

# DISCUSSION PAPER

DATE: 2 June 2008

SUBJECT: Role of the Association in the Annual National Reunion

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of each REUNION is: camaraderie, friendship, national business, bereavement and fun.

The current role of the Association, IAW the by-laws, is that of allowing chapters to make a bid to run the Annual National Reunion. Once approved by the Board of Directors, the option(s) are presented to the general membership at the Reunion. The general membership chooses the site/chapter to run the Reunion.

The problem is that fewer and fewer chapters are bidding for the Reunion and our choice of Reunion sites are the same and getting old. The knowledge and learning curve of each Reunion is lost with the hosting chapter and is not passed on. We should learn and improve with each Reunion. Basically each Reunion should be a learning experience and it is not. We should see that the Association and chapters present a memorable experience that also leads to a profit for the chapter and the Association, IAW the by laws

In the past we have seen various results from chapters hosting Reunions;

1. Chapters losing money
2. Chapters make a reasonable profit and then sharing it with the association (IAW by-laws).
3. Chapters saying they made a small profit but questionable profits were made by individuals in the chapter.

## Recommendation:

- That IAW our By-laws, the president appoint a National Reunion Director that will be responsible for:
  - Oversight – to be determined by the BOD/President
  - Mentoring – Help teach a chapter in the whole process
  - Assistance – When asked.
- Development of a **National Reunion Planning Guide** to be given to all chapters interested in bidding for the Annual National Reunion.

The structure of each Reunion should have the local favor of the chapter/area but must have the following components.

- ✓ Registration area/process
- ✓ Hospitality area
- ✓ A Vendors area
- A Presidents Reception
- ✓ Board of Directors Meeting
- Secondary Group Meetings i.e.; 503<sup>rd</sup>, 319<sup>th</sup>, Active Brigade, Ladies Society (Optional)
- ✓ Gold Star Luncheon
- ✓ General Membership Meeting
- ✓ Ladies Event, to be run by the ladies society (Optional)
- ✓ Banquet
- ✓ Memorial Service



# DRAFT REUNION PLANNING GUIDE

## BIDDING:

- All Bidding must be IAW by-Laws and should be presented to the BOD meeting PRIOR to the General membership meeting at the Annual Reunion – 2 years prior to the planned Reunion.
- Bidding on a Reunion by a chapter must include a location, tentative hosting hotel, tentative schedule of events and the name of the Reunion Director.
- The reunion director should be the main point of contact for the event and should have FULL knowledge and control of all events.

## RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Bidding Process – must comply
- Components Required – Must have all components
- Medal of Honor Recipient- Room Paid for by the Hosting Chapter
- Sigholtz Award Recipient- Room paid for by the hosting Chapter
- After Action Reports

## REGISTRATION: should include:

- A registration fee rate appropriate for the local area after a review of previous reunions rates that will help set this rate. Rates will be different for Association members and their families versus Non-Association members. Also 30 days prior to the reunion a "Late" or higher rate may be charged. The issue of day passes and Banquet only passes should be addressed. Active duty Sky Soldiers on order should be free. Active duty not on orders may be offered a discounted rate. And be exempt from "Late" fees.
- An information booklet with a schedule of events about the reunion and may include an Advertisements and discount items available to attendees.
- A Goodie bag that is appropriate for the area with all items being purchased at a reasonable rate.
- If financially possible, use 173d Airborne Vendors.
- Each reunion should have its own Reunion coin.
- The Registration area should have a way to be secured at the end of each business day.

#### HOSPITALITY AREA: should include:

- A location closed to the Vendors or Registration area
- Be large enough to seat 200-500 people
- Have a message Board
- Have a smoking / non smoking area
- Handicap access
- Offer beer, soda and mixed drinks, if possible
- Foods such as coffee/tea, snacks are optional
- The area should have a way to be secured at the end of each business day.

#### VENDORS AREA: Should include:

- A location closed to the Registration and Hospitality area
- Should accommodate 20 standard 8 foot tables or more (1,000-3,000 Sq. Ft.)
- Offer tables to 173d vendors first, over outside vendors
- Electrical outlets
- Allow water and juice for the vendors
- The area should have a way to be secured at the end of each business day.

