



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



WEBSITE: [www.2-1-196th.com](http://www.2-1-196th.com)

Volume 5

"A Soldier Once... And Always"

July 2015

**Commanders Corner:** The United States of America is not an old country by any stretch of the imagination but, as we celebrate our nation's birthday on July 4<sup>th</sup>, we should remember the sacrifices our fellow Americans have given to provide the freedom we now enjoy. As a country we do not celebrate our independence day by a show of military might with soldiers marching, tanks rolling through on parade and planes flying over; we celebrate with our freedom of choice with family, friends, fireworks and cookouts. I hope all of you celebrate our country's most important holiday and remember the sacrifices of our American men and women that made it possible. I ran across a few quotes expressing freedom: I hope they provide some insight. "Freedom has its life in the hearts, the actions, the spirit of men and so it must be daily earned and refreshed - else like a flower cut from its life-giving roots, it will wither and die." ~Dwight D. Eisenhower. "In the truest sense, freedom cannot be bestowed; it must be achieved." ~Franklin D. Roosevelt. "It is easy to take liberty for granted, when you have never had it taken from you. ~Author unknown. Freedom is never free." ~Author Unknown. "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, to assure the survival and success of liberty" ~John F. Kennedy. As you should know by now, our annual chapter meeting will be held in conjunction with the ADVA reunion this fall. I hope all of you will make an effort to attend. Reunion information is located on our web site <http://www.2-1-196th.com> and on the ADVA web site: <http://www.americal.org>. Make your reservations early; only so many rooms are available. Although it is not mandatory to be a member of the ADVA to be a member of the 2/1 Chapter; we strongly recommend it as the ADVA is the backbone from which this group was born. I have recently added a link for the ADVA application to our web site under "ADVA and 2/1 Membership Information". Thanks to Chapter Councilman, Juju Deriscavage, we will have some banners and signs for our hospitality room at the reunion. He also provided a sign for the B 2/1 group that annually invades the Kokomo reunion. Well, I know you would love to hear me rattle on some more but, I'm done for now.

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

Chuck

**World War II Facts:** The last Marine killed in WW2 was killed by a can of spam. He was on the ground as a POW in Japan when rescue flights dropping food and supplies came over, the package came apart in the air and a stray can of spam hit him and killed him.



**Twelve MIAs Identified:** The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency announced the identification of remains belonging to six soldiers who had been missing-in-action since the Korean War and one pilot who had been missing since World War II. Identified are:

- Army Pvt. Arthur H. Kelder, 26, from Chicago. Assigned to Medical Corps, 2nd General Hospital in the Philippines, Kelder survived the Bataan Death March, but succumbed to a host of complications in a Japanese POW Camp on May 7, 1942.
- Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Robert W. Ward, 22, of Pontiac, Mich. Assigned to the 387th Bombardment Group, 9th Air Force, Ward was copiloting a B-26C on a bombing mission near Mayen, Germany, when it was shot down by enemy fighter aircraft on Dec. 23, 1944.
- Army Air Force 2nd Lt. Jimmie D. Collins III, 22, of Sylacauga, Ala. On June 21, 1944, Collins was the co-pilot of a B-24H Liberator returning from a bombing mission near Berlin when it crashed near Hoofddorp, Netherlands. Also aboard were nine other airmen. One parachuted out and was captured by German forces; the others, including Collins, were reported as killed in action. Collins will be buried with full military honors in his hometown on June 29.
- Army Chief Warrant Officers 3 James L. Phipps of Mattoon Ill., 24, and Rainer S. Ramos, 20, of Bellingham, Wash., were the pilots of a UH-1C Iroquois (Huey) helicopter that was shot down in Quang Tin Province, South Vietnam, on Jan. 9, 1968. Also aboard were door gunners Staff Sgt. Warren E. Newton, 18, of Canby, Ore., and Spc. Fred J. Secrist, 19, of Springfield, Ore. The crew was assigned to Troop C, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, 14th Aviation Group, 1st Aviation Brigade. A U.S.-led recovery team was able to recover the body of Secrist, but not the other three, who were buried as a group with full military honors on June 17 at Arlington National Cemetery.
- Army Air Forces 1st Lt. William P. Cook, 27, of Alameda, Calif.; Flight Officer Arthur J. LeFavre, 22, of Red Bank, N.J.; Staff Sgts. Maurice J. Fevold, 21, of Chicago, Frank G. Lane Jr., 21, of Cleveland, and Ward C. Swalwell Jr., 21, also of Chicago; and Sgt. Eric M. Honeyman, 21, also from Alameda. On Dec. 23, 1944, The B-26G Marauder was on a mission to bomb an enemy bridge when they were shot down by antiaircraft fire near Seffern, Germany, near the Belgium border. Cook and Fevold were buried in October 2014 and Lane was buried in May 2015. Honeyman was buried on June 22 in Trail, British Columbia, Canada. Swalwell, LeFavre and the group representing the crew will be buried in Arlington National Cemetery sometime this August.
- Army Cpl. Kenneth P. Darden, 18, of Akron, Ohio, will be buried June 27 in his hometown. In late 1950, Darden was assigned to Battery A, 15th Field Artillery Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division, near Hoengsong, North Korea, when their line was attacked by Chinese forces, forcing the unit to withdraw south to a more defensible position. Darden was reported missing in action after the battle.

