

January 2012, Issue 36

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See all issues to date at these web sites:

<http://firebase319.org/2bat/news.html> or http://corregidor.org/VN2-503/newsletter/issue_index.htm

~ 2/503d Photo of the Month ~



Forty-six years ago 2/503 troopers prepare wounded for Dust Off at LZ Wine in the Mekong Delta on 2 January 66 during Operation Marauder. See story on Pages 41-49.



Chaplain's Corner



The Leapin' Deacon

Psalm 23:

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want; he makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies; thou anointest my head with oil, my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

2012 Greetings and Blessings to all Sky Soldiers, Families and Friends!

This magnificent, comforting and powerful Psalm is a wondrous blessing to all our people! Psalm 23, "*The Shepherds Psalm*," was a favorite for two of our historic mothers, George Washington's and Abraham Lincoln's. These two mothers had this most meaningful and comforting Psalm written on the "table of their hearts" – yes, they memorized it, sang it, prayed it, and jubilantly shared it with their sons.

This blessed Psalm deeply assisted our early Presidents in their demanding and dangerous times of crises and leadership during wartime – the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. This precious Psalm helped encourage and carry them through the dark and supremely demanding wartime presidencies.

A gifted Pastor, Charles L. Allen, wrote a dynamic and most helpful book entitled, "*God's Psychiatry*". Pastor Allen, using the 23rd Psalm as his centerpiece for help and healing and wise discipline, prescribed the Twenty Third Psalm to be read five (5) times each day for seven (7) days – yes, healing medicine for the entire person, mind, body, heart and soul.

READ IT: First thing upon waking in the morning.
Read it carefully and prayerfully...

Again immediately after Breakfast

Again immediately after Lunch

Again immediately after Dinner

Finally, the last thing before going to bed...

not quick or hurried, to carefully think on each phrase and verse – indeed, endeavor to write it on the table of one's heart. Truly, at the end of the week things will be different, newness and fresh beginnings will be a gift to you. The good Pastor Allen is assured of its marvelous, fruitful and healing results for all the faithful.

Ralph Waldo Emerson declared...

"A person is what he or she thinks about all day long."

Holy Scripture further teaches in Proverbs 23:7...

"For as a person thinks in his heart, so he is."

In summary, the 23rd Psalm is a pattern of thinking and being, and when a mind becomes saturated with it, a new way of thinking and a new life are the result.

Tremendous!

This New Year 2012 is a grand opportunity and a challenge to write these 118 words on the table of your heart. Bless all of you in so doing as you grow in Grace, Holiness and Wisdom!

In the Name of our kind Heavenly Father, our Lord Jesus, and the winsome Holy Spirit.

Chaplain Conrad Walker, COL, Ret.
"The Leapin' Deacon"
National Chaplain Emeritus
173d Airborne Association and
Military Order of the Purple Heart



Our Deacon, doing the Leapin', with able assistance with his holy boot (just in case) by Chaplain (Dr.) Robert Crick, Connie's successor with the 2/503d.





~ 2/503d Sky Soldier of the Year 2011 ~



Roy S. Lombardo, Jr., LTC (Ret)

We have the distinct honor of announcing Roy S. Lombardo, Jr., LTC (Ret), and former company commander of B/2/503d, has been unanimously selected by officers and men of our battalion representing all companies, as *2/503d Sky Soldier of the Year 2011*. Congratulations Ranger Roy!



BDQ Roy

In addition to Roy, there were many equally deserving men nominated for this special recognition this year. The 2/503d officers and men appointed to represent our battalion with their selection are to be commended for this most difficult task.

Rather than attempt to describe here the many merits and attributes of Roy Lombardo, here is what some of his Bravo Bulls had to say about their former commander:

I would like to add my name to the list of those nominating LTC (Ret) Roy S. Lombardo, Jr. for "2/503d Sky Soldier of the Year 2011". I cannot imagine anyone more deserving than my "old" commander, "Ranger Roy". He has been, and still is the glue that holds us all together. And, I don't know how he does all he does.... still a great leader! Of course, we can't forget his lovely wife Carol (the glue that holds Roy together). With Much Respect and Admiration,
~ A Bravo Bull ~

I nominate Lt Col (Ret) Roy S. Lombardo, Jr., to be selected as the 2nd Bn 503rd Sky Soldier of the Year for 2011. Then, Captain Lombardo, was my company commander in Vietnam. Captain Lombardo was the first of six CO's during my 12 month tour of duty. Since I was an eighteen year old Private, I did not have much exposure to him. I remember being led to the company CP in a very wet rubber tree plantation by my Platoon Sergeant to meet my CO. He and First Sergeant McDonald were talking when I arrived. I remember him looking me in the eye when I was introduced to him. I could tell he was professional and meant business. That set the tone for the next twelve months.

Many years later I have become reacquainted with now LTC (retired) Roy Lombardo, Jr. It has been under much more pleasant circumstances. I have found BDQ Roy to be a very caring and considerate man. He shows a very sharp level of interest in all of the Bravo Bull veterans.

Largely because of his dedication and efforts we have one of the few if only company size annual reunions among the many veteran reunions. He is always ready to listen and hear what you have to say. When we get together he wants to know how well my family is. When less fortunate members are in need he is willing to make it possible for them to enjoy the reunions with the rest of us. If it wasn't for BDQ Roy I don't think my level of enthusiasm for our reunions would be the same. I always look forward to seeing him.

~ A Bravo Bull ~



This small token of appreciation was personally presented to LTC Roy Lombardo by men of the Bravo Bulls on behalf of the officers and men of our battalion. *RLTW*

(continued....)



LTC Lombardo was my very first thought and if there is a vote to be made between our Colonel and any other man, I would have to vote for our LTC Lombardo. My personal nomination was for the wives, children, parents and siblings that held in there with us through thick and thin, although I knew in my head the nomination would just get tabled. The Colonel is top-notch to me and with all he does for all of us – there should be no question. I will not apologize for the nomination! We all know man for man our Colonel Lombardo was cut from a very special piece of military cloth, and that if he was cut he would bleed O/D green. I do not know of a finer commander or a more dedicated man to his family, to his duties, to his men and to the United States of America than LTC (Ret) Roy Lombardo, Jr. LTC Lombardo represents the 173d in a way that no other man ever could.

