

TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS



Ready To Strike.... Anywhere, Anytime

Vol 4 No. 32

TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS

August 11, 1969

Index

Unit	Page	Unit	Page	Unit	Page	Unit	Page
1/5	1	2/14 Photo	1	2/34 Armor	6	3/13 Arty	7
1/8 Arty	3	2/14	8	2/34 Armor Photo	8	3/13 Arty Photos	7
116 AHC	8	2/14 Photo	8	25th Aviation	1	4/23	4
2/12	1	2/27	1	25th DivArty	6	4/23 Photos	4
2/12	6	2/27 Photo	1	25th DivArty Photo	6	7/11 Arty	3
2/12 Photo	8	2/34 Armor	3	3/4 Cav	2	7/11 Arty Photo	3
2/14	1	2/34 Armor Photos	3	3/13 Arty Photo	7		

Operation Nutcracker Is Sweet for Fire Brigade

CU CHI - In ten hours of fierce fighting ten miles northwest of here, a joint effort by 2d Brigade units scored a heavy blow against enemy forces.

Aided by air strikes and gunships, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 5th Infantry; Alpha and Charlie Companies of the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry; and elements of the 2d Battalion, 14th Infantry, combined firepower to put the squeeze on an estimated two battalions of North Vietnamese soldiers during "Operation Nutcracker," in which 40 enemy were killed.

The action started when the Warrior companies began to push from open rice paddies into an area of hedgerows and abandoned hootches. The 1/5 Bobcats were right with them.

According to Captain William Correia of Warren, R. I., "As soon as we moved into the area, several enemy began running from the hedgerow. We fired over their heads and they retreated into the thick brush."

The target was "softened" with artillery fire, and then the ground units moved in. Alpha Company platoon leader 2d Lieutenant Tony Harper of Jacksonville, Fla., stated, "We had just entered the wooded area when we noticed fresh sandal prints around some spider holes and tunnels. We held up and started to check things out when the enemy opened up from a bunker."

The mechanized company had not gone far, either, before the first enemy soldier popped out of a hole with his AK-47 blazing.

Specialist 4 Flaco Conklin of New Haven, Conn., said, "I was manning the .50 caliber machine gun on my track when an enemy soldier popped up out of his hole only three feet in front of us and started shooting his AK on automatic at us. One shot creased my helmet. Luckily his weapon jammed, which saved my life."

Shortly thereafter the track driver, Alvarado Baltazar, Jr., dropped a grenade in the hole, killing the occupant. Baltazar is from San Antonio, Tex.

The mechanized company could move only 50 meters farther before several automatic rifles opened up on it. Bobcat .50 caliber machine guns quickly silenced the positions and drove the occupants from their well-camouflaged holes.

Charlie Company of the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry received enemy fire almost simultaneously and under similar circumstances. Under the covering of fire from gunships, the Tropic Lightning troopers were pulled back to allow artillery and air strikes to pound the enemy lair.

Specialist 4 Juergen Marshall remarked, "The air strikes and gunships really did a good job on that place. The first gunship slammed some rockets into the bunker that was giving us the most trouble."

Devastating artillery and air strikes continued while 2d Brigade units organized their re-entry into the enemy bunker complex. Sporadic fire met the 25th Division troops.

"We had to fight our way through that entire hedgerow," said Conklin. "NVA were coming up out of holes all over the place."

"The holes were so well-concealed and the enemy so patient," said Correia, "that we sometimes didn't make contact until after we had passed their positions."

When the Warriors moved back into the trouble spot, they made use of grenades and LAWs against the enemy snipers.

Private First Class Gene Loving of Chester, S.C., said, "We were really working out with LAWs. We made a lot of direct hits on bunkers."

By the time darkness fell, 40 dead NVA had been discovered. Captured enemy weapons included 18 AK-47 assault rifles, three RPG-2 launchers, one K-54 pistol, and one .51 caliber machinegun with tripod. Twenty 107mm rockets were also discovered and destroyed. More than a pound of enemy documents was confiscated during the engagement.

After a hard day of fighting, the mechanized unit set up a night defensive position near the contact area. Early the following day, they made another sweep, finding more documents and assorted munitions. Three enemy suspects were detained.



FOOT SAILING - The Golden Dragons display "navigation" tactics as they maneuver across a stream in the marshes near Cu Chi. (PHOTO BY PFC FRANKIE DITTO)

Wolfhounds Move Fast, Aid CIDG

CU CHI - Wolfhound infantrymen from the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry, came to the aid of a Vietnamese irregular defense group which had become surrounded by North Vietnamese troops 22 miles southwest of Cu Chi near the Kinh Bo Bo Canal. The Tropic Lightning soldiers routed the enemy force, killing 47.

