



Guardmount

Volume 6, Issue 1

July, 2000



TIGER UNIT

On 5/12/1967, Bien Hoa took a VC attack that was only surpassed by the "TET" offensive of 1968. Thirty-three years is an awfully long time but in my mind it was yesterday.

Either the day of or the day after the attack our base commander called my "flight" and a group of other Air Policemen into the base theater.

It seemed the 173rd Air Borne was pulling out on a mission. They were our perimeter security for the base and located well off our 3rd perimeter fence.

With the 173rd gone our base commander needed 50 A/P's to be formed into 10 five man teams to deploy about 100 to 200 yards outside the 3rd fence in the free fire zone. We were to act as an early warning device and if the VC came we were to engage them. Above and beyond the 50 volunteers there would be a number of reserve SAT's, specially equipped to back up these 10 teams. Our call signs were "Tiger 1 through 10, plus several special "Tiger" numbers for the SAT teams. All teams were lead by a Sgt. or experienced Airman 1st Class. For a week we were deployed at dusk and came in at dawn.

Memories from this week, in one form or ANOTHER were burned into my brain from then until this day.

For the purpose of this article three of these memories stick out quite vividly. Rain, Devastation, and Friendly Fire.

RAIN

I had never really liked rain, just tolerated it. Prior to this week, I always thought the torrential rains of "NAM" always aided the enemy. In this "Tiger" unit situation, I felt the reverse was true. It was like a safety blanket that helped us blend in and quieted the fear pounding in my chest. To this day, rain still has a very calming safe affect on me.

"Hueys" & "Puffs"

I had never seen a "Huey" or "Puff" in action up close until then. Two or three Hueys must have also been on a base protection mission also, because they kept making runs over us and parallel to the base perimeter. Then one night they seemed to find what they were looking for. Two Hueys began an attack, not far in front of us. "Puff" also came in and took part. The humming of those mini guns and the feeling of the bullets hitting the ground was truly amazing. The most fascination thing was the LASER effect caused by one tracer

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VSPA POINTS OF CONTACT

President: Kevin Fitzgerald
1219 2nd Ave. S
Nashville, TN 37210
(615) 242-8449

Vice Pres: Steve Gattis
616 W. Medallion Ct.
Ontario, CA 91762
gattis@gte.net

Treasure: Steve Ray
2887 Hampton Cove Way
Hampton Cove, AL 25763
SP483@Juno.com
steve.ray@LMCO.com

Membership: Terry Morris
W5148 E. Bush
Pardeeville, WI 53954
(608) 429-9090
incoming@jvlnet.com

Chaplain: Steve Janke
739 Hill Street
Carlstadt, NJ 07072
jank953208@aol.com

Guardmount: Dave Dobson
5315 Bevens Avenue
Spring Hill, FL 34608
(352) 683-2767
camranh@atlantic.net

Website www.vspa.com

Notice

The two numbers on the upper right corner of the label indicates the year through which your dues is paid.

If you have an address change please send it to me at 5315 Bevens Ave, Spring Hill, FL 34608.

Dave Dobson
Guardmount Editor

ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL ... AND DEADLY

At Bien Hoa, as at all Vietnam bases, the most commonly seen animals were the sentry dogs, now rightfully celebrated in poems and stories. However, there were a lot other "critters" slithering, crawling, creeping, and growling in and around the base, sometimes to the disgust and sometimes to the amusement of dogs and men. Do you remember any of these?

Despite the destruction of war, the native wild-life (and I don't just mean the VC) hung on the outskirts in rain forests and rice paddies and sometimes invaded the base itself. A grandpa python, which grew a foot or two with each telling, was caught crossing the perimeter and shot, I believe, by 3rd SPS CMSgt Parker. I saw the remains of our "longest sapper" on the perimeter road. Chief Parker wanted it made into a belt or belts. It looked to me to be at least ten feet long, but it could have been even longer. A lot of rice paddy rats had gone down that old snake's gullet!

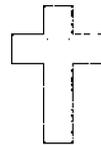
Pythons were less threatening than cobras and other poisonous jungle snakes, which liked to hide in the dark bunkers for a little sabotage work – nice surprise during a rocket attack! I can't remember that anyone in my time with the 3rd SPS went one-on-one with poison fangs, but there were other poisonous characters around.

