

Year of Rat has varied significance

By SGT Mike Cassidy

DA NANG (special) - the new moon of Feb. 15 will mark the end of the Year of the Pig and the beginning of the Year of the Rat for the Vietnamese as they celebrate the lunar new year, TET.

Unlike the American new year, Tet is more than parties and the changing of a date.

Religiously, Tet is a period for giving veneration to one's ancestors.

Socially, it is a time for friendly and happy sentiment, since the first events of the new year are believed to reflect the rest of the year.

Militarily, it has proved to be an opportune time for attacks, since it coincides with a temporary dry season for the whole country.

One the eve of the three-day celebration, a device known as a "Cay neu" is placed outside of Vietnamese homes. It consists of a bamboo stalk with all but its top leaves removed.

The stalk is decorated with an eight-sided piece of red paper with inscriptions of Buddha's Eight-fold path of righteousness. Along with this are added betel leaves, areca nuts, tiny bells, small gongs and a woven square of bamboo.

The "Cay neu" protects the house from demons and phantoms until the divine protectors of the cities, mountains, rivers, and homes return from the Jade Place where they are summoned each year to pay their respects and report to the Heavenly Emperor. The "Cay Neu" shows the evil spirits that the household is protected by Buddha.

On the night before TET the family ancestors are invited to join the family in a ceremonial sacrifice before they leave. During the period that the spirits are away they are invoked twice a day and welcomed to return to their home.

At the end of Tet, another ceremony is held to honor the ancestors as they return.

Ancestor veneration is so important during this period that a visitor will pay his respects to the deceased members of the family before he greets the living.

Much care is taken by the Vietnamese to assure that the new year starts properly. The disposition of the first visitor of the day is believed to determine the course of the year, so visits are planned in advance.

If the first visitor is happy, the family is assured happiness, until the next Tet. An unhappy visitor is believed to bring bad luck in the form of serious sickness, financial troubles and unfortunate lawsuits for the rest of the year.

Throughout the three-day holiday, every Vietnamese attempts to rid himself of all thoughts of hatred, revenge or grudge. This is the principal reason for settling all debts before the new year. If personal debts are not paid, the creditor might have bad feelings toward the debtor.

Tet is also the time for parents to bring presents to their children. Aside from gifts of toys or money, parents are also obligated to give their children a new set of clothes. It is considered the lowest form of poverty to wear the same clothes on the first day of Tet as were worn on the day before.

February marks the end of monsoon season here in the northern part of Vietnam beginning a short dry season until the rains begin in the south in April and May.

(Continued)

It was during this period in 1968, and to a lesser extent in other years, that Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces launched their Spring offensives. There is concern that attacks similar to the 1968 Tet Offensive might be planned for this year.

An article in a recent issue of Aviation Week cites "U.S. officials" as expecting a "major North Vietnamese military offensive in mid-February."

"In selected areas, it is anticipated that the level of the attacks will be equivalent to, or surpass, the North Vietnamese Tet offensive in 1968 during the new year 'cease-fire' period.

In a similar "news analysis" article in the *Washington Post*, writer Peter Osnos states, "Remembering the political effects of the Tet offensive in 1968, the North Vietnamese, analysts reason, are trying for something of a repeat performance now, although on a vastly smaller scale.

Photo Caption: A Vietnamese man pauses reverently at a Chinese temple in Da Nang. Religion, a basic means of understanding the Vietnamese people reaches a peak of importance during the Tet holiday, Feb. 15 to 17. A photo tour of the religious and cultural areas of Da Nang appear on pages four and five of the Charger (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 STEVE BROOKS)

Photo Caption: ON YOUR MARK - Manning their 175mm Howitzer, these men from the 2nd Bn., 94th Arty., prepare for a fire mission. The battalion was attached to the 196th Inf. Bde. on Jan. 8. Commanded by Lieutenant Colonel K. Leslie Cirk, the unit came to the 196th from Camp Eagle where it served with the 101st Airborne division (Airmobile) (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 ED BUCKLEY)

Retrograding saves loss of tax dollars

CAMP PROFESSIONAL - Broken equipment is worse than none at all, and definitely more expensive. It's undependable and can be dangerous, and while it sits inoperable it rusts and its useable parts too soon become obsolete.

Work schedules are interrupted and man hours are lost in tinkering with faulty machinery, all of which can add up to a monstrous loss in tax dollars.

The Army is trying to combat such loss with its program of retrograding, a systematic method of turning in unserviceable equipment. Retrograding makes it possible for each unit to clear its bad equipment away and make room for new. Meanwhile, the bad equipment is absorbed back into the system and repaired or melted down into raw materials. In either case, it is quickly put back to work for the Army.

Retrograding for the 196th Infantry Brigade takes place at Camp Professional under the direction of Maintenance Company's Sergeant First Class Charles G. Leis (Columbia, S.C.). He and his team of inspectors appraise sub par equipment brought in by the various units (from typewriters to ten-ton trailers), and decide what action is to be taken.

