

Jan • Feb • March  
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# AMERICAL

## NEWSLETTER

DEDICATED AS A LIVING MEMORIAL TO ALL VETERANS OF THE AMERICAL DIVISION

PRESERVING AMERICA'S FREEDOM: WORLD WAR II • KOREA • VIETNAM

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Dave Taylor

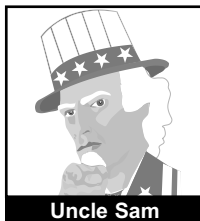
## Editor's Notes

### Editor-In-Chief

Dear Fellow Vets: This issue of your newsletter completes our redesign work to enhance the appearance of the ADVA National Newsletter. We've increased the size of the lettering for easier reading and we've enhanced the use of graphics. I hope you enjoy reading your newsletter as much as we enjoy putting it together for you.

In past national elections the membership has been asked to vote for nominees based on name recognition and unit assignment. The newsletter staff thought it worthwhile to ask nominees to give a brief background of themselves and what their goals & objectives would be if elected. Since I am running for an office I asked Gary Noller on the newsletter staff to handle this project. This information is presented on pages 4-6. We hope you find it helpful in casting your vote and please remember to vote when you get your ballot in the mail!

I want to remind everyone this is your newsletter. Please keep sending us *materials and photos* we can share with our membership. For our WWII Vets, I would like to edit an article about Americal Humor in WWII, similar to the "Humor-Vietnam" article I edited in the Oct-Nov-Dec 2005 issue. Please send me your memories of humorous incidents. Keep sending your Vietnam submissions to Gary Noller. You can see in this issue, we have some excellent commentary from our Vietnam Vets. From time to time we may have to edit your submissions for brevity but we try to include as much as possible. Last but not least, any problems, complaints, suggestions, etc. remember they land on my LZ. I can be reached by phone, e-mail and snail mail, so let me hear from you (and thanks for the many compliments you have sent to my staff and me!).



Uncle Sam

## PATRIOTISM

"This nation will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave."

*Elmer Davis*

"Patriotism is not the short, frenzied outbursts of emotion, but the tranquil and steady dedication of a lifetime"

*Adlai Stevenson*

"Patriotism is easy to understand in America – it means looking out for yourself by looking out for your country."

*Calvin Coolidge*

"A man's country is not a certain area of land, of mountains, rivers and woods, but it is a principle; and patriotism is loyalty to that principle"

*George William Curtis*

"It is the love of country that has lighted and that keeps the holy fire of patriotism."

*J. Horace McFarland*

"We have enjoyed so much freedom for so long that we are perhaps in danger of forgetting how much blood it cost to establish the Bill of Rights."

*Felix Frankfurter*

"My God! How little do my countrymen know what precious blessings they are in possession of, and which no other people on earth enjoy!"

*Thomas Jefferson*

"Our great modern Republic. May those who seek the blessings of its institutions and the protection of its flag remember the obligations they impose."

*Ulysses S. Grant*

"No arsenal, or no weapon in the arsenals of the world, is so formidable as the will and moral courage of free men and women."

*Ronald Reagan*



Dave Chrystal

## Chaplain's Corner

### ADVA Chaplain

LOVE. It's amazing how many times this word is used in the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, over and over again. Love thy neighbor as thyself; Love them, which love you; Love the Lord thy God; Love on another.

As I left Winterfest in New Glarus, WI this week the thought came out that it has been quite some time since I have seen such an outpouring of LOVE in so many different forms. Whenever Veterans are gathered together Love is abundant. There are many people hugging. Tears are in abundance too as we recall the memories of the ones loved and lost both from war and since. Tough love - - how about that old friend that you love dearly who has turned to alcohol or drugs? Because you love them you want them to seek professional help. What about the child that you bore that has an addiction and you deal with the child in rather harsh terms because you love them? Proverbs 17:17 ... A friend loveth at all times.



Cover

The Original image taken by PFC Roger C Hurlbutt for the July 1970 issue of the Americal magazine. Courtesy of ADVA Vietnam Historian Les Hines.

# Candidates Selected for Spring Election

Gary L. Noller

*PNC Ronald Ward, Nominating Committee Chairman, has announced the slate of candidates for the Spring 2006 ADVA election of officers. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters by the end of March. Completed ballots must be returned with a postmark of no later than May 1.*

*Candidates were asked to give information about themselves and their outlook for the ADVA. A brief summary of each candidate's response is provided below. Election results will be posted in the third quarter edition of the Americal Newsletter.*

## For National Commander

**Bacon, William S. (Bill);** San Antonio, TX. Army: Sept. 1967-Feb. 1971; Infantry officer; S-5 and Co. A, 2/1st Inf., 196th LIB, Dec. 1969-Aug. 1970. 30 years in the meat industry. ADVA, 11 yrs; current Sr. Vice-Commander, past Jr. Vice-Commander, past reunion co-chair; MOPH, 13 yrs, National Membership Director; National Adjutant; VFW, 5 yrs; Am. Legion, 5 yrs.

I encourage chapters and local membership to increase the profile of the ADVA through local, state, and national activities. I support the continuation of national reunions, chapter reunions, and the scholarship program. I wish to pursue an increase in membership of no less that 10% per year.

## For Junior Vice-Commander

**Merlin, Richard A. (Rich);** Riverside, CA. Army: 1968-1977; Military Policeman; 23rd M.P. Co., 1969-1970. 28 yrs real estate broker. ADVA, 37 yrs; current Far West Chapter Commander, second term.

Continue the scholarship program, newsletter, and website. I support a change in the governing body, structure, and chain-of-command of the ADVA. Pursue a better and more aggressive program in recruiting new members. Form a permanent reunion committee to oversee site selection and operation of reunions. Provide a better line of communication and better decision making.

## For Senior Vice-Commander

**Watson, Larry J.;** Wooster, OH. Army: 1966-1968; Co. C, 1/52nd Mech. Inf., 3rd Bde., 1st Armored Div., 1966-1967; Co. C, 1/52nd Inf., 198th LIB and Co. A, 1/6th Inf., 198th LIB, 1967-1968. 24 yrs owner of Watson Office Supply, Inc.; 9 yrs Director and Service Officer, Wayne Co. Veterans Service Comm. ADVA, 9 yrs.; past member Executive Council; National Assn. of County Veterans Service Officers; VVA past Chapter President; VFW, Am. Legion; DAV; AMVETS.

My goal is to build membership by recruiting and retaining members. This can be done by assisting members to find their old friends. I want to establish a member directory to help fulfill this need. The ADVA can also offer a class at a future reunion on how to locate veterans.

## For Junior Vice-Commander

**Taylor, David W. (Dave);** Medina, OH. Army: 1967-1971, Infantry Platoon Leader; Army Reserve: 1972-1993, Special Forces; Co. C, 5/46th Inf., 198th LIB, Feb. 1969-June 1969; COL (Ret.). 28 yrs business management and development, international operations, advertising, and public affairs for B.F. Goodrich. ADVA, 14 yrs; past Contributing Editor, past reunion co-chair; current WWII Historian, Editor-in-Chief, and Oral Historian; MOPH; Special Forces Assn.; VFW; VVA. My priority is to continuously improve the Americal Newsletter. The ADVA must do more in recruiting new members. I will conduct an organized effort to double the membership within two years and form a database to help Americal veterans locate one another. If elected I will relinquish the Editor-in-Chief post to another.

## For Executive Council

**Babler, Terry;** New Glarus, WI; Army: 1969-1971; Medic; 1st/1st Cavalry, 1970; 17 yrs with Rayovac Batteries, 19 yrs sheetmetal worker and union rep. ADVA, 16 yrs.; past Great Lakes Chapter Commander, past Executive Council member, current Great Lakes adjutant, past reunion chairman; Founder and President, 1/1st Cav. Assn.; Chairman New Glarus Winterfest All Veterans Reunion, 20 yrs.

All qualified chapters should have an equal chance at holding a national reunion. All active chapters should get paybacks by end of the year. The ADVA should support chapter activities. National should pay for commanders to attend chapter functions. Any active member of the ADVA should have a chance to run for any elected position. Only two reps from each chapter should be allowed on the Executive Council.

**Ballou, Donald A. (Don);** Cherry Hill, NJ; Army: Sept. 1943-Feb. 1946; Litter Bearer; 121st Medical Bn., Apr. 1944-Oct. 1945. Occupation of Japan with 1st Cavalry Division. 36 yrs construction and operations manager for Texaco. ADVA, 14 yrs; current Executive Council member, current and past Membership Committee member.

I wish to continue to serve on the Membership Committee and to recruit members through use of the ADVA internet website.





**Bryant, Wayne M.**; Greensboro, NC. Army: Aug. 1970-Feb. 1972; Infantryman; 25th Inf. Div. and Co. C, 1/46th Inf., 196th LIB, Jan. 1971-Dec. 1971. 36 yrs construction inspector for highways and buildings. ADVA, 5 yrs; current Product Sales manager.

I fully support the scholarship fund. I would like to see the membership continue to grow. It may be improbable but I would like to see the Americal Division reactivated so the Americal pride can continue endlessly. I suggest that the ADVA "fine tune" its operation as we go so as to keep up with changes.

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**Bedient, Thomas N. (Tom)**; Lenexa, KS; Army: 1966-2003 (overall); Officer- Infantry, Special Forces, Civil Affairs; HHC, Co. C, Co. D, and Co. E, 4/3rd Inf., 11th LIB, Nov. 1968-Oct. 1969; Col. (Ret.). 10 yrs. health services administration. ADVA, 10 yrs; reunion guest speaker; DAV; MOPH; Special Forces Assn.

With most of our Vietnam era veterans coming to retirement age soon, the time is right to energize membership efforts. Building more effective buddy-link engines and websites for each company sized unit may accomplish unique support to our veterans while bolstering membership efforts.

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**Buckle, James C. (Jim)**; Harwich, MA. Army: Sept. 1940-Dec. 1944; Rifleman, Runner, and Commo Sgt.; Co. E, 182nd Inf. Regt., May 1942-Sept. 1944. 29 years Communications Specialist, U.S. Government. ADVA, 55 yrs.; Past National Commander, current and past Chairman Executive Council, past Editor-in-Chief 20 yrs.; VFW 50 yrs; Am. Legion 50 yrs; DAV 50 yrs; chaired Co. E and Med. Det., 182nd Inf. Regt. reunions; established memorial scholarships in local high schools; Historian of Co. E and Med. Det.

My present goal with the ADVA is to help rebuild the New England Chapter, encourage Vietnam veterans to join, and rebuild the Americal Museum Committee. Membership activities should be directed to signing up members of the Americal that served in Vietnam.

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**Gilmore, J. Roger**; Rowlett, TX; Army: Feb. 1969-Oct. 1971; Training Officer, Ft. Benning; 4/21st Inf., 11th LIB and 1/52nd Inf., 198th LIB, Jan. 1971-Oct. 1971. 27 yrs Accountant. ADVA, 5 yrs; South-Midwest Chapter treasurer, National Adjutant.

I would like to see continued emphasis on membership initiatives through drives and member involvement. ADVA historical data must be preserved through projects such as the Vietnam Archive at Texas Tech. Univ. and the Americal Museum. Continue Scholarship Fund and Lifetime Achievement Awards. Improve retention and reinstatement of members. Upgrade life membership card. Determine feasibility of co-reunions with other Army division groups.

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**Mathews, John**; Verona, WI; Army: Jan. 1969-Nov. 1971; Artilleryman; 1/14th Artillery, Jul. 1969-Jul. 1970; drill instructor Jul. 1970-Nov. 1971. 12 yrs union officer; former laborer, foreman, and superintendent in underground utility construction. ADVA Great Lakes commander; past VFW Post 10549 commander, past VFW District Commander, American Legion, WI Vietnam Vets, Howard Co. vets, New Glarus Winterfest. Organized several local vets groups.

I will promote the equal voice of each dues paying member and fairness to all; improve organization of the association; keep scholarship going; continue historical programs; develop disability insurance program. My goals are to develop maximum participation; speak up for change; hold fair and open elections; double membership. There is no I or ME in TEAM.

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**Morrell, Lloyd J.**; Redmond, OR; Army and Air Force: 1940-1955; Hq. & Hq. Btry., 221st FA Bn., 1942 – 1945; Alaskan Air Command. 40 yrs government service (including military), Admin Officer. ADVA, 27 yrs; founded Far West and Northwest chapters, past Far West and past Northwest Chapter Commander; past and current Executive Council member, past reunion chairman and past Nominating Committee member, three times each. Organized the first national reunion outside of the Boston area.

Initiate changes that would make the organization stronger and benefit members. Preserve the present rotation of reunions among chapters. Increase membership. Remove chapter commanders that do not perform their duties.

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**Packard, Thomas M. (Tom)**; Galloway, OH. Army: July 1971-May 1973; Military Policeman; 196th LIB, Mar. 1972-June 1972. 30+ yrs at Franklin County (OH) Clerk of Courts. ADVA, 5 yrs; VVA, 25 yrs.; past Chapter President, past State Council Rep.; Founding member, past Chairman of Columbus (OH) Mayor's Veterans Advisory Board.

I believe our membership is our greatest asset, the newsletter is our lifeline, and our scholarship program is our legacy. I'll work to preserve and improve all of these.

I support elections by mail and our involvement with the Vietnam Archives Project at Texas Tech University. I advocate forming a Reunion Advisory Committee to take a role in helping less active chapters sponsor successful reunions.

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**Pike, Verner N. (Vern)**; Pinehurst, NC; Army: 1958-1988; Military Police Officer, Foreign Area Officer Specialist; 23rd M.P. Co., Jan. 1971-Jul. 1971; COL (Ret.). 9 yrs founder and CEO of marketing and lobbying firm. ADVA, 17 yrs.; Sandhills Chapter MOAA past president; NC Council of MOAA current V.P.; 82nd Abn. Div. Assn., 10 yrs.; Retired M.P. Officers Assn., 18 yrs.; Berlin US Military Veterans Assn., 10 yrs.; DAV.

Increase the role of chapters in planning, organizing, and conducting reunions. Expand membership rolls of Vietnam veterans. Continue to grow the scholarship fund, it is the one important link to the generation coming along. Seek participation in the annual Association of US Army (AUSA) convention.

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**Pola, Carlo A.**; Sandwich, MA. Army: 1942-1945; Construction Foreman; 57th Combat Engineers, 1942-1944; OCS and instructor at Engineering School, Ft. Belvoir, VA, 1944-1945; Army Reserve: 1945-1963, U.S. Army Engineers, MAJ (Ret.). 40 yrs. electrician. ADVA 60 yrs; attended most all ADVA reunions; American Legion, 60 yrs.

## NATIONAL NOTES

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I support the Americal Scholarship Fund and efforts to help deserving young people obtain an education and become well qualified leaders for the future.

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**Przybycien, Mithcell J. (Mitch);** New Lenox, IL. Army: Jan. 1942-Oct. 1945; Infantryman; Co. I, 132nd Inf. Regt. 29 yrs. comptroller in construction industry. ADVA, 60 yrs; VFW, 60 yrs; past post commander; 132nd Inf. Regt. WWII Veterans Assn., Sec.-Treas. And newsletter editor, 35 yrs.; American Legion.

I strongly believe in the scholarship program and the opportunities it gives our young people. I have always enjoyed attending reunions and will continue to attend them as long as I am able.

