

Marines Jolt VC in Barrier Is. Assault

By Sgt. A. Wolfe
DA NANG — Lightning struck twice as Marines from Special Landing Force Alpha landed on Barrier Island, approximately 20 miles south of Da Nang, June 27, commencing Operation Bold Pursuit. The Marines from Battalion Landing Team 1/26, were heli-

lifted into the NVA and VC hide-out by Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 265 in approximately two hours, while supporting units went ashore in landing craft.

The BLT had conducted Operation Daring Rebel, which claimed 340 VC killed and another

509 captured, on Barrier Island in May, and the enemy apparently were unprepared for the rapid return assault.

As the first wave began entering the landing zones, enemy small arms fire was received. The pilots of HMM-265 maneuvered their helicopters as the

crew members returned fire with .50-cal. machine gun fire. Marines from "D" Co. debarked from the choppers and immediately secured the landing zones.

Through July 2, contact was light, limited mainly to occasional enemy sniper fire. Twenty-seven VC had been killed and there were 503 detainees. Friendly casualties were light.

Assisting BLT 1/26 and HMM-265 are elements from the Americal Div. and elements of the Vietnamese (ARVN) 51st Regt., which are acting as blocking forces for the Marine sweeps.



SEA TIGER



Vol. V, No. 28

III Marine Amphibious Force, Vietnam

July 11, 1969

Allied Troops, 'Dozers Clear Dodge City

By SSgt. Don O'Neal

DA NANG—Operation Pipestone Canyon, a multi-battalion allied operation aimed at clearing the enemy from "Dodge City"—Go Noi Island area, while at the same time opening the final portion of Route 4, is entering its second month.

According to Maj. Gen. Ormond R. Simpson, commanding general of the 1st Marine Div., the operation is a "dramatic stride toward pacification" and has been a "smashing" success since allied forces have destroyed a vital enemy staging area.

"The success of Operation Pipestone Canyon will not be measured in the number of enemy killed," the general pointed out at the onset of the operation. He said that success would be judged by the destruction of enemy fortifications and facilities in the area. In those terms, Pipestone Canyon has been a success.

Since the operation began May 26, Marines have destroyed at least one enemy command post and more than 100 bunker complexes. The giant bulldozers of a U.S. Army land clearing team working under the security of Leathernecks of the 1st Marines have cleared a large portion of the island. Marines also destroyed more than 85 tunnels while 1,100 bunkers have been blasted. Two-hundred and twenty-seven enemy fox holes have been covered over along with 1,400 yards of enemy trench lines. The area that once served as a staging point for enemy assaults against military installations and civilian population centers is being rendered useless to the enemy.

The other aim of the operation, the opening of the final portion of Route 4 between Dai Loc and Dien Bon is being accomplished almost without a hitch. It is expected that both the land clearing and up-grading of the road will be finished within a few weeks.

While destroying the enemy's fortifications, the Leathernecks have also seized large food caches. More than 59 tons of rice and nearly a ton of corn has been captured.

Allied forces accounted for nearly 600 enemy killed in the first month of the operation, and during that time enemy forces attempted to avoid contact. Thirty-six prisoners have been taken along with more than 300 individual and 18 crew-served weapons captured.

The area in the heart of the "Rice Triangle"—long referred to as a "safe haven" for enemy forces and a "no-man's land"—is being converted to an area where Vietnamese people may soon live again and farm the fertile soil, safe from enemy terrorism and harassment.

3rd Marines Sweep Rockpile Stronghold

By Sgt. Bruce Smith

DONG HA — Fighting north of the Rockpile in Operation Virginia Ridge, the 3rd Marines accounted for 524 enemy killed between May 1, when the operation began, and June 26.

Under the command of Col. Wilbur F. Simlik, the mission of the 3rd Marines is to destroy or capture enemy forces, installations and materials infiltrating

into the Republic of Vietnam.

Action during the last week of June was limited to exchanges of mortar fire. The enemy also fired rockets at Marine positions. Friendly damage and casualties were light in all cases.

In addition to enemy casualties, Operation Virginia Ridge accounted for the capture of 135 individual and 31 crew-served weapons between May 1 and June 26.



No Station Break

ALTHOUGH HIS fellow Marines are taking a break, a radio operator on Operation Pipestone Canyon remains constantly on the job to insure all incoming messages are received. The Marines are clearing Route 4 from Dai Loc to Dien Ban.

(Photo by GySgt. Chuck Lane)

Reds Lose 173 as Allies Scour Khe Sanh Hills

By Sgt. Bruce Smith

DONG HA — Operation Utah Mesa, a joint American and Vietnamese Army search-and-clear operation, has been in progress in the rolling hills south of the old Khe Sanh combat base since June 11.

The combined force, called Joint Task Group Guadalcanal, is composed of elements of the 9th Marines and U.S. Army units from the 1st Bde. of the 5th Infantry Div. (Mech.), which operate out of Fire Support Bases Tenaru and Saigon, and two battalions from the 2nd ARVN Regt., which operate from Fire Support Bases Quantic and Smith.

Charlie Co., 1st Bn., 9th Marines made a significant contact

with the enemy when a squad-sized patrol encountered a well-entrenched enemy force. The Marines knocked out an enemy .50-cal. machine gun and killed four enemy soldiers.

While the squad and a reaction platoon assaulted the enemy flank, the remainder of the company maneuvered toward the NVA position, forcing the enemy to retreat. Artillery and Marine air strikes were also used in routing the enemy from his position.

The action accounted for a total of 35 enemy killed and the capture of four enemy AK-47 rifles.

The company again saw action when it came under attack while searching an enemy bunk-

er complex. Marine jets and artillery were called in, killing 11 of the enemy. One enemy SKS rifle, 77 pounds of explosives and 12 bangalore torpedoes were captured.

Kilo Co., 3rd Bn., 9th Marines got into the action when a night ambush team foiled an enemy plan to launch a surprise ground attack and killed 29 North Vietnamese soldiers during a three-hour battle.

The Marines initiated contact with the enemy from their ambush position and then moved back within their battalion perimeter. The communists immediately launched a ground attack supported by rocket-propelled grenades. Fighting con-

(Continued on Back Page)

Halt Red Supply Buildup

By Sgt. Ken Corbett

DONG HA — Herkimer Mountain, a 4th Marines' reconnaissance-in-force Operation to search out invading North Vietnamese Army forces in the mountainous jungles northwest of Vandegrift Combat Base and to deny the enemy use of infiltration routes, accounted for 108 enemy dead and sizeable caches of communist supplies between May 9 and June 26.

Operation Herkimer Mountain aims at preventing enemy forces from massing attacks against allied fire bases and denying the communists an opportunity to buildup large supply areas in the rugged mountainous jungles of the area.

Elements of the 4th Marines are conducting extensive patrols from mountaintop fire support bases and enemy resistance has been mainly in the form of North Vietnamese Army units moving communist rocket teams in to harass Route 9 and the Marines' Vandegrift Combat Base.

"While conducting extensive patrols over the mountainous terrain in the northwest corner of northern I Corps during Operation Herkimer Mountain, we have made contact with NVA units and called in artillery missions on several communist rocket sites," reported Maj. George X. McKenna, regimental operations officer for the 4th Marines.

In addition to the 108 enemy killed, the 4th Marines captured 7,000 pounds of rice, 25,021 rounds of small arms ammunition, 359 mortar rounds, 27 artillery rounds, 316 rocket rounds, 337 mines, 83 grenades, 1,869 pounds of explosives, 18 individual weapons and 3 crew-served weapons as of June 26.

FROM CG, III MAF

Team Versatility Wing's Trademark

I am impressed with the versatility and the scope of the tactical air missions that are being performed in I Corps by the members of our 1st Marine Aircraft Wing in support of our ground operations, and in this issue of the Sea Tiger, which commemorates the 28th Anniversary of the Wing's activation, I want to tell you something about these far reaching and wide ranging activities.

The 1st Wing has the equipment and the trained personnel required to perform all tasks of a well rounded tactical air arm; and all these tasks are being done, and done well, by our flying Marines. The enormous capability which is built into the Wing includes all the following facets of tactical aviation:

Tactical air command, communications and control facilities which stretch throughout I Corps.

They include forward air controllers, air liaison sections, Direct Air Support Centers, the Tactical Air Direction Center, Air Control Squadrons and Marine Air Traffic Control units which enable us to control and coordinate aviation at all levels of operations.

Offensive air. Fighter and attack aircraft—all with a wide range of ordnance—and rotary wing assault landing craft, team up to provide protection for a troop helilift in the assault, prepare the landing zones, and provide deep and close air support for our troops on the ground. Unique in our attack aircraft, we have the A-6 Intruder, which can deliver bombs with pin-point accuracy in all-weather conditions—day and night.

Rotary-wing. Helicopters give us the mobility we require in the difficult terrain of I Corps. Such jobs as logistic lifts, assault transport, close-in armed protection, emergency resupply and medical evacuation for a wounded Marine, are every day and every hour performances.

Aerial reconnaissance. Reconnaissance, observation and electronics countermeasures aircraft help us find the enemy and direct attack aircraft and other supporting arms in eliminating the threat.

Air defense. 1600 mph F-4 Phantom aircraft and Hawk missiles provide defense against enemy air attack should this materialize.

Logistics. The KC-130's inflight refueling capability allows increased time on station for our fighter and attack aircraft, and greatly increases the amount of continuous close air support that can be provided to ground troops. KC-130 and C-117 aircraft provide logistical lifts and flare drops to help both the Marine in the foxhole and supporting helicopter pilots to see the enemy at night.

I am impressed, too, by the number of developments that have been brought about by our imaginative and resourceful air-ground planners since the Korean conflict. I am talking about such things as the expeditionary airfield with all its components; the radar bombing techniques and equipment which permit bombing under all weather conditions; the logistic hardware necessary to handle the vast quantities of fuel required to keep our planes in the air; and the development of the automated equipment and procedures to insure positive control of all aircraft in an area at any time.

All of these innovations have been used in I Corps by the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing and all have proved to be highly successful developments to air-ground warfare in their combat use.

Marine Aviation has come a long way since the advent of dive-bombing during the Haiti Campaign of 1919, when Marine Lt. Lawson Sanderson discovered that aiming his biplane at the target increased bombing accuracy; or, when another Marine aviator, Christian Schilt, won the Medal of Honor in Nicaragua for flying the first medevac mission under fire. It would have been difficult for the Marines of those days to imagine Marine Corps aviation as it is today.

As exemplified by the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, it is versatile, potent, and hard hitting; and an integral component of our air-ground team which rightfully claims a large share of the credit for the success we have achieved here in I Corps.

LTGEN. HERMAN NICKERSON JR.
Commanding General, III MAF

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Laud 1st Wing Anniversary

On behalf of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, I extend my congratulations to the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing on the 28th anniversary of its activation.

As in years past, you continue to serve with the determination, effectiveness and Esprit de Corps which has characterized your entire history. Assigned a difficult and demanding combat mission as the air arm of III MAF, you have effectively supported U.S. and allied forces with thousands of fighter, attack, reconnaissance, helicopter and transport missions.

You are also to be commended for the 147 sorties flown against the enemy during the attack upon the Thong Duc Special Forces Camp in October 1968. The effectiveness of those sorties contributed significantly in preventing the loss of the camp. Also noteworthy was your part in the coordination and executive of Operation "Meade River," the largest helicopter assault in Marine Corps history, which accounted for more than 1,000 KIA.

