



Ripcord Association

2022

Springfield, MO

Reunion

In Memory of
Lee Widjeskog



The Reunion

The purpose then and now is to enable survivors of the Ripcord battle the opportunity to meet and talk to others who went through the same hard times. The FSB Ripcord Association held its first reunion in 1986 in Whippany, NJ directed by Chip Collins and John Mihalko. In 1987 Chuck Hawkins put together one on the edge of Washington, DC. Then none were held until 1995 when John Mihalko put one on in Golden Colorado. Since then the annual reunions have been set up by Fred Spaulding with the exception of the 2000 reunion in Shreveport, LA which was honchoed by Jim Campbell. We have been in Fredericksburg, VA, Mobile, AL, Atlantic City, NJ, Savannah, GA, Shreve Port, LA, Charleston, SC, Carlisle, PA, Colorado Springs, CO, Des Moines, IA, Laughlin, NV, Springfield, MO, Indianapolis, IN, Fort Worth, TX, and Myrtle Beach, SC. Some places twice or more. Fred Spaulding has continued for years to find appropriate locations that can accommodate our group needs and budget with assistance from Bob and Red Judd and Lee and Kathy Widjeskog.



Peter and Christine Meloro
Handled the finances, registration and treasury throughout the year.



Bill Boles Greeted everyone upon their arrival at the Reunion



John Fowler did all the preparations and contact with the hotel to make sure all went well.



Frank Marshall manages our website. He coordinates input from Board Members to prepare and distribute our Newsletters. He has been the primary contact person for members seeking information or updates on our Association or Reunion.



Paul Buhr In the past few years, Paul Buhr (A2/506) has kindly taken his time to shoot the photos for the yearbook. It takes a lot of one's time to do this work and gives him less time to chat with the guys.



Chris Courtney, Paul Buhr's Assistant helped Paul with all the photos taken at this year's reunion.



Jim McCoy assisted with greeting arrivals and with sale of books, shirts etc. throughout the Reunion

2022 Ripcord Association Board of Directors

Bill Boles	D/2-506	President
Frank Marshall	A/2-506	Vice President
Peter Meloro	C/2-506	Secretary/ Treasurer
John Fowler	C/2-506	Board Director
Jim McCoy	D/1-506	Board Director

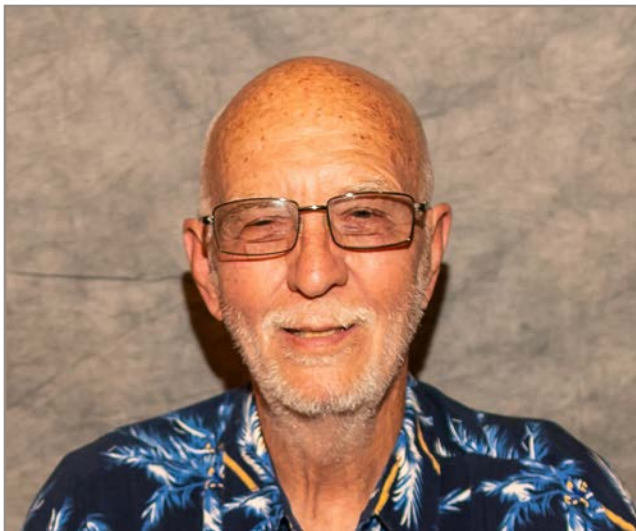
A special thanks to all those who volunteered their time to assist the Board during the Reunion. Your help was truly needed and appreciated.



