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## 11 Receive Bronze Stars

Eleven Bronze Star Medals with "V" device, including six "impact" awards, were presented to Regional Forces soldiers and ARVN Rangers recently.

Major General F.K. Mearns, commanding general, CMAC, made the presentations in back-to-back ceremonies held at 5th Ranger Group and Binh Chanh District Headquarters.

### RANGER HEADQUARTERS

Soldiers of the 5th Rangers were recipients of four of the "impact" awards for actions occurring on 24 February.

Aspirant Nguyen Huu Khang, 3rd Platoon, Reconnaissance Company, 5th Ranger Group, was leading his element in a waterborne patrol when it received intense hand grenade and small arms fire from 5VC concealed in nipa palm on the northeast bank of the canal. Aspirant Khang led his platoon to a decisive closing with the enemy. Later in the day, the platoon again came under fire and Aspirant Khang bravely led his platoon to a total victory. Results of these two actions were 9 VC KIA, 4VC captured, 7 AK47's, 600  
(Cont'd on Page 9, Column 2)

## New Unit Formed for CMAC Artillery

CMAC IQ--A new unit, the Capital Target Acquisition Battery (Provisional), officially came into existence February 23 at CMAC.

According to orders published by CMAC the stated mission of the battery is to "provide general target acquisition by means of flash ranging and operational control or attached counter-battery and ground surveillance radar."

Simply stated, it means that the Capital Target Acquisition Battery has control of the operation of the CMAC flash towers and radar sites that are used

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to spot rocket or mortar attacks on Saigon.

Captain George Woolsey, the battery commander, explained that the unit is split into a flash platoon and a radar platoon. He said "The flash platoon consists of the men in the flash towers, but the radar platoon is mainly a headquarters element. Most of our radar is manned by units under our operational control."

The new battery will have its own supply and motor sections plus communications and targeting sec-  
(Cont'd on Page 9, Column 3)

## EDITORIAL

## A Letter Means Caring

How many times have you seen the overseas mail call where the postal clerk hands out letters until only a few dejected men stand by---those who didn't get one?

This isn't a scenario from a movie. It happens quite often for various reasons. Mainly, it's because addresses have changed by constant moves and the letters are somewhere in the pipeline.

However, let's reverse the situation. Family addresses back home seldom change. Yet, there are sometimes weeks and even months when they, too, become dejected waiting for letters.

Writing, between family members, is not always a matter of exchanging news, but of thoughtfulness and caring. Just a note to mom and dad, wife or sister means that you care---merely by sending a few words.

Chaplains very often hear from parents and families who plead for word of their loved ones. In most cases, it's found that the "forgotten" letter home was only negligence.

Words from home bring a personal feeling of pleasure that only the reader understands. Remember, writing is a two-way street, and a letter means love and affection---whether you are 50 or 5,000 miles away.

And, your letter brings you home---even for a moment or two. (AFPS)



The CMAC HARPOON is an authorized semi-monthly publication of the Capital Military Assistance Command, Information Office, APO San Francisco 96243. Views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

Commanding General.....MG F.K. Mearns  
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## Mandrake



National Cartoonists Society

## Savings Plan Reviewed

(ANF)—U.S. Army finance officers have pointed out certain details that should be known by all participants in the Uniformed Services Savings Deposit Program.

The savings program, open to military personnel on active duty overseas, pays interest at the rate of 10 per cent a year, compounded quarterly. Accounts must be closed within 90 days after servicemen return from overseas.

Department of the Army Message 892393 states that depositors should understand the following terms:

-Requests for accelerated repayment of deposits will affect the accrued interest of an account, depending on when and where the request is submitted.

-Cash deposits should not be made subsequent to requests for accelerated repayment.

-No interest will be paid after the expiration of 90 days from the date of return to the United States or its possessions.

-If the 90 day period expires on any day other than the last day of a month, interest is computed only through the last day of the preceding month. In instances where repayment is for less than the 90-day period, personnel receive interest for a full month in which repayment is made.

## About People

# Long Way from Mexicali

From "south of the border down Mexico way" to the south of Vietnam down Saigon way has been a long trip for Specialist 5 Miguel Chavarela Larfarga, but it has been one he wanted to make.