Basing their evaluations on charts distributed by the Department of the Army, they class the defective equipment into one of four categories or "scrams." The scrams denote ascending degrees of damage.

For instance, a quarter-ton with a sick engine is sent to retrograde by a unit through its motor pool, presumably for a new engine. However, upon inspection the retrograde motor vehicle inspector, Staff Sergeant Lloyd Kestner (Paintsville, Ky.) finds that all that's needed is a new set of spark plugs. Since that's first echelon maintenance, the vehicle is classed into scram one and returned to the unit for repairs. Had some of the major **(continued on page 7) Broken equipment is expensive** (Continued from page 1) components of the engine been damaged or the frame of the vehicle bent, it would have been placed in scrams two or three and either repaired at the maintenance company shops or sent out of country for rebuilding. In extreme instances, such as a vehicle having run over a land mine, or having racked up an excess of miles, it would be assigned to scram four and scrapped.

According to Lewis, "The standards were set up to keep us from plowing a lot of money into equipment that would be less economical to maintain than replace."

In the past couple of months there has been a push within the 196th for units to turn in equipment not essential to their mission. This has resulted in an overloaded work schedule for the retrograde crew which ultimately receives it all. For this reason, each unit is reminded of the correct procedure in retrograding equipment.

The most important point is to have all the paper work ready, including DA Forms 2407 (work order), 562 (scram code form), 563 (missing parts list), 2765-1I (turn-in document), and 2408-7 (transfer document). These forms must be filled out so that the unit can sign over a piece of bad equipment from its property book.

It is also important not to overlook the proper channels to retrograde. As an example, a vehicle should first be checked over by the unit motor pool prior to being sent on to retrograde. In some cases this results in the vehicle being repaired at that level without having to spend time at retrograde. The motor pool staff can also assist you in preparing to send the vehicle to retrograde, such as cleaning it up, draining fuel, oil, transmission cases, and removing the canvas top.

1972 VOTING REGISTRATION INFORMATION

February 1972 has been designated "Armed Forces Registration Month." Here is information on the registration requirements from all the states, some U.S. Territories and the District of Columbia. If you have any questions on how to register or vote by absentee process, see your unit voting counselor. Your vote counts in 1972-but only if you meet the deadline of your State in registering.

ALABAMA

Members of the armed Forces and their spouses and children may register by mail in Alabama. Use the FPCA to request a registration questionnaire from the Board of Registrars, county of residence. Complete the questionnaire and when it is accepted you will be registered. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when you are applying for registration. Register now so that you can vote in Alabama's May 2 Primary election.

ALASKA

In Alaska, any qualified voter who is absent from his voting precinct may register and vote by absentee process. Send an FPCA, to the Lt. Governor, Pouch AA, Juneau, Alaska, 99801, to start your registration process. Your application must be postmarked at least 30 days before an election in which you wish to vote. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when you are applying for registration. Now is a good time to register to vote in the August 22 Primary of Alaska.

ARIZONA

In Arizona, members of the Armed Forces only may apply for registration when they apply for an absentee ballot with an FPCA. Others may apply for registration by mail by writing to the County Recorder, county of residence, for an "Affidavit of Registration" form. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when you apply for registration. Arizona has a Primary election on September 12, 1972.

ARKANSAS

In Arkansas, registration is not required for absentee voting on the part of members of the Armed forces and their spouses and dependents. You may use an FPCA to apply for an absentee ballot. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when applying. Make plans now to vote in the Arkansas Primary election on June 27.

CALIFORNIA

In California, members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents may apply for registration when applying for an absentee ballot. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when you are applying. You may use an FPCA to apply to the County Clerk, county of residence. The California Primary election is set for June 6-make plans now to take part in it.

COLORADO

In Colorado, members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents may apply for registration when they apply for an absentee ballot. Be sure to indicate your political party preference. You may use an FPCA to apply for the absentee ballot from the County Clerk, county of residence. Colorado has set September 12 as the date for its primary election-make plans now to take part.

CONNECTICUT

In Connecticut, members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents may apply for registration by mail using the FPCA. Be sure to indicate your political party preference. Send the FPCA to the Town Clerk, place of residence, and request an "Application for Absentee Admission as an Elector" form. Register now so that you can take an active part in your State's future. Keep in touch with friends at home to find out when the party primaries will be held.

Continued

1972 VOTING REGISTRATION INFORMATION

DELAWARE

In Delaware, members of the Armed Forces and their spouses may apply for registration when they apply for an absentee ballot. You may use an FPCA to do this. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when you are applying for registration. While Delaware does not permit voting in Primary elections you should make plans now to vote in the November 7 General election.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents from the district of Columbia may register temporarily to vote in the May 2d primary election and the November 7 general election. You may use an FPCA to register and to request an absentee ballot. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when applying for registration. Send the completed FPCA to the county clerk, county of residence, Idaho has a primary election set for August 8-make plans now to vote in it.

