



GOLF COMPANY 2ND BATTALION 5TH MARINES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



CHU LAI – AN HOA – PHU BAI – HUE CITY

Vol. 10, Issue 1

January, 2002

REUNION—2002!

Greetings fellow Marines and welcome to the first newsletter of 2002. A lot has transpired in our beloved country since the last newsletter. Our homeland was attacked by suicidal fanatics and many innocent Americans lost their lives as a result of these senseless acts and our country will never be the same. The current political administration has certainly risen to the occasion (my opinion) and is dealing decisively with the terrorists. I pray, as I know we all do, for those who have given their lives in service to our country and for the safety of our men and women in the Armed Forces and their safe return home to their families and loved ones.



The first order of business is to announce the Reunion site for 2002—which is, **Branson, Missouri!** The dates chosen for the reunion are 19 through 21 September 2002. So mark your calendars and start making your plans to attend. My wife and I have attended almost all the reunions since Golf Co. started having them in the 1980's and we've always looked forward to next. It's always great to get together with the guys, reminisce a bit (actually a lot), catch up on the families and to strengthen the bonds that we developed twenty some years ago.

The details about a central hotel and any planned activities haven't been worked out yet but I hope to have another newsletter out in early April with all those details. If there are any G 2/5ers out there who have the time and can help plan the reunion, please contact me—any and all help will be greatly appreciated.

Larry S. Ortiz, *The editor*

A Word from the Sec./Treas.

Happy New Year Marines,

It's that time again, you can look forward to mail from Uncle Sam about your taxes and mail from about your dues. I will be getting the dues notices about the time that you read this and lightening could strike and you could get them first.

The treasury is recovering from the last reunion and should be in good shape for the next. I urge all of you, especially those who haven't attended a reunion to do your best to make it. I cannot tell you how much I have enjoyed the ones I have been able to attend. I regret, I will not be able to attend many if not any in the future. My Myasthenia Gravis has cut my traveling for the foreseeable future, this is why I would like all those who haven't made one to really try to go—you never know what the future will hold.

Nancy and I have been working on relocating back to Southern California, the beach weather is the easiest on MG. It could be worse, I could have a disease that preferred cold nasty weather. If any of you guys make it out to the LA area, give me a call, I'm just North of LAX. It is with a heavy heart I bid adieu to my beloved desert.

Have a great year Marines and remember get your dues in early.

Lance Machamer

Note: This newsletter is being sent to all G Co. vets on our roster. Because of the expense of the printing and postage for the newsletter, we cannot afford to send each issue to the entire roster but only to paying members. We'd like to again encourage our vets who haven't joined the association to please do so. Attached to the newsletter is a membership form—the editor.

CORRECTION by the editor

I received the following from Milt Sick, Capt. USMCR

"I read with interest the most recent edition of the G 2/5 Association Newsletter, vol. 9, Issue 2, September, 2001. Please refer to page 3 of 8 "Lest We Forget...!" (Then) SSgt. Allen (Allan) (J.) Kellogg, Jr. KIA 3/11/70 I can assure you that SSgt. Kellogg is alive and was well the last time I saw him about 2 1/2 years ago."

I do apologize for having made the error and was glad to learn that SSgt. Kellogg is alive and well. I found the following details about SSgt. Kellogg's Medal of Honor Citation that I'd like to share with the association—the editor:

KELLOGG, ALLAN JAY, JR.

“Rank and organization: Gunnery Sergeant, U.S. Marine Corps (then S/Sgt.), Company G, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division. place and date: Quang Nam province, Republic of Vietnam, 11 March 1970. Entered service at: Bridgeport, Conn. Born: 1 October 1943, Bethel, Conn. Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a platoon sergeant with Company G, in connection with combat operations against the enemy on the night of 11 March 1970. Under the leadership of G/Sgt. Kellogg, a small unit from Company G was evacuating a fallen comrade when the unit came under a heavy volume of small arms and automatic weapons fire from a numerically superior enemy force occupying well-concealed emplacements in the surrounding jungle. During the ensuing fierce engagement, an enemy soldier managed to maneuver through the dense foliage to a position near the marines, and hurled a hand grenade into their midst which glanced off the chest of G/Sgt. Kellogg. Quick to act, he forced the grenade into the mud in which he was standing, threw himself over the lethal weapon and absorbed the full effects of its detonation with his body thereby preventing serious injury or possible death to several of his fellow marines. Although suffering multiple injuries to his chest and his right shoulder and arm, G/Sgt. Kellogg resolutely continued to direct the efforts of his men until all were able to maneuver to the relative safety of the company perimeter. By his heroic and decisive action in risking his life to save the lives of his comrades, G/Sgt. Kellogg reflected the highest credit upon himself and upheld the finest traditions of the Marine Corps and the U.S. Naval Service.”

