

## Film footage of Ripcord combat found

Historical record of combat actions on the beleaguered mountain top show airmen and members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 506<sup>th</sup> Infantry, Bravo Battery, 2/319<sup>th</sup> Artillery, and A Battery, 2/11<sup>th</sup> Artillery in action.

Craig Van Hout (B/2-506) secured film footage of Fire Support Base Ripcord under siege in 1970 from the National Archives earlier this year. Below is a summary of the 45-minute long collection of combat film.

Coverage dates: 8 Jul 70 – 11 Jul 70

Format: silent, unedited, color

Creating Organization: Department of Defense, United States Army, Office of the Chief Signal Officer, Army Pictorial Center, Army Motion Picture Depository

Camera operator: SP4 Chris Jensen

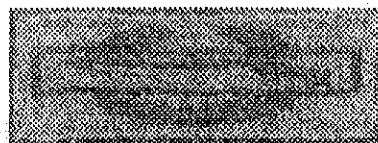
Shot List:  
8 Jul 70

- 1) Shows 2 forward air controllers of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, 2/506<sup>th</sup> Infantry, at FSB Ripcord directing an air strike on an adjacent, heavily bunkered NVA position.
- 2) Shows general shots of FSB Ripcord such as batteries of 105 and 155mm howitzers, a Chinook leaving Ripcord and men carrying ammunition. Includes a shot of SP4 David E. Johnson carrying 4 artillery rounds.
- 3) Shows more air strikes with 1000 lb. Bombs after D Company, 2/502<sup>nd</sup> Infantry was still unable to advance on hill.
- 4) Panoramic shot of mountains around Ripcord.

Continued on page 8 ...

## Herb Koenigsbauer, one of the giants of the Ripcord fight, passes on

COL Herbert Edward  
Koenigsbauer, Jr. (US Army  
Retired)



Herbert Edward Koenigsbauer, Jr., 62, of Colchester died on Saturday, November 2, 2002 at the VA Hospital in White River Junction, VT.

He was born in Waterbury, CT, on December 20, 1939 the son of Herbert E. and Gladys Koenigsbauer. He graduated from Bowdoin College, Brunswick, ME, in 1961 whereupon he was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the US Army. On May 23, 1964 he was married in his hometown of Thomaston, CT, to Veronika Wolfraum of Roth, Germany.

He retired in 1992 after thirty years of distinguished military service to his country. During his military career he served two tours of duty in the Republic of Vietnam for which he received three Bronze Star medals, the Air Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, and the Combat Infantryman's Badge. He further served three tours of duty in Germany and various assignments within the United States.

Continued on page 2 ...

## DONATIONS!

The association wants to say "thanks" to recent contributors, and these include the following stalwarts: George Stenehjem, Walter and Susan Fair, Beth and Erik Koenigsbauer, The Margalottis, Bob Dicks, Clark and Amber Reynolds, Steve and Patricia Smith, John and Martha Shepard, Gary and Kathy Watrous, and Bill and Sheila Williams. Contributions in memory of Herb Koenigsbauer were made to the association by: Joe and Carol Florkoski, Tom and Lorie O'Donovan, Fanny Sevaast, Evelyn Samson, Arthur and Lorraine Curtis, David and Linda Bellard, Dave and Barbara Shea, Rebel Foods, Inc., Mark and Lisa Lacroix, Roland and Carol Bernardo

Cheers and a well-deserved tip of the Ripcord Steel Pot to you all!

And, a special thanks goes to "Ripcordette" Patty Radford, whose husband Gary served as a platoon sergeant in D Co., 2/506<sup>th</sup> Infantry at Ripcord, for all her help in copying and mailing the newsletter!

## NOTES and REMINDERS

MEMBERSHIP is closing in on the 500 mark. Send NAME and ADDRESS CHANGES to Chuck.

## Herb Koenigsbauer

(continued from page 1)

Two of his military tours of duty brought him to the State of Vermont: first in 1967, as a ROTC instructor at Middlebury College and later in 1983 when he served as the Senior Army Advisor to the VT Army National Guard. He was a graduate of the Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, KS and the US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA. During his military career he was also awarded the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Army Service and Overseas ribbons.

