



RIPCORD REPORT

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



Number 72

Winter, 2007

SHOW ME A GREAT REUNION IN SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI!!!!

By Lee Widjeskog

For those of you who have been ignoring most of what is in the newsletter each quarter to concentrate on the letters and any news of long lost buddies, our next reunion is to be held in SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI.

It will take place starting Wednesday 18 July (for early birds) and ending the evening of Saturday 21 July 2007.

Springfield is a nice quiet town with attractions such as a AA Baseball team which will be in town while we are there, an art museum, the Air and Military Museum, Wilson Creek National Battlefield from the Civil War, The Battlefield Mall for those who settle their disagreements with credit cards and a Bass Pro Shop for the outdoorsmen of our group.

If that is not enough the "sleepy" town of Branson is only 35 miles away.

For those of us from the east who are clueless about mid-west entertainment, let me say that Branson has more variety of family entertainment in a small area than perhaps anywhere in the United States. A few of the attractions include the Dixie Stampede, Dick Clark's American Bandstand, Presley's Country Jubilee, the grand Palace, Stone Hill Winery, the Andy Williams Moon River Theatre, the Bald-knobbers Theatre, The Branson Variety Theatre, the Grand Country Music Hall, the Mickey Gilley Theatre, museums, golf, theme parks, shopping and enough variety to keep you busy and entertained for days.

We are planning a bus trip for the group on Friday of our reunion. If all works out it will include dinner and a show.



Clarion Hotel, Springfield, Missouri

**Mark Your
Calendars NOW!
Next Ripcord Reunion**

This year we will meet in Springfield, Missouri from 19 July (Thursday) through the banquet on Saturday 21 July. We will meet at the Clarion Hotel for \$69 plus tax per night with breakfast included. We should all have a good time!!!

FROM THE EDITOR

I hope everyone had a great Holiday and you all have a great New Year. I am asking you to make one New Year Resolution (even tho it is late). That is to come to our reunion this year and meet up with the guys you served with during Ripcord.

I am still working on the website and try to keep you informed with the latest updates. Check out the newsletter archives. It is now updated with all of the past newsletters from the very first one to the last one.

Remember, your comments on the newsletter or website are always welcome. Send all information to frank@ripcordassociation.com

We are receiving new members every month from our Website. Ripcord veterans or their spouse are putting Ripcord in Google and finding the Ripcord Association. www.ripcordassociation.com

Fred and Carol Gilbert (D/2-506) are putting together a trip to the Wash. D.C. area in March for the Ripcord Association. This is not to interfere with the Reunion set for July in Springfield. It is a get together for those that want to get together in March. For more info, please see the article in this newsletter or go to our website www.ripcordassociation.com

Also, very important! I need your e-mail address. If you are not receiving updates and information about the Ripcord Association via e-mail, you may be missing out on a lot of news.

Frank Marshall

ARTICLES

Deadline for the next issue will be **March 1, 2007**. Please send all articles, photos, incoming mail and interesting reading to:

**Frank Marshall
224 Derry Hill Ct
Mt Laurel, NJ 08054**
or e-mail to:
frank@ripcordassociation.com

DONATIONS:

Checks payable to "Ripcord Association".

Mail to:
**Lee Widjeskog,
493 Stillman Ave.
Bridgeton, NJ 08302**

Donations, the life blood of our Association

Donations came from the following generous members during the past three months:

A big "Thanks" goes out to the following donors:
Joe Guerra,
Bill & Shiela Williams,
Kirby Schaffer,
Rich Frazer,
Bruce Mccorkle,
Jerry Rodgers,
Dave Kreckel,
Bill Combs
Paul Buhr.

These generous donations allow us to continue to publish and send out the newsletter without charging dues. Currahee!!!

REPORT FROM NEW JERSEY

Things are firming up for our reunion slated for Springfield, Missouri. We will plan for a bus trip into Branson on Friday with plans for a meal and a show. Those who have received free tickets can use them at this time or attend with all the other folks. Anyone who will be able to assist us in running registration and the hospitality room, please let me know. We will also need help with beer and snack runs so volunteers are always well received.

The registration form is included in this newsletter. Be certain to contact the hotel before the June cut-off date. **The CLARION HOTEL REGISTRATION NUMBER IS — 800-756-7318.** Refer to the code **FIREBASE RIPCORD ASSOCIATION** to ensure you get the ripcord rate of \$68.95 before taxes. This rate is available three days before and after the reunion if you wish to stay and includes a buffet breakfast.

