



2nd Battalion 1st Infantry Chapter, Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA)



WEBSITE: www.b-2-1-196lib.com

Volume 3

"A Soldier's Footsteps"

December 2013

Commanders Corner: I hope you all had a Happy Thanksgiving and were able to spend some special time with family and friends. I hope you were some place a lot warmer than I was. All Thanksgiving week it was in the 20's around here---can you say "Global Warming"? This month Christmas is upon us and we'll have one more chance this year to celebrate with our loved ones. I always look forward to the holidays but, also sort of look forward to them ending and starting a new year. I'm always happy, happy, happy when I make it to another year. This month, we sent out dues information just to remind some folks that are delinquent so we can get our books and membership up to date. Annual dues may be paid throughout the month of January and, if you have any questions or problems please contact one of the officers. We have been very lucky to remain in the black with our finances and have been able to provide for our members. I want to thank all of you that have been so supportive of our chapter these past couple of years; especially those of you that have gone above and beyond the call of duty in helping with our finances and running of the chapter. As you probably know, Your current chapter officers were re-elected for another 2 year term and we are proud to serve the chapter. Now, is the time to start thinking of some fellow chapter members who would be candidates for the next elections in 2015. I'm sure we have some extremely capable guys out there. Don't worry, I'll keep bugging you throughout the next couple of years on this. I have been a little remiss in reporting new members the last couple of months and apologize for this. Over the last couple of months,; Joel Schwartz (B), Ed "Doc" Fast (B) and Gene "Bow" Bowen (B) have joined us as members. I regret to report another comrade passed away; W. Frank Hagen departed us on August 23, 2013. Frank served with Bravo 2/1 as an 81mm mortar man in '71-'72. Frank was not a member of our chapter but, we are sorry to hear of his passing and send our condolences to his family and friends.

Keep safe and may the bond of battle never be broken!
Chuck



WWII, Korea Servicemen Identified: The Defense POW/MIA Office announced the identification of remains belonging to:

- Army Pfc. Norman Dufresne, 20, of Leominster, Mass. He is scheduled to be buried in his hometown tomorrow. In July 1950, Dufresne and elements of G Company, 2nd Battalion, 19th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, were deployed astride hills along the Chinju-Hadong Road, just west of the Nam River deep within South Korea. The North Koreans launched a massive attack against their positions, forcing the Americans to fall back. Dufresne was reported as missing in action on July 30, 1950.
- Army Technician Fifth Grade Oneal Rush, 24, of Galivants Ferry, S.C. He will be buried Oct. 26, in his hometown. In August 1944, Rush, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers soldier, and six other service members were aboard an C-47A Skytrain aircraft that departed from Shingbwiang, Burma to Myitkyina, Burma, on an air supply mission. Rush and the six service members were reported missing in action when the airplane failed to reach its destination.

New Monument Documents Marines' Sacrifices: The monument stands 6 feet tall in Freedom Park. It's solid granite, inscribed with the story of the U.S. Marine Corps and the names of overseas battlegrounds that resonate in American history. Iconic names such as Tripoli, Belleau Wood, Peleliu and Iwo Jima. The last two are islands Charlotteans Hank Grathwohl, Coy Shue, Wally Duncan and Jim Hunter know well. All but Duncan are in their 90s; he's 88. All are retired Marines, all grateful to have lived long lives when so many of their buddies never got that chance. On the Corps' 238th birthday and the eve of Veterans Day, the Marine Corps League Detachment 750 of Charlotte dedicated the \$5,500 monument it installed weeks ago. It is a proper setting: In 1949, four years after the war, the Charlotte Lion's Club donated the 98-acre park to the city to honor those who served in war and on the home front. The men planned to be there, health willing, honoring their friends who didn't walk off those islands -- who in fading memories are forever young, forever missed.

"We will all think about our personal wars, and the guys we knew," said Hunter, 92, a retired real estate executive who was wounded at Peleliu on the three-month-long battle's third day. "I could name a dozen guys who didn't make it home. These were the guys watching your back, guys you could depend on. My experiences and these guys became a part of me. "They shaped who I became."
As much as a monument, the war stories of Grathwohl, Shue, Duncan and Hunter tell the courage of Marines, and the sacrifices made in war.

The only time the world beats a path to your door is if you're in the bathroom.