FLORIDA

In Florida, members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents may register by mail by sending an FPCA to the Supervisor of Registration, county of residence. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when you are applying for registration. Florida has a primary election scheduled for September 12 - make plans now to register and vote.

GEORGIA

Members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents who call Georgia home may vote by mail. Make application to register to the Board of Registrars, county of residence. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when you are applying for registration. Do so now so that you can vote in the August 8 primary election in Georgia.

GUAM

Members of the Armed Forces who are legal residents of Guam may register by completing the affidavit on the back of the absentee ballot return envelope. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when you are applying for registration. Send an FPCA to the Election Commission as early as July 2 to vote in Guam's primary election which is set for September 2.

HAWAII

Members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents who are legal residents of Hawaii will be registered when they apply for an absentee ballot by FPCA. Be sure to indicate your political party preference. Send the completed FPCA to the Country Clerk, county of residence, in time to be on the books and able to vote to the Primary election set for October 7.

IDAHO

In Idaho, members of the Armed Forces and their spouses their spouses and dependents will be registered when they apply for an absentee ballot. You may use an FPCA to do so. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when applying for registration. Send the completed FPCA to the country clerk, county of residence. Idaho has a primary election set for August 8 - make plans now to vote in it.

ILLINOIS

In Illinois members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents may vote in Federal, State and county elections without being registered. To apply for an absentee ballot, send a completed FPCA to the country clerk, county of residence. Be sure to indicate your political party preference. Illinois has a primary election set for March 21- make plans now to take part in it.

1972 VOTING REGISTRATION INFORMATION

INDIANA

In Indiana, members of the Armed Forces who are legal residents may apply for registration and an absentee ballot at the same time. Send a completed FPCA to the County Board of Elections, county of residence. Be sure to indicate your political party preference. Other persons may register by requesting an "Absentee Registration" form from the Clerk of the Circuit Court, county of residence. Indiana has a primary election set for May 2-make plans now to take part in it.

IOWA

In Iowa, members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents will be registered to vote (if required) when the affidavit on the back of the absentee ballot envelope is accepted. You may use an FPCA to request an absentee ballot from the County Auditor, county of residence. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when applying for registration. Iowa has a primary election on June 5 - make plans now to take part in it.

KANSAS

Members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents who are legal residents of Kansas are not required to be registered in order to vote. You may use an FPCA-send it to the Secretary of State, Topeka, Kansas, 66612- to request an absentee ballot. Be sure to in- (Continued on page 7) dicate your political party preference when you apply. Kansas has a primary election on August 1 - make plans now to take part in it.

KENTUCKY

Members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents who are legal residents of Kentucky may register by mail. Request an "Application for Registration" form from the County Clerk, county of residence. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when applying. Complete and return the form to be registered. You may use an FPCA to request an absentee ballot. Kentucky has a primary election set for May 22 - make plans now to take part in it.

LOUISIANA

In Louisiana, members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents who are legal residents may register by absentee process. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when applying. Send a completed FPCA to the Registrar of Voters, parish of residence, and the proper State form will be sent to you. Louisiana has a primary election set for August 29-make plans now to register and vote in it.

MAINE

In Maine, members of the Armed Forces and their dependents may register by absentee process. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when applying for registration. Send an FPCA to the Board of Registration, municipality of residence, to register. Maine has a primary election set for June 19-make plans now to register so that you can vote in it.

MARYLAND

In Maryland, members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents may register by casting an absentee ballot. You may request an absentee ballot by using an FPCA. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when applying. Send it to the Board of Supervisors of Elections, city or county of residence. May 16 is the date for the Maryland primary election-make plans now to register so that you can vote in it.

1972 VOTING REGISTRATION INFORMATION

MASSACHUSETTS

In Massachusetts, members of Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents residing with or accompanying them may register by absentee process. Submission of an FPCA will be treated as a simultaneous request for temporary registration. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when applying. FPCA should be sent to the city or town clerk, place of residence. Massachusetts has a primary election on September 19-make plans now to register so that you can vote in it.

MICHIGAN

Members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and immediate family residing with or accompanying them who call Michigan "home" may register by absentee process. Use an FPCA to apply for registration forms from the city or town Clerk, place of residence. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when you apply. Michigan has a primary election set for August 8-make plans now to register so that you can vote in it.

MINNESOTA

If you are a legal resident of Minnesota, plan to vote in the primary election. Members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents will be registered when their application for an absentee ballot has been accepted by the County Auditor, county of residence. Be sure to indicate your political party preference. You may use an FPCA. Minnesota has a primary set for September 12-make plans now to register and vote in it.