Lest We Forget...!

<i>L/Cpl. Charles E. Carpenter</i>	<i>KIA 6/26/69</i>
<i>2nd. Lt. Kenneth E. Fischer</i>	<i>KIA 7/3/68</i>
<i>PFC Wayne T. Miller</i>	<i>KIA 3/19/67</i>

Full Circle: A Marine's Return to Vietnam

By: Bill Buchanan (former Plt. Comdr. 2nd Plt. G Co. 17 October 1966 to 20 February, 1967.

As we both charge up a steep part of the hill, my Vietnamese guide Dinh. Mien yells, “We can do this; we are Marines!” Soon there is no more hill to climb and a familiar panorama unfolds beyond the crest: emerald rice paddies, groves of banana trees, and the still mysterious mountains to the south, stacked like fading panels of blue. This low pork chop-shaped hill is what in 1966 we Marines of G Company, 2nd Battalion 5th Marine Regiment called Phu Loc (6) for the nearby village on the topographic map. It served as a base for patrols out into “Arizona Territory”, a no-man’s land of largely abandoned villages, fallow rice fields and a network of dikes and trails: a natural lair for the R-20 “Doc Lap” main force Viet Cong battalion and the occasional North Vietnamese Army unit. After the transplacement of 2/5 in November 1966 from Con Thien, a battalion fire base three kilometers south of the DMZ, to An Hoa, a combat base thirty miles southwest of the coastal city of Danang, the VC hold on the area began to slip. Aggressive company-sized

reconnaissance in force and search and destroy operations supported by artillery and air chewed up the indigenous Communist forces until by 1970 the military threat they presented was significantly reduced. Clashes with NVA units infiltrating through jungle corridors in the western mountains occurred on a regular basis.

At my feet, rust colored clay mixed with quartzite rock is cratered here and there, not from incoming artillery or mortars, but locals digging for construction materials. Grasses and low bushes have invaded the site of my old platoon CP and the rest of the hill that I remember from 1966 as a dome of raw earth riddled with fighting holes and trenches: a veritable prairie dog warren surrounded by thickets of concertina wire. At the southern base of the hill, where we often placed our listening post, a Vietnamese cattle herder whistles a shrill greeting. To the north, light blue ribbons of the Thu Bon River flow between sandy channels. Where Liberty Bridge once stood, there is only a concrete footing encrusted with asphalt, giving way to shallow water and sand.

Even the hard dirt trail leading to the village of Thon Bon where I lost Sgt. Wayne Dawson to a well-laid ambush by a unit of the Viet Cong R-20 Battalion in December 1966 has been obliterated by new construction and farming. But as Mien and I discover that afternoon after walking a kilometer north to the Thu Bon River, the far banks still are lined with thick vegetation—perfect for concealing an enemy company with its RPGs, Kalashnikovs, mortars and machine guns trained on us, waiting until we paused in the high grass to scout a suitable crossing before opening up with all they had. That was where one of my riflemen, PFC John R. Bates apologized to me as we lifted him into the chopper after taking two rounds in the chest. Even though surgery had taken most of a lung and he had a guaranteed ticket stateside, Bates returned to my platoon a short time later because he “got bored in the hospital.” The day he returned to our position on the hill at Nong Son Coal Mine, I scribbled in my platoon commander’s notebook: selflessness, sacrifice, courage are weak words to describe the stuff such men are made of.



