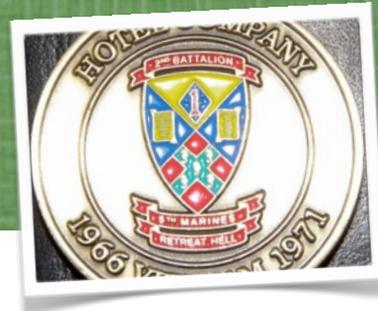


Hotel 2/5 Newsletter

MARCH 2014

RETREAT HELL

ISSUE TWO



Editor's Column

Here is the second of the monthly newsletters. I have received both accolades and criticism. I am trying to resolve issues that some are having and hopefully have ironed out the wrinkles.

I am looking for feedback on this newsletter idea. If you have any thoughts or criticism please let me know.

This newsletter has an article by one of our Corpsman, Doc Dennis

Noah. It has been previously published under other titles, but I utilized my editorial discretion and changed the title to one by which Barney Harbin made reference to the incident depicted therein. Ordinarily our Docs take care of us when we do something stupid. Doc Noah's role brought to mind the term "Munchausen Syndrome By Proxy". You are going to

have to look that one up for yourselves.

We have several Hotel members who have made return trips to Vietnam. I am hoping to get articles and photos from them for future newsletter articles.

As you can see from the reunion update things are moving along. Plans are being implemented, but are always subject to change. See you all in Nashville.



Your Editor

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2015 REUNION, NASHVILLE, TN

Things are moving along. Jim Hayden is on the ground in Tennessee and doing the logistics with a little help from others behind the scenes. Larry Tyler has volunteered to perform finance duties while Joe Sonderman is on the road enjoying retirement. Larry will also be posting reunion details on the web page and implementing a PayPal system to aid in payments. However, for guys (like me) who still need to pay by check that will still be available.



The Holiday Inn's discounted rate is \$109 which includes parking, a hospitality room for our use, and a free shuttle from the airport.

The schedule looks like it is coming together.

Day 1: Thursday, Nov 5th

Registration and "Meet n Greet". The kick off time will probably be around 3 p.m.

Day 2: Friday, Nov 6th

Tentative events that are being explored:
Group trip to Andrew Jackson's Hermitage and/or Cruise on the General Jackson Showboat.



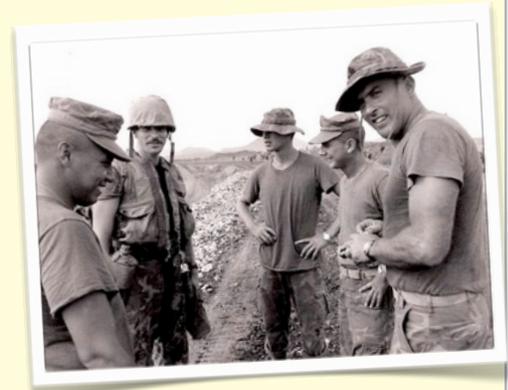
Day 3: Saturday, Nov 7th

Sightseeing on your own with a group lunch downtown at BB King's. Reservation is Noon to 1 p.m.

Birthday Ball at the hotel (1600-2200)

Day 4: Sunday, Nov 8th

Breakfast and Farewells.





Thank You Hotel Company

This past reunion in San Diego, I was able to put faces to names I had heard so much about and take pictures with people I had only seen in photos. I relished all of the time spent with everyone: the stories and the experiences at Pendleton and MCRD. I feel so honored to share with this distinguished group. As always, Marines go above and beyond and I was touched to read everyone's words of congratulations and encouragement on my recent admittance to The Bar. I wanted to take a moment to let you know how appreciative I am of your support and inclusion. It means the world to me.

Thank you. Carlie Peterson

Hotel Web Page Up



Larry Tyler has our web site up and running. If you haven't seen it yet give it a once over. You can find the web page at:

<http://hotel25vv.org/>

Contact Larry with your photos, articles, and information. If you have photos be sure and get them to Larry for posting. If you wander around the site you can see that he has the format for various themes and concepts that will enable

Hotel to communicate our thoughts, ideas and concerns. It is also a great place to share and or get information about benefits.

Contact Info. Get your contact information into Larry. He can add you to his email list providing a central hub for staying in contact with each other. It is also a good idea to keep me advised of your current email address at the same time. Between the two of us we can keep you all updated with the latest info and the reunion details..



VC Ducks

By Doc Dennis Noah

In combat situations you return to the basics of survival: food, staying dry, and so forth. Food is a large aspect of life, especially when you spend days on end eating out of these little green cans with dates on them going back to the Korean War. Also on extended operations in the field, we were particularly dependent upon helicopter resupply missions that were not always dependable because of the combat situation.

On one mission, they shipped us out by helicopters and as often occurred, we walked and walked and walked. The military term is a "forced" march. I do not know what is so forced about it. I certainly was not able to lag behind and be left in the middle of the jungle somewhere. It was not necessary to force me to follow the guy in front of me. So on my part anyway, it was a "voluntary" march. I had no hope in finding my way back alone.