In addition, you have devoted your energies to assisting the Vietnamese people through the pacification effort. Your achievements in providing food, clothing, medicine, construction materials and support to refugees, orphanages, schools, have earned you the deep gratitude of the Vietnamese people.

I salute you as worthy members of the United States Team in the Republic of Vietnam and wish you continued success in future operations.

CREIGHTON W. ABRAMS
COMUS, MACV

On behalf of all Marines of the Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, congratulations to the officers and men of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing on the Wing's 28th anniversary, July 7.

The illustrious record of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing is a proud and integral part of Marine Corps history and tradition over the past three decades, and today in Vietnam it is performing a multitude of combat support tasks of a scope unprecedented in military history. Never before have forces engaged in a land war been to depend so completely and so confidently on air support and never before has there been better cause for a deep appreciation of the courage, skill and dedication of the strong right arm of Marine aviation.

All Marines of FMFPac join me in fondest birthday greetings, with best wishes for future success.

LTGEN. HENRY W. BUSE
Commanding General, FMFPac

Twenty-eight years ago at Quantico, Va., the 1st Marine Aircraft wing was established. Since that time thousands of Marines have served under its banner and have helped to establish a proud and honorable heritage.

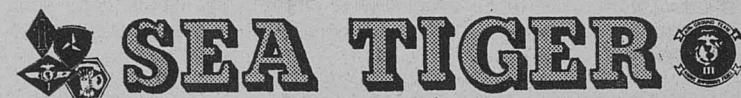
In 23 of the 28 years of service, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing elements have seen duty throughout the vast areas of the western Pacific. Eleven of those years have been in combat—including the many island-hopping campaigns of World War II, the Korean campaign and Vietnam today.

On the eve of this 28th anniversary, the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing has achieved a monumental point in its history. It is the largest Marine aircraft wing ever assembled and its operations encompass every facet of tactical and logistical air power. Each unit is fully dedicated to the success of the air/ground team.

In commemorating this milestone in your glorious history, I take great pride in expressing my congratulations to your command and to all Marines who make the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing the success that it is.

HERMAN NICKERSON JR.
Commanding General, III MAF

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Published each Friday by the III Marine Amphibious Force. The SEA TIGER complies with Marine Corps Order P5600.31 and MCO P5720.44 and is printed with appropriated funds, by The Pacific Stars and Stripes, Tokyo, Japan. The SEA TIGER subscribes to and receives material from the American Forces Press Service (AFPS) whose material herein may be reprinted provided credit and no other copyrights are involved. All photographs are official U.S. Marine Corps Photos unless otherwise credited. Photographs submitted from other sources outside the Marine Corps for publication in The SEA TIGER become the property of The SEA TIGER. Material submitted for publication in The SEA TIGER must reach The Combat Information Bureau, III Marine Amphibious Force, FPO San Francisco, Calif. 96602, on Tuesday of the week preceding publication. Statements, views and opinion expressed in The SEA TIGER are not necessarily those of the Marine Corps and should not be interpreted as directive in nature.

Circulation This Issue 38,000 Copies

Plague Control Gets Shot-in-the-Arm

By Cpl. Dick Frankovich

DA NANG — One of the deadliest diseases in Vietnam is falling off rapidly as U.S. Marines and Navy corpsmen move into its strongholds.

Bubonic plague has taken millions of lives in Asia. With modern medical techniques, however, control of plague is becoming a reality for the Vietnamese.

Frontline fighters of the disease include three U.S. Navy Medical personnel from Marine Force Logistic Command (FLC): Hospital Corpsmen 1st Class Charles Massengill (Ar-

kansas City, Kan.), Don Coons (Springville, N.Y.).

Massengill accompanies two Vietnamese nurses to Phuoc Xuan and Tiep Cu Hamlets, north of Da Nang. On the daily medical civic action patrols held by the civil affairs section of FLC's Supply Bn., Massengill and his Vietnamese counterparts treat simple cuts and bruises, dispense medicine, assure the seriously ill of further medical treatment and coordinate the efforts of the two hamlet chiefs in introducing proper sanitary and hygienic conditions to their people.

Coons and Hill, both serving with Headquarters and Service Bn., volunteered to work on the inoculation team after five people fell to the disease and more cases were reported in the village area. Massengill rounded up vaccine to inoculate everyone in the two hamlets.

The group went into action one morning. By evening, more than 3,000 people in Phuoc Xuan and Tiep Cu had been inoculated against plague.

Massengill, who had a year of intensive medical training in the Navy, commented on his work.

"We heard that some people

died of plague. We had already referred a couple of cases to the Hoa Khanh Children's Hospital, so I decided to inoculate everyone in both hamlets. They are populated mostly by refugees."

The Marine civil affairs team gathered the villagers together and Massengill filled syringes.

The team went into action. The old and the young streamed into the aid station. Babies clung to their sisters and mothers; older men brought grandchildren.

That afternoon the hamlet chief and a male nurse helped

give shots to members of the second hamlet.

Late in that evening, the team inoculated its final villager. A few days later, a U.S. Navy Preventive Medicine Unit would be called into the area. If more shots on a wider scale were needed, their teams would administer them. Tests would be made, and dusting units would spread insecticide to kill the plague-carrying fleas.

Although the "war" against plague has not been won, Marines and Navy corpsmen of FLC have won some battles. END

In Love With Cindy Orphan Adopts New Family

By Sgt. Gary Clark

DA NANG—An 11-month-old Vietnamese girl, orphaned since the first month of her life, gained a father, a mother, brother and a new name June 30. For her new father and family, the day marked the end of many months of work and worry. For the child, it marked the beginning of a long journey to a new home.

Lucia Hoang Thi-Thu Suong, who will be one year old on July 20, was orphaned when both her parents were killed near Hue last July. Her new life began last August when Marine Gy Sgt. Lou T. Deshaies, the assistant operations chief for the 11th Marines, 1st Marine Div., visited the Sacred Heart Orphanage in Da Nang and fell in love.

Strangely enough, Gunny Deshaies, whose wife Joanne and 6-year-old son, Bill, live at 18 Prescott St. in Leominster, Mass., was with another Marine who was adopting a Vietnamese orphan when he first spotted Lucia.

"I started visiting the orphanage regularly just to see her," recalled Deshaies. "I wrote my wife about her, and when I went on rest and recuperation (R&R) leave last December in Hawaii, I showed Joanne pictures of the baby."

With their hearts set on adopting the child, Deshaies and his wife began preparing the necessary paperwork. "First of all, we had to contact the United States Embassy in the Philippines to petition for adoption. Then we had to gather duplicate copies of our marriage license, birth certificates, financial statement, fingerprint cards and other documents."

The sergeant finally submitted the paperwork in February. By that time, Lucian had become a favorite of the nuns and nurses at the orphanage and Deshaies had become a very familiar and frequent visitor there.

"We were setting our hearts on having her accompany me home," smiled Deshaies. "We decided to change her first name to Cynthia and keep Lucia as her middle name."

But the adoption proceedings for Cynthia Lucia Deshaies developed a snag. A new change in the adoption laws required that the adoption contract for the baby be signed by the President of the Republic of Vietnam prior to the child's leaving Vietnam, a process that sometimes requires several months.

"Well, it was June 2 when I found out about the new ruling, and I had only another month remaining in Vietnam." With time getting short, the sergeant wrote his congressman, Rep. Phillip J. Philbin (Dem., 3rd Dist., Mass.), seeking help. Although his congressman couldn't contact the Vietnamese government on his own, he requested the U.S. Embassy contact the Vietnamese government on the Deshaies' behalf.

Finally, Deshaies flew to Saigon on June 17. "I was extremely thankful for all the help I received there. When I arrived, all the paperwork for the baby's adoption decree, visa, passport and her adoption contract had been completed and ready to go."

"I also received the V.I.P. treatment when I manifested myself and the baby for the flight home. The men running the III Marine Amphibious Force Transient Center went out of their way to take care of me, and Cindy Lou was manifested and given her own seat on the flight."

After a night of rest at Deshaies' hut in his company area, Cindy Lou and her new father were scheduled to board their plane for Okinawa. "My wife will meet us in Boston," continued the sergeant. "I know she'd be at a loss for words, and tickled to death if she were here now."

Deshaies, a veteran of 16 years' service in the Marine Corps, and his wife Joanne had tried to adopt a child in 1966 when they were stationed at Camp Lejeune, N. C. "Unfortunately, we couldn't remain long enough in North Carolina to meet the residence requirements," added the sergeant. "We've been married seven years and both my wife and I have always wanted a girl. Now, Cindy Lou is a dream-come-true."

And what does 6-year-old Bill think of getting a new sister? "I'm sure he'd rather have a brother," laughed Deshaies, "but I think he'll love Cindy just the same."

The sergeant and his family, after a brief leave, will move to Fort Sill, Okla., where Deshaies will probably serve as an instructor at the Army's Artillery and Missile School.



An Armful of Future

AFTER MONTHS of work and worry, GySgt. Lou Deshaies holds his young adopted daughter, Cindy Lou, just before leaving the Sacred Heart Orphanage for the flight home to the States. Eleven-month-old Cindy is the Deshaieses' "dream-come-true." (Photo by Sgt. H. Smith)

Success and Ray Benfatti Follow 9th Marines in RVN

By Sgt. Ken Corbett

VANDEGRIFT COMBAT BASE—On March 8, 1965, Leathernecks of 3rd Bn., 9th Marine became the first U.S. ground troops committed to combat in Vietnam as they landed at Red Beach in Da Nang. Among landing Leathernecks was Raymond C. Benfatti (Patterson, N. J.), at that time company gunnery sergeant for "I" Co.

As word of the 9th Marines redeployment from Vietnam was announced recently, Benfatti was again serving with 3/9. This time he is the battalion supply officer and holds the rank of captain. He assumed his present duties recently after 10 months as commander of "L" Co.

"It's a tremendous feeling to participate in such significant moments in the history of this battalion," comments Benfatti, a veteran of 22 years Marine Corps service. "We started the ball rolling here back in 1965 and now the 9th Marines' job in Vietnam is nearing an end."

The primary mission of Benfatti's unit when they arrived in Vietnam was to provide security for the air base at Da Nang. In June 1965, other 9th Marines units landed at Da Nang and the Marines began search and clear operations against Viet Cong guerrillas in the countryside near there.

In comparing the enemy and terrain he faced in 1965 to his current tour in northern I Corps, Benfatti comments: "We fought the Viet Cong in 1965; in northern I Corps I find the situation

quite different. The North Vietnamese soldiers here are well-trained, persistent fighters who resort to brazen tactics at times. The dense mountainous jungles near Vandegrift are more difficult to move in than the lowlands near Da Nang."

During Operation Dewey Canyon north of the Ashau Valley in February, Benfatti was wounded when communist sappers launched a ground attack against Fire Support Base Cunningham. The Leathernecks of "L" Co. repelled the enemy attack and killed 37 communist soldiers.

"I believe the Republic of Vietnam forces are able to continue our efforts after we leave," the captain answered when asked about replacements for the 9th Marines. "We fought alongside Vietnamese Rangers near Da Nang in 1965. Since then they have made great progress in developing a strong fighting force and have been equipped with modern weapons."

