



**503rd PARACHUTE RCT ASSOCIATION, WORLD WAR II, AND**

503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment

402nd Parachute Field Artillery Battalion

161st Parachute Engineer Company



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**A Message from the President...**

Our 503<sup>rd</sup> RCT. Assoc. WW-II 60<sup>th</sup> reunion in Fayetteville, NC was as usual, very successful, thanks to Nancy and her friends. Our visit to the Airborne Museum was very interesting and informative. I was a little disappointed at the Airborne Jump. The drive out to the drop zone was long, the sun was hot and the planes came one about 15 or 20 minutes apart. The reunion itself was great, as usual, seeing and visiting with our "503<sup>rd</sup> Family" is always and enjoyable get together. I just heard that our 61<sup>st</sup> reunion next year will be in Killeen, TX in September, so put that on your calendar so you won't forget to be there.

Take good care of yourselves and we will see you next year.

Sincerely,

Nelson Gatewood, President

**From the Secretary/Treasurer:**

Todd Mayer, our President-Elect did a fabulous job writing up the highlights of the 60<sup>th</sup> reunion in his first issue of the E-Newsletter sent by email in September. I have included part of the electronic newsletter in this mailed newsletter for your reading pleasure. Thank you, Todd for bringing us into the electronic age! Never fear, we will continue to mail newsletters, but if you would like to sign up for the E-Newsletter, email [Treasurer@503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT.org](mailto:Treasurer@503rdPRCT.org).

Thank you, Dee Breit, for agreeing to handle our incorporation notifications!

Thank you, Nelson Gatewood for the 2017-18 planners that you and Phyllis sent to be distributed to our vets!

**503<sup>rd</sup> is on Facebook! Check out and like our page!!!!**

## Mail Call

**Jim List**, son of **Robert G. List**, wrote to inform us of his father's passing. He recalled that his mother and father had wonderful times at the many reunions they attended. He said his father loved to share stories of the 503<sup>rd</sup> with his grandchildren and great grandchildren and that they enjoyed his stories.

**Jesse Gandee, II** wrote to tell us of his mother's passing. He said that his mother, **Jean**, travelled to many reunions and always enjoyed her time with his dad and the 503<sup>rd</sup>.

**James Allison** sent a note with his dues check. He celebrated his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in November. James lost his wife a year ago and they have 2 sons, 10 grandchildren and 21 great grandchildren!!! He is hoping to make it to the reunion in Fayetteville, as he has never attended a reunion. Let's hope some of those grandchildren and great grandchildren come with him!

**Tony Lopez** "gifted" Associate Membership to his three children, **Thomas, Steven and Yolonda**. He stated in his note that he hopes to make the reunion in Fayetteville. Hope you do, Tony! Update: Tony did not make it to the reunion this year. Yolonda emailed me that he fell in September and broke his hip, had to have surgery and was headed to rehab. Let's hope he is home and doing well!

**Don Herold** says he is doing ok. He is in an assisted living facility. He said he had a bit of a stroke or something that set him back some and he uses a walker to get around. Don enjoys hearing about the 503<sup>rd</sup> and wishes he could attend a reunion.

**Janet Bell** wrote to inform us of **Frederick Wilson's** passing. She said that while he was in the 503<sup>rd</sup>, Fred made a rescue jump in Dobodura, New Guinea to find an Airforce crew whose plane had crashed in the jungle. He and his team were able to find and bring out two severely wounded survivors and that he received the Soldiers Medal for Heroism, which is the highest non-combat military award.

**Ginny Hinds** emailed that she moved back to NY to be near her family. She hopes to make the reunion in Fayetteville, as she has to tie up some loose ends in Raleigh.

**Jim Klooster**, son of **Donald Klooster** informed us of Donald's passing. In May of 2015, Donald went to the WWII Memorial on Honor Flight and met Bob Dole. Jim said his father told his war story on video and it was sent to the Library of Congress to be kept in the archives.

Thank you, **Susan Marriner** and **Frank O'Neill**, for you donations to the 2016 Reunion fund!

**Judy and Janice**, the daughters of **Vernon Kopsell** wrote to inform us of his passing. They said he loved the 503<sup>rd</sup> and told them many stories of his time in the service. Vernon loved attending reunions, but that it became harder to attend as he got older.

**Sharon Martin** called to cancel their reservations for the reunion in July, as **Burl Martin** unexpectedly passed away. Burl had been hospitalized with bronchial pneumonia that went into congestive heart failure. He had recently been moved to a rehab center, and seemed to be doing well.

**Linda Eller**, daughter of **Paul Knapp**, wrote to inform us of Paul's passing due to complications from Parkinson's and leukemia. His wife Shirley passed away in January of 2016. Linda said that she knew both of her parents enjoyed the reunions they were able to attend as she has found numerous pictures of them at various reunions!

