SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

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Females care about soldiers

By SP4 Larry Rich

CAMP REASONER, (196th Inf. Bde. IO) – As the American assistance to the Republic of Vietnam winds down, fewer people seem to say they're proud of the efforts of the men who wear OD green.

Yet there are a vast number of people throughout the world who care for the individual soldier as a person away from home and loved one. Many of these people show their feelings by writing to servicemen.

Women, long a primary interest to servicemen, predominate the lists of people who write to soldiers overseas. Women of every size, shape and background are represented.

There are several ways for the soldier to increase his correspondence. The United States Organization (USO) clubs are a primary source. The local office of the American Red Cross also receives occasional letters.

Besides individual letters, USO's such as the Freedom Hill USO, located near the headquarters of the 196th Infantry Brigade at Da Nang, offer information about larger efforts to get correspondence with soldiers. These attempts range from a senior social studies class at Elyria High School (Elyria, Ohio) to widespread projects like "Operation Barsy" and the "Vietnam Mail Lady."

"Operation Barsy" was started three years ago by Barsy Cavelty (CP 101, 6600 Locerno, Switzerland). She wanted to show the GI, "That besides your loved ones back in the states, there are quite a lot of people in Europe who really care for you."

Miss Cavelty's efforts have resulted in over 23,000 European pen-pals for American soldiers in Vietnam. These women range from 16 to 30 years of age, and are located throughout Europe. At present she has "over 2000" women for a service man to write.

The Vietnam Mail Lady, Signa O. Jacobson (Rt. 2, Evansville, Wis.) receives 300 or more new letters each week from college girls, nurses, and people from all walks of life, all wanting to write and do things for you (the serviceman).

Mrs. Jacobson's interest in helping soldiers away from home started when she was 16 and writing to servicemen in the Korean War. She was introduced to and later married the brother of one of the men she had been writing.

When Vietnam came, she wrote to the sons of friends. Her offer to write anyone in need of mail got so many replies that she offered some of the letters to daughters of friends.

The girls told their friends and soon Mrs. Jacobson had a waiting list of women wanting to write servicemen. She contacted the Vietnam Mail Lady, then Edith Neal (Iowa), and asked for names of soldiers.

Because of failing health, Mrs. Neal asked Mrs. Jacobson if she would take over the position of Vietnam Mail Lady.

A large part of her duties are to connect servicemen with people who want to write them. She also mimeographs a news letter containing jokes, sports reviews and lists of pen-pals.

Some women prefer to send recorded tapes instead of letters. Often record albums can be obtained in this way. Home-baked cookies and snapshots are also available to the persuasive letter writer.

continued on page 6

2 Americal soldiers due up to $2000 VRB in 11B

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. IO) – At least two 23d Infantry Division soldiers have up to $2000 coming to them as a result of increased Variable Reenlistment Bonus (VRB) in MOS 11B.

According to Sergeant First Class James E. Gates, recently named "trouble shooter" and question and answer man in the Division Reenlistment and Career Counseling Office, 11B is one of nine MOS skills within career group 11 and 13 authorized payment of VRB-4.

The upgrade in VRB, effective July 1, was announced in a message received here in mid-July. The two light weapons infantrymen who have additional money coming to them were reenlisted after July 1, but before the DA message was received by the Division Reenlistment Office.

Personnel with the following MOS designations now qualify for VRB-4 for the first term reenlistment: 11B, C, D, E, F and H; 13A, B, and E.

Gates noted that this bonus could amount to as much as $10,000 for an E-5 or above who is eligible, and up to $8000 for those eligible personnel in grade E-4 or below.

The changes outlined in the DA message will be incorporated in AR 600-200, "Enlisted Personnel Management System."

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. IO) -- Miss America and her court are tentatively scheduled to grace Chu Lai August 15.

The Miss America troop will present a show consisting of singing and dancing. The Miss America Court is comprised of several contestants from last year's beauty contest title.

Commander of the week

Whitman heads 523d Sig

By SP4 Mike Cassidy

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. IO) – Captain Donald E. Whitman, (Mill Hill, Pa.) gives an impression of being a easy going man, but at the same time, as his record shows, a very vigorous person.

Whitman commands Company A, 523d Signal Battalion, which provides communication for Headquarters, 23d Infantry Division (Americal). He is also the divisions Commander of the Week.

He is very proud of his men and the work they do. When asked for his ideal of leadership, he said, "Good leadership is having people do what you want with the minimum of supervision."

In August 1966, Whitman enlisted in the Army. He trained as an MP at Ft. Gordon, Ga., and eventually attained the rank of Specialist Fifth Class. Not content with being an enlisted man, he applied and was accepted for the Signal Officer Candidate School at Ft. Gordon in 1967.

His first overseas tour took him to Vietnam in 1968. He was assigned to the Communication Center Company, 44th Signal Battalion, where he was a platoon leader. Later he became the company commander of the battalion's Headquarters Company.

Shortly after his return to the United States, he was promoted to captain. He had another overseas tour as commander of Company C, 440th Signal Battalion in Germany.

Concerning his military career, Whitman believes, "If people build themselves a career while they are in the Army instead of just taking what is dished out to them, they could be a lot happier while they are in."

Like all servicemen, the captain is anxious to return home, especially to his bride of last September, Joanne.

This Cobra gunship is caught in mid-air as he maneuvers in for a run. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

Case 1

Private First Class Michael P. Dumas, 176th Aviation Company, 14th Aviation Battaion, was tried by General court-martial on July 13 for possessing and wrongfully selling heroin. He was convicted and sentenced to a dishonorable discharge, confinement at hard labor for four years, forfeiture of all pay and allowances and reduction to Private (E-1).

Case 2

Private (E-1) Leo J. Frasheski, 178th Aviation Company, 14th Aviation Battaion, was tried by General court-martial on July 13 for wrongfully communicating a threat, lifting up a weapon against a superior commissioned officer and pointing a dangerous weapon at a person. He was convicted and sentenced to a dishonorable discharge, confinement at hard labor for three years and forfeiture of all pay and allowances.

Case 3

On July 15, Specialist Four Rodrigo Pechay was tried by General court-martial for wrongful possession of heroin and marijuana and for selling heroin. He was found guilty and sentenced to a dishonorable discharge, confinement at hard labor for five years, total forfeitures and reduction to Private (E-1).

