

# The *VietNam* Triple Deuce, Inc.

An Association of 2<sup>Bn</sup> (Mech) 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment VietNam Veterans

Edited by Linda Nishikubo

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## President's Message

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society Reunions was a great success! At the reunion we had 81 Triple Deuce members attending. The Vietnam Triple Deuce, Inc. had a meeting where nominations and votes were taken for five Directors.

The nominations were for Skip Fahel, Michael Groves, Gary Hartt, Jim May, David Milewski and Norman Nishikubo. Paper ballots were distributed to all paid members to cast their vote. Ballots were collected and counted by Vice President Skip Fahel and Secretary David Milewski. The top five receiving votes were

Skip Fahel  
Michael Groves  
Jim May  
David Milewski  
Norman Nishikubo

The result of the election of Directors was announced to the membership. If you have not made a reunion of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society, plan on attending the next reunion which will be held in San Antonio, Texas in 2003. You will have a great time!

During the week of May 13 and May 20, the Directors nominated and approved the following positions:

Skip Fahel – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President  
Michael Groves – President  
Jim May – Treasurer  
David Milewski – Secretary  
Linda Nishikubo – Editor  
Also, the following individuals submitted themselves as Locators for the Vietnam Triple Deuce, Inc.

Marcus Burk - Locator Charlie Co.

Gary Hartt – Locator Alpha Co.

Thomas Petro - Locator HHC & Recon

Robert Price – Locator Bravo Co.

Daniel Streit – Locator Delta Co.

Thank you, gentlemen, for stepping up and helping our organization grow.

If you would like to help reduce the expense to the organization and receive this newsletter via email, please contact Norm Nishikubo, [magnetc222@earthlink.net](mailto:magnetc222@earthlink.net), and provide him with your email id.

Send us your stories! We need them for the newsletter.

That's all for now,  
Mike Groves

## Thank you from St. Louis

Mike & I send out a big thank you to everyone who helped make the St. Louis Reunion a great success. Special thanks to all of you who volunteered! It was great to have the ladies so involved. We promise to take time in San Antonio to visit. Looking forward to seeing everyone in Texas in 2003!

Cathy & Mike Groves

## FAC COMMITTEE FORMED

During the business meeting of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Inf. Reg. Society held in St. Louis on 05-03-02 a vote was taken to establish a (FAC) Financial Assistance Committee.

By majority vote the formation of the FAC was approved. Its chairman is Denny Head, A/2-22 Vietnam.

The FAC is charged with the task of the administration and distribution of funds in order to provide monetary aid to 22<sup>nd</sup> Inf. Reg. Society members who need financial aid to be able to attend a reunion. *Note, all of us are members of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Inf. Reg. Society, at least I hope all of you are.*

All of the funds that the FAC will administer and distribute will come from donations. No other source of income will be provided. Having stated that, I hope all of you will find it in your hearts to contribute to this worth while cause.

In the past 5 people, all Triple Deucers, quietly took care of our Combat Brothers who were in need and helped them attend a reunion. It is about time that that burden, though it was a burden of love, was lifted from 5 sets of shoulders and spread among all of us.

If you elect to make a donation to the FAC please make your check out to: 22<sup>nd</sup> Inf. Reg. Society. Mail it, with a note stating it is for the FAC, to:  
Nathan Palani P.O. Box 53070  
Reno, NV 89513-0370

Magnet, C/2-22 Vietnam

## DUES

If you do not see a 'C' or 'P' after your name on the address label attached to the envelope this Newsletter came in you are not current with your dues. Until you are current with your dues you will not be sent further editions of the Newsletter.

If you feel that the record is not correct and you are current with your dues, then contact me and we will resolve the matter.

If you are not able to pay your dues contact either me or Norm and you will continue to receive the Newsletter. Don't be ashamed or embarrassed about this. Your situation will be held in confidence. Currently we have the funds to cover you because of the continued

generosity of your Combat Brothers.

There still seems to be confusion in our ranks relative to dues for the Vietnam Triple Deuce and the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society. We are separate from the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society. We are a stand alone element with no tie to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society concerning dues. The Double Deucer fee in the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society has nothing to do with us. It belongs to them and them alone.

When submitting your dues payment please use the **Application/Renewal Form**. This form contains all the pertinent information I need to properly record your payment.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Jim May, Treasurer VN 2-22 Provisional Support Dau Tieng

## NEWSLETTER MATERIAL

Folks I am running out of material for the newsletter. I need stories from you vets and articles from all of you.

I can fill a few more newsletters with stories from Skip Fahel, Mike Groves, Jim Hardin and Magnet but don't think you want that. So send me your write-ups.

If you feel that your writing skills are not good enough for one of your articles to appear in the newsletter, DON'T! Norm or I may have to clean the article up a little or a lot. We are willing to do it and send it back to you for your approval before I publish it. Norm and I have done this in the past and the original writers were very pleased with what they reviewed. Please send me your write-ups.  
Linda Nishikubo, Vietnam  
2-22 Newsletter Editor

## 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Vietnam Memorial

At the recent 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society Reunion held in St. Louis Ed Schultz, who is the Chairman of the Committee for the subject Memorial

Project, presented a report on the status of it.

So far the Committee has determined the design for the Memorial and material it will be made out of. The location for the Memorial will be Ft. Benning, home of the Infantry. The location was selected by a vote of the membership of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society in St. Louis. The inscription that will appear on the Memorial is almost final. *Note if you would like to see an illustration of the Memorial, visit the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society web site.*

Now to my lecture to all of you:  
The Committee has determined that the cost of the Memorial will be \$7,000.00 to \$8,000.00. Only \$1,672.00 has been received by the Committee for this Project in 19 months! That amount averages less than \$100.00 a month collected.

I know, I am partially at fault for the poor level of collection of funds for the Project because I have not been hammering away about it in each newsletter since the Cleveland Reunion in 2000. This has changed. Consider this article the first *hammer blow*.

As I stated in June 2001, This is part of our contribution to the legacy of our Brothers who fell in Vietnam. It is also part of our legacy relative to our service to our Country while we were in Vietnam. It is the responsibility of the living Vietnam Veterans of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment to ensure that this Memorial becomes a reality. In other words it is our **obligation** to see that it happens. I know you can do it. I saw what you did for the Holiday Support Fund last year. You recalled the words, "Deeds Not Words" for that project. Please remember them for this project. Now let's all make this thing happen.

When you make your donation to the Memorial, I am counting on you to do so, please make your check out to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society and designate that it is for the Vietnam Memorial Project. Mail it to Nathan Palani  
P.O. Box 53070  
Reno, NV 89513-0370.

Magnet, C/2-22 Vietnam

### WHAT YOU MISSED IF YOU DID NOT ATTEND

#### THURSDAY:

The glow and buzz of starting up a reunion of over 160 veterans of the 22nd Infantry Regiment on Thursday evening. The hallway outside our area roaring with Norm & Charles manning the Vietnam Triple Duece table gathering up membership dues (a whole \$10) and hawking tickets for Saturday's raffle. The 22nd table busy moving memorabilia of yet another great time.

The lost look of first timers, anxious to see the sights and determine the system of how to finally deal with old devils, find old friends, and satisfy their curiosity. Wives and girlfriends sometimes supporting their mates with a hand on the arm, gently squeezing assurances that the love that brought them together will get them through this too, and the vets often needing it.

The first day can be hard to do. Almost every conversation starting with the nod of the head to look down and read the large name tag of the person addressing you.

