RIPCORD REPORT

For Friends and Survivors of the battle of Fire Support Base Ripcord
Republic of Vietnam 12 March - 23 July, 1970

Number 89 Spring 2012

Indianapolis 2012

by Lee Widjeskog

The new year has been going now for the past two months. During that time I have joined the ranks of the retired persons.

This should mean that I would have a lot more time to get things done. However, many of you retirees out there have told me there seems to be even less time than when they were working. I suspect it is because you are not going to a regular job and I believe we tend to take a little longer to get things done due to the lack of pressure. After all no one is checking to see what time you reported to work now!

As a result, instead of rising at 0530, dressing, eating and hustling off to work you lay in bed an extra hour or so. By the time you eat, check the weather channel and read the paper it is now 0900. Now you have to decide what you want to do first. If you are married chances are you will now do the normal daily chores with your spouse. So now two people are used to do what one did before retirement.

Before you know it lunchtime has rolled around and you kill more time. After eating you think, well, I do not want to start something I won't finish today so I will wait till tomorrow. Throw in a few phone calls or e-mails from friends and relatives with requests to help with their project, can you watch the grand kids?, got time to go fishing?, want to play golf?. Then you start thinking, I better get to the doctors for that check up, don't forget to get the pills from the drug store and then go back again because they did not have them ready or couldn't give you all you need, stop at the store and get the milk, check out the sales at the big box store, and I have got to read that book I have been putting off.

Dinner rolls around and suddenly the day is over. You watch the TV check the news and or weather and your ready for bed and the next day. Not much was accomplished but it was not stressful and the time went fast. Soon a month has passed and you still did not get all the jobs done. Thus there is just not enough time in the day to do all you want and you can honestly say you are busier now as a retiree than you were when you were working!

Well, for me a lot of that is true but one thing I still have to do is help Frank and Dennis getting the newsletter out each quarter.

As you know we will be returning to Indianapolis again this year to meet with more Ripcord survivors and see if the town has recovered from the Super Bowl early in February.

This past year our association continued to do well thanks to donations and raffle proceeds at the reunion. One of the issues that must be addressed is that of incorporation of the association. This will protect the working members from some liability issues and insure there is a proper accounting of the funds and their expenditure now and in the future. Hopefully some of the attorneys in our organization can find time to help prepare the papers, but if not we will still get things done by the next reunion.

Hope this newsletter finds everyone in good shape and ready for another year!!

Make your reservations NOW!

2012 Ripcord Reunion
Indianapolis Marriott East
Indianapolis, IN
October 3 - 6, 2012

Reservations are in this issue and on our website

FROM THE EDITOR

I would like to thank everyone for all the letters to the Editor that you send me. This keeps the newsletter interesting and gives other members updates on how you are doing. Please keep them coming.

Our website has a list of all members and their units. go to www.ripcordassociation.com and click the membership roster.

You can always check out our website and get all the past Ripcord Report newsletters since 1985.

Our website is now 11 years old with over 87,500 visitors.

Go to our website and update your membership to change your e-mail, address, etc.

E-mail address

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.

contact me at mail@ripcordassociation or at my address below.

Biographies on our website.

I would like to put Biography of all Ripcord Veterans on our website. Please send me your biography for our website. Let me know about your Ripcord experience, and you can also tell us about your family and life after Ripcord. Send them to:
biographies@ripcordassociation or at my address below.

ARTICLES

Deadline for the Dec issue will be **May 1st 2012**
Please send all articles, photos, incoming mail to:
Frank Marshall
5 Taconia Ct
Mt Laurel, NJ 08054
or e-mail to: mail@ripcordassociation.com

2012 Ripcord Reunion
Indianapolis Marriott East
Indianapolis, IN
October 3 - 6, 2012

Donations, the life blood of our Association

The following have given donations to the Ripcord Association since the last newsletter. These donations help keep the website and newsletters published to keep all our Ripcord members up to date.

