



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



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

Volume 4

"A Soldier Once... And Always"

October 2014

**Commanders Corner:** Almost everyone knows what it is to lose a best friend and unfortunately I had that experience in August. Actually, it was my 2nd best friend; dear wife. My friend Lucky of 17 years, never questioned anything I did and was always happy to see me whatever the circumstances. This friend was known to give me presents out of the clear blue and I never knew what to expect. Friends come in all shapes, sizes, sexes and backgrounds. Friends appear out of the clear blue at times and for no apparent reason there is a bond that binds you together. We should cherish all of our friendships and strive to maintain them no matter what the circumstances. My dad told me that you should allow your true friends two idiosyncrasies and you need to overlook them in order to maintain a true friendship. After reflecting on the loss of my friend, I started thinking how much this applied to us; especially the bonds created with our fellow soldiers in a situation forced upon us. Uncle Sam threw us together from all parts of the country, various circumstances, backgrounds and attitudes; and we became friends. My dog, Lucky, was tossed out in the countryside and, somehow, we were dumped in the boonies. Finding a bunch of grubby looking soldiers we didn't know from Adam. We made friends, friends for life, with a special bond that can never be broken. Lucky was a friend I have lost like many others throughout my life and, like the others, held a special place in my heart; as do all of my buddies I met in Vietnam. I continue to cherish those friendships and will do my all I can to take care of them to the best of my ability. We are Brothers in combat and for life. The annual Americal Reunion was held in Houston in September. We had approximately 25 chapter members attending. During the annual chapter meeting we discussed several items that will be addressed in another newsletter. I attended the Veterans Reunion in Kokomo just a couple of days after I returned from Houston. At Kokomo, several chapter members conducted a memorial service at the opening ceremony. Another 2/1 Infantry hero was recognized for his conduct during the Vietnam Conflict recently and his accomplishment should invoke pride in us all. Specialist 4 Donald Sloat Company D, 2/1 Infantry was awarded the congressional Medal of Honor during ceremonies held on September 17, 2014 at the White House, Washington, D.C. Attending the ceremonies were family members and members of Delta Company. A host of former members of the 2/1 Battalion worked over 10 years to secure the much deserved award for heroic acts during September 1970 at Que Song Valley, RVN.



Chuck

May the bands of battle never be broken:



**DOD Identifies 5 Missing Service Members:** The Defense POW/MIA Office has announced the identification of remains belonging to World War II and Korean War soldiers. Recovered are:

- **Army Air Forces 1st Lt. William Cook and Sgt. Eric M. Honeywell**, 599th Bombardment Squadron, 397th Bombardment Group, lost Dec. 23, 1944, over Germany. He will be buried with full military honors at a location yet to be determined.
- **Army Pfc. Richard N. Bean**, Company D, 1st Battalion, 105th Infantry Regiment, 27th Infantry Division, lost June 15, 1944, in Saipan. He will be buried with full military honors at a location yet to be determined.
- **Army Sgt. Lee H. Manning**, Medical Company, 9th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, lost Dec. 1, 1950, in North Korea. He will be buried with full military honors at a location yet to be determined.
- **Army Pfc. Arthur Richardson**, 28, of Fall River, Mass., lost in January 1951 in South Korea. Richardson, a member of Company A, 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, will be buried Sept. 18 in Arlington National Cemetery

**Airstrikes Alone May Not Defeat Sunni Militants:** In their Syrian strongholds, extremists from the Islamic State group had been moving into civilian apartment buildings for cover days before the U.S. and its allies began pounding them before dawn Tuesday, activists say. It's just one sign of the difficulties in trying to destroy the group by relying mainly on airstrikes.

Breaking the militants' hold over the cities they have captured in both Iraq and Syria will be complicated because the group can easily melt into the population. In the Iraqi city of Mosul, the extremists have enough support among the mainly Sunni Muslim population that they have reduced the presence of their fighters in the streets without apparent worry about their grip on power.

Another problem is that there are no allied forces on the ground poised to move in to control territory should the militants retreat under the aerial bombardment.



