



RIPCORD REPORT



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

Issue # 113

March 2018

Halloween at Myrtle Beach in 2018

by Lee Widjeskog

OK everyone, be prepared for this reunion!!! It starts on Halloween Day!!! (October 31). So make certain you have everything you need to celebrate!

It will be a great way to relax before the hectic Thanks Giving, Christmas and New Year's events coming up after it!! Enjoy the secluded and peaceful beaches in Myrtle Beach as only early November can present to you!

Were you aware that Halloween has its roots in Christian, German and Celtic holidays of long ago? The Celts of the Ireland and Scotland and Germans, celebrated the time around 1 November as the end of the harvest and growing season and the beginning of the dark winter months. Pope Gregory IV (835AD) set aside days to remember saints, martyrs and the faithful departed as "All Saints and Martyrs Day (November 1) and "All Souls Day" (November 2). October 31 is the Hallowed Evening that marks the beginning of the celebration. Over time these words were condensed to "Halloween". With Christianity being introduced to greater Europe, the two celebrations were combined. The Irish and Scots in preparation for Halloween would scoop out turnips, place a candle in it and go from house to house seeking food and blessing families as way of remembering the dead.

In some cultures it is still a day to remember the dead and is celebrated with visions of skeletons and ghosts. Dressing up in costumes comes from Scottish and Irish customs and was brought to the United States in the 1830's. However, it was not popular until around 1910. By then turnips were seldom used in favor of the larger and easier prepared pumpkins to hold the light. Today, in North America, it has lost most of its religious significance, but in South America and other predominately Catholic countries all saints day is still

very important.

So as you prepare to attend the Halloween Reunion, take some time to remember the faithfully departed who we lost in 1970 and ready yourself for the coming dark days of winter!

See you in warm and lovely Myrtle Beach!!

2018 REUNION DATE:

Please note that the normal dates of the reunion have been changed for this year!

1-888-266-4375 for rooms
Group Code: Ripcord Association

2018 MYRTLE BEACH, SC

Wednesday Oct. 31 to Saturday Nov. 3

Leave Sunday Nov. 4



Sands Club Ocean Resort



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.

- Richard Frazer A 159 AHB
- Richard Blyth A 2/506 & HHC 2/506
- George Scott A 2/11 FA
- Leigh Freeman C 2/506
- Alfred Lee C 2/506
- Andy Hegedus C 2/506
- Darryl Reina A 2/506
- Walter Lewis B 2/319 FA
- David Fishlock E 2/501
- Joe & Leslie Stamm in memory of Robert Zoller C 2/506

Checks payable to "Ripcord Association".

Mail to:

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



**Visit our website at
www.ripcordassociation.com**

Read the **Ripcord Report** on line
Daily updates ● History
and much more

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.



Join us on Facebook group
Ripcord Association

**Visit our website at
www.ripcordassociation.com**

Please continue to send your letters and
send your comments or articles to:
frankmarshall@ripcordassociation.com

or postal mail to:

**Frank Marshall
567 Circle Drive
Surfside Beach, SC 29575**

Everyone would love to hear from you.

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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Ripcord on Facebook

by Anthony Chritchlow



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

Hi everyone! I hope all of you are in to good spring weather. Here in my part of Idaho spring started the first part of January. Most of the ski resorts here have been hurting with not much snow on the ski runs. After last year's snowmagedon we are enjoying this weather.

We enter the New Year with 700 members on face book. We have over 16 new members since the last report. Everyone's posting great pictures of Ripcord or their time in Vietnam. Keep up these posts. You guys are what makes our Face book page what it is.

I'm still waiting on information for the greatest generation foundation. This is for the group trip back to Vietnam. I know they have 2 trips for 2018. Out group is to be one. I do know they are confused about the entire group living in different states. I guess they thought we all live in one state. The Jokes is on them.

I won't be going to this year's reunion but plan in the 2020 reunion. Please consider attending our reunions. It's a good place to meet old friends and get new ones. I will post a registration form on facebook once it is available. So to all my Ripcord vets be safe this spring and all year.

