

CEREMONY HONORS VETERANS

Monday, November 15, 2010

By Amanda Buck – Bulletin Staff Writer

The nation's veterans do not always receive the recognition and thanks they deserve, but that was not the case Sunday at Bassett High School.



Joseph Ellison Jr. left was named Veteran of the Year and Olaf Hurd, Jr. was given the Outstanding Military Veteran Award on Sunday during a Veterans Day ceremony at Bassett High School. Ellison served in various locations during his time in the Army, including Desert Storm. Hurd is a Vietnam veteran who served with the 173d Airborne Brigade.

Veterans of numerous wars and peacetime missions were honored during the annual community Veterans Day service. Three men — Lee C. Smith, Olaf Hurd, Jr. and Joseph Ellison, Jr. — received special recognition, and many others were remembered by the crowd of about 200.

Veterans Day, held each year on Nov. 11, is a chance to honor veterans who serve their country and make freedom possible, said Lt. Col. David Gilleran, guest speaker at the event. Gilleran, pastor of Hope Presbyterian Church in Martinsville, has served two deployments in the war on terror and is commanding

chaplain of the 134th Chaplain Support Team in Blackstone. Veterans Day, he said, *"is not a day to celebrate war, but rather a day to celebrate peace. ... You enjoy the peace a veteran provides."*

In his years with the military, Gilleran said he has seen that being a serviceman or woman *"is a job like no other. It's difficult, dangerous, underpaid and under-recognized."* Veterans understand what that job involves in a way civilians can't, he said. Veterans *"know what it's like"* to be on patrol in Afghanistan, wondering if an IED (improvised explosive device) is about to go off, Gilleran said. They know what it's like to crawl through rice paddies or deserts *"with 100 pounds of gear strapped across your back,"* or to crawl across beaches in the South Pacific during World War II or through snow banks in Korea.

Men and women in the military do *"a thankless job that few people wanted,"* and some, such as those who served in Vietnam, *"were condemned for doing it,"* Gilleran said.

"Veterans are the men and women who stepped forward," he said. *"Service of one's country indeed is the most honorable profession."*

Even when one war ends, he said, it doesn't mean another won't begin.

"Your grandchildren and great-grandchildren will be called to stand as the first line of defense," he told the audience. Those who answer — from the Revolutionary War to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan — keep Americans safe and make freedom possible,

he said.

David Kipfinger, commander of the Martinsville Henry County Veterans Honor Guard, recognized the veteran of the year, who is chosen annually by members of local veterans organizations. Ellison, this year's recipient, served in the Army for 22 years, including a period in Desert Storm. Five years ago, he joined American Legion Homer Dillard Post 78, and he is involved in a wide range of community activities, Kipfinger said. Among them, Ellison goes into local schools and mentors students. He works closely with the JROTC at Magna Vista High School and often takes veterans and others to doctor appointments, the grocery store or anywhere else they need to go, Kipfinger said.

(continued....)



Ellison is the fifth member of the Homer Dillard Post to receive the Veteran of the Year award, said Commander Sonny Richardson. The post, which has 214 members, is particularly active and has received membership awards for two years straight, Richardson said. Kipfinger also recognized Smith, who received a certificate of appreciation. Smith, who is retired, worked as a service officer for 40 years, helping veterans receive the benefits they deserve, Kipfinger said.

"He knew the system inside and out," Kipfinger said. "He helped many people."

Debra Buchanan, chairman of the Henry County Board of Supervisors, presented the second annual Outstanding Military Veteran Award to Hurd, a Vietnam veteran. The award was established because *"for too long, we have failed to properly recognize and thank the men and women of this community who served us in the various branches of the military,"* Buchanan said.

This year's nomination process showed the board that "we have many, many people in this community who have dedicated their lives to making our lives better. There is no nobler venture than that," she said.

Although all the nominees were "outstanding," Buchanan said Hurd's history of service in the military and the community made him this year's recipient.

A member of the 173d Airborne Brigade in Vietnam, Hurd was paralyzed from the chest down after being wounded in the Mekong Delta. *"But that didn't stop him,"* Buchanan said, adding that Hurd went on to compete in numerous wheelchair sports and started the All American Handicapped Association in Martinsville and Henry County, *"where he worked tirelessly to obtain adequate handicapped parking signs and curb cuts throughout the local area."*

Hurd has been involved with numerous volunteer activities and is a member of Hillcrest Baptist Church and the VFW Post 2820 of Bassett. He also *"really, really likes to hunt,"* Buchanan said. ***"Clearly, this year's recipient, while physically challenged, could teach all of us what it means to overcome our obstacles and contribute to the betterment of mankind,"*** she said.

All three men expressed their thanks for the honors and were recognized with applause from the audience. The Bassett High School JROTC presented and retired the colors, and the Bassett High School band performed a selection of military music.

Vietnam veterans reunited at event

Monday, November 15, 2010

By Amanda Buck – Bulletin Staff Writer

Nearly 44 years have passed since the day Olaf Hurd, Jr. was wounded in a surprise attack in Vietnam.



Jerry Hassler, right, takes a look at the plaque recognizing Olaf Hurd, left, as Outstanding Military Veteran. Hassler surprised Hurd with his visit. It was the first time they had seen each other in 43 years.

On Sunday, Hurd was "dumbfounded" when he came face to face for the first time with a friend who was with him that day in 1967.

Jerry Hassler, who lives in Franklin, Tenn., traveled to Bassett to see Hurd receive the Outstanding Military Veteran Award, an honor that recognizes military and community service. Hurd admitted that he "had a sneaking idea" that he might receive the award. But Hassler's visit had been kept completely under wraps.

