

# ON THE RIGHT TRACK

1ST Battalion 50th Association



April 2017

Cover Page

## From the TC Hatch

By Jim Seagers

Hello, Members,

I can hardly wait! It's only a few weeks now until our reunion. Thanks to all who have worked so diligently on the preparations. This is going to be an especially memorable reunion. John Topper, Jay Copley, and I went to a 1/50<sup>th</sup> D Company graduation on March 10. There we met the Command Sergeant Major of the Army, who is the speaker for our memorial service. He is such a personable individual: he has wit, humor, grace, and outstanding military prowess. You will really like him. He is very down-to-earth even though he is such a valued leader.

We have memorabilia that we know all of you will treasure. I do want to stress one particular event that is a courtesy the battalion is extending to us. Instead of having the ball in an off-reunion year, the company commander Lt. Col. Baltazar and his cadre have made accommodations especially for us by moving it to this May on the Friday evening of the reunion. This ball is a special event, and we need to show our appreciation to the current 1/50<sup>th</sup> for inviting us. I am counting on you fellows to come and to bring your wives. You'll be glad you did, and so will your wife. How often do

you get to go to a military ball? Maybe once or twice in a lifetime. So come and plan to stay all week. We are going to have a record turn-out, and the Association and Battalion have done a great job making it affordable. See you there!

Play the Game!

Jimmy

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## Our 2017 Reunion

Marking 50 years since the 50th Infantry Deployment to Vietnam

Celebrating 100 years since the formation of the 50th Infantry Regiment

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## From the Chaplin



Hello to everyone, I hope when you get this news letter you are packed and ready for the reunion. It's been a while since I have contributed to the news letter, the only excuse I have is laziness.

I have been fighting bladder cancer for a while now and have had four procedures to remove the tumors. I went through six weeks of treatment and as of my last check up I was cancer free, thank God.

I want to thank Lorene for filling in the Chaplains article for me, what a great job she does for our news letter. If any one has any prayer concerns please contact me. My e-mail is [lawrencejordan30@yahoo.com](mailto:lawrencejordan30@yahoo.com) feel free to contact me any time.

I will close for now hope to see you at the reunion. Until then may God Bless and protect you. Toby

## Ladies Home Front

Well, it's not long now until the reunion! I am very excited about it. Jimmy and the officers have talked about it for two years, and I mean that in a great way. Anticipation and participation are high. Be sure to come with your husbands! This will be a memorable reunion, as my husband stated. I, too, want to stress the ball and the invitation the battalion has extended to us. Ladies, this is your chance to dress up and tell everyone that you have been to a military ball. Many ladies would like to get a chance to go to such an occasion, and WE ACTUALLY GET TO!! Hooah!!

Since our former commander of the 1/50<sup>th</sup> Co. Nelson will not be able to attend this reunion because he is in Afghanistan, to remember him please bring an item we can put into a "Remembrance Box" for him and cards or notes. Thanks! See you soon.

Lorretta Segars

### Chaplain Christensen Award the Soldier's Medal

On Tuesday morning, 13 March 2017, Chaplain Matthew Christensen was awarded the Soldier's Medal in Fort Benning, GA. The Soldier's Medal is the highest peace time medal that can be awarded to a Soldier who distinguishes himself or herself with heroism while not in conflict with an armed enemy. Chaplain Christensen did just that on the night of 28 February 2015.

That night Christensen received a text from a distraught Soldier requesting the Chaplain's aid and counsel. When Christensen arrived at the Soldier's barracks room, he found an intoxicated, rage-filled Soldier. That Soldier took Chaplain Christensen and two other Soldiers in that room hostage, threatening the hostages' lives with a machete.

The enraged Soldier then called his family, and on speakerphone, stated that he had three hostages to kill that night. He pinned one of the other soldiers against the wall, and drew back his machete. It was at that time that Chaplain Christensen made a move. Christensen grabbed the distraught Soldier from behind, and put him in a choke hold. As he wrestled with the Soldier, one of the other hostages removed the machete from his hand. With a second chokehold, Chaplain Christensen ended the altercation.

Chaplain Christensen credited his actions to "Nothing but fear, and I believe the work of the Holy Spirit, moved me into a position where I could physically control the soldier."

That night, Chaplain Christensen not only served as a Chaplain, giving guidance and counsel, but also acted as a Soldier, putting himself in the way of violence to save the lives of everyone in that room.

Read more here: <http://www.ledger-enquirer.com/news/local/military/article138464203.html#storyling=cpy>





**Association of the 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry  
Historian Report for the Spring of 2017**

March 13, 2017

Hello All!

