

# 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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Together Then.....Together Again!.....Thanks for Being There...&...Welcome Home

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### President's Message

Hello,

With this issue of our newsletter I am proud to announce the completion of the first edition of our very own locator's guide. We call it "*Welcome Home Brother*", and you can now look at it, download it, AND print it for your personal use by checking out our web site. This booklet has been authored by every one of you who has ever tried to find one of your old comrades in arms, and taken the time to tell someone else how you did it. The committee that put WHB (as we call it) together simply compiled a list of all the successful methods we could find, and put our new Chief Locator, Lon Oakley in charge of making a booklet that ALL members of this organization can use as a reference book to finding those Brothers who don't know about us yet. Lon's efforts were checked and edited by the Board of Directors, and that group would like to thank not just Lon for this major step forward, but every vet of Triple Deuce's other battalions who provided some of the methods listed. Please take a moment to look it over on the web site,

[www.vietnamtripledeuce.org](http://www.vietnamtripledeuce.org). This will always be a work in progress that we add to as more methods that work are sent to us by you. We would love to add a method to the next edition from your success in finding a lost Brother.

No time like the present to get your reservations in for the Omaha reunion in October. Going to be a great one from all indications. See you there. Have a safe spring season,

### The Vietnam Triple Deuce Website

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

Please Visit Today!

Mario Salazar

Dick Nash A Co. & HHC, 69

## Hero Dies

**Staff Sgt. Dwayne P. R. Lewis**, 26, of New York City, died in Baghdad, Iraq on Feb. 27, when his unit was attacked by enemy forces using small arms fire during a dismounted patrol. Lewis was assigned to the **2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, N.Y.** (attached to 4ID). SSG Lewis was a native of Grenada and became a naturalized U.S citizen. SSG Lewis grew up in Brooklyn, NY. His wife April is an Iraq war veteran, and still on active duty. Flowers were sent by the Triple Deuce.

## Reunion Dates: October 5-8, 2006

**Location; Omaha Marriott Hotel**

**For Reservations: Call Marriott Reservations  
1-800-228-9290**

**Identify yourself with "22nd Infantry Regiment  
Society"**

**Cost of Room: \$79.00 Plus Tax of 16.48% total \$92.02**

**Make Reservation before September 14, 2006.**

**Bus tip to Offutt Air Force base (Friday) Limited seating. This will include lunch. \$25.00**

**Friday Buffet: \$30.00**

**Saturday Banquet: \$35.00/\$30.00 (Beef/  
Chicken)**

**Ladies Brunch: \$20.00**

**Registration forms are on the last two pages.  
Watch upcoming newsletters for additional  
information**



## Editor's Comments

Rapidly approaching is an annual ritual in our home. One I participate in as much as I can from the comfort of my recliner or the security of my computer room. Perhaps many of you share my dread of this periodic event---SPRING HOUSE CLEANING.

At this time the house is cleaned "from top to bottom" (why not from bottom to top or even from left to right—I fail to understand.) Farewell to the cobwebs and dust bunnies. Clothing and shoes that no longer fit and outdated accessories are donated to the local thrift shop. Unusable "stuff" is hauled to the dump (my area of expertise). Then the inevitable ---shopping for much needed replacements. The goal—a more pleasant living environment.

As it seems to me, we are in the midst of spring house cleaning for the Triple Deuce. Much like turning the mattresses or changing the belt on the vacuum (something that no one sees but it helps the over all functioning) we have updated our membership rosters and streamlined how they are shared. Much like washing windows, we have eliminated the clutter from our website so the true beauty can shine through. We are most eager to do our shopping. We are always looking for Brothers in traditional and non traditional places. We are busy preparing for the Omaha reunion. We have created the locaters guide. The emails and phone calls exchanged involve many but the newsletter goes to all. Just like in the home---if everyone does his or her share the organization profits from the various talents and approaches. The goal of this—a more responsive and functional organization.

Much like I would never say no to the dear wife when she asks me to assist, the Triple Deuce efforts will be more effective if you respond affirmatively when ask to participate —or—even volunteer to share your expertise and insight.

Anyway that's how I see it from here.

**Dan Streit D, 1969**

## DUES, NOT WORDS

If your newsletter is stamped with a red DUES, NOT WORDS PLEASE, then it is time to renew your Membership. Dan is going to include a Membership and Renewal Form for your use. Please fill out the form with as much information as is possible. Lon Oakley, in his role as Chief Locator, is attempting to construct a program that will be used to help in finding Men who served in the various companies at various times.

This is also a good time to revisit the ongoing confusion regarding the 22 IRS **Double Deucer** payment that many of you make to 22 IRS. This **Double Deucer** contribution to 22 IRS is not a dues payment to Vietnam Triple Deuce. Vietnam Triple Deuce sees none of these funds.

