

# DIABLO

The Link for All Veterans, Spouses, Family and Friends of the 508<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment  
Published by *Family and Friends of the 508<sup>th</sup> PIR Association* – September 2016

## 10th Anniversary Reunion

Now's the time to Register and book hotel rooms for our Association's 10th Anniversary Reunion set for historic Charleston, SC from November 2 – 6.

One Reunion highlight will be broad attendance by Active Duty 508<sup>th</sup> paratroopers from Fort Bragg, including a 7-person Color Guard.

The Association intends to publish a souvenir Reunion Program booklet where Members and Supporters can reserve space for In-Remembrance Messages, Salutes to the Veterans and Active Duty, or Advertisements in support of the Association. Please submit photos and messages with your contract form (enclosed) before September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Anyone who needs special logistical or financial arrangements should contact the Reunion Committee, c/o Donna Palmer – donnapalmer1206@aol.com or (706) 284-3602.

### Tentative Schedule of Events

#### Wednesday, Nov 2

- Arrival/Registration. C.P. will be open!
- "Optional" Harbor Dinner Cruise (additional \$56)

#### Thursday, Nov 3

- Welcoming Breakfast
- Patriots Point/Yorktown Tour – Visit to Medal Of Honor Museum aboard the Yorktown.
- Lunch – optional (additional fee)
- Fort Sumter Tour – Citadel Professor, Kyle Sinisi

#### Friday, Nov 4

- Citadel Cadet Tour (afternoon)
- Citadel Twilight Parade
- Panel Discussion with Veterans & Active Duty

#### Saturday, Nov 5

- Free Day – Reunion Committee organizing elective excursions (additional fee) that may include:
  - Hunley Museum
  - Historic Downtown Charleston
  - Tangers Outlet Mall
- Oral History Video Session
- Banquet

## Lifetime Members

The Association's new Lifetime Member Program is off to a great start. A healthy mix of Veterans, Active Duty, Family and Friends are supporting the Association's mission and activities with a more substantial up-front contribution. Many thanks to the following new Lifetime Members:

