



Ripcord Association

2024

Myrtle Beach, SC

Reunion



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 hosted by Chip Collins and John Mihalko. In 1987, Chuck Hawkins put together another reunion on the edge of Washington, DC. Then none were held until 1995, when John Mihalko organized one in Golden, Colorado. Since then, the annual reunions were set up by Fred Spaulding with the exception of the 2000 reunion in Shreveport, LA which was honchoed by Jim Campbell. Lee and Kathy Widjeskog started taking charge of planning and organizing the reunions in 2010. 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. At this time, Peter Meloro and John Fowler have continued to find appropriate locations that can accommodate our group needs and budget.



Bill Boles greeted everyone upon their arrival at the Reunion.



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



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



Bill Heath the Editor of our publications throughout the year, works to make our newsletters and other printed materials accurate and informative.



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



Paul Buhr in the past few years, 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.

2024 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
Paul Buhr	A/2-506	Board Director

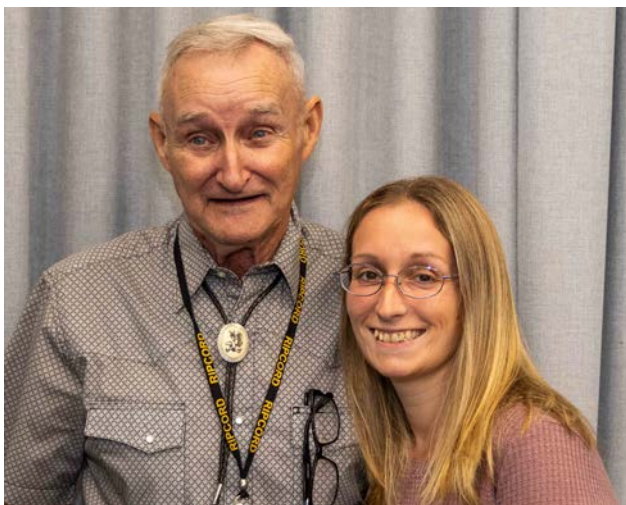
A special thanks to all those who volunteered their time to assist the Board during the Reunion. Your help was truly needed and appreciated.



Irene & Jim Aanonsen **A 2/506**



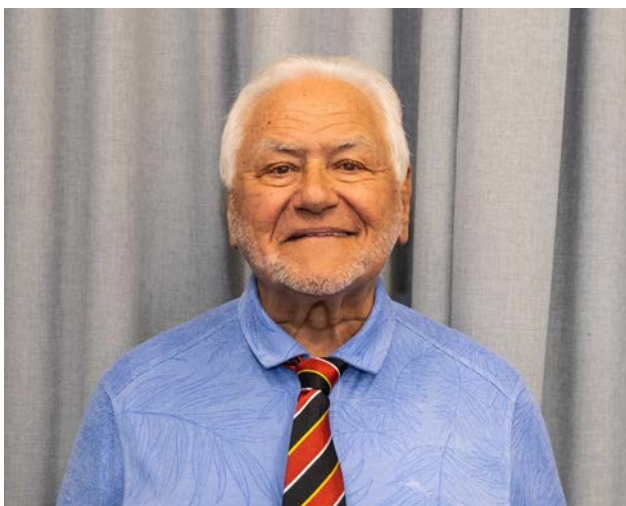
Lin & Pinkey Bashford & Kari Cline
D 2/506



John Beadle & Lisa Ohare **A/2-11 Arty**



Bill Boles **D 2/506**



Frank Bort **C 2/506**



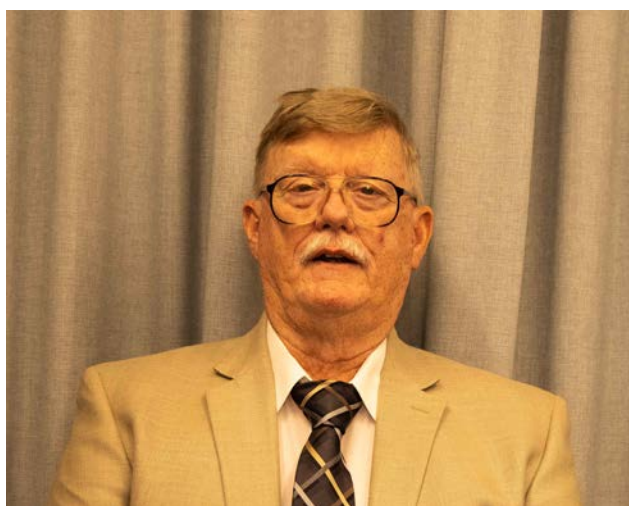
Bruce Brady & Karolyn Kruger **A 2/506**



