Greetings from your Cacti Battalion from Hawaii! We just completed the 25th Infantry Division’s inaugural Jungle Operations Training Course here on Oahu and our companies are taking some much deserved leave. Over the past two months, the battalion has been in the secondary jungles of Oahu, utilizing the lessons studied from Vietnam to tackle some of our toughest terrain in the wettest season on the island. Though the terrain lacks the triple canopy that many of you experienced in Vietnam, it did challenge us to evaluate our individual load plans, rope assisted movement, and refined water purification techniques. It turns out after all these years of using of Iodine tablets that they are bad for your thyroid! So we started using commercial off the shelf water purification systems that are lightweight and easy for Soldiers to use to sustain themselves.

Since the Jungle Operations Training Course (JOTC) closed out of Fort Sherman, Panama in 1999, jungle training has largely gone dor-

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All writers are identified by name except where they have requested confidentiality. Official statements of policy or opinion of the Association shall be expressed verbally or in writing (whichever is appropriate to the situation) only by the Association President or other person specifically designated by the Association Officers to do so. Opinions expressed in this news magazine are those of the writers (whether named or not), and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the 35th Infantry Regiment (Cacti) Association.

The Editor/Publisher reserves the right to edit and or decline to print any material submitted for publication, with or without notification to the author or submitting organization or company. News articles are printed on a “space available” basis and may not be printed even though you have been notified it would be printed. This is a judgment decision of the Editor/Publisher and is not personal. Address changes should be sent to the Secretary.

Annual Membership
Dues are Due
See page 26 for the 2014 Membership Form

2014 Cacti Scholarships

Because of the generous contributions of our Cacti Members, the Cacti Association Board of Directors has been able to approve an increase to $1500 per award for three 2014 scholarships. The time for scholarship applications is fast approaching. Be sure to tell your children/grandchildren of the coming April 15 cutoff date for scholarship applications.

All of our Cacti families are encouraged to apply for scholarship awards. To be eligible the applicant must: Be a child, stepchild, grandchild or great-grandchild of an Association member or a 35th Infantry Regiment member who was killed in action. Be a graduating high school senior. Have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 (on a 4.0 scale). Relatives of Association Board members are not eligible.

For more information see the Scholarship page on the Cacti web page—Cacti35th.org—or contact the Chairman, Wiley “Tiny” Dodd by email at this address: WDodd3@comcast.net
President’s Message

I am always a bit surprised to learn of Cacti who only recently discovered the 35th Infantry Regiment Association. Some gave up on finding old friends; others likely placed their service in a private place where the experience was not to be shared. There is a price to be paid for that silence.

There are tangible benefits to meeting those you served with who also have stories to live by and memories yet to be processed. Sharing those helps heal. Ordinary men sent to kill other men do not return feeling ordinary. That is particularly true about Vietnam and Korea as there was no definitive end point to the war as defined by WW II.

Our reunions, particularly for those of us now older, help in the restoration of trust, pride and acceptance. We enjoy a remarkable “family,” as diverse as it is generous and helpful. The men and women possess the wisdom, skills and experience that provide communities with sound leadership. They are people who know how to ask the right questions and determine what is genuine.

The point, getting duller as our ranks thin, is that for years the perception of the Vietnam veteran was that we were a wholesale lot of damaged goods. That has never been true. Men suffered, and continue to suffer from what they experienced overseas and on their return home. It’s tough feeling like an outsider or being shunned. The latter is particularly painful – ask an Amish person who has gone “English.” It’s emotional torture and produces depression, anger and anxiety – all PTSD issues.

Our association offers many benefits to members for a small membership fee. The most important is the opportunity to associate with those who have trod the same path and share in the pain of remembering the missing. We may be reluctant to say it, but collectively we are stronger for the experience.

I am not a “career” veteran. It took more than 30 years for me to begin looking for men I served with and wanted to see again. In some cases, I waited too long. They had passed away. My hope is that each association member and the present generation of Cacti will appreciate that locating buddies and joining the organization is about friendship, not living in the past.

For those interested, I maintain a closed Facebook Group for the 35th Infantry Regiment, meaning non-members can't access the posts. If you are on Facebook, a Cacti or Redleg who served with us and want to join the Group, please email me with a request: whhenson@cox.net. If you would rather not participate, I certainly understand. The purpose of the page is to pay tribute to our fallen, keep association members united and in routine contact using the social media your children and grandchildren do. The page is NOT to be used for political commentary or commercial purposes.

“...from Nogales, Arizona to Kunar Province, Afghanistan”

Col. Willam Taylor (Ret.): Requiem for a Hero
By Doc Hall / Past President B 2-35, 1970

Today, the site was Arlington but over the past few years small groups of Cacti have gathered in various other places through the United States for the same reason, to, as the song Arlington goes, “bring another hero home.”

To Cacti these days, “hero” may mean one of our young Brothers who paid the ultimate price, or even one of our older Brothers who paid that price 60 or even 70 years ago and finally found his way home. Or with added frequency, it means a Brother who served with us in our youth as a soldier and remained with us as a friend and keeper of our collective memories.

On Feb. 20, the small group of Cacti gathered to honor and bid farewell to the latter type heroes. Col. William Waldon Taylor, Jr. (Ret.) US was laid to rest on a very fine late February day. Bill Moore, Gary Dittmer, Tom Gragg and I met outside the Ft Meyer Old Post Chapel that sits just outside the walls of Arlington. We came to say goodbye to our hero.

Army Chaplain Hubbs performed the Mass of Christian Burial during the farewell services in the beautiful, impressive Old Post Chapel as family, former colleagues, and friends gathered to take leave of our old friend.

In speaking of his father’s life, Col. Taylor’s son, William, used the scene in Saving Private Ryan where the older Pvt. Ryan knelt by the Captain’s grave to ask if he had “earned it?” He said this was much the same question that his father might ask. Few people in attendance would dispute that our friend had indeed “earned it.” He had earned the love of his family and the respect of all who served with him.

With services ended, Col. Taylor was escorted in the finest military traditions from the chapel and on a horse drawn caisson for the ride to his final resting place. With a military band proceeding and a long line of vehicles following, the caisson slowly made the dignified and beautiful journey across the cemetery to Section 54 where Col. Taylor now rests.

As we arrived at the grave site and exited our vehicles, we found the edges of the roadway adjoining Section 54 to be leaching mud from the freshly melted snows that had covered the entire area just hours before. Bill Moore observed how appropriate this was for an old

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Things to Do at the Chicagoland Reunion

By Darlene and Paul LaFalce, Recon 2-35, 1969-70

The Hilton Chicago/Northbrook is 20-minutes via toll way from O’Hare International Airport, and a 40-minute ride to the Windy City.

River Trail Nature Center, Northbrook
This site is part of the Cook County Forest Preserves system. It showcases an area where Native Americans hunted bear, deer and elk along the banks of the Des Plaines River, and trappers and fur traders hunted beaver in its waters. Today you can see a fox, red-tailed hawk, great horned and barrel hawks, coyote and a bald eagle in the outdoor cages -- and bees in their hives. There are many more family-friendly exhibits in the building (closed on Friday). There are loads of well-marked trails that you may find yourself sharing with deer.

November -February open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily
March - October open 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily

Military attractions

National Veterans Art Museum - http://www.nvam.org/hours-info/
Tuesday-Saturday: Located at 4041 N. Milwaukee Avenue, Chicago, IL

Free admission
The National Veterans Art Museum inspires greater understanding of the real impact of war with a focus on Vietnam. The museum collects, preserves and exhibits art inspired by combat and created by veterans.

Tuesday -Thursday 10am – 6 pm; Friday and Saturday 10 am – 4 pm
104 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL

Admission is free for all veterans with ID

Contact if you want to schedule an oral history

Major collection of books and related materials on military history, with a particular focus on the concept of the Citizen Soldier in America. Today, building upon that foundation through the generosity of private donors, the Pritzker Military Museum & Library has become a non-partisan research organization that attempts to increase the public understanding of military history and the sacrifices made by the men and women who have served.


Cantigny Park - http://www.cantigny.org Explore American history as seen through the eyes of the First Infantry Division and gain a renewed appreciation for those who serve to protect our freedoms. With more than 38,000 square feet, the First Division Museum (FDM) provides an immersive and stimulating experience for visitors of all ages.

Hours: 7 am to sunset daily
Address – 1S151 Winfield Rd, Wheaton, IL
Join honor club in advance for free admission or $5 per car.

Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center - http://www.iholocaustmuseum.org/
The museum is dedicated to preserving the legacy of the Holocaust by honoring the memories of those who were lost and by teaching universal lessons that combat hatred, prejudice and indifference.
Hours – Monday – Friday 10 am -5 pm. Thursday evening until 8 pm. Saturday and Sunday 11 am-4 pm.
Address – 9625 Woods Drive, Skokie, IL
Adult Admission: $12.00
Seniors (65+): $8.00

Northwestern University, 633 Clark St., (847) 491-3741 Evanston, IL

Bahai Temple, 100 Linden Ave., Wilmette, IL 847-853-2300 (One of seven in the world).

http://www.bahai.us/bahai-temple/

Official Chicago visitors’ Site http://www.choosechicago.com
Events calendar, tours & attractions, visitor services & resources.


Transportation

Milwaukee District Northline – Northbrook station

MetraRail – provides services to Chicago and surrounding areas.

Maps & Schedules - metrarail.com/metrarail/en/home/

Weekend pass $7 all day Saturday and Sunday
Carriage rides-Along Michigan Ave. Half-hour rides with Noble Horse Chicago, 820 N. Michigan Ave., cost as little as $40 for up to four people, which makes for an even $10 split. (312) 266-7878.
Bikes-If the weather cooperates, get around town by bike. Purchase a 24-hour Divvy bike pass for $7 to take advantage of the city's bike share system, which include more than 4,000 bikes and 400 stations.

Chicago Trolley & Double Decker Co. – Coach USA
http://www.coachusa.com/chicagotrolley/
Hop On Hop Off tour

Navy Pier: http://www.navypier.com
Rides & Attractions – Bike and Roll Chicago, Absolutely Chicago Segway Tours. For more kid-friendly fun, try the Chicago Children's Museum at Navy Pier, 700 E. Grand Ave. Admission is free for kids 15 and under the first Sunday of each month, and free for everyone Thursday nights from 5 to 8 p.m. Call (312) 595-7437. Chicago Children’s Museum. Calendar of Events.

Chicago Botanical Garden. Free parking with military id.

Chicago Architecture Foundation, 224 S. Michigan Ave., (312) 922-3432
Tours, gift shop. Located across from the Chicago Art Institute.

(Continued on page 5)
Friend of the Cacti, Herbert J. McChrystal Jr.
By Peter Birrow, B 2-35, 1968-69, Past President

R
tired U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Herbert Joseph McChrystal Jr., of Kingsport, TN, died on Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2013, at the age of 89. A class of 1945 graduate of the United States Military Academy as an Infantry Lieutenant, McChrystal served in Germany, in the Korean War as company commander, and in the Vietnam War as battalion commander, brigade commander, and Chief of Staff for the 4th Infantry Division. He served in staff assignments with the US Army, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and Department of State.