VA Celebrates One Million Post-9/11 GI Bill Veterans: This month VA announced that one million veterans have now enrolled in college using their Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. VA recognized Army veteran Steven Ferraro of Edison, N.J., as the one millionth Post-9/11 GI Bill recipient when he enrolled at Middlesex County College this fall. Your VFW helped to commission the Post-9/11 GI Bill and has worked diligently to ensure student veterans have proper consumer resources, and are academically and financially prepared for college. To learn more about Ferraro and VFW's continued work to ensure student veteran success, click here: : <http://thefvw.blogspot.com/2013/11/va-celebrates-one-million-post-911-gi.html>

S seaworthiness of USS Freedom Questioned: For the second time in three weeks, the heavily scrutinized USS Freedom has been unable to perform scheduled tasks due to technical difficulties. Repairs are under way on the littoral combat ship's port steerable water-jet feedback cable, which stopped sending signals to indicate the jet's position during steering checks, 7th Fleet spokesman Lt. David Levy said in a statement. The problem was discovered as the crew prepared to depart the following day for Cooperation



Afloat Readiness and Training Brunei, the last major exercise of the ship's debut deployment abroad. "Until repairs are accomplished, the crew cannot steer the port water-jet remotely from the bridge," Levy said. "The Freedom is still scheduled to participate in CARAT Brunei." The steering issue is the latest hiccup for the \$500 million first-in-class vessel. It was sidelined Oct. 24 due to seawater contamination in one of its steerable water-jet hydraulic systems and in July with generator and computer issues.

Despite the issues, the Navy has gone all-in with the LCS, disputing Government Accountability Office recommendations in July to slow construction to see if the ships can meet the Navy's needs. The Navy instead pledged to proceed with the current delivery schedule.

Policy Ends Deportation of Troops' Families: The administration has directed Immigration and Customs Enforcement to no longer deport undocumented aliens who are spouses, children or parents of U.S. military personnel and veterans. The White House took the action in response to Defense Department concerns over troops' families being ripped apart by the forced removal of a relative who is in the country illegally. "Military preparedness can potentially be adversely affected, if active members of the U.S. Armed Forces and individuals serving in the Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve, who can be quickly called into active duty, worry about the immigration status of their spouses, parents and children," states the official memo released by the U.S. Customs and Immigration Service. The same goes for veterans "who have served and sacrificed for our nation," the policy states. The bottom line for these families is that a spouse, child or parent determined to be illegal will be allowed to "parole in place" while they apply for legal residency and citizenship.

**LOOK EACH WAY
A HARP SOUNDS NICE
BUT IT'S HARD TO PLAY
Burma Shave**

Veteran Fraud Alert! The Department of Veterans Affairs has issued a fraud alert about a marketing scam that is targeting veterans who misdial the VA National Call Center (800-827-1000) or the GI Bill Call Center (888-442-4551) phone numbers. A marketing company created two phone numbers that differ from the real VA numbers by one digit. If a veteran misdials and calls the bogus number, the answering party will offer a gift card and try to obtain sensitive personal data, to include credit card information. Please note that the VA will "never" ask for credit card or banking information over the phone.

The two bogus numbers are 800-872-1000 and 888-442-4511. Please forward this information to all your members, Posts and friends, and share it on your websites. The bottom line is make sure you know who you are talking to before providing personal information over the phone. The VA has notified law enforcement authorities.

For a list of toll-free VA phone numbers, go to the VA's Inquiry Routing & Information System webpage at https://iris.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1703.

Warning: VA ID Cards Are Easily Scanned: Anyone with a smartphone and a bar code app can scan any Department of Veterans Affairs identification card issued since 2004 and the cardholder's Social Security number immediately pops up on the screen. The Department of Veterans Affairs published warnings about the veterans information cards (VICs) on their website in 2011 and again in July, 2013. The alert states, "Some barcode readers, including those available as applications on cell phones, can scan the bar code on the front of the card, and reveal the veteran's social security number." VA has begun to work on a new type of card, which will not contain a Social Security number. Meanwhile, veterans should treat their current ID cards as just a careful as they do their Social Security card to prevent identity theft.

Armey Dropping Number of Paratrooper Units: The legendary Pathfinders have taken their final jump and the Red Devils aren't too far behind. The two paratrooper units -- formally known as the 5th Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division and the 508th Infantry Regiment -- are closing out long histories as a result of the U.S. Army's reconfiguration and budget cutting. Among the changes being made is a reduction in the number of parachute positions across the service. The military is capping parachute positions at 49,000 as part of the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance, a plan detailing the development of military forces through 2020. The plan calls for some units, including paratrooper units, to change their focus. The Army kept three standing pathfinder companies: Company F (Pathfinder), 5th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment, 101st Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault); and Company F (Pathfinder), 4th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment, 159th Aviation Brigade, both at Fort Campbell, Ky.; and Company F (Pathfinder), 2nd Battalion, 82d Aviation Regiment at Fort Bragg, N.C.

