



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



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

Volume 7

“A Soldier Once And Always”

April 2017

Commanders Corner: I have a couple of things to cover this month that, hopefully, will be of interest to our members and get the ball rolling as we enter into our 6th year of existence. First and foremost I want to report on the miraculous turn around in the condition of Bill and Susan Van Buren’s daughter, Amanda, who has turned the corner from a very serious heart condition. Amanda is now at home and recovering after a prolonged stay in the hospital. Amanda is a wonderful and engaging young lady who I had the pleasure to spend some time with when Gerry Borysiak, Don Hicks, Bruce Nielsen and I (all B 2/1) visited Bill and Susan on their farm in Missouri a couple of years ago. Go Amanda! Our 1stQuarter Financial Report and our Dues Report are now out on our web site. Please check the Dues Report if you are not sure of your membership status. We still have a few 2/1 Infantry Challenge Coins left; if interested please contact me and I’ll make arrangements to get you one (or some). Although we don’t really make a lot on them; whatever we make goes into the general chapter fund. We still need some feedback on who will be attending 2017 Americal Reunion in August. I already have a few people who have responded but, need more input to gauge the size of the hospitality room we’ll need it as soon as possible. Also, the 196th LIB is having their biennial reunion in Louisville, KY in 2017 f July 26th-30th. Information is available on our web site and on the 196th site <http://www.196th.org>. I am currently working with Dave Eichhorn, the 196th Association president, to get some 2/1 chapter applications made available at the reunion. I am planning to attend and would like to see some of you there. If I haven’t had the pleasure of meeting you before, please look me up if you attend. Last but not least, remember to start thinking about nominees for our Commander, Vice-Commander and Secretary positions which are up for election at the annual chapter meeting in Minneapolis this year.

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

Chuck



Good News: VA Lowers Medication Copayments: There's good news for many Veterans receiving prescriptions from VA. As of February 27, 2017, the regulations for copayments will change. The cost to most Veterans for medications required on an outpatient basis to treat non-service connected conditions will be less. VA's goal is to reduce out-of-pocket costs and simplify getting prescriptions to Veterans. This will also benefit Veterans in rural communities, where VA medical centers and local pharmacies may not be close to many Veterans homes



\$30 BILLION DEFENSE HIKE IS FIRST STEP: The \$30 billion increase sought by the Trump administration in the 2017 budget isn't enough to fix all the military's shortfalls but is the amount “we can implement responsibly” during this fiscal year, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis told Congress. Extra money is earmarked for readiness, such as improving deployability of Army brigades, Mattis said. The Army would get more than \$8 billion of the increase requested by the Trump administration in an amendment to the \$577.9 billion defense budget for fiscal 2017 submitted to Congress last year. Mattis, the retired Marine general who is running the Pentagon without any political appointees heading any of the services, said the \$30 billion is the first of three steps the Trump administration plans to take. The second step will be an increase in the 2018 defense budget. The White House has announced this will include a \$54 billion increase in the defense budget, but has not provided specifics.

One Hundredth Anniversary of the U.S. Entry in World War I: April 6, 2017 commemorates the day Americans first stepped onto French soil (1917) to help Europe deal with the Axis forces. From the vantage point of history – 100 years later – there is consensus: the “Great War” changed everything. More than 3.7 million men, women and children were killed or injured and suffered from its aftereffects. Empires were lost. National boundaries were reshaped. Economics were devastated. The Great War changed America. Broader freedoms and a new era in women's and civil rights emerged. America was thrust onto the global stage and transformed into a military and industrial power. World War I ushered in a century of profound social and economic change that continues to influence the lives of men and women worldwide. More than 4,700,000 people were mobilized, half of whom served overseas. Across France and Belgium, thousands of gravestones testify to that sacrifice. Those of us who served or have served in the military owe a debt to our Great War predecessors. They broke the dawn of air and undersea combat. They pioneered military technology that we take for granted today. They recognized that the struggle to stay free isn't just an American one, but a human one. The men and women who went to war 100 years ago founded The American Legion before they even left Europe, to support their fellow veterans and their communities.



