



The 2/4 Association

Sea Horse

Second Quarter, 2005

The Newsletter of the Second Battalion, Fourth Marines Association

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President's message

Greetings, Marines:

Usually I am not a person who has trouble putting things into words and those who know me well will say an amen to that. Last week my only child gave birth to my first grandson and the experience has overwhelmed me. She insisted that Peggy and I be there with her soldier husband to witness this miracle of birth. If you believe in a higher power or not, there is just something that completely takes over when you are witness to something so wonderful.

Okay Jack, so you have a grandson—so what!! My son-in-law spent from April 2003–April 2004 serving in Iraq and now he is a father. The circle of life continues. We served our country in a time of war and we came home to our wives and girlfriends and we started our own families and now our own children are having children. What goes around, comes around.

I hope that those of you who asked at the last reunion for a mailed copy of the *Sea Horse* have received one. We are

presently looking for ways to better serve your wishes. That may involve asking you for a fee to help cover the postage which the postal service says is going up later this year.

Ken Sympson, our editor, has said that he would like to step down by the end of next year. He has done a wonderful job for us, keeping us both amused and informed. Thanks Ken for everything.

Now is the time for some of our younger members to step up to the plate. If we don't get involved, soon we will not have an association. Vietnam veterans are getting older and there is much to be learned from those who have served after us and continue to serve. All the present officers will help as will all the previous leaders of our organization.

Please keep your thoughts and prayers on ALL the service men and women who protect our freedom daily. Peggy and I look forward to seeing all you old guys and gals and a whole bunch of new ones in San Diego.

Semper Fi,

Jack

Help wanted at the association

Submitted by Jack Petrowsky.

We have some very important 2/4 Association positions that are now, or will soon become, vacant. If you have the qualifications, we can use your help. Here's what we need:

- Membership chairman: Someone with computer skills to receive and list old member renewals, new members, forward dues payments to the treasure as received.
- Newsletter editor: Computer experience required with familiarity with Microsoft Word or other word processing or desktop publishing software.

- Sergeant at arms: Mostly a reunion function, checks to determine if those present are qualified (paid up members or new applicants) to attend.

The association annual dues are due!

As you know, we are getting close to the start of our annual dues drive. Our annual dues run from July 1 through June 30. Please help us to keep our association vital and strong by remembering to pay your dues on time each year.

Without your help, we cannot do what we do, nor remain who we are. I'm sure you "Magnificent Bastards," young and old, want to stay together as we always have. Do your bit and re-up for another tour of duty.

If you have been thinking about becoming a Life Member, maybe this is the time. Check the 2/4 Association website for details about Life Membership, or you may wish to continue paying \$20.00 for a one year membership.

If you have moved, changed phone numbers, or have any other new information relevant to our association, please

include it with your dues by using the Membership Application on the back of this newsletter. We need to stay current so we can stay connected.

Want to share a room at the reunion?

Submitted by Becky Valdez.

We have single men and women who would like to find someone with whom to share a room at the reunion. Anyone wishing to share and split the cost of a room with another (same gender) person please contact Becky Valdez, and she will help you with your reservation. Contact Becky at 714 281-2846 or email at <fxala@hotmail.com>.

Reunion 2005

Submitted by Becky Valdez.

Greetings everyone. We have some updates on the reunion. The registration form is included on page 11 of this issue—send yours in today while it's on your mind. Remember the dates are July 13–16, 2005.

Frank and I are pleased with the enthusiasm so far for this year's reunion. Phil Ciofalo has submitted our reunion information to several publications and has opened up a whole new interest for us. We have been contacted by several people who didn't know there was a 2/4 Association. Several of them will be attending this year. I was able to help Gunny Brandon find his friend Jim Norris after a 34-year separation.

What an honor this is for me and a great time of reunion. We hear that the Amphibious Vehicle Test Branch is looking forward to hosting us, as the active 2/4 are deployed.

The hospitality suite hosts are Gordon and Kathleen Domaloan. They will greet you in the Registry Tower room 2108. Bring your photo albums to share. Ray Del Rio will be there with your registration packets.

The memorial calendars will be in the P.X. when you arrive. This year's reunion shirts are polo shirts that have been designed by Frank and embroidered. We will have an embroidered V-neck shirt for the women as well.

Please let us know if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing all of you in July.

Frank & Becky Valdez
8221 East Birch Tree Lane
Anaheim Hills, CA 92808
Telephone: 714 281-2846
E-mail Frank at <valcone@hotmail.com>
E-mail Becky at <fxala@hotmail.com>

2004–2006 2/4 Association Officers and Chairs

President	Jack Petrowsky, P.O. Box 7214, Las Cruces, NM 88006-7214. Phone: 505 382-0759. E-mail: <jackny@webtv.net>.
Vice President	Yahya A.A. Kariem, 7717 Reed Street, Jacksonville, FL 32208. Phone: 904 764-2241. E-mail: <ykariem50@aol.com>.
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Health & Welfare Officer	Steven O'Shields, 3151 Lake Forest Drive, Apt #86, Augusta, GA 30909. Phone: 706 729-0043. E-mail: <chesty84@usmc.net>. Web page: <http://www.geocities.com.chesty84>.
Sergeant at Arms	TBD.

