

# Texas Chapter 13 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade Association



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## 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Chapter 13 Meeting

The meeting will be held in Port Aransas TX on May 17<sup>th</sup> at VFW Post 8967, 311 N. Alister St. Port Aransas 78373. We held a meeting at the VFW a couple of years ago so some of you may remember where it is.

The meeting will start at 1:00 PM with the VFW opening at 12:00 PM.

Lunch will **not** be provided as there are many eating establishments close to the VFW. So you should eat lunch, if you want, before coming to the VFW.

The Alister Square Inn is just a couple of blocks away and offers rooms for \$75.00, but there are many hotels/motels available in the area. The phone number of the Alister Square Inn is (361) 749-3000 and the address is 122 S. Alister St. Port Aransas.

Point of contact for the meeting is Sonny Garcia (361) 779-7137.

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JR Garza provided the following information for the benefit of chapter members. JR also made an excellent presentation at the San Antonio meeting on changes in VA procedures and how to deal with them.

Concurrent Retirement & Disability Pay

(800) 312-1080

<http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/disability/crdp.html>

Report a retired soldier's death

Call HQDA Casualty Operations Center (800) 626-3317

DFAS

(800) 321-1080

<http://www.dfas.mil/myPay>

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# Texas Chapter 13

## 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade Association

### 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Meeting in San Antonio (Summary)

1. Call to order
  - a. The meeting was called to order promptly at 1:05 by President John Barthelemy.
  - b. The invocation was given by Santiago Krummel.
  - c. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice-President Reyes Rios
  - d. An opening statement was made by John Barthelemy
  - e. A rollcall and introductions was conducted. A count of 22 chapter members was made, along with 10 spouses/guests. Those in attendance were:
    - i. Manuel Mermea
    - ii. Jason Brooks
    - iii. Russell Walter
    - iv. Fred Balderrama
    - v. JR Garza
    - vi. Santiago Krummel
    - vii. Leo Martinez
    - viii. John Mason
    - ix. Frank Martinez
    - x. John Barthelemy
    - xi. Michael Sparks
    - xii. Reyes Rios
    - xiii. Eric Hitchcock
    - xiv. Roberto Ybarra
    - xv. Kermit Maass
    - xvi. Robert Gonzalez
    - xvii. Roberto Sifuentes
    - xviii. Harold Brent
    - xix. Gary Granade
    - xx. Martin Sanchez
    - xxi. Augustin Soto
    - xxii. Sonny Garcia
2. Reading of Previous Minutes:
  - a. The reading of the minutes was conducted by Manny Mermea. A discussion of the minutes was held and then a motion was made by Gary Granade to accept the minutes. This was then seconded by Leo Martinez. A vote was held and the minutes were accepted.
3. Reports of the Officers
  - a. President/Vice President: No Report
  - b. Secretary/Treasurer:
    - i. The Chapter financial report was made by Harold Brent. The report was discussed and a motion was made by Sonny Garcia to accept it. This was seconded by Santiago Krummel, was voted on and accepted.
4. Committee Reports
  - a. Fund Raisers - Paul Reed, no report
  - b. The various regional representative discussed issues pertaining to the areas

# Texas Chapter 13

## 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade Association

5. Unfinished/Continuing Business: various items were discussed and will be detailed in the reading of the minutes at the next chapter meeting.
6. The meeting was adjourned.

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### The Wall

A little history most people will never know.

Interesting veterans statistics off the Vietnam Memorial Wall

There are 58,267 names now listed on that polished black wall, including those added in 2010.

The names are arranged in the order in which they were taken from us by date and within each date the names are alphabetized. It is hard to believe it is 36 years since the last casualties.

The first known casualty was Richard B. Fitzgibbon, of North Weymouth , Mass. Listed by the U.S. Department of Defense as having been killed on June 8, 1956. His name is listed on the Wall with that of his son, Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Richard B. Fitzgibbon III, who was killed on Sept. 7, 1965.

There are three sets of fathers and sons on the Wall.

39,996 on the Wall were just 22 or younger.

8,283 were just 19 years old.

The largest age group, 33,103, were 18 years old.

12 soldiers on the Wall were 17 years old.

5 soldiers on the Wall were 16 years old.

One soldier, PFC Dan Bullock was 15 years old.

997 soldiers were killed on their first day in Vietnam ....

1,448 soldiers were killed on their last day in Vietnam ....

31 sets of brothers are on the Wall.

Thirty one sets of parents lost two of their sons.

54 soldiers attended Thomas Edison High School in Philadelphia . I wonder why so many from one school.

8 Women are on the Wall. Nursing the wounded.

244 soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War; 153 of them are on the Wall.

# Texas Chapter 13

## 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade Association

Beallsville, Ohio with a population of 475 lost 6 of her sons.

West Virginia had the highest casualty rate per capita in the nation. There are 711 West Virginians on the Wall.

### The Marines of Morenci -

They led some of the scrappiest high school football and basketball teams that the little Arizona copper town of Morenci (pop. 5,058) had ever known and cheered.

They enjoyed roaring beer busts. In quieter moments, they rode horses along the Coronado Trail, stalked deer in the Apache National Forest.

And in the patriotic camaraderie typical of Morenci's mining families, the nine graduates of Morenci High enlisted as a group in the Marine Corps.

Their service began on Independence Day, 1966. Only 3 returned home.

The Buddies of Midvale - LeRoy Tafoya, Jimmy Martinez, Tom Gonzales were all boyhood friends and lived on three consecutive streets in Midvale, Utah on Fifth, Sixth and Seventh avenues. They lived only a few yards apart. They played ball at the adjacent sandlot ball field. And they all went to Vietnam. In a span of 16 dark days in late 1967, all three would be killed. LeRoy was killed on Wednesday, Nov. 22, the fourth anniversary of John F. Kennedy's assassination. Jimmy died less than 24 hours later on Thanksgiving Day. Tom was shot dead assaulting the enemy on Dec. 7, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.

The most casualty deaths for a single day was on January 31, 1968 ~ 245 deaths.

The most casualty deaths for a single month was May 1968 - 2,415 casualties were incurred.

For most Americans who read this they will only see the numbers that the Vietnam War created.

To those of us who survived the war, and to the families of those who did not, we see the faces, we feel the pain that these numbers created.

We are, until we too pass away, haunted with these numbers, because they were our friends, fathers, husbands, wives, sons and daughters.

There are no noble wars, just noble warriors.

# Texas Chapter 13 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade Association

*In Memory of*  
**Abelardo V. Miranda**  
June 1, 1936 - March 22, 2014



Sky Soldier Abel Miranda, pictured above, passed on March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2014.

Abel served with the original 503d Regiment in Okinawa before it was reorganized and became the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate), later to join it in Vietnam, both times with D Company, 16th Armor. Throughout his final years, he was very active with different activities within the chapter, as much as his physical status allowed.

Burial services were conducted at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery

## 2014 Calendar of Events

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Meeting: Port Aransas TX - May 17<sup>th</sup>  
3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Meeting: Ft. Worth TX - Date TBA  
4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Meeting: Plantersville TX - Date TBA  
2-14 Reunion: Ft. Benning GA - June 18-22

# Texas Chapter 13 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade Association

The Wolfman has a birthday!



**Jason Brooks, Tom Murray, Billy Robinson, Casey Kiernan,  
Fred Balderrama, Frank Martinez, Jimmy Then, JR Garza**