After retirement Herb returned to Colchester, VT with his wife Veronika where he enjoyed the outdoors. His favorite pastimes included hunting, fishing, skiing, golfing, and travel. He dearly loved his family and cherished time spent with them, especially during the holidays.

He is survived by his wife, Veronika Koenigsbauer of Colchester; one son, Herbert E. Koenigsbauer III and his wife Jinhee of Alexandria, VA; two brothers, Kirk and Karl, both of Deerfield, MA; three nephews and two nieces.

Funeral services will be held on Thursday, November 7, 2002 at 11:00 am in the Ready Mountain View Chapel. Those who wish may make contributions in his memory to the Disabled American Veterans or the FSB

RIPCORDER Association, 7702 White Dove Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46256-1750 (made payable to Fred Spaulding).

Visiting hours will be held on Wednesday, November 6, 2002 from 7 to 9 pm at the Mountain View Chapel, 68 Pinecrest Dr., Essex Jct., VT.

He will be interred at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, VA.



Herb and Veronika Koenigsbauer

# INCOMING...

from across the country and around the world

## It don't mean nothing

I would like to make a comment about the book *Ripcord: Screaming Eagles Under Siege*. I thought it was very well written.

I came into country in late December 1969 and I left in late November 1970. So I guess I was there for the whole thing. I served in C Co., 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn., 501<sup>st</sup> Inf. The one thing we knew was that it was pretty bad around there and a lot of people were getting hurt, and things were getting pretty hard on everybody.

The one thing I did not like is how it seems as if medals were very important to people other than the grunts. Even though the grunts were the guys who did most of the work, and died. Their bravery and valor was never acknowledged. One man cannot stand in testimony for everyone that gave so much and got nothing in return. When I was leaving the division after my tour and the Spec/4 handed me my Bronze Star, I looked at the medal and he said, "Oh, by the way, this isn't for doing anything." I will never forget those words. After reading what it says on the orders for my Bronze Star, "Reason: For meritorious service in connection with ground operations against a hostile force," I guess what the guy said was right. It don't mean nothing.

I would like to say that I might be speaking for every grunt that fought at that place, but I can't do that. But I'll just say that I'm speaking for myself. I'm proud to say that I was there with a bunch of guys that were the best—C Co., 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn., 501<sup>st</sup> Inf.

One more thing. If Lt. Col. Otis Livingston is still out there, it would have been a mistake to relieve him at Hill 1000 or anytime, because he was on the ground and he saw what was going on. That was where he needed to be and as far as I'm concerned he was doing one hell of a good job. He saw the suffering, the casualties, and the beating we were taking. He put an end to it for the day, and Mr. Spaulding was pounding the enemy from above with everything he had available to him, so we could regroup and maybe we could try again, but thank God we didn't because it would have been another Hamburger Hill. So, I still think Livingston made the right decision and I still think he is a fine battalion commander. Thank you sir!

Sincerely,  
John Knorr (Geronimo)  
Volant, PA

## A positive word about Lucas

Here's a check to help maintain the great *Ripcord Reports*. Sorry I won't be able to make the Colorado reunion. My wife and I are headed to Germany to re-visit our first PCS Kaserne in the 1950s.

Sometime, for future reference, I'd like to provide a positive message on Andre Lucas' behalf. I don't believe Keith Nolan knew all the facts. He was not too generous. There was a lot going on that Andre could not control.

Sincerely,  
George Stenehjem  
Edina, MN & St. Petersburg, FL



I started traveling to China in 1997, and to date have made nine trips. Some time back, Fred Spaulding suggested that association members might like to read about some of the insights I've gained in my travels. Here's a story I hope you'll find of interest. —Chuck Hawkins, editor

## WALL JUMPERS

BEIJING, PRC, September 2002—Kim Il Sung made the journey twice during Japanese occupation in World War II and was hailed as a hero. These days, a handful of Kim's countrymen attempt the same journey, also at great peril, but this time not from the Japanese. Today's threat comes from the security forces of their own country; the one Kim led until his passing in 1994, and which his son and successor, Kim Jong Il, now rules.

Attempts to flee the oppressive regime of North Korea come in dribbles and drabs. Flight is made more for economic reasons than for ideological ones. Many of those who manage to make the journey into China seek asylum in Western embassies in Beijing, but they often do not get it because they do not meet the United Nations' definition of political refugee.

