



# 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 10

“A Soldier Once And Always”

May 2020

**Commanders Corner:** Greetings to all my Fellow 2/1 Infantry Brothers and to all other members that served with our sister units. I hope this newsletter finds everyone and your families staying safe and well as we all deal with the virus. It's a strange time to say the least and we can all only hope that we can get back to something normal soon. I encourage everyone that may have other medical issues to continue taking care of those matters with your doctors which might be more problematic than the virus. I know that many VA facilities have said that they only will deal with emergencies but you should stay in close contact with your doctors and let them determine your medical needs.



Unfortunately I have read that some nursing facilities for our veterans are not doing and have not done their duties in taking care of our veterans which has resulted in outbreaks of the virus and deaths of our brothers that have served their country with honor. If you know of a veteran that is at veterans home I encourage you inquire with the facility to ensure they are doing all they should to care for the veteran and speak to authorities if you find they are not doing their job.

If you have not heard yet this year's reunion has been cancelled in Indianapolis. The good news is that the plan is to hold it in 2021 in Indianapolis. Our Brother Chuck Holdaway is actively working with the Americal committee and the hotel to rearrange the dates and details which will be communicated later. For those of you that had bought airline tickets for this year's reunion you should be able to get refunds or use the tickets for next year. Hopefully everyone planning to attend this year will be able to do so next year. The good thing is that we will all have another year of wisdom that we can share next year!

May 25 is Memorial Day and I encourage everyone to remember all our Brothers that gave their all to our great country. Hopefully some of the restrictions will be lifted and we can partake in the ceremonies that provide remembrance. At the minimum we can all fly our flag in their honor and that of our great country.

In this unique time in our country each of us are most equipped to deal with all the challenges of the day since we have faced many challenges in our life time. This is a time to stay in touch with everyone and assist those that may be struggling to cope. Anyone that may be faced with hardships and other issues need to remember that we are all Brothers for life and if you have a need don't hesitate to reach out. My Cell number is 410.718.4499 and if I can be of support please reach out and I know we all feel the same.

Have a Great May and be safe.

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

**Dwight Sybolt.**  
Commander

**From H Duckworth O'Brien's "A Grunt's Life":**  
**Standdown:** A 3 day break from combat in the division rear that allows grunts to get drunk enough they forget for a moment half the country is trying to kill them. .

**Chapter & Americal Division Reunion 2020:** The Americal National Reunion Postponed. Due to the COVID-19 (Chinese) virus, the 2020 ADVA reunion has been postponed. It has been changed to August of 2021; still in Indianapolis. All reservations already made have automatically been cancelled with no penalties. All monies sent in with the registration form will be refunded also. As soon as definite dates are confirmed, there will be updates on both the ADVA and our chapter web sites, the "Americal Journal" and our newsletter.

**New Web Site Addition:** Chuck Holdaway has updated our 2/1 Chapter web site to include a new link for the 48<sup>th</sup> Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog) web site. I don't know how many of you worked with the dogs out in the bush but, if you didn't, you really missed seeing a dog at it's best. I always felt a hell of a lot more comfortable when we had a dog around. The 48<sup>th</sup> Infantrymen and their dogs supported 196<sup>th</sup> LIB Infantry units in Vietnam from January 1967 through March 1972. Just a reminder, the URL for our site is <http://www.2-1-196th.com/>. Go to the "Related Links" page in the left column of the main page and to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Links page.

**Last Full Measure - 2019 Hollywood Motion Picture:** This is the name of a motion picture centered around a true story of U.S. Air Force Medic William H. Pitenbarger of his exploits in the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam War. This is the first time anyone has produced a movie that accounts for the actions occurring in the Vietnam War as close as any Hollywood production can fabricate. The film identifies with most of those 1966 war experiences, and the following years. This true story movie and the years afterwards indicates the value of those war time experiences even to this day, and for many years after as we experienced on our journeys. Not only for the Vietnam Veteran, but the families as well. 54 years after this jungle battle, the sacrifices of those combat Veterans is still palpable. As you know, everyone served with the other DOD services (Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard) during our respective RVN tours. What's so great about this RVN movie is that it is a true story. This movie is about a US Air Force Medic William H. Pitsenbarger who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his combat actions.

