



# RIPCORD REPORT



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

Number 91

Fall 2012

## MG Ben Harrison Recieves AAAA President's Award

The AAAA (Army Aviation Association of America) President's Award is only given occasionally for extraordinary service to our Nation, the Army, our Branch and especially AAAA. In fact, this award has only been presented 8 times in the 55 year history of the AAAA. MG (Ret.) Ben Harrison became the 8th recipient of this prestigious award at the AAAA Annual Professional Forum Banquet, Apr. 3 in Nashville, TN.

MG (Ret.) Benjamin L. Harrison is known as one of the foremost American military leaders of the 20th Century for his contributions to the tactics involving the integration of helicopters with infantry and armor forces for both rapid deployment and subsequent support.

He was an early advocate, theorist and practitioner of these tactics, commonly referred to as "air assault," which were so critical to modern military doctrine as practiced in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. He was able to put these principles into practice in Vietnam, first as a combat aviation battalion commander and later as an infantry brigade commander in the 101st Airborne Division, one of the pioneer airmobile divisions.

He enlisted in the Army at 17 years of age, six months before his 18th birthday and rose rapidly through the ranks, becoming a Regular Army Sergeant First Class at age 19. He was commissioned a second lieutenant of Infantry as the Distinguished Military Graduate from "Old Miss" in 1951. He later achieved an MA in Counseling and Education Psychology from the University of Missouri at Kansas City in 1963;

received an MBA from Auburn University in 1969 and the Advanced Management Program at Harvard Business School.

After a one-year tour in Office of the Secretary of Defense in the Pentagon, he returned to Vietnam in 1970, and took command of the 3rd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division on 23 Jun. During the first 69

days of his command, the 3rd Bde. conducted 16 battalion-size combat air assaults to multiple landing zones.

The siege of Firebase Ripcord, 1 - 23 July 1970, was marked by truly extraordinary bravery in combat with the award of five Distinguished Service Crosses and three awards of the Medal of Honor to

troopers and leaders of the 3rd Bde.

In his two combat tours in Vietnam, he flew hundreds of helicopter missions, personally accumulating a total of 1,842 combat flying hours out of his total time of over 5,000 military flight hours.

Following Vietnam from Aug 1976 to Aug 1977, he was the deputy commanding general of Fort Rucker, Alabama and then returned to Washington to design and conduct a review of officer education and professional development which resulted in the placement of branch proponency (including MOS specifications) with the commandants of the branch schools.

In 1982, the TRADOC commander asked Harrison, then retired, to be the senior aviator of a group of four officers tasked to review Army Aviation.

*(continued on page 4)*



*MG (Ret.) Harrison receives the President's Award from AAAA President, LTG (Ret.) Dan Petrosky with his wife, Carolyn Harrison, at his side.*

# FROM THE EDITOR

I hope everyone is having a great summer. Our 2012 Ripcord Association reunion will be in Indianapolis IN, Oct 3-6, 2012. Please make your reservations now! In this issue are updates on the documentary "The Ghosts of Ripccord" by Temple University graduate John Daily and the upcoming movie "The Battle of Ripcord by producer Shannon Lanier.



Both the documentary and the movie give all of us Ripcord veterans the chance to tell our story to our local media. So, contact your local TV and newspapers and let them know about these upcoming productions. Help get the publicity out there.

All the information for the websites of both productions are in this issue.

Another project I am working on is our Ripcord Memorial page on our website. I have been told by many that it is not accurate. I have been doing a lot of research on this and I need your help. Ripcord was part of Operation Texas Star and I am trying to narrow down the names to those KIA that were on or involved with or supported FB Ripcord. Could you please send me any names and their units that you remember were in this category from any unit. You can always contact me with any questions. My address is below or my e-mail: frank@ripcordassociation.com

## Membership

Anyone can join our Ripcord Association for free. If you are a Ripcord veteran, Family member or an Associate member. Go to our website and update your membership to change your e-mail, postal address, etc. so that we can continue to update you.

## E-mail address

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. Please go to our website and update your information.

Contact me at mail@ripcordassociation or at my address below.

### ARTICLES

Deadline for the Winter issue will be **Oct 20th 2012**  
Please send all articles, photos, incoming mail to:

**Frank Marshall**  
**5 Taconia Ct**  
**Mt Laurel, NJ 08054**  
**or e-mail to: mail@ripcordassociation.com**

## 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.

Bill Williams  
Wilburn Wall  
Doug Puffer  
Gerald Brenke  
Al Martin  
Audrey Wrightsell  
Rudy Forsman

Checks payable to "Ripcord Association".

Mail to:

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

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.

## 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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## JERSEY RAMBLING

by Lee Widjeskog

A/2-506



Now that I am retired from my day to day job, I have discovered that all the information I have accumulated and the experiences I have witnessed within the field of wildlife management is actually in demand. I have had a couple of offers to work part time with salt marshes and with woodcock. To many of the Ripcord readers these two items mean very little. But for me they encompass what I have spent much of the last 40 years learning about within the state of New Jersey and along the eastern seaboard.