Case 4

Private (E-1) Curtis Dixon Jr. was tried by General court-martial on July 16 for lifting a weapon towards a superior commissioned officer and firing an M-16 at his superior commissioned officer. He was found guilty of lifting a weapon towards his superior commissioned officer and sentenced to a bad conduct discharge, confinement at hard labor for three years and total forfeitures.

Case 5

On July 17, Private (E-2) Bobby L. Graham, 335th Transportation Company was tried by Special court-martial. He was found guilty of being AWOL, leaving his appointed place of duty, being in an off limits area, being disrespectful toward his superior commissioned officer, offering violence towards his superior commissioned officer and being disrespectful towards and NCO. He was entenced to be discharged from the service with a bad conduct discharge, forfeit $101 pay per month for six months, confined at hard labor for five months and to be reduced to the rank of Private (E-1).

A work party (why they call it a party, we're not sure) at FSB Dottie is trying to coax a 55 gallon drum full of dirt onto a truck. These "Jungle Warriors" of the 11th Infantry Brigade were rebuilding the blast walls around the Brigade TOC. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY CPT JOHN J. HOLLINGSWORTH)

'Mike' boats carry dozers

By SP5 Daniel McVann

CHU LAI, (39th Engr. Bn. 10) – Dozers with water wings? Not quite, but if that's what it would take to accomplish the job, rest assured the 59th Engineer Company would have used them.

For the 39th Engineer Battalion's 59th Engr. Company, life has been one continual move. The 59th has been improvising and "making do" all over northern Vietnam. The domain of the unit has extended from the Laotian border and Khe Sanh south through I Corps. But even for the 59th, this last job was most unique.

It is the accepted norm for land clearing companies to make their own roads, cutting through trees and hedgerows with their Rome plow blades opening their own private drive to their next working area.

Assigned to assist the 39th's Company C, the 59th Engr. Company was unable to span a marshy, watercovered area with their huge, 25 ton D7E dozers, and using floating bridges was scrapped because the water was much to shallow. It was time for the men of the 59th Engr. Company to try something new–even for them.

Boarding four of their dozers into two "mike" boats, the unit departed the Chu Lai docks heading out to the South China Sea. On the "mike" boats, which resemble the LST's of World War II, the men prepared for their rendezvous with their Vietnamese security force.

Following a two hour rolling ride, they arrived off-shore at the planned beach. They could see the Regional Forces awaiting them. The landing had been perfectly planned and executed--or so they thought.

Starting towards shore, however, the boats abruptly ran around approximately 100 meters offshore.

Backing off the sand bar, they proceeded a half mile farther up shore before they were able to beach the craft.

The job itself was accomplished in near record time. Now the 59th Engr. Company has been attached to the 84th Engineer Battalion in Da Nang. Still, before leaving the 39th Engr. Bn., the 59th Engr. Company had earned another first, not "jump wings" but rather unique "water wings."

1-82d did their part in operation LAMSON

By SP4 Wendell P. Hautanigmi

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. Arty. I0) – Operation LAMSON 719 is over. Six miles east of Khe Sanh is a barren patch of dry land that rises above the forest. For a time, this was LZ Vandegrift, temporary home of the 1st Battalion, 82d Field Artillery.

During the operation, they fired an average of 600 rounds per day. Heavy enemy contact began in the early hours of the morning. During night fire missions, illumination rounds were fired continuously. At dawn an aerial observer came in to pinpoint and direct high-explosive fire on the enemy.

After each mission, the Howitzer was cleaned and serviced. It would be needed many more times that day and again that night. Incoming rounds were a very real hazard to the artilleryman. He had to knock out the source of the shells before any serious damage was done to his position.

"Gun-Bunnies" had a tough job, alright. They missed the conveniences of base camp. They missed the clean, dry place to work, and the lights in the hootch for evening relaxation.

Morale was high, in spite of the conditions, in the line batteries as well as at headquarters. There was a sense of purpose in the work, and the men felt it. They all worked together for that purpose.

What has been accomplished? They moved an entire battalion from Chu Lai to LZ Vandegrift with a minimum of compications. They saw how it was to operate under field conditions. During security patrols along the perimeter one night, members of Headquarters Battery killed 59 enemy soldiers, and three sappers.

The intangible benefits were more difficult to determine. Many of Vandegrift's crew left with a new awareness of themselves, and the guys they worked with. Some even felt the kind of satisfaction found only in a job well done.

Chaplain baptises sergeant in Vietnam river waters

By PFC Patrick Ross

CHU LAI (39th Engr. Bn. I0) – With the South China Sea glittering in the sunlight on the horizon, members of the 39th Engineer Battalion's 59th and 137th Companies gather on a bridge they are working on.

The bridge is located on a stretch of secondary road, Route 521, about two miles past Night Defensive Position (NDP) Knight, near My Lai. Attention is focused on two men standing on the bank of the river which runs below the bridge. One of the men is Captain Billy D. Ingram, the battalion chaplain, while the other is Sergeant James L. Parker (Roseboro, N.C.) and is assigned to Company C.

The mood is silent and tranquil, for the men were participating in a very special and sincere ceremony, a baptism conducted in the field.

With the example of John's baptism of Christ fixed in their minds, they watched Chaplain Ingram and Parker cautiously step down into the smoothly running water. With only the noise of the water breaking the silence, Chaplain Ingram then lowered Parker into the water and out again, a cleansed man.

For those gathered, this baptism was a very special moment. Here was a man being baptized in the river waters of a war-torn nation, taking the time to dedicate his life and sharing this meaningful experience with others.

These 'Untouchables' nab the heroin user

By CPT George F. Bennett

DA NANG, (196th Inf. Bde. 10) – With the siren blaring, the vehicle roars through the streets screeching to a stop at its destination.

Similar to the "Untouchables" of the "Roaring 20's", the men leap from the vehicle and spring into action searching every square inch of the targeted area. Like Elliot Ness's men, this team is dedicated to eliminating the gangsters.

These men are, nevertheless, unlike their 1920 counterparts. Their search is not for booze, but a far greater nemesis–HEROIN.

Their vehicle is not a Model T Ford, but a deuce-and-a-half truck. And they are not T men, but ordinary soldiers who have a deep concern for their fellow men. This time the gangsters aren't the rum runners–they're the addicts and pushers of narcoties.

Of Elliot Ness were alive, he might well be proud of the newly organized heroin squad of 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry. This squad, under the direction of the battalion's newly appointed executive officer, Major John F. O'Brien (Columbus, Ga,), is amassing tremendous statistics.