Thu Bon River Ambush Site

If I expected some sort of epiphany to occur while standing on this hill after 35 years, it never materializes. Instead, an

abiding conviction wells up again: a feeling that we did well here as warriors—our tactics were sound and our unit cohesion and camaraderie constant. As a platoon commander, my narrow view of the war rarely extended beyond our TAOR and certainly did not encompass the Division level or theatre strategic and tactical overviews. Fortunately, the passage of time has produced a cornucopia of information—some of it from Peoples Army of Vietnam (PAVN) archives, some of it from analyses like Mark W. Woodruff's *Unheralded Victory: The Defeat of the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army 1961-1973*—that confirms what we sensed here in 1966 and 1967. However, this wellspring of pride and remembrance is laced with bitterness and sorrow over the Marines we lost and the nation we abandoned to an onslaught of 20 fully armed North Vietnamese divisions in 1975.



The Author on Phu Loc (6)

There is the lingering notion that the river of time has carried us far away from the landscape of 1966, so far that it exists now only in the minds of those who fought here. While on patrol through the hostile terrain east of our combat base I often watched my Marines wade across rice paddies against a backdrop of jungle and mountains with a feeling of historical *déjà vu*. My father, Brigadier General William (Buck) Buchanan, Basic School Class of 1935, landed with the Fourth Marine Division on the deadly beaches of Saipan, Tinian, Iwo Jima, Roi Namur. The 45 caliber Model 1911A1 pistol he carried ashore on those campaigns swung from my own web belt 21 years later in the Republic of South Vietnam. The cattle herder down slope and the farmer plowing his rice field beyond that grove of banana trees see a different landscape linked to the welfare of their families and the economic potential of the burgeoning agricultural province called Quang Nam.

Mien and I walk back down the hill at Phu Loc (6) towards the rented Honda that is waiting with a driver alongside a road that used to lead south to An Hoa combat base and now provides tourist access to the ancient ruins of My Son. Next to the trail, lying in the rust-red dirt, are the only two artifacts I've found today that prove it wasn't all just a dream: a piece of olive drab Fiberglas with a rubber switch cover attached to it and a fragment of sand bag fabric. I put them in my pocket as physical

links to a yesteryear that is receding more quickly as time passes.

The author was platoon commander of 2nd Plt. G Company from 17 October 1966 until late February 1967 at which time he became company executive officer. Any Marine who served in G Company during that general time frame is invited to contribute material to a book he is writing about operations at Con Thien and An Hoa. Send inquires to baylaurelpress@baylaurelpress.com.

Sit Reps

Vet Newsbriefs:

- Dennis Studenny writes "I broke down and spent the \$70.00 for the Marine Corps Association Directory. It's a CD-ROM with info on all MCA members, so if any of our guys are trying to find someone, let me know and I'll check it out."

To get a hold of Stu, you may contact him at:

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Broken Arrow, OK 74014
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E-Mail: stu_d_usmc@yahoo.com

Semper Fi.

STU

- Barney Barnes has provided the names and addresses of a couple more vets he's located, Salvatore J. Albano, from Enfield, CT and Nathaniel Frazier from Stuart, VA. Thanks Barney, and we'd like to welcome Salvatore and Nathaniel to the Golf 2/5 family.
- Dennis Studenny also located another G 2/5 vet in the *Old Breed Newsletter*, Ignacio Martinez from San Antonio, TX. "Marty" as we used to call him was the company clerk at An Hoa—welcome Marty to the Golf 2/5 family.

Missing In Action

We have lost touch with the following G 2/5 vets. Their last known city of residence is also provided below. If anyone knows their current address, please forward that information to me—the editor.

- Baker, Ferrall L.— Laguna Niguel, CA
- Dillenburg, Clyde – St. Joseph, MN
- Dima, G. E. – Spokane, WA
- Graham, James M. – Gibsonia, PA
- Gruner, John M. – Ft. Collins, CO
- McColloch, James H. – Charleston, SC
- Moore, Dave H. – Herndon, VA
- Moore, John H. – Payson, AZ
- Tant, William – Tuscaloosa, AL
- Zachary, Reid B. – Sultan, WA

USS HUE CITY Memorial

I hope all you Hue City Vets received your invitation to the Battle of Hue Memorial Weekend which was held on 11-13 January 2002. The memorial service is usually held at the end of January; however, due to the terrorist attacks, the memorial service was held early because of the possibility that the ship may have to deploy early.