An additional 20 enemy were killed by gunships of Bravo Company, 25th Aviation Battalion. Fourteen more were killed by the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG).

The CIDG soldiers had been operating in an area known as the Parrot's Beak when they encountered an unknown number of North Vietnamese soldiers. The irregulars, from the Due Hue area, took heavy casualties early in the battle. Evacuation of dead and wounded was hampered by heavy volumes of fire from fortified enemy positions.

Delta Company, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry, came into the area on an eagle flight in midafternoon to reinforce the irregulars. Two platoons of Delta Company came under heavy fire while sweeping the eastern side of the Kinh Gay Canal.

"Our 2d and 3d platoons were sweeping up the canal toward the area of contact when our lead element got

pinned down by snipers," said Sergeant Steve Langston of Logansport, Ind., a Delta Company platoon sergeant.

"There were about ten positions very close to the canal. They kept popping up and down, keeping us from moving up to evacuate casualties," stated Langston.

Lieutenant Colonel Forest Rittgers, Jr., of Manlius, N.Y., Battalion Commander, took personal charge of the Delta troopers when the company commander was hit by enemy fire.

Meanwhile, Charlie Company of the Wolfhounds had been called to assist Delta when it was pinned down by heavy sniper fire. Charlie Company flanked the dug-in enemy positions and fought hard to get the trapped Vietnamese and American soldiers out.

"**The NVA** would not budge and were well-concealed," said Private First Class George Diaz of New York City. "We could not see them so we just kept up our volume of fire to the front of us. Finally we drove them out."

Wolfhound soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, swept through the area the next day capturing weapons and supplies and confirming the enemy body count.

Included in their finds were two light machineguns, one AK-47 rifle, 18 Chicom hand grenades, seven 60mm mortar rounds, 123 blasting caps, 32 sets of clothing, medical supplies, a pound of enemy documents and various other NVA field equipment.



ABOVE AND BELOW - No matter how you look at it, the Wolfhounds are on top. (PHOTO BY PFC PHIL JACKSON)

Too many Americans in Vietnam are becoming Traffic Casualties. Rules of the Road are made for your protection. It's folly not to obey them. DEROS. Do it the safe way.

Decorated

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

CPT Paul F. Allen, HHC, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 1LT Terry E. Cory, HHS Btry, Div Arty
 1LT Kendall E. Hatton, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 WO1 Tom H. James, Co A, 25th Avn Bn

SILVER STAR MEDAL

LTC Tommie G. Smith, HHC, 2d Bn, 34th Armor
 CPT Michael S. Joest, D Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 1LT William Bradley, HHC, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 1LT Garold E. Townsend, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 1LT Gerald A. Odom, D Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 1LT Richard M. Ward, D Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav

BRONZE STAR MEDAL (HEROISM)

LTC Constantine J. Blastos, HHC, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 MAJ Roy C. Campbell, HHC, 1st Bde,
 CPT Arthur L. Minnefield, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 CPT Gary Peters, HHC, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 CPT Peter D. Wells, B Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 CPT Bud R. Brown, Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 1LT Robert R. Castona, Co D, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 1LT Joseph L. Krawczyk, B Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 1LT Patrick L. Smith, Co E, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 1LT Anthony R. Faiia, Co A, 2d Bn, 34th Armor
 MSG Darrell E. Olson, HHC, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 PSG Douglas Mehio, Co B, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PSG Mitchell V. Rader, C Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SFC Coy C. Crosby, B Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 SFC Dale L. Parsons, Co B, 65th Engr Bn.
 SSG Navarro G. Acosta, B Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 SSG Robert L. Norton, Co B, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SSG Vincent Killelea, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SSG Jimmie Marks, B Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 SSG Henry B. Miraldi, B Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 SSG Leonard Simpson, Co B, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SSG Jack A. Thomas, Co B, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SSG George J. Bleichert, C Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SSG Raymond Young, Co A, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 SSG Leslie R. Koch, A Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SSG Frank E. Williams, C Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SSG Welton C. Newsome, HHS Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SSG Joseph B. Newbury, C Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SSG Lloyd W. Heller, Co E, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 SGT Billy D. Browning, B Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 SGT Denn C. Marinovich, B Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 SGT Delton O. White, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SGT Charles Garrison, B Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 SGT Carroll Springer, Co B, 65th Engr Bn
 SGT Clarence H. Flynt, Jr., B Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 SGT Daniel Contreras, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf

WO1 John A. Driscoll, Jr., Co A, 25th Avn Bn
 SGT Michael P. Swim, HHC, 25th Avn Bn
 SP4 Louis H. Anderson, Co A, 25th Avn Bn
 PFC Phillip Langston, Co A, 25th Avn Bn