Politics and ideology take a hind-seat to self-survival and economic betterment. This is something with which the United States is familiar; witness the mass migration in recent years of illegal immigrants from Mexico flooding across the southwestern border. But there is no mass migration from North Korea, as much as some might hope.

Indeed, a German doctor, working from an enclave in South Korea, has led a drive to encourage exodus from North Korea by its impoverished people. At one time a far-left, radical socialist, the doctor lived and worked in the worker's paradise of North Korea until he became disillusioned. But not before he was recognized as a hero of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for giving his own skin to graft to the burned body of a Korean victim of a terrible accident.

With the idea that World Cup matches in South Korea would draw media attention to the plight of those in the North, the German doctor devised before hand an elaborate scheme to move refugees into northeast China and then to Beijing where they would run the gauntlet of security surrounding the embassy quarter in Chaoyang District. In fact, many of the so-called Korean refugees were already living in China, having years before exchanged poor conditions in North Korea for marginally better conditions on China's northeast frontier.

For those North Koreans not already living in China, the escape is an arduous and challenging one. Transportation networks in North Korea are limited to non-existent. Private transportation means using one's



**Chinese People's Armed Police on guard beside the American Embassy, which is under renovation**

feet as motive power; other forms, such as the rare automobile, are the exclusive domain of ruling elites. Regardless of status, movement about the DPRK is tightly controlled. People must have proper papers and a very good reason to be away from their home district or even local village.

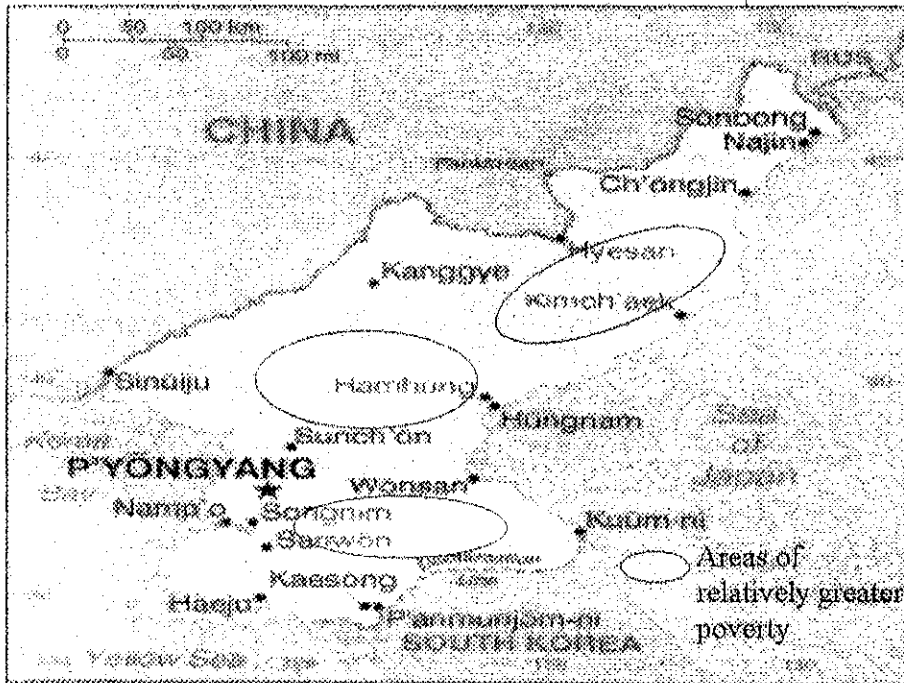
The problem of escape is exacerbated by demographics and relative economic conditions. North Koreans living near the Yalu River—forming most of the border with China—are generally better off than their fellow citizens in southern and central enclaves, and are less inclined to attempt flight. Ironically, the slightly better economic situation along the border owes much to smuggling and illegal trafficking in contraband items. Not only are northern North Koreans less inclined to flee, but they have a modest incentive to prevent others from doing so, since a crack down on escapees would also bring increased attention of the state security apparatus to their area.

To escape from North Korea, individuals must have a good set of forged documents and be prepared to make the trek on foot, traveling at night and hiding out during the day. The matter of crossing the border is only possible at personal risk and with the aid of sympathetic smugglers from the Chinese side. Communications to

coordinate such activities is difficult, dangerous and slow.

