

FOR THE MEN, AND THEIR
FAMILIES, OF THE 2ND BATTALION,
173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEP)

**WE TRY
HARDER!**

2/503d
VIETNAM
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ *newsletter*



November 2011, Issue 34

Contact: rto173d@cfl.rr.com

See all issues to date at either of these web sites:

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

~ 173d Photo of the Month ~



Sky Soldiers and Aussie troopers give aid to an Australian soldier during the first major joint-troop operation on 30 Jun 65.



Chaplain's Corner

Sky Soldiers of the Heroic Herd, the 2/503d Bn, Families and Friends:

Thanksgiving Blessings!

Psalm 19: 7-10

"The revelation of God is whole and pulls our lives together. The signposts of God are clear and point out the right road. The life-maps of God are right, showing the way to joy. The directions of God are plain and easy on the eyes. God's reputation is twenty-four-carat gold, with a lifetime guarantee. The decisions of God are accurate down to the nth degree. God's Word is better than a diamond, better than a diamond set between emeralds. You'll like it better than strawberries in the spring, better than red, ripe strawberries."



The Leapin' Deacon

We are thankful for the wonder and grace of each new day with its cherished sunrise and sunset; for the illustrative beauty of the evening and night with the countless stars and captivating celestial formations; and, in due time, the needed rainfall to assist our faithful farmers in providing produce to feed our Nation. We come before our kind Heavenly Father in renewed, devout and buoyant spirit of thanksgiving for His loving and mighty good earth, water and air, preparations for our awaiting tables, and our dire need for good nourishment.

Thanksgiving Season is just that – thanks giving and thanks living with a powerful attitude of gratitude for our Lord's great Grace and Mercy. If we receive anything beyond the "basic load" of food, air, water, clothing and shelter we are blessed in a huge way.

We further thank and praise our Lord for the profound privilege to be creative and enterprising Sky Soldiers and Families in sure mission, meaning and purpose. Our Lord has designed a special ritual of thanksgiving here on earth, and that is to love, serve, and encourage our brothers and sisters in need. This is the language of thanks we are called upon to use as servants of God, Country and our families, let us practice what we Preach and Pray.

We come to our ever-present Lord in thanksgiving with and for our faithful citizens who so gallantly serve our beloved Nation in the Armed Forces – each Sky Soldier and Family Member exceedingly important and valuable.

Lord, continue to watch over, inspire and protect, now and forever, our Troops of all ages and ranks and their families.

I close with a mighty Thanksgiving Prayer by the Most Rev. Robert Morneau, Auxiliary Bishop of Green Bay, Wisconsin:

"COME HOLY SPIRIT COME.

Free us from all reluctance that we may give freely and totally what we have and what we are, You are a spirit of joy. Send your transforming fire into our hearts and our world. Renew the face of the earth.

COME HOLY SPIRIT COME.

Teach us your immeasurable generosity. Empower us to welcome the stranger, to heal the broken-hearted, to calm the distressed. May we love without measure everyone who enters our life.

COME HOLY SPIRIT COME.

Remove all fear from our heart and grace us with trust in love's enduring power. May we be vital and joyful instruments of your love in a world that knows too much violence and pain.

COME HOLY SPIRIT COME!"

AMEN!

Blessings in abundance,

**Chaplain Conrad (Connie) Walker
"The Leapin' Deacon"
National Chaplain Emeritus
173d Airborne Association and
Military Order of the Purple Heart**



"Three soldiers of the 173d Airborne take a rest from their assault on Hill 875, near Dak To, Central Highlands. The 173d Airborne captured the hill on Thanksgiving Day 1967."

The National Archives





nationwide because the government has agreed to modify two national policies hostile to religion."

The order also requires the VA to change its national policies regarding volunteer honor guards. These changes will now allow the reading of "Thirteen Fold" Flag Recitations unless the deceased veteran's family requests otherwise, volunteer honor guards to provide their own texts of recitations to the funeral homes for the funeral homes to offer those options to the deceased veteran's survivor(s) for consideration, and the VFW honor guards to work independently with funeral homes to coordinate provision of volunteer services at the committal services scheduled at the cemetery without interference from the government.

"I am glad to see the VA overturn these policies, which will allow us to perform the entire VFW burial ritual," said Inge Conley, Commander of VFW District 4 in Houston and the VFW entity that initiated the lawsuit. *"We should be able to include prayers, mentions of God, and the phrase, 'May God grant you, grace, mercy and peace,' to grieving families laying American soldiers to rest."*

[Sent in by Richard "Airborne" Martinez, B/2/503d]

First Amendment Will Prevail at Houston VA National Cemetery

Cemetery will not interfere with prayers, religious expression during burial services.

October 21, 2011

The Veterans of Foreign Wars today declared victory in a Federal Lawsuit (Rainey v VA) filed over allegations of religious hostility and unlawful censorship by the VA and its director of the Houston National Cemetery.

Federal District Judge Lynn N. Hughes signed a consent decree ordering the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) to lift the ban on prayer and the word "God" at national cemeteries, to revoke national policies hostile to religion, and to reopen the Chapel which identity was previously changed to "meeting facility" at the Houston National Cemetery.

