



BATTLE-AX BANNER

3RD BATTALION

16TH ARTILLERY

AMERICAN DIVISION

JUL 1 NO. 2

BATTLE-AX BANNER

March 31, 1969

Tien Phuoc-

A TENSE SITUATION THAT FINALLY BROKE INTO ONE OF THE MAJOR CONFLICTS OF THE RECENT POST-TET OFFENSIVE

In the past month this battalion had it's share of fighting as battles raged all over South Vietnam. One of the more tense conflicts in the recent offensive was the battle of Tien Phuoc.

At 0200 hours on Feb. 23, the attack on Tien Phuoc was underway, as a large force of NVA/VC soldiers fired rockets and mortars on and eventually overran the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) outpost just south of the Tien Phuoc fire base camp.

SGT Alton Roundy, NCOIC of the Tien Phuoc VHF radio station said, "I was on duty early that morning when I happened to look out the window of my hotch towards the outpost. It looked like daytime up there, the exploding rockets and mortars lit up the sky so bright."

Immediately realizing the danger if the enemy gained control of the guns on top of the outpost, CPT Nguyen Ngoc Diep, CO of the CIDG forces in Tien Phuoc, called for artillery from Battlin Bravo.

After Bravo fired directly on the OP with WP, the local VC element tried to enter Tien Phuoc by way of the main gate, according to CPT Reginald P. Fontenot, Bravo chief honcho.

Things remained quiet until 0745 that same morning.

Motor sergeant, Ed Beaudin recalled, "Everyone was walking around still talking about the events that took place the night before when the first incoming artillery hit us."

That day no damage was reported in the battery area from enemy explosions or fire.

The next day rockets hit in the area of FDC and gun pit five, killing one man and injuring at least eight others.

Aware of the distinct possibility of an enemy offensive on Tien Phuoc, CPT Fontenot explains his batteries reactions, "We were expecting this kind of action, but we carried on as usual in the high standards of "Battlin Bravo."

(TIEN PHUOC Cont. on P.3)



FORT SILL, Okla. (ANF)-Silver and bronze coin medals, specially struck at a Pennsylvania mint, will commemorate Fort Sill's centennial year in 1969, marking 100 years of progress from a tiny cavalry camp to a sophisticated center of field artillery.

A limited number of silver coins priced at \$1.00 each and bronze coins at \$1 each are available by mail order from the Fort Sill Centennial Project Office, Fort Sill, Okla., 73503.

Proceeds from the sale of the coins will go towards financing the post's centennial year projects.

Today, the Fort Sill U.S. Army Field Artillery Center annually trains thousands of soldiers in handling all phases of field artillery. Additionally, the center conducts an officer candidate school, an NCO academy, a drill sergeant school and an instructor training course.

Since 1965, the center has been engaged in activating, reorganizing, and deploying specially trained units to Vietnam to provide combined arms capability.

GUESS WHAT!

Chases' Calendar of annual events has the drift on the month of March and April.

Starting out the month of March is Pickle-Hamburger Month, with the first week shared by Return the Borrowed Book Week and National Weights and Measures Week, but pinched somewhat by the March 3-8 marking of National Procrastination Week. March 15 is shared by Buzzard Day in Hickley, Ohio, when the townsfolk turn out to watch the buzzards' annual return from the Great Smoky Mountains.

Rounding out the month is a rousing Irish-German St. Patrick's Day tug of war at the University of Detroit.

April is America's Heartland Development Month and Horse Health Month. April 13 is Mother-in-Law Day, April 27 the day of the telegraphist in El Salvador and April 27 the Ramp Festival in Cosby, Tenn. (UPI)

SIR: Has the Americal Division been given a number, or did someone err?

R.W. Buckley
Redmond, Wash.

SIR: You were incorrect. The 23rd patch as illustrated is actually that of the Americal Division.

Pet. Potocky
Waukegan, Ill.