MISSISSIPPI

In Mississippi, members of the Armed Forces and their spouses may apply for a "Registration Application" when requesting an absentee ballot. Be sure to indicate your political party preference. You may use an FPCA to request the absentee ballot. Send the FPCA to the City or County Registrar, place of residence, and be sure to indicate that you want to register if you are not registered. Mississippi has a primary election set for June 6-make plans now to register so that you can vote in it.

MISSOURI

If you're from Missouri and want to be shown, here's the word: members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents residing with or accompanying them are not required to be registered in order to vote. You may use an FPCA to apply for an absentee ballot from the Clerk of the County Court or Board of Election Commissioners, place of residence. Be sure to indicate your political party preference. Missouri has a primary election set for August 8-make plans now to vote in it.

MONTANA

Montana makes it easy for members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents to register and vote. Use an FPCA for simultaneous application for registration and an absentee ballot within 45 days preceding an election. Be sure to indicate your political party preference. Montana has a primary election set for June 5-make plans now to vote in it.

NEBRASKA

Nebraska gives members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents registration forms when they apply for an absentee ballot. Use an FPCA to apply for the absentee ballot from the County Clerk, county of residence, and how in the margin "Please send registration form." Be sure to indicate your political party preference when you apply. Nebraska has a primary election set for May 9 - make plans now to register so that you can vote in it.

Continued

1972 VOTING REGISTRATION INFORMATION

NEVADA

Nevada permits members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents residing outside of the State to register at any time. Registration is permanent once it is completed. Be sure to indicate your political party preferences when you are applying for registration. Use a Federal Post Card Application to apply for registration and make plans now to vote in the Nevada primary election set for September 12.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Members of the Armed Forces and their spouses and dependents may register at any time in New Hampshire. Send a completed Federal Post Card Application to the Secretary of State, State of New Hampshire, Concord, to apply for registration and an absentee ballot. Be sure to indicate your political party preference when applying New Hampshire has a primary election on September 12 - make plans now to vote in it.

CRIME

Graphic Art: A man is trapped within a cage.

Case 1

On Dec. 4, 1971, Private First Class David L. Fox, A Troop, 1st Sqd., 1st Cav., was found guilty of sleeping at his post as a sentinel on a tower and using disrespectful language toward his superior noncommissioned officer.

He was sentenced by the court to be confined at hard labor for 100 days to forfeit \$100 pay for three months and to be reduced to the lowest enlisted grade.

Case 2

On Dec. 4, 1971, Specialist Four Ronald R. Barger, admin. Co (Prov) was found guilty of possession of about .07 grams of heroin.

He was sentenced by the court to be confined at hard labor for 45 days, to forfeit \$50 pay for two months and to be reduced to the lowest enlisted grade.

The confinement at hard labor for 45 days was later suspended for 90 days.

Case 3

On Dec. 7, 1971, Specialist Four Frank C. Young, Battery C, 3d Bn., 82d Arty., was found guilty of possession of about .22 grams of heroin.

He was sentenced by court to be confined at hard labor for 45 days, to forfeit \$150 pay for two months and to be reduced to the lowest enlisted grade.

the confinement at hard labor for 45 days was later suspended for six months.

Photo Caption: HIGH LEVEL VISITOR-Secretary of the Army Robert F. Froehike pays a visit to troops of the charger brigade's 3d Bn., 21st Inf. at LZ Linda during the secretary's visit to Southeast Asia-based troops early in January (US ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 JAMES H. GARNER)

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Wire, sandbags are signs of Tet

Photo Captions:

RIGHT - With a little help from the bulldozer, Sergeant Terence L. Somers, 196th Infantry Brigade Engineer Company (Prov), cuts a sentry dog path in the rugged hillside above the brigade officer complex. the project is part of the overall effort to upgrade defensive posture in the area.

BOTTOM RIGHT: When you're hot. A soldier from 2d Bn., 1st Inf. pours on the fuel in the perimeter wire of Camp Purdue. The battalion is burning out the wire on its perimeter to clear fields of fire and eliminate potential concealment for enemy sappers.

BOTTOM LEFT: Muscles strain as men of the 2d Bn., 1st Inf., add layers of sandbags to perimeter bunkers. The bunkers are part of defensive upgrading throughout the battalion.

DA NANG - "Upgrade your defenses" was the word, and the accomplishment of that mission has been a top priority job in the numerous camps and firebases of the 196th Infantry Brigade.

With the rapid approach of Tet '72, and the threat of enemy attacks in that time, the work has been given even higher priority.

Miles of barbed wire, thousands of sandbags, hundreds of bunkers and roar and grumble of bulldozers-these are the sights and sounds of the projects in the 196th.

The work is hard, dirty and back-breaking. Officers and NCOs inspect work; sometimes they order wire restrung, or bunker blast walls rebuilt. They remind the troops that the purpose is to keep Charlie out, or make his weapon ineffective-not to get a detail finished as soon as possible. The men grumble, but the job is redone.

