

The Viet Nam Triple Deuce, Inc.

An Association of 2 Bn. (Mech)

22nd Infantry Regiment

Viet Nam Veterans



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

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



Editor: Dan & Vera Streit D 69 DMOR - HMOR

Copyright 1996-2025

by The Viet Nam Triple Deuce, Inc.

website www.vietnamtripledeuce.org for current contact information.

Vol. 16, No. 4 September 2013



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What a summer we had in Oregon. It hardly rained at all, which did not help our forest fire areas, but none of them were all that bad overall. The rest of Oregon enjoyed the summer splendor that our state is famous for. My wife and I did all our vacationing in state this year—why go anywhere else? Still, I am getting the bug to go somewhere soon. Hmmmmm. (Tie-in coming.) How about Branson, MO ?

Knowing all the Officers, and most all of the Members of the 22nd IRS as I do, and the tremendous value the Society has added to my life, I hope to encourage all Members and their families to attend the 2014 IRS Reunion in Branson MO. I know the uneasiness faced by those deciding to attend, especially the first one, and the uneasiness I feel, for attending my 7th in Branson. I know that some unpleasant memories will be triggered, but they are quickly put in their place when getting together with a group of 22nd Infantry Regiment Veterans that have walked the same walk that I have walked. Some walked that walk in Iraq, and Afghanistan. They have shown me the same thing that our WWII Veterans did, that being, while the area that we fight in is quite different, the game is the same and the effects on soldiers varies only superficially.

Upon arrival, within the first few handshakes and hugs, all the uneasiness simply vanishes. Then, the time of your life gets going. My favorite part is the on-going party in the Hospitality Suite. That's where the fun, healing, and personal reunions happen, as well as meeting members that one doesn't know. But wait, you do know them, and that will be apparent to you quickly. "He is the same as me."

I know that it can be hard to write an article for the NL. I am struggling with one myself right now. I thought it might be interesting to write about what The Battle of Soui Tre means to me today. So far, I am failing, except for the facts that I was there, we got payback, The Presiden-

tial Unit Citation, and I had the feces scared out of me. So, I'll think about it some more, and just maybe an article will come out of it. I am asking every Member to do the same--think about that Vietnam experience that is bugging you, or you found interesting, scary, honorable, etc. Then simply jot down a few notes, maybe ask for some help, then write it out and send it in to **Dan and Vera Streit**. It could be that the notes are as far as you get. Send them in anyway, as I have here because I haven't found the answer to my question yet—maybe there isn't one. By writing about this problem of mine it could trip another Brother into thinking about it, and writing his answer to my question. That would be great for me, and many others I believe.

Have you checked out our web site lately? **Steve Irvine and Harold Metcalf** are continuing to upgrade our site, www.vietnamtripleeuce.com. So, please send in your ideas for things you would like to see, or how we can improve the site. ...your site. Steve and Harold want what we all want. A world class website for a world class unit. The Triple Deuce.

With Branson 2014 quickly coming, I'll leave you with my old mantra, Support Our Locators! Let's get a huge attendance of Triple Deucers, and a slew of first time attendees—showing them the good times awaiting them by joining us. Please contact them. They know how to help you find your long lost Combat Brothers. Tell them about anything that you can remember—even just a nickname, and they will try hard to work their magic for you, as they have done for many others. Their contact info is on our web, under 'Directors', then scroll down to "Locators".

Deeds, not words,

Lynn Dalpez,
DMORPresident

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

It seems that the more time I have on my hands the more I can set around and focus on all the negative things in the news. I often wonder what happened to "the good old days" where kindness to our fellow man and respect of others was the norm. My faith in the human race seems to be at an all time low. Perhaps this is because I am approaching retirement. I often speak vaguely and futuristically of "what I would like to do" Over the years the wife has given me helpful advice when I get into one of the moods. She has said "get over yourself" "may as well do it (whatever far off activity I am dwelling on) or buy it (whatever current toy I am lusting after)...you are going to die anyway"...or her favorite response to me. . . "Damn it. . .just do it. . .I don't want to set in the nursing home and hear you whine I wish I would have done this or gotten that"

Having often said how I would like to visit The Bailey Yards in North Platte Nebraska (you may never have heard of it. . .it is that flat expanse of land just north of Kansas. . .the fly over country). It is Union Pacific's largest railroad yard in the country. Tours are given and from The Golden Spike Tower the view is incredible. But I digress. . .I find I do that a lot more lately, too.

My lovely wife, made reservations for the several days of the annual tour and plopped her Nook in my lap. I just read a very good book **Once Upon a Town** by Bob Greene. A marketing summary describes it

Ten days after Pearl Harbor, families and friends of the Nebraska National Guard's Company D heard a rumor that their boys would be coming through North Platte on a troop train as they shipped out to the West Coast. 500 townspeople showed up at the station with food, cigarettes, letters, and love to give to the boys. But there was a mistake. The soldiers on the train were from Kansas' Company D, not Nebraska's. The townspeople decided to go ahead and give the Kansas boys the things they had brought. The train was only in the station for a few minutes, but when they saw how much the young men appreciated what was done for them, the local people de-

cided to do this for all the troops coming through North Platte.

What happened after that was something amazing. For four years, day in and day out, all the troop trains were met with cheerful local people serving the men homemade food, coffee, snacks they could take on the train, letters from people they didn't even know, and even a pianist playing their requests, while they quickly ate and visited during the stop. All this was done using coffee cups that need to be washed, fresh foods raised on the area farms, coffee donated from people's ration books, and food cooked in the homes of people in the area, some of whom did not yet have electricity! The interviews with surviving townspeople are fascinating, describing the commitment and real hardship these folks had to have to continue to serve the young men coming through on train after train, hundreds of men a day. Interviews with veterans who remember the stop are equally moving. They all were so impressed by the generosity and friendliness of the people of North Platte.

It did help my spirits and I know I enjoyed the visit to North Platte and the rail yards more because I had read the book.

Speaking of small plains towns that value soldiers---see how the free association of my mind works---The Next Best Reunion ever in Branson, Missouri is coming soon. The wife and I went down in the spring and returned in the summer with another couple. As always, there is much to do and much to see. One of the obvious elements of the entire city is the respect for America---the lifestyle, the liberties, the values---and ultimately the appreciation of those who fought to defend the freedoms that make living in America possible.