DIANE & FLOYD ALEXANDER A 2/506



MARC ARONSON B Bty 2/319 FA



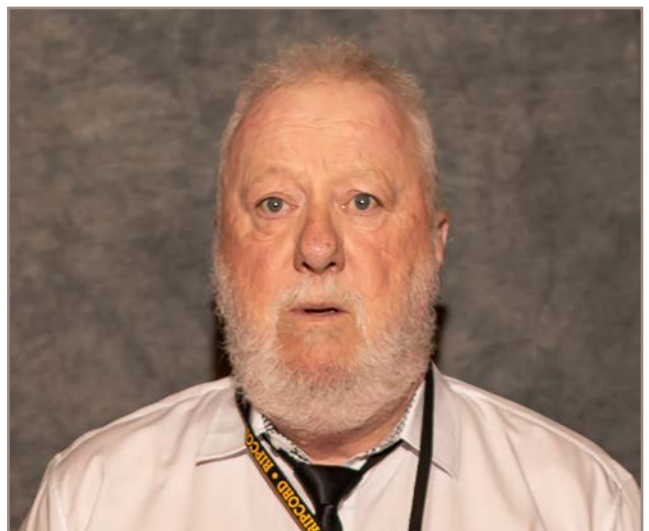
RANDY BALDWIN A 2/506



PINKEY & LIN BASHFORD D 2/506



TIMOTHY BOHAN GUEST PATHFINDER



BILL BOLES D 2/506



DAN BROCKMILLER A/159 ASHB



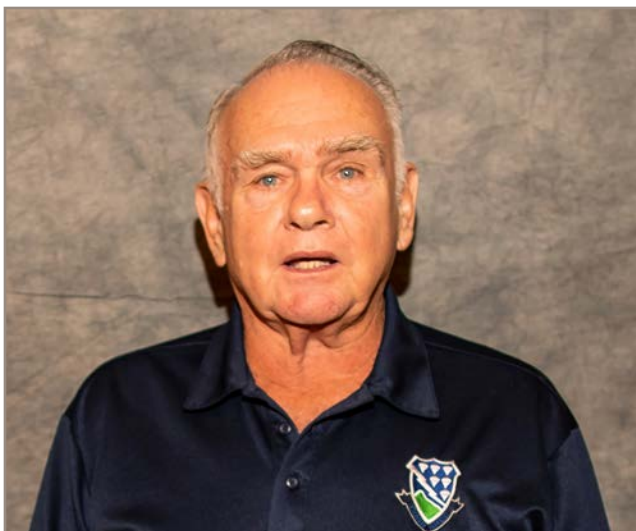
JEROME BUFFINGTON C 2/506



CHRIS COURTNEY & PAUL BUHR A 2/506



MARY & JIM CAMPBELL C 2/506



TEX CAMPBELL D 2/506



JUNE & RON COCHRAN A Bty 2/11 FA



CONNIE & DAVID COTE **B 2/506 & E 2/506**



LISA HILL & JUDY & TOMMY COUNTS **D/506**



DENNISE & ANTHONY CRITCHLOW **HHC /506**



RUTH & MERLE DELAGRANGE **D 1/506**



CHRISTINE & MICHAEL DICKEN **B 2/506**



DEBBIE & LAWRENCE FEISER **HHC 1/506**



CAROL & REX FLANSBURG D 2/506



LEE & MIKE FOREMAN B 2/506



LINDA & RUDY FORSMAN D 2/506



DEBBIE & JOHN FOWLER C 2/506



SARALYN & KEN GAINER A 2/506



LEA & MARTIN GLENNON A 2/506 HHC /506



ANN HALLIGAN & ROBIN GRAHAM HC2/506



LAVERNE & RAY GREEN A Bty 2/11 FA



GENE HALTENHOF C/158 AVN BN



JANET HAHN GUEST (E 2/506)