When allied armies reached the Rhine, River during WW II, the first thing men did was pee in it. This was pretty common from the lowest private to Winston Churchill (who made a big show of it) and Gen. Patton (who photographed himself in the act).

DoD Requests Plan to Close Stateside Commissaries: Tasked by Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel to find ways to preserve force readiness amid sharply falling budgets, his comptroller and the Joint Staff have asked the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) for a plan to close all stateside base grocery stores, say military resale community sources. Time will tell if this is just the loudest warning shot yet fired by a department desperate for budget relief, or if stateside commissaries, still enormously popular with military families and retirees, are viewed by current military leaders as a costly relic burdening a financially stressed force. Under Secretary of Defense Robert Hale, the department's top financial adviser, and Air Force Lt. Gen. Mark F. Ramsay, director of force structure, resources and assessment for the Joint Staff, reportedly requested the plan in a meeting with military personnel policy and commissary officials. It was to be briefed soon to Deputy Defense Secretary Ashton Carter and Adm. James Winnefeld, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Another high hurdle if the plan is to be included in the Obama administration's fiscal 2015 defense budget request would be sign off by the Office of Management and Budget and the White House. The military resale industry already has reminded Hagel in a letter that, at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Aug. 7, President Obama told Marines that closing commissaries is "not how a great nation should be treating its military and military families." Commissaries rely on taxpayer subsidies of \$1.4 billion a year to operate 247 stores worldwide. They now face their gravest threat in decades because of the budget sequestration tool formula in the 2011 Budget Control Act, and Congress' failure to replace it with a balanced debt-reduction deal.

Marine Corps Vet Tries to Save Stadium Jumper: A woman was clinging to life after jumping from the third deck of the Oakland Coliseum following a Sunday's Raiders game, authorities said. But her life appears to have been saved by a good Samaritan who pleaded with her not to jump and broke her 45-foot fall when she did. The man, who was also injured, tried to catch her. The tense, brief standoff began around 4:30 p.m., 15 minutes after the end of the game in which Oakland lost 23-19 to the Tennessee Titans, authorities said. The 61-year-old Stockton man, a Marine Corps veteran, was on the second deck concourse level when he noticed the woman above, and repeatedly shouted, "don't do it," Nelson said. But she jumped to the concourse below. The woman, who has not been identified, was taken to the hospital with critical injuries. She had gone to the west upper deck seating area in a section covered by a tarp, police said, and it appeared she was alone before she jumped. The injured man was taken to the hospital with serious injuries, but was conscious and talking and is expected to survive. Nelson visited the man, a lifelong Raiders fan, in the hospital Sunday evening, and described him as a "hero." "He just couldn't imagine having people see that," Nelson said. "He said it was a reaction. Even now, at the hospital he's very concerned about her. He's a real compassionate person."



Marine Non-Infantry Jobs for Female Infantry Course Grads: They made it through the live-fire exercise, the 20-kilometer (12.4-mile) hike and the 72-hour integrated infantry field exercise. They did pull-ups, sit-ups, ammunition can lifts, an 800-yard sprint in combat boots and a timed obstacle course in which they must low-crawl, carry and drag another Marine and throw a grenade -- and they passed by the male scoring standard. But the three women who graduated Thursday from the Marine Corps' infantry training course will not be assigned to infantry units or infantry jobs. Instead, the three women who graduated Thursday, along with another who will likely graduate with the next class because of an injury she suffered near the end of her training, will go on to other training and other jobs in the Corps, as Marine officials use information gathered from all the women who volunteered for course as they decide how to safely introduce women into all-male units. In April 2012, the Marine Corps issued a servicewide message explaining that it would, for the first time, assign active-duty female company officers, gunnery sergeants and staff sergeants, as well as Navy medical officers, chaplains and corpsmen to jobs that fit their existing military occupational specialties but were part of previously all-male battalion-sized units, such as tanks and combat engineers. The message also said the Marines Corps was seeking female volunteers to attempt its rigorous training school for infantry officers immediately after finishing the basic officer course, and planned to allow female enlisted Marines to volunteer for the enlisted infantry training battalion after boot camp. But, the message noted, the program is for testing purposes, and female graduates of the schools would not become infantry Marines.

