

# NVA Lose Heavily in Post-Tet Attacks

## Cache Found by D/4/12

By PFC James Low

Redcatchers found almost six tons of rice in two separate caches during a two-day sweep March 2-3 in an area 3½ miles west of Long Thanh and about 11 miles east of Saigon.

Delta Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf was airlifted into the area Sunday morning and began the sweep through tall grass and scattered nipa palm. Early in the afternoon, elements of the company penetrated into a dense stand of nipa palm where they discovered a Viet Cong hootch and bunker.

First Lieutenant Peter Joannides, a member of the point element, tripped a booby trap but was uninjured. "I was a bit shook up," he added, "but was very lucky to be unhurt." Two 82mm mortars, two 60mm mortars and one grenade were found in and near the hootch, and some were also rigged as booby traps.

One 82mm booby trap was found by Captain Lynn Stover, Delta Co commander. While checking over the articles left in the hootch, he turned over a board concealing a mortar round set with a trip wire. It hadn't exploded when it was disturbed and Stover called for everyone to move out while he disarmed it.

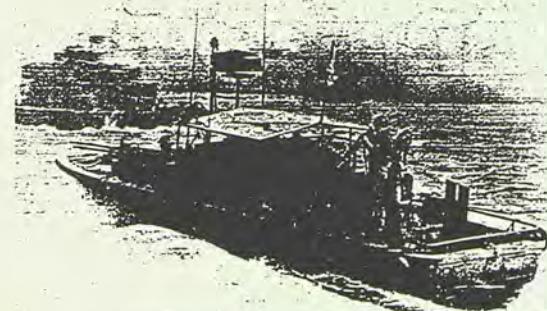
A few minutes later the sweating captain emerged with the disarmed round and passed it out to a clearing to be destroyed.

A fresh pot of cooked rice was also found on a gasoline stove, and freshly cleaned fish were nearby. There were also many personal items. The Vietnamese interpreter said the hootch appeared to have been used for several months and had been abandoned in a hurry. Nearby, two sampans, a motor, gas and oil were discovered under heavy camouflage.

The first cache of rice, totaling 4,850 pounds in 100 pound sacks, was discovered about 35 meters from the hootch through the heavy nipa palm. Members of the company ferried the rice out to a landing zone on sampans to where a Chinook helicopter picked it up.

Monday morning the second cache was discovered several hundred meters from the first and was also concealed in the heavy nipa palm. This cache produced 7,000 pounds of rice and 40 gallons of gasoline. The rice was flown out by Chinook and the fuel was destroyed.

(Continued on Page 8)



NAVY PATROL BOATS team up with the 503rd Chem Det to assist in defoliation at the horseshoe bend of the Vam Co Dong river southwest of Saigon. (Photo by Hassenfratz)



# REDCATCHER!

199th Light Infantry Brigade

Vol. 1, Nr. 9

April 1, 1969

## How's Our Circulation?

Gets embarrassing when someone asks, "When's the newspaper going to start coming out?" Especially since it has been published since December. So (ahem, ahem) the response is, "How come you're not getting yours?" As if the guy should know.

We should know, but don't always. There are many transfer points from the time this newspaper is printed until it reaches the reader, and at each the man in charge must do his utmost to break the distribution down fairly and then expedite delivery to the next point.

We found out last month, for example, it would help things if we sent boxes of the newspapers directly to battalion personnel offices and let them make the breakdown to their rifle companies. This way we're sure that they are at least getting an adequate supply of papers for their men. In the past, the papers had a way of "drifting" into other channels, leaving some units over-supplied, others with no papers at all.

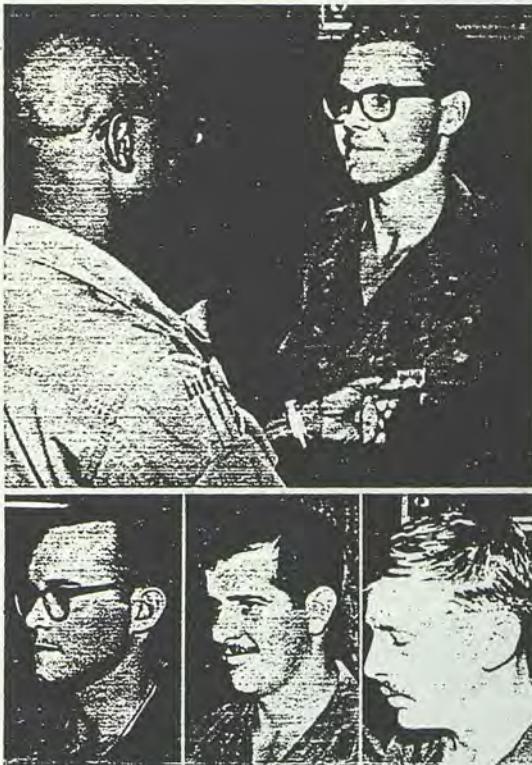
The press run of Redcatcher! allows one newspaper for every two men in the Brigade. Based upon normal readership practices, it is felt that this is a more than adequate ratio and one that will allow as many men to mail the paper home as want to.

The key to the system, however, is fair distribution, allowing your unit to receive its one copy for each two men assigned.

So if you are not receiving enough Redcatcher! copies at company, ask battalion about it. If not enough at battalion, ask us at Brigade PIO.

We are concerned about the distribution situation in the same way every publication is: If it doesn't reach all the readers possible, its strength is diminished, its energies dissipated. The greatest newspaper in the world isn't worth a can of Spam until it gets into the hands of its readers and is read.

—The Editor.



WITH AN RF-PF MEMBER Sp4 James R. Gibitz killed an enemy rocket team of six in a hootch in Ho Nai village, February 26. That afternoon Brigadier General Frederic E. Davison pinned on a Bronze Star Medal on behalf of the Brigade and the U.S. Army. Other photos (left to right) Specialist Four Larry Woodbury, First Lieutenant John F. Masters; Private First Class James Stanganelli. (Photos by Loughran)

## BMB On Alert Guard Throughout Attacks

In the early morning hours Feb. 23, Camp Frenzell-Jones was hit by enemy mortar and rocket rounds as the enemy post-Tet attacks began. This was the beginning of a concentrated effort of guarding, defending and building by Redcatchers who performed these functions with minimal sleep.

Certain precautions were taken out of defensive considerations. Increased surveillance, around and outside, the perimeter paid big dividends. Alert sirens were usually blown at least two minutes before any rocket attacks were launched by the enemy because surveillance teams had detected them.

Measures were taken for offensive maneuvers as well. Weapons were positioned so that a shift in fire could be made n

case of a ground attack. The number of soldiers manning bunkers and fighting positions increased markedly. Personnel manning these positions ranged from clerk-typists and cooks, to riflemen coming from or going to an R&R spot.

Brigade Executive Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Herbert Ray remarked, "I've had so many men coming up to me and wanting to volunteer as guards on the perimeter or wanting to involve themselves with any kind of action—especially when the 'combined' platoon had contact with the enemy near Ho Nai village—I had to turn them down."

Concerning BMB's perimeter, the number of fighting bunkers built during the recent period has more than doubled that of the original; supply routes were

By SP4 Robert F. Loughran, Jr.

Nine NVA and Viet Cong soldiers were killed 17 miles northeast of Saigon in Ho Nai Village Feb. 26.

RVN Marines and Rangers, and Popular forces, aided by an element of the combined (counter intelligence) platoon from the 199th, attacked the enemy at close range during early morning hours.

Led by First Lieutenant John F. Masters of Akron, Ohio the "Redcatchers" were returning from an ambush maneuver to their original starting point and spotted 30 men in uniform on a road in Loc Lam Hamlet just before daybreak. Masters remarked, "As we approached them one of my men shined a flashlight in their eyes and one raised his arms as if to surrender. In a flash everyone split up and a heavy fusillade began that lasted for an hour and a half."

