

October November December

2007



AMERICAL JOURNAL

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

Americal
Division's
"Old Glory"

UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS

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The Americal Journal is the official publication of the Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA). It is published each calendar quarter.

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Commander's Comments

By Larry Watson

I hope all is well with you. The holiday season is fast approaching. It is hard to believe how rapidly the year has flown by. As we celebrate Thanksgiving and Christmas let us remember those that are serving around the world to protect us.

Don't forget we have elections coming up very soon. The nominating committee is accepting nominations for all elective offices. If you have someone that you would like to nominate contact any member of our nominating committee. Dave Chrystal is the chairman of this committee. Serving on this committee with Dave is Roger Gilmore, Wayne Bryant, David Hammond, and Larry Swank. We need members to step up and serve as officers for our Association.

I recently came across a list of facts on veterans of the Vietnam War. A few facts that you may find interesting are 2,709,918 military personnel served on active duty in Vietnam which represented 9.7% of their generation. The Medal of Honor was received by 246 men.

58,148 were killed in Vietnam. 75,000 were severely disabled of which 23,214 were totally and permanently disabled. By official DOD records, the first to die was Richard B. Fitzgibbon on June 8, 1956. His son would die in Vietnam on September 7, 1965.

97% of Vietnam veterans were honorable discharged. 91% of Vietnam veterans say they are glad they served. 74% of Vietnam veterans say they would serve again even knowing the outcome.

Vietnam veterans have a lower unemployment rate than the same non-vet age groups. Vietnam veteran's personal income exceeds that of our non-veteran age group by more than 18%. 87% of Americans hold Vietnam veterans in high esteem.

There is no difference in drug usage between Vietnam veterans and non-Vietnam veterans of the same age group according to a study conducted by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Vietnam veterans are less likely to be in prison. Only one-half of one percent of Vietnam veterans has been jailed for crimes. 85% of Vietnam veterans made successful transitions to civilian life.

This information came from official government sources - Department of Defense, VA, and other government agencies. This belies the image that some have of Vietnam veterans 30 years after the fact. Let's not have the same thing happen to our Iraq and Afghanistan veterans.

Finally, do you know the presumptive illnesses for exposure to Agent Orange? If not, contact your nearest veterans service officer. Have a wonderful holiday season; I'll see you next year.



Chaplain's Comment

By Fr. Bart Berry

Again it is time for the Festivals of Light, Hanukkah and Christmas, which have some things in common.

Both are relatively minor festivals in their respective calendars, over time both have become child oriented, and both speak to an important truth which too often is lost in the busy-ness of the season.

Hanukkah recalls God's act after the cleansing and rededication of the Temple when the meager supply of oil was kept from running out until more could be obtained. The Temple was thus kept lighted and functioning. God was present with His people and provided for them.

At Christmas (Christ's Mass) Christians recall the birth of Jesus and believe that in that event God became a man to fulfill the covenant and redeem us. John says, "the Word (the creative force of God) became flesh....."

In both cases the eternal God, the Creator, acts in human history to provide for His people out of His immeasurable love. The father acts on behalf of His children. This should provide both comfort in our lives to know our God doesn't abandon us, and an example of how we should live our lives in relation to other people.

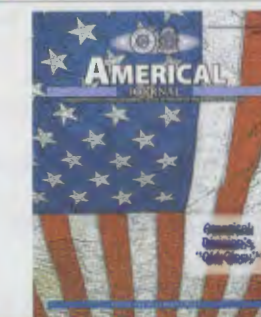
As we observe another Hanukkah and Christmas at war let us remember we are children of the one God who has acted, still acts, and always will act in His creation and mold our lives according to our Father's example.

May the light of this Holy Season be your guide.

The Journal Staff Wishes all the Best of the Season



James C. Buckle
Gary L. Noller
David W. Taylor
Dutch DeGroot
Frank R. Mika
Michael VanHefty



Featured Story Americal's "Old Glory"

Adjutant's Notes

By Roger Gilmore

This year is quickly coming to a close, and it has been another very successful year for the ADVA. Many of us were able to attend a great annual reunion in Buffalo, New York. New member recruiting efforts during 2007 enabled us to add more new members than any other year in recent ADVA history. This surge in new members is due in large part to an increased focus on new member recruiting by the recruiting team and individual members at veteran's gatherings and unit reunions.

Once again, National Commander Larry Watson and Senior Vice-Commander David Taylor conducted a highly successful new member recruiting drive at the annual Vietnam Veterans September gathering in Kokomo, Indiana. Scholarship Chairman Bob Short was also in attendance to help with new member sign ups. Kokomo recruiting efforts resulted in thirty-seven new members being added to the ADVA roster, of which three were life memberships. One former member was reinstated at Kokomo.

A total of seventy eight new members were added to the ADVA roster since the last issue of the Americal Journal. Of these seventy eight, seven joined as life members. Five former members were re-instated during this quarter.

The Sponsor-A-Buddy program is a way for each member to get a fellow Americal veteran started with an ADVA membership by paying his or her first year dues. This quarter, David Taylor, ADVA Finance Officer Spencer Baba and member Frank J. Davis sponsored buddies for their first year membership in ADVA.

As a reminder, each member's membership status is printed above your name in the address box on the back cover of the Journal. Annual pay members should check this date to ensure their dues are paid up. If this date is Sep07 or earlier, please mail your dues payment to PNC Ronald R. Ellis. Ron's address is listed on the back cover of this Americal Journal issue.

In closing, I want to wish each member a very happy holiday season and looking forward to another successful year for the ADVA in 2008.



Eighteen 164th Inf. Regt. veterans of the combat on Guadalcanal attended the annual reunion on 14-16 Sep 07 in North Dakota. From left to right: Kenneth B. Shaver, Svc Co; Dennis R. Ferk, Co A; William J. Hagen, Co B; Treumann J. Lykken, Co C; Col (ret) Wendell Wichmann, Co D; Henry A. Violett, Co D; Louis J. Hanson, Co E; Rudolph Edwardson, Co F; Sgt Maj (ret) Warren C. Griffin, Co G; Lt col (ret) Bernard A. Wagner, Co G; Gerald O. Sanderson, 2nd Bn Med; George H. Hopkins, Co H; Donald L. Hoffman, Co H; William P. Welander, 3rd Bn Hqs; Melvin P. Bork, 3rd Bn Bqs; Col (ret) Albert F. Wiest, Co M; William J. Tucker, Co M. Not shown: Ralph H. Oehlke, Band/Medic. All were members of the ND Army National Guard at the time of mobilization, with the exception of Col (ret) Wendell Wichmann, who was attending ROTC at NDSU and was assigned at Camp Claiborne.

Submitted by Lt. Col. (ret) Shirley J. Olgeirson; Editor, The 164th Infantry News; [REDACTED], Bismarck, ND 58502-1111

NEW MEMBERS

Bobby Abbott
196th LIB 4/31st Inf
Milton, KY
★ Dave Taylor

Robert J. Anderson
11th LIB E/4/3rd Inf
Scottville, MI
★ Dave Taylor

Joel Armstrong
11th LIB E/3/1st Inf
Gaston, IN
★ Dave Taylor

George W. Auxier
198th LIB B/1/6th Inf
Crown City, OH
★ David M. Perry

Ron L. Bass
23rd Div Arty HHB
Stockbridge, GA
★ PNC Gary L. Noller

Donald J. Birkenfeld
11th LIB 4/3rd Inf
Lansing, IL
★ Dave Taylor

Stephan R. Bogan
198th LIB 1/6th Inf
Batavia, OH
★ Self

William E. Boyle
1/1st Cav D Trp
Pittsburg, PA
★ Self

Tom Brown
26th Engrs HHC
La Porte, IN
★ Dave Taylor

Hal Buker
5th Marine Div n WWII
Forestdale, MA
★ Lloyd Morrell

John G. Charnisky
198th LIB C/5/46th Inf
Edwardsville, IL
★ Dave Taylor

Mike Chenier
11th LIB A/4/3rd Inf
Cadillac, MI
★ Dave Taylor

Roman F. Chillpacek
198th LIB C/1/46th Inf
La Porte, IN
★ Dave Taylor

William C. Coleman
176th Avn. Co. (ASHC)
Harrah, OK
★ Self

Dean Conn
3/82nd Arty C Btry
St. Charles, IL
★ PNC Gary L. Noller

Lester W. Cook
635th MI Co.
Ponchatoula, LA
★ Self

Ralph Cordes
11th LIB B/1/20th Inf
Freedom, PA
★ Dave Taylor

William J. Dolan
1/1st Cav HHT
Londonderry, NH
★ Self

Abraham M. Dubno
247th F.A.
Boynton Beach, FL
★ PNC Gary L. Noller

Jimmie L. Dubose
11th LIB C/1/20th Inf
Meridian, MS
★ Daniel Malin

John R. East
23rd Div
Kokomo, IN
★ Dave Taylor

Joseph J. Fatina, Jr.
132nd Inf Rgmt
Peoria, AZ
★ Self

Richard A. Field, Jr.
196th LIB 408th RR Det.
Aurora, CO
★ Self

Arthur Flasher
11th LIB
Mapleton Depot, PA
★ Dave Taylor

John Freeman
196th LIB C/2/1st Inf
Oakwood Village, OH
★ Dave Taylor

Leif J. Gardner
198th LIB A/1/6th Inf
Kewaksum, WI
★ PNC Gary L. Noller

Larry A. Gibson
198th LIB HHC
Benton, LA
★ Bob Short

Pete Herman
3/82nd Arty B Btry
Butler, PA
★ Dave Taylor

Charles C. Highley
11th LIB
Corning, AR
★ Bob Kapp

Dave Hill
1/1st Cav C Trp
Emmaus, PA
★ Dave Taylor

Anthony J. Hoseman, III
198th LIB C/1/52th Inf
Blackfoot, ID
★ PNC Gary L. Noller

Larry V. Howard
196th LIB
Muncie, IN
★ Dave Taylor

Ronald W. Imel
123rd S&T Bn
Fort Wayne, IN
★ Bob Short

Johnnie L. Ince
196th LIB HHC
Bossier City, LA
★ Les Hines

Leonard Kottke
198th LIB B/1/52th Inf
St Michael, MN
★ Conrad C. Geibel

Larry Ledbetter
23rd Inf Div
Indianapolis, IN
★ NC Larry Watson

Gilbert C. Lopez
11th LIB A/4/3rd Inf
Hemet, CA
★ Ron Krul

Roy Mabee
198th LIB A/1/52th Inf
Dover, NJ
★ Dave Taylor

Terry P. Mack
HHC 23rd Div
Miami Lakes, FL
★ Self

John M. Mauerman
196th LIB E/3/21st Inf
Portland, OR
★ Kenneth McParland

Larry May
124th Trans Bn (GOER)
Jefferson City, MO
★ Self

Richard Mikl
26th Engrs
New Auburn, WI
★ Dave Taylor

Roger Miller
11th LIB A/4/3rd Inf
Phoenix, AZ
★ Self

George A. Miller, Jr.
198th LIB 1/46th Inf
Decatur, IL
★ Dave Taylor

Rex R. Mills
23rd M.I. Det.
Huntsville, AL
★ PNC Gary L. Noller

Vron Mishler
196th LIB D/4/31st Inf
Bristol, IN
★ Dave Taylor

Gerald J. O'Meara
1/56th Inf HHC (Korea)
Schaller, IA
★ Self

Myron Peterson
196th LIB B/4/31st Inf
La Fontaine, IN
★ Bob Short

Daniel Porter
198th LIB C/5/46th Inf
Victoria, TX
★ Dave Taylor

Allen Query
198th LIB
Poland, IN
★ Dave Taylor

Edward Query
523rd Sig Bn
Martinsville, IN
★ Dave Taylor

Edward J. Riley
11th LIB A/4/3rd Inf
Ione, CA
★ Ron Krul

Mario Savalle
1/14th Arty
Allenton, MI
★ Dave Taylor

Harold H. Schmidt
1/82nd Arty B Btry
Adams, WI
★ PNC Gary L. Noller

Jerry Sears
11th LIB E Trp 1st Cav
Rineyville, KY
★ Dave Taylor

James H. Shaffer
11th LIB E Trp 1st Cav
Grove City, PA
★ Dave Taylor

Lawrence Shover
26th Engrs Co E
Mexico, ME
★ Self

Dave Simmons
196th LIB E/3/21st Inf
Bluefield, WV
★ Connie Steers

Richard Smith
Div Arty HHC
Gladwin, MI
★ Dave Taylor

Larry J. Stovall
198th LIB D/1/6th Inf
Columbia, TN
★ Self

Jim B. Sturgill
196th LIB 2/1st Inf
Cromwell, IN
★ Dave Taylor

Robert L. Swasey
3/16th Arty C Btry
Lynnfield, MA
★ Self

Frank Temares
198th LIB 5/46th Inf
Park Hills, MO
★ Bob Short

Robert T. Tullos
198th LIB E/1/46th Inf
Murfreesboro, TN
★ Bob Short

Roy L. Vivian
23rd Admin Co.
Streator, IL
★ *Dave Taylor*

John F. Wachter
TF Oregon HHC
Surprise, AZ
★ *Frank J. Davis*

John H. Webb
3/18th Arty Srvc Btry
East Liverpool, OH
★ *Dave Taylor*

John Welsh
23rd Admin Co.
Hemlock, IN
★ *Dave Taylor*

Gary Westrick
1/1st Cav HHT
Defiance, OH
★ *NC Larry Watson*

Allen F. Wilson
196th LIB B/1/46th Inf
Manchester, IA
★ *Dave Taylor*

NEW PAID LIFE MEMBERS

Edward L. Allen
196th LIB B/1/46th Inf
Tipton, KS
★ *Ron Davis*

Daniel D. Blackburn
196th LIB
Portland, MO
★ *Dave Taylor*

James Bruce
196th LIB 2/1st Inf
Sao Paulo, Brazil
★ *Spencer Baba*

Al Diederich
132nd Inf Rgmt Co. D
Vista, CA
★ *PNC Gary L. Noller*

Makoto Fletcher
198th LIB B/1/52th Inf
Issaquah, WA
★ *Conrad C. Geibel*

Alonzo Hodgdon
132nd Inf Rgmt Co. E
Barefoot Bay, FL
★ *PNC Rollie Castronova*

Robert E. Jeans
196th LIB A/4/31st Inf
Kenilworth, NJ
★ *Self*

Michael W. Jelvik
6/11th Arty
Auburn, WA
★ *Thad Lindquist*

Richard L. Morris
11th LIB C/3/1st Inf
Graceville, FL
★ *PNC Gary L. Noller*

Richard R. Rey
11th LIB 1/20th Inf
Madera, CA
★ *Self*

Gary D. Roschevitz
11th LIB C/1/20th Inf
Kansas City, KS
★ *Andres Delgado*

Gene Yeakley
6/11th Arty
Ceres, CA
★ *Self*

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Joel L. Merrill
No Unit
Pella, IA
★ *Self*

RE-INSTATED MEMBERS

Terry Dickson
11th LIB C/4/21st Inf
Decatur, IL
★ *PNC Rich Scales*

Francisco Garcia
198th LIB C/1/52th Inf
Gilbert, AZ
★ *Art Cole*

Jerry Sams
198th LIB C/1/46th Inf
Greenville, SC
★ *PNC Rollie Castronova*

Robert T. Spicer
23rd Div Arty HHB
Wantagh, NY
★ *James A. Rains*

Ramon Vega
198th LIB H Trp 17th Cav
Safford, AZ
★ *Dave Taylor*

TAPS

World War II Veterans

Forest G. Bowers
182nd Inf Rgmt Co. L
Abilene, KS
October 22, 2006

Charles S. Marston, III
182nd Inf Rgmt Co. A
Meredith, NH
April 17, 2007

Joseph F. McDonough
246th FA HHQ Btry
Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ
July 29, 2007

