



# 2nd Battalion 1st Infantry Chapter, Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA)



WEBSITE: [www.b-2-1-196lib.com](http://www.b-2-1-196lib.com)

ADVAcover.com

Volume 2

"A Soldier's Footsteps"

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**C**ommander's Corner: Thanksgiving is past and I hope all of you had a wonderful day with family and friends. If you are like my clan, there are always at least 2 places to go fill up on good chow and, hopefully take in at least part of a football game while you try to digest all of the goodies you have stuffed into your body. One of my sisters, Cheri, always puts on one hell of a spread of food and desserts and by the time I've sampled everything, I feel like I've gained a 100 lbs. I always spend the Friday after Thanksgiving hibernating and avoid leaving the house and getting into the hordes of people shopping on "Black Friday"; the biggest shopping day of the year. December will bring another holiday that affords us the chance to spend time with family and friends but, I hope you make time to do this throughout the year. Whether it be a birthday, ball game, barbeque, or whatever, family and friends are, hopefully, the most precious thing each of us will have our entire lives: especially the bonds formed with our brothers in battle. I was a little remiss in not identifying the newest members in the last newsletter; totally spaced putting it in. Our newest members are Pete Cullen (E), Dave Blanton (B), Lee Klein (B), Carl Fryman (C), Allen W. Smith (B), and Dan Hollins (E). Welcome to all of you and any contributions you want to make as far as newsletter articles, web site suggestions/corrections, pictures, or whatever you can come up with, will be greatly appreciated. Jerry Cochran has suggested a new feature for the web site which would contain "before and after" pictures of you guys. If anyone wants to send in a "Nam" pic and a current pic, I'll try to get something put together this winter. I hope to meet all of you at the Americal Reunion/Chapter Meeting in Nashville, TN. next year or at one of the other VN reunions that are held through the year. I want to wish our brothers, Gary Carder and Don Hicks, well as both are going through some tough times physically. Drop them a line or call them when you get the chance; contact information is on the web site. Remember, January, 2013 is annual dues month and they will remain at \$5/year. The vast majority of our members are current with their 2012 dues but, we are missing a few. We rely on dues and contributions to fund our newsletter, web site, and hospitality room at the annual chapter meeting. So, if you can, get them in to Don Hicks, we would appreciate it. 2012 has been a wonderful year for the chapter and we have seen our membership blossom. Thanks to all of you for your help and support throughout the year. If you are aware of a 2/1 Infantry member who needs to join our Chapter, please tell him of our existence and encourage them to sign up. We should enroll everyone who is eligible. Merry Christmas to all!

Chuck

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

There are two theories to arguing with a woman. Neither works. Will Rogers

**A**merical Division Veterans Association (ADVA) 2013 National Reunion: The ADVA national reunion committee has blocked the following dates as the 2013 National Reunion to be held in Nashville, TN. Check-in will be on Wednesday September 11, 2013. Thursday Sept 12 will be field trip to Fort Campbell and the 101st Airmobile Division. Friday Sept. 13 a trip is being scheduled for visiting the Tennessee Vietnam Veterans Memorial, (one of the nicest in the country) followed by a trip to the Country Music Hall of Fame, Dinner and the Grand Ole Opry. Saturday Sept 14 will be meetings social time and the annual banquet. Sunday will be check out. More will be published as we get more information from the National Committee. Please plan to attend as we are also scheduling our Chapter Annual Meeting at the same period.

**C**OLA Passes Senate: Returning to work this week, the Senate quickly passed a cost-of-living adjustment or COLA for VA. The 1.7 percent increase affects VA compensation for disabled veterans and surviving spouses. The COLA bill ties the rate for veterans' COLA to the increase in Social Security compensation which is determined each year by the consumer price index (CPI). The House passed their version in July. The President is expected to sign the bill soon. The increase in benefits for 3.9 million veterans and their families will take effect December 1, 2012. Since benefits are paid retroactively, the first check to reflect the increase is due on or about January 1, 2013.

