SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION
Vol. 4, No. 6 Chu Lai, Vietnam February 5, 1971

One more enemy tunnel complex will soon be put out of commission following its search be elements of the 23rd Division. Here a rifleman makes his exit via what had been a well-concealed escape hole leading into the underground hideout. (U.S. Army Photo)

Help center improves Army

By SP4 Guy Winkler

CHU LAI, (23rd Inf. Div. IO) – The Army is changing and the 23rd Infantry Division's Project Help is a part of that change that can benefit even the grunt in the field.

Any soldier in the division having a question or complaint about any aspect of military life can contact Project Help by dialing H-E-L-P (4357) in Chu Lai. Or he can write down his problem or question on a piece of paper, put it in an envelope addressed simply to "HELP" and drop it into a mailbag. A written response will be returned to the originater within five days.

The Help program is not designed to replace regular command channels as a source of information and assistance. It is intended to augment the chain of command in assisting the soldier with a problem.

Individuals who call or write to Project Help must leave their full name, rank and company, and their identity will be held "in the strictest of confidence," according to Sergeant First Class Jimmy Ray Miller of Loudon, Tenn., the project supervisor.

"Project Help is designed to dispel rumors and correct misinformation that may be troubling anyone in the division," he said. "It's a place for these people to go with their problems and there's always someone here to help, if we can. If we don't know the answer immediately, we will look into the matter and find a solution as soon as possible."

The program, which functions on a 24-hour basis, received an average of thirty calls per day during its first few weeks of operation. Many of the questions can be answered on the phone, though classified information cannot be discussed, SFC Miller notes.

To aid in the dissemination of information provided by the project, and thus increase its effectiveness, the Division Information Office prints answers to the most frequently asked questions in the weekly division newspaper, "Southern Cross".

SFC Miller said the most frequently asked question to date concerns rumors of a 10-month tour of duty in Vietnam. "It's still a one-year tour, until U.S. Army Vietnam (USARV) says differently," he explained.

The project was initiated by former Division Command Sergeant Major Fred E. Darling of Arlington, Va., and is administered by Division Command Sergeant Major William E. Mashburn of West Berlin, Germany. It is presently staffed by three infantrymen, one from each of the division's brigades, and one enlisted man from the division artillery command working as full-time problem solvers.

Americal nets 77

Troopers under the Southern Cross experienced increased action during the last week as they accounted for 77 enemy killed, as well as capturing significant amounts of supplies.

FREDERICK HILL

During fierce action this week, 32 enemy kills were credited to the 196th Infantry Brigade's "Chargers" this week.

Company B, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry started the week engaging an enemy force of unknow size northwest of Tam Ky. The "Legionnaires" reported killing two enemy soldiers in the contact.

The death toll from Company B was higher the next day. While on a search and clear mission northwest of Tam Ky, they engaged five VC, killing three. The other two evaded north.

Later in the day while on sweep, Recon platoon, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry found a large food cache containing 1075 pounds of rice, 200 pounds of corn, and 15 pounds of tea.

Towards the middle of the week Stinger 88, a gunship, observed 15 VC with weapons. He opened up with his mini-guns and left three enemy dead.

Company D, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry while on sweep

(Continued page 6)

Help question of the week

What assistance and loans can I receive as a student after my separation from the Army?

Your educational benefits depend on your marital status and months in service. You are allowed 11/2 months educational assistance for each month of active duty with a maximum of 36 months assistance. Eligibility ceases at the end of eight years from the date of the veteran's last release from active duty. Loans are available through the National Defense Student Loan program, the USA Guaranteed Bank Loan Program, or through various assistance programs offered by your school.

Try Amnesty

By Sp/4 Steven Elschlager

CHU LAI, (23rd Inf. Div. IO) – The drug abuse situation in this division has been a problem partially produced by the tensions between the ranks. This problem, until recently, had no answer. For those who decide to stop, Operation Amnesty is the answer.

Operation Amnesty is a program supported by the 23rd Infantry Division for it's personnel who wish to stop taking drugs and to rid themselves of problems that caused them to start.

Captain Larry Alessi, a residdnt of Baltimore, Maryland, the Division psychiatrist expressed his concern for the drug situation in a recent interview. The doctor explained it is most urgent that these problems be discussed openly between the EM, NCO's and officers of each unit. Such sessions would enable each man to realize that the unit is aware of and concerned about the problems that arise because of the use of drugs.

Captain Alessi explains the old myth stating that a man has to be taken off his job, put in a hospital and "treated" to solve his problems, is not completely true.

According to the doctor, "The harddst part of the program is not the "physical withdrawal" (sometimes lasting six days), but going back into a unit that is the same as when he left. The man would find himself in the same fix he started with and it's possible he would start taking drugs again."

