



# CHARGER

196TH INFANTRY BRIGADE



Vol. 2 No. 8

Da Nang, Vietnam

May 12, 1972



# F/8th door gunner's life? It's hectic

by SP4 STEVE BROOKS

Over the Dong Ha Valley, Republic of Vietnam - "They told me in AIT that I had 15 seconds to live once the shooting started. I beat the clock."

SP5 Jim Lowe (Buckhannon, W. Va) rides behind a machine gun in the unprotected doorway of a Huey Slick. Jim Lowe is a door gunner.

He spent 13 weeks in AIT learning how to service helicopters and shoot from the air, then did four months at the NCO academy.

When he came to Vietnam, he joined F Troop, 8th Cavalry as a Cobra crew chief. "I couldn't fly, of course, but when the pilot came back at the end of the day and told me about beaucoup kills, I was proud, because you can't do anything without Cobras, and the ground crews kept the Cobras flying. But I wanted to fly too, so I became a door gunner."

Lowe's day starts out with a formation, where he gets his assignment. The sun is just glinting on the PSP pad when he goes to ready his "ship" for flight, cleaning windows, connecting microphones, drawing and cleaning his machineguns.

Lowe invented his own mount, for using twin M-60s and built it in the hanger. "We took it to the troop Commander, Major Kennedy, and test fired them for him. He loved 'em!" Every day Lowe cleans his 60's. "You fly behind a 60, you take care of it. It'll save your life."

When his wife found out Lowe was attending door gunner

school, they had a lot to talk about. "She's happy as long as I'm happy and don't stick my neck out, and I can't do that anyway, with a wife and a kid at home. I like aviation, though, and want to go into it back in the world when I ETS. This is good practice for then."

In the air, Lowe is part of a team. Pilot Ben Nielson commented, "I can't fly without door gunners. They're my eyes and ears to the rear. They tell me how high off the ground I am, where I'm taking fire from. I couldn't land in a bush LZ without them."

It goes both ways, according to Lowe, who believes that "The pilots have our lives in their hands." The helmets they wear provide intercommunication, and the pilots and door gunners discuss strategy as they cruise over Vietnam at 100 knots per hour.

One recent day started high over the foothills of the Ashau Valley, just south of the DMZ. The "Blue Ghost" team included Lowe's slick, a LOH (light observation helicopter) and two Cobra gunships.

The pilot's voice crackled over the intercom: "This is a specified strike zone. If you see enemy positions, fire em up!" Lowe answers, "We'll probably throw hot brass all over the bird."

"That's all right. You just keep shooting. Keep your eyes open for tracers, and if you see muzzle flashes, get 'em!"

"Somebody taking incoming at 12 o'clock."

"Roger, that's Carroll."

"Rocket fire at 7 o'clock low! We're taking tracers!" The twin 60's on one side of the bird open up, Lowe's .50 cal on the other waits for bigger targets. Far below, the LOH buzzes close to the ground, looking for targets.

Over the intercom: "Keep an eye on that little bird. If he starts taking fire, put some stuff down there."

"TAKIN' FIRE, TAKIN' FIRE!!"

Lowe mashes his thumb down on the .50 cal trigger and the whole ship shakes as he slides across the seat, raining fire on an enemy gun emplacement. The ship slams violently to one side as an NVA Rocket-Propelled Grenade airbursts a few feet away. Lowe continues firing, his heavy shoulders shaking from the recoil of the big machine gun.

After a moment, the tracers stop streaking by. The pilot's calm voice comes over the headset: "That dude you shot at. I think you got him, he stopped firing."

The slick continues circling, just south of Firebase Sarge, which is burning heavily.

For a moment it's all conversation again. "Here's where we took the RPG."

From then on, the flight was a series of sights on the ground, sounds over the intercom.

A Cobra pilot comes on the air: "takin' fire! I'm hit! I've got a round in the belly of the ship!"

The wounded Cobra spins and makes a run for the sea, and Lowe's slick makes a tight turn to give chase. Again the pilot's voice, "Strap down everything back there - if he goes down, we're going right on his tail and pick him up."

Lowe jumps from his seat and begins stuffing loose tools and ammunition into corners, under seats, then opens up new boxes of .50 cal ammo and snaps the belts together, then into the gun. His eyes dart from side to side, and his lips purse against the microphone. The slick is straining at 105 knots, shaking with the speed.

This time luck is with them - the Cobra makes it to Quang Tri, spilling fuel all the way. The other Cobra in the flight needs to be re-armed.

Lowe and his partner are the only ground crewmen around, so they run over and rearm the slick. Now night is closing on the airstrip, and the birds shut down for a few hours.

Over the next two days, Lowe and his team snatched 12 Americans from firebases being mortared, rocketed, and overrun.

When Brigadier General Joseph C. McDonough, commander of the 196th Infantry Brigade, visited F Troop, he pinned two Distinguished Flying Crosses on Lowe. For a moment it was all close again, as the orders read: "Distinguished Flying Cross to SP5 James Lowe...for heroism in flying over territory known to be occupied by regimental sized NVA forces and high caliber



SP5 JIM LOWE

anti-aircraft emplacements... Lowe dismounted and helped carry a wounded Marine to the helicopter, during which time the base was undergoing intense mortar attack. Lowe's deadly suppressive fire allowed the aircraft to escape..."

