



RIPCORD REPORT



For Friends and Survivors of the Battle of Fire Support Base Ripcord
Republic of Vietnam 12 March - 23 July, 1970

Number 101

February 2015

101st Issue

Published 1985 - 2015

2015 Springfield, Missouri

Welcome to the Queen City of the Ozarks

Can you believe it's been almost 45 years since the Battle of Ripcord? During February 1970, Ripcord was not in the day to day vocabulary of the many in the 101st.

If you were with the Third Brigade of the 101st you were hanging out at FSB Jack, Camp Evans or patrolling the area around Rocket Ridge or the lowland jungles. The weather was still cold and wet and re-supply was not always on time due to overcast conditions, rain and fog. Enemy activity was still sporadic but the guys who had join in November or earlier were becoming the old hands at this jungle patrol game.

Fast forward to 2015. This year many of the same fellows will be re-uniting at Springfield, Missouri. Jungle growth will be missing and the hills will be small. Air assaults will be non-existent and no LZ's will be hot. The weather may be warm, but there will be plenty of cold beer, soda and good snacks available. The accommodations at the University Plaza Hotel will greatly outweigh the limited luxury afforded by dry poncho and poncho liner on the ground we so well remember.

There will be no formal patrols going out from the hotel. However, there are places and sights to explore in and around the city. This city hosts the corporate headquarters of Bass Pro one of the country's largest dealers in hunting and fishing equipment. Their show room covers 500,000 square feet of area and adjacent to it is their newly expanded wildlife museum. It is worth a day's visit to check this out.

For the shoppers among the group there is the

Battlefield Mall with over 150 stores covered by 1.5 million square feet of roof. I'll bet there is a store that might fit you!

South west of the city is the Wilson Creek National Battlefield. This is the site of the first major battle in Missouri during the Civil War. It ended with a defeat of the outnumbered Union soldiers. But the fighting in the area did not end at Wilson Creek. It was followed by two different battles of Springfield. The first was a Union victory and the only Union victory in southwestern Missouri. It resulted in the capture of the town of Springfield and its use as a supply depot for Union activities in Missouri, Arkansas and Louisiana. A year later the Confederates under General Marmaduke attempted to re-take the town and depot during the second Springfield battle. The Confederates were fought to a standstill and forced to leave the field with the depot still providing supplies.

Forty miles south of Springfield there is a little town known as Branson! There is no problem spending a day in town if you desire. There are over a hundred shows going on in town starting at 10 A.M. and extending into the far night. Music include country western, rock oldies and orchestral. There are also comedy and acrobatic shows so there is something for the whole family. Some might want to come a few days early to spend time check all this out.

The best reason for coming to Springfield will be to see your fellow soldiers from 1970. There is nothing quite like re-uniting with the guys you knew and meeting them in their new life attire. Few, if any of us wear Army green much anymore. See you in October!!!

2015 Ripcord Reunion

Oct 7 thru 10, 2015

Springfield, MO

Registration form on page 7 and will also be on our website

Indiana Veterans Hall of Fame

Frederick Spaulding is among the first to be inducted into the **Indiana Veterans Hall of Fame**. During an illustrious military career that spanned 29 years and numerous tours of duty, Spaulding earned so many medals that he doesn't know himself how many he has. The 74-year-old joked that an old army buddy once put a sign on his army jacket with an arrow that pointed up from his medals that read "continued on back." Today he displays them all in shadow boxes and it takes two to hold them all.



Please continue to send your letters and comments to: mail@ripcordassociation.com
Everyone would love to hear from you.

Opinions expressed in submitted material are not necessarily those of the editorial staff. We reserve the right to reject any material deemed to be inappropriate. We also reserve the right to edit all submissions, but we will make every effort to maintain the writer's concept and meaning. Please be brief and concise.

Second Annual Fire Base Ripcord Match

On **Saturday July 25th 2015**, the Langhorne Rod and Gun Club will be holding it's second annual Fire Base Ripcord Match.