Ellis Perdue
132nd Inf Rgmt Co. G
Roanoke, VA
July 3, 2007

Clifford C. Petersen
247th FA
Phoenix, AZ
July 19, 2007

Arthur R. Ryrholm
246th FA Btry B
Sioux Falls, SD
October 30, 2006

Boyd W. Vokes, Sr.
246th F.A.
Clearfield, PA
July 16, 2007

World War II Era Widows

Mrs. Howard P. Eden
182nd Inf Rgmt Co. C
York Harbor, ME
Date Unknown

Vietnam Veterans

Donald H. Bowers
198th LIB HHC
San Francisco, CA
August 22, 2007

Benjamin H. DiAmico
23rd MP Co.
Miami, FL
July 24, 2007

John H. Durel, III
1/1st Cav
Bartonville, TX
June 25, 2007

Oscar A. Gerner, Jr.
23rd Div HDQ
Jefferson, TX
Date Unknown

Leo Pillow
198th LIB D/5/46 Inf
Apple Valley, CA
August 24, 2007

Robert E. Wilson
11th LIB C/3/1st Inf
College Station, TX
June 1, 2007

LAST ROLL CALL

Robert E. Liddell
26th Signal Co.
Nashua, NH
October 3, 2007

Robert J. Merrill
182nd Inf Rgmt Co. A
Pella, IA
July 31, 2007

Joseph A. Grimoskas
Unit Unknown
Davenport, IA
June 22, 2007

Alan M. Swett
Unit Unknown
Milton, MA
July 30, 2007

Michael F. Tumas
Unit Unknown
Chicago, IL
July 17, 2007

Alex Vecchio
Unit Unknown
Spartanburg, SC
July 17, 2007

Vietnam Vets of 23rd MP Co. Host Former Submariner

Bryan J. Gelnett, 28, was hosted at a dinner gathering in Chicago, IL by Vietnam veterans of the 23rd MP Co. Gelnett now lives in Washington State and works for the Intelius Corp. of Bellevue, WA. He recently left the US Navy after a five year stint as a submarine officer assigned to the US Pacific Fleet.

Bryan is the youngest son of the late Larry Gelnett (Pocasset, MA) who also served with the 23rd MP Co. Larry was an active member of the Americal Division Veterans' Association and once served as National Sergeant-At-Arms. This role was a natural since the senior Gelnett's career was in law enforcement with the Massachusetts State Police. "SGT Lar" died due to cancer in 2001; his death was related to Agent Orange contracted in Vietnam during the late 1960s.

Hosting the gathering was John "Dutch" DeGroot (Mount Prospect, IL), a Past National Commander of the ADVA and close friend of the senior Gelnett. Joining them were 23rd MP vets Ernie Huerta (Chicago, IL), recently retired from the Chicago Police Department, and Brian J. Mulcrone (Bloomington, IL).

Gelnett's graduated from the US Naval Academy in 2002. DeGroot and Mulcrone pinned new Ensign boards on Gelnett's uniform. They also presented him with a naval officer's sword with his late father's name on the hilt as a remembrance.



L to R: Ernie Huerta, Bryan Gelnett, John "Dutch" DeGroot, Brian Mulcrone

Your local or unit chapter needs and appreciates your support. Most chapters have newsletters, reunions, and other activities that promote camaraderie. Volunteer to help keep your chapter active and valuable as a resource for Americal Division veterans.

Co. D, 4/3rd Infantry Holds Reunion



Veterans of Co. D, 4/3rd Infantry attended their annual reunion in Des Moines, IA on September 21-22, 2007. Front row: John Kilburg, Syd Staton, Bruce Flaherty, Dan Behrens, Pete Rico, Roger Abel, Jim Herdzyk, Pete McGeough, Mike Collins. 2nd row: Paul Amason, Gene Emerson, Lawrence Grabowski, Charles Sizemore, John Sears, Phil Ciarlo, Tom Newbauer, Jim Umsted. 3rd row: Ken Moats, Brendan Mahoney, JJ Williams, Bob Von Tholen, Mike O'Connor, Leroy Windmon, John Gonzalez. Back row, Stephen Peterzak, Gary Edgecomb, Coy Napier, Les Hines, Orville Berg. Missing in picture- Clyde Arnold.

New Book Tells of the Defense of Fiji in WWII

Robert Lowry announces the publication of his book titled **FORTRESS FIJI: HOLDING THE LINE IN THE PACIFIC WAR, 1939-45**.

During the first two years of the war, Fiji had to be defended from the possibility of attack by German maritime raiders intent on disrupting trans-Pacific telecommunications and trade.

When Japan launched its surprise attack on the United States Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbour on 7 December 1941, Fiji became New Zealand's outpost in the Pacific and a stepping stone on the 'reinforcement line' from the United States to Australia and the Philippines.

After Japan's initial sweeping victories, they developed plans to capture New Caledonia, Fiji and Samoa to rupture the 'reinforcement line' and prevent Australia becoming a base for an American counter-offensive.

Initially, Fiji strengthened its embryonic defenses with the help of New Zealand and eventually a New Zealand infantry brigade was dispatched. When Japan entered the war, another brigade was dispatched and some United States assistance was provided. In July 1942, American forces assumed responsibility for the defense of Fiji (including the 37th Infantry Division and later the Americal Division). Many of the New Zealanders returned home but by the end of 1942 there were about 40,000 United States, New Zealand and Fiji troops defending Fiji.

Robert Lowry served in the Australian Army for 30 years and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel. He served in Vietnam in 1968-69. The book consists of 120 pages including maps, photographs, appendices and bibliography. RRP Australian \$34.95 plus postage. Orders to the author at [redacted]

Dear editor,

After more than two years of work the Clinton County Historical Society has published the memoirs of Major General Lloyd B. Ramsey, U.S.A., Retired. General Ramsey commanded the Americal Division in Vietnam. Two soldiers who served on his staff in Viet Nam were Major Colin Powell and Lt. Col. Norman Schwarzkopf.

More detailed information can be obtained by contacting the Clinton County Historical Society.

Walton R. Haddix; Clinton County Historical Society

[REDACTED], Albany, Kentucky 42602

Dear editor,

I am looking for information on the 198th Lt. Inf. Bde. Aviation Section, 1967-68. We formed at Ft. Hood and in September 1967 we set off for Vietnam in two troop ships. One was the USN Gordon. We arrived in October 1967.

While I can find a lot of information on other parts of the 198th, I find no mention of our Aviation Section. When we arrived at Chu Lai there was no room for our choppers. We had to make a landing pad in the middle of the ammo dump.

Thank heaven, the Cav unit moved out and we took their place at Key Hole landing pad at the other end of the base. We stayed at this location till we rotated back in September 1968. Needless to say, the enemy blew up the ammo dump during the Tet offensive and I would not be here today if the 101 Cav had not move out when they did.

I am just wondering why there is no mention of our aviation unit. I would appreciate it if you can point me to this information.

Don Cook; 198th Lt. Inf. Bde., Aviation Section

Oct. 67 - Sept. 68

Dear editor,

I have always wondered why the 16th Combat Aviation Group is never really mentioned. I worked with the Assistant Division Aviation Officer and I flew with some of the helicopter companies in the division.

Allan Forde; 16th CAG

Dear editor,

Thank you for publishing my story A Young Soldier is Forever 21 in the third-quarter 2007 issue of the Americal Journal. I wish to point out that the captions on the photos on pages 28-29 are reversed.

Gary M. Jenkins; Co. C, 3/21st Inf.

Dear editor,

The Military Working Dog Team Association, Inc., is a Georgia incorporated 501(c)3 non profit organization. Our mission is to support deployed and CONUS based Military Working Dog (MWD) teams and veteran MWD organizations of all US military services.

Our website at <http://www.mwdtsa.org/> provides additional information regarding MWD TSA. Our current project is to provide MWD units with dog grooming tools not available through military supply channels.

The 59th Scout Dog Platoon, Combat Tracker Teams 10 and 11 and the 76th Infantry Detachment (Combat Tracker) were MWD units assigned to the Americal Division in Vietnam.

Ken Besecker; Secretary, Treasurer MWD TSA, Inc.

Dear editor,

Michael J. Martin has just released a new CD, "The Better Part of Valor". Martin served 12 months in Vietnam in 1968-69, mostly as a pointman with the 11th LIB. His citations include the Silver Star, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, and Combat Infantryman Badge.

More information on Martin can be obtained on the internet at <http://www.myspace.com/michaeljmartinmusic>.

PNC Ed Marsh; Jones, MI

Dear editor,

I was looking at lists of the units involved with TFO and saw that the 221st S&S wasn't listed. The unit was there in April 1967 before the Americal was formed. If I am not mistaken, it later became Co. A, 23rd S&T. I was new in-country and became part of TFO assigned to the 221st. I then went to HQ 23rd as a Liaison NCO to the depot at Qui Nhon. I worked for a Maj. Rowe(?).

My next two tours were with the Americal LRRP'S E/51st and with 3/21st Inf. before going to the 9th Division back to Hawaii. Do you have any information on MAJ Rowe, G-4 Americal?

Carl Hudson; [REDACTED]

Dear editor,

I would like to find information about my father, the late Francis Paul Brady. He passed away 24 years ago. According to his DD-214 he was in the Philippines during WWII with the Americal Division. I would like some information about the unit he was in and the campaigns he was involved in. I have some old photo's he had of the war that I would like to donate.

Herbert Braidhair; [REDACTED]

Dear editor,

I was in Vietnam from Nov. 1967 through Nov. 1968 with the 1st AVN Bde., 16th Group, 14th Bn., 756th Med. Det. at Duc Pho. I transferred in early January 1968 to the 534th Med. Det. at 14th Bn. HQ, Chu Lai, just south and behind the dune from the Americal's 198th LIB and 196th LIB.

I believe that the 14th Aviation Battalion was absorbed into the Americal Division at that time. If not please correct me and I will continue my search elsewhere.

I am suffering from a mental lapse of names of anyone I served with in Vietnam while serving on dust-off flights from Chu Lai. I am trying to put the past where it belongs. I want to find anyone who knew me.

Christopher W. Loew; [REDACTED]

Dear editor,

Co. C, 1/20th Inf. held their second reunion on June 8-9, 2007 at the Hilton Cincinnati Airport in Florence, KY. Several early arrivals ate at the Montgomery Inn Thursday night. Friday was primarily a registration day and included a reception provided by the Hilton.

On Saturday several members went to see area attractions. Some rode the riverboat, several walked the Purple People Bridge across the Ohio River, and some golfed. Many spent the afternoon in the hospitality room looking through albums. One would often hear "Do you know who this is?" or "Do you remember....?" Chuck Seketa's research about 1/20th was another popular stop.

Saturday evening, Tallman, or as he is better known as today, Reverend Jimmie Dubose, said grace before our dinner. Gary Ellis received a MRE to help him in traveling the most miles home to Washington. Keith Trace received a walking cane to help him return the shortest distance home to Ohio.

After dinner we had a video presentation of those KIA in Viet Nam our company. Bud Vincent proposed a memorial toast for these men and for those we know who have died since. Following the memorial was a business meeting.

Those not having to depart early Sunday morning enjoyed a final breakfast together before returning home. Thanks to the 46 men, women and one daughter who made this a wonderful reunion. See you next year in....?

Mike Stinnett; [REDACTED]

Dear editor,

I was in an aero rifle platoon of F Troop, 8th Cavalry (Blue Ghosts) in 1969-70. This was a small, closely knit group of 20-25 soldiers. I have a list of some of their names.

I would like to get in touch with anyone who was in this platoon or who can give me any information about the platoon's activities. I want to have contact with my former comrades. I have been postponing this search on account of the fear that some of them may no longer be with us.

Gary Johnson; F Troop, 8th Cavalry

Lebanon, PA 17046

Dear editor,

While reading the obits a couple of days ago I learned that Danny Dwight Mott, 55, of Zavalla, TX passed away. He was with the 3/21st Inf., 196th LIB, 1971-72. I don't know if he was an ADVA member- but that doesn't matter. He's another brother gone at the age of 55.

Malcolm East; Lumberton, TX

Dear editor,

My father served with the 26th Signal during World War II. His name was Harry T. Miller from Roslindale, MA. I have some information and pictures of his that were taken during the different invasions in the South Pacific. If anyone would like to contact me I'd be willing to share this information.

Marilyn Michalak; Peabody MA

Dear editor,

I served the final few months of WWII on Cebu with the machine gun platoon of Co. D, 1st Bn., 132nd Inf. Regt. I am searching for my squad leader, Gene Tucker. He was from Texas.

I received three mortar wounds and was treated in the field and sent back to duty. A few weeks later our company commander lined me and three other men up to present us each a Purple Heart. After he pinned the medal on each of us he took it off, went to the next man, and did it all over again. When all had been pinned the medal went in his pocket.

There was apparently no official record of my wounds. I need to find Tucker or anyone else who might remember the incident. I want no praise or publicity. I would just like to have the Purple Heart. I know one can be purchased but that's not what I want.

If it never happens--so be it. Maybe I'll be reincarnated and in my next life be in another war and wounded for the record. Thanks to all you guys for your bit and those who are doing theirs now. GOD BLESS THE U.S.A.

Al Diederich; 132nd Inf. Regt.

[REDACTED], Vista, CA, 92084

Dear editor,

Howard Fisher and I are trying to find out what happened to our friend Joe Cisneros who was with B Btry., 1/14th Arty. Howard, Joe and I went through basic and AIT together. We got separated at 90th Replacement, Joe going to the Americal while we went to the 1st.Cav. We know that Joe was KIA in Quang Ngai on 12 July 1969.

We were just trying to find out what a 13A10 was doing moving to a night defensive position and if he been moved to a RTO/FO slot? I have found out that a SP4 Elmer F. Beebe escorted Joe home. Was he a friend of Joe's?

Art Estrada; [REDACTED]

Americal Veterans Health Information

By Dr. John Hofer
ADVA Service Officer



Type 2 Diabetes

Greetings. I hope this finds everyone fit for duty. I want to share some information about a silent disease that could affect any Americal veteran. I hope this information reaches our Americal troops that have this medical problem so they can catch it early enough to manage it without developing complications.

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes. In type 2 diabetes, either the body does not produce enough insulin or the cells ignore the insulin. Insulin is necessary for the body to be able to use sugar. Sugar is the basic fuel for the cells in the body and insulin moves the sugar (glucose) from the blood into the cells.

When glucose builds up in the blood instead of going into cells it causes two problems. The immediate affect is that cells may be starved for energy. Over time, the affect of high blood glucose levels may hurt eyes (retinopathy), kidneys (nephropathy), nerves (neuropathy) or heart (cardiovascular disease).

Being diagnosed with diabetes can be intimidating, considering the complications that can occur. But many people can live long and healthy lives if attempts are made to control diabetes.

Hyperglycemia (High Blood Glucose) is usually 200-250 or higher after a fasting blood test. Hyperglycemia symptoms are urinating more often, especially at night, blurred vision, fatigue or low energy, increased thirst, and slow healing wounds.

