



# 377<sup>TH</sup> SECURITY POLICE SQ.

PROVEN IN COMBAT



Newsletter for the 377th Security Policeman

Volume 2

2014

My name is Charles Penley and I was born in 1946, Kingsport, Tennessee.

I joined the United States Air Force, Sep 23, 1966. Completed six weeks of basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

After basic training, I was accepted into Aircraft Tower Control Operator, career field. The ATCO was temporarily shut down so they could annex it and make it larger.

I was then put in hold status, pulling kitchen police every day. After about two weeks of KP, someone said that if we go over and speak to TSgt Desoto, and if we were qualified, then we could become Air Policeman.

That is exactly what I did. I became an Air Policeman.

My first base was Whiteman AFB, Missouri. It was a Strategic Air Command (SAC) Base, it had Minuteman I and Minuteman II ICBM missiles.

It was the 351st Air Police Squadron. I was assigned to "Delta Sector" and responsible for protecting ten of the missile sites. I served there approximately seven months and then volunteered for Vietnam.

Approximately the first week of October 1967, I arrived at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Saigon, Vietnam. My unit was 377th Air Police Squadron. I was then assigned to Charlie Flight, Charlie Sector.

At first, we lived in the concrete French barracks and then moved to the 1300-Area, two story, open bay barracks.

Alpha Flight was from 0400 – 1200 hours.

Bravo Flight was from 1200 – 2000 hours.

Charlie Flight was from 2000 – 0400 hours.

From the first week of October 1967 – January 29, 1968 nothing happened at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Saigon, Vietnam.

Then on Jan 30, 1968, at approximately 1430 hours, the word was given to all Air Policemen. "Go to your barracks, obtain your LBE (load bearing equipment) and report to the 377th Security Police Squadron armory, draw your weapons and stand-by."

Our LBE, consisted of:

Steel Helmet, with liner  
Web Belt  
H – Harness  
Flak Vest  
Canteen  
180 rounds of ammunition  
Flash light, L – Shaped  
Foul weather gear  
Knife, Survival, Camillus  
Whistle  
Portable hand held, Air Police radio, if your post required it  
Special Security Instructions, for that particular post

I signed for my M-16 rifle and stood by for an emergency guardmount.

Sgt \_\_\_\_\_ and I were assigned to "Charlie-5, which was a M-60 Bunker."

It was located at the intersection of Main Street and Avenue K, where Central Security Control was located.

Then on January 31, 1968, at approximately 0320 hours, the "Attack On Tan Son Nhut, Tet Offensive began."

Tet at Tan Son Nhut, was from Jan 31, 1968 – Feb 18, 1968.

Rocket and mortars, landed on the base every day.

### Ambulance Incident!

Sgt (unknown name), Charlie -5  
A2C Charles Penley, Charlie-5  
M-60 Machine Gun Bunker and M-16 rifle

Situation: An ambulance ran the Main Gate, Jan 31, 1968

It was reported from the 716th Military Police BN, Saigon, Vietnam, that several US Military vehicles had been stolen, in downtown Saigon.

To be, on the lookout for ambulances, jeeps and duce and a half ton trucks.

At approximately 0430 – 0500 hours, the Tan Son Nhut Main Gate, over the Base Police radio frequency, radioed to Central Security Control, that an unauthorized ambulance had run the main gate, coming onto the installation.

The ground "Attack On Tan Son Nhut," had began earlier and it was still going on.

Knowing about the stolen military vehicles that was reported earlier, the ambulance was of utmost concern, to the men of the 377th Security Police Squadron.

The ambulance drove west, from the main gate, on "Republic Avenue." Heading towards the Hotel-3 helicopter pad.

The main gate desperately needed any mobile unit, to intercept the unauthorized ambulance and determine who they were.

At this time no Base Police or Security Police vehicle, was close enough to intercept the unauthorized ambulance, that had forced it way onto Tan Son Nhut.

The unauthorized ambulance then turned right onto "Main Street," heading north, driving toward Central Security Control and Charlie-5 Bunker, which was located on "Avenue K" and near the Flight Line.