Dan Brockmiller A/159th ASHB



Jerome Buffington C 2/506



Paul Buhr A 2/506



Albert & Claudia Burkhard & Sally Miller A 2/506



Jim & Mary Campbell C 2/506



Tex Campbell D 2/506



Dennise & Anthony Critchlow
HHC 2/506



Ronald & June Cochran **A/2-11 Arty**



Howard & Diana Colbert **C 2/506**



Sue & Dale Cooper **C 2/506**



Rob Tarbuck & Paige Corkhill **Guests**



Connie & David Cote **B 2/506 & E 2/506**



Ruth & Merle Delagrange **D 1/506**



Michael & Evan DeWulf **Guests**



Christine & Michael Dicken **B 2/506**



Maryann & Russ Dixon **B 2/319**



Carol & Rex Flansburg **D 2/506**



Ken & Saralyn Gainer **A 2/506**



Martin & Lea Glennon
A & HHC 2/506



Bob & Maura Gustafson **Guests**



Elwood & Johnnie Hall **D 2/506**



Bill & Lynn Hand **B 2/506**



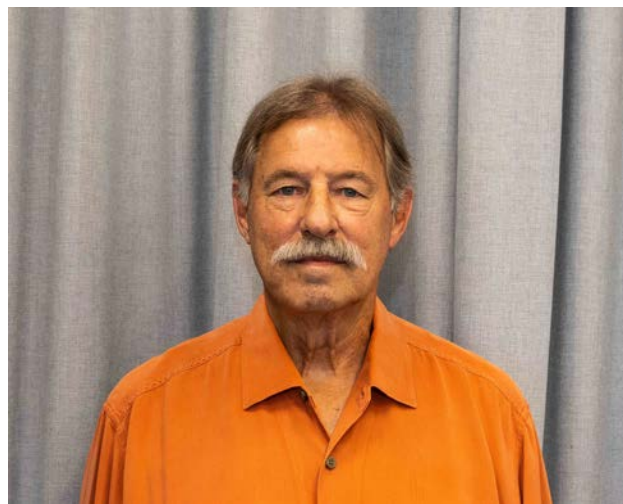
Laura & Paul Hansmann **B 2/506**



Jim Harris **HHC 2/506**



Linda & William Heath
A & HHC 2/506



Terry Hodges **D 1/506**



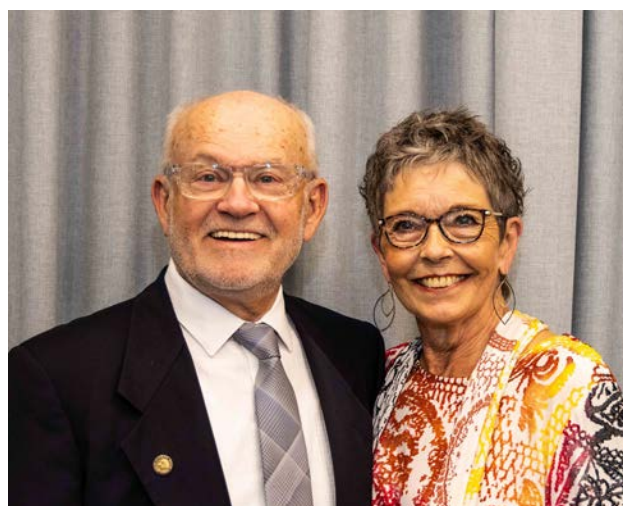
Jean & Chuck Holmen **A/159 ASHB**



Ron Hudson **A 1/39 Arty**



Charlene & Buzz Ireland **C/159 ASHB**



Bob & Cindy Jones **HHC 2/506**



Red & Bob Judd **B 2/506**



Sophia & Dave Kenyon **326 Engineers**



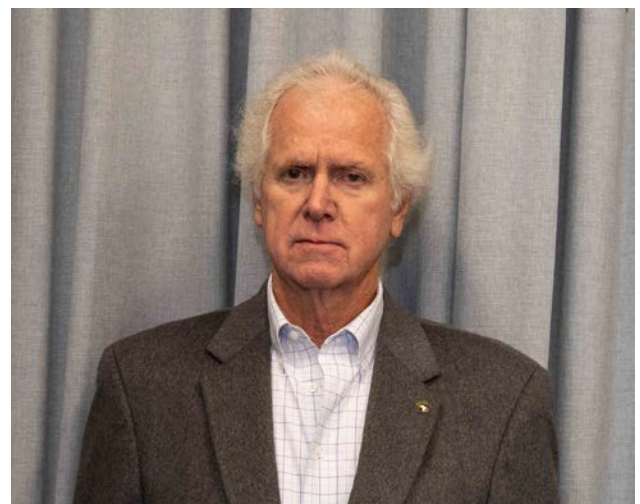
Kristi & Greg Kiekintveld
326 Engineers



Annette & John Kuennen **C 2/506**



Diane Grote & Dale Lane **A 2/506**



