



# ~ OPERATION CORREGIDOR II ~



## Honoring our WWII 503rd Paratroopers at 173d Reunion in Lexington

**Yes! I am honored to support bringing to the 173d Airborne Brigade Association's annual reunion in Lexington, KY paratroopers of the 503rd PRCT who fought in the Pacific during WWII as guests of our Brigade.**

**My name: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit: \_\_\_\_\_**

**To help offset the cost for this, enclosed is my check in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_.**

**Please add to note line "503rd Guest Donation" and mail check payable to:**

**Midwest Chapter 17  
P.O. Box 09640  
Columbus, OH 43209**

**Note: Your donation, not to exceed \$100., will be used to help defray the cost of hotel rooms, reunion registrations and special gifts to our 503rd PRCT guests on behalf of the officers and men of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep).**



**L-R: WWII 503rd PRCT troopers who attended the Myrtle Beach Reunion in 2010 as guests of our Brigade: Chet Nycum, Chuck Breit, Charlie Hylton, Paul Hinds and John Cleland.**



**Chuck teaching lyrics to *Blood on the Risers* to 1st Bat's Craig Ford in SC.**



**Charlie ready to burst out in song before doing a mean Texas 2 Step.**



**You could hear a pin drop as Chet told of his PLF on *The Rock*.**



**Honoring those 503<sup>rd</sup> super troopers at 173d reunion in Myrtle Beach, SC, 2010.**



***"Any nation that does not honor its heroes will not long endure"***

***~ President Abraham Lincoln***





~ Operation Corregidor II ~

During our 173d reunion next June in Lexington, KY, the Chapter 17 reunion steering committee has secured the *Kentucky Theatre* just a couple blocks from reunion central at the Hyatt Hotel, to serve as site for *Operation Corregidor II*, the interactive meeting with WWII 503rd troopers; *Operation Corregidor I* having been held in N. Myrtle Beach at our 2010 reunion, and *Operation Corregidor* having been held in Corregidor in 1945. This historic building will be ideal for this gathering of paratrooper warriors and their families. Chapter 17 is even providing popcorn and cold drinks!



Publicity stunt for an early “talkie” featuring The Marx Brothers. (Courtesy, University of Kentucky Photo Archives)

More than just a movie house...

The Kentucky Theatre is a familiar Landmark to generations of Lexingtonians. It’s richly ornamented walls and glowing stained glass fixtures have hosted gala events and entertained overflowing crowds. They have also endured hard times and disasters, both natural and manmade. And so it stands today, a true palace of memories, a hall full of comedy, tragedy, drama, adventure, and just plain fun.

We hope you enjoy this brief look at her history and join us soon to continue the tradition by making some memories of your own.

1965

*The Sound of Music*. Thousands lined up daily to see this summer’s timeless hit.



The present Kentucky Theatre auditorium (by Lee P. Thomas)



**October, 1921**  
Construction plans announced. The Builder, Lafayette Amusement Company offered \$20 in gold to name Lexington’s “palatial new photoplay house”.

The winner, of course, was the “Kentucky.”

April 24, 1927

Enter the “talkies”. In a major marketing coup, the Kentucky was the first to introduce Warner Brothers’ vitaphone sound films to Lexington.



Operation Corregidor II coming soon to the Kentucky



The concession area (by Raymond Adams)



~ 503rd PRCT Reunion ~



# Winter Weekend Getaway Feb 24-26 Hilton Head Marriott Resort & Spa



*Our fourth year hosting this fun mid-winter break, luxury accommodations at fantastic rates - rooms from \$100, and great amenities. You can't beat it for value. Ask any of the 80 who attended last year, from 10 chapters.*

**Make your hotel reservations 888-511-5086**

### REGISTRATION FORM

Mail to **Bill Eberle, 22 Big Woods Dr,  
Hilton Head Island, SC 29926-2665**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Your chapter: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ attending X \$75/person = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Added donation for Wounded Warrior \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Make check payable to **Ben Vandervoort Chapter**

Fee covers banquet, hospitality (FREE food & drink),  
hotel self park, events transportation.

### EVENT SCHEDULE

**THURSDAY:** Registration 1300-2100,  
FREE Hospitality Room food & drinks  
every day

**FRIDAY:** Parris Island Graduation of  
Marines; Beaufort National Cemetery  
Service of Remembrance for fallen  
paratroopers; Beaufort Historic District  
for lunch and shopping. Hospitality  
Room open with FREE food & drinks.

**SATURDAY:** various Savannah excursions;  
details to follow.

**SATURDAY EVENING:** FREE Happy  
Hour, Banquet, Guest Speaker.

**Hosted by Ben Vandervoort Chapter. Call or email Bill Eberle if you require  
transportation from Savannah Airport: 843 682 4171, [airborneben@hargray.com](mailto:airborneben@hargray.com)**

Good buddy Chuck Breit of the 503rd PRCT, who made the historic jump onto Corregidor and a lifetime member of the 173d Airborne Association, says all Sky Soldiers are welcome to register to attend their reunion which this year is being held in conjunction with the 82nd Airborne, Ben Vandervoort Chapter. Thanks Chuck!





## ~ Paul L. Hinds, 503rd Paratrooper Extraordinaire ~

Paul L. Hinds joined the 503rd PRCT in early 1942 at Ft. Benning, GA and was transferred to Ft. Bragg, NC for training during the summer prior to deployment to the Pacific Theater of Operations. He sailed from the west coast on October 20, 1942 and landed in Australia on December 2nd, after 42 days aboard the ageing Poelau Laut. The unusually long time at sea was a result of the captain's adamant refusal to sail with a convoy. In Paul's words.....



**Paratrooper Paul**

***“The 503rd PRCT was one lean, mean fighting machine. Anyone doubting that statement should contact the Gatekeeper of Hell to request an interview with one of the hundreds of enemy that our paratroopers sent there.”***

They zip-zagged across the Pacific to evade the Japanese submarines which infested the waters like sharks. Paul was with 2000 troopers sleeping in the ship's hold, packed in like sardines. They had only 2 meals per day, but on Thanksgiving they were served a feast which filled both sides of their mess kits. By that time their stomachs had shrunk to such a degree the excessive quantity of food, partnered with the pitch and roll of the small ship, caused many troopers to become sick.

Paul's only combat jump occurred on July 4, 1944, one national holiday he will never forget! Upon exiting the aircraft his M-1 rifle became entangled in the parachute's risers and created pain in his left shoulder. Then, to make matters worse, he landed in a mud hole on the graveled airport runway. When he stood up, he was cussin' up a blue streak. Paul turned around and who should be standing beside him? None other than the regimental chaplain, whose wry smile indicated that all was forgiven.

