

Some of the benefits your troopers can expect as Associate Members of the 173d Airborne Brigade Association, include:

- A complimentary subscription to our quarterly National Magazine, *Sky Soldier*;
- An auto window decal and membership card;
- Invitation to each member and their guests to our annual reunions;
- Complimentary use of our searchable on-line data base to hook-up with buddies;
- Participation in the 173d Airborne Brigade Foundation which offers a Scholarship Program for troopers and their family members;
- And support by our National Service Officers to help advise members on veteran service matters.

But, Mr. Gatewood, I'm sure you'll agree, most importantly, by our troopers coming together we will further bond while keeping the 'Airborne Spirit' and our renowned histories alive well into the future.

Through our local chapters we support our active duty paratroopers now in the war zone. Chapters have sent everything from Christmas trees to microwaves, baseball bats to sun glasses. If the troops want it, our chapters do their utmost to get it to them. Each chapter is in itself uniquely run by the local membership. Chapters conduct their own local programs, from meetings to social activities to visiting our wounded at hospitals and, when necessary, attending funerals of our fallen. We invite all members to stay hooked-up and participate in these programs and events whenever possible.

Accompanying this note is a form which interested members of the 503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT Association may use to register as Associate Members of the 173d Airborne Brigade Association. We very much look forward to welcoming to our ever expanding family of paratroopers the amazing men of the 503<sup>rd</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team, and to honor your and their dedicated, unmatched and heroic service to our country.

Nelson, if I may be so personal; I look forward to meeting you one day soon. Please let me know if you have any questions about our invitation and I'll do my best to answer them for you. Until then,

*Airborne, All The Way!*

Roy Scott

cc by email to:

173d Airborne Brigade Association Board of Directors  
Mr. William Calhoun, President-Elect, 503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT Association  
Mr. Chuck Breit, 503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT Association Member  
Ms. Nancy Young, Secretary, 503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT Association  
Mr. Hal Nobles, Chairman, 2010 Reunion Committee Chairman  
Mr. Mike Montie, 173d Membership Secretary





# 2010 503<sup>rd</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team Reunion

~ September 22<sup>nd</sup> - September 26<sup>th</sup> ~



## ~ Tentative Agenda ~

Wyndham DFW Airport North, Irving Texas

### Wednesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>

Registration (room 704):.....12:00a.m. - 5:00p.m.  
Hospitality Room (room 704):..... 2:00p.m. - 10:00p.m.

### Thursday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>

\*Breakfast..... 6:00a.m. - 11:00a.m.  
Registration (room 704):.....10:00a.m. - 4:00p.m.

### Friday, September 24<sup>th</sup>

\* Breakfast.....6:00a.m. - 11:00a.m.  
Board of Director's Meeting,  
(Hospitality room 704):.....10:00a.m.  
Registration (room 704):.....12:00a.m. - 5:00p.m.  
Hospitality Room (room 704/804):.....12:00a.m. - 5:00p.m.

*Hospitality room sponsored by:*

***FORD ALBRITTON***

***ALL TROOPERS please come and lift a drink!!!!***

Hospitality Room (room 704):..... 2:00p.m. - 5:00p.m.  
Dinner (banquet room BOND):..... 6:00p.m.  
Hospitality Room: (room 704 & 804),  
After dinner:..... 10:00p.m.

### Saturday, September 25<sup>th</sup>

\*Breakfast: ..... 6:00a.m. - 11:00a.m.  
SW Chapter Meeting:  
(hospitality room 804):.....9:30a.m.  
Annual Membership Meeting:  
(hospitality room 704): .....11:00a.m.  
Hospitality Room (Open after annual meeting): 5:00p.m.  
Open after banquet:.....10:00p.m.  
Banquet: (banquet room LINDBERGH 1):.....6:00p.m.

### Sunday, September 26<sup>th</sup>

\*Breakfast:.....6:00a.m. - 11:00a.m.  
Check Out: anytime up to 12:00a.m.

\*Breakfast Buffet is for registered hotel guests only.  
ALL others must order and pay individually.

\*\*\*No food or beverage may be taken out of the  
Hospitality suites, per hotel request.\*\*\*



**Attention all Sky Soldiers!** The 503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT Association is inviting all members of the 173d Airborne Brigade Association to join their fellow 503<sup>rd</sup> paratroopers at our reunion in Dallas, TX this September. We hope to see you here!!!

## ~ Hotel Information ~

Wyndham DFW Airport North  
4441 West John Carpenter Freeway (HWY 114)  
Irving, Texas 75063

Hotel Reservations: (972)-929-8181  
for special requests.

Toll free Reservations: (877)-999-3223  
specify hotel name.

Be sure to request the 503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT room block  
when making your reservations.

**Dates:** Wednesday, Sept 22<sup>nd</sup> - Sunday, Sept 26<sup>th</sup>  
(stay longer if you wish!)

- **Room Rate** is \$79.00 plus tax for up to 2 people (king or 2 full beds), which includes full breakfast buffet (including omelets and the like!), and free shuttle service to and from DFW Airport and local restaurants.

**Hotel Reservation deadline** is September 1, 2010, after which room rate cannot be guaranteed.

### 503<sup>rd</sup> Reunion Registration Fee

**\$90.00 per person**, please make check payable and mail to:

**Marvin Edwards or;**  
**SW 503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT**

**1655 VZCR 2313, Canton, Texas 75103**

Phone number for any questions—(903)-848-7023

**Fee includes:** Catered Dinner on Friday and Saturday, Banquet Room both nights for Dinner, Hospitality Room for entire reunion with snacks and drinks.  
Name Tags.  
Free Parking at hotel.  
And other items.

