



~~Rear Security~~

25th Div LRRP - Co F, 50th Inf (LRP) - Co F, 75th Inf Ranger

LRRP
LRP
Ranger

GREETINGS

This issue of Rear Security was more hastily put together than the last. Please excuse me. One of the reasons for the haste is that we wanted to make sure everyone was aware of the reunion in July and had a chance to make arrangements if they wanted to attend.

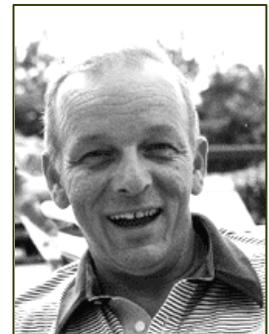
Regarding the reunion, in this issue you will find stuff on what the reunions are like, the forms needed for you to sign up for the reunion, a list of the general activities planned, etc. Remember, the dates are July 5 to July 9, 2000 in Savannah, GA.

After the last issue, a number of you contacted me regarding health problems we seem to be having that are related to our days in Nam. Dave Riddell got in touch with me regarding agent orange and diabetes. He had a lot of info and we decided it was time to publish it. Later, the national news broke on the tie between the two. Dan Nate is going through a scary time with Hepatitis C. And I have lost count of the number of you that have mentioned the fact that you are being treated for back problems related to Nam. I decided that in these issues we should start sharing some of this information. If you have health issues that you feel should be shared, get in touch with me please.

Regarding the photo below, these are four of the guys you will probably see in Savannah. Rick Ellison, Sam Wright, Dutch Lane and Richard Dunn got together this spring after finding each other this past winter. Dutch tells me that a this was a very enjoyable get-together.

The small photos below are a few of the other faces you probably will see at the reunion if you attend. Dick Ewald, Fred Stuckey and Marshall Huckaby to name just a few.

Bill MacIsaac



Co F Roster

I thought it might be time to update everyone on the status of our roster. We have 757 names on the roster. Of those 757:

- 39 were KIA in Vietnam
- 20 have died since Vietnam
- 368 we have found and have active addresses on
- 330 we still have not found.

Of those we have not yet found, we only have last names for 85 of the guys. Generally, we got these names from After Action Reports at the National Archives. The AAR simply listed "SP4 Durbin" or "SGT Franklin".

If you would like to have copy of the roster and have Email, let me know and I will email a copy to you in Word format. If you would like a printed copy, send me a self-addressed, stamped envelope (2 stamps) and I will mail you a copy. (It is 11 pages.)

Many thanks to Harvey Lameman. He found orders that had about 20 names that we did not have on the roster and had full names for about another 20 where we only had last names.

Dutch Lane, Rick Ellison and crew have been digging up not only names, but, have located about another 6 guys in the past 3 months.

Lastly, Mike Reiley dropped in on the home page. Mike was with the 3rd Brigade LRRPs. He knew the guys on team 3A (the Lost Team) and has been coming up with names that we don't have on the roster.

Email Addresses

For those of you who have a computer and can send or get email, we have a number of guys who are on line. I have a list of over 130 names and addresses. If you want a copy of the list, Email me at "LRRP6@ix.netcom.com" and let me know you want a copy of the list. I will email it to back to you.

Some of the addresses may be out of date (as are some of the snail mail addresses. Please, if you change your address, phone number or Email address, let me know. It's the only way I can keep the roster up to date.

Thanks.

In Memory

Since the last newsletter, we found out that two of our members have died.

Bill Patterson (1967 to Feb, 1968) died February 27, 1999 from cancer.

Jim Falstrom (1969 to 1971) died in January, 1984. His nephew, Brandon Ross, contacted us and asked for information on Jim's time in Nam. He is trying to fill in some gaps for his grandmother (Jim's mother). If any of you knew him or have any pictures of Jim and would like to help, you can contact Brandon at 3830 Cheyene, Grandville MI., 49418.

We pray that Bill and Jim have found the peace they fought for and deserve.

