

**LETTERS FROM READERS-NOVEMBER 2006-WORLD WAR II MAGAZINE**

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Distant Links to Baum's Raid

The story of the failed raid to free Lt. Gen. George S. Patton's son-in-law brought back a few memories of my service in Vietnam. When our unit, the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion (Airborne), 503<sup>rd</sup> Infantry, sailed from the Oakland (Calif.) Army Terminal on June 6, 1966---headed for duty in South Vietnam---the Commanding General of the United States Army Pacific (USAP) was General John K. Waters, whose headquarters was at Fort Shafter, Hawaii.

On the morning of January 9, 1967, D Company (Provisional), 4/503<sup>rd</sup>, riding aboard the armored personnel carriers (APC's) of D Company, 16<sup>th</sup> Armor (Airborne), 173<sup>d</sup> Airborne Brigade, punched west from Ben Cat, crossed the Thi Tinh River and secured Landing Zone 6 for the rest of the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion. The CO of D/16<sup>th</sup> Armor was Captain John K. Waters, Jr. In the afternoon, the APC's of D/16 and the grunts of D/4/503<sup>rd</sup> Inf. Were soon on their way to the Viet Cong stronghold of Ben Suc, located in the Iron Triangle.

I would like to say that while conducting operations with Captain Waters, our small unit was very lucky to have such a great leader in charge of the 173<sup>d</sup>'s armor element, and because of his recon by fire the VC stayed in their tunnels while we were in their base of operations. Other units were not as lucky and were engaged in heavy contact during the operations. I personally want to thank Captain Waters for taking such good care of us during combat.

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