The keynote speaker for the memorial was Col. Myron C. Harrington, USMC (Ret.). Col. Harrington was platoon commander in Delta Co., 1/5 during the Battle of Hue.

I know some Golf Co. Hue City vets attended the memorial and we will have a report from our Hue City Memorial "Correspondent", Barney Barnes, in the next issue of the newsletter.

Thoughts About 9-11-01, by Larry S. Ortiz

It was starting out as just another routine day. I was up a little after 5:00AM taking care of the three "s's" and getting ready to be at work by 6:30 moving a little slower than usual because of the cold I had. A little after 5:30 AM (PDT) the morning radio show host cut in with a news bulletin and announced that a plane had just crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City. She didn't have any details so I imagined that some little two-seater Cessna or a similar type airplane had accidentally crashed into one of the towers. I created this whole scenario in my mind about it being foggy or heavily overcast and that was the reason for the crash. As more information was available, the announcer said that it was in fact a passenger jet that had hit one of the towers of the World Trade Center. I immediately went to turn on the television and live reports were coming out of New York showing the upper floors of one of the two towers fully engulfed in flames. I stared at the TV in pure disbelief and continued to watch for several minutes when all of a sudden another passenger jet crashed into the second tower—I couldn't believe this was happening. As I watched a few minutes more, the first tower that was hit began to collapse and soon thereafter the second tower collapsed as well. As the buildings collapsed, smoke and dust billowed around the crashing buildings as the camera crews caught many people running from the area covered with the gray dust from the collapsing buildings.

What was going on? Was this really happening or was it some Hollywood special effects creation? As incredulous as it seemed—it was real. Reports immediately started coming in speculating about the possibilities of from 50,000 to possibly 100,000 casualties. As the news coverage continued, reports came out of Washington DC that a third plane had crashed into the Pentagon. How could this be happening—was the U.S. under attack? Soon after the report from DC, another report came in about a fourth plane crashing around Pittsburgh.

I made it to work and all anyone could do was talk about what was happening. Everyone was in a state of shock and disbelief. I tried to focus on things I needed to work on but was preoccupied with the events of the morning. People were running around reporting anything new they had heard or seen over the Internet—needless to say, it was a very unproductive morning. Before lunch we had an announcement at work that anyone

who wanted to leave could leave for the remainder of the day. As I was feeling really lousy from my cold and still in a state of shock, I went home. I hardly made it out to the parking lot and found my eyes welled up with tears. I had held it back as long as I could all morning and found myself crying as I drove home. I



turned on the television and more solid information was being reported about the terrorist attacks on the U.S. It also seemed that the networks were just continually playing and replaying the video of the planes crashing into the towers and the buildings collapsing. There were also photos of some of the people caught on the upper floors of the buildings leaping to their deaths rather than waiting to be burned to death. I watched TV for a while longer and the more I watched the more disgusted I became and the more I cried. How could this happen here? How could the U.S. homeland be under attack and from our own passenger planes?

It seems the older I'm getting the more emotional I get. These terrorist attacks brought back so many feelings of *the Nam* and how bad I felt when any of our guys were wounded or killed. I couldn't cry back then but I couldn't keep myself from crying now. The fact that possibly thousands of Americans were killed in the attacks felt the same as when my friends and fellow Marines were wounded or killed.

Well, we all now know the details about what happened on Sept. 11. Many reports characterized what happened as "cowardly" attacks on the U.S. I don't know about all you guys, but "cowardly" is not necessarily the word I would use. I think it took quite a bit of guts to get into an airplane and crash it into a building. Don't misunderstand my meaning; I do not make this statement with any admiration for what they did or how they accomplished their goal. What they did was ruthless, despicable, treacherous and pure evil. People who would crash an airplane full of innocent passengers into a building where hundreds or thousands of unsuspecting innocent people were working and going on with their daily lives are nothing more than animals.

