



2nd Battalion 1st Infantry Chapter, Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA)



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Volume 3

"A Soldier's Footsteps"

June 2013

Commander's Corner: A correction to last month's article: Mike Schmid was with B 2/1, 196th in '71-72. Mike's first tour was '69-'70 with the 173rd ABN Bde. and B 4/3 11th/198th LIB. Just a quick reminder; we're still taking nominations for the chapter secretary/treasurer position. Contact one of the officers with your nomination or if you have any questions regarding the tasks. I just got back from attending the Indy 500 with Bruce Nielsen (B 2/1), his cousin Bill, and about 250,000 of our friends. Bruce and I have gone to the race together for over 20 years but, neither one of us know the exact number of years. That may be because there are usually some beers consumed over the weekend. The race was really exciting for the 1st 197 laps but, as it had the 3 previous years, it ended under caution. What a bummer! Wish they'd do something about it. Maybe they could take a cue from NASCAR and stop the race until all the debris is cleared and then restart for a decent finish. Hopefully, all of you planning to attend the September Americal reunion at Nashville, Tn. have made your reservations by now. From what I understand it's going to be a big one and rooms are scarce. The headquarters hotel is completely full and the reunion committee has reserved another group of rooms at a nearby hotel for the overflow. I am attempting to make arrangements for us to have our own hospitality room like we did in Atlanta but, so far things aren't going too well. The original hotel is still trying to find something for us. The overflow hotel has no meeting rooms on the premises so that's a wash. One way or another, we'll come up with something. I have a call into Dolly Parton to see if we can use her house. I'll have an update in the next newsletter (I hope). I mentioned in the last issue, we are going to have chapter shirts available at the reunion. They are nice polo/golf shirts and should be in the \$20-\$25 range. We would appreciate it if anyone desiring a shirt (or two or three) would contact one of the officers with the number of shirts and the size(s) needed. This will make it much easier to order them and help ensure we don't have a bunch of shirts left over because of size problems. If you have any questions your officers are available to help. No new members to report this month. This is the first time this has happened since the inception of the chapter; let's get recruiting.

Keep safe and may the bond of battle never be broken!

Chuck

Editors Notes: *Newsletters* are uploaded to the 2nd Battalion Chapter ADVA Website. If you missed an issue or would like to look at one from the past look on the Website. The Web address is identified in the heading of the N/L. If you have anything relating to this N/L, email or write them to the following addresses; Email: rheroux1@nc.rr.com or Rich Heroux, 2005 Montgomery Road, Franklinton, NC 27525-7300.

Four MIAs Identified: The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office recently announced the identification of remains belonging to a World War II soldier, two soldiers from the Korean War and one Marine, who was lost during the ill-fated SS Mayaguez rescue operation in 1975. Recovered are:

Army Pvt. William Yawney, 23, of Freemansburg, Pa.. On June 15, 1944, U.S. forces were ordered into Saipan as part of an Allied strategic goal to secure the Mariana Islands. After a month of intense fighting, enemy forces conducted a final attack on the 105th Infantry Regiment, 27th Infantry Division's position. Elements of the regiment sustained heavy losses, to include Yawney, who was originally thought to have been buried in a military cemetery on Saipan.

Army Pfc. James L. Constant, 19, of Beach Grove, Ind. In late 1950, Constant and elements of 2nd Infantry Division were defending the Naktong Bulge, near Changnyong, South Korea, when they were attacked by enemy forces. Constant and many other service members were reported missing. Remains were later recovered and buried, reburied, and eventually transferred and reburied again as an "unknown" in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu.

Army Sgt. Charles Allen, 23, of Mineola, Texas. In late November 1950, Allen and elements of Company C, 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, were deployed north of the Ch'ongch'on River in North Korea when their unit was encircled and attacked by enemy forces. Allen was captured but died in captivity on March 31, 1951. An exchange of remains after the war failed to identify Allen, so he buried as "unknown" at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu.

Marine Pfc. Daniel A. Benedett, of Seattle. On May 12, 1975, Khmer Rouge gunboats captured the S.S. Mayaguez in international waters off the coast of Cambodia and took the civilian vessel to Koh Tang Island. After efforts to secure the release of the ship and crew failed, a rescue mission was launched that resulted in heavy U.S. losses. Benedett was aboard a helicopter that was shot down with 26 men aboard, only half of whom were rescued. Benedett was buried May 15 at Arlington National Cemetery in a mass grave containing the remains of his 12 other previously recovered crewmates. Theirs are the last names on the Vietnam Wall, Panel 1 West.