When the man I replaced gave me a one-day tour of the base a day before going back to the world, he seemed even more jumpy than most extreme short-timers. He confided to me that a large rat had come into the hut a few weeks before and had bitten his bared toe. Since he couldn't catch the rat for examination, the doc insisted he get the whole course of anti-rabies shots – entailing a series of long

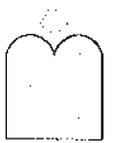
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President's Corner



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



GOOD DAD'S

Columnist Leonard Pitts Jr. grew up with a father he describes as physically present but emotionally absent. In his first book on parenting, Pitts openly chronicles his struggle to come to terms with his alcoholic father and the climate of fear he had created in their home. Pitts challenges all men to resolve the resentment toward their abusive fathers instead of passing it on to the next generation.

There's a passage in Hebrews 12 that applies to all Christians, but has special relevance to dads. It reads: "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord; look carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled." (vs 14-15)

Think of what could happen in our families if we emptied our hearts of bitterness and made peaceful relationships our goal! If we have been blessed with a wise and loving father, we should be grateful and follow his example. But if our father has failed us, we must rely on God's grace, resolve our anger toward him, and strive to be the kind of dad and grand dad we never had. It won't be easy, but with the help of our heavenly Father as a perfect example, we can learn to be Good Dads.

Portions of this article were taken from Our Daily Bread and Radio Bible Class Ministries.

Chaplain Steve Janke

I realized on the 4th I needed to write a note for this issue of Guardmount. Then I realized I'm way out in the boonies and the electric is off because of rain and lightning - - (I've lived here before. You might have it on again in a few minutes or two weeks.) The closest town is 30 miles away and they may not have power - phones are dead and I don't have a cell phone. So by candle light I began to write and thought about us in Vietnam and how we always made do with what we had. I realized I had my car with really expensive gas in it and so I was mobile if need be. Again I remember the times in Nam when we made jeeps run that shouldn't have - got hot water - from where? Had clean cloths, pictures, etc - and all under very awful conditions - but we made it - - -

So, I hope everyone had a great Independence Day . . . I learned or re-learned a lesson - we learned how to act as a team in Vietnam - or individually when needed; we learned to be independent and how to still fit into a team. And today - VSPA is growing thanks to each member - and as a group we are independent too - but never forgetting the motto: We take care of our own!

See you all at Lackland? Hope so!

I'm still out here in the boonies for a week: closest AFB is Whiteman - B-2 people! Guess I'll get out my flashlight and my AAA map - - - Till next time.

Kevin Fitzgerald, President



RETIREMENT



Retirement Ceremonies B/General Richard A. Coleman/Ground Breaking Ceremony

On the evening of 15 March 2000, a Country and Western Gala was held at the Gateway Officers Club, Lackland AFB, Texas to honor B/General Richard A. Coleman, wife Maggie and the Coleman family on the occasion of his retirement. Special commemorative coins honoring B/General Coleman's retirement were given to each guest. A more limited edition was given to B/General Coleman and VIP's. Many surprise's were in store for guests as Major General (Ret) Thomas Sadler, (former and first General Officer Top Cop) sang a couple of songs, one of which was, "Momma don't let your babies grow up to be SP's." Members of the Air Force Band of the West provided the music. B/General Coleman showed he is still light on his feet as he danced with his wife Maggie and with his daughters. Everyone joined in the singing and B/General Coleman, some family members and friends did the Texas two-step to the delight of the guests. During the evening, many gifts, from friends all around the world, were presented to B/General Coleman, and his wife Maggie. His two daughters and his son offered special words of tribute.

At 1030 hours on 16 March 2000, B/General Richard A. Coleman served as the presiding officer for a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Air Force Security Forces Center, Lackland AFB, Texas. The new 8.9 million-dollar facility is scheduled for completion in 2001.

