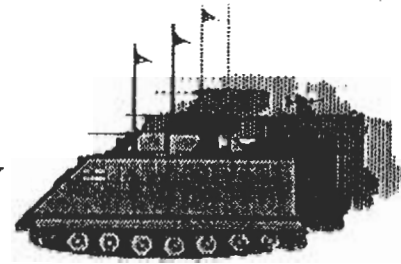


1ST BATTALION (MECHANIZED) 50TH INFANTRY

" ON THE RIGHT TRACK "



VOLUME NUMBER 2 -- DATED 31 OCTOBER 1998 -- ISSUE NUMBER 06

FROM THE
COMMAND TRACK...



I have always been proud to have been a soldier with the 1/50th Mechanized Infantry. From the time in 1967 when I first arrived at Fort Hood, I knew there was something special about the unit I had joined. I also knew that in that element of comraderie my army buddies would cover my backside if for no other reason than the simple fact we wore our crest proudly. It was an unspoken respect for each other because we had all done something that few men had ... went to Vietnam as a complete battalion, to fight the aggressor.

Now that we are thirty years from Vietnam, many of us try to hold it together not only in our own lives, but in the realm of maintaining our pride and our self respect as soldiers who once did awesome things together. But, as the years go by, it is hard to remember we were some of America's best. We had a common cause then, ... we can surely work to have a common cause now. Through the Association, I hope we can all make peace with our past. I welcome letters, e-mails or phone calls.

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Starting in this issue I will be biassing every person, but I will start with the beginning of the alphabet and work down the list: so ... Tom Zamzow, you are gonna have to wait a while for yours. Some of you will be repeated here. This was recommended to me by one of our fellow members, and I think it is a good idea. This way no one is forgotten. If you have not already sent in your bio, please do so now, so I can include it with all the battalion members. If yours has upgraded since you send your last one in, please send me a revised copy: Such as any-one that just got married, moved, changed occupations, anything to that nature. Let's let everyone out there know what has been going on in our lives. The following pages will be filled each issue with news about our members.

If you do not wish to be included in the bio column, please send me a note to that effect and I will honor your wishes. Otherwise, look for your information when we get to the first letter of your last name. Be patient, since I have found over 226 fellow soldiers now. Some are not members of the association yet, but I will include what information I have about them in the bio section anyway. Maybe, one of you will recognize the person as a long lost friend and can call him and get him interested enough to join. Enough said! On with the show.

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Where Friends Meet

* * * * *
THE BIO PAGE
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Allen, Michael Paul: Currently lives in Washington State. He was on track 134, which would make him a member of Alpha Company, third squad, fourth platoon. He also served with the 1/7th Cav sometime in 1967 or 1968. He forwarded pictures of himself to me and they are in the Reunion Book.

Allmendinger, Herman: Herman was with HHC during the period, 1/25/69 to 1/24/70. After 22 Years in the Army, he retired on 30 April, 1974. He now is more or less self employed, raising beef cattle with his wife in Stillwater Oklahoma.

Aylmer, Paul: Is a current resident of Philadelphia PA. Paul was with Bravo Company and came across on the boat, the USS John Pope with us. Queen was his driver. Paul has been married for 28 years and has three children. He works in the food business in Philadelphia as a sales manager.

Arzate, Arthur: Lives in California.

Ashlock, Larry: Came to Delta Company from Headquarters Company. He was an original, by that I mean he came across the Pacific with the main battalion. Larry now works with the VA Hospital in Florida and lives along the west coast of Florida. He is still married and has two boys. Harley Hawkins was his APC driver. Larry was one of the five people who tried to get a reunion together in 1986.

Bargy, Dexter: Dex came to us with Bravo Company in November of 1969 and left country in November of 1970. He is married and resides in California with his wife, Margot.

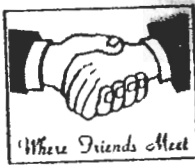
Barrios, Ray: Also was an original boat person and arrived in Qui Nhon with the rest of us. Ray was with Alpha Company when they met their fate in the Crescent Valley that fateful day in May of 1968. He currently lives in California with his lovely wife, Debi.

Barton, Walt: Lives in the New England States now and was with Alpha Company from August of 1968 to August of 1969. Prior to that he served in Vietnam with 4/60th Artillery from January 1968 until he was transferred to Alpha Company.

Belzer, Mark: Living in Illinois, Mark is married and has two children. He arrived with Alpha Company in March of 1970 and served in the Phan Thiet area of South Vietnam, and with the 4th Infantry.

Bergin, Tom: Lives in the great, glorious state of Pennsylvania. He came along with us by USS Pope and arrived in the country with Headquarters Company. Somewhere along the line, he got involved with Delta Company and was wounded in December of 1967 at the Battle of Tam Quan.

