



THE AMERICAN LEGION

Windjammer



Bi-Monthly Newsletter of Leon J. Wetzel Post No. 9

2026

Winona, Minnesota

Winona Area Veterans Center



Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion

For God and Country,
we associate ourselves together for the following purposes:

- To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America;
- to maintain law and order;
- to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism;
- to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in all wars;
- to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation;
- to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;
- to make right the master of might;
- to promote peace and good will on earth;
- to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy;
- to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.



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& Benefits**

**National Security &
Protection of Our Flag**

I WANT YOU

to be a Legion Family member

To Learn More, Contact:

AMERICAN LEGION POST 9

302 EAST SARNIA STREET

WINONA, MINNESOTA 55987

Eligibility Dates

World War I

April 6, 1917 – Nov. 11, 1918

World War II – Present

Dec. 7, 1941 – Present*

* if currently serving on active duty today, you are eligible.



THE AMERICAN LEGION POST 9 WINONA *WINDJAMMER*

**COMMANDER**

Rick Schell
24884 Hwy 14
Winona, MN 55987
507 312 0367

ADJUTANT

Sam Sasser
978 Gilmore Avenue
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507 458-2519

1ST VICE**COMMANDER**

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2ND VICE**COMMANDER**

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MEMBERSHIP DIR.

Dar Troke
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507 429 5029



Rick Schell

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Windjammer September/October 2026

Dear Legion Family,

Happy Fall! You can definitely feel it in the air, and we are heading into one of my favorite times of the year.

I want to take a moment to tell you how incredibly proud I am of our Legion members. The ideas being generated—and, more importantly, the people stepping forward to make those ideas happen—are helping us expand our reach in the community. I'd like to highlight just a few of the things we've been up to.

For the first time in our Post's history, we had a booth at the Winona County

Fair! It was a great opportunity to promote our veterans organization, recruit new members, and network with other clubs and organizations throughout the area. I'm pretty sure you'll see us back at the fair-grounds next year!

By the time you're reading this, we will also have had a tent set up at Goodview Days. I'm confident this will give us another great opportunity to meet members of our community and, hopefully, connect with and recruit more of our fellow veterans.

We also have a Concealed Carry Class on September 12. We're excited to offer this opportunity to our members, and there is still time to sign up. The registration sheet is available in the bar.

And we're not slowing down! We have several fun activities in the works for this winter, so stay tuned—there's more to come.

A huge thank you to everyone who has been willing to step forward, share ideas and, most importantly, follow through to make them happen. We are only as strong as our members, and your involvement is what keeps our Post moving forward.

Football, Food & Fall Are Back!

If you've read my previous newsletters, you've probably developed a pretty good idea of what drives me. Family, God and Country are first and foremost. I also happen to have a passion for football and cooking! As we head into my favorite time of year, I'm excited to announce that Vikings football and Legion pot-lucks are back!

Sunday, September 13—which also happens to be my youngest daughter Kate's birthday, so a quick birthday shout-out to her!—is the season opener, and it's a BIG one:

Minnesota Vikings vs. Green Bay Packers!

We'll be kicking off the season with a tailgate party in the Legion parking lot beginning at 1 p.m. Bring a dish to pass and come join the fun!

We'll continue having potlucks throughout the season for the Vikings' noon games. And yes... we even have a bullhorn!

As we head into fall, I encourage everyone to keep sharing your ideas, get involved when you can, and stop in and see us. Whether you've been a member for decades or haven't visited in a while, our doors are open.

Come in, pull up a chair and say hello. I promise—you won't leave a stranger.

Thank you for everything you do to support our Post, our veterans and our community. I'm excited about where we're headed, and I'm even more excited to see what we can accomplish together.

Rick Schell

Post Commander





BAR REPORT

From your Post 9 Facilities Manager

AMERICAN LEGION POST 9 BAR REPORT

September/October 2026

Trisha Franzwa

Where did summer go?! We are now entering Fall which means all of our food nights are starting back up!!!! Along with our food nights, FOOTBALL!!!!!!!!!!

Our Fall bar hours for Sundays will change as of September 13th. We will now begin opening at 11am for the football season.

I would like to mention some price changes that will be taking place as well. Due to the rising cost of products, you may start noticing a difference in prices. This will affect our meal costs and drink costs. Our fish meals will increase by \$1 effective September 18th.

Music will also be coming back on our fish fry nights so keep checking and see who is coming the night of fish fry and dust off those dancing shoes for a fun filled evening!

As I am writing this the WSU students are moving in so that means limited parking in the back of the legion during the week. We can only park in the loading zone designated for the legion and our deliveries. You may park in the parking spots during the weekend but not during school time, if you do, you will be subjected to a parking fine issued by WSU.

Taco Night and our meat raffle has changed to the 4th Thursday of the month!!! Please make note of change so you don't miss out. We are also going to be offering a new margarita special during our taco nights. Come check them out and take a chance of winning some meat! Come down and say hi to our amazing staff and enjoy a cold cocktail and awesome conversations!!!

**Trisha Schneider
Facilities Manager
American Legion Post 9**





The American Legion Post 9
AUXILIARY NEWS



PRESIDENT

Diane Cada
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1st VICE PRESIDENT

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507 454 2883

SECRETARY

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JR. PAST PRESIDENT

Shayna Dais
365 E 5th Street
Winona, MN 55987

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Pam Husman
8390 Cherry Lane
Winona, MN 55987
507 689 0768



Diane Cada
Auxiliary President

Auxiliary Members,

Auxiliary News and Events

**September/October
2026**

Where has summer gone or almost gone? Everyone is so busy that times just flies, when you are having fun!

What a great picnic we had, Thank you to all who worked so hard to put it together and made our day great!

Bernadette, Geri, Gym, sorry that you were stuck with the clean-up, awesome job. I hope my three little kids had fun with the games, and Angie, Thanks for cleaning up the mess X 2.

Dues are in the mail \$40. Please pay ASAP; we need you.

The Auxiliary meeting will be Sept. 8th @ 5:30, we need you to attend!

With Fall comes our food nights back, if you can help, Please let Jeff, or Julie know, we need more volunteers, this is your Club also and we can't do it alone!

FYI: the second Wednesday of the month, the Auxiliary serves a lite lunch for the bingo players, along with a dessert,

If you would like to help or donate some type of food, dessert, or money {to make food} let Julie or Karen know!

Serving stats at 6:00 PM — 7:00. All money goes to the Auxiliary.

We need ideas for fundraisers. Do you have any, let us know.

I don't mean to sound harsh or to repeat myself.....BUT the volunteers we have now work many of the food nights, it would be Awesome the have some more helpers, give it a try, it's fun and makes the heart feel good!

Many thanks to our Veterans, Active Troops, Police, Fire, EMT's for your service, we love and respect you, HUGS!

Hug your loved ones and friends, tomorrow is not promised!

Live like someone let the gate open!

Di ♥



THE AMERICAN LEGION

POST 9

S.A.L. NEWS



SQUADRON COMMANDER

Greg Lemmer
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507 312 2222

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Historian

Steve Buswell
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Goodview, MN 55987
507 450-6536



SAL News and Events September/October 2026

Hello Legion Family,

Greetings from your local SAL, hoping everyone has been enjoying their summer. It's hard to believe we are talking about fall already.

In September we recognize a very significant event that occurred when the United States of America was attacked on our home soil. Commonly known as 9/11, also known as Patriot Day. It has been 25 years since that horrible day. Lives continue to be impacted by this event and we must never forget all those lost due to this event.

Greg Lemmer

The SAL will be holding its fall Chicken-Q a bit later this September; it will be Saturday September 19th. We will be limiting sales to 600 meals so please get your tickets in advance as walk-ins will be limited on the day of the event. Hope to see you there as the cost is still only \$10.00 for pre-sales. Tickets the day of the event will be \$12.00, which is still a steal of a deal. A portion of the proceeds will be used for the Post 9 Children's Christmas Party and the local Toys for Kids Christmas give away.

There will also be a Chicken-Q on October 10th sponsored by, and benefitting the Cotter Speech Team. The SAL will be cooking the chicken for this event held at the Legion. Please stop in and support the Cotter Speech Team. Equally important, grab a seat and have a few beverages of your choice to support our Post.

Broasted Chicken will be starting on Thursday September 10th. Please note that there is a menu change. We are no longer serving fresh cut french fries. After much debate we have decided to go with the same tasty fries that Wing Night uses. It's hard to please everyone, and this change did not come without much discussion.

I also need to mention that after reviewing all the foods events that happen on Tuesday we have decided to move Taco Night to the 4th Thursday day of the month. What better time to try a Zing Zang based margaritas from the bar. As always we will have a meat raffle that same evening.

As SAL Squadron 9 Commander, and 1st District Membership Director I'd like to include the following statements regarding SAL membership:

A big THANK YOU to everyone who has submitted their SAL membership renewals. We have a great group of guys that help support all levels of the Legion family. Thank you for your dedication, your energy, and your passion for the Legion Family. Let's keep charging forward — the future is ours to shape!

The SAL is always looking for ways to support our veterans and the Legion family. If you have any ideas please share them with us.

Please take the time to thank a veteran or active military member. They deserve our Thank You each and every day. Please remember you have your freedoms because of them.

In closing, I wish you all the best. God Bless our Troops past and present and God Bless America.

Respectfully Yours,

Greg Lemmer

SAL Squadron Commander

BURIAL DETAIL/COLOR GUARD REPORT

Color Guard Functions:

Rollingstone Parade	August 13
Redmen's Flag Presentation	August 22
Goodview Days Parade	August 23

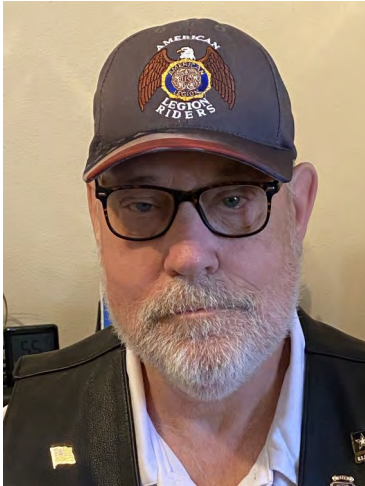


Funerals since 21 June 2026

Scott C. Wadewitz	28 June	2026
Frederick J. Buse	3 July	2026
David G. Erpelding	18 July	2026
Richard J. Swanson	13 August	2026



American Legion Riders
Post 9 Winona
September/October 2026



Brian Degnan

Hello Fellow Riders;

I hate to be the bearer of bad news, however summer is almost over. That doesn't mean that there aren't lots of great riding opportunities available. My advice is for you to get out there and take advantage of the beautiful fall days, and the awesome fall colors. By the time you receive this we will have finished our annual Is-

land City Ride for Vets. I want to thank the SAL for putting on the meal after the ride. It was very greatly appreciated.

We will continue to have our Wing Night on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, and we will be supporting Bingo on the 4th Wednesday by supplying meals and assorted desserts. Check with Riders members if you are interested in the menu for that month, as the offering changes monthly. We definitely appreciate your support. We have many activities coming in the next couple of months, including our annual Toys for Kids drive on Black Friday.

Anyone interested in becoming an American Legion Rider can reach out to me at bdegan55971@gmail.com, or my Membership Director at mmohr.55987@gmail.com.

Respectfully Submitted

Brian Degnan

Legion Riders Director



Fall Chicken-Q



Saturday, September 19, 2026

**Winona Legion Club
302 East Sarnia**

Serving 11am until Gone

****Pre-Sales held until 1pm****

**1/2 Grilled Chicken, Baked Potato, Baked
Beans and Bloedow's Roll for just
\$10 (pre-sales) / \$12 (at the door)**

Carry Out or Dine In



Exciting News !!!

**Our American Legion Post 9
is now offering**

Turbo Bingo

with our Wednesday night bingo !!



**Come play Turbo Bingo (bingo on a tablet)
here at the Legion and have chances to win
\$\$\$!**

- Tablet plays the bingo for you. No bingo dobbing needed !
- 3 different Turbo Bingo Packages to choose from !
- Can play bingo on sheets with dobber and/or bingo on a tablet !
- Every Wednesday - Doors open at 6pm - Bingo begins at 7pm.

Leon J. Wetzel American Legion Post 9

Gambling License: 00075



BASKET NITE!