The orders can't tell of the endless circling over enemy machineguns, the shock of a .50 cal recoiling against your hands, the yelling over the intercom when everybody is taking fire, the sensation of lifting off a pad just as incoming blows it up, and of looking into the eyes of an enemy machine gunner trying to kill you.

The orders can't convey things like that, or how Jim Lowe thinks of going home now, and how it feels to be short. If you want to know about things like that, ask Jim Lowe, door gunner. He'll tell you what it's all about.

## Phu Bai hit... 3/82nd returns fire

PHU BAI - There was this noise and everybody looked, and the second noise and the whistle and everybody ducked and a couple of explosions later everybody reacted.

This was the night of April 12th at Trai Dinh Tien Hoang, the compound housing the 12th ARVN battalion rear area, in one corner of which men from the 3rd Bn., 82nd Artillery (196th Inf Bde) were into their 48th tough hour.

Two days before they had been moved from Hill 260 near DaNang to Phu Bai as part of Task Force Lafayette. Their mission was to lend fire support to the American grunts in the area counteracting the Communist offensive.

In the last 48 hours, these men of C Battery, 3/82, had loaded and unloaded 105mm howitzers from Hill 260 to the new positions at Phu Bai, they'd set up commo with the infantry tactical operations center, humped rounds to the firing

positions, and built and sandbagged enough bunkers to cover all the men.

Extra security sandbags still needed to be filled but now it was split shift time. The six to midnight watch was on the firing line and the graveyard shift was catching some overdue sleep.

Then, just before 3 a.m., there was a muffled noise. The men on guard strained their ears... the men sleeping awoke. It had been an indistinguishable sound, like incoming and out-going rounds crossing each other in the sky.

Then there was a second round - and the whistle - and the shooting flame. It was Charlie's 122 rockets and they were incoming.

Like a boxing match there was the initial reaction to defend oneself, first by covering then by fighting back. Everybody hit cover instinctively; and according to Sergeant Leon Nepper, (the first fire team

leader to break from the bunker up to his gun position) "It was that extra little bit of motivation, maybe it was fear, that brought the four fire teams out of bunkers and onto the firing line while the last enemy rounds were still coming in. We all know the best way to stop the rockets is to let Charlie know you've got his number. Put about 40 rounds on him while he's trying to light up a couple of rockets."

During the entire attack, and as one rocket literally flew over their heads, First Lieutenant Alan Johnson of C Battery and his crew were in contact with the infantry tactical operations center. The latter had a field report from a forward observer who had seen some of the rockets being launched.

The grid coordinates of those positions were plotted and radioed to Lt. Johnson. Firing data was calculated, and he switched on his radio to call it out to the firing positions, hoping that the crews would be in the gun pits and not still in the bunkers.

They were there. Sergeant Bennie Torsch of the third gun's crew said there were three men in his pit long before the rockets stopped. Each nine man squad got the data at about the same time but it was Sergeant Nepper's crew that sent the all-important initial round back at the enemy.

Then the whole battery started blasting and the rocket attack ceased. According to SFC Melton, "I didn't have to do any hollering at anybody. Everybody'd rather see rounds going out than coming in. Next time we'll put some on 'em in one minute rather than three."

## 2/1 Ambush NVA

PHU BAI - Sharp eyes and ears netted a 2/1 ambush two NVA killed in action here recently, and two AK-47 rifles and an 82mm mortar baseplate captured.

The action began where Company A, 2nd Battalion 1st Infantry moved into the dinner roll-shaped green hills west of Phu Bai. The battalion had been moved into the area to provide added security for the Americans at Phu Bai during the NVA invasion in Quang Tri Province.

The second night in the bush the 2nd squad 1st platoon, led by Sgt. Charles A. Rivers, 24, Brunswick, Ga. moved into ambush positions at 1845. They set up claymores and trip flares in a small hollow with a placid pool crossed by a wandering stream and a footpath.

The first contact came at 2000 when three communist soldiers activated a trip flare in front of the position. A sharp firefight ensued, and the enemy soldiers evaded the area. The night's action wasn't over though.

At midnite and again at 0300 small units of NVA clashed with the squad. "They came down the trail making lots of noise, talking and jiving" Rivers said. "They put their baseplates down to get water, and then we tripped a Claymore." A half hour firefight ensued.

Rivers said "they spoke English pretty good. When we popped the claymore one of them said 'What was that?' and another one hollered 'Let's get the hell out of here'."

There were no U.S. casualties, but SP4 John C. Barahak, 21, Joliet, Ill, got half a dozen AK rounds through his ruck, and one through his helmet. "Man, I'm sure glad I wasn't wearing that at the time" he said, fingering the jagged hole.

Early morning recon revealed one NVA body lying in the small pool in front of the ambush position. The weapons and other baseplate were found nearby.

First light saw a "charlie-charlie" bird from 2/1 on the scene to check out the results. As the bird was leaving, Capt. Mike Murphy, Bn S-2, spotted another NVA hiding in the stream not 50 feet from the squad. He marked the position and more troops from the platoon moved in, seriously wounding the NVA, who was dusted off to Phu Bai in the charlie-charlie and later died.

The action is believed to have decimated a mortar squad which was attempting to shell the U.S. installation at Phu Bai. It was summed up pretty well by one soldier who observed "Yep, we pretty well ruined their whole day."

