



# RIPCORD REPORT



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

Number 106

May 2016

## JERSEY RAMBLINGS

by Lee Widjeskog A/2-506



During the past week and a half Kathy and I spent time in Calhoun County West Virginia! Kathy's sister lives there with her husband and I got a chance to help him clear some brush and build a few shelves in the shed we built during our last visit. I always enjoy visiting West Virginia and this time of the year (early spring) one can see much further in the hills than in the summer. I wish we had that opportunity in the hills west of Camp Evans! Agent Orange did not last long enough when it came to vegetation.

As usual things keep moving along and we all are getting older in years if not in spirit. I was sadden to hear of the passing of George Murphy on April 2. I am afraid things like this will become more common to our friends and associates as the years pass. With that in mind, Fred Spaulding has suggested that we post a frame in the newsletter with the names of comrades we have recently heard of dying. This will help our memory and alert us to what has happened since we cannot keep in touch with everyone.

### RIPCORD ASSOCIATION UPDATES:

#### Reunions

We are set for the 2017 reunion at the Tropicana in Laughlin, Nevada. The days for that event will be different from what we have been doing. It will start on Monday, 2 October 2017 rather than Wednesday. The final day (banquet night) will be Thursday 5 October 2017 with people leaving on Friday. Rooms will be \$34 per night Sunday thru Thursday and \$60 on Friday and Saturday nights.

Now that we have your attention, the 2018 reunion looks like it will be once more in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina at the Sands Ocean Club as in the past.

However, there is a time period change here as well! In an effort to keep the price as low as possible, the reunion **will be held the last day of October into early November (31 October thru 3 November 2018 with Sunday as check out day for \$62 per night before taxes).**

Finally, in order to confuse and shatter your memory cells, the 2019 and 2020 reunions in Indianapolis, Indiana will probably be held around the 23 July period as was the battle wrap up. Prices are still in negotiation but they will be nowhere as low as 2017 or 2018 unless we use this time period. Stay tuned for further info!!

#### The Ghosts of Ripcord DVD

"The Ghosts of Ripcord" is once more alive and kicking. John Daily is putting together the DVD's and will soon be ready to sell them to whoever wants a copy. He indicated he has a list of over 200 people seeking this DVD. He has been slow but it looks like it will finally be available. We are waiting for more information to provide you on how to order the DVD. **The Ripcord Association is not responsible for distribution of these DVD's.**

#### Remembering Firebase Ripcord Book

"Remembering Firebase Ripcord" is now out as many of you are available. The author, Chris Brady is having a book signing the end of April down in Myrtle Beach. A number of Ripcord guys will be there and all are invited. A good turnout will help the book sell so if you are near or have the time, drop down there and attend the signing and maybe buy an extra book or two. Details are in Chris's column elsewhere in this newsletter.

(continued on page 3)

## 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.

John Nicoson	3 <sup>rd</sup> Bde Recon
Joe Stamm	friend of Frank Bort
Phil Michaud	B 2/319 FA
Leigh Freeman	C 2/506
Wilburn Wall	C 2/501
Gene Marshall	B 2/319 FA
Richard Blyth	A & HHC 2/506
Michael Griffin	HHC 2/506
Peter Meloro	C 2/506

Checks payable to "Ripcord Association".  
Mail to:  
**Lee Widjeskog,**  
**493 Stillman Ave.**  
**Bridgeton, NJ 08302**

### Upcoming Ripcord Reunions

2016	Springfield, MO
2017	Laughlin, NV
2018	Myrtle Beach, SC
2019	Indianapolis, IN
2020	Indianapolis, IN

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.



Visit our website at  
[www.ripcordassociation.com](http://www.ripcordassociation.com)

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



Join us on Facebook group  
Ripcord Association

Please continue to send your letters and  
send your comments or articles to:  
[frank@ripcordassociation.com](mailto:frank@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**  
[www.ripcordassociation.com](http://www.ripcordassociation.com)

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**DMOR 2016**

The 2016 506 Reunion will be held from Wednesday 11 May through 14 May at the Riverview Inn 50 college St., Clarksville, Tennessee (931-552-3331) it provides a chance to tour Fort Campbell and meet the soldiers of the present as well as “old guys”. On Friday 13 May the induction ceremony for the Distinguished Members of the Regiment will be held. John Mihalko will be inducted so show your support and attend if you can. Sign up must be done before 5 May to allow for security check to get into Fort Campbell. For further info contact: 855-506-0506 or go on line to [www.506infantry.org](http://www.506infantry.org).