THE 1ST AND 3RD TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH

5:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M

MENU:

ADD: FF / RANCH OR PLAIN TATOR TOTS FOR \$2.00

ADD: BACON TO BURGER FOR 1.50

- | | | |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| A. | One Hamburger | \$7.00 |
| B. | Two Hamburgers | \$13.00 |
| C. | Chicken Tenders | \$8.00 |
| D. | Drummies/Paddlers (7 pieces) | \$12.00 |
| E. | Cheese Curds | \$7.00 |
| F. | Fish Sandwich | \$9.00 |
| G. | Golden Onion Rings | \$5.00 |
| H. | Hot Wings (7 pieces) | \$12.00 |
| P. | Breaded Pickle Spears | \$5.50 |
| S. | Side (Full Orders) | \$3.00 |
| | FF / Ranch or Plain Tator Tots | |





For every davit sold by OZ Lifting Products in the month of July 2026, OZ Lifting donated \$50.00 to our Post 9 Veterans Relief Fund. That total was \$9650.00 donated to the Veterans Relief Fund!!!!

THANK YOU OZ LIFTING!!!!!!!!!!

If you meet someone from OZ Lifting, thank them for their generosity and support of our Veterans!!

Sam Sasser Adjutant American Legion Post 9





**I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE
TO THE FLAG OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AND TO THE REPUBLIC FOR
WHICH IT STANDS
ONE NATION UNDER GOD
INDIVISIBLE
WITH LIBERTY
AND JUSTICE FOR ALL**



Attendees:

Patricia Wanek

Carol Voshage

Becky Kendrick-Thomas

Joni Faustino

Ellen English

Kristy Tibor

Amy Pelowski

And

Dar Troke

On Friday August 20th, Dar Troke, (our Post 9 Membership Director), hosted a luncheon for American Legion Post 9's female Legion Members. This luncheon was to honor our female members for their service to our country!!!! Thank you to all of you for your service!!!!!! American Legion Post 9

American Legion Post 9 female members:

Andrea Banicki	Debra Bebout
Tina Berg	Madelynn Bosch
Ellen English	Joni Faustino
Rebecca Felix	Tammy Gibbs
Carol Gordon	Rebekah Kendrick-Thomas
Victoria Mendes	Morgan Minick
Amy Pelowski	Vicki Sandhofer-Krolick
Margaret Stalka	Kristine Tibor
Dar Troke	Carol Voshage
Patricia Wanek	Renee Westbury
Julie Young	

We thank all of you for being a part of American Legion Post 9 and we thank all of you for your service to our country.

Sam Sasser Adjutant American Legion Post 9



In A Changing
World, One
Thing Stays
The Same:

*The Military
Experience.*

It's the bond

*between veterans who
have served America, from
the fields of Europe to the
jungles of Asia to the
deserts of the Middle East
and everywhere in between.*

"We will not fail

*those with whom we've
served," was the promise
by generations of veterans.
Help us continue the legacy.*

Join

*today's American Legion -
bonded through service,
committed to the future.*

American Legion Post 9
302 East Sarnia Street
Winona, Minnesota 55987
Phone: 507-454-4281

Check us out!!!!!!



**The
American
Legion**



American Legion Post 9 Color Guard

At the Goodview Days Parade on August 23rd!!!

**If you are interested in joining the Color Guard,
please contact me. Open to anyone from the
Legion family.**

Sam Sasser

Adjutant American Legion Post 9

LtoR: John Banicki, Tim Reed, Brian Hjelmeland, and Mike Mohr



AMERICAN LEGION POST 9 PICNIC

**AUGUST 9TH
2026**



At the American Legion Post 9 picnic that we had on August 9th.....

There was a fun activity for the kids. In the gray tub there was money, toys, candy, and stickers and more for the kids to search and find. Looks like they had a lot of fun doing this!!!! This activity was sponsored by the Auxiliary ladies!!!

Sam Sasser Adjutant American Legion 9

This is a picture of the American Legion Post 9 parade float at the Goodview Days Parade on August 23, 2026. The float was pulled by Jerome Gardner and his International Tractor. There is always a sign up list to ride on the float!!

Join us!!! Sam Sasser Adjutant Post 9



Join the American Legion Post 9 Burial Detail.



**We are looking for new members to join us!
We provide Military Rites for Winona Area
Veterans. We take great pride in what we do.**

**Contact: Sam Sasser
Burial Detail Commander**



First, make sure that you have a QRcode scanning app on your phone.

Scan this QR code to download the current Windjammer newsletter for American Legion Post 9. The Windjammer newsletter is in a .pdf format.



Scan this QR code to take you to the online events calendar on our website, americanlegionwinona.org



Scan this QR code to download the American Legion Membership application form. Print this out on your home computer , fill out the form, and bring to American Legion Post 9 with your \$55.00 payment.

Thank you for joining!!!!!!



Scan this QR code to download the SAL Sons of the American Legion Membership Application form. Print this out on your home computer, fill out the form, and bring to American Legion Post 9 with your \$30.00 payment.

Thank you for joining!!!!!!



Scan this QR code to download the Job Application form for American Legion Post 9. Print this form. Fill out the form and bring to American Legion Post 9 and give to Trisha Franzwa.

This form is work in progress. Contact me for questions or concerns. Sam Sasser Adjutant American Legion Post 9



These pictures are of Maurice Waldee when he served in the Air Force as a C5A airplane mechanic. Upper left picture, Maurice is on the left. Other pictures Maurice is on the right. These pictures show the immense size of the C5A aircraft. Thank you for your service Maurice.

There are very interesting videos of the C5A on YouTube.

Sam Sasser Adjutant American Legion Post 9



THE M1 GARAND RIFLE: EIGHT SHOTS BEFORE THE FAMOUS PING



UNITED STATES



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9.5 LB / 4.3 KG



43.5 IN / 110.5 CM



Eight rounds load into the internal magazine, and the empty clip ejects with the rifle's signature ping.

IN MEMORY
455TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HEAVY)

304TH WING



15TH
AIR FORCE

B-24

THIS MEMORIAL IS DEDICATED TO THE OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN OF THE 455TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP(H) WHO SERVED SO VALIANTLY IN THE DEFENSE OF FREEDOM DURING WORLD WAR II. THEY DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES BY PERFORMING STRATEGIC AERIAL WARFARE IN THE EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATION WHILE STATIONED AT SAN GIOVANNI, ITALY, DURING 1944 AND 1945.

COMBAT MISSIONS: 255

DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATIONS: TWO

SQUADRONS: 740TH, 741ST, 742ND AND 743RD

ACTIVATED ON 1 JUNE 1943 AT CLOVIS, NEW MEXICO

DEACTIVATED ON 9 SEPTEMBER 1945

AT SAN GIOVANNI, ITALY

DEDICATED 1988

This is an interesting bit of history donated to our Post.

Sam Sasser Adjutant American Legion Post 9



The next 37 pages are scans of the last pages of this booklet.

This booklet is a very interesting history and documentation of the Vietnam war.

Sam Sasser

Adjutant American Legion Post 9

Does He Care?



He cares enough to build for those

in need, to help

the young,

the old,

the apprehensive.

He will stop a moment and play

with the

children,

or

play

for

them.



You Bet He Does!





Military Assistance
Command, Vietnam



United States Army,
Vietnam



I Field Force, Vietnam II Field



4th Infantry Division



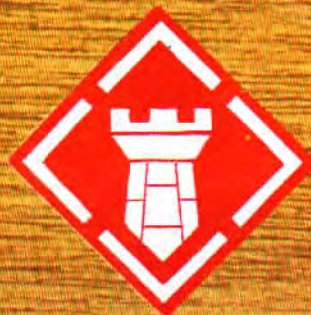
9th Infantry Division



25th Infantry
Division



5th Infantry D
(Mech) (1st



20th Engineer Brigade



1st Aviation Brigade



1st Logistical Command



1st



44th Medical
Brigade



173rd Airborne
Brigade



11th Light
Infantry Brigade



In



1st Infantry Division (Airmobile)



Americal Division



1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)



1st Infantry Division



82nd Airborne Division (3rd Bde)



101st Airborne Division



U.S. Army Engineer Command, Vietnam



18th Engineer Brigade



18th Military Police Brigade



5th Special Forces Group



11th Armored Cavalry Regiment



18th Military Police Brigade



198th Light Infantry Brigade



199th Light Infantry Brigade



34th General Support Group

1967 — The Squeeze Period

The Counteroffensive

The year 1967 saw the Free World Forces tighten the screw on the enemy. His manpower was slowly whittled down by many operations. His weapons and food caches were seized, blunting many planned raids and offensive actions. Increased bombing raids made his routes of supply difficult to use, curtailing his operations further. His cause was weakened by thousands of Viet Cong, political cadre and North Vietnamese who turned themselves in to the government's Chieu Hoi Program.

During the latter months of 1967, the enemy made two spectacular tries at propaganda victories, at Loc Ninh and Dak To. These two battles alone accounted for nearly 3,000 enemy dead.

His losses for the year included 87,534 killed in action and over 31,000 weapons of all types captured. He lost almost 14,000 tons of rice and 162 tons of salt. His ammunition supply was reduced almost 2.5 million rounds. His ranks were depleted by 27,178 to the Chieu Hoi Program, 17,671 of whom were fighting men. He was found to be recruiting boys from 12 to 16 years old.

He was feeling the pinch—yet he continued to fight. Civilians in South Vietnam were his victims almost as often as the military. Communist terrorists slaughtered over 4,000 South Vietnamese and wounded over 8,000 in their attacks. Kidnaping accounted for another 5,454 persons, all in an attempt to control the people.

More people moved into government protected resettlement areas than ever before. The enemy's source of labor, recruits, food and shelter was slipping away.

During the spring, hamlet and village elections were conducted and in the fall months the upper and lower houses were filled and the president and vice president were chosen. Despite threats of death and destruction, the people turned out in large numbers to vote.

On the political and diplomatic side of the war, the draft constitution for South Vietnam was put before the Constituent Assembly for debate; Thailand announced it would allow bases within its borders to be used for support of Vietnam operations, and Premier Ky visited Australia and New Zealand.



Jungle clearing by Rome plows denies the enemy his sanctuaries. Photo by Sp6 Jay J. Smith.



Continues

At the beginning of February the American military strength had risen by 20,000 men. The increased manpower permitted the U.S. forces to enter the field for long periods of time and the month saw the termination and beginning of many operations.

The four-day truce for the Lunar New Year, Tet, provided a stand-down period in which many operations were terminated. The truce itself was marred by 272 violations.

Operation Lam Son II in Binh Duong Province and Operation Thayer II were terminated with a combined kill of slightly over 2,000 enemy soldiers.

By mid-month elements of the 9th Infantry Division started Operation Enterprise in Long An Province and other 9th Division units began operations in the Mekong Delta with U.S. Navy units. This marked the beginning of gradual U.S. and ARVN weakening of the Viet Cong's dominance of Delta waterways.

LARGEST OPERATION BEGINS

Other 9th Division units joined elements of the 1st, 4th and 25th Infantry Divisions plus troops from the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 196th Light Infantry Brigade, and 173rd Airborne Brigade in what was to be the largest operation of the war—Operation Junction City. The gigantic force was

supported by the 11th Combat Aviation Group and 7th Air Force aircraft.

U.S. troops in War Zone C north and west of Saigon formed a giant horseshoe enclosing 250 square miles of enemy-held territory. Heavy fighting characterized the operation. Large stores of ammunition, weapons, clothing, food, documents and utensils were confiscated.

PARACHUTE ASSAULT

During one phase of Operation Junction City it was decided to employ paratroopers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade in a surprise combat assault along Highway 4 to block enemy escape routes from the battle area. On February 22, 1967 the only mass jump of the war took place at 9 a.m. when over 700 troopers from the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Airborne Infantry and supporting elements parachuted into a drop zone north of Tay Ninh. Twenty-three Air Force C-130 Hercules aircraft delivered the men and their equipment over the drop zone. The force blocked the enemy and released badly needed helicopters to 1st and 25th Division troops attacking the enemy.

Eighty-one days later 2,728 enemy lay dead from the operation and War Zone C was no longer a VC stronghold.

Cargo ships unload at Newport, Saigon's newest harbor facility. Newport was built to relieve congestion in Saigon Port. Photo by Maj. Don Blake.





Troops move through a village while on a patrol in War Zone C. Photo by Sp5 Gordon Gahan.

Their bases were destroyed; many of their supplies were gone. The Free World Forces counteroffensive was making remarkable advances.