On the morning after the initial jump on Corregidor in February 1945, he flew over the island on a resupply mission. After having pushed the supplies out of the Gooney Bird (C-47), Paul took several pictures of the topside by standing in the door with no parachute, steadied only by the lieutenant grasping his belt with one hand while holding onto the static line with the other. *“Fortunately, he had a good, strong grip!!!”*

After surviving 33 months, many of which were spent in the hot, mosquito-ridden, snake-infested jungles of New Guinea and several of the islands of the Philippines, he returned to the United States in August of 1945. *“I was aboard the first troop ship to arrive in San Francisco after the Japanese surrender. What a Glorious Day!!*

### **A standing ovation**

Paul, and his beautiful bride, Ginny, attended the 173d Airborne Association reunion in N. Myrtle Beach in 2010, along with other WWII 503rd troopers and their companions as honored guests of the officers and men of our brigade. During the reunion an interactive meeting was held where these paratroopers shared stories of their time during WWII in the Pacific, including a story from Paul.

During one phase of the fighting, Paul was tasked with processing the paperwork of his buddies killed in battle. While doing this sad work he noticed many of the men who had died hadn't taken out life insurance provided by the army. With no one looking, and with a surreptitious stroke of his pen, he righted this wrong, assuring surviving families would receive the life insurance payment in recognition of the great sacrifice made by their lost paratrooper.

Upon hearing this, the 100-200 Sky Soldiers and their family members in attendance stood and gave Paul a resounding round of applause -- perhaps the only recorded standing ovation received by a WWII 503rd trooper from Sky Soldiers.



**Paul, after the 503rd captured the airstrip on Noemfoor Island, 1945.**

Of the approximate 3000 paratroopers of the 503rd PRCT who fought throughout the Pacific during WWII, sadly, less than 100 men are still with us.

In January, Paul died at the age of 90. Indeed, he was one of the Greatest Generation. We send our condolences to his lovely bride, Ginny, and Paul's family.

*Rest easy trooper, you did a good job, Paul.*



# ~ Red Tails ~ ~



The Tuskegee Airmen, the famous "red tails," had a perfect record in escorting bombers over Germany during World War II.

## Forever One of a Kind

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

Howard is a buddy, a retired Air Force guy down here in Cocoa Beach, FL. One evening I stopped by the VFW in that little ocean side village and saw his wife there, Ola, but Howard was nowhere to be found. Ola mentioned he had gone to Alabama to bury his father. A couple weeks later I did see Howard and expressed my condolences for his loss. He happened to mention his dad, Roy Wiggins, served as a ground crew member with the Tuskegee Airmen, something I was never aware of.



Roy Wiggins, 99

Another day, my wife, Reggie, and I were at the local Post Office here in town. An elderly lady was struggling with a rather large package so I offered to carry it to the car for her. As we reached the car a man, whom I assumed was her husband and sitting in the car, pushed a secret button and the trunk of the vehicle miraculously opened. After placing the package in the trunk I noticed the driver was wearing a ball cap with the words *Tuskegee Airmen* emblazoned on the face of the cap. Kiddingly, I said, "I heard of you guys." He smiled. After thanking him for his service to his country, we left.

Sometime later, my wife and I visited the Valiant Air Command Warbird Museum in Titusville, not far from where we live. We walked around the outside area of the museum taking in the various models of aircraft on display, including many WWII, Korean War and Vietnam era flying machines, of course, spending extra time looking at and touching the Huey, now forever grounded, before moving inside to view the static displays.

Against a wall near the rear of the building was sitting an elderly, rather rotund man talking, smiling and shaking hands with visitors. We would soon learn he was LTC Hiram Mann, one of the original Tuskegee Airmen pilots. Finally getting our chance to meet this hero of WWII, we had the opportunity to chat with him for a few moments.

Having not brought a camera with us, I asked a stranger if he'd snap a photo and email it to me. For many weeks that photo never came, and I got into the habit of cursing that inconsiderate stranger (probably a Leg), until one day, here on this computer machine, the image of the Colonel, my wife and this old RTO appeared! I took back everything I had said about the stranger and his mother.

(continued....)





**Smitty, LTC Hiram Mann & Reggie at Warbird Museum**

Ready to leave, I wished the Colonel well, then came to attention and gave him my best Airborne salute, which he returned. Walking away thinking my bride was pulling slack, I turned to see her still talking with Hiram.

As we reached the parking lot she said, “Do you know what he said?” I told her I didn’t. She then replied, “He said ‘it was good to be saluted again.’” I think I said something like, “Wow, that’s great”.

As this is being written, this Friday coming to a theater near you, is the Lucasfilm, *Red Tails*, named after the tail color of the aircraft flown by the Airmen in WWII. Mann, who lives in Titusville not far from the museum, along with other Tuskegee Airmen was interviewed a few years ago for the movie, and was reported to say, “It was an experiment that many of the high brass didn’t want to see succeed. But we turned that adversity into victory.” Indeed, they did.

By the time you read this, Mann will have attended a special showing of the movie which would have included a question and answer period with the invitation-only movie goers in attendance. In anticipation of seeing the film, LTC Mann said, “I want to see how factual it is. I’m interested in seeing how the public will receive it.”



Advanced pilot trainer, Bob Hughes of Los Angeles, was assigned by the Army Air Corps to the Tuskegee Army Flying School to train the Airmen. “I started learning what the blacks were going through in Alabama. It was a mixed up thing,” he said. “Here these guys went through school against all odds.” Given the fact his skin tone didn’t match that of the Airmen, the army didn’t allow him to lodge on the airbase lest he catch *the Black*.

LTC Hiram Mann, 90, flew 48 combat missions over France and Germany in his P-51D fighter he named “Boss Lady”, after his wife Kitty; they’ve been married 71 years.

And now, our attention seems to turn more and more to the men and women of WWII, our fathers, mothers, aunts and uncles (my mom happened to be a *Rosie the Riveter*). We are occasionally afforded the fortunate opportunity to meet some of these people, these patriots; like the two Airmen I met and the late father of a buddy I heard about; like Paul Hinds of the 503rd, who is no longer with us, and Hiram Mann, who is; although our simple ‘thanks’ seems so lacking at times.

The *Greatest Generation*? Damn right they are!