(continued....)



"Jerry here was a complete surprise," Hurd said. "I'm dumbfounded." During their time in Vietnam, Hassler and Hurd were paratroopers in a reconnaissance platoon, Hassler said. As radio telegraph operators, they carried radios that made communication possible.

On Feb. 10, 1967, the group was on patrol in the Mekong Delta when the soldiers stopped to take a break. "I said, 'Would you like me to monitor your radio?'" and Hurd agreed, Hassler recalled. Hassler, who was listening to both his radio and Hurd's, said he was leaning against a small hill or termite mound when a flare that was part of the group's perimeter defense went off. "We didn't hear anything, so the sergeant said, 'Hurd, go find out what's going on,'" Hassler recalled.

It turned out to be an attack. A bullet pierced Hurd's left shoulder and lodged in his spine, leaving him paralyzed from the waist down. Another man was killed, Hassler said. "That was pretty much it," he said. "That's the last time I saw him till today."

Hassler, who was wearing a shirt and hat proclaiming his membership in the 173d Airborne Brigade, said he tried to keep himself out of sight as Sunday's ceremony got under way. It worked. When David Kipfinger, a close friend of Hurd's and commander of the Martinsville-Henry County Veterans Honor Guard, announced the surprise visitor, Hurd was overcome with emotion.

Hassler approached the front of the auditorium, where the two men embraced as the audience got to its feet. "That was a total surprise," Hurd said. "I had no idea, really."

The two men have kept in touch by e-mail in recent years, but seeing each other again was something else. Hassler joked that Hurd, who kept his hair in a short buzz cut during the war, now has more hair than Hassler does. Both men said they were happy to see each other again.

"I'm really glad I came," Hassler said. "We sprung it on him." Despite the hardships of Hurd's time in Vietnam — he served from May 1966 to February 1967 — and his injury, Hurd said he did have some good experiences there. He also had a supportive family full of people who helped him when he returned home, he said. "I was proud to be in the military and proud to serve my country," Hurd said. "I've said many times, if I could go back in time and serve my country again, I'd be glad to do so, even knowing the outcome."

ANOTHER FALLEN SKY SOLDIER IS FOUND!



In early August, 2010, the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation identified a Vietnam era trooper, taken from us, who was not accounted for by our Association on its many lists of fallen warriors generated over the past forty plus years.

Frank Denryter, who served with D/4/503d from 1970 to 1971, kept a log of all Sky Soldiers in the company who died in service during his tour of duty. When reviewing the names of the fallen warriors inscribed on the recently dedicated 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial, he realized one of his comrades was not included. The name of SGT Clinton A. Cook, killed on 28 April 1970 by a bobby trapped 105mm round, was missing!

Frank informed the Foundation of the omission and Sgt. Cook's name will be engraved on the Memorial in 2011, along with the names of the fallen from the 173d Airborne Brigade Combat Team's most recent deployment.

The 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial was designed to accommodate the addition of names of the Vietnam era fallen. If some of our brothers were omitted from the list of names inscribed on the panels the Foundation encourages all Sky Soldier veterans and family members to go to the KIA link on the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Website (www.173dairbornememorial.org) and ensure that your comrades/loved ones are listed. Should you find an omission, contact the Memorial Foundation's Director of Heraldry, Bob Wolfgang, at jrw173d@aol.com

Clinton Arthur Cook

Sergeant

D CO, 4TH BN, 503RD INFANTRY, 173RD
ABN BDE, USARV

Army of the United States

Hydaburg, Alaska

October 13, 1948 to April 28, 1970

CLINTON A COOK is on the Wall at

Panel 11W Line 063



I WANNA BE AN AIRBORNE RANGER I WANNA LIVE A LIFE OF DANGER

May 2010 Gathering of 173d Rangers and Chopper Crew Members in Las Vegas.



Rangers winning hearts and minds of villagers in Vegas.
Photos sent in by Robt. 'twin' Henriksen, N75 Rangers.

How much time do I have?

In the US Army Airborne School at Fort Benning, GA, one of the Sergeants was demonstrating all of the possible failures which could happen to the equipment. In particular, he was explaining how many things could happen to keep the main chute from opening. One of the trainees interrupted the Sarge and asked, *"If my parachute fails to open, how long do I have to open my reserve?"*

The Sergeant replied, *"Son. You have the rest of your life."*

~ Corrections ~

On Page 24 of last month's issue of our newsletter, I incorrectly identified Terry Boggs with Doc O'Donnell in this photo. The two men shown are John S. Boggs and Doc O'Donnell. Thanks to Dave "Griff" Griffin, HHC/B/2/503d for pointing out the mistake. Ed

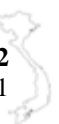


John Boggs with the Doc, 1966.

In last month's issue of our newsletter (Page 28), I incorrectly promoted LTC Paul Fisher of the 3/503d to CO, Commanding Officer. Paul served as Commo Officer with the battalion. Paul, I'm working off the 20 pushups you ordered me to do, but there's no way in hell I'm sending you that bottle of Jack Daniels! Will you settle for my peaches and pound cake? ☺ Ed



Paul Fisher, Commo Officer Extraordinaire





173d REUNION ITINERARY

San Antonio, Texas, 22 June – 26 June 2011



(Tentative itinerary, subject to change)

June 22 -- Wednesday

- 1200 - 2000 Registration
- 1300 - 0100 Hospitality Room
- 1300 - 2200 Vendors
- 1800 - 2000 President's Reception



June 23 -- Thursday

- 0900 - 1200 Board of Director's Meeting
- 1000 - 1700 Registration
- 1000 - 2200 Vendors
- 1300 - 2400 Hospitality Room