That night, when the same men are standing guard or "racking out" behind the defenses they help build, they think back to the days and weeks of work; and in the quiet hours when unseen things move outside the perimeter, they are secretly glad of the extra effort.

So long as the Chargers hold responsibility for the defense of Da Nang, the threat of enemy attack exists, and the defense preparations go on.

Photo tour open through Da Nang

Photo Captions:

- TOP LEFT -** A Sampan chugs down the Song Han river past the busy Da Nang skyline.
- BOTTOM LEFT-** This market is supplied daily by local farmers who supply the city with everything from fresh vegetables to just-caught fish.
- TOP CENTER -** There are many modern buildings in Da Nang city. Rolls of concertina wire remind one of the city's violent history, though.
- BOTTOM CENTER-** Many different religions flourish in Da Nang - Catholicism, Buddhism, Cao Daism and others.
- TOP RIGHT -** GIs on the Da Nang camera tour make their first stop to photograph the Cao Dai temple. The intricate architecture make interesting photographic possibilities.
- BOTTOM RIGHT-** The eye superimposed on a globe is a symbol of Cao Daism, an indigenous Vietnamese religion less than 100 years old. The eye symbolizes universal knowledge.

(US ARMY PHOTOS BY SP4 STEVE BROOKS)

By SP4 Steve Brooks

DA NANG - I found the real Da Nang the other day. Oh, yes it's still there - the temples, the river, the rickshaws, even real cars and trucks on real streets.

Talking to my NCOIC into a day off, I took the USO camera tour of Da Nang. this tour gives most GIs their only chance to see this off limits city. We were supposed to leave at 10 a.m., but I guess in Vietnam everything's supposed to be an adventure, so a flat tire on the bus held us up for an hour.

When we finally got started, the driver began choosing his illogical route through the twisted maze of mud paths and cobbled streets that feed the city-past the tar paper shacks and the old French style mansions. There are some new homes along the way, tastefully decorated in modern oriental style.

First stop is a Cao Dai temple. Even with the cloudy monsoon skies, the grounds are afire with the colored flowers tended by bearded monks. We sat on the rain-wet steps to remove our boots before going inside. It is cool there, and the brass ornaments are dimly lit from window filtered sunlight.

After taking pictures in the semi-darkness, we loaded onto the bus again and headed towards the Song Han River, as usual dodging Hondas, dogs and kids every foot of the way.

One interesting stop was on the waterfront near the hospital ship Helgoland, from Hamburg, Germany. Looking closely, we could see some cute German nurses, and for my camera I found some colorful, rusty tramp freighters tied up nearby.

Just down the road a bit we came to the Select Club, where we had lunch. Eight-hundred piasters buys a lobster or chicken curry dinner with hot French bread, fresh salad, and a pleasant view of the river.

We were supposed to stop at a few other places after lunch. Our late start in the morning made it impossible for us to get into these places, so we wound through the streets for a while, took pictures through the windows, and returned to Freedom Hill about 2 p.m.

The whole tour was lightened by commentary from pretty USO tour guide Ginny Chen. "Why do cows have humps on their back, Ginny?"

"I don't know. why don't you ask one. GI?"

About 20 to 30 persons make each trip. The bus leaves Freedom Hill at 10 a.m. (usually) on ? Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Your best bet is to sign up in advance; a lot of people want to go.

Mouse trap catches tiger

By SGT Mike Cassidy

CAMP REASONER-Like all inventors, Specialist Four Wilbur Baucom (Little Rock, Ark.) had to struggle for acceptance. Baucom, it seems, had built a better mouse trap, but no one was too excited about it until the mouse turned out to be a 460-pound tiger.

Triggering devices for mechanical ambushes come in all shapes and sizes. Baucom, of Company B, 3d Bn., 21st Inf., had seen quite a few of them, but he thought he had a better idea which involved the use of a mouse-trap.

There was some discussion because some of the members of the 2d Platoon did not think the thing would work. Baucom still had faith in his invention, and he asked his first sergeant about putting the device out.

"Top's decision to put the device out ended the argument before night settled on the platoon. At 8 p.m., though, Baucom was not too sure about his invention.

"My first thought when the thing went off was that the guys were right, and that the [sic] it had gone off accidentally," Baucom recalled.

Immediately after the mechanical ambush exploded, the men on the perimeter opened fire on the area and down the hillside where they could hear something running away.

As is the practice, Baucom was chosen to examine the area, since he had put the device out, along with his squad leader, Sergeant Jack Guffey (Ft. Myers, Fla.)

With the aid of artillery illumination Baucom and Guffey examined the area of the blast. They found an animal leaning against a large rock.

"What is that thing-a cow?" exclaimed Guffey.

