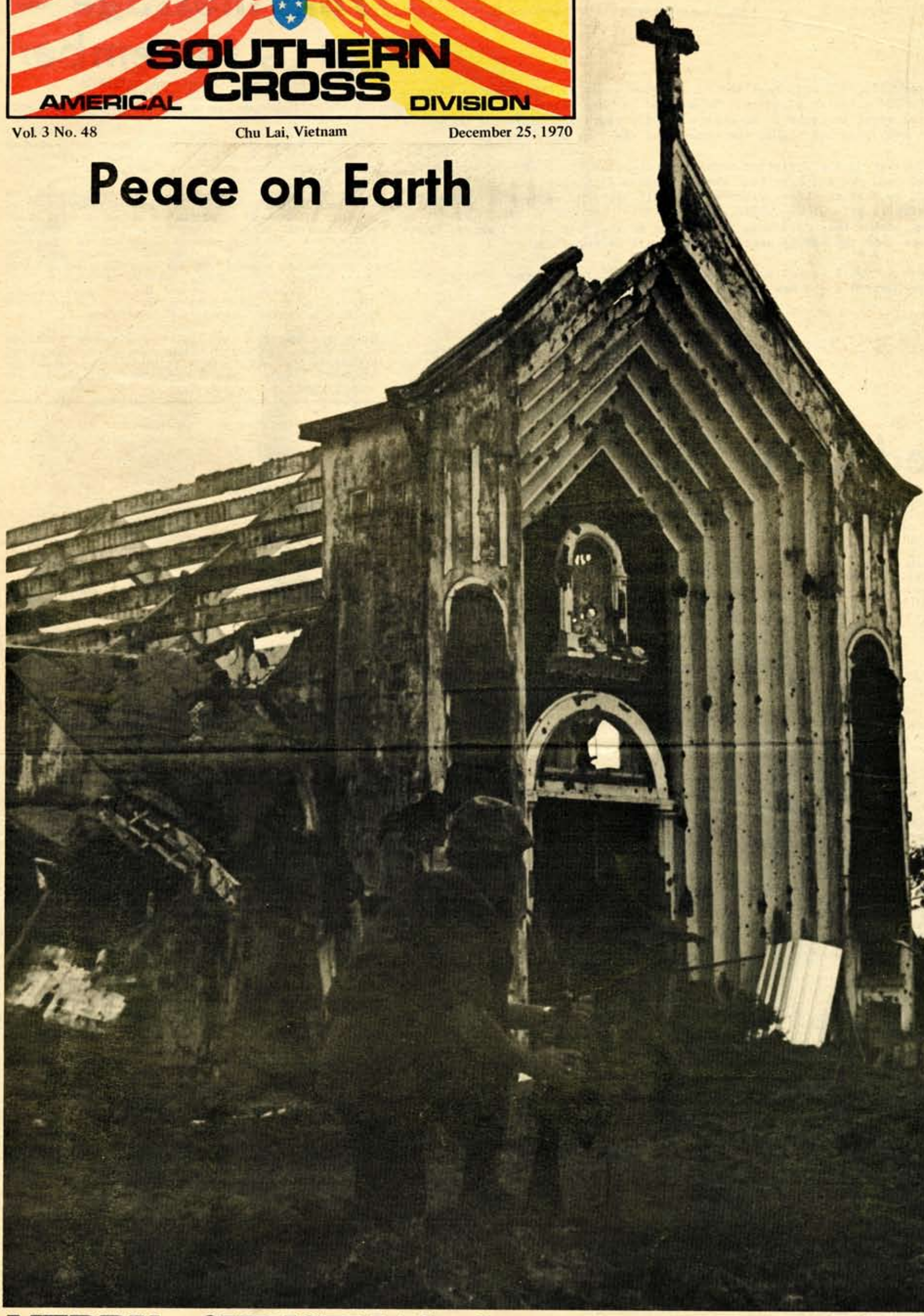
SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

Vol. 3 No. 48 Chu Lai, Vietnam December 25, 1970

Peace on Earth



MERRY CHRISTMAS from the Southern Cross

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

December 25, 1970 will mark the fourth observance of Christmas in Vietnam by the 23d Infantry Division. To many of us this Yuletide will be one of several spent in combat. To others it will represent the first Christmas spent away from the light, the warmth and the love of a family.

The message of the Christmas Herald was one of Peace on Earth, Good Will toward Men. We all have been asked to serve with fortitude and determination so that the brave Vietnamese people may soon enjoy the fruits of peace while maintaining their freedom. This Christmas finds us closer to accomplishing this goal than at any time in the past several years. Let us hope that the coming year will see peace restored for all of us.

