

Airborne Awards A Blast



DEVILS



DIGEST



May 2006

Vol. 1 No. 2

The 2006 STATIC LINE AWARDS AND 508TH CHAPTER REUNION **BY Ken Hamill**

The Atlanta Airport Marriot is easy to find and a top notch Hotel. I found the hospitality room in full swing at 4:00 PM on Wednesday. Sandwiches and all sorts of food were provided by the host Atlanta Chapter Volunteers each day for a light lunch and supper. Beverages and snacks were provided throughout the day. I bought one meal for myself while there, a big buffet breakfast. Coffee and pastries were provided Thursday morning prior to our bus trip to Fort Benning. We saw an interesting Airborne Demonstration at the Airborne School, followed by a Memorial Service dedicated to our fallen brothers. The distinguished speaker was LTG Richard J. Seitz. He also introduced a few members of the Test Platoon and their widows. The Silver Wings gave us a free fall demonstration with smoke attached to their legs. We were served a tasty BBQ lunch and then caught our buses to Red Cloud Range. We had an opportunity to fire several machine guns, 7.62 sniper rifles or M16A4 service rifles. The buses then took us to Fryar Field DZ. LTC McCaffrey, the 1st Bn, 507th PIR Cdr, spoke of student and cadre achievements and emphasized that the basic airborne school at Fort Benning is attended by all branches of service. A formation of approximately 200 military men and women marched to our front and waited to receive their wings. One aircraft dropped two sticks of paratroopers. Relatives of the graduates were invited to assist placing the wings on their loved ones. We were then invited to pin on wings and congratulate the new paratroopers, which was enjoyable. We returned to the Marriot by 6:00 PM and had Chick Fillet and/or subs with our beer. Ed Abram, the airborne music man provided music from the big band era every day and evening. The first \$1000 Quickdraw prize was split three ways. Congratulations to our Jim and Maria Jackson for being winners. It was good to see Jack and Ruth Damron back in circulation again. Congratulations to our Vice President, Dave Burns for his recovery from Cancer. He said it is in remission, is not yet curable, but is treatable. Dave sure looks strong and he looks good. The Friday Memorial Luncheon was formal and well attended. Candles were lit honoring our departed brothers of all wars and dozens of fallen hero friends were remembered by those of us in the audience who stood and called out their names and units. The Airborne School provided the color guard for all ceremonies. LTC McCaffrey spoke and represented the Infantry School very well throughout all ceremonies. Division Staff members LTC Burns of the 101st Abn Div and LTC Wehr of the 82nd Abn Div gave excellent presentations and represented the active airborne very well throughout all ceremonies. On Saturday, several people took one of the arranged tours to the Museum of Patriotism. I believe 18 Chapter members and wives attended the Static Line Awards. The 508th Chapter Meeting drew a dozen members, plus two from the Retired 508th PIR Association. Jack Damron displayed historical newspapers, photos and documents. See article referring to Jack's generosity in this newsletter. The Airborne Awards Banquet was very impressive. A big crowd, most in formal wear and in great spirits enjoyed an excellent meal. The Color Guard, words of thanks and short speeches were followed by Don Lassen announcing the Airborne Awards Recipients. There were approximately 12 – 15 awards presented. Walter Elliott won the 551 Parachute Infantry Association Award. I met Walter on the bus

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ride to Benning, his first visit there since WWII. The 551 was a separate Airborne Battalion and was decimated at the Battle of the Bulge. The few dozen survivors were absorbed by the 82nd Airborne Division and the 551 would cease to exist forever. Garland Wright of the 320th AFA Association won the MACV Team 162 Red Hats Association Award. Our oldest member Rudy Hardwick (93) won a weeks vacation in Hawaii, I think it was. The celebration moved to the hospitality room. A good band played while we circulated to toast the award winners. Several active paratroopers joined us and the camaraderie extended into the wee hours. The Static line Awards was a superb gathering of brothers. All events and ceremonies were well planned and executed. My hat is off to the host Atlanta Chapter and the best, most helpful and friendly volunteers of my experience at military reunions. I look forward to Static Line Awards next year.



Chapter member, WWII Red Devil and former member of the retired 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment Association, Ernie Lamson congratulates new Paratrooper PVT Slater.