Then as the large hospitality room fills table by table, and the activity around the open bar begins to gather a crowd, you notice the tables ringing the room. They are rapidly filling with the mementos of dozens of vets from wars past, mainly WWII and Vietnam. Some of this material is pushing 60 years old, and is very fragile, but one, the vet who put it there doesn't care. It is a part of his past and needs displayed to his peers and number two, each and every vet who picks up these pieces of history treats them with the reverence they deserve.

Our master of ceremonies and President, Bob Babcock begins the opening ceremonies with a short welcome, and recap of planned activities, and holds the Hemmingway turkey memorial, and the evening begins and finishes in this spacious, well equipped hospitality room. Most of these guys have a bit of an edge to them. They are different from many other vets. They were

INFANTRY. They have walked the walk that so many imitators wish for. When two guys who walked point together 30 plus years ago meet for the first time since, it is an event. All others must step aside for a moment while these two look at each other, hug, and look some more. Then the words begin to flow and great burdens, carried for decades begin to get lighter for each of them. I have been married to my best friend for 35 years, but she knows that when these things happen she is witnessing a meeting of me and a member of the OTHER family in my life, and simply shares my joy from the side. It is just another reason to love her so much.

Friday begins with a smaller than normal business meeting of all members who can get out of bed in time. The previous evening's activity claims a few victims for early morning affairs, but the meeting is exciting, because of it's content about the memorial to 22nd Infantry being planned, the nominations of new officers, and the introductions of every member in attendance. The stating of your name and old outfit usually produces more than one reunion of old foxhole mates. The three tour busses line up about mid morning, and the lobby is filled with the majority of the group heading out to downtown St. Louis for a great time. The hospitality room is much quieter, and as the day goes on, the later arrivals repeat many of Friday's moments. Groups of individual companies and platoons of the three battalions are starting to form, and so many old memories are being relived. Yes, there are some of the bad times mentioned, but only for a short while, and only therapeutically as needed. Some of us have waited three decades to talk about some of this stuff, but can only do it with the men who were with us there. The evening Spanish Buffet goes off without a hitch, with no one going away hungry or lacking in entertainment. The Air Force jazz band did a first class job, and if you wanted to know why we Nam vets relish the attendance of the WWII vets you had only to look in the eyes of one of them during the Glenn Miller songs. The bond between these two groups is indescribable. You just have to be there.

Saturday brought all of the above hospitality room activities again after the second business meeting, only enlarged

by a bit more late arrivals. I heard the total count was 304, with about 165 of that total vets. That would make it the largest yet, and the evening's banquet was more than outstanding, as LTC Mike Steele, the Commander of the Triple Duece today was the feature speaker. He led a delegation of current day troops to this reunion from Ft. Drum NY. He presented a video about the history of the Regiment, and held all attention in the room with his accounts of the unit's activities in Bosnia, especially the raid on an Al Qaida airport hanger. Superb.

Also in attendance was a delegation of active duty soldiers of 1-22 from Ft. Hood. They were led by Maj. Bill Hansen.

The hospitality suite seemed to reach a high pitch of activity around 11PM after the banquet, but then it started to get very calm. Table after table of vets began to realize that it was almost over, and somehow tried to cram all the undone things and unsaid words into these last moments. It wasn't somber, but it was subdued as we started to say goodbye to that other family for another 18 months, knowing full well that some of them won't be in San Antonio, and regretting the ones who hadn't come after being in Cleveland and Dallas and Gettysburg.

Sunday morning's memorial service ended this reunion, and while it hurt to say goodbye to so many, it did open the door to the challenge of saving the money & time to put a trip to San Antonio together in 18 months. I relish that project, and while I start an existence on retirement income in a couple of months, there will always be enough to get to a reunion to see my OTHER family.

We missed::: you.

Dick Nash, A/2-22 Vietnam

### NOTE FROM BRUCE TO GARY RE: REUNION

Gary: I feel like a weight has been lifted off my shoulders. I was apprehensive about going even up to the day I left. I thought it would be a more somber

gathering. I was definitely wrong. I had a great time and can't remember laughing that much for 4 days straight. Of course I can't remember the day of the week, what I had for breakfast, my ex-wife's name or remember to zip up my fly.

We remembered those that didn't come home with us the way they should have and we are grateful to know each and every one. I hope our experience will pass to others that did not attend and our next showing will be even better. I for one am already looking forward to it.

Damn, it was so good to see everyone. Mike and Kathy Groves did an excellent job making us all feel welcome.

Keep in touch and little by little we will start on the next one.

Bruce Blakeslee, A/2-22 Vietnam

### HELLO FELLOW TRIPLE DEUCERS

Just want to say it was a very nice reunion. This was my second reunion and I enjoyed it greatly. Got with my old friends and met new ones Jerry and Terry Pierce. I told Jerry he got a perfect match for himself and Bob and Susan Price are great people. John Yoshikane from Hawaii and Horace were present, so Bravo is growing.

Norm I don't want to get to long but I have to tell the people this one. Barb and I left after the prayer service without having eaten breakfast and headed west. After driving about 250 miles we stopped a BK to get a bite. After a while Jim and Sharon Nelson, another beautiful couple stopped at the same BK. Now what's the odds of that happening!!!

Clark Lohmann, B/2-22 Vietnam

### GRANITE HELMETS

Like silent sentries, guarding the bones of our brave,  
Those granite helmets, mark where they are laid.

As I walk through their ranks, I vision the enemies they faced,  
From the first to the last, never disgraced.

From these granite helmets, I sense no lament,  
Only the cadence of soldiers content.

The season blankets, that cover these graves,  
Mute not their deeds, so gallantly made.

The helmets I see, are few to compare,  
To many that perished, with no helmets to share.

I may be fortunate, to still trod this sod,  
But I know my comrades are marching with God.

When my time comes, my uniform of yore,  
Will see it's last light, as they close the bronze door.

Knowing that I will be among the elite,  
Will give me an edge, when I too meet St. Pete.

So carve me a helmet, and save me a place,  
To sleep with my buddies, forever in grace.

The sound of taps, from the bugler above,  
Will be my final farewell, from the country I love.

By Joe Maddox, MSgt. USAF Retired

In Flanders Field

In Flanders fields, the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks still bravely singing, fly

Scarce heard amid the guns below.  
We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow.  
Loved, and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe;  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch, be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.

By John McCrae, 1915

### THE WALL

At first there was no place for us to go  
Until someone put up that "Black Granite Wall."

Now, every day and night, my Brothers  
and my Sisters wait  
To see the many people from places afar  
file in front of this "Wall."

Many stopping briefly and many for hours  
And some that come on a regular basis.

It was hard at first, Not that it's gotten any easier,  
But it seems that many of the attitudes towards that Vietnam War We were involved in  
Have changed.  
I can only pray that the ones on the other side  
Have learned something, And more "Walls" as this one, Needn't be built.

Several members of my unit,  
And many that I did not recognize,  
Have called me to The Wall  
By touching my name engraved upon it.

The tears aren't necessary, but are hard even for me to hold back.  
Don't feel guilty for not being with me, my Brothers.  
This was my destiny as it is yours, to be on that side of The Wall.

Touch The Wall, my Brothers,  
So that we can share in the memories that we had.

I have learned to put the bad memories aside  
And remember only the pleasant times that we had together.

Tell our other Brothers out there to come and visit me, Not to say: "Goodbye",  
But to say: "Hello",  
And be together again. . .even for a short time. . .  
And to ease that pain of loss that we all still share. Today, an irresistible and loving call summons me to The Wall.  
As I approach, I can see an elderly lady.  
. . . And as I get closer, I recognize her. . .

It's Momma!

