Engineers are making Buddy Program work

EDITORS NOTE: The following is the second part in a series concerned with the drug programs in the Americal Division. This part specifically deals with the Buddy Program.

By MSG Bill Pickett
Americal Information Office

CHU LAI, (23rd Inf. Div. IO)--"If our program is working, it's because the men themselves are making it work," says Lieutenant Colonel Thomas A. Sands, 26th Engineer Battalion commander.

He was referring to the *Buddy Programs*, in use throughout the 23d Infantry Division (Americal), and specifically to the program within his battalion, which has been singled out as the most successful in the division.

The program is a part of the rehabilitation portion of the Americal's three-pronged Drug and Crime Suppression Program which is coordinated by Division Deputy Chief of Staff for Special Activities, Lieutenant Colonel Jay E. Hobbs, Jr. The three phases of the program are education and information, amnesty and rehabilitation and finally enforcement.

Sands, 36 and a native of Nashville, Tenn., took command of the battalion in late February of this year. He initiated the *Buddy Program* the next month, earlier than many of the division units. The program works hand-in-glove with the amnesty program and rehabilitation program, and "newbies" are introduced to it upon joining the unit.

During the early stages of the amnesty and buddy programs, Sands reports that the battalion had almost 30 men on amnesty and some 12 others processing for elimination from the service under the provisions of AR 635-212, Discharge for Unfitness or Unsuitability.

Two months ago, however, Sands estimated that the battalion had only six or eight men on amnesty and the unit was processing"...a couple of 212s."

Members of the battalion approach the problem two ways, said Sands, who was interviewed on the eve of his departure from CONUS and assignment with the office of the Chief of Staff of the Army in Washington.

"Ninety per cent of the guys on heroin," he explained, "don't like the straight guys, but they don't bother them. So we have to make the straights aware of the problem."

The straights are urged not to turn their backs on a man with a problem; to realize that the user may need someone to help him. All members of the unit are educated on drug use symptoms and encouraged to help men on to the road to rehabilitation.

Rehabilitation of a soldier who returns to the unit from treatment under the amnesty program continues in the battalion, explains Sands. "When a guy returns, we assign a couple of his buddies to look after him. We have people who volunteer to do this, and the CO also knows his people and can assign a certain soldier to buddy up with the returnee and help him out."

The colonel continued, "We do this for two purposes. Firstly, to lend encouragement to the man trying to kick the habit; secondly, to protect him from others on heroin and from pushers."

The second phase of the program--and perhaps this is the part of the iceberg below the water--is handled by the men. "We encourage the E-4s and E-5s to solve the problem," said

continued on page 2

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

Vol. 4, No. 37 Chu Lai, Vietnam September 17, 1971

EOD blows bad bundle

By SP4 Mike Cassidy

CHU LAI (23d Inf. Div. IO) -- How do you get rid of 20 tons of unserviceable explosives? Not too quietly. Not very nearby.

Five miles, as the crow flies, from Chu Lai Base is the site where the 133d Ordnance Detachment (EOD) and the 661st Ordnance Company, 277th Supply and Service Battalion dispose of their unserviceable ammunition.

On a recent demoliton mission, or shot, three conexes of the ammunition were destroyed under the supervision of Specialist Four Michael A. Caswell (Muskegon, Mich.), 133d Ordnance Detachment.

The rotating of the job of supervising left the other member of the EOD team, Sergeant First Class Frank Christy (Troy, Pa.) as an assistant.

The convoy moved along a road prepared by engineers several months ago when the site was selected. The engineers also sweep the road for mines and booby traps before each shot. It is a slow trip up the ridge line that borders Chu Lai--up steep inclines and around deep ruts and chuckholes.

The site is barren. Splinters of wood and metal are the only reminders of the previous blasts. Little remains of the trees in the immediate area. Their leaves and branches have been blown away with the explosives.

The deepest of the holes is chosen for the location of the shot. After that begins the hard job of carefully unloading and positioning rockets, motar rounds, artillery shells, claymores and just about every type of explosive used by the Army.

In a conversation during a break, Captain Paul Bender (Boulder, Colo.), commanding officer of the 661st Ordnance Company, and Caswell agree that the 20-foot crater will be useless after this shot. The day's explosion will deepen the crater from five to ten feet. This will make the already steep sides impossible to work on.

The men work with a careful confidence as they handle the explosives. Bender pointed out that the 661st Ordnance has never had an accident on one of these missions.

The EOD team is not directly responsible for the shot. They are there to make sure that all the ammunition is consumed by the explosion.

After the last of the unserviceable explosives are placed on the pile, it is covered with a blanket of C-4 satchels. Detonation cord connects the fuses in an octopus-like formation.

As these final stops are being completed, the security detail and the men who unloaded the conexes withdraw from the area.

Prior to this, a psychological operations team had warned the grass cutters and other Vietnamese working in the area of the upcoming shot.

Finally, the EOD team connects the last two tentacles of the detonation cord to one of the 1000-foot strands that will take them a safe distance from the area.

One mile and a few minutes later, the final fuse is connected to the cord. There is an explosion when the cord ignites followed by the main explosion. A few seconds later, hootches and offices on the base five miles away will shake slightly from the shot's shock waves.

It is a whole day's work going up in a mushroom cloud of smoke, but that was the idea.

ANYBODY GOT A LIGHT? -- A light is the last thing these men want as they fuse satchels of C-4 explosive. Under the C-4 is 20 tons of unusable ammunition.

(U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 MIKE CASSIDY)

EASY DOES IT -- Men of the 661st Ordnance Company, 277 Supply and Service Battalion form a chain to pass the unusable explosives down the 20-foot-deep blast crater. Mortar ammunition was only one of many types to be destroyed. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 MIKE CASSIDY)

VA opens new Vietnam program

WASHINGTON -- Starting August 15, the Veterans Administration (VA), Office of Education and Department of Labor jointly embarked on a counseling program for overseas servicemen and women.

