

TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS

Ready To Strike.... Anywhere, Anytime

Vol 4 No. 24

TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS

June 16, 1969

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when will they ever learn...



'They Were All Heroes'

Regulars vs. NVA at Crook: 400 Enemy Die

FSB CROOK, 7 JUN 69 - During two nights of deadly close-in fighting, Bravo Company of the 3d Battalion, 22nd Infantry, turned back two NVA regiments. In two separate back-to-back ground attacks Thursday and Friday nights on Fire Support Base Crook, eight and a half miles northwest of Tay Ninh City, the outnumbered Regulars

held firm and killed off the charging NVA.

Both battles saw the NVA forces soundly defeated. The enemy initially tried to breach the perimeter with sappers but failed. At no time was the Regulars' bunker line penetrated.

Supporting fires for Crook were supplied by Cobra gunships, tactical air strikes, spookie, shadow (C119 gunship) and a host of artillery batteries. Alpha Battery of the 7th Battalion, 11th Artillery, fired point blank the on-rushing enemy as rocket and mortar fire slammed into Crook.

"Throughout both attacks my men performed remarkably. Even during the height of the in-coming rounds, they got out of their bunkers and fired the guns. They knew they had to do it, so they stayed low and we came out like bandits, taking very few casualties," said the battery commander, Captain Dick Neal of San Antonio, Tex.

AS BRAVO COMPANY left the perimeter to sweep the area the following morning they were greeted by hand grenade-throwing NVA who tossed grenades out of well-camouflaged spider holes. Bravo returned to its perimeter and had spookie hose down the area with its deadly mini-gun.

Alpha Company was dropped off four kilometers north of Crook by the 187th Assault Helicopter Company to spoil the enemy's rapid retreat. Following a trail of commo wire they met head-on with the NVA regiment's headquarters. First Lieutenant William Ervin of Richmond, Va., called for tactical air strikes as he maneuvered his men against the enemy. Darkness forced Alpha to return to Fire Support Base Washington before enemy casualties were known.

THE SECOND NIGHT of fighting seemed to be an instant replay of the previous night's action. The only difference was that a fresh NVA regiment hit from the opposite side. As mortars, rockets and RPGs slashed into the fire support base, First Lieutenant Curtis McFarland of Midland, Tex., readied his platoon. Again the sappers were stopped before they breached the perimeter.

On both nights Major Joseph Hacia of Wethersfield, Conn., ran the entire show. He gained the perspective of the situation by rapidly moving between his tactical operations center, tower and bunker line.

"**I'M REALLY IMPRESSED** with the men of Bravo Company," said Hacia, the battalion's XO. "They performed to perfection and fought just as if they were at a turkey shoot. The real key to our success was early warning. Our electronic devices had them zeroed in several hours before they actually reached the perimeter. We knew they were coming and we were ready for them. The men on the bunker line knew exactly what to do and caught the sappers before they had a chance to do any damage."

Specialist 4 Thomas Belan of Pittsburgh was one of the first to spot the sappers as they attempted to crawl under the wire on the southwest side of the perimeter. Belan literally burned up the barrel of his machine gun.

THE QUICK-THINKING of Sergeant First Class Donald Neal of Columbus, Ga., proved to be fatal for the unsuspecting sappers. Neal grabbed two grenade launchers and several bandoleers of ammo before heading for Belan's position. Together they popped out the grenades and sent the sappers heading back for the nearby woodline.

BULLETIN

For the third night in a row, NVA soldiers launched a futile attack against FSB Crook. Saturday night's fight raged for two hours and ten minutes with Tropic Lightning protecting Crook with air strikes, artillery, light fire teams, spookie and shadow.

"**THEY WERE** all heroes," said Captain Larry B. Thomas of Camp Hill, Pa. Thomas directed his Bravo Company while running back and forth on the bunker line determining where the areas of greatest threat were. "The men knew what to do before I had a chance to direct them. They performed beyond expectations, and I'm proud of every one of them."

A last-ditch effort was made from the northeast section where the initial attack was fairly light. Machinegunner Specialist 4 Richard C. Marroquine of Floresville, Tex., made an immediate assessment of the situation and turned back the onrushing enemy with his M-60.

The desperate NVA answered his volley with a wave of rocket-propelled grenades. But Bravo had constructed their fortifications well. Many bunkers and (Continued on Back Page)



TWO VIEWS - (above right) Photographer Specialist 4 David DeMauro captures a scene of two views of battle coming together. A Regular Infantryman peers out at the area surrounding Fire Support Base Crook, as a Crusader gunship patrols overhead.

Decorated

SILVER STAR

LTC Duane R. Tague, HHC, 2d Bn, 34th Armor
 LTC John E. Mann, HHC, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 CPT Raymond W. Kaufman, Co C, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 CPT Edward W. Cavanuagh Jr., HHC, 2d Bde
 CPT Frederick G. Wong, Co B, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 1LT Gary W. Carlson, B Trp, 3d Sqdn 4th Cav
 1LT Don L. Smith, A Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Fld Arty
 1LT John Thomas, D Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 1SG Lloyd Storey, Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 PSG Frank L. Beavers, Co B, 4th Bn, 23th Inf
 SSG Jerrie K. Ramage, Co B, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 SSG Michael A. Wallace, Co A, 65th Engr. Bn
 SGT Johnny H. Ligon, Co B, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SGT Paul J. Keeler, Co B, 1st Bn, 27th Inf