"Our program will work if each and every unit is aware of the problems and knows how to handle them properly," says Capt. Alessi. "And in order to do this, the EM, NCO's and officers must understand each other by talking about their problems together."

Unit discussions on drug abuse have already begun and are accomplishing a great deal. The doctor states, "People relized that both are a blame for each others problems", in a recent EM–NCO session.

"Our approach is not to rey remove a man from his job, but to convince all the ranks that this problem is their own. It takes place in the unit and this is the only place it can be stopped."

New postal officer

By PFC Darrell McGillen

CHU LAI, (23rd Inf. Div. IO) – Captain Darell A. Hott of Ogden, Utah, assumed the position of 23rd Infantry Division Postal Officer during a recent Change of Command ceremony here in Chu Lai. He succeeds Captain Arthur J. Gipson of Tulsa, Okla.

After five months as Division postal officer, Cpt. Gipson will become Chief of Enlisted Records at division headquarters here.

Cpt. Hott was officially sworn in by Cpt. Gipson January 10, in the presence of Lieutenant Colonel J.M. Eubanks, Adjutant General of the 23rd Infantry Division.

After taking the oath, Cpt. Hott officially took command of the division's postal services, the largest APO in the world.

He will be responsible for the receiving and distributing all mail arriving to the division as well as the mail leaving. In conjunction with this he will also be responsible for all functions of the postal services that are available to the men of the division.

Before receiving his new title, the captain had been Chief of the Adjutant General's Award Branch here at the 23rd Infantry Division headquarters.

He is a graduate of the Civilian Postal Service Management Institution located in Bethesba, Md.

SP4 Robert Smith of Lindon, Kan., with Company C, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry takes a short break but with his M-60 machinegun in a ready position during a recent operation in the 196th Infantry Brigade. (U.S. Army Photo by PFC Stephen Belfeld)

Troopers take to new leave policy

By SP4 Lee Habich

CHU LAI, (23rd Inf. Div. 10) – The Army altered its leave policy in Vietnam near the end of of November and from every indication the men in the 23rd Infantry Division are taking full advantage of it.

At the present time servicemen in Vietnam are authorized a one week non-chargeable period of rest and relaxation (R & R) and two chargeable separate one week leaves to any of the R & R site, or one 14 day leave to either an R&R site or to the Continental United States.

While all of this may sound a little confusing what it boils down to is that GI Joe has a better opportunity than ever before to visit those places in the South Pacific he has been dreaming about.

According to WO1 Gerald D. Cummings, Assistant Chief of Personnel Actions, 478 division troopers selected Hawaii, 354 selected Sydney, 232 Bangkok, 131 Hong Kong and 103 Taipei as their R & R site during the month of December. In addition 273 troopers utilized the newly authorized 14 day leave to the Continental United States.

Because seven day leaves are normally determined in Da Nang according to the availability of stand-by seats to the various R & R centers no similar break-down is maintained.

The present policy enables a man to take a leave just about anywhere in the South Pacific he chooses, provided he secure a round-trip ticket prior to departure. However, because this entails obtaining a pass-port and an additional financial burden, most men choose to fly stand-by to the available R & R sites. No pass-port is necessary to fly to the authorized R & R sites.

By far the majority of 14 day leaves are taken to the Continental United States, as indicated in December. All arrangements, including the round-trip ticket on a chartered flight, can be made through the Personnel Actions Office at Division headquarters.

Once an individual has his request for a 14 day leave to the states approved by his Company Commander he should hand carry it to the Personnel Actions Office. In addition he should bring the money to purchase a round-trip ticket.

The Army has chartered flights to the United States with two airlines. World Airways, sponsored by the United services Organization, offers a round-trip ticket to Oakland for $350. Pan American Airlines, sponsored by the United Service Club, offers round-trip flights to Oakland--$369, Chicago--$442, and New York--$479.

Flight tickets can be purchased directly through the Personnel Actions Office. In turn they will make arrangements for a military flight to Saigon. All Army chartered flights to the United States depart from Saigon.

According to WO1 Cummings there are more than enough leave allocations to the United States to handle present applicants. Application for the 14 day leave to CONUS should be submitted at least 35 days prior to the expected day of departure.

U.S. looks very good now

By 1st Lt. Jack Brettholz

LZ HAWK HILL, (196th Inf. Bde. 10) – A 196th Brigade soldier, Specialist 5 James E. Stevens of Plymouth, Ind., recently was among the first GIs in Vietnam to go home on a two week leave.

Stevens, a squad leader with Company E, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry left Ton Son Nhut Airport December 15 on the first charter flight from Saigon to Oakland run by World Airways.