VA has been counseling servicemen in Vietnam on a personal basis and in group orientations since 1967. During fiscal year 1971, for example, VA provided information and help on GI Bill benefits to about 955,000 servicemen in Vietnam and in the United States. The VA also provides such service in all state-side military hospitals.

The new cooperative program will be sponsored by the Department of Defense on a three month test basis to determine the effectiveness of the augmented service.

VA, Office of Education and the Department of Labor will be based in Okinawa, Germany and Vietnam. Using a three man team concept (one each from VA, Education and Labor), they will brief service personnel in Vietnam, areas of Japan and Korea, and at military installations and at other areas of large troop concentration in Europe.

Coatimuni serves as mascot

By SGT Tom Mano

DA NANG, (196th Inf. Bde. I0) – "He's kind of our roving public relations man. He leaves every night and comes back or is brought back every morning," asserted one of the keepers of a very unusual mascot here in the 196th Infantry Brigade.

Two months ago, the Luc Luong 66 scout for Company A, 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry confronted an opponent that wouldn't fight back. The little rascel was a coatimundi or banana cat, but his name doesn't reflect his true gastronomical leanings.

"He's sorta like a GI; he'll eat anything," said Sergeant Duey M. Holm (Fargo, N.D.). "Somethimes he likes a cheeseburger and he'll eat the hell out of chicken."

"George, as the pet is affectionately called, sleeps behind the "reminder board" during the day and prowls at night. Though he might climb into a GI's bed, inevitably he returns to his resting place in the morning.

"He lives an ideal life," stated Holm. "He sacks during the day and messes around with us at night. But in the morning he's always there in the orderly room."

With his cone-shaped head, pointed ears and foot-long tail George cuts a pretty impressive figure. But the men here will vouch for his lack of aggressiveness.

"He'll climb all over you, but won't hurt you," explained Holm. "He never bites, but he might chew on you for a while."

Having been "drafted" for the duration, George will spend his remaining days in Vietnam with Company A. But will he ever return to the bush?

"We sure hope not," laughed Holm. "We're now trying to get orders from the Chief Coatimundi to give George a rear job MOS."

POCKET PET--Sergeant Duey M. Holm (Fargo, N.D.) helps George, the coatimundi mascot of Company A, 4th Bn., 31st Inf., check out a better view. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 LARRY RICH)

What Is A 'Lifer?'

One of the most often heard cliches in the Armed Forces today is "lifer." It's an "in" word if you're "out," and an "out" word if you are "in."

"Lifer" flashes back to Class B movies with George Raft shuffling endlessly along cold prison walls. It insinuates that the career airman has taken a life sentence, just like some three-time losers at Sing Sing.

It's a word than can easily be shouted by some guy whose biggest moments used to be standing on a street corner and throwing rocks at school buses.

It's a word that irritates many. Why? Because no one likes to be belittled by prejudicial words. On second thought, maybe the word isn't all that bad though . . .

No one was born a "lifer." They became one, step by step. Along the way civilian life beckoned. The grass often looked greener in their neighbor's back yard. "Peacetime" years were not always very peaceful — Korea, China Straits, Lebanon and the Berlin Crisis, Cuban missiles, and then Vietnam.

Many "lifers" sweated out housing, pay raises, operations, readiness inspections, long temporary duty assignments, alert duty and frequent moves. Somehow, the years passed and the sense of belonging grew. Good outfits, good guys and good memories outweighed the bad. So, they became "lifers."

And that's not all bad. Most people who accomplish anything in this world are "lifers." They concentrate on their vocation until they do it better than the average person.

Though the "lifer" may march to the beat of a different drummer, the doctor who brought each of us into this world was a . . . "lifer." So was your favorite teacher, and so were Vince Lombardi, Franklin Roosevelt, Satchmo Armstrong, Pope John, Billy Graham, Henry Ford and George Patton. Unfortunately, so were Karl Marx, Ho Chi Minh, Mao Tse Tung and most of those who are trying to upset our apple cart.

That's why professionals are needed in the military today and in the future. So a "lifer" label is no cause for anger . . . the professionals have spent too many years earning it, and they're in good company. (AFPS Editorial By Col. Lloyd Leavitt Jr., USAF)

REFRESHING PAUSE--Cooling it with a drink of water is Sergeant First Class Edward A, Goat (Pemberton, N.J.) Goat is the platoon sergeant of Company C, 1st Bn., 21st Inf. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP5 MICHAEL CLUXTON)

Engineers are making plan work

continued from Page 1

Sands. "Users don't want to admit the problem, so their coworkers get with them, urge them to shake the habit and try to point them in other directions."

He said the buddies send a guy to bed for the day, maybe two days, and assume a little extra work themselves so that the job gets done. They cover up for their buddy, they take care of him and each other, and in many instances the man is cured and nobody knows about it except the soldier and his friends.

Should that attempt fail, the men go to the CO with the problem, and the CO puts it to the individual: "Get straight, go on amnesty, now." Punishment is considered as a last resort.

"If the heroin user doesn't feel that his buddies hate him, he can be reached," explained Sands. "He doesn't care if I don't get along with him, I'm up here at battalion. I don't go on mine sweeps with the guy. He doesn't go reeling around my hootch."

"We rely on the good faith of the men. This is their program," he continued. "They live with the guy, and work with him. I'm tremendously pleased with the way the men have reacted, they have really taken it upon themselves and to the men must go the credit for any success the program has had in this battalion."

If the 26th Engineer Battalion program is unorthodox, it is still one of the most successful in the 23d Division. But then, that's not the only unorthodox program in the battalion. Sands is the guy who sends his men to school to complete GED requirements in lieu of other options when up for an Article 15.