If you have made a **Double Deucer** payment to 22 IRS believing you were paying your Vietnam Triple Deuce Dues let me know. You will be credited as paying your dues, even though the money you sent to 22 IRS will not come to Vietnam Triple Deuce.

Also, a Lifetime Membership to 22 IRS is not a Membership to Vietnam Triple Deuce.

**Jim May**

Treasurer

(207) 634-3355 [jlmay@tds.net](mailto:jlmay@tds.net)

## Reunion Loan Program

During the Business Meeting at the Kansas City reunion ways were discussed that might be used to help bring more Vietnam Triple Deucers to future reunions. I believe it was Dwight Brennerman who suggested that we consider some type of loan program that would help Members who wished to attend a reunion, but needed some financial assistance to do so. I am pleased to report that the Board has adopted a Reunion Loan Program.

Here's an outline of how the Program will work:

1. Funds will be available for lodging, reunion registration, 22IRS Reunion activities including tours banquets, and incidental expenses. Incidentals include breakfast and lunch expenses.
2. No cash advances will be made. Vietnam Triple Deuce, Inc. will pay all approved items di-

rectly to the provider. This does not include incidental expenses. The Treasurer will be responsible for incidental cost.

3. No bar expenses or room service charges will be considered as Program expenses.
4. The Member taking the loan and the Treasurer will agree to loan repayment schedules. There are no timetables for repayment and there are no interest charges.
5. The Board will, 12 months before the next 22 IRS Reunion, determine the amount that is to be allocated for the Program and the number of Members allowed to Participate.
6. Selection will be considered on a "first come, first served" basis.
7. The identity of the Member (s) taking the loan will not be announced or in any way made public.

The Board has allocated \$3,000 for the Omaha Reunion to be split between 5 Members. This is not to say that a Member must borrow all of the \$600 available to him. If a Member wishes to have only part of his expenses covered under the Program, that will be fine. In fact, it would be very fine because it would allow for more Members to take advantage of the Program.

So, if you have been considering coming to a Reunion, but haven't because your budget won't allow for it, well here's your chance to come and visit with your Vietnam Triple Deuce Brothers. The funds we have in the Treasury are intended for this type of use and nothing would please your Combat Brothers more than to have you come to the Omaha Reunion in October 2006.

Anyone wishing to take advantage of the Reunion Loan Program should contact me. Remember, this is a "first come, first served" arrangement.

**Jim May**

Treasurer

(207) 634-3355

[jlmay@tds.net](mailto:jlmay@tds.net)

# Omaha October 6-8, 2006



## ADOPT A PLATOON EFFORT ONGOING

In early December 2005 Skip Fabel sent me a note asking if I could work with the current A 2/22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Company commander CPT James Kleager to secure a sponsor for his Headquarters Platoon. Skip had gotten a message from Kleager asking the 2/22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Association to seek out former 2/22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry vets to serve as sponsors for the unit's platoons. Nothing big, just a chance for former 2/22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry vets to give some words of encouragement, say "hang in there" or arrange a "care package" of goodies to our gang current stationed in Iraq.

### Major Dennis C. Rasdall

These photos were provided by Major Dennis C. Rasdall, XO, 2nd Bn, 22nd IR, 10th Mtn. The Triple Deuce celebrated Triple Deuce Day by presenting awards for NCO and Soldier of the Quarter. Please note that the money comes from the 22 IRS. The formation was also used to present Purple Hearts to recently wounded Triple Deucers. It is understood that these are the first recipients of the Purple Heart Medal on this deployment.

IHow clean and well fed our younger Triple Deuce Brothers look is very impressive.



Taking Skip's note to heart, I contacted my old (and I do mean OLD!) Alpha platoon leader Dick Nash for some help. As always, Dick gave me some suggestions and I put together a quick plan to sponsor HQ Plt. I sent Skip back a note that I would also volunteer to act as liaison with CPT Kleager to ensure any of his other platoons would be sponsored as needed. I also asked him to relay a similar offer to the other company commanders in 2/22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry. Below is the email I got back from CPT Kleager.

LTC Oakley,

Thanks for the kind words. I look forward to your support. Currently the men of HQ PLT are looking for a sponsor, and any gifts sent will be distributed to these soldiers.

The men of the mighty Anvil company are doing very well. We all had an enjoyable Christmas. I can tell you that we are being very successful in our fight against the insurgency. Every day brings something new. The last two Iraqi elections were executed without any problems. These two elections were the first for the city of Abu Ghraib since Saddam took power. Conducting joint operations with the Iraqi Army, we secured the polling sites ensuring the safety of all who came to exercise their freedoms.

Thanks again for all that you are doing for us.

**CPT. James S. Kleager** 2/22, 10th Mtn.

The program got off the ground in early January 2006 with five dozen gourmet cookies sent to HQ Plt from JOSEPH'S STOREHOUSE & BAKERY (a famous local San Antonio restaurant), I have over a dozen merchants already on board to provide "care packages: periodically to HQ Plt while our guys are forward.

