

# Sky Soldier

Magazine

Summer 2014  
Vol 30 No.3



## The Herd Foundation Scholarship Recipients

Army Staff Sergeant Receives  
**MEDAL of HONOR**

COL CONRAD WALKER  
1932 - 2014

**CALIFORNIA,  
HERE WE COME  
The 2015 Reunion**

173d Airborne Brigade Association  
Membership  
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Norwood, MA 02062-1504

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# Local Association Chapters

- 1 Sigholtz-Capital Chapter, Washington, D.C., Area
- 2 Lozada-Watters Chapter, New York
- 3 Columbus / Ft. Benning Chapter
- 4 Glenn H. English Chapter, Philadelphia, Pa.
- 5 Fort Bragg, North Carolina Chapter
- 6 Elite Forces, Chicago Chapter
- 7 Florida Chapter
- 8 Inland Northwest Chapter
- 9 New England Chapter
- 10 Western States Chapter, California
- 11 Down Under Chapter Australia NSW
- 13 Texas Chapter
- 14 Southern California Chapter
- 15 Weber/Taylor Chapter, Minneapolis, Minn.
- 16 Col. Richard (Rawhide) Boland Chapter, Washington State
- 17 Mid-West-States, Ohio Chapter
- 18 Larry Pierce Chapter, Oklahoma
- 19 New Zealand Chapter
- 23 Queensland Chapter, Australia
- 24 Rochester, Minnesota Chapter
- 25 Thunderbird Chapter Phoenix, Arizona
- 27 Victoria Southern States Australia
- 28 San Diego Chapter, California
- 29 Lawrence (Larry) Joel Chapter, Nevada
- 30 South Carolina Chapter
- 173 Europe, (Italy & Germany) Chapter

## Sky Soldier Publication Deadlines

Issue	Article Submission Deadline	Publication Date
SPRING	15 March	15 April
SUMMER	15 June	15 July
FALL	15 September	15 October
WINTER	15 December	15 January

When submitting material for publication please send information as a text file via e-mail or in a Word document, **using complete sentences and paragraphs**. Indicate if it is an article or if it is "Chapter News." Please send photos as separate **high resolution (300 DPI)** PDF, TIF, EPS, or JPEG files. If possible, please identify the people and the activity in the photo.

If submitting an article from another publication, please obtain permission to reprint it in *Sky Soldier Magazine*. Include the name of that publication, the original date of publication, original author, and if applicable the photographer's name.



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Scan the QR code or go to [www.skysoldiers.net](http://www.skysoldiers.net) for more information on the 173d Airborne Brigade Association

*About the Cover:* The riderless horse being led in the funeral procession of COL Conrad “Connie” Walker, retired chaplain. A single riderless horse that follows the caisson with boots reversed in the stirrups is called the “caparisoned horse” in reference to its ornamental coverings, which have a detailed protocol. By tradition in military funeral honors, a caparisoned horse follows the casket of an Army or Marine Corps officer who was a colonel or above, or the casket of an American president.



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Roy F. Scott

# From the President

“It is time to work smarter not harder.”



**A** Hearty Airborne, to our Membership. We of the Association just returned from an outstanding reunion sponsored by Chapter 5, The Fort Bragg, Fayetteville North Carolina, chapter. I took my basic training at Fort Bragg. Many of the membership served with the 82nd. It was like going home. I told my wife as soon as I could find a certain lounge downtown, I would know where I was. I was so wrong. I could not find the Lounge!

I want to thank Jose and all members of Chapter 5 for their hard work—a **great job, Airborne Soldiers!**

Chapter 14 is working with Chapter 28 on “Stand in the Door,” our 2015 Reunion to be held in Beautiful San Diego, California. Wambi Cook of Chapter 14, in conjunction with our California chapters, has been working hard to provide a great reunion for our membership. The reunion will be held at the Town and Country Resort and Convention Center Hotel. [www.towncountry.com](http://www.towncountry.com). You may call (619) 291-7131 (or read pages 22-24) for more information.

Chapter 29, our Nevada Chapter, is now known as the Lawrence “Larry” Joel Chapter. It is a great honor for the Association and their Chapter membership. The Association’s 2016 Reunion will be held at Fort Benning in Columbus, Georgia. At the Mid-Winter Conference in January of this year, no chapter requested to sponsor the 2016 reunion, and I awarded it to Chapter 30.

**Thoughts of our Future.** In January 2008 I was given the task of looking to the future by formulating ideas regarding the improvement of how we do business as an organization. Since then, I have attended Army Division Association meetings and obtained valuable insight into how other associations operate. From this opportunity, I see ways we can improve. I use the word *improve* because the word *change* is very hard to accept as we get older.

It is time to work smarter not harder. The society, when formed, was financed by membership dues and 50 per cent of our reunion profits, per the bylaws. We now are operating as an Association. Membership is growing, from 4500 members to 5300, but since 2006 the Association has received profits from only

two chapters, Chapter 5 and Chapter 30, who have held reunions. Many chapters do not want to sponsor reunions. They want to enjoy a reunion, but do not seem to want work it.

Today we have membership, a yearly raffle, and coin sales. We have established Chapter 173 located in Europe; Colonel Foster and CSM Clark are great supporters of the Association. We still has 4546 inactive members who we cannot locate. Earlier this year, we had 338 Viet Nam members who joined. They stated, “We did not know about the Association.” In the upcoming year, I will work to strengthen our administrative and financial base by the following:

- 1) continue the yearly raffle;
- 2) increase membership (I will request the chapters take a more active role in locating members assigned to their chapters as well as working with Chapter 173 of the active Brigade. I will request that chapters advertise in their local newspapers with contact information. I will ask you to display a 173D patch on your automobile. I have been stopped by several veterans when they saw mine.);
- 3) have a calendar produced that will assist with revenue;
- 4) increase reunion profits (We are limiting ourselves with regard to reunion locations. As a member of the Army Division Association, there are many attractive places we can go without changing our bylaws—Branson, Mo., Nashville Tn., Knoxville, Tn., Omaha, Ne. [Heartland Airborne Memorial], Seattle, Wa., or New Orleans, La. These cities want the 173D to hold reunions in their cities. During our recent reunion, I asked Julie Wysong of Armed Forces Reunion Inc. to speak to the membership regarding their services to veteran groups. All AFRI would need is a sponsor, and they will handle all the work. For example, if we chose to hold a reunion in Branson, the closest chapter could be the sponsor. It may well be a small chapter that does not have the membership to work a Reunion but could sponsor the reunion by having AFRI do the



work. The cost is \$7.00 per person, which is paid by the registration fee. Just think about it. We all could attend a Reunion without worry and be able to enjoy our time with friends and family. *Work smarter, not harder.* Finally, the chapter that sponsors the reunion would share in the profits of the reunion.); and

5) The Sky Soldier Store, which will be online and have items for sale at the reunions .

In closing, I have always said the 173D is the most highly decorated combat brigade in the U.S. Army. In February of this year I was informed that the Brigade was expecting one or two Medal of Honor recipients. We now have, Al Rascon, Sal Gunta, Kyle White, and Ryan Pitts. We of the Association are honored

and proud of the Airborne spirit, the valor and courage displayed, not only by our recipients but also by their fellow Sky Soldiers.

Ryan Pitts, July 13, 2008, The Battle of Wanat, said this during a interview, "This medal represents a memorial for the Sky Soldiers who did not come home. Valor was everywhere. We did our job. This is not about me. It's about the guys. I did not earn it; we earned it."

This is why I promote the Memorial located at Fort Benning. As the Association President I can truly say *Our Fallen will never be forgotten.* Thanks to the work of the Memorial Foundation.

During our executive committee meeting at the reunion, I made a statement, "The hardest obstacle between the association, membership, and the chapters is trust." The present executive

committee and the appointed officers have one thing in mind. That is to accomplish the mission given and contribute to the welfare of our membership.

I have seen and heard of past officers and appointed individuals who have misused their positions. There are individuals who have misused the trust that was given. At the upcoming mid-winter conference, I will request the executive committee add a disciplinary section to our bylaws for individuals who violate them.

A Hearty Airborne  
Ye Iswa  
*Roy F. Scott, Jr.*  
President

## Army Divisions Association Summary of Reunion Sites 1987 - 2014

ADA Members		1 CAV	1st ID	2nd ID	3rd ID	4th ID	5th Rgt.	9th ID	11 CAV	23rd ID	25th ID	29th ID	30th ID	31st ID	70th ID	82d AB	101AB	173 AB	TOTALS	
FAM	LOCATIONS																			
1987	San Antonio, TX			1					1	2			1	1			1	1	8	
1988	Kansas City, MO		1	1					1			1							4	
1989	Dallas, TX			1					1			1							3	
1990	Seattle, WA					1													1	
1991	St. Louis, MO		1	1		1			1	1			1		3		1		10	
1992	Albuquerque, NM			1															1	
1993	Salt Lake City, UT		1													1			2	
1994	The Pines, NY									1			1						2	
1995	Orlando, FL	2	1	1		1			1	2	1	1	1		1				12	
1996	Little Rock, AR			1						1									2	
1997	Colorado Springs, CO	2	2		2	2			2		1						1		12	
1998	Spokane, WA			1		1					1				1				4	
1999	Springfield, MO					1					1			1					3	
2000	Hampton, VA										1	1					2		4	
2001	Valley Forge, PA										2	1	1			1			5	
2002	Milwaukee, WI	2				1							2			1	1		7	
2003	Biloxi, MS													1					1	
2004	Buffalo, NY	1	3		1				1	1						3	1		11	
2005	Norfolk, VA					1										2			3	
2006	Baton Rouge, LA			1															1	
2007	Lancaster/Val Forge, PA											1			1				2	
2008	Springfield, IL				1	F													1	
2009	Lexington, KY					F					1						1	1	3	
2010	Columbus, GA			1	4	F			F		1			1					7	
2011	Bowling Green, KY											1							1	
2012	Springfield, MO											1							1	
2013	DuPage Co., IL	F										2							2	
2014	Knoxville, TN																		0	
	TOTALS	7	9	10	8	9			8	8	9	8	9	4	6	8	8	2	113	
Future																		05/13		



Terry Aubrey

“ It is incumbent upon us to look at what changes need to be made.”



# From the Vice President

Summer is in full swing and the reunion at Fort Bragg is now history. I was never stationed at Bragg like so many of you were and it was good to hear the stories of days gone by. It is always a pleasure to watch those who have not seen one another in many years reunite and pick right up where they left off. During the reunion, the Board of Directors held their annual meeting at which time the Executive Committee members submitted their activity reports. Usually these reports are presented at the general membership meeting. However, the physical constraints of the facility caused some difficulty so some of the information did not get presented. That being the case, I thought I would submit the Vice President's report to be included in this issue of *Sky Soldier*.

As you read through the report please make special note of the section on copyright. I need those of you who bought hats, shirts, etc. at reunions or or chapter events with *Sky Soldier* on it to contact me. We need examples of clothing or challenge coins that date back as far as we can get. We need to establish tenure with the U.S. Copyright Office, and these samples will be of great benefit. With that in mind, I submit my report to you.

### 50th Anniversary Coin

The official 50th Anniversary Coin became available for sale to the general membership in the spring edition of *Sky Soldier* magazine. The first orders for coins came in around

May 2, 2014, and by June 8 were sold out. Preliminary figures show that the association sold approximately 525 coins for a net gain of \$9800.00. Unfortunately, several coin requests had to be returned. The executive committee discussed having another run of coins produced but determined that this would diminish the special offering of a limited edition.

The artwork on the coin has been reproduced into 20" x 24" prints that were available for sale at the Fort Bragg Reunion. We have 30 remaining prints and will establish an order system if there is demand for it. The prints sell for \$30.00 each.

Work has already begun on the 50th Anniversary Coin commemorating the deployment of the 173 Airborne Brigade (Sep.) to Vietnam. The artist has submitted some rough drafts of the artwork, depicting a Huey slick coming in with troops on the LZ and a Chinook in the air with a 105 slung below. This coin will be the same size as the former anniversary coin and, as the artwork is being done as a watercolor, I may do a full color stamping rather than the 3D version on the previous coin. I am working to have this available for sale in the magazine just prior to the reunion in San Diego. Since this will also be a limited edition, hopefully we will have some of them available at the reunion as well.

### Copyright/Trademark

At the Mid-Winter Conference I reported to you that we had applied for a Trademark

Registration for “Sky Soldier” and “Sky Soldiers” with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). Recently we received notice of refusal from the USPTO for both trademarks. It appears that the Army Aviation Heritage Foundation and Museum, Inc., has had a trademark for “Sky Soldier” since 11/20/2007 and reported the first use on 08/01/2001. In addition to putting on air shows, they sell merchandise labeled with Sky Soldier. Our lawyer and I met to discuss our options and to develop a course of action. It was decided that we should stay under the radar and gather evidence to support our use of *Sky Soldier* prior to August 2001. Therefore, I am requesting those of you who know of, or have, any clothing articles that were sold or distributed by the Society/Association prior to the year 2001 to contact me. Early editions of the magazine and membership cards may also be of some help. The main thing appears to be clothing articles. Depending upon the evidence we have, we may contest the registration or ask them to co-exist.

On another note it was brought to our attention that someone was selling items with the Association’s Logo on Cafepress.com. I investigated and found this to be true and filed a complaint with Cafepress.com concerning intellectual property infringement. I listed the articles for sale and included a copy of our logo and copyright. In less than 12 hours the Sky Soldier Store in question ceased to exist. I expressed our appreciation for their prompt action.

During the Mid-Winter Conference we talked about developing a policy for the use of the logo and other trademarks owned by the 173rd Brigade Association. Until the trademark issue for “Sky Soldier(s)” is resolved, it would be premature to develop such a policy.

Roy Scott has asked me to look into the

possibility of using Cafepress.com for our online store. They provide the merchandise with the association logo and do all the payment collections, shipping, and returns. We buy the item from them at a 40 percent discount and receive 15 percent of all items sold. I feel this could be the best option at present to begin our online store. However, further study needs to be made as to cost from other vendors, shipping expense and payment collections before we open the store. It is a very simple process for the association and we would not have to maintain an inventory of goods as well as shipping and other associated functions.

### **One Final Comment**

Back in May around the time of the Kentucky Derby I had received a distress call from Art Van Allen, President of Chapter 3. He informed me that the chapter was down to about four guys who participate and felt like the chapter could terminate if something doesn’t change. Since I had to be in Charleston, S.C., on business I told Art I would swing by Ft. Benning and we could discuss the issues. On my way south I stopped at Columbia, S.C., and had lunch with Lester Yearling. We talked about the plans for the 2016 reunion that his chapter is co-hosting with Chapter 3 at Fort Benning. Lester shared similar concerns about the need to recruit some of the new Sky Soldiers and get them involved with the Chapters. As I talked with others it is apparent that this 30-year gap will eventually have an effect on activity within the Chapters. Think about it. The new brigade—as we call it—has been in existence longer than the original one. These vets are still establishing their families and careers and for the most part have very little time for involvement in outside activities. In view of these facts it seems there is a growing lack of interest and participation in local chapters.

It is incumbent upon us to look at how we’ve been doing business and what changes need to be made to become more viable chapters. In the case of Chapter 3, there are nearly 200 active duty personnel at Fort Benning who wear the 173rd patch and over 60 Association members living in Columbus. Maybe a change of venue for meetings would help. Look for new, contemporary projects and events. While at Benning I looked up LTC Brian McDonald. He is now the Deputy Commander of the Ranger and Airborne Schools and former Rear Detachment Commander during the last deployment. We talked about the lack of participation and what changes or events need to take place. One suggestion he has is to have a satellite location at Fort Benning for the 8th Of November Run. This could be a huge benefit to the community and chapter. To sum it up, we need to take a look around and identify those things that are unique to each of our chapter’s locations and develop new and exciting events, meeting places, and projects.

There are newer generation vets who are interested and will begin to fill the voids. During this same time I had been contacted by Kevin Reiseiter, Iraq vet, about starting a chapter. I recently talked with Kevin and there is a growing interest among his contemporaries to work on getting a new chapter established.

Again, it has been an extreme pleasure to serve as your Vice President.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Terry Aubrey*







Tim Austin

# From the Secretary

**We all wore the patch with pride and distinction.”**



**F**irst, I thank all who voted for me in this past election. I just wish more members had voted. Thank you again for allowing me to be your Secretary.

Wasn't the reunion fantastic? I thank Chapter 5, Jose, and his crew for such a great time. I am sure all agree it was worth the trip if all you did was go to the Saturday night banquet! Just hearing the 82nd Airborne Division Glee Club is well worth the trip. Thank you to Chapter 5. At this reunion, seems there were more of the younger Sky Soldiers there than in the past. Hopefully this will continue and you younger guys will be able to step forward and take over the reins of the Association. Thank y'all for coming and look forward to seeing more of you each year.