**With Medal of Honor Award, Family Learns WWI Hero Wasn't Kin:** Two days before President Barack Obama announced a posthumous Medal of Honor for black World War I soldier Henry Johnson, a family got staggering news about the legacy of heroism that had inspired them for generations and through three wars. They weren't related to Johnson by blood after all. An Army general visited Tara Johnson last month with word that Henry Johnson was not her grandfather, and that her father, World War II Tuskegee airman Herman Johnson, was not the hero's son. "Dad's birth certificate didn't have Henry on it," she told The Associated Press in an interview this week. The name of the man listed on the document found by Pentagon researchers vetting Johnson's lineage was one relative had never heard mentioned as the father. "All we have ever known is Henry Lincoln Johnson," she said. "My family is going through an identity crisis; this shocked our foundation. She said they're at a loss to explain what had been a given for so long. Her father spoke warmly of Henry Johnson, recalling his sense of humor and trips to the park as a boy before the life of the man he knew as his father began to fall apart and the family broke up. Henry Johnson was a railroad porter in Albany before the war. He enlisted in the Army and won acclaim for rescuing a comrade despite suffering grenade and gunshot wounds in a ferocious hand-to-hand battle with German raiders in 1918. Returning from France, he was honored with parades and glowing newspaper stories about his exploits with the 369th Infantry Regiment, a unit known as the "Harlem Hellfighters."

**How Small the US Army Will Get is 'Up in the Air,' Top Officer Says:** Just how much the U.S. Army will shrink is still a matter of debate, according to the service's top officer. When asked what he considered to be his unfinished business, the Army's departing chief of staff, Gen. Raymond Odierno, whose term ends in September, was quick to respond. "The major thing that I thought we would have settled by now was what the end-strength of the Army would be," he recently told a group of reporters in Washington, D.C., referring to the size of the service. "I thought we'd be done by now, we'd understand exactly what the number is, we'd know exactly when it's going to be finished, and, frankly, that's still very much up in the air based on what happens with the Congress and the president as they continue to wrestle over what the budget should be." The U.S. military's largest branch of service continues to downsize after more than a decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan. There were 492,000 soldiers on active duty as of April 30, according to Pentagon statistics. The active component will shrink to 470,000 soldiers in fiscal 2016, according to budget documents, and may further contract in coming years -- to as few as 420,000 soldiers -- if federal spending caps known as sequestration remain in effect.

Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day.  
Teach a person to use the Internet and they won't bother you for weeks, months, maybe years.

