RIPCORD REPORT

For Friends and Survivors of the Battle of Fire Support Base Ripcord
Rupublic of Vietnam • 12 March – 23 July, 1970

Number 77 Summer, 2008

2008 Ripcord Reunion at The River Palms Resort

October 9 -12, 2008

River Palms Resort & Casino, 2700 Casino Drive - Laughlin, NV 89029

1(800)835-7904

Don't Miss This One!!!!

Registration Forms in this newsletter and on the website

Accomadations

The River Palms sets the new standard in superior service, exceptional quality and unparalleled value. With over 1,000 guest rooms and suites, the River Palms is the obvious choice for events of any size. The 25-story tower boasts the finest accommodations in Laughlin. Our spacious rooms are available with mountain or river views.

Guest Rooms

The guest rooms at the River Palms are simply the finest in Laughlin. Custom nightstands, breakfast tables and chairs add to the comfortable and spacious environment. The River Palms offers standard king & double rooms.

Dining

Whether you are in the mood for an elegant meal or a quick bite, the River Palms has something for even the most discriminating palate. With four distinct restaurants and a top-notch catering and banquet staff, River Palms dining is a cut above. We also offer a variety of bars & lounges for an evening cocktail or gathering of friends.

Restaurants & Eateries

The Lodge combines quality and elegance with the mood of the frontier spirit and early American charm to create the finest dining establishment in Southern Nevada.

The Lodge is located on the second floor. Hours of operation are 5 pm to 10 pm Sunday through Thursday and 5 pm to 11 pm Friday and Saturday. Reservations are recommended

Pasta Cucina is Italian cooking and ambiance at its best. Pasta Cucina offers guests traditional Italian dishes and is home of the $7.99 all you can eat Soup, Salad and Pasta dinner. Pasta Cucina is located on the first floor. Hours of operation are 4 pm to 9 pm Sun-Thur. Fri & Sat hours are 4 pm to 10 pm.

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FROM THE EDITOR

I hope everyone is doing good and I hope to see a lot of you at this year's reunion. There is going to be a lot of new faces this year. This is going to be a great reunion.

By the time you get this newsletter, the website www.ripcordassociation.com should be updated. I have been running a little behind because I have to work twice as hard selling Real estate these days.

I hope you are all enjoying the newsletter and website and would really appreciate if you could send me e-mails, letters, photos, etc. pertaining to FSB Ripcord or anything about Ripcord veterans to put in the newsletter and on the website.

Also, very important! I need your e-mail address. If you are not receiving updates and information about the Ripcord Association via e-mail, you may be missing out on a lot of news. Please go to our website and update your information.

ARTICLES

Deadline for the April issue will be Sept 1st 2008. Please send all articles, photos, incoming mail and interesting reading to:

Frank Marshall
224 Derry Hill Ct
Mt Laurel, NJ 08054
or e-mail to: frankmarshall@comcast.net

DONATIONS:

Checks payable to "Ripcord Association".
Mail to:
Lee Widjeskog,
493 Stillman Ave.
Bridgeton, NJ 08302

Donations, the life blood of our Association

came from the following generous members during the past three months:

Arthur Ahne	George Westerfelt
Tim Joilet	Sam Brown
Bill Williams	Charlie Tipton
Bill Hand	Donald Meier
Phil Bernal	Storm Russell

REPORT FROM NEW JERSEY

by Lee Widjeskog

Well, is everyone just about tired of gasoline and fuel prices going up weekly if not daily? This is reminiscent of the 1970's when we had gasoline shortages and sky rocketing inflation. If the inflation has not hit you yet, wait till this winter when it all comes home to roost. All I can suggest is plan ahead and expect more inflation and a recession before it gets better but eventually it will get better or at least not seem so bad as we all adjust to the new lifestyle imposed upon us.

On a brighter note, the reunion for 2008 is gathering steam! So far we have 21 people confirmed as coming and it is still very early. However, the price goes up to $80 per person for those who have not been able to get their money in before July 1. For those planning to fly into Las Vegas, book your flights quickly before another round of ticket price hikes hits. It really does pay to plan ahead!