I, like probably the rest of the country, felt absolutely miserable and depressed for weeks after the attacks. I was so angry and for a couple of weeks felt so helpless and powerless. I wanted to get back at these people, whoever they were, and make them pay for what they had done. I even thought about re-enlisting but knew I was past the age where that was possible.

One of the most frustrating parts of the terrorist attacks was I couldn't understand why these people would want to do this to us and why they seemed to hate Americans so much. What had we done to these people to make them hate us? Americans are the most generous people on earth. Whenever there is a disaster anywhere in the world, the U.S. is almost always the first to send aid and the largest amount. When we've gone to war, we've also been the most magnanimous victors—look at Korea, Japan and Germany and all of Europe that was rebuilt as a result of the generosity of the United States.

Soon after the attacks, *TIME Magazine* wrote an article and attempted to explain why the Muslim world harbored such deep hatred for the U.S. (which I read with interest trying to make sense out of these senseless acts). The overall reason, according to *TIME*, is narrowed down to U.S. foreign policy also characterized as “meddling” in the Middle East. But the hatred seems to go back even further than that. It seems to stem from the Muslim bitterness over the Crusades (at which point in history the U.S. was not even in existence), and “other military campaigns, plus decades of indignation over colonialism.” It gets even worse in that the U.S. is perceived as not just the enemy of the Arabs and Muslims but the enemy of God. This twisted thinking originated with the good ol' Ayatulla Khomeini who proclaimed the U.S. “the Great Satan.” Unfortunately, this twisted logic has been perpetuated by other Muslim extremists and militants like Osama bin Laden. *TIME* goes on to explain that the “greatest single source of Arab displeasure with the U.S. is its stalwart support of Israel: politically (notably at the UN), economically (\$840 million in aid annually) and militarily (\$3 billion more, plus access to advanced U.S. weapons). To a majority of Arabs, Israel, as a Jewish state, is an unwelcome, alien entity.” As far as why bin Laden has such deep hatred for the U.S., *TIME* states the reason is “the U.S. troop presence in his country (Saudi Arabia) dating to the military buildup before the 1991 Gulf War precipitated by Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. To bin Laden, as well as many nonradical Muslims, the presence of infidel soldiers in the homeland of the Prophet Muhammad is a sacrilege.”

The article goes on to add other bits of information as to why Arabs and Muslims hate the U.S. all of which are totally illogical. Even though it's illogical—it's real and we've entered a period where these radical fanatics are taking action against us. We're four months into the war against terrorism and all I can say is I'm certainly glad we have the Bush administration in office handling this military campaign and not “Bubba” Clinton and his cronies and Hollywood groupies. I personally have such contempt for Clinton the “draft-dodger” and how his administration single-handedly decimated our military and our military readiness by slashing the defense budget. He had such contempt for the military that he didn't even allow our Marine guards at the White House to wear their uniforms. This for me was, and remains, unforgivable! Yet, under Clinton's administration he

never hesitated to send the military here or there for whatever reason (mostly to distract the public and his critics from his indiscretions).

If you have a computer and e-mail, you've undoubtedly been the recipient of many e-mails forwarding many “open letters” by sometimes some notable people, and some other letters by other “regular” individuals. One of these open letters I read talked about the “feminism” of the U.S. By that, the writer talked about how, particularly under the Clinton administration, the military became “feminized”. Under this ridiculous era of “political correctness” Clinton applied so much pressure on the military to integrate women into traditionally male roles. I can remember back about a year or more ago, some prominent female politician criticized the Marine Corps as overly aggressive and a hostile environment for women. As a result of all this political correctness, all of the branches of the service, except for the Marine Corps, train women with the male recruits. The result of this is that the previous standards set for men have been lowered so that the females can get through the training successfully. HELLO! What are these idiots thinking?! I'm really not a male chauvinist pig and my comments have nothing to do with being anti-women (which my wife appreciates). Based upon my experience in Nam, we need to train the meanest mother-f--ers we can recruit to go out and kill the enemy. War is not a game and in addition to actual combat, war is extremely physically rigorous and demanding. I know there must be some females who could hump out in the bush in 110-degree temperatures with 70 lbs. of combat gear (or more) on their back—but not many. Do any of our misguided politicians who support political correctness think that because we may have women in our military, they (the enemy) are going to be more respectful of women and less likely to kill them? What utter stupidity. What this actually accomplishes is to lower the fighting capability of our military (except for our Marines). Also, the navy has spent billions of dollars re-fitting ships building quarters for women integrating women into the ship's crew. I believe this is again misguided political correctness and a waste of billions of dollars to the U.S. taxpayer.

