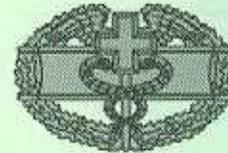


ON THE RIGHT TRACK

1st Battalion 50th Infantry Association



Winter 2003 Edition

FROM THE EDITOR

Bob Gold

Ah, at last we have a newsletter out for the troops. Due to technical difficulties beyond our control, I have volunteered to try and put a newsletter together.

First let me tell you a little about myself. My name is Bob Gold; I took basic, B. U. T. and A I T, with (B) Co. third Platoon, then was assigned to HDQ. Co. for 81 mm and 4.2" mortar training at Ft. Hood in Sept. of 1966 and 1967. In Sept. of 67 went to Viet Nam by boat. Upon arriving in country, our mortar Platoon. was assigned to Delta Co. My tour of duty was from Sept. 1967 -Mar. 1968. (W I A). Track 425

AND NOW THE NEWS- In July of 2002 we had a get-together here at my place. We had a cook out on Friday the 5th and a pig roast on the 6th. All had a good time. You can see the pictures on the web under the reunion section. Ray Sarlin did an outstanding job of advertising and putting in info about the cook out.

I have been striving to find as many of the original mortar platoon, so far I have found all but four. In January of this year I was visited by Stan Walulek of our platoon. Stan stopped by for the evening. Stan, Jim Edwards and I went out to dinner and talked about old times and the present. Later in January I had dinner in Indianapolis with Larry Curtis, Randy Smith, George Crist, Jim AmRien, Toby Milroy and Leroy Wilde. All were with the 1/50th and were boat people.

UP COMING EVENTS- 2003 reunion will be at Ft. Benning this year. The date is April 24th. - 27th. The hotel chosen is the Marriott Courtyard. For those who have computers, you can go to the web site and click on reunions, for those who do not; there is more info in this newsletter.

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Editor

Billie McGregor
Editorial Assistant

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MEMBERSHIP DONATION

OK TROOPERS, its that time of year and I know it is easy to forget to send in your donation for membership. If you are behind please send in your donation. If you are not sure, and you think you paid in advance, you will be credited for the next year. With out your support the Association will dwindle and will not survive. WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT.

Send your donation to:
Chuck McAleer
P. O. Box 1104
Kennesaw, GA 30156

THE INFANTRYMAN

The average Infantryman is 19 years old. He is a short haired, tight-muscled kid who, under normal circumstances is considered by society as half man, half boy. Not yet dry behind the ears, but old enough to die for his country.

He never really cared much for work and he would rather wax his own car than wash his father's; but he has never collected unemployment either.

He's a recent High School graduate; he was probably an average student, pursued some form of sports activities, drives a ten year old jalopy, and has a steady girlfriend who either broke up with him when he left, or swears to be waiting when he returns from half a world away.

He listens to rock and roll or jazz or swing and 155mm Howitzers.

He is 10 or 15 pounds lighter now than when he was at home because he is working or fighting from before dawn to well after dusk.

He has trouble spelling, thus letter writing is a pain for him, but he can field strip a rifle in 30 seconds and reassemble it in less.

He can recite to you the nomenclature of a machine gun or grenade launcher and use either one effectively if he must.

He digs foxholes and latrines and can apply first aid like a professional.

He can march until he is told to stop or stop until he is told to march.

He obeys orders instantly and without hesitation, but he is not without spirit or individual dignity.

He is self-sufficient. He has two sets of fatigues; he washes one and wears the other. He keeps his canteens full and his feet dry. He sometimes forgets to brush his teeth, but never to clean his rifle. He can cook his own meals, mend his own clothes, and fix his own hurts. If you're thirsty, he'll share his water with you; if you are hungry, his food. He'll even split his ammunition with you in the midst of battle when you run low.

He has learned to use his hands like weapons and his weapons like they were his hands. He can save your life -- or take it, because that is his job.

He will often do twice the work of a civilian, draw half the pay and still find ironic humor in it all.

He has seen more suffering and death than he should have in his short lifetime. He has stood atop mountains of dead bodies, and helped to create them. He has wept in public and in private, for friends who have fallen in combat and is unashamed. Just as did his Father, Grandfather, and Great-grandfather, he is paying the price for our freedom.