This program has proven to be a "quick win" and very easy since the good CPT sent me a current picture of Alpha 2/22 Infantry. All I had to do was show the photo and give a short explanation of what this was all about. Merchants and friends jumped at the chance to show these guys that we are behind them. (I know this fact would shock the major T.v. network commentators if they knew it, but I have found most Americans have the intelligence to separate the politics of the war and still support our young men and women who are putting their lives on the line daily in Iraq and Afghanistan).

Below is an example of the news YOU DIDN'T HEAR ON THE NETWORKS concerning the triple Deuce.

1-15-06

I apologize for the late reply. My computer has been down and we have been really busy. Just to note, if you have been watching the news and saw the report about the Frenchman Bernard Planche being rescued, that was my company that found him. It was a really exciting time for us.

Your POC for the HQ Plt. Is SSG Maxwell 'Donahue. He is my HQ PSG and Mortar Section Sergeant.

I also have one other platoon that I would like to set up with a sponsor. It is my 1st Plt. 1st Plt found Mr. Planche. The POC is 1LT Wilde.

CPT. James S. Kleager  
Commander A 2/22, IN, 1BCT, 10th MTN DIV  
"Deeds, Not Works"

Long story short, guys...if you are interested in sponsoring a platoon in Alpha or one of the other companies deployed in the future please send me an email.

I will build a bank of names and provide you that opportunity or point of contact in the future.

**Lon Oakley A 69**  
[ldo82288@hotmail.com](mailto:ldo82288@hotmail.com)

## Guest Book Hits

Name: **Nick Salerno**  
Email: [nickanet@yahoo.com](mailto:nickanet@yahoo.com)  
Date: 12/14/05  
Phone: 262-705-0369

Comments: As we approach the holidays I want to wish everybody a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from my family to yours.

Name: **Roger Frydrychowski**  
Email: [graypros@aol.com](mailto:graypros@aol.com)  
Date: 12/21/05

Comments: To all who have been a member of the Triple Deuce and especially Recon and Chargin Chuck off the boat and beyond. May you and your loved ones have a most blessed and happy Christmas season and continuing happiness and health through the holiday season and the new year. Please know that you each have continued in my thoughts and prayers even though my contacts through the years have been sporadic at best.

**Lt. Fry 65-67**

Name: **Lynn Dalpez**  
Date: 12/22/05

Comments: Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all my Brothers to The Vietnam Triple Deuce, Inc. And a big fat hello to my old Chargin Chuck XO **Lt. Frydrychowski**. Any chance of talking you into to coming to the Omaha reunion? Hope so. We would love it.

**Lynn Dalpez, VP**  
VN222, Inc.  
Ole Kool-Aid Kid himself

Name: **Lynn R. Carter**

Email : [sgtlynn@comcast.net](mailto:sgtlynn@comcast.net)

Date: 1/6/06

Phone: 360-256-0972

Comments: Hi all I was in Alpha Company Triple Deuce Fourth Platoon Track four three From April 10, 1968 thru April 9, 1969. After six months I became gunner and Squad Leader of track four two eighty one Mike Mortars. Have been in the last Veterans Day Parade, in Vancouver Washington November 2005 with **Gary Hartt** throwing candy to kids, had a lot of fun and meet a super guy Hi Gary.

Name: **Larry Peckham**

Email : [apparaiser@hialoha.net](mailto:apparaiser@hialoha.net)

Date: 01/25/06

Phone: 808-326-1101

Comments: Aloha my friends. I had changed my email address and have not heard much from you guys. I want to rejoin the group and come to the next reunion. How about some intel on that.

**Larry Peckham. Spanky**

Name: Jim Pap

Date: 1-22-06

Comments: Happy 2 22 Day

Name: Jose Victor Vecera

Email: [jose.vecera@dcma.mil](mailto:jose.vecera@dcma.mil)

Date: 02-27-06

Comments: Wonderful site. Brings back many memories. Not all good. But glad to have served.

Name: Jim Beckypayne

Email: [jim\\_beckypayne@yahoo.com](mailto:jim_beckypayne@yahoo.com)

Comments: I am trying to find info. on a few of the men I served with in 1969-70. Company C Rodney Dixon-my 50 gunner online and with CO (Kentucky?) Doc Alcock-Medic

I would be very happy to get any info or a method of how to get info.

Jim AKA Rat

P.S. What was the name of the main fire base in the Bolo woods area?