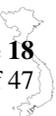
Hospitality Room on Friday is sponsored by **FORD ALBRITTON!!!** All troopers please come and share drinks and conversation from 2:00-5:00 p.m.. Ford was attached to Headquarters and flew many support missions for you and would like to talk with all of his old friends.

**AIRBORNE.....ALL THE WAY!**



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# 503rd Parachute Regimental Combat Team 2010

## ~ Reunion Registration Form ~



Wednesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>-Sunday, September 26<sup>th</sup>

Wyndham DFW Airport North, Irving Texas

\*\*\*\*PLEASE PRINT and RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WITH PAYMENT\*\*\*\*

\_\_\_\_\_ How many will be registered to attend reunion and banquet at \$90.00 per person?

Please print names

Unit

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ spouse

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

For information or questions, please call:

(903)-848-7023

\_\_\_\_\_ How many other guests will attend **ONLY** the catered meals with you at a cost of \$32.50 per person per meal? Please indicate meal: \_\_\_\_\_ Friday \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday

Date you plan to check in: \_\_\_\_\_

Date you plan to check out: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ We will **NOT** be able to attend the reunion or banquet(s) this year.

(Please print)

(Name): \_\_\_\_\_

(Phone Number): \_\_\_\_\_

(Email): \_\_\_\_\_



Wyndham DFW Airport North, Irving Texas

Enclosed is my check in the amount of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable to:

503<sup>rd</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Please mail completed form with check to:

Marvin Edwards

1655 VZCR 2313, Canton, TX 75103

Registration deadline is Sunday, August 15, 2010.  
Registration refunds will be given until September 10, 2010.



# The Man Who Planned The Offensive

[Time magazine, February 9, 1968]

It is one of those little ironies of fate that General Vo Nguyen Giap's name contains the Vietnamese words for force (Vo) and armor (Giap). The commander of North Viet Nam's armed forces and the overlord of the Viet Cong, he is a dangerous and wily foe who has become something of a legend in both Viet Nams for his stunning defeat of the French at Dienbienphu. He is one of the principal developers -- along with Mao Tse-tung and Cuba's late Che Guevara -- of the art of guerrilla warfare, a tactician of such talents that U.S. military experts have compared him with German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel. "You know when he's in charge," said a top Pentagon official last week. "You can feel him there." Yet Giap had no formal training as a soldier. "The only military academy I have been to," he boasted after Dienbienphu, "is that of the bush."

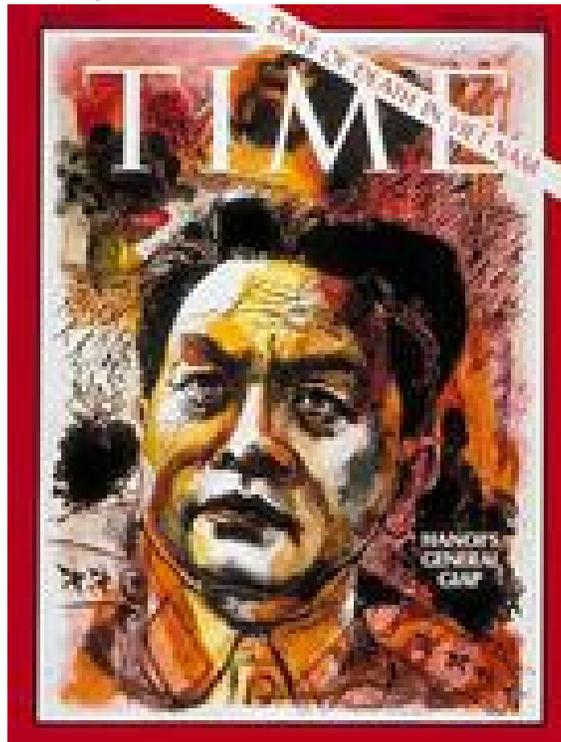
Giap, 56, was not born to the bush. The son of a poor but educated landholder in what is now North Viet Nam, he was sent to an exclusive college in the old imperial capital of Hue, got a law degree from the French-run University of Hanoi and finally emerged as a history teacher at Hanoi's Thang Long School. His idol, even then, was Napoleon. "He could step to the blackboard," one of his former students recalls, "and draw in the most minute detail of every battle plan of Napoleon." But his admiration for the French stopped there. A fervent Vietnamese patriot, he had joined an anti-French clandestine organization when he was only 14, later became a member of Viet Nam's fledgling Communist Party.

In 1939, the French banned the party, and Giap -- together with scores of other Communists -- fled to China. There he met Ho Chi Minh and became a charter member of a group that the French will long remember: the Viet Minh. His assignment, based largely on his blackboard battlegrounds, was to organize Ho's raging guerrillas into a fighting army. That was in 1941, and Giap has been in charge of the army ever since.

Giap is an ascetic man who neither smokes nor drinks, wears baggy, high-collared uniforms, and frequently goes about shod in sandals made from rubber tires. Yet

there are streaks of vanity in him. Because of his short stature (5 ft.), he likes to stand on boxes to deliver his speeches. On visits to his troops, he is liable to shuck his uniform, four-starred helmet and all, and show up dressed conspicuously in civilian clothes. He is a ruthless taskmaster, utterly contemptuous of the value of human life -- even that of his own troops.

***"Every minute, thousands of men die all over the world," he tells his officers. "The life and death of human beings means nothing."***



Giap's life has not been easy. He married in 1938 and fathered a girl, but his wife was arrested by the French and died in prison while he was in China; he has since re-married. An emotional man whose temper often got the better of his cool -- and earned him the nickname of "The Volcano and the Snow" -- he has, at times, been put down by Ho. An outburst against a French general in 1945 cost him a place on the negotiating team that tried to win independence from France at the end of World War II. A running feud with two powerful politburo members -- whose pro-Peking sentiments were resented in Hanoi's Communist pecking order. Although he is North Viet Nam's Defense Minister, military commander and Vice Premier -- and a popular hero

second only to Ho Chi Minh -- Giap has still not risen above sixth place in his party's official hierarchy.

