

THE PACER

An American story

CHAPTER ONE

By DAVID PARAMORE

It was September 1968, and I had just turned 20 years old while serving in South Vietnam with the 1st Cavalry Division.

I had completed my basic training at Fort Benning, Ga., and my AIT at Fort McClellan in Anniston, Ala.

My unit was Company A; 1st Battalion of the 8th Cavalry -- we referred to ourselves as the "The 1st Air Cav" -- an air mobile infantry unit stationed up in I Corps South Vietnam, which put us right up next to the 17th Parallel, just below North Vietnam proper.

As an infantry unit, we lived and worked in the field for weeks at a time

before being sent back to Landing Zone (LZ) Sharon for a little rest and refitting. There was never much recreation going on.

This was when we would get new jungle fatigues to replace the ones rotting off us as we walked, after having been worn for 45 straight days. We would also get medical care for the jungle rot everyone had on their feet from being constantly wet, along with numerous other maladies.

We all needed the rest, and although we were assigned perimeter guard duty while on the LZ, we could come close to getting eight hours of sleep every night for the

seven to 10 days that we were there.

I normally served as a rifleman in the 1st Squad with a great group of guys who, like me, were mostly Southern draftee boys. We were all about 19 or 20 years old at the time -- kids really, even if we didn't think so. Everyone was assigned a nickname soon after arriving and being placed in our squad.

I have often wondered if that was a common practice throughout the war or if it was unique to our unit. Regardless, everyone had to have a nickname.

I arrived in Vietnam on my mother's birthday -- March 3, 1968 -- and was quickly assigned a witty name. "Happy Birthday Mom! Uncle Sam is sending your boy to a war zone!" I always joked.

Because my name is David Palmer, some genius in the squad thought Palmer sounded good when combined with "paranoid."

"Paranoid Palmer" became my moniker for the rest of the time I was in the field. Was I actually paranoid? I did not think so, because the Viet Cong (VC) and the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) were really out to get me -- along with all the rest of us!

When I arrived in early March, the unit was in the midst of heavy fighting later referred to as The Tet Offensive of 1968. We were fighting the NVA in and around what we called "The Rock Pile" -- or what

the Vietnamese called "Khe Sanh." The Marines had a base at Khe Sanh and spent the spring and a good part of the summer of 1968 pinned down on their base by North Vietnamese troops.

Our job was to relieve the pressure on the Marines so they could rebuild their numbers and eventually leave the I-Corps. During that time, we were in and out of the A Shau Valley on operations. Much of our time was spent traversing some of the most God-awful terrain on Earth in which to fight a stupid war.

It was all jungle or elephant grass. Most times you could not see 10 feet in any direction. It was in this jungle that we participated in some of the heaviest fighting of the war in I-Corps.

We stayed in the field for months at a time and were seeing constant action from the VC and the North Vietnamese regulars, as the NVA had poured tens of thousands of troops into I-Corps' neighbor, the northern provinces of South Vietnam. The NVA would attack, fight hard for a few days and then pull back north to rest before coming at us again.

It seemed the VC were always around, springing ambushes on our patrols, launching rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) attacks as we moved through the jungle and mortaring the hell out of us whenever we set up our night positions.

You can bet we dug our foxholes deep and piled the dirt up in front of them. I probably shoveled more dirt during those months than the whole Corps of Engineers had

moved during the entire damn Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) project! Our unit suffered heavy casualties during the first part of 1968, but it seemed the 1st Squad lived a charmed life.

Because of all the constant fighting and the high rate of casualties and injuries our unit experienced at that time, my squad mates were almost never the same guys from day to day.

A new guy would be assigned to the squad one day and be gone the next, most of them just moved over to another platoon thinner than we were.

The guys I would serve the majority of my time in country with had not yet arrived or were just starting to show up.

Marvin Williams came over in late March and was assigned to my squad. Marvin would be there until he left the field in the late fall of 1968. Being 23 years old at the time, we called him "Old Man Williams."

Marvin was from Post, Texas, a planned township about 35 miles southeast of Lubbock and the brainchild of the cereal magnate of the same name. Marvin was everything you would expect a west Texas country boy to be -- quiet and soft spoken.

That is until it was time to raise hell, which he could do with the best of us. Marvin was also a "sole surviving son," which would eventually get him out of the field early because he was the last living male heir of his immediate family.

We were all digging in at the end of a day's march when a runner from the command post (CP) told Marvin that the captain wanted to see him ASAP. When Marvin got up to the CP, there was a major

waiting on him!

