



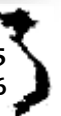
September-October 2017, Issue 75
Contact: rto173@att.net

See all issues to date at 503rd Heritage Battalion website:
http://corregidor.org/VN2-503/newsletter/issue_index.htm

~ 82nd Airborne Division ~
“America’s Guard of Honor”



See report on Pages 60-66.





We Dedicate this Issue of Our Newsletter in Memory
and Honor of the Men of the 173d Airborne Brigade & Attached
Units We Lost 50 Years Ago in the Months of September & October 1967



*“There’s only one proper way for a professional soldier to die.
That’s from the last bullet, of the last battle, of the last war.”*

General George S. Patton

Eduard Adolph Auyer, 29
SSG, E/17th Cav, 9/19/67

“Eduard will be honored at the Ohio Vietnam Veterans’ Memorial Park in Akron, Ohio. You Are Not Forgotten.”

Dan Dela Rosa
(Posted 9/5/06)



John Robert Bamvakais, Jr., 20
SGT, HHC/4/503, 9/28/67

“My Loving Brother. John, Oh how I miss you, and how my world changed when you sacrificed your life for our freedom. I am so proud of you. I miss you, you are now in the company of Mom and Dad. We as a family struggle with our lives we need to remember the days when we were all whole. They were the best days. You take care of Mom and Dad and someday we will all be together again. Your loving sister, Dodie.” **Viola Bamvakais**



William John Brett
PTE, 2RAR, 9/30/67



John Wayne Caver, 19
SGT, E/17th Cav, 10/31/67

“I was told that you were a great man. A man to be proud of. Some of the family talk about you with great fondness. I, unfortunately, never knew you, but your legacy lives on. Thank you, and you will never be forgotten. We love you.”

Mecca Caver




Rodney Barrette Cline, 20
PFC, C/4/503, 10/21/67

“Before VietNam Rodney taught me that by just being your natural witty charming self others will soon see that near you, is the very best place to be. I fell in love with my funny friend and too soon to part company when his draft number came up. Our youthful fantasies blossomed with he as my very own ‘soldier’ and me the ‘girl he left behind’. A home visit brought new realities for both and friendship prevailed to Nam.

Losing Rodney in Vietnam brought grief in an overwhelming feeling of helplessness and hopelessness and left behind a painful place in my heart that has not yet healed.

Looking back our friendship has lasted over 33 years through my colorful life's highs and lows, and that's a good thing. I am and always will be, thankful every day for the love, nurturing and support I've been blessed to share with his parents, Yvonne and John Cline. Rodney's memory and honor are safely entrusted to we so few that are left to carry on.” **Monica Marquis**

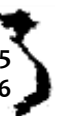


 **Larry Franklin Coggins, 22**
CPL, B/1/50th, 10/30/67
(Virtual Wall states B/1/503)

“Uncle Ball. You never knew me but Mom has told me all her memories of you. You have her eyes. I can't wait to show her this beautiful memoir of you, her brother. Mike has told stories of Nam for as long as I can remember and even as a child, I know it was hell. Mom tells me that you loved the Army and wanted to make a career of serving. I wish I could have known you. Thank you for your service.” **Amy Hill**



(continued...)

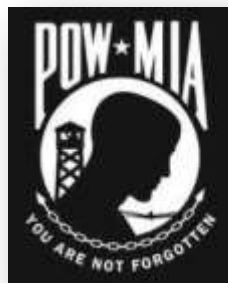




Walter Wayne Cunningham, 23
SGT, E/17th Cav, 10/31/67

"Thank you Uncle Walt for serving our country and sacrificing your life for it. Remembering you this Memorial Day!" **Unsigned**

[See Walter's Silver Star citation on Page 20]



Jimmy McDonald Malone, 21
SSG, C/1/503, 10/28/67

"Final Mission of PVT Jimmy M. Malone. PVT Jimmy M. Malone was the radio operator for Charlie Company, which was operating at the time of his tour in Bien Hoa Province, Republic of Vietnam. On May 4, 1966, as 4-5 platoons were encamped at a temporary position, Malone was instructed to go to the weapons platoon position to pick up his platoon's mail, and did not show up at 1830 hours for a standard briefing that all personnel were required to attend. A search was initiated for Malone, but no trace of him was found. The Battalion Commander ordered the search to include helicopters equipped with loud speaker systems to broadcast instructions in case he could hear. The search continued for the remainder of the day and for the next. Another platoon was called in to assist, but no trace of Malone was ever found." From pownetwork.org

"Sgt. Malone went to fetch mail at an adjoining encampment and turned up missing slightly thereafter. A search was started which found his boot prints accompanied by Viet Cong type shower shoe prints on the trail. The prints continued on into a fortified bunker complex. Enemy sniper fire held down the search party until sundown and by morning helicopters were sent in to assist to no effect. Sgt Malone is 59 years old now."
Unsigned



Frank Bellew Dunford, III, 19
SSG, C/4/503, 10/22/67

(Virtual Wall states C/1/503)
"Frank was a good person, a good soldier and a great friend. There has always been a hole in the heart of anyone who knew Frank. When I was an FNG Frank extended his friendship, support, skill and knowledge to teach me how to function and survive. He had a great personality and a smile that I can still see 40 years after his death. If anyone knows where Frank is buried please contact me. From a friend," **Lauren C. Dates** (Posted March 9, 2007)



Note: Frank is buried at Grand View Cemetery, Detroit, MI.

Robert Lee Fleck, 19
CPL, B/4/503, 10/19/67

"Your family will always remember & love you!"



Willie Franklin, 29
SSG, HHC/2/503, 10/14/67

"Your service and ultimate sacrifice will always be remembered by those who view this virtual WALL, and by those who served in Vietnam. May God bless you and give you peace. Forever in our hearts and memories....from your Nam-brothers-in-arms."

Nelson Grite

John William Freeman
T/CPL, DET 1 Div Int Unit

Nathaniel Harris, 20
SP4, C/2/503, 10/18/67

"Nate, You always talked about the girl back home and how you were going to get married, usually while we were sitting around filling sand bags or clearing jungle on Vung Ro Mountain. We were just getting to know each other and then you were gone... We had a nice service for you and I will never forget you! God Bless and I'm sure we will meet again." **John Schmidt**

Maurice Manton, 39
CPL, RNZIR, 9/2/67



(continued....)



Terry Lee Martin, 19
SP4, A/1/503, 10/3/67

"This photo is Terry's 1964 sophomore class picture at Minneapolis South High School. The picture was provided by Herb Reckinger Jr. of Cottage Grove, Minnesota with help from the staff at the Minneapolis Public Library. Terry, it is with great humility, pride and honor that Herb and I post this remembrance for you and upload your photo so that your memory and the sacrifice you made for your country will never be forgotten and to ensure your photo will be displayed on your birthday each and every year when the Education Center is completed. You are not forgotten and remain in the hearts of many after all these years. Thank you Terry for being who you were and for all you did. We live in freedom to this day thanks to heroes like you that answered the call to duty. You were one of the brave that answered the call. You honored us by your service and sacrifice. We now honor you each time we stand and sing the words 'THE LAND OF THE FREE AND THE HOME OF THE BRAVE'. Rest in Peace and Honor Terry."

Bob Ahles & Herb Reckinger, Jr.



David Eugene Person, 34
MAJ, E/17th Cav, 9/22/67

"David is buried at Ft Benning Post Cem. The cemetery says his unit was Trp E, 17 Cav, 173 Abn Bde."

Robert Sage



Stanley Edwin Radomi
PTE, 2RAR, 9/28/67

Lavern Leo Salzman, 21
SGT, D/2/503, 10/25/67

(Virtual Wall states C/2/503)

"Lavern is buried at Bellvue Cemetery, Ontario, CA. PH" **Robert Sage**



Robert Stanley Smith
WO2, 2RAR, 10/30/67

John Warren Twomey
SGT, 2RAR, 9/20/67


Leslie James Weston
PTE, 2RAR, 9/30/67

Sources:

173d Abn Bde Society List of KIA
Australian & New Zealand Lists of KIA websites
The Virtual Wall website
The Wall of Faces website

"The soldier above all others prays for peace, for it is the soldier who must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war."

– Douglas MacArthur

 **Elec McCoy, 20**
SGT, B/2/503, 10/25/67

"Elec is buried at Clark Cemetery in Oswego, SC. BSM PH"

Peter Edward McDuff
CPL, 2RAR, 9/28/67

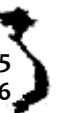
Daniel R. Meador, 20
SP4, HHC/4/503, 10/3/67

"You were such a sweet guy and lived up the street from me. I remember the day your mother got the news that you had been killed. I have never forgotten that day and I will never forget you and your sacrifice for our country. I know I will see you again someday. Your friend,"
Carla Ann Green Fosbre



Dennis Edwin Nelson
PTE, 2RAR, 9/28/67

Geoffrey O'Shea
PTE, 1 SAS SQN, 10/1/67



Sky Soldiers Helping Sky Soldiers

**173d Airborne Brigade
Association**
call for donations for the
**173d Airborne Brigade Association
Foundation**
*Hurricane Harvey Sky
Soldier Support Fund*

This is a call for all Sky Soldiers, their families and fellow citizens for support.

The fund has been established to assist Sky Soldiers, their families and Sky Soldier Gold Star families who have experienced losses from Hurricane Harvey and need assistance.

If you are one of the Hurricane Harvey victims, our hearts and prayers go out to you,

This drive is to generate funds to extend direct support to those of you in need.

Application for support forms available as a PDF file you may download at:

<https://theherdfoundation.com/Applications-for-Hurricane-Harvey-Sky-Soldier-Support-Fund>

Your donation is tax deductible, The 173d Airborne Brigade Association Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization. Information on donations to the Hurricane Harvey Sky Soldier Support Fund and its distributions will be provided through weekly reports posted on the 173d Airborne Brigade Association and the 173d Airborne Brigade Association Foundation website at:

<https://theherdfoundation.com/Donations-Received-&-Distributed-Report>

Guidelines/procedures to manage the Hurricane Harvey Sky Soldier Support Fund will be posted on the same website:

<https://theherdfoundation.com/Guidelines-for-Hurricane-Harvey-Sky-Soldier-Support-Fund>

Donations can be made by credit card or mailing a check

*Questions? - Please write to
vicepresident@theherdfoundation.com*

To donate by credit card, please go to:

<https://theherdfoundation.com/Hurricane-Harvey-Sky-Soldier-Support-Fund>

To donate by check:

Please make your check payable to the "**173d Abn Bde Association Foundation**", in the memo area write HHSkySoldierSF or "Hurricane Harvey Sky Soldier Support Fund"

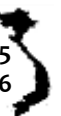
and mail it to this address

**HH Sky Soldier SF
C/O Jerry L Cooper CPA
4004 Sheffield Avenue
Muskogee, OK 74403-8557**



Coast Guard Air Station Houston responds to search and rescue requests after Hurricane Harvey in Houston, Texas, Aug. 27, 2017. The Coast Guard is working closely with all local and state emergency operation centers and has established incident command posts to manage Coast Guard storm operations.

(Petty Officer 3rd Class Johanna Strickland/US Coast Guard)





DAV Applauds Senate Approval of Bipartisan Legislation to Extend Choice Funding and Expand Access to VA Health Care

Posted on August 2, 2017

Statement of Garry J. Augustine, DAV Washington Executive Director

On behalf of DAV’s nearly 1.3 million members and all injured and ill veterans who rely on VA for their health care, we are grateful to Senate Chairman Johnny Isakson (R-GA) and Senator Jon Tester (D-MT), as well as House Chairman Phil Roe (R-TN) and Congressman Tim Walz (D-MN) for working together in a bipartisan, bicameral manner to pass legislation (S. 114, as amended) that will not only continue the Choice program uninterrupted, but also expand veterans’ access care by making critically-needed investments in the VA health care system.

We are particularly appreciative that in crafting the final agreement on this important legislation they worked closely with DAV and other major veterans service organizations (VSOs), who are accredited by VA to represent the interests of America’s 21 million veterans.

Thanks to their willingness to engage with us, the legislation going to the President will appropriate \$2.1 billion - **without having to meet offset requirements** - to continue funding the current Choice program for approximately another six months. Equally important, this final compromise version of the legislation will authorize 28 urgently-needed medical facility leases to expand veterans’ access to health care, as well as provide VA with new tools and authorities to recruit, hire and retain high-quality medical professionals.

We look forward to continuing our work with the House and Senate Committees on Veterans’ Affairs to reform and modernize the VA health care system so that all veterans have timely access to high-quality, veteran-focused health care, regardless of where they live. *(Emphasis added)*

Source:

www.dav.org/learn-more/news/2017/dav-applauds-senate-approval-bipartisan-legislation-extend-choice-funding-expand-access-va-health-care/

Note: We interpret “**without having to meet offset requirements**” as meaning the legislation no longer calls for reductions to VA disability payments to veterans as was originally proposed in the Trump Administration Budget. We will keep a close eye on any further developments and report findings in our newsletter. Ed



“To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan.”

“Abraham Lincoln made that pledge to America's Civil War veterans during his Second Inaugural Address, in 1865. A century and a half later, the Department of Veterans Affairs is still making good on President Lincoln's promise.” VA



Report about a 2/503 trooper worth repeating, thanks to a Cowboy....

The Terry L Wilson Battle Command Training Center: What's in a name?

"Dedicated to Terry L. Wilson, SP4, of Fairbanks, Alaska, and Recipient of the Purple Heart and Parachutist Badge with Assault Star."



On a hot duty LZ in Vietnam, I envision Terry Wilson walking toward me, the heat shimmering, like he's floating on a mirror. A telephoto effect changes and distorts my perspective and the almost 40 year-long focal length places me very far from all parts of the scene. M-16 in one hand, helmet in the other, Terry's saddled up, he lifts the 16, then his helmet, and becomes a giant "V" for Valor!

Me, I'm in the door of HORSETHIEF Recovery Helicopter for the 335th Assault Helicopter company about to insert the 173rd Airborne Brigade, and Terry, into Vietnam's Iron Triangle.

Terry and I were pals in high school; he was straight forward and tough. When Cindy and I married in 1965, Terry gave us a toaster. I enlisted 10 days later, and Terry became a good bush pilot.

Two years later after 15 months in Vietnam, Cindy's letters said Terry was drafted and volunteered for Airborne and Vietnam. With 6 months left on my second tour Cindy said she heard Terry was in country, but where?

Then happenstance! Among thousands of names on the wall of a giant outhouse at HQ I saw: "Terry L. Wilson, Chena Hot Springs, Alaska – 'A' 2/503, 173rd." Terry's unit was only about a mile away.

I tried finding Terry, but Co. "A" was always in the thick of it; so February 22, 1967 as the 173d ABN BDE readied for the only Combat Parachute Assault of the War – I'd be there and I'd find him! Then fate, while staging to fly cover at Quan Loi, HORSETHIEF crashed. I wasn't sure I'd live, let alone find Terry, what irony.

After 10 days later with new HORSETHIEF and patched-up for action, our first recovery was to a firebase in the Iron Triangle. As we came in, we took plenty fire from just outside the wire. This was a bad place!

We fixed the Huey and as I ran to Co. "A's" HQ, I saw the 105's aimed horizontal, more bad news! Word was they were expecting an assault. I asked about Terry and was told; "Co. A humped out before dawn." We were only about 1000 meters apart. More irony!

It was March 3, 1967; Terry's squad discovered a major VC command bunker complex. Terry, at the front like always, said they called smoke to mark the target but the firebase said, "No smoke rounds, only Willy Peter (White Phosphorus)." They called it anyway.

Rick O'Kelly, another trooper from Co. "A", told me recently, like Terry had years before; "It was too late."

Terry remembered being triaged, told he would not make it out alive and his litter placed at the end of the line. But Terry was tough and refused to die in that place, on that day, and unaided, he got up and got on the last chopper out – but not on my helicopter.

We connected years later, shared a long handshake and a deep look into each other's eyes; we didn't need words.

Terry never complained; never expressed regret; he had done his duty! Terry married a wonderful woman, had beautiful kids, volunteered with Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts and built hockey rinks; was a hockey dad when others couldn't be, and...died early of his wounds, I think, at forty one.

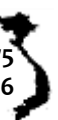
Terry Lee Wilson was a man from Fairbanks who took up an uninvited challenge to be a soldier and become an excellent one. A man who willingly went in harm's way for his country and suffered dire consequences. A man who did not languish with a bitter spirit, but hoisted his burden quietly. And then lifted his family, friends and community with his example of courage.

So, that's part of **What's in the Name** of the new Terry L. Wilson Battle Command Training Center on our Ft. Wainwright.

Great thanks to Lt. Gen. Brown, former CG and Major General James Harai CG, USARAK; David Arlie Nethken, O&P Mgr WBCTC (RLTW); Chick Wallace, Spec. Asst. Sec/ARMY; our national and interior delegations and especially the Terry L. Wilson Family – Job well done! Airborne – All the Way!

Joseph N. Field, III, is on the Alaska Veterans Advisory Council and nominated Terry Wilson's name for the new Battle Command Training Center on Ft. Wainwright.

[Story originally appeared in *Sky Soldier Newsletter*, Winter 2004/05, Vol. XIX, No. 4]



1ST ANNUAL FLORIDA AIRBORNE JAMBOREE

September 22nd – 23rd, 2017



Fellow Airborne Vets:

I would like to personally invite you to join with your South Florida All Airborne Chapter brothers and sisters, and all the other airborne veterans in our first annual Airborne Jamboree to be held in Sebring, FL.

Our Chapter is coordinating this year's events. Our brother Bill Eades has done ALL the work on this and has found a good Hotel at a reasonable price, restaurants to give us discounts and has arranged for the dinner on Saturday night at the local Elks Lodge for an unbelievable low price per person.

The host hotel will be the Sebring Quality Inn and Suites at a cost of \$65.39 per night including tax and breakfast. For lunch on Saturday, if you desire, you can go to Homer's Restaurant for a price of \$9.50 per person not including gratuity.

Dinner on Saturday night will as shown on Registration Form.

We will also have a hospitality room opened after the Opening Ceremony on Friday and will remain open till the Drop Zone is clear. It will be a BYOB room hoping that everyone will share.

I'm attaching a registration form and sure hope to get some checks and forms coming in from the members of the SFAAC. I have been receiving checks from the Special Forces. So, let's not let the SF outshine us. Please decide to attend and send in your registration forms soon.

AIRBORNE!

Thank you

Bob Buffington
82nd Airborne

For Registration Form Please Contact:

Bob Buffington
Phn: 954-593-5164
Eml: skyhawk6364@aol.com

Registration must be received by 12 September 2017

VA to Revise State Veteran Home Construction Regulations



*New Regulations Will Make it Easier for Rural
Communities to Compete for Grants for their Projects*

WASHINGTON –Today, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin announced that VA plans to propose changes to regulations for its State Veterans Home Construction Grant Program to make it easier for States to receive VA funding to construct Veterans homes in rural areas.

State Veterans Homes provide Veterans with nursing home, domiciliary or adult day health care and are owned, operated and managed by State governments. Currently, the construction grant regulations focus on Veteran demographics as well as nursing home and domiciliary bed need within a State, when determining priority group placement based on projected demand for assistance. Unfortunately, this makes it difficult for some rural areas to compete for VA State Home Construction Grants.

In highly rural areas, there could be a 500-mile distance from one State Veterans Home to the next, which gives family members limited options when searching for a conveniently located facility for a Veteran family member.

By incorporating a consideration for the need of Veterans in rural areas into the ranking priorities for grant applications in the regulations, rural States may find it easier to compete for the limited VA construction grant funding that is available.

"We want to remove the red tape," said Secretary Shulkin. "Veterans in rural areas need to be able to get nursing home care when it's needed as close as possible to their homes, families and friends. Changes in VA regulations can save families from having to travel long distances to visit a loved one in a facility far from home."

VA anticipates that the revision of these regulations will be completed by the end of this calendar year (2017). The updated regulations will be available for public comment. VA is working to ensure that the updated regulations go into effect as soon as possible.

For more information about State Veterans Homes, visit https://www.va.gov/GERIATRICS/Guide/LongTermCare/State_Veterans_Homes.asp



3,000 THIEVES

“Veterans of the 503rd, 462nd and 161st who served during WWII, began holding informal independent get-togethers almost immediately after WWII. On a February weekend in 1957, some seventy Veterans of the 503rd Parachute Regimental Combat Team met in Washington, DC, with the intention of establishing an Association for those Veterans who served in the unit during WWII. During this first reunion, they drew up a constitution that is the foundation of our Association today. The Association has held a National Reunion every year since. In 2016, the Association celebrated its’ 60th reunion anniversary.”



“To herald the return of the 503rd troopers to the Mindoro base camp (from Corregidor), the island base commander took over the base radio station and sternly announced to all the Allied forces that, ‘Colonel Jones and his three thousand thieves had returned’. This remark was, in trooper parlance, complimentary.”

Source: <http://503rdprct.org/Reunions.aspx>

503rd Parachute Regimental Combat Team 2017 Reunion

Wednesday, September 13 – Sunday, September 17
Killeen Hilton Garden Inn
2704 O.W. Curry Drive
Killeen, TX 76354

Reunion Contact:

Nancy Young

10445 Old Telegraph Road, Ashland, VA 23005

804-357-3297

Eml: youngncy@comcast.net

~ Thanks for the 503rd Memories ~

With apologies to Bob Hope, Leo Robin & Ralph Rainger; for you WWII 503 guys and your families – sung (imagining the voice of Bob Hope) to the tune of *Thanks for the Memories*:



***Thanks for the memories,
of tower jumping boys,
chutes instead of toys,
running ‘round the Benning ground
it must have been a joy.
We thank you, so much.***

***And thanks for that ocean trip,
across to distant land,
with Brothers of a Band,
with kits on back and ammo packed,
ready to make a stand.
We thank you, so much.***

***Markham Valley was no picnic,
combat jump one for you,
but you just hoped to kick nips,
and you did just that,
and thanks to you.***

***And thanks for the memories,
of the landing at Ley-te,
better you than me.
The Jap attacks you threw them back,
you brought them to their knees.
We thank you, so much.***

***Your time on Negros was fearful,
you’d had your share of that.
To fallen buddies a tear-ful,
but what the heck,
you went right back.***

***And thanks for the memories,
of low flying in a plane,
at Corregidor ‘neath your Main,
of coming down to that Rock’s ground
and never once complain.***

WE THANK YOU...SO MUCH.

The original song was sung by Bob Hope with words and music by Leo Robin & Ralph Rainger, and arranged by Gordon Jenkins. Originally from: *The Big Broadcast of 1938*. Lyrics here by Lew “Smitty” Smith, HHC/2/503d, 173d Airborne, ‘65/’66 Bless ‘em all!



JUMPING JACK

Maurice Manton, 39
CPL, RNZIR, 9/2/67

I was about 8 or 10 paces behind Morrie when he stepped on the mine. It fucks me up to talk about this and I have nightmares about it fairly frequently, yelling out a warning to him not to move but no sound comes out of my mouth. The dream always ends the same way with a brilliant explosion and me waking up screaming.



His mates called him "Morrie"

The mine was an M26 "Jumping Jack" and when it went up the warhead actually propelled itself out of the ground up to the height of his balls. Believe it or not I think that I actually saw it. It was painted deep bronze green and had yellow markings. Time stood still, there was a brilliant orange flash and I hit the deck. The vegetation was very thick and I was well protected. Not so Morrie, the mine blew the lower half of his body to pieces. His legs were separated from the rest of him and his balls were blown up onto his webbing.

We were all terrified that we were in the middle of a minefield and were pretty shaken up. The rest the section ran up to where I was so that we could pull Morrie back. As unbelievable as it sounds he was still alive and he pulled himself up onto his arse in a sitting position.

"Don't move!" he yelled
"And don't come and get
me ... I've had it!"

Morrie was older than the rest of us and was a junior NCO. He was an excellent soldier and I looked up to him. To see him blown to pieces in front of my very eyes was hell.

Presently an Aussie Engineer who was with us yelled out to Morrie "Don't move cobber, I'm coming to get you, just hang on and don't die!" The Aussie pulled his bayonet and squatted down and started prodding into the jungle floor...The rest of us stayed put and I kept talking to Morrie to try and keep him conscious. I felt

so helpless and there wasn't a fuckin thing that I could do.

