID, Oct. 69 to Mar.70

Richard S. Pauly

152 Como Ave.

Buffalo, NY 14220-1606

716-880-6535

rspauly@roadrunner.com

A Co. 25th ID, Sept.69 to June 70

Michael McGuire

1740 Las Cancas Rd.

Santa Barbara, CA 93105

805-701-0555

mmcgire.ahhi@gmail.com

C Co. 25th ID, Dec. 67 to Dec. 68

James E. Murray

909 Washington St.

Brighton, MI 48116

517-304-0477

newlife49@comcast.net

C Co. 25th ID, Jan. 69 to Oct.69

Comments: Jim would like to locate **Olin Rumfield, Bud Puskarich** (I notified Bud.), **Don Kruse, William Lecht, David Weathers, William Russell, Michael Walters, Sgt Robert Paul, Lt Apmour and Cpt White** (Not Cpt George White the Charlie CBO.) Jim would also like to attend the next reunion and any mini-reunions that are being held. (You guys in Michigan that might be holding a mini-reunion ought to contact Jim.)

Edward W. Nygren
866 Placid Way N.E.
St Petersburg, FL 33704
727-896-1411

enygren@tampabay.rr.com

A Co. 25th ID, aug. 67 to Aug. 68

Comments: Ed writes, "Anyone remember the Green Flag with the Red Stripes across the middle? I still have mine. Keep up the good work..."

TAPS

Joseph E. Williams

Florence, SC

B Co. 25th ID, Jan. 69 to Dec. 69

Comments: Joe Williams died March the 5th in Augusta Georgia in the hospital. He served in the Triple Deuce 1968-1969 time frame. He was seriously wounded December 3rd 1969. He has been in a wheel chair ever since he returned home from Vietnam. He was in second platoon second squad. He worked as a counselor for the VA for 21 years helping numerous veterans with their claims. In my opinion a bigger heart could only be found in another combat buddy. The war is over for you now Joe, rest in peace.

Doug Lyall

B Co. 25ID, June 68 to June 69

CW4 George P Ford died 16 Feb 1999 in Hurst, Texas, at age 83. He'd served in D Co 2-22 Inf 25th Div 1969-70 as UST (QM).

CW2 Billy J Shamblin died 29 April 2008 in Charleston, W Va, at age 75. He'd served as Maint Officer in D Co 2-22 Inf 25th Div 1970.

Robert Aurand

Atlanta, GA.

B Co. 25th ID, 12-67 to 9-69

Died April 17, 2011

The DUBABE is no more, a character among characters of A/2/22(Dec 65-late spring 1967)

I just found out today with a 100% certainty that **ERNEST HENRY JR** died on May 25,2010 and is buried in Valley Forge Gardens Cemetery, King of Prussia, PA. I am writing all that I remember about the DUBABE as was his self-anointed nickname during his US Army time, in the hope that I can connect with his son Ernest Henry. Ernest Henry was from Benton Harbor, Michigan. He was not the quiet type, always jive talking and a card hustler, who loved to gamble. He was drafted on Dec 9, 1965 and came to A/2/22 Mech with the 200 draftees just before Christmas 1965. He was in the 2nd platoon and had initially about 4 black friends from Benton Harbor some with funny nicknames. There was James T Jeffries (TADPOLE), Clifton Martin (TOP DOG), Larry Johnson and James Kelly. After basic training, only Henry and Clifton Martin stayed with the 2nd Platoon. Tadpole and James Kelly were in HHC 2/22 in Recon. and Larry Johnson went to OCS. The DUBABE was a good runner and I bet him \$5 he could beat him in the one mile run test in combat boots that was part of basic training. That was a big mistake as DUBABE came in 4th of 200 and I came in about 25th.