During his 29 year military career, McChrystal earned numerous awards and decorations to include four Silver Stars, the Bronze Star Medal, the Distinguished Service Medal and two awards of the Combat Infantryman's Badge. After retiring from the military, in 1974, his civilian employment included four years as Politic-Military consultant to RAND Corporation. He spent several years on the staff and faculty with the Florida Institute of Technology and also earned his MBA from that institution. He and his wife, Nedra, then formed a small logistics consultation firm.

McChrystal's legacy in service to the nation extends far beyond his military service. All five of his sons served in the Army on active duty.

(Continued from page 4)

Frank Lloyd Wright

Head a bit west outside of downtown to Oak Park for a glimpse of Wisconsin native Frank Lloyd Wright's Chicago work. Tickets for tours of his Home and Studio, 951 Chicago Ave., and the Unity Temple, 875 Lake St., cost $15 for each ($12 for students and seniors), but you can take a self-guided walking tour of the historic district for free. Call (312) 994-4000.

Chicago Skyscrapers

Willis Tower (formerly named Sears Tower) – 233 Wacker Dr. (312) 875-9447 8:30am-5pm Monday through Friday.

Get a sky-high view of the city on a Willis Tower Sky Deck tour. A trip to the top costs $18 for those 12 and up or $12 for kids 3-to-11. A $40 fast pass will move you past the lines but is not completely necessary.

John Hancock Center, 875 Michigan Ave. 312-654-2892

Splurge a bit on cocktails in the John Hancock Signature Lounge. Most cocktails are about $15, but that gets you a drink and a view from the building's 95th floor — tickets to the observatory alone cost $18 for adults.

Food, booze and music:

Goose Island Brewery tours are only $10 per person. Tours last 60-to-90 minutes and include six beer samples and a souvenir pint glass. Tour the Clybourn location Saturdays at 12:30 p.m., 2 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. and Sundays at 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. Goose Island Wrigleyville tours are Saturdays at 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. when there is not a Wrigleyville event (such as a Cubs game). Attendees must be 21 years or older, and reservations are required. Call (312) 915-0071 (Clybourn) or (773) 832-9040 (Wrigleyville).

Arrive early for a free Revolution Brewery tour at the Kedzie production facility, 3340 N. Kedzie Ave. Spots are limited to 30 people, ages 21 and up, first come, first served. Tours operate Wednesday through Friday at 6 p.m.; Saturdays at 4 p.m., 5 p.m., 6 p.m.; and Sunday at 3 p.m. Call (773) 558-2237.

Eat at Portillo’s, 100 W. Ontario St. The menu at this Chicago icon includes a classic Chicago-style hot dog for less than $3 and Italian beef for under $5. Don't leave without trying a milkshake.

Catch a live show at Metro, 3730 N. Clark St., Congress Theater, 2135 N. Milwaukee Ave., or Reggies, 2105 S. State St., where most shows cost less than $30.

Discover the legacy of Chicago blues at Chess Records, now Willie Dixon's Blues Heaven Foundation, where legends ranging from Etta James and Chuck Berry to Muddy Waters and the Rolling Stones once recorded. Tours at the 2120 S. Michigan Ave. building cost $10 and are often led by the great Willie Dixon's grandson; call ahead before visiting: (312) 808-1286.

Chicagobluesguide.com

Chocolate.com

Family fun

Check out the area beaches along Lake Michigan.

Gawk at gorillas and size up snow leopards at Lincoln Park Zoo off Lake Shore Drive, where admission is always free. From November through March the zoo is open daily from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Families should check out Legoland Discovery Center, 130 N. Martingale Road. Attractions include a jungle expedition and Chicago and Star Wars mini-land displays. Ticket prices vary, but generally are $20 or less; save $5 or more when you buy tickets online. Call (866) 823-9546.

There’s much more to see and do before, during and after the reunion.

(Continued on page 11)
The JOTC consisted of individual to company level exercises over a 21 day period for each rifle company, most of which was spent in the jungle environment. Soldiers learned how to survive, move and fight in the jungle with minimal support. I attached some pictures so that you can see some of the great work that your Cacti Soldiers were doing over the last few months. Our officers and NCOs are working on articles to publish based on their lessons learned from their jungle experience so that infantrymen across the Army can learn from their experience. We’ll provide some of the highlights in future Cacti Times submissions for your review. The 25th Infantry Division intends to sustain this training and incorporate partner nations across the Pacific. You can also check out a good number of pictures on our Facebook page at 2-35 Infantry Battalion.

Many thanks to those that are sponsoring a Cacti Soldier for our upcoming Cacti all-ranks Ball on 30 May 2014. Thanks to your great efforts and Mr. Peter Birrow’s dedication to our Soldiers, as of 1 March we have 48 Cacti Soldiers that are sponsored. We just passed out the sponsorship assignments to our company leadership to hand select Soldiers that will receive this honor. You should hear from your sponsored Soldier sometime in April. We are also excited that several Cacti veterans are making the trip to Hawaii to join us for the ball at the Hawaiian Hilton Village in Waikiki. We are still taking sponsorships for Soldiers through the end of April and selling ball tickets up to the week of the event, so contact Mr. Birrow if you are interested. As many of you know, our doors are always open to visiting Cacti Veterans. So if you are coming to Hawaii on vacation, please let us know so that we can arrange for an escort officer or NCO to receive you and give you a tour of Schofield Barracks and the battalion area.

Finally, my time with the Cacti is drawing to a close and on 16 June 2014, I will relinquish command of this great battalion to Lieutenant Colonel Ryan O’Connor. Ryan is an accomplished combat veteran who will take the battalion to new heights as Cacti 6.

LTC Ryan O’Connor graduated The Virginia Military Institute in 1996 and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Infantry. He is a graduate of the Infantry Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the Combined Arms Service and Staff School, The Defense Language Institute, and the Army Command and General Staff College.
In late April 1970, an old lady shuffled into a southern Minnesota small town post office carrying a square box wrapped in brown paper. The box, though not particularly large or heavy, was obviously cumbersome for the lady and she was happy to rest it on the counter.

Small Midwestern towns being what they were back then, there were no strangers as the lone postmistress greeted her by name. Once the burden was rested in place there was time for leisurely conversation, and family information was exchanged. The postmistress knew the generations of the old lady’s family, her children, her grandchildren and even the brand new great grandchildren. She knew what they each did for a living and where they were each living (though several had dispersed to other small towns throughout a two-state area) and the old woman carried similar information in her mind about the postmistress and her extended family. It was the type of exchange that occurred regularly in this small town post office, but was made sweeter because the old woman was not able to visit the office as often as she used to.

The family talk soon turned to her grandson. He was in Vietnam (of course the postmistress knew this) and remembering again the package, the old woman explained that the package was for him. His birthday was coming up in a couple of weeks and his grandmother had baked him a cake to celebrate. She was fearful that the package might not reach him in time and the conversation turned to this. Of course, the postmistress had very little special knowledge of what might happen once the package left the custody of the U.S. Postal Service, but she tried to reassure the old lady that it was very likely that it would make it on time.

Half assured (but still nervous) the old lady and the postmistress took their leave of one another. They each expressed the hope that the time until their next visit wouldn’t be as distant as the time it had been since their last.

In small towns time passes on (as it does everywhere) and life continues in a familiar slow and pleasant pattern as it had done for years. Then, two weeks after the “visit,” news came to the town that absolutely shat-tered those patterns. Such news in such towns normally didn’t come from a newspaper, nor the TV, or even the radio. It just spread from house to house, small business to small business and person to person and in a few short hours there was not a soul in the area who hadn’t heard the news. The post office, as always, was an important conduit for broadcasting any such events. So the postmistress knew early on that the old lady’s grandson had died in Vietnam.

Wherever townspeople met over the next couple of weeks the topic of conversation then most often turned to the community loss of this young man and expressions of sympathy for the family and the postmistress was involved in more than her share of such conversations.

The day of the viewing and then the funeral came and the whole town gathered to show support for the grieving family and to say goodbye to the young hero. Neighbors, as all community members were, while sad for the occasion were happy to be able to visit and exchange pleasantries about their families and friends. The postmistress was part of all of this, as always, as the community supported one another and the family. The graveside services concluded and a community meal was served to all and the people visited until gradually everyone slipped away once more and returned to their homes.

The community and the post office gradually began to slip back into their old familiar patterns over the next few weeks and the postmistress once again took her place as chief greeter and news collector for the town. Then came one day something that would disturb those patterns one more time. It wasn’t so much a community event but rather a private one that would involve the old lady and the postmistress.

A package came that day. It was one of several that were unloaded from the daily mail delivery truck to the post office. It was somewhat like all the others and yet it was different. The postmistress recognized it immediately. It was a square box covered in brown paper wrapping. It was a bit worse for wear from the last time she had seen it. No doubt it had covered many miles and suffered some mishandling since she placed it on an outgoing truck nearly two months ago. She recognized it without even seeing the handwriting and without benefit of the return address. She had no doubt of what it was.

The familiar patterns were once again immediately upset for her. Her customers came in with the usual banter and were puzzled by the reserve in her tone and the lack of smile on her face. They did not know.

The postmistress agonized over what to do. The “book” procedure would have been to leave a card in the mail box, for those who came in for their own mail, or to send the package out with a route driver for those who had their mail delivered. The postmistress just couldn’t bear to do this. So she agonized and finally decided that the only thing she could do was to take the package and deliver it personally to the old lady.

As she closed the post office for the evening, she placed the package in the seat beside her in her own car and drove to the old lady’s home. She didn’t have to think about the address as she knew exactly where she was going and could have done it without an address.

With a sense of duty but with a horrible dread, she took the package from the car and walked up to the front door of the old lady’s home. A knock (and not a bell) brought the old lady to the door. The old lady met her with a smile but this quickly and suddenly changed to despair and then to sobs as she too recognized the package for what it was. The sobs became nearly inconsolable as the package was exchanged and the postmistress did her best to support her old friend in the face of this new pain.

It’s not clear how long the postmistress remained there. She finally left to drive back to her home and the tears just wouldn’t stop for either. She had done her duty to her job and she had done her duty for an old friend but somehow this just never felt to be enough.

The days at the post office gradually returned to their patterns. For a while friends were concerned for the postmistress but most were never sure just why. The daily banter between community members continued and the postmistress could smile once again. She successfully was able to bury away the memory of that package and for the balance of her time as the official postmistress of the community she was always remembered for her smile and her greetings to all who entered her world.

But many years later, and well after the pass-

(Continued on page 19)
June 6, 1951

By Jess E. Salley, C 1-35, 1951-1952

I was a rifleman in the 25th Infantry Division, 35th Regimental Combat Team, C Company, 2nd Platoon, 3rd Squad. Our company was moving out to tie up with the 24th Infantry Regiment and the 6th R.O.K. Division. After a short distance, we got off the roads. Being Infantry, we hiked over the hills, staying off the road.

About 5 pm in the afternoon, the company was brought together in a wooded area. Captain Pernal, our Company Commander, informed us that we were completely surrounded by the Chinese. He assured us he would see us back to our lines and we would be bringing our equipment and any wounded. He said, "Nobody will be left behind."

Later on we found out that the 24th R.C.T. and the 6th R.O.K. Division had withdrawn and we were on our own, nobody on our right or left flanks.

Time passed...it was 7 pm and dark. We were going down the hill to get back to main line of resistance, when all hell broke loose. We were crossing a river bed when all at once we were being fired at from the right and also the left.