On the initial burst, three enemy fell while both the enemy and the Americans took cover and positioned themselves. After a period of small arms fire, six enemy in a village hootch began launching rocket propelled grenades. This is when Specialist Four James R. Gibitz and one Popular Forces soldier moved towards the hootch, entered and killed all six. Other Redcatchers were perched atop roofs and other vantage points.

Going into the last half hour of the fight, the friendly forces called in artillery and Cobra gunships to strike at the enemy.

Masters was obviously pleased with the performance of his men and said, "Each of them has less than 30 days left in country. But with their extremely aggressive attitude, those GI's helped attack a company and look at the results."

Ho Nai Village is 13 kilometers long and trails along a good portion of Camp Frenzell-Jones's perimeter. It consists of 22 individual hamlets, and some 47,000 Catholics, who left North Vietnam in 1954, make it their home.

Since last year's Tet attacks the combined platoon has guarded the Ho Nai area 24 hours a day with day and night patrols, ambushes, and check points on the roads in and about the village.

The afternoon of the 23rd in the Commanding General's Office, Brigadier General Frederic E. Davison awarded the Bronze Star Medal for valor to Gibitz and Army Commendation Medals for Valor to Platoons Leader Masters, Specialist Four Larry Woodbury and Private First Class James Stanganelli. Towards the end of the ceremony, General Davison remarked, "Here in the Brigade we've had many heroes and many have gone home. You fellows have taken their places, and this is from the bottom of my heart."

Maintained; the construction of interior bunkers was also given priority. This was due largely to Redcatchers' desires to stretch out and catch a few winks in a large place rather than a shortage of protective enclosures.

Compared to last year's Tet attacks, this year's were expected well before hand and during the period all soldiers kept their steel pots, flak vests, and weapons nearby at all times. Ready-reaction forces, damage assessment teams, and medical teams were on alert 24 hours each day. And, of course, the men in the bunkers were always there.

Colonel Ray also remarked, "They were all soldiers, they upheld the 199th's traditions and its fine reputation."



## REDCATCHER!

*Redcatcher!* is an authorized Army publication and is published biweekly under the supervision of the Information Office, 199th Light Infantry Brigade. Opinions and views expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. *Redcatcher!* uses Army News Features and Armed Forces Press Service material, as well as Command Information material produced by this and superior headquarters. Unsolicited contributions are welcome and will receive the same consideration as staff-written material. Address contributions and correspondence to *Redcatcher!*, Information Office, 199th Light Infantry Brigade, APO 96279. Telephone Redcatcher 162.

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### The Chaplain Speaks

### Immortality

By Chaplain (Lt Col) A. A. Farrow

You say you do not believe in immortality because you cannot see how life can exist beyond the grave. You cannot understand what it would be like. Therefore you think it cannot be. Let us consider a parallel situation that may give us some ground for hope and faith. Consider the pupa of a butterfly, living in perfect darkness, encased in its cocoon. Near the end of this phase of its existence the cocoon begins to crack. The pupa is much alarmed. It does not see how it can possibly survive the decay and crumbling of the shell in which it has lived. It knows nothing about any other form of life. It thinks of course that it will starve to death with no possibility of obtaining food and that it will soon be crushed without the protective covering which it has always known.

Eventually, however, the cocoon splits wide open and the pupa, now become a butterfly, is dazzled by the great radiant world of color, sound, warmth, sunlight, flowers and perfumes which it has never known and could not even imagine. It remembers now that while in the cocoon other pupas of great faith and insight had spoken in glowing terms of a life to come. Now it has happened. When the

old shell burst open what the pupa thought would be certain death has become radiant and glorious life. It spreads its wings, now dry in the brilliant sunlight, flutters to a nearby flower of inconceivable beauty and sweetness, sucks from it a nectar suitable only for Gods, and soars away into the sky. What a life! Beyond all power of imagination! Something incomparably better than the pupa had ever known, inside the narrow, dark confines of the now-shattered cocoon.

Living in these limited physical bodies as we do— cocoons really—by no stretch of the imagination can we possibly gain an inkling of the glory and beauty of the future life to which our Lord and Saviour invited us. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him; for we shall see Him—as He is." (1 John 3:2). "So, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory." (1 Cor. 15:54). This is the true message of Easter for the world. This is the good news.

### RELIGIOUS SERVICES

#### LONG BINH AREA

Lutheran	Sunday	11 a.m. 303rd Radio Research Orderly Room
Latter Day Saints	Sunday	1, 2 p.m. Plantation Chapel Annex
Episcopal	Sunday	1 p.m. Plantation Chapel
Jewish	Friday	7 p.m. Long Binh Post Chapel
Christian Science	Saturday	10 a.m. Long Binh Post Chapel
	Sunday	2 p.m. Plantation Chapel

#### CAMP FRENZELL-JONES

Protestant	Sunday	9, 10 a.m. Worship Services Bde Chapel
	Weekdays	8 a.m. Devotions Bde Chapel
	Wednesday	7 p.m. Religious Films Bde Chapel
Catholic	Sunday	9, 10 a.m. Mass 7th Spt Mess
	Tuesday	6:30 p.m. Mass Bde Chapel
	Saturday	6:30 p.m. Mass & Confession Bde Chapel

#### 199TH INFANTRY BRIGADE (FORWARD)

Sunday	4:30 p.m. Catholic Mass
	7 p.m. Religious Films
	8 p.m. Protestant Service

#### FIRE SUPPORT BASES

Catholic	Sunday	5/12 FSB 2:30 p.m.
Monday	3/7 FSB	11 a.m.
Wednesday	2/3 FSB	6 p.m.
Friday	4/12 FSB	6 p.m.

Protestant	Sunday	4/12 FSB 9 a.m.
	Sunday	3/7 FSB 10 a.m.
	Monday	2/3 FSB 9:30 a.m.
	Monday	5/12 FSB 10 a.m.

## National Patriotism

By Brigade S-5

Beyond the family and the immediate hamlet or village, the Vietnamese farmer has never been much interested in political policies. Seldom, if ever, does he visit his provincial capital, much less Saigon, for political matters.

His country has had relatively few years out of all its history when it was not ruled by kings, the Chinese, the French or the Japanese. Since 1875, Vietnam has had only a short period of time in which to develop national patriotism and democracy. No wonder he is still loyal to his family and hamlet first.

Many of us will risk our lives for our country. Why? First, we know all about our country and are loyal to its ideals. Secondly, we know that if anything were to happen to us our families will benefit from our G.I. insurance, social security, commercial life insurance, and welfare; also the Church and relatives will usually help care for our wives and children.

Not many Vietnamese know or yet fully appreciate what their country has become. Many seem to feel that if something were to happen to them, their wives and children would be out of luck.

We would do well to remember that during our American Revolution and in the War Between the States many American soldiers walked off the lines and went home to harvest the crops. They returned after they knew their families had food.

In other words, it is sometimes easy to label an ARVN or PF as not patriotic; it is quite another thing to see the big picture of what he is up against in both adjusting to his national government and in caring for his family.

### Warning— Piracy and Explosives Conversation

The Air Force Inspector General has asked all major commanders to insure that all personnel are aware that light-hearted reference to explosives or piracy aboard civilian air carriers, no matter how innocent they may be, can result in heavy fines and imprisonment.

The Air Force said many personnel and their families travel by commercial air carriers each year and careless remarks could cause serious consequences.

Civil air carriers are requested by Federal regulation to report immediately to local police and the FBI any comment pertaining to bombs, explosive devices, weapons or piracy in connection with a flight. The Air Force said this policy is strictly enforced.