At 1430 hours on 16 March 2000, B/General Coleman was retired in a command ceremony at Lackland AFB. His retirement is effective 1 April 2000. On that date B/General will become the longest serving member in the history of the United States Air Force, having served a total of 43 years, 4 months and 2 days on active duty. In his farewell address B/General Coleman lauded today's security forces as the "best" and urged everyone to press on with that standard ever before them. In closing, he simply stated, "Good bye." VSPA extends our best wishes to Richard A. (Dick) Coleman, B/General USAF (Ret), and his wife Maggie, in the start of this new phase of their lives.

Steve Ray

(Continued from page 1)

every fifth round @ 6,000 rounds a minute. The next day we saw the devastation. It reminded me of a freshly plowed field, and the trees were totally trashed.

Friendly Fire

We had been deployed back & forth around the perimeter for a number of nights. Each evening we secured a different area. The night in question we deployed in a ditch, 50 to 100 yards outside the 3rd fence. Prior to going on post, we were briefed that an enemy force was in the area and a penetration was likely. Shortly after getting posted, one of the "Tiger" units started getting some action about ½ mile away, we all became highly alert and ready for the worst. All of a sudden we started taking incoming fire, bullets were cracking over head and around us. Slap flares started going off and the sight of tracers going by was unbelievable. Outside of being shot at, there was another problem. The shots were coming from inside the base, not out. In other words from behind us. My first thought was the VC split us from the base. What actually happened was dogmans' dog alerted, and the dog man opened up on the fence line and us. If our Sgt. had not taken advantage of the terrain (the ditch), to deploy us, we would have been injured or killed by our own dogman. The only break in his firing was to switch magazines. Our Sgt. was able to get on the radio and advise us that we were taking fire from inside the base. The SAT team got to the dogmans post, secured it, and relieved him. The dogman came from my last base in Portland Oregon, and as I understand it, he left Bien Hoa shortly after the attack, and went to Japan.

That week had such a profound impact on the rest of my life. It is what happens when you send a sane man to an insane place.

*Sebastian "Coke" Coco
Bien Hoa 66 - 67*

**Vietnam Security Police
Millennium Reunion**

October 5-8, 2000 San Antonio, Texas

To be held at the **Club Hotel** by DoubleTree in Historical San Antonio, Texas. Hotel rates are \$79 per night, single or double occupancy, plus tax. Registration (see registration form) will be \$75 per person and include: Hospitality Room (open each night), All Associated taxes and Gratuities, Plus:

Thursday: Welcoming Reception w/Hors doeuvres & Punch (1800 - 2000)

Friday: Tour Lackland AFB/Medina Base 0900 – 1600 (1st bus will load at 0815, 2nd bus at 0930)

~SP Museum/AF Museum:	1st Bus (Group 1) 0900-1000
	2nd Bus (Group 2) 1000-1030
~Battlelab Briefing:	Group 1 - 1000 – 1030
	Group 2 - 1030 – 1100
~Air Force Museum:	Group 1 - 1030 – 1130
	Group 2 - 1100 – 1130
~Lunch:	All - 1130 – 1230
~Load buses for Medina:	1230 hours
~Medina base:	All - 1300 – 1600

Saturday:

- ~Business Meeting w/Coffee & Donuts at the hotel (0830)
- ~K-9 Demo/Tour Lackland AFB: Group 1 load bus at 1010, Group 2 load at 1100 (hotel)
- ~K-9 Demo/briefing: 1200 -- 1300 (Lackland AFB)
- ~Banquet Dinner/hotel (1800 - 2100)
 - 1700-1800: Photographs for reunion booklet
 - 1800-1900: Cocktails
 - 1900-2000: Security Forces Colorguard/Dinner
 - 2000- : Guest Speaker B/Gen (Ret) Richard Coleman
- ~Hospitality Room: Hotel Open Thursday 2000, Friday 1800, Saturday 2100

Sunday: Memorial Service at the hotel (0900)

~Optional Tour of Downtown (\$28)