The clear plastic five gallon water container, which hangs in the headquarters, can attest to the results. The container is just one-fifth full, yet 441 vials line the bottom. In less than one week of existance, the Untouchables have confiscated 441 vials plus other assorted drug paraphernalia.

Not all the vials had heroin in them when they were confiscated. Only 136 were full, but the problem is identified and the vice is tightening. With the never ending pressure, the price was driven from $3 to $12.50 per vial.

Each night at different hours, the same scene is reenacted as the Untouchables meet to plan their next raid. They saunder into the clandestine headquarters in small groups in anxious anticipation. The flow of adrenalin quickens as they huddle around the map. Captain Peyton F. Ligon (Canton, N.C.), the plans officer for the squad, discusses the prospective raid. Bits of intelligence gathered from informers are exchanged. Captain walter W. Lucus (Spokane, Wash.) advises on the legal ramifications. Suddenly, a finger strikes out and lands on the target. With blitz-like precision, the squad moves out for the kill.

The "Polar Bears" of the 4th Bn., 31st Inf. are most definitely putting the freeze on the drug traffic. "The drug squad has vowed to dry up the drug problem, and they can't be intimidated," stated O'Brien.

Nightly raids and sudden searches aren't the only methods employed by the "Polar Bears". Weekly brainstorming meetings, composed of junior enlisted men, are held to thrash out the problem and develop ways of getting to the source.

Each man coming into the battalion is personally counciled by the executive officer, chaplain and battalion surgeon. Then he is assigned a "good guy" (person known not to be on drugs) as a sponsor.

But the program doesn't stop there. Ways to constantly follow-up and constructively occupy the mans' time are being devised.

"I've spent ten of my 23 years in the Army as an enlisted man." continues O'Brien. "I know what they need and dictate myself, as does the heroin squad, to helping the little man--the grunt."

Action by the Untouchables has led to the arrest of four GI pushers, two Vietnamese pushers, and four addicts. The number on the amnesty program has significantly increased. Five others are working directly with the squad in an attempt to get the "Jonses" (Monkey) off their backs.

O'Brien won't give away all his trade secrets, but he did consent to list a couple of traits: A "Mainliner' will always have a canteen of fresh water available and will not have his sleeves rolled up. An addict will also drink an extremely large amount of Cokes to take care of the sugar craving.

"I was told by one addict that he had the stuff under the barracks because an officer wouldn't crawl under there," mused O'Brien. "Well, the squad and I will go anywhere and do anything to lick the problem and help the troops."

One suggestion which had emanated from the brainstorming, is total insolation. This would be a complete isolation of the entire battalion for a period of days to enable total idetification.

Another valid suggestion along the same lines as the battalion isolation, is having a hospital ship sent to Vietnam. Even in hospitals, the addicts might maintain their habits. By having the ship, total isolation would be achieved.

Of course, the hard-core addicts and pushers aren't taking all the harassment without doing something. Threats of intimidation can be seen throughout the battalion area by reading the graffito.

Regardless of how the chips fall, the Untouchables of the 4th Bn., 31st Inf. have a purpose and dedication that won't quit. They are demonstrating that old adage, "The Army helps its own."

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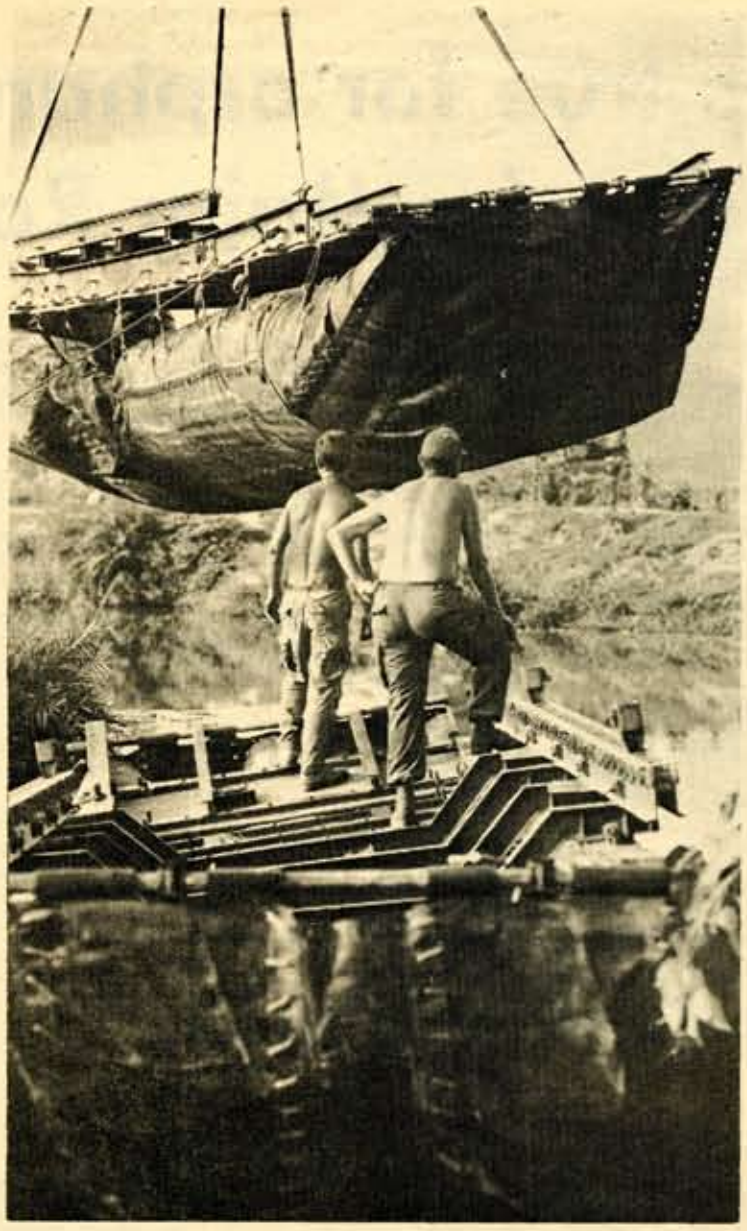
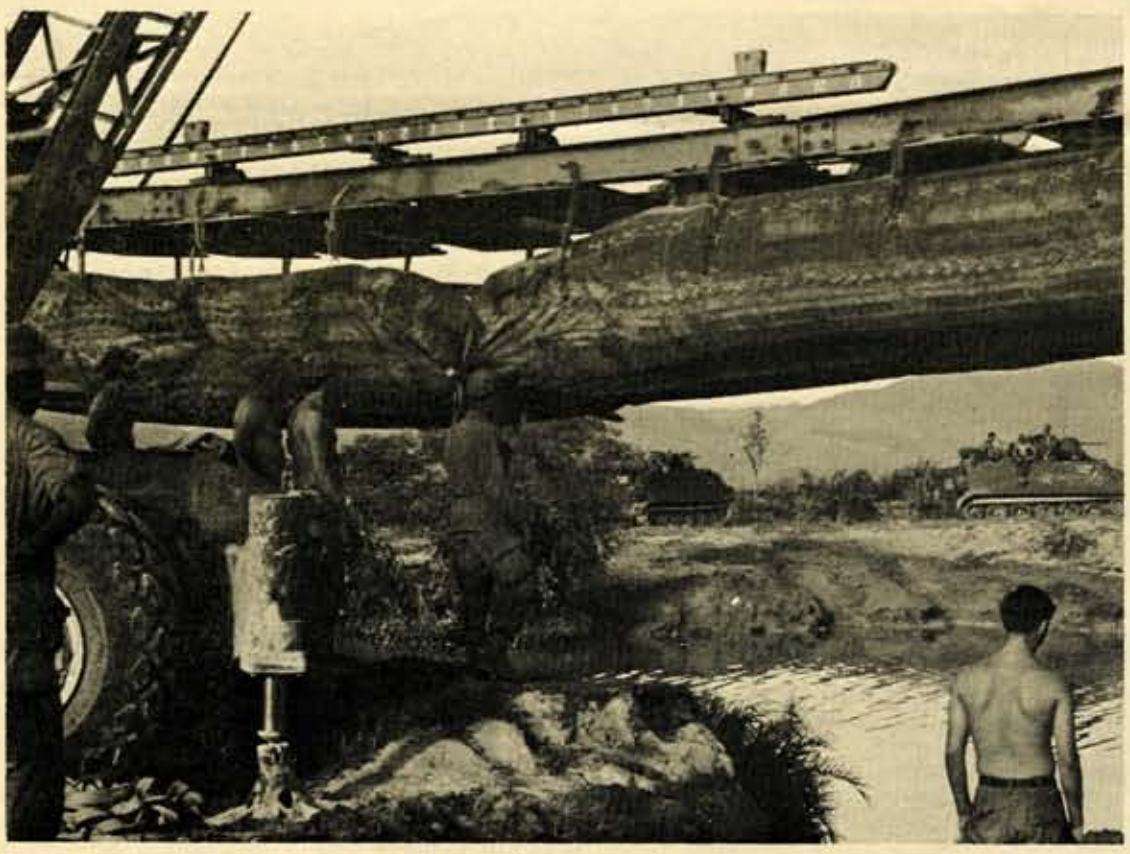