According to the evidence available, in fact, his total command of the current Communist offensive in South Viet Nam was accorded him quite by accident. One of his Politburo arch foes, Nguyen Chi Thanh, who had shared control of operations in the South, died last summer -- of what Hanoi describes as a heart attack but U.S. officers refer to as "B-52-itis" caught in the South. Thanh's death left Giap unchallenged, and he has spent a large part of the past six months planning the New Year's offensive that began last week.



## WHODAT?

In last month's issue of our newsletter we asked if anyone could identify this trooper and his friend. Taken in 1965/66 the Sky Soldier is **PFC John Mudrick**. The photo was taken by his buddy, **Mike Guthrie**, both A/2/503d.



**We'll call the dog Deogie.**

# Zulu Zulu The Battle at Bau San

Following the 173d Airborne Brigade reunion in Sydney, Australia in 2005, Gus Vendetti and Bill Vose of A/2/503d and I returned to Vietnam. Our mission was to hump into the "D" Zone jungle to find LZ Zulu-Zulu site of the 16 March 1966 battle when the 2/503d was surrounded by bad guys and at serious risk of being overrun.

During the visits to Sydney and our reinvasion of Vietnam, I kept a daily trip journal, originally 39 pages describing our experiences on that journey. But, over the years it has grown a tad, to 245 pages of historical records, photographs and recollections of Sky Soldiers who participated in 'Operation Silver City' and that memorable battle; it is entitled "The Battle at Bau San."

Upwards of 300 printed copies of this work have been mailed over the years to buddies. It is now available free to anyone wishing to receive it by email. It's in compressed format to avoid chewing up too much computer space, and is emailed in installments.

If you'd care to receive the report please drop me a note at [rto173d@cfl.r.com](mailto:rto173d@cfl.r.com) and it will be emailed to you piecemeal over a number of days. Even if you received an earlier hard-copy version you might want this copy as new recollections, photos and historical records continue to be added.

A former battalion executive officer/commanding officer of the 2/503d said this about the segment of the report describing 'Operation Silver City':

*"This historical account of soldiers conducting a valorous and determined defense against a well armed and numerically superior enemy force is an outstanding tribute to the Airborne Soldier. This account is particularly remarkable when the action is so accurately described from the viewpoint of the soldier and when the circumstances influencing the battle are known.*

*The following accounting of the Silver City operation from the Soldier's viewpoint is a remarkable tribute to the soldiers who carry the burden of battle and suffer the outcome."*

**Robert B. Carmichael, LTC Inf. (Ret.)**

A number of my buddies have asked me to have this thing formerly published. But, it's not my story, it's our story. A few sample pages from "The Battle at Bau San," follow.

Smitty Out



## VA EASES MEDICAL MARIJUANA RULES

Now I don't want you guys to get too excited about this, but, it was just reported...."Patients treated at Veterans Affairs hospitals and clinics will be able to use medical marijuana in the 14 states where it's legal, according to new federal guidelines. The directive from the Veterans Affairs Department is intended to clarify current policy that says veterans can be denied pain medication if they use illegal drugs. The directive does not authorize VA doctors to prescribe medical marijuana."

**Source:** Tim Wendel with staff and wire, *FloridaToday*.



Cartoon by Jerry Hassler, Recon 2/503d, '66/'67



# Zulu ~ Zulu THE BATTLE AT BAU SAN

July 9, Saturday

## **THE BATTLE AT BAU SAN**

*~ a Vietnam War story of a  
different kind ~*

*Why do we go back?  
Because we must go back.*

**D. LEWIS SMITH, JR.**



On March 11, 1966, paratroopers of the 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry Regiment, 173d Airborne Brigade prepare to load choppers at Bien Hoa Airbase (the "Snakepit") for assault into War Zone "D" during Operation Silver City.

Photo by: Wayne Hoitt

### Recollection:

"They took us in trucks that morning to the Air Base nearby, each of us loaded down with gear, already drenched in sweat from the humidity. A sickly, quiet calm seemed to envelop us; each in his own thoughts, each of us not knowing what to expect; but, we knew whatever it was it wouldn't be good. We had gone through this routine before as we would many times throughout the year. As the XO's RTO I was again in one of the first assault slicks, something I never became accustomed to. As always, I looked up and down the long line of choppers cranking up their engines with the sticks of men ready to board and, as always, thought 'some of you fuckers aren't coming back alive'. It was never me, I knew I was always coming back alive – or at least I thought I knew."

Lew "Smitty" Smith, HHC/2/503d

(continued....)



“I was in the ambush when Sgt. Butler, Marvin Harper and the young E-5, who had only been in the company a few weeks, were killed. I believe that the most difficult aspect of being a combat surviving soldier is to remember the last moments you shared with your friends. Bonds developed in combat are intensely strong and could never be understood by REMF’s or civilians. I remember every detail of the last hour of Marvin Harper and Sgt. Butler’s lives. We had stopped for lunch and Marvin coerced me into giving him a can of peaches for his fruitcake. I recall eating that dry cake and knowing that I got the worst end of that trade. While we were eating we clearly heard ‘rooster crowing’. Sgt. Butler reported this up to Captain Faley. We hadn’t finished eating yet when an order came down for Sgt. Butler to send a squad out to recon the area; he chose to come with us. We only moved out a short distance, certainly not more than 200 or 300 meters when all hell broke loose. I was thrown to the ground by a tremendous explosion. When I came to I crawled to a nearby anthill. Off to my side about 5 meters was Marvin. He was moving but obviously seriously wounded. He was in a very exposed position and I yelled for him to come over behind the anthill. He did not respond, so I crawled over to him; it was then I could see he was nearly dead and one of his feet was blown almost completely off. I then began to crawl back to the anthill and that was when I was hit in the shoulder. I lay behind the anthill and looked at Marvin and watched the ants drown in my blood. Occasionally, an incoming round would hit the anthill and that would really stir things up. I am not sure how long I lay there but at some point 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Jackson appeared. I don’t have words to explain and only those who know THE HAMMER could begin to understand the immediate sense of safety, comfort and security that overwhelmed me with him laying there beside me. He was the strongest, most capable man I have ever known. He was indisputably a fearless and valiant warrior, but also a true gentleman and a role model for young PFC’s. I remember Steve Haber well.”



