



# 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 6

“A Soldier Once And Always”

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**Commanders Corner:** I lost my mom and one of my oldest and dearest friends in March. My mom had a heart attack and held on for about a week until she finally went on to join my dad. My friend was shot when 3 guys tried to rob his liquor store as he was closing up; his name was Joe Klein and I had known Joe since the summer before we started high school and we still got together regularly for golf or drinks. I happened to be in downtown Indianapolis on the afternoon before the shooting and was planning on stopping by to see Joe at his store on the way home but, I blew by the exit and just continued on home. I had previously planned on meeting with my mom and some of my sisters at my mom's favorite bar to watch Indiana play in the NCAA tourney on Saturday night but, had to attend Joe's funeral that night and went to watch the game with a bunch of old high school friends after the funeral instead of driving 20 miles. I'll always regret that I missed to see one of my best friends one last time by not stopping by his store and, sadly, the night of the funeral would have also been the last time to go party with my mom. She had her heart attack the following Tuesday; one week to the day that Joe was killed. The reason I am imparting this to you is to remind you not to pass up any chances you have to get together with your loved ones and friends. I will miss Joe and mom more than I can express. Also, our chapter and the Americal Division Veterans Association recently lost member, Bill Bacon, and he will be sorely missed. Bill did a lot for the organization. Read Col. (Ret) Al Coleman's letter on page 2. On to the lighter side, Spring time at last! I finally got some information on the upcoming 2016 reunions and placed it on our web site; appropriately under the "Reunions" column. Jesse has ordered some shirts and caps and you may contact him to place an order. We also have some challenge coins still available.

Chuck

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



**Americal Division and 2/1 Chapter Annual Reunion:** It's official; the dates and location for the Americal Division Veterans Association and the 2/1 Infantry Chapter reunion will be held in Albuquerque, NM September 14-18, 2016. The information and forms for reserving you hotel and informing the organization staff are printed in the latest issue of the ADVA Journal. The information is also available on the Chapter website. It is not too early to make you arrangements for this reunion. As you know the rooms at the reunion hotel are called for early and there are only a select number of rooms reserved for the reunion. .



**Military Files, Emails Deleted Amid Probe:** The chairman of the House Intelligence Committee said recently that personnel at U.S. Central Command have deleted files and emails amid allegations that intelligence assessments were altered to exaggerate progress against Islamic State militants. "We have been made aware that both files and emails have been deleted by personnel at CENTCOM and we expect that the Department of Defense will provide these and all other relevant documents to the committee," Rep. Devin Nunes said at a hearing on worldwide threats facing the United States. Central Command oversees U.S. military activities in the Middle East. Nunes, R-Calif., also said the Office of the Director of National Intelligence briefed the committee on a survey indicating that more than 40 percent of Central Command analysts believe there are problems with the integrity of the intelligence analyses and process. With turmoil across the Mideast, Nunes wondered aloud if it was appropriate to wait months for the Defense Department's inspector general to complete an investigation into the allegations before efforts are made to rectify the alleged problems. "To me, it seems like 40 percent of analysts who are concerned at CENTCOM -- that's just something that can't be ignored," Nunes said. Lt. Gen. Vincent Stewart, director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, said that while it would be favorable for all to "get closure on exactly the extent of this allegation," he cannot control the pace of the watchdog's investigation. He said that while the investigation proceeds, intelligence officials continue to look into ways to improve the process of producing the assessments. The New York Times, which first disclosed the investigation, reported that it began after at least one civilian DIA analyst told authorities he had evidence that Central Command officials were improperly reworking conclusions of assessments prepared for President Barack Obama and other top policymakers.

**Search for State Benefit Information:** We recently received an inquiry from a member who asked to provide information concerning state benefits for veterans. After researching this topic the Executive Committee could not come up with any suggestions that might have assisted the veteran from receiving state benefits because none of the committee members resided in the veteran's state, however, after inquiring from a member who resided in the veteran's state a comprehensive list of veteran benefits was sent to the veteran. Your Executive Committee has seen the value of having readily available information, by state, of the many benefits that have become available to our membership. We are asking each of you that has access to this information for your state to send the information to the Commander, Chuck Holdaway, for inclusion on our website. Many state veteran organizations have a printed assortment of benefits available to veterans. We will put these on the website for all to take advantage of these programs. Send your state benefit memo to email: [choldaway@sbcbglobal.net](mailto:choldaway@sbcbglobal.net).