Anyway that's how several things seem to this old soldier.

Dan Streit D-69

Deeds Not Words

WELCOME TO THE "STAND DOWN IN BRANSON"

Copied from the 22nd IRS Website

Welcome to this great information website being set up by our outstanding hosts for the 30 April-3 May 22nd Infantry Regiment Society Reunion 22IRS reunion hosts Betty Brenneman and Ken Schulte. They have done a great job so far working with Jo Ann Chamberlin of The Westgate Branson Woods Resort and Pam Brown of Gatherings Plus as our lead agents in preparing reunion activities. (As always information is also available at 22nd Infantry Regiment Society website.)

Pam Brown has been gracious enough to build this website and will continue to update us whom is coming and the best ways to get to Branson, best ways to enjoy all the local sites has to offer, and best ways to make this an event the entire family can enjoy! Our most current agenda is available by going to Gatheringsplus.com and clicking on reunions, type in 22nd Infantry Regiment and then when our site comes up click on the more info tab.

Look for continued updates on the developing reunion agenda and all the diverse activities and awesome shows there are to take in while you are in Branson. and various entertainment packages available. You can register for your rooms now! Also remember rates will apply three days before our reunion begins and up to three days after it concludes to give us all a chance to make this a real STAND DOWN IN BRANSON!)

I invite you post your questions to this site or to me at lon@22ndinfantry.org so we can get you as much information to your needs as soon as possible.

We look forward to seeing you all for another outstanding reunion.

Lon Oakley Jr.

Co A 2/22nd Infantry RVN 1969

President 22nd Infantry Regiment Society

From now on please use

lon@22ndinfantry.org as my official email. Really appreciate your help and keep chargin.

LON OAKLEY JR
President 22IRS

GOOD MORNING VIETNAM!!!

December 17th 1968 started like a lot of days in Vietnam with Company B 2nd Battalion 22nd Infantry heading out on another combat mission. After sweeping and clearing roads the Company set up security for a large convoy leaving Dau Tieng to who knows where probably Tay Ninh. Enroute to their destination the convoy was ambushed by NVA and Vietcong and Bravo Company was ordered to defend. My platoon **SSG Sammy Polluck** immediately placed his platoon on line and began directing fire on the enemy. Under heavy enemy fire SSG Polluck, with complete disregard for his own safety, continually exposed himself to heavy enemy fire so he could treat and evacuate the wounded. His actions were responsible for saving several lives and he was awarded a Silver Star. I remember a heavy artillery barrage, followed by F4 fighter jets dropping napalm and other high explosive bombs, helicopter gunships, and the immense firepower of the Triple Deuce. I think some soldiers from the convoy were killed in the explosion. There was never any type of makeshift funeral or time to grieve, it was so impersonal. There was so much steel flying that day that the leaves on the trees looked like snow falling. I remember the NVA had brush tied to their backs and had red bandanas around the base of their pith helmets. The enemy lost, I think. around 50 soldiers. We had wounded but no KIAS to my knowledge. The enemy broke contact and left the immediate area. The convoy continued on their mission with no further contact. I hope this story helps the fellas that were there. Feel free to edit or add to the story. 45 years and I still remember some of the fight. I want to thank all of my squad and the platoon for keeping me alive that day. God Bless

Douglas Lyall B/68-69

A LOVE STORY, NOT A WAR STORY

They said that our marriage wouldn't last. The only mistake my wife made in this world was agreeing to marry me. I spent the next 43 years of our marriage never saying no to my wife.

The first year of our marriage was strained, thanks to our Uncle Sam. Approximately 13 days after our wedding on March 22, 1969 my orders required passage to South Viet Nam. I recognized that a MOS of 11Bravo did not guarantee me much safety or comfort, but I still remembered that I was the one who volunteered for the draft. This act would lead to a wealth of experiences, both good and bad but lessons never to be forgotten. Friendships forged in Company B, 2-22 Infantry (M) have remained intact for over 43 years. I still welcome calls in the middle of the night from friends made while with the Triple Deuce. Friendships forged in a combat zone do last forever.

I next saw Mrs. Ann Marie Duke Cobb sometime in November 1969 while on R & R in Hawaii. We compressed a second honeymoon into 4 nights and 5 days of which the highlight was eating fresh pineapple on the edge of the growing fields. Both Ann and the fresh pineapple were a welcome delicious treat

While she was flying back to North Carolina I was returning to South Viet Nam to complete my tour of duty. We both had miserable flights but for different reasons. I slept most of the flight back to Bien Hoa while Ann cried all the way to the Raleigh/Durham, NC airport. Our long distance love affair continued via letter and the occasional tape recording until my DEROS date of early April, 1970. I had been extremely fortunate to complete my tour without incurring a scratch. I continue to be blessed, blind, stupid and lucky. Above all else, I am blessed and extremely lucky to have met the love of my life.

Of all the experiences in my life to date my two most proud feats are a wonderful marriage and being awarded a Combat Infantry Badge. Of these two I now only have that CIB. I lost the woman that made me whole on Monday, June 10, 2013. I believe that our marriage is not over - we shall continue our dating sometime and some where in the future.

Stay tuned for further announcements from this station. I will keep you informed of any changes.

Willis E. (Bill) Cobb III

Ex 11B20

Co. B 2nd Bn. 22nd Infantry (M)

Viet Nam, 1969—1970

REUNION: THE CIRCLE OF REMEMBRANCE

The reunion in Branson, Missouri this coming spring will mark eight years of reunions for me with members of A Company of the 2/22nd. It's difficult to find the right words to express my gratitude to all the guys who served with my husband, **Capt. David R. Crocker, Jr.**, and who have shared their stories of him with me.

Some of you may know that I've been working on a book about my life with Dave and my experiences before and after his death. Now that the I've finished writing and started to submit it to publishing houses, ironically the first publisher who has shown a great interest is the University of Missouri Press!

