

# 21 Impact Awards for 176th Chopper Rescue

CHU LAI - Twenty-one medals for valor, more awards than the Americal Division has ever made for a single action, were presented in ceremonies recently at the 176th Aslt. Hel. Co. ramp here.

BG Wallace L. Clement, deputy division commander, made the impact awards to crew members of six helicopters involved in a daring rescue mission near Tien Phuoc.

1LT William D. Bristow (Alhambra, Calif.), commander of a 14th Cbt. Avn. Bn. UH-1 slick, was finishing a resupply and Medevac mission at 5:55 p.m. Mar. 19 when the drama unfolded.

As the slick emerged from the remote landing zone, heavy automatic weapons fire

was directed at the craft. PFC Robert Wilhelm (Tolley, N.C.) and SP4 Boyd Kettle (Durango, Colo.), crew chief and doorunner respectively, fired back.

### Escape

Pressing for altitude, the slick lurched, and flames spread quickly through the chopper after several hits.

"We continued firing and tried to land as quickly as possible," said 1LT Bristow. Co-pilot WO1 Paul E. Lent (Richmond Springs, N.Y.) radioed two distress calls.

When the ship touched ground, flames were lapping at the cockpit. The Medevac patient, passengers, and crew evacuated as the ship's fuel cells exploded and the slick became an inferno.

"Darkness was approaching, so we checked weapons and ammo," said 1LT Bristow. "We had an M-16 with 35 rounds and a .38-cal pistol with 20 rounds."

### Bad Outlook

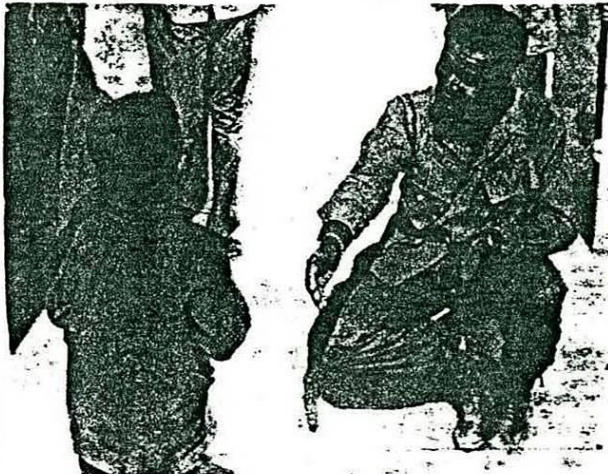
WO1 Lent's mayday call had been monitored by another aircraft, and two 176th "Musket" gunships and two "Minuteman" slicks were diverted to the crash area.

Meanwhile, MAJ Ronald C. Metcalf (Hickory, N.C.), 176th CO, left company headquarters in a recovery ship with maintenance and medical personnel aboard.

By 6:30, two gunships and three slicks were orbiting the downed aircraft while enemy gunfire increased. Fire became more intense as the rescue choppers inched toward the scene.

"I didn't think anyone could have survived the crash and fire," said MAJ Metcalf who told pilot WO1 Jerry W. Herman (Wooster, Ohio) to lead his gunship fire team to look for survivors.

(Continued on Page 7)



**Making a Friend ...**

SP5 James Riley (Baltimore), an interpreter with the 7th PSYOP Bn., tries to coax a handshake from a young Vietnamese chap during a recent village visit. Riley, who has spent just under two years in Vietnam, speaks fluent Vietnamese, almost entirely self-taught. (Photo by PFC Bill Crawford, 196th IO).

## AWOL NVA Now a POW

LZ BALDY--An AWOL NVA squad leader, with help from the 196th Inf. Bde., recently found himself with more free time than even he wanted.

The soldier, a member of the 2d NVA Div. located 25 miles northwest of Tam Ky, was on a three-day pass and decided to extend that to 10 days.

He was lounging comfortably in a hooch below an Americal observation post when a recon patrol of the 2d Bn., 1st Inf. surprised him.

At last report, the embarrassed NVA had given valuable information about his buddies and was enroute to an even longer vacation at a POW camp near Da Nang. (196th IO)



**... And a Friend Made**

Dwarfed by his pal's steel pot, this Vietnamese fellow had the time of his life during one of many visits by Americal soldiers to his home, the Que Son orphanage. (Photo by SP4 Art Noel, 523 Sig. Bn.).

# SOUTHERN CROSS

AMERICAL DIVISION

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CHU LAI, VIETNAM

April 27, 1969

## NVA Sappers March 4 Days, Sit 6 Hours—Then 4/31 Routs 'Em

By PFC BILL CRAWFORD  
LZ WEST—Bodies darkened with charcoal, the shirtless NVA crept nearer the rows of concertina wire.

All were well equipped for a mission of death and destruction with rocket-propelled grenades, satchel charges, Chicom grenades, and AK-47 rifles.

The enemy platoon had entered Hiep Duc Valley from rugged mountains to the west of this 196th Inf. Bde. fire support base.

Reaching the base of Hill 445 about 9 p.m., the NVA rested after an arduous four-day journey. Mission: attack LZ West, located at the summit.

### Ammo Low

At 3 a.m. after six hours rest, the sappers deployed around the West perimeter and were prepared to give the 4th Bn., 31st Inf. a memorable night.

1LT Paul Bavis (Baltimore), leader of the 4/31 reactionary force, was asleep when the first alert sounded. His force was dispatched to a perimeter sector receiving intense pressure.

On arrival, 1LT Bavis was immediately worried that the bunkers might not have enough ammo to suppress a

full-scale enemy attack.

"We had to get ammo to the bunkers in case this thing was really big," he said.

### Under Fire

Ignoring a shower of RPGs and Chicom grenades, PFC Gregory Mainous (Dayton, Ohio) raced straight to an ammo storage bunker. Mainous ran from position to position distributing ammo.

Returning to his post, Mainous found 1LT Bavis and SP4 Gilbert Smith (Wichita Falls, Tex.) staring intently at a wooden latrine

located near the helicopter resupply pad. Two NVA sappers sought cover behind the latrine.

The NVA periodically lobbed Chicom grenades at 1LT Bavis' bunker, and one demolished the doors.

### Herotam

"I moved some men atop the bunker, and we fired down on the latrine," said 1LT Bavis. The NVA died behind the latrine in a hail of fire.

