

On The Right Track



1st Battalion 50th Infantry Association



Mission Statement

Our mission is to publish a newsletter and to maintain an internet Homepage.

The association will use these publications to inform it's general membership about events within the association and about currant or proposed legislation that might affect veterans of all wars.

Members of the association will strive to preserve the memory of those who served in the "ICHIBAN" Battalion and to publish only the facts concerning any particular battle, person or situation.

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Notes From The Editor

Chance Encounters



Robert Melendez

Have you ever had an experience in your daily life

where you've encountered a veteran who either was in our same unit or was in the same area of Vietnam at about the same time we were? You just never know when you'll be surprised or reminded just how small the world can be. Here's what happened to me recently:

I belong to a running group, which is currently training for a marathon. During one of our long training runs, I began talking with one of our runners in our group. Since it was a long run and he seemed to be hurting, I came along side of him and asked him how he felt. He laughed and said that he had not taken care of his body earlier in his life and that "eating c-rations for 23 years" had taken its toll on his body.

Well, now I was really interested. As we continued to talk, I discovered that he was an Airborne Ranger and that he served in Vietnam in 1971. I asked what area he was in and he said, "...you probably won't know the areas since they were really small." He went on to say that he was in Qui Nhon, Bong Son and Phu My! As it turns out, he was attached to the 173rd Airborne Brigade and even spent time at LZ Uplift!!! He also remembered that his company worked with a "battalion of APCs" and that their firepower was awesome!

Another chance encounter occurred while I was having

lunch at a local restaurant. As my group and I were preparing to leave the restaurant, two individuals came in wearing Vietnam Veteran hats and jackets.

I approached them, introduced myself as a fellow Vietnam Veteran and spoke about our unit, the areas and dates of our service. I went on to talk about the recent trip to Vietnam that some of us had taken.

They gave me their cards and it turned out that both belonged to the Military Order Of The Purple Heart. When I spoke about our organization and our newsletter, they expressed interest and asked if they could include an article about their organization into our newsletter. I assured them that our members would love to hear about their organization. So look for some information in future newsletters.

So what are some of your chance encounters with other veterans? What stories do you have to tell? And sometimes the encounters may not be by chance at all or they may not involve veterans: read Toby Jordan's encounter with the family of Jim Ferguson to see what I'm referring to.

Chaplains Corner



Greetings to everyone, and a hope that each of you are in fine health and great spirits. I had something happen to me that proves that no matter how late in life we find ourselves, there is always something that will happen that will amaze us.. We are always talking about closure and how we can find it. Well it's not only something that we as veterans are looking for it can also be people that have lost a loved one and are looking for some answers. This all started with an email from Mick Hawkins, letting me know that he had just talked to Jim Ferguson's sisters and had a wonderful time talking about Jim. As close friends as Jim and I were, I had no idea that he had any sisters. So with the phone number from Mick I contacted the sisters and set up a meeting in Columbia, Mo. We had a wonderful time talking about a brother they had lost thirty some odd years ago but had not ever gotten to talk to anyone that was with Jim at the time of his passing, and had no idea how it happened. I feel that the visit we had and the time we shared help bring some closure to the family that had been left in the dark for so long. But that's not the end to this story, after a lot of talk and sharing of old photos we found that Jim's father and my Grandfather were raised together, and as a small boy I had probably visited with this family and played with Jim as a child. So not only did we have some closure, we found

some new friends that I'm sure we will visit with often in the future.

I hope to see some of you at the get together on the 4th of July weekend.

May God Bless and keep you safe, Your Chaplain, Toby.



HUMAN EVENTS

Former Foe Explains Why Bush is Man of Year Freedom's Commander-in-Chief

By Sen. John McCain
Posted 12/19/1, at 3:30 p.m.

On September 11, America and the world were confronted with the challenge of whether the 21st century would be one of freedom or barbarism.

