



2nd Battalion 1st Infantry Chapter,

Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA)

WEBSITE: www.b-2-1-196lib.com



Volume 4

A Soldier's Footsteps

November, 2011

Fellow Legionnaires: Well, It's been a busy 2011 so far and I've logged quite a few miles, taking some road trips to be with our brothers. This year I've hit Bill Van Buren's; Fredericktown, MO., Harry Humbert's: Winfield, KS., the Americal Reunion, Colorado Springs, CO., the Howard County Vietnam Veteran's reunion, Kokomo, IN, and, one I didn't have to travel for, a pig roast at my place.

At each stop I had a wonderful time and the stories and beverages flowed freely. All the guys and their wives were great to be with and the camaraderie still exists as it did, dare I say it, over 40 years ago.

I plan on creating a page on our web site in the very near future with pictures of the various formal and informal reunions we've had together since 1989 when Jim Crum got the reunions started in St. Louis, MO. I'll get working on it soon but, it will take a while to get it up to snuff since I'll have 20+ years to work with. Any pictures any of you may have of reunions/mini-reunions are welcome. Email or snail mail them to me (prefer .jpg format in email if possible). As mentioned in last month's newsletter, the 2012 Americal Reunion will be held in Atlanta, Ga., try to make it. It should be special.

As of this writing, we now have a total of 44 members on the web site. Check out the membership page to see if any of your old buddies have signed up. Well, I'll end this for now; the shorter this is the more room we have in the newsletter for good stuff. Thanksgiving is a time for reflection and giving thanks, I thank God for all of us. *Keep safe and may the bond of battle never be broken!*

Commander

Editors Notes: We are still looking for items to place in the Newsletter. The *newsletter* has been successfully uploaded into the 2nd Battalion Website. If you missed an issue you can find it there. The Web address in the heading of the N/L so everyone can have ready access to the WEBSITE. Chuck is working on a page that will have all of the pictures we can assemble and printable. This may take awhile, but we will let you know when its completed. If you have anything relating to this N/L, email or write them at the following addresses; Email: rheroux1@nc.rr.com or gcarder@columbus.rr.com. Snail Mail: Rich Heroux, 2005 Montgomery Road, Franklinton, NC 27525-7300 or Gary Carder, 1725 Demorest Road, Columbus, OH 43228.

Retirement Changes Face Huge Opposition: A recent Fleet Reserve Association survey found that more than 80 percent of the 1,700 respondents strongly opposed proposals to "civilianize" the current military retirement system. In addition, more than 80 percent of the active duty and Reserve component respondents said they'd shorten their term of service if the retirement benefit were changed to reflect the recommendations made in the Defense Business Board's "[Modernizing the Military Retirement System](#)" report. Read the [Military Advantage Blog](#) to learn more about the FRA Survey. [Let your voice be heard, contact you elected officials and tell them how you feel about the proposed changes to the current Military Retirement system.](#)

Afghanistan Marine Receives the Medal of Honor:

Former Marine Corporal Dakota Meyers risked his life to recover the bodies of fellow Marines in Afghanistan. Edwin Johnson, Aaron Kenefick, Michael Johnson and James Layton are four men former Marine Cpl. Dakota Meyer will never forget. He attempted to rescue them in an Afghan village in Kunar province on Sep. 8, 2009. He found his friends shot dead in a ditch, their equipment stripped from their bodies. With the help of Afghan troops, Meyer retrieved their bodies so they could be returned home. Assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines, in Hawaii, Meyers was preparing for a second tour to Iraq in 2009. His first was in 2007. He heard about an opportunity to join an embedded training team headed for Afghanistan and volunteered for it. On the day of the attach Cpl. Meyer was part of a four man sniper team embedded Training Team 2-8 training Afghan forces. Meyer's unit was ambushed by about 150 Taliban fighters. Four of the Marines were separated and were calling out for help. Meyer tried multiple times to get to his fellow Marines, but even their armored vehicles proved useless in the fierce firefight. Despite shrapnel wounds, Meyer was undeterred and charged in on foot only to find his friends dead. For his heroic actions he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. On October 19th, the city of Indianapolis dedicated a downtown bridge in honor of United States Medal of Honor winners. The city, a few years ago, dedicated an area in Military Park along the White River Canal to honor these award winners and several of them attended the bridge dedication. Among them was Hershel Williams who earned his Medal of Honor during WWII on Iwo Jima. Mr. Williams made a short but poignant statement encouraging younger generations to remember the service of all military personnel. He stated "When we Americans were born, we inherited two very precious gifts. One was the gift of life, and the other was the gift of freedom, both of which were paid for by someone else. I would like to encourage the young people to think about what others have done to make it possible for us to wake up every morning free."

