

# DIABLO



Voice Of The Family And Friends Of The 508<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment Association- February 2009 - Vol. 4, Nr. 1

## Friends and Family Hooks Static Line to 82<sup>nd</sup> Reunion

*Association to Gather With All Americans in El Paso, Texas*



### From The Jumpmaster

By Dick O'Donnell

The Friends and Family of 508<sup>th</sup> will be lashing on with the 82nd Airborne Division Association for 2009, hosted by the Benevidez-Patterson "All Airborne" Chapter, John Ceballos is Chairman. This holds promise of a wonderful experience for everyone. Below is the schedule thus far.

#### SUN CITY "ALL AIRBORNE" FIESTA V SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

(TENTATIVE)

##### THURSDAY - 2 JULY

8 am - 4 pm - Registration  
8 am - 10 am - Hospitality Room, (Coffee & Pastries)  
10 am - 6 pm - Tours on Request \*  
12 Noon - Midnight - Hospitality Room, Beverages & Snacks  
6 - 7:30 pm - Mariachi Performance

##### FRIDAY - 3 JULY

8 am - 4 pm - Registration  
8 am - 10 am - Hospitality Room, (Coffee & Pastries)  
8 am - 12 Noon - Ladies Social \*\*  
8 am - 12 Noon - Organizational Meetings  
1:30 - 3 pm - Welcoming Luncheon  
4 pm - 6 pm - Historic Mission Tour OR  
Tours on Request  
7 pm - Midnight - Tequila Social & DISCO Dance

##### SATURDAY - 4 JULY

8 am - 4 pm - Registration  
8 am - 10 am - Hospitality Room, (Coffee & Pastries)  
10 am - 12 Noon - 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parades - East & West sides of El Paso  
12 Noon - Midnight - Hospitality Room, (Beverages & Snacks)  
2 - 3:30 Mariachis & Ballet Folklorico  
6 pm - Assemble for "VIVA El Paso" Performance

##### SUNDAY - 5 JULY

8 am - 10 am - Hospitality Room,

(Coffee & Pastries)

8 am - 12 Noon - Transportation Provided for Religious Services

OR

Tours on Request

1 pm - 3 pm - Organizational Meetings  
3:30 - 5 pm - Native American Dancers & Ceremony (Circle Dance & Blessing)  
6 pm - 7 pm - Cash Bar  
7 pm - 1 am - Airborne Dinner/Dance

##### MONDAY - 6 JULY

9 am - 10:30 am - Memorial Ceremony (F & F, 508<sup>th</sup>) & Farewell Breakfast  
11 am - Menudo & Airborne Social at the Roy P. Benavidez-Robert Patterson "All Airborne" Chapter

\* TOURS ON REQUEST - Includes, but not limited to:

Shopping at Fort Bliss PX or Area Shopping Malls, El Paso Saddleblanket, Zicali Imports, Boot Factories, Mt. Franklin Aerial Tramway, Sunland Park Casino & Racetrack, El Paso Museum of Art, El Paso Science Museum & War Eagles Museum, etc.

\*\* LADIES SOCIAL - Includes, but not limited to:

Senior Aerobics, Massage Parlor, Hairstylists, Beauty Secrets, Cosmetics and Fashion Show

\*\*\* Hospitality Room will remain open at all times EXCEPT during regularly scheduled events!

See everyone there! Dick



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### From The Stick Pusher

By Leland Burns - editor

*The fantastic work of Dick O'Donnell with the 508<sup>th</sup> PIR web site gets chosen for a pilot program.*

#### 508TH RESEARCH SELECTED AS A NATIONAL GUINEA PIG

The National Archives has agreed to provide us with 17 months of daily 508<sup>th</sup> WW-II records. The regiment was selected for a pilot program that may be enjoyed by other researchers in the future but is currently the only organization to participate in the new program.

The daily records detail unit movements, names of men transferred into and out of the regiment, dates and names of personnel wounded or killed and many other items crucial to documenting our regiment in 1944 and 1945.

Duplication and digitization of the records will cost nearly \$1,300 to complete.

Seizing the unique opportunity, our 508<sup>th</sup> webmaster Dick O'Donnell quickly agreed to participate and sent a personal check to cover the expense.

It is hoped, however, that members of the association will help to defray the expense. I'm sending Dick \$50 and we need 25 more family/friends to step up. Checks can be made payable to Richard O'Donnell and sent to him at 760 Conestee Drive, West Melbourne, FL, 32904.

Trust me here. Sending the money is the easy part. Dick has and is taking on a lot of work to get this highly desirous information to the public. We should all be proud of what is found on the association web pages.

Thank you Dick!

Leland



## MAIL BOX

Hello folks. Just a signals check to see if we can do more to spread the word about our planned 508 trip to Normandy, Holland, and Belgium. I assume that we will cover the planned trip in the next 508 column of the Static Line. We, of course, are just coming out of the Christmas Holidays and with the economy as such I am sure many who wish to go must take a hard look at their finances.