Second later, a nearby (Continued on Page 8)

## Clerks Gang Up

DUC PHO—Men of the 4th Bn., 21st Inf.'s reactionary force go by two names.

By day, they're clerks; by night, they're combat clerks, with the accent on "combat."

The "Gimlets" reactionary force is platoon-size and led by SFC David Link (Beaver Dam, Wis.). Platoon members are from the S-1, S-4, Commo, and Motor Pool sections and operate just like a regular infantry platoon.

The force frequently patrols beyond the perimeter of LZ Bronco, 11th Inf. Bde. headquarters, and occasional-

ly sets up ambush sites.

Two squads comprise the platoon which carries M-60 machineguns and M-79 grenade launchers.

SFC Link earned the Bronze Star with "V" Device for dragging to safety two of his men wounded during a recent mortar attack involving the force.

In addition to field duties, the combat clerks help defend the Bronco bunker line during alerts and move to defend the Tactical Operations Center during attacks. (11th IO)



# Combat In Review



**Demolished VC Position**

Enemy fortifications can be big trouble for ground troops, so Americal infantrymen have come to appreciate the value of heavy tactical air and artillery strikes. Only rubble remains after direct hits like this one on the Batangan Peninsula. (Photo by SP4 Mike Friedman, 26th Engr. Bn.)

## Rangers Drop Right Into Enemy Camp

# 'Things Got Pretty Hot'

By SP4 DALE REICH  
LZ BRONCO—"As soon as we got off the chopper, we saw fresh bunkers and knew we were in the middle of an enemy base camp."

That's how SP4 Larry Mosley (Sutter, Calif.) remembers a recent insertion made by his Ranger team of G Co., 75th Inf.

Working with the 11th Inf. Bde., the Ranger team had been dropped seven miles southwest of Duc Pho where it encountered the base camp.

After leaving the insertion ship, the Rangers headed for a trail some 150 meters away to call in their position. SP4 Mosley and a fellow Ranger left the position to recon the area.

### Alert

The two Americal soldiers turned up 20 freshly-dug bunkers and two camouflaged hootches. Making mental notes of numerous enemy

positions, they were unaware of activity several meters away.

A squad of enemy soldiers, dressed in khaki uniforms and carrying AK-47 and SKS rifles was moving down a trail toward the other Rangers.

"I saw movement about 30 meters away," said SP4 George H. Sisson (Niagara Falls, N.Y.). "Suddenly, they moved into the bushes and began sweeping on line toward us. They knew we were in the area but couldn't see us.

### Getaway

"I saw at least 10 of them. I held up my rifle to alert the other men, and we were soon ready to initiate contact."

When the enemy soldiers had come within about 10 meters of the Ranger position, the Americal soldiers opened fire and immediately

killed four of the insurgents. The others ran for cover.

"We think we wounded several more, but things got pretty hot and we had to head for cover ourselves," said SP4 Sisson.

The Rangers were extracted with help from "Shark" gunships of the 174th Aslt. Hel. Co. which put suppressive fire on enemy positions.

Before leaving, the team confirmed the four enemy kills and picked up an SKS rifle. (11th IO)

## Cornered VC Says To Mr. Tunnel Rat-'Hello'

LZ BALDY—What SP4 Edwin Zeller least expected was the surprise greeting he got while investigating a hostile tunnel.

Zeller's bravado began after four VC evaded a heli-

## Chargers Turn to Old Standby—Low Crawl

By SP4 MILTON SICH  
LZ CENTER—When the trail ended in thick overhanging jungle growth, a platoon of "Chargers" from the 196th Inf. Bde. low crawled into an enemy base camp and plenty of action.

The second platoon of A Co., 3d Bn., 21st Inf. was on a search-and-clear operation 11 miles northwest of Tam Ky where the previous day they had evacuated several detainees from a hamlet. Interrogation had produced location of an unknown-size enemy force.

Now the platoon was patrolling the probable location—the same area in which they had made contact the day before.

"Blue Ghost" gunships of F. Trp., 8th Cav. assisted by rocketing the location before the platoon moved in.

### Waterfall

The "Charger" platoon filed down a trail flanked by triple canopy jungle vegetation. When they could go no further because of the heavy growth, the men began searching for a way to continue.

The point element discovered a narrow path so overgrown with jungle vegetation that the men had to low crawl. After moving 50 meters, point man SP4 Terry Green (Springfield, Va.) heard what he thought was running water.

Moving forward a short distance, Green came to a large waterfall. Next door was an enemy base camp, extremely well camouflaged and ringed with fighting positions and lookout posts.

As Green looked over the

apparently abandoned enemy positions, he spotted movement in bushes near a tunnel. A short burst of M-16 fire brought down a VC attempting to escape.

### Scramble

While reloading his weapon, Green was rushed by two more armed VC. Platoon leader 1LT Laurence McNamara (Fairfax, Va.) wheeled and killed both VC before they reached Green.

"That sent VC scrambling everywhere," said Green.

Approaching a tunnel, two infantrymen heard a noise above the enemy position, threw grenades on top, and killed two more VC.

Meanwhile, a separate element of the platoon was sent to follow the course of the stream and ran into three more fleeing VC. Two were killed by M-16 fire, and the other was captured and returned to the rest of the platoon.

### Inactive

1LT McNamara found a large tunnel complex. "I was reaching down and pulling out a VC when I noticed he had a grenade with the pin pulled," said 1LT McNamara. "I shoved him back and holstered. Grenade!"

The grenade blast in the tunnel killed three more VC and, after a thorough search of the camp, the platoon's lead element crawled back down the same path that had led to the base camp.

Sudden movement in thick jungle in front of the platoon was stopped with a quick reconnaissance by fire. A check of the area revealed a dead VC medic.

Documents found in the medic's shirt pocket named VC active in the area.

After the second platoon's visit, 11 names were scratched off the active list. (196th IO)

## COL Subs on AF Promotion

LZ BAYONET—An Army colonel promoting an Air Force major?

That's what happened here recently when COL Robert B. Tully (San Antonio, Tex.), commander of the 198th Inf. Bde., pinned a gold leaf on 198th Forward Air Control pilot David Griswold (Williamsport, Pa.).

"It was a ceremonial promotion," said MAJ Griswold, who had been promoted earlier by the Air Force.