SGT Robert J. Gast, Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP5 Terry L. Carmichael, B Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SP4 Charles M. Ramsey, Co D, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 David F. Thomas, C Btry, 2d Bn, 77th Arty
 SP4 Sherman Brand, Co C, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 SP4 Harry D. Mills, A Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty

SGT John W. Mishu, J., HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SGT Ray E. Davis, Co A, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SGT Donald George, Co B, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SGT James H. Iman, Co A, 65th Engr Bn
 SGT John L. Riche, C Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SGT Dennis Kontz, Co A, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SGT Glenn E. Bills, Co E, 65th Engr Bn
 SGT Randall A. Brummett, A Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SGT Richard E. Caven, Co C, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SGT Leonard Amberger, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SGT Danny L. Austreng, Co B, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SGT Harley C. York, Co A, 2d Bn, 34th Armor
 SGT Victor B. Arcuri, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SGT Clifford W. Lampi, Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP5 Edmund T. Mooney, B Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SP5 Charles G. Jacobson, Co E, 65th Engr Bn
 SP5 Anthony R. Haggard, Co E, 65th Engr Bn
 SP5 Theodore Medina, Co E, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SP5 Joseph J. Tamblyn, B Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SP5 David Fulks, Co D, 2d Bn, 34th Armor
 CPL Charles Kinyalocis, Co C, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 CPL William F. Horn, B Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 CPL Bruce Nothstein, B Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 CPL Dennis E. Dahlinger, B Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 CPL Herbert E. Brooks, B Btry, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 SP4 Calvin M. Wyant, Co C, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 SP4 Robert F. Nadeau, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SP4 David L. Tarver, Co E, 65th Engr Bn
 SP4 Anthony Zamora, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SP4 Danny F. Sparks, Co B, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 Curtis Ward, A Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SP4 James D. Powers, B Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SP4 Charles R. Bowman, HHC, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 James V. Hetherington, Co B, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 Dene W. Morris, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf

Military Justice Act Spawns New Court-Martial Manual

On August 1, 1969, the Army began working with a manual for courts-martial that will not be available for complete distribution until autumn of this year.

The Manual for Courts-Martial, United States, 1969 (Revised Edition) was necessitated by the passage of the Military Justice Act of 1968.

The Manual supersedes the current 1969 unrevised edition and incorporates significant changes in military justice procedures. Since these changes became effective August 1, and because the manual will not be distributed until September 1, commanders or anyone with questions relating to the changes are urged to refer to the Staff Judge Advocates office.

The major changes in the revised manual follow:

1. An accused may not be tried by summary court without his consent even if he has refused punishment under the provisions of Article 15.
2. An accused before a special court-martial must be afforded an opportunity to be represented by legally qualified counsel unless such counsel cannot be obtained due to physical conditions or military exigencies. (Captain Stephen Holm of the SJA office indicated that simply being in Vietnam is not a physical condition that would preclude one's being granted legally qualified counsel.)
3. The powers of military judges have been increased and a military judge may be appointed to a special court-martial. The powers of the president of a special court-martial without a military judge have also been increased.
4. A bad-conduct discharge may be adjudged by a special court-martial if a verbatim record of the trial is made, a legally qualified defense counsel is detailed, and a military judge is detailed unless a military judge cannot be obtained because of physical conditions or military exigencies.
5. An accused has a right to request trial by the military judge alone in any case to which a military judge has been detailed, provided the death penalty may not be adjudged.
6. An accused who has been sentenced to confinement may request that the service of the sentence to confinement be deferred until the sentence is ordered executed.
7. An accused at any time up to two years from the date of his conviction by a court-martial may petition for a new trial based on newly discovered evidence.
8. An accused may petition the Judge Advocate General of the Army for extraordinary relief, to include the setting aside of any or all of the findings of guilty and any or all of the sentence adjudged by the court-martial in any case where he feels that there has been a fraud on the court, newly discovered evidence, lack of jurisdiction or error prejudicial to his substantial rights.

That's a Good Idea

The Army wants your ideas and is willing to pay cash awards up to \$25,000 for any of your brainstorming ideas which are adopted.

Submitting an idea is simple. Your idea may be submitted by letter, on a plain piece of paper, or on suggestion form DA Form 1045. The only thing you need is a good idea and initiative.

Your suggestion should include the following information:

- a. What is the present practice, system or item being used?
- b. What change or improvement do you suggest?
- c. Where and how can your idea be used?
- d. What savings or benefits will result?

Send your suggestion to the G-1 section, 25th Infantry Division, and it will be fed into the great Army paper machine. Furthermore, you will receive a receipt (suitable for framing).

