



THE STATIC LINE

WESTERN STATES CHAPTER 10

NEWSLETTER

173rd AIRBORNE BRIGADE ASSOCIATION

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Summer, 2015

173rd Airborne Brigade Association 2015 Reunion

By Charles Earthman

San Diego was the perfect venue for a reunion marking the 50th anniversary of the Brigade's arrival in Vietnam. The Sky Soldiers of Chapter 10, their families, and friends traveled from Northern California and Northern Nevada to join Chapters 14 and 28 in hosting the event. We had been looking forward to the Brigade Association's annual reunion being held in San Diego and we were not disappointed. It gave other Sky Soldiers a chance to see how nice California really is.

The lineage and history of this great combat unit is wrought with sacrifice and heroism, including 13 Medals of Honor in six years in Vietnam. The Brigade is currently active and stationed at faraway posts still protecting America's interests, but the veterans attending the reunion were primarily from the Vietnam era; most in their late sixties and seventies. Many of these Sky Soldiers were reuniting with friends and comrades they had lived with and had shared experiences (both good and bad) during their most formative years that would never be forgotten. Now we gathered to reminisce and talk about the years since those days. Some brought wives, children, and grandchildren. Pictures and memories were exchanged; we talked about our lives after Vietnam and we re-



membered. We remembered the quirky times, army chow, and trying to avoid the wrath of the First Sergeant. And we remembered those who could not be with us today--the guys who did not make it out of Nam, and those who have passed since. We remembered, least they not be forgotten.

Our Chapter and Chapter 14 meet biennially on the central coast and we hope to have Chapter 28 join us at the next get together in Cambria later this year. This annual get together gives the California Sky Soldiers a chance to share in a small way what we all shared in San Diego.



WESTERN STATES CHAPTER 10
173rd AIRBORNE BRIGADE ASSOCIATION

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President's Message

Many Thanks to Chapters 14 and 28

From the welcoming reception to the closing memorial service--what a great job by the men and women of Chapters 14 and 28. I cannot say how special and fun each and every day was. So many, including my family that was there, had a great time. We had three generations of our family that got to be part of this special Reunion.

We all enjoyed the food, breakfast together, the music, tours, gatherings, and the Banquet--especially the speaker, current Brigade Commander Col. Michael Foster, telling it like it is! My family and my friends thank Chapters 14 and 28 for ensuring that the 173rd brotherhood is still very strong. These bonds will continue forever with the strong pride of our newer brothers and sisters and the strong leadership they have. We say, really well done!! Again, thanks to all that made it happen.

Our Chapter's Airborne Joe was really a big hit on the night of the Banquet. Joe's travelog book has a lot of miles bringing smiles of appreciation to all those that meet him. Lots of pictures were taken with "Airborne Joe". We're still looking for a Nam-era backpack. Call me at 650.712.0980 or any of our Chapter officers.

David and Shirley Carmona have moved out-of-state. They will be missed but will stay in touch with us. I will sure miss Shirley's great cooking at our meetings. We thank you both for your great support while you were here.

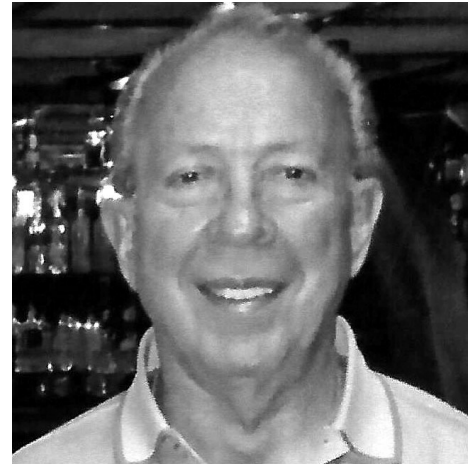
Our mandate and obligation is to serve our members. I urge all Chapter 10 members to let us know the kind of activities they'd like and also suggest possible locations for our gatherings. Our goals of comradery and brotherhood and being part of the 173rd ABN are the true reasons why we gather when and where we do. We all have and come from different walks in life, but as I've said before, being part--in whatever capacity--of the 173rd ABN, is a great honor. To this day I am proud to have served with this unit. So when you can make it to one of our functions, please do so. It's just for a brief few hours, but, as they say,

"It's Priceless".