The Medal of Honor was established during the Civil War and is the nation's highest military honor. Since it's inception, there have been 3,458 recipients with 85 still living. The most recent recipient is Marine Cpl. Dakota Meyer for actions performed in Afghanistan.

A fire fight; The ultimate rush.

On my left someone shouts on my right someone opens up.

It quickly builds to a crescendo.

You push away fear and do what you have to keep yourself and your buddies around you alive!

The crescendo slows to a few scattered rounds.

And when the end.

It seems so quiet.

You have a moment, maybe two. Ya think.

You've just survived another day.

In The Land Of The Cool Water Buffalo

Fire Fight

Bruce Nielsen; 6-21-2001

Veterans Mobilize to Protect Military Benefits: Recently, when Congress voted to raise the nation's debt ceiling, they specifically [targeted national security spending](#) to absorb many of the cuts, indicating that Department of Defense personnel programs and VA benefits would not be spared. Leaders in Congress have already discussed cutting or eliminating 10 benefits affecting military members, veterans and their families in recent months, and the VFW believes that these toxic proposals will once again gain momentum as Congress looks for ways to tighten its belt. America's all-volunteer military has shouldered a multi-theater war all by themselves for almost 10 years. They did so without question, and often with tremendous sacrifice to themselves and their families. Americans understand the scope of the national debt crisis; a crisis that could have serious repercussions on a military at war and a veterans' population that has already sacrificed much for the nation. However, instead of debating and enacting meaningful fiscal reforms, some in Congress have proposed plans that would leave America's military and her veterans to shoulder more of the national debt. This "10 for 10" plan — to cut 10 specific benefits to pay for 10 years of war — is a breach of faith with America's military and veteran families, and the call has gone out to the veteran population to put up a fight to stop it. The 10 ways Congress is targeting military and veterans' benefits during today's difficult fiscal times are to:

[Increase healthcare premiums for military retirees on TRICARE](#)
[Increase pharmaceutical fees for troops, families and retirees](#)
[Eliminate presumptive service-connected conditions for disabled and ill veterans](#)
[Lock out or increase fees for Department of Veterans Affairs Priority Groups 7 and 8 veterans](#)
[Reduce cost-of-living allowances](#)
[Freeze military pay](#)
[End government subsidies to military commissaries](#)
[Eliminate Department of Defense elementary schools stateside](#)
[Eliminate the 20-year military retirement plan](#)
[Eliminate DOD tuition reimbursement programs for service members](#)

While Congress publicly debated raising the nation's debt ceiling, we were concerned that many of the proposed cuts were being discussed behind closed doors. We understand that the nation must make difficult fiscal decisions, but the programs and benefits provided to veterans and military families were prepaid in full through their honorable service and sacrifice. Join the effort and make your voice heard by calling, writing, or e-mailing your members of Congress. Tell them to leave the military and veterans out of any deficit reduction proposals.

Change of Venue: Countless Wounded Warriors & everyone from U.S. Presidents to Privates have been taken care for at Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) in Washington, DC, for more than 100 years, but now what once was the Army's flagship hospital has closed. The closing was part of the Realignment and Closure Act of 2005. In August, patients were moved to the medical center's new location at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, MD., which will be renamed the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and September 15, 2011, the State Department and the District of Columbia took control of the WRAMC building.

Military Draft Opposed: According to a Rasmussen Reports poll in July, more than two-thirds (67%) of likely American voters oppose bringing back a military draft. 15% are not sure. Only 18% of the voting public favor conscription.

COLA for 2012? (Extracted from a MOAA Bulletin)
Q. Will there be a COLA increase in 2012? If so, how much will it be? **Ans.** Barring some dramatic, unforeseen change, there should be a 2012 COLA of **somewhere between 3.4% and 3.7% for Social Security, military retired pay, SBP, and VA disability compensation.** We won't know what the final COLA number will be until the September Consumer Price Index figure is released on October 19. Retirees should see the COLA in their January 2012 checks. Many members have asked if Congress might act to cut their COLA amount in 2012. We think it's likely Congress will seek some kind of COLA changes at some point in the months and years ahead as part of ongoing deficit-reduction efforts. But at this time there's no legislation on the table that would affect the 2012 COLA, and any prospect of that happening before the December 1 COLA effective date seems remote.