Once in China, escapees have a marginally better chance of completing the journey to the promised land of embassies and consulates in Beijing. Often they will become integrated into local Korean communities in northeast China, sometimes biding their time for months or years before making the final push to Beijing. Once in the capital city, things become difficult and dangerous again.

Beijing reacts with predictable deflection and dissatisfaction to a foreigner's indelicate probing. The extra security, I was told, "is an anti-terrorist measure." Invoking the terror of 9/11, it seems, serves a useful purpose for the Beijing bosses. I pressed the issue: "When is the last time there was a terrorist incident in Beijing?" And received the following response: "Not anytime recently. Perhaps 20 years ago we had some problem." And there the subject dies, wilting under the stare of fathomless, obsidian eyes.



If official Beijing is reluctant to discuss wall jumpers, regular citizens are not. Although news remains tightly controlled, word of North Korean escapees and attempts to seek sanctuary in embassies in the capital has spread. I met with a Chinese-American who had discussed the matter freely with her friends in Beijing. Other Chinese citizens I spoke with were also aware of the situation. Wall jumpers face a daunting challenge along the embassy streets now, and few are likely to succeed in the days ahead. New methods and approaches to freedom and economic betterment will have to be found or devised.

Perhaps the matter will become moot in the future, as relations between North and South Korea continue to warm, or worsen, as the case might be with the North's blatant violation of the Agreed Framework on nuclear weapons. But for now the issue of wall jumpers remains an embarrassment

The Beijing security forces call these people "wall jumpers," and in recent months efforts have been redoubled to prevent such occurrences. Security is more than tight, with access roads and side streets blocked to everyday traffic and extra security guards posted at embassy gates, along the streets and at all intersections. Available security forces were insufficient to do the job, and civilian security firms have stepped in to fill the void—a Chinese version of America's "rent-a-cop."

A stroll through the embassy area, or a drive along its streets in an authorized vehicle, quickly confirms the seriousness with which Beijing leadership views the wall jumpers. The famous Silk Market, which used to be accessible from four directions, including the street passing the American Embassy, can now be reached only through the entrance from Jiangmen Wai Avenue, a primary east-west thoroughfare. Barbed wire and linked fencing seal off the other access and egress routes.

The mere mention of wall jumpers to colleagues in the central government or in government-sponsored institutions is a sure way to quiet conversation and earn an icy look. Ever sensitive to appearances, official

to the Chinese government, regardless how slight, and increased numbers of security forces will continue to bear witness to the diminished capacity for freedom in the Middle Kingdom.

## REUNION NOTICE

Ripcord Reunion 2003 will be in Charleston, South Carolina from October 8 (Wednesday) through October 11 (Saturday, depart on Sunday the 12<sup>th</sup>)

See details and registration form on page 7.



# The Wild Man of LZ Sally

My Dustoff crew had circled Ripcord during those fateful moments of terror when the NVA mortar rounds found their target on the Commander and his operations officer. The C&C Ship gave us a call and asked if we could come in and pick up one remaining soldier, the Commander's RTO as I recall, while they came in for the bodies. We complied and safely reunited him with his unit back at Camp Evans. It had been a long day already, and the brief respite we anticipated after the Battle of Ripcord would be welcome. As part of the Air Ambulance Platoon, 326<sup>th</sup> Medical Battalion a.k.a. "Eagle Dustoff", we were on standby at Camp Evans and accustomed to getting up in the middle of the night and flying out to one of the far-flung fire bases in the mountains--good weather or bad--to pick up some poor, shot-up GI. There was always action out in that part of the AO. So a few weeks later, here I am in the middle of a hot summer day catching a few z-z-zees when we get a call for an urgent medevac at LZ Sally. "LZ Sally? Someone must have shot himself again," I thought, "the only action they ever see at Sally is self-inflicted or from incoming mortars, and they don't normally come in at high noon!"

"We got a berserk GI out here tearing the place apart! Get out here quick!" the voice on the other end howled before hanging up, giving us no option but to get out there and see what was happening.

As we saddled up and strapped on our chicken plates, I asked the medic if he knew how to handle the situation. He mumbled something about a straight jacket in the bottom of his aid kit that he had never used and wondered out loud what a good shot of morphine in the rear-end would do to settle down such a maniac. Skeptical though we were, we were duty-bound to take on this unusual mission, so off we scrambled for the short flight to LZ Sally. We were there before

the engine got warm. We landed at the helipad where we found a squad of soldiers guarding a tall, muscular GI, his red face flushed and agitated, but nevertheless not foaming at the mouth.