Chinese soldiers were firing heavy machine guns at us. They must have been two-hundred yards away from us. Every fifth round was a tracer fired from a machine gun; they were firing 20 feet above us. We could tell by the tracers, an old-time sergeant said they were lousy shots, which was good news for us.

We had gone just a little ways when we saw burning tents and equipment. It was our Regiment Headquarters. Near the road, two American soldiers were hanging from two trees, a sight I will never forget. Lieutenant Span ordered us to cut them down. He said, "They did that to hurt our morale, guess what...it just makes us madder."

Moving on we saw tanks pushing burning trucks, trailers and jeeps off the road so the rest could get through. I came upon a truck that was not moving. I went up to it and opened the cab. The driver had a bullet hole in his head. My first thought was that he was so young. We removed him and the truck would not start. Therefore I motioned for a tank to push it off the road. We moved down the road and at the same time we were being fired on from both sides of the road.

Near by was Captain Pernal and his radio man. I could hear a captain from L Company say that he was in dire need for help. Captain Pernal said, "We are unable to help as we were surrounded by Chinese and were fighting our way out."

Up on the cliffs, about 100 yards up, we could hear Chinese soldiers yelling and the sound of a bugle. A lieutenant from the artillery was near by. Thank God! He was a forward observer. He called for fire power! What a beautiful sight, them quad .50's firing and everything lit up like daytime.

It was shocking what we saw next, hundreds of Chinese soldiers with one on a big white stallion horse blowing a bugle. The lieutenant ordered the artillery 105’s to fire left to right and keep firing.

We saw the burst from the artillery 105’s that all the Chinese soldiers were killed instantly, including the white horse with the soldier who had blown the bugle. A fellow soldier nearby said, "Anybody up for horse meat?" Then we all laughed and it broke up the tension. We all agreed if it wasn’t for the lieutenant and his 105’s, we would not be here today.

I would like to thank the quad halftracks with the .50 calibers, four of them on one mount, what fire power! What a beautiful sight, them quad .50’s firing at night making a solid red line across the night skies. Tracers really show up.

Later down the road I saw a Chinese soldier lying dead on the road. He had been killed recently, his body was still smoking. I cannot say I was sorry after seeing my fellow soldiers hanging from trees.

Going on we saw a mama san coming around the hill, then rushing back around the hill. Our squad was told to follow her. We did and came about seeing her and two Chinese soldiers firing a 60mm Chinese mortar. She was running back and forth, giving them the range and distance. We opened fire on them, no more mama san and two less Chinese soldiers.

We got back to our lines. Saw some Turkey soldiers on a quad 30’s, they were in back-up positions and were a sight to be hold.

After 16 hours we were in a staging area. A jeep pulled up near us and had a litter across the back with a wounded soldier lying on it, he was moaning a lot. They sat the litter on the ground and went to get a medic. I was sitting on the ground near him, I saw him raise his head about four inches. His last word was "Momma." Then he died. It wasn’t my first soldier I saw dead but I will never forget it.

In came a helicopter to pick up a wounded soldier. The helicopter was about 100 feet in the air when an air burst blew it down. It landed like a pancake. The pilot got out, he had a cut over his eye but otherwise he was fine. The wounded soldier got out and limped over to a near by ambulance and said, "No more flying for me and take me back to Mash (medical aid station)."

With binoculars, I could see off in a distance Chinese soldiers climbing over trucks and equipment that we had left behind. We destroyed the motors of all the vehicles, making them useless. Out of nowhere came four P-51 Mustangs. They strafed and napalmed the Chinese who must have been either high or shell shocked because they took no cover.

I know from my experience in Korea that there are no atheists in fox holes. It was my mother’s prayers and my believing in God that I survived the 16-hour road block.

I’m 84 years old now; it took over 60 years before I could talk about that road block. I am proud to say today that Korea is a strong and prosperous country that upholds peace and freedom so that the sacrifices we made were not in vain.
Code Talkers

By Dianne Bean, Victor Bean’s wife. Victor served with A 2-35, 1967-68

I wish I knew, but I don't. My guess is it was fairly recently that our government decided to name the month of November as a time to honor all Native Americans, First Nation People, so to speak. We openly acknowledge it here in our Hoonah City Schools as we want our children to know. I wonder where else it is brought to the forefront?

And then there was a day, just last week actually. Our government decided to honor the code talkers of the Second World War.

For how long did we believe it was only the Navajo? Why wasn't it out there that 33 tribes across our Nation were doing that as well, in the Pacific and in Europe?

In part, perhaps, because they were told to keep it a secret, right up until 1968, smack dab in the middle of their own sons coming home from Vietnam. Did they who participated as code talkers even get the green light word? Likely not.

In 2008, those who cared began to move forward to find a way to honor hundreds of code talkers across this Great Nation. It took five long years for it to come to fruition. Five years...

Speech after speech brought forth the fact that those code talkers had saved thousands of lives because of the lightning fast way they could communicate radio to radio. Minutes instead of hours...

Each tribe had a designated representative. For the Tlingits, it was Ozzie Sheakley, a nephew to Victor's mother, hence, Victor's cousin.

Each representative was given a gold medal, additionally, silver medals to give to the family of each man who had been a code talker.

There had been talk, but it just ran in circles, as to who those Tlingits were. In the end, five were named as for sure, but it is believed there were several more.

It wasn't until that day, the day of the ceremony, that we found out Victor's father was one of them. He had never spoken of it to family. Victor wondered why. Perhaps because Victor was struggling to survive emotionally after his own service and the time never seemed right or maybe Richard Bean Sr., never got the word that was now okay to share. We will never know.

What an honor, what a tribute, what a blessing. It brought light and life to my husband's spirit and he wanted me to start sharing.

Besides family, that sharing was exclusive to those who served. John Dewey E 2-35, 1968-69, machine gunner, as was Victor, was at the top of the list. Dewey had come to stand by his brother in arms last summer and given Victor the closure he needed at long last. There were just a handful, but one by one, with my help, he made those calls that same night. His cousin Robert was near the top of the list, for he too served his country for 20 years, though after Vietnam, and understands the bond of that sacred brotherhood. Especially important to him too, was a call to my father, a Second World War vet, for whom he has much respect.

Victor felt pride, and joy and he reached in the direction of those who would truly understand what this meant to him. He reached, they listened and they understood and verbally hugged and honored him right back. Brothers in arms are like that, you know...

A month and a day...and it's about damn time!

Cacti Ball— Schofield Barracks, HI

The Cacti Ball is fast approaching, May 30th 2014 to be exact.

One thing that has not changed between our era and today’s Cacti is the buying power of our wages. For those of us who cannot attend the Ball in support of our Cacti Brothers, we can help out our young Cacti by sponsoring their ticket to the Ball.

So far, along with two of our Regimental Association members and wives attending, we have received sponsorship for 52 Cacti soldiers and/or dates. We ask for your participation.

For only $60.00 you can make a Cacti proud to be with their brothers/sisters at this prestigious event. Checks should be made payable to “The CACTI Store.” and mailed to:

CACTI Ball 2014
ATTN:  LT Loren Bell
91-111 Puaina Place
Ewa Beach, HI 96706

If you rise to this challenge, please let Pete Birrow (B 2-35, 1967-68) know so that we can gauge the impact that has been made.

If you too would like to attend, Pete Birrow has the game plan for you. Just drop him a line at birrowp@hotmail.com. And he will give you the full details.

Pete is the 35th Infantry Regiment Association's Liaison to our active duty 2-35th Infantry battalion, and a Past President of the Association. His personal motto:

“Once You Have Been Pricked By A Cacti, You Are A Cacti Forever!”
(Continued from page 6)

where he earned his master’s degree.

LTC O’Connor’s past assignments include Rifle Platoon Leader and Company Executive Officer, 3rd Battalion, 502nd Infantry, at Fort Campbell, Kentucky; Plans and Policy, Directorate of Training, 7th Army and US Army Europe, in Grafenwoehr, Germany; Brigade and Battalion Assistant S3 and Airborne Rifle Company Commander, 1st Battalion (Airborne) 508th Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade, in Vicenza, Italy, where he deployed to Iraq and to Afghanistan; Assistant Army Attaché, US Embassy, Mexico City; Battalion S3 and Battalion XO, 1st Battalion 17th Infantry, where he deployed again to Afghanistan, and BCT S3 and BCT XO, 2nd Brigade 2nd Infantry Division (SBCT), at Joint Base Lewis-McChord; and the Infantry Majors’ Career Manager and Assignment Officer, US Army Human Resources Command, at Fort Knox, Kentucky. He is currently assigned to the G3, 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

LTC O’Connor is married to the former Erin Exten. They have four children: Evan (7), Catherine (5), Lily (3), and Emma (1).

We trust that you and your families are well and that 2014 brings new opportunities. Our Cacti Soldiers and Families thank you for your example of selfless service to our great Nation and today’s active duty 35th Infantry Regiment continues to serve in your honor.

God bless you and your families and thanks for all your support to your Cacti Battalion!

Lieutenant Colonel Jay Bartholomew
Cacti 6

The following recent email correspondence from Life Family Member Terry Hendrick relates his father’s service with the Cacti during WWII and is shared with his permission. – John Lorts

Mr. Lorts: I saw your note in the 35th Infantry Regiment organization’s newsletter. My Dad, Jerome J. Hendrick, served in the 35th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Battalion, Co. K (may have been L or both since the regiment was reorganized in New Zealand before going to the Philippines.)

He entered the Regiment from Camp Roberts, California, in early 1942 and was in the Battalion on Guadalcanal, Vella LaVella and the Philippines, where he was seriously wounded in February 1945. He was discharged as a PFC after spending a year in military hospitals for treatment of a gunshot wound which left him disabled (he had four Purple Hearts, but didn't think that was extraordinary given that the Battalion had 100 percent casualties through the war). He used to say, "I was a sergeant many times." After his death we contacted some of the people he had served with and they referred to him as Sarge or Jed. Some of the people he served with included Jim Godfrey of St. Louis, later a prominent local politician. Terry Joyce, the man who crawled out under fire and dragged Dad back to the line after he had been wounded, is whom I'm named for and later was a policeman in Chicago. Bill Matachesky (not sure of spelling) was with him from Camp Roberts on and had been a coal miner in Pennsylvania (nobody reportedly could dig a better foxhole than Matachesky) and a young guy (Dad was 28-years-old when he was drafted, everyone else in the group was 20-or-21) who joined the platoon in New Zealand and was about 18. His name was Larry Hayes. Dad used to refer to him as "our mascot." Larry Hays came to Woonsocket, South Dakota and lived with my parents (actually in our garage) for about six months in about 1950. He was roaming around the country and needed a place to light for a while. My dad most certainly had PTSD; he slept about two hours a night, had terrible nightmares, drank about a quart of vodka a day and smoked four packs of cigarettes a day -- all the while putting four kids through college (what a GREAT Generation). When I was in high school I used to go on his mail route with him to shovel snow, and on some days he would talk about the war - funny incidents, or particularly strange combat experiences, people he knew. There were so many casualties in the company that he said he stuck with only a certain number of people he could trust in combat. He had no use for officers. Viet Nam was just heating up then and I would ask questions in the context that I might be drafted in a couple years.