I have always worked for New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife and never gave any thought that anyone else would be interested in paying me to do the same kind of work. Needless to say this is all a pleasant surprise but it also has me re-thinking how I will retire. Originally I assumed I would stop doing what I had been doing and simply work around the home catching up on all the projects I have delayed. But now, I feel obligated in a nice way to make time to work on these two projects during some portion of my retirement. This is not a bad situation by any means!

Along these lines of being retired I have started a project for the reunions. I am putting together albums of pictures of all of us and others whom we served with in Vietnam. I am enlarging the photos sent me and adding name and places as it can be remembered. The photos are laminated and put in a folder for each company or battery or other unit so they can be readily viewed.

To do this I need old photos from everyone. If you have ID's for the people shown great! When was the photo take? Where were you? What unit were you with? Pictures of the land, firebases, equipment etc. is also good. The more info the better. Once the books are put together all can check them out at the reunion and put names on those not remembered. So far I have started one for A 2/506, D 2/506, C 2/501 and D 1/506. I can use more pictures for these as well as other units that I have not started.

But if I am going to do this I need photos. You can send me originals, scan copies (at 600dpi) and send a disk or e-mail or bring your album to the reunion and I will make photocopies while we are together. If the response is good, each year the books for the unit will

grow and we will find out who "that crazy guy" in the photo really is.

Photos can be sent to Lee Widjeskog

e-mail [ltwidjeskog@aol.com](mailto:ltwidjeskog@aol.com)

493 Stillman Ave.

Bridgeton, NJ 08302

Bring your photos to Indianapolis in October! See you then!!!

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**2012 Ripcord Reunion  
Indianapolis Marriott East  
Indianapolis, IN  
October 3 - 6, 2012**

**2013 Ripcord Reunion  
Sands Ocean Club Resort  
Myrtle Beach, SC  
Oct 9 - 12, 2013**

**2014 Ripcord Reunion  
Sands Ocean Club Resort  
Myrtle Beach, SC  
Oct 8 - 11, 2014**



**Visit the Ripcord Association website  
at:**

**[www.ripcordassociation.com](http://www.ripcordassociation.com)**

The website includes:  
History of the Ripcord Association  
History of FSB Ripcord  
Biographies of Ripcord veterans  
Member Roster  
Newsletter Archives  
and  
much, much more.

To read more letters and comments written to the editor, go to our website and click member comments. **[www.ripcordassociation.com](http://www.ripcordassociation.com)**

(AAAA Award continued )

This four-month study resulted in the creation of Aviation as a separate combat arms branch and the centralization of all aviation doctrine, materiel and training development at Fort Rucker.

After his retirement from the Army, he continued to consult on specialized command studies and leadership development. He was a certified trainer and adjunct staff member of the Center for Creative Leadership for 17 years and conducted 38 leader development programs for the Central Intelligence Agency at their Career Training Facility.



He is a prolific writer on military doctrine and management with dozens of articles. In 2004 he published a book on Ripcord from the North Vietnamese perspective entitled, "Hell On A Hill Top." This book was based both on documents from each side of the Vietnam War and on information received on several trips to Vietnam to meet with former North Vietnamese military leaders, including his opposite number in the Ripcord campaign.

He has been awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, two awards of the Silver Star, two awards of the Distinguished Flying Cross, two awards of the Legion of Merit, the Soldier's Medal, 40 awards of the Air Medal, the Combat Infantryman Badge and numerous other U.S. and foreign decorations.

He was selected as a member of the U.S. Army Aviation Hall of Fame in 1992, and chaired the Hall for 12 years until 2011. He is also a past president of AAAA and the Army Aviation Museum Foundation.

His ability to synthesize information, formulate effective tactics, lead in combat, teach succeeding generations and understand future operating environments is truly unique. He has brought all these talents to bear for AAAA over the last 20 years. His tireless dedication to the Nation and our Soldiers while he was in uniform and now in retirement leaves no doubt that this patriot is richly deserving of this recognition.

Still flying his own aircraft at the age of 83, MG Ben Harrison embodies the Army Aviation spirit. (This article reprinted from the Army Aviation magazine May 2012)

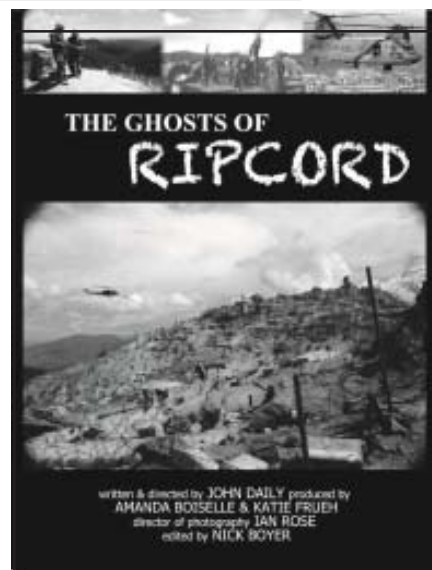
## Message from the Director of The Ghosts of Ripcord

Great progress is being made with the documentary about The Battle of Firebase Ripcord entitled, *The Ghosts of Ripcord*. My editor, Nick Boyer, and myself have been working tirelessly for the last couple of months and will continue through till the end of the summer to have the film completed. We have collected a large amount of film and photographic materials from the Vietnam War and even from Firebase Ripcord itself over the last few months and will be able to use all the archival footage in a new and interesting way to help explain the battle. There is actually so much material and so much compelling footage from the interviews with veterans that we now anticipate the documentary being 90 minutes long rather than the original 1 hour timeframe. We feel this will now give enough time now to cover all aspects of the battle without shortchanging anything.