The battalion also attempts to cut off the source of drugs through weekly inspections for the health and welfare of the men. Along with daily safety and fire inspections, all community areas of the unit also come under close scrutiny. But in the 26th Engineer Battalion, the *"Buddy Program"* is just that, and the troops themselves are making it work.

Reflections on Leaving

By 1LT Michael L. Shaw
39th Engineer Battalion

It was a good job, a worthwhile one.
And now as I leave, I ask,
What did it do for them,
For those we are here to help?
Did it make them better people for my being here?
Hopefully so---
But looking back I suddenly realize
That it is really my life, my lot, and my living,
That have been enriched.
I am a better person because of
The time I have spent here--
Or more accurately, invested here.
I know more about myself,
And that is the greatest journey
A person can make...
The journey of discovering one's self.
It is never ending and never lacks for interest.
Yes, it was a good job,
A worthwile one.
But most worthwhile for me.

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

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723d Maintenance repairs 'everything'

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. I0) – While an individual can afford to be a jack of all trades and a master of none, the 23d Infantry Division's 723d Maintenance Battalion does not have that privilege.

The 723d Maintenance Battalion is responsible for repairing any of the equipment that the division uses from radios to cannons. Hq and Company A of the battalion is located here.

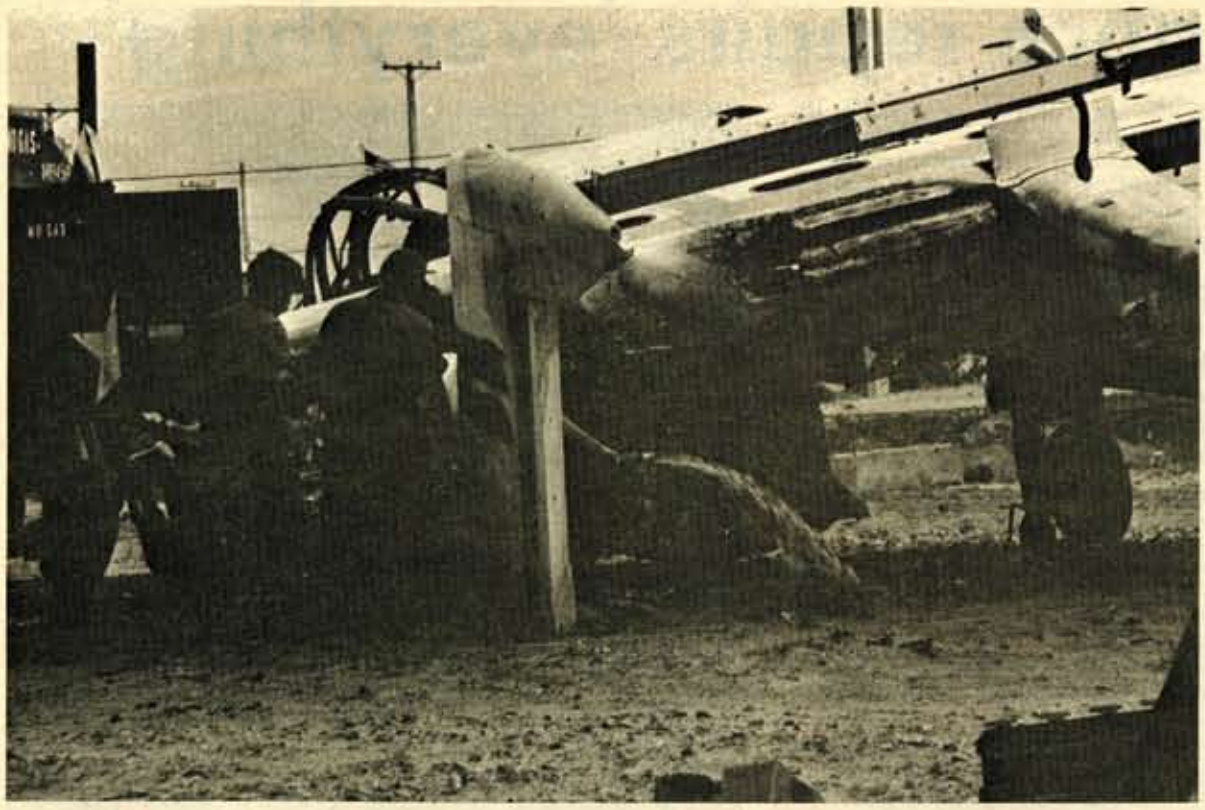
Its mission requires a wide variety of military occupational skills (MOS's). There are about four MOS's per shop in the company.

Many of the men plan to continue in their Army specialty when they return to civilian life. Specialist Four Laurence N. Neptune (Santurce, P.R.), for example, plans to return to school for further training and then continue in the refrigerator repair field.

The men have a great deal of enthusiasm for their jobs, according to shop officer, Captain Robert H. Fabrey (Perrysburg, Ohio). Some come in during time off to work. Fabrey compares the men to people who work in a service station simply because they enjoy working on cars.

Story and Photos by SP4 Mike Cassidy

LEFT CENTER: Specialist Four Robert G. Galdones (Naalehu, Hawaii), Specialist Four Jerry Brown (Nashville, Tenn.) and Sergeant Phillip Jacobsen (Torrance, Calif.) check the .50 caliber machinegun from their company's M-88, a recovery track vehicle.
TOP RIGHT: Specialist Four Barry L. Ober (Lititz, Pa.) checks an electrical connection on a 10-ton truck to find why it will not start.
BOTTOM LEFT: Specialist Four Francis S. Nelc (Roseau, Minn) cleans up equipment which is being sent by Company A, 723d Maint. Bn., to Da Nang to be rebuilt.
BOTTOM RIGHT: Specialist Four Stephen O. Myers (Houston) works on a captured AK-47 rifle. In the background, Sergeant Alfred H. Baynes (Newport News, Va.) studies a defect on a .38 caliber pistol.