In the aftermath of this barbaric attack on America, we have witnessed countless acts of heroism and leadership by so many Americans who have well earned the distinction of men and women of the year. The brave firefighters and police who gave their lives so others might live. The soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines who have gone into harms way to vanquish the terrorist foe. A mayor, Rudy Giuliani, who personally embodied the grit and courage of a city and a nation. The wise counsel and guidance of Powell, Rumsfeld and Rice who have built a coalition and directed

a war against evil. And there's no doubt that President Bush, who grasped the magnitude of that challenge, has provided the leadership for this moment. He rallied our nation and much of the world, in this righteous cause to defend our values, our liberty and our very lives. President Bush understood that this is not just a battle to destroy the al Qaeda terrorist network and their Taliban henchmen. It is a war against all terrorists and the states that harbor them, whether they reside in Damascus, Teheran, Baghdad, or the West Bank. He has led the world in a heroic campaign to vanquish freedom's foe and issued a warning to all nations that neutrality in this war is not an option. "Either you are either with us, or you are with the terrorists." The President has shown the determination needed to prevail against this international network of terrorists who hate the values we hold dear, and he has shown compassion for the victims of this abominable hate. He has extended America's hand of friendship to Muslims who reject the hateful purpose of terrorists. To see this mission through, President Bush has wisely counseled Americans to be patient as our soldiers, sailors, and airmen bravely fight on foreign soil against these hostile forces. He has helped us realize that this war will be long and hard; it will be waged on tough terrain and in the shadows. Today, we find ourselves in a new era as Americans respond to these challenges with a display of patriotism and a new spirit of unity. President Bush has sought to capture

Continued From Page 2 Human Events

this uniquely American moment by channeling it into what historian Stephen Ambrose describes as "common patriotism." He has issued a call to service, declaring that "our citizens have new responsibilities" and endorsing the creation of new opportunities within AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs for public safety and public health efforts. In recognizing the untapped desire of Americans to contribute to their country during war, he is encouraging a citizen army of individuals who can unite all citizens in service to their nation, in both civilian and military capacities, to win this war. In 2001, President Bush was summoned to serve as freedom's Commander-in-Chief. And he understands, as General MacArthur did fifty years ago, "There is no substitute for victory."

Mr. McCain, the senior Senator from Arizona, ran against President Bush for the Republican presidential nomination in 2000.



To all Fellow 1/50th
(Ichiban) Troopers:

Welcome Home, brothers!

I am sure that many of you have saved your 1/50th Unit Crests, "Play the Game", from the past. I am also sure that many of you do not have them. Because of a very generous donation by one of our fellow members of the Association, I have several Unit Crests available to offer as an incentive for you to become a member or to purchase Life Membership. Here is how it works:

For any dues paying member who becomes a Life Member during the months of April, May, or June, they will receive a pair of 1/50th Unit Crests.

For any non-member who now joins during the same time period and prepays their dues for two additional years (That's a total of three years), they will receive a pair of crests.

For any current member who is in arrears on their dues, if you forward a check for your past dues, plus the current year's dues, you will receive a pair of crests.

For any current Life Member who sponsors three new members during the same time period, or encourages three members who are in arrears to bring their account up to date, they will receive a pair of unit crests.

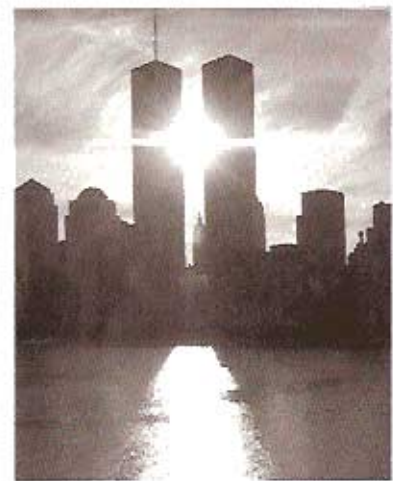
There are a limited number of crests available, so this is based on a first come-first served basis until supplies run out. I will have several pairs of crests available for sell at the price of: \$7.00 each, or

A pair of crests for \$ \$10.00

Please send your dues to:

1/50th Infantry Association
PO Box 1104
Kennesaw GA 30156

This picture was taken from an airliner as it was landing in New York. The sun is silhouetted between the two trade center towers and provides for a truly magical picture. Photographer unknown.



