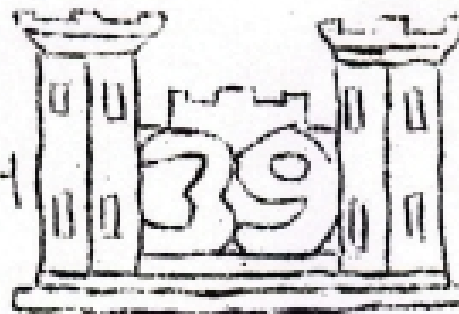


THIS MONTH



WITH THE

VOL IV No 5

JUNE 1971

An Authorized Unofficial Publication

HEADQUARTERS
39th Engineer Battalion (Combat)
Public Information Office
APO San Francisco 96325

Published Monthly
By The 39th Engr Bn
Public Information Office
(H&Mco) Phone 958-4122

LTC W. R. Mann, Commanding
1LT Thomas S. Smolen, PIO
SP5 Daniel V. McVann, Staff Writer

THE VIEWS AND OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS PUBLICATION ARE
NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY.

THOSE THAT DO CARE

SP5 D. McVann

The Vietnam War has resulted in vast numbers of casualties but very few Americans fully realize the extent to which the Vietnamese people have been victimized by this very war and in turn driven out of their own homes. In truth, there are literally thousands of refugees who are searching for new places to settle and start anew.

For many, the immediate flight from their home village is to the closest major town in their particular province. Here, most often, the homeless refugee is met with an already overcrowded town—the result of the tremendous influx of villagers. Fleeing one problem they are suddenly confronted with another. Often as not they resort to building a cardboard box and scrap lumber shanty. A home that leaves much to be desired but for the most part there still lingers that ray of hope for a chance to improve upon their plight.

It was with this in mind that the 59th Land Clearing Company responded to the pleas of the MACV advisory team and the district chief of Binh Son. The request was for assistance in a civic

(can't col. 2)

action program planned to aid the beleaguered Vietnamese of Binh Son Province. The task would be to clear 20 acres of land near the village of Phong Tho, located 4 kilometers off QL-1. With the land cleared, many of the Vietnamese that have been forced into a cardboard box existence could vastly improve their lot—an answer to their unswerving hopes for that brighter future.

For the men of the 59th the task was a relatively simple one. With the clearing finished the construction for the new village is already well under way. The dozers of the 59th opened up not only the land but also opportunities that for these people had only been dreams before. A job, yes. But much more for those that do care—for people.

"LET'S TALK IT OVER"

FROM THE DESK OF THE COMMANDER

LTC W.R. Mann

You know, we in the 39th Engr "Blue Balls" are no different than the next unit. Each of us has certain problem areas.

One source of problems is a lack of communications. This can occur between anyone: individuals, friends, fellow members of a squad or platoon, between subordinates and the chain of command, between ethnic and racial groups, and just plain between anyone. I firmly believe that just plain talk will solve many of our problems. The talk doesn't necessarily solve the problem but it does bring it out, makes both sides of any communications gap aware of it and thus present it for solution. Let's talk more about our work, promotions, living conditions, family, personal problems or any item of concern or worry.

I think you are all acquainted with me enough to realize how concerned I am about the health, morale and well being of every man in the "Blue Balls"—whether he is the newly arrived recruit or the short timer about to step on the plane.

I have my open door policy every Wednesday night in Chu Lai and I am available to anyone in field during my visits. I personally use every opportunity I have to seek you out for a talk in order to know your problems. I encourage you to present your problems to your chain of command or myself. Of the many problems discussed during my "open door" sessions and on visits, I find many of the cases have not been discussed with your leaders in your companies. Almost everytime these are the exact individuals who finally resolve the problem. Now I am willing to talk to anyone, anytime, anywhere—in fact I enjoy your conversations but why wait for me to get a problem solved. You would be surprised how rapid a problem can be solved locally.

Let's talk it over. We are all part of the "Blue Ball" unit. I am concerned about every member of our family. All of your leaders are concerned about their men. Let's get together and solve our problems. Let's take the time to talk it over!

