

# 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

Here we are coming up on the one year anniversary of September 11, 2001, let's all remember in our own way.

It is with regret that I have to inform all of you that we voted for a dues increase to the Vietnam Triple Deuce, Inc. This was done to insure that we could cover the costs of mailing out the newsletter. The dues are increased to \$15 and this will be for a calendar year of January through December. All presently pre paid dues are considered paid in full for as many years as the member has pre paid.

We are looking for anyone interested in setting up a Vietnam Triple Deuce website. If you have experience and want to do this, please contact me or any of the Directors of the organization.

Send us your stories! Keep the organization alive by sending in your dues and contact your buddies who may not have joined. If you have copies of old orders, documents etc which could help our locators in finding other Triple Deucers, please contact them with that information.

Remember, San Antonio, 2003 will be the next reunion of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society. Save up, and plan on attending. Details as they become available.

Mike Groves, President, A/2-22 Vietnam  
jaspaz@att.net

## The First Lady's Corner

### The Good Old Days

A neighbor asked me to talk to her daughter about Army life (for wives).

"John"(the boyfriend) was in Basic and "Mary" was itching to join him. I thought back to some of the fun parts...I learned many useful lessons from the Army upon Mike's return from VN. There was the time about the crosswalk ( I had never heard of jay-walking!); parking on base( that Reserved sign was really, really small and who knew that the base C. O. could get so-o-o upset at finding my car in his spot?); the duffel bag incident (not a good idea to drag the laundry in a bag with Mike's name and serial number in plain view!); and the speeding incident (are all M.P.'s without a sense of humor?).

After "Mary" viewed base housing at nearby Ft. Wood and the job market in the surrounding towns, the wedding is on hold and the kids are rethinking their future plans. I'm still fondly remembering my six months as an Army wife in The Good Old Days, and wondering how Mike survived all my mistakes?

Cathy Groves

## Business Matters

22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society Vietnam Memorial: I have some good news to report. The funds generated for this project presently stand at approximately \$5,700.00. This is a far cry from the \$1,600.00 I told you about in the June Newsletter. Thanks to each of you who have given.

Now to those of you who have not contributed yet, we are about \$3,000.00 short of the amount required for this project. Please find it in your hearts to send in your checks. Let's try to have the fund raising task associated with this project completed by the time the

December Edition of the newsletter is sent out.

Once again make your check out to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society and indicate that it is for the Vietnam Memorial Project. Mail your contribution to:

*Nathan Palani... P.O. Box 53070... Reno, NV 89513-0370.*

I am counting on you to bring the fund raising to a close in the next 90 days. I know that you can do it. Please don't prove me to be mistaken.

Vietnam Triple Deuce Dues: Please keep in mind that dues for 2003 are due by Mar. 31, 2003. Your payment should be made out to: Vietnam Triple Deuce, Inc. and sent to *Jim May*,

Auditor Needed: Jim May is asking for a volunteer to audit the financial records of our Organization. He is requesting that someone with a CPA background perform the task.

Magnet, C/2-22 Vietnam

### Clark On AP

Just want to say it was a very nice reunion. Jerry Pierce and I were discussing an Ambush Patrol we were on shortly after Burt. At the time I was still a real new guy but I was in time for Burt and spent the night of the big battle on LP Listen Post.

Back to the ambush patrol soon after Burt. The AP goes out like a normal one, nine people and about 1000 meters out. When we got to our position we set up in what was a bomb crater or artillery hole. It was a location that had a lot of broken stuff you had to lay in. Also if you moved in the hole you made a lot on noise because of the broken stuff. I had the 60 and a rifleman name Leon Gates was with me. To my left was Jerry Pierce and Billy Click, can't remember all the other names but anyway I had just turned on my back and put Leon on guard when here come the gooks. I could not move because of the noise I would have made. Here I am laying on my back and looking right up in

their faces. I think eight of them went by. They almost stepped on me, then Jerry and then Billy-talk about a heart beating. They went to check our perimeter and came back. That was too bad for them.

I think I had the 60 hitting our own APC's. Click had a bullet go right through his steel pot which was on the ground between he and Pierce. You could hear the wounded enemy crying and the able bodied dragging off there people. No one wanted to check out how much damage we had done and no one did. This was another time we good fortune and faith on our side.

Clark Lohmann, B/2-22 Vietnam

### Fighting Mechanics Pride Of A/2-22

3D BDE - "They may be mechanics, but they fight like infantrymen," said Cpt. Harvey R. Holter, commander of Company A, 2d Battalion (Mechanized), 22d Infantry.

Since the first of the year, the company's mechanics have fought along side of their line counterparts in every major engagement and countless small actions which have earned them the nickname of Keystone Cops.

Included among the battles in which they have participated are the Battle of Soui Cut on New year's Day, the Battle of Tay Ninh City, the large-scale action on Good Friday, and several encounters in the vicinity of Trang bang. In addition, they pull the position and duties of a line track in night defensive perimeters.

Virtually every man in the platoon led by Staff Sergeant Donald L. Maiberger of Lawton, Okla., has been decorated at least once for valor, while three have received Purple Hearts.

In addition to fighting, the maintenance platoon has maintained the enviable record of 65 consecutive days without an armored personnel carrier of the company's being out of action longer than overnight for mechanical repairs.

The men of the platoon rarely squawk about their duties, which often require them to stay up to the small hours of the night, only to arise early in the morning to accompany the company on its daily operations.

The above was taken from the August 19, 1968 Edition of the Tropic Lightning News. It was sent by: Don Maiberger, A/2-22 Vietnam.

*Norm's comment: Don made a carrier of the Army and retired as a Whisky-3.*

### GI Insurance

Airman Jones was assigned to the induction center, where he advised new recruits about their government benefits, especially their GI insurance.

It wasn't long before Captain Smith noticed that Airman Jones was having a staggeringly high success-rate, selling insurance to nearly 100% of the recruits he advised.

Rather than asking him about this, the Captain stood at the back of the room and listened to Jones' sales pitch.

Jones explained the basics of GI Insurance to the new recruits, and then said, "If you are killed in a battle and have GI Insurance, the government has to pay \$200,000 to your beneficiaries. But, if you don't have GI insurance and get killed in a battle, the government only has to pay a maximum of \$6000."

"Now," he concluded, "which group do YOU think they are going to send into battle first?"

Contributor unknown. Norm messed up again!!!

**Joe Dietz's, C/2-22, Reunion Feelings May 2002**

What a great time. This reunion was really special for me. One of my old squad members Ed Fagan and his wife, Linda, were there. We had been exchanging e-mails for a couple of months and Ed promised he would be there. I am not able to really put into words the feeling that came over me when I first saw him walk into the party

room. It was the same feeling I had the first time Jim Frost (the lemonade kid) and I met. You wonder about guys over the years, and hope they came home OK, and then see that they did, it's just great.

The other person that showed up for his 1st reunion was my old platoon leader, Rich Peduto. Rich and his wife had been down for a few days last year so we had seen each other before the reunion. Rich was waffling though about coming until the last minute. I was very happy when he wrote that he was going to be there. It was to bad that his wife, Sandi, could not get away, she is a great gal. We all pretty much hung out together for the weekend and talked constantly. Both said they would be in San Antonio, I hope so.

Norm: What a surprise to finally get home from the reunion and see that Lynn Dalpez had made contact with the unit. We have been going back and forth ever since. Since Lynn, Jim Depree has made himself known. We also have been back and forth a couple of times. Maybe two more for Texas in 03. Lets hope so.

Joe Dietz C/2-22 Vietnam

### A Letter From Edith

*Norm and I received the following letter from Mrs. Edith Miller shortly after the St. Louis Reunion. Edith is the Mother of Jack Miller C-2/22 KIA at the Battle of Fire Support Burt.*

It was nice to see you all at St. Louis. It was a nice reunion. We really had a great time there. Everyone was so nice to us. You all are a nice friendly bunch of people. I'm so glad we got to be there too. It really helps us a lot to be there with you all. You guys are like our son's now that Jack is gone, but he is never forgotten. We still miss him so much.