I must clarify at this point that I am not against women in our military, as I know several of our vets have daughters who have served and are serving in the military. Women have always had a role in the military, and a very important role. There will always be a role for them in the military but, I don't feel that role is to be trained for combat. And because of political correctness and our politicians trying to integrate women into more traditional male roles, I believe the fighting capability of the military has been degraded and jeopardized because of lower standards in the attempt to integrate women into combat roles. When are politicians and other misguided individuals in positions of power, going to realize that there really is a biological and physical difference between men and women? The plain biological fact is men, as a whole, are physically stronger than women.

It seems that there is always some article in the news extolling the latest accomplishment such as the first woman to be an astronaut, or the first woman to command a naval ship, or the first woman General, or whatever other “first woman” accomplishment in a traditionally male role may be the news of the

day. Does anyone really think the U.S. will allow women into combat? I don't—and rightly so. So if this is reality, why are we crippling our military capability trying to train women for roles they will never perform and are not physically capable of performing? It's just like the lowering of standards for fire fighters and policemen (I'm sorry, I guess the politically correct word would be police persons). Let's see, if you were trapped on the fifth floor of a burning building and needed to be carried out by a fire "person", would you rather have a 180 lb. male or a 115 lb. female trying to rescue you and carry you out of the burning building? I rest my case.

Another result of the terrorist attack has been all the publicity about how the country has become unified. I'm not so sure that's really the case because I've also read that the public display of patriotism by reciting the pledge of allegiance, singing the national anthem at public functions and flying the United States flag may be offensive to some minority groups or recent immigrants. What complete bullshit! We all know this is a country of immigrants—our so-called "melting pot". There still seems to be a flood of immigrants into the country and I am certainly not in a position to say if that is good, bad or indifferent. I know a lot of immigrants are filling highly technical fields that could not be filled otherwise and other uneducated immigrants are filling the service jobs and agricultural jobs that natural born Americans feel are beneath them (even though our natural born citizens are unqualified for other jobs). So there is a need for continued immigration and America is still the only and brightest shining beacon of hope and freedom for oppressed people on this planet. However, my belief is, if someone wants to come to the U.S. to partake of its freedoms and opportunity, they sure as better get with the program and learn the language and become a productive participant in this country—or get the hell out and go back where they came from. And furthermore, if the American flag and national anthem is offensive to them, try Afghanistan or Cuba, or China or Russia or wherever but there is no better place on earth to live than the great U.S.A!



A couple of weeks after the terrorist attacks there was a board of supervisors meeting here in Santa Barbara. One of the supervisors started the meeting off by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. The chairperson (a woman) reprimanded this man for doing this. She not only reprimanded the man, but fired him on the spot saying that he had no authority to do what he did and it was insensitive and divisive to recite the Pledge of Allegiance as it may be offensive to some members. I was flabbergasted at this woman's stupidity. Needless to say, it has gotten much publicity and people were outraged to the point that there is a recall coming up for vote for this woman. There are a few bleeding-

heart-liberals contesting the recall—but we'll get this stupid woman removed from office.