On that Op (operation) we had all been issued with morphine jabs which we wore around our necks. As I watched Morrie pulled his ampoule, cleared the needle and jabbed himself directly into his neck. Then he quietly prayed to himself in Maori and as I watched the colour in his face drained and he slowly slumped onto his side ... He bled to death before we could reach him.

I was too young for Borneo but I had made it to the Nam. When this incident occurred I think that I was nineteen. In a dirty war this was as bad as it ever got for me.

Kia Hunga Mate , Ki te Hunga Mate!

Kia Hunga Ora, Ki te Hunga Ora!

JTB

Source: Published in *The Vietnam Scrapbook, The Second ANZAC Adventure*, p 205.

The Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment



The **Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment** is the parent administrative regiment of regular and reserve infantry battalions in the New Zealand Army. It is the only regular infantry regiment of the New Zealand Defence Force.

The regiment was formed on 9 January 1947 as the New Zealand Regiment with a single infantry battalion as part of the newly created infantry corps. By 1 August 1947 the regiment was augmented by the re-organisation of the Jayforce (the New Zealand occupation force in Japan).

In 1967, during the Vietnam War, 1 RNZIR which was stationed in Malaya, contributed Victor Company, a 182-man rifle company to Vietnam which served from May 1967 until November 1967 as part of the 1st Australian Task Force. For the first two weeks the company served with 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment at Nui Dat and then came under 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment for the remainder of the tour.

(continued....)



Despite being under 2 RAR operationally, V Company did maintain some command autonomy for all non-operational administrative matters which were reported to the New Zealand Headquarters in Saigon.

During its six months in Vietnam V Company participated in Operation Paddington (8–16 July 1967), Operation Cairns (25 July – 1 August 1967), Operation Atherton (16 August – 3 September 1967), Operation Ainslie (4–21 September 1967) and Operation Kenmore (29 September – 11 October 1967).

Victor Company was replaced by Whisky One Company in December, also from 1 RNZIR in Malaya. A fresh Victor Company also joined and the two New Zealand companies continued to serve under 2 RAR until the formation of the ANZAC Battalion in 1968.

1 March 1968 saw the formation of the "ANZAC Battalion" which was a merger of A, B and C Companies of 2 RAR with V and W Companies of RNZIR, and renamed 2 RAR/NZ (ANZAC). W and V Companies operated as New Zealand companies, maintaining their identity and designation within the Australian battalion they were part of.

The new ANZAC Battalion's first operation was Operation Pinnaroo (27 February – 15 April 1968) with 3 RAR, followed by Operation Cooktown Orchid (April 1968). In May 1968 Victor 3 replaced Victor 2, 2 RAR was replaced by 4 RAR and the ANZAC Battalion became 4 RAR/NZ (ANZAC).

In November 1968 the first Whisky company was replaced by Whisky 2. In May 1969 4 RAR was replaced by 6 RAR whereupon the ANZAC Battalion became 6RAR/NZ (ANZAC). Two weeks prior to 6 RAR's arrival Victor 3 was replaced by Victor 4 and conducted operations with Whisky 2 until the arrival of the Australians. Whisky 2 was replaced by Whisky 3 in November 1969. During this rotation two New Zealand mortar sections and two Assault Pioneer sections were added.

In May 1970 Victor 4 was replaced by Victor 5. In July 1970, 6 RAR was relieved by 2 RAR again and the battalion was once again 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC). After three tours W3 Company was withdrawn from Vietnam in November 1970 along with 8 RAR. Finally, in May 1971 Victor 5 was replaced by Victor 6 and 2 RAR was replaced by 4 RAR thereby becoming 4 RAR/NZ (ANZAC) again, serving until the withdrawal of the last Australian and New Zealand combat troops in December 1971.

New Zealand infantry participated in many operations in Vietnam thereafter including Operation Duntroon (10–21 January 1968), Operation Coburg (24 January – 1 March 1968), Operation Kosciuszko (15–20 June 1968), Operation Merino (18–25 July 1968), Operation Lyre Bird (1–4 September 1968), Operation

Innamincka (7–12 September 1968), Operation Hawkesbury (12–24 September 1968), Operation Sceptre, an independent operation by W Company (28 September – 6 October 1968), Operation Capitol (12–30 October 1968), Operation Goodwood (December 1968 – February 1969) which included the Battle of Hat Dich, Operation Federal (27 March – 8 April 1969), Operation Overlander (8–17 April 1969), Operation Stafford (17 April – 1 May 1969), Operation Lavarack (31 May – 30 June 1969), Operation Mundingburra (14–15 August 1969), Operation Burnham (29 August – 30 September 1969), Operation Marsden (1–27 December 1969), Operation Cung Chung 1 (12–28 June 1970), Operation Petrie (29 June – 13 July 1970), Operation Nathan (13 July – 2 August 1970), Operation Cung Chung II (3 August – 20 September 1970), and Operation Cung Chung III (21 September 1970 – 31 January 1971).

Victor 4 Company also conducted their own independent operations including Operation Waiouru (5–9 July 1969), Operation Tekapo (26–28 August 1969), Operation Ross (15–24 October 1969), Operation With the ARVN (24–28 November 1969), Operation Napier (10 January – 20 February 1970), Operation Waipounamu (18–20 March 1970) and Operation Townsville (20 March – 23 April 1970).

As the only remaining New Zealand infantry company Victor 5 participated in the ongoing Australian efforts to secure the area and defeat D445 Vietcong Battalion, the primary enemy force in Phuoc Tuy Province. As part of 4 RAR/NZ Victor 5 Company was involved in Operation Phoi Hop (1 February – 2 May 1971), Victor 6 Company was involved in Operation Overlord (5–14 June 1971) including Battle of Long Khanh, Operation Hermit Park (14 June – 27 July 1971), Battle of Nui Le (21 September 1971), and Operation Valiant (3–6 October 1971).

With other Australian battalions having been withdrawn earlier in 1971, only 3 RAR and 4 RAR/NZ remained by mid 1971. Victor 6's last operation was one of protecting the activities of 1 ATF's withdrawal from Vietnam during Operation South Ward (6–16 October 1971). Victor Company was returned to 1 RNZIR in Singapore on 9 December 1971.

RNZIR casualties (including RNZE attachments) during the Vietnam War were:

2 RAR/NZ – 10 (both rotations)

4 RAR/NZ – 5 (both rotations)

6 RAR/NZ – 14

Source:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_New_Zealand_Infantry_Regiment



A FOURTH PARADE

My flag is out, joining
The annual patriotic unfurling,
With its customary entertainments,
Fervor, flash and noise.

Somewhere, around small-town squares
And the clustered shade
Of rural prospect,
The common comes to life

With the renewing promise of union,
Community,
Nationhood.

I see the festive gatherings of youth,

Assembled leagues of aspiration,
Sputtering antique tractors,
Uniformed cadets,
Ranked scouts and

Schools of pioneers,
Costumed choirs
Assuming linear purpose,
Brass instruments lifting together,

Assured drummers
Catching their phrase,
The step of honor guard
Steadied along streets

Lined with eager children,
Marveling the majorettes' audacity
And tugging parents toward
Our briefly enjoyed

Public prayer of unity.

For a moment,
We are one.

Bob



Received too late for inclusion in our July-August newsletter. Thanks to Bob Warfield, A/B/HHC 2/503 RVN '65/'66 for sharing his wonderful poem with us. Ed
(Web photos added)





INCOMING!



~ Wow! ~

I liked your article about coming home (Issue 74, Pages 44-45). I didn't know you were from Fontana. I'm originally from Woburn, MA just north of Boston but worked for the City of Loma Linda, CA from 1985 to 2007 (Dept. of Public Safety/Fire Dept. It wasn't a city back in the 60s).

I also enjoyed reading the "The Cremation of Sam McGee" (Pages 53-54).

Coincidentally, I was reading about the Alaskan Gold Rush just last week and we are going there in September.

In regard to your item regarding those who formerly received the newsletter but don't have a current email address in your files, one name was Hank Martinez. There was a Henry Martinez (an RTO, I think) in Charlie Company who died a few years ago.

Another name listed under "173d Unit Unknown", that was Sid Cheeseman. I remember that name but I believe he was an RAR Aussie. (Could have been the reunion in 2005 in Australia).

Last, I have been searching for info on Stephen Dyer Jewett, KIA 27 Dec 65 (C 2-503). Still hoping to find a photo somewhere. I remember him even though he was not in 3rd Plt C Co with me. He was from East Andover, NH. His name, along with over a million others, was sent into space by NASA. All the names on the Vietnam Wall were on the list. Maybe he will be remembered for eternity. Website URL below.

Barb and I visited with Johnny and Anne Graham in South Carolina last week. Johnny was my Team Leader initially and later my Squad Leader. We had a great time visiting.

Hope to see you and Reggie next year in Alexandria, VA. Airborne!

Jerry Patterson
C/2/503, RVN



Jerry, a strac lookin' trooper June 1966, in Woburn, MA

<https://stardust.jpl.nasa.gov/overview/microchip/names2j5.html>

~ Dad Was On Corregidor ~

I was in the 3rd MASH in the 173d Brigade HQ area off Bien Hoa Airbase in Oct., Nov. & Dec. '66. I used to get this newsletter from "Smitty", but I heard that he was ill and no longer doing it. Then today it shows up. Yea!!!

I got it this time because of Paul Whitman at the Corregidor.org website - my dad was on Corregidor (Fort Drum - The Concrete Battleship) when they surrendered. I am also an Aggie and attended the Muster last year and sat behind a survivor of the Drop on Corregidor, who was honored that evening.

I play golf weekly with Charles Brune, one of you EM from Vietnam. We both want to get this newsletter. I hope you can accommodate us.

Warmest regards,

Richard King

Hi Guys. Have added you both to the list for our 2/503d Vietnam Newsletter, thanks! I was ill for a while but only the good die young.

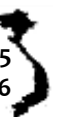
You can see all issues to date at http://corregidor.org/VN2-503/newsletter/issue_index.htm ATW brothers!

Smitty



Japanese soldiers surrender to troopers of the 503d PIR on Corregidor. "Joe Conway, back to camera, Jim Mullaney, nearest camera with sword." (web photo)

(Incoming continued....)



Note: Last month we re-circulated Issue 29 of our newsletter, a *Special Edition* covering *The Battle of the Slopes*, to mark the 50 year anniversary of Operation Greeley in Dak To. The troopers below sent in comments. Ed

~ A Couple of Comments ~

Finally got through your latest newsletter (issue 29). Had to set it down occasionally. I can only imagine the difficulty the guys that were there had getting through it. I'd like to make a couple of comments.

1. Dave Milton sounds like a great guy. Far more tactful and diplomatic than I ever was.
2. The question of screw-up at the command level.
3. My comments on the area. We were there in 1965.
4. A little background about artillery for all the 11B's.
5. NVA screw-up (?)

Dave came out OK but I do not know what happened to Cpt. Leonard. Does sound like some scapegoating going on.

Unless you have been in that area (flying over does not count) you will not know that 1000 yards might as well be several miles.

I agree with many of the riflemen, in that, it was a mess. That area was just the opposite of the old basic training saw, "*spread out, one round will get you all*". Sending 2 brand new platoon leaders in there on their first day, borders on criminal behavior. A rifle company platoon leader is perhaps the most important job a young officer will ever have. The results speak for themselves.

By 1967 the brass should have been well aware of the situation in the highlands. We were there briefly in 65, generally to the south of Rt. 19 up against the Cambodian border. Without maps, I should add. Just prior to leaving the area, I finally got some maps, only to determine that during our patrols, we strayed over the border a couple of times. The stairs cut into the hillsides were there when we were there and I'm sure were greatly improved by '67. Hell, there were even banisters or handrails in some areas! We had no contact but every indication, including the back of my neck, told us the bad guys were there. Try as we might, we were clumsy moving overland in that tough terrain. We never caught up with them. It was simple for a trail watcher to alert his buddies, run down a 100 yards of



**LT Jim Robinson
B/2/503
Camp Zinn, '65**

trail, then saunter off. None of us were running down any trails.

In my opinion, knowing that there were many NVA units in the area, deploying company sized units 1000 yards apart, was, as you said, STUPID.

I was an infantryman until I was sent to artillery OCS. Arriving in the rubber trees looking at the 20 foot wide road between the mortar pit and the brush. Not jungle, but twelve foot high brush. It occurred to me, that my training to kill Chinese in Korea on a hillside 2000 yards away, was pretty much a waste of time. This was not a shock to me as I was aware of the tactics used against the French. I knew I would have to direct fire right against our guys. To this end I always knew where I was, where the guns were and how the guns were laid. I had no trouble knowing where the enemy was.

According to the Ft. Sill instructors, I had way too much info. FDC was supposed to take care of those details. I did not trust them when shooting so close. There are just too many variables with a 105 and its' ammo.

By knowing the trajectory of the round, I could fudge the adjustment a little to increase our level of safety. I don't recall ever ordering "*fire for effect*". That command results in all 6 howitzers firing, which would work in a classic battle with the guns to the rear and the enemy to the front. Rarely were we in that position.

The guns are laid in a W pattern, almost always. The guns you adjust with are the center #3&4 guns. Guns 1 and 6 might be 100 yards or more apart, consequently their rounds would land (for our proposes) quite away from the adjusting rounds. I would walk the rounds in, (which would have had me fail the class) until mud and vegetation would get splattered around. Dangerous to do, but shooting 100 yards away from the firefight site was a waste of time, no one was there.

One of the guys noted that many of the rounds detonated in the trees. Some airbursts are OK but in that really heavy forest they should have swapped out contact fuses for delay fuses. But only experience would have taught the FO's that. I'm sure they were way too busy to sort out everything.

I think the NVA made a big mistake. Please understand I mean no disrespect to the troopers on that hill. I feel the NVA would have accomplished more, from their perspective, if they would have captured the wounded troops rather than execute them....

(Incoming continued....)



....Their initial goal was to wipe out an American unit and the 173d would have been the most spectacular accomplishment. Failing that, parading a bunch of paratroopers would have had a greater impact than all the pilots they kept parading around. The war was not just about body counts.

As I recall confusion and terror reign supreme in battle. Very few guys see the same thing the same way. To the guys that made it out, welcome home.

Thanks again for all your work

Jim Robinson
B/2/503

~ **Battle of the Slopes Correction** ~

On Page 8 of Issue 29 it states, *"We continued to move on our AO, then suddenly we got a radio call from A Company that they were in heavy contact with an entrenched NVA force. Shortly after we got another call from Colonel James Steverson, Commander of the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry, to move out to assist A Company."* The CO of 2/503 was LTC E.A. Partain, not Steverson.

Ed Privette, Maj. (Ret)
CO HHC/2/503, Dak To

Edward Allen Partain, LTG (Ret) **2/503d Battalion Commander, 1967, Dak To** **Born June 26, 1929 - Died March 24, 1996**

Edward Allen "Ed" Partain was born 26 June 1929 in Indiana. He was appointed to West Point from the 1st Congressional District of Arkansas. At West Point he was a Sunday School Teacher for two years and was Cadet Company Commander of G-2 company. On graduation Ed went in the Infantry, his first assignment being the Infantry School at Fort Benning. He was then assigned to the 27th Infantry, 25th Division in Korea from 1952 to 1953. He was decorated with the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, and the Combat Infantryman Badge. From 1953 to 1960 Ed served in various Company grade assignments and attended the Advanced Infantry Course at Fort Benning as well as the Marine Corps School, Junior Course.



Edward Allen Partain
West Point, 1951
Be Thou At Peace

From 1960 to 1963 Ed served as a Tactical Officer at West Point and in 1964 went to Command & General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. Ed's next assignment was to the Military Assistance Command Vietnam from 1964 to 1965. On completion he was decorated with a

second Bronze Star Medal, and second Purple Heart. In 1965 he also attended the Armed Forces Staff College.

His next assignment was to the Office of Personnel Operations where he served from 1966 to 1967. From 1967 to 1968 Ed served a second tour in Nam, this time with the 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade. He was awarded the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, 5 Air Medals, the Commendation Medal for valor, a third Purple Heart, and a second C.I.B.

In February 1968 he was assigned as Chief, Officer Personnel Branch, G1, United States Army, Pacific in Hawaii where he served until June of the same year. Next he went to the Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania for a year. On July 1969 Ed was named Chief, Objectives Plans Branch, War Plans Division, Office, Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, US Army, Washington, D.C. In January 1970 Ed became a student at the Helicopter School, Fort Rucker, Alabama.

On completion in September 1970 he was named Commander, Division Support Command, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where he served until February 1971. In March 1971 Ed was named Chief Of Staff, 82nd Airborne Division and in January 1972 he became Commander, 1st Brigade, 82nd Airborne, and served as such until July 1973. He was awarded the Legion of Merit. In August 1973 Ed took on the job of Deputy Director of Operations, Office, Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, US Army, Washington, D.C. Then in May 1974 Ed became Chief, Army Section, Military Assistance Advisory Group, Iran Military Mission with the Iranian Army. He served in that capacity until June 1976. In July 1976 Ed was named Assistant Division Commander, 1st Armored Division, United States Army, Europe. Next came assignment as Director, Logistics and Security Assistance, United States European Command, where Ed served from July 1977 to November 1979. On November 1979 he was appointed Deputy Commanding General, XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, a position he held until July 1980, when he was named Commanding General, 1st Infantry Division (Mechanized), Fort Riley, Kansas, to be followed by numerous other advanced postings until his retirement in January 1985 as LTG. He was decorated with the Distinguished Service Medal on his last assignment.



Source: Excerpt from Army bio, West Point website.

(Incoming continued....)



~ 82nd Airborne Newsletter ~

Hey Smitty,

My name is Marty Tomkin. I am a 101st Vietnam vet (67-68) and the Secretary of the Philadelphia Chapter of the 101st Airborne Division Association. I am also on the distribution list for your *2/503 Vietnam Newsletter*, which is beyond awesome.

Sadly, our Chapter is just about dead. But I am also the Secretary of the Philly Chapter of the 82nd Association. I never served with the 82nd, but they welcome anyone airborne qualified. We have members who served with Special Forces, Rangers, 82nd, 101st, 173rd, and Pathfinders from other infantry divisions. We have members from WWII through the Global War on Terrorism.

I was “drafted” to be secretary after the sudden passing of our secretary. One of my responsibilities is to send out a quarterly newsletter. Chapter news covers about a page and 1/2. After that, I fill it out with Army news, Airborne history, and a usually feeble attempt at humor. The last newsletter is attached.

With your permission, I would like to include an occasional article from your newsletter. I will of course give credit where credit is due. If OK, *The Battle of the Slopes* will be part of my 4th quarter Newsletter. Our young troopers in particular need to know details of their airborne big brother’s service.

Would you care to be on my distribution list? AATW!

Our reply:

Hi Marty, good hearing from you. Of course, you may reprint in your newsletter anything from our newsletter you like, except those pieces where we ourselves obtained permission to reprint -- you’ll need to contact the original sources in that regard.

With your o.k., I’ll include your email address and message in our next issue for any of our guys (many were All Americans) who might like to receive your *82nd Airborne Newsletter*. In our upcoming Sept/Oct issue we will be featuring the 82nd.

Yes, please add me to your distribution list. ATW brother!

Smitty
101st, 173d, 509th Abn

Note: Troopers interested in receiving Marty’s 82nd Airborne newsletter can email him at:

Martin Tomkin, email: met101sepa@gmail.com



Statement from DAV Washington Executive Director Garry Augustine on passage of the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017

August 23, 2017

For far too long, veterans have faced unnecessary and unacceptable delays within the current VA disability appeals system, on average taking between three to five years—sometimes longer—to



complete. Passage of the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017 into law today marks an important step forward in creating a more timely and accurate system for processing veterans’ appeals.

We believe the law enacted today will help minimize the frustration and undue burdens that veterans and their families experience when caught in a lengthy appeals process. This critical legislation will ensure that the new appeals system provides veterans with multiple options to challenge unfavorable decisions, ultimately leading to quicker and more favorable outcomes while also protecting veterans’ due process rights.

As veterans disability claims and appeals advocacy is the hallmark service provided by DAV, we have long called for meaningful reform of the appeals system as the backlog continued to grow. Since March of 2016, we have worked alongside Congress, VA, the Board of Veterans Appeals and many other stakeholders to develop and refine the legislation signed today. The Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017 is a testament to how vital such collaborative partnerships are in crafting reform measures that meet the needs of all parties involved—most especially the needs of disabled veterans.

DAV applauds the members of the House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committees, leaders in the VA and our partners in the veteran community whose cooperation has allowed this law to come to fruition. We appreciate VA Secretary David Shulkin’s commitment to ensuring veterans were given a voice in the reform process, and we thank Senate Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Johnny Isakson and Ranking Member Jon Tester, along with House Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Phil Roe and Ranking Member Tim Walz for their steadfast leadership and commitment to getting this bill passed.

Source: www.dav.org/learn-more/news/2017/statement-dav-washington-executive-director-garry-augustine-passage-veterans-appeals-improvement-modernization-act-2017/



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A Sky Soldier's letter home...

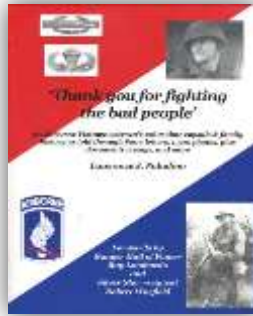
Death in War Zone D

By Larry Paladino

B/2/503, '65/'66 RVN

Excerpt from Larry's book:

"Thank you for fighting the bad people"



July 9, 1965 – to dad on airborne letterhead, 0200 hours: "Out of all the operations we've been on, this is only the second time I've stayed back. The C.O. (Capt. Roy Lombardo) left the company for good and I had to do all kinds of last-minute paperwork for him. But yesterday, 7 July 1965, was a day we'll all remember.

Bravo Company got ambushed by VC in War Zone D. The 173rd was pushing the VC from all directions and they had to show up to fight 'cause they had no place to run. The First Battalion was on one side, Co. A on the left, B in the center, and Headquarters on the right. The VC fled A and ran right into us. But we also actually ran into them.

They had dug in with .50 caliber and .30 caliber machine guns, which tore us up. By the end of the day B Company had four dead and 10 wounded. Lt. Zinn, 3rd Platoon leader (who ran sixth in some event at this year's Olympics) got shot all to hell. SSgt Howard really got blasted over a dozen times. Pvt. Johnson and Pvt. Hernandez, both new guys, got zapped. Hernandez got it through the back of the head and Johnson through the neck.

For a while, Bravo was pinned down in the area, but eventually they got out. Many of my friends got shot up, 10 altogether. Sgt. Murdock, SSG Schimpf, Cpl. Roberts, PFC Foster, Pvt. Purgason, Pvt. Pascale, Pvt. Padillo, Sp4 Cook, Pvt. Waycott, and somebody else.

Today I had to go to Tan San Nhut Airbase outside of Saigon to identify the dead men. Sgt. Howard had his fingers hanging by a thread and his chest was all tore up. The rest looked pretty bad, too. Sgt. Howard just got promoted and his wife is pregnant, with three kids already. Lt. Zinn just got married four months ago.

During the last problem, Sgt. Howard and I blew up two V.C. trucks after the rest of the company went on ahead. I was also his assistant patrol leader a couple weeks ago. He's about 22. Three others in the brigade got killed for a total of seven on 7 July – four just from the Bravo Bulls.

All this and Capt. Lombardo had just departed for Okinawa and the U.S., so Lt. Bennett was in charge until Capt. Sutton, our new C.O. gets here. With yesterday's action our company has five dead and 15 wounded.

On the last operation the C.O. (Lombardo) threw a grenade in a foxhole and I jumped in with my .45 and a knife but found nothing but an abruptly ending tunnel. Quite a few photographers were with us and I had my picture taken quite a few times. I also took some nice shots myself. Please get these other rolls developed. I don't know when the 173rd will leave here. We are about 15-20 miles north of Saigon near the Song Dong Nai River..."



Our good buddy, RTO Larry Paladino, B/2/503, some time, somewhere in Vietnam. It's suspected by many, Larry was the first-ever "Tunnel Rat" of the 2/503d in RVN.



2/503 BRASS



L-R: Bobby Tharp, Battalion S-3; Carmen Cavezza, A Company Commander; George Dexter, Battalion Commander; Paul Sutton, B Company Commander; Fred Henschell, C Company Commander; Bob Metz, HQ Company Commander, in Pleiku, RVN, 1965.

