

(Copy from C 4/31st Inf. Bn. veteran James B. Simms with the assistance of

Mike Crutcher a veteran of E & HHC, 1/5 Cav, 1969-70 1st Cav Div. May 2014.)

The "CHARGER" (Mounted knight with 196th crest on his shield.)

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congressmen

visit

Tay ninh

Two Congressmen from the State of Massachusetts—home State of the 196th Light Infantry brigade—recently visited the Tay Ninh based unit.

Congressman Edward P. Boland (D-Mass) and Congressman Sálvio [sic-Silvio] A. Conte (R-Mass) arrived by helicopter and were greeted by Brigadier General Richard T. Knowles, 196th Light Infantry Brigade commander who briefed the two Congressmen on affairs and activities within the brigade.

The two-hour visit gave the Congressmen a first-hand look at military operations within the brigade.

The Congressmen later met with some 50 troops who reside in Massachusetts and offered to send a Christmas message to the men's families and relatives at home.

Congressman Boland, in a speech, said, "We in Massachusetts and the United States are proud of the job you men of the 196th are doing." Speaking on the unit's participation in Operation ATTLEBORO, the Congressman complimented the brigade's "valor, stamina, and courage while embattling a large Viet Cong force."

Congressman Conte said, "This is the shot in the arm we needed. If we stop communism in Southeast Asia, we can definitely stop other such aggression in other countries."

LTC. Coley new

"polar bear" co

"The greatest honor bestowed upon a person of my rank is the command of an infantry battalion." These are the sentiments of Lt. Col. James P. Coley, new commanding officer of the 196th Light Infantry Brigade's 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry "Polar Bears."

Since Colonel Coley's arrival into the 196th Brigade in November, he has taken a firm grasp of his first combat command, which has quickly earned him the respect of the men and officers of the battalion. "To command troops in Vietnam is a great honor," said the colonel with a beaming expression on his face that mirrored the pride he felt in his new position.

Colonel Coley arrived in Vietnam in December 1966 and was assigned to MACV. Prior to his present assignment, he had been with G-3 USARV. He began his Army career in June 1961 after graduating from Virginia Military Institute. Since that time, Colonel Coley has served in Germany with the 4th Infantry Division, was a company commander with the 1st Infantry and 101st Airborne Division, served in a MAAG assignment with the Saudi Arabian Army, attended the Army command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and has spent three years in ROTC duties at Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

Colonel Coley had heard of the exploits of the 196th Lt. Inf. Bde., and especially about the 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry, upon his arrival in South Vietnam. When he learned he was to command the "Polar Bears," He felt "It was the finest moment of my career." It is the colonel's opinion that the men and officers of the 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry, are among the finest fighting men in the Armed Forces. Said Colonel Coley, "It will be an honor and privilege to serve in this team."

MACV Engr.

Visits 196th

Brigadier General Daniel A. Raymond, MACV Director of Construction, visited the 196th Light Infantry Brigade's base camp area Nov. 22. Purpose of the general's visit was to observe engineer facilities and installations.

During his stay, General Raymond was given a briefing and tour of engineer activities of the 196th Light Infantry Brigade and the 1st PHILCAGV. Later, he toured Company B, 588th Engineer Battalion, and the base camp itself.

General Raymond was greeted upon his arrival by Brigadier General Richard T. Knowles, 196th Light Infantry Brigade Commanding General.

Mortars welcome

new arrival

PFC Chuck W. Swabby (Fresno, Calif.), ran swiftly to a bunker outside his tent at the 8th Support Battalion's Replacement Center, 196th Light Infantry Brigade, and waited out a 30-minute mortar attack.

Returning to his bunk to catch up on his interrupted sleep, Swabby said, "What a crude welcoming, I've heard of welcoming celebrations, but none as noisy as this."

Swabby, now wide-eyed in wonderment, had just arrived at the Replacement Detachment the night before the mortar attack, and his first night there was "quite an experience."

Being new to the sounds of combat, Swabby "never knew what a mortar sounded like as it flew through the air or while exploding," he literally had to play it by ear.

