

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam  
...keeping the memories alive**

Phan Rang News No. 50

**“Stories worth telling”**

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**Get Well Wishes for David Cox**

At the Tucson reunion Paul Minet suggested we get a ‘Get Well’ card and have the people in attendance sign it. We did that and David Cox received his and here is what he said **“That card was a wonderful surprise and blessing to me! Please express my appreciation for their thoughtfulness and prayers.”** David Cox 69-70 Medic



**Back to the Early 60s’**

**Note:** I obtained several issues of the Pacific Stars and Stripes from Howard Taylor from 1966 and 1967 and because I thought that period of time was pretty significant to the Vietnam War I’m going to include in this issue and future issues all the Vietnam related articles from these issues. I hope you enjoy them as much as I have. The fold on both of these issues reads “Not for Sale” and

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the banner across the front reads “Share This Paper”.

**THE FOLLOWING ARTICLES ARE FROM THE PACIFIC STARS AND STRIPES, SATURDAY,  
DECEMBER 31, 1966 EDITION**

**U.S. Raids Draining Red Manpower** (*Pacific Stars & Stripes, Sunday, Jan 15, 1969*)

**SAIGON (UPI)**—Paths of destruction dug by U.S. air raids have, drained at least 300,000 potential fighting men from "north Vietnam's war-making machine," America's air chief in Vietnam said Thursday.

This is the work force the Hanoi regime has had to create on an emergency basis to repair and try to keep open the "vital lines of communication" severed in the air attacks, Lt. Gen. William W. Momyer, commander of the 7th Air Force, said.

American pilots still can attack only "a restricted variety of targets," including road, rail and shipping lines in north Vietnam, Momyer said.

But a main fringe benefit of this "limited" air war is that Hanoi has had to divert at least 300,000 men simply to repair the lines of communication.

"These are 300,000 that he certainly could put to better use in the war itself—if he could. He cannot."

It doesn't make the job of the pilots any less dangerous, however. The United States is losing airplanes

valued at \$2 million to \$3 million apiece at the rate of about one a day, and the communist defenses "are getting better," Momyer said.

Navy Cdr. James A. Burnett of Ponte Verge, Fla., who flies bombing missions over north Vietnam almost daily from the aircraft carrier Enterprise in the Gulf of Tonkin, conceded that "the bad guys over here have increased their firepower conventionally."

This is Burnett's second tour in the Vietnam theater, and he said he has found "there's a lot more" antiaircraft fire this time, "and a lot more concentrated."

**Truce Doubtful: Ky**

**SAIGON (UPI)** - Prime Minister Nguyen Cao Ky said Friday the government may be forced to call off the four-day Tet truce because of repeated communist cease-fire violations.

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It is now too late, however, to call off the 48 hour New Year’s cease-fire scheduled to being at 7 a.m. Saturday.

The lunar new year, or Tet, comes Feb. 8-12. It is too late to change the Western New Year cease-fire because it is so near at hand,” Ky said. "But if the Viet Cong continue their violations the government will have to revise its proposal for the Tet cease-fire that we ourselves suggested."

There was no immediate reaction from American officials.

Ky was in the Central Highlands at the resort city of Da Lat with his wife and children. He was attending a rural development conference and trying to get in a few days rest. He was recently ill with influenza.

The premier noted that during the two day Christmas cease-fire there were more than 120 communist violations. Both American and Vietnamese soldiers were killed and wounded. Intelligence reports indicated that the communists used the two-day respite from Free World bombs and bullets to move large amounts of supplies.

"If the Viet Cong continue their violations this weekend, it is likley there will be no Tet cease fire because our soldiers and cadres will not let their hands be tied by the viet cong who take advantage of cease-fires for assassinations and terrorism” he said.

(The Viet Cong so far have not announced whether they would observe a Tet truce although earlier they announced two-day truces at Christmas and the Western New Year weekends, AP reported.)

Ky also said that unless the Saigon dock strike is settled by Saturday he will personally step in and take a hand.

The stevedore walkout began five days ago and there are no signs and talks will resume. The strike protests the dismissal of 600 workers from the New Port complete recently built just north of Saigon. U.S. authorities said the workers were hired only on a temporary basis.

The general strike ordered by labor leaders to paralyze the City of Saigon in support of striking dock workers failed to materialize early Friday.

The labor leaders of the 60,000 member Saigon Workers Council, made up of about 120 unions, ordered the general work stoppage from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m.

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**Army Claims Captain Refused To Train Troops for Viet War**

**FORT JACKSON, S.C. (UPI)**— A young Army medical officer, once active in the civil rights movement, faced possible court martial Thursday for refusing to train personnel for duty in Vietnam and for advising Negro soldiers not to serve.

Capt. Howard B. Levy, 29, of Brooklyn, N.Y., admitted he felt the Vietnam war was "immoral and illegal," and had said so, but denied he intended to cause "disloyalty and disaffection among the troops," as charged.

He also admitted he had told Negro soldiers that if he were a Negro he would refuse to serve in Vietnam.

The charges were brought against Levy by his commanding officer and were turned over to Maj. Gen. Gines Perez, the commandant of Fort Jackson. Perez will decide whether to assign investigators to the case, the next step toward court-martialing Levy.