(Col. George Dexter photo collection)

(continued....)



173rd – “Big Red One” Deployed To Pleiku

The Reporter, August 14, 1965



General Westmoreland visits men of Alpha Company 2/503 in Pleiku. Foreground with eyes right is 2/503 Battalion Commander, LTC George Dexter, (Col. Ret).

PLEIKU, (USARV-IO) – At the request of Government of the Republic of Vietnam, elements of the 173rd Airborne Brigade and 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, have been made available by Task Force Alpha headquarters in Nha Trang to reinforce government troopers engaged in an operation against the Viet Cong in Pleiku Province.

The 173rd Airborne Commander, Brig. Gen. Ellis W. Williamson, is commanding U.S. troops.



Gen. Williamson briefs Gen Thieu Than Bin in Aug. '65.

Major General Stanley R. Larsen, Commanding General of Task Force Alpha, will coordinate their participation with the Commander of II Corps, Sub-Brig. General Vinh Loc, if they are required in the operation.

The U.S. troops were flown to Pleiku on August 10th and 11th from their base at Bien Hoa.



MG Larsen meets with 2/503 troopers in Pleiku.



Eagle Flight takes off from Pleiku.



Fr Kennedy and troopers celebrate Mass in Pleiku.

(Photos from Col. George Dexter collection)



**CITATION FOR POSTHUMOUS AWARD OF THE
SILVER STAR TO THIS MOST HEROIC
UNITED STATES ARMY SOLDIER**

**SPECIALIST FOURTH CLASS
WALTER WAYNE CUNNINGHAM**



**TROOP E, 17th CAVALRY REGIMENT
" SILVER SPURS "
173rd AIRBORNE BRIGADE
" SKY SOLDIERS "**

**CITATION FOR POSTHUMOUS AWARD OF
THE SILVER STAR**

The President of the United States takes pride in presenting the Silver Star Medal (Posthumously) to Walter Wayne Cunningham, Specialist Fourth Class, United States Army, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving with Troop E, 17th Cavalry, 173rd Airborne Brigade, as a point man of his platoon. At approximately 1000 hours, Specialist Cunningham's platoon was moving through high elephant grass in Tuy Hoa Province when it came upon a wood line and fell under heavy automatic weapons fire from an estimated North Vietnamese squad. Specialist Cunningham unhesitatingly rushed the enemy force, firing his weapon and throwing grenades. He had almost reached the enemy position when he was shot and killed. By exposing himself to heavy fire and rushing the enemy, he displayed an aggressive and professional attitude and caused the enemy to withdraw without inflicting heavy casualties to the rest of his platoon. Specialist Cunningham's personal courage materially contributed to the success of the platoon in discovering and routing an enemy ambush. Specialist Cunningham's extraordinary heroism in close combat was in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

Farewell to Two Chargin' Charlies

"RIP Sgt. Harvey Knapp (right) the best Damn squad leader a cherry could hope for. A true leader, always cool under fire. Harvey passed away last Thursday after a valiant battle with Cancer. Standing next to his point man Stanley Verkitas who passed away earlier this year. Stanley spent his entire life battling the demons that took his legs in the war he gave his all for. We are the sons of the greatest generation who believed that freedom isn't free. I love you brothers RIP."

(Grumpy)

C/2/503, 173rd Airborne Brigade



Brothers then...brothers forever.

[Sent in by Roger Dick, C/2/503]

Aug. 17, 2017



DoD Identifies Army Casualty

The Department of Defense announced today the death of a soldier who was supporting Operation Freedom's Sentinel.

Staff Sgt. Aaron R. Butler, 27, of Monticello, Utah, died Aug. 16 in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan, of injuries suffered from an improvised explosive device while conducting combat operations. The incident is under investigation.

Butler was assigned to the 19th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Camp Williams, Utah.

For more information, media may contact Ileen Kennedy, Utah National Guard, at 801-432-4229 or ileen.hkennedy.nfg@mail.mil

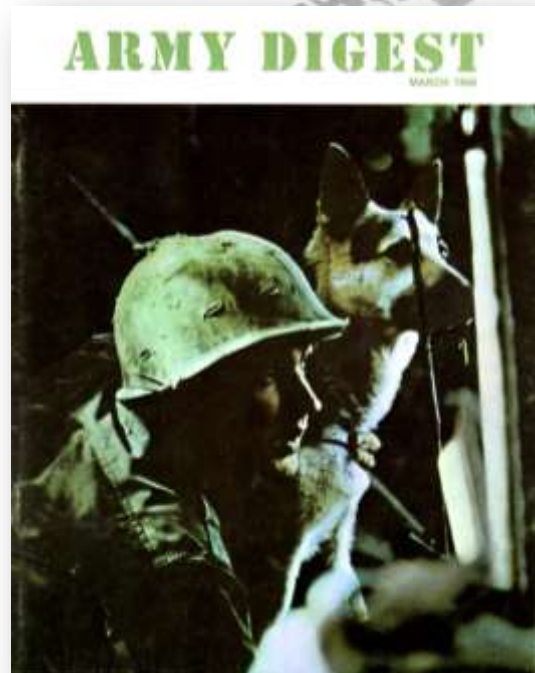


HILL 882

Dak To, Vietnam

Story by SP5 Rogert Craig
Photos by SP5 Gordon W. Gahan
U.S. Army Vietnam

The accompanying battle scenes photographed by SP5 Gahan are backed by actual sounds of fighting and shouts of soldiers who fought for Hill 882. Machinegun roar, the whine of snipers' bullets zipping by and the shouts of men in combat were tape recorded by SP5 Craig. Excerpts from their recording form the text of this story. – Editor, *Army Digest*



Cover: Scout dog "Batan" and his handler pause in the thick jungle growth of Hill 882 near Dak To. The 173d Airborne Brigade soldier and his K-9 scout spotted the enemy's ambush before it could be sprung—turning a possible defeat into victory for the paratroopers. Army photographer SP5 Gordon W. Gahan records the fight for Hill 882 in this issue.

*"We got enemy over here to the west."
"Get 'em, shoot 'em – Now!" "Hey we got that..."
"Ah, Lima Kilo Six...I'm gonna start puttin' artillery on the whiskey side." "Ah, Roger, Mike Six, Out."*

The fight for Hill 882 began as another "no contact" day for men of the 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade. For two days they tracked their enemy relentlessly through the mountains near Dak To. And they had found plenty of evidence that the 66th NVA (North Vietnamese Army) Regiment was hurt.

At mid-afternoon on 18 November, a scout dog stopped short and tensed—a soundless warning to his handler—and saved 180 men from walking into an enemy ambush. The airborne troopers dug in.

The battle was joined.

What was believed to be an enemy squad, a delaying force, turned out to be a reinforced company. Determined U.S. infantrymen caught everything the NVA troops could throw, and returned it in spades as they pushed the up-hill fight.

"Put it up there!" "I told ya there was one up there... Hell you..."

"Maybe he's the last, man." "Don't say that." "There they are!" "No luck, baby." "There they are—Go!"

"We're in a helluva place...We got a sniper overinna tree." "Hey, they worked right in behind us, back to our side, to the right--right flank." "Hey, Top..."

"Get 'em—get 'em—get 'em!!!"

The battle ended three hours later. Airborne infantrymen had reached the top of Hill 882.

(continued...)



Hill 882 photos by SP5 Gahan with original captions.



"We gotta sniper overinna tree."



"A lull in the up-hill fight, but still alert."

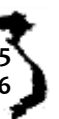


"Airborne trooper hunts enemy with 00 buckshot."



"Ah, Lime Kilo Six' – a call for artillery support."

(Hill 882 photos continued....)





"Medic! Medic! Buddy's been hit!"

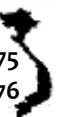


"Mortarmen 'lay in' their tube."



"A captured machinegun --- NVA are on the run."

(Hill 882 photos continued....)





“Hill 882 was not taken cheaply.”



**“Smoke marks the LZ –
‘Bring in the chopper!’”**



“A ‘dust off’ takes out the wounded.”

(Hill 882 photos continued....)





"The hill is ours – tomorrow's another day, another hill."

[Source: *Army Digest*, 1968]



THE 1/503D AT DAK TO...HILL 882

After scouring the area of the North Vietnamese who attacked Task Force Black, the three companies of 1/503 moved southwest to occupy Hill 882. The force was accompanied by approximately a dozen civilian news correspondents.

On the morning of 15 November, (1967), the lead company crested the hill and discovered bunkers connected by telephone wire. They were then attacked, and the rest of the Americans rushed to the hilltop to take defensive positions.

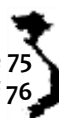
PAVN troops poured small arms, machine gun, and mortar fire on the Americans and launched several ground attacks. The U.S. commander requested helicopter evacuation for the most seriously wounded, but this request was denied by Colonel Schumacher, who demanded that the civilians be evacuated first.

When the fighting ceased on 19 November the U.S. battalion had suffered seven killed and 34 wounded. The North Vietnamese 66th Regiment left behind 51 dead.

[Source: Murphy, p. 244]



"U.S. wounded being moved to an aid station during battle for Hill 882." (web photo)



A Sky Soldier's Viewpoints

By Jerry Hassler, Sgt.

HHC/2/503 RTO, Commo & Recon Platoons, '66/'67



Mr. Hassler, one strac lookin' trooper, even in the bush.

I read a lot, both books, fiction and nonfiction and on the Internet, mostly history there. In Nam, I would grab a carton of paperbacks from Red Cross at the Milton Olive Chapel at the end of the main road into Camp Zinn next to the parade ground. Read everyone, including westerns, Perry Mason, sci-fi, mysteries, etc., as we all know how boring it was when not in the boonies, especially when town was usually off limits for a few days when back, although being in the field wasn't that entertaining either. Read when standing radio watch until someone complained our minds were elsewhere when they radioed in and we didn't hear them. Didn't believe it, but being a grunt pulls no weight.



"Milton Olive Chapel" at Camp Zinn, '65-'67, named in honor of Milton, B/2/503, Medal of Honor recipient.

As have most of us, I've run the full cycle of what we were then, became afterwards and where we are today. PTSD affected many, some little and some greatly. What we experienced can't really be shared except with other Nam guys who saw and went through what we did. Many became not what we were but what the media wanted us to be. The vet in the coat and tie was bypassed for the scruffy-looking, rag-tag guy in the torn and faded fatigues, who may not have even been a vet.



RTO Hassler next to his shelter and slit trench in the boonies.

For many of us, we went to Nam thinking we were defending freedom like our fathers and uncles had in WWII and Korea. The neighborhoods we grew up in had neighbors all around us who had fought in those wars. We had been raised on John Wayne, Audie Murphy, and the TV series Combat with Vic Morrow. Communism was real back then. Too often today, history is viewed without the context of what was occurring during the time period being judged. Since communism per se is not a real threat today, Vietnam is viewed only as a quagmire we should never have gotten into.

The Soviet Union went bankrupt and fell into their own Nam with Afghanistan as they continued to try and spread communism, something we duplicate as we try to spread democracy. Vietnam today is one country, communist, but more nationalistic. Nearly 70 percent of the population has been born since the war. They know they won uniting their country but today, want pretty much what the average American wants and hold no grievances towards America as we do in our feelings toward them. America has fought and defeated countries we should still hate, but hatred is not progress. Vietnam may well become a buffer ally of ours today against China who has aspirations to claim all the South and East China Seas, extending their power in the Pacific.

(continued....)



Taiwan is considered a part of China, yet today it is a democratic country of over 50 million people, not willing, after decades of its own internal struggle under military rule to one of a democracy, to allow itself to become less than what it is today. I visited Taiwan twice on R&R's, the second time because I was the only one who had enough money to go. Back then and more so today, it is a modern country, serving its people well.

I left Nam in March 1967 and was back in the concrete jungle of Atlanta in less than two weeks. Our combat jump during Operation Junction City was my last operation. When I left Travis AFB to head home, I boarded the same bus I had boarded at Camp Alpha to head to the 173d. I say the same as it had the same wire mesh grills welded over the windows to prevent rocks and trash being hurled by the anti-war protestors outside the gates.



Troopers of 2/503 Recon Platoon on ground after combat jump during Operation Junction City in February '67. Jerry, back row far right, wearing bandolier.

Once back, I wanted to tell people what was going on in Nam, at least what I thought and I only had a small piece of the pie to even draw opinions from. None really wanted to know, only whether or not I had killed someone while I was there. People view you differently if they know you killed someone and even though it is an understandable question, at the same time, it is personal -- only a few days before you realized best to not even confirm you were in Vietnam.

As the years passed, we learned to keep our mouths shut and even began to hate our participation from being in the war America lost. We fought in a noble cause and fulfilled our responsibilities as well and as justly as other Americans had fought in their wars. We have nothing to be ashamed of. Our pride is in the ideals of America, not in the mistakes our government leaders often make. Today, The Wall in D.C. is one of the most visited sites in our nation's capital.

I can't say the lack of interest was anyway different from my not listening to stories from veterans of previous wars, although most of us grew up with the movie newsreels and movies. Only today do I realize how much detail I missed of that part of history from relatives and neighbors who have since passed.

Today, those who went to Canada aren't viewed quite as heroic as when they went. More Americans today say they fought in Vietnam, over 13 million or so. Actors, politicians and outright frauds have claimed and falsified records to gain esteem and even veteran benefits.

I have no nightmares from my time in Nam, something I wish our fellow vets didn't suffer from, nor those who have endured the conflicts since then. We owe it to those who died and those who today willingly go in harm's way to remember until we pass, and to support the others when they come home.



A young Vietnam Vet, Sgt. Jerry Hassler, proud of his service and home from war.



And here we find a slightly more mature Mr. Hassler at our Newsletter Editor's home in Florida, eating all my food and drinking all my liquor. Well, he was a hootch buddy. Ed

(Photos & captions added. Ed)



Your Commander In Chief's Speech to "Future Soldiers" of America



President Trump salutes upwards of 40,000 youth at Annual Boy Scout Jamboree, July 24, 2017. (web photo)

President Trump's 2017 Boy Scout Jamboree Speech

Thank you, everybody. Thank you very much. I am thrilled to be here. Thrilled.

And if you think that was an easy trip, you're wrong. But I am thrilled.

19th Boy Scout Jamboree, wow, and to address such a tremendous group. Boy, you have a lot of people here. The press will say it's about 200 people.

It looks like about 45,000 people. You set a record today. You set a record. That's a great honor, believe me.

Tonight we put aside all of the policy fights in Washington, D.C. you've been hearing about with the fake news and all of that. We're going to put that... we're going to put that aside. And instead we're going

to talk about success, about how all of you amazing young Scouts can achieve your dreams, what to think of, what I've been thinking about. You want to achieve your dreams, I said, who the hell wants to speak about politics when I'm in front of the Boy Scouts? Right?

There are many great honors that come with the job of being president of the United States. But looking out at this incredible gathering of mostly young patriots. Mostly young. I'm especially proud to speak to you as the honorary president of the Boy Scouts of America.

You are the young people of character, integrity who will serve as leaders of our communities and uphold the sacred values of our nation.

I want to thank Boy Scouts President Randall Stephenson, chief Scout executive Michael Surbaugh, Jamboree Chairman Ralph de la Vega and the thousands of volunteers who made this a life-changing experience for all of you. And when they asked me to be here, I said absolutely yes.

(continued....)



Finally -- and we can't forgot these people -- I especially want to salute the moms and the dads and troop leaders who are here tonight. Thank you for making scouting possible. Thank you, mom and dad, troop leaders.

When you volunteer for the Boy Scouts you are not only shaping young lives, you are shaping the future of America. The United States has no better citizens than its Boy Scouts. No better.

The values, traditions and skills you learn here will serve you throughout your lives. And just as importantly, they will serve your families, your cities, and in the future and in the present will serve your country.

The Scouts believe in putting America first.

You know, I go to Washington and I see all these politicians, and I see the swamp, and it's not a good place. In fact, today, I said we ought to change it from the word "swamp" to the word "cesspool" or perhaps to the word "sewer."

But it's not good. Not good. And I see what's going on. And believe me, I'd much rather be with you, that I can tell you.

I'll tell you the reason that I love this, and the reason that I really wanted to be here, is because as president, I rely on former Boy Scouts every single day. And so do the American people.

It's amazing how many Boy Scouts we have at the highest level of our great government. Many of my top advisers in the White House were Scouts. Ten members of my cabinet were Scouts. Can you believe that? Ten.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson is not only a Boy Scout, he is your former national president. The vice president of the United States, Mike Pence -- a good guy -- was a Scout, and it meant so much to him.

Some of you here tonight might even have camped out in this yard when Mike was the governor of Indiana, but the scouting was very, very important. And by the way, where are our Indiana scouts tonight?

I wonder if the television cameras will follow you? They don't doing that when they see these massive crowds. They don't like doing that. Hi, folks.

There's a lot of love in this big, beautiful place. A lot of love. And a lot of love for our country. And a lot of love for our country.

Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke is here tonight. Come here, Ryan. Ryan is an Eagle Scout from Big Sky Country in Montana. Pretty good.

And by the way, he is doing a fantastic job. He makes sure that we leave our national parks and federal lands better than we found them in the best scouting tradition. So thank you very much, Ryan.

Secretary of Energy Rick Perry of Texas, an Eagle

Scout from the great state. The first time he came to the National Jamboree was in 1964. He was very young then. And Rick told me just a little while ago, it totally changed his life. So, Rick, thank you very much for being here. And we're doing -- we're doing a lot with energy. And very soon, Rick, we will be an energy exporter. Isn't that nice? An energy exporter.

In other words, we'll be selling our energy instead of buying it from everybody all over the globe. So that's good. We will be energy dominant.

And I'll tell you what, the folks in West Virginia who were so nice to me, boy, have we kept our promise. We are going on and on. So we love West Virginia. We want to thank you. Where's West Virginia by the way? Thank you.

Secretary Tom Price is also here today. Dr. Price still lives the Scout oath, helping to keep millions of Americans strong and healthy as our Secretary of Health and Human Services. And he's doing a great job. And hopefully he's going to gets the votes tomorrow to start our path toward killing this horrible thing known as Obamacare that's really hurting us.

By the way, are you going to get the votes? He better get them. He better get them. Oh, he better. Otherwise I'll say, "Tom, you're fired." I'll get somebody.

He better get Senator Capito to vote for it. He better get the other senators to vote for it. It's time.

You know, after seven years of saying repeal and replace Obamacare we have a chance to now do it. They better do it. Hopefully they'll do it.

As we can see just by looking at our government, in America, Scouts lead the way. And another thing I've noticed -- and I've noticed it all my life -- there is a tremendous spirit with being a Scout, more so than almost anything I can think of. So whatever is going on, keep doing it. It's incredible to watch, believe me.

Each of these leaders will tell that you their road to American success -- and you have to understand -- their American success, and they are a great, great story, was paved with the patriotic American values and traditions they learned in the Boy Scouts. And some day, many years from now, when you look back on all of the adventures in your lives you will be able to say the same, I got my start as a Scout, just like these incredibly great people that are doing such a good job for our country. So that's going to happen.

(continued....)



Boy Scout values are American values. And great Boy Scouts become great, great Americans.

As the Scout law says, a scout is trustworthy, loyal -- we could use some more loyalty I will tell that you that.

That was very impressive. You've heard that before. But here you learn the rewards of hard work and perseverance, never, ever give up. Never quit. Persevere. Never, ever quit. You learn the satisfaction of building a roaring campfire, reaching a mountain summit or earning a merit badge after mastering a certain skill. There's no better feeling than an achievement that you've earned with your own sweat, tears, resolve, hard work. There's nothing like it. Do you agree with that?

I'm waving to people back there so small I can't even see them. Man, this is a lot of people. Turn those cameras back there, please. That is so incredible. By the way, what do you think the chances are that this incredible massive crowd, record setting, is going to be shown on television tonight? One percent or zero?

The fake media will say, "President Trump spoke" -- you know what is -- "President Trump spoke before a small crowd of Boy Scouts today." That's some -- that is some crowd. Fake media. Fake news.

Thank you. And I'm honored by that. By the way, all of you people that can't even see you, so thank you. I hope you can hear.

Through scouting you also learned to believe in yourself -- so important -- to have confidence in your ability and to take responsibility for your own life. When you face down new challenges -- and you will have plenty of them -- develop talents you never thought possible, and lead your teammates through daring trials, you discover that you can handle anything. And you learn it by being a Scout. It's great.

You can do anything. You can be anything you want to be. But in order to succeed, you must find out what you love to do. You have to find your passion, no matter what they tell you. If you don't -- I love you too. I don't know. Nice guy.

Hey, what am I going to do? He sounds like a nice person. He -- he, he, he. I do. I do love you.

By the way, just a question, did President Obama ever come to a Jamboree?

And we'll be back. We'll be back. The answer is no. But we'll be back.

In life, in order to be successful -- and you people are well on the road to success -- you have to find out what makes you excited, what makes you want to get up each morning and go to work? You have to find it. If you love what you do and dedicate yourself to your work, then you will gain momentum? And look, you have to. You need the word "momentum." You will

gain that momentum. And each success will create another success. The word "momentum."

I'll tell you a story that's very interesting for me. When I was young there was a man named William Levitt. You have some here. You have some in different states. Anybody ever hear of Levittown?

And he was a very successful man, became unbelievable -- he was a home builder, became an unbelievable success, and got more and more successful. And he'd build homes, and at night he'd go to these major sites with teams of people, and he'd scour the sites for nails, and sawdust and small pieces of wood, and they cleaned the site, so when the workers came in the next morning, the sites would be spotless and clean, and he did it properly. And he did this for 20 years, and then he was offered a lot of money for his company, and he sold his company, for a tremendous amount of money, at the time especially. This is a long time ago. Sold his company for a tremendous amount of money.

And he went out and bought a big yacht, and he had a very interesting life. I won't go any more than that, because you're Boy Scouts so I'm not going to tell you what he did. Should I tell you? Should I tell you?

You're Boy Scouts, but you know life. You know life. So look at you. Who would think this is the Boy Scouts, right?

So he had a very, very interesting life, and the company that bought his company was a big conglomerate, and they didn't know anything about building homes, and they didn't know anything about picking up the nails and the sawdust and selling it, and the scraps of wood. This was a big conglomerate based in New York City.

And after about a 10-year period, there were losing a lot with it. It didn't mean anything to them. And they couldn't sell it. So they called William Levitt up, and they said, would you like to buy back your company, and he said, yes, I would. He so badly wanted it. He got bored with this life of yachts, and sailing, and all of the things he did in the south of France and other places. You won't get bored, right? You know, truthfully, you're workers. You'll get bored too, believe me. Of course having a few good years like that isn't so bad.

(continued....)



But what happened is he bought back his company, and he bought back a lot of empty land, and he worked hard at getting zoning, and he worked hard on starting to develop, and in the end he failed, and he failed badly, lost all of his money. He went personally bankrupt, and he was now much older. And I saw him at a cocktail party. And it was very sad because the hottest people in New York were at this party. It was the party of Steve Ross -- Steve Ross, who was one of the great people. He came up and discovered, really founded Time Warner, and he was a great guy. He had a lot of successful people at the party.

And I was doing well, so I got invited to the party. I was very young. And I go in, but I'm in the real estate business, and I see a hundred people, some of whom I recognize, and they're big in the entertainment business.

And I see sitting in the corner was a little old man who was all by himself. Nobody was talking to him. I immediately recognized that that man was the once great William Levitt, of Levittown, and I immediately went over. I wanted to talk to him more than the Hollywood, show business, communications people. So I went over and talked to him, and I said, "Mr. Levitt, I'm Donald Trump." He said, "I know." I said, "Mr. Levitt, how are you doing?" He goes, "Not well, not well at all." And I knew that. But he said, "Not well at all." And he explained what was happening and how bad it's been and how hard it's been. And I said, "What exactly happened? Why did this happen to you? You're one of the greats ever in our industry. Why did this happen to you?"

And he said, "Donald, I lost my momentum. I lost my momentum." A word you never hear when you're talking about success when some of these guys that never made 10 cents, they're on television giving you things about how you're going to be successful, and the only thing they ever did was a book and a tape. But I tell you -- I'll tell you, it was very sad, and I never forgot that moment.

And I thought about it, and it's exactly true. He lost his momentum, meaning he took this period of time off, long, years, and then when he got back, he didn't have that same momentum.