Texas-based Liberty Institute filed suit on behalf of the VFW over allegations of religious hostility and unlawful censorship by the VA and its director of the Houston National Cemetery. Officials told the VFW they could not have prayer during the burial services of veterans unless the family requested it specifically in writing and submitted the prayer to VA officials for pre-approval.

"The VFW is grateful that the government has restored the basic tenets recognized in the U.S. Constitution – which guarantees fundamental rights of religious expression and freedom of speech – to patriotic Americans who sacrifice everything to defend it. This is indeed a victory." said VFW National Commander Richard DeNoyer.

"We are thankful that after almost five months of litigation, the government is finally doing the right thing by entering into a consent decree and ending religious hostility at the Houston National Cemetery," said Jeff Mateer, general counsel for Liberty Institute. *"The decree not only impacts religious freedoms in Houston, but at all VA cemeteries*

Flag Folding

As an Army and Navy custom, the flag is lowered daily at the last note of retreat. Special care should be taken that no part of the flag touches the ground. The Flag is then carefully folded into the shape of a tri-cornered hat, emblematic of the hats worn by colonial soldiers during the war for Independence. In the folding, the red and white stripes are finally wrapped into the blue, as the light of day vanishes into the darkness of night. This custom of special folding is reserved for the United States Flag alone.



EDITOR'S NOTE

By Lew "Smitty" Smith

Do people ever read editor's notes? In fact, can't recall once reading a single such note by Hugh Hefner, although the articles were very interesting. Editor's notes are probably read only by their children or grandchildren, and then just those trying to work their way thru Journalism 101 at some Jr. College. So, for 33 issues of our newsletter you've only seen two, maybe three such



Photo of Hugh Hefner

messages at best, and hopefully brief one's at that. They do, however, serve as great ego boosters. Running that risk, here's one which addresses a couple topics.

Former hooch buddy and current good friend, S-2/ Recon HHC/2/503d RTO Jerry Hassler sent in a note the other day; Jerry said, *"When you die, it all dies."* Not sure what motivated the RTO's message, unless he knows something I don't know, but he was referring of course to the longevity of our newsletter tied to the longevity of yours truly. But I hope that won't be the case anytime soon, and should this old Journalism 101 grad go AWOL one day, we can hope Jerry, or our other hooch buddy Jim Bethea/HHC, or Wambi Cook/Alpha or Larry Paladino/Bravo, who each possess the necessary cutting and pasting skills, will pick-up our 2/503 Newsletter banner and carry on. But that's not what this note is about. This note is about Alice's Restaurant.

There's a fine line and risk one runs between producing a paper which is hoped to be interesting reading to a wide cross-section of readers, particularly when those readers are combat vets of the unit with which you served, and doing nothing to disparage that unit or the men who served in it. A combination of historical, factual reports of shared events while coupled with a measure of tongue-in-cheek humor seems to fit the bill most of the time as complaints have been less than a handful these past few years, and adjustments have been made on occasion to avoid such conflicts of opinion whenever possible. For example, a venture into political discourse was quickly squashed early on, although we continue to report on our Commander in Chief and politicians whenever military matters are the issue.

But, back to Alice; you remember Alice, this is about her restaurant.

There's an unwritten rule which could possibly be written somewhere, stating no good newsletter ends with an uneven-numbered page (I just made that up); and when putting together last's month's issue we were faced with that dilemma...the thing ended at 39 pages. So, this cutter and paster went on a search and find mission to locate stuff to fill just one more page, and *Viola!* the lyrics to the song *Alice's Restaurant* popped up on the screen. But alas, after cutting and pasting, the damn thing resulted in TWO pages, now putting our newsletter at the ungodly uneven number of 41! Having completed the work with the song lyrics something else was found to bring us to a comfortable 42 page issue; and following a battle with the evil email machine our newsletter was dispatched to around 1500 Sky Soldiers and friends of Sky Soldiers throughout the country and the world.

Upon receiving it, one of our buddies took umbrage with the inclusion of the song lyrics, as may have others, and sent in a note saying, *"Got the newsletter OK. Why 'Alice's Restaurant' deserves a place in one the Army's bravest units' Newsletters is beyond belief. It was definitely an anthem of the 'Anti-War movement'".* See, I told you this was about Alice and her restaurant. I tried to explain to our buddy the inclusion of those particular song lyrics was no political statement nor was it intended to demean the valorous service of men from our battalion but, moreover, was simply capturing one sign of the times from our youth, which we regularly do in our paper. He remained unconvinced.

While the *2/503d Vietnam Newsletter* is chiefly about that, our battalion during the war, it is also about the times book ending that war and all things within those book ends, even Alice and her restaurant. Without contributing perspective to our war, and from all slants, I believe something historical would go missing. Whether we report on the anti war movement, the enemy themselves or the players who set the war in motion and managed it, as well as those of us who carried out their orders, it is all part of our shared history, and therefore, we'll continue to report on all such aspects from that historical period. Should anyone find this unacceptable, they are welcome to take-over the newsletter...*please*.

In the meantime, I'll pay 50 dollars and pick-up the garbage.

All the way!