**This virus has done what no woman had been able to do...cancel all sports, shut down all bars, and keep men at home!!!**

**The National Army Museum** will be the first and only to tell the almost 245-year history of the U.S. Army in its entirety. Construction in the Museum has continued with a focus on completing the installation of the exhibits, the Veterans’ Hall, Medal of Honor Garden, and Café Terrace. All workers and contractors are following the rules and regulations outlined by the CDC and the Governor of Virginia. As you may know, the government considers construction to be an essential service, as it helps keep our country and our economy on the move. Opening date for the Museum has been placed on hold because of COVID-19. Stay tuned for a new date TBA,

### **The Latest National Guard coronavirus update:**

Troop count tops 45,000 mark for the first time: The number of Guard troops mobilized in the effort to cope with the coronavirus pandemic has increased, for the first time passing the 30,000 mark. “We want to win this war with as few deaths as possible,” Trump said. “Today, I am announcing action to help New York, California, and Washington, to ensure that the National Guard can effectively respond. The National Guard, these are tremendous people. Fully on alert. It has been activated.” The move will make it easier for states, already facing increasing costs as a result of the pandemic, to call in the National Guard if needed to help deal with the problems caused by COVID-19. There have been more than 30,000 coronavirus cases in the U.S., with at least 400 deaths, CNN reports. Trump’s initial order called for National Guard troops in the three-hardest hit states — New York, California, and Washington — to operate under what is called Title 32. Under this federalized status, Guard troops still report to the governor, but the government picks up the cost. Normally, it is a 75-25 split, with states picking up the smaller portion, but Trump waived that split and the federal government will absorb the entire cost. For weeks, National Guard members have stood on the front lines of the coronavirus fight — and now the majority of the 36,750 troops deployed in every state and U.S. territory are working under a federal status that offers more benefits and military health coverage.

### **Patriot Missile Defense Systems now active in Iraq, say US officials:**

New air defense systems are protecting American and allied forces at military bases in Iraq where troops have been attacked by Iranian-backed insurgents according to U.S. officials. Patriot missile launchers and two other short-range systems are now in place at al-Asad Air Base, where Iran carried out a massive ballistic missile attack against U.S. and coalition troops recently, and at the military base in Irbil, said officials. A short-range rocket defense system was installed at Camp Taji. The military has been gradually moving the defensive systems into Iraq over the last few months to provide more protection for troops that have seen a series of rocket and missile attacks.

### **Military’s Travel ban gets an extension.**

**SECDEF:** A 60-day ban on non-essential domestic and international Defense Department travel is going to be extended reported by Defense Secretary Mark Esper. “While I understand the impact this has on our troops and their families this is a necessary measure to keep our people safe and our military ready to act,” Esper said. While the travel ban has halted deployments, permanent change-of-station moves, training and temporary duty for schooling, officials have stressed it has been necessary to stop the spread of coronavirus throughout the force and throughout the communities with which troops interact.

### **Veterans volunteer to return to Army for COVID-19 response:**

Roughly 25,000 people have responded to the Army’s call for volunteers to assist with the coronavirus response after the service sent emails to 800,000 former soldiers gauging their interest in returning to duty. The Army is still looking for more personnel, officials said. And though the preference is for those who are currently licensed in medical fields, other former soldiers can also volunteer. Interested individuals should visit the Human Resources Command website and fill out the voluntary recall survey, said spokeswoman Lt. Col. Mary Ricks. “If we need their specialty, then our [Reserve Personnel Management Directorate] team will reach out to them,” Ricks said. The respondents so far have been from a mix of backgrounds, including from services other than the Army, and not all of them served in medical specialties. The original email soliciting volunteers asked for personnel from a series of health care careers, including critical care officers, various nursing specialties and former medics. The Army’s top medical officer said March 26 that the volunteers could be used to fill the roles of current medical personnel normally assigned to installation treatment facilities who may be called upon to deploy elsewhere in the United States.