As much as I have looked forward to this day,  
I have also dreaded it,  
Because I didn't know what reaction I would have.

Next to her, I suddenly see my wife,  
And immediately think how hard it must have been for her  
To come to this place.  
And my mind floods with the pleasant memories of thirty years past.

There's a young man in a military uniform  
Standing with his arm around her---My God!---He has to be my son!  
Look at him trying to be the man without a tear in his eye.  
I yearn to tell him how proud I am,  
Seeing him standing tall, straight and proud in his uniform.

Momma comes closer and touches The Wall.  
And I feel the soft and gentle touch I had not felt in so many years.

Dad has crossed to this side of The Wall,  
And through our touch, I try to convey to her that Dad is doing fine, And is no longer suffering or feeling pain.

I see my wife's courage building,  
As she sees Momma touch The Wall.  
And she approaches and lays her hand on my waiting hand. All the emotions, feelings and memories of three decades past Flash between our touch  
And I tell her that:  
It's alright . . . Carry on with your life. . .  
.And don't worry about me.  
I can see as I look into her eyes that she hears,  
And a big burden has been lifted from her,

On wings of understanding.  
I watch as they lay flowers and other memories of my past. My lucky charm that was taken from me and sent to her by my CO,

A tattered and worn teddy bear that I can barely remember having  
As I grew up. . .As a child,  
And several medals that I had earned and were presented to my wife.

One is the Combat Infantry Badge that I am very proud of,  
And I notice that my son is also wearing this medal.  
I had earned mine in the jungles of Vietnam,  
And he had probably earned his in the deserts of Iraq.

I can tell that they are preparing to leave,  
And I try to take a mental picture of them together,  
Because I don't know when I will see them again.  
I wouldn't blame them if they were not to return,  
And can only thank them that I was not forgotten.

My wife and Momma near The Wall for one final touch,  
And so many years of indecision fear and sorrow are let go.  
As they turn to leave,  
I feel my tears that had not flowed for so many years,  
Form as if dew drops on the other side of The Wall.

They slowly move away with only a glance over their shoulders.

My son suddenly stops and slowly returns.  
He stands straight and proud in front of me,  
And snaps a salute!  
Something draws him near The Wall  
And he puts his hand upon etched stone  
And touches my tears that had formed dew drops  
On the face of The Wall. . .  
And I can tell that he senses my presence,  
And the pride and love I have for him.  
He falls to his knees and the tears flow from his eyes,  
And I try my best to reassure him that:  
It's alright, And the tears do not make him less of a man. As he moves back wiping the tears from his eyes,  
He silently mouths:  
"God Bless you, Dad . . ."  
God Bless, YOU, Son . . .  
We WILL meet someday,  
But in the meanwhile, go on your way.  
There is no hurry. . .There is no hurry at all. As I see them walk off in the distance,  
I yell out to THEM  
And EVERYONE there today,

As loud as I can. . . And as others on this side of The Wall join in,  
I notice that the U.S. Flag,  
Old Glory, That so proudly flies in front of us every day,  
Is flapping and standing proudly straight out in the wind  
From our gathering numbers this day.

And we shout again. . .

And . . . again . . .

THANKS FOR REMEMBERING!

By Patrick Camunes

Visits to the Wall are understandably painful but often cathartic for family members of those who died in Vietnam. On June 6, 1968, Theresa O. Davis, from Quincy, Massachusetts, learned that her nineteen-year-old son, Richard, a Green Beret with the Fifth Special Forces, was killed near the Cambodian border. Mrs. Davis had lost her husband, also a serviceman, ten years earlier, and the death of her eldest son was overwhelming. The heartache never subsided but, after going to the Wall to find his name, Davis wrote a letter to Richard expressing how much she loved him and how deeply he was missed.

"Gold Star Mothers," alluded to by Davis in her letter, date back to World War I, when the mothers and wives of men killed in battle began wearing a black band with a gold star in memory of their loved ones.)

Dear Dick,

You were my first born. With your laughing eyes and mischievous grin, you stole my heart. I remember you as a little boy--the forts you built, the adventures you took, the "rescued" critters you brought home--and the friends that surrounded you. I'll never forget, when you were twelve years old, you stood so proudly beside me as they played taps for your Dad, and gave us his flag.

My darling son, you were the brave one--you tried so hard to be a father to your younger brothers and sisters. But you grew up so fast.

As soon as you were out of high school, you signed up for the Special Forces-and you were so happy when they accepted you. How proud you looked when you came home on leave wearing your Green Beret. Captured forever in my mind, is the image of your final hug, as you raced for the plane that would take you to Vietnam. You didn't say too much in your letters-but I knew you were in danger, because you always used to tell me "what you don't know, won't hurt you." I found out later-on June 6, 1968, you were on a team with some South Vietnamese soldiers, and your group was pinned down under fire. You were hit several times before you died. You were only 19 years old.

There are no words to describe how I felt. I was so empty-but I had to put up a front for your brothers and sisters. Little Kevin was only seven. He kept saying it wasn't fair-he'd already given up his Daddy. I pretended to be brave. But inside, the empty space just grew larger.

It's been a long time my son. I still miss you. I will always miss you. Sometimes I look at your friends that you went to school with, and I wonder what you would be like now; what my grandchildren would have been like. But you will never come back. You're gone forever. They gave you a Silver Star. Now they call me a Gold Star Mother. I spend a lot of time with the other Gold Star mothers. Every Monday night, a group of us go to the homeless shelter for Vietnam Vets. I know if it was you in that position, I would want someone to do the same for you. I guess that's what moms do. A lot of the guys have family problems. When they came home from Vietnam, they just couldn't talk about it; and they alienated themselves from their parents. We try to give them support-talk to them like a mother would talk to a son. One of them even came over and asked me if I could sew some buttons on for him. I did, but I also asked him, "Have you called your Mom, have you called your Dad?" They think their family doesn't want to hear from them. But when they do call, and go visit, the healing can begin. We also go to the Vietnam Memorial whenever we can. We can tell when one of the vets is having a hard time. Even now, so many of them feel

guilty because they came home, and our sons didn't. We give them a hug, and tell them it's not their fault; we're glad they're home. Dick, I'm sure wherever you are up there, you approve of what I'm doing. You were such a people person; always trying to help someone. When I go to the Wall, it's almost like you're there with me. Each time I run my fingers over your name on that cold, granite wall, I can feel the warmth of your laughter as if you are saying, "It's okay, Mom. I'm here." I know I will never hold you in my arms again. But I will forever hold you close to my heart because you will always be my firstborn-my shining star.

Love, Mom

All Four Of The Foregoing Were Sent By Dan Streit, D/2-22 Vietnam

### **It Was Supposed To Be A Walk In The Sun**

February 22, 1968: The Recon Platoon, 2/22, was roused by the sergeants: "Time to get up and get going!" Recon was taking out the sweep team and later the convoy from Dau Tieng to Tay Ninh. We had been doing this for a couple of weeks after coming off of Operation Yellowstone and getting refitted and getting new guys to fill our depleted ranks. I was looking forward to going to Tay Ninh. Things were quiet on The Road. It was going to be a routine patrol, a walk in the sun, and then on to Tay Ninh where we could get some ice from the ice house, then laager in, drink some cold beer and get a short-time girl. We all definitely needed some boom boom after Yellowstone.

So just before dawn we mounted our tracks. I was on the 70, the platoon sergeant's track. That was SSGT Ray Russler. Harold Neff was the delta, and then there was me, (Tom Petro) and Arthur Schneider, a new guy and going out on his first patrol. Art was nervous and tried to look determined and not scared, probably could not understand why we were being so jovial about going out on a combat patrol. I tried to reassure him that we had been out doing this for the last two weeks and had no trouble. Relax, take it easy, no sweat, G.I. But the

poor guy was looking pale.