## NEW FINDS

**Lynn R. Carter**

11807 N.E. 16<sup>th</sup> Street

Vancouver, WA 98684

360-256-0972

[sgtlynn@comcast.net](mailto:sgtlynn@comcast.net)

Alpha Co., 25<sup>th</sup> ID, April 68 to April 69

**Larry A. Carleton**

79606 Reamer St.

Greensburg, PA 15601

Charlie Co. 4<sup>th</sup> ID, Feb.67 to Sept.67

**Major George C. Stemmons**

273 Briarwood Drive

Greta, LA 70056

Plat Leader Charlie Co., XO Delta Co. 1969

**Major Ertque Villalon**

105 N. H Street

Imperial, CA 92251

2/22 BN Surgeon 1969

Submitted by **GARY HARTT** A/2/22(12/65-9/67)

HI GUYS, ON SUNDAY JAN 15, I SPOKE WITH THE WIFE IF Robert G. Maurer "Red"

Robert was an HHC boat Original who was drafted with me from Long Island. I have not spoken with him but had a nice conversation with his wife Linn. His home of record was listed as Lake Ronkonkama, NY but address back then was North Babylon.

Robert was in the COMMO section of HHC in Vietnam with Ray Zacharella appropriately, He is retired from the phone company. His time with the Battalion would have been 12/7/65 to Sept 1967.

His address and phone is:

**Robert G Maurer**

89 Avenue A

Holbrook, NY 11741-1432

631-588-4559

Harvey Nall  
1822 Rilla St.  
Asheboro, NC 27205  
336-629-9420  
Bravo Co. & Recon Plt.  
4th ID, Dec. 65 to Sept. 67

Harvey would like to get in touch with SSG Jones, Sgt. Name and Chunky Miller.

**William Carey Janes KIA 1967**

This message was forwarded by **Awb Norris**.

Hello,  
I was given your name from Mr. Sincock in regard to my request for information about my uncle "Bill" who was KIA in Vietnam in 1967 when he was only 20 years old. My family has little information about the circumstances of his death, and as a nephew and high school history teacher, I have always been curious. I know a few pieces of basic information, for example that he was killed Dec. 20 of 1967 in the Binh Doung Province. He was a member of the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry, C-Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry. I just wondered if there would be anyway to perhaps contact someone that may have known him, or knows the circumstances of his death, the operation he was involved with, etc... His tour started in March of 1967, so he was there for a fair amount of time before his death, so hopefully someone remembers him.

I appreciate your time and consideration,  
**Dave Goodwin**  
1171 Island Blvd. Fox Island, Wa 98333-9624  
(253)549-4418  
[Goodwind@skitsap.wednet.edu](mailto:Goodwind@skitsap.wednet.edu)  
Fox Island, Washington

## **2/22 C Company Reunion August 5, 2006**

Once again C Company will be having a reunion. An e-mail from the host follows:

Well, we're going to try this again. It'll be at our house again in Seabeck on Aug. 5th. Also, for those staying over, a breakfast is being arranged

in town for the next morning to gather one more time. We'd love to have you all here and please spread the word to any others that were with us that you think would want to join us. I don't have e-mail addresses for everyone so we need your help in getting the word out.

If you plan to be here, let me know at (308) 830-5473 or by e mail [dancook@oz.net](mailto:dancook@oz.net)

God bless  
**Dan Morris**  
2500 Kelley's Glen Ln. NW  
Seabeck, Wa 98380

## **Bravo Company Looses Comrade**

The Newsletter received this message from Mike **Smith** via **Brad Hull**.

**James Herman "Buck" Robinett**, B Co. Triple Deuce 25th ID

Buck was in Bravo Company Triple Deuce 81 mm Mortar Platoon . I think he left Vietnam fall of 1970. I know he was with us in Cambodia. David Reese said that when he first joined Bravo Company, to his knowledge, there were no Akan-sawer's in the Company, then Buck showed up. A little latter on, while they were unloading a resupply, Buck glanced up at the guys coming off the Chinook's ramp and said "Damn, there's Earl Rabbie, He's from Fisher, we graduated from high-school together." Earl had just graduated from the Cu Chi sniper school. Later, in the Krek Rubber Plantation, Dave found me and lo and behold I had a bunch of Hog callin buddies.

But this is about Buck.

Just before Christmas, Dave called me to say Buck was in a bad way at the VA Hospital here in Little Rock. I went to visit and was informed he was not a patient. As I understand it, Buck had been having chest pains and once admitted to the hospital they found he was diabetic, so they sent him home to get that condition stabilized before they could do bypass surgery. In the interim, he suffered a heart attack and passed away.

It was a good burial, late in the afternoon, cold blue sky, beautiful sun streaked clouds, then, when the DAV Honor Guards fired his gun salute, about a thousand startled snow geese got up out of the adjoining fields, flying way up and over us, heading off into the then lowering sun, and to top it off, there was a Huey flying around out of sight, giving us a perfect rotor chop sound in the back ground as Buck was laid to rest. Man, I was totally moved. In my mind, it was one perfect, praise be to God, Vietnam Triple Deuce send off.