The 2/4 Association Sea Horse is published quarterly, and is the official newsletter of the Second Battalion, Fourth Marines Association, Inc.

1st Marine Division Association reunion

The annual reunion of the 1st Marine Division Association will be held from August 3 through August 7, 2005, in Kansas City, Missouri. I hope to have more information in the next *Sea Horse*. In the meantime, you may want to check the association web site at:

<<http://www.1stmarinedivisionassociation.org/index2.htm>>

2d Marine Division Association reunion

The annual reunion of the 2d Marine Division Association will be held from August 28 through September 3, 2005, in Houston, Texas. I hope to have more information in the next *Sea Horse*. In the meantime, you may want to check the association web site at:

<<http://www.2marine.com/main.html>>

3d Marine Division Association reunion

The 2005 family reunion of the 3d Marine Division Association is scheduled for August 15–21, 2005 at the Sheraton National, Arlington, Virginia. Room rates are \$89 with free parking. For more information, check the 3d Marine Division Association web site at:

<<http://www.caltrap.com/>>, or contact:

SgtMaj Bill Krueger
7622 Highland Street
Springfield, VA 22150-3931
703 451-3844

Biography: General Peter Pace

(Editor's note: General Pace has been nominated by President Bush for Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. When he is confirmed, he will be the first Marine to hold that position.)

General Peter Pace is the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In this capacity, he is a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Nation's second highest ranking military officer. General Pace is the sixth officer to hold the position and the first Marine.

As the Vice Chairman, General Pace serves as the Chairman of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council, Vice Chairman of the Defense Acquisition Board, and as a member of the National Security Council Deputies Committee and the Nuclear Weapons Council. In addition, he acts

2/4 Association PX Merchandise

General Items	Price
Logo patch. 2".	\$3.50
Logo patch. 4".	\$5.00
Logo pin.	\$5.00
Sweatshirt. Red with EGA on back and Sea Horse silhouette on front.	\$35.00
Polo shirts. Red, white, blue or maroon.	\$25.00
T-shirt. Black, green or gray, with full color logo on front.	\$15.00
T-shirt. 2004 reunion.	\$10.00
Coffee mug. Black with white logo	\$5.00
Thermal mug.	\$5.00
2/4 molded plastic tumblers. Various sizes (rocks, hot/cold). Logo patch between molded plastic. Sets and singles. Check with Jack for sizes and prices.	
Books	Price
<i>What a Life</i> , Randy Kington.	\$22.50
<i>Images from the Otherland</i> , Ken Sympton.	\$22.50
<i>The First Battle—Operation Starlite</i> , Otto Lohrback.	\$25.00
Videos	Price
Dai Do Memories.	\$25.00
2001 Reunion, Quantico, VA. Includes visits to The Wall, Iwo Jima Memorial, etc.	\$10.00

Ordering Instructions:

Please e-mail Jack for sizes and item availability. We are looking for suggestions for additional PX items. I am looking at windbreakers, but am being put off by the price. Keep in mind that the PX is stocked by funds from the Association, so we must stock items that will go quickly, both at reunions and during the following year. Shipping and handling equal to USPS charges will be added to each order.

2/4 Association PX
c/o Jack Petrowsky
PO Box 7214
Las Cruces, NM 88006-7214

for the Chairman in all aspects of the Planning, Programming and Budgeting System to include participating in meetings of the Defense Resources Board.

General Pace received his commission in June 1967, following graduation from the United States Naval Academy.

He also holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration from George Washington University and attended Harvard University for the Senior Executives in National and International Security program.

Upon completion of The Basic School, Quantico, Va., in 1968, he was assigned to the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division in the Republic of Vietnam, serving first as a Rifle Platoon Leader and subsequently as Assistant Operations Officer.



General Peter Pace

General Pace is on the road to be confirmed as the first Marine to hold the position of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Returning from overseas in March 1969, he reported to Marine Barracks, Washington, D. C. During this tour, he served as Head, Infantry Writer Unit, Marine Corps Institute; Platoon Leader, Guard Company; Security Detachment Commander, Camp David; White House Social Aide; and Platoon Leader, Special Ceremonial Platoon. He was promoted to Captain in April 1971. In September 1971, General Pace attended the Infantry Officers' Advanced Course at Fort Benning, Ga. Returning overseas in October 1972, he was assigned to the Security Element, Marine Aircraft Group 15, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, Nam Phong, Thailand, where he served as Operations Officer and then Executive Officer.

In October 1973, he was assigned to Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington, D. C., for duty as the Assistant Majors' Monitor. During October 1976, he reported to the 1st Marine Division, Camp Pendleton, Ca., where he served as Operations Officer, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines; Executive Offi-

cer, 3d Battalion, 5th Marines; and Division Staff Secretary. He was promoted to Major in November 1977. In August 1979, he reported to the Marine Corps Command and Staff College as a student.

