



**Serving Sky Soldiers Past, Present and Future**

# *The Herd Word*

## **Gathering of the Herd: Williamsburg VA**

The Chapter planned the Virginia Peninsula lunch/member meeting, for 3 October, in Williamsburg, VA. However, Mother Nature, in the form of Hurricane Joaquin, had other ideas. The Category-four storm, with its accompanying winds, heavy rains, and flooding was sure to put a damper on the event.

As you well know, it's not nice to fool Mother Nature, so the Gathering of the Herd was postponed.

The luck of the Airborne! Saturday, 14 November, was bright and clear, as the 26 Airborne brothers-in-arms and their guests met at the Center Street Grill in New Town, VA.

Lunch, a business meeting, and camaraderie made for a great

time. Old friendships were renewed; new friendships were made. Fun was had by all.

Joe Flesch, updated the attendees on Chapter activities. Jeane Flesch reported on Chapter finances. The prospect of hosting the reunion was discussed with gusto. Barry and Cindy Holland did a fine job setting up the event. Much thanks for a job well done.

The Chapter continues to reach out to members, where they are, to ensure that not just those in the Washington Metro-Area are engaged by the Chapter leadership and involved in Chapter activities.

Just goes to show you that rain and snow may defer, but it will not deter the Airborne.



Barry and Cindy Holland, Tony Esposito, Charles Campbell, George Farris, Jeane Flesch, Larry Holbrook, Ginny Farris, Mick Weisinger, Dave Pistorese, Joe Flesch, Flo and Gene Cartier, Larry Kilpatrick, Connie and Ed Anthony, Bunny and Ken Kaplan, Mopsie and Don Phillips, Keith and Irene Wolff. Not shown: Mercer and Marybeth Collier, Doug Hetler

**AIRBORNE**  
*ALL THE WAY*

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# Message from the Chapter President



As we approach the end of the year, I am pleased to report that our Chapter has received strong support and participation from our members – Well done, Sky Soldiers.

During the last quarter, the Chapter donated \$550 to the US Army Heritage and Education Center, at Carlisle, PA, and a signed/numbered lithograph of a sculptor's sketch by Felix de Weldon, for his Iwo Jima monument. See article in this issue.

We continue to support Sky Soldier SFC Clifford Bonner and his family, while he recovers from a severe brain injury he received, while on a training jump in Italy, last August.

On one of our members request, we provided a Chapter Honor Set

to Mrs. Helen Duncan, Vietnam Sky Soldier, CSM Billy G. Duncan's Widow.

Chapter members participated in the 10 November Bravo Bulls Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery and helped fund the purchase of wreaths for that event.

On Veterans Day, a contingent of Chapter members conducted our annual Walk to the Wall and placed a wreath there to honor all Sky Soldiers. On 14 November, we had a fine turnout for our Williamsburg, VA, Gathering of the Herd.

Our Chapter's committee to investigate the Chapter hosting the 2018 173<sup>d</sup> Airborne Brigade Association Reunion has been working with the Brigade concierge service to evaluate potential venues in our area.

Our last scheduled event of the year is supporting Wreaths Across America, at Arlington National Cemetery, on 12 December. See information in this issue.

In January 2016, I will attend the 173<sup>d</sup> Airborne Brigade Association Mid-Winter Conference, in Columbus, GA, the site of the 2016 Reunion. I represent the Chapter at the Board of Directors meeting.

We will have our Annual General Membership meeting at The Irish Inn at Glen Echo, MD, on 6 February 2016. See notice in this newsletter. Please join us as we hold elections for Chapter Vice President and Secretary.

Airborne All The Way,

Joe



## Wreaths Across America

Each year, the Worcester Wreath Company supports the tradition of placing wreaths on the headstones of our Nation's honored dead at Arlington National Cemetery (ARNC).

This year's event will be held on 12 December 2015. **Bill Harris**, the Chapter Point of Contact, will be at Section 60, on/about 0600h. Chapter members who would like to participate in the wreath laying should meet him there. No need to sign up.

The crowd will be huge and parking limited. Participants should seriously consider using the Metro. Even using the metro, you may



have to get off at Rosslyn or the Pentagon and walk to the cemetery. The Metro rail system will open at 0700h. The Cemetery will open at 0800h.

The crowd will build up fast, well before the gates open. Some who arrive at the entrances at what they think is "just in time," often get delayed, arrive to empty

trucks, or are unable to place a wreath.

Donations to Wreaths Across America may be made at their website:

<http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org>, at \$15 per wreath. You may also specify a name.

