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11 Receive Bronze Stars

Eleven Bronze Star Medals with "V" device, including six "impact" awards, were presented to Regional Forces soldiers and ARVN Rangers recently.

Major General F.K. Mearns, commanding general, CMAC, made the presentations in back-to-back ceremonies held at 5th Ranger Group and Binh Chanh District Headquarters.

RANGER HEADQUARTERS

Soldiers of the 5th Rangers were recipients of four of the "impact" awards for actions occurring on 24 February.

Aspirant Nguyen Huu Khang, 3rd Platoon, Reconnaissance Company, 5th Ranger Group, was leading his element in a waterborne patrol when it received intense hand grenade and small arms fire from 5VC concealed in nipa palm on the northeast bank of the canal. Aspirant Khang led his platoon to a decisive closing with the enemy. Later in the day, the platoon again came under fire and Aspirant Khang bravely led his platoon to a total victory. Results of these two actions were 9 VC KIA, 4VC captured, 7 AK47's, 600
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New Unit Formed for CMAC Artillery

CMAC IQ—A new unit, the Capital Target Acquisition Battery (Provisional), officially came into existence February 23 at CMAC.

According to orders published by CMAC the stated mission of the battery is to "provide general target acquisition by means of flash ranging and operational control or attached counter-battery and ground surveillance radar."

Simply stated, it means that the Capital Target Acquisition Battery has control of the operation of the CMAC flash towers and radar sites that are used

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to spot rocket or mortar attacks on Saigon.

Captain George Woolsey, the battery commander, explained that the unit is split into a flash platoon and a radar platoon. He said "The flash platoon consists of the men in the flash towers, but the radar platoon is mainly a headquarters element. Most of our radar is manned by units under our operational control."

The new battery will have its own supply and motor sections plus communications and targeting sec-
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EDITORIAL

A Letter Means Caring

How many times have you seen the overseas mail call where the postal clerk hands out letters until only a few dejected men stand by—those who didn't get one?

This isn't a scenario from a movie. It happens quite often for various reasons. Mainly, it's because addresses have changed by constant moves and the letters are somewhere in the pipeline.

However, let's reverse the situation. Family addresses back home seldom change. Yet, there are sometimes weeks and even months when they, too, become dejected waiting for letters.

Writing, between family members, is not always a matter of exchanging news, but of thoughtfulness and caring. Just a note to mom and dad, wife or sister means that you care—merely by sending a few words.

Chaplains very often hear from parents and families who plead for word of their loved ones. In most cases, it's found that the "forgotten" letter home was only negligence.

Words from home bring a personal feeling of pleasure that only the reader understands. Remember, writing is a two-way street, and a letter means love and affection—whether you are 50 or 5,000 miles away.

And, your letter brings you home—even for a moment or two. (AFPS)



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Mandrake



National Cartoonists Society

Savings Plan Reviewed

(ANF)—U.S. Army finance officers have pointed out certain details that should be known by all participants in the Uniformed Services Savings Deposit Program.

The savings program, open to military personnel on active duty overseas, pays interest at the rate of 10 per cent a year, compounded quarterly. Accounts must be closed within 90 days after servicemen return from overseas.

Department of the Army Message 892393 states that depositors should understand the following terms:

-Requests for accelerated repayment of deposits will affect the accrued interest of an account, depending on when and where the request is submitted.

-Cash deposits should not be made subsequent to requests for accelerated repayment.

-No interest will be paid after the expiration of 90 days from the date of return to the United States or its possessions.

-If the 90 day period expires on any day other than the last day of a month, interest is computed only through the last day of the preceding month. In instances where repayment is for less than the 90-day period, personnel receive interest for a full month in which repayment is made.

About People

Long Way from Mexicali

From "south of the border down Mexico way" to the south of Vietnam down Saigon way has been a long trip for Specialist 5 Miguel Chavarela Larfarga, but it has been one he wanted to make.

In fact, Miguel's entire army stint is something he wanted to do, an action that goes beyond the ordinary American citizen's voluntary enlistment.

Chavarela, 22, known to his buddies in the CMAC AG Personnel section as Mike, claims Mexicali as his home town and Mexico as his native country.

After one and a half years as an accounting major at Los Angeles State College, Mike began to do some serious thinking about himself. (As an alien residing in the states he would normally have been subject to the draft. But as a student he was deferred from this possibility.)

"I wasn't sure about my future at the time. I needed some time to think." Mike decided by joining the U.S. Army he would get the opportunity to sort things out in his mind.

So in June 1966 this draft-exempt Mexican citizen took "that step forward." After basic at Fort Bliss, Tex. and army administration training at Fort Ord, Calif., he was assigned to process UCMJ offenders for the 6th Army at Fort Lewis, Wash. He was stationed at Baumholder, Ger-

many as an artillery gunner before coming to CMAC in July to work as an administrative specialist.

Chavarela has strong feelings about the Vietnam War, strong enough to get him to volunteer for duty here. "Now that we are here, a country as big and powerful as the United States must show people they can rely on its promises. There's no alternative... We have to win."

It won't be long now before Mike, with three months remaining, will be heading back to visit his widowed mother, and his brother and sister living in Mexicali and to see his three other sisters in Los Angeles.

He was asked what he had learned during his army stint.

"Now I know what I'm after and more or less how to get it. I'm more mature now. After ETSing I'll be returning to school to (Cont'd on Page 9, Column 1)

ARVN Patients Visited by CG

CMAC IO---Patients at the Army of the Republic of Vietnam's (ARVN) Tran Ngoc Minh Hospital in Saigon were visited recently by Major General F.K. Mearns, commanding general, CMAC, in honor of the Tet holidays. General Mearns was accompanied by Brigadier General Lam Son, deputy commanding general, CMD.

The generals visited all wards shaking hands with and passing out gifts to the 350 ARVN soldier-patients.

Hospital Administrator, Major Ho Quang Nguyen, guided the visitors through the wards and gave a comprehensive briefing on the hospital.

General Mearns' visit was in gratitude for a similar one made by his counterpart, Major General Nguyen Van Minh, commanding general, CMD, to the U.S. Army's 3rd Field Hospital in Tan Son Nhut during the Christmas holidays.

Meritorious Service Medal Authorized

WASHINGTON (AFPS)—In one of his last acts in office, President Johnson signed an executive order authorizing a new medal for those who have distinguished themselves by outstanding meritorious achievements or service.

Designated as the Meritorious Service Medal, it would rank between the Legion of Merit and the Ser-

vice Commendation Medal, as a non-combat award.

A White House statement said the need for the MSM has become apparent within the military services in the past few years. Before its adoption, only the Legion of Merit was available to those members of the services credited with meritorious achievement or outstanding service.