**Veterans Administration Responds to increases in Suicides:** The most recent data for veteran suicides – 22 a day – is heartbreaking. These are men and women who vowed with their lives to protect our great nation. They slept on battlefields, spent weeks at sea, flew over hostile territory and faced enemy fire so that we might sleep without fear at home in America. Somewhere along the line, sometime after discharge, something happened to them. It may have been caused by post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury. It may have been depression brought about by unemployment, under-employment or homelessness. No matter the reason, mental health of veterans is an issue in need of resolve. The American Legion knows that the high suicide rate does not need to exist. VA has broadened its ability to help veterans in crisis. In fact, family members and friends can contact VA through its suicide prevention hotline, texting service or online chat if there are concerns. Here is how you or someone you care for can reach VA during a crisis:

- **Chat phone number: 800-273-8255, press 1.**
- **Texting service: 838255**
- **Online chat service: [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net)**

VA responders have participated in more than 1.25 million crisis center calls, 175,000 online chats and 24,000 texting conversations. There are many success stories and happy endings in those conversations. Still, more needs to be done to reverse the increasing number of suicides.

September was National Suicide Prevention Month. But once the calendar turns to October, the threat remains. Be on the lookout for veterans who need help. Listen to them. Talk with them. Direct them to their local coordinators at [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net), or, if necessary, contact a counselor on their behalf.

A simple phone call, a willingness to listen or to step up with a referral for a fellow veteran can save lives. Please be on the lookout.

**Seabees Deploy to Liberia to Build Ebola Treatment Center:** A team of 15 Seabees from Djibouti has deployed to Liberia as part of the U.S. military effort to stem the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. The engineering team from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 133 at Camp Lemonnier will build one of 17 hospitals in Liberia that are central to military efforts, known as Operation United Assistance. The team will conduct site surveys, construct the \$ 22 million hospital and stock it with supplies, according to military officials and a Facebook post by the task force that normally commands the team in Djibouti. Members left Djibouti on Friday for the Navy base in Rota, Spain, en route to the Liberian capital of Monrovia. Their deployment follows the arrival last Wednesday of U.S. Army Africa commander Maj. Gen. Darryl Williams and a dozen military planners. Williams is leading the joint operation, which is slated to last six months but may be extended as needed, Pentagon officials have said. Roughly 3,000 U.S. troops are expected to deploy to the country in the coming weeks. A Pentagon spokesman indicated 60 military personnel are already in the country, including Seabees. Each of the 17 treatment centers will have a 100 bed capacity. The mission aims to train local health care workers to treat patients and to provide command and control for U.S. and international efforts to halt the spread of the virus.

[Money cannot buy happiness, but it's more comfortable to cry in a Corvette than on a bicycle.](#)

**Stories from you contain historical value for all who served. Please send your story to Editor, 2/1 Newsletter either by email [rheroux1@nc.rr.com](mailto:rheroux1@nc.rr.com), or by snail mail at 2005 Montgomery Road, Franklinton, NC 27525. (See page 6)**

There were two events that took place during the month of September 2014. The major event was the Americal Division Veterans' Association Reunion. This reunion was held at the Hilton hotel in North Houston, Texas. Accommodations could not have been more pleasing. The 2/1 Infantry Chapter also had its annual reunion/meeting as well. The chapter was well represented by twenty-five members attending. Along with the reunion activities many took part in the off campus activities such as visiting the George W. Bush Library located on the campus of Texas A & M University and Tours of the San Jacinto Monument, Battleship Texas and Houston National Cemetery. The Chapter had a great hospitality room stocked by our Treasurer Don Hicks and his lovely wife Rene. The weather was pleasant as were the visitors. Many issues came up during the Chapter Annual Meeting. These items will be discussed in detail in our future Newsletters. The other event was the Annual National Vietnam Veterans Reunion held in Kokomo, Indiana. I believe this is the 20th anniversary of this event. A number of our members attended this event. The event was highlighted by the dedication of memorial bricks placed in the entrance of the reunion facility. A single brick for each deceased member of one of our units serving in Vietnam. Please refer to the last page of this newsletter for a collage of the pictures taken at these events.