LT. Larry Van Etten, 2nd platoon leader for most of the time Dubabe was in the 2nd platoon said that he was the best point man he ever had. One day on a typical daily search and destroy thru the jungle, Dubabe was not on point but was left flank security. I was FO for the 2nd platoon at that time and a VC sniper fired a burst of rounds and got the Dubabe in both arms. It was lone sniper who immediately vanished. I happened to be the closest guy and went over to Dubabe to provide initial medical aid, while some guys chased after the now gone VC. When the medic came over I had to leave so as not to be too bunched up. The medic gave the Dubabe morphine and after the initial shock wore off, the Dubabe realized his bones in both arms were shattered and the medic said it was stateside for him. That's when Dubabe started his ranting. " The DUBABE is going back on the BLOCK, girls be

ready for me, the DUBABE is going home". By this time we are all cracking up laughing. Prior to this time, he and Kenny Leight were the big gamblers and each always had around \$400 in their wallets, always ready for the next big card game. They made a deal, that if either one became a KIA, the other could keep the money in his wallet. So of course when the DUBABE was wounded, Kenny came over asked the DUBABE if he should take the money from his wallet. Of course DUBABE replied that he was going to make it just fine. There are many other stories about the DUBABE. I had searched for him in the Benton Harbor, Michigan area and finally got so frustrated, I called the local police to see if he had a record as another combat vet Keith Laymen had seen him around Benton Harbor and he told me the DUBABE was still out hustling. They said they had some Henrys' but no Ernest, I asked them to arrest him and call me as his one phone call. They declined and I told them there would be no donation from me to their benevolent fund.

Ernest Henry was high on life and always entertaining to be around. It is too bad he was not located and we got reacquainted with him.
RIP DUBABE

Gary Hartt A/2/22
503-632-6955

GUEST BOOK HITS

Full Name: Harless Belcher
email: harless@yahoo.com
Date: 06/16/11

Comments: I served with co c 222 from Sept. 68 till June 69 when I was wounded. My nickname was Bird. I would like to hear from fellow triple deuce men .especially **Francis Sam Carter** from Calif. Welcome home to all triple deuce veterans.

Full Name: Marci Ehrhart
email: marci@onlinenw.com

Date: 05/30/2011

Comments: Thank you thank you thank you veterans and those who have died so I can have what I have today. I love you all so much and think of you daily. You are not forgotten in this household let me tell you. My kids are being raised to learn about and respect you all. Thank you.

FullName: Mike Riley

email: mk.riley2@gmail.com

Comments: I was with the 2nd 32nd artillery in Nam in 1968-69. The Triple Deuce was with us nearly every where we went and they were some of the best and bravest soldiers that I have ever seen. They saved our bacon several times and for this I want to thank them.

Name: Mike Pruitt

email: SONOFAVIETNAMVET@YAHOO.COM

Date: 04/24/2011

phone: 818 641-7537

Comments: My name is Mike, and I'm writing on my Fathers behalf, he passed away in 1993, from suicide, presumably a direct result of PTSD and alcoholism. His name is **Jimmy Dean Pruitt**; I am - doing a genealogy on his time in Vietnam. My problem I'm having - is, his dd214 reads he was with the 2nd 20th Arty 1st Cav am and I have learned that unit was an Aerial type form of combat, my - father only mentioned infantry as his duty, not gunner. Now, before I received his dd214, I had always remembered him saying his unit was the 2nd of the 22nd. He was very proud of being part of the 1ST CAV, but was the 2nd 22nd attached to the Cav at all? if so, from 65 to 66? I'm goin crazy trying to figure this out, the 2 20th Arty has a website but they never write me back, I've wrote at least 3 guys from there....For some strong reason I have your unit in my head, can you check a roster for his name?..please reply when you can....

Name: Bruce Sewall (9/69-9/70)

email: bgs7038@aol.com

Comments: Mike, sorry for your dads death. Suicide per cent was very high among Vietnam Vets, as it is now among our combat Vets coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan. Was your Dad getting any disability from the VA for his PTSD? If so then he might have gotten counsel-

ing either through the VA, or your County VA office. Some Vets were part of outreach programs from your state, or County VA office. There might be people he talked to that would remember more details of his time in Nam. But like a lot of Guys do, he might of kept everything inside and not reached out for assistance. Alcoholism is very high among Vets. It's a way of dealing with the pain, guilt, memories of events we're not equipped to handle by our selves. Your dad went off to war for his Country, came back to a normal life, and tried to be part of that "Lifestyle" but wasn't "normal" as no one is after combat. God bless your Dad for being a Veteran, and good luck with your search

Name: Jim Papczynski

Date: 05/09/2011

Comments: Mike, I am sorry for your Father's untimely death. I have no way to see if Jimmy Dean Pruitt was on the roster for the 2nd of the 22nd Mech. If he went over on the Nelson, as all the boat originals did, we could not all leave Dau Tieng all at the same time so we were sent to different Units for our last 60 days or so of our time in Nam. I went to the 4th of the 23rd Mech and there is a possibility your Father went to the Aty Unit of the 1st Cav. I hope my reply is not the only one you get.