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**Scales, Richard L. (Rich);** Oakley, IL. Army: Mar. 1969-Mar. 1971; Infantryman; Co. B, 3/21st Inf., 196th LIB, Aug. 1969-Aug. 1970. 29 yrs locomotive engineer. ADVA, 15 yrs; Past National Commander; VFW, 33 yrs; past District Commander, past Post Commander, POW/MIA Chairman Dept. of IL; Am. Legion, 34 yrs.; past Post Commander; 21st Inf. Regt. Assn., current National Sr. Vice-commander.

I support growth in membership and the creation of a guide to help chapters sponsor reunions. Preserve the scholarship program and the history of the Americal Division. Help members become more familiar with the ADVA and mentor officers in the duties of their positions.

**Short, Robert G. (Bob);** Kalamazoo, MI. Army: July 1967-Nov. 1970; cadet, West Point Military Academy July 1967-Feb. 1969; Infantryman and squad leader, Co. C, 1/46th Inf., 196th LIB, May 1969-May 1970; instructor Americal Combat Center, May 1970-Nov. 1970. 32 yrs safety, human resources, and engineering management, 26 yrs with Pfizer. ADVA, 17 yrs; Americal Scholarship Chairman, 4 yrs.

I would like the newsletter to publish more about the inner workings of the ADVA such as summary financial information (income, budget, balance sheet), membership information (active, honorary, associate), and temporary or standing committee reports. Continue efforts to locate Americal veterans and encouragement of them to join the ADVA.

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**Stiles, Ralph M.;** National Park, NJ. Army: Jun. 1966-Sept. 1970; Officer, Military Police; 23rd M.P. Co., Sept. 1969-Sept. 1970. 20 yrs police officer, detective, and composite artist for local law enforcement agencies; currently a free-lance artist. ADVA 5 yrs; contributor to Americal Newsletter (artwork).

I enjoy the fact that the ADVA is run by regular people who come from all types of backgrounds and I have high respect for the leadership of the association. My wife and I always make new friends at ADVA reunions. We strongly support our current military members. They are the greatest soldiers, sailors, and airmen we have ever had.

## For Scholarship Fund Trustee

**Eichhorn, David D.;** Fleming, OH. Army: Feb. 1970-Dec. 1971; Medic; HHC & Co. C, 3/21st Inf., 196th LIB, Aug. 1970-Aug. 1971. 32 yrs wastewater technician for Krayton Polymers. ADVA, 8 yrs; past East Region Chapter Commander, Eastern Region 2007 national reunion chairman; VFW, 34 yrs; Am. Legion, 16 yrs; DAV, 12 yrs; VVA, 6 yrs; 196th LIB Assoc., 7 yrs.

Continue the good work of the scholarship fund and provide benefits to as many applicants as possible. It is a good to give all qualified applicants an award to recognize their achievement and interest in further education.

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**McNown, John Jr.;** Overland Park, KS. Army: Jul. 1967-Apr. 1972; Infantry Officer; Co. A, 1/20th Inf., 11th LIB and HQ, 11th LIB, Jul. 1968-Jul 1969. 25 yrs plant manager for yearbook publisher Herff Jones. ADVA, 14 yrs; Co. A, 1/20th Veterans Assn., current President.

I am committed to the Scholarship Fund and I think it is the best living memorial we can have to all who served in the Americal Division. It is important to increase ADVA membership and increase the number of children and grandchildren eligible for scholarship awards. All Americal veterans should belong to the ADVA.

**Noller, Gary L.;** Kerrville, TX. Army: Sept. 1969-May 1971; Infantryman; Co. B, 1/46th Inf., 196th LIB, June 1970-May 1971. 25 years operations manager. 5 years construction manager. ADVA, 18 yrs; past National Commander, past Chairman Executive Council, current Vietnam Editor and americal.org administrator; VVA, 18 yrs, VFW, 10 yrs; Am. Legion, 8 yrs; 196th LIB Assn., 15 yrs.

Keep scholarship funds secure while earning competitive rates. Determine if scholarship fund should become its own not-for-profit organization. Offer a program to name scholarship awards as memorials to Americal veterans. Modify eligibility rules to allow access to descendants of deceased Americal veterans.

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**Tognoli, Paris (Pat);** Isleton, CA. Army: 1943-1945; Anti-tank platoon; HHC, 2nd Bn., 182nd Inf. Regt.; 36 yrs design engineer for Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Co.; ADVA, 25 yrs; current Far West Chapter chaplain, past Far West Chapter Commander, past member Executive Council; VFW 25 yrs. The ADVA connects old friends to one another and should be sustained forever. The Scholarship Fund is a wonderful endeavor and should be amplified, raise more money, and make more awards. It is important for young people to get recognition.

# Letters to the Editor

## World War II



Dear Editor:

A few years ago we met Harvey Hansen ("Tex"), and his wife from Massachusetts. He and my husband were talking and found out that they both were in the Americal Division serving in some of the same places. I just finished reading "Under the Southern Cross" and felt like I needed to write this letter.

My husband, PFC Robert Glenn Redmond was known as Bob or Red in the service. He served with Company B - 182nd Infantry in the Bougainville Campaign. On Guadalcanal he got sick from fumes while unloading a landing craft. On Fiji he told about the natives who did their laundry and sold them fresh fruit; how it rained every afternoon.

If Pvt. Donald B. Blaisdell is still living, I want him or any of his family to know what happened to the injured soldier that he bravely rescued on Bougainville on March 12, 1944 on Hill 260. As Glen was crawling up a hill, a grenade went off between his legs. Both legs were damaged. He said the "Japs" were in the trees and shooting anyone that came for him. The litter got stuck on the barbed wire and someone yelled up to him and told him that he was going to have to roll off if they were to save him. He rolled off and they were then able to get to him. He was sent to Letterman Hospital in California, then Nichols Hospital in Kentucky and then Crile Hospital in Ohio, where I met him. From Crile he was sent to Wakeman Hospital in Camp Atterbury, Indiana for extensive plastic surgery. He was discharged (after 29 months in Army hospitals) on August 1, 1946.

Glenn went back to College in Ohio and got his degrees in Music and English. After several years of having High School Bands, his legs gave him trouble while walking so he went into Elementary Education and taught 6th grade at a school in Port Clinton, Ohio, later becoming the Principal. After 7 years of administration, he went back into teaching and taught American History and Reading in the 7th and 8th grades until retiring in 1979.

We were married on June 15, 1946 and had 4 children, 2 boys and 2 girls. Our boys both were in the service: Bob, Navy Submarines during the Cold War and John, in the Airforce for 17 years, including Desert Storm. As Glenn grew older his legs and heart gave him a lot of trouble. He had to use crutches and an electric scooter to get around. He never complained. Glenn passed away on 3/18/04 at the age of 81. So thanks again to Pvt. Blaisdell. Because of his unselfish bravery, I had 57 memorable years with a wonderful man who touched the lives of many.

Betty A. Redmond

749 Taft Street, Port Clinton, OH 43452

Dear Editor:

I'm conducting a search for unit information on my father: PFC. Joseph R. C. Fleurant, who died at age 70 (RIP 5/10/93) of Gardner, MA. He served with 360th QM Bakery Co (composite) from Jan 31, 1943 thru Nov. 29, 1945. His unit spent time in Townsville, Australia circa 1942-early 1943. My research led me to ADVA. I couldn't find the 360th QM Bakery Co among Americal Divisions "Order of Battle". I'd like to identify the 360th's parent organization, the Corps/Army or Division? (He went overseas in '43 in the Coast Artillery Corps). I have photos of dad in New Caledonia (the Americal connection?), New Guinea and Corregidor, Leyte, Tacloban and Manila, Philippines, but no specific dates. I want to enhance my spiritual bond with dad and allow my family and I to gain a deeper understanding of his service and his passion for these areas. Feel free to email me at: dfleurant1@cox.net

Dennis C. Fleurant

720 E. Alice Avenue # 207

Phoenix, AZ 85020

## World War II & Vietnam

Dear Editor,

The burial location of veteran's for which the VA has provided grave markers, and the information on the markers, is now available on the Internet. Go to <http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov>. In addition to 3 million records for veterans buried in VA national, state veterans' cemeteries and Arlington National Cemetery, there are 1.9 million records for veterans buried in private cemeteries.

Larry Watson, Jr. Vice-Commander

## Vietnam

Dear Editor,

It looks like the Army is going to re-activate the 52nd Infantry. The latest charts for Modular Force "2011" show the 52nd will be assigned to the new Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) for the 2nd Infantry Division and the 25th Infantry Division. The breakout is as follows:

The 2nd Infantry Division, 2nd BCT will have A Co. 52nd IN; the 2nd Infantry Division, 3rd BCT will have C Co. 52nd IN; the 2nd Infantry Division, 4th BCT will have F Co. 52nd IN, the 25th Infantry Division, 1st BCT will have D Co. 52nd IN, the 25th Infantry Division, 2nd BCT will have B Co. 52nd IN.

Although the old 1st battalion of the 52nd Inf. Companies will not be serving together, it is good to see that they are all to be activated.

CSM Ron Brown

D Co. 1-52nd IN, 198th LIB

Dumfries, Virginia

Dear Editor,

I have anecdote to share. A couple of weeks after I arrived in Chu Lai, Dick McKegney, the American Express Military Bank branch manager, and three of his staff, yours truly included, had a few too many beers after work. Dick wanted to show off his song and dance routine on stage at the Bob Hope amphitheater a short distance from us. We didn't know that it was off limits. Ignorance is seldom an excuse in life. Arriving on stage we found that there was a dressing room with the door locked. Dick insisted that he open the door with his head.

Dick took a running start and just before his head reached it's the door it suddenly opened and Dick shot into the room a good three feet in the air. We found out very quickly that a security detail lived in the dressing room and they had notified the MP's when they saw us coming.

Three MP jeeps with lights flashing quickly arrived. We were taken to MP HQ and booked on minor charges and released. After only two weeks at Chu Lai I already had a rap sheet. Dick was a fine bank manager and friend. I hope he never reads this.

Don Kilgore; New York, NY

Dear Editor,

As you may be aware, the price of first class postage increased in January 2006. Since the Purple Heart stamp is set with a \$.37 price it will be phased out of production. All veterans write a letter to the Postmaster General asking that the price be deleted from the stamp so that it will be a first class stamp in perpetuity just like the American flag stamp.

Postmaster General address: The Honorable John E. Potter;  
Postmaster General; U.S. Postal Service; 475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW;  
Washington, D.C. 20260-1000

Buddy Sadler; 1/52nd Inf.

## ADVA National Adjutant Notes

I hope all ADVA members are starting the New Year in good health and with good fortune in your daily lives.

Let's continue to remember and pray for our brothers residing in the Gulf Coast region who were hit hard last year by the devastation from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The road to recovery for these members could be long and costly.

2006 is an ADVA election year for command positions and the Executive Council. In the next few weeks, the ADVA election committee will be mailing the 2006 election ballots to all voting members. I encourage each voting member to look at the candidate list and cast your votes for those you feel will work well as a leadership team for this association. Candidate profiles are included in this issue of the newsletter.

Membership growth during the last two months of 2005 and first part of this year was steady. During the November 2005 – February 2006 period, we added thirty-nine new members to the roster. Of these new members, seven are Paid Life members. We increased our Paid Life Membership by five from the existing annual pay member base.

We reinstated six former members during this time period.

On the 4th Quarter 2005 newsletter, there was an omission in your member address field on the back page. Your membership renewal date, whether annual pay or life member, was omitted. The printer was made aware of this omission, and the correct member renewal date appears on this newsletter.

For annual pay members, be sure to check your renewal date in the address block on the back cover of this newsletter. The first line in the address block, under the postal bar coding, contains your membership renewal date.

If the date shown on your newsletter is Jan06 or earlier, please send your dues' payment to PNC Ron Ellis, Assistant Finance Officer. Ron's mailing address is listed on the outside back cover as part of the membership application form.

As always, if you have questions about your dues status, have an address change or have a notification of the death of an ADVA member or former Americal Veteran, please contact me with that information.

General correspondence and notice of address changes should be mailed to the ADVA National Adjutant P.O. Box in Richardson, Texas. The full address is listed inside the front cover at the bottom right corner of the page

*Roger Gilmore*

National Adjutant

## TAPS

### World War II Veterans

#### 121st Med BN

**Mr. Robert Beschle**

Danbury, CT

February 8, 2006

#### **Mr. Hyman Forman**

Brockton, MA

February 1, 2006

#### 182nd Inf Regt Co I

**Mr. Donald A. Shebesta**

Woodbridge, CA

December 20, 2005

#### 245th F.A.

**Mr. Robert B. Thielen**

Los Angeles, CA

December 15, 2005

#### 51st Bde HDQ

**Mr. Gordon E. Copeland**

La Plata, MD

December 15, 2005

### Vietnam Veterans

#### 11th LIB

**Mr. Larry G. Chilcutt**

A/3/1 Inf.

Bunker Hill, IN

May 14, 2005

#### 198th LIB

**Mr. Kenneth L. Harrigan**

B/1/52 Inf.

Chesapeake City, MD

June 27, 2005

#### 723rd Maint. BN

**Mr. Charles D. Foringer**

Co. B

Butler, PA

June 11, 2005

#### 98th Maintenance

**Mr. Herman W. Voellings**

Worcester, MA

October 31, 2005

## LAST ROLL CALL (Deceased Americal Veterans not members of the ADVA)

#### 182 Inf Regt F Co.

**Mr. Anthony DiPirro**

Haverhill, MA

December 5, 2005

#### Widows

**Mrs. Alice Mullen**

Philadelphia, PA

December 28, 2005

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## NEW MEMBERS

#### Mr. Ralph Bordner

198th LIB D/1/6 Inf.

Raytown, MO

# PNC Gary L. Noller

#### Mr. Eugene E. Carey, Jr.

198th LIB D/5/46 Inf.

Fairplay, SC

# John W. Anderson

#### Mr. Gene Bright

198th LIB B/1/6 Inf.

Bemidji, MN

# PNC Gary L. Noller

#### Mr. Leon T. Doutrich

23rd Recon Co. – Panama

Wadsworth, OH

# Dave Taylor

#### Mr. Robert E. Brown, Jr

11th LIB C/3/1 Inf.

Westfield, MA

# Self

#### Mr. Earl G. Dunkerly

11th LIB A/4/21 Inf.