What is 'Freedom's Choice™' and 'HomeBase™'? The Defense Commissary Agency has chosen the names "Freedom's Choice™" and "HomeBase™" for its private label product assortment. Freedom's Choice will be the commissary brand name for food items and HomeBase for nonfood items such as paper products and other household items. With the initial rollout targeted for May, patrons in commissaries can expect to see a number of DeCA's Freedom's Choice and HomeBase products. Freedom's Choice and HomeBase will give patrons another chance to save money without sacrificing quality on brands priced significantly lower than national brands. The private label products will also be equal or lower in price to other grocery store brands.

K-9 Veterans Day: In 1942, the American Kennel Club helped create Dogs for Defense, a civilian group that trained dogs as sentries to help patrol the U.S. coastline. The U. S. Army approved the experimental program and created the K-9 Corps in March 1942. March 2017 marks the 75th anniversary. Prior to this action the only working dogs found in the Army were sled dogs. About 50 were Assigned to military stations in Alaska. By the end of WW II almost 10,000 dogs were trained for a variety of duties. The U.S. Army used about 1500 dogs during the Korean War and 4,000 in Vietnam. Currently there are about 3,000 military working dogs in the U.S. Armed Forces. Today, there are K-9's deployed all over the world, and crowds gather at military dog memorials across the U.S. not only to commemorate the military dogs that have fallen while engaged in combat with soldiers on the battlefield, but also in celebrate the special partnership that has developed over time. The dogs undergo hours of rigorous training every day to hone skills that require strength, agility, and high level of communication with their handlers. Military dogs are usually two years old when they get their respective units and can serve up to 12 or 13 years depending on their health and skills.



Military Heroes Honor Courageous Civilians on Medal of Honor Day: Always a select group, the number of living recipients of the nation's highest military award for valor continues to dwindle. Many of the 75 living Medal of Honor recipients are Vietnam War veterans in their 70s and 80s. Traveling for them isn't as easy as it used to be, so it's a special event, indeed, that can bring so many of them together. More than 20 of those honorees gathered recently in the shadow of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery, where they watched two of their number lay a wreath at the base of that famous monument to soldierly sacrifice. They did so in commemoration of National Medal of Honor Day, a day set aside to celebrate heroism. But to hear them tell it, the men gathered not to be honored, but to instead to pay their respects to men long since passed. "Going to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, to Arlington, [it] is a very spiritual, moving place," said Roger Donlon, the first Medal of Honor recipient from the Vietnam War. "We all reflect about our lives -- certainly about our parents, teachers and coaches that raised and taught us. And then we reflect on those that made the ultimate sacrifice." Those reflections are numerous in Donlon's case. After the wreath-laying ceremony, the focus of both the Society and the Medal of Honor recipients turned to honoring men, women and one unique teenager who have served their communities in different ways.

The Second Korean War: Ground combat Nov. 2, 1966 – Dec 3, 1969; Overshadowed by the war in Vietnam, a low-level ground conflict in the narrow confines of the Korean Demilitarized Zone also claimed American lives in combat. From 1966 to 1969, it simmered, boiling over into ambushes and firefights. But after the opening salvo, those isolated incidents were seldom reported in the mainstream media. Consequently, the public was largely oblivious to the small-scale fighting on the DMZ. This was suitable to the Johnson administration. It was determined to keep a tight lid on hostile actions in South Korea. For the majority of U.S. soldiers stationed in the Republic of Korea, the grim realities of armed combat were not of daily concern. As they do today, most of the American units perform garrison activities. But for one brigade of the 2nd Infantry Division and an attached battalion of the 7th Infantry Division, life in modern Korea was a matter of sacrifice and survival. These troops occupied the American sector of the border- a stretch of only 18 miles, but the most critical, embattled portion of the 150 mile frontier. The 2nd Division was blooded in November 1966 when six GI's were slain in two North Korean ambushes. From that time on, the men of the famed Indianhead Division were almost constant contact WITH THE ENEMY. The first men of the 7th Division to parish were members of a patrol hit in an unprecedented daylight ambush the following August. But official recognition of this twilight war was slow in coming from Washington. Finally, in January 1968, the North Koreans captured the U.S. electronic intelligence ship, Pueblo – the first time an American naval vessel had been seized on the high seas in 100 years. For a brief period, world attention was focused on Korea. The North Korean guerrilla campaign was finally blunted two years later with the construction of an improved DMZ barrier system.