Being there with all the guy's talking to Jeff has helped him the most, he really loved Jack as Jack did him too. Our Daughter, Carolyn, did enjoy it also. This was her first time. She spent 28 years in the Army. Jack's dad still has a very hard time over his death, as he was our first-born child.

We belong to our VVA group here in Richmond, IN. The guy's here treat us just great too. Jack was the only boy from our little town that was killed. We had 41 or 42 from the County (Wayne) that have their names on the monument there.

If you want to write up a little note about what I've said, please do so. Hope to see you all in Texas next time.

Love, Edith Miller

### New Finds

Dennis D. Alexander, A/2-22  
Looking for: Brickley, Bradley, Zurek, all cooks.

Walt Bispo, C/2-22

Thomas E. Buck, HHC/2-22

Clarence M. Butler, A/2-22

Bruce Campbell, B/2-22

Lynn R. Carter, A/2-22  
Looking for: Frank Miramontes

William Claudio, V/2-22

Roger H. Cote, A/2-22  
Looking for: Glen Porche

Gary Lee Davis, HHC/2-22

John R. Dodd, A/2-22

Ed Fagan, C/2-22  
Looking for: Jimmy Kelley, A/2-22

Bill Flynn, A/2-22

Thomas E. Gamrat, B/2-22

Cleon Gibbs, Sr., C/2-22  
Is looking for information concerning how he can get his personal belongings which never reached home after he was wounded.

Richard C. Holte, HQ & A/2-22

Kenneth J. Leicht, A/2-22

Jack Leshner, B/2-22

Charles Loveless, C/2-22

Gerald Marceaux, Jr., D/2-22

John Maricevic, HHC/2-22  
Looking for: Wayne Schere

David L. Matthews, A/2-22

Michael S. Mayes, C & HHC/2-22

Lloyd McGrath, C/2-22

David J. Moyer, HHC/2-22

Michael P. Morris, A/2-22

Bill Noyes, B/2-22  
Looking for: Keith Miller, Mike Chapman, Arthur Harp, Joe Kempt, Audrey Crumb, Joe Larry, Brad Baker, Carlis Bryant, Hector Santiago, Fred Garza, and Tim Hollins.

Michael S. Ochoa, A & HHC/2-22

William Olive, A/2-22

Jim Pasquale, C/2-22  
Looking for: Anybody & Everybody.

Michael J. Ropolo, A/2-22

William Sable, B/2-22

Mario E. Salazar, HHC

Jack Shishido, C/2-22  
Rickey Skains, A/2-22

William Stiefvater, HHC/2-22  
Looking for: Ruben Martin and Jackie Clement.

Gary N. Waddington, A/2-22

Patrick Walsh, A/2-22

William E. Wegener, A/2-22

Noble Wilcox, A/2-22  
Looking for: anyone from the Rotu 8 Track. Tom Vandever, Howard Houston and SSG Castoe.

Ivan B. Wittlow, A/2-22

### Comments, Questions, Etc From Our Members

Walt Bispo, C/2-22 asked: Is the 4<sup>th</sup> Div. Still active and where is it headquartered? *The 4<sup>th</sup>. Is active and its home is Ft. Hood, TX.*

William Claudio, A/2-22 wrote: I would like to contact the sister of Sgt. Kama, KIA. She lives in Hawaii. I never forgot Nam. We all did a great, outstanding job. We can not give up, ever! Mat the forces be with all of us. We should try and preserve our peace always and not become victims once again. We must maintain progress because war is hell and we need no more seeds of death and hate for our loved ones. We live under critical times that could mean the end of all human existence.

Ed Fagen, C/2-22 wrote: The reunion in St Louis was a wonderful experience. Its good to be back home with Joe Dietz, Rich Peduto, Jim Frost and other Brothers I served with. I'll be contributing an article to The Triple Deuce shortly. Best Regards.

Cleon Gibbs, Sr., C/2-22 wrote: Don't remember any names. I would like to make contact with anyone who remembers me. I am proud of being a Vietnam Vet. and to have served with the 25<sup>th</sup> Inf. Div. *Cleon's address & phone number are in the New Finds Section. He was in the 1<sup>st</sup> Squad of 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, C/2-22 starting around May or June 68. I remember him....Norm.*

Hugh Don Keith, A/2-22 wrote: Went to the reunion for the first time this year, really did enjoy it, I plan on going next year.

Lynn R. Carter, A/2-22 wrote: I love this Newsletter. *Just had to put his comment in....smile.*

Bill Noyes, B/2-22 wrote: You should list Units with New Finds. *Your suggestion has been implemented.*

Jack Leshner, A/2-22 wrote: Great newsletter. *Love that one too... smile.*

William B. McCormick wrote: I hope to travel back to Vietnam this December. Hopefully to the area around Nah Trang & Cam Rahn Bay. I will let you know how it was if anyone is interested. *Bill, I am sure there will be interest.*

Bruce Campbell, B/2-22 wrote: I was the leader of the 2-4 Squad from 07-68 to 02-69. Spent the last months on Nui Ba Den. I wrote home a lot and most of the letters I have. They give a lot of dates and places for 'B' Co. May help someone piece together info. *Bruce is listed in the New Find section.*

### Night Ops.

This took place when I was with B/2-12 in November 1966. We were tasked to take the company and surround a little plantation village about 2 miles southwest of Dau Tieng. This was the village aside Route 241 in the rubber plantation. We would surround it and the Recon Platoon would drive to it in trucks at dawn and conduct the actual search. We started out at about 10 PM, crossing the bridge to the west side of the Saigon River then into the rice paddies. The company was in column formation so it was pretty well stretched out. It was very dark that night and we moved in the typical stop and go manner. Although we had attempted to get some sleep before we left, after a few hours of travel we were all turning into zombies. I was falling asleep while stumbling along. We were out of the paddies and into some low growing brush when another halt came. The rubber trees were about 500 meters ahead. I figured the CO had halted us to recon and secure before exposing the balance of the company. I sat down after a few minutes and started dozing on and off. I don't know how long we waited but it seemed too long. I got up and started moving forward. I found the man ahead of me then no one. I asked him where the rest of the company was and why hadn't he moved out when they did. He pointed ahead and said he was waiting for that man to move. I told him he was waiting for a bush to move! I passed a situation report down the line and asked

for a head count. I found out that I had 25 men, but with no radio nor a map, we had little chance of connecting with the company. I passed on my plan to move west until we hit the road then parallel it until we hit the village. We had traveled about 100 meters when we ran into a small patrol that had been sent to locate us.

We joined the company in the rubber plantation and continued toward the village. It was even darker in the trees. I could hear the thud of someone falling down, followed by some whispers. After a little while the sound of the thud and whispers would be heard again. Finally I was close to the location where a thud occurred. The whisper came back, "careful, big ditch". Fatigue among the men caused the whispered message to only be sent three or four men back, then someone would fall in the ditch again. The ditch encircled the village so we followed it around and set up facing inward. I moved one of my M60 teams down to the perimeter road where the Plt. Sgt. pointed out where he wanted them to set up. As I started to take them there I fell into a roll of barbed wire. All night without a stumble, now this!

Recon arrived at first light and after gathering up the villagers, began their sweep. We heard rifle shots and grenade blasts. Adrenalin at 110%, we huddled a little lower, with our weapons ready. Then we realized they weren't engaged, they were just firing or throwing a grenade into every hole they saw. We had done several villages ourselves and never had any reason to do what Recon was doing. Several of us went into the village and pulled those troops out at gunpoint. Our Co went in and counseled the Recon Plt. Leader. They finished the sweep without any more firing.

The high point of the day was when Battalion sent trucks to take us back to Dau Tieng, where breakfast was waiting.

Jim Hardin, C/2-22 Vietnam

### Passed Away Recently

Terrence M. Castro, C/2-22 Vietnam passed away from a sudden heart attack

on 07-16-01. At the time of his death he resided in Richfield, WA. Terry is survived by his wife Viki to whom he had been married for 37 years, a son, a daughter and 4 grandchildren. Viki provided the details of his death.

Robert Downey, A/2-22 Vietnam passed away on July 12, 2000 at the age of 54. He resided in Fifi Lake, MI. Robert was active in the American Legion and enjoyed the outdoors. He is survived by two children and a sister. Bill Flynn, A/2-22 Vietnam provided the above information.