Jacobs Creek, PA

# PNC Gary L. Noller



**Mr. Thomas Elmore**  
11th LIB A/1/20 Inf.  
Goshen, IN  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Ms. Kathleen A. Fennell**  
12th EVAC Hospital  
Media, PA  
# *David Taylor*

**Mr. Claude W. Frazier**  
23rd S&T Bn 163 Trn Co  
McKinney, TX  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Mr. Jack Haas**  
198th LIB 5/46 Inf.  
Woolwich Township, NJ  
# *Self*

**Mr. Steven L. Jensen**  
11th LIB E/4/21 Inf.  
Hutchinson, MN  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Mr. Gerald R. Kasperek**  
198th LIB A/1/52 Inf.  
W. Seneca, NY  
# *Dan R. Young*

**Mr. Karl F. Kennedy**  
132nd Inf. Regt. 2nd Bn  
Houston, TX  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Mr. Charles P. Knowlton**  
23rd MP Co  
Puyallup, WA  
# *Paul Stiff*

**Mr. Wayne Lehman**  
198th LIB A/1/52 Inf.  
Twain Harte, CA  
# *Rich Merlin*

**Mr. Vernon Lovejoy**  
198th LIB B/1/6 Inf.  
Lakewood, CO  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Mr. Lupe Lucero**  
196th LIB B/1/46 Inf.  
Tucson, AZ  
# *Rich Merlin*

**Mr. Robert B. McCary, Sr.**  
11th LIB C/4/3 Inf.  
Salisbury, MD  
# *Self*

**Mr. Ronald M. McClure**  
198th LIB D/1/46 Inf.  
Killeen, TX  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Mr. Ronald M. McClure**  
198th LIB D/1/46 Inf.  
Killeen, TX  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Mr. Richard L. Minger**  
182 Inf Regt 1st Bn Co D  
Alameda, CA  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Mr. Robert J. Montgomery**  
164 Inf Regt 3rd Bn Co K  
Springfield, PA  
# *Bob Granoff*

**Mr. Terry A. Morris**  
198th LIB A/1/52 Inf.  
Hawesville, KY  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Mr. Charles M. O'Neal**  
11th LIB C/3/1 Inf.  
Darlington, SC  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Mr. Lyle D. Peterson**  
196th LIB B/4/31 Inf  
Davenport, IA  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Mr. Larry K. Proctor**  
196th LIB E/3/21 Inf.  
Marietta, OH  
# *David Eichhorn*

**Mr. Everett M. Rowles**  
198th LIB C/5/46 Inf.  
Ogden, UT  
# *David Taylor*

**Mr. Donald G. Salo, Jr.**  
23rd Admin Co  
Crossville, TN  
# *Self*

**Mr. Don Schademan**  
198th LIB H Trp 17th Cav  
Toppenish, WA  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Mr. Floyd B. Thigpen**  
26th Engrs Co D  
Sugarland, TX  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Mr. John H. Wagner**  
11th LIB B/4/3 Inf.  
Bayville, NY  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Mr. Jerome J. Williams**  
52nd Cmbt Engrs Co A  
Pennsauken, NJ  
# *Self*

## NEW PAID LIFE MEMBERS

**Mr. James G. Ashwell**  
11th Arty B Btry  
Newington, CT  
# *Self*

**Mr. William G. Cahill**  
196th LIB C/1/46 Inf  
Hilton, NY  
# *Rollie Castronova*

**Mr. Henry A. Gall, Jr.**  
11th Arty A/6 Bn  
Columbus, OH  
# *Davis Bradley*

**Mr. James H. Grubka**  
198th LIB E/1/52 Inf.  
East Aurora, NY  
# *Self*

**Mr. Jeffrey W. Keyworth**  
198th LIB D/1/6 Inf.  
Troy, MT  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Mr. Mark Ladd**  
196th LIB B/2/1 Inf.  
St Petersburg, FL  
# *Self*

**Mr. Thomas J. Platts**  
23rd MP Co  
Queensland, Australia  
# *Rich Merlin*

**Mr. William K. Rapp**  
196th LIB E/4/31 Inf.  
Summit, NJ  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

**Mr. Kenneth D. Rollins**  
11th LIB C/4/21 Inf.  
Alexandria, VA  
# *Self*

**Mr. Donald E. Smith**  
198th LIB C/1/52 Inf.  
Dexter, ME  
# *PNC Jim Buckle*

**Mr. Richard D. Stephens**  
11th LIB D/1/20 Inf.  
Griffin, GA  
# *John Furgess*

**Mr. Frank R. Yehle, II**  
198th LIB B/1/6 Inf.  
San Clemente, CA  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

## NEW HONORARY MEMBER

**CW5 DeWayne Browning**  
123rd Avn Bn  
Paradise, CA  
# *PNC Gary L. Noller*

Americal Vets are reminded the new dues structure is Vietnam  
Vets pay \$15/Year and WWII Vets pay \$12/year.

## RE-INSTATED MEMBERS

**Mr. Lee Bartnick**  
196th LIB A/4/31 Inf.  
Hampstead, MD  
# *Don Ballou*

**Mr. Robert E. Boyle**  
196th LIB C/2/1 Inf.  
Rochdale, MA  
# *Self*

**Mr. Alan D. Conger**  
11th LIB D/1/20 Inf.  
Boulder, CO  
# *Richard Parry*

**Mr. John L. O'Neil, Sr.**  
101st Med Regt  
Arlington, MA  
# *PNC Jim Buckle*

**Mr. Steve Stoutenburgh**  
11th LIB E/4/3 Inf.  
Herndon, VA  
# *Don Ballou*

**Mr. George Taylor**  
26th Engrs C Co  
Round Lake, NY  
# *James Baird*



Dear ADVA,

As a son of an Americal Veteran, it gave me a great honor to be chosen to receive a scholarship from your association. This money will help greatly in my pursuit of higher education at SUNY Maritime.

I will be using the money to attend SUNY Maritime College, where I am studying for a degree in Marine Environmental Science along with a United States Coast Guard Deck License for unlimited tonnage vessels. Along with my degree I will also have a minor in Oceanography and Marine Meteorology. I feel very honored that your organization would choose me as a recipient of one of your scholarships offered to the Children of the Americal Division Veterans.

Sincerely,

Cadet Brian Murray

**Donations of More Than \$10  
to the ADVA Scholarship Fund**

**Elbert VanVolkenberg**

**In 2005**

**scholarships totaling  
\$30,000 were awarded**

Dear Mr. Short and the ADVA  
Scholarship Committee,

I just wanted to take the time to thank you for the scholarship. It was a huge help this semester and I was honored to receive it. I really appreciate the generosity of the Americal Division. The scholarship money helped to pay my tuition and buy books this semester. Than you for helping me further my education as I study Political Science and Communications at the University of Pittsburgh.

Thanks Again,  
Christine Trout

## Memorial Contributions to the Scholarship Fund

Earl Cook in memory of William Gold

Mark & Joyce Deam in memory of William Gold

ADVA Eastern Region in memory of

William Gold & James Rains Sr.

Bob Short in memory of Don Shebasta

Kevin Moore in memory of Dr. Robert Muehrcke

Kevin Moore in honor of Montrose "Monty" Greene

## Scholarship Availability

ADVA members are reminded our college and vocational scholarships are open to children and grandchildren, including those by adoption, of current and deceased ADVA members (provided the deceased member held good membership standing at the time of death), and to any child of an Americal Division soldier who was killed in action or died while on active duty with the division.

**Application forms** are available on the ADVA website or may be obtained by contacting the scholarship fund chairman at the following address:

**Bob Short**

3839 Old Savannah Drive

Kalamazoo, MI 49009

269-372-2192

C146thinfa@aol.com

Completed application forms and all required attachments must reach the fund chairman at the above address by May 1 to receive consideration.

## EASTERN REGIONAL CHAPTER

DC DE KY MD NJ NY OH PA VA WV

### COMMANDER

**John "Jay" Flanagan**

89 James Avenue #1  
Cranford, NJ 07016  
908 • 709 • 9790  
jayflanagan@sprintmail.com

### SECRETARY

**Joe Tunis**

1160 Hamlin Hwy  
Lake Ariel, PA 18436  
570 • 698 • 7311  
tunis@lacc.com

### Sergeant-At-Arms

### Chaplain

### VICE COMMANDER

**Conrad Steers**

124 Harding Avenue  
Hicksville, NY 11801  
516 • 822 • 5938  
11thbrigade@optonline.net

### TREASURER

**Mark Deam**

418 East Ruth St.  
Sidney, OH 45365  
937 • 492 • 1908  
mdeam@woh.rr.com

**Leo Orfe**

**Maj. Barton Berry**



Visit our web site at:  
<http://home.who.rr.com/sidneyalum/advaerc/>

## Reviews from the Battlefield

The feeling of being on hallowed ground was with all of us during our stay in at our annual chapter reunion in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, November 3-6, 2005, headquartered at the Holiday Inn. The hotel is appropriately styled to that period during the battle of Gettysburg, adding to the atmosphere of what occurred almost 145 years ago.

Being so centrally located we were able to walk to many of the places of interest including the Gettysburg National Cemetery where we gathered around a monument and canon for a memorial service for all U.S. Veterans. The order of service was led by our own, Major Barton D. Berry, Jr. Maj. Berry was a Chaplain with the 5th/46th, 198th LIB and has now accepted the invitation of Commander Flanagan to be our Chapter Chaplain.

Being blessed with unusually warm and sunny weather, many of us walked through the streets of the town during our leisure time and in the evenings, taking in the uniqueness of the atmosphere and shops. Visits were also made to the nearby outlet mall and the Boyds Bear Country Store.

We had 106 in attendance, which made it a chapter reunion record. Friday night we had a served dinner at the historic Dobbin Tavern, where President Abraham Lincoln was our guest speaker. During our business meeting



**Chapter Chaplain Barton Berry (back to camera) conducts annual memorial service after battlefield tour.**

Saturday night, following our banquet buffet, Commander Flanagan announced a special welcome to Peter Messina and grandson Michael, Honey O'Keefe and daughter Laurie and Harriet Gold and daughter Debby.

The minutes of the previous meeting was read and accepted. Also read was the e-mail received from Wendell Strode. He expressed his regrets at having to cancel and sent his greetings to everyone. The treasurer's report of income and expenses brought a checkbook balance of \$6,863.02 with \$9,000 invested in two CD's. The report was accepted. It was also noted we have 652 active members.

A report was given by Dave Eichhorn, the chairman of the ADVA National Reunion for 2007, which will be in Buffalo, New York. He has secured a hotel, the Adams Mark, as the headquarters hotel for the reunion. Conrad Steers has offered to chair the Chapters 2006 reunion on Long Island, NY and it was approved by vote. Conrad also presented a letter of appreciation from Angie, the bartender at the Holiday Inn, who was moved and honored to serve the Americal Veterans during the reunion.

Memorial Plaques were made for all our past Chapter Commanders. Presenting his plaque to Dave Eichhorn,



**The Avenue Restaurant hosted a Saturday breakfast for the chapter with special discounts.**



**Americal "Old Guard" with President Lincoln at Friday night banquet, where Lincoln was guest speaker.**

Commander Jay thanked him for his excellent leadership of the chapter. Accepting the plaque for Bill Gold, our departed and dearly beloved comrade, was his daughter Debby.

Bob Cudworth who strongly recommends the need to maintain contact with our congressmen gave a message regarding more benefits for Veterans. A motion was approved to combine the 2007 Chapter Reunion with the National reunion in Buffalo, since we are sponsoring the national that year. Another motion was approved to donate \$100 to the national Scholarship Fund in memory of Bill Gold and Jim Rains.

Existing officers were all nominated to continue in their positions and the votes supported that. A special thank you for the success of the Gettysburg Chapter reunion was given to Tom and Dorene Smith, and Dave Taylor, who were the reunion co-chairs. Also to Edna Cudworth for making the ID badges and Mark Deam for his detailed up-to-date bookkeeping. Gary Befus ran a raffle of several reunion-related items. The reunion drew to a close in our large hospitality room after the Saturday night banquet, and final good-byes were made after breakfast on Sunday.



**Vets gather at Little Round Top during battlefield tour.**



**Chapter Commander Jay Flanagan presents plaque to past Commander Dave Eichhorn**



## ARTHUR R. WOOD SOUTH EAST CHAPTER AL FL GA NC SC TN

### COMMANDER Paul Stiff

P.O. Box 495991  
Port Charlotte, FL 33949  
PStiff3@aol.com

### SEC/TREAS Allen Feser

625 N. Indiana Ave.  
Lindenhurst, NY 11757  
afeser@juno.com



I hope this newsletter finds each of you in good health and living in one of the best years of your life! Our compliments to Dave Taylor and his newsletter staff. With each new issue the articles are becoming more interesting and more professional. Hats off to you guys!

### Chapter News – Good News

Our membership continues to grow, but as our membership grows so does our need to improve as an organization. Bottom line – we need more member involvement! Although the SE Chapter is stronger today than it was a few years ago, it desperately needs more people on the rolls to get involved! Let me know if you'd like to run for a chapter office or have any ideas for improving our chapters' connection to Americal Vets, by sending me an e-mail or writing using our PO Box address. Your involvement is very welcomed and needed!

### Melbourne Reunion

April is just around the corner. This year's event is the 19th annual Vietnam Veterans Reunion. It will be held as usual at Wickham Park, in Melbourne, Florida on April 27-28-29-30. This is a free event that brings together thousands of Vets each year. The ADVA SE Chapter will have a presence there. While attending keep an eye out for our logo and Americal signs in both the campsite area and the vendor's area where we will be manning a "Welcome Americal Vet" table. Please plan to join us!

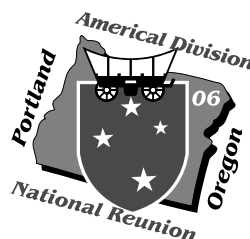
LZ Oceanside will also be in operation again, at the Melbourne reunion. See the information below under the Great Lakes Chapter. FYI --- Our chapter now has use of a yahoo Group Site to help its members regroup and stay connected. You can find the Southeast Chapter on <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SECADVA>. All Veterans are welcome to join us at our group site.

Our next chapter meeting will be held during the Melbourne event on Saturday, April 29th. All members will be notified of the meeting location before April. During the meeting we will have a chapter election. Nominations for all offices are open. Please contact us ASAP with your nominations or, if you have interest in running yourself, e-mail me at PStiff3@aol.com, or evening phone calls after 7PM at 248-703-0690 or by mail, using the Florida address above.

### 23rd MP Event In Our AO

Many of the Vietnam Vets of the 23rd MP Company will be gathered at Fort Bragg, NC from May 18-21, 2006. We have been invited by the newly activated 23rd MP Co. to participate in their brigade's anniversary celebration. During this time we will participate in a memorial ceremony and dedication of a new military police memorial complex at Ft. Bragg on Friday, May 19th. The 13 names of the Americal MP's that we lost in Vietnam will be posted on this new memorial. In addition we will attend a luncheon and be given a tour of the new 23rd MP Company headquarters and living area, and meet our newest 23rd MP's. If we can get enough golfers together we have also been invited to play in the Brigade's Gold Tournament on Wednesday, May 18th. In addition, we will have a hospitality suite open at our own "headquarters" at a nearby Holiday Inn. Information about this event is just coming in as the newsletter goes to print, so we may have a few more things planned. Join us for this mini-reunion. For more information contact Rich Merlin (Far West Chapter Commander) at 951-785-9816 or e-mail at Rmerlin425@aol.com or write to PO Box 2143, Riverside, CA 92516.

## NORTHWEST CHAPTER AK WA OR ID MT WY



### COMMANDER Dave Hammond

3015 SW 116th Avenue  
Beaverton, OR 97005  
503 • 644 • 3623  
pacwesthi@aol.com

The 2006 ADVA National Reunion will be held June 22-25 in Portland, Oregon. See the reunion information in this newsletter on pages 16 and 17, which include the registration. Book your rooms early!

## CENTRAL MID-WEST CHAPTER ND SD KE NE MO IA



### COMMANDER David A. Chrystal Sr

217 Southwest Circle  
Centralia, MO 65240  
573 • 682 • 2205  
dave23mp@mywdo.com

With the 2005 national Reunion behind us we have several reunion memory books on hand. If you purchased one and didn't get it, contact the commander at dave23mp@mywdo.com; or call (573) 819-0796. You can also order one, or an additional one, by the same methods for a mere \$20. This is the first time the Reunion Memory book is in full color. The newsletter of the Central Mid-West Chapter will soon be a reality. If you have articles to submit send them to the commander. We are in the negotiation process to have a chapter mini-reunion with the Nebraska Veterans during August this year, so stay tuned for more details.