**Janet Mahoney** has fallen several times in the past two years and is on oxygen. Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers.

## **Coming soon....**

A new membership registration form to help us update our records.

More information about our 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Reunion.

Be on the lookout!

## **TAPS**

**Kay Wynn**, widow of Dick Wynn, Co I, notified by her family

**Robert List**, Co D, June 6, 2015, notified by his son, Jim

**Rachel Kubik**, widow of Ted Kubik, Co G, September 14, 2015, notified by her son, Scott

**Phyllis Jean Gandee**, widow of Jesse Gandee, Btry D, 462<sup>nd</sup>, October 15, 2015, notified by her son, Jesse, II

**Vernon Kopsell**, HQ & Ser Btry, October 24, 2015, notified by his daughters

**James W. Gay**, HQ Co 1<sup>st</sup> Bn, December 4, 2015, survived and notified by his wife, Rexine

**Thomas I. Keeler**, Co A, April 20, 2016, survived and notified by his wife, Shirley

**George Lio**, HQ Co 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn, April 24, 2016, notified by his son

**Lundstrom, Emert**, March 8, 2016, survived and notified by his wife, Ruth

**Ralph Schwind**, Co A, April 9, 2016, notified by his son, David

**Donavan E. Wasson**, Btry C, 462<sup>nd</sup>, April 21, 2016, survived and notified by his wife, Anita

**Frederick Wilson**, Co C, survived by his wife, Pat, October 14, 2013, notified by a friend, Janet

**Rita Ellwood**, widow of David Ellwood, Co D, January 26, 2016, notified by her family

**Charles E. Breit**, RHQ, April 9, 2016, survived and notified by his wife, Dee

**Wallace Hillyer**, Co G, notified by mail

**Donald Klooster**, Co A, November 7, 2015, notified by his son, Jim

**Marjorie Henninge**, widow of James Henninge, RHQ, notified by her son, Jim

**Yvonne Freistedt**, widow of Calvin Freistedt, HQ 1<sup>st</sup> Bn & B, May 30, 2014

**Burl Martin**, Co F, June 26, 2016, notified by his daughter-in-law, Sharon

**Paul R. Scheuerman, Jr.**, Btry D, 462<sup>nd</sup>, September 7, 2016, notified by his son, Paul, III

**Paul W. Knapp**, Co B, February 25, 2016, notified by his daughter Laura

**Robert L. Parks**, Co A, September 13, 2016, notified by Dee Breit

Our condolences go out to our vets, widows and family members who have lost loved ones.

## Returned Mail

Virginia Grace, Richard Castillo, Roscoe Corder, RE "Ted" Morris, Helen Browne, Sarah Hollingsworth, Betty June Blondon, Nicholas Selage, Virginia Duwors, Verne White

Anyone know their whereabouts?

## Directory Additions, Corrections

Capiz, Henry, 1984 Oakdale Ave, Apt 315, St. Paul, MN 55118

Gurganus, Delores, 2637 Foxfire Rd, Farmville, NC 27828

Herold, Don, 4700 W 13<sup>th</sup> St N, Apt 1411, Wichita, KS 67212

Hinds, Ginny, 6 Morgan Ct., Clifton Park, NY 12065, 518-631-9415

Hoefner, Ted, 926 Tunkhannock Ave, Exeter, PA 18643

Horton, Charlie, 19 Royal King Rd, Tomball, TX 77377

Imbody, Daniel, 142 Niantic Rd, Barto, PA 19504

Kroll, John, 1609 Grandon Ave, Apt 127, San Marcos, CA 92078

Lopez, Steven, 1390 Magnolia St, Denver, CO 80220

Lopez, Thomas, 8202 Dahlia St., Henderson, CO 80640

Lundstrom, Ruth, 6102 Trevino Ct. N, Keizer, OR 97303

Mende, Ray, 4200 Taku Blvd. Juneau, AK 99801

Menefee, Sharon, 208 Shadow Springs Dr, Lafayette, LA, 70506

Peterson, John, 8405 Marble St, Apt B, Tampa, FL 33715

Rightnour, Wales, 2833 Nodosa Dr, Sarasota, FL 34232

Santo, Rita, 15 Chandler Circle, Montgomery, NY 12549

Santoro, Tony 5610 Buncombe Road, Apt. #1003, Shreveport, LA 71129

Sullivan, Jessica, 5775 Diana Lane, Lake View, NY 14085

Swoverland, Robert, 809 S Miller Rd, Saginaw, MI 48609

Weldon, Sandy, 3338 Black Hawk Ave NW, Oxford, IA 52322

Wynn, Kay, 1228 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave, Napa, CA 94556

**Save the dates---September 13-17, 2017**

**2017 National Reunion in Killeen, Texas!**

**Thanks Rick Miller for your willingness to host!**

My New Year's Resolution for 2017 is to do a better job of communicating and getting newsletters out. Thank you, Todd for setting the bar. You are an inspiration! Everyone, please keep those phone calls, emails, and notes coming. They keep me informed and enable me to inform the group. Merry Christmas and best wishes for a Happy, Healthy New Year!