Call the **Club** DoubleTree Hotel (210) 828-9031 to make your hotel reservations. Group Airfare is available by calling Carlson Wagonlit Travel at (210) 341-6363 or e-mail David Burleigh Firstclassstravel@bigfoot.com. The hotel will be providing complimentary transportation to and from the hotel as well as parking. The hotel is located at exit 23 I-410 East (1 mile from the airport). Take I-410 East from the airport and exit at Nacogdoches Rd. Use the turnaround lane. The hotel will be on the right next to Luby's Cafeteria. Questions: Call Steve Ray @ (256) 722-4085 Days (256) 532-5214 Nights or e-mail steve.ray@LMCO.com

REGISTRATION FORM

**YES, SIGN ME UP FOR THE VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE
REUNION!!!**

NAME _____

BASE IN VIETNAM _____

YEARS IN VIETNAM _____ **SQUADRON** _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

NAME OF THOSE ACCOMPANYING YOU _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED (\$75 PER PERSON) _____

PAYMENT IS DUE NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 1, 2000

**PLEASE SEND PAYMENT TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS AND MADE
PAYABLE TO:**

THE REUNION *BRAT*
4005 S. IONE
KENNEWICK, WA 99337
BratEmail@aol.com

Confirmation of Registration and Itinerary will be sent out by September 15, 2000. Call the *Club Hotel by DoubleTree* (210) 828-9031 no later than September 5, 2000 to make your hotel reservations. Be sure to mention you are with the Vietnam Security Police Reunion to receive your group rate of \$79 a night, plus tax. These prices are available 3 days prior to and after your event should you choose to extend your stay. We'll see you soon in historic San Antonio, Texas!

TREASURER'S REPORT AND OTHER GOOD

The Association account balance as of 31 May 2000 was: \$4295.85. Our source of income is derived from the dues paid by our membership. In that regard, we are not doing very well. Please, check the number printed beside your name and if it is 99, your dues are past due. The dues are now \$15.00 a year (there was a mix up in the last issue that incorrectly stated the dues was \$10.00). If you sent a \$10 payment for dues, we have marked you paid for 2000 and you do not need to send another check for \$5. Take a minute now to sit down and write out that check, payable to VSPA, and send to me at the address listed on page 2 of this issue. Many thanks to those members, who not only paid their dues, but added a little extra as a donation. I am asking all current members who have not yet paid to send in their dues by 31 July. By so doing, that would allow me more time to work on other issues for the Association.

Reunion - Planning is 95% complete. Check the information in this issue and sign up before the September deadline. FYI: The hotel did not get it right and some members called for reservations only to be told there was no listing for the VSPA. I corrected that and you should not have any further difficulties. If you do have a problem in registering, give me a call or e-mail and I'll work it. We will be sending out information packets to those that sign up for the reunion. Look for it in September. My new home e-mail is: SP483@Juno.com

Our Association helped sponsor the USAF Security Forces Symposium Week (Individual and Unit Awards Banquet) held on 25 May at Lackland AFB, Texas. Individual Security Force members at all unit levels worldwide were recognized for their Outstanding contributions.

Sgt. Louis H. Fischer Award: The award winners thus far in 2000 are as follows:

Christopher Orr (rank unknown), David E. Casebolt (Navy), A1C Christina Mittleman, SSgt. Daniel Miranda, SSgt. Frank L. Green, STG-2 Scott C. Johnson (Navy), and A1C Keith E. Quick. VSPA congratulates these Outstanding students and is proud to sponsor this prestigious award.

Steven F. Ray
Secretary/Treasurer VSPA

WW II vs RVN

This article gives the thoughts of Command Sergeant Major Ballogg of JTF 6 on the 25th Anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War.

There are less than 2000 active duty military with RVN service in uniform today. All of us are senior enlisted / officers. On the eve of the anniversary of the fall of Saigon I feel impelled to talk about the soldiers who served during that conflict.

The barrage of misinformation about the war and who fought it is a national disgrace. The B.S movies- Rambo, Apocalypse Now, Deerhunter and Platoon - - Oliver Stone's rendition of guys in the same unit killing each other, smoking dope on patrol - the sad thing is Oliver knew better but wants to be one of the Hollywood insiders. Some of the things portrayed in these movies did happen - as they happen in all wars, but they are portrayed as everyday occurrences in Vietnam, as every man's experience.