"The ceremony meant a lot to me," MAJ Griswold added. "I have enjoyed working with the Army. It's been a gratifying experience."

MAJ Griswold, who is assigned to the 20th Tactical Air Support Squadron at Da Nang, has been attached to the Americal Division for eight months, the last six with the "Brave and Bold." (198th IO)

## APCs Save Trapped MPs

By SP4 DONALD YOST  
DUC PHO—The day had been notably quiet as the first platoon of the 23d Military Police Co. escorted a convoy between Sa Haynh and here along Highway 1.

Suddenly, the last jeep in the convoy struck a command detonated mine, and heavy enemy small arms and automatic weapons fire was directed at the jeep.

SP4 Peter A. Jewell (Canaan, Me.), machinegunner on the jeep, was hurled from the vehicle by the force of the explosion.

SP4 Mark S. Jordan (Xenia, Ohio) stayed behind

the wheel of the jeep for 100 yards before it careened off the road and landed upright in a rice paddy. Only then did Jordan realize that Jewell was missing.

### Fast Answer

"I couldn't see him anywhere," Jordan said, "until I looked back and saw him low-crawling toward me through the rice paddies."

When Jewell reached the damaged jeep under heavy enemy crossfire, he immediately turned the machinegun on the enemy position despite painful bruises and abrasions.

While Jewell manned the machinegun, Jordan grabbed the radio and called help. Two armored personnel carriers of E Trp., 1st Cav. responded with devastating fire on the enemy.

The two MPs boarded an APC, and the disabled jeep was extracted from the paddy. "If it hadn't been for those APCs, we'd probably still be out there," said Jewell.

A day later, wrapped in bandages and still in pain, SP4 Jewell became SGT Jewell. (11th IO)





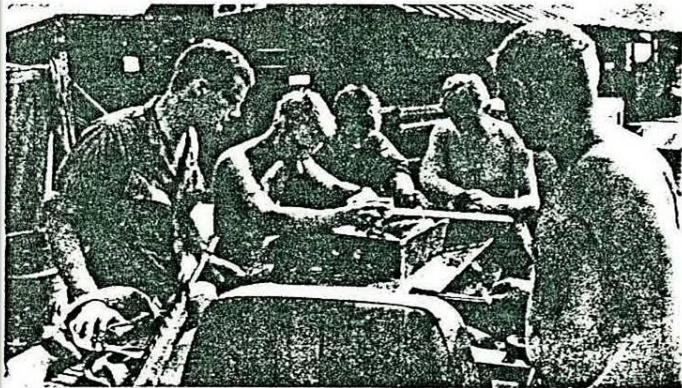
FAST team loads Chinook with PX items for remote fire bases



At fire base, troops line up at 23rd S&T co

## Fast Super Servi

Story and Photos by  
SGT DERRILL C. DALBY  
Americal Support Command



Men from 723rd Maint. Bn. repair small arms for field troops

CHU LAI—Americal troops in remote base areas are receiving supply, maintenance, and administrative support FAST thanks to the teamwork of division support elements.

Forward Area Support (FAST) teams, operating through the Division Support Command in Chu Lai, travel to distant fire bases to provide finance, personnel actions, issue and turn-in, and PX services. Now many services traditionally offered in larger rear support areas are available to units in remote fire bases.

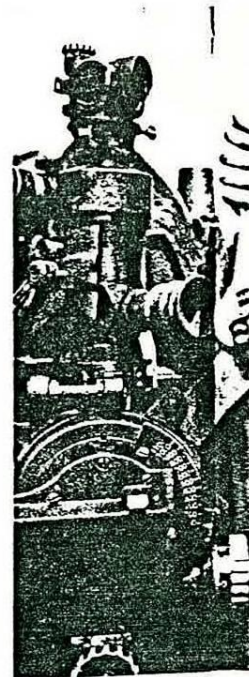
Before coming in for stand-down, an individual can make necessary PX purchases, take care of personnel and financial affairs, and have weapons repaired through the FAST team, leaving more free time to relax while in Chu Lai.

Here's how the FAST system works. After placing an initial request for a FAST visit with the Americal Support Command, a unit will be contacted by CPT Jackie Ratcliffe, current FAST advisor.

While at the base, CPT Ratcliffe gathers information

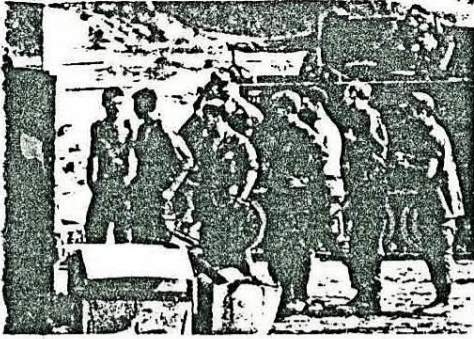


23rd Admin. Co. personnel make dog tags and money orders for 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. soldiers.



A FAST rep:





S&T conex to DX equipment and clothing

## Service Visits Field

on what the men want and estimates what to bring on the forthcoming FAST visit. Items desired range from boots to cameras.

On a recent FAST mission, 19 radios, 15 cameras, 4 shavers, 4 wallets, 19 binoculars, and 26 tape recorders were sold to a company of 180 men. This represents an average sale of over \$18 per man.

On the first seven visits since the program was initiated in February, almost \$19,000 of PX merchandise was sold. "We try to offer what the soldier looks for in Chu Lai. We save out the best for the boys in the field," said SFC John J. Jacobs, NCOIC of the PX depot.

FAST personnel live up to their name, processing 300 troops during an average visit of six hours. And they feel their work is highly rewarding because it gives them a chance to do something for troops in the field.

SP4 James R. Wilkerson, fire control instrument repairman, said, "It gives me a sense of satisfaction to put a piece of equipment back in working order for a crew chief or gunner."

A concerned "gun bunny" on a 155mm howitzer will watch as Wilkerson adjusts and tightens a sight. The artilleryman's relief is evident as he shouts back to the exec post, "Gun number four is up!"



FAST-man SP4 James R. Wilkerson repairs fire sight on M-48 tank



FAST repairman adjusts a 155mm Howitzer for precision firing



FAST-man PFC Mike Baker inspects M-16



Religion and You

# Peace in Dependence

By CHAPLAIN (LTC) JACK C. RANGLES  
Assistant Division Chaplain

Would you believe everything is allowed to drive us closer to Him?