LYNN & BILL HAND B 2/506



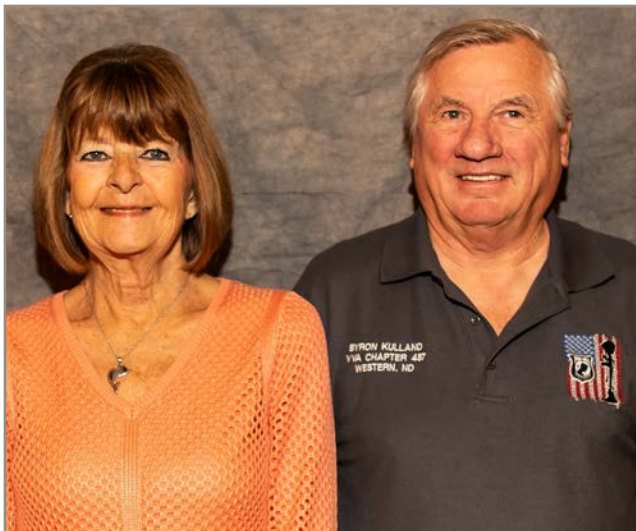
LAURA & PAUL HANSMANN B 2/506



LINDA & WILLIAM HEATH **A & HHC 2/506**



JOHN HEDRICK **E 2/506**



MARLENE & DAVE HILLEREN **B/159 ASHB**



JEAN & CHUCK HOLMEN **A/159 ASHB**



BUZZ IRELAND **C/159 ASHB**



CINDY & BOB JONES **HHC 2/506**



RED & BOB JUDD B 2/506



SOPHIA & DAVID KENYON B/326 ENG



KRISTI & GREG KIEKINTVELD B/326 ENG



PAM STONE, LYLE KOHMETSCHER B 2/501



ANNETTE & JOHN KUENNEN C 2/506



SUSAN KOSTE, DALE LANE, DIANE GROTE A2/506



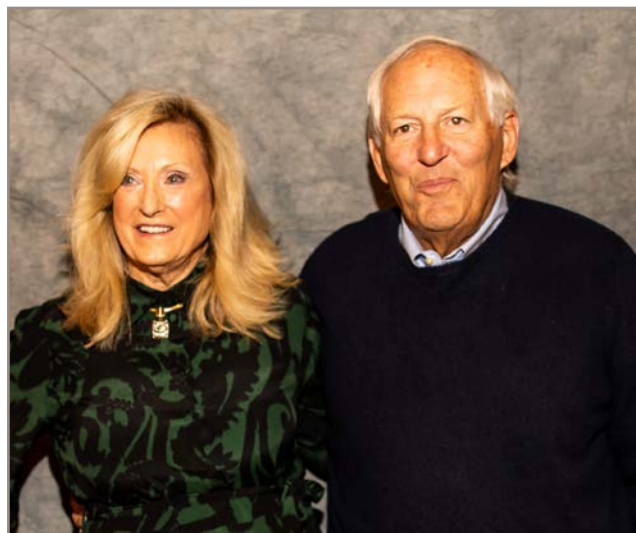
KOLEEN & TONY LITTLE D 2/506



ROBERT LAYTON B 2/501



THOMAS LEBOW A/159 ASHB



JANET & CHARLIE LIEB C 2/506



INGRID & DAVID LOCKWOOD A 2/11 FA



MIKE MACKEY C/159 ASHB



DONNA & JERRY & MANEMANN A 2/506



FRANK MARSHALL A 2/506



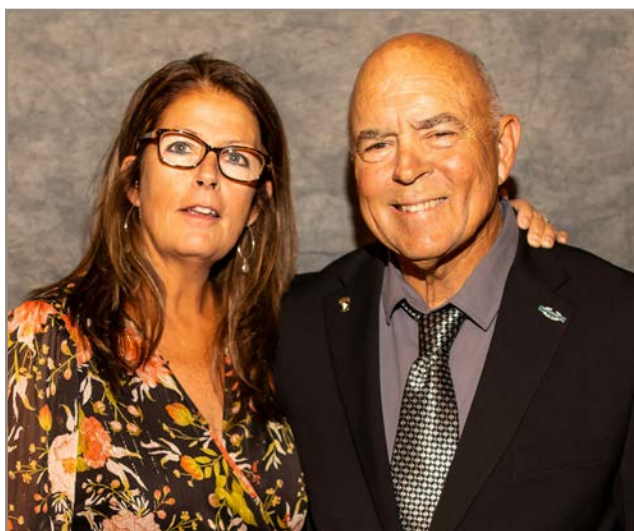
STAR & GENE MARSHALL B 2/319 FA



SONDRA & ALFRED MARTIN A 2/11 FA



DIANE (HEWITT) & JOE MCCARVILLE C 2/506



MICHELLE & JAMES & McCOY D 1/506



LINDA & RON & McCRORY **E 2/506**



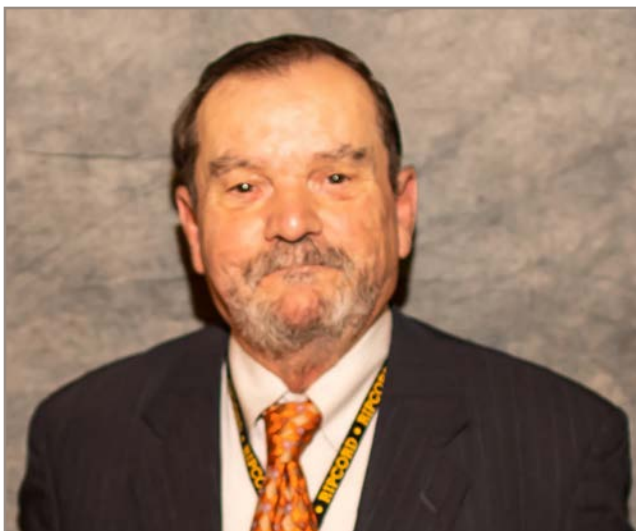
CHRIS & PETER MELORO **C 2/506**



DIANE & UWE MEYER **B 2/506**



TERESA & BENNY MULKEY **PATHFINDERS**



CLEM NEIDERER **HHC 2/501**



BRIAN PAUTZ **A/159 ASHB**



BARB & TROY PORTER C 2/506, 3 BDE AIR CAV



GEORGE POURCHAT D 1/506



CHARLOTTE & VINCENT PRIOLA B 2/506



DOUGLAS PUFFER D 2/506



PATTY & GARY RADFORD D 2/506



TRISHA & J.D. & RODGER GUESTS



ART SCHMIDT A/159 ASHB



CHERYL & GEORGE SCOTT A 2/11 FA



ROSE & RUDY SIDES GUESTS



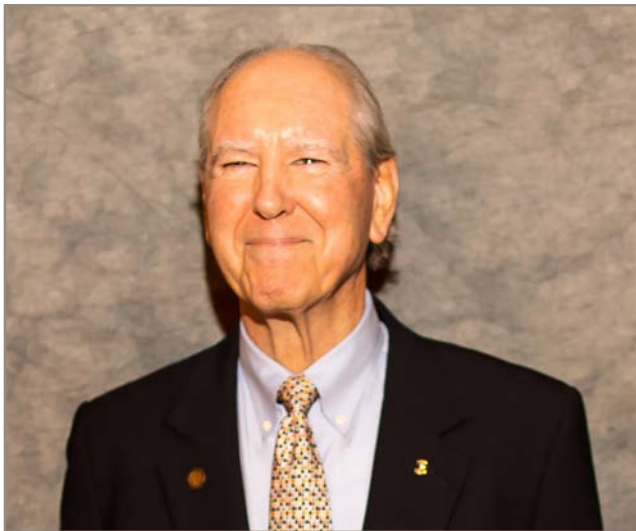
CARLA & WAYNE SKAGGS D 2/506