~ A Bravo Bull ~



Roy, leading Punch Bowl Ceremony, assisted by Roger Flowers, in memory of their fallen Bulls.

I recommend LTC (Ret) Roy S. Lombardo Jr., to be the 2nd Bn 503d Sky Soldier of the Year. I joined Bravo Company in August 1965 when then Captain Lombardo was clearing to head back to Fort Benning. I first met Roy in person at the 1985 reunion in Washington DC. From then on I have watched as LTC Lombardo reassembled the company to include anyone who served in B/2/503d, thru reunions, letters, e-mails and sadly, funerals. As a leader then and now he reaches out to his soldiers, NCO's and officers. We now have a Punch Bowl ceremony that takes place whenever the Bulls assemble, Roy is the one who brought this tradition from the days of the "Old Army" into the present which included the veterans and the active members of B Company. Last November LTC Lombardo hosted an informal reception for Medal of Honor awardee SSG Giunta that grew from a small planned event into the

largest event that week. He did it all with no cost to any of the active duty soldiers or Gold Star families. It was one to the highlights of my life and I personally thank LTC Lombardo for including me and the 173d personnel that were in attendance.

Also, something that may not be known outside of the Bravo Bulls is how LTC Lombardo still looks after his troops. He visits those who are sick and keeps in contact with the guys who can't attend any of the reunions for one reason or another. After my wife passed away I received calls from Roy just checking to see how I was doing. It's those little things that make LTC Roy Lombardo the Soldier of the Year for 2011 and to me, every year.

~ A Bravo Bull ~

Just to put in my two cents worth, Roy Lombardo is a perfect choice for the battalion trooper of the year. He does so much organizing and has helped keep B/2/503d guys as a cohesive group all these years. In fact, I just got a Bravo Bulls' shirt in the mail for their Las Vegas reunion in November, even though I'm not going and didn't pay for it. He said it was on him. And, last year through his urging I got a big framed award for supporting the Bulls in Afghanistan, just 'cuz I went to a funeral in Michigan for a combat fatality. I don't think Roy is in real good health, but he still travels all over the place doing stuff. Can't say enough about the guy.

~ A Bravo Bull ~

I'm in favor of the nomination of LTC (Ret) Roy S. Lombardo, Jr., for the 2nd Bn 503rd Sky Soldier of the Year for 2011. I have known LTC Lombardo since 1963 when the Bravo Bulls were stationed on Okinawa. LTC Lombardo is a seasoned combat veteran and I would serve under his command then and now without hesitation. He cared deeply for his men then and still does today.

I have gone with him in the present time to hospitals to visit wounded combat soldiers from the Iraq war. I have traveled with him to send off veteran soldiers to their final resting place and I have traveled with him to Vicenza, Italy to participate in, now Battle Company, and the 173d Brigade functions in 2006. He has made several trips there and will be going again in December, 2011 to participate with the 173d Airborne Brigade.

LTC Roy S. Lombardo, Jr., cared deeply for the men he commanded on Okinawa and the men he commanded in the Viet Nam War. He still cares today and is always giving back to the men in so many ways. Since we re-connected in 2003, I have attended several Bravo Bulls reunions throughout the country with him.

(continued....)



The one thing I believe he truly loves doing is the Punch Bowl Ceremony and I have photographed him on numerous occasions. I have observed his dedication and sincerity and it is clear that he is deeply moved when he speaks of our KIAs and those that are deceased from natural causes. I was also with him when he gave a very poignant eulogy for Major General (Ret) Ellis W. Williamson in 2007 at Arlington National Cemetery. He also performs a ceremony every year the day before Veteran's Day at Arlington where the 173d Airborne Marker is located. Many Sky Soldiers throughout the country attend this event yearly.

LTC Lombardo, I believe, is primarily responsible for holding the Bravo bulls together today. It's just not the same when he is absent from a function that the Bulls may have. I've also heard some of the other men say the same thing about him. His compassion and concern are intact for the men he commanded yesteryears and the camaraderie he has today for the men he served with years ago is unwavering. He gave much then and is still giving today. He has given more than he could ever receive as he is a very giving man when it comes to the U.S. Army and the men he served with.

His nomination for the award is highly recommended and is certainly befitting for a soldier who has so much compassion for our military men and women. LTC Lombardo had some encouraging words for me personally back in 1964 and it still rings clear to me today. I must say it helped shape my time spent in the U.S. Army as a soldier as well as helped shape my civilian career which impacted me in a positive way and helped me to be the man I am today. I am grateful for that and I do believe many other such men he commanded would share this same sentiment for LTC (RET) Roy S. Lombardo, Jr. I am proud to salute him!
A Bravo Bull



Roy and Carol Lombardo, 2011

This is to nominate Lt Col (Ret) Roy S. Lombardo, Jr., for 2/503rd Sky Soldier of the Year 2011 (Viet Nam Era).

Lt Col Lombardo was Commander of B Co 2nd Bn 503rd Airborne Infantry (BRAVO BULLS) on Okinawa and led the company into Viet Nam upon deployment on 5 May 1965. During his tenure as Company Commander on Okinawa, then Captain Lombardo, prepared his troops for combat with some of the most rigorous jungle training he could devise. Their performance in combat is testament to that training.

At the Brigade reunion in 1985, Roy initiated, and ever since, has maintained a roster of former Bravo Bulls. To date, there are approximately eighty (80) former Bulls, or next of kin survivors, on that roster. Roy has regular contact with all of them. In order to accommodate those Bulls that are unable to travel, he began annual Bull reunions throughout the U.S.

The Brigade Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery has been the site of a memorial service conducted by Roy and the Bravo Bulls every year since the dedication of the Memorial. Roy has also visited many graves of deceased Bulls throughout the U.S.

Troop morale and welfare were always, and continue to be high priorities for Roy. Some of his continuing efforts include:

**** Nomination of deserving veterans for selection as Distinguished Members of the 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment**

**** Attended reactivation of the 2nd Bn 503rd in Italy with other Bulls in 2002**

**** Visits the current BATTLE company in Vicenza on a regular basis and presents awards to them as follows: Leather-Man tools to Soldiers of the Month, combat knives to Soldier and NCO of the Year**

**** Upon his visits to the troops in Vicenza, he also conducts a Punch Bowl Ceremony to honor fallen/deceased members of B-2/503**

**** Roy also organized a reception for Medal of Honor recipient SSG Sal Giunta after the presentation at the White House**

Among Roy's proudest accomplishments are his selection as the first veteran of 2/503 to the Ranger Hall of Fame in 1996, and his selection as a Distinguished Member of the 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment.

