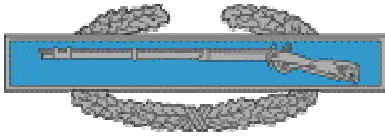


# ON THE RIGHT TRACK

1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Association



August 2011

Cover Page

## FROM THE TC HATCH

Jimmy Segars, President

I cannot thank all of you enough for the outstanding turnout and camaraderie at this year's reunion. We had a great time at each and every event and in between times as well. I especially appreciated the testimonies the new members gave at our Annual Meeting. It meant a great deal to all of us to hear how the association and getting together helps all of us and how we helped each other in the past in a far-away place called Vietnam. Our experiences in combat unite all of us in a way that few who did not experience Vietnam understand. Thank you to all on active duty at Ft. Benning. You are always so good to all of us. Thank you also for all the hard work that went above and beyond in planning and executing the Awards Ceremony for one of our own, Jay Copley. Jay, we're all so proud of you. We're proud to be called Vietnam vets.

As I just said, few who did not experience Vietnam understand, but Lt. Col. Hastings, the present 1/50<sup>th</sup> commander, understands. The speech he gave at the Memorial Service speaks volumes and so appropriately describes the way Vietnam veterans are and feel. His words were so eloquent yet emotionally moving in their simplicity and sincerity. Thank you Lt. Col. Hastings from all of us Vietnam veterans in the 1/50<sup>th</sup> and elsewhere. Below is a copy of the speech. You will want to keep it always.

***The April 28<sup>th</sup> Memorial Service Speech by Lt. Col Mike Hastings is on page 2.***

**This is part of an article sent in by Dick G. entitled "Joe Galloway's Talk"**

**"You are my brothers in arms" (Given to the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association: if you would like to read the entire article go to the unit's web site. It is well worth reading the whole thing, as this just sums up what the article is about.)**

I now know why men who have been to war yearn to reunite. Not to tell stories or look at old pictures. Not to laugh or weep. Comrades gather because they long to be with the men who once acted their best - men who suffered and sacrificed - who were stripped raw right down to their humanity. I did not pick these men. They were delivered by fate and the military. But I know them in a way I know no other men. I have never given anyone such trust. They were willing to guard something more precious than my life. They would have carried my reputation - the memory of me. It was part of the bargain we all made - the reason we were so willing to die for one another.

As long as I have memory I will think of them all - every day. I am sure that when I leave this world - my last thought will be of my family and my comrades - such good men. I'm going to shut up now and let us all get down to the real business of drinking and lying - er - telling war stories. Thank you. I salute you. I remember you. I will teach my sons the stories and legends about you. And I will warn my daughters never ever to go out with aviators. Good evening. God bless.

## Prayer request

Col. Frank Burns, a past commander of Ft. Benning, is being deployed for a year to Iraq. Please remember to pray for him and his family in his absence, that he will be kept safe and they will find the strength to make it through.

### IN THIS ISSUE

Lorene Burch, Editor

Billie McGregor, Editorial Assistant

From the TC Hatch	Cover
Joe Galloway's Talk	Cover
Lt. Col Hastings's Speech	2
Historian Report	3
A Soldier Returns Home	3
From the Editor	4
Jay Copley Award	4
Veteran Storytelling Workshop	5
1/50 Ladies Support Team	6
Ladies Application Form	7
Chaplain's Corner	7

### April 28<sup>th</sup> Memorial Service Speech by Lt. Col Mike Hastings

*Distinguished guests, friends, and most importantly the alumni and Veterans of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment; I consider it my privilege to speak to you today. The 28<sup>th</sup> of April is not associated with any sort of National Holiday, or tied to commemorating a specific battle. But it **IS** important in the history of this great battalion. Today we remember our fallen, and we consecrate this ground with soil taken from the very place you brave men fought so many years ago. As I mentioned, I consider myself privileged to be able to address you.*

*The remarks I'm about to make, I hope, convey what is in my heart as a veteran of my own conflict- but raised by veterans of yours. Growing up, my 8<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies teacher, my high school football coach, the boss at my job during High School summer vacations, and my next door neighbor-- the guy whose yard I mowed, were all Vietnam veterans. They were more or less my age now; and none of them talked about Vietnam. None of them shared even one story with me even though I wanted to hear everything. The only way I knew they served in Vietnam was by catching a glimpse of an old photo on their office wall; of deeply tanned young men in faded Olive Drab jungle fatigues, or maybe seeing a 1<sup>st</sup> CAV Distinctive Unit Insignia pinned inside a wallet.*