Smitty Out



Dozens of U.S. paratroopers injured after parachute jump during mock battle goes horrifically wrong

Reports 13 paratroopers suffered head, spine and pelvic injuries during the training exercise

By Allan Hall

Dozens of U.S. Army paratroopers have been hurt during a massive airborne drop in Germany. Sixteen of the 47 injured men are still in hospital, two of them in intensive care after the jump involving 1,000 soldiers went terribly wrong. They suffered head, spine and pelvic injuries.

The exercise pitted soldiers from the Vicenza, Italy-based 173rd Airborne Brigade in a mock-battle scenario with Slovakian soldiers and American troops from the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team over the Hohenfels training area in Bavaria, southern Germany.

Exercise: U.S. paratroopers jump out of a military airplane on Wednesday in a massive airborne drop exercise that left dozens injured. The American army said the drop was part of a scheme to switch the military focus back to fighting conventional forces as operations in Iraq and Afghanistan wind down.

More...

It is unclear what precisely happened to cause the numerous injuries. Officers at the clinic where the soldiers were treated said some of the injuries appeared related to parachutes drifting into nearby trees. Most of the injuries occurred during the first wave of the morning drop, which involved about 650 soldiers.

Polish troops also took part in the exercise but none of them were hurt. The victims suffered a variety of broken bones and spinal injuries and every one of them required hospital treatment. They were ferried to a local hospital in a fleet of ambulances.

A German civilian who witnessed the drop told Radio Bavaria: *"I've never seen so many parachutes in the sky. It was incredible sight, but I had no inkling that anything was wrong. I didn't see any chutes tangled or men appearing to drop too fast."*

But the military said that they would not be staging an inquiry into what happened because the injury rate was "acceptable". Civilian spokeswoman for the Joint multinational Training Command, which is under U.S. Army command, Denver Makle, said as the numbers injured 'was within expected margins' an investigation was not necessary.

Speaking to *The Local*, a German website, she added: *"Airborne operations are always dangerous. There is very little margin for error."* She explained an injury rate of up to 3 per cent is normal in this type of exercise. The units involved will continue their training, which is one part of an exercise involving thousands of soldiers from 10 countries.



Read more:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2046471/Dozens-U-S-paratroopers-injured-mock-battle-Slovakians-goes-horriblywrong.html>

[Sent in by Buzz Cox, C/D/2/503d]



Vietnam War Bonds?



Ad Inscription:

"This is a picture of some of the members of our Airborne Association doing their job in Viet Nam. They are on their way to attack a VC base camp. It's close — they're not sure how close. They'll know in a few minutes.

They buy Savings Bonds with the money they earn.

They are also showing the world how much we are willing to pay for our freedom, and the freedom of our friends.

Sometimes the price is very high. More than money can buy.

What price are you willing to pay?

THIS ADVERTISEMENT WAS PREPARED AND PAID FOR BY THE MEMBERS OF THE AIRBORNE ASSOCIATION, FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA" Spring 1967

[Sent in by Peter Klausner, A/4/503d]

Microsoft® EXPANDS VET HIRING INITIATIVE

Microsoft's *Elevate America* program, which trains veterans and spouses for civilian jobs in the technology sector, is expanding with the help of the Labor Department. Microsoft will provide 10,000 technology training and certification packages to veterans over the next two years via the Labor Department's One-Stop Career Centers in offices across the country. The company also has a program called *Military2Microsoft*, with a website veterans can use to translate their military skills to job openings at the company:

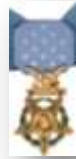
www.westillserve.com

Source: MilitaryTimes *EDGE*]

The Real Rambo

Here's the real Rambo. He and I served together in 1967 at the Airborne Department, Ft. Benning, GA, he was a SFC E-7 at that time. His mother and Joe Lewis' mother were close friends; both mothers are buried side by side in Opelika, Alabama -- told to me by Howard's friend, Roy Johnson, CSM 173d.

John "Top" Searcy, HHC/2/503d



The President of the United States in the name of The Congress takes pride in presenting the **MEDAL OF HONOR** to **FIRST LIEUTENANT ROBERT L. HOWARD, UNITED STATES ARMY** for service as set forth in the following CITATION:



Col. Howard
7/11/39 – 12/23/09

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. 1st Lt. Howard (then SFC), distinguished himself while serving as platoon sergeant of an American-Vietnamese platoon which was on a mission to rescue a missing American soldier in enemy controlled territory in the Republic of Vietnam. The platoon had left its helicopter landing zone and was moving out on its mission when it was attacked by an estimated 2-company force. During the initial engagement, 1st Lt. Howard was wounded and his weapon destroyed by a grenade explosion. 1st Lt. Howard saw his platoon leader had been wounded seriously and was exposed to fire. Although unable to walk, and weaponless, 1st Lt. Howard unhesitatingly crawled through a hail of fire to retrieve his wounded leader. As 1st Lt. Howard was administering first aid and removing the officer's equipment, an enemy bullet struck one of the ammunition pouches on the Lieutenant's belt, detonating several magazines of ammunition. 1st Lt. Howard momentarily sought cover and then realizing that he must rejoin the platoon, which had been disorganized by the enemy attack, he again began dragging the seriously wounded officer toward the platoon area. Through his outstanding example of indomitable courage and bravery, 1st Lt. Howard was able to rally the platoon into an organized defense force. With complete disregard for his safety, 1st Lt. Howard crawled from position to position, administering first aid to the wounded, giving encouragement to the defenders and directing their fire on the encircling enemy. For 3½ hours 1st Lt. Howard's small force and supporting aircraft successfully repulsed enemy attacks and finally were in sufficient control to permit the landing of rescue helicopters. 1st Lt. Howard personally supervised the loading of his men and did not leave the bullet-swept landing zone until all were aboard safely. 1st Lt. Howard's gallantry in action, his complete devotion to the welfare of his men at the risk of his life were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.