Any careless remark related to or overheard by an airline employee is treated as a direct threat to the safety of aircraft and passengers. Jokes and light-hearted or humorous comments are out of place.

Airline personnel are directed not to weigh validity of any such statement, but to report it and identify the source for arrest purposes.

## Adoption Laws

By Capt Francis P. DiCello SJA

Sometimes a couple will rear a relative or step-child but won't bother to adopt the child formally and legally. Such informal arrangements can be very harmful to the child. A child legally adopted by a person or couple usually assumes the adopting parent's name and by law becomes the parent's heir just as if he or she were a natural child of that parent. Without such formal adoption, the child has no formal legal relationship to the "parent."

Adoption laws and procedures vary from state to state. Usually, the procedure is started by filing a petition with the clerk of the superior court of the country where the petitioner wanting to adopt the child resides.

Any person over 21 years of age may file such petition to adopt and to change the name of the child. If the petitioner is married, both husband and wife must join therein unless one of the spouses is the natural parent of the child, in which case the natural parent does not join as a petitioner but must consent to the adoption.

Written consent to the adoption must be made by the child's living parent(s) or guardian or, if a step-parent petitions to adopt his or her step-child, the spouse of the petitioner (natural parent of child) must consent. In most states, if the child is at least 12 years of age, the child must consent.

After the petition is filed, the court will order the local super-

intendent of public welfare to investigate the case. A written report is submitted to the court, after which the court usually issues an interlocutory (temporary) decree awarding the care and custody of the child to the petitioners if the court is satisfied as to the genuineness of the consent, the moral character of the prospective parents and their ability to support the child.

If the child is a blood relative or step-child of one of the petitioners, the court may waive issuance of the interlocutory decree and the probationary waiting period and issue a final decree immediately.

After adoption is finally ordered, a new birth record is prepared by the state and substituted for the old record on file.

The adoption laws are strictly enforced. The courts will not recognize any informal arrangement. Many children who were brought up by loving, well-meaning people, and were even told that they were adopted, have been deprived of an inheritance because their foster parents did not comply with the letter of the law.

Therefore, it is recommended that persons rearing unadopted minor children give serious consideration to adopting the children so as to create the relationship of parent and child in the eyes of the law. Your Legal Assistance Officer is available to advise you on adoption laws and related matters.



### WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO LEARN TO RELAX YOUR SALUTE?

All major military installations in Vietnam, 66 at present, are staffed by a total of 192 trained Red Cross field personnel, handling 23,600 requests for Red Cross services each month.

Seventeen Red Cross recreation centers and clubmobile units are staffed by a total of 110 young, college-trained women who travel nearly 27,000 miles each month, presenting an average of 2,500 entertainment programs to nearly 244,000 American servicemen.

## Awards and Decorations

### Bronze Star Medal (Valor)

SGT William N. Denby-2/40. An artillery reconnaissance sergeant with a company of 3rd Bn, 7th Inf Feb. 4, he became first sergeant when the company commander, first sergeant and three radio operators were wounded. After briefing the battalion commander by radio, he began directing and assisting in the movement of the wounded to secure positions. He continued directing the infantrymen, refusing medical attention when he was wounded.

### Bronze Star Medal (Valor) (Posthumous)

1LT Thomas J. Staples-2/3. While serving as a platoon leader Feb. 2, he hesitatingly moved through enemy fire to aid the platoon's wounded medic when he was himself mortally wounded.

SP4 George E. Jackson-2/3. Although wounded himself while serving as a medic Feb. 2, he left his position and went to the aid of his fallen platoon leader (who was rushing to help Jackson) but was mortally wounded as he moved through the open terrain.

PFC Charles Inlow-2/3. While serving as radio telephone operator for his company Feb. 2, he was painfully wounded, but continued performing his duties. He later died of his injuries.

### Bronze Star Medal (Meritorious)

1LT Robert A. Caltabiano-A, 5/12; SSG Benny G. Privitt-A, 5/12; SGT William L. Hoekstra-A, 5/12; SP4 Joseph Whinnery-40th P.I. Det; SFC Leroy E. Lame-HHC, 5/12; SP7 Bruce Howell-HHC, 199th Inf Bde; SSG Edward J. Davis-179th M.I. Det; MAJ Richard A. Spaulding-152 MP Plt; 1LT George R. Hanrahan-A, 2/3, (1st OLC); SSG James D. Blackman-D, 3/7; SP4 Louis S. Stone-D, 3/7; CPT Charles D. Nelson-HHC, 5/12; SGT George A. Holyoke-HHC, 4/12; SP4 James Bowling-A, 4/12; SGT Stephen R. Jansta-D, 4/12; SSG Duane J. Stewart-313th Sig Co; SP4 Haywood E. Cooke-D, 4/12; 1LT Douglas R. Belville-HHC, 199th; CPT Benjamin Whitehouse IV-313th Sig Co; SGT Euclides Rivera-D, 5/12; SSG Willard B. Wildman-HHC, 5/12; 1LT Christopher W. Sprole-B, 5/12; 1LT John F. Lounsbury-D, 2/3; 1LT John W. Fitzgerald-HHC, 5/12; PSC John S. Hough-D, 5/12; 1LT Charles Dudley-HHC, 199th Inf Bde; SSG Steven R. Genser-B, 5/12; PSC Benny C. Bowman-C, 5/12; 1LT Ronald M. Stephens-B, 5/12; SP4 Ralph W. Baxter-B, 4/12; SGT Charles W. Hopkins-313th Sig Co; SFC John J. Holmes Jr.-HHC, 2/3; 1LT James T. Dean, Jr.-D, 2/40 (1st OLC); SGT Carl W. Rau-D, 4/12 (1st OLC); SP4 Richard Kozlowski-C, 2/3 (1st OLC); PSC Franklin East-C, 3/7; SP5 Richard Colligan-HHC, 4/12 (1st OLC); SP4 William A. Fields-D, 4/12; SP4 James McKenzie-D, 4/12; LTC Roy J. Herte, Jr.-3/7.

### Bronze Star Medal (Meritorious) (Posthumous)

PFC Welsy R. Potts-5/12.

### Army Commendation Medal (Valor)

SP4 Robert H. Smith-B, 3/7; PFC Gary E. Roe-D, 4/12; SP4 Kenneth Kussy-D, 4/12; SP4 Richard L. Laster-C, 4/12; SSG Larry L. Miles-B, 3/7; SP4 Claude M. Knight-A, 4/12; SP4 Jimmy G. Hull-D, 4/12; SP4 Lenwood A. Findley-D, 4/12; SP4 Dennis D. Jessop-HHC, 3/7; PFC Charles Harris-B, 3/7 (Posthumous)

### Army Commendation Medal (Posthumous)

SP4 Clifford M. Gardell-3/7.

## Marijuana Marks You

The answer to the question "What does drug abuse have to do with me?" is important. You, as a member of the armed forces, have a special dependency on your fellow serviceman and he has a special dependency on you.

The lives of all the men on a patrol depend on the alertness of the point man. Each member of a fire team is dependent on his buddies for survival in a combat situation. The success of an aircraft mission may depend on the ground maintenance crew whose mind is not dulled by drugs. No one can afford to trust the fate of his unit, helicopter or tank to any man who may be under the influence of marijuana.

Further, the drug abuser in military service leaves himself wide open as a security risk. For example, he can be blackmailed by threat of exposure. He can also be led to sell or give away classified information to support a drug habit. In addition, while "high" on a narcotic or drug, he may overlook or ignore proper security measures.