At the intersection of "Main Street and Avenue K," was a static Base Police Entry Control Point. It consisted of a wooden shack and his sand bag bunker. It was the last entry control point before the flight line.

At this same intersection was "Charlie-5 Bunker" which was a sand bag, M-60 Bunker. It was manned by Sgt (Unknown name) and A2C Charles Penley.

It was CSC that was controlling the 377th Security Policemen in the Defense of Tan Son Nhut.

It was the 377<sup>th</sup> Security Police Squadron, who were the boots on the ground, fighting both NVA and VC personnel.

Charlie-5 personnel, had spoken briefly to the Base Policeman, at his entry control post, that if he could not stop the unauthorized ambulance, that he was to get inside his bunker and hit the ground, as fast as he could.

As Charlie-5 definitely was going to open fire, on the unauthorized ambulance and stop it with armed force.

About the same time, 1LT Melvin G. Grover, was transporting, wounded

377<sup>th</sup> Security Police Squadron personnel to the 377<sup>th</sup> Base Dispensary.

In addition to Grover, being in the jeep, Sgt Gerald Summerfeldt, was seriously wounded and in the jeep also. They had come from Echo Sector, where the main fighting was taking place.

The unauthorized ambulance did not stop for the Base Police, Entry Control Point and it was the last point before entry onto the flight line area.

Sgt (unknown name) and A2C Penley fired three long bursts of fire from the M-60 machine gun, intentionally firing into the air above the ambulance and the ambulance stopped immediately.

After the proper challenges to the occupants of the ambulance were conducted, the passenger, was ordered at gun point, to get out of the ambulance and A2C Penley, put him in the prone position, face down.

Sgt (unknown name), kept the M-60 machine gun, aimed at the driver of the ambulance, who was still inside it.

At gun point, the driver of the ambulance, was ordered to get out of the ambulance, on the passenger side and placed in a prone position, face down.

Then A2C Penley, requested backup from the nearest mobile unit.

Then several Security Police vehicles arrived to ensure no one was in the rear of the ambulance.

The mobile units, then took control of the two men in the ambulance.

Approximately 1200 hours, Sgt (unknown name) and A2C Penley were taken to CSC to give written statements about the incident.

There had been some slack in the fighting at this time.

Sgt (unknown name) and A2C Penley returned to Charlie-5, which was their assigned M-60 machine gun post.

I do not have any information on the outcome of the two American men, who were in the ambulance.

Charlie Sector, received alot of sniper fire, up and down the entire MLR (Main Line of Resistance.)

Several nearby buildings were hit and some burned to the ground.

During the TET Offensive, Jan 31, 1968, 157 NVA and VC were killed on Tan Son Nhut and approximately 800 NVA and VC were killed just off the west perimeter of the base.

Shortly after the Tet Offensive, it was determined that Foxtrot Sector needed beefing up. From twelve men to approximately thirty men.

I volunteered to go to Foxtrot Sector. I was there for approximately two months total. During that period, I was promoted to A1C.

I then volunteered and got accepted to work in the sentry dog section.

I was assigned, sentry dog, REBEL, tatoo number A531.

On May 6, 1968, the "Attack On Tan Son Nhut," known as the Mini-TET began and Foxtrot Sector was attacked heavily. The main fighting came from the large French Cemetery just outside the southern perimeter, adjacent to Plantation Road.

Sometime after Mini-Tet, I went TDY to Tachikawa Air Base, Japan, to pick up a brand new sentry dog, SMOKEY, tatoo number M707.

I handled, Smokey M707, upon returning to Tan Son Nhut.

While I was TDY to Japan, the MPC (Military Payment Certificate) used in Vietnam, was changed and I converted my old MPC to the new MPC upon return to Vietnam.

While serving in the Sentry Dog Section, I was promoted to Sgt.

During my tour with the 377th Security Police Squadron, Tan Son Nhut Air Base was attacked on twenty-seven different occasions.

