

ON THE RIGHT TRACK

1ST Battalion 50th Association



April 2021

From the TC Hatch

By Jimmy Segars



The President's Corner

Dear Members,

It's been a long, tough year; however, I feel that our reunion will be a good pick-me-up for all of us. Unless something changes, we will have this reunion June 22-25 at Ft. Benning. Hooah!! Be sure to get your registration turned in and hotel arrangements made as soon as possible. I am definitely looking forward to seeing all of you!

Two weeks ago I finally got to meet our very capable Lt. Col. of the 1/50th, Dustin Daubert. He, too, is looking forward to the reunion. We also met with Jay Copley, Mike McCardell, Chris Lewis, the Sgt. Major of the battalion and their wives and the SGT Major's family. We had a great time, especially since it had been so long since we had seen them.

As many of you know, Lorretta's book *Sand in Tuscany* is about the 88th Infantry Division in the Italian campaign of WWII because her dad was a part of this first all-draftee division, including the 313th Combat Engineer Battalion. He fell in love with a beautiful, Italian girl, Lorretta's mom; and their romance is also a theme in the book as well as talking about the Italian campaign. A documentary was made from this book and interviews with three of the 88th Infantry still alive at the time, but in their 90's.

Two of these have since passed away, but their stories live on in this documentary called *Final Words of WWII*. A great deal of work, traveling, and interviewing took two years to complete this documentary. Later there will be a movie version called *War Bride*. Right now we have won or placed in 12 national and international film festivals. We are delighted it is doing so well. Also, we are doing screenings before hoping to have it on television. There is a screening planned during the reunion. Although *Final Words of WWII* is not about the 1/50th, it is part of history that little has been written about. And my wife feels as if she is a part of the 1/50th, so there is the connection with our association and this documentary. We promise you will like it.

Lorretta and I wish all of you a Happy Easter! May the true meaning of this holiday touch all of our hearts.

Play the Game

Jimmy Segars

Editor: Lorene Burch

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Chaplin's Corner

Jesus said: "Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. I have come as a light in the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness. I do not judge anyone who hear my words and does not keep them, for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." John 12:44-47

Editor's note:



What a year we have had. We are starting to feel some normalcy around here in Kansas, but still are wearing our mask. More people are getting vaccinated, so people are starting to relax a little.

Mom celebrated her 95th birthday. We had 29 family members show up. I had told them we wanted to keep it small, but well, how many more birthdays is she going to have, so I finally gave into everyone and let those who wanted to or could come to celebrate with her. I am happy to report we had no cases of Covid reported.

What a blessing this year has been, crazy how I could say that, but hear me out. We have been blessed by slowing down and getting to spend more time together. I have had fewer responsibilities as we could do most of the visits from home. My stress level has been much lower.

I am thankful for Bob's article and would love to hear more of your stories. After all this is your newsletter.

Am looking forward to getting to see many of you this June. It is long over due for us to gather and renew friendships.

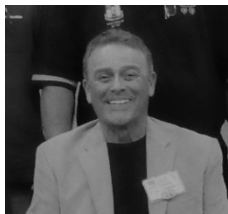
Blessings,
Lorene

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A 1968 Occurrence Revisited in 2021

By Association VP Roberto Melendez

DOCTOR'S VISIT

You have all had x-rays on various parts of your body over the years and I like, have had numerous as well. With that thought in mind, I'm relating an experience at my doctor's office that is connected to an incident at LZ Uplift in late May or early June 1968.

Since I have sleep apnea and must see the doctor twice per year. I happened to be there for my biannual visit and for this visit, the doctor had ordered an x-ray of my chest and ENT area.

After completing the obligatory 2 x-ray photos and looking at the results, the Technician approaches me and says, "Mr. Melendez you seem to have a small piece of metal embedded in the lower left side of your chest." I responded to her by saying yes that it was true and that I was aware of the piece of metal in my chest and when she asked about the circumstances of the incident, I proceeded to describe the events below. But I did so in a very short summarized manner as I thought that she would not understand our lexicon.

The details of the account below are directed to my Mortar Platoon guys (you know who you are).

INCIDENT:

"Well Ma'am, I spent the first 4 months of 1968 as the platoon medic for the delta Company Mortar Platoon. Since Delta saw some serious action during those 4 months, I naturally grew close to the members of the 'Four-Deuce' platoon as we endured and survived those harrowing incidences.

After the May 5th Battle of An Bao, I was transferred from the Delta Mortar Platoon to Alpha Company. On the occasions when Alpha would 'stand down' for a day or two at LZ Uplift I would usually go and bunk with my former Mortar buddies. (By this time, the Delta Mortar platoon had been permanently stationed at Uplift.)

On one particular 'stand down' I not only bunked with my Mortar buddies but got up at 2:00 am to watch their scheduled 'H and I' fire. After my shift concluded I returned to my bunk and had not been asleep for long when a HUGE explosion occurred and it seemed really, really close. We instantly assumed a mortar attack. I rushed to the Mortar Pit and found that a mortar round had exploded just after clearing the tube. Tragically one man was killed instantly (a new guy, I think) and another had a compound wound in the upper thigh (if I recall that it was Bernard Bierman).