VA's rule establishes a presumption of service connection for diseases associated with exposure to contaminants in the water supply at Camp Lejeune: VA regulations to establish presumptions for the service connection of eight diseases associated with exposure to contaminants in the water supply at Camp Lejeune, N.C. are effective as of March 1st, 2017. "Establishing these presumptions is a demonstration of our commitment to care for those who have served our Nation and have been exposed to harm as a result of that service," said [Secretary of Veterans Affairs Dr. David J. Shulkin](#). "The Camp Lejeune presumptions will make it easier for those Veterans to receive the care and benefits they earned." The presumption of service connection applies to active duty, Reserve and National Guard members who served at Camp Lejeune for a minimum of 30 days (cumulative) between Aug.1, 1953 and Dec. 31, 1987, and are diagnosed with any of the following conditions:

adult leukemia
aplastic anemia and other myelodysplastic syndromes
bladder cancer
kidney cancer
liver cancer
multiple myeloma
non-Hodgkin's lymphoma
Parkinson's disease

The area included in this presumption is all of Camp Lejeune and MCAS New River, including satellite camps and housing areas. This presumption complements the health care already provided for 15 illnesses or conditions as part of the [Honoring America's Veterans and Caring for Camp Lejeune Families Act of 2012](#). The Camp Lejeune Act requires VA to provide health care to Veterans who served at Camp Lejeune, and to reimburse family members, or pay providers, for medical expenses for those who resided there for not fewer than 30 days between Aug. 1, 1953 and Dec. 31, 1987.

This AAFES Welcomes Honorably Discharged Veterans:

After four years of coordination with the Departments of Defense, Army and Air Force as well as several other federal agencies, the Army & Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) will welcome home approximately 15 million veterans on Nov. 11. "AAFES is honored to offer this well deserved benefit to those who raised their right hands, took the oath and served our Nation with honor," said AAFES Director/CEO Tom Shull. "There are many generations of service members who have not been properly recognized for their sacrifices. The Veterans Online Shopping Benefit (VOSB) acknowledges their service and welcomes them home." Extending online shopping (shopmyexchange.com) privileges to all honorably discharged veterans will directly improve family and support programs for Soldiers, Airmen and their families. Consistent with each exchange's dividend policy, increased earnings as a result of VOSB are expected to generate tens of millions of dollars in increased annual dividends to Quality-of-Life programs for the military community including contingency operations, Army child development centers, youth services and fitness centers, Air Force outdoor recreation, combat uniforms, overseas school lunches and more. VOSB also strengthens AAFES' online business to better serve current shoppers. Including honorably discharged veterans will conservatively double exchanges' online presence, improving the experience for all shoppers. From technology upgrades to associate training to inventory planning, AAFES has been working on implementation of VOSB since it was first proposed in 2013. As a result, most of the required business capabilities are already in place, and AAFES will be ready for a smooth rollout on Veterans Day. "AAFES, along with its sister exchanges, is ensuring America's veterans are honored for their service and recognized as Soldiers, Airmen, Marines and Sailors for life," said Shull. "We look forward to welcoming our veterans home this Veterans Day and every day thereafter."