The major asked, "Are you Marvin Glen Williams?"

"Yes sir," Marvin replied.

"Are you the last surviving male heir in your family?" the major asked.

"Yes sir," Marvin answered.

"Well, the U.S. Army has received a letter from your mama asking to have her sole surviving son removed from combat," said the major.

"Yes sir!" Marvin said.

"Well, can you type?" the major asked.

"Yes sir," Marvin replied.

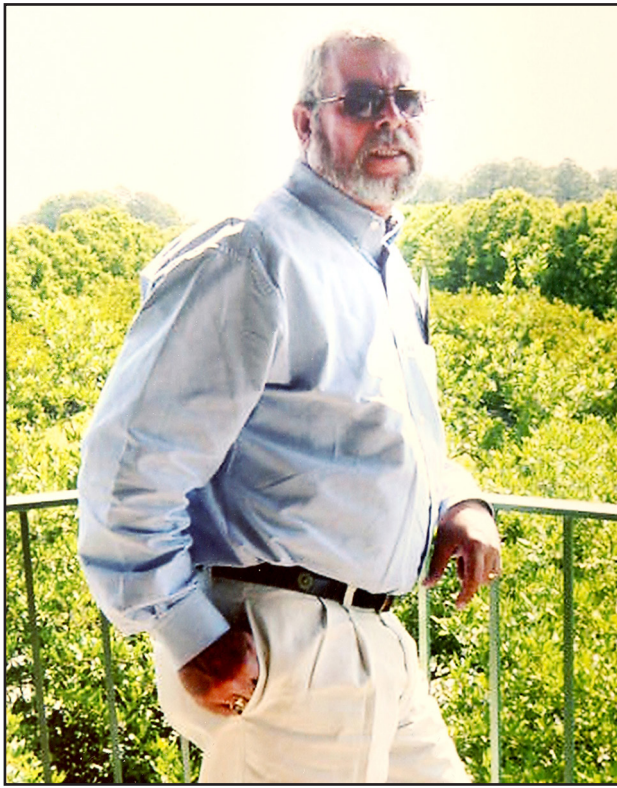
"Well, get on that helicopter, you are now my new clerk," ordered the major.

"Yes sir!" Marvin said.

By the time this event took place Marvin had already served almost eight months in the field.

(To be continued)

Editor's Note: The Pacer, An American Story was written by local author David Paramore as a fundraiser for Point of Grace (POG) Christian School. The Pacer is available for purchase on Amazon as a paperback or Kindle e-book download, with all proceeds going to support the expansion of POG. Amazon Prime-Unlimited members can download the book for free and support the POG expansion by way of Amazon paying a "royalty" on each download. Visit www.thepacerstory.com for more information.



David Paramore is a Taylor County resident and a Vietnam veteran. Paramore was drafted into the U.S. Army on March 3, 1968, as a rifleman.



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LEGALS

(continued from page 10)

SHALL REVISE THE DRAFT AIR CONSTRUCTION PERMIT AND REQUIRE, IF APPLICABLE, ANOTHER PUBLIC NOTICE. ALL COMMENTS FILED WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION. THE PERMITTING AUTHORITY WILL ACCEPT WRITTEN COMMENTS CONCERNING THE DRAFT TITLE V AIR OPERATION PERMIT FOR A PERIOD OF 30 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF PUBLICATION OF THE PUBLIC NOTICE. WRITTEN COMMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS (5:00 P.M.), ON OR BEFORE THE END OF THIS 30-DAY PERIOD BY THE PERMITTING AUTHORITY AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS. AS PART OF HIS OR HER COMMENTS, ANY PERSON MAY ALSO REQUEST THAT THE PERMITTING AUTHORITY HOLD A PUBLIC MEETING ON THIS PERMITTING ACTION. IF THE PERMITTING AUTHORITY DETERMINES THERE IS SUFFICIENT INTEREST FOR A PUBLIC MEETING, IT WILL PUBLISH NOTICE OF THE TIME, DATE, AND LOCATION IN THE FLORIDA ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTER (FAR). IF A PUBLIC MEETING IS REQUESTED WITHIN THE 30-DAY COMMENT PERIOD AND CONDUCTED BY THE PERMITTING AUTHORITY, ANY ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING THE PUBLIC MEETING WILL ALSO BE CONSIDERED BY THE PERMITTING AUTHORITY. IF TIMELY RECEIVED WRITTEN COMMENTS OR COMMENTS RECEIVED AT A PUBLIC MEETING RESULT IN A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE TO THE DRAFT TITLE

