

WARREN R. WILKINS UPDATE



DEVILS



DIGEST



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www.red-devils.org

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WARREN R. WILKINS UPDATE

By Ken Hamill

Warren R. Wilkins served in C Company, 508 ARCT in 1951-52 at Fort Benning, GA. We know this is a fact, because 9 veterans of the 508 ARCT who served during the same time frame sent documents, photos and statements proving that Warren Wilkins served with them. Our March, June and September 2015 newsletters described our attempt to gain veterans benefits for Wilkins. The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) had searched for Wilkins military records without success. Various Army Agencies had looked, but could not find a trace of Wilkins. NPRC indicated that Wilkins records were most likely destroyed in the fire of 12 Jul 1973. Our last package to the NPRC included my personal letter, the two NPRC forms and all of the statements, photos and documents provided by veterans Aristeo Blanco Jr., Ben E. Branch, Bernard E. Brown, Frederick P. Gilliam, Raymond Jasinski, Eugene F. Leonard, Joseph G. Lesniak, Patrick J. McCarthy and James H. Vanderhoof. We received a NPRC denial letter dated 4 August 2015. The second paragraph states – “The information furnished on the enclosed NA Form 13075, Questionnaire about Military Service was able to locate the entrance date of January 3, 1951, but was not able to determine the discharge date, final pay grade, or the final character of service”. Apparently, the NPRC assumes the worst about people whose records can't be found. We decided that coordination in good faith with the National Personnel Records Center is hopeless. We believe that Warren Wilkins served in George Company, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment 25th Infantry Division in Korea where he was wounded. Aristeo Blanco and Mark Eckenrode have attempted to correspond with members of the 27th Infantry Regiment Association looking for news of Wilkins in Korea. Mark has searched web sites for info pertaining to...

...Wilkins in Korea. I prepared a new package to be sent to a Congress-man or woman that included all of the enclosures sent to the NPRC with the addition of one more copy of the 508 ARCT Yearbook 1951-52 and Airborne School Class 44 book dated 1 June 1951, both items sent by Bernard E. Brown, Support Co. 508 ARCT 1951-52 and Rutland, VT. Theresa Holt provided contact information for her congressman Lee Zeldin. I called the congressman's office in Patchogue, NY and spoke to a very supportive and kind secretary. I provided her with the Berkshire Nursing Home address where Warren Wilkins now lives. She determined that Wilkins resides in another congressional district and provided their telephone number and name of the probable contact person there. This wonderful lady had me feeling real good about our effort to help Wilkins. I called the other representatives office and had a completely different experience with a secretary named Patricia. She was not nice. She said that many VA nursing homes are not as good as civilian facilities. She thought I should leave well enough alone and did not respond when I mentioned Potters Grave. She said she would not honor my letter request for help and would not allow me to speak with anyone else in her office. I informed Theresa Holt of the negative response. Theresa emailed me to say that she spoke with Mr. Cleveland Johnson, the veteran's affairs officer at Congressman Zeldin's Patchogue Office and he would help us. I mailed our package to Mr. Johnson on 23 October. Theresa Holt received a call from Mr. Cleveland Johnson stating he received the packet from us and was amazed at all the information that it contained. He is going to the VA in Washington, D.C. with the information to see what can be done for Warren and for other servicemen who are in the same situation. He said he is going to contact the NPRC as well. This is the best news we have heard!!! Airborne!!! All The Way!!! Hooaaahhh!!!

508th Airborne Infantry Regiment 1951-1957 From the 508th Airborne Chapter Archives

By Mark Eckenrode

- On April 16, 1951 the 508th Airborne Infantry Regiment (AIR) was reactivated at Ft Bragg. On May 5, 1951, the 508th AIR Reactivation Day Parade was held. The airborne recruits who had just completed their basic training were assembled on the Regimental parade ground of the 504th AIR. On the reviewing stand were MG Thomas Hickey, CG of the 82nd Airborne Division, BG Roy E. Lindquist, WW II Co of the 508th PIR, 1st Sgt Leonard Funk, Jr., Medal of Honor recipient from WW II and the new Commanding Officer of the 508th AIR, Col Joseph P. Cleland.

