

ON THE RIGHT TRACK

1ST Battalion 50TH Infantry Association Newsletter

December 2016



From the TC Hatch

By Jim Segars, Association President

President's Corner

Lorretta and I have had the pleasure and honor of attending several events at Ft. Benning this past summer. Among those was the Change of Responsibility ceremony for CSM Wittington and his replacement CSM Chris Lewis. Both men are outstanding leaders. As usual, Lt. Col. Baltazar and his staff made us feel very welcome.

We also took my father-in-law, a WWII vet, to the National Infantry Museum's Constitution Day event on September 17. They held a cooking demonstration on WWII Street, and we ate in the WWII mess hall there. My father-in-law was a mess sergeant with the 88th Infantry Division, 313th Combat Engineers. We introduced him to his unit's monument at the museum as we enjoyed the festivities at the museum commemorating our Constitution.

We will be participating in the "Wreaths Across America" event again this year. In fact, our whole family is flying up. We're excited about the experience they will have. It's always so rewarding. "Ya'll" come, too. You'll be glad you did because it's an awesome tribute to those buried there and in other national cemeteries as well as those in places such as Normandy

who gave so much for our freedom.

Happy Veteran's Day to all of you. I was privileged to spend it with my grandchildren at their school programs. Know that all of you are held in great regard by everyone in our Association and in our nation. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for your sacrificial service! You are always in our thoughts.

Our family wishes you a Happy Thanksgiving, a Blessed and Merry Christmas, and a wonderful New Year. We can't wait to see all of you at our spectacular reunion celebration of our 50th year of deployment to Vietnam and the 100th year of the formation of our battalion May 2-5th of next year. Don't miss it! We're planning a very special week of activities. Among those activities will be a Military Ball following the banquet! Men this is your chance to dress up in suit and tie or sport coat, and ladies you can wear formals. If you do not wish to be that formal, wear an accommodation. We're going to have a great time, so be sure to talk to your fellow 1/50th members and invite them to come. Make reservations early. Thanks!

Play the Game,

Jimmy

Lorene Burch,
Editor

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From the Home Front

Hello 1st/50th Mech.

I spent my time at LZ Uplift from May 68 to June 69. Never talked about the place at all until two or three years ago. Doc at VA said I should. So I do a little. Never got over Danny Haskins on May 25th. We lost a lot of guys before but that day was different.

But all that is not why I am writing. (Never done that before). I would like to know if anyone remembers when we found the cave. It was a R&R center for Charlie and hospital. We took it and never fired a shot. Dull right! But we captured a lot of soldiers and high brass. We got weapons and ammo. Now for the best we got \$100,000 in U.S. money. We meant to keep it but a box of records was also found. It told of all those \$100 bills and \$150,000 piasters. The next day all kinds of brass came to the boonies where they never went. Would not leave until they got all of it. We really got a lot of stuff that day. I never see anything in the newsletter about that. It wasn't as high profile as May 5 and 25, 1968, but I am sure we saved one hell of a lot of guys by that seizure.

A Proud Member

1/50th Mech 68-69

Morris Alvey Spec IV

P.S. Would like to hear more info on this.

(Note from the editor: For pictures and to find other stories that may have been turned in go to our web site. www.ichiban1.org)



National Purple Heart Day

On August 7, 2016, National Purple Heart Day, 1/50th Veteran Frankie Accardo attended an even at the Louisiana Governor's Mansion honoring Purple Heart recipients. Frankie is a member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart Red Stick Chapter 177 in Baton Rouge, LA. Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards and first lady Donna Edwards hosted them with a reception and lighting of the mansion in purple lights.

Right to left: Governor John Bel Edwards, Ashley Accardo Albritton, Frankie Accardo, and Crystal Accardo. (Ashley and Crystal are Frankie's daughters and are members of the chapter's ladies auxiliary.)

Submitted by
Ashley Albritton



COMMANDERS CORNER



LTC Baltazar &
CSM Lewis lead
1-50 IN on Fort
Benning's 9-11
Memorial Post
Run



LTC FRANK
BALTAZAR

Time flies. It seems like it was just yesterday when I sent my last letter for publication. In the last 90 days, the battalion welcomed the following:

CSM Christopher Lewis, Battalion CSM
CPT Jacob Persoon, C Company Commander
CPT Christopher Dubois, F Company Commander
MSG Kanaan Merriken, slated to be A Company 1SG

MAJ Richard Purcell, Battalion XO
1SG Wendell Gee, E Company 1SG
1SG Frank Burkhard, F Company 1SG

CSM Lewis and his wife Mikey come to us from Fort Polk's 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, where he served as the Brigade Operations SGM. He recently re-deployed in June from a 9 month tour in Afghanistan.