June 27 -- Friday

- 0730 - 0900 Gold Star Reception & Breakfast
- 0900 - 1500 Registration
- 1000 - 2400 Hospitality Room
- 1000 - 2200 Vendors
- 1000 - Board buses for trip to Fort Sam Houston
- 1030 - 1500 Tour Fort Sam Houston
- 1700 - 2300 BBQ, Mariachis, Dance at Maverick Plaza



Maverick Plaza

June 25 -- Saturday

- 0900 - 1100 Registration
- 0900 - 1200 General Membership Meeting
- 1000 - 1200 Ladies' Brunch
- 1000 - 2200 Vendors
- 1000 - 1200 Hospitality Room

BANQUET DINNER

- 1815 - 1850 Cocktails
- 1900 - 1910 Post Colors
- 1930 - 2035 Dinner
- 2035 - 2130 Speakers & Awards
- 2130 Retire Colors
- 2135 - ??? Entertainment & Dancing

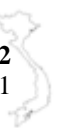
June 26 -- Sunday

- 0830 - 1000 Continental Breakfast
- 1030 - 1130 Memorial Service, Arneson River Theater
- 1130 - Reunion closing. Depart or stay and see more of San Antonio.



The Alamo

Reunion web site: <http://www.skysoldiers.com>





173d AIRBORNE BRIGADE ASSOCIATION

~ REUNION 2011 ~

22 June – 26 June 2011, San Antonio, TX

Hosted by Texas Chapter 13



Name _____ Phone (____) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail address _____

Unit served with in the Brigade _____ Dates served _____

Circle Shirt Size: S M L XL 2XL 3XL Male/Female _____

Exact hat size _____ (Note: A cowboy hat will be given to the 173d member above if Registration Form and hat size are received by March 1, 2011.

Guests:

Circle Male or Female and Shirt Size for each guest

Name _____ Relationship: _____ M / F size S M L XL 2XL 3XL

Name _____ Relationship: _____ M / F size S M L XL 2XL 3XL

Name _____ Relationship: _____ M / F size S M L XL 2XL 3XL

Registration/ Event Fees

- ___ \$173.00 per Association Member
- ___ \$125.00 per Guest
- ___ \$125.00 per Gold Star Family Member
- ___ \$ 75.00 per Active Duty Soldier (Not on Orders)
- ___ FREE Active Duty Soldiers on Orders (i.e., Command, Color Guard)
- ___ \$ 75.00 per Vendor Table
- ___ FREE Gold Star Brunch – 173d Gold Star Families
- ___ Brunch Ladies Brunch (Included with registration)
- ___ Please check if planning to attend.
- ___ \$ 15.00 Trip to Fort Sam Houston per person
- ___ \$ 15.00 Sky Soldier Adoption Program "Have a meal on me" for active duty soldiers



Hilton Palacio del Rio, San Antonio, Texas

\$ _____ Total Enclosed



Make Checks Payable to: [Texas Reunion 2011 – 173d Airborne Brigade](http://www.texasreunion2011.com)

Mail Checks to: John Rolfe, 100 Oleander Road, Comfort, TX 78013

For Hotel Reservations: Hilton Palacio del Rio, \$119 + tax per night. Call 1-800-HILTONS and request the group rate for The 173d Airborne Brigade Association, Inc., or use the unique group code ABA.

Overflow Hotel: Menger Hotel, \$119 + tax per night, Call: 1-800-345-9285 and request the group rate for the 173d Airborne Brigade Association.

To Register Online, visit www.texasskysoldier.org/reunion2011



After the War, Still Soldiering *All The Way*

By **Dr. Scott Fairchild, LTC (Ret)**
82nd Airborne Div.



Paul Rieckhoff (L) receives one of the Welcome Home Vets ducks and was thanked by Doc Scott (R) for his support of veterans through his role as Executive Director of the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA). <http://iava.org/about>

Thank you for your service to your country and most of all thank you for your sacrifice. The sacrifice is the part which it is hard for others to understand, especially civilians. Often even friends and family can't understand it. They can't begin to know that you left a part of yourself "over there."

They can't accept that you went over a young boy and came back an old man. They are not with you in the middle of the night when you wake up back in the jungle or the Central Highlands or in some desert and your weapon won't fire, or you are face-to-face with the friend who is no more. They didn't see the things you as a young soldier saw, nor anyone should ever see.

All of the anger, all of the fear, all of the caution, all of the distancing and isolation are natural human coping mechanisms which served you well while in-country, they helped you survive. They aren't necessary anymore, but try and tell your brain and body that!

When a loud noise goes off behind you or you are boxed in in traffic or you are packed into a tight seat on an airplane and there is no way out....you want to lash out with all your strength, and sometimes anyone within grenade radius gets it. It is a normal reaction for you to an abnormal situation. Many of your fellow soldiers with similar experiences are doing the same things....

"I just want my old self back."

It's the mantra of any combat soldier.

Remember, your brain has been changed.

There is a book called, *"Once a Warrior, Wired for Life."* That used to be true, but we are in development of new tools and techniques, like *brain retraining*. Through this technique our own studies have shown a reduction to PTSD symptoms by 63%. We must work to get back that healthy brain for you.

It is so important you realize there is help and you are not alone. There are so many veterans who experience exactly what you experience, every night, every day.

The Chain of Command doesn't get it, the VA doesn't get it, the government doesn't get it, and the civilians sure as hell don't get it, but **you** get it. When others don't even know what *it* is, through your connections with your buddies from combat, you and they get it.

You are to be commended for your courage. Not just for your time in service and during war, but for your strength to confront and battle this latest enemy silently yet purposefully sneaking through the wire; this enemy we call PTSD.