Name: Fred D Bowman

email: fbowman46@gmail.com

Date: 10/16/1946

phone: 931-729-2378

Comments: I served with Charlie company triple deuce in Cambodia 1970 from May - June

Name: Fred Arthur Zachary

email: fazachary62@gmail.com

Date: 12/16/1967--12/18/1968

phone: 479-787-3082

Comments: I served with Alpha company based out of Cu Chi and wondered if any of the guys are registered with you. Have located a couple here in the States since that time, but not nearly all of course. Thank you for your help. Sp4 Fred A.Zachary (rank at the time)

FullName: W. James (Jim) Beattie
email: recluse@starband.net
Date: 04/13/2011
Comments: Welcome home brothers. A job well done. RVN 67-68.

Name: Joe Gurkey
Date: 04/10/2011
Comments: God bless one of our brothers killed April 11, 1970. **Specialist James Chris Shukas** Company A Triple Deuce.

Name: Art Fernandes
email: squecker1@msn.com
Date: 04/03/2011
phone: 719-596-8949
Comments: I'm looking for a couple of guys I served with. 3d Bn 21st Inf from 67-68. The guys names I am looking for are **Muldoon, Michael J** and **Drewer, James D.** and **Underwood, Lowell T.** If you know who they are or know someone who does please feel free to email me. Thanks much.

Name: RAYMOND [CORP] LEE
email: LEEJOYCE2@YAHOO.COM
Date: 04/03/2011
phone: 815-252-6190
Comments: WAS WITH B CO. FEB TILL AUG 1967. I HAD TO CANCEL MY RESERVATION FOR ATLANTA. MAYBE NEXT TIME . IF ANYBODY IS IN NORTERN IL GIVE ME A CALL . I BEEN GETTING TOGETHER WITH TOM IZBICKI , TOM TALUZIK,CHIP LACASS. ALO WE ARE SUPPOSED TO MEET WITH WILLIE SMITH.IM GOING TO TRY TO GET INTOUCH WITH VALENEC AND WARE FROM ROCKFORD AREA.

Name: Marcelle Ehrhart
email: marci@onlinenw.com
Date: 03/31/2011
Comments: Hello boys. I just wanted to say thank you to all of you who have recently emailed me. I appreciate you taking the time and I have been excited to get some history on Annie Fanny. (Sorry to Michael Mitchell for bringing back the bad memories of the demise of ol' Annie). I wish I could joint in you Atlanta but right now I just don't have the funds. Besides, not sure what I could really contribute. I'd love to

meet you guys some day and get to talk and touch the people who truly understand what dad went through. Let me know if you need any of my photos sent in high quality for you to use.

Name: Luan Duy Ta
email: luanta_II@yahoo.com
Date: 03/30/2011
Comments: Hello 222's I am a Vietnamese American who grew up during the Vietnam war, when you were fighting to fulfill your duty, and for us, to protect our freedom. All I can say now is thank you very much. What the Vietnamese suffered since 1975 tell us that your sacrifice in Vietnam is invaluable and we very much appreciate that. Again, thanks very much, 222's. Luan Ta

Name: John A Layman 222 C Co Mortors 1967--1968
email: fredmeyer1946@netscape.net
Date: 24/03/2011
phone: 480-970-9064
Comments: I just joined, and was wondering if any other 222 vets live in or around Scottsdale AZ?

Name: Dick Nash
email: nash222@frontiernet.net
Date: 03/10/2011
phone: 309 537 3536
Comments: Gentlemen, One of our own has been fighting a valiant fight against kidney failure, and is finally in line to get a replacement from his son. The surgery had been scheduled in time for Bill Lipp to still make the Atlanta reunion, but it was postponed last week and keeps this great guy, and Alpha Co 2-22 vet from being with us in body April 14th. He will definitely be there in spirit and prayer when the other Alpha guys and all of us who have met Bill at several reunions gather in Georgia. But if you have the time, please send Bill a bit of well wishing from a combat Brother, you. I know he will appreciate it. His e-mail is wlipp@kc.rr.com.