*I remember being trained in ROTC by a Master Sergeant and Sergeant Major who were Vietnam veterans- again, they deferred talking much about it. Later on as a lieutenant, I was lucky to have a salty and tough Battalion Command Sergeant Major who was a Vietnam vet as well- he was legendary and was everywhere. I never expected him to share much with a LT, even though he was a fairly good-natured man.*

*For these men, for **you**, it was after the battle that they endured, and far longer than the moment of terror in the battle. When I sat and thought about it, silence is the reward we reserve for you and your buddies. Silence is the sound of Honor which speaks no words, and lays no tracks. I think I understand a little better now- but your generation of warriors is alone together. As young men you endured your golden moment in combat- out there in Vietnam together, but back here in silence. While a whole generation went after its' own indulgence, vanity or appetite- you men clung to tradition, duty, commitment, and raised the flag not just once, but every single day over places like Camp Radcliff, LZ UPLIFT, or at An Bao. You stuck it out. But in the end you persevered alone. Just as you made the long walk out of that combat zone with a duffel bag full of dirty uniforms into a new life as my football coach, or my 8<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies teacher, or my next door neighbor; you persevered.*

*But here, today, you are together and with a fresh duty; to complete the lives of your buddies who didn't make it back, and to add to the monument to their memory. I am privileged to offer you this ground, this sacred place in memory of your friends. Where you can join each other if not relieve each other in places like this and on occasions like this, for one day of the year, in the company of each other and under the flag you served.*

*I apologize if I've spoken too long. Without further delay I'd like to introduce the Honorary Colonel of the Regiment COL (retired) Richard P. Guthrie.*

## Reunion 2011



Historian Report: Summer – 2011

Jim Sheppard

I am still coming down from the April Reunion "high"! This one will be hard to top... great job by John Topper! All the festivities surrounding the award of the Distinguished Service Cross to Jay Copley were almost surrealistic! Much of this is documented on the photo descriptions of the 2011 Reunion Photos section of the web site. My "Accounting" numbers for the reunion: Historian Reunion Sales; \$320.00 (6 Memorial Photos and 13 Document DVDs)

As at the previous (2009) reunion, it was incredibly rewarding to have more family members of our KIAs join us...some for the entire reunion...but most only for the day of the Wreath Laying Ceremony. I don't know how much more of these family visits we can expect...as I don't think we will have many "repeat" family members...as once seems to be enough for most of these. I look for these numbers to drop precipitously at the next gathering...as most of the available contacts have now been invited twice...still, new contacts will be found & invited...so one never knows for certain.

I have a "push" on to obtain photos of all our men KIA. At this reunion we received 2 or three new photos of men for which we previously had none. I also received a new photo via e-mail that was promised some time ago by a family member who finally "delivered".

I will be continuing my efforts at updating our KIA files and Memorial Pages. My new goal now is to have a memorial page for every man of the 50th Infantry Designation KIA in Vietnam...accurate and assembled in some sort of book (Loose-leaf) form for donation to the Battalion. This will mean I will be working on those KIAs from "E" and "F" Company designations. I am hoping to achieve this by the next reunion...but it may take a while longer. Look for the "In Memoriam" and "Photo Gallery" pages to be reorganized into more accurate groupings. I am going to segregate those listings which have been found to NOT be men of the 50th Infantry. They will still be memorialized, but I believe we need to have a separate grouping of only 50th Infantry Designation KIAs...for accuracy from a historical view. I confessed to LTC Hastings at this past reunion that there are quite a few names on our memorial of men who were not 50th Infantry men. He was quite surprised, but I felt the truth should be told. I also mentioned that we voted to leave all names as they existed on our memorial...and straighten out the misinformation on our web site. This topic may need to be "re-visited" in the future by the membership.

Of interest to all: During the reunion, John Topper introduced me to Captain Casey Donovan, who is preparing biographical data on a short list of men who may have either 50th Infantry Battalion Complex buildings or grounds named after them in the near future. These men are all highly decorated and former members of the 50th Infantry Regiment or designations which had 50th Infantry Regiment "roots". Under Consideration are, from the Battalion proper in Vietnam: Dennis Hinton, Drew Shipley, Frank Webb, Malcolm Dulac and Bob Ballard. From the Battalion Proper and still living (Quite an honor!) Jay Copley, from Company "E" (LRP), 50th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division (Received the DSC Posthumously) Johnston Dunlop, and Medal of Honor Recipient from World War II Archer Gammon. Information on the final outcome and possible dedications will be posted on the Web Site when available.

