



# 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”

September 2020

**Commanders Corner:** Greetings to all my 2/1 Infantry Brothers and to all members that served with our sister units. The month of August has almost ended and with it goes the final hot month of 2020 I hope. I hope everyone has had an opportunity to enjoy some family time this summer even though we are going through many troubling times with the virus and social unrest. In some ways it almost seems like the way things were when we were returning from Vietnam. I had hope that we would not endure those times again.



Unfortunately if not for the virus we would have just finished our time together in Indianapolis and I for one missed it a lot this year. With all the things going on it would have been good therapy hanging out with all our brothers and families and enjoying old times. I know Chuck is working on our event next year and I hope we don't have to cancel again.

With the virus having everything locked down it just seems that not much is happening these days and most people our age just have to be careful with our activities especially travels. Unfortunately things don't seem to be improving and in my opinion our respective governments are using the situation to promote their agendas and really don't care much about the average people. I can't wait for the election to be over so we can move on with the challenges we face. I remind everyone that Rich continues to seek any type of input that he can include in the newsletters and your feedback on content you would like to see and any suggestions.

I want to wish everyone a happy and successful Labor Day and let's hope that the Coming fall will bring a more enjoyable time than the spring and summer gave us. All my prayers to the people of LA and TX that are dealing with Hurricane Laura which only adds to the tough time they were already having with the Virus.

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

**Dwight Sypolt.**

Commander

**New ID Cards Coming Soon:** The military is getting rid of the paper-based ID cards issued to retirees and family members for a new, more secure card, under a change already underway on some installations. The new generation Uniformed Services Identification Card will incorporate an updated design and security features to deter counterfeiting and fraud. The card will be printed on plastic card stock and will look and feel more like the Common Access Cards issued to active-duty service members and DoD civilian employees. This update does not change the populations eligible to receive ID Cards. Current ID cards remain valid through their expiration dates.

**From H Duckworth O'Brien's "A Grunt's Life": Incoming Mail:** In combat, the enemy has a very bad habit... they keep trying to kill you. You've been in the bush long enough to stop worrying about the round that has your name on it however, when the mortars start coming, you get deeply concerned because they're all addressed: "*Current Occupant*". This creates a high increase in your pucker factor\*. \* Pucker Factor: the degree of tightness of the sphincter muscle. Zero being calm and 10 being the tightest. It is worthy to note, anytime you receive incoming rounds, your pucker factor will be off the chart.

**Chapter Activities:** I am currently migrating our chapter web site to a new platform which will take some time to accomplish. This platform will enable easier updating and editing of the site and will enhance the speed at which pages load. The appearance of the site will be slightly altered but, will contain all original information as the old site once it is completely changed over. In the mean time, our original site can be accessed at the URL <http://old.2-1-196th.com> and I will continue to update it until total migration to the new platform is completed, hopefully sometime before the end of the year. This will take a lot of hours to complete and, since I am still working on the hotel contract for the 2021 Americal reunion and the reunion planning, there doesn't seem to be enough hours in the week to complete this endeavor expeditiously. The site will eventually be completely managed through "Wordpress" a newer "Content Management System" (CMS) which features very high speeds, a very high level of security, a vast technical support community and state of the art software which is updated on a regular basis. There are also other features which will eventually make my task of providing our web site much easier and faster. The original web site has already been migrated to a state-of-the-art server and our domain name re-registered at no extra cost; we will have the same annual maintenance fees for every aspect of hosting a web site. Now, the most time consuming part begins; the transition and restructuring of all the pages. If you go to our original web site URL, <http://www.2-2-196th.com>, you will see the new formatting and be able to get an idea or how things will look in the future but, you won't have access to all updated information unless you use the temporary site URL. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Chuck Holdaway

**The National Army Museum** will be the first and only to tell the 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,

**Pres. Trump says he has Rejected Pentagon Proposal to Slash Military Health Care:** President Trump said recently that he rejected a proposal from the Pentagon to cut military health care by \$2.2 billion during the pandemic. The president tweeted his rebuke hours after Politico reported that Department of Defense officials were suggesting cutting health care over the next five years as part of Secretary Mark Esper’s cost-cutting initiatives. “A proposal by Pentagon officials to slash Military Healthcare by \$2.2 billion dollars has been firmly and totally rejected by me,” Trump tweeted. “We will do nothing to hurt our great Military professionals & heroes as long as I am your President. Thank you!”