(continued....)



Roy is a regular contributor to the *2/503rd Newsletter*, *Static Line*, and *Infantry Magazine*.

Respectfully submitted for your consideration.

~ A Bravo Bull ~

My recollection of Roy goes back to August, 1964. Several of us, Larry Paladino, Bryan Bowley, Carleton Love, Stephen Scarpulla (Charlie Company), and myself, to name just a few, had just graduated from the same jump class, and when we landed on Okinawa were assigned to the Bravo Bulls B/2/503d. While the specifics of my first direct contact with Roy remain sketchy, I do recall that our training never stopped, just as if Lombardo knew in August 1964 that 9 months later we would land in South Vietnam for a 90 day TDY assignment that would last seven years.

Our training, unbeknownst to many of us, was geared to prepare us to be the finest jungle fighters in the best brigade in the United States Army. Roy was hard on us, fair, but hard. The training was designed to teach us the many nuances of jungle warfare, taking care of our weapons, our bodies and our buddies, and developing an irrevocable bond among the members of our company. That bond remained twenty years later in Washington DC, in 1985, when many Bravo Bulls gathered for the first time since we departed individually from Bien Hoa airbase.

I did not meet again with my fellow Bravo Bulls until 2000 when more than a dozen original Bulls and wives gathered in Palm Springs, CA. That was the first time several of us met as a unit since March 1966, when our rotation home began. Since then, and under Roy's guidance, the Bravo Bulls have met yearly across the United States to renew the bond that Roy instilled in us over 47 years ago. Besides our yearly get-togethers, several of the local area Bravo Bulls meet each 10th of November at Arlington National Cemetery at the Brigade marker. Roy leads us in a memorial ceremony to remember and honor those we marched among but who did not return with us from South Vietnam. We, the Bravo Bulls, 2/503, 173d ABN BDE (SEP) are the only company to continue to gather. I credit Roy's leadership, brotherhood, and continued devotion to his soldiers of yesteryear.

The leadership qualities of Roy Lombardo that instilled this very special brotherhood in us lo those many years ago, make us look forward to renewing, on a yearly

basis, that bond of camaraderie. While the years have added some mass to our frames, and removed some hair from our heads, and even though some found it difficult to remain in-step, we marched as a company this past Veterans Day at our 2011 reunion in Las Vegas.

The love we have for each other continues to grow. All of this can be attributed to LTC Roy S. Lombardo when he prepared those many young men from all four corners of the United States and Switzerland for war, and ultimately our return home to start families, continue our education, and begin rebuilding our lives.

For all of the above, I am honored to recommend LTC Roy S. Lombardo as Sky Soldier of the Year 2011.

~ A Bravo Bull ~

Ranger Roy, again leading the way with a squad of his Bulls at Vet's Day parade in Las Vegas, 2011.



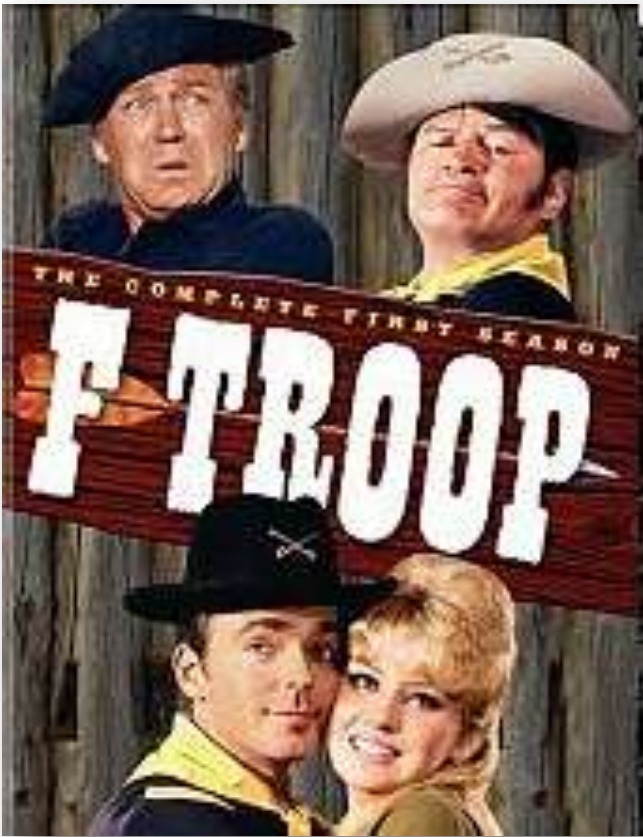
*Everywhere we go-oh . . People wanna know-oh . .
Who we are . . Where we come from . . So we tell them . .
We are the Bulls . . The mighty, mighty Bulls*

And, as BDQ Roy would often tell his Bulls some 47 years ago, and still tells them...

***"Take two salt tablets,
and drive on!"***



~ VIETNAM ERA TRIVIA ~



Jim Wilson, C/2/503d, sent in this trivia question last month:

"Might be a little trivia question for your next issue. Robert Stack was accompanied by a lesser known female television star when I met him, and her, at Dak To. Who was she?"

A little hint: The comedy TV show about a fictitious cavalry unit she co-starred in was cancelled in 1967 and the main stars were Forrest Tucker, Larry Storch and Ken Berry. Just wondered if anybody would remember. She was hot."

A number of Sky Soldiers and Sky Soldierettes correctly identified the show as F Troop, and the actress as Melody Patterson, who visited 2/503d Sky Soldiers at Dak To. A little about the show and her....

F Troop is a satirical American television sitcom that originally aired for two seasons on ABC-TV. It debuted in the United States on September 14, 1965 and concluded its run on April 6, 1967 with a total of 65 episodes. The first season of 34 episodes was filmed in black-and-white, but the show switched to color for its second season. Reruns premiered on the ITV network in the United Kingdom on October 29, 1968, and were screened repeatedly until July 16, 1974. The series was also broadcast nationally in Australia on ABC-TV and in Ireland on Telefís Éireann.