In life, I always tell this to people, you have to know whether or not you continue to have the momentum. And if you don't have it, that's OK. Because you're going to go on, and you're going to learn and you're going to do things that are great. But you have to know about the word "momentum."

But the big thing, never quit, never give up; do something you love. When you do something you love as a Scout, I see that you love it. But when you do

something that you love, you'll never fail. What you're going to do is give it a shot again and again and again. You're ultimately going to be successful.

And remember this, you're not working. Because when you're doing something that you love, like I do -- of course I love my business, but this is a little bit different. Who thought this was going to happen. We're, you know, having a good time. We're doing a good job.

Doing a good job. But when you do something that you love, remember this, it's not work. So you'll work 24/7. You're going to work all the time. And at the end of the year you're not really working. You don't think of it as work. When you're not doing something that you like or when you're forced into do something that you really don't like, that's called work, and it's hard work, and tedious work.

So as much as you can do something that you love, work hard and never ever give up, and you're going to be tremendously successful, tremendously successful.

Now, with that, I have to tell you our economy is doing great. Our stock market has picked up since the election, November 8th -- do we remember that day? Was that a beautiful day? What a day.

Do you remember that famous night on television, November 8th where they said, these dishonest people, where they said, there is no path to victory for Donald Trump. They forgot about the forgotten people.

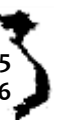
By the way, they're not forgetting about the forgotten people anymore. They're going crazy trying to figure it out, but I told them, far too late; it's far too late.

But you remember that incredible night with the maps, and the Republicans are red and the Democrats are blue, and that map was so red it was unbelievable. And they didn't know what to say.

And you know, we have a tremendous disadvantage in the Electoral College. Popular vote is much easier. We have -- because New York, California, Illinois, you have to practically run the East Coast. And we did. We won Florida. We won South Carolina. We won North Carolina. We won Pennsylvania.

We won and won. So when they said, there is no way to victory; there is no way to 270. You know I went to Maine four times because it's one vote, and we won. We won. One vote. I went there because I kept hearing we're at 269. But then Wisconsin came in. Many, many years. Michigan came in.

(continued....)



So -- and we worked hard there. You know, my opponent didn't work hard there, because she was told...She was told she was going to win Michigan, and I said, well, wait a minute. The car industry is moving to Mexico. Why is she going to move -- she's there. Why are they allowing it to move? And by the way, do you see those car industry -- do you see what's happening? They're coming back to Michigan. They're coming back to Ohio. They're starting to peel back in.

And we go to Wisconsin, now, Wisconsin hadn't been won in many, many years by a Republican. But we go to Wisconsin, and we had tremendous crowds. And I'd leave these massive crowds, I'd say, why are we going to lose this state?

The polls, that's also fake news. They're fake polls. But the polls are saying -- but we won Wisconsin.

So I have to tell you, what we did, in all fairness, is an unbelievable tribute to you and all of the other millions and millions of people that came out and voted for make America great again.

And I'll tell you what, we are indeed making America great again. And I'll tell you what, we are indeed making America great again. What's going on is incredible.

We had the best jobs report in 16 years. The stock market on a daily basis is hitting an all-time high. We're going to be bringing back very soon trillions of dollars from companies that can't get their money back into this country, and that money is going to be used to help rebuild America. We're doing things that nobody ever thought was possible, and we've just started. It's just the beginning, believe me.

You know, in the Boy Scouts you learn right from wrong, correct? You learn to contribute to your communities, to take pride in your nation, and to seek out opportunities to serve. You pledge to help other people at all times.

In the Scout oath, you pledge on your honor to do your best and to do your duty to God and your country.

And by the way, under the Trump administration you'll be saying "Merry Christmas" again when you go shopping, believe me. Merry Christmas. They've been downplaying that little beautiful phrase. You're going to be saying "Merry Christmas" again, folks.

But the words "duty," "country" and "God" are beautiful words. In other words, basically what you're doing is you're pledging to be a great American patriot.

For more than a century that is exactly what our Boy Scouts have been. Last year you gave more than 15 million hours of service to helping people in your communities. Incredible. That's an incredible stat.

All of you here tonight will contribute more than 100,000 hours of service by the end of this Jamboree -- 100,000.

When natural disaster strikes, when people face hardship, when the beauty and glory of our outdoor spaces must be restored and taken care of, America turns to the Boy Scouts because we know that the Boy Scouts never ever, ever let us down.

Just like you know you can count on me, we know we can count on you, because we know the values that you live by. Your values are the same values that have always kept America strong, proud and free.

And by the way, do you see the billions and billions and billions of additional money that we're putting back into our military? Billions of dollars.

New planes, new ships, great equipment for our people that are so great to us. We love our vets. We love our soldiers. And we love our police, by the way. Firemen, police. We love our police. Those are all special people. Uniformed services.

Two days ago I traveled to Norfolk, Virginia to commission an American aircraft carrier into the fleet of the United States Navy. It's the newest, largest and most advanced aircraft carrier anywhere in the world, and it's named for an Eagle Scout -- the USS Gerald R. Ford.

Everywhere it sails that great Scout's name will be feared and revered, because that ship will be a symbol of American power, prestige and strength.

Our nation honors President Gerald R. Ford today because he lived his life the scouting way. Boy Scouts celebrate American patriots, especially the brave members of our Armed Forces. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you.

American hearts are warmed every year when we read about Boy Scouts placing thousands and thousands of flags next to veterans' grave sites all across the country. By honoring our heroes, you help to ensure that their memory never, ever dies. You should take great pride in the example you set for every citizen of our country to follow.

Generations of American Boy Scouts have sworn the same oath and lived according to the same law. You inherit a noble American tradition. And as you embark on your lives, never cease to be proud of you who you are and the principles you hold dear and stand by. Wear your values as your badge of honor. What you've done few have done before you. What you've done is incredible. What you've done is admired by all. So I want to congratulate you, Boy Scouts.

(continued....)



Let your scouting oath guide your path from this day forward. Remember your duty, honor your history, take care of the people God put into your life, and love and cherish your great country.

You are very special people. You're special in the lives of America. You're special to me. But if you do what we say, I promise you that you will live scouting's adventure every single day of your life, and you will win, win, win, and help people in doing so.

Your lives will have meaning, and purpose and joy. You will become leaders, and you will inspire others to achieve the dreams they once thought were totally impossible. Things that you said could never, ever happen are already happening for you. And if you do these things, and if you refuse to give in to doubt or to fear, then you will help to make America great again, you will be proud of yourself, be proud of the uniform you wear, and be proud of the country you love.

And never, ever forget, America is proud of you.

This is a very, very special occasion for me. I've known so many Scouts over the years. Winners. I've known so many great people. They've been taught so well, and they love the heritage. But this is very special for me.

And I just want to end by saying, very importantly, God bless you. God bless the Boy Scouts. God Bless the United States of America. Go out, have a great time in life, compete, and go out and show me that there is nobody, nobody like a Boy Scout.

Thank you very much, everybody. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you very much

Source:

<http://time.com/4872118/trump-boy-scout-jamboree-speech-transcript/>

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA MISSION STATEMENT



The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

SCOUT LAW

A Scout is
TRUSTWORTHY. A Scout tells the truth. He keeps his promises. Honesty is part of his code of conduct. People can depend on him.

LOYAL. A Scout is true to his family, Scout leaders, friends, school, and nation.

HELPFUL. A Scout is concerned about other people. He does things willingly for others without pay or reward.

FRIENDLY. A Scout is a friend to all. He is a brother to other Scouts. He seeks to understand others. He respects those with ideas and customs other than his own.

COURTEOUS. A Scout is polite to everyone regardless of age or position. He knows good manners make it easier for people to get along together.

KIND. A Scout understands there is strength in being gentle. He treats others as he wants to be treated. He does not hurt or kill harmless things without reason.

OBEDIENT. A Scout follows the rules of his family, school, and troop. He obeys the laws of his community and country. If he thinks these rules and laws are unfair, he tries to have them changed in an orderly manner rather than disobey them.

CHEERFUL. A Scout looks for the bright side of things. He cheerfully does tasks that come his way. He tries to make others happy.

THRIFTY. A Scout works to pay his way and to help others. He saves for unforeseen needs. He protects and conserves natural resources. He carefully uses time and property.

BRAVE. A Scout can face danger even if he is afraid. He has the courage to stand for what he thinks is right even if others laugh at or threaten him.

CLEAN. A Scout keeps his body and mind fit and clean. He goes around with those who believe in living by these same ideals. He helps keep his home and community clean.

REVERENT. A Scout is reverent toward God. He is faithful in his religious duties. He respects the beliefs of others.

SCOUT OATH OR PROMISE

On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight.

SCOUT MOTTO

Be Prepared

SCOUT SLOGAN

Do a Good Turn Daily

(continued....)



~ Some Famous Boy Scouts ~



Hank Aaron, Hall of Fame Baseball Player
Buzz Aldrin, Astronaut
Neil Armstrong, Astronaut
Sir David Attenborough, TV Personality
Michael Bloomberg, Mayor of New York City
David Bowie, Singer
Jim Brady, Press Secretary
Sherrod Brown, Congressman
Jimmy Buffett, Musician



George W. Bush
Commander In Chief



Jimmy Carter
Commander In Chief



Bill Clinton
Commander In Chief

Walter Cronkite, Broadcast Journalist
Michael Dukakis, Governor of Massachusetts



Dwight Eisenhower
Commander In Chief

Henry Fonda, Actor



Gerald Ford
Commander In Chief

Harrison Ford, Actor
Steve Fossett, Adventurist
Bill Gates, Businessman
Robert Gates, Secretary of Defense
Richard Gere, Actor
Andy Griffith, Actor
Bruce Jenner, Olympian



Lyndon B. Johnson
Commander In Chief



John F. Kennedy
Commander In Chief

Martin Luther King, Jr., Civil Rights Leader
Dr. Alfred Kinsey, Biologist
Sheldon Leonard, Actor
Rich Little, Impressionist
James Lovell, Astronaut
Jerry Mathers, "The Beaver"
Paul McCartney, Singer
George Michael, Singer
Michael Moore, Author & Filmmaker
Jim Morrison, Rock Singer
Ozzie Nelson, Actor



Barack H. Obama
Commander In Chief

Ross Perot, Businessman
Rick Perry, Governor of Texas
Eddie Rabbitt, Country Singer
John Ritter, Actor



Teddy Roosevelt
Commander In Chief



Franklin Roosevelt
Commander In Chief

Richard Roundtree, Actor
Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense
Nolan Ryan, Hall of Fame Baseball Player
Alberto Salazar, Marathoner
Jeff Sessions, Director DOJ
Steven Spielberg, Movie Producer
Mark Spitz, Olympian
Jimmy Stewart, Actor
George Takei, Actor
Joe Theisman, NFL Quarterback
William Westmoreland, General
Elmo Zumwalt, Jr., Admiral





Sent in by Sky Soldier Frank Martinez, A/1/503

Last Month's *Whodat?*



And here he is again.
He's everywhere! He's everywhere!

Our very own Capt. Bill Vose, Esq., A/HHC/2/503, '66/'67, retired Chief Assistant State Attorney, FL.



A Bn CO's Note to His RTO About a Special Bunny



Smitty,

As I mentioned in phone con today – Col. Dexter sent me in to supervise (?) the B Company Bunny operation. My impression was that as great as her presence was, we should send a Bunny to everyone.

The choppers brought B Company in first. I never saw a more lively, bouncing group – a little filthy and dirty but alive and happy. The real pleasure was to see the wounded at your hospital. I checked the troops after most every operation to see they got their mail, etc., so I knew where to go.



Playboy Playmate of the Year, Jo Collins, "G.I. Jo", welcomes Bravo Company back from the field, escorted by B/2/503 wounded Bravo Bull Jack Price. (web photo)

She was perfect – flirty, happy. The morale went sky high. One guy had a full, upper body bandage, soaked with blood -- he acted like he'd cut himself shaving – no worry. She had a kiss and hug for all. Happy – lifted the spirits unbelievably.

As we left and got outside, she broke down and sobbed and sobbed. No B Company person saw it, but as I said, she was just a kid, and the experience really shook her – kinda as I felt when I first saw your little, malaria-racked body chained to a radio.

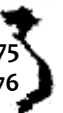
She's in an old folk's home now – where you belong.

B

Note: Above is from a hand-written note years ago to his former RTO, from the late LTC Robert B. (Bob) Carmichael, 2/503d Bn XO '65/'66, Bn CO '66, RVN. Those who knew Bob knew of his great sense of humor, which rings true in his note here. Those who knew him miss him dearly. Ed



**LTC Robert B. "Bob" Carmichael
1929 – 2016
"A Soldier's Soldier"**



The Beautiful Chris Nole And Fan of Vietnam Vets

In one of our previous newsletters we sent a shout out to the beautiful Chris Nole, and some of our guys shared fond memories of her visit to the 2/503d in RVN. On her website, <http://retrobabe.powweb.com/> which you'll want to visit, she included the following note: Ed

Airborne 2/503d Vietnam NEWSLETTER

Those great patriots of [Airborne 2/503d](#) included a wonderful article about me in their recent newsletter. They even included a picture of me in Vietnam, plus a more recent shot of me holding up my Marvel comic book, an issue of "The Nam" guest-starring a comic book version of me. It's a bit hard to see when it's so small, so I'll put a bigger version underneath, along with an ad for a reprint of the story in a new trade paperback from Marvel. Thanks again to the guys of Airborne 2/503d, for saying such kind things about me! Here's their newsletter. (Newsletter not included here. Ed)



Now, it's been our policy to include book notices by authors who served in the 173d, WWII 503rd, and attached units only. But, how can we not include notices of Chris' books.

EXPLOSIVE!
"A BLONDE BOMB GOES TO VIETNAM"

A monumental new photo-essay book documenting **CHRIS NOEL's** history-making Vietnam War tours, 1966 to 1969

Featuring
More than 200 photographs from Chris Noel's private collection, with many photos contributed by Vietnam veterans

CHRIS NOEL

NOW ON SALE AT AMAZON.COM

VIETNAM AND ME by **CHRIS NOEL**

She dated Frank Sinatra...
She co-starred with Elvis Presley...
She was compared to Marilyn Monroe...
And during the VIETNAM WAR, she had a love affair with half-a-million men!

VIETNAM AND ME is a new edition of Chris Noel's first book, 'Matter of Survival,' originally published in 1987. Now the book is BACK in a second printing, with a new title, a new cover, and all digitally-remastered photos, including some new shots never published before.

You'll see Chris in Hollywood with huge super-stars such as ELVIS PRESLEY, Burt Reynolds, and Don Johnson, and walk with Chris as she visits Vietnam to entertain our troops with Bob Hope, and falls deeply in love with a Green Beret soldier, handsome Capt. Ty Harrington.

Chris and Ty get married, but just one year after their dream wedding, suddenly, shockingly, Ty commits suicide, plunging Chris into a long, harrowing battle with mental illness and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Vietnam and Me is the intimate, personal memoir of **CHRIS NOEL**, the Hollywood star who became the voice of home for half-a-million men fighting the Vietnam War.

ALSO BY CHRIS NOEL
'Confessions of a Pin-Up Girl'

BOTH BOOKS NOW ON SALE AT Amazon.com and ChrisNoel.com





Property Tax Exemptions by State for Disabled Veterans

Many disabled vets are eligible for property tax exemptions on their primary residences. Here is a list by state of exemptions as reported on July 27, 2017, by *Veterans United Network*. They state a survey indicated 59% of respondents were unaware such

exemptions were available to them. We recommend you contact your state/county/city tax office to learn what specific exemptions may be available to you. Ed

Alabama: A disabled veteran in Alabama may receive a full property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of service and has a net annual income of \$12,000 or less. Exemptions differ between the state and counties.

Alaska: A disabled veteran in Alaska may receive a property tax exemption of up to the first \$150,000 of the assessed value of his/her primary residence if the veteran is 50 percent or more disabled as a result of service. The exemption transfers to a surviving spouse if the veteran is deceased from a service connected cause.

Arizona: A disabled veteran in Arizona may receive a property tax exemption of \$3,000 on his/her primary residence if the total assessed value does not exceed \$10,000.

Arkansas: A disabled veteran in Arkansas may receive a full property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is blind in one or both eyes, lost the use of one or more limbs or is 100 percent disabled as a result of service.

California: There are two categories for full property tax exemptions. Qualified veterans may receive a basic exemption if the assessed value does not exceed \$100,000; or a low income exemption if the assessed value does not exceed \$150,000 when the household income does not exceed \$40,000. Both categories are for full property tax exemptions.

Colorado: A disabled veteran in Colorado may receive a property tax exemption of 50 percent of the first \$200,000 of the actual value of his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled. A property tax deferral exists for eligible veterans over the age of 65 and for active duty personnel.

Connecticut: All eligible veterans in Connecticut may receive a property tax exemption of \$1,500 from the total assessed value of his/her property if the veteran served at least 90 days of active duty during wartime and is honorably discharged. Veterans below a certain income level and/or disabled veterans are eligible for additional exemptions. Contact your municipality's Tax Assessor for specific details.

Delaware: There are currently no state-mandated property tax exemptions for disabled veterans in Delaware.

Florida: A disabled veteran in Florida may receive a property tax exemption of \$5,000 on any property he/she owns if 10 percent or more disabled from a result of service. If the veteran is 100% disabled as a result from service then he/she may receive a full property tax exemption.

Georgia: A disabled veteran in Georgia may receive a property tax exemption of \$60,000 or more on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled, depending on a fluctuating index rate set by the U.S. Secretary of Veterans Affairs. The 2016 amount is \$63,780; property in excess of this exemption remains taxable.

Hawaii: A disabled veteran in Hawaii may receive a full property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of service.

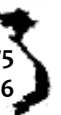
Idaho: A disabled veteran in Idaho may receive a property tax exemption up to \$1,320 on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 10 percent or more disabled as a result of service and reported total income of \$29,640 or less in 2016.

Illinois: A qualified disabled veteran in Illinois with a disability of at least 30-50% will receive a \$2,500 reduction in EAV; those with 50-70% can receive a \$5,000 exemption; and those with 70% or more pay no property tax.

Indiana: A disabled veteran in Indiana may receive a property tax exemption of up to \$37,440 if the veteran served honorably during any period of wartime and is 100% disabled as a result from service, or is at least 62 years of age with at least a 10% service-connected disability.

Iowa: A veteran in Iowa may receive a property tax exemption of \$1,852 on his/her primary residence if the veteran served on active duty during a period of war or for a minimum of 18 months during peacetime. A disabled veteran in Iowa may receive a full property tax exemption if the veteran is 100% disabled as a result from service.

(continued....)



Kansas: A disabled veteran or qualifying family member in Kansas may receive a property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 50 percent or more disabled as a result of service. The exemption amount is determined based on income.

Kentucky: Homeowners 65 and older or totally disabled as determined by a government agency in Kentucky may receive a property tax exemption of up to \$36,900 on his/her primary residence.

Louisiana: A disabled veteran in Louisiana may receive a property tax exemption of up to the first \$150,000 of the assessed value of his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of service.

Maine: A disabled veteran in Maine may receive a property tax exemption of up to \$6,000 on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 62 years or older or is 100 percent disabled.

Maryland: A disabled veteran in Maryland may receive a full property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of service.

Massachusetts: A disabled veteran in Massachusetts may receive a property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if all qualifications are met. To qualify, one must be at least 10% disabled, must have lived in MA for 6 months prior to enlisting and have lived in the state for 5 consecutive years. An exemption of \$400 may be received if the veteran is 10 percent or more disabled, a Purple Heart Recipient or Gold Star parent. A \$750 exemption may be received if the veteran lost the use of one hand, one foot or one eye; \$1,250 if the veteran lost the use of both hands, both feet or a combination of the two, or if the veteran is blind in both eyes as a result of service. A veteran may receive a \$1,500 exemption if 100 percent disabled as a result of service. The MA Department of Revenue prepared a full overview of local exemptions.

Michigan: A disabled veteran in Michigan may receive a full property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of service. The state also offers a homestead tax credit and property tax relief for active military personnel.

Minnesota: A disabled veteran in Minnesota may receive a property tax exemption of up to \$300,000 on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as result of service. Veterans with a disability rating of 70 percent or more may receive an exemption of up to \$150,000. Surviving spouses of military personnel are eligible to receive a \$300,000 exclusion.

Mississippi: A disabled veteran in Mississippi may receive a full property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the assessed value is \$7,500 or less and the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of service.

Missouri: A disabled veteran in Missouri may receive a full property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is a former Prisoner of War and is 100 percent disabled as a result of service.

Montana: A disabled veteran in Montana may receive a property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of service. The exemption amount varies based on income and marital status, as determined by the Montana Department of Revenue.

Nebraska: A disabled veteran in Nebraska may receive a property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100% disabled as a result of wartime service.

Nevada: A disabled veteran in Nevada may receive a property tax exemption of up to \$20,000 of the assessed value of his/her primary residence if the veteran is 60 percent or more disabled as a result of service.

New Hampshire: A disabled veteran in New Hampshire may receive a property tax credit of \$700 if he/she is permanently and totally disabled as a result of service, a double amputee or paraplegic or un-remarried surviving spouse. Individual cities may vote to adopt a higher tax credit. A 100% disabled veteran who is blind, paraplegic or a double amputee as a result of service who owns a specially adapted house acquired with a VA loan can receive a full property tax exemption.

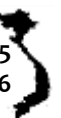
New Jersey: A disabled veteran in New Jersey may receive a full property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of wartime service.

New Mexico: A disabled veteran in New Mexico may receive a full property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of wartime service. Any veteran may qualify for a \$4,000 reduction if the veteran served a minimum of 90 days consecutive active duty and was honorably discharged.

New York: A disabled veteran in New York may receive one of three different property tax exemptions on his/her primary residence. The exemption amount varies based on type of service, disability as determined by the New York State Division of Veterans Affairs and the value of the exemption as determined by the county or municipality.

North Carolina: A disabled veteran in North Carolina may receive a property tax exemption of up to the first \$45,000 of the appraised value of his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of service.

(continued....)



North Dakota: A paraplegic disabled veteran in North Dakota may receive a property tax exemption for the first \$120,000 on his/her primary residence or if the veteran has been awarded specially adapted housing. A disabled veteran with a rating of 50% or greater may receive an exemption against the first \$6,750 of the taxable valuation.

Ohio: A disabled veteran in Ohio may receive a property tax exemption up to \$50,000 of the market value on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of service.

Oklahoma: A disabled veteran in Oklahoma may receive a full property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of service. The Oklahoma 100% Veteran Disability Tax Exemption applies to sales tax, excise tax and ad valorem tax.

Oregon: A disabled veteran or surviving spouse in Oregon may receive a property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 40 percent or more disabled as a result of service. The exemption amount varies annually according to income and increases by 3% each year. The 2017 exemption amounts are \$20,763 or \$24,917.

Pennsylvania: A disabled veteran in Pennsylvania may receive a full property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of wartime service. To be eligible a veteran must prove financial need, which according to the state is income less than \$87,212. Veterans whose income exceeds that value may still be eligible.

Rhode Island: A disabled veteran in Rhode Island may receive a property tax exemption on his/her primary residence. The exemption amount varies based on county, the value of the property and the exemption category that the veteran qualifies for. There are seven categories: Veterans' regular exemption, Unmarried Widow of Qualified Veteran, Totally Disabled Veteran, Partially Disabled Veteran, Gold Star Parents' exemption, Prisoner of War exemption and Specially Adapted Housing exemption.

South Carolina: A disabled veteran in South Carolina may receive a full property tax exemption if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of service. The disability rating from the Department of Veterans Affairs must include one of the following conditions: paraplegia, hemiplegia or quadriplegia, Parkinsons, Multiple Sclerosis (MS), or Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). A Homestead exemption is available for all persons over 65 and/or totally and permanently disabled.



South Dakota: A disabled veteran in South Dakota may receive a property tax exemption of up to \$100,000 on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of service. Paraplegic veterans may receive a full property tax exemption.

Tennessee: A disabled veteran in Tennessee may receive a property tax exemption on the first \$100,000 of his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled and has lost the use of two or more limbs or is blind in both eyes as a result of service. The exemption amount varies by county.

Texas: A totally disabled veteran in Texas may receive a full property tax exemption if the veteran receives 100% disability compensation from the VA and a rating of 100% disabled unemployability. Partially disabled veterans and those over the age of 65 may receive a property tax exemption based on their disability rating and age up to \$12,000.

