



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

WEBSITE: [www.2-1-196th.com](http://www.2-1-196th.com)

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Volume 9

“A Soldier Once And Always”

March 2019

**Commanders Corner:** First off, welcome to two new members: Darryl R. Ogle of Yazoo, MS, serving in Co. B 2/1 from 02/68 to 02/69; and William E. Walton of Harrison, ME serving in Co B & HHC 2/1 from 03/68 to 05/69. Welcome home, and all the best to you and your families.

There are two Veterans Reunions coming up this year that 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment veterans attend.

As an association, we are a Chapter under the Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA) who will be having their 2019 Reunion, 2-6 October 2019 at the Crown Plaza Providence/Warwick (Airport) at 801 Greenwich Ave, Warwick, RI 02886. See the ADVA website for additional information: <https://americal.org/cmsaml/index.php/reunions.html>.

The 196<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Brigade Association is having their 2019 Reunion, 22-25 August 2019 in Lombard, IL, at the Westin Hotel (west of Chicago). See: <https://www.196th.org/reunion2001/reunionp.htm>.

Although our Chapter meets with the ADVA, there are plenty of 2-1 INF Vets who show up for 196<sup>th</sup> LIB events. So, make plans to attend either one, if close to you or both if you can afford the time and expense. We are still asking for donations for our 2-1 INF Brick Program. These are small commemorations to our battalion and regiment, and it will last for a long time, and people will see these in memorial gardens and other places where we decide to commemorate our brothers who stood in ranks before us. As members of an old regiment of our Nation's Army, we should commemorate the Regiment's service, and the service of those who came before us. Five dollars is not a lot and we can all afford this small token. God bless you and your families during the rest of this year. Remember our collective extended family, those Americans serving in our Armed Forces all over the world, and especially to the memories of those that gave the ultimate sacrifice. Look at page 5 to read the Certificate of Dedication from the National Museum of the US Army with the inscription of the Paver Brick we purchased to honor all who served in the 2D Bn. 1ST Infantry since 1791. Thanks for all who contributed to the honor of all who served.

Got a comment, idea or complaint, contact me at [Commander.2.1.jgw@gmail.com](mailto:Commander.2.1.jgw@gmail.com).

John  
Commander



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

The great men and women in history were not great for what they owned; or earned, but rather because of what they gave their lives to accomplish.



**Which Military Branch Best Prepares its Troops to Separate? The answer may surprise you:** If you're in the Army, chances are you'll feel better prepared when it's time to get out than if you were in any other branch, according to the results of a recent Military Times poll. Seventy-four percent of soldiers who responded to our survey said they agreed — either somewhat or strongly — that if they separated from the military today, they would be prepared for the overall transition. Sixty-six percent of sailors, 64 percent of airmen and 59 percent of Marines said the same. Soldiers were also the best-prepared for challenges related to family reintegration, benefits, education and health care — bested only in the area of finances by Air Force survey respondents. One reason for this could be an approach taken by the Army's Soldier for Life program, which emphasizes the importance of acing transitions within the military.

**Setting Up For Failure — VA Blasted over Unfilled Health Care Positions:** Federal union officials accused the Veterans Affairs Department of undermining its own health care system by not filling thousands of open department health positions while they push new rules covering more medical appointments at private-sector hospitals. But VA officials dismissed the criticism as unfounded, since the department completed more appointments than ever before last fiscal year and has kept staff vacancy rates below comparable industry standards. At issue are nearly 49,000 empty posts within VA, just under 12 percent of the 420,000-plus jobs there. Department officials said that vacancy rate is normal for the sprawling bureaucracy, noting that they had a net increase of more than 3,000 employees last quarter. The current number of vacancies is greater than the approximately 35,000 positions that were open 18 months ago, when critics and lawmakers first accused department leaders of not doing enough to keep the agency fully staffed. It's also above the 45,000 unfilled slots reported last September. Union officials call the new figure “unconscionable” and part of a concerted effort by President Donald Trump's administration to drain resources from the VA.

**VA Contracting at 'High Risk' for Wasting Tax Dollars:** The Government Accountability Office declared Department of Veterans Affairs contracting, which topped \$26 billion in 2017, is a “high risk” area of government, susceptible to waste and mismanagement of taxpayer money and in need of more oversight. The GAO, presented a biennial report to the House Committee on Oversight and Reform on government programs that are vulnerable to fraud, waste, abuse and mismanagement. After a government-wide review, the GAO added two new areas to its latest report, one of them being VA contracting. The VA spent \$26 billion in fiscal 2017 to contract for goods and services — one of the largest procurement budgets across the U.S. government. The watchdog found outdated acquisition policies, little oversight and an unreasonable workload on its contracting officers, among other risks.