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

Bill Williams
Brad McGowan
Pete Meloro
Sid Berry
Wilburn Wall
Jim King
Allison Fraser Ayotte
Dave Fishlock
Marilyn Zeh Griffith in memory
of her brother PFC William Zeh

Opinions expressed in submitted material are not necessarily those of the editorial staff. We reserve the right to reject any material deemed to be inappropriate. We also reserve the right to edit all submissions, but we will make every effort to maintain the writer's concept and meaning. Please be brief and concise.

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
5 Taconia Court, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054
www.ripcordassociation.com

Editor: Frank Marshall
Phone: 856-273-4426
E-mail: mail@ripcordassociation.com

Writer: Lee Widjeskog
Phone: 856-451-1108
E-mail: leewidjeskog@ripcordassociation.com

Ripcord on Facebook

by Anthony Chritchlow

First a big thanks to everyone who donated to the production of the Ripcord documentary. It took only a few hours to start collecting the pledges. When I saw that we needed $5000.00 to fund this I thought we could never get that kind of money. You guys really surprised me. By the end of the first day we had over $500.00 as I remember. As the days went by we gathered more pledges. But we had less than a month to reach the goal. Then came the $500.00 and $1000.00 pledges. I began to feel like we just might make it. I changed my pledge from $25.00 to $50.00 I just wanted to help more. Everyone was giving the best pledge that they could.

What a great feeling that everyone is really giving to a great cause. Well at least a cause that is dear to us all. As the days went by I did not give up hope. We were working in the right directions and fast too. We made the goal with plenty of days to spare. Our final amount came to $7040.00.

I know there are guys out there that wanted to pledge but did not or could not. I thank you most because I know your hearts are in the project also.

I know the interviews have started. Looks like about 4 per week. I have sent to the production group my 50 pictures of Ripcord. I'm looking forward to maybe seeing a few of them in the final cut of the program. But if not mine then Chris Jensen's pictures and videos would be great. I know Walt Juszczak has some video also.

I would encourage everyone with pictures of Ripcord and the area around it to contact the producer. Let him know what you have.

Our Facebook membership keeps growing we are up to 236 members and 238 pictures. I really am thankful for all of the posting you Folks are putting on our page on Facebook. It surely would be a dull page if I was the only person posting there. So keep up the support.

Visit the Ripcord Association Facebook page at:
http://www.facebook.com/groups/ripcordassociation/

Attention Ripcord Veterans

Were you associated with Ft Dix, NJ?

The AFHH would like to put The story of Ripcord and the names of all Ripcord veterans that were affilated with Ft Dix to be put in the Museum being built.

The Armed Forces Heritage House (AFHH) is an organization dedicated to the goal of building a world class military museum, outside the perimeter of the Joint Base (McGuire/Ft Dix/Lakehurst) in New Jersey. The AFHH plans to preserve all of the history of the base, since 1917, by honoring all the men and women that served this country, and in some way were associated with the Joint Base.

The AFHH is a 501(c)3 non profit, that will be seeking relevant artifacts, and more importantly, human stories and archives, that will be presented to the public. The experiences and commitment of our Veterans, is of high value to everyone, and the AFHH will work tirelessly to represent the legacy of our brave servicemen and women. THe AFHH museum will utilize interactive exhibits and innovative technology to attract students, educators and families, by providing a backdrop of authentic education and inspiration.

Additionally, the museum will demonstrate the extraordinary relationship between the Armed Forces and the American people. Our goal will be to allow visitors of all ages to immerse themselves in this heritage, and to realize the vital contribution of these patriots, to the preservation of American freedom.

Please visit our website www.armedforcesheriatgehouse.org - for additional info.

We invite anyone interested to contact us at - info@armedforcesheritagehouse.org - with comments and suggestions.

(Editor's note)

If you were at Ft Dix, please send me your name, unit and dates you were at Ft Dix, even if you were shipped out to Vietnam thru McQuire Air Force Base.