In fact, Miguel's entire army stint is something he wanted to do, an action that goes beyond the ordinary American citizen's voluntary enlistment.

Chavarela, 22, known to his buddies in the CMAC AG Personnel section as Mike, claims Mexicali as his home town and Mexico as his native country.

After one and a half years as an accounting major at Los Angeles State College, Mike began to do some serious thinking about himself. (As an alien residing in the states he would normally have been subject to the draft. But as a student he was deferred from this possibility.)

"I wasn't sure about my future at the time. I needed some time to think." Mike decided by joining the U.S. Army he would get the opportunity to sort things out in his mind.

So in June 1966 this draft-exempt Mexican citizen took "that step forward." After basic at Fort Bliss, Tex. and army administration training at Fort Ord, Calif., he was assigned to process UCMJ offenders for the 6th Army at Fort Lewis, Wash. He was stationed at Baumholder, Ger-

many as an artillery gunner before coming to CMAC in July to work as an administrative specialist.

Chavarela has strong feelings about the Vietnam War, strong enough to get him to volunteer for duty here. "Now that we are here, a country as big and powerful as the United States must show people they can rely on its promises. There's no alternative... We have to win."

It won't be long now before Mike, with three months remaining, will be heading back to visit his widowed mother, and his brother and sister living in Mexicali and to see his three other sisters in Los Angeles.

He was asked what he had learned during his army stint.

"Now I know what I'm after and more or less how to get it. I'm more mature now. After ETSing I'll be returning to school to (Cont'd on Page 9, Column 1)

## ARVN Patients Visited by CG

CMAC IO---Patients at the Army of the Republic of Vietnam's (ARVN) Tran Ngoc Minh Hospital in Saigon were visited recently by Major General F.K. Mearns, commanding general, CMAC, in honor of the Tet holidays. General Mearns was accompanied by Brigadier General Lam Son, deputy commanding general, CMD.

The generals visited all wards shaking hands with and passing out gifts to the 350 ARVN soldier-patients.

Hospital Administrator, Major Ho Quang Nguyen, guided the visitors through the wards and gave a comprehensive briefing on the hospital.

General Mearns' visit was in gratitude for a similar one made by his counterpart, Major General Nguyen Van Minh, commanding general, CMD, to the U.S. Army's 3rd Field Hospital in Tan Son Nhut during the Christmas holidays.

## Meritorious Service Medal Authorized

WASHINGTON (AFPS)—In one of his last acts in office, President Johnson signed an executive order authorizing a new medal for those who have distinguished themselves by outstanding meritorious achievements or service.

Designated as the Meritorious Service Medal, it would rank between the Legion of Merit and the Ser-

vice Commendation Medal, as a non-combat award.

A White House statement said the need for the MSM has become apparent within the military services in the past few years. Before its adoption, only the Legion of Merit was available to those members of the services credited with meritorious achievement or outstanding service.

# Former VC Join 199th in New Team

199th LIB IO—A squad of former enemy soldiers has joined the 199th Light Infantry Brigade as the nucleus of a new Armed Propaganda Team.

## FIRST OF KIND

Begun as an experiment, the team is the first of its kind to be assigned directly to an American fighting unit. Their initial task is to win the sympathy of civilians living in hamlets in the brigade's area of responsibility.

## OTHER DUTIES

The Hoi Chanhs also help organize and announce brigade MEDCAPS, DENTCAPS, film showings and meetings, as well as distribute leaf-

lets, posters and publications explaining the GVN's Chieu Hoi program.

## RELATE WITH PEOPLE

"These men have a feel for the Vietnamese village which you and I don't have," explained Captain Melvin L. Chatman of Chicago, brigade civil affairs officer. "They know how to relate with the people and thereby have better opportunities

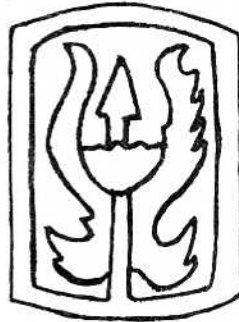
to obtain information of enemy activities from them."

Participating in a recent cordon and search operation, the Hoi Chanhs explained to the villagers the reason and purpose for the operation and what was expected of them.