173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation

The 173d Spartan Club

In 480 BC, three hundred Spartans stood in a rocky mountain pass at Thermopylae and for seven days held off the mighty Persian army, allowing Greek forces to muster and eventually defeat the invaders. Three hundred warriors preserved the cradle of civilization. Three hundred Spartan Warriors made a difference.

The 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation needs the support of 300 warriors to preserve and maintain our Memorial that was dedicated in June 2010 at the National Infantry Museum campus near Fort Benning, Georgia.

The Memorial Foundation requires a minimum of \$5,000.00 annually for basic maintenance costs (electricity, landscaping and irrigation). In addition to periodic costs of adding new information to the Memorial, funds will be required for maintenance, minor repairs, insurance and the Foundation's administrative costs. To ensure perpetual care for the Memorial, the Foundation has established an endowment fund goal of \$300,000., raised over ten years, in addition to annual donations received from other sources.

The Foundation is seeking 300 warriors willing to help preserve our legacy and maintain our memorial. This letter constitutes your invitation to become a member of the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation's *Spartan's Club*.

We ask each Spartan Club Commander to pledge between \$200.00 and \$1,000.00 for each of the next ten years. We ask each Spartan Club Centurion to Pledge between \$173.00 and \$199.00 for the same period and each Spartan Club Lancer to pledge between \$25.00 and \$172.00 for a similar period. If the Spartans contribute an average of \$100.00 each for the next ten years, the Foundation Endowment Fund will achieve its objective. Each Spartan Club member will receive periodic communications regarding events held at the Memorial, as well as receiving recognition in our annual programs and reports.

As with the Spartans at Thermopylae, the burden of preserving our memorial and heritage is shared equally regardless of position, title and rank. Membership in the Club is open to all Sky Soldiers, their families, and military and patriotic organizations and friends of the 173d. As in the past, we hope that you will accept this challenge and support your memorial.

**Ken Smith, Chairman
173d Memorial Foundation**

The 173d Spartan Club

I/We wish to share the honor of preserving our memorial and heritage as a member of the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation *Spartan Club*.



Beginning in 2011, and for nine succeeding years thereafter, I pledge to donate the following amount each year to the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation:

As a **Spartan Club Commander** (\$200.00 or more)
\$ _____

As a **Spartan Club Centurion** (173.00 to \$199.00)
\$ _____

As a **Spartan Club Lancer** (\$25.00 to \$172.00)
\$ _____

(Please print)

Full Name: _____

Primary Telephone: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Signature: _____

Please mail your signed pledge form and your check (payable to the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation) to:

**173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation
1160 Lake Royale
Louisburg, NC 27549**

Pledges may be paid electronically by going to the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation website at www.173dairbornememorial.org and clicking on the tab, "Memorial Donations."

To assist you in remembering the timing of your annual pledge donation, the Foundation will send you electronically or by mail a brief reminder.

Note: The 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Fund has been granted 501(c)3 status by the Internal Revenue Service. Contributions may be deductible under Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.





Dale Olson



The best of all good men.....and smuggler of rose bushes



A few days ago Mike Guthrie, A/2/503d, called to share the saddest of news, we lost Sky Soldier Dale Olson, A/2/503d, on Saturday, October 22nd, he was just 68 years young. The report was Dale expired while working in the yard at his

home in Sacramento, California. The news shocked us, as Dale and his wife Marci are good friends, and Dale so vibrant. Dale leaves behind his wife, children Tiffany and Scott, an extended family and countless friends.

It is always sad when one of our own passes on, but even more so when that buddy is a close friend, and Dale was just that, a close friend. Even though we lived on opposite sides of the country, Dale and I would talk on the phone occasionally, and regularly trade notes, keeping each other current on what was happening in our lives and that of our families.

Dale was a pious man, he loved his God completely, as he loved his family; and me, well, I'm a non-believer, yet we never once let our opposing beliefs stand in the way of our friendship and care for one another and each other's families; and Dale so dearly loved his Marci and his family, and the world evolved around his grandsons Joshua, Isaac and Evan.

Dale served in Alpha Company with our battalion in '65/'66, earning his Combat Infantryman's Badge as a grunt before being assigned an administrative position with the company. He was so proud to be a Sky Soldier and to have served his country during that war, and especially proud of the men he served with.