**Desmond “Hammer” Jackson  
one hellofa soldier.**

**Larry Cox, C/2/503d**

I stepped into the clearing as Truc and Vose confirmed we had finally reached our destination. Within minutes we determined we were standing within meters of where the “A” Company and HHC lines had joined. I asked Alex to take a snapshot of me standing where I thought my “hole” had been some 39 years before. Over two days of travel, 12 take-offs and landings, two hours of driving, two and a half hours of a killing march to reach this place, to again stand on Zulu-Zulu. We felt how mountaineers must feel reaching the peak of Everest, while the unheard voices in the jungle welcomed us back....

**The Ghosts of Zulu-Zulu**

“Hello Sky Soldiers, brothers. We’ve been waiting for your return, we knew you would come back one day. It’s been many years since we were last here together, and much has changed since that early morning when we were all boys fighting these other boys. How senseless we all were then. Tell us man is no longer making war. Tell us we gave up our lives for something good. Our fear has been gone for such a long time now, and we’ve come to call this jungle our home. It’s not so bad really, so don’t feel sad for us. Our only regret is not having lived full lives; not having returned home to our parents, our brothers, sisters, wives, and for some of us, our children. Can you tell us about our wives and children? Did our children grow to be good people? Are they happy? In some ways we are better off than each of you today. Today we sense your remorse, we feel your sorrow and your pain, we share your heavy hearts while we rejoice in your lives, and your tears are understood. You may or may not remember our names or our faces, you remember us only as brothers, as we remember you. When you leave this place today we hope you leave behind that part of you which has troubled you for so long -- which has returned you to this place. It is time for you to close this period in your life, it is time for you to move on, to revel in living, the living, and not us, the dead.”

Bill, Gus. Did you hear that?

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## Search & Find Missions

### JAG Officers

Looking to find the JAG Officers who served with the 173d at LZ English and the Bde Surgeon, Maj. Trainor (sp?) '69/'70. Bob "Ragman" Getz, CPT, Task Force Commander, 2/503d, '69. [rgetz173@yahoo.com](mailto:rgetz173@yahoo.com).

### Help Wanted!

Several of us from A/2/503d 1966, had helped James Miskel apply for a Purple Heart that had not been awarded to him when he was wounded on Sept 26, 1966. This was during Operation Sioux City - o/a 23km north of Bien Hoa. The Dept. of Army, Board for Correction of Military Records has just turned down the request. We are looking for two witnesses who can help substantiate the award: a medic - Sp5 Beaton, and a Brigade Photographer who was wounded at the same time from an enemy claymore mine. If you can help us find them or anyone familiar with this incident - please help! Jack Kelley (910) 488-0165, [JackTKelley@aol.com](mailto:JackTKelley@aol.com)

### Bravo Bulls in Ahn Khe

I'm still trying to find some of these Faces; this picture was taken in March or April of '68, in Ahn Khe.



This Bunch of Sky Soldiers thought it would be a great idea to Re-up... 4 - 5 of them survived Hill 875. I can't remember all their names. I'm hoping they will remember me and the day we took this and get in touch. Richard Martinez, B/2/503d '67-'68. Please contact me at: [rmartinez26@bak.rr.com](mailto:rmartinez26@bak.rr.com)

***"In war, things get blown up really fast."***  
(overheard from a US Army Ranger Sgt.)

## GIs Honor Burial of Scout

[From Firebase 173 newspaper, September 14, 1970]

LZ NORTH ENGLISH (RVN)

A Kit Carson Scout who was killed pursuing the VC across a rice paddy was buried by his American friends.

The Kit Carson, Do Ba Vu, was an ex-NVA. He finally rebelled against the lies, false promises, and hopeless causes of the North Vietnamese. He was trained as a scout to work with U.S. units.

Vu had been with B Co, 2d Bn., 503d Inf. for just two months when he was killed. The young soldier hadn't been in the area long enough to have any Vietnamese friends. The fact that he was North Vietnamese kept U.S. authorities from sending his body to any friends or relatives he might have had in the north. The GIs made their choice. He was one of their own, they would bury him as such.

Arrangements were made for a proper gravesite. A Buddhist priest, since Vu was Buddhist, was to insure that everything was conducted properly, in accordance with that religion. After the traditional night of mourning and burning incense, the coffin was loaded into a ¾ ton truck, in lieu of a caisson, and the column procession started out.

The column moved out of LZ North English and through the villages at almost a crawl. When the procession finally stopped, the coffin was carried by Kit Carson scouts and GIs across an open rice paddy.

There, on a natural high place, the ceremony was held. About 200 people, both Vietnamese and Americans, listened as "Taps" were played and the volley's from the rifle salute echoed across the valley.

The Americans had buried an "adopted" member of the 173d.





# UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

## ***Lessons learned from St. Louis VA Medical Center are applied VA-wide***

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) primary mission is to serve our nation’s Veterans. President Obama has charged the Department with ensuring the VA medical network is a top-notch health care system.