The causes of high blood sugar are eating too much food or sugary liquids (soda pop), not exercising, not taking diabetes medicine correctly, and illness or infection.

The normal fasting blood glucose range is 70-100. Impaired fasting glucose range is 101 to 125. A fasting glucose of 126 or higher indicates diabetes. These are only guidelines. Speak with your physician about the meaning of your blood glucose level.

There is a service connection between Agent Orange exposure and diabetes. Exposure to Agent Orange provides a presumptive service connection to type 2 diabetes. Anyone in-country may be presumed to have been exposed to Agent Orange.

If you have type 2 diabetes you should discuss this with a Veterans Service Officer (VSO). A VSO can be found at most VA facilities, county veterans office, or state veterans

offices. There are many other presumptive condition that veterans can be service connected for and can be discussed with VSOs. A VA claim can be initiated by a VSO.

I hope this information helps fellow veterans. This information, of course, is unofficial and is not to be considered information from The Department of Veterans Affairs. I hope it helps others to successfully manage this medical condition.

From a dental standpoint uncontrolled diabetes also contributes to dental problems, especially Periodontitis, an infection of the gums and bone structure surrounding teeth. Slower healing is seen following extractions with some people. Of course, good home care and regular check ups and cleanings can prevent most dental problems.

[Editor's note: John "Doc" Hofer, DMD, served with Co. B, 5/46th Inf., 198th LIB in 1970-71.]

Veterans' hand salute bill passes U.S. Senate



The U.S. Senate passed Senator Inhofe's (R-OK) bill that allows veterans and service members not in uniform to salute the flag. The bill, S.1877, was unanimously approved by Senate members. S.1877 seeks to clarify the procedures and privileges of veterans and out-of-uniform service members. Current U.S. law says that these service members should place their hand over their heart, while remaining somewhat vague as to whether or not they can salute.

Senator Inhofe praised the passage of the bill, saying "I believe this is an appropriate way to honor and recognize the 25 million veterans in the United States who have served in the military and remain as role models to others citizens. Those who are currently serving or have served in the military have earned this right, and their recognition will be an inspiration to others."

The corresponding bill in the U.S. House of Representatives is H.R. 3380. The military salute by veterans and military members not in uniform would be allowed when the United States flag is hoisted, lowered, or passes by. Other U.S. citizens are to stand at attention, remove headgear, and place the right hand over the heart.

Reunion Jitters

By Gary L. Noller

My wife and I had a great time at the ADVA national reunion in Buffalo, NY. We met old friends and made new ones. We are already making plans for the 2008 reunion in Jacksonville, FL.

A veteran attending his first ADVA reunion in Buffalo asked me if I was attending my first reunion. I replied, "No, this is my 18th consecutive year."

It could have been my 20th consecutive year but I missed the first two reunions held after I joined the ADVA. The main reason I did not go was because I did not know what to expect. I had a fear of the unknown.

I wanted to meet other Americal veterans very much so I made the leap and attended my first reunion in 1990. I hedged on the most of the events and only attended the Saturday night banquet. But I had finally broken the ice. Most of the reunion attendees were veterans.



along very well.

Attending the reunion the second year was not as scary as the year before. I knew I would see some of the same people that I met the first year. After the third year all my fear was gone. I was one of the "regular" attendees.

I always enjoy visiting with veterans attending their first reunion. In particular, I am interested in how the reunion compares with what they thought they would experience. In many instances veterans have told me that they got "cold feet" on the way to the reunion they almost turned around and went back home. One even went as far to say, "I would have went back home but I did not know what to tell my wife about why I did not go to the reunion. So I came."

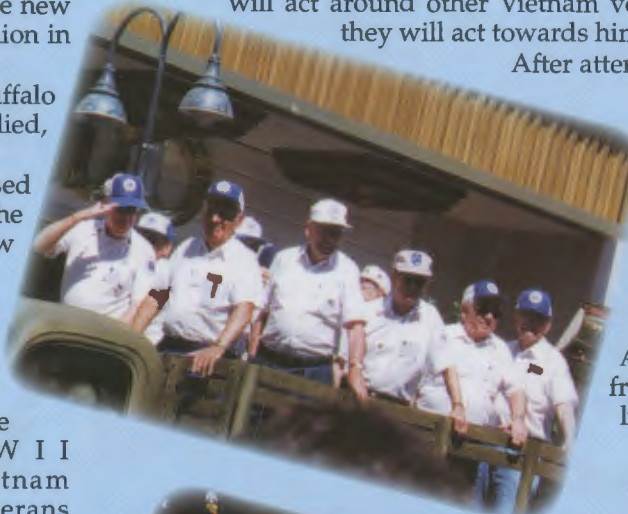
But these same veterans also say how glad they are that they attended their first reunion and that they want to come again. Far from being a bad experience, the reunion is redeeming and a lot of fun.

So why do we Vietnam veterans have the jitters about attending our first reunion? I suppose some of it is a natural fear of being all alone. But I think other circumstances contribute to a feeling of being on the outside.

Many unfavorable myths have been created about those who served in Vietnam. We came home one at a time and for the most part we went into hiding. It was only after

the opening of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in 1982 that many of us began to address our status as veterans.

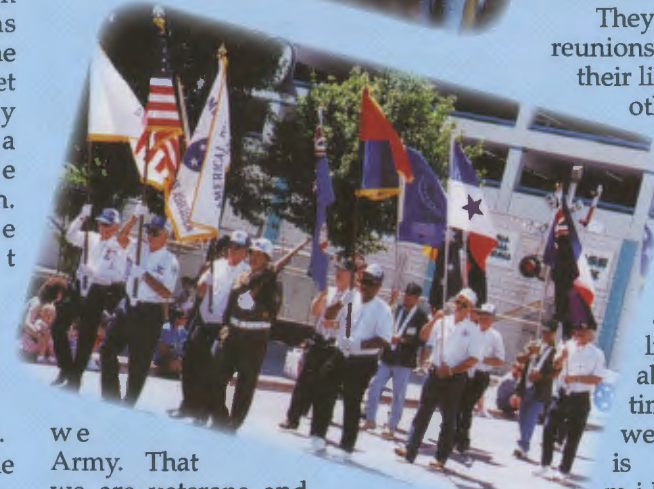
All too often a Vietnam veteran feels that he is the only "normal" one. He knows the popular stories about Vietnam veterans do not apply to him. He does not know how he will act around other Vietnam veterans or how they will act towards him.



After attending 18 ADVA reunions I can definitely state that there is no reason to be apprehensive about whom one will meet at a reunion.

Attendees come from all walks of life and all have an enthusiastic outlook on life.

They come to reunions to share their lives with others and to have fun.



There is always a little talk about the time that were in the military.

we Army. That we are veterans and service is common to us all. But we do not go into a closed room and play with G.I. Joe action figures. Many veterans bring their spouses and children and make it a family event.

The single most important benefit that I take away from reunions is the friends that I make. They include WWII veterans and Vietnam veterans. I can literally travel from Massachusetts to California, from Oregon to Florida, and never eat a meal on my own. All I would have to do would be to call a familiar ADVA member and make arrangements for a mini-reunion of our own.

If you have never attended an ADVA reunion but want to I encourage you to do it in 2008 in Jacksonville, FL. Special arrangements will be made to greet and welcome first time guests. We want to see you there.

If you want more information about the reunion go to www.americal.org/reunion.shtml. You will find details about lodging, events, registration, and key contacts. There is also a description of what people do at the reunion and what you can expect to see. Make your plans now and join us in Jacksonville. It will be great to see you there.

FAR WEST CHAPTER

AZ CA CO HI NV NM UT

COMMANDER

Rick Ropole
Corona, CA 92879

SEC/TREAS

Tom Packard
Galloway, OH 43119



The Far West Chapter Annual Reunion was held in Riverside California on September 30-October 2. About 30 veterans and their spouses attended this year's event which was held at the Riverside Marriott in Old Town Riverside. We met new friends and rekindled old ones in a well stocked

hospitality suite throughout the event.

Monday morning we boarded transportation to March Field Air Museum where we enjoyed a very informative tour of the facility. Our guide was a WWII Veteran and B-17 bomber pilot with nearly 4500 hours of volunteer work at the museum.

After lunch at the museum, we visited the Riverside National Cemetery for a tour and wreath laying ceremony. The cemetery is home to the Medal of Honor Memorial, one of only three sites in the country recognized as a National Medal of Honor Memorial site. Also visited during the tour were a POW/MIA Memorial and the Fallen Soldier/Veterans Memorial where a brief wreath laying ceremony took place.

After our annual chapter business meeting on Tuesday morning we toured the historic Mission Inn Hotel and Spa in Old Town Riverside. The Inn began as a small 12 room stagecoach stop in the later 1800s and now covers an entire city block. It houses a very interesting and priceless collection of art and artifacts, some dating back to the 1700s. In the hotel lobby is an oversized wooden chair, specially built for then President Taft for his stay at the hotel. It is said that he was offended by the size of it and would not use it.

The reunion ended with a dinner and music at the Marriott. Special thanks to Rich Merlin, Reunion Chairman, for putting on another great event. Next years reunion will be held next October in Laughlin, Nevada.

If you live in the Far West area, please consider joining us in the chapter. With 165 members, we still have a good mix of veterans from WWII and Vietnam which makes for some great conversation. Yearly dues are only \$10. For more information about the Far West Chapter or the reunion, e-mail, call or write Tom Packard at the above addresses or phone number.

EASTERN REGIONAL CHAPTER

DC DE KY MD NJ NY OH PA VA WV MA NH VT ME CT RI

COMMANDER

Conrad Steers
Hicksville, NY 11801

VICE-COMMANDER

Joseph M. Adelsberger
Plain City, OH 43064

SECRETARY

Elmer Wright
Glen Ridge, NJ 07028-1441

TREASURER

Mark Deam
Sidney, OH 45365



I want to start by saying to all my Americal brothers and sisters have a great and safe Veterans Day. I hope to see a lot of Americal veterans in Washington. Cherie and I will be there at the Doubletree in Crystal City with Terry Babler's unit.

I would like to hear from our membership on anything about the organization that is important to communicate. The National Reunion will be in June 2008. Take a look at the national website for more information. Next year it will be in Jacksonville, FL. I would like to see a good turn out from the East Chapter.

In October 2008 we will have our Chapter's reunion in the Cincinnati/Kentucky area. Check our web site for more information. In 2009 I would love to see someone in the New England area have a chapter reunion. If anyone needs help in running one please contact one of the officers.

For your information there will be a reunion of Bravo Co. 4/21 11th LIB (1968-1971) in St. Louis, Missouri on April 2-6, 2008. There is a Big Bad Bravo Web Site.

Again thank you for attending the National Reunion in Buffalo. I am still proud of the chapter for doing a great job. It is not easy running a National Reunion.

Cherie and I wish our fellow Americal veterans a happy and safe holiday season. Where did the year go already? Remember dues are due so please send them in. Welcome Home. Conrad (Connie) Steers.

NORTHWEST CHAPTER

AK WA OR ID MT WY

COMMANDER

David Hammond
Portland, OR 97201-8002



Please note that I have a new phone number. It is [redacted]. There are no current activities or meetings planned for the Northwest Chapter. Anyone interested in a leadership role with the Northwest Chapter please contact me. Dave Hammond.

ARTHUR R. WOOD
SOUTH EAST REGION CHAPTER

AL GA FL TN VA NC SC

COMMANDER

Paul Stiff
Sec/Treasurer
Jerry Nichols

VICE COMMANDER

Lee Kaywork
Sergeant-at-Arms
Jerry "Doc" Anderson



Now that you have made the decision to come to Jacksonville for the 2008 ADVA reunion you are probably asking yourself "as long as I'm there what else should I do?" With that question in mind I pulled out a map of Florida and drew a circle to see what was within a four hour drive from

Jacksonville.

The reunion trip to St. Augustine will hardly crack the surface of all the sites of this beautiful city with its Spanish architecture, historic sites and great restaurants and shops. This city is definitely worth a more detailed visit. Of course you golfers have to stop at Sawgrass in PontaVedra and view the 17th hole. Down I-95 just south of St Augustine is the World Golf Village with its shops, museum, IMAX theatre and of course golf courses. A little further south is the LPGA headquarters and golf course.

Daytona Raceway is a must stop for you race enthusiasts. This is also the junction with I-4 West and just an hour from Orlando and all of its attractions (SeaWorld, Universal, and Disney). Less then an hour from Daytona is Titusville, the gateway to Cape Canaveral and the Kennedy Space Center. This is one of those must see stops. You will marvel at what you see here; the launch sites, the museums, and the new Shuttle ride. This stop will make your entire trip to Florida worth it. You will leave here full of pride in our country. You surfing enthusiast can continue south to Cocoa Beach home of Ron Jon's and the best surfing in Florida.

Just past all the Orlando stuff is Cyprus Gardens; it is now an amusement and water park but the kids and grandkids will love it. Less then an hour's drive past Orlando is Tampa. The Tampa area has a lot of interesting and fun places to visit. There is Ybor City, Busch Gardens, the aquarium, Legions Field and across the Bay is St Petersburg with is many beaches and resorts

St. Mary's, GA is a beautiful and historic coastal town. If you miss the spouse trip to Amelia Island then this will make up for it. From the St. Mary's Marina you can catch a ride over to Cumberland Island. This pristine National Park is famous for its wild mustangs, great beaches and walking trails. Just outside St. Mary's is Kings Bay the Triton submarine base. Ninety minutes from Jacksonville is Savannah, GA. This and Charleston, SC are two of the most charming southern cities. Savannah's history is rooted in the American Revolution as well as the antebellum period of the south. You will be amazed at who is buried in the old cemeteries in Savannah. This city is famous for its 33 park squares, the downtown market area and the shops nestled along the river front.

By now you should get the idea that there is so much available in and around the Jacksonville area that this

reunion will give you a great vacation opportunity. I didn't even touch on the great beaches, the state and national parks, the swimming and golf resorts or the sport fishing and other water activities available. We are going to fill the Wyndham Riverwalk Hotel so I suggest you make your reservations early.

Take advantage of the Early Registration contest: (1) Each confirmed Hotel and paid 2008 Reunion registrant who registrars before January 1, 2008 will be entered into a drawing to receive: one complementary night at the hotel during the convention, one free reunion registration and one ticket to the Saturday evening banquet. (2) Each confirmed Hotel and paid 2008 registrant who registers before March 31, 2008 will be entered into a drawing to receive; one complementary ticket to the Saturday evening banquet. (3) Hotel records and reunion committee records will be used to determine eligibility. Decisions of the judges are final.

Mark your calendar, June 26-29, 2008 the ADVA 2008 Reunion at he Wyndham Riverwalk Hotel in Jacksonville, FL. Registration forms are available on line at www.americal.org or in this issue of the Americal Journal. If you have any questions feel free to contact me at [redacted] or [redacted]. Lee Kaywork, Chair, ADVA 2008 Reunion



23rd MILITARY POLICE CHAPTER

WWII Korean War/Panama CZ Vietnam Global War on Terrorism

COMMANDER

Dutch DeGroot

VICE COMMANDER

Dale Meisel

SEC/TREAS

Tom Packard

Galloway, OH 43119



By the time you see this we shall be an official Chapter of the ADVA. We have made strides in membership and have started to realize some of our goals both long and short.

We have a unit historian now Al Feser. Al will be responsible for collecting the history of the 23rd Military Police Company. This includes our veteran activities, active duty MP history taking place now as well as our time in Vietnam. He is working diligently on a lot of projects, which will be shared with historians long after we are gone. Please join with me in helping Al complete this important task.