Rescue crew saves helix

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. I0) – If a plane were to come into Chu Lai International with landing problems and was expected to crash-land, the first unit notified would be the Crash and Rescue team.

The first concern of the team is, of course, to get the crew and any passengers aboard out of the aircraft. This can be done in several ways according to the type of craft. If the craft has a jettison escape system, one of the rescuers can pull the jettison lever on the outside and the pilot or pilots will be thrown 100 feet skyward where the emergency parachute will pop open to ease the pilot down to the ground.

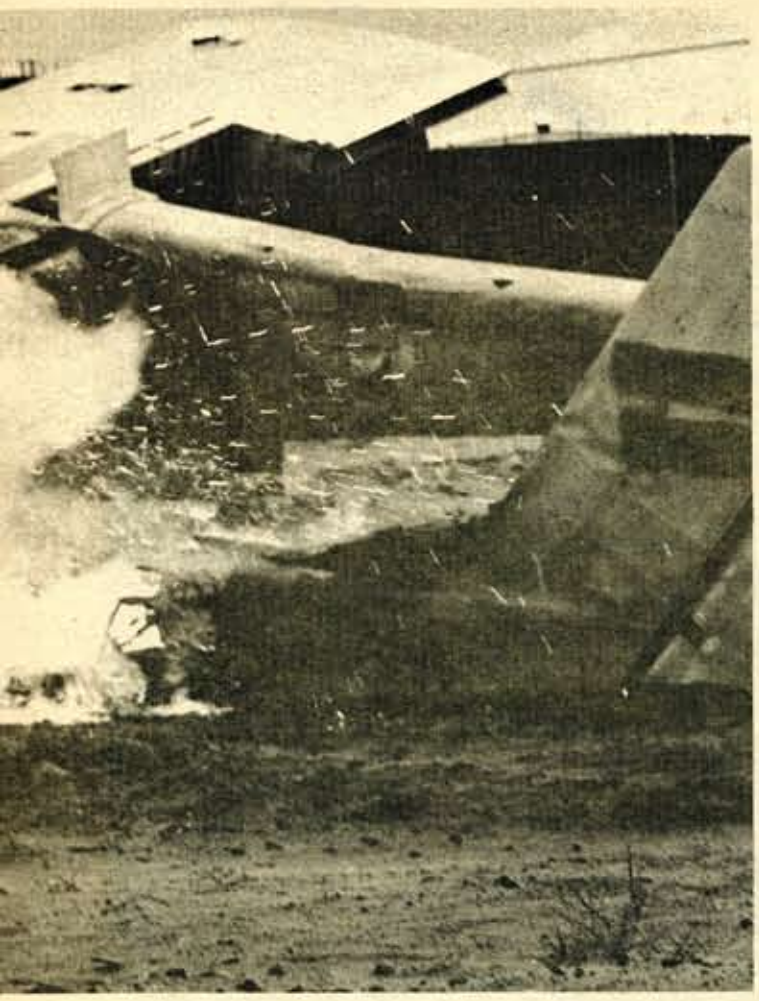
If the rescuers are unable to get the cockpit open, they can spray the plexiglass with a CO2 extinguisher, which freezes the plexiglass. They then hit the cockpit with anything hard and the plexiglass shatters, allowing the men to pull the pilot out.

Once the pilot is extracted and safe, the rescue team can begin work on the problem at hand, putting out the fire and trying to prevent secondary explosions. This is done by spraying a thick foam made of a dense organic material mixed with water at a 1 to 7 ratio. The foam forms a thick blane itself to prevent re-ignition of the fire in other parts of the plane.

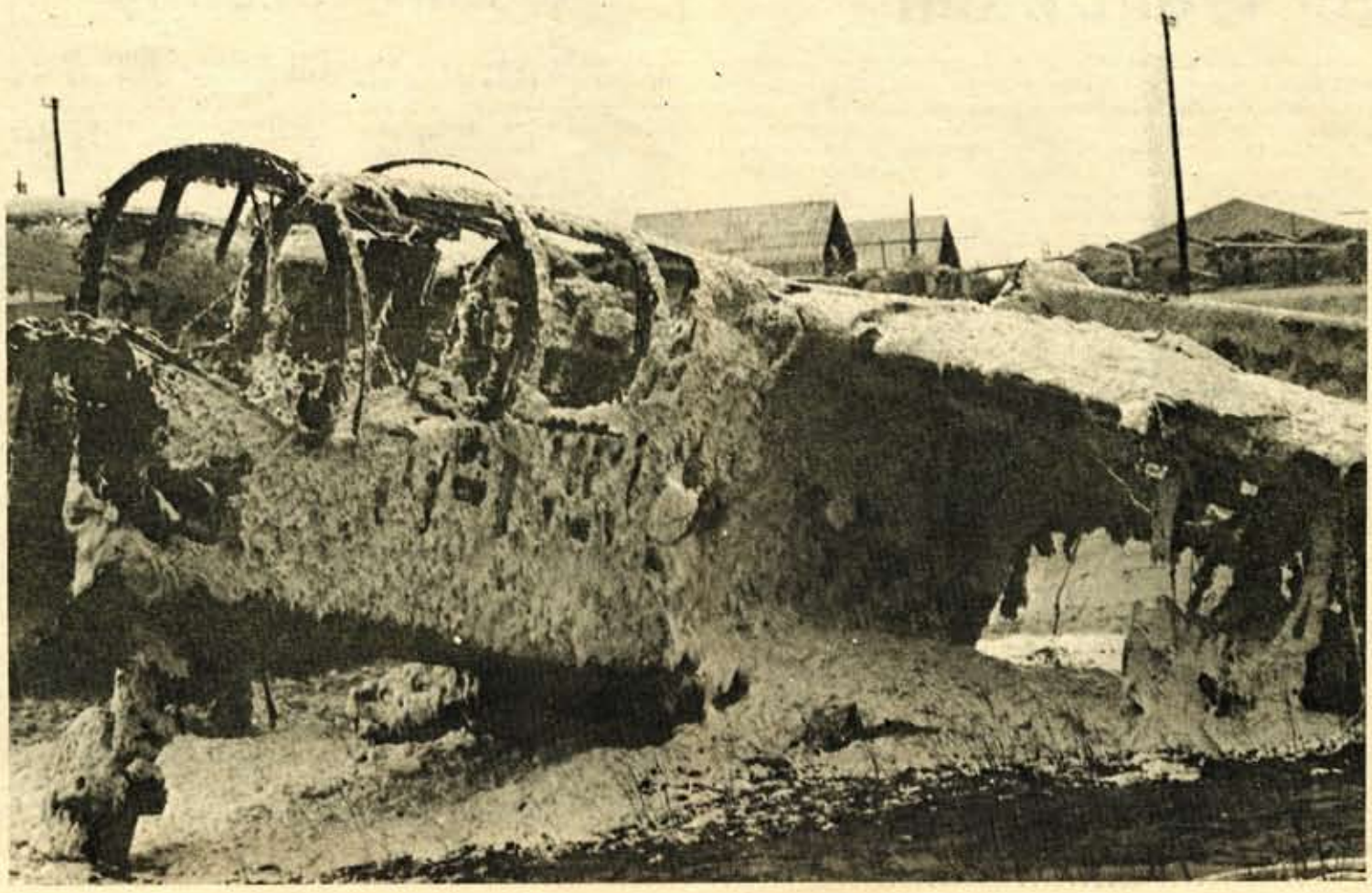
The men fighting the fire have an almost martian appearance in their silver coated reflective asbestos suits. They scurry about the flames spraying the fire and performing their job as professionally as any fire fighting team around.