E-mail your info to: frank@ripcordassociation.com

or postal mail to:

Frank Marshall
5 Taconia Ct
Mt Laurel, NJ 08054

INCOMING MAIL

I transferred from the 2nd Field Force located in Phu Loi to the Camp Evans of 101st Airborne in April or May of 1970. After I arrived I was assigned to Company B, 2nd Bn where I served as a Forward Observer with CPT Bill Williams as the previous FO had been killed. I also served as an Aerial Observer and as a Battalion Fire Direction Officer. My name is misspelled in "Ripcord" Screaming Eagles under Siege."

Dr. Aaron W., Andreason
B/2-506

I remember the stench as soon as we stepped out of the airplane in Da Nang (I think it was Da Nang). That smell and the sight of what looked like a God forsaken country remains distinct to this day. I remember just bits and pieces of the time spent in country as I have put most of the memories out of my mind. I became an RTO just after a few months when a fellow from California named Cleveland wanted to change places in which he would then carry the 60.

Within a few days after, he was blown up by a land mind and died. I was an RTO from then until Lt. Noll recommended me for a job on Ripcord because I was getting short. I was on the assault on Ripcord in March in which a good friend Heater was wounded and died on the med-a-vac back to Evans. I was also with the squad that retrieved the bodies from Ripcord in April (I think it was April). After talking with Bill Heath, he was also in that recovery party. I remember Doc Lamonde; he was Doc Drapers predecessor. Doc Draper and I traveled together until I was assigned to Ripcord under Sgt. Robin Graham.

I was med-a-vaced out on June 28 (I think) from a claymore and 105 round explosion. From there I went to Japan, then to Brooks Army Hospital in San Antonio and then on the Ft. Hood to finish out my military commitment.

I was not aware of the Ripcord Association until one night I got at call at home from someone asking if I was Billy Helvey, if had been in the 101st, and was at Firebase Ripcord. After replying yes to all the questions, the caller said his name was Robin Graham and he was my Sgt. on Ripcord. He had traveled from halfway across the U.S. to deliver an Australian Made 911 pistol I have found and carried with me. It had been 35 years since I has talked to or heard from anyone I had served with in Viet Nam. It took 5 more years of soul searching before I would gain the nerve to attend my first Ripcord meeting in Ft. Worth, 2010.

I want to thank each and every one that has kept the unity of brotherhood with their devotion and work on the Ripcord newsletters and reunions. The healing part begins.

Billy F. Helvey
Alpha 2/506

Hi to all,

First let me thank all of the veterans of Ripcord. After reading my brothers letters to home from Vietnam I've become infatuated with finding info. Read "Ripcord" Screaming Eagles under Siege, wow I am totally in awe. The sacrifices and suffering all of you endured, I for sure am forever grateful.

I am hoping that one of you great men may have fought alongside my brother Robert (Bobby) Hubertus or knew of him. If so and we could correspond that would be good. Thank you very much.

Michael S. Hubertus
miguelmx1@live.com
Brother of Robert Hubertus B/2-319

To my fellow Ripchord vet; It was a priviledge and a pleasure to serve with you

Thomas P. Clark, Sr.
A/158 Avn

The months I flew on, arround and above, Ripcord were the most life changing time of my life. I was on a LZ just accross the valley and saw the base turn into a volcano, on the day the CH 47 came down. My crew and I were Shot down on July 21 on hill a ridge below hill 605, and traped with then saved by the men of cpt. Workman's co. D/1- 506th. My aircraft took his life. I have always felt guilt over his loss.

Then the last missions on the 23rd. I will always remember the fire base and the men who served there.

Larry Kern
A/158th AHB Ghostriders
larrycrashkern@aol.com

INCOMING MAIL

Dear Lee

Here is a little something to help keep the flame burning and the members alive!

I make this donation in the memory of Cpl Virgil M. Bixby A/2-506. 22 July, 1970. We will never forget.

With great respect
Brad McGowan
D 6 326 Eng 101st Abn

Dear Lee,

My husband Nick and I would like to send along this donation in memory of my dad, SSGT John William Fraser, 101st, 1st of 506th, Delta company, 3rd plt.

He was wounded at Ripcord and lost his battle with Agent Orange, related cancer in January of 2009.

So many aspects of the Vietnam War are still battled by those that served.

Thank you so much for your work and support of the Ripcord warriors.