Dawn was just coming on with the sun starting to rise over the horizon, when the Recon tracks with the sweep team engineers came to the Dau Tieng bridge, waved hello to the guys in that huge bunker, and rode until we came to the woodline. The engineers got their equipment together, and all of the recon guys, except the deltas and track commanders, dismounted and started the patrol. Schneider was told to go with me on the flank, and off we went. I told him to stay way clear of me and keep one eye on the ground and one eye on the sweep team. Don't go too far in front and don't fall behind. Along the way he must have asked me a zillion questions: Why are we stopping? Did the engineers find anything? What do we do now? Where are we going? What am I supposed to do? He was getting on my nerves, but I kept reassuring him, not to worry, we won't run into anything today, it's a good day for your first patrol, keep cool, man, its going to be all right.

And so on and on we went, the sun rising and getting hotter. Clear day, at least it won't rain on us. Through the rubber trees, past the first ville, me telling him not to talk to the dinks, keep moving, through some more rubber trees, past the second ville (both definitely VC controlled) and finally into the open, dry, rice paddies. Often the engineers would stop and check something and we would stop, light a smoke, take a drink, and Schneider asked his questions: Why are we stopping? Is something wrong? Should we take cover? I pointed to all the Vietnamese traffic on the road coming from the opposite direction and reassured him that if there was a ambush out there those dinks would not be on the road. Off we go again, past the culvert, which was blown up so often it was a full-time job for the engineers to fix it and a prime ambush target for us. Right after the culvert was repaired, ambush patrols would set up nearby and almost always bagged a dink who was trying to blow it up again.

The sun getting high in the sky and it was getting hotter, and Schneider was looking tired and worried. It must have been so puzzling to him, so bewildering

as to what in the hell was going on. And we trudged along, sometimes on the flank, and back up on The Road behind the engineers, moving along, moving along, one foot in front of the other. We were now out in the open, and as far as the eye could see to the horizon was rice paddies and time to relax a bit, my mind started to drift to the Tay Ninh laager and Lonnie Than. Lonnie Than, also known as 38's, was an above-average-looking short-time girl whose claim to fame was that she had huge natural breasts, extremely rare for a Vietnamese, real handfuls, never wore a bra, and did she ever like me. "She no can sleep at night, she boo ku luv you", her friends would tell me. Whenever we pulled into the laager and she saw me, she would squeal and come running to me. Oh boy, oh boy, cold beer and Lonnie Than, just awaiting round the bend.

And on and on we trudged coming up to the Tay Ninh high road, past the shrine to some rice paddy god, which was shot up and always put back together, and all the time Schneider and his questions. He must have wondered to himself how could these guys act so nonchalant, this is dangerous, and these guys behaving like they don't have a care in the world and how come nobody is telling me anything. Hooking a right on the high road, we continued through the stand of rubber trees until we saw the Alpha Co. patrol with the minesweepers from Tay Ninh.

All right! I told Schneider, "Come on, it's all over, time to mount up and go to Tay Ninh." A look of relief showed on his sweat-stained face. "See, I told you so, Schneider, a walk in the sun", I said merrily. The convoy from Dau Tieng with the rest of the Recon platoon could be seen from a distance, clouds of dust trailing behind, moving fast, perfect timing. Soon we would fall in with the convoy, head through Tay Ninh, send two tracks to get some ice, then just before Tay Ninh base camp, swing left into a stand of rubber trees and relax. Unloading and then reloading the convoy took hours and Recon would laager on the edge of the base camp. There a small crowd was always waiting for us. Short-time girls,

beggars, kids, the curious, girls selling cokes and beer. One time a group of local high school girls came to see us to practice speaking English and kept coming back to see us. Among these girls I met Nuygen Thi Vinh. But that's another story.

So we mounted up and got ready, and then all of a sudden Russler was talking in his CVC helmet and then Neff was turning OFF the road and following the lead track. What's up with this? This is not right. We continued to go about 50 meters in and parallel to the road and continued through the rubber trees. I was sitting on the edge of the track with my feet dangling over the side. We passed this old stone French mausoleum, a real work of art, surrounded by a wrought-iron fence and gate. I think the name Penaud, Pernod or Arnaud was carved in the lintel. It was built of marble and it was right near the edge of the road. My mind drifted: This must have been some place back in the 30's when the French ruled. They brought their culture and religion, and this French colonial was buried on the plantation he once owned, buried in a beautiful marble mausoleum that was now all shot up. We used to enjoy putting .50 caliber and M79 rounds into that thing, leaving big holes in the marble. And yet still it stood, defying time and wars.

We were going through the rubber trees now, getting so close between them that the sides of the track rubbed against them. I stopped my daydreaming to lift my legs as we passed close to a tree when BOOM! flash of red covered my eyes, I heard a loud ringing like two pieces of metal clanging together, and then a powerful force was tearing me apart, throwing my upwards. Then nothing. Blackness. When I came to, I was inside the track. All was smoke, I could not see, the smell was awful and I was in great pain. I thought to myself, "The track is on fire, I GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE," but I could hear nothing except this loud ringing in my ears. My ears hurt, every part of my body hurt. But somehow driven by that mad desire not to be burned alive inside a flaming track, I crawled up and out and over and hit the ground.

I curled up in a fetal position, and thinking why is it so quiet, where is everybody? My ears are ringing SO LOUD. What happened? Am I dying? I think I am dying. You never think it's going to be you. And now it's me. I say an act of contrition and I think of my mother and father, and I am as white as a ghost. Then here comes Doc Pirpich running with a couple of other guys. I recognize Ritchie Marrero; they are running into a minefield to get me out. I am alive, and after Doc Pirpich pats me down and looks me over I realize not only am I alive but not too badly banged up.

Doc tags me for the medevac, I am put on a stretcher and onto the chopper, where I see Schneider and Russler. Schneider does not look good at all and Russler's head is all bandaged. I look at Schneider and he looks at me with the most bewildered and pitiful look I ever saw. "Hey, take it easy, Schneider, be cool, don't worry, no sweat, G.I. This is gonna be a walk in the sun". I was telling him that all day. Making light of his fear. And Arthur Schneider on his FIRST patrol when Recon got blown up by a landmine. Months afterward the opinion was that he was one of the lucky ones. If you're gonna get hit and be sent home, get it on your FIRST day. Worse is to suffer for 11 months and then get hit just before you're ready to go home. Of course the WORST is to get killed. That happened to Emerson Cole. Killed just weeks before he was to go home.

I saw Arthur Schneider again in the hospital. He could not move. The medics told me he had a bad back injury and was probably going to Japan. After about a week I was getting up and moving about and went down the rows of beds to see him, but he was too doped up to understand anything I said to him. Then one day the mortars came down around the hospital. There were a lot of mortars and they were hitting close. Incoming! Incoming! Everybody was trying to get to the bunkers, hobbling, pushing, yelling...I looked over and there was Schneider lying helpless on his bed. The look on his face was bewildered, pained, wide-

eyed fear, a look that screamed, "I got blown up in a landmine explosion and now I'm gonna die from a mortar round coming through the roof and won't somebody help me"?

And the last I saw of Arthur Schneider was two medics throwing a mattress over him as they ran for the shelter.

After a month in the hospital the doctors released me as fit for duty. I returned to the Recon platoon. So did Russler. Schneider did not. Rumor had it he went to Japan and then the States. We never saw him again.