Upon completion of school in June 1980, he was assigned duty as Commanding Officer, Marine Corps Recruiting Station, Buffalo, N. Y. While in this assignment, he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in October 1982. Reassigned to the 1st Marine Division, Camp Pendleton, General Pace served from June 1983 until June 1985 as Commanding Officer, 2d Battalion, 1st Marines. In June 1985, he was selected to attend the National War College in Washington D.C.

After graduation the following June, he was assigned to the Combined/Joint Staff in Seoul, Korea. He served as Chief, Ground Forces Branch until April 1987, when he became Executive Officer to the Assistant Chief of Staff, C/J/G3, United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/United States Forces Korea/Eighth United States Army.

General Pace returned to Marine Barracks in Washington D.C. in August 1988 for duty as Commanding Officer. He was promoted to Colonel in October 1988. In August 1991, he was assigned duty as Chief of Staff, 2d Marine Division, Camp Lejeune. During February 1992, he was assigned duty as Assistant Division Commander. He was advanced to Brigadier General on April 6, 1992, and was assigned duty as the President, Marine Corps University/Commanding General, Marine Corps Schools, Marine Corps Combat Development Command, Quantico, Va., on July 13, 1992. While serving in this capacity, he also served as Deputy Commander, Marine Forces, Somalia, from December 1992–February 1993, and as the Deputy Commander, Joint Task Force - Somalia from October 1993–March 1994. General Pace was advanced to Major General on June 21, 1994, and was assigned as the Deputy Commander/Chief of Staff, U. S. Forces, Japan. He was promoted to Lieutenant General and assigned as the Director for Operations (J-3), Joint Staff, Washington, D.C., on August 5, 1996.

General Pace served as the Commander, U. S. Marine Corps Forces, Atlantic/Europe/South from 23 November 1997 to 8 September 2000. He was promoted to General and assumed duties as the Commander in Chief, United States Southern Command on 8 September 2000 until 30 September 2001.

General Pace's personal decorations include: Defense Distinguished Service Medal, with two oak leaf clusters; Defense Superior Service Medal; the Legion of Merit; Bronze Star Medal with Combat V; the Defense Meritorious Service Medal; Meritorious Service Medal with gold star; Navy Commendation Medal with Combat V; Navy Achievement Medal with gold star; and the Combat Action Ribbon.

(Updated March 11, 2003 HQMC)

* * *

The above article is from the Marine Corps web site at
<<http://www.usmc.mil/genbios2.nsf/biographies/FE09E79F7B3869BA85256808006F8753?opendocument>>, May 11, 2005.

BrigGen William Weise, USMC (Ret)

(Editor's note: This is the second in a series of biographical articles on former commanding officers of the "Magnificent Bastards." In October 1967, then-LtCol Weise became the CO of 2/4. General Weise is now retired and lives in Alexandria, VA. Semper Fi, General.)

Brigadier General William Weise, a native of Philadelphia, served on active duty from 1951 to 1982. He went to boot camp as a private at Parris Island, SC in 1951, during the height of the Korean War. He retired from active duty at Parris Island as a Brigadier General in 1982. During those thirty-one years he had combat tours in Korea and Vietnam. In Korea he served as a 60 mm mortar section leader, rifle platoon commander, and rifle company executive officer with George Company, 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division. In Vietnam he commanded the "Magnificent Bastards" of the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines during some of the heaviest fighting of that conflict in 1967–1968.

His combat decorations include: the Navy Cross, this nation's second highest combat award; the Silver Star, the third highest combat award; two Legions of Merit (with combat V); three Purple Hearts (for wounds received in combat); and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry (with Gold Palm). In addition, his battalion was awarded the Navy Unit Commendation "For outstanding heroism in action against insurgent communist forces in the northern I Corps Area, Republic of Vietnam, from 5 March to 31 May 1968...."

His peacetime assignments include: rifle company commander (F/2/1, 1959–1960); Force Reconnaissance Company Platoon Commander, Operations Officer, Executive Officer, and Inspector-Instructor, (1st and 3d Force Recon Companies, 1960–1965); infantry regiment commander (Ninth Marines, 1975–1976). He also held various staff positions. He taught at the Naval War College, Army Command and General Staff College, and the Marine Corps Officers Basic School. He graduated with highest distinction from the Naval War College. Other schools include: Army Ranger School, Army Airborne School, Army Special Warfare Officers School (where he was the honor graduate), Navy SCUBA Divers School, Army Command and General Staff College, Marine Corps Basic School, Marine Corps Supply Officers Course, and Marine Corps Boot Camp.



Return to Vietnam—March 1999 in Hanoi at the War Museum

In 1999, General Weise returned to Vietnam with fellow members of the "Magnificent Bastards." Shown here outside the Hanoi War Museum, from left to right, are Jim Livingston, Dale Robinson, Bill Weise, and Jim Wainright. It should be noted that then-Captain Livingston was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions during the battle of Dai Do in 1968. Then-LtCol Weise received the Navy Cross for his conduct during the same operation.