Robert Layton **B 2/506**



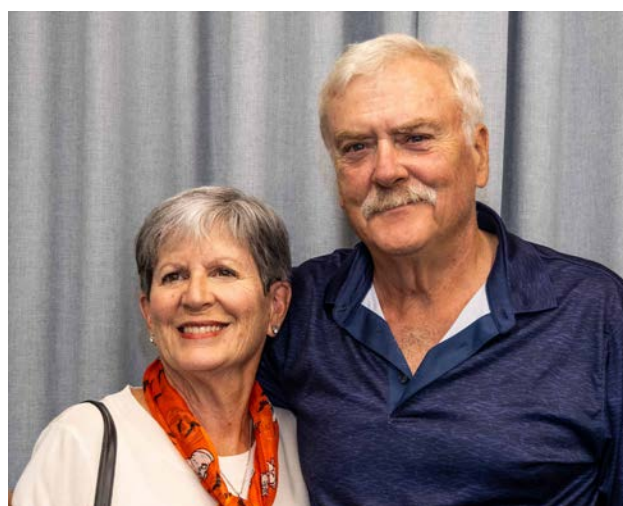
Janet & Charlie Lieb **C 2/506**



Tony Little **D 2/506**



Ingrid & David Lockwood **A 2/11 FA**



Andrea & Mark Lynch **Guest**



Kathie & Walter Lyssy **HHC 2/506**



BW & Dollie Marshall **A 2/11 Arty**



Dee & Frank Marshall **A 2/506**



Alfred & Sondra Martin **A 2/11 Arty**



Joe McCarville & Diane (Hewitt)
C 2/506



Jim & Michele McCoy **D 1/506**



Chris & Peter Meloro **C 2/506**



Diane & Uwe Meyer **B 2/506**



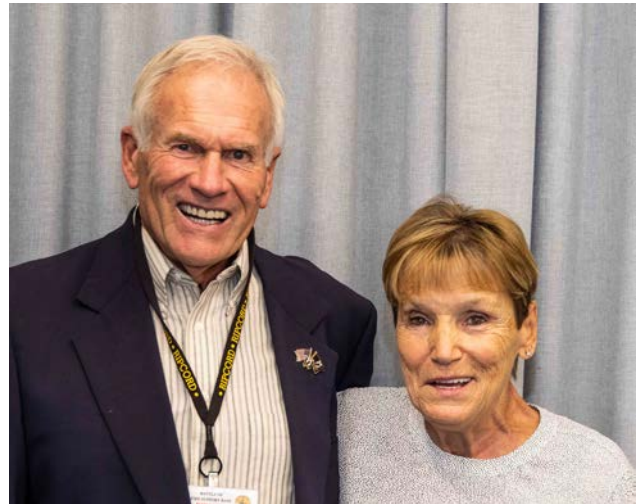
Bob Pagano **B 2/506**



Brian Pautz **A/159 ASHB**



Ray, Blaine & Sheila Potts **B 2/319 Arty**



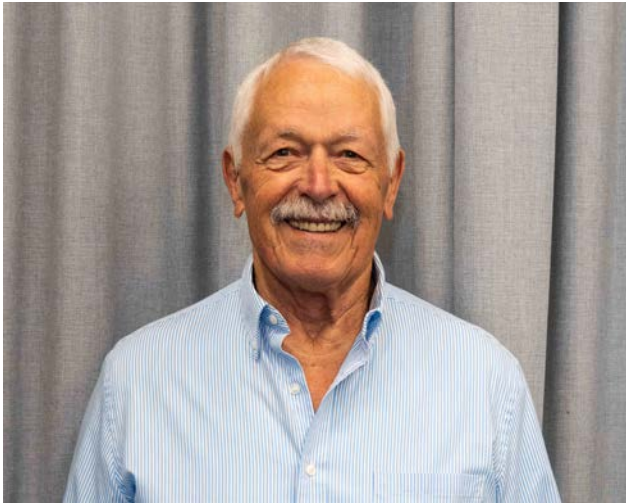
Gary & Patty Radford **D 2/506**



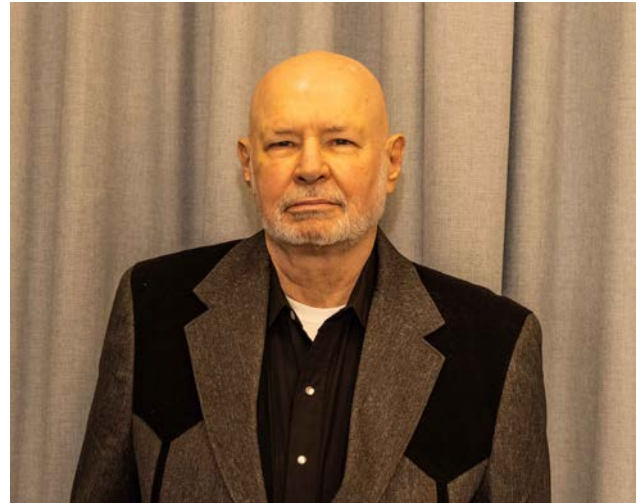
Bill, Amanda, Allen, & Aspen Rich
Guests



Vanessa Martin & Rander Shaner
Guests



Marc Skinner **D 2/506**



Everett Slaughter **B 2/506**



Joe Smith **326 Engineers**



Jim Smither **GVSU Veterans History**



Jeane & Bob Smoker **C /2/506**



Dave Snyder **A 2/11 Arty**



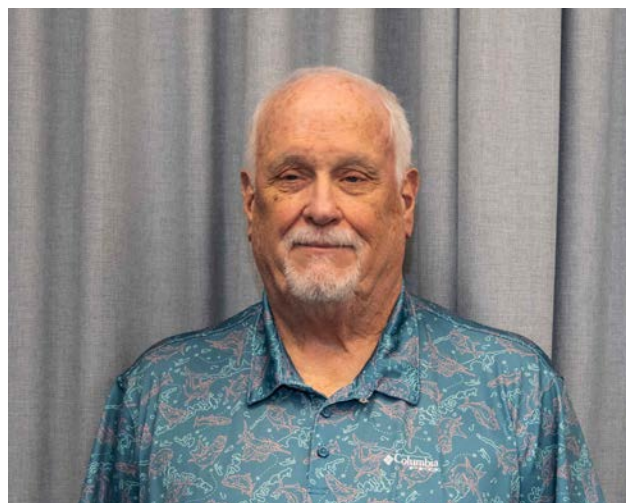
Mary & Chris Straub **D 2/501**



Judy & John Stumbo **HHC 2/506**



Charlie & Lacy Tipton **C 2/506**



Craig Van Hout **B 2/506**



Pat & Ron Virgilio **D 2/506**



Susan & Steve Wallace **B 2/506**



Pat & Bill Watrous **B 2/506**