As you would expect, I am in the thick of preparations for the upcoming Reunion. At this writing, we are expecting to have our most well attended event ever!... thanks in no small part to the generous donation from Tom and Diana Clark! If you have not yet registered or made hotel arrangements...I suggest you "get crackin"! Details about hotel accommodations are being updated on the website reunions page as the reunion gets closer. We have already sold out the Hampton Inn and Suites and I expect we will come close to filling the nearby Holiday Inn (Both in Phenix City). In fact, we anticipate having so many at the Holiday Inn that we will be designating one of our buses to be specific to that property for all reunion events. If both of these properties are full by the time you get around to making reservations, I suggest the Quality Inn which is right behind the Hampton. Their rooms are currently priced at \$67.00 plus taxes...but they have a history of raising their prices once they determine the short supply of rooms for those reunion dates.

My most ambitious Association Archives endeavor has been the acquisition of seven foam board displays depicting our Regimental History. I had these printed at 18 x24 inches and made frames for them in my woodworking shop in my basement. These turned out so well...with an aged appearance... that I decided to re-frame all my other large displays in the same fashion. I also framed Bryan "Frenchy" Lagimoniere's 36 x 48 map of LZ Betty...and will finish framing two large 36 x 48 maps of Vietnam this week.

I had already completed professionally re-framing several of our World War I panorama photos and added a few new displays...such as a collection of photos from World War II purchased from the estate of a medical officer from the 50<sup>th</sup> Armored Infantry Battalion. I also added a small display on the 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Scout Dog Platoon of the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.

In April, I will begin sorting everything out and developing a plan to get the entire archives into my truck for the driving trip to Fort Benning! It may be a bit cramped...but I believe I can accommodate everything. Since I no longer own the large Van I had at the last reunion...it will be a challenge getting everything into about ½ the storage space!

I plan to leave San Diego on Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. I will attend a Vietnam Conference at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas between Thursday and Saturday...then hit the road for Fort Benning. I should arrive either Sunday or Monday and will have our archives displays all set up by Tuesday Afternoon at the latest. There will be so many framed displays that I plan on having quite a few framed maps, etc on display in the Hospitality room. It seems our 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry "Museum" is getting to be too large for the conference room we have used in the past!

Finally, I will have "Victor Charles"(See photo) with me again to stand guard in the archive room!

Your Historian

Jim Sheppard





## GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING 4/29/2015

The meeting was called to order by President Jim Segars at 0940.  
 Opening prayer was offered by Chaplain Toby Jordan.  
 The Pledge of Alliance was recited by the assembled group.



Historian Jim Sheppard discussed the increasing expense of the newsletter and the fact that the membership would be getting the Newsletter by E-mail. Members were urged to go to the 1/50th web site to submit their e-mail addresses as well as furnish those addresses to Newsletter Editor Lorene Burch.

There will be one more paper copy sent to the membership. Those without computer access may still get a hard copy.

He also discussed income and the importance of paying dues on time. If you are not a member it would be important to become one

Gary Quint submitted the minutes from the last reunion as published in the December 2014 newsletter.  
 A motion was made to accept and seconded. A voice vote approved the motion.

Treasurer Chuck McAleer submitted the treasury report.

Discussed surplus and expenses throughout the year

Proposed a scholarship be formed with surplus money and that a board to study and determine the criteria.

**Old Business**

Newsletter by e-mail will save \$3,000 yearly.

Only source of income besides reunion is membership dues which are spotty and lacking  
 Monument was \$7,000 alone

President Segars reminded the attendees that we are on Eastern Time Schedule

Discussed changes in the schedule

Two Companies turning blue

Members can participate with Blue Cord for those who do not have family attending

Discussed traffic issues

President Segars discussed schedule for today (4/29). Introduced new first time attendees.

A motion was made and seconded to return to Ft. Benning for the 2017 reunion. The motion was passed by voice vote of the attending membership.

The 2017 Reunion will represent the 50th Anniversary of the 1/50ths deployment to Viet Nam and the 100th Anniversary of the formation of the Battalion.

**New Business**

Lorretta Segars Discussed Wreaths across America program. The group has placed wreaths on 250,000 graves in Arlington the 1st year. Anyone can donate time or money to Wreaths Across America.

Bob Schaller spoke on behalf of John Thelen whose step son died leaving a 3 year old daughter. Motion was made for Association to donate \$100 to the family in memory of his step son. Seconded and Passed

A motion was made, seconded and passed to retain the following officers of the Association: Jim Segars as President, Robert Melendez as Vice President, Chuck McAleer as Treasurer, Gary Quint as Secretary, Toby Jordan as Chaplain and Jim Sheppard as Historian.