The CSM and I continue to be amazed by our Drill Sergeants and the Infantrymen they produce. On a consistent basis, our Drill Sergeants train our Soldiers to master rifle marksmanship and to be physically fit. In result, over 80% of a company will qualify sharpshooter or expert. In some cases, we have seen 96% sharpshooter or expert. For physical fitness, on average our companies will increase the Soldiers' Army Physical Fitness Test scores by over 50 points. These are some amazing statistics. We are extremely confident in the abilities of the Infantrymen that graduate from this battalion. We are also confident in the leaders we provide to the rest of the force as our Drill Sergeants and cadre members are the very best trainers our Army has to offer.

Over the summer, the battalion held a Back to School event for its Soldiers and Families. The event included a baking competition, bouncy houses, ice cream, and raffle prizes. For the competition, the children served as our judges. This year, the children elected Alpha Company as the winner of the baking competition. The company received the battalion's Golden Boot award (picture on left).

(Continued on next page)





October, a dozen of our Cadre members represented the battalion in a shooting competition consisting of Army, USMC, and Law Enforcement Personnel. The competition consisted of two pistols (9mm & .45), small caliber rifle (.22 caliber), M1 Garand rifle (.30-06), shotgun (Trap) and a combat course. SFC Alexander Roysden from B CO placed first overall. He is pictured above (standing, 2nd from the left).

The CSM and I went along as observers, but we did manage to put some “rounds downrange” with the CSM’s own M1 Garand.

This year we had 12 Staff Sergeants make the promotion list to Sergeant First Class. Congratulations to:

A CO
SSG Gregory
SSG Finley

B CO
SSG Williamson

C CO
SSG Smith
SSG Tinnin

HQ
SSG Williams

D CO
SSG McLean
SSG Saunders
SSG Williams

E CO
SSG Fenn

F CO
SSG Tomlinson
SSG Meeks



Performers: Our Top SSG Arrendale earned his Ranger Tab.



Looking forward to seeing you all at the Reunion in May!

PLAY THE GAME! FIX BAYONETS!

Bayonet 7 & Bayonet 6

CSM Lewis
Pinning the
EIB on
SFC
Roysden





Blackhawks

As we have seen throughout our combined years of experience, a large majority of the new “Millennial” Soldiers have a harder time adjusting to the military lifestyle, so we have implemented a new approach in interacting with them while upholding the rigorous standards required to become an Infantryman. We started prior to picking up our new batch of 220 fresh recruits with a class on Training and Connecting to Millennials. The CSF2 (Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness) personnel at Ft Benning put together an excellent class and it set the foundation for changing the mindsets of the Drill Sergeants. The next big catalyst for change came in the form of not allowing the Trainees to quit. In the past, once the new “millennial” Soldier hit adversity a good 10-20% would just quit and want to go home. The Drill Sergeants would try to convince them to keep training and pushing on but soon would let the Trainee quit. Now we have implemented a no quitting philosophy and have been able to retain that 10-20% which one day they may become a Drill Sergeant or Sergeant Major that will keep this philosophy alive and strong.

Performance is the next small change. As sports psychology advances we learn more and more ways to bring it into our daily routines and use it during critical times. Knowing the adversities that the Trainees would go through we tailored the training the CSF2 personnel presented to help the trainees overcome adversity. As a private new to the military they mess up a lot of things so in turn they do a whole lot of push-ups, so with adversity training they change their outlook from “this is punishment and its horrible” into “I am getting stronger and becoming a better soldier”. The Army Physical Fitness test is another main focus. Utilizing trigger words, imagery, increasing heart rate, decreasing heart rate, and confidence are just a few things that we have taken from the sports psychology world and used it to increase our scores, along with a good physical training plan our scores have increased from 166 average with only 32% of the Company passing to 203 average with 63% of the Company passing. We still have 3 more test to go before graduation and we are optimistic about our final numbers.