HELLOES & COMMENTS

Name: Christopher Gaynor
email: cbgaynor2@yahoo.com
Date: 02/27/2011

Comments: I was a RTT Team Chief with 2nd Bn, 77th Fa based out of Dau Tieng. We were glued to 22 for combat field operations all over III Corps. We provided close support for Triple Deuce and you guys protected us. There is not any doubt in my mind that I owe my life to the brave men of Triple Deuce. God bless every one of you and all of your lost brothers.

Name: Willie J Smith
email: SeMajeill@aol.com
Date: 02/20/2011

phone: 773-848-5803
Comments: I am in Chicago, IL and would like to hear from members of B Company, who served between 1965 and 1967. Please feel free to give me a call at my contact number: 773-848-5803. If no answer, please leave a detailed message and I will get back to you.

Name: Ron Dennis
email: ronstrans@aol.com
Comments: Was with C co 3 platoon from 3 69 to 11 69

Name: Joe Gurkey
Comments: Nice to read all the comments from everyone. I was with Alpha Co. 1st Platoon Triple Deuce from Aug 69 - May 70. I remember some names like **Ron Harris, Mike Lajoice, Dale Hackman, Jim Gotland, Dave Schaffer, Sgt. Robt Paul, Lt Armour**. First time I saw this site. Nice to reflect and remember all the good friends I had.

Name: John Felz
email: fandoservices@aol.com
Date: 2/11/11
phone: 908 757 5449

Comments I served with triple deuce in April 68 to Dec 68. I have recently been in touch with some of the guys and plan to go to reunion in April. I would like to know if any one knows where **Earl Steiner** Is (50 Gunner) and **Bruce Hay** (Squad leader).

Charles R. Otey, Jr.
614-313-6699
croteyjr@aol.com
C Co. 25th ID, Nov. 67 to Nov. 68

John G. Chisholm
219-938-2241
F2643john@aol.com
B Co. 25th ID, Sept. 67 to Aug. 68

Edward M. Fagan
212-799-7014
efagan2@nyc.rr.com
C Co. 4th ID, 66 to 67

George B. Gonzales
810-687-0166
A,B&D Co's 70 to 71

Comments: George would like to hear from anyone that he served with.

Ronald F. Picardi
989-781-3257
rpicardi1@chartermi.net
A Co. 4th & 25th ID, 65 to 67

Comments: Ron writes, "Current Status - Early retirement thanks to the local economy."

Michael Daugherty
360-830-5024
mikedaugherty@wavecable.com
C Co. 25th ID, Dec. 65 to Apr. 66

Comments: Mike was also with the 124th Signal Battalion from Sep 66 to Sep 67.

Donald W. Smith
570-735-1023
A Co. 4th & 25th ID's Dec. 65 to Sep. 67

WHAT TRIPLE DEUCE HEROES Rescued 3 RATTs on Rt. 239, the Road to FSB BURT?

(excerpt from "A Rifleman First"* by Mike
Pectol)

December 28th, '1967 – 3d Brigade, 25th Inf. Div
convoy exited DT base camp through the gate
leading to the road and the bridge over the Song
Saigon River. Engines roaring, tracks clanking,
and a huge cloud of reddish brown dust billowing
out behind them, they took the short jog toward
the mountain in front of them, and made the left
turn onto Rt 239, which headed out towards the
Cambodian Border. It was part of operation Yel-
lowstone, and for many of 2/77FA, the first time
back out in the field since a catastrophic fire had
wrecked most of their equipment and sent them
back to DT on an unplanned break to re-equip
asap. The good news for them at least was, that
Christmas was much more Christmasy in Base
Camp than in a crew bunker on a FSB.

It was no secret that they were heading out to a
place called Soui-Cut. The 3d Bde branch of the
Army Rumor Mill had been in high gear since
around a week before this one. Almost without
exception, everyone in a discussion about it had
"Bad Vibes." That feeling soldiers who pay atten-
tion get when something just ain't right.

In that convoy was a young Acting Buck Ser-
geant on his first field operation "in charge." and
2 members of the rest of his RATT (Radio Tele-
typewriter Team). Not bad enough the bad vibes,
being on the major highway to one of the worst
danger zones in the Elephant's Ear area, up very
close to the Cambodian Border, but during a
phony Christmas Truce EVERYONE was sure
would soon be broken. But on his first field trip
as the responsible party. And top was probably
expecting him to fail in some way or another.