The reunion registration is also important. The sooner I have your registration in the sooner and more complete our plans can be for this July.

Plans for 2008 are presently in a flux. Panama City has backed out on us and hopes to get something in Hampton Roads, Virginia have not materialized. Frank Marshall is looking into the Philadelphia area but we are open to other suggestions for 2008, 2009 etc. Contact me if you have a suggestion and the sooner the better. We hope to hold the 2008 event in the month of October but July is fine if that's what works out. It is not too soon to set up something for 2009 either.

**CURRAHEE!!!
Lee Widjeskog
856-451-1108**

Bill (Hard Core) Kohr, Pathfinder on Ripcord

William (Hard Core) Kohr was raised in central Pennsylvania and like many that graduated from high school in the 1960's ended up in the Army. Bill was different from most since he seemed to enjoy the army life and soon went on to jump school at Fort Gordon in 1969. His training completed,

he arrived in Vietnam and was assigned as a Pathfinder directing the Chinook CH-47 helicopters on and off Firebase Ripcord. On the final day of Ripcord he was there working with Lt. Caballero, SSgt. Samuel Williams and Cpl. Jimmy Howton making sure the choppers got in and



loaded quickly and away before the mortars could take them out. He and the Pathfinder Team helped keep a lot of the guys on Ripcord safe and sound during the evacuation. For their valiant efforts that day, they all received Silver Stars.

When Bill was discharged from the Army, he returned to work at the trailer plant where he was earlier employed. He then attended a community college and received a degree in Forestry. Subsequently he found employment at a lumberyard cutting pulpwood. In November of 1975 he married Susan Franz. Together they had a daughter, Jennifer who was born in 1977. During this overall time frame he joined the 228th Transportation Unit of the Pennsylvania National Guard to continue his dedication to the Army and became part of the new pathfinders unit that was being established in Harrisburg. When the regular job hours at the lumberyard interfered with being a pathfinder, he went into subcon-



tracting which allowed him time to spend with his pathfinder unit and still earn enough to support his family.

His unit was quite active and was called up to help in the Johnstown, PA flood of 1977. In 1978 they were called to assist the First Coast Guard District in Portland, Maine by ferrying supplies during a severe February storm and then moving pre-fabricated homes onto devastated

islands along the coast. In all cases Bill was recognized for his dedication and professionalism as a soldier and a Pathfinder.

While this was taking his time he did not neglect his fledgling family. In the summer of 1978 he took them on an auto trip out west to visit Mount Rushmore, tour Montana, see the Grand Canyon, experience Texas and return home. He and Sue having finished their big trip proceeded to build a new home.

By 1979, his love for the Pathfinders and the military and his exemplary work caused his superiors to convince him to attend Officers Candidate School.

Things were going well for Bill in early 1979. His house was completed awaiting the electric, a second daughter was on the way and OCS was to start in March. While returning home from a guard meeting in early February, Bill lost his life in an automobile accident. He was buried on Valentine's Day, 1979 which holds the meteorological record for the coldest Valentine's day in the area and an even colder day for his loved ones. Eight months later his daughter, Kristen was born.

He is survived by his mother, wife and two daughters and missed even years later. His daughters are now grown and would love to hear from people who knew their father when he served in Vietnam.



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***See you in
Springfield, Missouri
July 19 – 21, 2007!***

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.

Ripcord Report

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Address Correction Requested

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Frank Marshall, Editor
**RIPCORD
REPORT**

Reunion Registration 2007

Firebase Ripcord Association Reunion, July 18-21, 2007 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) or guest be sharing your accommodations? Yes No

How many including you? _____. If yes what are their names? (For name tag purposes only).

Arrival Date/Time _____ Departure Date/Time _____

If applicable, Arrival Airline: _____ Flight # _____

Transportation is available to and from the airport. Please provide the hotel with advanced notice.

Registration fee of \$_____ is enclosed for #_____ Adults and #_____ children under 18.
\$50 for children under 18. For adults see discounts below !

DISCOUNTS FOR EARLY REGISTRATION:

Before March 12, 2007, \$75 per adult

March 13 through May 1, 2007 \$80 per adult,

May 2 through June 25, 2007 \$85 per adult.

After June 25, 2007 \$90 per adult.

Your registration fee covers the cost of the hospitality room, snacks and beverages, the Friday bus trip to Branson and the dinner on Saturday.