He has a Bachelor of Science from Temple University and a Masters in Business Administration from Arizona State University, where he was inducted into the Beta Gamma Sigma and Sigma Iota Epsilon honor societies for academic excellence.

General Weise is active in a number of veteran and community activities. He co-chaired the Marine Corps Heritage Center Committee for five years and currently serves on the Heritage Center Special Projects Committee. He is the recipient of numerous awards for community service. His wife for 43 years, the former Ethel Jaeschke, died in 1997. He has three Children, and grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

* * *

(Editor's note: The prologue in Keith Nolan's 1994 book, *Magnificent Bastards: The Joint Army-Marine Defense of Dong Ha, 1968*, provides interesting insight into the man who would soon become the CO of 2/4. With permission from General Weise, it is included, below.)

* * *

"Look, I'm telling you guys—they're lined up twelve deep here waiting to get infantry battalions," the 3d Marine Division personnel officer (G1) told the three recently arrived light colonels who stood before the field desk in his tent. It was 12 October 1967, and they were in the division rear at Phu Bai, Republic of Vietnam.

"You're just going to have to wait your turn."

Lieutenant Colonel William Weise, one of the three, was not hearing what he wanted to hear. As he had just told the G1, he had come to Vietnam to do nothing but command an infantry battalion in combat.



LtCol Weise—1968

The caption on this photo provided by General Weise reads, "18 March 1968 Battle of Vin Quan Thoung."

The silver oak leaf on Weise's cover was seven days old. His last assignment as a major had been a thirteen-month tour as an adviser to the Republic of Korea Marine Corps. He had waived reassignment to the United States so he could get to Vietnam before the war ended. When he got orders sending him to the 3d Marine Division, Weise wrote ahead to the commanding general, asking to serve as the operations officer of either an infantry battalion or a regiment. Arriving not as a major but as a freshly minted lieutenant colonel, Bill Weise, an intelligent, forceful man, sorely wanted an infantry command. His career demanded it (Weise was very ambitious), as did his sense of duty. He listened, heartsick, as the G1 continued, "...there's only three slots open in this outfit: the division special services officer, the division embarkation officer, and the assistant base defense coordinator at Dong Ha Combat Base."

Shit, here I go, Weise thought. Risk my marriage with two overseas tours in a row, and I'm going to wind up as a division office pogue. Weise knew the G1 and implored him, "You can't do this to me!" But the G1's hands were tied; the division commander, MajGen Bruno A. Hochmuth, personally assigned all field-grade officers. The general would soon welcome these three aboard, but it would be another two days before he would meet with them again to discuss their assignments. Weise and his two hard-charging, like-minded compatriots, Edward LaMontagne and George Meyers, thus had time to talk to officers they knew on the division staff about getting battalions.

Their meeting with General Hochmuth was in his command bunker. The 3d Marine Division was an overtaxed organization, and the general, sitting at his field desk, was too busy to ask them to sit or to offer the customary cup of coffee. There was no small talk: "Well, okay, Meyers, you're going up to Dong Ha to help coordinate the defenses up there."

"Yes, sir."

"LaMontagne, you're going to be my embarkation officer."

"Yes, sir."

God, thought Weise, he's going to make me the special services officer. But Hochmuth surprised him: "Weise, I see that you've had a lot of experience in reconnaissance. I'm not happy with the way my recon battalion is being deployed, so I want you to take over. We've got a good young major in there by the name of Bell. He's going to be transferred in three weeks. Meanwhile, I want you to see as much of the AO as you can. See how we're deployed. Go around the area. You'll take over when Bell leaves. Now, does anybody have any questions?"

"No, sir," said LaMontagne.

"No, sir," replied Meyers.

"Sir, I don't have any questions," Weise blurted out, "but I want the general to know personally that I really want an infantry battalion."

Weise had been expressly warned during his two days of politicking that it would be unwise to do anything but click his heels when the general made his decision. Weise, however, had picked up the nickname Wild Bill during his sixteen years in the Marine Corps, and he had sometimes gotten his way by being audacious: "...whatever job you give me, I'm going to do, sir—but I don't want to sit back there with a recon battalion and just send those kids out on patrol. I want an infantry battalion."

"Weise," Hochmuth snapped, "you get the hell outta here. When I want your advice on how to run my division, I'll ask for it. Meanwhile, you get out there and do your job."

There was a lot of ground for the disappointed Lieutenant Colonel Weise to cover before he took over the 3d Reconnaissance Battalion. The 3d Marine Division's four infantry regiments (the 3d, 4th, 9th, and 26th Marines) and its artillery (the 12th Marines) were positioned throughout Quang Tri and Thua Thien provinces, the two northernmost provinces of the five that defined the I Corps Tactical Zone. The division main command post at Phu Bai was in the Viet Cong (VC) guerrilla badlands of Thua Thien Province. The division forward command post at Dong Ha, in Quang Tri Province, was just below the DMZ, which divided North and South Vietnam. The war on the Z was with the North Vietnamese Army (NVA). Dong Ha controlled an eighty-kilometer frontage of combat bases that faced the DMZ from the beachhead at Cua Viet, west to the jungled mountains of Khe Sanh. The Ben Hai River and the DMZ, which for political reasons the Marines could not cross, afforded the enemy a sanctuary for their artillery batteries and a staging area for battalion- and regimental-sized assaults.