## CHARGER



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# Last of the "Heavys"

By Sp/4 Steve Brooks

Hill 34, Republic of Vietnam -- One by one they made their way to Hill 34. Sp/4 Mike Payton (Roseville, Ohio) was the first to arrive, coming down from Firebase Birmingham in December.

He has worked with his gun crew in the 2d Battalion, 94th Artillery since he came to Vietnam in September, 1971.

Next to arrive was the 175 mm gun. It came off the assembly line in the "World" in 1964, and came to Vietnam in January, 1971. It fired projectiles from Hill 65 (Rawhide), Firebase Birmingham, on the road to Lam Son 719, Firebase Barbara, and then it clanked down the dusty road to Hill 34, south of Charger Country in Da Nang.

The "projo" came last, traveling across the United States from its birthplace at the Ravenna Arsenal in Ohio. It left from Seattle, Washington, like most men and materiel bound for Vietnam.

At 1400 hours, 9 April 72, the man, the gun, and the projo were all in Gun Pit Three on FSB Hill 34. At that time, Sgt. Allen Thueringer slid into the gunner's seat, pulled the oily canvas cover off the sights, and aimed the long barrel toward an open grid.

He jammed his fingers in his ears as the 175mm gun in the pit behind him fired an adjustment round overhead. The two guns then fired off eight more shorts, then the pits fell silent as Sp/4 Timothy Hoy and Sp/4 Roy Gaines luggered the projo to the gun.

It was painted red, with the emblem of the 2/94 in yellow, and the fuse was carefully brasso'd and fastened to the round by Sgt. Steven Puckett. And in big yellow letters was written "Last U.S. HEAVY ROUND FIRED IN RVN."

With much pomp and delay the round was carefully loaded into the breech, accompanied by the clicking of dozens of cameras. As everybody from Brigadier General Joseph C. McDonough, 196th Infantry Brigade Commander, to the crew of gun four held their ears, Payton inserted the primer and jerked the lanyard. Nothing happened--the primer was a dud!

Amid laughter and surprised faces, Payton slipped a new primer into the breech and whipped the lanyard, and the last U.S. heavy artillery round fired in Vietnam streaked towards destruction.

The next day the gun was turned over to the ARVN.

Battery C, which fired the first of the 2d Battalion, 94th Artillery's 536,720 rounds in Vietnam, also fired the last one.

Payton and Thueringer felt that they had as much right as anyone to fire it. "Our gun crew has been together the longest, ever since September. We worked for this chance, and it means a lot."

Hill 34 is ARVN now, and the words painted on the barrel of Gun Three tell the story--2/94 is "Coming Home."

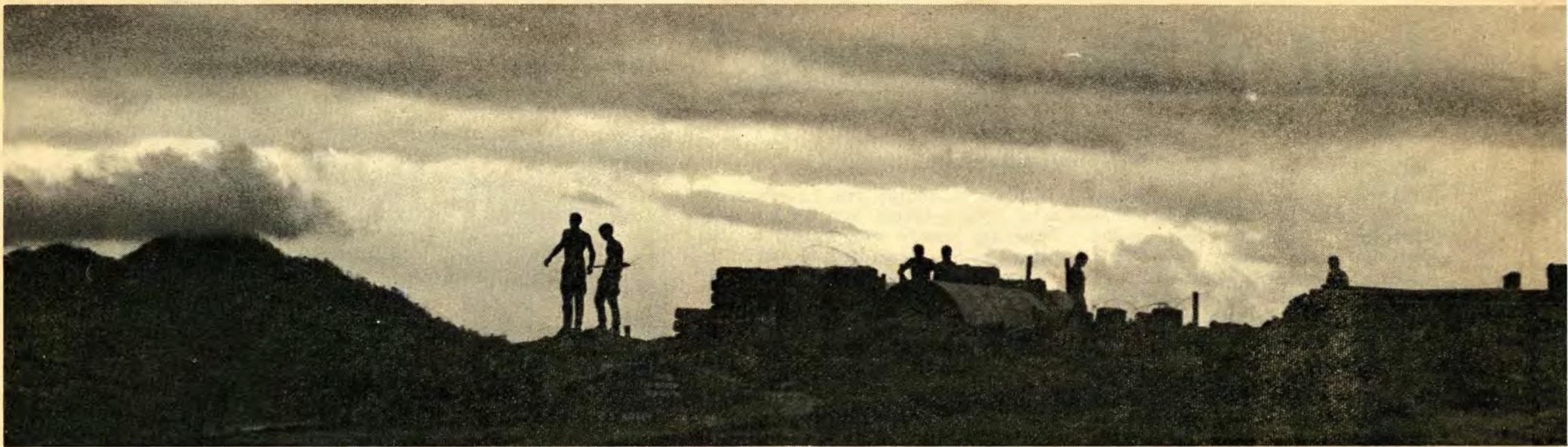


HERE IT COMES...The last American heavy artillery round is placed in the automatic loader-rammer by the crew of gun number three, 2d Bn, 94th Artillery.



THERE IT GOES...On its way to destruction the last 175 round leaves the men of the 2d/94th far behind. Flying faster than an

M14 round, the 200 pound projectile will shatter the air over the many miles to its target. (US Army Photo SP4 Steve Brooks)



# Close LZ Maude... Open Hill 200

By Sp5 Bill Simpson

Hill 200, Republic of Vietnam — The 196th Infantry Brigade has opened a new firebase on hill 200, at the end of the perimeter line. The new gun point will replace Firebase Maude.