Air Crash and Rescue located just off the runway, has been in Chu Lai since there was an airport capability. Many people who know about Crash and Rescue, are grateful they are there.

TOP LEFT: The victim, a crashed Helix aircraft, is soaked with mogas to insure a healthy flame for rescue crew to practice on.
TOP CENTER: An incendiary grenade is thrown in the mogas and it's "all systems go."
TOP RIGHT: The firefighters make an "On line" assualt of the flaming craft, with hoses spraying full.
BOTTOM LEFT: One of the asbestos uniformed crew concentrates on the tail section of the craft.
BOTTOM CENTER: The foam mountain coming from the hose blankets the fire in the cockpit of the craft.
BOTTOM RIGHT: The fire out, the aircraft sits with a heavy blanket of foam; proof of the Air Crash and Rescue team's proficiency.



Story & Photos by SGT Ron Cryderman



Team broadcasts the word

By SP4 Sam Rousso

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. IO) – It happens in Vietnam every day. Somewhere–in a village, hamlet or city–a Road Broadcast Team is at work.

In the 23d Infantry Division's AO (Area of Operation), the job is handled by three-man teams–two Vietnamese and one American. Such a team recently visited the village of Khoung Binh, in Le Tin District, Quang Tin Province.

The Two Vietnamese are Kit Carson, or Luc Luong 66, Scouts. They are former Communists who "Chieu Hoi-ed"--or ralled to the Government of the Republic of Vietnam (GVN).

Long Ly Duc, a former sergeant in the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) Medical Corps, became a Hoi Chanh--rallier--in 1969. In addition to his road broadcasting, Long teaches English to other Kit Carson Scouts.

Hiem Nguyen Chiem, a former teacher's assistant, joined the Viet Cong in June, 1965. He rallied in October, 1967.

Sergeant Anthony Summit (Buffalo, N.Y.) has worked in Psyops (Psychological Operation), a part of G-5 (Civil Affairs) for 18 months.

The broadcast for today was composed of tape recordings and live speeches extolling the GVN's virtues. During the broadcast, Summit, unarmed, went through the village, handing out pro-GVN leaflets and posters.

"The object of psyops," says Summit, "is to win the hearts and minds of the people." After spending 45 minutes in Khoung Binh, Summit Hiem and Long packed up their loudspeakers, climed into their truck and started for another village.

A projectile is sent "home" from a 155mm Howitzer from Fire Support Base Vandergrift. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 WENDELL P. HAUTANIGNI)

Take stock in America
Buy U.S. Savings Bonds

Man, dog hold close bond

By SGT Tom Mano

DA NANG, (196th Inf. Bde. 10) -- The supreme bond between two men exists when the life of one is in danger and his thoughts turn to saving the life of his comrade. Imagine the strength of the bond if the risk is taken by a man for his dog.

These were the emotions running through a scout dog handler's mind when his dog was in danger here in the 196th Infantry Brigade.

Specialist Four Jerry D. Collins (Breckenridge, Tex.) and his dog, Dutch, a 97-pound German shepherd, were working with Company A, 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry when the crisis arose.

"Though we weren't expecting anything, I wasn't too happy about going out," said the 48th Scout Dog Platoon handler. "A bird was coming to pick us up and I just wanted to leave."

Moving out of their day defensive position, the men patroled the immediate area with Dutch leading and Collins close behind. Suddenly, Dutch threw a strong smell alert.

"I glanced at a trail coming up the rice paddy," remembers the 196th Infantry Brigade soldier. "Sure enough, a VC soldier with an AK-47 appeared out of the brush."

Collins fired three shots over the enemy's head and Dutch attacked the adversary. Moments later, the slackman behind Collins opened up on the VC soldier.

"I guess it was just a reaction," mused Collins. "I couldn't concentrate on fighting and save Dutch too, but decided by dog was more important."