I've been enjoying a break from heavy Historian Activity for most of the summer...enjoying my new boat on the Jersey Shore back bays! That should change soon...as some long overdue oral surgery will have me house bound for most of the month of August. This fall I will return to the National Archives for more research and in about a year, look for reports on a planned trip to the Personnel Records Center in Saint Louis for Morning Report and Roster research and copying.



## A SOLDIER RETURNS HOME

By CYNTHIA M. ELLIS  
cellis@thetelegraph.com

GLEN CARBON - U.S. Army Spec. Randall "Randy" Dalton's journey ended Sunday with family and friends saying goodbye to their loved one killed in action in Vietnam four decades ago.

Thousands attended the memorial service at Sunset Hill Funeral Home and Cemetery for the Collinsville soldier who gave his life for his country on July 24, 1971, at age 20. "This journey that ends today started 40 years ago when Randy's family was informed that he was missing in action," said Dalton's cousin, Scott Dutton.

.....  
"When we say closure today, we do not mean forgetting," he said. "I hope nobody here ever forgets Randy." He said he's certain many who attended the service have sat in quiet solitude, shedding tears or trying to deal with the emotional release. "As we drove up the hill out here today, somebody shed a tear," he said. "When they saw 1,050 flags lining the highway, it's hard not to weep. It's hard not to be affected by that sight."

.....  
Following the service inside the funeral home, the Illinois Patriot Guard escorted Dalton to the gravesite, where he was laid to rest by his parents. Dalton was buried with full military honors. An Army honor guard carried his casket from the hearse to the grave. They presented each of his sisters - Gayle Vecchetti of Edwardsville, Karen Kloster of St. Louis and Linda Kruse of Tampa - with an American flag. At the end of the graveside service, Dalton's sisters released red, white and blue balloons into sky. Emotions poured from those attending the service. "This is incredible," one woman said as she walked from the funeral home to the gravesite. "His family gets to say goodbye." Charles Spencer of Springfield, Ill., said his friend was riding with the Patriot Guard and he felt it was his duty to attend. "I served in Vietnam from January 1969 to March 1973," Spencer said. Spencer said following the war he remained in the Army and retired as a captain. "It's remarkable that he's being laid to rest 40 years to the day he lost his life," he said. "He's home now, and we will never forget his service to our country."

Read more: <http://www.thetelegraph.com/articles/dalton-56963-family-service.html#ixzz1TImCNZGA>

## From the Editor

**Lorene Burch**

You may notice some changes in the News Letter this month. The first you may notice, is that the editor has change. My name is Lorene Burch I am the wife of Roger Burch, a life member.

It was voted on that there would only be three news letters sent out a year, so I volunteered to do it after John Topper requested a replacement. Although I grade papers and teach several writing classes, this is not something I am well versed in, so bear with me as I muddle through this first edition with the help of Billie. Which by the way, is a God sent.

The next paper will be published in December, so please try to have any article in by no later than November 16, as I know with the holidays coming up, it will be hectic for everyone.

So, John to you I say, thank you for all you did for the paper for all those years. It isn't as easy as it looks when life gets in the way.

To all those at the Gettysburg as well as Georgia, I thank you for making my mother feel so welcome. She, as we, is looking forward to the next one.

Thank you for your prayers and support.

**News – Fort Benning, Friday, Apr. 29, 2011**

**By Ben Wright – [benw@ledger-enquirer.com](mailto:benw@ledger-enquirer.com)**

### **Retired Captain Given Belated Medal Copley receives Distinguished Service Cross for actions during Vietnam**



Retired Army Capt. Jay C. Copley didn't forget the soldiers he served with in Vietnam as he was presented the Distinguished Service Cross Thursday afternoon. "I accept it on behalf of the great soldiers," Copley told a crowd of hundreds on a parade field at the National Infantry Museum and Soldier Center. Col. Terry Sellers, the chief of staff for the Maneuver Center of Excellence at Fort Benning, presented Copley the military's second highest award for valor. The award was to be presented by former Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey, but he couldn't get a flight after a deadly night of storms striking the Southeast, said public affairs spokeswoman Elsie Jackson. Copley served with Casey's father in Vietnam and Germany.