The commanding officer is the gallant but chronically clumsy and accident-prone Captain Wilton Parmenter (Ken Berry), descended from a long line of distinguished military officers. He was awarded the Medal of Honor after accidentally instigating the final charge at the Battle of Appomattox. Only a private, he was ordered to fetch his commanding officer's laundry. As he rode away, pollen in the air caused him to sneeze repeatedly. A group of Union soldiers mistook his sneeze for an order to charge, turning the tide of the battle. His superiors, wishing to reward his action, promoted him to captain and—in view of his ineptitude—gave him command of remote Fort Courage, a dumping ground for the army's least useful soldiers and misfits. Much of the humor of the series derives from the scheming of Captain Parmenter's crooked but amiable non-commissioned officers, Sergeant Morgan O'Rourke (Forrest Tucker) and Corporal Randolph Agarn (Larry Storch). He tries to escape the matrimonial plans of his girlfriend, shopkeeper-postmistress Jane Angelica Thrift, known locally as "Wrangler Jane" (Melody Patterson), though he is seen to be a bit more affectionate towards her during the second season.

Melody Patterson (born April 16, 1949 in Inglewood, California) is an American actress best known for her role as *Wrangler Jane* in the 1960s TV series *F Troop*. She was 16 years old when she debuted on the show. Since the 1967 cancellation of *F Troop*, Patterson has worked in television, radio, and the theater, in addition to entertaining troops in Vietnam.



Melody was married to actor James MacArthur who is best known for the role of Dan "Danno" Williams in the TV series *Hawaii Five-O*. During her marriage to MacArthur, she had to put her career aside to move to Honolulu, Hawaii. During the next seven years she appeared in many episodes of *Hawaii Five-O*, and started modeling and making commercials. While living in Hawaii she found herself again on the stage in the Herb Rogers Production of *"Butterflies are Free"* with Barbara Rush and Dirk Benedict. After that she kept busy doing other plays such as *"House of Blue Leaves,"* for the University of Hawaii, and the part of Peggy in *"The Front Page"* written by Charles MacArthur, and directed by her husband James MacArthur.





VA Launches Open Source Custodian

Open Source Electronic Health Record Agent Begins Operations

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) today announced it has completed an important milestone on its joint path with the Department of Defense (DoD) to create a single electronic health record system for service members and Veterans. OSEHRA, the Open Source Electronic Health Record Agent, has begun operations and will serve as the central governing body of a new open source Electronic Health Record (EHR) community.

"We developed our open source strategy to engage the public and private sectors in the rapid advancement of our EHR software, which is central to the care we deliver to Veterans and service members and to our joint EHR collaboration with the Department of Defense," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. *"With the launch of OSEHRA, we begin the implementation of our strategy and we look forward to the creation of a vibrant open source EHR community."*

As part of the initiation of OSEHRA operations, VA has contributed its current EHR, known as VistA (Veterans Integrated System Technology Architecture), to seed the effort. OSEHRA will oversee the community of EHR users, developers, and service providers that will deploy, use, and enhance the EHR software.

Individuals and organizations interested in participating in OSEHRA are invited to join through the community website. Established as an independent non-profit corporation during its initial phase of operation, OSEHRA is putting in place the framework and the tools that will enable the public sector, private industry, and academia to collaborate to advance EHR technology.

Draft documents describing key framework components, such as the design of its code repository and the definition of its software quality certification process, are available on the OSEHRA community website. Community feedback is welcome as the OSEHRA team finalizes these designs in preparation for launch of full technical operations this fall.

The design of OSEHRA is being led by The Informatics Application Group (tiag) under a contract awarded by VA in June 2011. Moving to an open source model invites innovation from the public and private sectors. It is an important element of VA's strategy to ensure that

VA clinicians have the best tools possible, and that Veterans receive the best health care possible.

Joseph Armstrong

B/4/503d

Veterans Service Officer

**New England Chapter 9, John A. Barnes III (MOH)
173d Airborne Association**

Service members, families honored at State House

AUGUSTA, Maine (NEWS CENTER) -- Years after being killed or injured serving our country, service members and their families were honored by the state Thursday. Relatives of service personnel who



Larry

served in Korea, during World War II, and in Vietnam, were presented silver and gold star medals for the sacrifices their loved ones made.

It was an emotional ceremony at the Hall of Flags inside the Maine State House.

Allen Nadeau was overcome with emotion as he accepted his brother Larry's medal. He said he was filled with both pride and sadness, thinking back to those difficult days when his parents learned the news.

"To see my parents throughout the years go through that, I wouldn't wish that on anyone. Obviously I wouldn't want to bury one of my kids," said Nadeau. *"He gave the ultimate sacrifice for his country."*

The ceremony is part of an ongoing effort by Maine Veteran Services to identify relatives of services members killed, injured or missing while serving their country.

[Source: Chapter 9 Newsletter]

Larry Joseph Nadeau

Private

B CO, 2ND BN, 503RD INFANTRY,
173RD ABN BDE, USARV

Army of the United States

Orono, Maine

August 11, 1947 to January 2, 1966

LARRY J NADEAU is on the Wall
at Panel 04E Line 048



Watergateamendment.com is the new website dedicated to the historical novel “*The Amendment*”

by John J. Fitzgerald, C/2/503d

What does the 25th Amendment have to do with Watergate? The information in this book and website will startle you.

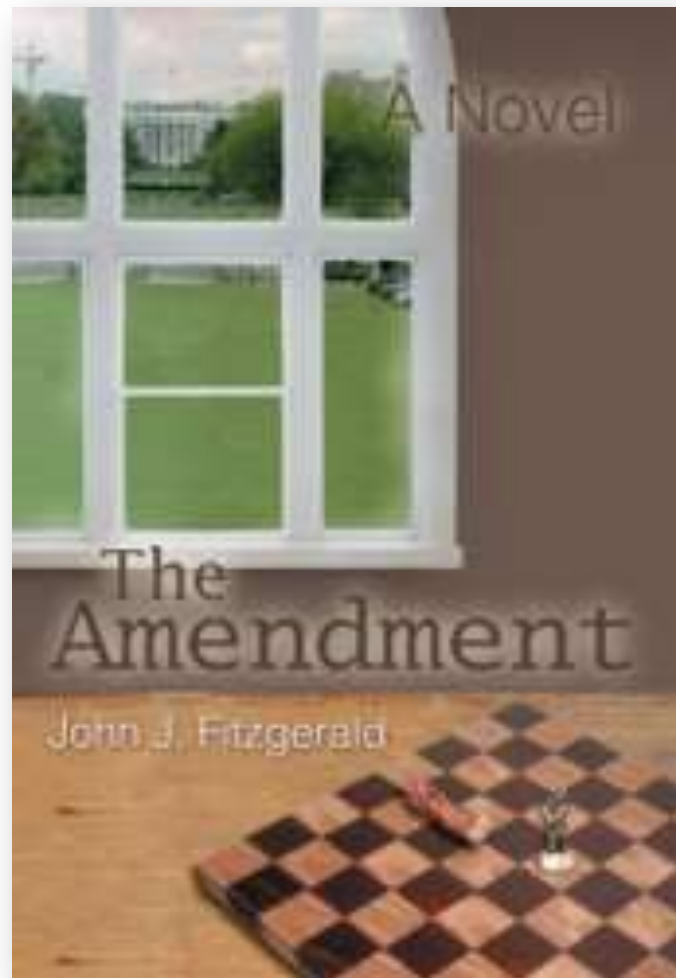
“To help answer the most asked question about the book...Is it true?”