John Topper mentioned that there are Lapel Pins and Decals commemorating the 50th anniversary of the beginning of VN War - Free and available in the hospitality room

Lorretta Thanked current 1/50 Cadre. New BN Commander and staff have been extremely helpful and she feels as though we need to give them a big Thank You.

John Topper - reviewed Memorial Ceremony

Benediction was offered by Chaplain Toby Jordan

The meeting was closed at 10:30



## Letter from the Editor:

This past two years has seen many changes in the formatting of the newsletter and I am getting some great feedback. Would just like to remind you all, this is your newsletter and it is only as good as the articles that I receive. Also, I want to take the time to thank each of you who have allowed us to send this VIA email as it saves time and money.

I realize that not everyone has an email address, so am happy to oblige those as well. It is important that as many of you receive the newsletter as desires. Some are not able to read it on the computer or don't care to own one.

Bottom line is, no matter how you receive the newsletter it is important for you to make sure we have your updated information. If you have an email account and use it please let us know. My hope someday is to use it for special announcements that you may miss on the website: [www.ichiban1.org](http://www.ichiban1.org).



## New Infantry Soldiers Leave Foxtrot with Strength and Honor

### Company C

Foxtrot Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment graduated a class of new Infantrymen on 14 March 2017, sending them to Infantry units around the world. The Army will send some to Airborne School, Ranger School or Special Forces Assessment and Selection.

This cadre of world class trainers originally picked up 173 new Soldiers in October. The first 72 hours were focused on integrating the new Soldiers into the company. A tone of strict discipline and high, rigid standards were set from the first step they took from the buses. They were entered into the company records and issued the equipment that they would care for and use over the next 14 weeks. The attrition started almost immediately, with a few Soldiers asking to quit after just a few days. The Battalion doesn't let them off so easily though, recognizing that Soldiers who may want to quit when first exposed to the stress of Basic Training will often toughen up and perform well once they have adjusted. Anyone who wanted to quit had to wait until the end of Red Phase.



In Red Phase the Trainees were introduced to basic Soldier skills. They were assessed on their physical performance with the APFT and the new Physical Demands Assessment. They spent time in the woods learning to navigate, they were taught basic Soldier First Responder skills, they tested their coordination and endurance on the obstacle course, and they learned the fundamentals of marksmanship. White Phase was focused on qualifying them on their main weapon, the M4. At the end of the last range, RM18, the Company had 73 Soldiers who qualified Expert. Blue phase wrapped up the weapons training with classes on other US weapons, including machine guns, the AT-4 and Mk 19.

Black phase included STT, which taught the Trainees basic skills they would need for field training and patrolling. They learned how to fight in cities during Mobility Operations in Urban Terrain. They culminated in the Field Training Exercise, a seven day event that included a company defense, mounted operations, NCOs from the Advanced Leadership Course, and a visit from LTG Lundy, the Commanding General of the Combined Arms Center. The FTX ended in a long, grueling march back to the Company Training Area where they were treated to a bonfire and their Drill Sergeants reading the history of the American Infantry. Gold Phase included recovery from the field, the Turning Blue Ceremony, and graduation. On 17 Feb 2017 Foxtrot Company graduated 166 brand new Infantrymen, ready to deploy to units around the world.





### Copley Challenge

Lewis, Christopher G CSM USARMY MCOE (US)

On 01 May 2017, in conjunction with the Regimental Reunion and the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Regiment, the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry will conduct the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual “Copley Challenge,” a battalion-level endurance competition to honor of the wartime service of the Honorary Regimental Sergeant Major, CPT(R) Jay Copley, and to build a competitive spirit and esprit de corps among the Cadre and Drill Sergeants of 1-50 IN.

This challenge will consist of six events, based around tasks that our Infantrymen are trained on here at Sand Hill, to be conducted by six, two-man teams of Drill Sergeants (one team from each Company in the Battalion). Each team member will carry 40 lbs of equipment, plus weapon, and will move by foot to each of these designated stations in and around the Battalion area on Sand Hill. Team scores will be a combination of GO/NO-GO for each task, and their overall team time, from Start to Finish.



The Start and Finish point will be the 1-50 Memorial in front of the BN Headquarters on Sand Hill. Members of the Association are more than welcome to watch the teams compete – just please let us know if you plan on attending. CSM Copley will announce the winning team at the Battalion Ball on 05 May 2017. The Battalion will continue to conduct this event every May in honor of the anniversary of the birth of the Regiment in May 1917, and in honor of the Battle of An Bao where CSM Copley earned the Distinguished Service Cross on 05 May 1968

FIX BAYONETS!