The Americal Division was officially designated the 23rd Division in December 1954. It still retains the name as well as the number. Some folks often call Americal as a misprint or American. The "cal" comes from "New Caledonia, where the Division was formed in a hurry out of troops on New Caledonia during the crisis in the Solomons in WWII. It had a tremendous war record in WWII, and continues to function as the 2nd Division in Vietnam today. (American Legion)



HEY MULDON! DID YOU KNOW THAT THE NEW RED CROSS GAL HAS A BLACK BELT FOR JUDO?

ANF

FORT BLISS, Tex. (ANF)—The Army's first Air Defense Artillery NCO Candidate School officially opened in January at Fort Bliss.

The school will prepare men for positions as squad leaders on the Quad 50 and the M4 "Duster" automatic weapons.

The first group of 76 candidates began the 21-week course with promotions to the rank of E-4. Additional promotions will be awarded for outstanding performances during the course. Candidates will spend the final two months of course work as on-the-job trainees in the operation and maintenance of air defense artillery pieces.

Two new LSG's have taken posts as top shirts in the 3/16th.

Recently promoted to his present rank, LSG Donald E. Burnett moved from Bravo Battery to Charlie Battery as chief NCO. LSG Burnett is from Columbus, Ga.

LSG Ervin L. Kuehn, Sidney, Mont., moved to Service Battery from his position as Operations Sergeant at the 1/82nd Arty.

The baseball game in the cow pasture ended rather abruptly when a runner slid into what he thought was third base.

Owensburg (Ky.) News

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Lt. Col. Jack R. Pilk ————— Battalion Commander
CPT Terry L. DePhillips ————— Information Officer
SP5 Tom Maus ————— Editor

TIEN PHUOC

Cont. from P. 1

While Bravo pounded the enemy positions around Tien Phuoc American and Vietnamese, special forces started out to reclaim the enemy held outpost no more than 750 meters from the Tien Phuoc perimeter.

Just minutes after leaving the compound, the patrol was hit with 122mm rockets. But the group continued up the steep hill to the outpost and secured the vital position on the hilltop.

BEST MESS TOTALED OUT

The following day, the men were eating breakfast when the alarm was sounded and once again Bravo was under seige.

Forty people cleared out of the mess hall just 30 seconds before two 82mm mortar rounds struck dead center in the mess kitchen putting shrapnel holes in every utensil in the place.

SFC Alfred Walsh, Bravo's "Battlin' Mess Sergeant" took charge of getting men out of the area.

SFC Walsh said, "It took us two and a half hours to extinguish the fire, and that was only because of the determination of the men in the battery."

For those of you that weren't aware of this, Bravo Battery mess took the first 3/16th Arty. "Best Mess" award just one week before this tragic incident.

THE BATTLE CONTINUES

The next day, Feb. 25, enemy rockets and mortars continued to rain on Tien Phuoc.

Small mobile strike forces comprised of Vietnamese soldiers from Da-tang remained in an area just south of Tien Phuoc.

With elements of the 1st Bn., 52nd Inf., 198th Inf. Bde. and 3d Bn. 21st Inf. 196th Inf. Bde. moving in, a blocking force was set up to stop further enemy movement towards Tien Phuoc.

Continuous air strikes by both Marine and Air Force jet fighters pound away at an enemy position on a hillside 2000 meters from the Tien Phuoc perimeter.

At night when fighters were no longer effective Cobra gunships and a C-47 "Spooky" were used to deter an enemy advance.

THE BEACON

A small radar unit known as the Beacon operates inside the Tactical Operations Center (TOC) guiding jet fighters to their targets by transmitting a beam that is picked up by the aircrafts Beacon receiver. Air Force Sergeant Michael Walker monitors aircraft transmissions from his MRC-108 radio jeep.



MY DAUGHTER TELLS ME
YOU'RE IN THE ARMED
FORCES...