We also expect to launch a website within a month for the film and also hope to premiere the completed work at the Ripcord reunion in October. Nothing is final yet but we are very excited by what we have accomplished so far and are very eager to show the world what the final product will be for *The Ghosts of Ripcord*. Thank you again to everyone for your support and if you would like more updates many more will be coming out on our Facebook page during the month of August as we near completion.

<http://www.facebook.com/firebasefilm>

Thank you!  
John Daily





## INCOMING MAIL

I was Crewchief on a slick during Ripcord. Saw some of the action going on at the time. I remember our ship evacuating some of the Grunts off the base, from an LZ on the a downside of the base. We could no longer land on the base, too much incoming fire. I do remember we had to low level into the pick up LZ.

The base was hot. I recall seeing the downed Chinook on the base. NVA had 51 Cal. machine guns . . . scary! After the overrun, our ship helped "Graves Repristration" recover some of the KIAs. I recall the Graves Repristration dude telling me, "No worries, the NVA always let you retrieve your dead because they are buddhist". To this day I don't know the truth to that statement.

*James Morikawa*  
C/101<sup>st</sup> Aviation  
[jmorikawa@clearwire.net](mailto:jmorikawa@clearwire.net)

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I was sent to FSB Ripcord to await transport down to Alpha Company. They could not get me down there because of all the Enemy action taking place. I stayed with Bravo Company on the Firebase and was sent to get the Pilot out of the downed Chinook amongst other duties.

I always was under the impression I was on the last Chopper off Ripcord with one other soldier. He had smokes and I had water or vice versa and we shared. I do not know who he was. I remember the pilot saying we were the last ones. I almost died from incoming Mortar trying to get to the LZ. In fact the guy who found me in a bunker and told me to follow him dissapeared after a mortar hit by the Water Blivets.

I served as a Squad Leader under Capt. Chuck Hawkins after Ripcord. Chuck came to Buffalo about 8 or 9 years ago and we had Dinner and a visit after I saw the Fox War Stories with Ollie North and contacted Chuck through Fox.

Since then I have connected with Tim Neuman after I read an Article in our Local newspaper about his experience with Ripcord. We live within a mile of each other.

*William F. (Frank) Wopperer*  
A/2-506  
[FrankW@thermalfoams.com](mailto:FrankW@thermalfoams.com)

It took 42 years for me to finally add my name to the Ripcord Association roster. There has not been a single day that has gone by in the last 42 years that I have not thought about Firebase Ripcord.

Being one of the last few grunts on the hill on July 23, 1970 I never thought that any of us would ever survive that last day.

I hope some day soon I will get to personally thank the chopper pilot that saved my ass.

*Lawrence G. Talbot*  
B/2-506  
[talbotsurv@comcast.net](mailto:talbotsurv@comcast.net)

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Mr. Marshall,

I brought my kids with me on the bus, I wanted to shoot you a email regarding the pictures that were taken with the Ripcord survivors, me, and my kids. I was hoping to get a copy of them sent to my email, so I can print them off and hang it up. It was a great honor to be there with all of survivors.

Also, great story to tell you. After the ceremony, I went to half price books in Greenwood, IN to see if they had a copy of Ripcord. They did have a copy of Ripcord and so I bought it. On the way home, I opened it to look through it and Fred Spaulding had signed it, dated from May 2005. I thought it was really cool. Well don't want to take to much of your time, thanks for all you have done.

*Brian Mahan*  
SGT MIL NG IN ARNG  
[brian.mahan@us.army.mil](mailto:brian.mahan@us.army.mil)

*(Editors note: Below is the photo of Brian and his children at Fred Spauldings Award ceremony when he recieved The Distingued Service Cross)*



# INCOMING MAIL

I was the RTO assigned to HHC 1/506, re assigned to D 1/506 as a replacement. Later with C 1/506 and L 75th Rangers.

Jonathan "Doug" Hazlett  
D 1/506  
[doughazlett@sbcglobal.net](mailto:doughazlett@sbcglobal.net)

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Ripcord Veterans,

I'm a history professor at Grand Valley State University in Michigan. I run the GVSU Veterans History Project, and record oral history interviews with veterans. I attended the 2011 reunion and conducted interviews there, and will be back this year to talk to more people. I can also set up individual interview sessions for anyone who lives within a few hours' drive of Grand Rapids, Michigan. We record our interviews on video, and send each veteran a free copy of his interview. We also post them in our digital archive (see website, [www.gvsu.edu/vethistory](http://www.gvsu.edu/vethistory)), and share the files with the Library of Congress. Most of the 22 interviews we have conducted thus far will be up on the website by the end of the summer, and a few are posted currently. If you are interested in being interviewed, please feel free to contact me.