The effect on the individual who abuses drugs is the most far-reaching point to consider. The desire to abuse drugs is entirely inconsistent with the desire for individual freedom. The abuser no longer has a choice. Torn down physically and mentally—sometimes permanently—his time, money and energy are wasted. His only care or purpose is to secure his supply of drugs. His interest in all about him is gone; he loses contact with normal society and eventually excludes himself from society altogether.

It is in this light that drug abuse has something to do with you. If you are urged or tempted to experiment with narcotics, hallucinogens, depressants or stimulants, your commander in the service and your future employer in civilian life will

look upon you as a person who lacks emotional stability and respect for law. In addition, thousands of dollars worth of Veterans Administration benefits, in the form of education payments, home loan insurance and on-the-job training are lost to the ex-serviceman discharged from the service by courts-martial.

Any man with common sense knows that used properly, drugs contribute to life. Used improperly, they bring harm to the user and those who must rely on him. In the military, a drug abuser is a threat to the life and to the morale of his comrades. As likeable an individual as he may be, in a combat zone he is truly more your enemy than your friend. Back in the States, he will be a drag on his friends, his family and his community. It is very difficult to admire such a man. It would be tragic to become one.

## March SOM

Redcatcher Soldier of the Month for March was Specialist Four Richard W. Fabling, 22, of Hoffman Estates, Ill.

Specialist Fabling served for five months with Alpha Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf as a radio-telephone operator before becoming the Commanding General's enlisted aide, an honor that comes with being selected Soldier of the Month.

Born in Columbus, Ohio he attended Texas A & I University for one year before entering the service. He intends to go back to school after separating from the Army.

Among the rewards he received for being chosen were a \$25 U.S. savings bond from his "Warrior" battalion and from the Brigade, plus a tailored suit and three-day R&R to Vung Tau.

## In the Field

## Brigade Summary

Feb. 16:

The Brigade closed its two largest cordon and search operations in as many weeks today, after processing more than 2,500 civilians through the combined holding and interrogation center near Binh Chanh. There were 32 detainees for the three-day cordon which involved more than a battalion of Redcatchers.

In other action, a reconnaissance patrol operating 9 miles southeast of Bao Trai received fire from an unknown size enemy force. One enemy soldier was killed when the patrol returned fire.

Feb. 17:

Brigade elements today killed two enemy and detained four suspects in scattered action west of Saigon.

Infantrymen from Delta Co, 5th Bn, 12th Inf spotted one Viet Cong early this morning 3 miles southeast of Duc Hoa. The enemy was killed when he attempted to flee, and his K-54 pistol and equipment were recovered. The Redcatchers also apprehended two suspicious-looking individuals dressed in Khaki shorts and black shirts. Three grenades and 15 bunkers were also found and destroyed.

"Warriors" of Alpha Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf, received a burst of small arms fire this afternoon at 300 meters from five Viet Cong 7 miles southwest of Saigon. The company returned fire and the enemy fled southeast. As the troops pursued, a "Razorback" light fire team received small arms fire from the nipa palm 100 meters south of the original contact. The team returned fire as Alpha Co closed in. A sweep netted one Viet Cong killed in action and two Viet Cong suspects held along with two AK-47 rifles and one carbine captured.

Feb. 18:

Redcatchers of 5th Bn, 12th

Inf engaged two Viet Cong 3 miles southeast of Duc Hoa. An AK-47 rifle and four magazines were recovered and a blood trail was found. A comprehensive search of the area failed to turn up any bodies but three bunkers were found and destroyed during the search.

In other action, 4th Bn, 12th Inf "Warriors" destroyed a 20-bunker complex during recon-in-force operations 10 miles southeast of Duc Hoa.

Feb. 19:

Elements of 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf located three bunkers 4 miles west of Saigon. During destruction of the bunkers and three-grenade booby traps, two AK-47 rifles and approximately 203 rounds of ammunition were discovered.

Feb. 21:

A Brigade recon patrol engaged four to six Viet Cong 3 miles southwest of Duc Hoa. A company from 5th Bn, 12th Inf was inserted into the area and killed one of the enemy. One RPG round was also captured.

Feb. 22:

A light fire team supporting "Warriors" of 5th Bn, 12th Inf spotted a small number of NVA soldiers while on a recon operation 6 miles west of Ben Luc. As the enemy moved through high grass, they began firing on the helicopters. The team returned fire resulting in five enemy soldiers killed.

Feb. 23:

Redcatchers this morning killed 24 enemy soldiers within 2 miles of Camp Frenzel-Jones.

While searching a hill with elements of the 720th M.P. Bn, Charlie Co, 5th Bn, 12th Inf began receiving small arms fire from another nearby hill. The ensuing battle lasted for several hours, with the Redcatchers credited with 24 Viet Cong killed and two suspects detained, one of whom was wounded. Also

recovered were two AK-47 rifles and one NVA radio complete with accessories.

Elements of the Brigade's 71st Inf Det (LRP) supporting units of 5th Bn, 12th Inf, made contact with an estimated force of three Viet Cong while operating in the "pineapple" area 5 miles southeast of Duc Hoa. The LRP's engaged the enemy with small arms fire and grenades killing two and recovering two AK-47 rifles with full ammo belts and other assorted web gear. Members of the battalion also destroyed eight bunkers.

Nearby, infantrymen of 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf found a small cache containing eight 60mm mortar rounds and 50 lbs. of TNT with 15 detonators and a quantity of det cord near a small stream. The cache seemed to have been in place for only three hours. Elsewhere, the Brigade Main Base Camp received less than five 107mm rocket rounds during an early morning attack. Casualties were light and no damage was reported.

In other action 8 miles east of Duc Hoa, members of 4th Bn, 12th Inf destroyed 3 bunkers and held six detainees for questioning.

Feb. 24:

During light action elements of the Brigade's 71st Inf Det (LRP) engaged a team of three or four Viet Cong soldiers in the "pineapple" region 14 miles west of Saigon. A morning search revealed one Viet Cong killed and an AK-47 rifle and four loaded magazines recovered.

Feb. 25:

While supporting Redcatcher elements this morning, a light fire team destroyed five sampans  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles southeast of Duc Hoa. Another three were destroyed later in the day.

A cache of more than 300 rounds of small arms ammunition was found in a recently used enemy base camp by members of Alpha Co, 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf  $\frac{7}{4}$  miles southeast of Saigon.

Elsewhere, one suspect was detained by infantrymen from Alpha Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf.

Feb. 26:

One Viet Cong soldier was killed and six sampans destroyed 5 miles southwest of Duc Hoa by a light fire team supporting a Brigade people-sniffer mission.

Elsewhere, elements of 4th Bn, 12th Inf held 2 detainees and destroyed four bunkers and one Claymore mine 8 miles southwest of Saigon.

Feb. 27:

Elements from Bravo Co, 3rd Bn, 7th Inf spotted three Viet Cong 500 meters from their position 10 miles southwest of Saigon and opened fire. The enemy troops returned fire briefly before fleeing. A sweep of the area produced one enemy killed, and his AK-47 rifle and ammunition captured.

Elements of 4th Bn, 12th Inf discovered the body of a Viet Cong that had been killed in previous fighting involving the battalion 9 miles southwest of Saigon.