BRONZE STAR

SGT Merlyn R. Kruse, Co C, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SGT Donald Drewry, Co C, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SGT Jose Hernandez, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SGT Kim Klawiter, Co D, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 SGT Jackie McNarin, Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SGT Elvin Page, C Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav.
 SP4 James C. Roberts, HHC, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Gary Johnson, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf

SP4 Michael G. Reece, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SP4 Richard A. Haerling, Co A, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Frank W. Rosss Co D, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 SP4 George H. Stoddard, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Rodney L. Porter, Co F, 75th Inf
 SP4 William E. Patrick, C Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Fld Arty
 SP4 Clarence Kenner, Co A, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 James L. Johns, Co B, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Thomas Silva, Co B, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 PFC Tommie J. Dyer, Co D, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Sammie Washington Jr., Co B, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Pierce J. Bunce, Co B, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Michael L. Johnigan, Co B, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Ronald J. Zollner, Co B, 1st Bn, 27th Inf

SP4 Charles E. Ward, Co B, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SP4 Charles E. Frost, Co, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 Richard D. Kline, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Charles A. Ramsey, Co D, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 SP4 William D. Toon, Co D, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 SP4 Howard L. Givens, Co A, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 Dayle Stapleton, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf



Tropic Lightning Tots

**The Commanding General Welcomes
 The Following Tropic Lightning Tots
 To The 25th Infantry Division – As
 Reported By The American Red Cross.
 Born To:**

May 16
 SP4 Glenn D. Head, Co E, 2d Bn, 12th Inf, a son

May 19
 SP4 James Morris, Co A, 25th S & T Bn, a son

May 21
 SP4 Michael J. Cumm, 25th Admin Co, a son

May 23
 SP4 Richard Stock, Co A, 554th Engr Bn, a son
 PFC Rodney R. Koenig, Svc Btry, 1st Bn, 27th Arty, a son

May 25

May 30
 1LT Michael J. Schultz, Co B, 65th Engr Bn, a son

May 31
 CPT Hugh H. Hanna, HHB, 3d Bn, 13th Arty, a son

June 2
 SP4 Lloyd Reems, Jr., C Co, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav, a son
 SP4 William Witsman, Co C, 125th Bn, a daughter
 SP4 Gary W. Chapman, Co B, 554th Engr Bn, a daughter

June 3
 SP4 Ronnie J. Duzan, B Co, 554th Engr Bn, a daughter

PVT Junius Wilson, Co B, 2d Bn, 14th Inf, a daughter

June 4

SFC Segal W. Bryant, HQ and Co A, 25th Med Bn, a son

May 26

PFC Thomas E. Phillips, Co C, 2d Bn, 14th Inf, a daughter

Take Good Care of Her; She's Your Sweet 16

A recent newspaper story told of an American who unexpectedly came face to face with a Viet Cong. Both men froze for a second, then one squeezed the trigger of his weapon. There was a click. Nothing happened. Then the other man fired. The VC slumped to the ground.

Our man was lucky that time. It was Charlie's weapon that wouldn't fire. How about your weapon? Are you sure it'll do the job when you need it most? Is it clean?

AND HOW ABOUT the ammo and your magazines? Are they clean too? And when was the last time you zeroed your weapon. A soldier's best friend is his M-16; what kind of friend do you have?

Most soldiers realize how important it is to keep their M-16s clean, but it is just as important to keep the ammunition and magazines clean. A dirty magazine means dirty ammo, and dirty ammo means trouble. Bent ammo is even worse.

Dirty and bent rounds won't chamber properly, if they chamber at all. Rounds left unchecked day after day in your magazines will begin to rust and gather dirt. Oiling ammo does more harm than good, because even though it might prevent rust, the oil will collect dust and grit.

DIRT WILL prevent the follower from working properly, causing the round not to chamber. Lay off the oil for ammo, and the magazine needs only a light touch on the spring.

If you're one of the soldiers who carries as many magazines as you can, remember that each round must be cleaned and inspected daily. If they get wet, clean them off to prevent rust-caused malfunctions.

Never load more than 18 rounds in your magazine. Overloading puts too much tension on the follower spring, weakening it.

You'll also want to check your M-16's zero every two weeks. It takes just a couple of minutes and few rounds to check or adjust the setting of your sights.

IN AN EMERGENCY, when you have been firing for a long time and don't have time to break down your weapon and clean it, you can keep it in action by applying LSA to the bolt and carrier, but not in the chamber. This emergency technique will prevent sluggish action and malfunctions for a time. In all normal situations, lubrication should only accompany cleaning, not try to substitute for it.

Never close the upper and lower receivers except when the selector lever is on safe. If you jam the sections together with the lever in one of the firing positions, you'll force the automatic sear down, damaging both it and the sear pin.

When you have your weapon torn down for cleaning and the bolt group apart, make it a practice to check the bolt for cracks and fractures. Don't worry about discoloration, though, it's harmless. Check the cam pin for cracks and chips and be sure it's in place when you put the rifle back together. Chances are the weapon will explode if fired without it.

ALSO CHECK the firing pin retaining pin. It should be replaced if it is cracked, bent or blunted. But don't reassemble the weapon without it; the fire power of your M-16 will be limited to one shot if you do.

