

# ON THE RIGHT TRACK

1<sup>ST</sup> Battalion 50<sup>th</sup> Association



August 2025

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Greetings:

Hope everyone is doing well. We had a great turnout for our reunion in May but there were many that were missed too. We hope everyone that came had a good time. We enjoyed getting to do some new activities such as the tank simulators for the Bradleys and Abrams. We also got to see the new Armor and Calvary collection at the Armor Museum. We appreciate the time spent with current cadets of the 1/50th and wish them well as they continue in their next schooling. The banquet was a great time as always getting to celebrate everyone from the 1/50th. To those unable to attend we hope to see you next time.

Jimmy Segars

Reunion 2<sup>nd</sup> in Command was Peyton Burch, son of Ben Burch, and grandson of Roger and Lorene Burch.

Topper saw that Peyton seemed to be having a hard time, so he took him under his arm and helped to make him feel special. Ben now has the certificate and coins hanging on his wall. Thank you, John Topper for this honor.



Editor: Lorene Burch

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## Chaplains Corner



A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. John 13:34, 35

May you all have a blessed fall, remembering it I how we treat others that matter.

Greetings:

What a special reunion. I do have one story to share.

My grandson Peyton and I were in line to get lunch and we followed a person wearing a gray shirt similar to Roger's. But I lost track of it when we went to sit down. I saw a table of the members of our group and figured the rest would come along shortly. As we set there I noticed that there was a sea of black and I didn't see anyone else in our group.

The table was now filled with cadets that at one time had been filled with members of our group. We sat and visited with the cadets that had set at our table and I finally asked about the vest they were wearing. The group was being punished for one of them had snuck in a cell phone, so all of them received the punishment. So, at once a red flag went off, and I stood up to see if anyone else from our group was in the room. I saw the Guthrie's so figured we were okay. So, sat back down and finished eating with our group. After they left I heard Guthrie turn and tell Fred (I think that was his name) that we were on the wrong side. Woops!!!

So after a good tongue lashing from my son Ben, we finally let him know, "We may have been in the wrong place, but we were with the right people.

Hope you all are doing well. It was great to reunite with so many.

Blessings,

Lorene Burch

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## Gone But Not Forgotten

Below is a list of Vietnam Era 50 th Infantry Regiment Veterans who have either died since the last reunion\*...or we have learned of their earlier death since the last reunion. As of April 18, 2025

Loretta Segars, June 2024

1. James Allen, A & D Company died September 18, 2018
2. Tom Clark, A Company died December 21, 2023\*
3. Daniel P. Coia, Scouts died October 18, 2024\*
4. Phil Davis, A Company died July 17, 2017
5. Paul William Ehrlich, A Company died October 12, 2023\*
6. Gus Etteldorf, HQ Company died May 2, 2009
7. Joe Ewing, C Company died August 22, 2024\*
8. Gordon Fennell, HQ/Flame died December 24, 2021
9. Aaron Gage, HQ Company, S2 Died December 1, 2023\*
10. Jim Hale, A Company died January 29, 2024\*
11. Billy Wayne (Bill) Hayes, B Company died September 24, 2023\*
12. Wayne Lamping, B Company died April 30, 2023\*
13. David M. Light, Short Range Ambush Platoon died December 5, 2010
14. "Tall Joe" Mlinac, B Company and Short Range Ambush Platoon died November 26, 2023\*
15. Bill Moore, B Company died February 11, 2023
16. Bob Schaller, B Company died July 12, 2023\*
17. Richard T. Schramke, A Company died August 20, 2007
18. Dean Spooner, C Company died June 18, 2023\*



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## REUNION 2025 AFTER ACTION REVIEW

John Topper

14 May 2025

In many ways this was the best reunion we've had since beginning our biannual sojourn to Ft Benning in 2003. The numbers weren't as high as some years, and I didn't schedule as many activities, and that gave us more time to spend with each other. The logistics were made easy by the folks at Fort Benning and, of course, Michelle Spivey at the Hampton Inn. Early on the battalion commander appointed LT Carlos Mantano as Liaison and he proved to be an able contact. With CSM Lewis, Honorary Sergeant Major of the Regiment, on site at the National Infantry Museum my job was made so much easier.

The 1918 Club (formerly Benning Club) with Cherye Holifield as our hostess was on its game. Great service and wonderful meal. The only blip in our schedule occurred when I didn't listen to what Carlos Montano was telling me and we arrived at the Mess Hall about 30 minutes early. We managed to overcome that issue, and each event went as planned, and without a hitch. LTC Brandon Bangsboll spoke at our banquet and COL Rob Choppa did a masterful job at the memorial service. The 198<sup>th</sup> Brigade Commander, COL Jacob White attended the memorial service.