Dad said that a number of the men had never fired an M1 Rifle but had been trained with Springfield’s. A lot of guys fired the M1 for the first time off the fan tail of the ship. They didn’t really know what regiment they were assigned (they initially thought “the Rainbow Division”) and that his battalion was made up of "guys who had completed basic and were in various schools or awaiting assignment." The initial groups of noncoms, he said, were "sergeants from every motor pool and supply room in the South," noting the initial group of noncoms were ‘out of shape and in no way experienced leading men in combat. All kinds of mistakes were made . . . they mostly stayed in their tent and played cards”

He said this group didn’t last long. "They dropped out from the heat and physical exertion and were mostly all replaced in the first couple of months on Guadalcanal.

In the early days of the war, things were pretty desperate.”

I’ll look for pictures. Some are taken on New Caledonia, I think, after they had been in New Zealand. The guys look to be in pretty good shape. My Dad was, I believe, an original member of the reformed 35th. He was 29 years old when he was drafted, everyone else in the group was 20-or-21) who joined the platoon in New Zealand and was about 18. His name was Larry Hayes. Dad used to refer to him as "our mascot." Larry Hays came to Woonsocket, South Dakota and lived with my parents (actually in our garage) for about six months in about 1950. He was roaming around the country and needed a place to light for a while. My dad most certainly had PTSD; he slept about two hours a night, had terrible nightmares, drank about a quart of vodka a day and smoked four packs of cigarettes a day -- all the while putting four kids through college (what a GREAT Generation). When I was in high school I used to go on his mail route with him to shovel snow, and on some days he would talk about the war - funny incidents, or particularly strange combat experiences, people he knew. There were so many casualties in the company that he said he stuck with only a certain number of people he could trust in combat. He had no use for officers. Viet Nam was just heating up then and I would ask questions in the context that I might be drafted in a couple years.

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(Continued from page 10)
duty, as did a daughter-in-law and one son-in-law. MG McChrystal was the father of General Stanley McChrystal, who commanded all forces in Afghanistan and earlier commanded Joint Special Operations Command.

His five grandsons are presently serving or have served on active duty with the Army. Another grandson presently works for an agency within the Department of Defense. As of the middle of December 2013, four grandsons are serving in Afghanistan at the same time.

**Tribute from MG Bill Moore, US Army (ret)**

MG Herbert J McChrystal was known in 1968 to the 2nd Battalion as Colonel McChrystal. He was our operational commander when we went to Quang Duc Province (Duc Lap) as part of a two battalion task force. The other battalion was from the 173rd Airborne and left the battle early. The operation was to retake the province after its loss during Tet.

By capturing Quang Duc the NVA had essentially cut Vietnam in two. The 2nd Battalion had been detached from the Third Brigade and placed under “operational control” of Colonel McChrystal, then the Commander of the Second Brigade of 4th Infantry Division. Colonel McChrystal gave us the operational freedom to fight and win the battle for Quang Duc Province. After the August/September battles the NVA withdrew from Quang Duc back into Cambodia.

We could not have had a more competent Task Force leader than Colonel McChrystal. Not only was he my commander and mentor, but also became my friend. Unlike other common command experiences in VN, a visit by Colonel McChrystal was always welcome. He had just the right leadership style to inspire me and hence help our battalion accomplish our mission.

Burial will be in Arlington at a date yet to be announced.

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**Infantryman on the day of his interment.**

Chaplain Hubbs said some final words, and a three-volley rifle salute followed. TAPS was blown, the flag was folded and presented to the family, and finally the band played a military hymn to conclude the ceremony.

Bill Taylor was many things in life and in the military. He was a husband and a father and grandfather. He was an enlisted infantryman and an Infantry officer. He fought in three wars (and earned the Combat Infantry Badge in each). He was a much respected leader and he was a formidable Cacti. He will be missed.

The next time you are at Arlington stop by Section 54 Gravesite 1762 and you too can say farewell, and thank you to Col. Taylor.

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**Mike Slyck, B 2-35, 1969-70,** visited the Nathaniel Wadsworth Longfellow School #36 in Rochester, New York. This is a Pre-K class so the students are between 3 and 4 years-old. When Santa makes these annual visits the last day before the Christmas break he always spends time talking to and answering questions from the students. This is the 14th consecutive Christmas visit Santa has made to School 36; and helps kick-start the Christmas feeling for him. He intends to continue this practice for many years to come.

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I have a few pictures from Camp Roberts and from New Caledonia, where they were trained for the Philippine invasion. Much of what my Dad told doesn't quite jive with the Regimental and Division history (as he would point it, written by officers). He died in the Veteran's Hospital in Tucson, Arizona in 1982 I can't recall that he said he knew anyone from Idaho, but oddly enough there is a story in the 35th Regiment’s newsletter about Vella La Vella and a guy who pried gold teeth from dead Japanese soldiers. My Dad talked of this and that he felt it was barbaric, so there might have been a lot of interaction between people in different Battalions and Companies. -- Terry Hendrick, Lake Nebagamon, Wisconsin.
Greetings and a thank you to all members of the 35th. My uncle, Christopher Eugene Brooks, (B 1-35) gave his life on 7/3/66 in the actions occurring that day in Pleiku Province. I am disheartened by the lack of information available on the events that day. I have read a couple of member’s recollections of that day...but I want to find more. So I ask that anyone who survived that day, or knew PFC Brooks in any way to please contact me. Your sacrifices will never be forgotten. It is my wish to hopefully gather enough info to write a book on the actions occurring that day. If anyone can help me with info, anecdotes, help with Freedom of Information Act, or just a kindly word, all will be greatly appreciated. Chris Gore -- Kings Mountain NC USA -- 02/18/2014

thundrskiss65@gmail.com  (Editor’s note: Information on this battle can be found on our web site at:

http://www.cacti35th.org/regiment/history/aars/3july1966giorgi.htm

I am trying to see if anyone out there has any pictures and/ or stories they would share of my uncle Herbert David HORNER (B 2-35) also known as 'Little Red' he was KIA on 6-5-70. Thank you and God Bless.

Shannon Horner -- Villa Rica GA USA -- thehornerfamily5@gmail.com

I am trying to locate information on SSG Clark E. “Gus” Gustafson who served in Co D, 2nd Bn, 35th Inf, 4th Inf Div in Vietnam from 12 Apr 69-27 Mar 70. SSG Gustafson’s daughter Stacy is my daughter-in-law and she knows very little about her dad’s service. If anyone has information, photos, etc., that they would be willing to share, I and Stacy would greatly appreciate it. I was able to get a copy of his DD-214 for Stacy which showed the above unit of assignment in Vietnam. Thanks, James F. (Jim) Thrasher Sergeant Major U.S. Army (Retired) Columbia County Florida Veterans Service Officer Home Address: 7021 S.W. County Road 242 Lake City, FL 32024 -- james-thrasher@comcast.net

If anyone could help me, I am looking for a Brent McClean that served in Viet Nam in 1968 with 2/35 4th Inf, Heavy Weapons Mortar Unit. Very much appreciated, Lynn Sommer -- Coeur d Alene, ID -- hlsommer@frontier.com

Good morning. I just got an email from Frank "Pete" Peterson, A C 1-35, 1968-69. He said he went down to his basement last night, which is way too cluttered, and happened to walk by a cardboard box and he stopped and opened it. In it, were some writing things from VN along with his orders for his CIB!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! You may recall that Pete has been fighting with the VA for a very long time to be recognized for his CIB as well as his Purple Heart which didn't appear on his DD 214. He's been rejected three times by them even after substantial personal statements from those that served with him. He is one happy camper, as he should be. The orders also had me and James Georgie on them. Now on to the Purple Heart. We are stopping to see him and his wife in Wichita later this month on our way out West. A big Congrats to Pete.  Mike Critchfield, A 1-35, 1968-69

Let me just say the reunion was great, it was well attended and I was able to renew old friendships. Also at the reunion, I saw a guy walking around and he looked my “C Company” T-shirt and asked about the shirt and what year I was there? I said ’67-68. Then he said that I had to have been there 27 February 1968. I told him I was wounded on that day. To my surprise, he also was wounded that day, so I asked him what platoon he was from. Then he went on to tell me he was the lieutenant from Recon and his name was Ray Henry, what a great guy.

I believe we made a great choice in picking our president, Bill Henson. He is a real good guy, a caring person and one that I'm glad to call a friend. Lots of luck to Bill in the New Year. Also, Rick Straw is the greatest guy to win the Tom Kehoe award. He is the best of the best. Since I have met him, I think he is the most caring guy and someone I would call a good friend.

At the reunion, I had the pleasure to meet the active duty Cacti. I got to spend time with LT Stoppelbein, SGT Garrett Austin, SGT Jonathon Barnard and SGT David Kupcho. Let me say these guys are the best to represent the Cacti. My hat is off to them, they are the

(Continued on page 19)
35th Infantry Regiment Association Financial Summary

Mike Mannix—Treasurer, HHC, 2-35 1968-70

We are in good shape, financially, as I write this note. One of our continuous problems is the timely submission of dues payments. Dues, if you are a yearly paying member, are due January of each year. We certainly allow for some leeway, however we have sent out “dues reminders” for the last two years to remind people about their obligation. Like a lot of organizations we have procrastination or just forgetfulness when it comes time to send in your dues payment. It may not seem like a “BIG DEAL,” but it is part of our planning process. Each year the Board Of Director’s agree and vote upon a budget, which includes forecasting revenue and expenses for the coming year. Those projections are based upon anticipated revenue against expense. Your dues may not seem like a big deal but when you see the big picture, the accumulation of our membership’s dues provides a portion of our revenue which pays our bills. PLEASE, if you haven’t as of yet, send in your dues which will allow us to garner further expenses by not having to mail reminders.

If I may be allowed a personal note, I am writing this on 3/6/14, it is the 45th anniversary of the death of a very good friend and fellow medic, Dan Noeldner. Dan became a KIA on this date, within weeks of his DEROS, and being awarded the DSC the day he died. He is sorely missed by his family and friends.

SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE

By Peter Birrow, B 2-35, 1968-69, Past President

Here in Florida, my 94-year-old neighbor Hanna is a very interesting person. She is forever sharing memorabilia with us from her life as a mother, wife, and now a long-time widow.

From this wonderful woman, we have learned that one of her sons was an actor on Broadway. Through this familial connection, Hanna was able to meet and become a friend of Estelle Getty, one of the “Golden Girls.” They were close friends for many years until Estelle passed away in 2008 at the age of 84.

Hanna recently told us that acting was in the family genes. Her lawyer husband, Edward, even joined an actors group in St Petersburg Florida. One of his first shop/study assignments was to write a one act play. Husband Eddie, who passed away before we met Hanna, was also a WWII Army Air Corp veteran.

He was stationed in the European Theater in England. What he had conjured up for this play is possibly from life experience and could be put into any era and still ring true. Here is the original script that Hanna shared with us.

Flamer (a play)

Scene: Dr.’s office -- waiting room, usual furniture (chairs, tables, lamps, magazines)

Characters: two men, one about 60, the other about the same, perhaps a little older.

The men are seated a few chairs apart, apparently waiting their turn to be called in to the doctor.

First man (Sam): Have you ever been to this doctor before?

Second man (Joe): No. This is my first visit also. They tell me that he's quite good.

Joe: That's encouraging. May I ask what your problem is?

Sam: No one seems to know exactly. I keep getting these recurring nightmares. My family doctor recommended that I see this specialist. I hope he can help. These dreams are getting me down.