Here in lovely southern New Jersey the weather has suddenly turned hot and the insects are flying once more. Years ago when I was a college student studying wildlife biology and waiting to see if the Vietnam War would be over before my Army commission kicked in, I spent two summers in the dank, wet, hot swamps and marshes of southern New Jersey studying and counting mosquitoes. (I guess I was preparing for Vietnam even then). I spent hours walking through the mud and beating off mosquitoes but I did not have to worry about getting shot and I did not carry a heavy pack. However, I did learn to tolerate uncomfortable conditions for extended periods. As a result, if the insects start flying today, they are still an annoyance to me, but I can ignore them while others seem to go crazy.

As you think of the reunion, don't forget the **Friday Night Ladies Raffle**. Each year we have had some very interesting donation that help us keep the association going and the hospitality room hospitable. Donations can be items you make, purchase or just think someone might want. One year we even had the donation of a Claymore mine "Klacker" (without the mine). It drew a lot of comments and interest. A set of bull horns went home with Tex last year and **Fred Spaulding's "best friend ever, Ben Peters"** made sure he got the golfing print he liked.

This year we hope to have a separate raffle with the proceeds going towards Keith Nolan's daughter's trust fund. So bring items and money if you can afford it.

Lastly, George Murphy (B 2/320) is still proceeding with setting up a trust fund for the Ripcord Association for the benefit of Keith Nolan's daughter. Keith is apparently having a tough time with the chemo treatments and has not been able to get back to George with the needed information. Hopefully we will have it set up by the 2008 reunion.

Get you registrations in as soon as possible!!! A good time will be had by all who attend.

CURRAHEE !!!!!

Make this Reunion a Vacation, Bring Your Family

River Palms Cafe is a beautiful riverview dining establishment with an extensive menu selection and South Seas flair. Hours of operation are 6 am to 10 pm, Sun-Thurs. Fri & Sat hours are 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. River Palms Cafe is the perfect choice to satisfy any dining desires. For those on the run, or planning a day on the river, all food items are available to take out. River Palms Cafe is located on the first floor

The NoKaOi' Buffet mixes ambiance of an island decor with an impressive assortment of main dishes, salads and desserts. The No Ka Oi Buffet is located on the second floor. Hours of operation are 24 hours daily.

The River Palms offers the only late night buffet in town. The Great Late Night Buffet is open from Sun-Thurs 10 pm to 6 am. Fri & Sat hours are 11pm to 6 am.

Bars and Lounges

The River Palms offers guests everything from live entertainment to dancing to an intimate setting where you can gather with your closest friends.

The Bermuda Club at the River Palms is one of the best nightspots in Laughlin. The Bermuda Club encompasses state of the art lighting and elegant design to form an unforgettable evening. During the day, The Bermuda Club also serves as a satellite viewing area for major sporting events, given its proximity to the Sports Book. A large projection television screen is used for events such as Monday Night Football, the Super Bowl and Kentucky Derby. River Palms offers great shows. The Bermuda Club is located on the second floor.

The Lodge Lounge is an intimate setting where you can sip a glass of fine wine or a 30-year old scotch. Located on the second floor, main casino level, the Lodge is the perfect setting for an early evening cocktail or after dinner liqueur. The Lodge is located on the Second Floor. Hours of operation are from 5:00pm to 10:00pm Sunday through Thursday, and 5:00pm through 11:00pm on Friday and Saturday.

Shipwrecked Bar offers a magnificent view of the Colorado River from the picture windows behind the bar.The theatrical stagelighting casts its own "picture-perfect" glow inside the Shipwrecked Bar. Spotlights are used to provide direct and indirect lighting effects across the bar area. The Shipwrecked Bar is located on the Third Floor. Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Parrot Bay Bar is home to some of Laughlin's most outgoing and friendly bartenders. It is a favorite with the guests and locals (they say it's because of the penchant for Royal Flushes on the $1 video poker machines). Parrot Bay Bar is located on the third floor and opens at 8 a.m.

The Pasta Lounge. Serving drinks and dinner this 22-seat lounge is suited to those who prefer a more leisurely and casual dinner. The Pasta Lounge is a favorite late afternoon, early evening gathering place. The Pasta Lounge is located on the Second Floor. Hours of operation are 4:00pm to 10:00pm nightly.

Gaming

With 72,000 square feet of the hottest Vegas style gaming action (the biggest in Laughlin), the River Palms is the only place to be.

Table Games

The River Palms has all your favorite table games including Blackjack, Roulette, Craps, Three Card Poker, and Let It Ride.

Slots

Slot Players have a reel good time at over 1,000 slot machines. The River Palms has all the latest and greatest slots around.