**A**New Oil Power: The main topic of conversation at a recent OPEC conference in Vienna was the reemergence of the United States as a global oil power. As Financial Times reports, "over the past three years, the United States has accounted for the entire net increase in global oil output, excluding OPEC members and former Soviet republics." In fact, the United States increased oil and liquid hydrocarbon output by 1.1 million barrels per day between 2008 and 2011. As the United States expands development of shale oil, output will only grow. Ryan Lance, CEO of ConocoPhillips, says his firm expects U.S. shale-liquids production to grow by 150 percent by 2020. "Thanks to both shale and Canadian oil sands, North America could become self-sufficient in oil... by 2025 and even a net exporter."

**E**ditors Notes: Newsletters are uploaded to the 2nd Battalion Chapter ADVA Website. If you missed an issue or would like to look at one from the past look on the Website. The Web address is identified in the heading of the N/L. If you have anything relating to this N/L, email or write them to the following addresses; Email: [rheroux1@nc.rr.com](mailto:rheroux1@nc.rr.com) or [gcarder@columbus.rr.com](mailto:gcarder@columbus.rr.com). Snail mail: Rich Heroux, 2005 Montgomery Road, Franklinton, NC 27525-7300 or Gary Carder, 1725 Demorest Road, Columbus, OH 43228.

**A true friend is someone who reaches for your hand and touches your heart.**

**House Committee Discusses Employment Initiatives:** The House Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity held a hearing to discuss ongoing veterans' employment initiatives. The committee members asked representatives from VA and the Department of Labor to evaluate their programs. Most of the hearing focused on persistent high unemployment among Iraq and Afghanistan-era veterans, the VA's implementation of the new Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) and the Department of Labor's goal to refine the roles of Disabled Veteran Outreach Program specialists and Local Veterans Employment Representatives. VFW will continue to monitor and advocate for comprehensive veterans' employment solutions and hold agencies accountable for the programs they have implemented to serve our nation's heroes. Change the 20-year military retirement plan to resemble civilian plans.

Your Editor received the following email from Dixie Carder, Gary's wife concerning Gary's current struggle. He is at the point in his recovery that requires professional help. The family has asked for your continued prayers for him as he goes through another phase of his battle. He needs all of our help. If you want to send him a get well card and encourage his recovery, I am sure it will go a long way to demonstrate our confidence for his revitalization. His address is: 1725 Demorest Road, Columbus, OH 43228.

**Dear Fellow Chapter Members:** This is not an easy update on Gary Carder's condition for me to post, but it is necessary. Based on Gary's weakened state, the doctors and all the family concur that Gary needs to go into a rehab facility for awhile. He needs to build up his strength so he can go home without the risk of falling again. I and the family will be able to stay during the day but not at night. The facility chosen by the family is nice and has everything Gary requires to get his strength back on track. I wish I could stay with him, but maybe someone else taking over his care for awhile is best for both of us. He will be going to Mill Run Gardens in Hilliard which is recommended by the doctors and others who are familiar with the place. It is completely furnished and we will take his personal belongings there for him to have. They have a chef there who will plan his low sodium meals and also watch his fluid intake. I don't want him to think we don't want to take care of him, because that is far from the truth. He wasn't keen on the idea in the beginning because I couldn't be there all of the time, but now I think he is okay with it because I can be there till he falls asleep at night. I sure hope we are doing the right thing and he doesn't give up because then I wouldn't be able to forgive myself. Please continue your prayers that all this works out okay and he gets stronger and can come home where he belongs. I will update you when we are settled. Take Care and God Bless your all for your support and encouragement. *Dixie Carder*

**VA Increases Vets Retraining Assistance Program:** VA announced they have filled 36,000 of the 45,000 job training openings available under the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) passed as a part of the *VOW to Heroes Act*. An additional 55,000 openings will be available October 1, 2012. VRAP provides up to \$1,473 a month in GI Bill benefits for those taking full-time courses to learn the skills necessary to land a job. VFW was instrumental in getting the provision passed as a part of the comprehensive jobs bill and encourages eligible veterans to apply online.