2/503 reunion in Cocoa Beach. While not considered a ladies' man, even the pretty girls couldn't resist the charm of this big paratrooper teddy bear.

But in his own, quiet, self-effacing and peace invoking way, he probably never realized how honored those of us who knew him felt, in just knowing him -- I should have told him that -- maybe now he knows.



Dale with "Capt. Quong" at Ho Chi Minh's retreat. As his Lord taught him, *love thy enemy*.

Dale and Marci's life following the war saw more than its share of heartache, having lost their son Ryan at an early age, and Dale's constant fight with diabetes. Dale's remains will be cremated and buried with their son. And the recent recession did them no favors either, rocking their financial world as it did so many others. Yet, in spite of these tests of his character, Dale never flinched, he remained upbeat, resilient, always looking for the positive coming in the morrow, and the goodness he saw in others. Dale was all about goodness, and was so undeserving of such an abbreviated stay in this world. Damn, I'm missing him.

During one of our two 2/503 reunions in Cocoa Beach years ago, we were unable to find a local preacher to lead a sunrise service on the beach. Of course, Dale stepped in and did a wonderful job. 173d surgeon, Col. Tim Cloonan attended that service. In learning of our loss of Dale, Tim said, *"I remember Dale. I only met him that one time, he sure had his head screwed on right. I sure do remember him and the calm he generated in those around him. I can't compare myself to a man like that...you are correct, he 'was the best of all good men.'"* Yes, Doc, that he was.

(continued....)



In '01, Dale, a small group of other Sky Soldiers and I returned to Vietnam to participate in the dedication of a school dormitory for needy kids built by another close friend of his, Mike Thibault, also A/2/503d. None of us will ever forget how concerned Dale was about getting captured by the bad guys as he smuggled into the country his *rose bush of friendship* in honor of a fallen buddy, which he was successful in doing. In line, following Dale's lead, each Sky Soldier poured a glass of water on that gift of peace and remembrance. This physical giant of a man was the most gentle soul I've ever known....just ask anyone who knew Dale, and they'll agree.



In 2001, Dale is having video fun with local kids in the Mekong Delta near LZ Wine of Operation Marauder in '66. Dale was a smile magnet.

During our reinvasion of Vietnam back then, Dale, Mike and I, along with a guide, humped for hours to find the site of where Alpha Company was ambushed. It was there Dale lost his closest friend in the war, Lamar Frederick. I recall taking Dale's video camera, and without his knowledge filmed him standing next to a tree at that ambush site, talking to and weeping for the longest time over his lost friend.



Dale, standing near tree line where the battle of 26 February 1966 began.

On the exhausting hump back we were forced to cross a rickety foot bridge across a paddy dike, then walk along the dikes towards our pickup location. At one point Dale slipped on the wet surface and fell into the rice paddy water, which we all found amusing. Of course, he jumped right up with a bigass smile on his face.



In Taipei following their reinvasion of Vietnam in '01. Dale on left with his buddies Jack Ribera, Lew Smith, Mike Thibault and Mike Sturges.

**17 Sep 2003
Lamar Donald Frederick
Private First Class**

**A CO, 2ND BN, 503RD INF RGT, 173 ABN BDE
Army of the United States
23 December 1943 - 26 February 1966
Bellevue, OH
Panel 05E Line 080**

Lamar,

It has been 37 years since you left us. Eight of us from 2/503rd, mostly A Company, went back to Vietnam in Feb of 2001. I took a Bare root Rose bush in my suitcase and planted it in your honor. Originally, my plan was to honor you where you fell. However, that was not possible. It now grows outside a High School Dormitory outside Saigon. Many of your old friends contributed to this dormitory.

This Rose is now being cared for by the young high school girls that are living in the Dorm. It is fully grown now and beautiful. To those of us that knew you, this will always be a tribute to you.

On July 10, 2004, your mom, Justine Snowden, is to be honored by the 173d Airborne as a Gold Star Mom.

This has been far too long coming. I look forward to it with great anticipation and eagerness.

We will always remember you.

Always

Dale Olson

And in some faraway land this smuggled rose bush blossomed. And here, in our backyard in Florida, a new rose bush is being planted. We're naming it Dale.



Dale, our thoughts are with you, Marci and your family. Farewell my brother.



Last Chance to Nominate a Buddy for 2/503d Vietnam Vet Sky Soldier of the Year 2011

Don't forget to send in by **December 1st** your one-page write-up nominating a trooper for *2/503d Vietnam Vet Sky Soldier of the Year 2011*. There are no specific criteria to submit a nominee.

A selection committee of three 2/503 officers and three enlisted men from different years in-country will review all nominations and select the honoree on behalf of all of us. The editor of this newsletter will only have a vote in the event of a tie.

2/503d Sky Soldier of the Year 2010 was Colonel Ken Smith in recognition of his never-ending, ongoing support of paratroopers of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep). – See Issue 18, Page 7 -

Honor a deserving buddy and send in your nomination today to: rto173d@cfl.rr.com The honoree will be announced in the January 2012 issue of our newsletter.

All The Way!



