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From the Hatch



Greetings:

I hope everyone is having a good summer.

Happy 250th birthday to America !!

There have been quite a few graduations at Ft. Benning this summer. I have been fortunate enough to attend a few.

This past week some of us were able to attend the Change of Command ceremony for the new Battalion Commander. We want to wish our best to outgoing Commander LTC Brandon Bangsboll in his future assignments.

The incoming Battalion Commander is LTC Brad Hoelscher. LTC Hoelscher comes to us from his most recent assignment as the Military Personnel Exchange Program Officer for the Land Warfare Centre in the United Kingdom. LTC Hoelscher began his career in North Carolina National Guard and attended the US Military Academy at West Point. His career includes command of C. Company and HHC- 1-5th Infantry Regiment "Bobcats" in Alaska, 101st Airborne Division as Plans Officer, 2nd Brigade Combat Team "Strike", and Brigade Operations Officer for 101st ABN DIV, just to name a few. We want to welcome LTC Hoelscher to Ft. Benning. We look forward to meeting with him more in the future.

Jimmy Segars



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Chaplain's Corner

Ephesians 4: 1b-3

Apostle Paul writes: “(I) beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Greetings:

Hope all are doing well:

We had a quiet 4th with some friends.

Roger is already talking about the reunion in 2027. We have started making plans.

It seems for almost everyone, our days are getting busier instead of slowing down. Maybe it is because we are slowing down and it takes longer.

Blessings,
Lorene



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Gone But Not Forgotten

Duet Obituary

Eddie Joseph Duet, Sr., a resident of Scott, Louisiana for the past 30 years, passed away on May 5, 2026, at the age of 78. He was born on August 1, 1947, in Raceland, Louisiana.

Eddie dedicated much of his life to working as a Tugboat Captain, a career that reflected his love for the water. Known for his skill and confidence, Captain Eddie could captain just about any vessel, big or small. Whether aboard a tugboat, shrimp boat, or simply at home, he also found great joy in cooking, always making sure there was plenty to share with those around him, including his beloved dogs, Rocky and Jolie, who patiently waited nearby for leftovers.

A proud veteran of the United States Army, Eddie served his country honorably during the Vietnam War, holding the rank of Sergeant. He saw combat action with the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), the 4th Infantry Division and the 173rd Airborne Brigade as a rifleman with Company C, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry. His bravery and sacrifice earned him numerous commendations, including the Combat Infantryman Badge, Vietnam Service Medals, two Purple Hearts, the Silver Star, and the Bronze Star.



Eddie loved spending time with family and friends and was known for always having a story to tell. He enjoyed dancing when he could and never turned down a good card game, especially when he was winning. His larger-than-life personality, sense of humor, and generous heart made everyone around him feel like family.

He is survived by his wife of 28 years, Relda King Duet; daughter, Kerry Kaye Duet; son, Eddie (Cynthia) Duet; stepson, Michael (Katharine) Manuel; granddaughters, Kaiya Miette Naquin, Kenzy Jolette Naquin, Joy Manuel, Kelsey (Matthew) Ingwersen, and Lenay Duet; grandsons, Lucian Manuel, Nalo Manuel, Nathan (Mikaya) Duet, and Reese Duet; sister, Louverda Duet; and brother, Raymond (Deanna) Duet.

Eddie is preceded in death by his daughter, Natalie Rae Duet; parents, Noiscia & Leo Duet; brothers, Noles Duet and Livingston "Frog" Duet; sister, Geneive (Jan) Baudoin, Eloise Melancon, Carol Rousse, Mary Hebert, and Wilma Duet.

<https://www.lafuneralservices.com/obituary/eddie-duet-sr>

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CSM (Ret.) Herman Allmendinger

Sunday September 27, 1931 - Friday April 3, 2026

Herman Allmendinger, age 94, of Stillwater, Oklahoma, passed away on April 3, 2026, in Stillwater. Viewing will be 1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Sunday, April 19, 2026 at Strode Funeral Home. Services will begin at 2:00 p.m. Monday, April 20, 2026 at the Strode Funeral Home Chapel. Burial will follow in Sunset Memorial Gardens. Strode Funeral Home and Cremation is in charge of the arrangements.



Herman was born on September 27, 1931, in Bad Boll, Germany, to Otto and Margaretha Allmendinger. Herman grew up in Germany and in 1950, moved to the United States where he would build a life defined by dedication, service, and deep love for his family.

Herman proudly served in the United States Army, retiring as a Command Sergeant Major after 22 years of active duty. He was a life member of the Association of the 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry Regiment. A devoted and life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Herman was deeply involved in his local post, serving as Commander of VFW Post 1843. In recognition of his leadership and service, he was honored numerous times as an All-American Commander which culminated in him being named Mr. VFW. Following his military career, he continued his strong work ethic as a plant manager and Chief of Human Resources at National Standard. In retirement, he returned to one of his greatest passions-fishing and ranching.