AAFES: Will open to all honorably discharged veterans on Veterans Day 2017



US Mulls Sending 1,000 More Troops into Syria:

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and the White House reportedly are considering initial proposals from U.S. Central Command that would send 1,000 more troops into Syria to accelerate the fight against the Islamic State. The proposals, reported by The Washington Post, would build on suggestions from Army Gen. Joseph Votel, the head of the command, who spoke last month during a visit to the region of the need for more artillery and logistics support for the coming assault by the U.S.-supported Syrian Democratic Forces on the Raqqa stronghold of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, or ISIS. If approved by Mattis and President Donald Trump, the additional forces would likely come from a mix of troops from the Army's 82nd Airborne Division and the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, which was aboard ships headed for the Mediterranean. Defense Department announced that an additional 2,500 conventional troops, including troops of the 82nd Airborne Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team based at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, were being sent to Kuwait where they would be on standby for possible deployment to either Iraq or Syria to support local forces against ISIS. About 1,700 of the 2nd BCT troops from the 82nd are already in Kuwait and Iraq in the train, advise and assist role with the Iraqi Security Forces. Currently, about 500 mostly Special Forces troops are permitted in Syria and a little more than 5,000 in Iraq under what are called the Force Management Levels. However, the number of U.S. troops in Syria began going above the caps earlier this month.

Gary Sinise to Receive AUSA's Highest Award:

Gary Sinise, an actor and humanitarian who has focused on supporting service members, veterans, first responders and their families, has been selected by the Council of Trustees of the Association of the United States Army as the 2017 recipient of the George Catlett Marshall Medal for sustained commitment to the men and women of America's armed forces. Sinise will receive AUSA's highest award for distinguished public service on Wednesday, Oct. 11, at the Marshall Dinner, the final event of the Association of the U.S. Army Annual Meeting and Exposition. The dinner will be held at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C. "I am honored to be invited to receive the George Catlett Marshall Medal from the Association of the United States Army," Sinise said. "It has been a great blessing to know there is something I can do to support the men and women in uniform who defend our nation and I will look forward to expressing my gratitude in person at the Marshall Dinner." Sinise, who can currently be seen starring in the CBS series *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders*, was born and raised in Chicago. His support of veterans can be traced back to his time at Steppenwolf Theater, which he co-founded in the 1970s. During the 1980s, he created a Vets Nights program at the theater, offering free dinners and performances for veterans. It was his performance of severely wounded veteran Lt. Dan Taylor in the 1994 movie *Forrest Gump* that led him to work closely with wounded and disabled veterans. As his acting career continued, Sinise became more dedicated to supporting service members and veterans nationwide. Following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Sinise began taking part in USO handshake tours, and went on to form the Lt. Dan Band, entertaining troops at home and abroad for the past 14 years. In 2011, Sinise created the Gary Sinise Foundation to serve defenders, veterans, first responders and their families. Support comes through a variety of programs including R.I.S.E. (Restoring Independence, Supporting Empowerment), which builds specially adapted smart homes for severely wounded veterans. The foundation's Invincible Spirit Festivals celebrate injured service members, caregivers and hospital staff at military medical centers with a daylong festival complete with a live Lt. Dan Band concert and cookout prepared by celebrity chef Robert Irvine. The foundation's Soaring Valor program brings World War II veterans to the National WWII Museum in New Orleans and sponsors videotaping their firsthand accounts of war. Other programs include Relief & Resiliency Outreach, Serving Heroes, Arts & Entertainment Outreach and First Responders Outreach. The Marshall Medal, awarded by AUSA since 1960, is named for former General of the Army George Catlett Marshall Jr., a former Army Chief of Staff who also served as Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense and U.S. Special Envoy to China in a public service career that spanned from the Spanish-American War through the Truman administration.

