

# DIABLO



The Link for All Veterans, Spouses, Family And Friends Of The 508<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment Association- November 2009 - Vol. 4, Nr. 3

## “Operation Christmas” a HUGE Success!

*Every 2/508 Trooper Receives Present From Santa*

### The Prez Sez

By Troy Palmer



You will remember the Airborne Demonstration Team. They made a parachute jump for our 2007 reunion in Birmingham, AL. The first man out the door that day was parachutist Jason Wolcott, the great nephew of Jack F. Wolcott. Jack, a member of F Company was killed in Market Garden.

Working with Dick O'Donnell, Jason is taking a lead role in organizing another 508th Family and Friends reunion for October 21-24, 2010 in Oklahoma City, OK.

Seeing that the Airborne Demonstration Team is in Fredrick, OK it wouldn't be out of the question to expect a field trip to the Airborne Command where ADT maintains two WWII vintage hangers and two C-47's, plus a Beechcraft C-45. The travel time between OKC and Frederick is about the same as from Atlanta to Fort Benning, a trip taken annually during Airborne Awards week.

The hangers, originally built to house bombers, are a step into yesteryear. Other outbuilding acquired and maintained by the ADT include barracks and mess hall facilities which are in constant use to house and feed team members during weekend training sessions and jump school attendees.

Oklahoma City is an exciting and vibrant location for this reunion and offers a wide variety of things to do and places to go. A number of activities are being planned in and around the city so you will not want to miss this reunion.

Keep your eyes out for future Diablo issues for further details. It will a grand time.

Troy



### OPERATION CHRISTMAS

OPERATION CHRISTMAS was launched when the Family And Friends of The 508th PIR Association (F&F) learned that the Family Readiness Groups (FRG's) wanted to ensure that a Christmas gift was sent to every Paratrooper in 2-508 PIR.

The call went out to F&F members and their generosity resulted in a total of \$6400 being collected which was distributed amongst all the Company FRG's.

We are proud to say that every soldier of 2-508th PIR will be receiving a package! Our thanks go out to everyone involved!



**“BIG” check of \$5350 represented total monies collected to date by early November in Fayetteville ceremony. Nearly \$1000 arrived later.**

### SANTA'S SLEIGH ARRIVES

LTC FRANK JENIO recently wrote: “I wanted to ... put out to F&F of the 508th and everyone else that it looks like the first shipment of gifts from OPERATION CHRISTMAS came in the other day. We've got some pictures of them and they are posted on our Battalion Facebook page below:”

<http://www.facebook.com/#/pages/2-508-PIR/121978657838>

“I would encourage all F&F and anyone else who loves the 508th to become fans on the site - we post pics and videos and updates on there regularly so it's a great way to keep updated on how 2Fury is doing. Thanks again - LTC FRANK JENIO, CDR, TF 2-508 PIR”.



#### Diablo Editor

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### FROM THE FIELD

CSM BERT PUCKETT wrote, “I can't say how humbled I am at the support the Family and Friends of The 508th have provided. It truly is another indication of the Regiment acting as a family ... and you have, as usual, gone 100% and then some.

I want to update you all on the progress of 2-508's latest deployment to Afghanistan. Most of the Battalion has arrived in Kandahar airfield and are now pushing out to their respective Forward Operating Bases (FOB's). The troopers are doing well over all and are attacking the mission with the aggressiveness that has always been the hallmark of 82nd Airborne Paratroopers.

The BN will be initially spread over an area the width of half of North Carolina. LTC Jenio and I will be on the road a lot to check in on our troopers and insure that they are well taken care of. Our mission of Advise and Assist is a fairly recent concept in this war and the 508th is the first BDE in the Army to be tasked to do it. So once again we are making

history in the finest traditions of the 82nd ABN Division.

The boss and I have logged about 3500 miles checking on them, but the boys have really taking the fight to the enemy. Every Platoon has been in a fight now and the boss and I are hammering out CIB's as fast as we can. We also have a few Valor awards up for consideration as well. Needless to say I am extremely proud of them.

Your support is, as always, invaluable to the success of our mission. Without it our troopers would not have the confidence they do to mount up and meet the enemy every day.

CSM Bert Puckett, 2-508 PIR, 82nd ABN DIV, FOB Walton, Afghanistan."

### LET'S KEEP IT COMING

Numerous requests have been received for an address to write to the soldiers and/or continue to send boxes filled with goodies throughout their deployment. Please use the following address:

SUPPORTING A SOLDIER  
C/O LTC Frank Jenio  
Task Force Fury  
FOB Walton  
HHC Company 2-508th 4th BCT 82nd  
APO, AE 09355

### MAIL BOX

10-18-09

Dear Editor Of the Diablo, 508th Parachute Infantry Reg. In your publication of August, 2009 you had a request for information on LTC Harry Harrison from his son, HarryHarrison@park.edu. I sent information on LTC Harry Harrison from my personal knowledge. As the First Sgt. E Co, 508th Parachute Co. from the states to Normandy and Holland...I was hurt coming out of Holland...just inside of France.