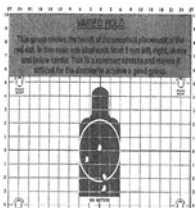
### Parallax Mitigation Devices Company B

Today’s ITB Soldiers are better marksmen than ever before and will continue to progress as infantry men due to their priority as the back bone and tip-of-the spear of our military. This is due largely to the advanced training techniques and continued technological advancements in optics weapons. An infantryman's primary weapon, the M4 carbine, is the most important weapon in the United States Army’s arsenal and marksmanship is one of the most important fundamentals to an infantryman. For this reason, the department of Defense puts a huge emphasis on advancements for the weapon and its respective optics.



After ITB Soldiers zero and qualify with iron sights, they transition to the

M68 CCO to further enhance their marksmanship skills and accuracy. One of the problems, however, is that new shooters have trouble obtaining good zeroes due to the parallax associated with the M68. The M68 is, for the most part, parallax free and point of aim should equal point of impact. This is not always the case as there are minute errors that can decrease accuracy exponentially as the shooter reaches out to further and further distances. When zeroing the weapon and engaging the target, the red dot must be precisely centered every shot to ensure accurate zeroing of the weapon and accurate fire on targets. New shooters often have trouble centering the red dot and must estimate the true center of the red dot with respect to the lens. To assist with this issue and eliminate the guess work in centering the red dot, the Army began using



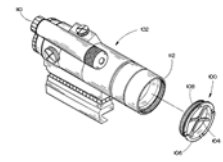
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the Parallax Mitigation Device to screw into the front of the M68 to further eliminate parallax issues when zeroing the M4 Carbine.

The 1-50 Infantry Battalion with the help from the 198<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade's marksmanship team, has started to implement Parallax Mitigation Devices into the rifle marksmanship portion of basic training. As a result, Soldiers have been able to zero their weapons in on third of the time it normally takes when zeroing a regular



M68. This also eliminates a waste of ammunition as Soldiers zero their weapons in less firing iterations. Time, money, and survivability are three of the most important factors in creating a combat ready Army and increasing combat effectiveness in our military. Over time, the Parallax Mitigation Device can increase the amount of time drill sergeants have to train ITB soldiers, the device will save in ammunition costs as Soldiers are able to zero their weapons using less ammunition, and the Soldier will have a better zero when he or she deploys to face America's enemies and engage them on the battle field, thus increasing their overall survivability (Lindlau and Wayne).

Lindlau, Richard D., Wayne B. Morgan, and Range Tactics Llc. "Patent US8484881– Method and system for mitigating parallax in gun sights." Google books, N.p., 03 June 2011. Web. 20 Mar. 2017. <<https://www.google.ch/patents/US8484881>>

## Alpha Company

The New Year began with 1-50 Infantry Battalion (OSUT), as Alpha Company welcomed a new Commander, Captain Phil Axelrod, in addition to a new Executive Officer, First Lieutenant Jonathon Atwell. Even with the change, the Company remained anchored by First Sergeant Kanaan Merriken and the outstanding team of Drill Sergeants.

Alpha Company and Bravo Company each picked up a new cycle of Recruits on January 27, 2017. It was on that morning when tension and fear gripped the Recruits as they loaded the buses to their units. The very moment they stepped off the bus, they were greeted by motivated Drill Sergeants, tension and fear to intensify as they struggled to adapt to a new way of life. "I am very proud to be where I am, I am very proud that we have a class of 211 future Infantrymen who raised their right hand to serve their country during time of great international strife and uncertainty. I am very grateful to be here in order to ensure the future of the United States Army and the future of the Infantry and make sure that we are bringing trained, proficient, and professional Infantrymen to the line." remarked Captain Axelrod, who went on to add, "Marksmanship, physical fitness, and discipline; that's the winning combination for Infantrymen and they are going to get a whole lot of that from here." In contrast, First Sergeant Gerald Mullins, the First Sergeant of some 198 recruits of Bravo Company is more stoic and silent regarding his 13<sup>th</sup> cycle.