#### PRESIDENTS RECEPTION:

- Is a semi formal (Dress slack and collared shirts) event for the leaders of the Association/Brigade to gather and network.
- Current chapter presidents, Presidents Emeritus and their wives are invited.
- Active duty command elements (and wives) are invited, as well as the Sighlotz awardees and his wife.
- Medal of Honor Awardees and local VIPs are invited.
- Cocktails and light snacks should be offered.



#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:

- A room large enough to hold 35+ people set up in a "U" shaped table configuration facing a screen or blank white wall.
- An American Flag and the 173d Flag should be displayed along with a Gold Star flag
- Audio Visual LCD projection is needed with appropriate cords and plugs
- Internet access should be available in the BOD meeting area.
- Coffee/Tea/Water should be available for attendees.

#### SECONDARY GROUP MEETINGS: (Optional)

- One of the purposes of the reunion is camaraderie and a place to finally hook up with old comrade in arms. This best can be done by having secondary groups gather of the Reunion hotel during the annual reunions.
- Scheduling must be done far in advanced so that room space may be negotiate
- Cost of Secondary Group Meetings are the responsibility of the secondary group.

#### GOLD STAR LUNCHEON:

- One of the purposes of the reunion is Bereavement.
- The gathering of Gold Star families in an attempt to allow families to share, bond and show that we have not forgotten them or their fallen sky soldiers.
- An American Flag and the 173d Flag should be displayed along with a Gold Star flag.
- The cost of this event should deducted from the reunions cost given to the association.

#### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEEETING:

- This event should be able to hold 400 persons and be set up in theater style facing a stage or platform.
- An American Flag and the 173d Flag should be displayed along with a Gold Star flag.
- Audio Visual LCD projection is needed with appropriate cords and plugs
- A microphone with appropriate system is needed.
- Internet access should be available in the BOD meeting area, if needed.

### LADIES EVENT: (Optional)

- This event should be held during the time of the general membership meeting
- This event should be solely operated and funded by the ladies Society

### BANQUET:

- This event is a formal event with the dress being Uniform or Coat and Tie required
- This event IS NOT a buffet line style event.
- This s usually preceded by a Cocktail party (Cash Bar)
- Tight control access to this event should be maintained
- Seating for 650-850 is required with tables of 8 preferred
- Seating is open with the acceptance of the head table and a table for the color guard
- A table of remembrance (missing man) should be set in the center near the head table
- An American Flag and the 173d Flag should be displayed along with a Gold Star flag
- Audio Visual LCD projection may needed with appropriate cords and plugs
- Internet access should be available if needed.
- A microphone with appropriate system is needed.
- An area for a band is needed.
- An area for dancing may be needed.

AFTER ACTION REPORT: must include

Over all number of attendees

Number of walk-in attendees

Registration cost to include late registration cost

Number of Room Nights

Room nights comps (Usually 50 to 1)

Detailed expense report in all areas



# Discussion Areas

**CONTRACTS:** When you contract with a Hotel for block room and set room rates, you do just that, contract or promise to use that many rooms. If you do not fill those rooms – you are obligated to pay for them. It is always best to UNDER estimate your room block

**INSURANCE:** Most Hotels want some form of insurance; It is in the Associations interest to obtain a umbrella insurance coverage for all events *1 Million for EACH EVENT*

**ADVERTISEMENTS:** Should be through local news papers, the national web site and Sky Soldier magazine. Also may online and national veteran magazines offer free advertisement space of your reunion. *FAIL Sky Soldier*

ARMY TIMES, etc.

**AD BOOK:** Can produce income for the reunion committee and offer discounts to reunion attendees. However this requires someone to get out and sell the ad space. Another way is to get a list of local business from the Visitors Bureau and do a mass mailing to them and sell you adds that way.

**VOLUNTEER WORKERS:** Are great when you have them. But as a general rule on Day one of the reunion. You will have only a hand full of workers. So plan as if you one is going to show up and you we do much better. *HAD TO HIRE LADYS CLUB TO MAINTAIN REGISTRATION*

**CONTRACT EMPLOYEES:** May be obtained through the Visitors bureau, through a local temp employment agency. They can help out greatly and be assured to show. They just need supervision and only need to be contracted for the time you need them.