Someone once said: "Whenever I see a crowded assembly of men and women, I think of the privations and disappointments, the unsatisfied hungers, and unalleviated sorrows which make up their lot.

"How much they have suffered and lost, how frequent have been their sicknesses and bereavements, how humbling have been their defeats, how searching have been their mortifications and betrayals, how full of anxiety their outlook on life.

"I never sit and speak with an older person who opens out the story of his long life, but I realize again how closely sealed the book of life is to man himself.

"The story told is one of hope unfulfilled, work unfinished, love baffled, trial upon trial, sorrow upon sorrow, death upon death, impoverishing and shadowing life all the way through."

The sharp blasts of adversity are to cause us to rely more upon Him. They are designed to drive us nearer Him.

Many things which we thought were ill spared may have been uprooted in the storm of life, but His love abides as warm and unchanging as ever. He desires our dependence on Him so He can give us peace.



## 11th Leads Americal Re-Up Bid

DUC PHO—A whopping sum in reenlistment bonuses was paid to members of the 11th Inf. Bde. last month as 30 soldiers took the oath for another Army hitch.

"Compiling this record-breaking number of reenlistments gave the 11th Bde. a clean sweep in Americal Division competition," said MSG William Chaplic, 11th career counselor.

Division re-up competition is held in three categories: best brigade, battalion, and company. Individual 11th champs are the 3d Bn., 1st Inf.; and C Co., 4th Bn., 3d Inf.

"Results of the 11th's reenlistment program performance have clinched first place for the third quarter of the Fiscal 69 Commanding General's award," said MSG Chaplic.

"The quarter total is 60 reenlistments with 30 in March alone."

More than half the reenlistees for the quarter were AUS or inductee personnel, while the 30 re-ups last month were all obtained by MSG Chaplic and SSG Paul Boyle, the other 11th Bde. career counselor.

SFC Fred Friedrich (Renton, Wash.), senior career counselor for the 11th, was recently awarded the Bronze Star for service. Among his achievements was reenlistment last January of 19 AUS personnel, more than were signed up in the rest of the division.

The Variable Reenlistment Bonus can be that extra nest egg you've been wanting to pay for electronic equipment, a new camera, or even that R&R or leave. What's handy about the Vietnam VRB is that you'll get the whole bundle tax-free, no strings.

Check SGT Re-up today. He has the good word.

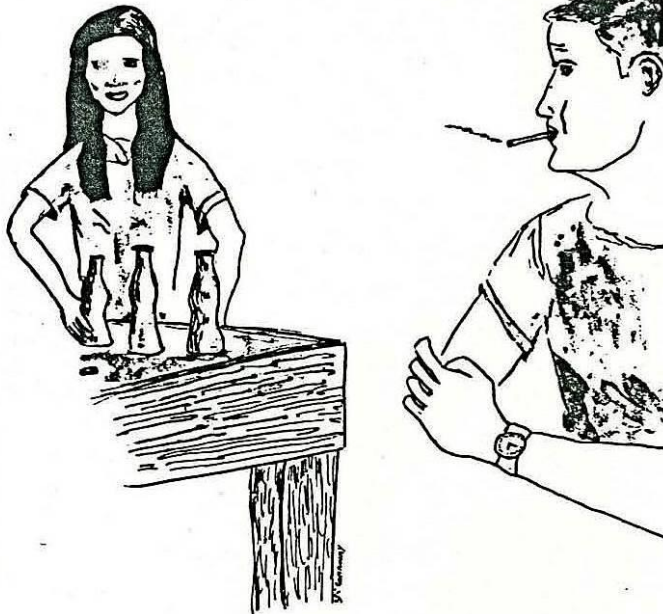
# SOUTHERN CROSS

AMERICAL DIVISION

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# Let Village Buyers Beware!



By 1LT PETER WESTRUP

The March day was unusually hot and sticky as the Americal Division infantry company arrived in Vinh Than village and stopped for a 10-minute break.

The company commander put out the word to platoon leaders to instruct their men not to buy in village shops. The edict was already familiar to the troops.

But the severe heat and the taste of warm, lizidized canteen water made cool bottles of soda so challenging a temptation that PFC Switchtoff decided to chance being caught with a purchased drink.

He easily bought and downed the "refreshing" liquid without being detected just before the company moved out.

### Delirium

About 20 minutes out of the village, Switchtoff was overcome by dizziness and nausea. Moments later, he experienced severe stomach pains which quickly became mild convulsions.

Medics first diagnosed the problem as heat exhaustion but soon decided on something much more serious. When the dust-off chopper arrived, Switchtoff was barely breathing.

The stricken soldier's respiration rate dropped rapidly, and his condition was critical. Fortunately, in his delirium he mumbled something about drinking a soda, so doctors had solid indication of what treatment to pursue.

Such events actually happen.

PFC Switchtoff lived, a minor miracle considering his "soda" contained emblaming fluid which has since left him unable to regain use of normal functions for the rest of his life.

### Ingredients

Each day, Americal soldiers make unwise and often unauthorized purchases on the Vietnamese economy. Most appear harmless, but a certain percentage usually result in frightful consequences.

Most dangerous purchases involve foodstuffs, both solids and liquids, because GIs mistakenly believe that containers bearing American brand names are bona fide U.S. products. Such is seldom true.

Bottles are easily procured by Vietnamese who fill them with homemade brews, many of which are plagued by impurities.

Viet Cong and their village friends spike drinks with toxic agents, usually formaldehyde, ground glass, and battery acid. Oddly enough, most people cannot readily detect such additives in time to avoid injury.

### Booby Traps

Also to be avoided are open air refreshment stands where one may watch a drink or sandwich being prepared but cannot judge what ingredients are used. Even popsicles sold by baby-san have a polluted water base.

Consumption of such foodstuffs can cause painful diseases like ptomaine poisoning and hepatitis.

Eats and drinks are not the only taboo items in the village. Cigaret lighters, candles, and souvenir toys are also used as tools of war.

Cigaret lighters are easily and often booby trapped with a small charge that disables a GI, particularly one igniting the lighter close to his face.