Deeds Not Words! 12/30/2005

NEWARK — James Herman “Buck” Robinett, 56, of Newark, died Wednesday. Survivors: wife, Sally Robinett; daughters, Ashley Robinett, Nikki Cooper ; mother, Johnnie Robinett; brother, Joe Robinett; sister, Margaret Collins; grandson, Dalton Cooper.

## Thanksgiving Battle 1967 Part 1

I was encouraged by my friend Dan Streit to write this for the newsletter. From time to time Dan and I would cross paths at the Jensen Café in Beloit, Kansas. I sometimes ate breakfast there and Dan and I would talk about farming, thistles or the weather. For about 15 years neither of us realized we each had served in Vietnam and in the same battalion. One day I sat down wearing a hat that said Dau Tieng. When Dan saw the hat his eyes got bigger and with a loud voice he exclaimed “Where did you get that hat?” I said “I was in Dau Tieng”.

I may have taken Lynn Dalpez’s (a fine artist) place in September 1967. Sgt. Kay was our platoon sergeant and Jim Frost was my squad leader. Due to my memory I may be in error as far as times and dates. It has been many moons ago at a place roughly five miles south or south-east of Dau Tieng in November at a place at the tip of the Iron Triangle called trapezoid, a jungle landscape. A place that was haunted, a place that felt to me that hadn’t changed for a million years, a place that truly was the survival of the fittest.

I knew Charlie Co. which was headed up by Capt. Bill Allison was a good company. I didn’t know at the time how good it was until starting Nov 25, 1967.

I might mention that the First Infantry Division was to the east. They had been in a major fight October 13, 1967. The Black Lions A and B company of the 2/28 had 64 KIA and 132 wounded at the Battle of Ong Thanh. The enemy unit was the 271 NVA Reg. This was one of the regiments that attacked FSB Gold March 21, 1967. This regiment was trying to move that fall into the 25<sup>th</sup> Division sector (according to the VFW magazine of Feb. 2006.) They had been held up because there was not enough rice in our area of operation.

It may have been a coincidence but on one ambush patrol headed by Jim Frost we almost opened fire on ox carts in the darkness. At the last moment we captured the ox carts loaded with rice and possible Viet Cong dressed as civilians and women. Was this the rice that was to replenish the rations of the enemy?

November 25, 1967 was a dark enough night but with my night vision I could see the tree line. Co. C2/22 Mech was in a lager sight. Co. B had contact the day before so Sgt. Kay ordered us to dig deep that evening and set out extra claymores. The wires were tied to sticks so if the wire was messed with the claymore turned around and would pull over the stick next to the foxhole. Sgt. Kay was getting short and was known to be nervous.

Patrick from second platoon headed up an ambush patrol located to our left. I was on top of track 34 with the 50 cal for the whole night. Another night without sleep. The 50 cal was a no nap zone. It was the weapon the gooks hated. At about 2:30 a.m. a sudden rapid loud popping noise arose from the jungle. It was a mortar being launched. I yelled mortars at the top of my voice. A few seconds later incoming explosives rocked the jungle clearing. Sgt. Kay was under the track trying to find cover. I ended up ducking into the APC. Feeling terrible about leaving my post I got back into the turret and cocked the ma-

I waited for a ground assault. A few moments passed then Patrick's ambush patrol sprung their ambush when the laughing enemy mortar crew with a flashlight walked into their kill zone.

I heard the M16s and M60 machine gun firing and instantly knew 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon had gotten the enemy mortar crew. Charlie Company was a good company but I didn't know they were that good.

To be continued. . .

**Jim Nelson** C Co. 2/22, 1967

## **Tears of Pain by Savage Grace**

It's good no one can see the tears  
That run beneath my eyes  
Falling to the Place of Pain  
I feel so deep inside.

There was a time so long ago  
That seems like yesterday  
The day the children lost their lives  
A day for which I'll pay.

And pay I have and pay I will  
Until the day I die  
And then I'll Pay a little more  
Without a wonder why.

For God in Heaven knows the score  
Of this I know for sure  
Without Him in my life you see  
I could not have endured  
So carry on with your life  
Shed not a tear for me  
While on your knees in time of prayer  
Its then I hope you'll see.

By praising God for all That is  
And all that there will be  
Just one more thing before you go  
Please thank God for me.

### **ORA UPDATE**

The Board of Directors has authorized Lynn Dalpez and Bill "Mad Doc" Matz to purchase an additional supply of ORA Medals and Parchments. These ORA Medals and Parchments will be ready for the Omaha Reunion, where I'm sure all the First Time Attendees will want to share their Red Ant Stories and then be awarded their ORA's. Also, anyone who wants a Parchment to replace a damaged or lost one should contact any of the Board Members and one will be sent out. However, if you have lost your ORA medallion you will need to come to the Omaha Reunion and tell your story again!