"The second night I was here, someone yelled, "incoming, incoming, and everyone also started to run outside to the bunker. All I could do was follow," said Swabby.

"During the attack I kept thinking that it was a heck of a way to be greeted to this country," said Swabby.

"The next few nights I slept with my clothes on, including boots and flak jacket," added Swabby.

Swabby now knows what a mortar sounds like and is prepared for any other attacks. He even went as far as to jokingly think of a motto for himself—"Always ready."

buy

u.s. bonds

peace corps candidate

now charger reporter

PFC Dennis E. Shutz, 10th Public Information detachment, 196th Lt. Inf. Bde., has always wanted to become a member of the ever popular Peace Corps. He was impressed by the many good things that the organization does for the underprivileged people of the world. He wanted to be a part of it.

A year ago, he took the Peace Corps membership test, passed it, and was qualified, a few days after qualifying he was informed that at that moment, the peace corps couldn't find a position for his type experience. They did tell him, however that they would keep his application under consideration.

Now, exactly one year and one month later, they have reconsidered PFC Shutz. They sent him a letter all the way to Vietnam to inform him of his acceptance. Naturally, this Dayton, Ohio, native was overjoyed and relieved. At last he could become a member of the Peace Corps.

His dream would be fulfilled. But then he remembered. He was already a soldier in the Army, with a year and a half still to serve.

PFC Shutz completed the application sent to him, and notified the Peace Corps that he would be available in 1970. Following his discharge from the service, PFC Shutz will finish his college education. He hopes the Peace Corps will wait.

medic believes

in steel pots

A steel pot [not] might impress a man as being much protection against a bullet, but it has its moments. Ask Sp4 John Fezi, a medic with the second platoon of Company C, 3rd Bn., 31st Inf., 196th Lt. Inf. Bde.

Second platoon was on a night patrol through an area of dried-out rice paddies when they were ambushed by an estimated VC platoon equipped with automatic weapons and mortars. The three flank men were hit immediately and the platoon moved back to a better position.

Specialist Fezi had just gone over one of the dikes and was dropping to a prone position when a bullet tore into his helmet.

"At first I didn't know what hit me," he recalled. "I thought a piece of shrapnel from the mortars knocked off my helmet. It was dusk, and when my helmet fell off, it knocked my glasses off, too, so I couldn't see much. I found my glasses and put them on, then found my helmet. When I felt the bullet hole in it, and the blood on my head, believe me, I was shocked. I had no idea how bad I was hit."

The bullet entered the right front of his helmet and was deflected along the side toward the back, creasing the pot from the inside and tearing the liner. Instead of exiting it bulged out the steel and ricocheted straight down where it passed through Fezi's right shoulder harness and

embedded itself in his flak vest. Fezi received only a slight laceration on his forehead, just below the hairline. Specialist Fezi is now a confirmed believer in the value of a steel helmet, but feels one performance test such as the last is enough for anyone.

Grade school kids send

xmas greetings to a.f. "f.a.c."

"I hope you don't get hurt....be careful." "Do you like bubble gum? I hope so." "I want you to win the war." "We play Army under our tree house." Would you believe Christmas greetings?

Captain Glenn G. Givens (Akron, Ohio), an Air Force forward air controller (FAC attached to the 196th Lt. Inf. Bde., believes it.

The quotes are from 55 handmade, individually designed Christmas cards the captain received from three classes of elementary school students of F.H. Bode School in Cuyahogo Falls, Ohio.

Made from brightly colored construction paper, dressed up by an assortment of crayons, and containing hand drawn Christmas trees, Santa Clause and pictures cut from old Christmas cards, each card conveyed a "Merry Christmas."

Delightfully surprised, carefully reading each child's message, Captain Givens repeatedly commented, "This is great! Real interesting..I had no idea...it caught me by surprise."

In a letter which accompanied the cards, Mrs. Sharon Smith, a teacher at the school, and her class, told Givens, "Our school project-filling Christmas packages for you in Vietnam-has caused many to stop and think. We tend to become so wrapped up in our own activities at times, that we forget to fully appreciate what you are doing for us. Please accept our best holiday greetings and our sincere "Thank you!" Our prayers are certainly with all of you."

