

# ON THE RIGHT TRACK

IST Battalion 50th Association



August 2017

Cover Page

## From the TC Hatch

By Jim Seagers



### The President's Corner

Dear Members,

I want to thank all of you for the great turn-out at our 100<sup>th</sup> Celebration of the 1/50<sup>th</sup> and the 50<sup>th</sup> Year of our deployment to Vietnam. We had a great time, especially just being together. I especially want to thank Lt. Col. Baltazar and all of his men and our members and officers for all the hard work they did to make this past reunion a success. It was a special honor to have the Sergeant Major of the Army Daniel A. Dailey to be with us and to speak at our memorial service. The fact that he took time out of his extremely busy schedule in Washington to be with us is a tribute to his integrity. He was very personable and humorous. We are fortunate to have him serve in the important capacity that he holds in the army.

We have had feedback from different ones of you on ideas for our next reunion. These are being taken into consideration. We are always interested in hearing from our members.

I hope you had a great Independence Day and are enjoying the summer. Thank all of you for your support.

Play the Game,

Jimmy



Some of you may remember seeing this flag, as from what I understand Don Rainwater and Bryan P. Lagimiere, made it while stationed in Vietnam. Don was presented with this flag at the 2017 reunion in May by Bryan. He had been keeping it all these years and decided it was time to pass it on.

Lorene Burch,  
Editor

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# From the Chaplin



Proverbs 18:24 "Friends come and friends go, but a true friend sticks by you like family."

As I pondered what to write for this newsletter I was reminded of the past reunion. We are like family when we get together. We may differ in many ways, but we are united by a common thread. My prayer is that God will be with each of you as you go about your daily tasks. May your journey be all that you hoped it would be.



## GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Sometimes we wonder if any of us make a difference after we are gone. Wilber D Breseman, Bravo, 1st PLT; has died but his legacy lives on. He had collected many military items over the years and decided to help establish a museum located in VFW Post 4054 in Marcellus, Michigan. Look it up on their web site for more information; simply type in VFW 4054, you will find what you need to view the items in the museum.

## Letter from the Editor



It was great seeing so many of you at the reunion. Making new friends and renewing old friendships. I must give a great big thank you to Carol and Neil Miller for the use of their battery from their camera and for all the help they were during the week. (Will have a second battery next time) Also for so many who were willing to share their stories. For those of you who were not able to make it I hope you will think about making to the 2019 reunion. We have lost so many over the past few years, that it is becoming more important for us to get together. Each year we get a few who come for the first time and wish they would have come sooner.

Lorene Burch, editor



**Wreath Laying Ceremony  
At the 1/50th Reunion on May 4, 2017**



LTC Frank Baltazar

Good morning and welcome to the 1-50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment Wreath Laying and Memorial Ceremony.

I want to recognize SMA Dailey for being here. Sergeant Major we appreciate you spending time with the association and being part of this ceremony. MG Wesley, BG Jones, COL Kendrick, CSM Haynie, Association Members and its Vietnam Veterans, and friends and family of the Bayonet Battalion:

I am deeply honored to host this ceremony. Fifty years ago, these great Americans from every walk of life, draftee or volunteer, formed or became part of a cohort Infantry battalion that stood-up at Fort Hood, Texas in 1967, and later that year deployed to the Eastern Central Highlands of Vietnam. 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment served in continuous combat operations for four years securing the vital Vietnam Line of Communication, Highway 1. The Battalion earned three Republic of Vietnam Crosses of Gallantry with Palm and one Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star. Individual acts of heroism were also awarded, with Infantrymen receiving the Distinguished Service Cross, like our Honorary Command Sergeant Major Jay Copley, the Silver Star, the Bronze Star with Valor, the Air Medal with Valor, the Army Commendation Medal with Valor, and the Purple Heart. To the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment Vietnam Veterans, the current Battalion Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers, and Soldiers, sincerely appreciate your service to our Nation. Your strength of character exemplifies the ideals adopted by our current warrior ethos and by being here with us, you've extended the character of our Army profession far beyond your active service.

Today, we are especially blessed to have surviving family members and friends from our battalion's fallen heroes. We honor our fallen through ceremonies and traditions just like this one, preserving their storied past. We also preserve their honorable service by proudly displaying our regimental colors and their streamers. It is through these ceremonies and symbols that we maintain our bond with those who have gone before us...and for those that are in uniform, it reminds us of the shared identity we have with all of them, that we, the Army, exist to serve the Nation by supporting and defending the Constitution. It reminds us of the sacrifices we are willing to accept for our fellow comrades, our team, our Army, and the people of the United States.