Hill 200 was selected on the basis of its direction from LZ Linda, the Brigade's other firebase. It was decided that Hill 200 and Linda would be more mutually defensive and provide better coverage for the grunts than the old Maude-Linda combination which had blind spots.

The "move out" from Maude had originally been scheduled as an eight day mission with the Engineer Company (Prov.) doing the teardown and B Company, 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry pulling security.

However, less than halfway through those eight days, both B Co. 2/1 and the engineers were put on orders for Phu Bai as part of Task Force Lafayette. Deadline for the closing of Maude and the opening of Hill 200 was changed to as soon as possible. The troops were needed up north to secure Phu Bai because of the recent invasion across the DMZ.

Immediately a second platoon of engineers was moved into Maude and the 2/1 grunts began working with the teardown crews during the day and pulling security at night. The grunts mostly disassembled the bunkerline while the engineers tore out the perimeter wire.

Everyone was involved in jerking out engineer stakes on the hill. Some of the workers estimated these were "at least 50,000 stakes." Salvageable timber, culvert halves, and concertina wire were dropped into sortie nets and airlifted via Chinook to Hill 200.

On April 10, there remained only one building on the infantry side of Maude and four buildings on the artillery side. Everybody was out of time—within twelve hours the 2/1 grunts and the two platoons of engineers were to be in Phu Bai.

At 3PM that same day the men of Bravo Battery, 3d Bn, 82nd Arty hooked two of their 105mm howitzers to Chinooks and moved them to Hill 200. Once they were set in place and registered

(zeroed), and not before then, the other two.

Three hours later Hill 200 was operational. The buildings of LZ Maude were the five buildings and Hill 200 was either site without some firepower had.

The 2/1 grunts and the engineer platoons and a contingent of 1st Bn, 46th Inf. moved in to take care of the policing up of bits and pieces by kites.

Finally, a tractor and operator from E Company moved in to level off the ground and metal—leaving nothing for "charlie."

At Hill 200 the Engineer Co's first platoons set up the new underground tactical operations center while the Arty troops finished sandbagging out protective claymore mines.

Infantry and artillery will occupy Hill 200 until the end of the year. DaNang.



SMC  
pilot  
on 1  
PHO



# Close LZ Maude... Open Hill 200

(US ARMY PHOTO SP4 ED BUCKLEY)

By Sp5 Bill Simpson

of Vietnam - The 196th Infantry Brigade has moved on hill 200, at the end of the perimeter line. It will replace Firebase Maude. It was decided on the basis of its direction from LZ Linda, the new base. It was decided that Hill 200 and Linda will be more defensive and provide better coverage for the Hill Maude-Linda combination which had blind spots. Hill Maude had originally been scheduled as an alternate site for the Engineer Company (Prov.) doing the work, 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry pulling out halfway through those eight days, both B Co. were put on orders for Phu Bai as part of Task Force 101 for the closing of Maude and the opening of Hill 200. The troops were moved to secure Phu Bai because of the recent invasion

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(zeroed), and not before then, the other two Howitzers were moved.

Three hours later Hill 200 was operational and all that remained of LZ Maude were the five buildings and some bunkers. At no time was either site without some firepower had it been needed.

The 2/1 grunts and the engineer platoons departed for Phu Bai and a contingent of 1st Bn, 46th Inf. moved on to Maude to finish the policing up of bits and pieces by knocking down the last five buildings.

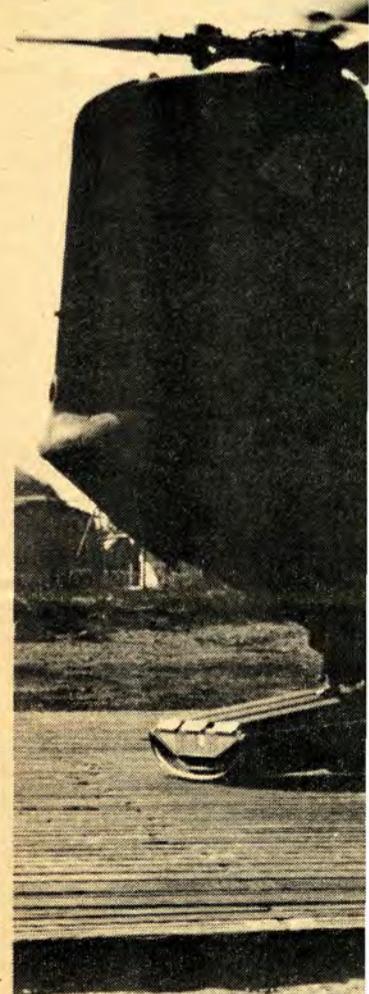
Finally, a tractor and operator from Engineer Co. were flown to Maude to level off the ground and plow under any excess metal—leaving nothing for "charlie."

At Hill 200 the Engineer Co's first platoon finished slit trenching the new underground tactical operations center and sleeping quarters while the Arty troops finished sandbagging the bunkers and setting out protective claymore mines.

Infantry and artillery will occupy Hill 200 at all times—defending DaNang.



SMOKE POPPED... Before landing, pilots get some idea of wind conditions on the ground to guide them to their cargo. PHOTO SP4 ED BUCKLEY





(US ARMY PHOTO SP4 ED BUCKLEY)

other two Howitzers were moved. Operational and all that remained was some bunkers. At no time ever had it been needed.