Further north the 1st Cavalry Division had begun Operation Pershing and the Communists pounded the Da Nang Airbase with over 50 Russian-made 140 mm rockets, killing 43 and wounding 137. A few days later in March, Da Nang was hit by 10 more of the huge rockets.

The February-March period was active diplomatically. The Manila Conference countries and their ambassadors met in Saigon in preparation for a two-day conference on Guam with high Vietnamese leaders and President Johnson. The Constituent Assembly had approved the draft constitution for South Vietnam a few days prior to the meeting. Premier Ky presented President Johnson a copy of the new constitution. It was ratified a few days later.

In Thailand, B-52s began to arrive at bases in accordance with a previous agreement with the kingdom. The huge bombers were used mainly against enemy complexes in South Vietnam in early April. Previously they had flown from Guam to South Vietnam in a 5,000-mile round trip.

The 9th Division's Operation Kittyhawk began in March. While the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese were trying to keep out of the way of the major operations, they made small-scale attacks on Vietnamese Popular Forces and surprise attacks on other installations.

U.S. forces climbed to a strength of 470,000, a few thousand

from the year-end peak of 490,000 servicemen in-country.

In April, an eight-week election period began for thousands of villages and hamlets throughout the country. About 77 percent of the eligible voters turned out to elect their local leaders despite constant threats from the Viet Cong. Many of the threats were carried out as 12 candidates were slain by terrorists and 31 others kidnaped.

The government also announced fall elections would take place to select the upper and lower houses of the new government and to choose a new president and vice president.

In Saigon Ellsworth P. Bunker assumed duties from Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge who was retiring from public life.

Operation Adams was completed during the month by the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division in Phu Yen Province with an enemy death toll of 491. Elements of the 4th and 25th Infantry Divisions began Operation Francis Marion in Pleiku Province which resulted in 1,203 enemy deaths.

Enemy pressure was building in the I Corps Tactical Zone (I CTZ) in the vicinity of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). It became apparent Marine units would have to be moved to counter the threat. The 196th Light Infantry Brigade was moved into the Chu Lai area to replace relocated Marine units. This was one of the first of many major ground combat units from USARV to operate in the northern provinces.

Other units joined the 196th in I CTZ. They were the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division and, in May, the 1st Brigade,

101st Airborne. The Army troops in the zone were placed under the operational control of Task Force Oregon (TFO) which was controlled by the III Marine Amphibious Force.

Early in May a Hoi Chanh led men from the 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division to a weapons cache which consisted of 2,000 mortar rounds, 1,200 grenades, 20 claymore mines, 1,000 small arms rounds and 400 rifles.

The 101st Airborne's brigade launched Operation Malheur in Quang Ngai Province which in 28 days accounted for 392 enemy killed and 150 weapons captured.

While elements of the 25th Infantry Division began Operation Kolo Kolo, the 2nd Brigade of the same unit terminated Operation Ala Moana in Hau Nghia Province, accounting for 382 enemy deaths.

The Mobile Riverine Force clashed with the enemy for its first major engagement in the delta 15 miles west of My Tho.

In Saigon, Premier Ky announced his candidacy for president on May 12. Four days later the assembly approved the presidential election law.

The next day three new operations began: Operation Dallas by the 1st Brigade of the 1st Division and Operations Barking Sands and Diamond Head by elements of the 25th Division.

The enemy struck the 25th Division with 100 rounds of mortar and recoilless rifle fire. However, most guerrilla attacks were concentrated against ARVN and Vietnamese irregular forces during this period.

Seven new operations began during June. Most units in USARV were involved in Operations Coronado, Bluefield, Malheur II, Akron, Kawela, Billings, and Greely. More than



Villagers have their registration checked prior to voting in hamlet elections. Almost 77 per cent of the eligible voters turned out.



Parachutes lower supplies to troops as they are dropped from Air Force C-130s. Photo By Maj. John Shanahan.

1,500 enemy died from U.S. action during the month.

In July Thailand announced that it would send a 2,200-man regiment to the Republic of Vietnam. This force was the first ground combat unit contributed by the Thais who had already provided airlift of supplies on several occasions.

Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara conducted high-level conferences at USARV's Tan Son Nhut headquarters. The day after the Secretary left the country, President Johnson announced the United States would increase its troop commitment to Vietnam.

During the month, USARV moved to its new headquarters in the Long Binh complex and MACV moved to its new buildings opposite Tan Son Nhut civilian air terminal. Other units moved out of the capital area during the following months, including: 1st Logistical Command, 1st Aviation Brigade and 1st Signal Brigade headquarters, Saigon Area Command and many subordinate units.

Significant enemy attacks in July killed 37 civilians and wounded 29 when two civilian buses in the northern provinces were hit. The Viet Cong attacked the base camp of the 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry and the airfield at Phuoc Vinh. More than 150 mortar and rocket rounds struck the area. In Phu Loi a 1st Aviation Brigade unit was also hit by mortar and rocket fire later in the month.

The 1st Brigade, 9th Infantry Division began Operation Riley in Bien Hoa Province. Elements of the 9th and 25th Divisions along with ARVN units conducted a seven-day operation, Coronado II/Song Thang 3, that resulted in 441 enemy casualties.

1967 OPERATIONS

WHEELER/WALLOWA, Americal Div
Sept 11, 1967-Nov 11, 1968

MALHEUR I & II, 101st Abn Div
May 10-Aug 2, 1967

MACARTHUR, 4th Inf Div, 1st Cav Div, 173rd Abn Bde
Nov 1-Nov 26, 1967

FRANCIS MARION, 4th Inf Div & 25th Inf Div
April 5-Oct 11, 1967

SAM HOUSTON, 4th Inf Div
Jan 1-April 5, 1967

CEDAR FALLS, 25th Inf Div & 173rd Abn Bde
Jan 7-Jan 20, 1967

SHENANDOAH II, 1st Inf Div
Sept 28-Nov 19, 1967

BILLINGS, 1st Inf Div
June 12-26, 1967

ENTERPRISE, 9th Inf Div
Feb 13-March 10, 1967

IV CORPS

Can Tho

III CORPS

Tay Ninh

Long Binh

Saigon

Vung Tau

I CORPS

Chu Lai

Dak To

Kontum

An Khe

Pleiku

Qui Nhon

II CORPS

Ban Me Thuot

Nha Trang

Cam Ranh Bay

MANHATTAN, 25th Inf Div
April 22-June 7, 1967

JUNCTION CITY, 173rd Abn
Bde, 1st Inf Div,
25th Inf Div, 196th LIB
Feb 22-May 16, 1967

DALLAS, 1st Inf Div
May 16-24, 1967



The USNS Corps Christi Bay is the world's only floating depot maintenance facility. The Army's 34th General Support Group operates the facility. Photo by Sp4 Steve Kopels.

A company from the 199th Light Infantry Brigade captured an enemy sampan which yielded 220 pounds of TNT and over 2,300 rounds of ammunition.

Enemy action during August was heavy. An enemy company struck the Edap Enang Montagnard resettlement village in the Central Highlands. The tank farm at Nha Be City, 10 miles southeast of Saigon, was hit by communist fire causing extensive damage. And the Ban Me Thuot airfield in Darlac Province was struck by mortars twice during the month.

Two more American operations started in August. The 21-day Operation Benton resulted in 397 enemy killed and over 150 weapons captured by elements of the 101st Airborne and the 196th Light Infantry Brigade. A 20-day operation, dubbed Coronado IV, was launched by elements of the 9th Infantry Division. It accounted for 101 enemy deaths and 180 weapons seized.

In I CTZ the Marine bases at Gio Linh and Con Thien began to receive heavy artillery and mortar attacks. These attacks reached a peak during September. Marine and Army artillery plus Air Force bombers lifted the siege from the DMZ bases.

On September 3 the presidential elections were held. About 83 percent of the voters turned out, the slate of Nguyen Van Thieu and Nguyen Cao Ky for president and vice president respectively receiving the voters approval. The voters also chose an upper house for the new government.

New operations during the month included: Task Force Oregon's Wheeler in I CTZ, accounting for nearly 2,000 enemy killed; the Mobile Riverine Force's Operation Coronado V in the Delta; costing the enemy 330 dead Operation Bolling, conducted by the 173rd Airborne Brigade and elements of the 1st Cavalry Division; and the 1st Infantry Division's

Operation Shenandoah in Binh Duong Province, which took 956 enemy lives and 100 weapons.

In Nha Trang a satchel charge exploded in the Neptune NCO Club killing one civilian employee and wounding several civilian and military personnel. Terrorists struck the Republic of China Embassy in the capital with explosives and sniper fire. Extensive damage was done to the building and many casualties resulted.

At the 9th Division's base camp at Bear Cat, Thailand's Queen Cobra Regiment settled into their new home and readied themselves for future operations.



Mobile Riverine Force boats move down the waterways of the Mekong Delta searching for Charlie. Photo by SSgt. Robert Peterson.

AMERICAL DIVISION FORMED

At Chu Lai, Task Force Oregon was redesignated the Americal Division, becoming the only named division on active duty in the U.S. Army. Now the blue patch with the white stars of the Southern Cross was to be seen in the Pacific area once more.

Russia made a late September announcement that a new military assistance agreement had been signed by the U.S.S.R. and North Vietnam whereby the Russians would furnish "airplanes, antiaircraft and rocket equipment, artillery and small arms ammunition and other military equipment..."

Early in October the Vietnamese National Assembly validated the election results. This was followed by the installation of the 60 newly elected members of the upper house of the government. Later in the month the lower house elections were held with 73 percent of the electorate turning out to complete the last round of elections. On the last day of the month the inauguration ceremonies were conducted in downtown Saigon.

Following the inauguration a parade of civic and military forces marched to celebrate the South Vietnamese National Day. Flags of seven nations, representing the Free World Assistance Forces in Vietnam, led the march order.

In I CTZ Army forces were increased as the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Cavalry joined the Americal Division. The brigade immediately began Operation Wallowa, which was later combined with Americal's Operation Wheeler.

HUEYCOBRA ARRIVES

October also saw the introduction of a helicopter especially designed for ground support—the Huey Cobra. This gunship, with advanced weapons systems, slim silhouette, high speed and maneuverability began combat operations in 1st Aviation Brigade units.

The 4th Infantry Division started Operation MacArthur in Pleiku Province and the 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry joined the Ivymen in the Central Highlands during the month. Also the 3rd Battalion, 503rd Airborne Infantry arrived at Qui Nhon to further increase U.S. strength in Vietnam.

Communist activity included a North Vietnam Army regiment's attack on an ARVN regiment at Song Be with the North Vietnamese coming out on the short end of the battle.

ARVN losses were only 10 killed to the Communists' 130.

VC DEFEATED AT LOC NINH

At Loc Ninh, near the Cambodian border, two battalions of the 273rd VC Regiment attacked the perimeter where CIDG and ARVN troops were lodged. The Viet Cong broke through the perimeter and entered the village. The 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry was one of the first of the 1st Infantry Division units rushed to help push the enemy force from the area. This was accomplished after difficult street fighting and digging the enemy out of the perimeter bunkers they had occupied. When the ARVN, Special Forces and 1st Division troops finally forced the enemy to break contact, other troops of the 18th Infantry were waiting as a blocking force to cut them down.

The enemy retreated to a rubber plantation five miles south of the Cambodian border to avoid air strikes and artillery that harassed their move to high ground. On the third day of the battle the enemy began to return the artillery fire. Air strikes soon reduced the VC's fire.

Fighting broke out again when the Viet Cong attacked across the landing strip at the district headquarters. This attempt was broken up, but not before the VC had tried to scale the walls of the outpost. Enemy forces made sporadic attempts to get back into Loc Ninh, but they were met by American and ARVN patrols that hounded them until they withdrew from the area, losing over 1,000 men killed in the over-all action.

WEAPONS CACHE UNCOVERED

Thirty miles east of Saigon in Phuoc Tuy Province, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 47th Infantry and Company B, 3rd Squadron, 5th Cavalry were searching the area during the 9th Division's Operation Akron III. A concrete slab with wire hinges and handles was discovered. When it was opened, the troops found an entrance to a tunnel complete with steps cut into the side. Upon examination, a large supply of weapons, ammunition and medical supplies were found. Further tunnel discoveries were made in the immediate area. More arms, ammunition and supplies were uncovered as each tunnel was searched. The list of equipment brought out grew to tremendous size and included such weapons as 75 mm pack howitzers and .50 caliber machine-guns.