## FAR WEST CHAPTER

AZ CA CO HI NV NM UT

### COMMANDER

**Richard A. Merlin**  
10610 Orchard View  
Riverside, CA 92503  
909 • 785 • 9816  
Rmerlin425@aol.com

### SEC/TREAS

**Gene McGrath**  
1101 East Daytona  
Pahrump, NV 89048  
775 • 751 • 1861  
mc2some@usintouch.com

### Vice Commander

**John Bowley**

### Sergeant-At-Arms

**Curt Rothacker**

### Chaplain

**Pat Tognoli**



### Commanders Comments

Our chapter continues to grow with 11 new members being added since our reunion in October. Our roster now numbers 169 Veterans. We especially encourage any ADVA members who live in our seven-state area to join us. You may

contact Commander Rich Merlin or Secretary Gene McGrath for information and a Chapter Membership Application.

The next chapter reunion is scheduled for the last of September – first of October in Las Vegas, Nevada. More information on dates and registration will be forthcoming. All national ADVA members, spouses and guests are invited.

On a sad note we regret to report the passing of a charter chapter member, Don Shebasta in December 2005. Don joined the Americal as a member of the 182nd Infantry Regiment on Cebu. Later, he was part of the occupying forces in Japan, serving in the IG Section at McArthur's headquarters in Tokyo and later at 8th Army Headquarters in Yokohama. His decorations include the Asiatic Pacific Theatre Ribbon w/ Bronze Battle Star, Philippine Liberation Medal w/ Bronze Battle Star, Victory Medal, Army of Occupation Medal – Japan, and the Good Conduct Medal. Don was a past commander of our chapter and served in different officer positions for seven years. He most recently was the Junior-Vice Commander of the ADVA national organization. In 2002 Elks Lodge #218 of Stockton, CA named Don "Elk of the Year" for his work in establishing an "Adopt A Vet" program for the Veterans Affairs Livermore Facility Nursing Unit.

According to his wife of 58 years, Desiree, "Don was most delighted when he could spend time helping his fellow Veterans." Don was always a key part of our chapter and our reunions and we will sorely miss him. We offer our heartfelt condolences to Desiree and family.

### Needed: A Few Good men

This year our chapter will hold elections for the offices of Commander, Vice-Commander, Secretary / Treasurer and Sergeant of Arms for the 2006-2008 term. The incumbent commander has served for two consecutive terms for a total of 4 years, and the Secretary / Treasurer for three consecutive terms for a total of 6 years. It is time for a change and a wonderful opportunity for more members to get involved. Please contact one of our nominating committee members: Gene McGrath at (775) 751-1861 or Curt Rothacker sat (925) 784-5391 to put your name on the ballot. If we do not get a full slate of candidates, we will have to institute the "draft". Thank you.

### Chapter Dues Reminder:

Chapter dues of \$10 are now due for 2006. Dues are paid on a calendar year basis, and no statements are sent. Members who have not paid yearly dues by April 1st of the current year will be dropped from the chapter roster and mailing list.

Please remember to pay your dues so you can keep receiving chapter mailings about the reunions and the Chapter Newsletter, the Cannon. Payments should be sent to Gene McGrath, Chapter Secretary / Treasurer. Thank you for your support.

### Change of Address:

If you have a change of address or telephone number, please notify our Secretary / Treasurer Gene McGrath. Keeping our roster up to date will insure you receive the newsletter and all other mailings. Thank You.



## SOUTH MID-WEST CHAPTER

AR LA MS OK TX

### COMMANDER

**Cameron F. Baird**  
P.O. Box 211  
Stonewall, TX 78671  
830 • 644 • 2704  
altdorf@kfc.com

All ADVA members in the chapter region are encouraged to sign up for complimentary newsletters. We are trying to expand the mailing list, and we want to get a letter for everyone. If you have not been receiving newsletters or have moved, please drop a line or e-mail the chapter commander so you can be included.

Plans are being made for Americal participation in the Veterans Day parade in Dallas. See the upcoming newsletter for details.



## NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER

MA NH VT ME CT RI

### COMMANDER

**PNC Roland Castronova**

4 Stone Drive  
Peabody, MA 01960

### *A Time For Decision*

We recently completed a mailing to the approximately 450 Americal

Vets & Associates we have in our database, asking for the \$5 annual dues for 2006. The due date was the end of January. We only received five checks; three from Vietnam Vets, one from a WWII Vet and one from an associate. Currently we do not even have the appropriate officers assigned to make us a valid chapter under the ADVA by-laws and, despite our requests in this newsletter, no one has stepped forward to volunteer.

There seems to be little interest in keeping the chapter going. I will continue to work on this issue in the coming weeks but, unless I find more interest, I will approach the Eastern Region Chapter this spring and ask them to consider absorbing the New England states into their chapter. This would be until such time in the future, there is sufficient interest from New Englanders that a new chapter can be formed. It is my understanding the Eastern Chapter will have their 2006 chapter reunion late summer or early fall on Long Island, so this would be an excellent opportunity for New England Americal Vets to drive down and make contact with the Eastern Chapter members.



## GREAT LAKES REGIONAL CHAPTER

II IN MI MN WI

### COMMANDER

**John Mathews**

7728 CHT G  
Verona, WI 53593  
608 • 845 • 8988  
dawg5@tds.net

### ADJ/FIN OFF

**Terry Babler**

W5889 Durst Road  
New Glarus, WI 53574  
608 • 527 • 2444  
pointman1@tds.net



We would like to thank everyone that attended our 20th Annual Winterfest R&R All Veterans Reunion in New Glarus, Wisconsin. This was indeed our largest Winterfest Reunion. The new hospitality room at the Chalet Landhaus Inn ...the "Burning of Winter"

new site ... the parade ...the dance at the New Glarus Fire Station ...Poker Run, Winterfest Auction ... annual All Veterans Group Picture ... the banquet on Saturday night at the New Glarus Hotel ... the music by the band "Badge" ...the party at midnight around the hotel fireplace until who knows when ... everything was great!

Special thanks to the Winterfest Committee and Auction Committee who, without the hard work we could not put this on. And, of course, the people who came from all over the USA to attend including our special guests, Congressional Medal of Honor Sammy L. Davis & Diane Carlson Evans, Chairperson and founder of the Women's Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.



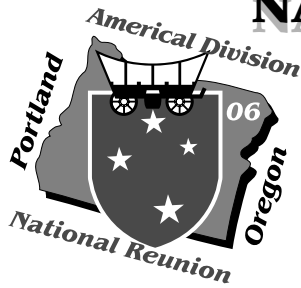
### **Americal Veterans Enjoying the 20th Winterfest In beautiful New Glarus, WI**

On the Monday immediately following Winterfest a group of people presented the idea of nominating John Mathew's for the Executive Council for the Americal Division Veterans Association. The deadline for nominations was February 15th. According to the bylaws at least 15 nominations by members in good standing are required in order to have the name listed on the ballot. The numbers of nominations received were in excess of 15 and have been forwarded on to the chairman of the committee. John Mathews has done a lot of good for the organization and we highly recommend him for the position. If, for some reason, you do not see his name on the ballot please consider writing his name on the ballot. The ballot will be mailed to you from the National Board.

In other business the Great Lakes Chapter is planning on attending the 19th Annual Vietnam Veterans reunion in Melbourne Beach, Florida on April 27-30, 2006 at Wickham Park. We would like to thank the following sponsors of Operation LZ-Oceanside 3" for their support: The 1st Cav Assn, Vietnow national, Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans Chapter 3 and, of course, the ADVA Great Lakes Chapter. Our activities will include "Jamakin Night" on Wednesday night the "Gator Patrol" on Thursday night and the Florida reunion all weekend, Thursday through Sunday at beautiful Wickham Park in Melbourne. The reunion includes vendors, live music all weekend, The Wall, military displays, POW/MIA Ceremonies, "The Last Patrol" performance, etc. We will have a hospitality room set up at the main hotel, the Best Western in Cocoa Beach, 5600 N. Atlantic Avenue. For reservations call (321) 783-7621 or 1-800-962-0028. For rooms mention "Operation LZ-Oceanside III" when making reservations to get the discount. Any overflow will be next door at The Days Inn. Both Hotels are together. For additional information about our group, contact me: pointman1@tds.net. or (608) 527-2444. For information about the Melbourne Reunion at Wickham Park you can get info at their website: <http://members.aol.com/FLVietVets/reunion.html>.

For those of you that may not be a member of the Great Lakes Chapter yet, the dues are \$10/year or save and pay \$45 for five years. This covers the cost of three newsletters / year. For all current members, please check your mailing label on your Chapter Newsletter to find the expiration date of your dues. If you have no date, we welcome you to join us. Please fill out page 2 of the newsletter and send back to: Great lakes Regional Chapter, c/o Terry Babler, Adjutant, W5889 Durst Road, New Glarus, WI 53574. See you at the National Reunion in Portland!

# AMERICAL DIVISION VETERANS ASSOCIATION NATIONAL REUNION PORTLAND, OR JUNE 22-25, 2006



**Dave Hammond, Reunion Chairman**  
503-644-3623, or email [pacwesthi@aol.com](mailto:pacwesthi@aol.com)

**Place:** Portland Marriott Downtown/Waterfront

Situated downtown in the "City of Roses," on the west bank of the scenic Willamette River.  
1401 SW Naito Parkway, Portland, OR. For more hotel information [www.portlandmarriott.com](http://www.portlandmarriott.com)

**Room Rates:** Make reservations directly with the Portland Downtown Marriott. Specify you are with the Americal Division Veterans Association for our group rate of \$112.00 per night. 1-800-831-1000 or 1-503-226-7600.

**Transportation:** Suggested: Blue Star Shuttle Service from airport directly to the hotel. \$13.00 each way. Leaving Portland airport on the half hour from 4:00 am to midnight. Leaving hotel from 5:00 am to 5:00 pm. on the half hour. 1-800-247-2272. [www.bluestarbus.com](http://www.bluestarbus.com) Go to information booth outside of baggage claim area and request Blue Star downtown shuttle.

### ***Reunion Activities & Highlights:***

On Your Own Activities: (Within walking distance or short cab ride): Stroll the Portland waterfront, Saturday Market, Washington Park Rose Garden, Oregon Zoo, World Forestry Center, Classical Chinese gardens, and more.

### **Fishing:**

Salmon & Sturgeon. Contact Dave Hammond for guide information. [pacwesthi@aol.com](mailto:pacwesthi@aol.com)

### **Golf:**

Contact Steve Dant for further information. 719-559-3653 or email [ssdant@adelphia.net](mailto:ssdant@adelphia.net)

### **Car tours:**

Oregon Coast, 1:45 minutes from hotel. Mt. St. Helens, 1:30 minutes from hotel. Mt. Hood, 1:00 hour from hotel. Oregon wine country, and more.

### ***Friday***

### **DON'T MISS THIS.**

Tours hosted by Grayline Tours. Portland City Tour-Oregon Coast-Columbia Gorge- Multnomah Falls and more. See registration page for more details. [www.grayline.com](http://www.grayline.com)

### ***Friday Night***

Jet boat transportation and tour of the Portland waterfront. Jet boats will shuttle us to the Oregon Museum of Science & Industry for an indoor/outdoor BBQ and dance with a guided tour of the USS Blueback Submarine.

### ***Saturday Guest speakers and seminars:***

*Kim Cook*, veteran and published author of "Do Bar Fights Count? How To Write Your Military Stories," will speak on the importance of writing your own personal experiences for family and history. [www.warriortales.com](http://www.warriortales.com)

*Charlene Edwards*, photographer, writer, wife of Vietnam veteran, and author of "Voices from Vietnam;" a beautiful book about the tragedies and triumphs of Americans and the Vietnamese—two peoples forever entwined by the legacy of war. [www.voicesfromvietnam.com](http://www.voicesfromvietnam.com)

### ***Saturday Night Banquet***

Banquet ceremony, dinner, entertainment, and dance with live music.

# AMERICAL DIVISION VETERANS ASSOCIATION NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION FORM PORTLAND, OR JUNE 22-25, 2006



Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse or Guest Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

VN \_\_\_\_\_ WWII \_\_\_\_\_ Unit(s) \_\_\_\_\_

## **Registration:**

Before 5/1/06: \$25.00 per person X # of people ( )  
After 5/1/06: \$30.00 per person X # of people ( ) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## **Friday Tours:**

9:00 AM – Noon

Portland City Tour: \$37.50 X # of people ( ) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

1:00 – 5:30 PM

Columbia Gorge & Multnomah Falls: \$47.00 X # of people ( ) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

9:00 AM – 5:30 PM

City to the Waterfalls (Includes both tours above)  
\$78.00 X # of people ( ) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

9:00 AM – 5:30 PM

Oregon Coastal Wonders: \$73.50 X # of people ( ) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(More tour info available at [www.grayline.com](http://www.grayline.com))

## **Friday Night: Don't Miss This!**

5:30 – 9:00 PM

Jet boat ride on the Willamette River to picnic dinner, dance, and private tour of the USS Blueback Submarine.

*Boats begin boarding at 5:30 PM. You will be assigned a boarding time.*

\$45.00 X # of people ( ) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Saturday Night Dinner/Dance:** \$45.00 X # of people ( ) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Choose entrée for each person and how many:

Baked Alaskan Salmon \_\_\_\_\_ Mt. Hood Broil Grilled Flank Steak \_\_\_\_\_

**Reunion T-Shirts: \$10.00 each. White. Large reunion logo on back; small ADVA logo on front.**

Specify size and how many: \_\_\_\_\_ Med \_\_\_\_\_ LG \_\_\_\_\_ XL \_\_\_\_\_ XXL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## **Mail to:**

ADVA Portland Reunion  
Dave Hammond  
3016 SW 116th Ave.  
Beaverton, OR 97005  
Contact Number: (503) 644-3623  
[pacwesthi@aol.com](mailto:pacwesthi@aol.com)

**Memory Book** \$20.00 X ( ) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to: Dave Hammond/Reunion Chairman**

*You will be sent an acknowledgement of your reservations/order*



**1/1 troopers at Winterfest New Glarus, WI 2006**

Charlie Company, 1st/52nd Inf., 198th LIB, reunion will be held July 13-15, 2006 at the Crowne Plaza St. Louis Airport, 11228 Lone Eagle Drive, Bridgeton, MO 63044. Your reservations can be made by calling (314) 291-6700 or 1-800-227-6963. The daily block room rates are \$75 plus tax. Cut-off date for block rate is 6/15/06. Make your reservations as early as possible. You must ask for the block reunion rate. For more information contact Terry Wyrick, P.O. Box 172, Cabool, MO 65689 or e-mail: [m60gunner@hotmail.com](mailto:m60gunner@hotmail.com).

26th Combat Engineers (Vietnam) will hold their 2006 Reunion in conjunction with the ADVA National Reunion in Portland, Oregon, June 22-25. We encourage all Engineers to register for the National. For more information about our group's activities in Portland, contact Linda Gordon, 550 8th Ave S., Clifton, IA 52732 or call: (563) 242-4061.

3rd/1st Inf. (Hawaii / Vietnam, Jun 1966-Dec 1968) will be meeting on October 13-16, 2006 in Atlanta, Georgia. For more information contact Tim Cook, 911 4th Ave E., Williston, ND 58801. Phone is: (701) 774-0598 or e-mail: [thirdfirstreunion@yahoo.com](mailto:thirdfirstreunion@yahoo.com).

Delta Co., 4/3rd Inf., 11th LIB, 69-70, is holding a reunion June 16-17, 2006 in Moline, Illinois. For more information please contact Linn Hoopes; [hoopman@kdsi.net](mailto:hoopman@kdsi.net) or [linn.hoopes@menninga.com](mailto:linn.hoopes@menninga.com); 641-621-1501 or 641-621 2035.

F Troop, 8th Cavalry, Blueghost Vietnam 68073 will meet March 31-April 2, 2006 in San Antonio, Texas. For more information contact Paul Reitchel (207) 626-0354 or e-mail: [meaust@aol.com](mailto:meaust@aol.com).