**IRS Reopens Deadline for Veterans who Missed Corona Virus Stimulus Checks:** Veterans Affairs officials are reminding families who missed out on some corona virus stimulus checks last spring that they have a few more weeks left to claim that cash. In a social media post Friday morning, VA Secretary Robert Wilkie urged veterans who think they may be eligible for the money to contact the Internal Revenue Service and see if they are owed any money. At issue are payments of up to \$500 per dependent child for disabled veterans who do not typically meet the threshold for filing annual income tax returns. The money was part of a massive emergency spending package pass in the spring designed to offset financial losses due to the corona virus pandemic, then in its initial months. Payment concerns disabled veterans with dependents who have not filed tax returns in recent years. After Congress approved one-time payouts of up to \$1,200 per person, the IRS struggled to get those stimulus checks to some veterans whose current address and bank account information was not up-to-date in their systems. The agency eventually partnered with VA officials to use some veterans benefits records to help with that challenge, but could not identify all of the individuals who may have been eligible to receive the additional \$500 child payments along with the other stimulus payouts.

**Boys Town Turns Out for Military Burial of Alum who Died Alone:** Not a lot went right in Nick Baker’s life. He was left to the foster care system as a child and died May 31, alone in his apartment in Texas, by his own hand. But on Friday, about two dozen members of the only two families he really knew — Boys Town and the U.S. military — joined together to bury him with military honors at Omaha National Cemetery. Nicholas Baker was 31. “He had a long journey,” cemetery director Greta Hamilton told the mourners, “but he is home now, with his brothers and sisters here to look after him.” Chris and Regina Costello, the Boys Town family teachers who were Baker’s surrogate parents during his stay there from 2005 to 2008, received the flag carefully folded by an honor guard from Offutt Air Force Base.

**Remains Identified of Marine killed in World War II Tarawa Atoll Battle:** A Marine whose remains were identified nearly 77 years after he died on a Pacific island during a World War II battle will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors. The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced Wednesday that it had identified Marine Corps Reserve Pfc. Charles D. Miller’s remains May 19 using dental and anthropological evidence, DNA and other evidence. Miller, who was from the town of Albany, was 19 when he was killed in action in November 1943 on the third day of a battle of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands, The Star Press reported. Over several days of fighting amid stiff Japanese resistance at Tarawa, approximately 1,000 Marines and sailors were killed and more than 2,000 were wounded.

**Federal Appeals Court Rules Male-only Draft Constitutional:** A federal appeals court ruled Thursday that requiring only men to register for the military draft is constitutional. The Supreme Court ruled in 1981 that women could be excluded from registering since combat jobs were closed to them. Combat jobs have since been opened to women, but the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans said Thursday it cannot reverse the Supreme Court’s precedent. “The factual underpinning of the controlling Supreme Court decision has changed, but that does not grant a court of appeals license to disregard or overrule that precedent,” the three-judge panel ruled, adding that “only the Supreme Court may overrule its precedents.” Thursday’s ruling overturns a 2019 decision from a lower court that the male-only draft is unconstitutional. The United States has not instituted a draft since the Vietnam War, and Pentagon officials have repeatedly said they intend to keep the force all-volunteer. But men aged 18 through 25 still have to register for the Selective Service System or else face consequences such as losing access to federal financial aid for college. A men’s rights group known as the National Coalition for Men brought the lawsuit against the Selective Service System, arguing that a male-only draft is discriminatory. In a statement Thursday, the organization said it is “exploring its options” for next steps, including whether to petition the Supreme Court to hear the case.