*James Smither*  
[smitherj@gvsu.edu](mailto:smitherj@gvsu.edu)

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I served in HQ & HQ Battery, 2/11th FA from July 1969 to Sep 1970. When 1LT Kalsu from A Battery, 2/11th was KIA, my Battery CO, Cpt Tom Austin was sent out to Ripcord to take command of A Battery. I was Tom Austin's HQ & HQ Battery clerk at Camp Eagle up to that time. My MOS was 13E20 (FDC) but when I arrived at the 2/11th in July they told me they had too many 13E's and ended up making me a clerk because I knew how to type. A great deal of dissension developed back in the 2/11th Bn. area with troopers very upset and began to protest the fact that Ripcord wasn't evacuated much earlier. Some one shot about 20 holes in the Bn CO's personal water tank one night. On another night a grenade was tossed into his hooch. However, the pin wasn't pulled so it was probably

meant to be a warning. When they finally began evacuating Ripcord, the 1SGT and I drove over to Camp Evans to see if we could give him a ride back to Eagle. We did not know at the time that he had been wounded during the evacuation. We had to return to Eagle without him. Tom and I were both from Georgia and although he was a Cpt and I was a Spec5 we developed a friendship. He came to see me in Savannah, GA in the early 70's and I have had no contact with him since that time. I am attempting to write about my experiences for my children and grandchildren and would like very much to contact Tom. I understand why you may not be able to give me his email address, but could you please forward this email to him and if wishes to contact me that would be great.

*Thank you very much,*  
*Robert B. Martin (Spec5)*  
*HQ & HQ Btry, 2/11th FA*  
*Camp Eagle, RVB*  
[rbmartiniv@gmail.com](mailto:rbmartiniv@gmail.com)

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I didn't know til today the name of that battle i was in ripcord...the teletype 105 was there we were microwave only 4 of us from the 63 single bat. i sat on our bunker like a nut not inside a saw every thing.if you were there i was with them big monkey ears antias at the end of the run way at now call rip cord.. the call for ripcord was ham 9 to the single core there...i saw the B 52s, the F 104, and the ammo dump when it went up that night...welcome back guys

*Edward Neff Rodman*  
*105 single from the 63 siginal bat.*  
[neffrodman@aol.com](mailto:neffrodman@aol.com)

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It is the highest honor of my career to have been granted a Ripcord Airborne logo with the Screaming Eagle. When Freddie asked me to be an associate member, I nearly wept. You men are patriots and heroes and I am proud to tell your story.

Thank you for your service and opening your brotherhood to me personally and through my organization, the rest of the world.

*Sincerely,*  
*Noel Alexander LaToure*  
*Fox 45*

# INCOMING MAIL

## Greetings

I was invited by Veteran Frank Marshall to join as an Associate Member. I will be involved in Shannon Lanier's film project, "The Battle of Ripcord".

I had a chance to meet a few of the Veterans at the Vietnam Memorial on 9 June 2012 as they laid their wreath and shared remembrances. Thank you all for your service, and Welcome Home!

*Brian Dettling*

*stage\_arms\_solutions@hotmail.com*

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Dear Sir,

I was the Scout Dog Handler that was wounded on 7-6-70 while outside of F.B. Ripcord.

*Bruce Bond*

*4BlueRoan@gmail.com*

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Hi Frank, welcome home.

I have been wanting to thank, then, Colonel Harrison for decades but until just a few days ago I didn't know who it was that I wanted to thank.

I was talking to Lt Robert Layton, 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, Bravo, 2/501<sup>st</sup>, about an extraction we had both been involved with that included General Sid Berry. There were only two helicopters that showed up, one was General Berry's and the other was the Brigade Commander's, however, at that time I didn't even know which Brigade I was in.

My company had been in the mountains and most of the men had contracted a virus of some kind that was very contagious and caused fever, vomiting and diarrhea. After two days of watching them suffer in pouring rain, we spent the next day trying to walk off the mountain, the following morning we reached the low lands and shortly after that two helicopters appeared and started shuttling us out.

After 25 years I was able to find and thank General Berry and now I finally know who was in the other helicopter. I would greatly appreciate it if you could forward this to, is it General now, Harrison.

I was not a part of Ripcord, I arrived on 5 July 70. We were going through that week of training they give

new guys when the ammo dump exploded and we watched a line of helicopters going out and another coming in. When we finally reached our company headquarters we were told that they couldn't get a bird in to where the company was because it was too hot. A day or two later the battalion returned to Phu Bai and Ripcord was abandoned.

*Thanks for your help and all that you do.*

*Jon Chaffin*

*[jmc@acsconsultants.com]*

*B/2-501*

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Dear Mr. Marshall,

I enclose a donation to your organization, in recognition of and appreciation for the fine work you are doing in a very good cause. Your 2012 Spring issue is exceptionally interesting and informative.