After evacuation the KIA/WIA and clearing the debris away, I returned to my temporary bunk and as I pulled my shirt off, I noticed there was a small trickle of blood from the lower left side of my chest. A very small cut was there and I think I remember that could feel the metal just below the skin surface. And that Ma'am, is how the metal got into my chest: also, I find it amazing that you're the first technician to have mentioned it while all the others have not."

(The area never hurts and the metal seems to have moved deeper: or maybe it's the muscle that I added in that area over the years. OK, okay maybe it's not muscle so it must be fat.)

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REUNION 2021

By: Reunion Chairperson John Topper

The reunion is scheduled to take place 22-25 June. The Registration Form is included in this newsletter.

The HQ hotel is the newly remodeled Hampton Inn in Phenix City, AL. Make your reservation directly with the hotel.

The registration cost (\$150) is a bit more this year because the battalion has been unable to sell shirts, hats, coffee cups and the like since they have not been able to invite guests to graduation exercises over the past year. Consequently, they will not be able to fund the recreation and pay for the BBQ as they have in the past, so we will take on that part of the budget.

The schedule will be much the same as years past:

Tuesday: Registration/Happy Hour/Open Mic

Wednesday: Morning – Annual business meeting/Lunch – DFAC/Afternoon – Museum/Evening – BBQ

Thursday: Morning – Turning Blue/Memorial Service/Lunch – MRE/Afternoon – Local Briefings/Evening – Banquet

Friday: Morning – Graduation/End of Formal Activities

Having documentation with you that verifies vaccination against COVID-19 is probably a good idea. Nothing has surfaced that would indicate it may be a necessity, but it can only help.

Looking forward to seeing you all in June – let me know if you have questions. John Topper 317-331-0470.



From our last reunion in 2019

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1st Battalion 50th Infantry Association

Reunion 22-25 June 2021

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)

Host Hotel is the Hampton Inn, Phenix City (866)799-3642 for reservations). YOU MUST make your hotel reservations DIRECT with either the Hampton or other hotel of your choice. Submitting this registration form does NOT cover your hotel reservations. Ask for 1/50 rate of \$96 cutoff for this rate is 10 June. Hotel POC: Michelle Spivey, (334) 664-0776.

Registration Procedure: Registration Cutoff Dates: Registration Costs: (Per Person) \$150
Early Registration: Before June 10th \$150.00 - After June 10th \$175

Mail this form along with check to: Gary Quint, Secretary
1st Battalion, 50th Infantry Association
438 Fairway Lane
Kirkwood MO 63122

Please make check payable to: 1st Bn 50th Infantry Association

Registration Fee Includes:	22 June Evening Reception	Buses	Dinner for Guests
	23 June Lunch, Dinner, Buses	Gifts for Hosts	Auction Items
	24 June Lunch, Dinner, Buses	Event Shirt/Cap	Door Prizes

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A Historians Thoughts

In his second novel, [*A Farewell to Arms*](#), Hemingway wrote the following passage, a stark critique of war and those who laud it:

“I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice. . . . We had heard them, sometimes standing in the rain almost out of earshot, so that only the shouted words came through, and had read them, on proclamations that were slapped up by billposters over other proclamations, now for a long time, and I had seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory and the sacrifices were like the stockyards at Chicago if nothing was done with the meat except to bury it. There were many words that you could not stand to hear and finally only the names of places had dignity. Certain numbers were the same way and certain dates and these with the names of the places were all you could say and have them mean anything. Abstract words such as glory, honor, courage, or hallow were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the numbers of roads, the names of rivers, the numbers of regiments and the dates.”

I was stunned by these words.

As Historian and proprietor of my Vietnam infantry unit's association archives and website, the later, within which you can find memorial pages for over 200 men who died in Vietnam as members of the various units of our Regiment, I was suddenly struck by the truth of the legendary authors words.

Putting together the details of all those deaths...a large majority of whom were teenaged men...struck down in their youth, leaving a multitude of sadness in so many lives, left my views on that war many years ago shaken and changed.

Of course, we gather and remember. We remember the names of those we lost...the villages, the base camps, the experiences...good and bad, and we are now, after many years of distain or indifference to our dutiful service to our country by those who did not experience the horrors of war...are often greeted with “Thank you for your service”.

It was a long time coming...and quite disconcerting the first times we heard this greeting, but I now believe it a fitting legacy...and a now meaningful “salute” to those who have fought in all wars since “our war”.

Submitted by Jim Sheppard



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Please send your articles to:

Lorene Burch
821 Meadowbrook Rd.
Salina Kansas 67401

Or to my email address: thelmaburch@gmail.com

Feel free to visit the web site at:

<https://www.ichiban1.org/>

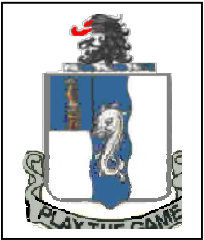


**2021 Reunion June 22-25th.
Make your reservations today.**

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Kirkwood, Mo. 63122