Sincerely
Allison Fraser Ayotte

Dear Mr Widjeskog

Enclosed is a check for the Ripcord Association in memory of Irene Newman, the mother of one of your members,(Timothy Newman

We would very much appreciate it if you could notify the family that a donation has been made in memory of Tim's mother

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Judith Clarke
Alan Doyorety

I was drafted from teaching schoolat Las vegas High School, Las Vegas, NV in July of 68. I was awarded the 100,000 Graduate of Basic Training at Ft Lewis. I went across the parade field and did AIT (at Ft Lewis) and after graduation in Dec. our battalion did not get a leave but was shipped to VN. I was taken out of the line and was given an OCS class date of 21 Apr, 69. I graduated from OCS Infantry at Ft Benning (OC-63) with orders for Airborne and Ranger schools and was to teach in the leadership class at Ranger School till deployed but I turned down the commission. I was given 4 days to get to Ft Dix and was sent to VN as an E-1. I got E-2 when landing in country…the Army was not happy with me.

Lt Hargrave made me his RTO for his platoon in company C of the 2nd of the 501. We were ABCON or reserve unit. I did this for many months and then was made a squad leader about the time Lt Sullivan took command of our platoon…I was an E-4.

We worked the AO of Bastogne during the rainy season then in the spring dry season we went up to AO of Ripcord, Gladiator, and Granite. I was on all 3 firebases when we did perimeter duty. We went into the A Shau valley. I DEROS in June of 70. I am happy to be alive.

The book Ripcord was given to me by an old University of South Dakota friend who we met up in VN. Carl Larson was in Co E (mortars) of 1st of the 501st. I just re read the book Ripcord and saw your Association and decided to join. I would be happy to hear from anyone that I was in the jungle with. Stay Alert Stay Alive!I taught High School and coached basketball and football in Vegas for 36 years and am now retired.

Robert C Henningsen
C/2-501
henningsenkrc@aol.com

To all Ripcord Veterans

I am honored to be an associate member of this organization!

Cowboy Kenn
Entertainment / DJ
cowboykenn@cowboykenn.com

We were lucky enough to watch the final evac of Ripcord from Firebase Kathyrn a safe distance away. We were told we would be going there as our Delta company was already there, but it never happened. We had been on a hill next to Ripcord a week or two earlier, but could not resupply because of bad weather, so we went 4 days without food and were C.A.'D away to Katherine for perimeter guard.

Brian T Allen
B/1-506
ballen1950@aol.com

This is an excerpt from a letter sent to George D. Murphy from William Nolan, a retired college professor and the father of Keith Nolan who wrote the book *Ripcord: Screaming Eagles Under Siege.*

I am an amateur etymologist. I have always—since childhood—been interested in how things began—that is why history always intrigued me. Here are some things about the 101st that might interest you. I was rummaging through some of my odd bits of collection things and came upon some info concerning the patch of the 101st.

As you can see, the concept of the of the eagle dates back to the Civil War—from a Wisconsin Regiment in the Iron Brigade that had an American Eagle as its mascot. When the unit disbanded, it took the bird back to the State Capitol building and was treated royally. Upon death it was stuffed and remained an honored trophy.

When WWI began for the USA, the army was rapidly expanded, causing the creation of several divisions. These new divisions were normally formed around state boundaries. The 101st had Wisconsin as its center point. In time, these new divisions developed sleeve insignias for their units. These patch insignias were usually based on the state's history or something related to the division itself. For example, the division's company's name—27 Div.; part of the state's flag—37 Div.; the division's number—75 Div.; geographic high height— 40 or 41 Div.; etc. The 101st Division chose a state Civil War hero—Uncle Abe the Eagle. Uncle Abe had a reputation of being very vocal in battle—thus the nickname "Screaming Eagles."

At the end of WWI, the 101st went into the organized Reserves. With WWII, it was activated and continued its WWI patch design. In 1942 the Division went airborne, but again maintained its shoulder patch design.