- The airborne volunteers, who had just completed basic training, were moved to Ft Benning in three successive weeks to receive airborne training and began the task of bringing the newly reactivated Regiment up to its authorized strength at its location in the Sand Hill area of Ft Benning.

- In August 1951, the 508th Airborne Regimental Combat Team (ARCT) was formed and comprised of the following units: the 508th AIR consisting of the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Service Company, Medical Company, Support Company and three infantry battalions. Each infantry battalion consisted of a Headquarters Company, three Rifle Companies and a Heavy Weapons Company. Each battalion had their own designation, which was worn, on the left side of their highly lacquered helmet liner. The Regimental shoulder insignia was worn on the right side of the helmet liner.

- The 320th Airborne Field Artillery Battalion joined the Regiment in August 1951 to form the 508th ARCT. The 598th Airborne Engineer Company joined the ARCT in September 1951. In August 1952 the 19th Airborne Quartermaster Detachment was organized at Ft Benning as the first such unit in the Army. On September 23, 1952, the Detachment was redesignated the 519th Airborne Quartermaster Company and became a component of the 508th ARCT. The 427th Airborne Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battery was activated and joined the 508th on January 1, 1955. In Early 1955, The 508th Tank...

...Company was activated, but was then deactivated prior to the ARCT's participation in Operation Gyroscope in July 1955.

- The Regimental crest for the 508th was approved for wear by the Institute of Heraldry, US Army on September 4, 1951 and was first worn by the proud members of the 508th ARCT. LTC Clyde M Dillender, Jr., Regimental Executive Officer originated the motto "Fury From The Sky" which was incorporated into the regimental crest.

- On October 15, 1951, the 508th ARCT shoulder sleeve insignia was officially approved. This was the first shoulder insignia designated specifically for the 508th. The insignia was an adaption of that worn by the 82nd Airborne, which furnished cadre for the Regiment when it was reactivated at Ft Bragg. In lieu of the "AA" in the 82nd insignia, a blue wyvern was designated for the 508th ARCT.

- Throughout the summer and fall of 1951, ground training and airborne operations intensified as the Red Devils prepared for their next test.

- In December 1951, the 508th moved to Camp Rucker where they were the aggressor force pitted against the 47th Infantry Division (Vikings). During the exercise, the Red Devils proved their mettle against the 47th in their aggressiveness and quick movement. Aggressors usually lose these mock wars, but the 508th were so skillful at infiltration tactics and surprise raids that the Vikings were unofficially conceded to have lost the exercise.

- Operation Long Horn was the next big exercise for the 3,800 highly trained Red Devils. Pitted against the 82nd Airborne Division, the 508th were slated to conduct a massive airborne drop on April 8, 1952 despite the forecast of high winds. Right on time, the Red Devils hit the silk despite encountering 20 mile per hour winds. Col Joe F. Lawrie, CO of the 508th and BG Lacey Murrow, CO of the 18th Troop Carrier, made the decision to drop not knowing that LTG William Hoge had ordered the drop cancelled when winds exceeded 15 MPH. One trooper was killed and 221 were injured, 196 serious enough to be admitted to the hospital. Gen J. Lawton Collins, Army Chief of Staff, was visiting at Ft Hood to observe the jump. But like newsman, believed it had been called off and missed it...

...He was quoted as saying "He was satisfied with the jump. It is dangerous. That is why they get extra pay."

- Throughout its assignment at Ft Benning, the 508th continued to train as a combat team, support the Infantry School, provide cadre for the ROTC summer camp training, and provided instructors in support of the Ranger School at both northern Georgia and Florida camps. In addition, the 2nd Battalion, under the leadership of LTC Herbert V. Mansfield, pioneered the light poncho roll concept, which allowed the infantryman to move faster and eliminated the backpack entirely. The Regiment also tested airborne equipment at both Ft. Benning and special desert equipment in Yuma, AZ area.