This match was created to honor the men of the 101st Airborne who served our Country with honor and distinction at Fire Base Ripcord in 1970.

The gates open at 7:30 with the first team starting the course of fire at 9:00 am. We will be serving lunch at our club house after the match. We welcome all members of the Ripcord Association to join us and look forward to seeing you again for this event.

Our Club address is 251 Stoneyford Road, Holland PA. Here is a link with directions:

<http://www.langhornerodandgun.com/club/location>
Please note some GPS units have difficulty with this address.

If any of your members would like to shoot the course of fire, please let me know in advance.

Thank you again for your support of this event and more importantly, thank you and your group for their service to our County.

Regards,

Gary Bissig

Practical Rifle Chairman

Langhorne Rod and Gun Club

(Editor note: Please contact Frank Marshall if you plan to attend this event. frank@ripcordassociation.com)

RIPCORD REPORT

Ripcord Report is a publication of the **Ripcord Association**, and is the authoritative voice of history for the Battle of Fire Support Base Ripcord.

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Donations *the life blood of our Association*

The following have given donations to the Ripcord Association since the last newsletter. These donations help keep the website and newsletters published to keep all our Ripcord members up to date.

Wilburn Wall C 2/501
Rick Blythe A 2/506
Bob Wallace C 2/506
Fred and Carol Gilbert D 2/506
Bob Judd B 2/506
Randy House C 158 Avn
John Mason D 2/506
Bill Williams B 2/506

For the memory of John Sherba E 2/506

- Cape Regional Medical Center
- Darcy Greenfell
- Christine & Maurice Hunt

For the memory of Betty Marshall

- Gilbert & Margaret McDonald
- Gertrude Tomkowicz
- Jean Rowand
- Richard & Janice Brzowski
- James & Catherine Neidhardt
- William & Dorothy Neidhardt
- Jeff & Donna Young
- Jay Wetherby
- Peggy Stark
- Nadine Garrabrant
- Frank & Elizabeth Schluth
- Josephine Fachet

For the memory of Chuck F. Schluter

- Joe Minias C 2/506

Checks payable to "Ripcord Association".

Mail to:

Lee Widjeskog,
493 Stillman Ave.
Bridgeton, NJ 08302

Make your reservation for the Reunion NOW!

Hotel Reservations

UNIVERSITY PLAZA HOTEL &
CONVENTION CENTER
333 John Q. Hammons Parkway
Springfield, Missouri 65806

417-864-7333 (Ask for Hotel Reservations)

Refer to Group code: RIPCORD
Group Room Rate:

\$82 per day (King or 2 double beds) +16.46% tax

\$114 per day for King Suites + 16.46% tax

Ripcord meets from Wed. Oct 7 – Sat. Oct. 10

A Credit Card Number is required
to guarantee this reservation.
Call by September 5, 2015.

Anna Britt Nolan Trust *by George and Mary Murphy*



Here is Britt's picture taken 6 months ago at 8th grade graduation. She was in the Honor Society with a 4.0 grade point average and awarded the top in the class for math, science and language arts.

The address where donations may be sent
for the trust fund is:

Anna Britt Nolan Trust
c/o First Bank
6211 Mid Rivers Mall Drive
Saint Charles, MO 63304-1102

JERSEY RAMBLINGS

by Lee Widjeskog A/2-506



Let me start out with making a vital correction to the last newsletter! **A FREE BREAKFAST IS,... I repeat "IS"included with the price of the room at Springfield, Missouri!** I apologize if I have confused anyone. Fred Spaulding spends a lot of time trying to find deals and places that offer a free breakfast with the room and he did a fine job once again.

For those of you who are following how well we do at our reunions, let me mention that we brought in \$1821 from the Ladies raffle, \$1390 for the Lamp (this was the last lamp we have available), \$1190 from the Anna Britt Nolan table plus an additional donations for the trust fund to allow us to send a check for \$2050. Once again we had the services of Mike (The Barber) Chiarelli who presented us with \$454 in donations for haircuts. It is a generally well groomed bunch of guys and gals at the banquet courtesy of Mike! Thank you for donating your time and expertise!!