Ripcord Association Membership

814 members in our Ripcord Association
657 are Ripcord Veterans
157 are Associate Members
203 receive newsletter via Postal Mail
610 receive the newsletter via e-mail
700 on Facebook "Ripcord Association Group"

Please go to our website and update your membership to keep getting important information about our Ripcord Association

Anna Britt Nolan Trust

by Mary Murphy



Hello Everyone,

I just want to give you a brief update with regard to Anna Britt and the Trust Fund. Anna Britt Nolan continues to do very well in high school and has been named Valedictorian of her graduating class this year. She has also applied and been accepted at Oregon State, getting a scholarship for her tuition. So next fall she is off to college with plans to major in Journalism! How proud Keith (and George) must be of her.

Anna Britt is so thankful for the support our Ripcord Association continues to give her with the raffle for the trust fund every year. Can you believe this all began when she was just 9 years old! Now if we can just keep our support coming as she goes through her college years. So please start thinking about items to bring for the Trust Fund Raffle at the reunion this year.

I am at home here in Northern Illinois in the midst of a winter storm—we're due to have a foot of snow by the time it's finished. Makes me think of Myrtle Beach a lot and I am planning to see you there! God Bless All of You!

Hi everybody!

Thank you so much for the donation! I found out last week that I was accepted to the University of Oregon! I plan on going "into" the Journalism Program/major of U of O but we will see how things pan out once I get there.

I am graduating this year (2018) and am my classes valedictorian!!!

Thank you for your continued support!
Anna Nolan,

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



Winter is here for those of us in the northern states. Every once in a while it gets chilly or down right cold in the south and then the complaints really come to fore! But, fear not because the days are getting longer and soon the mud season will come to the north and the south will start to worry about the coming heat of the summer. Where ever you live it is never quite perfect but we all adjust and learn to deal with it. Sort of like the “Nam. But it was only for a year so as bad as it was, good days were ahead.

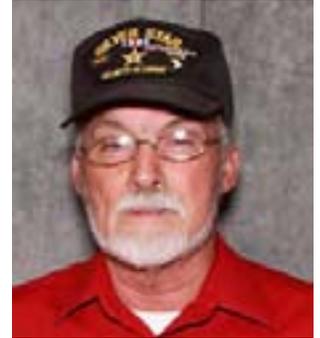
Since the last newsletter I have finalized the Associations financial report. In October 2016 we started with \$50,384. From the first of October to the end of September 2017 we spent \$20,475 and made deposits of \$17,047 to leave us with a total of \$46,907 at the end of September 2017. It broke down as follows: Postage, web site, newsletter & supplies: \$1,798, Shirts, hats, books, DVDs, etc.: \$ 6,325, Reunion food, meals etc.: \$8,045, Incorporation, non-profit & tax filing: \$2,258, Anna Britt Trust: \$1,300, DVD startup loan: \$750. Anyone wishing to review the books is welcomed to contact me for details.

Many of these expenses will not be repeated at the same level in this fiscal year since they are one time events. The expenditures for the shirts, hats etc. will be much less this year since we now have a good supply of items. The non-profit paper work has been completed and will not need to be re-done. The loan was made to John Daily so he could produce more of his DVD “The Ghosts of Ripcord” and has now been repaid as per agreement

INFORMATION NEEDED: I think that by now many of you have received a letter or message via e-mail or the US Postal Service from me. I am preparing the year book for 2020 with a picture of all the men who were considered to have been the Ripcord AO when they died or received mortal wounds. With each picture I want to write a little about the personalities of those who died way too soon. So check that list I sent you and let me know what you recall about your buddy. Each was a very important person to his friends and family and I want that to show up along with his picture. Search your memory, your old letters and photos and see what you can come up with and let me know before July 2019. Friends and relatives can contact me as well! Thank you!

Randal Burdette passed away 8 Feb. 2018

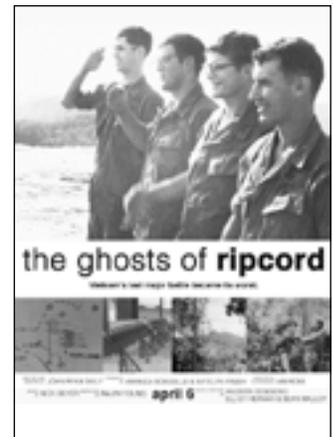
Randy ran gun #5 in Alpha Battery 2/11 Field Artillery on FSB Ripcord. He was considered to be “one Hell of a trooper” and an all-around good guy. He passed away from a heart attack on 8 February 2018. He will be sorely missed by his wife Sue and many members of the Ripcord Association who had the privilege of knowing him.



