



2nd Battalion 1st Infantry Chapter,
Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA)
WEBSITE: www.b-2-1-196lib.com



Volume 4

A Soldier's Footsteps

December, 2011

Commander' Corner: Wow! December already! Don't know about all of you but, time sure seems to fly anymore. Hope you all had a good Thanksgiving and will enjoy your Christmas. Part of my Thanksgiving is the thanks for having been associated with so many great men during my time in the service. These guys are friends for life and share a special bond of brotherhood. Several irons are in the fire right now. We are trying to decide on a logo for our column in the Americal Journal, we are deciding on when/how/what to do about issuing membership cards for the chapter, and, last but very important for our continuance, and I hate to say this, the onset of membership dues. Dutch DeGroot is designing a temporary logo for the next issue of the Journal and there will be more to come on this. The issuance of membership cards will be under discussion pending the adoption of a permanent logo and the cost involved. It is also expedient for us to initiate an annual dues charge. This is necessary to cover maintenance of the web site, newsletter postage, and any other expenses we may have. To date, we have a cash balance of \$226. Right now it looks like the dues will be \$5/yr for both 2/1 veterans and associate members. Starting in January, 2012, our Secretary/Treasurer, Don Hicks, will begin notification to our current membership.

Our newest chapter members are Don Campbell (Co. B), Doug Franz (B), Scott Smith (B, E, HHC), Stevie Russell (B), and Alan Mitchell (B, HHC). Welcome to the 2/1 Chapter.

Well, here's to starting a new year of seeing old friends, meeting new ones, and continuing the outstanding tradition of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment.

We have linked to the 196th LIB Website. It is www.196th.org.

Keep safe and may the bond of battle never be broken!

CHUCK

Editors Notes: We are still looking for items to place in the Newsletter. The *newsletter* has been successfully uploaded to the 2nd Battalion Website. If you missed an issue, look on the Website. The Web address in the heading of the N/L. If you have anything relating to this N/L, email or write them at the following addresses; Email: rheroux1@nc.rr.com or gcarder@columbus.rr.com. Snail mail: Rich Heroux, 2005 Montgomery Road, Franklinton, NC 27525-7300 or Gary Carder, 1725 Demorest Road, Columbus, OH 43228.

100-Year-Old Army Vet Celebrates Birthday: Listening to retired Chief Warrant Officer 3 Walter Nunn talk about his days in uniform is like a living history of the Army. "When I joined the Army in 1933 we still had horse-drawn artillery units here at Fort Sill," Nunn said. "And when I got out we were shooting nuclear shells. That was really interesting." Nunn has a lot of memories because he just turned 100 years old on Oct. 16. He celebrated his birthday recently at the H. G. King Community Center in Lawton with Lena, his wife of 73 years, and many friends and family members. Nunn was born in 1911 in a log cabin in McIntosh county, in eastern Oklahoma. The oldest of seven children, he joined the Army before he graduated from high school, because his

and times were hard during the Depression. That was also the Dust Bowl days here in Oklahoma, and farming was very difficult." Nunn said. "So I figured being in the Army was a good way to help my family."