If your idea is adopted by the great idea adopter you may receive a cash award for your thought.

Submit your idea now.

TROPIC LIGHTNING**Combat Honor Roll**

Sergeant Fred Ogas, Jr., is added to the Combat Honor Roll this week for distinguishing himself while serving with C Troop, 3d Squadron, 4th Cavalry.

Then specialist four, Ogas was on a reconnaissance-in-force mission when C Troop came under fire from a large, well-entrenched enemy force.

The initial exchange of fire was directed at the command element, killing the troop commander and wounding several men.

Sergeant Ogas, riding on the command vehicle, was thrown to the ground and seriously wounded. Disregarding his painful wounds, he immediately moved to aid his injured comrades.

As he was evacuating two of his fellow soldiers, two insurgents placed heavy fire on Ogas' positions. Ogas then stormed the enemy position and single-handedly killed the occupants of the enemy bunker with his M-16 and grenades.

After administering aid to his wounded comrades, he realized the troop was without effective command and immediately assumed control of the unit and reorganized the scattered elements.

Placing his men on line and collecting the wounded, Ogas informed the squadron commander of the situation and then guided medical evacuation helicopters into the contact area.

At the order of the squadron commander, Sergeant Ogas chose a night defensive position and set the troop into place and with the use of voice communication and flares, guided another troop to his location. He kept control of the unit throughout the battle.

Sergeant Ogas' bravery, initiative, and aggressiveness contributed to the defeat of a well-entrenched hostile force.

The TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS is an authorized publication of the 25th Infantry Division. It is published weekly for all division units in the Republic of Vietnam by the Information Office, 25th Infantry Division, APO San Francisco 96225. Army News Features, Army Photo Features, Armed Forces Press Service and Armed Forces News Bureau material are used. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Printed in Tokyo, Japan, by Pacific Stars and Stripes.

MG Ellis W. Williamson Commanding General
MAJ John C. Fairbank Information Officer
1LT John C. Burns Officer-in-Charge
SP5 Charles Withrow Editor
SP4 David DeMauro Asst. Editor
SP4 Ralph Novak Production Supervisor

BATTALION CORRESPONDENTS

SGT Jan Anderson	1/5	SP4 Pete Freeman	7/11
SP4 Dennis Dibb	1/5	PFC Richard Sears	4/9
SGT Roger Welt	4/23	SP4 Carl Detrick	2/34
PFC John Frame	4/23	PFC Frankie Ditto	2/14
PFC Sam Dixon	4/23	PFC Victor Allison	3/4
SP4 K. C. Cullen	3/22	PFC Phil Jackson	2/27
SP4 Arthur Brown	2/12	PFC Craig Sampson	2/27
PFC Larry Goodson	2/12	SP4 Pat Morrison	3/13

2/34 Provides Tanks; Infantry Provides Thanks

TAY NINH - Looking like an old-time cavalry charge, tanks from the 2d Battalion, 34th Armor, came screaming across the open fields. Making a hard turn, the armored vehicles pulled on line without losing speed.

Suddenly, the tanks pulled to a halt. Loaders jumped into the turrets and readied the high explosive and heat rounds. Tank commanders ranged in the targets with experienced hands. The computer analyzed the target at 1,900 meters.

A shattering crescendo of sound and billowing smoke pointed toward the enemy positions. Ninety millimeter breeches flew open and as quickly as the expended round flew out, the loader slammed home a new one. New targets were zeroed in and fired on. Bursting rounds smothered the entrenched positions.

ARMOR, A HIGHLY effective combat arm, has slammed enemy positions since World War I. Here in Vietnam, tanks are again showing their effectiveness as the backbone of field operations. The M-48A3 tank is the standard vehicle of Tropic Lightning's 2d Battalion, 34th Armor. Not only does it have a 90mm cannon, but also a .50 caliber and 7.62mm machineguns. Many of the 2/34th Dreadnaught tank crews have added an extra machine gun for additional fire power.

Tankers, men who ride and fight in the "iron monsters," rely on their ability to maintain the vehicles and use them with speed and accuracy. Although the tank crews do not hump the rice paddies on a sweep, they do endure a number of hardships alien to the infantry.

Tankers must care for their personal weapons, machineguns, cannon and 52 tons of steel machinery.

Their duties include replacement of 300-pound road wheels, heavy track blocks, and "humping" 60-pound cannon rounds in resupply. After a fire fight or just a sweep, all of these requirements must be met before even thinking of relaxation. And often, in a heat-baked turret this means hours of work, heavier than most found in other jobs.