"Naw," countered Baucom, "look at the legs they're all furry."

"Yea, but look at the claws!"

It was not until dawn that the platoon discovered that the big, furry animal with the large claws was the female tiger.

The discovery explained a number of things. For several nights the men of the platoon had heard an unidentified growling outside the perimeter. The noise of something running away from the area of the blast was apparently the beast's mate moving out of the area as quickly as possible.

Though the tiger was not the enemy that the 2d Platoon was after, it did pose a very real threat when it got within 30 feet of the platoon's night defensive position.

"I guess she was hungry, but I sure wasn't going to give her anything to eat." Baucom concluded, "because I don't think she was planning on using a p-38 (a C-ration can opener) to get a meal."

With testing unit**He saves maintenance****By SP4 Ed Buckley**

CAMP FAULKNER - Using a little initiative, a few regulators, generators, and rectifiers, Staff Sergeant Joseph A. Decilles (Fullerton Calif.) solved one of the 1st Sqd., 1st Cav.'s most troublesome maintenance problems.

"We had quite a large deadline of vehicles- eight or nine tracks - due to faulty charging systems, and 63rd Maintenance was on our backs because many of the parts we sent them to be repaired were still in working condition," recalled Decilles. "So I suggested we test and rebuild the parts ourselves."

Although many others in the shop doubted it would be done, Decilles went ahead and within two weeks he built not one, but two complete charging systems- one for the M551 Sheridan and the other for the M113A1 Armored Personnel Carrier.

Decilles, a turret mechanic with the 1st Sqd., 1st Cav., explained that the charging system works much the same as generators in automobiles. It generates the electric current to operate the vehicle's electrical equipment and recharge the battery.

During the first four weeks they were used, the systems saved the Army over \$1500 in voltage regulators alone.

Decilles didn't stop there, however. He has also designed and built a portable testing unit for the M113A1's charging system.

This small unit enables mechanics to check out suspected faulty parts without resorting to taking them out of the vehicle.

The sergeant has also familiarized each of the unit's track mechanics with his test board and portable unit, enabling them to get to the problem without going through time-consuming maintenance channels.

"We used to have to wait a week or two for replacement parts," remarked Decilles. "Now we can test the parts and usually repair them in just a few days."

He explained that before his test board was set up, all defective parts were sent the Maintenance Company of the 196th Infantry Brigade's Support Battalion who forward many of the parts to the 63d Maintenance Battalion. He also mentioned that because problems related to the charging unit may occur once a month with an average track vehicle, far too much time was being lost in this round-about maintenance channel.

Decilles pointed out that his is not the first such charging system tester. "The Army has a unit that will do the same thing, but it takes a Philadelphia lawyer to run the damn thing."

"Their's cost about \$2,000 and is able to perform a few more less important functions such as testing lighting circuitry," observed the mechanic. "My portable unit wouldn't cost \$50 to build."

Photo caption: CHCKIKNG IT OUT - Staff Sergeant Joseph A. Decilles checks out the charging system in this M113AI Armored Personnel Carrier. Decilles designed and built the portable testing unit from spare parts he scraped together. (US ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 ED BUCKLEY)

Jones stands by his pig

By SP4 Steve Brooks

CAMP CRESCENZ - "My pig weighs 23 pounds and I carry more than 30 pounds of ammo for it, plus my complete field gear and ruck. But I'm gonna keep it until I DEROS."

His name is Specialist Four Roy Jones and he came from the mountains of West Virginia to the mountains of South Vietnam. In West Virginia he hunted with a rifle for food and sport. In Vietnam he hunts Charlie to stay alive, and to cover Da Nang.

To do this he carries and M-60 machinegun, 7.62mm.

Like all grunts, he calls it a pig.

He lives with it and sleeps with it. In his ruck he carries one poncho for himself and one for the pig. It took a while to get used to the weight and extra work, especially in the mountainous terrain patrolled by his unit, Company C, 1st Bn., 46th Inf.

The pig position is the most important spot in the night perimeter. When the platoon moves into its position, the pig is placed first, and everyone else moves to fit in.

As soon as the pig is placed for the night, the pig team lays out all of its ammo-more than a thousand rounds.

The belts are placed side by side, and gunner Jones knows he can link them up in complete darkness. Then the gun is re-oiled, and the gas cylinder cleaned. Complete disassembly is usually done only in a rear area solvent tank.

In the bush Jones carries a pig cleaning kit and lots of oil, and of course, a tooth brush. If the ammo gets wet and even a little rusty or stuff, the belts will not feed well, so Jones gets out his toothbrush and gun oil and cleans every round and every link in the belts.

Then he covers the pig with a poncho, and usually opens a can of C-rations in the few remaining moments of light!

In most units, a pig gunner stays on the gun until a flock of newbies enters the squad, when he starts breaking them in as ammo bearers and assistant gunners. After a while, one of them takes the pig, and the gunner moves on to another, lighter load.

