



New England Chapter IX 173rd Airborne Bde.



Email Edition

December 2008

The Officers and Staff of Chapter IX wish every one of you, Season's Greetings. May the approaching year be the best year ever for you and your family. During this Holiday Season there are still many of our Nation's warriors in harms way and recovering from their wounds. Keep them in your minds and prayers over this Holiday period. They ARE one of us.

NEW Members:

I apologize for the misspelling Gene Marsolais last name in the Nov. Newsletter.

Paul Rocheleau

Dennis Joanethis

Rick Utley



PRESIDENT:

As 2008 comes to an end I would like to remind everyone to take some time and re-read all the news letters they appear on our website and you will see how much was accomplished this year. Without the dedication of the chapter officers and members pushing each other and basically setting aside a lot of time each week we would not be as large a chapter, or as well informed a chapter as we are at this time.

We still have goals that we need to accomplish, but we have come a long way in a short amount of time. I would like to take this time to thank the families of our members who allow their troopers the time to attend our meetings, donate their time to our cause, and support us when we lose a member or have to travel back and forth to a hospital to visit an ill trooper even at great personal expense. They know and understand the brotherhood and they understand our pain even if we don't show it.

To all the members of The New England Chapter IX, John A. Barnes III , and The International Society of The 173rd Airborne Brigade I wish you and your family happy holidays and thank you for serving with us.

Airborne All The Way
Fred Lewis (Chapter IX) President

Chapter IX Monthly Newsletter

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VICE PRESIDENT

Well Brothers, another year has come and gone. I would first like us all to take a moment to remember our brothers who made their final jump this year. This year has been a monumental year in our Chapter, the officers and members who have volunteered their services have all been working double time to keep up with all we are accomplishing, I could write on and on so I encourage ALL members, new and old, to join us in our next meeting to see where we are currently and our progress as a Chapter. We are moving onward and upward and EVERY ONE OF US has something to contribute and your input is valued. This year the Barnes vigil and Leapfest were again great successes and it was great to see so many of you out there as its always a good time for everyone to get together and catch up face to face. Thanks to all for the tireless dedication to its continued success. I would like to express a special thank you to Steve Baptiste for hosting our November meeting at his restaurant "The Pier View" in Onset, Ma. We are keeping on the move and holding our meetings in different locations to reach all of you who cannot make the journey to Dedham, keep your eye on our meeting locations and drop in. If you know of an establishment or a location you would like to see us hold a meeting, contact Dennis Hill and we will go from there. Our drop zone is a large one, let us know! To all of you, my wife Kristen and I wish all of you and yours a wonderful holiday season and a very happy New Year!



Airborne, All The Way!

Sean Roden, VP



SECRETARY:

Hello Everyone,

You should have received this newsletter just before Christmas, so I would like to wish all of you and your families a Very Merry Christmas and the possibility of a good New Year for all of us.

What can I tell you folks that you haven't heard a million times before? Dues are due, yes they are and the chapter relies on them for a substantial part of the revenue for the chapter. Please take a moment and either join, or pay your dues for 2009. Dues are still \$24.00 per year or \$173.00 for life, the choice is yours.

Enough about dues, let's get to a special subject which is near and dear to my heart.

Chapter IX Monthly Newsletter

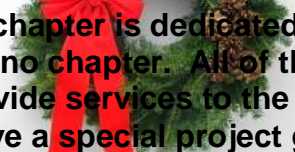
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CRSC , what is CRSC? It is COMBAT-RELATED SPECIAL OMPENSATION.

I have spoke to many of you members at one point or another in the last year and I know that this subject must affect a certain percentage of you. If you were wounded while in Vietnam and came home and was Medically Retired from the Army due to your wounds, I am sure like most of us that you gave up your military retired pay and chose the VA pay because it was more money. Effective January of 2008 a new law went into effect that you now can collect both your VA disability and a portion of your military retirement pay. This new law is CRSC. You must obtain a copy of the form to file a claim to the Army, and must forward along with the form all paperwork to prove your receipt of a Purple Heart and VA papers to prove your disabilities. You than submit all of the paperwork to the Army and they will decide if your eligible and if so what amount they will give you. No one will call you at home, you will not need to go and see anyone. The burden of proof is all on you to prove your disabilities.

This is money (not a lot) might be a little over \$100.00 depending on your disabilities. This is a new law that is not being advertised, and no one is being notified. It is all through word of mouth. Think you might be eligible? Call me at (781)-769-6062 and I will advise you what I can to assist you. Remember! You must have been medically retired from the Army with a disability and been eligible to receive Military retirement pay. Any questions call.