Thus the confusion about the origin of the patch and its symbol. The patch is all about a Civil War eagle, but the airborne aspect of the Division gives the illusion that the bird represents the Division's activities in WWII. It isn't so, but the idea sure fits like a glove and is hard to dispel.

William Nolan

We spoke to Ulla Nolan tonight and she said Bill is doing much better. Please continue to keep them in your thoughts and prayers. *George and Mary Murphy*

Anna Britt Nolan Trust Fund

by George and Mary Murphy

We were recently contacted by Gregory Harp, who was intereviewed by Keith Nolan for his book The Magnificent Bastards. He has donated to the Trust Fund and said he will contact others from 196 L.I.B. to see if they can help out, too.

The Trust Fund continues to grow thanks to contributions. Now's a good time to start thinking about the raffle for the trust fund at the reunion in October. Any items you wish to contribute to this raffle will be greatly appreciated.

The address where donations may be sent for the trust fund is:

Anna Britt Nolan Trust
c/o First Bank
6211 Mid Rivers Mall Drive
Saint Charles, MO 63304-1102

RIPCORD PICTURES

At the suggestion of Robin Graham, I would like all members to send copies of their Vietnam photos of the guys and area during the Ripcord battle to Frank Marshall or Lee Widjeskog. They can be hard copies or scanned e-mails. From these we will make albums of them for the reunion and also keep them on a computer for future reference. This will allow others to see what many of us remember after we are gone. These will also be submitted to the Texas Tech Vietnam archives so they will be in more than one place. Thus a better chance that the photos will survive after us.

When ever possible give the names of those in the pictures. If not the names give the units and approximate time period if known. If it is a firebase and you do not remember the name give the approximate date, your unit and if you were visiting or assigned there.

If you send hard copy, we will return them to you after we have had a chance to scan them.

Any details you can remember will help. We all have a few pictures and combined we can produce one heck of a collection!

A RIPCORD LEGEND
CROSSES OVER TO THE HIGH GROUND

On November 8, 2011 our good friend, a steadfast and loyal comrade, and an unsurpassed American patriot and warrior passed from our ranks. Cpt. Dave Rich, whose courage, fortitude, and soldierly skill during the Battle of Ripcord as the Battery Commander of B/2-319th Field Artillery were legendary, died as a result of injuries sustained in a fall at his home in Maine. We shared a common experience that was forged in combat fighting the enemies of our country; an unshakable faith in the American soldier and an enduring belief in his courage, commitment, and competence; and an abiding love of our country and all those who choose to defend her. On receiving the news of his death, my mind was filled with many thoughts concerning this most unusual and remarkable man.

The first thought that came into my mind was "undaunted courage in battle". As we all know, Dave was the most decorated soldier in the Ripcord battle as he received the Distinguished Service Cross, a Silver Star, multiple bronze stars, and seven purple hearts during the fight .Dave was the master of " counter battery fire". When enemy mortar rounds would hit Ripcord, Dave, at great risk to his life, would immediately rush to the incoming mortar impact area and conduct a "crater analysis". Upon reaching the bomb crater, Dave would get down on his hands and knees with a level and Aiming Circle to determine the azimuth and angle from which the enemy round was fired, then he would calculate the range and compute the necessary data to immediately place counter battery fire on the enemy mortar positions, which reduced or in many instances ceased the incoming enemy fire on Ripcord. Dave was a soldier who defied the enemy, and his unparalleled courage and leadership was an inspiration to every soldier who fought in the battle.

The second thought that came into my mind was "dedication to victory". Dave was not typical of the soldier of the era. He was different in the way he viewed the Vietnam War and his role in it. He fervently believed that when you went to war, you should remain in the war zone until the war was over and victory had been achieved. As a result of that belief, Dave served continuously in Vietnam for the better part of four years and reluctantly returned to the States after his request to extend his tour for another year was denied. I don't believe Dave ever came to grips with how the Vietnam War ended in light of all the sacrifice he had seen during his time in Vietnam and his view that winning the war was essential to the nation. Dave left all of himself on the battlefield.

