



May 2011, Issue 27

Contact: [rto173d@cfl.rr.com](mailto:rto173d@cfl.rr.com)

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

[www.firebase319.org/2bat/news.php](http://www.firebase319.org/2bat/news.php) or [http://corregidor.org/VN2-503/newsletter/issue\\_index.htm](http://corregidor.org/VN2-503/newsletter/issue_index.htm)

## ~ 173d Photo of the Month ~

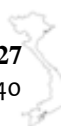


*"In this Jan. 1, 1966 file photo, women and children crouch in a muddy canal as they take cover from intense Viet Cong fire at Bao Trai, about 20 miles west of Saigon, Vietnam." (AP Photo and inscription/Horst Faas) Note: It's more likely this photo was taken on 2 January 1966, of either the 1/503d or 2/503d as the two battalions didn't move into the rice paddies until that date during Operation Marauder. 2/503d assaulted LZ Wine, a hot landing zone – see Issue 10, Pages 27-35 for story.*



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# CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

## On The Path of Wisdom, Kindness and Care

Dear Sky Soldiers,  
Families, and Friends of  
the 173d Airborne Brigade:



**The Leapin' Deacon**

Psalm: 86:11-15

Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your  
truth;  
give me an undivided heart to revere your name. I give  
thanks to you, O Lord my God,  
with my whole heart, and I will glorify your name  
forever.  
For great is your steadfast love toward me;  
you have delivered my soul from the depths of  
Sheol.  
O God, the insolent rise up against me; a band of  
ruffians seeks my life,  
and they do not set you before  
them.  
But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow  
to anger and abounding in steadfast love and  
faithfulness.

When we pray, we need to make sure that we earnestly  
resign our Command, our attitude that we are in charge.  
When we pray, we no longer give orders, outline  
policies, nor prescribe courses of actions or avenues of  
approach. Our blessed Lord is in charge and carries out  
His missions and purposes as He wills through us, His  
followers, and yes, His faithful 21st Century Disciplined  
Disciples. We can, indeed, declare our deep desires,  
wishes and hopes, but we wait upon the command of  
ANOTHER.

We, the 2/503d Sky Soldiers are deeply challenged and  
caring servants of God and Country as we whole-  
heartedly serve all of our Troops of all ages and ranks,  
and Veterans from past and present service and combat.  
We have revealed to us in Holy Scriptures and tradition  
that we are not the good, but thanks be to God, the  
forgiven by His Holy and Saving Work.

As we thrust our lives and persons into new and fresh  
beginnings, we confidently surround one another in  
prayer with the Spirit of Hope and forgiveness, fresh  
attitudes of meaningful cooperation, and life-giving  
assistance to the caring enterprises of the Herd and  
family.

A living legend, Nelson Mandela, in the recent past,  
celebrated his 90th birthday. This tremendous person is  
a vibrant witness of forgiveness, humility, and setting  
aside the poison of hatred. He spent nearly one-third of  
his long life in a brutal prison for incitement against  
apartheid, along with the charge of treason. He,  
correctly, and by God's Grace, hung in there – knowing  
he was a bearer of the news of freedom for all people. In  
1994, Mandela became South Africa's first black  
president and, most important, its first democratically  
elected president and world leader with a convincing  
attitude and spirit of forgiveness, humility and wisdom.  
Let us have the same wisdom, attitude, and action as we  
pray for all

Sky Soldiers and families and all Patriots.

Let us Pray:

Lord God, we, this very hour are experiencing new and  
fresh beginnings. May our hearts respond to your  
victorious leadings – your kind of forgiving life, your  
kind of caring attitude and behavior, and your kind of  
ways and truths. May we move firmly down the paths of  
wisdom, kindness and care. Bless us in our vital and  
vast mission of care for our Combat Warriors, Wounded  
Warriors, Veterans, and families.

In the Name of our Kind Heavenly  
Father, Lord Jesus, and the Giver of  
Peace, the Holy Spirit. AMEN



**Chaplain Conrad (Connie) Walker**  
*"The Leapin' Deacon"*

National Chaplain Emeritus  
173d Airborne Association and  
Military Order of the Purple Heart



**The Leapin' Deacon in Vietnam doing what he does best.**





## Preface to *The Leapin' Deacon*

**Dateline: Jungles near Xuan Loc, Vietnam  
29 June 1966**

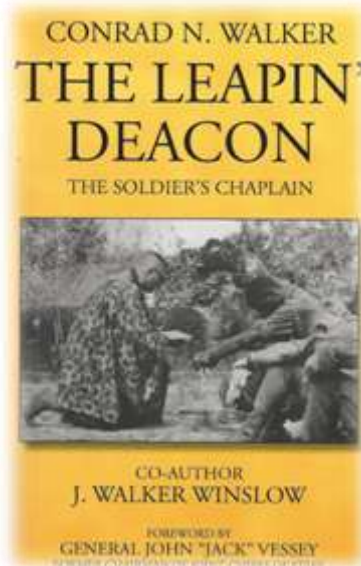
**By Charlie Morris, A/2/503d**

“As the relief force entered our area, Chaplain Connie Walker was the first man to reach me. I was in tears; I had lost some of the best fighting men in the world. Many of my boys, I knew, would never fight for their country again. I tried to show the chaplain the most severely wounded, but he realized our state of mind and immediately had prayer with me, then went to every man. While praying with PFC

William Marshall of Detroit, he noticed that the young soldier was bleeding heavily above the tourniquet on his arm, which has been blown off below the elbow.

Chaplain Walker used part of his own clothing and quickly applied another tourniquet high on the arm and stopped the bleeding.

After rendering spiritual aid, the chaplain started chopping trees to try and clear an LZ for the evacuation of the wounded and dead. I've never seen a man in my life work as hard as he did. The chaplain is a 'mighty big man'. He seemed to be a tower of strength. Every time that my vision cleared so that I could see, I saw him working like a buzz saw. He even held huge trees as they were being chopped down, using a 'bear hug' and moved them to avoid hitting our wounded comrades. I could never express the respect and appreciation Chaplain Walker won that bloody day.” Charlie Morris



**SSGT Charles B. Morris  
Medal of Honor Recipient**

## "A HANDFUL OF SILK AND GOD"

*Anonymous 462d Trooper, 503rd PRCT WWII*



**Sobbing low, bucking high,  
Motors thunder through the sky:  
Prop blasts over strut and wing,  
Maddened demons, howl and sing:  
And out of this we are going to fall  
With a handful of silk and God,  
That's all.**

**Small red light gleams at the door  
Throwing blood-red pools on metal floor.  
Beyond is space, vast and deep:  
Awoke you screaming, once, from sleep.  
And out of this you're going to fall  
With a handful of silk and God,  
That's all.**

**A match is struck to a cigarette:  
Grim young faces in silhouette:  
No figment of a fear-struck brain--  
These, the shadows that line the plane--  
They too into void are going to fall  
With a handful of silk and God,  
That's all.**

**They too hold fear, bridled tight,  
Fighting fear with fear of fright:  
Facing the job, the task at hand,  
Grimly determined, indomitable band.  
Soon into space we're going to fall  
With a handful of silk and God,  
That's all.**

**But our hearts beat high for the land we love,  
And our courage comes from the sky above.  
When down from the clouds with our Weapons  
of hell  
We'll avenge the comrades we loved so well.  
What more shall we need when we get the call  
BUT A HANDFUL OF SILK AND GOD--  
that's all?**

Chaplain Walker's book is available from LangMarc Publishing [www.langmarc.com](http://www.langmarc.com)



Source: 503rd PRCT Heritage Battalion Web Site  
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## Letter from a 503<sup>rd</sup> Trooper

It was an honor to receive this letter recently from trooper Jim Mullaney of the 503rd PRCT, WWII. Jim kindly gave us permission to share his note with you. This letter and his letter on the following page tells us everything we need to know about this man, this paratrooper, this brother. *Airborne, All The Way, Jim!*

Smitty:

Thanks for your recent letter and your writing in the 173d Newsletters. All are enjoyed very much. Always good hearing from and about paratroopers.



**Trooper Jim**

Tony Geishauser (Cowboys) and Jerry Hassler (Recon 2/503d) sent very interesting notes on Veteran's Day. Your letter and theirs make us ancient guys realize how things haven't changed very much since the 1940s. The people who are Paratroopers – regardless if they were WWII, Korea or Nam, or the present day are the same types. Just great Americans and great soldiers.

Reminds me of an incident at Fort Bragg in June of 1942.

Lord Louis Mountbatten came from Britain to see us jump. Afterwards he inspected the troops and asked one of the "H" men if he liked being a paratrooper. The man answered, "No Sir."

Lord Mountbatten stated that he understood the entire unit was made up of volunteers and he wondered why the soldier was in the unit if he didn't like it.

*"Sir," the trooper said, "I'm going into combat soon and I want to be with men who do like to be paratroopers."*



Lord Mountbatten moved on with a smile on his face.

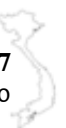
Like I said – paratroopers are the same breed even after sixty plus years.

Thanks again for writing, and my door is open if you ever get near Louisville. Perhaps we'll meet someday.

**Jim Mullaney  
503rd PRCT, WWII**



The following letter from Jim is reprinted here with courtesy of Jim and the 503rd PRCT Heritage Bn web site.



*"I, mistakenly, surmised that as the years passed these memories would fade into oblivion as so many others have, but this event seems to be indelible."*

## THE LETTER

BY JAMES M. MULLANEY

July 12, 1995

Royal and Darlyne Jaynes  
16061 Best Lane  
Eugene, Oregon 97401

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Jaynes,

This letter is something I've intended to write for many years but could never quite get around to putting it all in perspective. Secondly, I'm a procrastinator. Thirdly, I was and am in doubt as to whom I should address this unusual but true story.

I don't want my note to dwell on personal war experiences any more than is necessary to present accurately what took place on Corregidor Island in February 1945.

On February 16th of that year the 503rd Parachute Regimental Combat Team made a parachute drop onto Corregidor at 08:45. I was a member of this unit and jumped with the first wave. We landed on "Topside" where the barracks, the golf course, theatre, and officers' quarters were located. Prior to the assault we were informed there would be about nine hundred Japanese on the island. It didn't take long to realize that there were at least five to six thousand. About eight hundred paratroopers made the 08:45 drop. The next drop was scheduled four hours later.

I suppose in modern day military parlance this could be described as a fluid situation. At any rate that is what this writer was doing on Corregidor.

After eight days of heavy fighting on the tiny island (about three and a half miles long and a half mile wide at Topside to a few yards wide at the tail end) we finally moved around Malinta Hill and advanced toward the overgrown air strip called Kindley Field. It was at Kindley Field where my story took place.

We had captured the strip and were conducting patrols to clear out the caves and tunnels just west of there near Cavalry Point. In our earlier briefings we were informed that this is where the Japs had landed in April 1942 during their assault on the fortress that led to General

Wainwright's surrender. As we moved through the tall weeds cautiously toward the bay we discovered many skeletons - I remember fifteen or twenty - all Japanese.

The enemy had not taken the trouble to bury their dead. Just left them there to rot in the tropic heat or make a few good meals for the ubiquitous rats. These bodies laid in a semi circle. I found one body facing the others in the semi circle from a distance of about twenty feet. It was an American...

The uniform he wore had weathered the tropics much better than his body. The shoes and leggings were still in place around bones. The pants were frayed and brittle but still covered the backside and lower spine. The wool shirt was torn. His helmet (World War One type) was cocked over his skull and cheek bones. He had all his teeth and the helmet strap gripped them lightly. He was in a prone position.

His .03 rifle was under his right arm bones with the forefinger bone of the right hand inside the trigger guard. There was no ammo in the rifle or nearby.

I imagined for a moment how he had fought to the end. It was obvious that this brave man had killed many of the enemy and battled courageously in a hopeless situation. With due respect I gently moved the helmet strap and looked at his dog tags.

His name was Skelton. I couldn't be sure of the first name but it looked like "John". His home town was Eugene, Oregon.

I've often thought that I should write to the mayor, if Eugene has one, or some official about this incident but then I was worried that these details would possibly hurt his family or friends. I, mistakenly, surmised that as the years passed these memories would fade into oblivion as so many others have, but this event seems to be indelible.