The 23rd MP Company was represented by several members at the 25th anniversary of the dedication of the Vietnam Memorial over the Veterans Day weekend in Washington, D.C., to include Wes Haun at the reading of the names on the Wall.

We are asking that as many 23rd MP's join us for the reunion in Jacksonville this June as can make it. We would like to equal the numbers that we had in Cleveland.



Americal Division Veterans Association.

Scholar: **John Byrnes**
School: Binghamton University
Sponsor: **James Brynes**, father;
Division Artillery



Again, thank you for this generous gift.

Scholar: **Tammy Ecklund**
School: University of Wisconsin
Sponsor: **Eric Ecklund**, father;
4/31st Infantry



Thank you very much for selecting me for a scholarship. I am very grateful. This will be of great assistance in paying for my nursing classes this fall. Thank you again for your support.

Scholar: **Melanie Russell**
School: Pasco-Hernando Community College
Sponsor: **Leonard Oliver** (RIP), grandfather;
221st Field Artillery



I want to take this opportunity to thank you all for choosing me as a scholarship recipient this year. The program that is in place is certainly a

wonderful one; my grandfather, parents and professors think very highly of the ADVA scholarship fund. I have applied for this scholarship three out of the four past years and have received an award each time. You are all truly making a difference in so many young people's lives through your generous donations. Again, thank you so much for helping me reach my educational goals.

Scholar: **Stephanie Loeb**
School: University of North Carolina
Sponsor: **Everard Loeb**, grandfather;
182nd Infantry



Thank you very much for the one-thousand dollar scholarship. I really appreciate your generosity. I am attending the University of Texas at Tyler this fall and I plan on pursuing a career within the medical field. I am

very excited to take this big step of my life. Thank you again.

Scholar: **Anna Lauritsen**
School: University of Texas-Tyler
Sponsor: **Carl Lauritsen**, grandfather;
164th Infantry



I want to thank the Americal Division Veterans Association for your generosity and for your service to our country. I am very appreciative to

have been chosen for this award. I assure you that it will certainly be put to good use and it will make my financial situation for funding my college a bit more palatable.

My plans at this point include a desire to serve my country in one of the armed services and then to make a career in law enforcement. I will certainly remember the help that our organization has provided and hope that you will share my family's pride in what I plan to accomplish.

Scholar: **Sean E. Matthews**
School: University of Connecticut
Sponsor: COL (Ret.) **Dennis Matthews**, father;
4/21st Infantry



I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to the members of the ADVA for awarding me this scholarship. My education is of the utmost importance to

me and this award will enable me to further finance the cost of an undergraduate degree. My grandfather, William F. McGoldrick, would be proud and honored to know that the organization to which he dedicated the later part of his life is helping younger generations achieve their goals of higher education. (Photographed with Louise McGoldrick, grandmother.)

Scholar: **Katelyn M. Mahoney**
School: Chowan University
Sponsor: **William McGoldrick** (RIP), grandfather;
182nd Infantry



I would like to thank the Americal Division Veterans Association for the generous scholarship awarded to me in the amount of \$1,000. Currently I am a sophomore at the University of Connecticut. I am

the homecoming chair of my sorority, Kappa Alpha Theta. In addition, I am involved in community service activities, philanthropy events, and intramural sports. The ADVA's financial support has been a factor in making my years at UConn successful and for that I am extremely grateful.

Scholar: **Kerry Coffey**
School: University of Connecticut
Sponsor: **Gerald Coffey**, father;
16th Combat Aviation Group



I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Americal Division Veterans Association for its generosity in providing scholarship. I am honored to be the recipient of this award. I am looking forward to returning to the Maryland Institute College of Art. My

goal is to earn degree in animation. This scholarship will help me achieve this goal and assist me in realizing my dreams. Thank you for your confidence and willingness to help me achieve my goals.

Scholar: **Sara Beschle**

School: Maryland Institute College of Art
Sponsor: **Robert Beschle** (RIP), grandfather;
121st Medical Bn.



I would like to express my immense gratitude for awarding me with an Americal Division Veterans Association scholarship.

I find myself greatly honored to have this recognition delivered to me. My potential success in college will only be further encouraged by this generosity. This scholarship is special for a particular reason: it is received with pride by both my father and me. Thank you again for the opportunity this has provided.

Scholar: **Alan J. Orthmann**

School: University of Washington
Sponsor: **Dennis Orthmann**, father;
174th Assault Helicopter Co.



I deeply appreciate the generous ADVA scholarship recently awarded me and would like to thank the ADVA. I applaud your commitment to post-secondary education. I am truly honored to receive a scholarship that represents and honors

the men who fought to protect our country.

This fall, I will be attending the Colorado School of Mines majoring in chemical engineering. Again, thank you very much for selecting me and for your generosity. I also know my selection has a very special meaning for my father.

Scholar: **Steven Bolger**

School: Colorado School of Mines
Sponsor: **James Bolger**, father;
3/16th Artillery



Thank you once again to the Americal Division Veterans Association for granting me a scholarship for this school year. I am honored to have been

chosen for a second time. The scholarship will help me continue my education at University of Wisconsin-River Falls, where I will be a sophomore majoring in health and human performance. Thank you once again for your generosity.

Scholar: **Karn Petersen**

School: University of Wisconsin
Sponsor: **Roger Petersen**, father;
23rd Military Police Co.



I cannot express my gratitude and appreciation for the scholarship that I have been awarded. Not only was I lucky enough to receive the scholarship to help me continue my education, but I was also fortunate enough to attend the annual Americal Division Veterans Association

reunion this past year and personally thank the veterans who not only defended our country but also contributed to the scholarship fund. I hope to see you in Jacksonville next year!

Scholar: **Melissa Bungo**

School: University at Buffalo
Sponsor: **Ronald Krul**, father;
4/3rd Infantry



I would like to thank everyone for the very generous ADVA scholarship I recently received. It is with great pride that I accept the scholarship in honor of my father, Kenneth Gates, who

served 1970-71 in Vietnam, Charlie Co., 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry. I will be returning to Western Illinois University for my final year where I am majoring in communication and marketing. It is with sincere gratitude that I say a final "thank you" for your continued support throughout my college career.

Scholar: **Brian A. Gates**

School: Western Illinois
Sponsor: **Kenneth Gates**, father;
1/46th Infantry



Thank you very much for your scholastic award of \$1,000. I am extremely honored to be the recipient of the Americal Division Veterans Association scholarship.

The scholarship has helped me greatly by allowing me to concentrate on schoolwork without having to worry about finances. I will graduate in the spring of 2010 and I would like to continue my post-education in the University of New Mexico physical therapy program. I would not be as far along in my educational career without your support

Scholar: **Crystal F. Martinez**

School: University of New Mexico
Sponsor: **Ruben Martinez**, father;
1/6th Infantry



Thank you for the \$1,000 scholarship that I received from the Americal Division Veterans Association. It will help me with tuition costs.

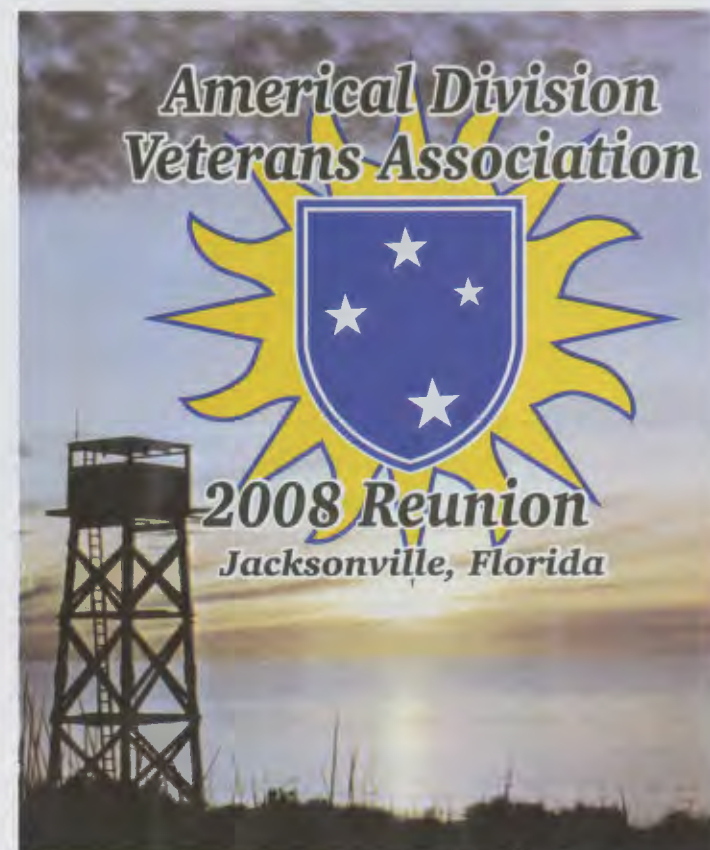
I am attending Indiana Wesleyan University because I feel that it is an excellent institution to further my education and to prepare me for the rest of my life. My dad is a college graduate and taught school for ten years. Like him, I value a good education. I thank you for helping me to go to college and to prepare for my future.

Scholar: **Zachary Hiser**

School: Indiana Wesleyan University
Sponsor: **William Hiser**, father;
4/3rd Infantry

Jacksonville Reunion June 26-29, 2008

By this time next year you will be talking about what a great time you had at the Jacksonville Reunion. The "Chu Lai Stand Down" will keep you buzzing for months; the delicious Polynesian cuisine, the waves washing on the shore as the sun sets in the west, the moon light dancing across the water as the night wears on, the fire dancers and great music from the show.



Since the Mayport Naval Station is home to 33 units, it is common to see helicopters skimming the water or jets soaring high above and the masks of the fleet are always part of the landscape.

The Stand Down is only one part of this great reunion. The trip to Camp Blanding will also add to the experience. This active Army and Florida National Guard training base will bring back the "good old days". Just seeing the barracks, the firing ranges and the troops in formation will have you reminiscing about your training days and all the trouble you got into.

The indoor and outdoor museums with the large variety of vehicles and weapons including the mock up fire base will add to this great experience. This trip includes lunch so you can share that unique army experience with your friends and loved ones.

The spouses (remember when they were wives), family and those who like to sneak away from the meetings will

enjoy one of two trips to either St. Augustine or Amelia Island. Both of these trips offer a glimpse into our illustrious past.

St Augustine is the first and oldest city in the USA. It was founded by the Spaniards and has a rich history. It features the Fountain of Youth, the Old Jail, the Mission of Nombre de Dios (Shrine) where first Catholic mass was said, and the Castillo de San Marcos our nation's oldest monument. There is also the old Fort, the shopping in the open market area and of course great places to enjoy lunch. The Columbia Restaurant is the oldest family run restaurant in Florida and features great Spanish cuisine.

The Amelia Island tour provides another perspective on the unique history of Northeast Florida. On this tour you travel up scenic A1A stopping off at the Kingsland Plantation and America Beach before you get to downtown Fernandina with its blocks of Victorian houses.

This island, which has served under eight flags, is the cradle of the early commercial shrimping industry in the USA. The shrimp boats still leave from the marina docks daily. The many restaurants feature local shrimp on their menus. This quaint little First Coast town will win your heart. You will want to return.

The best part of the reunion is catching up with old friends and buddies who share a common bond. The recently completely renovated Wyndham Riverwalk Hotel offers a great environment to sit back relax and swap stories. Whether you are in one of the hospitality suites, the lounge, out on the Riverwalk, around the pool or in the lobby with its inviting atmosphere you will find just the right place to enjoy yourself.

If you want to take it outside then just jump on the water taxi to the Jacksonville Landing with its many shops and restaurants. Or you may choose to take a stroll down to the San Marco section of Jacksonville.

No matter where you turn you will find a friend and a good time at the Jacksonville Reunion. So join us June 26-29, 2008. Go to the website www.americal.org/reunion.shtml or look for the registration information the next edition of the Americal Journal or contact me.

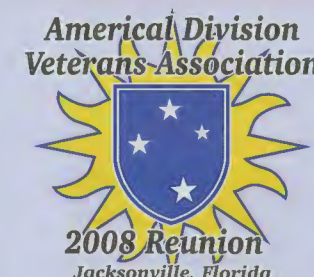
Don't forget we are having a registration contest.

Each confirmed hotel and paid 2008 reunion registrant who registers before January 1, 2008 will be entered into a drawing to receive: one complementary night at the hotel during the convention, one free reunion registration and one ticket to the Saturday evening banquet.

Each confirmed hotel and paid 2008 registrant who registers before March 31, 2008 will be entered into a drawing to receive one complementary ticket to the Saturday evening banquet.

Hotel records and reunion committee records will be used to determine eligibility. Decisions of the judges are final.

Lee Kaywork, Chairman
2008 ADVA Reunion Jacksonville



2008 ADVA NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION FORM JACKSONVILLE, FL JUNE 26-29, 2008

Wyndham Riverwalk Hotel

Jacksonville, FL 32207
\$99.00 per night, Special Rate good 3 days before and 3 days after Reunion



Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Spouse/Guest(s) Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: State: Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Unit/s: _____ WWII _____ VN _____

Registration Fee before 4-1-08	\$20.00/Person	X _____ =	\$ _____
Registration Fee on/after 4-1-08	\$25.00/Person	X _____ =	\$ _____
Reunion Photo Book	\$20.00/Book	X _____ =	\$ _____
Reunion Tee Shirt	\$12.00/Shirt	X _____ =	\$ _____
Indicate size for each shirt ordered _____			

Friday: June 27, 2008 8 AM-3 PM

**Camp Blanding Tour w/lunch \$65.00/Person X _____ = \$ _____

Friday Night: June 27, 2008 4:30 PM-11 PM

Chu Lai Stand Down and Show \$45.00/Person X _____ = \$ _____

(Ocean Breeze Club, Mayport Naval Base, Cash Bar)

Saturday Spouse Tour: June 28, 2008 8 AM-3 PM

**Historic Amelia Island \$50.00/Person X _____ = \$ _____

**St. Augustine America's Oldest City \$50.00/Person X _____ = \$ _____

Saturday Evening Dinner Dance: 6 PM-11 PM

Attendees: \$45.00/Person X _____ = \$ _____

Please Select Entrée: Chicken Marcella No: _____ TOTAL \$ _____

Sliced Sirloin No: _____

Herb Encrusted Salmon No: _____

Mail form and check to:

Checks Payable to:
ADVA 2008 Reunion
Tim Vail

Roanoke, VA 24012

Contact e-mail: _____ Contact Phone: _____

Americal Division's "Old Glory"

By Dale Meisel and Julia Brennan

Spread across a geographically huge area of operations (AO) in Vietnam, the Americal Division's 23rd Military Police Company had a wide variety of important duties to perform. They escorted convoys, secured division and brigade tactical operations centers (TOCs), and operated prisoner of war collecting points.

To the Military Policemen in Chu Lai fell one important but more ceremonial duty: each day they raised and lowered the American flag which flew over Americal Division Headquarters. In late 1970 and early 1971 I was the Operations Officer for Americal Division Provost Marshal LTC Everett I. Perrin, Jr. When the flag was lowered each day it was stored near the MP desk sergeant, "ready for duty" on the following morning. Periodically, when the flag had become too tattered to be flown, it was replaced.