### COMBAT STORIES:

**A Scary Day:** B Company worked off Hill 251 from January – May 1970 timeframe. Located in a mountain area about 8 – 10 clicks west of our 196 LIB Brigade and 2/1 Battalion Hawk Hill firebase. Our mission was to conduct day patrols and night ambushes to interdict the surrounding area of VC and NVA influence. Normally this was conducted in separate platoon level operations, but on one occasion two platoons daisy-chained through the mountain area, and down into the surrounding rice paddy valleys. My platoon had point on the day "jack," and we moved single file down a dry stream bed into an open rice paddy levered area. My platoon then passed a small wooded island area, and came to rest in a small Ville just on the other side. All of a sudden a shot rings out and my radio comes alive. It is the other platoon who trails me. They have come out of the same dry stream bed, and just as they approached the wooden island area an enemy sniper shoots and kills their point man at close range. The entire platoon is now pinned down, with their dead point man out front. My Prick 25 (PNC-25 radio) rings with "Jerry, a sniper has killed our point man and has us pinned down. Can you come and help?" It is my good buddy 2LT Doss Kornegay of Harlingen, TX on the other side... I immediately gather two of my squad leaders (Paul Thomas and Terry Lloyd) and my RTO (Rick Whittier) and the four of us work our way back to the opposite side of the wooded island area. The bush is triple canopy, so thick you can't see two feet in front of you. The sniper is in there somewhere, and we have to go find and kill him. Talk about pucker factor. To see your enemy is one thing, but to know he's out there and not see him is most frightening. When I first try to enter the bush, as I pull the high weeds apart a three foot fluorescent green krait snake appears right in front of me. It was locally known as a "one step, two step" poisonous snake because once it bites you, you drop dead at the next step. I quietly close the bushes and move off five feet to my right. We can't see or hear the guy and I whisper into my radio to LT Doss "Throw a smoke grenade where you think he is." And don't you know a cherry red one lands literally 10 feet to my front left. I continue to crawl forward with my rifle set on automatic, as I'm not taking any chances with this hombre. But the war gods are with me, as the sniper has escaped down a spider hole and is nowhere to be found. Guess he wanted to live to fight another day. The damage was done. I relate same to the pinned down platoon leader, and a medivac chopper is called in to remove the point man KIA (killed in action) and one other man in his platoon overcome by heat. G. Hughes

**Chapter Secretary/Treasurer Writes the Following Message to all members:** I had my third and hopefully the final surgery procedure yesterday morning. Each one was a little higher on the back and just a tad more uncomfortable. I am sore this morning but the surgeon thinks that I should find some relief. He told me that I need to take it easy and not over do for several months, I sure do hope it is the answer but we know that this is not the end but maybe I will be able to tolerate the pain for longer periods of time. Thank you guys for remembering me in your prayers during the last couple of years. We are looking forward to seeing you guys in October of this year. I am going to try and come to the pig roast and I have it marked on my calendar. I may not be able to drive that far by my self and since Renee will be on her yearly sister trip I will be by myself. We will have to wait and see. I would get to see those who do not come to the Americal reunion. Keep the faith and as always I got your back.

Don Hicks  
RTO

### Soldier Missing From Korean War Accounted For:

The Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing from the Korean War, have been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors. Army Master Sgt. Francis H. Stamer of San Fernando, California, will be buried May 6, in Arlington National Cemetery. On Nov. 1, 1950, Stamer was assigned to Company M, 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, when his unit was attacked by Chinese forces at Unsan village in North Korea. This attack forced the unit to withdraw five miles southeast to Ipsok village. Stamer was reported missing in action on Nov. 2, 1950. A military board later amended his status to killed in action. Today, 7,852 Americans remain unaccounted for from the Korean War. Using modern technology, identifications continue to be made from remains that were previously turned over by North Korean officials or recovered by American teams.

**Too Small:** CofS Gen. Odierno has described the latter figure as "too small." He said at least 450,000 active-duty soldiers are needed to adequately respond to conflicts around the world. "Losing that last 30,000 makes a huge difference in the capabilities that we have," he said at an event last year. The overall size of the Army, including the reserve components, will total more than 1 million soldiers next year, with 470,000 on active duty, 342,000 in the National Guard and 198,000 in the Army Reserve, according to budget documents. The general has also warned of potential threats around the world and correctly predicted the rising sectarian divides in Iraq. "Well, I heard that in 1980. I heard that in 1990. And I heard that in 2000. Odierno approved the deployment of as many as 450 more Army advisers to Iraq -- a move that will bring the number of U.S. troops in the country to more than 3,500.