Currahee, Randy!

“The Ghosts of Ripcord” Documentary

There are new DVDs available of the feature-length documentary entitled, The Ghosts of Ripcord. To place an order please visit our official Facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/firebasefilm>



You can also go directly to the link below to place an order more quickly.

<https://www.facebook.com/commerce/products/1414513478659718/>

You will receive your DVD in the mail within 7-10 business days from the time your order is received and processed. Any questions regarding past or future orders should be directed to our Facebook page’s inbox or to our official email: firebasefilm@gmail.com

Thank you!

John Daily

INCOMING MAIL



Great news!

Our own Dale Tauer (D/1-506) has been nominated for the Distinguished Member of the Regiment award and will be honored at Ft Campbell during Currahee week this year! They even posted a picture of him in Vietnam on their face book website!



Congratulations Dale, what an honor!
Jim McCoy
D/1-506

I was transferred over to E Co. (Recon) and that's where I got to know John Mihalko, etc.

Here is a little donation for our association and Thanks for the Ripcord Newsletter, God Bless America!!

Sincerely,
Alfred (Chief) Lee
Navajo, NM



Dear Ripcord Association,

My name is Kevin McKee and Harvey Neal was my Mother's first cousin. Our family has always carried a sense of gratitude and pride for Harvey's service and I have made it a personal mission to learn as much about his life in an effort to keep his spirit very much alive within our family. To the best of my knowledge Harvey was a part of 3rd Platoon, A company, 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry of the 101st Airborne. He was wounded during Ripcord on 07/22/70 and died later on 07/27/70. Him and my mother both grew up in South Boston, Virginia. Would there be anyone in the Ripcord Association that may have known Harvey and could share stories or pictures of their time together? Any bit of information would be cherished by our family.

Thank you,
Kevin L. McKee
kevin@curtiswindham.com



Lee,

Thank you for the great work you do for the Association. The reunion at Laughlin was terrific. Cheryl and I met some really wonderful people and enjoyed our time there. Please add this donation to the general fund.

Best wishes and a Happy New Year to you and Kathy.
George Scott A 2/11 FA

Lee,

I knew Lt. William Penn Wall III. He was the forward observer. He was Roman Catholic and from wester Washington state. I saw him a day or two before he was killed. He had a cold and a rash running from his right nostril to the corner of his mouth. He was waiting for news of the birth of his child. His college friends called him "Bink". He was calling in artillery when he was killed by enemy mortar fire. I had told him to find a safe place where he could observe and adjust fire. He was adjusting fire on one of the mortar positions when he was killed. Several weeks later I saw Captain Ben King, the C.O. of C Battery, 2/319th Artillery. The safe position Bill had did not allow him to see to adjust so Ben told him to move where he could see. After Bill was killed, Ben had to put Bill's body in a body bag.

Ray Hines
C 2/319 FA

Hello Lee,

I received your letter , etc, here on January 2, 2018. It was nice to hear from you and I send a Big Hello to all the members! It's too bad I don't have access to the internet and besides that I don't know a thing about computers anyway, sorry.

Well, I am sorry to say I can't remember thoses guys of C 2/506 on the KIA list. But mostly I remember 2nd Lt. Jim Campbell and Sgt. Paul Burkey. The three of us dragged two KIAs that were out in the open on the 8th of July west of Ripcord (Hill 1000). I remember the first one, never got his name (James Hupp) was shot in the head and about my height so no problem we dragged him by his fatigue shirt. The other guy was a big white boy about 6'1" or 6'2", our medic (Rickey Scott) and I never knew his name either. After Ripcord

INCOMING MAIL



Hi Lee,

I remember O'Brien, Graham, & Law pretty well.