After his first tour in Vietnam, Benfatti reported to the 2nd Infantry Training Regt., Camp Pendleton, Calif., where he received a direct commission to second lieutenant. When he was ordered back to Vietnam in 1968, Benfatti requested assignment with the 3rd Bn., 9th Marines and assumed command of "L" Co.

Benfatti's wife, Ann and their seven children currently reside in Oceanside, Calif. "The redeployment of the 9th Marines indicates the progress that has been made out here," concluded Benfatti.



LEATHERNECKS OF "B" Co., 1st Bn., 5th Marines, cross a stream as they push through the "Arizona Territory" northwest of An Hoa in search of the enemy. (Photo by Cpl. G.W. Wright)

Mortarmen Kill 5 Sappers During Close Night Battle

By Cpl. John McGowan

AN HOA — "I knew the North Vietnamese soldiers were close, but I didn't realize just how close until I reached over the rice paddy dike and touched one," said Pfc. Samuel D. Bowen (15616 Vaughn Rd., Brecksville, Ohio) after he and Pfc. Joseph Balutis (1202 Euclid Ave., Whiting, Ind.) killed five NVA sappers attempting to sneak by their position.

Both Bowen and Balutis, as mortarmen attached to Headquarters and Service Co., 1st Bn., 5th Marines, were assigned to assist "C" Co. in the defense of the battalion's night defensive position.

The squad to which they were assigned spent the better part of the day digging deep fighting holes along a rice paddy dike.

All was quiet at the perimeter

until 3 a.m. Then suddenly, mortar and rocket rounds announced an enemy attack.

"When the first mortar rounds hit, Balutis and I manned our fighting hole," said Bowen. "After that, we began to receive heavy fire from enemy soldiers to our front."

As the battle raged on, a Marine at the far end of the defensive line noticed a group of NVA crawling along the dike in front of the Leathernecks' position.

As soon as the NVA were spotted, the word passed to Bowen and Balutis.

"When we received the word of the intruding NVA, we began to toss fragmentation grenades about 15 yards in front of our position," Bowen recounted. "Then suddenly, the Marines in the position next to ours yelled that the NVA were a lot closer than that."

"Sam pulled the pin from a grenade and let the spoon fly," recalled Balutis. "As he reached over the dike to drop the grenade he touched one of the enemy soldiers."

"I'm only glad that the grenade blew up as soon as I dropped it," said Bowen. "Otherwise, we may not have spotted him before he did some damage."

A quick check revealed five dead NVA, a B-40 rocket launcher and several rockets lying in front on the dike.

The Marines concluded that as they were busy concentrating on the enemy towards the front, the five NVA sappers crawled along the dike from a blind side of the defensive perimeter.

"All I know," concluded Bowen, "is that when they get close enough to touch, that's close-in combat."

'Hot Pad' Ready With Air Support For Ground Units

By S. Sgt. John Tolarchyk

DA NANG—"Scramble, scramble!"

Seconds after the call is received, the ready room and flight line at Marine Fighter-Attack Squadron (VMAF) 542 is all activity.

Ground crews begin hooking up external starters to F-4J Phantoms.

Pilots race to their aircraft and radar intercept officers (RIO) get a quick situation brief from Marine Aircraft Group 11's operations section.

Within minutes the RIO is in the back seat of the aircraft and the howling jets taxi down the runway and streak off toward their target.

Manned 24 hours a day, the squadron's "hot pad" is scrambled more than 80 times a month.

Capt. Kenneth L. Crouch (Arlington, Va.) remembers one hectic afternoon: "We were scrambled twice within a two-hour period. The first call came at 2:30 in the afternoon."

Within minutes two Phantoms were airborne, heading for an area south of the demilitarized zone (DMZ).

A Marine OV-10A Bronco observation plane was on the scene as the Phantoms arrived over their target. The Bronco pilot briefed the jet pilots: a 3rd Marine Div. reconnaissance team was taking heavy fire from a North Vietnamese force of unknown size.

The OV-10 pilot then marked the enemy target with a smoke rocket. "He was right on target," declared Crouch. "As soon as we spotted the smoke we began our first run."

"The Bronco pilot reported

that we were taking heavy automatic weapons fire and on the second run we started taking anti-aircraft fire. The rounds were close, but they were going over the cockpit," explained the 27-year-old Marine pilot.

Diving through the heavy enemy fire the third time, the Phantoms expended their remaining ordnance, turned south and headed for home.

Once on the ground and in the hangars, ground crews worked on the planes readying them for their next mission.

First Lt. John W. Council (Heavener, Okla.), an RIO on the first flight, recalled, "About an hour after the first scramble the call was sounded again. When we got 'on station' two A-4 Skyhawks were working the area over. After they headed back to Chu Lai we started making our runs."

The Phantoms made three passes on the target, hitting the mark with deadly accuracy. Their mission completed the Marine jets streaked for the Da Nang Air Base unscratched.

Twenty-four hours a day VMFA-542's "hot pad" is ready; ready to provide support—a vital part of the Marine air-ground team.

Repair Vans Make Runs to Field Units

By Sgt. Frank Fox

DA NANG—Supporting two Marine divisions logistically in combat—especially in the mountains and jungles of Vietnam—can be a difficult task, to say the least.

Marines serving with Maintenance Bn., Force Logistic Command, are geared for the job however. Their mission is to maintain all types of combat weapons and equipment.

One section of Maintenance Bn. is Small Arms Repair, attached to Ordnance Maintenance Co. Its mission is to repair, as rapidly as possible, all infantry weapons ranging from .45-cal. pistols to 106mm recoilless rifles.

Marine units engaged in combat operations throughout I Corps, the Republic's northernmost tactical zone, are seldom able to return to rear staging areas when weapons need servicing or repairing.

So the small arms repair Marines worked out a program to take their repair service to the Marines in the field.

Called "contact" teams, they do just that. A unit taking a temporary pause from combat operations merely requests that a small arms repair team be sent to "contact" them at a given site.

Two or three men in a specially-built van, equipped with work bench, tools, drills and spare parts are sent out to the infantry unit in the field to check each Marine's weapon and make nec-

essary repairs while he waits.

"We hardly get the doors open and we have eight-to-ten hours of work ahead of us," says Cpl. Greg Tobias (3378 Deer Hill Rd., Lafayette, Calif.), a veteran of some 40 contact team trips into the "bush" in the past 11 months.

"These men have a great deal of respect for their weapons and take good care of them," Tobias added. "But continued use under the trying conditions of combat in Vietnam calls for maintenance which the infantryman himself cannot give."

"That's where we come in. We handle all but the most major types of repair work," Tobias continues. "This includes repairs to all types of machine guns, recoilless rifles and the 60 and 81mm mortars."

These Marines supporting Marines and the success with which they meet their challenge could best be summed up by Burnley.

"They really show their appreciation for what we do. It's a great feeling to have your work appreciated, especially when it's by another Marine."

Enemy Stalked By 1/5

By Sgt. Doug Pennington

AN HOA—For the past month in the "Arizona Territory" just southwest of the An Hoa Combat Base, Leatherneck infantrymen of "C" Co., 1st Bn., 5th Marines have been relentlessly stalking — at times chasing — an elusive enemy force.

Now and then the Marines catch up with an element of the enemy force and the enemy has no choice. They fight; and they die. Eighty-six of them have met that fate in small unit contacts with the Charlie (for "C") Co., Marines over the past month. The Leathernecks keep on pursuing. And in the wake of each battle they pick up enemy weapons and ammunition — a recoilless rifle, grenade launchers, AK-47 assault rifles, B-40 rockets.

"These Marines are great... There's no other way to describe them," says veteran GySgt. Jack A. Holmes of Fremont, Ohio. "They trudge the sun-scorched ground in 100-degree-plus temperatures during the day and sleep in muddy paddies at night, but they keep right on going. And they fight like wildcats. My old outfit out here in '66 was good, but these Grunts (Marine slang for infantrymen) are the greatest," claims Holmes.

And GySgt. Holmes believes the enemy would agree with him — at least about the "Grunts" of Charlie Co., 5th Marines fighting like wildcats.

Growing With Time

Chu Lai: Modern Air Complex

By Cpl. John Ehlert

CHU LAI — Four years ago, in June 1965, the first A-4 Skyhawk jets of Marine Aircraft Group 12 touched down here. Within two hours, those same jets were loaded with ordnance and flying combat missions against the enemy.

Today, the Skyhawks of MAG-12 are still landing and taking off on combat missions from Chu Lai.

However, the intervening

years have brought many changes.

Unlike the aluminum expeditionary landing mat that served as a runway for those initial jets in 1965, the Chu Lai air strip is now a 10,000-foot concrete runway. F-4 Phantom jets of MAG-13 also fly combat missions from Chu Lai, as do A-6 Intruders of Marine All Weather Attack Squadron 533.

The mission remains the same — air support for Allied forces

throughout the I Corps Tactical Zone of Vietnam.

Marines at Chu Lai still work in 100-degree heat, monsoon rains, and under the constant threat of enemy mortars and rockets. The tent cities and "C" rations of 1965 have been replaced by well-constructed Southeast Asia huts. Hot chow is now served in modern mess halls.

Elements of the 3rd Marine Div., which provided ground

support and security, have moved north. They've been replaced by the Army's Americal Div. The Seabees are still there, carrying on the joint-service tradition they so well exemplified in the building of Chu Lai Air Base. In a mere 23 days, they had cleared and graded the area; and laid a 3,500-foot aluminum landing mat, complete with catapults and arresting gear. This feat was accomplished despite many problems caused by extremely sandy conditions and intense heat.

After having completed the vital artery air strip in their round-the-clock activity, the Seabees continued construction of the essentials; including a huge tent city, fuel farms and roads. The Navy builders now construct steel hangars, complete with air conditioning.

The hot, dry, sandy waste that was full of cactus, lizards, snakes, mosquitoes, rats and Viet Cong in '65 is still hot, dry and sandy. But the cactus now adorns areas near offices. Lizards are kept as pets. The snakes have fled inland; mosquitoes have been banished by insecticides; rats no longer pose a threat. The Viet Cong have taken to the hills.

Friendly relations exist between Vietnamese and Americans, thanks mostly to the many civic action programs in the Chu Lai area. Schools, hospitals, churches, roads and villages have been built. Weekly medical civic action visits provide the people with regular medical care. The children are familiar with Americans and smile when they see them. They know they are friends.

Chu Lai has progressed beyond even the greatest expectations of those Leathernecks who waded ashore in May 1965 to secure and build an expeditionary landing field for Marine jet attack and fighter aircraft.

They accomplished their mission in less than a month. In the four years since, aircraft of MAG-12 and MAG-13 have continually struck hard at the elusive enemy.