Also, we are trying to locate photos for the KIA's that we do not have photos of. The guys for whom we do not have photos are:

Ervin Laird - KIA 1 Feb 67
Larry P Blackman - KIA 17 Feb 67
Carl Flower - KIA 31 May 67
Morrison Pickett - KIA 30 Jan 68
Todd Jackson - KIA 30 Jan 68
Gregory Kelly - KIA 6 Apr 68
Hubert Meredith - KIA 1 Aug 68
Steven Collier - KIA 27 Oct 68
Reid Grayson - KIA 28 Dec 68
Raymond Sullivan - KIA 24 Jan 69
Frank Wilder - KIA 1 Mar 69
John Baughman - KIA 16 Apr 69
Lennis Jones - KIA 6 Nov 69
Richard Babb - KIA 1 Jan 70
Donald Tinney - KIA 14 Apr 70
Robert Thompson - KIA 12 May 70
Milan Lee - KIA 19 Sep 70

If you have a photo of one of these heroes, please have a copy made, scan it into a computer readable format, etc and get it to Bill Mrkvicka; 26 Pinewood Knoll; Rochester, NY 14624 (email - LRRP6@ix.netcom.com)

Agent Orange / Diabetes

Here's something that makes me worry. An Air Force report was leaked to the New York Times on Tuesday, March 28, establishing clear cut evidence linking Agent Orange to Adult Onset Diabetes or Type 2 Diabetes.

Apparently, the study concerned 1,000 Air Force veterans involved in aerial spraying operations known as Operation Ranch Hand. Astoundingly, there were 47% more diabetes cases among this exposed group than a control group of a similar number who also served in the war, but who had no contact with Agent Orange. A separate letter from Air Force surgeon general, Lt. Gen. Paul K. Carlton, confirmed the "association" of the herbicide with the debilitating disease.

I don't know how the rest of you feel about this, but I'm upset. I've struggled to control the progressive nature of this disease for ten years. It has affected the quality of my life at home and my performance at work. It has been expensive to treat and caused me to take risks with drugs like Rezulin, the recently discredited "miricale" drug which caused sudden liver failure in some users.

Now, I learn that there is "particularly strong evidence" tying the defoliant to diabetes. My diabetes? How about yours? If six percent of Americans (15.7 million) have diabetes, what percent do we LRRPs and RANGERS from Co. F have? I'm curious.

In good faith, we did our job, pursuing the enemy, working the Saigon and Vam Co Dong Rivers; moving, hiding and attacking the enemy in the Ho Bo and Boi Loi Woods always in the presence of this chemical defoliant. Like you, I'm not a shirker or complainer; but I tell you gentlemen, this has made me mad as hell.

I would urge everyone to get a blood test. Most adult onset diabetes goes undiagnosed.

Check out this website for diabetes/agent orange information. Firebase Hope [HTTP://embark.to/firebasehope](http://embark.to/firebasehope).

Dave Riddell

Co F, July 68 to July 69

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Shortly after Dave sent me this article and information, Cecil Hamm sent me an article he found:

By David Brown
Washington Post Staff Writer
Wednesday, March 29, 2000 ; A14

"The Air Force has found a "significant and potentially meaningful" relationship between diabetes and bloodstream levels of the chemical dioxin in its ongoing study of people who worked with the defoliant Agent Orange during the Vietnam War, according to a new report.

Servicemen with high dioxin levels were more likely to develop diabetes than were those with low levels, and people with the highest levels developed the disease most rapidly, according to the report.

The findings raise the possibility that diabetes may join eight other diseases officially said to be linked to Agent Orange, a dioxin-containing herbicide used widely during the war. That, in turn, would permit tens of thousands of Vietnam veterans to apply for compensation from the federal government.

The new findings are contained in a report sent to Rep. Christopher Shays (R-Conn.), chairman of the subcommittee on national security, veterans affairs and international relations of the House Committee on Government Reform. It was obtained by The Post from a government source.

For the sake of compensation, all Vietnam veterans are assumed to have had Agent Orange exposure, and do not need to prove they were in contact with the chemical to qualify for benefits. Although most diseases "presumptively" linked to Agent Orange are rare ones, the list includes lung and prostate cancer, the two most common cancers in men. Even so, fewer than 11,000 veterans receive benefits under the program.

After the Department of Veterans Affairs makes recommendations, the president decides which diseases to add to the list. The department gets advice from the National Academy of Sciences.