Americal Division Artillery WWII & Vietnam 2006 Reunion will be held May 4-7, 2006 in Roanoke, Virginia. The headquarters hotel will be the Wyndham Hotel (three miles from I-81 on Route 581) with a rate of \$85 plus tax. For reservations contact Bonnie at the hotel at (540) 563-9300. Reservations must be made by April 15th to get the group rate. We will have "Early Bird" activities for arrivals on the 3rd. Contact us for more details, Bob & Carol Miller, 67 Gannett Rd, Farmington, NY 14425. Our phone is: (585) 924-5296 and E-Mail is: [Ryskowski@aol.com](mailto:Ryskowski@aol.com).

Vietnam and All Veterans Reunion (The Nations Largest Veterans Reunion) will hold their annual event on April 27-30, 2006 at Wickham Park, Melbourne, Florida. This event is well attended by the ADVA Southeast Region Chapter and other ADVA members eager to get warm from the Great Lakes Region Chapter. ADVA members should contact the chapter commanders for more details or also call (321) 632-4928 or get more information on the reunion web page:

<http://members.aol.com/FLVietVets/reunion.html>.

Veterans of 3/16th Artillery are having their first reunion in Indianapolis, IN on March 17-19, 2006. Veterans of 3/18th Artillery and 55th Artillery quad-50s who were also on Arty Hill and at Tien Phouc are invited to join this reunion. Contact Harold (Woody) Preston, 2960 W. Sylvania Ave., Apt 7; Toledo, Oh; 43613; 419-475-4342; [Wbigdawg69@aol.com](mailto:Wbigdawg69@aol.com), or Jerry Adkins at [jjadkins@aol.com](mailto:jjadkins@aol.com)

Bravo Co., 4/21st Inf., 11th LIB, April 14, 1968 to May 1969, will have its first ever reunion April 28-30, 2006, at St. Charles, MO. The location will be the Embassy Suites Hotel. Over 200 men of B/4/21st are now on a roster. Reunion contact is Robert Lee Horton, [ns\\_volunteers@cox.net](mailto:ns_volunteers@cox.net).

Delta Co., 1st/20th Inf., 11th LIB will meet April 27-30, 2006 in Bowling Green, Kentucky. For more information contact Wendall Strode at 1-800-538-3883 or e-mail at: [strode@corvettemuseum.com](mailto:strode@corvettemuseum.com) or visit our website at: [www.deltacompany.org](http://www.deltacompany.org).

Yankee Division Veterans Association, 87th National Convention, June 8-10, 2006 at the Best Western Merry Manor, Portland, Maine. Contact: Sam Thompson (508) 285-4656 or E-Mail at: [Thompson.Iscret@comcast.net](mailto:Thompson.Iscret@comcast.net).



# Tanks in the Jungle

by Thomas Howard



***Tanker on Bougainville Note Flamethrower***

The 754th Tank Battalion (Medium) was activated at Ft. Knox, Kentucky on 1 June 1941 and attached to the 4th Armored Division at Pine Camp, Watertown, New York for training. In its seven months of training, the general unpreparedness of the U.S. for a major conflict was reflected in the fact that the only tracked vehicles available for training were those known as "Infantry Combat Cars", vintage 1930's.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, we were equipped as a light tank battalion, at the expense of the 4th Armored Division. The battalion set sail from New York as part of Task Force 6814 aboard the John Erickson.

On arrival in New Caledonia the battalion established its base 25 miles northwest of Noumea, in the area of Saint Vincent. The battalion remained in New Caledonia for seventeen months, which allowed it the time to conduct intensive training, from platoon to battalion level. In addition to training, our Company A was stationed 150 miles away to guard a bomber air strip at Plaines de Guyac while the balance of the battalion guarded the Tontoute Air base not far from St. Vincent as well as coastal defense assignments.

Because of the intensive training, our tracks tore up the main north/south highway on the island (consisting of shale and gravel) and therefore had to build its own road traversing the length of New Caledonia. Extensive use was made of an old, abandoned convict road. Each company was assigned a section of the road to make it usable using backbreaking manpower and its organic vehicles of war. Bridges were built and road surfaces were graded where necessary.

When completed we had our own access road on the island to be used when moving vehicles to training areas or for tactical purposes in the event of attack by the Japanese. By 8 August 1943 the forward echelon of the battalion set sail for Guadalcanal. The battalion went ashore a few miles south of Lunga Beach with our M3A1 light tanks.

New tactics had to be developed for the use of tanks in this type of terrain and so began another extensive training period. Everything we learned about armored tactics and had practiced in the States and on New Caledonia was of no use to the battalion in the Guadalcanal jungle. The battalion began extensive experimentation to perfect tank and infantry tactics suitable for jungle warfare with the 3rd Marine Division and later with the 37th Infantry Division. It was here that new tactics were developed which were to assist us immeasurably at a later date when the battalion was actively engaged in combat in Bougainville.

During this period on 7 November 1943 our battalion was redesignated the 754th Tank battalion (Medium). The battalion was now authorized four tank companies and a newly formed Company D Light Tank Company. An assault gun platoon replacing the mortar platoon formed in New Caledonia, was also authorized. The battalion's stay on Guadalcanal was short, with its primary purpose to test the feasibility of tank use in jungle warfare, develop new tactics and acclimate the troops to the weather and terrain.

The battalion was designated as an integral support for the XIV Corps and moved up the "slot" on LST's and arrived at Bougainville in late December 1943. It landed at Torokina Point and a bivouac area was established reminiscent of covered wagon days, with circled armored vehicles in a perimeter defense.



***754th Tank Battalion Bivouac – Bougainville***



**SSG Jesse R. Drowley**  
**Medal of Honor Recipient**  
**1919-1996**

The jungle was thick and the ground swampy to the extent it would not support our tanks and many bogged down. Many long weeks were required to clear underbrush, fell trees and fill with ground coral before the area was made livable. We were in close proximity to a good road network to support the divisions manning the perimeter defenses and to react for air base defense.

The battalions' first taste of combat and loss was suffered on 30 January 1944.

The enemy was fortifying a coastal strip opposite one of our infantry outposts at the mouth of the Torokina River, and from these positions were constantly harassing our infantry patrols. To probe these positions and dislodge the enemy, Company A, the Assault Gun Platoon and a Mortar Platoon supported the attacking infantry forces, which were a reinforced company of the 132nd Infantry Regiment. Under the cover of supporting artillery fire, these forces crossed at the mouth of the river and attacked east. This engagement was successful in that an untold number of enemy pillboxes were reduced, heavy casualties inflicted on the enemy and the general perimeter of American forces were extended and straightened.

It was during this action that Staff Sergeant Jesse Drowley of Company B, 132nd Infantry Regiment noted that three men of the assault company (other than his own) had been badly wounded.



### ***Tanks Overrun Enemy Positions*** ***Bougainville Jungle***

He rushed forward to carry the wounded to safety. Drowley then discovered a source of the enemy fire as being a pillbox concealed near the juncture of the jungle and the beach which, together with an adjacent pillbox, had not been discovered by the tanks. These pillboxes had halted the infantry advance with severe casualties. Drowley ran through enemy fire to get the attention of one of our tanks, climbed on top of the tank and guided it to an enemy pillbox.

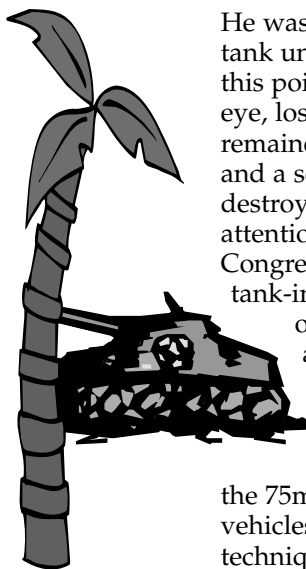
Under heavy small arms and machinegun fire hitting the tank Drowley directed the tank driver by firing tracers from his submachine gun to within twenty feet of the pillbox.

He was hit in the chest by a bullet but refused to leave the tank until the pillbox was definitely located by the crew. At this point he was hit again by small arms fire in his left eye, losing his eye and was knocked from the tank. He remained alongside until the pillbox had been demolished and a second pillbox directly behind the first was also destroyed. He then returned to the rear for medical attention and was subsequently awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. This attack proved that tank-infantry teams are effective in jungle combat. We lost one tank to enemy fire, two tankers killed in action and a number of others wounded.

January saw the receipt of our new Sherman M3 tanks. They looked like and were a formidable weapon with their 3-inch armor plated turret and the 75mm gun. Once again, the rush began to make these vehicles combat ready and teach the crew new firing techniques and operation of the more complex equipment. Receipt of these heavier tanks were a big morale booster and we received an influx of new men to accommodate the new five man versus four man tank crews.



***Tanks Being Pulled***  
***From Swamp***  
***Bougainville***



At the recommendation of the battalion staff, XIV Corps authorized the two letter companies to retain five of the light tanks. These lighter tanks were to prove invaluable during combat operations as back-up protection for the forward elements, the medium tanks.

March 9-31, 1944 saw elements of the battalion continuously committed to action against the Japanese 6th Infantry Division which launched attacks against the 129th Infantry Regiment and the 37th and Americal divisions. In the counterattack the ground was generally pretty flat but due to the deep ravines the Japanese took shelter in, it was difficult to bring the guns down to bear on them. However the combined team of infantry and tanks were able to demolish all the Japanese held pillboxes and restore the original line.

Tanks were again engaged on 15 March against the Japanese. It took two counterattacks but with the second the enemy was driven off. One tank was damaged and over 100 enemy bodies were counted and four captured. Enemy troops followed up with a counterattack on the 17th but were driven back by a combined infantry-tank attack. The enemy broke contact, and regrouped their forces for a renewal of their attack on March 23rd. But against a combined infantry-tank counter attack, we broke the enemy's back.

While these events took place with our Company C, Company A constantly assisted the Americal in repulsing Japanese diversionary attacks. Many times the tactical ground was extremely limiting and only one section of tanks (2) could be used at one time. Elements of our battalion assisted in later phases of the battle in retaking Hill 260 and driving the enemy off Hill 600.

Although the Japanese 17th Army suffered tremendous losses during the March offensive the enemy had re-fortified a narrow coastal strip east of the Torokina River. Elements of our Company A assisted the Infantry in clearing the area east to the Mavavia River. When it was all finished these offensive commitments terminated combat on the island for the battalion. On 18 June other of our battalion elements that had been deployed elsewhere under Corps control had consolidated on Bougainville. We were together as a complete battalion once again but only 50% of the original members who trained at Pine Camp, New York, remained.

By early November our battalion staff made preparations for future operations in the Philippines. Over the course of the next six months we found the terrain far different than the jungles of Bougainville. The country through which we moved was open and the tactics employed were more akin to the normal concept of tank deployment. Here ground gained was measured in miles, not yards as in the Solomon's but we never forgot our "baptism" in the jungles of Bougainville. 🇺🇸

***Thomas Howard is the Secretary / Treasurer of the 754th Tank Battalion Association. During his service with the battalion, Howard was awarded the Silver Star and Purple Heart. All photos used in this article were provided by Howard.***



The Light Tank M3A1, part of the Stuart family of tanks, began production in April 1942. For awhile, the M3A1 was built concurrently with the M3. This was reflected by the last few M3s having a welded hull while the first M3A1s retained the riveted hull - before welding became standard. The major differences between the two vehicles were that the M3A1 dispensed with a cupola and was fitted with two turret hatches; the installation of an oil motor power traverse; and the provision of a turret basket which the M3 had lacked. Minor modifications included the repositioning of the turret vision ports and, as the series progressed, the removal of the two sponson machine guns, the mountings for which were blanked off. The M3A1 was manufactured until February 1943. A total of 4,621 M3A1s, 211 of which were diesel-powered, were built.



***Tankers Captured This Japanese Mountain Gun – Bougainville***

# A Long Vacation

(At Government Expense)

by Siegel "Bob" Varner



When Pearl Harbor was bombed in December 1941 I was 16. When I graduated from High School in June 1943 I called about enlisting. I was told to go down to my Draft Board to volunteer for induction. I went, only to be told that I didn't have to volunteer – my draft notice was already in the mail. I arrived July 13, 1943 to Camp Roberts, California for basic training where they trained 15 infantry battalions and 4 or 5

artillery battalions. After the 13 weeks basic was over most of the guys got a furlough and went home before going overseas or to their permanent assignment. I had scored high on aptitude tests and was told I qualified for the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP), or college. I had to wait for an opening at Stanford University but the Army decided it needed infantry replacements more than students. In the interim I pulled KP duty at the Officers Mess and, in so doing ate as well as they did. On January 20, 1944 I left on leave for Minnesota to see my girlfriend at the time. Two weeks later, in February we were loaded on the USAT David C. Shanks in San Francisco and set sail. All troops were kept below decks until we had passed under the Golden Gate Bridge. We didn't see another ship until we reached New Caledonia.

March 26, 1944 we arrived at Noumea, New Caledonia and were transferred to shore on barges. The operators were Melanesians who had dark skin and bush red hair. The red color was caused by using dye to control lice. After we got on trucks we were driven for about two hours to a replacement depot. One week later we were trucked back to Noumea. On April 2, 1944 we boarded the President Polk, a former cruise liner which had be refitted as a troop ship. Four nights later we docked at a pier on Guadalcanal and on April 9th we arrived at Empress Augusta Bay, Bougainville Island, the Solomon's where we spent one night on the beach before going to our "outfit". The next morning we were trucked to Company I, 132nd Infantry Regiment, where I was assigned to the second platoon, under Lt. Losey. My platoon Sergeant was Pete Simonetti and Leo Hoeffler was my squad leader.

## Combat on Bougainville

April 12, 1944. After one day in my new outfit we were told that we – Third Battalion – were going on a combat

patrol. "I" Company would be Point Company and 1st or 3rd platoon would start at point. Point position was rotated about once per hour as to even out the risk and also the job of hacking through the brush and all the "wait-a-minute" vines, which hung down 100-150 feet from the trees and were about an eighth of an inch in diameter with a barb about every two inches. When one caught your clothes or equipment you had to "wait a minute". If it caught your skin – you bled. And so to go on this patrol we loaded on trucks about 8:00AM with "C" and "K" rations, rifle, 2 canteens of water, full ammo belt, 3 or 4 grenades, blanket, shelter half, bayonet, mess kit, helmet and 2 rounds of 60-mm mortar ammo. I think I carried about 70 pounds. We rode past Hill 260, which had been the location of an important battle less than two weeks before. It had what was labeled the "highest-priced tree in the world". Between Jap and American attacks and counter attacks it cost 200 lives. It was less than 1/2 mile from where I spent my first night in "I" Co.

By 8:30AM we had crossed the Torokina River and drove a ways into the jungle on the corduroy roads. We unloaded and the point headed into the jungle towards hills 20 and 500/501. A battalion going through the jungle makes considerable noise but at point the word came back, "move quietly, hold it down." At this time our platoon was 40-50 yards from the lead scouts. When we had moved that far we found out why there was so much noise – the Japs had strung wire with cans attached as a warning device. We did the same thing; we also used the empty M1 rifle clips, which being steel with a spring, rang out very well. Shortly after we passed the wire shots rang out – we deployed and stayed low. After ten minutes and a few of our grenades exploded, it was still. A short wait and we advanced 30 yards or so through a semi-clearing. There were three foxholes, five dead Japs, and some smoke. My first action, less than 30 yards from me and I never saw a thing until it was over.