On November 23, 1955, Herman married the love of his life, Inge Richter, in Hennebach, Germany. Together they built a life centered on family, hard work, and shared values.

Herman had a lifelong love of farming and fishing, but above all, he cherished time with his family. He will be remembered for his strength, dedication, and the steady presence he provided to those who knew and loved him.

Herman is preceded in death by his parents, his daughter, Debbie Fry and his brother, Otto Allmendinger. Herman is survived by his wife, Inge Allmendinger; his son, Perry Allmendinger and wife Staci; his grandchildren, Trevor Fry and wife Stephanie, Tori Allmendinger, Kendrick Allmendinger, and Jacqueline Allmendinger; and his great-grandchildren, Lucas and Easton Fry, along with a loving extended family.

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The S4's Cookbook!

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As a separate (some might say, "Bastard") mechanized infantry battalion in Vietnam, we often found ourselves behind the brigades and divisions when the resources were doled out. On the positive side, people on the IFFV staff knew who our battalion was. For example, in later life I worked for two former IFFV Commanders (William Rosson and Stanley Larsen) and both acknowledged the 1/50 as a "damn good outfit". But war stories are seldom about the positive side, so let's examine our logistics.

While we were with the 1st Cavalry and 173rd Airborne Brigade, the battalion got the benefit of their logistical clout, but when the battalion moved to Phan Thiet in September 1969 we quickly learned to expect little support from Task Force South; so one of our responses was to establish an off-the-books expediting team at the depot in Cam Ranh Bay, coordinated by SSG Isbell. Now that the Statute on Limitations has expired, perhaps some of the S4 war stories can finally be told. Just a few will give the flavor of the times and circumstances and put into perspective the exploits of Chief Gene Quimby, SFC Jim Hobbs, SSG Isbell and the other logistics professionals who made sure that our combat Infantry battalion had the wherewithal to move, shoot and communicate.

Where to begin? Well, our (unofficial) expediting team naturally needed a vehicle to get around in, so a M151 jeep was duly assigned... as a combat loss. Without that M151, access to supplies on a huge base like Cam Ranh Bay would have been virtually impossible to achieve. On top of that SSG Isbell made arrangements to have a 3/4 ton truck and a 5 ton truck when needed, because it seems that our little team wasn't the only game in town. Lest anyone decry the ethics involved, well golly, "War is hell!"

Let me briefly examine a few of the reasons why we needed all the help we could get) and there were many! Shortly after I took over Charlie Company (January 1970), the Quartermaster Bulk Laundry "lost" all of our uniforms sent in from the field (there's a much bigger story here that I'm NOT telling), and supplies of replacement uniforms were limited. Surprise, surprise, the second batch of dirty fatigues was "lost" too. Pretty soon our grunts were about to be forced to crack open footlockers and wear their going home set in the field. After that, we'd be naked! Somehow we got our new uniforms direct from Cam Ranh Bay, even if a few captured AK47's and M1A1 carbines disappeared in the process. Jim recently whispered to me that our "system" came up with 14,000 sets of fatigues and Lord only knows what else after we hit Phan Thiet, and he was called on the carpet by IFFV G4. Fortunately, the G4 NCOIC was a buddy of his from Germany and the dust settled.

During the ship loading in Qui Nhon for the trip from LZ Uplift to Phan Thiet, SFC Hobbs went walkabout on the wharf. He spotted, to his immense surprise, a new M113 and a 100 KW generator setting there in the bright sunshine with no one around to admire their freshly painted surfaces. To keep them from falling into enemy hands, he was left with no choice but to have the guys hook the generator to the track and load them aboard the ship. A couple months later the battalion had to combat loss a track, and SFC Hobbs got paperwork approved to take delivery of the replacement out of current stock - so the books were balanced. The IFFV G4 NCOIC finally figured out the puzzle, and it was worth a beer.

Fortunately, IFFV never found out about the generator, or there would have been hell to pay! The sidebar on that story is that having the extra generator was a real blessing, because our generators were worked to death.

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The "spare" generator kept us from having too many power outages that would probably have had the battalion fail our annual IG inspection. As it was, we passed with flying colors!

Ray Sarlin's Note: Jim's story about the M113 reminded me of a buddy in Korea who signed for an Ordnance Depot and became the only Ordnance Corps Officer in the United States Army with an organic armor capability. Jim Hobbs was the Battalion Supply NCO, CWO Gene Quimby the Property Book Officer, and for my sins I was briefly Battalion S4 for the first three months in Phan Thiet.

DAVID HAAG AS REMEMBERED BY BOB CAMORS

I wanted to write something more about Dave Haag whose loss was reported in the last Downhill – seems only right that he be remembered for his battlefield service which I was there to see. So, this is a war story but that is what I have to share so you will know that Dave Haag was a real field soldier who should be remembered as a good leader who shared all risks and dangers of Vietnam with the soldiers he led.