The third thought that came into my mind was "master of his craft". I don't know that there was a junior officer in Vietnam that knew more about the use of artillery in battle than Dave. Dave's knowledge of artillery was "dug out of the dirt" as in his early tours he was an enlisted man (prior to obtaining a battlefield commission) who learned the craft from the bottom up. Dave not only mastered the technical procedures that relate to the effective use of artillery, he also mastered the tactical techniques that enabled him to put rounds on the ground "on time" and "on target" in such a manner that would best support the soldiers in the field. Dave fully understood that with his expertise and experience he could save the lives of the embattled soldiers in the bush who needed his help over and over again. History will not record how many lives Dave saved with his actions, but I can assure you that every infantry leader in the Battle of Ripcord will agree with me that the losses incurred would have been significantly greater had it not been for Dave Rich and those magnificent soldiers that served under him in his battery.

The fourth thought that came into my mind was "casualty of war". I don't know that there was a soldier that survived the Ripcord battle that suffered mentally from his Vietnam experiences more so than Dave. Although Dave remained in the Army for a number of years after the Ripcord battle before he was medically discharged, he had great difficulties assuming what we would call a "normal life." Dave was unable to replicate in peace the strong "relational" bonds that he had fashioned in war. He devoted most of his later life to educating himself by taking numerous courses offered

by a university in Maine near where he lived. He eventually decided that he would master the Russian language and after doing so he traveled to Russia for additional studies and at the same time taught English to Russian students. He very much enjoyed this role late in his life as it gave him a sense of fulfillment that he had not experienced for a long time. I believe he was as happy as he could be in this environment, and it helped relieve the torment he suffered every day of his life from his war time experiences.

The final thoughts that came into my mind relate to my own personal experiences with Dave. Although I only knew Dave in passing in Vietnam, having exchanged a short couple of conversations with him on Ripcord and during the standdown before the siege of Ripcord, Dave and I became friends after meeting back up at the Savannah reunion. I cannot recall Dave either in Vietnam or in the number of times we were together afterwards ever being without a cigarette dangling from his mouth. Dave was a "free spirit" and could regale you with endless dialogue on a variety of subjects, but when the conversation turned to the war, he would become intense and you could see the torment and pain in his eyes. He once stopped in to visit me down here in God's country and we spent a day and a night in a secluded cabin deep in the piney woods of East Texas. Throughout a night of chain smoking and sipping on a little Kentucky whiskey, the depth of the man was revealed in all of his complexity. I learned or perhaps relearned that at his essence Dave Rich was a Soldier and his essential qualities were courage and obedience. Under a resplendent Texas sky, as old soldiers are apt to do, we spoke of former comrades and past battles. We spoke of missions accomplished, obstacles overcome, and duties performed. We spoke of those things that are understandable only to Soldiers. We also spoke of the indomitable spirit and enduring nobility of the American Soldier. Lastly we spoke of the immense honor and privilege it was to lead American Soldiers. Throughout I was moved by the abiding passion that this remarkable man had for Soldiers and Soldiering. When he got ready to leave, I walked him to his car and told him "Dave, you are one of a kind and an awesome warrior whose courage in battle inspires us all. I love ya man" as I embraced him with a hug. He broke down and started crying and you could see the excruciating pain in his eyes. It was the pain and suffering that knows no peace in this life. My friend Dave has finally found that peace as he now rests in that special section of heaven reserved for warriors who left it all on the battlefield. God bless you my friend.

Currahee,
Jim Campbell

Ripcord Reunion Dates

2012 Ripcord Reunion
Indianapolis Marriott East
Indianapolis, IN
October 3 - 6, 2012

2013 Ripcord Reunion
Sands Ocean Club Resort
Myrtle Beach, SC
Oct 9 - 12, 2013

2014 Ripcord Reunion
Sands Ocean Club Resort
Myrtle Beach, SC
Oct 8 - 11, 2014

Visit the Ripcord Association website at:
www.ripcordassociation.com

The website includes:
History of the Ripcord Association
History of FSB Ripcord
Biographies of Ripcord veterans
Member Roster
Newsletter Archives
and
much, much more.