Now, we get ready for a short year and head to San Diego, California on 2 - 6 May 2015. I am sure Wambi will have a great reunion planned. I will be there early and stay a few days after to "see the sights." I want all of you to join me there. Remember, we will be having a DRESS banquet the evening of the fifth of May. Please, all bring appropriate clothes. The guys who come from the active Brigade have to wear their dress uniforms and we are really dishonoring them by not wearing shoes, long pants, shirt, tie, and coat. Please, all make an effort to dress up. I know many no longer dress up, but it will not hurt any of us to do this one time a year.

We here in the Association are moving at

a fast pace. The Brigade is doing much, and covering all of it is almost impossible. As y'all know, the Brigade had Kyle White receive a Medal of Honor just prior to the reunion. Hopefully he will be at the next reunion and many others in the future. We have just received word that Ryan Pitts will be honored on 21 July with the same medal. For me, it has been a pleasure. Ryan, he himself, called and asked me to attend the ceremony. Of course I will be there. What an honor!

After the reunion I went to Montana and had a wonderful trip. The camping was great, only had to walk half-mile to get into the camp site and that at 7600+ feet in altitude, what a trip for an old man out of shape. I must do something about that!

I am encouraging all chapters to get their chapter articles in to me so they can be included in all future magazines. Please get these in so that all can see what you as a chapter are doing, where and how often you meet, and how the guys in your area can join in and make a difference. Remember, we all wore the patch with pride and distinction. We all need to step forward and get the word out to have all government employees give to the CFC for the 173rd Airborne Brigade Association Federation. We all need to work together to get this moving better each year. The more we forward on this, the better it will be for all. We will be able to give more scholarships and possibly more to each scholarship.

As each of you learn of the death of your buddies, please send that to me so I can include it in the next magazine. As you can see from the last several issues we are starting to include these. Please send an obituary if you have one as well as when and in what unit in the Brigade the person served. Thank y'all in advance.

The last topic I am discussing is the Field Artillery Officer Candidate School. I know there are many who graduated from there and then served in the Brigade. At the last reunion, I was the only one from the Brigade who attended. Next year I encourage all to attend and we can show the effect that FAOCS had upon the Brigade. I know many of you have been to these reunions in the past, and some of you have never been. Please plan on being there for the 2015 reunion. They are, of all places, at Fort

Sill, Oklahoma. Many of us who graduated from there and then served with the Herd do not have great memories of the place. We were just glad to get out with a commission, but it is a chance to reconnect with others from our classes. I have one classmate who graduated with me and then went to the Herd. Will not mention his name, but I do hope to see you there next year. OK? I do not know if y'all know, but the FAOCS was the most difficult of the Officer Candidate Programs the US Army had and only 60 percent of those who started were able to complete. So that was a great accomplishment, even before having the privilege of serving with the Herd.

Look forward to seeing each of you next year in San Diego. Have a great summer!

Tim Austin

# The Official 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Coin "The Legacy Continues"



**SOLD OUT**

From the day the 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade (SEP) was organized in March 1963, Sky Soldiers have been leading a combat legacy second to none. Now, to honor five decades of valiant service, the 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade Association is pleased to offer this limited edition coin commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Brigade. There are only 600 number of coins in this edition. Each coin is 2-3/4 inches in diameter. The relief artwork on the reverse is in a gold tone depicting the continuance of the combat legacy with Sky Soldier against a backdrop of the coastal mountains of Vietnam and the snow-capped Sky Soldier rising over the mountains of Afghanistan.

These special edition coins are only available through the 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade Association. They are \$25.00 each, including shipping. Act quickly to secure your coin and join the brave and loyal accomplished coins. Don't miss out on this special edition. Order yours now by completing the order form.

**SOLD OUT**

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 Number of Coins @ \$25.00 each \_\_\_\_\_ Total amount: \_\_\_\_\_

**SOLD OUT**

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# 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial Foundation

By Ken Smith

## 2013 DISTINGUISHED AND HONORARY MEMBERS OF THE 503D INFANTRY REGIMENT

Honorary Colonel of the 503d Infantry Regiment Kenneth Smith and Honorary Regimental Sergeant Major Richard Weik would like to recognize the 2013 Class of Distinguished and Honorary Members of the Regiment.

**DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE REGIMENT** Dennis Hill has been active in the 173d Airborne Brigade's New England Chapter for several years. He volunteered to be the Association's National Membership Chairman where his energy, ideas, and work ethic helped make the current 173d Association membership responsive and increased active membership. He was instrumental in arranging for a local library to scan 173d yearbooks so they are now available on line. Dennis served in 1-503 and 3-503 in the Republic of Vietnam.

**DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE REGIMENT** Peter Klausner, past President of Chapter IX, created the impressive website for the New England Chapter as well as website for the Fourth Battalion, 503d Infantry, 1966 - 1967. In his efforts to update membership in Chapter 9 and the Fourth Battalion, he teamed with Dennis Hill to run the 173d Association Membership Program. Peter developed a significantly improved database, removed duplicate names and names of those who were deceased, updated information, and made the membership system responsive to the Association leadership. Peter served with 4-503 in the Republic of Vietnam.

**DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE REGIMENT** LTC Michael Healy was the Battalion Commander when the Fourth Battalion deployed to Vietnam to augment the 173d Airborne Brigade as the third maneuver battalion. He retained command of the 4-503d Infantry from June 1966 to February



1967. During his command, the Battalion received the Navy PUC for actions in the Da Nang area in the fall of 1966. In the early years after Vietnam, he stayed in contact with as many Fourth Battalion veterans as possible and arranged informal get-togethers. He was the catalyst for the initial Fourth Battalion reunion at Ft. Bragg seven years ago which resulted in finding 400 men who served with the Fourth Battalion from June 1966 to June 1967.

**HONORARY MEMBER OF THE REGIMENT** Ray Payne was the first Australian member of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) Association, joining in 1985. In 1979, Ray was prominent in a committee to build a memorial commemorating the initial deployment of Australian combat troops to South Vietnam that was dedicated 1985. Ray was instrumental in the birth of the 1RAR Association in 1987 and then formed the Association of 1RAR Infantry Battalions, serving as both Honorary Secretary and President. He also was instrumental in forming the first chapter of the 173d Airborne Brigade Society in Australia and was key in the successful five-year fight to have the 1RAR Group awarded the United States Meritorious Unit Citation in July 1991. Ray was appointed as Southern Hemisphere Liaison to the 173d Airborne Brigade Association by its president in 1996 and subsequently has served with distinction in that capacity. Ray served with the First Battalion Royal Australian Regiment in the Republic of Vietnam.

**HONORARY MEMBER OF THE REGIMENT** Chaplain Steve Cantrell served with distinction as a member of the 173d Airborne Brigade and is one of three US Army Chaplains to make a night combat parachute assault into Bashur, Iraq, on March 26, 2003. Since returning to the United States, Chaplain Cantrell has been an active supporter of the 173d Airborne Brigade Association, participating in all Memorial Foundation ceremonies and events and currently serves as a member of the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation Advisory Committee.

**HONORARY MEMBER OF THE REGIMENT** Mrs. Karen Riestler has actively supported the 503d Infantry Regiment Heritage, being heavily involved in activities of the Rochester Chapter of the 173d Airborne Brigade Association including two annual Association meetings where she organized Gold Star meetings and arranged for guest speakers who addressed mental and emotional issues of concern to this elite group of individuals. From 2005 to the present, Mrs. Riestler actively supported the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation and subsequently became a member of its Board of Directors. In the Rochester community Mrs. Riestler served as the Family Readiness Group leader for a Rochester National Guard unit deployed to Iraq in 2008, in the absence of community members familiar with Army protocol, OPSEC and organizational aspects of the National Guard's integration into the active component.

### 2014 MEMORIAL FOUNDATION HONORS CEREMONY

"The Fallen will never be forgotten and the unveiling of these 13 names is partial fulfillment of this pledge."

With these words, National Memorial Foundation President COL (R) Ken Smith assured 19 Gold Star family members gather at the



173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial, along with nearly one hundred friends and Sky Soldiers, that the Brigade's fallen warriors would forever be remembered whenever their comrades gathered together.

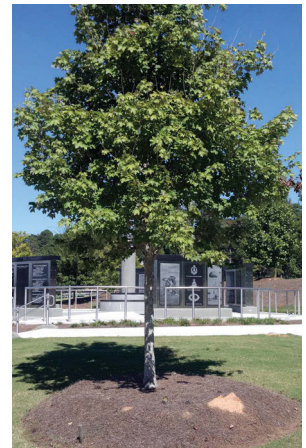
LTC Brian McDonald, the Brigade Rear Detachment commander during OEF XIII and COL Andrew Rohling, the Brigade Commander at that time, both spoke glowingly of the service and sacrifice of the fallen as well as the courage and dedication of all the Sky Soldiers who served during this challenging conflict.

National Memorial Foundation Board of Directors members escorted the Gold Star families into the inner circle of the Memorial, where each of the 13 names was read and then unveiled, one by one, on the panel listing those who fell.

National Memorial Foundation Advisory Board Member LTC (CH) Steve Cantrell, joined by MAJ (CH) Eddie Cook provided a moving invocation and Ms. Celeste Mabry-Lee graced the event with a moving rendition of the National Anthem. At the conclusion of the ceremony, final honors were rendered and the haunting sounds of "Taps" brought tears to many eyes.

### IN MEMORY OF "UNCLE JACK"

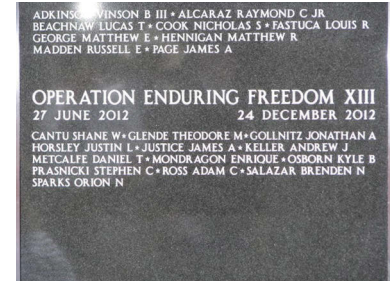
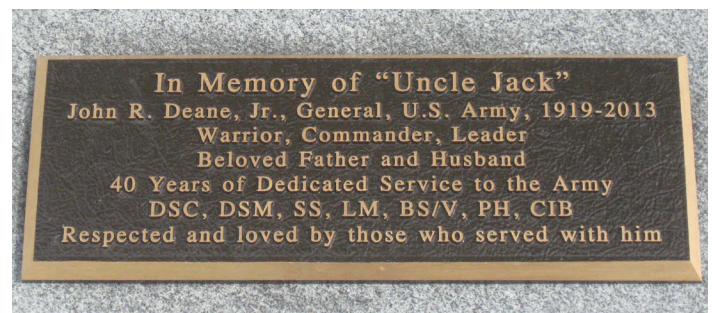
On Friday, 13 June, at 1700 hours, a group of General John R. Deane's friends and family gathered together adjacent to the 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial on the National Infantry Foundation's "Walk of Honor" to dedicate a tree in Memory of Uncle Jack.



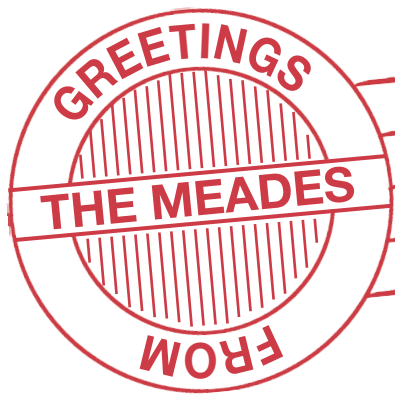
General Deane commanded the 173d Airborne Brigade in 1967 during which the unit operated throughout III Corps and he led the only mass parachute assault conducted during the Vietnam conflict. His command tour extended through the late summer of 1967 when the Brigade deployed into the II Corps area including Dak To.

General (R) William Richardson and COL (R) Ken Smith spoke at the brief but moving ceremony, characterizing General Deane as a man of both tremendous physical and moral courage, loved by the soldiers who served under his command. His awards include two Distinguished Service Crosses, the Distinguished Service Medal, two Silver Star Medals, the Legion of Merit, the Silver Star and the Purple Heart.

General Deane devoted his life to his country, the military and to his family. Though he served in and commanded a number of military units, Ken Smith noted that the 173d Airborne Brigade seemed to be his favorite.







# Wish you were here!

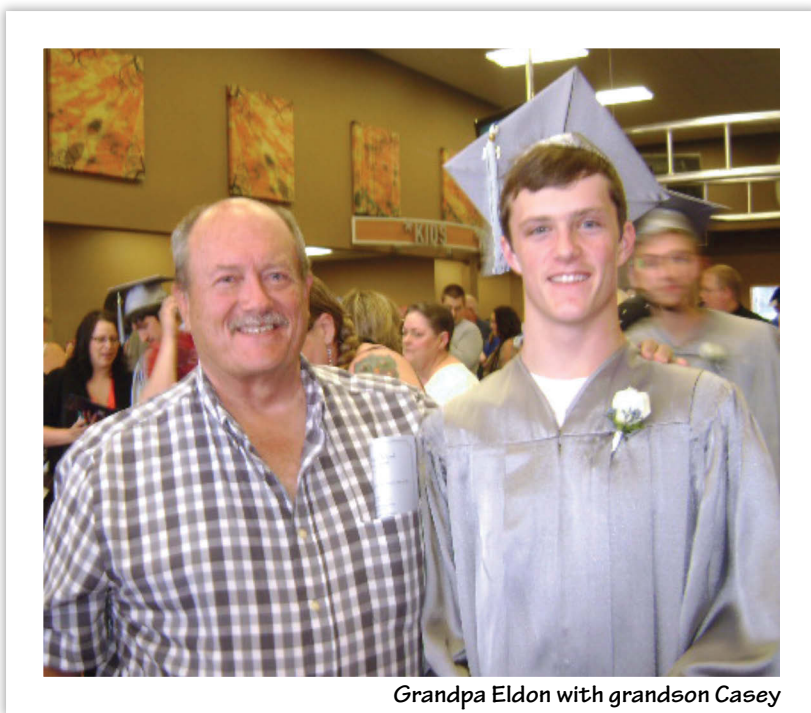
## The 2014 Summer Grand Tour of Eldon and Kathy Meade

### Kathy and I started our travels after Memorial Day.

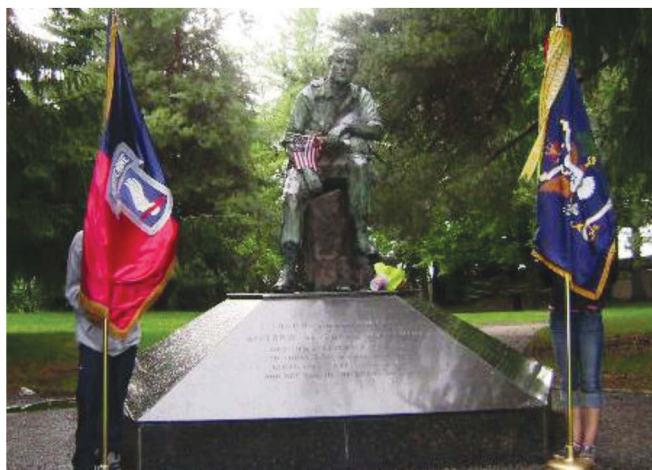
Our trip began from Buckeye Arizona by going to Washington State, Spokane Valley, for the graduation of our grandson Casey Meade. Casey graduated on **5 JUNE** from Barker High School and his parents Eric and Lisa had a graduation party for him on **7 JUNE 2014**.

Inland Northwest Chapter 8 of the 173d Airborne Brigade Association conducted a memorial service at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Spokane's Riverfront Park. The service was held in recognition of the death of LTC John J Clark (Bn Cdr of 3rd Bn, 503rd PIR, KIA) and CPL Joseph Michael Giusta (3rd Plt C Co 3rd Bn 503rd PIR) on 3 June 1970.

The Chapter thanked the Spokane Combat Veterans Association for support shown of Chapter functions. Chapter members Rubin Estrada and Robert Warren are members of the CVA.



Grandpa Eldon with grandson Casey





We continued our travels as we left Spokane, heading to Gillette, Wyo., where my mother lives. We spent two days with her as a rest stop before heading to Fort Benning, Ga. We left Gillette and decided to drive straight through, a little over 26 hours.

We arrived at the Uchee Creek Campground about 7:30 EDT and settled in for the next five days.

**FRIDAY 13 JUNE**, the Nation Infantry Museum and the 173rd National Memorial Foundation held a Memorial Tree dedication ceremony in memory of General John R. Deane Jr.