Edward T O'Brien (the Hobbed); Terry was an easy going guy as far as I can remember. He was a W2, Medevac pilot in charge (PIC), assigned to the 326th Medical Bn, Eagle Dustoff. At the time of his death he was scheduled for rotation to Camp Eagle. The rotation was delayed because the replacements were held up at Camp Eagle due to aircraft repairs. We had two aircraft & crews detached full time @ Camp Evans with C Med from Camp Eagle, to support our northern A/O. They were on 24 hrs/day for a week at a time. Rotation day required the replacement crew to be in place before the old crew could depart. On that fateful day Terry took the mission that the replacement crew would have gotten. I know that for a fact, I was the pilot on the replacement crew. They had a hoist mission and were hit by an RPG. Terry was scheduled to leave the day he rotated back to Eagle on RR to meet his wife in Hawaii, we had to notify her before she departed the US. They were newly weds before he went to Nam.

Bruce Elliot Graham was Terry's co-pilot. He was a very young W1, new to the unit, single. As I remember him he was a pleasant, quiet guy, eager to learn.

Brent Robin Law was an excellent flight medic and crew member, he was one of our very best. He was single and I believe he hailed from Colorado. On the mission where he got killed I'm very familiar with, I got shot down in that LZ earlier. I believe we were in support of 0/1 of the 506th, you can check that out from your records. After I was shot down in the LZ my helicopter continued to run, I had gotten thrown out of it before I could shut it down and so did everyone else that was in it including a full load of wounded. We got hit just as I lifted off to depart and came crashing down in the LZ. I got evac'd out on my sister ship later, flown by Larry Rosen. Brent was the medic on that ship, he ran across the LZ and jumped into my helicopter, switched off the fuel to stop the rotor blades. I was evac'd to C Med for treatment of my wounds. While I was being treated some time later they carried in the two Dustoff crew member from Lt Rosen's ship. The Co-pilot had taken a round through his arm and Brent had taken that same round in his chest, DOA @ C Med. We determined upon investigation that only one round hit the aircraft going through the windshield, the co-pilots, left arm,

passing on through and hitting Brent on the right side of his chicken plate and penetrating his chest, killing him instantly. Lt. Rosen knowing the situation, flew five missions into that LZ to evacuate the wounded before the incident that killed Brent & wounded his co-pilot.

Lee that's the best I can recall of events. I hope this information helps and sheds some light of events.

*Have a nice day,
Allen Schwartz
326 Med and Eagle Dustoff*



Hi Lee,

I remember Roberto Flores, I was his platoon leader from when I joined 2d Pit, Bravo, on Apr 2 (day after Bravo walked off of Ripcord first time?), until I was transferred from Bravo to Division G-1 on May 20. He was an ideal soldier, good natured, never complained, always willing to do whatever was necessary or asked of him. He perfectly illustrates the old adage, "The good die young." There were only a few who impressed me this much...mostly it was his uncomplaining, good nature. He would smile when there was little to smile about.

*Ed Morris
B/2-506*



Frank:

I wanted to thank you for keeping me on the mailing list, as I so much enjoy reading about another successful reunion! It's great recognizing a few of this motley crew in the pictures! Seriously, I have always felt very honored that my hotel property had a chance to host this event.

*Have a blessed and Happy Thanksgiving!
Christine C. Ruble, CMP | Director of Sales
University Plaza Hotel & Convention Center*



Dear Lee,

Enclosed is a donation to the Ripcord Association in honor of: Robert Zoller who made the ultimate sacrifice, Frank Bort for his courageous service and all the men who fought so gallantly at FSB Ripcord.

*Sincerely,
Joe A. and Leslie R. Stamm*

INCOMING MAIL



Lee,

Thanks for forwarding the Log report (20 Aug 1970) from Robi n Graham, He sent it because I wanted to know the name of the soldier who got hit by M60 by the “friendl y fire” from the misguided helicopter. We were on Firebase Kathryn. A misguided (lost) Huey from the adjoining AO saw some lights and decided to strafe us. I have a vivid memory of that incident. The soldier, SP4 Thomas Searon had just survived Ripcord and had 7 days to go. That was the first time I had bullets hitting all around me as I was caught in the open working on getting a light bulb installed in the Arty area. By the way, Dr. Harris found out that he did survive the injury. It was a serious injury, as the bullet came up and through his intestines.