DURING THE DRY season, the rumbling tanks carry clouds of dust with them that blanket the crews from dawn to dusk. Monsoons mean mud. Track repairs mean that first the tracks and wheels have to be dug out of the mud. Often the mud makes the replacement parts twice as heavy as normal. Even in the monsoon, the tanks are at least 20 degrees hotter on the inside than outside. The flailing tracks somehow beat a rhythmic shower of dust to cover the crew out of what should be moist ground. Yet the tank crews keep their vehicles in constant readiness.

In recent engagements in and around the 1st Brigade area of operations, Dreadnaught armor has been called to aid many mechanized and "straight leg" units. The tankers poured everything they had into the enemy positions. The results - enemy resistance was broken point-by-point, till there was no resistance.



HUMPING THE 90'S - Alpha Company Dreadnaughts hastily move resupply rounds across rice paddies toward Nui Ba Den. (PHOTO BY SP4 CARL DETRICK)

SUPPORTING FIRE POWER - A Dreadnought gives .50 caliber cover fire during a joint infantry-armor operation at the base of Nui Ba Den. (PHOTO BY SP4 CARL DETRICK)



Cu Chi Tower Stops Snake Sneak Attack

CU CHI - In recent action on the perimeter of the Cu Chi base camp, a snake sneak attack on a 110-foot observation tower was successfully repelled by the tower guard and a dozen military policemen.

Private First Class Allan V. Benfant of Detroit, a tower guard for the 1st Battalion, 8th Field Artillery, was on the afternoon shift when the assault began. A photographer, who had been taking pictures from the observation deck of the tall structure, had started the long climb down.

HE HAD ONLY gotten about ten feet down when startled by the sight of a black snake entwined in the ribs of the ladder's protective cage a few feet beneath him. Naturally he started back up the ladder, only to be met by another snake either jumping or falling toward him.

Luckily it only brushed him as it fell all the way to the ground. Wasting no time, the photographer scrambled back up to the top deck where he waited out the siege.

Tower guard Benfant then armed himself with a broom and counterattacked. He did not see the snake until he was almost beside it and it darted out at him, thus influencing him to retreat a few rungs up the ladder.

ONCE IN A BETTER fighting position, the determined tower guard continued jabbing at the snake until he dislodged it and sent it tumbling to the second landing. Benfant pursued the sneaky intruder and unsuccessfully tried to force it off the landing.

In the meantime, MPs had arrived on the scene and one had climbed up the framework and was on the outside of the landing trying to oust the snake from its perch with a rake. After breaking part of the rake, he succeeded in knocking the reptile to the ground where the other MPs disposed of it.

When it was all over no one could explain what the snakes were doing 85 feet up in an all-metal tower. Benfant suggested that they might have been fleeing from the fires where workers were burning off weeds along the perimeter bunker line. He also stated that he planned on being particularly cautious when climbing the tower henceforth.

Survey Team Is Part of Arty Pre-planning

TAY NINH - Two Army vehicles carrying 12 men and loaded with equipment, moved down a winding road through the Vietnamese countryside of Tay Ninh Province. Their destination: The base of Nui Ba Den Mountain. Their mission: Survey a specified area.

It was just another day's work for the survey team of Headquarters Battery, 7th Battalion, 11th Field Artillery. Traveling through Tay Ninh Province was nothing new to them, since they have surveyed all over Tay Ninh, from the top of Nui Ba Den to within a mile of the Cambodian border. Lately, they have been going to the field practically every day, surveying new field locations for the ever-increasing number of artillery batteries firing in support of ground elements in Tropic Lightning's 1st Brigade.

On this mission, the 7/11 crew was accompanied by members of the 25th Division Artillery survey team from Cu Chi.

Working together, the surveyors completed their field work very quickly, finishing up at a new fire support base about a mile up the road. Later, they would have to compute all the surveying data they had gathered in the field, putting to use their knowledge of geometry and trigonometry.

Another day had come to a close and another successful survey operation had been completed. Although the surveyors receive little recognition, their work plays a vital role in achieving maximum effective support from the artillery. But this day had all but been forgotten and the surveyors' thoughts were already being directed toward tomorrow, wondering where their next job would take them.

SURVEYING DUO - Artillery surveyors, Specialist 4 Jack Ingram of Memphis, Tenn., and Specialist 5 Ralph Ruble of Ironton, Mo., of the 7/11 survey team head up the road to set up their equipment.
(PHOTO BY SP4 PETE FREEMAN)



A Tomahawk Civic Action Program

A Splendid Time Had By All

TAY NINH - Growing in leaps and bounds, the civic action program of the 4th Battalion (Mechanized), 23d Infantry, is taking a firm hold on the hamlets in the Tomahawk area of operations.