**Iraqi Kurds Fight Islamic State With Aged Weapons:** The exhausted Kurdish fighters leaned against a pair of antiquated green cannons on a hill overlooking this northern Iraqi village, the ground around them littered with shrapnel from fierce battles with Islamic State militants. One of them, Moustafa Saleh, tapped the cannon with his mud-caked boots. "Russian-made," he said, with a smirk. "My grandfather used the same one." Iraqi Kurdish fighters on the front lines of battle say they have yet to receive the heavy [weapons](#) and training pledged by the United States and nearly a dozen other countries to help them push back the Sunni militants. U.S.-led airstrikes have forced the militants to retreat or go into hiding in towns and villages across northern Iraq, paving the way for ground forces to retake territory seized by the militant group in its lightning advance since June across western and northern Iraq. But without more sophisticated weaponry, the Kurdish fighters, known as peshmerga, have had to rely on aging arms like the Soviet-era cannons, a centerpiece of the offensive Tuesday to retake Mahmoudiyah and the nearby strategic towns of Rabia and Zumar. While some newly sent arms have stacked up in the Kurdish capital, including a shipment from Germany this week, Kurdish officials say they can't be distributed until the Kurdish fighters are trained. The delay shows the difficulties on the ground as the U.S. and its allies bomb the militants from the air.

**I once won an argument  
with a woman...  
in this dream I had.**

**Pres. Obama Builds Coalition of Arab Nations for Syrian Strikes:** President Barack Obama recently called the U.S.-led attacks against terrorist targets in Syria a sign that Arab nations in the Middle East and Congress at home are committed to destroying the Islamic State, the terrorist group that occupies large swathes of land in Iraq and Syria. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Bahrain and Qatar all joined the U.S. in the attacks against the Islamic State that included a strike package of stealth fighters, bombers, drones and Tomahawk missiles, Obama said. "America is proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with these nations as part of our common security," the President said in brief remarks from the South Lawn of the White House, just before departing for New York City. "The strength of the coalition makes clear that it is not America's fight alone." In addition to hitting Islamic State targets, Obama said the coalition operation in Syria was meant to disrupt a plot "against the United States and our allies by seasoned al-Qaeda operatives [there] known as the Khorosan Group." "Once again, it must be clear to anyone who would plot against America and try to do Americans harm that we will not tolerate safe havens for terrorists who threaten our people," he said.

**Committee Examines Mental Health Access Between VA-DOD:** The House VA Committee held a hearing to discuss mental health access for service members transitioning from DOD to VA. The hearing was a preview to a press conference held later in the day to introduce a suicide-prevention bill that the VFW helped craft. The committee members heard from parents of service members who had taken their lives after struggling with PTSD and having difficulties accessing VA services. Legislation includes suggestions from those on the ground—military professionals, mental healthcare providers, family caregivers and veterans, who struggle with the effects of PTSD every day. Some of the provisions include reforming the discharge review process within DOD by requiring military review boards to reexamine the circumstances surrounding those discharges entirely, establishing a VA community outreach program focused on successful transition from active duty to veteran, and increasing access to mental healthcare for service members and guard and reservists.

**US Strikes Hit Islamic State Group in Syria, Iraq:** U.S. warplanes bombed Islamic State militant positions on both sides of the Syrian-Iraqi border on Wednesday as hard-line Syrian rebels who have been battling the extremist group sought cover, fearing a wider aerial campaign against all fighters seen as a potential threat to the United States. The airstrikes come a day after the U.S. and five Arab allies opened their military operation against the Islamic State group in Syria with more than 200 strikes on some two dozen targets. That campaign, which President Barack Obama has warned could last years, expands upon the aerial assault the U.S. has already been waging for more than a month against the extremists in Iraq. "There's definitely a second day and there'll be a third and a fourth" in Syria, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry told CNN in an interview on Wednesday. "This will go on for some time in several forms." Along with its Arab partners, the Obama administration aims to destroy the Islamic State group, the extremist faction that has through brute force carved out a proto-state in the heart of the Middle East, effectively erasing the border between Iraq and Syria. The United Nations has accused the group of committing war crimes. The latest U.S. strikes, conducted by bombers and fighter jets, damaged eight Islamic State vehicles in Syria near the Iraqi border town of Qaim, the U.S. Central Command said in a statement. It also reported hitting two Islamic State armed vehicles west of Baghdad, as well as two militant fighting positions in northern Iraq.

**The F-22, World's Priciest Fighter Jet, Finally Flies in Combat:** After nearly a decade of being derided as dangerous to fly and an example of wasteful military spending, the radar-evading F-22 fighter jet flew in combat for the first time in this week's U.S.-led airstrikes in Syria. The Pentagon said it used the stealthy warplane in coordinated strikes with other fighter jets and bombers against Islamic State strongholds and facilities in northern Syria. Lt. Gen. William Mayville, director of operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the aircraft helped drop GPS-guided bombs on an array of targets, including militants' headquarters, training camps, barracks and combat vehicles. The F-22's apparent success is a dramatic turnaround from three years ago, when the fighter was grounded for nearly five months because of safety problems stemming from a faulty oxygen supply system. For a while, the plane's future was very much in doubt. The sleek, diamond-winged fighter was conceived during the Cold War to thump a new generation of Soviet jets in dogfights. But after the Soviet Union collapsed, Moscow never built those fighters.