Feb. 28:

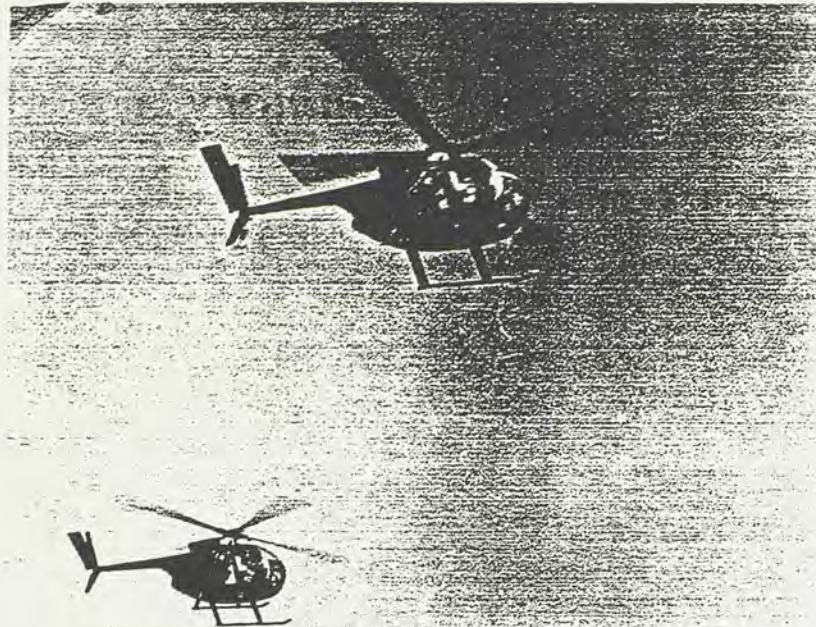
Redcatchers from Charlie Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf uncovered a bunker complex possibly used as an aid station and supply area less than a mile west of Binh Chanh district headquarters 7 miles southwest of Saigon.

The infantrymen found sacks of rice and medical supplies, including blood plasma, stethoscopes, as well as two gas stoves and six Claymore grenades. Also found in the area were two sampans and a booby trapped grenade with trip wire.

In the "pineapple" region, Delta Co, 5th Bn, 12th Inf found two 81mm mortar rounds and seven Claymore grenades 14 miles west of Saigon.



ENGINEER from the 87th Engr Co works on in the waning sun to help erect a new motor pool building at BMB. (Photo by Whinnery)



SOMETHING ROTTEN IN DENMARK? People sniffer mission west of Saigon using light observation helicopters. (Photo by Whinnery)



MUCK AND MIRE can't stop the LOCH, and this leader scar of it. (Photo by Whinnery)



CREW CHIEF Specialist Five Steven R. Lewis greases the bearings on the UH-1D helicopter before flying out again. (Photo by Whinnery)

## 'Chopper Power'

# Fireball Aviation

By SP5 Larry Trammell and SP5 Joseph F.

### "Fireball!"

What does it mean to the men of the 199th Brigade?

For one, it is the red fireball in the center of the Brigade's shoulder patch, symbolizing man's entering the nuclear age. The other "Fireball" is the 199th's busy aviation section.

Whether it's a dust-off on a "hot" landing zone, supplying badly needed ammunition during a firefight, shuttling newsmen and photographers or Red Cross "Donut Dollies," the combat units of the Redcatcher Brigade have come to rely on Fireball Aviation "slicks" and the men who keep them in the air.

Flying from Camp Frenzel-Jones, Fireball has performed every task possible since coming to Vietnam in 1966, with its UH-1D Hueys and recently-acquired OH-6A (LOH) "Cayuses."

Only when the job is too large or too heavy, such as transporting artillery or an infantry company, does the unit seek outside help, but not always. "We were once forced to fly 15 sorties (missions) to extract a company with one Huey," recalled aviation section leader Captain Lee W. Jurney from Aurora, Ill.

The Fireball pilots find themselves for the most part providing vital resupply for Redcatchers during operations, extracting wounded soldiers in emergencies, taking the battalion commanders and the commanding general on command-and-control flights, as well as ferrying "people sniffer" missions.

The people sniffer missions, now flown in the highly maneuverable Cayuse LOH, are conducted by the Brigade's 503rd Chem Det. As the sniffer-equipped chopper flies at tree-top

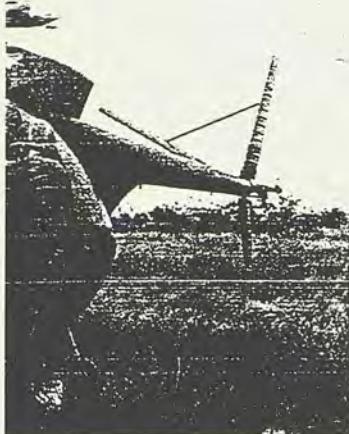
level over suspected areas, the operator monitors a small black box which detects human body odor. This pinpoints enemy positions in bunkers or along recently-used trails.

With an average of over 120 hours flying time a month by each of the 12 Fireball pilots, keeping the rotary-wingers in the air is a tall order, especially during combat. "We usually have 80 percent of the aircraft available at all times," said aviation maintenance officer WO David Woodrow of Belfast, Maine. "It may be necessary to work the men eight hours on and eight off to keep the choppers flying," he added, "but we do it."

"Naturally it's just as important having the helicopters in excellent condition as it is having excellent pilots to fly them," said engine mechanic Specialist Five Byno Ferguson of Alamogordo, N.M.

Direct equipment support, including major items such as rotors, engines and frames, is provided by the Brigade's 7th Spt Bn, while Fireball specialists trained in everything from petroleum distribution to avionics (electronics repair) keep the choppers in top condition.

Fireball has not lost an aircraft due to maintenance malfunction since coming to Vietnam. Daily inspections detect any unusual oil leaks, loose wires or other items that may cause damage. Bearing and engine controls are checked after every 100 hours of operation. When the chopper tops 1,000 flight-hours, rotors, engine, flight controls and a long list of other items which wear quickly are replaced. After 2,000 hours, the chopper is exchanged for a reconditioned one from Corpus



er scrambles aboard, glad to be out



LIKE A GHOST the helicopter comes in to resupply an element of the 3rd Bn, 7th Inf. (Photo by Hansell)

Christi, Tex. Engine, radio system—in short, everything—is replaced and the reconditioned chopper is as good as new before it leaves the rebuilding facility.

The section has a large new hangar containing administrative offices, avionics repair rooms, and engine and weapons working areas. Before the new hangar was built, a simple A-frame structure had served as home.

The once small (100×300 meters) heliport was enlarged to accommodate facilities and gunships of Bravo Trp, 3rd Sqn, 17th Air Cav, plus an area large enough for four Chinooks and a large fuel pit at which helicopters of other units also refuel.

Also helping the 199th move anywhere at a moment's notice is Specialist Four Jay E. Crowder (Canton, Ohio), who is the Army aviation element at Brigade forward.

He is responsible for obtaining, distributing and controlling helicopters for air-assault missions, resupply flights, troop movements and courier runs—briefly, all Brigade air movement.

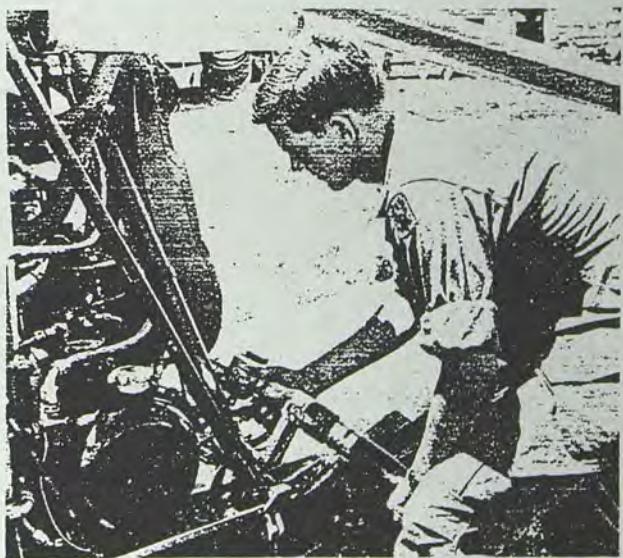
In addition to knowing the current number of "air assets" and devising a continuous schedule, Crowder must keep track of each helicopter at all times, even though they are usually spread to all points of the Redcatcher area of operations.