*“The mistakes made at the St. Louis VA Medical Center are unacceptable, and steps have been and continue to be taken to correct this situation and assure the safety of our Veterans. VA will not tolerate risk to our Veterans,”* said Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki. *“VA employees at the St. Louis VA Medical Center, along with all of our employees, have a solemn responsibility to provide safe, quality care for the well being of all our patients.”*

Under the Obama Administration, in the past 18 months, VA has implemented more stringent oversight of the safety of all its medical facilities. It is this more rigorous standard that directly led VA to identify and address problems at the St. Louis Medical Center. Additional resources have been allocated and new procedures and stricter enforcements are in place to ensure the safety of all Veterans who seek care at VA facilities. VA mandates transparency and accountability in its handling of mistakes or failures to meet VA’s high standards. VA’s processes lead the nation in terms of transparency and accountability.

***“VA is committed to ensuring that all our health care facilities are safe,”*** said Shinseki. ***“VA will continue to investigate the actions of individuals involved and the proper administrative and disciplinary measures will be taken.”***

The St. Louis facility has undergone a thorough examination, and many safeguards are in place that are designed to prevent a similar situation from occurring again. In-depth staff training and management reviews were immediately conducted by the St. Louis leadership,

medical staff, and VA’s Supply, Processing and Distribution (SPD) program office teams.

*“The Veterans we serve are our friends, our neighbors and a part of our family,”* said Dr. Robert Petzel, VA’s Under Secretary of Health.

*“Under the direction of Secretary Shinseki I have determined there is a need for an independent, national Administrative Investigation Board (AIB) to determine the reasons for failure to follow correct procedures. The Chief of Dental Services has been placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation.”*



**Dr. Robert Petzel**

Immediate actions were taken to ensure all personnel were properly re-trained and all equipment is being handled in accordance with manufacturers’ instructions. All pre-washing of dental equipment which was performed by dental personnel prior to sterilizations is now being done by qualified SPD staff.

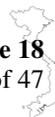
No Veterans are currently ill as a result of this incident. The potential risk to Veterans is extremely low.

*“The St. Louis VA Medical Center provides excellent care to more than 50,000 Veterans a year, and the dental clinic equipment issue does not reflect the level of care provided by the more than 2,600 dedicated medical center staff,”* added Petzel.

\*\*\*\*\*

***“When in doubt, empty your magazine.”***

Murphy's Rules of Combat Operations



# 2/503d Sky Soldiers ~ Where Are They Now?

**Ronald Amyot**, Sp-4, HHC/2/503d, '65-'66 Vietnam. Was in Recon Platoon and then Field Exchange at Bien Hoa. Retired from New York State Police after 36 years. Married to bride Mary and have three children, Kasey, Travis & Garrett, and one grandchild, Eion. Live near Syracuse, NY in Cicero.



**Ron, gone fishin'**



**Jimbo**

retirement goal is to live on a sailboat and harass the Smith's and the Hoitt's in Florida.

[jim\\_bethea@yahoo.com](mailto:jim_bethea@yahoo.com)

**Jim Bethea**, Rifleman, HHC/2/503d '65/'66. My wife Gayle and I have been together for 39 years and married for 37. We live in Elmer City, Washington; that's about three miles downstream from Grand Coulee Dam. I work at the dam for the Bureau of Reclamation as an Engineering, Draftsman. My

**Wayne Bowers**, US Army '66-'69 SSG E-6, C&D 2/503d '67-'68. Married 38 years, Brenda, one daughter, Ashley (26). Operations Manager for a restaurant chain, Columbia SC. [bowway@aol.com](mailto:bowway@aol.com)

**Jaime N. (Jimmy) Castillo**, 2nd Plt/C/2/503d, 7/66-7/67. 82nd B/325 7/67-12/68. 2nd marriage 25 years with Ester, 5 adult children -- Jaime, Johnny, Cindy, Silvia and Mike. 11 Grandchildren and 4 Great-Grandchildren. Retired from ConocoPhillips refinery at Arroyo Grande, CA 26 years.

[jncastillo173@msn.com](mailto:jncastillo173@msn.com)



**Ester & Jimmy**



**Mike**

Computer Science. I also have a book of poems written under my pen name Michael Simay (so you guys wouldn't know that I was secretly a poet) entitled

**Mike de Gyurky**. I retired from the California Institute of Technology's, Jet Propulsion Laboratory in 2004 after 25 years of building computer software for spacecraft telemetry processing, commanding and communications application. I am a writer now, and have a book out entitled *The Cognitive Dynamics of*

*Reflections During A Monsoon Evening* (many of them were written while I was with the 2/503rd at Bong San in 1969). I just completed a novel entitled *Before The Rains Came*, which I wrote at the instigation of my buddies Jim Grimshaw, Preston Parrott, Bill Hill, and Bernie Griffard. We'll see if it is published, and then if you like it. It is about why we went to fight in Vietnam. Part 1, of the novel is 565 pages. I'm now writing another text book. Aside from that I have a bad case Mikeof rheumatoid-arthritis, but still run every day, and go to the gym. I'm now almost 72 years old; and no, I would not want to be young again. My wife Cheryl is still working at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. She was a MI Lieutenant in Counter Intelligence at Ft. Bragg when I met her in 1973. So we are well, and send all of you our best wishes, in the Airborne tradition.

[degurky@sbcglobal.net](mailto:degurky@sbcglobal.net)



**Tony out pickin'**

**Xavier A. (Tony) Esposito**, 1LT, C/HHC/2/503d, '65/'66. Retired LTC in 1984. My bride Rosemarie and I just moved from Hampton, VA to Williamsburg, VA. Five Great grandchildren; lovin' every moment of this 55+ golfing community (and I don't golf). Still fishing w/ an Airborne! attitude. [xavierespo@cox.net](mailto:xavierespo@cox.net)



**Les**

**Les Fuller**, Sp-4, Recon squad machine gunner A/2/503d Feb. '67-'68. Retired floor covering installer. Married to Billie. One son who is a SFC in the 101st Abn. Two grand daughters, Devona and Makayla. One great grandson, Zachary. I currently live in Ridge Manor FL.

