



RIPCORD REPORT



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

Issue # 119

September 2019

2019 Springfield Ripcord Reunion *by Lee Widjeskog*

This past July we held our fourth FSB Ripcord reunion in the town of Springfield, Missouri. Each time we have been welcomed and the reunions were a success. 2019 was no different!

The University Plaza Hotel was where we got together and it was a great place. Members started arriving on Saturday even though we did not start the hospitality room before Wednesday. The early birds found things to do locally and down in Branson.

Over 150 people attended with new people in the persons of Linda Byles and Patty Taylor cousins of Durl Calhoun of B 326 ENG, David Cote (B&E 2/506), Larry Fieser (C 1/506), Jim Joyce (Pathfinder), Ken Lilley (A 2/506), Johnny McGinnis (A 2/506), and Joe O. Smith (D 2/506 & 326 ENG). We were happy to meet these new comers and hear their stories. Everyone adds a little piece of memory to the story of the battle around FSB Ripcord.

Thursday morning saw our squad of golf players reach 16 in number. (That was the size of my platoon on 22 July 1970.) All had a great time and they got back with a few hours to spare before going to the baseball game.



The local double A, professional baseball team (Springfield Cardinals) was in town while we were present. Arrangements were made to attend the game when they were playing the Amarillo Sod Poodles. (Yes, the “Sod Poodles”! Apparently the town voted on the name and came up with this moniker. It’s a play on words and a pun for “prairie dogs”. I would have preferred “Prairie Dogs.”) About 60 of us attended the game and they had the veterans walk onto the field before the game and receive a standing ovations as the announcer told a brief history of “Ripcord”. It was a moving tribute for many of the veterans. Oh yes! The Sod Poodles won 3 to 1 over the Cardinals.



On Friday we once more held the “Ladies Auction/raffle”. Some wonderful prizes were offered and won. Over \$2500 was raised as most of the 150 people attended the event. Plenty of food was available as the chicken tenders, meatballs and sauce, coconut shrimp, hot wings, vegetable plate, cheese plate and mini sandwiches disappeared but not before all ate. Everything served was delicious!

(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 Fowler C 2/506
- Leigh Freeman C 2/506
- Russ Dixon B 2/319 FA
- Joe O. Smith 326 ENG & D 2/506
- Fred Shuttleworth E 2/506
- Jim McCall D 2/506
- Ron Hudson 39th FA
- Steve Matsumoto A 2/506
- Jim Harris HHC 2/506
- Peter Meloro C 2/506
- Lloyd Rahlf HHC 2/506
- Rick Blyth A & HHC 2/506
- Vincent Priola B 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:

ltwidjeskog@aol.com

or

postal mail to:

[Lee Widjeskog](#)

493 Stillman Ave

Bridgeton, NJ 08302

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

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(2019 Reunion continued)

On Saturday we held an 1100 hours business meeting. The two board members nominated were elected by acclimation and general business discussed. Following lunch Bob Judd directed the erection of the flags and guidons for the evening banquet.

Well before 1630 hours all was set and members were dressed. Paul Buhr with the assistance of his brother Korky, got all the yearbook photos completed by 1800 hours.

A delicious dinner was served and once all were satisfied the coins were presented to the first timers. In the annual free drawing, Bob Barrowcliff of 159 ASHB won a Ripcord Reunion registration for two whenever he wishes to use it.

Group pictures and unit pictures were completed and all moved to the hospitality room to say their goodbyes and plan for the big reunion in 2020.

Hope to see you all in 2020 starting on Monday, 20 July once again at Springfield and the University Plaza Hotel!



Welcome to the Ripcord Reunion

*(See page 8 of this newsletter for
Registration form and more information
for the 2020 Ripcord Reunion 50th
Anniversary)*

JERSEY RAMBLINGS

by Lee Widjeskog A/2-506



The 2019 Ripcord Reunion was a success and is now over! The hotel staff and the chamber of commerce were all very helpful and easy to deal with.

They proposed the attendance and appearance at the baseball stadium only two blocks from the hotel. Those who attended were recognized and received a standing ovation from the fans attending the game. It was great to feel appreciated.