All of a sudden, the truck started sputtering and
bucking and slowing down, then died.

SgtMikie's flashpoint temper was on the verge

of going nuclear ----

*"God Damn it! Fuckin truck just had preventive
maintenance and repairs for the trip and natu-
rally the fucker breaks down on convoy to an op-
eration on the dustiest, worst part of a jungle-
lined road through Hell to a **Hot Spot** in hell!
Fuckin Army equipment! Yeah, and fuck you
too, Murphy! Guys! One on each side of the ve-
hicle now! Eyes on the jungle! And the road! So
far, we've been lucky. We didn't hit a mine or
step on any, but that don't mean there is not
STILL time! Move it! I'm gonna catch the next
track and tell them to radio info on our sitrep to
the commander, and find out what the plan will
be, but I'm pretty sure we ain't gonna like it ay-
tall! Heads Up! God Damn dust!"*

The reddish - brown cloud was thinning as the
noise was lessening as the vehicle in front of
them disappeared around the curve in the road,
taking its own thick, choking 25 mph cloud with
it. All three clambered out, jerkin off their goggles
wiping the reddish - brown dust that had begun
to coat them, wiping their noses to clear air pas-
sages and keep from breathin it. Swallows of
water were swished around in their mouths so
they could spit out the thin, reddish - brown mud
created. Sometimes handfuls of precious, tepid
water had to be partially inhaled through the
nose, then forcefully snorted out through each
nostril as thin mud. That is how thick it some-
times accumulated, forcing breathing through the
mouth. Then they had to spit out mouthfuls of
mud that had accumulated in their saliva. Then,
swallows of clearer water, to ease the parching
of their throats.

Sgt. Mikie, locked and loaded on rock 'n roll, like
his 2 "troopies" went round to the back of the 'rig'
that was on his crew's Radio Truck, rubber-
neckin both sides of the road, searching for en-
emy movement. Not that he would necessarily
have SEEN it, experts in camouflage as these
guys were.....and waited, cussin and prayin for
the sound of the track behind them, which he
hoped would be coming SOON. Fear and Anger
combined, gripping his heart and lungs, squeez-

ing them tight, breath coming in short, labored gasps almost like he just run the 440. Lookin at one of the troopies, eyes buggin almost outta his head, he noticed the same symptoms.

For 7 months and 28 days now, Mikie had been operating at PF-10 with intermittent jumps to 20. Some said 10 was the highest. Mikie disagreed. This was DEF'NLY the start of a 20 day! For him, and to a different degree, his men, 10 was pretty much just everyday stuff. Base Camp, or out in the bush, all life was a constant threat. You could be walkin anywhere, and come under, mortar, rocket, even sniper fire and only a steadily HIGH level of awareness, PF gave you any chance at all of survival. It roughly doubled on convoys with the possibility of an ambush, or hitting a CD Mine, then at the FSBs in the bush. You're a much gooder target for a sniper, machine gunner, or RPG gunner, mortar and rocket crews. Heck, at a FSB, you could even step on some unexploded US ordinance and get vaporized, or trip a booby the infantry had been lucky enough to miss while securing the LZ. Though he and everyone else headed for BURT expected ---"felt" trouble, little did he or they know that in a very few days, he and maybe they would reach **brand new heights of 30+** on the PF scale, hahaha! That for a while, beginning on New Year's Eve, 30 would soon begin to feel 'normal' to the exhausted, frustrated men of the 3d Brigade, including him and his men.

Jerked out of his reverie and eyeballing the surroundings – the noise of an approaching track –

"Well, Fuckin A! Thank God for SMALL favors! STOP, GODDAMNIT! "

Holding his weapon up, parallel with the ground, the Army stop signal.

"Man, we got a hell of a situation here! Our fuckin truck just died. Can't get it re-started and I ain't no fuckin mechanic! Tried to signal the track in front, but too much dust for him to see me. He just kept on truckin' and now, is way up ahead.

Sgt. Mikie was talking of course to the TC or Track Commander, of one of the 2nd battalion, 22nd Infantry, Mechanized tracks the 2nd battalion, 77th Field Artillery was on convoy with on the way to a place called "Soui-Cut" and named "Firebase BURT" in the OP ORDER they were currently under. He said –

"Wait one. I'll radio them and have them relay the info to convoy commander, and find out what they want to do."