Once again, I sincerely appreciate everyone for making the trip to Fort Benning and being part of this ceremony.

Play the Game!



## Echo Company 1-50<sup>th</sup> IN, BN

### Echo Company Continues Training Excellence

1LT Sean Kelly

July 11, 2017

Echo Company, 1-50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment maintained its high standards for the quality training of Infantrymen during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2017. Class 7016 conducted the culminating events of their One Station Unit



Training (OSUT) in early April by executing a week-long Field Training Exercise in the woods of Fort Benning. The FTX tested the Trainees' learning from the previous phases of the cycle with Drill Sergeants helping to develop a tactical knowledge base amongst their platoons.

The highlight of the FTX was the execution of the Bayonet, a rigorous foot march through the night from the Echo Company Patrol Base to Malone MOUT Facility.

In total the movement measured over 15 miles. Along the way the 210 Trainees executed mission essential logistical pick-ups of materiel and munitions to support a company attack. Despite the long and arduous movement, Echo Company assaulted the objective with vigor, achieving a final victory of the FTX. Upon reconsolidation the company moved to Honor Hill to receive their coveted Crossed Rifles, signaling that each Trainee earned the right to be called an Infantryman.



Class 7016 celebrated the end of their training on Sand Hill by welcoming the families of Trainees for two major events. The Turning Blue ceremony took place on April 27 and during this special occasion parents, families, and friends were reunited with their Trainee and were able to award him the coveted Infantry Blue Cord. During the ceremony many individuals were recognized for their performance during the cycle. SPC Mark Clarke was named the Soldier of the Cycle and SSG Roberto Silva was named the Drill Sergeant of the Cycle. Echo Company hosted the graduation of Class 7016 at the National Infantry Museum on April 28, providing an inspiring ceremony to celebrate these newly-minted Infantrymen.

There was little time to rest between graduation and the next major event for Echo Company. On May 3 CPT Fritz Dufresne took command of the company from CPT Joshua Gaetano. CPT Dufresne came to Echo Company following positions at Fort Hood with the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division and III Corps.

CPT Gaetano served as the Company Commander for 12 months and his next assignment is with Task Force 1-28 Infantry on Fort Benning's main post. During this time in between cycles Echo Company welcomed four new members of the cadre team. 1LT Sean Kelly took over as the Company Executive Officer after Platoon Leader positions at Fort Hood, SSGs Austin Craig and Robert Black took over Drill Sergeant positions in 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon after serving

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## Foxtrot Instills Strength and Honor into a New Batch of Infantry Soldiers

Foxtrot Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment graduated a class of 158 new Infantry, trained by expert Drill Sergeants in the grueling heat of Georgia. Most of the class have contracts with Special Forces, and use this training as their first step on the long journey to make it into that elite warrior service. The rest were sent to Infantry units around the world, many of them going through airborne school.

The two main areas of focus for 198<sup>th</sup> BDE trainees are Marksmanship and Physical Fitness. These have been the foundations of the Infantry warrior since the Revolutionary War, and the goal of Basic Training is to create a lifelong expert out of each Soldier who graduates here. Foxtrot Company tried new practices and refined existing ones in order to achieve a better product this last cycle.

The Army has been using the same marksmanship program since WWII, and has been improving and adapting it ever since. Foxtrot Company used new technologies like in-chamber boresight laser during initial bore-sighting and the Parallax mitigation Device during weapon zero days. These small improvements saved time and helped the Drill Sergeants concentrate their efforts. The Parallax Mitigation Device, an attachment for the M68 that allows for the shooter to reduce the parallax effect at targets under 50 meters, allowed for faster and more accurate shooting by making it much easier to get a steady sight picture for new shooters.



### Parallax Mitigation Device

We also refined how we spent our time on weapon zero days. These days are the critical first step to ensure that the mistakes made by rookies don't become established. Most of the Company was zeroed the first day with the second day of zeroing set aside to concentrate on the "hardcores", those who were having trouble grasping the basic concepts and getting the proper shot group. These practices helped ensure that, even dealing with inclement weather on both qualification days, the trainees were able to meet and in many cases exceed the standard.