The data in the Air Force report come from a study that since 1982 has followed about 1,000 former servicemen who serviced or flew aircraft carrying Agent Orange. Their health is compared to a similar number of airmen who served in Vietnam, but had no defoliant exposure.

The data do not prove dioxin causes diabetes, only that there appears to be a correlation between its level in the blood and the disease. There could be non-causal reasons for the association.

For example, obesity increases a person's risk of developing adult-onset diabetes. Dioxin is stored in fat tissue. It's possible that people with diabetes are more likely to have higher levels of dioxin in their blood simply because their bodies get rid of the chemical more slowly.

Rep. Bernard Sanders (I-Vt.), however, said last night he believes the evidence is strong enough to add diabetes to the list.

"What we should appreciate is that this is not some abstract academic exercise," he said. "This is real life, where people who put their lives on the line to defend this country are suffering and dying. It is absolutely immoral to continue to turn our backs on those people."

LRRP / Ranger Veteran Organizations

"25th Division LRRP" / "Co F, 50th Infantry (LRP)" / "Co F, 75th Ranger" (From now on, I am going to save paper and refer to this group as "Co. F"). 75th Ranger Regiment Association - US Army Ranger Association. ????? What the hell are all these organizations? Which one should I join?

These are a few of the questions I have gotten over the last few months as we have been locating more and more guys from our group. Here's an attempt to define these three groups.

This newsletter is from the Co F group.

In 1966, the 25th Division formed a LRRP company. (Actually two - one in Cu Chi and one in the 3rd Brigade in Tay Ninh.). In 1967 the 3rd Brigade LRRPs were shipped to the 4th Division with the rest of the Brigade and in January of 1968, the Army re-named the other 25th Div LRRP's as "Co F, 50th Infantry (LRP)". Then, in a bold move to win the war in March 1969, the Army again renamed the unit as Co F, 75th Ranger. Same guys, same missions, same reporting structure.

In 1990, a few of us started an informal group of vets. This group consists of guys from Co F. This organization is informal. The only membership requirement is that you served with Co. F for one day. Doesn't matter if you were in supply, a cook, in the field, in commo, or even the CO - you're one of us. There are no membership dues.

The 75th Ranger Regiment Association was formed in the 1980's as an organization for all LRRP/LRP/Rangers, from all Divisions, who served in Vietnam. Again, you had to serve in one of these units for a day in Viet Nam. The 75th Assoc. is a formal organization. There are yearly dues if you want to belong. There are 4 officers who are elected by the members and do the day to day work. The organization is run by "Unit Directors". (Think of "Unit Directors" as the Association's Board of Directors). Each of the 15 Vietnam companies names one person as their representative and Unit Director. Tom Cahill is our representative. Later, the Ranger vets from the Panama Campaign, the Grenada campaign and the Somalia campaign were invited to join. Lastly, the active duty Rangers were invited to become members and now have a Unit Director from each active duty brigade.

Because the 75th Assoc helped us in Co F get started, and they had a newsletter and a reunion (both being of tremendous value to each of us), we immediately chose to become associated with them and have done so since 1990. We encourage you to join this group.

The US Army Ranger Association is another association of Ranger Veterans. They asked us to join them. However, we

discovered one big problem - unless you graduated from Ranger school, you couldn't join. Since well over half of the Co F vets are NOT graduates of the Ranger school, we felt our efforts would be best put toward getting all of us back together. We chose not to associate ourselves with them.

Hopefully this helped clear up some of the issues about the various groups. You are free to join any or all of them. The main thing is to get back in touch with your old buddies using any vehicle that gets the job done.

Recondo School

Steve Sherman who was in another Division's LRRP/Ranger Unit is putting together a book about Recondo School. In it he is planning to produce a complete roster of graduates by class. He intends to publish the book later this summer.

He has a complete listing of all graduating classes except for those with Recondo numbers 172 to 521. If any of you were in one of those classes and have a copy of your graduating orders, Steve would appreciate a copy so he can finish the roster. You could either mail a copy to Bill Mrkvicka or directly to Steve. Steve's address:

Steve Sherman
2314 Chesire Lane
Houston, TX 77018
(Phone 713-683-9076)



Anyone know who these three guys are? The faces are all familiar to me, but, I can't put names on any of the three. They were all in the company in 1968/1969.