### Some facts about the Tuskegee Airmen

- 992 pilots graduated at Tuskegee Army Air Field between 1942 and 1945.
- 450 pilots served overseas in the 99th Pursuit Squadron at the 332nd Fighter Group.
- The pilots escorted bomber planes in North Africa and Europe during World War II.
- Enlisted members were trained as mechanics, armament specialists, radio repairmen, parachute riggers and control tower operators.
- Tuskegee Airmen Inc. formed in 1972 and has 53 chapters, including the Gen. Daniel E. Chappie James Chapter.



**LTC Hiram Mann**

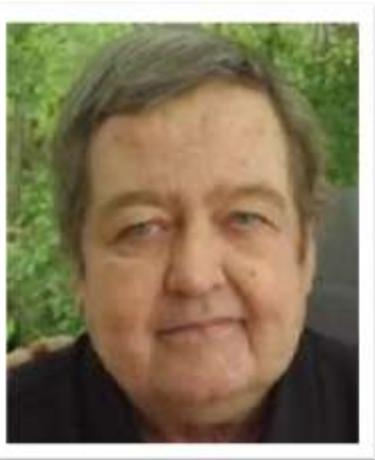
(Photo by Tim Short, *Florida Today*)



## From Wife of Proud Late Paratrooper

I am the wife of Michael B. Ludas who passed away way too soon, on Oct. 1, 2011. I am using Michael's email for his service and friends correspondences.

He served with the 173rd, Co. B & D 2/503d in Vietnam Jan. 1967 to Jan. 1968. He did basic at Ft. Leonard-wood, Mo., Ft. Gordon, & Jump School at Ft. Benning, Ga. in 1966.



**Michael, a proud paratrooper**

He was a machine gunner, wounded 3 times, earning 3 Purple Hearts, 2 Army Commendation Medals with "V", Vietnam Service Medal w/Bronze Service Star, Vietnam Campaign Medal w/device 60, 5 Unit Citations, Parachutist Badge with Gold Battle Jump Star, CIB, among others.

He survived many daily "contact fire-fights", "Ambush Patrols", and "Search & Destroy" Missions. He was proud to serve with a strong group of men in all that was expected of him and participated in "Operation Cedar Falls, Jan '67", made the historic "Jump, on Operation Junction City, Feb, 22, 1967," and thankfully after his last time wounded, survived the horrific "Battle of Hill 875", of which he lay wounded across the area waiting for evac, when Fr Watters' group was disastrously hit by our friendly fire.

Michael was always in question why he survived and those wounded didn't. It was these memories that later haunted him when the Iraq war came about, brought up many issues he had suppressed, as others have. Over the years Agent Orange issues took a toll on his body, as he would say, his shoulders shot, his knees shot, his skin diseased, then a Stroke, Prostate cancer, and PTSD. With all the meds he was on, no one really knew how to help my Michael, there was nothing that made him comfortable any more, and finally his body gave out.

We were high school sweethearts and for 47 years he always called me his "little Trooper", he named everything "Geraldine" for his luck, like his 1965 & 66 cars he raced and his machine gun because he said they were always with him. For Luck he wore my school ring on left little finger, carried things I gave him, 50 cent piece, St Michaels medallion (which I wore also and was blessed by the Priest in Chicago), a broken

watch that got blown off him the first time he was wounded, etc. He and I were our luck through all the years of being together.

Michael was my "Lifeline" and "Hero", I miss him dearly but know that we had the best deepest love and respect for each other than any two people could ever have. We were happy to have 2 daughters, son-in-law, daughter-in-law and 4 fun grandkids. His life was cut too short.

He was devoted to the guys of the 173rd that served with him and was very proud to be associated with this organization.

My daughters and I were wondering if there is anyone who has any photos or stories from those who may have known him; if we could have some copies of such, we would be gratefully appreciative. Maybe you could get the word out for us?

Thank you, and I apologize for the long email but I am extremely proud of my Michael.

Geraldine (Gerrie) Ludas  
<mailto:mludas@wi.rr.com>

**Thanks for writing, Gerrie. We hope some of Michael's buddies will be contacting you.**



**Michael with 2/503d  
in Vietnam circa 1967**



## Last Month's WHODAT?



This strack looking G.I. is SFC Terry "Nick" Sabree, C/2/503d and Special Forces trooper.

*"For those who have fought for it, Freedom has a taste the protected will never know."*

~ Henry Hauser

## Nostalgia

Sophia Loren and Jane Mansfield



*"Hmmm. Sure drinks her tea fast, that cup is already empty."*

[Photo sent in by John "Suli" Sullivan, HHC/2/503d, always on the lookout for nostalgia and full cups]

## THE OLDEST VC

By George Coker

A/4/503d

This is one of the stories that, when we get through telling it, we won't be sure we got it right.

On one operation, we were moving into a VC staging area that was covered with grenade booby traps and punji stick holes. RJ Pool, Edwin Minor and Capt. Hampton were in the right column between the first platoon and the weapons platoon. Myself, the XO, and 1st Sgt Vickers were in the left, between the 1st and 2nd platoons.

RJ and I couldn't have been more than 30 feet apart. RJ said a real old VC with an AK-47 jumped out of a covered foxhole. He wasn't more than 10 feet from RJ, and when he raised the AK, everyone hit the dirt. The old man emptied a magazine in their direction and disappeared.

On my side of the line, a VC took off running down a trail followed by Sgt Anderson and David Raines. Evidently, the VC tripped a booby trap, because, as our guys followed, the grenade exploded. It showered Sgt Anderson's leg with shrapnel and David was hit in the right thigh. With all the shooting and explosions, I was as close to the ground as a person could get. Sgt Vickers yelled at me, *"There's a grenade booby trap a couple feet in front of you"*.

Soon after the action started, David came walking down the path supported by another trooper. He had a hole in his thigh about the size of a fingernail. We had gone to Airborne school together, so when I saw it I said, *"Man that looks like a million dollar wound"*. David replied, *"A trip to Memphis would be nice"*.

Our medics had set up a station behind our position. The medic picked a square piece of metal from a pineapple grenade out of David's thigh, sprayed it with iodine, put a bandage on it and sent him back to his unit. When he passed by me, he said, *"No luck. No luck!"*

We don't know if there were 2 VC or just one. Sgt Anderson had been a member of the Army Rifle Team, winning several meets. He missed that VC 20 times, I guess the old man was just having a good day!

