

Bravo Regulars



B Company 3/22



Vietnam Service

www.bravoregulars.com

September, 2020



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President's Message

Art Gormley
President
(718) 317-9881
ag31782@aol.com

Greetings Bravo Brothers,

The Bravo Board and our host, Bob Best, continue to work toward planning our re-scheduled June 9-12, 2021 reunion in Goldsboro, NC. Please check Dave Lowell's column for an overview of what to expect in the months ahead in terms of a reunion timetable. Please mark your calendars and make your plans to be with us in Goldsboro next June. Let's pray for better times ahead for all Americans.

As most of you know, good fortune and Treasurer John Otte's fiscal restraint allowed the Board to declare a dues holiday at our 2018 reunion in Branson, MO. With a reunion coming next year and recognizing a continuing environment of uncertainty, the Board has voted to reinstate member dues for the 2020-2021 fiscal period. Annual dues are set at \$35. You will find a dues payment form included in this newsletter.

We recognize that this has been a difficult year financially for many families. As has always been Bravo's policy, no member will be penalized for non-payment of dues. If you can afford to contribute \$35, we thank you for your generosity. If you can afford to do more, we welcome that as well in recognition that some of our Bravo Brothers have been more fortunate financially than others.

I want to thank the students of Westlake High School in Austin, Texas for this year honoring two of Bravo's fallen brothers—Sgt. Lonnie Lundy (https://eanes.tv/media/t/1_vxfvgwyy/81478061) and Lt. Walter Hogans (https://eanes.tv/media/t/1_kz4zfpf5/81478061). The linked video tributes are part of the school's inspiring Virtual Vietnam Memorial Project, which to date has honored nearly 5,000 of the fallen.

I would also like to thank all Bravo Brothers who contributed personal recollections of their service with Lonnie and Walter as part of these memorial tributes. (Please see our June 2020 newsletter for links to seven other fallen Bravo Brothers who have been honored in years past by the students and faculty of Westlake High.)

As combat veterans, we should all be grateful that a new generation of young Americans is being taught about the Vietnam War, the ultimate sacrifice made by so many of our generation, and the suffering of the families and friends left behind.

It is too early to say we have beaten the pandemic. It's out there, so please stay safe.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'AG', written in a cursive style.



John Otte
Treasurer/Locater
(310) 539-0886
bravo6xray@aol.com

Association Business

Financial Report Income and Expense	
June 1, 2020 Balance	\$8,764.97
<u>Income</u>	
Total Income	\$.00
<u>Expenses</u>	
Reunion Mailing	\$227.90
Newsletter	387.13
Website Update	35.00
Hosting Service	59.85
Bank Service Charge	15.00
Misc. Expense	15.00
Total Expenses	\$724.88
Aug. 31, 2020 Balance	\$8,040.09

Dues Notice

It's that time again to send in your dues. On behalf of the organization's officers, thank you for your support. Although from looking at the financial report it may appear that we are doing pretty well, there is a reunion coming up and we can do more with a little cash. Thanks for all your support.

John Otte, Treasurer

Bravo 3/22 Dues Invoice

**Dues Period Sept. 2020 thru Aug. 2021
Annual Dues \$35.00**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Platoon/Assignment: _____ Tour Dates: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Send dues to:

Bravo 3/22
1037 Koleeta Dr.
Harbor City, CA
90710-1819

A self-addressed envelope is enclosed.

All dues are completely voluntary and are used only to support the activities of the group.



Editor's Notes

David W. Lowell
 Editor
 (520) 762-8609
 davidwlowell@aol.com

Welcome back Bravo Brothers! I hope all of you are doing well. Thus far we have not received word of any Bravo casualty from the COVID-19 war, so our defenses seem to be working.

Prior to publication, our Board conferenced and came up with a plan to promote our June, 2021 reunion as follows:

September, 2020	Share plan
December, 2020	Full details with registration form, itinerary, etc.
March, 2021	Go/no go decision, final details and last call
June, 2021	Newsletter published after the reunion.

I apologize for any inconvenience but please remember we are striving for a SAFE reunion! Thank you for your understanding. This information is repeated at the top of our Bulletin Board for quick reference.

The cover photo for this issue is an overhead current (as of 2017) view of our old AO, compliments of 2/22. In the past, I had heard that the Vietnamese government had erected a memorial over the grave sites at Suoi Tre. I later heard that the memorial and remains were moved to make way for a reservoir. This view shows the reservoir in place. Our old base camp, Dau Tieng, is at the bottom center to get you started.