I will always remember that look on his face, in the dust-off chopper and then again the hospital bed, a look of fear, but a look that also said, "Hey, Petro, you asshole, you told me this was supposed to be a walk in the sun."

Sent by: Tom Petro, Recon 2-22  
Vietnam

### **The Ambush at RPG Alley 09/19/ 1968**

What I am about to tell you is actually the last story I should tell. However, after reading John Eberwine's story of March 13, 1968 I am compelled to tell the "last" story first because there may be others among you who have carried guilt or have unanswered questions about the events of September 19, 1968.

After the Battalion left Dau Tieng in August '68 the 1/5 took over convoy escort. The relationship that I had with LT Skrove and the Recon Platoon was not present with the 1/5. My attempts to warn them of what was going on the morning of August 21 fell on deaf ears. What happened over the next few days is another story. However, someone was listening to what I was saying because I was moved, within a week, to Cu Chi to be the convoy officer for the Division. When I arrived the G-4 told me that the Commanding General wanted me in the Division TOC and I was to have all the support I needed. I was under the impression that Command wanted all of

their convoys to run the way LT Skrove and LT May ran the Dau Tieng convoy.

I soon found out that politics play a big roll in what goes on the closer one gets to the top. I no longer could talk directly to the security on the ground. I had to talk to the MPs. Even though they might not be directly involved in security, they were responsible for running convoys. Politics.

For the first two weeks things were quiet. The CG would come in about 08:00 and ask how things were going. Procedures were set up and I was feeling good about being able to keep truck drivers out of ambushes. The worst place to be in an ambush is in the front seat of a truck. Those guys were defenseless and wouldn't have a chance of getting out.

On the morning of September 19<sup>th</sup> I began to get some sense that there would be trouble on the Dau Tieng convoy. The room I was in was filled with radio monitors, I was able to monitor radio traffic between the ground units and the MPs, but I was not allowed to talk directly to those units. I had to ask the MPs to ask questions for me. It was just a bad way to do things. I did find out that there were no "Little People" following the guys sweeping the road. There were "Little People" at the bridge, but they were staying at the bridge. I made the call, as I had done for six months. No convoy today. Anyone in the Recon Platoon could have made the call. There was going to be an ambush. When I was in Dau Tieng I would radio the Bde. XO and he would ask a few questions and say "OK." LT Skrove would post the road just like there was going to be a convoy and then bring the tracks back to the bridge firing their 50 MGs into the most likely spots for an ambush to take place. LT Skrove called this "Recon by Fire." The convoy was safe, the Recon Platoon was safe, and maybe Charlie suffered some losses and was frustrated by not being able to pull off an ambush.

I thought this day would be like one of those days. I was there to keep the convoys out of ambushes and this was my first "No Convoy" call. I went looking for the G-3 to tell him that I thought the Dau Tieng convoy should be cancelled. He wasn't there, but I had no sooner

returned to my area when he came in and asked about the convoy. I told him why I wanted to cancel the convoy and he said, "You're the guy who is suppose to know." Then he said he would cancel the convoy. He seemed pleased about how things were evolving. About ten minutes later the G-3 came back into my office and said, "The General said the convoy will run." He didn't look pleased now. I protested but he said there was nothing he could do and he had to go to get ready for the ambush.

I sat next to that radio for what seemed like days hoping I was wrong and that the last track would clear CP 26, the laterite pit beyond the Ben Cui Rubber, but it didn't happen that way. The convoy got to RPG Alley and the ambush was sprung. Eleven men died right there, Triple Deucers and truck drivers. I don't know how many others were wounded. And all because someone in a command position wanted a fight and was willing to use defenseless truck drivers and unsuspecting escorts. From a tactical point of view I can think of no worse way to engage an enemy with Mechanized Infantry, but the tracks were not part of the tactics. They were, along with the trucks, bait. The air cover was there waiting for the convoy to get hit. The plan was to chase Charlie down through the rubber and catch him coming out the back side. That part worked. I remember one of the pilots saying that it was a turkey shoot.

I did not know that the unit involved in this action was "A" Company 2/22 until mid year 2001. The constant change in call signs and the lack of direct contact with escorts caused me to think that the escorts were 1/5 Guys. I did not know that any Triple Deuce units were back in Dau Tieng.

If you were there and have felt in any way responsible for the losses that day I want you to put that burden down. It is time to rethink what went on. What I have told you won't bring anyone back, but you should understand that it wasn't your fault that your friends were killed together with those defenseless truck drivers. The fault lies squarely upon the shoulders of those in positions of authority at the time and who had a mind

set that dictated 'an enemy body count at any cost'.

Neither the General nor the G-3 ever came back into that office again. A few weeks later I was moved to the Division Support Command. Politics.

Jim May, Provisional Support Dau Tieng

### GOING HOME

Everyone was waiting for DEROS. I took a round about way home. After Soui Tre I was transferred to Co D 51<sup>st</sup> INF. Which was light infantry with a guard duty mission assigned to the MPs. Getting there took a day. I flew to Tan Son Nhut then got on a C130 for the rest of the day. This one was a shuttle that went all over Viet Nam. On one leg we had ARVNs complete with family and livestock. The pig was cute. Finally got to Cam Ranh Bay and reported to the 197<sup>th</sup> MP BDE. Too late to continue, they put me up for the night. One sergeant was very apologetic that he couldn't find clean sheets for me! I was more concerned with where their bunker was as well as locating a weapon I could use. I must have had 'the look'; they were nice, but kept their distance. I spent the next day as an unarmed passenger in a convoy going to Phan Rang. Cam Ranh Bay was interesting. They had paved roads and signs. In fact they had enough plywood in signs to build a small town. Some of our tents back at C 2/22 had ammo boxes for floors, I was annoyed to say the least at the amount of 'wasted' wood.

My new company had 2 platoons at Phan Rang with a third at Nha Trang. I wanted the 3<sup>rd</sup> because it was north of Cam Rang Bay, about 50 miles from Co headquarters. There is truth about a soldiers life

improving the farther he is from the flag pole. I spent the night there and had a nice run in with the 1<sup>st</sup> SGT. the next morning. He decided it would be better if I went to Nha Trang! The 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. issued me a weapon (M14), got us a jeep, and we spent the day in convoys to Nha Trang.

What a place. We kept our weapons locked in an arms room and wore civilian clothes on pass. Our mission was to guard the ships in the bay and the port area. We had enough to keep two men on each ship and run 3 guard shifts. Our port handled very important war material in the form of PX stocks & Class 6 supplies. Class 6 is beer and liquor. We did see one small shipment of ARVN ammo come through once. It wasn't long before I felt the 'edge' leaving me. I did what I could to retain it, but it slipped away. I mentioned this to the Platoon Sgt. and suggested I could do some door gunner missions on my day off. He went through the roof and had the Platoon Leader forbid me from any extra curricular activity. A SP4 & E5 joined us from 3/22. Both had been at Soui Tre and we had a good time swapping stories in front of the rest of the platoon members whom had earned their CIBs by default! By the time I got on the freedom bird I was pretty well housebroken again. We climbed North out of Cam Ranh all the way to Nha Trang before turning EAST. All was quiet on board until the coastline fell behind us. Then a spontaneous cheer went up! We got to Ft. Lewis after sundown. I was hard to believe I had left there the year before, in September 1966. After getting issued new greens, I was off to SeaTac Intl. We had been warned not to messing with protesters. I encountered

two shaved heads wearing robes. They started to approach me, but I guess the glare I gave them was too much. One grabbed the other and they went in another direction. I got on a night flight and was sitting alone, marveling at the snow covered Olympias and night lights on the ground. There was something that wasn't quite right though. Just as the stewardess asked for a drink order, it hit me and I looked at her and blurted out "NOTHING IS BURNING"! Not a good thing to say on an airliner at anytime. She recoiled. I started to explain that it was the first time I had looked out into the night and saw that nowhere was there anything burning, flares descending or tracers flying. I have never been so embarrassed in my life. I stammered an apology and sunk into the seat. I can't imagine how you guys who stepped from mud to the freedom bird handled it. I had 5 months to wind down and made a complete fool of myself.