[Sent in by Jack Tarr, 4/503d]

Funny story, Jack. It was one day in May of '66, when I drove a LT from Camp Zinn to Long Binh Hospital; believe he was going there to see his nurse lady friend. We left on the return trip about dusk heading up Highway 1. At one point we took a few rounds of sniper fire from a tree line; we also learned how fast jeeps can really go -- not fast enough. Sounds like the same VC. LT with the lady friend, if you read this, drop me a note. Ed





# 2/503d Troopers....They were Young & Soldiers

## But, where are they now?

### Bob Beemer (B/2/503d),

joined the Army in February 1967. He was sent to Vietnam where he joined the 173d in November 1967, arriving 2 days before Thanks--giving. He was then sent to An Khe for jungle school, then to fire support base "12" at Dak To where he was assigned to 2d Platoon of "B" Company 2/503rd. Bob remained with Bravo until February of 1968, when he requested assignment to the Recon Squad where he spent the remainder of his tour.



When Bob returned stateside he was assigned to "C" Company 1/508th, 82nd Airborne Div. until his separation in February 1970.

Upon his discharge from the army, he planned to join the New York State Police Department until *I demonstrated to them the power of a Mach "1" with a 390 cu in engine. They asked me not to take the test for a while so I became an Apprentice Carpenter.* Bob says this proved to be his best move since being in the 173d.

He advanced in the trade, building everything from single family homes to suspension bridges and for the past 14 years he worked in construction management supervising the projects.

*Today I am happily married for 32 years to Katharine who has been my stability over the years along with enjoying our daughters Tanja and Erin who live nearby.* He also has a son from a short previous marriage who lives in another state. Bob has been active in Veterans issues locally and does not let a day go by when *I am not grateful for having served with some of the finest men ever to have walked the earth.*



So, you wanna be a Sky Soldier? Better have big ones.

### Bob Carmichael (HHC/2/503d),

was born 28 October 1929, in Wewoka, Oklahoma. Bob enlisted in the army in 1952, later completing officer training. LTC Carmichael served as Battalion Executive Officer and Battalion Commander of the 2/503d in 1965/1966. At the request of General Williamson, he returned to Vietnam for a second tour in 1969 as Battalion Commander with the 25th Infantry Div. Bob's storied army career spans nearly 22 years, and in addition to Vietnam, includes service in Korea, Alaska, and the USA Command & General Staff College, among numerous other appointments. Referred to as "RBC" by family and friends, he graduated the University of Texas with a BA in Psychology, and has completed numerous advanced infantry and officer courses while in service to his country. Bob played a critical role during *Operation Silver City* in March of 1966, when his advice to 173d Brigade was followed to tactically and quickly move the battalion to position Zulu Zulu in the "D" Zone where it could set-up a defensive perimeter before being attacked by a reinforced enemy regiment. Years later he was in command of the 25th Inf. Bn which was victorious in one of the most major battles ever fought in Vietnam, during *Operation Crook*. Bob's army service and combat awards are too many to list here, but include the Silver Star, the Army Commendation Medal, the Bronze Star w/V with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Purple Heart w/1 Oak Leaf Cluster. Bob was and remains to this day a *Soldier's Soldier*, never once losing sight of the value and importance of the lives of the men he commanded. Today, Bob is retired and lives in Austin, Texas with his commanding officer, Mrs. Exie Carmichael. While Exie pretends to fill the role of RTO, our brave leader would much rather face a company of attacking NVA than to disagree with the *real* commander in the Carmichael family. Instead, he spends much of his time fishing, tending to his vegetable garden, rooting the Long Horn's on to victory; and with his lovely wife, helping G.I.'s even when those same G.I.'s have no idea from where the help originates.



(continued....)





## 2/503d Troopers....Where are they now?

### George Dexter

CO 2/503d, on February 26, 1966, during Operation Phoenix, was wounded by enemy sniper fire in the left leg and arm.



He was evacuated back to the United States where he spent 2 1/2 months at Beaumont Army Hospital in El Paso TX, underwent five operations and spent a year in physical therapy, but was able to get back on jump status 2 1/2 years after being wounded. In August '66 he and his family moved to Carlisle Barracks, PA where he attended the Army War College. From there George was assigned the following summer to the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the Pentagon. In the summer of '69 the Colonel and his family moved to the Panama Canal Zone where he commanded the 8th Special Forces Group for two years. He returned to Vietnam in the summer of '69. By this time most of the American combat units had been returned home. After four months in Can Tho in the Delta, he was sent to MACV Headquarters in Saigon, where he served out the rest of his tour working with the South Vietnamese developing a pacification program for their use after the Americans left. His last tour of duty before retirement was with the ROTC Program at the University of Texas at Austin. George retired in 1975 and moved with his family to Albuquerque NM. *There I built my own solar adobe home in the foothills northeast of town, doing most of the adobe bricklaying, carpentry, plumbing and electrical work myself. Katy and I lived in that house for 26 years.* During this time he did a lot of volunteer work, primarily as a docent with the Anthropology Museum at the University of New Mexico and with the St. Vincent de Paul Society, a Catholic charitable organization. In 2004, he and his wife sold their house at the peak of the housing boom and moved into a local retirement home. His wife, Katy, died there in May 2011 of complications from Parkinson Disease. *It has been very lonely without her, but, at 87, my health is good and several of our children and grandchildren live either in Albuquerque or in New Mexico within a couple of hours of here. I see them a lot.*

**Stanley F. Crump A/2/503d**, served with the first platoon as a rifleman, grenadier, and on occasion as a RTO, from May 1965 to May 1966. He joined the Company fresh out of Jump School about two weeks after the brigade landed in Vietnam. Stan is now retired, and living in Winthrop, NY. He is married to Carol and they have two children and two grandsons. *And yes, it is a grand day to be a Sky Soldier.*



**2/503 Chargin' Charlies catch a bad guy, circa '66/'67**

(Photo by Jack Leide)

### 2/503 Troopers

Send in your before and after photo and a 1/2 page write-up of what you've done since the war, letting your buddies know you're still alive and kicking. Email to: [rto173d@cfl.rr.com](mailto:rto173d@cfl.rr.com)

(continued....)