As I write to you people I am hoping that "John" Skelton can in some way be remembered in your thoughts and prayers. If any of his family or friends can be located let them know what a soldier he was. Show them this correspondence and tell them that here in Louisville, Kentucky is one person who never met John Skelton but will never forget him....



**James M. Mullaney**  
503rd PRCT, WWII





## Silver Staples Upon His Chest...

### A good story about education....

Hank, a former Non-Commissioned Officer (Sergeant), having served his time with the Army 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) as a Scuba Team Sergeant, took a new job as a school teacher. Just before the school year started he injured his back and was required to wear a plaster cast around the upper part of his body; fortunately, the cast fit under his shirt and wasn't noticeable.

On the first day of class, he found himself assigned to the toughest students in the school. The smart-alecky punks, having already heard the new teacher was a former Green Beret warrior, were leery of him and decided to see how tough he really was, before trying any pranks.

Walking confidently into the rowdy classroom, the new teacher opened the window wide and sat down at his desk. When a strong breeze made his tie flap, he picked up a stapler and promptly stapled the tie to his chest.

Dead silence ..... He had no trouble with discipline that year.

[Sent in by James Shifler, 3/319th]



### ~ On Being A LRRP ~

Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol

By Reed Cundiff, 173d LRRPs

LRRP was a very different experience than the batts. You faced being shot at on a semi-daily basis as you note. We'd be out for 3 or 4 days and then back for two and were never in battles that lasted for days. We were more in control of what was happening since five very frightened folks can move very, very quietly (much like migrating cockroaches) and spot the other guys without being spotted. I think we saw VC and NVA about half the patrols we went on without being spotted. We'd report in what we had seen and moved on.

We spotted five different groups in one day of up to half company size - and then the bastards decided to RON within 50 meters or less so that we were within their

security perimeter. It got interesting and I did have dreams about that for years - as did everyone else but by the time things started happening we had 5 gunships and four F-100s on station.

Four months later we did have a "meeting engagement" when they were waiting for us on the LZ (we had been spotted earlier in the day by two RPD gunners) but this RPD gunner was asleep when our point man, Mannie Moya, was nearly run over by 3 guys on bikes (2 or 3 km from Cambodia). Mannie was damned near drilled by the MG at 15 meters as was Bumgardner. We took out the three and the MG and his right security and then ran like rabbits.

We had reported finding a probable occupied battalion level base camp and we had a battalion of 105s covering our exfiltration (which turned out to be 2 km away from where it was planned) -- we kept hearing folks working, laughing and joking etc. It later turned out that we had probably been wandering about a regimental base camp since the 25th got into a huge fight at almost the same coordinates three days later (Alexander Haig was battalion commander and got a DSC for it).

Yep, thought about that for years and these were the main emotional things in my life until I got married and had kids.



LRRPs from left: Ray Hill, Reed Cundiff, Roger Bumbardner, Mannie Moya & Bruce Baughn  
Can't see their faces? They're LRRP's!



## Sky Soldier Continues His Mission Of Helping Vets And Their Families

Chuck Dean is a combat veteran of the Vietnam War. He was one of the first paratroopers to be deployed in 1965. After his wartime service he spent two years as a Drill Instructor at Ft. Ord, California. Chuck has worked with thousands of soldiers and veterans in the U.S. and across the globe--including Russia, Italy, Canada and France. Chuck also served as the National Chaplain for the 173d Association (1996-2004).



Chuck

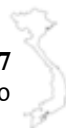
His mission has always been to help other veterans find positive solutions to the many challenges of transitioning home after wartime service.



He continues to write and live in Seattle, Washington, and is the author of several books on recovery issues, including his best-selling *"Nam Vet: Making Peace with Your Past"*. More than 250,000 copies of a recent book written for the modern warriors, *"Down Range: To Iraq and Back"* has been distributed to the military both at home and in the war zones. *"After Ashcroft"* and the sequel *"The Second Crow,"* are his latest works of fiction and can be found on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

**Note:** Years ago when trying to make sense out of my little participation in our war while struggling with the onset of PTSD, I happened to come across a copy of Chuck's *Nam Vet*. More than any book or anything I ever read about the illness and coping with it, his book helped me better understand the illness, and me. Can't recommend it enough. Ed

In the Spring of 2004, Chuck was invited by the U.S. Army to assist the paratroopers of the 173d Airborne Brigade in their re-adjustment after combat in Iraq. His focus while at their re-deployment base camp in Vicenza, Italy, was to help the troops re-integrate with their loved ones, and re-adjust to peacetime conditions after prolonged combat exposure in Northern Iraq. The 173d is the same unit Chuck served with as a young paratrooper in Vietnam.





## Hallowed Ground At An Old Beach Hotel

One of my VA counselors had been a NCO in 1st Cav. When I told him that I had been in the 173d he rolled his eyes and said that he had been in charge of part of a quick reaction force whose purpose was to assist units that got into actions heavier than they could handle. He said that whenever they got a call to assist the Herd they knew they were going into a hornet's nest.

I know this is going to sound silly but I'll risk the label of being a silly old man: My first reunion was in Cocoa Beach at a place called The Wakulla Suites. We had a second floor room and from time to time I would go out onto the balcony overlooking the pool area where most everyone had congregated and just watch.

I realized that what I was looking at was a collection of men who had endured some of the most hellish fighting of any war. It was a collection of individual episodes of heroism -- concentrated, selfless heroism in the flesh. It was awesome, and that place for the time we were there seemed like hallowed ground to me because of their presence.

My uncle was at Normandy on D-Day and lives in Melbourne, Florida. He came to the reunion and we had a few drinks together. I was very pleased to have him see me in such company. It was one of those proud moments.

**Jim Bethea**  
HHC/2/503d, '65/'66



**Three commo guys in Cocoa Beach.**  
L-R: Hooch buddies Jim Bethea, Lew Smith & Wayne Hoitt together again after 40 years.



**Sky Soldiers and Sky Soldierettes at reunion in FL.**



**Louie Zucco, 'Herman the Paratrooper', and Ed Perkins at 2/503 reunion in Cocoa Beach, FL.**

## Third 2/503 Reunion In The Works? "Blast on the Beach"

Semi-serious discussions are underway by Don "Rocky" Rockholt (A/2/503d), the editor of our newsletter, and the Elia P. Fontecchio VFW Memorial Post 10148 to hold a third 2/503 reunion in Cocoa Beach, FL. We've tentatively agreed to a date sometime in October 2012. As we did twice before, the reunion will be replete with fun activities for Sky Soldiers and their family and friends, and while chiefly a 2/503 affair, open to troopers from all 173d units and WWII 503rd troopers. Skip Kniley (3/319th) and his jumping fools will likely be on-hand for yet another blast onto the beach. Look for details in upcoming issues of our newsletter. Ed



**Rocky, winning hearts & minds of the local villagers in Cocoa Beach, FL. If Skip lets him, Don will jump too.**





## Chaplain Lawrence Anthony "Larry" Kelly, Jr., Colonel

NEWBERRY, SC - Chaplain Colonel Lawrence "Larry" Anthony Kelly, Jr., 78, of Newberry died Saturday, March 26, 2011 at Dorn VA Medical Center. Chaplain Colonel Kelly was born in Charleston on December 23, 1932, the son of the late Lawrence Anthony, Sr. and Emma Styles Kelly.



He was a life-long student, always reading and always learning. Chaplain Colonel Kelly received an undergraduate degree from Coker College, an MBA from the University of South Carolina, and a Masters of Divinity from Duke University. He had been a member of the SC Methodist Conference since 1960.

Chaplain Colonel Kelly retired after 31 years with the United States Military. He first enlisted in the US Navy where he served for four years, including a tour in the Korean Conflict. His remaining military career he served in the US Army, including two tours in Vietnam. He received Combat Jump Wings while serving as Chaplain with the 173d Airborne Brigade in Vietnam. His last post was at Fort Jackson, SC until his retirement in 1995. Among his numerous military medals and awards are the Legion of Merit medal with one Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, the Bronze Star with Valor, the Purple Heart and the Meritorious Service medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters. In 1991, he was presented the State of South Carolina Order of the Palmetto.

He spent most of his retirement with his family and loved building furniture, woodworking, and gardening. He was a member of Central United Methodist Church.

Chaplain Colonel Kelly is survived by his wife, Joyce Dennis Kelly of Newberry; children, Lawrence A. (Kitty) Kelly, III of Columbus, GA; Kathleen Kelly and Mary Anne K. Glass, both of Newberry, and Patricia K. (Bryan) Dowd of Gaston; sisters, Cile K. (Bob) Barber of Newberry, Dorothy K. (Furman) McKnight of Charleston, Patricia Kelly of Newberry, and Ann (Robert) Smith and Barbara Britz, both of Charleston; grandchildren, Larry, Michael, Johnny, Adam, Katie, Matthew, Robert, Joshua, Christian, Patrick, Rachel, and Liam; 8 great-grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Memorials may be made the American Heart Association Mid Atlantic Affiliate, P.O. Box 5216, Glen Allen, PA 23058-5216; or to the American Cancer Society, c/o Helen Beebe, 181 Trailers Trail, Leesville, SC 29070. On line condolences may be sent to the family at [www.whitakerfuneralhome.com](http://www.whitakerfuneralhome.com).

Rest well with your Maker, Chaplain Kelly.



## Alpha Company 2/503d Fall In!!

If you served in Company A, 2d Battalion, 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) from 1963 to 1972 please join your fellow "*No DEROS Alpha*" buddies in Columbus, Georgia for an A/2/503 ONLY mini-reunion.

### Reunion Dates:

May 4-8, 2011

### Reunion Central:

Hilton Garden Inn  
1500 Bradley Lake Blvd.  
Columbus, GA 31904

### Hotel Reservations:

Phn: 1-706-660-1000

Fax: 1-706-660-1919

Web: <http://hiltongardeninn.hilton.com/en/gi/groups/personalized/CSGGHGI-A2503-20110504/index.jhtml;jsessionid=LGUS5XWRRQ3K2CSGBJBNEWQ>

## Airborne!

Terry "Woody" Davis  
A/2/503d

[davis\\_terrence@bellsouth.net](mailto:davis_terrence@bellsouth.net)



*"Where there is one brave man, in  
the thickest of the fight, there is the  
Post of Honor."*

~ Thoreau



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# 173d REUNION ITINERARY

(Tentative, subject to change)



## June 22 -- Wednesday

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



## June 23 -- Thursday

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



## June 24 -- Friday

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

## June 25 -- Saturday

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

### **BANQUET DINNER**

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

**Maverick Plaza**

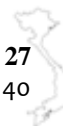
## June 26 -- Sunday

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



**The Alamo**

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







# 173d AIRBORNE BRIGADE ASSOCIATION ~ REUNION 2011 ~



22 June – 26 June 2011, San Antonio, TX

Hosted by Texas Chapter 13

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Unit served with in the Brigade \_\_\_\_\_ Dates served \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

## Guests:

Circle Male or Female and Shirt Size for each guest

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

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

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

## Registration/ Event Fees

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



Hilton Palacio del Rio, San Antonio, Texas

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed

Make Checks Payable to: [Texas Reunion 2011 – 173d Airborne Brigade](#)

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



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

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

Register online: [www.texasskysoldier.org/reunion2011](http://www.texasskysoldier.org/reunion2011)



# ~ The Pentagon Papers ~

(Excerpts)

## 173d Airborne Slated for Da Nang

2 Mar 65 DOD

“ASD (ISA) McNaughton cabled Taylor that the 173d Airborne Brigade (then on Okinawa) would be deployed to Da Nang instead of the Marines. (This last minute change may have been Mr. McNaughton's attempt to emphasize the limited, temporary nature of the U.S. troop deployment and to reduce the conspicuousness of the U.S. presence. Airborne troops carry less equipment and look less formidable than the Marines plus they have no history of peace-keeping intervention in foreign wars).”



MG Maxwell Taylor

No choice but to reinforce with additional US/3d country forces as rapidly as possible. Westmoreland asked that all forces then in the planning stages be approved for deployment, plus he identified more forces (9 maneuver battalions in a division (-) and one MEB) which might be required later and for which planning should begin. He asked that the 173d be held in SVN until the Airmobile Division was operational.