Why? My guess is that those in Hollywood and the media who avoided service have this need to reinforce their decision not to serve by vilifying those who did. This continued effort to disgrace those who went saddens me and makes me furious.

I am going to compare two conflicts as a vehicle to define the RVN combat soldier. My intent is not to denigrate any other veteran but to shed some light.

"The Greatest Generation" and W.W.II. This was "The Good War", there was an evil foe bent on conquest and the destruction of the world as we knew it. Our whole society was galvanized behind the war effort. Every organization supported the war and total victory. There was every reason to fight and no excuse not to.

The 60's generation and Vietnam. The not-so-good war. The American public initially supported the war - but it was a side bar. The reserves and National Guard were not mobilized. There was no societal effort. The goals were ambiguous and the threat undefined. The only reason to fight was a sense of service to the Nation. And yet:

W.W.II - 33% enlisted 67% drafted - - initially only 21 to 35 year-olds were to be taken but not enough volunteers came forward so the draft was lowered to 18.

RVN - (65 -73) 67% enlisted 33% drafted - and of the
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needle belly-shots. His sympathetic squadron mates nicknamed him "Rats." As you no doubt know, he wasn't the first or last troop in Vietnam to suffer the grueling rabies prevention treatment.

As for me, in-country I never slept with my feet uncovered, and it has become a lifelong habit - just can get to sleep with exposed toes!

The 3rd SPS acquired a Malaysian honey bear, supposedly a refugee from a Vietnamese traveling show, but likely smuggled over from Cambodia or down from the North. Some speculated it had been stolen from the Saigon zoo - or rescued from it as the animals there were in miserable shape. This cute non-issue cub had a golden fur necklace and shiny black coat. It was immediately adopted as mascot and kept at the kennels, making the dogs nervous. Playful at first, it grew rapidly on chow hall leftovers and dog food as it developed long strong paws and steely claws (designed for ripping into honey trees) which it used to tear escape routes from its pen. Perhaps some of you know about the eventual deposition of this troublesome and no doubt illegal mascot.

The locals, of course, kept livestock, such as water buffaloes, wide-horned and mean-eyed. They'd take off after Americans - didn't like our smell - but we often saw scrawny herdboys or girls leading them around with nothing but a slim stick, tapping them on the horns and taking no guff from them. I've even seen kids swimming them near a riverbank.

Speaking of livestock, it's amazing to me that people in the USA keep SEA potbelly pigs as pets today. I had seen these swayback tubs waddling around Montagnard villages near Pleiku and could never have guessed they might some day have pet appeal to Americans.

The pigs looked only half-domesticated, but real wildlife still wandered in the highland rain forests. Even an occasional tiger was taken. A Safeside friend who was first assigned to Pleiku SPS and who

had hunted or tried to hunt native wildlife from a huey, probably hoping to spot one of those rare tigers or just pot a few jungle deer. Before he could get a tiger, however, his chopper went down. He survived in tact but gave up air hunting when assigned to 3rd SPS.

Not glued to TV or Nintendo screen, the kids we visited in hamlets and villages around Bien Hoa on Medcap and other civic action trips showed real skill in making their own toys and in taming the skittish jungle deer, about the size of jack-rabbits, and sparrows and other birds which lived in the rafters of their huts and flew down to eat from their hands.

These were just a few of the creatures I encountered during my two tours in Vietnam. The giant cockroaches, screaming crickets, and other insect pests I'll leave for a later story or maybe just try to forget.

I'll always recall, however, that amid all that death, a lot of tough creatures were lurking, determined to survive.

*Paul Kaser
148 E. Peralta Way*

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draftees, 10% volunteered for the draft.

W.W.II - 4 year period- 350,000 draft evaders

RVN - 8 year period- 500,000 draft evaders - developed to a fine art by some we know well.

W.W.II - Desertion "in the zone" Europe and Pacific theaters: 20,000 convicted servicemen. Prior to D-DAY the British jails were full of US deserters that were brought to dockside in handcuffs.

RVN - Desertion in-country: 250.

W.W.II Units surrendered to the Enemy - From Bataan to Europe many units with the ability to fight surrendered without one. Platoons, Companies, and (in the case of the Battle of the Bulge) Regiments with the ability to fight chose not to.