"He doesn't look too bad," I said to my crew, so the medic loaded him aboard, seating him on the floor between the medic and crew chief with back against the transmission firewall. "But if he makes any quick moves toward the cockpit or the exits, cold-cock him with your Crescent wrench", I ordered the crew chief. He assured me with a sheepish grin that he would comply if necessary. Thankfully, neither force nor constraint was necessary, and by the time we got back to Camp Evans, the wayward GI had settled down and readily unburdened himself of his transgressions.



"I didn't go berserk!" he exclaimed. "I was just mad!" As the story unfolded in the presence of the doctor, we learned that he had gotten into a friendly fight with another soldier, and the First Sergeant had intervened, taking the side of his opponent. Then taking the UCMJ into his own hands, the First Sergeant locked him up in a Conex--in the direct sunlight of the already unbearable heat. After a few moments of sheer panic and an over-active adrenal gland, the GI decided he had "done his time" and proceeded to kick his way out of "LBJ North" and pursue the now evading First Sergeant. The Doc and I laughed out loud at the thought of that First Sergeant, his eyes wide as saucers, hot-footing it out of the AO when he saw the hinges of that Conex door give way to a Size-13 jungle boot. We never knew what happened after the soldier got back to his unit, but we bet among ourselves that his offense would never go to trial--and that the First Sergeant would be forever grateful for having a clean pair of boxer shorts on hand.

Jerry Rodgers  
Burke, VA  
Eagle Dustoff, 1970-71

**Ripcord Reunion 2003, Columbia, South Carolina** (send in this form with your registration fee to Fred Spaulding)

☐ Yes, I'll be there! ☐ I can't make it, but keep me on the list. Is this your first reunion? ☐ Yes ☐ No

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ UNIT in RVN: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Will a family member(s) or guest be sharing your accommodation? ☐ Yes ☐ No How many including you? ☐

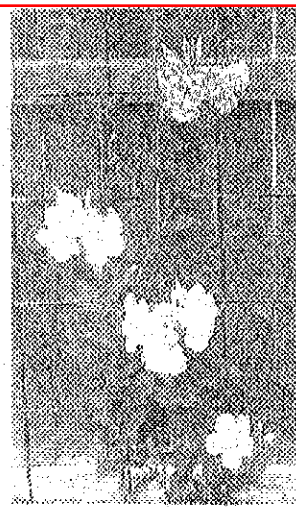
If yes, what are the names? (For nametag purposes only) \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival date/time: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure date/time: \_\_\_\_\_

If applicable: Arrival airline: \_\_\_\_\_ Flight # \_\_\_\_\_

Transportation is available to and from the airport. Please use the courtesy phone at the airport.

Registration fee of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed. Fee is \$90 per adult, \$50 for children under 18, \$40 banquet only.



**Discounts for early registration: Before March 12, \$75 per adult; Before July 23, \$80; Before September 1, \$85; After September 1, \$90.**

Your registration fee covers the following events, except as noted. Please check the boxes for headcount.

**Wednesday, October 8:** Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours.

**Thursday, October 9:** Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours.

**Friday, October 10:** Tour of attractions in the Downtown Historic District.

☐ Will attend, Number \_\_\_\_\_ attending. ☐ Will not attend.

**Saturday, October 11:** Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours.

Golf ☐ Yes ☐ How many? ☐ No. Golf is **NOT** covered by the registration fee. Cart and green fees TBA.

1500 hours: Business meeting for Association business, in the hospitality suite.

**Banquet:** Will attend ☐, number attending? ☐ Will not attend ☐

1730-1830: Cash bar (open until 2000 hours).

1830: Opening remarks and invocation.

1830-1930: Buffet banquet

1930: Presentation of Ripcord Coins to newcomers by Ben Harrison (Maj. Gen., USA, ret.)

1950: Raffle of clock, and lamp.

2000: Closing remarks.