### Fed Agency Blames Giant Hack on 'Neglected' Security System:

The agency that allowed hackers linked to China to steal private information about nearly every federal employee -- and detailed personal histories of millions with security clearances -- failed for years to take basic steps to secure its computer networks, officials acknowledged to Congress. The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee spoke in unison to describe their outrage over what they called gross negligence by the Office of Personnel Management. The agency's data was breached last year in two massive cyberattacks only recently revealed. The agency's assistant inspector general for audit, detailed a years long failure by OPM to adhere to reasonable cybersecurity practices, and he said that for a long time, the people running the agency's information technology had no expertise. Last year, he said, an inspector general's audit recommended that the agency shut down some of its networks because they were so vulnerable. The director declined, saying it would interfere with the agency's mission. The hackers were already inside her networks, she later acknowledged. "You failed utterly and totally," said committee Chairman Jason Chaffetz, a Utah Republican. "They recommended it was so bad that you shut it down and you didn't." Archuleta, stumbling occasionally under withering questions from lawmakers, sought to defend her tenure and portray the agency's problems as decades in the making as its equipment aged. She appeared to cast blame on her recent predecessors, one of whom, John Berry, is the U.S. ambassador to Australia. Offered chances to apologize and resign, she declined to do either. During the open hearing the agency's chief information officer, confirmed that personnel information on 4.2 million current and former federal employees had been stolen, not just accessed. The number of security clearance holders whose data has been taken is not yet known, she said. But the records go back to 1985 and include contractors as well as federal employees

### Strain on Navy Resources Will Cause Mideast Carrier Gap:

A year after Navy aircraft carriers launched an ongoing U.S. air assault against Islamic State fighters in Iraq and Syria, the Navy plans to pull its carrier presence from the Middle East this fall for as long as two months. That gap -- between when the current carrier leaves the Arabian Gulf and its replacement arrives -- is part of the Navy's effort to regroup after years of what officials say was an unsustainable pace of operations that has worn down resources. A Navy spokesman said the increased tempo of recent years has been compounded by the impacts of budget cuts and a fleet of 10 carriers instead of 11. That combination means the fleet has been overextending for years without the ability to catch up on maintenance and training, said Lt. Timothy Hawkins, a Navy spokesman at the Pentagon. "When we responded to increased combatant commander demand for carrier strike groups in 2011, 2012 and 2013, we said we would have to recover our readiness in subsequent years," Hawkins said. This kind of gap between deployments will continue until 2020 to achieve that full readiness, he said. Hawkins did not specify in which region this gap would occur, saying the Navy does not discuss future operations. But a look at carrier scheduling made clear that the Middle East was the only region where this could happen. "The only place where they can make that up is the turnover between the (current) carrier and the next one in the Gulf," said retired Vice Adm. Pete Daly, the chief executive officer of the U.S. Naval Institute, who has been watching the carrier deployment schedule closely. The Navy typically has two carriers deployed at any one time -- one in the Middle East and one in the Pacific. This summer, the carrier George Washington is returning from Japan for its mid-life refueling, while the West Coast-based Ronald Reagan heads out to take its place in the Pacific. That leaves only the Theodore Roosevelt, which deployed from Norfolk to the Middle East in March and is slated to shift homeports to the West Coast in the fall after seven months at sea. It will be replaced by the carrier

**2<sup>nd</sup> Division Prepares for the Future:** This Summer, the 2<sup>nd</sup> (IndianHead) Division will undergo one of the most significant transformations in the past 50 years on the Korean Peninsula based on the strategic shift in focus to the Asia-Pacific region and the U.S. Army Operating Concept. --The division will relocate its forces further South to improve its readiness and strengthen the historic alliance it shares with the Republic of Korea. For twenty years, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division (2ID) has maintained its headquarters and the majority of soldiers north of Seoul. In the future a majority of its units and equipment will move to Pyeogtaek as part of the Land Partnership program agreement. This move into world-class facilities will allow consolidation with Republic of Korea (ROK) forces and increased interoperability not only with the ROK but also within U.S. Forces Korea. Upon completion, new facilities -- including headquarters; motor pools; barracks; morale, welfare and recreation; housing; and medical and education centers -- will be available to more than 24,000 troops and their families assigned to the division.