If you were present you saw our ticket girls Emma and Maddy Meyers, the granddaughters of Uwe and Dianne Meyers (B 2/506). These lovely young ladies provided us with speeding drawings constant motion. It was great to have their assistance!

By the time this newsletter gets out, Frank Marshall, Peter Meloro and I will have finalized the bylaws for our incorporation proceedings. Before the next annual reunion we will make certain all members receive it either in the mail or via e-mail. This will give us a start and changes can be made if needed. The primary purpose of the incorporation is to protect the limited assets of the organization and the people running your organization. There will not be any major changes unless the group wants them. For all practical purposes the organization will continue to run as it has since 1995.

Since the last newsletter Kathy and I have been busy with the holidays as many of you have. We went to Massachusetts for Christmas and returned on New Year's Day. Traveling by car on the first day of the year in the northeast is really great! Very few cars were on the road and the semis were all parked. Great travelling!

October will be here before we know it! I am looking forward to getting back to Springfield, MO. It is close to Branson and the home of Bass Pro. Both items are high on the list of many in the association to visit. See you there!

Update on the new Ripcord Book



Chris Brady is still conducting interviews for the upcoming book on those who fought at Firebase Ripcord, though time is running out. He's contacted a number of literary agents and is also looking at self-publishing. If you would like to chat with Chris, contact him at cbrady@windstream.net or Frank Marshall at frank@ripcordassociation.com to set up an interview.

The goal is to have the final product published this year.

Ripcord on Facebook

by Anthony Chritchlow



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ripcordassociation/>

So the Documentary is finally being set out to everyone that donated, the amount need to get a free copy. As I type this I'm a waiting lol. I hope now that you all have had a chance to look at your copy. I've been seeing great reviews on our Face book page. By the time this get to you guys I'm hoping that it is released for purchase for everyone and we have a date and channel it will be on TV.

Spring is on the way yaaaaaaa. I'm looking forward to this year's reunion. It's been 2 years since the wife and I have been to one. I would suggest if you have not been to one try to make it to at least one. I find it great for the soul. I want to thank each and every one of you who contribute to our Face book page. Keep up the great posts. Dig through your old photos and keep posting them. Spring is on the way for all of your snowed in.

See you all at the reunion.

Visit our website at
www.ripcordassociation.com

INCOMING MAIL

Friends,

Thank you for sending the Ripcord Report, and thank you for all your efforts!

I send a donation each quarter to the Ripcord Report. My name did not show up in the donation column in the last report. If I am not sending my checks to the correct place, please let me know!

Wilburn Wall

C 2/501

(Wilburn, your check arrived but it was after the report went to press. Thanks for your donations! Editor)

Dear Ripcord,

Thank you so much for the donations! It really helps me out and gives me financial security I wouldn't have otherwise. This has really opened a lot of doors and has allowed me to choose from four year university instead of having to go to a community college. This is my first year of high school and I'm excited for what the future holds. I intend to major in journalism and minor in creative writing and hope to get a career writing for a newspaper, if not books.

Thanks so much!!

Britt Nolan

Hi Lee,

My wife, Marion and I had a wonderful time at the reunion. It was nice seeing all the guys after all these years. This check is a donation in the memory of Chuck F. Schluter.

See you at next years reunion! Wishing you and your family "Happy Holidays".

Joe "Buffalo" Minias

C 2/506

Dear Sir:

I'm in the process of researching/writing a book about American combat operations in and around the A Shau Valley. The battle for Fire Base Ripcord is a key part of that story. The working title of my book is A Shau Valor: American Combat Operations in the Valley of Death, 1963-1971.

In viewing the Ripcord Association's website I found

a document titled "Facts About The Battle of Fire Base Ripcord." That fact sheet indicates that three men received the Medal of Honor and that five were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. Can you or someone in the Association provide those names to me? I know about LTC Andre Lucas, but can't track down the others. Since acts of valor are at the heart of my manuscript, I'd very much like to include their stories in the book. Here's hoping you can help or point me in the right direction!!!