Exposing himself to fire, Collins waved to the slackman until he ceased shooting. Softly stepping towards the spot where Dutch had attacked, he prayed he would not find a canine corpse.

Rounding a trail, he saw his dog jumping in the elephant grass. Never has there been a more joyful reunion.

"I just looked at him and thanked God," said Collins. "I think our bond is even greater now."

"There was the enemy's rifle on the ground, but he was nowhere to be seen," added the handler. "We found a blood trail, but there were too many paths, so we didn't follow him."

Reflecting on the contact, Collins said, "I'm sure glad to have him around. He's a super-aggressive dog, really does a job whenever he gets a chance."

Teamwork nets 11 for 198th, 176th

CHU LAI, (198th Inf. Bde. I0) – Action was light recently as infantrymen from the 198th Infantry Brigade and gunships from the 176th Aviation killed 11 enemy soldiers and captured one enemy suspect and one pistol.

Most of the action occured in the 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry's area of operation (AO) southwest of Chu Lai. The "Regulars" killed five enemy soldiers and captured one unknown type pistol.

While on operations southwest of Chu Lai, a recon element from the 1st Bn., 6th Inf., engaged a group of VC soldiers. A search of the area revealed four VC soldiers killed.

While operating in the same area, Company A, 1st Bn., 6th Inf., engaged a small group of VC soldiers, killing one and capturing a pistol which was extracted to a nearby LZ (Landing Zone).

Patrolling in an area southwest of Chu Lai, Company A, 1st Bn., 6th Inf., found and destroyed a base camp area consisting of 25 military structures protected by rocks and trees.

Other action occurred in the 4th Battalion, 3d Infantry's AO northwest of Chu Lai. The "Old Guard" killed two enemy soldiers and captured one enemy suspect.

Company C, 4th Bn., 3d Inf., on an operation northwest of Chu Lai, had a mechanical ambush detonate. A search of the area revealed two dead NVA soldiers and two NVA pistol belts. The pistol belts were extracted to an LZ.

While on a patrol northwest of Chu Lai, Company B, 4th Bn., 3d Inf., found and destroyed a base camp area consisting of 18 fighting positions of various sizes, six outdoor latrines with frames made of railroad ties. The perimeter measured 100 by 75 meters and was estimated to be about nine months old.

Company D, 4th Bn., 3d Inf., operating northwest of Chu Lai captured one enemy suspect. He was extracted to Chu Lai for questioning.

While flying over an area southwest of Chu Lai, the 176th Aviation engaged a small group of VC soldiers, killing one. The next day in the same general area gunships from the 176th Aviation observed and engaged an unknown number of VC soldiers, resulting in three enemy killed.

'Chargers' count 16 kills recently

DA NANG, (196th Inf. Bde. 10) – The "Chargers" of the 196th Infantry Brigade accounted for 16 enemy kills recently as they operated west of the Da Nang area.

The week started with small amounts of ammunition being found by Company's B and C from the 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry. C Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, destroyed two booby traps, while A Troop, 1st Spd., 1st Cav., located and destroyed a land mine before it could cause damage to an allied vehicle.

F Troop, 8th Cavalry, started the action when it spotted four VC soldiers while flying support for 1st Bn., 46th Inf. All four VC soldiers fell before the firepower of a LOH and gunship combination. Another F Troop LOH observed five to six enemy troops. The LOH's M-60 accounted for two NVA soldiers KIAs and gunships added still two more kill to the score. The Blues of F Troop, 8th Cav., engaged and killed one NVA soldier in ground action southwest of Da Nang.

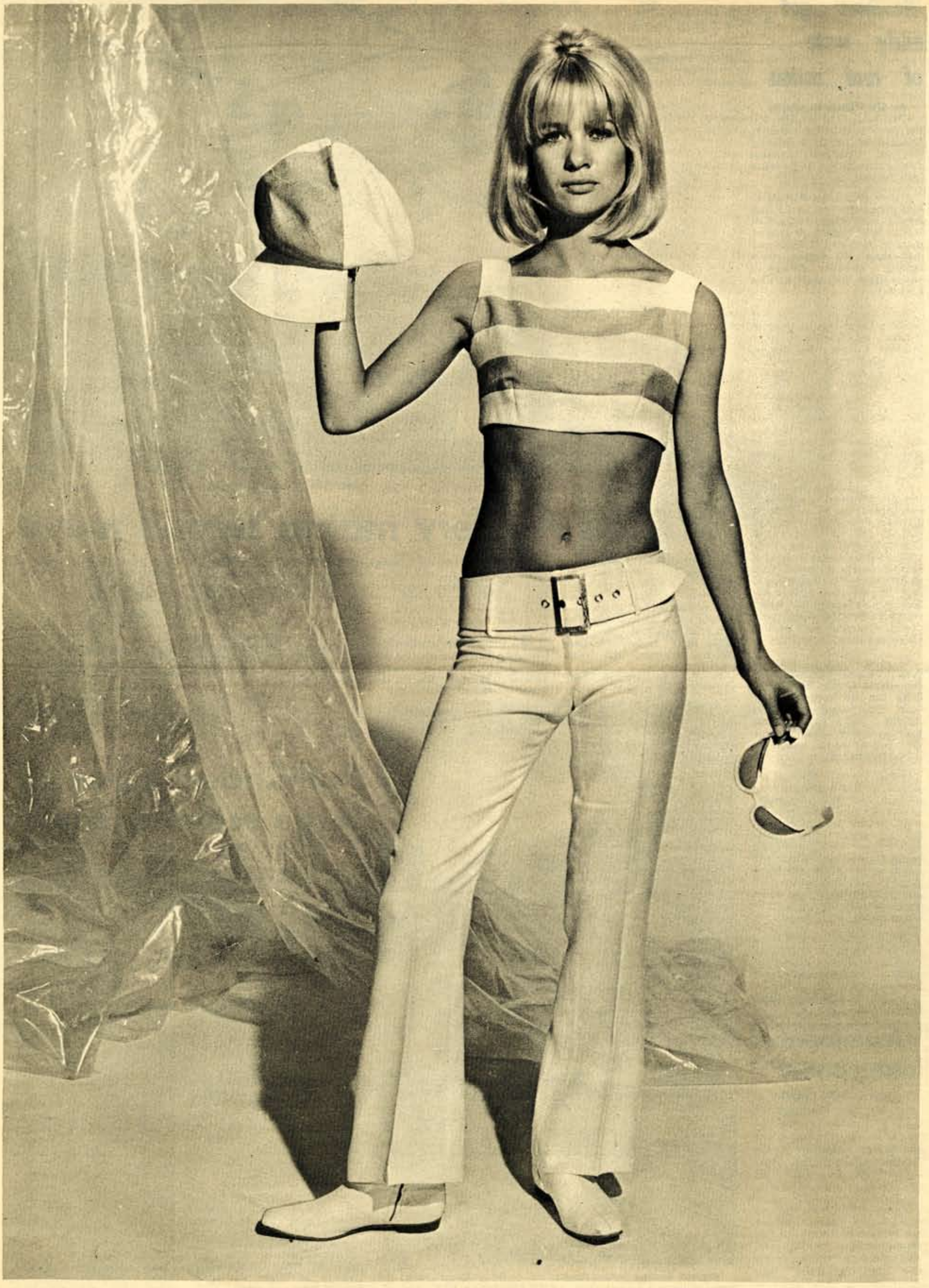
Seven NVA soldiers walked into an area being patrolled by Company B, 1st Bn., 46th Inf. This mistake resulted in five NVA soldiers killed and two wounded. The men of Company B captured seven rucksacks, one AK-47, one K-54 pistol, 250 pounds of small arms ammo, six Chicom grenades, 60 pounds of rice, one RPG (Rocket Propelled Grenade) training device and one Chicom radio.

