

Bravo Regulars



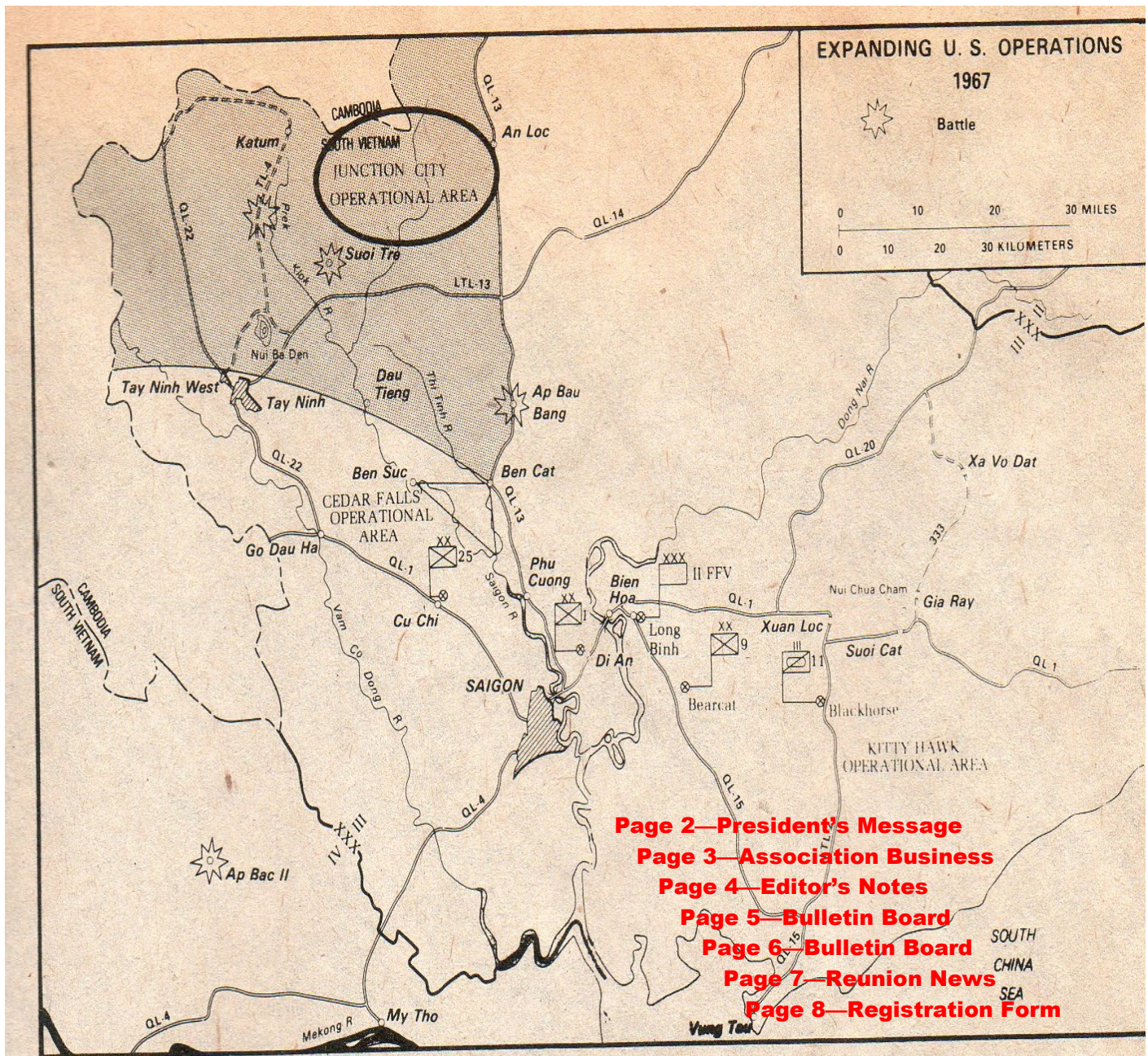
B Company 3/22



Vietnam Service

www.bravoregulars.com

SEPTEMBER 2015





President's Message

Ted Silberies
President
ted9er@gmail.com
(408) 674-2759

Dear Bravo Brothers,

I once again want to personally invite you to our reunion in Naples, Florida. If you haven't been to Florida, I can tell you April is the perfect time of year to check out all it has to offer. The sooner you fill out and submit your registration form and send it in the better. Our host, Richard Ward, needs to know how many people to plan for.

For those of you who may not know, last month our Vice President, John Gority, fell and broke his hip. But true to his nature, he's making a remarkable recovery. Just goes to show that you can't keep a good man, a Bravo man, down.

I'm hoping to see John in Naples this spring along with the rest of you, and even some new faces like Paul Angers, James 'Doc' McCellan, Ron Rowley and Clarence 'Sonny' Szejbach. So please mail those registration papers in today.