Utah: A disabled veteran in Utah may receive a property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 10 percent or more disabled as a result of service. The maximum exemption amount available to qualified veterans is \$253,264. Active duty armed forces personnel may receive a full property tax exemption if he/she is deployed out-of-state for military duty.

Vermont: A disabled veteran in Vermont may receive a property tax exemption of at least \$10,000 on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 50 percent or more disabled as a result of service. The exemption amount varies as each town votes on the amount. The maximum exemption amount allowed by the state is \$40,000.

Virginia: A disabled veteran in Virginia may receive a full property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of service.

(continued....)



Washington: A disabled veteran in Washington may receive a property tax exemption on his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of service. The exemption amount is based on income, as determined by the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs. Veterans with less than a 100% disability rating may receive a partial exemption.

West Virginia: A 100 percent disabled veteran or any veteran over the age of 65 in West Virginia is exempt from paying taxes on the first \$20,000 of assessed value on a self-occupied property if the veteran was a resident of the state at the time they enter military service.

Wisconsin: A disabled veteran in Wisconsin may receive a property tax credit on their state income tax return for his/her primary residence if the veteran is 100 percent disabled as a result of service or has a 100 percent SCD rating. The veteran must have lived in WI when they entered into service or for a 5 year period after entering. The exemption amount varies.

Wyoming: A veteran in Wyoming may receive a property tax exemption of \$3,000 of the assessed value of his/her primary residence if the veteran has lived in the state for 3 or more years and served during a period of war. Disabled veterans are eligible for the same exemption.

District of Columbia: A veteran must be over the age of 65 or disabled in order to qualify for a property tax exemption in the District of Columbia. The exemption reduces the veteran's property tax by 50 percent. To qualify the veteran must own at least 50 percent of the property and annual income cannot exceed \$100,000.

Source:

<https://www.veteransunited.com/futurehomeowners/veteran-property-tax-exemptions-by-state/>

Our further research indicates the following property tax exemptions are available to vets from:

Puerto Rico: There are several types of property tax exemptions, each with its own eligibility criteria and level of exemption ranging from \$500 up.

Virgin Islands: The first \$20,000 of the assessed value is not taxable for Veterans and Widows/Widowers if the owner occupies at least a portion of the property full-time. The maximum exemption in any situation is \$20,000.00 or \$250.00 in tax.

Note:

We recommend to all veterans and particularly veterans with disabilities to check with their state/county/city what, if any, benefits are available to them. A web search stating "Veterans Benefits" and naming your state/locale should produce results.

173rd Down Not Out

BIEN HOA, (USARV-IO) -- A platoon of 173rd Airborne Brigade paratroopers was pinned down for two hours on Oct. 5 (1965) when an estimated VC reinforced company fired at them from prepared positions.

The platoon was part of a battalion-sized 173rd sweep operation in War Zone "D", 22 miles northwest of Bien Hoa.

Artillery fire was called in and the Viet Cong broke contact, leaving at least seven dead behind. Over-all American casualties were described as light.

Source: *The Army Reporter*, October 9, 1965



The cost of war...a dead Viet Cong.
(Photo by Mike Sturges, A/2/503)





2/503d Sky Soldier of the Year ~ 2017 Desmond "Hammer" Jackson, 1SGT C/2/503d, '65/'66 RVN



The "Hammer", a one-of-a-kind Sky Soldier.

Selected by his peers, and which speaks for every soldier who served in Charlie Company 2/503 in 1965/66, we are honored to name 1st Sgt. Desmond "Hammer" Jackson, our 2/503 Sky Soldier of the Year for 2017.

Sometime ago three troopers from Charlie Company during that period visited together in Puerto Rico and they spent much of the week discussing events surrounding the "Hammer". They agreed that if a movie was made of the Unit in Vietnam no one could play the role of 1st Sgt Jackson, not Morgan Freeman nor John Wayne. The Hammer would have to come out of retirement and play that role himself. He could not be imitated. He had already won the highest award that any manager, any leader can win---he has won the loyalty, admiration and respect of everyone who served under him. Many of his men believe they would not be alive today had it not been for him.

Memories of the Hammer performing heroic deeds in combat are many and include the events of 14 Mar '66. On that day, reports Larry Cox of C/2/503, "I was wounded and he was the first one to me. The instant that he hit the ground beside me I knew that I was going to make it. He stayed with me until Doc Brown arrived. When Doc Brown did what he could do the Hammer

returned and picked up my pack, weapon and a role of commo wire that I had been carrying. He then picked me up like a rag doll with one arm under my shoulders and the other under my legs. He was having trouble with the commo wire so he placed it on my stomach and told me to hold it. He carried me only about 50 feet when he nodded toward an ant hill which had a strand of wire leading into it. It obviously contained a mine which had malfunctioned or had not been detonated. He said "let's get to hell out of here" and he began to run through the brush. As he crashed thru the brush he jumped over obstacles like an Olympic high jump champion. At some point I lost control of that God awful role of wire and it fell between his legs and tripped him. He and both packs and weapons landed on top of me. Hammer then got up and started to pick me up again. I said "1st Sergeant, I think I can walk." He then put his arm around me and supported me as we walked back to the area which Capt. Faley had secured for the medivac choppers.

The last time I saw him he was standing under the chopper as I was being pulled up. I can still vividly see him and Capt. Faley standing there by the three bodies of the men who died that day."

Many of 1st Sgt. Jackson's men have proudly stated, he is the strongest man, both mentally and physically, that they have ever known. He was courageous to the point of being totally fearless. He was always a "first responder" when one of his troopers needed help and he did so with no concern for his own safety.

A characteristic which he shared with other great leaders is that he was loyal to those under him! He took care of his men and really cared for them. And the admiration from his troopers he earned over half a century ago, is as strong and meaningful today as it was then.

1st Sgt. Desmond "Hammer" Jackson is truly deserving to be our 2/503d SKY SOLDIER OF THE YEAR!



The Hammer, with his men in the boonies.



An Airborne shout out to the Gyrynes...

Face of Defense: Captain Lives His Childhood Dream in Marine Corps

By Marine Corps Capt. Jordan Cochran
24th Marine Expeditionary Unit



ABOARD USS BATAAN, Aug. 9, 2017 — Ever since Marine Corps Capt Dakota Herpich was a boy in Rolla, Missouri, he knew he wanted to be a Marine. On Sept. 11, 2001, a sixth-grade teacher entered his classroom and turned on the television.

"I remember him running in and turning the TV on, when I saw the towers fall I remember being confused," Herpich said. "I couldn't comprehend the hatred someone must have felt towards us to do such a thing. But that opened my eyes to a world outside my little corner. It showed me that there are people all over the world that needed my help."

When he was little, Herpich said, A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft occasionally flew over his house near Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

"I always wanted to fly them," he said. "That's when I started reading every book I could get my hands on [that was] military-related. I basically cleaned my school library out of books that had anything to do with the military. There were a couple of books that were Marine Corps history books, and that was what truly spiked my interest in the Corps. It made me want to join the Marines to help people who can't help themselves"

Helping People in Need

Herpich first got his wish to help those in need in October, when he deployed to Haiti as part of Joint Task Force Matthew with the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit to assist in humanitarian and disaster relief operations after Hurricane Matthew caused widespread flooding and damage there.

"My team and I provided aircraft security each time they touched down at the airfields," he said. "With the lack of security present from airport security teams, coupled with the state of the country, protecting our assets on the deck was vital."

On the first flight out, he said, his team conducted an island survey.

"We flew over the entire island, getting eyes on the areas of interest and the most hard-hit areas to assess where to distribute aid," he added. "I knew this is why I joined the Corps. I was proud to be there and only wished we could have done more."

Responsibilities During Deployment

Herpich is deployed with the 24th MEU, serving aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Bataan as the officer in charge of the law enforcement detachment, responsible for the MEU's military working dogs, a forensics lab, personal security details and detainee handling. The 24th MEU is operating in Europe and the Middle East, providing crisis response and contingency support for combatant commanders, including maritime security operations, humanitarian assistance and advance force operations.

"I appreciate all the thoughts and prayers I get from back home," Herpich said. "It means a lot when we're out here."

Recalling his own childhood dream, the captain said boys and girls who are interested in joining the military will find it worthwhile if they do. "If someone wants to join the Marines, I would say take it seriously and work hard," he said. "You will have opportunities you never would dream of in a million years."

After his deployment, which is expected to end next month, Herpich said, he hopes to become an instructor to mentor the next generation of Marine Corps officers.

Source: U.S. Department of Defense
govdelivery@subscriptions.dod.mil



Semper Fi brother!



President Trump Unveils New Afghanistan, South Asia Strategy

By Jim Garamone

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

August 21, 2017



Trump: "Troops Deserve Plan for Victory".

WASHINGTON, Aug. 21, 2017 — President Donald J. Trump unveiled an expansive new strategy for South Asia aimed at bolstering American security.

The new strategy encompasses Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, the Central Asian nations and extends into Southeast Asia. He stressed the strategy will not have artificial timelines built into it.

Trump spoke before a crowd of hundreds of service members at Conmy Hall at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall in Virginia.

Trump said the American people are frustrated by the nation's longest war in Afghanistan, calling it a war without victory. The new strategy, he said, is a path toward victory and will step away from a policy of nation building.

The new strategy, Trump said, is a result of a study he ordered immediately after he was inaugurated in January. The strategy is based on three precepts.

"First, our nation must seek an honorable and enduring outcome worthy of the tremendous sacrifices

that have been made, especially the sacrifices of lives," Trump said. *The men and women who serve our nation in combat deserve a plan for victory. They deserve the tools they need and the trust they have earned to fight and to win."*

No Hasty Exit

Trump said the second precept is that a hasty exit from Afghanistan would simply allow terrorists to flood back into that country and begin planning attacks on America and its allies and partners.

The third precept, he said, concerns the threats emanating from the region, which are immense and must be confronted.

"Today, 20 U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organizations are active in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the highest concentration in any region anywhere in the world," the president said. *"For its part, Pakistan often gives safe haven to agents of chaos, violence and terror. The threat is worse because Pakistan and India are two nuclear-armed states whose*

tense relations threaten to spiral into conflict. And that could happen."

The United States and its allies and partners are committed to defeating these terrorist groups, Trump said.

"Terrorists who slaughter innocent people will find no glory in this life or the next," he said. *"They are nothing but thugs and criminals and predators and -- that's right -- losers."*

Trump added, *"Working alongside our allies, we will break their will, dry up their recruitment, keep them from crossing our borders, and, yes, we will defeat them, and we will defeat them handily."*

In Afghanistan and Pakistan, the United States will work to stop the resurgence of safe havens that enable terrorists to threaten America, Trump said.

(continued....)



“And we must prevent nuclear weapons and materials from coming into the hands of terrorists and being used against us, or anywhere in the world, for that matter,” he said.

Conditions-Based Strategy

Trump emphasized the strategy will be conditions based and not set to a timetable. *“I’ve said it many times how counterproductive it is for the United States to announce in advance the dates we intend to begin or end military options,”* the president said. *“We will not talk about numbers of troops or our plans for further military activities. Conditions on the ground, not arbitrary timetables, will guide our strategy from now on. America’s enemies must never know our plans or believe they can wait us out.”*

Trump said the new strategy will involve all aspects of American power, employing diplomacy, economic might, intelligence and military power to advance American interests and ensure the safety of the homeland and American allies and partners.

The United States, he added, will continue to support the Afghan government and its military.

“Ultimately, it is up to the people of Afghanistan to take ownership of their future, to govern their society and to achieve an everlasting peace,” Trump said. *“We are a partner and a friend, but we will not dictate to the Afghan people how to live or how to govern their own complex society. We are not nation building again. We are killing terrorists.”*

Trump said Pakistan is a major concern, and he said Pakistan must stop providing safe havens for terrorists who rest and refit for actions in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

“Pakistan has much to gain from partnering with our effort in Afghanistan,” the president said. *“It has much to lose by continuing to harbor criminals and terrorists.”*

Pakistan Must Change

Trump noted that Pakistan has worked with the United States in the past, but the nations’ policies must change.

“No partnership can survive a country’s harboring of militants and terrorists who target U.S. service members and officials,” Trump said. *“It is time for Pakistan to demonstrate its commitment to civilization, order and to peace.”*

Trump said India will be a key component in any strategy in the region, and the president wants to work with India’s leaders to provide more economic assistance and targeted development to the people of Afghanistan.

“We are committed to pursuing our shared objectives for peace and security in South Asia and the broader Indo-Pacific region,” he said.

The president pledged that service members will have the rules of engagement they need to take swift, decisive actions. *“I have already lifted restrictions the previous administration placed on our warfighters that prevented the secretary of defense and our commanders in the field from fully and swiftly waging battle against the enemy,”* he said. *“Micromanagement from Washington, D.C., does not win battles. They’re won in the field, drawing upon the judgment and expertise of wartime commanders, and front-line soldiers, acting in real time with real authority, and with a clear mission to defeat the enemy.”*



‘Victory Will Have a Clear Definition’

The president described what he believes victory will look like. *“From now on, victory will have a clear definition: Attacking our enemies, obliterating ISIS, crushing al-Qaida, preventing the Taliban from taking over Afghanistan, and stopping mass terror attacks against America before they emerge,”* he said.

NATO allies and global partners like Australia will support the new strategy and have already pledged additional troops and funding increases, the president said.

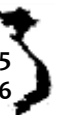
Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said he has directed Marine Corps Gen. Joe Dunford, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to prepare to carry out the president’s strategy. *“I will be in consultation with the secretary general of NATO and our allies -- several of which have also committed to increasing their troop numbers,”* Mattis said in a written statement.

“Together, we will assist the Afghan security forces to destroy the terrorist hub.”

The president concluded his speech speaking directly to service members in the hall and around the world. *“With our resolve, we will ensure that your service and that of your families will bring about the defeat of our enemies and the arrival of peace,”* Trump said. *“We will push onward to victory with power in our hearts, courage in our souls and everlasting pride in each and every one of you.”*

Source:

U.S. Department of Defense





The Price Paid by Sky Soldiers of the 173d ABCT During the War in Afghanistan, to Date

~ OUR KIA ~



2005



- SFC Matthew D. Blaskowski, 9/23/07
- CPT David A. Boris, 11/12/07
- MAJ Thomas G. Bostick, 7/27/07
- SGT Joshua C. Brennan, 10/26/07
- 1SG Michael S. Curry, 7/23/07
- PFC Adam J. Davis, 7/23/07
- CPT Matthew C. Ferrara, 11/9/07
- SSG William R. Fritsche, 7/27/07
- SSG Michael J. Gabel, 12/12/07
- SPC Brian L. Gorham, 12/31/07
- 1LT Benjamin J. Hall, 7/31/07
- SGT Adrian E. Hike, 11/12/07
- SPC Christopher S. Honaker, 7/5/07
- SGT Travon T. Johnson, 7/23/07
- SPC Joseph M. Lancour, 11/9/07
- CPL Sean K. Langevin, 11/9/07
- PFC Jacob M. Lowell, 6/2/07
- SPC Hugo V. Mendoza, 10/25/07
- SGT Jeffery S. Mersman, 11/09/07
- PFC Joseph A. Miracle, 7/5/07
- PFC Christopher F. Pfeifer, 9/25/07
- PFC Juan S. Restrepo, 7/22/07
- PFC Jessy S. Rogers, 7/23/07
- CPL Lester G. Roque, 11/9/07
- SSG Larry I. Rouble, 10/23/07
- SPC Matthew D. Taylor, 9/26/07
- PFC Timothy R. Vimoto, 6/5/07
- PFC Thomas R. Wilson, 8/27/07

- SSG Damion G. Campbell, 8/26/05
- PFC Joseph Cruz, 10/16/05
- SSG John G. Doles, 9/30/05
- SSG Troy S. Ezernack, 10/9/05
- CPL Daniel J. Freeman, 4/6/05
- SPC Blake W. Hall, 8/21/05
- CPL Emmanuel Hernandez, 6/8/05
- 1LT Derek S. Hines, 9/1/05
- 1LT Joshua M. Hyland, 8/21/05
- SGT Michael R. Lehmler, 8/21/05
- SFC John Morton, 12/15/05
- PVT Christopher L. Palmer, 8/21/05
- SSG Michael W. Schafer, 7/25/05
- CPL Matthew, P. Steyart, 11/22/05
- CPL Sascha Struble, 4/6/05
- CPL Steven C. Tucker, 5/21/05
- SSG Romanes L. Woodward, 4/6/05

2007



SGT Joshua C. Blaney, 12/12/07



2008

(2008 continued...)



SPC Sergio S. Abad, 7/13/08
 CPL Jonathan R. Ayers, 7/13/08
 CPL Jason M. Bogar, 7/13/08
 1LT Jonathan P. Brostrom, 7/13/08
 SGT Ryan J. Connolly, 6/24/08
 SPC James M. Finley, 5/31/08
 SGT Israel Garcia, 7/13/2008
 CPL Jason Hovater, 7/13/08
 SFC Matthew R. Kahler, 1/26/08
 CPL Matthew B. Phillips, 7/13/08
 CPL Pruitt A. Rainey, 7/13/08
 SPC Willington M. Rhoads, 7/16/08
 PV2 Andrew J. Shields, 5/31/08
 CPL Gunnar W. Zwilling, 7/13/08

2010

SSG Vinson B. Adkinson, 8/31/10
 SGT Raymond C. Alcaraz, 8/31/10
 SG Luca T. Beachnaw, 1/13/10
 PFC Nicholas S. Cook, 3/7/10
 SGT Louis R. Fastuca, 7/5/10
 PFC Matthew E. George, 8/31/2010
 SPC Matthew R. Hennigan, 6/30/10
 PFC Russell E. Madden, 6/23/10
 PFC James A. Page, 8/31/10



2012

PFC Shane W. Cantu, 8/28/12
 PFC Theodore M. Glende, 7/27/12
 SGT Jonathan A. Gollnitz, 9/26/12
 SPC Justin L. Horsley, 7/22/12
 SPC James A. Justice, 8/17/12

PFC Andrew J. Keller, 8/15/12
 SFC Daniel T. Metcalfe, 9/29/12
 SGT Enrique Mondragon, 12/24/12
 SGT Kyle B. Osborn, 9/13/12
 1LT Stephen C. Prasnicky, 6/27/12
 PFC Adam C. Ross, 7/24/12
 PFC Brenden N. Salazar, 7/22/12
 SSG Orion N. Sparks, 9/26/12



Lest We Forget

Source:
 The 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial Website
www.173dairbornememorial.org

(Random 173d ABCT web photos added)



Marauders in the night: Soldiers prepare for realistic combat in European exercise

By Sgt. David Vermilyea July 24, 2017



Paratroopers assigned to 1st Squadron 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade conduct cold load training, then an air assault mission in conjunction with Hungary's Air Force and Army during Saber Guardian 17. Saber Guardian 17 is an annual, multi-national exercise that aims to assure our Allies and partners of the enduring U.S. commitment to the collective defense and prosperity of the Black Sea region. (Photo Credit: Sgt. David Vermilyea)

SZOLNOK, Hungary -- Cool air breezed on determined faces of Saber Guardian participants on the ground, while ambitious airborne paratroopers anticipated their jumpmaster's command 1,000 feet above ground level. Dark plumes of stratus clouds intermittently guarded a full moon as Paratroopers from 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade silhouetted the Hungarian night sky like black paint droplets on a charcoal canvas at approximately 1:00 a.m. on July 16, 2017.

The airborne operation, part of Exercise Black Swan, is one piece of Saber Guardian 17, an annual exercise spanning across the Black Sea region, with 23 allied and partner nations and more than 25,000 participating military personnel.

Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment's role in the exercise is to work together with Hungarian Army and Air Force assets and conduct a multifaceted, complex airborne operation specially geared to reflect realistic combat circumstances.

"They [the Hungarian Army] are treating the mission as a short-notice operation, so they only started their planning in earnest last night," said Lt. Col. Hugh Jones, Commander of 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment. *"For that reason, their higher headquarters have deliberately not given them much information."*

Short-term, short-notice planning scenarios are representative of current real-world combat situations. The mission given to Alpha Troop is comprised of multiple phases, said Jones.

First, paratroopers prepare for and conduct an Airborne Operation at night on a secured airfield, which houses a fleet of American UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters and various Hungarian rotary-wing aircraft, said Jones.



Paratroopers assigned to 1st Squadron 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade conduct an airborne assault in Szolnok, Hungary at night during Exercise Saber Guardian 17. Saber Guardian 17 is an annual, multi-national exercise that aims to assure our Allies and partners of the enduring U.S. commitment to the collective defense and prosperity of the Black Sea region.

(Photo Credit: Sgt. David Vermilyea)

"As a section leader and jumpmaster, I have been looking at everyone's equipment and making sure it's in proper configuration," said section leader and jumpmaster Sgt. Jacob Fink of Alpha Troop. *"Then, later on in the day I'm going to inspect jumpers, put the parachutes on and make sure that all of their equipment is safe and ready to jump with."*

(continued....)



Second, paratroopers move to the helicopters on the airfield and conduct an air assault on the first objective by way of both American and Hungarian helicopters. This is delving into the unknown because unlike the airfield they jump into, it is not secured.

Third, Paratroopers move in tactical formations on the ground to a viable location for the main body to stay while a smaller reconnaissance element detaches and sneaks over to the objective, later returning with valuable information to present their command.

"I will lead my recon section through the objective area along pre-planned checkpoints and routes," added Fink. *"We will establish early-detection sensors and observation posts on areas of interest that we have already identified."*

Finally, paratroopers perform the challenging task of linking up with Hungarian forces, relay the advantageous findings from the recon element to them, and guide them into the objective so the Hungarian soldiers can execute their part of the mission -- actioning the objective.

"That is going to be the biggest point of friction - making contact with the Hungarian forces and getting on the same page," said Fink. *"There will be a lot of moving pieces so we need to make sure that everybody's synchronized."*

Alpha Troop Commander Cpt. Doni Wong understands the high demands of this arduous task for his troop. *"I trust my non-commissioned officers to take care of the mission, and the job,"* said Wong. *"To make the interoperability piece work."*

Interoperability is at the core of Exercise Saber Guardian. To aid the natural process of developing chemistry among different countries, units and branches, 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment and Hungarian forces have deliberately planned to spend time together after the three-day-long mission concludes in order to continue developing their dynamic working relationship through camaraderie.

"We'll sit down and have a big dinner with the Hungarian host nation forces and get to discuss how the mission went with them," said Fink. *"We'll get some time to build relations, and it's always a lot of fun when we do these things."*

While the downtime may be fun, the Sky Soldiers do not lose sight of the importance of the activity.

"We do things that you would never see or do anywhere else in the Army or world. The challenges are high and so are the rewards," said Wong. *"Paratroopers are unlike any other soldiers you'll meet in the Army."*

The Sky Soldiers continually go above and beyond the warrior's call, whether they are in combat or training while concurrently strengthening international alliances.



Paratroopers assigned to 1st Squadron 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade conduct cold load training, then an air assault mission in conjunction with Hungary's Air Force and Army during Saber Guardian 17. Saber Guardian 17 is an annual, multi-national exercise that aims to assure our Allies and partners of the enduring U.S. commitment to the collective defense and prosperity of the Black Sea region. (Photo Credit: Sgt. David Vermileya)

The 173rd Airborne Brigade, based in Vicenza, Italy is the U.S. Army Contingency Response Force in Europe, capable of projecting forces to conduct the full range of military operations across the United States European, Central and Africa Commands' areas of responsibility.

Source: www.army.mil/article/38114/



"THE NAVY INTERCEPT TUNNEL AT MONKEY POINT (STATION "C ")

By Don Abbott
503rd PIR

From the time the first paratrooper hit the inhospitable ground of the Island of Corregidor, early on the morning of 16 February 1945, the men of the 503rd Parachute Regimental Combat Team had heard the sound of explosions and felt the ground shake from the resulting concussion. These explosions began early in the operation with B-25 and A-20 aircraft plastering areas outside the drop zones with 500 pound bombs even while the men were in the air.

These planes also spread a smoke screen to keep Japanese troops in the Eastern part of the Island from spotting the men dropping from the sky in their parachutes.

As the days progressed, the men of the 503rd became conditioned to hearing bombs, grenades and explosions set off by demolition teams seeking to close up bunkers containing Japanese Imperial Marines who could not be flushed out and who rejected any suggestion of capitulation.