## ARMED WITH 16s

Though armed with M-16s, the team does not seek armed contact with the enemy; but they have the means to resist if attacked. The team's overall mission is to urge enemy troops and cadre to repatriate.

Working and living with them is Specialist 5 Nelson A. Garner, a Redcatcher from Columbus, Ga., on his second Vietnam tour. He acts as liaison between the team and the brigade.



# 199th Mascot Loses Life But Saves Some Redcatchers

199th LIB IO—The mascot of a company in the 199th Light Infantry Brigade may have saved several soldiers' lives when he lost his life in tripping a booby trap.

The mongrel, known to Charlie Company, 4th Battalion, 12th Infantry as "Bubba," was with a night ambush team following pointman Specialist 4 Kenneth Conners of New York City.

Conners glanced down after his foot had tripped the wire of a Chicom gre-

nade booby trap. He froze and waited, but the grenade firing mechanism was stuck, unable to explode.

The rest of the second platoon including Bubba were moving to link up with Conners' squad. After Conners tripped the wire, the platoon was told to wait until the trap had been blown. But the dog jumped into the lead.

After he moved 15 meters in front of the patrol, a shattering explosion was

heard. Bubba had tripped a concealed 105 mm artillery shell-booby trap.

The dog's master, Sergeant William Francis of Corpus Christi, Tex. said the artillery round appeared to have been buried. "The booby trap could have been tripped by whatever group reached it first."

The men have lost Bubba's horseplay and companionship, but they probably won't forget the heroism of their little pal.



Photos by Sp5 M. Wilson (top) and 1Lt A. Wagner (below)

Story by Sp4 B. Wickham

## Airmobile, Ranger Style

The 5th ARVN Ranger Group is an important element of the CMD/CMAC defensive belt around the South Vietnamese capital. The group's senior advisor, Major Reinhard Schumann, CMD Advisory Team 100, says "I have nothing but the highest regard for the Rangers. I would stack them up against any U.S. unit." Speaking of all ARVN units advised by Team 100, Colonel W.R. Harris, Deputy Senior Advisor, observes "We are advising well trained soldiers and all we really have to do is coordinate with U.S. activities. The ARVN units in the CMD know what to do and how to do it."



Troops of the 3rd Platoon, 3rd Company, 38th Ranger Battalion conduct a sweep (top) through rice paddies five miles south of Saigon. SFC Thomas Bennett (center in above photo), advisor to the company, coordinates with the company's executive officer while the rest of the platoon (photo left) moves into position after off-loading the Hueys. The action was part of a recent 5th Ranger Group airmobile operation.



# Sennett in Saigon--'Driver, Follow that Bus!'

CMAC IO--Shades of Mack Sennett movies! A bus bristling with rifles, moves through a crowded city street. Rickety taxicabs rush in all directions. Motorbikes, crisscross, going every which-way.

Miraculously, a Chinese parade materializes in the middle of traffic causing auto horns to add to the general merriment of noise makers and dragon masks.

Tet in Saigon ... and a grim reminder of war is the shotgun-toting guards in a jeep, trying to stay behind the bus.

The open-top jeeps are

providing escort service for the army buses that transport Capital Military Assistance Command (CMAC) soldiers to and from work. Captain Gerald LaMotte, CMAC Headquarters Company Commander, explained, "Explosive charges were discovered recently on two army buses in Saigon, so we're not taking chances:

"We inspect our buses every morning before anyone gets on board and then send an escort jeep on every run." Cpt. LaMotte continued, "There just aren't enough Military Policemen in Saigon to spare so we

had to call on CMAC clerks and drivers to man the escort jeeps."

Out in the street a bus waited to take the first run back from lunch. Specialist 4 Gerald Horn, a driver for CMAC Signal Section, sat in his jeep watching the traffic pass the side of the bus. "What we are mainly guarding against," he said, "is a terrorist tossing a grenade under the bus or attaching a charge to the side."

Horn was dressed for the occasion wearing driving goggles on his helmet, an armored "flak" vest with the panned inscription "Horn - Sheepshearer" (He  
(Cont'd on page 9)

## City of Saigon Hit by Enemy

CMAC IO--During the early morning hours of February 23, there were several enemy initiated incidents within the CMAC/CMD area of operation.