**Sunday, October 12:** Departure. See y'all next year!

(clip here)

**Deadline: September 7, 2003—Send form or call →**

**Town & Country Inn & Conference Center**

2008 Savannah Highway, Charleston, SC 29407; Tel.: 1-800-334-6660; Fax: 1-843-766-9444

Group: Ripcord Association, October 7-12, 2002. Group # RIPCOR

Confirmation Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Rate: \$69.00 plus 12 percent tax, per night, single/double occupancy. Cash deposit or credit card number required to guarantee reservation. Rate applies three days before and after group block dates (Oct. 7-12, 2003 are the block dates).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Rooms: \_\_\_\_\_

Roommate Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Room Type Preferred: \_\_\_\_\_

King/Smoking \_\_\_\_\_ King/Non-Smoking \_\_\_\_\_ Double Queen/Smoking \_\_\_\_\_ Double Queen/Non-Smoking \_\_\_\_\_

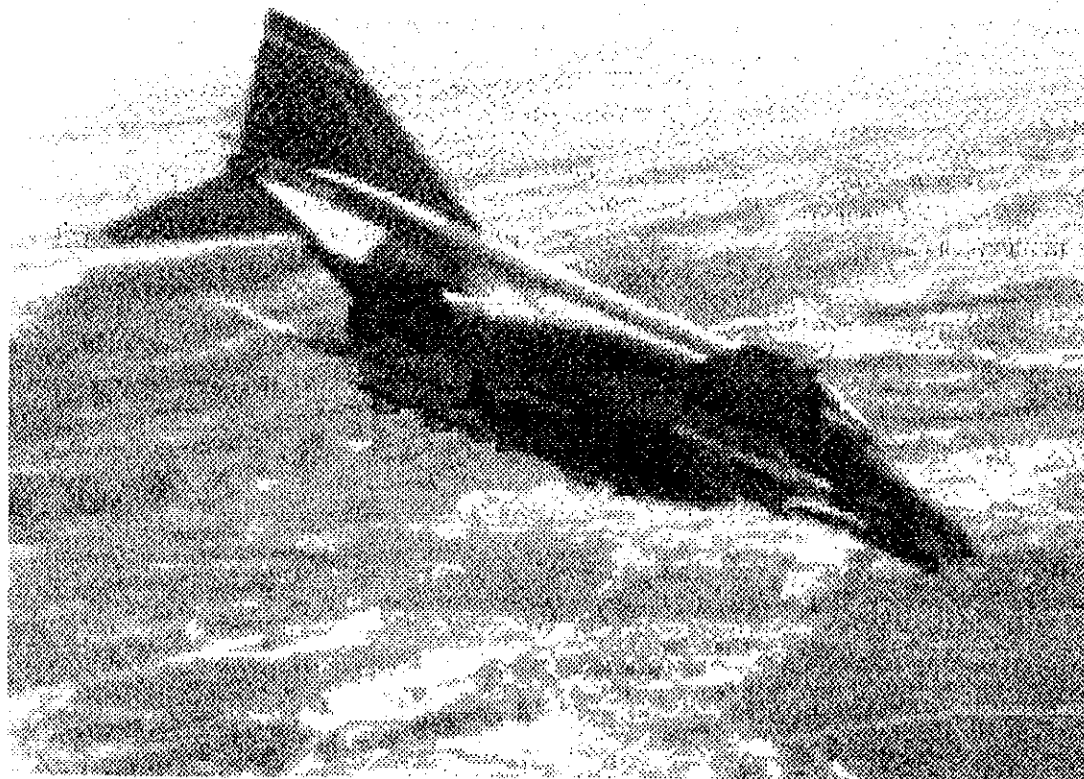
For Payment by Credit Card

Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Check-in Time: 3:00 p.m., Check-out Time: 12:00 noon

(Save for your records.)



## Combat film footage of Ripcord

(continued from page 1)

9 Jul 70

- 1) Shows the men trying to take cover from the 50-70 knot winds frequent at Ripcord, then leaving cover to participate in a fire support mission, aiding ground troops.

10 Jul 70

- 2) Shows a loader, SP4 Floyd Alexander, on a 105mm howitzer after he was struck by the cannon recoiling (loaded with a charge 7 maximum load), while firing at an enemy mortar position, which was firing on Ripcord. Alexander was startled by a mortar landing nearby and moved into the recoil of the howitzer. Shows Alexander being carried away as suppressive fire continues. The mortar attack left 2 US KIA and 14 WIA. (This sequence was shot in conjunction with SP4 Jerry Dubro who has a sequence of Alexander being hit by the recoil later in film.)