Most of the explosions, while not inconsequential, were confined to localized areas. There had been a few spectacular blasts, such as the one which went off inside Malinta Tunnel on the night of 21-22 February. That one shook the island and sent blow-torch-like flames bursting from every entrance to the huge underground system.

But it was the catastrophic detonation of 26 February which set a new standard for magnitude. People outside the 59th Coast Artillery Barracks at Topside when the blast occurred were nearly blown off their feet by the concussion even though they were located over two miles from the explosion. Although the epicenter was out of sight because Malinta Hill and several buildings at Topside intervened, the plume of

smoke and debris could clearly be seen rising several thousand feet into the air. It was later learned large rocks landed on the deck of a Navy destroyer standing off shore over a mile from the explosion.

The 503rd had been fighting on Corregidor for more than a week. The Western portion of the Island had been a killing field for thousands of Japanese troops who had died rather than surrender to inevitable defeat. Combat there, though still rough, had pretty much settled down to mopping up operations. On 24 February, the First Battalion of the 503rd attacked through the 3rd Battalion of the 34th Infantry at Engineers Point with the objective of seizing all the ground on the tail of the Island from the Japanese. The Third Battalion of the 503rd followed and mopped up pockets of resistance bypassed by the First Battalion. The Second Battalion was left to continue the dirty job of digging out and eliminating remaining Japanese still fighting on the head of the Island, including "Topside".

Heavy fighting was experienced as the First Battalion battled its way along Water Tank hill toward the tail of the Island but by the night of 25 February the paratroopers occupied a line on high ground extending from Cavalry Point on the North to Monkey Point to the South. The line overlooked Kindley Landing Field and the tail was in sight. To the East the Island narrowed to a few hundred yards wide.

The Japanese defenders were being concentrated, much as if they were fish in a pocket seine. Some of the Japanese attempted to swim to the Bataan Peninsula which is not much over two miles away at that point. But that was a high risk venture because even if the swimmer could conquer the swiftly flowing currents, there were LCM's and PT Boats patrolling the channel. The Japanese defenders of Corregidor were getting desperate.

Monkey Point was the location of the Navy Intercept Tunnel, also known as Station "C" or Tunnel "Afirm". A little background on that installation is needed to appreciate the story which follows.

In the early 1930's the US Navy established at least two locations to intercept radio communications of the Japanese Imperial Navy. Earlier the Japanese Naval Code had been broken and through the use of "Purple Machines", to the extent the US Navy was able to decipher a good deal of Japanese coded message traffic.

(continued....)



The locations, at first, included Guam and Shanghai, China which were equipped with "Purple Machines". As the Japanese invasion of China brought fighting closer to Shanghai, the Intercept Station there was moved to the Philippines. Station "C" as it was called, was first moved to Olangapo at Subic Bay. Radio reception there, unfortunately, was not favorable because the surrounding hills interfered. Consequently, Station "C" was moved to Marivales and, later, Cavite Naval Base on the Southern shores of Manila Bay. Here the reception was better but the many large electric motors used in the Naval Repair facilities caused serious interference.

The station needed to be moved again and the choice was now a site on Corregidor. The Army, which had supreme control over operations on Corregidor, discouraged the move because they had plans to install a Radio Direction Finding Station of their own and they feared the Naval installation would interfere with that operation. The Army was less than enthusiastic about the Navy locating on its Island of Corregidor because Naval personnel were given much better quarters, had better food and, in general, had higher ratings so their pay was better than the run-of-the-mill Army man.

The Navy unit operating Station "C" was manned with exceptionally intelligent people, needed to operate the high tech facilities, and they demanded comparable perquisites. Regardless of the Army intransigence a construction program for the Navy was begun on Corregidor.

Project Afirm, for the letter "A", was the digging of the intercept tunnel near Monkey Point. Project Baker, for the letter "B", was the installation of the Navy High Frequency Direction Finder station on the tail of the Island. Project "Cast", for the letter "C" undertook the construction of quarters for the Naval personnel not far from the Intercept Tunnel. Station "C" was moved to the Island in October, 1939 and it occupied the newly completed tunnel.

As the siege of Corregidor began soon after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December, 1941, the Army settled down to hold out on Bataan and Corregidor as long as they possibly could, assuming the United States would send reinforcements. The personnel at the Navy Intercept Tunnel, on the other hand, began to be removed from the dangerous location as fast as the Navy could arrange for submarine transportation. These highly trained people had an extremely important role to play in monitoring Japanese secret communications which made it imperative they (1) should not fall into Japanese hands as Prisoners of War, and (2) be moved so they could continue their operations elsewhere. Station "C"

personnel provided information about Japanese Naval operations which made possible US Navy victories in the Coral Sea and at Midway, for example. The last of the personnel from Station "C" were evacuated during March 1942, well ahead of the surrender of Corregidor on 6 May 1942.

Now to return to events taking place during the Liberation of the Island of Corregidor in February 1945.

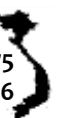
As the 503rd's First and Third Battalions approached the Navy Intercept Tunnel the Navy facility was not difficult to spot because of the virtual forest of at least twenty antenna poles surrounding the site. These poles, some foot and a half in diameter and 30/40 feet high were a dead give-away.

On the morning of 26 February, as the First Battalion was getting ready to resume their attack to the East, a huge explosion went off in the Navy Intercept Tunnel.



The actual cause of that explosion will, undoubtedly, never be known for certain. What is known is that a very large supply of high explosives was set off.

(continued....)



People who were close to the site at the time have two somewhat different theories. One is that the Japanese, occupying the tunnel, chose to commit suicide by setting off the explosion, thereby taking many of the Paratroopers with them. This was not an inconceivable concept considering the Japanese had not hesitated to do the same thing in other locations, but on a much smaller scale. The other version, and the one which seems more likely, is that the explosion was set off accidentally by the tank, sitting on a small mound near the Main Entrance firing into the mouth of the tunnel. The force of the explosion was such that the tank was blown into the air and landed upside down. Whichever version is correct there is no doubt but what the explosion was a catastrophic event. Available records give the number of casualties for 26 February but do not break out those due to this event alone. It appears, however, there were about 30 Paratroopers killed outright and about 125 seriously injured. The real number of injured will never be known since a number of men with cuts and bruises, which would have been considered seriously disabling under other circumstances, did not seek help because they knew others needed help much more than they.



An unknown, but substantial, number of Japanese troopers were killed.

Many stories of the survivors of the explosions abound. Captain Bill Bossert, Company Commander of "A" Company was talking on his walkie-talkie with 2nd Lt. Rene Stievenart who was sheltered behind the tank firing into the entrance of the tunnel. Stievenart was killed instantly as the tank rolled over him. The tank crew, except for one man, Guy Crull, was also killed. Debris from the explosion nearly covered Bossert. The rocks included in the debris pounded down on him and crushed his ribs. Luckily, some of the other men

spotted his plight and came to his rescue, digging him out from the covering debris.

Pfc Carl Bratle happened to be located beside one of the radio antenna poles when the explosion occurred. He could see all the rocks, dirt and rubble in the sky and knew he needed cover to protect him when it came down. He dropped his M-1 and hugged the pole and made himself as compact as he could. Fortunately, most of the stuff missed him. A rock landed on his rifle, however, smashing the wooden stock.

Conventional wisdom over the years since 1945 has been that the Navy Intercept tunnel was completely destroyed on that morning of 26 February 1945. A man, the "foremost authority on Corregidor" (according to a writer for the *National Geographic Magazine*) guided visitors to the middle of a large field of Cogan grass. Immediately to the West of a handball court which is a very prominent landmark near Monkey Point, he tells them "*This was the location of the Navy Intercept Tunnel before it blew up*". He goes on to explain that the explosion was so fierce the area had all the soil skinned off and trees will never grow there.



Looking to the north and east of the handball court a hillside is covered with jungle growth which, when left uncleared or unburned for a season or two, looks too formidable and difficult to explore.

The only available, detailed, large-scale map of the area, updated through 1936, gives no details of the Navy Intercept Tunnel since the tunnel complex was not begun until after 1938 and was completed in 1940. In the area involved, the 1936 map shows a road leading to Kindley field but no other man-made installation nearby.

(continued....)



A retired Navy Captain Duane Whitlock was contacted to see if he could shed any light on the location of the Navy Intercept Tunnel. He had served there as an enlisted radio man during the early days of the Siege and had been evacuated by submarine around the middle of March 1942, as were all the other Navy people serving in the tunnel. This veteran was located through the Naval Cryptologic Veterans Association. That organization compiled a booklet of reminiscences in 1983, a copy of which can be found in the Library of Congress in Washington, DC under the title INTERCEPT STATION "C" from Olongapo through the evacuation of Corregidor 1929-1942.

One of the key questions asked of this veteran was if he recollected where the entrance to the tunnel was located in relationship to the handball wall. He remembered there was a Navy Lieutenant who was a handball enthusiast and that a handball court had been built for him. He also recalled walking from his quarters to the entrance to the tunnel and seeing the handball court on his right. He remembered the tunnel was not far beyond the court.

The field of Cogan grass, in the area near the handball court, was explored with the information provided by Captain Whitlock.

Just to the North of the handball court evidence pointed to the existence of a road leading past it and continuing to the East. It was overgrown with grass, bushes and trees. If it had not been known to exist it would have been very easy to pass over without notice. Following the trace of the road a few yards a concrete wall about five feet high and, perhaps, twenty feet long was found. Upon closer inspection a second retaining wall could be seen. The wall on the right, facing West, was standing. The one on the left, had fallen, or had been blown down and nearly covered what had been a concrete ramp.

This, certainly, seemed to be what was left of the Main Entrance to the Navy Intercept Tunnel! Opposite the entrance, looking to the South, stood a mound of earth and stone, 10 to 15 feet high where the tank, firing into the entrance, was spotted before the explosion.

Directly to the North of the ramp, between the two walls, was a large crater. This could only be seen after the energetic use of a bolo to clear away some of the heavy vegetation choking the crater. It was larger than any of the 1000 pound bomb craters which can be seen around Topside. It was in the range of 50 to 60 feet in diameter. It appeared conventional information was right: the Navy Intercept Tunnel had been completely obliterated in 1945.

A few feet off the road leading to Kindley Landing Field is one of the best examples of a Panama Mount left anywhere on Corregidor. This particular mount covers a full 360 degree traverse and has not been touched by scrappers after the railroad rail around its Perimeter. The 155mm howitzer position may have been part of Battery Levagood, one of the Batteries manned by the 92nd coast Artillery, Philippine Scouts. Since many of the Batteries had more than one gun position a search for more Panama Mounts was begun. Nearby were the ruins of a building which had been constructed of stones held together by cement. The building had been pretty well blasted but it may have been some sort of magazine or shelter relating to Battery Levagood. Continuing on a few yards to the West another blasted structure was found. This one had two concrete walls leading down at about a 45 degree angle for about 30 feet. It looked like the walls of a stairway. The significance of this facility was not immediately clear.

Continuing to beat around the mixed cogan grass/brushy area just to the North of the Topside-Kindley Field Road a huge hole in the surface comes in view. Care must be taken not to fall in. The hole is about 15 feet in diameter. A rock tossed into the hole seems to take forever before hitting the bottom. Laying against one side of the hole is what appears to be a concrete air shaft. A flashlight on a cord lowered down the shaft reveals a depth of about 45 feet! Putting together some of what had been learned from the Cryptological Association book and what could be seen on the ground: (1) the walls down the hill appeared to be the Main Entrance to the Navy Intercept Tunnel, (2) the two walls leading downward at a 45 degree angle seemed to the "Exit, 100 steps" shown on the Cryptological Association stylized drawing of the tunnel and (3) it seemed logical to assume there would be an air shaft even if it had not been shown on the stylized drawing. It became clear these all must be part of the tunnel which was thought to have been obliterated.



(continued....)



The hole, or void, around the air shaft is a mystery but one guess of how it could have been made has some merit. A hole must have been dug from the surface down to the tunnel below. Forms were built to form an air shaft and concrete poured. Afterward dirt must have been back-filled to fill the void. This dirt would be weaker, or less compact, than the ground around it. The huge explosion on 26 February 1945, looking for relief must have ejected the back-filled earth like a volcanic eruption. That must have been a sensational sight!

Although the entrance, the two walls leading down and the air shaft appeared to have been part of the Navy Intercept Tunnel, there were some problems, however, in fitting the parts together since the two walls leading down were a long way from the Main Entrance down the hill. The Navy Captain had said the whole tunnel was about 150 to 200 feet long. If these were three parts of the navy Intercept Tunnel it was hard to visualize how they fit.

At the walls leading down (the "Exit") a closer look at the bottom of the caved in portion showed two small holes, perhaps six inches in diameter, on the opposite sides of a large boulder. Several days later these finds were shown to a visitor. He was a sinewy fellow from Los Angeles who is nearly a professional explorer and adventurer, travelling to many parts of the world seeking interesting experiences. He began digging around the boulder with his survival knife until he dislodged it. It dropped down the hole and could be heard rumbling for a scary length of time before it came to a crashing stop. This hole was part of a lot larger open area below. He continued to enlarge the hole until he could get his head in with a flashlight. He could see a good deal of space below. The hole was further enlarged until it was just large enough for his slim body to slip through. Using a 30 foot rope to belay him, he disappeared down the hole. He was gone for, probably, a half hour. When he returned he had several pieces of human bone, a rubber Japanese shoe sole and a leather shoe sole which seemed too large for a Japanese person. Underground facilities always raise a question of whether there is enough air for a person to safely, explore. When asked about the air in the hole the explorer said there was lots of fresh air since he had been all the way to the air shaft and that the shaft around the hole provided lots of air. Surprisingly, he said there was no way to get into the air shaft from the void around it.

After nearly a month, exploration of the area around the Navy Intercept Tunnel at Monkey Point came to an end for 1989. All of these thoughts remained. What had actually been found? Was this all, really, a part of

the Navy Intercept Tunnel or was it something else? How extensive was the tunnel? Was it possible for someone, not as agile as the fellow from Los Angeles, to get into and explore the Tunnel?

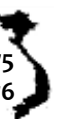


In April 1990 the writer and Ed McCarthy returned to Corregidor to make a video tape. The purpose of the project was to tape facilities on the Island before they were further destroyed by "scrapers" and the passage of time. Ed was born on Corregidor prior to World War II while his father was a high ranking non-commissioned officer stationed at the headquarters of Fort Mills. Ed retired from the Navy in 1989 as a Chief Warrant Officer. He had been on active duty, stationed at Subic Bay flying drones. Later he worked for a civilian contractor and lived on Luzon performing the same job he had while in the service.

Although Ed was very familiar with Corregidor, he knew little about the Navy Intercept tunnel at Monkey Point. Introduced to the findings of the previous year he, too, was greatly intrigued. Ed, a friend Mike Nargatan and Noel (a young Filipino who must have had about a 25-inch waist line) went to the Monkey Point area together. At what had by now become known to us as the "back door" in our minds, a rope was tied to a tree growing in the caved-in entry area. The three fellows went down into the tunnel.

The hole was large enough for them to get through but too small for the writer to attempt so he stayed on top in case they ran into trouble. After about a half hour the rope, finally, began to wiggle indicating someone was coming up. A call down the hole "who is coming?" brought no answer. Surprisingly, a head appeared and a young man climbed out. He was one of four young men from the Faith Academy in Manila. In 1989 the writer had shown him, and a group of other young men, around the Island but had not seen them since. The Faith Academy is a school for offspring of parents who are missionaries in the South Western Pacific area. These young men had climbed down roots growing along the side of the void around the air shaft.

(continued....)



Later during the stay on Corregidor, Ed and the writer collaborated with Captain Daniel Howell, USMC, retired, who lived in a small home he had built in James Ravine. Danny had three Filipinos working for him. He volunteered to have his men enlarge the hole into the tunnel so we could more easily get through. This they did and we could all now get into the tunnel. Some video footage was made of the inside of the tunnel and some measurements and compass readings taken.

When first entering the hole, a long, very steep slope leads down at about a 45 degree angle. A rope is very helpful in the decent because there are several drop-offs of four or five feet. At the bottom of the slope the tunnel levels off and there is a good deal of room. Offhand, it appeared the tunnel walls must be at least 12 feet wide and, perhaps, even higher. The walls and ceiling are raw rock and dirt although there are signs they, at one time, had a concrete lining. This lining, however, has, mostly, been destroyed. At the place where the tunnel levels off there are two side laterals. The one to the left, or Northeast, is the longest. Crawling under the concrete tunnel lining, which has been badly blasted, one can go back about 38 feet from the main lateral. At the rear of this side lateral many objects shaped somewhat like grenades are strewn around the floor. They are about 3 inches in diameter and 4 or 5 inches long. It is difficult to determine what material they were made of. They are crumbly like they might be rusted iron but the color is darker than rust, almost like carbon. Whether these objects were left over from Station "C" days or whether they were Japanese is hard to determine. Danny guessed these might have been fuses of some sort and that could very well be correct. The side lateral on the right, or Southwest is much shorter than the other, measuring 12 feet. There is little detail in the short lateral from which to determine its possible use. Perhaps it was the office of the Naval commander of the station. The larger lateral had been used to house the "Purple Machine".

Continuing straight ahead (to the Southeast), the tunnel leads to a cross tunnel. To the right (Southwest) about 50 feet is the opening, or void, around the air shaft. Here it is light and airy. The thought, however, comes to mind: "people toss stones down from above to see how deep the hole is--what if someone else finds the opening on the surface and decided to see how deep it is?" It did not seem to make much sense to stay in the open very long. Moving on to the Southwest a short distance, the tunnel, reaches a point where there is only room enough to crawl. After about 33 feet from the shaft the tunnel is completely blocked all the way to

the ceiling. This point appears to be under the road to Kindley Field.

There is a lot of debris throughout the tunnel and the floor is very irregular, almost wavy. There are places where debris is piled high and other places where it must be close to the original floor level. This debris probably came from a combination of the big blast in 1945 and many years of the ceiling sloughing off loose material. It is possible Japanese, digging for the bones of their comrades, may have thrown spoil up into piles sometimes nearly reaching the ceiling, although there is no evidence of the Japanese exploring the tunnel ruins. That raises a question: was the tunnel blocked as a result of the explosion in 1945 or was it thrown up by digging Japanese? Even with piles of rubble, the ceiling is high enough in most places to stand up. Some of the walls of the tunnel are lined with reinforced concrete but most of the lining appears to have been blasted loose by the explosion in 1945.



Main entrance



Diesel exhaust vent

(continued....)





Roof detail

The exception is, when, instead of turning to the right at the end of the lateral, one takes a turn to the left and heads Northeast. Here there are several places where a person has to crawl. Eventually, following the tunnel becomes an exercise in “slithering”. After a while the floor begins to climb rapidly, much the same as in the slope where we entered.

Following this lead, slithering and climbing for quite a distance with surprisingly good air the tunnel eventually comes up to near the surface at the facilities noted near the Panama Mount. It had become evident there had to be another opening nearby since, at times, there was actually a stiff breeze blowing past which raised a powdery dust. Finally a point is reached where the tunnel is blocked. But off to the side daylight shows. In fact sunlight actually shows through a hole, perhaps, a foot in diameter. That was much too small to climb through.

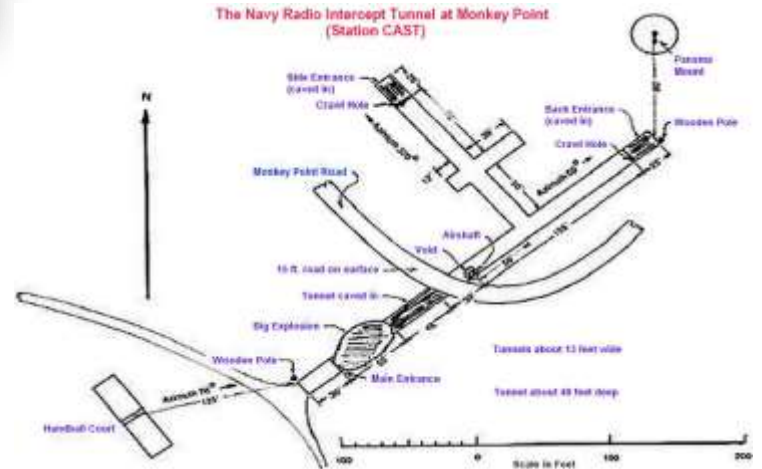
Returning to the intersection between the tunnels, measurements of the distance between the hole and the intersection appeared to be about 90 feet apart. These measurements cannot be precise because of the uneven ground and the question of, exactly, where to measure from and to.

Returning to the surface, compass bearings were taken at the same azimuth observed in the tunnel below. Following this bearing on the surface for the distance between the shaft and the small hole where sunlight had been seen, one arrives at the ruins of the facility which, originally, was thought might be a store for the Panama Mount.

Once the layout of the tunnel complex began to become clear, other details began to emerge. Two iron pipes had been observed while down in the tunnel. They lead from a short distance above the tunnel floor and into the top of the tunnel. At the time they were only interesting observations. Later, in discussions with Captain Whitlock, it was learned one of the pipes was an exhaust for a diesel electric power generator. The other handled the exhaust from air conditioning equipment.

All the observations on the surface and in the underground portion of the facilities began to make the

layout clear. The entrance, previously thought to be the rear exit was, in reality, an entrance to the main lateral, leading to the North East from the main tunnel. The new hole found at the Northern end of the main tunnel was connected with the “Exit, 100 steps” shown in the stylized sketch. Beyond the blocked spot to the South of the airshaft was the part of the tunnel which was destroyed by the explosion in 1945.



Many years have passed since that cataclysmic day when the Navy Intercept Tunnel blew up. Now visitors can walk around the area without fear of the earth shaking and rocks, dirt and other debris being blasted all over Monkey Point.

During all those years survivors and others interested in the story of the Navy Intercept Tunnel have accepted the concept the facility was completely destroyed by the blast. This study shows that supposition to be wrong. The Navy Intercept Tunnel was not completely destroyed by the blast! It was badly damaged, that is certain. But a good deal of the complex still remains in a recognizable condition.

Although no physical indication was found of other visitors having entered open parts of the Tunnel, it is believed the people mentioned in this study were the first to enter the tunnel and fully understand what they were seeing.



Wreckage of the Murder Inc. at Monkey Pt.

[This report courtesy of 503rd Heritage Battalion website]



Rare Pics from a Sky Soldier Extraordinaire

These first four I found posted by a Nick Forney on the Internet who got them from a WWII army film processor. They show Manila Bay on Corregidor and the 503 PIR combat jump on 16 February 1945.

The 503d pics are rare. Another is of our Junction City jump.

The newspaper article on Gen. Williamson is self-explanatory (following page).

Best to you and your family old bud.

Jerry Hassler, Sgt.

HHC/2/503 Commo & Recon Platoons, '66/'67



503d Troopers land inside courtyard on Corregidor.



Another view of the Airborne assault in the Philippines.



The "Rock" peppered with chutes and liberators.



Sky Soldiers make their combat blast in RVN, Feb. '67



Some of the brave souls landed in Manila Bay.

(Jerry's submission continued....)





Lt. Gen. Paul Caraway, Commanding General, USARYIS and IX Corps and Mrs. Williamson each pin a Silver Star on newly promoted Brig. Gen. Ellis W. Williamson, Commanding General, 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate)
 (Photo by Sp5 Greer)

Gen Caraway Makes Presentation At USARYIS Headquarters Company

FORT BUCKNER (IO) – On the occasion of his promotion, Brigadier General Ellis W. Williamson, Commanding General, 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate), was honored by his command in a traditional ceremony held at the Brigade Headquarters, Thursday, August 1.

As General Williamson returned to his Command Post, after receiving official notice of his elevation in rank, he was met by an honor guard from Company D, 16th Armor, which presented arms as their newly promoted Commanding General alighted from his sedan. At the same time the drums and bugles of the Brigade’s band sounded “Ruffles and Flourishes,” followed by the “Generals March,” which his one-starred personal flag was run in the head of....
held in General Williamson’s honor at 173d Brigade Headquarters, as did Mr. Eikaru Nakamura, Mayor of Kita-Nakagusuku Son, who was a guest of the Brigade. An informal reception was held for General Williamson and his family in the Brigade Headquarters following the ceremony.



