



**John A Barnes III (MOH)
New England Chapter 9
173rd Airborne Brigade Association
Newsletter**



February 2010

On Groundhog Day, Punxsutawney Phil predicted six more weeks of winter, his prediction sure feels accurate here in New England. Enjoy another issue of our Chapter Newsletter updating you as to the happenings and future happenings of our Chapter.

New members have joined our ranks, John O'Neil Jr. HHC 4/503 66 – 67. Clarence Hyler, E 1/503 67 – 68. Welcome!

Next membership meeting is to be held at 14:00 hrs, Brandon Inn, Brandon Vt. All members and their wives, significant others are invited. A supper is planned at the Brandon Inn at 18:00 hrs. This is our first out of state meeting in many years. It is good being around warriors such as us, not to tell war stories, but to be amongst the best of the best.

The April meeting is being planned now in the Connecticut/Rhode Island area. More info will be available in our March Newsletter.

There was some confusion on supported companies down range. Chapter 9 was always under the impression that C 2/503 was our unit as it was last year. As it turned out Ft Bragg Chapter had C 2/503 as well. It was, I thought unfair to have 2 Chapters supporting 1 Company when there were 8 units not being supported at all. I made the decision to change. We are now supporting D 2/503 as well as E 1/503. A Chapter of our quality has the ability and hopefully the generosity to accomplish this mission. We believe in leaving no man behind. Support is not just supplying goods. It is also communication with our troops. Those of us that are teachers, or involved in other organizations can support by writing letters. We are in the process of getting POC's for our respective units. Kind words are often as needed as cookies. Letters or cards can be sent to Dennis for forwarding down range
http://www.newenglandskysoldier.com/Chapter_Administration.html .

We are stopping our donations "For the Troops" on 1 Mar. Purchasing of items and mailing will take place immediately after. It is still not too late to make that donation, 100% is used to support our 2 units. Checks to Dennis Hill, the chapter address is on our website, mark on the check, For the Troops. http://www.newenglandskysoldier.com/Chapter_Administration.html . We are a 501C (19) Not for Profit Organization, receipts are sent out to donors.

National Reunion is 2 – 6 June 2010, Myrtle Beach NC <http://www.173rdreunion2010.com>

There is a lot of information available to us on the VA's website <http://www.va.gov> , if you have a few minutes take a look.

Requesting Military records <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs/index.html>

Breaking news from National <http://www.skysoldiers.com/news.htm>

Stolen Valor <http://www.reportstolenvvalor.org>

The Original 4th Battalion Reunion is 30 May – 1 June, Ft Benning Ga.
http://www.geronimbattalion.com/files/Reunion_2010.pdf . Jack Tarr is now the point man for the entire 4/503, he can be reached @ jtarr5@verizon.net

173rd Polo shirts 50% off at the Special Operations website, looks like a good deal.
www.asomf.org/gift_shop3.php?cat_id=1&p_id=962

Congratulation to the New Orleans Saints for their Super Bowl win

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PRESIDENT:

I have been in office but a month. The Chapter has reinforced what I already knew, we are very much Airborne...

I am pleasantly surprised by the response of our members in attending the membership meeting in Brandon Vermont at 14:00 hrs. After the meeting a wine & cheese gathering at Anthony Albarello's house is planned. An 18:00 hrs supper is at the Brandon Inn will complete our agenda. We hope that everyone will be able to attend. It will be good to be able to place faces with names on our roster. We have a new way of doing business.

We now have the elected and appointed positions filled within the Chapter, I can not be happier with these fills. These are the people that are the unsung warriors of our Chapter. They go about their tasks without any fanfare or fame. I often get the praise, but without their work, where would we be? I say thanks to each of you. They make my job a lot easier!

We have collected \$2,000 + for the Troops, a job well done. You, the members made this possible. There is still time to donate, March 1st is our cutoff date.

What's on our to do list? A highway named after the 173rd in MA first, followed by a naming in each of our Chapter states. Continuing the movement of our membership meetings within our AO. Better media coverage of our sponsored events.

Our overall goals remain unchanged: Our Members, our Active Duty, and our Fallen. We will never forget!

Peter Klausner
President

SECRETARY:

Hello Everyone

Here we are into the second month of a new year and as they say in business, we are Under New Management. There are a lot of new and exciting ideas that have been placed on the Chapter plate for the next two years. It will take the effort of many members to accomplish many of these up and coming events and etc.

We are not getting any younger or healthier and now just might be that time in your life to step forward and become involved. Many organizations have the same problem as us, (Membership involvement). If you have been reading your Chapter Newsletter and the National Sky Soldier you know that this Chapter has made many accomplishments within the last two years, from membership to partnership with various organizations. We are fast becoming a very strong chapter within National and we have the numbers on our side to help make changes which are good for the chapter as well as National.

So take a few moments and think about attending a meeting, supporting the Chapter PX, attending a Barnes Vigil or going to the Leapfest. It is not a good thing to sit on the couch and say to yourself, oh well, I will go to a meeting some day or go to a vigil, because that day may never come. Do it while your able; you might rekindle that comradeship you once had in Vietnam that you never have experienced since those days.

Membership Dues, yes there are still a few members out there who have not paid their dues for 2010. Please take a moment and send your dues into the Chapter Secretary. \$24.00 for the year or \$173.00 for Life. Might be time to think about life time dues.