But – it is the magic of the reunion experience that I want to speak about here. Thirty-eight years after Dave's death, at a point when I thought memories of Dave existed only with me and our family, my brother-in-law Tom found tributes written in honor of Dave on the virtual Wall. Tom tracked down the authors (**Dick Nash** and **Lon Oakley** are among them) and we were invit-

ed to our first reunion in Omaha in 2006. This was the same year that I sold our family business, a skilled nursing home, started by my parents and grandparents. Dave had worked with my father to build one of several iterations of the facility in 1966 during the summer after our wedding and before we left for Germany for two years. I didn't have regrets about selling the business, but there was definitely a lot of nostalgia related to the place and its' history. I still remember how thrilled Dave was to use a backhoe for the first time, make cement and hammer trusses in place. He loved working with tools.

I didn't know what to expect at that first reunion in Omaha and the fabulous experience that I had was beyond measure. I was greeted like a long lost friend, a much loved sister – a princess! Since that first reunion we've met in Seattle, Atlanta, Washington, DC, Colorado Springs and each time more members of Alpha Company have attended and shared their stories. The experience has brought Dave back to me and created a new family at the same time. Dave seems real again thanks to the faithfulness of all of you who were with him in his last six months of life.

I love being included in the circles of remembrance and the stories that emerge in our reunions. My only regret is that Dave's parents did not survive to hear them – but I'm sure they're listening, so keep talking.

I'm looking forward to Branson – and Missouri!
I'd love to be in touch any time:

Ruth W. Crocker
ruthwcrocker@gmail.com,
www.ruthwcrocker.com, www.Facebook.com/ruthwcrockerauthor.

Address: 28 Pearl St., Mystic, CT 06355.

REUNION SUGGESTION FROM RUTH CROCKER

I would love to participate in an activity with the ladies in our group at the reunion. I'd be happy to organize a gathering to speak about writing, writing a memoir, cooking, nutrition, recipe exchange, writing cookbooks – or any other subject of interest to people. You can contact me directly at: (860) 536-3701

Or ruthwcrocker@gmail.com or www.ruthwcrocker.com or on Facebook at ruthwcrockerauthor or Vintage Food and Modern Living.

MINI REUNION IN NASHVILLE

Thanks to all that attended the 'mini-reunion' in Nashville this June. As usual, it was great to spend some time with everyone and also to meet some new "Friends Forever". Since the reunion was advertised in some magazines as "DauTeing Reunion", we even had guests from the 2nd 32nd Artillery, one Veteran riding his Harley from Oregon to meet up with his buddy from South Carolina!



C Company, **Harless Belcher** and his wife Jackie, met with some new "recruits" from C Company, along with the regulars! Regardless of Com-

pany, dates of time spent in Vietnam....all had great stories that intertwined with each other from their service encounters. **Ed Davis** and "first time to a reunion" **Frank Chrismur** shared a story, not knowing until the ending that they had fought together, side by side, so many years ago. These are the special moments of any reunion!

Some other "new" attendees are **Paul** and **Fay Smith**, **Bill Freebern** and **Fred Gibbs**...It was great meeting them all and I hope they will continue to come to all the reunions

A Company, **Bob Noon** and his wife, Loretta, with her "nudging him to go", attended for the first time, along with **Eddie** and **Evie Laconne**, getting to see the guys from back then!

There was also plenty to see and do in "Music City", a very friendly place with lots of history. Of course, back at the hotel, there were lots of photos exchanged, lots of stories told and much laughter and remembrances were held during our "Memorial Service".

A Special thanks to **Charlie** and **Pat Easley** for making the barbeque successful. Pat prepared lots of yummy dishes and Charlie kept the grill going not to mention bringing all that stuff with them!

We ended the week with a riverboat luncheon and show cruise on the Cumberland River to downtown. (photo)

Looking forward to seeing this whole crew in Branson next spring! Thanks to everyone!

Betty Brenneman, HMOR

REMEMBRANCE DAY 2013, 10th Mountain Division

On June 23rd I travelled to Ft Drum to meet with Triple Deuce Veterans of the 2003 deployment to Afghanistan and to attend the Remembrance Day Ceremony that would be held on the 25th. This group of 2003 Alpha Company Vets is lead by **Dawn Esposito**, Gold Star Mother of **SGT Michael Esposito**. Present were **Heriberto Baez**, his wife, **Rosa** and their infant son, **Derek**, **Justin DeShazo** and wife **Rachael** and their children, **Kaelyn** and **Austin**, **Adam DeCiccio** and his mother, **Dawn DeCiccio** as well as **Patrick Hines** and his wife **Amy**. Also attending was **Christina Durkin** and her children, **James** and **Reese** Donnelly. Christina is a close friend of Dawn E and helps her with her Triple Deuce efforts. Those who have read the Ft Drum episodes in the pages of earlier Newsletters will recognize some of these names, others are new. Readers might find it odd that Adam's mother attended this event, but this gathering is like a family reunion. These Veterans served together for many years and had multiple deployments. Adam's family lives in Rhode Island and many trips were made to the DeCiccio home by these Veterans over the years. So, what we have here is Dawn E and Dawn D playing the roles of Den Mothers to this group. It's fun to watch grown men reply to Dawn E's "request" with a unanimous, "Yes Mrs. E" (Note: I attended high school with Adam's Uncle Donald, who is a Vietnam Vet.)

Well, here we were, all gathered and ready to go out for some food. We were staying at the Best Western Hotel in Watertown which put us within walking distance of food and beverages. We had a noisy meal. Once this tight group figured out I wasn't there to tell them what to do I or provide them with lectures on how "...we did it this way in my time," I was accepted, it was like being with family.

Before the meal was over it had been decided

that the next stop would be a Karaoke Bar strategically located between where we were eating and the hotel.

We settled in to a room adjacent to where the singing was going on. This gave me a chance to visit with these Triple Deuce Vets. A lesson I learned from talking with and listening to other Vietnam Vets talking with WW II 22nd IR Vets at reunions was that even though their war was fought in a different place and time than our war, we have much in common. Seeing ourselves through the eyes of those who served before us, has helped bring many of us to a place where we have a better understanding of our roles and the importance of our service. It is my intent to help bring our younger Veterans to a place in their minds where they have a better understanding of the importance of what they have done. One of these Vets has gone to great lengths in gathering information on past wars and had been comparing his service to what he read regarding the service of others. I told him I could not argue with his research, but reminded him that he was not a statistical figure, he was a real person with real experiences and if he wanted a true measure of his performance he should ask those he served with. I waved my hand around the room and said, "Ask these guys how you did." I believe I opened a door in this Veteran's mind that he didn't know was there.