McNamara (L) and John T. McNaughton. (DOD photo)



Gen. Westmoreland

7 June 65 MACV 1911/ 07033 5Z

“Westmoreland told CINCPAC that a summer offensive was underway to destroy GVN forces and isolate and attack district and province towns. The enemy had yet to realize his full potential, and RVNAF's capability to cope was in grave doubt. RVNAF build-up was halted because of recent losses.

## 5. Eleventh Hour Change

One final obstacle to the Marine deployment was raised when Assistant Secretary of Defense McNaughton cabled the Ambassador in Saigon on 2 March stating that the 173rd Airborne Brigade, then stationed on Okinawa, would be substituted for the Marines. Other than exchange of cables, there is no documentary evidence in the files to indicate what might have been the rationale behind the belated attempt to deploy the 173rd Airborne to Da Nang in place of the Marines. One can only surmise the reasons behind such a move, but certain characteristics of the two forces may provide a clue.

The Marines present *prima facie* a more formidable appearance upon arrival on the scene. They have organized a complement of heavy weapons, amphibious vehicles, and various other items of weighty hardware, including tanks, in contrast to the smaller and lighter airborne. Together with their accompanying armada of ships, the Marines might be seen as a more permanent force than the airborne. This, coupled with the common knowledge that the Marines have a long history of interventions in foreign countries for purposes of peacekeeping and stability, might have influenced someone in the decision apparatus to consider using the airborne in their stead as a positive signal that the Da Nang deployment was to be of short duration.

(continued....)



2/503 ANTI-TANK "ENTAC" PLATOON

1964. Sky Soldiers ready to go....anywhere.





If this was indeed the case, it suggests that there were still high-ranking people in Washington who were hoping to make the deployment of U.S. troops temporary and limited.

General Westmoreland objected to the proposed change on the grounds that the Marines were more self-sustaining and the Ambassador agreed with him.



**CINCPAC Headquarters**

CINCPAC, in objecting to the proposed change, sent the following telegram to the JCS:

The action outlined in Ref A, which would place the 173rd Airborne Brigade, a two-battalion brigade, at Da Nang, embodies several features which are undesirable. A light and flexible airborne force would be committed to a fixed task depriving CINCPAC of his air mobile reserve. It is the only airborne assault force in the theater. A comprehensive array of plans and logistic preparations which affect many of our forces, and the forces of other countries, would be undermined. The action would employ units which are less adequately constituted for the purpose.

Since the origination of OPLAN 32 in 1959, the Marines have been scheduled for deployment to Da Nang. Seven CINCPAC and SEATO contingency plans and a myriad of supporting plans at lower echelons reflect this same deployment. As a result, there has been extensive planning, reconnaissance, and logistics preparation over the years. The CG, 9th MEB is presently in Da Nang finalizing the details of landing the MEB forces in such a way as to cause minimum impact on the civilian populace. The forces are present and ready to land, some now embarked, with plans for execution complete. The deployment has been thoroughly explored by Amb Taylor with Prime Minister Quat and the method in which the Marines would be introduced was mutually agreed upon as pointed out in Ref B (not included).



**PM Quat**

Another practical consideration is the fact that 1300 Marines are already at Da Nang. The Marines have been there in varying numbers for more than two years and thus have long since established the logistics and administrative base for future Marine deployments. They have a long standing and effective local relationship with the populace and the RVNAF. Then,

there is the matter of adaptability for the task. Da Nang is on the sea coast. Each Marine BLT has its own amphibian vehicles, which are adaptable to continuing seaborne supply. Each one has a trained shore party to insure the flow of material across the beach in an area where port facilities are marginal. They embody amphibious bulk fuel systems which serve as a cardinal stand-by in case of interruption of commercial fuel supply. Their communications equipment and procedures are compatible with the hawks, helicopters and other Marine formations now in Da Nang and their organic heavy engineer equipment will be effective in developing the defensive works needed for accomplishing the task. The Marine MEB includes tanks and artillery. The airborne battalions, on the other hand, being designed for a different task, are deficient in each of these important particulars-in varying degrees-and are thus less desirable for the assignment.

***The situation in Southeast Asia has now reached a point where the soundness of our contingency planning may be about to be tested.*** The tasking has been completed. Logistic arrangements and lines of communication are establishing and operating. Command arrangements have been made and agreed upon and plans for landing and disposition of forces ashore have been made and these forces are ready to execute them. It therefore seems imprudent, at this time, to shift forces in a major sector and to force changes in contingency posture for other parts of Southeast Asia.

Whatever force is landed, its strength should be adequate for the job. The airborne force, if selected, would require substantial and diverse augmentation to achieve the desired combat capability.

If the final decision is to deploy and [sic] Army Brigade instead of the MEB to Da Nang, then I would recommend a one Brigade Task Force of the 25th Infantry Division. This would provide a ground combat capability reasonably similar to the ground elements of the MEB. The command and control elements and the initial light infantry elements of this task force could be airlifted to provide some early security at Da Nang. Achievement of a more adequate capability similar to the MEB would require air and sealift from Hawaii and CONUS augmentation of some support units for the task force. The DAFFD should not be used since it is an essential element of other contingency plans.



I recommend that the MEB be landed at Da Nang as previously planned."

(continued....)



## F. ANALYSIS

This paper has raised basically two analytical questions. First, what was the significance of the landing of the two Marine battalions rather than other units, such as the 173rd Airborne? Second, what was the mix of objectives behind the deployment, and did the deployment meet these objectives?

The significance of putting the Marines into Da Nang turns on whether this deployment was intended or was viewed (1) as the first elements in a phased build-up of U.S. ground combat forces, or (2) as a one-shot response to a peculiar security need at Da Nang. There is evidence for both propositions.

There are two pieces of evidence in support of the phased build-up proposition. First, no less than seven CINCPAC contingency plans treated Da Nang as a base for U.S. Marine Corps activity, and at least two of those plans provided for major Marine ground forces in the I Corps tactical zone of South Vietnam. Except for Phase II of OPLAN 32-64, however, contingency plan build-ups of force were predicated on overt DRV or Chinese Communist action. At the time of the initial landings, such overt action was anticipated in the OPLAN but had not yet occurred. It was a fact, on the other hand, that some sort of action was needed in the South to halt the course of the insurgency there, and that two Marine BLT's would not do the trick.



The second piece of evidence was the last minute attempt by Ass't Secretary of Defense McNaughton to substitute the 173rd Airborne for the Marines, and CINCPAC's strong reaction against this attempt. The only apparent rationale for the McNaughton move is as a blocking measure against expected pressures for further build-ups as embodied in the contingency plans. The substitution would have created planning tangles for the Chiefs and CINCPAC and, therefore, would have

delayed pressures for further deployment pending the development of new plans. CINCPAC's vigorous response, based on administrative and logistic arguments, coupled with concern for the loss of an airmobile reserve force, persuaded Washington and thwarted the McNaughton effort. It is interesting to note, in this regard, that McNaughton, at least on the record, did not receive any support for his attempt. Conceivably, Ambassador Taylor, who had expressed serious reservations about the implications of the ground force deployment, could have joined forces with McNaughton. Taylor's failure to do so was probably based on the fact that he did not believe the pressures could be significantly thwarted by the substitution, and that, therefore, it made much more military sense to proceed as planned.

The evidence against the phased build-up proposition and for the one-shot security hypothesis rests on one major document, and paradoxically, on the absence of other documents. The major document is the



**Bundy at White House**

McGeorge Bundy Memorandum for the President of February 7, 1965. In this memorandum, Bundy reviews the entire situation in Vietnam without any reference to future ground force deployment—even though the request for the Marine BLT's was only two weeks away. Moreover, the usual flood of documentation preceding a decision of significance is not to be found. In other words, it appears that the key decision makers in Washington are not focusing hard on the importance of the deployment. The attention-getter, as the Bundy memo indicates, was the impending air war against North Vietnam.

The significance of the Marine BLT deployment must also be measured up to the objectives intended by the deployment. There were four distinguishable rationales:

- (1) Freeing ARVN forces from static defense to base security;
- (2) Providing added security for U.S. air bases being used in the air war against North Vietnam;
- (3) Signaling Hanoi with increased U.S. determination to pay a higher price in meeting its commitments; and
- (4) Bolstering GVN morale.

*(continued....)*







**VC 1965**

The first objective was the one most stressed publicly-to release RVNAF for offensive action against the Viet Cong. General Westmoreland cabled the JCS on 22 February saying that the deployment of the Marines to Da Nang would result ultimately in freeing four RF companies, one tank platoon, and another RF battalion then being formed. The MACV Monthly Evaluation of March 1965 stated that only two RF companies had in fact been released. It is apparent, then, that this objective could not have been taken very seriously. While it can be argued that any slight improvement in the local force ratios vis-a-vis the Viet Cong was desirable; even the most optimistic prediction of releasable RVNAF units would not have had much importance.



A second rationale was the notion of security for a major U.S. air base being used in bombing operations against North Vietnam. Da Nang was exposed and the probability of a Viet Cong attack on it could not be ignored. While the two Marine BLT deployment, by itself, was recognized as being insufficient for high level of confidence about base security, there can be little doubt that U.S. troops did make that important base more secure. In retrospect, it could be construed that this was the first sign of U.S. awareness of RVNAF inadequacy. There is, however, no documentary evidence available to support this view and, in fact, the real extent of this ineffectiveness was not recognized until a few months later.

A third objective may have been to signal Hanoi with the seriousness of the U.S. resolve in Vietnam. Notwithstanding the relatively minute combat power imposed in two battalions, the very fact that they were deployed would be a much clearer sign to Hanoi of U.S. determination in the fleeting appearance of a few jet aircraft or the shadowy presence offshore of a mighty

fleet of ships. Taken in conjunction with the well-known U.S. shibboleth against involvement in a major Asian land war, the deployment should have been a highly visible step unequivocal in its meaning to Hanoi. Yet, there is no evidence that anyone in the U.S. government intended the deployment to convey such a signal and there was no discussion of what responses we expected from Hanoi. If this indeed were an unspoken objective, it made little dent on NVN designs. If anything, it may have aided those in Hanoi who wanted to send additional regular NVA units into SVN.



**NVA soldiers**

A fourth U.S. objective was bolstering morale within the GVN and the concomitant willingness to carry on the fight. It was quite reasonable to assume that the Marines, like the air strikes on NVN that preceded them, did have a beneficial effect on morale. It is equally obvious, however, that any such effects would be transitory. Long-term improvements in morale could only come with dramatic and lasting alteration of the situation, and the two Marine battalions did not have that capability by themselves.



**March 8, 1965, Marines land at Da Nang**

*(continued....)*





**Raid on Bien Hoa Air Base**

It seems from this vantage point that only the objective of base security really made sense. The deployment of the Marines to Da Nang might have deterred an attack on the base by a regiment of main force Viet Cong. The Marine Infantry were dug in on commanding terrain facing the North and West along the most likely avenues of approach. The security of the base was by no means assured by their presence, however, as by their own admission they were in no position to prevent determined attack--or, especially, raids and mortar attacks--the kind that had done so much damage to Bien Hoa the year before. The U.S. forces only had responsibility for half of the base complex, and it was doubted that the RVNAF could prevent the Viet Cong infiltrating sabotage squads through the heavily populated areas on the GVN side. The Marines did not, as Secretary Rusk said they would, put a tight security ring around the base.

The ring was not closed until considerably later, and even then, the Viet Cong successfully penetrated the defenses and caused considerable damage in a raid on 1 July 1965--the first of a series of raids that have continued up to the present.

The landing of the Marines at Da Nang was a watershed event in the history of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam. It represented a major decision made without much fanfare--and without much planning. Whereas the decision to begin bombing North Vietnam was the product of a year's discussion, debate, and a lot of paper, and whereas the consideration of pacification policies reached talmudic proportions over the years, this decision created less than a ripple. A mighty commandment of U.S. foreign policy—

**thou shall not engage in an Asian land war -- had been breached.**



**173d troopers a few weeks after arriving Vietnam.**

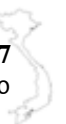
Besides CINCPAC and General Westmoreland who favored the deployment, Ambassador Taylor who concurred with deep reservation, and ASD McNaughton who apparently tried to add a monkey wrench, this is a decision without faces. The seeming ease with which the Marines were introduced and the mild reaction from Hanoi served to facilitate what was to come. It also weakened the position of those who were, a few scant months later, to oppose the landing of further U.S. ground combat forces.