A couple of items were discussed at the business meeting.

1. Jim McCoy and Bill Boles were re-elected to the Ripcord Board of directors for three year terms. No one ran in opposition. The board consists of President Peter Meloro, Vice President Frank Marshall, Sec. – Treas. Lee Widjeskog, member Jim McCoy and Bill Boles.
2. We expect a great number of people to attend in 2020. It is conceivable we could have four or five hundred attend. For that reason we are not going to hold any raffles either for Anna Britt or the Ladies Raffle in 2020. However, the hot, finger food will still be served, but this time on Wednesday night.
3. The purpose of the event in 2020 will be for all to meet and talk to those they have been searching for over the years. It is intended to allow all a chance to mingle with and find their long lost comrades who attend. This will be done in the hospitality room and around the hotel.
4. Tony Little has worked with a jeweler and come up with a design for a Ripcord ring that has been approved. The cost of the ring will be from \$499 and up depending on the amount of gold and silver and current prices of the metal. The price can be less if he has enough people signed up to purchase. Elsewhere you will find his info and pictures of the ring. If you are interested in a “Ripcord” ring sign up with Tony.
5. The balance of our account at the end of June 2019 was \$51,604.36.

Ripcord on Facebook

by Anthony Chritchlow



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

Well another reunions in the books. I want to thank everyone that posted pictures of this year's reunion. The pictures were great. I wanted to be there this year but taking the kids and grand kids to Yellowstone took priority this year. My wife and I will be there for the 50th. I was lucky and got a room for us at the hotel. My sister and her husband will be with us. They have made at a different hotel they did not want to take a chance of taking a room from a Ripcord vet. I hope by the time this news letter is published that we will have more rooms available at the hotel. I think it well a huge reunion next year.

Now for our Face book page. We are now up to 809 members. We always get a big jump at reunion times. The majority of new members are family and friends of Ripcord Vets. Also, family and friends of our Ripcord brothers that lost their lives around and on Ripcord.

My summer started out great. I did a lot of cleaning in and around the house. I did a deep clean in the garage. Took one of the atv's apart looking for a no power problem. I'm now looking for a \$500 part to get it running again. Then there is the fall the wife took in June. She dislocated her left shoulder and fractured her left ankle. So June and July she was a guest at either a hospital or rehab center. I got her home the last 2 weeks of July. On Monday 29 July she given the ok to put weight on her foot and use crutches. She can now get out of the house on her own. As they say there's always next summer. I'm driving the wife nuts as I have already laid out the trip to Springfield. I have my route down and where we are getting hotel rooms. After the reunion we will head north to Minnesota to visit her sister. I think I might be a bit excited for next year's reunion.

I guess I've rambled on enough. Everyone be safe for the rest of this year and next year also.

Anna Britt Nolan Trust

by Mary Murphy



Keith Nolan, who wrote "Ripcord, Screaming Eagles Under Siege", died when his daughter was only 10 years old. We helped him set up an education trust fund for his daughter when he discovered he had stage four lung cancer. The Ripcord Association has continued over these years to find new members due to the publicity Keith's book about our battle brought to the public. We all owe our thanks to Keith for the opportunity we have had to meet with each other. We can show our appreciation to Keith and his mother Ulla by supporting the trust fund.

The trust fund is made up of donations from Ripcord members as well as royalties from her father's book and his life insurance money. The trust fund is administered by her grandmother Ulla Nolan. It ends when Anna Britt reaches 26 years. At that time it goes over to Anna Britt Nolan without her grandmother overseeing the spending.

Anna Britt completed her first year of college at the University of Oregon. She has received scholarships to help with her tuition and she uses the trust fund for living expenses. She has done well academically and is also working at a local newspaper this summer, which goes with her Journalism major. That and a short trip with her grandmother to Sweden to meet relatives makes for a busy year.

Anyone wishing to donate to the trust fund can send a check to the address below:

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



INCOMING MAIL



“Bob and I would like to thank everyone for the card at the reunion. We also want to thank everyone who helped with the flags. Several times since the reunion Bob has mentioned the care and respect given and how impressed he was. Looking forward to the 50th next year!”