In Normandy, E Co. had the point in a march to a battle and I was, as always, up with the first troops behind the point. LTC Harrison came up and walked and talked with me. It was the first time I had seen him in Normandy.

At first his talk was normal and we carried on a normal conversation about the company, the Bn. and things in general.

Then, as if something broke in him...he started mumbling and I asked him what was wrong. He just kept on mumbling, not making sense. After several minutes went

by I could not understand a thing he was saying. I knew something was wrong with him. Then we came to a turn in the road and he did not follow the column, or myself, but walked straight ahead into a ditch. I stopped the column and sent 4 men into the ditch to get LTC Harrison up and back with me. Because I stopped the column a jeep came up and parked at the turn in the road. A Staff Officer came over to me and asked me why the column was stopped. I told him about LTC Harrison.

About this time the 4 men came up out of the ditch carrying LTC Harrison. The Staff Officer said, "Have them put LTC Harrison against the front wheel of the jeep and then you get the column going. Don't say a word about what you just told me to anyone except your Company Command.

As I walked away I heard the Staff Officer say in a very, strong voice, "Harry, what is wrong with you?"

I gave the motion to move the column out.

I was told they reduced LTC Harrison in rank, sent him to a hospital in England and then sent him to a Regular Infantry Regiment. He was killed in combat with another unit.

I tell you this because sometime in the future someone may ask about LTC Harrison and you should have the truth. His daughter has been in contact with me. Her brother sent her my E-mail on the subject. We have exchanged several e-mails. I sent them a map marking the battles and where the events with LTC Harrison took place.

Sincerely,  
Ralph H. Thomas



### Wollaton Memorial Update

Here are pictures of the 508 Monument at Wollaton Park. It is 95% completed, just needs the final touches to be complete. We had a ceremony today at the memorial. The official ceremony will be on the 12<sup>th</sup> of March 2010 which will be 66 years when the 508<sup>th</sup> made Wollaton Park their home base in England. The crowning tablet reads: "Dedicated to the American 508 Parachute Infantry Regiment Who Served So Honorably and Proudly Left This Park In June 1944 And Again In September 1944 To Shed Their Life's Blood In The Cause Of Freedom On The

Battlefields Of France, Holland, Belgium And Germany."

Take Care & God Bless  
Graham Lawson



### Checking In

Diablo Editor,

Sir, my name is Francis Call. I am the son of William "Bill" Call. My father just turned 87; he is in fine health and spirit. I just wanted to say hello to you and thank you for your work on the Newsletter. Be good and God Bless.

Francis Call



### Condolences

Nobles

Bob Nobles, Co C, recently reported that his wife Bette had passed away last August 21st.

"We had 66 years together," Bob said, "I jumped on D-Day and was captured on June 11. Spent 11 months as a POW. She did not if I was alive or dead for 3 months. We had a great life together. My best to any other C Co members left."

Condolences can be sent to:

Bob Nobles

112 E. Falls St, Ithaca, NY 14850



## Call For Dues !

Dues for the new fiscal year of Family and Friends of the 508th PIR Assn. are due beginning **November 1**.

Dues are \$10.00 per year per household. Multiple years may be paid if desired and donations are gratefully accepted. A new facility on the web site ([www.508pir.org](http://www.508pir.org)) enables payment and donations using your credit card through PayPal.

**Please send dues to:**

**F&F508PIR Assn.  
3630 Townsend Dr.  
Dallas, TX 75229-3805**

Ellen Peters, Treasurer



## Final Jumps

### Klug

William A. Klug of Wesley Chapel, FL died on December 23, 2008 from cancer. William was a 508<sup>th</sup> jump school graduate and jumped into Normandy. He was also a P.O.W.

His life work was in a government accounting office in Washington DC. William, who was 84 years of age, is survived by his wife Juanita.

Condolences may be sent to her at 26616 Whirlaway Terr., Wesley Chapel, FL 33544-1593

### Manion

Louis Wallace Manion, 84, went to be with his Lord, November 4, 2009.

He was a retired employee of Dupont, an Army veteran of World War II, serving with the 82nd Airborne Division, 508 Reg. and was a member of their Ky. Chapter Assoc., a member of the Harmonics of Louisville, and Shively Christian Church.

Survived by his loving wife of 63 years, Martha Jean (Jenkins) Manion; his children, Louis W. Manion, Jr., Steve Manion (Margie), Debbie Piper (Darell), Diane Knabel (Joe), Karen Sue Keener (David), Shirley Joseph (Vernon) and Mark Manion; 16 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; and his sister, Mary Juanita Manion.

Condolences can be sent to Martha at 4716 Beech Dr., Louisville, KY 40216-3324

### Van Leuven

Very late word was recently received regarding the life, and death, of a stalwart paratrooper, Lewis Van Leuven.