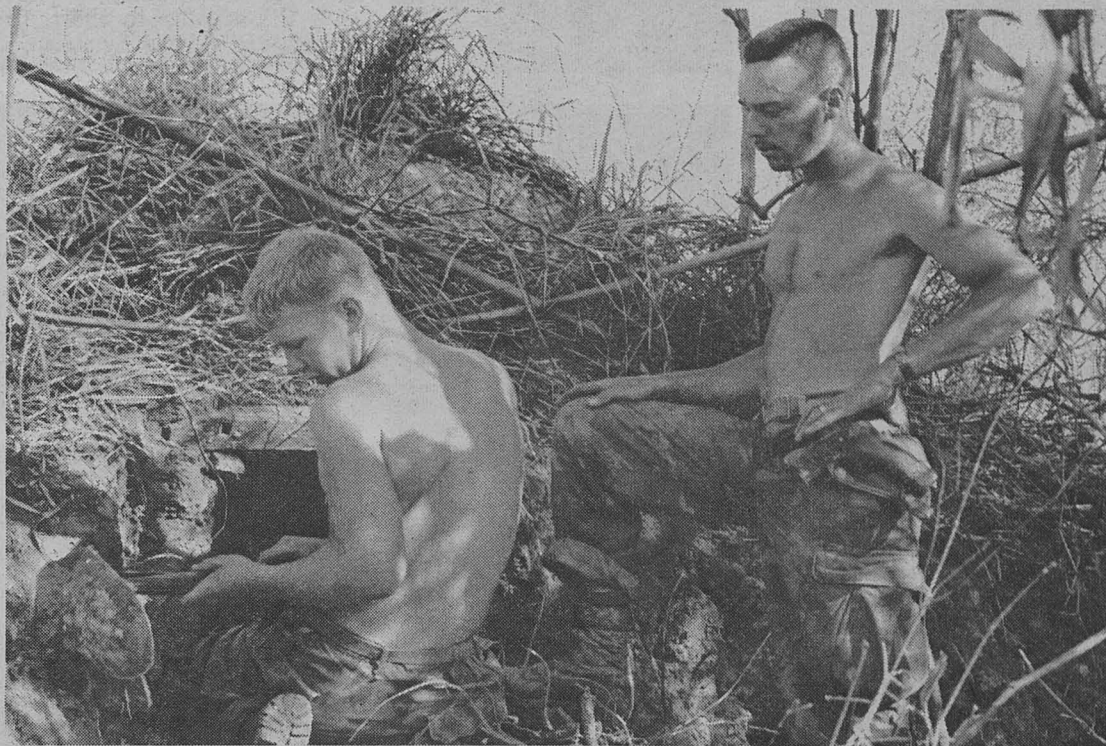
MAG-12 pilots have flown more than 132,000 combat sorties in over 160,000 combat flight hours while dropping more than 232,000 tons of ordnance. MAG-13 pilots, since their arrival in Sept. 1966 have logged more than 57,000 combat sorties in 66,000 combat flight hours. They have dropped more than 80,000 tons of ordnance on Communist forces.

One MAG-12 unit, Marine Attack Squadron (VMA) 311, has set what its pilots believe is a record, with more than 32,000 combat sorties in its A-4 Skyhawks.

A MAG-13 squadron, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314, this year was named winner of the first annual Robert M. Hanson Award as the Corps' top fighter squadron.

The combined effort of the U.S. and Vietnamese forces has driven Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army elements to the hills. From their first major operation, Starlight, which killed 875 Viet Cong in five days, to the recent Dewey Canyon, in northwestern I Corps, called by some officers as the most successful air-ground operation in history, Chu Lai has proven itself a vital base in the Vietnam war.

Those who remember Chu Lai as an aluminum expeditionary air field of 1965 would not recognize the major jet complex that is celebrating its anniversary.



WHILE ON COMBAT OPERATIONS most Marines find it pays to dig-in, but its just the opposite for Pfc. Bill Staggs (left, Salem, Ore.) and SSgt. Lester Boone (New York) members of the 1st Marines. They're digging out enemy weapons caches and hiding places. The two Marines are members of the multi-battalion allied force participating in Operation Pipestone Canyon on Go Noi Island southwest of Da Nang. (Photo by Cpl. J. Volpe)

Former Jockey at FLC

By Pfc. Joe Doyle

DA NANG—A few years ago Danny L. Sorenson's life was the fast-paced, exciting world of professional horse racing. As a jockey, colorful racetracks such as Hialeah and Tropical Park were more than an afternoon's excitement—they were his mailing addresses.

Today, Sorenson's mailing address is changed. He is a Marine lance corporal serving with Force Logistic Command at Camp Books, eight miles northwest of here. During rare free moments, Sorenson (9411 N. 2nd St., Sunny Slope, Ariz.) can be found with his face buried in a sports magazine or talking with friends about his favorite subjects: horses and horse racing.

"I started riding when I was just a kid,"

Sorenson recalled. "My dad was a jockey back in the 1930's, and a trainer after that. By the time I was 13, I was racing at fairs in Minnesota."

When he was 16, Sorenson's father took him to Canada where his career as a professional jockey began. Despite the demands of riding, the youthful jockey continued his studies and successfully completed his high school education.

"A jockey's life is all right," Sorenson says. "It takes a lot of work, long hours and plenty of practice. But it's great because you get to move around a lot, and really see what our country looks like."

In March 1968, Sorenson set aside his promising career and joined the Marine Corps.

"I weighed about 118 pounds when I joined, which is kind of heavy for a jockey. My average riding weight had been about 100 pounds. When I got out of boot camp," Sorenson recalls, "I weighed about 138 pounds. Marine boot camp gives you a big appetite."

With his weight now steady at 140 pounds, the young Marine is undecided on whether to cut his weight down and resume riding as a jockey after his military service, or pursue a career as a trainer.

For now, Sorenson's life sees him traveling mostly on foot as a member of FLC's Provisional Rifle Co. The unit's mission is to provide security for the command's headquarters complex and nearby Vietnamese hamlets.

Plans Laid for Marine to Record Meade River Ballad During R&R

By Cpl. Frank Franzone

DA NANG — A 19-year-old Marine who sings "for just his own enjoyment" is mixing business with pleasure on his Rest and Recuperation (R&R) leave.

LCpl. Christopher Vineyard (Taos, N.M.) made plans to cut a record with a major commercial recording company while on R&R in Hawaii. Vineyard, a radioman with 3rd Bn., 26th Marines, will cut the song dedicated to the men "who lived

and died on Operation Meade River."

Vineyard wrote the song, "The Ballad of Meade River," bit by bit during the operation last fall. "Sometimes after a day's action or whenever I had the urge, I sat down and wrote a few verses," Vineyard explained. "Most of the inspiration came from the things I saw and felt during the day."

After the operation, the young Leatherneck wrote his father in the States, who in turn contacted

several recording companies. Copies of the song were mailed and a few weeks later a representative from one of the companies contacted Mr. Vineyard. Arrangements were made for Christopher to cut the record in Hawaii while on R&R.

"This is the first time I've ever cut a record and I'm just a little nervous about it," Vineyard confessed. "I usually sing just for my own enjoyment or for friends."

Vineyard, who accompanies

himself on the guitar, has had no formal music training. "Another reason for going to Hawaii on R&R was to pick up a new guitar. Mine's pretty beat up after 10 months in Vietnam," he said.

Vineyard hasn't made any definite plans for a music career. "After I cut the record I'll just wait and see what happens. I have to see how well the record sells before I decide on anything definite," he concluded.

1st Wing '69: Chapter 28 Of a Success Story...

By SSgt. P. L. Stacy

DA NANG—Daylight breaks as the first wave of Marine CH-46 Sea Knight helicopters land Leathernecks into recently cleared landing zones.

Several days earlier, Marine A-6A Intruder jets from Da Nang and Chu Lai dropped ordnance on hilltops nearby, paving the way for their seizure as fire support bases. With troops in position, CH-46 and CH-53 helicopters stream in with artillery pieces, supplies and more Marines.

Another Marine infantry battalion is in place. It was helilifted in as a blocking force to cut off enemy retreat.

Overhead, Marine OV-10A Bronco pilot, flying observation support for the lead company, spots an enemy bunker complex and radios warning to advancing Leathernecks.

Although the enemy-held hill is heavily fortified it is believed to be only a holding force to slow down the Marines.

Within a short time, Marine F-4J Phantom and A-4E Skyhawk jets, directed by the Bronco pilot, pound away at the enemy position.

The infantry unit sweeps the area following the aerial bombardment. They meet light resistance—testimony to the effectiveness of the air strikes.

As the cordon tightens, another hazard is encountered. The weather suddenly changes, and the operational area is covered with blankets of clouds. Resupply and medical evacuation missions, which up until now had been hampered by enemy ground fire, face the problem of coping with the "socked-in" weather. However, special flying techniques, developed over the Corps' 22 years of helicopter planning and operations, enable pilots to continue their vital resupply and life-saving medevac missions.

UH-1E Huey gunships, in addition to flying escort missions for the larger helicopters, are called upon frequently to aid ground units with suppressive fire against the enemy when contact is made.

The Marine Corps' newest helicopter gunship, the Cobra, shows its versatility and effectiveness by delivering awesome firepower to protect Sea Knight helicopters engaged in medevac missions.

The Marines begin to close in.

Enemy units find their avenues of escape cut off and they're forced to dig in and meet the oncoming Leathernecks.

Observation aircraft, including the single engine O-1C Birdog, are continually "on station," calling on Marine Phantom and Skyhawk jets whenever and wherever the enemy is spotted.

Resupply continues through even the worst weather. Marine Air Support Radar Team (ASRT) controls para-drops of supplies from helicopters and fixed-wing KC-130F aircraft.

Medevac choppers are guided by the ASRT and make their pick-up's dropping through holes in the overcast.

As the cordon reaches its last notch, the enemy takes final defensive positions, hoping to turn back the bulldozing Marine assault.

Leatherneck artillery and air strikes continue battering enemy positions. The advancing Marines finally break through, capturing large caches of supplies and weapons.

This hypothetical situation is typical of Marine air-ground operations in Vietnam. It is the latest chapter of a story which began 28 years ago—July 7, 1941—with the commissioning of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing at Quantico, Va.

One year after its birth, units of the wing landed at Guadalcanal, providing air support for the 1st Marine Div. in America's first ground offensive of World War II.

Following WWII, the wing was ordered to China.

In 1947, the wing returned to the United States and established headquarters at the Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro, Calif.

But it was once again supporting combat units when hostilities erupted in Korea in 1950. During the Korean war the 1st MAW pioneered the use of helicopter aircraft for vertical envelopment of troops engaged in combat.

The 1st MAW moved to Japan in 1956, establishing bases at Iwakuni, Atsugi and Oppama. Elements later took part in the defense of Taiwan.

Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 362 landed UH-34Ds in Vietnam during April 1962, participating in Operation Shufly. The operation ended March 1965.