My message to these young Vets is to join the 22nd Infantry Regiment Society, come to reunions, if possible, write their stories for the Newsletter and keep track of those they served with. I realize that these young Vets are building lives and family takes first position in what they do.

Back to the Karaoke. Justin likes to sing, and sing he did; only taking time away from the microphone to keep his beverage from going to room temperature. Adam assumed the role of host and made certain that there were two drinks in front of everyone. All were enjoying conversations with the exception of a woman at the bar, who admitted after a bar fight was narrowly avoided, that she said something she shouldn't have said. That behind us, we finished up and headed for the hotel. Well, not all of us. Adam and Justin decided to visit some of their old haunts in Watertown. Dawn D reported that Adam got back to the hotel about 3 AM and since there were no police in pursuit, she considered it a good evening.

Pete Gaworecki arrived on Monday morning just in time for breakfast. Once Pete was fed, we joined a caravan that was headed to the Wal-Mart to pick-up the food and drinks that were to be served at the picnic and field day at Battalion Headquarters.

All of the food, beverages and gift cards are provided by the **AMVETS**. There was, as there has been at past events that have been supported by the **AMVETS**, more food and drink than could be consumed. **Marty Ashman** had an impressive stack of gift cards from Wal-Mart and Best Buy that would be awarded to the Soldiers who won the event(s). The **AMVETS** present were **John J. Gaeta, Post #4, Frank DeMarco, Post #18, Chuck and Melanie Marsillo, Post #45 and Marty Ashman, Post # 722**. I speak for all of the Members of the 22nd Infantry Regiment Society and the Vietnam Triple Deuce when I say TANGO YANKEE for the support the **AMVETS** have and continue to provide to our Active Duty Soldiers.

Charlie Company did not deploy with the 1st BCT last year, so they were the beneficiary of the picnic. The day was truly for the Soldiers of Charlie Company, so much so that **LT Nick Wright** and **SSG Mat Brue** manned the grill throughout the entire day. They did manage to find a way to break the monotony by slamming down the large grill cover when my back was turned. Yes, I did my startle reaction thing with each slam. I was happy to provide some of the entertainment.



The photos are of SSG Mat Brue on the left and LT Nick Wright on the right. The Soldiers eating are Charlie Co. Soldiers.

During the picnic we met the Charlie Company CO, **CPT Jeremy Brandenburg** and an old friend of the Alpha's, **CPT Chris Yankow**. CPT Yankow was an SSG with the Scout Platoon back in 2003. Adam informed us of CPT Yankow's ability with the Battle Ready Rifle. The BRR is an M-14 set up in sniper mode. M-14's were difficult to come by in Nam, but the Army came to its senses and put the weapon back into Infantry Units. If you look at page 3 of the Winter 2012 (misabeled as 2013) Society Newsletter you see a photo of Adam carrying a BRR.

The day saw Justin Deshazo and Family as well as Pat and Amy Hines leave for home. Work and family obligations are very much a part of their young lives. I was pleased that they made the effort to make the trip and more pleased to have been able to visit with them. My hope is that they will be able to attend the Branson Reunion next spring.

The conclusion of the picnic saw the Charlie Co. Soldiers carrying off all the food and drink that hadn't been consumed. I'm certain that these young Soldiers wasted none of what they took with them. Pete and I were on our way back to the hotel to relax after a day of, well for me, diving for cover. Before we left post we decided to stop back at the PX for something. While driving to the PX we found ourselves being followed by a car with someone waving an arm out of the window. The Dawn's had been riding around the Post, pretty much in circles, and needed directions on how to get back to Watertown. Pete and I decided to go to the Fairground Inn for dinner, relax and get ready for the Remembrance Day events. We had no sooner finished our meals when Adam called to inform us that the remaining group had gathered in the hotel bar. So, Pete and I joined them. Adam had invited two Charlie Co. Soldiers to join the group. The conversation was lively ranging from Martin Scorsese movies to best brands of beer and important qualities in women. The evening ended on another pleasant note with no more than a walk to the elevator for Pete and me.

The next morning at breakfast, Dawn D told the group that Adam got back to the hotel after 3 AM with his two new friends in tow. He got house-keeping to bring up roll-a-way beds and then the three of them re-lived the entire evening. Dawn D had been assigned the duty of waking the two Charlie Soldiers up at 5:30 AM. They had to be back at Ft Drum early or they'd be in trouble. The Remembrance Day activities were, as one would expect, conducted with reverence and respect. Many Gold Star Family Members were present to honor not only their loved ones but the six Soldiers who were KIA in 2012. One of these Gold Star Father's, Paul Monti, father of

SFC Jared Monti, MOH, 3/71 Cav, 10th Mtn, was asked to stand, he reluctantly did. He was asked to stand in recognition of the fact that the popular Country & Western song, ***I Drive Your Truck***, was written about him and how he stays connected to his son by driving Jared's truck.

It was just prior to the start of the ceremony that **COL Mike Loos** came to visit. After the ceremony the Triple Deuce contingent gathered at the Triple Deuce Memorial site. The Triple Deuce site is adjacent to the 10th Mountain Memorial site. To date, none of the other battalions in the 10th Mountain Division have completed a site. Truth is, most haven't done any work at all on their sites while the Triple Deuce site was completed and dedicated in December 2008 after the Battalion returned from Iraq. At the site we were joined by **Glenn and Penny Sweet**, Gold Star parents of **PFC Jack Sweet**. We agreed that some maintenance was in order with regard to the pedestal portion of the main monument. Pete and Glenn said they would follow-up on getting the problem corrected. The gathering was brief but a nice visit none the less. Dawn E had arranged for us to meet **Major General Townsend** and **CSM Rick Merritt**, the new CG and CSM of the 10th Mountain Division, between events that were being held for the Gold Star Families.