Drill Sergeant providing guidance on a shot group. One of the biggest challenges with the current generation of Americans we get as Trainees is their physical fitness and resilience, and building their bodies up while instilling in them the skills and discipline to continue to work out on their own time is a challenge. This was the first cycle to implement a new Physical Training pilot, the Physical Domination Program created by SSG Guerrero and CPT Dubois. This program aims to use the full range of exercises from the PRT (Physical Readiness Training) manual in concert with nutrition, rest and injury prevention measures to deliver a trainee with a stronger overall standard of physical fitness and knowledge. The main change was to break down the workouts into six major groups, each day concentrating on a different area of the body. Strength training circuits were created mainly using advanced exercises from the PRT manual. Injury reduction was achieved through proper instruction on exercise form, ankle prehab, and stretching instruction.

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## Diamondback Company Update

By: 1LT Andrew Miller

In mid-April, Diamondback Company picked up 182 Trainees for Class #7036, who had agreed to undergo the rigorous training to become an Infantryman.

Following Red Phase, the Company transitioned into M4 rifle marksmanship training. In the face of tremendous adversity, long hours, and the unrelenting Georgia humidity, the Drill Sergeants displayed why NCO's are known as the "backbone of the Army" – 95% of the Trainees qualified as either Sharpshooter or better, with just above half qualifying as Expert.



Shortly after the completion of rifle marksmanship, the Company progressed into training on the M249 and M240B, hand grenades, MK-19, .50 Cal, and BDM. Following this training, the Trainees executed the buddy and fire team live fires, urban operations, and Stryker training.

All of this training led to the culminating Field Training Exercise, where the Trainees demonstrated their readiness to serve as a Rifleman upon reaching their units. Those who accomplished this task were presented the Crossed Rifles during a ceremony on the final night of the FTX.

With the completion of all necessary training behind them, the Trainees began the recovery period. The Trainees were successful in passing their final inspection, thereby securing the ability to graduate.

The final week of the cycle was packed with rehearsals for both the Turning Blue Ceremony and Graduation. On July 21, after a grueling 14-week cycle, 170 Soldiers became Infantrymen, thus ending the chapter on Class #7036.

Moving forward, the Company is preparing for a new Commander, CPT Lyons, with the Change of Command Ceremony taking place on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Shortly thereafter, on August 4<sup>th</sup>, Diamondback Company picks up Class #7056, and the journey to become an Infantryman starts again.



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The program also focused on increasing the caloric intake of the trainees as much as possible. In the end the Trainees learned how to conduct a wide variety of useful exercises and the skill to pursue physical fitness without a Drill Sergeant yelling at them.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Recovery	(Core) PD, 4C, PU, HH, Ab Routine, RD	(Aerobic Cardio) Active Warm-Up, Timed Run, RD	(Upper Body Hypotrophy) PD, Dips, Pyramids, PU, RD	(Anaerobic Cardio) Active Warm-Up, Sprints, RD	(Lower Body Hypotrophy) PD, Weighted Squats, Lunges, RD	(Active Recovery) PD, MMDs, Dynamic Stretches, RD
Recovery	(Core) PD, 4C, PU, HH, Alternate Ab Routine, RD	(Aerobic Cardio) Active Warm-Up, Distance Run, RD	(Upper Body Hypotrophy) PD, Kettle Bells for Lifts, RD	(Anaerobic Cardio) Active Warm-Up, Repeats, RD	(Lower Body Hypotrophy) PD, Deadlifts, Hamstring Pulls, RD	(Active Recovery) PD, MMDs, Dynamic Stretches, RD

### Example of a two week cycle

These are just snapshots of how the Army continues to seek to improve and refine the way we train and fight, ensuring that we continue to build upon the legacy from the past. Foxtrot will continue to improve on these critical tasks, and take lessons learned from the previous cycle to improve the Soldiers we graduate.



(Con't from page 4)

with Task Force 1-28 IN and SSG Juan Felix took over a Drill Sergeant position in 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon after time with the 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division in Fort Bliss, TX. Echo Company is excited to add so many new members to the team!



As June began Echo received a new class of 156 Trainees to Sand Hill, class 7049.