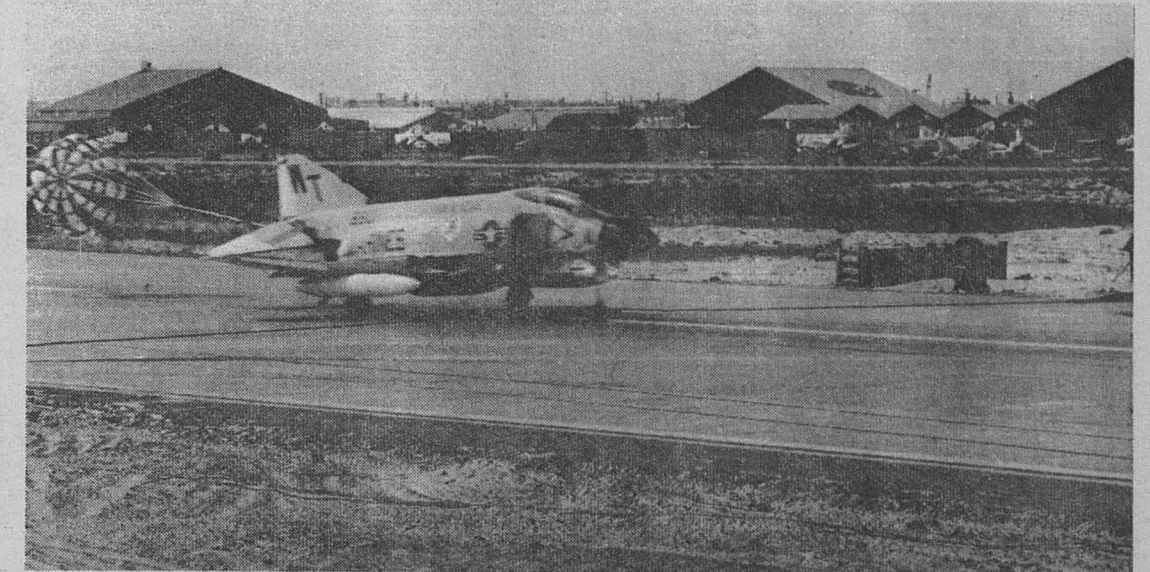
One month later, as F-4B Phantom jets of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 531 arrived, the wing's headquarters was established at Da Nang.

Day by day, page by page, more than 16,000 men and 600 aircraft of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing continue to add to the command's illustrious history.

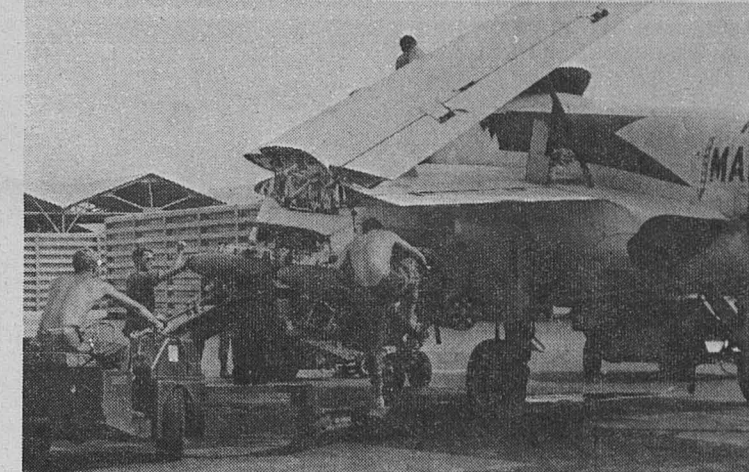


Third Marine Div. Leathernecks disembarked from these 1st MAW CH-46 Sea Knight helicopters in northern I Corps, after kicking off a recent operation aimed at stopping infiltration of North Vietnamese Army units. (Photo by Pfc. W.C. Schobel)

First Lts. Richard J. McSorley (Pittsburgh, Penn.), left, and John A. Morrison (Poughkeepsie, N.Y.), radar intercept officers with Attack Squadron 542, race to their F-4 Phantoms being scrambled off the "hot pad," manned 24 hours a day. (Photo by SSgt. John Tolarchyk)



An F4J Phantom of Marine Fighter-Attack Squadron 232 touches down at Chu Lai, marking the 25,000th arrested landing made on the M-21 and E-28 arrestment gear at the southern I Corps Base. (Photo by Cpl. E.B. Willis)



Ordnance personnel of Marine All-Weather Attack Squadron 533, Chu Lai, check an A-6A Intruder jet prior to its departure on a combat mission. (Photo by Cpl. E.B. Willis)

Wing's Eye-in-the-Sky, a twin-engine OV-10A Bronco proves itself to be a valuable asset to Marine infantrymen. One of the more recent additions to the air arsenal, the Bronco earns its bread and butter with pinpoint reconnaissance and target-marking capabilities. (Photo by Pfc. W.C. Schobel)



LCpl. Robert M.E. Dunn (Grand Rapids, Mich.), a gunner with HMM-263, stands ready to fire his .50-cal. machine gun during a recent Marine helilift south of Da Nang. (Photo by GySgt. R.T. Jordan)

Morale Boosted By 7 1/2 Feet

By Cpl. Terry Sollenberger

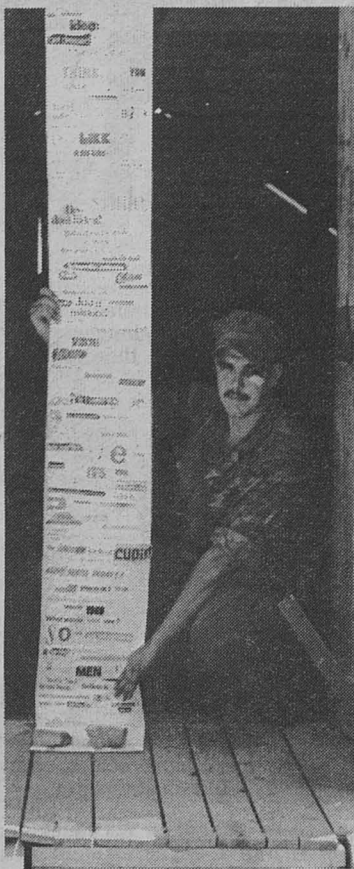
CUA VIET—Letters received by Marines in Vietnam are a real morale booster and when Sgt. Richard Bostard Jr. (Apollo, Pa.) received a very unusual letter he stirred curiosity among his fellow Leathernecks in the 1st Amphibian Tractor Bn. at Cua Viet.

The excitement was understandable because, after all, how many Marines can say they have received a 7½-foot letter?

Bostard received the unusual letter from Miss Mary Teremi, a college student from Owosso, Mich., who later explained the details behind her 7½-foot masterpiece in a conventional letter.

"It took six hours of pasting, writing, clipping and snipping to make the letter," she explained. "I had to glue ten sheets of typing paper together. Then I added lots of clippings and did a little of my writing to get the end results."

However, receiving such a letter has posed one problem for Bostard. "How do you write an answer to a 7½-foot letter?" asked the young Marine.



Bostard with Letter

Helmet Bears Full Brunt Of Enemy Rocket Attack

By Cpl. Frank Franzone

DA NANG — The steel combat helmet worn by Marines in Vietnam is one of the most useful pieces of gear a Marine possesses.

Helmets are sat upon, shaved in and cooked in. They are used to carry things in and for any of a hundred other uses. They also save lives. Pfc. Mike Henry (53 S. Hermitage, Trenton, N.J.), can testify to that.

Henry, a member of the 1st Shore Party Bn. Helicopter Support Team (HST) here, was with "B" Co., 1st Bn., 5th Marines on an operation in "Arizona Territory," south-southwest of Da Nang.

He was rudely awakened one night as enemy rockets came screaming into the compound. Grabbing his rifle, he headed for the nearest bomb crater, some 25 yards from where he had been sleeping.

As he lay in the bomb crater, he remembered that in his haste he had forgotten to bring his flak jacket and helmet.

"I made a mad dash after the rockets stopped," Henry explained. "I had just put my helmet and flak jacket on when an

explosion knocked me down."

As Henry got up, he checked himself over. Incredibly he was not wounded. Henry brushed himself off and headed back to the crater, where he would spend the rest of the night.

As the sun came up, Henry crawled out of the bomb crater. It was then that he noticed his helmet. "As I crawled out of the bomb crater, my helmet fell off. I looked at it and couldn't be-

lieve what I saw," said Henry.

Indented in Henry's helmet were three holes, each approximately the size of a quarter. Around the holes were scratches and marks. The camouflage canvas cover was shredded on one side.

Henry remarked, "That was just a little too close. I hate to think what my head would have looked like if I hadn't been wearing my helmet."

Full Blooded Marine Rides Trail in Nam

By Cpl. Trygg Hansen

QUANG TRI—When Cpl. Clifton Ami arrived in the Republic of Vietnam, he switched from bucking bulls and bronco busting to riding "trail" on "rough-rider" convoys along dusty highways of northern I Corps.

Back in Parker, Ariz., near his present home on the Hopi Indian Reservation, Ami was a rodeo cowboy competing throughout the western United States. Today in

Vietnam, as a section leader with 7th Motor Transport Bn., Force Logistic Command, the full-blooded Hopi-Tewa Indian rides "trail" or rear command vehicle on convoys from the battalion headquarters at Quang Tri west to Vandegrift Combat Base and south on National Highway 1 to Da Nang.

Reflecting on his 12 years of rodeo competition, Ami noted, "Both jobs involve plenty of dust; but here, you have more responsibility."

As a section leader in 1st Plt., C Co., Ami handles jobs critical in the running of transport convoys and the hauling of vital combat supplies.

Riding "trail" on supply convoys is Ami's latest job since his recent promotion to corporal. Keeping the convoy together, supervising emergency breakdown maintenance along the road and coordinating the convoy's progress by radio with the convoy commander are all a part of his new position.

When Ami says that his job is a 24-hour-a-day responsibility, he isn't kidding. Looking after his section's troops, trucks and training keeps the 21-year-old Leatherneck hustling from morning to night.

A former semi tractor-trailer driver and .50-cal. machine gunner, Ami knows what he's talking about when instructing his men on the maintenance of their five-ton trucks and trailers and

the use of the machine gun.

Acknowledged as having one of the best sections in the company, Ami stresses individual responsibility with his men and their machines.

"When you put a private first class in charge of a \$10,000 vehicle with a full load of cargo, he's got quite a job and he must be mature enough to handle the responsibility," stressed Ami.

Like many Marines serving here, Ami is looking to the future and making plans.

After graduation from Parker High School in 1966, Ami worked in the Keans County Hospital pharmacy and rode the rodeo circuit on weekends.

"During the summer I toured full time with the rodeo," he continued, "but I enjoy pharmacy work and plan to return to a similar job when I return home."

In preparation for advancement and a better job, the bronco-rider-turned-Leatherneck is currently picking up college credits in chemistry and physics through correspondence courses. His future plans include entering either pharmacy or medical school at a Colorado or Arizona university.

For Cpl. Clifton Ami, many a dusty road lies ahead before that time comes. Meanwhile, he is vitally concerned with convoy, the men in his section and their vehicles.



LCPL. LARRY D. LUCK (Dearborne Heights, Mich.) fills his canteens with cool, clear water while on patrol 12 miles south-southwest of Da Nang with "India" Co., 3rd Bn., 5th Marines. The canteen water is purified with halizone tablets to ensure contamination free drinks.

(Photo by Sgt. D.E. Kramer)

War Zone's Lasting Impressions

By Pfc. Joe Doyle

DA NANG — During one's life, many are the sights and sounds that inbed themselves in the canals of the mind.

Marines of the Force Logistic Command (FLC), headquartered at Camp Books, eight miles northwest of Da Nang, are bombarded daily with sights and sounds that stir one's mind, senses and imagination.

Camp Books is the scene of a myriad of bustling activity. To fulfill FLC's arduous mission of supplying all U.S. Marines operating in I Corps, Marines and machines work day and night.

Huge forklift vehicles carry a seemingly endless array of crates from arrival to storage to transport. As often as the large metal hulks roll by, one cannot fail to marvel at the sight of the versatile two-pronged mechanical monster.

At the Truck Co. area of Camp Books, eyes and ears are constantly exposed to a veritable symphony of activity.

Large, powerful engines are tuned, emitting roars that boast of energy. Trucks are loaded to the brim with supplies, and they line up behind one another to form up for convoys delivering goods to Marines in the field.