Joe: That's strange! I have a very similar problem. I don't get these dreams often, but when I do, I wake up screaming in a cold sweat. It's driving my wife crazy!

Sam: That sounds like my symptoms to, but I am a widower. My wife passed away three years ago, but it did annoy her a lot.

Joe: Sorry to hear that. By the way, what do you see in your dreams? Is it always the same?

Sam: I really don't like to talk about it. You may think it's silly.

Joe: No I won't. If it's troubling you, maybe talking about it might help.

Sam: Well, it's always the same. I'm in a fire. There's smoke and flames all around me. There is deafening noise all around me and I'm falling. Not just me but the entire scene. There's a lot of frightened shouting and frantic movement to escape. I know I'm screaming but no sounds come out of my throat. It's just awful.

Joe: (His face suddenly goes pale) I can't believe it. It's almost like my dream! The fire, the smoke, the terrible noise, the sensation of falling, the terror of the moment!

Sam: Do you really mean it? Is it that similar?

Joe: Yes, yes. It's the same. Never changing, almost every night.

Sam: Does it mean anything to you? Something in your past, perhaps?

Joe: There is something, but over the Veterans hospital, they say it was something I should have forgotten long ago.

Sam: Oh, so you are a veteran. What branch of service were you in?

Joe: I was in the Army air Corps in World War II.

Sam: So was I. Did you fly or were you ground personnel?

Joe: Oh, I flew. I was a tail gunner, B24.

(Continued on page 17)
The Day it Snowed in Vietnam
(Christmas in Vietnam, 1969)
By Jim Schueckler, 192nd Assault Helicopter Company

The usual carols played in the mess hall at supper and the calendar said "December 24, 1969," but it didn't feel much like Christmas Eve. We were tired from a long day of flying many missions picking up infantrymen and recon patrols from field locations. We brought them back to the big airfield at Phan Thiet for the Christmas cease-fire. Gunship helicopters had escorted us because they were frequently needed on other days, but today not a shot had been fired in either direction. It seemed that soldiers on both sides of this war were glad to allow the cease-fire to start one day early.

It had been a hot day, and even in the evening, after the withering sun had dipped below the horizon, we sat sweltering in T-shirts in the pilots' hooch. The air was somber. The usual discussions of recent close calls and superior airmanship were subdued by the subject on everyone's mind, but nobody would talk about: the recent loss of two pilots and four crewmen. We joked about the cease-fire and wondered how long it would last. One man predicted that the base would be hit with mortars just before midnight. It seemed that there was nothing to celebrate. One pilot tried to change the mood. "We have to do something happy! Let's sing Christmas Carols!" he said, almost in anguish.

But no one started singing.

Mike Porter, my copilot, finally blurted out, "Let's take up a collection for the Project Concern hospital!" I thought back to the first time I saw that hospital at Da Pao; I was copilot for Ted Thoman. A medic showed us a baby in desperate need of medical care, suffering from convulsions and dehydration. Flying that Huey helicopter at top speed, Ted soon had the baby girl and her parents at the hospital. That "mission" made me feel good; it was the only one, so far, that was not part of making war. The memory was vivid because only hours before we had flown many missions picking up enemies on both sides of this war were glad to allow the cease-fire to start one day early.

Mike's excitement was contagious — I jumped up, said "Great idea, let's go ask!" and almost ran out the door. We stopped at the crew chief's hooch and asked Bascom if he would like to fly tomorrow. He and Dave quickly agreed, also wishing to escape the prevailing sadness.

Major Higginbotham, the company commander, was in the operations bunker. I explained our plan but he answered: "We don't have the Da Lat MACV mission. In fact, there are no missions; there's a cease-fire tomorrow . . . remember?"

It had been Mike's idea, but the prospect of not being able to make this mission was too much, so I pleaded the cause: "Please, Sir, could you call battalion and see if some other company has Da Lat MACV?" MACV, the Military Assistance Command Vietnam was the US Army unit of advisors to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam. One or two US advisors were assigned to small military compounds in almost every large village. A MACV mission usually meant flying the province Senior Advisor around to visit the villages. MACV missions were a respite from the tension and danger of combat assaults or recon team missions, but had their own risks of weather, wind, and being without gunship escort. Flying near the beautiful city of Da Lat, up in the cool mountains, was an additional treat.

The CO picked up the phone and then started writing on a mission sheet form. He handed it to me and said, "Da Lat MACV helipad, oh seven thirty; We took the mission from the 92nd." He opened his wallet, and handed me some money. "Here. Good luck!"

When we reached the gunship platoon hooch three pilots looked on sadly as one man raked the money. "Here. Good luck!"

We tied down the pile of bootsy in the Huey. After returning the truck, the four pilots walked together back to our hooch. One looked at his watch and said, "Hey guys! It's midnight. Merry Christmas!"

When we reached the mess hall, the cooks were still there, preparing for Christmas Day. The mess sergeant replied: "Do you have a truck with you? We have a surplus of food because so many guys went home early."

One pilot went to get the maintenance truck while the rest of us checked dates on cans and cartons of food. Then we drove to the infantry mess hall where we accepted four cases of freeze-dried foods. The medic at the dispensary gave us bandages and dressings.

Throughout the day, the same scene was repeated. For most soldiers, they were still in the service of helping the Republic of Vietnam. One or two US advisors were assigned to small military compounds in almost every large village. A MACV mission usually meant flying the province Senior Advisor around to visit the villages. MACV missions were a respite from the tension and danger of combat assaults or recon team missions, but had their own risks of weather, wind, and being without gunship escort. Flying near the beautiful city of Da Lat, up in the cool mountains, was an additional treat. A MACV mission usually meant flying the province Senior Advisor around to visit the villages. MACV missions were a respite from the tension and danger of combat assaults or recon team missions, but had their own risks of weather, wind, and being without gunship escort. Flying near the beautiful city of Da Lat, up in the cool mountains, was an additional treat.

My alarm clock startled me out of a deep sleep. A check with my wristwatch verified the time, but something was wrong. There was no shouting, no rumble of trucks, no roar of propellers and rotors. Mornings were usually bustling with the sounds of men and machines preparing for the daily business of war, but today there were no such sounds. I thought to myself, "Is this what peace sounds like?"

In the shower building, Mike and I talked about what our families would be doing today on the other side of the world. As all short timers do, I reminded Mike that in just two weeks I would be going home, my year

(Continued from page 15)
in Vietnam over. My wife promised me another Christmas celebration, with decorated tree and wrapped presents. I would be also be meeting another Mike for the first time, my son, now only a few months old.

After breakfast, the others went to the flight line while I called for a weather briefing. When I reached the helicopter, Mike was doing the preflight inspection and had just climbed up to the top of the Huey. Together, we checked the main rotor hub and the "Jesus nut" that holds the rotor on the helicopter. Everything was fine; we were ready to fly. We took off and headed for the mountains.

It always felt good to fly with this crew; we were a finely tuned team. The rugged and muscular Lee looked every bit like a cowboy from his hometown in Bascom County, Wyoming; hence his nickname "Bad Bascom." He was the crew chief of this Huey and did all the daily maintenance on it; it was his "baby." With Mike as copilot and Dave as door gunner, we had taken that helicopter into and out of many difficult situations, from landing supplies on a windy mountain top to extracting recon teams from small clearings while taking enemy fire. The radio call sign of the 192nd Assault Helicopter Company was Polecat; we were Polecat Three Five Six and proud of it. This day was beginning to feel even better because we were going to use our combat skills for a mission that seemed so unrelated to war.

I decided to climb higher than usual in the smooth morning air. As we left the jungle plains along the coast, the green mountains of the Central Highlands rose up to meet us. On the plateau, a thick blanket of fog lay like cotton under a Christmas tree. It spilled over between the peaks in slow, misty, waterfalls. In the rising sunlight the mountain tops cast long shadows on the fog. The beauty and serenity of the scene was dazzling. Had I noticed this before? I think I had, but today the gorgeous scenery wasn't a backdrop for the unexpected horror of war.

The mess hall had been quiet. The airfield was quiet. The radios were quiet. We weren't even chattering on the intercom as we usually did. Our minds were all with different families, somewhere back home, thousands of miles away. Everything was quiet and peaceful. It felt very, very, strange. Was this the first day of a lasting peace, or just the eye in a hurricane of war?

As our main rotor slowed down after we landed at Da Lat, a gray-haired Lieutenant Colonel walked up to the Huey. "Merry Christmas! I'm Colonel Beck. We have a busy day planned, my men are spread out all over this province, and we're going to take mail, hot turkey, and pumpkin pies to every one of them!" He handed me a map that had our cross-stitched route already carefully drawn on it. His distinguished look turned to a big grin as he added, "Oh — would you guys like to have some Donut Dollies with us today?" Four heads with flight helmets were eagerly nodding "YES!" as the two young ladies got out of a jeep.

Donut Dollies were American Red Cross volunteers, college graduates in their early twenties. Although no longer distributing donuts like their namesakes of World War I, they were still in the service of helping the morale of the troops. At large bases they managed recreation centers but they also traveled to the smaller units in the field for short visits. For millions of GIs they represented the girlfriend, sister, or wife back home. Over the Huey's intercom, Colonel Beck introduced Sue, with the short, dark, hair and Ann, a brunette, the taller one.

Soon we were heading towards the mountains with a Huey full of mail, food, Christmas cargo, and two American young women. For the soldiers who had been living off Vietnamese food and canned Army rations at lonely, isolated outposts, these touches of home would be a welcome surprise.

As we approached the first compound Colonel Beck, by radio, told the men on the ground that we were going to make it snow. Sue and Ann sprinkled laundry soap flakes out of the Huey as we flew directly over a small group of American and Vietnamese soldiers who must have thought we were crazy. Several of them were rubbing their eyes as we came back to land. I will never know if it was emotion or if they just had soap in their eyes.

The three Americans came over to the Huey as we shut it down. Ann gave each of them a package from the Red Cross and Sue called out names to distribute the mail. After about 15 minutes of small talk, Colonel Beck announced, "We have a lot more stops to make" and got back into the Huey. The soldiers stood there silently, staring at us as we started up, hovered, and then disappeared into the sky.

At the next outpost, Colonel Beck left us so he could talk privately with the local officials. The crew and I didn't mind escorting the Donut Dollies. It was easy to see how happy the soldiers were to talk with them. I wondered how Sue and Ann were feeling. Their job was to cheer up other people on what may have been their own first Christmas away from home; if they were lonely or sad, they never let it show. Throughout the day, the same scene was replayed at other small compounds. Some soldiers talked excitedly to the girls, while others would just stand quietly and stare, almost in shock to see American women visiting them out in the boonies.

Finally, with the official MACV work finished, we were above the hospital at Dam Pao. Mike landed us a few hundred feet from the main building. Several men and women came out, carrying folding stretchers. They first showed surprise that we were not bringing an injured new patient, and then joy when we showed them the food and medical supplies. Mike opened the ammo can full of money and said, "Merry Christmas from the Polecats and Tigersharks of the 192nd Assault Helicopter Company." One of the women began to cry and then hugged Mike. A doctor asked if we would like to see the hospital. He talked as we carried the goods from the Huey to the one-floor, tin-roof hospital building. "Project Concern now has volunteer doctors and nurses from England, Australia, and the USA. We provide health services to civilians and train medical assistants to do the same in their own villages. We try to demonstrate God's love, so we remain neutral. Both sides respect our work, and leave us alone."