**TRICARE Prime Announces Fees for 2013:** The 2012 TRICARE Prime enrollment fees for uniformed services retirees and their families went into effect in October 2012. The new fees for 2013 are \$269.28 for Retirees and \$538.56 for Retirees and their family members. Survivors of deceased active duty sponsors and medically retired service members and their dependents are exempt from annual fee increases. Their enrollment fees are frozen at the rate in effect when they were classified and enrolled in TRICARE Prime. Their fees remain frozen as long as there is no break in their TRICARE Prime enrollment. For more information please visit <http://tricare.mil>



**Wreaths Across America:** A program started by a florist in Maine has spread across America. The stated mission of Wreaths Across America is to, Remember, Honor, Teach, is carried out in part by coordinating wreath laying ceremonies a specified Saturday in December at Arlington, as well as veterans' cemeteries and other locations in all 50 states and beyond. We also organize a week of events including international veteran's tributes, ceremonies at State Houses and a week-long "Veteran's Parade" between Maine and Virginia where we stop along the way to spread our message about the importance of remembering our fallen heroes, honoring those who serve, and teaching our children about the sacrifices made by veterans and their families to preserve our freedoms. This week of events is made possible by thousands of volunteers who organize local ceremonies, raise funds to sponsor wreaths, and participate in the events. We receive no government funding. The cost of our programs is paid by individual wreaths sponsors, **corporate donors** and **volunteer truckers**.

**Combating Illness:** We have several Comrades that require our thoughts. Gary Carder's condition continues to baffle the doctors. Read a synopsis of his case further on in this N/L. Our esteemed Treasurer, Don Hicks, has been under the weather for sometime now. Although he claims to be getting better, he still would be happy if we were to send him encouragement. If you are aware of someone who could use our prayers and kind words, please let us know so we could put out the word to the rest of us for help. Let the Commander or Editor know so we can get the word out to our members.

**Never put both feet in your mouth at the same time, because then you won't have a leg to stand on.**

## **V**A Offers a New Tool to Help Veterans Prevent Diabetes:

The Department of Veterans Affairs today announced the implementation of a pilot version of the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP), a program being promoted nationally by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, aimed at reducing the number of Veterans who develop diabetes. "The Diabetes Prevention Program will provide Veterans with another tool to help them lead healthier, fuller lives, reducing their risk for diabetes," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. The DPP was a major multi-center clinical research study aimed at discovering whether modest weight loss through dietary change and increased physical activity or treatment with the oral diabetes drug metformin could prevent or delay the onset of Type 2 diabetes. The study enrolled participants who were prediabetic—overweight and with blood glucose (blood sugar) levels higher than normal, but not high enough for a diagnosis of diabetes. Results showed those who lost a modest amount of weight through dietary changes and increased physical activity sharply reduced their chances of developing diabetes. "Approximately 24 percent of Veterans have Type 2 diabetes," said Dr. Linda Kinsinger, VA's chief consultant for preventive medicine. "We've monitored the DPP's results and we feel that it could be another tool to make a difference for Veterans." Through VA's pilot DPP, which will be offered on a strictly voluntary basis, some Veterans who are at risk for, but not diagnosed with, diabetes will attend a series of group sessions and will be given predetermined weight loss and physical activity goals. Research has shown that, while many Veterans benefit by establishing their own health goals, others show positive improvement working towards goals determined by the program. Other Veterans at risk for diabetes will receive weight management care through MOVE! - VA's current weight management program. The program targets a broad range of patients who are obese or overweight with obesity-related conditions, whereas the DPP specifically targets those obese individuals who have laboratory evidence of prediabetes. Because VA is eager to try new approaches to promoting health and preventing disease, it is implementing a pilot VA version of the DPP. A limited number of Veterans with prediabetes will be able to participate in this pilot clinical program at the medical centers in Minneapolis, Baltimore, and GA coordinating center. For more information on this program, contact Jay Shiffler ([jay.shiffler@va.gov](mailto:jay.shiffler@va.gov)) at the VA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention. To learn more about the VA's prevention program, visit <http://www.prevention.va.gov/index.asp>.