**Pentagon to Launch Task Force to Investigate UFO Sightings:** The Pentagon is forming a new task force to investigate UFOs that have been observed by US military aircraft, according to two defense officials. Deputy Secretary of Defense David Norquist will help oversee the task force, which is expected to be officially unveiled in the next few days, according to the officials. Previous efforts to look into what the Pentagon dubs unidentified aerial phenomena were led by the US Navy as many of the documented encounters involved their aircraft. The Department of Defense did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Members of Congress and Pentagon officials have long expressed concerns about the appearance of the unidentified aircraft that have flown over US military bases, posing a risk to military jets. There is no consensus on their origin with some believing they may be drones potentially operated by earthly adversaries seeking to gather intelligence rather than extraterrestrials. The reports describe the observed phenomena as “Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS)” -- the Pentagon’s official terminology for drone aircraft. The Navy videos were first released between December 2017 and March 2018 by To The Stars Academy of Arts & Sciences, a company co-founded by former Blink-182 musician Tom DeLonge that says it studies information about unidentified aerial phenomena. The Pentagon had previously studied recordings of aerial encounters with unknown objects as part of a since-shuttered classified program that was launched at the behest of former Sen. Harry Reid of Nevada. That program was launched in 2007 and ended in 2012, according to the Pentagon, because they assessed that there were higher priorities that needed funding.

**If you get a second chance, grab it with both hands. If it changes your life, let it. Seek to listen and learn. Learning is a lifelong commitment. Take a few minutes to think before you act, especially when you're angry.**

**Federal Judge Rules DoD's Policy Unlawfully Slows Immigrant Troops' Path to Citizenship:** A federal judge recently struck down a Defense Department requirement that service members serve for six months or a year before being eligible for an expedited path to citizenship. The lawsuit was filed by the American Civil Liberties Union in April on behalf of eight non-citizen service members. They represent a class of thousands in uniform, according to the ACLU. The matter revolves around a DoD policy signed on Oct. 13, 2017, which lengthened the time a recruit must serve before receiving a certificate of honorable service, which is one of the requirements for getting expedited citizenship. The change lengthened the time in service to 180 consecutive days of active duty or one year in the reserves, to include successfully completing basic training. Previously, eligibility for that certificate began after one day of service. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services policy manual stated that one day of service was sufficient in establishing eligibility. DoD previously didn't have a formal policy, but Army and Navy personnel documents indicated that the certificate of honorable service could be issued after one day of service, according to court documents. Under a ruling by Judge Ellen S. Huvelle in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, DoD must revert to that one-day marker.

**New Army Aviators will Incur 10-Year Service Obligation starting in October:** Commissioned and warrant officers who enter flight training starting in October will incur a 10-year service obligation once they become rated Army aviators, according to guidance published Aug. 12. The service requirement is four years longer than the previous commitment. Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy signed a memorandum in June. The new requirement matches the service commitment for Air Force aviators. Soldiers currently in training are exempt from the new policy. The new policy will also apply to the Army Reserve and National Guard, though the obligated service remains part-time.

**Postmaster Pledges Veterans' Prescriptions won't be Hurt by Mail Service Changes:** The head of the United States Postal Service on recently acknowledged "dips" in service in recent months but denied any large-scale failures or deliberate mail slowdowns were to blame for problems with veterans prescription deliveries or other postal operations. "We are working here feverishly to get the system running, add stability, and also to hire more workers to handle the delivery process," Postmaster General Louis DeJoy said during testimony before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. "We serve 161 million people. We still deliver at 99.5 percent of the time. We have significant efforts to continue to improve on that process, and everybody is working feverishly to get that right."