To each of you I extend my personal best wishes for a safe and blessed holiday season and a New Year of good fortune and peace.

JAMES L. BALDWIN
Major General, USA
Commanding

Yule message — Let us remember

By Lieutenant Colonel Teddy R. Pope, Jr.
23rd Infantry Division Chaplain

What if suddenly there were no Christmas? What kind of a world would it be?

There would be a large number of soldiers in Vietnam who are not as happy as they are now. There are many who are already enjoying or looking forward to their Christmas drops. Since I have been in the military, I have noticed there is a real effort to get as many men home as possible for Christmas.

Thousands of orphans, needy children and needy families have been made happy because of the American soldier's spirit of generosity at Christmas. It wouldn't be pleasant to think of our world minus the spirit of generosity that is prompted by Christmas.

Many thoughtful things are done for the sick and wounded at Christmas. Christmas makes us thoughtful. It prompts us to write friends give, gifts to loved ones. Yes, Christmas makes us a little more considerate of others. We wouldn't want that to be lost.

None of us would like to lose the joy, generosity, and thoughtfulness that Christmas brings. There is no danger of this happening as long as we remember the Christ of Christmas.

This Christmas as we share something good with a loved one or a buddy, as we sing carols in a hospital ward, or worship together in a chapel, may we think about the Christ and what His coming means to us and to our world. May we thank God for His unspeakable gift. And above all, may we so live that others throughout our world will open their hearts and let the savior in.

Red Cross fills stockings

By SGT Matt Gryta

CHU LAI (23rd INF DIV IO) – The men and women of the 23rd Infantry Division don't have snow on the ground for Christmas this year, but there is a present in each of their stockings thanks to the concerted effort of the American Red Cross (ARC) and folks from Iola, Kansas; Ekalaka, Montana, and points east and west.

The gifts come in the form of multi-purpose durable denim "ditty" bags filled with ballpoint pens, pen-sized flashlights with batteries, lighters and flints, nail clippers, recording tapes, address books and toilet articles.

Female-designated "ditty" bags include such items as foot pads, hand lotion, nylon and plastic headcovers, cosmetic remover pads and round hair curlers.

"These personal gifts were intended for each member of the division as an expression of the American people's gratitude for the personal sacrifices made over here by members of the Armed Forces," explained Harold L. Kaplan, Field Director of the ARC in Chu Lai.

"We wanted to insure that each American serviceman and woman in Vietnam receives a gift on Christmas Day."

Some 30,000 bags were distributed to each and every member of the division at the dinner meal on Christmas Day.

Over 350,000 of the hand-made gift bags were shipped to the Republic of Vietnam as a result of the ARC's "Shop Early" Program, conducted by more than 1,500 local stateside Red Cross chapters.

"Thousands of volunteers, with the cooperation of various community groups, businesses and organizations purchased the contents of the bags and packaged and shipped them over here," Mr. Kaplan said.

The list of chapters contributing for personnel "Under the Southern Cross" reads, in Mr. Kaplan's words, "like a roll call of the United States, but the largest single shipment came from the Aloha State."

One thousand bags were sent to Chu Lai courtesy of the Hawaii State Chapter of the ARC.

All of those gift packages from the Red Cross must get heavy after a while, but they don't seem to bother this soldier.
(U.S. Army Photo by SGT Matt Gryta)

THE SOUTHERN CROSS is an authorized periodic publication of the Americal Division Information Office for Division units in the Republic of Vietnam. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Contributions are encouraged and may be sent to the Information Office, Americal Division, APO 96374. Tel: Chu Lai 2414. The editors reserve the right to edit all contributions.

Major General James L. Baldwin . . . . . Commanding General
Major William F. Gabella . . . . . Information Officer
First Lieutenant Dean Bunch . . . . . Officer-in-charge
Specialist Four David P. Goodrich . . . . . Editor
Specialist Five Thomas J. Neville . . . . . Production Editor

NGUYEN VAN THIEU
President of the Republic of Viet-Nam

Dear General Milloy:

I am very happy to learn that the men of the Americal Division under your able leadership took an active part in the rescue of the flood victims in I Corps in recent weeks. Their efficiency and dedication contributed to the success of the mission of mercy, and at the same time enhanced the prestige of the Americal Division.

I have pleasure in commending you and all the officers and men of the Americal Division for a job well done, and I extend to you my most heartfelt thanks.