**A** legacy is something that is left to others when one is gone. The Americal Division Veterans Association created its Legacy Committee to develop a legacy for veterans of the Americal Division (23rd Infantry Division). Part of the legacy will be the creation and construction of fitting memorials to the veterans that served in all units of these this proud U.S. Army infantry division.

Donations to the Legacy Fund should be sent to PNC Ronald R. Ellis, 4493 Hwy. 64 W, Henderson, TX 75652. Be sure to write a note to let Ron know you are contributing to the Legacy Fund. Thank you for helping this program that honors the memory of veterans who served in the Americal Division.

*Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier'n puttin' it back.*  
Will Rogers

## **R**egistering your DD 214 with the County Clerk of Courts/ VA Rep:

One of the first things you are told before you are discharged from the Military is, "Make sure you register your DD214." It may seem like this is really not that important, until you find yourself searching for this document. You may need it to verify VA benefits or for a job interview and without it, you have no documented proof that you actually completed a military enlistment. Let's face it, anyone can say they were in the military and without your DD214 you are just like everyone else. Where to Register Your DD214: The first place you may want to register your DD214 is with your County Veterans Office because, it will be beneficial in the future, when you are ready to take advantage of the VA benefits that you are eligible for. Some of the benefits you may have rights to are:

*Education Benefits*

*VA Home Loans*

*VA Medical Benefits*

*Disability Claims*

*Employment Opportunities*

These are just a few of the benefits that qualifying veterans are eligible to receive. By having your DD214 on file with the County Veterans Office, the office can assist you with filing VA applications and required forms that may be needed to apply for VA benefits. In addition, by registering with the county veteran's office, you can ask to receive county veterans' information about job fairs, emergency financial assistance, and many other county veteran programs. The 2<sup>nd</sup> place your going to want to register your DD214 is the Clerk of Courts at your County Courthouse. This is for one reason and one reason only; if your original copy gets lost while moving, cleaning the house, or is just accidentally thrown away. You have a back-up... just a car ride away.

## **V**A Guarantees 20 Millionth Home Loan:

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced it has guaranteed 20 million home loans since the home loan program was established in 1944 for returning World War II Veterans. The 20 millionth loan was guaranteed for a home in Woodbridge, Va., purchased by the surviving spouse of an Iraq War Veteran who passed away in 2010. Given the current low interest rates, the program has grown significantly in the past five years, with 71 percent more purchases and 20 times as many refinances processed in fiscal year (FY) 2012 than in FY 2007. Currently, there are 1.7 million VA guaranteed home loans in existence with a total value of \$284 billion. VA has guaranteed 540,000 mortgages in 2012. "The 20 millionth VA home loan is a major milestone and is a testament to VA's commitment to support and enhance the lives of Veterans, Servicemembers, their families and survivors," said Allison A. Hickey, VA's undersecretary for benefits. "As a result of their service and sacrifice, as a group, they prove to be disciplined, reliable, and honorable—traits that are ideal for this kind of national investment." The program makes home ownership more affordable for eligible Veterans, Servicemembers, and surviving spouses by providing access to lower cost financing. VA loans are also attractive within the mortgage industry because they protect lenders from loss if the borrower fails to repay the loan. Mortgages guaranteed by VA have had the lowest foreclosure rate for the last 17 quarters and the lowest delinquency rate for the last 14 quarters compared to all other types of home loans. Much of the strength of VA's home loan program stems from the efforts of VA to ensure Veterans receive every possible opportunity to remain in their homes and avoid foreclosure. Since 2009, VA's efforts have resulted in over \$8 billion in savings to taxpayers in foreclosure avoidance.