The Tropic Lightning soldiers initially started by helping to improve the living conditions of one village, Ap Ninh Hung, near Tay Ninh City. Now the spirited program is reaching out into several rural hamlets.

The Tomahawks have been making each program a social event. Recently the mechanized infantrymen loaded three jeeps and one truck with medical supplies, food stuffs, T-shirts, baseball caps, plastic kitchen ware, and other small items that make life a little easier and headed for the small hamlet of Soui Da. There, all the items were passed out, many of them in the forms of prizes. A favorite item the children love is a blastic bag that contains pencils, pens, paper and a small ruler.

While Major Al Prieto, the battalion surgeon, performed a medical civic action program on one side of the market place, Captain Gren Fleming of Hampton, Va., S-5 officer, and his men were busily setting up carnival-type amusement booths.

"The villagers could hardly wait for us to get set-up," said Fleming. "They were so excited. I think we added a little happiness to their lives."

Villagers of all ages enjoyed the festivities. From throwing darts at balloons to just watching, everybody got a taste of the best medicine: laughter.

The day's highlight was the foot race. Everybody was there to cheer on his favorite runner. One small boy finally prevailed over everybody else. He now has the distinction of being the fastest foot in town.



STEP RIGHT UP, THREE FOR A QUARTER - Well, actually it was five for a smile as a Tomahawk ties a balloon to a board in preparation for the day's festivities.

ONE YOUNG CONTESTANT in the dart-throwing contest takes careful aim on his target. Winners (along with everyone else) received prizes during the Tomahawk civic action project. The balloons really don't stand a chance against the youngsters' dart barrage.



DIVARTY Survey Gives Precise Shell-Rep

CU CHI - Theodolite, DME, heliotrope, all strange words to laymen, but to the 25th Infantry Division Artillery survey section they are vital instruments needed in important and often dangerous work.

The survey section provides exact coordinates and azimuths from surveyed points to a fire support base so artillery can fire accurately on a target in the shortest time possible.

WHEN THE ORDER to "dig in" is given, the survey team is ready at a fire support base. Team members know their job is important, and working together, they determine the exact information necessary for artillery to carry out successful fire missions.

According to the DIVARTY survey officer, Captain Robert Haney from Wichita Falls, Tex., "Accuracy is our most important product. We are oriented to give artillery, through accurate surveyed coordinates, a first round hit."

The survey section consists of two departments, Survey and the Survey Information Center. Survey determines the actual coordinates, angles and other information requested. SIC, according to Computer Specialist 5 James Lawrence from Othello, Wash., "Takes all field work and transfers it into usable data for lower echelon units."

IT IS NO EASY job and takes a lot of men to find the correct data. Party chiefs, computers, recorders, instrument operators, tapemen - each one has a complex job to perform. Every man, according to Haney, is cross-trained. Each one knows at least three other jobs in the survey section besides his own.

Danger is sometimes present. Occasionally sniper fire brings the work to a temporary halt. When the enemy is silenced, the work continues. A Shell-rep is one of the most dangerous missions of the DIVARTY survey section.

It is survey's responsibility, while enemy rockets or mortars are coming in, to go to the place of impact and analyze the crater. Information, such as back azimuths, angle of fall and type of round are quickly determined and sent to the 1st Battalion, 8th Artillery, Fire Direction Center where a fire mission is initiated.

"CHARLIE FIRES three or four rounds, crawls back in his hole, waits, then comes out and shoots again," states Lawrence. "He's hard to see from the air. Artillery will have a pre-fire plan, a set location to fire on when rockets come in. Through a shell-rep, survey will give better locations to fire on."

The amount of security varies. Sometimes infantry units will accompany the survey team. Most of the time, the men are brought to their locations by armored personnel carriers.

Their jobs are important and often dangerous. The men of the DIVARTY survey section know teamwork is

their most important tool in obtaining the information and accuracy that is so vital.

DISTANCE MEASURING EQUIPMENT - One way to get exact coordinates of Fire Support Base Patton II is by using Distance Measuring Equipment. Specialist 5 Jim H. Arends of Woodland Hills, Calif., checks out a DME. (PHOTO BY SP4 KEN FAIRMAN)



2/12 Thwarts Bubonic Threat

CU CHI - The 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry, recently helped a small Vietnamese hamlet eliminate one of the biggest problems that can face a people; bubonic plague, often called Black Death.

Acting on information received by the civic affairs section, the battalion surgeon, Captain Thomas Brugger of Portland, Ore., found confirmed cases of the plague in the village.