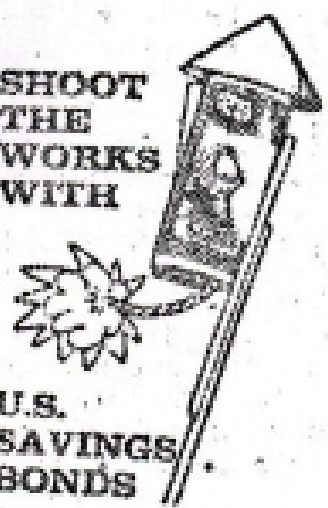
REFLECTIONS ON LEAVING

Lt Michael Shaw

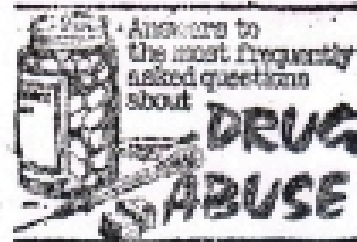
It was a good job,
a worthwhile one.
And now as I leave, I ask,
What did it do for them,
For those we are here to help?
Did it make them better people
for my being here?
Hopefully so—
But looking back I suddenly realize
That it is really my life,
my lot, and my living
that have been enriched.
I am a better person because of
the time I have spent—
or more accurately, invested here.
I know more about myself,
And that is the greatest journey
a person can make...
The journey of discovering one's
self.
It is never ending and never lacks
for interest.
Yes, it was a good job,
a worthwhile one.
But most worthwhile for me.

M.S.

SHOOT
THE
WORKS
WITH



U.S.
SAVINGS
BONDS



CROSSWORD PUZZLE Answers on Page 8

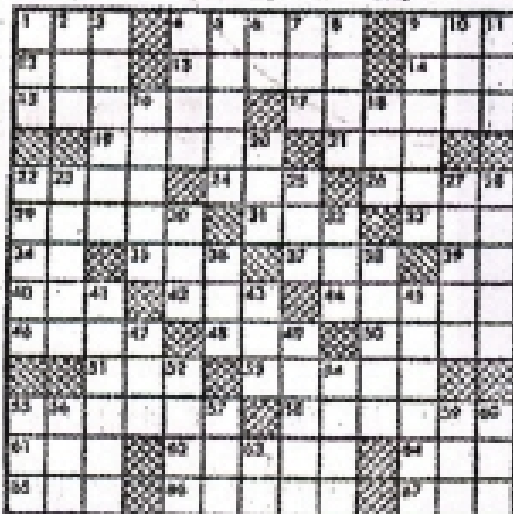
ACROSS

- 1-Room in harbor
- 4-Shakespearean character
- 9-Uncooked
- 12-Flange
- 13-Benefit
- 14-Moore
- 15-Tenify
- 17-Checked
- 18-Ingress
- 21-Repairs
- 22-Word of sorrow
- 24-Number
- 25-Flexible leave
- 29-Slugs down in mail
- 31-Place
- 32-Click beetle
- 34-Part of "to do"
- 35-Southern
- 37-Hindu symbols
- 39-Compass point
- 40-Face for portrait
- 42-Equality
- 44-Covers
- 45-Walk
- 46-Shallow vessel
- 50-Possessive pronoun
- 51-Negative
- 53-Lam
- 55-Male angry
- 58-Packagings
- 61-Beverage
- 62-Contending tests
- 64-Period of time
- 65-Free of
- 66-Fewest
- 67-Community

- 6-Sound
- 8-Present (ending)
- 7-Godless of feeling
- 8-Genre of office
- 9-Classified
- 10-Point
- 11-Small lamp
- 16-Expanding
- 18-Doctrine
- 20-Attraction
- 22-Collect
- 24 (start)
- 25-Overwork
- 26-Work
- 27-One defeated
- 28-Frost
- 30-Watson
- 32-Sailor (ending)
- 36-Sweet sleep
- 38-Moose



- 41-Cared for
- 43-Student
- 45-Messiness
- 47-Seed container
- 49-Approaches
- 52-Marvle
- 54-Light rain
- 55-Delice
- 56-Mohammedan name
- 57-Born
- 59-Editors
- 60-Mounted
- 63-Baby-torn daily



Dist. by United Feature Syndicate, Inc. For use in National Service Newspapers Corp.

Is marijuana an addicting drug?

No. Marijuana does not lead to a physical dependence. Therefore it can not be considered addicting. Chronic users become psychologically dependent upon the effects of marijuana. Thus it is classified as habituating. The fact that a drug is not addicting has little relationship to its potential harm, since dependence, whether psychological or physical, is a serious matter.

Are all drugs harmful?