**NDU Honors Special Operations Community:** During a dinner gala in November 2012, the National Defense University Foundation honored members of U.S. Special Operations Command for their service and sacrifice in the war against terrorism. The American Patriot Award recognizes exceptional Americans who have demonstrated a profound and abiding love of country. The award also honors those who have provided inspirational leadership and selfless dedication to national security and world peace, significantly advancing national ideals, values and democratic principles. Navy Adm. William H. McRaven, commander of SOCOM, accepted the 2012 award on behalf of the men and women he leads, as his unit celebrates its 25th birthday. The command was established by an act of U.S. Congress in 1987. "What an honor it is to be here this evening representing the men and women of the special operations force," he said, before introducing each service's top officer and enlisted leader. "These men represent the 66,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines that make up the U.S. Special Operations Command," McRaven said. The admiral also acknowledged former SOCOM commander, Army Gen. Bryan "Doug" Brown, as well as five recipients of the Distinguished Service Cross, five Navy Cross recipients and one Air Force Cross recipient as "modern-day SOF heroes." "In addition to these men, since 9/11, SOF warriors have been the recipients of another 10 service crosses and four Medals of Honor, including Ranger [Army] Sgt. 1st Class Leroy Petri and three posthumous awards, to Green Beret [Army] Staff Sgt. Rob Miller and [Navy] SEALs Mike Murphy and Mike Monsoon," Craven said. The SOCOM commander noted the years since 9/11 have highlighted the "unique nature" of special operations, citing events ranging from the capture of Saddam Hussein to current efforts of troops assisting Afghan Local Police. "From the jungles of the Philippines and Colombia, to the mountains of Yemen, to the deserts of North Africa, to waters off Somalia," Craven said, "our special operations forces have been instrumental in protecting American lives abroad and keeping violence from our shores." "These operations have captured the imagination of the American public and the attention of the world," he said. A theme throughout Craven's remarks was a question he said he's often asked: "What makes special operations so special?" "Well I can tell you that, as good as they are, the men and women of special operations are no more courageous, no more patriotic, no smarter or no more committed than any other man or woman in uniform," he said. "All of us who have served have been inspired by the uncommon valor of Medal of Honor recipients Sal Gaunt, of the U.S. Army, and Marine Staff Sgt. Dakota Meyer," Craven said. "We are all moved by the young men and women of all the services who re-enlist at a time when the fighting is the toughest and their sacrifice the greatest." The admiral also credited young service members who are "wickedly smart" for their skills and technical abilities. "We are the sum of the parts of the greatest military the world has ever seen," Craven said. "As SOF warriors, we are shaped by our services, forged in the crucibles of training posts like Parris Island, the Great Lakes, Lockland Air Force Base and Fort Benning." "It is from the services that we gain our heritage, our tradition, our creeds," he said. "It is from the long lineage of soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines that came before us that drive our sense of duty." Craven said special operations forces are a "microcosm of America," drawing strength from every corner of the United States and the world. "Not only do we benefit from the strength of our parent services, but we are blessed to be

part of a larger interagency organization," he said, citing the State Department, Central Intelligence Agency and others. "We have achieved a unity of purpose -- an action that is unparalleled in the history of warfare," McRaven said. "So what is it that makes special operations so special?" McRaven asked again. "It is men and women who are steeped in the heritage of their service, bonded by a common purpose, inspired by the nation and who are willing to fight and die for the American people that they love so much."