RVN - Not one platoon in 9 years of fighting surrendered.

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Some were overrun but chose to fight to the death. LTG H. G. Moore, when revisiting his battlefield 20 some odd years later, was told by the North Vietnamese Officers that they were astonished at the American soldiers "Fanaticism" to fight to the end.

My unit was the 3rd squad C Company 2nd Bn 14th Infantry of the 25th Inf. Division (Tropic Lightning) or the "Electric Strawberry" as we called it with pride. The Division fought in RVN from early 66 to late 71. The Division had a little less than 17,000 assigned. During its tour the 25th had over 5,000 killed in action and just under 25,000

wounded in action.

That's about twice the Divisions rolls. The 25th ID never lost a position to the enemy - never had a unit overrun - never had a soldier surrender under fire.

I am proud to have served as a grunt in RVN and have never served with finer men.

Command Sergeant Major Ballogg

Membership Application (send Copy of DD 214 and \$15.00 fee)

Name _____
Address _____
State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____
Unit in S.E.Asia _____
Dates of S.E.Asia Duty _____
Description of Duty _____
Looking For? _____



ASSOCIATION MERCHANDISE FOR SALE



- | | |
|---|----------|
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| 2. Air Force Combat Veteran Patch | \$ 4.00 |
| 3. Security Police Badge Patch | \$ 4.00 |
| 4. QC lapel pin | \$ 4.00 |
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| 8. Air Force Flag 3' X 5', Nylon | \$15.00 |
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| 10. Association Bumper Stickers | \$ 1.50 |
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| 13. Mini-Security Police Badges, 1 3/4" high, Official Issue | \$ 16.00 |
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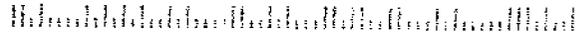
First Class



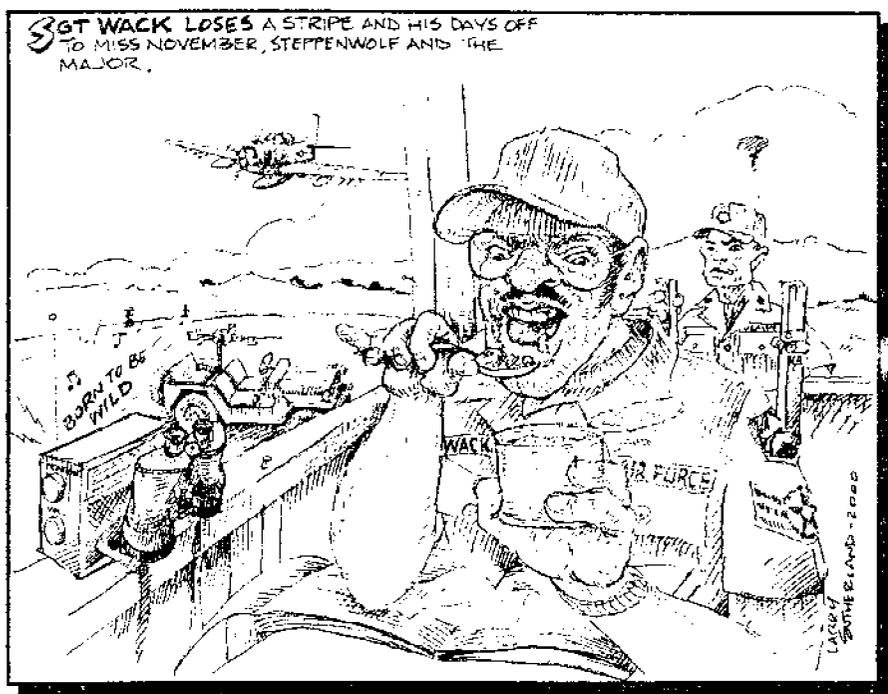
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Thanks to our
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SSGT Jerry 'SPAN' SPADAFORA
232nd C.S.P.S. PHAN RANG CFC 68



SGT WACK LOSES A STRIPE AND HIS DAYS OFF
TO MISS NOVEMBER, STEPPENWOLF AND THE
MAJOR.

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