I departed from the 377th Security Police Squadron, at the end of Jul 1969.

My tour was nineteen months, three weeks and two days.

(See Chart # 1, below to see information provided on the Attacks.)

(See Chart # 2, below to understand the acronyms used in Chart # 1.)

**Chart # 1 is below:**

ATTACK NUMBER	YEAR	MONTH	DAY	HOUR	BASE	TYPE	ROUNDS	US Losses Aircraft DESTROYED	US Losses Aircraft DAMAGED	US Losses Casualties KILLED IN ACTION	US Losses Casualties WOUNDED IN ACTION
035	68	01	31	0320	TSN	MBN	NR	000	013	023	086
049	68	02	18	0100	TSN	STO	060	Losses	are	included	with
052	68	02	18	1220	TSN	STO	002	Losses	are	included	with
053	68	02	18	1520	TSN	STO	002	Losses	are	included	with
054	68	02	18	1755	TSN	STO	001	Losses	are	included	with
055	68	02	19	0157	TSN	STO	002	Losses	are	included	with
056	68	02	19	0352	TSN	STO	002	Losses	are	included	with
057	68	02	19	0515	TSN	STO	003	Losses	are	included	with
058	68	02	19	0602	TSN	STO	005	Losses	are	included	with
059	68	02	20	1203	TSN	STO	001	Losses	are	included	with
060	68	02	20	1855	TSN	STO	002	Losses	are	included	with
061	68	02	21	1202	TSN	STO	001	Losses	are	included	with
062	68	02	21	1634	TSN	STO	003	Losses	are	included	with
065	68	02	24	0400	TSN	STO	020	Losses	are	included	with
068	68	02	27	0128	TSN	STO	003	Losses	are	included	with
069	68	02	27	0525	TSN	STO	004	Losses	are	included	with
071	68	02	28	0110	TSN	STO	002	Losses	are	included	with
073	68	03	01	0503	TSN	STO	016	Losses	are	included	with
084	68	03	21	0117	TSN	STO	010	000	007	000	002
098	68	05	06	0616	TSN	STO	010	000	000	000	000
099	68	05	07	0343	TSN	STO	011	000	001	000	000
101	68	05	08	0300	TSN	STO	014	000	000	000	000
105	68	05	10	0325	TSN	STO	007	000	000	000	000
113	68	06	12	0337	TSN	STO	013	002	008	001	002
114	68	06	14	0340	TSN	STO	004	000	002	001	002
195	69	05	12	2315	TSN	STO	003	000	000	000	000
222	69	06	29	2210	TSN	STO	003	000	000	000	000

Column 1- Attack Number

Column 2- Year

Column 3- Month

Column 4- Date

Column 5- Hour

Column 6- Base

Column 7- Type of Attack

STO - Stand Off Attack

SAP - Sapper Attack

S&S - Stand Off and Sapper Attack

MBN - Multi-Battalion

SAB - Sabotage

AWP - Automatic Weapons

NR - Not Reported

Column 8 - Standoff Rounds Impacting on Base

This data is limited to enemy losses incurred inside air base perimeter.



VETERANS OF TAN SON NHUT  
377TH SECURITY POLICE SQ  
**TET OFFENSIVE JAN 31, 1968**  
AWARDED   
PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON

SPECIAL ORDER  
GB- 743

14 October 1969

1. By direction of the President, is  
awarded the Legion of Merit for exceptionally meritorious conduct in  
the performance of outstanding service from 17 Jul 67 to 1 Jul 69.
2. By direction of the President, each of the following units is awarded  
the Presidential Unit Citation for extraordinary gallantry in connection  
with military operations during the period indicated:

*Bombardment Sq, Tactical*  
~~8th Tactical Bombardment Sq (6 Jun 67 to 18 Jan 68) (PACAF)~~  
~~13th Tactical Bombardment Sq (6 Jun 67 to 18 Jan 68) (PACAF)~~  
377th Security Police Sq (31 Jan 68 to 2 Feb 68) (PACAF)