VA to Help Cover Some Home Loan Fees

Week of October 10, 2011

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will cover extra costs for veterans who struck deals on home loans and faced the possibility of higher fees amid confusion over a federal law change. The problem involves a Sept. 8 notice from the Department of Veterans Affairs loan operations that said certain fees would be lower beginning Saturday. But Congress delayed those lower fee rates from taking effect until November in legislation awaiting President Barack Obama's signature. For more information and updates as they become available, visit the News and Announcements box on VA's Loan Guaranty Home Loan Program website. For more guides on how to get a VA home loan and make the best use of it, visit the Military.com VA Home Loan Center.

[Sent in by Richard "Airborne" Martinez, B/2/503d]



Presented to honoree

Reunions of the Airborne Kind



506th Association Rendezvous, (Fort Campbell),
November 8 - 11, 2011, Oak Grove, Kentucky.

Contact:

COL Sean M. Jenkins
Tel: 270-439-1499



Recon, HHC, 2/503 '66-'67 is having a reunion in Lexington, Kentucky the same days as the 173d Association annual reunion next June. So far, about 12 members have indicated they will attend. Watch this space for details to follow.



173d Airborne Brigade Association Annual Reunion,
June 6 - 10, 2012, Lexington, Kentucky hosted by
Chapter 17. See early notice on Pages 11-13.

Contact:

Dave Carmon
Eml: dcarmon@roadrunner.com
Web: www.skysoldier17.com

Note: If you're aware of any upcoming *Airborne* reunions please send details to: rto173d@cfl.rr.com

A Day for Vets

This *Veteran's Day*, we honor those who have so bravely served this country. America is founded on the principle of freedom, justice, and liberty for all. Our nation's soldiers serve every day to protect our country and its ideals. On *Veteran's Day*, take a sacred moment to remember those who sacrifice their lives every moment to achieve peace and democracy.



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The 2012 173d Reunion

Lexington, KY

June 6 -10, 2012

Hosted By Chapter 17

Room rate 115.00 plus tax per night with Free Parking

New/Registration fees:

Sky Soldiers 99.00

Spouses & Guests 75.00

Gold Star 75.00

Children free - unless attending Reunion dinner

The Hyatt is taking reservations now.

Call 800.233.1234

Ask for the 173 Airborne guestroom block or code G-173A.

Also use this code when making reservations on-line
at the Lexington-Hyatt website - www.lexington.hyatt.com

Information and Forms will be posted soon at www.skysoldier.org and www.Skysoldier17.com



~ REUNION PROGRAM ~

Hosted by Midwest Chapter 17



June 6 - Wednesday

0900 – 1700 Registration @ Lobby
0900 – 2230 Hospitality @ Hyttops Sports Bar
0900 – 2300 Vendors @ Kentucky Room
1800 – 2000 President's Reception @ Jasmine-Franklin

June 7 - Thursday

0700 – 1230 Golf Outing TBA GC
0900 – 1700 Registration @ Lobby
0900 – 2300 Vendors @ Kentucky Room
0900 – 2330 Hospitality @ Hyttops Sports Bar

June 8 - Friday

0830 – 1030 Gold Star Reception & Breakfast @ Regency 1
0900 – 1100 Board of Directors Meeting @ Regency 3
0900 – 1700 Registration @ Lobby
0900 – 2200 Vendors @ Kentucky Room
1000 – 2330 Hospitality @ Hyttops Sports Bar
1100 – 1500 Kentucky Veterans Memorial – Frankfort – VFW Lunch

June 9 - Saturday

0830 – 1000 Ladies Brunch @ Bluegrass Pre-function Area
0900 – 1130 General Membership Meeting @ Regency 1&2
0900 – 1700 Registration @ Regency 1 Foyer
0900 – 2330 Hospitality @ Hyttops Sports Bar
0900 – 2300 Vendors @ Kentucky Room

Banquet

1800 – 1845 Cocktail Hour @ Bluegrass Ballroom
1845 – 1900 Post Colors/Convocation @ Bluegrass Ballroom
1900 – 2035 Dinner @ Bluegrass Ballroom
2035 – 2115 Speakers & Awards @ Bluegrass Ballroom
2115 Retire the Colors

June 10 Sunday

0800 – 0900 Memorial Service @ Regency 1
1130 Reunion Closing

BE SURE TO ATTEND OPERATION CORREGIDOR II

173d AIRBORNE BRIGADE ASSOCIATION 2012 REUNION



JUNE 6-10, 2012, LEXINGTON, KY

~ Registration Form ~

Please print. Copy form for additional guest(s)

My Name: _____

Guest: _____

Guest: _____

Guest: _____

Phone: (____) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail address: _____

Brigade Unit Served With: _____

Dates served: _____

Registration/Event Fees (Check boxes)

Per Sky Soldier Association Member ☒ \$99.
Per Each Guest. (Number of Guest(s) _____) ☐ \$75.
Children free - unless attending Reunion dinner
Per Child or all other extra dinner only guests ☐ \$40.
Per Gold Star Family Member ☐ \$75.
Per Active duty Soldier (Not on Orders) ☐ \$75.
Per Active Duty Soldier on Orders ☐ Free
(i.e. Command, Color Guard)
Per Vendor Table ☐ \$75.
Ladies Brunch (Number attending _____) ☐ Incl
Per player in Golf Tournament (No: _____) ☐ \$45