"He's one of the few I've ever seen that can use three telephones at once and remain on top of the situation," said one of Crowder's acquaintances. "I glad it's him and not me."

Catering to an infantry Brigade is an unending task for the Redcatcher's aviation section. But when the chips are down, the flying Fireballers have the choppers up.



WATCHFUL. Specialist Five Paul Shanahan mans his gun for the commanding general's helicopter. (Photo by Whinnery)



IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS (Says who?) gas was pumped into the "Bubble" Helicopters by the likes of Specialist Four Arthur Gagnon. Now, of course, they've been replaced by LOCH's. (Photo by Whinnery)

## iation

ph F. Whinnery

# Vung Tau In-Country R&R

By SP4 Peter Gyallay-pap

Sand dunes, ocean breakers, gourmet food, 20-cent drinks, entertainment, sightseeing, games, female companionship. Where? Vietnam's coastal resort town 50 miles southeast of Saigon, Vung Tau, offers this diversion to Redcatchers and III and IV Corps-based servicemen on in-country R&R.

For the prudent spender who can (or must) forego a female companion, and merely wishes to sun and relax with his buddies, total costs for the three-day rest and recuperation period need not exceed a few dollars. Meals and mandatory lodgings are gratis at the R&R Center.

During and after the recent Tet holiday, a 7 p.m. curfew was imposed on the town for R&R vacationers, and the Center experienced a general slowdown. In times of normal operation, however, up to 100 servicemen check into the Center each day for their three-day holiday; eight Redcatchers are usually included in this number.

The R&R Center is a modern tile-and-concrete structure of local architectural style. The main floor houses the reception area from which terraces and patios descend to a reflecting pool and small garden on the street level and lower floor. The lower floor, fully air-conditioned, contains a bar, snack bar, gift shop, tailor and comfortable dining hall with soft red upholstered arm chairs. Six large rooms above the main floor accommodate about 20 servicemen in each, while the adjacent annex building has three floors of smaller, better furnished rooms with sleeping quarters for four men.

Food is given special attention at the R&R Center, probably to the surprised delight of most soldiers used to less elaborate fare. Served by matronly women dressed in traditional "ao das," the Vietnamese national dress, the food varies for each meal with a choice of three main dishes.

Lunch, served between 11:30 and 1, may offer turkey noodle

soup followed either by roast turkey with dressing, breaded veal cutlets with gravy or spiced beef cubes, with mashed potatoes, candied sweet potatoes, asparagus with cheese sauce and buttered carrots or lima beans.

Dinner is served between 5:30 and 7. After beef vegetable soup, you may choose a charcoal broiled steak, baked ham with pineapple sauce or Southern fried chicken. Choice of accompanying vegetables include oven-baked potatoes, buttered noodles, mexi corn or buttered beets. Desert includes fruit jello, assorted cakes and cookies and strawberry or peach sundaes.

An ice-cooled buffet table offers seven kinds of salads and five deserts which include French apple pie ala mode, strawberry shortcake with topping, chilled pears and chocolate and pineapple sundaes. San Miguel beer from Manila is available with meals as well as iced tea, lemonade, coffee, milk or tea.

The breakfast menu remains the same each day. Served between 7 and 9, it offers eggs done in six ways and omelets in five. There is also fruit juice, chilled citrus, griddle cakes or French toast with potatoes, hot dry cereal, plus buttered toast, jellies and jams, coffee, milk or tea.

If that is not enough, fine food may also be eaten at three acceptable local restaurants, the Grand Hotel, Cygnos and Rendezvous. The Grand is the most stylish and specializes in seafood. A lobster thermidor, seasoned with a mild, spiced cheese sauce and mushrooms is recommended for 300 piasters (the one for 500 is not appreciably larger). A complete dinner costs upwards of 500 piasters, which by hotel standards is not expensive.

Vung Tau, compared to other Vietnamese towns or large villages, looks unmistakably like a resort town, a mark left partly by French planning. The palm-tree-adorned Front Beach, harboring dilapidated fishing boats at the south end, juts into the

main boulevard of the town in front of the Grand and Cygnos. There are many good opportunities for the amateur photographer on a walking tour.

A sidetrip either by horse and buggy or mini-bus to a Buddhist monastary may be worthwhile. Located midway between the airfield and Vung Tau proper, on the side of a hill overlooking a wide area, the cloister-like community has an enormous white marble statue of Buddha, plus other monuments and religious icons.

Military busses that stop at the R&R Center on the way to Back Beach (the only authorized beach for U.S. servicemen), wind through the tree-lined streets of Vung Tau, past the store fronts, alluring bars and steam bath houses, market place, teeming populace and former French villas.

The trip to the beach takes about twenty minutes. The beach itself, which overlooks the South China Sea, is wide and clean and the vegetated sand dunes and panoramic background are reminiscent of parts of the Jersey shore.

Behind the dunes and across the bus road is the crowded Beachcomber Club, where drinks, food and entertainment are found day and night. The club is open only to servicemen and their guests, and stays open after the beach closes at 6 p.m. The curfew for R&R members has been 11 p.m., except during the recent Tet and post-Tet period.

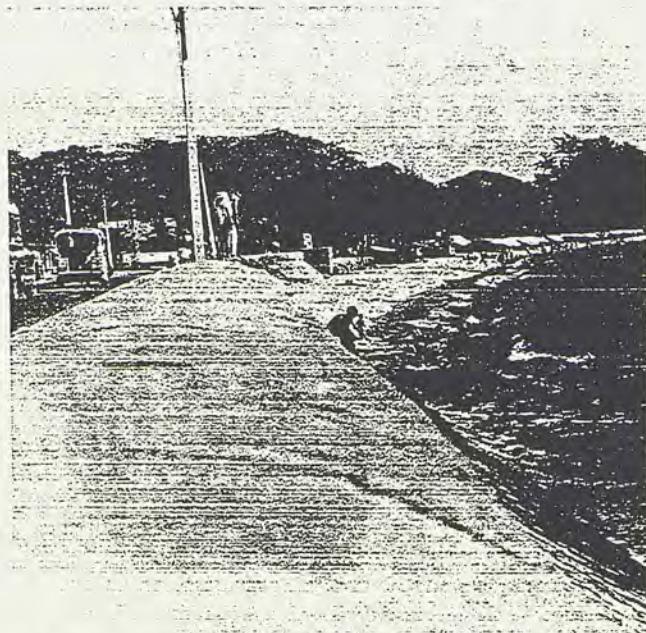
Vung Tau is a setting for three days of quiet relaxation at little or no expense, or wild excitement for those wishing to blow off paddy and jungle steam—and a little money. The choice is yours.



THE SAND IS HOT as a \$2 pistol shooting up hill, but when Smith meets Smith, can Wesson be far behind? The name of the soldier is obviously Smith, origins unknown, and the girl is Christina Smith, from Sydney, Australia, a dancer at a beachside resort. Wesson may not be far behind, but the photographer was well ahead of the game, which was afoot.



GANG'S ALL HERE as soldiers congregate at the beachside bar-and-restaurant with their guests.



BREAKWATER AT THE BEACH at Vung Tau at high tide. The beaches are on par with the better in Vietnam, with interesting side-trips available to the surrounding countryside.

# Hobo, Who Are You?

By SGT Jere Helmers

After being in country for almost a month, Specialist Four Merle De Marco of Lorain, Ohio decided to do something about the lack of mail the troops in Alpha Co., 5th Bn., 12th Inf. were receiving.

In May, 1968 De Marco wrote his hometown newspaper, *The Lorain Journal*, about his problem. It was printed and results immediately began to pour in.