**US Army to Deploy Hundreds of Fort Riley Soldiers to Iraq:** About 500 troops from the U.S. Army's 1st Infantry Division in Fort Riley, Kansas, will head to Iraq and other countries in the Middle East next month to help coordinate the campaign against the Islamic State. More than 200 hundred of the soldiers will be based in Iraq at U.S. Joint Operations Centers (JOCs) in Baghdad and the Kurdish capital of Irbil, and the rest of the contingent will operate out of U.S. bases in the region under the U.S. Central Command. The initial plan was to have 138 of the troops at the operations center in Baghdad, 68 at the operations center in Irbil and 10 at the Iraqi Defense Ministry. The 200-plus troops will be part of the 475-troop contingent President Barack Obama authorized last month to serve in Iraq as advisers to the Iraqi National Security forces and the Kurdish Peshmerga forces. However, the 200 from the 1st ID will not "embed" with the other advisers at the brigade and headquarters levels with the Iraqi and Kurdish forces. Instead, the 1st ID troops will perform duties at the JOCs, Gen. Ray Odierno, the Army Chief of Staff, recently said he had signed off on "sending another division headquarters to Iraq to control what we're doing there, a small headquarters." The division headquarters would be the first to deploy to Iraq since the 2011 withdrawal of U.S. forces from the country.

**Head of Secret Service Resigns:** After facing heavy criticism for several major breaches of security, head of the Secret Service Julia Pierson announced she would resign her post recently. "The president had the opportunity to telephone Director Pierson and express his appreciation for her service to the country," White House press secretary Josh Earnest said, praising Pierson for taking responsibility for the breaches of security that occurred during her tenure. "She believed it was in the best interest of the agency to which she had dedicated her career," and the president and secretary agreed, Earnest said, adding that Pierson offered her resignation, and was not asked to leave. Joseph Clancy, who was the formerly the special agent in charge of the Presidential Protective Division of the Secret Service, and who retired in 2011, will take over as acting director until a replacement is appointed.

**Long Deployments, Service Culture Push Sailors to Leave Navy:** Lengthy deployments and a risk-averse service culture are among the frustrations sailors face in the Navy, according to an independent survey led by a Navy pilot. More than 5,500 officers and enlisted sailors responded to an unofficial online poll as part of the 2014 Navy Retention Study, a project led by F/A-18 pilot Cmdr. Guy M. Snodgrass to understand why sailors, and officers in particular, leave the Navy early. The service is not involved with the project, although its personnel chief, Vice Adm. Bill Moran, has expressed interest in it and spoken with the project leaders. A solid majority of respondents in the voluntary survey (62 percent) described the balance between work and home as "not ideal," according to results released last month. Many described their last deployments as long (between seven and nine months), and just under half expected upcoming deployments to be just as lengthy or longer. Majorities also said that senior leaders didn't care what they thought and didn't hold themselves accountable. They strongly believed the Navy was risk-averse and unable to stomach mistakes, and they held that performance rankings are based on factors other than merit. "There are no quick remedies," the survey's authors concluded. "Resolute and thoughtful changes are necessary to improve the factors that impact sailors the most." On the positive side, survey respondents reported they believed in their work and trusted subordinates and peers. Pluralities of respondents said they wanted to retire from the service, with majorities citing benefits and pay as main factors for staying in.

**ISIL Threatens to 'Slaughter' Families of US Troops:** An Army intelligence bulletin is warning U.S. military personnel to be vigilant after Islamic State militants called on supporters to scour social media for addresses of their family members -- and to "show up [at their homes] and slaughter them." The assessment, obtained by Fox News, came from the Army Threat Integration Center which issues early warnings of criminal and terrorist threats to Army posts worldwide. The advisory warns military personnel and their families about the Islamic State, or ISIS, calling on supporters to target their homes. While there is no independent intelligence to corroborate the ISIS threats, the bulletin recommends more than a dozen precautions to military personnel to protect their homes -- and their online profiles. "Given the continued rhetoric being issued by ISIL's media services and supporters through various social media platforms the ARTIC is concerned of the possibility of an attack," the bulletin says. "Soldiers, Government Civilians and Family Members are reminded to be vigilant of their surroundings and report suspicious activities to their respective military or local law enforcement."