Lieutenant Colonel Weise visited every battalion in the division. With a few days to spare before he was to take over 3d Recon, he went to visit a good friend of his who was a battalion executive officer with the 7th Marines in the 1st Marine Division, the only other Marine division in Vietnam. They were dug in along the Hai Van Pass above Da Nang, and at approximately 0300 on 26 October 1967, while sleeping near the battalion command post (CP), Weise was awakened and directed to the covered-circuit radio. The division chief of staff was on the other end.

"Hey, Weise, get your ass back up here," said the colonel. "You know Two-Four?" Two-Four is shorthand for the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines, which was under the operational control of the 9th Marines and participating in Operation Kingfisher below the DMZ. Weise answered that he had visited 2/4, and mentioned the battalion commander by name. "He's been hit," the chief of staff said. "You got it. They're in a firefight."

Jesus, Weise thought, expecting to be helicoptered directly into 2/4's night action. Instead, it took him two days to make his way back north by chopper. By then, 2/4 had been pulled back to the Dong Ha Combat Base. What a sorry sight, Weise thought. The battalion he found really looked wanting in terms of numbers and esprit. They were, however, Marines—and he knew how to breathe fire into Marines. Beat up or not, the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines, was his, and Bill Weise was exactly where he wanted to be.

* * *

(Editor's note: It's clear that the battle of Dai Do from April 30 to May 3, 1968, played an enormous role in General Weise's life. As much could also be said for the entire 2d Battalion, 4th Marines, "whose bravery, competence, initiative, and selflessness carried the day¹." In his September 1987 article in the *Marine Corps Gazette*, General Weise recounted in detail the historical events leading up to and included in the battle, then provided a great retrospective on the "why" of what occurred.

There were, however, certain aspects of Dai Do that General Weise has not publicly discussed. In preparing for this piece in the *Sea Horse*, he revealed some of these to me, and he kindly gave me permission to pass them on to the members of the 2/4 Association. The following is from his April 10, 2005, e-mail.

* * *

¹ BrigGen William Weise, USMC (Ret), "Memories of Dai Do," *Marine Corps Gazette*, p. 42, September 1987.



Department of the Navy
Headquarters United States Marine Corps
Washington, D.C. 20380

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the NAVY CROSS to

LIEUTENANT COLONEL WILLIAM WEISE
 UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For extraordinary heroism while serving as Commanding Officer, Second Battalion, Fourth Marines, Ninth Marine Amphibious Brigade, in the Republic of Vietnam from 30 April to 2 May 1968. Colonel Weise exhibited exceptional valor and courage while leading his battalion against an estimated 2,000 North Vietnamese Army regulars entrenched in a well fortified bunker complex and supported by artillery fire. Initially having only a small portion of the battalion's combat elements available to engage the enemy, he skillfully utilized and coordinated effective air strikes and artillery fire upon the hostile force, maintaining constant pressure on the enemy and thus denying him freedom of maneuverability. As additional elements arrived, Colonel Weise integrated his forces and initiated assaults which eliminated successive enemy strong points. His masterful tactical employment of forces, combined with his personal direction of the ground forces, provided the inspiration required to mount repeated attacks in the face of seemingly overwhelming odds, despite the unit's depletion due to previous heavy combat commitments. When the enemy launched several counterattacks against his units, he continually moved among his men, rallying them and inspiring confidence in his unit leaders and among individual Marines while reorganizing and maintaining maximum combat effectiveness within each element. On the third day of battle, while personally leading in a fierce assault on the enemy's furthestmost portion of the heavily defended objective, Colonel Weise was seriously wounded, but actively directed the orderly withdrawal of his forces to supporting positions. Steadfastly maintaining control of his battalion, he tenaciously continued to direct the evacuation of casualties to the secondary positions until he collapsed from his critical wound. During this period, the battalion accounted for hundreds of North Vietnamese casualties and four enemy prisoners. By his dynamic leadership, unfaltering courage, and selfless devotion to duty throughout, Colonel Weise inspired all who served with him and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

For the President,
 Paul R. Ignatius
 Secretary of the Navy

"Here are a couple of facts about the Battle of Dai Do that are not yet in the official records:

"The exact number of enemy casualties is unknown, except to NVA officials and they wouldn't tell me. Upon direct questioning in 1999, Lt Gen Tran Van Quan, who commanded all enemy forces in the two northern provinces of South Vietnam from 1965 through 1974, said NVA casualties were heavy but he did not know the exact figures.

"In 1987, MajGen Dennis Murphy, who was the operations officer, 3d Marines, during the battle told me and Vic Taylor that an Engineer Co buried 1568 enemy bodies three days after the battle.