All of the cards were of "standard" size, except one. This special greeting was printed on two sheets of paper, each 36 inches long and 24 inches wide. Not only did it wish the captain a "Merry Christmas," but in the "extra space," an accurate account was given of the classes' activities. This card was five-year-old Greg Givens' (the captain's son) way of wishing a very special "Merry Christmas" to his dad, who's helping to win the war in Vietnam.

Awards and decorations

Bronze Star Medal (Valor)

PSG Richard Green, C-8thSpt
SP4 Ed. J. Lister, C-8thSpt
SP4 Bob A. Sroka, F-17th Cav

SP4 R. R. Marchese, C-4/31
SP4 Dick S. Raczka, C-4/31
PFC Ray O. Spivey, C-4/31
PFC Ron E. Krahl, 175th Eng

Army Commendation Medal (V)

2LT Jim G. Mikesell, C-3/21
SGT Terry P. Lucas, C-3/21
SP4 Gerald J. Nitka, C-3/21
SP4 Larry E. Trzupeck, C-3/21
PFC Joe C. Mrzlock, C-3/21

CPT Jere J. Riggs, HHC-4/31
2LT Bob E O'Brian, HHC-4/31
SSG Herb J. Slamin, HHC-4/31
SSG Jim W. Sweat, HHC-4/31
SP4 Fred Jenkins, HHC-4/31
PFC Mike Farmer, HHC-4/31
CPT Jim Bouldin, A-4/31
CPT Antonio Sola, D-4/31

Army Commendation Medal (M)

SFC Sid L. Moran, HHB-3/82
MAJ John F. Clark, HHC-8Spt

SP5 Tim W. Sands, A-8th Spt
SP4 Gerald Hansen, A-8 Spt
SP4 Randy Jackson, A-8 Spt
SP4 Jack D. Murphy, A-8 Spt
PFC Dave Lawson, A-8th Spt

Purple Heart

SP7 Tom Holland, C-8th Spt
SP4 Dick Clark, A-8th Spt
WO1 Jim A. cook, HHB-3/82
SP4 Dennis Berky, C/4-31

PFC Bufford Rowe, A-8th Spt
PFC Ray N. Sears, A-8th Spt
PFC Dave Treese, B-8th Spt
SSG Ron G. Knott, F-17 Cav
SP4 L.D. Longworth, F-Cav [F-17 Cav]
SP4 Ed Perl, Trp, F-17 Cav
PVT Vern Au Clair, C/3/21

machine gunner receives bronze star

SP4 Robert A. Sroka, an assistant machine gunner with the 196th Lt. Inf. Bde's Troop F, 17th Cavalry, has been awarded the Bronze Star Medal with "V" device.

He was cited for valor while serving with a security force protecting the perimeter of an artillery battery. When the perimeter came under mortar attack, he was hit in the chest and left arm. In the fighting that developed, his machine gun ceased to fire. Disregarding his wounds and personal safety, he exposed himself to enemy fire to obtain more ammunition and return to the gun position.

“tunnel rat” has anxious moment

Being a “tunnel rat,” one has to move cautiously and be ready always for anything when searching for the VC in his underground sanctuary.

PFC Richard P. Magnusson of Wochester, Mass., was just that, and perhaps a bit hasty. Magnusson was on patrol with Company A, 4th Bn., 31st Inf., 196th Lt. Inf. Bde., when a tunnel was discovered in a VC village.

Magnusson was sent down to investigate the hole.

He went straight down three feet and then started ahead, crawling about four feet when he discovered the tunnel was L-shaped.

Cautiously, with a strong grip on his .45-cal. pistol and flashlight, Magnusson crept toward the re-routed hole.

“I quickly pointed my flashlight around the corner and caught a quick glimpse of what looked like a figure crawling away. I fired a shot and hurried back to the surface to report my find.” said Magnusson.

Climbing out the tunnel before a trail of smoke, Magnusson approached his platoon leader and excitedly told of how he had shot a VC in the lower backside of his anatomy.