Because, as you know, when it comes down to it, you cannot depend on other folks, but you can depend on your brothers. Remember from the book, *The Things They Carried*....***"They carried their pictures from home, they carried their short-timers calendar, they carried their Tabasco sauce and extra ammo clips, but above all they carried each other."*** It's veterans taking care of veterans.

Soldier On, fellow warrior. You have another mission at which to excel. We are going to **heal that soldier within**, and empower you to continue to do what you have already begun to do.

(continued....)





Doc Scott conducting PTSD awareness clinic at 173d reunion in N. Myrtle Beach. Photo by : Craig Ford, C/1/503d

We hear you and understand you. It is all part of the journey. You will not be going this alone.

You ain't heavy, man, you're my brother,

Doc Scott

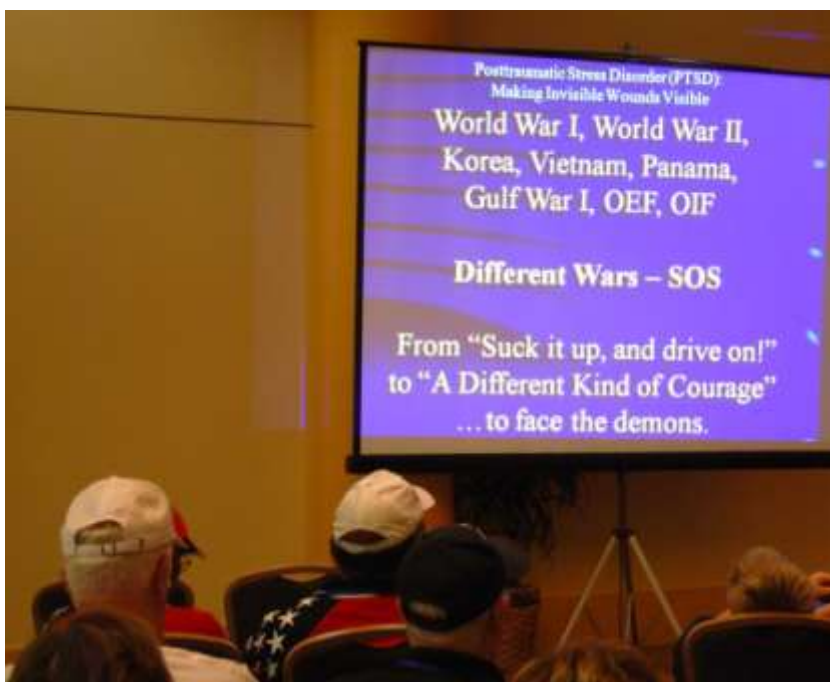
Some wounds don't end with the war.

The severity and extent to which veterans suffer with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder is a direct response to our culture's willingness to

Welcome Home and care for its Warriors.

Veterans Caring for Veterans,

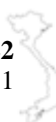
Scott Fairchild, PsyD
Welcome Home Vets, Inc.
(WHV)
1370 Bedford Drive, Suite 106
Melbourne, FL 32941
Phn: 321 253-8887, Fax: 321 253-8878
Eml: BaytreeHtlh@aol.com



Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Making Invisible Wounds Visible. Photo by Craig Ford, C/1/503d

An old airborne warrior shared a little wisdom with me, he calls it THE CONTRACT. See the August '09, Issue 2, Pages 1-3 of your 2/503d newsletter. Check it out. Let me know what you think. Give me a call or email me your phone number, we will setup a meeting for treatment and a PTSD evaluation so we can get started on that healing journey.

Note: Doc Scott is a former LTC with the 82nd Airborne Div. who conducted much of the early studies and research on PTSD for the U.S. Army at Walter Reed Army Hospital, and he is a renowned authority on combat-related PTSD. From his private practice, Baytree Behavioral Health in Melbourne, Florida, the Doc has helped numerous Sky Soldiers, from privates to colonels and their spouses and partners from throughout the country – this old RTO one of them. Ed



The Comprehensive PTSD Care Institute of Chicago (CPCIC)



Dr. Eugene Lipov and Steven Tomaszewski, Sr. are proud to announce the launch of The Comprehensive PTSD Care Institute of Chicago which will be held December 9th between 7-9 p.m. Everyone is invited to come and meet the staff and see their current clinic and future clinic. They are not asking for any money, just your time and help to let our Veterans know they are there.

Governor's Place
2260 W. Higgins Road
Suite 101
Hoffman Estates, Illinois

Please RSVP by December 3rd to:
Kevin Burkhardt: 224-698-2700
kevin@painmngt.com

**The mission of CPCIC is to provide
near-term real hope and real solutions for
Warfighters and Veterans suffering from
PTSD and TBI to improve their
quality of life.**

Please visit our web site at:
www.stopptsdnow.com

Steven M. Tomaszewski
Director of Veterans Outreach
www.stopptsdnow.com
1450 American Lane
Suite 1400
Schaumburg, IL 60173
224-698-2700

2/503d Crossword Puzzle Winner

We ran a crossword puzzle in last month's issue promising to send a bottle of the editor's favorite rum from St. Croix, VI to the first person to send in correct answers. The winner is **Preston "Pres" Parrott**, Maj., former company commander of E/2/503d. Pres, the bottle of Cruzan rum will arrive your AO in time for Christmas, but, remember what the Islanders say, *"If you drink too much Cruzan, you'll get Cruzan Confusion."* Congratulations Cap!