FYI—my wife, Judi, and I are packing up our new camper and heading to the Klamath River in a few days for a month of salmon fishing. If any of you guys want in on a great fishing spot, give me a call this week and join us. There aren't any electric trees where we camp, so if I don't respond to you right away you know why.

Ted



Painting by Norm Bergsma



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

Association Business

Financial Report Income and Expense

June 1, 2015 Balance \$9,581.23

Income

Dues	
Donations	\$37.59
Total Income	\$37.59

Expenses

Newsletter	\$852.60
Bank Service Charge	\$10.00
Misc. Expense	\$37.59
Total Expenses	\$900.19

Aug. 31, 2015 Balance \$8,718.63

DUES—DUES—DUES

It's that time again, time for us to send out our Dues Invoices. These dues are used to fund the activities of our association. Remember, any dues are completely voluntary.



Bravo 3/22 Dues Invoice



Dues Period Sept. 2015 thru Aug. 2016
Annual Dues \$35.00

NAME: _____

Send dues to:

Address: _____

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

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIP:** _____

PLATOON/ASSIGNMENT: _____ **TOUR DATES:** _____

Preaddressed envelopes
are enclosed

PHONE: _____ **EMAIL:** _____

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



Editor's Notes

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

Welcome back Bravo Brothers!

Hope this finds everyone well. The cover art for this issue is a map of our old AO, taken from an old magazine article, which is posted on the Bulletin Board. Although labeled Suoi Da, the story is about Suoi Tre. Almost nothing in the story is actually true! It's all just made up. The story is so inaccurate that I wonder if he was actually there! Briefly, the battle started at dawn against Bravo and Alfa companies 3/22. After about five hours, this unit arrived from the west "bringing reinforcements and much needed ammo." They had been present for about 15 minutes when a column of tracks arrived and broke the attack. I do not recall them being a significant part of the battle.

Thank you, John Kapor, for submitting an interesting article, which is on our Bulletin Board, about those who are guarding the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

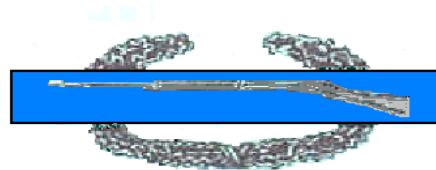
I have recently received another request for information on and a photo of Albert Graham, Jr., Platoon Sergeant, 2nd Platoon, KIA 2 June, 1967. Anyone serving with us at that time, please help if you can. Details are on the Bulletin Board.

I received a reply to a letter of condolence sent on behalf of Bravo Regulars to the family of Charles Ellis, which I'd like to share with you. "Thank you so much for the comforting words. Charles' death has certainly been a tragic loss for our family. Charles loved Bravo so much and has communicated with some of his 'brothers' by phone. We would like very much to continue to receive the newsletter. Your invitation to be an honored guest at your reunions shall be cherished. Thanks again, Daphne Ellis."

Once again John Otte is sending out dues invoices. Please contribute something if you can.

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

Dave out



Submissions may appear disjointed at times but are often edited for space, content and/or excerpted from larger personal communications between members. Submissions can be sent to either my email or home address (880 N. Solar Drive, Vail, AZ 85641) or to any Officer. Any photos submitted by mail will be scanned and returned.

BULLETIN BOARD

**Submitted by Editor—Excerpt from Vietnam Mission Magazine, March 1990—Massacre at Suoi Da—
Written by Randall T. Elliot**

Randall T. Elliot was a captain with the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division. In March 1967 the battalion he was attached to met the Viet Cong at Suoi Da near the Cambodian border.