Carroll Littleton, B/2-22 Vietnam passed away on 09-20-01. At the time of his death he resided in Muscaline, IA. He is survived by his wife Joeline. From June 02 Edition of the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Inf. Regt. Society Newsletter.

Robert Plouff, A/2-22 Vietnam passed away on June 7, 2002. At the time of his death he resided in Warwick, RI. He is survived by his wife Kathy, two daughters and his parents. Notice of his death was provided by his Mother.

### **Stop to Salute on Memorial Day**

by Capt. John Rasmussen

EAGLE BASE, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Army News Service, May 22, 2002)

-- It was raining "cats and dogs" and I was late for physical training.

Traffic was backed up at Fort Campbell, Ky., and was moving way too slowly. I was probably going to be late and I was growing more and more impatient. The pace slowed almost to a standstill as I passed Memorial Grove, the site built to honor the soldiers who died in the Gander airplane crash, the worst redeployment accident in the history of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Because it was close to Memorial Day, a small American flag had been placed in the ground next to each soldier's memorial plaque.

My concern at the time, however, was getting past the bottleneck, getting out of the rain and getting to PT on time.

All of a sudden, infuriatingly, just as the traffic was getting started again, the car in front of me stopped. A soldier, a private of course, jumped out in the pouring rain and ran over toward the grove. I couldn't believe it! This knucklehead was holding up everyone for who knows what kind of prank. Horns were honking.

I waited to see the butt-chewing that I wanted him to get for making me late. He was getting soaked to the skin. His BDUs were plastered to his frame. I watched-as he ran up to one of the memorial plaques, picked up the small American flag that had fallen to the ground in the wind and the rain, and set it upright again. Then, slowly, he came to attention, saluted, ran back to his car, and drove off.

I'll never forget that incident. That soldier, whose name I will never know, taught me more about duty, honor, and respect than a hundred books or a thousand lectures. That simple salute -- that single act of honoring his fallen brother and his flag -- encapsulated all the Army values in one gesture for me. It said, "I will never forget. I will keep the faith. I will finish the mission. I am an American soldier." I thank God for examples like that.

And on this Memorial Day, I will remember all those who paid the ultimate price for my freedom, and one private, soaked to the skin, who honored them.

Sent by: Jerry Giannopoulos, D/3-22 Vietnam

### **A Soldier Died Today**

He was getting old and paunchy and his hair was falling fast  
And he sat around the Legion telling stories of the past,  
Of a war that he had fought in and the deeds that he had done  
In his exploits with his buddies; they were heroes, everyone.

And though sometimes to his neighbors, his tales became a joke,  
All his buddies listened, for they knew of where he spoke.  
But we'll hear his tales no longer, for old Bob has passed away

And the world's a little poorer, for a soldier died today.

No he won't be mourned by many, just his children and his wife,  
For he lived an ordinary very quiet sort of life,  
He held a job and raised a family, quietly going on his way;  
And the world won't note his passing; though a soldier died today.

When politicians leave this earth, their bodies lie in state,  
While thousands note their passing and proclaim that they were great,  
Papers tell of their life stories from the time that they were young,  
But the passing of a soldier goes unnoticed, and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution to the welfare of our land  
Some jerk who breaks his promise and cons his fellow man?  
Or the ordinary fellow who in times of war and strife  
Goes off to serve his Country and offers up his life?

The politician's stipend and the style in which he lives  
Are sometimes disproportionate to the services he gives,  
While the ordinary soldier, who offered up his all,  
Is paid off with a medal, and perhaps a pension small.

It's so easy to forget them, for it was so long ago  
That our Bob's and Jim's and Johnny's went to battle, but we know  
It was not the politicians, with their compromise and ploys,  
Who won for us the freedom that our country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger with your enemies at hand,  
Would you really want some cop-out with his ever-waffling stand?  
Or would you want a soldier who has sworn to defend  
His home, his kin, and country and would fight until the end?  
He was just a common soldier and his ranks are growing thin

But his presence should remind us, we may need his like again.  
For when countries are in conflict, then we find the soldier's part  
Is to clean up all the troubles that the politicians start.

If we cannot do him honor while he's here to hear the praise,  
Then at least let's give him homage at the ending of his days.  
Perhaps just a simple headline in the paper that might say:  
Our Country Is In Mourning,

### **For A Soldier Died Today.**

Author Unknown and once again Norm did not record who sent the above in.

### **Unit Locators**

Your Board of Directors have elected the following individuals as Unit Locators.

Gary Hartt, A-Co. Locator

Robert Price, B-Co. Locator

Marcus Burk, C-Co. Locator

Daniel Streit, D-Co. Locator

Thomas Petro, HHC & Recon. Locator

In the event you have information that you feel will help our Locators find people please contact them and provide the data.

Norm Nishikubo, C/2-22 Vietnam

### **AN OPEN LETTER TO ANYONE WHO SERVED IN VIETNAM**

Dear Hero ,

I was in my twenties during the Vietnam era. I was a single Mother and, I'm sad to say, I was probably one of the most self-centered people on the planet. To be perfectly honest, I didn't care one way or the other about the war. All I cared about was me, how I looked, what I wore, and where I was going. I worked and I played.

I was never politically involved in anything, but I allowed my opinions to be formed by the media. It happened without my ever being aware. I listened to all the protest songs and I watched the six o'clock news and I listened to all the people who were talking. After awhile, I began to repeat their words and, if you were to ask me, I'd have told you I was against the war. It was very popular. Everyone was doing it, and we never saw what it was doing to our men. All we were shown was what they were doing to the people of Vietnam.

My brother joined the Navy and then he was sent to Vietnam. When he came home, I repeated the words to him. It surprised me at how angry he became. I hurt him very deeply and there were years of separation-not only of miles, but also of character. I didn't understand. In fact, I didn't understand anything until one day I opened my newspaper and saw the anguished face of a Vietnam Veteran. The picture was taken at the opening of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC His countenance revealed the terrible burden of his soul. As I looked at his picture and his tears, I finally understood a tiny portion of what you had done for us and what we had done to you. I understood that I had been manipulated, but I also knew that I had failed to think for myself. It was like waking up out of a nightmare, except that the nightmare was real. I didn't know what to do.

One day about three years ago, I went to a member of the church I attended at that time, because he had served in Vietnam. I asked him if he had been in Vietnam, and he got a look on his face and said, yes. Then I took his hand, looked him square in the face, and said, Thank You for going. His jaw dropped, he got an amazed look on his face, and then he said, No one has ever said that to me. He hugged me and I could see that he was about to get tears in his eyes.

It gave me an idea, because there is much more that needs to be said. How do we put into words all the regret of so many years? I don't know how, but when I have an opportunity, I take it. So here goes: Have you been to Vietnam? If so, I have something I want to say to you. Thank

you for going! Thank you from the bottom of my heart. Please forgive me for my insensitivity. I don't know how I could have been so blind, but I was. When I woke up, you were wounded and the damage was done, and I don't know how to fix it. I will never stop regretting my actions, and I will never let it happen again. Please understand that I am speaking for the general public also. We know we blew it and we don't know how to make it up to you. We wish we had been there for you when you came home from Vietnam because you were a Hero and you deserved better. Inside of you there is a pain that will never completely go away. And you know what? It's inside of us, too; because when we let you down, we hurt ourselves, too. We all know it and we suffer guilt and we don't know what to do. So we cheer for our troops and write letters to any soldier and we hang out the yellow ribbons and fly the flag and we Love America. We love you too, even if it doesn't feel like it to you. I know in my heart that, when we cheer wildly for our troops, part of the reason is trying to make up for Vietnam. And while it may work for us, it does nothing for you. We failed you. You didn't fail us, but we failed you and we lost our only chance to be grateful to you at the time when you needed and deserved it. We have disgraced ourselves and brought shame to our country. We did it and we need your forgiveness. Please say you will forgive us and please take your rightful place as heroes of our country. We have learned a terribly painful lesson at your expense and we don't know how to fix it.

From the Heart,  
Julie Weaver

### **And now the Response to the Above letter. From A Proud Vietnam Vet :**

I guess that I'm going to let a little bit of my bitterness out here...and, I expect I'll catch hell for this...but....