Photos by Captain John J. Hollingsworth

SP4 Hankins acts speedily to save women beneath truck

By SP5 Daniel McVann

CHU LAI, (39th Engr. Bn. 10) – Enroute to a project site at Chu Lai, Specialist Four Laster Hankins (Ft. Benton, Mont.) was instrumental in rescuing a Vietnamese woman beneath the wheels of a 2½ ton truck.

Hankins, assigned to the 39th Engineer Battalion's Company A as a bucket leader, was following a cement mixer truck to the work site when the truck stopped and Specialist Four Richard Magill (Chicago, Ill.) also of Company A, raced back to Hankins on the bucket loader and explained the crisis.

A Vietnamese woman was pinned beneath the duals of a 2½ ton truck, could he help? Acting instinctively, Hankins wheeled the bucket loader around the cement truck with Magill still clinging to the ladder on the bucket loader.

By approaching from the rear of the truck, Hankins was able to raise the trucks' dual tires clear of the seriously injured woman with the lifting "teeth" of his loader. Two unidentified GIs pulled the woman from beneath the truck and rendered first aid until the ambulance arrived.

The military police arrived within minutes, taking charge of the incident. Hankins was just beginning to realize that it had been his actions that had been the deciding factor in rescuing the woman.

TOP LEFT: Members of the 26th Engineers watch another section of a floating bridge inch toward a creek south of Nghai Hanh. The engineers were supporting the opening of Minh Long Road and had to provide a bridge for "Dusters" to cross.

TOP RIGHT: A 2½ ton truck crosses the floating bridge constructed by the 26th Engineers as part of Minh Long Road construction.

BOTTOM LEFT: Cavalry units in the background needed a cross for this creek, which the engineers provided.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Two dozers from the engineers cut a path along the Minh Long Road so the "Dusters" in the background can negotiate a creek crossing.

A surprise comes true for orphanage, a dream comes true for Major Ross

By SP4 Mike Cassidy

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. IO) – It was a surprise for the children of Quang Ngai Catholic Orphanage and an impossible dream come true for Major Kenneth L. Ross (Colorado Springs, Colo.), the S-3 of Company B, 523d Signal Battalion, and for the members of the Knights of Columbus Council No. 4815 in Old Bridge, N. J.

Ross and the men of Company B presented the orphanage with 18 cartons of inflatable toys, games, building sets, dolls and stuffed animals. The orphanage is a regular project for the officers and men.

In the first part of November last year, the major wrote a letter to Council No. 4815 asking if they would contribute Christmas toys for the children of Captain Rod Memorial Orphanage in Duc Pho. Ross, a former member of the council, describes it as "the best council on the East Coast."

He had a three year assignment as ROTC instructor at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, N.J., until he was transferred to Vietnam. At the time of the letter, he was signal officer for the 11th Brigade's Jungle Warriors". The council replied that the toys were on their way by air freight.

Later that month Ross received a MARS call from Ft. Juanchuca, Ariz., asking which orphange the toys were to be given to. Everything seemed to be on schedule. Knowing the orphanage and the Knights were depending on him, the major called the air freight office in Da Nang every day asking if the shipment had arrived.

As time grew short he discussed his problem with Rev. James Shiel, 11th Brigade chaplain. Father Shiel simply said to "have faith." Christmas was arriving in a few days, but the toys had not. To Ross' surprise, the chaplain donated a shipment of toys which was distributed on time to the orphans, complete with Santa Claus.