To read more letters and comments written to the editor, go to our website and click member comments. **www.ripcordassociation.com**

Reading of The Names

30th ANNIVERSARY OF THE WALLREADING OF THE NAMES

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund is hosting the *Reading of the Names* of 58,272 service members inscribed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. as part of the special activities planned this November to commemorate The Wall's 30th Anniversary.

The *Reading of the Names* will take place at The Wall for 65 hours over a four-day period beginning with an opening ceremony on Wednesday, November 7, 2012 at 3:00 p.m. Volunteers will read names for approximately eight hours from 4 p.m. on November 7 to 12 a.m. on November 8. Participants will then read the names for 19 hours daily from 5 a.m. until 12 a.m. on November 8, 9, and 10.

The *Reading of the Names* took place in Washington, D.C. just four other times in The Wall's history. In November 1982, the names were read aloud at Washington National Cathedral as part of a week-long National Salute to Vietnam Veterans. The names were read at The Wall during the 10th Anniversary celebration in November 1992, during the 20th Anniversary celebration in 2002 and during the 25th Anniversary celebration in 2007.

If you are interested in participating in the *Reading of the Names*, please fill out the form below.

READING OF THE NAMES SIGN-UP FORM

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) is committed to the privacy and protection of your personal information. All information entered below will be used for the sole purpose of communicating with you in regards to this specific event.

Due to the large number of requests and participants, all communication from VVMF regarding this event will be via e-mail. Please make sure you provide a valid e-mail address. If you would like to receive additional information on the VVMF's other activities and those associated with the 30th Anniversary of The Wall, you can simply check the box provided.

http://www.vvmf.org/ROTN

Temple University is doing a documentary on Ripcord

Release Date May 2012

Genre Documentary

Description A 60 minute historical documentary covering the history of the battle for Firebase Ripcord and the experience of its veterans. Archival material and on-camera interviews with Ripcord veterans will help explain the battle.

Plot Outline The Battle of Firebase Ripcord took place in 1970 in the midst of the Vietnam War. On March 12th the 101st Airborne was ordered to open up Firebase Ripcord to oversee the Ashau Valley in order to prevent the North Vietnamese Army from gaining access to the Ho Chi Minh trail. The resulting battle lasted for 4 1/2 months in which 248 Americans were killed. The high casualty toll combined with the lingering headlines of Hamburger Hill motivated the United States military to discourage the media from reporting news of the battle to the American public. Over the last 40 years knowledge of Firebase Ripcord exists mostly amongst the veterans of the battle who refuse to let their sacrifice be forgotten.

Directed By John Daily

Produced By John Daily, Amanda Boisselle

(Editor's Note)

I would like to thank all those that have donated contributions to this documentary thru the Kickstarter website for Temple. Your generous donations were outstanding.

Interviewed on Feb 4th and 5th were, Fred Spaulding 3rd BDE S3 AIR, Jeff Wilcox A & C/2-506, Robert Layton B/2-501, David Mitchell D/2-501 To be interviewed Sun Feb 26 Lee Widjeskog A/2-506, Fred Gilbert D/2-506, Dennis Bloomingdale B/2-506

Check out Temple's facebook page
about this documentary
http://www.facebook.com/#!/firebasefilm

Firebase Ripcord Association October 3-6, 2012

Hotel Reservation form for
INDIANAPOLIS MARRIOT EAST
7202 East 21st. Street
Indianapolis,IN 46219

317-352-1231 (Direct Hotel Reservation)
or at www.indianapolismarriotteast.com

Group code: **RIPCORD**

Group Room Rate: $85 per day +17% tax.
A deposit for the first night's room and tax or a Credit Card Number is required to guarantee this reservation.

Your Name:_____Telephone # _____

Address:_____

City:_____ State:_____ Zip:_____

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

Roommate Name(s):_____

Room needs:_____

THIS IS A NON-SMOKING HOTEL (SMOKERS SHOULD GET A GROUND FLOOR ROOM SO THEY CAN STEP OUTSIDE.)

- 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: 4:00 PM (1600 hrs) Check-out Time: 12:00 PM (1200 hrs)

To confirm reservations, return form to the hotel or call by September 3, 2012.
We look forward to seeing you in October!