[lesa2503@yahoo.com](mailto:lesa2503@yahoo.com)

**Bob Getz**, CPT, Task Force Commander, 2/503d, '69. Retired from US Army and Facilities/Construction, University of Illinois at Chicago and Harper College. Currently Elected Trustee at Elgin (IL) Community College. President of a firm Supporting Our Veterans and member of the Congressional Commission for the Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary Events of the Vietnam War. Married to Pat, with three married Children and four Grandchildren. AIRBORNE, ALL THE WAY!! RAGMAN [rgetz173@yahoo.com](mailto:rgetz173@yahoo.com)

(continued...)



**Thomas "Tom" Goodwin**, Cpt., Commo Officer 2/503d, '64-'66, Major, USA (Ret). Retired Town Administrator, (MA). Living in Greenfield, MA 01301, married to Carol (April 17, 1953). Former college professor and currently a certified Lay Preacher and volunteer at the local VA Outpatient Clinic. Wear that 173d cap every day. [thomasgoodwin@comcast.net](mailto:thomasgoodwin@comcast.net)

**Earle L Graham**, PhD, SSGT A/2/503d, 12/67-5/68. Volunteered to join 173d when 3rd Bde was formed at Ft Bragg (was with 82nd ABN, 1/504, Devils in Baggy Pants). Remained with Co A, 3/503d until December '67 then went to Co A, 2/503d. Retired teacher of students with disabilities now living in Snellville, GA. Married to Gloria; five children (all grown and gone), and one granddaughter. [drgra60@yahoo.com](mailto:drgra60@yahoo.com)



**Proud grandpa**

**Wayne Hoitt**, HHC/2/503d (RTO, S-3) 1/65 - 4/66. Sp4 in the battalion, final rank Sgt. E-5. Since 1953 living at the Moses Patten Homestead, Patten Hill Road, Candia, NH. 3 daughters, 1 son, 1 adopted daughter, 7 grand kids, 4 great grand kids. Director of Operations, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, Manchester, NH campus. Hoping to retire in the next few months to Bradenton, Florida with my main squeeze the artist Raven Skye McDonough. [whoitt@hotmail.com](mailto:whoitt@hotmail.com) Please take time to check out her web site: [www.ravenskyemcdonough.com](http://www.ravenskyemcdonough.com)



**Wayne & Raven**

**James "JJ" Jackson**, PFC, 3d Squad, 3d Platoon, B/2/503d, '65/'66. Retired mid level manager USPS living in Beaumont, CA, married to Teri, with one granddaughter and one on the way, Olivia and TBA. "Your mind is like a parachute, it doesn't function unless it's open.". [rvfriendly@gmail.com](mailto:rvfriendly@gmail.com)



**"JJ"**

**Art Martinez**, 1LT, B/HHC/2/503d, '65-'66, Major (Ret). Retired from management with Shell Oil Company, living in Pomona, Southern California. Wife, Bonnie, 2 children. [abmmartinez4@yahoo.com](mailto:abmmartinez4@yahoo.com)

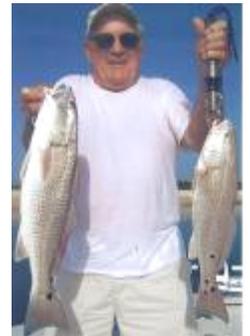


**Art**

**Richard Martinez**, Sp-4, 11B1P, B/2/503d, '67/'68. Living in Wasco CA., from where I was drafted in June of '67. Went back to work for and with my dad in a small family-owned Auto Body Shop. Married twice. I have a son, Brian, from the first wife, and daughter, Amberly, from the second wife. I have three grandkids Roman 7, Mike 4 and 'Airborne' Ashley 2. I recently bought a Harley. I ride today in memory of those who Will Never Live Their Dream, SKY SOLDIERS...My BAND OF BROTHERS. Gone BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN. [rmartinez@bak.rr.com](mailto:rmartinez@bak.rr.com)



**Note: I told Richard this photo would scare everyone. He said, "If you think that pic is INTENSE use the one with the Beret." I couldn't do it, it's too scary. Ed**



**Dave gone fishin' too**

**David "Dave" Milton, Sr.**, Cpt., CO, A/2/503d Inf.. 1967. Retired LTC Army and business owner living in Jacksonville, FL. Catching giant redfish and playing golf. [d.milton821@yahoo.com](mailto:d.milton821@yahoo.com)

**Ted S. Mobley**, Sgt.E-5, Commo Platoon Radio Sgt. HHC/2/503 '65/'66. Retired from Montgomery County Police Dept., Montgomery Co. Maryland. Currently living in Mt. Pleasant, S.C. with my wife Susan. We have 4 children, 5 grandchildren, and 2 great grandchildren. [sue81245@att.net](mailto:sue81245@att.net)

**Preston A Parrott**, Battalion S-1; Commander, E Company 2/503d '69. Retired Major US Army ('85), and High School JROTC Instructor ('04). Living in Odessa, TX with my wife Linda. We have seven kids and Thirteen Grandkids. [prestonparrott@cableone.net](mailto:prestonparrott@cableone.net) 'Pres'



**Tom "Bird" Parrott**, Sp-4, light team, RTO, 2nd platoon, D/2/503d, '68-'69. Still working at University of Illinois at Chicago. [parrott@uic.edu](mailto:parrott@uic.edu)



**Jack Price, Capt.,** B/2/503d, '65/'66. We live on Buffalo Mountain, near mile marker 175 on Virginia's Blue Ridge Parkway. Just stop in at Mabry Mill, and ask for Buffalo Jack. We have a son, Cam and family