**Two Korean War MIAs Identified:** The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office recently announced the identifications of remains belonging to two Korean War soldiers. Returned home are:

\* Army Sgt. Stanley W. Bear, 19, of Greenup, Ky. On Sept. 4, 1950, Bear would be reported as missing after battling enemy forces near Haman, South Korea. He was assigned to F Company, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division. Unidentifiable remains would eventually be recovered and interred as an "unknown" in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu.

\* Army Cpl. Elmer C. Kidd, 22, of Seneca Falls, N.Y. In late November 1950, Kidd and his unit, the 31st Regimental Combat Team, were advancing along the eastern banks of the Chosin Reservoir, in North Korea, when they were attacked by a massive enemy force. Kidd would be reported missing after a fighting withdrawal to positions south of the reservoir.

**Dear Editor:** I just read your newsletter for November, especially the article about Kham Duc. I was there on May 12, 1968. As a matter of fact, on this date November 4th, 1967 is my 45th anniversary of leaving for Nam. The aircraft that was shot down was intended for my company C 2/1. We were the last infantry company out of Kham Duc. The 3 Air Force personnel were not the last ones out. Three guys from one OP were there for 6 days. One guy was named Ron Sassenberger from Idaho. I met him at a reunion of the 196th in Hampton, Virginia in 1992. He told the story to some of us of their survival until their rescue 6 days later. The NVA were searching for him and two other guys the whole time. The CH-47 crashed near me and with the help of some other guys we were able to get the crew out because it was starting to burn. It failed to auto rotate down. The Huey that went down happened almost in the middle of Charlie company. It flipped on it's side almost on top of the CP. One gunner was trapped underneath and we were able to raise the chopper off of him and get him out. When we left, the NVA had control of most of the camp by then. Pretty harrowing day!!!! I saw the C-130 that was nearly hit by the mortar round. It blew out one of the tires and the crew was trying to stop the aircraft. It was carrying A 1/46th, I believe. I remember vividly those guys jumping out of the cargo door in the back of the aircraft. We ran out and helped some of them off the runway. Later, we watched that same aircraft take off empty. Just reflecting a little of that day. The article just brought it to mind. Maybe some of Bravo's guys from that era may have been there too. I could tell you much more but I won't bore you any longer.

*Carl Fryman*

## Assisted Living House and VA Benefits



*If a home in an assisted living community is what you need, then it's possible that veterans' benefits can help.* Homes in assisted living communities are often for sale rather than rent. VA borrowers with assisted living needs may be able to get a VA-guaranteed mortgage to finance a property located in an [assisted living](#) community.

As long as the property meets VA requirements for acceptable use, then it can be considered for VA financing. For instance, condos and townhomes must be on the VA-approved list, and all properties must undergo a VA appraisal and provide safe living conditions.

Qualified veterans or surviving spouses with assisted living needs may purchase approved homes in assisted living communities using the VA Home Loan Guaranty Program, and there may be additional VA benefits available.

Through an underutilized VA benefit called Aid and Attendance, wartime veterans and surviving spouses can receive reimbursement for in-home care. Those who are unable to feed and dress themselves and take care of bathing and other bodily needs without assistance, and those who are bedridden or need help with prosthetic or orthopedic devices, may qualify for the Aid and Attendance benefit. Also, those with physical or mental injuries or illnesses that may require assistance to protect them from daily environmental hazards or dangers may also qualify.

The annual income threshold for Aid and Attendance is currently \$18,234 for a veteran with no dependents. Those with one dependent can make \$21,615 and still qualify. For each additional dependent, the threshold is upped by \$1,866. For surviving spouses with no dependents, the annual Aid and Attendance threshold is \$11,715. For spouses with one dependent, the threshold is \$13,976 and increases by \$1,866 for each additional dependent.

The advantages of buying a home using a [VA loan](#) include:

- No money down up to conforming loan limits
- No monthly private mortgage insurance premiums
- No prepayment penalties
- Competitive interest rates

For more information about purchasing a home in an assisted-living community using a VA-guaranteed loan contact a VA specialty lender.