Cincinnati, OH (PRWEB) June 24, 2011

Readers of ‘The Amendment’ will now have a website <http://www.watergateamendment.com> that will add information about the characters and historical data. The website will shed un-noticed information on the turbulent political times of the Watergate era of the sixties and seventies. This book takes a unique view into historic behind the scenes activity that directed a change by utilizing the Pentagon Papers, Watergate and other activities to help orchestrate this elaborate Conspiracy.

This included the amending of the constitution, the removal of the Vice President and the President. To help answer the most asked question about the book...Is it true? Author John Fitzgerald has unveiled the new website: <http://www.watergateamendment.com>

Mr. Fitzgerald said, ***“There is a great deal of fascinating events that happened during this historic era. Much of it was not reported or it was controlled to help create a specific effect or opinion, after many years a lot books and information have been revealed that shed new light on the events of that historic time. I want the reader to experience the fun of history to see some of what was known and not reported.”***



The new website: <http://www.watergateamendment.com> has some very interesting historical data that relates to the overall theme of the book. It also highlights some of the historical characters, Spiro Agnew, George Wallace and others; and has some unnoticed interesting information such as an example of why the 25th amendment went almost unreported during the ratification process. The relationship the New York based Rockefeller team had on Richard Nixon and how they manipulated him to run and then resign the Presidency. A view of Nixon’s letter of resignation, did it follow the requirements of the 25th Amendment?

“The Amendment is a fun read and I hope the website will add enjoyment, entertainment and education as well,”
Fitzgerald said.



Last Month's WHODAT?

Some buddies of his quickly identified the trooper with his M79 in this photo as Jimmy Castillo.

That's Jimmy Castillo!
Jerry Hartman, C/2/503d

Hey, the G.I. loading the M-79 is our own J. Castillo C/2/503, weapons platoon, 1966, Bien Hoa, behind weapons platoon tent.

Barry "Bear" Hart, C/2/503d



Chargin' Charlie Jimmy Castillo

Jimmy grew up in Guadalupe, California, on the Central Coast about 2-3 miles from the Pacific Ocean. He always wanted to go into the Marines, but when the time came, he decided to become a Paratrooper. *"I wanted it to be adventurous! I never regretted the decision I made."*

After graduating High School in December '65, he entered the Service at Fort Ord, CA, then on to Fort Gordon, GA, but not as an infantryman, but a 114H, anti-tank killer, where he had to ride on a jeep with a 106 recoilless rifle. Then to Fort Benning, GA for Jump School.

After proudly earning his Jump Wings, it was on to Vietnam where they sent him to an Airborne outfit called "The 173d Airborne Brigade". *"I asked around and nobody knew anything about them."*

"When I reported to the 2/503d, Charlie Co., they said Weapons Platoon was full and they instead assigned me to 2nd Platoon -- there went riding on the jeep...gone. Somehow, it worked out for me; I learned to survive on OJT. Have some stories about these events."

Returning to the states after his year of Combat Duty, he went to the 82nd Airborne at Ft. Bragg, where he tried to hook up with 3rd Bn, *"They were all ready to go. They went and joined the 173d."*

Some of the action he participated in with the 82nd were the riots in Washington D.C. when Rev. Martin Luther was killed.

Jimmy returned home following 3 years of service to his country. He went to work for a sugar factory, then Columbia Records for 12 years, and 26 years with Union 76, Tosco, Phillips, and ConocoPhillips oil refinery in Arroyo Grande, California. Today, he is retired and enjoying every day, *"with my up and down emotions."*

Jimmy keeps busy with lots of Honor Guard and Color Guard activity as a member of the *Boots & Chutes All Airborne Association*, and some of the reunions he attends with the 173d, CVVA Post 982, and the American Legion Post 371 *"(notice if you look at it backwards it's '173')."*

Jimmy and his wife, Ester, have 3 sons, 2 daughters, 11 grand kids, and 4 great-grand kids.

Jimmy, on Veteran's Day 2011 with Boots & Chutes All Airborne Association.



"Vietnam was what we had instead of happy childhoods."

~ Michael Herr, 1977



JOHN LINDGREN HAS

AN AFTERNOON WITH CHARLIE BRADFORD

By John L. Lindgren
503rd PRCT



Almost as soon as I got back from Nova Scotia, I called Charlie Bradford, the old 2nd Battalion surgeon, from my cousin's Watertown Massachusetts house on Standish Road [the next street west is Bradford Road named for one of Doc's forebears who have been in the state for some time].

"Is Doc Bradford there?" I ask.

I am astounded that the great man himself has answered the phone. I would learn later, he doesn't like to be called Doc, he prefers Charlie. We make some small talk then he tells me we must get together at the Harvard Club. I am pleased he seems anxious to see me. I hadn't expected this after hearing so many stories; he wants to be left alone, no visitors, he's not well, he has no time for the 503rd reunions and the rest.

He sounds enthusiastic about our meeting, *"We'll have lunch there!"* We arrange it for Friday but there is a small problem, he either doesn't drive or he doesn't have a car, I think he neither has a car nor does he drive.

"I'll try to arrange a ride and call you back," he tells me.