Two platoons departed for Phu Bai. Inf. moved on to Maude to finish

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and plow under any excess

First platoon finished slit trenching

quarters center and sleeping quarters

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Hill 200 at all times--defending



**SMOKE POPPED...** Before landing the Chinook pilots get some idea of wind conditions as the men on the guide them to their cargo. (US ARMY PHOTO SP4 ED BUCKLEY)



**MOVING OUT...** All salvageable material is prepared for movement as everybody pitches in closing LZ Maude.



**NEW HOME...** For the M102 Howitzer it's the same old grind as the air mobile model of the 105mm howitzer is unslung at Hill 200.



## Voters Urged To Prepare

Is your voting residence one of those listed below? If it is, you can take steps to get ready to vote in the November 7 general election.

Alaska, Calif., Conn., Del., D.C., Ky., Maine, Md., Mass., Minn., Mo., Nev., N.H., N.J., N.M., N.Y., N.C., Ohio, Okla., Ore., Pa., P.R., R.I., S.C., S.D., Tex., Vt., Wis., Wyo.

All the States listed, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, will accept your FPCA application for an absentee mail ballot as early as May.

Puerto Rico has an early cut-off date for accepting ballot requests—September 1. California would like to receive your application by September 8 and Texas by September 23. It is a good practice to request your absentee ballot as early as possible.

Some of the States listed above also have registration deadlines. Alaska, Delaware, Maine, Nevada, South Carolina, and South Dakota have deadlines for registration. Puerto Rico had a registration deadline in February.

Alaska—You must register before you can request a ballot. Registration deadline is October 8. Address your FPCA requests for registration and an absentee ballot to the Lieutenant Governor, Pouch AA, Juneau, Alaska 99801.

Delaware—Uses special State registration form, sent with the absentee ballot, to register a

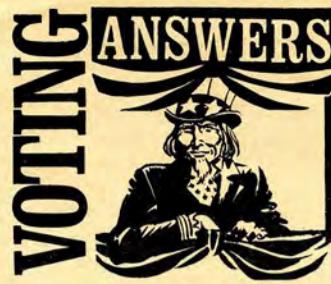
service voter applying for both registration and a ballot. Registration form must be returned by October 28. Address your FPCA to the Department of Elections, county of residence.

Maine—Like Alaska, requires separate FPCA requests for registration and an absentee ballot. No set registration deadline, but registration must be completed before a ballot can be forwarded. Address FPCA request for registration to the Board of Registration or Registrar of Voters, municipality of residence. Address FPCA ballot request to the City/Town Clerk, place of residence.

Nevada—Also requires separate requests for registration and an absentee ballot. Registration deadline is October 8. Address all FPCAs to the Board of Registrars or Court Clerk, county of residence.

South Carolina—Uses special State registration form, sent with the absentee ballot. Registration deadline is October 8. Address your FPCA to the Board of Registration, county of residence.

South Dakota—Uses the FPCA ballot request to register a service voter who is not already registered, so be sure your FPCA is witnessed by a commissioned officer. Address your FPCA to the County/City Auditor or Town/Township Clerk, place of residence, so that it will arrive before October 28.



## Am I eligible to vote?

Yes, if you—  
Are a U.S. citizen.  
Are 18 years old.  
Are a legal resident of a State.  
Have registered, if your State requires registration.

Residency and registration requirements for your State are listed in *Voting Information—1972*, an Armed Forces regulation which your voting counselor has. A recent Supreme Court decision nullified the existing durational residency requirement which Tennessee has. That decision, of course, affects only one State directly, but can be expected to result sooner or later in changes to requirements in other States.

I'd be eligible, all right but I'm not registered. How can I register?

If you meet the other three voter qualification requirements, you may use a Federal Post Card Application for Absentee Ballot—or FPCA, as it is called—to request registration or the special State registration form which some States have.

Usually, only one FPCA is re-

quired to request both registration and an absentee mail ballot. But five States—Alabama, Alaska, Louisiana, Maine, and Nevada—require you to make one request for registration and a second request, after you are registered, for an absentee mail ballot. Puerto Rico has the same requirement.

## Do I still have time to register for the November elections?

Yes, there is still time to register in every state which requires registration. In Puerto Rico, however, the period for requesting registration ended in February. You even have time to register and vote in some State primary elections.

## Where can I get an FPCA?

From your unit. For the November election this year, your unit commander will issue you an FPCA by August 15 if you are overseas and by September 15 if you are stationed in CONUS.

But you can get an FPCA earlier than that if you need one—for example, to register or to participate in a primary election.

## Voting Bulletin #2

## Voting Action Line Brings Fast Answers

Direct telephone communication has been authorized between voting officers in the field and a staff office in Department of Defense in Washington, D.C., for rapid response to pressing questions and problems concerning the Voting Assistance Program. The DoD telephone extension is 44777, by incoming AUTOVON line.

Called VAL, for Voting Action Line, the new communications channel will be open 24-hours a day. During non-duty hours, a tape answering service will take down incoming calls. Members of the Federal Voting Assistance Task Force, OASD (M&RA), will man the telephone from 0830 to 1700 hours, Washington time, Monday through Friday.

Replies to incoming calls from voting officers will be given over the telephone, if possible, but mail will also be used to speed answers to the field.