There is an interesting side note to this ORA activity that I want to share with the Membership. Prior to any official announcement regarding the purchase of these new Medals and Parchments some of our Brothers donated \$600 to Vietnam Triple Deuce to be used for the purchases. These Members wanted to be certain that the unique Vietnam Triple Deuce tradition of presenting the ORA continues. Furthermore, all of these Members have asked that they not be identified or acknowledged for their most generous donations.

I have an advantage here because I know who these Brother Members are. I would like to identify them so that all of the Membership can acknowledge their generosity, however, I will respect their wishes.

Every day I am thankful that you have made me a part of the finest Veterans' Organizations that has ever existed, The Vietnam Triple Deuce.

Deeds, Not Words

**Jim May**

# Dau Tieng

## XT49347

### (Part 4)

The Battle of Good Friday was the beginning of a very active period in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade's AO. The NVA and VC units that had participated in the Tet Offensive were trying to regroup and make their way back into Cambodia and that meant they had to travel through our AO. Elements of the ¾ Cav were operating out of Dau Tieng and this meant more fuel, all types, was needed. Between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of April we sent everything that would haul fuel down to Tay Ninh. My diary note of April 21<sup>st</sup> states that all the JP 4 tanks at the helicopter refuel point were full and that the tankers that hauled JP 4 were also full and sitting in the motor pool. Keeping all these convoy vehicles running was not an easy task. The mechanics and the drivers would spend much of every night fixing what had broken the day before. This meant that guard duty fell mostly to the other members of the Provisional Co. Those Men had to do their work all day and then spend their nights in and on the bunkers. The cooks were feeding the Men at the bunkers as if we were in an FSB. The Mess Sergeant had assigned one of the cooks to get up in the middle of the night to make coffee for the Men on guard duty. I'm a big time coffee drinker and liked a cup of coffee at 2 AM. This practice of having a cook on call to provide coffee became permanent in the Provisional Co.

My Mother (You guys that call know here as Ma.) had sent a birthday package to me. It had arrived around the 15<sup>th</sup> of April. My birthday is April 20<sup>th</sup>. Ma had sent a chocolate cake, a can of chocolate frosting and some candles. Well, there was no time for cake so I put the cake in the refrigerator until the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Things had slowed down so I figured it was time for a little chocolate cake and beer. When I took the aluminum foil wrap off the cake I found mold spots covering about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the cake. Getting sick from eating a moldy cake didn't concern me in the least, there were bigger threats to my well being at hand, so I took my bayonet and cut the mold circles out of the cake and covered the holes with the canned frosting. I stuck the can-

dles in the cake and a few of us ate cake and then went back to what ever it was we were doing. I left the cake and candles on the table in my hooch overnight because I was on the bunker line. When the Vietnamese that worked in the kitchen and did odd jobs came in the following morning Saow, a boy of about 9 years old, who was the son of the Boss Mama-San, went into my hooch, as he always did, and came out crying. He saw the candles and assumed I was dead. When I got back from bringing the convoy out Mama-San was waiting for me. I had to go and show the boy that I was still alive. Only then did he stop crying.

It was also on April 22<sup>nd</sup> that I learned I had a nickname. I was coming back from bringing the convoy out to the latrine pit beyond the Ben Cui rubber when I heard a radio transmission between the Rangers who were posting the road. I don't remember the exact message but it was to the effect that Zorro was coming. I wanted to know who Zorro was, so I asked as I passed by one of the Jeeps the Rangers were in. I was told that they called me Zorro because I was always alone and appeared from out of nowhere. I didn't tell anyone in the Provisional Co. about the nickname. Some things were better left alone.

It was during this period that some of the Men decided to have a mustache-growing contest. I was asked to be the judge, but managed to avoid that auspicious position by getting into the contest. The winner would get a case of beer from all the losers. I won. I don't remember how many cases of beer were involved. What you may find more interesting is that the mustache that is posted on my upper lip is the direct descendent of the one that won the contest. Cu Chi didn't like the mustache, but I didn't much care. The Men liked the mustache, it gave them a reason to tease all the others contestants who had, "...lost to the LT..." it was a diversion. The mustache would stay.

On April 24<sup>th</sup> all the line units that had been in Dau Tieng moved out to continue the blocking tactics that had started at the Battle of Good Friday. My diary note of the 24<sup>th</sup> reads, in part "With 2 Bn's gone and more moving out the VC will start the mortaring again. It will probably be 3 to 5 days." My diary note of April 25<sup>th</sup> reads, in part, "Good morning! The mortar attack came

...Once the line units were gone there were no APs or LPs of any kind. There weren't enough personnel in Dau Tieng to defend the place so there was certainly no way to provide any type of patrols that might prevent the local VC from setting up mortars and rockets.