Sincerely,

VIET-NAM CONG-HOA
TONG-THONG

NGUYEN VAN THIEU

Professionals win friends at Hau Duc

By PFC John P. Szaynowski

LZ MARY ANN, (196th INF BDE IO) – Bewildered by its strange, frightening appearance and deafened by its ear-splitting sound, several Montagnard families cautiously approached the waiting helicopter.

Prompted by the Vietnamese interpreter and armed with the promise of a better life, the simple, mountain dwelling people overcame their fear and finally climbed aboard with their pigs and chickens for a short flight to Hau Duc, a nearby resettlement community of 13,000 people in Quang Tin Province, west of Tam Ky.

This scene has been re-enacted many times on Landing Zone Mary Ann since it was first built in July 1970. Over 600 refugees, encouraged by PSYOPS (Psychological Operations) and "Chieu Hoi" programs, have sought the sanctuary offered by the 1st Battalion. 46th Infantry, 196th Infantry Brigade.

In doing so, they have taken the first steps in exchanging a life of harassment by the Viet Cong and NVA for a more secure and productive future in New Hau Duc.

The "Professionals" concern for the welfare of these and other Vietnamese refugees does not end with their relocation but follows them to New Hau Duc. The battalion strives to maintain a close working relationship with Major Thanh, the District Chief, and the various village chiefs of the resettlement community.

The large influx of refugees into New Hau Duc sometimes

Among the health measures that have been recently initiated in the area has been a mass immunization program which now protects 90% of the populace against cholera, plague, and small pox. Another has been a public health and sanitation program that insures that local drinking water is checked regularly for dysentery, typhoid fever and intestinal parasites.

In addition to these, the battalion has sent the village over 3000 bars of soap and information concerning personal hygiene and sanitation practices is promulgated throughout the village by the local information office.

The most permanent manifestation of Smith's influence in the village is the completion of a new district dispensary which he helped build. It stands as evidence of the substantial progress the villagers of New Hau Duc, aided by the 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry, have made to attain a healthier and, thus, happier life.

Sometimes. American presents difficulties in maintaining a sufficient amount of food, adequate medical care, and an acceptable level of public health and sanitation. The Professionals have gone a long way in solving these problems.

Under an ambitious agricultural reform program established by Major Thanh, great strides have been made to increase the quantity and quality of agricultural produce. However, the rate of food production and the amount of food purchased from the government still must be supplemented for the rapidly growing population.

The 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry accounts for thousands of pounds of rice and corn consumed by the villagers. Over 6,000 pounds were confiscated in September alone from the VC.

Perhaps the most important aspect of aid furnished by the battalion to New Hau Duc is the medical civic actions program, commonly referred to as MEDCAP.

"The Biggest Problem," explained Specialist Four Kevin Smith of Rochester, N.Y., a combat medic with the program, "is to get the people to participate in the medical program and become concerned and active in their own affairs."

The role of the Vietnamese people in the program shows improvement as evidenced by five South Vietnamese Army medics, one Vietnamese civilian medic, and several women nurses from the village currently involved in the program. "In most cases," stated Specialist Smith, "the Vietnamese medics and nurses prescribe, dispense or administer the medicine while I supervise the proceeding."

"When I first came here, virtually all of the medicine and medical equipment was obtained through American sources, but now, over 40% of the medical supplies used in New Hau Duc are obtained through Vietnamese channels of supply," he added.

assistance is less vital, but perhaps just as gratifying. On a recent Asian holiday, Children's Tet, about 2,000 children enjoyed more than 5000 cookies and assorted candy and fruit provided by the battalion for the occasion.

The major concern of the "Professionals" rests with winning the confidence of the Vietnamese people of New Hau Duc assisting them in achieving a better life. Lieutenant Colonel Richard Carvell, the battalion commander in comment stated, "We have developed a close and harmonious relationship with Major Thanh and the people of New Hau Duc. It is an exemplification of what we are striving to achieve in Vietnam."

This Americal soldier obviously has it made. What more could you ask for than a pretty girl, a nice day and plenty to eat and drink? (U.S. Army Photo).

Unit gets Ochinere power

By SGT Louis Miller

LZ DOTTIE (198th INF BDE IO) – Mail call has become a little confusing for a company of the 23rd Division's 198th Infantry Brigade since those two men with the same last name joined the unit.

The two men, Specialist 4 Norman and Private First Class Rod Ochinero of Fresno, Calif., are both serving with the same platoon of Company A, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry.