*“Were you a paratrooper, daddy?”  
“I still am honey.”*





## 2/503d Troopers....Where are they now?

### Frank J. Dukes

(A/2/503d), was born in Lewistown, PA on May 26, 1947. He joined the U.S. Army after graduating from Lewistown High School in Sept. of '65. He enlisted as an Airborne Infantry soldier and went through basic training with Echo Co. 4th Training Bn. at Ft. Gordon GA. After a short leave he went into advanced individual training at Ft. Ord, CA, then on to Airborne Jump School at Fort Benning GA. He completed jump school in early March of '66, then again went on a short leave back to Lewistown, PA. Frank was then assigned to A Co. 2nd Bn 503rd Inf, 173d Abn Bde (Sep) in April of '66. He was just 18 years old when he was handed an M-79 grenade launcher and was told to get some rounds and practice firing outside the perimeter of the base camp in Ben Hoa, Vietnam. Frank says he can't remember all the places he has been through but he does remember 29 June '66, at Xuan Loc, *when a lot of good brothers lost their lives and the rest of us grew up real fast.* He also remembers a recon of the Central Highlands on Aug. 26, '66, when he was wounded by enemy troops with a hand-detonated mine. Frank was airlifted out to a hospital and just when he thought he was ready to go back to the unit his leg became infected. The wound had to be cut open again and left open to re-heal. Frank then got Malaria and was again hospitalized for about 4 more months. After leaving Vietnam, Frank was assigned to B Co. 1st Bn 505th Inf, 3rd Brigade of the 82nd Abn Div at Fort Bragg, NC. During his stay at Bragg, Frank went to the riots in Detroit, MI and then back to Vietnam with the 82nd Abn for the Tet Offensive in February of 1968. Frank left the Army in September of 1968 as a Sergeant E-5 and earned the C.I.B., Purple Heart, Army Commendation Medal and Paratrooper Wings. *Love the Silver Wings.* Frank met his sweetheart, Myrlene, in October of 1968 and married her on February 8, 1969. They have been married for 42 years and have one son, Michael, daughter-in-law, Jeri, and two grandsons. *Myrlene gets all the credit for keeping me in line and for that matter alive. I still don't know how she ever put up with me in the early years.* Frank worked in the Steel Mill in Burnham, PA for 16 years and then the steel industry went bust in 1982. He worked there for 26 years and recently retired on December 31, 2011. Frank now keeps busy as a volunteer driving our Veterans to their Doctor appointments in the DAV van.



### Bernard F. (Bernie) Griffard (B/2/503d),

was born January 13, 1943 in Bloomington, IL. Following his graduation from Loyola University Chicago in January 1965, he received his ROTC commission as a Second Lieutenant. After Jump School at Ft. Benning, GA in August-September 1965, his first Active Duty unit assignment was the 101st Airborne Division, Fort Campbell, KY. While at Fort Campbell he served as a Platoon Leader and XO in B/1-501 ABN IN, and as the Aide de Camp to the Assistant Division Commander. In September 1967 he reported to the 2/503 ABN, 173d ABN BDE (SEP) in Dak To, RVN. Over the next 18 months he served as the Commander, B Company and as the Battalion S4 and S1. He was on Hill 875; in Kontum and Duc Co during Tet 1968; An Khe and Bong Song. During his RVN tour he received two Bronze Stars w/V and two Purple Hearts. During his 28-year military career additional overseas assignments included eighteen months in Korea and eight years in Europe, five years of which were in Berlin. He also served tours with the Army's Operational Test & Evaluation Agency; as an instructor at the Combined Arms & Services Staff School (CAS3); and served as the Director of the first Battle Command Training Program (BCTP) Exercise Team. In 1992, Bernie was assigned as the Commander, Army Forces, Task Force GTMO, Guantanamo Bay Cuba during the first Haitian Migration. He concluded his career at Fort Lewis, WA as the Assistant Chief of Staff G4, I Corps, retiring in April 1993 in the rank of Colonel. A graduate of both the U. S. Army Command & General Staff College (CGSC), and the U. S. Army War College (USAWC), he also has a Master's Degree from the University of Miami, FL. In November 1993, Bernie accepted an appointment as an Associate Professor at the U. S. Army War College's Center for Strategic Leadership, Carlisle Barracks, PA, a position he still holds today. He and Honey, his wife of 42 years live in Mechanicsburg, PA. Their son and three grandchildren live in Florida, and their daughter lives in Alaska, providing the optimum places to visit in the winter and summer.



(continued....)





## 2/503d Troopers....Where are they now?

### **Barry L. (Bear) Hart (C/2/503d)**

was born in Lancaster, PA on October 20, 1947. He joined the Army on November 22, 1965.

He took basic training in A Co., 4th Training Bn, 2nd Bde at Ft. Gordon, GA. He was chosen to attend Leadership Training School in February 1966, Class 87, 3rd Training Regt. Inf., also at Ft. Gordon. Barry took advanced infantry training in E Co., 7th Training Bn, 3rd Bde and Jungle Familiarization School, also at Ft. Gordon, GA. He attended Airborne School at Ft. Benning, GA, Class 40, 45th and 49th Companies, as Jumper #521. He completed jump School on May 20, 1966. Barry arrived in Vietnam in June 1966, and was assigned to Recon Platoon, 2nd Bn, 503rd Inf, 173d Airborne Bde on Operation Yorktown (June 23-July 8). In July 1966, he was assigned to C Co. 2/503 Weapons Platoon where he worked his way from base plate carrier to fire direction control. He jumped in Operation Junction City in War Zone C with the 2/503d, which was the only mass combat jump in Vietnam. On two occasions he served as fire direction control for the battalion's 4.2mm mortars and Co. A, B and C 81mm Mortar Platoons. He was promoted to Sgt. E-5 in August 1967. Barry was in all operations of C Company from July 1966 to December 1967. He was the mortar forward observer for 1st Platoon on Hill 875 at Dak To in Nov. 1967, where C Co. had 42 killed in action and 45 wounded in action, himself included. From Dec. 1967 to Feb. 1968, he was assigned to 5th Special Forces, MACV, and SOG Operations on a voluntary basis. While leading a Civilian Irregular Defense Group on ambush, they themselves were ambushed and left for dead. With a minor arm and back wound which bled profusely, the Viet Cong thought Sgt. Hart was dead and didn't bother to make sure. The CIDG were not so lucky. Barry earned two Purple Hearts, a Bronze Star, Army Commendation Medal, Combat Infantryman's Badge with Wreath, Airborne Silver Wings with Combat Jump Star, ARVN Jump Wings and Pathfinder Badge. He was discharged on October 1968 as Sgt. E-5 from B Co., 1st 325th Inf., 82nd Abn. Div. at Ft. Bragg, NC. Barry is widowed with two children. He has been a machinist and tool maker, and has served as the Kentucky State President of the Vietnam Vets Motorcycle Club. He resides in Paducah, KY.



### **Jack Kelley (A/2/503d)**

was born in Orlando, Florida, July 8, 1937.

A member of the Boy Scouts of America he was awarded the Eagle Scout badge.