- Late 1952 and early 1953 saw the strength of the Regiment depleted as the officers and men of the Regiment were ordered to Korea as individual replacements. Many who had volunteered to join the 187th ARCT were diverted to infantry divisions in Korea who were in need of replacements due to combat losses. The Regiment received orders to move to Ft Campbell effective February 15, 1954 with attachment to the 11th Airborne Division. On April 8, 1954 the Regimental Combat Team was reorganized at Ft Campbell as a General Reserve, Class I unit. The Regiment received additional troops and once again began intensive unit training. During this period the Regiment got its first look at the C-124 Globemaster aircraft and became one of the first units to jump from what was then the largest transport aircraft in the Air Force inventory. Little did the Red Devils realize that less than a year later they would once again become reacquainted with the Globemaster for more than a short ride and jump.

- After 17 months at Ft Campbell, the Regiment was once again ordered to affect a permanent change of station. This time the Red Devils took part in Operation Gyroscope – an exchange with the 187th ARCT stationed in Camp Chickamauga at Beppu and Camp Wood at Kumamoto, Japan. The 187th was to return to Ft Bragg. Once again, the Red Devils met up with the C-124 Globemaster. At that time, this was the largest air movement of troops ever undertaken by the Army and Air Force...

- The objective of Operation Gyroscope was to airlift 3,800 Red Devils to Japan and to ferry to Ft Bragg 3,200 men of the 187th ARCT. A steady stream of C-124's each carrying approximately 90 troopers and seven tons of equipment, leapfrogging across the Pacific both ways to complete the transfer in 10 days. The operation started at the airfield at Ft Campbell. From then on a plane took off every two hours and landed in Japan approximately 50 hours later. Stops were made in California, Hawaii and Wake Island for refueling, food and crew rotation. The actual flying time from Ft Campbell to Japan was 43 hours.

- July 8th saw another unique side to Operation Gyroscope. This was the movement of dependents via sea transport. Two ships, the USS General A. E. Anderson and the USS J. C. Breckenridge, carried 704 Red Devil dependents to Japan. After a 10-day voyage to Moji, Japan, the Red Devil dependents were met at the port by their husbands who had accompanied their family to California and then boarded aircraft at their stop in Travis AFB for the rest of their journey to Japan.

- After their arrival at their respective stations the 508th began to unpack, check all equipment left by the 187th and prepare to commence training at various training areas. The 1st Battalion moved by vehicle to their major training area in early August and celebrated their arrival in Japan by making a 25-mile hike with full field equipment back to Camp Wood after several weeks of intensive training.

- Deployment to Japan saw the Red Devils faced with many situations not normally encountered by a regimental combat team. While both Camps Chickamauga and Wood had a small support complement, the Regiment had to appoint many troops to assume additional duties such as finance, Post Exchange, clubs, postal and other "housekeeping" activities. For example, the Military Police Detachment at Camp Wood was comprised of troopers from the 1st Battalion and the 320th Abn FA Bn. In addition, medical, service and engineering troops were split between the two camps.

- August 1955 through June 1956 saw the Red Devils busy with intensified training at the various training locations on the island of Kyushu...

508th ARCT Continued from Page 3:

...They walked, rode, entrained and jumped into training areas regardless of the weather.

- Perhaps the most significant exercise undertaken by the Red Devils in 1956 was their participation in Operation Firm Link, and a joint SEATO exercise conducted near Bangkok, Thailand. Representatives of all SEATO members were involved. Troops of the 2nd Battalion and Battery B, 320th Abn FA Bn formed a Battalion Combat Team commanded by LTC Edwin H. Patterson. Stops were made at Okinawa and Clark AFB, PI. on the way to Bangkok.
- Operation Gyroscope was supposed to be a stabilized three year tour, however, that was not to be. The ARCT was ordered back to Ft Campbell and all elements returned in July 1956, almost a year to the date of their departure from the same station. The 508th ARCT, along with the 187th ARCT, which was also ordered to Ft Campbell from Ft Bragg. The mission of the two proud Airborne Regimental Combat Teams was to cadre the formation of the 101st Airborne Division, which was reactivated at Ft Campbell in late July 1956.
- A much-reduced 508th became a part of the 101st Airborne Division and was designated "The Schools Command" for the Division. Its mission was to provide Infantry Advanced Individual Training (AIT) for those recruits who had volunteered for the 101st after they had completed their basic training. The recruits were assigned to various units of the Division and sent to Division Jump School. Upon satisfactory completion of Jump School, the new troopers received their AIT conducted by the training cadre of the 508th AIR.
- In March 1957, the mission of the 508th AIR was completed. The 508th AIR was deactivated on March 27, 1957 at Ft Campbell after a period of almost six years of outstanding active service. The remaining personnel of the 508th were reassigned to various units of the 101st Airborne Division.