A Way too long pause, a lot of Squawking static and talking on the radio and.....

"Well, they told me to tell ya to hold tight, keep your eyes peeled, and wait for the last track in the convoy. They will hook ya up, and tow ya to the FSB. Sorry, Shitty Deal, I know. Good luck. Gotta Boogie now, and try to catch up."

Army convoys at that time, almost always had what the soldiers called "**The Accordion Effect.**" They would tighten up the distances between vehicles, and due to road conditions, contact or other reasons.....including breakdowns, the distances often widened out way too much. That effect was an important factor now, and for the rest of the day. The track had to try to tighten it up again. So they left Sgt. Mikie and his two troopies with that sinking, mildly nauseating depression in the pit of their stomachs. Fear of the unknown but naturally negative suspicions. We All knew the enemy knew when we left base, where we going, what road we would take. Hell, how many roads WERE there that could handle a brigade-sized convoy that also led to the site we needed to get to. ONE.

As far as being the fastest way to get there by land goes anyway. Except for those fucking Chinooks, Mikie liked their Airmobile Operations Gooder. Generally, much faster.

"And you don' gotta worry about no steeng-keeng breakdowns like this. Any breakdowns would occur at the FSB, and there are mechanics there to band-aid it like they always have to

do, to give them time to start scrounging around or beggin for parts.”

War of course, is a HURRY UP and wait business at it's very best, if there even is such a thing as best! Sort of an OXY-MORON, huh????!!! So the track had lurched forward and around them and taken off with a huge cloud of dust! HI-HO SILVER!!! So to speak.

Sgt. Mikie and his troops understood. And of course, that didn't help one little bit. Three lone troopers, stuck with a broken down truck, covered in sweat and dust turning to mud as they mixed, part of one lousy canteen of tepid, lousy tasting water apiece, facing the very real possibility of an assault by the Viet Cong and their own torture and death at the hands of an enemy who had not one ounce of mercy in them. Only the will to win, in as humiliating a manner as possible, time permitting. Waiting. Hoping. Praying and knowing deep down that this could be 'it' for them. It was between 10 and 20 minutes between tracks, or so it seemed – plenty of time for an assault to take place and take out three lousy troopers and destroy their vehicle. Great Stuff, *IF you are a 'Charlie!'*

“Ahhhhh----SO! Goodie, comrades! Uncle HO has smiled on us today! We have just received an almost FREEBIE, as the Americans say! All that remains is for us to take it!”

Thinkin –
“Okay, we need a plan. They are looking to YOU for it, Sarge! This is what you get the Big Bucks for, hahahahahaha!”

Out Loud –

“Well, guys it's exactly what we knew would happen. They had to leave us. We are to try to hang in and wait for the last track to hook us up. And of course, we should expect and attack. So, ---I ain't gonna bullshit ya. We are stuck between the shit and the toilet paper here. The only thing we can do is have a plan, work it, and hope

and pray for the goodest. Hope you guys scored at least Marksman on your live fire exercises before coming over here. So, here is our plan. Of course, we will all be looking, but we kinda need a little extra. Benson, you get up on the top of the rig and assume a prone position. You are at the highest point, so you are the frontal lookout. DO NOT kneel, sit up, or stand! Low profile is of course a harder target. You cover 180 degrees from the front to left and right. Now's a good time to think back to basic and remember your camouglage and target acquisition training, both of you. Keep scanning and if you think you see something, look at it from an angle, not directly to try to catch any movement. Weapons on rock 'n roll, but if the shit goes down, try to quick squeeze only single rounds. If you can't hold it to short bursts of only 2 or 3 rounds. Get the lips of your magazine pouches on your bandoliers now. Lay the mags down partially out of the pouch, so you can grab them faster and easier with your reload hand. DON'T pull the empty. Hit the button and let it drop, after you grab the replacement. Got it? Good.

Art, you take the side closest to the mountain, prone. You cover from Benson to the rear middle of the road. I'm gonna get in the rig and get the thermite grenade to use it to destroy the rig and the secure gear if it gets down to the nitty gritty. I'll cover from the middle rear back up to Benson.