The Clarke Simulation Center was a good addition and something we hadn't done before. The same was true with the Armor Vehicle Museum. We saw many different armored, tracked and wheeled fighting vehicles that fostered a good deal of interest from some of our members.

The battalion hosted the Wednesday evening BBQ with something different – a cookout. Hamburgers and hot dogs were well-received, and the keg of beer had a gathering, as usual.

Last fall I contacted the bus company we have used in the past and they gave me a quote of \$4800 for one 57 passenger bus. The battalion CO and I got our heads together and decided we could do better. We did, at least from a cost point. We rented three 15 passenger vans and managed the overflow with POVs. The cost for the vans was \$1325, a savings of \$3475. I'm told some folks had a bit of difficulty getting into the vans. Don and Gwen Rainwater purchased a step that made it easier for everyone to get in and out of the vans.

I will present a detailed budget report to the Executive Board, but we realized a gain of \$3586. Most of that of course came from using the vans instead of the bus. We also gained \$340 from the banquet half-pot.

But the real value in making it worth all the effort, in my opinion, was the opportunity to see the magnificent faces of those in attendance. Albeit some faces were more magnificent than others. It may have escaped your notice, but some of us are getting older!

Congratulations to our newest members of the Order of Saint Maurice, Don Rainwater, Larry Curtis and Mike Canavan. We also recognized the value of the behind-the-scenes workers and supporters with the Shield of Sparta awards to Gwen Rainwater and Carol Curtis.

We missed all those who were unable to make it for various reasons. We also missed and gave a loving tribute to those who were taken from us since the last reunion. God bless you all – hope to see you at our next reunion. Play up, play up and Play the Game!

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## General Meeting First Battalion 50th Infantry Regiment 5/7/2025

Jim Segars opened the meeting with The Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made to accept the minutes as recorded at the 2023 General meeting. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote of the membership.

John Topper, as acting Treasurer, presented the financial report. John discussed the fact that using vans in lieu of busses saves about \$3,000 and explained the requirements necessary to enter Fort Benning.

He also shared the fact that several people have donated to the Association. Those donors are Michael Canavan, Paul Buckhold, Dick Guthrie and Roger Jones.

Historian Jim Sheppard was unable to attend but his wish to donate his extensive research to Infantry Museum was brought before the members. His full report is available upon request.

Jim Segars reminded everyone to wear their shirts for the Memorial Service.

Jim Segars made a motion that John Topper retains the position of Treasurer. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote of the Membership.

Dick Guthrie made a motion to accept the current slate of Officers. Gary Quint seconded this motion and it was passed by voice vote of the Membership.

John Topper asked if there were any suggestions, from the Membership as to a venue for **the** next reunion. Since there was no response from the floor it was decided the next reunion will be held at Fort Benning.

Jim Segars opened the floor to any new business with no response from the Membership.

With all business concluded and in lieu of Toby Jordan's absence, John Topper led the membership in prayer.

Jim Segars adjourned the meeting



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## Awards at Banquet



Receiving the Order of Saint Maurice ,  
Don Rainwater, Larry Curtis and Mike Canavan



Receiving the Shield of Sparta awards  
Gwen Rainwater and Carol Curtis.

(More photos are available on the Association Website Reunions page)

## The Memorial Service

Our speaker was Colonel (retired) Roberta Choppa. He served in several operational units (in peace and combat) and training units in Infantry/Maneuver, Command Staff assignments at the Platoon, Detachment, Company, Battalion, Brigade, Division Corps, and Army level. Served in several types of infantry units including Mechanized, Light, Airborne, Ranger, Stryker and Long Range Reconnaissance Infantry Units, in various worldwide assignments. Received Awards and decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit (with three oak leaf clusters-OLC), Bronze Star Medal two OLC), Purple Heart, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Army Meritorious Service Medal (six OLC), Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army commendation Medal (six OLC), Joint Service Achievement Medal, and the Army Achievement Medal (four OLC) And the list goes on.

We thank him for the honor of having him speak.



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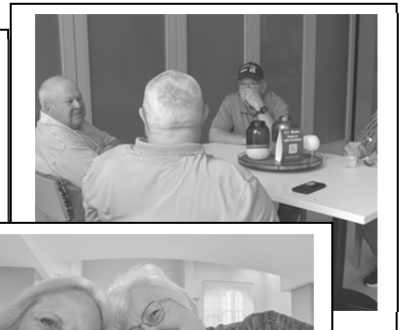
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## Faces of the Reunion 2025

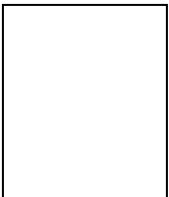


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