Source:

[www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/pentagon3/pent8.htm](http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/pentagon3/pent8.htm)



**Dean Rusk**





# Juvenal Vidal Vallejos

## A Sky Soldier



Juvenal Vidal Vallejos, 80, of Billings, passed away Tuesday, March 29, 2011. Born on May 7, 1930, Juvenal Vidal Vallejos (Val) to Barbara and Lucio Vallejos in Honolulu, Hawaii. Val, his sister Grace (Ingracia) and brother Richard (Ciryoku) grew up in Downtown Honolulu. Val also has an older brother, Tony Amagsanay and sister, Philomena Bungato. He graduated from Farrington High School in the class of 1949. At the age of 18, he joined the National Guard. In 1949, he enlisted in the US Army and was stationed at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, in Company A of the 25th Infantry Division, a.k.a. Tropic Lightning Division. He did tours in Korea, where he received the Purple Heart for injuries to his right leg, the Dominican Republic, Vietnam, twice, where he received the Purple Heart for

eye injury due to shrapnel. He was very proud to be Airborne. He proudly served in the 82nd Airborne Division and the 173d Airborne Brigade, "Sky Soldier." Vallejos earned his Master Parachutist Badge with over 100 jumps. He was awarded the Bronze Star for heroic, meritorious service, Good Conduct Medal seven times, Combat Infantry Badge (2nd Award). Vallejos finished out his career as First Sergeant E8 "Top" of HHC 1st Bn 14th Inf 1st Bde 25th Div Schofield Barracks, Oahu, Hawaii, right where he started. 1st Sgt. Vallejos retired in 1975. On his eve of retirement he received a letter of appreciation stating that he was a strict disciplinarian the most successful in gaining instantaneous results from the troops. He was a 24-hour a day soldier, always ready and eager to perform, an example for all to follow. As his troops, friends and family called him, **HARDCORE**. During his school years he met and married his High School sweetheart, Shirley Kaiwi. From this union they were blessed with their son Edward Vallejos. They later divorced. In 1960, Val married Nancy May Chase and was blessed with son Billy Chase. Thru this union they were blessed with two more sons, Richard and Charles Vallejos. Nancy and Val later divorced but remained best friends. Val fought many battles in his life, and when he was diagnosed with Parkinson's, he treated it no differently than any other battle; he had a plan of action and followed thru, fighting his hardest. Val was preceded in death by his parents; his brother, Richard C. Vallejos; brother-in-law, David Awong; Shirley Kaiwi and Nancy May. He is survived by his sister Ingracia Awong; his sons Edward (Barbara) Vallejos, Bill (Nyana) Chase, Richard (Marilyn) Vallejos, and Charlie (Donna) Vallejos; and his Grand Children Lisa (Carl) Cabanada, Brandon (Lisa) Vallejos, Dylan, Chelsy Chase, Richie and Ashleigh Vallejos. Great Grand-daughters, Kaylee and Kelly Ann; and numerous nieces and nephews. Thank you to all those who helped Val thru his last battle. A Special thanks to all friends and loved ones and the staffs at Aspen View, Autumn Springs and St. Johns Garden Court for all of the love and support in his final days. Dad, you earned your wings as a Sky Soldier, now you've earned your wings to the Kingdom of Heaven. No more pain and peace forever. We love you. Aloha.



*All the Way, brother.*



## ON GOING BACK TO VIETNAM

Why do we go back?? Different reasons for all of us. Many don't know the reasons. Many go back maybe to find what they left there, their innocence. Perhaps our youth that got consumed in such a short time. Perhaps some go back to see if that hollow feeling we came home with can somehow be filled. I do know when you go back and open your eyes and hearts to the people of that county and meet them at their level, a comfort comes over you, and for me I am so glad I went back.

**Bill Nicholls**  
A/2/503d



**In 2005 two 2/503 Alpha Company troopers returned to Vietnam and the jungles of the "D" Zone to find a battle site from their youth, Maj. Gus Vendetti (L) and Capt. Bill Vose shown here in the "D" Zone jungle at the site of LZ Zulu-Zulu. Only they can tell you what they found there.**

**Roger that, Bill, no simple answer, and maybe we each have our own different answers? Some years ago I searched for the reason behind why two trips back were called for, and now some of us are talking about a third re-invasion. Still not sure to this day what that reason is. Here's a failed attempt at trying to explain it. Ed**

"And so, these four graying men, two former young officers and two former young privates, will venture into the deep and dark jungles of Vietnam, to a specific place to find a specific time when they were soldiers fighting to keep one another alive, carrying with them their own crosses, looking to cover their scars, drawing strength from one another and hoping to find some peace with their souls. Why are we going back? Because we *must* go back.

Perhaps we're wiser than we think. Perhaps what Gus, Mike T, Audey Murphy-Bill Vose and I are doing will help us better understand our scars from war, even though one would be hard pressed to get fellas like Vose and Vendetti to even admit to having scars. So, back we go again, lest we, like so many others from our war, like thousands of others, like Bob Stokes (?), end our Vietnam saga in such a final and permanent way. Back we go, in search of a special kind of band aid to cover our wounds; not the permanent kind. Not many of us care to admit it, but *that* is the reason veterans go back.

One would think as years continue to distance us from that place and time, we would find it easier to deal with and understand our roles in that war and its effect on our psyches. Yet, as the years march by, for me at least, just the opposite is true, I remain more confused than ever. And so, I go back. And so, they go back. When in hell's name will we ever move forward – *can* we ever move forward? *Goddamn you Vietnam, leave us alone for Christsakes!"*

*(The Battle at Bau San)*

### ~ The Airborne Life Is Not For Me ~

Fifty-one years ago, Herman, a young lad from the Carolina mountains, was drafted by the Army and volunteered for jump school.

On his first day at Benning the Army issued him a comb. That afternoon the Army barber sheared off all his hair.

On his second day at jump school, the Army issued Herman a toothbrush. That afternoon the Army dentist yanked seven of his teeth.

On the third day at Benning, the Army issued him a jockstrap...


The Army has been looking for Herman for 51 years.





We may have included this in an earlier issue but I'm too lazy to check. It's worth repeating. Ed

## ~ The Brotherhood ~

"I now know  why men who have been to war yearn to reunite. Not to tell stories or look at old pictures. Not to laugh or weep. Comrades gather because they long to be with the men who once acted at their best; men who suffered and sacrificed, who suffered and were stripped of their humanity.

I did not pick these men. They were delivered by fate and the military. But I know them in a way I know no other men. I have never given anyone such trust. They were willing to guard something more precious than my life. They would have carried my reputation, the memory of me. It was part of the bargain we all made, the reason we were so willing to die for one another. As long as I have memory, I will think of them all, every day. I am sure that when I leave this world, my last thought will be of my family and my comrades. Such good men."

~ Author unknown



At N. Myrtle Beach reunion in 2010, from left:  
Mike McMillan A/4/503, Chuck Breit 503d PRCT WWII,  
Mike Sturges A/2/503 & Jerry Wiles B/2/503.  
*Such good men.*

(photo by Barb Dresser)

## BATTLE OF THE SLOPES HILL 1338

### Request for Recollections

**It's time to record your memories.  
What did you do? What did you witness?  
What do you recall?  
How has that battle changed your life?**

June marks the 44th anniversary of what most Vietnam War historians consider the costliest encounter by a single American unit in the entire war. On June 22, 1967, Alpha Company 2/503 Infantry, and its 120 plus troopers headed for their Base Camp located adjacent to the Special Forces camp and the Dak To airstrip. In less than three hours, a combined NVA and VC enemy force of as many as 1000 annihilated Alpha. Seventy-Six (76) warriors lost their lives along with 30 or so wounded that fateful day.

Though Alpha suffered unimaginable casualties, there were a diverse number of entities who were intimately involved and affected by the day's events. We're asking not only for Alpha survivors, but Bravo and Charlie companies' remembrances. What went through the minds of the 319th or the mortar contingents who pondered the accuracy of their fire missions? We'd like to hear the details from those officers who directed the fighting from the TOC, as well as the Casper platoon who played an integral part throughout the day. There exists an uncounted number of combatants who still carry a mountain of remorse from when they stood helplessly on the banks of the Po Ko River awaiting the order to "saddle up", an order which never came. Lastly, the voices of the families of those lost must be heard.

We ask that your submissions be sent in no later than May 15th for inclusion in the June issue of our *2/503d Vietnam Newsletter*.

Send your recollections and any photos you might have to [rto173d@cfl.rr.com](mailto:rto173d@cfl.rr.com) and please pass this request on to your buddies who survived the *Battle of the Slopes*. With enough recollections the editor says he'll produce a *Special Edition* covering the battle.

All issues to date of our newsletter can be seen at either of these web sites: [www.firebase319.org/2bat/news.php](http://www.firebase319.org/2bat/news.php) and [http://corregidor.org/VN2503/newsletter/issue\\_index.htm](http://corregidor.org/VN2503/newsletter/issue_index.htm)

**Wambi Cook**

**A/2/503 Survivor of the Slopes**



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**Vietnam and All Veterans of Brevard Presents:**  
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## LAST MONTH'S WHODAT?

Last month we asked you to identify this trooper who was a Chargin' Charlie and who went on to become Chief of Police in Mount Weather, VA.



Our Sky Soldier buddy is Lester Daughtridge, born in North Carolina in 1949.

He began his military service in February 1966 at the age of 17. He started out with 1/506th Inf., 101st Airborne at Ft. Campbell (*"When they were still Airborne of course,"* says Les). He was assigned to Company C/2/503 Inf. in March 1967. *"I just missed the jump. Needless to say I paid dearly for that ('Once a Cherry always a Cherry'), but hell I was in one of the hardest Battalions in the Army and that means something, even today."* He spent most of his tour sharing point with SP/4 James Nothorn from Credence, Arkansas. *"We lost him on the Hill. I was there June 22nd and I was wounded on the Hill. I came back and finished my tour and returned to the world and served with Company B 1/325 Inf. 82nd Abn."*

After a year of spit and polish Les returned to Vietnam. When asked where he wanted to go he told them, *"Company C 2/503d Inf. You probably think this was crazy but This Unit was proven in my book. I was with the CP group my second tour acting for the 1st Sgt. Similar to what Sgt. Adams did before we lost him on the Hill in 1967."*

Les made the Army his career. *"I served with the 25th Infantry, I was A Drill Instructor for three years. I spent time teaching the TOW Dragon and ITV. My final duty station was with The Jungle Operations Training Center in Ft. Sherman, Panama. I was a Senior Instructor in charge of Counter Gorilla Operations."*

*"Still going strong and still remembering the HERD."*



## ***"The Year of the Pathfinder"***



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Please visit [www.moaa.org/contact](http://www.moaa.org/contact) to send a message to the appropriate department.

***"When the dust has long settled on  
the battlefield, all that is left is old  
soldiers on both sides."***

~ Smitty



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# Visiting Our Guys

By Roy Lombardo, LTC (Ret)  
CO, B/2/503d

15 March 2011. I just went to see our guys, yesterday.

Today started as an ordinary day. I promised to meet the Varga's and some college students from Vandalia, IL to take them to the Vietnam Memorial to view the name of Ronnie Schukar, Judy Varga's brother. The Bravo Bulls have been connected with the Schukar family for decades, which is a separate story. Katy, the Mom, is like a mother to us all.



Ranger Roy

We met at the entrance to the Vietnam Memorial, which was a miracle in itself, with them coming from the Rayburn Building and me from Baltimore. It was almost 1500 hours and I urged them to hurry because I wanted them to visit Lincoln's Memorial before we went to Arlington National Cemetery.

Leon Cooley, Barry Herbison, their wives and I were just at the Wall in November. Now I was back and had a single red rose to place at Tablet 2E, where the names of most of the Bravo Bulls reside. Judy had a disc recording that she was to leave for her brother. As I leaned forward, hands reached from inside the wall and grabbed my heart and my throat. My tears welled and I was immediately reminded of the poem by Jimmy G, pal of Kris Kristopherson, which I have plagiarized.