Pete and I did get to visit with Mike Loos and learned that he was on his way to the War College at Carlisle, PA. Mike also told us that his son Nick had earned his Eagle Scout Rank and was hopeful that the award would arrive soon so that Nick could be presented his Eagle Scout Badge in front of the Boy Scouts he'd been involved with for the four years the Loos family has been at Ft Drum.

We saw many other old friends and familiar faces during the visit. When they see the Guidon they know that the 22nd Infantry Old Goats are there in support of our Active Soldiers.

After the ceremony I noticed that Adam was sitting listlessly. He hadn't stopped moving in 72 hours, so I found this to be odd, so I asked him if he was OK. His reply was that he was tired and

planned to let his mother drive back to Rhode Island. It was then that I offered advice for the first time. I told Adam that if he slept once in a while he wouldn't be as tired as he was.

It was time for me to get back on the road; I had a nine hour drive in front of me with the promise of thunder storms for the entire trip. I cased the VN 222 Guidon after saying my good-byes and headed home.

Jim May, HMOR

Post Script: Dawn Esposito has informed me that the Triple Deuce Soldiers will be returning from Afghanistan starting in early September. Dawn was told that 140 Soldiers would be arriving. Dawn called Frank DeMarco and asked for some help with providing sheets sets, pillow cases and pillows as well as some snack packs. Dawn just called again to report that the 140 sheet sets, pillows and cases as well as 140 toiletry kits were ready for transport as well as 700 cases of snack packs. It seems that Frank DeMarco knows someone who works at Entenmann's Bakery and they are going to send a trailer loaded with snacks for the returning Soldiers. Dawn also said that she had raised \$500 at work and that the money would be used to buy juice and soft drinks to go with the snacks. Dawn also said that Patrick and Amy Hines are planning on attending the Branson Reunion.

FNG GOES FISHING

Many of you know that I have been fishing in the Sea of Cortez for a number of years now with David Milewski and members of his family. You might also know that **Jerry Rudisill**, Charlie Co., 2/22, 67-68, has also made the trip. This year things were different. This year there were only four of us lead by Trip Master, **David Milewski**, Charlie Co., 2/22, 67-68, **Gary Hunziker**, Charlie Co., 63rd Maint Bn, 67-68, **Bill Bukovec**, Bravo Co., 1/22, 66-67 and me. Yes, it was a boat full of Vietnam Vets.

We would fish on the *Tenacious* out of Las Palmas de Cortez with Captain Carlos and Mate Alan. As is the custom, a new member of the trip gets to fight the first fish. The fish might be a three pound Bonita, a fish we'd release, or a 400 pound Blue Marlin, a fish we'd also release.

It wasn't long before we had a fish on and Bill Bukovec was handed the rod. It was a Striped Marlin so Bill got to fight the fish from the chair. It didn't take very long for the rest of us to realize that Bill had never before fought a fish of this size; in fact, we agreed that Bill had never fought a fish weighing more than a pound or two. We came to this conclusion after watching Bill make just about every mistake one could make while struggling with the fish. We were all making suggestions to Bill as to what to do when, after about 15 minutes, Bill said, "This is a lot more difficult than it looks on TV." That comment was all that was needed for the rest of us to begin to offer Bill endless streams of advice. The crew quickly picked-up on what we were doing and joined in. Bill had five voices telling him what to do and some of the telling was contradictory. It took another 15 minutes for Bill to get the fish to the boat but I'm certain that those 15 minutes seemed like an hour to Bill. The fish, a 120 pound Striped Marlin, was hauled on board by the crew for a photo op and then released. The accompanying photo is of Bill and his first Striped Marlin. It was while the fish was being hauled up for the photo that Gary awarded Bill the **FNG** title. For the rest of the trip Bill was referred to as "**the FNG.**" Bill, who is a "Boat Original" now knew what it was like to be an **FNG**.

The rest of the day saw us riding around looking for more fish and drinking beer. We did get into a school of small, 10 to 15 pound tuna. We managed to put 10 of these into the fish box.

When we got back from fishing we got out of our Vietnam sweat-wet clothes and into our bathing suits and relaxed in the bar-pool where we drank more beer and relived the day. Then it was shower time, ("Never pass a shower," seems to

be a universal motto with Vietnam Vets.) We then went to dinner, as mentioned above, where we drank more beer. After dinner we sat around relaxing drank more beer and told one another what a good day it had been. 0500 HRS comes early, so we were all in bed by 2100 HRS. Bill and I shared a room. The last thing he said before he went to sleep was. "I'm still tired from fighting that fish."

The next day was uneventful. We caught a 90 pound Striped Marlin early and didn't catch another fish for the rest of the day.

We did meet an "Ugly American" on the dock who we'd met the day before. This guy, a man in his mid 60's, was one of those guys who



knows everything. He announced that he was a professional fisherman and knew more about fishing than anyone of the Mexican Boat Captains present. If you want to know why people in foreign lands don't like Americans it is because of people like the know-it-all. Well, we saw this fool the next morning. He was waiting on the dock dressed in a t-shirt, K-Mart shorts and black high-cut sneakers. They looked like the Keds I had when I was 12 years old.

Good news was that even though the fishing

was poor, we used the time to drink all the beer we'd brought out with us. That evening we went to eat at a restaurant that is owned by an old friend who once was the Dock Captain where we fish.

The third day saw us back into the fish. We managed to get 15 tuna into the fish box. We had four fish on at the same time. This requires doing an intricate "dance" when the fish decide to cross lines on the fisherman. We 'did good,' even the **FNG** 'did good.' We caught 5 Striped Marlin and were visited by a small pod of Killer Whales. While we were on our way back to the dock I asked Alan to rate us, using his long experience with other fishermen. Alan carefully looked at each of us and then said, "**Loco**".

We were pleased with such a high comment and thanked Alan for his honesty. We didn't drink all the beer that day, but did our best to catch-up at the pool and at dinner. We brought some of the tuna with us to one of the local restaurants where it was nicely prepared.

The following morning we took Bill back to the airport and said our "so long's" and then said our "hello's" to David's wife Judy and their daughter Kim who were coming down for a family gathering in Cabo San Lucas.