508 Chapter members who served in the 508th at any time are invited to submit their interesting or humorous experiences while in that unit.

Bad News, **Mark Eckenrode**, our very capable Chapter Historian called about 3 months ago and informed me that he will soon resign from the Historian job. Mark said he may be able to contribute stories to our March and June Devils Digest. He has contributed great stories to our newsletter for the past couple of years. I will miss reading Mark's articles and will miss his support and friendship. Mark has enormous knowledge and has been very willing to share his expertise. I believe Mark will be moving to Thailand where he has a second home, friends and family. Mark is very involved with the OV-1 Mohawk Association. Mark is a life member of the 1st Cavalry Division Association, life member of the OV-1 Mohawk Association, life member of the 82nd Airborne Division Association, life member of the Special Forces Association and life member of the Disabled American Veterans. Mark sent a very nice message as follows: "I enjoyed my tenure as Chapter Historian with the 508th Airborne Chapter and hope to contribute additional articles to the Devils Digest in the future. I also added the names and personal data of several hundred veterans who served in our Regiment in the past and present to bolster the original database assembled by Jack Damron and Rodger Jacobson. I call this database of over 4350 veterans of our Regiment the 508th Legion of Honor. I am very proud that my time and effort in researching various archive sources has led to the current 508th Database Legion Of Honor. Our 508th Database Legion Of Honor will never be finished; it remains a work in progress. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to serve!!!" Mark is an American Patriot and we wish him only the best. We hope that Mark provides us some stories about the OV-1 Mohawk aircraft and some of his experiences while flying in the OV-1 right seat. We salute you Mark Eckenrode and thank you for your many contributions to our Chapter.

508 Chapter Members needed to volunteer for Chapter jobs: Devils Digest Editor, Historian, Secretary, Treasurer, Website Designer, Website Administrator, Website Monitor, Chapter Vice Chairman and Chapter Chairman in the near future. Please see 508 Chapter Problems on Page 8 of this Digest.

A PARATROOPERS MEMORIES #10

By Ed Slocum of HQ3-508 ARCT 1955-56

All American member Edward A. Slocum of Headquarters Company, 3-508 ARCT 1955-56 and Sumter, SC has written his life story. The book is titled – Searching for the Yellow Brook Road. Ed would like feedback from us. If you spot an error, pass it on back, so Ed can fix it. Article #10 starts now. He said, congratulations, you are about to become members of the American Legion. I need six dollars in dues from each of you. As a Legion member, you can drink beer at the club. Of course all of this is highly irregular and totally illegal. During the next six months I began to venture off post and see the sights. Several of the soldiers assigned to my platoon drove about 50 miles south to a wild little town called McColl, SC. They asked me to go with them and I was about to get a real education. I thought I grew up in poverty however I had never seen real poverty until visiting McColl, South Carolina and the South Carolina State line area. One of my buddies had a date with a local girl. I went with him to her home. We drove up to a shack that could have been used to make the TV show, the Beverly Hillbillies. The house was unpainted wood siding with a front porch built several steps above the ground. The house was set on brick pillars about 3 feet high. The house was small. Inside the house, the walls and flooring were also made of unpainted, unfinished pine. During the 50 years or so that the house had been standing, all of life's wear and tear were spilled on the floor and the walls. There was no separation between the country kitchen area and what would've passed for a sitting room. The residents looked beat down by life. It was like the economic depression of the 1930s had never ended. I later learned they were Indian mixed blood who was darker in complexion than the local white natives of Marlboro County, South Carolina. I didn't know it at the time, but I was looking at what was a poor black sharecropper's house in the 1950s. It was absolutely pitiful. My buddy picked up his girlfriend and we then traveled to another part of McColl, South Carolina to a full-blown honky-tonk. Again it was unpainted both inside and out. They had a wood-burning space heater in one corner of the building,...