I hadn't known quite what to expect when I called. My friend, Bill Calhoun and I, two highly respected handwriting analysts, had Charley on his last legs after viewing a fairly long letter he had written me in a shaky spidery scrawl. I really hadn't had a letter from him since then for some time although I always can count on a Christmas card with a brief message. Long ago he used to send his holiday greeting on a physician's prescription blank, prescribing good cheer etc. His voice sounds strong and vibrant during our short conversation, I am happily surprised he has been snatched from the jaws of death, a remarkably speedy recovery in view of Calhoun's and my own gloomy diagnosis of his handwriting. He was clearly glowing with energy and enthusiasm.

He calls me back. He has a ride and I get detailed instructions on how to get to his club. It's not all that

difficult; go to the corner of Massachusetts Avenue [known to the locals as *Massav*] and Commonwealth Avenue [known to the locals as *Commonwealth Avenue*]. You can't miss it.

It's Friday and I am in my seersucker suit wearing my best four-in-hand tie. I had wanted to wear my bow tie, my daughter Yvonne had given me this past father's day but after several tries it didn't seem to tie too well. Doc had warned me, *"You can't get in club without a tie. If you haven't got one we can get one there."* He must have a low opinion of Californian's dress standards and I can't really fault him for that.

I am there in no time from Watertown. I park my stylish green rented Dodge Shadow and put two hours worth of coins in the meter. Plenty of time, Doc's benefactor has to return to Marshfield at one thirty and it is now nearly noon. I have been warned several times of the harsh treatment at the hands of the meter maids given parking offenders in Boston.



The indomitable Dr. Charles Bradford, one of the few true greats. "Doc" did not mind getting in and labouring with the troops. Notice that he's holding his glasses in his hands - with his poor eyesight, he usually wore them.

As I walked along Commonwealth Avenue it reminded me somehow of Amsterdam. The street is divided in the middle by a wide green swath [where the canal should be] planted with huge graceful maples; the club building faces this handsome street. On either side, large expensive looking old apartments face the mall. I have yet to see a stroller or a child or a nanny. I think to myself the YUPPIES must have given this section a miss or perhaps these houses aren't as expensive as they look.

(continued....)



I look across Massav and head for a large building with two flags displayed high above the entrance. The Stars and Stripes above all, and beneath it, a large blue Harvard Club flag, that turns slowly in a gentle breeze. I had been here before in 1947 with Jack Mara, an old D Company comrade and another time, just after the war, with my cousin. That was a long time ago and nothing is as I remembered it. I don't recognize a thing.

Entering the lobby, I go past the bar into a spacious lounge but Charley isn't there. In fact, no one is there. I look at the magazines piled on a large table to see if they have the *New Yorker* there with son John's poem in, but there are no *New Yorker* magazines at all. I look in a huge empty main dining room, obviously closed for lunch. I go back towards a second smaller dining room and look in another smaller lounge. I recognize Charley at once.

There he is sitting in chair, a pair of crutches leaning on a pillar beside him. He's wearing a bow tie and a Brooks Brothers *Madras* shirt. He kind of tilts back his head looking through his glasses at me, exactly as I remembered him. He's a big man and looks exceptionally fit and trim as he gets up from his chair and we shake hands. He tells me severe arthritis has slowed him and he must walk with crutches. He suggests we go into the bar where he orders a Bristol Cream Sherry and I have one too. Something new! Everybody knows Doc Bradford never touched alcohol. I carry the drinks while Charlie moves on his crutches to the dining room. A waitress named Mary serves us. I haven't remembered much else but she looks familiar. They are apparently old friends and exchange pleasantries. Listening to their conversation I have the idea Charlie hasn't been at the club for a while.

We order, or rather Doc does. I suggested baked scrod but he nips that in the bud forthwith, *"It's no good. You wouldn't like it. We'll have the chicken,"* he tells Mary. He is in fine spirits. The customers in the small dining room are almost exclusively thin old ladies. Aside from us, there is one other man eating there. As I sip my sherry, I look out the window at the bright sun and the maple trees. I feel very good being here with Doc. We sit and he opens the proceedings and sets the agenda, so to speak. *"I never get to talk to people about the 503rd. Unless they were there, who could I tell all this to? They'd never know what I'm talking about."*

He starts on his subject right away by taking a few shots at some traditional regimental whipping boys. The infamous disagreeable G, *"wasn't a bad sort really,"* he tells me, *"he simply behaved badly."* He plows no new ground here as he ticks off the man's shortcomings. I listen saying very little. He sent a couple of rounds J's way. Nothing new here either.

It's been fifty years since R who avoided hazardous duty because of bad knees but Charlie is as incensed by the improper conduct as if it had happened yesterday. Doc has little use for any of these scoundrels and malingerers.



After he was through castigating these rascals I brought up M's return to the states from Noemfoor under a cloud so to speak, but Doc had somehow granted M absolution for his sins and I supposed it must be accepted by all as an act of faith. I didn't quite understand how M had behaved differently in such a way to be forgiven by Charlie for his [in my eyes] disgraceful conduct. Charlie explained it this way, *"M was a brave man who didn't fear combat. He simply wanted to go home, pulled a few strings and left."* I don't quite understand his train of thought here, but I hold my tongue. How Doc could admire this man, a known malingerer, who purposely banged at his knee causing it to swell and then conspired with a physician to get a ticket home, is far beyond me. I don't ask the hard questions and thankfully we go to a new subject.

It is obvious he has given careful consideration to all of this and the thoughts pour out to his audience of one who can understand what he is saying. He lashes out at a few more who are guilty of certain lapses who probably will never be quite forgiven but these are minor offenders, misdemeanor cases. These people are those who stay at the command post and don't bother to visit the troops or are out taking pictures when they should be taking care of their men. He has hundreds of stories that he heard right from the horse's mouth so to speak as he questioned the wounded coming to his dispensary for treatment.

He wrote down these stories that are found in an unpublished manuscript called *"Combat Over Corregidor."*

He talks of the 2nd Battalion heroes and the surgeon, of course, is one of them. He would join combat patrols whenever he could, which was often enough, to be where the action was. Charlie was the first person I saw coming through to the company after a bloody night battle. He got the Silver Star for his trouble.

(continued....)