We moved on toward our real objective, Hill 500. There were small hills and streams to cross before we came to a large flat area which had been pounded by artillery. We could see Hill 500 but the holes and fallen trees slowed us down. We started the climb up the very steep hill only to be called back because someone spotted Japs. The decision was made to pull back and let the artillery "soften up" the area for us. After the barrage we started up again.

If you can imagine a 19-year-old ... you know that I wanted to be the first to the top. I made it with some guys from "K" Company. I think the hill was 200 feet or so high, but with gear and 90 degrees temperature, and probably 85% humidity, it seemed like a thousand feet. At the top we were silhouetted to anyone lower so we dropped down flat. The guy next to me – no more than 18 inches away – and I were behind a knocked down tree, which was about two feet in diameter. As we each did a "push up" to look over there was a snap! He "ughed" and collapsed. He was hit in the jugular vein and his blood splattered all over me. He died almost instantly.

There must have been a sniper in a tree in front of us because a guy behind me and one to my left were hit in the legs. Behind me and to the right another man was hit. Directly behind me another casualty. All five of us were within a 12-foot circle. Needless to say I was really scared. When someone said, "let's get the wounded out" I was only too happy to help. I guess it didn't occur to me that standing up I would be a better target. So three of us grabbed the guy next to me and carried – or dragged – what was like a big, bloody rag doll back over the edge of the hill. Some guys get Bronze Stars for dragging wounded out. I didn't but ... I am still here.

Hot and dry air, our canteens emptied quickly. I was picked as part of a detail to collect canteens and go back down the hill to get water. The only water available was what had collected in shell holes: moldy, yellow water and the holes still smoking from the blast. But it was welcome to those who got it. On the way back up the hill I was overcome and I just plain sat down and cried. People walked by me, they never said a word. Finally got back up to the top and things were quiet. We dug in along the top of the hill. The holes we dug were 2 1/2 feet wide, 5 feet long and close to 3 feet deep. It was tough going through the roots – but the roots got even during the night because while we were sleeping they dripped sap on us. When it rained the foxhole became more of a bathtub than a bed. The water was 6 to 8 inches deep except where we dug a little deeper to act as a sump.

One of the reasons for such deep holes was we had close artillery support. Close means as close as 25-50 yards. If someone removed too much of the propellant explosive in the artillery, you got a "short round." This happened to "I" Company. On the backside of the hill from the Japs our Company Command Post (CP) had a round land dead center, killing Captain Komrony, First Sergeant O'Rourke and several other men.

I don't know whether to categorize this as a "morale building" or "humor in uniform" item, but after the morning fire fight had ended and there were only sporadic exchanges an L4 artillery liaison spotter plane flew over looking for targets. About 75 yards out was a tree occupied by a Jap sniper. As the plane approached the pilot took several shots at him; very foolish. The normal procedure is for the Forward Observer (FO) to locate the problem, fly off a ways and then call for artillery, which usually silenced the enemy. Not this guy, he put his plane into the closest possible turn and circled the tree like he was on a "U" line. His hand came out of the window, and with his 45 cal. Automatic pistol he let go with 8 rounds. Then he left. The odds of hitting the sniper were astronomical, but there was no answering fire from him.

Our patrol was "reinforced" by some Fiji troops. They were capable of moving through the jungle so well that they had gone to the north end of Bougainville, killing Japs and destroying supplies without ever getting caught. They probably were never seen. Unfortunately for the Negro .

troops who also accompanied us, the Japs captured some and, thinking they were Fiji, tortured them

At night you didn't dare get out of your hole to answer nature's call. Several men were killed by their own comrades, by getting out of their holes after dark. We learned the adage, "use your helmet and dump it in the morning."

The depth of my foxhole may have kept me from a Purple Heart. In the morning I was going to get out and so I put one foot over the edge and gave a shove with the other. Not quite hard enough – I fell back. As I did a rifle slug snapped through a small tree – right in line where I would have been – if I had gotten out. Two days later we had lost contact with the Japs so we had to pull out.

It had been alternately sunny and rainy. As we left our holes we passed by Company K's positions. Less than fifty feet away were three foxholes, each with a dead GI. Their bodies were so bloated that they almost filled the holes. I don't think I'll ever forget the smell or the sight of those men.

Our next bivouac was at the top of another hill but we didn't dig in. There we pitched our pup tents, which were two shelter halves buttoned together. We dug a drainage ditch around the tent, but it didn't do much good. It rained so hard that we were as wet inside as out. That was the first time I used a palm leaf to funnel rainwater into my canteen.

Shortly after returning from that first combat patrol I was sent to the R&R site on the island. It was located on the beach, next to the Marine airstrip. We lived in Quonset Huts that had wooden floors. There were Ping-Pong tables, chess games and other distractions from the field. Further "entertainment" was watching the Corsairs taking off and landing. That was the plane with a gull wing, which carried a 500-pound bomb but it didn't always release it over the target. One time, one released just as the plane touched the ground and it went bouncing down the strip without it ever exploding. One day two planes were coming in, in formation, one just behind and above the other. As number one touched down, the other landed on top of him. I don't think either pilot survived the big blast.

When I returned to the field we went into positions a little downstream on the Torokina River, close to the Empress Augusta bay. These were elegant in comparison to the holes we had left before. They were about 12 feet square over a 2-3 foot deep hole. The walls were mahogany logs almost two feet in diameter. Canvas tops for roofs allowed a nice ventilation system. They also had a slit for a machine gun or B.A.R. facing the front. They were 50-60 feet apart. I always thought it funny that they had no trenches to connect them. There were six-foot deep trenches, similar to WWI, between the first defensive positions when I joined Company I.

Our 16 by 16 squad tents were pitched about a hundred feet away. We only occupied the "blockhouses" at night.



One night when I was due to go off guard I went to wake up my relief, but when I thought he was getting up, he didn't. That night, of all nights, the Officer of the Guard chose to inspect.

He found no one there. We were both summoned to the battalion commander. We both told our stories. The other guy had a reputation for being a very sound sleeper so we were both warned, but that's all. Technically we could have been court-martialed and shot. I've wondered if this went into my file but I doubt it because shortly after I made PFC I got the Good Conduct Medal. I also received the "Combat Infantryman's Badge" of which I was very proud and have been getting prouder as I get older.

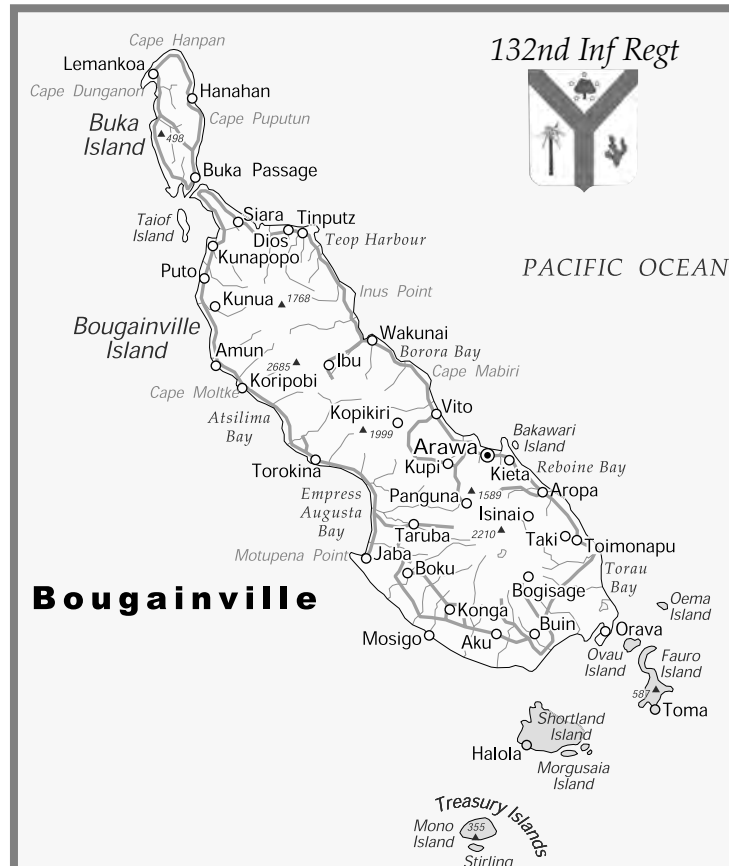
We had a "field of fire" cleared in front of the "blockhouses" for better than 50 yards. I never heard of an attack like the one on Hill 260 in front of our lines. Just to make sure none would develop we made short patrols out to and across the Torokino River. At the time it was only about one to two feet deep but I was apprehensive about the wide-open space of a hundred yards we had to cross. The guys who had hit the island first liked to tell how they used to ambush the Japs at the river and at their vegetable gardens. It wasn't unusual to find Japs where they had camped. First of all we could smell them long before we could see them. They had a fishy-iodine smell to them. After the war the Japs said the same to us, except that we smelled like milk or cows to them.

On patrol, the jungle usually quieted down as we moved. If we sat down and were quiet, the birds would start making noise again. It worked just like an alarm system – only in reverse. We had Observation Posts in the tops of Banyan trees 200 feet high. With a platform, roof and sometimes a steel plate floor one could feel pretty secure. Of course, getting up the ladder was more than some guys could take. The river was about 200 yards in front of our lines and from our OP we could see a mile up or downstream. Beyond the Torokina were the Saua and Lunga Rivers, one of these rivers emptied into the bay near the north end. We maintained an outpost there, which the LCT's transported us to and from. It was here that I was given a 1903 Springfield, bolt action rifle, with telescopic scope. I was the "Platoon Sniper". I can still remember the mosquito's there --- I think they drank "612" mosquito repellent for a chaser.

One night our phones were not working too well and some one behind the forward positions (where I was) decided to fire a few rounds. That was uncomfortable, especially so because our holes were only a foot deep. The water level was so near the surface that any deeper would have resulted in small pools. That worked to our advantage in our regular bivouac area. We built platforms about 9 feet high and put 55-gallon drums on top of them. Then we dug holes roughly 5 feet deep and lined them with drums that had the top and bottom cut out. With one guy to dip and two more to "bucket brigade" to the drums on top, we had a beautiful shower.

By filling the drums in the morning the water got close to tepid by evening. It had been said that American GIs would make anywhere "home". We made lamps out of C-Ration cans by punching a hole in the top and sticking a rope wick in. We made tables and chairs from the wood available, carts or the jungle. The parts were held together with commo wire.

The 132nd Infantry Regiment was originally a Chicago National Guard outfit, but there were many replacements. In my squad there were two or three "originals". John B. Lyons and Henry Zykowski are the ones I remember. The replacements came from all over the USA. Silas Stover and "Cully" McCullough were from Alabama or Mississippi. These two were typical southern boys – long and lean and very good rifle shots. They also kidded each other about "never had it so good as in the Army" ... "probably got your first pair of shoes when y'all wuz drafted." The "boys" were very talented as far as "liberating" any materials needed. For instance, somehow or other the disabled planes at the airstrip provided the tubing and other components for a "still." By getting cereal, sugar and fruit from the kitchen, they had all they needed to make "White Lightning". This was an improvement over the simpler "Raisin Jack", which was made in a five gallon water can from sugar and raisins. The other source of alcohol was to trade souvenirs to the Navy for "Torpedo Juice" or anyone in the rear area for some real bottled whiskey. **(To be continued)** 🍷



**EDITORS NOTE:** This article is an edited version of Bob Varner's wartime autobiography. This edition is part I. Other parts will appear in subsequent issues of the Americal Newsletter.

# Connecting With The Past

## My Dad, Armand S. Levy

by Alexis Gable



My father (born and raised in Philadelphia) was a vet of the Americal's 182nd Infantry Regiment, reaching the rank of Staff Sergeant, Communications Chief, Anti-Tank Co. After his death in 1991, I found a huge scrapbook full of photographs and papers documenting his time in the Solomons, Phillipines and

Japan (11/1944 to 11/1945), which I will be donating to the Americal Museum. Reviewing it again in 2005 is what initiated my search for information on the Americal Division and my good fortune in finding Dave Taylor.

My dad had a great sense of humor and a concern for those less fortunate. I remember him always being socially and politically conscious and active. My father instilled in me respect for all people regardless of race, religion, or sexual preference. I have fond memories of weekend arts & crafts projects, and us even building a radio from scratch. I understand now how his teenage hobby as a ham radio operator would lead him into radio operator training with the Army. He was also a passionate photographer, and avid camper/backpacker. Much of what I like and value about myself I "inherited" from him. Yet, like all of us, there were also negative personality traits, which effected my childhood.

After the war he went back into advertising, changed his last name to Lever, and in 1949 moved to San Francisco with his wife, mother & baby, since his mother's family had a long history in San Francisco. He became the head of advertising for a large department store, and then switched careers in the 1960's to become a successful real estate broker. My father never talked to me about WWII except for funny stories about his pet monkey in the Philippines, so I can't begin to imagine the effect it had on him for better or worse. After reading his "Evening Thoughts..." which I didn't see until he passed away, my first thought was "I wish I'd known this guy. I would have really liked him!" I have many good memories of my father and a new perspective and respect after reading about the Americal's campaigns. If you knew my father, or have any comments, please email me at: [gable2004@earthlink.net](mailto:gable2004@earthlink.net).

### Evening Thoughts Aboard A "LCI" 3/25/45

#### (Levy's thoughts the evening before the assault on Cebu)

The sea is rough tonight and occasionally through a break in the clouds a pale half moon lights the tops of the jumping waves, and makes somber shadows along the deck and under the ladder-ways. Our pitching, rolling assault boat is not alone; to either side, in front and in back, are dozens and dozens more boats – some carrying infantry like this one, others carrying the tanks, guns, ammunition.

Tomorrow morning at dawn a fleet of Navy ships will lay down a terrific barrage on the shore. Then our boat along with others will turn and head for the beach. We'll hear the sand crunch under the bow, the ladders will go down, and we'll rush ashore. Secure the beachhead, push inland "be aggressive men", attack the city from north and south, "move swiftly men, keep on the alert" hit the airfield and secure it, "look out for bobby traps men"; keep them from blowing up bridges. First Battalion on the right, third battalion on the left flank, everything is set.

Tonight the men are playing cards, reading, having bull sessions, smoking and some, with seasickness, lying in their bunks. Where the hell is all this tense anxiety, nervousness, sitting-on-the-edge business that they have always written and told about preceding an invasion attempt?

For almost all of us, this will be our first beachhead invasion, but the men aren't acting one bit differently than on an ordinary night in camp. This afternoon I cleaned my rifle, but no more thoroughly than I have any other day. The other fellows cleaned their rifles during the day, just a routine fieldstrip and oil job. Nobody seems the least excited or disturbed. Tomorrow is just another day --- just another job to do. Another day on lousy rations ... another day of chasing and killing Japs.

But tonight nobody has time for that. There's a hot poker game on in the mess room, another down in the compartment, two fellows playing gin rummy. Sprawled around on boxes, cases and floors are others reading mystery stories or Life magazine. I'm sitting here killing time until the news comes on. We'll print the news on the typewriter and pass it around. The fellows will make a grab for the newsheet. We heard that four Armies are across the Rhine now and giving the Germans all kinds of hell. That's what the fellows really go for, and that kind of news from the western front makes the men feel good. Now there's something that really matters --- what's Gen. Montgomery doing ... how far did you say the Russians are from Berlin? 🇺🇸

# Don't Smoke Em If You Got Em

by John (Doc) Hofer, D.M.D.



**John (Doc) Hofer**

While serving in the military we have all heard the "smoke em if you got em" phrase, and most of us lit up. With this in mind, I want to share some smoking information with our ADVA members and their families.