**OD MIA Recovery Update:** The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced the identification of remains and burial updates of three sailors and four soldiers and one Marine who had been missing in action since World War II and Korean War.

– **Navy Ensign Lewis S. Stockdale, 27**, of Anaconda, Mont., was buried with full military honors in Honolulu. On Dec. 7, 1941, Stockdale was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which suffered multiple torpedo hits as it was moored off Ford Island in Pearl Harbor. The attack capsized the ship, resulting in 429 casualties, including Stockdale. Thirty-five sailors would be subsequently recovered and identified; the rest would eventually be buried as unknowns in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, better known as the Punchbowl.

– **Army Pvts. John H. Klopp, 25, and Earl J. Keating, 28**, both of New Orleans. In December 1942, Klopp and Keating were assigned to the Anti-Tank Company, 126th Infantry Regiment, 32nd Infantry Division, when their unit was involved in intense fighting in what is present-day Papua New Guinea. On Dec. 5, 1942, Klopp and Keating died repulsing a heavy Japanese attack, and were buried by fellow soldiers within the American perimeter. The American Graves Registration Service was unable to locate their remains after the war, however. Klopp will be buried March 23 in Arlington National Cemetery. Keating will be buried May 28 in his hometown.

– **Navy Chief Petty Officer Duff Gordon, 52**, was buried with full military honors in his hometown of Hudson, Wis. On Dec. 7, 1941, he was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which suffered multiple torpedo hits as it was moored off Ford Island in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The attack capsized the ship, resulting in 429 casualties, including Gordon. Thirty-five sailors would be subsequently recovered and identified; the rest would eventually be buried as unknowns in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, better known as the Punchbowl.

– **Marine Corps Sgt. John C. Holladay, 31**, will be buried April 4 with full military honors in his hometown of Florence, S.C. He was assigned to Company B, 1st Marine Raider Battalion, 1st Marine Raider Regiment, when lost fighting in July 1943 as part of a joint U.S. Army-U.S. Marine Corps battle against Japanese positions in the invasion of New Georgia Island, British Solomon Islands.

– **Army Sgt. Wilson Meckley Jr., 22**, of Lancaster, Pa., will be buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery on April 4. In November 1950, he was assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division, and was assembled with other soldiers into the 31st Regimental Combat Team, historically known as Task Force Faith. During a fighting withdrawal from the Chosin Reservoir, he would be reported missing on Dec. 2.

– **Navy Fireman 3rd Class John H. Lindsley**, of Illinois, was lost on Dec. 7, 1941, while assigned aboard the battleship USS Oklahoma in Pearl Harbor. He will be buried with full military honors on a date and location to be announced.

– **Army Cpl. Dennis D. Buckley**, of Wayne, Mich., was lost fighting in South Korea on Feb. 13, 1951. He was assigned to A Battery, 15th Field Artillery Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division, and will be buried with full military honors on a date and location to be announced.

## Farewell to Lt William Bill Bacon:

Submitted by Col (Ret) Al Coleman, US Army

The death of Bill Bacon on February 27, 2016 was a deep personal loss to me and all who knew him. Bill was the company commander of A 2/1 during the Kham Duc operations in the summer of 1970 and was one of the finest company commanders I have known during my 28 years of service. Bill grew up in a military family and a 1966 graduate of Texas A&M. These two factors instilled in him a great love of country and a high sense of duty, honor, loyalty, and dedication; traits that he exhibited his entire life. I think of him not only as a wonderful army officer but as a wonderful human being and friend. Bill had a promising military career ahead of him but this was cut short on July 30, 1970 when he was wounded leading his company in a fire fight against NVA. He was evacuated and began a long healing process which ended in him being given a medical discharge in February 1971. He became a strong supporter of the Americal Division Veterans Association and the Military Order of the Purple Heart; rising to positions of high responsibility in both organizations.