**Judge Rules, VA Botched Handling of Suicidal Marine:** A Veterans Affairs hospital botched the treatment of a suicidal Marine by sending him to another medical facility even though he had an emergency condition, a federal judge said. The Marine, Cameron Anestis, 21, of Georgetown, killed himself after he was turned away from a second facility in Lexington because he did not have a form showing he was a combat veteran. The VA had a duty to help Anestis, U.S. District Judge David Bunning ruled. "It must treat those who suffer from an emergency condition," Bunning said. Anestis, a lance corporal in the Marine reserves, went to a Lexington VA medical center on Aug. 16, 2009, but was turned away after being told treatment wasn't available there. Anestis went to a second VA center in Lexington the next day and again was rejected. Unable to find the form he needed, Anestis became frustrated and violent, attacking his wife, who called 911 from another room. She heard a gunshot and found that her husband had committed suicide.

**New Disabled Veterans Memorial Opens:** The new American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial opens in Washington on October 5, 2014. The President is expected to dedicate the VFW-supported memorial, and he will be joined by the secretaries of Interior and Veterans Affairs, and many others, to include VFW National Commander John Stroud. The memorial will open to the public at 3 p.m. It is located at the foot of Capitol Hill on the House side, at the trisection of 2nd and C Streets and Washington Avenue, SW. Closest Metros are Federal Center and Capitol South (Orange, Blue and Silver Lines).

**Afghan Army Death Rate Spikes 30 Percent:** An Afghan army desperate for more advanced military equipment is suffering death rates 30 percent higher in the 2014 fighting season, the army's first against the Taliban without large-scale assistance from the U.S.-led international military force, officials said. A bigger worry than the increased deaths, though, is the havoc the military could unleash on the country if the army rips at its ethnic seams, an increased possibility as U.S. and other NATO forces continue to draw down their forces, Afghan and American military experts say. When the U.S. and other NATO-led forces withdraw all combat troops by Dec. 31, the Afghan army will truly be on its own on the battlefield for the first time since the 2001 U.S. invasion. America has spent \$62 billion since then to train and equip the country's security forces, but Afghan military experts remain concerned that the army doesn't have enough men or materiel. "They're fighting, but they are suffering," said Gen. Abdul Rahim Wardak, Afghanistan's former minister of defense and a current adviser to the president's office. Some of those worries were mitigated on Sept. 30, when the United States and Afghanistan signed a bilateral security agreement allowing about 10,000 American troops to remain in Afghanistan to train, advise and assist Afghan forces past the end of the year. America's NATO allies are expected to contribute a further 5,000 or so troops. A smaller U.S. Special Operations forces will also remain and actively go after extremists such as al-Qaida.

**VA Expands Patient-Centered Community Care (PC3) Contracts to Provide Access to Primary Care:** The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that primary care has been added to the services available to veterans through VA's Patient-Centered Community Care (PC3) contracts, a key and evolving part of the non-VA medical care program. Eligible Veterans are already able to access inpatient specialty care, outpatient specialty care, mental health care, limited emergency care and limited newborn care for female Veterans following childbirth under PC3. This modification supports VA's Accelerated Care Initiative, helping to move Veterans off of waitlists and into care. Additionally, reduced commuting standards will require that contracted providers schedule appointments closer to the Veterans' homes. The initial PC3 contracts were awarded in September 2013 to Tri-West and HealthNet and have been used as part of the non-VA medical care program to purchase care in the community. "PC3 is part of the overall non-VA medical care program," said Dr. Carolyn A. Clancy, VA's Interim Under Secretary for Health. "We look forward to expanding our ability to provide timely access to health care services to our Veterans." VA Medical Centers have the ability to purchase non-VA medical care for Veterans through contracted medical providers when they cannot readily provide the needed care due to geographic inaccessibility or limited capacity. This additional option is available to purchase non-VA medical care when required Veteran care services are unavailable within the VA medical facility, or when Veterans benefit from receiving the needed care nearer to their homes. In addition, VA is reviewing how PC3 may be used to help implement the newly enacted Veterans Benefits programs.

# Scenes from the 2014 Reunions