We just need to do a signals check to insure we have done all we can to reach the maximum number of folks. I have included the 505, and 507 in sending out the information as OB Hill always had folks who fought in other airborne units in the 508 trip he conducted for so many wonderful years. I am sure the column in the Static Line will help a lot if we can get the word out ASAP. We are now less than five (5) months away from what we call in the airborne of my era "Wheels UP!!!!".

I do know that Skip McGrath, Jan Silver, Ellen Peters, and of course myself will be in Normandy next June regardless. Any suggestions or comments that anyone can share will of course be welcomed. It would be great to see this happen if possible.

Gene Garren

*The following is a note from a web based photo album of John Ceballos, web address follows. ed.*

World War II Veterans, Family & Friends of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment recently celebrated their 66th Anniversary in Fayetteville and Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

It was a privilege and absolute HONOR to have been witness to this historic venue and I would like to thank all the Veterans, Family & Friends of the 508th P.I.R. for their gracious welcome and hospitality. A special note of gratitude goes out to COL. Drinkwine, CSM Flowers, CSM Puckett and all of the other officers and enlisted men and women of the modern day, active duty 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment for their professional and dedicated effort in supporting this historic anniversary event.

Many Thanks and ... AIRBORNE - All The Way!

*No Sky Too High... No Blast Too Fast  
You Call... We Fall!*

*Eighty Deuce On The Loose!*

John Ceballos, M.S. Chairman.  
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Hello Red Devils,

Following is the Jump Schedule for the 2009 NORMANDY JUMPS by the Liberty Jump Team:

JUNE 4 - 11HOO ANGOVILLE AU  
PLAIN DZ 'D'

JUNE 5 - 22H30 LIESVILLE SUR DOUVE  
(NIGHT JUMP)

JUNE 7- 12H30 LA FIERE (preceding the  
Military jump)

We hope our 508<sup>th</sup> friends traveling to Normandy will be able to come support our team jumps from a C-47 transport.

Best wishes!

Jil Launay

Liberty Public Relations



## In The News

**508<sup>th</sup> Veteran Zane Schlemmer** received a commendation award during a Veterans Day ceremony at the Hawaii State Veteran's Cemetery with the following write up:

### **HSVC Volunteer D. Zane Schlemmer**

D. Zane Schlemmer served in World War II as a paratrooper in the U.S. Army and participated in the Normandy Invasion and subsequent actions through the liberation march across Europe. Since 2002, he has volunteered his skills to the Veteran's Administration, Financial Resources Management Services at Tripler Army Medical Center, providing valuable technical support in the auditing, records research, reconciliation and data verification tasks of this office. He was recently

recognized for over 2500 hours of volunteer work service and is a finalist for the 2008 Governor's Volunteer of the Year Award. In August of 2008, Zane moved his volunteer work to the Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery, in the Administration office, averaging approximately 15 hours per week. His many contributions to the Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery, Veterans Administration and the community are truly appreciated and it is an honor to have him.



## Final Jumps

### **Hamblin**

Friends, it is with great sadness that I inform you that my father, Col. Paul W. Hamblin, will not make tomorrow's formation. At 3:30 PM E.T. January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009 he joined his fellow band of brothers who are in God's army. He was surrounded by his wife, son and daughter-in-law. Like old soldiers do, he just faded a way.

Service was held at H.M. Patterson & Son Funeral Home in Atlanta, GA. Final burial site is Arlington National Cemetery.

Paul W. Hamblin II, Son

Sylvia Hamblin ph# 1-770-451-5015

### **Howell**

Dear Family and Friends, I would like but am saddened to report the death of Charles Howell – Company C of the 508<sup>th</sup> on December 9, 2008. He lived in Lansing, NY. Charlie made the jumps on D-Day and Nijmegen and fought in the battle of the bulge. Three times he was wounded in these major campaigns. My wife Bette and I had a double marriage with Charlie and his Helen on April 25, 1943 in York, South Carolina. Helen preceded Charlie in death passing away after 45 years of marriage. Bette and I continue and have now been married for 65 years.

Bob Nobles

C Company 508 PIR

1942-1945

### **Steinheimer**

Just thought I'd drop a note for all the 508ers, to let everyone know that my dad, David Steinheimer, passed away on September 6, 2008.

He died in his sleep, and was in the Cal Turner facility in Scottsville, Ky, for rehab, after falling off of his porch in August. He *Loved* the 508th, and all the people associated with it, and as his extended family, I know he will be missed.

Sincerely,  
Babs Adam

PFC Steinheimer was in H Company, ed.

#### Watson

In trying to track down the people whose Diablo's were returned, I spoke to Joseph Watson's wife and she informed me that he passed away May 23<sup>rd</sup> of this year. He was 85 and had been living at the Bill Nichols Nursing Facility for Veterans in Alexandria, VA for the last two years. Joseph served with E Company.

Ellen Peters



### Searching For ...

*For our readers without email - any news you may have for the Searchers can be sent to the Diablo Editor if the address is not given or known. Ed*

Brian Siddall, a researcher and friend of the 508th, is hoping to locate any 508th men who were involved in a specific action on June 6, 1944. Before dawn on D-Day, a group of twelve 508th men were under the command of an Engineer Officer after becoming separated from Shields Warren's group. They were captured after a firefight that night and involved in a strafing the next afternoon.