Norman, a rifleman with the "Regulars", was helping his company secure a pacification hamlet southeast of Chu Lai when he was told to board the next helicopter to go to the replacemen detachment in Chu Lai where he could see his brother. A reunion was in the making.

"It was exciting for us because we hadn't seen each other for nearly a year," said Norman. "I knew Rod was coming over, but I didn't know he would be assigned to this division."

During their first meeting, the men talked about the difference between home and Vietnam and how nice it would be if Rod would be assigned to the same company. A short time later, their wish became reality when Rod, a medic, was not only assigned to Company A, but was further assigned to be the medic for his brother's platoon.

"It's great being in the same platoon," said Norman, who has been in-country for eleven months. "This way we can watch out for each other and be with each other instead of worrying about how the other one is getting along."

In a short time, Norman will be going home, but he's leaving with the feeling that some of his experience and know-how rubbed off on his brother.

Lieutenant Richard Jarrett of the First Battalion, 20th Infantry, eases the pain with his roadside manner, while treating a patient a few miles north of Duc Pho. (U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Gregory Wright).

S-4 plays role in Vietnamization

by PFC Stanley Van Beek

FSB BRONCO (23rd INF DIV IO) – "Preparing the Vietnamese to eventually run their own affairs is one of our primary goals, and our S-4 is doing everything it can to live up to this goal" remarked 23rd Division's 11th Infantry Brigade S-4 Captain Kenneth P. Lord, Columbia, Tenn.

The brigade's S-4 assists the ARVN's 4th Regimental S-4, Captain Nguyen Quang Tu, Quang Ngai City, by supplying needed materials such as barb wire, engineering stakes and scrap wood to relieve problem areas.

"A recent example," added 1st Lieutenant Ivan Lantzky, assistant S-4, Brooklyn, New York, "is a road completed near Minh Long. The ARVNs supplied their own labor and provided protection for the project, but were unable to get enough culverts and big timbers to complete the job." The road was completed through the help and cooperation of Brigade S-4.

"We help the ARVN by showing them how to help themselves," continued Cpt. Lord," and we encourage them to develope their own channels by launching them on a large program and then letting them finish it by utilizing their own resources."

"We have an outstanding relationship with the ARVN's S-4 noted Lantzky." Cpt. Tu drops by our office four or five times a month to discuss ways we could help his S-4."

This relationship between the S-4's was reflected recently during a storm that hit Duc Pho. although the ARVN had some material to aid the disaster victims, the 11th Brigade S-4 supplied aid emergency aid that the Vietnamese could not provide.

Cpt. Lord has been Brigade S-4 for two months, and for his cooperation with the ARVN S-4, Cpt. Tu has presented him with a recognition plaque.

'I thought it was all over'

By Sp4 James Tabata

FSB BRONCO (11th INF BDE IO) – "I saw the trip wire just before I hit it, but by then it was too late to stop my forward motion," said Specialist Four Michael Freude of Torrence, Calif.

"I stood there at least a second, stunned and waiting to hear an explosion," continued the veteran 11th Infantry Brigade, Company B, 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry pointman.

But nothing exploded, and Freude sighed, "That was the first booby trap I've tripped in the four months I have walked point; believe me, in those few seconds I was scared and thought it was all over for me."

The wire Freude tripped was found attached to a grenade with the spoon flipped. The 23rd Division soldier was on operation with his unit in a valley northeast of Fire Support Base San Juan Hill.

California girl wants penpal

CHU LAI (23d INF DIV IO) – The Southern Cross recently received a letter from an 18-year-old freshman girl who is attending Sacramento City College. She would like to correspond with Americal Division soldiers who would like to write her.

Her name is Mary Anne Fox, and she has a special reason for caring about the guys serving in Vietnam. She had an older brother that served in the Americal Division. He died last May.

Her address is 441-46th Street, Sacramento, California 95819

Chinooks make bi
provide water,foo

Story and photos

The latest report are that Snoopy is alive and well at his "mansion" on LZ Center in the 196th Infantry Brigade of the Americal Division.

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) – "Getting shot at in mid-air is about the only thing I don't like about it."

That's what Warrant Officer Dennis McCracken of Atlanta had to say about piloting one of the huge CH-47 Chinook helicopters from the 178th "Box Car" Assault Helicopter Company, Americal Division.

Mr. McCracken, as any Chinook pilot, has good reason to feel the uneasiness of possibly being shot down while flying over enemy territory. The size of the aircraft makes a target that would be almost impossible to miss while coming into a hot landing zone or flying below a heavy overcast.