The following article was taken from a bulletin put together by the staff of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry, 196th LIB, called "*The Legionnaire*" 15 January 1970 – Republic of Vietnam: BRAVO Nabs VC Rocket Launcher. Hawk Hill: The small piece of metal protruding from the tunnel floor looked useless, but the 196th Infantry Brigade soldiers kept digging. Their curiosity paid off, for the metal turned out to be a deadly 122 mm Rocket Launcher. A scout dog directed the men of the 2nd. Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment to the tunnel entrance. "We were climbing up this bushy hill and had just reached the second terrace," recalls Sergeant William Chrest, (Owosso, MI) of B Company, "when the dog came alert." A pit loomed ahead four feet by ten feet deep. Two grenades were lobbed into the hole, and the ground shook. Three soldiers lowered themselves in with grappling hooks and ropes. The Americal Division infantrymen moved on hands and knees into a horizontal tunnel which branched out from the pit." We had gone about 20 feet, when the tunnel made a sharp turn to the left", said Sgt. Chrest. "As we went around the corner, we saw this metal log sticking out of the ground." The men backed up 30 feet and threw a grappling hook at the object. A quick tug showed it to be free of booby traps. Sgt. Chrest borrowed a knife and started probing. He hit a metal tube. "The tube was so long," quipped the Sergeant."I thought we had hit a water main." After the tube came a bipod wrapped in plastic to protect its intricate parts. "As soon as I saw the plastic, I knew it had to be a weapon important to them," said Chrest. "There was no rust on the moving parts. The VC were getting ready to use it because they had already started to dig it up". The find had special meaning FOR Sgt. Chrest. "We got rocketed while on Hawk Hill," he said. "I could still hear the rockets whistling over the bunker. I can't help but wonder if this was the same Rocket Launcher.



Support Wreaths Across America

Christmas in RVN: For two nights, Dec. 24th and 25th 1969 a formal “cease fire” was called with the Viet Cong, and all four line companies of the 2d Battalion 1st Infantry were called to the rear and to a relatively secure hilltop to celebrate Christmas. Some brief memories were; Bravo company seeing another infantry line company and calling each other “REMF’s”. Santa flying into are area on a helicopter with red & green smoke grenades blowing off the skids, green gravy and turkey, our Charlie Brown Christmas tree with shaving cream snow, our old K.C. Papasan, (Our Kit Carson Scout & former NVA who previously fought against the French), with a battery operated toy my Aunt Sally had sent me, and the two (not one but two) yellow smoke grenades my platoon threw in my “hooch” as I was trying to get some sleep. An act of love the culprit only owned up to 20 years later at a reunion. LT laughed at the first one, but the second was a bit too much – my gear was yellow for days. It was nice not being shot at or having to shoot somebody. A simple hometown Christmas out on a muddy hill somewhere in I Corp, Vietnam.

Jerry Hughes, B 2/1 196 LIB

I WANT TO CRY

I WANT TO CRY.

I'M NOT SURE WHY.

AWAKE EMOTIONS! IT'S REVEILLE!

YOU'RE BACK IN THE WORLD. TIME TO SET YOU FREE!

WAIT.....I SMELL SMOKE FROM AN LZ.

I FEEL PAIN HIDDEN IN BLANK EXPRESSIONS OF MANCHILD WARRIORS,

AS I WATCH THEM LOAD THE BODIES OF FOREVER LOST POTENTIAL.

IS THAT TAPS I HEAR? NO....

JUST THE FADING SOUND OF THE DUSTOFF, SWALLOWED UP BY THE CLEAR BLUE SKY.

I'M GOING TO CRY.

I KNOW WHY.

Gary L. Carder, B 2/1 196 LIB

YOU LIKE TO PLAY GAMES DON'T YOU?

I'VE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY, AT LEAST THAT'S MY OPINION.

TO PLAY THE ULTIMATE GAME.

THE ULTIMATE TEAM SPORT.

ONE YOU'VE NEVER PLAYED.

YOU PLAY THIS GAME TWENTY FOUR HOURS A DAY SEVEN DAYS A WEEK FOR JUST ABOUT 365 DAYS.

THIS GAME WILL TEACH YOU ALL YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT YOU.

THERE IS NO OVERTIME.

BUT. THERE IS SUDDEN DEATH.

THE NAME OF THE GAME IS WAR.

“WAR “ 8-11-01 Bruce Nielsen, B 2/1 196 LIB

Guns have only two enemies; rust and politicians.