*One day in March with visitors small,  
I stood before a marble wall,  
inscribed with names, heroes all,  
some of whom I now recall.*

*I heard voices all around,  
as I stood on sacred ground,  
in front of Baker, Howard, Zinn,  
Robillard, Rick, and Airborne kin.*

*A voice called out "Assemble round,  
it's Ranger Roy, that I have found."  
Peering deep into the 2E Section,  
I saw their faces in my reflection,  
remembering wartime imperfections,  
I reached my hand in their direction.*

*"Touch me," Lopez cried from marbled grave,  
"Your presence here is all we have,  
forget us not, the young and brave,  
who fought for freedom save."*

*"Touch my name," Schugar said,  
"Free us from the fearful dread  
of feeling few tears were shed  
upon passing from our Mother's bed."*

*Amidst my tears, I touched their names,  
whose letters rippled like waves of grain.  
Then Bobby Hastings barked my name,  
"OD for you and train in the rain."*

*I shook his hand and we embraced,  
his redneck and smiling face,  
so eternally encased in  
mirthful youth, long displaced.*

*"Hey, Sir!" Ron Zinn did press,  
"Don't feel bad for my distress.  
Now I am laid to rest  
because I forgot the Ranger test."*

*"Damn, Ron, don't be so forgiving,  
for I'm the one who's still living."*

*"Sir, there's no misgiving, just  
bring our friends to where we're living."*

*Then Howard, Hastings, Lopez, and Rick  
disappeared from my outstretched hand,  
inside the Wall of Vietnam,  
with Baker and others from our band.*

*As they faded back to black,  
they made a raucous parting crack,  
"It's Happy Hour now in back,  
time for beer and a little Jack."*

*Laugh and cry, weep and pray,  
emotions ran high this March day,  
and as I tried to move away,  
I heard their voices say...*

*"Touch me! Touch my name!  
Give us pleasure from the pain,  
affirm we died not in vain,  
and please come visit us again!"*

I tried to quickly recover because the youngsters with us might not understand the tears of an aging man. We headed for the Lincoln Memorial, with them rushing to the winds for pictures. As we stood on the curb awaiting their photographic efforts, a motorcade raced past, with our President waving from his window. He seemed to be saying, "Roy, I remember you from the SSG Giunta MOH Ceremony," or words to that intent.

(continued....)





On to Arlington National Ceremony and a visit to place another rose at the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial. Then we proceeded toward the Tombs of the Unknowns, little realizing that we would be diverted to the funeral of the LAST MAN STANDING -- Corporal Frank Buckles, the last known WWI veteran, 110 years young, was being laid to rest. The President and VP had spoken earlier and departed but the Burial Ceremony began as we walked to the crowd's edge. There were about 500 in attendance, including several Native Americans in full eagle feather bonnets and regalia; soldiers in uniform with feathers, affixed to their headgear; about 200 motorcyclists in formation off to the side of the ceremony; and a mix of current soldiers in Mess uniforms, as well as cammo fatigues; and family and friends.

Afterwards, we hiked uphill to the Tombs of the Unknowns, only to witness the Sergeant of the Guard and the relief moving forward to change the guard, in the pouring rain. Patiently and reverently, we watched the perfect Changing of the Guard, before heading to the vehicles and a dry, long-awaited evening meal. While eating at a posh restaurant along the Potomac, the youngsters were grateful and amazed at how I was able to schedule all those events for them to witness. Slyly I reminded them that could have been done by any of the Bravo Bulls, using our military, magical powers.

With warm Airborne regards,

BDQ Roy



L-R: John Beauchamp and close friend Charley Zions, both KIA at Zulu-Zulu.

# BRAVO BULLS

## 2/503d Flash Coin

Front



Back



2" long x 1.75" high

**Announcing the availability of a Limited Edition 2nd Battalion 503rd Flash Coin. Half of all profits will go to the 173d Memorial Foundation, and half will go to feed the poor.**

**To obtain the coin, please send check or money order to:**

**Paul R. Fisher, LTC (Ret)**  
**81 Oak Lane**  
**Eatontown, NJ 07724**

**Email: [fisherppd@att.net](mailto:fisherppd@att.net)**

**Cost is \$10.00 per coin plus \$4.00 postage**  
**~ Limit 10 per person ~**  
**(To be mailed in June while supplies last)**

**Note:** Except for books written by Sky Soldiers pertaining to the Vietnam War, or 503rd PRCT troopers pertaining to WWII, run free of charge, no for profit ads appear in this newsletter, with the exception of *Digger*, *Dogface*, *Brownjob*, *Grunt* by Capt. Gary Prisk C/2/503 which, whenever mentioned herein, he owes me a rum and coke. Cap, that's one more rum and coke. Ed



## Mulgrave Settlers Museum Gordonvale, Queensland, Australia

Not sure if you can help out again with the attached photos (below) dealing with the 503rd Parachute Regiment in Gordonvale during 1942 -1943. Know there are not too many left from that period.

The Museum collection includes a linen table cloth, embroidered with the signatures of the guests at an Anglican Church function in Gordonvale during WWII. The signatures include those of the 503rd American Paratroopers who were stationed in Gordonvale during the war.

We recently had a Significance Assessment done on the museum and its collection by consultants from Brisbane. One of the items was going to be this tablecloth. However, Faye had to give this a miss as she was unable to get identification of the centre piece or anything else to do with it. It is still a significant item for our museum but couldn't be put into the assessment work. Thanks

**Travis Teske**

[travistt@tpg.com.au](mailto:travistt@tpg.com.au)



Anyone with background information on this item please contact Travis at his email address above.

**From the desk of  
Ned Costa, CAPO  
Executive Director**



## Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day!



In March, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution to honor veterans who served in Vietnam by designating March 30, 2011 as "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day." This special day for Vietnam Veterans was celebrated all across the U.S., perhaps even in your home town. I had the honor to spend the day with fellow Sky Soldiers from the 173d Airborne Brigade – Southern California Chapter 14, while attending the "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" celebration in Whittier, CA.



From left: Jerry Perry, Art Martinez, Wambi Cook,  
Ned Costa, Ray Ramirez & Rene Macare





## Future Paratrooper?



Grandpa Don "Rocky" Rockholt, A/2/503d LRRP, proud of his new little guy, Justis, born March 30, 2011 (photo date incorrect). Not only do they look alike, neither of them has any hair. Congratulations to mom, dad and Rocky.

## American Pride



[Sent in by Jim Gettel, A/2/503d]

## HOOK UP!

Pat "Doc" Feely, shown here, B Med medic attached to Charlie 2/503 during Operation Silver City in March 1966, was one of the medics who ran to the aid of the "C" Company troopers wounded by the artillery round on the night of 15/16 March at LZ Zulu-Zulu. The Doc wants to hook-up with the trooper who lost his legs during that incident – it's important to him. Pat made the army his career, retired a LTC, and can be reached at: [thatsunfair@yahoo.com](mailto:thatsunfair@yahoo.com)



Doc in April '66

## 173d Abn CO Relieved Of Duty

By Kevin Dougherty, *Stars and Stripes*

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany -- The Army has relieved Col. James H. Johnson III of command of the 173rd Airborne Brigade for serious allegations "that were substantiated" following an extensive review, said the deputy commander of V Corps.



COL James H. Johnson, III

The Army announced its decision on Johnson late Friday. Col. Kyle Lear is serving as the acting commander until Johnson's replacement arrives this summer. However, it didn't go into any detail about Johnson's transgressions, or whether he will be court-martialed.

Brig. Gen. Allen W. Batschelet, Johnson's direct supervisor, said in a telephone interview that Johnson faced "a number of allegations that were (later) substantiated." Commanders need to be held to the highest standards, he said.

"Once this is compromised, we have an obligation to take action," Batschelet said. "These sorts of things can become a distraction."

While the Army says it can't elaborate on the allegations against Johnson, talk of the colonel's troubles are the grist of rumors, particularly in the communities where the brigade is based.

"It's a pretty grave decision we had to make," Batschelet said of relieving Johnson. "We hold commanders to the highest standards."

Based in Vicenza, Italy, the brigade includes six battalions. Two battalions are in Vicenza, and four are in Germany, with three of them in Bamberg. The fourth battalion is based in Schweinfurt.

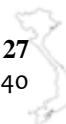
Johnson assumed command of the brigade in October 2008. He led it on a yearlong tour of Afghanistan, with the brigade returning to Europe late last year. The Army suspended Johnson as commander Feb. 17. On Friday, the suspension was lifted.

"He's officially relieved of command at this point," said Lt. Col. Rumi Nielson-Green, a spokeswoman for U.S. Army Europe.



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# Welcome Home Stories

I went to Okie in Oct 63 and came home for one month in April 67, then back overseas until Feb 69. I went back in July 69 and came home in Feb 71. Most of the time I was in Vietnam or TDY to Korea or Taiwan. The rest of the time I was on Okie but did some Medcap support to some outlying islands that lasted a couple of weeks each.

When I came home on leave in 67 things were not too bad except for one night when I took my folks out to dinner. I was in blues (Many of us barracks rats in the 1st SFG bought blues to attend our Xmas ball). Some jerk gave us a hard time and I went after him but people got between us and threw the guy out! Not too bad.

I went back to the 5th SFG and did special projects for the next 19 months. During that period three of us were commissioned.

When I came home in 69 I was a new 1LT and arrived in San Fran wearing a green beret, infantry combat awards and carrying my stuff in an aviator's kit bag and carrying an SKS in a rifle case. When I walked out of the bus station in SF I turned left and headed to a nearby hotel where I wanted to change clothes, take a hot shower and then go for a barber shave (AIDS was not a problem then so razors were not off limits!).

About ten yards along some idiot jumped out of a doorway to block my way. Tall and incredibly skinny white guy with a big red afro like hair cut and a tie dyed T-shirt. He was about five or six feet away but screamed at me so hard I could feel spit on my skin. He screamed, "HOW MANY BABIES HAVE YOU KILLED TODAY?"

I put my kit bag down and shifted the gun case to my left hand. The jerk's eyes got big and his skin got even paler than before. He screamed again while turning, this time something unintelligible, and ran screaming up the street.

I guess he expect me to shoot him. Actually my hand was tired and I wanted to change hands on the bag. Still I was a bit shocked at this event and nothing seemed very welcoming in San Francisco except the guys in the barber shop who appreciated someone that shaved and got haircuts.

It was not too bad when I returned to Vietnam to serve in the 173d. I had a few cases of comments and hard looks but when I faced them they turned away or averted their attention. When I came home in '71 I took a flight west to visit UK and then the US but wore civilian clothes.

This time I went to Ft. Devens and joined the 10th SFG. Boston area was crummy. My team had to march in the 4th of July Parade in '71. We wore berets, jungle fatigues, and carried M-16s, LBE and padded rucksacks. Before the parade began the VVAW (Vietnam Veterans Against the War) came up to us followed by news cameras and reporters. They wanted to interview the team. I told them to go ahead just to get out of the way when we had to join the parade. (Every man in the team had two or more tours in Vietnam, all had at least one Purple Heart, a CIB and at least on valor award. All were mature and professionals).

The one reporter said, "No news here" and they all left to find another target for the six o'clock news.

So we marched in the parade. Not fun. People spit at us, threw cans, garbage and dog crap at us - but no one lost their discipline and we got through without bayoneting any of them. After we were invited to an American Legion for a beer where we were given a hard time about not winning the war and how we were not really fighting a real enemy like the Japanese or Germans. So we politely told them to kiss our collective asses and went back to Devens.

We got a lot of anti-war and anti-military treatment in that area, much of it stemming from the offices of Senator Brooks. He did not like the military and did all he could to move us out of Mass until he finally realized he had lost billions of their tax base and had lost over ten thousand jobs!

**Moe Elmore**  
**D/HHC/C/2/503d, '69-'70**

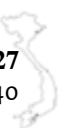
And they get to come home to a country that welcomes them! For most of us Nam Vets, it's hard to say "when I got home". When we got back, it wasn't home anymore. I got "back" 40 years ago last December 21st. Not a day has gone by since July 5th 1970 that I haven't thought about being there. No amount of granite, or pills from the VA can ever cure that sickness.

**Chip Hanson**  
**U.S. Marine**

Don't imagine you're going to fill up one page with "Welcome Home" stories. One day I was there. The next day I was here.