**SATURDAY 14 JUNE** the 173rd National Memorial Foundation conducted an Honors program at the 173d National Memorial adding the 13 Warriors of the 173d Airborne Brigade Combat Team who fell during Operation Enduring Freedom XIII:

Stephen C. Prasnicki	27 June 2012
Justin L. Horsely	22 July 2012
Brenden N. Salazar	22 July 2012
Adam C. Ross	24 July 2012
Theodore M. Glende	27 July 2012
Andrew J. Keller	15 Aug 2012
James A. Justice	17 Aug 2012
Shane W. Cantu	23 Aug 2012
Kyle B. Osborn	13 Sept 2012
Jonathan A. Gollnitz	26 Sept 2012
Orion N Sparks	26 Sept 2012
Daniel T. Metcalfe	29 Sept 2012
Enrique Mondragon	24 Dec 2012

After the weekend activities, I had the opportunity to visit the United States Airborne School 1st Battalion, 507th PIR. During this visit in coordination with Battalion Commander, I was granted access to everything but could not fly or jump. Ground Branch was not in cycle but I did visit the Airborne Lounge located on Mann Field. The next stop was Jump Branch where I was able to witness the Mission Air Commanders Orientation briefing, Jump Master Inspection of students, Jump Master Inspection of the aircraft (C130), and loading of students. The next stop was the Drop Zone (Fryer DZ) where I was able to locate centerline along with the secondary Drop Zone Safety Officer's position.

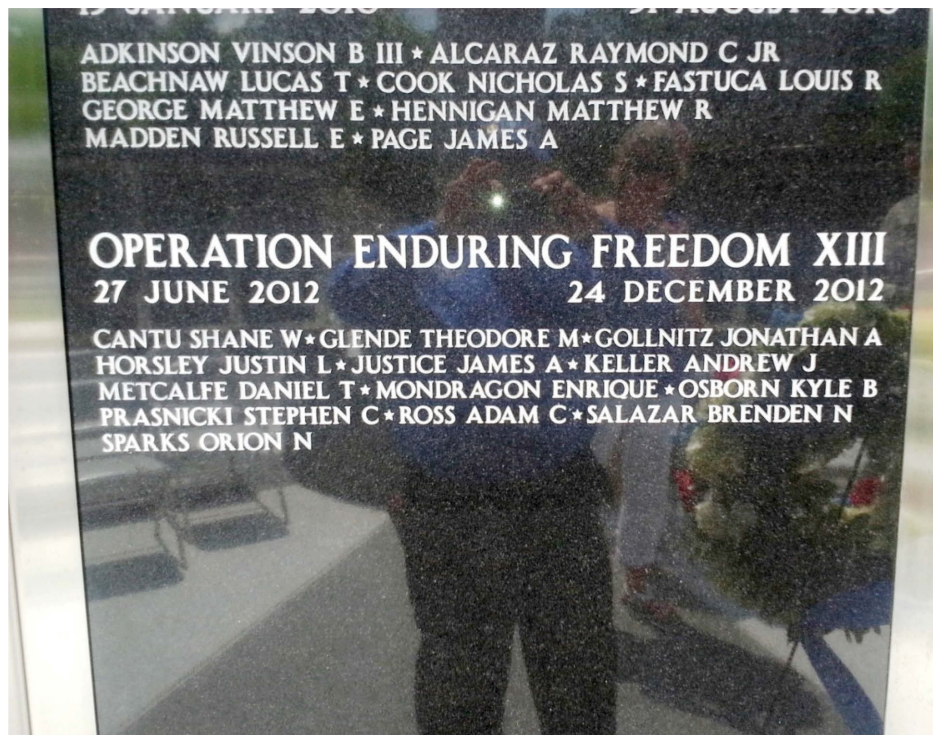


Uchee Creek Campground

The school no longer uses the big sound trailer and the instructors use bullhorns to direct students with hints of what they should do when operating their parachutes in the descent, as well as preparing to land, and actually landing.

**TUESDAY 17 JUNE** I went to Tower Branch where B Co was conducting training on the 34 ft tower, and swing landing on the 250 Ft Tower. The Company also conducted a tower rescue class. There was much in this day that reminded me of the past.

My first encounter with Tower Branch was with Class 17 49th Company of the 4th Student Battalion in 1968. Tower two arm three was my first experience of being hauled aloft, a memorable event for a 17-year-old. I would later become an instructor in 1980-81 and again 1990-92, both at



Tower. I also was selected to train the Egyptian Airborne Command on the use and maintenance of their 250 ft tower in An Shas Egypt in 1991-92. I





later was a private contractor to the Egyptians when they broke and needed updates to equipment in 1997-98.

There are many of the training instruction that are the same and some different. SLT now has a release device that is more consistent in the release of students—no more rope detail or the risk of the jumper jumping off the platform, thus injuring the student or the instructor. The 34 ft tower is a little bit different, as the student is not required to stand at a modified position of parade rest or sound off with four more SGT Airborne when moving up the platform. The exits are also modified with respect to the type of exit used today. *Stand by* is the command before exiting the tower.

The training continued throughout the day making memories for students and the instructor.

**WEDNESDAY 18 JUNE** morning saw Kathy and I set out from Uchee Creek and traveling on to Fayetteville, N.C, for the 173d reunion. We arrived in the late afternoon close to 5:00 pm at our hotel. I went to the host hotel and began the registration process. I stayed and visited with several individuals.

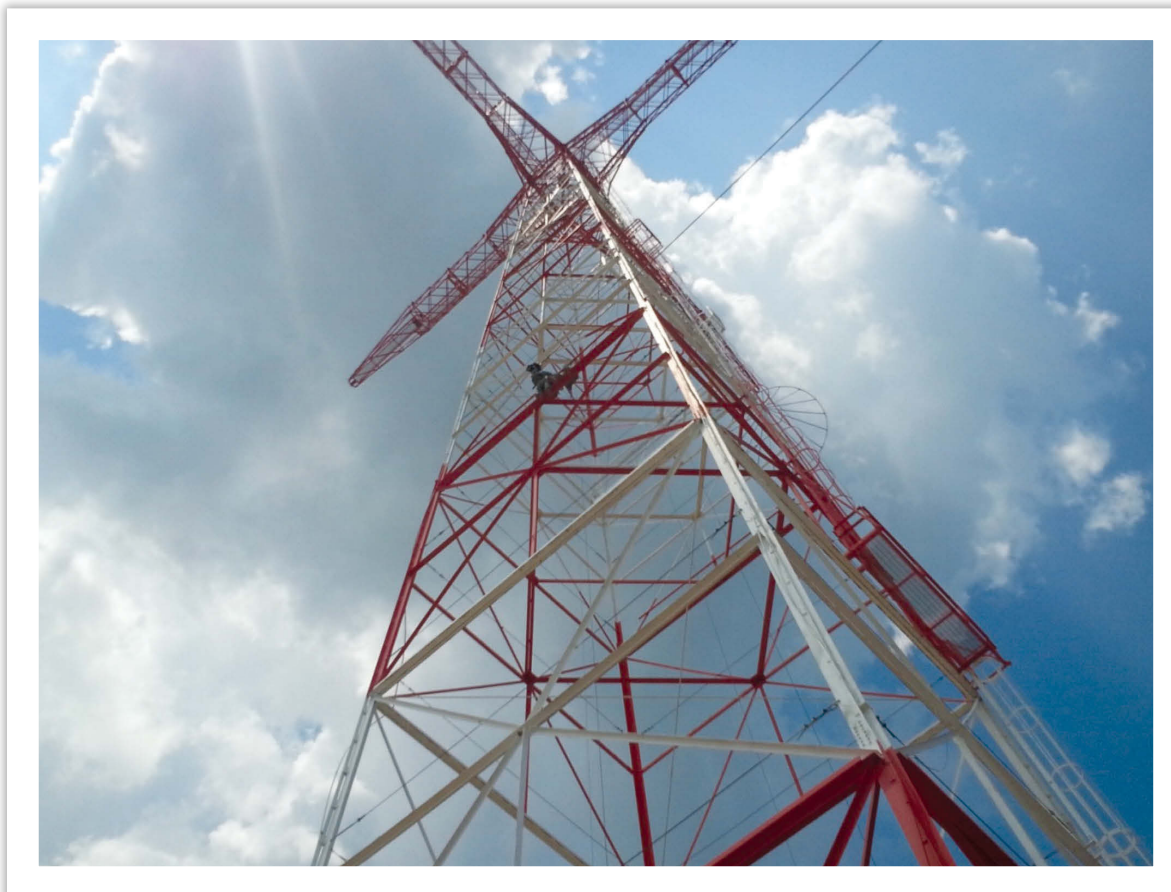


Each of the days brought many good memories of times past and many reflections on the loss of those who have fallen.

**FRIDAY 20 JUNE** the host Chapter 5 had a BBQ on Ft. Bragg. There were many memories of the 82nd as well as the face of new buildings. They reflected change but also maintained similarity. The food was good as was the company of Sky Soldiers and families!

**SATURDAY 21 JUNE** consisted of meetings of the Board of Directors and the General Membership. Much was discussed but little accomplished—on to the mid-winter conference and next year in San Diego. The banquet was very much the high point of the event. The 82nd chorus entertained us with great enthusiasm and spirit. Even the heavy downpour of rain could not mar the evening.

The Reunion closed and the members conducted a memorial service. Sky Soldiers began to return to their respective homes to begin plans for Fourth of July and many other events for the remainder of the year.



**SUNDAY 22 JUNE**

Kathy and I began our travels home by way of Indiana where we visited my nephew and his wife for two days. We left Indiana and traveled to Missouri where we visited Kathy's brother and many family members for two days.

**THURSDAY 26**

**JUNE** saw us set out on the final leg of our journey, traveling through Amarillo, where we spent the night. We arrived home at 5:00 pm **SATURDAY 28 JUNE.**

Our total drive was 8050 miles in 30 days—a grand tour I must say!

To all, it was great to see you. We will be looking forward to next year in San Diego.

# Army Staff Sergeant Receives **MEDAL of HONOR** for Valor at Wanat

By Michelle Tan

[www.armytimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/201406230600/NEWS/306230052](http://www.armytimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/201406230600/NEWS/306230052)



**It was the last bit of darkness before sunrise. A single burst of machine-gun fire rang out across the valley just as a volley of rocket-propelled grenades slammed into Observation Post Topside.**

Then the valley erupted in chaos.

For the next 90 minutes, Sgt. Ryan Pitts and his fellow paratroopers from 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, would fight off a force of more than 200 enemy fighters.

Nine paratroopers gave their lives and 27 were wounded July 13, 2008, in Wanat, Afghanistan, as the men fought to keep the enemy from overrunning OP Topside and Vehicle Patrol Base Kahler.

The Battle of Wanat was one of the deadliest of the war.

Pitts, now a former staff sergeant, is credited with enabling U.S. forces to hold the OP, turning the tide of the battle and protecting fallen Americans from enemy hands.

For his actions, Pitts received the Medal of Honor July 21, 2014

Pitts, 28, will be the ninth living service member to receive the nation's highest award for valor for actions in Afghanistan or Iraq. Seven troops have been posthumously awarded the medal for their actions in those wars.

He also will be the third soldier from 2nd Battalion to receive the MoH for actions during the unit's 2007-2008 deployment to Afghanistan—a deployment that has also yielded a Presidential Unit Citation, a Valorous Unit Award, two Distinguished Service Crosses, 26 Silver Stars, 93 Bronze Stars with V device and 169 Purple Hearts.

Former Staff Sgt. Salvatore Giunta was the first living service member to be honored for his actions in these wars, and former Sgt. Kyle White was honored in May. All three men deployed together in the same battalion in May 2007 for a 15-month deployment to some of the toughest parts of eastern Afghanistan.

Pitts who was medically discharged from the Army in 2009, refused any credit for his actions. He views the MoH as a memorial to the nine soldiers who gave their lives in Wanat.

"I feel a responsibility to tell our story, because there are nine guys that can't," he said.

## **BATTLE OF WANAT**

On July 8, 2008, five days before the battle, 29 paratroopers from 2nd Battalion's Chosen Company, five combat engineers, a two-man Marine Corps embedded training team and 24 Afghan soldiers moved to the Waygal Valley to set up a base in the outskirts of the village named Wanat, according to the narrative accompanying Pitts' award.

Six mortar men and a three-man TOW missile team joined the troops.

The new post was to be called Vehicle Patrol Base Kahler, after Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Kahler, 2nd Platoon's fallen platoon sergeant.



During the Battle of Wanat, Ryan Pitts was a sergeant and 22-years-old. Six years later, he seeks to honor those who died on the battlefield.



Former Staff Sgt. Ryan Pitts is the third member of 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, to earn the Medal of Honor for the unit's 2007-2008 deployment to Afghanistan.

OP Topside was built on a ridge to the east of VPB Kahler, about 100 meters up an incline of terraces.

At 4 a.m. July 13, 2008, the soldiers of 2nd Platoon conducted a stand-to, which had them in full gear manning their defensive positions in preparation for a potential enemy attack.

During this time, the soldiers identified what looked like insurgents on the western high ground above Wanat, according to the narrative.

Pitts, the forward observer, and Sgt. Matthew Gobble began to put together a request for indirect fire from the OP. But before they could complete the call, at about 4:20 a.m., the first burst of machine-gun fire ripped through the air.

The enemy had infiltrated Wanat, setting up firing positions and weapons caches in the town's bazaar, hotel complex, homes and mosque as they launched a full-scale assault, focusing their fires on VPB Kahler's key defensive weapon systems and positions.

Within minutes, the enemy had destroyed the TOW system and injured the soldiers manning the 120mm mortar firing pit, setting it on fire, according to the narrative.

At the same time, the men at OP Topside were hit with small-arms fire, RPGs and hand grenades thrown by insurgents hiding in the draw to the north of the OP.

All of the men on the OP were wounded, and several killed, in the first volley of fire.

"I got knocked out of the center position into one of our northern fighting positions," Pitts said. "Spc. [Tyler] Stafford was also wounded, Sgt. Gobble was wounded. It was in those opening moments that Spc. Matt Phillips started to return fire — he threw a hand grenade and was killed by the RPG that came in. [Spc.] Gunnar Zwilling was killed. It was just a barrage of RPGs, and it was very disorienting."

Pitts was peppered with shrapnel, with a deep wound to his right thigh.

As he fought to regain his bearings, Pitts crawled to the southern fighting position, where Spc. Jason Bogar was firing a machine gun. Bogar stopped to treat Pitts, throwing a tourniquet on his right leg to stop the bleeding.

"I couldn't really use my legs," Pitts said, so he crawled to the northern fighting position and started throwing grenades at the enemy.

"I cooked the grenades off for three to four seconds, meaning I let the fuse burn for that time because I didn't want to give them the opportunity to throw them back at us," Pitts said.

Pitts then got on the radio and relayed situation reports and updates to then-Capt. Matthew Myer, the company commander who was at VPB Kahler. He also began firing the M240B machine gun.

"I couldn't exactly stand, so I would pull myself up to my knees and physically pull my leg up to a kneeling position and start firing," Pitts said. "I'd blind fire, spraying along the rock, and once I thought I had laid down enough suppressive fire, I'd pop up and try to take out whatever I could."

As the battle unfolded, Pitts, who was the only contact between the command post and the OP, maintained contact with Myer, directing artillery fires from nearby Combat Outpost Blessing onto pre-planned targets around the OP.

At about 4:45 a.m., 1st Lt. Jonathan Brostrom, the platoon leader, and Spc. Jason Hovater showed up at the OP.

"After hearing reports from the OP, [Brostrom] told Capt. Myer he was going to reinforce the OP, and he picked up Spc. Hovater on the way," Pitts said. "They ended up running across the center of Wanat, past enemy positions, to the OP. I don't know how they made it."

Pitts gave Brostrom an update and described the enemy's locations before handing off the M240B to Spc. Pruitt Rainey and receiving an M4 with an M203 grenade launcher in return.

At this point, Pitts' memory is fuzzy.

"The next sequence of events I remember was all of a sudden it seemed really quiet," Pitts said. "It didn't seem like there was any fire coming from the OP."

Pitts said he didn't want to yell out, in case the enemy was nearby, so he crawled around looking for his fellow soldiers. He saw casualties on the terraces and in the crow's nest, and the southern fighting position was empty.

"At that point, I realized I was by myself," Pitts said. "I crawled back to the southern fighting position and tried to figure out what to do next. I don't know what was going through my mind at the time other than, 'I'm alone, this is going to be bad.'"

Alone and bleeding, Pitts got on the radio, calling for anyone who would answer. Myer did.

"I told him everybody at the OP was either dead or gone, and I was there by myself," Pitts said. "He told me there wasn't anybody to send, that they were in a fight down there, too. I just responded, 'You either send more people or this position is going to fall.'"