### Sustaining Members - \$350

**Lois and Bill Andrews** – Daughter of WWII Vet Bill Gowdy – Hq/1st Bn

**Bob Chisolm** – WWII Veteran – I Co.

**Charmaine and Barry Deere** – Relative of WWII Vet Norman J. Deere – Service Co.

**Gene Garren** – Friend & Supporter of the 508th

**Bill Hamilton and LaNell Hester** – Son of WWII Vet Ed Hamilton – H Co.

**Brodie Hand** – WWII Veteran – C Co.

**Chris Harris** – Nephew of James A. Childs – C Co. – KIA 09/18/44

**Capt. Paul Kearney** – C.O. Delta Co. 1/508th

**Alex Mitchell** – Relative of WWII Vet 1st Lt. Robert Mazyck Mitchell - I Co.

**Michael Mitchell** – Son-in-law of WWII Vet Joseph P. Thornton – F Co.

**Tsugi and Dick O'Donnell** – Cousin of Gerard Ruddy, C.O. of Hq/1st Bn. – KIA 06/06/44

**Donna and Troy Palmer** – Son of WWII Vet Larry Palmer – Hq/1st Bn.

**Ellen Peters** – Friend & Supporter of the 508th

**LTC Justin Reese** – C.O. of 1/508th

**Jan Silver** – Widow of WWII Vet Walter Silver – C Co.

**Bob Speers** – WWII Veteran – Hq/2nd Bn.

**Norb Studelska** – WWII Veteran – D Co.

### Patrons - \$250

**Barbara Asher** – Widow of WWII Vet Robert Asher – A Co.

**Chris Brown** – Nephew of Edward B. Brown – C Co. – KIA 09/18/44

**Randy Lewellen** – Son of WWII Vet R.B. Lewellen – I Co.

**Valorie and Shane Harris** – Nephew of James A. Childs – C Co. – KIA 09/18/44

**Patrick Russell** – Friend & Supporter of the 508th

**Joan Shanley** – Daughter of WWII Vet Irv Shanley – Hq/2nd Bn.

**Linda and Tom Stumpner** – Nephew of WW II Vet John Daum – B Co. – KIA 06/08/44

### Supporters - \$150

**Suzanne and Charles Butler** – Relative of WWII Vet Baxter S. Clark.

**Francis Call** – Son of WWII Vet Wm J. Call – B & G Co.

**Sam Clark** – Relative of WWII Vet Baxter S. Clark.

**Charlene Confrey** – Widow of WWII Vet Evan Confrey – G Co.

**Karen Holton** – Daughter of WWII Vet Walter Silver – C Co.

**Patricia Laakso** – Daughter of WWII Vet Billy McClure – D Co.

**Julia Morris** – Daughter of WWII Vet Angel Romero – G Co.

**Charlie Ortega** – Co. C - 1st Abn Batt Grp., 187th; Co C 508th - 1st Bn - 1961-1964

**Carl Porter** – WWII Veteran – Service Co.

**Joe Schwann** – WWII Veteran – Co. I, 505<sup>th</sup> PIR

**Peggy and Ray Younes** - 19th Qm. OM. 508th ARCT 1951-1952

For more information on Association Membership and Dues Payments, please visit the Association website at [www.508PIR.org](http://www.508PIR.org) and click on the "Key Association Information" Logo. If anyone has more specific questions surrounding Membership opportunities and payment of Lifetime or Annual Dues, please contact Ellen Peters-Treasurer, at [Treasurer@508PIR.org](mailto:Treasurer@508PIR.org) or (214) 632-1360. ➔

## REGIMENTAL HISTORY

### Operation Carentan I & II Vietnam - March 1968 by Rob Palmer

In March 1968, Paratrooper units including the 508<sup>th</sup> conducted several difficult operations to secure and clear the territory surrounding Hue in the Thua Thien province of Vietnam. The task force classified Carpenter included 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 508<sup>th</sup> Inf, c/2-321 Artillery and 307<sup>th</sup> Engr. Division Paratroopers, teamed with Airborne Infantryman of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division to launch Operation Carentan I & II.

This operation was directed against routing insurgents in Thua Thien province, north of the new forward base at Camp Eagle. The 508<sup>th</sup> Infantry occupied the high-ground, providing bridge and ramp security in the vicinity of Hue and began the tall task of road clearing and reconnaissance operations with an emphasis on infiltration routes and lines of communication into Hue, while C/307<sup>th</sup> Engr. provided mine sweep/demolitions teams. The fighting during these operations was intense and nearly continuous, leaving some officers to remark that it was the most difficult and determined of the war.

Late in the evening of 21 March 1968, members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. 501<sup>st</sup> Abn. Inf. repulsed an attack on their defensive position, sometimes resorting to direct artillery fire. The next day, gunships of the 101<sup>st</sup> Avn. Bn. caught a North Vietnamese Army (NVA) company in the open five miles west of Hue, killing 34. The 508<sup>th</sup> Infantry continued operations in the Sano area until 23 March 1968 against the enemy dug in along a line of camouflaged trenches parallel to the canal south of Highway 552. Airstrikes, artillery, and gunships supported this three-day operation and destroyed most of the enemy fortifications.

On 29 March 1968, the 508<sup>th</sup> Infantry conducted a two-company air assault and cordoned villages. Although the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division's intelligence section estimated enemy strength at approximately seven thousand strong in March 1968, during Operations Carentan I & II, the division inflicted devastating casualties on the communist units. This heavy fighting first stemmed communist momentum and then pounded their forces into full-scale retreat during the first five months of 1968 as VC and NVA units attempted unsuccessfully to hold their gains in the lowlands.