Jim Hardin, C/2-22  
Vietnam

### RICH GOLDSMITH'S RESPONSE

John Eberwine,

Your request for info that could possibly help Billy Mann prompted me to dig through my old files. I do not recall the names of the KIA or WIA but I know of two significant fire fights C/2-22 was engaged in 1969.

One took place a few days before I joined the company. I took command of C/2-22 on 28 Aug 69 (found my old green DA 66). The previous company Commander had been relieved in action just as a major fight was concluding. The date was just a

few days before I took command. As I understand it the company had been heavily engaged and at the worst possible time a friendly artillery round landed in the middle of one of the platoons killing several and wounding more. When the artillery ultimately prevailed on the enemy unit, it withdrew and C/2-22 was ordered to sweep through the enemy positions. By now it was night and our guys were exhausted as well as demoralized by the short round. The company commander, thinking he was sparing his men, refused to advance and was relieved-- temporarily replaced by a Captain on the battalion staff who did carry out the orders.

I linked up with the company at the "Holiday Inn" at Tay Ninh where C-Company was sent to recover. They had been there a day or two when I arrived. After a few more days of recovery for the men and maintenance on the tracks and weapons we moved out to the bush again. On 7 Sep 69 (found an old award citation) we got another tiger by the tail-- a large NVA unit. I remember that the fight lasted about 9 hours and that we had every imaginable form of fire support (must have been the only real action going on that day). The action on the ground is a blur to me now but I'm sure we had some casualties. Sorry I can't produce any names. The only real facts I can add are the dates cited above.

I just noticed you wanted fire fights in 1970. Sorry. These are 1969. Maybe you'll find some other use for this info in your archives.

Rich Goldsmith, C/2-22 Vietnam

**THE LAST DAY IN THE FIELD FOR AN ALPHA "BOAT" ORIGINAL**

In my year tour in Vietnam, there was around 10 times I should have been among the dead. This is the last one. Although, I never wrote the details in the diary I kept, I still remember it as it was yesterday's nightmare. The boat people's tour started from Sept. 22, 1966 departure from the Port of Tacoma on the USNS GENERAL NELSON M. WALKER (Troop ship carrying the 3rd

BDE, 4TH INFANTRY DIV.) The Pacific crossing took about 20 days with a resupply stop in Okinawa, Japan. We disembarked from the ship in Vung Tau on Oct 12, 1966 (Columbus Day). Thus unlike replacements, our 20 days on the boat counted as part of our tour. (Except for Mike Rupolo and Dwight Brennenman who because of emergency leave had their year's tour end Nov 17, 1967) During my year in Vietnam, I was rarely in base camp or any other place, except for 12 days in Vung Tau after being a WIA in March 1967 and 2 lovely 5 day tours in Hong Kong and Manila. (R&R) By the end of Aug, 1967, I was so sick of being in the field. All my letters home found me complaining and whining about still being in the field. From Sept 1 to Sept 6, 1967, we saw heavy action by Nui Ba Den, with the worst on Sept. 4 (BLACK VIRGIN MASSACRE) with 7 KIA and many wia. Finally we were in base camp on Sep 7 and Alpha left for the field again on the 8th. But all the remaining Alpha Originals were left behind in the base camp. Of course I was assigned to KP duty for the next couple of days and other guys who had earlier DEROS DATES than mine, which was Sept. 21st, were starting to process for stateside. I got to finally spend some quality time with the few remaining guys in the Ty One On at night. (Alpha's EM club) We remaining Alpha Originals took up a collection and had about \$80 for beer and soda for the field troops. Since Tyrus O'Rourke and myself were the final 2 guys to leave on the 21st., We volunteered to take a 3/4 ton pickup loaded with beer and soda and drop it off with the troops just south of PREK LOC, which was northwest of Nui Ba Den about 2-5000 meters (I think). On the morning of the 19th, Tyrus and I joined a morning convoy from Dau Tieng to Tay Ninh and then on our own, headed north to Prek Loc. The road was secure in the morning all the way to Prek Loc. We got to where the troops were just south of Prek Loc about noontime and distributed the beer and soda. We said our goodbyes to the replacements we had become friends with and started heading back south to Tay Ninh. We were about 1000 meters North of the Black Virgin when the truck died. Tyrus said it was carburetor problems from the dusty morning convoy. We siphoned some gas from the gas tank and used it to clean the

carburetor and got the truck going again. We laughed and swigged some beer to get rid of the gasoline taste. While working on the carburetor, I commented to Tyrus about the potential headlines in my hometown newspaper. "TWO SOLDIERS KILLED IN VC AMBUSH AFTER BEER DELIVERY WITH 2 DAYS LEFT IN TOUR DUTY" Next we saw 3 ARVNS with rifles and gave them a ride. Tyrus whispered to me. They think we are being nice guys giving them a ride but its great having 3 more rifles if we do get ambushed. We go about a half mile and the truck dies again. We are right next to the Black Virgin, where we got hit on Sept 4th and we have no radio, the 3 ARVNS immediately get out of the truck and start walking south. In all the time on the road no other vehicle or people are seen and it starts getting spooky. Now it is around 430pm and we both know that the VC own this road in 2 hours. We start frantically siphoning more gas and try and get the truck started and it takes about a half hour. (THE LONGEST 30 MINUTES IN MY LIFE) We are no longer laughing and scared sh--less. After all the crap we have been through for a year, we want to go home to the USA. We get to Tay Ninh around 6 Pm and wind up spending the night there. (We never passed the 3 ARVN soldiers who took off walking.) The next morning we have an uneventful convoy trip to Dau Tieng. All the other Alpha Originals were gone and no one knew we were missing. The next day Sept. 21st. Tyrus and I board a plane and land in Oakland, Calif and are discharged from active duty. We felt REBORN! We go to Travis AFB and get a military hop to an air base outside Fort Bragg, NC. Then a commercial flight to LaGuardia in NYC, next a cab ride to the Long Island RR Jamacia Station. Tyrus boards a train to Riverhead and I to Port Jefferson. Tyrus and I were two of 34 guys drafted together on Pearl Harbor Day, 1965. I never saw Tyrus again and found out in April 2001, that he died around 1995. Tyrus was a battle fatigue victim in Vietnam and was institutionalized several times for alcohol abuse. While he is not an official KIA, like many of our brothers, he could not overcome the trauma he experienced in Vietnam.

Gary Hartt, A/2-22 Vietnam

### A LETTER TO US

Dear Vietnam Veteran,  
I know I should have written much sooner.

I can't say why I did not. Out of fear of admitting to myself, you were there, fighting a war. Or maybe ashamed. Ashamed that I never accepted the things you felt you had to do.

Whatever it is, I know it must hurt.

Believe me when I say it hurts me more. I have the burden of your hurt plus that of my own. The pain of not being able to show my true feeling towards you.

I am not writing this for the months you served in Vietnam, but for the many years, you were left alone with only your brother Veterans. You served proudly and it went unmentioned.

For along time, I've wanted to express the words. The words an honorable Veteran needs to hear.

For a long time, I've wanted to hold you during your times of pain.

God knows I wanted to.