I am the father of 1 Lt. Terry A. Palm, KIA on Hill 805, protecting Ripcord's flank, on July 14, 1970. Both we and the NV A knew that, if Hill 805 could not be held, then Ripcord itself could not be held, and so it indeed developed. After 5 nights of intense, determined, skillful assaults on 805, we abandoned it on July 17 and Ripcord itself July 23.

My son was 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon leader, D Co., 2-501, commanded by Cpt. (now Col. Ret.) Straub, a fine exemplary leader.

I worked for many years bringing Delta Co., especially 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, out of wound-licking, post-war isolation, into many rewarding associations and reunions.

In reference to the article on "Reading of the Names", I was privileged to take part in the original reading, in Washington National Cathedral, in Nov. 1982. The designated reader for the group of names that included my son deferred to me when informed of my connection. So, in the somber, totally, eerily silent underground room underneath the cathedral, I read the names that included my son Terry. It was the same haunting hour of 2 a.m. as the time Terry fell in a heavy assault on 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon's front.

As for me, my service was Navy, a generation earlier, in WWII and Korea. I've just passed age 93.

*Respectfully,*

*John W. Palm*

*Commander, U.S.Navy, Retired*



# INCOMING MAIL

Frank

Shannon Lanier - producer of the upcoming movie, "Battle of the Ripcord", attended the July 20 monthly meeting of the Armed Forces Heritage House museum (AFHH). Shannon was able to present an update on the progress of the work to complete the film to all of the attending members of the AFHH.

His presentation was very significant and moving, because he connected his personal experiences regarding Vietnam Veterans, and his desire to produce a compelling story that will document the hardship and history of the Battle of the Ripcord.

The AFHH, an organization that plans to build a world class military museum outside the perimeter of the Joint Base (McGuire/Dix/Lakehurst), that will honor the history of the Joint Base from 1917, supports the honorable efforts of the Lanier project, and will continue to help promote the project to the public at large.

*Nino DePasquale  
depsix@aol.com*

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Hello,

My name is John Mackley in Durango, CO. I have been a long time friend of Michael & Linda Dunaway. As you know Mike is a member of your association (Dunaway, Michael; Unit: E/2-506).

I know you and the association would want to know the sad news of Mike & Linda's passing last Saturday in a helicopter accident near Camp Verde, Arizona.

After all you guys endured and survived in those spring months of 1970, this is a hell of a way to check out. I just found out today that the pilot was flying too low and clipped a cable spanning the narrow canyon and Verde river. Makes me angry. Nevertheless, Mike and the woman he loved were able to leave together.

The family, with the assistance of the Durango Fire and Rescue Authority, of which Mike was Chief, have secured the Community Concert Hall at Fort Lewis College here in Durango for this Saturday at 10:00 for a Memorial Service. Their 2 children, Jason and Michelle are due to arrive in Durango from Virginia and Phoenix respectively, on Friday. I will most definitely speak with Jason & Michelle on behalf of

The Ripcord Association. It will be my honor. Mike & I spoke of you gentlemen on numerous occasions.

*John Mackley*

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Frank

Ron Janezic read my bio on the Ripcord website and found me on Facebook. Ron lives in Walnut Creek, CA (last 28 years), and I reside in Newark, CA (all my life), less than a one-hour drive from each other. We had a great time on Sunday, July 22 reminiscing with each other and our wives over lunch in Walnut Creek.

So many memories....so many friends names and incidents were discussed over some three hours. We are both considering attending the reunion in Myrtle Beach in 2013.

I hope you are doing well, and THANKS again for all you do for the Ripcord Association.

*Take care...*

*Darryl Reina  
1st Platoon, A2/506th  
darryl14r@aol.com*



*Ron Janezic, Darryl Reina*



# INCOMING MAIL

I posted this previously with no response. Once again I'm looking for 5 young men injured in a mortar attack on ripcord. Here are the details. I remember it like it was yesterday.

My background. I'm WO Kenneth Mayberry (NE), call sign Phoenix 50, flying my aircraft 606, I was a Aircraft Commander with the Phoenix (blue dot on the tail boom) C/158 Avn Bn at Camp Evans. My right seat (pilot) was WO David Rayburn (GA) a new guy first combat mission, my Crewchief this day was Sp4 John Ackerman and my Doorgunner Sp4 Wayne Wasilk both from a small town in SD.