I am not certain exactly how long we walked, but we started out in the morning, saw an entire day, then a night, and another sunrise, then another afternoon before we arrived at our destination. We marched over hills, through creeks, rice paddies, and even walked for a few hours down a railroad

track. We were told to be quiet, but I have to tell you something. We did not talk but we were not quiet. We had weapons straps clanging, ammo bandoliers knocking against each other, and the clumping of 100 sized 11 to 13 jungle boots. We were not exactly stealthy but we did not talk.

We had been out in the field for (no surprise here) a few days before we took our hike. Our little green cans were mostly gone when we started our walking tour of Southeast Asia. They were not able to re-supply us so we had little chow. We were tired, wet, and famished. As an old friend of my father used to say on our fishing outings: "We had wet butts and hungry guts." I was so tired that the whole event seemed like an out of body experience. I was walking in a stupor from the fatigue and hunger.

Then, all of a sudden, our dreams came true. We walked into this clearing at dawn on the second morning and there were cooks, tables, and on these tables were green containers with hot chow. The cooks were Army dudes but what the heck, we were desperate. We thought we had died and gone to heaven. The Marine Corps did not provide hot chow out in the field. And I mean never.

I understand that the Army did supply hot chow on occasion in the field and at times beer. The only hot chow we had came in those green cans and was heated by C4. We did receive beer in the field once but it came in the form of manna from heaven like Moses in the desert. By this I mean the beer was thrown

from helicopters flying at 60 knots and 300 feet. You ever had 20 cases of canned beer dumped out of helicopters in the jungle on your head? Well, let me tell you, a beer can with a forward speed of 60 knots falling on you from 300 feet really hurts. This was our first and last beer run in the field and it was not particularly successful. I didn't even like beer so why did I have to be smacked with beer cans from on high? It did not seem fair to me.

Anyway, as luck would have it, the senior Army NCO said that he did not have enough for us because he was waiting for the Army patrol to return. He apologized with sincerity. He said that he could give us some cornflakes. They were in these little cardboard boxes with the perforations you opened and poured milk into them. We gladly accepted. Of course, he had no milk to give us. He did not have any sugar either. I poured the warm halazone laden brown, muddy rice paddy water from my canteen onto my corn flakes. Man did this stuff taste awful. It literally looked like mud and tasted like, well you know what.

After the scrumptious breakfast, we continued our walking tour of Vietnam or wherever we were. During the late afternoon, we came to a large abandoned village. My platoon was sent in to occupy it and dig in for the night. We looked for McDonald's but apparently it had not yet opened in this village. We were flat out starved.

Then we heard this quacking. I mean there were ducks in this place! You can eat ducks, right? We did not wish to shoot them, as it would make big holes in them. So off we went, K-Bars and bayonets in hand. The great hunters were going to slay these ducks and live off the land like Daniel Boone. Marines should have no trouble slaying these little critters, right? Wrong! There were two-dozen Marines chasing them around for over an hour—battle-hardened warriors of our country trying to kill these ducks.



It was not funny at the time as we were hungry. Now thinking back upon it, we must have looked like the Keystone Kops chasing these little things. We finally killed six of them. There were two others but they are probably still running and laughing. Now what? Who was going to clean and cook them?

They all looked at me, the corpsman, to prepare the feast. I was in charge of health. Food was part of health. Correct? They thought it was perfectly logical that I should be the chef. It seemed like quite a stretch to me, but I agreed. I did hunt growing up

in the Ozarks and knew how to clean ducks. However, cooking them was another matter. Mom always handled this part.

In the village, there was a large hut with a large cooking area and even pots and pans and a wood grill. I would not bestow upon it the respect to call it a kitchen but it would do. On the other hand, I was no Julia Child either. There was even rice. So I butchered the ducks, threw them in water and boiled them for a couple of hours. I then added some rice and made a rice soup with pieces of duck. It smelled horrible. It even looked worse. Have you ever seen the stuff that is pumped out of a boat's or RV's holding tank? It looks like watery milk chocolate pudding. Well this is exactly what my cooking prowess had produced with the same consistency. It smelled about the same.

I was going to throw it out, but they were hungry so they ate it. I did not. I would rather have eaten mud but they devoured it with enthusiasm and thanked me. Little did we know that the VC ducks had a surprise in store for us.

Well about 0200 in the morning in the pitch black, I heard a moan, then another moan, then another moan, then about 20 more. Then I heard my guys puking from the other end. The entire platoon was sicker than you can imagine. I was not sick, of course, as I refused to eat my own cooking. I had given them food poisoning.

For the next two days I gave them all kinds of medications including antibiotics to heal them. They

marched with their legs spread out to the side (like a cowboy who had ridden horses for 60 years), they were doubled over, and they had these anguished looks on their faces. They kept running into the brush and asking for those tiny rolls of toilet paper. We promptly ran out of the latter.

The officers wanted to know what happened. With the innocence of a newborn baby, I said, "I really do not know, sir. It must have been bad water, sir."

Yeah, that was it. Bad water. They bought it and I never told them what really happened. I figured I would end up in Portsmouth [Naval Prison] for 5 years if I told the truth. I informed our leaders that I had it under control and they should not worry.

Slowly, my guys began to stand upright and walk normally like humanoids again. By the third day, everyone was well again in H Company.

The only good thing about this ending was that the platoon was no longer hungry. This worked out perfectly as we did not get resupplied for 2 more days. I was hungry but endured. I was never asked to cook again.