Looking for a Replacement for Secy/Treas: Your Chapter is actively soliciting for a replacement for our current Secy/Treas, Don Hicks. See the Commander's comments for details. Your entire staff will be up for reelection when we meet in Nashville in September 2013. If you are interested in serving in this capacity, reply directly to Chuck Holdaway or Rich Heroux.

**Beer: Helping ugly people
have sex since 3000 B.C.**

~~ W.C. Fields



A Grateful Nation Buries Mayaquez Recovery Mission Relics: May 12- 15, 1975 a 50 man team of US service members attempted to recapture and release the hostages aboard the *Mayaquez*, a merchant vessel under American sponsorship, that had been hijacked off the coast of Cambodia. The *Mayaguez incident*, took place between the Cambodian Khmer Rouge and the United States forces, was the last official battle of the Vietnam War. The names of the Americans killed, as well as those of three U.S. Marines who were left behind on the island of *Koh Tang* after the battle and who were subsequently executed by the Khmer Rouge, are the last names on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The merchant ship's crew, whose seizure at sea had prompted the U.S. attack, had been released in good health, unknown to the U.S. Marines or the U.S. command of the operation, before the Marines attacked. It was the only known engagement between U.S. ground forces and the Khmer Rouge. The President's Marine Corps band was there, the 8th and I Marines, and the old guard in attendance at the burial ceremony held at Arlington National Cemetery. 13 Marines, Sailors and an Airman were buried together in one coffin. About 50 of their team from those fateful days were there to say a final good-bye to their friends. "I have never seen a more beautiful ceremony and I am honored to have been there," said Monica Cash a participant at the ceremony.

Obama Vows to Close Guantanamo: The president vowed again recently to close the U.S. detention facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and tasked the Defense Department to locate a site in the U.S. where military tribunals can be held. Veteran Organizations are firmly against both proposals by national resolutions approved by delegates attending our past three national conventions. Guantanamo serves a purpose: it keeps our most dangerous enemies off the battlefield, out of America, and provides an extremely secure and controlled environment for the military court system. by new claims filings in each of the three years, further compounding the backlog. "Whatever the reason", Chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs, Bernie Sanders, said "we remain deeply committed to work with the Veterans Administration on cleaning up the claims backlog."

Korean War 60th Anniversary: Plans are being set to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Korean War armistice in Washington, D.C., on Saturday, July 27. Thousands of veterans from across the nation, as well as representatives from other UN nations, are expected to be present at the Korean War Memorial for the 9:30 a.m. ceremony. The event will be broadcast live, and VFW Posts are encouraged to share in the commemoration by hosting "Pancakes for Patriots"-type events to honor and help educate local communities about the service and sacrifices made by so many Veterans and their families. The current June/July issue of *VFW Magazine* is dedicated to Korean War veterans, and it highlights the \$600,000 donation towards building their national memorial—tops among all veterans' organizations.

Congress Passes Stolen Valor Act of 2013: Congress has passed the Stolen Valor Act of 2013, introduced by Rep. Joe Heck and Sen. Dean Heller, both from Nevada. H.R. 258 was passed overwhelmingly in the House on Monday by a vote of 390-3, and the Senate passed its companion, S. 210, Wednesday night by unanimous consent. The legislation now heads to the White House for the president's signature. VFW National Commander John Hamilton said Congress followed the roadmap laid out by the U.S. Supreme Court when they overturned the original Stolen Valor Act last year. In their writings, the high court suggested any future legislation had to be narrower in focus than just to penalize people for simple lying, which they ruled as protected speech in a 6-3 decision. "Now the new language is bullet-proof," said Hamilton, "because the focus is on the intent to profit from the lie, to obtain money, property or something of a tangible benefit, which is what con artists have been doing throughout history." Not every combat award is covered, but the ones most worn by wannabe heroes will be protected once the bill becomes law. VFW advocates were able to reach all 100 Senate offices in record time after the House passed their bill, encouraging the Senate to take action. It is because of you that the Senate bill passed so quickly!