"LtGen Tran Van Quan also told me and others that all three Regiments of the 320th participated in the battle. If so, then the UNDER STRENGTH BLT 2/4 PUSHED AN

ENTIRE ENEMY DIVISION BACK FROM THE BO DIEU RIVER TO REOPEN THAT VITAL SUPPLY ROUTE AND PREVENT WHAT I BELIEVE WAS AN INTENDED ATTACK ON DONG HA COMBAT BASE, A RELATIVELY SOFT TARGET. As far as I know, this is the only time during the Vietnam War that an American battalion stood toe-to-toe with a Soviet equipped NVA Division for three days and came out on top.

"The price for the 2/4 victory was very high: 81 KIA and 297 Medevacs.

"At no time during the battle did the CG, 3d MarDiv, or any member of his staff, visit the battle site even though the battle took place less than 3 km from his command post!!

"I plan to provide these and other facts to the official record in the near future."

Health to our Corps,

Bill Weise

Save a Vet

(Editor's note: The following is the text from an e-mail received by Becky Valdez and forwarded on to me. I'm passing it on to the membership for your information and consideration. Note that the e-mail includes a web address where more information can be found.)

From: SaveOurVets@aol.com

To: fxala@hotmail.com

Subject: Help our Vets

Date: Sat, 5 Mar 2005 20:47:00 EST

Dear Becky Valdez for the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines Assoc.,

My name is Jonelle Kop/McCurdy. I have been an Auxiliary Member of the DAV for 13 years (09002AA00028) and a Bronze Leader in the DAV Commanders Club since 1996. I follow in my mother's footsteps, supporting my husband, a Vietnam combat Marine, as she supported my father, a WWII Army Captain as a Gold Leader of the DAV Commanders Club. I found your information in the March DAV magazine and decided that you were a person who could help me.

I am very concerned that our newest Veterans coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan are facing the same deficiencies in the VA Health Care system that existed for my father and my husband and all the other brave veterans who made it home, especially in the area of care and treatment for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report on February 14, 2005, stating in short that at least 15% of the servicemen returning from warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan will develop PTSD. PTSD can be debilitating and, if left untreated, can lead to substance abuse, severe depression and suicide! While there is NO cure for PTSD,

early identification and treatment is critical in improving the quality of life!

The GAO has determined that the VA has failed to meet ANY of the 24 Special Committee recommendations, 10 of which were established in 1985—20 years ago! In addition, the VA does not intend to do so until 2007 or later! Finally, The GAO has determined that the VA is incapable of handling the new influx of veterans while still maintaining care for those of past wars. Left unchanged, the chance for early intervention will be missed!

The GAO report, as confirmed by numerous other reports and articles, has determined that the Vet Center program is the answer to the problem! But that it is too small, understaffed and under funded to handle the new influx of veterans needing help!

In order to try to bring this disaster into public view, I have established a website at <www.SaveOurVets.com>. Not only does it detail the problem, but it provides excerpts and links to numerous reports and articles supporting this conclusion. There is also a petition detailing what is needed to solve the problem and asking for the funding and support to do so.

Here is where you come in! I need to get as many people as possible to sign this petition so that it will have an impact with the VA, the Congress, the Senate and the President! It took Vietnam Veterans along with the DAV and its members to create the Vet Centers! It will take the same to get these Centers properly funded to do the job they were created to do! Please help me!

Send the Petition to your members. Ask them to go to the Website SaveOurVets.Com and sign the petition. Ask them to send it on to their friends so that they can do the same! The time to make a difference is NOW! But I need YOUR support and the support of everyone you know!

In addition, if you have a website, please consider adding a link to the SaveOurVets.com site, and I would LOVE to add yours to mine, as a supporter. In addition, if you would like more information about what a Vet Center does, please go to <www.MiamiVetCenter.org>. It is a website I keep up on the ongoing activities of my local Vet Center.

Thank you!

Unit honors own who wouldn't stop fighting

Submitted by MCB Camp Pendleton. Story by LCpl Daniel J. Redding.

CAMP PENDLETON, CA (April 8, 2005)—One of Operation Iraqi Freedom's most battle-scarred units recognized two of its shining heroes Friday—including a man whose battlefield exploits were the stuff that inspires TV movies, his sergeant major said.

Unfortunately Sgt Kenneth K. Conde Jr. wasn't around to hear all the commendation heaped on him. He died less than three months after the combat action that generated all the praise—though not before "relentlessly" pressuring the enemy despite combat wounds.

His tenacity and bravery posthumously earned him 2d Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment's Noncommissioned Officer of the Year Award, and the 2d Bn., 4th Marines Association's Big John Malnar Leadership Award.

Shot in the afternoon hours of April 6, 2004, Conde Jr. kept fighting. Like so many Marines wounded in OIF, he refused evacuation. Sgt Conde remained with his unit until July 1, when an enemy improvised explosive device claimed his life in Ar Ramadi, Iraq.



Mr. Kenneth Conde Sr. at the award ceremony for his son

The Sergeant Major John M. Malnar Leadership Award was bestowed posthumously on Sgt Kenneth K. Conde Jr. His father, Mr. Kenneth Conde Sr., shown above, accepted the award on behalf of his son. Mr. Conde is a former Marine staff sergeant.