**Ripcord Association Newest Members**

Reed	Tom	101st Abn
Rohde	Stan	A/377 Arty
Rich	David	Associate Member
Hesselbein	Robert	Associate Member
Owens	Melanie	Associate Member
Morgan	Gerald	B/101st Avn Bn
Cunningham	Joe	B/2-501
Dicken	Michael	B/2-506
Heehn	Richard	C/159th Avn Bn
Macy	Jackie	D/2-502
Wittler	Neal	E/2-506 Recon
Stam	Jeff	HHQ/1-501

**Membership Status**

- 761 members in our Ripcord Association
- 621 are Ripcord Veterans
- 140 are Associate Members
- 203 receive newsletter via Postal Mail
- 558 receive the newsletter via e-mail
- 584 on Facebook “Ripcord Association Group”

**2016 Ripcord Reunion**

**Springfield, MO**

Wed. Oct 5 thru Sat. Oct 8, 2016  
with check out on Sunday 9 Oct.

The University Plaza Hotel  
333 John Q. Hammons Parkway.

The rooms cost is \$82 per night  
before taxes.

**Breakfast is included.**

**Springfield Sign ups April 2016**

- Tex Campbell D 2/506
- Ken & Maryann David D 1/506
- Bob & Red Judd B 2/506
- Gene & Star Marshall B 2/319 FA
- Jim & Michelle McCoy D 1/506
- Bruce & Ramona Nelson B 2/319 FA
- George & Sheila Potts B 2/319 FA
- Dave & Lisa Snyder A 2/11 FA
- Bob Tarbuck & Paige Corkhill C 2/506
- Lee & Kathy Widjeskog A 2/506

# INCOMING MAIL



Hi Lee,

I commanded B 2/319 from July 15 to the end.  
Warmest regards,  
*Phil Michaud*  
*B/2-319 Arty*

.....

New Member

New in country, our group was sent as Rear Security on July 21. The mess had been hit the week before. On July 23, the Schnucks helicopters pulled the 105's off the hill. They were back to get the back hole and bulldozer but one set down 20 ft from my fox hole on top of the hill. The pilot jumped into my foxhole and said they had hit his #1 engine. We were evacuated by Huey's picking us up in the pits where the 105's had been.  
*Michael Dicken*  
*506 Inf. Co B 2nd Bn*

.....

New Member

Was operating out of Ripcord when our helicopter was shot down on June 7, 1970.  
*Jeff Stam*  
*HHQ/1/501st*

.....

New Member

I was a pilot flying in support of FSB Ripcord from May 1970 to July 1970. I was a new pilot with the Kingsman/Kingsmen call sign during the period. I did not fly during the last days at FSB Ripcord. I flew many sorties as a co-pilot in the area FSB Kathryn, and nearby locations.  
*Gerald Morgan*  
*B Co 101st Avn Bn 101st Avn Grp 101st Abn Div*

.....

New Member

Saw this attack 1st hand from about 6 clicks away as I led my platoon thru the ASHau in the direction of Ripcord (Michael Alioto was one of my M-60 men)  
*Joe Cunningham*  
*2-B 1/501*

New Member

I served as an AH-1G gunship pilot in 1972, but serve as the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association Legacy Committee Chairman. The Battle of FSB Ripcord is important to remember and study. I look forward to being an associate member of your organization.  
*Robert Hesselbein*  
*Associate Member*

.....

New Member

B Co 3/187 3rd platoon. I did a Hot LZ on 12 March 1970 to take the pressure off the 506. I still have your CEOI. We were socked in for a couple of weeks on the mountain top and the Vietnamization in the flats followed by Las Son 719. Would like the details on the March period for my boys- we meet regular but never knew where or why we were doing what we did on that one!  
*Ted Mataxis*  
*3/187*

.....

New Member

Enjoyed hearing from old buddy, John Schnarr who told me about this website  
*Neal Wittler*  
*2nd 506 Echo Company*

.....

New Member

My father is David Rich. Though my parents divorced and the time we should have had with our father was too short. I am hoping to reconnect with him in a way that honors his memory with those he served with.  
*Respectfully, his son,*  
*David E. Rich*  
*ultratrunk1973@gmail.com*

Our members enjoy reading letters to the Editor, so why not take a few minutes and send us a letter to let other members know about you, your thoughts about the Ripcord Association, our reunions or anything you like to share. Send your letters to:  
[mail@ripcordassociation.com](mailto:mail@ripcordassociation.com)

## George D. Murphy 1948-2016



Recently we lost a most able member of the FSB Ripcord Association with the passing of George Murphy formerly of Bravo Battery 2/320 Field Artillery. George and his wife Mary were not founding members of the association having only discovered and attended their first reunion in 2004, but they were great and consistent supporters!