This is nice try...but, it's too little...and at my age, too late. I know that I should do the Christian thing and "forgive" you. But, after 30 years of abuse and shame, I just can't find it in my heart. I may have to explain it to God, I don't have to

explain it to you. All of a sudden all this "touchy feely, forgive me" crap makes my skin crawl How do you forgive something that didn't exist then...and doesn't exist now?

We went off scared, idealistic kids. Most didn't want to go, but did. Cause that's what every man in our family did when called. We went. We were Grunts, Cooks, Mechanics, RTO's, Truck Drivers...we all had our jobs and we did them as well as you can expect any 19 year old to do. While we were doing our jobs, you went on with your life. Ours stopped for 12-18 months. While you were in school or living the good life or just plain living, we were dying. We were dying then, we are dying now. And, all vets, no matter the way, are still getting crapped on.

We are not heroes. The 50,000 names on the black gash are the heroes. They remain young, we grow older. We are their future, they are our past. They were heroes, we were lucky. Sometimes though, I think they are the lucky ones...at least, they are not having to explain to Human Resources why they are safe to be around. Hell, I've had people that refuse to be in the same building with me after 7pm. All because I'm a Vietnam Vet and just might go tripwire at 7:01pm. Just like I do most nights at 7:02 pm. Most of us are in our late 40's or early 50's...and today, if you say Vietnam it does not mean much to anyone under 30...other than "Oh, that's the war we lost"....and if I hear that one again, even after my stroke, I'm gonna whack the sayee upside the head. We didn't lose...you did.

You have no idea what YOU lost....You lost the war....you lost our respect...you lost yourselves. You are the people that forever changed on 9/11...we are descendants of the guys that have been looking for, finding and killing the bad guys since 1776. We've been there, done that, and we've seen the elephant. You are the huddled masses...we are VETS!

We are becoming the things you feared...we ARE the establishment. And, as we get more and more people in the establishment, we are making changes, some good, some bad, some not at all. But, at least we are trying. And, this time, we are in control, and there's not going to

be another Vietnam...not as long as I can still walk, breathe, write, and hit the ballot box. These kids are not going to suffer because of an American Public that is as wishy-washy as the Pacific Ocean. This time, they got REAL solid backing from people that truly understand the frustration of trying to find an enemy that just disappears. You are the "Hell no! We won't go!" bunch. We are the guys that went...and are still there. Some of us live here...but, will never truly be home.

You want forgiveness? Haul yourself out to the VA hospital and visit some of the WWII vets that haven't had a visitor in 10 years other than the American Legion, VFW or a Donut Dolly. Talk to them, thank them. They're just as forgotten as we are. Explain to them how they are not qualified for VA treatment due to budget cuts. Explain to them why they have to wait hours for a damned bottle of aspirin, and be demeaned when they pick it up. Explain to them how they were promised medical help for life... and how it's "I think you misunderstood. We never had a contract." Look at them and see what \*YOU\* have done...if I had my way, every vet would get free medical for life at any doctor's office he wanted to go to. Just show the "VETERAN" card and get free medical, dental, and pharmacy, until he dies, no charge, No Charge, NO CHARGE. From aspirin to open heart...we provide to the vet at NO CHARGE, paid for by a grateful American Public. Yeah, right.

Explain to them how you feel their pain. Explain to them how people in Europe are more important than they are...how the money that could be used for the promised medical treatment they were promised is being squandered on someone with a last name no person can pronounce. Explain to them how their government used them for atomic/biological testing without their consent and later deny that it ever happened. Talk to them, you might really learn about what makes us all tick. We learned from them...they were our teachers.

We are not the "Wannabees"...we are real. Suddenly, it's chic to be a Vietnam Vet. I hear constantly, "I wish I had gone" or "I've always regretted not joining the

service"...yeah, from sh\*t to chic...and it only took 30 years.

Both items sent by: Ed Grystar, C/2-22 Vietnam

Magnet's comments: *After great personnel debate, I elected to put both of these articles in the Newsletter. I for one am willing to forgive and have done so. However, there are others of us who are not and have not.*

*It is my hope that those who have not yet forgiven, rethink their position after they read these articles and then forgive. I believe that it is necessary for them to forgive before they can start to heal.*

## THE WALL

By Laurie Kellman, Associated Press.  
July 20, 2002

WASHINGTON - Two war buddies find each other shoulder-to-shoulder again. A teenager feels the presence of a father killed before she could talk. Fears recede for a haunted veteran.

Volunteers at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial call it "wall magic," the power of the V-shaped black granite on the National Mall to help veterans, aggrieved families and the nation heal the wounds of a conflict that cost 58,209 American lives.

Twenty years after its unveiling, the wall and its symbolism has fulfilled designer Maya Lin's goals.

"I had an impulse to cut open the earth," wrote Lin, then a 21-year-old student at Yale. "The grass would grow back, but the cut would remain."

To those involved, there's nothing magical about the power of a public testament to the war's painful legacy.

"This was something that gave Americans the license to mourn publicly," said Jan Scruggs, founder of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund. The memorial prompts discussion that keeps alive the history of the conflict and the people who waged it, visitors say.

"It's a magnet. It helps draw people together," said Ronald Wilson, 63, of Largo, Fla., who visited the wall Friday with his granddaughters. Wilson was in the military during the Vietnam era but never served in-country.

"I think there's some healing going on," said Marlyn D. Bowman, 52, a landscape gardener at the memorial since its November 1982 unveiling.

"Some people come here, and they can't go down (the memorial's sloping path) at first," Bowman said. "I think it has helped heal the nation, but I don't think that we are healed," said Layna McConkey Peltier, 33, whose father, Army Capt. Wayne Allen McConkey, was killed when she was a year old.

Scruggs says the memorial was born of his psychological scars that resulted from watching his comrades die during a yearlong tour of duty and seeing disdain heaped on many veterans at home.

In 1979, he founded the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund and went on to raise \$8 million from 275,000 donors. A year later, President Carter granted it two acres on the National Mall.

The fund's board unanimously chose Lin's design from 1,421 entries. The architecture student proposed sinking a V-shaped gash of black granite into the ground.

She said its shiny surface would connect the past with the present as the chiseled names of every Vietnam fatality would meet the visual reflections of living visitors. Its "arms" would embrace people of every background and political persuasion who descended to its apex.

There, Lin hoped, "all who come here can find it a place of healing."

Lin's design listed the names in the order in which they died, making it more likely that those who served together would be listed together.

The system has inspired more than one episode of "wall magic," said memorial volunteer Ron Worstell.

Recently, he said, two men who hadn't had contact since they served together arrived at the wall at the same time, looking for each other's names. Instead, they saw each other's reflections on the surface, standing together again.

"I guess you made it," one said to the other.

For James Bowen, a Vicksburg, Miss., teacher who served two tours in Vietnam, the wall's power excised torturous memories of his comrades when he finally summoned courage to visit the site for the first time Thursday.

"I was afraid these guys would be there, and I didn't want to face them," Bowen, 54, told a conference of educators Friday at Georgetown University. "It removed the ghosts. It has healed me."

The wall has given Peltier a way to talk about her father and find the children of other men killed in action. She hopes the designers of any memorial to the victims of the Sept. 11 attacks at the World Trade Center will take a lesson from Lin's design.

#### WHAT IS AN AMERICAN?

The following was said to have been written by a dentist in Australia.