### Senate Action: Privatized Commissaries Killed; 'Couples BAH' Cut Survives:

The Senate voted to kill a plan to privatize five large commissary stores to test the concept of commercial grocers running base stores to save defense dollars. But as the Senate version of the fiscal 2016 defense authorization bill moved toward a final floor vote late amendments to block other initiatives to curb compensation were denied consideration. Only a modest number of amendments among hundreds drafted got up-or-down votes. Two shelved amendments would have blocked a third consecutive cap on military pay raises and would have scuttled a committee plan to sharply reduce Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH).

**German submarine U-1206 was sunk by a malfunctioning toilet.**

**Sailors Await New Physical Fitness Rules, 'Tape-In' Debate Smolders:** Last year, some 5,000 sailors failed the Navy's physical fitness assessment, the majority because they couldn't "tape-in," or meet body weight standards calculated by measuring around a sailor's neck and waist. The Navy now wants to lower that number who fail by changing its test, part of a broader retooling of its fitness program that includes making gyms available for longer hours, performing fitness "spot checks" between testing cycles and emphasizing diet and nutrition. While sailors across the service are likely to feel the effects of each change, it is the fitness test — and in particular its body weight component — that has many of them talking. Some argue that relaxing the standards will lead to less fit sailors. Others say the body weight calculation, known as the body composition assessment, doesn't reflect the wide range of modern body types. "A thin sailor doesn't necessarily constitute a healthy sailor, and a sailor that's borderline or slightly out of [body composition] standards isn't necessarily unhealthy," Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Michael Stevens told a group of sailors Monday in Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan. At the center of the debate is a rule that those who fail the body composition portion are automatically flunked for the full fitness assessment — before they even can take the exercise portion. A single failure can have consequences for a sailor's career; three such failures in a four-year period result in separation from the Navy. "We're looking to, I think, inject a little more reality into the BCA," said Cmdr. Chris Servello, spokesman for Navy Personnel Command. The fitness test is required twice a year, and only those who exceed the Navy's maximum weight allowances by height are required to tape-in.

**Body of American Killed Fighting ISIS Handed Over to Family:** The body of an American who died fighting with Kurdish forces against the Islamic State group in Syria was handed over to his family at a Turkish border crossing, a Kurdish official said. Hundreds of people turned up in the Kurdish town of Kobani to bid farewell to Keith Broomfield before his body was handed over to family at the Mursitpinar gate, said Idriss Naasan. Broomfield, from Massachusetts, died on June 3 in battle in a Syrian village near Kobani, making him likely the first U.S. citizen to die fighting alongside Kurds against the Islamic State group. He had joined the People's Protection Units known as the YPG on Feb. 24 under the nom de guerre Gelhat Rumat. The YPG are the main Kurdish guerrilla battling the Islamic State group in Syria. The U.S. Department of State confirmed Broomfield's death Wednesday but declined to provide any details about the circumstances. It was not immediately clear who from Broomfield's family was there to receive his body on the Turkish side Thursday. Kurds in Turkey lined the road, waving flags and applauding as the convoy carrying the body drove by. The fight against the Islamic State group has attracted dozens of Westerners, including Iraq war veterans who have made their way back to the Middle East to join Kurdish fighters, who have been most successful against the extremist group.

**World War II Facts: Among the first 'Germans' captured at Normandy were several Koreans. They had been forced to fight for the Japanese Army until they were captured by the Russians and forced to fight for the Russian Army until they were captured by the Germans and forced to fight for the German Army until they were captured by the US Army.**

**Best Scout Squad Competition Tests Mental, Technical and Tactical Skills:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual William J. Gainey Cup Best Scout Squad Competition kicked off with 19 scout squads at Fort Benning, GA in early May 2015. The three day competition tested the mental, technical and tactical skills in both individual and team events to determine the Army's best six-man scout squad. The year's competition was won by a squad from the 4<sup>th</sup> Squadron, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Regiment, Vilseck, Germany. In a snapshot, the competition events include both scout-centric and common skills tasks designed to test the teamwork and leadership of each scout squad in a fast-paced, physically and mentally challenging environment. Each scout squad negotiated obstacle courses, demonstrated their lethality in live-fire exercises on the range, performed day and night land navigation courses, conducted both route and area reconnaissance missions, called for artillery fire, executed security operations, and performed operations in a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) battlefield.