Most if not all VA hospitals and clinics offer "stop smoking clinics". They even have the patch that can be prescribed to help a smoker quit. The VA has information that will help with something that is very difficult to do. Please consider the following facts:

- ORAL CANCER is often overlooked or ignored until it is too late.
- 30,000 Americans are diagnosed with oral cancer each year.
- 9,000 Americans die each year from oral cancer.
- Only 50% of persons with oral cancer will survive 5 years.
- Oral Cancer has the 5th lowest survival rate of 13 major cancers.
- 100% of persons receiving radiation to the head and neck have permanent serious oral sequelae (complications).
- 40% of persons receiving chemotherapy experience debilitating and dose limiting oral sequelae.

In the last several years I have seen a large increase in the numbers of Vietnam vets and/or veterans in that age range that have oral cancer. It is one of the most devastating problems of medical and dental care.

The number one recommendation that I have for a smoker is to QUIT! Whether or not you see a dentist regularly, ask for an oral cancer exam during a visit. Early diagnosis and referral can prevent some of the complications and side effect of treatment.

Yes, I am a former smoker, and I have even bummed a few cigarettes at Americal reunions. But if our ADVA members and families follow my advice it might save a life. 🇺🇸

***(John (Doc) Hofer, D.M.D. served as a medic with Co. B, 5/46th Inf. in 1970-71. He is currently Chief, Dental Service at the Madison, WI Veterans Hospital.)***



## 38 Year Wait

by Robert E. (Gene) Wilson

I joined HHC, S-2 Shop, 3/1st Inf. at Schofield Barracks in September 1967. We traveled to Vietnam on the USS Weigel and arrived at Qui Nhon on December 22, 1967. For 38 years I wondered what it would be like to come together with the men I had served with in Vietnam. I finally found late last year.

In April 2005 I received notice of a reunion of the 3/1st to be held in Atlanta, GA. I made my hotel reservations that day. As the summer flew by I looked forward to the reunion with great anticipation.

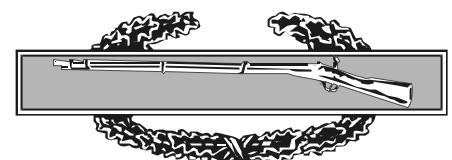
I arrived at the reunion hotel around noon on Friday. I soon spotted Colonel (CPT as I knew him) Rhinehart and hollered, "Hey you". He stopped and greeted me with a handshake and hug. I told him it was great to see him. I found six other guys sitting around and I asked, "3/1st?" They stood and introduced themselves and I was off and running.

I found myself getting back with some of the old officers that came in and out of the TOC. They had changed but all were recognizable. We are a little heavier and a little grey on top, but we still were the same. I was mesmerized just being with them.

Along with Rhinehart I also met Colonels Franklin and Lowder, my battalion commanders for the year, and Captains Jack Nolan, Ken Baskett, and Paul Place. They brought memories of years long gone. So many memories had been blank until we talked at the gathering.

One guy that I had looked for over the years was the battalion commander's RTO, Douglas Inman. It just so happened that CPT Rhinehart and Tim Cook had been looking for him also. Surprisingly we found him living about eight miles from the hotel. The three of us showed up at his front door and he was overwhelmed. We greeted and chatted for a bit and then on Sunday morning he showed up at the reunion with his family.

It was a great gathering and a real healing weekend, more then I could have imagined. Our camaraderie is like no other, no matter what type of group, club, or organization you might belong to. 🇺🇸



# SAPPERS Revisited

by Joseph H. Wolfe, Jr.

I am very happy that Keith Nolan wrote the book SAPPERS IN THE WIRE, which detailed activities of my battalion while I was in Vietnam. But the book did upset me because some things were said that were not true.

I served with Co. D, 1/46th Inf. from Sept. 1970 until I was wounded July 1, 1971. I served as a Platoon Sergeant and the Field First Sergeant. A reference was made of me on page 70 of the book that I disagree with. It was in reference to a firefight that took place on February 11, 1971.

Nolan quoted William Meeks as saying, "We ran right by the company commander, and we ran right by the field first sergeant who was huddled behind his rucksack with his hands over his helmet. They were kissing their ass instead of directing fire". Maybe at the moment they ran past me I was behind my rucksack because we were taking fire. But I will tell anyone I wasn't kissing anything and was directing our men to return fire. It wasn't my nature to run from a battle or not do my duty.

After that battle we had several soldiers put in for Bronze Stars for heroism. The First Sergeant said there were too many requests and asked me if it was okay to downgrade my award to an ARCOM with V. I told him "I don't care as long as the men under me receive the Bronze Star."

After reading the book I made two pledges to myself. The first was to contact as many of the Delta grunts as I could. The second was to get in

contact with Keith Nolan. I want them to know that any decision I made during 1970-1971 was to bring as many of us home as possible and still do our duty. That also meant I wanted to return home and the more of them who made it enhanced my chances of a safe return. It was all for one and one for all.

Nolan did reply to my message to me. He said, "Good evening, Sergeant Wolfe, and many thanks for your gracious and understanding message. If someone had gotten me confused with someone who was kissing his ass goodbye during a firefight, I doubt if I would have been so kind! "You probably know what I'm going to say next: when you write a

history book, you have to guess who is telling the truth, and who is misremembering things. It's always a dilemma. "In a perfect world, every published book would really be a rough draft with the 'real' version to be republished after comments and corrections have been received. There are always details you get wrong, and details you miss. Everyone has their own perception of events. It's such a tangle of confusing and contradictory information that sometimes I want to give up on the whole writing thing altogether--but then I tell myself, better to make some mistakes than to not tell the story at all."

I am glad that as many of us returned home as did. My next goal is to see as many of you as I can before we meet on the other side. 🇺🇸



## Chu Lai Dust-off

by Pappy Dave

It seems as if the division dust-off support has been forgotten in the list of units that served in the Americal Division. I flew over 900 hours as a Flight Medic (07/69-01/71) in support of the 11th LIB, 196th LIB, and 198th LIB. I was assigned to the

68th Medical Detachment (Helicopter Ambulance), one of the two detachments that were Chu Lai Dust-Off. The other was the 54th Medical Det. Chu Lai Dust-off had several crewmembers killed in Vietnam.

Prior to my duty with the dust-off I was a medic with Recon and Co. C, 3/21st Inf., 196th LIB (11/67-12/68). I closed out my 44 months in Vietnam with Special Ops, 1st Field Force, II Corps.

I was WIA on the last day of TET, 1968. I didn't want to go home so after 10 weeks in the hospital and rehab I returned to the 196th. I worked as a RTO at Charger Dust-off on LZ Baldy. The 236th Medical Det. (HA) out of Red Beach, DaNang, provided one aircraft on station at LZ Baldy. They covered most of the AO north of Tam Ky. Chu Lai Dust-off covered south of that line, but nothing was written in stone and who could get there the fastest with the most took the mission. 🇺🇸

# Why Not Me? An Americal Nurse Finds Closure

by David W. Taylor



**2nd Lt Kathy Sullivan 1968**

Kathy Sullivan enrolled in the Army's delayed entry program to have money for nursing school. Commissioned in January 1968, she was assigned to the Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C. on the Pediatric Ward with critically ill children.

Sullivan volunteered for Vietnam because "it was the thing to do", and "hospitals were the same everywhere". Departing from Boston in a snowstorm she landed at Bien Hoa, near Saigon in 110-degree heat on December 31st. That evening her "New Years Eve Celebration" was gunfire and flares as nightly attacks took place around her. Five days later she landed in Chu Lai in the dark during a monsoon downpour. Arriving at a series of Quonset Huts, (the 312th Evacuation Hospital), her reaction was, "you've got to be kidding, this doesn't look like a hospital! What the hell have I gotten myself into?"

Sullivan's first assignments were the Recovery Rooms and Triage where she was introduced to the stark reality of war. She remembers "multiple wounds ... bits and pieces ... I couldn't believe it.

What amazed me is that they survived at all. My goals were to help them with the will to live and insure they got the best of care." Her memory of the Americal grunt is indelible, "the horrific wounds I saw but the fight the guys had in them. They always wanted to know about their friends. 'Did Joe come in ... did Mitch make it?'"

By April 1969 Lt. Sullivan was assigned to the Vietnamese Ward. She recalls, "when I first got there I hated it. I didn't like the Vietnamese because I felt they were responsible for the wounded soldiers. The language and cultural barriers were very frustrating.

It was not unusual to have a Vietnamese patient with 10-15 family members who slept with them on the bed or on the floor under the bed. I remembered a Montanyard boy whose infection cleared up. The doctor pulled the IV and told us to send him back to his village. The mother was upset. She thought he was going to die."

Kathy learned to laugh and be accepting as she worked on the Vietnamese Ward. It was the only way she could persevere. In addition to the civilian patients there were Viet Cong prisoners who were watched by MP's. She remembers, "at one time we had fourteen VC POW's on the ward. They would look right through you." Cultural barriers were the reason LT. Sullivan was eventually reassigned to another ward.

"We had an old Vietnamese man who had tuberculosis. He had about six chin whiskers that had to do with his religion, which I did not know. Food would lie on his beard and get crusty so one time, when he was sleeping I shaved him to clean him up. Some of the other civilian patients got out of their beds to come after me.

I didn't realize what I had done." Sullivan was reassigned to the malaria ward and her replacement in the Vietnamese ward was another recently assigned nurse, 1LT Sharon Lane.

"I first met Sharon in the mess hall", recalls Kathy. "She was very quiet and talked about her mom and dad. We got close quick because everyone bonded quickly over there. Sharon told me, 'I got assigned to the Vietnamese ward', and I told her, 'well don't shave anyone!' On June 8, 1969 at 0600 hours Kathy was working in the malaria ward just a few hundred feet from the Vietnamese ward. All of a sudden she felt shaking and heard a large deafening noise. "I thought the other side of our Quonset Hut was hit. Everyone, patients and staff, hit the floor.

We had a soldier on dialysis at the end of the ward who obviously couldn't get out of bed so we threw a mattress on him. Then we realized it was the other ward that had been hit. We heard people screaming and running. We put on our flak jackets and ran outside and saw the Vietnamese ward was leveled. We were all in shock, a Major told me, 'Lt. Lane is dead.' I thought to myself, 'this can't be true.' We all went to the mess hall to hold on to each other while other staff covered our ward. Then we went to the chapel while we were still trying to piece things together. I felt frustration, fear and anger. We all felt survivors guilt ...it should have been us."

On December 15, 1969 Kathy Sullivan left Vietnam two weeks early under "Operation Santa Claus." She remembers staff personnel asking if she'd like to stick around and watch Bob Hope who was coming to for a Christmas show.



She responded, "No thanks, I'll see him on TV." With mixed emotions, especially that she was "deserting" her friends; she departed Vietnam and, in January 1970, was discharged from the Army.

Like many Vets, Kathy Sullivan picked up her life as she found it, and continued her career in nursing, marrying Don Lee, whom she had met before departing to Vietnam. But the agony of that fateful day in June 1969 kept in her soul. She always wanted to tell Lane's parents she was sorry for what happened. In the late 1980's she located their address and wrote a letter (she didn't know that Sharon's father had died in 1979). In the letter she wrote that she had served with Sharon, knew her well and was sorry for what happened. Kathy remembers, "I kept the letter for several months before I could bring myself to mail it. I wrote in the letter, 'you don't have to respond.' I wasn't sure if the parents would respond and if they did, if I would receive a letter of anger or hate." Kathy received a letter back from Sharon's mother, Mrs. Kay Lane, thanking her for writing. Kay Lane followed up with a Christmas card and Kathy responded with one as well.

Kathy recalls "through the years we corresponded with each other, but I never sent any pictures of myself. I felt that if I didn't send any pictures I would remain anonymous. Then a couple years ago I asked if it was OK to write about my family. Kay Lane's letters nurtured me and she would ask my opinion about things people wanted to do in Sharon's memory."

Kathy and her husband live in Oak Grove, Missouri, a suburb of Kansas City. In the summer of 2005, Chuck Wright, co-author of the book: *DOC, Medics and Surgeons in Combat*, and a member of the Medical War Memorial in Kansas City, told Kathy "it is time for you to meet Kay Lane." Mrs. Lane was asked about a visit and she was excited. A get-together was planned for the weekend of October 15-16, 2005.




**Kathy Lee (left) with Kay Lane at Sharon Lanes Gravesite, October 15, 2005.**

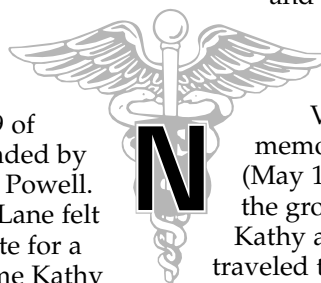
A private plane was chartered that brought Kathy and her husband Don, Chuck Wright and Steven Cook, the Executive Director of the Medical War Memorial to the Akron / Canton, Ohio airport. Waiting in a Holiday Inn in North Canton, across from the cemetery where Sharon Lane was laid to rest, was Kay Lane, several members of the Sharon Lane Memorial Chapter 199 of the VVA (Canton), headed by Chapter President Pat Powell. Both Powell and Kay Lane felt it would be appropriate for a small group to welcome Kathy Lee.

Late morning the van arrived from the airport and Kathy finally met Sharon Lane's mother, 36 years after that tragic morning. Kathy admits, "I was very nervous. I didn't sleep much the week before the trip. I didn't know what I should say when I would stand in front of a mother whose daughter was taken instead of me. I simply said 'I'm sorry'. Mrs. Lane responded by saying, 'why, you have nothing to be sorry for'. With those words ... I'm am now at peace."

The group had lunch together, then traveled to the cemetery for Kathy to visit the gravesite and pay her respects.

The group also traveled to Aultman Hospital in Canton, where Sharon Lane received her nurses training, and a permanent statue of Sharon in her uniform stands by the entrance.

The statue was the first Vietnam War-related memorial dedicated in the USA (May 1973). With tender farewells the group left and Kay Lane, Kathy and Don Lee and Pat Powell traveled to Mrs. Lane's home. There, Kathy reflects, "I got to know Sharon much better. Kay had all her daughter's uniforms ... we shared some chuckles about how thin we were back in those days." Kathy Lee felt that through all the sharing of letters, she and Kay Lane, once separated by distance as good pen pals, "are now" she says, "special friends". She adds, "Sharon Lane is my hero and that will never change. Whenever I go to the Wall in Washington, D.C., I always stop by her name to say 'thank you for your sacrifice.' A small gesture, but a sincere one." 



# Never Stop Asking

by J. 'Duster' Heath

For a number of years, more than three decades in fact, the vision of one man jumping overboard from a troop ship in the middle of the Pacific Ocean bound for Southeast Asia haunted me. I was one of the two men to last see this man alive. He casually strolled over to the aft rope-rail of the ship and jumped overboard as you or I might jump into a resort swimming pool. Although we were enjoying a sunny day, the Pacific waves were about twelve feet high.

I ran to the bridge yelling, "Man overboard, man overboard!" The officer acknowledged my emotion-laden message and asked me to return to the point on the ship where I had made the observation. The large vessel began to slowly turn, but after about 15 degrees, it turned back and resumed the original course. It was as though a somewhat indifferent response to my urgent report.

After what seemed a long time, the cadre called us into a formation, took roll call, and soon confirmed that a man from another unit in my battalion had jumped overboard. It was an obvious suicide. The next day the only thing authorities could confirm was that the missing man had been a cook.

Speculation developed among our company that he probably received a "Dear John" farewell letter from his lover stating she did not love him any more. In typical military fashion, we covered our frustration over a lack of confirmed information with dark humor: "Maybe he could not stand his own cooking, ha." Staff did say that turning a ship that size takes too much time, too wide an arc, plus there were no smaller rescue craft available on the Merchant Marine vessel.