### Odd Feeling

Candles too can be charged by hollowing the core and inserting explosive. Village candles usually are not worth buying due to their rapid burning rate.

Souvenir toys or dolls are prime objects for enemy treachery and, last year, a large number were found to contain explosive material. That news put a strong scare into GIs who mailed home toys or dolls.

Local villages are generally interesting places to shop, and most display a large array of merchandise. But many goods found there are products of the black market with prices jacked sky high for the unwary GI.

### Alternative

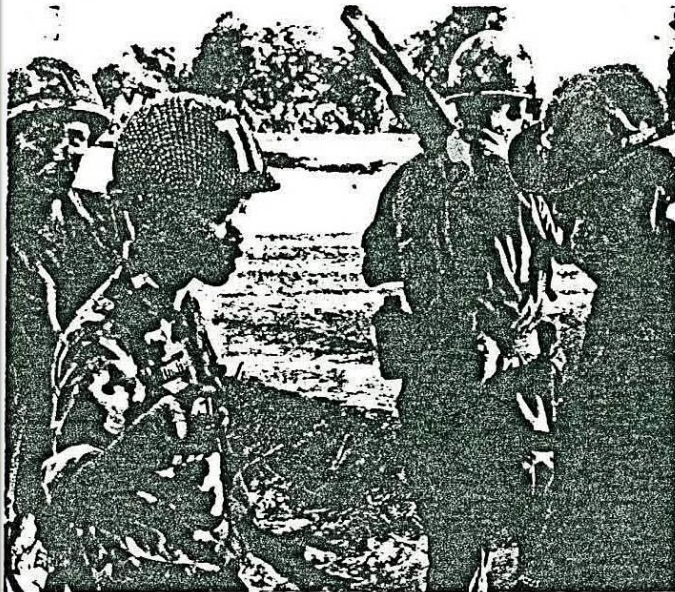
Americans further make a mistake by using MFC which helps boost the black market economy.

Purchases of Vietnam souvenirs and any type of food or beverage should always be made at a PX or authorized concession where quality merchandise is assured.

GI buyers in the village should be continually aware of the danger inherent in shopping there. An old adage suffices well:

Caveat Empor! Let the buyer beware! (Americal IO)





INTERROGATOR THINH OF THE VIETNAMESE National Police Field Force Platoon explains results of his questioning of a VC suspect to SSG Hung, an ARVN interpreter attached to the 11th Inf. Bde. SSG Hung's ability as a translator often gives 11th Bde. units a big jump on the enemy. (Photo by SP5 Al Holloway, 11th IO).

Call the Best Man Available, an ARVN Interpreter

## No Speaka Da Language, Joe?

By 1LT PETER WESTRUP  
CHU LAI—Approaching the village chief, the Americal Division platoon leader spoke slowly and distinctly in Vietnamese:

"Have you seen any Viet Cong?"

The old man said he hadn't, so the lieutenant tried again, each time changing the tone and pronunciation of his question. Finally, the man's face brightened, and a rapid flow of information poured out.

But, because he wasn't fluent in Vietnamese, the lieutenant understood only that he might be missing valuable information. Then inspiration hit.

**Results**  
A quick call to the battalion commander (flying overhead brought the battalion's ARVN interpreter from duty with another platoon. In moments, the Americans learned that 17 VC, armed with rifles and a mortar tube, had just left the village and were headed west.

## Ice Cream!

DUC PHO—Ice cream! Ice cream! Yup, just like Bill Cosby used to yell it on that record; that's how good it makes a guy feel.

Thanks to PSG John H. Hicks (Crystal Springs, Miss.) and his crew, 11th Inf. Bde. chowhounds here are seeing flavors ranging from bananas to strawberry several times a week.

The local ice cream plant produces 79 2½-gallon containers every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. (11th IO)

April, 27 1969

Within an hour, the VC force had been intercepted. Eleven VC were killed, four were captured, and several weapons taken.

Such assistance given American units throughout Vietnam by ARVN interpreters typifies their value in the GI's daily operations.

**Long Road**  
Becoming an ARVN interpreter is hard work.

After submitting a request to attend the Armed Forces Language Institute in Saigon, the would-be interpreter must pass an entrance exam that requires limited facility in English. Then he undergoes a security check.

Average attendance at the Institute is three to four months, depending on the individual's ability to grasp English and his performance on a rigorous final exam.

If possible, assignment is through choice of unit. Some interpreters join ARVN personnel management and administrative support teams, but most move to American combat and combat support units.

### Big Asset

The Americal Division's 154 interpreters, 10 of whom are attached, have performed well in various capacities. Included among awards made to interpreters in the past two months are three Silver Stars, six Bronze Stars, and 10 Army Commendation Medals.

Unit commanders claim their interpreters are a vital link in the success of combat missions.

"Having an interpreter greatly increased my platoon's operational efficiency," said 1LT Arthur C. Grueter (Manchester, N.H.), formerly a company CO with the 11th Inf. Bde.

"More than once, an interpreter gave us good leads through his contacts with local villagers."

Interpreters are also valuable assets to civic action programs, according to SGT Thomas G. Sweeney (Bayside, N.Y.), who works closely with interpreters for the 11th Inf. Bde.'s Civil Affairs section.

"Interpreters are not only valuable as translators but as diplomats," said SGT Sweeney. "They really get us closer to the Vietnamese people." (Americal IO)

## Engineers Always Eye 'That Other One Time'

By SP4 DENNIS SELBY  
LZ ROSS—The warning echoed up and down the slow-moving column of engineers:

"Burning a hole...."  
The C-4 charge is set, and the demolition expert moves to place the next charge over a suspected mine.

Working in stifling noon-day heat, men of the second platoon of A Co., 26th Engr. Bn. are sweeping and clearing newly-opened Highway 534.

### Soda Night

Advancing toward the first platoon of D Co., 26th Engrs., the Americal Division soldiers have a five-mile section of road to clear. Hopefully, they will finish by 2 p.m., because it is Saturday, generally "cold soda night" here where the second platoon is billeted.

Beginning about 7 a.m., at LZs Ross and Karen, the two platoons of engineers begin sweeping Highways 534 and 535 to meet at their intersection.

2d ARVN Division soldiers provide security on each flank, roving 100 to 600 meters and loosing an occasional M-79 round to flush possible snipers.

