

COMMANDER COASTAL DIVISION 12
FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 96601



THE SWIFT FAMILY LINE

1 October 1968

Dear Families and Friends:

Through this letter, called the "Swift Family Line" I hope to give you a good idea of the vital role your man on the Swift Boats has in Vietnam.

The Swifts, (or PCF, for Patrol Craft Fast) have the job of patrolling the coast of South Vietnam to stop infiltration of men and supplies to the insurgent Viet Cong. This involves stopping, boarding and searching all types of waterborne traffic such as junks, sampans, and trawlers. In addition, the Swift provides gunfire support to Army and Marine units on the beach, is available for search and rescue, plus many other tasks requiring a fast response with a dedicated crew.

Each boat has a Lieutenant or Lieutenant (junior grade) as Officer in Charge. The five crew members make up the crew.

Though your man on the Swifts may have initially been trained in a specialty, such as Boatswain's Mate, Gunner's Mate, Quartermaster, Engineman and Radarman, each man must be thoroughly familiar with all duties and stations on the boat, similar to the requirements of a submarine crew.

The Swift is well-armed and is a potent weapon in this conflict. The performance of your man on the Swift, as those who have been there before him has achieved an enviable record for Market Time Operations. (Market Time is the name given to the offshore surveillance activities in Vietnam).

The long hours each man spends on patrol and his attention to duty has resulted in this division being recognized as leading in mission performance, in all of Market Time.

The duty is arduous, and each of you can be justifiably proud of the job they are doing. I certainly am.

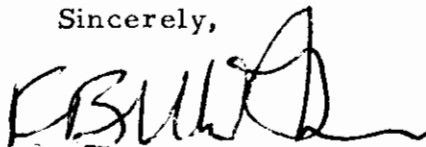
We have just completed moving the ashore berthing facilities from the APL-5 (that is a floating barracks vessel) to brand new barracks on the beach near the Swift Piers. This should allow more space for the man to stretch out after the tough patrols. Recreation facilities at the Navy Station nearby (called Camp Tien Sha) include a gymnasium, hobby shop, theatre and EM clubs. There is no other liberty authorized in the DaNang area.

I am sure you are aware of the importance of your letters to your man on the Swift. Good news from home has always been and will continue to be one of the most important aspects of a serviceman's morale overseas.

Should any serious problems arise at home which require the immediate notification of your Navyman, the most direct means of communication is through the American Red Cross.

In closing I would like to say it is a great pleasure and privilege to serve with the dedicated man in Swift Boats. Your continued support through letters and news from home will help ensure that the job over here gets done.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. B. MCGHEE', with a stylized flourish at the end.

K. B. MCGHEE

Lieutenant Commander, U. S. Navy
Commander Coastal Division TWELVE