The problem of the first shipment was still unsolved. An inquiry through the Red Cross in mid-January discovered that the toy shipment was pending clearance from the Civil Aeronautics Board. A letter from Vince Abousslmen, Grand Knight of the council, said that they were trying everything to have the toys delivered, but it would be at least Easter before they arrived.

To further complicate matters, the 11th Brigade headquarters were moved to Dong Ha near the DMZ to coordinate Operation LAMSON 719. "I had almost given up when the 11th Brigade moved north, because I didn't expect to return to Duc Pho," said Ross. Fortunately the toys were not lost because the shipment was addressed directly to him.

March brought a six month retation to the 523d Signal Battalion in Chu Lai. Another inquiry through the Red Cross reported that the toys were on their way by sea to Saigon. The toys finally arrived in Vietnam. They would go by sea to Da Nang and then by truck to Chu Lai.

Ross would finally receive the toys but they would not be going to the intended orphanage. While home on leave in April, Ross called Abousslemen and explained the predicament of not being in Duc Pho.

The major watched nervously as a dream that took eight months to realize, came true. At 8 a.m. the convoy of 60 men and seven vehicles prepared to leave for the orphanage. Though it is only a 30 mile trip, it took over an hours. On the way, the convoy traveled over the level northern reaches of the rice bowl, which is fringed by hills and mountains so steep as to appear out of a drawing.

A procession of trucks and jeeps alowed for less powerful forms of transportation: cows, water buffalo, three-wheeled busses and bicycles.

The streets of the hamlets and villages, crowed with motor bikes, pedestrians and animals, stopped the convoy long enough for the GI's to exchange waves with the villagers.

As the first vehicle rolled onto the orphanage grounds, the cheers of the children started. The toys were gradually given out. Small stuffed animals went to the tots in the nursery, and inflatable toys and dolls to the older children.

There were many red-faced GI's, after they blew up a two-foot, clown-faced balloon. The smiles on the faces of the children as they played with their new toys showed the major that the eight months of effort had been a success.

As a Spanish major at Washington and Jefferson College, Washington, Pa., Ross wrote an honors thesis on Don Quixote. Speaking of the day at the orphange, he commented, "You might say this was my impossible dream come true."

Story and Photos by SP4 Mike Cassidy

TOP: An "impossible dream" comes true as Major Kenneth L. Ross, S-3 523d Signal Bn., gives a stuffed toy to a child at the Quang Ngai Catholic Orphanage.

BOTTOM: SP5 Russell C. Hauri (right), HHC, 523d Signal Bn. and SP4 William R. Klaus, Company B, 523d Signal Bn., affix chains for a swing while a friend checks the sturdiness of the structure. The swings were a gift to the orphanage from Major William M. Alexander, executive officer of the 523d Signal Bn.

196th Brigade reports 24 kills in action

DA NANG (196th Inf. Bde. IO) – The "Chargers" of the 196th Infantry Brigade accounted for 24 enemy deaths, and uncovered several enemy caches in moderate action.

F Troop, 8th Cavalry, while on an air cavalry mission early this week, inserted the Blues into an area west of Da Nang. The Blues swept the area and observed two VC soldiers evading northwest. They engaged the enemy with small arms fire, killing both enemy soldiers. Two rucksacks containing miscellaneous clothing, 12 rice knives and a small amount of medical supplies were captured in the action. The captured supplies were extracted to Da Nang.

Later the same day, while working in an area southwest of Da Nang, Company A, 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry, engaged three VC soldiers with small arms fire. As a result, one enemy soldier was killed as the others evaded west.

F Troop, 17th CAvalry, while working with the 116th PFs (Popular Forces), observed four to five VC soldiers approximately 350 meters west of their position. They engaged the enemy with small arms fire and processed artillery on the enemy's location. The PFs then swept the area and found three VC soldiers killed in the action, and detained another. The detainee was taken to Da Nang for questioning.

The reconnaissance element of 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., while on patrol southwest of Da Nang, came across a structure next to a cave. The cave was searched and the "Gimlets" found 50 pounds or rice, one AK-50, 150 rounds of AK-47 ammunition, three RPG boosters, three RPG tail assemblies, miscellaneous clothing and eight Chicom grenades. The AK-50 was extracted to a nearby LZ and the rest destroyed.

While on patrol west of Da Nang, F Troop, 17th Cav. found two 122mm rockets and 190 pounds of rice. The rice was inedible and was destroyed, along with the rockets.

B Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, while in their night defensive position early this week, received five RPG rounds and observed four VC soldiers evading southwest. "Blue Ghost" was on station and spotted an unknown size enemy force. "Blue Ghost" engaged the enemy, killing two as the others evaded.

Company B, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry, while patroling west of Da Nang this week, found two caves containing 680 pounds of rice. The rice was extracted to Da Nang.

A LOH from F Troop, 8th Cavalry, while on a VR (visual reconnaissance) mission received small arms fire from a structure. Gunships, which were flying with the LOH, then engaged and destroyed the structure. The VR ship later observed another structure and engaged and destroyed it. The Blues were inserted and swept the area, finding a cave containing 500 to 600 pounds of rice. Due to the technical situation, the rice was unable to be extracted and was destroyed.

While checking an artillery impact area this week, Company C, 3d Bn., 21st Inf. found one AK-47 rifle with two magazines containing 60 rounds, and five rucksacks containing two ammunition pouches, four magazines with 80 rounds, one Chicom grenade, one 9mm pistol belt with clip, two canteens, one mess kit, an unknown amount of NVA money, 30 pounds of rice and one civilian ID card. The entire find was extracted to a nearby LZ.

Company C, 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., while patroling an area west of Da Nang, spotted six enemy soldiers moving to their front. They engaged the enemy with small arms fire, killing three as the others evaded northwest.

While on patrol this week, the 116th RFs (Regional Forces) found a tunnel that had collapsed because of artillery fire. Upon searching the tunnel, the RFs uncovered the bodies of 12 VC soldiers. The kills were credited to Alpha Battery, 3rd Battalion, 16th Artillery, for fire missions.

Bravo Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, while patroling an area west of Da Nang, found 300 pounds of marijuana hidden under a parachute. The find was destroyed.

Company B, 1st Bn., 46th Inf., while on patrol west of Da Nang, found one enemy structure containing 1000 pounds of rice stored in sandbags. The rice was extracted to Da Nang.

Later, in the same area, Company D, 1st Bn., 46th Inf., while on a search and clear mission, discovered two cache sites containing 100 pounds of rice. Five hundred pounds of the rice was inedible and was destroyed, while the remaining 500 pounds was extracted to Da Nang.