VA Unveils Claims Submission Option That Promises to Complete Claims within 30 Days

09/07/2017

WASHINGTON — Today, as part of the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) continued efforts to improve timeliness of services for Veterans and their families, VA unveiled the Decision Ready Claims (DRC) initiative, a disability claims submission option with accredited Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) that promises to deliver faster claims decisions to Veterans and their families.

“The DRC initiative is a collaborative effort between VA and VSOs to help Veterans receive faster decisions on disability claims,” said VA Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin. *“VA works closely with participating VSOs to make sure they are properly trained in this new process and given the tools they need to participate successfully in the program on behalf of the Veterans they serve.”* Veterans who choose to submit their claim under DRC can expect to receive a decision within 30 days from the time VA receives the claim. VSOs will ensure all supporting evidence — such as medical exams, military service records, etc. — is included with the claim submission. This advance preparation by the VSOs allows claims to be assigned immediately to claims processors for a quick decision.

DRC was first implemented May 1, 2017, at the St. Paul (Minn.) Regional Office, and is now available at all VA regional offices. While DRC is currently limited to claims for increased compensation (commonly known as claims for increase), and requires Veterans to work with VSOs, VA’s goal is to expand the types of claims accepted under the initiative and allow Veterans other ways to submit their claim under DRC.

DRC is another key step in aggressively modernizing VA’s benefits delivery to Veterans in a fully digital operating environment. With electronic claims processing as a foundation, VA’s innovation will improve service to Veterans, their families, and survivors.

Source: Veterans Affairs



Army Paratroopers Test New Artillery Targeting System at Fort Bragg

08/25/2017 12:37 PM CDT



By Leon Price

Airborne and Special Operations Test Directorate,
U.S. Army Operational Test Command



Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 319th Field Artillery Regiment, perform a combat equipment airborne jump with the new Joint Effects Targeting System -- JETS -- during operational testing at Fort Bragg, N.C., June 15, 2017. Once on the ground, soldiers test the system to ensure it still functions. (Army photo)

FORT BRAGG, N.C., Aug. 25, 2017 — Forward observers -- experts in calling for artillery and mortar fire and directing that ordnance onto enemy targets -- hit the mark in testing a new piece of targeting equipment here recently.

"Black Falcon" Army paratroopers of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 319th Field Artillery Regiment, tested the effectiveness and durability of the Joint Effects Targeting System, a modular, soldier-portable, handheld, day/night, all-weather, target observation, location and designation system.

JETS components include a handheld target location module, a laser marker module and a precision azimuth vertical angle module, all items mounted atop a tripod.

Collecting Data

Army Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Orouke, a test noncommissioned officer with the U.S. Army Operational Test Command's Airborne and Special Operations Test Directorate, said JETS testing collects data to determine the system's suitability, reliability and survivability when conducting static line airborne operations, in a door bundle configuration for airdrops.

HHB troopers spent four days in New Equipment Training from the Program Manager Soldier Precision Targeting Devices office out of Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Army Sgt. 1st Class Juan Cruz, assistant JETS test NCO, said that NET places the soldiers in practical exercises to test the equipment.

After NET validation, Orouke said the "Black Falcons" put JETS through its paces by performing seven combat equipment jumps and several door bundle drops, making sure that JETS still functions after it reaches the ground.

After each airborne operation, forward observers assembled the equipment, and began identifying and designating enemy personnel and vehicle targets in day and night conditions.

Targets were arrayed over rolling terrain from 800 meters to over 2,500 meters away. Test data was then gathered to prepare a report, so senior

Army leaders can make procurement decisions on JETS.

Testing

"Operational testing provides soldiers the opportunity to use, work with and offer up their suggestions on pieces of equipment that can impact development of systems that future soldiers will use in combat," said Army Col. Brad Mock, the director of Army Airborne testing.

Upon completion of testing, JETS could potentially be issued to Army light and airborne artillery forces worldwide.

Source:

www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1290364/army-paratroopers-test-new-artillery-targeting-system-at-fort-bragg/source/GovDelivery/



White Supremacist In Charlottesville Wearing 82nd Airborne Hat Gets Called Out...By 82nd Airborne

The elite paratrooper unit continues to battle fascism – but now on American Soil

By Dominique Mosbergen



The 82nd Airborne Division fought several campaigns against Nazi Germany during World War II. So after a man in a hat bearing the elite Army paratrooper unit's insignia was pictured throwing a Ku Klux Klan salute (which resembles and is sometimes mistaken for a Nazi salute) during the weekend's Charlottesville protests, (troopers of) the division delivered a pointed message.

"Anyone can purchase that hat," 82nd Airborne wrote on its official Twitter page. *"Valor is earned."*

All American

The infantry unit, nicknamed the All American Division, was reacting to a photograph that Brandon Friedman, a former Obama administration official, shared of the demonstrator on Twitter. The image was retweeted more than 20,000 times Monday.

"Our WWII Airborne forefathers jumped into Europe to defeat Nazism. We know who we are. We know our legacy."

All American

"U really think that guy is an active member of the 82nd just because he has that hat? My mom has that same hat. She's 78 & has never served."

All American

"Respectfully, anyone who thinks this man represents our culture and values has never worn the maroon beret...and never will."

All American

See entire report at:

www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/82nd-airborne-nazi-salute-charlottesville_us_5992ad61e4b08a247276f35e

82nd Airborne Division

"America's Guard of Honor"

All Americans Fighting Nazi Germany...*Make Us Proud*



A wounded All American trooper receiving first aid by buddies during WWII in Europe. *Makes us proud.*

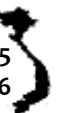


82nd Airborne troopers at St. Mere-Eglise as they move forward to liberate France and Europe. *Make us proud.*



And the young All Americans of today who gave their full last measure. *Make us proud.*

Read more about the All Americans, true patriots, beginning Page 62)



Dunford: No Room for Racism, Bigotry in U.S. Military



By Jim Garamone
DoD News, Defense Media Activity

BEIJING, Aug. 17, 2017 — The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff stressed today that there is no room in the U.S. military for racism and bigotry.

Marine Corps Gen. Joe Dunford is traveling in Asia and involved in high-level discussions centered on the nuclear threat posed by North Korea, but he took time to address the recent tragedy in Charlottesville, Virginia. The chairman said he has read the tweets posted by his fellow members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. *"I have been traveling, so I've been following in bits and pieces what's been happening in Charlottesville and very saddened by the events there and the loss of life of the young lady who was hit by a vehicle,"* he said. *"I can absolutely and unambiguously tell you there is no place -- no place -- for racism and bigotry in the U.S. military or in the United States as a whole."*

The chairman said the Joint Chiefs' statements were important. *"They were speaking directly to the force and to the American people: to the force to make clear that that kind of racism and bigotry is not going to stand inside the force. And to the American people, to remind them of the values for which we stand in the U.S. military, which are reflective of the values of the United States,"* he said.

The chairman said he was late in responding to the tragedy, *"but only because I've been in Beijing and not really decisively following the developments over the weekend,"* he said.

The Joint Chiefs of Our Military...



General Mark. A. Milley Army Chief of Staff

"The Army doesn't tolerate racism, extremism, or hatred in our ranks. It's against our Values and everything we've stood for since 1775."



Admiral John Richardson Chief of Naval Operations

"The shameful events in Charlottesville are unacceptable and must not be tolerated.

Our thoughts and prayers go to those who were killed and injured, and to all those trying to bring peace back to the community.

The Navy will forever stand against intolerance and hatred."



General Robert Neller Commandant of the Marine Corps

"No place for racial hatred or extremism in @USMC. Our core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment frame the way Marines live and act."



General Dave Goldstein Chief of Staff of the Air Force

"I stand with my fellow service chiefs in saying that we're always stronger together. It's who we are as Airmen. Integrity, service and excellence...that's what America's Air Force is about."



82nd Airborne Division, World War II 1942 – 1945

Initial training and conversion

The 82nd Division was redesignated on 13 February 1942 during World War II, just two months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the German declaration of war, as Division Headquarters, 82nd Division. It was recalled to active service on 25 March 1942, and reorganized at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana, under the command of Major General Omar Bradley. During this training period, the division brought together four officers who would ultimately steer the U.S. Army during the following two decades: Matthew Ridgway, Matthew D. Query, James M. Gavin, and Maxwell D. Taylor.

Under Major General Bradley, the 82nd Division's Chief of Staff was George Van Pope.

**Bravery is the
capacity to
perform properly
even when
scared half to
death.**

Gen. Omar N. Bradley



On 15 August 1942, the 82nd Infantry Division, now commanded by Major General Ridgway, became the first airborne division in the history of the U.S. Army, and was redesignated as the 82nd Airborne Division. The division initially consisted of the 325th, 326th and 327th Infantry Regiments, and supporting units. The 327th was soon transferred to help form the 101st Airborne Division and was replaced by the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, leaving the division with two regiments of glider infantry and one of parachute infantry.

In February 1943 the division received another change when the 326th was later transferred, being replaced by the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, under James M. Gavin, then a colonel, who was later destined to command the division.

Sicily and Italy

In April 1943, after several months of tough training, its troopers deployed to the Mediterranean Theater of Operations, under the command of Major General Ridgway to take part in the campaign to invade Sicily. The division's first two combat operations were parachute assaults into Sicily on 9 July and Salerno on 13 September 1943. The initial assault on Sicily, by the 505th Parachute Regimental Combat Team, under Colonel Gavin, was the first regimental-sized combat parachute assault conducted by the United States Army. The first glider assault did not occur until Operation Neptune as part of the D-Day landings of June 6, 1944. Glider troopers of the 319th and 320th Glider Field Artillery Battalions and the 325th Glider Infantry Regiment (and the 3rd Battalion of the 504th PIR) instead arrived in Italy by landing craft at Maiori (319th) and Salerno (320th, 325th).



Glider assault, D-Day

In January 1944, the 504th, commanded by Colonel Reuben Tucker, which was temporarily detached to fight at Anzio, adopted the nickname "Devils in Baggy Pants", taken from an entry in a German officer's diary. The 504th was replaced in the division by the inexperienced 507th Parachute Infantry Regiment, under the command of Colonel George V. Millet, Jr. While the 504th was detached, the remainder of the 82nd Airborne Division moved to the United Kingdom in November 1943 to prepare for the liberation of Europe.

With two combat drops under its belt, the 82nd Airborne Division was now ready for the most ambitious airborne operation of the war so far, as part of Operation Neptune, the Allied invasion of Normandy.

(All Americans continued....)



The division conducted Operation Boston, part of the airborne assault phase of the Operation Overlord plan. In preparation for the operation, the division was majorly reorganized. To ease the integration of replacement troops, rest, and refitting following the fighting in Italy, the 504th PIR did not rejoin the division for the invasion. Two new parachute infantry regiments (PIRs), the 507th and the 508th, provided it, along with the veteran 505th, a three-parachute infantry regiment punch. The 325th was also reinforced by the addition of the 3rd Battalion of the 401st GIR, bringing it up to a strength of three battalions.

On 5 and 6 June, these paratroopers, parachute artillery elements, and the 319th and 320th, boarded hundreds of transport planes and gliders to begin history's largest airborne assault at the time (only Operation Market Garden later that year would be larger). During the 6 June assault, a 508th platoon leader, First Lieutenant Robert P. Mathias, would be the first U.S. Army officer killed by German fire on D-Day.



A trooper during Operation Market Garden who gave his life for liberty and his country. He made up proud.

**From the Airborne Creed
about the Airborne Force:**

***"It is my pledge to uphold its honor and prestige
in all I am--in all I do".***

On 7 June, after this first wave of attack, the 325th GIR would arrive by glider to provide a division reserve. In Normandy, the 82nd gained its first Medal of Honor of the war, belonging to Private First Class Charles N. DeGlopper of the 325th GIR. By the time the division was relieved, in early July, the 82nd had seen 33 days of severe combat and casualties had been heavy. Losses included 5,245 troopers killed, wounded, or missing, for a total of 46% casualties. Major General Ridgway's post-battle report stated in part, "**... 33 days of action without relief, without replacements. Every mission accomplished. No ground gained was ever relinquished.**"

Following Normandy, the 82nd Airborne Division returned to England to rest and refit for future airborne operations. The 82nd became part of the newly organized XVIII Airborne Corps, which consisted of the 17th, 82nd, and 101st Airborne Divisions. Ridgway was given command of the corps, but was not promoted to lieutenant general until 1945. His recommendation for succession as division commander was Brigadier General James M. Gavin, previously the 82nd's ADC. Ridgway's recommendation met with approval, and upon promotion Gavin became the youngest general since the Civil War to command a U.S. Army division.

Market Garden

On 2 August 1944 the division became part of the First Allied Airborne Army. In September, the 82nd began planning for Operation Market Garden in the Netherlands. The operation called for three-plus airborne divisions to seize and hold key bridges and roads deep behind German lines. The 504th PIR, now back at full strength, was reassigned to the 82nd, while the 507th was assigned to the 17th Airborne Division, at the time training in England.



Men of the 82nd Airborne Division drop near Grave in the Netherlands during Operation Market Garden.



The Nijmegen combat jump, 57 miles behind enemy lines.

(All Americans continued....)



On 17 September, the "All American" Division conducted its fourth (and final) combat jump of World War II. Fighting off German counterattacks, the division captured its objectives between Grave, and Nijmegen. However, the failure of the British 1st Airborne Division to seize the Arnhem bridge allowed the Germans to move defenders to the Nijmegen bridge. The division failed to capture Nijmegen Bridge when the opportunity presented itself early in the battle. When the British XXX Corps arrived in Nijmegen, 6 hours ahead of schedule, they found themselves having to fight to take a bridge that should have already been in allied hands. In the afternoon of Wednesday 20 September 1944 the 82nd Airborne Division conducted a successful opposed river assault on the river crossing of the Waal river, capturing the north end of the Nijmegen road bridge. War correspondent Bill Downs, who witnessed the assault, described it as

"A single, isolated battle that ranks in magnificence and courage with Guam, Tarawa, Omaha Beach. A story that should be told to the blowing of bugles and the beating of drums for the men whose bravery made the capture of this crossing over the Waal possible."

The British XXX Corps units did not follow up their own and the 82nd's success by advancing toward Arnhem. This led to some friction between the 82nd's Colonel Tucker and Major General Gavin and Captain Peter Carrington of the Grenadier Guards. By the time the advance was resumed the opportunity for a rapid capture of the road to Arnhem had passed. So the costly successes of the 82nd's Nijmegen bridge seizure was followed by the failure to take the main prize; the British 1st Airborne Division was lost at the Battle of Arnhem. The Market Garden salient was held in a defensive operation for several weeks until the 82nd was relieved by Canadian troops, and sent into reserve in France. During the operation, 19-year old Private John R. Towle of the 504th PIR was posthumously awarded the 82nd Airborne Division's second Medal of Honor of World War II.

The Bulge



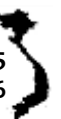
Men of the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment advancing through a snow-covered forest during the Battle of the Bulge, December 1944.

On 16 December 1944, the Germans launched a surprise offensive through the Ardennes Forest, which became known as the Battle of the Bulge. In SHAEF reserve, the 82nd was committed on the northern face of the bulge near Elsenborn Ridge.

On 20 December 1944, the 82nd Airborne Division was assigned to take Cheneux where they would force the Waffen SS Division Leibstandarte's Kampfgruppe Peiper into a fighting retreat. On 21–22 December 1944, the 82nd Airborne faced counterattacks from three powerful Waffen SS divisions which included the 1st SS Panzer Division Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler, 2nd SS Panzer Division Das Reich, and the 9th SS Panzer Division Hohenstaufen. Their efforts to relieve Kampfgruppe Peiper failed.

On 23 December it attacked from the south and overran the 325th GIR holding the Baraque-Fraiture crossroads on the 82nd's southern flank, endangering the entire 82nd Airborne division. The 2nd SS Panzer's objective was to outflank the 82nd Airborne. It was not an attack designed to reach Peiper, but it was his last chance, nonetheless. If it did outflank the 82nd, it could have opened a corridor and reached the stranded yet still powerful Kampfgruppe. But the attack came too late.

(All Americans continued....)



On 24 December 1944, the 82nd Airborne Division with an official strength of 8,520 men was facing off against a vastly superior combined force of 43,000 men and over 1,200 armored fighting and artillery vehicles and pieces. Due to these circumstances the 82nd Airborne Division was forced to withdrawal for the 1st time in its combat history. The German's pursued their retreat with the 2nd and 9th SS Panzer Divisions. The 2nd SS Panzer Division Das Reich engaged the 82nd until 28 December when it and what was left of the 1st SS Panzer Division Leibstandarte were ordered to move south to meet General Patton's forces attacking in the area of Bastogne. Some units of the 9th SS Panzer including the 19th Panzer Grenadier Regiment stayed and fought the 82nd. They were joined by the 62nd Volksgrenadier Division. The 9th SS Panzer tried to breakthrough by attacking the 508 and 504 PIR positions, but ultimately failed. The failure of the 9th and 2nd SS Panzer Divisions to break through the 82nd lines marked the end of the German offensive in the northern shoulder of the Bulge. The German objective now became one of defense.

On 3 January 1945, the 82nd Airborne Division conducted a counterattack. On the first day's fighting the Division overran the 62nd Volksgrenadiers and the 9th SS Panzer's positions capturing 2,400 prisoners. The 82nd Airborne suffered high casualties in the process. The attached 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion was all but destroyed during these attacks.

Of the 826 men that went into the Ardennes, only 110 came out.

Having lost its charismatic leader Lt. Colonel Joerg, and almost all its men either wounded, killed, or frostbitten, the 551 was never reconstituted. The few soldiers that remained were later absorbed into units of the 82nd Airborne.¹

After several days of fighting the destruction of the 62nd Volksgrenadiers and what had been left of the 9th SS Panzer Division was complete. For the 82nd Airborne Division the first part of the Battle of the Bulge had ended.

Into Germany

After helping to secure the Ruhr, the 82nd Airborne Division ended the war at Ludwigslust past the Elbe River, accepting the surrender of over 150,000 men of

Lieutenant General Kurt von Tippelskirch's 21st Army. General Omar Bradley, commanding the U.S. 12th Army Group, stated in a 1975 interview with Gavin that Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery, commanding the Anglo-Canadian 21st Army Group, had told him that German opposition was too great to cross the Elbe. When Gavin's 82nd crossed the river, in company with the British 6th Airborne Division, the 82nd Airborne Division moved 36 miles in one day and captured over 100,000 troops, causing great laughter in Bradley's 12th Army Group headquarters.

Following Germany's surrender, the 82nd Airborne Division entered Berlin for occupation duty, lasting from April until December 1945. In Berlin General George S. Patton was so impressed with the 82nd's honor guard he said, *"In all my years in the Army and all the honor guards I have ever seen, the 82nd's honor guard is undoubtedly the best."* Hence the "All-American" became also known as "America's Guard of Honor".

The war ended before their scheduled participation in the Allied invasion of Japan, Operation Downfall. During the invasion of Italy, Ridgway considered Will Lang Jr. of *TIME* magazine an honorary member of the division.

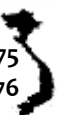
Casualties

Total battle casualties: 9,073
 Killed in action: 1,619
 Wounded in action: 6,560
 Missing in action: 279
 Prisoner of war: 615

To the paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division,
 you make us proud, and we salute you
 and send you a hearty,
"Airborne! All the way!!"



**ANYONE CAN BUY AND WEAR THIS HAT,
 BUT NO ONE HAS THE RIGHT TO DEFILE IT...
 TOO MANY GAVE THEIR LIVES UNDER ITS
 CANOPY FOR FREEDOM OF ALL HUMANKIND.**



OIR Official Outlines Gains, Pays Tribute to Fallen Soldiers

By Lisa Ferdinando
DoD News
Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Aug. 16, 2017 — Coalition and partnered forces in Iraq and Syria are making progress against an increasingly desperate, fanatical enemy, the spokesman for Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve said today.

The coalition continues to conduct strikes in both Iraq and Syria, Army Col. Ryan Dillon told reporters at the Pentagon in a teleconference from Baghdad. Syrian Democratic Forces have cleared about 55 percent of Raqqa, the self-proclaimed capital of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, he said.

In Iraq, the Iraqi federal police continue to conduct security operations in Mosul, Dillon said, noting the coalition maintains support to the Iraqi security forces as they reset and prepare for follow-on operations in Ninevah province.

Tribute to 'Courageous Paratroopers'

Dillion paid tribute to two soldiers who died Aug. 13 while engaging in combat operations in Iraq.

"Sgt. Allen Stigler, 22, of Arlington, Texas, and Sgt. Roshain Brooks, 30, of Brooklyn, New York, artillerymen with the 82nd Airborne Division, were killed while conducting a counter-fire mission against an ISIS mortar site when an explosion occurred," he said.

There is no indication the deaths were a result of enemy contact, he said, adding that an investigation is underway.

"The Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve extends its most sincere condolences to the family, friends and teammates of these courageous paratroopers," he said. The soldiers were assigned to 2nd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

See complete report at:
U.S. Department of Defense
govdelivery@subscriptions.dod.mil



Sgt. Allen Stigler, 22, left, and
Sgt. Roshain Brooks, 30, right.

Rests Easy With The Warriors, Brothers

From *Daily News*, New York:

"Sergeant Brooks and Stigler were courageous patriots and Paratroopers who served our coalition and the people of Iraq with extraordinary commitment," Brooks' commander Col. Pat Work said in a statement.

"Our team extends its most sincere condolences to their Families and friends."

Brooks joined the Army in 2012, and after a 2014 deployment to Iraq, he was assigned to the Fort Bragg, N.C., division in 2016. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal and Combat Action Badge.



All Americans honoring their fallen on an earlier
Memorial Day.



Anti-Malaria Pills Don't Always Work



By Lew "Smitty" Smith, HHC/2/503, '65/'66
Editor 2/503d Vietnam Newsletter



The 'We Try Harder' boys of the 2/503 were on yet another search and sweat mission in late '66, humping our way thru thick jungle once again -- is there any other kind?

Just days earlier after we had spent a week or so between ops comprised mostly of relaxation and relative safety at Camp Zinn, word came down we were moving out again to look for those little people in their black pajamas with their big guns and nasty booby traps. I don't know about you, but it always left me with a sick feeling in the gut upon learning we'd be off on another mission. But body count was the rule of the day, and it was again time to go get our share of numbers to be compiled at some busy, smoke-filled office in Saigon by young men in un-bloused starched khakis then forwarded to Mr. Johnson and the stars at the Pentagon to salivate over -- invariably and without fail, on every operation Mr. Charles would do his own bit of counting.

As we re-cleaned our weapons and prepared our rucks...more ammo, grenades and other tools of warfare came out of storage and were dispensed to each man, along with C-Rats to hold us over for a couple or few days before resupply. Water canteens were filled to over-flowing then capped. Tubes of mosquito repellent and, for some, small bottles of Tabasco sauce were stowed away. Oh, and the daily salt tablets and anti-malaria pills too were packed tight.

Day-after-day we cut our way thru the stifling hot, muggy and insect and snake infested jungle, usually avoiding pathways feared to be festooned by the little people with their devious and well-camouflaged deadly booby traps, although it was the guys on point who were doing the cutting, a most dangerous job and undesirable duty for most. It was not uncommon for a trooper to succumb to heat exhaustion which on occasion would require a dust off, while further slowing our progress to some pre-determined 'important' destination in the heart of the thicket.



2/503 battalion command group on jungle path in 1966, don't ask why. The shorter man is likely hootch buddy Nguyen Phuc, battalion interpreter and scout, KIA on The Slopes in '67. (Photo by Maj. Tom Goodwin, Bn Commo Leader)

On an earlier sojourn into the "D" Zone jungle some of you may recall one particular trooper falling from the heat -- we all were at risk of it. He was in such poor condition we had to clear an LZ for dust off to rush him to some Mash unit. This delayed our already slow march, yet troopers reveled in the extra rest time. The battalion CO was pissed off to the point he ordered the RTOs within reach to transmit orders to each of the Company Commanders that anyone not taking their salt tablets and succumbing to the heat would face an Article 15, often involving demotion in rank and lost pay -- after all, the Generals at their desks in Saigon had a war to fight and a new star to win -- delays were unacceptable and numbers were in demand.



Dust Off in the jungle, not for the trooper referenced above, but similar. (web photo)

(continued....)