"I first heard of the new two week leave to Conus on the radio," said Stevens, "and I put in for it immediately. I requested the period from 20 December to 3 January in order to be home for Christmas and New Year's. Then when I found out on December 9 that it had been approved for 10-24 December, I gathered my belongings as quickly as possible and hitched a ride on the first convoy leaving for Chu Lai."

As it turned out, Stevens was delayed at the Chu Lai airport due to poor weather and missed his flight which left Saigon at 1 p.m. December 11. After another four days waiting for flights at Chu Lai, Cam Ranh Bay and Saigon, he finally secured a seat on the initial World Airways flight on the 15th. Along with more than two hundred other soldiers and amidst a crowd of reporters and cameramen, Stevens was ushered onto the aircraft by the president of the company.

When asked if he remembered the official's name, Stevens replied: "Not even, I was so excited just to be going home, I didn't pay any attention to the ceremony."

Twenty-four hours and nine thousand miles later, Stevens was reunited with his wife, Carolyn, his 4-year-old son and 8-month-old daughter. His daughther was born only three days before he left for Vietnam.

It was snowing in Indiana and the average temperature was 18 degrees, but the Stevens family spent their time together in a warm clebration of the holidays and son Darren's birthday.

"The whole thing was a series of lucky breaks," said Stevens. "First, the new leave program started in my eighth month in-country, the last month I would be eligible for it. Also, it gave me the opportunity to see all of my family, not just my wife, with whom I had spent R&R in Hawaii earlier in my tour. Then, because of the delay, I was able to be home on Christmas and for my son's birthday.

"The cooperation and help from everyone involved in this thing was just fantastic," said Stevens.

Dr. King remembered

By MSG William Turner

CHU LAI, (23rd Inf. Div. 10) – Approximately 50 23rd Infantry Division soldiers attended a brief birthday memorial service for the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Negro civil rights leader here Friday, Jan. 15.

Chaplain (Major) R. L. D'Arcy, Assistant Division Chaplain conducted the afternoon service in the chapel garden.

In his remarks and prayers during the ceremony, Chaplain D'Arcy quoted much of Dr. King's philosophy of life.

"May we emulate the courage and virtue of Martin Luther King -- Man of God and a man who gave his life for his fellow man," he said. "Teach us to understand that he died for freedom, and that his death will have been in vain unless we grasp the ideals that motivated him."

"He is not dead, his courage and virtues live on," the chaplain said.

Asked his impression of the ceremony, one Negro soldier said, "It is a fitting tribute, I only wish more of the "brothers" could be here to share this moment with us."

The 23rd Infantry Division band, under the direction of CW2 Ronald E. Howell, played three selections; He, Grant Us To Do With Zeal and O light of Life, songs which reflected the zeal, life, love, and hope Dr. King had for mankind.

Lieutenant Colonel James W. Sawey center speaks to the officers and men of the 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry during a change of command ceremony in which he assumed command of the "Regulars". (U.S. Army Photo by SGT Terry Williamson)

1st Lieutenant Charles J. Morris of St. Petersburg, Fla., admires his 112 foot Tumbleweeds cartoon strip while PFC Darrell McGillen helps untangle it. (U.S. Army Photo by SGT Matt Gryta)

Lieutenant is hooked

CHU LAI, (23rd Inf. Div. 10) – 1st Lieutenant Charles J. Morris, of St. Petersburg, Fla., has a very unusual hobby.

Each day he receives a cartoon strip entitled Tumbleweeds from his mother, which she cuts from the St. Petersburg Times.

After receiving the strips, Lt. Morris staples each one onto a roll of adding machine tape. So far the cartoon strip measures 112 ft., 9 in. in length.

Lt. Morris has been collecting the strips since he first arrived in Vietnam 11 months ago. He has spent some time in the field, but later was assigned to the reproduction staff here.

SOUTHERN CROSS
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Vietnamese GI slang comes of age

By CPT George F. Bennett

HAWK HILL (196th Inf. Bde. IO) – If you were to hear the term "crash", many thoughts might come to mind. It might mean a car wreck or a person recovering from a drug-induced trip. To the men of the 196th Infantry Brigade, as well as other soldiers stationed in Vietnam, the term has an entirely different meaning. If a man from the 196th said he was going to crash, it would mean he was going to get some sleep.

Jargon is a definite part of every occupation. It most definitely is a part of the grunt's life in Vietnam. Just the term "grunt" is peculiar to Vietnam. The infantryman of World War II was a "dog face", while his counterpart in Korea was a "ground pounder."