While in their day defensive position this week, Company G, 75th Rangers, had a mechanical ambush detonate. Upon checking the area, they found one dead VC soldier and recovered one AK-47 rifle.

F Troop, 8th Cav., while on an air cavalry mission late this week, inserted the Blues into an area west of Da Nang. The Blues swept the area and captured an enemy soldier hiding in a cave. A search of the cave uncovered one SKS, one 9mm pistol, four rucksacks, one AK-47 magazine, 15 rounds of AK ammunition, three sets of NVA fatigues, nine batteries, a metal box containing 21 radio tubes, 200 feet of detonator wire, miscellaneous medical supplies, assorted food stuff and various cooking utensils. The enemy soldier and all the supplies were extracted to Da Nang.

Several persons on this Sheridan tank seem to be taking it easy as it maneuvers through shallow water. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY CPT JOHN J. HOLLINGSWORTH)

'Brave and Bold' see light action

CHU LAI (198th Inf. Bde. IO) – Action was light last week in the 198th Infantry Brigade AO (area of operations) as infantrymen and a ranger element killed ten enemy soldiers and captured four enemy weapons.

The meat of the action occurred in the 4th Battalion, 3d Infantry's AO northwest of Chu Lai. The "Old Guard" accounted for eight enemy soldiers killed and one captured weapon.

While working northwest of Chu Lai, Alpha Company, 4th Bn., 3d Inf. engaged a group of VC soldiers, killing one. After following a blood trail for a short distance, they engaged and killed two more VC soldiers. A further search of the area revealed four military structures and two bunkers. The infantrymen assualted the area with hand grenades, killing four more VC soldiers.

Also working in the same AO, Charlie Company, 4th Bn., 3d Inf. engaged and killed one VC soldier and captured one rucksack containing 50 pounds of rice and two gallons of cooking oil. The items were extracted to a near LZ.

While on a patrol in the same area later in the week, Charlie Company found and extracted one 51 caliber machinegun without a tripod or barrel and five picks.

Near the same area, while on patrol, Company B, 4th Bn., 3d Inf., found and destroyed 200 engineer stakes, ten ammunition cans, five batteries, two sleeping positions and assorted clothing.

While patroling northwest of Chu Lai, an element of Delta Company, 4th Bn., 3d Inf., found and destroyed two structures, 20 pounds of corn, cooking utensils and a small quantity of beansand potatoes.

While working in an area west of Chu Lai, Ranger teams from the 198th Brigade engaged a small group of NVA soldiers. Two enemy soldiers were killed and one AK-47 rifle, one carbine rifle, 25 pounds of rice and seven pounds of peas were captured and later extracted to a nearby LZ.

While in their night defensive position west of Chu Lai, a long range recon team engaged suspected enemy movement near their perimeter. The sweep of the area netted one dead bear weighing 400 pounds.

Gunships from Delta Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry engaged and destroyed six military structures and four bunkers with miniguns and rockets during a week's action west of Chu Lai.

Bravo Company, 1st Bn., 6th Inf., while patroling west of Chu Lai, found and extracted one AK-47 rifle.

Females care about soldiers

continued from page 1

For the soldier who gets little at mail call, the women offer a chance to share his experiences and thoughts with someone back in the "world." They also offer an excellent opportunity to broaden the GI's list of acquaintances.

The attitude of the women is reflected by 17 year-old Jeanein Mihm (Lowler, Iowa). "My friends brother came home from Vietnam recently," she writes, "and he said it'd get really lonely down there. So I felt that if any guy over there is lonely, I'd write to him. I believe that there are enough people in the world without anyone being lonely."

This SFC beats the bush at 40

By 1LT Frank B. Easterly

DA NANG (196th Inf. Bde. IO) – Most people feel that if you're beating the bush as an infantry grunt when you hit 40 years-of-age, you ought to find something a little more relaxing to do.

Luckily for the 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry and the 196th Infantry Brigade, Sergeant First Class Loan D. Payne (San Diego, Calif.) is not a man to rest on his laurels.

"He doesn't look old and he sure doesn't act old," a team leader in the 4th Bn., 31st Inf.'s recon platoon replied when asked about his platoon sergeant. "But the facts are that he's been telling everyone he's 39 for about three years."

Currently the acting platoon leader for the "Polar Bear's" recon platoon, Payne is easily recognizable. With his towering six foot three inch frame, bushy golden moustache and soft-spoken manner, he looks like a cowboy out of the old West.