Berry, Gerald L: He came to Alpha Company in May of 1968 with the fourth platoon. He left country in June of 1969. He lives in Indiana right now, and has eight (8) children, almost a squad of his own. He owns his own Facility Maintenance Company.



* * * * *
THE BIO PAGE
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Bertholf, Cheney L Jr: Is retired, living in Florida. He was our battalion commander from February 1968 to August 1968. Many soldiers knew him as the "Silver Fox." After many years of devoted service, he retired from the service as an LTC. Cheney has two married sons. Once Cheney left the service, he settled in Florida with his wife, who just recently passed away. God be with you and her, Cheney!

Billups, Walter C: Was with Bravo Company during October of 1967 to September of 1968. His driver was Carl Pollock, APC # 213. Walter arrived with the 1/50th Infantry after completing "basic" with 1/41st Infantry at Fort Hood Texas. He now lives in Missouri with his wife.

Bloom, Gerald L: Gerald was assigned to Bravo Company in October of 1968 and left the country one year latter. He is married and has three children and resides in Illinois. Gerald works for Caterpillar Inc and has been there over 25 years. In his spare time, he officiates at high school football games.

Bloomquist, Harry: Harry also came over on the boat (or is that ship?) from Fort Hood and was the driver of 143. He served time with Headquarters Company and Delta Company upon arrival in country. Harry and his wife, Susan, live in the Pittsburgh PA area. Married over 31 years, they have two children, both sons, and Harry states he likes boating and his riverfront cottage.

Bordwell, Donald D: Don came into country with the battalion and took up occupancy with Alpha Company. He was on APC # 122 and believes Wayne Wright was his driver. After leaving the country in April of 1968, Don returned to Iowa, where he now resides with his wife, Vickie.

Bradley, Kenneth P: Currently lives in Georgia, but began his time with the battalion in August of 1968, assigned to Charlie Company. Ken left country in July of 1969 and was assigned to Fort Dix until his release. He is married and has two sons. Ken is very active in the local veterans groups in his area. Ken works for a local power company.

Brannon, Harold: Harold was with Bravo Company and arrived in country by USS John Pope. He was second platoon track driver. Harold is now a plant manager and lives in Alabama.

Braun, Bruce A: Bruce arrived in country along with the rest of the battalion and was Delta Company Commander. Bruce continued his military career, retiring in November of 1991 at the rank of Colonel. He is presently Director of the Division of Military Science and Technology and resides in Virginia with his wife, Edith. The couple have four children.

Brennan, William E: Bill was with S-4, Headquarters Company and arrived in country to greet all our smiling faces. Prior to assignment with 1/50th Infantry, Bill was with the 3rd Squadron 4th Cavalry in Chu Chi. Bill helped with the loading and shipping of our equipment to Vietnam aboard the SS Lena Luckenbaugh. He says he was unloading the ship for two days when he saw another liberty ship arrive off the coast. Guess what? That was us. He left country in August of 1968, ending up living in Illinois

1ST BATTALION (M) 50TH INFANTRY

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NEWS FROM THE GUYS
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Heard from several guys over the past few months.

A little late to add to the June newsletter which went out in mid-June, however; I understand Tim Culbertson put together a mini-reunion in June and at least ten of our guys showed up for it. Glad to see the comraderie there gang. Let's do it more often!

Also, Some of the guys got together for a little gathering in Tennessee during July. Hear the group had a great time. Wanted to go to both, but family obligations, such as Birthday Parties and a VFW State Convention got in the way. Next time! Carl you done a great job there with the reunion. More on that later.

For those of you who don't know ... Dick Guthrie, Brian Thomas, and Toby Milroy ventured back to Vietnam in August of 1998. I received several communiques from Brian's wife, Sue. They found LZ Uplift and our original LZ Ichiban! They also ventured to the Battle of Tam Quan which was during the month of December 1967. All returned safely home this time, also! WELCOME HOME, AGAIN ... BROTHERS! More later!

OHHH, By the WAY! Mike Horvath ... "HAPPY 51ST BIRTHDAY!" This is a bit late since his birthday was on the 16th of August, but better late than never, right MIKE?

(I also understand you will soon be a gramps ... heh heh, welcome to the club, Mike!)

Received e-mail from a fellow who was in our unit after it came back from Nam. S Sgt Glen O'Brian says he has two other friends in his area in the same unit. We hope Glen and his friends will join the association and hope to see them at the reunion in KC.

Got a fellow who just joined recently. Goes by the name Ray Sarlin. Ahh, he is one of our long distance members. you see, Ray resides in Australia, but hopes to get to the reunion this coming year. Good Day, Mate!!

Just got an application this week from Thurman Pike of Bravo Company. He has joined the Association and we welcome him into our home.