**Medal of Honor Month:** During the month of March we will celebrate a Congressional Medal of Honor recipient that had a great impact on my Military career. I refer to meeting of Colonel Robert B. Nett. Robert Nett was a 1Lt in Easy Company 102d Infantry serving in the Pacific as commander of E company in an attack against reinforced enemy that held up the American advance for two days. Lt Nett spearheaded an assault against the stronghold. During the fierce hand-to-hand encounter, he killed seven deeply entrenched Japanese with his rifle and bayonet and although seriously wounded, he gallantly led his men forward refusing to relinquish command. After receiving an additional wound in the final assault he would only give up command when all arrangements were made for his successor and walked to the rear for treatment. I met this courageous man while attending training at Fort Benning, GA where he was responsible for Leadership Instruction. Colonel Nett and I had a common relationship because we were raised in the same region of Connecticut. I was pleased to have met such a wonderful and interesting man who cared tremendously for soldiers. During our several friendly encounters Col. Nett encouraged me to continue serving our country and to strive for excellence. His encouragement and modesty stuck with me throughout the 37 years I served in the U.S. Army. When on occasion, where the service presented a number difficult situations, I remembered Col. Nett's inspirational example for his men and was instrumental in his leadership and devotion to duty. I will always be grateful for the opportunity to meet this patriot and spirited individual.



**New Department of Veteran Administration Appeals Procedures:** 19 February 2019, the Department of Veterans Affairs implemented the Appeals Modernization Act of 2017. The AMA applies to all VA benefit decisions, including decisions about your education benefits. The law creates a new decision review process that allows VA to improve the delivery of benefits and services to Veterans and their families. The new process gives you choice and control, and all communications are written in plain language. The new Appeals modernization process allows you to seek faster resolution if you disagree with a VA decision. If you receive an initial claim decision after February 2019 and you disagree, you can choose one of three new lanes to have your disagreement reviewed: as a supplemental claim, through a higher-level review, or by appealing directly to the Board of Veterans' Appeals. The Appeals Modernization Act establishes a new decision review process for disagreements with VA decisions that is timely, transparent and fair. For more information about VA's implementation of the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act or to access the applicable forms, go to: and follow the instructions for submission. If you have any questions or need additional assistance please contact the Education Call Center at 888-442-4551 between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. Central Time, Monday through Friday.

So if a cow doesn't produce milk; Is it a "Milk Dud or an Utter Failure?"

## 2/1 LOCATOR

**\*\* Send your locator notices to *Locator c/o P.O. Box 2639 Key West, FL 33045*, or email: [jhughes-groupins@aol.com](mailto:jhughes-groupins@aol.com).** Okay to include photo, name / nickname, rank, home origin if known, and time of Vietnam service.

### *196th Infantry Brigade Mission:*

196th Infantry Brigade trains and validates all US Army, Pacific assigned Army National Guard and US Army Reserve forces in accordance with FORSCOM and USARPAC Training Guidance in order to ensure units are fully prepared to deploy in support of Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) and other operations as directed. The 196th Infantry Brigade's assignment is with the United States Army Pacific Command at Fort Shafter Hawaii provides the training and support mission for the Indo-Pacific Command's Army reserve and National Guard Units. The area of responsibility is the largest AOR spanning 36 nations with more than half the globe and 7 of the world's 10 largest Armies.