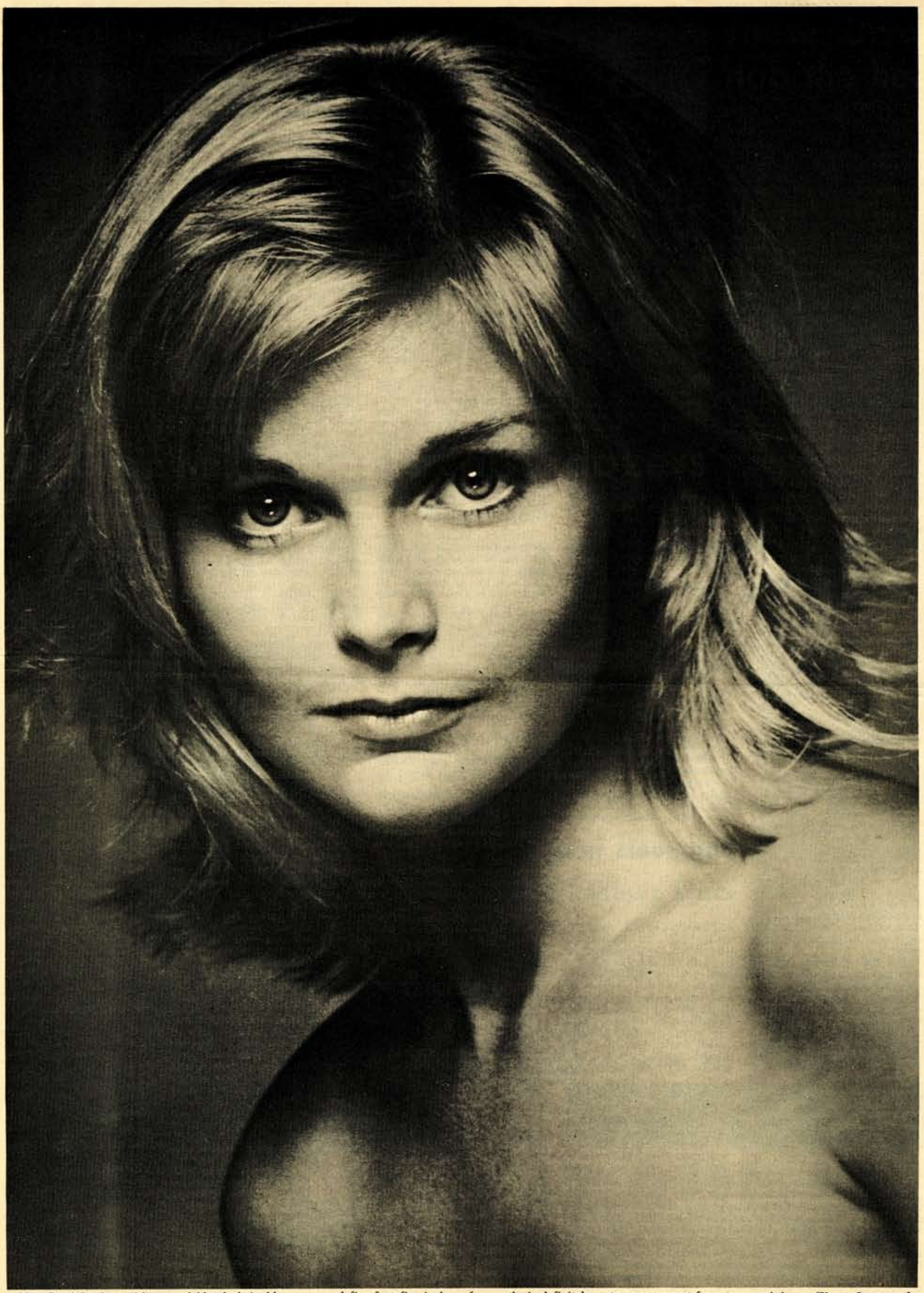
However, if someone does a foolish or unsafe act, he regrets that he even thought about it. Payne's usually genial nature can become as fiery as his red hair.

"The men have to realize that I am in a position of leadership," Payne explained. "Once that is established, the rest cames very easily."

His philosophy is "You lead by example." The example he has set as a senior NCO is an enviable one. By not leaning on the weight of his rank and by working along side his men, he has earned their faith and trust. They have given him the nickname "Pops," more out of respect than anything else.

"He hasn't got time for those who talk about what they do to be an effective leader," one of his men stated proudly. "He simply gets out there and does it with us and never says a word about it."

If a man's highest testimonial is from those he works with, Payne is truly a man who leads with actions rather than words.



Miss Carol Lynley, with natural blonde hair, blue eyes, and five feet five inches of warmth, is definitely a strong argument for a two week leave. (Photo Courtesy Jay Bernstein Public Relations)

Major Charles E. Getz (Prattville, Ala.), former commanding officer of the 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry, receives his fifth award during the recent change of command ceremony at Firebase Stinson. Colonel Pham Van Nghin, commanding officer of the 6th ARVN Regiment, is presenting a Cross of Gallentry with gold star to the major. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 MICHAEL J. CASSIDY)

They go see quacks at 2nd Bn, 1st Inf

By SP4 Larry Rich

CAMP PURDUE, (196th Inf. Bde. IO) – When a soldier in the 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry, 196th Infantry Brigade, says he's going to the aid station to see the quacks, that's exactly what he means.

He isn't making a judgement of Army medics. He just wants to see "DEROS" and "Re-Up," the mascot ducks of the medic platoon.

When the medical platoon moved to the Da Nang area," Staff Sergeant William Gill (Colorado Springs, Col.) said, "they found that the Marines had built a small concrete pond. It was located in front of the building we were planning to use as and aid station."

The medics began thinking of ways to use the pond. Fish were discounted because the chlorinated water would kill them. Several other uses were suggested, including a duck pond.

The day before he retated, their platoon sergeant went into Da Nang and brought two ducks. He presented them to the medics as a going away present in reverse.

Finding themselves with two dirty, underfed ducks and an empty pond, the medics started to build a suitable place for their mascots to live. A white pickett fence was placed around the banana stalks were planted to provide shade.

"The men built a shelter and covered it with psychedelic designs," Gill said, "But the ducks prefer to live outside. We change the water every other day, so they spend their time swimming and getting fat."

"Legionnaires" show little surprise when they hear the flap of wings and raucous cries issuing from the aid station area. They know it's just the local quacks messing around again.

26th Engineers have problems building road near Quang Ngai

By SP4 Kerry R. Baird

NGHIA HANH, (26th Engr. Bn. IO) – The first platoon of Charlie Company, 26th Engineer Battalion, 23d Infantry Division (Americal) arrived at Nghia Hanh about 10km southwest of Quang Ngai City to build a new road.

The road runs from Nghia Hanh for a distance of 6km and ends at OP (observation post) Warrior.

The engineers built the road for the dual purposes of opening up the area for the local people and to make the resupply of OP Warrior easier. The road follows the Song Phuoc River, which was the main "highway" for the people before the engineers came.

The new road adds an extra factor of mobility to the lives of the people now. The first quarter mile was an existing road which was improved to take truck traffic. The next two miles was a foot path which the engineers bulldozed and graded into road. The last mile of the road was completely new construction through dense brush and rice paddies.

Platoon Sergeant James Holman, (Springfield, Ore.) said, "We had to move about 15,000 yards of earth onto the road. That's a lot of hauling!" (It works out to about 1875 dump truck loads) The material that they use is a red soil called laterite. When compacted it makes an extremely solid roadway.

The engineers bridged the Song Phuoc Giang River in two places to supplement the ford which was already there. Echo Company, 26th Engr. Bn. brought in a flotation foot bridge which the Charlie Company engineers helped to install. The other bridge will accomodate traffic up to a 2½ ton truck.

Most of the men of the 1st Platoon enjoyed working on the project. Specialist Four Charles Alston (New York) said, "I'd rather be here than back in Duc Pho (their home base). There aren't any projects like this back there."

The engineers were not without their problems. Just after they set up their night defensive position (NDP), OP Ralph, they were hit by a typhoon. The OP quickly developed into a mud hole three feet deep, which frequently threatened the swallow five-ton dump trucks whole.