Mid-day heat doesn't slow the unit. The road may be heavily-mined; almost two years have passed since the last convoy rolled over the one-vehicle-wide path.

### Prodding

According to 1LT Michael Bollinger (Manila, Ark.), second platoon leader, "we check anything that registers on mine detectors. True, it's usually a buried soda can or 'C' ration tin, but we check it just the same."

Two mine detector operators sweeping each side of the road are followed by "probers." The MDOs mark any suspicious spot of ground that registers on the mine detector.

Then two probers, using a bayonet, gently prod to un-

cover the source of the reading. If the source can't be located or is too large, the demolition expert places a C-4 charge on the suspected spot and "burns a hole." The explosive concussion sets off the mine.

"Nine times out of ten, it's not a mine," 1LT Bollinger added. "But that other one time can destroy a vehicle."

### Rarity

PVT Kenneth Roberts (Chattanooga), a prober, said, "the VC like to mine roads with C-4 or other explosives. Since plastic is often used as a container, rather than metal, mines are very difficult to detect."

"The road is only used by an occasional convoy, but before every trip, the engineers must carefully resweep and reclear the highway," 1LT Bordinger said.

"Five miles is a pretty good walk, but that's one of the jobs of an American combat engineer." (Americal IO)

## Mr. Fixit Is 723's Alias

CHU LAI—The shop area, strewn with disabled vehicles, generators, and other damaged equipment, resembles the legendary elephants' graveyard where old pachyderms gather to die.

But, in this case, the "dead" will live again.

From instrument and watch repair specialists to M-48 tank mechanics, the 723d Maint. Bn. keeps the Americal Division ready for battle.

Almost 300 pieces of damaged equipment pass through 723d shops each week to be inspected, serviced, and tested before release to their owners.

Very little is wasted. A jeep, damaged beyond repair, is stripped of usable parts and placed on the scrap heap for return to the States and use as scrap metal.

"We may not fight the war with rifles and grenades," said OIC 1LT Kenneth T. Hunt (Cincinnati), "but each time we put a vehicle back on the road, we discourage the enemy." (Americal IO)

## Nice Try, Guys

CHU LAI—Mr. Lawrence Babbitts of 107 West Lintor St., Philadelphia, received a routine inquiry here recently from Selective Service Board No. 44 in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

In effect, the board wondered why Mr. Babbitts had failed to register for the draft.

SFC Larry Babbitts, alive and well as NCOIC of the Americal Information Office after 18 years in the Army, is currently drafting his reply to the Selective Service. (Americal IO)



## Definitely a Dog's Life

SP4 John B. Doyle, the 11th Inf. Bde. veterinary medic, inoculates a muzzled scout dog against one of many diseases that affect dogs in Vietnam. The 59th Scout Dog Platoon member didn't have much to say. (Photo by SP4 Owen G. Miller, 11th IO).

SOUTHERN CROSS

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# 176th Receives 21 Awards

(Continued from First Page)

Several passes over the crash site revealed nothing, and the gunships temporarily left to provide cover for a ground patrol ambushed while attempting to secure the downed ship.

## Strobe

Hope dwindled when a second gunship search also failed, but one commander, WO1 Richard K. McLean (Miami), suddenly saw a flash of light.

"I thought it was just a muzzle flash," said WO1 McLean. "Then I realized it was actually a strobe light."

Far below on his back in the middle of a rice paddy lay WO1 Lent who had crawled from a hedgerow where the downed fliers were hidden 75 meters from the crash site. WO1 Lent flashed 1LT Bristow's strobe at the gunships.

## Fast Work

Hearing the conversation about the strobe, WO1 Bruce W. Shaffer (Washington),

and WO1 John M. Blair (Spokane), pilot and co-pilot of a slick, volunteered to extract the crash victims.

"We quickly organized the three slicks and gunship team," said MAJ Metcalf, "and WO1 Shaffer began a high overhead approach."

As he descended through increasing enemy fire, MAJ Metcalf flew his slick like a gunship and followed WO1 Shaffer to lend cover, WO1 Gary L. Williams (Phoenix, Ariz.) swooped in as MAJ Metcalf's wingman.

As WO1 Shaffer landed, WO1 Lent and SP4 Kettle hustled the other five survivors into the rescue ship. Lent then darted for the chopper amid a hail of bullets and SP4 Kettle followed.

"Rounds were hitting all around me," WO1 Lent said. "I thought I was a goner."

WO1 Shaffer lifted safely as gunships hovered nearby.

Two Silver Stars, 11 Distinguished Flying Crosses, and eight Air Medals with

"V" device were presented a week later.

WO1's Shaffer and Blair received the Silver Stars; MAJ Metcalf, WO1 Williams, WO1 McLean, WO1 Herman, and 1LT Bristow received the DFC.

## Winners

Other DFC winners were SP4 Robert O. Allison (St. Helens, Ore.); SP4 Antonio K. Taylor (New York City); 1LT James D. Horton (Troy, Pa.); WO1 Glen E. Goff (Knightstown, Ind.); WO1 Thomas G. Melin (Clyde Park, Mont.); and WO1 Philip S. Lee (Norfolk).

The Air Medal with "V" went to SP4 Steven R. Cundry (Springfield, Mo.); SP4 Phillip R. Varnum (La Crosse, Wis.); SP5 Lawrence J. Silva (San Leandro, Calif.); and SP4 Billy L. Parsons (Trona, Calif.).

Also, SP4 Richard C. Sear (Akron); SP4 Richard R. Conover (Levittown, N.Y.); and SP4 John C. Gruidl (Minneapolis); and SP4 Jerry L. Mitchell (Reading Pa.), (16th IO).



*Fernande*

The obvious half of the husband-wife team, Robin and She, Fernande is a Gallic charmer who once modeled Dior fashions. "She" and her husband recently performed in the Chu Lai area where some adventurous American types discovered that Fernande answers fluently in French, English, Spanish, Flemish, and German. (Photo by CPT Cary Sklarew, Americal IO).

## Nightclubs, FDC Don't Have a Lot in Common

By SP4 PAUL PALMER

CHU LAI—A vast difference exists between the flashing life of a nightclub and that of an artillery center—one beams with cigaret smoke and the other brings smoke.