Correct answers to puzzle:

- | | | | |
|---------|-------------|-------|-------------|
| Across: | 1. Xin Loi | Down: | 2. Canteen |
| | 3. Aussies | | 3. AWOL |
| | 5. APC | | 4. MOS |
| | 7. Airborne | | 6. Squad |
| | 9. PRC | | 8. Alpha |
| | 10. Puff | | 9. Poncho |
| | 11. C Rats | | 11. Cu Chi |
| | 12. Huey | | 14. Destroy |
| | 13. MPC | | 16. X Ray |
| | 14. Dak To | | |
| | 15. Out | | |

Note: Since Pres was the *only* one to send in answers, we will discontinue crossword puzzles due to lack of popular demand, plus, Pres would win every month and ultimately turn into a very confused man.



Who is this dapper 2/503d Trooper?





173d Airborne Brigade Memorial DVD



The 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial Foundation DVD of the memorial dedication at Fort Benning, GA held June 1, 2010, is now available for purchase. Order early for Christmas! What a great gift to give a Sky Soldier buddy, the family of a Sky Soldier and those who served with the 173d.

All monies raised from the sale of DVD's will go to the perpetual care of the 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial. This is not the power point slide presentation which was circulated, but a video, in DVD format, which is over one-hour long and covers the entire dedication ceremony.

If you need further information please contact Craig Ford, Treasurer, 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial Foundation, email: cford1503@frontier.com or call Craig at: [425-422-7976](tel:425-422-7976)

~ DVD Order Form ~

Please send check or money order to the address below and
payable to the:

173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation
(please print)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Country: _____



Number of DVD's ordered ____ at \$20.00 per DVD: \$ _____

First Class shipping for one or two DVD's is \$2.00 total:* \$ _____

Priority Mail shipping for three or more DVD's is \$5.00 total:* \$ _____

Check or money order enclosed for this total amount: USD \$ _____

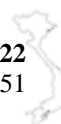
(Please email Craig for postage rates to outside North America)



Please mail to:

173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial Foundation 17207
76th Avenue, W., Edmonds, WA 98026 U.S.A.

~ Please allow two (2) weeks for delivery ~



INCOMING!



~ I thought my 'boys' had been permanently removed ~

Giddy Mates. Gee, I enjoyed this issue of the newsletter probably a little more than all the previous issues because of the bit of history about the jump into Nadzab, New Guinea (November 2010, Issue 21, Page 45). I can't recall if I ever mentioned this to you before but my daddy was one of the Aussies who were in that jump with the 503 PIR but I didn't know anything about it until one day not long before he died. We were talking about all kinds of stuff over a couple of 'cold ones' and he said to me, "Did you ever think you had castrated yourself when you jumped out of a plane?" I said that most times I was too busy, scared or bitching to really remember, and he added, "You know, we had a couple of days practice before they sent us over to that job and to this day I don't know how to explain how I managed to pump out your 2 brothers and 2 sisters as I thought my 'boys' had been permanently removed by the webbing." My daddy served in New Guinea from when he was 19 until he was 22. He had been returned to Gordonvale (Qld), Australia after being wounded and then rejoined the artillery unit that they took the "volunteers" from. That was the only time he ever really mentioned that association and it was not until the 173d Sydney reunion that I was talking to Ray Ramirez and he started talking about the lineal relationship of Aussies and The Herd and I realized he was talking about my daddy and his mates (without any identification). I would love to send a few "UNWARRY" stories that I found amusing but I feel a bit apprehensive intruding on the memories of all you fellow 2/503 mates as it is THEIR newsletter. Thanks for the read mate, I really enjoy them and often it takes me back to those days when we were all 10 foot tall and bulletproof until God (or something) showed us we were not always right!

John Arnold
1RAR

Hey Cobber. Thanks for the great story about your dad. Yes, John, you and all your mates are invited to send in what you like, we enjoy reading about you wild and crazy Aussie Diggers. By the way, nice hats. Ed

~ Those Salty Dogs ~

I know I sound like a broken record but I hate to see the note "**Remember, our newsletter is filled with adult content and may not be appropriate for too young eyes.**" which I assume you were forced to insert because of all the expletives in the newsletter. I suggest you either edit such text or delete future submissions rather than risk offending the large cross section of followers

you are obtaining through this great work. Profanity is the crutch of the intellectual cripple when used indiscriminately with no real motive. Thanks.

R 2/503d

You're damn right! Nah, that disclaimer wasn't because of anyone's particular use of curse words, and our newsletter really isn't for too young eyes. This ain't no Sunday-go-to-meetin' pamphlet; this is about paratroopers and war and veins in the teeth and stuff. The thing is always splattered with F-bombs and squirrel balls and the like. It's simply an adult publication for adults and written (mostly unedited) by adults, G.I.'s at that, who as you know, can be a tad salty at times...I love it. We will not edit how our guys choose to report our history, that will be left in the domain of the authors. I often correct spelling and basic grammar, otherwise, this shit is what it is. We've all stared death in the eye and watched its' workings up close, I think we can handle a few blue words; if not, folks can read their Bibles instead, or, take-over the newsletter. Thanks brother, appreciate your sensitive thoughts, you're a good man and I'm proud to have you as one of my closest friends. Ed

~ Good Wishes ~

Holiday wishes to all Sky Soldiers wherever you are serving. "We sleep safe in our beds because rough men stand ready to visit violence on those who would do us harm." George Orwell

Steve 'Sgt. Rock' Vargo
C/2/503d, '67

And rough women too. Ed

~ Jim Thorne Farewell ~

On page 43 of 48 (November newsletter) you have the obit of Lt. Jim Thorne. I tried to get to his funeral but got there after it had started. I had a 15 minute appointment at Carlisle with the Commandant that was to have been at 10:30 but did not get in his office until 10:45 and he kept us until 11:45. By the time I got to the Church at Camp Hill the service had already started so I did not go in. I did sign the Memorial book indicating I was 173d ABN BDE. I have also sent a small check to the VA Med Center Hospice. He is not the first friend I have taken care of in their final days by that Hospice. They do a super job. Airborne,

Don Bliss
173d Aviation Bn

(continued....)