MONUMENT UPDATE By Bob Murray: The Army Special Operations Museum in Fayetteville NC advised the Chapter the approximate completion date of our monument for the 508th ARCT is 31 July 2006. As you know the monument will be placed at the entrance walkway to the Museum, among similar Monuments for most every Special Operations units of the Army. Your Contributions have been significant and greatly appreciated by the Chapter and we thank you. Those of you who have not yet contributed may do so by forwarding your check to our Chapter Treasurer at: 508th ABN Chapter, PO Box 1462, Sun City AZ 85372-1462

MEMORIES OF A PARATROOPER

By Jerry Grubbs

In April 1952 I was in Jump School at Fort Benning and the 508 was on Operation Longhorn in Texas. The Regimental Commander, Colonel Laurie jumped the outfit in high winds resulting in over 200 injured and one killed. My jump school class went to the 508 as replacements. My first jump with the 508 was on 1 May 1952. There was a welcoming beer party on the Drop zone, Lee DZ. We jumped C-47's and I was 7th man in the first stick. When I got my opening shock, I felt great and was enjoying the ride when I noticed everyone else was going down and I seemed to be just hanging there. The aircraft circled around and started dropping the second stick. I landed about the same time as the last man in the second stick. I needed some more weight; bricks might have worked, to help me down. At the time I was 5' 4" and 135 pounds. In June or July of 52, some of the unit was sent as "aggressor force" for Ranger School. Some went to Eglin AFB, Florida. A few of us went to Dahlonaga, Georgia. We slept in squad tents and bathed in a mountain creek about 60 yards away. We were allowed to go through some of the Ranger Training, repelling down mountains and riding the death slide into a lake or river. We would set up and conduct ambushes on the ranger students. We were there about a month and had a lot of fun. My first GP bag jump was from a C-82, the first flying boxcar with a much smaller exit door than the 119's. I was second man in the stick, just behind a Second Lieutenant we called "Turtle Joe" because of the way his helmet fit his head. I watched the green light flash in the opposite door and started out, but the Lieutenant stayed in the door. I hollered at him twice to go, but he stayed. I kicked him in the shin with my right foot and he melted out the door. I pulled myself forward with my left hand and dove out the door. When the chute opened, the right upper quick release broke on the GP bag. I eventually got everything situated and stable. I released the GP bag about 100 feet from the ground. When I landed, the bag which contained a light machine gun, my rocket launcher and other gear acted like an anchor. The wind took the chute away from the bag and I was like a cork in between the chute and GP bag. First Sergeant Wade collapsed my chute and asked if I was OK. Thankfully I was OK, but a bit peeved at the Lieutenant. My 20th jump in February 1954 was the



1952 Dahlonaga, Georgia, Jerry Grubbs as Ranger Dept Aggressor

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sickest I ever got. The night before the jump, the NCO Club had given a beer party in preparation for going to Fort Campbell. Most guys showed up with a hangover. We flew about an hour and most of us got sick. When we jumped, there were orpe sacks falling all over the place. My jumps #23 thru #31 were made at the 11th Airborne Division Jump School. Two or three of us cadre would jump on the first pass over the DZ. We were not supposed to maneuver our chutes at all in order to determine wind drift, which helped the aircrews to center the student jumpers on the DZ during the next pass. The worst time I had in the 508 was in late 1953. The 82nd went on maneuvers to Greenland and needed qualified jumpers. About half of the Company went to Greenland. They were supposed to return, but never did. The Special Forces School opened at Fort Bragg in 1953 and took most of our senior NCOs. I pulled more KP as a Corporal than I ever had as a Private or PFC. Airborne! - Jerry Grubbs