And then the roll — pouring forth in a rushing stream of sturdy vehicles, over the winding, dusty and mountainous roads of Vietnam.

As truck convoys surge through the countryside, the sky above is also FLC's domain.

Members of Air Delivery Platoon are in the air, dropping supplies by parachute to friendly troops in isolated portions of I Corps. At night, "flarebirds" with air delivery Marines hover contin-

uously, prepared to illuminate the night to flush the enemy before the ready sights of Marine riflemen below.

However, all the sounds are not those of whirring machines, and steel against steel.

A Leatherneck looks beside him. There stands 90 pounds of dynamite with a wagging tail, a panting tongue, and a heart full of love. The Marine is a scout or sentry dog handler; the dog is as gentle as a snowflake to his master only.

The sight of the man-canine team bears a different meaning to different people.

To a Marine in combat a scout dog and his handler are a welcome sense of security. They detect enemy ambushes. To the enemy, the sight of a sentry dog, fangs bared and charging towards him, is instant terror.

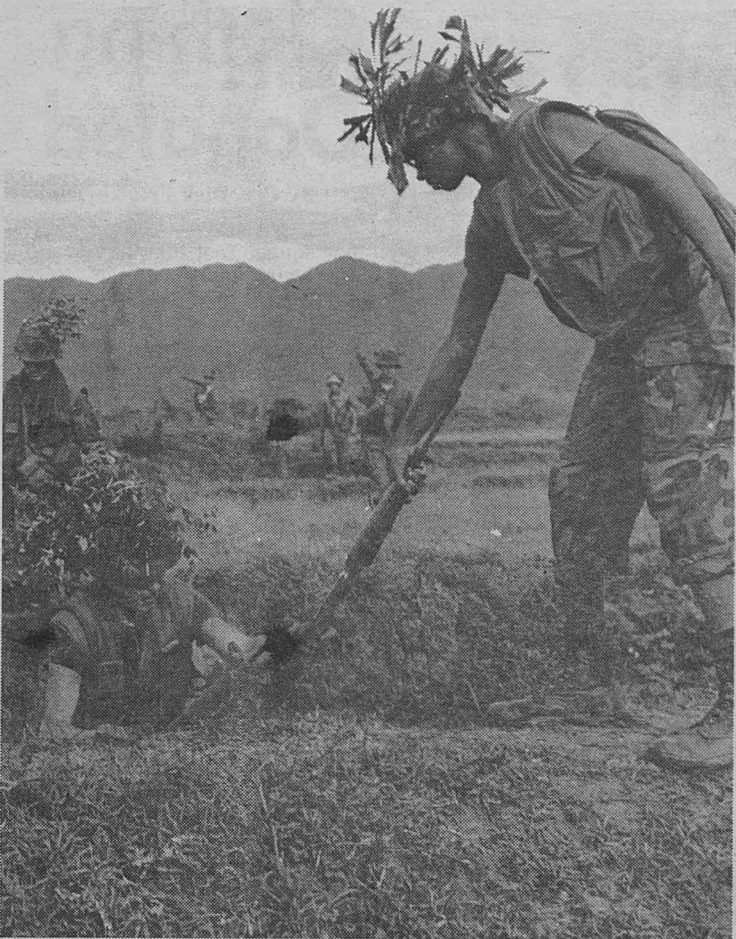
Yet, as prepared as FLC Marines are to fight and support combat activity, there are still older sights and sounds with perhaps greater meaning: Civil Affairs.

No sight in Vietnam is more appealing than that of a smiling Vietnamese child, no sound more pleasant than his or her laughter.

No experience is more rewarding than helping an aging Vietnamese farmer bring in his harvest of rice.

No reward for one's efforts surpasses that of seeing a merging nation gain the confidence and knowledge to stand tall among other free nations of the world.

The Marine Force Logistic Command has some 10,000 Leathernecks giving their unselfish all for their country's interests in Vietnam.



SSGT. TERRANCE E. DUNN (Huntsville, Ala.), a platoon sergeant with "B" Co., 1st Bn., 5th Marines, gets a hand from LCpl. Norris I. Branham (1340 S. Dover St., Philadelphia, Pa.) as he climbs over a rice paddy dike three miles northwest of An Hoa. The Marines are searching for an elusive enemy force sighted by aerial observers. (Photo by Cpl. G.W. Wright)

Damaged Weapons Out of Use for Minimum Time

By Capt. D. G. Menely

DA NANG — On a mountaintop near the Laotian border in the Republic of Vietnam, a group of Marine artillerymen are confronted with a serious problem. The firing mechanism on one of their artillery pieces is broken.

Grinding along a narrow gravel road, a Marine tank hits a land mine, dismantling one of its huge tracks and damaging the suspension system.

A Marine mortar team is set up in the field. Night has fallen. Suddenly the mortar team begins receiving enemy small arms fire. The sighting mechanism on their mortar tube is hit and the weapon is out of action.

As soon as they are notified, repairmen from Ordnance Maintenance Co., Force Logistic Command, are on their way to that mountaintop by helicopter; maneuvering a big tank retriever to haul the disabled tank back to Da Nang; or replacing the damaged mortar sighting mechanism with a new one.

"We handle roughly 1,500 damaged ordnance items each month," explains Capt. K.L. Carter (Oceanside, Calif.), commander of the maintenance unit.

"We do major repair work on all Marine infantry weapons, artillery and tracked vehicles. And we also do optics work for binoculars, high-powered rifle scopes and range finders.

"If you bring an infantry weapon or artillery piece for repair one morning, we can have it back to you late that afternoon," Carter continued. "The tanks take a little longer, but usually not more than three days."

The company is capable of repairing all types of ground ordnance items. Those requiring a complete rebuild are shipped to the United States for rehabilitation at one of the two Marine supply and repair centers: Barstow, Calif. or Albany, Ga.

In order to provide rapid repair service for Leathernecks in the field, Ordnance Maintenance Co. has a number of highly-trained specialists.

"There are five types of tracked vehicle mechanics who work on tanks, personnel carriers, anti-tank vehicles and self-propelled guns," says Carter. "We also have men who specialize in turret repair. The infantry weapons specialists

work on everything from .22-cal. rifles to the 106mm recoilless rifles."

Artillery mechanics, after 12 weeks of schooling can repair everything from the 4.2-inch mortar to the 175mm self-propelled gun.

Range finders, binoculars, computers and any other piece of optics related to ordnance is repaired by the maintenance company.

"Everything from nuts and bolts to major replacement items on tanks can and are made by our machinists and welders," reports Carter.

"We can repair it here in our shop or go to the fire support base and repair the item there. Contact teams are sent out almost continuously to units in the bush," he continued. "If needed, we send out large tank retrievers to bring vehicles back in."

In addition to supporting the 1st Marine Div., the company supports the Republic of Korea Marines and, on occasion, units of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam. Korean Marines are even being trained as small arms repairmen by the FLC infantry ordnance repairmen.

LSA Gets Supplies To Marines in Bush

By Pfc. Romeo Garza

DA NANG—From dream sheets to zone briefs, helicopters to forklifts. It's all in a day's work for the Marines of the 1st Shore Party Bn. at Camp Muir.

The Logistic Support Area (LSA) supports the 7th Marines with supplies to the infantry units in the "bush" and fire support bases miles from any supply point. It is operated by the men of "C" Co., 1st Shore Party Bn.

For these Marines the day begins with a "dream sheet." It is given to the helicopter pilots and provides them with information about the units they will be resupplying. On the sheet are the call sign, name of the fire support base, elevation of the hill, the frequency used to call the unit, and the grid coordinates.

When the chopper comes in for a resupply the pilot is given a certain number from the control tower. He then checks his sheet and finds all the information needed to accomplish his mission.

As the chopper nears the unit in the field he is given a "zone briefing." This gives him information he needs to come in and drop the nets loaded with supplies. The Helicopter Support Team (HST) in the field handles this portion of the resupply.

"It's a very efficient and smooth operation," remarked 2nd Lt. D. L. Wright (Rt. 2, Okeene, Okla.) commanding officer of the LSA. "During Operation Oklahoma Hills we handled over 3,500 tons of supplies."

"Here in the rear, the supplies are brought in by trucks and are set off at the landing zone (LZ) to be separated by the battalion representatives. The supplies are then placed in a specified area for each battalion and again separated into categories of supplies that must go to their companies in the field."

"The supplies are then moved onto the LZ by forklifts and placed on nets ready to be helilifted out to the infantry unit. Everything is marked on the individual battalion's "dream

sheet" so that we will know what goes where and who gets what," continued Wright.

"There are times when the job of the LSA man is dangerous," added 1st Lt. W.L. Carter (Rt. 3, Denison, Texas) commanding officer of "A" Co., "One is when we get an emergency resupply at night when we have to move the supplies onto the LZ in the dark. The hardest part is for the man that stands under the chopper and tries to hook the nets to it as it hovers some six feet off the ground. For the pilot it is a tricky operation too because he can't see how close he is to the ground."

Another tough job is that of the HST man out with the unit who has to direct the chopper at night. If there is a firefight going on or if there are snipers in the area, one man stands on the LZ with two flashlights signaling the pilot in.

"We try to place the men where they like to work. If they like to work in the 'bush' that is where they go," continued Carter. "The men have performed their jobs professionally and quite successfully. What has made our job easier is the complete cooperation we get from the 7th Marines."

Along with supporting the 7th Marines, HST men also work with the 51st Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) Regt. Wright has trained eight ARVN soldiers on HST maneuvers as well, to help smooth out their system of helicopter resupply.

Engineer Constructs Plow For Vietnamese Farmers

By Cpl. Rob Straub

DONG HA—The experience gained working on a farm back home was put to good use here by a Marine from the 11th Engineer Bn.

The engineer battalion received a request from the 3rd Maine Div. Civil Affairs section to construct a plow to be attached to a farm tractor villagers in Cam Vu west of Dong Ha had just received.

This unusual request had many of the Marine engineers at a loss on where to begin until Sgt. William Sepe (Pleasant Valley, N.Y.) learned of the problem. Sepe, who has lived on a farm most of his life, promptly came up with several magazines on farm equipment and, with his knowledge gained on the farm, he began formulating plans for the new plow.

"The metal plow is basically the same type I used on the farm back home in New York," commented Sepe, "except for a few modifications necessary to attach it to the old tractor."

It took Sepe about five days to construct the plow in his battalion's welding shop. The new plow now enables the Vietnamese farmers at Cam Vu to plant more crops in less time than they could with a water buffalo and a wooden plow.

After the plow was presented to the villagers, Sepe accompanied a Civil Affairs team to the village to see how well it did the job.

"It was great to be able to help these people and I really enjoyed the chance to visit with them and to see how they farm their land," Sepe concluded.

SGT. SEPE EXPLAINS the construction of the new steel plow to a Vietnamese. Below, farmers west of Dong Ha watch in amazement as the plow and tractor till their fields.

(Photos by Cpl. Robb Straub)





TANKS FROM "B" CO., 1st Tank Bn., move out with the point element of "E" Co., 2nd Bn., 1st Marines, on Operation Pipestone Canyon. Pipestone Canyon is a multi-battalion operation designed at opening the final portions of Route 4, while at the same time clearing enemy forces from the "Dodge City"-Go Noi Island area 12 miles south of Da Nang. (Photo by Sgt. D.E. Kramer)

Clothing Donated

By Cpl. Dick Frankovich

DA NANG — "More smiles per square foot than any area in Southeast Asia."