**Bob Fleming**  
**A/D/2/503d**

**Bob. You were correct.**





# ~ 75th Ranger Regiment Association Reunion ~

July 25 - 31, 2011

Fort Benning, GA

## Lurps & Rangers of the 173d Airborne Brigade



Part of the lineage of the 75th Ranger Regiment:

173d Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol

74th Long Range Patrol

75th Inf. N/Company Rangers

74th Long Range Surveillance

### Reunion Headquarters:

#### Holiday Inn

2800 Manchester Expressway  
Columbus, GA 31904

**Reservations: 706-324-0231**

(Mention "75th Ranger Reunion" to receive special room rate of \$79. per night)

(All 173d and sister units welcome to attend)



### Reunion Registration Rates:

Members: \$40.

Sat. Banquet: \$40.

### Reunion Contact:

Robt. 'twin' Henriksen  
Unit Director 360-393-7790

For more information go to:  
<http://rangerrendezvous.soc.mil/>

Our reunion will be held in conjunction with the  
current 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment  
*Rendezvous and Change of Command*

### Tentative Activities:

- Visits to the 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial and the National Infantry Museum
- Massive tactical jump by active airborne troops, Fryar Field DZ
- Ranger School Class Graduation
- Weapons displays by active military soldiers
- Bicycling along the River Walk & Horseback Riding
- Introduction to Yoga & Stress Reduction for Spouses
- Seminars on Veteran's Benefits & Navigating the VA
- 75th Ranger Regiment Association meeting & business meeting
- Fort Benning Change of Command ceremonies
- Be Airborne again – Jump at a small Alabama airport (Fri.)
- Banquet at the "Iron Works" historical building (Sat.)
- Ranger Hall of Fame inductee at River Center for Performing Arts. Carl Vencill is our nominee
- Services at Ranger Memorial – reading names of fallen heroes

**90 members and several widows of KIA have already registered to attend. REGISTER TODAY! [RLTW!!](#)**



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# INCOMING!



## ~ Honouring Aussie Vets ~

I look forward to each issue and its articles, which are most interesting. Thank you for the inclusion of the news release by our Australian government on page 11 (April issue) about the \$3.3 million towards the world's first education Centre in Washington DC to honour Vietnam Veterans. This announcement received only scant coverage to the public. I was particularly pleased to see that the Hon. Graham Edwards attended the official announcement. Graham Edwards lost limbs from a M16 mine in SVN, and has been our voice for veterans in Australia to fight for a fair go from the government and the Dept. of Vet Affairs, Australia. Looking forward to your next issue.

**Sid Cheeseman, AM**  
**1RAR**

## ~ Another Friend of Budda's ~

Just getting around to reading the last newsletter. I remember working with Budda, really good dog but had been in the field too long. If you were sitting around and looked at him he started growling then barking like he was ready to nail you. Of all the dogs though I would rather work with him.

**Bob Beemer**  
**B/2/503d**

## ~ A Dog Gone Story ~

The stories of dogs in the April issue were compelling, interesting, and emotional. The idea of dogs to detect things that we could not, is a great idea. The difficulty lies in the execution. We, the DOD, did a piss poor job of utilizing the dogs. Sometimes the teams were brilliant and at other times almost detrimental. We have no idea how many dogs were sent there and then allocated to various units. We do know that they all died there. I understand, but cannot substantiate, that some of the Vietnamese units considered them to be rations.

My only direct experience was a sad one. I flew from Pleiku to Bien Hoa with a stop in Saigon on a C-123. When we landed in Bien Hoa it was dark. The crew assisted in getting the 2 stretcher cases out onto the tarmac. Then loaded up in their pickup truck, telling me that an ambulance will be out to pick-up the 4 of us. Well we sat there for over an hour and no ambulance. The tower was not that far away, in a direct line, but staying on the tarmac was quite a hike. I knew better than to walk straight to the tower as the Air Force had mined all the dirt in the area just prior to us being deployed to Vietnam. Realizing what a good natured guy that I am, you can understand that I was a little pissed off being dropped off with the 2 guys on stretchers and a third guy classified as walking wounded.

After another hour I heard a bell ring. Not a church bell, but a bicycle bell. One of the types that were mounted to the handlebars of the bike, that you operated with your thumb -- this little KACHING KACHING sound getting steadily louder. I had superb night vision and as the sound grew louder I could see the Vietnamese security guard sitting on a bike with a carbine slung across his back. His feet were jammed into the frame beneath the handlebars. His source of power was a German Shepherd on a long lead. The guard had taken a few wraps around the base of the handlebars allowing the Shepherd to drag him around on his security patrol while he rang the bell in an effort to alert any of the bad guys, so that they could hide until he passed.

Everything was OK until the dog reached a downwind position. It, of course, picked up our scent and came charging at us, all teeth and eyeballs. I had had enough of this nonsense and had no intention of the dog attacking one of the guys on stretchers. From the sitting position I fired a burst into the dog. It crumpled. The guard with his feet tangled up, not on the peddles, ran into the dead dog. He flipped over the handlebars, landing on his back. I think he bent the barrel of his rifle in the process. The guard was faster than a speeding bullet, beating feet to clear the area.



**Bien Hoa Air Base 1965** (photo by Jim Robinson)

It's always interesting how a little shooting will get peoples' attention. About half the airbase descended on us. Ambulances arrived and we were hauled off to a field hospital. Why we were not off loaded in Saigon I have no idea.

**Jim Robinson**  
**FO, B/2/503d**

(continued....)





~ Not Hill 875 ~

It also states Hill 875 on YouTube. In the YouTube below, I'm the medic about 10 seconds into the video carrying the wounded trooper back to the rear so we could work on him. This was really Hill 882 or 889, we had contact on both hills at about the same time 875 was going on. We had CBS and *Newsweek* traveling with us for a couple weeks because they knew we were in a hot spot. Take care, Airborne.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KhfvUd1sSQ>

Joe "Doc" Mescan SSG  
1/503d



The above photo appeared on page 6 of last month's newsletter incorrectly stating it was taken during the battle at Hill 875. Thanks Doc for setting us straight. As Wambi Cook so rightly noted about their return to Dak To, *"We dedicate this voyage to those brave souls who never made it off any Hill."* Ed

~ Budda, the Scout Dog ~

Great newsletter!!!! I was with Budda for a while or shall I say he was with us for a while and that wonderful story brought tears to my eyes (*If Only I Could Talk*, Issue 26).

Gary "Cooch" Cucinitti  
1/503d

~ Cammo'd Buttons? ~

Quick question and you might be able to answer it. The Avis - *We Try Harder* buttons, I've seen the originals, but not the camouflage ones, what did they look like? I've looked all over Google and can't find one picture, but I'd like to get a few custom made for my group. Were they actually camouflage or just black letters on an OD back? Thanks.



Jay Forbes

Canadian non-Vet friend of the 173d  
[forcerecon85@hotmail.com](mailto:forcerecon85@hotmail.com)

Hi Jay: It was Col. Bob Sigholtz, deceased, our Bn commander '66/'67 who came up with the idea for the "We Try Harder" motto for the 2/503d. He let Avis know the 2d Bat adopted their slogan and they sent hundreds of red and white buttons to VN. I've never seen a cammo version of the button. Maybe one of our guys can help you? Ed

~ RTO of Merit ~

I think Major Watson's RTO left in December 1966. I got the job early January 1967. Sp4 Orury was Ken Kaplan's RTO until Harry Cleland took over. I would have considered it a privilege to take that PRC25 for Capt. Kaplan, but Harry had those duties.

Dave "Griff" Griffin  
HHC/B/2/503d

~ CORRECTION ~

Last month we intimated Griff served as Ken Kaplan's RTO...oops.

*Dave was an RTO under Ken's command,  
but not his personal radioman,  
shown in the pic where they both stand,  
Griff all smiles with hat in hand,  
it was Harry instead in that faraway land,  
so with apologies my boys,  
corrected I am.*

Ed



From left: Bravo CO, Ken Kaplan, with a  
B Company RTO of merit.

(continued....)



### ~ A Friend of the 173d ~

I guess you could call me a friend of the 173d. I don't show up because I was doing something different at the time. I was a USAF Weather Observer from 1969-73. The closest I ever got to Nam was 5 days of R&R in Bangkok. Well, that and the three B-52's that took off every hour for the entire 14 months I was on Guam '72-'73. I was also on the island for Linebacker I & II, or the Christmas bombings. Over a mile of B-52s sat on both the runways, almost nose to tail. As soon as one cleared the end of the runway, another one would start rolling on the other runway. That went on for more than an hour as more than a hundred BUFF's took off on the 18 hour round trip flight to Nam.

My connection and interest is through Francis Leroy (Pancho) Maples, Specialist Four, B CO, 2ND BN, 503RD INFANTRY, 173D ABN BDE, USARV Army of the United States, La Feria, Texas, March 16, 1947 to November 13, 1967.

He was killed near Dak To, Kontum Province in the battle of the slopes. His birthday was last Wednesday. He was a high school buddy and a helluva great guy. I've been interested for years in any little bit of information about his service and his last battle. I've read *Dak To*, by Edward Murphy, which I have been told is the best book about the battle. And I just put *Hamburger Hill* on my Netflix list.

**Roger Daniel**

USAF Vet

[rogwriter@aol.com](mailto:rogwriter@aol.com)

**If anyone knew Pancho, please drop Roger a note.**  
Ed

### ~ Important Photo ~

When I commanded a rifle company in the 173d, C/2/503, I had occasion to conduct memorial ceremonies for some of my troopers who had been KIA. One day we had a service for three of my men that had been killed and during the event someone, I forget who, took a photo of the service. The photo was of the troops formed-up on a small patrol base and it included a shot of the three upside down rifles with boots at the muzzle and helmets on top. It was in color so the red color of the soil stood out against the washed-out green of our jungle fatigues and the foliage behind. Believe this was Feb.-Mar. 1970.



**Moe in Recon, 5th SFG**

I had the photo on the wall of my office when I was DCO of the 5th SF in '93/'94. One day I came back from a trip or TDY to find it gone. It was the only photo I had of my time in the Bde and I kept it on the wall as a reminder that when you are leading soldiers in combat, every decision can cause a life. It helped me keep focus and from letting the little things go unchecked or the tedious things ignored.

In any case, I would like to have this notice put up someplace in the random hope that whoever took the photo still has it and might return it, anonymously of course. I would gladly welcome a similar photo from that day.

**Darrell "Moe" Elmore, LTC (Ret)**

C/D/HHC/2/503d, 5th SF

[moeelmore@aol.com](mailto:moeelmore@aol.com)



**Similar to the photo Moe is hoping to find.**

### Something Honorable

Gentlemen: Today I stopped at a local gun store to pick something up. It was an interesting encounter. The younger man waiting on me (35-40 years old) noticed my ball cap and said, "*The 173d Airborne. You're Airborne?*" I responded, "*All the Way.*" He then said, "*The Herd. You guys have a lot of respect and are well known. The Herd was hardcore. You guys were tough!*"

I explained that the Herd, indeed, was a distinguished unit, but that reputation is due in large part to those who preceded me in the early days. The store clerk (who was 82nd Airborne) was very complimentary and said that everyone who served in Vietnam forged that reputation.

He and an older man (owner?) both thanked me for my service, and again expressed their respect for me having spent that time with such a distinguished unit. I walked out of that store a little taller, and feeling proud of something big and something honorable of which I played a small role.

**Jerry Sopko**

D/4/503d

(continued....)



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### **Filling Them Boots**

Jerry: I spoke to a 173d Vet at Home Depot in Omak, Washington. I thanked him for his service and told him I was in the unit in Vietnam. His comment about us was that we had left some big boots to fill. You're right...you walk a little taller and your heart swells. Airborne!

**Jim Bethea**  
**HHC/2/503d**

### **~ More on Zulu-Zulu ~**

Good work on the newsletter. Just wanted to say that I helped in putting down cover fire with my M-60 when Sgt. Ku extracted Capt. Brownlee and also with Beauchamp when he told the (cherry) new guy that he would take point because he was short and wanted to make sure that he would make it home.