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE



JOHN F. RASH, Colonel, USAF  
Director of Administration

JOHN D. RYAN, General, USAF  
Chief of Staff

DISTRIBUTION  
GO

- GB-743

**VETERANS OF TAN SON NHUT  
377TH SECURITY POLICE SQ  
AIR FORCE OUTSTANDING  
UNIT AWARD W/ COMBAT VALOR**

**4 - 5 DEC 1966**

**1 APR 1969 - 31 MAR 71**

**17 JAN 1972 - 28 MAR 1973**



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON

SPECIAL ORDER  
GB-862

4 December 1973

1. The 377th Air Base Wing (PACAF) is awarded the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (with Combat V Device) for exceptionally meritorious service in support of military operations from 17 January 1972 to 28 March 1973. The following units share in the award for the same period unless otherwise indicated:

377th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Sq, 17 Jan 72 -  
1 Oct 72  
377th Organizational Maintenance Sq, 1 Oct 72 - 28 Mar 73  
377th Field Maintenance Sq, 1 Oct 72 - 28 Mar 73  
377th Civil Engineering Sq, 17 Jan 72 - 2 Aug 72  
377th Security Police Sq  
377th Services Sq, 17 Jan 72 - 2 Aug 72  
377th Supply Sq  
377th Transportation Sq  
377th USAF Hospital  
8th Special Ops Sq, 8 Jul 72 - 1 Oct 72  
9th Special Ops Sq, 17 Jan 72 - 29 Feb 72  
21st Tactical Air Support Sq, 15 Mar 72 - 21 Feb 73  
310th Tactical Airlift Sq, 27 Jan 72 - 15 Nov 72  
360th Tactical Electronic Warfare Sq, 1 Feb 72 - 24 Nov 72  
21st Aeromedical Staging Flight  
6251st USAF Clinic

2. The 6251st Air Base Squadron is awarded the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (with Combat V Device) for exceptionally meritorious achievement in support of military operations from 1 April 1972 to 18 September 1972.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE



GEORGE S. BROWN, General, USAF  
Chief of Staff

JACK R. BENSON, Colonel, USAF  
Director of Administration

DISTRIBUTION  
GO

GB-862

**Awards and Decorations**

15 JUNE 1971

	A	B	C
ORGANIZATION	CAMPAIGN PARTICIPATION CREDITS	AIR FORCE UNIT AWARDS (Award, Period of Service & Authority)	OTHER UNIT AWARDS (Awards, Period & Auth), Special HONORS AND ENTITLEMENTS
377th Air Police Sq -----	58,59,60-----	AFOUA w/V, 4&5Dec66. DAFSO GB-116/67.	H-58 Campaign (8Apr66-28 Jun66)PACAFSO G-156/67; H-60 Campaign (9Mar67-14 May67)PACAFSO G-308/68.
377th Armt&Elet Maint Sq -----	58-----	AFOUA w/V, 8Apr66-25Nov66, DAFSO GB-455/67.	H-58 Campaign (8Apr66-28 Jun66)PACAFSO G-156/67.
377th Bomb Gp, Hq-----	6-----		H-6 Campaign (15Oct42-24 Aug43).
377th Civil Engr Sq -----	59,60,61-----	AFOUA w/V, 8Apr66-31May67, DAFSO GB-455/67; AFOUA w/V, 31Jan68-31Mar68, DAFSO GB-133/69.	
377th Cmbt Spt Gp, Hq -----	58,59,60,61-----	AFOUA w/V, 8Apr66-31May67, DAFSO GB-455/67. AFOUA w/V, 31Jan68-31Mar68, DAFSO GB-133/69.	H-58 Campaign (8Apr66-28 Jun66)PACAFSO G-156/67. amended by PACAFSO G-16 /68.
377th Field Maint Sq -----	58-----	AFOUA w/V, 8Apr66-25Nov66, DAFSO GB-455/67.	H-58 Campaign (8Apr66-28 Jun66)PACAFSO G-156/67.
377th Fighter Sq -----	8,12,28,30,35-----	DUC, 25Aug44, WDGO 31/45; DUC, 16Mar45, WDGO 56/45.	
377th Munitions Maint Sq-----	58-----	AFOUA w/V, 8Apr66-30Nov66, DAFSO GB-455/67.	H-58 Campaign (8Apr66-28 Jun66)PACAFSO G-156/67.