The first three weeks of May were filled with continuous mortar and rocket attacks. My diary notes have entries that read, "...40 rounds this morning..." "...got hit six times today..."

In the later part of May things quieted down and that brought Major L up from Cu Chi for a visit. My diary note of May 24<sup>th</sup> reads, in part, "...everyone from Bn(S&T Bn) has been up here to tell me how worthless I am..." Of course no one in Cu Chi had any idea of what I was doing, so when they saw a dirty truck they figured I wasn't doing my job. If they saw one of the Men coming from the shower point at 2 PM they thought that there was no discipline and that the Men were hanging around doing what ever it was that pleased them. They had no idea that the Soldier might have been on the road for three or four days and had come back to find himself on guard duty the night before.

Major L arrived on the afternoon of the 24<sup>th</sup> and told us there would be a meeting in the mess hall in the AM. I don't know where he was during the night because he didn't show himself on the berm line. The meeting in the mess hall consisted of Major L lecturing the CO and the three Lt's, me and the two Quartermaster Lt's, on something I can't remember. It was probably about how ineffective we were. That was the usual theme. What I remember was that it was getting late. Major L began to move his finger back and forth between me and the other Lt's and stopped at me and said, "I'm going with you today." I think he was trying to make this some surprise inspection and may have been surprised when I said, "Fine, we're late." We left the mess hall and got into my Jeep. Major L wanted to know where my driver was. I explained that none of the Lt's had the luxury of a driver. As he began another lecture the radio squawked, "Papa 3, Romeo 6, where are you?" I interrupted the Major's lecture by answering Don Skrove with "Romeo 6, Papa 3, go." I told Don I had company, an Oscar 4 from Charlie Charlie riding with me and that I was on my way to the convoy formation point and that I'd con-

tact him as soon as I got there. Well, Major L didn't finish his lecture but was appalled at my radio procedure and to see that I had two radios in my Jeep. He said, "I'm a Regular Army Major and I have one radio in my Jeep, why do you have two?" I explained how one was on the Recon Platoon frequency and the other on the Brigade frequency because there was a war going on. I wasn't that blunt, but he got my point. When we arrived at the convoy formation point I got out of the Jeep and began to check vehicles as quickly as I could because I knew that the road was nearly secured. When Major L saw me looking into fuel tanks and kicking tires he called me back to the Jeep and began another lecture. I was told that I was an Army Officer and that I shouldn't be doing what I was doing. I quickly reminded him about the war that was going on and how we had to fight it, again, not in blunt terms and went back to inspecting vehicles.

Once the vehicles were checked out I called Don and told him how many vehicles there were and he said to start them out. We had a code for numbers and locations and I knew that Don wanted me to bring the convoy to the bridge. As we started out Major L asked where we going and I told him "Out to the Ben Cui rubber" and without any hesitation he told me he wanted to be brought back to the Provisional Co. area. I stopped and told the lead truck driver to wait for me. I dropped Major L off and didn't see anymore of him around Dau Tieng for a few months.

It was after this visit that I made an attempt to get out of the Provisional Co. The attempt was informal; I didn't want Cu Chi to know what my intentions were. However, no one that I spoke to could give me any advice as to where a Transportation Corp Officer could get a job in any unit in Dau Tieng.

My diary entry on June 5<sup>th</sup> begins with; "Billy (Crash) Hardgrave hit another mine today." This was the third vehicle Billy Hardgrave had found a mine with. He should have been with the Engineers because he was the best mine detector in the AO.

## SOMETHING TO CONSIDER

Those of you that come to the reunions know Billy Hardgrave as Butch Hardgrave. I am sure that if you call him Crash, he will answer. As I mentioned earlier, when a vehicle hit a mine or some other distasteful event occurred I would be summoned to Cu Chi to explain why. Crash Hardgrave's third mine was no exception. When I reported to the Bn CO, LTC H, I would get lectured on just about everything I was doing. He didn't want me carrying 45 Pistol. He didn't like my mustache; said I lost the respect of the Men because I had a mustache. Then he'd ask if I was still driving my own Jeep and inspecting vehicles on the convoy line. It was like listening to someone from another planet. LTC H was a nice man, not insulting like Major L was, but he didn't have any idea of what FORWARD SUPPORT was. He must have assumed that Dau Tieng was just like Cu Chi.

It was at this meeting that LTC H told me that I should find something else for Specialist Hardgrave to do. He said that hitting three mines was enough. Before he finished speaking about Butch my mind said, "LTC H has some compassion for the Men. He understands and appreciates that their lives are at risk every time they leave on a convoy." My thoughts were interrupted when LTC H finished by saying that the last truck that Specialist Hardgrave was in was new and that he was too hard on equipment. LTC H may not have been abrasive, but he had no respect for the Men in his command. As usual, when I left his office I went directly to the airfield and got on whatever was leaving for Dau Tieng. I wanted nothing to do with Cu Chi types.