**Mark Mitchell**  
**B/2/503d**

**Hi Mark, roger that. One hellofa operation, our little Battle of the Bulge, but instead of Patton's tanks coming to the rescue, we had the arty and those wonderful choppers and F4's on the scene, plus the 1st Batt, and guys brave beyond brave. The older I get the more amazed I become at what we all did as young men. Sometimes I look at an 18 or 19 kid walking into a 7-11 with his pants down below his ass and think, no way in hell would he make it. Be well brother. Ed**

### **~ The Japanese Attack on Brookings, Oregon ~** ( Newsletter Issue 25, Pages 6-7)

In June, 1942, my father-in-law, Leonard Negles, was stationed at Fort Stevens, Oregon, at the mouth of the Columbia River, when Japanese submarine I-25 surfaced and lobbed shells from its 140mm deck gun at the fort. Fort Stevens hosted a few cannons for coastal defense and to defend the mouth of the Columbia River, which leads to the deep water port in Portland. The commander at Fort Stevens didn't return fire, possibly because the Japanese gunner didn't seem to know what he was shooting at, and the fort's commander didn't want to give him lights or muzzle flashes for aiming points. I believe the Japanese didn't really know where they were when they surfaced. Leonard claimed that the attack was essentially over by the time the men decided that the noise was about incoming artillery. They manned their positions right away, thinking that the hubbub perhaps was about an accident at the fuel dump or an ammo bunker. It was only later on in the morning that everyone finally got the word that they'd been attacked by the Japanese. The damage was negligible, and there were no fatalities.

At the outbreak of WWII, Leonard was in the Oregon National Guard where he was trained as an artilleryman

and then assigned to coastal defense with the 249th Coastal Artillery unit at Astoria, Oregon. Units from the 249th were subsequently trained as searchlight crews, then sent to England where they were assigned to various searchlight battalions. Leonard served with the 226th and 227th AAA Searchlight Battalions. He entered France by way of Utah Beach. His crew wandered around Europe with the allied forces. They were assigned to anybody who wanted an 800 *million* candle-power searchlight and its associated AAA guns. They worked in small teams—the AAA gun crew, a .50 caliber machine gunner, and the searchlight operator. Sometimes the .50 caliber gunner did AAA duty. His unit participated in the Battle of the Bulge, being shuffled to any of several forward bases along the American perimeter. By the end of his tour, his searchlight was credited with 10 shoot-downs, and several members of his crew were killed.

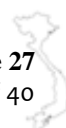
Leonard was stoic by nature, and he hardly ever commented about his experiences in Europe. I compiled the information above by going through his photo album. In his later years pamphlets arrived from his artillery unit, notices of reunions. Leonard said he didn't want to go, because everyone he knew has already passed away.

Leonard passed away a few months ago at the age of 88.

**Mark Carter**  
**173d LRRP '65-'66**



**Leonard Negles**



## Diggers may march alongside Viet Cong

By Mark Dodd, *The Australian*

MORE than 2000 Australian Vietnam War veterans are expected to meet their former foes if an ambitious plan for a formal reconciliation, supported by the Gillard government, is agreed to by Hanoi.

In the most significant move to date to effect links between Vietnamese veterans and their Australian counterparts, the RSL has embarked on a low-key diplomatic push to win crucial Vietnamese government support.

If Hanoi agrees, the plan could result in Australian veterans joining a reconciliation parade with their former enemy, the North Vietnamese Army and the Viet Cong, to coincide with next year's 50th anniversary of the start of Australia's decade-long involvement in the war.

While the issue is a very sensitive one for Vietnam, insiders have told the Australians there is growing optimism the Nguyen Tan Dung government will agree to the proposal.

RSL national president, Ken Doolan, confirmed negotiations were under way to establish formal links between the RSL and Vietnamese veterans groups, talks he described as delicate.

Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd has thrown his support behind the initiative, describing the proposal as a 'positive development' in relations between the two countries.

RSL NSW branch president, Don Rowe, one of the leaders for the push for official reconciliation, said hundreds of former Vietnam veterans have been making private pilgrimages to old battlefields. *"(Many) have found it not only a moving experience but a healing process as well,"* he said.

Former SAS trooper, Don Barnby, said he supports formal reconciliation, saying Australian soldiers had immense respect for their old enemy, a very worthy foe, *"tough, determined and disciplined."*

For others, such as two-tour veteran Geoff Hazell, the decision to take part in a formal reconciliation is a difficult one.

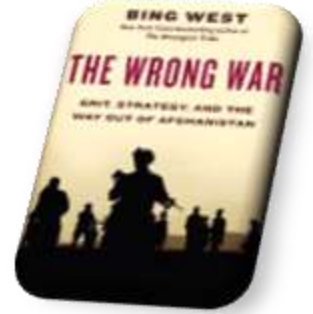
*"I have nothing but respect for the NVA fighting soldier,"* he said. *"I have more personal problems with those in Australia who actively or passively supported them."*

[Sent in by John Arnold, 1/RAR]

## Book Review by a Sky Soldier

**THE WRONG WAR**, by Bing West (Random House)

Neglected still after a decade, Afghanistan is supposed to be the "right war," so much so, that 48 countries (28 NATO) have skin in the game, from two for Iceland to 90,000 US. But, in *THE WRONG WAR*, Bing West brings home with unstinting clarity, not only what's wrong with how we've fought this war, but what may yet be salvaged from the errant assumptions, squandered lives, opportunity and treasure, and the political morass that continues to frustrate success.



While it's Afghanistan's war to win, it's America's to lose. Government corruption, strategic indecision, logistical burdens, extremes of terrain and climate, complexities of language and custom, together with targeting and response restrictions against a wily, adaptive enemy combine to challenge command at all levels, as the relief of five field generals now attests.

West's narrative acquaints us with all of this, on the ground, with the urgency of men under fire, fighting through conflicting directives with astonishing bravery, discipline and restraint. The result is a cordite crisp portrait and sober commendation of Americans, Brits and ISAF fighting in Konar and Helmand, coupled with a cogent critique of our confused mission and a realistic appraisal of how imperative fight and build distinctions can be redressed within existing capabilities and commitments.

Supplemented with a brief outline of applicable lessons and COIN guidance, *THE WRONG WAR* brings the battle experience and the immediacy of its strategic and objective reconsideration to instructive necessity. We must hope this book will be read with as much attention by The White House and the Congress as it surely will be by all who have a stake in the future of Afghanistan.

**Bob Warfield**  
HHC/A/B/2/503d

### GENERALS (COMISAF)

Barno	2001-05
Eikenberry	2005-06
McNeill	2006-08
McKiernan	2008-09
McChrystal	2009-10
Petraeus,	2010-11



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## LLOYD CHRISTENSEN

We lost a Sky Soldier brother on March 23, trooper Lloyd Christensen of the 173d. It sounds like he was one tough trooper. Here's a couple notes from his son, Paul, a Senior Chief Navy Corpsman honoring his father and sent to a 2/503d buddy of his.



The Doc here at the VA said he had about 24-72 hours 3 days ago, if I know him it will be another 72. You Sky Soldiers are a tough breed. Thanks for being there for him.

Dad passed yesterday morning. Among his last words were to "Remember that I love you all", and "Airborne all the way".

Yesterday my brothers and I pulled up the "Rawhide" song off the net and played it for him on the smart phone. When he heard the song playing, his eyes immediately opened, he spoke clearly for all to hear "Yee-Haw RAWHIDE!" and triumphantly raised both arms above his head in a victory salute for the entire song. Very moving for us boys, and the grandkids who don't yet recognize the significance of the gesture.

Proud, triumphant, courageous, and fearless even in the face of death. Thanks again and Semper Fi,

**Lloyd's son  
Paul Christensen**

## JOHN WASSINK



It is with deep sympathy that I announce the passing of one of our own, John Wassink (3/503), Perris, CA. John was killed on Sunday April 3rd, while riding his Quad four-wheel off-road motorbike with family and friends near the Arizona border in Brawley, CA.

According to John's girlfriend, Janice, he will be cremated and wanted to keep things simple so as of this writing no public memorial is planned. Should things change I'll be sure to pass on updates as they become available.

John was a man of a few words, but you could depend on his presence at all Chapter 14 meetings and as an active participant at the past few year's reunions. His quiet demeanor will be missed by all.

**Wambi Cook  
A/2/503d**

*They are gone and I must follow  
To the golden fields above  
Where the mighty God of justice  
Shall reward the patriots love  
Sweet it where I live and love thee  
Sweeter far for thee to die  
With the flower-clad hills around me  
Echoing back my last good-bye*

**The Dying Soldier, lyrics by Rev. P. MacThomas**



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## 173d Airborne Brigade Association Medal

The Board of Director of the 173d Airborne Brigade Association approved the creation of such an award at their June 2010 meeting.

The Medal was designed with the ribbon using the colors of the 173d patch with 3 vertical stripes symbolizing the three combat theaters of operation of the Brigade. Yellow for Vietnam, Tan for Iraq and Black for Afghanistan. The medal displays the logo of the Association with our nickname and Airborne motto. The back of the medal uses the distinctive unit insignias of the Brigade in Vietnam (173d Airborne Brigade, the 1st Royal Australian Regiment and the Royal New Zealand Artillery), and the combat badges earned by the Sky Soldiers of the Brigade.

The medal was created by the Association and may be awarded to any Sky Soldier for Special Recommendations for continued superior service to the Association. Approval of the award will be made by the Board of Directors of the Association. ROTC cadets may be awarded the medal for continued superior service and/or achievement and be awarded by local Chartered Chapters at local ROTC award ceremonies. It is also to be awarded to all Sky Soldiers receiving the Medal of Honor at a time and place set by the recipient.

The Medal has been awarded to CSM John Bagby of 1/503 Infantry for his continued superior service to the Association. [Sky Soldier Magazine, Vol. XXVII, No. 1]



CSM Bagby

## You Numba One G.I.?



From left, Sky Soldiers Mike Sturges (A/2/503), Bill Metheny (HHC/4/503), Mike McMillan (A/4/503), Larry Hampton (A/1/503) and Bob Evalt (2/503) sending their hellos to the editor of this newsletter from the badlands of Wyoming. The dog refused to do it.

The master and his student were out in the Wyoming badlands studying geology and hunting petrified wood.

Student: *"Master, what if I get lost in the badlands? How would I ever find my way home again?"*

Master: *"Face into the gale, you will be looking west."*

Student: *"But Master, what if there is no gale?"*

Master: *"Then you are safe because you are no longer in the badlands."*

*"The badlands of Wyoming are my favorite place to be. There is nothing that brings me more animal pleasure than sitting cross legged on the very edge of a badlands mesa, facing directly into the gale, just as the sun is setting over the far horizon."* (RockTumblingSupplies.Com)



The badlands of Wyoming







## ~ 2/503d Sky Soldier Extraordinaire ~

### Colonel Robert H. Sigholtz (In Memoriam)



Robert H. Sigholtz (deceased), Colonel Infantry, Commander 1966/1967, 2nd Bn (Abn) 503rd Inf., enlisted in the U.S. Army upon graduating high school. After completing basic training he attended non-commissioned officers school. He became a platoon sergeant where he served for seventeen months before attending officer candidate school where he graduated as a second lieutenant. Bob returned to civilian life in 1946 as a first lieutenant, but was called back into the service in 1948 when the Korean War became imminent. Three weeks after the war began he was assigned to the Eighth Army Long Range Patrol where he was promoted to Captain. Upon return from Korea he was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division as a company commander in the 325 Regiment. From the 82nd he was posted to Germany with the 11th Airborne Division, 502nd and 503rd. In these Battle Groups Bob served as the S-1 and S-3. He was then reassigned to the 82nd Airborne upon his completion of his tour with the 11th. He was once again assigned to the 325 where he served as S-3. This posting was followed by service as the Plans and Operations Officer for the 82nd. Bob returned to Korea as G-3 advisor to the Republic of Korea Army, and the Special Force Commander. Then Lt. Colonel Sigholtz was assigned to DCSOPS Department of the Army where he served four years. In 1966, Bob joined the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) in Vietnam as Brigade Executive Officer. Most of the time while serving in this capacity he commanded Task Force Sigholtz which



was a highly mobile force acting as a third maneuver battalion. After five months he was assigned as commander of the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Inf. During this assignment he was most fortunate to have the opportunity to lead a battalion combat team in an airborne assault. He was first to jump from one door of the C-130 aircraft, and General "Uncle Jack" Deane jumped from the other. Colonel Sigholtz was selected for the Army Stat College upon completion of the RVN tour. Next, Bob became the Professor of Military Training at Georgetown University. During this assignment at

Georgetown, Colonel Sigholtz was chosen to command a brigade when the Ninth Division was to move to Korea. However, he retired from the service upon the death of Bob, Jr., his son, a platoon leader in Company D, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry while serving in Vietnam. While in the army Bob attended college courses in the evening and twice was sent full time to college by the army. He earned Bachelor and Masters degrees and completed some work for his Ph.D which he earned after returning to civilian life, when Bob then became the Athletic Director of Georgetown University. His major accomplishments during his five years there were that he quadrupled the intramural program, returned G.U. to playing intercollegiate football, hiring of the basketball coach who received some favorable notoriety, and had a long-range athletic building program approved and later built. Sigholtz then moved to the entertainment field when he became Manager of JFK Stadium and the Arena (National Guard Armory) in Washington, DC where he remained for ten years. From this employment he moved on to being a consultant for stadiums and arenas and negotiating professional team contacts. He was also the assistant to the owner of a mega-automobile dealer in Santa Monica, CA. Decorations received by Col. Sigholtz include three Silver Stars and Master Parachutist Badge among many others. Colonel Robert A. Sigholtz died 2 September 2005, and was interred at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors.