**Military Service Discount:** The National Park Service offers free annual passes for current U.S. military members and dependents in all services including the Reserve and National Guard and military cadets. Passes are available at federal recreation sites with a Common Access Card or military ID. Passes offer access to more than 2,000 federal recreation sites and cover entrance fees. Veterans with a disability rating can get a free lifetime pass to national parks and other recreation areas. To learn more about the Access Pass, or to order one online for a \$10 processing fee, visit <https://store.usps.gov/access-pass>. To get the free pass, you’ll need identification and proof of a permanent disability. Citizens and residents age 62 and older are eligible for an \$80 Lifetime Senior Pass or \$20 Annual Senior Pass. The passes can be purchased online, at some national parks and recreation sites, or by mail. The National Park Service will offer free admission to everyone on Nov. 11, in recognition of Veterans Day.

**Church Services in the Field:** Shortly after our encounter with the North Vietnam regulars from the 2<sup>nd</sup> NVA division in late March 1969, it was time to thank God for bringing us through this episode. We gathered on a hillside while our 196 LIB chaplain, conducted a Catholic mass. I don’t remember his name but the service was well attended. I was astounded with the attendance. After all we went through just prior to this event I really did not know what to expect. I hope everyone reading this note will recall similar opportunities. Let the rest of know what you encountered. Of course we had to be in a secure area where we could get a helicopter and supplies as well as provide for local security.





**The M-60 Machine Gun: "It's The Pig Man!"** Using a mash up of technology garnered from WW II, the U.S. military selected a compromise general purpose machine gun in 1957 that remains in limited service to this day. This gun, officially known as the M60, has been carried by many, loved by most, and hated by some. No matter which one of these categories a soldier fell into though, they all called it 'the pig'. These soldiers had to hump everything they carried through a tropical rain forest under some of the worst conditions imaginable, earning it the 24-pound M60 the nickname 'the pig'—but this wasn't the only reason for the moniker. Combat squad, where most soldiers carried 5.56mm M16s, noticed quickly that the 7.62mm NATO full-auto-only M60 could huff and puff and blow down houses.



The Three Soldiers Memorial in Washington, D.C. The one on the left is toting 'the pig'

**The Pentagon Promises to use Artificial Intelligence for Good, not Evil:** The military has its eye on artificial intelligence solutions to everything from data analysis to surveillance, maintenance and medical care, but before the Defense Department moves full steam ahead into an AI future, they're laying out some ethical principles to live by. Defense Secretary Mark Esper signed off on five guidelines in a memo released recently, "The United States, together with our allies and partners, must accelerate the adoption of AI and lead in its national security applications to maintain our strategic position, prevail on future battlefields, and safeguard the rules-based international order," said Esper wrote. "AI technology will change much about the battlefield of the future, but nothing will change America's steadfast commitment to responsible and lawful behavior." The list is the result of a 15-month study by the Defense Innovation Board, which is made up of academics and executives in tech and business, who presented their proposed principles in a public forum in October. According to Esper's memo, the Pentagon pledges that its AI efforts will be: 1) Responsible, 2) Equitable, 3) Traceable, 4) Reliable and 5) Governable. In short, any technology's development and operation should be carefully developed and used, have safeguards against bias in data analysis, be auditable to find the sources of mistakes and correct them, have narrowly-defined parameters for use and have back-up plans for shut down in case something goes wrong.