Of note is that all the wreaths have to be removed in January. Details on how you can join Wreaths Across America (WAA) for the Wreath Cleanup on Saturday, 23 January 2016, will be posted in the WAA blog and Facebook page.

# Chapter 1 Calendar Year 2015 - 2016

Chapter Event	Date	Time	Day	Project Officer	Remarks
Wreaths Across America	12 Dec 2015	0900	Sat	Bill Harris	Arlington National Cemetery
Chapter Annual General Membership Meeting	6 Feb 2016	1100	Sat	Joe Flesch	The Irish Inn at Glen Echo 6119 Tulane Avenue Glen Echo, MD 20812
St. Patrick's Day/ Gathering of the Herd (MD)	12 Mar 2016	1100	Sat	Joe Flesch	Flanagan's Harp and Fiddle 4844 Cordell Ave Bethesda, MD 20814
Reading of the Names Vietnam and GWOT	7 May 2016	1030	Sat	Ed Anthony	Brigade Marker Arlington National Cemetery
Gathering of the Herd (VA)	? May 2016	TBD	TBD	TBD	Shenandoah Virginia Valley Area
173 <sup>d</sup> Airborne Brigade National Reunion	7-11 Jun 2016	N/A	Tue - Fri	N/A	Convention and Trade Center Columbus, GA
Gathering of the Herd (VA)	? Jul 2016	TBD	TBD	TBD	Northern Virginia TBD
Chapter BBQ	13 Aug 2016	1100	Sat	Joe Flesch	Flesch Home 11730 Hawkes Road Clarksburg, MD
Bravo Bulls Ceremony	10 Nov 2016	1100	Thu	Roy Lombardo	Multiple Sites Arlington National Cemetery
Walk to the Wall	11 Nov 2016	1000	Wed	Joe Flesch	Vietnam Memorial No-Host Lunch
Wreaths Across America	? Dec 2016	0900	Sat	Bill Harris	Arlington National Cemetery
Wounded Warrior Visits	Periodic	N/A	N/A	TBD	DC and Richmond VA Area

## Bravo Bulls Forever

On 10 November, the resolute Vietnam-era, B Company, 2/503<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Battalion (Bravo Bulls), Sky Soldiers with the Tucker Chapter of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division Association, recognized the sacrifice Airborne Soldiers buried at Arlington National Cemetery had made.

The ceremonies began at Afghanistan KIA, SSG Larry Rouble's gravesite. His widow, Jackie, and her daughter, Carmen, and son, Jason, laid a wreath at the site.

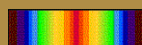
It was particularly poignant that this site was near where several other GWOT Skysoldiers were buried.

LTC (retired) Roy Lombardo, in his traditional emcee role, reminisced about the contribution those present and absent had made on behalf of the nation.

The group then moved to MG and Mrs. Ellis Williamson's gravesite. Here, Roy summarized General Williams role in Brigade History.

At the 173<sup>d</sup> Airborne Brigade Marker, the assembly placed small American flags around the wreath placed on the Marker. Here too, Roy recognized the Bravo Bulls of yesteryear and today and the proud lineage and brotherhood that continues today.

Afterwards, the Bravo Bulls retired to Il Porto Restaurant, in Alexandria, to enjoy good food, good friends, good times, and look forward to next year.





# Chapter 1 Financial Report

As of 30 November, 2015

Balance as of 31 August, 2015	\$10,125.80
Receipts (Dues, Fees, and Donations)	\$2,196.98
Disbursements	(\$2,227.49)
Balance as of 30 November, 2015	\$10,095.29
Receipts included:	
Dues: 40 Transactions @ \$20.00	\$800.00
Dues: 5 Transactions @ \$40.00	\$200.00
Dues [Brigade] 5 Transactions @ \$24.00	\$120.00
Pay Pal Fees	-\$10.02
Donations: 76 Transactions	
Mitzi Belenky (for Scholarship Fund)	\$837.00
	\$250.00
Disbursements included:	
The Herd Word (September) (30 copies)	\$19.59
Framing for two Iwo Jima Prints	\$750.00
Donation to Army Heritage and Education Center	\$550.00
Annual VA Corporation Commission Fee	\$25.00
Postage (Stamps and Mailing Honor Set	\$83.78
Annual RRBMDK Law Firm Fee	\$100.00
Dues Letter for non-email members (30 Copies)	\$10.49
Brigade Foundation Scholarship Fund	\$250.00
Annual Brigade Dues (\$16.00 each)	\$80.00
Wreaths: Walk to the Wall & Bravo Bulls	\$358.53

## Chapter Donation to USAHEC

On 14 September, the Chapter donated \$550 to the United States Army Heritage and Education Center (USAHEC).