And only He knows why I never found the courage. I do not remember what I used to say; maybe I do not want to remember.

All I know is I hope that it is not too late to give you those things now.

For years you tried to be part of my world. Doing everything to please me, just to be noticed and given a little time and understanding. I look back and see the demands I placed on your shoulders when you were young. "Fight your weakness, and always show strength to others around you".

Who was I to make such a demand?

I sit here with tears in my heart; finally admitting to myself the one weakness you must have seen in me and never questioned.

My inability to say the words that I know would have meant so much to you.

"Welcome Home."

You served your country honorably. Please hear these words now, from my heart. Please give me a chance to be part of your world now. The world I should have been part of long ago.  
Love,  
America

Author unknown. Sent to us by: Ed Grystar, C/2-22 Vietnam

Norm's comment: I had a rough time retyping this so that it could be transposed to the newsletter. All of you who served in Vietnam know why.

### THE GROVES SAGA CONTINUED

3 December 1968 Back from R&R.

11 December 1968: Back in the field again. We're pulling security for bulldozers, which are cutting jungle around Dau Tieng. Boy, they can sure clear jungle as each one can cut twelve square acres an hour. When you have twelve dozers working, that's clearing a lot of jungle. Of course, with all this cutting, we are uncovering plenty of old base camps. In fact, we just found one with a thousand lbs. of rice and other supplies. So the man has been around here. *(One of the dozers 'Rome Plow' actually fell through the top of a bunker. It was kind of funny seeing the guy standing on top of the dozer looking up at us and hollering for us to get him out. It was a big bunker complex.)*

18 December 1968: Well, I have been kind of busy yesterday and today, we had some contact with VC. Yesterday we swept a road for mines, then returned back the way we came to set road outposts for the convoys. Just as we got into position, we got a call to react as the convoy was ambushed. Now this was during the morning about 11 a.m. We went charging down the roads in our tracks and pulled off to the side facing the wood line in both directions to our left and right. One of our sister companies, Bravo, was escorting the convoy so they were in

contact and not us. As it ended up, they had 35 dead VC and NVA lying around the road where they were and at least twenty more in the woods we were facing. Bravo took three wounded and no killed so we had a field day. The strangest thing Cath is that the gooks assaulted the convoy, running out in the open towards a company of tracks and a couple of tanks. Naturally they got kicked. I'll never be able to figure that one out.

Well, today we were running a convoy. Not past the same place though. I was the very first in line or point, you would say. We were running down the road and I was just about to enter the gate of the fire support base when I heard some AK-47 fire. Immediately I turned the track off the road and pointed us towards the sound of the firing. We weren't really sure what was going on, as the firing sounded distant. We watched the convoys pass us up and the other two tracks joined up with us. We were still waiting for our last track and the last truck in the convoy. When the truck came by, they needed a medic. One of their people had been wounded by AK fire in the stomach. We patched him up and waited a little longer for our track, which never did show up. Very weakly over the radio, we heard them calling and saying that they had been hit by an RPG and had three wounded. So, there I was heading down the road for the other track. I'm driving 3-1 track now, but the track, 3-3, hit by the RPG, is the one I used to drive till I hit the mine in October. When we got there, everyone was all right except for three wounded and they weren't hurt seriously, thank God. We started firing into the wood line to see if we could flush something out, no soap. Whoever had fired the RPG had left, so that was that. I'm under the sneaking suspicion that "Charlie" is going to be trying something. He is monitoring Dau Tieng where we are staying and he has ambushed two convoys in as many days. What's he up too? I don't know.

24 December 1968: Here it is Christmas Eve and tomorrow is Christmas, so, Merry Christmas. We are still here at Dau Tieng, sweeping roads. Today we found a mine in the road and blew it in

place. Other than that, nothing exciting happened. Now that the cease-fire is in effect I do believe Charlie is going to try and blow our minds or other parts of our body. UGH!

31 December 1968: I guess by now you know that we have been in some light contact, and now it's been fairly calm but I'm pretty uneasy. There are two big things to tell you. One is I quit driving. I've had enough and I'm getting a little too nervous to be hacking that job. Actually I'm just too damn nervous to be here in the field on line but I'll grin and bear it. Second, I'll go before the board in January for Sgt. E-5. That will mean a little more pay and responsibility. The board isn't hard. The questions are about things I do everyday and the most important thing is the commander's evaluation, that I know is good. Other than all this, everything is still the same unexpected grind. Situations always arise with the unexpected. One example is that today while I was driving, we were going through the heavy under brush, when this huge ditch suddenly appeared and I met it. Well a ditch is really not that bad but when the thing is about eight feet deep and just wide enough to permit the nose of the track to fall down so that I'm sitting at least at an eighty degree angle, well that's pretty scary. I even thought that for a moment I was going to turn end over end. After that, I decided to quit driving because I get a little shook up looking for the unexpected, getting too short for this shit.

Mike Groves, A/2-22 Vietnam

**NEW FINDS**

Dwight L. Brenneman

Robert A. Cummings

Richard D. Eastman (Doc)

Patrick L. Kanan

Henry J. Kayes

Richard B. Kramer

John A. Lash

Ival Lawhorn, Jr.

Jackie Lewis

Clark L. Lohman

Frank Lomento

Dale Merritt

Teddy Manley

Tom Petro

Brooks E. Remencus

Felix Rivera, Jr.

Daniel Ryan

Kenneth Schmidt

Ken Schulte

Donald S. Stoffel

Coy Thomas

Gary W. Whitney

William W. Zachary

**For The Ladies**

**FORTITUDE AT HOME**

So many experiences, so many stories shared by you 2/22 vets make fascinating reading in this great newsletter. Perhaps some incidents of what was going on stateside with the wives may be of interest as well. Ladies, from WW II to present active duty, can we hear more of these stories from you? Where were you? What occurred while you were holding the fort at home?

My husband, Ralph Julian, joined the 4th Infantry Division at Ft. Lewis, Washington. He served in the 2/22 from December 1965 to June 1966 and from January 20, 1967 to September 5, 1967. During early 1966 the 4<sup>th</sup>. Division began preparations for deployment to Viet Nam and many wives and families remained in the Ft. Lewis/ Tacoma area at that time. Watching and waving, we stood a long

time at the dock as the "boat people" pulled away in their ship for the long Pacific Ocean "cruise". We wives then turned to our tasks, determined to stay in touch with each other and give support in trying to raise our families in as normal a way as possible. Most wives were far away from their own families so we became a family too, caring and coping together. This also hopefully would lessen the worries of our husbands, knowing we were there for each other.

Sometimes it was very difficult to find and help the women. They had been told by their husbands to keep to themselves: perhaps an attempt to protect them. This was often toughest on the foreign-born wives. One Sunday evening I received a phone call regarding a wife who was being stalked. She was frantic. A man had been calling numerous times giving her license number, where she lived and spelling out the things he was going to do to her. She lived beyond the city limits, so I called the sheriff only to be told nothing could be done unless there were a specific incident, but did agree to patrol her street more often. In talking to her, she did say a neighbor across the street had told her husband she could call on him, but now she thought it was to late to bother him and didn't know his name or number. I persuaded her to wake her eleven-year old son to go across with a flashlight to write down the name on the mailbox while she waited at her door. She made the call! The neighbors of course rallied around; she met them and learned she had a policeman right next door. It was nearly midnight when she called me with this news, and we all got some sleep. She changed her phone number.