When the operation ended 31 March 1968, 861 enemy troops had been killed. Weapons and munitions captured included 186 individual and crew-served weapons, 1027 rockets, mortar and artillery rounds, 41,000 small-arms rounds and 45 grenades. The paratroopers also kept nearly 17 tons of rice and grain from the enemy.



## Update on Balloting and Special Meeting

Many thanks to the many Members who returned ballots approving the Association's new Governing Documents. Following the July 30 Special Meeting to tally votes, the Association filed an Application to update its non-profit tax-exempt status to 501(c)(3). Any IRS approval will be retroactive to 19 August 2016.

For more information on Association Bylaws, Policies and Financials, please visit the Association website at [www.508PIR.org](http://www.508PIR.org) and click on the "Key Association Information" Logo. Choose the *Paymaster* button to make on-line Donations. ➔

## Thank You

### Dick O'Donnell

for your Countless Hours Expanding & Enhancing the Association Website

[www.508PIR.org](http://www.508PIR.org)

History · Library · Membership Info · Store

## Final Jumps

### Glass, Darrell

Darrell Glass of C Co. passed away June 17, 2016. Darrell was a dear friend to all who knew him. He attended reunions for many years where he entertained everyone with his humor. When I finally met Darrell in person during a trip to California, Darrell was a most gracious host. We spent many hours talking about his wartime experiences and his post-war life.

Condolences may be sent to his widow at:  
1609 Mimosa Pl.  
Fullerton, CA 92835-2112

### Thornton, Joseph

Joseph Thornton of F Co. passed away April 2, 2016. He jumped into Normandy behind Utah Beach on D-Day. He fought with the 508<sup>th</sup> through Normandy where he suffered a bullet wound to his arm on July 4. He said medics "patched him up" and he returned to battle. Joe left Normandy for Nottingham, England on July 15, 1944—with only 32 of the original 140 F Co. who jumped returning. On September 17, 1944 Joe and the 508<sup>th</sup> boarded jumped near Nijmegen, Holland as part of Operation Market Garden. They captured and defended roads and bridges until November 13, 1944, before moving to Sissonne, France for rest and recuperation. On December 17, 1944 Joe and the 508<sup>th</sup> were trucked to the Ardennes to help thwart the German invasion during the Battle of the Bulge. He and the 508<sup>th</sup> returned to Sissonne on February 17, 1945, where he later received word he was headed back home.

Joe was honored with the following awards: Purple Heart; Bronze Star; Parachutist Badge; Combat Infantry Badge; European Theater of Operations Medal with Bronze Arrowhead; WWII Victory Medal; and Presidential Unit Citation. He was awarded the French Legion of Honor in 2011. In the late 1940s, Joe helped rebuild war-torn Okinawa for two years. He returned to Atlanta where he worked as a construction superintendent.

Condolences may be sent to his family at:  
14255 Woolsey Rd.  
Hampton, GA 30228-2255

### Villalobos, Luis L.

Luis Villalobos of D Co. passed away August 22, 2016.

Condolences may be sent to his family at:  
c/o Mark Villalobos  
9352 Steele St  
Rosemeade, CA 91770 ➔

## NORMANDY HISTORY

### The Long Journey Home

The Odyssey of Pvt. Martin Teahan's M-1  
By Jim Farrell

If I were to report the facts, I would tell you Private Martin Teahan of HQ Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 508<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR), died on June 6, 1944, near a church in Picauville, Normandy. While scouting a position, he was shot in the leg, captured, and then killed by a German soldier who thought he was reaching for a weapon. A few weeks after D-Day, a French farmer in the area found a rifle with the name M. Teahan engraved on the butt of the rifle.



No one knew what the farmer did with the rifle for 72 years, until it was discovered this February by a French Army Paratrooper Commander named Colonel Patrick Collet.

Those are the facts, but the story associated with the rifle tugs on something much deeper for me. You see, Private Martin was my Uncle "Matty." A poor Irish immigrant, stories of his bravery resonated with me as I grew up in the same rough neighborhood in the South Bronx. Not seven days prior to the discovery of the rifle, I visited my roots for the first time since childhood. I stood in grand St Jerome's Church, and thought of my Uncle Matty as I looked at his name, engraved in the cool stone of the somber building.