As we transition into the Rifle Marksmanship portion of the cycle, we run the trainees through all the training the Army normally gives them, but we are adding more and more resiliency training and performance enhancing training from our CSF2 personnel. As many know, marksmanship is a highly stressful time as everyone is pushing hard to win the Top Shot or the Best Platoon. This causes a stressful environment for the Trainees along with the possibility of being recycled for not being able to qualify with their rifle. So we bring in an outside agency that mirrors and reinforces what we teach to give the trainees another angle or perspective on the importance of their training. It ranges anywhere from mental imagery to the four fundamentals of marksmanship. Critics will say it is a waste of time and even I was skeptical of it when I was first introduced to it many years ago, but over the years of utilizing it I have seen a difference. Will it make 100% of the force better at shooting? No it will not, but for that 10-25% of shooters that go from unqualified to marksman or those marksmen to sharpshooter it has a very positive effect. Our final goal is to have 0 Unqualified, 0 Marksman, 140 Sharpshooters, and 80 Experts.

As always we look forward to meeting everyone at the upcoming reunion and if you would like to follow our training outside of the newsletter look us up on Facebook. Every week we post a roll up of training completed and pictures to help the families of the Soldiers understand what their Soldiers are going through and also to ease the separation for some. Here is the link <https://www.facebook.com/Bravo-1st-50th-Infantry-OSUT-1401185476764209/?ref=bookmarks> or you can search in the search bar “Bravo 1st 50th Infantry OSUT”.



From the Chaplin



This is the season we Celebrate the birth of our Lord and savior. May each of you be blessed as you celebrate the season and the reason for it.



Hello,

For those who don't know me, my name is Shawn Barr, I am the grandson of Roger and Lorene Burch. I have had the privilege of attending the last two reunions and have become fond of several of you and feel that the 1/50th has become part of my extended family. For this reason I would like to thank each of you for your support as I applied and received a scholarship to attend St. John's Military here in Salina Kansas. So I am now enrolled as a Sophomore. This school is giving me the structure and education I never felt I was receiving in the public schools. Since I was a small boy I have desired to go into the military and follow my dad and grandfather's footsteps.

So even though I will miss being at the upcoming reunion I would like you all to know that you have made a positive influence in my life and am hoping to keep you posted as to how things progress.

Play the Game!

Shawn Barr

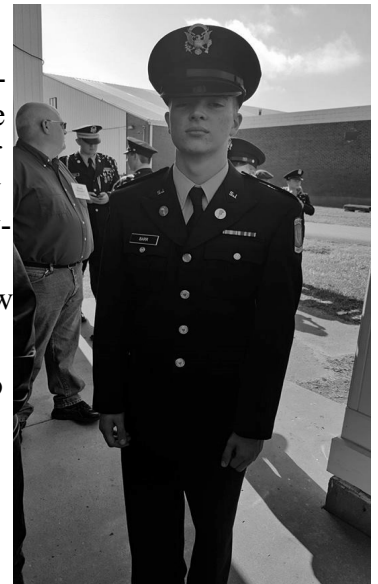
Letter from the Editor:



For the first time in seven years, I have to state that if you do not see your article, I just did not have the space to put it in, as I try to do it on first receive basis.

I am happy to say that some got their articles in as early as September to make sure they made it in. If you do not see your article and had sent it in early, please let me know as I am trying to find a good way to keep things organized in order to keep me from losing articles. Have purchased a jump drive for the sole purpose of the news letter. This makes it easier so it doesn't get lost among the other items I must keep on the computer.

Please keep the articles coming and give me feedback on the newsletter. As you all know it is a continued learning experience.



Ladies Home Front

Wreaths Across America is December 17th. Call Crystal City Marriott in Arlington for reservations. They give us senior rates which are less expensive than even military rates. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you!!

Please send me your shirt size. Ladies' sizes are available, but remember to order 2 sizes bigger than what you ordinarily wear because these are cut small. If you want the regular men's sizes, state that. E-mail me at segars-jim-lor@charter.net . Thanks!

Name _____ Size _____



Wolfpack Sticks Together, Continues to Play the Game.

2LT Nicholas Seibold

Since April 2016, the trainees and cadre of Alpha Company accomplished much. The month of started off with qualification week, in which class 6033 used their rifles to engage 40 targets and achieve at least 23 out of 40 hits. The trainees successfully did so, and every trainee qualified with his weapon; with most trainees scoring sharpshooter or expert.

