



In Service to America

Vietnam Veterans of America



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The Bushmaster Story



As a result of the declaration of a National Emergency in 1940, the 158th Infantry mobilized again – training in Oklahoma and Texas. Then in 1942, following the December 7th, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor,

the 158th Infantry Regiment disembarked to the Panama Canal Zone. In Panama the 158th trained in jungle warfare. Gaining fame for their newly acquired fighting skills, the Regiment took the name “Bushmasters” after the deadly bushmaster snake (indigenous to the region). The name "Bushmasters" became well-known throughout the national press and General MacArthur personally requested the 158th Infantry to serve in the Southwest Pacific Theater.

In January 1943 the Bushmasters staged in Australia. From “Down Under” the 158th Infantry advanced on and fought through Goodenought Island, Arawe, Wakde-Sarmi in Dutch New Guinea, and Neomfoor engaging and defeating Japanese units of division strength. In 1944, the Bushmasters landed in the Philippines and received a presidential citation for their success destroying or capturing 100 Japanese artillery pieces and enabling a successful invasion of the allies -- General MacArthur "had returned." In 1945, the 158th Infantry pressed further in the Philippines, invading southern Luzon by means of a daring naval landing craft assault hitting the Legaspi Port. As a result of the Bushmasters' continued success, the 158th Infantry was selected to spearhead the final invasion of Japan. The Bushmasters were under orders to proceed two days ahead of America's crushing D-Day, to silence Japanese air warning stations south of Kyushu. Timely capitulation of Japan saved the Bushmasters from what many believed would have been a certain suicide mission.

In October 1945, the 158th Infantry landed in Yokohama, Japan. The great odyssey was over. FROM ARIZONA TO JAPAN - IN FIVE YEARS! Members were then shipped home and the 158th was deactivated at Utsunomiya, Japan in January 1946.

C130 Crash Lands

How often have we heard that a C130 or C123 that crash landed in Vietnam? I'm sure it happened plenty of times. It also happens in Iraq. Here is a photo of one that hit the dirt and they promptly blew it up after it suffered a lot of damage.



Campaigns for the Vietnam War

Streamers are issued for all Army units that are involved in various campaigns against the enemy. Below is a list of those we located for campaigns we were likely involved in

- Advisory 15 March 1962-7 March 1965
- Defense 8 March-24 December 1965
- Counteroffensive 25 December 1965-30 June 1966
- Counteroffensive, Phase II 1 July 1966-31 May 1967
- Counteroffensive, Phase III 1 June 1967-29 January 1968
- Tet Counteroffensive 30 January-1 April 1968
- Counteroffensive, Phase IV 2 April-30 June 1968
- Counteroffensive, Phase V 1 July-1 November 1968
- Counteroffensive, Phase VI 2 November 1968-22 February 1969
- Tet 69 Counteroffensive 23 February-8 June 1969
- Summer-Fall 1969 9 June-31 October 1969
- Winter-Spring 1970 1 November 1969-30 April 1970
- Sanctuary Counteroffensive 1 May-30 June 1970
- Counteroffensive, Phase VII 1 July 1970-31 June 1971
- Consolidation I 1 July-30 November 1971
- Consolidation II 1 December 1971-29 March 1972
- Cease-Fire 30 March 1972-28 January 1973



New Rate for Social Security Military Veterans

Please share this with anyone who's had active duty service prior to January 2002 and planning for retirement. In a nutshell it boils down to this: You qualify for a higher social security payment because of your military service, for active duty any time from 1940 through 2001 (the program was done away with in January 2002). Up to \$1200 per year of earnings credit credited at time of application - which can make a substantial difference in social security monthly payments upon your retirement. **You must bring your DD-214 to the Social Security Office - and you must ask for this benefit to receive it! Soc Sec website at**

<http://www.ssa.gov/retire2/military.htm>

This is something to put in your files for when you apply for Social Security down the road. It is NOT just for retirees, but anyone who has served on active duty prior to January 2002. FYI - this benefit is not automatic, you must ask for it! If you need help, call: Dave Chilson, IMCOM West, ACS Accreditation/SFAC Coordinator, 2450 Stanley Road, Suite 101, Ft Sam Houston, TX 78234, 210-295-5514.

Typical News From Vietnam



Ever wonder what news is like in Vietnam these days? Below is an article that was located on the web about **Da Lat, Vietnam.**

The dizzying rate of urbanization in Da Lat, a resort city in the south central region founded by the French, has tarnished its natural beauty, sparking concern among architects and local residents. Architects from HCM City's Architecture University, Viet Nam's Association of Architects and the Institute of Urban Planning sat down with policymakers yesterday at a conference held in the city to discuss how to preserve the city's natural beauty.

Experts spoke about alternative plans for the next 22 years, focusing on how to preserve and nurture the city's 100-year-old reputation as one of the country's greenest and most romantic spots. Speakers raised concerns about the alarming number of big-budget construction projects gaining approval from the local authority, pointing out that many forested areas are being destroyed to make way for many of the projects. The province's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, for example, has allowed the Tam Ha Ltd Company to cut down 885 old pine trees in a 36,959 square-meter forest in the city's Ward 10 to build a tourism site.

Vietnamese Money



Vietnamese money has changed a lot over time and even going onto the Internet, we could not find any banknotes from the war years. The timeframes were from the 1940's to current day. Interesting...



It appears the money "we knew while over there is long gone".

Vietnamese Holidays

Tết Nguyên Đán more commonly known by its shortened name **Tết**, is the most important and popular holiday and festival in Vietnam. It is the Vietnamese New Year which is based on the Lunar calendar, a lunisolar calendar. The name *Tết Nguyên Đán* is Sino-Vietnamese for *Feast of the First Morning*. Tết is celebrated on the same day as Chinese New Year though exceptions arise due to the one-hour time difference between Hanoi and Beijing. It takes place from the first day of the first month of the Chinese calendar (around late January or early February) until at least the third day. Tết shares many of the same customs of its Chinese counterpart. Many Vietnamese prepare for Tết by cooking special holiday foods and cleaning the house. There are a lot of customs practiced during Tết, like visiting a person's house on the first day of the new year (*xông nhà*), ancestral worshipping, wishing New Year's greetings, giving lucky money to children and old people and opening a shop.

AZ State Council Meeting

The AZ State Council meeting will be held at **American Legion Post 19 on Virginia Dr. on the 6th of Sept.** We will likely attend a lunch at the Yuma Landing (4th Ave and 2nd St) as we did last time. The hall at Post 56 is already rented for that day, thus the change. If you are intending to attend the meeting, please keep this in mind.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting is to be October 21st 2008 at 7:00pm. We ask that as many of you come as possible. Location is American Legion Post 56 at 1490 W. 3rd Street, Yuma, AZ. 85364.