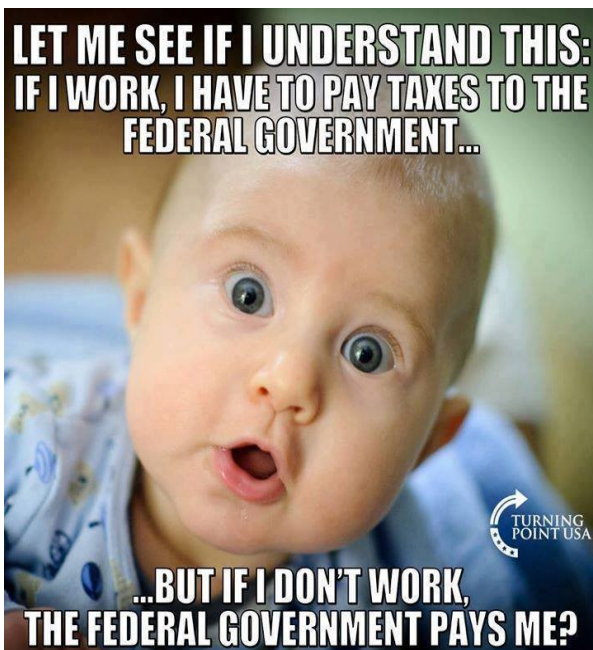


US Airstrike Kills High-Profile Terrorist Leader:

The Department of Defense has confirmed that an airstrike conducted March 19 in Paktika Province, Afghanistan, resulted in the death of Qari Yasin, a well-known al-Qaida terrorist leader responsible for the deaths of dozens of innocent victims, including two American service members. Yasin, a senior terrorist figure from Balochistan, Pakistan, had ties to Tehrik-e Taliban and had plotted multiple al-Qaida terror attacks, including the Sept. 20, 2008, bombing on the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad that killed dozens of innocent people, among them Air Force Maj. Rodolfo I. Rodriguez and Navy Cryptologic Third Class Matthew J. O'Bryant.

Chief: Army Will Need Smaller Units for Megacity Combat: The Army's chief of staff said Tuesday that in about 10 years, the service must be ready to fight in megacities, a type of warfare that will require future units to resemble today's special operations forces. Speaking at the Future of War Conference 2017 hosted by New America in Washington, D.C., Gen. Mark Milley said that the character of warfare will likely go through a fundamental shift over the next decade. The world's population is steadily moving toward living in megacities. Currently, there are about a dozen of these huge urban areas with populations of more than 10 million. By mid-century, "we are going to have at least 50 or more," Milley said. If war is about politics, it is going to be fought where people live, and "it will be fought, in my opinion, in urban areas," he said. "That has huge implications for the United States Army." The service has been primarily designed to fight in woodland and desert environments with rolling terrain, the chief said, adding that the service has the capability but is less suited for jungle, mountain and urban warfare. "So what this means then -- and I have discussed this with the Army leadership -- we are going to have to ... optimize the Army for urban warfare," he said. This has implications for equipment, from the "width, size and weight of tanks" to the "rotor-span of helicopters," the general said. Truly preparing for urban warfare will mean redesigning fighting units to better cope with the compartmenting nature of city streets, buildings, floors and rooms, he said. "The Army will definitely have to organize differently, probably into smaller, more compartmented groups," Milley said. "We will have to have, what I think, is a lot of relatively small formations that are networked and can leverage Air Force and naval-delivered joint fires." The service is still debating the size of these units, but "probably somewhere in the range of companies to battalions," he said. "If you think of how some of our special operations operate today, that may be a preview of how large your Army operates in the future," Milley said. "That doesn't mean you do away with battalions and brigades, but the fighting element will probably end up having to be a much smaller entity."

Video Worth Visiting: We came across a video that has taken the breath out of many a strong veteran. It is truly worth looking over. To get to the video just type in the following link on your computer; www.youtube.com/watch?v=47NW7nu9BnU. Enjoy.