Another interesting item on the same page is recorded that a Beacon Drop was put in at 1614. I had just become the Beacon Drop Officer and that was the first of many that I put in. I can tell by the date and location . I did not remember that those two items happened on the same day.

Walt Lyssy



Don Workman

CPT Workman was the perfect combat commander to me. Perhaps I was just a young impressionable LT, but he personified the infantry leader.

G-2d by the BN XO, MAJ Ford, he told me and LT Thompson that he was assigning us to the best company commander in the battalion. That set the tone and expectation for me, and when I finally met him I was not disappointed. I do not know what you call a prior service West Pointer, but under other circumstances you would call him a mustang. Due to his earlier service and attendance at Prep School, he was a bit older than the other junior officers and his maturity fostered a calm and confident persona. While his command presence demanded respect, he was also personable and built self confidence in his subordinates. I certainly felt like I would be okay if I followed his lead. He always seemed calm and well-grounded. At the same time, when we finally got into a serious firefight, his voice could be heard above the din shouting encouragement and guidance. When we hit the hot LZ at Ripcord, he was forceful in directing suppressive fire, but very calm and

almost jovial when he told the 1SG to put his cherries in for Air Medals. Later, when three NVA walked into our perimeter, only to be greeted by one of our M-60 starter belts, he yelled “Good, cut their d... off!”, which I took as a colorful figure of speech rather than an illegal order. After the mortar attack on the hill top, we were the target of several ground probes or attacks. During a break in the action he once yelled “If they hit us again, it will be every man for him self!” Some found that scary or demoralizing, but I took it as a call to arms. Bring it on! Ranger calmly directed ARA and fast movers very close to us. During one such sortie, he told us to get down as low as we could because these were going to be right on top of us. He was right. The exploding ordinance was so close it literally lifted us off the ground and rained splintered tree parts and dirt down on us. That ended the ground attacks! At the same time, this small framed warrior was not one to waste his troops. I cannot tell you how many times he cautioned me about taking care of my guys. His motto was you can buy more ammo, you can’t buy more life.

Having taken a small mortar fragment during the early morning engagement, he offered to medevac me, which I refused. I have always been of the opinion that he “rewarded” me by assigning me to the first bird out during the extraction in the late afternoon of the 21 July. The last time I saw him, he was standing erect and confident at the edge of the LZ, directing traffic to the incoming birds. His death, moments later, was a total shock to me. His family lost a son, I lost a mentor, and the Army lost a helluva leader.

Currahee!

John Smith

D/1-506

Ripcord Association Newest Members

Smith	Walter	2/319 FA HHB
Franklin	Stephen	2-506
Rodriguez	Ramon	L Co 75th Rangers
Barthelemy	Farrel	B/2-319 Arty
Bartos	Stephen	101st Abn

2018 FSB RIPCORDER REUNION SIGN UP SHEET

At the Sands Ocean Club Resort, Myrtle Beach, SC

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 _____

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

SIGN UP FEES

Before June 30, 2018, \$75 per adult

July 1 through 31, 2018 \$80 per adult,

August 1 through October 1, 2018 \$85 per adult.

After October 1, 2018 \$90 per adult.

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

Sign up fee due October 26, 2018.

Make your check payable to "RIPCORDER ASSOCIATION"

Mail your check with this form to:

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

Questions? Call Lee at 856-451-1108 before 26 Oct. 2018. (After call 609-774-6951)

AGENDA

Wednesday, October 31: Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Self guided tours and shopping)

Thursday, November 1 Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Golf in the AM) (Self guided tours)

Friday, November 2 Hospitality 1200 Hours. Ladies raffle 1800 hours (6PM)

Saturday, November 3 Business meeting for association business in Hospitality room.

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

Sunday, November 4 Homeward bound

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

HOTEL RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE SEPERATELY

BY October 1, 2018

CALL: 1-888-266-4375

Ask for HOTEL RESERVATIONS and mention the

GROUP CODE: RIPCORDER ASSOCIATION

(Price is \$62 per night plus tax: breakfast is included.)