Van was in Company E when he dropped behind the German lines on D-Day. He was in his early 20's and stood 6 feet four inches, pretty tall by parachutist standards. He was from Utah and loved to hunt and ride horses.

Six days later, his unit was engaged in a firefight with German soldiers when a German hand grenade landed near him. Before he had time to do anything it exploded. He was knocked unconscious. When he awoke he saw that both his legs were badly mangled, and he was in great pain. The Germans were overrunning their position. Van said he saw a young German soldier approach and stand over him. Then the German soldier fixed his bayonet on the end of his rifle and aimed it right at Van's heart. But when the soldier made his thrust he (the soldier) turned his head and only stuck Lewis in the shoulder. The German ran off without looking at Van again.

Van said he knew the German soldier saw the condition of his legs and just wanted to put him out of his misery. But he could not stand to watch as he finished off the killing job. Van passed out again and when he awoke he was in a field hospital. Both his legs had been amputated above his knees, but Van said the really strange thing was he could still feel his toes itching. But he had no toes.

Van was eventually flown back to the States and was fitted with artificial legs and feet. But every so often the scar tissue would build up on his "stumps", and begin cracking and bleeding and he would have to go to a Veteran's hospital to have that scar tissue cut away. With each visit he got a little shorter. As he told it, "Once I was six feet four. Now I am about five-ten."

Tom Camp, a close friend and hunting buddy of Van's, shared a humorous tale about Van.

"One night in Maine we were gathered under the fire cover, hugging some heat because it was about 10 degrees. A trapper drove into camp and wanted to know if we had seen any beaver ponds,

or lynx, or fisher where he could set his traps. There was a big snow on the ground.

Van's artificial legs had a pair of ordinary black slippers built onto them at the feet. After the trapper had been there a while, and most if not all of us had noticed him looking at Van's feet, Van left and went into the cook tent.

When Van had gone the trapper said, 'Now guys it ain't any of my business, but I think you all should take up a collection and buy that guy a pair of decent, warm boots.'

Just for the record, we called Van "Twinkle Toes." And he loved it.

Thank God for men like him. Otherwise we would all be speaking German today and seriously or not declaring Adolph Hitler a hero.

Sleep in peace, Twinkle Toes. You left the world a better place."

Van left us on March 12, 1995.



## Searching For ...

### Unidentified Hq 1<sup>st</sup> Men



This is a picture of my Uncle Marty (Martin) Teahan. One of his friends (Art "Jake" Jacoby) just sent it to me. On the back of the picture it says Wilkinson is on left, then Jake, my uncle is 2nd from the right. I'm not sure who the other 2 people are but I think they are all members of Headquarters Co., 1st Bn. I'm not sure where this was taken. I'll have to

write to Jake and ask him. Based on the tent I think it's in Nottingham. Does anyone know these paratroopers?

Thanks,  
Liz Farrell  
[E2355@aol.com](mailto:E2355@aol.com)

### Nijmegen Saviors

Dear Sir,

My mother was an 11 year old girl in Nijmegen when the 82nd Airborne Division was instrumental in liberating the city. One of the stories she just the other day told me again is of how on September 22, 1944 she and her parents were in front of a bank building when a tank loaded with munitions exploded.

They were among the very few who weren't killed and with some other people sought shelter in the pitch-black basement of the bank. My mother says that she felt the ground being wet and didn't realize at first it was her and her Dad's blood. She also heard some

crackling sounds but they didn't realize the bank was on fire as well.

Suddenly the basement window opened and an American soldier stuck his head in and said, "We thought there might be some people in here, let's get you out of here."

There were about three or four soldiers and they carried my grandfather and my mother on their backs, while my grandmother walked along. They asked where they wanted to go and took them to a friend's house somewhere. My grandfather received some of the first penicillin available, also from the 82nd Airborne Division, thereby saving his leg.

My mother still doesn't know why they would have even thought to check there for people. She says rarely a day goes by that she doesn't think about those men. The story still moves her (and me!) deeply.

My mother and her family were saved that day by these selfless American

soldiers, and she is hoping to somehow connect with any of them.

I know this is probably like trying to find a needle in a haystack, but I would be ever so grateful if you had any thoughts that would assist me in trying to find any of these men.

Yours sincerely,  
Renate Schoep

If this story sounds familiar to you, please contact Renate's mother:

Alberdina Roosegaarde Bisschop  
159-2345 Cedar Hill Cross Road  
Victoria, British Columbia  
Canada V8P 5M8



### Changes of Address

Please forward change of email addresses to [treasurer@508PIR.org](mailto:treasurer@508PIR.org) and change of postal addresses to Ellen Peters; 3630 Townsend Dr.; Dallas, TX 75229-3805."



### The Diablo

3630 Townsend Dr.  
Dallas, TX 75229-3805