Video Poker

If Video Poker is your game, look no further than the River Palms. With over 200 machines of every variety, so there's always a Royal waiting.

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Ripcord Reunion Registration 2008

Firebase Ripcord Association Reunion, October 9 – 12, 2008
River Palms Resort & Casino, Laughlin, NV

☐ ***Yes,*** I'll be there!

☐ I have not attended a Reunion since 1997 and have not received a Ripcord Coin.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ UNIT IN 'NAM _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP_____

Will a family member(s) or guest be sharing your accommodations? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How many including you? _____ . If yes what are their names? (For name tag purposes only).

_____

_____

Arrival Date _____ Departure Date _____

TRANSPORTATION FROM THE AIRPORT IS ON YOUR OWN!! PLAN AHEAD, 'CAUSE IT AIN'T THAT CLOSE! The River City Shuttle from Las Vegas, will be $35 each one-way if you use the code "RIP-CORD". Reserve a space by calling 888-948-3427.

Registration fee of $_____ is enclosed for #_____ Adults and #_____ children under 18.

$50 for children under 18. For adults see discounts below !

DISCOUNTS FOR EARLY REGISTRATION:

Before June 30, 2008 – $75 per adult

July 1 through 31, 2008 – $80 per adult

August 1 through September 1, 2008 – $85 per adult

After September 1, 2008 – $90 per adult

Your registration fee covers the cost of the hospitality room, snacks and beverages, and dinner on Saturday.

Registration fee is due no later than September 30, 2008.

Make your check payable to **"RIPCORD ASSOCIATION"**
Mail your check with this form to:
Lee Widjeskog, 493 Stillman Ave., Bridgeton, NJ 08302.
If you have questions call Lee at 856-451-1108 before 30 September 2008

AGENDA

Tuesday, October 7:	Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours (for early, early birds)
Wednesday, October 8:	Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Self guided tours and shopping)
Thursday, October 9:	Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Golf in the AM) (Self guided tours)
Friday, October 10:	Hospitality 1200 Hours. Ladies raffle 1900 hours (7 PM)
Saturday, October 11:	Business meeting for association business in Hospitality room. Dinner with cash bar starting at 1730 hours done by 2200 hours.
Sunday, October 12:	Homeward bound

Thursday Golf Outing (not included in the registration fee) Check here if you will play ☐

HOTEL RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE SEPARATELY AND BY 21 SEPTEMBER 2008
USE THE OTHER FORM OR CALL 800-835-7904,
ASK FOR HOTEL RESERVATIONS AND REFER TO THE GROUP CODE: **RIPCORD**

Hotel Registration 2008

Firebase Ripcord Association
October 8 - 11, 2008

Hotel Reservation form for
River Palms Resort & Casino
2700 Casino Drive
Laughlin, Nevada 89029
Phone: (800) 835-7903 Facsimile: (702) 298-2137
Group code: **RIPCORD**

Group Room Rate: Sunday thru Thursday $28 per day + tax
Friday and Saturday $55 per day + tax
A deposit for the first night's room and tax or a
Credit Card Number is required to guarantee this reservation.
Room rate is available three days before and after the group-blocked dates.

Your Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Arrival Date: _____ Departure Date: _____ No. of Rooms _____

Roommate Name(s): _____

Room type preferred: ☐ King Single Room ☐ Double Room

☐ Suite & Other Special Requests*: _____

** Although we cannot guarantee special requests, every effort will be made to meet your request.*

Deposit Enclosed: _____ Credit Card Number: _____ Exp: _____

Cardholder Signature Authorizing Hotel's Use of Credit Card: _____

PLEASE NOTE: *Those guests sending a cash deposit should be aware that a credit card imprint and valid, state-issued ID will be necessary upon check in. Should you wish to pay for your stay with cash, a credit card imprint and valid ID will still be required upon arrival to secure your accommodations.*

All cash payments are accepted upon departure.
Check-in time: 3:00 PM Check-out Time: 11:00 AM
To confirm reservations, please return form to the hotel or call by September 21, 2008.
We look forward to seeing you in October!

More Fun and Entertainment at The River Palms

Poker Room

For all you card players out there, get on you poker place and get ready to play. The Poker Room is one of the premiere poker rooms in Laughlin. With 60 seats and up to 300 seats for tournament play, there is no finer place for a game of Hold â ˜Em, Stud or Omaha.