Another fallout of political correctness is the focus on "diversity". What I think the term "diversity" is supposed to mean, is respect of differences whether it be race, religion or sexual orientation. I can live with that. But I think the problem of so much emphasis on diversity is to factionalize groups leading to feelings of victimization, which actually creates more divisiveness rather than bringing disparate groups together. Growing up as an Hispanic in New Mexico, many children spoke only Spanish. At that time there was no bilingual education and the way the school systems handled it was to "outlaw" the speaking of Spanish in school and students were forced to learn English. I've heard criticism of this approach but on the other hand, I can also see the benefit. Some Hispanics believe being forced to give up their native language also forced them to give up their culture. As an Hispanic, I disagree. My culture is more than a language. But more than being Hispanic, I am an American and I am very proud of my American culture. I think we should start focusing on what unites us rather than what keeps us apart. And, in my opinion, our common English language is very important in that unity. I know from experience that I need to speak and to communicate well in English in order to be able to make a living for myself. Therefore, I was in favor of getting rid of bilingual education in California. If I were to move to Mexico, or France or Germany to live, I would certainly expect to have to learn the language of the country I moved to and wouldn't expect that that country made everything available to me in English. And, if I chose to move to another country and was offended by their public displays of patriotism and the flying of that country's flag, that would be my problem—not theirs.

I don't know if many of you watched the Rose Bowl parade on New Year's day. But if you did, you saw the opening of the parade with a fly-over by Air Force planes and the Marine Corps Band taking the lead in the parade and playing the National Anthem. There was a lot of flag waving throughout the parade and floats with patriotic themes and parade participants decked out in red, white and blue. It was great! I was gratified to see that the bleeding-heart backlash to such a public display of patriotism hadn't been stifled in the least. There was even a float entered by a Vietnamese woman who actually sold her house to raise the money to build the float and enter the parade. She did it to express her gratitude to the U.S. as she was an immigrant after the Vietnam War. WOW! Here's someone who realizes what she has and I admire her recognition of what it means to be an American. As much of a cliché as it may seem, Freedom isn't free and I believe every citizen has a responsibility to our country to protect that freedom.

As I said earlier in this editorial, after the terrorist attacks I felt helpless and powerless. I no longer feel that way and I feel confident and optimistic that we can win a war against terrorism wherever these terrorists may hide out. America is more than an ideal and I truly believe we can withstand any threat to our freedom and our way of life—and what's more, with a truly united country, we will prevail and defeat these threats wherever and whenever they arise!

P.S. After I wrote this editorial, I had my wife (Melba) read it. Her comment was that I started out writing about 9-11

and digressed to discussing (bashing) the Clinton administration, political correctness, women in the military, and diversity and she didn't understand how this anything to do with 9-11. This editorial was my vehicle to express my feelings about 9-11 first. Since 9-11 we're living in a different country than we were before 9-11. I, like I suspect most Americans, believed we would always be spared an attack on our soil—we learned differently. As horrible and senseless as those attacks were, we, as a country also learned something from them. We may be the only "super" power left but we're not invulnerable to attack by a determined enemy. And while I still feel the U.S.A. is the greatest country on earth, I see how political correctness, diversity, and the lowering of standards in the military only serves to weaken this country. And only if we are truly united and work toward common goals, will we be able to defeat these new threats.

Semper Fi,

In Our Thoughts and Prayers

I have just learned that my good friend and fellow Golf Co. vet, George Haught recently had a heart attack. He had angioplasty to unblock two arteries and the prognosis looks good. So far it doesn't appear that his doctor's are recommending by-pass surgery. George, we'll keep you in our prayers for a full recovery. —*the editor.*

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Sign on at <http://www.2ndbn5thmarines.com>

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Golf 2/5 Association Membership Form: (New Members Only)

Name _____ AKA _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone(____) _____ Work Phone(____) _____ E-Mail Address _____

Years Served _____ Platoon/Squad _____ MOS _____

Optional: Wounded / Date _____ Location _____

Dues: \$25.00 first year; \$10.00 per year thereafter. If you are on 50% or more disability, just send \$10.00 first year and \$10.00 per year thereafter. If these amounts are a financial hardship, contact Lance. We want everyone to be a part of the Association.

Mail New Membership Forms to: **G 2/5 Association, c/o Lance K. Machamer, 4 Lighthouse Street, #10, Marina del Rey, CA 90292**

**Golf 2/5 Association
c/o Larry S. Ortiz
7064 Scripps Crescent
Goleta, CA 93117**

Address Correction Requested

First Class