## DID YOU EVER GO CAMPING?

by

1LT Jerry Hughes US Army Vietnam Sep 69 -Sep 70

To this day, now 50 years later, I'm still astonished by how naïve the general public is about what one does in a 15-year infantry ground war. What young men and women must go through to stay alive and keep their men alive while still accomplishing dangerous battle missions. Like post war when one of my neighbors asked, "Jerry, did you ever go camping?" I'm also surprised about just how lasting the after-effects of serving in a war can change a normal American kid. Years ago, there was a scholarly documentary piece about how our lifelong personalities are fully developed by age 5. However, if a "truly emotional experience" comes along, one can change forever. Kind of like for those who lived through the depression, they spent the rest of their lives counting pennies. We American kids grew up in Vietnam. With 2.5 million honorably serving in-country and 58,220 killed in action, I'm sure you know it was quite the 12 to 13-month tour. Most Vietnam Veterans speak little to the outside world (non-veterans) about what they did on a day to day basis. It's not that we're not proud of what we or our "brothers" did...it's just - you wouldn't understand, so why go there? Personally, I am very proud of being an Airborne Infantry officer leading a platoon of 40 men in combat for one year. And yes, I mourn the loss of my own men and fellow high school and college classmates who died or were wounded serving their country. That's a truly emotional experience that eternally changed this young lad. What I can tell you is that some 90% + Vietnam Veterans say that even knowing what they know now, they would still go back and do it again. But we'd like to fight the war our way this time, and not the politician's way. Friday March 29, 2019 is **National Vietnam War Veterans Day**. Stop by our Key West Vietnam Memorial at Bayview Park and pay your respects. As combat journalist Joe Galloway in *GOD'S OWN LUNATICS* so eloquently stated, "Those who went before us are saying, we're at peace and so should you be, and so should you be."





**Six States have National Guard Forces that could Rival a Foreign Army:** Nearly 430,000 Americans served in the U.S. Army and Air National Guard, according to Department of Defense data. Guard members sign up to commit one weekend a month and two weeks per year for training — but are often asked to sacrifice much more in service to their state and country. Between September 2001 and September 2015, some 428,000 members of the National Guard were sent on deployments. These troops also answer the call when disaster strikes their home states, like the recent fires in California and during Hurricane Harvey. When it comes to capabilities, no two states are alike — we ranked the top six, measuring everything from sheer size of force to whether the state has special forces, strike, and a brigade combat team. Overall, we found Texas has the most capable National Guard. Following close behind is California, Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York and Georgia.

**Sailor in V-J Day Times Square Kiss Photo to be Laid to Rest:** Funeral arrangements for the sailor photographed kissing a woman in Times Square at the end of World War II have been scheduled. George Mendon's daughter says her father died after he fell and had a seizure at the assisted living facility in Middletown, Rhode Island, where he had lived with his wife of 70 years. He was 95. According to his obituary, his funeral was held at St. Mary's Church in Newport. Burial will follow at St. Columba Cemetery in Middletown.



**Former Army Secretary John Marsh Laid to Rest in Virginia:** Former Secretary of the Army John Marsh Jr. was laid to rest at a Civil War battlefield in Virginia where he developed a love for history and the military. Marsh, who also served four terms as Virginia's 7th District congressman, died Feb. 4 at Blue Ridge Christian Home in Raphine. He was 92. Former Vice President Dick Cheney was among the mourners who gathered for Marsh's funeral at the Virginia Museum of the Civil War and burial at New Market Battlefield State Historical Park, The Northern Virginia Daily reported. Cheney said some of Marsh's admirable qualities were a love for the Army, in-depth knowledge of history and the ability to rise above partisanship. He said Marsh was the epitome of a patriotic American, loyal soldier and successful statesman.



**New Army Rifle Offers more Versatility in Combat:** Army Sgt. James Snow has carried an M-4 carbine and an M-110 sniper rifle as an infantryman on missions. With the M-4, he knew he was capable of hitting a target accurately up to only 300 meters. With a sniper rifle, he had less maneuverability and spent a lot of time breaking down and reassembling the larger weapon to carry. Last month, Snow was given the opportunity to try out the Army's new Squad Designated Marksman Rifle, or SDM-R. After just a couple days handling the new weapon, he said it felt like something that could fill the needs of both his previous weapons. It had more mobility and close combat capabilities like the M-4, but also better precision at a distance like the M-110. "It's easy to move around, and you can do a lot of things with it," Snow said. "Absolutely, I would carry this around every day if I was deployed. Every day, you could carry it for every single situation." That was exactly the type of weapon that the Army looked to create for its combat arms squads — a weapon for one member of an infantry, armor, cavalry scout or combat engineer squad to carry and provide precision fire between 300 and 600 meters without losing the capability of hitting closer-range targets.