The twin-engined, tandem rotar helicopter has an internal cargo space of 1,450 cubic feet, stands about 19 feet tall and is 51 feet long.

To U.S. and ARVN soldiers on landing zones scattered throughout the Americal area of operation, the sight of the 178th "Box Cars" means water, food, supplies and mail. To the crew of chopper number 436, "It makes you feel like you're doing something worthwhile," commented Specialist Four Fay Brudos of Viroqua, Wisc., one of three doorgunners for the aircraft.

A doorgunners primary job is to defend the Chinook against enemy fire. He must be alert and keep his M-60 machinegun in top condition. His other duties include keeping an eye open to warn the pilots against possible mid-air collisions and pulling maintenance to

The pilot for a Chinook must be fully alert and check his instruments constantly.

Most Chinook helicopters from the 178th Assault Helicop on the side of the cock-pit.

g wind,big medicine-
d,supplies and mail

by SP4 Guy Winkler

keep the big bird in the air.

Up every morning, often before dawn, crew members and pilots for the 178th begin the day with a routine maintenance check of fluid levels and samples, safety wires, lube levels, bolts and nuts, rotar damage and a number of other pre-flight checks.

After receiving their missions for the day, the big bird leaves for 10 to 12 hours flying supplies and transporting troops to and from landing zones anywhere in the division.

"One of the things I like most," says Specialist Four Carl Friend, "Is flying to different places and seeing all of the landing zones which few people have the opportunity to do. It never gets boring."

At times, the Chinook is called on to handle more than hooking supplies and transporting personnel.

The craft is equipped with an external cargo hook of 10-ton capacity which is regularly used to recover other downed aircraft. During September and half of October, the 178th "Box Cars" had recovered 18 disabled helicopters.

Flying and maintaining the big bird is an all day job which requires the utmost attention from both pilots and crew members. Each man has an intricate function and performs each task knowing that hundreds of men are depending on him.

At the end of each day, the Chinook is refueled, cleaned and reexamined before it is parked to await the next workday.

This soldier from the Americal Division "hooks" a large crate of ammunition to a Chinook helicopter, which is hovering above the soldier's head. The Chinook carries the ammunition to fire support bases in the division's area of operation.

r Company in Chu Lai have their own favorite personality painted

Specialist Four Carl Friend refuels the Chinook to keep the big bird flying.

Eagle flight kills eight

By SGT Louis Miller

LZ STINSON (198th Bde IO) -- Infantrymen from the Americal Division's 198th Infantry Brigade and helicopter gunships from the 116th Aviation Company teamed up to kill eight Viet Cong and capture two in a recent eagle flight south of Chu Lai.

Company A of the 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry was combat assaulting into various landing zones when a gunship flying cover for the unit observed an enemy soldier crossing a rice paddy nearby. The "Cobra" engaged and killed the lone VC and then dropped a smoke grenade into the area to mark where a platoon of the "Ready Rifles" should be inserted.

"After we landed in the area we moved into a woodline where two of my men spotted another Viet Cong attempting to cross a river," said First Lieutenant Steven Kairies of Minneapolis, the platoon leader. "They opened up and killed him."

Observing from a command and control aircraft, Major Charles E. Getz from Prattville, Ala., the battalion commander, spotted a group of enemy soldiers enter a woodline in a nearby area. He immediately ordered the platoon on the ground be picked up and inserted into the new location.

"When the platoon hit the ground, the platoon leader took his men into the woodline and made a sweep of the area," Major Getz said. "The men spotted and killed another VC and found one that the gunships had killed."

A short time later the gunships observed and engaged another group of enemy soldiers in a trench line. This time another platoon from Company A was inserted near the area of contact and immediately engaged the enemy.

Sweeping the woodline, the "Ready Rifles" found another enemy killed by gunships and three killed and two wounded by their small arms fire.

Some of the 500 people innoculated against cholera in the aftermath of recent area flooding, line up at an emergency Medcap station along Highway One north of Duc Pho.Photo by SP4 Gregory Wright

Bad odds net good results

By SP4 Terry Williamson

LZ DOTTLE (198th Inf Bde IO) – A face-to-face encounter between an infantryman from the 23rd Division's 198th Infantry Brigade and four Vieet Cong soldiers began as a surprise to both sides, but when it was over, the surprise was on the Viet Cong.

The "Regulars" of Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry, were on patrol southeast of Chu Lai checking deserted hamlets near the new pacification village of Giem Dien. The first two hamlets produced no results but then the patrol spotted several structures standing alone on a small island that had been created by the monsoon rains.