Types of questions expected from the field are those concerned with election information and election procedures, but calls concerning the supply of voting materials, such as FPCAs and the *DOD Pamphlet Voting Information—1972*, are also expected. The Military Departments are responsible for distribution of such voting supplies and will be asked by Department of Defense to speed their delivery if shortages are reported from the field.

## PRIMARY VOTING PREPARATION CHART

During the month of May 1972, 14 States and the District of Columbia will hold either a regular primary election (R), a Presidential primary election (P), or both. The chart below provides information on how service personnel can prepare to vote in these 1972 primary elections.

Dates shown in the last column indicate the latest time that *ballot requests* (FPCAs) will be accepted by State election officials. Voters should submit *ballot requests* (FPCAs) early enough to insure that *voted ballots* can be returned in time to meet State deadlines.

STATE	DATE	REGISTRATION REQUIREMENT FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL	TO REQUEST AN ABSENTEE MAIL BALLOT, SEND A COMPLETED FPCA TO:	
			WHERE	WHEN
ALA	2 May (R,P)	Must register before absentee ballot can be sent. To register, send FPCA to Board of Registrars, county of residence. See Note (21 April 1972)	County Register, county of residence.	By 27 April
ARK	30 May (R)	Registration is waived.	County Clerk, county of residence.	Prior to election.
D.C.	2 May (R,P)	Registered when FPCA for absentee ballot is accepted.	Board of Elections, District Building, Washington, D.C. 20004.	By 25 April
IND	2 May (R,P)	Registered when FPCA for absentee ballot is accepted. See Note (3 April 1972)	Clerk of the Circuit Court, county of residence.	By 29 April
KY	23 May (R)	Registered when FPCA for absentee ballot is accepted.	County Clerk, county of residence.	By 3 May
MD	16 May (R,P)	Uses executed affidavit on ballot return envelope.	Board of Supervisors of Elections, county of residence or Baltimore.	By 9 May
MICH	16 May (P)	State registration form sent with absentee ballot.	City or Township Clerk, place of residence.	By 13 May
NEB	9 May (R,P)	State registration form sent with absentee ballot.	County Clerk, county of residence. (Douglas, Lancaster, Sarpy county: Election Commissioner).	By 5 May
N.C.	6 May (R,P)	Registered when FPCA for absentee ballot is accepted.	Chairman, County Board of Elections, county of residence.	Prior to election.
OHIO	2 May (R,P)	Registration is waived.	Clerk, County Board of Elections, county of residence.	By noon on 29 April
ORE	23 May (R,P)	Uses executed affidavit on ballot return envelope.	County Clerk, county of residence.	Prior to election.
R.I.	23 May (P)	Registration is waived.	Board of Canvassers and Registration, place of residence.	By 5:00 p.m. on 2 May
TENN	4 May (P)	Registered when FPCA for absentee ballot is accepted.	Election Commission, county of residence.	By 24 April
TEX	6 May (R)	Registered when FPCA for absentee ballot is accepted.	Office of County Clerk, county of residence.	Prior to election.
W.VA.	9 May (R,P)	State registration form sent with absentee ballot. See Note (9 April 1972)	Clerk of County Court, county of residence.	By 6 May

Note: Unregistered serviceman must be registered by (date). (W.VA. only: Include on FPCA the words "Registration forms requested".)

# VOTING

## NEBRASKA

If you are a legal resident of Nebraska and want to vote in the primary election, here are the dates to remember:

- February 1, 1972: This is the earliest date you can apply for absentee registration and an absentee ballot. Do it now.
- May 9, 1972: This is the date of the primary election.

If you are a member of the Armed Forces or a spouse or dependent of a member you may use a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to apply for registration forms and an absentee ballot at the same time. Be sure to include the phrase "Please send registration forms" in the margin of the FPCA and to indicate your political party preference.

When you receive the registration forms and the absentee ballot, complete them as soon as possible and return the entire package to the issuing office.

## MARYLAND

Men and women in the Armed Forces who are legal residents of Maryland should make note of the date, May 16, 1972. That's when the State will hold its primary election.

Members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents may register for the primary election by casting an absentee ballot.

To obtain a ballot for the Maryland primary election, complete a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) and send it to the Board of Supervisors of Elections, county of residence. Be sure to indicate political party preference on the FPCA.

## OREGON

If Oregon is your legal residence, here are the dates to remember if you want to vote in the primary election:

- April 21: get your Federal Post Card Application off to the county clerk, county of residence, by this date to request an absentee ballot.
- May 23: this is the date of the primary election.

Members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents temporarily residing outside the U.S. do not have to register in advance of an election. When the executed oath on the absentee ballot return envelope is accepted, you will be registered. Send a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) — making certain you indicate political party preference—to request your absentee ballot. One request will cover all elections in any calendar year.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

If South Carolina is your legal residence, here are the dates to remember if you want to vote in the primary election:

- May 13: this is the cut-off date in applying for registration by mail. Members of the Armed Forces and their spouses may apply at any time by mail for an "Absentee Registration Card." Send a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to the Board of Registration, county of residence, to register.
- June 13: this is the date of the primary election. A second, or runoff, primary is set for June 27, 1972.

In applying for absentee registration be sure to indicate the party in whose primary election you wish to vote.

Questions? See your voting counselor.



## Engineers at Hoa Ninh

CAMP PERDUE — The 500 residents of Hoa Ninh village have approximately 30 new acres of arable land as result of cleaning done recently by the 196th Infantry Brigade's Engineer Company (PROV).