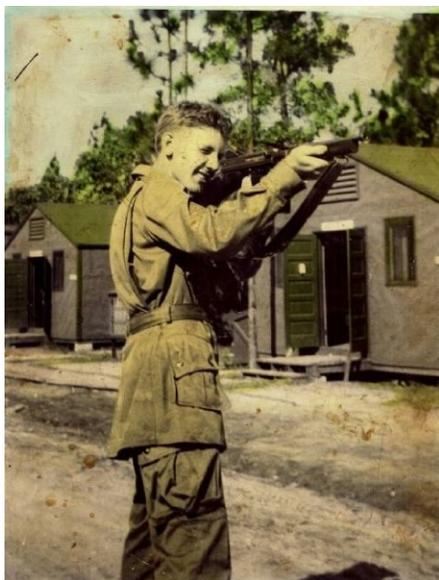
Then, as if by fate, we received an email from Colonel Patrick Collet, a French Army Paratrooper commander who grew up in Normandy. He had acquired an M1 Garand rifle from a descendent of the farmer in Picauville. Once he saw the named M. Teahan engraved on the rifle, he knew he had something special and was determined to find who M. Teahan was.

My sister Liz and I long ago became members of the 508<sup>th</sup> PIR to honor our uncle Matty. Liz setup a

profile page on the 508<sup>th</sup> PIR website, listing her as a contact. Who knew, this simple process would result in such a life altering discovery, as the first place Colonel Collet searched was the 508<sup>th</sup> PIR website. He found the match and notified Liz. I knew, she knew, the moment we found out—the rifle was our Uncle Matty coming home after 72 years.

Colonel Collet invited my wife Monica and I to visit this June. We got to hold the rifle; I felt the cold metal of the weapon on my fingertips, and envisioned my Uncle, bravely marching forward through enemy territory.

I was also in the army, many years later, but never engaged in the sort of battle for which so many young men of WW II fought and died. We decided this majestic representation of history should be returned to Martin Tehan's brothers-in-arms, the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, 508<sup>th</sup> PIR.



Martin Tehan aiming his M-1 in training

Our visit didn't end there; Colonel Collet had arranged an unbelievable itinerary for us. We were directed to the site of Uncle Matty's grave, where we met the U.S. Army Chief of Staff General Milley to salute and say a prayer. A man of quiet authority, I immediately jumped to attention and snapped "Yes Sir" at his direction. Monica of course found this to be hilarious, but she understood, as I did, the magic of the moments we were sharing on this trip.

And what a trip! After the cemetery, we visited Omaha and Utah beaches, including an amazing jaunt to Point du Hoc. This moment, staring at the cliff of Point Du Hoc, will forever blaze in my memory. General Milley and his staff guided us through each site, and their descriptive stories provided the fields for our imaginations to roam.

Martin Tehan's rifle will be brought over to General Milley by Colonel Collet and the French Army Chief of Staff General Bosser later this year. General Milley has invited my entire family to officially donate the

rifle at a ceremony at the Pentagon. I suspect the plaque will look something like my first paragraph, with some added words about bravery and duty. As appropriate as it will be, I doubt it can ever capture the emotion, the power, and the change we experienced as a result of the rifle's discovery. Thank you, for a piece of my heritage is now coming home.