Bill Cooper (2nd Platoon Leader, 1968) brought to our attention a group of websites covering an in-depth diary of a platoon leader with 2/22. His experiences included being involved with Burt, Buell and Good Friday. Maps and drawings and video interviews are included. The maps and drawings can be found on <https://www.vietnamtripledeuce.org/Skips%20Maps/Skip%20Fahel%20Maps.html#AprilID>. There are also three audio records. Part one has the intro by the interviewer, Maj. Baun, and interviews with Lt Prairie, Bravo Company Commander, Sgt. Crowe and Cpt. White who was my company commander (Delta Company) <https://app.box.com/s/q7vzuf8zi4n95ecsfawfg5lt93b3dn9o>, Part two has interviews with Lt. Cooper, Lt. Boyle, Charlie Company Commander, LTC Flint, Battalion Commander, and Lt. Balzer, Recon Platoon Leader <https://app.box.com/s/udegf4h263e12ya8g7ee51s6t5179gzf> and Part three has interviews with Maj. Schultz and Cpt. Allison from 2/22 Mech <https://app.box.com/s/mgafflj64wbcyxm9jkfw4wna8irw707>. It's a good read for those with the time and interest. A copy of this information will be included in the Battle Reports books that I bring to reunions.

Editor's Notes (con't)

I had an email exchange with Chet Johnson (Co. XO -1/66-5/67) about Suoi Tre that wouldn't be of general interest, but in closing he had some kind words to say about Suoi Tre vets. It can be found on our Bulletin Board. Chet also wanted to share with us a web site where many vets were sharing photos and experiences at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/431374360216330/>. You don't have to be active on Facebook to enter. After serving with us, Chet later returned for another tour with the 101st Airborne and was a company commander at the battle for what would become known as "Hamburger Hill".

The newsletter from 22nd IRS contained an interesting comparison of enlisted soldiers from our era and present day. It can be found on the Bulletin Board.

Welcome to new member Bill Ervin (2nd Platoon Leader—07-12/68). Bill was 2nd Platoon Leader starting in July, 1968. He can be contacted at 1419 Alydar Drive, Collierville, Tennessee 38017-9157, (256) 783-5355, billervin@comcast.net. Bill has provided us with a narrative of his time with Bravo Company, which is on the Bulletin Board.

We have received updated contact information for Robert Benson (3rd Platoon— 4-69/70) and he has been moved from Inactive to Active. Bob's new address is P.O. Box 1649, Kaunakakai, Hawaii 96748-1649, (805) 674-4572, islandivory@gmail.com.

Three members have been moved from Active to Inactive status due to their contact information becoming invalid. They are Bobbie Bouge, Johnny Crocker and Jesus Fuentes.

Thanks to all who contributed to this issue. Our next issue will be out in December and we will be accepting submissions through the end of November. Until then, may peace be with you.

Dave out

4th Infantry Division (IVY)
By
George L. Skypeck
1997



BULLETIN BOARD

Submitted by Editor—Reunion 2021 Schedule

Prior to publication, our Board conferenced and came up with a plan to promote our June, 2021 reunion as follows:

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| September, 2020 | Share plan |
| December, 2020 | Full details with registration form, itinerary, etc. |
| March, 2021 | Go/no go decision, final details and last call |
| June, 2021 | Newsletter published after the reunion. |

Submitted by Chet Johnson (Co. XO.– 1/66-5/67) —regarding Suoi Tre

SALUTE! To all that were involved on the ground, in the air and in the relief forces. This victory was one of the leading stories in March 1967 and history was made by all the units involved. The Presidential Unit Citation that was awarded is for overwhelming gallantry by individual units in physical combat with an armed enemy, who were completely defeated. This battle could have been another “Little Big Horn”, but you brave soldiers proved you had the guts and strong willpower to prevent this from happening again! All of you made history in that victory.

Submitted by 22nd IRS Editor– The American Soldier—Then and Now	
1968 Enlisted	2018 Enlisted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 years old • 79% high school graduates • Less than 196 females • 21% minority • 60% draftees • 36% married • SGT base pay = \$279.00 per month • SGLI coverage = \$10,000.00 • 35 lbs. of equipment (\$1,856.00) • Individual replacements • 62% survival rate if wounded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 years old • 96% high school graduates • 15% female • 48% minority • 100% volunteers • 52% married • SGT base pay = \$2,490.00 per month • SGLI coverage = \$400,000.00 • 75+ lbs. of equipment (\$19,454.00) • Unit rotations • 88% survival rate if wounded



BULLETIN BOARD

Submitted by Bill Ervin (2nd Platoon Leader—07-12/68) - via Art Gormley

Just saw the website for B Co., 3rd Bn, 22nd Infantry and it brought back memories of a 23-24 year old in South Vietnam. I was an infantry platoon leader in B Company, joining them in mid-July 1968 at the Phu Chong Bridge where the platoon had several positions under the bridge to try to prevent sappers from blowing it up. B Company soon relocated to Tay Ninh in August 1968 and constructed Fire Base Buell to the Northeast of Tay Ninh along the road leading to the south side of Nui Ba Den.