Leroy's Sports Book Beach Club Bingo

Beach Club Bingo is a premium bingo facility that seats 300. 6 sessions daily, at 9 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 5 p.m., 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. The 1 p.m. and 9 p.m. sessions are Jumbo Sessions. Voted best Bingo in Laughlin!

Attractions

The River Palms is a full service resort with premier amenities and river attractions right outside our door. Whether you're into water sports, sight-seeing, or just want to relax the day away at our pool or Spa & Salon, the River Palms boasts something for every visitor.

Outdoor Recreation - Fishing, water skiing, and sailing are also available on the Colorado River or nearby Lake Mohave. You can even catch a water taxi right off the River Palms pier. If you would rather spend time on the links, the River Palms can also coordinate a tee time at one of three nearby championship level golf courses.

THE COMEDY SHOP
We Put the Laugh in Laughlin!

Comedy Shop features a nightly array of fun and laughter. Come see stand-up comedians who have been featured on HBO specials, Comedy Central, Premium Blend, The Tonight Show, Late Night, and more!

Show Schedule: Shows Nightly at 8pm - Dark on Sundays

Ticket price: $14.95 and $19.95 for preferred seating (Note: The $14.95 seats will have long, narrow tables; $19.95 seats will be round cocktail. Tables for 4 and will be up front in the room closer to the stage.)

Cocktails? Yes. cocktail service will be available throughout the show

Purchase Tickets: At the main cage (2nd level).

Entertainment

With multiple entertainment venues, there's always something happening at the River Palms.

The Bermuda Club is a hotspot with a Video DJ and dancing on Friday and Saturday nights starting at 8 p.m.

When it comes to shopping, Laughlin's got it all. The nearby Preferred Outlets at Laughlin offers 58 different retail outlets including a Gap Factory Store, Reebok store and the Stadium 9 cinema.

Spa & Salon

Located on the 4th Floor of the Hotel Tower, the River Palms Spa has a picturesque view of the Colorado River. The River Palms Spa offers guests relaxing massage, free weights, treadmills, stair stepping machines and even a redwood-lined sauna.

The River Palms Spa is open daily. River Palms guests may use the spa free. A full gym is offered as well as a sauna and massage therapist.

The Vange Salon is now open Monday-Saturday, 9:30 am to 5pm. Full service is available for Men and women.

You can sunbathe while relaxing at the River Palms outdoor swimming pool. Or, if you prefer, take a dip in the jacuzzi. Pool hours are 6am-midnight. Enjoy your favorite drink or a snack while lounging at the pool. The pool bar/snack bar is open at 11 a.m.

River City SHUTTLE

Airport / Hotel Shuttle Service

We offer shuttle service from the Las Vegas McCarran Airport to all of the hotels in Laughlin, including the River Palms. We are the only airport shuttle service that is properly licensed to take you directly to and from your hotels in Laughlin.

I am pleased to be able to offer a 30% discount from our normal fares to your group. Specifically, any of your reunion attendees may travel with us for $35 per person, in each direction. Reservations and prepayment is required to take advantage of this rate. Please advise your groups that they can reserve by calling our office toll-free at 888-948-3427 or using our website. They will need to use the code 'RIPCORD" to get the special rate.

This Shuttle runs only 3 times a day. Please call the shuttle company for the times of each shuttle

John Sherba, Recon, E 2/506

This year, "Doc Speed" former medic for Bravo Team of Recon, will turn 60 on July 23rd. He and the other (five to eight) men that made up a team of Recon spent days and weeks in the jungles and hills outside the Ashau Valley in 1969 and 1970 searching for North Vietnamese Army Regulars while trying to avoid detection and contact. They did this leading up to Ripcord and after Ripcord.

John was born and raised in Cape May County New Jersey. After graduating from high school he got a job working for a mason. Soon the inevitable happened and he received his draft notice. It was early summer 1968. On the advice of his father he decided to ignore it knowing that it would take them a while to seek him out. By the end of summer he found himself in Basic Training at Fort Dix. Here he built a severe dislike for KP (probably due to some left over feelings from working one summer in an Italian restaurant).

John volunteered for Vietnam to avoid KP duty.