We had trekked for a few days without making significant contact with the enemy which, if one were to ask most of us, that was quite alright. For this RTO, after 10 months of going thru this inane and insane routine and witnessing the carnage war produces, mostly inflicted on our adversaries but also on too many of our own, I was content to deal with the sweat and exhaustion without having to drop at the crack of AK47s and weapons of unknown origin, yet the fear and anxiety which marked every forward step remained our constant companion.

One step in front of the other, G.I., many of us would often think when we weren't thinking of milkshakes, as we progressed forward while praying for those longed for yet too seldom heard words, "take five", "take 15". A few troopers would claim they were happy to engage in a brief firefight if only to break the physically crippling and maddening monotony and torture of *the hump* – some say paratroopers are crazy to begin with.



Good buddy Lee Braggs, RTO, two tours RVN, retired SFC, outside our hootch at Zinn in '66.

(Photo by RTO Jerry Hassler, 2/503 Recon & Commo Platoons)

Sitting next to Lee in our dugout, I became cold and began to shiver. "Lee," I said, "I'm freezing." Lee touched my arm and said, "You're burning up man." It was then I rushed out making it as far as the tall, anchored antenna nearby, dropping my fatigue pants and while grasping the radio antenna pole I was overcome with an attack of body-wrenching diarrhea. Now, given our diet and living conditions, diarrhea was common within our ranks, but this episode was something ordered up by the Devil himself.

Someone, maybe Lee, called a Doc to my aid, who immediately took my temperature, 102, as he would throughout the night. At first light a dust off was called in and choppered this G.I. to the nearest Mash unit where I remained for three days until the temperature broke and recovery seemed apparent.

The Docs didn't return this G.I. to the field but instead I was choppered back to a ghost town which was Camp Zinn and a hootch of empty cots -- a camp normally bustling with activity of 600+ Sky Soldiers loudly scurrying about was now eerily barren and deafly quiet.

An uneventful and lonely day passed when I decided to visit nearby Bien Hoa AFB where it was rumored the *Fly Boys* had their very own malt shop. They did, and it was there I purchased that milkshake I had daydreamt about just days earlier in the jungle. It must have been mixed with powdered milk as it tasted like crap, and beginning to feel weak and ill I threw-away the half-consumed frozen delight and stumbled back to Zinn and our hootch, falling on my cot.

(continued....)



2/503 Sky Soldiers "Taking Five" next to a bomb crater in the "D" Zone jungle, 1966. (Photo by Tom Goodwin)

Following the long, torturous journey thru jungle hell we came to our important destination where we would remain for two days as companies "A", "B", "C" & "HHC" sent out their patrols in all directions looking to engage and increase the count. Maybe some of you recall the time a night patrol mistakenly attempted to return thru the perimeter of the wrong company when our guys on line fired them up thinking it an enemy assault, killing one as we heard men in the patrol yell, "We're Americans! We're Americans!" War is unforgiving and unfair, and as General Sherman once rightly noted, "War is at best barbarism...its glory is all moonshine".

At the CP our commo guys had erected a tall antenna to facilitate radio communications with brigade. In the early a.m. RTO good buddy Lee Braggs and I were manning the company and brigade nets. The enemy was jamming the company net with Vietnamese music, and we could only receive hourly sitreps from company RTOs by the squelch from their PRC25 radio handsets.



There's a vague memory of being naked and pissing on my or someone's cot...intentionally or unintentionally I'll never know. It was later reported one of our hootch buddies returned from R&R to find this RTO in a state of delirium. An ambulance rushed me to 93rd Evac Hospital in Long Binh along Highway 1.



93rd Evac (web photo)

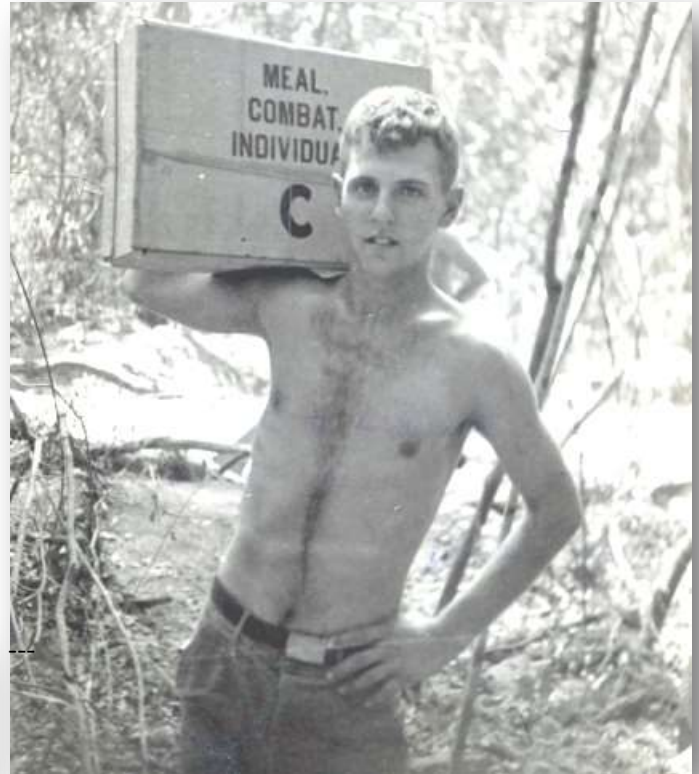
From there I was medivac'd by chopper to 3rd Field Army Hospital in Tan Son Nhut near Saigon. The next recollection is begging for water while a nurse would only dampen my lips with a wet cloth, hearing doctors standing nearby talking of sending this parched Sky Soldier to Japan, as I came in and out of consciousness.



3rd Field Army Hospital near Saigon, with which many of us are familiar – today a war arms museum. (web photo)

Apparently, they determined I was too important to the war effort (: and kept this RTO there rather than forward my sick ass to the land of kimonos and Saki. It would be diagnosed this G.I. was struck down with *P. Falciparum* malaria, one of the nastiest in the string of that disease, and I would join the ranks of 40,000 other G.I.'s stricken by malaria during our war.

Following weeks of recovery while enjoying good food and tender treatment by young nurses with round eyes, I was returned to Camp Zinn where, while re-cleaning my weapon, I got a sick feeling in the gut when word came down we were moving out again on a search and sweep mission. We had more numbers to count, and so did Mr. Charles, with the mosquitoes at attention.



Barely over 100 pounds this skinnier paratrooper is back in the boonies with his fellow Sky Soldiers following his date with malaria. Must be a paratrooper, check the gig-line.

Malaria & PTSD

Although studies have shown many of those who have contracted the disease, particularly *P. Falciparum* malaria, exhibit symptoms and display physical and emotional characteristics similar to those by Vietnam veterans who suffer with PTSD – Malaria is not considered a disability by the VA; after all, that might involve 40,000 new claims.

To steal a line from a t.v. celeb, "I don't know this for a fact, but I believe it to be true," I suspect there wasn't a squad in our battalion who didn't have at least one trooper stolen from the ranks by a case of malaria.

You can read more on the following pages about the effects of malaria on veterans of the Vietnam War. Ed





"This sign at a field hospital in Papua New Guinea exaggerates the consequences of not taking anti-malaria medicine. Despite its nasty side effects – like turning the skin yellow – atabrine was instrumental in getting a handle on the malaria problem for American troops during World War II." (National Museum of Health & Medicine photo)

MALARIA IN RVN

"Vietnam War (1962–1975): Malaria felled more combatants during the war than bullets. The disease reduced the combat strength of some units by half. Over 40,000 cases of Malaria were reported in US Army troops alone between 1965 and 70, with 78 deaths. The U.S. Army established a malaria drug research program when U.S. troops first encountered drug resistant malaria during the war. In 1967, the Chinese scientists set up Project 523 – a secret military project – to help the Vietnamese military defeat malaria by developing artemisinin based anti-malarial formulations."

Source:

<http://www.malariasite.com/tag/vietnam-war/>

Release: Immediate



Vietnam Vet's history of malaria may be clue to health problems

IOWA CITY, Iowa -- Cerebral malaria should be considered as seriously as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or Agent Orange exposure as an underlying cause of long-term medical and psychological problems faced by some Vietnam War veterans, according to a study by a University of Iowa and Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) psychologist.

In an article published in the November issue of the *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, Nils R. Varney, UI adjunct professor of psychology and a staff neuropsychologist at the VAMC in Iowa City, and his colleagues report that many cerebral malaria survivors from the Vietnam War have a number of neuropsychiatric symptoms that can persist for years after the acute illness has been treated.

It is estimated that as many as 250,000 Vietnam veterans suffered cerebral malaria. Contracted from mosquitoes, the illness causes an encephalitis, or inflammation of the brain. This can result in damage to cerebral nerve tissue in the frontal-temporal areas of the neocortex.

"Cerebral malaria does a number of different things to a patient's brain that cause a variety of neurological problems," Varney says.

(continued....)



"Clinical reports from 500 B.C. through the 20th century noted that patients who survived the illness frequently developed depression, impaired memory loss, personality change and proneness to violence as long-term effects of the disease. These are symptoms that have been reported by many Vietnam veterans for years and are often treated strictly as PTSD."

The researchers compared the neuropsychiatric status of 40 Vietnam combat veterans who contracted cerebral malaria between 1966-1969 with 40 Vietnam veterans with similar wartime experience who suffered gunshot or shrapnel wounds during the same period. The participants underwent numerous tests for sensory, cognitive and behavioral symptoms.

Findings indicated that, when compared to wounded combat veterans who did not contract cerebral malaria during their service, the veterans who had malaria reported more problems with depression, subjective distress, auditory information processing, memory, emotional instability and seizure-like symptoms. Interestingly, Varney notes, the malaria-related health concerns among Vietnam veterans are similar to what British troops faced in 19th century India during the height of the British Empire. Nineteenth-century physicians documented these cases and considered malaria a leading cause of mental illness in British-occupied regions. *"It's well-chronicled in the medical literature from that period, but basically it's been forgotten, since malaria has not been a major problem in industrialized western nations for decades,"* Varney says.

The study results may offer new hope to many Vietnam veterans with neurological and psychological problems that have not responded to previous treatments. The findings suggest that doctors consider a history of malaria in any medical, psychological or psychiatric workup of Vietnam veterans because a positive response could change diagnosis and treatment. Anticonvulsant medications can be beneficial in treating symptoms that affect cerebral malaria survivors.

"I would suspect that doctors who treat Vietnam veterans with unexplained and untreatable neurological or psychological problems would find a significant number of them with a history of malaria," Varney says. *"And that means there's a different way to assess these cases. It's not solely PTSD or Agent Orange exposure that's causing these problems, which are the only explanations these veterans have had to hang their hats on. Now we may be able to move these patients into a category where their problems make sense, what is wrong with them is known and well-documented, and it's treatable."*

The study was funded by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. 1/8/98

Source:

DAVE PEDERSEN
283 Medical Laboratories
Iowa City IA 52242
(319) 335-8032; fax (319) 335-8034
E-mail: david-pedersen@uiowa.edu
Web: <http://news-releases.uiowa.edu/1998/january/0108clue.html>

(continued...)





In addition to the risks inherent to combat, troops experienced many environmental hazards. Pesticide and herbicide spraying was commonplace. In addition, Vietnam is a tropical country with high temperatures, high humidity and a monsoon climate. Many troops were unable to get dry for days, opportunities for bathing were infrequent, and skin hygiene was poor. Bacterial and fungal infections of the feet were a major cause of temporary disability. Skin disease was a leading cause of outpatient visits and hospitalization.

Throughout the war, disease accounted for 70.6% of all admissions with the remaining approximately equally divided between battle casualties (15.6%) and non-battle injury (13.8%). The good survival rates seen were attributed to rapid evacuation, the ready availability of whole blood and well-established semi-permanent hospitals.

Tropical diseases were frequent. Malaria was the most important. Over 40,000 cases of Malaria were reported in Army troops alone between 1965 and 70 with 78 deaths. However, this was less than had been seen in earlier wars because of the effectiveness of weekly chloroquin-premaquin prophylaxis against vivax malaria. (Prophylaxis was much less effective against falciparum but the institution of dapson prophylaxis cut those cases in half.) Diarrheal diseases were also common and cholera was epidemic in Vietnam but not a single case of cholera was seen in the highly immunized, well-nourished US troops.

Melioidosis was a relatively rare disease caused by *Pseudomonas pseudomallei* but well publicized after 8 of the 29 cases diagnosed in 1966 died. It was also publicized after the war by Dow Chemical, which erroneously hypothesized that the symptoms of Vietnam veterans after the war were due not to Agent Orange, but to Melioidosis. Neuropsychiatric casualties paralleled those in the US

until 1970 when rates rose rather precipitously. This was attributed to the lessened American presence, the news of lack of support on the home front, and a growing substance abuse problem because of the ready availability of a variety of cheap drugs.

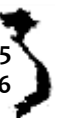
Following the war, veterans experienced many readjustment problems and adverse health effects, many of the latter attributed to Agent Orange. The Vet Center program was established to deal with the readjustment problems in an environment acceptable to the anti-establishment veterans. After years of debate, Congress directed the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a comprehensive review and evaluation of the available scientific and medical literature on Agent Orange and the other herbicides used in Vietnam. As a result of the first two reviews, published in 1994 and 1996, VA now recognizes eight conditions which are presumed to be related to service in Vietnam for the purposes of establishing service-connection: soft tissue sarcoma, non-Hodgkins lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease, chloracne, porphyria cutanea tarda, respiratory cancers, multiple myeloma, prostate cancer, acute peripheral neuropathy, and spina bifida in offspring.

Source:

www.va.gov/oaa/pocketcard/vietnam.asp

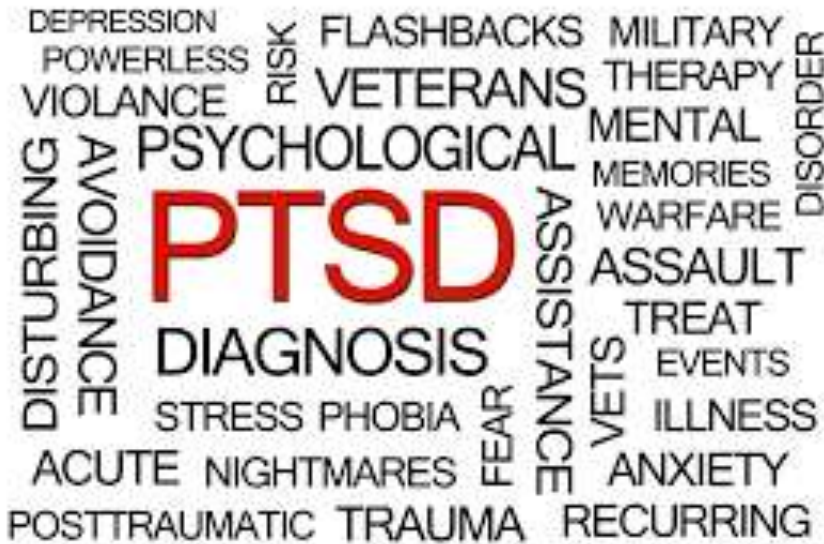


(web photo)



Coping with PTSD – A Veteran's Perspective

My personal 3-step process for coping with PTSD



I am NOT a therapist or psychologist, but I have put a lot of thought into this process before, during and after treatment for PTSD. I have talked about these thoughts with mental health professionals, and have included information learned from CPT (Cognitive Processing Therapy), individual counseling, coping skills, and support groups. This process is not intended to be a treatment program, but merely a guide to get you going in the right direction.

Step One

The first step in recovering from post-traumatic stress disorder is recognizing that your behavior is not normal. Notice that I did not say that “you have a problem” or that “you have a mental illness”. But simply put, “my behavior is not what is normal for the average civilian”. These behaviors are wide ranging, and vary from person to person. But the key is for you to recognize that you are exhibiting behaviors that are not normal in the civilian, non-combat environment. This is a very difficult step, you, because of your combat experience, will not naturally recognize that your behavior is not normal.

Behaviors such as routinely and excessively checking their personal security (making rounds around your property in the middle of the night, triple checking doors to ensure they are secure) are not typically normal behaviors. While these examples themselves may not be detrimental, they are an indication that PTSD is creeping in. Other examples are feeling

uncomfortable in public places because you can't watch everyone; not being able to concentrate on a conversation with a loved one in a public place because you are distracted by other people's actions; feeling nervous in stores (especially Wal-Mart for some reason); being hyper-vigilant in public, or when driving; being quickly “amped-up” when there is a minor confrontation (particularly when it effects family or close friends); sleep problems; quickly losing patience with children or loved ones (to include outbursts), and then feeling upset because you don't understand your own actions; emotionally closing yourself off from family and friends; and of course...substance abuse, whether it is alcohol, illicit drugs, or even prescription drugs prescribed by the VA or other physicians.

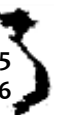
These are examples of irregular behaviors from my own life, and certainly should not be considered an all-inclusive list. However, the key is to give yourself an honest, solid look in the mirror, and check your own behaviors. Checking these behaviors with a loved one is always a good idea, as long as you are willing to accept the loved one's honest view of your behavior.

Step Two

The next step, which is increasingly difficult, is understanding WHY you are behaving in these ways. This is critically important to coping with PTSD. This is the step that many of us struggle with for many reasons. Due to our military training, we think of PTSD as a “weakness” or “mental illness”. Neither of these is the truth. To understand why our behaviors have changed, you must understand that there is a physical change in your brain, as well as a chemical change.

We, as combat veterans, have had our brain function reconditioned by our environment. This is not a “mental illness”, but a change in response to stress imposed on our bodies and minds. The first thing we normally see is the loss of the “flight” response. Because of our combat experience, we have been conditioned to respond by fighting only. Because of this, our “baseline” level of chemicals in our brains is not the same as a “normal” civilian. We have been conditioned to go from 0-60 instantly, so our bodies have adapted by keeping our ready state at a higher level. This also explains why we cannot calm down in a reasonable amount of time.

(continued....)



The key to understanding why PTSD is affecting you, is to understand that mentally, we have been conditioned to react differently, and physically, there has been a change in our brains. This is not to be confused with a mental illness. It is a change to a series of conditioned responses because of exposure to an environment and/or a traumatic event.

Another note at this point is that this is not curing, recovering or treating. This is coping. PTSD is not a condition that will ever be cured, and you need to understand that you will be in a day to day struggle for the rest of your life, but the rewards of working on it are worth the effort.

Step Three

The third step is one that will last the rest of your life. Now that you have identified that you have behaviors that are no longer normal (notice that by this point, you should recognize that these behaviors were once normal for your environment), and that you recognize that PTSD is NOT a “mental illness” or “weakness” but rather a physical/chemical, and mental process change due to your experience, we can begin to try to change these behaviors.

This step is where therapy, groups, and other types of exposure therapy often time offered by the VA will work. If you have not personally gone through the first two steps, therapy won't be effective.

The most important thing you can do is to find a good support system. This should include your loved ones, who need to understand steps one and two as well. There is no substitute for loved ones that try to understand what you are going through, and support you in your struggles. But most importantly, you NEED to find others with PTSD that are in step 3 as well. No matter how well meaning, people that have not experienced combat cannot fully understand what we are dealing with. This is a very difficult step to take. WHY?

Because we have been conditioned by our military service to view our fellow service members as strong and to not show weakness to each other.

You will feel more comfortable talking about your experiences with those who you know to have gone through similar situations. This will open you up to being able to share these experiences and emotions with your closest loved ones, who likely want to hear about your experiences and feelings so that they can be understanding and help you cope. This goes



back to step 2 once again. Every combat veteran will have some level of PTSD. The things you are going through are going to be similar to what your fellow veterans are going through. You need to take the leap of faith that your fellow combat veterans will understand.

This is one of those subjects that we are conditioned to avoid in discussion. But when the subject is breached, the conversation will grow rapidly. And you will find that you are not alone. In fact, you will begin to see that the veterans you meet are exhibiting many of the same behaviors that you do. And you will have many of the same emotions as well. From here, you will continue to open up about your experiences. The more you can talk to those whom you trust about your experiences, the more you will bring these emotions from your subconscious, and you will find that you can process these thoughts, and will begin to reduce the feeling to exhibit these behaviors, and return to a somewhat “normal” civilian life.

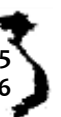
This is not to say that you will be cured. You will cope with PTSD for the rest of your life, and will continue to fight the urge to exhibit these behaviors. But as time goes by, you will find this easier and easier.

This article was written by SFC Anthony Patchell, an OIF Veteran.

Source:

http://familyofavet.com/coping_with_PTSD_veterans_perspective.html

(Images added)



Reunions of the Airborne Kind ~ 2017



503rd PRCT Association, WWII National Reunion, September 13-17, 2017, Killeen, Texas. Contact: Rick Miller, Reunion Host, treasurer@503rdprct.org



2/501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Abn Reunion is being planned to celebrate our departure to South Vietnam 50 years ago. December 13, 2017, Fort Bragg, Fayetteville, NC.



11th Airborne Division Association Reunion, Colorado Springs, CO, September 18-22, 2017. Contact: C.J. Magro, 256-247-7350



187th ARCT "Rakkasan's Reunion", September 2017, Boulder, CO. Contact: www.rakkasan.net/reunion.html



B/2/501st Reunion 2017, Great Falls, MT. Dates to be determined. Contact <http://b2501airborne.com/reunion.htm>



509th Parachute Infantry Association Reunion 2017, Shreveport, LA. Contact <http://509thgeronimo.org/reunions/freunions.html>

NOTE:



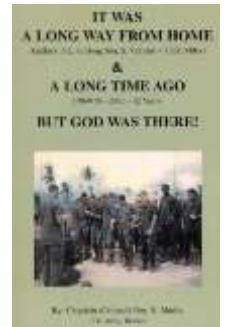
If you are aware of any upcoming "Airborne" or attached unit reunions, please send complete details to rto173d@cfl.rr.com for inclusion in our newsletter.



Airborne...All The Way!

Chaplain (Colonel) Roy Mathis' Book About His Ministry as a Chaplain in Vietnam

Roy "Sonny" Mathis was born and raised in the Goucher/Pacolet community. He graduated from Pacolet High School (53), Clemson University (57) and Southwestern Baptist Seminary (66). Mathis joined the Pacolet National Guard as a senior while at Pacolet High and completed 12 years in the Guard. He was serving as the pastor of Indian Hills Baptist Church, North Little Rock, AR and also serving as a chaplain for the Arkansas National Guard when he was called into active duty during the Vietnam Conflict.



Roy has just finished a book about his ministry as a chaplain in Vietnam. Although he served in the army for 30 years, this book covers only the one-year period while serving as the Battalion Chaplain for the 4/503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade. Mathis kept a daily diary while in Vietnam and the book comes from that account. The book's title is **"IT WAS A LONG WAY FROM HOME & A LONG TIME AGO, BUT GOD WAS THERE."** In this well written and interesting book, Roy describes scenes and events that most of us cannot even imagine. It is the story of struggle, sacrifice and up close battlefield fighting. It is also the story of the strong bond that develops between soldiers who shared the very real danger of being killed or wounded at any second.

Roy wrote the book as a history for his grandchildren, who, someday, may say *"what did Papa do in the Vietnam War?"* However, after its release it became very popular and the first printing was quickly sold out. A second printing is underway.

Copies of the book are available directly from Roy. Contact him via e-mail at roynancymathis@bellsouth.net or call him at 864-487-0933; or write him at 138 Mulligan Drive, Gaffney, SC 29341. Roy has not released the book for profit, and the cost for the book and shipping only covers the printing and postage.

The book is also now available from Amazon.com in a format for e-readers. Click on [Mathis Book on Amazon](#) to get to the Amazon page to order the book.

Source: <http://pacoletmemories.com/roybook.html>



173d Airborne Association Membership Application Form

PLEASE PRINT AND FILL-OUT THIS APPLICATION

Mail Application and Payments to;

Please **circle** the appropriate boxes below

Membership Secretary, Dennis Hill
97 Earle Street
Norwood, MA 02062-1504

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Annual Membership			
Ends on 31 December of each year - \$ 24.00			
Regular *		Associate	
Sky Soldier	Veteran	Gold Star	Spouse of deceased Sky Soldier
Life Membership \$ 173.00			
Regular *		Gold Star (Parent or Spouse)	

Make checks payable to:
173d Airborne Brigade Assn

**Regular Membership open to those assigned or attached to the 173d Airborne Brigade*

Please print current or updated information below:

Service Number (B446349): _____
(Use first Letter of last name and last 6 of service number)

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