Enclosed is my check for this Total Amount: \$ _____

Please make Check Payable and Mail to:

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

Hotel Reservations:

Hyatt Regency – Lexington, \$115.00 + tax per night.
Reservations: 1-800-233-1234
Request group rate for 173d Airborne Assn. guestroom block or code G-173A. This is also the code to use if making reservations on-line at - www.lexington.hyatt.com

Overflow Hotel:
To be announced

"HISTORY, HORSES & HOOCH"

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OPERATION CORREGIDOR II

Midwest Chapter 17 is proud to announce we will be inviting paratroopers of the 503rd PRCT who fought throughout the Pacific during WWII to attend next year's 173d Association reunion in Lexington, KY as guests of the officers and men of the 173d Airborne Brigade. This is *troopers honoring troopers* and is not sanctioned by either the 173d or 503rd Associations. It's a paratrooper thang.

In 2010, at the annual reunion in N. Myrtle Beach, SC hosted by South Carolina Chapter 30, five (5) troopers of the 503rd attended as guests of men of our Brigade and friends of the 173d and 503rd. As honest Abe once said,

“Any nation that does not honor its heroes will not long endure,”

and that's just what we'll be doing in Lexington.

Of the over 3000 men who served with the 503rd during WWII, sadly, less than 100 troopers are still with us. We hope you'll join in not only helping out with the funding (until sufficient funds have been raised), but attending our reunion next June and meeting these troopers personally and attending the WWII interactive presentations.

To date, these Sky Soldiers and friends of the 173d and 503rd have made contributions getting us to half-way to where we need to be. Our thanks to each of you! *Airborne!!*

Steve Aballa, 2/503
Ron Amyot, 2/503
John Arnold, 1RAR
Jim Baskin, 4/503
Bob Beemer, 2/503
Jerry Berry, 4/503
Pat Bowe, 2/503
Wayne Bowers, 2/503
Jim Brookmiller, 4/503
Bob Bruce, 1/503
Bob Carmichael, 2/503
Chapter 27, Australia
Bob Clark, 5th SF
Harry Cleland, 2/503
John Cleland, 173d Bde
Dave Colbert, 2/503
Reed Cundiff, 173d LRRP
Terry Davis, 2/503
Bruce Demboski, C/2/503
George Dexter, 2/503
Roger Dick, 2/503
Tom Dooley, 2/503
Jim Dresser, 2/503
Frank Dukes, 2/503
Scott Fairchild, 82nd Abn
Pat Feely, B Med
Paul Fisher, 3/503
Craig Ford, 1/503
Joe Franklin, 173d Bde
A.B. Garcia, 2/503



Honoring our WWII Paratroopers of the 503rd PRCT

Tony Geishauser, Cowboys
Jim Gettel, 2/503
Johnny Graham, 2/503
Larry Hampton, 1/503
Jerry Hassler, 2/503
Nick Hun, 2/503
Ken Kaplan, 2/503
Ed Kearney, 2/503
Jack Kelley, 2/503
Bill Knapp, 2/503
Gary Kozdron, 1/503
John Kyne, 2/503
Joe Lamb, 2/503
Dave Linkenhoker, 2/503
Joe Logan, 2/503
Roy Lombardo, 2/503
Bob Lucas, 2/503
Richard Martinez, 2/503
Jim Montague, 2/503
Butch Nery, 4/503, N75
Hal Nobles, 3/503
Bill Ostlund, 173d
Larry Paladino, 2/503
Ed Perkins, 2/503
Lou Pincock, 2/503
Jack Price, 2/503
Gary Prisk, 2/503
Bill Reynolds, 2/503
Jack Ribera, 2/503
Jim Robinson, 2/503
Lee Robinson, 2/503
Graham Rollings, 2/503
Jack Schimpf, 2/503
Bill Shippey, 2/503 N75
Roy Scott, 3/319
Lew Smith, 2/503
Jerry Sopko, 2/503
Larry Speed, 1/503
Jim Stanford, 2/503
George Stapleton, 3/503
Mike Sturges, 2/503
Bob Sweeney, 2/503
Bill Thomas, 2/503
Marc Thurston, 2/503
Alt Turner, 2/503
Steve Vargo, 2/503
Jerry Wiles, B/2/503
Ron Woodley, 2/503
Bill Wyatt, 2/503

We're raising necessary funds to cover the cost associated with inviting between 3 and 5 503rd troopers and their spouses or a family member. For information about donating to this worthy effort, please contact rto173d@cfl.rr.com for details.



MY LATEST RANT

"The Army which long ignored and even denied that going into combat can produce long-term psychological stress is now providing counseling to try to avert such problems....."

That was the opening to a 1990 article in the *New York Times* about our Fort Bragg program to support troops returning from *Operation Just Cause* and the overthrow of dictator Manuel Noriega.

I was amazed that at little old Fortress Bragg, North Carolina, our team could seriously be making history by providing the first acknowledged treatment to preclude the impact of the long-term sequel of exposure to combat trauma.....something other than the proverbial *"Suck it up and Drive On"* mentality so ingrained in military culture.