A 175 mm gun speaks its piece to the enemy in I Corps Tactical Zone. The 2nd Battalion, 94th Artillery fires the big guns in support of operations along the DMZ. Photo by Sp5 Gordon Gahan.





HueyCobra gunships were introduced in October of 1967. With its speed, maneuverability, and firepower, the AH-1G has proven to be combat ready and reliable.

Final count made this find the largest ever discovered. Besides other types of equipment and medical supplies, there were 1,140 weapons of all types, 95,000 rounds of small arms ammunition, 3,634 grenades and 452 mortar rounds. Many of the weapons were still packed in grease, cosmoline and plastic.

November began quietly with the 9th Infantry Division units starting Operation Coronado IX and joining with the 11th Armored Cavalry, Australian and Vietnamese troops in Operation Santa Fe I in the Delta. Vietnamese Marines joined the 9th in Coronado IX after the exercise began, causing the 502nd Local Force Battalion to slowly get chewed up in the operation 65 miles southwest of Saigon.

BIGGEST BATTLE TAKES PLACE

In the Central Highlands the rumblings of the biggest battle of the war were resounding in the hills around Dak To. For several weeks intelligence reports showed increased enemy activity in the vicinity of Dak To, astride the natural infiltration route along Route 312 north of Pleiku and close to the Laotian-Cambodian border. The town is normally garrisoned by ARVN troops and elements of a U.S. Special Forces-trained Civilian Irregular Defense Group.

When it became apparent the enemy was preparing battlefield positions for an assault on the town, the 4th Infantry Division's 1st Brigade was deployed into the area. Two companies from the 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry made initial contact with a strong North Vietnamese Army force. The hills soon resounded to the sounds of the battle, which grew in ferocity. The NVA regulars pinned the Americans down. The 3rd Battalion commander called in air support against positions astride the steep hill. Artillery and mortar fire combined with the bombs to stem the enemy fire. Morning recon patrols found the enemy so well entrenched he was barely hurt by the tremendous pounding. It was apparent the enemy was not going to give up easily or melt away into the jungle.

Additional American and South Vietnamese troops were

called to reinforce those presently locked in combat. The 173rd Airborne Brigade and later elements of the 1st Cavalry were brought in to assist the 4th Division troops. Besides artillery and helicopter gunship fire support, C-47 Dragonships and giant B-52 bombers flew supporting missions for the ground troops. Artillery and airstrikes pounded the hills for hours before infantry assaults on the enemy positions. The soldiers found the enemy still capable of delivering murderous fire to slow his advance. Casualties mounted on both sides, but gradually the NVA troops were forced back toward the Cambodian border and sanctuary. One of the bloodiest battles was fought for Hill 875. The remnants of the 24th, 32nd, 66th and 174th NVA Regiments stood and fought off American and ARVN soldiers for four days in the



Part of the largest enemy weapons cache ever found which totaled over 1,140 pieces.

area. When Thanksgiving Day arrived, Americans had claimed the hilltop and their turkey dinner was served them amidst the shattered bunkers and trees.

The enemy had paid a terrible price for the Dak To battle. His known losses were 1,641 men killed; how many more had been killed or seriously wounded and dragged from the battle area would be impossible to estimate. He had been subjected to fantastic bombardments during the 26 days of battle. Almost 138,000 rounds of artillery had been fired; 1,101 Army helicopter gunship sorties were flown against him, combined with 1,869 Air Force sorties and 32 strikes by B-52 bombers. Many hills looked like jumbled piles of huge matchsticks and splinters as great trees had been felled by the battle.

The battle was the largest in the war to date—exceeding the Ia Drang Valley battle of 1966 and the Loc Ninh battle of the preceding month.

Other November action: the enemy's shelling of the base camp of the 2nd Brigade of the 25th Division and the division main base camp at Cu Chi, plus the start of Operation Strike/Uniontown in Bien Hoa Province by the 199th Light Infantry Brigade. The operation was to account for 100 enemy losses.

THANKSGIVING IN THE FIELD

Despite battles raging from the North to the South of this war-torn nation, the 1st Logistical Command delivered — 57,000 whole turkeys and 325 tons of boneless turkey meat plus all the trimmings of the traditional Thanksgiving feast. The impressive figures included 28 tons of cranberry sauce, 15 tons of nuts, 8 tons of candy, 11 of olives, and 33 of fruit cake.

The new "Three C Concept" of speeding supplies to the

user was introduced during the month. The Cs stand for one container, one customer and one commodity. The operation begins at a factory where a truck trailer is loaded. The trailer is then sealed and driven to port where the trailer is placed on a ship bound for a foreign port. Here it is unloaded and delivered, still sealed, to the using combat unit. The system virtually eliminates pilferage and speeds the vital supplies to units in less time. Once unloaded, the empty 35-foot trailer is returned to port for another round trip.

DAK SON TERROR

Year-end saw one of the most atrocious terror attacks in Vietnam's bloody history. In the Montagnard village of Dak Son two battalions of Communists struck on December 5. The VC regulars quickly pushed the local defense force into a small area, then rampaged up and down the hamlet streets systematically burning down more than half the 150 thatched homes. With flame throwers and grenades the Communists slaughtered people in their primitive homes and bunkers. Seven out of every 10 of the 252 victims were either women or children, some burned beyond recognition. An unknown number of men were kidnaped and led away by the 300-member Communist force.

At Saigon the Constituent Assembly disbanded as its activities were completed. The newly elected National Legislative Assembly convened to begin functioning as the lawmakers under the new constitution.

New U.S. troops continued to arrive in country during December, mostly from the 101st Airborne Division. The 3rd Brigade arrived at Bien Hoa on December 8; the command group on December 13; and the 2nd Brigade came, five



A trooper from the 173rd Airborne Brigade calls for a medic to aid his wounded buddy during fighting on Hill 882 near Dak To. Photo by Sp5 Gordon Gahan.



A lone woman sits in the rubble of her village following the VC terror attack on Dak Son where 252 Montagnards were killed by flame throwers and hand grenades.

days later to complete the huge airlift from Fort Campbell by giant C-141 Starlifters.

Just before Christmas the 11th Light Infantry Brigade completed its movement from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, to join the Americal Division at Chu Lai. The 11th brought the total U.S. troop strength to more than that of the Korean War.

The Communists again showed their disdain for truces by violating both the Christmas and New Years truce periods. The Christmas truce was marred by 40 major incidents and the New Years by 63 major and 107 minor incidents.



ENEMY KILLED

83,386

HOI CHANH

27,178

VIETNAMESE ABDUCTED

5,357

VIETNAMESE CIVILIANS KILLED

3,707

ARVN CASUALTIES

Killed	Wounded
12,716	29,448

FWMF CASUALTIES

Killed	Wounded
1,105	2,318

U. S. MILITARY CASUALTIES

Killed	Wounded
Army—6,514	Army—33,556
U.S.—9,353	U.S.—62,025

1967 CASUALTIES



Trailers are stacked high on the deck of a Sea Land transport ship that is ready to unload at Cam Ranh Bay.



Photo by Sp4 Ron Sehorn

Nation Building:

Since the division of Vietnam in 1954, the Communist government in Hanoi has sought to take over South Vietnam. Through terrorism, assassination, and military aggression, Hanoi and the Viet Cong in the South have tried to overthrow the government in Saigon.

In 1954, President Eisenhower, in a letter to South Vietnam's President Ngo Dinh Diem, promised the support of the American people in Vietnam's struggle against aggression. This pledge was renewed by President Kennedy, who sent in large numbers of American advisers for the ARVN forces.

Despite these efforts, the Communists continued to wage a successful war of subversion, and by mid-1965 had come dangerously close to achieving their objectives. In July of that year, President Johnson restated the pledges of his two predecessors and sent American combat units to assist the Army of the Republic of Vietnam.

The United States was not the only nation to respond to South Vietnam's call for help. The United States provides the bulk of military assistance, but Korea, Australia, Thailand, and New Zealand also have armed forces here, and no less than 40 nations of the free world have rendered vital nonmilitary aid in the struggle against aggression. This aid may be divided into five main categories:

- (1) Medical Aid
- (2) Educational and Vocational Aid
- (3) Technical Assistance Programs
- (4) Agricultural Aid Programs
- (5) Resettlement Programs

MEDICAL AID

The shortage of trained medical personnel has been a serious problem in the Republic of Vietnam. Currently 13 Free World governmental and private organizations are helping meet this need.

To bring medicine to remote areas of Vietnam, medical teams from New Zealand, Korea, the United Kingdom, the Philippines, Australia, the Republic of China, Germany, Japan, Spain, and the United States are stationed throughout the Republic. Here are a few examples:

* A 12-man Spanish medical team is now operating in a provincial hospital and in Go Cong.

* A Korean mobile medical unit works in the coastal city of Vung Tau.

* New Zealand has an 8-man surgical team at Qui Nhon.

* Philippine teams have operated in several provinces, including Tay Ninh Province.

* Quang Ngai clinic and Quang Ngai hospital both have Canadian doctors and Cuban refugee doctors on their staffs.

* The Republic of China has sent a 10-man medical team to work at the Phan Thiet hospital.



A Free World Effort

*The United States has medical teams serving in many of the provinces of Vietnam.

*Over 150 private physicians from the United States, on leave from their practices, have volunteered and served in Vietnam under a program sponsored by the American Medical Association.

*The German hospital ship "Helgoland" docks at several ports along the coast to provide medical services as a unique floating hospital.

Medical teams could not operate were it not for the existence of adequate medical supplies. By 1967, more than \$10,000,000 in vital medical supplies had been donated by 10 different nations. A few examples:

*Canada provided $\frac{1}{2}$ million doses of anti-polio vaccine for a massive immunization program being conducted by the Vietnamese Department of Public Health.

*In September, 1966, three tons of medical supplies were donated jointly by the Brazilian government and 14 private organizations.

These are only a few of the varied and extensive medical assistance being given to the people of Vietnam by nations of the free world. In a country engaged in war, good medical service for the civilian and military populations is essential. Thanks to the free world, Vietnam today is enjoying the highest standard of medical treatment in its history.

EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL AID

Key targets of Viet Cong assassins are the teachers of Vietnam. The enemy realizes that the destruction of the schools is necessary for the final subversion of society. To counter these atrocities, and to expand and improve the educational facilities of Vietnam, nations of the free world have been giving various forms of educational aid to South Vietnam:

*Over 1,400,000 textbooks have been provided for all school grades.

*Free World professors are now lecturing in the Republic, many of them on leave from their universities.





Photo by Sp5 Gordon Gahan

*Thousands of scholarships have been made available to deserving Vietnamese students for the purpose of study abroad.

*Australia, New Zealand and Germany are providing technical training aids to Vietnam. Machines and equipment for two technical schools, one at Dalat and one at Gia Dinh, were given by Germany.

Free world educational aid is aimed in several directions. It seeks to give to Vietnamese people technical training in order that they might manage their own specialized industries; it seeks to give Vietnamese students the opportunity to study abroad; and above all, it tries to expand educational opportunities for as many young people as possible. As the military provides security in hitherto insecure areas, it will be possible for the students of Vietnam to pursue their education without fear of Viet Cong terrorism. Free world assistance will provide them with the tools and facilities for a better tomorrow.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

There is no greater indication of the free world's belief in the future of South Vietnam than in the long range technical assistance projects now being undertaken in the Republic.

*South of Da Nang lies the An Hoa/Nong Son industrial complex where South Vietnam's only coal mine is being developed with the aid of French and German investment. Germany has provided machinery for the construction of chemical plants near this complex and has funded many millions of dollars in long-term capital investments. Such a project will not only create jobs for the people in the surrounding areas, but will also stimulate many other sectors of the economy and provide benefits far above the initial investment.

*The United States has given 48 locomotives and 225 freight cars for the Vietnamese national railway, an important contribution in the effort to reestablish communications with all parts of the nation.

*Australia constructed a 55-kilowatt radio station at Ban Me Thuot. This station helps bring the government's message to remote areas of the Central Highlands.

*At Thu Duc, the United States has completed a water purification plant which now services the entire Saigon area. For the first time, the Saigon/Cholon areas can enjoy the benefits of pure water.

With the improvements and maintenance of Vietnam's communications, it will be possible to keep the country united,



and prevent the Viet Cong from isolating portions of the countryside.

Industry, communications, power—these are the fields in which free world technical assistance is now being given. When the war is over, these projects will remain to help the Vietnamese people and economy.

