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From: "Mike Vickroy" [REDACTED] | Block address

To: "Dick Detra" [REDACTED]

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Subject: USA MILITARY IN VIETNAM NEWSPAPERS

Date: Fri, 24 Nov 2000 16:08:14 -0600

Dick; Have you seen this site and info? Mike Vickroy

October 9, 1967

TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS



Soldiers of the 25th Inf Div's 1st Bn, 27th Inf "Wolfhounds," move out on a combat sweep 45 Kms northwest of Saigon. The men are the 2d Bde Operation "Kotekole."

269th Launches Huge Operation

A classic example of an Air Mobile operation at brigade level and one of the largest air mobile operations to date was recently launched by the 269th Cbt Avn Bn in conjunction with the 25th Inf Div.

All three battalions of the 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div were airlifted into a heavily wooded area five miles west of Go Da Ha near the Cambodian border to begin a massive search and seal operation. The entire force was moved in less than one and one half hours. The highly synchronized operation included the many Pickup Zones (PZ's) being operated expertly by the 269th "Black Barons" Pathfinder Detachment "Cavellers"; who loaded both troops and cargo for their air-mobile delivery. Due to the close proximity of the Cambodian border, the area was extensively

and Go Da Ha into six separate landing zones. The operation, which called for precise, well planned and executed flights by the five assault helicopter companies involved, was conducted in five two-company flights and one single company flight. On one occasion as many as forty troop carrying helicopters made simultaneous landings in two different LZ's.

The Air Armada included the 116th "Hornets", the 187th "Black Hawks", the 188th "Black Widows", all from the 269th Combat Aviation Battalion "Black Barons". The 173d Aslt Hel Co "Robin Hoods" and the 182d AHC "Vultures" from the 11th Cbt Avn Bn also participated in the action under the operational control of the "Black Barons".

Twenty gunships from the respective companies involved, were

SSG Gets \$9,907

Re-up Bonus

When SSG Kenneth L. Latta raised his hand the other day not very much happened. He was presented a piece of paper; received hearty congratulations; blinked when a flashbulb went off; and . . . oh, yes, was given a check for \$9,907.00—the largest Variable Re-enlistment Bonus ever awarded in the 25th Inf Div.

Latta took the six-year oath of enlistment from LTC James R. Merryman, commanding officer of the 269th Cbt Avn Bn. Ten crew chiefs and ten gunners are responsible to Latta in his present position as a maintenance supervisor with the 116th Aslt Hel Co. He and they assure that aircraft will be available for flight whenever they are needed.

Having served three years in

Heart Operation Girl From Early

Suffering from a heart defect since birth, 13-year-old Nguyen Thi Nam has had the operation that will save her from an early death.

The defect was discovered last September when Nguyen was examined by CPT Jerry Crooks, a doctor from the 25th Med Bn, during a 25th Div Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP). Through an interpreter, Crooks learned that the child became very tired after the least amount of exertion. Noticing the defect, Crooks sent her to the 7th Surg Hosp at Cu Chi for a complete examination.

Death Possible

Medical officials pin-pointed the defect and found that it had to be corrected or the child would suffer gradual deterioration and death would occur before she reached the age of 25.

Crooks made immediate plans for the operation. Delayed because the 7th Surg Hosp had

over Crook and repair along sure is up and should few days.

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strikes which preceded the numerous gunships' prep of the Landing Zones (LZ's) prior to the slicks entering. Timely coordination between the Ground Commander and the Air Mission Commander was essential to the success of the operation due to the enormous size of the Air Mobile force and the limited weather conditions which prevailed throughout the entire operation. Despite a ceiling of less than 1,000 feet, the multi-lift missions continued on schedule. The 1st Bn (Mech) 5th Inf, the 1st Bn 27th Inf, and the 2d Bn 27th Inf of the 2d Bde, 25th Inf Div were airlifted from three field locations near Trang Bang

helped seal the eastern and western boundaries of the large area with machine gun and rocket fire. The gun teams involved included the 186th AHC "Slingshots", the 187th AHC "Rat Pack", the 188th AHC "Spiders", the 173d AHC "Cross Bows" and the 16th AHC "Copperheads". The 269th Chl Avn Bn smoke ship "Smoky Baron" covered for the approaching slicks, laying dense smoke screens in six of the Landing Zones. The heavier Infantry equipment was later carried in by Chinook helicopters from the 205th Aslt Spt Hel Co "Geronimos" under the operational control of the "Black Barons."

the Army as an infantryman (1955-1966) and four years in the Navy (1966-1968). Latta decided he wanted to make a career of the Army. After completing basic training in 1965 he was assigned to Ft. Lewis, Wash., as a fixed wing aircraft mechanic.

When asked for his reaction to the unusually large bonus, he said, "Well, it's only money, but that wasn't why I re-enlisted anyway." With a wife and five children waiting for him in Seattle, he does expect to be able to find something to do with the money.

Latta will soon complete eighteen months in Vietnam.

November 1966 revealed that the operation had to be postponed.

Specialist Needed

In April 1967 another evaluation revealed her condition was favorable for the operation. The following months were spent in locating a specialist to perform the delicate operation and getting permission from the Vietnamese government.

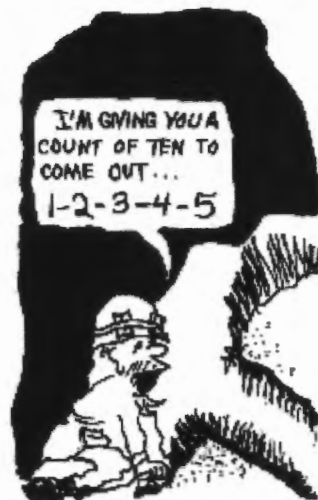
Crouks completed arrangements just before his return to the States. Surgery was performed on Sept. 5 by CPT Daniel Cunningham, surgeon with the 3d Field Hospital in Saigon.

Home Soon
CPT Anthony Caprio, a doctor with the 25th Med Bn, has taken

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