You'll also want to be sure to load only the prescribed number of tracer rounds per ball rounds. Tracers look pretty and serve a purpose, but they also leave deposits in the bore of your weapon that clog the bore and can clog the gas port. Since tracers don't have either the stopping or killing power of regular ball ammo, you have several good reasons to avoid excessive use of the tracer.

Dreadnaughts Add Concern For People to War Effort

By Sp5 Doug Elliott

CU CHI—Through self-help and improvement programs, the hearts of the people of a Vietnamese village have been won.

Under the direction of Lieutenant Colonel Duane R. Tague, Terre Haute, Ind., the 2d Battalion, 34th Armor, fights a two-sided war.

Besides the use of Dreadnaught Armor against Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army forces, the Battalion S-5 Civil Action office continually seeks to aid the people through self-help programs in villages.

CURRENTLY the Battalion's "silent" effort is headed by Captain Thomas C. Boling, Duneveik, West Germany and Sergeant First Class Billie Brown, Campbellsville, Ky. Their program is aimed at the Phu Hoa District, an area east of Cu Chi.

The program branches in several directions. One program seeks to find disabled civilians who have had amputations, and to supply them with artificial limbs. Amputees are taken to the Saigon Rehabilitation Center and taught to use the artificial arm or leg.

This is a free service designed to rehabilitate people so they can return to a useful, productive life. If the families of patients need food while the amputee is in the hospital, the Dreadnaughts insure that rations are supplied.

A **SECOND PHASE** of the program is demonstrated in Tan Tanh Dong village. At the request of a school principal, the S-5 staff drew plans for a bicycle shed for pupils. After the plans were made, the battalion secured the material needed for the building and cut out key pieces to show the villagers the basic design. Local carpenters then constructed the shed.

As Brown puts it: "The more we let the people do on their own, the more they respect the end result."

THE SHED IS now completed, and the children and principal of the Tan Tanh Dong school are delighted.

Working with all six schools in the Phu Hoa District, the Dreadnaughts also replaced many schoolyard swing sets. Gathering up necessary rope and wood, along with new metal frames, the soldiers saw that the schools had what was needed to make the swings safe. The swings are used by nearly 500 pupils.

Brown wanted to make a gesture of his friendship to the Vietnamese people. Citizens of the Hoi Tanh hamlet, having worked long and hard to improve their village, had made strides in areas of civil defense and hygiene. Still, the people had to use buckets to provide everyone with water.

Brown, through the help of his wife back in Kentucky, bought two pumps in the States and had them shipped to Vietnam. Then he and his assistant, Staff Sergeant Jefferson A. Spencer of Ewing, Ill., helped the villagers in their spare time to install the pumps at wells in the hamlet.

Although Brown will soon return home, the memory of the Dreadnaughts and the concern of Billie Brown will continue to live on with the people of the Phu Hoa District.

Reminder: You're invited to listen to the 25th Division's Radio Show 'Lightning 25' every Sunday morning at 11:30 on AFVN, 54 on your radio dial. Army Specialist Jack Schmitt each week spotlights new and exciting talent from the ranks of the Tropic Lightning. Listen this Sunday, you may hear someone you know.

Heat Injury Prevention is Stressed

In a recent Tropic Lightning bulletin, all commanders were reminded of their responsibilities for the prevention of heat injuries.

All personnel are reminded that:

1. Normally heat exhaustion is preventable.
2. Heat casualties can be reduced by following these suggestions:

Closely observe and reduce when possible continuous hard work of personnel newly arrived in country. The normal period of acclimatization is one or two weeks.

Adequate amounts of water and other fluids and adequate supplemental salt supplies must be available. When the situation permits, periodic rest periods must be arranged, especially for personnel newly arrived in country.

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SP4 Richard Huhta	2/14	SGT Roger Welt	4/23
SP4 Karl Karlgaard	2/27	SP4 Pete Freeman	7/11
SP4 Robert Williams	2/27		

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Dorex S. Round Is A Dog and a Bobcat

CU CHI - To hear mortarmen of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 5th Infantry, speak of Dorex S. Round you would never guess he was a dog. As a pet, their canine comrade has proven to be quite an asset. He may even DEROS soon.

Aside from offering the traditional man-dog bond that has been established through the ages, Dorex S. Round (alias "Short Round") has acquired talents which are invaluable in the war in Vietnam.

THE AFFAIR BEGAN seven months ago when Short Round, then a pup, appeared out of nowhere. The Bobcat mortarmen, working out of Fire Support Base Patton, became attached to him.

Each day as they left on an operation their pooch saw them off and eagerly awaited their return with wagging tail. So it went until a new base regulation stated "no pets in the fire support base."

The mortarmen, with a sad farewell and moist eyes, left their pet in the nearby village of Trung Lap.

THAT GESTURE might have marked the end of the relationship. Three days later, however while passing through the village the platoon members saw their former pet trying to escape from its new owners. When Short Round saw the armored personnel carriers he made a dash for the tracks, and was snatched up by his old gang.

The reunion was joyful, but the problem of dogs not being allowed on the fire support base still existed. A solution was reached. Short Round would accompany them on every mission and thus avoid violating the regulation.

Since then, in the dozen or so ground attacks launched against the Bobcats in places ranging from the Citadel to the Ho Bo Woods, Short Round has alerted every time before the attack.

SPECIALIST 4 JACK C. Dominic of Oakland, Calif., explains; "It never fails. Just before we find indications that we are in for an attack Short Round begins to bark."