AGRICULTURAL ASSISTANCE

Vietnam is one of the richest rice producing nations in all of Asia, and the development of agriculture is of prime concern. Many free world nations are seeking to further the development of cooperatives to promote agricultural development.

* The Republic of China has had an agricultural mission in Vietnam since 1959. Working through the Ministry of Agriculture and local farmers, the 74-man mission has been seeking to promote better crop development in the Hue, Phan Rang, Dalat, Bien Hoa and Long Xuyen areas.

* Australia has provided valuable material including an experimental dairy farm, irrigation equipment, farm tools, livestock and poultry breeding equipment, a milk plant, rice silos, and animal vaccine production equipment.

* Germany has provided \$4,000,000 in long-term investment for the importation of machines, tools and fertilizers.

* The largest contribution, in terms of money, has come from the United States, whose agricultural aid program by



1966 had totalled \$640,000,000.

RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMS

Today, an estimated seven percent of the Vietnamese population are refugees. The South Vietnamese government has been providing for these unfortunate people, but the magnitude of the problem demands much more. Free world governments and agencies are attempting to fill this need.

* Germany has provided \$6,000,000 for the construction of refugee centers and a refugee village for 2,000 people.

* Australia has donated milk, blankets, roofing materials and earth moving equipment for refugee resettlement.

On a more personal level, the drive to aid the refugees of Vietnam was felt in the Japanese city of Niigata. Hearing of the plight of the refugees of Song Be in Phuoc Long Province, the citizens of Niigata banded together and sent

2½ tons of blankets, clothing and home medicine kits. Soon after this generous donation was made, the mayor of Niigata came personally to Song Be, where he was greeted by the local population. It was a fitting demonstration of Asian brotherhood and free world solidarity in the face of Communist aggression.

NATION BUILDING

The military side of the war is emphasized day after day, on television and radio and in newspapers around the world, but frequently too little is said of the successful fight against poverty, ignorance, disease and fear. This aid, now being given by nations of the free world, is as vital in the struggle against aggression as is the military effort. The Republic of Vietnam, the United States, and nations of the free world are not waiting for the war to end in order to help the Vietnamese people. They are building a nation now.





Photo by SSgt. Charles Washington



1968

Prelude to Attack

The year 1968 opened with an unwarlike quietness because of the New Year Truce. Only isolated squad-size VC units were involved in any fire fights. Army units found several rice caches. A company from the 173rd Airborne Brigade's 503rd Infantry found one rice cache of slightly over 1000 pounds hidden in bushes near its perimeter.

No sooner had the truce ended when the Viet Cong mortared, and tried to overrun the base camp of the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division in Tay Ninh Province. Shortly before midnight on New Years' Day, human wave attacks struck the base's perimeter from three sides. The attack broke off before the morning of January 2. The defenders found 347 enemy bodies strewn about the defensive area. It was later established that the attackers were from the 271st and 272nd VC Regiments.

Action elsewhere picked up. In the North both the Americal and 1st Cavalry Divisions reported increased contact with the enemy. In the highlands the 4th Division made contact with guerrillas near Pleiku and Dak To, and the 101st Airborne Division discovered several VC tunnel complexes west of Cu Chi in III CTZ.

During the next few days heavy contacts were made in the Americal's Operation Wheeler/Wallowa area of action in southern ICTZ, and along the Saigon River, 15 miles northwest of Saigon, in the 25th Division's Operation Yellowstone.

On January 7 a new \$500,000 Dial Central Office was opened in Phu Bai to provide a 1,000-line exchange for Marine and Army elements in the area.

PROVINCE CAPITAL HIT

Guerrilla forces made a pre-dawn terror attack on Ham Nghia's province capital of Khien Cuong. Following a mortar and rocket barrage, the VC penetrated to the center of town. Vietnamese National Police, Regional Forces and American advisors broke the attack at the market place. One policeman, alone at his post, was credited with killing five insurgents with hand grenades.

Two battalions of the ARVN 49th Regiment rushed to the aid of the city. By dawn 20 enemy bodies were counted in the center of town and four enemy suspects were detained. American casualties were three killed and 15 wounded. The Vietnamese police and Regional Forces casualties were described as light; however, the cost to the civilian populace was severe. Eighty civilians were wounded and 150 families were homeless from the surprise assault.

Heavy action continued through the next week centered in the Americal's battle area of southern I CTZ and the 25th's area of operation northwest of Saigon. Many units reported enemy resupply activity. Recently vacated tunnels and bunkers were also discovered, but there were only sporadic contacts. The 9th Division launched sweep operations 25 miles southwest of Saigon against a reported buildup of enemy forces; however, only light enemy contact was made.

During the month large and small enemy rice caches were discovered from one end of the country to the other. In the north, NVA forces were building up in the vicinity of the Marine base at Khe Sanh. This base sits astride the main infiltration route that skirts the DMZ through which enemy reinforcements are funneled toward Quang Ngai City and Hue. Units of the 108th Artillery Group at Camp Carroll were firing constant support for the bastion, 18 miles away.

Rice and weapons caches turned up regularly. The most unusual capture was made by the 11th Armored Cavalry near the Cambodian border, 70 miles north of Saigon. A North Vietnamese Regular was spotted carrying 60-pound bags of rice on a bicycle. He tried to out-pedal an Armored Cavalry Assault Vehicle (ACAV), but he was no match for the ACAV's speed. The Blackhorse troops ended the NVA soldier's rice smuggling days.

Sporadic action continued through the third week of January with small engagements reported and many more caches being discovered. On several occasions base camps



The Vung Chua Mountain site, located near Qui Nhon, is a major communications relay link between the northern and southern commands of USARV.



INNOCENT. OR...? Sampans make a tranquil setting on the waterways of the country. They are one of the main modes of transportation and commerce in Vietnam, and are used by the Communists to deliver large quantities of arms and ammunition. Photo by SSgt. Robert Peterson.

received harassing mortar fire.

The 1st Cavalry Division encountered an enemy force estimated at two battalions near Bong Son in Binh Dinh Province. The 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry was moving into the area when a lone enemy soldier was sighted. When the armored vehicles moved into an attacking position, heavy resistance was met. Gunships and airstrikes were called in and a blocking force moved in behind the enemy. After a day of fighting 128 enemy lay dead on the battlefield. The cavalry lost four men.

In the closing week of January, gunship crews from the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion spotted large sampan flotillas 31 miles southwest of Saigon in Dinh Tuong Province. Thirty-one of the sampans were sunk. Enemy sampan activity seemed to have suddenly increased as gunships reported sinking 98 more of the boats.

The Viet Cong attacked the town of Trang Bang, 28 miles northwest of Saigon, attempting to overrun the district headquarters. In typical VC fashion the insurgents struck from three sides with recoilless rifle and rocket fire at the buildings. The Viet Cong soldiers were caught in a crossfire from Popular Forces bunkers when they assaulted. Six enemy soldiers were killed in the fighting, as were a policeman and a civilian woman. Thirty-five civilians, including 16

women and eight children, were victims of wounds in the attack. The enemy was forced to withdraw from the town, never achieving his objective.

Although weapons and food caches continued to be turned up by searching troops, enemy contact was rare. The planned 36-hour Tet truce was approaching. In I CTZ the Communist threat was so severe the entire truce period was cancelled there. Heavy daily enemy artillery and rockets pounded away at Khe Sanh while North Vietnamese troops moved in on three sides.

A DEADLY HOLIDAY

Across the rest of the nation civilians and military were planning family reunions and celebrations for the three-day holiday starting the last day of the month. Already fire crackers were being shot off in happy anticipation of the Buddhist New Year. Tet being a time of family gatherings, made movement of large groups of people possible without suspicion. This was exactly what the Communist guerrillas needed and during the days preceeding Tet, large numbers of the VC and NVA moved into the nation's major cities.

Arms and ammunition were smuggled into the cities inside loads of farm produce and materials carried in trucks and sampans. They were then moved to cemeteries inside coffins



USARV and 1st Logistical Command headquarters buildings at Long Binh Post form a geometric pattern in what was once jungle. Photo by Sp4 James Lynch.

War Reaches The Cities



Military policemen le
away a Viet Cong w
was captured in
vicinity of the Americ
Embassy during the Co
munist attack Janua
31. Corporal Geo
Moyer, left, and S
James M. Singer, 52
Military Police Co
pany, were rushed to
Embassy to assist gua
in repelling an asse
on the compound. Ph
by Sp5 Donald A. H



in mock funerals. Even the flower pots were used to hide magazines of ammunition and hand grenades. By evening of January 30 most cemeteries in the major cities had become VC arsenals.

TET ATTACKS BEGIN

The first of the Tet attacks occurred at Nha Trang at 1:15 a.m. on January 30. The assault was apparently aimed at the U.S. Military Assistance Compound in downtown Nha Trang. By nightfall the next day, attacks took place in 27 of the 44 province capitals. The U.S. Embassy was one of the first targets in Saigon. Strikes were also made at Da Nang, Hue, Quang Tri, Qui Nhon, My Tho, Tan Phu Trung, An Khe, Pleiku, Kontum, Dalat, Ban Me Thout, Hoi An, Tuy Hoa, Hoc Mon, Tay Ninh, Ben Tre and Soc Trang. Also hit were military airfields at Da Nang, Chu Lai, Tan Son Nhut, Bien Hoa, Pleiku and Tuy Hoa. Major military installations were also subjected to ground and mortar attacks, including the huge ammunition dump and the II Field Force Headquarters at Long Binh.

Many of the cities overrun were cleared of guerrillas within 24 hours; however, several cities were held by the enemy for longer periods. These included Saigon, Hue and Dalat.

ANGRY PEOPLE

The Communists had hoped to rouse the people to a popular uprising with the attacks. The NVA and VC troops had been told the people would greet them with open arms. Instead, by violating the sacred family celebration of Tet by bombing, burning and disrupting city life, and by executing civilians, the Communists angered the people.

EMBASSY ASSAULTED

In Saigon 19 Viet Cong blasted a hole in the compound wall of the U.S. Embassy at about 3 a.m. on the last day in January. Several unsuccessful attempts were made by the terrorists to penetrate the embassy. The thick cherry wood door at the main entrance took a rocket hit and stood fast. Insurgents who entered the compound through the shattered wall and by scaling the rear wall were stopped in a 6-hour battle with Marine guards reinforced by military police from the 716th MP Battalion. To insure no VC had entered the embassy building a helicopter loaded with 101st Airborne paratroopers landed on the roof to search the building from top to bottom. The last insurgent died in a civilian aide's quarters in the rear of the compound, killed by the civilian himself with a pistol thrown to him by the MP's.

The attackers attempted to enter the Independence Palace grounds, but were driven into an incomplete hotel where they held out for two days. Other guerrillas struck military and government installations all over the Saigon-Cholon-Tan Son Nhut area. The MACV compound was struck by sniper fire and the sprawling Tan Son Nhut Airbase was invaded by about 700 guerrillas. Tropic Lightning troops of the 25th

Infantry Division were called to help drive the enemy out of the base. American and ARVN soldiers supported by helicopter gunships rushed to the city.

Communist political cadre paraded through the streets in an attempt to rally the people to assist them; they found few takers.

Throughout the country superior firepower and logistical support turned the tide against the Communists dramatically.

The 1st Cavalry in the north secured Quang Tri; 4th Division troops had secured Pleiku and Kontum, and so it went to the south where 9th Division troops freed My Tho from the VC. Through all the fighting, ARVN troops displayed conspicuous bravery. They proved that this is their country and they are willing to fight for it.

COSTLY ATTACKS

The fierceness of the fighting was attested to by the casualty figures. In three days the Communist death toll was esti-



A helicopter lands on the U. S. Embassy roof, recalling the manner in which troops of the 101st Airborne Division were landed to aid in clearing the compound.

mated at over 10,000. Some 3,000 suspects were being detained. South Vietnamese losses reached 632 killed and 1,588 wounded. American deaths were 281 with another 1,195 wounded. Other Free World Forces lost 34 men. At least 3,000 civilians died and another 350,000 were left homeless.

Destruction of property was high. In Pleiku, 50 per cent of the homes were destroyed by the fighting. But the worst catastrophe struck Hue, which was completely overrun by the Communists. When the fighting to retake the city was over, near the end of February, 80 percent of the city had been destroyed, including many irreplaceable art treasures of the Citadel, the historic home of Vietnamese emperors for centuries.

Free World Forces quickly moved to block off escaping Communist soldiers on the outskirts of the cities and to destroy guerrilla mortar and rocket crews harassing military installations.