See ya when I see ya!!

Airborne always,

Bob Ortiz



Chapter 10's ROTC and JROTC Award of Excellence

By Charles Earthman

It's the time of year when most schools are having award assemblies to celebrate students' achievements. While many Chapter members were attending the Brigade Reunion in San Diego, J.C. Terry was busy presenting some ROTC and Jr. ROTC students in northern California with the Chapter 10 173rd Airborne Brigade Award of Excellence. This Award recognizes outstanding cadets in the Junior and Senior ROTC programs in high schools and colleges around the area. "The Award of Excellence" goes to the most distinguished cadet of a given ROTC or JROTC unit. The standard for the cadet that distinguishes he or she, as stated in the certificate, is "For Excellence in Military Proficiency, Scholarship, Knowledge, and Leadership and in keeping with the traditions and ideals of the Sky Soldiers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Association".



J.C. Terry and Erica Madrigal

Following is a list of the students honored this year:

Michael Thao

Erica Madrigal

Wilhelmena Q. Copeland-Lark

Brandon Mangosing

Anthony Desouza

Phuong DU

Jacob Nicholas Pursch

Mason Lau

Reyes Quiroz

Andrew Julian Delinila

Robert McCampbell.

Jeffrey Velazquez

J.C. Terry has set the standard for the 173rd Airborne Brigade Association ROTC awards. The program he has designed is now the model for the rest of the Brigade Association.



Reyes Quiroz and J.C. Terry

CAB for Past Conflicts?

Exerts from The Army Times

The Army created the Combat Action Badge in 2005 to honor those who'd engaged or been engaged by enemy forces during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan but weren't eligible for similar awards available to medics or infantrymen. It was made retroactive to Sept. 18, 2001, but since shortly after its founding, lawmakers and veterans groups have pushed to send it back much farther — to the outbreak of World War II.

That proposal, championed for several years by Florida Republican Rep. Richard Nugent, reached the House version of the National Defense Authorization Act but wasn't included in the final bill signed by President Obama in late 2014. However, language attached to the bill required the Defense Department to include the proposal in its comprehensive review of the military awards system, launched last year by then-Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel.

This idea deserves consideration for the many non-infantry personal involved in combat in WWII, Korean, and Vietnam—especially those soldiers wounded in combat (awarded the Purple Heart Medal). I hope that one day this will happen.



COMBAT ACTION BADGE





CHAPTER 10 2015 EVENTS CALENDAR



CHAPTER 10 SUMMER PICNIC & BBQ

"YOU HAVE TO BE HERE"



Take Hwy 92 West to Hwy 1,
Go north 3 miles to 2nd light (Capistrano)
Turn left and go to 470 Capistrano Rd.

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Bring your Favorite Dish"

It's all about our great past to share
with the special brotherhood
of friends and family.
"Let us not be forgotten!"
Don't miss this great day of fun
and memories.

There will be a special tribute to those
Chapter 10 members who are no
longer with us, but not forgotten

For more information contact:
Bob Ortiz - 650.712.0980



Other events scheduled for this year:

Sept. 4-6—Col. Maggie's All Services reunion & Labor Day Parade in Marina. The city will be honoring all paratroopers with a BBQ after the Parade.

Nov.7— Fort Ord Warhorse Show; all eras and wars are on display. We have the Vietnam War (if anybody has any Vietnam stuff Bob can borrow, it would be great!) All services are there, great speakers, food, and tours.

Nov. 11—Veterans Day Parade in Elk Grove. Hopefully the son of Dennis Felmley will join us.

Dec.5—Annual Christmas Party in Ripon. Good music, lots of food, a great raffle with lot of prizes, and gift exchange.

If you have questions or want to add something to this list in the next newsletter, call

Bob Ortiz—650.712.0980



Kon Tiki Inn - Pismo Beach, Calif.

Recon elements from Chapter 14 have scouted a new bivouac for our joint Chapter meetings held biennially on the central coast. The Kon Tiki Inn in Pismo Beach has been suggested. It has direct access to the beach & is located near shops and restaurants. The idea will be discussed in future meetings. Check it out on the internet and tell us what you think or, if you have another place in mind, let us know.





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vva-223.org

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