

1ST BATTALION (MECHANIZED) 50TH INFANTRY

" ON THE RIGHT TRACK "

VOLUME NUMBER 3 -- DATED 10 DECEMBER, 1999 -- ISSUE NUMBER 08

FROM THE
COMMAND TRACK...

I realize this newsletter follows by only a few weeks my previous newsletter.

I need to say this: First and foremost, some of my happiest moments in the past three years have been when I find another member of the battalion and can convince him to join our elite group. It pleases me greatly to hear from a "long lost" member of the battalion after all these years. ~~Let's face it: we had a bond back then~~ (whether you want to admit it or not, it existed) and after all these years it feels good to speak to another guy from our unit. Although there are so many of you out there I did not know then; I feel as if we knew each other, no matter what!

I learned a real hard lesson this week. REAL HARD! I just want to say this, and as they said back in those days: Listen up!

If you care for someone, please let them know! If you have been thinking of someone, give them a call! If you have been wondering what that special friend, relative, loved one has been doing, ask, find out, talk to them, tell them you care! We all think that tomorrow will come, but let me tell you one thing, not one of us is guaranteed that next day! I know! Don't wait another day, or another hour, or another minute. If you truly care for someone, call them now!

On Thursday, 09 December, 1999: I had one of the most hated phone calls I ever want to receive. It was from Sandy Pottinger's wife, Sandra. Sandy was our president last year of the Association, and he did all the mailing labels for the Association. Norman "Sandy" Pottinger was with Bravo Company from November of 1968 until November of 1969.

Sandy passed away on Wednesday, 08 December 1999 in the early evening. His wife informed me he just stopped breathing and that quick, a great man, a good husband I am sure, a true friend of mine, was gone! Please say a prayer with me for Sandy, his wife Sandra, and family; and all those who were affected by his presence. I would also like those who knew him (and those who did not) to please drop Sandy's wife a card, or a call to wish your deepest sympathy. I have included her address below, with phone number; in hopes that she does not mind me releasing that information. Please,... if you can, call or write her a short note of condolences.

Mrs. Norman "Sandy" Pottinger
209 Bascomb Springs Court
Woodstock GA 30189
(770) 592-0731

On the next page, I am repeating a poem that I reproduced in an earlier newsletter. It is fitting, I believe.

JUST A SIMPLE SOLDIER
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He was gettin old and Paunchy and his hair was falling fast,
And he sat around the office, telling stories of the past.
Of a war that he had fought in and the deeds that he had done,
In his exploits with his buddies, they were heros, everyone.

And 'thou' sometimes to his neighbors, his tales became a joke,
All his buddies listened well for they knew of where he spoke.
But we'll hear his tales no longer, for old Sandy has passed away,
And the world's a little poorer, for a soldier died today.

No he won't be mourned by many, just his children and his wife,
For he lived a very ordinary, very quiet sort of life.
He held a job and raised a family, quietly going on his way,
And the world won't note his passing; 'tho' a soldier died today.

When politicians leave this earth, their bodies lie in state,
While thousands note their passing and proclaim that they were great.
Papers tell of their life stories, from the time that they were young,
But the passing of a soldier, goes unnoticed, and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution to the welfare of our land,
Some jerk who breaks his promise, and cons his fellow man?
Or the ordinary fellow, who in times of war and strife,
Goes off to serve his country, and offers up his life?

The politicians stipend and the style in which he lives,
Are sometimes disproportionate to the services that he gives.
While the ordinary soldier, who offered up his all,
Is paid off with a medal, and perhaps a pension too small.

It is so easy to forget them, because it was so long ago,
That our Sandy's and Jim's and Johnny's went to battle, but we know.
It was not the politicians with their compromise and their ploys,
Who won for us the freedom that our country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger with your enemies at hand,
Would you really want some cop-out, with his ever waffling stand?
Or would you want that lonely soldier who was sworn to defend:
His home, his kin, his country, and would fight until the end?

Sandy was just a common soldier and his ranks are growing thin,
But his presence should remind us, we may need his like again.
For when countries are in conflict, then we find the soldier's part,
Is to clean up all the troubles that the politicians start.

If we cannot do him honor, while he's here to hear the praise,
Then at least let's give him homage at the ending of his days.
Perhaps just a simple headline in the paper that might say:

"OUR COUNTRY IS IN MOURNING, FOR A SOLDIER DIED TODAY!"