**Triple Amputee Veteran Arrested, Charged with Taking Money from 'We Build The Wall' Donors:** A politically outspoken U.S. Air Force veteran, who suffered among the most catastrophic war wounds in American history, was arrested and charged with defrauding hundreds of thousands of donors to a "We Build The Wall" GoFundMe campaign. Brian Kolfage, 38, of Miramar Beach, Florida, launched the campaign in 2018 and raised more than \$25 million to fund a privately constructed wall along the U.S.-Mexico border. Steve Bannon, President Donald Trump's former chief strategist, was also arrested for his alleged role in the scheme, as were two others. All four men were charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and money laundering. If convicted, they face a maximum of 20 years in prison.

**Pres.Trump Vows US Troops in Iraq will Return Home:** President Donald Trump vowed that U.S. troops in Iraq will be "leaving shortly" but without compromising American national security interests in the region during a meeting with the country's prime minister at the White House recently. Trump's comments came a day after senior administration officials said that specific troop withdrawal timelines would not be discussed in the talks with Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi, who is making his first trip to the White House. "We're helping where we can," Trump said in response to reporters' questions about the continued U.S. military presence in Iraq. "But it's a separate country. They have a prime minister. They have people in office. They have to run their country. We've been in Iraq for a long time. "Frankly, I didn't think (the Iraq War) was a good idea ... Now we're getting out, we'll be leaving shortly." About 5,000 U.S. military personnel are currently stationed in Iraq, performing training and support roles. Last month, the top U.S. general for the Middle East said he believed the U.S. will keep a smaller but enduring presence in the country. Marine Gen. Frank McKenzie, the commander of U.S. Central Command, said he believes the Iraqis welcome the U.S. and coalition troops, especially in the ongoing fight to keep Islamic State fighters from taking hold of the country again.

**Army Veteran gets 12 Months Prison Time for Stolen Valor:** An Army veteran who lied about receiving the Purple Heart and Silver Star medals received the maximum prison sentence of 12 months on Tuesday, according to the Justice Department. Gregg Ramsdell, 61, of Columbus, Georgia, also received three years of supervised release and he was ordered by the court to repay \$76,000 to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Ramsdell pleaded guilty in December to lying about serving in Afghanistan between 2008 and 2009. He also admitted to falsely claiming to have suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder when he applied for disability payments through the VA in 2014, according to court records.

**Guard Troops from 3 States Heading to Wisconsin to Assist with Unrest:** National Guard troops from Arizona, Michigan and Alabama were heading to Wisconsin to assist with unrest in Kenosha after the Jacob Blake shooting, said Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers. The governor has authorized the deployment of 500 members of the Wisconsin National Guard to Kenosha, doubling the number of troops in the city of 100,000. The National Guardsmen will operate under state Active Duty status through emergency management assistance agreements with Wisconsin to assist local and state partners in Wisconsin to ensure citizens' right to safety and maintaining order, according to a Wisconsin Guard statement. The streets of Kenosha were calm on Aug. 26, following a night of peaceful protests for the first time since Blake was shot by police Aug. 24th. Blake, a 29-year-old Black father of six who was left paralyzed from the waist down, made Kenosha the latest focal point in the fight against racial injustice that has gripped the country since the May 25 death of George Floyd in Minneapolis police custody.

**Intelligence Officials will no Longer Brief Congress in person on Foreign Threats to the 2020 Election:** Instead, they will inform lawmakers of threats in writing, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence said recently. The decision, made with Director of National Intelligence John Ratcliffe's assent, arose out of concerns that briefings to lawmakers have resulted in leaks of classified information, an ODNI official said. But the change threatens to undermine the community's pledge to be transparent with Congress and the public at a time when three foreign adversaries, including Russia, are seeking to influence the American political process.