The Phoenix were 10 aircraft of 6 flights of 10 for this move. All 101 Avn assets were employed. Due to CC commo failure our flight lead, Cpt Randy House broke off to lead the evacuation. We were directed to report over a prominent waterfall in the area & were then directed to a pickup pad for extraction. We were the second flt of 10 to go in. The first flt all made a "go around" because of hostile mortar fire. I was directed to the log pad & as I turned final I had mortars impacting along a seemingly straight line paralleling my flt path. Boom Boom Boom I believe 4 or 5 mortars impacted. I instinctively intended to go around & then the mortars stopped, I seen the guys waiting for me so elected to go in. As I flared another mortar impacted knocking the men down like bowling pins. My left leg felt like a hot poker had been stuck in & I knew I had been hit by shrapnel. Over the intercom someone said "go around" & I said "no, get those guys first". Before my skids hit the ground I saw my crewchief & gunner dash past my wind screen & begun to carry the wounded guys into the aircraft. What I witnessed was the most courageous act I'd ever seen. 2 guys running across open ground carrying wounded troupers to our aircraft. If another mortar splashes down they are dead. Everything went into slow motion. I had people calling asking if we had trouble because we were on the ground so long. I was afraid to answer because I didn't want to break the spell. Finally John & Wayne got everyone loaded & we took off. These guys were wounded BAD! My crew tried their best to dress their wounds with our on board first aid kits. Blood was everywhere in the bay. I realized blood has a distinctive odor.( We went directly to Charlie Med at Camp Evans. Phoenix 44 followed me & checked my air craft out. At Charlie Med one of the

Drs asked me if I was wounded (he saw the shrapnel holes in the chin bubble), I said "no". Compared to the guys we just brought in I would have been embarrassed. I flew back to the Nest to have maintenance check my aircraft out.( They immediately grounded it, I had over 40 holes.( Its next flight would be under the belly of a Chinook sling loaded to DaNang for repair.( After a long wait maintenance finally released a bird for me to get back in the air. My Battalion called twice asking if I had been wounded, they had seen my aircraft. I lied and said no. By the time I got back in the air the evac was over but I got in on pulling the security force out that we had inserted before the evac had begun. By the time I got in that night my leg was really hurting so I got a beer & went to our medics' hootch & had the shrapnel extracted.

I tried to put Ackerman & Wasilk in for medals, I thought Silver Stars were appropriate, but my Plt leader told me he would have to put me in for a higher award so I dropped it. Medals were not a high priority then. I regret that now.

For 40 yrs I've thought about those guys we brought in. What happened to them? They were horribly wounded that day. I would love to hear from them.

*Can anyone help?*

*Kenneth L Mayberry(*

*Phoenix50@neb.rr.com or kensue@neb.rr.com*

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Our 2/501st was the swing bn for the 101st from April thru July D co was inserted to the ripcord AO at the end of April delta co was working on this blue we didnt know at the time but there was a major supply trail on the other side the next 5days was a turkey shoot for D co. We left this AO and went to FB Gladiator. Wasn't a good time we spent a week or more there, mortars rained in every time a bird came in. We were pt on hill 805 I dont want to talk about this 6 days 56 wounded 9 kia

*Randy C Davos*

*D/2-501*

*randy101stavn@yahoo.com*

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It is an honor to be counted among your ranks.

*Jason Fischer*

*Fox45 News*

# INCOMING MAIL

My name is Thomas Schultz, Redskin 19. I was with D/158/101st Div and flew my first cobra mission as Air Mission Commander during the battle of Ripcord.

Thomas Schultz,  
Redskin 19.  
D/158/101st Div  
cw5safety@gmail.com

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It is an honor to be a part of the screaming eagles. We are thrilled you trust us to tell your story.

Sincerely,  
Jeff Barnd  
Fox45 News Anchor

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I scouted the future Firebase Ripcord site, and recommended against putting the a firebase there, around February or March of 1970 as a liaison officer from the 2/17 Cav, 101st Abn, flying an O-1 Birdog with the 220th RAC.

I watched a 10,000 pound bomb dropped from a Sky Crane helicopter to blow the mountain top off to prep the site for the firebase.

In July(?) of 1970, after I had returned to C/2/17 Cav as a helicopter pilot, I was one of the last helicopters to evacuate men from Ripcord. As we lifted off the NVA were in the wire coming into the firebase.

About 10 years ago a former colonel who was writing a book about Ripcord contacted me. After I wrote to him and told what I saw and what I thought of the whole mess. I never heard from him again. I assume his book was going to be a bit different from what I remember.

Mike Nadler, Condor 43  
Viet Nam 1969-70  
Nadlermike@aol.com

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Jody Smith here, 3rd platoon, A/2-506. Ya Know, I wouldn't trade the experience or My 101st Airborne buddies for anything, love or money, but I sure as hell wouldn't want to do it again, BUT, I would if I was asked just rite and I had all of you beside me, Currahee.,

Jody Smith A/2-506  
jodylee1950@hotmail.com

*Ripcord Report Fall 2012*

## Ripcord on Facebook

by Anthony Chritchlow



Thank you to all of our Facebook members. Our membership just keeps growing. We have gone from 236 at the last newsletter, to 284. This is an increase of 48 new members. Our numbers are increasing by 2 to 3 a week. The press conference about the movie has helped us a lot. I predict that we will be over 300 members by the reunion in October. This is a good time to make plans to attend. Hopefully the premier for the documentary will be part of this year's reunion. Frank told me because of all the money that was pledged, they were able to take more time in the editing of the documentary. This is going to result in a great show about FSB Ripcord. I would like to thank Shannon Lanier for taking on the movie about Ripcord. I am looking forward to following the progress of the movie. We hope to see you all in Indianapolis, October 3rd – 6th.