377th Orgl Maint Sq -----	58-----	AFOUA w/V, 8Apr66-25Sep66, DAFSO GB-455/67.	H-58 Campaign (8Apr66-28 Jun66)PACAFSO G-156/67.
377th Security Police Sq -----	60,61-----	AFOUA w/V, 8Apr66-31May67, DAFSO GB-455/67; *PUC, 31Jan68-2Feb68, DAFSO GB-743/69.	H-60 Campaign (15May67-31 Mar68)PACAFSO G-308/68.
377th Services Sq-----	58,59,60,61-----	AFOUA w/V, 8Apr66-31May67, DAFSO GB-455/67; AFOUA w/V, 31Jan68-31Mar68, DAFSO GB-133/69.	H-58 Campaign (8Apr66-28 Jun66)PACAFSO G-156/67.
377th Supply Sq -----	58,59,60,61-----	AFOUA w/V, 8Apr66-31May67, DAFSO GB-455/67; AFOUA w/V, 31Jan68-31Mar68, DAFSO GB-133/69.	H-58 Campaign (8Apr66-28 Jun66)PACAFSO G-156/67.
377th Transportation Sq -----	58,59,60,61-----	AFOUA w/V, 8Apr66-31May67, DAFSO GB-455/67; AFOUA w/V, 31Jan68-31Mar68, DAFSO GB-133/69.	H-58 Campaign (8Apr66-28 Jun66)PACAFSO G-156/67.
377th USAF Dispensary -----	58,59,60,61-----	AFOUA w/V, 8Apr66-31May67, DAFSO GB-455/67; AFOUA w/V, 31Jan68-31Mar68, DAFSO GB-133/69.	H-58 Campaign (8Apr66-28 Jun66)PACAFSO G-176/67.

**353**

## Awards and Decorations

AFP 900-2      Volume II      23 November 1981

### 377TH AIR BASE WING

(71) (72)

AFOUAW/V, 17 JAN 72 - 28 MAR 73, DAFSO GB-862/73

RVN GC W/P, 17 JAN 72 - 28 JAN 73, DAFSO GB-332/75

### 377TH AIR BASE WING, DET 1

RVN GC W/P, 17 JAN 72 - 28 JAN 73, DAFSO GB-619/77

### 377TH AIR POLICE SQUADRON

RVN GC W/P, 8 APR 66 - 14 MAY 67, DAFSO GB-332/75

### 377TH ARMAMENT / ELECTRONICS MAINT SQUADRON

RVN GC W/P, 8 APR 66 - 25 NOV 66, DAFSO GB-332/75

### 377TH CIVIL ENGINEERING SQUADRON

(63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71)

AFOUA W/V, 1 APR 69 - 31 MAR 71, DAFSO GB-703/71

AFOUA W/V, 17 JAN 72 - 2 AUG 72, DAFSO GB-862/73

RVN GC W/P, 8 APR 66 - 14 MAY 67, DAFSO GB-332/75

### 377TH COMBAT SUPPORT GROUP

(63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71)

AFOUA W/V, 1 APR 69 - 31 MAR 71, DAFSO GB-703/71

RVN GC W/P, 6 APR 66 - 16 JAN 72, DAFSO GB-332/75

### 377TH CONSOLIDATED AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE SQ

(68, 69, 70, 71)