He graduated from The Citadel in 1959 and was commissioned as a 2d Lt of Infantry in the US Army. In December 1979, he retired from the U. S. Army as a LTC, after twenty years of service. He commanded parachute infantry units at platoon, company and battalion levels where his last two assignments were as a Battalion Commander in the 82nd Airborne Division and finally, as Deputy Commander, 5th Special Forces ("Green Berets"). Jack was awarded the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star for Valor with six Oak Leaf Clusters, the Purple Heart, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Medal (eleven awards), Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Army Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, and the Senior Parachutist badge. He has also earned Master's Degrees from both American University and Central Michigan, served as a Certified Financial Planner, and as an Adjunct Professor at both Webster University and Campbell University. Jack also served as the Executive Director of Men's Ministries of the International Pentecostal Holiness Church (IPHC), a position he held from 1985 to 2005. In 2006 he was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Coalition of Men's Ministries (NCMM). NCMM is a network of denominational and para church ministries which represents more than half of the churches in the United States, and the Commander Bill Linn Award from the Royal Ranger Ministry (IPHC) for shaping the lives of boys. His recent position has been as the Vice President of Advancement/Director of Development for Holmes Bible College from April 2007 to December 31, 2008. Currently he serves as the Chaplain for the Fort Bragg Chapter of the Military Order of the Purple Heart and is a member of the Cumberland County Friends of the Library. Jack and his wife, Lynn, are members of the Northwood Temple Church, where he served on the church staff from 1981 to 1985 as an Associate Pastor.



*(continued....)*

*"Above all, Vietnam was a war that asked everything of a few and nothing of most in America."* ~ Myra MacPherson, 1984





## 2/503d Troopers....Where are they now?

**Dave Kies, HHC/2/503d,** was born on a dairy farm in Platteville, Wisconsin. He attended one year of college before

deciding that wasn't for him. Off to the big city of Chicago he went, working for American Airlines until Uncle Sam came calling. In October 1965, he took basic training at Ft. Knox, then Advanced Infantry Training at Ft. Polk, Louisiana, spending time hauling bamboo from Texas to Ft. Polk for "Tiger Land". *Not much time preparing for Vietnam.* Volunteering for Jump School was a no brainer after the \$55. stipend was announced by some recruiter during AIT (Wasn't it all about the money?). Dave was assigned to the Anti-Tank Platoon of HQ 2/503 of the 173d at Camp Zinn, in Bien Hoa, and on April 26, 1966, he was dropped off to start his new life as a 173d paratrooper. It didn't take Dave long, with his new buddies in Anti-Tank, to realize that "Charlie" didn't have any tanks and *maybe this anti-tank thing was a sick trick.* After seeing what a bunch of macho, fun loving guys the Recon group were, Dave and four others from Anti-Tank joined Recon under the watchful eye of SSgt. Marcus Powell. *What a difference in leadership.* Now they were part of Powell's Recon Panthers. January 22, 1967, became the day Dave will never forget. That bright, sunny Sunday morning when Eric Zoller and Dave were walking down a trail policing up their booby traps from the previous nights' ambush patrol...a claymore went off killing Eric and taking both of Dave's legs off below the knees -- it's been 45 years since that day. Dave went back to Wisconsin where he returned to school at the University of Wisconsin at Platteville majoring in Art. He later put his art talents to use as an illustrator for the clothing catalog, Lands' End Inc. He retired in 2007. Dave has five grown children and his wife, Anne, who brings him toast and coffee in bed every morning. Dave says, *"How good is that!"* Dave and his wife live outside of Madison, Wisconsin, and he wishes every winter that global warming would make it to Wisconsin. *Airborne!*



**Kenneth C. Redding (HHC/2/503d),** was born in Baltimore, MD on May, 27, 1943. He joined the Army February 1963 where he spent three days at the reception center at

Ft. Jackson, SC. He then went to Ft. Gordon, GA for basic training, then leadership school and AIT. Ken attended jump school during the extreme heat of August 1963. After jump school and standing in formation awaiting assignment to either the 101st or 82nd, he was one of 30 troopers assigned to go through specialized training for the "ENTAC", a wire guided missile for anti-tank training. After training he traveled to Okinawa via the USNS Gaffey for 18 days where *"I had the dry heaves for 17 out of the 18 days."* Once in Okinawa Ken was assigned to HHC 2/503rd, stationed at Camp Kue. Two weeks after arriving in Okinawa he made his cherry jump on a training exercise in Taiwan. During the early part of *"I think 1965"*, Ken went to Iriomote for jungle training where he was an assistant instructor on booby traps and snares. He got caught in one of the traps that Sgt. Clark had already set. Ken had to have several stitches placed in his left leg. *"Want to see my scar?"* Ken was promoted to Cpl (E-4) then to Sgt (E-5). In March 1965 he extended his tour of duty in Okinawa to finish out his three year hitch with the US Army. Two months later the entire 173d Airborne Brigade was sent to Vietnam. Because the "ENTAC" was useless in the jungles of VN and being an E-5, he was assigned as the NCOIC of the battalion PX. In February 1966, Ken returned to the world. From 1966 until 1986 he was a Baltimore County Police Officer when he retired as a Sgt. From 1986 until 2009 Ken had a second career with AAI Corporation, which is a Defense Contractor. *"Their current claim to fame is the UAV Shadow."* He fully retired in September 2009. Ken has been married to his wife, Sherry, for 45 years this May 7th. They have three children and 8 grandchildren.



***"We are not about to send American boys nine or ten thousand miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves."***

~ Lyndon Johnson, Oct. 1964

(continued....)





## 2/503d Troopers....Where are they now?

### John (Top) Searcy

(HHC/2/503d) was born Oct. 11, 1943, in Toledo, OH. He entered the US Army Jun 13, 1962, taking basic training at Ft. Knox, KY, and AIT at Ft.