Anthony

To all the spouses, significant others, family members, I hope you will accompany your Ripcord veteran to the reunion this year. We have not attended all of the reunions but the ones we have were very interesting and as much fun for me as for my veteran. I learned a lot about the things Anthony never wanted to talk about. I also met other *better halves* that learned the same. I really hope to see you all in Indianapolis.

Dennise,  
Anthony's *better half*

Visit the  
Ripcord Association Facebook page at:

[http://www.facebook.com/groups/  
ripcordassociation/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/ripcordassociation/)

Check out Temple's facebook page  
about the Ripcord documentary  
<http://www.facebook.com/#!/firebasefilm>

## Ripcord 2012 Reunion

(signed up as of 7/30/12)

Anthony & Dennise Critchlow HHC 2/506  
Frank Marshall A 2/506  
Raynard & Debbie Sellers A 2/327  
Ben & Carolyn Harrison HHC 3 Bde  
Murphy & Phyllis Majoria guest  
Polly Atkins Guest  
Bruce & Ramona Nelson 2/319 FA  
Lee & Kathy Widjeskog A 2/506  
Bob & Red Judd B 2/506  
Jim & Michelle McCoy D 1/506  
Ben & Lillian Peters B 2/506  
Bruce Brady & Karolyn Kruger A 2/506  
Dave & Lisa Snyder A 2/11 FA  
Paul & Laura Hansmann B 2/506  
Doug Puffer D 2/506  
Al and Sondra Martin A 2/11 FA  
Paul Buhr A 2/506  
Dale & Sue Cooper C 2/506  
Chuck & Jean Holman A 159 ASHB  
Ken & Mary Ann David D 1/506  
Rudy & Linda Forsman D 2/506  
Walter Jurinen D 1/506  
Bob & Maryann Mulhauser B 2/319 FA  
Craig & Sandy Van Hout B 2/506  
Bob Leibecke C 2/506  
Uwe & Diane Meyer B 2/506  
George & Mary Murphy B 2/320 FA  
Floyd & Diane Alexander A 2/506 & 2/319 FA  
Robin Graham HHC 2/506  
Bob Tarbuck C 2/506  
Steve & Pat Smith D 158 Avn.  
Audrey Wrightsell A 2/11 FA  
John & Annette Kuenen C 2/506  
Merle, Ruth, Joshua, & Joe DeLagrange D 1/506  
Mike & Laura Renner A 2/11 FA  
Dorian & Marsha Alexander A 2/506  
Steve Manthei C 2/506  
Lin & Pinkey Bashford D 2/506  
Bill & Sheila Williams B 2/506  
Don Keifer A 2/506  
Tony, Sean & Tim Cox D 1/506  
Tom & Judy Counts D 2/506  
David & Linda Younts A 2/506  
Tex Campbell D 2/506  
John Reilly 2/11 FA  
Jim Smither & Mike McGregor Grand Val. State Univ.  
Ron & Linda McCrory E 2/506  
Fred & Miki Spaulding HHC 3<sup>rd</sup> Bde  
Billy Helvey A 2/506  
James & Peggy Roach 2/506 & 3/187

## Ripcord Association Membership

### New Members

Last Name	First Name	Unit
Barnd	Jeff	Associate Member
Bond	Bruce	58th Inf Scout Dog
Botschfter / McDougall	Robert	E/2-501
Davos	Randy	D/2-501
Dettling	Brian	Associate member
Elkin	William	A/2-11
Fischer	Jason	Associate Member
Gunn	Steven	HHC/2-506
Hazlett	Jonathan	D/1-506
LaToure	Noel	Associate Member
Mahan	Brian	Associate Member
Martin	Robert	HQ & HQ Btry, 2/11th FA
Morikawa	James	C/101st Aviation
Nadler	Michael	C/2-17th Cav
Ray	Kenneth	Associate Member
Rodman	Edward	63rd sig bn
Schultz	Thomas	D/158th Avn Redskin 19
Smither	James	Associate Member
Talbot	Lawrence	B/2-506
Toohy	Martin	HHC 2/506
Wandland	Steve	Aviation
Wopperer	William	A/2-506

We have:

781 members in our Ripcord Association.  
587 are Ripcord Veterans  
194 are Associate Members  
250 receive newsletter via Postal Mail  
531 receive the newsletter via e-mail  
22 are new members  
284 Facebook "Ripcord Association Group"

When was the last time you updated your Membership If you have moved, changed your e-mail address, etc

Please go to our website Membership Page and fill out the membership Form



# Distinguished Member of the Regiment (DMOR)

506th Infantry Regiment

## Induction Ceremony at Ft Campbell July 2012



*Sonny Arkangel, Jim Campbell, Ben Harrison and Gary Radford*

## Anna Britt Nolan Trust Fund

*by George and Mary Murphy*



Britt's nearly another year older (going on 13) and that only gives us about five more years before she goes to college. Wouldn't it be great if she had the funds to do so? Just think—if everyone in the Ripcord Association could donate \$5.00 or \$10.00 a year, that goal could be realized.

For all of those who have donated to the Trust Fund already and continue to do so, many thanks!

Don't forget to help out by bringing items for the Trust Fund Raffle at this year's reunion in October.