Copley, 78, of Columbus was honored almost 43 years after he led a fierce attack during the May 5, 1968, Battle of An Bao in Vietnam. A member of Company C, 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry Regiment, Copley was relieving another company when the group came under withering fire from enemy small arms, machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades in Binh Dinh Province. Copley disrupted the enemy's attack on the company he was relieving, saving countless soldiers' lives. During an ensuing battle, Copley continued to direct the attack on the enemy as forces tried to consolidate their positions. Copley received life-threatening injuries but continued fighting until he ensured the safety of his men.

The 50th Infantry Regiment lost 22 soldiers in the battle and 58 were wounded. Joe Torres, a member of the 50th Infantry Regiment in 1968, came from Houston to watch the ceremony. "I think it is wonderful," Torres said of Copley receiving the honor. "It took a long time but at least it happened. He is still here."

Copley, who received The Purple Heart, was recommended for the Distinguished Service Cross but never received it because of an administrative error and three-year statute of limitation. U.S. Rep. Lynn Westmoreland, who attended, worked with U.S. Sen. Saxby Chambliss to get language in a defense appropriations bill to allow the award.

Westmoreland said the most interesting note about the award is that he had met Copley four of five years ago and he never mentioned the lost honor. "He had opportunities and never mentioned it," Westmoreland said. "It took one of his soldiers to even bring it to our attention only after attending the 40th anniversary of the battle. This soldier even found out he had not received the medal." Westmoreland said Copley has remained humble throughout the process. "It wasn't a day goes by that he doesn't think about those injuries he received and losing 22 soldiers," he said. "It had to be in his mind. Today is a great day."

Read more: <http://www.ledger-enquirer.com/2011/04/29/1557320/retired-captain-given-belated.html#ixzz1S35bS8VM>

## VETERAN'S STORYTELLING WORKSHOP

### DICK GUTHRIE

From our time together more than forty years ago, we all have stories to tell. Some of us have done so on the "War Stories" page of our Association Website, but surely, **all** of us have stories we haven't yet told. In some cases, they are too painful, or seem too scary to share with anyone beyond those who lived them with us. These chronicles celebrate the exploits of our buddies -- some of whom are gone -- and the stories deserve to be saved for posterity. I know from my own experience that telling these stories is a way to deal with the pain they continue to cause us. I have just learned about a unique opportunity to get my stories told -- and saved for all time in the Library of Congress. I'm already signed up, and I think some of you might be interested as well.

#### WHAT is this?

During this four-day **Veterans Storytelling Workshop**, a qualified staff will guide participants through the process of:

- becoming storytellers
- crafting their story into its most compelling and interesting form
- getting comfortable telling their account on camera
- integrating their own memorabilia -- photos, objects, letters and music -- into our narrative
- preserving the stories in digital format for submission to the Library of Congress where these accounts will join thousands of other stories already archived in the Veterans History Project.

#### WHO's doing this?

Some of you may recall the 1999 reunion in Kansas City when Brian Thomas, Toby Milroy and I gave a presentation about our '98 trip back to Binh Dinh. My cousin, David Baker is the one who crafted that PowerPoint presentation. It inspired a number of our members to press for another return visit to Vietnam, and in 2001, David came with us. He later produced a compassionate documentary of that trip, titled *In Their Own Words*. Bob Melendez and Russ Roth and I were at the film's opening in Santa Fe several years later. David Baker's *Skyhorse* Company is committed to keeping alive the art of storytelling in this modern world of sound bites and twitter feeds. They know how to empower us to use technology and become the *teller*, but also the *director*, *producer*, and *distributor* of our own story. Once crafted, we'll preserve the accounts with easy-to-use digital technologies. The end product surely will educate and inform our families, communities and our society. This should make the world more aware, more compassionate, more understanding of our experiences.

#### WHO's invited to participate?

Veterans, but also interviewers, or even those who want to tell the tale of a beloved veteran who is no longer around to tell his or her story.

#### LIBRARY of Congress?

There, the *American Folklife Center* runs *The Veterans History Project* (<http://www.loc.gov/vets/vets-home.html>). This initiative collects, preserves, and makes accessible the personal accounts of all American war veterans -- from World War I in 1914, up through the current Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts. They're doing this so that future generations may hear directly from veterans, and better understand the realities of our wars

It takes just "*Five Easy Steps*" to join in the Veterans History Project. But getting started tends to be the most difficult step to take. This is where *Skyhorse* can help.