Every drug is harmful when taken in excess. Some drugs can also be harmful if taken in dangerous combinations or by hypersensitive people in minute or ordinary amounts. The fact that certain drugs can produce enormously beneficial results has produced the false notion that pills will solve all problems. Society must develop a new respect for all drugs. Drugs that affect the mind can have subtle or obvious side effects. These can be immediate or may become evident only after long, continuous use.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT....NEW INSIGHT INTO MARIJUANA

"In talking to local officers, parents and teenagers, the users of marijuana biggest argument in support of the habit is the claim that "pot" is no worse than getting drunk on alcohol.

But if getting high on marijuana is as bad as intoxication from booze, this alone should be sufficient condemnation. An additional hazard of marijuana is that when a new and more powerful drug is introduced into a circle of "pot" smokers the group will often take up the new drug. Studies show most hard drug addicts did start with marijuana. New evidence reported by Dr Davis Wade, Texas state commissioner of mental health should make the most avid user reconsider his views.

"We are getting substantial research evidence to indicate that marijuana is causing brain damage--irreversible brain damage. This is organic cellular damage. First it causes personality alterations...a flattening of the personality." His conclusions should make you think. "persons who suffer such brain damage do not ever recover." (reprinted from the Andrews County News, Andrews, Tex.)
THINK ABOUT IT; IT MIGHT WELL MEAN MORE THAN YOU ONCE THOUGHT!



THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Chaplain Billy D Ingram

In a recent letter from the Surgeon General to the Chief of Chaplains some important sentences caught my attention.

"The drug problem is basically a cultural one...Each case is individual and involves a construct of values, goals, concepts of meaning and an overall belief in the value of or disvalue of life itself...The ultimate answers will come from discovering values and systems of meaning which can be accepted by the individuals concerned...The nation itself must find a philosophy of commitment to a way of life more important than how one feels at the moment, or even whether one lives or dies. Without such a goal and the sense of purpose involved why not take the easy way?...Since most of the problems troubling drug users are related to questions about life and its meaning, the importance of a viable, practical religious approach is clear. Whether the labels are religious or not the product is definitely in that department.

Accepting as true the Surgeon General's analysis of the drug problem, then every one in leadership positions has a moral

responsibility to re-evaluate their values and struggle with a philosophy of meaning. Religion has been doing this since the beginning of man. Religious systems have struggled, waned, changed, reformed and revived. At times in history religions has been found wanting. But always former religious systems have been surpassed by new enlightenment and renewed meaning, which called forth renewed commitment to life. At no time has religion been ignored without a major crisis developing. Everyone in leadership positions who feels disenchanting with religion can not afford to just ignore it. Instead we must seriously enter into dialogue and rediscover meaning and workable values.

If we thing modern religion is unworkable, irrelevant, then for survival sake offer a better answer. And remember those with drug problems are

(can't page col 1)

(can't col 2)

(Chaplain's Corner con't)

usually more emotional than rational. They are not however, too different from from any of us. We are all emotional animals who live more by our feelings than by our logic. Whatever meaning or value we find logical must also be exciting. It must not only cause us to think but also to love. Before we act we usually "feel". Before we commit we become concerned. A value system will not work when we are intellectually aloof, but when we are emotionally involved.

One other quote from the Surgeon General that should create some reflection.

"To the extent that our culture has identified itself with the primacy of material affluence it is in trouble... We envelope people tribally (McLuhan) with a way of life that sets personal pleasure, freedom from pain and frustration, and the rejection of discomfort... as the only goals worthy of pursuit... add to all of that the teaching of the culture as to the socially approved utilization of alcohol in anesthetizing for enjoyment... despite the very real physical and psychological pitfalls involved, and there should be no surprise that the use of marijuana and hard drugs seems only a right and proper to many of us. It almost seems as if we want a drug problem."

ANNOUNCEMENT

Concerning religious retreats. The only dates left for the 39th Engr Bn to receive allotted spaces to is August 6-9, a Catholic retreat. However, July 30-Aug 2 is a Protestant retreat for the 23rd Inf and they will probably share several spaces with the 39th. August 16-19 is a Jewish retreat and all Jewish personnel are encouraged to attend. Also on any given Saturday we may be given notice that some unit has a number of allocations to share with the 39th. Orders have to be cut immediately as the personnel would leave Monday morning. Therefore, if the Chaplain has a list of persons who wish to attend a religious retreat he can submit your name and get you off to a retreat some unsure week. If you are interested, tell the Chaplain. The retreat is a one time experience during any tour.

SAFETY

CPT Michael Davis
Bn Safety Officer

Although it's impossible to determine why, the safety posture of the battalion has taken a sharp turn for the better with only three reportable accidents as of the 28th of June. Whatever the reason, it's the men of the battalion, E5 and below, who deserve the credit, because they are the ones who are most exposed to the hazards.