House Passes Jobs Bill for Veterans: Culminating a strong push by Veteran organizations to improve work opportunities for America’s jobless veterans, the House of Representatives has passed the final version of legislation that will help provide jobs for about one million veterans who are currently unemployed. Provisions of the bill, passed by the Senate on Nov. 10, include expanded education and training and transition assistance for veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as older veterans. The final version of this bill passed today by the House, the VOW to Hire Heroes Act, is welcome news to veterans especially America’s jobless veterans. The new legislation, once signed into law, will provide tax credits to businesses that hire veterans who are out of work — \$5,600 for each veteran and \$9,600 for each disabled veteran.

Key provisions of the bill in addition to the above are:

Makes the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) — an interagency workshop coordinated by the departments of Defense, Labor and Veterans Affairs — mandatory for servicemembers moving on to civilian life to help them secure meaningful jobs through resume-writing workshops and career counseling.

Expands education and training opportunities for older veterans by providing 100,000 unemployed veterans of past eras and wars with up to one year of additional Montgomery GI Bill benefits for education or training programs at community colleges and technical schools.

Provides disabled veterans up to one year of additional vocational rehabilitation and employment benefits.

Allows servicemembers to start looking for federal jobs before separating from active duty in order to facilitate a truly seamless transition from the military to jobs at federal agencies.

The unemployment rate for about a quarter-million veterans who have returned from Iraq and Afghanistan stands at about 12 percent. Of the estimated one million jobless veterans in America, two-thirds of them fall within the 35- to 64-age group.

Ohio Vietnam Vet Awarded Silver Star: Former Army Sgt. Thomas R. Gdovin, from Westlake, Ohio, was awarded the Silver Star Medal by U.S. Senator Rob Portman, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, in a ceremony on Capitol Hill on Nov. 8. The award, one of the nation's highest awards for gallantry in military service, honored Gdovin's actions in combat on March 8, 1968. Gdovin enlisted into the United States Army on July 5, 1966 and served in the 101st Airborne Division. He was awarded the Silver Star Medal for his bravery during the Vietnam War, risking his own life to save a wounded Soldier while under enemy fire. Dan Phillips, the Soldier he rescued and a native of Lancaster, Ohio, was in attendance alongside retired Lt. Gen. John Cushman, Gdovin's brigade commander in Vietnam. Along with the Silver Star, Gdovin has been awarded a Purple Heart with one oak leaf cluster, the National Defense Medal and the Vietnamese Service Medal with four bronze stars, the Combat Infantry Badge, the Parachutist Badge, the Expert Marksmanship Badge and the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm Unit Citation.

Need a Copy of Your DD214 or a Family Members DD214? We always get this question. Here’s the answer. A DD214 Record of Military Service is always free to obtain for the service member and family members. DD214 requests can be processed online or by mail/fax. To complete the online form or to print the form and mail/fax it to the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), www.archives.gov/st-louis.

Amputee Soldier Once More Into the Breach:

When people ask Staff Sgt. Brian Beem why he stayed in the Army after a bomb blast took part of his right leg, he usually answers with a joke. "I was on a lot of drugs when I made that decision." A little more than five years after the blast, Beem was lucid and upright on a prosthetic limb as he re-enlisted at a remote base in Kandahar province, Afghanistan, extending his contract with the military. The decision was easy, he said. Even as he lay doped up on painkillers in a hospital bed at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in 2006, "I knew I was going to stay in for the full 20," he said. "I've always known that." His patrol was returning to base Oct. 11, 2006, rolling a block south of the notorious Baghdad slum Sadr City when an explosively formed penetrator sliced through the hull of his Stryker combat vehicle. Beem, of Poughkeepsie, N. Y., was knocked off his feet, but didn't know why. "I'd been in a couple IED blasts before that," he said. "That was a rugged one." He looked over to see his best friend, Sgt. Nicholas R. Sowinski, of Tempe, Ariz., dead next to him. The vehicle was on fire. All power and internal communication was out. As he called out to the rest of the Soldiers in the vehicle to find out if anyone else was injured or dead, he felt down the length of his leg. Down to his knee was probed further, he felt a second knee. It was a fine, but as he what seemed like compound fracture. He managed to climb out of the wreck before his headset's cord yanked was shattered, his best friend gone, but even in that moment, he laugh at forgetting to unplug himself. "I find amusement in all the little things," he said. "It's a coping guess." Less than three weeks after the bombing, complications forced surgeons to remove part of his leg. And less than a year later, he was back to work in Alaska. That's not where he wanted to be. His unit, 5th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, was deploying to Iraq without him. "But when this one came around, and when our number was drawn to come over here for this fight, Staff Sgt. Beem fought very hard to make sure that he could be here," said Col. Todd Wood, commander of 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division. Wood issued Beem's oath of re-enlistment at FOB Frontenac, in Kandahar's Arghandab River Valley. The fact that he still wanted to deploy after having already done it, not needing to further prove himself, "is amazing," said Staff Sgt. Andrew Bobo, a 5th Squadron member and close friend of Beem. "He's one of the few people I've ever introduced my friends from home to." "I call him my bionic friend," said Bobo, of Payson, Utah. "It's almost like basking in the reflected glory of somebody else's coolness." Beem shrugs off that kind of thing. For him, it's about the inspiration he derives from the people around him and the memory of his friend, Sowinski. "I would like to think that if he were still alive today ... and he were in the same situation, he would make the same choices," he told the 5th Squadron troops who attended his re-enlistment. "I do it for people like him, I do it for my family, I do it for my friends and I do it because of all the people like you."



All Right They're on Our Left, They're on Our Right, They're in Front of Us, They're Behind Us.... They Can't Get Away This Time.

Lt. Gen. Lewis B. "Chesty" Puller



Tomb of the Unknown Repaired: Arlington National Cemetery has repaired large cracks that ran across the Tomb of the Unknowns due to wear and tear over time. A specially-designed grout was used to fill the cracks, and inspectors have found the repairs to be holding up just fine. The recent work will be checked again in the Spring to see how it fares this Winter.

Veterans and Their Spouses Get Startup Help

From the SBA: According to the Small Business Administration (SBA), nearly one-fourth of newly discharged veterans consider starting their own businesses. Many get started using an SBA Patriot Express loan. The program offers streamlined and expedited loan procedures to help people in the military open their own small businesses. Patriot Express loans are available to veterans, active-duty military eligible for the military's Transition Assistance Program, Reservists, National Guard members, current spouses of any of these groups, and surviving spouses of members or veterans who died during service or from service connected disability. Many members of veteran's organizations meet at least one of these eligibility requirements. A Patriot loan is a good way for our veteran's to help themselves and put the skills acquired during service to work for themselves. In addition, the Veterans Business Outreach Program provides business training, counseling, and mentoring to those considering starting a small business. Many Veteran Business Outreach Centers also provide pre-business plan workshops, business plan preparation, feasibility analysis, mentoring, and other business development services. SBA loans of up to \$500,000 may be used for business start-up, expansion, equipment purchases, working capital, inventory, or business-occupied real estate purchases. Interest rates generally are 2.25 percent to 2.75 percent above the prime rate, based on the amount and maturity of the loan. To learn more about the Patriot Express program, visit www.sba.gov/patriotexpress.

Canine Comrades: The Army and Marine Corps are expanding their canine-unit programs. It is reported that 725 military working-dog teams are deployed in CENTCOM's war zones, the vast majority of them in Afghanistan. Frontline dogs, deployed with soldiers and marines are able to detect explosive devices and give U.S. personnel an early indication of the presence of IEDs. New funding will allow troops to continue the canine program through 2014.

Full Honors: On June 26, 1943, 10 Army airmen took off in their B-17E Flying Fortress, nicknamed "Naughty but Nice," on a bombing mission over Papua New Guinea during World War II. The aircraft was shot down by Japanese fighter aircraft, and only the mission's navigator, Army 1st LT, Jose L. Holguin, survived. On September 21, 2011, the remains of those nine airmen killed were interred as a group at Arlington National Cemetery, Va., with full military honors.