During one such attack, an enemy 82mm mortar fell close enough to place three chunks of shrapnel in Short Round's hindquarters. The ordeal earned him a purple heart and a rest at the tracker dog hospital in Cu Chi. After he returned from the hospital, he received a hero's welcome before going back to the old grind.

The platoon members hope to take Short Round home with them. The paperwork is already in, and hopes are high that he can make the journey. They think he deserves a DEROS.



CLEANING CHORES - Private First Class Richard Smith of Portland, Ind., pushes a cleaning rod down a mortar tube while Specialist 4 Don Kennedy of Ashboro, N.C., cleans the exterior and squad leader Specialist 4 James Cavaciuti of Torrington, Conn., watches the progress. The men are members of E Company, 2d Battalion, 14th Infantry. (PHOTO BY SP4 RICHARD HUHTA)

Warriors Take Holiday **'Olympics' Come to Pershing**

CU CHI - When the allied forces paused for a standdown in honor of Buddha's birthday May 30, the Warriors of the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry, used the cease fire to hold a form of "Olympic Games" at Fire Support Base Pershing 30 miles northwest of Saigon.

The atmosphere of a war zone made a lot of improvising necessary, but the games were a giant success.

Half of the activities were sports-related and the rest were military activities turned into sports.

PRIZES WERE awarded to winners and runners-up in each event. For the lucky winners, a three-day pass in Cu Chi base camp awaited each. Each runner-up received a two-day pass.

"It was a great idea," said Private First Class Vernon Lyons of San Diego, Calif. "The best part was a chance to win a pass. Everyone had a chance to win."

The activities included a football throw for distance, a 100-yard dash, a basketball shoot and a machinegun firing contest.

The competition between companies created excitement and enthusiasm. Cheers could be heard as the infantrymen tried to spur their favorites to victory. Getting together competitively brought out some of the fine athletes in the battalion.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL John E. Mann, commanding officer of the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry, was the originator of the activities.

"It is somewhat traditional in the Army to have some form of sports activities on holidays for fun and relaxation," said Mann.

Mann also presented the prizes to the winners and runners-up. The "Olympics" were topped off with a low-level "salute" by a flight of helicopters and then smoke ships.

Cricket Matches Held Daily at Tay Ninh Base

TAY NINH - At the Tay Ninh base camp, swarms of the enemy have vaulted the perimeter and entered the friendly position on wings.

Because of the efforts of courageous Tropic Lightning troopers over 5,000 of the enemy have been squashed out. Yet the fight rages on despite the tremendous losses incurred by the enemy.

Such huge body counts would spell ignominious defeat for a conventional foe, but large crickets, ousted from their natural habitats by the monsoon rains, can hardly be considered conventional.

So the ingenuity and perseverance of the 25th Division soldiers at Tay Ninh is being tested by one of Vietnam's more common insects.

Many unique methods of self-defense have been devised by the more aggressive soldiers. Specialist 4 Dwight Tallent of Tulsa, Okla., has tallied over 100 of the body count with a quick sweep of the right hand followed by a swift kick.

Tallent, an awards clerk for the 3d Battalion, 22d Infantry, is considering making a special unit citation to the unit which gathers the greatest body count during the season.

IF I HAD A HAMMER - and you might, but in the wrong place if you're strolling under this 90 foot pole these two 3d Brigade wiremen are working on. **(PHOTO BY SP4 JOE SAFRONE)**



DIVARTY Radar Keeps Watch

CU CHI - There are only six of them there. They are specialists, and all have a job most soldiers would envy.

They operate a radar site near Go Dau Ha, 20 miles northwest of Saigon. The purpose of this small Division Artillery radar site is to detect infiltration of enemy troops near the Cambodian border.

They work at night. Each man has a shift, constantly watching the radar screen and reporting significant information to DIV-ARTY headquarters. The daylight hours are used for maintenance, sleeping, filling sandbags, and getting a suntan.

Although they do not have an officer at the radar site, supervision is maintained from DIVARTY headquarters battery at Cu Chi base camp. The men work together, carrying out their duties as radar operators. Specialist 5 Michael Ball of Caldwell, Ohio, has the extra responsibility of being section chief, in charge of coordinating activities at the radar site.

The soldiers live in their own hootch on a US Navy Seabee compound with soldiers from the Army of the Republic of Vietnam providing security. Each group works separately, doing its own job.

Specialist 4 Allan Krebs of Pottsville, Pa., commented "We have very good facilities here." Although there are no movies, there are lots of books and magazines available as well as TV in both their hootch and the air conditioned enlisted men's club. Also, hot and cold running water is available for their use.

Specialist 4 Jerry Baxter of Cherryville, N.C., sums up the opinion of all his Tropic Lightning DIVARTY soldiers, stating: "Morale is high, everyone works together because we have good conditions and a responsible job to do. It's good duty and I'd like to be here my entire tour."



MAINTENANCE AND SCHOOL -

When any GI stops in a Vietnamese village to make minor repairs, an outside classroom is often the result. Specialist 4 John Kreis of Knoxville, Tenn., inspects his jeep as curious youngsters watch. (PHOTO BY SP4 KARL KARLGAARD)

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DIG - (left) Before showtime at Fire Support Base Meade, Carolyn finds time to help on an emplacement shield.