People ask me why I have continued to be the Chapter Secretary? I do it out of love for the chapter and its members. It gives me a purpose in life to help others and there can be no greater feeling than to have helped a fellow veteran or his family. I am 100% dedicated to the chapter and once I retired from Corporate America, I heard the call to help other veterans to make sure they never go through what we did when we came home.

We all know what it was like when we were in Vietnam and read about what was going on back home, how the people did not respect or support us. We must NEVER allow a generation of Veterans to turn their back on another. Do all that you can to support our troops in harms way. Donate some money to a good organization supporting the troops, volunteer your time to help veterans past and present, the main thing is to

GET INVOLVED!

I wish you all and your families the best of everything and most of all to have the best of health, because without your health you have nothing.

Remember those who have taken the baton from us and are moving forward to spread the word of freedom. You all know the saying: "For those who fought for it, freedom has a special flavor the protected will never know".

Until next month, stay well, do not shovel too much snow, and always remember that you all made the world a better place to live in, and for that I thank you all.

Dennis P. Hill, (Secretary)

Service Officer:

Chronic vs Presumptive

Does everyone understand these concepts?

They are very confusing and their meanings have been further confounded by the courts.

A chronic disease is one in which the onset is so insidious that it may not have been detected during service, but for which service connection is granted if the disability is diagnosed within one year following discharge. Here, the diagnosis and the time limit are crucial. Examples are arthritis, cancer, cirrhosis, etc. The complete list and the rules governing SC are found at 38 CFR 3.309. SC is pretty easily proven with a diagnosis within the time period.

A presumptive disability is one that may be diagnosed many years following discharge and is based upon a specific event that is proven to have occurred during service. Examples are PTSD, disabilities due to AO and radiation exposure, etc. The rules are found in 38 CFRs 307. and 3.309. For these disabilities, a nexus connection is particularly important. SC is more difficult to prove in these claims.

Many of you have chronic disabilities that were first diagnosed many years following your discharge from service. So, your nexus connection follows a longer time period than has been normally considered by VA. This "grace period" is largely due to the court's interpretation of VA's regulations.

Bottom line. VA is supposed to resolve doubt in your favor. But it cannot legally do so based upon your word alone. It must have written proof of the merits of your claim.

To Every Rule There Is an Exception

I caution that we should use care when saying that various conditions are "presumptive". The term may be the most overused and least understood in our lexicon today. While this is technically correct in what we say, our words don't tell the entire story and may lead others to believe their condition is presumptive when it isn't.

For example, in a recent discussion it was said that PTSD is a "presumptive" condition. It is not. Even a combat veteran with a CIB still must provide evidence that there was an event

and then more evidence that the event has had a disabling effect upon him. VA must give the combat veterans word more weight in the decision but nothing is simply automatic. I'm aware of cases of veterans with CIBs being denied PTSD claims. The language is full of phrases like "Rebuttal of service incurrence or aggravation" and "Prohibition of certain presumptions" that give VA wiggle room around some presumptions.

Today when we hear "presumptive" most of us think of dioxin and the Vietnam veteran. There are many others...radiation, tropical diseases and POW status, to name a few. What may be presumptive to one veteran won't be to another. If I come up with a cirrhosis diagnosis, it's not likely that mine will be presumptive...VA will write it off to self medicating.

Timing also varies..."The diseases listed at §3.309(e) shall have become manifest to a degree of 10 percent or more at any time after service, except that chloracne or other acneform disease consistent with chloracne, porphyria cutanea tarda, and acute and subacute peripheral neuropathy shall have become manifest to a degree of 10 percent or more within a year after the last date on which the veteran was exposed to an herbicide agent during active military, naval, or air service." and then there's "Diseases specific as to former prisoners of war. The diseases listed in §3.309(c) shall have become manifest to a degree of 10 percent or more at any time after discharge or release from active service."

Respectfully

Joe Armstrong
Veterans Service Officer

MEET & GREET:

Hello, my name is Guy Hodgkins and I'm your Chapter Chaplain. I served with the 173rd Airborne Brigade, C 2/503, from 1967 - 1968, and D 2/503 from 1968 – 1969. During that time I was wounded twice.

After I was discharged from the Army I began having issues, especially with interpersonal relationships. At the time little was known about P.T.S.D. and any treatment I received was of little help. Through many turns in the road, I landed in Ohio, where I became connected to a Christian ministry and began working and studying with them. In 1991 I was ordained and given an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity based on my studies and experience. I am a Nondenominational minister and can perform marriages and funerals.

After a time in Ohio I moved back to my hometown, Keene, NH where I met Marie, my wife of 33 years. We have 5 daughters, 2 son-in-laws, and one WONDERFUL 2 1/2-year-old grandson.

I live in West Hawley, Massachusetts and for nine years have been 100% permanent and totally disabled. Living with P.T.S.D. has been manageable only through my Savior Jesus Christ. I look forward to working with my Brothers in the 173rd and ministering to your needs.

God bless you,
Guy Hodgkins



Rick Utley, has recently undergone surgery to remove a brain tumor and is now recovering at home. Cards or emails to support our brother would be appreciated by Rick & his wife Ingrid.

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“Peacekeeping is not a job for soldiers, but only soldiers can do it.”
Dag Hammarskjöld, Former UN Secretary

As always, we wish you a good door position and safe landing.