The 503rd was not known for rewarding its heroes and only the most extraordinary feats of arms were recognized. Little Joe Whitson earned the Distinguished Service Cross for conspicuous bravery on Corregidor perhaps the bravest of the brave in Charlie's eyes. They knew each other well and Doc admired this officer twenty years his junior. He told of Frank Keller, a D Company paratrooper who stayed for two days with a wounded comrade in a ravine crawling with the enemy.

He was proud of his medics as well he should be. Jack Bowers, his senior medical enlisted man was sort of a rogue, but a brave and able man.

Bowers was wounded along with B at the mouth of Corregidor's



Doc Bradford

Cheney Ravine. Bowers attended B although painfully wounded himself. B's wounds were [according to Charlie] superficial but he left never to return to his rifle company. B's conduct displeases Doc particularly since he was a graduate of a highly respected southern military school *"who should have behaved better."*

John Prendergast was a tough Irishman and brave as a lion but in other ways not entirely scrupulous. Charley Leabhart was a first class medic and creator of one of Doc's favorite puns, *"It get's Corrugguder and Corruggeder."*

We have, as he promised at the outset, spoken of nothing else but the war and the regiment. Perhaps he is writing his memoirs, who knows? He talks of his family a little. I mention my grandfather was a great admirer of Teddy Roosevelt. *"My father was a very good friend of Teddy Roosevelt. He was at our home quite often."* Roosevelt died in 1919 and Doc [born in 1905] would certainly be old enough to remember Roosevelt when he visited.

I was told by others, that President Franklin Roosevelt had seen to it that Doc was returned from London when the US entered the war. He was a volunteer physician there helping the British war effort. I told him I thought the story true. Charlie laughs and tells me, *"It's a great story but not a word of truth in it."*

He asks me if I knew his brother was governor of Massachusetts at one time. I told him I knew that. He obviously is enjoying himself telling his stories to one of his old comrades in arms. His comrade in arms, hanging

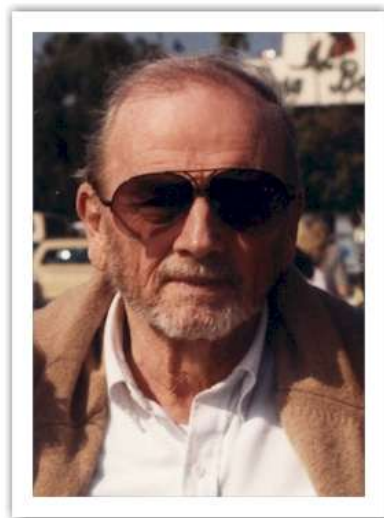
on his every word, is enjoying the afternoon immensely as well. Charlie is right, the only people you can talk to about these things, are those who were there. His Harvard Club number is 883 and he explains to me he has finally reached his club number 88. He is bright and sharp and I enjoy every minute listening to him.

I am startled when he blurts out at one point, *"I don't think I am of much use to anyone now and am ready to die."* I tell him he looks like he is in good health and what's the rush. I wish I had remembered it at the time and I would have given him Mr. Maugham's admonition to a friend, *"Death is a dreary business, I advise you to have nothing to do with it."* We go out in the lobby, Doc is moving along on his crutches and we sit down and talk some more in the leather easy chairs.

We're not there too long when two pretty young girls, perhaps six or seven years old, come up to us. These are the daughters of Charlie's friend who has driven him here from Marshfield. She has remained in the car parked in front of the club to fight off meter maids. We say goodbye. I walk out to the station wagon and Charlie and I say goodbye again.

He is grinning broadly and looks at me through his glasses with his face raised up ever so slightly and I suddenly see him slowly lumbering toward our position like a big bear, the first man to reach us that February morning after D Company's bloody fight at Wheeler Point.

It has been a beautiful afternoon. I think Charlie had a good time too. The station wagon pulls away from the curb. I look at my watch and my heart sinks. It is nearly three-thirty and the rental Shadow has surely been towed. We had been talking for a long time.



John "Jungle Fox" Lindgren (1987)

[Source: 503rd Heritage Battalion web site]

"The closer you get to the individual soldier doing the dirty work, the closer you are to the truth in war."

~ John Lindgren



A Rare & Privileged Event – The 173d ABCT St. Michael's Jump at Aviano, Italy

By Leta Carruth

Honorary Member of the 503rd Regiment

A prayer to Michael the Archangel,
Patron Saint of Paratroopers by Lew Poorman:

*Angelic Michael, hear my call
As through the sky I now will fall.
Satan you once cast from here.
Aid me now to conquer fear.
My static line have hooked to hold.
And then my chute it to make unfold.*

*Suspension lines untangled be
And open up my canopy.
From other jumpers float me clear
As safely down I persevere.
On angel wings I hit the ground.
My father's favor I have found.
In thanks, St Michael, I do pray
For God has helped me - all the way.
Amen*

Last Monday, October 28, 2011, I had the privilege of witnessing the St. Michael's jump by the 173d ABCT from Camp Ederle, Vicenza, Italy. This was the first time in seven years that the 173d has held the St. Michael's jump. The event was coordinated by the 173rd Brigade Chaplain, MAJ Edward Cook.

I rolled out of bed at 04:30 - a feat in itself for me but, as the day unfolded, a feat that was beyond worth it. A couple of the men from the 2/503d (Steven Van Esch, Fabe Sesma) had made arrangements for me to join family members and attend the jump. I will never be able to thank those men enough for arranging this.

I walked across post to the 2/503d Battalion HQ where I had been told to be by 06:30 in order to board a bus for Aviano where the jump would take place. There was a bit of confusion about where the buses were - they were not at the 2/503d HQ. Around 06:20 I made my way into the building and inquired at the staff duty desk as to where I should be. The Soldiers asked around and directed me to the soccer field.

As I walked from the 2/503d BN building to the soccer field (retracing my steps from the hotel) I ran into SGT Rimmel who is a very cherished friend and who was participating in the jump that day. SGT Rimmel and I walked together to the soccer field where Soldiers from 2/503d, 1/503d and HHC were meeting to be taken to Aviano for the jump.



SGT Rimmel went onto the field to join the 2/503d Soldiers while I waited on the edge of the field. As I was waiting I met Jenn Cook, the Brigade Chaplain's wife, and their son Edward. Jenn took me under her wing all day. I am grateful to her for her guidance and support. I am so thankful our paths crossed.