The enemy was so close that soldiers at the command post and those listening in on the channel could hear enemy voices through the radio, according to the narrative.

Pitts got off the radio, and "at that point I just tried to think of the next thing I could do to impact the battle," he said.

He began firing the M203, lobbing 40mm grenades "almost straight up in the air. I don't know how many I shot," he said.

When he started getting low on ammo, Pitts crawled. "I couldn't stand, I wasn't mobile at all," he said. He got to a working radio and called down to 1st Squad, which was manning a traffic control point along a north-south road near the OP.

When Sgt. Brian Hissong answered, Pitts called for them to shoot over the tops of the sandbags to stop any enemy fighters from trying to overrun the OP.

"We looked up the hill and the OP was in a haze of dust," said Hissong, who received a Bronze Star with V for his actions that day.

The soldiers at the TCP could hear Pitts shooting back at the enemy as they scanned the tops of the sandbags. They also worked to put together a team to reinforce the OP.

That team—Staff Sgt. Sean Samaroo, Sgt. Israel Garcia, Spc. Jacob Sones and Spc. Michael Denton—scrambled up the terraces to reach the OP.

"I didn't know they were coming," Pitts said.

Sones started treating Pitts' wounds while Garcia pulled security, and Samaroo and Denton began checking on the casualties.



The scene at the OP “wasn’t good,” said Denton, who would earn the Silver Star for his actions that day. “I found my best bud Hovater laying up there. I took ammo from Hovater’s body, told him I loved him.”

He then went into the crow’s nest, where he found Ayers slumped over the M240B. Denton gently moved Ayers and began manning the machine gun.

Suddenly, he saw an orange burst over to his left.

That’s when another barrage of RPGs tore into the OP, wounding all five men. Garcia was mortally wounded.

“I crawled into the center, but there wasn’t really anything I could do for Garcia,” Pitts said. “I just laid there and held his hand. We just talked for a while. He told me he wanted me to tell his mom and wife that he loved them. I don’t know how long I stayed there for.”

Hissong, who left the Army in 2009, remembers feeling helpless as they heard over the radio what was happening at the OP.

“They were all wounded, they were in trouble, but we were kind of helpless for a while because we couldn’t leave our position,” he said.

The paratroopers at the OP eventually huddled up in the southern fighting position, while Denton, who was wounded but still able to stand, tried to pull security.

“I cleared a double feed [on a rifle] and I realized how bad my right hand was,” Denton said. “The bone was sticking out of my hand.”

He then gathered up rifles and ammunition and distributed them to the surviving soldiers.

As the men sought cover, AH-64 Apaches, bombers and fighter jets arrived on the scene along with a quick-reaction force, Pitts said.

Despite being nearly unconscious, Pitts continued to communicate with Myer, provided critical feedback as he called in the first helicopter attack run, according to the narrative.

The medical evacuation helicopters began arriving as well, Pitts said.

“I’m thinking they’re going to evacuate us down at the vehicle patrol base where there are more defenses, it’s more secure,” Pitts said. “But they popped smoke between us



Sgt. Ryan Pitts, left, with Sgt. Israel Garcia, who was mortally wounded during the Battle of Wanat.

and the enemy, and the medevac comes in and lands right there. There were a lot of valorous things guys did that day. That was one of the craziest things I saw.”

At about 6:15 a.m., after fighting for more than an hour while critically wounded, Pitts was

medically evacuated along with Samaroo, Sones and Denton.

### “THEY’RE MY HEROES”

Pitts’ actions during the battle were “decisive,” said Col. Bill Ostlund, the battalion commander at the time.

“He prevented the enemy from overrunning the OP and thus saved lives and prevented the loss or capture of fallen and wounded paratroopers,” he said.

Denton, now a former sergeant, said his friend deserves the MoH.

“It could have easily been a lot worse than it was. Ryan’s one of the best guys I served with. I’d go to hell and back with him, he’s that good of a guy. All the guys were.”

Without Pitts, Myer, as the senior officer on the ground, said he wouldn’t have known what was going on at the OP.

“Ryan was the lynchpin that held the ground before others could get to him,” Myer said. “He was the only person that began the fight on the OP and stayed on the OP for the firefight until he was [evacuated].”

Myer credits his men for “acting on instincts,” and credited Pitts for continuing to fight despite his wounds.

“I know his injuries,” Myer said. “He’s still, to this day, peppered with shrapnel.”

Hissong also credits Pitts preventing the position from being overrun.

“Even though he damn near got himself killed, he managed to keep his composure and keep fighting and do what he was supposed to do,” he said about Pitts. “His weapon would go down and he’d get another one and continue to fight. He was throwing grenades at [the enemy] and throwing rocks at them to get them to jump out from behind cover.”

Pitts credits his fellow soldiers.

“Valor was everywhere,” he said. “Everybody just did what they needed to do, and a lot of

it was because of the relationships we had. We were very close.”

Pitts cited the soldiers who manned the weapons systems in the gun trucks at VPB Kahler under heavy enemy fire. He also described a soldier who was shot through both legs while trying to pull a mortally wounded Pfc. Sergio Abad to safety.

He lauded Brostrom and Hovater for running through a “hail of fire” to reinforce the OP, and Ayers for continuing to man the M240B even after being hit in the helmet.

“After that, I can imagine he knew there was a very good chance it would kill him if he stayed on that gun, but he did it because he knew we needed it,” Pitts said.

Garcia, Sones, Denton and Samaroo braved fire to get to the OP. “Nobody told them to come, but they came anyway,” he said.

And Denton, who fought on despite a wound so serious that bone tore through the flesh in his right hand, searched the remains of the fallen soldiers, including that of his best friend Hovater, for much needed ammunition.

“I can’t even imagine what it would be like to have to search your best friend and then continue to fight,” Pitts said. “He did it, and, after he was wounded, he stands up and continues to try and fight.”

Six years later, Pitts lives in Nashua, New Hampshire, with his wife, Amy, and his young son, Lucas. The former staff sergeant now wears a suit and works in business development.

As he prepared to receive the Medal of Honor, Pitts said he was taking things one day at a time.

“Everybody sacrificed a lot that day,” he said. “I try to think about the guys we lost and try to do my best to honor them and the gift they gave me. I hate the word ‘hero.’ But I feel very fortunate when I look at the guys I served with. They’re my heroes. It was the honor of my lifetime to serve with them.”



Former Army Staff Sgt. Ryan Pitts was interviewed at his home in Nashua, N.H., June 10, with his son Lucas and wife Amy.

# The Herd Foundation

<http://www.theherdfoundation.com>

By Dan Parker

a 501(c) 3 corporation recognized by the IRS as a tax deductible donation

## THE FOUNDATION'S ROOTS

It started in the 1970s with simple donations for college as we developed a scholarship fund. Over the years our Scholarship fund grew and we were able to give out more money, but we had become a dead man society; we had no active unit, our average age was increasing, and our resources began to decline. Then in 2000, the 173d Airborne Brigade was reactivated again and a bright new future stood before us. Visionaries started looking forward and asking how we could prepare to meet the challenges that would come.

Then the world changed and 9/11 was upon us. The War on Terror was in full swing. The Brigade jumped into Iraq and we found ourselves playing catch up football when it came to support. But we learned from each experience, each deployment. As the Brigade transitioned into the 173d Airborne Brigade Combat Team, we transitioned into the 173d Airborne Brigade Association. Over time our old scholarship fund of the 1970s transformed into the 173d Airborne Brigade Association Foundation of today, a 501 C3 Tax-Free corporation that now has a bigger mission and broader support.



## SCHOLARSHIP

Each year we award scholarship grants to students that are family members of the Association or 173d Airborne Gold Stars and their families.

The scholarship fund is a living memorial to our comrades who died in combat. Unlike us, they were denied the chance to advance their education. These awards are given in their honor. The scholarship committee seeks to award scholarships to applicants displaying the potential for a degree in higher education, whether it is technical, university, or professional. A scholarship committee rates each applicant sent to them without knowing the names of applicants. All committee members passes their decisions to the nation Scholarship Director. The National Scholarship Director working with the Chairman decides the number of scholarships and the amounts. This varies from year to year by the amounts donated by members.



## 2014 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

**Dillion Luedtke**—Sumter, S.C., son of Frank Luedtke, recipient of the Timothy R. Vimoto Scholarship Award. Dillion will be given an additional \$500 as the Timothy R. Vimoto Scholarship Award Winner, which is given to the highest scoring applicant submitting an application.

This is the second year we are proud to offer this annual award given in memory of PFC Timothy R. Vimoto who was killed in action on June 5, 2007, in the Korengal Valley, Afghanistan. Vimoto served with the combat tested Soldiers of Battle Company, 2d Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry and he deployed with his Battle Hard brothers in support of Operation Enduring Freedom VIII. PFC Vimoto distinguished himself as an exemplary rifleman and as one of the finest paratroopers in the Battle Hard ranks. He was deployed to the Korengal Valley, an isolated, six-mile gash in the Hindu Kush mountains that American soldiers have dubbed the *Valley of Death*. Remote even by Afghan standards, the rocky terrain forces troops to patrol on foot. Its inhabitants practice Wahabbism, an especially strict strain of Islam. American troops didn't arrive there until four years after the war began, then spent half a decade trying to dislodge a fierce insurgency embedded in the rocky cliffs. Before the U.S. closed its Korengal outpost in 2010, the valley saw some of the toughest fighting in the country: 42 U.S. troops were killed and hundreds wounded in countless clashes with Afghan and foreign fighters aligned with insurgents groups. Timothy's unit was chronicled by journalists Sebastian Junger and Tim Hetherington (later killed in Libya), who produced the Oscar-nominated documentary *Restrepo*, which showed near-daily battles with enemy fighters. According to Junger's book on the unit, *War*, the platoon spotted an enemy position

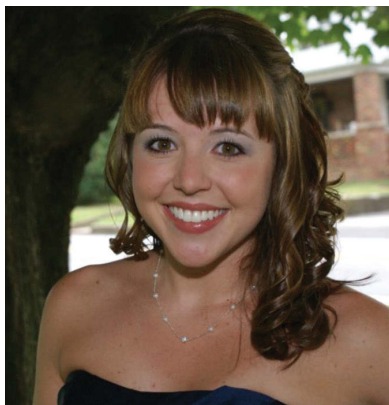




on a hill near their firebase. A 25-soldier team, including Timothy, set out to engage them. After reaching the steep hill, they were met with a hail of gunfire and rocket-propelled grenades. Rescue helicopters couldn't land on the steep terrain amid the hail of machine-gun fire, so the soldiers had to carry Timothy off the hill.

Tim's father was C.S.M. Isaia "ACE" Vimoto, the Brigade C.S.M.

**Heather Masser**—Knoxville, Md., granddaughter of Gary Llewellyn, recipient of the In Memory of 1 LT. James F. O'Brien Scholarship Award. O'Brien was a Platoon Leader with A.CO. 1/503d in Vietnam.



**Katelyn McClung**—Seaville, N.J., daughter of Robert McClung.



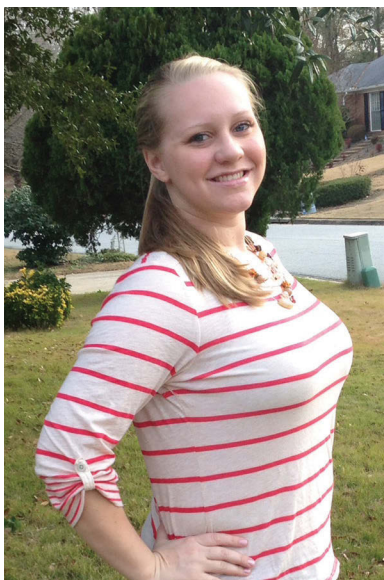
**Jacob Sells**—Granville, Ia., grandson of Michael J.W. Sells.



**Jessica McKenzie**—Park Hills, Mo., granddaughter of Russell D. Ward.



**Victoria McKernan**—Columbus, Ga., daughter of MSG/1SG Jacob E. Stockdill.



**Anthony Helton**—Murfreesboro, Tenn., grandson of Thomas L. Lloyd.



**Faythe Stone**—APO, AE, daughter of Col. Christopher Stone (USARAF IG), photo unavailable.

**John McCormick**—Paul Coleman "C" CO. 1/503RD.



There were 18 scholarship applications received. Sixteen of those were received by the submittal deadline, and two were received over one week past the deadline and were not evaluated.

Nine applicants will be awarded scholarships of \$1,173.00 for a total of \$10,557.00. We appreciate and thank the individuals, the Chapters, and the groups who donated to this meaningful program.

We would have given eight awards this year but we are able, for the sixth year in a row, to give nine due to the gracious donation by the men and wives of "C" Charlie 1/503D of \$1,173.00. Their request for us was to award one additional scholarship to the next person on the list who wouldn't have received a scholarship without this donation!

We would like to invite all Units and Chapters to consider sponsoring a scholarship in the group's name, a special person's name, or in memory.

## WOUNDED WARRIOR PROGRAM



Once a Sky Soldier is wounded and evacuated out of the combat theater, the unit notifies the association. We in turn contact the local Chapter Hospital Representative who goes to the hospital and visits the wounded (Walter

Reed, The Burn Center, etc.). We have had the chapters put on baby showers for families while their soldiers were in the hospital. We just developed a "Hospital Kit" to be given to each soldier. It contains goodies donated by various chapters for the wounded. We also developed a 173d Purple Heart Coin.

We have taken wounded Sky Soldiers and families on fishing, boating, and sailing trips, as well as to amusement parks in order to take their minds off current circumstances.

## SUPPORT

On every deployment chapters select units to support downrange. At Christmas we send Santa suits and things to remind our Sky Soldiers about the season. We have sent children to soccer camp and we have supported Sky Soldiers' wives for an Army run. We support the Eighth of November Annual Run, and we stand ready to support the troops and families in any way we can!

## BEREAVEMENT

With the coming of the War on Terror came the price of our liberty. Our Sky Soldiers on the front lines in this war are paying the ultimate sacrifice for our safety and freedom. We have long promised to be there for them and we are. Once notified of a soldier killed in action, our Brigade Liaison notifies local chapter presidents. We send flowers to the families and attend every funeral of a Fallen Sky Soldier.

## GOLD STAR

First we appointed a National Gold Star Representative, a 173d Gold Star Mother herself. Our Gold Star Rep reaches out to the family in their hour of need and lets them know we are here now and will be there for them in the future. We attend the funeral and our Gold Star rep stays in close contact with the families long after. Many chapters open their arms and invite the families into their activities if and when they are ready. Later in the year our national Gold Star Rep sends cards and letters reminding Gold Star families they are not forgotten. We also have developed and give a special 173dGold Star pin. We have started a National Gold Star Luncheon at Reunions. We send gifts to the younger children at holidays.



# Thank You, Donors!

By Eric A. Hitchcock

As you know, the funding for the 173D Airborne Brigade Foundation is strictly by donations from individuals, groups, association chapters, members, and our recently approved C.F.C. (Combined Federal Campaign) Program.

All the money that is donated is used for our core programs which include the Scholarship Program, Wounded Warrior Program, Gold Star Program, Bereavement Program, and General Sky Soldiers and Sky Soldier Family Support.

We would appreciate your kind generosity in considering supporting something specific that would be your preference of one of our Support Programs or just a general donation that can be used for any of the above needs. Some people like to be specific and ask that the money be used for our Gold Star Program, and if so we keep track of that money separately. We can be specific with the utilization of your donation based upon your request. Please consider sending a donation to help us support these very important causes. We can have a donation set up to be automatically deducted from your checking or savings account on a monthly basis for a "Hassle Free" way to send \$10.00, \$20.00, or any designated amount, all of which are 100% tax deductible.

If anyone is interested in leaving the foundation a contribution in your will, we would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this possibility with you.

Some of the things your money has allowed to do are taking wounded Sky Soldiers fishing, assisting in the purchase of a PTSD companion dog for a Vietnam veteran, assisting in travel allowances for Gold Star family members and close Sky Soldier friends of our new and third Metal of Honor recipient, supplying computers for our Gold Star wives in Italy so they can communicate with their families in the states, awarding almost \$100,000 in scholarships to Sky Soldiers and their families, sending goodie packages downrange while we were deployed, sending flowers to Sky Soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice including Vietnam Era veterans who have just passed, sending Christmas gifts to Gold Star children, sending remembrance cards to Gold Star families, and many other similar scenarios.