2017 ADVA National Reunion Bloomington, MN -- August 23-27

Attendees will stay at the Hilton Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport Mall of America hotel at 3800 American Blvd E, Bloomington, Minnesota 55425. Hotel reservations can be made by calling the Hilton at 952-854-2100 or on the web at <http://group.hilton.com/americaldivisionveteransassociation>. Use the reunion Group Code: ADVA. The reunion room rate is \$114 per day plus 15.25% tax. The group rate will be offered three days before and three days after reunion dates. Call in your room reservation if you plan to use the extended dates or have any problems with the Hilton web site. There is free Hilton shuttle service from the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) to the nearby reunion hotel. We have teamed up again with Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. (AFR). AFR will provide web based reunion registration, pre-selected banquet seating with your friends, and on-site reunion support. You may register for the reunion, tours, and banquet by completing the online form and pay by credit card at afi-reg.com/americal2017. For more details visit the Americal Division Website; Americal.org/reunion, or 2/1 Inf Chapter website; b-2-1-196lib.com/reunion_events.

Veteran Homelessness: Trump's Budget Could Hurt Efforts: The push to end homelessness among veterans would suffer without the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, which is up for elimination under President Donald Trump's proposed budget, nonprofits and local officials say. The council coordinates the efforts of 19 federal agencies that play a role in preventing and ending homelessness among all Americans. But the strides made with the subset of veterans — for whom homelessness has been effectively ended in three states and dozens of communities amid a concerted effort — make the proposed cuts particularly upsetting to advocates. Homeless advocates in any given state consult the council, whose annual budget is about \$3.5 million, on which strategies are working elsewhere as they seek to house veterans. They worry momentum will slow. "We've learned how to end homelessness," said Nonie Brennan, chief executive of the nonprofit All Chicago. "It would be a tremendous shame if we were not able to continue to implement these strategies in our communities across the country." Adding to the ire and confusion, the budget proposal also says the Trump administration will support Department of Veterans Affairs programs for homeless and at-risk veterans and their families, but doesn't elaborate. Trump, who promised on the campaign trail to support veterans, wants to give the VA a 6 percent increase.

The US and Russia: Perpetual Enemies or Potential Allies?

During the 2016 presidential election, then-candidate Donald Trump roiled the foreign policy establishment by praising Russian President Vladimir Putin and suggesting it was time for a comprehensive re-evaluation of U.S.-Russian relations and broader cooperation between the two countries against the fight with jihadists. In doing so, Trump raised two issues: one political and one strategic. Praising Putin and challenging the prevailing view that Moscow poses a long-term threat to American interests around the world, the Trump campaign underscored its anti-establishment credentials as an outsider and its distance from Washington foreign policy establishments. The move also lent credence to a strategic view that had been circulating around Washington, that the threat posed to the United States by jihadists outweighs the threat posed by Russia. Since Russia is also threatened by jihadists, there is, in theory, a basis for a realignment of American-Russian relations and expanded cooperation in combating international jihadism. Russia has a significant Muslim population, currently estimated at between 12 percent and 15 percent of its citizenry, or around 27 million people. Moscow has the largest Muslim community in Europe, outside of Istanbul, estimated at between two million and two-and-a-half million of its inhabitants -- roughly half of whom are Russian citizens and the balance immigrants, many undocumented, from the Caucasus.

Operation Attleboro:
The 196th's Light Infantry Brigade Baptism By Fire in the Vietnam War:
Part one of a series:

What began as a small-scale, limited-objective exercise for the 196th Light Infantry Brigade (LIB) on September 14, 1966, unexpectedly developed into a widespread, protracted, multi organizational battle before it ended on November 24, 1966. The final troop list included elements of the U.S. 1st and 25th divisions, the 173rd Airborne Brigade, several Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) battalions, a Special Forces-trained 'Mike Force' and U.S. air support—22,000 Allied troops in all. It was the largest U.S. operation of the war to that date. On November 6, 1966, the corps-level II Field Force Vietnam took control of the operation until the final action on November 25, 1966.