**Soldiers Helping in the Pandemic:** Parachute riggers plan to churn out 1,000 masks per week at JBLM: Parachute riggers at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, plan to sew 1,000 to 1,500 surgical masks per week to help patients afflicted with COVID-19. Before the Pentagon issued guidance to stop reporting COVID-19 case numbers at individual military bases, there were six confirmed cases at JBLM. Though numbers are no longer available at JBLM itself, the number of cases in the surrounding counties has trended into the thousands. And with new Pentagon orders directing troops to start wearing face coverings in public, increasing mask production could come in handy at JBLM and other Army installations. Soldiers from the support battalion for 1st Special Forces Group created 300 surgical masks for Madigan Army Medical Center and regional partners as of April 2.

**World War II – Gasoline:** It was puzzling why the German Luftwaffe kept on using 87 Octane Aviation Gasoline while the Americans and British used 100 Octane Gasoline in their Spitfire Fighters and Americans used 130 Octane in our P-51 and other fighters. This is a declassified article by the British Society of Chemists (Declassified in 2014). The German and British aircraft both used 87 Octane Gasoline in the first two years of the war. While that was fairly satisfactory in the German Daimler-Benz V-12 engine, it was marginal in the British Rolls-Royce Merlin XX engine in British aircraft. It fouled the spark-plugs, caused valves to stick, and made frequent engine repair problems. Then came lend-lease and American aircraft began to enter British service in great numbers. If British engines hated 87 Octane gasoline, American, General Motors Built, Allison 1710 engines loathed and despised it. Something had to be done! Along came an American named Tim Palucka, a chemist for Sun Oil in their South East Texas Refinery. He took a French formula for enhancing the octane of Gasoline, and produced 100 octane aviation Gasoline, just a few miles west of Beaumont, Tx.. This discovery led to great joy among our English Cousins and great distress among the Germans. A Spitfire fueled with 100 Octane gasoline was 34 miles per hour faster at 10,000 feet. The need to replace engines went from every 500 hours of operation to every 1,000 hours. Even more, when used in 4 engine bombers. The Germans couldn't believe it when Spitfires began shooting their ME-109 E and G models right out of the sky. The American Allison engines improved remarkably with 100 Octane gasolines, but did much better when 130 octane gasoline came along in 1944. The 130 Octane also improved the Radial Engine Bombers. 100,000 Americans died in the skies over Europe. Lord only knows what that number would have been without "Super-Gasoline".

**For veterans who missed out on COVID stimulus cash payouts, VA and IRS have a quick fix:** Veterans Affairs and Treasury Department leaders announced new plans Friday to get coronavirus stimulus checks to veterans who may have missed out on the initial wave of payments because they don't typically file tax returns or collect Social Security benefits. Federal officials said veterans who receive compensation and pension benefit payments from VA will be sent the money "without additional paperwork or IRS filings" thanks to a new system set up by the government agencies. "Many have expressed concern that veterans and their beneficiaries would be overlooked during the distribution of (coronavirus) Economic Impact Payments simply because they don't file an annual tax return," VA Secretary Robert Wilkie said in a statement. "This collaboration will ensure our veterans receive (those) payments without any additional action."

**Alcohol Sales at Exchange Stores Surged by 50% in March, AAFFES:** With many clubs and restaurants on military bases closed and civilian establishments off limits thanks to the coronavirus, retail alcohol sales on U.S. bases worldwide soared by 50% the third week of March, an exchange spokesman said. "Alcohol sales across the retail industry have understandably seen increases as bars and restaurants have closed and demand has shifted to at home consumption," Army and Air Force Exchange Service spokesman Chris Ward said in an email. According to Nielsen data, U.S. alcoholic beverage sales in retail formats jumped 55% in the third week of March compared to the same time a year ago.

I never thought the comment "I wouldn't touch him/her with a 6 foot pole" would become a national policy, but here we are!

# Company B searches village

By Gerry "BO" Borysiak

Old Adage.... What doesn't kill you makes you stronger! Life for us there in some ways was like another year in our lives, Good Days, a few Great ones, and some we were lucky to get through!