Picture From 1969: Site Chosen For Army Museum: The picture above was taken just prior to the insertion into the fight at Tien Phoc, Vietnam. Pictured from left to right are; Raul "Heavy" Perez, Lieutenant Gary Carder, Platoon Sergeant Ernie Rodriguez and platoon RTO, Phester.

First Amendment Will Prevail at Houston VA National Cemetery: Cemetery will not interfere with prayers, religious expression during burial services. American veterans declared victory in a Federal Lawsuit (Rainey v VA) filed over allegations of religious hostility and unlawful censorship by the VA and its director of the Houston National Cemetery. Federal District Judge Lynn N. Hughes signed a consent decree ordering the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) to lift the ban on prayer and the word "God" at national cemeteries, to revoke national policies hostile to religion, and to reopen the Chapel which identity was previously changed to "meeting facility" at the Houston National Cemetery. The Federal Lawsuit filed suit on behalf of veterans over allegations of religious hostility and unlawful censorship by the VA and its director of the Houston National Cemetery. Officials told the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) they could not have prayer during the burial services of veterans unless the family requested it specifically in writing and submitted the prayer to VA officials for pre-approval. "The VFW is grateful that the government has restored the basic tenets recognized in the U.S. Constitution – which guarantees fundamental rights of religious expression and freedom of speech – to patriotic Americans who sacrifice everything to defend it.

Army Ranger Killed on 14th Combat Deployment: Two Soldiers with Joint Base Lewis-McChord's Army Ranger battalion were killed when insurgents attacked their unit with an improvised explosive device. Sgt. 1st Class Kristoffer B. Domeij, 29, of San Diego, and Pfc. Christopher A. Horns, 20, of Colorado Springs, Colo., were mortally wounded in Afghanistan's Kandahar province, according to the U.S. Special Operations Command. Both were assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment. Domeij, who was on his 14th deployment, enlisted in the Army in July 2001 after graduating from Rancho Bernardo High School. He was called irreplaceable by his commanders. A Ranger that you wanted by your side when the chips were down. Domeij joined the 2nd Battalion at Lewis-McChord in April 2002, where he served as a forward observer. He also was one of the first Army-qualified Ranger Joint Terminal Attack Controllers, which is training typically reserved for Air Force members. Horns was on his first deployment to Afghanistan. "Ultimately, Pvt. 1st Class Christopher Horns represents everything which is great about the United States," Odom said. "He placed his fellow Rangers, the regiment and his nation before everything else in life." Horns joined the Army in July 2010 and was assigned to the 75th Ranger Regiment in March, where he served as an assistant machine gunner and automatic rifleman.

Man Who Posed as Wounded Ranger Spared Jail: A Connecticut man who posed as a wounded Soldier has been spared jail but is forbidden from leaving his home on Veterans Day and Memorial Day. Jesus Garcia's attorney says the 21-year-old Greenwich man was granted accelerated rehabilitation, a program for first-time, nonviolent offenders. Garcia was sentenced Friday and ordered to perform community service and attend counseling. Garcia must surrender all military uniforms and memorabilia.



'If we ever forget that we're One Nation Under God, then we will be a nation gone under'...

Ronald Reagan



Reunion Photos: This picture is from the Kokomo reunion. Left to right: Gerry "Bo" Borysiak, Terry "Foxhole" Loyd, Bill Gregory, Bruce Nielsen, Chuck Holdaway, Mike "Frenchie" Kosteczko, Randy Turner.



Holdaway's Pig Roast: Left to Right: Bill "Van" Van Buren, Terry "Foxhole" Loyd, John "Big John" Careccia, Chuck Holdaway, Bruce Nielsen, Julius "Juju" Deriscavage, Harry "Harvey" Humbert, Don Hicks.



Bill Van Buren's visit in late August 2011: Left to Right: Gerry "Bo" Borysiak, Don Hicks, Bill Van Buren, Bruce Nielsen, Chuck Holdaway.

THE ONLY VICTORIES WORTH HAVING ARE THOSE THAT ENTAILED A HARD FIGHT