**The Air Force is going full 'Rainbow Six' with its new Throwable Scout Robots:** Fans of the video game *Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Siege* will recognize a new gadget the Air Force is using to help base security forces scout out threats and inspect vehicles without putting themselves at risk. The best part: you can absolutely chuck it! Airmen with the 96th Security Forces Squadron are now in possession of Throwbots, wheeled micro-robots that can roll into unsafe areas and transmit video and audio recon back to defenders, allowing them to make informed decisions without getting in the line of fire. It's unclear how many other security forces personnel across the force are making use of the new device. It took five minutes for me to learn how to use it," said Leon Gray, from the 96th SFS, in the Air Force article. "It quickly became apparent how our security personnel could utilize this tool in our operations." It sounds like the Air Force has similar plans in mind: specifically, airmen think the Throwbot will come in handy in active shooter situations, where the drone's camera allows operators to see around corners, locate and identify hostages and threats, and reveal a room's layout. Airmen also plan to use the drone to check under vehicles when conducting commercial vehicle inspections, according to the Air Force. Not only is the Throwbot useful, it's tough, too. According to the Air Force, the drone can take 30-foot falls, crawl over a variety of terrain, and tow up to four pounds of additional equipment.

**3,000 Service Members have Contracted the Corona virus since the Pandemic Began:** The military reported more than 1,400 new corona virus cases this week, surpassing 33,000 total, the Pentagon announced Recently. Just a week ago, the military reported that it had surpassed 30,000 cases on the same day the Army became the first service to reach 10,000 total. The Army added 602 cases since Monday, increasing their total to 11,385 as of Friday, according to the Pentagon's corona virus case data, which is posted online every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The pandemic appears far from ending soon as cases continue to increase across the country. On Wednesday, the United States reported nearly 1,500 deaths, the highest number in a single day since mid-May, The Washington Post said. The country is seeing a seven-day average of more than 1,000 new deaths each day. There have been 5.2 million corona virus cases in the United States as of Friday, according to Johns Hopkins University, and more than 167,000 have died from the virus. The military has had to find ways to adjust to the pandemic in order to keep training and deploying personnel. Air Force Gen. John Hyten, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Wednesday that over 30,000 service members were in quarantine to prevent the spread of the corona virus. "They're getting ready to go into an environment where, in order to stay safe and make sure we don't infect large numbers, we put them in quarantine," he said during a Hudson Institute think tank discussion.

**Troops in War Zones May Get Priority for a COVID-19 Vaccine:** Service members, especially those deployed to combat zones, will be considered to be among the first to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, National Institutes of Health Director Dr. Francis Collins said recently. "In general, military members are considered to have special priority" for new vaccines and therapies, he said, but stressed that decisions have yet to be made on who will go to the front of the line. Instead, a public-private partnership will be formed to deal with distribution, the official explained. He said Perna's main role is in advising and assisting the drug companies working on a vaccine in their own production planning and manufacturing.

**ACC Revived 15th Air Force for Conventional Ops:** The Air Force revived 15th Air Force as its largest organization overseeing conventional weaponry, giving the World War II-era group new purpose for 21st-century warfare. Air Combat Command is shifting the fighter jets, battle management aircraft, strike drones, and combat search-and-rescue forces from Ninth and 12th Air Forces under the new 15th Air Force. That umbrella organization will manage daily wing operations so the lower-level officials at 9AF and 12AF can focus on supporting U.S. Central Command and U.S. Southern Command, respectively. "In addition to organizing, training, and equipping ACC's conventional forces, this new [numbered air force] will also present a deployable joint task force-capable headquarters," the command said in a release. That joint task force can manage any air combat resources that are contributed to a collaborative effort, just as 9AF oversaw Airmen who led part of the military's corona virus pandemic response under the Army. Maj. Gen. Chad P. Franks, who previously ran 9AF, will lead 15AF at Shaw Air Force Base, S.C. The numbered air force began as a bomber group in the Mediterranean during World War II before taking on other expeditionary and mobility roles in later decades. It was inactivated in 2012 as the 15th Expeditionary Mobility Task Force. No units will physically move because of the reorganization, and most of the over 45,000 Airmen who work for 15AF will not see changes in their daily operations, ACC said. The changes are intended to streamline aspects like training, tactics, and maintenance that can benefit from bringing similar aircraft together.