We would like to offer our sincere appreciation for the recently received donations:

- Anonymous in memory of 1LT. James F. Obrien, PLT. Leader A Co. 1/503d Vietnam
- Santiago Krummel, a monthly donor, Weslaco, Texas
- The Johnson Family in memory of Jim Baskens Honor, Pratt, Kansas
- The Sandy Woods, Hanover, Pennsylvania
- Sky Soldier Jeremiah Minor built and sold a Sky Soldier video game and donated proceeds, Ohio
- Jon, my Vietnamese dry cleaner, League City, Texas
- United Methodist Church Mens Club and Sky Soldier "Daive" Jim Pfeil, Willis, Texas
- Sky Soldier Major Dan Parker (Retired) "Redleg", Houston, Texas
- San Antonio Sky Soldiers in memory of Chaplain (Col. Ret.) Conrad Connie Walker "The Leaping Deacon," San Antonio, Texas "
- USA Ret. CSM Willie C. and Phyllis Noles in memory of Chaplain "Connie" Walker, San Antonio, Texas
- Dustin and Kimberly Zumwact in memory of Chaplain (Col. Ret.) Conrad Walker, San Antonio, Texas
- John F. Hall in memory of Chaplain "Connie" Walker, San Antonio, Texas
- Chapter II New York-Larzado I Watters 173D Airborne Brigade Association, Gold Star Support
- Jerry Hartman, C-2/503RD
- Kaiser Sterbinsky, proud 2/503d 75th Ranger
- Chapter 2, 173d Airborne Association
- Texas Chapter 13, 173d Airborne Association
- Sky Soldier Chuck Huller, generous donor(!) on multiple occasions
- Paul R. Fisher LTC (R) "The Challenge Coin Man," Eatontown, N.J.

Please support our SKY SOLDIER CHALLENGE and receive one of our beautiful Foundation Coins as a token of our appreciation. You will be sent a coin with a minimum \$25 gift. Please send donation to: **173D Airborne Brigade Association Foundation, 1208 Iowa Street, South Houston, TX 77587**. If you have any questions about the foundation or would like to discuss the possibility of leaving a legacy, please contact Eric Hitchcock at **713.941.8118** office, **713.545.3974** cell, or **eric@blastincorporated.com**. We need and want you on our next "Thank You" list!

A special thanks to everyone who bought foundation support items at the association table in the vendors room at the Ft. Bragg Reunion.

**Once a Sky Soldier always a Sky Soldier!**



# The Herd Foundation Helps



“Asta has given Jim a new quality of life. She goes with him everywhere. She keeps him calm, she makes him feel safe. He is now winning the battle of depression.”

My uncle, James (Jim) Simpson, is a true warrior. Jim completed two tours in Vietnam with C/2/503 173d Airborne. Jim fought and survived Dak-To Hill 875. Jim has had a golf ball size tumor removed from his brain. He is fighting spinal deterioration from the exposure of Agent Orange. One of Jim's ongoing battles is severe chronic PTSD & anxiety disorder and depression.

Uncle Jim has often told me “My home is my foxhole.” Jim is uncomfortable going outside of “the wire.” He is constantly looking over his shoulder to see what is going on or who is behind him. In an effort to provide Jim a better quality of life, I contacted Kenny Lickliger, owner of Vohne Liche Kennels. I told Kenny the story of my Uncle Jim. Kenny and I talked about a service dog. Kenny put me in contact with Jessie Smith, who is the Director of the Executive and Family Protective Program at Vohne Liche Kennels. All I can say about Jessie is *he is AWESOME!* Jessie and I spoke over the phone several times. He spoke with Uncle Jim over the phone several times. Then one day, Uncle Jim and I paid a visit to Vohne Liche Kennels.

I cannot convey how impressed we were with the world class training facilities of Vohne Liche Kennels, sitting on over 350 acres in Denver, Indiana. Their motto is “Specializing in Strong Social Police Dogs.” They train K-9 units, military working dogs and, as I mentioned, Family and Executive Protection Dogs. One of the biggest attributes of VLK is that it is owned by a retired veteran and the majority of the trainers are veterans. These people understand combat, PTSD, and what it's like returning to “the world.”

Jim's service dog, Asta, is from the Family and Executive Protection Program. Asta has given Jim a new quality of life. She goes with him everywhere. She keeps him calm, she makes him feel safe. He is now winning the battle with depression. She even wakes him up from his nightmares. It is just unbelievable the difference a service dog can make. Service dogs for disabled veterans is a treatment I whole heartedly believe in.

I would like to thank everyone who has helped me with providing a service dog for Jim. A special thanks goes out to Kenny Lickliger, Jessie Smith, Rick Kell of Feherty's Troops First Foundation, Phyllis Clopton of the Captain Kyle Comfort Foundation, and the 173rd Airborne Brigade Association Foundation!

Sincerely,  
Jay R. Brainard



# CALIFORNIA, HERE WE COME The 2015 Reunion

**“Stand in the Door,” our 2015 Reunion, will be held in beautiful San Diego, California, from May 2 through May 6.**

Wambi Cook of Chapter 14, in conjunction with Chapter 28, has been working hard to provide a great reunion for our membership. It will be at the Town and Country Resort & Convention Center. For more details, please go to [www.173rd2015reunion.com](http://www.173rd2015reunion.com). Click on the REGISTRATION tab in order register for the reunion. You will also find a link to Town and Country Resort where you may reserve your accommodations.

Please remember that these are two separate registrations. One is for the reunion and the other is for lodging.

Our reunion will be earlier in the year than usual. This is to coincide with the 173rd’s 50th anniversary of entering the Republic of South Viet Nam which took place on May 5, 1965. The 173rd Airborne Brigade (“Sky Soldiers”), stationed in Okinawa, was the first U.S. Army ground combat unit committed to the war. All our memories may not be good ones, but it was an event that created a bond that has lasted a lifetime. Come and reconnect your friends and comrades. Be proud of your service.

***And have a great time with us in San Diego!***



San Diego skyline



Located in the heart of San Diego, America's Finest City, the Town and Country Resort Hotel encompasses the "Best of All Worlds." Our hotel Mission Valley San Diego is just minutes from the vibrant nightlife of downtown San Diego, the oasis of beautiful Mission Valley, and the thrill of San Diego's beaches and attractions.

Our Mission Valley San Diego hotel is a family-owned resort with a heritage of hospitality spanning more than five decades. The Town and Country Resort Hotel enjoys an award-winning reputation for putting smiles on the faces of vacation guests and conference attendees alike. Whether you spend your time basking in the warm San Diego sun or in the warmth of our friendly service and hospitality, your stay at Town and Country Resort Hotel will reward you with a rich glow of satisfaction.

What makes a hotel a legend? At the Mission Valley San Diego hotel, it begins with our setting, where towering palms frame the impossibly blue San Diego skies. The scent of thousands of rose bushes and perennials waft thru the pleasant San Diego climate.

A resort is not a resort unless there are more dining options than there are days in your stay. With four restaurants, lively lounges, our own bakery, and a seasonal pool side snack bar located within the grounds, our hotel Mission Valley San Diego does not disappoint.

For nourishing your spirit, the world-class Bella Tosca Day Spa and Salon will melt away stress with hydrotherapy, couples massage, or our signature treatments and a full-service fitness center. Of course, when your day inevitably winds down, our modern, yet charming hotel room and suite accommodations await to complete your perfect stay.

From our location in Mission Valley, the heart of San Diego, you're only minutes from the abundance of "California's Playground."

Enjoy San Diego's famous city sites and attractions such as the world-famous San Diego Zoo, SeaWorld Adventure Park, Old Town, Balboa Park, LEGOLAND, Safari Park, and over 60 miles of beautiful bays and beaches.

Hop aboard the light-rail trolley which stops on property for easy travel to additional San Diego sights and destinations such as the Gaslamp District, San Diego Convention Center, PETCO Park, Seaport Village, Qualcomm Stadium (home of the Chargers!), Horton Plaza, USS Midway, Tijuana, and San Diego State University

Unwind with a round of challenging golf at the adjacent 27-hole championship Riverwalk Golf Course, where preferred tee-times and rates are available for our guests. Or stroll next door to the renowned Fashion Valley shopping district, entertainment, and dining center.

With a legacy of warm hospitality, offering a garden spread over 32 lushly landscaped acres bathed in San Diego, Ca., sunshine and the relaxing atmosphere of a secluded resort, our Mission Valley San Diego hotel beckons you.



Tiki lion



Trellises Garden pool



Mission Valley golf



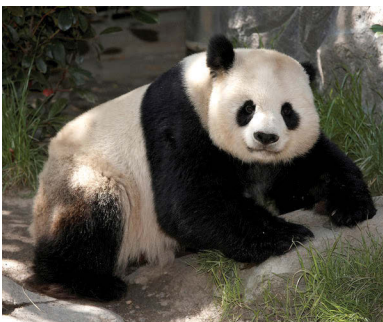
Balboa Park



SeaWorld Adventure Park



Town and Country Resort



Panda at the San Diego Zoo



Historic Gaslamp District



Royal Palm Tower pool





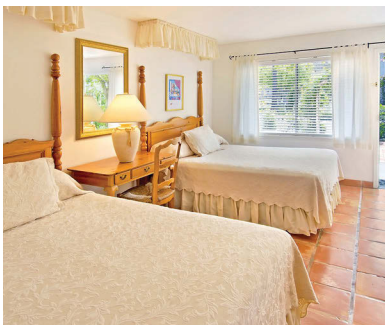
Overlooking Mission Valley



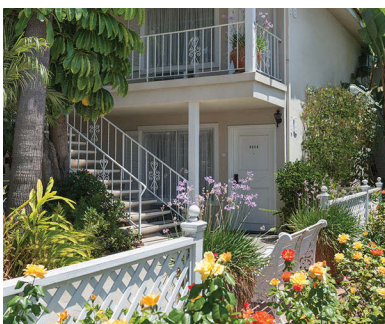
Danny delivering in-room dining



Royal Palm Tower room



Cottage bungalow style room



Bungalow

Hello! I hope all is well with you. My name is Kunesha Miller and I will be your reservation coordinator for the group you have coming in May of 2015.

You are up and running for attendees to go online and make reservations. They may also call the hotel to make reservations. The number is (619) 291-7131 ext. 3810 or (800) 772-8527. Anyone in our call center will be able to assist with making a reservation.

I'm showing the rates to be  
**\$99 for a single/double**  
**\$119 for a triple and**  
**\$139 for a quad.**

I'm showing parking for your group is \$2.00 a day.

I hope you are having a wonderful day and I look forward to working with you. Let me know if you have any questions.

---

**Kunesha Miller**  
*Group Reservations Coordinator*  
TOWN and COUNTRY RESORT  
500 Hotel Circle N | San Diego, CA, 92108



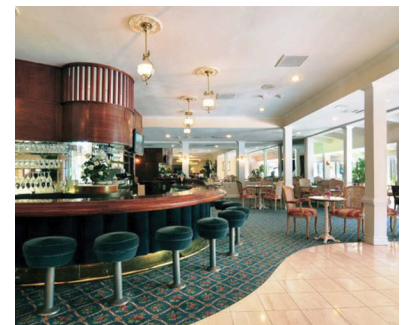
Charlie's



Bella Tosca Spa waiting room



14,000 sq ft Mediterranean-style spa



Trellises lounge



Trellises Garden Grille

# JIM FOWLER, RANGER HALL OF FAME



The Ranger Hall of Fame is held annually in July at Fort Benning, Ga. It was formed to honor and preserve the spirit and contributions of America's most extraordinary Rangers. Inductees are selected impartially from Ranger units and associations representing each era or Ranger history.

Each nominee is subjected to the scrutiny of the Selection Board to ensure the most extraordinary contributions are acknowledged. To be eligible for selection to the Hall of Fame, a person must be deceased or have been separated or retired from active military service for at least three years at the time of nomination. He must have served in a Ranger unit in combat or be a successful graduate of the U.S. Army Ranger School. Achievement or service may be considered for individuals in a position in state or national government after the Ranger has departed the Armed Forces.

Honorary induction may be conferred on individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to Ranger units, the Ranger foundation, or the Ranger community in general, but who do not meet the normal criteria of combat service with a Ranger unit or graduation from the U.S. Army Ranger School.

2014 Inductees Include:

SGM Peter Bacerra • MSG Kenneth Bachmann • LTG Dell Dailey • CSM James Fowler • CSM Jeffrey Greer  
COL Robert Guy • LTG John Le Moyne • BG Herbert Lloyd • SSG Calvin Rollins • COL Robert Tonsetic

(<http://www.nationalgrassociation.com/ranger-hall-of-fame-1/>)

"General...Distinguished Guests—family, friends and U.S ARMY RANGERS...

"We had a saying when I was in the Rangers: "If you wanna be proud you gotta get humble," which meant hard combat and realistic training. But today, that has taken on a new meaning for me for I am truly humbled. But first and foremost, this is not a **me** honor. It's a **we** honor that I can only accept on behalf of all the great Rangers I've had the honor and privilege of serving with, and all the credit and glory belongs to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

"Growing up as a kid, I was trying to figure out what I wanted to do with my life. Then I saw *Darby's Rangers* with James Garner and I knew I wanted to be an U.S Army Ranger.

"I have lead a life I couldn't have imagined. When I graduated Ranger School on Halloween day, 1968, we were told there were less than 200 enlisted Rangers in the Army at that time. Back then in Ranger School, we only got one C Ration meal a day. All of us had cuts on our tongues from licking the cans. I remember when I graduated I was so skinny I looked like I had just escaped from Dachau!

"Then, when I got to Vietnam, I was selected to serve as a Ranger Team leader With November Co, 75th Rangers. This honor applies equally to all my N Co Ranger Brothers—some are with us here

today—who I fought with, bled with, and when we lost fellow Rangers in combat, shed tears with...

"This coming 3 Oct 14 we will commemorate the 30th anniversary when we officially activated the 3rd Ranger Bn and 75th Ranger Regiment on York Field that stands in front of this building. We went through over a thousand Rangers in our first year, but the 3rd Ranger Bn was stocked with some Ranger legends of which many are in the Ranger Hall of Fame and deservedly so. Rangers like retired CSM's Art Cobb, Gerry Klein, Steve England—who was one of my original Platoon Sergeants—Joe Heckord, Mike Kelso, John Edmunds, and Doug Greenway.

"Doug was one of my original Squad Leaders. I used to nearly kill Ranger Greenway as every time we had an Airborne Operation we had very few jumpmasters. As 1SG, I had to jumpmaster all our jumps and I used to JMPLI the Rangers in just LCE, T-10, steel pot and reserve and send em over to then SSG Greenway to hook up their heavy equipment like 120 pound rucks, lowering lines and 1950 Weapon Containers. He's still a Stud. Hell, when he was fixing to retire as the Infantry School CSM, he decided to enter the Best Ranger competition with his son, Brandon. When I went to see him at

Todd Field, I asked him how he was doing. He said fine; just tough having to drag Brandon along!

"In closing, to steal a line from COL Signor, a Song Tay Raider, I've been asked: 'Did you really like leaping outta high performance aircraft in the middle of the night with full combat equipment at low altitudes to shoot bad men in the face at close range with high caliber weapons?' To be truthful, not that much. But if I gotta fight, I wanna go to war with those men that do—like the Men in N Co Rangers or the 3rd Ranger Bn.

"Rangers you do Lead the Way!"



From left, General William F. "Buck" Kernan and CSM Jim Fowler



# IN BRIEF...



## PRESENTATION OF 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE PORTRAIT TO NAN WILLIAMSON

From left, Ike Monte, Chapter 1 president; Nan Williamson, daughter of General Williamson, and Eric Hitchcock, Association Foundation president.