All the best,

Tom Yarborough

Col, USAF (Ret)

try@verizon.net

Dear Frank,

We received sad news -- Bill Nolan, Keith Nolan's father, passed away on Sunday, January 4, 2015, after a long illness. In accordance with his wishes, the funeral arrangements are private, and the family has asked for no memorials. Ulla Nolan asked us to pass this news along to all her friends at the Ripcord Association.

George and Mary Murphy

Hey Frank,

Thanks for the newsletter. The ceremony for my brother John at Fort Campbell was terrific.

My sister Barb gave a very touching speech which got a standing ovation. Made me as proud as ever of John. Hope all you guys are well. Always in my thoughts.

Dave Kreckel



(Editor note: John Kreckel A/2-506, was KIA July 22, 1970 and received the Distinguished Service Medal)

Visit our website at
www.ripcordassociation.com

INCOMING MAIL

Dear Sir:

A few years ago I read the book, "Ripcord". As I recall in the book, SSGT Michael L. Cooksley, platoon sergeant, and Lt. Palm?, his platoon leader, were mentioned a few times. Could you tell me which company and unit they were in?

Thanks very much!

Jerry Pinto

jerrypinto@sbcglobal.net

2/502 - Vietnam

Lee,

Thank you, Frank and the other Currahee vets for keeping Ripcord memories current. I so appreciate what yo'all do! Hope this helps the cause a little.

Randy House

C 158th Avn

In search of,

I am a Marine. I was a member of Third Force Recon Co. in 1969-70. From Dec. 1969 to Feb 1970 we ran patrols in the A Shau Valley. Our main support during this time came from Commando of the 101 st Airborne out of Camp Eagle. I am trying to find anyone who remembers this as we are having a reunion in oceanside CA this spring that includes Helicopter units. Our Third Force Reunion is back in Quantico. The one in Oceanside is for all recon units 50th anniversary.

I know this is not a Commando site. I am just looking to find someone who remembers and can point me in the right direction. They were important to my team because they saved our asses more than once. I believe a Major James was a commander.

Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Richard Jenkins

Team Boxhill. USMC

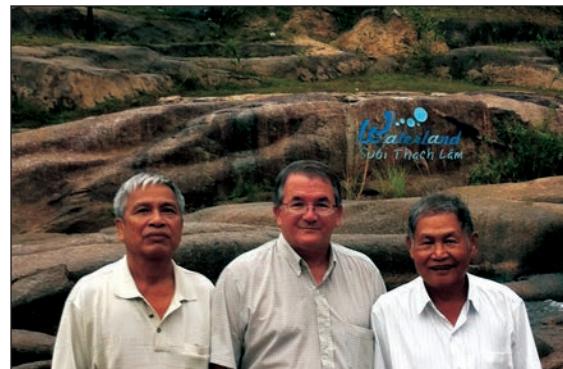
jenkinsanr@aol.com

Greetings Fellow Ripcord Vets

I have now been to Viet Nam 10 times since 1970. My first time back was 2002. It wasn't till 2011 that I began thinking I would like to go back to the Ripcord AO and then I started thinking I would really like to

meet a former NVA soldier who fought at Ripcord. I had met former VC several years ago and they were cordial. In 2013 I met and played tennis with 3 current Vietnamese Army officers. They were coaches of the army basketball team and the team was staying in "my" hotel. Our interactions were very friendly. On their final night in town, after the tournament was over, they had a party and I was invited to join them at their table with other ranking officers. It was a memorable experience.