C Troop, 1st Spd, 1st Cav., found a probable enemy hospital area west of Da Nang containing 20 NVA uniforms, 300 pounds of salt and a table that could be used as a surgical table.

While on a patrol west of Da Nang, C Troop, 1st Spd., 1st Cav., found three enemy structures containing a total of 200 pounds of rice. The rice was extracted to be turned over to Vietnamese authorities.

A Troop, 1st Spd., 1st Cav., killed a VC soldier who tried to evade into a bunker. The enemy soldier was clad in black pajamas and carried a hand grenade.

Company D, 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., finished its week by a cordon and search operation west of Da Nang. They found 600 pounds of corn buried in the ground and detained six military aged women who did not have ID cards.



Judy Geeson, recent star of Hammerhead, may be carrying a boy's cap, but if she looks like a boy to you guys, you better get paperwork started for an R&R.

'Newbies' get early taste of real action

By SP4 William Hutchison

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. IO) For two "newbies" the training afforded by the 23rd Infantry Division (Americal) Combat Center recently got to be just a little too realistic.

Private First Class Michael A. Bird (Hackettstown, N.J.) and Private First Class James Cali (Lodi, N.J.) pulled their first guard in Vietnam and discovered that three VC sappers were making a nightime attempt to demonstrate their craft on Chu Lai beach.

Bird was up at the time and notice a figure moving along in the surf. He immediately woke Sergeant Cooper (Jacksonville, Fla.), who notified the TOC (Tactical Operations Center). Staff Sergeant Jerry Church (Marion, N.C.), the Sergeant of the Guard, was dispatched to investigate. Meanwhile the three nervous occupants of bunker 402 watched as the sappers crawled along the sand not 100 meters from them.

Church and his driver arrived and proceeded down the beach searching for the VC soldiers. As the jeep went by the insurgents ducked out of sight. When Church reached the end of the bunker line he turned around for another sweep. Meanwhile, the sappers headed for the water to hide, but this time bunker 403 fired an illumination flare which exposed the swimming men. Church opened up with his rifle, his driver with a .45 pistol.

"I think I hit all three of them," Church explained. "One disappeared as soon as I started firing and we never saw him again. The other two were clinging together and when the gunships arrived, we could only spot one of them, which the Cobras finished off."

"When I had shot up all my rounds, we had bunker 401 fire at them, but they were pretty far out. We kept popping "hand pops" to keep them in sight. At first the gunnies tried to drive them ashore. When the one was finally hit, another sergeant and myself waded out in the water to get him. He was still alive and gave quite a fight. But he died a few moments after we got him ashore," described Church.

The loincloth-clad body was searched, revealing a baseball type fragmentation grenade. A sweep of the entire area proved fruitless-but for the "newbies" of bunker 402 the night was a sleepless one.

VA announces loan policy

WASHINGTON (ANF) -- Taking unfair advantage of veteran borrowers may be grounds for suspension of privileges to participate in the Veterans Administration (VA) loan program, according to the VA.

VA also noted that declining to sell a new home or make a loan to a credit worthy, eligible veteran because of his race, creed, color or national origin may also jeopardize one's opportunity of participating in the VA loan program.

A Chinook resupplies LZ Crest with a sortie of ammunition for the 3d Battalion, 82nd Artillery. (ARMY PHOTO BY SGT CARL DROST)

3/82nd Artillery makes second move

By SGT Carl Drost

LZ CREST, (196th Inf. Bde. IO) -- "Okay, you guys, grab your guns and move out," was the cry put out to B Battery, 3d Battalion, 82nd Artillery. The command wasn't as easy as one might think, as the guns were 105mm howitzers that weigh over 3000 pounds.