3/16th SETS UP

A separate yet vital unit known as the Fire Support Control Center (FSCC) was organized and sent to Tien Phuoc under the direction of Battalion XO MAJ Francis Waskowitz.

According to CPT Douglas Gladfelter (S-2) also present at Tien Phuoc "The purpose of FSCC is to coordinate all the different units in the field and obtain both political and military clearance for air strikes and artillery fire in the Tien Phuoc area."

VHF IS SAVED

Tien Phuoc is assured

of having adequate land line connections to Chu Lai only when VHF is on the air.

SFC Roundy explains VHF's dilemma, "When FDC took a couple of direct hits, their land line to me was knocked out." Realizing FDC's precarious position, Roundy exposed himself during enemy rocket attacks to lay a new land line to FDC.

Meanwhile back at the radio station, rockets were landing behind the radio rig, knocking down antennas and setting fire to the POL dump which happened to be next to the VHF power generators.

"It looked like VHF was in serious trouble for a few minutes during that second rocket attack," said PFC Jesse Adkins whose unabashed and dauntless courage helped put out the fire in time to save the generators.

QUAD 50 MOVES IN

A squad of four men from the 3d section, 55th Artillery (Quad 50) were called to Tien Phuoc for the purpose of firing harassment and interdiction.

In their first three days at Tien Phuoc, the team fired over 20,000 rounds.

ENEMY ROCKETING CEASES

Short on supplies and badly hurt, the surviving members of the enemy intruders fell back to regroup and re-supply their forces.

Except for periodic firing of friendly artillery, peace and quiet reigned over Tien Phuoc for the next three days as restoration of equipment and buildings continued.

INFANTRY HIT HARD

A large number of NVA soldiers have reportedly been building up their strength and receiving supplies in an area a few miles east of Tien Phuoc. "We know their out there," said LSG Ralph Lewis, "They hit the CIDG or spec-TIEN PHUOC Cont. on P. 4

Cont. from P. 3

ial forces, who call us for artillery support and we give it to them, but the enemy hits and falls back into his hole or tunnel so fast we can't pin them down to one location."

SPECIAL FORCES STRIKE

Special Forces Camp A-102 at Tien Phuoc houses the field TOC, through which all field operations in the Tien Phuoc area are monitored and directed.

Camp Commander CPT John Cleckner states, "Since Feb. 23, we have killed a total of 115 NVA and VC."

Within the 400 meter perimeter of Tien Phuoc itself, over 194 122mm, 140mm rockets, and 82mm mortars have struck according to CPT Cleckner.

Since the beginning of the offensive, 19 helicopters have been shot down around Tien Phuoc.

MORE ROCKETS

The lull came to an abrupt end on March 2.

"Everyone in the command had finished eating breakfast just half an hour before the first incoming rockets hit," said Battlin Bravo cook, Mike Wenson.

In the midst of all the DIVARTY Battalion Guidons and a band playing, DIVARTY CO, COL Lawrence M. Jones, r. bid a fond farewell to the men he commanded since March 31, 1968, during recent ceremonies at the 23rd Aviation Heli-pad.

Receiving the DIVARTY Guidon for his tenure of service with Americal was COL Leslie B. Hardy. COL Hardy comes to the Americal Division from his position as commander of the 36th Artillery Group (USAREU-).

COL Jones will return to CONUS to become a member of the staff and faculty at Carlisle Barracks, Pa.

POL IS DESTROYED

After keying in on his motor pool the first time, SGT Ed Beaudin suddenly moved just about all of his remaining POL to the special forces POL dump.

"I knew that if more rockets or mortars were fired at Tien Phuoc, I would be the recipient of a couple of them. It only stood to reason, my motor pool is in the middle of everything they want here," said Beaudin.

Sure enough, the first rockets to enter Tien Phuoc that morning landed right in the POL dump setting what was left on fire for the second time.

The generators of VHF were once again of main concern. Knowing the fire would not be put out this time, the generators were pulled to safety.