Some gunners, though, grow to like the pig with all its strengths and problems. Jones wants to keep his pig as long as he's in Vietnam. "I feel safer with it. And, I like the challenge. No one else ever wants to carry the pig-too heavy, and too much work. So there's a challenge, and I took it up."

Why does he feel safer with it?

"Because the pig brings down more pee and scunion than anything else in the bush, and Charlie's afraid of it.

As long as Charlie's got his head down, me and my squad stay alive."

Photo Captions: READY FOR TROUBLE - Gunner Specialist Four Roy Jones loads his pig in the perimeter and gets ready for the long night in the bush. (US ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 STEVE BROOKS)

Graphic Art: "Some of the Things you are enabled to do by having United States Savings Bonds." Restore a 1948 Dodge.

drawing of a man working on an automobile.

Photo Caption: The Charger staff recently discovered Toni Rayward hiding among the sand pebbles of Australia, her smile ready to greet you GIs who made the scene there. (PHOTO COURTESY VINCENT H. HAYES)

12 Chargers teach English

By SP4 Bill Simpson

DA NANG - The words on this page are meaningless unless you understand the ideas they represent. The words "skyscraper" and "subway" mean something to you because you have experienced them, but would they mean anything if you were Vietnamese?

Not only would you never have experienced them but even picking them apart wouldn't help. The derivative "sub" means under in Latin, but Latin had no influence on this country's language-and how does one go about scraping the sky?

A dozen men from the 196th Infantry Brigade have been donating their evenings in helping Vietnamese students bridge that understanding gap.

Late each weekday afternoon, three of the volunteers board a jeep in front of the S-5 shop and head through the twisted, smoky streets of Da Nang enroute to the Civilian Personnel Office. Their mission is to aid the students in gaining a cultural understanding of American English, to make the words on the textbook pages more than just strange sounds with mysterious spellings.

As the three GIs are driving over, their students are already drilling through their English textbooks under the tutorship of Vietnamese university instructors. First they pronounce vocabulary words, then the sentence drill such as "Many Americans live in brick houses," Many Americans live in wooden houses," or question-answer oral drills. "How are you today?" "Fine, thank you."

Each student attends class five nights a week on his own accord, and for most this follows a full day of work or school or both. Among them are rice framers, tradesmen, active members of the South Vietnamese Army and high school students.

According to Captain Thomas Janke (Sarasota, Fla.), 196th Brigade assistant S-5 and office-in-charge of the American participation in the school, all are very serious students.

For the high schoolers, mastering their third language besides Vietnamese and French can mean acceptance to a university in Saigon, the ARVN personnel may be trying to qualify for duty as an interpreter, and the tradesmen and farmers have found that English is more commonly used in the market place than the French which used to predominate.

They practice on and on for an hour, recite, compose their own sentences, maybe learn a few American phrases which are in common use. It's all from the textbook and it's a very structured classroom situation, with the teacher lecturing and calling on the class for responses. It's in this hour that they learn correct structure, and, through a lot of practice, correct pronunciation.

After the first 60 minutes the Vietnamese instructor leaves the class to be replaced by one of the GIs. He goes over all the exercises his students have been assigned for the night, carefully picking out the words that the majority of the students have trouble pronouncing. For the advanced students who have trouble keeping quiet when others are reciting, perhaps an extra word or two to pronounce.

"They're all getting the sounds down now," says Specialist Four Frank Caliendo (Peekskill, N.Y.), one of the volunteer GI instructors. "The, th, s and ch sounds were the hardest for them to learn because there are no sounds like that in the Vietnamese language. It takes a sort of re-orientation of the mouth." After quickly running through the exercises, the GI teacher usually has a few minutes left to guide the class as he wants. It may turn into a question and answer session about why the U.S. Army has such large pockets on its uniforms or perhaps the teacher will explain the fundamentals of baseball. Sometimes the tables are turned and the students give the teacher a short course in Vietnamese.

Last week one class go additional pronunciation work and examples of end pronunciation via a "Sad Sack" comic book. This week a class had their vocabulary expanded to include words like elephant, seal, glaciers and Antarctic thanks to National Geographic magazine.

Liaison team aids patients

By SP4 Sam Rousso

DA NANG - On the other side of Da Nang, far from the vast majority of men of the 196th Infantry Brigade, two men do an important, possibly vital, job in virtual obscurity.

Staff Sergeant Clinton Gorai (Honolulu, Hawaii) and Sergeant Kenneth Goode (Griffithsville, W.Va.) are the 196th's liaison team at the 95th Evacuation Hospital.

"Our working hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily", says Gorai. "But we are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

Duties for the team are many. They include arranging home calls for the patients and arranging transportation for patients back to their units after discharge from the hospital.