Because of the gruesome situations the grunt faces almost daily, he relies on his wits to stay alive and his sense of humor to maintain his perspective. It is largely through his vocabulary that the grunt is able to achieve a sense of belonging and a sense of humor.

Without a sense of humor, life could become a complete drudgery. This is particularly true for the grunt since he has many occasions to be totally aware of fear and death.

Like the war itself, the use of various expressions and phrases is fluid and constantly changing from year to year. The terms REMF and FIGMO meaning rear echelon troop and I got my orders, as well as other slightly off-colored terms still exist.

The phrases "there it is" and "not even" are relatively recent additions to the infantryman's jargon. When asked a question to which the answer would be yes, he might say, "There it is." Various affirmative answers would be inferred with the emphasis on the different words. If the answer was no, he would say, "Not even" and stretch out his pronunciation of even.

The following hypothetical conversation might better illustrate the new language being used by the infantryman in Vietnam:

Joe: Say Sam. Have you received a sugar pop? (Sundry pack to supplement the regular rations--contains soap, candy, etc.)

Sam: Negative, and we're getting a little low on C Rats. (C Rations) Are you going on a jack? (patrol)

Joe: That's a Roge! (Yes) We've got to go about four clicks (four kilometers--4000 meters) to our Sierra (South) all the way to the blue line. (River)

Sam: WOW! Are there many red lines (roads) in that AO? (Area of Operations)

Joe: I have negative knowledge, but my G-2 (intelligence) says I'll pass several Uncle Bens (rice paddy) and a Kelloggs (wheat field) before we reach our destination.

Sam: What's the skinny about the Victor Charlies (Viet Cong) in the AO.

Joe: I'm not sure, but the old man (commander) is taking a little bird (light observation helicopter) on a VR. (visual reconnaissance)

Sam: Are you taking your pigs (machine guns) and do you have enough eggs (M-79 grenades) for your blooper. (grenade launcher)

Joe: That's a max affirm (definitely yes) And if we see Mr. Charles (Viet Cong), we are going to do him a J.O.B. (Each letter pronounced distinctly meaning to annihilate)

Sam: Well, good luck. I've got to make sure my FNGs (funny new guys) get their chop chop (food, used mostly when talking to Vietnamese)

Joe: It's going to be a dark night. I hope artillery has plenty of sunlight. (illumination rounds) By the way, do you know what push (radio frequency) we'll be operating on? It might be Winchester. (30.30)

Sam: There it is. (absolutely right)

The list is not complete, but it is a good sampling of the current vocabulary used in Vietnam. As previously mentioned, the jargon is constantly changing and possibly becoming more definitive. THERE IT IS.

After a close-up look, could you eat anything as cute as these piglets? It depends on how hungry you are. These are going to feed village orphans. (U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Joel Andrewjeski)

Trooper wins bet; carries 40 lb. hog

By SP4 John Szaynowski

LZ MARY ANN (196th Inf. Bde. IO) – An unusual request by a 196th Infantry Brigade soldier led to an extraordinary evening meal for the men of Company B, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry.

As Private First Class Juan Avilez of Lajas, P.R., and Sergeant Steve Turner of Casagrande, Ariz., prepared to move out with their company at daybreak to LZ Mary Ann, they were startled by the sudden explosion of a nearby enemy booby trap.

PFC Avilez and several other soldiers set up security while Sergeant Turner moved forward to investigate what had detonated the enemy hand grenade. Sgt. Turner returned, moments later, dragging a forty-pound pig. The pig had been killed when it strayed into the device's trip wire, causing it to detonate.

"When I saw that the explosion had only blown off the pig's jaw, I asked the platoon leader if I could carry it back to the LZ," related Avilez.

Somewhat puzzled by the strange request, the platoon leader, 1st Lieutenant Donal G. Rider of Cooperstown, N.Y., nevertheless agreed.

"I cut a pole from a small tree and tied the pig's feet around it." explained Avilez. Encumbered by the forty-pound pig and burdened with the additional weight of 300 rounds of M-60 ammo and a Claymore mine, Avilez wearily trudged a half-mile to LZ Mary Ann.

When the company finally arrived on the fire support base, Avilez went straight to the mess hall. "I talked to the mess sergeant to see if he would give me some boiling water to clean the pig," stated Avilez. The mess sergeant not only provided the materials to clean the pig, but also furnished two gas stoves for cooking it.

The pig was roasted over the gas stoves on an improvised skewer of engineering stakes, and then portioned out to anyone who wished to eat some. "Everyone who ate some said it was really good," commented PFC David Hebein of Ishpeming, Mich.