USAHEC, in Carlisle, PA, makes contemporary and historical strategic leadership, the global application of Land power, and US Army Heritage material available for research. Their goal is to educate and honor Soldiers, past and present.

The Chapter also donated a numbered Iwo Jima Lithograph to USAHEC, with documentation of the link between 4/503<sup>rd</sup> and the Marine Corps, in Vietnam. Terry Walsh added \$50 to the contribution.

It was a fulfilling event for all involved.



Bob Read, Mike Perry, Gene Cartier, John Kingeter, Joe Flesch



Bob Read, Mack Brooks, Judy Read, Mike Perry, Joe Flesch, Jeane Flesch, Gene Cartier, John Kingeter

## Reminder

On 31 October, the Chapter sent out the Annual Letter about 2016 173<sup>d</sup> Airborne Brigade Association Dues and Chapter Fees.

We asked that you remit your payments and verify your current contact information, by 1 January.

Our Chapter fees support our events. If you did not receive our communication, please Chapter President Joe Flesch.

[sigholtz.capital.chapter@gmail.com](mailto:sigholtz.capital.chapter@gmail.com)



# Walk to the Wall 2015

It was a near perfect day - perhaps, a bit cool and breezy. That was to be expected. After all, it was November in Washington. The gusts, however, did little to dampen the resolve among the Sky Soldiers, their families, and friends to pay homage the fallen of yesteryear.

The twenty-plus assembled as planned, on the Brigade Colors, near the Vietnam Memorial Three-Soldiers Statue.

Solemnity had to wait its turn, as old friends, new friends, battle buddies, familiar strangers, and just plain folks hugged in unabashed gladness at another year in which they had been blessed to honor those not with us.

There were fewer of us old Sky Soldiers than last year. Sublimely, we all knew that would always be the case. That made the occasion all the more precious.

**George Farris** brought donuts and coffee. Many took his generosity to heart and stomach. George also brought **Ms. Jackie Rougle**, widow of Operation Enduring Freedom KIA Sky Soldier, **SSG Larry Rougle**, and her children, **Carmen** and **Jason**, with him. She fit right in the band of veterans old enough to be her father.

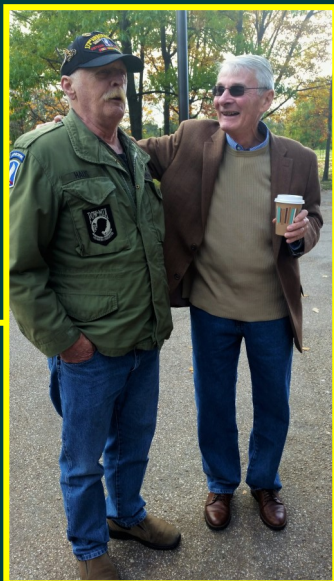
When the time seemed right, **Bill Harris**, led the motley group to the apex of The

Wall. **Ed Anthony** and **Marc Ludlow** proudly carried the American flag and the Brigade Colors, as the crowd parted to let us pass. When we reached the apex of the monument, the Chapter President led the group in a moment of silence, followed by a salute, as the 173<sup>d</sup> Airborne Brigade wreath was placed among the others in tribute.

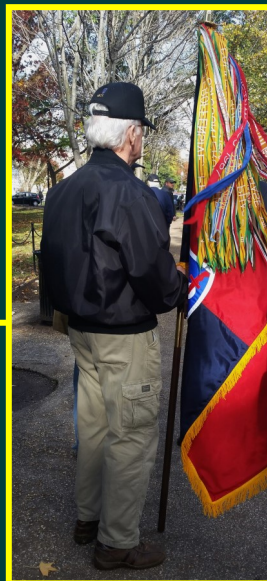
With that, some marched from The Wall and dissolved into the crowd of veterans, wearing the insignia of units and deeds long since passed. Others, however, met at the Key Bridge Marriott, where the food and time allowed us to spend time catching up with old friends and recounting old adventures.



Mark Ludlow, Charles Evans, Don Haus



Don Haus, Bill Connolly



Ed Anthony



Roy Lombardo



Chuck Evans, Joe Fleisch, Mack Brooks, Marc Ludlow, Ed Anthony, Pat Lanahan, Bill Harris, Roy Lombardo, Don Haus, Gene Cartier, Carmen Rougle, Jackie Rougle and her son, Jason, George Farris, Other Non-Chapter Sky Soldiers and friends



# SFC Cliff Bonner Update

Chapter 1 Member **Mick Weisinger**, our liaison at the McGuire Veterans Administration Medical Center, in Richmond, VA, represents the Chapter and the 173<sup>d</sup> Airborne Brigade Association by supporting and communicating with Sky Soldiers hospitalized at the McGuire VA.