I last saw Bill during the Americal Division reunion in Houston, Texas. We enjoyed long conversations about our time in Vietnam and he expressed a desire to revisit Vietnam. Upon leaving Houston he presented one of his cypress wood candle holders to my wife and me. Typical Bill Bacon. I knew that desire to visit Vietnam would take place and it did. My last correspondence with Bill was a multi-page letter from him outlining where he visited, what changes had taken place. His letter ended on a somber note. His doctors had found a tumor on his brain and he wasn't looking forward to another long healing process.

In February this year I received word that Bill wanted to see me. I called his wife Debbie to see how he was doing. She told me the doctors had done all they could and Bill was home under hospice care. Two days later I got a phone call that he died. Bill was laid to rest in Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery on March 7, 2016. Saint Paul wrote "the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness." (2 Timothy 4:6-8). The same could be said about Bill Bacon.

Good bye my Friend. God bless and rest in peace.

Col Al Coleman, US Army (Ret)

Former Commander 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry

**Lafayette Escadrille:** This month marks the 100th anniversary of the creation of the Lafayette Escadrille; a squadron of volunteer American aviators who fought for France before the United States entered World War I. Formed on 17 April 1916, it changed its name, originally Escadrille Américaine, after German protest to Washington. A total of 267 men enlisted, of whom 224 qualified and 180 saw combat. Since only 12 to 15 pilots formed each squadron, many flew with French units. They wore French uniforms and most had noncommissioned officer rank. On 18 February 1918 the squadron was incorporated into the U.S. Air Service as the 103d Pursuit Squadron. The volunteers—credited with downing 199 German planes—suffered 19 wounded, 15 captured, 11 dead of illness or accident, and 51 killed in action.



**US Remains in N. Korea Lost in Political Limbo:**

The village elder put his shovel aside, stooped down by a scraggly bush and pulled a sack from the freshly turned dirt. Spreading open the sack, he reached in to reveal femurs, skull and jaw fragments, boots and a rusted green helmet. "These are your American GIs," Song Hong Ik said at a burial mound near the top of a small hill. Perhaps they are. But for more than a decade, no one has been trying to find out. "Until They Are Home" is one of the most sacred vows of the U.S. military, yet Washington has long suspended efforts to look for 5,300 American GIs missing in North Korea whose remains are potentially recoverable. The countries' abysmal relations suggest that no restart is coming soon. In the meantime, possible remains and recovery sites are being lost as North Korea works to improve its infrastructure with projects such as the Chongchon River No. 10 Hydroelectric Power Station. The bones Song revealed came from that project's construction site. His village, the hamlet of Ryongyon-ri, is nestled among low rolling hills in the heart of a Korean War battleground about 150 kilometers (almost 100 miles) north of Pyongyang. The 90-minute drive from the capital runs through mostly flat land covered by rice paddies or fields of corn and potatoes. The scene is quietly rustic. Farmers use ox-carts to transport produce and villagers can be seen walking in the distance on narrow dirt roads. Not far from the highway that leads past the village, a shallow river runs through a wide valley. Song, polite but to the point, explained as he climbed the hill that the valley will be flooded when the dam is completed. Song said construction on the plant, which involved a lot of digging, began in earnest four years ago. That's when the bones started piling up, he said. Enough, he added, to fill a half-dozen makeshift burial mounds on the hill, maybe 70 or 100 sets in all. Between 1996 and 2005, joint U.S.-North Korea search teams conducted 33 joint recovery operations and recovered 229 sets of American remains.

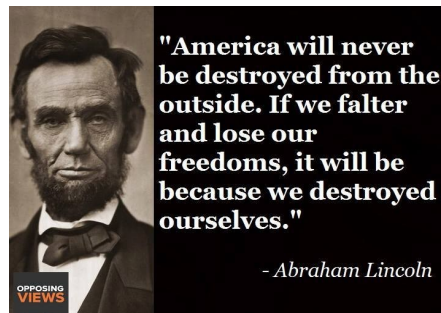
**Big Change to Army Dog Tags:** Military ID tags – commonly known as Dog Tags – have been part of military service since World War I. Quite a bit of personal information is contained on the metal tags, which raises the potential risk of identity theft. In 2007, Department of Defense announced an initiative designed to better protect servicemembers by replacing Social Security numbers with randomly generated 10 digit military ID number on dog tags and other military-issued documents. The first military ID tags contained only a servicemember's name; additional information, such as religious preference was included later. The last time a major change was 1972, when service numbers were replaced by Social Security numbers. However, military IDE tags placed servicemembers at high risk because they contain everything necessary for identity theft except the servicemember's date of birth. Transitioning to military ID numbers adds an important layer of protection. Army recruits and soldiers set to deploy will be the first to receive the new dog tags. The later will receive new tags through their soldier readiness processing center.