Class 6033 still had a long way to go before their graduation in June. Off in the distance, blue, black, and gold phases awaited them. While in blue phase, the trainees received an opportunity to use a wide range of weapon systems like an M320 grenade launcher, an M249 SAW, an M240B machine gun, an AT4 launcher, the MK19 grenade launcher, and the M2A1 .50Cal machine gun. Following this, they trained their land navigation skills and threw hand grenades. Buddy team and fire team live fire exercises closed out the remainder of the month, and the trainees of Alpha Company got to spend a weekend with their families during their mid-cycle break.



After a peaceful weekend of rest and relaxation, class 6033 returned to training and hit the ground running with a week of first aid and urban operations. With just two weeks of training left, the class completed a stress shoot, Mounted React To Contact training (MRTC), and a 4 day FTX which culminated in a traditional Bayonet march and crossed rifles ceremony.

Having returned from FTX, the company shifted into recovery operations. Here, they cleaned their equipment and prepared for graduation. Then, on June 3rd, 2016, Alpha Company and Charlie Company participated in a joint graduation at the National Infantry Museum. From there, the 120 newly forged infantrymen of Alpha Company went out to serve in infantry units around the world.

In the 3 weeks between classes, Alpha Company's cadre participated in several activities together in order to build esprit de corps among the company. The cadre utilized the opportunity for PT off post and completed a 5 mile run and a 12 mile ruck march on the trails at Flat Rock Park in Columbus, GA. Later in the cycle break, the cadre met at the East Alabama Gun Club, and had a day at the range together. Back on Fort Benning, the cadre utilized Carey Pool and a 1 mile track to complete a 500 meter swim immediately followed by a 4 mile run. Finally, CPT Martinez hosted all the cadre at his home for breakfast.

Then, on June 24th 2016, Alpha Company received class 6203 with 136 trainees. In 2 weeks, the trainees completed rifle qualification, fire team live fire, and heavy weapons training, and they will complete urban operations, squad tactical exercises, and an FTX before completing returning to recovery operations and graduation.



The past quarter was busy but rewarding for Alpha Company. Class 6033 graduated, class 6203 arrived, and they will graduate as infantrymen soon. However taxing the job of training infantrymen is, the reward is in knowing that we send the best possible soldier to his unit, and that our graduates are prepared to serve their country in infantry units around the world.



50 years



REUNION 2017

Planning is just about complete for next year's reunion. The dates are 2-5 May and the headquarters hotel is the Hampton Inn, Phenix City. Reservations should be individually confirmed no later than Friday, April 7, 2017 by calling our reservations department at (866)799-3642 or hotel direct at (334)664-0776. Guests should identify the group as *1st Battalion, 50th Infantry Reunion* to ensure they receive the contracted group rate. Reservations are being accepted now.

The event format will be the same as last year, a detailed schedule will be provided at check in. Tuesday evening reception at the hotel with refreshments furnished by the hotel. Wednesday evening BBQ at Uchee Creek, and Thursday evening banquet at the Benning Club Regimental Room are booked. Thursday morning Turning Blue ceremony followed by the memorial service are scheduled as is Friday morning graduation ceremony.

We have a very special guest speaker for the memorial service, the Sergeant Major of the Army has graciously accepted our invitation. SMA Dan Dailey's biography can be viewed at:
<https://www.army.mil/leaders/sma/>

Registration cost will be \$100 per attendee. This is considerably less than our normal cost, largely because of a most generous donation from Tom and Diana Clark.

The reunion will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the battalion's departure from Ft Hood in 1967 for Vietnam. We will also celebrate the 100th anniversary of the formation of the 50th Infantry Regiment in 1917 during World War I. Both events will be celebrated by special caps and a challenge coin. Contact John Topper at jt1@psci.net if you have questions.

The battalion command team of Lieutenant Colonel Frank Baltazar and Command Sergeant Major Chris Lewis have invited those interested to attend the Battalion Ball on Friday evening following our reunion. The cost of the Ball, \$25, is not included in the reunion registration fee.

50th Infantry Regiment



We are currently in the planning phase of the Association's Reunion which will be held here from 2-5 May 2017. At the end of the week, the battalion will be hosting a Reunion Ball. We look forward to a great week and invite all to attend the ball. The ball is an optional event to all association members. Additional information will be provided in the coming months. Stay tuned!