At the end of the four-day retreat and workshop, each participant will have a compelling story, properly formatted for submission to the Veterans History Project. And we will also take home a copy of our story, to share with friends and family -- and the Ichiban1 website.

#### WHERE? WHEN

The first workshop will be in Silver City, NM on 9-11 September. If you'd be interested in coming, please contact David Baker, [djb@skyhorsefilms.com](mailto:djb@skyhorsefilms.com), 505-469-1967. Depending on interest, *Skyhorse* may be able to schedule an orientation at our 2012 reunion. Let David know if that would be attractive to you. Meanwhile, I plan to be in Silver City, NM in September, and I look forward to seeing you there!

## 1/50<sup>th</sup> Ladies Support Team

Hooah, ladies,

Does that sound as if we can be military, too? Well, in a sense we are military already because we support our men—soldiers/veterans of the 1/50<sup>th</sup>. This last reunion we ladies decided that we want to do more to partner with our men to help honor soldiers—past and present. So we formed the 1/50<sup>th</sup> Ladies Support Team. All wives of 1/50<sup>th</sup> Association Members are members of this support team. We activated on April 27, 2011.

### WHAT DO WE DO?

1. First of all, we honor our husbands' service by supporting them in the 1/50<sup>th</sup> Association. In doing so, we strive to
  - a. read the newsletter
  - b. attend reunions and
  - c. become engaged in our husbands' interests in the 1/50<sup>th</sup>.
2. Next, we will keep informed of opportunities to actively support our current 1/50<sup>th</sup> soldiers by responding to the activities listed in the newsletter and responding as much as possible.
3. This year, we decided to support the following projects:

### WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA AND OPERATION HOME FRONT.

**Wreaths across America** (see website) is a non-profit organization that places Christmas wreaths each December on the graves at **Arlington National Cemetery**. The wreaths are donated and volunteers place the wreaths. This year the wreaths will be placed on December 10 along with a ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Wreaths will also be placed at each section of The Wall. We all know that December 10 was a key day in the life of 1/50<sup>th</sup> Vietnam vets deployed in 1967-68. So honoring our soldiers in this way speaks volumes to our men. We ladies will be going to Washington, D.C. to take part in this event as volunteers on December 9-11. Any of you men in the 1/50<sup>th</sup> can go, too. We will also be going to Bethesda Hospital, where the Wounded Warriors at Walter Reed Hospital are being transferred as of this coming September, to present Psalm 91 camouflaged bandanas and perhaps Christmas items.

The second project we are calling **Operation Home Front**. We are making contact through Lt. Col. Hastings' wife Diane with a soldier in each company of the current 1/50<sup>th</sup> deployed from Ft. Benning to a combat zone to distribute care packages that we send to troops who will not otherwise get packages from home. We will make up items for the packages—as many as you wish—and send them to me. We hope all of you are excited about this new group and will become actively involved in our efforts to serve our soldiers. See schedule and accompanying form below.

**DON'T FORGET COOKBOOK INFO AS WELL. IF YOU FORGOT INFO, E-MAIL ME FOR DETAILS.**

### ARLINGTON TRIP

Rates:  
Transportation: Book on your own as well as the hotel below. Ladies may share rooms. Let me know.  
Motel: \$129 group rate until Nov. 9. Marriott—Crystal City at Ronald Reagan Airport in Arlington, VA 1-888-236-2427 or directly at 1-701-413-5500.  
Ask for 1/50<sup>th</sup> block.  
Metro: \$18 for a 2-day pass—purchase on Dec. 9  
Grey Line: \$40 for a 2-day pass—purchase on Dec. 9  
Meals: On your own. There is a restaurant in the hotel and several in a near-by mall area.

### TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Dec. 9 Arrival  
10:30 A.M. Meet at hotel to deposit luggage. Check in time is 3:00. Rooms may be available earlier, but we don't need them until 3:00.  
Board Metro to D.C. Visiting/Sightseeing via Grey Line for 2.5- hour tour.  
1:30 P.M. Lunch TBA  
3:00 P.M. Check in at the Marriott  
Time TBA Evening meal  
Dec. 10  
6:30 A.M. Breakfast  
7:30 A.M. Board Metro to Arlington  
8:00 A.M. Arrive at Arlington. Be in place at 8:30 A.M. Wreath laying.  
12:00 N Ceremony at Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and The Wall  
Time TBA Lunch  
2:00 P.M. Board Metro to Bethesda Hospital  
3:00-3:30 P.M. Arrive at Bethesda Hospital. Meet Wounded Warriors.  
5:00 P.M. Leave Bethesda for Marriott Hotel  
Time TBA Evening meal/shop in near-by area  
Dec. 11  
Free day. Breakfast whenever. Sightseeing if you wish.  
12:00 N Check-out. Mission Accomplished.  
Dress accordingly for December weather and being outside at Arlington for several hours.