That was the consensus among Marines at the Hoa Khanh Children's Hospital, eight miles northwest of here.

The smiles were the result of a one-man "smile team" and an active church congregation back in the United States. Marine SSgt. Charles Dinkins Jr. (700 Small Ave., Selma, Ala.) and the congregation of the Lauderdale Avenue First Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn., were responsible for providing the hospital with more than 150 pounds of clothing and toys.

"Kids are the most important product here," said Dinkins. "Like kids anywhere they deserve a break."

Part of that break was Dinkins' delivery of 25 boxes of gifts collected in Memphis and donated to the hospital.

The delivery was like a Christmas party for the ward of recuperating youngsters. There is little joy for a child in a hospital bed, but with unopened packages full of goodies, the day turns into a marathon of laughter and excitement.

Dinkins' father, Dr. Charles Dinkins Sr., leader of the Memphis congregation, is responsible for coordinating the Stateside effort.

After receiving one of his son's letters telling of the hospital and its work, Dr. Dinkins and his congregation responded with a steady flow of clothing and toy shipments.

1st Div. Marines Stack Arms For 2 Days at Recreation Area

By Sgt. Gary Clark

DA NANG — The young Marine vaulted from the truck and hit the ground on the run. With legs and arms pumping like pistons he raced past a string of barbed wire and traveled across 20 yards of blistering white sand and crashed to the ground. He rolled twice and took a wary look around.

"Good," he thought. "The rest of my squad is right behind me."

Suddenly, he jumped to his feet and with the cry, "Last one in goes for beer," disappeared into the blue-green surf of the South China Sea.

Beer? Now, that doesn't sound right for a battlefield scene, does it? Actually, the Marine and his squad are all members of "G" Co., 2nd Bn., 5th Marines, the first company to attend the 1st Marine Division's new stand-down center, "Stack Arms."

Designed to give two days of rest and relaxation to weary division infantrymen, the center is located on the beach inside the 3rd Amphibian Tractor Bn. compound near Marble Mountain, five miles southwest of here. A haven of peace, sun, sand and water for 48 hours, it's one of the few real breaks Marine "grunts" get from their difficult and dangerous job of fighting a war.

Pfc. Vernon Jimerson (Carthage, Ark.) has been in Vietnam for three months, and had just returned with "G" Co. from 92 days in the "bush." "It's so great here, it's hard to put how we feel into words. We're left completely on our own, with no formations, no duties to perform and no guard duty. I think the thing I like most, however, is being allowed to sleep as late as we want while we're here."

The center is maintained by a permanent staff assigned from various division units. GySgt. Richard Vain, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the center, has the job of keeping the troops supplied with everything they need.

"The companies arrive about noon on their first day," said Vain. "They remain all night, the next day and night, and leave about noon on the third

day. The first thing we do when they arrive is issue each man a pair of shorts, a sweatshirt, shower shoes and a hat. We then take the uniform they have on, have it laundered, and return it to them within 24 hours."

From the moment the troops arrive, the word at the center is "Whatever you want, you get." Recreation facilities include a beach, volleyball, softball, football, boat rides, and snorkeling. Two different recreation rooms, open 24 hours a day, offer television, ping pong, letter writing materials and dozens of games.

Two first-run movies are shown each night and each company sees a USO show during its stay. The beach is open from 6:30 a.m. to dark and there is plenty of free beer and soda.

Chow, one thing dear to the heart of any self-respecting Marine, is unbeatable. Breakfast is served at the 3rd Amtrac Bn. mess hall. Then, from noon until 6 p.m., a cookout is held on the beach, offering a menu that varies from steak and hamburgers to chicken and hotdogs.

In addition, tape recorders, Polaroid cameras and transistor radios are available for the troops to use during their stay. Two phones connect the center with two Military Affiliate Radio Stations (MARS) in Da Nang. A third phone will be installed shortly, giving the center the capability of providing phone calls to families at home.

"It's fantastic! There's just no other word for it," exclaimed Pfc. Grant Beeney (170 Williams St., New York, N.Y.), another "Golf" Co. Marine. "We're free to do anything we want. The quarters are comfortable and the personnel running the place are terrific guys. Above all, I think, I enjoy the rest I'm getting. We've got comfortable cots, with clean sheets and pillowcases! How can you beat that?"

The center was built by the 1st Engineer Bn. of the 1st Marine Div. The engineers hauled 22 sea-buts nearly eight miles to the center and built six more. They built an outdoor stage and screen, a 3,000-gallon water tank on a tower to provide the troops with showers, two life-guard towers on the beach, 15 picnic

tables, a shower unit; installed the electrical system and built a mile of road. All in only 19 days.

The troops were encouraged to think up a name for the new stand-down center and decided on "Stack Arms," a phrase

which expresses their enjoyment and appreciation of the place. As one of the few areas in Vietnam where the troops can relax and unwind during their tour, it's sure to become a favorite of the Marine "grunts."

Aspiring Cartoonist Extends Overseas to 'Paint' Vietnam

By Pfc. Joe Doyle

DA NANG — Vietnam is a world apart from the wistful shores of Cape Cod, Mass. Yet both regions have been an important source of inspiration for LCpl. Peter J. Koutrouba (231 Carwell St., Marchfield, Mass.).

Koutrouba is an air freight operations man serving here with Force Logistic Support Group Alpha, a unit of Force Logistic Command (FLC).

The young Marine, also an artist, voluntarily extended his overseas tour of duty while on

Okinawa to serve in Vietnam to draw and paint in his spare time.

Koutrouba can also be found with a sketchbook and pencils regardless of where he is. He also carries a camera and when he sees a scene he'd like to paint, in oils or watercolor, he photographs it and recreates it later.

Whenever possible, he visits the Hoa Khanh Children's Hospital at FLC's headquarters site just northwest of here.

The young Vietnamese patients gather around, as he draws cartoon characters, clowns or sketches of the children themselves.

"I love children," said Koutrouba. "Maybe it's because I don't want to grow old myself. I'll just stay around and play with the kids for awhile."

The Massachusetts Leatherneck first became interested in art when he was a youngster.

"I've been drawing all my life," he commented. "Ever since I was big enough to scribble on the walls at home."

Although he has never had any formal professional art training, his drawings and paintings have a flair. He attributes much of his knowledge to short art courses and related subjects he studied in high school.

Koutrouba hopes to resume his art education when he completes his service and aspires to be a cartoonist.

"A guy can do pretty well drawing cartoons," he said, "although some have only made 'peanuts.'"



KOUTROUBA VISITS a young friend at Hoa Khanh Children's Hospital.

Sea Tiger Mail Bag

(Cont. From Page 2)

Karen Webber
23 Argyle St.
Pinehurst, Mass. 01866
Age 18

Madilene Kuhn
3040 Magliocco Dr., No. 16
San Jose, Calif. 95128
"Over 25"

Pat Nunez
2317 Laplace St.
Chalmette, La. 70043
Age 21

Janet Eberle
711 Gardenia Dr.
North Little Rock, Ark. 72117

Lil Warren
61 Cook St.
Pinehurst, Mass. 01866

Claire Narkuvich
Dianne Narkuvich
11 Central Ave.
Burlington, Mass. 01803

Joyce Vanderzee
7825 Yorktown Pl.
L.A. Calif. 90045

Debbie Wachsmith
Sunset Dr.
Kalispell, Mont. 59901
Age 16

Jane Sommerfield
Rt. 1
Kalispell, Mont. 59901
Age 16

Sharon Stellrecht
13781 Riata St.
Garden Grove, Calif. 92641
Age 15

Jeanne Hamilton
Mashua Rd.
Billerica, Mass. 01862
Age 17

Romona Lindaman
Rural Route 1
Parkersburg, Iowa 50665

Linda Gauer
15625 E. Doublegrove
La Puente, Calif. 91744
Age 17

Lucy Mae Licette
Grand Caillou Rte. 6
Box 930
Houma, La. 70360

Carol Bianchini
1951 Colden Ave.
Bronx, N.Y. 10462

Marilyn Boomgarden
Rural Route 1
Ackley, Iowa 50601

Nicole Jurjevic
53-46 211 St.

Bayside, N.Y. 11364
Patti McGill
4332 N. Mason
Chicago, Ill. 60634

Janet Paterson
4718 N. Kelso
Chicago, Ill. 60630

Kathy Cangemi
43-41 Murray St.
Flushing, N.Y. 11355

Eileen Daly
190 B. 114 St.
Rockaway Pk.
Queens, N.Y. 11694

Ellen Poggioli
1945 Colden Ave.
Bx., N.Y. 10462

Gwen Rospierski
Taylor Towers, Rm. 407
Ohio State Univ.
Columbus, Ohio 43201

Sandy Johnson
7501 Denrock Ave.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90045

Conny Lawie
323 Ward St.
Marine City, Mich. 48039

Vicky Pack
504 Holland St.
Marine City, Mich. 48039

Judy Kupstis
3541 Hawthorn
Franklin Park, Ill. 60131
Age 18

Maribeth Ciarniello
Goetz Hall, Box 544
415 Straight St.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219
Age 18

Gail Meirose
Goetz Hall, Box 558

415 Straight St.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219
Age 18

Dru Fritzsche
Goetz Hall, Box 550
415 Straight St.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219
Age 21

Nellie Langley
Age 16
Betty Langley
Age 18
Rt. 1, Box 90
Dorsey, Miss. 38840

June Newman
33 McMahon St.
Willooighby N.S.W. 2068
Australia
Age 21

Barbara Newlin

211 S.E. Granger
Des Moines, Iowa
Age 21

Denise Doyle
50 Whipple Rd.
Billerica, Mass. 01821
Age 16

Karen Hicks
R.D. 1
Weedville, Pa. 15868

Amber Ann Baumbach
608 So. Main St.
P.O. Box 36
Monona, Iowa 52159
Age 21

Debra Blanton
775 Kenmore Dr.
Spartanburg, S.C. 29303

Connie Sponsler
9123 Stevens Ave. So.
Bloomington, Minn. 55420

Debbie Carney
Rt. 6, Box 314
Houma, La. 70360

Donna Sprusansky
Age 20
Vicky Testa
Age 19
Aggie White
Age 18
Kathy Welch
Age 19
Debbie Follamsbee
Age 19
Jucy Hiscock
Age 22
New England Baptist Hospital
91 Parker Hill Ave.
Boston, Mass. 02120

Bunny Mains
311 Lindbergh Dr.
Prescott, Ariz. 86301
"22 & up"

Cynthia Carroll
1288 Pembroke St.
Uniondale, L.I., N.Y.

Sue Green
1808 Shubel
Lansing, Mich. 48910
Age 20

Sandy Skarr
4523 W. 84th
Chicago, Ill. 60652

Debbie Stedham
8632 So. Karlov
Chicago, Ill. 60652

Bonny Loeffler
1A Banks St.
Somerville, Mass. 02144
Age 15

Jean Laeffler
1A Banks St.
Somerville, Mass. 02144
Age 17

Gloria Delgado
3925 Guardia Ave.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90032
Age 19

Cherlyn Hawley
6351 W. 79th St.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90045

Susan Trzeciak
5141 W. Hutchinson
Chicago, Ill. 60641

Nancy Curtiss
9563 S. Prospect Ave.
Chicago, Ill. 60643
Age 18

Connie Ellis
452 Hanover Ave.
Allentown, Pa. 18103
Age 15

Janet Wallace
5650 Lawndale Place
Cincinnati, Ohio 45212
Age 23



SITTING IN THE MIDDLE of a virtual dustbowl on Go Noi Island, Pfc. Carl Witherspoon (764 Gresham St., Washington, D.C.) pauses to clean his M-16 rifle. (Photo by Cpl. G.W. Wright)

HST Final Link In Supply Chain

By Cpl. Larry White

DONG HA—You'll find them with infantry companies in the field and on fire support bases throughout northern I Corps.