508th AIRBORNE HISTORY - A MEMORY FROM 1951

By Bob Murray

Fifty- five years ago, in April, the department of Defense directed the reactivation of the WWII 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment as the 508th Airborne Infantry Regiment (AIR). On Saturday 5 May 1951 the reactivation ceremony of the unit was held at Ft. Bragg. Colonel Joseph Cleland, affectionately known as the “Great White Father” because of his snow white mane and flowing mustache, recent CO of the 504th AIR, received the Regimental Colors of the old 508th PIR from its WWII CO, Colonel Roy Lindquist. He vowed at that time the 508th AIR would be the “best outfit in the Army.” Colonel Cleland earned his “Jump Wings” when he was fifty. Present, in addition to Colonel Lindquist was MG Thomas Hickey, CO at the time of the 82nd Abn Division and 1SG Lennie Funk of C Co., WWII PIR. Lennie was the most decorated paratrooper of the 82nd and all the Airborne units. The Congressional Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Bronze Star etc. Before them were a thousand or more men in their teens and early twenties who had volunteered for the Airborne and had just completed their Basic Training with the 82nd Airborne Division. They came from all parts of the USA and upon completion of Jump School had expected to be assigned to the 11th or 82nd Airborne Divisions. However the reactivation of the 508th AIR changed all of that, they were going to be Red Devils! Upon graduation from Jump School they would move to the Sand Hill area of Fort Benning and home of the 508th AIR. The Officers and Cadre for the 508th had been assembling there in May awaiting the arrival of the new Paratroopers. After the reactivation ceremony the soon to be Red Devils were given the remainder of the day off to participate in the reactivation festivities and free beer at the area Beer Gardens! A third of the new troopers were to initiate the first of three movements from Bragg to Benning at dawn the following morning. The remaining troops would leave the following two Sundays. The troops in those three movements were scheduled to graduate from Jump School on June 1st, 8th and 15th and then report to Sand Hill. Needless to say, the troopers scheduled to depart at dawn with the first movement, took full advantage of the Free Beer. They climbed, or dragged themselves aboard the train with bleary eyes, dog tired, and a real hurtin’head, for the long ride to Benning. I know, because I was one of them!



The front and back sides of the Master Wings to the left are actually the graphic representation of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment – Regimental Coin. These coins may be available at Fort Bragg during All American Week later this month.

These graphics were provided by PFC Matthew Leary of the 4th BCT Public Affairs Office, 82nd Airborne Division. Thank you Matthew!

82nd AIRBORNE DIVISION'S 4th BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM STANDS UP **By PFC Matthew Leary 4th BCT PAO 82nd Airborne Division**

The 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment was reactivated Jan 6, 2006, becoming the 4th Brigade Combat Team (BCT) of the 82nd Airborne Division. Since January, the 4th BCT has undergone infrastructure re-organization necessary for the formation of a new BCT. We have completed most of our task organization, which includes two Infantry Battalions, a Fires Battalion, a Brigade Support Battalion (BSB), and a Brigade Special Troops Battalion (BSTB). The BCT's newest battalion, a Reconnaissance Surveillance and Target Acquisition Squadron (RSTA), is in the process of forming and will receive a commander in June. Each week the brigade is increasing in size with the arrival of equipment and personnel. Training has been a priority of the BCT since forming. We have conducted numerous airborne operations, platoon level evaluations, and supported the 3rd BCT in its training at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La.

The 508th PIR is preparing for All-American Week May 22-26, during which there will be a brigade picnic, sporting events and a pass-and-review ceremony. The brigade will have several battalion change-of-command ceremonies in the coming months and will receive a new BCT commander in June when Col. Petrenko becomes Chief-of-Staff of the Division.

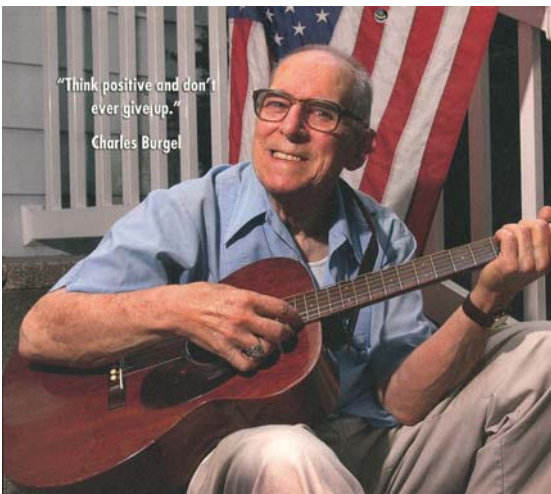
With the addition of the 508th PIR, the 82nd will increase its size to over 20,000 Paratroopers, making the Nation's Strategic Response Force an even stronger Division than it was before. We look forward to maintaining the values and standards of those who came before us in the 508th Airborne. FURY FROM THE SKY!!!



Paratroopers from the 2-508th Parachute Infantry Regiment search for hostile forces while conducting a non-combatants evacuation operation at Fort Bragg.