FUN BREAK - Carolyn Koppel of Girard, Ohio, and Pat Owen of Milwaukee, Ore., finds an enthusiastic audience of 1st Bn, (Mechanized), 5th Infantry Bobcats at Fire Support Base Devlin. (PHOTO BY SGT JAN F. ANDERSON)



Doughnut Dollies, We Love You!



REFRESHMENT - (Left) Pat Owen serves Kool-Aid to the new-in-country replacements. The talk session following is a person's first contact with the Doughnut Dollies.

WELCOME - (right) Pat Owen, 23, of Portland, Ore., greets incoming personnel at the replacement detachment with an orientation of Red Cross Services.





WASH - (left) Cu Chi Kool-Aid patrols start at the ice house where ice is procured, washed and the beverage mixed.

MIX - (right) Terri Dickerson checks the bouquet of the freshly made Kool-Aids. The girls usually have a Kool-Aid patrol in Cu Chi at least once a week.



Since It's Red Cross Week, Here's to the Ladies, God Bless

WANTED - Young, female, college graduate for exhausting, underpaid, inelegant and occasionally dangerous work in an insect-infested, intemperate climate, alternately soggy and dusty. Little chance for advancement.

In an ad like that it is unnecessary to specify that the girls be mad about work. Mad is one thing they certainly will be. It is also of little avail to ask that they be of adventurous disposition; none who are not will come forward. Likewise the expectation that no girls who lack in idealism or determination will volunteer is correct.

In truth the Red Cross Doughnut Dolly is a rare and delightful girl, an institutionalized Joan of Arc.

Officially they are called Recreation Aides. Six are assigned to the Tropic Lightning Division base camp in Cu Chi, and their turf includes 1st Cavalry units in and around Tay Ninh and parts of the 82d Airborne Brigade.

Though they brighten the days of the American soldier with word games and parlor type contests, the girls are not professional entertainers. Typically they are recent college grads with majors in education, psychology or sociology.

Carol Skaff, 23, of Port Arthur, Tex., is typical in her college background and in her reason for being here. "I care about the men." In country since April, Carol has become the staff artist for the property required in their skits and games.

Outside of her 70-hour work-week her concerns are often the same as any GI. Right now Carol's main problem is keeping Jason, a nondescript dog who has adopted the girls, out of the clutches of the MPs.

"Jason is a very spiritual dog," explains Carol, during a break from working on a new program.

The girls create and work up all the shows on their own, each being responsible for one show every six weeks. Approaching the dry run or New Haven tryout stage now is Terri Dickerson's current effort.

Terri is also from Texas - Houston - and is a graduate of Texas Women's University in Denton. She thinks Jason is merely aloof.

A typical day for Terri could be a 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. tour of two or three fire support bases with a show at each. Or a typical day could be a Kool-Aid run around base camp, or visiting hospital patients. In their regular shows alone, the six Doughnut Dollies play to an average of 2,500 men a week.

Like all the Red Cross Girls, Terri has come to terms with helicopters and her hair ("I'll go to Hong Kong and

buy a wig"). On the plus side of Vietnam is some comfort. "I'll never wear stockings again," she vows.

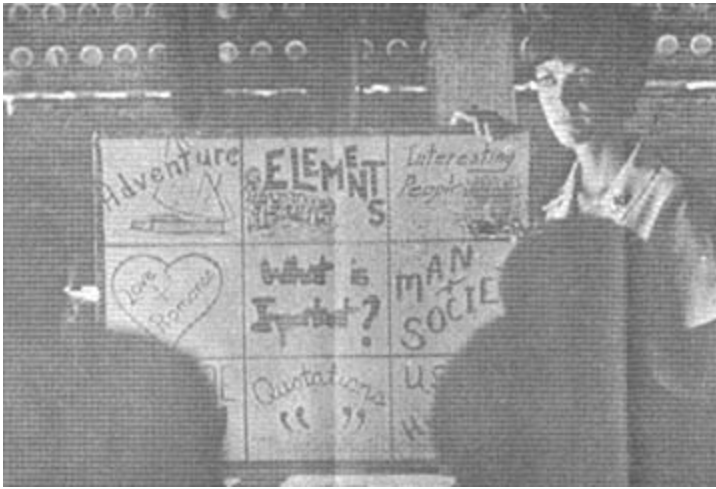
For all their long hours the pleasure of the work has to be pretty much its own reward. Recreation Aides are Paid less than a beginning school teacher.

Part of the compensation may lie in the reaction, their audience's response. In the presence of Doughnut Dollies, hardened troopers and artillery men suddenly turn shy. "Round eyes," one explained simply.

When they're not giving a show while at a fire support base, the girls chat with their audience, take a turn serving in the mess hall.

Carolyn Koppel, 22, of Girard, Ohio, will join the boys on the basketball court if there is a game going or just to demonstrate her 25-foot set shot.

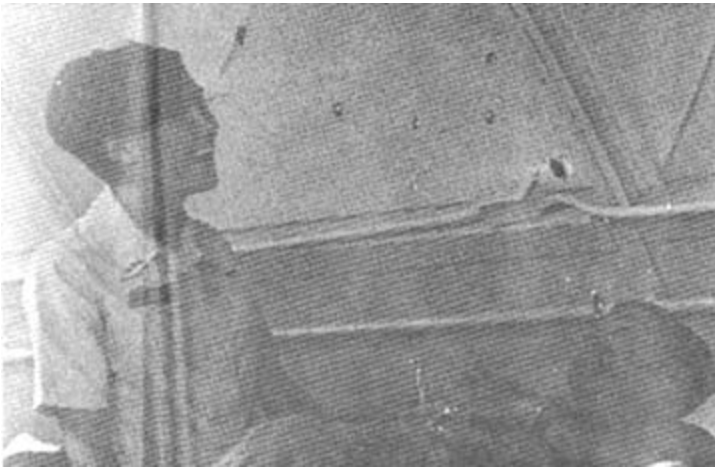
Soon a helicopter whirs in, and the girls must head out to their next show. The measure of the success and appreciation they enjoy is that none are ever sorry they came, and all are sorry to see them go.



