

Happy Thanksgiving To All

Hello 50th Company:

My family and I wish you and your families a very Happy and Meaningful Thanksgiving. Hug each other and Laugh!

Other than that, I'm wondering if some of you would care to join me and Jim Durkin in sharing memories of two days that all of us who served in Vietnam have etched in our minds: the arrival and, even better, the departure from our all-expenses-paid "vacation" 55 years ago in a sunny tropical clime.

Bob Hines recently shared a Vietnam era video with several of us. It is a CBS *60 Minutes* video from 1970 that shows Mike Wallace interviewing Army soldiers flying in commercial airliners with smiling young stewardesses (i.e., not in AirForce C-130s) from California to their tour in Vietnam and then a part-two with another group flying home. (If they had done this two weeks later, some of us in 50th Company might have even starred in the video.) The video is short (eleven minutes) and is bound to stir up some old memories. **See video below**

Not only did I find it a good watch, but I feel it is very pertinent as we celebrate another Thanksgiving. As Jim Durkin noted below in his reaction to the video, it stirs up old memories and probably inspires a few tears. My entry into Vietnam and my exit a year later were two of the most memorable days of my life. Seeing the images will

no doubt mean different things to each of you, but the common thread is that we are all thankful for having gotten through those difficult and dangerous times and having been able to enjoy another 54-plus years of life, family, friends and careers.

If the spirit moves you, please feel free to send me your memories of these two very significant days, and we will pass them on to our classmates.

Jim Durkin has already stepped up and shared his thoughts: "Lou, attached is a 1970 *60 Minutes* video Bob Hines found that has Mike Wallace and staff interviewing Army soldiers flying commercial airliners from California to RVN and back. Since those of us who went to Nam all shared this same experience, I found it really worth watching. While not all of us supported the war effort, we all answered the call of our country, very often in the form of a draft notice. After watching the video, that wonderful song of 60's era (John Denver?) entered my consciousness:

*All my bags are packed, I'm ready to go.
I'm standing here outside your door.
I hate to wake you up to say goodbye.
But I'm leaving on a jet plane.
Don't know when I'll be back again.
Oh Babe, I hate to go.*

But go we did. We boarded our planes. Most of us returned and inexplicably, for the most part, became better persons because of our military service. I know that I shifted my focus to a sense of we/us - not just

me. And this has changed how I've interacted with all whom I love and who love me, and all whom I've touched and who have touched me all these past 55 years. Perhaps my military service, in this way, has had a small, but real, positive effect on the world. And each of you from 50th Company has had a positive effect on me.

This reflection has brought a few tears - perhaps tears of joy, certainly tears of Thanksgiving."

Best Regards to All and Happy Thanksgiving,

Lou Lallo and Jim Durkin