**Sam & Jack**

(3 grand kids) in Fairhope AL, and daughter Megan and family (2 grand kids in Austin TX). Between being beekeepers, grandparents, farmers, not much time left! A lot of time on the road traveling. Always look forward to seeing any of you! [wp25244@west-point.org](mailto:wp25244@west-point.org)



**Ken**

Married 43 years to Sherry with three children and eight grandchildren. [kenthebowler@aol.com](mailto:kenthebowler@aol.com)

**Kenneth C. Redding, (67 yrs.),** Sergeant E-5, "ENTAC PLATOON" HHC/2/503d, '65/'66. Retired Sergeant Baltimore County Police Department, MD. Also, retired from AAI Corporation (Defense Contractor). Live in Hanover, PA, which is ten miles East of

**John W. Searcy Sr., Sgt-E5,** 4.2's Mortar Platoon, HHC/2/503d, '65/'66. Retired US Army 1SG, retired Correctional Officer (State Of Alaska). Now living in North Las Vegas, NV, married to Leona, 48 years on Aug. 22<sup>nd</sup>, with two children, seven grandkids, and seven great-grandkids. "Hooah! It's a good day to be alive." [js173abn@embarqmail.com](mailto:js173abn@embarqmail.com)



**Top & Mrs. Top**



**Ken**

**Ken Smith.** Captain, Bn S-3, and A and D Company Commander, 3/67 - 10/67 (I couldn't hold a job), Colonel (Ret). Semi retired, living in NC with wife Susan. Visited periodically by three children and eight grandchildren. "Every day of life is a gift."

[kkvsmith173@embarqmail.com](mailto:kkvsmith173@embarqmail.com)

**Lew "Smitty" Smith, Jr. (62).** Sp-4, RTO Commo Section, HHC/2/503d, '65/'66. Retired business owner living in Merritt Island, FL, married to Reggie for 43 years (foolish woman), with two grand



**A gaggle of Smitties**

kids, Sofia (Lil' Smitty) and Aidan (Smittytoo). "It's a good day to be a Sky Soldier." [rto173d@cfl.r.com](mailto:rto173d@cfl.r.com)

**Leonard Ray Tanner, B/HHC/2/503d '67,** living in Jefferson, SD. I was a cook and worked two days on and two days off and in a short time I found how much fun a guy could have after three times the mps. They brought me back to camp for fighting, they decided I would be able to better get my frustrations out in the field. I was put in 2nd platoon 2nd squad so I am the only cook to make the combat jump in '67. [tanner\\_ry@yahoo.com](mailto:tanner_ry@yahoo.com)

**Wayne Tuttle, Sp4,** C/2/503d, 2nd Platoon RTO then Company RTO '66-'67. Retired business owner living near Dawson Creek, British Columbia, Canada. Married to Iva - two daughters and a son (Lauri, Elaina & David), and four grandkids (Joshua, Abby, Aaron & Marley). You're always welcome when you see the Patch. [tuttle@xplornet.com](mailto:tuttle@xplornet.com)



**Iva & Wayne**

**Steve 'Sgt. Rock' Vargo, C/2/503d, Sp-4;** 51st Inf LRP Sgt. E-5 formed out of 173d. With 173d for 4 months in 1967 (including June 22nd and Battle of Slopes) before going to LURP. Now retired in Columbus, Ohio since Oct. from State of Ohio. Semi-pro bicycle racer for Colavita Ohio Cycling and competing in Colavita-Zipp Time Trial Series in Ohio/Indiana. 'kat vicuska' pure life, the gypsy way. [steve.vargo@yahoo.com](mailto:steve.vargo@yahoo.com)

**James Velky.** Where I am now: Colonel, retired U.S Army Special Forces (2005); currently deployed (as of Aug. 2010) to Afghanistan as MPRI SOF mentor/trainer. Where I was: Casper Platoon Door Gunner Jan '69-Feb '69; D Co., 2nd Bn Fire Team/Squad Leader Feb '69-Jan '70. Contact email address while in Afghanistan is: [james.velky@cox.net](mailto:james.velky@cox.net).

(continued....)

**“Friends may come and go, but enemies accumulate.”**

Somebody said it.



**Ed Wilby, Sr.,**  
E-4 Ground  
Surveillance Platoon,  
HHC/2/503d '65/'66.  
Semi-retired, own my  
business supplying  
furniture to the Hotel  
Industry. Photo is of  
Helen, my wife of 43  
years, and my two sons



**Family Wilby**  
Jason and Jeremy and granddaughter Jada. Residing in  
Tampa, Florida. Current age 64. [ewilby4111@aol.com](mailto:ewilby4111@aol.com)

**Note:** As long as we continue to receive submissions  
for this "2/503d Where Are They Now" section, we'll  
include them in future issues. Let your buddies know  
where you are and what you've been doing. Send  
your info to [rto173d@cfl.rr.com](mailto:rto173d@cfl.rr.com) Ed

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## MR. CLEAN?

Who is this trooper who thinks he's gonna get clean  
from that pot?



Hint: He was attached to the 2/503d from brigade on  
numerous operations.

## Spc. Joseph Whiting Dimock II, U.S. Army Ranger, killed during explosion at ammunition facility

**Afghanistan:** Spc. Joseph Whiting Dimock II, 21,  
Wildwood was killed during in an explosion at an  
ammunition holding facility during a check of the  
inventory.

The explosion also injured another Ranger. Dimock  
enlisted in the U.S. Army in August 2007, according to a  
release from the U.S. Army Special Operations  
Command. For nearly three years he served as a  
rifleman in 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment.  
*"Ranger Dimock represented everything right with  
America. He was an incredibly talented young man,  
who volunteered to serve his nation in a time of war and  
ultimately gave his life in support of her cause,"* said Lt.  
Col. Mike Foster, the 1st Ranger Battalion Commander.