The mail was addressed to Alpha Co. with sometimes as many as four or five letters in one envelope. But—one letter came addressed specifically to De Marco. It was signed "The Old Nuisance."

Shortly after came another letter from the same man. After several weeks he changed his signature to "The Old Soldier," and after a few more, to "HOBO," which he is still using.

The letters have come from different states, including Florida, New Mexico and California, but they were still from the same anonymous person.

There was one clue of a sort: Although the letters came from all over the United States, the majority of them were from De Marco's hometown of Lorain.

In the first letter, HOBO stated that he wouldn't send a return address, because he wanted De Marco to use what little free time he had to write his parents.

Because the handwriting was different from that of any letters he had received before, De Marco had no idea who it could be.

After telling his folks of the situation, he suggested it could have possibly been the mailman. But his parents checked and were convinced it wasn't the mailman.

The letters weren't all he received though. He received a batch of photos of many of his high school friends, and even one of him when he was on the Sophomore football team. On the back of one of the photos was the remark, "Greg was a friend of yours." HOBO also sent him 13 issues of the *Midweek Pictorial*, an illustrated weekly

published by the *New York Times*. All issues but one were from the year 1921; the other was September, 1920.

In a letter with the papers, the anonymous writer stated he wanted to send De Marco something different that he and his buddies would enjoy.

Men of Alpha Co. spent many hours reading every inch of the magazines. A big spread on the main fall activities of President Harding visiting New York; articles on Ty Cobb and upcoming Babe Ruth, pictures of the famous Sing Sing band playing for the laying of the cornerstone of their new classification building, the Irish Revolt—were just a few of the pieces in the magazines.

What does HOBO write about De Marco? He tells him of his many hunting and fishing trips and how he hopes that someday De Marco has a chance to visit the Grand Canyon. He once remarked that he has four children, one who hasn't yet graduated from high school.

Not only was De Marco astounded at not having any idea who the man was, but his folks were also. Shortly after the letters started, his parents began to receive a telephone call every Sunday from various places from none other than HOBO.

HOBO also sent him a tube of "Hobo Salve."

A note with it stated "This salve has been good for many things, chapped hands, or faces and heat rash. This is only a sample; if it's any good I'll send more. The HOBO."

(Ed. note: Shorter than short, De Marco will depart Vietnam shortly after this article appears.

One can imagine his musings, though, as he settles into his seat aboard the Freedom Bird, thoughtfully squeezing "Hobo Salve" onto a chapped palm and rubbing in the heat rash on the back of his neck; preparing, in short, to begin the quest that will lead him to the identity of HOBO.)

## 3 New Bn Cmdrs

Since the New Year, three Redcatcher battalions have received new commanding officers.

Assuming commands were Lieutenant Colonels Robert Dudley Wiegand of the 4th Bn., 12th Inf.; Robert J. Cottney, 3rd Bn., 7th Inf. "Cottonbalers"; and John A. Mess, 2nd Bn., 3rd Inf. "Old Guard."

Wiegand, Ft. Collins, Colo., is a 1955 West Point graduate who served a previous tour in Vietnam as a Senior Advisor to the ARVN's 45th Reg., 23rd Inf. Div. He twice earned the Division's Gallantry Cross and the Bronze Star for Valor.

Prior to coming to Vietnam to command the "Warrior" battalion, Wiegand, airborne and Ranger qualified, was a student at the Indian Defense Services Staff College.

Cottney of Bellvue, Ohio, graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1952 and had prior combat experience in Korea with the 1st Bn., 15th Inf. and in Vietnam 1966-67 as a Special Forces Operations Officer. Airborne, Ranger and Special Forces qualified and the holder of the Army Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters; he was previously assigned to the Limited War Laboratory at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Md.

Mess, Green Cove Springs, Fla., commands the "Old Guard" battalion, replacing Lieutenant Colonel M.J. Asensio, who rotated to CONUS. He graduated from Ripon College in Wisconsin in 1952 and received a direct commission through ROTC. He earned his Combat Infantryman's Badge while serving in the Korean War as a platoon leader. Airborne qualified and a 1965 graduate of the Command and General Staff College, Mess served with the U.S. Military Mission in Guatemala before arriving in Vietnam.



HUGH HEFFNER my not approve, but here there are more types of bunnies than in the Playboy Clubs. Holding one is Specialist Four Joseph Joseph Uniatowski of Wilmington, Del. Seems the rabbit is quite tame and has become a familiar sight at Uniatowski's signal site.

## PSG Jackson Symbolizes Dedicated Infantryman

Platoon Sergeant Walter H. Jackson, acting first sergeant of the "Old Guard's" Bravo Co., is unabashedly proud with his men, unit and country.

Born in Tennessee, he has spent his last 18 years with the infantry in Korea, Europe and Vietnam, as well as with the "Old Guard" 1st Bn., the Presidential Honor Guard in the United States.

Barely six months after he joined the Army in 1951, he saw combat in Korea with the 7th Infantry "Cottonbalers," "Old Guard," and now the "Warriors." He earned his second Bronze Star Medal (for Meritorious Service) upon completion of his tour, but he extended for six months to go back to his old unit, Bravo Co., 2nd Bn., 3rd Inf.

"After my experiences with the men of Bravo, I couldn't resist going back; and I'll probably extend again," he said. The 5th Bn., 12th Inf. former executive officer, spotted Jackson in his new unit upon his return and asked "Why did the 5/12 lose you?"

Jackson answered, "I had to return to my old company. I wanted to finish my tour with 'Old Guard.'

experiences in combat were. Instead "It's being with your men in times of hardship, knowing you won't forsake them."

He added: "The young infantryman is someone who has helped make the history of our country great. We must learn to respect him."

Last June, Jackson was inducted to Charlie Co., 5 Bn., 12th Inf., the quintessential Redcatcher infantryman, having served with the "Cottonbalers," "Old Guard," and now the "Warriors." He earned his second Bronze Star Medal (for Meritorious Service) upon completion of his tour, but he extended for six months to go back to his old unit, Bravo Co., 2nd Bn., 3rd Inf.

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THIS GIRL'S NAME is Donna Reading, but she obviously is not reading. But she looks as if she could read. Come on and open a book, Donna Reading, and read, read read! You can do it, kid-read!

If you are worried about a possible emergency situation or other family problem at home contact the 199th's American Red Cross Field Director, Mr. Renken, for help in obtaining full information quickly, and he will work closely with you to help solve these and other problems. His phone number is Redcatcher 181 (rear).

"My concern over here is for the young troops, and I think the job of all senior NCO's is to help the troops at all times." He doesn't like to tell war stories he replied, when asked what his most memorable experience.

A new battalion sergeant major assumed duties at "Stephanie" Fire Support Base March 8 when Sergeant Major Joseph R. Godwin of Columbus, Ga., succeeded Sergeant Major Olin Dorsey Jr. of Augusta, Ga. as 3rd Bn., 7th Inf. sergeant major.

The ceremony was held in the early morning at the battalion's forward headquarters 5 miles west of Saigon. Awards for valor and service were also presented at the same time by Brigade Commander, Brigadier General Frederic E. Davison.

# How To Recognize an April Fool

By SFC Robert E. Jones

April Fool's Day in the earlier days of our country used to be an occasion when the local japesters had one heck of a good time "fooling" more gullible fellows with purses on sidewalks (to be jerked away by a string as the April Fool stooped to pick it up) or bricks under hats (at a time when the thing to do was to kick any hat just sitting there on the street).

Times change and, aside from school-children, hardly anyone goes to such lengths for a laugh at his neighbor in the United States anymore. The April Fool, however, is still amongst us—forever inept, stumbling through life and egocen-

tric to the point where he concentrates so much on himself that he does not even pay attention to the warnings that might save him from harm.