His father, Kenneth Conde Sr., a former Marine staff sergeant, accepted the award on his behalf during the solemn ceremony.

"This honors and recognizes my son and what he did out there. It does him justice," he said.

He went on to add that he would have traveled to Egypt to accept the honor for his son, whom he says "chose to fight."

"Sgt Conde was a Marine's Marine and a man's man," LCpl David J. Siltan, a member of Conde's squad, said last July. "He was a fighter trained for combat. He exceeded everyone's expectations."

Conde's award stems from his actions with 3d Mobile Assault Platoon, Mobile Assault Company. He was in the

midst of an evacuation mission when, during a firefight, he was struck by enemy fire.

Conde, from Orlando, Fla., continued to fight after taking an enemy bullet in his left shoulder.

"We stayed and fought till every one of the insurgents was dead," Conde said shortly afterward in an interview with Marine correspondents in Iraq.

After being shot, Conde fired several shots, killing an enemy fighter, before falling to the ground, according to Cpl Jared H. McKenzie, a member of Conde's company.

He managed to find his feet again and continued firing before falling again, McKenzie said.

SgtMaj Joseph J. Ellis, the battalion's sergeant major, agreed the former squad leader deserves the honors.

"He exemplified the true essence of a combat leader," Ellis said. "When he got in contact with the enemy, he pursued them relentlessly until he either killed them or lost contact with them."

To Ellis, Conde was a hero in the flesh.

"He is the type of individual that you would see in these freakin' movies on TV," Ellis said. "Instead of it being Hollywood acting, he was a true-life warrior."

The Sergeant of the Year Award is given in honor of SgtMaj "Big John" Malnar, a longstanding battalion hero. The association has been handing out the award since 1990.

The battalion also on Friday awarded the "Doc Gorsage Corpsman Award" to Navy Petty Officer 3d Class Rudy Contreras Jr., the senior line corpsman for the Weapons Company.

Contreras, who accompanied the unit during its most-recent seven-month deployment, had previously been awarded the Navy Commendation Medal with a 'V' for Valor, along with a Purple Heart, for his actions in Iraq.

"It's going to sound cheesy, but the award means a lot to me," said Contreras, who served alongside Conde on several occasions. "It shows that the unit considers me their 'doc,' and that they feel I can be relied upon when needed."

"These guys are my brothers," Contreras added. "They took me under their wing. I couldn't have gone through this without their support."

Contreras, a married father of two from Houston, personally treated 30 casualties—including Marines, civilians and enemy forces—while deployed to Iraq.

"I have no resentment for anything I've experienced with the Marine Corps," Contreras said, inching toward his three-year mark in the Navy. "I'm very honored to serve with the Marines."

The "Doc Gorsage Corpsman Award" is given to the corpsman who exemplifies service similar to that of Navy Senior Chief Walter Gorsage, a corpsman who served with 2d Bn., 4th Marines, during a battle at Dai Do, Vietnam.

* * *

The above article is from the MCB Camp Pendleton web site at <http://www.pendleton.usmc.mil/scout/articles/april%207/unit.asp>, April 8, 2005.



Aerial view of the site for the 2005 reunion of the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines Association

The Town and Country Resort & Convention Center is a 40-acre complex with a mix of charming cottage-style single-story units, two-story garden units and two multi-level towers.

A variety of public areas are spread throughout the resort including: restaurants, cocktail lounges, Bella Tosca Day Spa & Salon, a gift shop, barber and beauty shops, swimming pools, a whirlpool and the largest private meeting and convention facility in San Diego.

- Jay W. Brown
- William P. Dever
- James C. Flaherty
- Charles P. Garber
- Benito Garica
- Robert H. James
- Homer (Mike) K. Jenkins
- William "Doc" D. Johnson
- Richard L. Morris
- Bob Pace
- John K. Palmer
- William M. Papianou
- James E. Parker, Jr.
- Thomas Payne
- George M. Prewitt
- Robert L. Ruotolo
- Robert F. Skeels
- Dick L. Stoker
- Frank Valdez, Jr.
- James Verderber
- Thomas M. Wright

Wanted: new editor for the *Sea Horse*

Submitted by Ken Sympson.

Sometime back in 2001, I let Jim Mazy talk me into taking over the editor duties from Brooks Wilson. Brooks had been the editor for 12

years, truly a heroic feat. My run will be nowhere near as impressive.

For purely personal reasons (too old, too many grandchildren to play with, too many old photographs to get organized, running out of time to restart my childhood interest in model airplanes, senility, etc.), I am targeting the end of 2006 to transfer editorship to an enterprising young Marine (or Corpsman).

Here are some important qualifications:

- You must have poor luck at resisting the urge to volunteer,
- You cannot be afraid of computers, Microsoft software or viruses (it's often hard to distinguish between the latter two),
- You should be familiar with desktop publishing software,
- Assuming we keep a web page version of the *Sea Horse*, you should have a minimal understanding of publishing to the web,
- And you must care about the English language, spelling and grammar.