After Viet Nam, George got a Bachelor of Science degree and went to work for the Caterpillar Company. He found time to marry Mary Way in 1982. He was active in his community as a Cub Scout Leader, Little League coach, a member of the Newark Neighborhood Watch, a Moose Lodge member, a member of VFW Post 1486 and American Legion Post 181. George couldn't just be a member, he eventually became post commander for each of these last two organizations. When he wasn't playing golf or softball, he and Mary owned and raced harness horses in the area.

Once he discovered Keith Nolan's book on Ripcord, he became an active member of the association. When he and Mary heard that Keith had terminal cancer they took Chuck Hawkins suggestion and proceeded to check with a bank and lawyers to set up a trust fund for Anna Britt Nolan, the young daughter of Keith. By the fall of 2008 the trust fund was set and the first donations made. The success of this fund is due to the hard work and efforts of George and Mary Murphy and the others who have contributed to this wonderful cause. They felt as do most of us that without Keith Nolan's book, many of us would not know each other today or the details of the battle in which we participated.

We of the FSB Ripcord Association will greatly miss the presence and hard work of George Murphy who was and always will be a dedicated veteran, valuable member of society and a friend to all who got to know him! God speed, George, we will miss you.

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**

## Ripcord on Facebook

by Anthony Chritchlow



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

Aaaah Spring is here. We had a mild winter here in Boise. The snow landed up in the mountains where we need it. Most places where they measure it's at 100% or more.

As of 4/9/16 our facebook page is up to 584 members.

A few months ago I picked up a new position with the company I work for. Along with giving out food samples I will not be traveling all of southern Idaho Checking on the other employees that do demo's. So, lots of traveling from now on. Yes I know not too smart on my part hahaha.

Our plans for the summer, is a vacation to the Oregon coast. Visit with family. Soon the Snow melts its ATV time.

As always guys and gals keep posting your thought and pictures on our Facebook page. You are the life's blood of our page. Have a safe summer.

## "Remembering Firebase Ripcord" New Ripcord Book

### How to order the book:

**email [rememberingripcord@windstream.net](mailto:rememberingripcord@windstream.net)**  
if you are interested in obtaining a personalized copy of the book.

It can also be ordered online at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)  
or [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com).

**2015 Ripcord Association Reunion men's Group Photo**



**2015 Ripcord Association Reunion women's Group Photo**



Everyone is invited

## Ripcord Book Discussion Event

### Remembering Firebase Ripcord

Vietnam 1970

10 a.m. Sat. April 23

Surfside Beach Public Library  
410 Surfside Dr,  
Surfside Beach, SC 29575

Author Chris Brady, accompanied by a number of Ripcord survivors, will discuss the battle, those who fought in it and the two-year process of writing the book. "Remembering Firebase Ripcord" is available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com). For more information, email [rememberingripcord@windstream.net](mailto:rememberingripcord@windstream.net)

#### Rooms are available at the:

Springmaid Beach Hotel in Myrtle Beach.  
3200 South Ocean Blvd.  
843-315-7005 Ask for Matthew Kido and tell him you are with Ripcord.  
Please let me know if you book here or elsewhere.  
[frank@ripcordassociation.com](mailto:frank@ripcordassociation.com)



# RIPCORD REUNION 2016 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, 2016, \$75 per adult**

**July 1 through 31, 2016 \$80 per adult,**

**August 1 through September 6, 2016 \$85 per adult.**

**After September 6, 2016 \$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 September 29, 2016.**

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 29 Sept. 2016. (After call 609-774-6951)

## **AGENDA**

**Wednesday, October 5:** Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Self guided tours and shopping)

**Thursday, October 6:** Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Golf in the AM) (Self guided tours)

**Friday, October 7:** Hospitality 1200 Hours. Ladies raffle 1800 hours (6PM)

**Saturday, October 8:** Business meeting for association business in Hospitality room.

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

**Sunday, October 9:** Homeward bound

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

## **HOTEL RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE SEPERATELY**

### **BY September 2, 2016**

### **CALL 417-864-7333**

Ask for HOTEL RESERVATIONS and mention the

**GROUP CODE: RIPCORD**

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