**LOCAL VIP/OFFICAL INVOLVEMENT:** Usually the local Governor & Mayor, etc can be asked to issue a proclamation making the reunion week, 173d Airborne Sky Soldier week, etc. Also you can get the local Visitors bureau to coordinate all of this. You can also get some local officials to attend and welcome everyone to their city.

# SAMPLES

1.BANQUET SCHEDULE

2.TABLE OF REMEMBERANCE CEREMONY

3.PREVIOUS REUNIONS

4.REGISTRATION FORM



## BANQUET SCHEDULE SAMPLE

1800 Hours	Cocktails	
1845 Hours	Enter main Ballroom,	Find a table and take a seat
1900 Hours	<b>Opening Ceremony:</b>	Call to Order
1901 Hours	Post the Colors	173d Airborne Color Guard
1910 Hours	Pledge of Allegiance	All Sky Soldiers
1912 Hours	Invocation	Association Chaplain _____
1915 Hours	<b>Welcoming:</b>	Chairman of the Reunion
1918 Hours	<b>Table Ceremony</b>	Chairman of the Reunion & 173d Airborne Color Guard
1923 Hours	<b>Toasts:</b>	"Mr. Chairman"
	<p><i>"The Chair recognizes Mr. _____, Association President" "With your permission, I would like to propose a toast" "Permission granted" "Gentlemen, Ladies and Sky Soldiers of the 173rd Airborne..." (then raising his glass) "...to the president of the United States." RESPONSE: "TO THE PRESIDENT"</i></p>	
	<b>2nd Toast:</b>	"Mr. Chairman"
	<p><i>"The Chair recognizes our Australian Brother", "With your permission; I would like to propose a toast" "Permission granted" "Gentlemen, Ladies and Sky Soldiers of the 173rd Airborne..." (then raising his glass) "...to the Queen." RESPONSE: "GOD SAVE THE QUEEN"</i></p>	
	<b>3rd Toast:</b>	Mr. Chairman"
	<p><i>"The Chair recognizes Mr. _____, from the _____ Chapter" "With your permission, I would like to propose a toast" "Permission granted" "Gentlemen, Ladies and Sky Soldiers of the 173rd Airborne..." (then raising his glass) "...to Our Brother we lost in Vietnam." RESPONSE: "TO OUR BROTHERS"</i></p>	
	<b>4th Toast</b>	"Mr. Chairman"
	<p><i>"The Chair recognizes Mr. _____, from _____ Chapter" "With your permission, I would like to propose a toast" "Permission granted" "Gentlemen, Ladies and Sky Soldiers of the 173rd Airborne..." (then raising his glass) "...to Our Brother we lost since our return home." RESPONSE: "TO OUR BROTHERS"</i></p>	
	<b>5th Toast</b>	"Mr. Chairman"
	<p><i>"The Chair recognizes First Sergeant _____ from Headquarters Company of the Airborne Brigade.", "With your permission, I would like to propose a toast", "Permission granted" "Gentlemen, Ladies and Sky Soldiers of the 173rd Airborne..." (then raising his glass) "...to Our Brother we lost in the War on Terror." RESPONSE: "TO OUR BROTHERS"</i></p>	
	<b>6th Toast</b>	Finally the Chairman speaks,...
	<p><i>"Gentlemen, Ladies and Sky Soldiers of the 173rd Airborne. I would like to propose a toast... (then raising his glass) ...to the ladies that tolerate us, and add beauty and grace to this room!" RESPONSE: "TO THE LADIES"</i></p>	
1930 Hours	<b>Introduction of</b>	Community Leader (Mayor) or VIP _____
1940 Hours	<b>Introduction of</b>	Community Leader (County Council Chairman) _____
1945 Hours	<b>Dinner</b>	
2030 Hours	Call for Order,	Read Sigholtz Recipient Awardee Bio, for the year ____
2031 Hours	<b>Sigholtz Awardee 20??</b>	Comments by SSG _____
2035 Hours	<b>Brigade Commanders</b>	Colonel _____, US Army
2040 Hours	<b>Guest Speaker:</b>	_____
2050 Hours	<b>Retire the Colors:</b>	173d Airborne Color Guard
2055 Hours	For the good of the Association	Comments, by Reunion Director (Memorial service in the morning)
2100 Hours	Invitation to Next Reunion site	Reunion 20??
2100 Hours	<b>Entertainment</b>	Local Band
2400 Hours	<b>Banquet ends</b>	<b>Stay Safe!</b>