Jim May, HMOR
Prov. Co. 1968

GUEST BOOK HITS

Name: **Lynn Dalpez, President**

Location: Beaverton, OR

Email: dalpez222@gmail.com

Phone: 503-848-3901

Please note my new email address.

dalpez222@gmail.com

Posted on: Sunday - Jul 7, 2013

Name: **Bruce Fielding**

Location: New London WI.

Email: brewster3219@gmail.com

Phone: 920-250-1367

I am updating a post from Feb. one of your own **John Snap Hintzke** of C Co. 2/22nd Mech. has passed away he served in 66-67 as a field medic. He led a very productive life after returning from Nam. He and his family built a great well drilling business from the ground up and his kids still run it to day.

Posted on: Tuesday - Jul 9, 2013

Name: **Z. Burton**

Location: Alabama

205-886-8282

Email: burtontiques@hotmail.com

Looking for anyone who knew my father, Msgt.

John E. Burton D Co. 25th ID, 68 to 69 from Talladega, Al.

Posted on: Thursday - Jul 11, 2013

Name: Joseph **Joe Spado (Spadoman)**

Location: River Falls, WI

Email: spadoman@me.com

Phone: 715 209-0241

On vacation over the past few weeks. Stopped in Seattle and met up with **Howard Paull**, Co B mortar man, 1968 and 1969. We shared 4th platoon for quite a spell. A great reunion, even though I could only visit for 24 hours. It has been 44 years since the last time we saw each other.

We are Brothers!

Posted on: Wednesday - Jul 17, 2013

Name: **Phil Guiffre**

Location: A 2/22 67

Email: falcon1of5@aol.com

Phone: 347-432-0485

Watched platoon the real story last night. Oliver Stone was B 2/22. worth watching but I guess tech advisors were on vacation, keeps referring to 22nd Inf "Division:.. long life to all, guff.

Posted on: Sunday - Jul 21, 2013

Name: **John Spangler**

Email: a222div25@hotmail.com

Happy July 4th to everyone.

Posted on: Thursday - Jul 4, 2013

Name: **Robert Underwood**
Location: St Helens Oregon
Email: alrwa155@yahoo.com
Phone: 503-410-8084

It was an honor to visit your website. Thank You
Lynn Dalpez for pointing me here.
Posted on: Wednesday - Jul 3, 2013

Name: **Warren L. Crabtree**
Location: West Salem, IL
Email: warrncrabtree@yahoo.co
Phone: 618-456-3162

I was with C 2/22 June 1970 thru Dec 1970.
Like to find anyone who might remember me. I
became a carrier driver in Cambodia. Went to
HQ to drive for LTC Vale.
Posted on: Saturday - Jul 27, 2013

Name: **Dennis Abraham**
Location: mpls,mn
Email: stubness1@hotmail.com
Phone: 612-722-5705

I was the Bn mail clerk from Sept 69 to Aug 70
and would like to know about all the triple deuce
guys from NN. I also have plenty of names for
HHC locator if he wants them. All he has to do is
email me.
Posted on: Thursday - Aug 15, 2013

Name: **Raymond [Corp] Lee**
Location: near Chicago
Email: leejoyce2@yahoo.com
Phone: 815 603 5492

Was there Feb 1967 to Aug 1967 B Co. 3rd plt.
Saw the post from a guy named Underwood, just
wondering if he was a Sgt with us for a while.
Posted on: Sunday - Aug 18, 2013

Name: **Phil Guiffre**
Location: A 2/22 recon 3/22 9/66-9/67
Email: falcon1of5@aol.com
Phone: 347-432-0485

Comments: RIP staff Sgt **Michael Ollis** 2/22
10th Mountail from Staten Island NY KIA last
week. Praying for no American lives will be lost
in Syria.
Posted on: Sunday - Sep 1, 2013

NEW FINDS

Lucien N. Caron
140 Ramsdell Lane #2
Barrihgton, NH 03825
lucien.49@hotmail.com
HHC/Recon Platoon 25th ID, April 69 to March 70

James S. Langston
613 Stone Church Lane
Geneseo, IL 61254
309-945-7258
jlangston66@yahoo.com
HHC, 25th ID, Nov. 68 to Dec. 69

HELLOES & COMMENTS

Leland W. Potter, Jr.
830-305-5625
southernpatriot@msn.com
C Co. 25th ID, 1969 to 1970

Robert B. Blakeslee
561-906-5384
beach1722@aol.com
A Co. 4th & 25th ID, March 67 to March 68

Bruce would like to locate **George Corwin**. Bruce said that he went to an address that he had, but George wasn't there. Then he heard that George may have been killed in a motorcycle accident a few years ago.

George M. Carter
301-642-0628
gmacarter47@verizon.net
A Co. 4th & 25th ID, March 67 to March 68

"The Newsletter is Great - Thanks for all of your work."

Terry M. Hackman
330-645-6281
thackman@neorr.com
HHC 25th ID, Oct.67 to Oct. 68

Thomas C. Izebicki

815-546-0790
B Co. 25th ID

"We hook up every three or four months, **Willie Smith, Skip LaCass, Ray Lee, Tom Tallisik, Chuck Anderson** and drink, eat and enjoy."

Henry J. Kayes

814-657-3780
A Co. 25th ID, 65 to 67

Thomas J. Petro

863-773-6827
tpetro@hotmail.com
Recon Platoon 25th ID, Aug. 67 to Aug. 68

Dennis D. Abraham

612-722-5705
stubness1@hotmail.com
HHC, 25th ID, Sep. 69 to Aug. 70

Dennis would like to locate **Bill Hurs, Rich Hanley, Lucien Caron, Tom Zydron, Ray Brinks, Clint Milum**.

John L. Combs

402-879-1400
C Co. 25th ID, Sep 68 to Sep 69

"I served with **Harless Belcher** in Vietnam. I was proud to serve with him. He is a very brave man. I read the article he put in your paper. I remember the day he was wounded. Someday I hope to meet him."

Victor G. Diver

309-388-4950
vicd2@glastel.net
B Co. 25th ID, Nov. 69 to Nov 70

Edward L. Lara

303-525-5169
papaed09@comcast.net
B Co. 25th ID, Sep 67 to Sep 68

"I am planning on attending the reunion in Branson, MO."