A Message From Bob
Gold

Hey, troopers, get your money in for the Not A Reunion Get Together. I need to know how many are planning to come; and I could use some bucks to start getting ready for it.

My Name is Old Glory

By Howard Schnauber

I am the flag of the United States of America.
My name is Old Glory.
I fly atop the world's tallest buildings. I stand watch in America's halls of justice. I fly majestically over great institutes of learning. I stand guard with the greatest military power in the world. Look up! And see me!

I stand for peace - honor - truth and justice. I stand for freedom I am confident - I am arrogant
I am proud.
When I am flown with my fellow banners
My head is a little higher
My colors a little truer.
I bow to no one.
I am recognized all over the world.
I am worshipped - I am saluted - I am respected
I am revered - I am loved, and I am feared.

I have fought every battle of every war for more than 200 years: Gettysburg, Shilo, Appomatox, San Juan Hill, the trenches of France, the Argonne Forest, Anzio, Rome, the beaches of Normandy, the deserts of Africa, the cane fields of the Philippines, the rice paddies and jungles of Guam, Okinawa, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Guadalcanal New Britain, Peleliu, and many more islands.

And a score of places long forgotten by all but those who were with me.
I was there.



I led my soldiers - I followed them.
I watched over them.
They loved me.
I was on a small hill in Iwo Jima.
I was dirty, battle-worn and tired,
but my soldiers cheered me,
and I was proud.

I have been soiled, burned, torn and trampled on the streets of countries I have helped set free.
It does not hurt, for I am invincible.
I have been soiled, burned, torn and trampled on the streets of my country, and when it is by those with whom I have served in battle - it hurts.
But I shall overcome - for I am strong.

I have slipped the bonds of Earth and stand watch over the uncharted new frontiers of space from my vantage point on the moon. I have been a silent witness to all of America's finest hours

But my finest hour comes when I am torn into strips to be used for bandages for my wounded comrades on the field of battle. When I fly at half mast to honor my soldiers.
And when I lie in the trembling arms of a grieving mother at the graveside of her fallen son.

I am proud.

My name is Old Glory.

Dear God - Long may I wave.

LOTTERY TICKETS

Gentlemen--we will be selling tickets for two Lottery Drawings to help defray costs of the reunion and the printing of future newsletters. The first lottery will be based on the three-digit number drawn by lottery officials in Ohio, on 5 July 2002. Those attending Bob Gold's gathering will be witness to the number drawn, and of course, the winning ticket holder's name. The winner will be called that night, unless he is present at Bob's party. The second Lottery will then start the following day, with the winning number based on the Pennsylvania State Lottery three-digit number drawn at 1900 hours (7:00 p.m.), on Christmas Day, 25 December 2002.

The cost of tickets is as follows:

- \$3.00 for each individual ticket.
- \$10.00 for a book of four tickets.

First place winner (the number that matches the one drawn that evening) will receive \$1,500.00. A second and third place prize will be issued to the number that follows on each side of the winning number; thus, if the number 245 is drawn; the numbers 244 and 246 would each receive \$150.00.

Sorry fellows, you cannot reserve individual numbers, since they will be placed randomly in books of four, so that you will not receive back-to-back numbers. This event shall start now, since the first series of 1,000 tickets is already being printed.

So now, the only thing I have to do is convince all of you out there to purchase your tickets, plus tickets to sell to your family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, etc. Open up your hearts and your wallets, and send for your tickets today! Don't wait until June to order tickets, there may be none left. Buy them now or order what you feel you can sell by 30 June 2002. Remember that you can always reorder more, should you sell out of them quickly.

Support your Association and help everyone have a great time at the reunion, inexpensively. Keep in mind, some lucky winner(s) out there will end up with some spending money of their own, and it could be YOU. Please use the enclosed form to order your tickets today, and Good Luck!

Please note: whether you purchase the tickets for your own use or to sell; the stub attached to the ticket must be filled out with a person's name, and phone number, and returned to me prior to 30 June 2002, so we know who to contact if that should be the winning number. These stubs should be sent along with any remittance to the address listed below as soon as possible, however, I must receive the stubs and money prior to the end of the day, 30 June 2002, to be eligible for a prize. NO EXCEPTIONS, except for those noted below.