The President of the United States, Lyndon Johnson, the man who once said Asian wars are for Asian boys, had decided to meet his military leaders at Wake Island. The conference reflected his growing concern for the way the war was going. My story is similar to that of many other Americans engaged in the fighting end of the Asian war. Our patriotism, naiveté and eagerness slowly gave way to nagging doubt, then fear—and the will to live. Many faced this well, others slowly slid into battle fatigue, and the line between that and insanity grew blurred. We were in very dangerous territory. We had mounted a major operation called 'Junction City'. We saw the enemy often, and our patrols heard them a lot at night, signs that a fight was brewing. They were watching and following us closely, waiting for a mistake. They must have wondered what we were doing there: it was so near the Ho Chi Minh Trail that they could bring major units against us rapidly. We were staying in a fire-base with an artillery battalion. Another infantry battalion arrived, and the engineers constructed berms—walls—around the camp, making our awesome firepower even more effective. It limited Charlie's ability to see us and made his direct fire weapons less useful. Jesus, it was scary out there. Even though we were three battalions, we knew that there were at least three enemy regiments in the region, enough to wipe out an 800-man battalion in minutes. About 9:30 in the morning of March 21 we came under the most intense mortar and rocket bombardment I had ever experienced. Five, six, seven hundred heavy explosions rocked through our positions. With this kind of firepower we knew that something big was up and that we were the target. Then it went quiet, and we knew Charlie was coming. You could see for almost a mile. The underbrush did not grow in this area, but there were a few tall trees. We rushed to the berm. It was already hot, and the air was filled with dust and the smell of cordite. In the distance we saw them forming up, row after row like the British at New Orleans. I could see their bayonets. My fighting blood was up, and I called to my men to fix bayonets. A cheer went up from 2,500 Americans (sic). After long weeks, if not months, of hunting an elusive enemy, he was at last before us. We wanted to go over that goddam berm and fight those people. Cooler heads prevailed, and we waited. My men began to straighten grenade pins, zip up flak jackets, check their ammunition and weapons. A few prayed, some ate and drank—maybe the last chance for a while. Others stared at the incredible sight unfolding in front of us. The first assault elements were now a football field's length away, running towards us; some were firing and bullets were beginning to hit all around. Enemy sappers came into view, carrying engineering equipment to breach our berm. The commander of the laager ordered us to fire, and we did so before he'd even finished saying the word. Our artillery pieces had been pulled up to the berm and were firing 'beehive' rounds as fast as they could. These were shells containing hundreds of small steel darts that pinned enemy soldiers to trees and nailed their rifles to their chests. Machine guns and assault rifles fired fully automatic adding to the cacophony. The Viet Cong were coming from two sides. As they got closer, our men began to fall, and their mortar rounds were coming into our position. A bullet ripped through my fatigue jacket, just under my left arm. That was close. The VC were coming through, over the dead bodies of our men. They committed their reserve force, and we felt the pressure. This time I wasn't sure our firepower would prevail. They were working around the other side of our position and we were taking casualties: about 75 men. We weren't yet desperate, but the going was getting harder. Then, as suddenly as it began, and after several airstrikes, we sensed that they were about to quit. We couldn't hold back any longer, and with one loud scream and no-one in control we went over the top. I couldn't remember if my pistol was loaded, so I picked up one of theirs. We attacked the few units and rearguard that remained. Gradually the smoke cleared and the firing stopped. We sent out a flying squad and they got the mortar crews and captured the mortars. The VC had been stupid to withdraw and not protect their guns. The fight had lasted about 35 minutes. I began to count the bodies on the ground. I could see over 200 dead, including 27 Americans. The final count was probably a hell of a lot higher. I looked at them. Small, young and dead. They never had a chance; they could not fight us on our terms. But their leaders wanted to embarrass Johnson at Wake Island. So they came, wave after wave. It was then I knew we would lose the war. Their political dedication was something we did not have. They would fight on empty stomachs with a handful of bullets against well-fed Americans. Somehow, it violated the sense of fair play I grew up with. A few hours later, as I walked through the carnage, a CH-54 'Flying Crane' helicopter came in carrying a small bulldozer to dig a pit and I saw row after row of mangled bodies. I couldn't help thinking, "My God, are we Nazis?" I couldn't eat for a couple of days. A lot of generals came out and told us what a good job we did.

BULLETIN BOARD

Submitted by John Kapor—3rd Platoon (Basic only)

Fascinating facts about the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. 1) How many steps does the guard take during his walk across the tomb of the Unknowns and why? 21 steps. It alludes to the twenty-one gun salute which is the highest honor given any military or foreign dignitary. 2) How long does he hesitate after his about face to begin his return walk and why? 21 seconds for the same reason as answer number 1. 3) Why are his gloves wet? His gloves are moistened to prevent his losing his grip on the rifle. 4) Does he carry his rifle on the same shoulder all the time and, if not, why not? He carries the rifle on the shoulder away from the tomb. After his march across the path, he executes an about face and moves the rifle to the outside shoulder. 5) How often are the guards changed? Guards are changed every thirty minutes, twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year. 6) What are the physical traits of the guard limited to? For a person to apply for guard duty at the tomb, he must be between 5'10" and 6'2" tall and his waist size cannot exceed 30. They must commit two years of life to guard the tomb, live in a barracks under the tomb, and cannot drink any alcohol on or off duty for the rest of their lives. They cannot swear in public for the rest of their lives and cannot disgrace the uniform or the tomb in any way. After two years, the guard is given a wreath pin that is worn on their lapel signifying they served as guard of the tomb. There are only 400 presently worn. The guard must obey these rules for the rest of their lives or give up the wreath pin. The shoes are specially made with very thick soles to keep the heat and cold from their feet. There are metal heel plates that extend to the top of the shoe in order to make the loud click as they come to a halt. There are no wrinkles, folds or lint on the uniform. Guards dress for duty in front of a full-length mirror. The first six months of duty a guard cannot talk to anyone nor watch TV. All off duty time is spent studying the 175 notable people laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery. A guard must memorize who they are and where they are interred. Among the notables are: President Taft, Joe Lewis (the boxer), and Medal of Honor winner Audie L. Murphy, the most decorated soldier of WWII and of Hollywood fame. Every guard spends five hours a day getting his uniform ready for guard duty. The tomb has been patrolled continuously 24/7, since 1930.