...a bar where. they sold beer and illegal whiskey and a juke box bellowing out rock and roll. I think that may have been the first time I actually saw white lightning. Of course they persuaded me to have a sip and it almost took my breath away. I could not understand why anyone would drink such stuff. Sometime during the course of the evening a fight had broken out between two of the young local women. One of the women pulled out a switchblade knife and intended to cut the other woman's throat. The bartender jumped over the bar with an oak Billy-club. That was when I really became aware of what was going on, as the woman with the knife turned her attention to the bartender and took a swipe at him with a knife. The bartender retaliated by hitting her on the head. The Billy-club made a ringing bong sound. Eventually the woman was subdued, disarmed and thrown out of the club. The police were not called and my buddy said it was just a typical Saturday night. I knew that this sort of thing was not for me. On September 11, 1954 I had traveled to Charlotte, North Carolina. It was my intention to spend the weekend and see the sights of the city. I had ridden to Charlotte with some other Fort Bragg soldiers and they dropped me off downtown. I looked around at the buildings and the big city. I was 18 years old and did not know what else to do, so late that afternoon I decided to cut my visit to Charlotte short and return to Fort Bragg. On the bus trip back, I was to meet my future wife; Emily Ann Scott of Lake View, South Carolina which is 70 miles from Fort Bragg. Emily was returning home for the weekend from her job in Charlotte. This chance meeting was the single most important event of my life. I could not guess that I would be walking into walls thinking about her very soon. I will write about young love in the chapter entitled: My Family. The fall season passed quickly, Christmas was over and in January 1955, the Platoon SGT posted a duty roster that placed me on special duty for six months. I ask what this was about and was informed that he was doing me a favor. For six months I was being given a great opportunity to work in the billeting department of the 82nd Airborne Division.

TO BE CONTINUED

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

By Ken Hamill

The Colonel Rueben H. Tucker Chapter of Washington, D.C. planned, manned and conducted the ceremonies this year without help from other chapters or our National Office. I arrived at our hotel on 8 November when most of us met in the hospitality room where snacks, wine, beer and soft drinks were provided. Some of us ordered food to be delivered and some of us ate dinner in Old Town. Allen Schoppe, Joe Steen and me rode the hotel shuttle van to and from an Irish Pub. The Hampton Inn & Suites, Old Town Area South, Alexandria, VA was the excellent host hotel. A nice breakfast was provided for all Hampton guests every morning. Our small convoy of civilian vehicles was escorted by the Police most of the way to Arlington National Cemetery on the mornings of 9 & 10 November. Some of us wore the association uniform – Blazer, 82 tie, and grey trousers on each of the days when wreaths were presented. The first presentation would take place at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers. I got permission from the duty guard located under the Tomb building, to use the photo area on the right side of the Tomb. Nothing interferes with the photographer's line of sight from this area. We watched a wreath presentation that preceded us. We then took photos of the very formal changing of the guard and our presentation. The four person group that presented our 82 Airborne Division Association wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers was Doug Dillard, Frank Fisanich, Diana Tubbs and Eddy Lamberty, The first three are outstanding Americans. Eddy Lamberty is a Belgian National who takes care of gravesites of American World War II KIA's in his homeland. As always, the tomb guards were impeccable as they guided our 82 representatives while conducting the ceremony. The U.S. Army Band Bugler was also perfect as he played Taps. When the Tomb ceremony finished, I moved quickly to our 508 P.I.R. memorial site located about 50 yards down the sidewalk. I gave a 5 minute talk about the 508 P.I.R. then gave a signal to the Color Guard NCOIC. The color guard presented arms and the Bugler gave a...