Beardless or not, he is not a boy. He is the American Fighting Man that has kept this country free for over 200 years. He has asked nothing in return, except our friendship and understanding.

Remember him, always, for he has earned our respect and admiration with his blood.

*He is an **INFANTRYMAN**.*

Written by Michelle Malkin, a syndicated columnist and FOX news commentator. Submitted by John Topper.

Dear American soldier,

You don't know me, but I know who you are and I will not forget.

You are deploying from Fort Carson and Fort Hood and Fort Bliss and Fort Stewart. You hail from Middletown and Middleboro and Greenville and Redding and Thousand Oaks and Maple Tree. You are white, black, brown, and yellow-but always Americans first.

You are with the 3rd Brigade Combat Team and the 10th Combat Support Hospital and the 571st Air Ambulance Medical Evacuation Company. You are with the 1st Cavalry Division and the 3rd Infantry Division and the "Iron Horse" 4th Infantry Division. You are Black Knights with the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment. You are engineers, drivers and medics in the 13th Corps Support Command.

Your motto is "We Will," "Steadfast and Loyal," "Swift and Deadly," "Always Prepared," "First to Fight," and "No Task Too Tough."

You will be joined overseas by thousands of sailors and Marines on the USS Boxer and USS Bonhomme Richard and USS Cleveland and USS Dubuque and USS Anchorage and USS Comstock and USS Pearl Harbor. You will get support in the Gulf from an airborne infantry brigade, a squadron of F-117 Nighthawk stealth fighters, and two squadrons of F-16CJ radar-jamming fighters.

You have friends on the USS Constellation in the Persian Gulf, and the USS Harry S Truman in the Mediterranean Sea, and the carrier USS Abraham Lincoln stationed at Perth, Australia, and the USNS Yano on route to the Red Sea, and the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson on its way to a training mission in the Pacific.

You have classmates and colleagues and cousins who died at the Pentagon and in the Twin Towers on September 11. You have buddies who took bullets over the past year in Afghanistan and Kuwait and the Philippines during Operation Enduring Freedom. You have uncles and brothers and fathers and grandfathers who sacrificed their lives in past wars.

Their deaths haunt you. Their heroism inspires you. Their footsteps beckon and you cannot resist.

You have wives who are tough as nails and husbands who are enormously proud. You have toddlers who know the colors of the American flag and grade-schoolers who have memorized Army verses like these:

The hardest job, the dirtiest job
Since ever war began
Is picking 'em up and laying 'em down
The job of an infantryman

No mission too difficult
No sacrifice too great
Our duty to the nation
Is the first we're here to state

Our doughboys come from Brooklyn
Our gunners from Vermont
Our signals from Fort Monmouth
Our engineers DuPont

Against the foes of freedom
We fight for liberty
We make no peace with tyrants
On land or on the sea

As you pack your green Army duffel bags, press your desert camoullage fatigues, polish your boots and kiss your families goodbye, please take these words with you:

Thank you. Thank you for answering the call to arms. Thank you for being fit and young and brave and willing. Thank you for loving freedom enough to put your own life on the line to defend it.

Pay no attention to Sean Penn and Sheryl Crow and Baghdad Babs. Tune out the half-naked loonies and Flower Power leftovers. Stand tall. Fight hard. And know that there are legions of Americans who are boundlessly grateful for what you have volunteered to do.

We know who you are. We will not forget. And we will pray every day for your safe return. Hoo-ah!

CHAPLAIN'S

Toby Jordan

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Hello to every one, it is my hope and prayer that each of you are enjoying good health and had a great holiday season. I'm going to try and keep this brief because the newsletter is filling up fast. But I would like to take this opportunity to wish Bob luck in his under taking of taking care of our newsletter.

No farther than we are in to this New Year we have all ready had our share of tragedy. The latest being the space shuttle incident, which shocked the whole nation. I believe that such an incident makes us more aware that we never know what tomorrow holds in store for us. So let us all be ever in prayer and mindful that God is in control, and in Him we should look for peace and assurance in our everyday lives. God be with each of you, and I hope to see you at our reunion in just a couple of months.

If everyone is thinking alike, then somebody isn't thinking.