The prospect of a roast pig dinner was not Avilez's sole motive for laboring up the steep slopes of LZ Mary Ann with the forty-pound pig. As he later disclosed, "I won twenty dollars from a friend who said I couldn't carry the pig back to the hill."

Division medcaps make it big -- win friends and influence people

By SP4 Lee Habich

CHU LAI (23rd Inf. Div. IO) -- Week after week doctors and medics performing numerous Medical Capitulations (MEDCAPS) throughout the 23rd Infantry Division reaffirm the old adage that actions speak louder than words.

To the local Vietnamese, who have little if any, medical aid at their disposal, the weekly MEDCAPS come as a welcome, if not indispensable event.

During the period December 6th through January 2nd, according to the 23rd Infantry Division G5 office, there were 409 MEDCAPS in the division. In the course of these MEDCAPS 21,300 Vietnamese men, women and children were treated for skin diseases, chest colds, infections and numerous other ailments. Among those treated, 110 indivisuals were evacuated to hospitals in Chu Lai for further treatment.

The MEDCAPS, usually consisting of one doctor assisted by two or three medics and a Vietnamese interpreter, often handle two to three hundred villagers during one MEDCAP. When innoculations such as flu or typhus are given, as many as a thousand villagers may be treated.

MEDCAPS are arranged at brigade level, usually through the battalion surgeon. They are assigned an area of responsibility and depending on enemy activity, weather conditions, and the availability of medical supplies, the location and frequency of the MEDCAPS are determined.

Once a MEDCAP team sets up in a village headquarters building, school or other easily accessible location, the Vietnamese interpreter announces their presence and purpose with the aid of a public address system furnished by the accompanying G5 team.

Within a matter of minutes villagers begin ambling into the MEDCAP location. Children are usually the first to come, stimulated primarily by curiosity. Mothers toting their sick youngsters are usually next. They, in turn, are followed by older mama-sans and papa-sans who bear the maladies accompanying old age.

The Vietnamese seem to have more than their share of skin diseases, infections and nagging coughs. Lines are formed and with the aid of the interpreter the villagers describe their afflictions to the doctor.

Those with coughs receive Robitussin, a cough syrup and a supply of Cepacol, a cold tablet, to take home with them. The children, having an apparently greater problem with skin diseases and accompanying infections, have their wounds cleaned with a disinfectant surgical soap and bandaged.

Their mothers are given bottles of the disinfectant, cotton gauze and surgical tape. The interpreter repeats the doctor's instructions explaining to the mother how to administer to the wound. With a sense of relief, smiling mothers noddingly acknowledge the instruction of the interpreter.

In a week they will return to a similar MEDCAP where another doctor and team of medics will re-examine the old wounds and any new ones. To the Vietnamese the fight against disease is a long and continuous struggle, and in a very real sense, division MEDCAPS are their biggest ally.

Infantrymen of the 23rd Infantry Division secure a landing zone for a fast approaching helicopter bringing supplies to a line company operating Northwest of Chu Lai.

(U.S. Army Photo)

Orphans of a WAR and a WORLD they didn't make

Photos by

SP4 Joel M. Andrewjeski

This infantryman from Company C, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry makes his way through some high grass during a combat assault into a VC position during a recent operation in the 196th Infantry Brigade. (U.S. Army Photo by PFC Stephen Belfeld)

Ready Rifles get 10

By SGT Louis Miller

LZ STINSON (198th Bde. IO) – Ten Viet Cong were killed and six more captured as a unit of the 23rd Division's 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry, 198th Infantry Brigade, conducted a successful cordon and search recently of a hamlet south of Chu Lai.

As a platoon from Delta Company was moving into their positions surrounding the hamlet, four enemy soldiers suddenly emerged from two structures.

"Our men had not even had enough time to get into their positions when the four enemy came out," said Captain Perry L. Kyser of Youngstown, Ohio, the company commander. "We opened up with small arms fire and brought down all four when they tried to evadd."

Under the direction of 1st Lieutenant Daniel Boccolucci of Buffalo, N.Y., the platoon swept the area and found one AK-47 rifle and three Chicom hand grenades. Then the men returned to their positions and finished setting up their cordon of the small hamlet.

"When it was light enough, the platoon split up into search teams and entered the hamlet," Cpt. Kyser said. "One team found the gear of one of the Viet Cong who had been killed the night before. We theorized that he must have fallen asleep on guard and left all his gear behind as he attempted to evade."

Another team discovered a bunker in the hamlet and heard talking coming from it. Quickly, the rest of the platoon was called together and the men scaled off the bunker. An interpreter with the unit told the enemy inside to surrender and, after several minutes, two of them did.

"We knew there were still others in the bunker, but they refused to come out," the captain said.