**When the people fear the government, there is tyranny.  
When the government fears the people, there is liberty.**

~ Thomas Jefferson

**Overtaxed Fleet Needs Shorter Deployments:** The Navy's vice chief of naval operations told lawmakers this week that the service depends on shorter deployments in order to meet readiness recovery targets. During a March 17 hearing by the House Armed Services Committee's subcommittee on readiness, Adm. Michelle Howard said a heavy operational tempo during wartime had taken its toll on Navy fleet and ship readiness. While the Navy had invested heavily in deploying and next-to-deploy units and equipment, she said, that came at the expense of units "on the bench." "Where we've made choices, our ability to surge has become smaller," she said. "We have lowered the readiness of those assets and in some cases the readiness was lowered because we've consumed those assets." Deployments of nine and 10 -- and in some cases, even 11 months -- had taxed fleet readiness over the last decade, Howard said. While the Navy predicted it could perform maintenance and training necessary to return the service to previous readiness rates in a little more than five years, that estimate depends on returning to traditional seven-month deployments, she said. "In order for us to get to an end state where [the] entire fleet is recovered, we have to manage the amount of fleet that's out," Howard said. "We have determined we can have about one-third of the fleet out while we're maintaining and training the rest of the fleet." "But in the end, when you look at a 36-month maintenance-to-deployment cycle, it means our deployments need to be about seven months, in order to get the ships back to get to maintenance, in order to have the time to train the crew back up to their next deployment." Fiscal 2017 will be the first year in a concerted Navy effort to stabilize deployment length through an "Optimized Fleet Response Plan." Chief of Naval Operations John Richardson said the Navy was on track to hit seven-month deployments by the end of 2017. Extended deployments have cut into ship maintenance schedules, and also proved frustrating and exhausting for sailors kept away from their families longer than expected.

**New Campaign Medal Approved:** Defense Secretary Ash Carter signed into creation the Inherent Resolve Campaign Medal (IRCM) to American service members battling terrorist groups in Iraq and Syria recently. To qualify, a member must have been present in Iraq, Syria, or the contiguous waters or airspace of either country, on or after June 15, 2014, for a period of 30 consecutive or 60 non-consecutive days. Service members who were killed or were medically evacuated due to wounds or injuries immediately qualify for the award, as do members who engaged in combat. The IRCM's placement in the hierarchy of medals and ribbons will be after the Iraq Campaign Medal and before the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal.



**A code of Silence: Vets Groups Mum on Scandal At Wounded Warrior Protect: Some veterans groups suspected** for years that Wounded Warrior Project was playing by a different set of rules than older, more established organizations. There were the heavy-handed, tug-at-the-heartstrings TV ads that showed the struggles of vets dealing with severe amputations and traumatic brain injury. In print and online spots, the face of the organization is often a horribly burned veteran. The Madison Avenue-style campaign brought in scores of millions of dollars annually -- dwarfing the amounts received by other organizations -- but also giving members of these other groups pause over exactly how Wounded Warrior Project was spending its massive war chest. By 2014, Wounded Warrior Project, then a little more than a decade old, had pulled in more than \$1 billion. Still, no outsiders publicly voiced concern or raised questions. "The first commandment of veterans' organizations is 'Thou Shalt Not Criticize Other Veterans Organizations,'" said a longtime official with a national veterans group who spoke to Military.com on condition that neither he nor his organization be identified.