# TABLE OF REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY

As you enter the dining area, you may have noticed a table in front of you, raised to call your attention to its purpose – it is reserved to honor our comrades that are no longer with us.

All Americans should never forget our brave men and women who answered our nation's call and served the cause of freedom in a special way.

As the Honor Guard places one of the three helmets and civilian cap on each empty plate, I would like to ask you to consider their sacrifices, followed by a moment of silent prayer.

## HONOR GUARD:

With dignified, reverent music as background the Honor Guard moves into position around the table and places the helmets (A Vietnam era steel pot, a Iraq era desert colored K-pot, a Afghanistan era digital camo helmet) and a civilian hat ( a veterans baseball type hat), on each empty dinner plate at each table setting. The Honor Guard then departs.

## SPEAKER:

The table is round – to show our everlasting concern for our soldiers not with us tonight.

The cloth is white – symbolizing the purity of their motives when answering the call to duty.

The single Red Rose, displayed in a vase, reminds us of the life of each of those not with us.

A pinch of salt on the plates symbolizes the tears of their families.

The Bible represents the strength gained through faith to sustain those lost from our country, founded as one nation under God.

The glass is inverted – to symbolize their inability to share in this evening's toast.

The chairs are empty – they are with us only in spirit.

The **first empty chair** symbolizes those who lost their lives in the 54 combat operations in the jungle and mountains of Vietnam.

The **second empty chair** symbolizes those who lost their lives in the 10 combat operations in the desert and mountains of Iraq.

The **third empty chair** symbolizes those who lost their lives in the numerous combat operations in the mountains and plains of Afghanistan

The **last empty chair** symbolizes those who lost their lives in the battle of life after war. For most it was a painful experience, for others it never ended.

Let us remember and never forget their sacrifices.

# Previous Reunions

Year	Location	# Attended	Fee	Hotel	Hotel Cost
2010	Myrtle Beach, SC	Est 500	TBD	TBD	TBD
2009	Daytona Beach, FL	Est 600	125-140	Plaza Resort and Spa	99-120
2008	Alaska – Cruise	160	75	Holland America Line	125+
2007	Rochester, MN	600	150	Raddison,Hilton,Holiday Inn	76-130
2006	Fayetteville NC	800	150	Holiday Inn	89
2005	Sydney, Australia	400	125+	Panthers Hotel	132 Aussy \$
2004	Daytona Beach, FL	650	125-140	Adamsmark Hotel	88
2003	Reno, NV	640	135-150	Peppermill Hotel	50-100
2002	Chicago, IL	480	110	Fairmont Hotel	115-135
2001	Fort Worth, TX	600	110	Radisson Plaza	89
2000	Rochester, MN	500	100	Holiday Inn	60-120
1999	Fayetteville, NC	850	100	Holiday Inn	72
1998	Boston, MA		130-150	Sheraton Boston	115-135
1997	Tucson, AZ		100	Double Tree	61
1996	Anaheim, CA		95	Anaheim Hilton	74
1995	Rochester, MN		75	Holiday Inn Downtown	59
1994	Sacramento, CA		105	Holiday Inn Capital Plaza	69
1993	San Antonio, TX		110-125	Hilton Palacio Plaza	85
1992	Chicago, IL		100	Blackstone Hotel	69
1991	NSW, Australia		135	Townsville Intl Hotel	
1990	Washington, DC		95	Mayflower Hotel	75
1989	Lake Tahoe, CA		90	EL Rancio Tropica	110
1988	Chicago, IL			Blackstone Hotel	67
1987	Orlando, FL		75		38