Bob and his boys. Operation Junction City 1967.



The following was read by A.B. Garcia, HHC/2/503d, '65/'66, during the April 25, 2011, ceremonies in Loch Sport, Australia to mark ANSAC DAY.

## AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN

"I crouched in a shallow trench on that hell of exposed beach. Steep, rising foothills bare of cover, a landscape pockmarked with War's inevitable litter, piles of stores, equipment, ammunition and the weird contortions of death sculptured in Australian flesh.

I saw the going down of the sun on that first Anzac Day. The chaotic maelstrom of Australia's bleeding. I fought in the frozen mud of the Somme, in a blazing destroyer exploding on the North Sea. I fought on the perimeter at Tobruk, crashed in a flaming wreckage of a fighter in New Guinea. Lived with the damned in a place called Changi, fought in the snow at a place called Korea, and again in the jungles of Malaya, Borneo, and South Vietnam.

I was your mate, the kid across the street, the medical student graduate, the mechanic at the corner garage, the baker who brought you the bread, the gardener who cut your lawns, and the clerk who sent your phone bill.

I was a private in the Army, a Naval commander, an Air Force Bombardier.

No man knows me. No name marks my Tomb, for I am, every Australian Serviceman, for I am the UNKNOWN SOLDIER.

I died for a cause I held just in the service of my land, that you and yours may say in freedom.

I AM PROUD TO BE AN AUSTRALIAN."

## ~ ANSAC DAY ~

Anzac Day is a national public holiday in Australia and is considered by many Australians to be one of the most solemn days of the year. Marches by veterans from all past wars, as well as current serving members of the Australian Defense Force and Reserves, with allied veterans as well as the Australian Defense Force Cadets and Australian Air League and supported by members of Scouts Australia, Guides Australia, and other uniformed service groups, are held in cities and towns nationwide. The Anzac Day Parade from each state capital is televised live with commentary. These events are generally followed by social gatherings of veterans, hosted either in a public house or in an RSL Club, often including a traditional Australian gambling game called two-up, which was an extremely popular pastime with

ANZAC soldiers. The importance of this tradition is demonstrated by the fact that though most Australian states have laws forbidding gambling outside of designated licensed venues, on Anzac Day it is legal to play "two-up".

Despite federation being proclaimed in Australia in 1901, many argue the "national identity" of Australia was largely forged during the violent conflict of World War I, and the most iconic event in the war for most Australians was the landing at Gallipoli. Dr. Paul Skrebels of the University of South Australia has noted that Anzac Day has continued to grow in popularity; even the threat of a terrorist attack at the Gallipoli site in 2004 did not deter some 15,000 Australians from making the pilgrimage to Turkey to commemorate the fallen ANZAC troops.



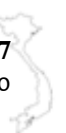
A veteran on Ansac Day

Although commemoration events are always held on 25 April, most states and territories currently observe a substitute public holiday on the following Monday when Anzac Day falls on a Sunday. When Anzac Day falls on Easter Monday, such as in 2011, the Easter Monday holiday is transferred to Tuesday.

This followed a 2008 meeting of the Council for the Australian Federation in which the states and territories made an in principle agreement to work towards making this a universal practice. However, in 2009 the Legislative Council of Tasmania rejected a bill amendment that would have enabled the substitute holiday in that state.



***"I have never killed a man,  
but I have read many  
obituaries with great  
pleasure."*** ~ Clarence Darrow





## David Taitino was laid to rest in South Carolina



Received message from our member Don "G"

Giannattasio from GA #1106 Company no. - Operations Officer 1968-69. Thank you to those who attended David's service and represented our Unit to show support to his family.

As your Unit Director, I was sadly unable to attend. Hopefully, photos and messages from the service will be sent to me or Reed Cundiff (Patrolling editor) for the next issue (submit due date May 15th).

Any member in contact with David's family, please let them know that the 75th RRA Ranger family is here for support and that we want them to be involved in the Ranger family activities. Please send me any contact information for David's family.

I'm still waiting on anyone to send me information on David's company history and where else he served, including stories about him, photos and so on.

There will be a Reunion - Ranger Jump honoring him and the other 4 members we lost last year.

Again, talked to TAD and Karen about Members and Friends of the company needing to attend Reunion as Tad is tired of seeing his teammates and friends laying horizontal. Let him see you standing vertical.

**Robt 'twin' Henriksen '70-'71**  
**75th RRA Unit Director**  
**Lurps & Rangers**  
**173d "Herd" Airborne**  
**(360) 393-7790**

I had the honor of attending the visitation for one of our fallen. There were 4 or 5 of us from the hill in Bong Song. The family took a bunch of pics with different cameras. Hopefully, some pics will surface. David was dressed in greens with jump wings and medals. Tad gave him his Ranger Hall of Fame medallion (around his neck) to take with him to the grave. The family was grateful we were in attendance.

**Don Giannattasio**  
**75th Rangers, '68-'69**

**RLTW**



**Vietnam veterans of the 82nd Airborne and Vietnamese Red Berets on Veteran's Day in Denver, Colorado 2011.**

Photo by Vince Hoang, VNAF



## FAREWELL TO A 503rd TROOPER



COLUMBIA, SC: Brig. Gen. (Ret) Dr. William Campbell McLain, Jr., 94, died April 17, 2011, in Columbia, South Carolina.

He was born in Columbia on March 1, 1917, to the late William Campbell McLain and Louise Stone McLain. Dr. McLain is survived by his wife of 68 years, Jeannie Anderson McLain; his sister, Julia McLain DuRant (Robert N.); and brother, Robert Sinuefield McLain; his four daughters and son and their spouses, Jeannie Rubin (Hyman, Jr.), Lucy Coleman (John), William Campbell McLain III, M.D. (Sandra), Emmie May (John), and Chappy Manning (Deas); ten grandchildren, twelve great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his sister Elise McLain Lane. After graduating from Columbia High School, he received his bachelor's degree from Duke University and medical degree from Duke University School of Medicine in 1942, then entered military service. He served with the 503rd Parachute Regimental Combat Team in the New Guinea and Philippines Campaigns from 1943 to 1945 and participated in combat parachute jumps during these campaigns.

Dr. McLain entered the South Carolina Army National Guard in June 1949, serving until he retired in 1977 from the position of State Surgeon. His awards and decorations include two Bronze Star Medals, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal with two stars and one Arrowhead, WWII Victory Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, Philippine Liberation Medal, Combat Medical Badge, Parachute Badge with Bronze Star, Presidential Unit Citation, and SC State Service Medal (25 years) and The Guardsman Retirement Medal.

He returned from World War II in 1945 and completed his residency in internal medicine before entering private practice. After practicing in Columbia for over 20 years, he and his wife moved to the SC coast where he continued to pursue his life-long love of golf and medicine. He practiced internal medicine briefly in Beaufort, SC, and worked with the South Carolina Regional Medical Program before working for approximately 20 years in emergency medicine at St. Joseph's Hospital in Savannah, Georgia.

While Dr. McLain was a true soldier whose life exemplified "Duty, Honor, Country," he also had an undying devotion to his wife and family. He was a great listener who possessed a keen wit and extraordinary intellect whose advice and company were widely sought. Dearly loved and admired by all his family and many friends, he will be greatly missed.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to the South Carolina Military Museum, 1 National Guard Road, Columbia, SC 29201, or the charity of your choice.

### *Airborne, All the Way General!*



#### **A note sent to the General's son, Dr. Cam McLain, from a 2/503d Vietnam-era trooper:**

Hello Doc: I recently had the good fortune to speak by phone with your dad, and as is the case with all soldiers of his generation it was an honor to speak with him. As long as a paratrooper walks this earth, Doc, your dad and the men he served with will always be remembered and remembered for their unmatched and everlasting legacy -- most will never be so fortunate. Please allow us to share in your pride for your father. *The Greatest Generation*, indeed.





# Ohio vets missing out on bonuses

By Alan Johnson  
*The Columbus Dispatch*  
[ejohnson@dispatch.com](mailto:ejohnson@dispatch.com)

Although 33,572 Ohio veterans have received bonuses from the state, more than three times that many who are eligible haven't applied.

The Ohio Department of Veterans Services reported yesterday that it has distributed \$27.5 million in bonuses in the past nine months. The money comes from a \$200 million bond issue approved by Ohio voters in November 2009, the first bonus was sent in August 2010 and the program really didn't get rolling until last November.

Former and current personnel who served at least 90 days on active duty are eligible to receive \$100 per month of service for duty in the Persian Gulf theater, Afghanistan or Iraq, up to a maximum of \$1,000. Veterans who served elsewhere in the world during those conflicts can receive \$50 per month of duty up to \$500.

To be eligible, veterans must have been Ohio residents now and when they served.

Tom Moe, veterans services director, said he believes *"there's a lot more out there who are eligible, so we're making every effort to be sure that everyone who's qualified for the bonus gets it."*

***"This is real money for veterans, for whatever purpose they need or desire," Moe said. "We know that the bonus has already made a difference in the lives of over 33,500 Ohioans."***

The state's tradition of offering bonuses to Ohio veterans dates to the Civil War.

The agency doesn't have an exact number of eligible veterans, but it estimates that more than 100,000 have not applied for the bonus.

For information, call toll-free 1-877-644-6838, or visit [www.veterans-bonus.ohio.gov](http://www.veterans-bonus.ohio.gov)

[Sent in by Steve Vargo, C/2/503d]

## HOOK UP!

I met a guy the other night and found out that his uncle was KIA on 22 June 67. He is retired Sergeant Major Michael Schroeder. His uncle was LT Richard E. Hood the platoon leader of 2nd platoon. He wants to contact anyone who was a survivor and was down there with him. If there is anyone who was there or that knew LT Hood, please contact Michael at [mschroeder65@yahoo.com](mailto:mschroeder65@yahoo.com)

Les Fuller  
A/2/503d

## MEMORIAL FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 11 JUNE 2011 HONORS CEREMONY

The 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation is pleased to announce that a formal "Honors Ceremony" will be held at the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial at the National Infantry Museum campus on Saturday, 11 June, at 1000 hours.

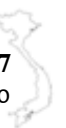


This Ceremony will honor the **Ken at dedication of the** nine warriors who fell during **173d Airborne Memorial** Operation Enduring Freedom X in Afghanistan, as the Foundation unveils their names on the panels commemorating our fallen. The Memorial Foundation also will add the name of a fallen Vietnam warrior to the list of our brothers who died so long ago.

The name of SSG Salvatore Giunta will be added to the roster of those who have been awarded the Medal of Honor while serving in the 173d Airborne Brigade. This brings to fourteen the names of those so honored.

All Sky Soldiers, families, and friends are invited to attend this brief but meaningful ceremony. When plans for the event are finalized, information will be placed on our website ([www.173dairbornememorial.org](http://www.173dairbornememorial.org)).

Ken Smith  
A/D/2/503d





He swims with the fishes.