Ten days after the first attack, the brunt of the Communist effort was broken everywhere except in Hue, where the 1st Cavalry Division blocked additional North Vietnamese units from reinforcing the insurgents in the city, who were slowly being dug out block by block by U.S. Marine and ARVN forces.

The most reliable intelligence estimates indicated a second wave of attacks would take place by mid-month. Vietnamese and American forces conducted sweeps in the vicinity of the

large cities to break up the possibility. One Delta city, Ba Lieu, was attacked by the VC, but the invaders were turned back by ARVN soldiers in a day-long battle.

In the Saigon-Bien Hoa area, the 25th and 9th Infantry Divisions, joined by the 199th Light Infantry Brigade and 11th Armored Cavalry, clashed with Viet Cong guerrillas frequently. Artillery and helicopter gunship supporting fire caused the Communist death toll to mount at an incredible rate. During early portions of the Tet attacks, the only available aerial gun support was provided by the 1st Aviation Brigade and 1st Cavalry Division gunships.

FRESH TROOPS ARRIVE

By mid-month President Johnson decided to send 10,500 more U.S. troops to Vietnam. The first major unit to answer the call was the 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division. The brigade was rapidly deployed to the I CTZ to alleviate pressure on Marine forces who were fighting in Hue and who were facing an estimated four to five North Vietnamese divisions.

On February 18 the second wave of attacks was launched by the Communists. This time they were not as severe as the initial attacks, with no major ground assaults being initiated. The attacks were basically mortar and rocket barrages. Nearly every military installation hit during Tet was struck again, including the ammunition dump at Long Binh and the airfields at Tan Son Nhut and Bien Hoa. Sixteen provincial



Their homes destroyed by the Viet Cong attack on Saigon, Vietnamese citizens search through the rubble for material with which to rebuild.

capitals were also shelled.

The next day a 122 mm rocket struck the civilian passenger terminal at Tan Son Nhut Airbase killing one and seriously wounding 21 American military personnel, most of whom were preparing to return to the United States after the completion of their tour.

Heavy fighting broke out on Saigon's northern perimeter as the Viet Cong bombarded Tan Son Nhut and MACV headquarters again. Aviation Brigade gunships reported sinking many sampans attempting to resupply Communist forces surrounding Saigon. Enemy anti-aircraft guns were located 2½ miles south of the Tan Son Nhut Airbase.

During the last week in February the attacks on Tan Son Nhut and Bien Hoa began to taper off. Marine and ARVN troops were digging the last enemy soldiers out of Hue. Throughout the countryside reconstruction was beginning. Curfews were still in effect, but the people were slowly starting to rebuild. Prices in the major cities were getting back to normal.

THE COST IS HIGH

The cost to both sides of the Tet attacks was heavy. U.S. losses were 2,371 killed during the period of slightly over 30 days. Also, 11,664 were wounded with some 5,500 being returned to duty without hospitalization. One hundred fifty-five soldiers were reported missing in action. The enemy paid even more dearly for his attempts to take over the cities. During the same period, the enemy lost an estimated 25,000 soldiers killed. No statistics are kept on enemy wounded. They lost over 16,000 weapons and a half million rounds of

ammunition. They also lost their biggest bid to win the war.

March began with optimism in Vietnam. Two major operations got into full swing in the Republic: Operation Truong Cong Dinh and Operation Quyet Thang.

The 1st and 2nd Brigades of the 9th Infantry Division launched Truong Cong Dinh March 7 with beach landings east and west of the provincial capital of My Tho, 50 miles southwest of Saigon. Entering the area from the north was the 7th ARVN Division. In the first seven days of heavy fighting, 145 enemy soldiers were killed.

Quyet Thang (Resolve to Win), a multi-division offensive, began four days after Truong Cong Dinh. This operation was centered in the four provinces surrounding Saigon. Elements of the 1st, 9th and 25th Infantry Divisions joined with the 5th and 25th ARVN Divisions, plus Vietnamese Marines and began the push to clear the provinces of Long An, Hau Nghia, Binh Duong and Bien Hoa of the enemy guerrilla units that still remained after the Tet attacks.

In four days, 215 Viet Cong were killed and 22 suspects detained. Large stores of ammunition and weapons were captured, including 45 122mm rockets.

NEW SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

The world waited with anxiety for any change in Washington's policies concerning the conduct of the war when it was announced that Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara would leave to become president of the World Bank. President Johnson named Clark M. Clifford to succeed McNamara. At the swearing-in ceremony, Clifford assured the world that he intended to continue the war policies in accordance with



Infantrymen spread out from their assault chopper after landing on the edge of a forest.



A patrol moves through a dense jungle on a reconnaissance-in-force mission.

the wishes of the President.

Also announced were the appointments of General William C. Westmoreland as the new Chief of Staff and Lt. Gen. Bruce Palmer, Jr., deputy commanding general of U.S. Army Vietnam, as the new vice chief of staff. Replacing General Westmoreland as Vietnam commander would be General Creighton W. Abrams, deputy commander of U.S. Forces in Vietnam.

Fighting was fierce in I Corps Tactical Zone during the month of March. Elements of the Americal Division and the 1st Cavalry Division recorded more than 1,000 enemy soldiers killed during the month. Three operations accounted for the heavy kills: Operations Wheeler/Wallowa, Jeb Stuart and MacArthur.

Since its beginning last November, Operation Wheeler/Wallowa took a toll of 3,335 North Vietnamese, 3,086 Viet Cong killed, and 1,089 individual and 238 crew-served weapons captured.

A 100-foot NVA trawler was destroyed four miles southeast of Duc Pho during the second week in March. Americal units participated in the action. Weapons taken from the ship included 700 rifles, 44 submachineguns, 15 light machineguns, 170 rifle grenades, 52 82mm mortar rounds and 27 hand grenades.

Operation Coronado XI, the 9th Division's massive push in the Delta, terminated in mid-month. The operation began February 4 when two battalions of the division made a beach assault five miles south of Can Tho—the deepest penetration to that date into the Delta by an American unit. As a result of that operation, 246 of the enemy were killed, with 45 weapons and 20,700 rounds of small arms ammunition captured. In addition, the Old Reliables destroyed 28 bunkers and sank seven sampans.

Khe Sanh continued under intense siege by more than 20,000 enemy soldiers. The 5,000 Marines and a few U.S. Army and Vietnamese units continued to hold out against the daily barrage of Communist shells. But the friendly casualty figures mounted. In one crash of a C-123, 49 persons were killed.

Near Khe Sanh, enemy tanks were sighted for the first time in the war. Elements of the 1st Cavalry Division, on a cordon and search mission a few miles from Lang Vei, sighted what later were confirmed as PT-76 light amphibious tanks. The 14-ton tanks mount a 76 mm main gun, plus a 7.62 mm machinegun.

Another first in the war was the shelling of the sprawling U.S. Army Base and support command headquarters at Cam Ranh Bay. Damage to the base was extremely light with no loss of life.

With more than an estimated 70,000 Communists massed for a strike against the allies in Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces in I CTZ, Provisional Corps Vietnam was established. Though the attack never took place, PROVCORPSV continues to serve as a command echelon between III Marine Amphibious Force and Army and Marine Divisions in the northern area.

The enemy's capability to harass in the Saigon/Long Binh area was sharply pointed out when a 30-vehicle convoy moving from Long Binh to Newport was ambushed nine miles northeast of Saigon on Highway 1A. One American was killed and three others wounded.

As the month drew to a close, U.S. and Vietnamese forces killed 419 Communists when enemy forces launched two massive human-wave attacks against two widely-separated allied positions. South Vietnamese Regular and Popular Forces troops and infantrymen from the 25th Infantry Division killed 284 Reds when the Communists flung themselves time after time against the PF outpost around the village of Trang Bang, 28 miles northwest of Saigon. The morning attack of March 25 lasted into the early morning hours of the next day.

In the other battle, a multi-battalion force of North Vietnamese, supported by flamethrowers, attempted to overrun a U.S. fire support base. At 3:30 a.m. on the 26th of March, an estimated three NVA battalions charged the base about 19 miles west of Kontum City. The bloody, close-in fighting continued for four hours before a counter-attack by the defenders drove the Communists from the perimeter. The attack cost the insurgents 135 killed. American losses for both battles were 19 killed and 51 wounded.

STEPS TO PEACE

Lyndon Baines Johnson startled the world when he announced Sunday, March 31, that he would not seek reelection to the Presidency of the United States, and that he was ordering all bombing north of the 19th parallel stopped.



Aerial resupply is one of the many missions of the Chinook helicopter. Carrying supplies either internally or slung, it can deliver needed materials to the remote parts of the country.

In announcing the cessation of air action, the Chief Executive said that there "is no need to delay the talks that could bring an end to this long and bloody war." He called upon the Soviet Union and Britain, as co-charimen of the Geneva Conference, to do all in their power to bring peace in Vietnam.

"I call upon Ho Chi Minh," President Johnson also said, "to respond positively and favorably to this new step toward peace." North Vietnamese leaders procrastinated for some weeks on the call for preliminary peace talks, but finally agreed on Paris as the scene for the talks that could lead to peace.

Advocates of peace and non-violence in the civil rights struggle lost a leader when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was shot to death on a Memphis motel balcony Thursday night, April 4. King's death came one day after he had told associates that he was not disturbed by reports that he would be subjected to physical harm while in Memphis. President Johnson set April 7 as a national day of mourning for the slain civil rights leader.

The month of April was marked by three major operations. Operation Carentan II began April 1 to prevent enemy troop movements around the imperial city of Hue. Operation Pegasus/Lam Son 207, a joint mission, effected the relief of the besieged U.S. Marines at their Khe Sanh combat base. And Operation Delaware invaded the North Vietnamese stronghold in the A Shau Valley, destroying tons of enemy equipment and supplies.

The 1st and 2nd Brigades of the 101st Airborne Division and the 3rd Brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division encountered fierce fighting throughout the Carentan II area of responsibility.

One of the bloodiest battles to date in the operation oc-

curred three miles northwest of Phuoc Yen. Elements of the 101st Airborne had cordoned off an NVA battalion and hit it with artillery, airstrikes and small arms fire. After killing key officers and three company commanders, the paratroopers used loudspeakers to encourage the remaining enemy to surrender. Ninety-five prisoners were taken that day and more than 300 NVA regulars were confirmed killed. Subsequent actions by the 82nd's 3rd Brigade resulted in about 140 more enemy soldiers killed during an assault on the village of Thon Bon Tri, four miles west of Hue. The paratroopers, members of the 1st Battalion, 505th Infantry, used heavy concentrations of artillery against the entrenched enemy force.

The 77-day siege of Khe Sanh was lifted Friday, April 5, when elements of the 1st Cavalry Division and ARVN Rangers swarmed up Highway 9 into the foothills surrounding the Marine base. For the first time since September, American forces traveled the twisting mountain road that linked the 5,000 Leathernecks with coastal supply areas. The three-pronged relief force pushed toward the base from the east, north and south. Sporadic artillery and mortar fire was encountered, but no ground resistance was met. Of the 20,000 enemy troops surrounding Khe Sanh before the operation began, only about 7,000 remained when the task force reached the outskirts of the base.

More than 1,000 Communists were killed in the operation. In three days of scouring the hillsides around the Marine base, cavalymen from the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry captured a vast arsenal of weapons and supplies.

AFTER TWO YEARS

The A Shau Valley was described as a "weird piece of terrain...like a ditch cut out of a bunch of mountains."

Fleeing Reds deserted their weapons, ammunition and rations when thousands of helicopter-borne cavalymen invaded the Communist command's military supply base in South Vietnam—the A Shau Valley, close to the Laotian border. After more than two years, American forces again entered the valley, despite what one official termed "damn good antiaircraft forces." The Americans paid a heavy price for their assault. North Vietnamese long-reaching 23mm and 37mm guns and .50-cal. machineguns destroyed or damaged 30 choppers in the first 24 hours of the operation. Some of the helicopters were hit at 6,000 feet. The operation

A check of identification papers is a necessary step in each cordon and search operation.



was to last until mid-May.