**Chapter Member Dies from Motorcycle Accident:** Mrs. Penny Linto sends the following: It is with great sadness that I tell you that my husband, Norman Linto passed away. He was in a tragic motorcycle accident April 6, 2019. He loved God, his Family & our Country. And his service was such a huge part of his life. He was in Vietnam, went back in the National Guard in 1982 & again in 2001 after 911. God needed him, he was quite Christian .....Norman was a great father, loving husband and great soldier.  
Sincerely,  
Penny Linto

**Court Upholds Bowe Bergdahl's Sentence Despite 'Dirty Traitor' Comments:** The U.S. military's top appeals court has upheld a conviction against former Army Sgt. Robert "Bowe" Bergdahl on charges of desertion and misbehavior before the enemy, saying public comments by President Donald Trump and the late Sen. John McCain condemning the soldier did not invalidate his prosecution. The Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces handed down a decision recently on the sentence, which was delivered in 2017 and has already been upheld at the lower appellate level. All five appellate judges on the case agreed at least in part on the conclusion, but two judges filed partial dissents expressing their dismay at the viciousness with which Bergdahl was treated and the conduct of the leaders in question. While Bergdahl was received with a celebratory welcome at the White House upon his May 2014 return, public opinion rapidly turned against him as the facts of his disappearance and capture became known. He ultimately pleaded guilty at court-martial to desertion and misbehavior, and was sentenced in Nov. 2017 to a dishonorable discharge, reduction to the grade of private, and forfeiture of \$1,000 in salary per month for ten months.

## Ping Golf - A MUST Read For EVERYONE...

*Even if you're not a golfer this is interesting.*

On Monday, a friend played the Disney Lake Buena Vista course. As usual the starters matched him with three other players. After a few holes they began to get to know each other a bit. This is the rest of what he reports.

One fellow was rather young and had his wife riding along in the golf cart with him. I noticed that his golf bag had his name on it and after closer inspection it also said - "wounded war veterans." When I had my first chance to chat with him I asked him about the bag. His response was simply that it was a gift. I then asked if he was wounded and he said yes. When I asked more about his injury, his response was, "I'd rather not talk about it, sir".

Over a few holes I learned that he had spent the last 15 months in an army rehabilitation hospital in San Antonio, Texas. His wife moved there to be with him and he was released from the hospital in September. He was a rather quiet fellow; however, he did say that he wanted to get good at golf. We had a nice round and as we became a bit more familiar I asked him about the brand new set of Ping woods and irons he was playing. Some looked like they had never been hit. His response was simple.

He said that this round was the first full round he had played with these clubs. Later in the round he told me the following.

As part of the discharge process from the rehabilitation hospital, Ping comes in and provides three days of golf instruction, followed by club fitting. Upon discharge from the hospital, Ping gives each of the discharged veterans, generally about 40 soldiers, a brand new set of custom fitted clubs along with the impressive golf bags.

The fellow I met was named Ben Woods and he looked me in the eye and said that being fitted for those clubs was one of the best things that ever happened to him and he was determined to learn to play golf well enough to deserve the gift Ping had given him.

Ben is now out of the service, medically discharged just a month ago. He is as fine a young man as you would ever want to meet.

**Ping, whose products are made with pride here in Arizona, has the good judgment not to advertise this program.**

**This sure beats the hell out of Nike's million dollars giveaways to athletes who will not respect our flag nor our Country. Ping, on the other hand, renews your faith in mankind, or at least the class of the PING Corporation. Too bad PING doesn't take advantage of this wonderful program by advertising it. You can bet the Media won't do it for them**

*God Bless America and the game of golf.*

*Thank you PING*

*May God Bless our Military!*