For example, an April Fool—  
—Has two boxes of C's and no P-38.

—Always has dry socks in his pack, wet ones on his feet.

—Clears his M-16 of water by blowing down the end of the barrel—with a round chambered.

—Likes music at 10 decibels—even on night ambush.

—Plays "quick-draw" alone—now.

—Sent a souvenir RPG round to his late cousin.

—Ignores Malaria pills. "Ma-

lia pills?"

—Likes to "shave" pedicabs with his jeep "because they don't have the right of way."

—Prefers to disarm his own booby traps—at least once.

—Puts Kool Aid in his canteen to make the water taste better but skips purification tablets since they make it taste worse.

—Uses lots of nuoc mam to poison the bacteria in local food.

—Believes there is safety in numbers—congregates with buddies at Saigon bus stops.

—Likes the 10 percent overseas savings program—but has nothing left after his monthly expenses.

—Found R&R a bore because

many Japanese refused to speak pidgin English.

—Thinks Charlie Chaplin is a VC religious adviser.

—Uses foot powder for after shave talc so he won't develop athlete's face.

—Cherishes his independence as an American but resents his house-girl, who acts as if she "owns" this place.

—Comes to RVN a recruit, is team leader at three months, veteran at five and, through carelessness, is no more at six.

—Hears "incoming" and runs for a ditch—30 meters away.

—Sets his jaw, grits his teeth, "John Wayne's" his M-60, then slogs ahead to trip a trap wire with his big, flapping feet.

—Jeers at Lambrettas with 12 passengers as he drives to the Cholon PX with his buddy in a deuce-and-a-half.

—Keeps his jeep in fourth gear to save gas—at 15 mph—answers to "Jerky".

—Has a claymore in his foot-locker in case he needs one in a hurry.

—Braggs about the Mercedes 250 SE he got from Old Folks for finishing high school. Wonders what his college present will be—if he's accepted.

—Braggs about his speed when he wrecked the Mercedes.

—Gets haircut, shave, shampoo and massage—when the line is longest—on payday—tips 10 piasters.

## Chaplain On The Move

By PFC Bruce Bolinger

Late on a Sunday afternoon an air boat operated by the 5th Bn, 12th Inf as a means of resupply, left the Binh Dinh bridge and set out for Charlie Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf located three miles down river.

Fifteen noise-filled minutes later, Captain Andrew Berthold, chaplain for the 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf stepped ashore to say Mass for the Catholic members of Charlie Co.

It's a long way from the Holy Rosary Parish in Medford, Wis. to the paddies of Vietnam and Chaplain Berthold is much busier than he ever was in Medford.

The 199th Brigade's area of operation presents many transportation problems for a chaplain. Most of the battalion base camps can be reached by jeep but many company positions are isolated and inaccessible by most normal military means of transportation and improvised ways must be devised if he is to reach his destination. Airboats, rafts, sampans, and sometimes bicycles are often appropriated for the needed transportation.

Chaplain Berthold is constantly on the move, visiting the men at their base camps, in the

field, and those "Redcatchers" in hospitals in Saigon and Long Binh. Every day finds him in a different place, and when his schedule of masses and visits is completed he may accompany an infantry unit on a combat operation where he is available to any GI who wants to talk to him.

Chaplain Berthold is respected and liked throughout the 199th, partly because he tries to be more of a friend than a priest or officer. "I don't try to push myself or my position as chaplain. I am not here just for the Catholics, but to help anyone who wants my help," he said. "Some men feel resentful of a chaplain for they feel that he's there to try and convert them or make them more religious. I am here in a religious role, of course, but not strictly religious. I am ready to talk to a man about his personal problem or just chat about anything in general. I want the men to feel at ease when I am around and realize that I am there to help them whenever they feel they need any kind of help. I don't want them to feel that I am forcing them into anything."

Red Cross Provides

## Whole Blood for Families

U.S. servicemen in Vietnam or any overseas station can obtain whole blood through the American Red Cross to meet blood requirements for members of their immediate families residing in the United States.

Blood for family members of U.S. servicemen is furnished by Red Cross regardless of whether or not they reside in a community covered by the American Red Cross blood program. In areas of the United States not covered by the blood program, the Red Cross will, upon request, replace the total amount of blood used by the serviceman's relative.

However, the Red Cross will replace only the amount of blood used, even though some commercial blood banks require two or three units to replace one unit of blood they provide for the patient.

The American Red Cross does not sell blood. Hospitals, however, may pass on a processing charge to the patient as well as a charge for handling and ad-

ministering the blood. These charges vary widely, depending on the hospital.

Begun in World War II, the American Red Cross Blood Program continued after the war, based on the belief that Americans would give blood to aid fellow citizens in both peace and war. Its 25 years of success have justified that faith.

The Red Cross now collects blood in 41 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The blood is typed and processed, and the greater part of it is distributed to hospitals for transfusion as whole blood.

However, in the Pacific and all other overseas areas where the US Forces are located, whole blood is collected only by the US military.

Brigade members having questions about the Red Cross blood program or its role in the military blood program should contact the local Red Cross field director, at Redcatcher 181 or 182, located in building T 5007.



"Hitchhiking" is part of everyday life for Chaplain Andrew Berthold, the "Old Guard" battalion chaplain, as he makes his way to hold services throughout the battalion's area of operations. (Photo by Bolinger)

## Camera & The Elements

One of the first things a soldier interested in photography discovers in Vietnam is that cameras cost half as much here as he would pay stateside. One of the next discoveries is that cameras and Vietnam humidity are not compatible. It is also easy to find someone who has just plain dunked his camera, only to have it go "glub" instead of "click."

All is not lost, though, for there are some important things one can do to make sure his camera survives. One of the best pieces of advice to prolong the life of your camera in Vietnam is, "Do not take it into the field!" The most likely question after this statement is "Why have a camera if you don't take pictures where the action is?" You had better make sure it is expendable, then.

There is only one relatively inexpensive camera available, the "Nikonos II", that effectively resists numerous dunkings. It is primarily designed as an easy-to-use underwater camera, and thus has proper seals to keep out moisture and dirt.

Seldom available in the Exchange, it can be ordered by mail from Japan or Hong Kong for less than \$100. Aside from this, the only alternative is to buy a cheap rangefinder-type camera and hope you get some good pictures before the mechanism rusts. The rangefinder type has less moving parts (no mirrors) and, if you are lucky, it may survive the moisture and a dunking or two.

During the dry season, when the water problem is not as crucial, you may get away with carrying your camera in a plastic bag that remains sealed until you are ready to take a picture. When you seal the bag, a certain amount of moisture will also be sealed in. If possible, get some packages of silicone gel, which will absorb the moisture. An easy source of plastic bags are the ones the PRC 25 radio batteries are in. Silicone gel is used as well to keep fuse cans for mortar rounds dry. This same combination is also a good idea for cameras that are being stored rather than used, as well as film and accessories.

## Application for USMAPS

Applications are now being accepted for the U.S. Military Academy Preparatory School at Ft. Belvoir, Va. Prep School attendance affords enlisted members of the active Army an excellent opportunity to compete for appointments to West Point.

Commanders at company level are requested to encourage highly-motivated individuals desiring attendance at West Point to apply. Eligibility requirements and all application procedures are contained in AR 350-55.

Further information is available from unit personnel officers.

## Continued from Page 1

"There was enough rice in the two caches to feed a company-size element for five months," Stover commented. "Charlie has suffered a definite blow by the loss of his food."

Later in the day another hooch was found and fresh signs of activity and tracks indicated the site had been used that morning. A further search proved the enemy had left the area. All the hooches and cache sights were destroyed and Charlie Co was airlifted out Monday afternoon.

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Stamp edge. Sorry, does not qualify as free mail.