The dozer operators soon became proficient at pulling trucks out of the mud. The road was also hard-hit by the typhoon. The laterite had turned into a thick, gooey layer of mud, which was almost impossible to drive on. During the course of one day, four dump trucks were pulled out of ditches.

The weather stayed bad throughout the entire operation, and the engineers began to take the mud in stride. The drivers were more careful; the dozer operators were always looking for trucks that were stuck and a truck in motion was given a wide berth by everyone on the road.

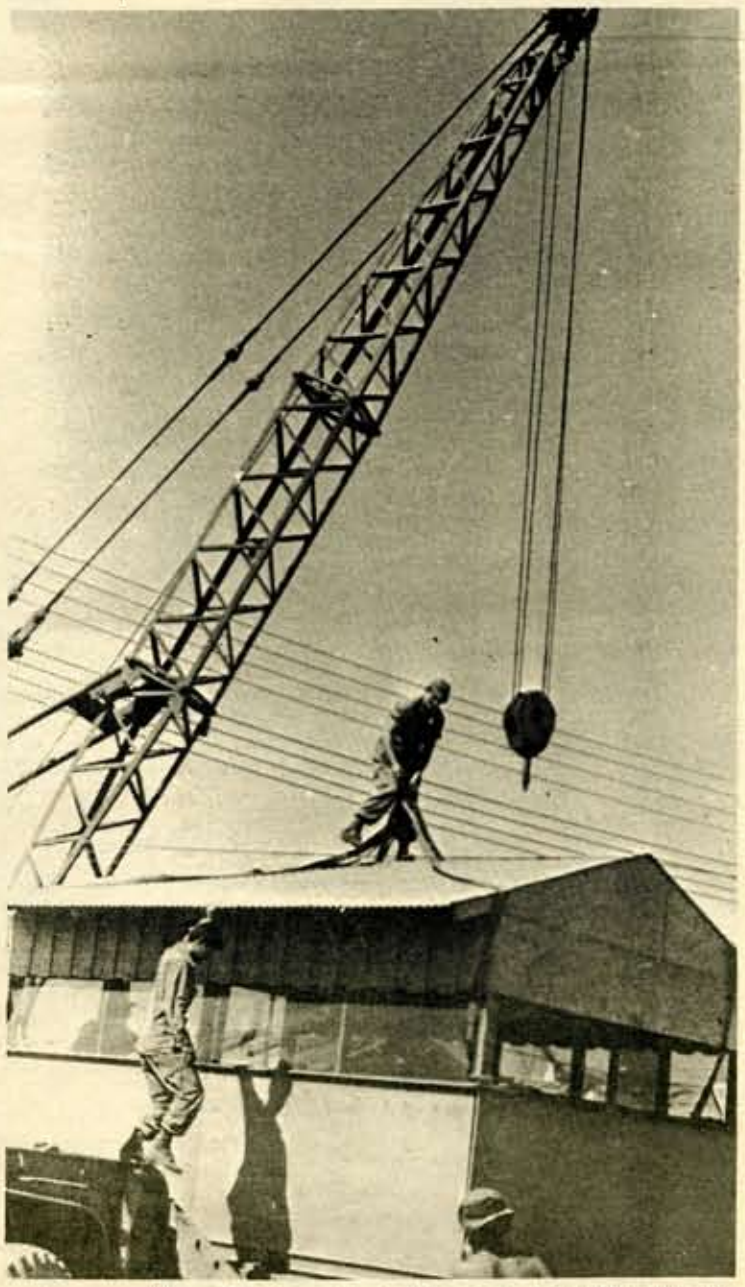
The engineers had other worries. Several old concrete bridges built by the French on the first section of the road were not strong enough to hold the weight of a bulldozer. One dozer fell through a bridge and was stuck for nearly a day until another dozer could pull it out.

During their stay at Nghia Hanh, the engineers had very little trouble from the Viet Cong.

Life also has its brighter moments for the engineers. "When we're not working, we spend our time at the Nghia Hanh MACV (Military Assistance Command, Vietnam) compound, where we eat our meals," said Specialist Four Charles Snodgrass (Charleston, W. Va.) "Those MACV teams have it made," said Specialist Four Joe Daymon (Ocala, Fla.), who was returning one night after having a hot shower and an evening of music, cards and conversation.

As the engineers prepared to pull out of their NDP, nothing was wasted. Holman said, "We're giving all the materials from our fighting positions to an ARVN artillery unit who helped us out with ice for our sodas and people to help fill our sand bags. We're giving our Air-Mobile Bunkers (developed by the 26th Engineers) to the MACV team. They will be using them at one of their district headquarters".

Even when they leave, the men of Charlie Company, manage to help someone.



A new office building gets emplaced at 23d Infantry Div (Americal)as engineers prepare the hoist to lift the hootch from a flatbed trailer. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 SAM ROUSSO)

Engineers help cavalry unit cross swollen Song River

By SP4 Kenny R. Baird

CHU LAI, (26th Engr. Bn. IO) – On June 22, elements of Company A and Company E, 26th Engineer Battalion, 23d Infantry Division (Americal), were called to the Song Vu Gai River near LZ (Landing Zone) Rawhide to solve a big problem.

B Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavarly was on the west side of the river and wanted to cross it in order to stand down for a few days.

C Troop was on the east side of the river and was supposed to take over for B Troop. However, the river was swolen by heavy rains and all the shallow fords were impassable.

They waited for nearly a week for the water to go down, but when it didn't they called the 26th Engineers. After making a recon of the river, for possible new fords, the engineers decided that the quickest way to move the two cavalry units was with a raft.

The orders were given and the very next day Company E bridge trucks were sent north from Chi Lai loaded with parts for the M4T6 raft. The trucks were met at the crossing point by engineers from Company A and the work began immediately.

That afternoon the engineers began to ferry the "tracks" across the river. The quick response of the 26th Engineers to the call for help illustrated their great versatility and their high state of readiness.

QUESTION: My wife is threatening to divorce me. Can she do that?
ANSWER: Your wife and her lawyer are required to inform the court that you are in the military service. You will be notified of the impending divorce suit and will be given a reasonable number of days to reply. Thirty days is a common period of time given. You may request the court to postpone the divorce until your tour is over and you can be present to defend hourself. If you should receive a letter from your wife's lawyer asking for you to agree to a divorce or to waive your rights granted by the Soldiers and Sailors Relief Act, it would be wise to talk to your 1st Sergeant. He can arrange a talk between you and a lawyer at SJA who can explain your options.