We were very aware that a notifying officer could appear at the door of any one of us at any time with word of our husband missing or killed in action. A uniformed officer would arrive in a military sedan and approach the house as a very apprehensive wife perhaps watched and braced herself to answer the door. One wife whose husband was in the Air Force fainted when she saw the blue gray uniform as she opened the door. The happy outcome of this story is that it was "only" the postman. Other times there was no mistake. We went to

the home, placed phone calls, grocery shopped, made mortuary visitations and attended the funerals.

There were some unfortunate instances of people coming in Red Cross uniforms (apparently obtained without authorization) telling the wife her husband was missing or dead and the monthly checks would stop. It required Ft. Lewis intervention to assure her none of this was true. Newspaper attention to the situation seemed to have an effect on reducing, maybe stopping, the horrifying harassment.

Madigan Army Hospital at Ft. Lewis received a number of wounded. We visited the men of the 2/22 in addition to providing cookies for all hospital patients on a rotating basis with other wives' groups in the area. When one of our wives received word her husband was so severely wounded his survival was in question, we waited with her. The next word indicated he would probably live. Finally, she was notified he was stabilized enough to be moved as far as Hawaii. At last, he was on his way to Madigan Hospital. His terrified wife asked us to go with her as she didn't know what to expect she would find after the agonizing weeks of uncertainty over his condition. We walked the long hospital corridor; at the doorway seeing him across the room, propped up in bed surrounded by all sorts of medical equipment, she cried out, "Oh!! You're so WHITE!!". They both burst out laughing. From that moment she started filling his room with crazy cards, balloons, flowers, whatever. Oh, yes. Now the rest of the story. They are a black couple.

During this time, General Westmoreland came back to report to Congress. He said, "What is needed is Perseverance on the battlefield and Patience and Fortitude at home". We felt this meant us. We did our best. One day at a time.

Jean Julian

Editors Comment: OK Ladies, after reading Jean's article I am sure you get the message. Send me something, please. The For The Ladies Section should not just be for jokes.

### What's a Military Family Worth?

I think the vast differences in compensation between the victims of the September 11<sup>th</sup> casualty, and those who die serving the country in uniform, are profound. No one is really talking about it either because you just don't criticize anything having to do with September 11<sup>th</sup>. Well, I just can't let the numbers pass by because it says something really disturbing about the entitlement mentality of this country.

If you lost a family member in the September 11<sup>th</sup> attack, you're going to get an average of \$1,185,000. The range is a minimum guarantee of \$250,000 all the way up to \$4.7 million. If you are a surviving family member of an American soldier killed in action, the first check you get is a \$6,000 direct death benefit, half of which is taxable. Next, you get \$1,750 for burial costs. If you are a surviving spouse, you get \$833 a month until you remarry. And there's a payment of \$211 a month for each child under 18. When the child hits 18, those payments come to a screeching halt.

Keep in mind that some of the people that are getting an average of \$1.185 million are complaining that it's not enough. We also learned over the weekend that some of the victims from the Oklahoma City bombing have started an organization asking for the same deal that the September 11<sup>th</sup> families are getting. In addition to that, some of the families of those bombed in the embassies are now asking for compensation as well. You see where this is going, don't you?

Folks, this is part an parcel of over fifty years of entitlement politics in this country. It's just really sad.

Rush Limbaugh, 03/11/02

### 1-22 Deploys to Cuba

At 0400 April 6, 2002, Task Force Regulars mustered in the Raider Brigade Fieldhouse at Ft. Hood to prepare for movement by air to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to assume the duty of perimeter security for the Taliban and Al Qaeda

prison compound. The 200 person strong task force, led by 1-22 S-3 MAJ Brian Reed, consisted of men of Company B, 1-22 Infantry led by CPT Jason Wesbrock plus elements of Company C, the Recon platoon, and support forces. This was the first tactical deployment of 1-22 since their successful mission in Haiti in September 1994 through January 1995. It is also a return to the place where our Regiment earned a battle streamer in the Spanish-American War in July 1898.

Less than three weeks after returning from a month long deployment to the National Training Center where they trained in mechanized war fighting with the latest technology and the most lethal weapons and tactical systems in the world today, the troops of 1-22 Infantry responded to their new mission and quickly switched gears to riot training, crowd control, and working without their Bradley fighting vehicles. Along with their perimeter security mission, they will be responsible to help move the prison compound to an expanded facility that will accommodate more prisoners being brought in from Afghanistan.

Family members, just as many of us have experienced in past wars and deployments, stayed with the troops to bid them farewell and Godspeed until they disappeared behind the curtains and began the manifest process prior to departing for the airfield.

MG Raymond Odierno, CG of the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, told the families and troops that this is a very important role these troops are taking on in the war against terrorism. Awb Norris, CO/2-22 VN, Bill Bukovec, B/2-22 VN and Bob Babcock, B/2-22 VN represented our veterans, along with a USO coffee and doughnut table and representatives from AUSA. We were there to insure the soldiers understood that we vets will be here to support them in any way that we need to, just as we did for 2-22 Infantry in their recent deployment to Bosnia. As information comes in on how we can support this latest deployment, I will let you know.

Bob Babcock, B/2-22 VN, Pres. 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society

**2-22 Returns Home**

On 03/22/02 the vast majority of activity duty men of the 2-22 returned home to Ft. Drum from Bosnia. A small hand Full of men remained in Bosnia for approximately an additional week. They too have returned home.

During its 6 month assignment the 2-22 was part of the UN Peace Keeping Force In Bosnia. They played a key role in apprehending a few Terrorist Cells residing in Bosnia.

Once again they lived up to the motto, "Deeds Not Words".

WELCOME HOME TRIPLE DEUCE.

**Passed Away Recently**

**Larry J. Dye** HHC/2-22 passed away on 03-23-02. Larry was an Original in Vietnam and served in the Mortar Platoon. He was only 57 years young. Teddy Manley let us know of Larry's passing.

**James C. Fennel**, B/D/ 2-22-25 Vietnam, passed away on 06-18-01. His wife Betty Fennel notified us of her husband's passing..

**Pat Konja**, A/HHC/2-22 Vietnam, passed away on 01-21-02 near Gary Indiana. Lanky and blond with glasses, FNG Pat was wounded on 12-18-69 in the Boi Loi Woods while on a dismounted platoon sweep. Pat was a motor fuel wholesaler, delivering gasoline and diesel to stations in his own trucks. He is survived by his grown daughter and ex-wife Julie, who reported Pat's death to Brad Hull. She was still on good terms with him.

Despite my urging Pat never made it to a reunion. Guys, after I got off the phone with Julie I cried over the loss of an old buddy. The adage "It's never too late" doesn't apply to attending one of our reunions.

Brad Hull, A/2-22 Vietnam

**Gerald 'Pixie' Picard**, A/2-22 Vietnam, passed away at home on 11-04-84. He

resided in Kihei, HI. Gerald came to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. from 3-22 in December '66. Information on Gerald's passing is recent and was sent to us by Brad Hull and Roger Cote. We received it after the KIA / Passed Away Section for this newsletter went to press. So his name is not on the listing but will be in the future.

**2-22'S KIAs IN VIETNAM PUBLICATION POLICY**

Starting this year the listing of the Triple Deuce's KIAs in Vietnam will be with the newsletter on an annual basis only. Beginning this year and for subsequent years the KIA Listing will accompany the June Newsletter as a stand alone item.

On a quarterly basis the newsletter will continue to contain the names of Triple Deucers who have passed away recently or those who passed away at home and for whom we recently received information on.

Board of Directors, Vietnam Triple Deuce, Inc

Before I close out, here is some food for thought: Relax. Just take one day at a time. However, if several days attack you at once, run like hell.

That's all for now folks. Expect the next edition in early September.

Love, Linda