One of the women described a recent event. Two nurses and a medical assistant student were returning from a remote clinic in the jungle when their jeep became mired in mud. Many miles from even the smallest village, they knew that they would not be able to walk to civilization before dark. A Viet Cong foot patrol came upon them, pulled the jeep out of the mud, and sent them on their way.

There were homemade Christmas (Continued on page 17)
Cacti Taps

Korea
William F. Burns, HHC 35th, 1949-51
SGM Shelby T. Clark, (Ret) HHC, 35th, 1951-53

Vietnam
MG Herbert J. McCrystal (Ret), Operational Commander, 2-35th, 1968 (See page 5 for story)
Ronald Crocker, Shotgun/B 1-35, 1963-66
Leslie Fox Jr., 2-35, 1967
Ross Spradley, C 2-35, 1968
Gary Stroschein, A/HHC, 2-35, 1968-69 (12-10-68)
Joyce Queen, Family A 1-35, 1965-66
Opal Stockwell, Family C 2-35, 1965-66

Memorial Donations

In memory of Ross Spradley, passed away 12/30/2013, C 2-35, 1968 by
In memory of Tim “Doc” Sines, KIA 9/30/68, C 2-35 by William H. Patterson, C 2-35, 1967-68
In memory of John Slyter, E Recon, 2-35, 1969-70 passed away
5/4/2012 by Linda Slyter, family
In memory of LTG Sid Berry, A 35th, Korea, 1950-51 by W.B Woodruff, Jr. L 3-35, 1950-51

The Purpose of this Association shall be to organize the veterans of the 35th Infantry Regiment of the United States Army, is order to foster, encourage and perpetuate the memory of the officers and men who distinguished themselves by their services and sacrifices while with the 35th Infantry (Cacti) Regiment; to promote and cultivate social intercourse and fellowship among their descendents; to perpetuate the memory of the achievements of the 35th Infantry (Cacti) Regiment and its members; to comfort and support the current active members and their families of the 35th Infantry Regiment; to promote the National Defense; American patriotism and American citizenship; to encourage historical research in relation to Wars; to acquire and preserve the records of the services of the members of the 35th Infantry (Cacti) Regiment as well as documents and relics; to mark the scenes of the activities of the 35th Infantry (Cacti) Regiment with appropriate memorials; to celebrate the anniversaries for the events of our Country’s Wars and conflicts; to foster true patriotism; to maintain and extend the institution of American freedom; and at all times to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America.

CPT Mike Casp,
A Battery, 2/9th Artillery, killed in a helicopter crash, 11-14-67. CPT Casp was temporarily filling in for the regular Liaison Officer, HHC 1-35. Photo from Dennis Dauphin, FO, C Battery, 2/9th, 1966-67.

Last October Frank Marks, Fox Co., 35th Infantry Regiment, WW II, noted on the Cacti Web site: “When I first came in contact with the men I served with in the Army, yes, they were my buddies, but at the time they were just a bunch of yahoos. It wasn’t until we met for our first reunion that I realized just how much I loved those guys and how much they really meant to me. At our first and last reunions with the men I served with it was just like the old song, “The tears flowed like wine.” So I say to you, if you have never attended a reunion, do your damnedest to get to one. It will be the best day of your life.”

Frank was a key figure and historian for the former F Co. Assn. 35th Inf. Regiment. His membership in today’s Association and WW II service places him among the most senior Cacti veterans to attend, when able, annual reunions. Generations may be most at ease with their own, but Frank embraces all. At the 2012 Denver reunion he said he felt like he was with “a lot of younger brothers.” Frank’s words speak to what is special about coming to the reunions. The affection and sense of important place in each other’s life are dominant. You can see more in yourself, surprisingly, because the intensity of a shared experience is ever-present and truly celebrated. Seeing new faces this September will be a pleasure, as will be the announcement of the 2014 Tom Kehoe Service Award recipient. The evening of Sept. 27 will be devoted to the Memorial Banquet, which honors those Cacti who gave all in service to this country.
Sam: Hey, I was a navigator in a B-24. Where were you stationed?
Joe: I was with the Eighth Air Force in England.
Sam: So was I! What years were you there?
Joe: 1943 to 1944.
Sam: That's when I was there. What outfit?
Joe: 384th Bomber Command stationed at Gatwick.
Sam: This is too much! That was my outfit!
Joe: You're kidding! This is unreal!
Sam: Maybe we knew some of the same guys. Did you know "Hardhat" Reilly?
Joe: Sure. He was our C.O. and then there was Al Dunn. He was our weatherman.
Sam: Yes, yes. I remember him. By the way, who was your pilot?
Joe: The nicest guy I ever met -- John Atherton. He didn't make it.
Sam: (Starring in disbelief) You flew in the "Lady Luck" with John Atherton? Were you with him when he was shot down over Dresden?
Joe: (Nodding sadly, realizing that something strange is happening) I was there. John's chute never opened. I spent the rest of the war in a prison camp. Stalag 47.
Sam: You are not going to believe this! I was on that B-24 with you and John. I had just been assigned to the Lady Luck that morning. I hadn't had much of a chance to meet the rest of the crew.
Joe: Well, I'll be -- so you were the new navigator I didn't have a chance to meet before we took off on that last raid!
Sam: Yep! I was able to finally bail out. They took me to Stalag 36 and I never met anyone there who had been on that plane. I had no way of knowing whether anyone else made it.
Joe: No wonder we share the same nightmare. We lived through it together.
Sam: We sure did and you know something? Maybe it was meant that we meet and talk out our fears. Knowing that someone else survived the horror maybe all the medicine we needed. Somehow I feel like a burden is off my mind. How about you?
Joe: Me too! Let's keep in touch. Talking it out and just being alive feels wonderful.

The two men rise, give each other a warm hug and leave the doctor's waiting room arm in arm and one can almost hear the strains of, "Off we go, into the wild blue yonder."

Curtain
Submitted by Ed Krassner, 6/8/93
(Originally written in the 1980s)
ing of that old lady, that same postmistress felt the need to relate this story to the old lady's granddaughter. By this time the granddaughter also worked for the post office. The postmistress related the story as it occurred and tears flowed again as she told of returning the package. She had over the years told the story to a select few but this time she added something that she had never told another soul. As a postmistress it was unthinkable but she wished she said, with anguish in her voice, that she had “just thrown that damned cake away!”

In today’s world of ready information you can easily find information on Vietnam War casualties. These come from many sources and in many forms. You can find numbers for how many were killed in action, or how many died of wounds. There are numbers for those who died of accidents or illnesses. You can find how many were wounded in action and good estimates for other non-fatal maladies.

I wonder though if there will ever be a study to show how many grandmothers were casualties? Or how many friends and community members? And would a postmistress who lived the balance of her life with the terrible memory of a returned cake ever qualify as a casualty of war?

It’s a world full of questions and full of hidden stories. I guess that’s what makes it so interesting in the end. I never knew the postmistress. I never knew the old lady. I never met most of the community members, but I was told this story many years ago by the granddaughter and it has always stuck with me. After all these years it just seems like a story worth telling again.

(Editor’s note: Joyce Wagner, sister of Cacti KIA PFC Richard Matheis, B 2-35, May 8, 1970, is the granddaughter of the old lady in this story. Richard, for whom the cake was intended, was mistaken for the enemy and shot by another soldier while returning to patrol base.)

(Continued from page 7)

Virginia Beach Reunion Photos by Joe Henderson, 2/9th, HHC/A 2-35, 1968-69

(Continued from page 12)
Today’s Cacti Training in Hawaii

(Continued from page 7)

...ing of that old lady, that same postmistress felt the need to relate this story to the old lady’s granddaughter. By this time the granddaughter also worked for the post office. The postmistress related the story as it occurred and tears flowed again as she told of returning the package. She had over the years told the story to a select few but this time she added something that she had never told another soul. As a postmistress it was unthinkable but she wished she said, with anguish in her voice, that she had “just thrown that damned cake away!”

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(Continued from page 12)

best. The only regret I have is I didn’t get time with SPC Justin Kane. I would have liked to spend time with him. But knowing his mother and father were there, hands down he would spend time with them. Also I got to speak with SGM Bly and now the new CSM Ronald Bly. He is a great guy and you can tell a great leader. Also,

COL Rich White (ret.) I had the pleasure to talk to his son, MAJ Graham White. Major White, his dad, was my platoon leader in Vietnam Charlie Company Second Battalion and if he is like his Dad, he will be great which I believe he is already. I would like to welcome Major White into the Cacti Family. Take Arms! Tom O’Connor, C 2-35, 1967 to 68.

(Continued from page 12)

(Continued from page 7)

(Editor’s note: Joyce Wagner, sister of Cacti KIA PFC Richard Matheis, B 2-35, May 8, 1970, is the granddaughter of the old lady in this story. Richard, for whom the cake was intended, was mistaken for the enemy and shot by another soldier while returning to patrol base.)
We heard a rumor that the New Zealanders were going to come and take our place on the island. Then we had a New Zealand NCO come into our platoon with about a dozen Fijian “Night Fighters.” I didn’t pay too much attention as to what was going on at the time, but there were probably other New Zealanders and Fijians in our other platoons as well. Orders came that we were to leave the island and return to Guadalcanal. On our way to the beach we found that a Naval C.B. unit had dug out and installed a landing field on the east side of the island for a Marine Air unit. (Could that have been the “Vella Lava Cava,” where Col Boyington had his so called “Misfits?”) When we finally got to the shore and were lining up to be picked up by landing barges, we were ordered to get back into the brush. Motion picture cameras had been set up along the beach, the barges were coming in and when they hit the shore dropping their ramps on the front of the barges, Marines with bayonets on their rifles and faces blackened, came stormsing ashore yelling like banshees. When all this was over, they finally let us board the landing barges which took us out to the ships lying off shore then back to the Canal. (About 2-3 months later, when we were on R & R in New Zealand, a newsreel in a theater showed a caption, “Marines Take Yet another Pacific Island—Vella La Vella.) When we left Vella, the Island had been pronounced “Secure.” That so called capture of Vella by the Marines, was just Marines landing to protect the new air strip that the C.B.s had constructed.

We returned to Guadalcanal to await the 161st and the 27th rejoining us. We were anxiously waiting to head to New Zealand for some much needed rest and recreation. While we were waiting, Colonel Stanley “Swede” Larsen returned to Hawaii for a little schooling on becoming our Assistant Regimental Commander. Our Division C.O. General “Lightning Joe” Collins had received orders to go to the European Theater to become one of General Eisenhower’s staff. (Because of the swiftness of our Division in taking Guadalcanal, Gen. Collins earned the nick-name “Lightning Joe” and the 25th Infantry Division became known as the “Tropic Lightning Division” and a bolt of lightning was added to our Taro Leaf Insignia.) General Collins had every regiment in the Division assemble, Battalion by Battalion, in a empty supply dump on the Canal so he could tell us of his promotion and to say how proud he was of all the men who had served with him in the Division and to say goodbye.