*Jim is writing a book on the whole experience entitled Uncle Matty Comes Home. A Facebook page has been created in Martin Tehan's honor and has over 25,000 fans in just 3 months, www.facebook.com/unclemattycomeshome General Milley is totally committed to bringing the rifle back and honoring his memory. To all 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne brothers, this is a reminder that no matter how much time has passed, what you have done for our freedom will never be forgotten.* ➔



Jim Farrell laying flowers on his uncle's grave

## FORT KOBBE - PANAMA

By Buck Rogers

When the word came down on that cold December morning that our battalion, the 1<sup>st</sup>/504<sup>th</sup> PIR (Devils in Baggy Pants), was going on an emergency deployment readiness exercise at Ft Bragg – but we were told to pack jungle boots and lightweight battle dress uniforms – all I could think about was the trouble brewing in Panama and how I had just received orders for Permanent Change of Station (PCS) there 10 days earlier. Then, three weeks following Operation Just Cause our battalion redeployed to Panama for a scheduled rotation to Ft Sherman for Jungle School.

So before I even had a chance to PCS to Central America I had made two trips down to Panama to get the lay of the land. I'll be the first one to say that my first night in the jungle wasn't something I was looking forward to; I'm from a small town in Wisconsin and the worst thing that can mess you up in the woods are mosquitoes. Nonetheless, after a couple days I embraced it. I think it's the smell that makes it bearable. Not the smell of the jungle, but the smell of a funk infantry squad that smells like the decaying jungle floor.

I PCS'd in August and ended up at Ft Kobbe. The first guy to meet me and escort me to the company was PVT Scott Davis. "Sarnt...it's cool, everybody's good and we have pretty good leadership."

As soon as I hit my platoon area and got introduced to everybody it was on. "You got a mustard stain,"

"You stole our mission," or "We're the real Red Devils." It was going to get ugly as the only airborne infantry unit in country didn't get to jump in. There were only three or four of us from the 82d at that time and we took the good-natured ribbing for about a week or two more.

That's when I sat down after-hours and grilled the guys. "Do you think the guys at Bragg train out of a different manual than we do down here? Do you think they jump with better equipment than we use down here? Do you think they're more motivated than the guys down here? We both fought the same battle with the same tactics and weapons. We just arrived differently and when it comes down to it, I value my CIB and my infantry life much more than I value a star on my jump wings."

I think I got the point across. We were one and the same. If all you valued were badges and awards, then you were going to be butt-hurt. But if you wanted a great experience to enhance your career, then the 1<sup>st</sup> of the 508<sup>th</sup> was the place to be.

We had well-rounded leadership from battalion headquarters on down. CSM Beard had his finger on the pulse of everything going on. We had a company flag football team that was playing in the summer months on Howard AFB. We advanced to the base championship game and he called me to his office. Always chewing gum and in his Georgia accent, "You gonna beat those flyboys, right?" Hell, I didn't even know he knew we had a team. He showed up with his family for the game and cheered us on like it was a Georgia-Florida game. He popped into Gorgas to visit after I had a knee operation. He supported all battalion events and participated as well; he *never* sat on the sidelines no matter if it was a Chaplain's Retreat up the coast or a fishing expedition on the Canal.

At the company level we had a philosophy of doing it right and having fun while doing it. Sometimes I wondered how far the guys were willing to take it. I wasn't in country a month when we had ammo supply point guard duty. The fact that we were eating venison steak over a fire raises a lot of questions. A lot of questions...but I didn't ask them.

SFC Dorty, our platoon sergeant, was a historian. In fact, after his military career he was the Civil War expert for the History Channel. He played for reals. There was no glad-handling POWs in training missions. There was no soft two-hand touch on the football field. There were no shortcuts in the jungle. He stressed history to us and the lessons learned after major historical battles. He wanted everybody to understand why battles were won or lost and why losing wasn't an option.

I had a platoon leader named 2LT Miska. His experience in Panama was another step on his way to three-stars and being a Presidential Advisor at the White House.

I could go on, but in the end I think the people who had the opportunity to serve in Panama were

exposed to fantastic, caring leadership. I don't think there is one person from the 1<sup>st</sup>/508<sup>th</sup> who could stand up today and say that their time at Ft Kobbe made them a lesser man.