Now, we need to think of capture. I'm going to leave it up to you guys to decide whether or not you will put up with that, but you know what will probably happen if you decide to let yourself be captured. I hope you know that in the long run, it is up to you. You can be such a pain in the ass that you can probably FORCE them to kill you and avoid torture. Or you can think “Maybe they won't torture” Slim possibility. But, to help you decide, I'm gonna tell you what I'm going to do. If I'm sure all is lost....I'm gonna yell GET CLEAR! And give you around 5 seconds or as close as I can to move away from the truck. Then I'm gonna pop the top on the grenade, drop it down the filler neck of the tank, then just snuggle up to

it. The truck, me and at least some of them are goin up in a BIG BOOM! I ain't gonna be captured! If you decide to take your chances, clear the vehicle, --FAST! If you decide like me, all ya gotta do is keep firing, if you can, or kicking, or whatever, while you're snuggled up to Old Bessie here and I'll see ya in heaven, 'cuz we already been in Hell, right? Questions? Ask 'em now, 'cuz from now on, it's quiet and scanning. Listening and focusing on what is out there, or maybe no. No? Okay, then, deploy.

Humid heat, sweat running towards their eyes, in a world silent except for jungle noises, and the distant rumbling of vehicles.....the three took their positions and focused on the world around them, waiting and hoping for the prospect of a rescue from some of their fellow soldiers.

"For the rest of my life, I'm going to love Tow Truck drivers, if there even IS a rest of my life. Please, if not for my sake, for these newbies. I could understand a mortar, or a rocket, or even an attack on the perimeter, but THIS is just too fucking much! No steengkeeng way for a young green kid to die, who shouldn't even be in this situation."

After the first track came and passed, with a wave and a shout, and NOT the last vehicle, a clear pattern was established. A pattern of joyful, ecstatic hope that this could be it! Followed by a steep emotional fall off that mountain of hope to the jagged, hope crushing rocks of depression below. With each track that came bringing hope and left, crushing it, the joyous highs became higher, so of course, the falls became harder. Everything else being addressed as well as possible, there seemed to be nothing Sgt. Mikie could do about the knee-jerk reaction of his men and himself standing up as the tracks came barreling around the bend in the road, into view. Finally, he had to instruct them after around the 4th track and vehicles spaced between them had gone by – and what seemed like hours and hours of waiting and sweating, eye strain, etc.

"Okay, I guess we can't keep from standing up

in case we need to be ready to climb into the truck quick. But until we know for sure we are gonna get that tow....we have to keep our weapons and our visual Focus DOWNRANGE. It only takes a second or less for a bullet to finish it, even if there is a rescue in sight. Okay? Good. Don't forget it again, or it might mean your life."

Alone with their thoughts, Sgt. Mikie couldn't help wondering and fighting a little bitterness.

"What the fuck is keeping those guys??!! I figured we were somewhere in the middle of the convoy, so nearly as I had it figured it should be pretty soon. We can't hold out against more than 2 or 3 squads max, our being lightly armed! Why the fuck didn't the guys in the track that left us here hook us up??!! Oh, well, shit. I get that. A fightin track in the middle of a convoy cannot be 'saddled' down with a towed vehicle in case of trouble...and that is what this trip is, since BEFORE it started! Definite Trouble!!

BAD, BAD VIBES HERE!

Now, in between tracks, an eerie quiet developed on that lonely road, but not on the troops waiting for their salvation to come rattlin' and clankin' around that bend in the road. LOTS of noise inside. Pulses thundering in their ears, trying to breathe quietly, instead of those seemingly thundering rasps, so they could hear if the enemy were sneaking into assault positions. –

*Why didn't those guys on that track at least give us a grenade apiece? But, then, why didn't I think to ask? BIG MISTAKE there, Sargie-Pargie! Well I am glad I scrounged enough magazines and bandoliers so we can all have 2 full bandoliers of full magazines, roughly double the "Basic Load" Around 280 rounds apiece. I **know** they are out there! They are watching right now! Waiting their chance to come in here in a full tilt boogie assault and kill us all. Or kill 2 of us and cut our PeePees off, stuff it in our mouths, and leave us as a 'note' to the guys who will find us here if they don't hurry up and get here. And maybe take one of us maybe me, to PLAY with*

till they get bored or dinner is over and they need to move out again to meet up with us at BURT! What a steengkeeng fucking lousy spot to be in! Well, don't let the troopies see how fucking scared you are, Sargie! Don't be a fucking coward! Scowl and look determined. At least that won't be an act. They aren't gonna take any of us alive, the motherfuckers! We are on "Rock 'N Roll" and we will DEF'NLY take most of them with us, specially when out of ammo, or no time to switch mags, I toss this thermite grenade down the neck into the gas tank of this baby and blow all of us to hell!! COOL! a Track! HAL-LAY-LOO-YA! Mabye THIS ONE is THE ONE! God Damn! PUH-LEEZE, GOD! LET THIS ONE BE THE ONE! We be too, too, WAY to young to die, but what the hell, ain't we all??!!