It was just a short time later that the Division loaded on ships and sailed to New Zealand. We landed at Auckland, New Zealand and were met by thousands of New Zealanders who gave us a “Hero’s” welcome. We disembarked and loaded onto troop trucks, each regiment going to a different part of the island. Each of our Artillery units went to separate camps, too. Our regiment went to a area just outside of a quaint little town called, Papatotioi. Here we stayed for just over two and a half months. We hadn’t been paid since the Division left Hawaii, so when we did receive our money we were pretty well heeled. The only rub was that we were paid in English Pounds instead of dollars and many of the fellows really got taken, as they didn’t know the value in the rate of exchange.

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The people were really wonderful, opening their homes and taking some of our boys in. We would receive a one-day pass which allowed us to just to Papatotioi. It had one theater which showed the same show for a week. A couple of stores and a pub which couldn’t handle too many of our boys at a time, so not too many tried to frequent it. We did get some three-day passes and then we could catch the train just outside of camp to go to either New Market or Auckland. The two towns were so close, you couldn’t tell where one left off and the other began. There were six of us who hung out together pretty regularly. The first time we got a three-day pass we all went on the train and got off at New Market. We asked the first person we saw where the local “bar” was. He directed us down the street to a building and when we went in, it was a dairy store. This is what they called a “milk bar.” When it was determined that we wanted some beer, they told us we wanted to go to a “pub.” It was about two in the afternoon and the pubs there didn’t open ‘til four. So we walked around and found a roller skating rink that was open. We went in and skated until the pub opened. We ordered either a pint of ale or a pint of stout and were really disappointed as all their beer was room temperature. We found they did have a really good wine called “Manhattan Cocktail.” We walked on to Auckland and went to a photographer’s studio and had some group and individual pictures taken to send home.

Once again we were getting our rations from the New Zealanders. I was by my kitchen the first day one of their trucks came to that area. The driver asked our Mess Sgt. Marcus Roberts where he should put the six butchered lambs. Roberts had him walk through the kitchen to where we dumped our garbage. He said that was where the lambs belong and if that was all they were going to deliver to never make that delivery again. They finally got the idea, we Americans were beef eaters and that is what they delivered after that. They didn’t have to deliver too much as most of us went to town and had our fill of steak, chips and tomatoes, Oh yes, and plenty fresh milk and eggs.

One time I went to New Market by myself. When I got there, I decided to ride the tram to see where it went. I got on the tram in the manufacturing section of town. This was late in the afternoon. The only person on the tram at that time was a nice looking girl of twenty. I asked if I could sit next to her and then struck up a conversation. She had just gotten off work at a woolen mill where she ran a loom. I never did ask what she was making on the loom. In talking with her, I learned that her father was in the New Zealand Army and was serving in North Africa, and she lived alone with her mother. I asked if I could walk her home, when she got there, boy was I in for a surprise. The conductor announced we had reached the street where she was to get off. When I stood to let her get up from her seat, she reached along the side of the seat and pulled out a white cane. I never knew ‘till then that she was blind. I walked with her to her house and she asked me in to meet her mother. After talking with them for a short time I excused myself saying I had to get back to camp. They invited me to come back for a Sunday dinner. I went

(Continued on page 21)
Humor in Uniform

The tactful Sergeant...

The Captain called the Sergeant in. "Sarge, I just got a telegram that Private Jones' mother died yesterday. Better go tell him and send him to see me."

So the Sergeant calls for his morning formation and lines up all the troops. "Listen up, men," says the Sergeant. "Johnson, report to the mess hall for KP. Smith, report to Personnel to sign some papers. The rest of you men report to the Motor Pool for maintenance. Oh by the way, Jones, your mother died, report to the commander."

Later that day the Captain called the Sergeant into his office. "Hey, Sarge, that was a pretty cold way to inform Jones his mother died. Couldn't you be a bit more tactful, next time?"

"Yes, sir," answered the Sarge.

A few months later, the Captain called the Sergeant in again with, "Sarge, I just got a telegram that Private McGrath's mother died. You'd better go tell him and send him in to see me. This time be more tactful."

So the Sergeant calls for his morning formation. "Ok, men, fall in and listen up. Everybody with a mother, take two steps forward. NOT SO FAST, McGrath!"

The below poem is from the “War Stories” page of the Cacti web site—Cacti35th.org. See also page 25.

Send your stories in to Wiley “Tiny” Dodd, E 2-35, 1969-70 at Wdodd3@Comcast.net or send them to the Cacti Times, contact information is on page 2.

Purple Heart and Distinguished Service Cross

by Ray Dillard (nephew of Francis Mitchell)

Dedicated to the memory of Pvt. Francis L. "Bubbie" Mitchell, KIA August 19, 1950

Bubbie was a brother and a son who gave his life. He joined to feed the family, times were hard, there was much strife

After two years in Japan, they sent Bubbie to Korea...

The 35th Infantry Regiment of the 25th Division was among the first to enter.

To fight the Reds was their mission.

Bubbie was due to be discharged on the sixth day of September. But, August 19th is the date His buddies will remember.

The fog was thick that day and the Reds crawled through the line. When the boys found out about it, it was battle time.

The Reds set up a .50 cal. They'd captured in the fight. Our boys were taking casualties, and, with fire like that they might.

Bubbie ran from his position like a rabbit from a dog. There was nothing for protection, not a rock, and not a log.

At the truck he found a Browning Automatic B-A-R. He ran back dodging bullets, loaded up, and returned fire.

He knocked out that .50 cal. and laid down heavy cover. The boys could manage better then and took care of the others.

When the fight was over, Bubbie paid the highest price. He'd never go back home again. The Private gave his life.

What he did that day sent good boys home. Now they're great-grandpas.

His Mother was presented a Purple Heart and Distinguished Service Cross.

(Continued from page 20)

there a couple more times. The New Zealanders couldn't buy chocolate candy without ration coupons (other items of food and clothing were more important so chocolate was a real luxury item) and we soldiers could buy all we wanted without having coupons. When I brought them a couple chocolate bars and a couple of boxes of chocolates, you would have thought I had given them a million dollars. Their last name was Duncan, and after all this time, I can't remember either ones first name.

Besides roller skating, going to the pubs and eating at restaurants, we did go to a couple of horse races. We got a kick out of that, telling the people there that they were running their horses the wrong way. Theirs ran around the track clockwise, while here in the States, the horses ran counter-clockwise. We spent Christmas and New Year's in New Zealand, and some time in January we received another group of replacements. I think we had about 30 come into Fox Company. In January we also had a company picture taken with just the men who had been on the Canal and Vella La Vella. The last week of January, 14 men from each company in the division shipped out to New Caledonia to set up a camp for each Regiment to go to. We shipped out of New Zealand the first week of February to the port of Noumea, New Caledonia.
New ID Cards for Vets Enrolled in VA Health Care

By Hans Petersen, VA Staff Writer Monday, February 24, 2014

The VA is introducing a new, secure identification card called the Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC). VHIC replaces the Veteran Identification Card (VIC), which was introduced in 2004. VA is committed to providing the high quality, safe and effective health care Veterans have earned and deserve, and part of this effort includes ensuring the personal security of Veterans. As part of a phased rollout, on February 21, 2014, VA began issuing the newly designed, more secure VHIC to newly enrolled and other Veterans who were not issued a VIC. Starting in April VA will begin a replacement effort to automatically mail the more secure VHIC to Veterans who have the old VIC. All Veterans who are enrolled and have the old card should have their new replacement card by July. VA expects to complete mailings of the replacement VHICs by July. To ensure receipt of the new VHIC, enrolled Veterans should make sure that VA has their correct mailing address.

http://www.va.gov/health/NewsFeatures/2014/February/New-ID-Cards-for-Vets-Enrolled-in-VA-Health-Care.asp#sthash.IVlN8zGx.dpuf

Agent Orange Exposure Linked to Stroke

Stroke has been added to the growing list of possible health effects Vietnam veterans may face long term after exposure to Agent Orange. In response to new evidence showing a statistically significant overall increase in stroke associated with exposure to chemical in Agent Orange, a committee examining these health effects has moved stroke to the "limited and suggestive" evidence category. However, the published data do not permit distinguishing hemorrhagic from ischemic stroke, said the authors of the updated report, Veterans and Agent Orange: Update 2012 : Committee to Review the Health Effects in Vietnam Veterans of Exposure to Herbicides (Ninth Biennial Update).

The evidence already suggested an association between exposure to the chemicals and hypertension, ischemic heart disease, and type 2 diabetes, as well as Parkinson's disease and some cancers.

Elsewhere in the 900-page report, the committee concluded that on the basis of newly reviewed evidence and in previous reports, there is also "limited or suggestive" evidence of an association between exposure to the chemicals of interest and Parkinson's disease.

The committee concluded that on the basis of new evidence and previous reports, evidence is inadequate or insufficient to determine whether there is an association between exposure to chemicals of interest and Alzheimer's disease.


WASHINGTON – Continuing the transformation of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) into a 21st century organization, the President has proposed a $163.9 billion budget, a 6.5 percent increase over Fiscal Year 2014, that will support VA’s goals to expand access to health care and other benefits, eliminate the disability claims backlog, and end homelessness among Veterans. The budget includes $68.4 billion in discretionary spending, largely for healthcare, and $95.6 billion for mandatory programs – mostly disability compensation and pensions for Veterans.

“This budget will allow us to continue the progress we have made in helping Veterans secure their place in the middle class,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “It is a tangible demonstration of the President’s commitment to ensuring Veterans and their families have the care and benefits they’ve earned and deserve.”

The $68.4 billion total in discretionary spending includes approximately $3.1 billion in medical care collections from health insurers and Veteran copayments.

“We remain committed to providing Veterans the opportunity to pursue their education, find meaningful employment and access high-quality health care,” Shinseki added. “From the men and women of ‘the greatest generation’ to the Veterans who have returned from our most recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, no one deserves it more.”

VA operates one of the largest integrated health care systems in the country with nearly 9 million enrollees; the ninth largest life insurance program; monthly disability pay, pensions and survivors payments to more than 5.1 million beneficiaries of monthly pay, pensions and survivor benefits; education assistance or vocational rehabilitation benefits and services to 1.2 million students; mortgage guaranties to over 2 million homeowners; and the largest cemetery system in the nation.
Just a Common Soldier
(A Soldier Died Today)

by A. Lawrence Vaincourt

And tho' sometimes, to his neighbors, his tales became a joke,
All his Legion buddies listened, for they knew whereof he spoke.
But we'll hear his tales no longer for old Bill has passed away,
And the world's a little poorer, for a soldier died today.

He will not be mourned by many, just his children and his wife,
For he lived an ordinary and quite uneventful life.
Held a job and raised a family, quietly going his own way,
And the world won't note his passing, though a soldier died today

When politicians leave this earth, their bodies lie in state,
While thousands note their passing and proclaim that they were great.
Papers tell their whole life stories, from the time that they were young,
But the passing of a soldier goes unnoticed and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution to the welfare of our land
A guy who breaks his promises and cons his fellow man?
Or the ordinary fellow who, in times of war and strife,
Goes off to serve his Country and offers up his life?

A politician's stipend and the style in which he lives
Are sometimes disproportionate to the service that he gives.
While the ordinary soldier, who offered up his all,
Is paid off with a medal and perhaps, a pension small.