The training was realistic and the recreation opportunities endless: swimming with caymen in the Chagres, getting bit by a vampire bat and 28-days of rabies shots, peacock bass fishing on the Canal, dodging security after hours downtown, and countless other experiences that will never be forgotten. In the end those memories and friendships made there will last a lifetime, no matter where our paths go.

And that Private Davis that first welcomed me to the Battalion? Last month we linked up for the first time in 25 years, hiked some of the trails around Mt Rainier (Davis, at right in photo), and relished our days as Red Devils in the 508<sup>th</sup> over a jar of moonshine. You can take the boys off jump status, but that's about all that will change.



*Buck Rogers served in the US Army for 14 years from 1983-1997. He transferred from the 1<sup>st</sup> 504<sup>th</sup> and was with B Co 1<sup>st</sup> 508<sup>th</sup> from Aug 1990-Jan 1993. Buck's final assignment was with the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division as G-1 Plan NCO.*

## Mailbox

Troy, I know that as a WWII veteran I am exempt from the dues payment, but I very strongly wish to support the association. Thanks for all that you are doing.

### Norb Studelska, D Co.

*Thank you, Norb, for your Lifetime Member support.*

I have been in contact with the gentleman, Jan (Bos), in Holland. He sent me copies of many documents related to my uncle after POW Camp Alt Drewitz cIII was liberated by the Russians. I had never seen them. It was very moving to read them, and to see the list of items returned to my grandmother. I can think only that she must have cried while touching each piece.

**Nina Brewer** – Niece of SSGT Robert Brewer who died as a result of wounds received in the Russian bombing of the camp.

At 92 years old, my eyes are bad – I have hearing aids in both ears, weak heart, can't walk far, etc. Do what you have to do – my time is running out.

### J. Naro – B Co 508<sup>th</sup>

*James, many thanks for your kind donation.*

Just wanted to let you know my husband, Lowell T. Austin passed away Jan 17, 2016. He was 84 years old and he is buried at the National Cemetery of the Allegheny. He was a SSGT when he got out of the 508<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you and God Bless, **Bonnie L. Austin**

*Lowell Austin served in the 508<sup>th</sup> ARCT 1952-1955*

Condolences can be sent to Bonnie at:

951 Linden Rd.

Eighty Four, PA 15330-2525

Mr. Troy Palmer,

My late husband, Ralph D. Mills, died of a heart attack on May 22, 2012. We were married for 55 years. We all miss him so much.

He loved life so much. He spent 22 years in the army. He loved the 508th. He and his buddies loved talking about the 508th. He loved me and our four daughters, our sons-in-law and our 6 grandchildren. We loved him very much. I still miss him.

He would sit on our deck and play his guitar and sing. Our family loved hearing him. Our daughter would sing along with him. He was a kind and generous person. He went into the business of heating, air conditioning and refrigeration. Every one knew him as a kind-hearted man. He would sit on our deck and watch to see if our neighbors were o.k. If he saw one of them had no lights on, he would call to see if they were o.k, take them to the doctor or hospital.

He joined the Masons, then Shriners, and drove their van to take kids and parents to the Burn Center or Shriners Hospital or to the orthopedic Children's Hospital.

I just wanted you to know the kind of man he was. He loved me and our family. We loved him very much and miss him.

I'm sorry for taking up your time, but I wanted you to know him. He was a good Christian man.

That's the kind of man Ralph D. Mills was.

Yours in God's care, his wife, **Wilma Mills**

*Wilma, thanks for sharing the character of a 508<sup>th</sup> Paratrooper.*

Charlie Ortega of Roswell, NM phoned. He was in the 508th Co. C, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn, 3rd Brigade for 6 months back in 1962. He apparently began in the Army in 1955 at Ft. Bragg. When he was in the 325th Regiment, he remembers moving into the new 3-story brick barracks in 1956. He mentioned how others have told him that today's new barracks are unbelievable when compared to the 1956 "new barracks"!

*Thank you, Charlie, for your Lifetime Member support.*

Dear Ellen:

Here is the picture I talked to you about. It was taken at the Howdy Club in Greenwich Village. We were at Camp Shanks in Dec. 1943.