When the stubborn enemy continued to stand fast, the "Ready Rifles" decided to go in after them, behind a barrage of hand grenades and M-16 fire.

When the firing stopped, two Viet Cong emerged with their hands up. The infantrymen then entered the bunker and captured two more Viet Cong and found that they had killed six. Found near the bodies were two AK-47 rifles, one automatic rifle, a pistol and a Chicom hand grenade.

That mede the enemy toll for the entire hamlet search ten enemy killed and six captured.

Weekly total reaches 77

(Continued from page 1)

southwest of Tam Ky found one VC grave. The kill was credited to Company B, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry for previous contact in the area.

While on a sweep southwest of Tam Ky later in the week, Recon platoon, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry were ambushed an NVA force of unknown size. The "Professionals" returned small arms fire and five NVA were killed.

They also captured three AK-47s, 12 AK magazines, four pistol belts and three Chicom grenades. The weapons and equipment were extracted to LZ Young.

Charger 13 of Brigade Aviation while working southwest of Tam Ky towards the end of the week made contact with four NVA. Swooping down from the cloudy sky, the LOH succeeded in killing two of the enemy.

GENEVA PARK

Action during the week increased for the 198th Infantry Brigade as the infantrymen of the "Brave and Bold" killed 25 enemy soldiers and confiscated over 3,000 pounds of enemy rice.

The 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry saw the heaviest action of the week south of Chu Lai. The "Ready Rifles" killed 12 Viet Cong and conviscated a large amount of enemy rice in several actions.

While on patrol, Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry found seven dead Viet Cong. The Viet Cong had been killed by M-16 fire, and it was determined that the enemy soldiers had been killed by Charlie Company in two previous contacts with hostile elements.

Later, Charlie Company engaged and killed a VC evading into a woodline. The "Ready Rifles" then received fire from the woodline, and immediately equested the aid of gunships, from the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, which raked the area with mini-gun fire, killing one Viet Cong. The "Ready Rifles" killed yet another with small arms fire. Four hand grenades were captured in the action.

Early in the week, Charlie Company was inserted into an area of suspected enemy activity. Supporting gunships from Delta Company, from the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry observed a VC evading into a spider hole. The gunships directed the "Ready Rifles" to the enemy location, where they killed one VC and wounded another.

While conducting eagle flight operations, Charlie Company detained three military-age males. The detainees were sent to a nearby LZ for further questioning.

Maneuvering in the same area, Company C found three metal drums that contained 1, 170 pounds of rice. The drums were buried under-ground in a hedgerow. Later the "Ready Rifles" found two metal barrels that contained 920 pounds of polished rice hidden in a hedgerow. All of the rice was extracted to a nearby LZ for redistribution. Charlie Company also found 1,790 pounds of spoiled rice in the same are, which was destroyed.

The "Regulars" of the 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry, killed six Viet Cong in scattered engagements on the Batangan Peninsula southeast of Chu Lai.

While in a night defensive perimeter, Echo Recon, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry engaged and killed one Viet Cong as he neared the "Regulars" perimeter. Captured in the action were an AK-47 magazine.

While on patrol, Company A, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry, observed seven Viet Cong soldiers in a military structure at a distance of 25 meters. The "Regulars" engaged enemy with hand grenades and small arms fire. After the action, the infantrymen entered the structure and found five dead enemy and two wounded. The two wounded enemy were extracted to a Chu Lai hospital. Captured in the action were six Chicom hand grenades.

Action was generally light for the infantrymen of the 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry, as the "Professionals" killed two Viet Cong in separate engagements northwest of Chu Lai.

While moving into a night defensive position, Company D of the battalion engaged and killed a VC on a trail.

A gunship from Bravo Company, 123rd Aviation, operating south of Chu Lai, observed and engaged a Viet Cong walking down a trail. The VC was killed by mini-gun fire.

Gunships from Company D, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, observed a group of Viet Cong south of Chu Lai. An aero-rifle platoon was inserted into the area, and engaged the enemy with small arms fire. The aero-rifle platoon killed four enemy soldiers, and wounded three. The wounded enemy soldiers were extracted to a Chu Lai hospital.

IRON MOUNTAIN

Combat activity was moderate during the past week as the 11th Infantry Brigade "Jungle Warriors" accounted for 18 enemy kills, seven detainees and 15 hootches and caves destroyed.

The 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry led the way this week as they bagged 10 KIA's in various actions throughout the brigade AO.

Charlie Company of the battalion spotted and engaged one VC in the foothills west of Duc Pho. He was killed.

Operating in the foothills west of Duc Pho, Company B, 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry spotted, engaged, and killed one enemy soldier.