Earlier this month I had the privilege of meeting Nguyen Thuyet. (I learned of him from the previous Ripcord Report.) I think he was known as Tooie (don't know how it would have been spelled) back in the day. Some of you will remember him. He was an interpreter with D 2/506 and then served in a battalion role. It was the first time he had seen anyone from Ripcord since the war. The evening we met in Nha Trang I told him that someday I would like to meet a soldier we fought against at Ripcord. The next day we met for breakfast and a friend of his, Mr. Vinh, joined us. Mr. Vinh is a former NVA soldier and he was surprised that Thuyet could speak English. Not only was this the first time he saw another Ripcord vet, it was the first time he spoke English since the war. That morning they showed me If you want to go to the A Shau, my guess is that Thuyet would like to serve as your interpreter once again.



RIPCORD REUNION 2015 SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI

Yes, I'll be there!

I have not attended a Reunion since 1997 and have not received a Ripcord Coin.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ UNIT IN 'NAM _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Will a family member(s) be attending? If yes what are their names? (For name tag purposes only).

Arrival Date _____ Departure Date _____

THE HOTEL PROVIDES FREE TRANSPORTATION FROM THE AIRPORT.

Registration fee of \$_____ is enclosed for #_____ Adults and #_____ children under 18.
\$35 for children under 18. For adults see discounts below !

DISCOUNTS FOR EARLY REGISTRATION:

Before June 30, 2015, \$75 per adult

July 1 through 31, 2015 \$80 per adult,

August 1 through September 6, 2015 \$85 per adult.

After September 6, 2015 \$90 per adult.

Your registration fee covers the cost of the snacks, beverages, hot hors doers on Friday night and dinner on Saturday.

Registration fee due no later than October 1, 2015.

Make your check payable to "RIPCORD ASSOCIATION"

Mail your check with this form to:

Lee Widjeskog, 493 Stillman Ave., Bridgeton, NJ 08302.

Questions? Call Lee at 856-451-1108 before 1 October 2015. (After call 609-774-6951)

AGENDA

Wednesday, October 7: Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Self guided tours and shopping)

Thursday, October 8: Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Golf in the AM) (Self guided tours)

Friday, October 9: Hospitality 1200 Hours. Ladies raffle 1800 hours (6PM)

Saturday, October 10: Business meeting for association business in Hospitality room.

Dinner with cash bar starting at 1700 hours done by 2200 hours.

Sunday, October 11: Homeward bound

Thursday golf outing (a separate fee). Check if you will play [].

HOTEL RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE SEPERATELY

BY September 5, 2015

CALL 417-864-7333

Ask for HOTEL RESERVATIONS and mentions the

GROUP CODE: RIPCORD

(Price is \$82 per night plus tax: breakfast is included.)