*Nancy*



# 503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT Association, WWII, Inc.

## *The Rock*

Volume 1, Issue 1 September, 2016

503<sup>rd</sup> PIR \* 462<sup>nd</sup> PFAB \* 161<sup>st</sup> PEC

### Welcome to our very first issue of the "The Rock"!

My goal is for "The Rock" newsletter to serve as supplement to our standard mailed newsletter as we slowly progress towards the digital age. Creating an electronic newsletter will hopefully allow us to engage more people with less cost, as we promote and preserve the history of 503<sup>rd</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team. The goal will be to publish the E-Newsletter in September, January and May of the current year. The E-Newsletter will focus on the history of the 503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT, along with upcoming, current and past events. As this is the very first issue, expect some changes to the layout as the newsletter matures and we work our way through the transition of publishing it.

The electronic newsletter is being launched to promote our new website 503rdPRCT.org and our face book page, which can be accessed from the website. The website will be basic and will focus on the Association. It will serve as our "front porch" to the world and let everyone know who we are and what we do, and provide those seeking information or membership and way to contact us. Our Face book page will help spread our message to all the younger generations who prefer this type of communication. Be sure to follow us.

Interested persons can sign up for our E-Newsletter by emailing  
Treasurer@503rdPRCT.org.

*Todd Mayer*

President Elect

503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT Association, WWII, Inc.

### 60<sup>th</sup> Reunion Celebrated in Fayetteville, North Carolina

The 503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT Association just wrapped up its 60<sup>th</sup> annual reunion in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Although "Hot", we all had a great time as we met with new friends and spent time catching up with old acquaintances.

We had six veterans from the 503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT and 3 Veterans from the 503<sup>rd</sup> PIR, who served in the unit after Korea and before Vietnam attending. Along with that, we had a long list of Veteran's wives, family members and friends at this year's reunion.

On Thursday afternoon, our Hospitality suite was humming as our Veterans, Families and Friends settled in for another great reunion. Our good friend Tom served as our bartender and made sure everyone's ice cold beverages were wiped dry from the cooler before being served, a critical job that did not go unnoticed.



*Above- Members of the original 503<sup>rd</sup> PRCT.*

*Tony Sierra, D Co., Angelo Bordanaro, E Co., Russ Nelson, E Co., Nelson Gatewood, 462<sup>nd</sup>, Kenny Lyle, 462<sup>nd</sup> and Gene Karbowski, 462<sup>nd</sup>. Photo courtesy of Todd Mayer.*



*Above- Tom Hilburn, Dave Hudiburgh and Rick Miller. Posing with an original 503<sup>rd</sup> Regimental Flag that was used prior to Vietnam. The Colors were donated at last year's reunion by Lt. John Keller, who served with the unit.*



*Above- "Members of the shirt club". On Friday afternoon an impromptu photo of all those who were hang 'in around and were wearing an association shirt. Back Row- Bill Marr, Tom Hilburn, Dave Hudiburgh, Rick Miller, Nelson Gatewood, David Llewellyn, Middle Row- Sandy Weldon, Nancy Young Bottom Row- Phyllis Gatewood, Susan Weldon, Natalie Young, Rita Santo, Susan Marr. Photo courtesy of Todd Mayer*

On Friday morning our group headed over to the Airborne & Special Operations Museum. For those of you who have never been there, it's a great museum and well worth a visit. It does a fantastic job of telling the history of America's Airborne and Special Operations Units. The 503rd PRCT was well represented in the museum displays. Our group was given a special treat, when they brought out the original artwork of "The Rock", by Thomas M. McNeil of G Company, 503rd PIR. The original artwork was painted on a duffel bag. Mr. McNeil recently donated the artwork to the museum. It is currently not on display to the general public.

Friday evening we had an informal banquet dinner, followed by our annual auction. The highlight of the auction included the auctioning off of Doc Llewellyn's "last man standing" 1936 bourbon whisky. I did not sample, but I heard it was smooth. On Saturday morning the group headed over to the paratroop airdrop training area on the grounds of Fort Bragg. The group got to witness several paratrooper airdrops, along with meeting the active duty paratroopers themselves.

Saturday afternoon we held our board and membership meetings. President Elect Nelson Gatewood is now President of the Association and Todd Mayer is President Elect. The terms run for two years. It was also decided that Rick Miller would look into hosting our 2017 reunion in Texas. Later that evening on Saturday, we held our formal banquet, where the new officers were introduced and upcoming events announced, followed by more socializing in our hospitality suite. At the end of the day, we all bid farewell.

<https://www.facebook.com/503rdPRCT.org>