11 Jul 70

- 3) Shows impact area of a 120mm mortar which landed on the helicopter pad at Ripcord during an early morning barrage which left 7 US WIA. Shows helicopter trying to land in the high winds and being forced off by the combination of winds and mortars. Show LTC Andre Lucas, Commander, 2/506<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, exiting the Tactical Operations Center. Shows troops cleaning up the debris from the 120mm mortar impact.

Camera Operator: SP4  
Gerald Dubro

Shot List:

8 Jul 70

- 4) Shots of lowlands from helicopter on the way to Ripcord; perimeter of Ripcord; Chopper Pad at Ripcord; helicopter coming in atop helipad; helicopter leaving (the coming and going of helicopters at Ripcord was hampered by wind reaching 50 knots in force and occasional enemy mortar attacks).
- 5) Jet bombing mountain next to Ripcord (there was an enemy bunker

complex located on this mountain). Shot of men setting up claymores for night defense. Continuation of bombing on bunker complex.

- 6) MAJ Herbert Koenigsbauer calling in an air strike.
- 7) View of the firebase.
- 8) Loach, which was dropped by Chinook. The Loach was being carried out by a Chinook and was dropped when the Chinook had to take evasive action to avoid being hit by an enemy mortar attack.
- 9) Huey helicopter taking off.
- 10) Chinook helicopter coming in with supplies.
- 11) Loading up a Huey helicopter.
- 12) Chinook flying off.
- 13) Bombing bunker complex on nearby mountain.

9 Jul 70

- 18) Bombs dropping on bunker complex.
- 19) Moving artillery rounds. Battery B 2/319<sup>th</sup> Artillery battery Commander CPT David F. Rich and XO 1LT Thomas Brennan. Moving artillery rounds. Howitzer emplacement. Soldier cleaning a 155mm howitzer.

20) 105mm howitzer, Battery B, 2/319<sup>th</sup> Artillery in operation giving suppressive fire to mortar attack. While loading the howitzer, SP4 Alexander was injured by the recoil from the Howitzer which was firing a number 7 charge (they fire charges from 1 to 7, seven being the strongest). Alexander being knocked down by the recoil from the howitzer he was loading. Crew #5 helping Alexander after he was knocked down. Alexander laying down by the howitzer. Gun crew going back to man the howitzer.



# LZ DEAF EAR

KENT ISLAND, Maryland—Is winter over yet? I don't know about you, but folks in this household are aching for spring to arrive. Besides, the heating bills are (literally) through the roof.

Speaking of oil ...

## NO OIL FOR IDIOTS

How can war against Saddam Hussein be about oil? It's just not logical. Yet thousands of anti-war protesters would have us believe otherwise.

If it were about oil, we'd take over Canada instead. That's where we get most of our oil.

Wouldn't we be more interested in quelling disturbances in Venezuela if it were about oil? Venezuela was the fourth largest supplier of oil to the U.S. in 2002.

Five countries supply more oil to the U.S. than Iraq, which is sixth behind Canada, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Venezuela and Nigeria. The oil the U.S. imports from the United Kingdom, Norway, Angola and Algeria combined is more than double the oil we get from Iraq.

If it were about oil, why wouldn't we just lift the sanctions against Iraq and import more? France and Germany don't seem to have a problem doing business with Saddam.

