

# ON THE RIGHT TRACK

IST Battalion 50th Association



December 2019

Cover

## From the TC Hatch

By Jim Seagers

President's Corner



Dear Members,

As we come to this year's remembrance of Veteran's Day, I thank all of you for your service, both as we served/serve together in the 150<sup>th</sup> and now in our association. We thank Lt. Col. Gallagher, his cadre, and his men for their tireless efforts to serve our country. We salute all of you!

One of our own, CSM Christopher Lewis, is now retiring from active duty. The ceremony celebrating him and his lovely wife Miki will be on November 26. His help and expertise to our association has been invaluable. Among many other things, our association thanks you, CSM Lewis, for your work on the Vietnam display at headquarters and your work at the National Infantry Museum. You are a great historian as well as a great soldier!

Thanksgiving and Christmas will be here soon. Lorretta and I take this opportunity to thank God for all of our blessings, one of which is our relationship with the 1/50<sup>th</sup>, past and present. May all of you have a blessed Christmas and wonderful New Year in 2020.

Play the Game  
Jimmy



Editor: Lorene Burch

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## From the Chaplin



As a another year passes and so many more are facing life threatening issues, we need to be reminded of the hope that was given to us those many years ago, with the birth of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

As you reflect at this time of the year don't forget the many things we need to be grateful for. Our families, friends, and so many good memories. At the close of the day that is what really matters.

So with all the gifts under the tree, don't forget the greatest gift of all, of hope eternal. Praising God in all things and praying for a Merry Christmas for each of you.

For God so loved the world that he gave His only Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not parish but have eternal life. John 3:16

### Ladies Home Front

Once again members who wish to go will be attending the Wreaths Across America event on December 14 this year at Arlington National Cemetery. Jimmy and I encourage all of you to place a wreath on the grave of someone who served in the U.S. Military this December, whether you can go to Arlington or not. Merry Christmas, and may God bless all of you.

P.S. Thank all of you for your prayers on my behalf!! We love all of you!!

Sincerely,  
Lorretta Segars





## VIETNAMESE IMMIGRANT

**-- Well Done. The difference between legal and illegal. This is something everyone in America should read....It looks like we did some good after all!**

**On Saturday, July 24th, 2010 the town of Prescott Valley, AZ, hosted a Freedom Rally. Quang Nguyen was asked to speak on his experience of coming to America and what it means. He spoke the following in dedication to all Vietnam Veterans. Thought you might enjoy hearing what he had to say:**

### **Start Quote:**

**35 years ago, if you were to tell me that I am going to stand up here speaking to a couple thousand patriots, in English, I'd laugh at you Man, every morning I wake up thanking God for putting me and my family in the greatest country on earth. I just want you all to know that the American dream does exist and I am living the American dream. I was asked to speak to you about my experience as a first generation Vietnamese-American, but I'd rather speak to you as an American.**

**If you hadn't noticed, I am not white and I feel pretty comfortable with my people. I am a proud US citizen and here is my proof. It took me 8 years to get it, waiting in endless lines, but I got it, and I am very proud of it.**

**I still remember the images of the Tet offensive in 1968, I was six years old. Now you might want to question how a 6-year-old boy could remember anything. Trust me, those images can never be erased. I can't even imagine what it was like for young American soldiers, 10,000 miles away from home, fighting on my behalf.**

**35 years ago, I left South Vietnam for political asylum. The war had ended At the age of 13, I left with the understanding that I may or may not ever get to see my siblings or parents again. I was one of the first lucky 100,000 Vietnamese allowed to come to the US. Somehow, my family and I were reunited 5 months later, amazingly, in California. It was a miracle from God.**

**If you haven't heard lately that this is the greatest country on earth, I am telling you that right now. It was the freedom and the opportunities presented to me that put me here with all of you tonight. I also remember the barriers that I had to overcome every step of the way. My high school counselor told me that I cannot make it to college due to my poor communication skills. I proved him wrong. I finished college. You see, all you have to do is to give this little boy an opportunity and encourage him to take and run with it. Well, I took the opportunity and here I am.**

**This person standing tonight in front of you could not exist under a social-ist/communist environment. By the way, if you think socialism is the way to go, I am sure many people here will chip in to get you a one-way ticket out of here. And if you didn't know, the only difference between socialism and communism is an AK-47 aimed at your head. That was my experience.**

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**Vietnam Immigrant****(Con't)**