*Most honorable Mr Scott,*

*I was overwhelmed by tears when the 173 Airborne Brigade arrived in Estonia last week and I have seldom felt more honored than by your mail!*

*When the Russian aggression started in Crimea I was very afraid that Russia might attack Estonia anytime, by land, from the sea or from the air. It was only when Defense Secretary Hagel announced that fighter jets would be deployed in Estonia that I felt reassured that NATO and Article 5 is working. The fighter jets arrived only days after the announcement. These have now been followed by more planes from NATO countries as well as by very firm declarations high rank politicians from many NATO countries.*

*Now I, like other Estonians, feel safe! This is primarily so because the United States that has stood firm to its commitments!*

*I do understand that the US presence*

*is based on decisions by politicians, not the least of which is President Obama. Unfortunately, there are no signs from Mr. Putin that he will abandon his expansion plans, thus I think that the US and NATO presence and protection has to be prolonged way beyond 2014.*

*Freedom has a price. Firm sanctions against Russia are necessary. In my opinion the US should reintroduce a ban on high tech sales to Russia as one of the measures to curb Russia's expansionist plans even if it means decreased exports and effects on employment.*

*Yours faithfully,  
Toomas Kabin/Estonia*

*P.S. As to me, I was born in Sweden by Estonian parents who fled the country in 1944. I got my MA in Econ from the US in 1979. I returned to Estonia in 1989 in the Swedish Foreign Service. I've always been loyal to the United States!*

## NEW STORE, NEW ADDRESS

Please take a look at our new pages (42 - 46) highlighting customized items available through Area Advertising. Daniel Day (dday3381@roadrunner.com) is in charge of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Association Store and asks that everyone makes a note of the new mailing address:

**173rd Airborne Brigade Association**  
**P.O. Box 1733 • Ashland, KY 41105-1833**  
**(800) 328-8005**

*Christmas is coming and the store is full of great gifts!*

**Welcome to  
Jerry L. Cooper (CPA),  
the 173d Airborne  
Brigade Association's  
new treasurer!**

**He may be reached at  
treasurer@skysoldier.net.**

### 173rd Airborne Brigade Honors New Gold Star Family Members at Fort Benning

Video available at <http://vimeo.com/99539573>

The Army pledges that Gold Star Family Members will always be a part of the Army. The

173rd Airborne Brigade upheld this pledge as Gold Star Family Members were honored at a

ceremony that unveiled new names on their monument. Melissa Bell has the details.

## Captains Deployed to Afghanistan Get “Pink Slip”

Military.com Jul 23, 2014 | by Richard Sisk

At least 48 Army captains serving in Afghanistan are among nearly 1,200 captains who have essentially been given pink slips forcing them to leave the military as part of the Army's drawdown, service officials said Wednesday.

In addition to the 48 in Afghanistan, another 39 captains deployed overseas were also on the so-called captains' "hit list" for separation from the service in seven to nine months, the officials said.

A senior Army official defended the move to tell captains in Afghanistan that they had been chosen for separation rather than wait until their tours in the combat zone had ended.

The official said that the seven or nine-month clock for transition out of the Army started running when they were selected for separation and it was better to "give them the maximum amount of time" to prepare for civilian life.

"I believe it was the right thing to do," said the senior official, who spoke on background on the condition he was not identified.

Another round of officer separations was set to begin in the first week of August when pink slips start going out to officers with the rank of major, a second Army official said.

The selection process for separation began with an extensive records check to turn up those with marks against their careers—"anything from an extra-marital affair to a DUI (Driving Under the Influence)," a senior official said.

The officers were being ordered to leave the military as part of the Army's plan to reduce the size of the force following the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and amid budget cutbacks. The current strength of the Army was 513,800, and that number must be reduced to 440,000-450,000 by 2019, a senior official said.

The Army was trying to meet the lower numbers by recruiting fewer troops but the projections were that involuntary separations were still necessary, a senior official said.

"We won't be able to achieve those numbers" without issuing the so-called "pink slips," the official said.



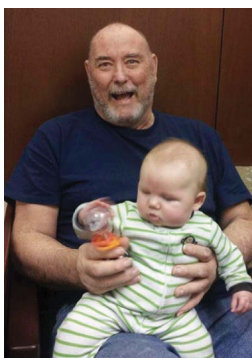
# St. Michael's CORNER

RICHARD VAN HOOK, 69, passed away from cancer on Tuesday, January 28, 2014. A memorial service was held on February 10, 2014, at National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona.

On July 7, Dawn Massey honored his last wishes by taking him up for his last jump and scattering his ashes.

(Submitted by Bill Reynolds)

Richard Van Hook with his latest grandson



General MICHAEL R. "MICK" STABILE died at home May 6, 2014, at age 65. Mick served in the Army with the 173rd Airborne, "The Herd," and was awarded Bronze and Silver Stars and two Purple Hearts.

He is a graduate of SDSU (BS, biochemistry), Northern Essex (LPN) and UMass Lowell (RN). He worked as a nurse, counselor, and case manager, most recently with the Homeless Outreach Team in Boston.

After retirement, he and his wife traveled, volunteered, and parented a household of loving dogs. He is survived by his wife Deanna Smith of E. Kingston, N.H., and his daughter Kate of South Berwick, Me.

PHAN THAI passed at his home in Seattle, Wa., on June 20, 1914, following a short illness. He was born February 27, 1941, in Hanoi, Vietnam. His family left Hanoi in the early '50s, voting with their feet for freedom. He joined the RSVN Army in 1964 and served with the US Army as an interpreter. During his time with the 173d he was assigned to 72nd MI, Brigade Civil Affairs, 2/503d Inf, & the 75th Rangers. In 1966 the approximately 50 VN interpreters assigned to the 173d were offered the opportunity to attain jump status. Two volunteered; one was Thai. As the 173d deployed stateside, Thai served with the VN Special Forces and in 1973 the VN Navy.

With his wife and younger brother he escaped South Vietnam in

1975 and, for a second time, began a new life. After a harrowing sea journey which included the sinking of the ship they were on and a year in a refugee camp in Hong Kong, they arrived in Seattle.

Thai was active in both VN and US military veterans organizations including Chapter XVI, 173d

Bde Assc. For over ten years he

served as president of the RSVN Special Forces Association of Washington.

His most recent "adventure" was to serve as treasurer of the American Vietnamese War Memorial Alliance. He is missed for his energy, support, and positive attitude. Rest well our friend.



William Terry Stancil, age 65, of 5881 Oak Valley Road, Toccoa, Ga., passed away Tuesday, July 15, 2014, at the home of his sister. A son of Frances Cooper Stancil Camp and the late William Russell Stancil, he was born March 17, 1949, in Stephens County, Ga., where he lived most of his life. He served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War having received the Bronze Star and Purple Heart. He was of the Baptist faith. He is preceded in death by a brother, Charles Stephen Stancil.

Survivors include his mother, Frances Cooper Stancil Camp, of Toccoa; son and daughter-in-law, Grant and Brandy Stancil of Stella, N.C.; grandson, Tyler Barber; brother, Dale Stancil of Toccoa; sister and brother-in-law, Gail and David Fry of Toccoa. Funeral services were Thursday, July 17, 11:00 am in the Hillcrest Chapel of the Acree-Davis Funeral Home.

Terry was with C/4/503 from May 28, 1969 to Jan. 9, 1970 when he was wounded during mortar attack on LZ North English and spent stateside. He completed his tour of duty with the 82nd Airborne in Ft. Bragg. Terry succumbed after a two year battle with colorectal cancer. His father was WW2 paratrooper with D/506, 101 Abn, and his son is Afghanistan Marine Force Recon paratrooper.

He was my friend who will be missed, but not forgotten.

(Submitted by Dr. Richard Smokey Wells)

MARK MICHAEL LUGO, Jr., of Antelope, Ca., passed away suddenly on August 1, 2014, at the age of 32 years. Mark Jr. proudly served his country by spending 10 years in both combat and service duty in the Army. He was honorably discharged in 2010 and pursued his college studies in Network Engineering. Mark was an avid 49ers fan and Chelsea Football. He loved working out and spending time with his family, friends, and fellow veterans. He is survived by his loving parents, Regina Uimari and Mark Michael Lugo, Sr.; sisters, Cherlisa Urbina, Alexandra Johnson, and Cherena Martinie Lugo; brothers, David De Benedetto and Mauricio Martinie Lugo; grandmothers, Patricia Mark and Mary Peterson; grandfather John De Benedetto; stepfather Michael Uimari; and stepmother Susan Lugo.



A Celebration of Life memorial service was held at 1:00 pm on August 22 at the Bridgeway Christian Church.

It is with very much sorrow that I am spreading the word about the passing of one of our Brothers. PATRICK J. (PAT) WELSH died on August 3, 2014, after an extended illness.

Pat was Commander, Co A, 3/503, Jan-Jul 70. He was also the TOC Duty Officer after commanding Co A until his DEROS in August 1970. He was very highly respected by his fellow Sky Soldiers. Pat was a remarkable and thoughtful man. Interestingly, he had studied for the

Catholic Priesthood prior to becoming an Army officer.

Even though he recently was in very ill health, he made a point to attend the most recent Sky Soldier National Reunion held at Ft Bragg. We are very grateful that through his extraordinary effort he gave us one more opportunity to reunite with our fellow 3rd Batt Trooper.

A memorial Service was held in Louisville, Ky., where Pat's extended family lives.

(Submitted by Mason Branstetter)



## DAY 571—The BATTLE for SSG THOMAS

By WO1 Jeremiah Minor

This day has been a long time coming. The Washington city court house seemed pleasant from the outside. Newly erected war memorials for WW1, WW2, Korean War, and Vietnam War stood tall with monuments idolizing the sacrifices service members made for their country. I took careful note that there were no Iraqi or Afghanistan monuments erected to honor our fallen in this city. Just as well, considering the complete disservice they have already subjected one of the most honorable service members with whom I had the honor to serve.

Security asked if I wanted to remove my uniform jacket before entering the metal detector. I told him absolutely not and that he could wand me like they do with the guys in orange jump suits. Just then an elderly man—perhaps the court security guard's supervisor—took the metal detector wand and ushered me to the side. He gave me a once up and down stating "I have to make it look good for the cameras" and then asked if I would be coming back through. I told him "As long as it takes." He told me to just walk right through and over to him and that he would make sure I got in with minimal hassle. I felt a little better about walking in now that I wasn't on display like my brother would soon be.

I entered the courtroom I had been dreaming about, the battlefield where my brother, Thomas, would fight for his life. The light seemed dim, a dozen or so light bulbs burnt out in the rafters of the antiquated fixtures on the ceiling. The cushioned bench seats along with the floors were stained from years of trial proceedings' wear and tear. It made me wonder how many more innocent people were walked into this room chained and presumed guilty until they had proven their innocence. I wondered how many were innocent and then taken to jail. Not my brother. As I watched Thomas enter, my heart lifted. I smiled at him from the benches and gave him my best reassuring nod trying to maintain a presence of steadfast confidence for him and his family.

The entire day passed with the prosecution attempting to twist

the jurors' view of Thomas as a crazed war veteran. Witness after witness took the stand making what seemed to be an abundance of contradicting statements. Some of them ended in Thomas's favor once Mr. Walker, the defense lawyer, cross examined them. I was sickened when the judge overruled Mr. Walker's objection to not allow a transcript to be read of a witnesses recollection of the day Thomas had to defend himself. To me it seemed to violate his state rights as well as his constitutional rights to face his accuser.

By the middle of the next day the Mr. Walker had already had the prosecution's witnesses stumbling and contradicting themselves. To add another stinging blow, he had the jurors laughing at key witnesses of the prosecution. Thomas's poor mother and wife by this time were worried sick,. I did my best to reassure them as well as one could. I let them know everything would be okay soon. I pointed out the fact that the jurors would not even look at Thomas on day one, but after every break they had now, when walking past his table they would steal glances his way while smiling and nodding. I told them people do not like to make eye contact with guilty people. I whispered to his family "They know he is innocent."

The beginning of the 3rd day began with prosecution and defense making closing remarks. After their conclusion the judge explained rules and sent everyone to lunch. After lunch the jurors deliberated for about 30 minutes. I am pretty sure they were forced to stay in there that long to make it seem like they had a discussion.

As we took our seats after lunch, the jurors walked out, eager it seemed, to give their verdict. To the charge of 1st degree murder.: NOT GUILTY. To the charge of 3rd degree murder.: NOT GUILTY. To the charge of Voluntary Man Slaughter: NOT GUILTY! Each verdict of NOT GUILTY was more thunderous than the last. An hour later I got to watch Thomas hug his family for the first time in 573 days.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOK7EGI2M4w>





# CONRAD WALKER

## March 2, 1932 - May 26, 2014

By Jennifer R. Lloyd  
Supplemented by Eric Hitchcock

***COL. CONRAD “CONNIE” WALKER, retired U.S. Army, gave up a promising sports career in pursuit of a higher calling, becoming a chaplain with the 101st Airborne Division and 173rd Airborne Brigade and earning the nickname “Leapin’ Deacon.”***

Walker jumped with paratroopers and earned military accolades during the Vietnam War.

His daughter Gracia Marshall of San Antonio said Walker “retired his logbook after 600 jumps.” His wife of 60 years, Joan “Ann” Walker, said he even modified his jump routine for his faith, replacing the numerical countdown with “Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Amen” before leaping.

Conrad Walker died Sunday, May 25, in San Antonio at age 82. His family said the death was the result of Agent Orange-related illnesses.

One of three boys, Walker was born in March 1932 to Don and Bebe Walker in the bedroom of his parents’ home in Herrick, Ill. He and his future wife were high school sweethearts who married in 1953 after a five-year courtship. The couple had three daughters and two sons.

Joan Walker said her husband was scouted to play baseball before heading to the University of Washington in Seattle where he was a guard on the Huskies football team and held amateur heavyweight boxing titles in the 1950s.

Despite being recruited to play sports professionally, “he chose the Lord over all these other opportunities and financial gain,” Marshall said.

Chaplain Walker graduated from the University of Washington in Seattle after four years of study. He attended Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., and worked in a parish in Elmore, Minn., before the church asked him to consider becoming a military chaplain—though it meant a cut in pay.

“They said he was better qualified, because he was a boxer and a football player, to take more abuse than the other pastors who were thinking about joining the military,” his wife said.





(Opposite) Funeral procession

(Top) Folding the flag that had been draped on Conrad Walker's casket.

(Above) Presentation of the folded flag to Chaplain Walker's widow, Ann

(Below) Military honors

He graduated from Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota and was ordained a Pastor of the Lutheran Church. In 1962, he was called by his church to Active Duty as a U.S. Army Chaplain. While in seminary, and as a parish pastor, he served in the U.S. Army Reserves and the Minnesota National Guard.

Chaplain Walker was awarded the Silver Star, Bronze Star with "V" device, Legion of Merit and Purple Heart for his pastoral mission under hostile conditions in Vietnam. He was a Master Parachutist to include one combat jump with the 173rd Airborne Brigade during Operation Junction City on February 22, 1967.

Marshall said that her father, as a noncombatant chaplain, had only carried a machete. But when he accompanied a relief platoon to the scene of a firefight, he "helped the medic to bring the wounded men back from the direct line of fire, despite machine gun fire that intermittently raked the area," an Army citation reads.

"I just remember swimming at the pool with him as a child and seeing these divots in his side and not realizing that they were bullet grazes," Marshall said.

Chaplain/Pastor Walker served at Ft. Campbell, Kentucky with the 101st Airborne Division, in Vietnam with the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate), Fort Benning, Georgia Student Brigade (Airborne, Ranger, Pathfinder School) and many more assignments in the U.S. Army. Chaplain Walker retired from active duty on November, 1, 1990 to accept a call as a Senior Pastor at MacArthur Park Lutheran Church in San Antonio, Texas. After serving as a parish pastor for 5 years, he began his new mission of Worldwide Retreat Ministry.

Chaplain Walker is survived by his beloved wife, Ann, and five adult children, 12 granddaughters, 10 grandsons (four currently on Active Duty), eight great-grandsons, and seven great-granddaughters and two brothers. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him and especially the San Antonio Area Sky Soldiers whom he would join on Wednesday mornings at the Drop Zone Cafe for breakfast.

<http://www.expressnews.com>





# TEXAS SKY SOLDIERS HONOR (RET. COL.) CHAPLAIN "CONNIE" WALKER "THE LEAPING DEACON" MARCH 2, 1932 – MAY 25, 2014



A hole was dug. A mighty oak was chosen. A can of beer and challenge coin were buried with the tree.



Some Texas Sky Soldiers toast a "Great Man."



Two close friends give him a beer and time capsule.



From left, MG Jerry Bethke, Capt. "Jim Bob" Pfile, Bird Corporal (Spc.4) Eric Hitchcock



Final Farewell



Final Farewell



# 173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE PARATROOPERS VISIT US EMBASSY IN LITHUANIA

Story and photo by Sgt. Daniel Nelson  
145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Leaders of Troop A, 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade tour the U.S. Embassy, June 26, to discuss training opportunities and upcoming exercises throughout Lithuania.

The paratroopers recently arrived in Lithuania to take part in NATO training exercises occurring throughout the Baltic region to increase interoperability between forces and train in offensive, defensive and stability operations.

During their visit, paratroopers were shown around the diplomatic community and sat in on briefings held by key U.S. military and diplomatic leaders working in Lithuania.



Leaders from Troop A, 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade, visit the U.S. Embassy June 26 in Vilnius, Lithuania. Paratroopers assigned to 1st Squadron recently arrived in Lithuania to train alongside Lithuanian Land Forces in order to increase NATO interoperability throughout the Baltic region. (Photo by: Sgt. Daniel Nelson, )

Col. Jeffrey Jennette, defense attaché officer for the U.S. Embassy in Lithuania, spoke with leaders from Troop A about the eagerness of Lithuanian Land Forces training alongside U.S. service members in the Baltic region.