After observing this operation day after day I decided that the next time the flag was changed I would keep the old one rather than see it destroyed. I am not sure why I decided to save the flag as I returned from Vietnam with few souvenirs. But 30 years later, in

2001, when I attended my first ADVA reunion in Cleveland, I was glad I kept this special souvenir.

The flag had spent most of the intervening years gathering dust in my closet. The majority of the time I forgot I even had it. But while preparing for the 2001 reunion I recalled I had it. I contacted Dave Taylor, who along with Larry Watson, was organizing the annual ADVA get together. I told Dave about the flag and asked him if he wanted me to bring it along. He gave me an enthusiastic yes.



When Dave saw me in Cleveland with the flag he asked me if he could hold it. It was then



Photos Courtesy Julia Brennan

that I realized that for many the flag would resonate in a special way.

On the Saturday afternoon of the reunion I hung the flag in the ballroom. At the banquet that evening Dave had me come to the podium where I briefly told the audience my story. Several attendees later told me that the introduction of the flag electrified the veterans.

I subsequently displayed the flag at other reunions. But I realized along the way that

the flag was in need of professional attention. I contacted Dr. Richard Verrone of Texas Tech University for advice. Verrone has attended several ADVA reunions in his quest to enhance TTU's Vietnam Center with Americal veterans' memories and memorabilia. Through Dr. Verrone I ultimately contacted Julia Brennan of Caring for Textiles in Washington, D.C. Julia agreed to use her professional skills to conserve the flag. Her story follows.

Dale's American flag that flew over the Americal Division headquarters is the first flag from the Vietnam War that I have conserved. It fills an important piece of history for me. I grew up in Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai, Thailand, (1964-1970) during the Vietnam War. My father served there in 1968. It was a worrisome time for me as a child. When Dale's flag arrived I was

working on two World War II flags; the flag that flew over the US Capitol on September 11, 2001; a Marine Guidon used in the Battle of Faluja, Iraq; and a 16 star hand-stitched wool flag from the 1850's. Each one of these flags tells a story. Each is owned or cared for by someone who, like Dale, has taken the time to keep the stories and artifacts alive.

My job as a conservator is to extend the life of the object. My work is not restoration. I do not recreate or reweave a textile to make it look new. I use reversible techniques to stabilize it. I try to be as non-invasive as possible to preserve the integrity and history of the piece.

Over twenty years of experience has formed my conservation processes. As a professional member of the American Institute for Conservation I adhere to a code of ethics. Treatments have to be reversible (no tapes, glues,



Photo Courtesy Dale Meisel

paint, staples, bleaches) and respect the integrity of the object.

My handwork has to be distinguishable from the original. Also, all treatments are accompanied by written and photographic documentation of the artifact before, during and after treatment.

This is part of the historical record for the future. It is work that demands patience, careful looking, thoughtful evaluation - not rote formulas, hand-skills, and sometimes scientific analysis. Each textile that comes into my studio is treated uniquely and with the utmost care and professionalism. The Americal Division's flag was in fairly good condition overall. It was soiled and one end was tattered, frayed, and missing sections of the borders. These edges had been tied up in multiple knots in order to prevent them from falling off, but they were pulling at the body of the flag and looked unsightly.

I left some of the worn ends "incomplete", but stabilized them with fine hand stitching so that they would not continue to fall apart or unravel.

These physical damages are reminders of its history and use.

Since the flag was nylon and fairly contemporary, I knew that it could be wet cleaned. As a matter of practice, I tested the reds and blues to make sure that the dyes would not bleed. They were fast.

Next, I untied all the knots and tangles in the border and flattened them out. This enabled me to reconstruct the end of the flag with as much original material as possible. These dangling ends were very vulnerable. I sandwiched them in nylon bridal netting to protect them during the cleaning. The flag was wet cleaned flat in a non-ionic detergent, blocked, and pressed. The stabilization work focused on the tattered end. Once I had the dangling ends all realigned, I could see there were large gaps between the body of the flag and the torn off ends. I used lightweight nylon of the same cream and red colors to insert "bridges" to fill in these gaps. I left the frayed edges as is, and hand stitched the patches in place to fill in the areas of loss. The corners, which were worn off to gentle curves, were stabilized with tiny blanket stitches to secure every other thread.

Now the flag is sturdy enough to be handled and displayed. Its wear and tear are still evident, but not causing any damage. Finally, I folded it, padding out the creases with acid free tissue and packed it in an acid free box for long term storage.

Textiles are amazing vessels of history. As children we are swaddled in them, as brides adorned in them, and in death honored by them. Quilts



Photo Courtesy Dale Meisel

cover our beds, samplers record family history, and rugs provide colorful and warm footing. From ancient times textiles were the most revered of gifts. Highly evolved, easily transported, they were instant symbols of kingship, wealth, belonging, or surrender. They continue to be. I hope that people will look in their closets and pull out these powerful mementos and commit to their preservation.

After about two months of work, Julia returned the flag to me. Her work was skillfully done and should give the flag the stability it badly needed. Our Stars and Stripes still looks her age, and perhaps will never again achieve the heights she once attained. But she may still occasionally show herself off to some old soldiers, who may see a bit of themselves reflected in the Americal's "Old Glory".

Dale Meisel was First Platoon Leader, 23rd MP Company and Americal Division Provost Marshal Operations Officer in 1970 and 1971. He is currently the Warden of the 1,354 bed Lehigh County Prison in Allentown, PA, but claims he got his start in corrections at the PW cage in LZ Bronco/Duc Pho. He can be reached at

Julia Brennan, owner of Caring for Textiles, based in Washington DC, has been working in the field for over 20 years. She has worked on three of George Washington's waistcoats, Lou Gehrig's 1931 jersey, Babe Ruth's 1930 All Star Tour kimono, General Patton's riding silks, Miss Kitty's dress from Gunsmoke, and hundreds of other beloved "non-celebrity" textiles. She is committed to public outreach and spends time each year teaching textile conservation in museums overseas. Her recent missions include Algeria, Madagascar, and Bhutan. You may reach her at www.caringfortextiles.com



23rd Military Police veterans with "Old Glory's" first appearance Cleveland ADVA reunion 2001. L-R Vic Kornaski, Tom Packard, Randy Teal, Paul Stiff. Photo Courtesy Tom Packard.



Old Glory over Chu Lai 1970

Photo Courtesy Dale Meisel

Still Remembering Gloria DeHaven

By Staff Sgt. Emil I. Blomstrann



Joseph Lauer, John Wells & Emil Blomstrann. All were attached to the same supply tent

between three artillery batteries. Company E kitchen and supply tents were demolished and another 150 bounced from the loose sand between two rows of tents, and then went spinning off to the east, failing to explode.



Bust of Gloria DeHaven (left) and the original carving from an Army cot frame (right), by Emil Blomstrann

about coming out, but he did. We got a new doctor after that and he was the best." I still have my New Testament, which was in my barracks bag and was spliced by a fragment of the shell which hit Wells.

But to relieve tensions there was also time to relax. Company E was interested in basketball and had a good team. We were able to fish or swim in the ocean. Chapel attendance was good and so was the movie theatre. In the mess hall tent there was a radio, which played all day until "lights out." There were transcriptions of stateside programs like "Fibber McGee and Molly" and music from "Oklahoma."

To relax, I found a piece of wood from a broken cot frame and chipped away at it with a knife in my spare time trying to create the head of a female. It was a slow process but guys would stop by at the supply tent to ask how it was coming and wanted to know who it was. Carrol Cooledge from F Company thought I needed photos to work from and gave me some movie magazines. We had recently seen "Two Girls and a Sailor" with June Allyson and Gloria DeHaven and Cooledge suggested it should be Gloria. John Wells wrote to Gloria DeHaven asking for life size photos. Her studio sent 8 x 10" photos. One of the men on security duty helping to maintain the three airports brought me some red sandy clay that the bulldozers had been digging up. I worked with that but it wasn't satisfactory. Then a young officer from division headquarters came to see what I was doing and suggested clay. A couple of days later, five pounds of modeling clay arrived and a model of Gloria DeHaven was created. The story of the clay model even made it back to the home-town newspaper, The Hartford Courant.

I have now been married for 38 years, still have the model of Gloria, and much to the irritation of my wife, inasmuch as I cannot always remember our anniversary, I never forget when Gloria's birthday when July 23rd rolls around and I insist we have a birthday cake for her. She will be 82 this year. Just a kid, I'll be 91.



Gloria DeHaven

(Courtesy www.hollywood.com/celebrity/
Gloria_DeHaven. All rights reserved

This article is reprinted, with permission, from the 164th Infantry News, the official publication of the 164th Infantry Regiment Association. Grateful appreciation is acknowledged to LTC (Ret) Shirley J. Olgeirson, 164th Editor. Photos courtesy of Emil Blomstrann.



Emil Blomstrann (32 Foxon Place, New Britain, CT) celebrates Gloria's 82nd birthday with cake, ice cream and a candle!

Gloria DeHaven was one of the signature perky soubrettes of the 1940's. A hometown sweetheart for many GI's, she was a good singer with a vivacious screen presence. She appeared on stage and in many TV shows, including Gunsmoke, As the World Turns and Murder, She Wrote

"Pearls of Pauline" My WWII Memoirs

By Fernando Vera

WWII Historians note: This is the 4th installment of Fernando Vera's memoirs, which began in the 1st Quarter 2007 issue of the Americal Journal.

Mopping Up on Leyte (Continued)

Also here in my wandering, I ran into two of our guys very neatly dressed in khakis in some quartermasters' chow line. They saw me too and we just nodded; at the time I didn't know that they were AWOL. They too were caught. I never found out what kind of Courts Martial they got. Also, when I was out "adventuring" someone in my tent stole my Parker 51 pen. I'm sure it was someone of the cadre there and when I saw him with one like mine I challenged him but, of course, he denied it. Made me question who was the enemy?

One more incident: I went to the beach one beautiful but very muggy moonlight night. There were all kinds of GI's laying around shooting the breeze and this one guy say's, "Hi buddy." I said "Hi", and he said "Lets talk." I said "OK." I sat down next to him and we said a few things, then he tried to get cute. I told him if he wanted to go home he'd better change his (expletive) ways. My first and only experience - I left quite hurriedly, man! I never knew of such things; me! at a worldly age of 21 too. Here also were many freed civilian American ex-prisoners; they seemed to have a sad look.

Finally after about one month of leisure I was sent to a final departing area where I was to go back to my company, although I didn't know it yet. There I met a few Japanese-American GI's who seemed apprehensive about their role here and I tried to put them at ease. Finally, I was sent to the docks at Tacloban. Before I boarded this civilian merchant ship, I saw a very large cemetery with many white crosses and Stars of David; a rather sad and thought-provoking sight. Here I must say that there sure is a difference in civilian and Navy-operated ships. On to Cebu.

Cebu - Philippine Islands

I arrived at Cebu City, Cebu on April 16, 1945 and stayed at the dock overnight. A little way off I saw the capitol building which had been gutted by fire. I boarded a landing barge that took me and some other guys to port in about an hour's time. We landed at the beach at the end of a paved road and a truck was waiting. If I'm not wrong, the area where my company was located was called Tabuelan and there wasn't anything there but jungle growth.

When I got off I was back to my company; until then I never confided that I would. Guess they were trying to prevent me from getting lost! First person I talked to was my First Sergeant Joy Fay. Someone, of course, had taken my place as the company runner and he kinda looked at me wondering

where to place me. So I said, "Whatever you say Sarge." So what he did was to send my replacement to a squad and I got my job back. I surmise that he was considering that I had been there much longer than the new man and wanted to respect that.

That same day we took off on a company patrol in a southerly direction. Here I noticed the terrain; there was a good bit of coral or volcanic base in some areas and some were sunken as if a meteor had struck. One was large enough that there was a small farm at the bottom of it. The weather was warm and clear. Oh yes, it seems that if you got scratched with this stuff you would get a pus-like infection real easy but it would clear up; anyway, I did.

After traveling two hours on this semi-barren terrain of irregular formations and depths, we turned from South to West. On our way we came upon this small brook which came out of nowhere, traveled quite swiftly, was dirty brown and, after about 100 feet or so disappeared again into the ground. Along this brook was no vegetation and the soil was pale. Finally, we reached a heavy growth area and a ravine that was quite deep and rocky about 150 feet wide. Across it, we saw two Japanese soldiers going north. I'm not sure but I think they shot at us once, I guess in defiance, then they disappeared.

Here we also got word that my communications officer, Sgt. John Sustar, was to go home on emergency leave. He took our names and wrote to my mom (I still have the letter) and never came back to us. He wrote that he got malaria; guess he forgot to continue taking his Atabrine tablets, how convenient (pun intended). From here a squad was sent out along this ravine led by our Lt. Smith from North Africa. They were gone for about two hours when they came back. He reported they had come upon an abandoned camp and the cooking fires were still warm. There were also some small abandoned ponies; apparently the Japanese soldiers took off with no resistance. We bedded for the night without foxholes; nothing but solid volcanic rock all around us. Next day we went back the way we came and then continued on an easterly direction into all kinds of terrain, some bare, some semi-jungle growth when we came upon this long and deep valley. It was bare but the opposite side was higher than the side we were on.

When we stopped on a break I would find the nearest bush or defilade to melt into. You see, I took my basic training quite seriously, my basic platoon Sgt. Buckmaster saw to that. For those of us who went into the interior of Cebu on missions, as you well know, the typography is really hard to describe other than that there must have been a great volcanic and earthen upheaval as evinced by the irregular formations we encountered.

After the break we came upon another shallow valley turned south. As we were traveling southward we heard a small skirmish to our left. I wasn't quite dark when a supply unit of Filipinos caught up with us. How they ever found us God only knows! Guess someone knew our area quite well. There were few armed guards leading them, so actually they were in a dangerous kind of position. They bedded

down for the night with us. In the dark one of the Filipino porters lit up to smoke and we quickly put a stop to that. A little while later the Japs dropped a couple of mortar rounds. No damage from them but close. Two of our guys jumped from their foxholes and were killed in action. Next day we buried them and the CO registered their place on the map and reported it.

We were going down from this knoll on a westerly trail when we were fired upon; our first scout named John, the guy who had taken my place as runner, got wounded on the foot; not too grave. There was firing over our heads but no further harm. I think that our re-supply crew took him back to wherever. We didn't continue on but went back from where we had turned into this small valley. From here on I really don't remember how we went or whether the next narrative happened on this company patrol.

I do remember we settled on a semi-level area with all kinds of outcroppings. Two young Filipinos joined us from somewhere very pleasant. I don't remember how many days we spent here, but not too many. A squad patrol was sent out and they were gone about one half day, I think. They were ambushed and we lost our BAR man. My friend, Vic Crowder, told me that because of him, the rest of the squad was saved. I don't remember the BAR man's name but he had been with us since Bougainville and I got acquainted with him. While here there were some wild hens and roosters. I and the Filipino comrades chased them into a small hole in a rock; our mouths watering imagining roast chicken. There were three of them and as we reached for them they flew out beating us furiously with their wings and they got away. Maybe it was all for the good as their meat would have been too tough to bite.

On the last day before we left, a squad had been posted a little way from us on our return trail that evening. Some straggler Japanese were going towards them talking loudly and they wiped out four of them. Also, that night in a nearby area some guy from another company spotted about one hundred Japs going north in a canyon. He wasn't believed from what I heard (rumor). Next morning as we were preparing to go end this patrol I was kneeling checking my carbine. I always cocked and fired it, then put on the safety and magazine. Lo and behold this time I had the carbine pointing up. Muzzle near my face. I put in the loaded magazine, pulled the trigger and bam! I sat back stunned. Sgt. Fay stared and, I guess, the whole company. He came over quickly and grabbed the carbine off my hands. I guess he thought I was trying to be funny. No way! Anyway, he realized it was a stupid accident and never questioned me.