...excellent rendition of Taps. The 5 members of the color guard were assigned to the Old Guard, the 3rd Infantry Regiment of the Army posted at Fort Myer, right next to Arlington. Their NCOIC was a Buck Sergeant who carried the U.S. colors. The bugler, a Sergeant First Class, was assigned to the U. S. Army Band. The color bearers and bugler stayed with us for 3 days. They were extremely sharp and performed as good as it gets. We presented 10 – 12 wreaths on the 9th and the 10th including the 1SG Funk, General Robinson, General Ridgway and Major Queen's gravesites plus memorial sites for the 82nd, 11th, 13th and 17th Airborne Divisions, 173d Airborne Brigade, 187 A.R.C.T., 325 G.I.R., 504 P.I.R., 505 R.C.T., 551 P.I.B., 555 P.I.B., the Golden Brigade, and Team 162. The second day was rainy, so the first ceremony of the day was held in the auditorium of the Women in the Military Service Memorial Building, a beautiful place. The most impressive ceremony finished the day off. Team 162, Red Hat Advisors to the Vietnamese Airborne included two color guards, our U.S. and a Vietnamese color guard. There were about 4 dozen Vietnamese immigrants present, Vietnamese Paratroopers and some family members. Our lunch on 9 and 10 November was provided by Walter Rauscher who operates Ark Restaurants from his Fifth Avenue Office in Manhattan. Walter Rauscher had served with the 505 in combat at Dom Rep. We gathered at the fancy Sequoia Restaurant with a great view of the Potomac River in Washington, D.C. Everyone remotely connected to the Arlington Ceremonies was invited. Our color guards, some medics from Walter Reed, a Polish Colonel from their State Department, our group of veterans and several Vietnamese Paratroopers, some with family members, around 50 ate and drank free of charge. Their help was so nice that \$10 was the average tip, \$80 bucks a table, not bad. Walter Rauscher had a great time & we had a great time. We all left comfortable and full. On 11 November we presented wreaths at the World War II, World War I, Korean War and Vietnam Wall Memorials. Once again, great events had ended, but strong memories remained. Call me to perform the 508 PIR honors in 2016 Hoooaah!!!



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**TAPS - 508th PARATROOPERS
RECENTLY DECEASED**

- Ernesto Alvarado Benavidez-Patterson Chap
B Co. 1-508, 82 Abn Div 1980-84 2 Jun 2013
- Harry E. Collins Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan
Svc Co, 508 ARCT 1955-56 24 May 2015
- Fred L. Delaney Helena, Montana
Love Co, 508 ARCT 1951-53 13 Jan 2013
- Richard R. Dudley Sr. Vulcan Chapter
H Co. 508 PIR 1945-46 7 Aug 2015
- Evan F. Riley Tampa Bay Chapter
H&H Co, 508 ARCT 1951-53 20 Jul 2015
- Jack W. Schlegel Walter Hughes Chapter
Hq Co, 3-508 PIR 1942-45-56 11 Jun 2014

Statistics

Annual Members.....22
Affiliate Members.....14
All Americans.....298
Total Members.....334

December 2015 Treasurers Report

Printing expense Sep 2015:	\$143.01
Newsletter Envelopes Dec 2015:	\$30.87
Chapter Account 30 Nov 2015:	\$1799.43
Annual Memberships to date 17 =	\$136.00



Thank you **Huey P. Taylor** of Headquarters & Headquarter Company, 508 Airborne Regimental Combat Team 1951-53 and Baton Rouge, Louisiana for your generous donation to our Chapter Treasury.

Alfred "Ted" Cobb, Jr. of Headquarters Company, 2-508 ARCT 1954-56 and Lehigh Acres, Florida elected save our chapter the cost of mailing by reading our Devils Digest on line at www.red-devils.org. Ted and his wife visited Nashville and Fort Campbell. He said the Grand Ole Opry and the General Jackson Riverboat cruise were great, but found so many changes at Fort Campbell that he did not have a clue where to go and wished there was a tour but they don't offer one. Thank you Ted.

Richard L. George of H&H Co, 508 ARCT 1954-55 and Birmingham, AL called me and mailed me information about a Mr. Ronald B. Miller II of Huntsville, AL who assists veterans with VA disability issues. Mr. Miller googled Warren Wilkins as I spoke to him on the phone. Thank you Richard George. I was impressed by Mr. Miller. He told me about the VA website www.ebenefits I googled Warren Wilkins US Army 1951-52 and it took me to the 27th Infantry Regiment. The fifth entry was sent by Warren R. Wilkins of West Islip, NY on 16 May 2001. He was looking for his personal records and identified the Wolfhounds as his outfit in Korea. He did provide his serial number, but his jumbled comments indicate he had memory problems then.