**In 1982, I stood with a thousand new immigrants, reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and listening to the National Anthem for the first time as an American. To this day, I can't remember anything sweeter and more patriotic than that moment in my life.**

**Fast forwarding, somehow I finished high school, finished college, and like any other goofball 21 year old kid, I was having a great time with my life I had a nice job and a nice apartment in Southern California. In some way and somehow, I had forgotten how I got here and why I was here**

**One day I was at a gas station, I saw a veteran pumping gas on the other side of the island. I don't know what made me do it, but I walked over and asked if he had served in Vietnam. He smiled and said yes. I shook and held his hand. This grown man's eyes began to well up. I walked away as fast as I could and at that very moment, I was emotionally rocked. This was a profound moment in my life. I knew something had to change in my life. It was time for me to learn how to be a good citizen. It was time for me to give back.**

**You see, America is not just a place on the map, it isn't just a physical location. It is an ideal, a concept. And if you are an American, you must understand the concept, you must accept this concept, and most importantly, you have to fight and defend this concept. This is about Freedom and not free stuff. And that is why I am standing up here**

**Brothers and sisters, to be a real American, the very least you must do is to learn English and understand it well. In my humble opinion, you cannot be a faithful patriotic citizen if you can't speak the language of the country you live in. Take this document of 46 pages - last I looked on the Internet, there wasn't a Vietnamese translation of the U.S. Constitution. It took me a long time to get to the point of being able to converse and until this day, I still struggle to come up with the right words. It's not easy, but if it's too easy, it's not worth doing**

**Before I knew this 46-page document, I learned of the 500,000 Americans who fought for this little boy. I learned of the 58,000 names inscribed on the black wall at the Vietnam Memorial. You are my heroes. You are my founders.**

**At this time, I would like to ask all the Vietnam veterans to please stand. I thank you for my life. I thank you for your sacrifices, and I thank you for giving me the freedom and liberty I have today. I now ask all veterans, firefighters, and police officers, to please stand On behalf of all first generation immigrants, I thank you for your services and may God bless you all.**

**Quang Nguyen  
Creative Director/Founder  
Caddis Advertising, LLC  
"God Bless America"  
"One Flag, One Language, One Nation Under God"**

Submitted by: Dave Knechtel



## NEWS FROM FORT BENNING

### A CO

#### **A CO Implements the ACFT**

A CO is currently in the process of shifting its physical fitness training with the introduction of the Army Combat Fitness Test, or ACFT. The ACFT was created with four goals in mind. First, to improve soldier and unit readiness for the physical challenges of the battlefield. Second, the Army wants to transform the culture of fitness within its ranks. Third, the Army wants to reduce preventable injuries and attrition. Lastly, the final goal of the ACFT during its inception is to enhance mental toughness and stamina. The Army began field testing the ACFT in October of 2018 and has adjusted the new test by receiving feedback from soldiers.

The ACFT intends to measure brute physical strength, explosive power, upper and lower body endurance, and cardiovascular stamina. The Army Physical Fitness Test, or APFT is criticized because studies have found that the three events (push-up, sit-up and 2-mile run) do not accurately assess soldier fitness status. In order to mitigate the problems caused by the APFT, the Army created new testable exercises in addition to modifying the current ones. The ACFT is composed of six total exercises; the deadlift, standing power throw, hand release push-up, spring-drag-carry, leg tuck and 2-mile run.

While the implementation of the new exercises are important to soldiers when it comes to preparing for the fitness test, the grading scale is arguably the biggest change the Army has made in decades. The ACFT grading scale is now gender-neutral and is categorized by strength class in correspondence to MOS. For example, the infantry MOS is categorized as “heavy” according to the new grading scale, therefore soldiers must lift a certain weight, or perform a certain number of repetitions to satisfy the minimum standard for their job. Each MOS falls into a different category, and each category has a different minimum standard that soldiers must obtain in order to successfully pass the ACFT.

The Army is constantly improving in order to maintain its status as the most lethal and effective fighting force in the world. Both leaders in the Pentagon and soldiers in the field understand the importance of improving one’s fighting position and creating an environment for success on the battlefield. Whether it is the implementation of the 22-week Infantry OSUT cycle or improving the way the physical readiness is measured, soldiers in the Army are better prepared for the next fight wherever and whenever that may be.