Tropic Lightning infantrymen repelled a predawn attack Friday, April 13, on a battalion defensive position 49 miles northwest of Saigon. The attack came at 4:04 a.m. when enemy troops launched a mortar attack on the camp, followed by a ground assault. The 25th Division soldiers battled the estimated two battalion-size force until 7 a.m. when contact was broken. An initial sweep of the battlefield yielded 51 assault rifles, 13 light machineguns, and other equipment in addition to the 137 enemy bodies. A detainee taken in the battlefield sweep identified the enemy unit as part of the 271st VC Regiment. This unit had taken part in the Trang Bang battles earlier which netted Tropic Lightning, Air Force and South Vietnamese troops 470 enemy dead. Sixteen U.S. soldiers were killed in the action and 47 others wounded.

The two largest enemy caches ever found in Vietnam earned the finder the largest amount of reward money ever given to a Hoi Chanh. Nguyen Van Lieu received 1,088,000 piasters (\$9,222 U.S.) for leading American, Australian and Vietnamese soldiers to the caches containing more than 1,000 rifles, 60 mm mortars, light machineguns, grease guns,

Bangalore torpedoes, cases of ammunition, explosives and more than one ton of rice.

Lieu had been a Viet Cong for seven years before turning himself in at the Phuoc Tuy Provincial Chieu Hoi Center last September. Part of the reward Lieu turned over to the Phuoc Tuy and Saigon Tet Aggression Relief Projects.

April ended on an optimistic note when Clark M. Clifford, the new Secretary of Defense, announced that he foresaw a cut in troops in Vietnam. The increased effectiveness of the South Vietnamese will permit a leveling off of U.S. efforts in the war and "in due time" permit a gradual troop reduction, Clifford said. In his first public address since becoming Secretary seven weeks earlier, Clifford said his statement was based on a comprehensive review of American policies and programs in Vietnam, which were ordered by President Johnson after the setbacks suffered by the Communists during their Tet attacks. "The results were clear and encouraging," he said. "They disclosed that Hanoi could not bend South Vietnam to its will by military force."

Action during May was fairly heavy, especially around the city of Saigon. The peace negotiations also went into full swing in Paris.



The USS Topeka fires at inland enemy positions in I Corps Tactical Zone from her position off the coast. The Navy supports land forces throughout the Republic with various types of ships.

MASS SURRENDER

In one of the largest mass surrenders by North Vietnamese in the war, 97 NVA regulars, including five women nurses, turned themselves over to paratroopers of the 101st Airborne at Phuoc Yen. The prisoners said their unit was the 8th Battalion, 90th NVA Regiment, which had been sent to Hue to serve as occupation forces after a takeover by the North Vietnamese forces.

Other elements of the NVA regiments were hit hard by the Screaming Eagles and the Panther Company, 1st ARVN Division when Thon Duong, northeast of Hue, was cordoned off. The Panther Company drove into the village under intense fire while four companies of the 1st and 2nd battalions of the 501st and 502nd Infantry blocked escape routes. Covering fire was provided by gunships of the 308th Aviation Battalion. In the two days of fierce, close-in fighting, more than 350 enemy soldiers were killed, including a battalion commander, a battalion executive officer and three company commanders.

The 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry of the Big Red One slugged it out with the enemy for 10 hours May 4 near Tan Hiep, four miles north of the division's basecamp at Di An. Throughout the early morning and into the afternoon, Battery C, 2nd Battalion, 33rd Artillery at Di An and Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 13th Artillery at Phu Loi poured over 1,600 rounds of 105mm howitzer shells into the area. The infantrymen inched forward into the village and as darkness set in, the enemy broke contact, leaving 236 dead behind.

For three days following the initial encounter, the division engaged in heavy fighting. Utilizing tanks and armored personnel carriers to crash through the wooded terrain near Phu Loi, the division's 4th Cavalry forced the enemy to break into small, disorganized groups as gunships firing overhead supported. The three-day total for the fierce fighting rose to 661 enemy killed, while U.S. losses were put at seven killed and 18 wounded.

Viet Cong terrorists used a taxi loaded with explosives to blast the Allied television station in downtown Saigon Friday, May 3, six hours before the North Vietnamese Government agreed on Paris as the site for the preliminary peace talks. As the talks continued, the VC stepped up their attacks of terror against the capital city, shelling it almost daily with 122mm rocket and mortar fire. The government station was apparently the prime target for the explosives, but the blast also smashed the windows and collapsed the ceiling of the adjacent Armed Forces Vietnam Network studios. A building of the university center was completely destroyed. Three Vietnamese were killed in the blast and 30 wounded, including five Americans.

Enemy shelling of Saigon and other major cities in the South commenced in earnest on Sunday, May 5, in a coordinated mortar attack before dawn. Probes against three points on the edge of Saigon were made, but no major ground offensives occurred against the capital. Newport docking facilities, the village of Thanh My Tay, and the municipal water plant at Thu Duc were sites of attacks. A U.S. military billet near the central market place was sprayed by an exploding mortar shell. There were numerous other reports of rounds hitting various sections of the city. Casualty figures revealed that 49 persons had been killed in the shelling and 360 wounded.

The heaviest of the fighting and attacks centered in Saigon's Chinese district of Cholon near the Phu Tho race track. Scattered street fighting erupted and 110 VC were killed during Sunday's action. In addition, six news correspondents were killed as they covered the action. The West German Embassy announced that First Secretary Baron Hasso



Ruedt von Collenberg was executed by the VC and that his body had been found near the race track. A few blocks from the U.S. Embassy, Brig. Gen. Nguyen Ngoc Loan, head of the National Police of South Vietnam, was seriously wounded when leading an attack on Viet Cong snipers. Elements of the 9th Infantry Division intercepted the enemy's Phu Loi Battalion trying to enter Saigon two days later and killed 213 in a factory area near the edge of the city.

More than 2,000 Communists were killed in the three days of the new attacks.

In Paris, peace talks commenced with the delegates agreeing to exclude representatives of South Vietnam and other Allied governments, as well as those of Russia, China and the Viet Cong from the initial talks. From the beginning, Hanoi insisted that the only problem to be discussed was the unconditional ending of the U.S. bombing of the North. The U.S., however, maintained that the North must also show some military restraint before the talks could develop into full fledged negotiations of peace in the country.

North Vietnamese Ambassador Xuan Thuy called on the United States to end the rest of the bombing and "all other acts of war" against his country but did it in softer words than had been expected. Ambassador Averell Harriman, the U.S. delegation head at the conference, asked in turn for restraint on the part of the North Vietnamese to match the cessation of bombing imposed by the U.S. Harriman charged that instead of restraint, the North moved "substantial and increasing numbers of troops and supplies from the North to the South since the bombing halted March 31."

KHAM DUC EVACUATED

Allied forces evacuated the U.S. Special Forces camp at Kham Duc with a heavy cost in lives and equipment on May 14. The evacuation of the camp resulted in the loss of five helicopters and four airplanes, one of which was known to be loaded with Vietnamese soldiers and their dependents. More

than 120 men, women and children were in the C-130 aircraft when it was shot down on takeoff just over the Kham Duc airstrip. There were no survivors. Evacuation of the camp meant that the Air Force could bomb the area with tactical airstrikes and B-52 saturation raids.

Operation Delaware closed May 17 when the allies pulled out of the A Shau Valley. The entire area was to be kept under close observation and interdiction fire.

The campaign cost the Americans 139 killed and 662 wounded. Communist forces lost 726 dead. In addition, 128 helicopters were hit during the operation. All but 20 of these were recovered and repaired. Weapons and equipment captured during the sweep included a Soviet-built tank, tracked vehicles, two bulldozers, 66 trucks, one jeep, electronics and radio equipment, 2,200 rifles and machineguns, flamethrowers, antitank and antiaircraft guns and hundreds of thousands of rounds of ammunition.

The 4th Infantry Division kicked off a new drive in the Central Highlands near the end of the month, attempting to envelop North Vietnam's 325th Division. The Communist division had moved south after participating in the 77-day siege of Khe Sanh.

LONG, HOT SUMMER

With the coming of June, the incidents which foretold a long, hot summer began. Enemy activity increased in and around Saigon as the Communists continued their shelling of the capital city in support of their negotiators at the preliminary peace talks in Paris. Hanoi boasted that beginning with the 19th of June, 100 rocket rounds would be fired into the city each day. The enemy failed to live up to this boast, though the city continued to suffer damage from what little rocket fire did come through. General Creighton Abrams assumed command of U.S. forces in the Republic on June 16 and stated that the shelling of Saigon would be stopped. Immediately, infantrymen from the 9th and 25th Infantry

A 122 mm rocket is fired from its launching tube to demonstrate the weapon, which has been used by the Communists to shell Saigon. Pictured on the opposite page Saigon is shown under a rocket attack. Right photo by Sp5 George Saunders; opposite photo by Maj. Charles B. Moore.



Divisions began sweeping the outskirts of the city. Within the city and at its edges ARVN soldiers also made successful sweeps, adding to the daily total of Communists killed in the struggle for the safety of Saigon and its citizens.

At home, Americans watched in horror as another leader, Senator Robert F. Kennedy, was struck down. The senator was killed shortly after learning of his victory in the California presidential primary election. The senator from New York was killed four years and seven months to the day after his brother, President John F. Kennedy, was assassinated in Dallas.

In another mass surrender to Government forces, 110 Viet Cong turned themselves over to Vietnamese forces Tuesday morning, June 18. The VC were the remnants of two regiments battered by Government forces for a week. The original 400-man force was reduced to 200, including 80 wounded, after a battle with South Vietnamese forces. Their commander was killed, and their deputy commander, a VC captain, surrendered to GVN forces Monday.

The worst single disaster to strike the Saigon administration during the war occurred Sunday, June 2, when a malfunctioning rocket hit a temporary Government command post in Cholon, killing six high-ranking Vietnamese officials and wounding four others. The mayor of Saigon was among those wounded.

Fresh Communist forces moved into the Saigon area as the month wore on. At least seven separate regiments were identified as being around the refugee-filled capital city as June ended. Forces from the 1st, 9th and 25th Infantry Divisions, plus ARVN Rangers and Marines swept the area surrounding Saigon for a week killing several hundred enemy soldiers. Many of the enemy dead were identified as North Vietnamese Army regulars.

"BOMBS AWAY!"

America's B-52 bombers wound up three years in the war in Vietnam in late June without a single combat loss, while at

the same time dealing the enemy many severe blows. They proved their worth again and again. They were credited with preventing a major attack against Khe Sanh and with spoiling enemy efforts to launch a major counter-offensive in the Central Highlands. Now that 11 of Hanoi's divisions are committed to fighting in the South, the Stratofortresses have a much simpler task than they first did. Larger troop concentrations require lengthy, and thus visible, supply lines which are extremely vulnerable to the 30 tons of bombs each of the mammoth bombers can carry. A North Vietnamese document captured in the North said that one regiment had been hit six times by the B-52s from the time the enemy had left their base in North Vietnam.

The evacuation of Khe Sanh began June 28 because of "...significant changes in the military situation in Vietnam since early this year." The evacuation was decided upon because of "an increase in friendly strength, mobility and firepower..." in the area.

Operation Nevada Eagle in the 101st Airborne's area of operation continued with fierce firefights during the last of the month. Screaming Eagles paratroopers and Popular Forces units have been scouring the area around Hue in a continuing effort to eliminate the enemy forces still located in the area. In addition to the several hundred enemy killed in the I Corps operation, several large supply caches were uncovered.