Brett, Kathy & Denise Widjeskog **Guests**



Bob Worrall **B 2/501**



David II, Linda, David & Shannon Yonts
A 2/506



Peter & Chris Meloro **C 2/506**, Maura &
Bob Gustafson, Mark & Andrea Lynch



Sue & Tara Koste, Dale Lane & Diane
Grote **A 2/506**



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.

Senior Officer Chris Straub presents the Coin



Bill Watrous B 2/506



BW Marshall A 2/11 Arty



Bill Rich (son of Dave Rich) (B/2-319)



William Lewis B/159 ASHB



Randy Shaner B 2/501



Johnny Wright A 2/506

Special Awards



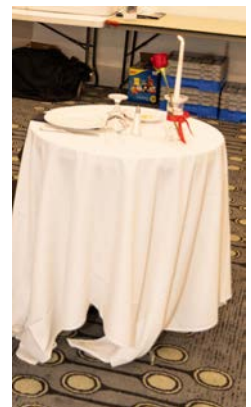
Presentation Award to Kathy Widjeskog



Presentation Award to Paul Buhr



Presentation Award to Bill Heath



Merle Delagange Lighting the
Missing Men Candle

Unit Group Photos



HHC 2/506



A 2/506



B 2/506



C 2/506



D 2/506



E 2/506



B 2/501



D 1/506



1/506



159th ASHB



326th Engineers



A 1/39 FA



A 2/11 Field Artillery



B 2/319 Field Artillery

3 members of the First Ripcord Association Reunion 1985



Frank Marshall, Bill Heath and Rick Blythe

2025 Ripcord Association Reunion



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 Vietnam 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 Ladies Auction and Raffle each year, benefiting the association. The proceeds have allowed us to keep the registration fees stable since 2003. **Thank you ladies!**