Medal of Honor Recipient Vernon McGarity Dies: World War II Army squad leader and Medal of Honor recipient Vernon McGarity has died at age 91. McGarity died of cancer on May 21, 2013 in Memphis. President Harry Truman awarded the Medal of Honor to McGarity in October 1945. According to the U.S. Army Center of Military History, McGarity was a Technical Sergeant in the 393d Infantry, 99th Infantry Division, during World War II. McGarity was wounded in an artillery barrage that preceded a German counter-offensive near Krinkelt, Belgium, in December 1944. He refused to be evacuated and returned to battle. There are 79 Medal of Honor recipients who are still alive, according to the Congressional Medal of Honor Society



Resolution 24 Sails Through Congress: The Military and Veterans Affairs committee has unanimously voted to approve House Concurrent Resolution 24, a resolution that would urge Congress and the Department of Defense to rescue Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl. Sergeant Bowe Robert Bergdahl was serving in the eastern Afghanistan region of Afghanistan when he was taken captive on June 30, 2009 by members of the Haqqani militant network, a group allied with the Taliban. Since his capture, the Taliban has released multiple propaganda videos of Sergeant Bergdahl in captivity. Sgt. Bergdahl is assigned to the 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, based at Fort Richardson, Alaska. He is from Hailey, Idaho. He was twenty-three years old when he was taken captive as a prisoner of war. Sgt. Bergdahl has been held captive for four years and is now 27 years of age. House Concurrent Resolution 24 is currently pending in the House Rules and Reference Committee. Sgt. Bergdahl is America's only known living Prisoner of War in Afghanistan at this time.



2013ADVA National Reunion Check-in on Wednesday, September 11, 2013, Thursday September 12 trip to Fort Campbell and 101st Airmobile Division, Friday September 13 trip to Tennessee Vietnam Veterans Memorial (one of the nicest in the country), then Country Music Hall of Fame, Dinner and then Grand Ole Opry; Saturday September 14 meetings as usual and Saturday night Banquet. Out on Sunday, September 15. The reunion will be housed at the Millennium-Maxwell House Hotel at 2025 Rosa Parks Blvd., Nashville, Tennessee 37228-1505. Friday will highlight the annual memorial service and culminate with dinner and a trip to the "Grand Ole Opry. Saturday we will hold our annual meeting and elect new officers. See the ADVA Journal or visit our 2/1 website for more details.

Sometimes when I reflect on all the beer I drink, I feel ashamed. Then I look into the glass and think about the workers in the brewery and all of their hopes and dreams. If I didn't drink this beer, they might be out of work and their dreams would be shattered. I think, "It is better to drink this beer and let their dreams come true than be selfish and worry about my liver."
~ Babe Ruth

House VA Committee Evaluates Claims Initiative: The House VA Committee held a hearing to evaluate VA's recent initiative to process claims pending over two years. VFW provided written testimony acknowledging that although the project did provide decisions to many who have waited a long time, more needs to be done to ensure VA creates a viable, effective and efficient system to develop and manage claims. VA Under Secretary for Benefits Allison Hickey spoke about the 34,834 claims that have been adjudicated within the last 30 days and how VBA will finalize the remaining 32,000 by the end of June. Committee members voiced concerns about current backlog numbers, employee training and performance reviews, and how VA plans to justify to veterans lengthy wait times for decisions.

Airborne Tests New Parachute: The Airborne and Special Operations Test Directorate conducted a rigorous operational test recently on the new Military Free Fall Advanced Ram-Air Parachute System, a non-developmental item that is about to replace the nearly 20-year-old MC-4 parachute system for all service branches, according to the test officer. Supported by 30 static line qualified paratroopers from C Troop, 3rd Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment at Joint Base-Lewis-McChord, Wash., and 50 military free fall paratroopers from the 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th and 10th Special Forces Command groups, Airborne and Special Operations Test Directorate, or ABNSOTD, testers conducted the operational test to validate the system's effectiveness, suitability and safety, said Roderick Manke, test plans analyst. "The RA-1 is an individual Soldier's parachute system consisting of a main parachute, reserve parachute, harness and container," Manke explained. "It is designed to allow insertion by both Military Free Fall and Double Bag Static Line techniques depending on mission deployment requirements."



**They went with songs to the battle, they were young.
Straight of limb, true of eyes, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.**

**They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,**

**It's hard to make a comeback
when you haven't been anywhere.**

Thousands of motor cycles from Rolling Thunder Line up for their annual ride through Washington, DC to demonstrate to the nation their support and demands for a total accounting for soldiers that are POW/MIA. The staging area for this ride is a parking lot near the Pentagon just across the Potomac river bridge leading to the Lincoln Memorial. Riders had to start assembling around 0400 in the morning. The ride through Washington too approximately 3 1/2 hours as the motorcade proceeded to the Vietnam War Memorial.