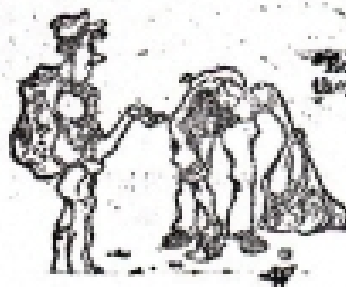
On the 2nd of June PFC Robert J Pence of D Co was driving his 5 ton dump to Tien Phouc when the brakes failed causing him to hit a Vietnamese woman. She suffered multiple fractures of the legs. An investigation indicated that PFC Pence was not at fault.

On the 16th of June, Sgt Ronnie A Stepp of C Company was backing a 5 ton dump in the Chu Lai trash dump when a Vietnamese woman tried to jump up on the tail gate. She fell to the ground and was run over by the left rear duals. An investigation indicated that Sgt Stepp was not at fault.

On the 18th of June, PSG Walter H Kujath of C Company was attempting to break a 2" by 4" board by placing one end on a rock and jumping on the board. Good try but it didn't work. He broke his leg instead.

You guys are doing great as far as accidents go, but what about all this speeding? There were about 6 DR's for speeding this month, which is about 6 too many. Speeding increases your chances for an accident and you don't gain very much time at all.

Be sure and watch for those "congested areas", too. Remember, it's where there are 3 or more houses within 50 meters of each other. I know that it's hard to decide just when to slow down, so we are going to ask the MP's to post speed limit signs.



"Look, they call it slow!"

PROGRESS IS OUR BUSINESS

By SFC Lee W. Pitts

To the average soldier in today's vast and modern Army "work" is a foul word, but to the combat engineer, especially those in the 39th Engineer Battalion with attached 59th Land Clearing Company, 137th Light Equipment Company and the 511th Panel Bridge Company, it is their most important product.

Manhours and equipment hours well into the thousands have seen this battalion and attached companies produce a work load to be envied. Jobs assigned have not been relegated to the major projects of roads and bridges alone. For times have often found our units hauling cement for a neighboring unit's swimming pool, assisting the installation engineer with 290's, helping the 91st Evac by loading services of a crane. The list could go on for an indeterminate amount of time, but our big purpose behind this story is to plaudit the units of this battalion for the exceptional work overall.

To save time and space this writer has taken the highlights from June's very busy schedule of activities and used them in an effort to accredit all units concerned.

The construction work accomplished by the line companies with the aid of the 137th equipment capabilities and some super hauling by the 511th, reached its peak with the rush effort to complete Route 518. This project assigned to A Company and often hampered by delays caused by sniper fire and halts due to tactical convoys is worthy of praise. From the drivers of proof trucks (always a dangerous job) to mine sweep teams every man pitched in to make the engineer effort one of pride.

As we leave A Co we move on to Bravo Co and Route 524/523. Not hampered with the convoys found on 518 and few enemy incidents B Company progressed remarkably proving themselves capable as they had first honors at shooting asphalt. This on 524. Work on 523 to date has been mostly at the pioneer road level with much culvert work.

Probably one of the more noted projects is that of upgrading 521. Noted because it is located near the new infamous My Lai. Work on 521 is under direction of C Company and has been mostly pile bridges construction and preparing a causeway. Not to be forgotten is the effort expended on the road itself, culverts and headwall construction leading the way.

The longest and most hazardous road is Route 533 under construction by Delta Co. Presently in the stages of shooting asphalt they can also be seen constructing steel stringer bridges. Progress has managed to forge ahead remarkably.

As for an illustrious

(Can't page col 1)



"WELL, I DON'T THINK IT HAS AS MUCH CLASS AS A CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY!"