AFOUA W/V, 17 JAN 72 - 1 OCT 72, DAFSO GB-862/73

RVN GC W/P, 1 JUL 70 - 1 OCT 72, DAFSO GB-332/75

### 377TH FIELD MAINTENANCE SQUADRON

AFOUA W/V, 1 OCT 72 - 28 MAR 73, DAFSO GB-862/73

RVN GC W/P, 8 APR 66 - 14 MAY 67, DAFSO GB-332/75

### 377TH MUNITIONS MAINTENANCE SQUADRON

RVN GC W/P, 8 APR 66 - 25 NOV 66, DAFSO GB-332/75

### 377TH ORGANIZATIONAL MAINTENANCE SQUADRON

(68, 69, 70, 71)

AFOUA W/V, 1 OCT 72 - 28 MAR 73, DAFSO GB-862/73

RVN GC W/P, 8 APR 66 - 14 MAY 67, DAFSO GB-332/75

### 377TH SECURITY POLICE SQUADRON

(63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71)

AFOUA W/V, 1 APR 69 - 31 MAR 71, DAFSO GB-703/71

AFOUAW/V, 17 JAN 72 - 28 MAR 73, DAFSO GB-862/73

RVN GC W/P, 15 MAY 67 - 28 JAN 73, DAFSO GB-332/75

### 377TH SERVICES SQUADRON

(63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71)

AFOUA W/V, 1 APR 69 - 31 MAR 71, DAFSO GB-703/71

AFOUA W/V, 17 JAN 72 - 2 AUG 72, DAFSO GB-862/73

RVN GC W/P, 8 APR 66 - 14 MAY 67, DAFSO GB-332/75

### 377TH SUPPLY SQUADRON

(63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71)

AFOUA W/V, 1 APR 69 - 31 MAR 71, DAFSO GB-703/71

AFOUAW/V, 17 JAN 72 - 28 MAR 73, DAFSO GB-862/73

RVN GC W/P, 8 APR 66 - 14 MAY 67, DAFSO GB-332/75

### 377TH TRANSPORTATION SQUADRON

(63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71)

AFOUA W/V, 1 APR 69 - 31 MAR 71, DAFSO GB-703/71

AFOUAW/V, 17 JAN 72 - 28 MAR 73, DAFSO GB-862/73

RVN GC W/P, 8 APR 66 - 14 MAY 67, DAFSO GB-332/75

### 377TH USAF DISPENSARY

(63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71)

AFOUA W/V, 1 APR 69 - 31 MAR 71, DAFSO GB-703/71

RVN GC W/P, 8 APR 66 - 31 AUG 72, DAFSO GB-332/75

**73**

Below is a sample letter that I sent to the USAF to get my DD-214 updated to a DD-215.

**United States Air Force**

**May 15, 2014**

**Board for Correction of Air Force Records  
SAF/MRBR  
550-C Street West, Suite 40  
Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4742**

**John Doe  
555 Main Street  
Anywhere, USA (your zip code)**

**Email: john.doe@gmail.net**

**Phone: 1-555-555-5555**

**RE: Awards and Decorations earned but not awarded at my time of separation**

- 1. 1966 Sep 22 - Enlisted in the USAF**
- 2. 1967 Oct - Arrived Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Saigon, Vietnam. Assigned: 377th Security Police Squadron**
- 3. 1969 Jul 30 - Departed Vietnam.**
- 4. 1970 Sep 21 - ETS'd USAF Active Duty, Vance AFB, Oklahoma**

**When I left Vietnam and then ETS'd from the USAF, I had not been made aware of some awards I had earned while assigned to the 377th Security Police Squadron, Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Saigon, Vietnam.**

**Now I am aware of three awards, I believe that I am authorized to wear.**

- 1. Presidential Unit Citation: Tet Offensive, Jan 31, 1968 - Feb 2, 1968**
- 2. Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, with Combat Valor, Apr 01, 1969 - Mar 31, 1971**
- 3. Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm, May 15, 1967 - Jan 28, 1973**

**John Doe**

**Supporting Documentation:**

- 1. USAF Form DD-214**
- 2. AFP 900-2, Awards and Decorations, dated 15 Jun 1971, AFP 900-2, dated 23 Nov 1981**
- 3. 377th Security Police Squadron, "Lineage and Honors"**