The first attack by fire occurred at approximately 2:30 a.m. when nine rounds of suspected 82mm mortar rounds landed at Cat Lai. Three of the rounds landed in the 11th Transportation Battalion compound resulting in no casualties and minor damage to a building. Six rounds landed in Cat Lai village wounding one Vietnamese woman and slightly damaging several houses.

The second attack occurred at about the same time when about five 107mm rockets landed at Nha Be. No casualties or damage were reported. CMAC/CMD towers

located throughout the area of operation sighted the rocket flashes and within one minute RVN artillery engaged the firing sites.

The next attack by fire began at 4:34a.m. when seven explosions believed to be 122mm rockets occurred in the city of Saigon. This attack resulted in light Vietnamese casualties and extremely minor damage. There were no U.S. casualties or damage. A CMAC observation tower observed the rocket flash and within three minutes the location was engaged.

At 6:30 in the evening, three more 122mm rockets landed in Saigon killing six Vietnamese and wounding 23. Damage was done to a gas station and 10 cars were damaged in a garage.

## Proof is Invisible

WASHINGTON (AFPS)--Viet Cong propaganda experts at Paris, whose job is, among other things, to present to the world material proof of U.S. "atrocities" in Vietnam, are not getting that proof from their counterparts in the field, according to captured documents.

The response to Viet Cong appeals to all party committees in South Vietnam for "documents, pictures, witnesses...petitions from holy associations .... and the victims themselves... which illustrate the crimes perpetrated by the U.S. imperialists" has been totally inadequate, even though Viet Cong directives are specific about the type of evidence required by their International Information Office at Paris.

## Command Notes

# Civies Okayed for R&R Flights

Civilian clothing is now authorized for optional wear by personnel heading for R&R Centers except Hong Kong and Tapei.

Those wearing civilian clothes aboard the plane can also wear them while at the R&R processing center.

Acceptable clothes are: dress shirts, sport shirts, slacks, civilian shoes, tennis shoes, sneakers and sandals. Unacceptable are: sweat and athletic shirts, shirts with printed novelty slogans, white or camouflage T-shirts normally worn as undergarments, blue-jeans, shorts, boots and shower shoes.

Mixing of distinctive military and civilian clothes is prohibited except for wear of military low quarter shoes. Only square-bottomed shirts may be worn outside trousers. Socks must be worn. Clothing must be clean and in good shape.

Personnel not meeting these standards won't be issued a boarding pass.

### INSURANCE DIVIDEND REPORT INACCURATE

Disregard rumors circulating of a 50 cent dividend per \$1,000 to be paid on government life insurance policies. If special dividends are approved, the Veterans Administration will make an official announcement.

### PHONE RATES REDUCED

Phone calls between the U.S. and RVN are cheaper than ever with American Telephone and Telegraph Company's introduction of station to station calling between these points. New station rates are \$9 for the first three minutes and \$3 for each additional minute; person to person rates are \$12 for the first three and \$3 for each additional minute.

### VA'S MAN ON THE SCENE

You can get up to date on Veterans Administration benefits and how to make claims for benefits both in service and out by contacting Mr. Tom Boyer, VA Coordinator for Southeast Asia at Consolidated Base Personnel Office, Building 934, Tan Son Nhut AFB. (Tan Son Nhut 2214)

### SERVICING CHOPPERS

When heading for the dental clinic you must first pick up your dental records at the AG Personnel Office, Bldg. MV 512, across from the MACV Annex.



## Sitting on Tax

CMAC IO--Back in the states it is fast approaching time for burning the midnight oil over tax returns.

But here in Vietnam, military personnel have the option of waiting up to 180 days after leaving this country to file. (Only if a tax has already been assessed will you have to notify the Internal Revenue Service to postpone collection.)

Since many personnel do not have their 1968 bills and receipts available, it is difficult for them to complete their returns while in country. But married personnel filing joint returns may elect to have their wives complete and sign the returns so long as the husband sends home his W-2 forms.

If you can get your returns out now you will be able to draw interest on your refund sooner or at least quit worrying about filing the return.

When computing your tax, if in doubt about a deduction consult your legal officer or a tax expert. If you are legally entitled to a deduction, no matter how insignificant, the government wants you to take it.

Of course, the Internal Revenue Service takes a dim view of anyone trying to get out of paying the appropriate tax.