MARC SKINNER D 2/506



EVERETT SLAUGHTER B 2/506



JOE SMITH B/326 ENG



JIM SMITHER GVSU Veterans History



WAYNE SPRUILL D 2/506 & E 2/506



CAROL KEILMAN, TERRY STANGER A/159 ASHB



MARY & CHRIS STRAUB D 2/501



**CHRIS & MARY STRAUB & KATHY &
TRAVIS MORRISON GUESTS**



**ROB TARBUCK, PAIGE CORKHILL,
BOB TARBUCK C 2/506**



**DEBRA & LELAND TREMBLAY
3rd BDE AIR CAV**



PAT & RON VIRGILIO D 2/506



LORI & TOM WENMAN GUESTS



CATHERINE & JOHN WILLIAMS GUESTS



BOB WORRAL B 2/501



BRYAN & LEON WRIGHT B/326 ENG



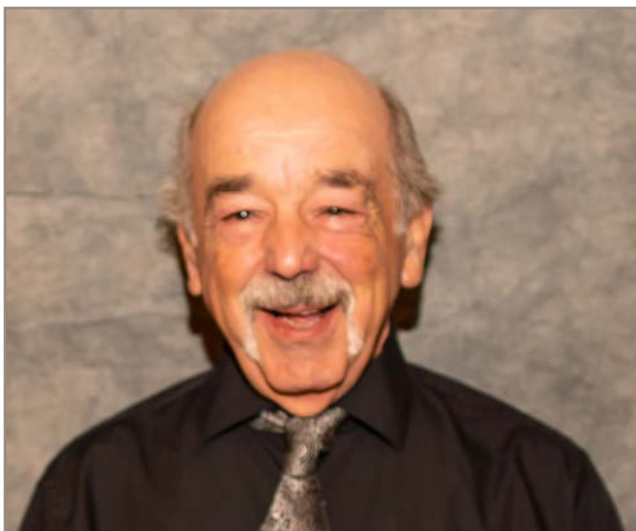
ROBERT WRIGHT A 2/506



SHANNON, LINDA, DAVID YONTS A 2/506



DAVID WENDY & NATE YONTS GUESTS



RONALD ZAHN A 2/11 FA



MAURA & BOB GUSTAFSON GUESTS



Coin Presentation



After attending the 1995 reunion, General Harrison decided the survivors of the Ripcord Battle deserved a little more recognition for surviving the battle and finding the courage to meet with others who suffered during and after the battle. He developed a design and had a two sided coin created. The coin shows the firebase and surrounding hills 805, 902 and 1000 which were pivotal to the outcome of the battle. The reverse side has the 101st shield and sentiments. Each year since 1997, a coin has been presented to survivors who are attending their first reunion. In cases where family members of those killed in the battle attend, coins are presented to the family in memory of the departed. The recipient is called upon the stage and cheered by his battle peers as the coin is presented. The pictures that follow show the most recent recipients.