It was about a week later that I had to report to Cu Chi again. I left the 45 Pistol in a small pack I carried but still had the mustache. LTC H commented about the mustache again and then asked what Specialist Hardgrave was doing. I told him I had solved two problems. Specialist Hardgrave, the human mine detector, was my Jeep driver. LTC H said nothing but looked at me in disbelief.

Next part, on the Road with Recon. Yes, I do have a little track time.

**Jim May**

A few weeks back I had one of those conversations with Steve Irvine, Bravo Co., Oct-68 to May-69, which lead to the "And what have you been doing since Vietnam" question which usually comes up. After telling Steve that I had recently retired from the Financial Service Industry he asked if I knew anything about retirement planning. I do, much of my work was in Small Company Pension and Individual Retirement Plans. After a few questions and answers Steve suggested that I write up a synopsis of our conversation and post it in the Newsletter.

Before I do what Steve suggested I must make a disclaimer. I am no longer involved in the Securities Business. All of my Licenses and Authorities have been retired. In fact, if I were still involved in the Securities Business I could not submit this piece to the Newsletter. And, if you are working with someone who is helping you with your retirement plans, consider yourself fortunate. Far too many people get no help or meaningful advice.

I believe that those of you who are not yet retired and own self-directed retirement plans such as IRA's, 401(k)'s, 403(b) TSA's, 457's and similar plans may find this information interesting. Unfortunately, most people who own these types of plans do not receive information on diversifying their investments or in building their portfolios to suit their needs and attitudes. Most people just go along week after week having money deducted from their paychecks and invested in mutual funds without ever knowing if what they are doing is suited to them. If you are one of those people, the following should help you to correct the problem.

First you have got to know about yourself and how your attitudes play into proper portfolio construction. Most of the major mutual fund companies provide programs on their web sites that are designed to help you to answer these questions and then act upon the findings. I suggest that you go to the web site of the mutual

fund company where your money is invested. Once there, find the retirement planner and answer the questions. Be honest in your answers. All of the sites I am familiar with have planners that are easily followed. Once you have completed the questions section you will be shown a portfolio of funds and percentages of your total investments that should be invested in each sector, or type of fund. If you understand the suggestion and it makes sense, follow it.

You must also consider all of your holdings when following the suggested portfolio. If you have IRA's as well as retirement accounts be certain to include those IRA's when you make your fund allocations. For example, if the suggested portfolio for your 401(k) calls for a 20% cash position and your IRA is invested in a bank Money Market Account and it represents 15% of your total retirement holdings, then you only need to hold a 5% cash position in your 401(k). Another consideration is a spouses retirement holdings. Those holdings may be with another mutual fund company but should be included if you and your spouse plan on retiring at the same time. If your spouse is younger then a separate approach might make more sense. You should re-balance your accounts at a minimum of once a year.

If your fund company doesn't offer a planning tool, then go to the web site of any of the fund companies you hear advertising on radio and TV. They have these tools and will let you use them without charge. Of course, you'll see their funds recommended in the solution section. Steve asked how he could be certain that his mutual funds were performing satisfactorily. I suggested that he use Morningstar to find that answer. Morningstar is the name of a company that is in the business of rating investments and reporting on them. When I was working I subscribed to their service and I know that it is available to anyone who wants to pay for it. Before you spend your money be aware that most libraries have access to Morningstar and you can get what you need there. Also, the mutual fund company you invest with should have Morningstar reports available on all their funds. If they do not, then maybe the fund you are holding is a "dog." Finally, any report that is

more than a year old is not worth considering. The Morningstar report will provide you with the performance history of the fund. This is reported in past year, 5 years, 10 years or life of the fund. It will also rank the fund against all similar funds. Be mindful that the top 10% to 20% of similar funds are separated by very small differences in performance. I've always considered the best performing funds as "winners." One fund may be in last place among the top 10% in one year and at the top the next. The 5 year averages make all of these funds "winners."

Other important information that Morningstar provides is the "style" of the fund. This is important because the portfolio arrangement that you put together on the web page of your fund company will call for types, or "styles" of funds. For example, your portfolio may call for 20% in Large Cap Growth Funds. Large Cap Growth is a "style." When you examine a Morningstar report you may find that what your fund company recommends as a Large Cap Growth Fund may, in reality, be a Large Cap Blend Fund, or something else. (There are nine major styles of domestic mutual funds, nine major styles of Foreign/International funds and specialty funds to consider.) You'll need to examine what is available and find a competitive substitute. If you can't, then maybe you should consider a change in fund companies. Before doing so, call the help desk at the fund company, you may get the answers you require.

There are many nuances about this subject that I have not covered. It would take a book to do so. If any of you have any questions, please let me know and I will do my best to answer.

**Jim May**  
Treasurer

**October 6-8, 2006**

mark your calendar  
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