Plan to End Veteran Homelessness 'On Track' The Department of Veterans Affairs says its 2010-announced plan to end homelessness among the country's veterans by the end of 2015 is on track, with "significant" progress anticipated through 2014, yet 12 percent of all homeless adults in America are veterans. Since 2010, when VA

VA Secretary Eric Shinseki announced the plan, veteran homelessness had dropped 24 percent, according to the VA and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, which released the latest figures in the 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress. Official figures put that in real numbers -- a drop of nearly 18,500, leaving slightly less than 58,000 still homeless as of January 2013, when the last annual count was made. That kind of drop over nearly four years would seem to indicate the plan will fall short of goal -- with little more than 24 months remaining to 2016. "The reason we are right on track for veterans is that one of the things the President called for was an increase in resources for veterans," he said. "We have won those increases in resources. Those significant increases really are going into effect during this year and will be fully evident next year ... We expect an acceleration of the reduction over this year and next year." The overnight "point-in-time" count made in January 2013 showed the number of homeless veterans had dropped about 4,770 from the year before, or about 8 percent. In a statement, the VA pointed out that overall homelessness shrunk by just 4 percent in 2012, just half the "robust decline" among veterans. The VA spent more than \$1 billion on programs to reduce homelessness among veterans and their families this year. These included some \$70 million in HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing grants, which combines rental assistance from HUD with VA case management and clinical services, about \$300 million in grants to community agencies that help approximately 120,000 vets and their families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Life isn't tied with a bow, but it's still a gift.

Spoils of War: Police Getting Leftover Iraq Trucks: Coming soon to your local sheriff: 18-ton, armor-protected military fighting vehicles with gun turrets and bullet-proof glass that were once the U.S. answer to roadside bombs during the Iraq war. The hulking vehicles, built for about \$500,000 each at the height of the war, are among the biggest pieces of equipment that the Defense Department is giving to law enforcement agencies under a national military surplus program. For police and sheriff's departments, which have scooped up 165 of the mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicles, or MRAPS, since they became available this summer, the price and the ability to deliver shock and awe while serving warrants or dealing with hostage standoffs was just too good to pass up. "It's armored. It's heavy. It's intimidating. And it's free," said Albany County Sheriff Craig Apple, among five county sheriff's departments and three other police agencies in New York that have taken delivery of an MRAP. But the trucks have limits. They are too big to travel on some bridges and roads and have a tendency to be tippy on uneven ground. And then there's some cost of retrofitting them for civilian use and fueling the 36,000-pound behemoths that get about 5 miles to the gallon. The American Civil Liberties Union is criticizing what it sees as the increasing militarization of the nation's police. ACLU affiliates have been collecting 2012 records to determine the extent of military hardware and tactics acquired by police, planning to issue a report early next year. "One of our concerns with this is it has a tendency to escalate violence," said ACLU Center for Justice senior counsel Kara Dansky. An Associated Press investigation of the Defense Department military surplus program this year found that a disproportionate share of the \$4.2 billion worth of property distributed since 1990 - everything from blankets to bayonets and Humvees - has been obtained by police and sheriff's departments in rural areas with few officers and little crime. After the initial 165 of the MRAP trucks were distributed this year, military officials say police have requests in for 731 more, but none are available.

MyHealthVet Turns 10: This week VA marked the 10th anniversary of its online health services portal, MyHealthVet, which allows veterans to manage many aspects of their health care in an easily-accessible and secure online platform. To mark the anniversary, VA medical facilities across the country are hosting events and learning sessions to help veterans enroll in the portal and better understand all of its features. MyHealthVet allows veterans to access certain health records; save, print and share health information using the VA Blue Button; refill VA prescriptions online and track health activities like VA appointments, wellness reminders and lab results. Veterans can also use the portal's secure messaging feature to communicate electronically with their VA health care teams between visits. Your VFW has been an advocate for the expanded use of MyHealthVet and other online tools as part of VA's Connected Care initiatives, ensuring veterans can easily access and manage their care options. To learn more about MyHealthVet, visit here: <http://www.myhealth.va.gov/>



Soldier Breaks Air Assault Foot March Record: While 202 new graduates stood at attention to receive the, Air Assault Badge at The Sabalauski Air Assault School here, one officer's achievement made the November ceremony a historic occasion. Capt. Jason Burnes, an assistant operations officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team "Rakkasans", 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), finished ahead of his peers and every other student that wore a pack on their shoulders to complete the 12-mile foot march. With a time of one hour and 37 minutes, Burnes beat the previous unofficial record by a full minute. The record stood for nearly two years, set by then Pfc. Joshua Evans of 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). Burnes attributes his success on the foot march to his marathon training. He is a member of the Fort Campbell 10-miler team and runs often on his own. "Running a lot on your own free time gets you in better cardiovascular shape," Burnes said. Burnes went on to say that he could not have done it without the help an motivation of the instructors and his fellow Soldiers.