**NEWS FROM  
FORT BENNING  
(con't)**

## **B CO**

### **22 Week Training cycle for Infantrymen initiated**

At this very moment, change has come to Bravo Company, 1st Battalion 50 Infantry Regiment. With all Infantry OSUT changing the training requirements for new basic training cycles from 14 to 22 weeks, B Co has taken up the responsibility of being the first Company in the Battalion to transition to this new Program of Instruction. The goal that B Co is currently working towards is ensuring that our training cycle moves from familiarization of both individual and collective Infantrymen tasks, to a place where trainees are focusing on becoming masters of the skills taught to them. Ways we are doing this is by providing them almost 3 full weeks Rifle Marksmanship training, spending a more significant amount of time on basic tasks such as properly operating a M249 machine gun with 8 full days of training on it, conducting a full week of Land Navigation instead of one day, and incorporating the Army's new Army Combat Fitness Test into our physical training plan, which includes new events like the deadlift, the new core focused leg tuck, and sled and kettle bell carries. The biggest goal for our 22 week class is to ensure driving the most realistic training we can for our soldiers. Our Drill Sergeants continue to work their hardest daily, in order to mold a more lethal Infantrymen who is ready to leave here and help carry the mantle of being ready to fight our Nation's enemies.

## **C CO**

### **Marksmanship training improvements**

Charlie Company had just finished their 7<sup>th</sup> week of infantry one station unit training (OSUT). Last week our trainees focused on rifle marksmanship, with the new 4 point position qualification table being the culminating event. The 4 point rifle qualification table was developed based upon feedback from over 15 years of direct fire engagements in Iraq and Afghanistan. Trainees start in the standing position. They engage one target and immediately transition into a prone unsupported firing position. This simulates making contact with an enemy. As the firer engages targets and gains fire superiority, he/she transitions to a prone supported position, with a magazine change during each transition to better simulate combat conditions. Finally the firer transitions to a kneeling and standing supported firing position as he/she continues to engage the enemy. Next week the trainees have the opportunity to learn and shoot the M2 .50 cal machine gun, the MK19 Grenade launcher, and M320 grenade launcher.



**NEWS FROM  
FORT BENNING  
(con't)**

**E Co**

**E CO finishes its last 14 week training cycle**

War Eagle Company is currently training 235 trainees in Infantry OSUT in class 9066. Class 9066 will be the last 14 week cycle trained at War Eagle Company before the 22 week cycle begins in January. As of 19 October the Company is on training week seven. The Company has completed all rifle marksmanship (RM) qualifications with outstanding results. 117 of 235 trainees qualified expert, 100 qualified sharpshooter and 6 qualified marksman. War eagle Company continues to have one of the highest RM averages in the brigade. During this cycle the company received two new platoon leaders as part of a new integration program across Initial Entry Training. The addition of platoon leaders has made the unit more effective and increased lethality of all soldiers due to the increased cadre to trainee ratio. Beginning next week the trainees of War Eagle Company will enter into blue phase where they will be familiarized with the M249, M240B, M2 .50 cal, M320 grenade launcher and AT-4 anti-tank rocket. Also in blue phase the trainees will be taught team and squad level tactics and participate in field training exercises. At the end of blue phase the trainees will have their "Turning Green" ceremony and they will officially be classified as Soldiers.

**Address change**

Jim Sheppard, 21 NW 29th Place, Cape Coral, Florida 33993.

My email addresses will not change...and my Cell phone number will not change.

I no longer maintain a "land line".



**Greetings:**

We are busy at this time of the year. Just celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary. It was a fun event that our granddaughter Monica put together for us. Was blessed with all the friends and family that took the time to send a card or come to the event. I am honored to be a co-captain of this years (2019-2020) Relay for Life team where in November we raised just over \$900 to go towards research for a cure for cancer and to assist families with expenses. Or goal this year is \$6,500 by May. The DA-VA group I belong to will be putting throws together to give to the vets in nursing homes in our area for Christmas. This is a time for giving and being thankful for all that we have been blessed with. So rather than to concentrate on being in the ER with mom once in November and Roger twice, I want to take the time to be thankful for the nurses and doctors who attend to those who are ill. To the family and friends who honor us with their time and visits. To each of you for all that you have done and are doing for those around you. For the caregivers who take the time out of their lives to tend to the needs of their loved ones.

**GOD BLESS AND MERRY CHRISTMAS!!**

Lorene Burch



Gary E. Quint  
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Kirkwood, Mo