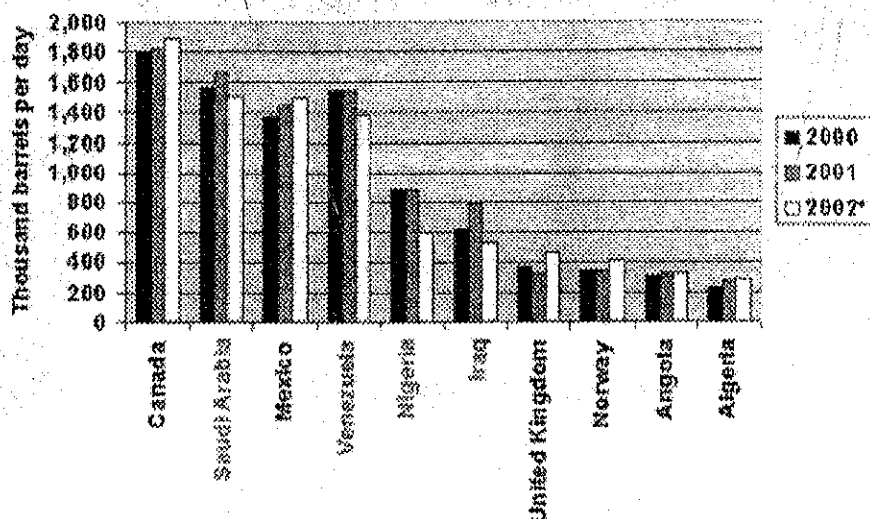
If it were about oil, why were there no Iraqi peace demonstrators in the large crowds that assembled across Europe last week? There are hundreds of thousands of Iraqis living in Europe, and tens of thousands living in the United States. Where were they for the anti-war marches? I suspect that Iraqis living in freedom in Europe and America know something the peace activists either don't know or refuse to acknowledge -- that Saddam Hussein is a viscerally evil creature.

Well, there you have it. If it's not about oil, what then?

It's about U.S. national interests. It's about protecting the United States of America and her allies from a bad actor who has shown a marked tendency toward aggression, accumulation of chemical and biological weapons, a desire to possess nuclear weapons, and who provides support to terrorists. It's about preserving (and restoring) stability to a region of the world that connects East with West, Europe and Russia with

Africa, the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea with the Mediterranean Sea.

There are other reasons, of course. It would be a wonderfully humanitarian thing if 23 million-plus Iraqis didn't have to live in a brutal dictatorship (compared with 2 million or so Albanians in Kosovo that we went to war against Serbia over in 1999; where were the protesters then?)



In the past year or so I've had the opportunity to meet with a number of defense attachés and government ministers from different countries in Asia Minor and the Middle East. With near unanimity they favor getting rid of Saddam Hussein, by force if necessary. A colonel from Oman confided that President Bush's "axis of evil" comment is true. The number of supporters the U.S. has in the Middle East -- Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, Egypt, Turkey, and even Yemen -- buttress this sentiment.

We need to be thinking beyond Iraq. I firmly believe the Bush administration is doing this, but they are noticeably silent about it, a characteristic of the Bush presidency from day one. After Iraq, will it be Syria, another country led by an evil dictator? What about Iran, with its radicalized mullahs, but on the verge of a social and political revolution?

Other great challenges remain. The war against terrorists will continue through our grandchildren's lifetimes. The U.S. now has several thousand troops in the Philippines fighting along side with government forces against Abu Sayyaf. We just sent several hundred troops to Columbia to assist against Marxist guerrillas there.

Then there is North Korea.

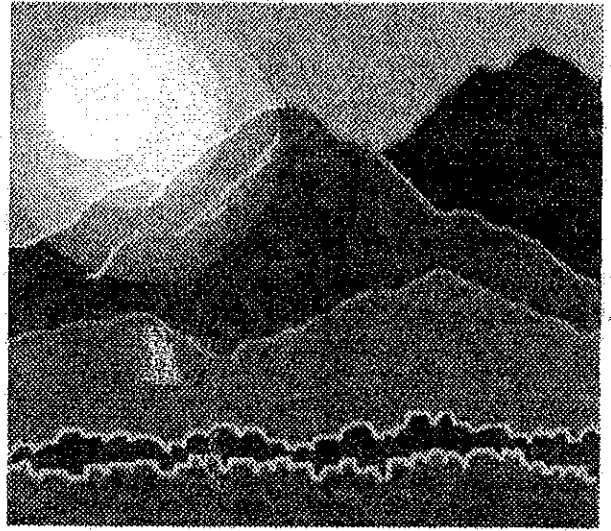
The list goes on. —Chuck Hawkins, editor

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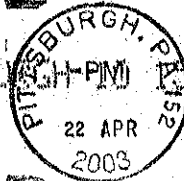
**Can spring be far off?**

*Ripcord Report* is a publication of the Battle of Fire Support Base Ripcord Association, and is the authoritative voice of history of the battle.



*Ripcord Report*  
Chuck Hawkins, editor

PEDAL PITTSBURGH



04/22/03



Address service requested.

FRANK MARSHALL

Combat Infantryman's Badge