V AIR OPERATION PERMIT, THE PERMITTING AUTHORITY SHALL ISSUE A REVISED DRAFT TITLE V AIR OPERATION PERMIT AND REQUIRE, IF APPLICABLE, ANOTHER PUBLIC NOTICE. ALL COMMENTS FILED WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION. FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CONTACT THE PERMITTING AUTHORITY AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER. PETITIONS: A PERSON WHOSE SUBSTANTIAL INTERESTS ARE AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSED PERMITTING DECISION MAY PETITION FOR AN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTIONS 120.569 AND 120.57, F.S. PETITIONS FILED BY ANY PERSONS OTHER THAN THOSE ENTITLED TO WRITTEN NOTICE UNDER SECTION 120.60(3), F.S., MUST BE FILED WITHIN 14 DAYS OF PUBLICATION OF THE PUBLIC NOTICE OR RECEIPT OF A WRITTEN NOTICE, WHICHEVER OCCURS FIRST. UNDER SECTION 120.60(3), F.S., HOWEVER, ANY PERSON WHO ASKED THE PERMITTING AUTHORITY FOR NOTICE OF AGENCY ACTION MAY FILE A PETITION WITHIN 14 DAYS OF RECEIPT OF THAT NOTICE, REGARDLESS OF THE DATE OF PUBLICATION. A PETITIONER SHALL MAIL A COPY OF THE PETITION TO THE APPLICANT AT THE ADDRESS INDICATED ABOVE, AT THE TIME OF FILING. A PETITION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING MUST CONTAIN THE INFORMATION SET FORTH BELOW AND MUST BE FILED (RECEIVED) WITH THE AGENCY CLERK IN THE OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL, 3900 COMMONWEALTH

BOULEVARD, MS 35, TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-3000, AGENCY_CLERK@DEP.STATE.FL.US, BEFORE THE DEADLINE. THE FAILURE OF ANY PERSON TO FILE A PETITION WITHIN THE APPROPRIATE TIME PERIOD SHALL CONSTITUTE A WAIVER OF THAT PERSON'S RIGHT TO REQUEST AN ADMINISTRATIVE DETERMINATION (HEARING) UNDER SECTIONS 120.569 AND 120.57, F.S., OR TO INTERVENE IN THIS PROCEEDING AND PARTICIPATE AS A PARTY TO IT. ANY SUBSEQUENT INTERVENTION (IN A PROCEEDING INITIATED BY ANOTHER PARTY) WILL BE ONLY AT THE APPROVAL OF THE PRESIDING OFFICER UPON THE FILING OF A MOTION IN COMPLIANCE WITH RULE 28-106.205, F.A.C. A PETITION THAT DISPUTES THE MATERIAL FACTS ON WHICH THE PERMITTING AUTHORITY'S ACTION IS BASED MUST CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: (A) THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF EACH AGENCY FILED AND EACH AGENCY'S OFFICE OR IDENTIFICATION NUMBER, IF KNOWN; (B) THE NAME, ADDRESS, ANY EMAIL ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER AND ANY FACSIMILE NUMBER OF THE PETITIONER; (C) THE NAME, ADDRESS, ANY EMAIL ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER, AND ANY FACSIMILE NUMBER OF THE PETITIONER'S REPRESENTATIVE, IF ANY, WHICH SHALL BE THE ADDRESS FOR SERVICE PURPOSES DURING THE COURSE OF THE PROCEEDING; AND AN EXPLANATION OF HOW THE PETITIONER'S SUBSTANTIAL INTERESTS WILL BE AFFECTED BY THE AGENCY DETERMINATION;