Working in the foothills west of Duc Pho, Charlie Company of the Battalion detected three VC hiding in a tunnel. They were engaged with hand grenades, killing all three.

Operating in the same area later, the company engaged and killed a VC.

The next day the company spotted 20 to 30 enemy in the open and engaged with artillery resulting in one VC killed.

About the same time, Bravo Company observed and killed one VC with small arms fire in the foothills west of Duc Pho.

Company B later detected a VC hiding in a tunnel. The enemy was engaged with hand frags and was killed in the action.

The 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry held a close second as they scored five KIA's in a single action northwest of Duc Pho. Recon observed 15 to 20 NVA while in their night defensive position. The infantrymen engaged the NVA killing five of them while the others managed to evade.

The 3rd Battalion, 1st Infantry found one cave with three tunnels in the foothills southwest of Quang Ngai City.

Company A of the Battalion found one cave with three tunnels in the foothills southwest of Quang Ngai City. The caves and tunnels were destroyed.

Company C, 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry engaged two VC in the hills west of Duc Pho resulting in two VC killed. Captured in action were two packs and a SKS. The battalion also accounted for five huts destroyed and five detainees.

PENNSYLVANIA SQUARE

Action was light in the Pennsylvania Square AO for the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry last week. The men of the Army's most battle honored unit killed two enemy soldiers and captured three.

A dismounted patrol from C Troop found 900 pounds of rice behind a false wall in a hootch and later that day captured a VC hiding in a tunnel. Later in the week, C Troop engaged two groups of VC killing one and capturing one. The command and control helicopter after receiving small arms fire killed a VC in a sampan.

Recently, when the rains came, causing floods and flood victims, somebody remembered to help out. These Americal soldiers distribute bags of rice to flood victims a few miles north of Duc Pho.
(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Gregory Wright)

The doll in the picture is June Fairchild who plays Sonny in MGM's current release, "Pretty Maids All In A Row". If the flick ever gets to the big Nam, you can see more of her. (Photo courtesy of MGM)

Americal's Mr. and Mrs. Lieutenant

By SP4 Terry Williamson

CHU LAI, (198th Inf. Bde. IO) – An officer of the 23rd Division's 198th Infantry Brigade, displaying neatly folded towels, ponches, and an assortment of various field equipment, claims that he has the neatest field pack in all of Vietnam. And it's probably because his wife packs it for him.

First Lieutenant Duane C. Whitaker of Council Bluffs, Iowa, a platoon leader with Alpha Company, 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry, and First Lieutenant Linda Whitaker of Worcester, Mass., a staff nurse at 91st Evacuation Hospital are both stationed in Chu Lai, and that simplifies the packing problem – and the homesick problem – for the married couple.

It took a long series of events to allow Linda to be able to pack her husband's field gear in Vietnam. First, they met each other on a blind date while both were stationed at Fort Huachuca, Ariz. The rest of the courtship and the manner in which Linda followed Duane to Vietnam have all the makings of an afternoon soap opera.

"We decided to get married after Duane learned he was being transferred to Fort Ord, Calif.," Linda said. "We were married in Monterrey, and soon afterwards, I managed to be reassigned to Fort Ord also."

Linda had just been at Fort Ord for three weeks when her husband received orders for Vietnam. The nurse looked into the possibility of coming with him, and then volunteered for the tour. She even managed to come over on the same flight.

When the couple arrived in Vietnam, Duane was assigned to the 23rd Division and Linda came through with an assignment to the 91st Evacuation Hospital. Things were falling in place for the couple and they became one of the 20 husband-wife teams to serve together in Vietnam.

"Of course it's not the most perfect situation for us here," Linda said. "Duane spends a lot of time in the field and so we're not together very often. Also, working at the hospital, I'm so close to things that are happening that it gets rather tense at times. It's good, though, because I'm a girl who needs to know what's going on."

"I had my reservations about Linda coming at first," Duane said. "But she wanted to come and now I'm glad she did. It's worked out pretty well for us."

Duane and Linda get to see each other about three days every two weeks, but there is no set schedule when Duane's unit comes to Chu Lai. But Linda, as "the girl who needs to know," usually manages to find out before Duane comes in. Still, it was somewhat of a shock when Duane arrived out of the field the first time.

"You see pictures in the papers that show how dirty the infantrymen get in the field, but you don't really believe it until you see it. That's one thing no wife should ever witness," she said. "Sometimes Duane comes to the hospital with all his gear and says 'Hi, I'm home'. He really looks awful before he cleans up."

Duane gets a kick out of it though. "I think she likes to see me anyway. I like to pop in and see everyone staring at me."