Peter Meloro presents the Coin



Chris Straub D 2/501



Gene Haltenhof C/158 AVN BN

Chris Straub presents the Coin



Robert Wright A 2/506



Ron Cochran A Bty 2/11 FA



Dave Hilleren B/159 ASHB



Robert Jones HHC 2/506



Lyle Kohmetscher B 2/501



David Lockwood A Bty 2/11 FA



Jerry Manneman A 2/506



Diane (Hewitt) Mccarville Guest (C 2/506)



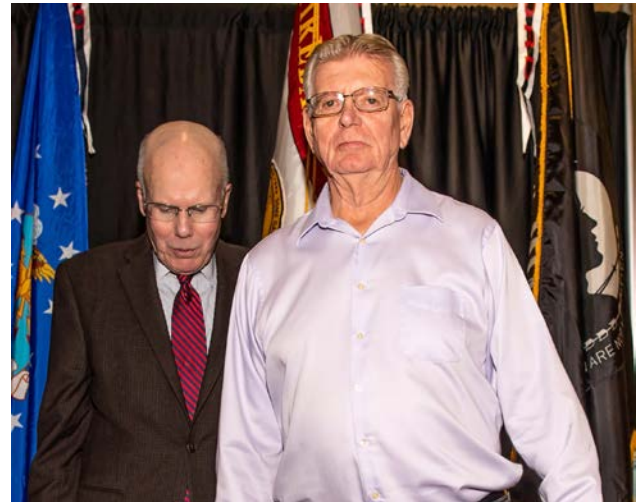
Art Schmidt A/159 ASHB



Leon Wright B/326 ENG



Thomas Lebow A/159 ASHB



Dan Brockmiller A/159 ASHB

Bill Boles presents the Coin



Brian Pautz A/159 ASHB



William Green A Bty 2/11 FA

Honors and Awards



Bob Leibecke presents an Award to Robin Graham for all his work and dedication for the Anology of Ripcord day by day Report.



Frank Marshall presents an Award to Bob and Red Judd for all their hardwork and dedication to the Ripcord Reunions.



Jim Campbell pays tribute to Gen Ben Harrison, Chuck Hawkins and Leonard Moore.



Chris Straub presents the Coin to Jim Smithers



Merle Delagrange lights the Candle Ceremony



Bill Boles opening remarks

Tributes to Lee Widjeskog



Bill Heath reads letter from Capt. Burkart Tribute to Lee Widjeskog



Peter Meloro Tribute to Lee Widjeskog

Honors to Kathy Widjeskog



Chris Meloro Tribute to Kathy Widjeskog



Michele McBride Tribute to Kathy Widjeskog



Mary Campbell Tribute to Kathy Widjeskog

Rest in Peace



January 10, 2022

Unit Group Photos



D 1/506



A 2/506



B 2/506



C 2/506



D 2/506



E 2/506



HHC 2/506



2/501



3rd BRIGADE HHC



159th ASHB



B 2/319 FIELD ARTILLERY



A 2/11 FIELD ARTILLERY



326 ENGINEERS



PATHFINDERS

Setting up Reunion



LADIES AUCTION AND RAFFLE



HOSPITALITY ACTIVITY







The Women of Ripcord

Each year we try to get a good picture of all the women who come with the men of Ripcord. They have provided a strong foundation for the association and for the men. Many of these women have lived through the year in Viet Nam supporting and worrying about their loved ones. All the women were the ones who helped the men re-adjust to civilian life and surmount their memories. Since 2002, they have supported the association by bringing items for the Chinese Auction each year for the benefit of the association. The proceeds have allowed us to keep the registration fees stable since 2003. Thank you ladies!



The Men of Ripcord

During October 2022 we were finally able to hold our reunion to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Fire Support Base Ripcord. Due to the Covid pandemic we were unable to meet in 2020 and 2021. It is a testament to our Ripcord Family that so many of the veterans of that battle and their family members were able to attend and honor our service and the memory of those who paid the ultimate price as a result of that battle. This photo captures the Brotherhood that continues to exist among those who served together during that very difficult time.