GUESS - (left) In the chapel of Fire Support Base Pershing, Carolyn Koppel waits for the answer to "From what novel is the quotation 'It was the best of times, It was the worst of times'?"

INTERESTED - (right) The girls always find plenty of GIs who are glad to have a few minutes of diversion. A Lieutenant looks over one of their entertaining creations here.





CHAT - (left) Jane Herring visits a wounded soldier in the 25th Evac Hospital. On such calls the girls pass out shorttimer's calendars, word games and other morale builders.



Machines' Job May Go to the Dogs

By SP4 John Haydock

CU CHI - One of the big problems American troops have had in Vietnam is keeping the supply roads open and free of mines and booby traps. In the past it has taken costly and time-consuming sweeps to do the job.

And then, the electronic equipment used to detect the mines might sound off at nails or C-ration cans, causing whole columns of troops or vehicles to be held up while an investigation by engineers was in progress. Moreover, plastic mines or C-4 and bamboo booby traps are passed right over by a mine detector.

To solve these difficulties, the Army is introducing on a test basis, mine-sniffer dogs - dogs that detect mines or booby traps by the human scent left behind when ground is dug up.

THE 60TH SCOUT Dog Platoon, attached to the 25th Infantry Division's 2d Brigade, is the first such group of dogs to be sent to Vietnam. There is no real "scout dog" in the platoon. All of the animals are especially trained for sniffing mines and tunnels.

In tests being conducted by the Fire Brigade, a dog and his handler are sent out ahead of the normal engineer team. So far, the dogs have been as accurate as the min-sweeping teams - and nearly 40 per cent faster.

The dogs "alert" only where there has been fresh digging or there is something that resembles a triggering device in the road.

According to dog handler Corporal Ron Peterson of Bradenton, Fla., the dogs are very accurate. "My dog Heidi," Peterson said, "has been going through a series of tests at Cu Chi where captured mines, mock booby traps and other similar devices are set along a road. On one test she alerted at 14 out of 16 mines and three out of three trip wires."

ON HER FIRST actual mission, Heidi alerted twice - once to a burned-out trip flare and once to a large piece of cable. She found no mines.

But neither did the crew from the 65th Engineers who were right behind her with two mine detectors. They stopped more than a dozen times to investigate false alarms, while the dog stood or sat patiently by the roadside waiting for them to catch up.

The handlers are assigned to Vietnam for 180 days, but the dogs for health reasons will remain here permanently. If their work proves effective, and so far it has, more such specially trained dogs will be sent over from the States to be used all over the country.

"Mine-sniffer dogs are working like a charm," said Lieutenant Colonel Constantine Blastos, commanding officer of the 2d Battalion, 14th Infantry. "In one recent operation with my men, an engineer team with electronic equipment walked right over a booby trap trip wire. But the dog found it."

Whiskey Fifth Orders An Oriental Float To Go

By SP4 Richard Mizdal



MASSIVE RAFT COMPLETED - Bravo Company, 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry Manchus move materiel to a fire support base by means of a huge raft.

TAY NINH - "Since we can't fly it, float it." That was the response when Echo Company 65th Engineer Battalion had to move heavy equipment from Tay Ninh base camp to a Tropic Lightning patrol base under construction seven miles away.

The heavy bulldozer and crane could not be airlifted because of their weight, and the ground was too marshy to drive them so a large float

was constructed.

The result involved four steel rafts with inflatable pontoons, two small boats, two truck loads of nine-foot steel beams, a crane, bulldozer, and jeeps. The convoy-like caravan made its way out of Tay Ninh base camp to the banks of the nearby Oriental River.

Once there, a dozer backed off its carrier truck and cleared the river bank of debris. A crane was positioned along the bank and began to lift rafts off their trucks; meanwhile a compressor was furiously blasting air into the pontoons. Small boats were set floating and then fastened together, forming a huge raft measuring about 30 by 40 feet.

Ramps connected the raft to the shoreline as the machinery was driven aboard. The raft was completely loaded with equipment. Bravo Company, 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry, scrambled aboard and took up security positions.

The U.S. Navy river patrol division based at Go Dau Ha aided in security operations.

The float was pushed down the Oriental River for several miles by a 27-foot "Bridge-Erector-Boat" to pick up the bulldozer.