**Duster Heath's  
Troop Ship,  
USS General  
W.H. Gordon  
AP 117 Photo  
Courtesy:  
Seaweed Ships  
Histories**



- **General Class Transport:**
- **Length: 623'**
- **Beam: 75'6"**
- **Draft: 25'**
- **Complement: 452**
- **Built at Federal, Kearny and commissioned 29 June 1944**
- **Displacement: 19,660 tons (full load)**
- **Speed: 21 knots (max), 8-11 knots (econ)**
- **Armament: 4 5"/38 DP, 4x2 40mm, 18x2 20mm**
- **Geared-turbine engines, twin screws, 17,000 h.p.**
- **Troop capacity: 5,650**

I thought, "What a shameful waste. He would have been relatively out of harm's reach on a base inside a secured perimeter. He would likely have been able to avoid direct combat and the primitive, torturous existence of typical combat infantrymen." (Atypical was one cook who 'got bored,' volunteered for Infantry duty, became the most highly decorated man in our company, wounded three times, finished his tour as a lifeguard at China Beach, Vietnam).

For years this memory of a suicide left me with the stain of a man who pulled the plug on his life, 'checked out' because his girl betrayed him. I continued to consider the act a somewhat pathetic thing to do. I occasionally wrote on veteran websites relating this event, along with other experiences. One day recently I received an email from a veteran who happened to read one of my email articles relative to the contemptible cook.

The email buddy shared his knowledge with me. He informed me that the suicidal young man had occupied the bunk next to his on the ship. I learned the departed man had entered the U.S. from Mexico,

joined the military to become a U.S. citizen and to help his mother, who suffered deep poverty and resided in Mexico.

According to the email, the man spoke only broken English and had difficulty communicating with other troops. My email friend went on to explain that the day before the suicide the cook had asked if he were to die whether the service insurance money would go to his mother.

Perhaps the man who knew the story had, like other veterans, subdued speaking of some aspects of the war. Or he had remained silent, not wanting to jeopardize the insurance money that had likely been sent to the young soldier's mother.

Although I do not sanction suicide, the young man's act, originally appearing one of weakness, acquired new meaning. He became another soldier for me to grieve, yet now in his honor, an unselfish young man who committed an act of love for his mother. After more than thirty years, I gained significant insight and some additional sense of closure because, . . . I never stopped asking. 🇺🇸

# When I Was A Soldier

by Mel Carney

I slowly walk along the crumbling rock wall, which once was the only protection for some young man in a long ago war. I could feel what he felt, as the cannons roared down the valley and mixed his mind. I could feel and smell the sweat and grime that clings to a matted and scruffy beard. I feel the weeks and months without bathing or changing clothes. He knew, as I do, that there is no sense in combat. There was/is no place to turn and no rest for a weary soul.

Each combat veteran, has been able to push away the months and for some, years in combat. Then at some moment, completely unexpected, a twig will snap or something will go bump in the night and the memories once capped, rush in to screw your day. Those memories can make your chest pound so loudly that you know everyone can hear. Whether it was here in Gettysburg, The Bulge, or in some place called An Loc, all combat soldiers are all the same. Only their individual memories that they carry are different.

So often in combat, it appears that there is no way to come out alive. Those who do walk away are often burdened with a strange guilt of life. There are no answers, just endless questions. An old Irish saying goes, "If it is my lot that I should rise and you should not, then I must go and before I go, I wish ye, fare thee well." This saying came from some long ago skirmish, as one soldier got up to leave while the other could not. Like combat, this saying makes no sense and as a consequence it fits combat perfectly.

A Medal of Honor soldier from the Korean Conflict, sat at my kitchen and talked of combat in the Korea, the South Pacific Islands of WWII, as he had served in both wars. I told him that I was having a hard time remembering what I was like before Viet Nam. He sat for a while and then he said,

"When you look death in the eye and walk away, you are forever changed." I had thought that, the veteran who got off of the plane in Seattle on Feb 5, 1969, was the same one who got to Da Nang as Tet started in 1968. I guess I left him somewhere in the jungle or on some rice paddy dike, more than likely looking for answers. It took 30



years and the movie, "When We Were Soldiers" to let my feelings about my Viet Nam experience get close to the surface. I guess I began to understand that I did not have to be strong for anyone and as a result I was able to let out some of whatever I brought back with me. Simply put, I cried there in that darkened theatre. I do not know for whom I cried. Perhaps it was for those who were scarred and wounded physically – mentally or both. Perhaps it was for my men who are listed on the "Wall". Perhaps it was for those of us who walked away and have to deal with the slings and arrows of day to day living. Perhaps I just cried.

In years to come our young soldiers, who are in combat today, will be reminded of their time in combat. Someone will tap them on the shoulder from out of nowhere. They will spill coffee all over their

desk or take a defensive stance where none is justified. Non-combatant types will laugh, when they startle a combat veteran with their voice from no where. They will ask, "Do you think that you are the only one in building?" As civilians, these young men and young women will find that their day to day battle is as real as the ones that they are fighting now. The battles will take place inside of their heads and some are never over. There is no DEROS or Rotation to stateside and there will be no military brothers and sisters to share their experiences. Like every soldier who has returned from combat to civilian life, they will have to trudge the oft times lonely life of a combat fighter, who is dressed in civilian clothes.

The young men who were hunkered down behind these walls at Gettysburg, and every one who has been fired on in combat, knows something that most are fortunate not to know. They know the fear of combat. Fear in combat, rips at your innards, as mortar rounds are walked onto your position. Fear springs from the night, when a machine gun starts to chatter and Claymore mines start barking. Fear comes on the silence of a moonless night in Viet Nam, when something has drawn your intense gaze into the blackened night. The fear found in any war is the same as what the men behind the granite walls at Gettysburg felt. Today, as I stand quietly on this battlefield, I can feel their fear. I hear the cannon balls swish through air and crash into the broken and disheveled earth in front of the rock wall. Yes, for a moment in time, the shiver that drives down my spine is caused by this young man's angst. As I stand on this hallowed ground, I know that we are all brethren in a godless place called combat. For our newest veterans, my men of Co B, 1st of the 6th, 198th LIB, and all those who fought and either lived or died in some battle, I say my prayers on a daily basis. As you take your next free breath, you need to do the same. 🇺🇸

# Twins: A Special Bond

by Keith, Twin Brother of Ken



**M**y twin brother Ken and I joined the Army together under the buddy system. We took basic and AIT together at Ft. Polk, LA. We were then sent to Ft. Hood, TX to be part of the 198th Lt. Inf. Bde.

Ken went to 1/14th Artillery and I went to the 1/6th Infantry. I don't recall the company I trained with but I think it was Headquarters and Headquarters Co. (HHC). At that time my brother was in Headquarters Battery (HHB), 1/14th Artillery. We soon learned that the 1/14th was going to go to Vietnam.

At that time I didn't know the 1/6th Inf. was also going to Vietnam. But I knew I had to get with my brother because I didn't want him to go to Vietnam without me. I don't exactly recall how we tried to pull this off. I do remember talking to the first shirts and the chaplain. They tried talking us out of going to Vietnam together. They cited the Sullivan brothers of WWII. I also recall my dad getting involved. He may have called a higher up somewhere. But I finally got reassigned to the unit with my brother.

HHB, 1/14th Arty. left Fort Hood for deployment to Vietnam. We flew to Sacramento, CA and boarded the USS Gen. W.H. Gorden. We sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge and across the Pacific Ocean to Subic Bay, Philippines. While at Subic Bay we were allowed to take an eight-hour beer break. That was the best beer break of my life. We then went to the Navy NCO club, but that's another story. We re-boarded the ship and headed to DaNang and then south to Chu Lai.

We were in HHB in Chu Lai for the first four months. One day we were all gathered up and told that a new battery was being formed. It was to be called Delta Battery. We were also told it would be called a four-gun 105mm Howitzer Jump Battery and it would support the infantry.

They needed volunteers. My brother and I were 19 years old at the time. We volunteered for D Brty. in order to get away from the base camp and to get away from all that stateside crap. D Btry. jumped to 13 hills in a little over seven months.

When you sit down on a new hill you're sitting ducks for enemy mortar rounds. I can still hear the hollering from guys that got hit. We could hear the mortar rounds "blooping" out of the mortars in the valley below and listened to the whistling sound as the rounds came down on us. We always turned off all the electric generators on the hill so we might hear where the mortars were fired from. Then the enemy would get a dose of a 105mm howitzer up their ass.

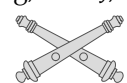
We moved south of DaNang during the first Tet offensive. We were in direct support of the 1/6th Infantry. We lobbed charge ones at the enemy. Two F105 aircraft circled overhead all day in support of the 1/6th. The jets laid some heavy stuff on Charlie. When all this was over and the 1/6th guys came back to our position and told us they had lost almost everybody. I knew a lot of the casualties because I had trained with them at Ft. Hood. If I would not have gone to the artillery with my brother I would have possibly been along side the infantrymen that day. Instead, I was just a charge 1 away. To this day I feel bad for those guys.



My battery commander kept a diary of our jumps and the diary ended saying we had fired 48,000 rounds with 129 enemy KIAs. My brother and I were together on every hill in Vietnam. Fat City was possibly the worst experience for us. Mortars are one thing but getting overrun is another. We had been put on a red alert but we kind of brushed that off because we were back in base camp. We shouldn't have disregarded the warning. About 2:30 in the morning all hell broke loose. Charlie penetrated our perimeter. The enemy first attacked with rocket propelled grenades (RPGs). This was followed by mortars, gas, and then a ground attack. They threw satchel charges into our bunkers.

I knew then that my brother and I had made a serious mistake wanting to stay together. This attack came when we only had eight days left in-country. We were the only two kids in the family. I knew so-help-me-God that our time had come. It was total panic on the hill. We couldn't breathe, we had no gas masks. I remember saying to myself, like I'm sure a lot of guys do in this situation, "please God, don't let me die". Illumination rounds finally came in and lit the sky. Cobra gunships came and strafed the perimeter. As daylight came an assessment of damage was completed. We had two men killed, two men seriously wounded, two 105mm howitzers destroyed, and a M60 machine gun stolen.

My brother and I were on the following hills: LZ Bayonet, LZ Uptight, LZ Falstaff, LZ 410, LZ Baldy, LZ Charger Hill, LZ Farrow, LZ Bowman, LZ Young, LZ BJ, LZ Pleasantville, LZ 54, and LZ Fat City.



*(Editor's note: Due to a computer malfunction I lost Keith's last name. I apologize for the loss of information. -gln)*



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I am looking for anyone who knew my grandfather, **Philip D. Barkley**. He was with the Americal Division in the Philippines in World War II. Contact: Samantha Cleek, [samanthacleektwhs@yahoo.com](mailto:samanthacleektwhs@yahoo.com)

I am looking for anyone who served with me in Americal Division. I was a mechanic on the **Agent Orange helicopters**. I remember Johnny Dollar. I need information for VA claim. Contact: Lonnie Richard Hodge; [chevy@plateautel.net](mailto:chevy@plateautel.net).

I would like to contact the family of **Sgt. Waites**, KIA while serving with **H Trp., 17th Cav.**, 1970-71. We were told he died from an anti-personnel mine. Contact: Bob Stevens, 928-344-3463.

I am looking for anyone who served with my brother, Spec. 4 **David C. Dodson**, who was killed in an auto accident after returning home. He served with **B Co., 196th LIB, 8th Support Bn.**, 1968-69. I served with the 135th AHC, 1968-70, during two tours. I would like to know what duties my brother's unit performed. Contact: Robert G. Dodson, #EV5660, *SCI Fayette, LaBelle, PA 15450-0999*.



#### Americal Division Veterans Association

Dedicated as a Living Memorial to the Veterans of the Americal (2nd Infantry Division), United States Army

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Dedication:  
The Americal Division Veterans Association is dedicated as a *living memorial* to all veterans of the Americal Division and is pledged to foster true American patriotism, social and welfare activities for all members, allegiance to the United States Government, and its flag, and to perpetuate the traditions and history of the Americal Division of the United States Army.

I am looking for **Maj. Croby** and **Capt. John Milligan** who served in **Nghia Hanh District**, Quang Ngai Province, as advisers, 1970-73. I was chief of Nghia Hanh District and received Bronze Star with V Device from Department of Defense in 1973. Contact: David Trong Hoang, 5418 W. Crystal Ln., Santa Ana, CA 92704; 714-531-4065.

I wish to **locate duty rosters** from various units with the Americal Division. I was with the 3/18th Artillery, May 1968 until May 1969. I have decided to go through my 500 or so slides and I.D. people in the pictures. It would be nice to add complete names. Contact: Jim Hardy; Salem, OR; [susanjimhardy@msn.com](mailto:susanjimhardy@msn.com).

I am trying to locate a **Major Rowe** (sp?) who served with G-4, Americal Division in 1968. He was assigned to the Quinhon depot as a liaison officer. Contact: Carl Hudson; [cthudson@bellsouth.net](mailto:cthudson@bellsouth.net).

I wish to locate information about my cousin, **SPC David "Chinky" Woznicki**, who served with Co. A, 1/52nd Inf. He was killed-in-action on 7 Dec 1967. I want to find battle rosters and specific details on the missions he was part of. Please reply by e-mail as I am starting a tour supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. Contact: SGT Kyle King, [sgtkowboy@yahoo.com](mailto:sgtkowboy@yahoo.com)

I am looking for anyone who served with me in **Co. D, 1/6th Inf.**, 198th LIB, 1967-68. Contact: Hockless Bryant, 1401 NW 103rd St., Apt. 232, Miami, FL 33147; 305-694-9607.

I am trying to locate any crew members from a **Dust Off mission in Tra Bong** (Quang Ngai Prov.) on 8 Nov 70. My son Mark (Dinh Nit) was picked up and taken to the 27th Surgical Hospital in Chu Lai where I was stationed as an army nurse. He is from the Hre Tribe in Tra Bong and was about three years old at the time and suffered from severe malnutrition and infections. There was a boy with him who claimed to be his brother. He appeared to be about 12 but said he was 15. He wore the tiger stripe fatigues and most likely belonged to CIDG. Contact: Maureen Robinson, (ANC 66-67/70-71), [mrobin1213@aol.com](mailto:mrobin1213@aol.com)

I am trying to locate information about **Charles J. Jackson**, a now deceased veteran of 1/6th Inf., 198th LIB. He served in 1968-9 as an E-7 or E-8 supply sergeant in Chu Lai. His sons want to know what their dad did in Vietnam. Contact Dennis Flores (A/2/1), [Aztacokat@aol.com](mailto:Aztacokat@aol.com).

I wish to locate **Veterans of Company B, 1/6th Inf.**, 198th LIB, 1/69 to 1/70. I especially would like to contact Louis Pendelton, Richard Childers, Terry (Big Swede) Anderson, and Jimmy Cheek. Contact jerry M. Smith, (828) 287-5224 or [pearidgemayor@aol.com](mailto:pearidgemayor@aol.com).

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World WarII	1942-1945
Korean War	1954-1956
Vietnam War	1967-1973

Eligibility includes those who served with Task Force 6814 (WWII) and Task Force Oregon (Vietnam).  
Branch of service is immaterial.

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The ADVA is dedicated as a *LIVING MEMORIAL* to all veterans of the Americal Division and is pledged to foster true American patriotism, social and welfare activities for all members, allegiance to the United States Government, and its flag, and to perpetuate the traditions and history of the *Americal Division of the United States Army*.

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