Since I have no idea how hard it may be to capture a new editor, I thought it best to notify the association early.

Oh, I almost forgot. The most important qualification is an abiding love for the "Magnificent Bastards" of 2/4.

Reunion raffle

Submitted by Becky Valdez.

Anyone wishing to donate items for a raffle to be held during the reunion, please contact Becky at <fxala@hotmail.com> or call 714 281-2846. The proceeds will go to the 2/4 Association.

A few members have mentioned that they would like to donate special items. If you would like to make a contribution, remember that your gift does not need to be of military origin.

Raffle tickets are \$1.00 and may be purchased at the reunion. If you won't be able to attend the reunion, you can call Becky for tickets.

The raffle will be held during the banquet, and you will not need to be present to win.

Welcome (or welcome back!)

Submitted by Jim Mazy.

Welcome to our new, renewed or upgraded members as of 5/12/05.

- Ila K. Bench
- Thomas A. Bridges

Second Battalion, Fourth Marines Association 2005 Reunion
San Diego, California, July 13–16, 2005
Reunion Registration Form

Please complete and return (with or without check) to Ray Del Rio by June 1, 2005.

First Name: _____ MI: ____ Last: _____
Names of Guests: _____ Number Attending: _____
Address: _____ Home Phone: (____) _____
E-mail: _____
Rank, unit, dates assigned or attached to the 2d Bn, 4th Marines: _____

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1. Registration fee until June 1, 2005 | \$10.00 x ____ = \$ _____ |
| 2. Registration fee after June 1, 2005 | \$15.00 x ____ = \$ _____ |
| Registration fees are per person, 13 years old and up.
Registration is free for children under the age of 13. | |
| 3. Bus fare to MCRD | \$5.00 x ____ = \$ _____ |
| 4. MCRD tour and lunch | \$5.00 x ____ = \$ _____ |
| 5. Harbor cruise (4:15 PM to 6:30 PM) | \$18.00 x ____ = \$ _____ |
| 6. Harbor cruise for children 4–12 years old | \$10.00 x ____ = \$ _____ |
| 7. Bus transportation to Camp Del Mar | \$5.00 x ____ = \$ _____ |
| 8. Baseball tickets | \$17.50 x ____ = \$ _____ |
| 9. Banquet | \$30.00 x ____ = \$ _____ |
| Total | \$ _____ |

Make check payable to 2d Battalion, 4th Marines Association. Send registration form and check to:

Ray Del Rio
5976 Oak Meadow Drive
Yorba Linda, CA 92886

Hotel Contact:

Town and Country Hotel
500 Hotel Circle North
San Diego, CA 92108

619 291-8770, or **(toll-free)** 800 772-8527

Don't forget to mention that you are with the 2/4 Association. Room rates are \$99.00 per night. Please let us know if you would like to share a room with another person.

Membership Application, Second Battalion, Fourth Marines Association

Name: _____ Home phone: (____) _____
Address: _____
Work phone: (____) _____

E-mail address: _____

Current rank if active duty or highest rank if discharged or retired: _____

Personal awards and decorations: _____

Period(s) of service (total): From _____ To _____; From _____ To _____; From _____ To _____

Period(s) with 2/4: From _____ To _____; From _____ To _____; From _____ To _____

Place(s) served with 2/4: _____

Unit(s) assigned to while with 2/4: Company _____ Platoon _____; Company _____ Platoon _____; Company _____ Platoon _____

Other military affiliations: _____

Married _____ Single _____ Widowed _____ Spouse or significant other's name: _____

Dues Information

Life membership can be paid in up to three installments over a period not to exceed nine consecutive months. Dues guidelines are the same for Regular Membership and Associate Membership. Please indicate below the type of membership you desire.

Membership Class:	Regular Membership: _____	Associate Membership: _____
Life Member	____ 54 and under:	\$175 (Lump sum or two payments of \$58.34 and one payment of \$58.32)
	____ 55 to 64:	\$125 (Lump sum or two payments of \$41.67 and one payment of \$41.66)
	____ 65 and over:	\$75 (Lump sum or three payments of \$25.00 each)
Annual Member	_____	\$20

It is the applicant's responsibility to schedule payments, since the association will not send invoices. If the applicant fails to complete payment of life membership dues as set forth above, amounts paid and received towards life membership will be converted and credited as annual membership dues.

Please mail checks (payable to "2/4 Association") and application to:

2/4 Association
c/o Jim Mazy
6122 Shasta Street
Englewood, FL 34224-8161

If you have a picture of yourself, either as an individual or in a group setting, from your Marine Corps/Navy years (boot camp, cruise book, etc.) and/or a recent photo, please enclose with this form. Also, please identify all persons in each photo. The photos will be returned after scanning. The scanned photos, along with the identification information, will be assembled into a computer CD photo album for historical purposes of the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines Association.

2/4 Association President
P.O. Box 7214
Las Cruces, NM 88006-7214

Postage
here

Address Correction Requested