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~ Memories of Buddies in Vietnam ~

Thank you for being faithful in sending me the newsletter. My name is George Luis Rivera, I was a floater with 2/503d. I was an artillery observer so I was moved around the line companies every month. I arrived there during early February 1968 until December 1968. Sometime after Summer, I was sent to Battalion Recon until December 1968. I was with No DEROS Alpha with CO Captain Ahern, XO LT MacPherson, B Company Captain Fox, C Company with Captain Gellison, and D Company. I returned in late 1969. I went straight to Battalion Recon again. I don't know what else to say. I served well, knew many who died, hardly any who made it. I have been disconnected ever since. I was very moved to have seen the 173d Memorial dedication at Fort Benning. I can make out the name of William Francis Brice. He was Echo Company driver. He and my other friend Patrick Steele were killed just outside the berm at LZ English North one day. Thank you so much for having sent this to me. I was a Sergeant. I was given the name George of The Jungle by Dugan Ersland, No DEROS Alpha Company Battalion RTO one day when I climbed a tree to set up a directional antenna after none of the guys who tried to could make it up the tree. He asked me if I could climb the tree. I said yes and went at it. He said he'd give me five dollars if I could climb the tree. I am still waiting for it. When I climbed down he said, *"Damn George, you're a regular George of The Jungle,"* and the name stuck. I was known by the call signs Alpha Echo, 1 Niner X-Ray, and Vector One Niner. I worked with B 3/319, Capt. Lacey, the 175s from LZ Salem and LZ Lot, LZ Tater. I was stationed at Pleiku, then An Khe, then Bong Song at LZ English, and sometimes at LZ English North. I have chronic CRS syndrome, and PTSD. I don't sleep much, walk around a lot while everyone sleeps. I sleep better armed. I am still there most of the time. Thanks for the mail brother.

There was a Lieutenant named Michael Phalen and George White? Do you know if they survived? He was a fine LT, caring about his men and even though massively wounded himself, the first words out of his mouth when he regained consciousness after the night explosion were, *"How are the men? Is everyone okay? Did we lose anyone?"* Then he looked down in the dark and saw his severed right leg and began crying for a moment. I did not tell him Frank Herrera had died. I told him, *"It's me sir, Rivera, I've got you now sir. I'll take care of you now."* Then we took some MG fire and after a long time, the Dust Off came in. It was total darkness as we loaded the 13 wounded into the one Slick. They were screaming as we stacked one on top of another to enable them to get to aid quickly. I am still there. I can still hear them screaming. I cry over it sometimes. I blame it on allergies if someone notices.

There is more, there are more, to the story. I was cold all night even though the temperature was at least in the eighties. Later that morning at daybreak, I discovered that my fatigues had been drenched in blood from top to bottom. That's why I had been so cold all night. I can't get the incident out of my mind. There were no uniforms to change into, but we were extracted later that day, so I only had to wear them one day. As long as I stayed in the sun I was fine, but as soon as I stepped into the lightest shade I would be covered by flies. I cannot get it out of my mind. I hate flies. Every time I see one I go after it and hunt it down until I kill it. I know its excessive, maybe obsessive. It's a perpetual nightmare. I'm sorry to have burdened you with this account. Welcome home. I'm glad you made it.

Do you know anything of LT COL William B. Hornish? He was 2nd Bat CO when I first arrived. He was one hell of a commander. It was not good practice for him, but anytime there was a unit in contact his chopper, The Tijuana Taxi would show up and he would jump out and jump into the fight. He was crazy to do that, but he was loved for it. We used to call him Uncle Bill or Wild Bill. One night there was a big night firefight with, as I recall B Company, and some indians. Bravo was taking so much fire that one of the chopper pilots on scene refused to approach again because he had taken so much fire already. He said he didn't want to get shot down. I heard Col Hornish scream at him saying, *"You get back there and get in the fight and bring my boys out or bring my chopper back here and I'll get a real man to fly it. In fact, get back here and pick me up!"* I would have hated to be that pilot. That's why we called him Uncle.

There were some people I failed to mention. The medics that night were Senior Medic Gerry Walsh from Boston and James Tuttle from Allentown I believe, maybe Levittown, PA. I cannot remember another. Among the wounded were George White and at least nine others. Frank Herrera was KIA that night. Steve Perkins with his M-60 crew went out across a wide rice paddy in search of the machine gun. I remember seeing them slither by as silent as a snake in the dark into the rice paddy after the enemy MG opened up. I saw Steve and Jimmy Tuttle again back at Fort Bragg. The CO's name was Captain Joe Gellison. His RTO was named MacGregor. It was my third day out with them, so I am sorry I cannot recall any more names

George Rivera
A/2/503d, '68

Note: Thanks for sharing, George. Any buddies out there who remember George, you can contact him at:
pathfinder5181@msn.com





~ From Down Under ~

~ Tactical Recon Photos ~

Fellows: Do you know in which US archival repository the tactical recon photos from Vietnam would be held?

A group of our veterans is working with the Vietnamese to locate their MIAs, as they were very helpful to our teams searching for our MIAs.

The location of interest now is May-June 1968, north-east from Saigon, where some heavy fighting occurred between our forces and the VC/NVA at two fire support bases during the attacks on Saigon after Tet.