Before entering service, Levy was active in Negro voter registration movements in South Carolina. He is chief of dermatology at the Fort Jackson Army Hospital.

He allegedly has refused to teach dermatology to Special Forces personnel who would have used the training in combating diseases in Vietnam.

The Army also charged that Levy had said that if he were a Negro he would "refuse to go to Vietnam and would refuse to fight if sent there; and that Special Forces members are liars, thieves, killers of peasants and murderers of women and children."

Levy said he had asked help in his legal defense from the American Civil Liberties Union. An ACLU attorney, Charles Morgan Jr., of Atlanta, Ga., said the defense would rely mainly on the rights of free speech under the First Amendment to the Constitution and on the officer's interpretation of the obligations of a physician.

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**Navy Pilot Who Hit North Disputes N.Y. Times Dispatch**

**VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. (AP)**—A U.S. flier who has bombed the town of Nam Dinh declared Wednesday the area contains at least three legitimate military targets and some of the heaviest anti-aircraft defenses in north Vietnam.

Nam Dinh has been cited by New York Times reporter Harrison Salisbury as one of the north Vietnamese communities which has suffered heavy civilian casualties from American bombing.

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Salisbury said that although the mayor of Nam Dinh regards the city as essentially a cotton-and-silk textile town containing nothing of military significance," it has been "systematically attacked by American planes since June 28, 1965."

In a dispatch published by the Times Tuesday, Salisbury said 89 persons have been killed, 405 wounded and the homes of 12,464 destroyed.

Taking issue with Salisbury, Cdr. Robert C. Mandeville, commander of Navy Attack Sq. 65, told Jack Kestner, military affairs writer of the Norfolk Ledger-Star, that Nam Dinh is part of a transportation complex leading south from Haiphong, north Vietnam's main seaport, and the capital of Hanoi.

Mandeville said his squadron, which returned to the United States earlier this month, had frequently hit the Nam Dinh area.

"Our targets," Mandeville said, "Consisted mainly of a large trans-shipment area on the banks of the river, a fuel area on the delta east of town and rail yards to the west."

He said his fliers regarded Nam Dinh as one of the most dangerous objectives in north Vietnam.

"Some of our guys think this is the most heavily-defended area up there," he said. "The north Vietnamese don't waste their antiaircraft batteries. They only put them around stuff they want to protect."

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### **AF Keeps ‘Big Eye’ on Bombers**

**WASHINGTON (UPI)**-The Air Force feels it is taking every possible precaution to assure that U.S. bombers hit designated military targets on raids on North Vietnam.

One of the precautions is the use of converted passenger planes, filled with electronic gear, as a "big eye" to assure the bombers fly on their scheduled course.

The passenger planes, considerably slower than the bombers, may be hundreds of miles from the target. But they fly at very high altitudes and through the use of radio and radar can track dozens of bombers simultaneously and correct their courses if necessary.

Admittedly, civilian casualties cannot always be avoided. The policy has been, however, to select targets where civilian loss will be at a minimum, military sources said.

The policy has been to keep the bombers at a distance of 30 miles or more from the north Vietnamese cities of Hanoi and Haiphong. About the same distance

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maintained from the Chinese border.

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**376,000 U.S. Troops in Viet**

**SAIGON**-U.S. troop strength has reached 376,000, the highest figure of the war.

A Spokesman said most of the increase was due to the arrival of lead units of the 9<sup>th</sup> Inf. Div.

Armed forces of other Free World nations increased to 54,000, a gain of 2,000, the spokesman said.

Estimated enemy strength remained at 280,000.

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**Hope Plays To Wounded**

**MANILA** (AP) - Bob Hope and his troupe gave a “Cheer-up” performance Thursday for 280 Vietnam war wounded at Clark AB.

There were more than 16,000 other U.S. Servicemen and their families in the outdoor audience. But Hope and the troupe played almost entirely to the group of men, some in wheel chairs, one in his hospital bed and many walking wounded in blue and white hospital clothing in the front rows.

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**Air Cav. Units Catch Hit-and-Run Force**

**SAIGON** (UPI)—First Air Cav. units caught up Thursday with a communist force which overran one of their artillery batteries two days ago and won revenge in a fierce, day-long pounding from artillery and air strikes.

The "Flying Horsemen" first made contact with the enemy at the mouth of the An Lao Valley, a 14-mile-long saddle that is believed to be one of the communists' main strongholds in the central high lands.

Helicopter gunships swarmed in and the battle raged for five hours. At one point contact was lost, but the troops pushed doggedly on and UPI photographer John Schneider reported they caught up with them again at nightfall.

The Americans found 65 bodies on the battlefield. At least some were from the fight two days earlier when the communist force penetrated the defenses of a 1st Cav. artillery position and caused heavy casualties before being hurled back in hand-to-hand fighting and by artillerymen who lowered their big guns and used them like rifles.

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Size of the enemy force was not immediately determined. The first contact was made about seven miles from the bloody battlefield where the 1st Cav. Artillery unit was hit. It is an area of rolling jungle along the central coast near Bong Son and about 300 miles northeast of Saigon.