### Harold Roy

L to R – Bob Daniels, Harold Roy, Bob Chisolm



**Carl Porter** from Peoria, IL writes:

Enclosed, please find the original photo and negative of the 508 Parachute Riggers who jumped into Normandy, France, on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

Those standing are CWO Roy Barger, Tech Sgt John Kersh (POW), Cecil Neal (POW), T K "Det" Detwiler, Albert "Snapper" Pirtle, Edward "Pony" DuPont (POW and WIA), Elmer Martell (POW), Donald Hansen (WIA), Howard "Randy" Ranbauer (KIA), Lawrence "Larry" Snovak (KIA), Harry Gerheim, Robert "Bob" Watts (POW and WIA), and 1st Sgt Lindale "Button Nose" Keating (POW).

Kneeling are Tech Sgt Henry Schillinger (POW), James "Jimmy" Hall (KIA), Carl H Porter (POW and WIA), Thomas "Tommy" Cross (KIA), Earl Cornwall and Frank "Dutch" Dasch (POW and WIA).

Our two Sticks (shared with Motor Pool personnel), dropped well North of Valognes and miles from our designated Drop Zone, "...almost on top of headquarters of Bataillon 1, Grenadier Regiment 1058, 91<sup>st</sup> Luftlande

Division at Le Haute Gelay...". Hence the large number of Trooper POWs. Also contributing to our decimation was rolling hedgerow country and the fact that several of us landed in hedgerow trees, making it impossible to "roll up the stick". It is to our credit that, of the 10 Troopers who were met on the ground and taken prisoner, only 3 remained as POWs to the end of the war. The separate "escape stories" of John Kersh and Marcel Bollag (not a Rigger), as well as Schillinger, Porter and Watts, are for another day.

A mystery. If you count the Troopers in the picture you will find only 19. My firm recollection is that there were 20 of us scheduled for the Jump, but one had gone to get CWO Barger's rifle (rank has its privileges). Trouble is, I thought it was "Pony" DuPont but, as you can see, he is standing between his best buddy, "Snapper" Pirtle and Elmer Martell.



Thank you, Carl, for your Lifetime Member support. ➔

### Check it Out!

February, 2017 will mark the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Emile Lacroix's "In the Footsteps of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division" March. Every year, Emile selects one of the regiments of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Abn Div and conducts a march through their actual WWII battlefield areas. Emile has selected the 508<sup>th</sup> PIR as the regiment for his 2017 march. The march will most likely take place on Saturday, February 18. Active duty soldiers come from Germany to take part in the march and a group of re-enactors participate in the march carrying WWII weapons. They set up positions in small villages along the march route which gives it an air of authenticity. Wreaths are laid at various monuments and there is a lovely banquet at the end of the march. Any veterans interested in attending and in need of an escort, please contact Ellen Peters at (214) 632-1360 or [eeptx@sbcglobal.net](mailto:eeptx@sbcglobal.net). ➔

### 1Fury Readiness

It's hard to imagine where 1-508's path to demonstrating its readiness and ability to jump, fight, and win tonight truly began. The battalion

completed a rotation at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) in October/November 2015 while attached to 1st BCT, but it never rested upon returning home. After Platoon Live Fire Exercises at Camp Lejeune in March 2016, Company Live Fire Exercises at the National Training Center in May, and a Brigade Field Training Exercise at Fort Bragg in July, 1-508 PIR found itself back at JRTC in August. It's common for many leaders in the Army to say you never really win against Geronimo, aka JRTC's "enemy" force. However, Task Force (TF) 1 Fury (comprised of the Battalion pure plus a British company of Paratroopers from the UK's 16th Air Assault Brigade and a mechanized infantry company from 2-7 Infantry), in fact, did win against Geronimo during JRTC rotation 16-09.

