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16 Jul 67

Mortarman's Foot Trouble Still Unsolved

DUC PHO — Private First Class Leslie Thomas has had a problem with his feet for years. The problem is that they will not quit growing.

The young soldier of Company B, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry has had trouble fitting his size 14 feet since he entered military service.

In civilian life he was able to get shoes by having them custom made, but in basic training this was not the case. The only shoes that they were able to fit him with in basic were low-quarter dress shoes. These had to suffice for the 6-foot, 5-inch soldier until he was into his second week of advanced infantry training.

When PFC Thomas reached the 3rd Brigade Task Force, 25th Division in Vietnam he was required to exchange his stateside combat boots for jungle boots.

The mortarman's feet once again gave his supply sergeant headaches. The best pair of boots that the sergeant was able to come up with was size 13.

This pair of boots has served PFC Thomas, after considerable breaking in, for the last seven and a half months.

As all good things must come to an end, so must PFC Thomas' boots. So once again he is faced with the problem of acquiring a new pair.

The big-footed 3rd Brigade trooper has not been surprised that they haven't arrived yet. "If they don't send me some size 14s soon, they had better send sonic 15s," he said.