Magnusson again entered the tunnel with a little anxiety, to see the results of his actions.

Minutes lapsed when Magnusson reappeared from the tunnel with a faceless expression. He was carrying a bundle of medical supplies wrapped in a bulging pair of black pajamas.

Over the laughter of his fellow soldiers, Magnusson simply muttered, “What can I say?”

Mail

Don't forget the deadline for mailing Christmas packages Air Mail is December 13. *****

“Polar bears” find

viet Cong haven

On the fourth day of Operation ATTLEBORO, Company A, 4th Bn., 31st Inf., 196th Lt. Inf. Bde., did a little exploring of its own.

The mission of the “Go-Go” company was to provide security for the “Wolfhounds” of the 25th Inf. Div. who were under constant enemy fire.

The day before, the company walked into a small clearing that contained five large huts.

“It was a funny thing to see the huts in such a location, with chickens, pigs, and ducks wandering around,” remarked Lt. James A. Smith, recon platoon leader, from Forth Worth, Texas.

“We began to probe the area, which because serious business after realizing the place had been deserted and evidence pointed out that it was vacated in a hurry,” added Smith.

Along with the wandering animals, the company found a tunnel complex system, which contained medical supplies and training aids, including a blackboard.

They also discovered a hard-bound book which showed distorted pictures of B-52 bombers dropping their loads, which was used for propaganda purposes. The book also showed pictures of a VC in combat training.

Two-hundred-fifty pounds of rice, that white stuff that has been found constantly during ATTLEBORO, turned up in the village also, and was destroyed.

A shower stall and a sunken pit with four beds was also discovered which was believed to be a nurses' quarters because of the array of freshly laundered female clothing hung on a line.

“We figured the area must have been some type of hospital or aid station or R&R center for the VC. The village definitely had just been vacated before we arrived. The people must have been living there within the day,” stressed Smith.

The “Go-Go” boys bundled up their discoveries, transported them out, and continued on their way.

No. 1 m.p. receives 29 letters from home

A letter from home to a soldier in a combat zone can often mean the difference between peace of mind and sleepless nights of anxiety. So it is completely understandable why every soldier patiently waits for "mail call" and at least that one letter from someone special back home.

But when Maj. Lincoln F. Brigham (Hollis, N.H.), provost marshal of the 196th Lt. Inf. Bde., received one large envelope containing 39 letters from the first grade students of his hometown Hollis Elementary School, that was a thrill of which few soldiers can ever hope to boast.

The letters, probing every subject from natural curiosities that dwell in the minds of the young to extolling the major's bravery for serving in a war-infested country, expressed each child's gratitude to the major and to the thousands like him serving in Vietnam.

A few notable quotes from the many letters include: "You are so brave to fight our enemies in the war." On Veterans Day... we are going to stop what we are doing a minute and pray for the soldiers that are fighting for our freedom, you must be very brave." "I think you for our freedom."

One of the letters shocked the major when he read: "I would like to give you two dollars, but I don't have any more money. Mom is going to visit you, did you know that? He was much relieved when he discovered the letter was written by his seven-year-old son, Forbes, also a member of the class.

It is hard to express the gratitude and sentiments that engulf a man under such circumstances. Yet the major expressed it well when he commented, "I am very touched with certain groups of people raging for us to get out of Vietnam, its a little refreshing and gives one a breath of fresh air to know we do have such sincere support. Although they are very young, the unsolicited and mature way in which they expressed themselves, considering their varied backgrounds, is amazing." ***

Polar Bears

route v.C.

Two men from Company A, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry, 196th Light Infantry Brigade, pooled their combat skills and wiped out two entrenched Viet Cong positions.

Sergeant Steve J. Segal, a mortar forward observer from Highland Park, Ill., and Sp4 Siegfried Janatta, a radio-telephone operator from Staten Island N.Y., were on a company-size patrol recently, and while crossing a road met a barrage of fire from the Viet Cong entrenched in sporadic spider holes.

Janatta moved up close to the first spider hole and lobbed a grenade expertly into the hole, silencing the fire.