A three-man medical team was airlifted into the remote hamlet where the cases had been discovered, 12 miles west of Cu Chi. After arriving at their destination, the 2d Brigade medics co-ordinated their efforts with an ARVN medical officer, who also served as interpreter for the team.

"**WE MADE** spot checks first," related Brugger. "It was raining, so we asked the village chief if we could set up in his hootch, and he said he would permit it. We gave initial treatment to two definite plague victims. There were other villagers who had symptoms of the plague and we treated them just to be sure."

Altogether, the unit treated 83 people. "Not only did we check each for plague," said Staff Sergeant Lonnie Ashley of Carrollton, Ga., "but we treated everyone who had something wrong with them."

The team may return to the village, should more cases of the dreaded disease break out.

The Vietnamese medics took over the treatment of the victims and gave plague-preventive shots to the villagers. A second team was scheduled to eliminate the rodents that harbor the disease. DDT was used to wipe out the dangerous fleas.

Major is a Clerk

CU CHI - The 2d Brigade at Cu Chi base camp has a major working as a company clerk. Major Arnett of Seaford, Del., is a member of the 2d Battalion, 34th Armor. The major is a Specialist 4.

Arnett, whose first name is "Major," became a fighting company clerk, when he joined Alpha Company in the field to get some required information.

ARNETT HAD gathered all the data he needed when the company was diverted to aid an element of the 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 5th Infantry which had made contact with the enemy. Although he had never been on a sweep, he volunteered to go with the Dreadnaught unit.

One tank was short a man, and Major suddenly became a tank gunner. Riding the back deck of the tank, Arnett arrived during an artillery and air strike. The tank pulled on line and waited.

As the last salvos struck the enemy positions, the Dreadnaught armor and Bobcat mechanized infantry forces moved into the contact zone.

Reconning by fire, Arnett acted as rifleman and grenadier from the back deck of the tank. During periods when the tank's loader was busy inside the tank, Arnett manned the M-60 machine gun on top of the vehicle.

FOR FOUR HOURS, the company clerk alternated in his use of weapons. Said Arnett: "I never really thought anything about the fighting until three Viet Cong fired a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) in our vicinity. There was too much noise going on to hear the RPG. But then, I'd never heard one before, so I wouldn't have known what to listen for anyway."

Shortly afterward, a tank commander and loader were slightly wounded on another tank. After the pair was dusted off, Arnett climbed into the tank commander's position.

Not knowing how to load and fire the main gun or machine guns, Arnett grabbed his trusty M-16 and began to fire at the enemy positions.

Finally, after the battle was over, Arnett flew back to Cu Chi in a helicopter, went back to his desk, and his old job as clerk.

Major Arnett had proved his combat effectiveness.



NUI BA DEN looks down on Charlie Battery's position as the Clansmen prepare for a night of firing.

Clansmen Go to Tay Ninh to Put a Thorn In Side of Nui Ba Den

TAY NINH - Cannoneers of Battery C, 3d Battalion, 13th Artillery (The Clan), moved from Fire Support Base Mead near Cu Chi to Tay Ninh Base Camp to provide reinforcement against increased enemy activity here.

The move to Tay Ninh followed a buildup of NVA troops in the Tay Ninh Nui Ba Den area. Battery C's mission was to provide general artillery support and reinforcement of maneuver units in the area.

Only four hours after arriving, Battery C received its first fire mission. The firing went on all night with five of the battery's 155mm howitzers tallying 689 rounds fired during 27 missions in the first 24 hours.

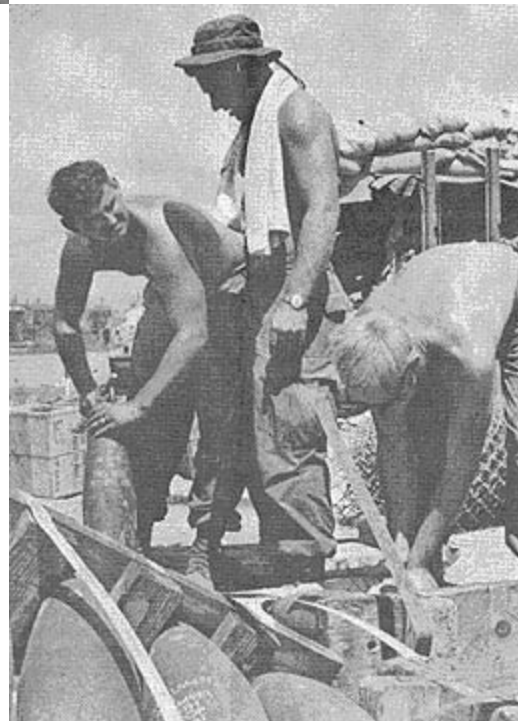
Ten days after the move the battery moved out of Tay Ninh Base Camp to a position within a mile of Nui Ba Den in support of the 2d Battalion, 34th Armor, operations and maneuver units operating in the vicinity of the

majestic mountain.