LTC Frank Baltzar



1st Battalion 50th 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)

Host Hotel is the Hampton Inn and Suites, Phenix City, AL. Call the Nationwide Toll-Free number: (866) 799-3642 or call the hotel direct: (334) 664-0776 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:

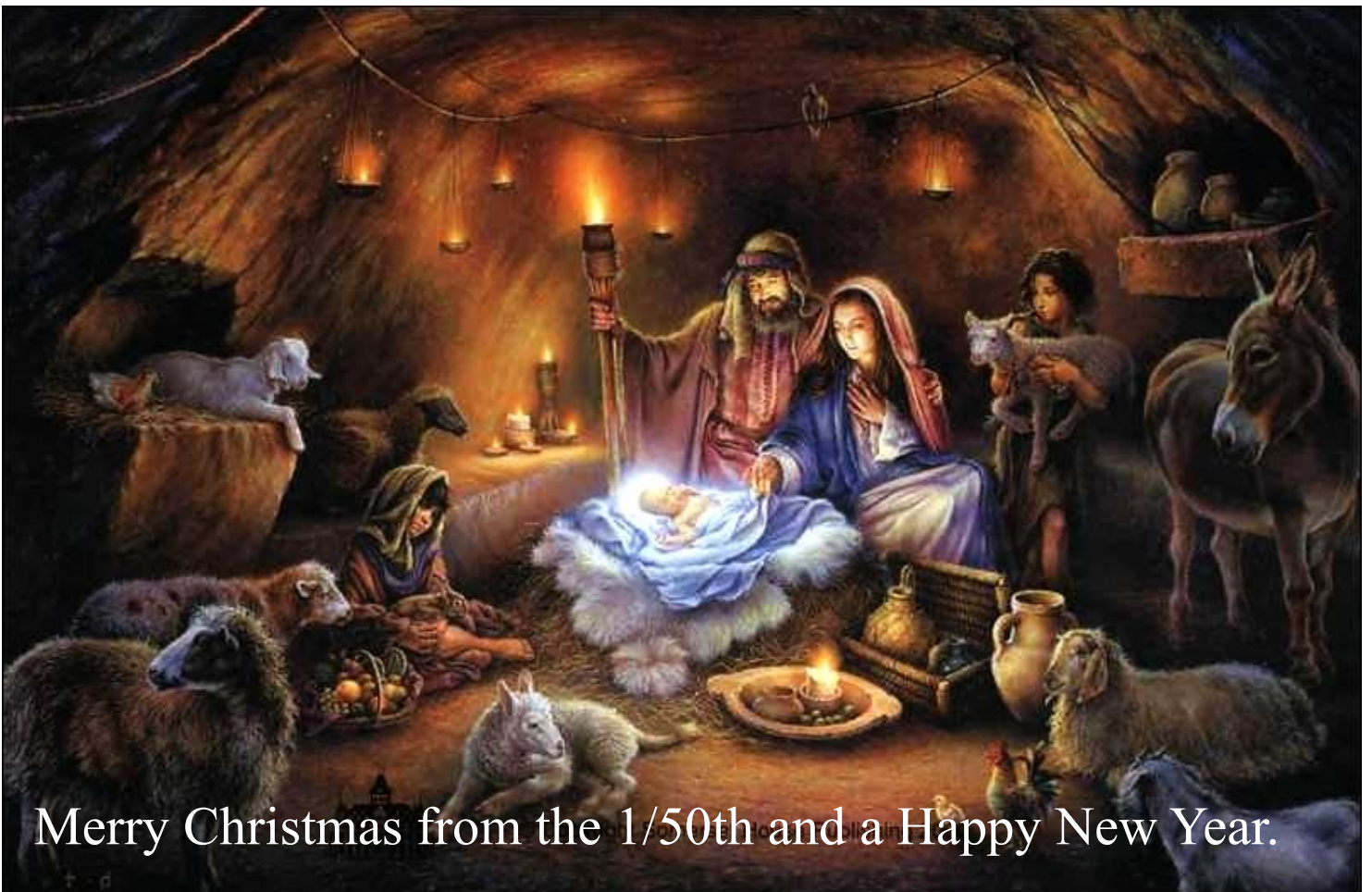
Gary Quint, Secretary
1st Battalion, 50th Infantry Association
438 Fairway Lane
Kirkwood MO 63122

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

Registration Fee Includes: Hospitality Room open Tuesday night through Thursday night, 2 May: Evening Reception, 3 & 4 May: Lunch, Dinner, Buses and 5 May: Buses.



Gary E. Quint
438 Fairway Lane
Kirkwood, Mo



Merry Christmas from the 1/50th and a Happy New Year.