As he finished up training the Army "volunteered" John for medic schooling at Fort Sam Houston. Once the training was done one of his buddies talked him into going airborne so off they went to Fort Benning. His buddy dropped out but John got his wings and then an assignment with the 82nd Airborne at Fort Bragg with the 3/508 Infantry. While assigned there he parachuted into the Canal Zone for three weeks of Jungle training and also dropped onto Puerto Rico for even more training. Again he found too much of his time being assigned to KP. Wanting to avoid this duty at all costs, he volunteered for Vietnam.

John Sherba with his wife Debbie

Sherba arrived in Vietnam in November 1969, got assigned to the 101st and the 158th Aviation for medics and once more was pulling KP. Having had enough of this "—" he volunteered for Recon. His first team was Alpha.

On one of his first missions in the field the boys got into a little altercation with some guys from North Vietnam. Sherba killed both of the NVA very quickly while some of the other guys were still getting their guns up. From that event, he got the name "Doc Speed" as a play on words, because as we remember from anti-drug posters of the day "Speed Kills". It was evident to the members of Alpha that Doc Sherba "kills".

After a series of bad adventures in the field, most of the Alpha team re-upped to get out of the field. Doc Speed was transferred to Bravo team where he worked with John Mihalka and others who have become life long friends.

By 10 July, Sherba was given a "rear" job working the aid station on Fire Support Base Ripcord. He was there for the evacuation and was soon once again going in the field with recon till he left country in October.

John flew into Washington, checked out of the Army and four days after he left Vietnam; he was home in Cape May County pushing concrete for the mason as if he had never left. In 1976 he married his wife Debbie and together they have had three daughters and one son. John started his own business as a mason and retired a few years ago as his knees and some ailments from Vietnam have worn him down. He still hunts birds and an occasional deer and all year long you can find him near a fishing pole by a lake or on the bay or ocean. In spite of all he has been through and seen he is usually in good spirits whenever you see him.

CELEBRATION

LAUGHLIN RIVER TOURS

The Only Dinner Cruise In The Area!

$ 40.00 PER PERSON

BREAST OF CHICKEN MARSALA
Tender breast of chicken, smothered with mushrooms
and Marsala wine sauce, served with garden wild rice and vegetable medley

CAPTAIN'S CATCH OF THE DAY
Salmon filet, prepared with lemon pepper and dill butter, served with garden wild rice and vegetable

PRIME RIB OF BEEF
Choice prime rib, cooked to perfection, served with roasted red potatoes and vegetable medley

PASTA
Tri-colored tortellini, served with marinara and vegetable medley

All dinners include our delightful Caesar salad, dinner rolls and dessert
Beverages can be purchased at our full service bar
All dinners selections are prepared fresh on board.

All prices include the two hour cruise fare and Nevada State sales tax.
Gratuity not included

Laughlin River Tours
P.O. Box 29279
Laughlin NV 89028

FOR RESERVATIONS
CALL
1-800-228-9825

Early Register for the Reunion

Laughlin Registration2008
27 June 2008

Jim and Irene Aanosen	A 2/506
Robert and Red Judd	B 2/506
Tex Campbell	D 2/506
Ben and Lillian Peters	B 2/506
Charlie and Juanita Tipton	C 2/506
Bill and Lynn Hand	B,E 2/506
Wayne Spruill	D,E 2/506
Fred and Bonnie Martin	2nd /11th Art.
Bill Boles	D 2/506
Tommy Counts	D 2/506
Joe Pojedinec (Poje)	Friend
Terry Stanger	A /159 Avn.
Audrey Wrightsell	2nd / 11th Art.
Storm Russell	1/62 Avn.
Lee and Kathy Widjeskog	A 2/506
Frank Marshall	A 2/506
George and Mary Murphy	B 2/320 Art.
Mike & Lura Renner	2nd / 11th Art.
Charlott Faddis & 2 guests	A 2/506
Fred Spaulding	HHC 3rd Bde
Ben and Caroline Harrison	HHC 3rd Bde

Maj Vince McNamara of Brigade S3 Operations Officer during the evacuation of Ripcord died on May 24, 2008. Burial will be at Arlington National cemetery in Arlington, VA with full Military Honors on Aug 11, 2008.

If any Ripcord Veterans are in the area at that time, it would be a great Honor to represent The Ripcord Association at his Burial.

RIPCORD REPORT

Ripcord Report is a publication of the ***Ripcord Association***, and is the authoritative voice of history for the Battle of Fire Support Base Ripcord.

Ripcord Report
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