The 196th LIB was activated in August 1965 at Fort Devens, Mass., as a train-and-retain unit tailored to the concept of light infantry's ability to maneuver. The brigade was ordered to Vietnam in early summer of 1966 and arrived there by sea and air in August 1966. This first combat operation of the 196th LIB—code-named 'Attleboro' after the Massachusetts town—was initiated on September 14, 1966, from the brigade's semi-completed base camp in a manioc field just west of Tay Ninh.

Since this was the 196th LIB's first battle test, the plan was purposely not a bold one. It called for a series of battalion-size, airmobile operations extending north, east and south of Tay Ninh from Trai Bi to Suoi Da to Dau Tieng, including the Michelin rubber plantation just outside of Dau Tieng (Tri Tam). The area of operations assigned to the 196th was on the southern fringes of the Dong Minh Chau, or War Zone C, as it was popularly called. That area and War Zone D, just to the east and in the southern portion of Phuoc Long province, had been used by the Viet Minh as base areas during the French colonial days and continued to be used as supply, training and administrative zones for the Viet Cong (VC) during the years of U.S. military presence in South Vietnam.

The 196th's combat operations during Attleboro fell into two distinct phases. The first, from September 14 to October 31, 1966, was a series of probing maneuvers resulting in only light and sporadic contact with the VC, but huge amounts of rice and other stores were uncovered and captured. All three battalions of the 196th participated in one way or another. The 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry (2/1), commanded by Lt. Col. Charles 'Pete' Weddle, kicked off the operation by conducting an airmobile assault into an area between Tay Ninh and Dau Tieng on September 14, 1966. Before the 2/1 returned to Tay Ninh, the 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry (4/31), commanded by Lt. Col. Hugh Lynch conducted an airmobile operation to the north of 2/1's area of operations on September 18. After light contact with the VC, the battalion returned to base camp on September 25. On October 6 the 4/31 began search-and-destroy operations in the area previously vacated by the 2/1 on September 21. The battalion stayed on the operation until October 14, encountering a small number of VC and being credited with two VC kills. The 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry (3/21), was given the mission of securing the 196th's Tay Ninh base camp. This phase of Operation Attleboro was controlled from the Tay Ninh base camp by the 196th commander, Brig. Gen. Edward H. DeSaussure.

Phase II of Attleboro, began November 1 and ended November 5, 1966. Because of the large quantities of rice and other food stuffs captured and airlifted to Dau Tieng in the course of the operation, the commander of the 25th Division placed the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry (1/27) 'Wolfhounds' under the operational control of the 196th to help secure the captured supplies and the command post area at Dau Tieng and to be available for combat operations to support the 196th's mission. The 1/27, commanded by Major Guy S. 'Sandy' Meloy, who was to distinguish himself later in that action, was given the mission of securing the airstrip at Dau Tieng and conducting 'eagle flights' (special helicopter assault force missions) over the areas where enemy supply caches had been uncovered. Meanwhile, beginning on November 1, the 2/1 and the 4/31 were securing food caches and patrolling some three kilometers to the northwest of Dau Tieng. On November 2 the 2/1 and 4/31 continued saturation patrolling while the 1/27 conducted eagle flights about three kilometers to the north of the 2/1 and 4/31.

On November 3, a scheme of maneuver was worked out by the 196th staff to utilize and coordinate actions of all three committed infantry battalions. The plan called for a company (B/1/27 was selected by Meloy) to

block in the north along Highway 19, now deteriorated to an overgrown trail, and the other two battalions to advance north on four axes from positions of the uncovered caches some four kilometers south of the blocking position. Meloy violently objected to the battle plan. He felt that, although it may have looked impressive on the map and seemed logical in briefings, the plan did not take into account the realities of infantry movement in dense, overgrown jungle and the extreme difficulty of maintaining control of many small, separated maneuver elements in that environment.