I recall I was on nightly ambush from FSB Buell on the evening of September 10-11, 1968 with 15 members of my platoon. The Battalion had set our ambush site two kilometers to the northeast of FSB Buell in a small banana grove on top of a hill. When I arrived near the ambush position, I noticed it was the same position (banana grove) I had occupied several days earlier. I had a cardinal rule to 'never occupy a previous ambush position'! So I radioed the company commander (Captain George Featherston) and requested to move my ambush position 250-300 meters to the East. Permission was granted and we settled in for the night. Then all hell broke loose with a ground attack followed by enemy mortar fire pummeling FSB Buell. When Army and Air Force aircraft responded to the ground attack, the nearby banana ground exploded with .51 caliber anti-aircraft fire from the positions that were dug in and prepared by the enemy during the evening. Suddenly Air Force bomb casing parts began dropping around us. We dug in the ground with our helmets for protection. When daylight came I took my ambush patrol to check out the three .51 caliber positions in the banana grove. When we reached the abandoned empty anti-aircraft position, a Huey flew nearby then suddenly a 105mm white phosphorus marking round went off 500 feet directly overhead. We were being marked for an American artillery strike who mistook us for enemy soldiers. I immediately reacted by having everyone drop any heavy items and run like hell back to the rice dikes 200-300 meters to the East and, at the same time, radioed B Company to check fire ASAP any artillery barrage being called on our position. We also immediately dropped behind a rice dike and popped smoke grenades. This made the Huey overhead pause in calling the artillery strike. The enemy force that attacked FSB Buell had withdrawn to the northwest. We traveled East with multiple smoke grenades popping in a linear row marking our position. The artillery strike was stopped and the Huey flew away. As we got up to return to FSB Buell, we had spent bullets from that attack falling around us. Seventy-six enemy soldiers had fallen outside the wire at FSB Buell. As B Company soldiers went outside the wire, one enemy soldier got up with his AK-47 over his head indicating he wanted to Chu Hoi. As Captain Featherston and several soldiers approached, the enemy soldier dropped his AK-47 and opened fire killing Captain Featherston's radio operator. B Company then hit the ground and opened massive return fire. Based on the terrain, ground slope and the direction of the concentrated return fire, the spent bullets began falling all around the distant rice dike and the prone positions of my 16 member ambush patrol. Ten minutes later when the B Company ground fire stopped, I took my ambush patrol further East to the Nui Ba Den—Tay Ninh roadway and came back to FSB Buell approaching from the South to avoid getting shot by nervous fellow B Company soldiers.

BULLETIN BOARD

Bill Ervin narrative continued

Fire Base Buell was attacked a second time several days later and suffered no casualties. I recall I had my platoon dig shallow trenches between fighting positions where we could safely crawl and reinforce any position during that second ground attack.

I also recall operations in October 1968 in the rubber plantation near Dau Tieng and some minor fighting. In November 1968 we defended the signal facility on Nui Ba Den. I used my training in explosives to blast a gravel path through the rocks from the Nui Ba Den helipad to the signal facility headquarters at the top of the hill, plus blow up and pulverize massive boulders between my platoon's bunkers to improve interlocking defensive fire in case of ground attack.

In early December 1968 I returned to Nui Ba Den and took over as Company Commander of A Company 3/22 Infantry for the next six months as a young 24 year old First Lieutenant and remained in command until June 10, 1969.

I recall in April 1969 my infantry company (Company A) constructed Fire Support Base Crook and occupied it in May 1969 until relieved by Company B.

In 10 months and three weeks I had never lost a fellow soldier until June 6, 1969. On June 10, 1969, I turned over Company A to a new infantry company commander at FSB Washington as previously planned. I was proud of every member of Company B and Company A in my time in South Vietnam.

I hope ya'll have a great reunion in Goldsboro, NC. I was born and lived in Brunswick, GA but most of my family lives throughout N.C. Wilbur's BBQ in Goldsboro is one of the best BBQ joints in North Carolina and in the U.S.

Submitted by Editor—Obituary from 22nd IRS Newsletter

With sadness I must report that Col (Ret.) Ralph Julian (2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry, 4th and 25th Division, 02-09/67) has passed away. Col. Julian was in command of the Track Unit at the Battle of Suoi Tre.



Paintings by
Norm Bergsma