"By then, Sergeant Segal had joined me, and together we moved toward another spider hole," said Janatta.

The two men inched their way within 20 feet of the spider hole, constantly under fire. "It was close enough for me," said Segal, "so we both threw a grenade. We wanted to check our results, but darkness was near and we gradually had to break contact."

"I just hope I never get that close to the VC again," mused Janatta.

The result of the day's action for the "Go-Go" company produced one VC killed and three wounded.

philippines senator

visits "charger" camp

The Honorable Mr. Almendras, a Senator from the Republic of the Philippines, visited the 196th Light Infantry Brigade's base camp at Tay Ninh, recently.

Senator Almendras arrived with Brigadier General Gldencio Tobias [**Correct spelling is: Gaudencio V. Tobias**], commander of the 1st Philippine Civic Action Group, Vietnam (PHILCAGV), stationed at Tay Ninh.

Senator Almendras was given a briefing and discussed issues at hand with brigadier General Richard T. Knowles, 19th Light Infantry Brigade commander.

The Senator's visit was concluded with a tour of the base camp and the city of Tay Ninh.

RE UP

“gimlets”

treat kids

It was fun for all at the Cao-Xa school recently, as the “Gimlets” of Co. A. 3rd Bn., 31st Inf., 196th Lt. Inf. Bde., threw a party that the local youngsters would remember for a long time to come.

Civil Affairs programs in the Cao-Xa village area, a few miles west of Tay Ninh, are conducted by the 1st Infantry.

The school children greeted CPT. Emil C. Gregg (Hazeltown, Pa.) and his men with a group song. Soldiers and children mingled and became acquainted. Each child received from the men of Co. A, a book bag, paper and writing supplies.

Next, games of tug-of-war, sack races and apple dunking had children and soldiers alike mixing with joy.

CPT. Arturo M. Sanchez, the battalion's S-5, coordinated the civic action programs with Father Zue, the religious leader of Cao-Xa.

The lack of supplies at the Cao-Xa school prompted Co. A to contribute food, clothing, and school desks. In the future other companies of the battalion will undertake similar programs at the school. They hope to eventually have every man “adopt” one of the school children.

Contributions from the battalion are helping to make Father Zue's dream of building a home for the elderly a reality. ****

genuine or fraud?”

By Chaplain (CPT.)
Jon M. Lindenauer

Have you ever noticed how difficult it is to tell real quality from a cheaper substitute?

Take diamonds, for example Most of us wouldn't know a carat from a hole in the ground, or a flawless gem from an imperfect one. It takes an expert with a magnifying glass, to point out the difference, the defects.

Or maybe you've been shopping for a used car. Even an expert can't always spot a lemon.

Or perhaps it is a grenade or an artillery shell. Who can tell when a round is going to be a dud?

In all of these, failures to meet some standard had caused a defect a flaw that in many cases renders the item in question absolutely worthless.

People who call themselves Christians should also meet standards of value if they are genuine. Those who live lesser goals are heading for the human scrap pile.

“charlie” Finds

lost glasses

It was a strange case of lost and found for PFC John K. Jauch, 21, (Elizabeth, N.J.), of Company C, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, 196th Lt. Inf. Bde., during Operation ATTLEBORO.

His company was moving to a landing zone to establish a defensive perimeter as artillery fire saturated the VC infested area to their front. As PFC Jauch moved through the dense jungle, a branch knocked off his helmet and glasses. With his vision impaired, he could not see where his glasses had fallen. He quickly picked up his helmet and decided it would be best not to linger in the area.

The next day, the company was back in the area which had been the scene of fierce fighting for the past two days. Since his vision was blurred, it was decided best to return PFC Jauch back to base camp. He went to the company's CP and waited for a helicopter that would take him out. As he waited, a sergeant passed by, carrying a pair of familiar looking glasses. PFC Jauch shouted, “Those are mine! Immediately I knew they were mine by the white adhesive tape holding the frame together.”

A soldier had found PFC Jauch's glasses while searching an enemy bunker. They were being worn by a dead VC who had good vision for at least twenty-four hours of his life.

“THE CHARGER”

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