#### 2015 ADVA NATIONAL REUNION

Norfolk Virginia

October 28 thru November 1 2015

The Norfolk Waterside Marriott, 235 East Main Street, Norfolk, VA 23510 will be the main hotel for the reunion. The hotel is noted as the best place to stay. It has just recently been remodeled. The ADVA attendees are offered 3 days before and after the reunion dates based on availability. The reunion guest room rate is \$109 = tax (currently 14 % + \$2 occupancy fee) World War II members will their individual room rate



reduced to no-charge when they check-in. There is also a special rate of \$129 + tax for a Concierge Level room. The cutoff date to make reservations is September 25, 2015. Book early to ensure lodging at the reunion hotel. The hotel is offering complimentary overnight parking. There is no parking for RVs in the main street garage or city streets. The hotel is offering free self-overnight parking.

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29 - 9:00am - 5:00pm** Tour Ft Eustis and Williamsburg

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30 - 11:30am - 2:00pm** Spirit of Norfolk Lunch Cruise

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31-9:00am - 12:00** Norfolk Botanical Garden Tour

**6:00pm - 10:00pm BANQUET DINNER.**

As requested by ADVA membership, members and guests can select seating assignments with friends/family before the banquet. We have an exceptional menu and some unique entertainment before, during, and following the banquet that will make for a memorable event that should not be missed.

**"No combat ready unit has ever passed inspection." "No inspection-ready unit has done well in combat."**

**Families Clean Vietnam Memorial in Honor of Fathers' Sacrifice:** For years, Patty Lee didn't speak about her father; her mother never discussed him with her six children. But Sgt. 1st Class Delbert C. Totty hadn't done anything wrong. The unspoken truth was that he was killed in action in Vietnam when Lee was 12 years old. "We all grew up in silence," Lee said of a generation of children whose fathers died in a war many wanted to forget. "We didn't talk about Vietnam, we didn't talk about our fathers." It's difficult to fathom in this age of solemn homage to troops killed in Iraq and Afghanistan and warm welcomes when they come home safely, but for the children of Vietnam veterans, the fate of their fathers was often a dark secret. Lee, now 60, didn't have a chance to grieve for 25 years until 1992, when a new group, Sons and Daughters in Touch, organized a gathering at the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C., for children of troops lost in the war. For many like Lee it was the first time they met others with similar stories — the first time they didn't feel alone. The 1992 gathering sparked what became a regular Father's Day weekend tradition for survivors, many of whom didn't find their voice until they had outlived their fathers, long after the war was over. On Saturday, more than two decades after that initial meeting, in the murky light of a cloudy early morning, the polished granite of the memorial wall reflected the images of more than 100 people — some using walkers, others still with braces on their teeth, many carrying brushes and buckets of soapy water. Pointing to one of the 58,000 names on the wall, they recalled a loved one. It was the beginning of a weekend long event organized by Sons and Daughters in Touch and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund for survivors to coincide with Father's Day. There will be a public ceremony at the memorial on Sunday beginning at 10 a.m. All these years later, meeting at the wall is still an emotional event even for regular attendees.