There is a report that someone in Pakistan had published in a newspaper an offer of a reward to anyone who killed an American, any American. So I just thought I would write to let them know what an American is, so they would know when they found one. An American is English, or French, or Italian, Irish, German, Spanish, Polish, Russian or Greek. An American may also be Mexican, African, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Australian, Iranian, Asian, or Arab, or Pakistani, or Afghan. An American may also be a Cherokee, Osage, Blackfoot, Navaho, Apache, or one of the many other tribes known as native Americans. An American is Christian, or he could be Jewish, or Buddhist, or Muslim. In fact, there are more Muslims in America than in Afghanistan. The only difference is that in America they are free to worship as each of them chooses. An

American is also free to believe in no religion. For that he will answer only to God, not to the government, or to armed thugs claiming to speak for the government and for God. An American is from the most prosperous land in the history of the world. The root of that prosperity can be found in the Declaration of Independence, which recognizes the God given right of each man and woman to the pursuit of happiness. An American is generous. Americans have helped out just about every other nation in the world in their time of need. When Afghanistan was overrun by the Soviet army 20 years ago, Americans came with arms and supplies to enable the people to win back their country. As of the morning of September 11, 01 Americans had given more than any other nation to the poor in Afghanistan. Americans welcome the best, the best products, the best books, the best music, the best food, the best athletes. But they also welcome the least. The national symbol of America, The Statue of Liberty, welcomes your tired and your poor, the wretched refuse of your teeming shores, the homeless, tempest tossed. These in fact are the people who built America. Some of them were working in the Twin Towers the morning of September 11, earning a better life for their families. (I've been told that the World Trade Center victims were from at least 30 other countries, cultures, and first languages, including those that aided and abetted the terrorists.) So you can try to kill an American if you must. Hitler did. So did General Tojo, and Stalin, and Mao Tse-Tung, and every bloodthirsty tyrant in the history of the world. But, in doing so you would just be killing yourself. Because Americans are not a particular people from a particular place. They are the embodiment of the human spirit of freedom. Everyone who holds to that spirit, everywhere, is an American. So look around you. You may find more Americans in your land than you thought were there. One day they will rise up and overthrow the old, ignorant, tired tyrants that trouble too many lands. Then those lands, too, will join the community of free and prosperous nations, And America will welcome them!

Sent By: Ralph Julian, HQ/2-22 Vietnam



## STANDING WATCH

The embers glowed softly, and in their dim light,  
I gazed round the room and I cherished the sight.  
My wife was asleep, her head on my chest,  
My daughter beside me, angelic in rest.  
Outside the snow fell, a blanket of white,  
Transforming the yard to a winter delight.  
The sparkling lights in the tree, I believe,  
Completed the magic that was Christmas Eve.  
My eyelids were heavy, my breathing was deep,  
Secure and surrounded by love I would sleep  
in perfect contentment, or so it would seem.  
So I slumbered, perhaps I started to dream.

The sound wasn't loud, and it wasn't too near,  
But I opened my eye when it tickled my ear.  
Perhaps just a cough, I didn't quite know  
Then the sure sound of footsteps outside in the snow.

My soul gave a tremble, I struggled to hear,  
And I crept to the door just to see who was near.  
Standing out in the cold and the dark of the night,  
A lone figure stood, his face weary and tight.

A soldier, I puzzled, some twenty years old  
Perhaps a Marine, huddled here in the cold.  
Alone in the dark, he looked up and smiled,  
Standing watch over me, and my wife and my child.

"What are you doing?" I asked without fear  
"Come in this moment, it's freezing out here!  
Put down your pack, brush the snow from your sleeve,

You should be at home on a cold Christmas Eve!"

For barely a moment I saw his eyes shift,  
away from the cold and the snow blown in drifts,  
to the window that danced with a warm fire's light  
then he sighed and he said "Its really all right,

I'm out here by choice. I'm here every night"  
"Its my duty to stand at the front of the line,  
That separates you from the darkest of times.  
No one had to ask or beg or implore me,  
I'm proud to stand here like my fathers before me.

My Gramps died at 'Pearl on a day in December,"  
Then he sighed, "That's a Christmas 'Gram always remembers."  
My dad stood his watch in the jungles of 'Nam  
And now it is my turn and so, here I am.

I've not seen my own son in more than a while,  
But my wife sends me pictures, he's sure got her smile.  
Then he bent and he carefully pulled from his bag,  
The red white and blue... an American flag.

"I can live through the cold and the being alone,  
Away from my family, my house and my home,  
I can stand at my post through the rain and the sleet,  
I can sleep in a foxhole with little to eat,  
I can carry the weight of killing another or lay down my life with my sisters and brothers  
who stand at the front against any and all,  
To insure for all time that this flag will not fall."

"So go back inside," he said, "harbor no fright  
Your family is waiting and I'll be all right."  
"But isn't there something I can do, at the least,  
"Give you money," I asked, "or prepare

you a feast?"

It seems all too little for all that you've done,  
For being away from your wife and your son."  
Then his eye welled a tear that held no regret,  
"Just tell us you love us, and never forget  
To fight for our rights back at home while we're gone.  
To stand your own watch, no matter how long.

For when we come home, either standing or dead,  
to know you remember we fought and we bled  
is payment enough, and with that we will trust.  
That we mattered to you as you mattered to us.

From The Dien Cai Dau Express  
Veterans Newsletter

## The Final Inspection

The soldier stood and faced God.  
Which must always come to pass. He hoped his shoes were shining Just as brightly as his brass.

"Step forward now, you soldier, how shall I deal with you? Have you always turned the other cheek? To My Church have you been true?"

The soldier squared his shoulders and said, "No, Lord, I guess I ain't Because those of us who carry guns Can't always be a saint.

I've had to work most Sundays And at time my talk was tough, And sometimes I've been violent  
Because the world is awfully rough.

But, I never took a penny  
That wasn't mine to keep...  
Though I worked a lot of overtime When the bills got just too steep,

And I never passed a cry for help,  
Though at time I shook with fear, And

sometimes, God forgive me. I've wept unmanly tears.

I know I don't deserve a place  
Among the people here,  
They never wanted me around  
Except to calm their fears.

If you've a place for me here, Lord, It  
needn't be so grand.  
I never expected or had too much, But if  
you don't, I'll understand."

There was silence all around the throne  
where saints had often trod as the soldier  
waited quietly for the judgment of his  
God.

"Step forward now, you soldier, You've  
borne your burdens well,  
Walk peacefully on Heaven's streets;  
you've done your time in Hell."

#### TO ALL THAT SERVED

Norm's comment: Folks I know that a lot  
of you have seen the above before in the  
newsletter. I decided to put it in again for  
*those of you who have not.*

#### From Veterans News and Information Service...

##### Subject: Army Birthday Message

For 227 years now, Soldiers have  
defended freedom. And again today,  
Soldiers are fighting on behalf of the  
American people as we prosecute the war  
on terrorism. So as we celebrate our  
Army's Birthday and reflect on our great  
institution, a simple truth arises: there is  
no greater profession than the Profession  
of Arms, and no greater job than ours-  
serving on point for our Nation. Thanks  
to American Soldiers, freedom's light  
shines as a beacon throughout the world.

The Army has courageously fought our  
country's wars and served honorably in  
peace for over two and a quarter  
centuries. We can all be justifiably proud  
of The Army's achievements - a  
distinguished history of service to the  
Nation. From our victories in the  
American Revolution through the trial of  
our Civil War, from the trenches of  
World War I to the beaches of Normandy  
and the island battles in the Pacific of  
World War II, from the frozen mountains

of Korea to the sweltering paddies of  
Vietnam, from Grenada and Panama to  
the sands of Kuwait and Iraq, and now on  
the plains and in the mountains of  
Afghanistan, Soldiers have marched at the  
van of democracy and the cause of liberty.

And throughout that history of service,  
the key to The Army's success is our  
flexibility and willingness to change, to  
meet the world as it is-without altering the  
core competencies that make the Army  
the best fighting force in the world. You  
are the best Army in the world. As we  
forge ahead to gain irreversible  
momentum in our Transformation, you  
will continue to be respected by allies,  
feared by our enemies, and honored and  
esteemed by the American people. Your  
courage, dedication to duty and selfless  
service to the Nation are the hallmarks of  
the Soldiers of the United States Army.

We will never be able to tell you enough  
how very proud we are of you, how  
everyone we meet offers their thanks for  
what you do and their prayers for your  
safety and well-being. So we are honored  
to join you in celebrating the birthday of  
the most powerful land force the world  
has ever known. Thank you for your  
service, for your sacrifices, and for your  
abiding devotion to something greater  
than self. God bless each and every one of  
you and your families, God bless our  
magnificent Army, and God bless  
America.

Eric K. Shinseki, General, United States  
Army Chief of Staff

Thomas E. White, Secretary of the Army

Sent By: Michael Delougherty, A/2-22  
Vietnam

Norm's comment: *Gen. Shinseki was with  
the 25<sup>th</sup> Div. in Vietnam.*

#### The Groves' Saga

04 January 1969 We have moved from  
our last position to a new location which  
used to be thick jungle. We have been  
here for two days and it's been pretty  
peaceful, although, they bomb areas  
around us all the time.