“We’re here to be good neighbors, to work with them and train with them,” said Jennette. “They are quality allies, and you guys can be good advisers to them.”

Training exercises, economic growth and opportunities for paratroopers from 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment to learn about the Lithuanian culture were also discussed during the visit.

Jennette urged the paratroopers to seek out every opportunity to not only train alongside their Lithuanian counterparts, but be involved within the community, such as visiting orphanages, schools and participating in various community events.

U.S. military leaders from the U.S. Embassy spoke about the positive impact previous paratroopers from 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade had on Lithuania, who were recently replaced by 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment.

Leaders from the Troop A expressed the importance of maintaining a positive influence during the time they will spend in Lithuania.

“I told my guys that you’re not only representing the 173rd, you’re also representing America,” stated 1st Sgt. Richard Meeker of Troop A.

Approximately 600 paratroopers from the brigade are training throughout the Baltic region as part of land-forces exercises to demonstrate commitment to NATO and sustain interoperability with allied forces.

<http://www.newz.lt/link.php?articleid=18532&source=0>

# Chapter News

## Chapter News Submission Guidelines

- Please send information as a text file such as a Microsoft Word document, no pdfs.
- Please send pictures as separate high resolution JPEG files.
- Please identify the people in the photo.
- Please send current information.
- Do not send meeting minutes or newsletters.

## Chapter 1

### Sigholtz-Capital Chapter • Washington, DC

Michael Montie, President • memontie@aol.com • 703-447-7085

These past three months have been a busy period of saying goodbye to old friends, supporting our membership in familiar and additional ways, and continuing to upgrade the Chapter's operations. We are blessed to have an outstanding leadership team, enthusiastic Chapter members, and family members who honor the service and sacrifices of Sky Soldiers everywhere.

Along with A/3 Sky Soldiers from all over the country, we said our final goodbyes to Sky Soldier John Chapla (A/3-503, 69-70) in Arlington Cemetery on 27 March. John had passed away on 5 January. Sky Soldier William Dillingham (3-319, 68-69) passed away at home on 31 March. We celebrated his life with his family and friends on 17 May. Former Chapter Vice-President Michael Belenky (173SB, 65-66), who gently passed away on 12 April, was laid to rest with full military honors in Arlington Cemetery on 15 July. We joined the family and friends of BG (R) H. Glenn Watson as he was laid to rest with full military honors in Arlington Cemetery on 14 May. As a young officer General Watson had been the OIC for the Interment of General of the Army George C. Marshall, and now rests in a grave adjacent to him. On 21 May, the Chapter supported BG (R) James Hutchens (1-503, 65-66) as his beloved wife Patricia was laid to rest on Chaplains Hill, directly across from the Brigade Memorial Marker in Arlington Cemetery. Lastly, on 10 June we supported the family of active duty Sky Soldier veteran 1LT Christopher Holbrook (two ABCT deployments) as he was laid to rest in Arlington Cemetery. 1LT Holbrook passed away on 13 March, the result of an accident in Hawaii.

In 2013, the Chapter recognized Gold Star Mother Roberts "Cis" Sigholtz as the Founding Mother of Chapter 1. On 14 March of this year, a Chapter delegation visited Cis to report on the State of the Chapter. The visit was sweetened a bit with a bouquet of roses, but the conversations about the Chapter Sky Soldiers are always the highlights for her.

On Saturday, 3 May, Chapter members conducted its annual Reading of the Names at the Brigade Memorial Marker in Arlington Cemetery. MG (R) Lee Surut (3-319, 65-66) inspired his fellow Sky Soldiers as he walked the hills of Arlington to join fellow Vietnam-era Sky Soldiers and read the names of our losses for the year 1968, and the full list of those lost during the Airborne Brigade Combat Team's deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan.

On Saturday, 24 May, three former company commanders of C/4-503

joined forces to lay roses at the panels of the Vietnam Wall containing the names of C/4s losses during the Vietnam War. Bill Connolly and Michael Montie did the honors at the Wall as Bill Brewster joined us by cell phone from Wyoming. Wayne Walker and Mick Justin supported the process by double-checking the names for correctness. This is an event we recommend to all units.

On 13 June, Michael Montie represented the Chapter at the dedication of the memorial tree to honor GEN John R. Deane Jr, on the grounds of the Infantry Museum at Fort Benning. The tree is placed next to the Brigade Memorial. General Deane's family was present for the ceremony, and graciously grateful to all who were in attendance. The following day, Michael represented the Chapter as the names of the ABCT losses of OEF XIII were installed on the Brigade Memorial. Chapter 1 counts 1LT Stephen C. Prasnicky (4-319) of Lexington, Va., who was killed in action on 27 June 2012, as one of our own. A large Chapter 1 delegation joined hundreds of mourners as Stephen was laid to rest in Lexington during the summer of 2012.

The Chapter takes pleasure in announcing that Joseph Flesch (4-503, 66-67) has become the new Chapter Vice-President, and already has made his mark. He is the Chapter's point man for the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) effort, and has volunteered to host the annual Chapter barbecue in August.

We all have seen and heard much in the press concerning the VA recently. Chapter 1 is blessed to have Michael Bargmann as its Chapter VA Liaison. Mike does an absolutely fine job, and would like to reassure all who may be concerned about some of the stories that simple doctor shortage is often the more likely cause for delays than the lurid descriptions in the press. Michael's dad, by the way, was an Army Ranger who climbed Pointe du Hoc on that difficult day some 70 years ago.

We are pleased to announce that, due to the diligent follow-through of Chapter Treasurer Mark Ludlow, the Sigholtz Capital Chapter is now a 501(c)(19) organization in its own right. For those chapter presidents who are unsure of the process, Mark has prepared a helpful process summary.

Finally, the Sigholtz family and the Sigholtz Chapter were very pleased to learn that the ABCT will dedicate the multipurpose center as the Sigholtz Center on 1 August, in honor of COL Bob Sigholtz (2-503) and CPT Bob Sigholtz (D/2-503, KIA 29 May 1969). Chapter Gold Star Associate Member Whitney Knoerlein, who is the granddaughter of COL Bob and niece of CPT Bob, will travel to Italy to represent the family.



# Chapter 2

## Lozada-Watters Chapter • New York

Tommy McMahon, President • tom173sky@aol.com • 646-533-5935

We have had a very busy month of May. We awarded a Father Watters Plaque to the outstanding ROTC Candidate Cadet David Glinbizzi. We conducted our annual Viet Nam Memorial Service at the Viet Nam Veteran Memorial Wall in lower Manhattan, and we are planning to dedicate a bridge in New Jersey to Father Watters. Information will follow about dedication date and time. Thanks Steve Scapula for all your work with this dedication.

I would also like to thank Chuck Heller who got Jerry Cooney to sign

gloves for the chapter to sell for a fundraiser. In June, Mitchell Community Center presented Carlos Lozada a Medal of Honor plaque to be displayed at his park in the Bronx. There will be a ceremony dedicating the street to be Named Carlos Lozada Way sometime this year.

Thank you to Dave Smith who set up our June monthly meeting at West Point.

Talking to the majority, I must admit I am a little jealous about those who trained and served with the same guys with the Herd. Unlike the later year Sky Soldier who was assigned to the Herd from a line—first guy to the 101, second to 173, and so on. My first disappointment was when my buddy and I who trained together for basic, advance infantry, and jump school were standing together on the line. He went to the 101 and me to the 173rd. I have yet to meet someone I served with in the Nam.

# Chapter 3

## Columbus/Ft. Benning Chapter • Columbus, GA

Art Van Allen, President • art173rd@aol.com • 706-317-4177

# Chapter 4

## Glenn H. English Chapter • Philadelphia, PA

George Bembischew • no email • 215-788-0824

# Chapter 5

## Ft Bragg Chapter • North Carolina

Jose V. Bercedoni, President • grazycan173rdabn@nc.rr.com • 910-822-3895

# Chapter 6

## Elite Forces, Chicago Chapter

Frank Miceli • elite173rd@aol.com • 847-428-1116

# Chapter 7

## Florida Chapter

James Bradley, President • webmaster@173rdairborne.com • 727-376-2576 • www.FloridaSkySoldiers.com

They all served in Troop E-17th Cavalry, 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) in 1970-71 but it wasn't until 2014 that they were able to meet again.

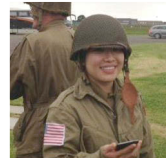


Airborne brothers hook up after 43 years: Charles Anderson, Jim Bradley, Jove

Jim McSorley showed that age has not slowed him down. Boarding a C-46 in England, he flew with a load of the 173d Vets to make a Jump in France to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Jump in the Normandy



Jim McSorley.



173d Vet Captain Chin.



Jim McSorley waiting to jump in St. Marie-du-Mont.



Ex-173d Vets who jumped in France for the 70th Anniversary of D-Day.



173d Vet Jim Wilson on the right.

invasion. Jim tells of the plane escorted by British Spitfires as they crossed the Channel. His jump in St. Maries-du-Mont was memorable and as was the meeting of other jumpers from various war eras and countries.

# Chapter 8

## Inland Northwest Chapter

Ron Dearing, President

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# Chapter 9

## New England Chapter

Peter Klausner, President • [logpc@comcast.com](mailto:logpc@comcast.com) • 508-238-0289

We send greetings to all from The New England Chapter. Late spring, early summer weather has finally come to New England after a long cold snowy winter.

The Chapter conducted its 20th consecutive year honoring John A. Barnes III (MOH) with a vigil in his name. The weather was good unlike previous years. There were many civilians, police, firefighters, and military from all branches who stopped in to pay their respect to John Barnes, to us, and to all our nation's veterans.



The Chapter stood a silent vigil at the memorial for 12 hours. Jungle fatigues, BDUs, and ACUs were the uniform of the day. The local newspaper placed a front page article in it honoring Barnes and the townfolk came with cookies, coffee, and all kinds of rations for us to eat. The Chapter also provided cold drinks and hot food cooked on the grill everyone. No one left hungry.

The city of Boston also paid thanks to its veterans by placing 38,000 flags in the middle of the city honoring each Massachusetts veteran who gave his life for his country.



The September meeting will be Sept. 13, 2014, in Concord N.H., VFW Post 1631, 6 Court St.

A reminder and thanks to the Boston Library 173d Yearbooks are online and available for viewing or downloading: [archive.org/details/chapter9of173rdairbornebrigadeassoc](http://archive.org/details/chapter9of173rdairbornebrigadeassoc). To date, some 2700 downloads have been made.

For those of us who attended the 2014 reunion I think we can all agree it was a great time. Our thanks go out to the Fort Bragg Chapter for their hard work.

### Rest in Peace Sky Soldier

General, Michael R. "Mick" Stabile died at home May 6, 2014, at age 65. Mick served in the Army with the 173rd Airborne, "The Herd," and was awarded Bronze and Silver Stars and two Purple Hearts. He was a graduate of San Diego State University (BS, biochemistry), Northern Essex (LPN), and University of Massachusetts Lowell (RN). He worked as a nurse, counselor, and case manager, most recently with the Homeless Outreach Team in Boston. After retirement, he and his wife traveled, volunteered, and parented a household of loving dogs. He is survived by his wife Deanna Smith (E. Kingston, N.H.) and his daughter Kate of South Berwick, Me.

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# Chapter 10

## Western States Chapter • California

Bob Ortiz, President • [azitro2011@gmail.com](mailto:azitro2011@gmail.com) • 650-712-0980

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# Chapter 11

## Down Under Chapter • Australia NSW



# Chapter 13

## Texas Chapter

John Barthelemy, President • barthelemy47@comcast.net • 713-516-2989

On Saturday May 17, 2014, the Texas Chapter 13, 173rd Airborne Brigade held its quarterly meeting in Port Aransas, Texas. It was the second time that the meeting had been held at the VFW Post # 8967 and all the Sky Soldiers in attendance were welcomed by the members there. The meeting was promptly called to order by President John Barthelemy at approximately 1300 hours. There were approximately 15 Sky Soldiers present and eight spouses/girlfriends in attendance. Sunny Garcia from Corpus Christi was responsible for coordinating the meeting with the VFW Commander of the post and everything went as planned. As usual, each Sky Soldier introduced himself and then his wife/girlfriend. Sunny Garcia introduced World War II and Vietnam Veteran SFC (Ret) George Silvas. Sky Soldier George Silvas served with 101st Airborne Division in WW II having made two combat jumps. He also participated in the Battle of Bastogne, and is a Cavalier of the French Realm having been knighted three years ago. Sky Soldier Silvas served with the 173rd in Vietnam from 1966 to 1967 and is a lifetime member of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Association. He was a professional boxer with 60 fights under his belt prior to joining the Army in 1943 and was the boxing coach for 82nd for many years. He has been married to his childhood sweetheart Katherine for 67 years, is a retired civil servant, and stays active various military associations.

### 2nd Quarter Meeting in Port Aransas (Summary)

1. Call to order
  - a. The meeting was called to order promptly at 1:00 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 roll call and introductions was conducted. A count of 16 chapter members was made, along with 8 spouses/guests. Those in attendance were:
    - i. John Barthelemy
    - ii. Harold Brent
    - iii. Jason Brooks
    - iv. Sonny Garcia
    - v. Robert Gonzalez
    - vi. Santiago Krummel
    - vii. Dusty Jarnigan
    - viii. Manny Mermea
    - ix. Alfredo Lujan
    - x. Andres Herrera
    - xi. Michael Sparks
    - xii. Avelardo Valdez
    - xiii. Roberto Sifuentes
    - xiv. George Silvas
    - xv. Reyes Rios
    - xvi. Augustin Soto
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 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 Many Mermea. The report was discussed and then 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
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.

### George Silvas

We were honored by the presence of George Silvas at our chapter meeting in Port Aransas. I had the privilege of meeting George last year and was very pleased he could attend our meeting. He was one of the original members of the Brigade, but what makes George even more special is that he was assigned to the 101st Airborne during the Battle of the Bulge at Bastogne during World War II.



Master of Ceremonies Donald Bartlett (standing left) speaks with French Legion of Honor awardees Edward Kerker (left, seated, smiling), George Silvas (wearing beret), and Harry Nixon on Wednesday May 30, 2012. Kerker, Silvas, and Nixon were honored at the ceremony with the French Legion of Honor Award by French Consul General Frederic Bontems (right) for serving courageously during World War II to free France from Nazi tyranny. *Photo by San Antonio Express-News.*



# Chapter 14

## Southern California Chapter

Wambi Cook, President • wambicook@aol.com • 626-664-0219

Our spring meeting was held at VFW Post 8070 in Azusa. Twenty members attended. Items on the agenda are as follows.

We manned an info table for the Fifth Annual “Welcome Home Viet Nam Veterans Day.” Over 700 vets, families, and friends visited a variety of service-related venues on the campus of California High School located in Whittier. We also had the good fortune of recruiting seven new members, most of whom were not aware of the chapter’s existence until this event.

In April, Art Martinez and Ray Ramirez represented the Herd at the annual ANZAC memorial services conducted at the Westwood Military Cemetery. After the ceremonies, the New Zealand Consulate hosted a wine and appetizer luncheon for attendees.

“We Remember Observance” is held each Memorial Day weekend. A chapter contingent visits over a half-dozen cemeteries throughout the greater Los Angeles area of over 14 fallen Herd brothers’ gravesites. We hold individual services that include the cleaning of the site, placement of an American flag, flowers, special prayers, personal remembrances, and end with the playing of *Taps*. On occasion family members join us. This year, medic Joel Sabel’s (4/503, 7/10/67) sister, Rosemary, and husband met us at our first site of Evergreen Memorial located in Rowland Heights.



(From left) Wambi Cook with Joel Sabel’s sister, Rosemary, and her husband.



*We Remember* ceremony.

On Memorial Day afternoon, Joel along with 11 other fallen Bishop Amat High School (Lancer) alumni, were recognized for their service. Chapter member Louie Costello, who was with Joel and the others that fateful day, rung the memorial bell in his honor.

Many of us attended and/or participated in a host of other Memorial Day activities with the VFW the American Legion, just to name a few.

Once again we presented the 173rd annual awards to two outstanding Azusa Unified School District’s JROTC members.

Ray Ramirez is not only our chapter secretary, but a long-standing board member of the National Memorial Foundation. He took an active role in the “Honors Ceremony” held this past 12 June at Ft. Benning.



CPT. Geiser of Azusa Unified School District’s JROTC receives an award presented by Chapter 14.