For these artillerymen of the 196th Infantry Brigade, this was a usual "jump", quickly moving from one hill to another as they're needed. They remember only 18 days earlier when they were given the order to move to LZ Crest and now they were leaving.

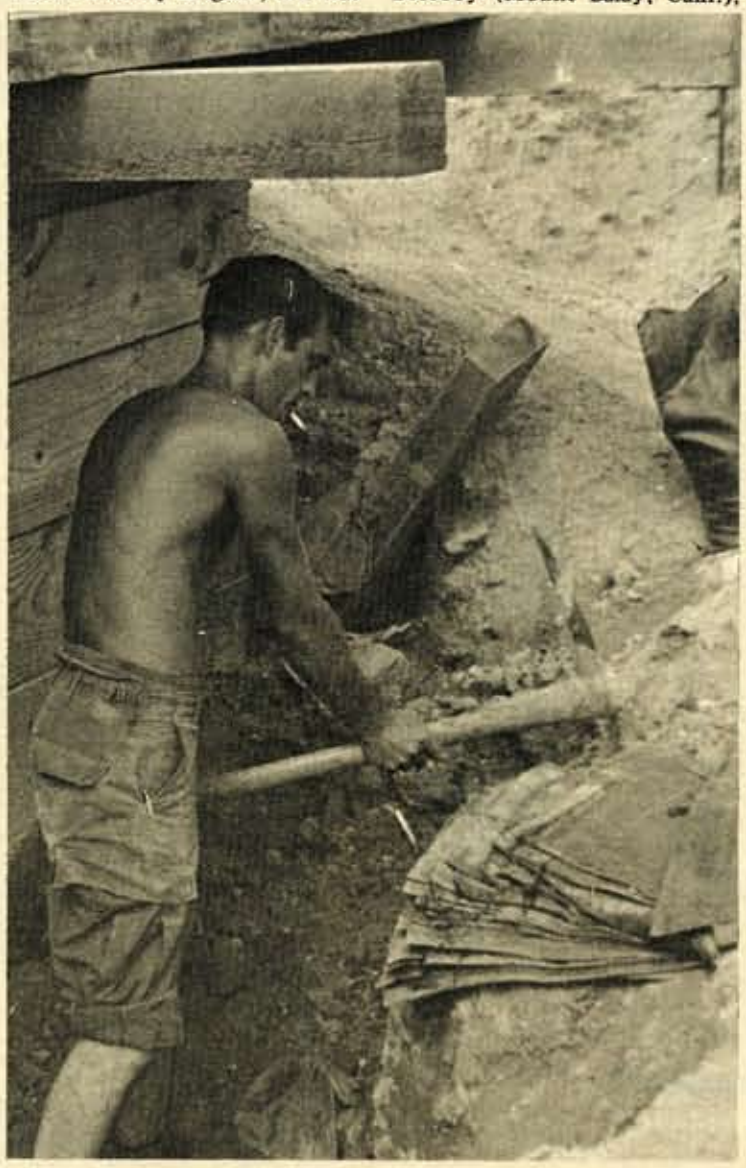
"We were in one location for two-and-a-half months before coming to Crest," remembered Second Lieutenant William A. Bescoby (Mount Balay, Calif.), assistant executive officer for the battery. "The move provided the battery with an opportunity to get out of the rut that develops when staying in one location too long."

The moves accomplish more than relieving boredom. It gives the men a chance to be efficiently mobile and help others in their tasks.

"The move to Crest gave the new members of the battery an opportunity to learn how an air move is accomplished," added Bescoby. "While on Crest, the men were able to help their counterparts, the ARVN (Army of the Republic of South Vietnam) artillery do their job."

Some of the men were sorry to leave. Thoughts of the 10,000 sandbags they filled clouded their minds. A mess facility had recently been constucted and each man had a bunker.

But such is the life of a mobile artilleryman. He knows at any time, he can be given 24 hours to get his stuff together and be ready to move to a new "home."



Sergeant Rueben Bonner loosens dirt to fill sandbage around the mess facility at LZ Crest. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SGT CARL. G. DROST)

Pathfinders serve on large-scale assault

By Sp4 Mike Cassidy

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. IO) -- As the night combat assualt neared its destination in the jungle, the landing zone suddenly started to glow with landing lights.

After landing a soldier from one of the first assault helicopters exclaimed, "Where the hell did you guys come from?"

"Where did you come from, we've been waiting for you for 15 minutes," replied Platoon Sergeant Simon Quinterous, Pathfinder detachment, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 14th Aviation Battalion (Combat).

Quinterous and his men were controlling the airmobile operation, providing wind and landing direction, enemy situation information and troop supervision. In most cases the pilot and infantrymen can handle the assault, but in difficult operations, such as night or large scale assaults, the Americal Pathfinders are called.

In an operation several months ago, the Pathfinders directed a combat assault involving 2000 men.

The Pathfinders were first used during the Normandy invasion of World War II to direct airborne operations. Since then the Pathfinders have expanded to include airmobile operations.

Short of flying the aircraft, they are able to control every aspect of a combat air mission from slinging external helicopter loads to cutting a landing strip for a fixed wing craft.

Corporal Dennis Carson (Banning, Pa.) of the detachment continued his training after Airborne School because of his interest in parachute jumping.

Many Pathfinders, like Corporal Larry Keller (Tucson, Ariz.), are placed in infantry units when they arrive. In time, because of their unique skills, they are usually reassigned to a detachment.

Aside from directing American and Vietnamese combat assaults, Pathfinders also give various courses on helicopter utilization and operate the control tower at the Quang Ngai airport.

First Lieutenant Eric Herold (Seattle), commanding officer of the detachment, rotates the jobs among the men because of their technical competence.

The emblem of the Pathfinders, a winged torch on a black field, symbolizes the Pathfinder's leading the way for aviation.