We saddled up, started on our way back to where we had started from, went by the dead Japanese soldiers that our outpost had killed, turned north into a semi-deep valley and came upon a very large group of dead Japanese soldiers, all in one closely-knit circle. Their bodies were shattered in various states; from the looks of things none had tried to get away as they were so close together. I don't know which artillery outfit got them but they sure did one hell of an accurate job. We didn't stop, we just stared in silence.

We climbed out of this canyon onto a completely different terrain, almost all white coral, rocky stumps and ridges. Lo and behold, there was a group of trucks waiting for us. We got started going on this bumpy ride where the engineers had bulldozed a half-baked road with no frills. Of course, our GI drivers were no "little old ladies from Pasadena."

They drove as fast as they could, trying to level out the higher bumps. Had I known how rough that ride was going to be I would have rather walked out! We entered the asphalt road that crossed the island west to east and went, I guess, to rest in the prepared camp in Liloan. In looking at the map in our book, *"Under the Southern Cross"*, since I wasn't there, I just wonder if all you guys that started from Cebu City walked all the way north to this road which crossed the island from Tabuelan's west coast to the eastern coast, approximately 50 miles as the crow fly's, probably some 200 miles up and down hills and valleys. One hell of a long walk!

In our camp we loafed, went to Cebu City and fooled around drinking tuba – of which one of our officers said, "If you saw where and how it was made, you wouldn't drink it." Well, what the hell; we were living dangerously, so why quit now? It was nice to relax. It seems like the regiment was stationed all around here, although I was not aware of it. Our mess had coffee on 24 hours a day and for some reason our meals were better. One thing I found that was sad was that when we were through our meal and didn't finish everything, the neighborhood Filipinos would get whatever we had left over. After a while we weren't allowed to give them any; we had to dump it into a 50-gallon barrel. They would dip into it and take whatever they could. I'm quite sure they were hungry. Why such a practice was stopped I don't know.

One night as I was returning to camp, a jeep stopped and picked me up. The driver was a young lieutenant who had been a guerilla during the occupation; he said that he was to make the Philippine Islands his home when the war was over. He gave me a ride all the way to my camp even though it was way past his area and we wished each other luck.

It's possible that we went out on two more company patrols but I'm not sure so I'll tie them together as one. We were then trucked north about five or ten miles on the coastal road and we stopped at a village where we took off in a westerly direction. I think we sort of zigzagged north and west into some slopping hills, some bare and some with overgrowth in the lower valley's; many ups and downs but we kept on getting into higher and higher elevations. We reached a high point and looked down into a valley overgrown with growth with a path going into it. Further on, there were some high steep hills. We were going to climb up one of these. Because of the steepness the distance was illusionary. I thought, "Hah!" It took us all day, and in climbing this steep and high (and bare) hill, about a 75-degree slope – we'd slip back quite often. When we finally reached the top we were exhausted to the point that we just laid down to catch our breath; we just thought we'd get there in a couple hours! What easy targets we'd have been.

Nearby in a rock outcrop was a delicious cool spring where we refreshed ourselves. From here we were to go down an overgrown trail, but first a squad patrol was sent down. Our Lt. Smith of the African campaign led it, went down a little way and was ambushed. A few shots were fired and he got wounded in the leg, not serious, but it was over for him. Apparently it was a couple of stragglers who ran off. We went down, veered off to the left and went to a small cone-shaped knoll, very rocky with nothing around it. It was getting dark so we just actually curled around some rocks and quickly fell asleep. No night radio watches that I can remember. Incidentally, the only code radio ID password that I can remember is "Arson 1" and "Arson 2". But we had used so many different ones.

Next morning we started in an easterly direction on a low ridge that was bare; we stopped for a break and lo and behold here comes a B-24 Liberator flying low with its bomb bay doors open. Boy! Did our ID smoke grenades and panel markers break out fast; I mean fast! Glad they weren't colorblind! We started again and turned north to the left and there was this sunken area that looked like a coral landscape which was quite large. There were probably caves with some jungle growth; never ran into any growth as heavy as in Bougainville. To the right there was a small canyon and a high ridge. We saw another patrol going the opposite way. It was a little way off so actually you couldn't see their features too well and I'm sure we were eyeballing one another closely for a few minutes; neither patrol got excited and we silently continued on. And on!

For some un-Godly reason, there were millions of household flies; you couldn't open your mouth to take a breath, they were so hungry. Also, to the left, there were some trees and they seemed to be full of monkeys, guess they survived on flies. We came upon this small pool and tiny spring of water and there was a dead Japanese soldier already swelling up. We continued on to somewhere and someplace along the way Filipinos and their guards caught up to us with supplies. I've yet to know how in heaven they found us! They should have been awarded a medal for bravery; only two armed men and never knowing what they might run into! That was really something!

We were sent back to the spring to get water with the Filipino crew as we were bedding down for the night. A squad was sent further up as an outpost. Next morning we were told that when they woke up one of the guys who had slept by a log got up and the guy on the other side of the log was a dead Jap! He took off fast! Also, before reaching the spring we ran into another company patrol on our path going the opposite direction. One guy I recognized as one of those I had basic with. He either didn't recognize me or he was just plain tired. His name was Sanderson we called him Sandy, from Klamath, CA.

From here we came upon some clear rolling hills which were covered with low lush grass which we called the "Golf Course." We went down into this small canyon where one side looked like the Grand Canyon, only it wasn't too wide. We came upon a lone hut; in it was a son of the "rising sun"

and his sun had set. We came out of the canyon into a small clump of woods where we set up for the night. A squad was sent off to check a clump of bamboo and from a ways off we heard some loud blasts. Four or five Japanese soldiers and nurses had committed "Hari Kari" with hand grenades. I had radio watch that night but the one who started the watch fell asleep too, so when we suddenly woke up next morning, so did our vigilant watcher.

Nothing was ever said. In a way it was quite humorous; I guess the other end did too as they never questioned us as to why we didn't report. One thing for sure, all the rest of us radiomen never woke up to relieve either; I think we were all bushed. We stated back the same way for a while, then swung east towards the coast and came upon some coconut trees. A couple of Filipino that were with us climbed them and got us a few green coconuts. The juice was very refreshing. Finally, we reached the road by some village and waited for transportation back to our permanent camp.

This was our last patrol of the war, June 13, 1945. We loafed around, went to Cebu City to see if there was anything interesting to do and got to see the "Mad Russians, How Do You Do?" a USO show, while waiting to go on the invasion of Japan. I read later after the war, I think in "Stars and Stripes" that two divisions were slated to invade the next island south of Honshu to draw in Japanese troops before invading Tokyo. We were one of the divisions. Man! Am I glad they dropped the bomb!

I also read on the company bulletin board, that volunteers were wanted for pre-landing frogman training. They were to land and raise hell; and they frankly said that survival was nil. I silently thought about it as I was thinking of the younger replacements that had recently joined us but I realized that I was not physically up to it. You see, I already felt quite old at twenty-two.

We got the news that the war was over around noon, month of August, 1945. Two A-bombs had been dropped previously. The report of the effects of the bombs radiation was awesome. The river at Hiroshima would contaminate the ocean; plus the land would be sterilized, etc. I wondered, "My God, what in heaven?"

Just around this time our communications Sergeant, James Standish, returned; his gamble had paid off. I don't think he even emptied his duffle bag. All of the old timers left for home almost immediately. I saw Bennie Wauneka at Battalion Headquarters for the last time. He became Major Harris's orderly and I saw him 45 years later at the Navajo Reservation. His cousin, Frisco, had already passed on. Six months later he also died. I'm glad I got to see him once more.

In preparation for Japan, Vic Crowder and I got orders to be transferred to the 247th Field Artillery; we didn't even get time to say "so long" to most of the guys. Why I don't know, but Army life-wise, it was a good duty transfer. We had it good and we ended up at the battalion headquarters company. I met with the Battalion Commander and I requested that Vic and I be kept together as we had been together since we got drafted and the request was granted.

I got in the communications section again, gravy duty. We tore down miles of communications field wire, but weren't allowed to donate it to the Filipinos so we just threw the rolls along the road for easy finding. While I was still with L Company, I found that C Company, 132nd was nearby. I went looking for my basic training buddy, Leonard Montezuma and was greatly saddened to learn that he had been killed in action. He was a quite unassuming man, we got along great.

I left for Japan on September 1, 1945. Some guys left gals crying and the populace waved goodbye to us. It saddens me to know that, in view of all the sacrifice that was paid for the liberation of the Philippine Islands, that we are now being denied our military bases there anymore. Of course, I respect the Philippine Islands government mandate but one base could have been kept as a living memorial in respect to our military that gave their all!

247th Field Artillery Headquarters Company Japan and Home



One of the main paths in small hills near Yokohama Beach; There were foxholes every 100 feet. Good thing the bomb was dropped. (Photo courtesy Fernando Vera)

On our way to Japan we hit, a guess, a mild typhoon. You could see our LST's really bouncing in the ocean, guess they really took a beating. For a few days out it was still warm, but I woke up one morning cold; we were nearing Japan. I arrived September 8, 1945, at Yokohama. Tokyo Bay was an ocean in itself; you cannot see from shore to shore. There were ships of all types. I'd say hundreds just to describe the immensity of our military might and the logistics of military movement and supplies. Mind you, this was accomplished



Japanese military personnel standing in formation during the surrender of Yokosuka (Yokohama) Naval Base, August 30, 1945 (Photo: US Navy Historical Center, Washington, DC)

without our modern day computers. It now makes me wonder why we can't solve our own medical, social behavior and joblessness problems as I write this in 1991 and 1992. Will it get worse?

We docked and I went ashore. I slept by a warehouse and woke up the next morning thinking I must be on California, the sun was so bright and clear. We boarded some trucks and went somewhere out into the country to an Army base. I got off in a disordered fashion and messed around some cases of electronic parts, very well-fingered wood. Some were whole radio stations with portable gas engines. All this had been neatly stacked but when we got though, everything was in disarray. The area we had gone through was farmland.

The same day we were trucked back through Yokohama to some small Navy barracks and next door to us a Japanese Navy Admiral was living in a house. We got acquainted with an old couple who were still living in their bomb shelter. They told us in sign language about the "B Ni-ju-Kus" (B-29s) coming over and frightening them; gratefully now, we could both smile about it. I also saw the devastation in Tokyo and Yokohama. The street we were on was called "I sogo cho", the roadway to Yokosuka where the Marines were stationed but I never did go that way. The hilly roadways were all terraced and they had vegetable gardens, I guess, wherever a plant would grow.

The beach was also lined; I think this was done to prevent erosion. We did calisthenics and some regimented running on the streets. Yeah! We were well-disciplined troops. We started getting acquainted with the people; needless to say, people are people. I met a Kamikaze pilot who let me know he wasn't too enthusiastic about his impending sacrifice.

After a few days we were moved to a more permanent Navy barracks down the road, plenty of room. Here we were assigned to guard duty. We guarded our little piper cub that was in an empty area in downtown Yokohama. Of course,

here too there was much devastation. Citizens told us that a little way off was a Christian school that had been bombed with many children in it. The sadness of war; it seems as the world hasn't learned to respect itself yet.

I started to learn Japanese, enough to get by. I even learned to count up to a million; it was easy. I'd read in one of our G2 Journals that they found information that the Japanese were intending to occupy the US for 50 years if they had won. Well, they're not doing too badly now are they? One of the reasons I mentioned this is that the little school kids would approach us and practice their English with us; apparently they were being prepared for the future.

I also pulled guard duty in front of a theatre to keep the GI's out. It ran all day, how late I don't know. It had three screens, giving a 3D illusion, although it was not clear. They showed the news of General MacArthur and some troop landings; I think it was our paratroopers. A group of us were put to guard various areas; one night my friend Vic Crowder and I got to guard a race track in Yokohama-the stable had some kind of equipment, what it was I don't know.

Anyway, we had 4-hour watches, walking up and down over some 100 yards and not a soul around to make a military impression on! It was cold! cold! cold! Our tropical blood couldn't take it. We decided to go inside one of the stables where there was a weighing scale and sat down back to back. Next thing we knew our Officer of the Day (OD) was shining a light on us. He turned around and never said a thing; we had difficulty falling asleep. His name was LT. Behrens; a "damn good officer", to him, the men came first.



Japanese Vice Admiral Michitomo Totsuka, Yokosuka (Yokohama) Naval Base commander, photographed just after he surrendered the facility to Rear Admiral Robert B. Cainey, US Third Fleet Chief of Staff, on August 30, 1945. This is the Japanese Admiral whose house was next door to where Fernando Vera was billeted in Yokohama (Photo: US Navy Historical Center, Washington DC)

Other officers were good too, but this guy was extra. Anyway, we were never called on the proverbial carpet. Well, I got guard duty in this same place during the day and nature called. So, I went to an open latrine where I was



General Douglas MacArthur gives his speech accepting the Japanese surrender on the deck of the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945. The deck of the Missouri furnished two American flags. One had flown from the mast of Commodore Matthew Perry's ship when he had sailed into Tokyo Bay nearly a century before. MacArthur was a direct descendant of the New England Perry family and cousin of Commodore Matthew Perry

indisposed and the OD came along and caught me the way I was. He read me the riot act, threatened Courts Martial. He asked why I didn't ask for a corporal of the guard. I made him aware that I was miles away from our command post and, as young and healthy as I was, I wouldn't be able to holler that loud. Another "Peril of Pauline" close call went by with no bad results.

I got a plush base-gate guard duty with I think 3 days off of every 4. With this freedom, I got to go to see Tokyo and saw the Emperor's Palace with the moat around it. In front of it was a large park where there were many bomb shelters roughly dug. I would catch the train from Yokohama to Tokyo; and in between was much war devastation, miles of it.

Usually there were a few GI's on the train but the cars were full of Japanese citizens who showed no animosity. Guess they realized we weren't going to be destructive or arrogant. One thing I did notice was that in all our bombing, rails and bridges were left intact. Guess they were missed for our probable military use, as there were quite a few canals around Yokohama. People were beginning to return to business in the buildings that were left and small souvenir shops were opening. I went into one where I saw a whole wall of shelves full of, I'm sure, cultured pearls in jars, millions of them. I could have had some of them free and I don't think they would have said anything. Also, of course, our "chokorato" (chocolate) and chewing gum was in high demand. These were good money generators as we weren't getting full pay and our pockets were sort of bare.

To be Continued

Remembering a Husband at War

By Francis Sinclair-Anderson



John J. Anderson 1944
(Photo courtesy Francis Sinclair-Anderson)

My late husband, John E. Anderson, served as a medic with the 121st Medical Battalion during the battles for Guadalcanal and Bougainville. John passed away peacefully on March 21, 2005 at the age of 83 years and 11 months. He had a very productive and happy life. I have much information gained from John during conversations over a period of time and also some notes which I would like to relate to the readers of the *Americal Journal*. John put most of the bad memories aside and most of what he related to me were facts about where he was, what happened and other anecdotes.

I will begin John's history at age 20, December 1941. After serving one year in the National Guard (along with his buddies from the same area of Boston, MA), he was expecting to be relieved of duty, which happened to be the very same day Pearl Harbor was attacked. Instead, they assembled together and were told, "Sorry boys, we are at war, you are now on active duty until the war ends." Soon thereafter, he became part of a large transport of service personnel. Their group was split into two, one to go to Europe and the other to the Pacific. John went to the Pacific.