The exercise began with a Joint Forcible Entry onto Geronimo DZ. The Task Force quickly assembled and then initiated two simultaneous battalion attacks - one to secure the airhead line in under an hour, and the second with B/3Para and B/2-7 IN simultaneously converging on an enemy stronghold southeast of the DZ. Both attacks were a resounding success, and Geronimo was unable to affect the build-up of combat power into our area of operations.

As Geronimo regrouped for one big consolidated attack against the brigade combat team, TF 1 Fury was ready. We held our ground against dozens of armored vehicles and chemical attacks and - in an unprecedented move - the TF conducted a dismounted movement south through a swamp all night to envelop the enemy's exploitation force. In a 10-minute battle inside "enemy lines," a group of less than 50 Paratroopers led by A Co destroyed over 160 Geronimo troops as enemy armored vehicles were being hunted and destroyed by our D Co and B/2-7 IN further north.

Immediately following our defense, TF 1 Fury transitioned to a battalion-level Live Fire Exercise. The battalion performed magnificently, incorporating multiple explosive demolition breaches, an Apache air weapons team, and indirect fire as our companies maneuvered across four objectives spread over 3km - easily defeating multiple enemy strongholds and counter-attacks.

In the end, TF 1 Fury will return to Fort Bragg, NC in early September a much more lethal and cohesive team. As we continue our role within the Global Response Force, we will be much more prepared to jump, fight, and win tonight.

ALL THE WAY! FURY FROM THE SKY!

By MAJ Dru Rhodes, 1-508 PIR Operations Officer ➔

### 2Fury Training

2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment has faced a big transition these past few months as it welcomed new senior leaders, but it didn't stop

the battalion from leading the way in training exercises and completing tasks.

The paratroopers said goodbye to Lieutenant Colonel Damon K. Harris and welcomed Lieutenant Colonel James L. Browning, our newest Commander, during the change of command ceremony held on July 18. LTC Browning comes to 2FURY after serving as Deputy Executive Officer to the Commanding General at the United States Army Cyber Command in Fort Belvoir, VA.

Shortly after welcoming their new Commander, they bid farewell to CSM Donald McAlister on August 1. CSM McAlister passed on responsibility to CSM Curtis Donaldson. CSM Donaldson brings over his vast knowledge from his previous position as the Operations Sergeant Major from 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment. Rangers Lead the Way!

2-508 took responsibility as the Out-load Support Battalion (OSB) for the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team. As the OSB, 2-508 ensures that all equipment and paratroopers from the Global Response Force (GRF) are ready to deploy at a moment's notice. The GRF and OSB work hand-in-hand to achieve the All American standard of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division. As the nation's Guard of Honor.

On August 15, after being relieved of the duty of OSB, the paratroopers of 2-508 jumped into the Sicily Drop Zone on Fort Bragg and executed an airfield seizure. However, paratroopers of 2FURY didn't stop there, after the seizure of Sicily DZ every soldier grabbed their rucks and marched miles through the night back to BN HQ within the training area before calling the mission a success.

The paratroopers of 2FURY trained hard with the rest of 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team during the BDE Field Training Exercise. 2-508 executed down pilots missions, defensive operations, and patrolling, all while working with the other battalions in the Brigade. 2FURY is confident in its ability to work cohesively as a team and accomplish any mission that it is given.

As the end of 2016 draws near, 2-508 prepares for their rotation at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Polk, LA. At JRTC, 2FURY will hone its skills on planning, execution, and recovery of vast training missions and objectives.

Through training, dedication and discipline, the Paratroopers of the 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment stand ready to answer our Nation's call!

AIRBORNE! ALL THE WAY!  
FURY FROM THE SKY!

By 2LT Anthony G. Paulson, IN S5/FRL/OPSEC ➔



### New Portrait

On June 4, 2016, a portrait of Gen. James M. Gavin at La Fiere Bridge in June 1944, was unveiled at the Airborne Museum in St. Mere Elgise. The artist is James Crowley.

### Changes of Address

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