It's so easy to forget them for it was so long ago,
That the old Bills of our Country went to battle, but we know
It was not the politicians, with their compromise and ploys,
Who won for us the freedom that our Country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger, with your enemies at hand,
Would you want a politician with his ever-shifting stand?
Or would you prefer a soldier, who has sworn to defend
His home, his kin and Country and would fight until the end?

He was just a common soldier and his ranks are growing thin,
But his presence should remind us we may need his like again.
For when countries are in conflict, then we find the soldier's part
Is to clean up all the troubles that the politicians start.

If we cannot do him honor while he's here to hear the praise,
Then at least let's give him homage at the ending of his days.
Perhaps just a simple headline in a paper that would say,
Our Country is in mourning, for a soldier died today.

© 1987 A. Lawrence Vaincourt

(The official version)

(Reprinted by permission: www.vaincourt.homestead.com)

A recorded version of this poem was just released by Connie Francis, and will also serve as part of a big telethon this June 14 on Discovery, in aid of veterans with PTSD.
**CACTI TIMES SPRING 2014**

**Life Membership Fee Schedule**

(See page 26 for Membership Form)

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**CACTI PX ORDER FORM**

Send to:  
JOE HENDERSON  
26 NEPTUNE LANE  
LEVITTOWN, PA 19054

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**ITEM** | **COST** | **QTY** | **TOTAL**
--- | --- | --- | ---
BELT BUCKLE | $20 |   |   
ASN COFFEE MUG | $10 |   |   
35th REGT COINS | $10 |   |   
ASSN HAT | $15 |   |   
4th VIET VET HAT | $10 |   |   
25th VIET VET HAT | $10 |   |   
25th KOR VET HAT | $10 |   |   
CIB VIET HAT | $10 |   |   
VN RIBBON HAT | $10 |   |   
PURPLE HT. HAT | $10 |   |   
35th KEY RING | $10 |   |   
LICENSE COVER | $15 |   |   
10 in. ASSN PATCH | $25 |   |   
ASSN PATCH | $5 |   |   
REGT PATCH | $5 |   |   
4th ID PATCH **White** | $5 |   |   
4th ID PATCH **OD** | $5 |   |   
25th ID PATCH **Red** | $5 |   |   
25th ID PATCH **OD** | $5 |   |   
25th ID PATCH **Brown** | $5 |   |   
CI LAPEL PIN | $5 |   |   
CMB LAPEL PIN | $5 |   |   
CIB (FULL SIZE) | $5 |   |   
35th REGT CREST | $3 |   |   
CIB BUMPSTICK | $3 |   |   
35th BUMPSTICK | $3 |   |   

**Shipping & Handling** | See below

**TOTAL** |   |   |   

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**Great resource on the Vietnam War:**  

Now You Tell Us  
by Charles Cooper, B 1-35, 1967-68

We were walking through a village when we found a man in the hedgerow. We drug him out and gave him a strip search. They hid grenades in the strangest places. It looked like he had white lace all over his body. One of our medics came up to watch. He put his hands behind his back. We asked him, “What's wrong with this guy?” The medic said “Oh, he's a leper.”  
Whoa! It turned out, yes, he had leprosy. His family didn’t have the heart to kick him out, but they wouldn’t let him live with them. He lived in the hedge and they brought him food and water.

**Fresh Meat!**  
by Mel Oldham, HHC 2-35th RCT, WWII

Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 35th RCT was stationed at the south end of Vella LaVella on the opposite side of the island from the landing strip. The location was next to a small lagoon connected through an inlet to the ocean at one end and a fair sized fresh water stream flowing into the other end. By mid September 1943 most of the hostilities on the island were over and the location was probably as close to a tropical paradise as you could want. Although things were quiet, patrols were sent out up stream and along the coast as a precaution. During one patrol along the stream a large Holstein bull was discovered hiding in a thicket. Since no one had had any fresh meat for weeks they thought here's our chance, and with permission from the CO they shot it.  
Having little or no butchering experience or adequate tools they resorted to an axe from camp and hacked off some sizable chunks of beef for the cooks to cook as roast beef. The flavor was excellent if you chewed long enough, but the meat was so tough you could hardly stick a fork in the gravy. With no refrigeration the company had “fresh” meat for only a couple of meals.  
The next day the CO sent the squad back to bury the remains of the carcass.
“War Stories” continues from page 21.

Now You Tell Us

_by Charles Cooper, B 1-35, 1967-68_

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Life Membership Fee Schedule (See page 26 for Membership Form)

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<th>Age</th>
<th>Dues</th>
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<td>75+</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# 35th Infantry Regiment (Cacti) Association

**Membership Form**

*Having served with the 35th Infantry Regiment, I hereby apply for membership or renewal and enclose my dues.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEW</th>
<th>RENEWAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Unit:** Company: _____ Battalion:______  
**From:** dd/mm/yy __________________  
**To:** dd/mm/yy __________________

**Name:** __________________________  
**Nickname:** ___________________  
**Spouse:** ________________________

**Address:** ________________________________________________________________

**City:** ____________________________  
**State:** ________________  
**Zip:** ____________

**Phone:** (_____ ) ___________ - ______________  
**AGE:** _______  
**Birth Date:** dd/mm/yy ________________

**Email Address:** ____________________________________________________________

---

**MAY** we provide your contact information to other members of this Association?  
YES _____  NO ______

**MAY** we list your unit, name and dates of service on our website roster?  
YES _____  NO _____

**MAY** we list your email address on our website roster?  
YES _____  NO _____

**NOTE:** Your address and phone number will NOT be listed on the website roster.

**Send completed form and payment to:**

Don Johnson  
14516 Shenandoah Ave.  
Baton Rouge, LA 70817

**SEE BELOW FOR DUES INFORMATION:**

---

**Annual "Electronic Times" Membership**  
Dues ($15.00 per year)

**Annual "Mailed Times" Membership Dues**  
($25.00 per year)

**Life Membership "Electronic Times"**

**Life Membership "Mailed Times"**

**Donation for Cacti Times Publication Costs**

**Donation for Health & Welfare**

**Donation for Scholarship Fund**

**Memorial Donation**

**Indicate in Memory of Whom if applicable**  
(_______________________________________)

**TOTAL ENCLOSED**  
$________________________

---

**See page 25 for Lifetime Membership Fee Schedule**
Name _____________________________________________________________

Nickname __________________________________________________________

Guest Name(s) _________________________________________________________________________________________

Company: ______ Battalion: ______ From: dd/mm/yy __________________To: dd/mm/yy __________________

Unit (Company/Battalion) ______________________________________________________________________________

Dates Served ___________________________________________________________________________________________

Address _______________________________________________________________________________________________

City ___________________________________________________ State: ____________________ Zip: ____________

Phone: (_______) _________

Email ________________________________________________________________________________________________

Arrival Date ___________________________________________________________________________________________

Departure Date ________________________________________________________________________________________

MEMBERSHIP IN THE ASSN IS REQUIRED TO ATTEND THE REUNION. Forms are available in every “Cacti Times” newsmagazine and on http://www.cacti35th.org

$ ________ Reunion Registration ($10.00 for 1st and $5.00 per additional guest over 18.)

$ ________ Saturday Banquet $40.00 per person

There are two choices for dinner; please indicate a selection for each person attending:

1) Grilled Chicken Breast & Herbed Tilapia with Red Pepper Fennel Sauce. Quantity ______ 

2) Sliced Beef with Au Jus Quantity ______

All Dinner Entrée selections include: Green Salad w/dressing on the side, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Mixed Seasonal Vegetable, Freshly Baked Rolls, Coffee, Tea and Dessert Chocolate Decadent Cake with Raspberry Sauce

(Special Dietary Needs) __________________________________________________________________________

$ ________ Hospitality Room Donation $ ________ Scholarship Donation $ ________ Cacti Times Donation $ ________

$ ________ Annual Membership Dues for 2014

$ ________ Annual Membership Dues for 2015

$ ________ TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED (Make checks to “35th Infantry Reunion 2014”)

REUNION HEADQUARTERS HOTEL

The Chicago/Northbrook Hilton

2855 North Milwaukee Ave

Northbrook, IL 60062


Room rates are $95.00 for Single, Double, Triple or Quad. Be sure to use the Group Code 35INF. These rates do not include 11% room tax. A credit card is required to secure the reservation or mail a first night’s payment as deposit to the hotel. Reservations must be made by September 15, 2014. Rooms are limited so make your reservations early. Rates are good +/- 3 days of the Reunion. Parking is complimentary. Free Internet access and Free Shuttle within a 5 mile radius of the hotel.

QUESTIONS on registration— Don Johnson (225) 247-9321 or donjohnsonbr@bellsouth.net Information or questions on Chicago/Northbrook contact: Paul LaFalce: Phone 847-358-0129 Or email him @ plafalce@yahoo.com

Please fill out this form and mail with your payment, as soon as possible, addressed to:

Don Johnson

35TH INFANTRY ASSN.—REUNION 2014

14516 Shenandoah Ave

Baton Rouge, LA 70817

If you plan to attend but are unable to send your payments at this time, go ahead and mail the registration to Don Johnson. You can send in your payment later. Full payment is due September 1, 2014. (We need this info for planning purposes.) Cancellations will be accepted until September 15, 2014 with full refund, after that a refund will be based on circumstances and a review by Reunion Committee. Transportation to and from the Airport There are two airports serving Chicago, O’Hare (ORD) and Midway (MDW). Although you may find cheaper airfare flying into Midway, the round trip transportation is much higher than O’Hare. Darlene LaFalce recommends American Taxi. Flat rates to Northbrook are $29 from ORD and $56 from MDW. Here’s their link. http://www.americantaxi.com/ATOnlineOrderWeb/rates.jsp Or take the L (CTA subway train) from midway downtown to Quincy stop $2.25. About 55 minutes. Walk 3 blocks west on Adams to Union Station. Then take a Metra train $5.25 (Milwaukee District North Line) to Northbrook station. Fifty-five minutes. Hotel shuttle will pick up there. Links used: http://www.mrl.ucsb.edu/~yopopov/directions/mdw-us.html .http://metrarail.com/metra/en/home.html. Also another option is Go Airport Express it is a little more expensive than American Taxi, but another option. Portal link: http://airportexpress.hudsonltd.net/res/?USERIDENTRY=IRA-2014&LOGON=G0 Code: IRA-2014
Please note your address label on this Newsmagazine. If it is not correct, please contact Don “Doc” Johnson with corrections.

These Good Men  
by Michael Norman

I now know why men who have been to war yearn to reunite. 
Not to tell stories or look at old pictures. Not to laugh or weep.
Comrades gather because they long to be with the men who once acted their best, men who suffered and sacrificed, who were stripped raw, right down to their humanity.

I did not pick these men. They were delivered by fate. But I know them in a way I know no other men.
I have never given anyone such trust. They were willing to guard something more precious than my life. They would have carried my reputation, the memory of me. It was part of the bargain we all made, the reason we were so willing to die for one another.

I cannot say where we are headed. Ours are not perfect friendships; those are the province of legend and myth.
A few of my comrades drift far from me now, sending back only occasional word.
I know that one day even these could fall to silence. Some of the men will stay close, a couple, perhaps, always at hand.

As long as I have memory, I will think of them all, every day.
I am sure that when I leave this world, my last thought will be of my family and my comrades...such good men.

Sent in by: Rick White, Col, US Army (Ret), C & Recon 2-35, 1967-68
richard.white@l-3com.com