They are helicopter support teams (HST) of the 3rd Shore Party Bn., and are the final link in the vast effort to bring supplies to 3rd Marine Div. Leathernecks operating in the mountainous terrain south of the DMZ.

With each unit in the field there is a two-man radio-equipped team that has undergone extensive training. These Marines have the know-how needed to bring a helicopter into a landing zone, be it for resupply or emergency medical evacuation.

HST Marines attend a four week school at Camp Lejeune, N.C., where they are taught procedures for directing choppers into the landing zone, how to brief the pilot from the ground concerning enemy and friendly situations, and the best avenue of approach and departure. They also receive classes in demolitions and handling explosives.

Upon arriving here and before their assignment to field units, the men receive another month of training at one of the three Logistic Support Activities (LSA) operated by the 3rd Shore Party Bn. They are taught the newest procedures in radio, how to hook up the cargo nets and external loads and how to prepare artillery pieces and heavy earth moving equipment for helicopter transport to the field.

Cpl. Edward R. Brewer (Long Beach, Miss.) has been with shore party for 13 months and has directed helicopters into all types of landing zones hacked out of the jungle undergrowth by Marine infantrymen.

"It is with the small landing zones that my job is most rewarding," said Brewer. "When we build a zone, the company is really in need of resupply or a medevac mission."

It is up to the HST men to direct the engineers in building the zone. They provide the dimensions needed for the helicopter to land. If there is not enough room on the hilltop for choppers to set down, the team indicates what trees to be cut down so that external supplies may be lowered to the ground.

"After the zone is cleared it is our job to direct the 'bird' into the zone. We have a variety of methods to use — smoke, hand signals, or if the weather is bad and we cannot see the bird, we direct him by radio using the sound of his engines," said Brewer.

"I remember when we were on Fire Support Base Neville and

had been socked in by the weather for a week. Every time a 'bird' would try to land it couldn't get past the heavy fog and overcast. We needed the supplies, so I told the pilot he could fly up a valley to the base of the mountain and then follow up the side of the hill to the zone. He radioed back he would try and about five minutes later we could hear him creeping up the side of the hill and then into the zone. After that the pilot knew how to approach us and made four trips that day," said Brewer.

LCpl. Hope A. Eason (Chesapeake, Va.), another HST member, estimates he has built and controlled over 20 landing zones while working with infantry units.

Last December on Foxtrot Ridge while serving with an element of the 4th Marines, Eason remembered, "After the battle we had about 40 wounded men to get back to the Vandegrift Combat Base hospital," commented Eason. "All we had for an LZ was an old bomb crater and it was pretty hard for the helicopter to sit down on the LZ to pick up the medevacs. But those pilots did it. They came in and didn't waste a minute getting the wounded out."

"That's what's great about being an HST man — being able to look up and say, 'Medevac out,'" he added.

"It's our responsibility to keep the zone clear of anything that might get tangled in the chopper's rotors," said LCpl. Curtis A. Schibley (Ft. Myers, Fla.). "There have been many times when I've had to close an LZ because there were too many loose sand bags, ponchos and poncho liners that would fly up into the air when a helicopter hovered over the zone," he said.

"Sometimes the 'grunts' don't understand why we close LZs. But if we don't it could cause a crash and even injuries or death to some of the Marines nearby," continued Schibley.

The HST men do their best to get anything needed for their infantrymen. On one fire support base hangs a sign that sums up their job: "HST — Post Office, Travel Agent, Medevac, Weather Station, All Letters Go By AIR."

Versatility ...

(Continued From Page 2)

June 7 is the 28th anniversary of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. Heartiest congratulations to each officer and man of the Wing. You have dedicated yourselves to the difficult task of preserving freedom. This year, like so many others in the past, finds the Wing far from home, making sacrifices that must be made if free men are to remain free.

We look forward to our 29th year of operation. We can take justifiable pride in the many accomplishments of our Wing, especially here in Vietnam. Our combat record is indeed significant and a tribute to your professionalism and dedication. The total effort is indicative of the "Can do Spirit" that personifies a member of the Marine air-ground team.

Today I salute not only the aircrews who have acquitted themselves in an outstanding manner, but also those many Marines on the ground and behind the scenes who keep our Wing functioning around the clock.

No matter what the job, you are, and will continue to be, integral and vital to the success of the Wing. Your magnificent accomplishments are truly in keeping with the finest traditions of our Corps. "Happy Anniversary" and well done.

MAJ. GEN. C.J. QUILTER
Commanding General, 1st MAW

Careless Reds Lose Heads; They're Dead

By Pfc. Romeo Garza
DA NANG — "Carelessness is costly!" Twenty-eight North Vietnamese soldiers found the true meaning of what that slogan means when they decided to make a night river crossing and found themselves under the watchful eyes of Marines.

Led by 2nd Lt. George Davis (23 Landing Rd., Duxbury,

Mass.), the 1st Plt. of "D" Co., 1st Bn., 7th Marines proceeded to take advantage of the enemy's lazy attitude when the NVA neglected to send a point or flank security out while crossing the Vu Gia River, 10 miles southwest of here.

First Lt. Thomas M. Swanson (1146 Summit Ave., St. Clair Park, Minn.) company execu-

tive officer, explained the action.

"The first platoon was assigned to watch the river from their night defensive position, when our flank security spotted an estimated 30 NVA crossing the river heading straight for them," said Lt. Swanson.

"Pfc. Mike Culpepper (Punta Gordo, Fla.) radioed in and told

his platoon commander that he had 30 NVA coming at him and that they were within 25 yards of him. Culpepper was told to take measures to prevent the enemy from reaching shore," Swanson continued.

"Culpepper's squad opened up with two M-60 machine guns, M-16 rifle fire and light assault weapons."

When the fight was over the Leathernecks had killed 28 NVA. The Marines also found several weapons and ammunition.

"It was really strange for the NVA not to have any security when they crossed the river," said Swanson. "We received one rocket propelled grenade during the initial contact, but that's all."



Sleep-in, Marine Style

SGT. ROBERT P. Stewart (3765 Millbrook, Fresno, Calif.) and LCpl. William S. Carter (2414 9th Ave. Great Falls, Mont.), 5th Marines infantrymen catch up on some shuteye during a brief lull in Operation Pipestone Canyon. (Photo by Cpl. G.W. Wright)

Bullets, Blitz Turn Tide

1/5 Marines Repel NVA

By Sgt. John M. McGowan
AN HOA — "I don't know whether it was our whooping and hollering that scared them or our bullets . . . I only know that they turned around and ran."

With these words LCpl. Tom L. Herlache (Green Bay, Wisc.), a squad leader with "A" Co., 1st Bn., 5th Marines told how he and four comrades put an abrupt halt to an assault by an estimated 50 North Vietnamese Army soldiers. The NVA had attempted to overrun a sector of "A" Co.'s night defensive position, three miles west of here.

It was getting dark as the company put the final touches on the perimeter. With all in readiness, the Marines settled

into their fighting holes and waited for "Charley" to make the next move.

At midnight "Charley" made his move by hitting the command post with an assortment of B-40 rockets, mortars and rocket propelled grenades. "The bombardment lasted about 30 minutes," reported Herlache. "Then they began to make assaults all along the perimeter."

Assault after assault was repelled, when suddenly the word was passed to the CP that the NVA were concentrating an assault at one position. Herlache, who was at the CP when word of the enemy strategy was received, mustered four Marines and headed towards the area of the main assault.

"When we arrived at the area, we found a wounded Marine in his fighting hole," said Herlache. "Suddenly the sky became bright with illumination and standing no more than 25 yards outside our lines, was the enemy."

The Marines responded by charging, firing their M-16's from the hip and yelling their heads off. Their aggressiveness paid off with the NVA turning around and retreating.

After pursuing the enemy only a few yards, the Marines returned to their perimeter, closing the door to the retreating NVA.

A sweep of the area surrounding the company's perimeter revealed 59 dead NVA soldiers and an assortment of individual weapons and gear.

Marines Jump Reds; Capture 'A-A' Guns

By LCpl. Joe Kinney
DA NANG — Allied aircraft can swoop through the skies over the Republic of Vietnam knowing that "K" Co., 3rd Bn., 7th Marines is doing its best to insure safety of the airways. There's a captured communist anti-aircraft machine gun outside the Kilo Co. office on Hill 10 to prove it.

Kilo Co.'s third platoon captured the weapon without the loss of a single life during a recent battle in the "Arizona Territory."

The company was participating in an operation in an area centering 15 miles southwest of Da Nang. The third platoon, acting as the point element, discovered what appeared to be an enemy base camp.

"They attempted to hide all their weapons and gear under false bottom floors," recalled 2nd Lt. John F. Bender (6233 Walhonding Rd., Washington, D.C.).

"I would have to say that it was a productive day," said Bender. Results of a search of the camp included three 12.75mm anti-aircraft machine guns, 33 assault rifles and several thousand rounds of ammunition in addition to assorted clothing and documents.

Evidence indicated the enemy was in a hurry to leave the area. "I am sure that they wanted to take the equipment with them but they just didn't have time,"

said Cpl. Willie F. Thornton (109 Phillips Dr., McDonough, Ga.). "I think the enemy wanted us to think they just took everything and left hoping that we wouldn't look too hard for anything. I guess we fooled them."

"We're awfully proud to have that gun because we know that our aircraft are a little safer with the gun in our hands," said Cpl. Donald A. Girouardi (Rt. 24, Alexandria, La.), a member of the third platoon. "Wherever Kilo Co. goes I am certain that one captured gun will be out in front of our company office."

Lose . . .

(Continued From Page 1)
tinue until dawn, when the enemy fled.

The enemy lost two rocket-propelled grenade launchers, two heavy machine guns, and 13 AK-47 rifles.

Several days later Kilo Co. again made contact in the early morning hours with an estimated two NVA companies. The enemy employed RPGs, machine guns, and other automatic weapons. The fighting broke at 6 a.m. when the enemy retreated, leaving behind 15 dead, 250 grenades, seven AK-47 rifles, two SKS rifles, one RPG launcher, one heavy machine gun and two flamethrowers.

Mail The Sea Tiger Home

FROM:

FPO San Francisco, Calif 96602

TO:

Postage
3rd Class 8¢
Airmail 29¢
1st Class 13¢

NOTE: Fold paper three times, secure edges with
Staple or Tape and mail home.

7th MTBn Tops Half Million Mark

Since moving to Quang Tri Combat Base in November 1968, the Marine Corps' 7th Motor Transport Battalion has logged more than a half million miles in support of the American military operations in Northern I Corps. The battalion supports Marine Force Logistic Support Group Bravo, headquartered at Dong Ha Combat Base in keeping Marine fighting units supplied with all necessary combat equipment, rations and ammunition.