I met Dave in 1969. We met in Phan Thiet around November of that year when I took over command of B Company, 1st of the 50th Infantry. Dave was a platoon leader – I think it was 3rd Platoon. He had been in that position for some time – I believe he had been there since the company was at LZ Uplift back in Bong Son before the battalion left the 173 Airborne Brigade and was moved down to Phan Thiet. I only joined the battalion after the move South to join the First Field Force (called "IFFV") which was a non-divisional ad hoc colonel-led task force consisting of a Cav. Squadron, our battalion, aviation and some other units. I had been the S3 Air when I first got there and then CO of Alpha Company for about two months before CPT Dave Parker returned after having been WIA. After that, I was posted as CO of Bravo – I called it "Bodycount Bravo" for the many VC we put in the ground.

On December 9, 1969, two days before Dave Haag was seriously wounded, the company had been in a RON (Remain Overnight) position up on Highway One (aka "QL1") a few clicks up past Whiskey Mountain. We had received an order to patrol north of the road and to insert a Ranger long-range recon patrol ("LRRP") team from Charlie Rangers which would overwatch a trail that a VC unit was expected to come down to attack one of the RF-PF outposts that was beside QL1. I was thinking that this was a longshot as we had seen little serious enemy contact – mostly just one or two VC shooting from a distance or mines and booby traps. The VC were there though, somewhere.

We inserted the Ranger Team by making a company size sweep on a long circular pass north of QL1 and then returned to the RON position for the night. We had to make it look like a routine patrol for deception – the whole idea was to avoid the usual helicopter insert of the Ranger LRRP team so nobody knew the trail was being watched.

During the night we put out one LP up to the NE parallel to QL1 and another one East toward the Le Hong Phong Forest which was this huge, mass of sandy-floored jungle where there were no villages. The Ranger LRRP team was impressive: bush hats, face camo, black gloves with fingers cut out.

The company circled up at the RON and each track put out its section of chain-link fence held up by steel pickets to deflect or detonate any incoming B-40 rockets. At the time, we only had about 4-5 men per track – US forces in VN were being "wound down" and our foxhole numbers were very



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light compared to what they had been early in the war.

That day, the Red Cross had sent a notification that SGT Bill Whitlach's wife had just given birth to their son and I was so happy to be able to deliver that news – Bill was in Dave's platoon. That night, we received incoming green tracers several times and went on full alert but there was no attack. We had put out barbed wire and trip flares which were not activated. Balancing the risks, I did not call in the LPs.

The next morning, early on December 10th, 1969, I received a radio call that the Charlie Rangers had just observed a fifty-man, heavily-armed VC unit pass down their overwatched trail heading our way. We were ordered to move to pick up the Rangers and then move to contact. We got to the Rangers but they declined to join us but at least we knew where they were – safely behind us. By that time, the Battalion Commander LTC Gilbert, was overhead in his C&C bird vectoring us to the enemy location.

I soon heard firing from the point platoon and brought the company online and we moved through the enemy with the 50s knocking down anything that moved in front of us. By 4:30 p.m. it was over. We had zero casualties – not even any WIA. Some enemy were killed by gunships running away from us. Again, we went into a RON at the battle site and battalion HQ called in Spectre, the C-130 with side mounted mini-guns, to keep us company for most of the night as a counter-attack was always possible. The next morning, we did a sweep and picked up one VC POW who we Med-evac'ed.

On December 11, 1969, our orders were to move north up the trail that the VC had come down the day before and seek to re-establish contact. LTC Gilbert was emphatic that we were not to move north of a specific gridline until he gave us the order because he had given the USAF clearance to engage anything above that line. We moved out as a company. The woods on both sides of the trail were clear of undergrowth so there was good visibility. Soon, I got a call from Second Platoon to come up and see what they had found – a VN dug bunker-hospital. They had prepared a bunker with a surgical table mound in the middle and overhead cover in preparation to treat their casualties from the battle they were coming down to fight. There was also a fresh grave from what appeared to be a senior VC officer – showing that they had probably stayed in that area the previous night.

We moved further north along both sides of the trail and were soon at the limit of advance as directed by battalion. I put the company into a circular defense position (our standard SOP) not far from the trail so we could still overwatch it. After about 20 - 30 minutes, two VC came down the trail and were not seen by our observers and opened AK fire on Dave's platoon which was the closest to the trail. The VC were both killed but not before they had hit Dave who was seriously wounded. The Medevac took what seemed to be forever and did not get there in time to help Bill Whitlach. I have a vivid recollection of that day and remember Dave being a very solid leader during this operation and during the fight who was a sore loss to his men and to our small field-soldier force. I cannot remember the Bronze Star with V citation that I wrote for him but I know he did receive the award. Dave was hit in the leg and I found out later that his wounds turned out to be somewhat disabling. Of course, in the Vietnam era we had no realistic way to stay in communication with those we knew after they left and I lost track of Dave for many years. We never received any status reports on any of our WIA who did not return. At some point, we had one or two phone calls and he told me he had visited Bill Whitlach's family and had met Bill's son who was born the day before his dad had died.



RIP Dave Haag – we remember you well and hope to see you again **on the other side.**

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