I heard from **Augie Fernandes** of Love Company, 508 ARCT 1951-54 and Leesburg, Florida. Augie was diagnosed to have leukemia and started an oral chemo program. He was given four to six weeks to live in January 2015. He decided to stop the chemo and enjoy life. His lab numbers were so high that he should not survive. Augie, now 85, sounded strong and enjoyed telling some of his experiences while sharing a laugh or two. Hang in there Augie!



Most things that you need to know about the 82nd Airborne Division Assn can be found at: www.82ndairborneassociation.org/

Ben Vandervoort Chapter Mid Winter Weekend
Getaway, 25-28 February 2016
Hilton Head Island, South Carolina
Marriott Resort Reservations: 888.511.5086
Bill Eberle Airport Transportation 843.682.4171
Registration form page 44 of current Paraglide

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 508 CHAPTER, 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION ASSOCIATION, INC.

FORMAL NAME (No Nicknames) _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____

STREET _____ CITY _____ STATE _____

9-DIGIT Zip _____ ASN _____ (or) SSAN (Last 4) _____

MARITAL STATUS _____ SPOUSE'S NAME _____ NUMBER OF CHILDREN _____

OCCUPATION _____ HOME #: (_____) _____ CELL #: (_____) _____

EMAIL _____ SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

____ ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FOR YEAR 2016 \$25.00 + Wounded Warrior _____ Ed Fund _____ Total Sent _____

____ LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP (\$250.00 FOR 49 YEARS AND UNDER OR \$175.00 FOR 50 YEARS +) \$ _____

____ ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY, RESERVE, NAT. GD – Current Rank and Date of Rank: _____

____ RETIRED MILITARY – Retired Rank and Date Departed Active Military Service _____

____ MILITARY VETERAN – Rank and Date Departed Military Service _____

508 UNIT: Co _____: Bn _____: Location _____ FROM MO/YR _____ TO MO/YR _____

Combat Tour Location: _____ FROM MO/YR _____ TO MO/YR _____

NEW MEMBERS MUST INCLUDE PROOF OF AIRBORNE QUALIFICATION

MAIL TO: KEN HAMILL; 2207 Coventry Drive; Columbus, GA 31904-5034

508 CHAPTER PROBLEMS

By Ken Hamill

My ability to accomplish work requirements for the Chapter has been severely reduced by physical problems. Macular Degeneration has ruined my vision and will get worse with time I'm told. My memory is not reliable and my hand tremor adds up to any kind of work is a real challenge. So, my problem becomes a chapter problem and is therefore our problem.

We need some younger, more dynamic veterans to volunteer for some of the chapter staff jobs, so chapter work can be accomplished by several men. If volunteers do not appear, our chapter is as good as gone.

Our chapter was financed for the most part by the annual rebates paid by National for each life member. 300 All American members at \$4.50 each gave our Chapter \$1350.00. The financial crisis brought havoc to our 82 Abn Div Assn Treasury. Our 82 Association leaders voted to stop rebate payments. Most of us thought the loss of rebates were a temporary action...

...It looks like our association will not restart the rebates program in my lifetime. We now rely on approximately two dozen annual members at \$8 per membership and your generous donations to pay chapter expenses. We will have to cut back on mailing the Devils Digest to our members. One mailing, costs approximately \$280.00 for the printing, forever stamps and envelopes. If possible, we should continue to buy a wreath at \$125 for the 508 PIR Memorial Site at Arlington National Cemetery. If possible, we should also pay the \$82 Registration fee for our Annual Convention Delegate.

If our Chapter fails, the Family and Friends of the 508 PIR Association may be the way for us to continue to support our active paratroopers of the 508 PIR, 82 Abn Div. I will join the Family and Friends of the 508 PIR Association. I will keep our Chapter solvent as long as I can. I will keep \$1000 in our bank account, so our checking account will not be charged. I will send items of historical value to The Military History Institute at Carlisle, PA or to the Family and Friends of the 508 PIR Association.