Coast Guard Commissions 7th Fast Response Cutter: Around 1 a.m. on Feb. 3, 1943, German submarine U-223 torpedoed the U.S. Army Transport Dorchester, which carried more than 900 troops, civilian contractors and crew, off the coast of Greenland. Coast Guard Cutter Comanche served as one of the escorts for Dorchester and the Coast Guard crew began to search for survivors in the water. The temperature was below freezing, with sea spray icing Comanche's decks and superstructure. Many of the survivors who were in the water were already lifeless, but lookouts spotted lifeboats full of survivors. Comanche crewmembers took action and one of the men who volunteered to dive into the treacherous, North Atlantic waters was Stewards-Mate 1st Class Charles David Jr. David was hypothermic from his heroic efforts to save Dorchester's survivors. Tragically, he contracted pneumonia and succumbed to his illness. Storekeeper 1st Class Dick Swanson, a crewmember aboard the Comanche, later described David as a "tower of strength" for his actions that day. It was a natural way to describe David, who was well over six-feet tall and 220 pounds. But it wasn't David's height Swanson was alluding to; it was his strength of character. This force of strength will live on in the Coast Guard's newest ship, Coast Guard Cutter Charles David Jr. The newly commissioned cutter is the service's seventh fast response cutter and first to be home ported in Key West, Fla. Retired Master Chief Petty Officer Vincent Patton served as the eighth Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard from May 1998 to October 2002. Patton described the honor of meeting Sharon David, Charles David Jr.'s granddaughter and ship's sponsor; former crewmember Swanson; and family members of those David rescued, including the executive officer of Comanche. "It was spiritually emotional knowing that the descendants of the executive officer were present, as had it not been for David, they themselves would not have been born, not to mention countless others who were rescued by David," said Patton.

Code Talker Says Redskins Name Not Derogatory: A leader of the Navajo Code Talkers who appeared at a Washington Redskins home football game says he considers the team name a symbol of loyalty and courage - not a derogatory slur. Roy Hawthorne was one of four Code Talkers honored for their service in World War II during a Monday night game against the San Francisco 49ers. Hawthorne says the Code Talkers met with team owner Dan Snyder but did not discuss the name. Hawthorne says the word redskins is a Native-American icon that has many positive meanings. The brief ceremony came amid a "Change the Mascot" campaign by some Indians and civil rights leaders who regard the word redskins as a racial epithet. Snyder has called it a badge of honor.

The Twelve Days of Christmas – Vietnam Style

On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me,
A sniper in a palm tree!

On the second day of Christmas my true love gave to me,
Two Chicoms and A sniper in a palm tree!

On the third day of Christmas my true love gave to me,
Three AK's, two Chicoms and A sniper in a palm tree!

On the fourth day of Christmas my true love gave to me,
Four mortar rounds, three AK's, two Chicoms and A sniper in a palm tree!

On the fifth day of Christmas my true love gave to me,
Five RPGs, four mortar rounds, three AK's, two Chicoms and A sniper in a palm tree!

On the sixth day of Christmas my true love gave to me,
Six booby traps, five RPGs, four mortar rounds, three AK's, two Chicoms and A sniper in a palm tree!

On the seventh day of Christmas my true love gave to me,
Seven human waves, six booby traps, five RPGs, four mortar rounds, three AK's, two Chicoms and A sniper in a palm tree!

On the eighth day of Christmas my true love gave to me,
Eight blown up trucks, seven human waves, six booby traps, five RPGs, four mortar rounds, three AK's, two Chicoms and A sniper in a palm tree!

On the ninth day of Christmas my true love gave to me,
Nine choppers down, eight blown up trucks, seven human waves, six booby traps, five RPGs, four mortar rounds, three AK's, two Chicoms and A sniper in a palm tree!

On the tenth day of Christmas my true love gave to me,
Ten sappers sapping, nine choppers down, eight blown up trucks, seven human waves, six booby traps, five RPGs, four mortar rounds, three AK's, two Chicoms and A sniper in a palm tree!

On the eleventh day of Christmas my true love gave to me,
Eleven Claymore mines, ten sappers sapping, nine choppers down, eight blown up trucks, seven human waves, six booby traps, five RPGs, four mortar rounds, three AK's, two Chicoms and A sniper in a palm tree!

On the twelfth day of Christmas my true love gave to me,
Twelve Purple Hearts, eleven Claymore mines, ten sappers sapping, nine choppers down, eight blown up trucks, seven human waves, six booby traps, five RPGs, four mortar rounds, three AK's, two Chicoms and A sniper in a palm tree!!!!!!!!!!

Author Unknown:

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Republic of Vietnam 1968-1969