Private First Class Milton W. Dacalio of Naaleku, Hawaii and Specialist 4 Robert Mack McGowan of San Bernadino, Calif., moved to a structure at the far end of the island.

"It was raining hard and we had to wade out to the small island to investigate the structures," Specialist McGowan related. "I was glad to get to dry land but I really didn't know what was in store for us."

When the two men reached the structure, PFC Dacalio cautiously moved inside while Specialist McGowan provided security outside. Inside, PFC Dacalio gave a quick look around and saw four Viet Cong looking back at him.

He sent a burst of M-16 fire into the enemy group and retreated to a safer position outside.

"I was surprised too when I heard the firing and saw Dacalio coming out of the building," said Specialist McGowan. "I didn't know what was in there, but Dacalio kept firing so I knew he had found something."

Again PFC Dacalio entered the structure but this time he stayed long enough to find the bodies of the four Viet Cong along with two AK-47 rifless, six hand grenades, and six packs.

"The whole thing came as a surprise to us, but I'll bet the VC were the most surprised of all," commented Specialist McGowan.

Private First Class Ted "Doc" Michlee, A Co., 4th Bn., 21st Inf., 11th Infantry Brigade uses a lull during a recent field operation near LZ Bronco to treat the back of one of the men in the unit.
(Photo by SP5 H. Wells).

70 enemy killed in week of light action

By SP4 David Goodrich

In moderately light action this last week, elements of the Americal Division killed 70 enemy soldiers. In a slightly unusual cache find, the 196th Infantry Brigade found 34,000 pounds of salt.

Geneva Park

Infantrymen from the Division's 198th Infantry Brigade saw moderate action this week as Operation Geneva Park accounted for 21 enemy kills.

The heaviest activity was reported by the 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry, as the Regulars killed 11 enemy soldiers and wounded another southeast of Chu Lai. Of these 11 enemy k.i.a., nine were accounted for by Company C of the battalion.

An element of Company A observed one Viet Cong evading from a tree line, and a group of the "Regulars" maneuvered to within 100 meters of the enemy and killed him. Later, Company D chalked up a kill after the infantrymen observed a small group of the enemy.

Nine enemy soldiers were killed by the "Ready Rifles of the 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry and several weapons and a large rice cache were taken. Late in the week, an eagle flight by Company D resulted in four Viet Cong killed and five detainees taken.

Earlier in the week, the company discovered ten barrels of polished rice buried in the ground near a hedgerow. The barrels were well camouflaged and contained nearly 8,000 pounds of rice. All edible rice was extracted to Son Tinh District Headquarters for distribution to orphanages and refugee centers in that district. In other action, the company killed one VC attempting to evade to the east in an area south of Chu Lai.

A platoon from Company C of the "Ready Rifles" engaged a group of VC at a distance of about 100 meters in a brief contact south of Chu Lai. While attempting to evade, the enemy element ran into a well-placed blocking force of another element of the "Ready Rifles" who killed two enemy soldiers and captured another.

Later in the week, Company C killed two Viet Cong after establishing contact with the enemy and following some resulting blood trails. They led the infantrymen to a spider hole, which they threw hand grenades into, killing two.

H Troop, 17th Cavalry killed one Viet Cong southeast of Chu Lai.

Hawk Hill

In light action this week the men of the 196th Infantry Brigade killed 24 enemy soldiers and found 34,000 pounds of salt.

Company C of the 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry killed three enemy soldiers during the week's action in three separate encounters.

Company A of the battalion discovered 16,000 pounds of the week's salt finds while on a search and clear mission.

Later in the week, the company came across three large wicker baskets, each containing 6,000 pounds of salt.

The Recon element of the 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry, while on sweep observed 13 enemy to their front and managed to kill two with small arms fire.

Company B of the battalion engaged and killed three NVA southwest of Tam Ky while on patrol.

Company D of the 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry killed one VC after firing in the direction of movement from their night laager position northwest of Tam Ky.

Company A observed three VC eavding from a structure, while on patrol. They killed two, and the other managed to escape.

While on visual reconnaissance for the 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry a member of Brigade Aviation observed three NVA northwest of Tam Ky. The enemy was engaged with small arms fire resulting in all three enemy killed.

IRON Mountain

The men of the 11th Infantry Brigade killed 16 enemy soldiers during the week in light action.