Well, I'm here to tell you, some 22 years later, the Army has come full circle thanks to the efforts of BG Cornum. BG Cornum is a Board Certified Urologist, who specialized in wound healing metabolism, a career she probably should have not ventured from.

By virtue of the fact that she went down in a helicopter in Iraq and was a POW for several days, she has become an expert in Battle Fatigue and the anointed guru on all things traumatic. She has gone on record stating that Post-traumatic Stress Disorder doesn't exist and subsequently immediately rose to the position of Director of Comprehensive Soldier Fitness in the Army. Not since the DSM II eliminated the category of Battle Stress, has the view been so archaic.

Now MG Cornum has teamed with psychologist Martin Seligman, PhD (Dr. Don't Worry, Be Happy) of the University of Pennsylvania to commit \$117,000,000 of your tax dollars to "blame the victims". The Army's new Battle Mind Training, now evolved at RESILIENCY TRAINING spearheaded by Army Chaplains (Opportunist Professors of Psychology De Luxe) is aimed at educating soldiers through classes on personal, unit, social and spiritual resiliency adapted from a Penn State Resiliency Program with little measurable evidence of success.

Obviously, training to prepare for trauma is of some benefit, but to design a entire program on Resiliency is absurd. MG Cornum does admit that if soldiers just can't get their heads around what happened to them, then



Doc Scott

perhaps they need to see someone to help them "REFRAME" their experience.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hyNmSE-QyZc>

Read Ed Tick, *Heal the Warrior, Heal the Country*

<http://www.welcomehomesoldier.com/permalink-4291> for a simple explanation of how important it is to recognize the wound.

Even the *American Psychological Association Journal* has been sucked into this debacle dedicating an entire journal to the program. Soldiers are instructed to attend the prescribed Resiliency Training and informed that they now have the necessary tools to transcend the impact of being shot, exploded, maimed, losing a buddy and witnessing atrocities. The Warrior Ethos is now this: The Army has afforded the opportunity for Resiliency Training. If you didn't participate, you are derelict in your duties. If you participated and still have PTSD symptoms following a trauma, you are obviously **WEAK. And do we really have to wonder why the suicide rate for veterans is more than died in combat, 18 a day, and the suicide rate for female soldiers triples when they are in combat. I'm sure these soldiers all failed to 'listen up' during their Prescribed Resiliency training. Thank you General for your contributions. Perhaps it's time for you to return to Urology.**

The Army has taken a QUANTUM LEAP BACKWARD and the American Psychological Association has followed them into the hole. This program clearly contributes to putting soldiers in a position which creates, not ameliorates PTSD and its symptoms. It is clearly a modern day version of BLAME THE VICTIM. Does it have a familiar ring? If you don't have a job, it is not the Bank's fault or Wall Street's fault, it's your own damn fault.

Let's just be honest and call the Army's Resiliency Program what it is....a new name to return us to Suck it up and Drive On!

We could have saved the millions.

Some wounds don't end with the war. The severity and extent to which veterans suffer with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder is a direct response to our culture's willingness to Welcome Home and care for its Warriors.

**Scott Fairchild, PsyD
LTC (Ret), 82nd Airborne Div.
Veterans Caring for Veterans
1370 Bedford Drive, Suite 106
Melbourne, FL 32941
Phn: 321 253-8887, Fax: 321 253-8878**



Last Opportunity to Order Your Battalion Coin

I am introducing you to 4 coins I did to honor the service of the combat paratroopers of all 4 Battalions in the Brigade. AVAILABLE NOW.

They are \$10. per coin plus \$2.50 for shipping of one or two coins. Shipping for 3 or more coins is \$4.50.

If interested please pass on to your readership the availability of these coins. I only produced 100 of the 1, 3, 4 Battalion coins, and 200 of the 2nd Batt coins. After they are gone I am done.

After expenses *ALL* profits are donated to the 173d Memorial and to a local Foodbank. *ALL PROFITS* are given away.

Please send a note indicating which coin(s) you are ordering and include your check payable to:

Paul R. Fisher, LTC (Ret)
3/503d
81 Oak Lane
Eatontown, NJ 07724

If you have any questions please call me:

Cell (908) 489-0366
Home (732) 542-1598

Coin Design ~ Front:

Battalion Number Banner.

Circle of the countries where the Brigade has fought (3rd and 4th did not go to Iraq or Afghanistan but the Brigade did).

Center is the WWII Eagle patch of the 503rd Airborne Infantry.

Coin Design ~ Back:

Top: Master Jumps wings (for the Brigade not each individual).

Gold Star for 5 combat Jumps (3 in WWII, 1 VN and 1 Iraq)

CIB: 1st and 2nd Battalions three awards for WWII, VN and SW Asia).

3rd and 4th (2 awards of CIB WWII and VN).

Rock designation 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th.

Dual Battalion Crests.

Brigade Patch.

Sky Soldier for the name the Chinese gave the Brigade.

Coin color Dark Purple for the blood combat paratroopers spilled on the battlefield.

1/503d



2/503d



3/503d



4/503d



Airborne.....All The Way!