Bomb craters were used as convenient mass graves, but as 42 years have passed, finding the exact spot is difficult and even modern gadgetry like ground-penetrating radar and Google-Earth are not solving the problem.

The idea is to locate imagery from the time and identify the craters used as mass graves.

Our own archives have been searched with little result for this type imagery. Sadly, a lot was destroyed after our involvement in SVN ended. Any suggestion will be appreciated.

Lex McAuley
1RAR

bannerbk@big.net.au



A Coy arrives Vietnam 2 June 1965

Photo: firstbattalionassociation1rar.org.au

Is it a bird, is it a plane, is it...?

On Operation 'New Life', November 1965, 1RAR was clearing the town of Duc Hanh. A water buffalo got loose and did what water buffalo do - attack the strange-smelling foreigners. It charged down the street, hooking left and right with those big horns, scattering Aussies in

all directions. It just missed one guy, who slammed the butt of his M-79 onto its head as it passed, but the 79 was cocked and loaded....and fired. With all of South Vietnam to fly in, that round impacted at battalion headquarters, creating the instant impression that the damn Viet Cong were mortaring and first round accuracy was very good... then surprise when nothing more arrived. The 'unauthorized discharge' was a platoon secret for 25 years. *More....*

...The benefits of a military academy education:

On Operation 'Silver City', March 1966, a stream of Chinooks was flying into the 2/503rd area to extract the rice and stuff found there. One Aussie officer, a graduate from the Academy, wondered where all the helicopters were going, and someone said they were taking Mules to evacuate the caches found in the 2/503rd area, assuming 'mules' would be understood as the mechanical type. Our staff-trained officer considered this, frowned and asked, "Where are they going to get fodder for mules around here?"

Lex McAulay
1RAR

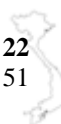


WHODAT?

In last month's issued of our newsletter we asked you to identify this young Master Blaster. In 1966/'67, this trooper was company commander of Charlie Company 2/503d. He is retired Major General John "Jack" Leide.



The Cap



WWII 503rd Buddies

Over the past couple weeks a number of Sky Soldiers sent letters to WWII troopers of the 503rd PRCT, to say hello, ask how they're doing and to thank them for their courageous service to their country. Of over 3,000 503rd paratroopers who fought in the Pacific during WWII, roughly 200 of these men are still with us.

Sky Soldier Frank Dukes, A/2/503d, sent a letter to WWII 503rd paratrooper Carl Dongilli who had made the famous combat jump onto Corregidor. In reply to his letter, Frank received the note below from Carl's son, Dana. Both Dana and Frank gave us permission to share their correspondence. Ed



Carl Dongilli, a 503rd Paratrooper

Frank,

My name is Dana Dongilli. I'm the son of Carl Dongilli. I'm emailing you to inform you that Carl passed away in October. I read your letter to him, since all his mail comes to my house, and was very touched that you wrote to him because he was a brother paratrooper. He was proud to have been one and to do what was needed to be done at that time of his life. He never really talked much about the war, but once in a while, if my brothers and I would ask, he would tell us things. He used to tell us, that even after all these years, he would still wake up at night and swear he was back there fighting again. I guess that never goes away. I know he made quite a few jumps, but I think the one that most stood out in his mind was the one on Corregidor. He actually has a book about that jump and the battle. Well, I'm going to go now. I just wanted to thank you for the letter and to let you know he would have appreciated it also.

Thanks Again,
Dana



**Carl, jump ready.
*Airborne, All The Way brother!***



Dear Dana,

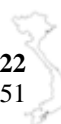
I am so sorry to hear of Carl's passing. Sadly so many of our brave men who paved the way for our freedom are leaving us way too soon.

The members of the "Herd" owe a debt of gratitude to men like your father who paved the way for the rest of us. I did get a chance to meet 5 of the men who were with your father and made the jump on Corregidor. These men and your father gave the rest of us quite a legacy to live up to.

I am passing your letter on to my brothers and I am sure they will all feel the sorrow I feel tonight because we just lost another great TROOPER. Thanks for letting me know about your father.


I hope you know that he is now in a far better place and is not having any more of those bad dreams.

Frank Dukes
A/2/503
173d Abn Bde (Sep)




~ A Wonderful Letter ~

Following is a wonderful letter from 1966 which we can suspect few of us have ever seen or were aware existed. Ed



503rd REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM ASSOCIATION, WORLD WAR II
503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment 462nd Parachute Field Artillery Battalion
Co. A, 161st Parachute Engineer Battalion



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**1966 CONVENTION
AT
CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA
JULY 15 - 16, 1966**

Dear Member,

As you know, the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) is now fighting in Vietnam and has been there for some time. Many of you already know that the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 503d Airborne Infantry are in the 173d and as such makes it the successor unit to the 503 RCT. For you civilian type a Brigade is about the size of a RCT.

The Board of Directors of the 503d RCT Association has approved the "adoption" of the 173d by this organization. The purpose is to provide morale building services and assistance to the troopers of the 173d.

I have contacted Brig. Gen. Paul F. Smith, Commanding General, of the 173d and he is extremely pleased with the offer. He suggests the mailing of small gifts such as: pocket novels, small metal mirrors, lighters and flints, stationery with self-sealing envelopes, and other small comfort items. Gifts should be mailed direct to brigade headquarters for re-distribution. Cards and letters should be sent to the lettered companies of the 503d Infantry's battalions.

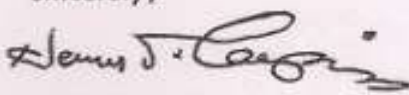
In a recent article, written by a correspondent now serving in Vietnam, the reporter listed the following items as very desirable gifts. "Most of all food. Send them cookies and cake, or some cheese or summer sausage. Good cheese is hard to come by in Vietnam, and sausage is unknown. Menthol cigarettes are hard to get. Also appreciated are small transistor radios that operate on flashlight batteries."