**Ex-Veterans Affairs Official Sentenced to Jail in Disabled Vet Fraud Scheme:** A former U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs official has been sentenced 11 years in prison for a \$2 million bribery scheme involving a program for disabled military veterans. James King, 63, of Baltimore, previously pleaded guilty to one count of honest services and money wire fraud, one count of bribery of a public official and one count of falsifying records to obstruct an investigation. King was sentenced to serve 132 months in prison to be followed by three years of supervised release and to pay \$155,000 in restitution to Veterans Affairs. Three employees, who admitted to bribing King, were sentenced. Albert Poawui, the owner of Atius Technology Institute, was sentenced to serve 70 months in prison and ordered to pay \$1.5 million in restitution. Sombo Kanneh, Poawui's employee, was sentenced to serve 20 months in prison and ordered to pay \$113,000 in restitution. Michelle Stevens, the owner of Eelon Training Academy, was sentenced to serve 30 months in prison and ordered to pay \$83,000 in restitution. "James King and his associates exploited an important VA program that provides valuable services to our disabled military veterans," said Justice Department Assistant Attorney General Brian Benczkowski. "This prosecution once again demonstrates the Justice Department's commitment to hold accountable those who seek to defraud government programs for their own personal enrichment."

**Large-scale Closures of VA Facilities could be Coming Sooner than Expected:** Veterans Affairs' version of a base closing round could start years ahead of schedule, department officials told Congress. Under the VA Mission Act signed into law last year, the president is authorized to appoint an Asset and Infrastructure Review Commission for the department in 2022. To inform the group's work, VA officials were given three years to perform regional market assessments to determine areas where there were medical facility shortages, gluts and other challenges. VA Secretary Robert Wilkie said those assessments were delayed slightly late last year but could still be finished in the next 12 months. If so, that could create a problematic gap between collecting that information and starting evaluations in 2022.

Of course I talk to myself; sometimes I need expert advice.

**VA to Launch New Program Aimed at Getting Vets IT Jobs:** The Department of Veterans Affairs is planning the April launch of a new program aimed at placing vets in high-paying information technology (IT) jobs, with the department picking up the full tab for training and fees once the vet actually gets employment. The Veteran Employment Through Technology Education Courses (VET TEC) program will work through what the VA is calling an "incentivized payment structure" to encourage the veteran to stay with the program to completion. According to a VA release last week, it will pay the training provider 25 percent of tuition and mandatory fees up front, another 25 percent when the vet graduates, and the last 50 percent when the veteran "lands a job in his or her area of study and training." A VA spokesperson said that the planned payment schedule would not result in out-of-pocket expenses to the veteran. Training providers will not be able to charge veterans for tuition and fees and refund the charge after payment from the VA is received, the spokesperson said. The VET TEC program also will not count against the veteran's GI Bill benefits, the spokesperson said. The length of the training programs will depend on the course and the provider, but the VA's market research showed that the typical course would last four to six months. VA Secretary Robert Wilkie said in a statement that the VET TEC program is part of the department's commitment to helping veterans "make successful transitions into their post-military career. We are excited to partner with successful training providers who will help pave the way for veterans seeking meaningful employment in their field of study."

**The Truth About POW/MIAs:** What we do know as true that since World War I not all of our missing comrades in arms have not been accounted for or returned. After World War I, over 4,400+ MIAs are unaccounted for. After World War II 72,772+ MIAs are unaccounted for. After the Korean War 7,675+ MIAs are still unaccounted; 168 from NC. After the Vietnam War 1,640 MIAs are still not accounted for. 65 from NC. and 38 from Southeast Asia.

**From Homeless to Deloitte:** Free program puts vets on path to lucrative tech jobs. When Daniel Moss got a job offer from Deloitte, he thought it was too good to be true. Moss, an ex-Navy air traffic controller, had struggled re-adjusting to civilian life after his almost-six-year military stint. Upon returning to his hometown of Columbus, Ohio, he enrolled at Wright State University but couldn't find steady employment. His wife ended up divorcing him, and he spent two years homeless, sleeping in his college library and showering at the gym. One day, he came across an advertisement in a print publication of the Navy Times for NS2 Serves, a free program that provides veterans with information-technology training and helps them find a job to put their newfound certifications and skills to good use. Moss applied, eventually graduated and in November received an offer letter for an IT solutions analyst job with Deloitte. Laura Carmack, NS2 Serves' vice president of recruitment, said that she hears stories like Daniel's all too often from veterans. NS2 Serves taught Moss how to use SAP software, valued by IT employers, and allowed him to complete a certification in sourcing and procurement. After 10 weeks and a "very difficult exam," Moss graduated and was almost immediately hired by Deloitte. "I'm grateful for the spirit of the NS2 program," Moss said. "Even before we found out Deloitte was sponsoring the class, the program itself is motivating and empowering to people who may not be as empowered as they once were." Carmack said that NS2 Serves has graduated 237 veterans and hopes to increase that number to at least 400 by 2021.