**Army to Form Teams of Active, Guard and Reserve Units:** The U.S. Army announced the launch of new pilot program designed to team up certain active, National Guard and Reserve units so they can train together before they deploy. The Associated Units pilot will begin this summer by teaming up about two dozen active Army units with various Guard and Reserve units. "Much of America's Army's capacity is resident in the Reserve Components, and we must rely more heavily on them to meet the demands of a complex global environment," Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, Gen. Mark Milley said today in an Army press release. "The Associated Units pilot allows us to leverage the capabilities and capacities of the active component, Army Reserve and the Army National Guard as one Army." The first of these unit associations will occur in Georgia. The 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, an active-Army infantry battalion stationed on Fort Benning will be associated with the 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, a Georgia Army National Guard unit. The 48th Infantry Brigade, meanwhile, will also be associated with the active component's 3rd Infantry Division, stationed on Fort Stewart, Georgia. "The soldiers of Task Force 1-28 and the soldiers of the Georgia Army National Guard's 48th Infantry Brigade will wear the patch of the 3rd Infantry Division," Lt. Gen. Timothy J. Kadavy, Director of the Army National Guard said. "This brigade will train and, if called to do so, deploy and fight with the 3rd Infantry Division as an Associated Unit. These units will develop relationships and standards in home station so they may fight together in combat without having to meet on the battlefield and figure these things out."



**Army Deploying Fort Bragg Units to Middle East, South Korea:** The XVIII Airborne Corps headquarters will deploy about 450 soldiers to Kuwait and the 1st Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division will deploy about 400 soldiers to South Korea, according to recent press release. In late summer, the XVIII Airborne Corps headquarters will replace III Corps as the headquarters of the Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve, the global coalition to defeat Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, according to the release. Meanwhile, the 1-17th Cavalry, the final Kiowa Warrior Squadron remaining in the Army, will conduct a rotational deployment to provide aviation support to the U.S. mission in South Korea, the release states. "The XVIII Airborne Corps has a long and proud history of constant readiness to answer the calls of our Nation," Lt. Gen. Stephen Townsend, commander, XVIII Airborne Corps. "Our soldiers and units are skilled, tough and stand ready around the clock to defend America. They are ready for both of these important missions to deter North Korean aggression and to degrade and ultimately defeat [ISIS] which will improve security in those regions and make the American people safer." The 1-17th will replace elements of the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade from Fort Drum, New York

**1 25,000 Post-9/11 Veterans Wrongly Denied VA Benefits:** A recent study by the National Veterans Legal Service Program (NVLSP), Swords to Plowshares and Harvard Law School's Veterans Legal Clinic found that 125,000 veterans with bad paper discharges have been wrongfully denied access to VA health care and benefits due to VA's strict interpretation of character of discharge eligibility. Under current law, veterans who have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable are eligible for VA benefits. While the law only requires VA to evaluate whether the service of veterans with a punitive discharge (bad conduct and dishonorable) meets the legal threshold of dishonorable, VA regulations also require claims adjudicators to conduct a character of discharge analysis for veterans who received an Other-Than-Honorable discharge. The report finds that 90 percent of character of discharge reviews result in the denial of benefits.

**VFW: Sequestration Must End!** There was nothing shocking about the Army's force reduction announcement. The Budget Control Act of 2011 had dictated the terms by which America's largest military service would incrementally shrink from a wartime high of 570,000 active-duty soldiers to 450,000. Still to come, however, is the return of mandatory sequestration in fiscal year 2016, which would further shrink the active Army to 420,000 soldiers, as well as drastically slash the operating budgets of all four military services. "Sequestration is the most significant military readiness and national security threat of the 21st century, and despite almost universal congressional opposition to it, no member of the House or Senate has yet introduced any legislation to end it," said John W. Stroud, national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States. "Our military can beat any military in the world, but they can't fight a Congress that is essentially forcing them to operate for a decade on only eight years' worth of funding." Though the Army's announced two-year plan to reduce its end strength by 40,000 soldiers and 17,000 civilians was preordained four years ago, Stroud said what's important now is for the new Congress to act. "We need both political parties to finally say 'enough,' not because a continued sequester will hurt civilian economies in certain congressional districts, but because a continued sequester weakens America, worries our allies and emboldens our enemies," he said. "Our brave men and women in uniform will continue to perform and excel at every mission, but overtasking with inadequate resourcing will cost lives — American lives — which is an impending disaster the VFW will not allow. Sequestration must end!"