Polk, LA. From there he was assigned to the 2nd (Abn) Battle Grp 504 Abn Inf 82 Abn Div. until Feb '65. John then joined the 173d Abn Bde in Okinawa as a Squad Leader in the 4.2's Plt, HHC 2/503d Abn Inf in '65-'66. He was deployed to Vietnam with the 2d Bn from Okinawa in May of '65. He later served with the 101st Abn as a Jump School and Jumpmaster Instructor. From there he was assigned to the Air-borne Dept. at Ft. Benning, GA as an Instructor for Basic Airborne and Jumpmaster School. Next, Top was assigned to C Co. (Abn) 5th Bn 23rd Inf, 172 Inf Bde at Ft. Richardson, AK. From Nov. '68 until April 2, '70, he was assigned to the USARAL NCO Academy as the Sr. TAC NCO, until Aug. '71, then the 82nd Abn Div NCO Academy as TAC NCO and Instructor. In May '73, John returned to Ft. Richardson as an Instructor and TAC NCO with the NCO Academy until Dec. '74. Top was assigned to C Co. (Abn) 4th Bn 23rd Inf, 172nd Inf Bde as the Weapons Plt. Sgt. Until the end of '75, he was assigned back to the NCO Academy as the Chief Instructor for Primary NCO Course, until Jun '77. Top then was posted to the 9th Inf Div. NCO Academy as an Instructor in the Advanced NCO Course at Ft. Lewis, WA, until Jun '78. Top then joined HHC 2nd of the 1st Inf, 9th Inf Div. as the Co. 1st Sgt, until July '79, then back to Ft. Richardson as the 1st Sgt. of C Co. (Abn) 4th Bn 23rd Inf, 172nd Light Inf Bde, until Jan '81. John was then assigned to the NCO Academy in Alaska as the Asst. Commandant, until he retired on 30 Jun '82. He is the recipient of the Bronze Star w/V device, 2 awards of the Meritorious Service Medal, 2 awards of the Army Commendation Medal, 6 awards of the Good Conduct Medal, and Master Parachute Wings. After retirement, Top instructed JROTC at East High School, in Anchorage, AK, until '85, then he took a position as Correctional Officer with the Dept of Corrections for the State of Alaska until retiring on Oct. 1, '96. Married to his lovely wife, Leona, for 49 years, they have two children, daughter Zina, and son John, Jr. Leona and Top moved to North Las Vegas, NV, in July of 2000, where they spend time RV-ing in their motorhome, *fishing when we can, and enjoying our seven grandchildren and seven great grandchildren, soon to be eight.*

### Lew (Smitty) Smith

(HHC/2/503d), was born Sept. 13, 1947, in Oneida, NY, and grew up in SoCal. He joined the army in 1965, and following jump school was posted to the 101st Abn at Ft. Campbell as a radio operator instructor. He says he was forced to go airborne because two of his older brothers were army paratroopers (82nd & SF) and it *"wouldn't have been safe entering the house as a Leg"*. In Dec. '65, he was assigned to the Bn commo squad with the 2/503d at Bien Hoa, as RTO for the Bn XO and CO, under the commands of Cols. Dexter, Carmichael, Walsh & Sigholtz. *Thought I was going to the 101st, and was pissed when they told me I was going to some outfit called the 173d -- I thought they were a Leg unit!* Lew was awarded the Bronze Star w/V for his actions at LZ Zulu Zulu during Op Silver City, in March '66, which he refers to as his "BS" award. He was also wounded that day by a very unfriendly F-4. Lew rose to the heights of SP4 before the Peter Principle kicked in. He never received his third stripe, once the army realized he was not career material, and may hold the record for time-in-grade as an E-4, and directly blames LTC Bob Carmichael for this gross oversight and lost pay. Following Vietnam, he was assigned to the 509th Abn in Mainz, Germany, where he was the first-string catcher on the battalion's baseball team (*which kept me out of a lot of guard duty and KP*). In 1967, he married the beautiful German Fraulein, Regine Sperber, and in '68, he took a European discharge. Lew played semi-pro baseball in L.A., including one summer on the instructional team of the California Angels until they realized he couldn't hit a curve ball, and to this day laments he never found his rightful place in professional baseball. He also owned and played for the Miami Suns, a semi pro team in Florida. He attended college in CA and FL, and earned his Industrial Instructor's Certificate at the Univ. of Wis. at Eau Claire. Lew worked for Flying Tigers in L.A. as a sales and services instructor, and owned his own business serving the airline industry for over 25 years, and taught a college level class on air cargo. He and his Frau, Reggie, have been married for 44 years (Lew says, *I was tricked. I thought she only wanted a Green Card but I haven't been able to get rid of her ever since*). They live on Merritt Island, FL, where he busies himself with writing, reading and golf. They have two sons and two grandchildren. Smitty publishes the monthly *2/503d Vietnam Newsletter* for the men of his battalion, and is honored to be a Sky Soldier.





## 2/503d Troopers....Where are they now?

### Steve (Sgt. Rock) Vargo C/2/503d,

came from the 101st at Ft. Campbell and joined the Herd on May 20, 1967. He was Charlie 2nd Bn, 3rd Platoon. After completing jungle school, he was sent to Pleiku as an E-4 (Sp4) and was made a Fire Team Leader. Steve was promoted to Sgt. E-5 and his fire team gave him the nickname of 'Sgt. Rock'. He spent all of his time in the central highlands. On October 2, 1967, *I was levied to go and form a LURP unit being formed out of the 173d.* He joined Co. F 51st Inf. LRP, ABN on October 2, 1967, as the Assistant Team Leader of Team 1/5. His team leader was Bill Lavender who also came from the Herd. *We would go out for up to 5 days on ambush missions, taking two teams with two M-60s. I would pack an M-79 on ambush. I always walked rear-security.* In April 1968, Steve was wounded and left country. He first went to Japan and later to Valley Forge VA Hospital, in PA, where he received an early discharge. Steve retired from the State of Ohio after spending 20 years as a Parole Officer and Parole Program Specialist with the Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections. *I did internal investigations and was a hearing officer for pre-discipline hearings.* Steve is a competitive cyclist, competing in the Colavita, Ohio Cycling Club's Timetrial Series the past two years, the Western Series, and this year and next will be doing the Eastern Series.

*My cat buddy of 11 years, Oliver, had to be put to sleep on December 14, 2011, due to cancer. That same day, the vet had a 5 month old female that was dropped off at the door. I took her home and her name is Molly. She is black as coal. I am planning to attend this year's Herd reunion. Airborne!*



**Molly**

### Dave von Reyn (HHC/C/2/503d),

was born in Terre Haute Indiana on May 5th, 1948. He volunteered for the draft in 1967 from his home in Boulder Colorado. He attended Basic training at Fort Bliss, Texas and Infantry AIT at Fort Gordon, Georgia before Jump School at Fort Benning, prior to his deployment to Viet Nam in June of 1968. He was assigned to 2nd Bat., HHC, LZ English, originally as the "people sniffer" operator in "Cowboy" Huey's flying at tree-top level searching for major NVA concentrations in the Central Highlands. After 3 weeks he volunteered to be deployed to the field with his buddies, joining Charlie Company, 3rd Platoon as a rifleman. Dave became the M-60 gunner shortly thereafter and served in that capacity for 6 months before becoming squad leader for the Point Team. He saw action in Kontum, Pleiku, Bong Song, An Khe, the Fishhook and the An Loa Valley. After discharge from the Army he received an AA degree from Aims College in Greeley, Colorado and started work for IBM in Boulder, Colorado as a material handler in 1973. He worked his way up into management positions, relocated many times and left IBM after 22 years to join AT&T as a District Manager in New Jersey. He was named Director in 1997 and joined KPMG Consulting in Boston as a Senior Manager in 1998. He spent the next 10 years in Consulting and retired as a Managing Director at BearingPoint Consulting. In retirement Dave has done volunteer work at the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Hospital, taught snowboarding at Mount Sunapee Ski Area and continues to race his dirt bike in local Motocross races with his youngest son Jason. Dave has three sons, Brett who is soon to return to the States from the Marines, Drew and Jason who both live in Bridgewater, CT. Dave and his wife Linda live in Canaan, New Hampshire.