PFC John W. Sutton (Pittsburgh), assigned to the 1st Bn., 82d Arty. Fire Direction Control Center, knows both those lives.

A year ago, Sutton toured the eastern U.S. and a singer, guitarist, and organist in a three-man psychedelic-rock group called the Trifids.

"We got the name from a movie called 'Night of the Trifids,'" the 19-year-old said.

"One of the guys looked up the word and found it meant 'divided into three parts.' That seemed to fit, so we used it."

Since the group started in Pittsburgh four years ago, Sutton and his psych-rock combo have played in many major cities in the East and Midwest, including New York, Chicago, Milwaukee, and Louisville.

"Most often we played one-nighters in the greater Pittsburgh area," Sutton said. "But when we went on the

## No VC Allowed

DUC PHO—Two 11th Inf. Bde. platoons have encircled several rice paddies near the Song Tra Cau five miles northwest of here so scavenging VC will no longer steal local villagers' rice.

Involved are the recon platoon of the 1st Bn., 20th Inf.; and the first platoon of E Trp., 1st Cav (11th IO).

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road, we booked into clubs for a week or two at a time. "When you put almost \$12,000 in amplifiers, microphones, and psychedelic lighting equipment on the stage, you can't afford one-night stands on the road."

"In Pittsburgh, we worked five teen dance centers. Each held nearly a thousand teenagers."

"We put on our show there and backed up some well-known singers and groups like Brian Hyland, The Drifters, The Rolling Stones, The Animals, The Mamas and Papas, and The Beach Boys.

Sutton recently arrived in Vietnam and works as a chart operator in the 1 82 FDC which coordinates artillery fire for the battalion.

When his Army tour ends, back to that noisy nightclub life! (Americal IO)

## BS 'V' for Pilot

LZ BRONCO—Air Force CPT Lewis E. Jones (Bloomington, Ill.) has been awarded a Bronze Star Medal with "V" device, usually a decoration for ground action.

CPT Jones was cited for valor last Nov. 17-20 when he coordinated extraction of the body of a jet pilot killed in a crash and later guided advance ground troops into a hostile area to search for the other pilot.

A Forward Air Control pilot for the 11th Inf. Bde., CPT Jones was directing the original mission when the jet was shot down. (11th IO)

## Fast Job Saves Girl's Life

By SP4 TONY SWINDELL  
LZ BRONCO—"We had only a few moments to start her breathing again, and we were cutting it pretty close."

CPT Milton Dorf (New York City) was explaining the exacting experience he, another doctor, and a medic went through recently at the 23d Med. Bn. Evac. Hosp. here.

A small girl was brought to the hospital with other Vietnamese civilians after a rocket attack on nearby Duc Pho village.

Suffering from multiple shrapnel wounds, the girl was treated and placed in a

ward to await transfer to a Chu Lai hospital. Suddenly she stopped breathing.

## Hidden

The medic, SP5 Jerry Cooper (Charlotte) was making routine rounds when he noticed the girl's chest still. He scooped her up and rushed to a treating room where CPT Dorf and CPT Louis Ellis (Philadelphia) waited.

"At first I couldn't understand what had happened to her," said Dr. Dorf. "Then, when we examined her, we found a small shrapnel wound in her chest which had been hidden by her shirt."

While CPT Ellis massaged the girl's heart, medics inserted a tube in her throat to keep air passages open. CPT Dorf injected a stimulant directly into the heart.

"We had only a few moments...we were cutting it close," CPT Dorf explained.

## Recovering

"When I felt her heart begin beating again and her breathing start, I knew she had a pretty good chance of recovering."

"When she was put aboard the Medevac chopper to Chu Lai, she was gaining strength." (11th IO)

## Decorated for Same Gunship Mission

# Five Pilots Win DFC

CHU LAI—Five pilots of the 174th Aslt. Hel. Co. have been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for exceptional heroism in suppressing an enemy ground attack last Nov. 17.

Cited were WO1 Robert E. Thomas (Birmingham, Ala.), 1LT Robert R. Gamber Jr. (Philadelphia), 1LT Geoffrey J. Buckley (Alexandria, Va.), CW2 James R. Rawlings, and WO1 Eugene D. Nowak.

## Top Help

The five gunship pilots were called to action when LZ Snoopy and a nearby South Vietnamese Army in-

stallation came under fierce enemy rocket and mortar fire and a ground attack.

The pilots flew through heavy rain and darkness, quickly pinpointed hostile positions on arrival, and engaged a large VC force.

## Beaten

Spotting an enemy mortar emplacement, the gunships made repeated attacks on the position but were repelled by intense hostile fire. On the fourth try, the position was destroyed.

In the continuing engagement, the five pilots placed suppressive fire on the advancing enemy force and inflicted numerous casualties.

The gunships remained in the area for over 3½ hours until the attack was crushed. (Americal IO)

## Milestone for 1/82

CHU LAI—An eight-inch gun section, headed by SGT William Stoneman, fired the 100,000th round in Vietnam for the 1st Bn., 82d Arty. in ceremonies recently at D Btry.

The same piece which fired the 100,000th round had been used to fire first when the 1/82 was reactivated last year at Ft. Lewis, Wash. (Americal IO)





### Building Bridges

White Lions of the 26th Engr. Bn. work vigorously to repair the damaged Binh Son bridge, seven miles south of Chu Lai. Part of the bridge collapsed when VC placed explosive charges under one of its main supports. (Photo by SGT Herb Hartley, Americal IO).

## NVA Sappers Zapped After Big March, Sit

(Continued from first page) 106mm recoilless rifle position took a direct RPG hit. 1LT Robert MocarSKI (Holliston, Mass.) ran into the area to help evacuate the wounded and stumbled over a dead NVA soldier.

Mainous helped 1LT MocarSKI evacuate the wounded, and PFC Ronald Norfleet (Scappoose, Ore.) ignored painful shrapnel wounds to make several trips with litters to the aid station some 200 meters away.

Everywhere on the besieged sector of the perimeter, exploding RPGs and sporadic AK-47 fire added to evacuation problems.

A medic, SP5 Bill Leander (Salina, Kan.) was asleep in

the aid station when the attack was launched.

"I got a call from C Co saying they had a man hurt pretty badly," said Leander. "I grabbed a litter and took off."