Bob and Redd Judd



Lee,
What a great time the reunion was for me. Thanks for making me feel completely at home. I look forward to next year...even with 300 to 400 people I'll manage to find a few new faces that tell me more about the blank spaces in my memory. And thanks to Kathy!

Enclosed is a check for the trust fund.

Currahee!

Joe O. Smith

D 2/506 & 326 ENG



LOOKING FOR LOST EAGLES

“The 101st Airborne Division Association is looking for 101st Airborne Division Veterans who served in the Division from 1991 to the present day.

The Association publishes a great Screaming Eagle Magazine, which covers the present Active Duty Divisions Combat Employment. It also publishes articles about the National Association’s current activities, and its Chapter activities. In addition it publishes articles about the Division’s past History, and also about its members who served in the Division.

If you are interested in joining this great National Association contact SGM Lloyd J. Rahlf USA (RET) a veteran of the Division during the Vietnam ERA. His E-Mail address is lrahlf@aol.com, or drop him a note at his mailing address, 738 O’Callaghan Dr, Sparks, NV 89434-3917. A Membership Packet will be sent. “Remember” “Once an Eagle always an Eagle”.

Lloyd J Rahlf

SGM, USA (RET)

National Association

Membership Committee Member

Ripcord Ring

Last year at the reunion a couple of people asked about getting a ring for Ripcord. Tony Little of D 2/506 talked to a jeweler and they designed a ring. After a few reviews and minor changes they produced the ring you see in the photos.

At this time the prices (before tax) are below for rings size 10 and below. It runs about \$90 more for larger rings.

Sterling silver : \$279

10k Yellow gold: \$979

14k Yellow gold: \$1499

If anyone is interested in obtaining a ring contact Tony by postal or e-mail. No money is presently required, just let him know if you would like to buy this ring. The more people that buy rings the lower the cost. tonywlittle@gmail.com

Tony Little

5080 Comstock Rd.

Chapel Hill, TN 37034



Ripcord Association Membership

647 members in our Ripcord Association

537 are Ripcord Veterans

110 are Associate Members

128 receive newsletter via Postal Mail

519 receive the newsletter via e-mail

809 on Facebook “Ripcord Association Group”

If your contact information has changed, please go to our website and update your membership to keep getting important information about our Ripcord Association

Springfield 2019 Attendee List

Below is the names of those that attended this year's past reunion

Floyd & Duane Alexander A2/506 & B 2/319 FA
Bob Anderson A 2/11 FA
Robert & Michele Barrowcliff A 159 ASHB
Bill & Pam Baldwin A2/506
Kurt & Kaleb Bashford & Logan Cline Guests
Lin & Pinkey Bashford D 2/506
Timothy Bohan Pathfinder
Bill Boles D 2 /506
Bruce Brady A 2/506
Jerome Buffington C 2/506
Paul & Korky Buhr A 2/506
Linda Byles & Patty Taylor B 326 ENG
Tex Campbell D 2/506
Howard, Diana & Bobbi Colbert C 2/506
Adam, Jase & Jacki Horton guests
Dale & Sue Cooper C 2/506
Fred Connor HHC 2/506
David Cote B & E /506
Tommy & Judy Counts & Lisa Hill D 2/506
Harold Day & Vickie Edwards 2/17 Cav.
Merle, Ruth & Josh DeLagrange D 1/506
Russ & Maryann Dixon B 2/319 FA
Lawrence & Debbie Fieser & Susan Nelson C 1/506
Rex & Carol Flansburg D 2/506
Nicholas & Andrew Fotias Pathfinder
John & Debbie Fowler C 2/506
David, Arlene, Wyatt & Willie Grubb D 158 ASHB
Ricky & Janet Hahn E 2/506
Bill & Lynn Hand B 2/506
Paul & Laure Hansmann B 2/506
Jim Harris HHC 2/506
Chuck Hawkins C & A 2/506
Bill Heath A & HHC 2/506
John & Barbara Hedrick E 2/506
Billy & Maggie Helvey A 2/506
Raymond Hines 2/319 FA, LNO 2/506
Terry Hodges D 1/506
Chuck & Jean Holmen A 159 ASHB
Donald & Linda Holthausen C 2/506
Jim Joyce Pathfinders
Robert & Red Judd B 2/506
Rick & Betty Kellogg B 2/506
Dale Lane, Diane Grote A & HHC 2/506