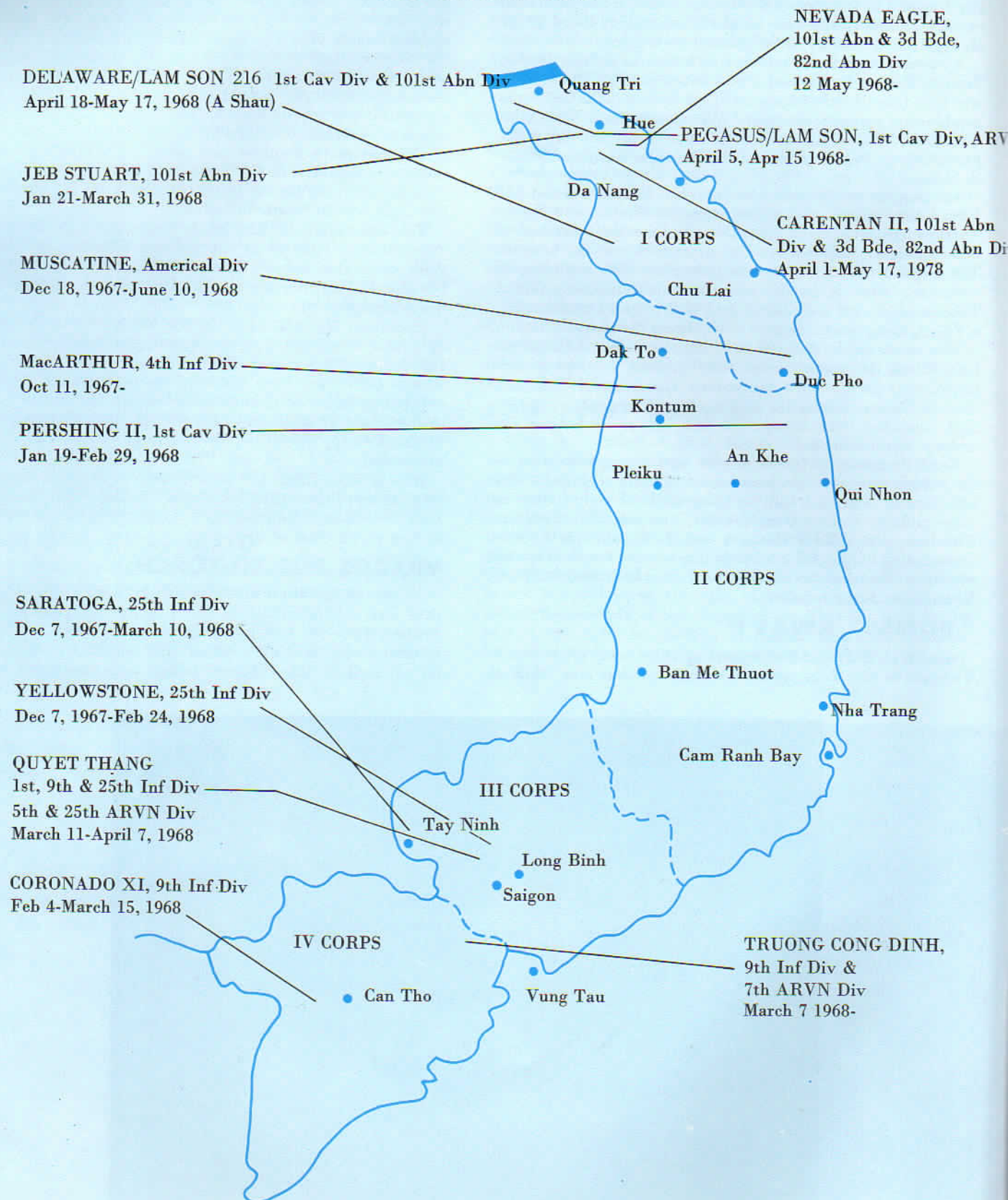
Also in mid-June, Lt. Gen. Frank T. Mildren succeeded Gen. Bruce Palmer, Jr., as deputy commanding general of USARV. Gen. Palmer succeeded Gen. Ralph E. Haines, Jr., as Army vice chief of staff.

VILLAGE PUT TO TORCH

In one of the worst atrocities of the war, Viet Cong guerrillas entered the village of Son Tra shortly before midnight Friday, June 28, and killed 88 persons—73 of them being civilians—and leaving another 103 wounded. More than 85 per cent of the villagers' homes were destroyed by the



1968 OPERATIONS





Son Tra was almost totally destroyed by Viet Cong guerrillas, who put the village to the torch on June 28. Photos by Sp5 Michael A. Faherty.

1968 CASUALTIES *

ENEMY KILLED

152,387

HOI CHANH

9,272

VIETNAMESE ABDUCTED

6,672

VIETNAMESE REFUGEES **

1,180,491

CIVILIANS ASSASSINATED

4,234

TERRORIST INCIDENTS

7,387

ARVN CASUALTIES

Killed	Wounded
18,230	43,081

FW MAF KILLED

804

U. S. MILITARY CASUALTIES

Killed	Wounded
Army—6,607	Army—49,202
U. S.—10,503	U. S.—78,493

terrorists, leaving 4,000 people homeless. Most of the dead were killed by the flames. They died in their homes as they slept. Those that reached bunkers were burned to death as they huddled inside. The terrorists were Viet Cong who had been operating throughout northern Quang Tri Province for several months.

Culminating eight months of sweat and toil, in which five American engineers lost their lives to enemy fire, the Phu Cuong Bridge over the Saigon River was opened June 29. The bridge represents the last link in the Saigon by-pass, which will permit supplies from Long Binh to reach basecamps of the 1st and 25th Infantry Divisions without traveling through the crowded streets of the capital city. The largest bridge ever built by Army engineers in Vietnam, the 1,002-foot concrete and steel span shortens the route to the infantry basecamps by 11½ miles! The bridge and approaching roadway 25 miles north of Saigon were constructed by the men of the 20th Engineer Brigade.

June closed with a note of optimism in the peace talks in Paris. Secretary of Defense Clark M. Clifford said that the "current negotiations may move out of the public propaganda stage toward private negotiations." The U.S.'s negotiator, Cyrus R. Vance, told North Vietnam that the U.S. "was prepared to cease bombardment of North Vietnamese territory," but was unable to do so because Hanoi had intensified its war efforts while the U.S. had been trying to de-escalate. And for the first time, Hanoi offered to discuss a Vietnam peace based on the 1954 agreements of the Geneva Conventions. But Hanoi's offer was tied to another demand for a total halt in the bombing of the North. "We think there is a proper basis for peace in Southeast Asia that conforms to the legitimate interests of all the countries of that area and that we and others should move steadily toward it," Vance rebutted at the session on June 26.

The Vietnamese have paid heavily in their long struggle against the Communist insurgents. Despite the cost, they maintain their determination to be free. We are assisting them in all their efforts—military, economic, and political—wherever we can: In the field, with the rural people, and at the military and governmental headquarters level. Success will depend ultimately upon the effectiveness of our joint efforts.

*From 1 Jan-30 Sept 1968

**Total number of South Vietnamese refugees on 30 Sept 1968



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Now you are going home to rejoin your family and friends. They are proud of you and are anxiously awaiting your return. With you goes a world of knowledge and impressions based on the experiences you have had in Vietnam. Your friends, neighbors, and the people with whom you will work will look to you as an authority on what is happening in the Republic of Vietnam. This magazine, a history of this country and the year you spent here, may help you to tell your story.

You are commended for the fine job you have completed in Vietnam. Warmest wishes for success in your future endeavors.

Frank T. Mildren

FRANK T. MILDREN
Lieutenant General, US Army
Deputy Commanding General



Cam Ranh Bay

Front Cover ; Emerging from the darkness of night into the light of a new day ; Lifting a country from the grasp of Communist aggression and instilling instead a hope of peace and freedom ; this is the goal being pursued by the USARV soldier from the Highlands to the Delta.

The title, TOUR 365, signifies the normal tour of one year, 365 days.

Back Cover : A pretty girl with a smile greets servicemen who have completed their tour of duty in the Republic of Vietnam and are now homeward bound.





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AMERICAN LEGION POST 9 VETERAN'S RELIEF FUND

The American Legion Post 9 Veterans Relief Fund was formed back in August of 2016. The American Legion Post 9 was involved in a Gospel/Patriotic Concert that was presented at the Central Lutheran Church. This concert was presented in four consecutive days. The concert was the work of about 30-40 very dedicated individuals who practiced once every week for about a year. The concert was a great success and was so much fun just to listen to. The concert was no charge to those attending. At the end of each performance the American Legion Burial Detail asked for donations. We raised \$12900.00 in donations after those four performances. We were amazed at how appreciative the audience was. And the amount of donations we received. These funds were to be used to help veterans. Thus the formation of the American Legion Post 9 Veterans Relief Fund. All requests for donations are done through the Winona County Veterans Service office. Tom and Rolando, our Winona County Veterans Service Officers, first qualify the person as a Veteran. And Tom and Rolando then ascertain that the request is a valid request.

The fund has provided assistance for electric, water and gas bills, water heaters, heating and cooling equipment, rent, car repairs, property tax, phone bills, lodging, medical bills, mobility products, food cards, and even assistance with funerals.

Once the requests are approved by the County Veterans Service Officers, the checks are written and sent directly to the vendor. This fund is the most direct help to Veterans in the County.

This fund has gone a long way in providing assistance to Winona County Veterans in their time of need. These funds are available to all Winona County Veterans and Veterans do not have to be a member of the American Legion to receive assistance.

Over the years we have provided about \$45,000.00 in assistance to 200 plus veterans. We are always asking for assistance in keeping this fund going. Donations to the fund can be made by writing your check to the American Legion Post 9 Veterans Relief Fund. I would like to add that the fund has no administration costs. 100% of funds donated go to help Winona County Veterans.

Your donation will be greatly appreciated by American Legion Post 9, and the Veterans we serve.

Thank you for your consideration of our Veterans Relief Fund.

Respectfully presented.

Sam Sasser

American Legion Post 9 Adjutant

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September 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
6	7 Labor Day ALR Mtg 5:30pm	8 Exec/Post Meeting 5pm 40&8 follows Auxiliary Mtg 5:30pm Wing Nite 5-6:30pm SE Patriot Mtg 7pm	2 Rotary 12p Bingo 7pm Memorial Park Mtg 5:30	3 Winona County Blood Drive 9a-3p Hiawatha Marines 7pm	4	5 Card Show in the Hall 9-2pm Baby Shower
13	14 SAL Meeting 6:30pm	15 Kwik Trip 8am Basket Nite 5-7pm NoonLions 6pm	9 Rotary 12p Bingo 7pm	10 Broasted Chicken 5pm-6:30pm	11	12
20	21 Red Cross in hall 12-6pm DAR 6:30pm	22 SE Patriot Meeting 7pm	16 Rotary 12p Bingo 7pm	17 Kwik Trip 8am	18 Fish Fry 4:30-7pm Music by Hillbilly Fever 6-9pm	19 SAL Chicken Que! 11am til gone Local 1030 at 6:30 pm
27	28	29	23 Rotary 12p Bingo 7pm	24 Taco Night and Meat Raf- fle 5-7pm	25 German Police Visit 5-11pm	26 Benefit in Hall 12-5pm Class of 1963 Reunion 1-5p
28	29	30	30 Rotary 12p Bingo 7pm			



October 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4	5 ALR Meeting 5:30pm	6 Basket Nite 5-7pm CoastGuard 7 Noon Lions 6p	7 Bingo 7pm Rotary 12pm	1 Hiawatha Marines 7pm	2	3 Retirement Party 1-5pm
11	12 Columbus Day!! SAL Meeting 6:30pm	13 Exec/Post Meeting 5pm 40&8 follows Wing Nite 5:30	14 Bingo 7pm Rotary 12pm	8 Broasted Chicken 5pm to 6:30p SE Patriot 7p	9 WSU Athletics Trivia in hall 7-9pm Silent Auction 4-9pm	10 Cotter Chicken Que by the SAL 11am til gone
18	19 DAR Meeting 6:30pm	20 Basket Nite 5-7pm Red Cross 12p NoonLions 6p	21 Bingo 7pm Rotary 12pm	15 WSU Retirees in hall 2pm	16 Fish Fry 4:30-7pm Music by Renee Jones 6-9pm	17 Family Get Together in hall 12-4pm Local Lodge 1030 at 6:30pm
25	26	27	28 Bingo 7pm Rotary 12pm	22 Taco Nite & MeatRaffle 5-7pm SE Patriot 7p	23	24
31	30	31	32	33	34	35



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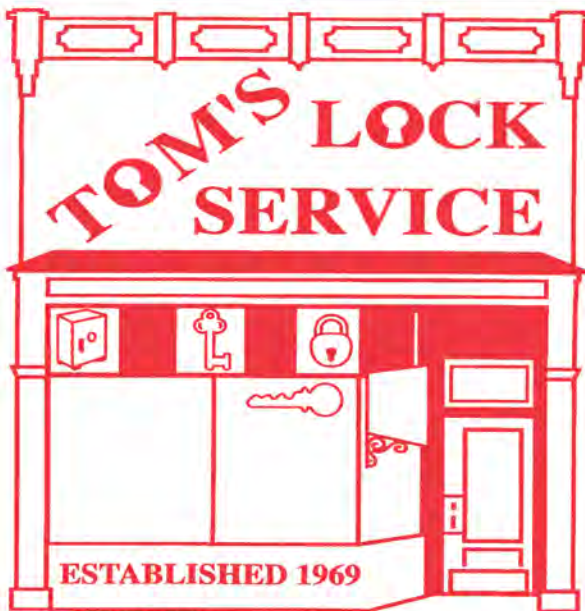
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