JACK DAMRON PRESENTS CHAPTER WITH HISTORICAL ITEMS

Jack Damron presented three boxes of history to the 508th Airborne Chapter. Jim Lutes and Ken Hamill will safeguard these historical items for our Chapter. There are four pages from the 6 December 1942 Baltimore Sun depicting Pearl Harbor a year earlier. There is one 1945 Berlin Edition of the All American Paraglide. There are portions of several newspapers, including the Stars and Stripes published in 1945. There is a 12" X 16" admin box of 82nd Airborne Division Association Bulletins dating back to 1998. A second admin box contains 508th Chapter Newsletters, several hard cover and soft cover books pertaining to the 508th. A third box about the same size contains 7 photo albums or envelopes of photos, plus assorted envelopes of correspondence and a few books about the 508th. These items will be described in future issues of the Devils Digest. The Chapter thanks you Jack for your generosity.



508th Airborne Chapter Life member and Cancer Survivor Charles Burgel of Rehoboth Beach, Delaware is shown here on the cover of a special calendar. Charles Burgel is a Survivor. Since 1981 he has been treated for lung cancer, cranial aneurysm, Leukemia, congestive heart failure, and is presently being treated for prostate cancer. By his side during these treatments he had his loved ones, along with caring doctors and caring nurses, and his music, while he himself always had a positive attitude. All through this he still found time to play some chords and write a few songs-some of them about his doctors and nurses. His motto is "Think positive and don't ever give up".

Dr. Jim Jackson, 508th Airborne Chapter Life Member with his friend Donald E. Ballard, shown wearing his Medal of Honor. Hospital Corpsman Second Class "Doc" Ballard threw himself on an incoming grenade to protect a group of wounded Marines he was treating on 16 May 1968 in Quang Tri Province, Vietnam. This photo was taken at an event 29 August 2005. The Medal of Honor epitomizes the best of what America stands for, honoring the gallant individuals who have received it.

"A nation can be judged in part by how well it honors it's heroes".

George W. H. Bush

Editors Note;

It is indeed a great honor to walk among these great men of this Country's Military brothers and share a camaraderie like no other Group in the world. God has indeed smiled on us.

Jim Lutes, Secretary



Tony LaJudice Cancer Free

Jim Lammle reported on May 4 that Tony LaJudice called him and said that he did an MRI today and it showed that he is now cancer free. Congratulations to Tony and Mary from all the 508 Troopers. That's really great news.

VA MEDICARE SUBVENTION UPDATE 01: Provided by Bruce Tyler

Under current law, Medicare-eligible veterans are not allowed to use Medicare coverage at local VA hospitals. Instead, they are forced to decide between receiving medical care at a VA hospital without being able to use Medicare to help them make their bill payments, or using Medicare at a non-VA hospital and losing the personalized veterans' care of a VA hospital. Rep. Sue Kelly (NY) 16 Mar 06 introduced HR 4992, the Veterans Medicare Assistance Act that would provide Medicare eligible veterans with Medicare Subvention. This would give vets the right to use Medicare benefits to help pay their bills at local VA hospitals. Kelly pointed out that veterans pay into Medicare for most of their lives, yet the law prohibits them from using Medicare Benefits at a VA hospital later in life. Since VA hospitals specialize in treating veterans' needs, veterans should not be forced to choose between cost and comfort. Veterans should be eligible for the same Medicare benefits at a VA hospital that they would have at any other hospital. [Source: USDR Action Alert 11 Apr 06 ++]



2006 Dues to renew your membership should be sent to the Treasurer today if you have not already done so. Why not renew your membership as an All American Life Member and eliminate those annual payments.



Joke – For the Love of Golf

A man and his wife walked into a dentist's office. The man said to the dentist,

"Doctor, I'm in one heck of a big hurry! I have two buddies sitting out in my car waiting for us to go play golf. So forget about the Novocain and just pull the tooth and be done with it-- I don't have time to wait for the anesthetic to work!"

The dentist thought to himself, "My goodness--this sure is a very brave man, asking me to pull his tooth without using anything to kill the pain."

So the dentist asked him, "Which tooth is it, sir?" The man turned to his wife and said, "Open your mouth, Honey, and show the doctor which tooth hurts."