While the cycle gets underway, the tenets of accountability and discipline are stressed and basic Soldier skills are developed. Class 7049 has begun a demanding physical training regimen designed to help transition these civilian recruits to Infantrymen. The

Trainees have already completed multiple Army Physi-

cal Fitness Tests, Foot Marches of varying lengths and daily physical training. They have also been introduced to the fundamentals of marksmanship and developed into competent marksmen after several weeks on spent in simulators and on the range. Trainees have been exposed to Army Basic Training standbys: confidence and obstacle courses, chemical protective mask training, combatives training and individual movement techniques. They are developing into a team and demonstrating an ability to overcome the challenges they will face during their time here. They will continue training until their scheduled graduation on September 8.



2017 Reunion Ft. Benning, Georgia



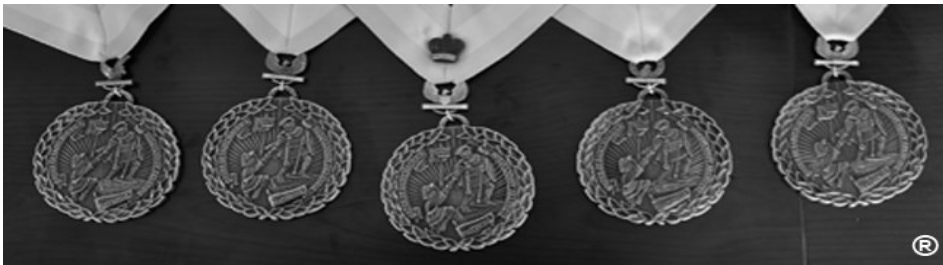
## Order of St. Maurice



Toby Jordan, Bob Melendez, Chuck McAleer, Randy Smith, Bob Gold, Diane and Tom Clark, LTC Frank Baltazar, CPT Christopher DuBois.

Toby, Bob, Chuck, Randy, Bob and Tom all were rewarded the Order of St. Maurice.

Diane was honored for her service to the Association for all the help she has given over the years. Thank Diane for all you have done and will continue to do in the future.



Tom Clark, Dick Guthrie, Bob Melendez, ?, ? John Topper and Jim Segar, at the Officers Ball.







## Charlie Company

Charlie Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment picked up a class of 180 Soldiers on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 2017. After the Holiday Block Leave, the cadre of Charlie Company is more than motivated to receive fresh new recruits in order to train them into lethal and capable Infantrymen ready to embark on to their new units.

The Basic Training portion consists of “Red”, “White”, “Blue” “Black”, and “Gold” phases. These phases are consistent with the “crawl, walk, run” model. This is designed to provide a good foundation for tasks that becomes incrementally difficult and complex. Within each phase is a different type of training is set-up to teach each individual recruit with different Infantry skills and proficiencies.

Red Phase focuses on the recruit’s further indoctrination to the military lifestyle and basic Soldiering Skills. This phase includes familiarization and training on marksmanship, land navigation, and familiarization of Army equipment. It is also during this phase recruits are trained and qualified to use their main weapon, the M4 carbine.

Moving on to the White and Blue phase, this phase consists of learning more advanced Soldiering skills and utilization of an array of other weapons and equipment. The recruits familiarized themselves with the M240, M249, and M320 which are heavier weapons that are utilized by Infantry squads. Only after the initial three phases are concluded are the recruits considered Soldiers. However they are not Infantrymen just yet.



More moving on to the Black and Gold phases, the recruits afforded the opportunity to see their family and recover from training for a weekend during their family day pass. On returning from their well-earned break, they will begin individualized Infantry training during the Black and Gold phases. During this phase they will apply what they learned

during the Basic portion of their training to the team and higher echelons. The recruits will learn how to move as a member of a team or a squad and fulfill a designated role. They are also exposed to different vehicle assets of the US Army and learned how to operate in an urban environment. The training culminated to an FTX event where they applied everything they learned and conducted varying scenario-based training lanes.



The FTX event culminated in a Foot March back to the Company Training Area. After recovery operations are complete the new Infantrymen of Charlie Company conducted a Turning Blue Ceremony and graduated on the 2nd of June 2017.

Immediately after Charlie Company picked up a STO2 class of 150 STO1 qualified Soldiers from National Guard and Reserve units all over the United States. These Soldiers returned to Fort Benning in order to complete their Infantry training after a year in their respective units. The training these Soldiers will receive is at the same caliber of training that the active duty Soldiers are afforded to. They are expected to graduate on the 25<sup>th</sup> of August 2017 as full-fledged Infantrymen.