David W. McCall

828-862-8855
B Co. 25th ID, Sep 68 to Sep 69

David would like to locate John Hester and anyone from B-1-1.

Michael J. Muesing

559-855-8932
B Co. 25th ID, 67 to 68

Kenneth J. Zipp

845-457-5178
kenzipp@yahoo.com
C Co. 25th ID, Jan 69 to April 69

Patrick W. Merth

715-986-4632
paulinemerth@gmail.com
C Co. 25th ID, Aug 67 to Aug.68

Pat & Pauline will attend the reunion in Branson."

David G. Ferguson

dferguson5731@sbcglobal.net
C Co. 4th & 25th ID, Nov. 65 to Nov. 67

Darrell L. Schaff

ddarlin1968@aol.com
815-262-8214
B Co. 25th ID, Oct. 66 to Sep 67

Joseph M. Suemegi

765-674-1903
A Co. 25th ID, Nov 69 to Nov 70

TAPS

Nick J. Docsanes

C Co. 4th ID, Dec. 65 to 67

I have more bad news. Pam just called and said Nick Docsanes had just passed away. He

had fought a tough battle with his lungs and heart. Nick will be sorely missed. He was a friend to all and took the time and effort to host 2 of our Reunion. I personally will miss Nick. We had been friends and worked together before and after Viet Nam. He was a "Great" man.

By **Jim Neeley**

C Co. 4th ID, Dec. 65 to Sept. 67

Robert Crisp

Blain, TN

B Co. 25th ID, 1969 to 1970

By George Reisching

Coy Joe Thomas

Findlay, IL

C Co. 25th ID, 67 to 68

Died at home June 19, 2013

RIP - COY JOE THOMAS

June 9, 1947 - June 19, 2013

Coy Joe Thomas, 66, of Findlay passed away at 7:30 a.m. Wednesday (June 19, 2013) at his residence. Funeral services were held at 11:00 a.m. Saturday June 22, 2013 in the Lockart-Green Funeral Home, Findlay with Pastor Cletus Hicks officiating. Visitation was from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Friday June 21, 2013 at the Funeral Home. Burial was in Wright Cemetery near Findlay with military rites. Memorials can be made to Findlay American Legion Post #409. Coy Joe was born June 9, 1947 in Marshall, Arkansas the son of Chester and Zara (Craft) Thomas.

He was a service manager for Datsun in Decatur for 10 years, owned and operated Speed-Lube in Mattoon, Charleston and Rantoul, started Speed Truck Lube in Effingham in 1992 and sold his concerns in 1996 and retired.

Coy served in the US Army during Vietnam from November 1967 to November 1968 in Charlie Company 2nd Platoon, 3rd Squad 2nd Bn (Mech) 22nd Infantry Regiment 25th Infantry Division. Coy earned the Bronze Star, 2 Purple Hearts, the

Combat Infantry Badge and the Good Conduct Medal. (Yes, I am still trying to figure out who the hell in the US Army put Coy in for the good conduct medal!)

Coy was a lifetime member of the VFW of Sullivan and the Findlay American Legion since 1969. Coy loved life and enjoyed hunting and corvettes.

Surviving are his special friend, Nancy Beem of Findlay; Nancy's sons Scott and Michael, and their wives and children and Nancy's daughter Sarah; along with his father, Chester Thomas of Lorena, Texas; half sister, Donna Halleck (Wes) Lorena, Texas. Coy was preceded in death by his mother and half-brothers, Clarence and Ken-non Adams.

I first met Coy Thomas a few days before Thanksgiving, November 23, 1967. Coy's claim to fame was that on that Thanksgiving night he was on a nine man ambush patrol about 600 meters in front of 2nd Platoon at the night laager. Just after midnight the laager received about 20+/- mortars and a few of us were wounded by shrapnel. A few minutes after the mortars stopped, we heard machine gun fire and grenades out in front of 2nd platoon. Captain Bill Allison got the ambush patrol (Tiger 2) on the radio and asked what was going on. The answer was that the ambush patrol got 8 of the Vietcong mortar squad running down an oxcart trail with a flashlight and laughing.

The next day, Charlie Company ran into a Vietcong ambush in a bunker complex and lost 2 Lieutenants and a 50 gunner KIA. Many of 1st and 2nd platoon were wounded. Coy received his first purple heart that day and a bronze star for the ambush patrol.

Coy Thomas always had a smile on his face and a knack for making us laugh. He would tell stories about his youth that bordered on the unbelievable. When I was in Findlay, Illinois for his funeral, I found out that I had only heard about

one twentieth of the grade school and high school stories and they were all true.

In Vietnam, Coy would “*borrow*” an officer’s jeep to make a beer run. Most of the time he came back to the company area, with a black eye or lumps all over, because he took on the entire artillery enlisted men’s (EM) club or the 3rd of the 22nd’s EM club. Coy never met a bar that he did not like and never left a bar without a fight. Sometimes Coy had to leave the jeep where it crashed into a ditch! No problem, he would just “*borrow*” another one and paint out the bumper!

He would then relate these stories to us and Coy had a way of having us visualize him standing there telling 20 artillery men they better make out their last wills!!! Coy always smiled as he told us how they beat the crap out of him. There were so many times in the field, at night laagers, before leaving for ambush patrol or listening post, we would be digging the night foxholes and laughing at Coy’s stories.

When I derosed home in September 1968, I knew that Coy’s humor had kept me sane during those terrible days we shared together. Since reacquainting with Coy in 1997, we shared so many good times, at reunions, and stories that had us laughing so hard we almost *urinated* ourselves!! When I called Coy, I would say, “Is this General Thomas,” and he’d say, “Is this Private Eberwine.” Then we’d laugh like hell!

Charles “Jack” Jackson, my daughter Rosie, and I drove out to Findlay Illinois on Thursday June 20th arriving 5:30 AM Friday June 21st. We met Sarah Beem at Coy’s home and were allowed to stay at Coy’s home for the next 2 days. Around 10:30 AM, Coy’s close lifelong friend, Larry, came to the house to see if we need anything. We talked for about an hour and heard about Coy arriving from Arkansas and starting 2nd grade in the Findlay school. Coy graduated in 1965 from Findlay High school and was still friends with about 95% of the graduating class. Larry suggested we have breakfast or lunch, so we followed him into town. We ate at JP’s - a lo-

cal breakfast and lunch place where we met half the town. Many folks stopped by our table and would say, you must be Coy’s Nam friends. People told us that Coy had talked about a number of his friends from Vietnam and now his friends finally had a chance to met us.