My next subject is that this chapter is dedicated to its members. Without the membership, there would be no chapter. All of the Officers are dedicated individuals who volunteer to provide services to the membership. The Chapter President and Vice President have a special project going where phone calls are being made to members of the chapter who are Life Members. It seems that many life members joined years past and gave some information, but not enough. Now we are attempting to call and say hello and verify information for the chapter records. Some members have never heard from the chapter since they joined other than newsletters. Nice to hear a voice on the other end that says "hello how are you doing"? For far too many years we haven't kept in contact with our members as we should have, so we are attempting to correct this over sight. We are not telemarketers, we are just calling to say hello and see how you're doing and if the chapter can assist you in any way.

The chapter is getting big, we have 356 names on our chapter membership roster, not all paid, and we are moving forward. This chapter is dedicated to its members, and we are trying to do the right thing. Give us some time and if you have a suggestion, call me and let me know about them, it might be that one suggestion that we all have been looking for. God Bless you and your families.

Dennis Hill, (Secretary)



Quartermaster

Hello, my name is John O'Dea.

I was born in Boston on January 20, 1951. During my youth I lived in Roxbury, Dorchester, and finally West Roxbury. I enrolled in Boston Trade High School after attending St. Theresa's grammar school. When I finished at the trade school in 1968, the war in Vietnam was raging. Several of my friends on the block had been K.I.A. This fact, along with the government's contention that the communists were pushing to take over the globe, inspired me to want to avenge the deaths of my friends.

I joined the army in February of 1968. During my basic training I became very impressed with the airborne spirit. I wanted to be "more" than just another soldier. I signed up for jump school. After graduation from airborne training, they assigned me to the 82nd Airborne Division where I spent the next year at Fort Bragg.

In April of 1969 D.O.D. finally sent me the orders I had hoped for - Vietnam with the 173d Airborne Brigade. Some of my best and worst memories were etched into my brain while "in country".

I returned back to the world on July 7, 1970. Feeling the need to enhance my education, I enrolled at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, where I earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology, with a minor in Anthropology. Thank you Uncle Sam for the G.I. education benefits. During my college years I felt the need for immediate gratification, so I started making furniture and worked at building things.

I then worked in biological research for a couple of years, followed by a stint at teaching at the junior high level. Truly rewarding, but a labor-of-love job with a meager salary. Although I enjoyed teaching, the money just wasn't adequate, so I got accepted into the Carpenters' Union in 1984.

Sometime in 1988-89, Roy Wheelock called me and informed me of the 173d Chapter. Seeing the patch and talking with a few of the guys brought back so many emotions that I was overwhelmed. I joined immediately and have been very active maintaining and growing the Barnes Chapter IX ever since. I was extremely happy and proud to have been President of the chapter during the '98 Boston Reunion.

Sincerely,
John J. O'Dea, Jr.

STUFF:

Next General Membership Meeting will be held on 17 Jan 09. Westborough, MA, VFW Post 9013, 9-A Milk Street @ 10:00 Hrs. Everyone is invited.

The original 4th Battalion now has a web site that is up and running. www.geronimobattalion.com , pay it a visit and sign into the guestbook. They are trying hard to locate all the original guys.

A French soldier in Afghanistan talks of our Warriors:

<http://serendipity.ruwenzori.net/index.php/2008/09/21/american-troops-in-afghanistan-through-the-eyes-of-a-french-omlt-infantryman>

Keeping your demographics up to date: It is important that you let us know if your address and or email have changed. Email saves the Chapter money. It also enhances our ability to communicate with you.

LAST WORD: As usual I have the last word. We are a unique group of veterans. We have seen and done a lot of things. Our history is written in the annals of the Brigade forever. We all contributed in some way. We were, and remain part of the 173rd forever. **FACT**, we are not getting any younger! Our numbers are decreasing. Today's warriors are much different than us: their equipment, their wars, their wounds, they to need our support. I know personally what these warriors are up against. I know personally the care they are, or are not receiving for their wounds. I know personally they are a long way from home and family. A package, a card, an email is all that is sometimes needed to brighten their day. Show your support of our warriors, not with a yellow ribbon sticker on your car or truck, but by getting involved. Our Country needs us as much today as it did 40 years ago. Our son Eric continues his recovery in Germany, to those of you that have showed your thanks and support to him I am forever grateful. There are THOUSANDS of sons and daughters that need our support!

Our President Fred Lewis will be going south for the winter. We will be in the capable hands of Sean our VP. Fred will continue to be in touch, but will be enjoying a much needed break.

"Yesterday at the beginning of the ground war Iraq had the fourth largest army in the world. Today they have the second largest army in Iraq"

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Attributed to General H. Norman Schwarzkopf
Under a news conference during Desert Storm

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