Leonard Larson A 2/320 FA
Robert Layton B 2/501
Bob Leibecke C 2/506
Ken Lilley A 2/506
Tony & Koleen Little D 2/506
Murphy & Phyllis Majoria Assoc. Mem.
Gene & Star Marshall B 2/319 FA
Al & Sondra Martin A 2/11 FA
Jim & Michele McCoy D 1/506
Ron & Linda McCrory E 2/506
Johnny McGinnis A 2/506
Peter & Chris Meloro C 2/506
Uwe & Diane Meyer B 2/506
Thomas & Annette Militello A 2/11 FA
Jerry & Mariellen Moyer C 2/506
Bruce & Ramona Nelson B 2/319 FA
Tom & Jan Pack B 2/319 FA
Robert Pagano & Rachel Springer B 2/506
Troy & Barbara Porter C 2/506 & 3rd Bde Air.
Ray & Sheila Potts B 2/319 FA
Douglas Puffer D 2/506
T.J. & Samantha Reeves Guest
John Rich Guest
Bill Rose A 2/506
Charles Schilero & Joann Schmidt D 2/506
George & Cheryl Scott A 2/11 FA
Fred Shuttleworth & Victoria Rayle E 2/506
Marc Skinner D 2/506
Joe O. Smith B/326 ENG & D 2/506
Jim Smither Grand Valley University
Dave & Lisa Snyder A 2/11 FA
Fred & Micki Spaulding HHC 3rd Bde
Robert Tarbuck & Paige Corkhill C 2/506
Leland & Debra Trembley 3rd BDE Air Cav.
Larry & Kathy Wallace Guest
Robert & Jackie Wallace C 2/506
Jeff & Sarah Watkins Guest
Tom Wenman Guest
Lee & Kathy Widjeskog A 2/506
Diane Wilson Guest
Mike & Liz Womack C 2/506
Audrey Wrightsell A 2/11 FA
Ron Zahn A 2/11 FA

2020 Reunion Date

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

Springfield, Missouri

Monday 20 July to Thursday 23 July

Leave Friday 24 July

(See page 8 of this newsletter for Registration form and more information)

UNIVERSITY PLAZA HOTEL

333 S John Q. Hammons Parkway

Springfield , MO 65806

(417) 864-7333

or 417-862-0070 if the University Plaza is full

<https://upspringfield.com/>



Charlie boys plotting their next move



Doc and Betty Kellog with Jackie Wallace seeking food



Len Bashford checking tickets after losing "The Hat"



Baldy holding court

RIPCORD REUNION **2020** SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI

I 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 March 1 2020, \$75 per adult
Mar. 1 through May 9, 2020 \$80 per adult,
May 10 through June 20, 2020 \$85 per adult.
After June 20, 2020 \$90 per adult.

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

Registration fee due no later than July 14, 2020.

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 14 July 2020. (After call 609-774-6951)

AGENDA

Monday, July 20: Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Self guided tours and shopping)

Tuesday, July 21: Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Golf in the AM) (Self guided tours)

Wednesday, July 22: Hospitality 1200 Hours. Hot hors doers 1730 hours

Thursday, July 23: Business meeting for association business in Hospitality room (1100 hrs)

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

Friday, July 24: Homeward bound

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

HOTEL RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE SEPERATELY BY June 18, 2020

CALL 417-864-7333 or 417-862-0070 if Univ. Plaza is full.

The second number is for the "Q Hotel" a block away

Ask for HOTEL RESERVATIONS and mention the

GROUP CODE: RIPCORD

(Price is \$92 per night plus tax: breakfast is included.)