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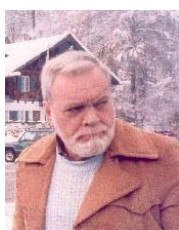


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TAPS RECENT DECEASED MEMBERS

Bobby Bush, HQ3, 55-56 March 24, 2006

NEW MEMBERS

Armando Bernal, HQHQ Company 54-56
Kirby Elliott, Dog Company 53-56
Robert P. Johnson, Fox Company 54-56
Edward Terwillegger, MP 55-56
Lawrence Whitehouse, Easy Company 54-56
Raymond Younes, 519 QM 51-52

NEW ALL AMERICAN (LIFE) MEMBERS

Raymond Crook, 598 Engrs 54-57
Leonard Yaiko, Easy Company 55-56



Pat & Tressa St Amour under Boston Boomerang



L-R: Maria & Jim Jackson and Rudy Hardwick



Bob & Dorothy Sorenson at Memorial Luncheon



Ted & Lois Thompson in Hospitality Room



George & Betty O'Connor in Hospitality Room



L-R: Henrik Moe, Doug Hague and Bob Sorenson



Rodger Jacobson and Dave Button in Sales Room

Photo Identification Top Left - James & Christine Vanderhoof. Top Right - Jack & Ruth Damron. Left Center – Rodger & Leone Jacobson. Right Center – Ken Hamill & Dave Burns.

Name _____	Address _____
City _____	State _____ Zip _____

Quartermaster Sales Form---(Members Only)

Complete this form and mail your check payable to Kenneth Glynn along with your name and address in the box above to: Ken Glynn, 836 Glendale St., Lakeland, FL. 33803-4122. Please include shipping and handling charges in the amount column to the right of each item ordered.

ITEM/DESCRIPTION	QTY	SIZE (CIRCLE)	COST	SHIPPING/HANDLING	AMOUNT
Hat, White, Maroon Bill, Chap Logo, Embroidered		One size fits all	\$14.50	\$1.50 Each	
Hat, White, Maroon Bill, Chap Logo Screened		One size fits all	\$12.00	\$1.50 Each	
Sweatshirt, Grey, Chapter Logo Screened		M L XL *XXL *XXXL	\$22.00	\$3.50 +\$2 Ea additional	
Shirt, T, White, Chapter Logo Screened		M L XL *XXL *XXXL	\$12.00	\$2.00 Each	
Shirt, T, White, Web Site Logo Screened		M L XL *XXL *XXXL	\$12.00	\$2.00 Each	
Shirt, Polo, Abn Maroon, Chap Logo Embroidered		M L XL *XXL *XXXL	\$22.00	\$3.50 + \$1.Ea Additional	
Pad, Mouse, Chapter Logo Screened			\$7.50	\$2.00 Each	
Pad, Mouse, Regimental Logo Screened			\$7.50	\$2.00 Each	
Patch, 508 th Abn Chapter (See 1, below)			\$5.50	\$1.00 Each (3/\$1.50)	
Patch, 508 th ARCT (See 1, below)			\$5.50	\$1.00 Each (3/\$1.50)	
Patch, Para Red Devil (See 1, below)			\$5.50	\$1.00 Each (3/\$1.50)	
Patch, 320 th Abn FA Bn			\$5.50	\$1.00 Each (3/\$1.50)	
Pin, 508 th ARCT			\$3.00	No Charge	
Pin, Para Red Devil			\$3.00	No Charge	
Wrap, Can Cooler w/Chapter Logo Screened			\$3.00	\$1.00 Each	
Wrap, Can Cooler w/Regimental Logo Screened			\$3.00	\$1.00	

* Add an additional \$2.00 for each X above XL (XXXL size is a special order)
 1. All patches can be purchased for 3 for \$15.00 + Shipping and Handling.
PLEASE ALLOW 2-4 WEEKS FOR DELIVERY

TOTAL \$

508th Airborne Chapter Membership Application

Please PRINT and COMPLETE all items. Make checks payable to: 508th AIRBORNE CHAPTER

Mail to: 508th AIRBORNE CHAPTER P.O. BOX 1462, SUN CITY AZ, 85372-1462

All American (Life \$100 over 50; \$150 under 50); Annual (\$15); ** Affiliate (\$8);

Reinstatement (\$15)

Please circle one of the above

Last Name: _____, First: _____ MI: _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____

Zip _____ - _____

Telephone #: _____ E-Mail: _____

Married _____ Wife's Name _____ Children _____ Occupation _____

508th Service From _____ / _____ / _____ to _____ / _____ / _____ (Month/Day/Year)

Unit: Company: _____ Battery: _____; Battalion _____,

508, 320 AFA, 427 AAA, 519 QM, 598 Eng.
(Circle One)

** AFFILIATES ONLY, please complete: I am a Member of the _____ Chapter of the
82nd Abn Div Assn, I DO / DO NOT wish to transfer to the 508th Abn Chapter.

Signature: _____

Mail To: 508th Airborne Chapter, P.O. Box 1462, Sun City, AZ 85372-1462