



# 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division



## The Old Reliable

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Republic of Vietnam

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### Now part of MRF

### Bearcats fighting in 4<sup>th</sup> war

The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry, which joined the 9<sup>th</sup> Division in April, has seen action in every major war fought by the U.S. in this century.

Originally organized in 1917, the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment had the mission of helping with the construction of the Siberian Railroad in Russia. Soldiers of the regiment plodded through the bitter winter to complete the span. To commemorate this operation, the unit adopted the Polar Bear as the symbol for its unit crest.

Dubbed the Bearcats, the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion was flown to Vietnam from Ft. Lewis, Wash., where it trained since reactivation on Nov. 1, 1967.

Most of the battalion's preparation for Vietnam took place in winter weather, causing such unlikely scenes as infantrymen searching a mock-up Vietnamese village in the snow.

In May, 1968, the unit fought its first major battle against VC and NVA forces which tried to invade Saigon. Recently, the 6/31<sup>st</sup> went afloat with the Mobile Riverine Force.

During World War II, the 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry fought against the Japanese in the South Pacific and Asian Theater.

The unit was again summoned to action at the outbreak of the Korean War to curb the communist threat breaching the 28<sup>th</sup> parallel. In 1951, the regimental colors were retired.

The regiment had been referred to as the "American Foreign Legion." Before 1963, it had never been stationed in the continental United States.