Bravo Company of the 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry had their hands full when confronted with a number of challenges in the line of duty. In a two day period, a total of four VC were killed in action along with the discovery of a 1,900 pound rice cache.

Working in the lowlands south of Quang Ngai City, Company D of the battalion found approximately 1,000 pounds of unpolished rice stored in metal containers.

Company C found approximately 2,000 pounds of unpolished rice along the coast northwest of Duc Pho, stored in plastic bags buried underground.

Members of D troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry received small arms fire while riding in a Light Observation Helicopter (LOH) along the coast north of Duc Pho. After being cleared for firing, the LOH killed two VC and wounded the third.

While patroling the foothills northwest of Duc Pho, elements of Company C, 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry engaged and killed one VC.

While patroling an area along the coast south of Duc Pho, Recon platoon of the 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry observed two VC in a boat. Subsequent action resulted in one enemy dead and one captured.

The next day, while patrolling the foothills southwest of Duc Pho, the Recon platoon of the 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry saw five VC coming down a trail. The platoon killed two of the enemy as the rest managed to evade.

Pennsylvania Square

Action increased in the Pennsylvania Square last week as the men of the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry killed nine enemy soldiers and captured seven more.

Alpha Troop accounted for eight of the kills and captured six. One contact began as the Troop's supply helicopter spotted a group of VC and directed the ground elements to them. The result was one killed and three captured.

Well, How about it? Do you see anything you want for Christmas? We have it on good authority that whatever her name is, this is the real live snow maiden that helps carry Santa's pack. Maybe you would like to lend a hand.

Underneath his pitched tent, this Americal soldier takes enough time to catch some z's.

(U.S. Army Photo by PFC James Dunn)

Cav shows yule spirit

By SP4 Dave Goodrich

CHU LAI (23d INF DIV IO) – What does it take to bring people really close together? All too often the answer is tragedy, but it's not a one way street.

Sergeant Jay Klein, a member of the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry from Valley City, N.D., was reading his hometown newspaper when he learned that an old friend of his had lost both of his legs in a farming accident. Neil Holmgren, 19, was in the University of Minnesota Hospital while the local chapter of Veterans of Foreign Wars in Valley City was trying to raise $2,500 to get him a set of artificial legs.

Sergeant Klein was concerned enough to talk about the matter with Specialist 4 Duane Sather, a member of the Cav from Pillsbury, N.D. They decided to get together a small fund for Neil among the guys in the unit. The goal was to help him get the legs he needed by Christmas.

The men of the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry proved that Christmas spirit could be a very real thing even when thousands of miles away from home. "Some of the guys gave $20 or $25 and they didn't know Neil from Adam" related Specialist Sather.

One of the men, Warrant Officer 2 Gary Krehbiel from (Drumright, Okla.), said. "I wanted to help somebody who had greater problems than I had."

Doyle Miner from (Council Bluffs, Iowa) commented, "If I was in Neil's position I really would have appreciated it a lot. That's why I knew it was the right thing to do."

When it was all over the men had collected $364.35. They sent it off to the VFW in time to help put the drive over the top of its $2500 goal.

Black history course offered

A new course designed to promote brotherhood by providing an insight into the hardships and triumphs of the black American has been announced by the Americal Education Center.

The course, entitled "The History of the American Negro" is scheduled to begin in early January. The 48-hour course will be presented three times weekly, and will include material on the African beginning and its culture before the invasion of the white man; the establishment of slavery in American and the institution of slave trading; the Civil War period along with the Reconstruction and post - Reconstruction era; the Negro's role in the military and the "Harlem Renaissance" toward social and cultural emergence.

The college level course will be presented in a series of lectures with open discussion on various subjects. It will be worth three semester hours credit, and can also be taken through correspondence. The fee is five dollars for the correspondence course, and will be 10 dollars for the classroom course starting in January. The price includes the texts, which are worth more than the cost.

The only prerequisite for the course is a high school diploma or equivalent. A comprehensive examination will be administered on completion of the program.

Arty supports tranquil valley

By SP4 R.J. Smith

NEW HAU DUC, (23rd INF DIV IO) – You can sit in front of the command post, look over the helipad that clings tenaciously to the steep slope just underneath, and gaze down into the green valleys that huddle a few hundred feet below.

The sun pays on the densely forested mountain slopes, makes the terraced rice paddies seem transparent, and mirrors off the tiny metal roofs of the New Hau Duc compound in the distance. An afternoon at Fire Support Base Pleasantville can be very tranquil.