Submitted by Bob Hanik

I communicated with you about a year ago in my quest for a photo of Sgt. Albert Graham, Jr., a member of your unit who died in Vietnam on June 2, 1967. Recently I have spoken to John Otte and Bill White about Albert. They remember him well, as you do. Albert was from Bakersfield, California, one of 10 children, four of which are still living in California and have not been able to provide a photo amongst the other relatives in the family. I know he served two tours in Vietnam. After his first tour, he returned to Bakersfield and was a police officer for a couple of months, before signing up for another tour in Vietnam. I've been told that there were over two hundred mourners who attended his funeral in Bakersfield. I'm hoping that you can make another effort in reaching out to your members and see if anyone can come up with a photo of Albert. I can be reached at 530-671-7805 or bhawk1@aol.com.

BRAVO REUNION 2016

Naples, Florida Welcomes Bravo Company



Presented by Co-Hosts Richard Ward & Dorene Clark

The event will be held at [Naples Italian American Club](#), located at 7035 Airport Pulling Road in Naples, Florida. There is a map included in newsletter with the location of the venue and all of the lodging options and instructions for reservations on the reservation form.

You can choose from two featured excursions:

- Cruise aboard a Luxury Yacht for a narrated tour and a buffet lunch on the Naples Princess where you may catch a spool of dolphin's playing in the Gulf of Mexico.
- Florida Everglades Airboat Tours by Captain Mitch, the oldest family in the airboat rides industry of south Florida.

You can sign up for these and other discounted events on the Registration Form.

We are proud to offer this 2016 Bravo Reunion at the same price as previous years. Your early registration will help us make this a memorable event.

Shirts for the men and ladies and hats can be pre-ordered and paid for at time of registration. Prices are on the registration form. If you prefer to pay with a credit card, send an email request for a PayPal Invoice to bravoreunion2016@gmail.com.

Bravo Regulars

**BRAVO REGULARS 2016 REUNION
REGISTRATION FORM**

April 6, 2016 thru April 10, 2016

REGISTRATION FEE: \$75 Per Person \$140 Per Couple		
CONTACT INFORMATION		
Full Name:		Number of Guests:
Street address:	Spouse Name:	Phone no.: ()
City:	State:	ZIP Code:
Vietnam Unit:	Date of Service:	
Arrival Date:	Departure Date:	
Email Address:		

LODGING OPTIONS		
(Please Contact Hotel Direct Using <u>Group ID</u>)		
Inn at Pelican Bay: <u>Bravo Reunion 2016 Rate:</u> \$129 City View / \$149 Garden View Reservation Deadline 3/1/2016	Address: 800 Vanderbilt Beach Rd., Naples, FL 34108 (239) 597-8777	
Hilton: <u>Bravo Regulars Reunion 2016 Rate:</u> \$203 (20 rooms available) Reservation Deadline 3/7/2016	Address: 5111 Tamiami Trail N., Naples, FL 34103 (239) 430-4900	
Hawthorne Suites: <u>Bravo Company Rate:</u> Studio \$124 / 1-Bedroom \$134 Reservation Deadline 2/27/2016	Address: 3557 Pine Ridge Rd., Naples, FL 34109 (239) 593-1300	
Best Western: <u>Bravo Reunion 2016 Rate:</u> Negotiations In Progress	Address: Christian Hernandez 6400 Dudley Dr. Naples, FL 34105 (239) 643-6655	
Reunion Shirts:	S M L XL XXL	Reunion Shirts: () () Reunion Hats: ()
Number Ordered:	Circle	\$23 each \$13 each
		Total \$ Total: \$
Naples Princess Luxury Yacht Tour	Captain Mitch's Everglades Air Boat Rides	
Insert Names to Register	Insert Names to Register	
Naples Trolley Tours • Naples Caribbean Gardens & Zoo • Naples Botanical Gardens		
Discounted Rates Available		

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN BY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS:		
Bravo Regulars Association 6017 Pine Ridge Rd., #273, Naples, FL 34119	EMAIL: BravoReunion2016@gmail.com	FAX: (239) 491-7001

**Please include check with reservation or send email to bravoreunion2016@gmail.com
& Request a PayPal invoice to pay with credit card
Shirts & Hats are pre-ordered and require advance payment**