**Military Training Helped Veterans Launch Small Businesses:** Having trouble finding an employer who understands your military skill set? Why not be your own boss? That strategy seems to be working for the veterans who showed off their small businesses Tuesday in southeast Washington, D.C., during Bunker Labs' third-annual Muster Across America Tour. The participating veteran-run small businesses included a farm specializing in fresh produce, a subscription murder-mystery service, a home-fitness company, a military-apparel business, a retreat for first responders and a site that matches veterans with employers, among others. Bunker Labs is a nonprofit dedicated to helping veteran entrepreneurs. It co-sponsored the 2019 Muster tour with JPMorgan Chase, which announced it would be investing \$3 million in Bunker Labs to improve and expand its operations. The event featured a keynote address from Under Secretary of the Army Ryan McCarthy, an ex-Army Ranger with firsthand knowledge of the skills veterans can bring to any job. "They're resilient people," he said. "They can deal with a lot of stress. They know how to organize and plan for a problem."

**Demand for surplus Weapons greater than the supply:** It turns out the demand for supplies of surplus Army 1911 handguns outstrips supply, by a lot. According to a new government report, there has been double the demand for surplus M1911, 45 caliber pistols released for civilian sales from the Army, and the same program received 100,000 more requests for surplus M1 Garand, 30 caliber rifles.

**The 2020 ADVA Reunion** is being sponsored by our chapter and I would like to request some volunteers (I know you dislike that word). I am going to need a few people to help monitor/oversee some of the events and functions we will have going on. If I can get enough people involved, it wouldn't take up too much of any one individual's time to help make things run smoothly. The reunion will be held in Indianapolis and is tentatively planned for August, 2020. You don't have to live around Indy to help out and I can work with you on hours, duties, etc. Some of the duties may be as follows: helping on the registration desk, tours, selling raffle tickets and monitoring the ADVA and chapter hospitality rooms. The more help we have the better. If you are interested, contact me at [chuck-hol2@gmail.com](mailto:chuck-hol2@gmail.com) or [indy2020reunion@gmail.com](mailto:indy2020reunion@gmail.com). By the way, I have put the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter chapter financial statement on our web site. If you aren't sure what your status is on dues, please check the "2/1 Finances" web page. Thanks. Chuck Holdaway; 2020 ADVA Reunion Chairman.

**Coast Guard Officer Ordered to Jail, Accused of Being 'Domestic Terrorist':** Lt. Christopher Paul Hasson, 49, was arrested in the parking garage of the Coast Guard's Washington headquarters on drug and gun charges. Federal agents recovered 15 guns and more than 1,000 rounds of ammunition from Hasson's Maryland apartment. Prosecutors alleged in court documents filed that Hasson had compiled a spreadsheet of so-called "traitors" that included House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer and presidential hopefuls including Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand, Elizabeth Warren, Cory Booker and Kamala Harris. Also mentioned were such figures as MSNBC's Chris Hayes and Joe Scarborough and CNN's Chris Cuomo and Van Jones. Investigators say Hasson repeatedly studied a manifesto authored by Anders Behring Breivik, who killed 77 people in a 2011 bomb-and-shooting rampage. Prosecutor Jennifer Sykes claimed Thursday that Hasson would also log onto his government computer during work and spend hours searching for information on such people as the Unabomber, the Virginia Tech gunman and anti-abortion bomber Eric Rudolph. Hasson also allegedly



# *Certificate of Dedication*

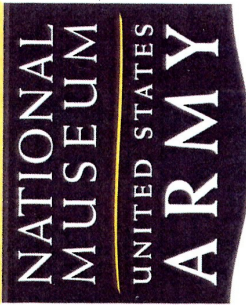
In recognition of your commitment and dedicated support of the United States Army, this certifies by vote of the Board of Directors that the inscription below will forever be recognized on a commemorative brick at the National Museum of the United States Army. Your unselfish generosity is herein acknowledged as vitally important to a new national landmark that will pay tribute to the American Soldier in war and peace.

## ***Inscription***

HONORING VETERANS  
PAST, PRES, & FUTURE  
2ND BN, 1ST INFANTRY  
U.S. ARMY FROM 1791  
SEMPER PRIMUS  
196TH LIGHT INF BDE

*Brighton W. Abrams, Jr.*

BG Creighton W. Abrams, Jr. USA-Ret.  
Executive Director



*GEN Gordon S. Sullivan*

GEN Gordon S. Sullivan, USA-Ret.  
President