Suddenly a six part explosion permeates the air and the reverberation goes crashing through the valleys. The guns of Battery C, 3rd Battalion, 16th Artillery speak with no uncertain authority in support of American and ARVN forces in the secluded Quanh Tinh Province.

Pleasantville, sometimes quiet, sometimes thunderous, is a unique fire base. It is populated and operated solely by artillerymen. It is isolated by mountains, its safety dependent upon a mutual understanding with the Popular and Regional Forces, as well as with the civilian inhabitants of New Hau Duc itself.

"What we have out here," explained Captain David L. Carl from Romney, W.Va., "is a classic example of Vietnamization and pacification. There are no other GI's in this immediate area. We fire primarily in support of Vietnamese forces and Chieu Hoi teams who operate in an environment that they are familiar with. These people can go out and meet Charley on his own terms," continued Captain Carl.

In return for the fire support, the artillerymen are provided with effective security. The RFs and PFs maintain guard on almost half of the base perimeter. But Pleasantville security stretches out beyond their main perimeter. "We are also protected from enemy aggression by civilian forces that are interspersed throughout the entire outlying area," said First Sergeant Isais A. Quintana of Junction City, Kan. The security is, indeed, very effective. Even wire probes are rare.

The Division Artillery base is the basis of this pacified area. The new Hau Duc complex, some eight kilometers north of Old Hau Duc, is comprised of seven villages that have been relocated. Many of the 13,500 people are from the fertile area to the west known as the Rice Bowl. All are either refugees or Chieu Hoi's. "Because the Bowl is a major source of food for the area, it has been a popular target for the Communists" stated Captain Carl. "Since our arrival the people feel free to cultivate the land in safety. You can see rice paddies and banana groves out there where none previously existed."

The paddies and the groves are there; green and productive.

FSB Pleasantville has another name, as pointed out by Lieutenant Colonel Thomas G. Lightner of Gainsville, Va., Battalion Commander of the 3rd Battalion, 16th Infantry: Gibralter of the Quanh Tinh Province.

The lofty fire base fits its nickname even in appearance.

Not habit forming

By SGT Louis Miller

LZ DOTTIE, (198th INF BDE IO) – A unit of the Americal Division's 198th Infantry Brigade turned an old enemy habit into their own advantage and killed two enemy, captured three and confiscated two rifles and nine grenades in a recent encounter southeast of Chu Lai.

A platoon of Company C, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry was preparing to move from a night offensive position when members of the element spotted several women carrying baskets of food into a nearby deserted village.

"We stayed in our position a little while longer and saw the women bring more food into the village," said Staff Sergeant Wayne L. Bower of Newport, Ore., the platoon sergeant. "Then, using the hedgerows as cover, we moved away from our position and set up a new one where we could observe both the village and our old position."

The next morning the infantrymen found they had correctly predicted their enemies' habits when they spotted a Viet Cong checking their old position for discarded items. Sergeant Bower took several men and maneuvered towards the enemy.

"We got as close as we could without being detected and then I yelled 'Dung Lai'", said the sergeant. "He was going to run but then decided against it and just put his hands up." Taken from the enemy were two hand grenades, a pack, and webgear.

The Kit Carson Scout with Company C questioned the Viet Cong and learned that there were more enemy soldiers in a structure next to the village the company had been observing. The platoon from the company left several men to secure the captured enemy and moved down a trail towards the village.

"We were nearing the area when we heard voices coming from a structure just 20 meters from us," said Sergeant Bower. "I looked around the bend in the trail and saw two VC, one with an AK-47, standing near the building."

The platoon busily began making their plan. A machinegun and one squad were positioned to the rear of the structure to block the enemy's exit while sergeant Bower and another squad was to move in from the front.

Just as the men were moving into their designated positions, one of the two VC they had seen decided to leave. A quick burst from an M-16 brought down the enemy.

"As soon as we opened up, so did our element in the rear," related the sergeant. "The enemy within the structure attempted to move out the back, but the machinegun changed their minds. So they decided to try the front where we were."

Sergeant Bower's element's of fire was just as intensive and, when the brief firefight was over, the infantrymen discovered they had killed another enemy and wounded two. The wounded were evacuated to a Chu Lai hospital. Found inside the structure were another rifle, three AK-47 magazines, seven hand grenades, food and ten hammocks.

Useful materials can not be left behind for the enemy. Using a trip flare, SFC Willie Smith of Company A, 4th Battalion 21st Infantry of the 11th Infantry Brigade ignites discarded limber.

(U.S. Army Photo by SP5 H. Wells)