Any outstanding tickets remaining unsold after midnight, 30 June 2002, will be listed as void. Although highly unlikely, should any winning number be unsold, the following day's Lottery drawing, 6 July 2002, will then be used as a basis for deciding the winning number. Please return all unsold tickets, or the stubs filled out, with any owed money, by 30 June 2002, to ensure those who have purchased the tickets have a chance to win. Any unsold tickets remaining will be with me at Bob Gold's gathering for sale prior to the numbers drawn, for those who wish to purchase another chance to win. Good luck!

1/50th Infantry Association Lottery

The Association is holding a "lottery" style raffle to raise funds to help defray expenses of the next reunion. Even if you cannot make it to the reunion, please support the association by purchasing your tickets now. We are selling tickets based on the Ohio State Lottery (three-digit daily number). Multiple purchases are available and recommended, for sale to neighbors, relatives, and co-workers. There are only 1,000 tickets available, so do not delay--order your tickets today, before supplies run out.

The winning number will be the three-digit number drawn on 5 July 2002. The winning number pays \$1,500.00. The numbers above and below that number will each receive \$150.00.

SEND YOUR CHECKS OR MONEY ORDERS ALONG WITH THE FORM

LOTTERY TICKET REQUEST FORM

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ PHONE NUMBER: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

_____ Individual tickets at \$3.00 each.

_____ Books of four tickets at \$10.00 each.

_____ Amount Enclosed

_____ Please include check for the amount of your purchase.

Please return all money and stubs, or return any unsold tickets prior to 30 June 2002.

Send to:

Kenneth G Riley
200 Georgetown Court
Hanover PA 17331

ON LEADERSHIP

By



By John Topper
19 December 2001

Recently I have been involved in teaching some classes on leadership to varied organizations in Wyoming and it occurred to me that we are in the process of changing leadership within the Association and an update to the general membership is in order. The change that is occurring is not one of revolution, but evolution. As I explained in my first communication after assuming the office of president, I don't anticipate any radical change, and there hasn't been any to date, nor do I anticipate any in the future. Change is, however, inevitable and this organization is no exception. Your executive committee has approved some changes in the past few months and I would like to share them with you. Most have been of a routine nature, having to do with fixes to our Constitution and Bylaws. Both documents are available for viewing on our website at www.ichiban1.org.

Others are more organizational in nature and they involve the distribution of responsibilities to various individuals. One of the most far-reaching has been the move of Association Founder, Ken Riley to that of Chairman Emeritus from Treasurer. Ken simply has too much institutional knowledge to relegate him to a single office. The Executive Committee therefore agreed to the establishment of this exalted position, without specific duties, so we may maximize his worth to the benefit of all. In this capacity, he will serve as mentor and advisor to all officers, providing us with his corporate experience and expertise. In effect, we have replaced Ken with about ten others in the structure because the Association has grown exponentially both in size and complexity. Chuck McAleer who has a solid background in financial management has replaced Ken as the Treasurer. Chuck will do a great job and his expertise is welcomed.

We also have a new Webmaster, Ray Sarlin has replaced Chris Lange and is doing a remarkable job on the website. If you haven't visited the site recently, please do so. You will be pleasantly surprised at the additions Ray has made. Thanks Ray and welcome aboard.

We have also added some new faces in the "head shed". As you know Robert Melendez is the new editor of the newsletter you are reading. Jim Edwards is donating time and materials to print the newsletter and doing a great job, indeed. We formally established the office of Counselor and Harry Wilson, Attorney At Law, is capably filling that capacity. Harry has secured non-profit status for the Association, not an inconsiderable accomplishment. That means any donations made to the Association may now be tax deductible.

The Executive Committee is in frequent communication and we are slowly but surely assuming all those functions that once were Ken Riley's alone. Frankly, it is a testament to Ken's considerable capacity for this, his labor of love that he functioned on his own for so long. Not many could have done as much for so long and so well.

But the officers of your Association are volunteers, serving without pay of course, and are subject to daily demands from their other interests. (Ever notice how work has a flair for getting in the way of having fun?)