As it transpired, the next three days exposed the flaws of the battle plan. Battalions were split by four to five kilometers; companies were lost; communications between battalion headquarters and brigade staff were nonexistent during critical times; and in the final phase of the battle, one battalion commander was commanding 11 infantry companies while another battalion commander was left to command only his headquarters elements.

The operation kicked off at 0900 hours on November 3, when the 2/1 and 4/31 attacked along four axes, designated as Red, Blue, White and Purple. Because of the extremely difficult terrain in which the units were working, the attacking units were not mutually supporting. At 0922, B Company, 1/27, was airlifted into a landing zone (LZ) to the east of the established blocking position. Meanwhile, C Company, 1/27, was airlifted into an LZ approximately four kilometers to the west of the B/1/27 blocking position. The plan called for a linkup of these two companies of the 1/27.

At 0950, C/1/27 landed in a cold LZ (no enemy action apparent) and moved 500 meters north through high elephant grass to the edge of a wood line. The company commander, Captain Frederick H. Henderson, sent a point patrol to the northeast into the woods to find the trail on which they were supposed to guide. That trail became known as 'Ghost Town Trail.' (The individual stories of the fighting and heroism along the trail were described in S.L.A. Marshall's book *Ambush: The Battle of Dau Tieng*.) After moving through the woods 400 meters to the north, the point squad of C/1/27 came under small-arms and automatic-weapons fire. The remainder of the C/1/27, which was still moving through the elephant grass, also came under fire. That initial encounter was the start of heavy, close-in fighting, which was typical during the rest of Attleboro. C Company, 1/27, and 1/27 did not advance much farther during this phase of Attleboro. A Company, 1/27, remained on security around the Dau Tieng airstrip.

It was later determined that the battalion had hit the Recon Company of the 9th Viet Cong Division. During the hours that followed, the C/1/27 tried to move into a defensive position and evacuate their wounded before continuing the attack. By 1210 the company had sustained six killed in action and six wounded. One of the casualties was Captain Henderson. Lieutenant Billy B. Powers, the 2nd platoon leader, became company commander. Around 1200 Major Meloy, who had been overhead in his command helicopter, came in low on the LZ and jumped from the chopper when it was 5 feet off the ground. He then moved up to the wounded Captain Henderson. After talking to the seriously wounded company commander, Meloy radioed and requested his helicopter support company, the 'Hornets,' commanded by Major Jim Patterson, to evacuate Henderson.

The VC had the advantage of firing from well-prepared positions along firing lanes that were close to the ground, well-concealed and hard to spot. They had also placed snipers high in the trees, tied to the trunks—either to keep them from leaving their firing position or to prevent them from falling out of the trees if they were hit. Tree snipers were to cause their fair share of U.S. casualties during the next three days. With Major Meloy on the ground taking personal control of the fighting and Captain Henderson critically wounded, the buildup of troops in the area continued. (Captain Henderson died after the helicopter that had been summoned to lift him out was shot down trying to land on the LZ.)

A Company, 1/27, commanded by Captain Richard B. Cole, was relieved of its security mission, airlifted from Dau Tieng and ordered to land and attack west of the C/1/27 and roll up the VC right flank. After landing, the A/1/27 linked up with the C/1/27 at 1245. At that point, General DeSaussure called Major Meloy over the command net and asked, 'Do you need more troops?' The reply was an emphatic, 'Yes, sir!' Whereupon General DeSaussure ordered C Company of the 3/21, commanded by Captain Russell DeVries, to airmobile from the base camp at Tay Ninh to support the 1/27. C Company, 3/21, was first air-lifted to Dau Tieng, then to an LZ in the vicinity of the 1/27—the first lift landing at 1405 and the last lift at 1515—and was ordered to attack east of the C/1/27. The first element of the C/3/21 linked up with the 1/27 at 1448.