I never took photos of the Dead, but I did captured Enemy. Like in Harry's Movies, When we went down the elephant grass Day Logger. After observing Males in that small Ville. I told Someone on the Hill to have the CP keep watch on the open rice patties behind the Ville for signs of any of those males DI DI Mauing/escaping!!! Once there, we called to find out, and they had not left, but were not to be seen anywhere either! That is when I started probing the area with a hard bamboo cane. Near the back of that Ville was a terraced (4 foot high) berm that had thick bamboo clusters all through it!

"Just like the ville you and I came in from behind. That had that HUGE & DEEP bomb crater that was filled with water. We just got there when I spotted the back of a dink going under and headed for another Bamboo cluster at the edge to our left. I tied a grenade to the end of a 20 foot bamboo pole and had somebody pull the pin and I shoved it into the under water hiding tunnel. Pretty stupid!!! but then that old Mama San came out with a white bandage on her arm, and took her top off, to distract us with her long droopy pancake breasts, Yelling with her black beetle-nut teeth!!!

About two or three months before Harry's Movie of that later patrol and prisoners First Platoon returned with. I recall we had LT Hughes as our PL, when that movie was taken. Harry was short. and stayed up on the Day logger. WHICH ALLOWED HARRY, TO GET SUCH A GREAT SEQUENCE FROM BEGINNING TO END of our platoon patrol. I walked back up the DDP Hill with the first blind-folded CIA, Foxhole had the second one, and I think you can just see the third CIA, when the film ran out on that roll? Not too many of Bravo happy to see those prisoners who we found out were VC Tax Collectors. I know when I found the wedge opening (AKA Flower Box) We did not have a scout or interpreter with us. I yelled from the side of the opening (Not wanting to get my head shot off! "VC Dung Lia! VC Dung Lia! GI Souvenir Beau Coup BOOM!!! Clearing that area, I cooked the grenade a grenade to a "Fast 5 Seconds) and tossed in, and exited stage right!!! As soon as it blew I ran back and listened at the side of the entrance. I heard a faint gurgling moan! Hughes comes up and says You Going in? I said Hell No there is someone down there that has a serious case of Ass, against the Guy who threw that Grenade!!! Hughes ask if anyone will go in? Gary Guera Says "I will" Hughes gives him his 45. And he starts for the entrance... I said wait a minute... seeing a boy about 10 wearing a good buttoned shirt. I brought the boy over to Gary and said Have the boy go first, keep a tight grip on his shirt collar. Move slow, any sign of trouble shove the boy down and either fire over the kid or get out, now! He does, and that seemed like the longest 5 minutes while he tried to get his vision in the darkness. Then... BANG, Bang! Guera comes flying out, the boy comes flying out!! both unscratched! Gary says as he was moving slowly further into the tunnel he feels a hand, jabbing at his throat in the Blackness!!!

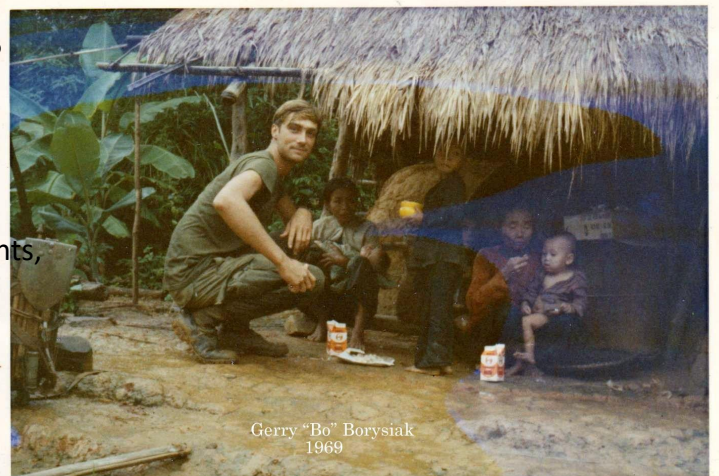
That's it! "DUNG LIA, DUNG LIA!!!" and hands become visible below the entrance, Three Dinks come out, & nobody wants to go in and bring the splattered one out!