U.S. casualties were reported light.

**Marine Artillery Posts Hit by Red Mortars**

S&S Vietnam Bureau

**SAIGON** — Artillery batteries from the 12th and 13th - Marines took moderate casualties Wednesday night in a communist mortar attack.

A Marine gun position also took moderate casualties Wednesday night in a communist mortar attack 5 miles west of Dong Ha.

U.S. sources said 100 to 150 mortar rounds hit artillery batteries of the 12th and 13th Marines.

Marines returned artillery fire on suspected communist positions. Another marine position, 11 miles to the west, was hit by more than 100 mortar rounds Wednesday night, a U.S. spokesman said.

Some of the enemy rounds hit marine perimeter security units, the spokesman said.

U.S. casualties were reported as light.

In other action Wednesday, marines killed eight communists in scattered patrol and ambush operations throughout the northern neck of the country. Friendly casualties were described as light.

Supported by four Air Force AC-47 Dragon Ships, units of the 1st Inf. Div.'s 1st Brigade killed seven enemy in a fight with two communist squads 21 miles north of Saigon.

The infantrymen began sweeping the area at dawn Thursday. Enemy losses were unknown. A spokesman said U.S. casualties were light.

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**B-52s Pound Red Troops**

**SAIGON**-Air activity over the Republic of Vietnam Thursday was highlighted by B-52s bombing an enemy troop concentration near Phan Thiet in Binh Thuan Province.

Results of the strike, which took place before dawn, have not been announced.

U.S. pilots flew a total of 454 strikes in South Vietnam Wednesday but bad weather limited to 70 the number of missions flown over North Vietnam.

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Phantom crews destroyed an antiaircraft site near Dong Hoi in North Vietnam. Two other antiaircraft sites were damaged. Pilots encountered heavy ground fire.

In other air action. A6 pilots from the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk struck the Nam Dinh railroad yard 37 miles southwest of Haiphong. Four fires were started.

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**60 Viet Cong Killed In Viet Army Sweep**

S&S Vietnam Bureau

**SAIGON**—Sixty Viet Cong were killed Wednesday in a sweep conducted by a Republic of Vietnam infantry battalion near Kien Hung, in Chuong Thien Province.

A Vietnamese spokesman said an unspecified number of the enemy were killed by air strikes.

An arms cache seized in the area, which is in the Mekong Delta 124 miles southwest of Saigon, yielded two 60mm mortars, 1,000 mines and 609 grenades.

Friendly troops suffered no casualties.

In other action Wednesday, two Vietnamese children were killed during a fire exchange after a Popular Force platoon ran into a Viet Cong ambush 19 miles southwest of Saigon.

Two Regional Force companies and armored personnel carrier troops were sent in pursuit of the enemy.

Friendly troops suffered light casualties in the engagement. Enemy casualties were unknown.

In central Vietnam, a Regional Force company killed seven Viet Cong during an attack Wednesday on an enemy position in Quang, Nam Province.

Friendly casualties were termed "very light" in the action, which was part of a 1-day search and destroy operation.

Friendly forces suffered light casualties early Thursday when Viet Cong force hurled about

200 rounds of 82mm mortar fire at a Vietnamese Marine post and at a Vietnamese Army artillery unit a few miles south of the DMZ.

The attack was near Gio Linh in Quang Tri Province.



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THAT'S IT FOR 1966...IN THE NEXT ISSUE WE'LL GO TO 1967.



**COKE CAN MORTAR**

One day I and another guy arrived at the new white arm/de-arm shack at the North end of the runway to find two things, a fellow from the F-100 squadron out there to arm those aircraft and an empty 2.75in rocket pod on the ground.

Finding the rocket pod was very odd because it normally would have gone back to the revetments with the aircraft after de-arm to be reloaded and not detached from the plane.

The bomb pylons on a swept wing F-100 contain a plunger. When the bomb is dropped, a small explosive cartridge atop the plunger fires and kicks the bomb away from the plane so that it

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won't contact and damage the swept wing. The F-100 weapons guy at the shed with us possessed a bucket of those cartridges. The straight wing B-57s did not need them.

Did you know a Coke can fits perfectly inside a rocket tube? Well it does!

We propped the rocket pod vertically up against the shack.

We cut open the F-100 pylon cartridges and poured the black cylindrical pellets inside them into the top of a Coke can.

Then we inserted a lit cigarette into the can and dropped the can upside down into a rocket tube.

After repeating this process numerous times, increasing the number of pellets in the Coke can each time, we got nervous and decided to stop our fun because we were firing those cans so astonishingly high we felt sure the control tower could see them and we would be getting a visit by the Air Police.

*(A2C Lawrence (Larry) Theurer was with the 8th Tactical Bomb Squadron, loading munitions aboard the B-57 Canberras. I was fortunate to have meet Larry at the B-57 Bummers reunion in Branson, Missouri and after I had seen what he had written I asked if I could share his stories with the Phan Rang community. Of course he agreed and this is just the first of many more stories to come. Maybe Larry should have titled it his 'confessionals'!)*

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