Registration fee is due no later than July 12, 2007.

Make your check payable to "RIPCORD ASSOCIATION"

Mail your check with this form to:

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

If you have questions call Lee at 856-451-1108 before 14 July 2007

AGENDA

Tuesday, July 17: Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours (for early birds)

Wednesday, July 18: Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Self guided tours and shopping)

Thursday, July 19: Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Golf in the AM) (Self guided tours)

Friday, July 20: Bus trip, show and dinner in Branson.

Saturday, July 21: Business meeting for association business in Hospitality room.

Dinner with cash bar starting at 1730 hours done by 2200 hours.

Thursday Golf Outing (not included in the registration fee) Check here if you will play

HOTEL RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE SEPARATELY AND BY 27 JUNE 2007

USE THE OTHER FORM OR CALL 800-756-7318 AND REFER TO THE

GROUP CODE: FIREBASE RIPCORD ASSOCIATION.

Hotel Registration 2007

Firebase Ripcord Association July 18-21, 2007

*Hotel Reservation form for
The Clarion Hotel Springfield
3333 South Glenstone Ave.
Springfield, MO 65804*

**Phone: (800) 756-7318 Facsimile: (417) 883-5720
Group code: FIREBASE RIPCORD ASSOCIATION**

Group Room Rate: \$68.95 plus \$8.23 tax per room per day which includes a breakfast buffet.
**A cash deposit for the first night's room and tax or a Credit Card Number is required to guarantee
this reservation. For those paying with cash, the required deposit is \$77.18.**
Room rate is available three days before and after the group-blocked dates.

Your Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Arrival Date: _____ Departure Date: _____ No. of Rooms _____

Roommate Name(s): _____

Room type preferred: King / Smoking King / Non-smoking

Double Queen / Smoking Double Queen / Non-smoking

Suite & Other Special Requests: _____

** Although we cannot guarantee special requests, every effort will be made to meet your request.*

Deposit Enclosed: _____ Credit Card Number: _____ Exp: _____

Cardholder Signature Authorizing Hotel's Use of Credit Card: _____

**PLEASE NOTE: Those guests sending a cash deposit should be aware that a credit card imprint and valid, state-issued ID will be necessary upon check in. should you wish to pay for your stay with cash, a credit card imprint and valid ID will still be required upon arrival to secure your accommodations.*

All cash payments are accepted upon departure.

Check-in time: 3:00 PM Check-out Time: 12:00 PM

To confirm reservations, please return form to the hotel or call by June 27, 2007.

We look forward to seeing you in July!



The Wall and White House Tour

WHAT: A great opportunity to get together to honor fallen brothers, share fellowship, and take a special, guided tour of the White House just for Ripcord vets.

WHEN: March 9-12 (Friday-Monday), 2007 (37th anniversary of the beginning of the Ripcord battle.)

WHERE: Springhill Suites by Marriott, Arundel Mills near Baltimore-Washington International Airport, 7544 Teague Road, Hanover, MD 21076; Tel.: 410-799-7100.

DEADLINE: A block of rooms has been reserved. Please make your reservation directly with the hotel NOT LATER THAN February 9, 2007, and mention Ripcord Association to get the special rate of \$119.00. Free airport shuttle service from BWI.

HEADCOUNT/REGISTRATION: We need to know the full name, address, Social Security number, and date of birth of those attending this event. The SSN and DOB are needed for security access to the White House. Please provide these to Carol Gilbert, 531 King Malcolm, Odenton, MD 21113, Tel.: 410-672-2311 or 410-294-3519; Email: CarolG50@verizon.net. Note: Please do this BEFORE February 1, 2007.

SCHEDULE:

- March 9: Meet at the hotel hospitality lounge, no-host dinner.
- March 10: Morning: Tour the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial—The Wall. No-host lunch in D.C. Afternoon: Special White House tour.
- March 11: Morning: Individual schedule. Afternoon: (Optional) dinner and entertainment at Medieval Times restaurant and theater at Arundel Mills,
- March 12: Wrap up and head home.

I will attend the Wall and White House Tour: Name _____, address _____, phone number _____, SSN _____, DOB _____, number attending _____, names, addresses, SSN, DOB of each person attending _____

_____.

I will [__], will not [__] attend the Medieval Times dinner. Number attending _____. There is a \$43.00 charge per person for this event.

Carol is the wife of Fred Gilbert who served in Delta Co., 2/506th Infantry at Ripcord.