We'll hold a joint fall meeting with our Northern California sister Chapter 10 in the beautiful coastal city of Cambria in November.

### SAVE THE DATE

Next year's reunion is set: 2 May-6 May at the Town & Country Inn Resort & Inn located in the Mission Valley section of San Diego. Resort rep Kimberly Hubbard addressed the membership at Ft. Bragg and we're confident that her assurance that the resort's Red Carpet amenities will exceed our expectations. Check [www.173rd2015reunion.com](http://www.173rd2015reunion.com) and the various links on the national site for updates.

Chapter 14's reunion committee meets with Chapter 28 to discuss the 2015 Reunion.



## Chapter 15

**Weber/Taylor Chapter • Minneapolis, Minnesota**  
Trudell Guerue, President • [elfguerue@msn.com](mailto:elfguerue@msn.com) • 651-455-3787

## Chapter 16

**Col. Richard (Rawhide) Boland Chapter • Washington State**

Chris Clewell, President • [chrisclewell@aol.com](mailto:chrisclewell@aol.com) • 425-672-7486

## Chapter 17

**Mid-West-States, Ohio Chapter**

Bill Terry, President • [renownedtwo@wowway.com](mailto:renownedtwo@wowway.com) • 614-476-3060

## Chapter 18

**Larry Pierce Chapter • Oklahoma**

Don Walton • [Walton.don@ecewb.com](mailto:Walton.don@ecewb.com) • 580-678-1088

MEETING MINUTES, 1300 hrs, 14 June 2014  
VFW Post 9265 A J "Rock" Hudson Post, 4605 S Pennsylvania Ave, Oklahoma City, Ok.

Meeting was brought to order by President Don Walton  
Pledge of Allegiance rendered.

Chaplin rendered the opening prayer.

Treasurer's Report, currently \$2097.05 Savings, Checking undetermined.

The floor was opened to old business:

Don on Tax Letter. Needs to be generated. Clarence was present and is aware he needs to sign it. Don is getting with Ed Perkins on the contents and format of the letter.

Secretary position will stay as is for the present.

Floor opened to New Business:

Clarence donated 9 bobby pin Vietnam bead ribbons. They were elected to be sold for \$10.00 each. Sold = 4 \$40.00, 5 = Remain

Cash donations Don, Bob, Ed and Gene donated \$10.00, and Clarence donated \$100.00 Total \$140.00. Monies turned over to Bob Gardner to hold until it can be deposited.

The upcoming Reunion was discussed and known that at least Five Members will attend.

Meeting closed at 14:50 hrs.

Next scheduled meetings are as follow:

11 October 2014, 1300hrs at VFW Post 5263 General Lesley J. McNair Post, 103 NE 20th St, Lawton, Ok.; (580) 248-0713

13 December 2014, 1300hrs at VFW Post 9265 A J "Rock" Hudson Post, 4605 S Pennsylvania Ave, Oklahoma City, Ok.; (405) 604-0264

NOTE: Annual Xmas Dinner may replace regular meeting

## Chapter 19

**New Zealand Chapter**

John Deazley • [jdeazley173@gmail.com](mailto:jdeazley173@gmail.com)

## Chapter 23

**Queensland Chapter • Australia**

Ray Hughes O.A.M. • [trishray1@bigpond.com](mailto:trishray1@bigpond.com)

## Chapter 24

**Rochester, Minnesota Chapter**

Floyd Riester • [ries173abn@aol.com](mailto:ries173abn@aol.com) • 507-281-0926

## Chapter 25

**Thunderbird Chapter • Phoenix, Arizona**

Bob Madden, President • [bob5992@cox.net](mailto:bob5992@cox.net) • 602-999-5992



# Chapter 27

## Southern States Chapter • Victoria, Australia

John Arnold • johnarnold@inet.net.au

Greetings from Melbourne Victoria, home of Chapter XXVII Southern States AUSTRALIA.

At the time of writing we are just entering the southern winter and this means quite cold nights and days that could be warmer. June 9 is the date we celebrate the Queen's Birthday (although her real birthday is in April) and that heralds the start of the Australian snow season which is in the Southern Alps along the border of Victoria and New South Wales and continues until September. To this day I still cannot see why people want to pay a LOT of money to travel the three or so hours from Melbourne just to be cold and wet, and to shiver and play around in all that white stuff. Geeze, I can just open my refrigerator/freezer and see that.

This chapter has been very quiet this year with not a lot happening. This is mainly due to many members thinking that they are too old to participate in our activities and meetings. However, we battle on with the same *Usual Suspects* doing what they can to keep things moving.

We had our Annual General Meeting in February of this year and the incumbent executive was returned unopposed.



AB Garcia and Merv Williams at the pre march.



John Arnold & Garcia prior to march.



On Friday **April 25** we observed our ANZAC Day traditions here in Australia and New Zealand, and the chapter members who attended marched with our banner and our **Herd Flag with the 1RAR** group

this year, the first time in many years. We marched at the rear of that group as there are some veterans of 1RAR who did their tour after us and therefore do not see themselves as part of our history. This didn't faze us and we were a very enthusiastic contingent, even if small in number. **Kenny Baker**, our initial president had a

leg wound and couldn't march but he forced himself to be a part of the parade from the

The chapter banner supported by two cadets with Kenny Baker facing camera & John Arnold back to camera.

front seat of a Rolls Royce courtesy car. A number of our blokes who live in regional Victoria made their presence felt at their local observance and marches. Those of us in Melbourne retired to the Duke of Kent Hotel after the march for a few cold refreshing frothy ones as it had been a very warm sunny day and thirsts were up. Our secretary, John Arnold, on "get off the piss" orders from his doctor was forced to sit among these beer drinking members while drinking coffee. Mind you, once the caffeine hit came in he was just as silly as the rest of them.

On May 25 Dennis Edgley (chapter VP) and John Arnold (chapter Secretary) attended the American Memorial Day observance at

The Shrine which is located in the beautiful Alexandria Gardens on St. Kilda Road, one of the main arterials of this city. This service is planned and overseen by the American Ex Service Association of Victoria and it was quite an honor to be part of it. Mr. Eric Bartosh, president of that association, can be very proud of the ceremony which was one with utter respect and poignancy.

This was also a beautiful day with clear skies and very welcome sunshine as it had been raining pretty hard the day and night before. It was quite unusual as on that day there were a couple more observances by other national groups: the Greek military veterans (WWII) and the historical group for The Boer War troops from their war in Africa against the Dutch African BOERS.

Over these past several months our secretary, in conjunction with Ray Payne, (Southern Hemisphere spokesman and secretary of Chapter 23) has been busy with organizing and

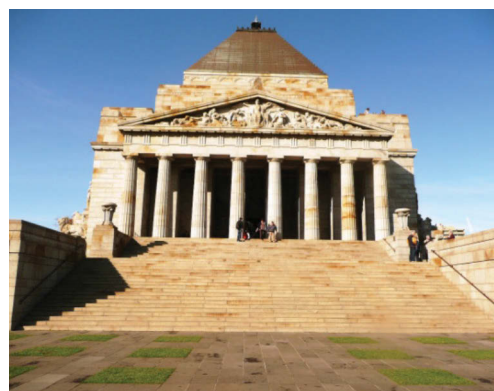
logistics of the reunion here in Melbourne during October 22 to 26 of this year for the Australian & New Zealand chapter members of the **1RAR Group**. This has seen a lot of running around arranging accommodation,



The Shrine with the USA & Aussie flags



John Arnold (L) & Dennis Edgley inside The Shrine with wreaths.



The Shrine in Melbourne.

transport, and venues and getting the word out to as many of our blokes we can, (with the aid of Ray's incredible email network) and we are also expecting a few of our brothers from the United States who have indicated their wish to join in and it is not too late for any others who want to visit the Land Down Under and enjoy (TRUE) southern hospitality.

Our biggest concern has been locating a hotel at a reasonable rate and location as the Victorian Spring Racing Carnival is on in Melbourne at this same time and accommodation in the city has been at a premium. Thankfully we got in early enough to secure lodging at a central city location at what is quite a reasonable rate for Melbourne.

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## Chapter 28

### San Diego Chapter

Gilbert Reynoso, President • g\_reynoso\_r@yahoo.com • 760-500-1944

Our May meeting was held in our new home location which is at the American Legion Hall, Post 149 in Escondido, Ca., where we began working on our future programs, including participating in veteran outreach programs, expanding our Honor Guard membership roster, and preparing to assist Chapter 14 with our involvement to help assure a successful 2015 reunion of the Skysoldier brotherhood in San Diego.

We also were honored by being part of the Memorial Day remembrances

in San Diego with our Honor Guard members participating in three different ceremonies.

Since our last report we have welcomed four new members, Tim Hall-RVN, Richard Gauthier-RVN, David Wilbur-RVN, and Mike Erickson, who served in Afghanistan at Outpost Restrepo. Please give them a welcome when you meet up with them.

Our next adventure was participating in the July 4th parade that took place on Coronado Island, home of the SEALs, West Coast. Since San Diego is a "Navy Town," our platoon size chapter, with comrades from other Airborne units such as the 82nd and 101st troopers joining us, always stands out. We enjoyed this as much as the crowds along the route do—even though we were pretty worn out by the end of it.



(From left) Tim Hall, Rusty Kulp, Mike Erickson, Carlos Hernandez, Dan Sampson, Gilbert Reynoso, Henry Stiegler, Richard Gauthier, Ruben Salgado, and Pascual Dinong.

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## Chapter 29

### Lawrence (Larry) Joel Chapter, Nevada

Joe Carmody • jallen9819@aol.com • 719-839-1810

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## Chapter 30

### South Carolina Chapter

Lester Yeargin, President • lesteryeargin@bellsouth.net • 803-786-7995

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## Chapter 173

### Active Duty Chapter • Europe (Italy & Germany)

Frank Marcantonio f\_marcantonio@yahoo.com



# Introducing the New 173rd Airborne Brigade Association Store!

In response to the overwhelming inquiries regarding a store for the Association, President Roy Scott and Vice President Terry Aubrey have found a permanent home for our customized items at Area Advertising in Ashland, Kentucky. The Association Store will be led by Store Chairman, MSGT Daniel F. Day (Ret.), an engineer with the 173rd Airborne Brigade. While serving in Vietnam ('67-'69) he operated on a demo team, mine sweeping and tunnel demolition. MSGT Day was instrumental in organizing and coordinating merchandise for the Lexington, Las Vegas and Ft. Bragg reunions.



Together with Area Advertising's creative team, MSGT Day has designed the Wounded Warrior Herd Foundation logo. That logo, along with versions of the Sky Soldier logo, battalion crests and jump wings will be available on shirts, hats, banners, coins, plaques, and other items. We are excited to offer an array of commemorative items to display your pride and support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

## Airborne All the Way!



MSGT Daniel F. Day (Ret.)  
Dates of Service: 11 June 67 to 13 May 96



Association Staff: David Wireman, Graphic Artist; Cassie Watts, Graphic Artist;  
MSGT Daniel F. Day (Ret.), Store Chairman; Josh Perkey, Store Manager;  
SGT Sam Perkey, Area Advertising Owner/Operator; Joe Dumaine, Signage

**Volunteers serving  
our veterans daily**



**We want to hear from you! Is there something you would like to see in the store?  
Questions or comments on current products?**

**Daniel F. Day - [dday3881@roadrunner.com](mailto:dday3881@roadrunner.com) • Josh Perkey - [joshperkey@areaadvertising.com](mailto:joshperkey@areaadvertising.com)  
606-329-8055 • 1-800-328-8005 • P.O. Box 1733, Ashland, KY 41105**

# Wounded Warrior Program: The Herd Foundation Commemorative Tee



**Wounded Warrior Tee - \$25**  
*Item# 173WW005*

*Jerzees 50/50 Black Tee  
Printed in Four Locations!*



Partial proceeds from this design go to assist wounded unit members through programs like the Wounded Warriors Backpack Program.

The Backpack Program provides returning wounded soldiers a bag filled with essentials and branded Airborne items.

Donation at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, MD



# FULL CUSTOMIZATION AVAILABLE!

## Choose an item



## Choose logos

## Choose locations



Side 1



Side 2

- 1 
- 2 
- 3 
- 4 
- 5 
- 6 
- 7 
- 8 
- 9 
- 10 
- 11 

Front Only
- 12 

Front Only



**Shirts, High Profile Cap, Wood Plaque and Bayonet prices include one customizable location.**



**Moisture Wick Polo - \$35**  
Item #173ST650

**Cotton Polo - \$35**  
Item #173K420

Available in Royal, Navy, Red & White

**Multiple Locations Available Only \$8 Each!**



**Customizable High Profile Cap - \$19.99**  
Item #173C800

High Profile Cap Available in Royal, Navy, Red & White



**Low Profile Twill Cap - \$19.99**  
Item #173OTTO



**Featherlite Short Sleeve Oxford - \$39**  
Item #1730231

**Featherlite Long Sleeve Oxford - \$39**  
Item #1733231

Available in French Blue & White



**3'x5' Embroidered Flag with Grommets - \$30**  
Item #173001



**12"x18" Reserved Parking Signs**  
Fund-raising items only  
Chapter presidents call for more information!

**Choose any logo, battalion crest or jump wings along with two lines of personalized text.**



**Personalized 9.5"x11.5" Wood Plaque - \$45**  
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**Personalized Commemorative Bayonet and Stand - \$149.99**  
Item #173004



Up to three locations to customize!





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- Mastercard
- Discover
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- VISA

Credit Card Number (all digits)

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CVV

Signature (for credit card customers only):

*Design Options*



4



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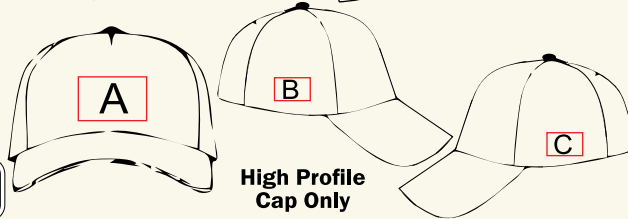
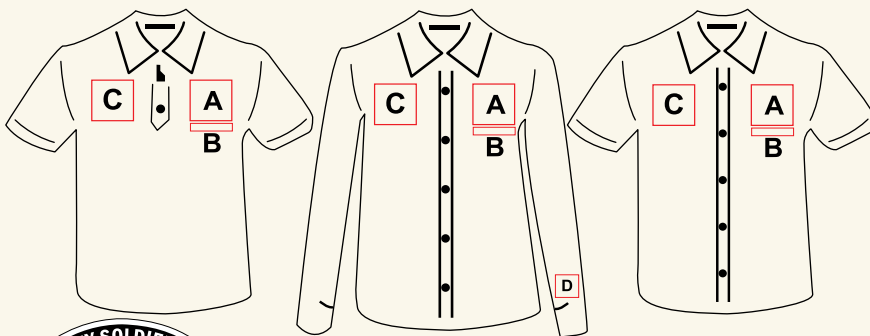


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12

Please allow an extra \$4 for 2X, \$6 for 3X, \$8 for 4X, \$10 for 5X and \$12 for 6X.



High Profile Cap Only



Product #	QTY	Color	Size	Location A	Location B	Location C	Location D
Ex. 173K420	1	Royal	M	10	MSGT Daniel F. Day	3, (second line) C I B	9

If you have any questions regarding designs or imprint locations please don't hesitate to call 800-328-8005.



# 173d Airborne Brigade Association Membership Application

## 173d Membership Application

Mail to:

Dennis Hill, 97 Earle St., Norwood, MA. 02602-1504

Join on line at [www.skysoldier.net](http://www.skysoldier.net)

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Middle Initial</b>	<b>Last Name</b>
<b>Street Address</b>		
<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip Code</b>
<b>Home Phone</b>		<b>Cell Phone</b>
<b>173d Unit Assigned to</b>		<b>Dates Assigned</b>
<b>Chapter Assigned to</b>		<b>Email address</b>

### Type Membership

<b>Annual</b>	<b>Life</b>	<b>Associate</b>
<b>Annual \$24.00</b>	<b>Life \$173.00</b>	

Checks payable to: 173d Airborne Association

Pay by credit card

Installment Plan \$30.00 monthly, 6 months

<b>Type card: M/C, VISA, AMEX etc.</b>	
<b>Credit Card Number</b>	
<b>Expiration Date</b>	
<b>CCV Number, back of card last 3 numbers</b>	
<b>Billing Address on card</b>	
<b>Names as it appears on card</b>	

Info, questions: Dennis Hill, 781-769-6062 10:00 – 19:00 EST





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173rd Airborne Brigade CC754 \$12.95 ea



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Army Chinook CC587 \$12.95 ea



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