DEVOURED BY A MAN-EATING RPG SCREEN - Specialist 4 Carl F. Screider of Madison, Conn., looks as though he is persuaded that an RPG screen might be just as dangerous as an RPG. Specialist Schneider isn't trying to free himself from the monster's clutch; he just wants to get the thing up.

THREE CLANSMEN proceed with the unglamorous task of uncrating projos.





POWDER HANDLERS Private Roderick Woods of Bolivar, Tenn. (left), and Private First Class Jose F. Manzaanares of Pharr, Tex., take powder charges to be loaded behind the projectile in the gun tube.

COMING IN calls Corporal David S. Ramsey of Dearborn Heights, Mich., as he sets down the 100-pound projectile inside the howitzer for loaders to ram into the gun's tube. In the background an ammunition handler fuses more projectiles for the mission.



24 Enemy Fall

2/12 Whips NVA in 4-Hour Fight

CU CHI - Warriors of the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry, killed 24 North Vietnamese soldiers ten miles northwest of here in a fierce four-hour firefight. The 2d Brigade infantrymen sustained no casualties themselves.

As the soldiers hit their landing zone and scrambled for cover, gunships from the 116th Assault Helicopter Company blasted enemy positions from the sky, killing nine NVA who were fleeing the area.

CHARLIE AND Delta companies then pushed into the area the enemy had abandoned. At first there was no



resistance.

"I had just checked out a freshly dug fighting position when - blam! A slug hit my rifle butt and sent me sprawling," related Private First Class John Harrington of West Springfield, Mass. "He was no more than five feet away in a hedgerow. My weapon saved my life by stopping his bullet. I returned fire and then used grenades."

AFTER THE MASSIVE fire support had ceased, the infantry assaulted the enemy stronghold. Small arms fire and grenades finished the job.

"I can't give enough praise for the excellent performance of our men," said Lieutenant Colonel John E. Mann, battalion commander. "Our supporting fire was excellent. Everything went very well."

Seven AK-47 assault rifles were destroyed; one was captured. Also confiscated was a 60mm mortar tube complete with baseplate and six rounds.

A LOAD OF TROUBLE (Above) for the enemy waits on the shoulder of Specialist 4 Percy Miller of Williston, Fla. The Warriors provided more than enough trouble for NVA in a recent firefight. (PHOTO BY SP4 ART BROWN)

Holy Mackerel What a Fish Story Golden Dragons Tell

By PFC Frank Ditto

CU CHI - A Kit Carson Scout working with soldiers from the 25th Infantry Division uncovered something fishy in a thickly wooded area just north of Cu Chi base camp recently.

While searching for signs of the enemy on a three-day mission, Phan Van Chung, a former Viet Cong and now a scout for men of Bravo Company, 2d Battalion, 14th Infantry, uncovered a well-camouflaged trap door which led into a tunnel four feet underground.

Knowing that Viet Cong were in the area, Chung eased himself into the tunnel and disappeared into an ocean of darkness. The "Bravo Bandits" waited anxiously for their Kit Carson Scout to call out.

Suddenly, Chung popped his head out of the tunnel and began passing out cans of one of Charlie's favorite foods - mackerel. Chung kept passing out more and more cans of the fish and the men outside began wondering just how much there was.

Specialist 4 Richard Gregg of Salem, Ohio, and Private First Class Daniel Zaldivar of Los Angeles, Calif., relieved Chung in pulling out the fish.

Not for three hours did the Bravo Bandits finally succeed in emptying the tunnel. Final count came to 1,800 cans of mackerel.

"I didn't think that I'd have any fish stories to tell about Vietnam," said Gregg. "But now I guess I do."



PRIVATE FIRST CLASS Dan Zaldivar of Los Angeles inspects the mackerel cache found north of Cu Chi by the men of Bravo Company, 2d Battalion, 14th Infantry. **(PHOTO BY SP4 FRANKIE DITTO)**



Specialist 4 Roger L. Evans of Ashtabula, Ohio, shouts instructions as he sights in preparation for a fire mission for his 4.2-inch mortar. Evans is a member of the 2/34 Armor. **(PHOTO BY SP5 DOUG ELLIOTT)**

Thanks to
Mack D. Gooding, 15th PID, 1st Bde., for sharing this issue,
Kirk Ramsey, 2nd Bn., 14th Inf. for creating this page.

This page last modified 8-12-2004

©2004 25th Infantry Division Association. All rights reserved.