After many days at sea (WWII editors note: this was on Task Force 6814), they arrived in Australia to be among some



Japanese transport bombed and run aground on Guadalcanal (Photo courtesy Victor Lander)

of the first GI's to arrive there. They received a very warm welcome and were assigned temporary billets in the homes of the Australian people. Later they were sent to the island of New Caledonia for training and outfitting with equipment and weapons, some vintage WWI.

John and his buddies were assigned to the 121st Medical



Native Chief's Home ("Bure"), Fiji's.
(Photo courtesy Victor Lander)

Battalion, under the newly-named Americal Division. After a number of months on New Caledonia they became part of a large task force of vessels, men and supplies. His unit was aboard the "President Jackson" and at early dawn on November 12, 1942, they began to stream ashore on Guadalcanal in a supreme effort of support and relief to the battle-weary Marines who had been fighting the Japanese since their landing on Guadalcanal in early August, 1942. John spoke of climbing down the rope ladder on the side of the "President Jackson" with his boots tied around his neck so they would not get wet on his way to Guadalcanal.

As they poured ashore they passed by columns of battle-fatigued and exhausted Marines on their way off the island. Messages were called back and forth. John recalled one being, "You are welcome to this G_D__ Island!" At this time the Marines had established a small secure beachhead and were in the process of taking control of Henderson Field, their main objective. The island, however, was still heavily fortified and occupied by the Japanese.

John remembered their small field hospital built partially underground and his unit building and settling in their foxholes. He had a vivid memory of that night November 12th and 13th, as he watched awestruck and terrified from his foxhole at what would be come the first naval battle for Guadalcanal. He spoke of the sky being illuminated with brilliant bursts of colored lights, and the noise of battle was horrendous (the likes of which he had never seen or heard again in his life). John witnessed the sinking of many large vessels and aircraft. It wasn't until afterwards they learned they had witnessed, among others, the sinking of two flag ships, the "San Francisco" and the "Atlanta", together with Admirals Callaghan, Scott and their crews. In addition they saw the cruiser "Juneau" sink with the Sullivan brothers onboard. He remembers how thankful they were that not one Japanese shell had struck Guadalcanal, and what remained of the Japanese Navy was turned back.

While serving on Guadalcanal the 121st Medical Battalion were among the first medics in the war to be armed with weapons to defend themselves. The Japanese snipers would target them as they went to assist the wounded and pick them off.

John was a gentle man and did not dwell on the horrors he experienced. He simply said that, after a while you become immune and stay focused on the job you had to do—helping your wounded buddies stay alive with



John Anderson on horse, Fiji Islands 1943
(Photo courtesy Francis Sinclair-Anderson)

first aid and rush them to the field hospital ASAP. He did speak of the hardships of life on Guadalcanal in wartime; leather boots and belts and other equipment turning green and rotting in the rainforest. Also the large crabs and other bothersome insects that occupied their foxholes, which were always muddy.

After the island was secured John said Admiral Halsey came ashore and spoke, praising and thanking them for their bravery. Afterwards, they all assembled together at the top of a mountain where a cemetery had been hastily provided to lay some of their lost comrades to rest. John remembered a very moving memorial service was held.

John survived his service on Guadalcanal and was shipped off the island once our forces secured the island in March 1943. He was then sent with his buddies to the island of Fiji for a well-earned R&R, retraining and reequipping with more up to date equipment and weapons. During their time on Fiji John and his buddies were invited by a native chief to their family social gatherings. At these events, John, being a great dancer, learned how to do a native dance. He became so good that for years after he would entertain his own family at weddings and other gatherings. He was still performing at the age of 81! During their visits with the native chief and his family they would be invited to partake of the customary potent white drink made from roots of plants grown on the island. After one of these occasions they were having difficulty finding their way back to base, a hut. The chief came to their rescue and presented them with a horse that got them all safely back to camp.

In December of 1943 the 121st took part in the invasion of Bougainville. John said that the island was so volcanic that the ground constantly shook. Shortly afterward their field hospital and sleeping quarters were attacked at dawn on January 23, 1944 by Japanese aircraft repeatedly bombing them. On that fatal occasion John and his buddies were caught running to their foxholes as the bombs dropped in their path, throwing shrapnel everywhere. John remembers on the sound of the bomb dropping and then realizing he was severely injured, and prayed to the Blessed Mother to save him. John was severely injured in the neck and his leg just above the ankle and his fingers. The largest wound was to the inside of his left thigh. He may have suffered other injuries had it not been for his buddy, "Red" Murray. He lay down on top of John to protect him as another Japanese bomber came over and dropped more bombs. Many of his buddies were killed and others wounded like John. He

believed his guardian angel was with him and the prayers from his many loving family members protected him.

Fortunately for John and his other wounded buddies they were quickly taken to their own hospital nearby which had also taken a hit but was still operating. They were about to amputate John's leg when he heard a surgeon he knew say, "No, let's try to save this boys leg." John was 22 then.

He was quickly patched up as best they could and sent in haste to the rear hospital now established on Guadalcanal. There he received more intense care and was placed in a cast up to his underarms to be later transported by hospital ship to an Army hospital in Texas. He said he would never forget the joy he felt as they sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge with a large lump in his throat.

John remained in several different casts for 10 months and after many surgeries and continued care he was discharged from the Army on October 6, 1944. He later received a 65% permanent disability from the VA. John's unit also received a Presidential Unit Citation on which his name and outfit appears, for their support of the Marines on Guadalcanal. Along with all his other buddies who were wounded that day they all received a Purple Heart. After John passed away I received a document signed by President Bush saying the country thanked him for his service.

John never claimed to be a hero. Like all other vets who served and survived and he said, "The real heroes are the ones who never returned." He also said, like most vets, the experience he remembered most was the courage and camaraderie he shared with his buddies. The war in the Pacific remained the one great experience of his life. I believe these experiences became part of John and made him into the honorable and compassionate man he became. In a letter to his brother Joe (from which I have taken some of this information) written on March 25, 1944 on his return to the states, he says, "It's all over now, so I am just going to shelve it as a bad memory and experience."

Years later when John's nephew Bruce presented him with the book, "Guadalcanal" by Richard B. Frank, John wrote in the book, Thank you for presenting me with this book. I relate to this history of Guadalcanal, landing there on November 12, 1942 and surviving thru March 1943. Never did get it completely out of my mind, so wasteful of such a wonderful gift—life—and to me it will never resolve anything." I believe these sentiments remained John's until he died.

In May of 2002 John and I returned to the Pacific Theatre of War (at the urging of his nephew Bruce) on a 32 day cruise put together to give vets and their families an opportunity to revisit most of the battle sites. It was during this cruise that John spoke at length about his wartime memories. As we approached the Solomon Islands he pointed out the "slot" where Japanese aircraft

would fly down from their base at Rabaul, New Guinea, to drop bombs on Guadalcanal and Bougainville. I believe this trip brought closure to John for his sad memories.



John Anderson on cruise ship May 3, 2002. Guadalcanal is in the background (Photo courtesy Francis Sinclair-Anderson)

Americal Shines at Kokomo Reunion



September 13-16, 2007 marked the 25th Annual Vietnam Veterans Reunion at the Howard County Veterans Park near Kokomo, Indiana. Many Americal vets were among the over 30,000 vets in attendance. During the annual Americal picture taking event at the large American flag, ADVA National Commander Larry Watson presented the Lifetime Achievement Award to Past National Commander Ed Marsh. Ed was named as a recipient at the ADVA 2005 National Reunion, but had not received it at that time. The ADVA signed up 37 new members as Americal vets celebrated an "Americal family reunion" over the four day period.



Christmas Day 1967 HSB, Americal Divarty, Chu Lai

By Al Simms

The Christmas illustration, dinner menu, and messages were printed on a one-page folded piece of paper. I don't really remember where I got it but I think that it must have been at the mess hall since it contains the menu for the meal. Not everyone went to a religious service that day. I don't think that I went to a church service because I had tower guard duty. Except for that meal I was in the top of a 50 foot tall guard tower. It was the only time that I pulled actual guard duty my entire year in Nam and it had to be Christmas Day!

The best food that I ate in the Army was during my last year when I was assigned to Staff and Faculty Battery at Ft Sill. At breakfast we could literally get anything we wanted with eggs cooked to order. Second best food was actually boot camp at Ft Bragg. The only problem there was that we were not allowed enough time to enjoy it.

In Vietnam I was assigned to the 1/14th Artillery. We were never co-located with our own battery and generally we ate in whatever mess facilities were available where ever we were. Some were good and some were not. I ate a lot of C-rations too.

Prayer for Christmas

Our Father in Heaven, we give thee thanks for the gift of thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior, the Prince of Peace and Lord of Life. May thy gift of Bethlehem, announced by the Angelic Chorus, be born again in our hearts this day. Help us to know and experience the meaning and blessedness of their message: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men." Remove from us fear and hate and help us to know by faith thy peace which passes all understanding. We pray that the spirit of Christmas will be shared by our loved ones. With them help us to ponder, like Mary, the deep mystery of Christmas. May the truth and love which the Holy Child of Bethlehem brought to earth abide in our lives. In His name receive our praise and thanks. AMEN

DEC. 25, 1967
B, AMERICAL DIVARTY
A1, VIETNAM

Commander's Message

Throughout the Christian world, the Christmas season is a time of joy and spiritual inspiration. Despite separation from our families and the hardships imposed by war, those of us in Vietnam will still share the traditional Christmas spirit this year. We can enjoy the spiritual satisfaction that comes from giving. As fighting representatives of the Free World, our gift is the help we give the Vietnamese people to secure their independence, their individual safety, and their future freedom. Each of you gives a part of this gift and deserves the satisfaction of having increased the happiness of others—the true Christmas spirit.

My best wishes to each of you and your families for the Christmas season. May you enjoy good fortune during the coming year.

W. C. Westmoreland
W. C. WESTMORELAND
General, U.S. Army
Commanding

Christmas Day Dinner

Shrimp Cocktail	
Crackers	
Roast Turkey	Turkey Gravy
Cornbread Dressing	Cranberry Sauce
Mashed Potatoes	
Glazed Sweet Potatoes	
Buttered Mixed Vegetables	
Assorted Crisp Relishes	
Hot Rolls	
Fruit Cake	Butter
Mincemeat Pie	
Pumpkin Pie w/Whipped Topping	
Assorted Fresh Fruits	
Tea w/Lemon	
Assorted Nuts and Candy	Milk

Agent Orange Registry

By Richard Ropele

This story is not meant to be the definitive paper on Agent Orange. It is meant to stir your thoughts regarding something that we should be aware of, and if necessary, take the appropriate action. We were all in Vietnam when Agent Orange was being used and we need to be aware of the potential health risks that we face.

I am going to register with the VA and sign up for the Agent Orange Registry. I will let you know about the process in subsequent articles.

Agent Orange was a herbicide used in Vietnam to kill unwanted plants and to remove leaves from trees that otherwise provided cover for the enemy. Between 1961 and 1971, the U.S. Military in South Vietnam used more than 19 million gallons for defoliation and crop destruction. Heavily sprayed areas included inland forests near the DMZ; inland forests at the junction of the borders of Cambodia, Laos, and South Vietnam; inland forests north and northwest of Saigon; mangrove forests on the southernmost peninsula of Vietnam.

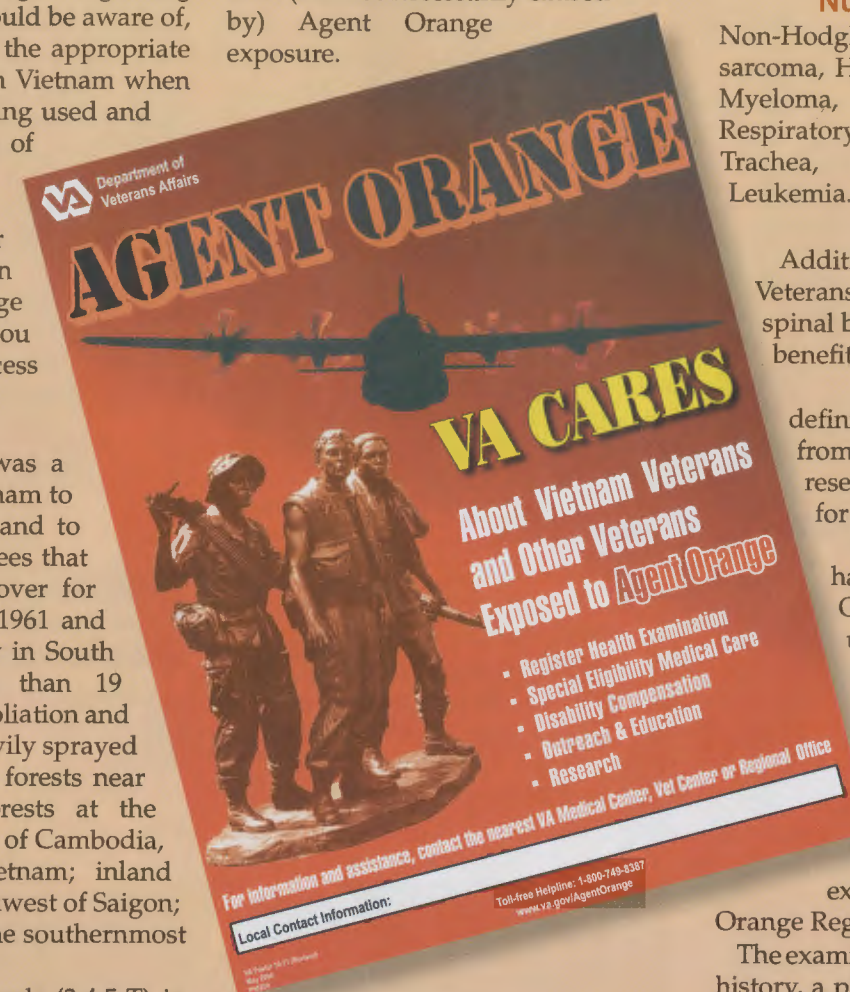
One of the chemicals (2,4,5-T) in Agent Orange contained minute traces of 2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin (also known as TCDD or dioxin), which has caused a variety of illnesses in laboratory animals. More recent studies have suggested that the chemical may be related to a number of malignancies and other disorders.

The following conditions are now presumptively recognized for service-connection for Vietnam veterans based on exposure to Agent Orange or other herbicides:

Chloracne

A skin disorder. Chloracne is the one human effect universally linked to dioxin exposure. The presence of

chloracne is considered a clinical sign of exposure. The VA has recognized Chloracne as the one human effect universally linked to dioxin exposure. The presence of Chloracne is considered a clinical sign of exposure as associated with (but not necessarily caused by) Agent Orange exposure.



Porphyria Cutanea Tarda

When signs and symptoms occur, they usually begin in adulthood and result from the skin becoming overly sensitive to sunlight. Areas of skin exposed to the sun develop severe blistering, scarring, changes in pigmentation, and increased hair growth. Exposed skin becomes fragile and is easily damaged.

Peripheral Neuropathy

Acute or subacute nerve disorder condition results from damage to the nerves that carry signals from the hands and feet.

Type 2 Diabetes

There appears to be some relationship between Agent Orange exposure and increased insulin resistance, the precursor to type 2 diabetes.