George and Mary Murphy  
B Battery 2/320 Artillery

\*\*\*\*\*

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

**Make your  
Hotel reservations  
NOW!  
317-352-1231**

**2012 Ripcord Reunion  
Indianapolis Marriott East  
Indianapolis, IN  
October 3 - 6, 2012**

**Reservation forms are in this issue and on our website**



Check out more photos of the Ripcord Movie Press Party  
on Cowboy Kenn's website  
<http://kennpix.smugmug.com/Prospectors-Parties-Events>



## Ripcord Movie Press Party at Prospector's Steakhouse and Saloon, Mt Laurel, NJ



Photo ©2012 Cowboy Kenn”

As of this printing of The Ripcord Report, we are waiting to hear from Shannon Lanier, producer for an update on the progress of the movie “The Battle of Ripcord”. It will be posted on our website.

I keep in touch with a lot of the members of The Ripcord Association and we all agree that making the Ripcord movie will not be an easy task. It will need a lot of money to finance this project (more than we can help him with), but most important Shannon will need our support to make this one of the greatest movies ever told, about a “BATTLE” that was never known to anyone except those that were involved in it. I am hoping with the hype of a movie being made about us, that someone out there will do a mini series on HBO which will have to be at least a twelve part series to tell the entire battle.

Go to our website [www.ripcordassociation.com](http://www.ripcordassociation.com) and our facebook page [facebook/ripcord](https://www.facebook.com/ripcord) group to keep updated on the progress. I will continue to let you know what I know.

Facebook group page: The Battle of Ripcord

<http://www.battleofripcordmovie.com>

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2179032/fullcredits#cast>



Frank Marshall with the suggested actors to do the movie and play some of our parts. (photo taken at the Press party)



# 2012 Ripcord Gathering in Washington D.C.

Hosted by Fred and Carol Gilbert



The Ripcord Gathering in Washington D.C. was another great event for Ripcord Veterans and their families.

The Gathering was hosted by Fred and Carol Gilbert with special thanks to Sam and Luree Rawlinson for all their help.

The Gilberts provided excellent buffet dinner on both Friday and Saturday evenings.

Shannon Lanier the producer for the upcoming movie “The Battle of Ripcord” was at The Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the 101st Memorial with his camera crew taking video which can be seen on his website [www.battleofripcordmovie.com](http://www.battleofripcordmovie.com)

There were about 50 members of the Ripcord Association that attended the fun filled weekend.





**RIPCORD REUNION 2012**  
**INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA**

[ ] 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 VIETNAM \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Will a family member(s) be attending? How many including you? [ ]. If yes what are their names? (For name tag purposes only).

Arrival Date \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date \_\_\_\_\_

**NO COMPLEMENTARY TRANSPORTATION FROM THE AIRPORT AVAILABLE.**

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, 2012, \$75 per adult

July 1 through 31, 2012 \$80 per adult,

August 1 through September 1, 2012 \$85 per adult.

After September 1, 2012 \$90 per adult.

Your registration fee covers the cost of the hospitality room, snacks and beverages, and dinner on Saturday. Registration fee due no later than September 28, 2012.

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 30 September 2012

After call 609-774-6951

**AGENDA**

- Wednesday, October 3:** Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Self guided tours and shopping)
- Thursday, October 4:** Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Golf in the AM) (Self guided tours)
- Friday, October 5:** Hospitality 1200 Hours. Ladies raffle 1900 hours (7PM)
- Saturday, October 6:** Business meeting for association business in Hospitality room.  
Dinner with cash bar starting at 1730 hours done by 2200 hours.
- Sunday, October 7:** Homeward bound
- Thursday golf outing (not included in the registration fee). Check here if you will play [ ].

**HOTEL RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE SEPERATELY AND**

**BY September 3, 2012**

**CALL 317-352-1231 or E-mail at [www.indianapolismarriotteast.com](http://www.indianapolismarriotteast.com)**

**ASK FOR HOTEL RESERVATIONS AND REFER TO THE GROUP CODE: RIPCORD**

(The cost will be \$85 per night plus tax.)

# Firestore Ripcord Association October 3-6, 2012

**Hotel Reservation form for**  
INDIANAPOLIS MARRIOTT EAST  
7202 East 21<sup>st</sup>. Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46219

**317-352-1231 (Direct Hotel Reservation)**  
or at [www.indianapolismarriotteast.com](http://www.indianapolismarriotteast.com)

Group code: **RIPCORD**

Group Room Rate: \$85 per day +17% tax.

A deposit for the first night's room and tax or a Credit Card Number is required to guarantee this reservation.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of Rooms \_\_\_\_\_

Roommate Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Room needs: \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS IS A NON-SMOKING HOTEL**  
**(SMOKERS SHOULD GET A GROUND FLOOR ROOM SO THEY CAN STEP OUTSIDE.)**  
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: 4:00 PM (1600 hrs)                      Check-out Time: 12:00 PM (1200 hrs)

To confirm reservations, return form to the hotel or call by September 3, 2012.  
**We look forward to seeing you in October!**