Getting wound up tighter than a 'mainspring' of a clock Mikie yelled over the engine noise and squawking squelch of the radio –

"HEY! ARE YOU GUYS THE LAST TRACK? CAN YOU HOOK US UP AND TOW US IN? OKAY. SURE. WE KNOW, WE WERE BRIEFED. ANY IDEA HOW MANY MORE LEFT? OKAY, ZIN-FUCKIN LOI, MY BOY! BE SAFE!"

Why did the powers that be not realize that there is important communications gear in this truck and it would possibly end up in Russian hands if the crew was killed before they could destroy it and captured it?

RIFLEMAN FIRST! I temporarily forgot that could happen to a Radio Teletypewriter Operator, a knob twister, for Chris' sake! A Radio Clerk/Typist. But it already has so no surprise there! Oh, well.....good thing I was listening up when our DI said that to us in Basic, to get us to

"Pay attention, young troopers! No matter what your MOS is....in war, you never know what can happen, and if it comes right down to it, the nitty-gritty...You MAY have to be what we are training you to be...first, maybe last, and always, always....."

A Basic Rifleman!

Good thing I paid attention to all that basic infantry stuff they taught us. Maybe it will work against them and for us that I fired expert on the "Live fire" range and the weapons familiarization courses before comin over! God, I hope so! I like all soldiers, hated my DI, but now, I realize that with what he taught us, we just MIGHT have a chance! I just don't understand this! This waiting is driving me nuts! Bet the troopies are 'bout ready to dirty their pants, being relative newbies, poor guys! Gotta stay in charge, stay cool and when they come, very short bursts and give 'em hell! Come on, God Damn! Let's get this the fuck over with, one way or the other! Guess they were right in that book where the guy said 'A COWARD DIES A THOUSAND DEATHS, BUT THE BRAVE ONLY DIE ONCE!' Ain't it the truth, hahahaaha!!! And even if I DID want to run, where the fuck would I run TO??!! 'Nowhere to run, nowhere to hide' Martha and the Vandellas, I think, hahaha! You crazy muther! What the hell are you doin, singing goofy rock songs to your possible death and mutilation???! Well, HAL-LAY-FUCKIN-LOO-YA!"

Mikie and his troops had exclaimed when the last track came barrelin' around the bend at a noisy, dusty 25 mph or so. The troopers clambered lickity-split into the open cab of the dead truck as the track was pulling around into position in front.

"Heads up! Keep eye balling the sides of the road! I am gonna rig the towing cable and hook us up!"

He sprinted around the front of the truck, waiting for the track to position and the crewman to jump down, grab the cable and attach it to the track. Then, grabbin it out of his hand, when he handed the hook to him, he attached it to the towing point of the truck, ran around, jumped in the cab, took the truck out of gear, and gave the high sign to move out. A slight tugging jerk, and the track and truck were off to BURT. BIG sighs of relief from all three, and high fives all around!

“YEAH!” They all shouted in unison. No one mentioned what they were probably thinking. They were out of the fire, but now they were just back into the frying pan. This was STILL combat convoy on the way to a rendezvous with Lord only knows what.....but everyone in the 3d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division KNEW, though no one ever knew HOW they knew ---it was gonna be BIG TROUBLE of some kind, for at least some of them! But in the life of a combat soldier, for NOW at least – “All’s well that ends well – one situation at a time!

Later on in between the ears debriefing – Mikie never could finger out WHY they never attacked.

Hell I woulda done it and fast, too! Before they had a chance to form a plan, or settle in. Maybe they thought we had a radio and could call for help, or we were just bait. Never know for sure, I guess. Just might be one of those Guardian Angel things. Sure glad we got into the FSB by dusk, too.

Sgt.Mikie
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"Class of 68"

* "A Rifleman First"
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The book may be downloaded for \$6.00

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