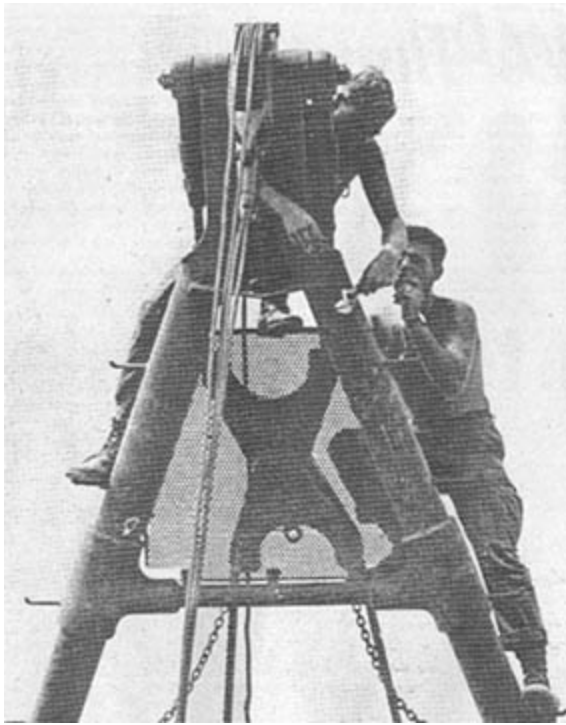
The raft and the bulldozer then moved up the Oriental River to a canal that led to the final destination. Because the canal was so narrow, the raft had to be turned sideways and pulled in to allow its passage.

First Lieutenant Robert Feller of Charlottesville, Va., was in charge of the Echo Company rafting operation. "The difficulty of the operation," stated Feller, "was the narrowness of the canal which left only inches to spare on each side of the raft."

Upon arriving at its final destination, the heavy equipment was used to clear fields of fire and to construct a berm around the base's perimeter.



TRACKS AND TRACKS OF TRACKS - This aerial shot shows column of APCs moving into the Crescent area, 13 miles east of Tay Ninh City. The APCs belong to A Company, 4th Battalion (Mechanized), 23d Infantry. (PHOTO BY SGT ROGER WELT)



SKY RIGGING - Specialist 5 William Bihn of Venice, Fla. (top), and Sergeant Charles Lalomia of Little Falls, N.J., prepare the cables on a vehicle tank retriever's 38-foot boom.

TAKE IT UP - The photo at right shows a VTR lifting a 1,700 pound tank engine and transmission. Sergeant Thomas Harding of White Fish, Mont., scrambles for the fender to make sure the engine swings clear of his tank.



Tanks Need Tow Trucks, Too

CU CHI - A tracked vehicle that can hoist and carry a 25-ton tank around just as a puppy carries a bone is often a lifesaver to the men of the 2d Brigade.

The vehicle tank retriever (VTR) used by the 2d Battalion, 34th Armormen, is an important, versatile piece of equipment.

"It can pull a disabled tank," says Captain Michael K. Anderson of Van Nuys, Calif., "as fast as it can run by itself - 35 miles per hour."

WHAT MAKES the VTR run? A 1,000 horsepower engine. "The cruising range," said Anderson who is head of battalion maintenance, "is 220 miles with its four-man crew."

The VTR can ford a stream as deep as five feet four inches without any special kits and without flooding the engine. The VTRs front blade can act as a brace and support for lifting heavy objects, or in another situation, it can be used for digging or grading, the same as a plow.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Lloyd O. Biggs of Atmore, Ala., is the officer in charge of the Dreadnaughts' three VTRs. Not only do the retrievers perform the heavy work of maintenance on the 52-ton tanks, but they are also employed to help other units.

As Biggs said, "We assist anyone who needs us. Recently we helped Pacific Architects and Engineers remove a bulldozer stuck in a marsh. And we worked with the 104th Engineers, and the 3d Squadron, 4th Cavalry, in similar operations."

THREE BATTALION VTRs run about four missions to the field or to fire support bases every day. Fight they can, add they have. Each VTR has its own assortment of small arms and automatic weapons. On a recovery mission in the Citadel, an NVA company attacked a VTR and two accompanying tanks. But the recovery was successfully completed in the midst of the fierce fight.

Sergeant David Graszok of Dearborn Heights, Mich., and Sergeant Charles Lalomia of Little Falls, N.J., agree it is hard work and long hours on a VTR crew.

"But," notes Graszok, "there is a real sense of accomplishment in performing the job. Even though we work with heavy equipment, the tolerance for error is very small. When the job is completed, it is always something you can be proud of."



PRECISION WORKMANSHIP is necessary in the continuing preventive maintenance on an M-48A3 tank. Specialist 5 James T. Pender of Hobgood, N.C., does his thing on the Dreadnaught armor. Pender is senior mechanic for Alpha Company's vehicle tank retriever. (above right)



BIG SUPPORT is needed and given when a 52-ton tank has a minor malfunction. Tropic Lightning's 66-ton VTR from 2/34 can and does perform the mission. In the photo at left, a retriever tows an out-of-commission tank north of Cu Chi.

Regulars Slam Back NVA Thrusts

(Continued From Page 1)

fighting positions received direct hits and withstood them.

"I SAW THEM COMING," said Marroquine. "This place was lit up like the Fourth of July and we could spot out

targets as they came out of the woodline." Twelve enemy soldiers were riddled with machine gun bullets in front of Marroquine's position, and several blood trails led off to the woodline.

Battalion Commander Lieutenant Colonel Robert Carmichael of Columbus, Ga., had nothing but praise for his Regulars.

"Everybody reacted to perfection to defeat the enemy force. We had one hell of a battle on our hands, and it directly involved the entire battalion. Our support elements provided everything we needed as fast as it could possibly be done. Alpha, Charlie and Delta companies all got into the action at Crook by sweeping the surrounding wood lines after the battle. Even our recon platoon was out there clearing away the bodies and counting the captured weapons. I'm proud of every man in the unit and especially proud of those men in Bravo Company who pushed back two NVA regiments in two nights."