Acting on a request from the chief of Hieu Duc District, Sergeant Loxley P. Vance (White Sulfur Springs, W. Va.) and Specialist Four Carl W. Bradberry (Jasper, Ala.), two combat engineers, were dispatched to the village site 11 miles west of Da Nang.

The two men spent a full week at Hoa Ninh bulldozing under the existing vegetation around the village and flattening out the land to make irrigation possible.

As they filled in and scraped off the dirt, all the excess was walled up in a six-foot berm for the defense of the village's perimeter. Vance and Bradberry also pushed up four triangular fighting positions to provide an extra measure of security.

Since Hoa Ninh is a new resettlement

village with new people still moving in, the two G.I.s even worked a couple of evenings grading off foundations for new hooches.

Hoa Ninh Provincial Forces and two platoons of Regular ARVN troops provided security for the pair of engineers during the entire operation. And, to make sure there would be no misunderstandings between Bradberry and Vance and the villagers, the interpreter assigned to the 196th's Engineer Company accompanied them.

Relations were favorable during the entire seven days and twice Vance and Bradberry were the dinner guests of a local Provincial Force sergeant and his family. According to Bradberry, "We gave them a few cans of our c-ration pork slices and they cooked them up with rice and fresh vegetables. It was number one."

"But the second night we were served fish soup with all the trimmings, including some of the scales. That's when I knew it was time to head back for the rear."

## MEDIC!

by Sp/4 Steve Brooks

LZ Ross, Republic of Vietnam — With a loud splash, the boy slipped off a rock and fell into the deep waterhole where villagers washed their clothes. When he didn't come up, an ARVN soldier dived in after him, pulling the boy to the surface. The soldier began calling "GI! GI!"

First Lieutenant Arthur Cowart of Company A, 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry came running from his bunker on nearby LZ Ross where his unit was securing an artillery battery. Cowart placed his hands on the small back and began applying artificial respiration, pausing every few seconds to shout "MEDIC!"

Medics Sp/4 Dwight Beatty and Carl Powell pushed their way through the crowd of villagers, and Beatty saw that "the kid had no pulse at all. His skin had turned blue, and he had all the symptoms of death."

Beatty rolled the boy on his back, cleared his throat passage, then began giving mouth-to-mouth artificial respiration. Powell massaged the boy's arms and legs to start the blood circulating, and Cowart administered heart massage.

Minutes passed, and the boy didn't start breathing. Everybody was watching Beatty, wondering when the medic would stop trying to breath life into the small form. But Beatty kept right on working, and suddenly, after almost ten minutes, the boy began gasping.

Beatty still worked on, until after ten minutes more a LOH (Light observation helicopter) set down nearby, and Beatty carried the boy aboard, then scrambled on after him to keep him breathing as the LOH buzzed off towards the ARVN hospital on FSB Baldy.

Later on, Beatty sat in the aid station at 3/21, and remembered, "I had no hope at first, but I couldn't give up. I was going to keep working on that boy until a doctor told me to stop."

## RATAC

By SP4 Gary R. Sonsky

CAMP RED HORSE, Republic of Vietnam — It's Midnight and you are just falling into a sound sleep, when suddenly you're rocked out of bed by the artillery going off in the distance.

It's annoying, but essential. However, how do those guys know what to shoot at? The answer is Radar Target Acquisition (RATAC).

RATAC detects movement by the use of radar. In the 196th Infantry Brigade's tactical area of interest there are three RATAC locations.

Usually eight men are assigned to each station with two men in a radar shack on a rotating shift with the others. From the outside the radar module itself looks like a conex. Inside there is room for two men and a control panel, radios and the all-important radar screen.

The system is similar to that used by air controllers to bring in aircraft. Each radar module is located where it will be able to cover a 360 degree sweep.

The radar sends out its beam which bounces off anything that is moving, and the team spots a blip on the screen. The operator

is able to tell how many people there are, whether there are vehicles and how fast they are going.

If one of the three RATAC teams has a movement they contact the Fire Direction Center (FDC); simultaneously the Fire Support Coordinate Center (FSCC) is called for fire clearance. Then the team which spotted the movement contacts another team for further confirmation. After it is verified and cleared and the artillery begins the RATAC acts as an electronic forward observer—they are able to tell the battery firing if they have to adjust.

After the artillery has completed their job—when RATAC says there is no longer movement—a visual reconnaissance team checks the area from the air.

Since American artillery is not able to fire into certain areas but the ARVN batteries are, an ARVN RTO, FDO and an interpreter may be on the scene to pass the coordinates from RATAC to their batteries.

It may seem that the \$600,000 it costs for each station is a lot but, the radar is taking the place of many grunts.



Flanagan, How long have we been in country?

# MARS' 1st family

By SP4 Gary R. Sonsky

CAMP CHARGER, Republic of Vietnam - "This is AD6QFJ I have your party; go ahead please." If you've ever made a MARS call from the 196th Infantry Brigade area, you know that phrase. The voice, which doesn't resemble that of other Army operators, belongs to Mrs. Joyce Largent.

Joce and her husband Don are the main connection for Charger calls. Their station, which is also their home, is in Shafter, Calif., about 10 miles north of Bakersfield.