Last Summer, **SFC Cliff Bonner** was injured during a training jump in Italy. After a substantial stay at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, in Washington, DC, Sergeant Bonner was stable enough to be transferred to the McGuire VA for specialized treatment.

Since Cliff moved to Richmond, Mick has let the Bonner family know that the Chapter and the Association remain available to support him and his family.

Mick reports that Cliff is recovering well but slowly from brain trauma. He has some use of his left arm and leg and is beginning to move the right side of his body.

As would be expected, SFC Bonner's wife, **Ruby**, is his major source of support. She is an absolute dynamo in addressing Cliff's needs. **Kenneth** and **Felicia** Cliff's father and mother, are regular visitors.

Mick says he is gratified to see how the VA, Department of the Army, the Fisher House Foundation, and the Wounded Warrior Project have come together to support Cliff and his family.

Cliff has a long road to full recover. With his family's support, the professional care he's receiving, and SFC Bonner's own

inner spirit strength, we are confident he will make a comeback.

Keep SFC Bonner and his family in your prayers



SFC Cliff Bonner and his mother Felicia

## A Big Sky Soldier Thank You

### Harvey Jester

At the 14 November Williamsburg Gathering of the Herd, the assembly approved **Harvey Jester**, Certified Public Accountant (CPA) as a Honorary Chapter Member for his pro bono auditing services of the Chapter books.

Harvey has been providing auditing services, in the greater Washington, D.C. for over 30 years. He is licensed in Virginia and the District of Columbia and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the

Greater Washington Society of Certified Public Accountants.

Harvey resides in Falls Church, VA, and has served as an Infantry Sergeant in the Virginia National Guard.

A big Sky Soldier thank you and welcome to Harvey!



Harvey Jester, CPA

### Mrs. Mitzi Belenky

A big Sky Soldier Thank You to **Mrs. Mitzi Belenky** for her donation of \$250.00 to the 173<sup>d</sup> Airborne Brigade Foundation's Scholarship Fund.

Her generous donation is in memory of her husband, **COL Michael Belenky**, and **Ms. Jean O'Neil** for their service and dedication to Sky Soldiers



Mitzi Belenky

## Save the Date

### Chapter Annual Meeting

Saturday 6 February 2015  
1100 – 1400 Hours



The Irish Inn at Glen Echo  
6119 Tulane Avenue  
Glen Echo, MD 20812

## OPM Cybersecurity Letters

With the compromise of millions of OPM personnel records by the Chinese, OPM has been sending out letters to those who may have their private information compromised.

Anyone who has been in the Service of the US and had a security clearance or applied for a position is in jeopardy. If you have not received a letter from OPM you can go to their website <https://www.opm.gov/cybersecurity>.

This will take you to their Cybersecurity Resource Center where people can sign up for services.

You will want to click on the “I think I may be impacted and

would like more information” the large icon on the right. Be advised if you ever applied for a security clearance and filled out a background investigation form you had to provide not only all your information but information on your family members and references.

All of this information may be at risk. OPM can make available services (credit monitoring, identity monitoring, identity theft insurance and identity restoration services) for the next three years.

It is worth your time to see if your information may be at risk.

## The Johnson Platoon



Johnson Platoon 1969  
Republic of Vietnam



Johnson Platoon 2015  
Lawrence, Kansas

The Johnson Platoon Sky Soldier veterans served together in B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 503<sup>rd</sup>, at LZ Uplift, RVN, in 1969. They started having annual reunions 1985 and have met every year since, at the homes of the various platoon members.

Several Johnson Platoon members are also Chapter 1 members, including **Larry Kilpatrick**, who provided the picture above of the 2015 reunion. Other Johnson Platoon venues included Michigan, Maryland, Kentucky, North Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Florida. Several members of the platoon received the Purple Heart and two were killed in action. Their reunions provide these Sky Soldiers the opportunity to maintain their friendship and honor their fallen brothers.

Pictured in the 2015 photo, Left to Right – **Chuck Rice**, **Mike Crowell**, **Gary Geiger** (Vietnam Vet – friend), **David Schneider** (Korean War Vet – friend), **Johnnie Mulvenna**, **Rick Walker**, **Al Lopes**, **Joe Gibson** (Chapter 1), **Chuck Radcliff**, **Fred Carlson** (Chapter 1), **Mike Moddrell**, **Larry Kilpatrick** (Chapter 1), and **Tom Dosier**.