He Caucadou....Check with LT Hughes, on this recollection?

It was a good Eye Opener for a bunch of Newbie's The Tax Collector info came out a day or 2 later from the rear!

Great Day, when it's GI's Zero, and VC, One KIA, and 3 VC CIA! I did some early tour tunnel ridding... but That Day put me into Absolute Retirement STATUS!!! without incidents, that I learned from... And just Maybe, it was Gary's Lucky Day?

PS. Most people would not believe half the stuff we saw and did without the Photographic Proof? **I'm attaching one that showed we still were willing to share with the Locals too!**



Gerry "Bo" Borysiak  
1969

## PAWS in Service:

(Purple Heart veteran receives service dog)

The life expectancy of a radio operator (RTO) in the Vietnam War ranged from between five or six seconds all the way up to thirty seconds depending on the source reporting the statistics. An RTO is responsible for reporting conflicts or firefights to headquarters which provides support for units in conflict. Where the commander went, the RTOs were up front with the commander. The enemy knew what it meant to take out a guy with the 10 foot antenna sticking out his back – take out the radio operator and you avoid dealing with air support. It was well known that the radio operator's place in the marching order was with the officer-in-charge – two high-priority targets in one spot. Don Hicks, one of my radio operators in Company B, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Brigade, barely 20 years old, when he went to Vietnam in January 1969. His tour ended in January 1970. Don recalls that Vietnam smelled so bad – “I can still smell it”, he says. When Don returned home in February 1970, he proposed to his longtime sweetheart, Rene, and they will celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in May. Don recalls that that Rene looked beautiful with her hair done “just so”. Don, Rene, and Don's older cousin Charlie were walking around waiting to go to church when a series of explosions (fireworks) erupted. Rene, recalls, “I will never forget suddenly being face down in the sandy dirt with Charlie and Don on top of me. So much for looking beautiful.” Charlie said, “Don you aren't in Vietnam!”. Don referred to the symptoms he experienced upon returning from Vietnam as “nightmares” or “spells.” Not much was known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). PTSD can occur in people who experienced or witnessed a traumatic event such as war/combat, a serious accident, a terrorist act, rape or other violent assault. Persons with PTSD may relive the events through flashbacks or nightmares; they may feel sadness, fear or anger, and they may feel detached or estranged from other people. People with PTSD may avoid situations or people that remind them of the traumatic event, and they may have strong negative reactions to something as ordinary as a loud noise or an accidental touch. Don has medication now and his nightmares are not as frequent; on average 2 to 3 times a week.

Don retired from General Motors in 2001. Since retirement he has had more time to his thoughts, remembering things that are impossible to forget, and his PTSD symptoms have intensified. He was subsequently diagnosed with PTSD by the Veterans Administration and was awarded benefits related to his service in Vietnam. His service practitioner recommended that having a service dog would be of great benefit to him. The VA can help provide a service dog but it may take years due to the high volume of veterans in need of this type of assistance. After an episode of PTSD causing instability and nearly falling to the ground while playing TAPS at a local veteran's day activity, increased the desire for purchasing a trained service dog. Abbi's Barkery is a local non-profit organization that raises money by making and selling homemade dog treats and providing the funds to needy veterans to purchasing a trained service dog through “Paws in Service. Purchasing and training a fully trained service dog can cost between \$10,000 - \$25,000. Paws in Service purchases and trains shelter dogs. Don is already step ahead toward having his service dog. “Luna”, an adopted K-9 from the local municipal shelter, is now living with Don and Rene Hicks. Don and Luna have been bonding and working on basic obedience training. Luna's formal training as a service dog will begin as soon as the first installment payment is made to the trainer at no cost to the veteran. Luna's life has already been saved through adoption. Luna will, in turn, be providing life-enhancing assistance to her new owner. To learn more about Paws in Service and how you can contribute to this and future projects, please visit [www. PawsinService.org](http://www.PawsinService.org).