Numerous Cancers

Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma, Soft tissue sarcoma, Hodgkin's disease, Multiple Myeloma, Prostate Cancer, and Respiratory Cancers: Lung, Larynx, Trachea, Bronchus; Lymphocytic Leukemia.

Additionally, children of Vietnam Veterans with the birth defect spinal bifida are eligible for certain benefits and services.

These are just summary definitions that I extracted from various sources, please research further on your own for more definitive answers.

If you suspect that you have been exposed to Agent Orange (or other herbicides used in Vietnam (the three most common are Agent Orange, Agent White, and Agent Blue - mixtures identified by the colored stripe on the drum)), contact your nearest VA Medical Center for an examination under the Agent

Orange Registry.

The examination consists of a medical history, a physical examination, and a series of basic laboratory tests including chest X-ray, urinalysis, and blood tests. If medically required, consultations with other health specialists are scheduled. No special Agent Orange tests are offered because there is no way to show that Agent Orange caused individual medical problems.

The Department of Veterans affairs has set up a special examination program for Vietnam veterans who were worried about the long term health effects of exposure to Agent Orange. Contact your nearest VA medical center and ask about participating in the Agent Orange Registry.

Source:

<http://www1.va.gov/agentorange/>

An Americal Veteran is Hitting the Mark in Iraq

By Gary L. Noller



1LT Bruce Allen with scoped M-14 rifle in Vietnam jungle, 1971

Bruce Allen participated in small bore rifle competition in high school and college. He was on the State of North Carolina civilian team at the National Matches at Camp Perry, Ohio where he fired an M-1 in competition at ranges up to 600 yards and a Model 70 Winchester at 1,000 yards. The National Matches are considered America's "World Series of the Shooting Sports".

Now a Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army, Allen utilizes his interest in rifle marksmanship in his role as the Officer in Charge (OIC) of Training for the 1st Cavalry Division in Iraq. He deployed to Iraq with the division in October 2006 and expects to return to the United States near the end of 2007. He will be 60 years old when he arrives home.

Allen was born in Moline, IL in 1947 and moved to New York City where he attended public schools. He graduated from Stuyvesant High School in 1965 and immediately entered North Carolina State University. After a couple of years of college he entered the U.S. Army at Ft. Bragg, NC in February 1968. He completed basic training at Ft. Bragg and advanced training as a military policeman at Ft. Gordon, GA. He then volunteered for Infantry

Officer Candidate School (OCS) at Ft. Benning, GA and upon completion of OCS he served for a few months as a Basic Training Officer at Ft. Jackson, SC.

He received orders for Vietnam and after three weeks jungle training in Panama he arrived in-country. He assumed duties as an infantry platoon leader with Co. B, 1/46th Infantry. He recalls that Co. B "spent most of its time in the jungle searching for the enemy. We would spend one week on LZ Professional providing security in the bunkers and then three weeks in the jungle."

"We moved constantly and hardly ever stayed in the same location two nights in a row. Every night we formed our 360 degree perimeter, dug our foxholes, and manned our positions. We never slept all night long. The next day we moved on through the jungle, regardless of the weather conditions. We were true jungle fighters." Allen's Vietnam tour ended in August 1970.

Allen returned to North Carolina State University after leaving the Army. He earned a bachelor's degree and took employment with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in Washington, D.C. as a fingerprint examiner. He joined the North Carolina National Guard in 1978 and transferred to the

Army Reserves in 1983.

After a few years with the FBI he accepted a job with the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation as a Special Agent. He processed crime scenes including those involving homicides. He then completed law school in Georgia and practiced as an attorney for about 15 years. He served



1LT Bruce Allen with M-14 rifle at FSB Professional, Vietnam; 1971

in the reserves until 2002 and retired to Florida in 2003 where he sold coastal real estate.

But Allen's retirement did not last long. After Hurricane Katrina slowed real estate sales he consulted with



A U.S. Army Soldier from Charlie Company, 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division provides security during a patrol in Muqadiyah, Iraq, Sept. 20, 2007. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Shawn Weismiller)



LTC Bruce Allen at sports stadium in Baghdad, Iraq; 2007

his wife and she agreed to allow him to accept an active duty tour for 18 months. He recalls, "I merely filled out an application for active duty through Human Resources Command (HRC). My security clearance was still good and I was a retired Reservist. With all the strains on the active duty force it was not hard to get a position to supplement the force."

"I joined the 1st Cavalry Division at Ft. Hood, TX for a few months before we deployed. We have been in Iraq since October 2006. I have been well accepted as the "old man" of this unit. I am treated just like all soldiers and I do my job to support our troops."

"I wanted to come to Iraq to see for myself what soldiers must go through. The weather is extremely hot and dry. We work seven days a week, normally 14 hours a day. I am the Officer in Charge of Training for the Multi-National Division-Baghdad."

"I schedule a multitude of training activities because even in war units must train to keep their edge. As the enemy changes its tactics we must change ours and that requires training. I currently am involved in Small Kill Team and Sniper Training which involves long range firing."

Allen will spend more time in Iraq than he did in Vietnam. He compares the two by saying, "Iraq is similar to Vietnam in that the enemy is once again not in uniform. The enemy blends in to

the populace as in Vietnam. The enemy likes to "hit and run" as in Vietnam. He knows that if he attempts to slug it out with us he will get clobbered by superior firepower."

"The enemy sets but improvised explosive devices (IED) and booby traps just as the VC did in Vietnam—but now he has much more technology at his fingertips. The enemy attempts to wear us down and prolong the war just as in Vietnam. He knows that the Americans don't like long wars and support at home will wane."

He also contrasts Iraq with Vietnam. "What we face here that we did not face so much in Vietnam is the suicide attacks. Insurgents here don't mind sacrificing themselves to kill Coalition Forces or local nationals, even innocent women and children. Religion is much more a part of this war than was in Vietnam. Centuries of strife between different religious sects makes it difficult to get this country united. I don't think that was the core of the problem in Vietnam. Americans are always in a hurry to accomplish things. Iraqis are in no hurry."

As far as the difference in living conditions he says, "It is 120 degrees every day and we have not seen a drop of rain since May. In Iraq there is no humidity or mosquitoes or leeches like in Vietnam. The environment in Vietnam was much worse than over here. I can still feel the leeches crawling up my pant legs."

Allen and his fellow soldiers have a high regard for each other. "Once again I am well accepted by my fellow soldiers. They respect the fact that I was an infantryman in Vietnam. They know that there are few Vietnam veterans left in the service and they are in awe that I am here. It is good for their morale to see me here."

"I get many questions about Vietnam and what we went through back then. I have nothing but great respect for our soldiers today and the job that they do each and every day. I see a lot of dedication and love for each other. The Band of Brothers theme is very much alive."

"I have been to several heart

wrenching memorials for fallen comrades. We all mourn our losses even if we didn't personally know those lost. I listen to the personal stories told by comrades of the fallen. They are family and rely on each other every day. In most cases they are like sons to me and I love them all."

It is ironic that Allen speaks of feeling that fellow soldiers are like sons to him. In fact his own son is a fellow soldier. CPT Jason Allen is currently in the Baghdad area as a squadron Signal Officer in the 2nd Stryker Brigade. It is the younger Allen's second tour of Iraq and he is expected to end his tour of duty in November 2008..



LTC Bruce Allen and son CPT Jason Allen in Baghdad, Iraq; 2007

LTC Allen also has two daughters, Tamara and Amber. He has been married to his wife Sarah for 34 years. They have five grandchildren. He says that when he retires in early 2008 "I may go back to selling real estate or we may move back to Georgia where I might practice law part-time. My wife and I intend to do some extensive traveling and try the space-A flights."

Looking forward to his arrival back home from his second war, he states, "I really wanted a nice homecoming to heal the wounds from Vietnam. 1st CAV is expecting just that upon our return to Ft. Hood. My tour has been extended by a few months but I will go back to retirement in February. I will then hang up my uniform and can tell myself 'job well done'."

Indeed, LTC Allen, a job well done. Your fellow Americal veterans thank you and your family for your dedication and sacrifices.



Into the Night Once More

© Andrew Ladak, March 2002

"I don't give a damn if they thank me," he said after chugging the rest of his beer, "and the movies, parades, the tears that they shed-- it's all bullshit," he spat with a sneer. "Hell, even the Wall is part of their game. I know why they wanted it built-- A goddam memorial to help ease their shame, a tomb where they buried their guilt."

I nodded my head but I didn't reply, as I played with the mug in my hand. I think he was drunk, and I know I was high, 'cause we'd had a lot more than we planned.

We'd met at the bar to knock back a few. It was something we did now and then. And sometimes after a bottle or two, he'd bring up the war once again. He'd dredge up a name, a time or a place, and briefly we'd both reminisce. But I'd never before seen this look on his face, and he'd never got angry like this.

He picked up my Zippo, the one that I've had since that day we lost half the platoon. (The kid it belonged to was hit real bad, and I knew he'd be dead before noon.) He fired up the lighter and lit up a fag-- his last, so he crumpled the pack. He squinted at me as he took a deep drag, then blew out the smoke and sat back. His eyes flashing fire through the cigarette haze, he said, "You understand--you was there. But them?" And he raked the saloon with his gaze. "They don't got a clue and don't care."

He waved at the bar and said, "Look at 'em all-- if you think that they care, then you're nuts. Hell, most of that crowd is too young to recall, and the older ones hated our guts. Now--thirty years later--they're feelin' our pain. They lay flowers and weep at the Wall. Well, screw it," he said, and he sneered with disdain. "I'm really fed up with it all. The kids with the nose rings--hell, whaddathey know? 'Vietnam' brings a glaze to their eyes."

To them, all that stuff was a long time ago, and what little they're taught is all lies."

I stared at my mug, with nothing to say, though I sensed it was my turn to speak, but when I looked up, he was looking away, and I saw something wet on his cheek. "Jesus," he swore, "it's been years since I cried-- can't remember the last time I did. But now I feel something rising inside and it's makin' me bawl like a kid. There's something in here," he said, striking his chest, "this anger that I feel again when I see the bastards now beating their breast who called us all killers back then."

"Oh, it's trendy and cool now to pity us fools, us grunts that they loathed before. They tell us they're sorry, that we was just tools, in a dirty imperialist war. Well, I was no tool, and I wasn't no fool, and we was proved right in the end. I don't give a crap what the kids learn in school-- we was the good guys, my friend. Whatever they say, back then or today, I know we was right all along. We killed 'cause we had to, 'cause that's what it takes-- but we never blew babies away, and God knows we might'a made some mistakes, but we weren't the ones that was wrong."

"The ones that betrayed us still don't understand. The hell I went through--it's my own. I've had all the pity and thanks I can stand, and I wish they'd just leave me alone."

He stopped and we sat there, silent and still. His anger, for now, had been spent. I waited awhile, then settled the bill. It was late, it was time that we went. We rose, and he stumbled a bit by the door, but he grinned and he said, "I'm all right." I followed him out, and we vanished once more-- like we used to before-- in the welcome embrace of the night.

[Andrew Ladak served with Co. C, 5/46th Infantry. Illustration by Ralph Stiles, 23rd M.P. Co.]

Americal Veteran Inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame

By Thomas J. Nash



MSG (Ret.) George I. Beach was inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame during its 12th annual ceremony on August 8, 2007. Beach served with the Americal Division's Co. E, 51st Inf. and Co. G, 75th Inf. in Vietnam.

Medals alone do not tell George Beach's story. His inspiring presence in the unit elevated the performance of every other member of the unit and of the Unit as a whole. When General Colin Powell referred to G75 as "one of the most decorated units in Vietnam," George Beach was at the unit's core. He was its heart and soul.

SSG Beach stood above his peers and was recognized as a natural leader, both in the field under combat conditions and while standing down between missions. Expectations were higher for SSG Beach than for other team leaders and many of his team's missions were assigned directly by Division Headquarters.

George Beach's three years with E51/G75 were eventful and memorable. On a patrol early during his tour with the unit, while walking along a ridge, his team came upon an overhang with a hooch almost directly below them. The team's Vietnamese interpreter listened to voices coming from below

and identified the conversation as taking place between an NVA officer and NCO. Rather than work their way around to ground level and risk detection, George simply jumped off the overhang directly through the thatched roof and overpowered the two NVA soldiers.

Perhaps the best example of SSG Beach's leadership and overall impact on E51/G75 can be illustrated by recounting his actions during the NVA assault in May 1969 on LZ Baldy. Baldy was assaulted at night by NVA sappers and regular troops. G75 lost one Ranger KIA and virtually every Ranger was wounded.

SSG Beach was the leader of one of two Ranger teams assigned the day following the initial assault to join the defense of the perimeter. SSG Beach took charge of the Ranger sector and directed the building of hasty sandbag fighting positions and the collection of as many weapons and as much ammunition as could be located. Under SSG Beach's leadership, the Rangers fought and defended its perimeter sector for four more days.

There was little opportunity for sleep, rest, or food, but under SSG Beach's leadership, the Rangers succeeded in ultimately repelling the NVA attack and killed numerous NVA soldiers. Every Ranger taking part in the action was wounded.

SSG Beach's actions during the defense of LZ Baldy helped to lift the unit's spirits and to lessen its casualties. It was not SSG Beach's style to self-promote, and his efforts at LZ Baldy went largely unheralded, but those who saw him or who served with him that day will always recall SSG Beach's selfless and tireless heroism and valor during the enemy assault.

George I. Beach is a living legend and a giant in the annals of LRRPs and Rangers in Vietnam. He was, and is, held in the highest regard and esteem by the LRRP/Rangers and officers with whom he served. His Ranger Hall of Fame citation reads as follows:



MASTER SERGEANT GEORGE I. BEACH

MSG George I. Beach is inducted into the US Army Ranger Hall of Fame for his 20 years of military service, with a special emphasis on his service and contributions to the Ranger and Special Operations communities, but especially his 4 consecutive years in a combat role in Vietnam, including 3 full years as LRRP/Ranger during which he became E51 G75's most decorated and respected soldier and leader.

MSG Beach served in C Co. (Long Range Patrol), VII Corps for a year before being assigned to the 101st Airborne, where he spent a year in Vietnam before transferring and serving with E Co. (Long Range Patrol), 51st Infantry, and its successor organization G Co. (Ranger), 75th Infantry for a period of 3 consecutive years in Vietnam. Among other assignments, MSG Beach later served with the 5th Special Forces Group for 3 years.

During his 3 years with E51 G75, George Beach became a legend -- a soldier's soldier -- who raised the performance level of the unit with his courageous and valorous conduct, his outstanding leadership and guidance, and his willingness to take on the most difficult missions. His record is replete with remarkable examples of individual bravery and outstanding team leadership. He logged over 100 missions, becoming the heart and soul of the unit. MSG Beach's awards and decorations include the *Silver Star*, the *Bronze Star* (6 -- 3w/V), *Purple Heart* (2), *Air Medal*, *Defense Meritorious Service Medal*, *Army Commendation Medal* (2 -- 1w/V), *Good Conduct Medal* (6), *National Defense Service Medal*, *Vietnam Service Medal* (11), *Army Service Ribbon*, *Army Overseas Service Ribbon* (7), *Vietnam Campaign* (3), *Vietnam Cross of Gallantry Unit Citation w/Palm*, *Combat Infantryman Badge*, *Parachutist Badge*, *Expert Badge (M-14)*, and *Sharpshooter Badge (M-16)*.

MSG Beach is a truly exceptional example of what it means to be a Ranger. He defines the expression "RANGERS LEAD THE WAY."

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