The couple write letters to each other when Duane is in the field. It takes about five days for a letter to go from Linda in Chu Lai to Duane, nearly the same time it would take if Linda were a normal housewife living in the states. And the letters are about the same as any husband-wife correspondence.

Duane says she asks about three times in each letter when he is coming to Chu Lai. Linda says that she gets no important news from Duane, that he just says he'd doing fine. But both still look forward to receiving letters from each other.

It's no secret to the men in Duane's platoon that his wife is nearby. "Everyone knows Linda is in Chu Lai," he said. "When I got here, I didn't think anyone would know, but you work so closely with the people in your platoon that it doesn't take long before everyone knows everyone else's secrets."

"We went to the PX together one time, and about 20 guys stopped us," Linda said "They were from Duane's company and they all wanted to meet me and tease Duane."

For Linda, Vietnam has become a real family affair. She has a cousin, 1st Lieutenant Geraurd O'Rielly, who is also a platoon leader in the 198th Infantry Brigade. Linda's brother, Air Force Sergeant Gary Herbert is stationed in Japan and he makes monthly trips to this area.

When their tours are over, Linda and Duane plan to continue their education at the University of Arizona and hope to travel eventually to Paris for more studies.

The Whitakers, 1st Lieutenants Linda and Duane enjoy a moment together near the South China Sea. Linda is a staff nurse at the 91st Evac. Hospital and Duane is a platoon leader in the 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry. (U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Terry Williamson)

VC supply points in rice paddies , jungles

By SP4 Zin Balaban

HAWK HILL, (196th Inf. Bde. IO) – Out in the jungles and rice paddies of Vietnam there are numerous supply points where enemy soldiers obtain their rations of food and medical supplies. Such places must be well hidden to avoid detection from both ground and aerial observation.

One such supply station was recently discovered by soldiers of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry, 196th Infantry Brigade of the 23rd Infantry Division.

While setting up their day defensive perimeter, Company B's 3rd platoon sent out an element to reach the top of a nearby hill in order to better observe the surrounding area. The point man was searching for an easy way to the top, when he came across a small rice cache.

Upon a closer search of the area it was discovered that the cache consisted of a variety of foods.

"Most of it was under a straw-roof shelter, and the place, as well as the path leading to it, was well camouflaged," said Private First Class Evon E. Pope of Phoeniz City, Ala., a rifleman in the platoon's 2nd squad. "We were just lucky to come across it."

Besides confiscating approximately 500 pounds of rice stored in bins and a 55 gallon drum, and a small mill for the shakedown of the grain, also uncovered in the cache were dried potatoes, peanuts, pepper and spices from old ketchup bottles, various medical supplies and even an old but still usable balance type weighing scale for measuring out rations of food.

"The weighing scales and the various bowls, ammo boxes and sandbags which were probably used for containers for the rations are what makes me believe that this was one of the enemy's resupply points," said Staff Sergeant Phillip C. Simson of Blouchester, N.J., platoon sergeant of the 3rd platoon.

"The enemy is hurting as far as their food supplies are concerned," concluded Sergeant Simson. "Our destroying this supply point put even more pressure on their already poor logistical support."

Soldiers of the 196th Infantry Brigade unload sandbags of salt, which represents only a fraction of the 17 tons of salt captured by Company A, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry (U.S. Army Photo by SP4 John P. Szaynowski)

Worship in field

By SGT Louis Miller

KY TRA, (198th Inf. Bde. IO) -- The infantry platoon--composed of men of various religions--gathered around a makeshift tent somewhere northwest of Chu Lai for a religious service. But, instead of the normal chaplain, the leader of this service was a private first class infantryman.

The services are held each Sunday for--and by--the men of the platoon of the 23rd Division's Company A, 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry, 198th Infantry Brigade. The services were organized by Staff Sergeant Chester Helm from Williamsport, Pa, the platoon sergeant, who realized that monsoon weather would prevent chaplains from coming to the field and thought the next best thing would be for the unit to hold their own services.

"On my first tour in Vietnam there were times when I was scared, so naturally my thoughts turned to religion," said SSG Helm. "I know the men feel the same way so I thought we should hold services every Sunday, even if a chaplain could not lead them."

The problem of finding someone to stand in for the chaplain was quickly solved when the men learned that Private First Class Cleve D. Crabtree of Lucasville, Ohio, was the son of a minister.

"I was sort of glad to be chosen to lead the services", the infantryman said. "After all, I have the background for it."

The platoon carries two Bibles and each week a different selection is chosen for the service, which last only ten or fifteen minutes. Then the service ends with a prayer that was written by PFC Crabtree.

"At first only a few men showed up," PFC Crabtree said. "But now, the entire platoon participates. We really have a close unit."