And therefore, I would like to solicit any ideas for improvement in how the Association functions – it is here to serve your needs after all. We are working hard, but virtue of position does not mean we have all the answers. Remember when we used to complain about “those bastards up at battalion/brigade/division?” Now is your chance to have your voice heard.

Some of my thoughts on the process for effecting change:

1. Leadership begins with values. Our values will shape the Association and yours are important to and need to be considered in the process. Before jumping off the deep end, I will seek input from the other officers. As long as we are in agreement, I feel confident we are doing the right thing. Feel free to disagree if you see us doing something you believe to be a mistake.
2. Change can be hard work. Just because it is easier to continue doing things in the ways we have become accustomed does not justify not changing when necessary. As we transition the duties from Ken to various members of the organization, we are experiencing this. Frequently, people will not understand or be slow to understand why change is necessary and that can slow down the process, so it is incumbent on the officer’s of the Association to ensure all members are aware of change and understand the necessity for it. Let us know if you don’t understand.
3. Leadership is a team sport. No one person can do it all. Leadership is not about controlling from the top; it is about empowering people to do what they are capable of doing. Growing people is the hallmark of a successful organization.
4. Learn from doing. By listening to others we will learn to do things better and by doing things better, we improve the organization. One of my goals when I pass the mantle of leadership to my successor is of having operating procedures for all Association functions in place so the transition is as painless as possible.
5. An organization has only so much energy. Most of that energy is focused on performing the activities at hand. We must look forward and anticipate future needs however. That is sometimes difficult – “it’s hard to keep in mind your task is to drain the swamp when you are ass deep in alligators”. When this slate of officers leaves office, there will be ample room for improvement but we should have an idea what remains to be done so our successors won’t have to discover that on their own.

An idea that came from Darrell Sourwine is an example of 5. above and is worth looking into. Darrell’s idea is the formation of a Hall of Fame. Great idea but one that will require a lot of work determining the recommendation criteria; selection criteria and a myriad of other questions would have to be answered how many inductees initially? How many each year thereafter? Is it a nominative process? Do we need a selection committee or does the Executive Committee decide? Or is selection determined by a vote of the general membership? There are probably other questions that will come up, but you get the idea. It is something I believe we should pursue and I would like to hear from anyone who has thoughts on how to proceed. If you disagree, I would like to know that as well.

As you read this, I hope one thread of thought appears throughout and that is that any successful organization ultimately comes to the conclusion that the answers lie in its people. The members of an organization that wish to see it grow and be successful must have a passion for what they are about. They must have a sense of becoming better, not content with just being what they are. There must be a vision that is grounded in values and supported by people who believe in it. Finally, there must be an environment that fosters the belief in people, without whom all else is meaningless. Leadership always comes down to people. Thank you for being a valued member of the Association and please, exercise your rights as a member to make this a better organization.

Vote For Where You Want The Reunion In 2003

Tentative Date: April 24-27

The choices are:

1. Columbus, Georgia
2. Washington D. C.

	Rate	Dinner
RIVERTOWN INN <i>(Includes continental breakfast)</i>	\$63	\$15
COURTYARD	\$97	\$10-20
HILTON <i>(Dates 5/1-4/2003; they cannot accommodate 4/24-27)</i>	\$95	\$25-30
HOLIDAY INN NORTH – AIRPORT	\$80	\$20
SHERATON – AIRPORT	\$69	\$20
WASHINGTON D.C.		
EMBASSY SUITES – ALEXANDRIA*	\$210	\$32
EMBASSY SUITES – CRYSTAL CITY*	\$160	\$33
DOUBLETREE – CRYSTAL CITY	\$130	\$40
HILTON – CRYSTAL CITY <i>(National Airport)</i>	\$145	\$40
<i>*Included in the room rate is a fully cooked to order breakfast, plus free drinks for 2 hours each evening.</i>		

Please detach and mail to:

Gary Quint
438 Fairway Lane
Kirkwood, Mo. 63122

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

MEMBERS ONLY

Check One:

COLUMBUS, GEORGIA _____

WASHINGTON D. C. _____