General George S. Patton



SURFING THE NET FOR VETS

1. **National Military Appreciation Month**
<http://www.defendamerica.mil/nmam.html>
Submitted by John Topper
Please visit the Department of Defense web page below and sign in thanking the men and women of the U.S. military services for defending our freedom. The compiled list of names will be sent out to our soldiers at the end of the month. So far, there are only about 1.2 million names. What a shame, National Military Appreciation Month. The entire exercise takes 10 second, literally. Please PASS IT ON to your email friends. You may have to copy this Web Site and paste in your browser.

2. **VA Grants Agent Orange-Related Benefits**
<http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel>
Submitted by Billie McGregor
WASHINGTON (Jan. 23, 2003) - Based upon a recently released review of scientific studies, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi has decided to extend benefits to Vietnam veterans with chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL). Visit the above link for complete information.

3. **The UNOFFICIAL Fort Benning Website**
<http://www.babycornelius.com/Fort-Benning/>
Submitted by Ray Sarlin
Everything you ever wanted to know about Fort Benning is listed within these pages. Check out the history of the Infantry Band. With reunion right around the corner, you couldn't find a better spot to get information about Ft. Benning.

4. **Maps, Maps & More Maps**
http://www.rjsmith.com/topo_map.html
Submitted by Ray Sarlin
Ray Smith's excellent 1st Battalion, 69th Armor map page of their (and our) Areas of Operation in Binh Dinh Province. We often worked with the 1/69, and the rest of the Black Panthers site is interesting reading, too.



ASSOCIATION FLOWER FUND

Contact: Bob Gold
 10545 Wright Road
 Uniontown, OH 44685
 (330) 305-1495

robertjrrjunkie@aol.com

The Association Flower Fund will send flowers on behalf of the Association in remembrance of deceased members or their loved one. If you know of someone who has experienced this loss, please contact Bob Gold for arrangements.



RANDOM THOUGHTS By John Topper**Here We Go Again?**

We all have unpleasant memories of the protestors of the Vietnam War and it looks as if they are at it again. Or at least they are trying to rally the country to some vague cause, although it doesn't appear as if they were very successful in their first "march on DC" on 18 January 2003. The organizers of this ill-advised peace march are clearly trying to be Marx-like in their dissent. The only question is whether it is Karl or Groucho they are emulating. The Hollywood intelligentsia, trying hard to be relevant, has the current version of Hanoi Jane in the person of Barbra Streisand, dubbed by pundits as "Baghdad Babs." And other notable anti-warriors like Alec Baldwin and Martin Sheen, who act as if he believes he really occupies the West Wing and people are genuinely interested in what he has to say.

What is really telling about this pathetic bunch is their spokesmen who actually think they have something to say that actually thinking people want to hear. We don't. The good news is that they have little or no credibility for anyone with the slightest ability to think for themselves. The best they can do is have Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton listen intently to (and, along with everyone else) applaud Cynthia McKinney – a former member of congress from Georgia who lost her seat in the November election – when she proclaimed: *"In no other country on the planet do so many people have so little as they do in this country."* Few people in America (and other countries for that matter) were aware that people in countries like Iraq, North Korea, Zimbabwe and Bosnia had it so much better than we until Ms McKinney graciously enlightened everyone. The children who had the misfortune to be at the peace march were no doubt shattered to learn that they were so deprived and probably demanded of their parents an immediate increase in their mutual fund accounts.

Much of the disingenuous argument posited by those "in the know" had to do with New York Congressman Charles Ringel's proposal to return to the draft and conscript young men – and presumably young women - into the military. There is no reason, other than for political gain, to even suggest that a return to the draft is necessary. What Ringel and others would like for us to believe is that poor, undereducated, young black men bear the brunt of the fighting (and dying) when America goes to war. Not so. It is a specious argument at best and they know there is no chance of the military forces returning to the draft. They want simple-minded sympathy for their wrong-headed argument. The Defense Department has neatly proved them wrong in their bid to politicize the issue. Many of the members of this Association were draftees in Vietnam and served with distinction and valor and there is no reason to believe that the current generation could not do as well. The facts are, however, that all services are meeting their objectives with volunteers. A system, incidentally, that has proven much more efficient than conscription. And they are wrong in their posturing because in fact white soldiers fill disproportionately more combat slots while blacks opt for service support jobs. Remember, these are all volunteers and they are free to make the choice where they want to serve.