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DTG	EVENT	LOCATION	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>2 May 17</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>		
1200-1800	Registration	Hampton Inn Phenix City	Alumni Association
1400	Memorial Rehearsal (Tentative)	Bldg 3560	Bn CO/CSM
1800-2100	Reception	Hampton Inn	Association
<b>3 May 17</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>		
0830-0930	Executive Committee Meeting	Hampton Inn	Jim Segars
0930-1045	Association Annual Meeting	Hampton Inn	Jim Segars
1100-1145	Travel to Battalion DFAC	Bus	1/50 Escort
1200-1300	Lunch	DFAC	Association
1300-1330	Travel to Museum	Bus	Association
1330-1530	Tour Museum	Museum	Association
1530-1600	Travel to Hotel	Bus	1/50 Escort
1700-1745	Travel to Uchee Creek	Bus	1/50 Escort
1800-2000	BBQ w/ 1-50 Cadre <b>SMA Invited</b>	Activity Center, Uchee	Cmd Team
2000-2045	Travel to Hotel	Bus	1/50 Escort
2045-2200	Hospitality Room Open	Hampton Inn	1/50 Escort
<b>4 May 17</b>	<b>Thursday</b>		
0800-0900	Travel to Pomeroy Field	Bus	1/50 Escort
0900-0930	Turning Blue Ceremony	Pomeroy Field	Cmd Team
0930-0945	Travel to BN HQ	BLDG 3560	Cmd Team
1000-1030	Memorial Service <b>SMA</b>	Front of BLDG 3560	Cmd Team
1030-1100	Monument Dedication <b>SMA</b>	BLDG 3560	Cmd Team
1200-1330	Lunch with Soldiers	BLDG 3560	Association
1330-1400	Briefing with LTC Carson (1/29 CO)	BLDG 3560	1/50 Escort
1400-1600	Sniper school briefing	BLDG 3560	1/50 Escort
1600-1630	Hands on equipment etc.	BLDG 3560	1/50 Escort
1730-1800	Travel to Benning Club	Bus	Association
1800-2200	Association Banquet	Benning Club	Association
2200-2230	Travel to Hotel	Bus	1/50 Escort
2230-UTC	Hospitality Room Open	Hampton Inn	1/50 Escort
<b>5 May 17</b>	<b>Friday</b>		
0730-0800	Travel to Patriot Field	Bus	1/50 Escort
0900-1000	Observe Graduation Ceremony	Companies A & B	Association
1100-1130	Travel to Hotel and Open Time	Bus	Association
1800-2300	Battalion Spring Formal	River Mill	Cmd Team
<b>6 May 17</b>	<b>Saturday</b>		
0800-1200	Checkout	Hampton Inn	Association





**1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Association**  
Reunion 2 May - 5 May 2017  
Fort Benning, Georgia  
**Registration Form**

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Badge Name \_\_\_\_\_ Shirt Size \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Name \_\_\_\_\_

Badge Name \_\_\_\_\_ Shirt Size \_\_\_\_\_  
(Use separate sheet for additional guests)

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

(Host Hotel is Hampton Inn and Suites, Phenix City, AL) **Overflow Hotel is Holiday Inn Express Address: 1702 US 280 Bypass, Phenix City, AL 36867 Phone: (334) 298-9404**

***Host Hotel is the Hampton Inn and Suites, Phenix City, AL. (HOTEL IS COMPLETELY BOOKED, PLEASE MAKE RESERVATIONS at another hotel.) Call the Nationwide Toll-Free number: (866) 799-3642 or call the hotel direct: (334) 6640776 for reservations. YOU MUST make your hotel reservations DIRECT with either the Hampton Inn and Suites or other hotel of your choice. Submitting this registration form does NOT cover your hotel reservations. (Hospitality and Archives will be at the host hotel.) Ask for 1/50 rate of \$89 (rate available for 2 - 5 May) – This special rate must be reserved by April 7th, 2017. Our Hotel Sales Representative is Michelle Spivey, (706) 615-2900.***

**Registration Procedure: Registration Cutoff Dates: Registration Costs:**  
(Per Person)  
**Early Registration: (Before 22 April, 2017) \$100**  
**After 22 April: ..... \$125**

**Mail this form along with check to:** Gary Quint, Secretary  
1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Association  
438 Fairway Lane



Gary E. Quint  
438 Fairway Lane  
Kirkwood, Mo

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Meanwhile, in Delta Company, Second Lieutenants from the Infantry Basic Officer Leaders Course took a break from tactics in the field to focus on sharpening necessary administrative skills they will need. First Sergeant Matthew Peeler pitched a class on the Non-commissioned Officer evaluation report (NCOER) in addition to types and techniques of counseling. This was followed by pairing up the Lieutenants and Drill Sergeants and conducting a mock initial counseling foreshadowing their future roles as Platoon Leaders.

Delta Company Executive Officer, First Lieutenant Andrew Miller, noted the class and practical exercise “were an extremely valuable experience for them to have. Being able to interact with and counsel seasoned Non-commissioned Officers better prepares them for their first initial counseling with their future Platoon Sergeant.” The entire 1-50<sup>th</sup> Battalion is confident that it will maintain its excellent standing as the premier Basic Training Battalion in Fort Benning for future cycles and for the rest of the year.