BATTERY COMMO HURT

"Rockets knocked out much of our commo this time," said CPT Fontenot.

Under the direction of Chief of Commo, SGT Julius Wright, the wire team continued to work flawlessly even under adverse conditions.

THE GUNS KEEP FIRING

The following day Bravo Battery was in the middle

of a contact firing mission when more enemy rounds started dropping in.

In CPT Fontenot's words, "This is when the most heroic acts were performed, and that was by the gun crews themselves, they continued to fire."

MEDIC STANDS OUT

SP4 Alvinci Merske, medic at Battlin Bravo was the first man on the scene whenever a casualty was reported. Bravo XO, 1LT Jimmy Kilpatrick praises Merske's actions, "We all had trouble keeping up with him whenever a casualty was reported in the battery area, he was Johnny on the spot all the time."

On March 3, the last rockets hit Tien Phuoc. But the seige around Tien Phuoc continues as Americal infantrymen and artillerymen along with their Vietnamese counterparts hold their ground and continue to smash the enemy assault.

As CPT Cleckner so emphatically stated, "The enemy is still out there and they want Tien Phuoc."

One of Colorado's oldest citizens and a resident of Walsenburg for almost a century died here yesterday. Mrs. Cleofes Quintana was around 104 years old at the time of her death, her grandmother said.

Brocton (Mass.)

Enterprise-Times

Williams missed the short infield fly and ended up flat on his grass just back of second base. Philadelphia (Pa.) Record

Mrs. Hawkins, proud of her canning ability, took Reverend Williams to the basement and showed him her well-filled panties.

Lincoln (Nebr.) Ledger

Two girls who have been friends for many years and do many things together had babies the same day.

St. Paul (Minn.)

Pioneer Press



CAREER COUNSELOR'S CORNER

There is a "Pot of Gold" awaiting those of you who reenlist for the first time and hold one of the nearly 300 military occupational specialties designated as critical by the Army.

The pot of gold is in the form of the Variable Reenlistment Bonus (VRB). It can add as much as \$8,000 tax free to your regular reenlistment bonus. Unless you are a professional athlete, it is mighty difficult to get such a bonus in the civilian world.

The VRB is only available to men and women reenlisting for the first time. You must also meet the following requirements:

Reenlist for at least 8 additional months of service.

You must serve at least 1 month of active service in your current enlistment before reenlisting.

Be in the grade of E-3 or higher (in certain MOS, E-4 or higher).

Be qualified in one of the military occupational specialties designated as critical skill by the Department of the Army.

If you meet all of the above requirements, you can collect a VRB in addition to your regular reenlistment bonus.

How is the VRB figured? The nearly 300 critical MOS are divided into four categories: Multiplier of four, Multiplier of three, Multiplier of two and Multiplier of one.

Those in "Multiplier of four" category are the skills in which there is a most critical need for men and women; those in "Multiplier of one" category are skills in which there is still a critical need for men and women but not critical as "Multiplier of four" skills.

The multiplier category which you fit is the time factor in figuring your VRB.

First, your regular reenlistment bonus is calculated. Then, it is multiplied by your VRB multiplier. Thus, if you are in the "Multiplier of two" bracket, your bonus would be multiplied by two and the sum would be the VRB bonus. You would add the VRB bonus to the regular reenlistment bonus to get your total bonus.

Let's take some specific examples:

If you are an E-6 with four years of service and you are reenlisting for six years, your regular bonus would be \$2,000.

Suppose you are also an RTT Operator (05-Charlie), you would be in the "Multiplier of four" bracket. We would multiply your \$2,000 bonus by four and get a VRB of \$8,000.

Then, we would add your reenlistment bonus to that total and come up with a total bonus of \$10,000.

Suppose you are an E-4 with three years of service and a stock control clerk (76 Papa).