11 January 1969 Well I've got some  
news for you. I have been wounded, but  
I'm doing all right. In fact, I'm out of the  
hospital and in the company area at Dau  
Tieng where I'm not to do a thing but  
rest. Course, you'll want to know where  
and what I got hit by right? It was an  
RPG and I received multiple shrapnel in  
the left hip. In other words, I got it in the  
A\_\_! The metal went in pretty deep so  
they couldn't dig it out and the only thing  
I'm suffering from is a very sore  
posterior. It was a hard way to get out of  
the field I'll tell you. On January 8 we  
were sweeping or pulling a Recon of the  
area along side a road just out of Dau  
Tieng. Our tracks were moving through  
some heavy brush when one of the  
people on the other track saw a weapon  
or something lying in a bush. We  
stopped the tracks and he walked towards  
the bush to check it out. He did not get  
more than fifteen feet from the bush  
when a gook opened up with automatic  
AK-47 rifle fire. No one was hit but we  
all jumped off the track and tried to get  
behind some cover. Also, we were  
trying to get the tracks turned around so  
we could turn the machine guns on the  
bushes where the fire was coming from.  
While we were doing this, two RPG  
exploded amongst us. One did not hurt  
anyone, but the other wounded the RTO  
(radio operator) from our track and the  
squad leader from our track. All this  
time, we were receiving fire and were  
trying to place where it came from and  
get our track, wounded, and the rest of  
the people out of the area. I rushed over  
to the RTO and a buddy who was  
wounded trying to get the medic over to  
help them. The Lieutenant was standing  
close and trying to get some organization  
and the medic was crawling towards us  
when an RPG hit the Lieutenant  
killing him, our medic, our RTO,  
wounding me and my buddy Mickey. I  
knew the Lieutenant, RTO and Medic  
were dead but Mickey I wasn't sure of. I  
felt the hip on my left side to see if I was  
hurt very badly and it was covered with  
blood, but I could still move around.  
When I tried to move towards Mickey,  
an RPG hit the track just to the right of  
me wounding the fifty gunner and driver  
(the track I used to drive), so then I  
figured I'd best get the hell out while I  
could. I half crawled and ran about five

hundred feet to the rear away from our contact where one of our other tracks had retreated after taking an RPG. So, here I lay until we got some help and they could get us together and "dust" us off. (*A duster, tank with twin 40mm canon, showed up to bail us out, if he had not opened up on the brush and wood line there was a good chance it would have been a lot worse.*)

12 January 1969 Here it's 1:10 a.m. in the morning. I'm pulling generator watch and making sure nothing goes wrong. Have the watch for seven hours from 12 a.m. to 7 a.m. It's not too bad, gives me time to think, read and contemplate the future. I have been thinking about how I have become a man. I've held the lives of people in my hand, I've watched them die, live, laugh, cry, hope and despair. I've seen men come over here with the look of home still fresh in their eyes, I've seen the uneasiness they show as we tell them of the life they will live for the next 365 days. I've seen the smart and quick die and the not so swift slacker live. Remember when I wrote the letter in May of my friend Woody being killed? I got quite close to Woody. We were as brothers. Did everything together. I knew all about him. Everything. Then a change came over him. What it was or what caused it, I don't know. But, he became bitter, hateful and began to drink excessively. No one could talk to him. Not even me. Then one night when we were securing a bridge, Woody said, "I'm through, I'm tired, and I don't care whether I live or die tomorrow." How I worried and prayed for Woody! How I tried to convince him that there was a life to live. But it was futile. That next day he was killed. I had to watch the blood pour out of his neck, watched him shudder and heard the death rattle in his throat. How I cried, I cursed and wept and beat my hands against the track. I was so hurt, so full of despair. But as they say, time heals all wounds. I soon learned to forget as soon as one was killed, I erased him from my mind because I could no longer grieve for those killed. I learned to accept the fact that they were dead.

13 January 1969 Doing better and doing some work now at my new job, which is Company mail clerk and awards clerk. I don't go to the field anymore. Whoopee for that!

16 January 1969 I still have this job as

mail clerk and awards clerk as you can see by me typing this letter. I found out where I will be stationed in the world. I'll be stationed in Fort Lewis, Washington. I'll be in a Calvary unit. I have heard that they have field problems of five days a week and play war games. Now that's just what I need isn't it? They took the stitches out of my left hip and lower back and I'm making it all right. I've been on this typewriter from 7 this morning to nine at night working on awards for people who have been in fights and recommended for awards. I'm glad I came in because on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January, the company reacted to a convoy that was ambushed and we got a 122 body count! The fight lasted for 8 hours and we had four wounded and one killed. We didn't do too bad considering what we were fighting.

Sent By: Mike Groves, A/2-22 Vietnam

#### TET '68 January 31, 1968

The VC/NVA launched wide scale attacks at all major populations areas. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion (M), 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry was operating in the area north of Tay Ninh conducting searching operations trying to locate enemy forces that were part of the units that attacked Fire Support Base Burt at the beginning of the month. The battalion received orders to relocate to Dau Tieng to assist in the defense of the Michelin Rubber plantation and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Base camp. The Battalion was able to relocate to the area without incident. The base camp of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade received incoming rockets and mortars, and a limited ground attack at the northwest side of the perimeter. For the next 12 days, incoming rockets or mortars hit the brigade base camp at least three times a day. Several rounds landed in the battalion area, but no damage was done. The initial ground attack was the only direct attack on the base camp during TET. During the first three days of the VC/NVA TET offensive, there were many other

locations that were under heavy attack within the Division area. These included the area of Go Da Ha, Tay Ninh, and the Saigon-Long Binh areas. The 25<sup>th</sup> Division base camp was also under heavy attack. The battalion was assigned the reserve mission for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade.

The battalion was assigned the mission to keep the Main Supply Route open between Dau Tieng and Tay Ninh and also to assist in the security of the supply route between Tay Ninh and Cu Chi. In order to accomplish this mission, A and C Companies of the battalion were relocated to Tay Ninh. B Company remained in Dau Tieng. At 06:00 hours each morning, B Company would move out on the MSR towards Tay Ninh with a platoon of engineers to clear the roads and provide security on the road. They would cover half of the distance. At the same time, C Company would depart Tay Ninh towards Dau Tieng and Company A would depart Tay Ninh towards Cu Chi. The battalion would conduct limited search and destroy missions along the MSR while waiting for the convoys. The battalion would also react in support of other units in contact in the Division area. These reaction missions resulted in several sharp contacts involving A and C Companies.

After making the sweep of the road, the company would pull off the road by squads and wait for the convoys to make their runs, or conduct the limited sweeps. The first run, which was from Tay Ninh would leave Tay Ninh between 13:00 to 14:00 hours, and take one hour to make the trip. The convoy would depart Dau Tieng no later than 16:00 hours. As soon as the convoy passed the northern most unit, the company would roll up and return to the company area at the base camp. The company would stand down and take it easy to get ready to

move out at 06:00 hours the next day.

The battalion remained on this security mission until US forces were ready to begin their offensive operations against the retreating VC/NVC. The battalion was then directed to move north with all elements of the 3<sup>rd</sup> brigade to the area northeast of Soui Da. The two infantry battalions were air lifted into the area, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, (M) 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry took the road and jungle routes to get there. The infantry battalion established contact with enemy forces within 1 hour after landing, and the contact turned into some heavy firefights. However, the 2/22 was not in a position to assist in these actions.

Skip Fahel, B/2-22 Vietnam

### **May I Salute You?**

By Patricia Salwei

I approached the entrance to Ft Belvoir's medical facility last year as an old veteran pattered towards me. Easily over 80 years old, stooped and slow, I barely gave him a second glance because right behind him, on his heels, was a full bird colonel. As they approached, I rendered a sharp salute and barked, "Good morning, Sir!" Because they were heel to toe, I began my salute, as the old veteran was about two paces from me. He immediately came to life! Transformed by my greeting, he rose to his full height, returned my salute with pride, and exclaimed, "Good morning captain!" I was startled, but the full bird behind him was flabbergasted.