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FOR ANYONE THAT IS "ON-LINE", WE NOW HAVE A "HOME PAGE".

Please take the time to check it out every so often. The address for this new service to the Ichaban troopers is:

<http://web2.airmail.net/npoage/1st50th>

Drop in on the site and send Norm and myself a note to let us know you were there. Our e-mail addresses are listed on the page. Send any suggestion or comments you may have on how we can improve this service. Norm welcomes any pictures you wish to have included on the page. Send them to Norm Poage in Dallas, TX. His address is in the directory.

Even a stopped clock is right twice a day.



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FROM THE OTHER SIDE
* * * * *

I received over 20 copies of this letter since March 1998. Since it is passing around the Internet with lightning speed, I am reprinting it here in its entirety. I think the author of it is Patrick Camunes.

"There are so many things that are written about the "WALL" but never anything on being on the other side. I was inspired by the picture 'Reflections' that I use as wallpaper on my PC and a recent story called, 'Autumn Wall'."

"At first, there was no place for us to go until someone put up that Black Granite Wall. Now, every day and every night, my Brothers and Sisters wait to see the many people from places afar file in front of this wall. Many stop briefly, and many stay for hours; some come on a regular basis. It was hard at first, not that it has gotten easier, but it seems that many of the attitudes towards that war that we were involved in have changed. I can only pray that the ones on the other side learned something and more walls as this one need not be built."

"Several members of my unit and many that I did not recognize have called me to the WALL by touching my name that is engraved upon it. The tears are not necessary but are hard even for me to hold back. Don't feel guilty for not being with me, my brothers. This was my destiny as it is yours, to be on that side of the WALL."

"Touch the WALL, my Brothers, so that we can share in the memories that we had. I have learned to put the bad memories aside and only remember the pleasant times that we had together. Tell our other Brothers out there to come and visit me; not to say good bye, but to say Hello and be together again, even for a short time and to ease the pain of loss that we all share."

"Today, an irresistible and loving call comes from the WALL. As I approach, I can see an elderly lady and as I get closer, I recognize here. It's Mamma! As much as I have looked forward to this day, I have also regretted it because I didn't know what reaction I would have."

"Next to her, I suddenly see my wife and immediately think how hard it must have been for her to come to this place and my mind floods with the pleasant memories of thirty years ago. There is a young man in a military uniform standing with his arm around her ... My God! ... it is ... it has to be my son. Look at him trying to be the man without a tear in his eye. I yearn to tell him how proud I am, seeing him standing tall, straight and proud in his uniform."

"Mamma comes closer and touches the WALL and I feel the soft gentle touch I had not felt in so many years. Dad has crossed to this side of the WALL and through our touch, I try to convey to her that Dad is doing fine and is no longer suffering or feeling the pain. I see my wife's courage building as she sees Mamma touch the WALL and she approaches and lays her hand on my waiting hand. All the emotions, feelings and memories of three decades flash past between our touch and I tell her it is alright. Carry on and do not worry about me ... I can see as I look into her eyes that she hears and understands me and a big burden has been lifted from her."



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FROM THE OTHER SIDE (CONTINUED)

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"I watch as they lay flowers and other memories of my past. My lucky charm that was taken from me and sent to her by my Company Commander, a tattered and worn teddy bear that I can barely remember having as I grew up as a child and several medals that I had earned and were presented to my wife. One of them is the Combat Infantry Badge, which I am very proud of, and I notice my son is also wearing that medal. I earned mine in the jungles of Vietnam and he probably earned his in the deserts of Iraq."

"I can tell that they are preparing to leave and I try to take a mental picture of them together, because I do not know if I will ever see them again. I would not blame them if they do not return and can only thank them that I was not forgotten. My wife and Mamma near the WALL for one final touch as so many years of indecision, fear and sorrow are let go. As they turn to leave, I feel my tears, that have not flowed so many years, form as dew drops on the other side of the WALL."

"They slowly move away with only a glance over their shoulder. My son suddenly stops and slowly returns. He stands straight and proud in front of me and snaps a salute. Something makes him move to the WALL and he puts his hand upon the WALL and touches my tears that formed on the face of the WALL and I can tell that he senses my presence there and the pride and the love that I have for him. He falls to his knees and the tears flow from his eyes and I try my best to reassure him that it is alright and the tears do not make him any less of a man."

"As he moves back wiping the tears from his eyes, He silently mouths, God Bless you Dad ... I return the greeting, God Bless you Son ... We WILL meet someday, but in the meanwhile, go on your way. There is no hurry, there is no hurry at all."

"As I see them walk off in the distance, I yell out to them and everyone there today, as loud as I can ... THANKS FOR REMEMBERING and as others on this side of the WALL join in, I notice the American flag that so proudly flies in front of us everyday, is flapping and standing proudly straight out in the wind today. THANK YOU ALL FOR REMEMBERING!"