Myrtle Beach Attendees 2014

- Jim & Irene Aanonsen A 2/506
- Alan & Judy Alexander A 158 AVN
- Polly Atkins Guest
- Lin & Pinkey Bashford D 2/506
- John Beadle & Noreen Labadie A 2/11 FA
- Tim Bohan (Brother Pathfinder)
- Bill Boles D 2/506 & HHC 3BDE
- Bruce Bond Scout Dog unit
- Keith & Sandra Bowman D 2/506
- Bruce Brady & Karolyn Kruger A 2/506
- Chris Brady Guest
- Paul Buhr A 2/506
- Albert Burckard A 2/506
- Dick & Debbie Cable E 2/506 Recon
- Jim Cambell C 2/506
- Luis Carrasquillo D 2/506
- Tom & Linda Chase 163 AVN
- Mike & Kathy Chiarelli B 2/506
- Howard, Daina & Bobbie Colbert C 2/506
- Dale & Sue Cooper C 2/506
- Dave & Cheryl Corradetti C 2/506
- Janet Coryell Guest
- Ken & Maryann David D 1/506
- Merle, Ruth & Josh DeLaGrange D 1/506
- Evan DeWulf Guest
- Mike DeWulf Guest
- Thomas DeWulf Guest
- Russ & Maryann Dixon B 2/319 FA
- Alvin Dodd D 2/506
- Richard & Pat Drury D 1/506
- Carnell, Chad & Kim Evans 2/319 FA
- Rex & Carol Flansburg D 2/506
- Mike & Lee Foreman D 2/506
- John & Debbie Fowler C 2/506
- Tom Gaunt Guest
- Fred & Carol Gilbert D 2/506
- Kenny & Marybeth Grimm Guest
- Mike Goff Guest
- David & Arlene Grubb D 158 AVN
- Rande Hall & Andrea Ferguson 326 Med BNE
- Bill & Lynn Hand B 2/506
- Jim Harris HHC 2/506
- Ben & Carolyn Harrison HHC 3BDE
- Chuck Hawkins A 2/506
- Dick & Linda Hawkins Guest
- Bill Heath A 2/506 & HHC 2/506
- Billy & Shea Helvey A 2/506
- Jim Hill B 2/319 FA & A 2/506
- Ray Hines @/319 FA
- Chuck & Jean Holmen A 159 ASHB
- Don & Linda Holthausen C 2/506
- Ron Hudson 1/39 FA XXIV Co
- Steve & Melinda Huggins E 2/506 Recon
- Buzz, Charlene & Renni Ireland C 159 ASHB
- Bob & Red Judd B 2/506
- Rick & Betty Kellogg B 2/506
- David & Sophia Kenyon 326 ENG
- Greg & Kristi Kiekintveld 326 ENG
- Greg & Juliann Knott D 2/506
- John, Annette & Angie Kuennen C 2/506
- Bob Layton B 2/501
- Bob Leibecke C 2/506
- Robert & Mable Lemon C 2/506
- Mike Mackey 159 ASHB
- Murphy & Phylis Majoria Guest
- Frank Marshall A2/506
- John Mason D2/506
- Jim & Judy McCall D 2/506
- Jim & Michelle McCoy D1/506
- Ron & Linda McCrory E 2/506
- Peter & Chris Meloro C 2/506
- J. Paul Meyer 159 ASHB
- Uwe & Diane Meyer B 2/506
- Eric, Serena, Emma & Maddy Meyer Guest
- Joe (Buffalo) & Marion Minias C 2/506
- Leonard & Carol Moore 3rd BDE Air
- George & Mary Murphy B 2/320 FA
- Clem Neiderer HHC2/501
- Robert Pagano B 2/506
- Ben & Lillian Peters B 2/506
- Stan & Belinda Polski 2/319 FA
- Ray & Sheila Potts B 2/319 FA
- Doug & Iris Puffer D 2/506
- Steve Pullen B 2/17 Cav
- Gary & Patti Radford D 2/506
- Sam & Luree Rawlinson Assoc. Members
- John Richards & Yvonne Robertson B 2/506
- James & Peggy Roach D 2/506
- Jerry & Luci Rodgers 326 Med
- Bob & Sue Romig D&E 2/506
- Bill Rose A 2/506
- Kent Roland C 2/506
- George & Cheryl Scott A 2/11 FA
- Chuck Shannon D 2/506
- Fred Shuttleworth E 2/506
- Charlie Silvetti & Nancy Wood 1st Air Cav
- MarcSkinner D 2/506
- Steve & Pat Smith D 158 AVN
- Terry Smith A&D 2/506
- James Smither Guest
- Bob & Jeanne Smoker C 2/506
- Dave & Lisa Snyder A 2/11 FA
- Fred & Mikki Spaulding HHC 3rd BDE
- Dennis & Jane Stortz D 2/506
- Bob & Rob Tarbuck & Paige Corkhill C 2/506
- Dale & Janet Tauer D 1/506
- Charles Van Cleve 2/319 FA, C&D 2/506
- Craig and Sandy VanHout B2/506
- Bob & Jackie Wallace C 2/506
- Steve & Susan Wallace B 2/506
- Lee & Kathy Widjeskog A 2/506
- Jeff & Katherine Wilcox A&C 2/506
- Bob Worrall B 2/501
- Audrey Wrightsell 2/11 Assoc. Member
- John & Priscilla Yearwood B 2/17 Cav
- David & Linda Yonts A 2/506
- David II & Wendy Yonts Guests
- Ron Zahn A 2/11 FA