The colonel stopped mid-salute, smiled at me and quietly moved on. As I entered the clinic, the utter beauty of the encounter preoccupied me. What prompted the old man to assume that I was saluting him? Perhaps he just thought, "It's about time!" After all, doesn't a WWII vet outrank us all? I turned my attention to the waiting room taking a moment to survey the veterans there. Service people rushed around, loudspeakers blared, the bell for the prescription window kept ringing. It was a whirl of activity and the older veterans

sat quietly on the outside seemingly out of step, patiently waiting to be seen. Nobody was seeing. My old friend stayed on my mind. I began to pay attention to the military's attitude towards its veterans. Predominately, I witnessed indifference: Impatient soldiers and airmen plowing over little old ladies at the commissary; I noticed my own agitation as an older couple cornered me at the Officer's Club and began reminiscing about their tour in Germany. To our disgrace, I have also witnessed disdain: At Ramstein AB terminal, an airman was condescending and borderline cruel with a deaf veteran flying Space A; An ancient woman wearing a WAC's button was shoved aside by a cadet at the Women's Memorial dedication in D.C; A member of the Color Guard turned away in disgust from a drunk Vietnam vet trying to talk to him before the Veterans Day Ceremony at the Vietnam Wall. Have you been to a ceremony at the Wall lately? How about a Veteran's Day Parade in a small town? The crowds are growing faint. Why do we expect the general public to care if we don't? We are getting comfortable again. Not many of us around have been forced to consider making the ultimate sacrifice. Roughly 60% of today's active duty Air Force did not even participate in Desert Storm. I always lament about the public's disregard for the military. I do not count all the days I stayed in bed instead of going to a ceremony or parade. It was my day to be honored and I deserved to sleep in. It's just like a 28-year-old, whose weapon was "Microsoft PowerPoint Slide Presentation" during the last conflict, to complain about recognition. Sometimes I wonder who is going to come to our parades in 20 years; will anybody look me up in the Women's Memorial Registry?

The answer lies in the present. We will be honored as we honor those who have gone before us.

The next generation is watching. It is not my intention to minimize the selfless service of our modern military; my comrades are the greatest people I know (and frankly should be treated better). But, lately I'm wondering if the public's attitude towards the military isn't just a reflection of the active duty military's attitude towards its own veterans. It's time to ask - do we regard them, do we

consider them at all? How does our attitude change when the hero is no longer wearing a uniform?

I was proud to wear my uniform. Can I admit that I thought I was cool? There is no denying that there is something about our profession, combined with youth, that feeds the ego a little. We have all seen a young pilot strut into the Officer's Club with his flight suit on. He matters; he takes on the room; he knows he can take on the world. But, one day he will leave his jet for a desk, and eventually he will have to hang up that flight suit. A super hero hanging up his cape. How will we measure his value then? He will no longer look like a pilot, an officer, a colonel. He'll just look like an old man coming out of the clinic with his prescription. But, is he less of a hero? Will anybody remember or care about all the months he spent away from his newborn daughter while making peace a possibility in the Balkans? Probably not.

Our society has a short memory. Maybe it is not for the protected to understand. Rather, it is my hope that when a young lieutenant walks by him they will each see themselves reflected in the other - one's future, the other's past. In that moment, perhaps, the lieutenant will also see the hero, now disguised as an old man, and thank him.

The truth is there are heroes in disguise everywhere. I used to wonder why people would want to chat with me when I was in uniform - telling me about their four years as a radio operator in Korea. So what? I wasn't impressed relative to my own experiences. Now I understand that they were telling me because nobody else cared. Proud of their service, no matter how limited, and still in love with our country, they were trying to stay connected. Their stories were code for: "I understand and appreciate you, can you appreciate me?" The answer is, yes.

I separated from the Air Force in February. I'm out of the club. Still, I want you to know that I'll attend the parades, visit the memorials, and honor you. All this while my kids and your kids are watching. Then, maybe, someday when I'm an old woman riding the metro, a young airman will take a moment of her

time to listen to one of my war stories. I, in turn, will soak in her beauty and strength, and remember.

Today as I reflect on my adventures in the Air Force, I'm thinking of that ancient warrior I collided with at Ft Belvoir. I'm wondering where he is, if he's still alive, if it's too late to thank him.

I want to start a campaign in his honor - Salute A Veteran. What a great world this would be if all our elderly veterans wore recognition pins, and we would salute them even if we were out of uniform and saw them coming out of a Seven Eleven.

Yes, this started out as a misunderstanding on my part. But, now I get it. That day was the first time in my life that I really understood what it meant to salute someone.

Dear Veteran, I recognize and hail you! I do understand what I have and what you have given to make it possible. So I'm wondering if we meet on the street again may I salute you?

Sent by: Larry Gunnels, C/2-22 Vietnam

Location: Trash Pit Dau Tieng.  
Date: Late June or Early July '68.

John Lewis was in base camp to start the processing of his rotation paperwork. Technically, John still had a few days of field service remaining but had some how secured some slack time. John will tell you that he demanded it but I say it was because of his platoon leader's benevolence.

On this particular day SFC Russell told me that the trash barrels in the company area needed to be emptied and he wanted me to assemble a work detail and get the job done. At the time I only had walking wounded from which to assemble a work detail. When I say walking wounded I mean crawling wounded. There was no way they could lift trash barrels. So it was up to me and me alone to accomplish the assignment. I was driving the 5 ton up to the first barrel when John saw me and asked what I was doing. I told him the situation, he then said that he would give

me a hand. We loaded all of the barrels and drove to the dump site. I backed the truck to the edge of the pit and lowered the bed gate to its bed level position. If you recall there was always something burning in that pit. Just below us was some smoldering trash. Neither of us knew that something was cooking in it. John and I would get on opposite sides of a barrel with our backs to the pit in a semi squatting stance and tilt the barrels to empty them. Of course this position put our backsides out over the edge of the gate and over the edge of the pit. We had just started to empty our last barrel when a grenade went off in the pit directly below us. John wound up face down on the truck's bed and I wound up on my knees. I knew I wasn't hit. I was an expert at personal wound recognition by this time. I asked John if he was OK and if he felt any pain? He said, "I don't know". He was still prone when I looked over at him. I saw a small hole in one of the pockets of his fatigue pants and became quite concerned because I knew that not feeling anything did not mean one was not hit. I told John about the hole and asked again, do you feel any pain? He said no. Then he got up and pulled his wallet out. A frag had cut the wallet then lodged in it. We looked at each other then the area around the pit. Everyone was prone. M16s were pointed in every direction. We sat down and started laughing, not only at them but the whole situation. I guess it was our way of releasing the pressure of the moment. When we had finished, we completed the trash dumping exercise. During the drive back to the company area I was really going to rub John's nose in it concerning how safe base camp was. I got a few words out when he said if you want to unload the barrels by yourself when we get back, just keep it up. I didn't say another word, at least not until the truck had been unloaded. (smile)

Norm Nishikubo, C/2-22 Vietnam

### **Your'e in the Army now**

The following is a father's advice to his son just moments before he gets on the bus that will carry him off to join the Army:

"Son, you are getting ready to embark on a great adventure as many of the men in our family have done since your great-great-great-great-great-great-great grandfather did many hundreds of years ago.

There will be many dangers ahead that you will encounter. Remember your training and obey your commanders, this will keep you alive during the arduous days of battle. Always stay with the plan, if you deviate from it you will be in grave jeopardy.

When the time of battle is over, be wary as you go into the towns and cities ahead because there are many hidden dangers lurking there. There will be many temptations to lure you away from your brothers in arms and this could put you in danger even if it seems safe at the time. In every town there will be a street that will be most treacherous of all - there will be strong drink to dull your senses, loud and crude songs to suppress your hearing, and wild women of ill repute to enable your enemy to catch you off guard. My advice to you as a former soldier is simple.

What ever you do... FIND THAT STREET."

Sent by: Robin Harrington,  
C/2-22 Vietnam

### **IF I CATCH YOU**

A guy was ordered by his doctor to lose 75 lbs. due to very serious health risks.