Gordon Kelley, Coy’s superior officer for most of his year in Vietnam, and Cynthia Kelley flew in from Cherryfield, Maine. There are too many stories between Gordon and Coy, so we will have to have Gordon tell those. All I know is there was a love/hate relationship in Vietnam, but all Love once our reunions started in 1996. Coy would do the damndest things to anger LT Kelley, but Gordon could not stay mad at him. Gordon and Cynthia loved Coy like a son, well, the prodigal one maybe, but a son. Charlie Company had good representation at Coy’s last battle, his funeral.

Findlay, Illinois has a sign at the town limits stating the population is 750. The number is changed every 10 years after the census. Larry told us if we arrived at the Funeral Home at 4 PM, we could see Coy before they closed the casket. It was really important to Jack, Rosie and I to say goodbye to Coy before they shut the casket. Jack was Coy’s 50 gunner, while Coy was the driver of 2-3 track the last few months before Coy derosed. Their friendship deepened and they became brothers the last 16 years since reunions started.

Coy was Rosie’s crazy uncle. At every large or mini reunion we attended, Coy would make a fuss over Rosie and sing to her. Her favorite song that he sang was, “Cry Like A Baby”. Anytime we heard that song Rosie would say that’s Coy singing to me. I swear that we saw about 850 +/- people come through the Funeral Home Friday evening.

My relationship with Coy solidified on July 1st 1968 in Vietnam. We were sweeping the road for mines so the convoys could go safely from Dau Tieng to Tay Ninh. Coy happened to be lead track that day; *something he had a knack for avoiding!* I was walking left flank security with

Herb Mock and **Don Hildebran** about 150 meters off the road. We came to a small stream and I saw a wire leading to the culvert bridge at the road. Coy's track was sitting at the edge of the bridge. I screamed and yelled over for them to get off the bridge. Coy saw and heard me and backed up, but our CO, Captain Dickinson, reached down toward the wire. The 500 pound bomb went off killing the Captain, and 2 men from my squad; **August Ferrel "Ronnie" Bolt** and **Freddie Jurado**. Bolt never told us his real name, so he said to call him Ronnie. But as GI's go, we called him Thunder or Lightning, because he was slower than molasses. But a great guy.

As I am writing this piece for the newsletter on June 30, 2013, tomorrow, July 1, 2013, will be 45 years ago that Coy was able to live for the next 45 years. With all the dead and wounded we witnessed in Vietnam, I always felt somewhat good about being able to save Coy that day. I have suffered with the deaths of Ronnie and Freddie, as they were the only 2 men who died while I was squad leader of 2nd Platoon -2nd squad.

Coy's legacy began around 1954 when he moved with his family to Findlay, Illinois, continued during his time in the US Army, especially during Vietnam, and then 44 more years back in Findlay. It seemed to me that he was loved by everyone who lived in or near Findlay, with perhaps the exception of some husbands from 20-30 years ago!!

I have never met anyone like Coy Joe Thomas before and I know I never will again. He was larger than life, and loved life to the fullest. If you were a friend of Coy's you were blessed. I must have heard 50 times; he was one of a kind! God bless you Coy, rest in peace now, your suffering is over. We will see you on the other side of the wall someday. Keep the beer cold, and the poker hands and dice hot! We love you! –

John Eberwine C/67-68

FUN FOR EVERYONE IN BRANSON at THE REUNION

Branson is a city in Taney County, Missouri, United States. It was named for Rueben Branson, postmaster and operator of a general store in the area in the 1880s. The population was 6,050 at the 2000 census. The Branson Micropolitan Statistical Area embraces Stone County, Missouri and Taney County, Missouri. Today it is sometimes referred to as a "family-friendly Las Vegas" because of the numerous shows and attractions, as well as the flashy building decorations and neon lights. The "strip" as it has been named, draws people from far and wide. If shows are not your thing then check out one of the three lakes Branson has to offer. Lake Taneycomo's clear cold waters provide some of the finest trout fishing available anywhere in the world. Table Rock Lake as well as Bull Shoals Lake offer a variety of recreational activities including hiking, sightseeing, hunting, skin diving, fishing, and water sports such as swimming, boating, water skiing etc. Maybe it is golfing that swings your attention. Branson has an array of golf courses sure to please the newest beginner to the most professional golfer. Branson Landing is mall located in downtown Branson on Lake Taneycomo. Anchored by Bass Pro Shops and Hudson Belk, it contains 100 stores and several restaurants. Check out the huge waterfront fountain in the central square where every 30 minutes you can see choreographed fire, water, and light shows set to music. Riding the Ducks is very popular and a favorite with kids. The "ducks" as they are affectionately called are based on the DUKW a World War II amphibious landing vehicle. The tour will take you on a ride through town and then into the lake for a short cruise. The Branson Scenic Railroad operates out of the historic Branson Train Depot located downtown. The railroad takes you on a 40 mile round trip ride through the beautiful Ozark countryside using vintage train engines and cars from the 1930's through 1960's. They also offer nightly dinner trips and a Polar Express tour during November and December. The Branson Belle is a recreation of a classic riverboat that has lunch and dinner cruises with live entertainment on Table Rock Lake. A popular attraction in Branson is Silver Dollar City a family friendly theme park similar to "Dollywood" in Tennessee. It has dozens of arts & crafts and specialty shops, rides, shows, and restaurants. You should plan on spending at least 2 days at Silver Dollar City. The Shepherd of the Hills Outdoor Drama is one of the longest running local attractions. See the events of Harold Bell Wright's classic novel reenacted by a huge cast of actors and stuntmen. During the day you can also visit a recreation of Old Matt's cabin and travel to the top of Inspiration Tower where you can see all the way into Arkansas on a clear day.

Copied from a Branson visitor's brochure