*"His loss is felt across the entire battalion and our  
thoughts and prayers are with the Dimock family."*  
He was on his second deployment to Afghanistan. He'd  
Previously served in Iraq.

*"Spc. Dimock was a warrior who chose a higher calling  
and deployed three times in support of the Nation.  
Joseph remains a hero to our Nation, the Army, and his  
family,"* said Col. Michael Kurilla, Commander of the  
75th Ranger Regiment. Ranger Dimock is survived by  
his parents, Joseph and Ellen Dimock, and two younger  
brothers.

~ Sua Sponte ~

**Source:** <http://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local-beat/army-ranger-dimock-98287629.html#ixzz0utLTkOtU>





# Ranger Hall of Fame inductees honored at RiverCenter

July 15, 2010

By Lori Egan, The Bayonet

FORT BENNING, Ga. - Each of the 14 men inducted into the 18th annual Ranger Hall of Fame July 9 credited the people they served with as the reason for the honor.

The ceremony was in the RiverCenter's Bill Heard Theatre. COL John King II, commander of the Ranger Training Brigade, said the common thread for those being honored was their willingness to sacrifice, to serve the nation and the Soldiers to their left and right.

*"It's the Ranger heritage," King said. "The people who are being honored today are the ones who motivate today's Soldiers."*

*"It's incredible to be included in the same category as men I think of as giants - Ralph Puckett and Phil Piazza,"* said SGM(R) John Edmunds. *"It's very humbling."*

General (R) William Kernan, the keynote speaker and president of the selection committee, said Ranger School teaches what right looks like, the training is a crucible and being a Ranger is not for the weak of heart.

*"This honor is earned,"* he said. *"The standards are high. Rangers lead competently and confidently."*

The Rangers inducted into the Hall of Fame were introduced alphabetically. They are: LTG (R) Jared Bates, 1SG (R) William Block, SGM (R) Al Brashier, LTG (R) Carmen Cavezza, former PFC Raymond Noel Dye, CSM (R) John Edmunds, CSM (R) Joseph Gagnon, MG (R) James Jackson, CSM (R) Michael Kelso, CWO (R) Gary O'Neal, GEN (R) Joseph Palastra Jr., 1SG (R) Earl Singletary, the Honorable Eugene Sullivan and CSM (R) James Voyles.

They received Hall of Fame medallions from King and CSM Dennis Smith, RTB's command sergeant major, or COL William Ostlund, deputy commander of the 75th Ranger Regiment, and SGM John Brady, regiment operations sergeant major. According to the program, *"The medallion signifies selfless sacrifice, professional excellence and remarkable accomplishment in the defense of the greatest nation in the world and to the highest ideals of service."*



*"It is earned by several,"* said Brashier, whose deployments include operations Provide Comfort and Uphold Democracy, *"but worn by one. It is a privilege to be recognized."*

Bates, who helped GEN Colin Powell and President Jimmy Carter negotiate the surrender of the military junta on Haiti averting combat operations, said he thought the Ranger motto - Rangers Lead the Way - should have a comma, because of its dual meaning. *"Rangers, lead the way is a statement and a directive,"* he said.

*"I served with real heroes,"* said Dye, who participated in three combat invasions - Sicily, Salerno and Anzio, Italy - during World War II. *"I accept this honor for the men I served with."*

*"No one receives an honor like this without the past and present Rangers,"* said Kelso, who was Fort Benning's top NCO from 2002-2005. *"This recognition is about being a member of a Ranger team."*

*RL TW*



# President Ronald Reagan's Address to Sky Soldiers

I count it a great honor to speak this evening to the "Sky Soldiers" -- the veterans of the 173d Airborne Brigade. It is not often units in military history can claim the record of valor and devotion to duty that is yours -- in less than a decade of existence, you received 12 Medals of Honor, 10 of them posthumous, and over 6,000 Purple Hearts. And -- sadly but gallantly -- there are today 1,533 names of your comrades carved in stone on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Those, at least, are the statistics. But you know better than most that the cold statistics cannot tell the real story -- maybe I should say "the legend" -- of the 173d. I think here of those early years in Vietnam; the first Army helicopter assault, the first joint-Allied operation, the only combat parachute assault and of course the battle at Dak To -- the calm and resolve of General Schweiter, the heroism of men like Chaplain Watters. What a record; as the years move back and history provides perspective, I can assure you that the deeds and dedication of "The Herd" -- men like PFC Willie Monroe whom you are honoring tonight -- will be remembered as among the most illustrious in American military history.

I could go on. But you know when I have been asked as President to talk at some occasion about the valor of our country's Armed Forces, I have often thought how right Lincoln was in the example he set at

Gettysburg when brave men have fought and died, there is little any president or person can add to the quiet testimony of their sacrifice.

So tonight, I will do only what I can do as President; tell you that what you did in Vietnam lives on; that our commitment was a noble cause, that your deeds will always be remembered by free men and women -- that someday, when freedom returns again to Southeast Asia, the people of those nations will honor you as surely as your countrymen honor you tonight.

I wish you well on your reunion; I complement those who have worked so hard on this project and all of you for helping keep alive the great tradition of the Sky Soldiers of the 173d Airborne Brigade.

And finally, I want to do what the American people would do if they had the chance to know your story and speak to you today. I want to thank each of you -- for your valor, patriotism, and service to the cause of freedom, and for remembering your fallen and missing comrades. God bless you all.

President Ronald Reagan

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This video address to Sky Soldiers by President Ronald Reagan first appeared in *Sky Soldier* magazine in August 1985, Vol. 1 Issue 1.