(Progress Is Our Business con't)

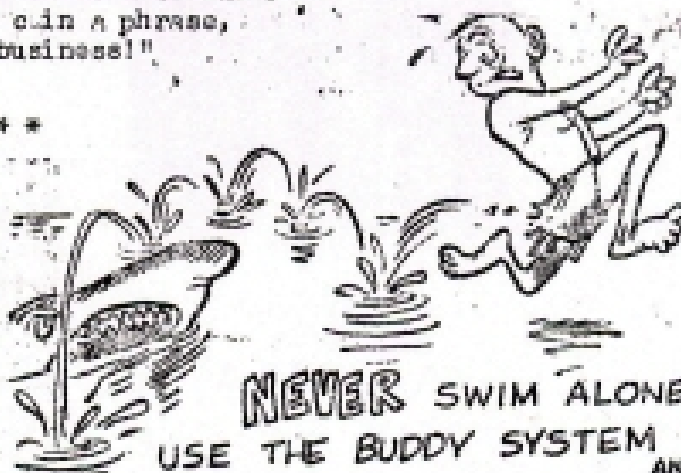
record, the 59th Land Clearing can't be beat. Far and away the movingest company, the 59th can be credited with land clearing operations as far north as Khe Sanh and more recently civic action projects in the Binh Son Province. Constantly facing danger, the 59th reported 20 enemy incidents, destroyed 260 meters of enemy tunnels and trenches and 21 bunkers in the month of June alone while clearing 1535 acres. This was done on top of a number of unit moves.

Hardworking though the companies might prove, it can be said without hesitation that progress could not be what it has been without the equipment assistance of the 137th Light Equipment. Moving and working with the line companies this unit, very seldom able to reunite itself, was responsible for the major part of all earthmoving. A platoon from the 137th that is responsible for the rock quarry crushed 4170 cubic yards of 2 1/2 (-).

All line companies have their own contingent of 5 ton dumps, but none of them could come close to the record held by the 511th Panel Bridge in haul support. Even the massive effort by the 59th and the awesome record of the 137th must share the limelight with the 511th. Often working when others would stop, this unit accomplished tasks that would shame a dump truck company.

Last we forget our hats off to the support sections at Bn Hqs, in particular the heavy equipment section, which kept rolling at all odds and provided support unequalled by any other section of its size.

I should elaborate more, but it would only serve to lessen the tremendous tasks accomplished by all. T. coin a phrase, "Progress truly is our business!"



WANTED WANTED WANTED WANTED WANTED
WANTED WANTED WANTED WANTED WANTED
WANTED WANTED WANTED WANTED WANTED
WANTED WANTED WANTED WANTED WANTED
WANTED WANTED WANTED WANTED WANTED

ANY suggestions, comments to help improve This Month with the 39th. It's your battalion paper so do your part to help improve it. Make it what you want.

Also anxious to receive any stories or poems, articles etc. that you might care to write. Can deal with your work, human interest, anything. Everything accepted with thanks. No need for any particular format—take care of re-writes and proper format and spelling here. Think about it. Will give you something to do with all that spare time.

To send anything in just send it with your mail clerks. Have them dropped off at distribution for PIO.

Don't complain if you haven't taken the time to do anything about improving it. It can only be as good as you want it. If you want something, let us know about it!

It is up to you—take the time and act now.

"FORTY TRUCKS" or

"THE 511th DUMPS AND HUMPS"

Lt N. McLaughlin



Telephones started ringing, 39th's
getting a load,
Something's up—a push to finish a road.
From Col. Bacchus to LTC Munn,
Route 518 was under the gun.
Aided by 5 tons from Bravo, Charlie, Delta
and all,
The 511 was called on to haul.
Rising early, motor stables nearly in dark,
Men feverishly busy in the moonlight
bridge park.
Bright sun rising in the east; headquarters
barely waked,
Two convoys of forty roar out the gate.
Escorted by police with lights, sirens
and guns,
Forty trucks with rock to be stopped by
no one.
Rumbling south through Binh Son and finally
Quang Ngai,
Three graders were needed to spread and
scarify.
South, then north on QL-1 all day,
Will my truck hold together?—Lord let
us pray.
Finally entering Chu Lai base camp at dusk,
Work's hardly started, there's tires to
burst!
Mechanics and drivers working late into
the night,
Were so instrumental in the 511th's plight.
But early next morning as the sun would arise,
Forty dumps at the gate—no surprise.
Working two weeks straight with never a scuff,
Who ever heard of Sunday afternoon off?
With a deadline to meet, rocking all of the road,
The forty odd dump trucks had carried the load.
Much to the credit of the NCO's and men,
The 511th had done it again!

ANSWERS TO THE CROSSWORD PUZZLE



GUN	ROMES	RAW
DIP	AVAIL	ANA
DEBONE	BEINED	
ENTRY	ASK	
ALAS	TEN	WELD
WRES	GET	ROK
AR	JAN	TAL
SE	SIT	PAN
COMES	STEP	PAN
OURS	NOT	TEMPT
WADDEN	ABLES	
ARE	LEERS	ERA
RID	LEAST	RED