**After 50 Years, 'Iron' Brigade Prepares to Inactivate in South Korea:** Spring cleaning was a bigger chore than usual for the 1st "Iron" Brigade Combat Team this year. Soldiers have been clearing out gear accumulated from 50 years on the Korean Peninsula. In Korea since July 1965, the Iron Brigade is preparing to inactivate and turn over its mission to 4,600 soldiers from the 1st Cavalry Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team. The Fort Hood, Texas-based unit will be the first rotational heavy brigade to deploy to South Korea when it takes over July 2. Members of 1st Brigade have been going through nooks and crannies at Camp Hovey, their base just south of the Demilitarized Zone, and turning in excess equipment that has piled up over the decades. Lt. Col. Darrell O'Steen, 1st Brigade's deputy commander, said it won't be simple swapping permanently stationed soldiers for rotational troops. When the unit cases its colors, its equipment will stay in Korea. The 2nd Brigade troops will use them during their rotation and pass them onto the unit that replaces them nine months later, O'Steen said. The transfer of duties to the incoming troops will be similar to handovers in places such as Iraq and Afghanistan in recent years, but it will be complicated by the need to maintain "fight tonight readiness all the way to the end," according to 1st Brigade executive officer Maj. Ryan Workman, "Nobody is shooting at us here, which they have downrange, but the mission is more complicated to transition," he said. "Our soldiers are permanently assigned here, and they have brought a lot more gear, and some of us have families here. We can't just put our soldiers on four or five aircraft and fly them out." 1st Brigade troops have been taking inventories and sending excess gear to storage facilities south of Seoul, he said.

**Report: Wait Lists for Veterans Even Longer Today than Last Year:** The number of veterans seeking health care but ending up on waiting lists of one month or more is 50 percent higher now than it was a year ago when a scandal over false records and long wait times wracked the Department of Veterans Affairs, The New York Times reported. The VA also faces a budget shortfall of nearly \$3 billion, the Times reported in a story posted online ahead of its Sunday editions. The agency is considering furloughs, hiring freezes and other significant moves to reduce the gap, the newspaper reported. In the last year, the VA has increased capacity by more than 7 million patient visits per year, double what officials originally thought they needed to fix shortcomings, the Times reported. However, the newspaper added, department officials did not anticipate just how much physician workloads and demand from veterans would continue to soar. At some major veterans hospitals, demand was up by one-fifth, the paper reported. Citing interviews with department officials and internal department budget documents it had obtained, the Times reported that doctors and nurses have handled 2.7 million more appointments than in any previous year, while authorizing 900,000 additional patients to see outside physicians. The Times also reported intense internal debate at the VA over a proposal to address a shortage of funds for a new, more effective but more costly hepatitis C treatment by possibly rationing new treatments among veterans. Certain patients who have advanced terminal diseases or suffer from a "persistent vegetative state or advanced dementia" would be excluded under that plan, the paper reported. Agency officials expect to petition Congress this week to allow them to shift money into programs running short of cash, according to the newspaper. However, lawmakers may object to removing funds from a new program intended to allow certain veterans on waiting lists and in rural areas to choose taxpayer-paid care from private doctors outside the department's health system, the Times reported. "Something has to give," the department's deputy secretary, Sloan D. Gibson, said in an interview with the newspaper. "We can't leave this as the status quo. We are not meeting the needs of veterans, and veterans are signaling that to us by coming in for additional care, and we can't deliver it as timely as we want to."

**Army Begins Training for Next War, Which May Be Much Different, Bigger:** For more than a decade, troops have been schooled in counterinsurgency. "Mission-specific" training, they call it: going house to house, busting down doors, rooting out terror cells, recognizing crude explosives. An Army in transition aims to get back to the future. The training needed to fight full-scale, more conventional battles has suffered, Army leaders contend. So Fort Riley is putting soldiers such as Staff Sgt. Gilbert Monroe back into big tanks and simulating wars on a scale grander than Iraq or Afghanistan. "This is what I signed up for," Monroe said. He began his military career 14 years ago in an M1A2 Abrams tank. But he spent tours in Iraq commanding more nimble armored vehicles, rolling on eight tires and lacking the heft to blast a target from 2 miles out. "We need to be ready to play against the pro teams, not just the amateurs." In Army-speak, the training needed to fight that brand of enemy is shifting away from "mission-specific" toward "decisive action." And that requires the reacquainting of soldiers with epic battle plans featuring tanks, surface-to-air missiles, Apache choppers and military precision exercised over a broad and rugged terrain. "That skill set has perished," said Timothy D. Livsey, Fort Riley's deputy garrison commander. "It's a paradigm shift for the Army," Livsey said. "We have to get back to bread-and-butter skills and gunnery." Fort Riley officials say decisive-action training blends yesterday's emphasis on battlefield prowess with the people skills required of troops more recently focused on counterinsurgency.