A little after 07:00 they called for the Soldiers and a few family members who were there to board the buses. I had no idea where SGT Rimmel was or what bus to board. About that time CPT Andy Oliver came walking by and recognized me. I was still half asleep so I was thrilled to see a familiar face. CPT Oliver called out to someone to make sure I was on the bus with 2/503d Chosen Company. The next thing I knew I was not only on the bus with SGT Rimmel but we were seated next to each other. PERFECT!

We arrived at Aviano around 09:30 and a bit of the "hurry up and wait" began. The jump was scheduled for 15:00 (3:00 PM). As we were waiting MAJ Cook gave a history of St. Michael and the St. Michael's jump.

After MAJ Cook finished each of the Battalion Chaplains presented each of the Soldiers who were jumping with a St. Michael medallion to commemorate the jump. The three C-130s that would take the paratroopers up arrived.

The paratroopers were briefed on the LZ (Landing Zone). It was a little unnerving for me to listen to the person conducting the briefing discuss what to do if 1) you land in a tree, or 2) you land on a power line, etc. But good to know all bases are covered!

Then the paratroopers, by Battalion, were called out to "rehearse" the elements of the jump. A little while later they lined up to get their chutes from the conex. Then they completed some basic preparation before rigging up in the chutes. Not long after that it was time to "buddy up" and "rig up" in the chutes.



Rigging up

(continued....)





Leta and Sgt. Remmel

After they are all rigged up a Jump Master checks each paratrooper to make sure everything is in order and, I think, prepares the static line. For once I didn't ask a million questions - I tried to stay out of the way since I knew it was essential that this all be done properly to ensure the safety of each paratrooper.



Heading out to the C-130s

After we watched the paratroopers file out to the planes we hopped on a bus to go to the LZ (Landing Zone). We weren't there too long before we saw the planes approaching.



First chutes popped

As the first chutes popped it was both breath taking and an emotional moment for me. Not a "boo hoo" type of emotion but I couldn't stop the tears from streaming down my face. Jenn Cook came over and saw my tears. Before I even had the chance to explain myself she

assured me she understood. Then I told her about one of those men who was jumping out of the third aircraft.

He was shot during an ambush back in OEF VIII. He wasn't medevaced for about 3 hours due to the intensity of the fight and the helos not being able to land. Once he got to Asadabad he "died" 2 or 3 times but the incredible medical staff kept reviving him. By the time he got to Landstuhl he was on life support. His family was called and told that they (Landstuhl) would try to keep him alive until they got there. Another miracle happened and he stabilized enough to be sent to WRAMC (Walter Reed Army Medical Center).

Once at WRAMC his was in a comma and declared brain dead. As his family stood vigil for 10 days there was no change. Then, one more miracle, on the 10th day he woke up. He fought for 22 months at WRAMC to get healthy - to get well. His only goal was to return to the 2/503d. And he did. He did so by determination. He endured numerous surgeries and procedures; months of waiting; mountains of paperwork. He could have been medically retired from the Army but not this Paratrooper. It was all about getting back to his unit.

Not only did he return to the ROCK but he deployed with them in OEF X. What a stud!

So there I was standing at the Landing Zone in Aviano, Italy knowing that one of those Paratroopers beneath one of those canopies was this young man. Yep, I got emotional and I'll never apologize for that.

To be honest the emotion wasn't just about that one Paratrooper, though. It was about how damn fortunate I am to be allowed to love and to be so loved by so many of the ROCK Paratroopers and their families. Not one day passes in my life that I don't know how fortunate and blessed I am.



"Those are 'my' guys!"

(continued....)





"I hope you all had soft landings!"

As we were standing around waiting for all of the Paratroopers to make their way across the road from the LZ to where we were at the buses I noticed a gentleman with the name tape "Rohling". What a bonus! COL Andy Rohling who is now the 173rd ABCT Commander. I introduced myself and thanked him for the opportunity to be at the jump. COL Rohling was previously the S-3 and XO for 2/503d. COL Rohling was kind enough to chat with me for a few minutes. As we were chatting he handed me the St. Michael medallion that he had been given that day. I was beyond honored.

Some Italian Jump Masters had participated in the jump. After everyone was safely back on the ground, the chutes were stored away and everyone assembled near the buses. Both MAJ Cook and an Italian Commander had Soldiers from each country exchange jump wings. Then each Commander said a few words about what a special day it was. And it was SO special in every possible way.

When we boarded the buses to return to the airfield at Aviano MAJ Cook came to my seat. He told me that Jenn had filled him in a little on why I was there. Then he reached in his pocket and pulled out one of the St. Michael medallions and told me that he would like for me to have it. I was honored and speechless. I told him that COL Rohling had already given me his. MAJ Cook asked that I accept the one from him, too. Another blessing to my already more than perfect day.



The St. Michael medallion given to me by MAJ Cook and COL Rohling, showing the front and back.

Honored, humbled, privileged, grateful...there really just aren't words to fully describe my feelings for being allowed to experience the St. Michael jump. I am forever thankful. This day is absolutely one of the most cherished days of my life.

Jump week continued for the Paratroopers in Vicenza. On Tuesday I know some of the ROCK Paratroopers were at Aviano for day jumps from Chinooks and night jumps from the C-130s. Wednesday and Thursday there were more jumps. I hope all of the jumps on Tuesday - Thursday were as safe as the ones on Monday. I'm sure there were many pairs of wings buried on the landing zone last week. I'm told that tradition is that when a Paratrooper makes his/her last jump on an LZ they bury a pair of their wings. I know a couple of men who made their last jump as a member of the ROCK. I wish them well as they move on with their military careers and lives. They will always be ROCK Paratroopers to me. Once ROCK, always ROCK. Right?

Again, my thanks to Steven Van Esch, Fabe Sesma, Bob Remmel, Jenn Cook, MAJ Cook, COL Rohling, LTC Larsen and all of the ROCK Paratroopers for allowing me this once in a lifetime experience as well as your support to me.

AIRBORNE!!!

"SGT Remmel tucked this away in one of the pockets of his ACUs and jumped with it. Just minutes after his jump he handed it to me. There are no words for how special this is." Leta



Leta's web site:

<http://paratrooperprayers.tripod.com/>

Leta Carruth was named an *Honorary Member* of the 503rd Regiment in recognition of her providing sustained physical, moral and substantive support to the warriors of the 2nd Battalion, 503d Infantry Regiment from 2007 forward.

By order of the Secretary of the Army.