All are needed and the color of their skin bears no relevance to their service, obviously, and just as obviously, many young black men who have little or no future when they reach 18 years of age can improve their chances of leading a productive life by enlisting. The military offers them a chance for a future – training toward a vocation that provides an opportunity for a civilian job when they leave service to their country.

Another reason there won't be a draft is the Bush Administration almost certainly realizes that without college students protesting on campuses of hotbed political activism, the anti-war crowd simply can't make any significant headway. And students won't get involved in a big way unless they are actually in danger of being drafted.

The sad part of all this is that Saddam Hussein is given support and encouragement by any anti-war movement – real or not. Just as the North Vietnamese benefited from the protestors in the '60's, so will Saddam benefit – he will believe that America isn't sincere in its threats to invade. He will take heart and conclude that he doesn't have to seriously consider any suggestion that he abrogate his position and go into exile.

Inadvertently, these misguided, wrong-thinking protestors are actually making it more difficult for America to *not* go to war. They encourage Saddam who isn't smart enough to know – or doesn't care – that he can't win a war against America.

And once again the Infantry soldier will have to come to the aid of his country. And once again he will fight to preserve the freedom for protestors to continue their collective stupidity so that forty years from now they, like us, can write articles bemoaning the frustration of being a true patriot and wishing people in the world's greatest country would all grow up.

Reunion 24-27 April 2003

Registration Form

Fort Benning, Georgia

Member Name _____ Phone Number _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail Address _____ Badge Name _____ T-Shirt Size _____

Guest Name _____ Badge Name _____ T-Shirt Size _____

(Use separate sheet for additional guests)

Arrival Date _____ Departure Date _____ Hotel Name _____

(Host Hotel is Marriott Courtyard)

Registration Procedure:

Registration Cutoff Dates:

Registration Costs:
(Per Person)

Mail this form along with check to:

Early: 15 April 2003

Early Registration: \$125
After 15 April: \$150

Chuck McAleer, Treasurer

1st Battalion, 50th Infantry Association

Host Hotel is the Marriott Courtyard 706-323-2323 for reservations (Michelle Cross)

PO Box 1104

Kennesaw, Georgia 30156

Make check payable to: 1st Bn 50th Infantry Association

Registration Fee Includes: 23 April Reception

24 April Lunch, Dinner, Buses

25 April Lunch, Dinner, Buses

26 April Lunch, Dinner, Buses

Entry fee for Callaway Gardens

T-Shirt and Cap

Dinner for Guests

Gifts for Hosts

Door Prizes

Notes:

1. Not all activities and times have been confirmed. The Battalion Commander, LTC Bill Payne and Brigade Commander, COL Brian Baldy have committed their support, but the training schedules are subject to change.
2. Ray Sarlin will have computers set up to give classes on how to access and use our website at the hotel – firm schedule TBD.
3. No activities are scheduled for 27 April. The new leadership has tentatively scheduled a meeting for that morning and a number of folks have indicated an interest in visiting Andersonville Prison (Civil War) nearby.
4. Anyone interested in a round of golf at Callaway contact Chuck McAleer.
5. Costs are based on an estimated 70 Association members attending the reunion.
6. Any questions prior to the reunion please call John Topper 307-856-0178 or email jt@wyoming.com.

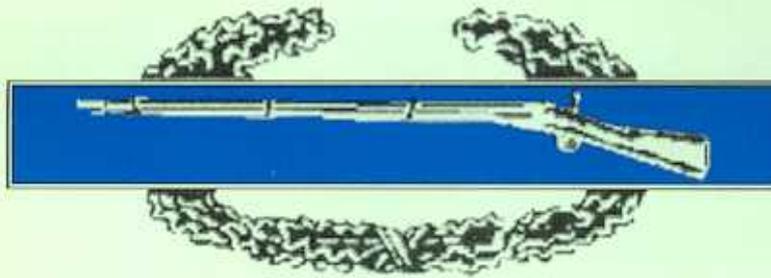


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On The Right Track



1st Battalion 50th Infantry Mechanized