The Largent's role is a vital one in MARS (Military Affiliated Radio System) calls. A military station here gives Joyce a GI's number that he wants reached. Joyce then passes it on to her telephone operator who dials the number and lines up the party.

The cost of the call is based on what it costs to talk for three minutes from California—the price varies from \$1 to \$3. Since the call is being placed over the radio, the word "over" must be said after each transmission so that Joyce and the Vietnam operator can transmit and receive on the microphone.

Don, who is 33 and works for an electronics firm, received his amateur radio license in 1961, and Joyce hers in 1967. Their incentive for running calls are a love for radio and, as Joyce said in a recent MARS interview, "We want to be able to do something for someone else."

Joyce continued, "Don was in the Seabees in Okinawa and Guam from 1958 through 1962 and we communicated via MARS. So we know what it means for families to be separated and how helpful a call can be."

The Largents have been running calls from Vietnam since February, 1969. "If they ever 'quit' we would be in a bind,"

commented SP4 Rob Gardner a MARS operator. "Sooner or later another stateside station would pop up but the other stations like to shift around while Joyce and Don are always there."

Joyce usually spends anywhere from six to fourteen hours each day working the rig and setting up the calls—the time varies due to atmospheric conditions which sometimes inhibit radio contact. The patches usually run from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 10 p.m. to 4 a.m., Vietnam time.

Joyce starts her day at six in the morning and finishes with patching at nine that night—she eats and does housework in between periods of contact.

In late spring and summer months, when the conditions sometimes permit 24-hour contact, Joyce and Don run alternate shifts—one working while the other sleeps.

The Largents spend their holidays—Easter, Christmas, New Years—working the rig and very seldom take any days off. The couple do not get paid for their services and also pay for their increased power bill. The government does help as far as the equipment itself.

Two girls—Becky 13 and Debbie 8—make up the rest of the Largent household. Although Joyce is busy most of the day the girls realize that she is helping soldiers in Vietnam and is therefore something special.

Well Mrs. Largent, we in the 196th Infantry Brigade think you're pretty special too.



(U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 ED BUCKLEY)

# 3/82nd Arty: Volleyball Champs

CAMP CHARGER — The 196th Infantry Brigade volleyball tournament ended recently with 3d Bn., 82nd Arty. outlasting seven other teams to capture the brigade championship.

The artillerymen took the best two out of three from the 3d Bn., 21st Inf. in the final match played near the brigade headquarters area.

Both teams were recognized the night after the finals at an awards ceremony. Brigadier General Joseph C. McDonough, commanding general of the 196th, presented team trophies to the winners and runners-up.

Members of the winning team were Captain Doug Allerdice, Captain Tom Tieme, Sergeant Ron Tintera, Sergeant Donn Hinkle, Specialist Four Larry Buerk, First Lieutenant C.C. Hale, Specialist Four Robby Robbins, Sergeant Randy Pixley and Sergeant Richard Adlof.



Once Kinsey gets the serve... It's all over.

## Bde. Signal's Story

By SP4 Pat Wiznewski

CAMP CHARGER, Republic of Vietnam — Partyline confusion on your telephone at home is a nuisance—in a combat zone it can be lethal.

The Brigade Signal Office coordinates all communication in the 196th Infantry Brigade. Radios, field phones, dial telephones, MARS calls, and even computerized payroll messages come under the supervision of this office.

Their most important task is the dictation of wavelengths and call signs on our radio net. The net has over 150 frequencies to be used by grunt units, helicopters, tracks, and MPs. Separation is necessary to keep the frequencies clear for the people who want to use them.

If a unit in the net needs to talk to another unit within the net (for example, if a grunt needs direct como with a chopper) they can do so.

The mainstay of the radio net is the AN/PRC-25. This radio is compact, light and easy to maintain; Radio Telephone Operators (RTO) in a grunt unit can pack it without trouble; it can be mounted on a track, jeep or chopper in a matter of minutes. "The PRC-25 is the best thing that ever happened to Army communications," say Major LaPlante, OIC of the signal office.

Our communications system is sophisticated enough so that anyone, anywhere in the 196th can send a message across the street or around the world. "We are responsible for all communications west of the (Da Nang) airbase", says 1Lt James A. Nance (Tuscaloosa, Ala.), "but our work certainly doesn't stop there."

The signal office enlists the aid of the Air Force, Federal Electric, and civilians in their work that extends outside the boundaries of the Da Nang area.

The signal office supervises MARS calls. From the MARS station the call is carried to CONUS through military channels, and is then transmitted through civilians channels. These "ham" radio operators are usually housewives dedicated to helping the GIs in their own way.

With the cutback of troop levels here, there are fewer MARS calls being made. This means more room on the airways, less trouble and a minimum of waiting for your call.

A telephone call is transformed into "computer talk". This is sent to CONUS where another computer "listens" to the problem, feeds the information to another computer that gets the necessary information and reverses the talking process. A person with lost, stolen or destroyed records should be able to get duplicate records within four days.

Federal Electric Company also cooperates with the signal office; they do the majority of the work concerning dial telephones. The Da Nang Central Office puts calls through to Saigon and even the "WORLD". Federal Electric is now in the process of turning over their work to Vietnamese civilians.

The Air Force has a full time pilot working in the Signal Office. His job is to keep an open line of communications between the 196th and Air Force Patrol aircraft; an Air Force pilot was picked for this job so there would be no confusion in the relaying of messages to the planes in the air.