***“Television brought the brutality of war into the comfort of the living room. Vietnam was lost in the living rooms of America -- not on the battlefields of Vietnam.”***

~ Marshall McLuhan, 1975

(continued....)





## 2/503d Troopers....Where are they now?

### Steve Welch (C/2/503d),

says, *I am still kicking, but a lot of people know me, but not much about my family.* Steve has been married almost 44 years to his wife Diane.



They have two daughters, Terri 42 and Lori 38. They also have two granddaughters, Jillian and Brooke, both 7 years old. Steve retired from civil service in 2006. He enjoys learning to play the guitar, walking and gardening. A couple of times a month *I go to the local storage auctions, but I've only bought 2 lockers in the last 7 months. I think I'd starve if I had to do it for a living.* He enjoys being able to talk with the guys he spent time with in Viet Nam. *I think it's good therapy to keep in touch with those who saw the same things I did. I enjoy reading the 2nd battalion newsletter each month.* Steve still lives in his hometown of Santa Cruz, California, and says life is going along nicely.

### Edward A. Wilby

(HHC/2/503d), was born April 24, 1946 in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada.



*After flunking out of my First year seeking a business degree, I decided to cross the border to Bangor, ME and enlist in the U.S Army in July of 1963.* He took basic training and AIT at Ft. Dix, and after his training he decided to go Airborne. He went to Ft. Benning in the fall of 1963, shortly after President Kennedy's assassination. *I enjoyed jump school and more than any other experience at that time, it gave me the fuel to become a man, and made me proud to belong to such an elite group of men.* After 3 choices offered for duty, "they" selected the 173d, and off I went to Okinawa for the next 18 months of my life....*I was seething with excitement, and looking forward to the adventure.* Ed was assigned to the Light Ground Radar Plt., HHC/2/503, where for almost 12 months he trained in early warning radar equipment. Promoted to PFC, *I finally became vested and welcomed into the ranks as a regular, no more to be seen as a green trooper.* Shortly after, 3 days to be exact, he wandered up the hill behind Camp Kue, and entered an "off limits" establishment looking for refreshments!! *Needless to say the next day I was back to being an E-2.* Vietnam then arrived, *most of us had no idea what or where Vietnam was, or what we were getting into, but we quickly learned, and learned fast.* His platoon was broken up after finding out the equipment they trained on for so long was useless. *Our platoon was shifted to the Recon Plt., and then immediately began those lonely, long, scary, "red ant infested", 9 man nightly patrols to protect the perimeter of Bien Hoa airbase.* Buddies became family, and a closeness developed which only Vietnam Vets understand. *We truly relied on one another, and we all knew it.* Ed was involved in 4 helicopter assaults on 4 different missions; *Thank god I returned safe and sound from each one. It was time to go home, my time was up, I hated leaving my buddies behind, it affected me more than anyone could imagine.* After his return home, he was assigned to Ft. Devens and was promoted to E-5 and participated in training the 196th Light Inf Bde for duty in 'Nam. Following his military service Ed settled in Toronto, Canada for a while and worked in sales and marketing for large Coffee companies, Melitta being one. Ed has resided in Tampa, FL for the past 20 years. *My beautiful wife Helen has been by my side for 45 years. We have two sons and a beautiful granddaughter.*



2/503d Troopers, circa '66/'67 (Photo by Jack Leide)



## ~ Looking For Buddies ~

### Shout Out

I keep getting mail for *Michael Potter* and I'm sure he'd like to receive his letters and *Sky Soldier* Magazines. Do you believe you can assist in getting a Shout Out Message, so we can get his address corrected?

**Jim "Top" Dresser**  
A/HHC/2/503d  
[fsqt173d@aol.com](mailto:fsqt173d@aol.com)

### Email Addresses

A couple of our guys may have changed their email addresses. If you're in contact with these troopers please ask them to send me their correct address:

*Ron Amyot*  
*Jim Bailey*  
*Willard Christensen*  
*Bob "Doc" Beaton*  
*Floyd Reister*  
*John Walsh*

Thanks!

**Lew "Smitty" Smith**  
HHC/2/503d  
[rto173d@cfl.rr.com](mailto:rto173d@cfl.rr.com)

## VA Announces Changes to Emergency Care Payment Policy

January 12, 2012

**WASHINGTON** – The Department of Veterans Affairs announced today a change in regulations regarding payments for emergency care provided to eligible Veterans in non-VA facilities.

*"This provision helps ensure eligible Veterans continue to get the emergency care they need when VA facilities are not available,"* said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki.

The new regulation extends VA's authority to pay for emergency care provided to eligible Veterans at non-VA facilities until the Veterans can be safely transferred to a VA medical facility.

More than 100,000 Veterans are estimated to be affected by the new rules, at a cost of about \$44 million annually.

VA operates 121 emergency departments across the country which provide resuscitative therapy and stabilization in life-threatening situations. They operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. VA also has 46 urgent care units, which provide care for patients without scheduled appointments who need immediate medical or psychiatric attention.

For more information about emergency care in non-VA facilities, visit [www.nonvacare.va.gov](http://www.nonvacare.va.gov)

## Eagle Eye Sharp Shooter

Our very own Capt. Bill Vose, A/HHC/2/503d, chief assistant state attorney in Orlando, Florida, seen here taking a bead.



*"Been up loading my gear to head out to range for shooting competition. Spent all day Saturday in a shotgun tactical training class. Bill"*



Missed the target Cap?

### Your Newsletter

Guys. This is *your* newsletter and we'll continue doing it as long as we can, although our new enemy is the clock. For historical purposes, write down your memories and stories and send them in, with some photos, to be published. As hooch buddy Jim Bethea (HHC/2/503d) reminds us, *"If you don't write it down, it never happened."* Ed

Send to: [rto173d@cfl.rr.com](mailto:rto173d@cfl.rr.com) with subject line *"Newsletter"*



**45 Years Ago This Month**  
**2/503d Combat Jump in Vietnam**



**~ Operation Junction City ~**