You sign up for an additional six years and receive a reenlistment bonus of \$1,510. You are also in the "Multiplier of 3" bracket and so your reenlistment bonus is multiplied by three to give you a VRB of \$4,530. When you add your reenlistment bonus to your VRB, you would come up with a total bonus of \$6,040.

The VRB critical skill areas cover virtually all branches of the Army and all types of jobs. Among the critical skills are field artillery crewmen (13 Bravo), cooks (94 Bravo), clerks (71 Hotel) radio repairmen (31 Bravo), tactical commo chief (31 Gulf), artillery surveyor (82 Charlie) and many others.

The sum of money that you first time reenlistees receive through the VRB program can mean a lot to you in future years.

You can buy a car, start a stock portfolio, have enough money to get married and raise a family or just salt it away in the bank.

For tax purposes, while in RVN, you should request lump sum payments, otherwise the VRB will be spread over several years and taxed at a straight 18% (\$180.00 on each \$1,000).

We have plenty of information on the VRB and the regular reenlistment bonus, including a U.S. Army pay rule that enables you to figure within seconds your reenlistment bonus and VRB.

Stop by and see us. We are in the S-1 building at battalion headquarters, or call Battle-ax Personnel (Chu Lai 2172). (Dept. of the Army)

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Some good advice-----
When in the battalion area watch your step, especially at night. Don't become a "twisted ankle casualty!"



NORTH AMERICAN "GOOSE BIRD"
OR... THE PURPLE CREEPER
NECK SWIVELING, GIEL (YLER)



ALPHA BATTERY

"It should be a new and interesting (exciting) experience," said Alpha Battery LSG Mike Segovia of his upcoming assignment as ROTC instructor at the University of California, Berkley.

With less than a month to go, LSG Segovia looks forward to his new assignment with great enthusiasm. "I'm a little skeptical about wearing my uniform on campus, so I will wear civilian clothes to work, changing into my uniform when I reach school."

Chief of smoke, SFC Adams will soon be drifting towards CONUS. When he gets there, he's going to be stationed at the NCO Candidate School as an instructor.

Rumors say that he is not content with this and plans on changing it as soon as he reaches the states, best of luck sarg.

Things got pretty wild around the battery area as Gordy Alexander and Ken Atkinson bet each other that he could stop smoking and drinking COMPLETELY.

With \$50 on the line and just about a week under their belts, the thirsty two some are still baiting each other, trying to get the other to break the ground rules and collect his \$50.

Ask either one of them what it's like to earn combat pay.

HAPPINESS COMES TO

ARTILLERY HILL AS 20 MONTH DREAM IS FULFILLED

Referred to as Sweet's Lounge," men from Battalion Commo have constructed an outdoor patio, outside their hootch, overlooking the beautiful EM mess hall.

Ever since he arrived here at Artillery Hill some 20 long months ago, SSG Ed Sweet has had a dream, that is to build a place near his men's living quarters they could call their own, relax and just plain enjoy in their free time.

SSG Sweet's dream materialized last month as a group of determined men from commo planned a concrete floored patio with a metal roof.

SFC Joe Kemp chipped in by furnishing some torn bags of concrete and the metal for the roof came from some old buildings.

Other than that, all the rest of the construction was no more than hard work from the men of commo.

Working off and on, Nick Convertino, Billy Daniels, Greg Hogue, Sam Terry, Chuck Pratt, Bill Summers, and Eddie Washington completed the job in a week and a half.

A definite oriental form of architecture is noticed in the buildings design. The structure sports colorful diamonds on it's side and a tri-colored garbage can.

LSG Batton presented the well-deserving men with a barbecue grill, and along with SSG Sweet, expressed hopes for a grand opening in the near future.

Once again the old inscription present on so many buildings in the area is utilized "Better Built by Mighty Battle-ax Commo" (I think).

MESSAGE FOR CHARLIE

"You can hide in your caves, but they'll just be your graves, for you can't get away from the guns."

Kipling