General Smith has given us a very good guide line. However, it is evident that the General does not have the appetite of a twenty-year old man.

Those of us who served in the WW II 503d know how much a letter and a package from home can mean. This is a good project for a chapter to work on jointly, and wives should be encouraged to participate. These mailings should not be limited to Christmas time, but should be carried out the year 'round.

Let's show them under with gifts and mail, and don't forget to let them know that it's from a member of the 503d RCT Association, WW II. A good way is to cut out the return address with our insignia on it from an old envelope or letter and include it in the envelope or package.

The address is: **HEADQUARTERS,**
173d Airborne Brigade (Sep)
Office of the Commanding General,
APO San Francisco 96250

Sincerely,

Henry T. Capiz,
Director of Programs



Go Navy!

A U.S. Navy Admiral was attending a naval conference that included Admirals from the U.S., English, Canadian, Australian and French Navies. At a cocktail reception, he found himself standing with a large group of officers that included personnel from most of those countries.

Everyone was chatting away in English as they sipped their drinks, but a French Admiral suddenly complained that, whereas Europeans learn many languages, Americans learn only English. He then asked, *"Why is it that we always have to speak English in these conferences rather than speaking French?"*

Without hesitating, the American Admiral replied, *"Maybe it's because the Brit's, Canadians, Aussie's and Americans arranged it so you wouldn't have to speak German."*

You could have heard a pin drop.

[Sent in by John Searcy, HHC/2/503d, '65/'66]

~ TIGER BEER ~

Biere 33 is still sold in France, at least as of 14 years ago when I bought the can I still have. I'll bet it has not aged well.

The worst were *Tiger* and *Anchor* (brewed for *Her Majesties Forces*) which there were still a lot left in the brigade area when I arrived with 4th Bn in August 1966.

There was a lot of *Swan Lager* from Perth, Australian left over from the Aussies. It was rather good and was going for 5 cents a can since Americans wanted Falstaff and Bud.

A number of the better American brewers would not send their stuff to RVN since they figured it would spoil in the heat and turn everyone off.

Reed Cundiff
LRRP 173d



POWERFUL WAR DOCUMENTARY SOON ON T.V.

The feature movie documentary, *RESTREPO*, will air on the National Geographic channel on Monday, Nov. 29 at 9:00 pm EST. Restrepo chronicles the deployment of a platoon of U.S. paratroopers (2/503d, 173d Airborne) in Afghanistan's Korengal Valley. The movie focuses on a remote 15-man outpost, "Restrepo," considered one of the most dangerous postings in the military. This is war, full stop, without editorializing or high-command analysis.

The documentary is now also available on DVD and is a must-see for all Sky Soldiers... and hopefully others. Brutal stuff. Note also this is where SSG Giunta was serving when he conducted the heroics which resulted in him being the first living recipient of the Medal of Honor since the Vietnam War. Hope you all saw this modest hero's interview on "60 Minutes" recently...or found it online at the NBC website.



Please pass this along to others who may or should have an interest. Check local cable listings for channels and details.

In December, the Tampa Bay Chapter of the 82nd Airborne/All-American Association with support from the 173d Airborne Association Florida Chapter will be hosting 2 active-duty young enlisted paratroopers from Fort Bragg for a week of "R&R at Clearwater Beach." This year one of the guys will be a former 173d trooper now serving at Ft. Bragg. Airborne!

Michael Switzer, C/3/503d
mswiper2@verizon.net



Chapter 17

Christmas Party

Date: 12/4/2010

Place: Franklin VFW Post 7596
422 S. Main St, Franklin, Ohio 45005

Phone (937)746-7786

Hotel information: Holiday Inn Express,
851 Commerce Center Drive, Franklin, Ohio 45005.
Phone (937)746-1094. Hotel is off of I-75 & St. Rt. 73.
(Post is approx. 1.5 miles from hotel). Room rate,
\$69.95+tax. Very nice hotel, built about a year ago.
Hotel will reserve a block for the 173d. When calling to
make the reservation, you must state you are with the
173d in order to receive the discounted price.
Rooms should be reserved asap.



Holiday Inn Express, Franklin, OH



SKY SOLDIERETTE CORNER

By Iva Tuttle

First and foremost, I want to wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a good New Year. May the sun shine when you need it, the rain only come at night, and may peace finally fill your heart.

I was going to beg off writing a column again this month because I am facing a questioning time in my life and feel a lot of the decisions I must make could overshadow my ability to help you through these musings. But felt that I needed to also tell you in person instead of just leaving another blank hole. I won't be submitting anything until I get myself back together.

This year has been one of many personal trials and losses. Not only did I lose my Dad, but a very good friend. Numerous people in my extended family have experienced losses that have affected our lives too. Our children have dealt with personal issues that have been more than they should have to ever deal with in their lives.

Not only was I facing the loss in my life, I had to face the fact that I had to accept some responsibility for the abuse that has happened in my daughters' lives because of a home life that may not have been what it should have been.

For the first time in my life, I haven't been strong enough to be my own support system. I found that while I was giving support, giving and caring for others, I had never asked for myself. I took for granted that a support system would be there when I needed it.

There are those who have given me care and love and support through this awakening. I want to thank each and every one of you. But right now, I need to find who I am – I can no longer ignore the fact that I need.

So, when the time is right, you will hear from me. Keep your chin up – stand tall and proud. Know you are loved, but remember that love isn't taking, it's giving and accepting.