After two nights of fierce fighting, the number of enemy killed on the battle-marked terrain around Crook reached 400. One GI died in the action and eight were wounded.

Now is the time to be thinking of wet-weather safety. Four points are made by the battalion surgeon for rainy season foot care. They are (1) Whenever possible restrict activity in wet weather to less than 48 hours. (2) Use plenty of foot powder. (3) Change socks frequently. (4) In rear areas wear shower clogs whenever possible.

2d Bde, ARVNs Join to Chase Charles

'Cats, ARVNs Join in 6-Day Mech Sweep

CU CHI - In a six day combined operation, elements of the 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 5th Infantry, and the 15th Armored Squadron of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam, proved the effectiveness of combined maneuvers between the allied forces.

The missions, consisting of sweeps in the Citadel and the edge of the Ho Bo Woods, showed that allies can work together to achieve a single objective.

The ARVN armored unit worked in two task forces in combination with the Tropic Lightning 2d Brigade mechanized unit. Each task force was comprised of one Bobcat company and one ARVN company.

ONE FORCE operated under the control of the Bobcats while the other fell under the jurisdiction of the ARVN command. By splitting the leadership and command responsibility, there was an even balance between the two allied units.

Using the M-41 tank and the armored personnel carrier, the new ARVN units proved to be highly familiar with their equipment.

The work in the Citadel added strength to the argument that men with separate military training can function well together. The use of the RPG screen was new to the ARVNs, but the mechanized troopers showed them its usefulness.

TWO COMMAND posts were placed in the center of the night formations and an ARVN vehicle was located between each APC of the Bobcats' to form a wheel-type configuration - a true intermingling of the armored companies.

Captain Max Ray of Marina, Calif., Charlie Company commander, was impressed with the eagerness of the ARVNs in learning tricks which have made the 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 5th Infantry, a formidable fighting unit. Ray explained, "I thought that for a new unit the 15th Squadron did very well. We had no contact even though we were looking for the enemy. Nevertheless, they performed well in the laager and functioned as well-disciplined troops. They immediately realized the importance of tracking to avoid hitting mines."

IN A COMBINED operation the language barrier would seem to present a problem at first glance. However, the

Vietnamese commander's understanding of English, in conjunction with the American liaison officer's talents in Vietnamese, eliminated most communication problems.



In the photo at the top of the page, an Air Force Phantom Jet streaks in to deposit its ordnance on the NVA tunnel complex. The photo (below left) shows air still filled with smoke from the strike as 2/34 armormen push their way forward. The next shot (below, right) is of a Bobcat dropping a 79 round on an NVA firing position.



The photo (above left) is of Charlie Company 2/12 and Alpha 2/34 advancing toward an enemy-occupied hedgerow. Immediately above, the Bobcats keep pushing on while tracks lay out heavy .50 caliber fire. The final pic (right) shows the 1/5 Mech moving into a position from which they had just received enemy fire. (Photos by Sgt Jan Anderson)

2d Bde Troops End It All for 59 NVA

By Sgt Jan Anderson

CU CHI - Elements of five battalions from Tropic Lightning's 2d Brigade, along with an ARVN contingent, used every resource of their firepower to break up a concentration of North Vietnamese soldiers near Trung Lap, killing 59 enemy.

Acting on an early tip-off that many NVA were in the area the allied armada, under the control of the 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 5th Infantry, rushed into a sweep formation by 8:00 a.m. the day of the action. When air strikes and artillery had "softened" the circular hedgerow complex, forces from the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry, and elements of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam working with them pursued fleeing suspects to hold them for interrogation.

After the air and artillery had finished their work, the force began an on-line push into the thick hedgerow. As they moved, radios crackled with reports of enemy running through thickets to avoid the heavy firepower.

THEIR RUNNING proved futile. Gunships thwarted any escape attempts. The ships killed five enemy who were scurrying down a stream bed.

Searching for what must have seemed a mile to the enemy, Charlie Company and a platoon of Company B from the 1/5 Mech, along with Alpha Company of the 2d Battalion, 34th Armor, and Charlie Company of the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry, made an impressive display of infantry-armor might.

Keeping such a diversified allied force of armor, infantry, air strikes, and gunships coordinated proved a big task. Captain Gay LaBoa of Atlanta, Ga., 1/5 Mech operations officer, provided direction on the ground while Lieutenant Colonel William E. Klein, Bobcat battalion commander, relayed orders from his command-and-control helicopter.

MOVING INTO the hedgerow and using heavy reconnaissance-by-fire techniques, the 2/12 Warriors force encountered no resistance. Then, as the line of tanks, armored personnel carriers, and ground troops inched its way forward, the sound of AK-47 fire cracked through the air. The allied force returned with maximum firepower. Because of the length of the sweep force, one end was able to receive heavy fire while the opposite end was not aware of the action.

The first and only unit to meet heavy resistance was Charlie Company of the 1/5 Mech. For four hours the Bobcat company had to push its way through sniper holes and tunnel complexes.

A big surprise came to the company's first platoon when a North Vietnamese soldier apparently asleep in his hole was awakened by the .50 caliber fire and ran to the tracks, hands held high, shouting "Chieu Hoi!"

Thanks to
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