Deployed Father Renders First Salute to Son:

U.S. Army Master Sgt. Marshall Rader opened up a laptop and turned on a projector atop the conference room table at Forward Operating Base Gamberi, May 10. He then opened a video chat program and saw a familiar face on the screen projected onto the wall. A video teleconference was set up inside the conference room at FOB Gamberi so that Rader could render the first salute to his son Gregory during his officer commissioning ceremony following a ceremony held at North Georgia University. Rader serves as human resources noncommissioned officer-in-charge with 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, based out of Fort Hood, Texas. The native of Clarington, Ohio, served honorably for ten years in the Army before getting out. Rader said he was out for five years when he decided to re-enlist. "My wife deployed and 29 days later, I came back into the Army," said Rader. "I just missed it too much, I love the military." Rader said his son attended North Georgia College majoring in political science and joined the Reserve Officer Training Course, Simultaneous Membership Program. Rader's two daughters were in attendance. His father-in-law, wife and son, were all dressed in their Army Service Uniform for the occasion. His son stood at attention with his right hand up, as Rader's wife, a U.S. Army major, read the oath of enlistment to her son. More people began to walk into the conference room to witness Rader's son become the newest officer in the Rader family.

Memorial Day 2013: As we gathered to remember the more than one million Americans who served and died in our nation's conflicts going back to the Revolutionary War, please remember to keep our 83,000 missing and unaccounted-for servicemen—and their families—in your thoughts, as well as the men and women assigned to the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, who are tasked with bringing them home from some of the most austere places on Earth. As of today, there are 73,661 missing from World War II; 7,918 from the Korean War; 1,647 from the Vietnam War; 126 from the Cold War; and 6 from our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

My wild oats have turned into prunes and all-bran.

WWII Vet Receives Long-lost Dog Tag from France:

Irving Mann, the founder of Mann's Jewelers in Rochester, was cautious but intrigued when an email arrived at his store from a woman wondering if he could possibly be the Irving Mann whose military tag she said she'd found a day earlier in her barley field in France. After all, the World War II veteran didn't recall losing a dog tag after landing in Normandy with the 90th Infantry Division on D-Day and fighting across Nazi-occupied France. It had to be false," thought Mann, who'd recently celebrated his 88th birthday. The French woman, Sophie LaFollie, eventually convinced the Manns she was for real. For one thing, LaFollie relayed the serial number from the aluminum tag, a number Mann has never forgotten: 42023412. "She specifically said, 'I'm not interested in any kind of reward. The only thing I'm interested in is what happened to you that you would have lost your dog tag where I found it,'" Mann said. Then the beat-up pendant arrived in the mail, leaving Mann to marvel at its journey and recall his own through the village near Rethel, France, where his outfit had dug in for a few days' rest and traded Spam and cigarettes for fresh eggs with two young women in a farmhouse nearby. "Any (doubting) thoughts I may have had disappeared immediately when I had the dog tag in my hand," Mann said. LaFollie included a picture of her farmhouse, where her grandmother and aunt had lived during the war. "Memories came flooding back," the veteran said, remembering how he'd scrambled those eggs in his steel helmet, stirring with his bayonet.

Soldiers Pay Tribute to Faithful Working Dog:

One of the best memories Spc. Veronica Pruhs has of Military Working Dog Linda is the day they were on patrol and Linda trotted over to a car so she could get a better smell through a window that was open a crack. Linda indicated there were drugs inside the car, and she was correct. Military Police officers found two grams of marijuana inside the car's center console. "She knew her job and she was really sweet," said Pruhs, who worked with Linda for 10 months. Pruhs had nothing but fond memories of the 6-year-old German Shepherd after Linda's memorial ceremony at the Clay Kaserne Chapel May 7. She died April 26 due to medical complications from cancer, and had worked as a narcotics detection dog for the 525th Military Working Dog Detachment in Wiesbaden for six years. About 50 people attended Linda's ceremony, which included a rifle salute from the attachment's honor guard. Chaplain (Maj.) Craig Bickel, deputy U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden chaplain, presided. "Her faith in service is a model for all Soldiers," he said during his benediction. "With heavy hearts in her death, today we want to honor her service."

DoD Won't Adopt VA's Electronic Health System:

The extended pursuit of a seamless process for getting departing service members' complete health records into the hands of the Department of Veterans Affairs took yet another turn when the Pentagon announced it was shopping for a new health records system. The announcement came even as members of both the House and Senate held conferences to voice their commitment to ending the VA's disability claims backlog, which both VA and Pentagon officials acknowledge is partly due to incompatible records systems between agencies. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said his decision to look at a new health records system "does relate to some extent to the backlog, but it's not directed at the backlog. In many ways it's about the future, so we don't have backlogs." Hagel's move comes as the backlog increasingly gains traction with Congress.