"We have guys who get discharged from the hospital and come in here to get a ride back. We call their units for them, but sometimes we can't get through. Either that, or the units just don't respond. In any case, we have people stranded," said Goode.

The two NCOs try to provide rides to Freedom Hill, Gorai added. "I think the brigade should have two or more bus runs out here every day, with the last one leaving here at about 4:00 p.m. It certainly would make things a little easier."

Other responsibilities of Gorai and Goode include making rounds of 196th patients at the hospital twice daily. If there is anything patients need to have done-drawing money from the patient's trust fund for PX purchases, procuring stationary and cigarettes and helping with financial problems. Rounds take an hour to an hour-and-a-half at the minimum to complete.

When they aren't making rounds, the NCOs give the people of the 95th a hand where ever they're needed-even holding down drug abusers when they are "coming down." Most of the time they're needed to carry in litter patients brought in by helicopter.

When a man is brought in from the 196th, Gorai and Goode first must determine the men's unit and whether his injury was a result of hostile or non-hostile causes. They then forward this information to Brigade Casualty Branch.

Gorai, of 196th Admin. Co. (Prov), and Goode of HHC, are billeted at the 95th evac. "We, get everything we need here," Gorai said.

"At the hospital," says Goode, "there are always new things to do..we are always kept busy by a new problem."

How do the men feel about their jobs? "We have to be a lot more responsible than we would otherwise," says Gorai. We have to maintain our appearance. We take the responsibility ourselves because we are part of the 196th, but we are on our own here.

196th Band plays tunes for grunts

CAMP CRESCENZ - Bush weary grunts here now trudge from the slicks to the showers to the beat of "The Saints Go Marching In" and other rhythms played by the 196th Infantry Brigade Band.

The idea came from Lieutenant Colonel Clyde J. Tate, former commander of the 1st Bn., 46th Inf., and was carried on by his successor, Lieutenant Colonel Andrew D. Perkins.

Major George D. Lenhart, battalion executive officer, commented, "We do it to show that we care, and we'll keep on doing it. We like music!"

It's a novelty to the grunts ducking under the rotor blades and heading for showers and clean clothes. Specialist Four Van Hall of Company C asked, "They're playing for us? You're kidding-I thought they were here to practice or something."

The "Professionals" are the first until to request the band to welcome incoming grunts, but bandmaster Chief Warrant Officer Brian Arnold says the band is available to other brigade units.

Photo Caption: SALUTING THE INFANTRY - Grunts of the 1st Bn., 46th Inf. are treated to a serenade by the 196th Infantry Brigade Band as they come in from the bush for a refit and retrain. (US ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 STEVE BROOKS)

Col. Arter is deputy CO

CAMP CHARGER- Colonel Robert Arter has taken over as Deputy Commander of the 196th Infantry Brigade., replacing Colonel Warner S. Goodwin, Jr.

Goodwin, former commanding officer of the 11th Light Infantry brigade, will be going to Washington to work in the Pentagon.

Arter, who took over his new position Feb. 1, comes to Da Nang from Phu Bai where he was commanding officer of the 1st Bde., 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile).

The 42-year-old Arter, from Massillon, Ohio, is a 1950 graduate of Ohio University and holds a Bachelor of Science Degree.

In his more than 21 years in the service, Arter has served in Korea, Japan, Denmark and Vietnam. He is presently on his second tour in Vietnam.

1st Bn, 46th Inf**Civil affairs work moves on**

By SP4 David Rea

CAMP PERDUE - With just a tape recorder, a loud speaker and a three-quarter-ton truck, Sergeant First Class John Forsythe, the S-5 (civil affairs) of the 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., has deprived the enemy of many potential weapons.

Forsythe is working on the Volunteer Informant Program (VIP) in the 196th infantry Brigade tactical area of interest. The program enlists the aid of the Vietnamese people in eliminating ammunition, explosives and weapons before the enemy can use them.

"We tape a plea to the people to assist us," Forsythe explained. "Then we travel around broadcasting, mingling with the people and wait for results."

During a recent six-day period, the "Legionnaire" team collected two 500-pound bombs; 27, 105mm rounds, eight 60mm rounds; a Romanian Ak-47 rifle with magazines and ammunition; 15, 40mm rounds, a B-40 rocket, four Claymore mines and 14 fragmentation grenades.

The success of the VIP team also has been recognized in other quarters.

"When we started out, the team consisted of two Americans (Specialist Four Russell) Reis and myself, and my four S-5 interpreters," recalled the sergeant.

"Then we received an intelligence report that they (the enemy) were laying an ambush for us."

Since that report a security force from the "Legionnaire" reconnaissance platoon, along with an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) team has accompanied the VIP team.

"So far I've been very pleased with the results (of the program)," commented Forsythe, but he still has another goal.

"My ultimate goal is to get a 122mm rocket," he stated. "That would be a first for this type of program in the brigade."