Siddall has been searching for any of the men involved in this action in order to verify some unique details to the story.

If these details match up to any of your experiences in Normandy or if you've heard any accounts about an Engineer Officer commanding 508th men please contact either Brian Siddall at 607-275-8080

#### Bolin, Raymond H.

Dear Editor,

I am seeking assistance to locate someone in the 508th, Co. E who might remember Raymond H. Bolin. A Tennessean, Raymond was killed at Normandy, June 7, 1944. Raymond's next of kin was notified shortly after the event that he was missing, and it was several months before the family knew for sure that

he was dead. Family traditions refer to him as being killed by friendly fire, although I have nothing to substantiate that. He left a young wife who was a member of the WACS. I am awaiting whatever information I can obtain from his military records.

Also, can you tell me when and where the next 508th reunion is scheduled?

Raymond is a first cousin to my father and grew up in a state orphanage about 200 miles away. Thus, while the family may know of him, no one remembers him. Raymond left the orphanage and joined the Navy in 1937 when he was about 17. An idealistic young man, he turned against killing and deserted his ship. Eight months later, he wrote a heartrending letter about his reasoning in deserting and then the next day turned himself into a Naval Recruiting Station.

Also, I have never seen a photograph of Raymond and would love to locate one, if possible. The family had nothing. Records indicate that his mother was placed in a mental institution and that his stated father was not his father at all. Such a sad, sad story, one that I would love to tell as soon as my research is complete.

Thank you for any assistance you can provide.

Cherel Henderson



### Special Report

#### 28th Annual "In the Footsteps of the 82nd March"

Emile Lacroix's 28th annual "In the Footsteps of the 82nd" march was a huge success with nearly 1,000 people attending. Emile is an amazing man and the 82nd Airborne is truly blessed to have a man such as he preserving its memory.

I flew over to Belgium with 80th Abn, AA veteran, Ray Fary. Ray had me enthralled with story after story during the flight. He brought along all kinds of document copies and photos which really enhanced the stories.

The day after we arrived we went to Trois Ponts to lay wreaths on the 80th AA and 505th Monuments there. Ray and I laid the 505th wreath together and Ray laid the 80th AA wreath. As we laid the wreath on the 505th monument, I couldn't help but think of my dear friend, Bob Murphy who passed away last fall. The wreaths were absolutely gorgeous and

a gift from Frits Janssen's Dutch association. It really touched my heart to see this fine Dutch association provide the wreaths to be laid on monuments in Belgium.

The march was on Saturday, February 14. There was a large group of re-enactors from the U.K. and those guys were really funny. They seemed to be having the time of their lives. As they headed out for the march, their leader had them marching in formation. I think their ages ranged from 14 to 40! One guy was carrying a 30 cal. machine gun on his shoulder. There were also several American soldiers stationed in Germany who attended the march.



*Emile Lacroix and Ray Fary in Trois Ponts*

The march began at the "Castle" where General Gavin had his CP. The Belgian Minister of Defense sent a wreath to be laid at the plaque there. Ray, Anne Marie Lemort, and a Belgian major laid the wreath. Tommy McArdle said a few words explaining the situation at the time and Emile spoke to the French marchers. A wreath was also laid at an 80th AA monument in Bra.

After the march, we attended a lovely memorial service for Bob Murphy at the local church. During the service there was slide show of war time photos of various troopers. I was surprised at the number of photos I recognized including the 508th's Francis Lamoureux's Pathfinder photo.

There was a banquet after the march. It was a lot of fun. LTC. Maria Eoff got some of the troopers up on the stage with her to sing the All American Soldier song. Everyone in the hall joined in. At the end of the song someone yelled "AIRBORNE" and the rest of the hall shouted "ALL THE WAY". It was a lot of fun and a very late night.

During the trip I had the opportunity to visit many Battle of the Bulge sites including the Malmedy Memorial, St. Vith, Elsenborn Ridge and many others.

We ended our trip by visiting the Waterloo battlefield where I stood on the exact sites where both Napoleon and Wellington watched the battle unfold. It was very interesting.

Ellen Peters



## Get Well

### Smith, James W.

While in the hospital in December for a ruptured spleen Jim lost his wife Dot on or about 12/12/2008. He was unable to leave the hospital for her funeral. He was home for about two months but has since moved to Tennessee and is living with his son. But when he spoke to Kenneth Rock Merritt in mid February he said, "Tell all my 508<sup>th</sup> buddies that I'll be back!" We have no address or phone number to share at this time. Please keep Jim in your prayers.

## Last Call For Normandy

### Normandy Tour Set for 2009

The 508th Friends and Family bus tour of the Normandy battle-grounds and 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary activities of D-Day still has openings.

Please contact Eddie Polk at [eddie0337@aol.com](mailto:eddie0337@aol.com) or 800-556-1460 (Toll Free) to get updated details from him on the trip.



### The Diablo

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