**(APPLICATION FORM ON PAGE 7)**

Send This Form and Cookbook Info. to Lorretta Segars 2323 Half-Sectionline Road; Albertville, Alabama 35950  
or e-mail to [segars-jim-lor@charter.net](mailto:segars-jim-lor@charter.net) For more info: (256) 878-7437

**Deadline: November 1, 2011 for trip---As soon as possible for Operation Home Front**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Yes                      No                      I will go on the Wreaths across America Trip.

**Make reservations now with transportation and hotel on your own.**  
**(Note: You can also purchase a wreath by going to the website for Wreaths across America.)**

Yes                      No                      I will send items for packages.  
When (See dates below) \_\_\_\_\_

Yes                      No                      I will save \$2 a week to cover postage for mailing the packages to deployed soldiers from the Segars' address.

**Mail items and extra postage funds to Lorretta Segars at the above address at the following designated times:**

Sept. 1-- for patriotic Sept. 10 mailing

Nov. 28---for Christmas mailing

Feb. 1----for Valentine's mailing

April 1---for Easter mailing

Yes                      No                      I will contact people that I know to ask if they would like to purchase a bandana at \$3.00 each for us to give to a Wounded Warrior on Dec. 10 at Bethesda Hospital. Forward funds to Lorretta Segars. Thanks to all of you for participating!!

Yes                      No                      I will send my husband's information for the cookbook by Sept. 23.

## CHAPLAIN'S

**Parker Pierce**

**O** Dear 1/50th Family: I pray that everything is going well for each of you and your family members. I prayed that everyone made it safely back home from Ft. Benning and the 2011 Reunion. As I have said after each reunion for the past seven, this one had to have been the best yet! It was for me in many ways, because "special prayers" were answered by the Heavenly Father! I was personally blest by seeing and being with many special people in my life, but I was especially blest by meeting some "first time" 1/50th veterans. This year we had some very special guests that came for the first time and that was several of our K.I.A.'s family members. They came from as far away as Idaho and Washington state! There were I'm sure as many this year as we have ever had at one of our reunions. Another particularly special person at this year's reunion was a retired chaplain Lt. Col. Newby. He was no doubt to me the epitome of an Army chaplain. He did an excellent job, with God's direction, as I have ever witnessed previously at any ceremony or event. Another very significant event at the reunion was the medal upgrade ceremony for Jay Copeley - what an honor for Jay but also for the 1/50th Infantry Battalion! He was very gracious and humble about that honor - what a soldier! Still another unforgettable event was the Army Ranger demonstration. This had special meaning to me since my uncle was one of the original 1st Battalion Rangers, picked by Col. Darby himself during WWII. The ranger demonstration was to me personally, carried out as well as any highly trained group as I have ever witnessed. We are so blest in the United States to have in every branch of military service specialized groups of highly trained and proficient fighting units. What a military!! Several other activities that are always special are the witnessing and participating in an infantry battalion graduation ceremony. One of these graduations should be a required and mandatory observance for all of our leaders in Washington, especially our current President leading the way to attend one of these highly patriotic ceremonies. I wish this requirement would begin with this administration and continue on in the future! The infantry museum is another very special activity we get to enjoy. What a place that exhausts the military history of our great Nation! Finally, no reunion is complete without spending time with the greatest group of military personnel in the world - our volunteer Army! We always do this by having chow with them in their mess hall. Talking with them and fellowshiping with them - they are something to behold! Last but not least, is our 1/50th banquet. This is very special as we break bread together; have the donations bidding tables, and silent auctions on specially donated items. All in all the 2011 Reunion had to be one of the greatest we've ever had! So, to all that get a chance to come to one of YOUR reunions, you would be welcomed by everyone and you would never regret it, and would not want to miss another one! Well, to each of you in the 1/50th family, again it was my special blessing to see and be with you a few weeks ago at Ft. Benning, Georgia! I know we all will be praying for each other, our God blessed United States of America, our President, our military and their families. I'll be praying for God's special blessings for each of you and your family members. Have a safe and enjoyable summer! In Him, Parker