20 Deadliest U.S. Battles of the Vietnam War, 1965 – 1973

(reprinted from an earlier issue of the Ripcord Report)

Battle	Battle Deaths	Dates		Battle	Battle Deaths	Dates
Ia Drang Valley*	300	Oct 23 – Nov 26, '65		Vin Huy	73	May 30 – Jun 2, '67
Khe Sanh	205	Jan 20 – Apr 14, '68		Ong Thang	70+	Oct 17, '67
Dak To**	192	Nov 1 – Dec 1, '67		Hamburger Hill (Ap Bia)	70	May 10 – 20, '69
Cu Nghi	121	Jan 28 – 31, '66		Dong Ha	68	Apr 29 – May 4, '68
Hue	119	Feb 2 – Mar 2, '68		Tam Quan	58	Dec 6 – 20, '67
Kim Son Valley	107	Feb 16 – 28, '66		LZ Bird	58	Dec 27, 66
Con Thien (ambush near)	84	Jul 2, '67		Dong Son	54	Sep 4, '67
Dak To	76	Jun 22, '67		Thom Tham Khe	48	Dec 27 – 28, '67
Firebase Ripcord***	75	Jul 1 – 23, '70		Tan Son Nhut Air base (near)	48	Mar 2, '68

* LZ Albany alone claimed 155 KIA on Nov 17, making it the single deadliest U.S. action of the war. LZ X-Ray resulted in another 79 KIA over two days, Nov 14 – 16.

** 158 of the KIA were sustained at Dak To over six days, Nov 17 – 23.

Note: Lengthy operations are excluded. Only actions that could be categorized as single or directly related engagements are tabulated.

Source: From VFW magazine, November 2001; reprinted from Sigler, david B. Vietnam Battle Chronology; U.S. Army and marine Corps Combat Operations, 1965 – 1973.

Editor's Note: Battle deaths in Sigler's book for FSB Ripcord are listed as 61. Based on keith Nolan's research a better figure is 75 KIA, including one ARVN interpreter attached to A Co., 2/506th Infantry. This makes the battle of Fire Base Ripcord the 10th deadliest battle of the Vietnam War. – Chuck Hawkins, editor

Special thanks go to Rick Blythe (HHC, 2/506) for supplying this information to Ripcord report.

Jeff Wilcox (A & C 2/506) showing off his new license plate 2BN506

2012 Ripcord Reunion

Indianapolis Marriott East
Indianapolis, IN
October 3 - 6, 2012

RIPCORD REUNION 2012
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

[ ] 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) be attending? How many including you? [ ]. If yes what are their names? (For name tag purposes only).

Arrival Date_____ **Departure Date** _____

NO COMPLEMENTARY TRANSPORTATION FROM THE AIRPORT AVAILABLE.

Registration fee of $_____ is enclosed for # _____Adults and #_____children under 18.
$35 for children under 18. For adults see discounts below !

DISCOUNTS FOR EARLY REGISTRATION:
Before June 30, 2011, $75 per adult
July 1 through 31, 2011 $80 per adult,
August 1 through September 1, 2011 $85 per adult.
After September 1, 2011 $90 per adult.

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

Registration fee due no later than September 28, 2012.

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 2012
After call 609-774-6951

AGENDA

Wednesday, October 3: Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Self guided tours and shopping)
Thursday, October 4: Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Golf in the AM) (Self guided tours)
Friday, October 5: Hospitality 1200 Hours. Ladies raffle 1900 hours (7PM)
Saturday, October 6: Business meeting for association business in Hospitality room.
Dinner with cash bar starting at 1730 hours done by 2200 hours.
Sunday, October 7: Homeward bound
Thursday golf outing (not included in the registration fee). Check here if you will play [ ].

HOTEL RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE SEPERATELY AND
BY September 5, 2011
CALL 317-352-1231 or E-mail at www.indianapolismarriotteast.com

ASK FOR HOTEL RESERVATIONS AND REFER TO THE GROUP CODE: **RIPCORD**