As he wondered how in the heck he would ever do it, he ran across an ad in the newspaper for a GUARANTEED WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAM. "Guaranteed like hell," he thought to himself. But desperate, he calls them up and subscribes to the 3 day/10 pound weight loss program.

The next day there's a knock at his door, and when he answers, there stands before him a voluptuous, athletic, beautiful, 19 year old woman dressed in nothing but a pair of Nike running shoes and a sign round her neck. She introduces herself as a representative of the weight loss

company. The sign reads, "If you can catch me, you can have me." Without a second thought he takes off after her. A few miles later, huffing and puffing, he finally catches her and has his way with her. After they are through and she leaves, he thinks to himself, "I like the way this company does business!" The same girl shows up for the next two days and the same thing happens. On the fourth day, he weighs himself and is delighted to find he has lost 10 lbs. as promised. So, he calls the company and orders their 5 day/20 pound program.

The next day there's a knock at the door and there stands the most stunning, beautiful, sexy woman he has ever seen in his life, wearing nothing but Reebok running shoes and a sign around her neck that reads, "If you catch me, you can have me." He's out the door after her like a shot. This woman is in excellent shape and it takes him a while to catch her, but when he does, it is worth every cramp and wheeze. She is by far the best he's ever had. For the next four days, the same routine happens and much to his delight, on the fifth day he weights himself and found he has lost another 20 lbs. as promised.

He decides to go for broke and calls the company to order the 7 day/50 pound program. "Are you sure?" asks the representative on the phone. "This is our Most rigorous program." "Absolutely," he replies, "I haven't felt this good in years." The next day there's a knock at the door and when he opens it he finds

Richard Simmons standing there wearing nothing but pink running shoes and a Sign around his neck that reads, "If I catch you, I can have you."

Sent by Robin Harrington,  
C/2-22 Vietnam

### BRAIN CELLS

I have not seen anyone explain this as well as Cliff Clavin, on

Cheers. One afternoon at Cheers, Cliff Clavin was explaining the Buffalo Theory to his buddy Norm, and here's how it went:

"Well ya see, Norm, it's like this...A herd of buffalo can only move as fast as the slowest buffalo. And when the herd is hunted, it is the slowest and weakest ones at the back that are killed first. This natural selection is good for the herd as a whole, because the general speed and health of the whole group keeps improving by the regular killing of the weakest members.

In much the same way, the human brain can only operate as fast as the slowest brain cells. Excessive intake of alcohol, as we know, kills brain cells. But naturally it attacks the slowest and weakest brain cells first. In this way, regular consumption of beer eliminates the weaker brain cells, making the brain a faster and more efficient machine.

That's why you always feel smarter after a few beers."

Sent by: Dick Nash, A/2-22 Vietnam

*Norm's comments: The above makes a lot of sense to me..smile*

### NO ROOMS LEFT

By the time a Marine pulled into a little town, every hotel room was taken. "You've got to have a room somewhere," he pleaded. "Or just a bed, I don't care where."

"Well, I do have a double room with one occupant - an Air Force guy," admitted the manager, "and he might be glad to split the cost. But to tell you the truth, he snores so loudly that people in adjoining rooms have complained. I'm not sure it'd be worth it to you."

"No problem," the tired Marine assured him. "I'll take it." The next morning the Marine came down to breakfast bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. "How'd you sleep?" asked the manager. "Never better." The manager was impressed. "No problem with the other guy snoring, then?" "Nope, I shut him up in no time," said the Marine.

"How'd you manage that?" asked the manager. "He was already in bed, snoring

away, when I came in the room," the Marine explained. "I went over, gave him a kiss on the cheek, said, 'Goodnight, Beautiful,' and he sat up all night watching me."

Contributor unknown: Norm screwed up again!!

### For The Ladies

#### THE POWER OF A WOMAN

There were 11 people hanging on to a rope that came down from a helicopter. There were ten men and one woman.

They all decided that one person should get off. If that did not happen the rope would break and they would all die. No one could decide who should go. Finally the woman gave a very touching speech saying how she would give up her life to save the others, because women were used to giving up things for their husbands and children, giving into men, and not receiving anything in return. When she finished speaking, all of the men clapped.

Never underestimate the power of a woman.

Sent to us by: Joan Mahoney,  
DaimlerChrysler L.A.

### The Silent Treatment

A man and his wife were having some problems at home and were giving each other the silent treatment. The next week, the man realized that he would need his wife to wake him at 5:00AM for an early morning business flight to Chicago

Not wanting to be the first to break the silence (AND LOSE), he wrote on a piece of paper, "please wake me 5:00 AM."

The next morning the man woke up, only to discover that it was 9:00 AM and that he had missed his flight. Furious, he was about to go and see why his wife hadn't awakened him when he noticed a piece of paper by the bed.

On the paper was written, "It is 5:00 AM. Wake up."

(MEN JUST AREN'T EQUIPPED FOR THIS SORT OF CONTEST)

Sent to us by: AA Staff, DaimlerChrysler LA

### CHANGING ROLES

A man was sick and tired of going to work every day while his wife stayed home. He wanted her to see what he went through so he prayed, Dear Lord, I go to work every day and put in 8 hours while my wife merely stays at home I want her to know what I go through, so please create a trade in our bodies.

God, in his infinite wisdom, granted the man's wish. The next morning, sure enough, the man awoke as a woman. He arose, cooked breakfast for his mate, awakened the kids, set out their school clothes, fed them Breakfast, packed their lunches, drove them to school, came home and picked up the dry cleaning, took it to the cleaners and stopped at the bank to make a deposit, went grocery shopping, then drove home to put away the groceries, paid the bills and balance the check book. He cleaned the cat's litter box and bathed the dog. Then it was already 1p.m. and he hurried to make the beds, do the laundry, vacuum, dust, and sweep and mop the kitchen floor. Ran to the school to pick up the kids and got into an argument with them on the way home. Set out cookies and milk and got the kids organized to do their homework, then set up the ironing board and watched TV while he did the ironing. At 4:30 he began peeling potatoes and washing vegetables for salad, breaded the pork chops and snapped fresh beans for supper. After supper he cleaned the kitchen, ran the dishwasher, folded laundry, bathed the kids, and put them to bed. At 9 p.m. he was exhausted and, though his daily chores weren't finished, he went to bed where he was expected to make love which he managed to get through without complaint.

The next morning he awoke and immediately knelt by the bed and said, Lord, I don't know what I was thinking. I was so wrong to envy my wife's being

able to stay home all day. Please, oh please, let us trade back.

The Lord, in his infinite wisdom, replied, My son, I feel you have learned your lesson and I will be happy to change things back to the way they were. You'll have to wait nine months, though. You got pregnant last night.

Sent by Gary Krek, HHC/2-22 Vietnam

### 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Society Reunion 2003

The 2003 22nd Infantry Regiment Society Reunion will be held October 23-26, 2003 in San Antonio, Texas at the Four Points by Sheraton Riverwalk North.

Please make your reservations early by calling the Four Points by Sheraton Riverwalk North at 1/800-288-3927.

Rooms are blocked under the name of "22nd Infantry Regiment Society". Please identify yourself as part of this group to get the negotiated room rate of \$99.00 for a single or double room plus 16.75% tax. Parking is \$6.00 per day.

On Friday, October 24, 2003, Peter Holt will host the group for a tour of San Antonio's new SBC Center, a dinner, and a pre-season NBA basketball game, starring our very own San Antonio Spurs. John Bradley and Peter Holt are planning other "Texas fun" times for you and are hoping to make your visit to San Antonio memorable.

Please contact Marie in Peter's office for additional information or help in planning your visit: phone (210/648-0000); e-mail, mkey@holtcompanies.net; fax (210/648-0078).

Ya All Come Now,

Marie Key, Executive Administrator Holt Companies

*Additional details relative to the reunion will be contained in future newsletters. I recommend that you make your room reservations early. As in the past quite a few of us will show up a day or two early.*

*Trust me, John and Peter are pulling all of the stops for this event. It will be a 'blow out'.*

*Magnet*

Closing: Folks this is it for now. Expect the next newsletter in the late November to early December time frame. Remember to send in your 2003 dues.

Have a great Thanksgiving,  
Love Linda