(C) A STATEMENT OF WHEN AND HOW EACH PETITIONER RECEIVED NOTICE OF THE AGENCY ACTION OR PROPOSED DECISION; (D) A STATEMENT OF ALL DISPUTED ISSUES OF MATERIAL FACT. IF THERE ARE NONE, THE PETITION MUST SO INDICATE; (E) A CONCISE STATEMENT OF THE ULTIMATE FACTS ALLEGED, INCLUDING THE SPECIFIC FACTS THE PETITIONER CONTENDS WARRANT REVERSAL OR MODIFICATION OF THE AGENCY'S PROPOSED ACTION; (F) A STATEMENT OF THE SPECIFIC RULES OR STATUTES THE PETITIONER CONTENDS REQUIRE REVERSAL OR MODIFICATION OF THE AGENCY'S PROPOSED ACTION INCLUDING AN EXPLANATION OF HOW THE ALLEGED FACTS RELATE TO THE SPECIFIC RULES OR STATUTES; AND, (G) A STATEMENT OF THE RELIEF SOUGHT BY THE PETITIONER, STATING PRECISELY THE ACTION THE PETITIONER WISHES THE AGENCY TO TAKE WITH RESPECT TO THE AGENCY'S PROPOSED ACTION. A PETITION THAT DOES NOT DISPUTE THE MATERIAL FACTS UPON WHICH THE PERMITTING AUTHORITY'S ACTION IS BASED SHALL STATE THAT NO SUCH FACTS ARE IN DISPUTE AND OTHERWISE SHALL CONTAIN THE SAME INFORMATION AS SET FORTH ABOVE, AS REQUIRED BY RULE 28-106.301, F.A.C. BECAUSE THE ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING PROCESS IS DESIGNED TO FORMULATE FINAL AGENCY ACTION, THE FILING OF A PETITION MEANS THAT THE PERMITTING AUTHORITY'S FINAL ACTION MAY BE DIFFERENT FROM THE POSITION

TAKEN BY IT IN THIS WRITTEN NOTICE OF INTENT TO ISSUE AIR PERMIT. PERSONS WHOSE SUBSTANTIAL INTERESTS WILL BE AFFECTED BY ANY SUCH FINAL DECISION OF THE PERMITTING AUTHORITY ON THE APPLICATION HAVE THE RIGHT TO PETITION TO BECOME A PARTY TO THE PROCEEDING, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH ABOVE. EXTENSION OF TIME: UNDER RULE 62-110.106(4), F.A.C., A PERSON WHOSE SUBSTANTIAL INTERESTS ARE AFFECTED BY THE DEPARTMENT'S ACTION MAY ALSO REQUEST AN EXTENSION OF TIME TO FILE A PETITION FOR AN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING. THE DEPARTMENT MAY, FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN, GRANT THE REQUEST FOR AN EXTENSION OF TIME. REQUESTS FOR EXTENSION OF TIME MUST BE FILED WITH THE OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT AT 3900 COMMONWEALTH BOULEVARD, MAIL STATION 35, TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-3000, OR VIA ELECTRONIC CORRESPONDENCE AT AGENCY_CLERK@DEP.STATE.FL.US, BEFORE THE DEADLINE FOR FILING A PETITION FOR AN ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING. A TIMELY REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF TIME SHALL TOLL THE RUNNING OF THE TIME PERIOD FOR FILING A PETITION UNTIL THE REQUEST IS ACTED UPON. MEDIATION: MEDIATION IS NOT AVAILABLE FOR THIS PROCEEDING. OBJECTIONS: FINALLY, PURSUANT TO 42 UNITED STATES CODE (U.S.C.) SECTION 7661D(B)(2), ANY PERSON

MAY PETITION THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE EPA WITHIN 60 DAYS OF THE EXPIRATION OF THE ADMINISTRATOR'S 45-DAY REVIEW PERIOD AS ESTABLISHED AT 42 U.S.C. SECTION 7661D(B)(1), TO OBJECT TO THE ISSUANCE OF ANY TITLE V AIR OPERATION PERMIT. ANY PETITION SHALL BE BASED ONLY ON OBJECTIONS TO THE PERMIT THAT WERE RAISED WITH REASONABLE SPECIFICITY DURING THE 30-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD PROVIDED IN THE PUBLIC NOTICE, UNLESS THE PETITIONER DEMONSTRATES TO THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE EPA THAT IT WAS IMPRACTICABLE TO RAISE SUCH OBJECTIONS WITHIN THE COMMENT PERIOD OR UNLESS THE GROUNDS FOR SUCH OBJECTION AROSE AFTER THE COMMENT PERIOD. FILING OF A PETITION WITH THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE EPA DOES NOT STAY THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF ANY PERMIT PROPERLY ISSUED PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 62-213, F.A.C. PETITIONS FILED WITH THE ADMINISTRATOR OF EPA MUST MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF 42 U.S.C. SECTION 7661D(B)(2) AND MUST BE FILED WITH THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE EPA AT: U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR, 1200 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W., MAIL CODE: 1101A, WASHINGTON, DC 20460. FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING EPA REVIEW AND OBJECTIONS, VISIT EPA'S REGION 4 WEB SITE AT: [HTTP://WWW2.EPA.GOV/CAA-PERMITTING/FLORIDA-PROPOSED-TITLE-V-PERMITS](http://www2.epa.gov/CAA-PERMITTING/FLORIDA-PROPOSED-TITLE-V-PERMITS).