"I started toward the bunkerline as an AK-47 started popping away at me. I jumped into one bunker and shined my light around. No one there was wounded, but I heard moaning in the next bunker."

#### Plea

"I started there, and the AK opened up again. I could see dirt spraying where bullets were hitting around me."

In the next bunker, Leander found a man with badly injured legs after an RPG had smashed his bunker.

"He was bleeding pretty bad," explained Leander. "I didn't have a tourniquet so I made one from the drawing string of a sandbag."

"There was no way I could get the man out by myself, so I yelled for help."

#### Readiness

Leander's plea was answered by 1LT James Dean (Penn Yan, N.Y.), who raced through AK-47 fire toward Leander's voice. Eventually, they got the wounded GI to an aid station.

Eight NVA lay dead around the perimeter, and one sapper was captured. No 4/31 soldiers were killed.

"It was just like everyone had trained for a whole year to be ready for that one night," said 1LT MocarSKI. (196th IO)

## Med Society Membership Is Booming

CHU LAI—Two medics hurried toward the conference room.

"What's the meeting about tonight?" asked the X-ray technician from the 312th Evac Hosp here.

"I don't know for sure, but I think the division dental surgeon plans to talk about a field project," replied the other medic, an aide in the 312th emergency room.

The medics were rushing to attend a bi-weekly meeting of the Chu Lai Medical Society, which operates much the same as medical societies everywhere, providing an opportunity for men of medicine to learn from each other.

#### Membership

"The society's purpose is to present the opportunity for exchanging medical data between all branches of service and to coordinate MEDCAP projects," said CPT Thomas Hall (Hamburg, Pa.), Americal preventive medicine officer and society secretary.

Medical personnel from every branch of service in the Chu Lai area belong to the society whose membership now totals 225 since its initiation in August, 1967.

Membership is open to everyone in the medical field and stationed in the Americal area. (Americal IO)

## Nice Try, Guys (2)

LZ LIZ—The VC PSYOP effort just can't cut it here.

For the second time in as many months, a 1st Bn., 20th Inf. mortar barrage recently silenced a brief VC broadcast from a nearby treeline.

Next month: same time, same station, same result! (11th IO)

## 9000 Miles From Wrigley Field

# A Once & Future Outfielder

CHU LAI—Allen Robinson gripped the baseball glove, instinctively smacked it with a closed fist, and let his mind wander to thoughts he tries not to recall very often.

First he sees Robinson, CF, at the top of a Cubs box score—then reality intrudes with Robinson, PFC.

"I was invited to spring training with the major league club this season," said Robinson, Chicago's No. 3 pick in the 1967 college draft and selective service choice last October.

Only one month into his Vietnam tour as an infantryman, Robinson sees box scores listing Smith, Spangler, Hickman, Qualls, Young, and McMath in right and center field for the Cubs.

"I thought I had a real

good chance of making it this year," said Robinson, who instead will spend the season with the 196th Inf. Bde's 3d Bn., 21st Inf.

Robinson, 24, turned pro after four years at Tennessee State University. In June 1967, he moved to the Cub's Caldwell, Idaho team in the all-rookie Pioneer League.

## Sports

"I went to Tennessee State on a football scholarship, but I played only two years," Robinson noted. "I stayed with baseball when it coincided with spring football practice."

As a shortstop at Central High in Mobile, Ala., Robinson never hit under .390 in

three varsity seasons and was the youngest player on a local semi-pro team.

His Central predecessors? Just Willie McCovey, and the Aaron brothers, Hank and Tommy.

At Caldwell, the 5-foot-10, 175-pounder led off, batted .327, and led the league in stolen bases. He bats left, throws right, and has run the 100-yard dash in 9.4 seconds.

"I went back to school for my degree, finished in March, and went to spring training with the Cubs' minor league teams," Robinson stated. In one and a half months with Quincy, Ill. of the Class A Midwest League, he batted first, hit .354 with nine home runs, and again led in stolen bases.

That brief, impressive showing earned Robinson a boost to Class AAA at Tacoma, Wash., one step from Wrigley Field, Chicago, and the big time.

"That was a big jump," he recalled. "I didn't start any games, but I pinch-hit and pinch-ran a lot. It was a real experience playing with young guys and a lot of older veterans."

At season's end, Robinson visited his fiancée in Jacksonville, went home Sept. 29, opened his mail that afternoon, and learned he'd be an Army private Oct. 8.

Like many drafted athletes, Robinson blitzed the basic training PT course with a perfect 500 score. "I was assigned to the infantry and knew right away where I'd be going."

His next big decision: Extend six weeks, ETS in early May, and try to play ball immediately; or ETS stateside in Oct.

"I think I'd like to get out in May, but I don't know if I want to extend," Robinson said. "Till I see more of the field, I just don't know." (Americal IO)

## It's Spelled Skiing or Skiing for WO1 Reed

LZ BRONCO—WO1 Harry Reed confused a plane-load of people when he turned up with skis and ski boots on a recent R&R return flight from Japan.

An instructor pilot with 11th Inf. Bde aviation, WO1 Reed (Park City, Utah) is an expert skier and a member of the Professional Ski Instructors Association of America.

"I started skiing about 14 years ago," he said. "I've skied all over the East coast, Utah, Colorado, Washington, Canada, and Mexico. I just returned from Japan which has excellent slopes."

While attending the University of Utah, WO1 Reed worked as a professional ski patrolman, watching slopes and aiding injured skiers.

#### Runner-up

WO1 Reed entered the Army in 1966 and went to Alaska to teach Army and

civilian personnel skiing. He was later assigned to flight school and arrived here last August.

"I've competed in all alpine events," he said, "including the downhill slalom in which skiers reach speeds up to 80 mph."

"I skied in class B events and once took second place in Alaska's Southern Ski Conference."

WO1 Reed leaves the Army in 1971 and is eyeing Aspen, Colo. for his first civilian assignment.

#### Ideal

"Aspen has a special helicopter service which takes skiers to unskied areas, then directs them from the air. I'd like that kind of work."

"That way I could combine skiing and flying, the two occupations I enjoy most." (11th IO)



## Goin' Home

Vietnam: distant and uphill, tired, rifle plopped, gear slung, tanned, wary, distant and uphill, weary, distant and uphill. (Photo by SP4 Dennis Selby, Americal IO)