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I will have additional information on the Cow Pie Raffle in the next newsletter. If anyone has an acre field and would like to donate it to be used for the Cow Pie Event sometime in late June or Early July next year, please let the editor know as soon as possible.

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You know you are having a bad day when ...

Your horn sticks on the freeway behind 32 Hell's Angels motorcyclists.
 Your twin sister forgot your birthday.
 It cost more to fill up your car than it did to buy it.
 The bird singing outside your window is a vulture.
 You invite the Peeping Tom inside, but he says NO!

* * * * *
A SENSE OF URGENCY
* * * * *



The push is on--to send a message to Congress. Since early March, veterans by the hundreds have flocked to town meetings in locations from New Jersey to New Mexico. They come to the meetings because their benefits are in jeopardy, and they want to do something about it.

Clearly, the time has come for action. Already, more than 20,000 acute-care hospital beds have been closed because discretionary funding for veterans health care was frozen. And that is just the beginning.

VA will lose nearly 22,000 health-care workers in hospital settings, including 2,000 workers providing rehabilitative care and another 10,000 providing psychiatric care. The number of inpatient hospital patients treated will drop by more than 280,000. The number of veterans receiving rehabilitative care, such as spinal cord injury, will drop by over 4,600. The number of veterans receiving psychiatric care will drop by nearly 77,000.

I could go on and on, but you see what we are faced with. To me, it is an outrage, and I think every veteran in this country should be similarly incensed. But venting among ourselves--while healthy to the soul--is like "preaching to the choir." More is needed.

And that is where the veteran's town meetings come in. Sponsored by AMVETS, The DAV, the VFW, and the Paralyzed Veterans of America--these forums aim to bring veterans and lawmakers together in a face-to-face dialog on the budget crisis. The veterans have been willing to do that, judging from the attendance; the lawmakers have not.

Indeed, out of more than 80 senators and congressmen invited to seven town meets, only five have attended. Some of the others did send a representative, but I think it is obvious that many in Congress see little or no urgency in this issue. And why should they? The vast majority on Capitol Hill are NOT veterans. The point I am making is this: If the veteran's community does not speak for itself, who will?

Given the congressional demographics above, we have a tremendous education job on our hands ... have had for some time. Call, write, or visit your Congressman, House of Representative, or elected official, and let them know where you stand on these important issues. Let them know you will fight for the right to your benefits, and let them know how soon election day will be among us. If they don't want to go to war for us, as we did for them, then let's find the person out there who will, ... and let them know this.

(Part of this article was reprinted from the latest AMVETS magazine)

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Reminder

As a reminder to all members dues for the year of 1999 are payable now. They are payable prior to 31 December 1998. The dues for the upcoming year are set at Ten Dollars (\$10.00) Anybody who wishes to donate money to the Association, it will be greatly appreciated.

If your newsletter label has the years, 1997 or 1998 on them, your dues are now due. Anyone who joined the Association after 1. September, 1998, dues are automatically paid for the year 1999.

ADDRESS CHANGES

It cost a great deal of money to send out newsletters six times a year and when they are returned undeliverable because of an address change, it costs us twice then, once we find your new address. Please, take a few minutes to update our records when there is a change. Please help us get "The Right Track" out to you on time and as cost effective as we can by utilizing the form below.

We want you to receive your copy of the newsletter without any delay. Notify us of your new address here. Include with form your old address so we can remove it from the directory and database. Clip this address change form and mail to:

~~~~~  
Kenneth G Riley  
200 Georgetown Court  
Hanover PA 17331

|      |         |         |              |         |
|------|---------|---------|--------------|---------|
| Name | (Please |         |              | Print)  |
| New  |         |         |              | Address |
| City | State   | Zipcode | Phone Number |         |
| Old  |         |         |              | Address |
| City | State   | Zipcode | Phone Number |         |

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This guy is playing golf, when on one of the holes, he takes a high speed ball right in the crotch. Writing in agony, he falls to the ground.

His buddies whisk him away to the hospital where the doctor says, "I will have to put your pecker in a splint to let it heal and keep it straight. It should be okay in a few weeks."

"But doc," he says, "You don't understand. Next week I get married and my girlfriend is still a virgin in every way!"

"Sorry," says the Doc, "That's the best I can do for you." So the Doc took four tongue depressors and formed a neat little 4-sided cradle and wired it together.

Arriving home, the guy never mentions this to his fiancée. They get married the following week and head out for their honeymoon. As they enter the room and close the door, the man's new wife, rips off her clothes and says, "You will be the first. No one has ever touched these breasts."

Quickly he pulls off his clothes and adds, " See this here, it's still in its original crate."

The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything. ... They just make the best of everything.