



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



Email edition

May 2009

We welcome everyone to our monthly newsletter. For those of us that do not receive mail electronically, this will be the last issue until fall. We are in hopes that your summer will be enjoyable and healthy. We look forward to talking with you when we resume our regular mail editions. Our Chapter phone number is 781-769-6062, Dennis is there, we ask that you are considerate of the times that you call; Dennis is getting old and doesn't stay up as late as some of us, nor does he always make "Stand Two"..

The Officers & Staff of your Chapter sincerely wish you an enjoyable Memorial Day. We who have served our Country know the pains, and hardships of war. Let us not forget that our Country still has its finest men and women in harms way. We have all given some; too many of us have given all.



We welcome our newest members.

Joseph Armstrong

Guy Hodgkins

William York

Daniel Lynch

President:



This is the time to decide if you are going to go to the national convention. I just spent four months in Daytona and I stopped into the hotel numerous times and it's beautiful and right on the beach. Last year the convention was on the west coast so a lot of us did not go for whatever reason. This year its 1300 miles away and the drive can be done in twenty four hours if you don't like flying. There are many reasons why members need to attend a national convention, probably the most important reason is friendship.

When and where else do you get to meet your airborne brothers from all over the world unless you make the trip to Daytona? Please take the time to visit the web site and plan your way down south.

Don't be one of those guys wishing he had gone but did not bother because there is always next year. Every convention is important for the survival of the association and for your own personal happiness. www.newenglandskysoldier.com/Chapter Links.html

Thanks
Fred Lewis (President)
Chapter 9

Secretary: 

May is one of the busiest months for the Chapter. As most of you know this is the month that the Chapter conducts it's vigil to honor John Barnes. It is hard to believe that fifteen years ago a handful of members decided to start this vigil. I remember huddling under sheets of out stretched plastic attempting to stay warm during the rain. From a handful of members to a big production, we have grown!

So, it is time once again to conduct the annual John A. Barnes, III, (MOH) twenty-four hour vigil. If you have never attended a vigil, allow me to explain it to you. The Chapter honors John Barnes by standing in front of his monument which is located on the corner of East Street and Eastern Avenue in Dedham for twenty four hours. Members take half hour shifts standing at the monument in uniform holding an M-16 Replica. We do this from 0700 hours on Sunday, May the 24th. until 0700 hours on Monday morning the 25th. of May. During the vigil, the Chapter rents a grill which is running the entire vigil and food is cooked all day and night. Hamburgers, hotdogs, steak tips, drinks and there might also be some watermelon floating around, all free of charge. There will be a table set up for sale of all 173D related products. The sale of items helps defray the costs of running the vigil. There is also a porta-potty and a large car port set up should one want to sleep during the night shift and have brought a sleeping bag or cot.

This is the time to bring the family and enjoy yourself. Meet old and make new friends. Come when you want, even if its 0100 hours in the morning. When night time comes, we have a generator and put up lights for the illumination of the area.

Uniform of the day is fatigues & maroon beret, if you have your old uniform and want to wear it that is fine also. Some members wear their class A uniforms. Don't have a uniform, come anyway and you can stand a watch in civilian clothes.

This vigil can not be accomplished without membership participation. There has to be members present to cover the entire twenty-four hours of the vigil if possible. When there are not enough members, half hour shifts have to be completed many times to cover the slots by those who are present.

Plan on coming to Dedham, Ma. and participate in OUR vigil. Have any questions you can call me at my residence at (781)-769-6062. On Vigil day, I will have my cell phone and you can call me at (781)-724-3492 should you get lost, need directions and etc.

I hope to see you all at the vigil, Airborne All The Way!

Dennis Hill, (Secretary)



Spot Light on Our Members:

I was born Graham David Thomas Town in Reigate, Surrey, England in 1947, emigrated with my family through Ellis Island to California in 1953, became a US Citizen in 1964, graduated Ventura High School in 1965, studied Electronics Engineering and apprenticed to the US Navy as a civil servant, and was drafted into the US Army in 1967.

I was selected to go to the "Instant NCO" school at Fort Benning after AIT at Tigerland, Fort Polk and became a Light Weapons Infantry Sergeant E5 in 1968. I was sent to Viet Nam as a replacement to the 173d, went to jungle school at An Khe, and was assigned to the 1/50th as a Squad Leader. The Brigade Maintenance Officer noticed my Collage and US Navy Electronics experience and detailed me to Company D Maintenance, Support Battalion at LZ Lane as Avionics Sergeant. I served the remainder of my tour between LZ Lane and LZ English with Casper Aviation Platoon, HHC.

I am a member of Casper Aviation Platoon Organization (CAPO) and have served as both Vice President and President of CAPO (www.casperplatoon.com).

I went back to Civil Service with the US Navy at Point Mugu California after separation from active duty in 1969, served my reserve time attached to the Navy, and was honorably discharged in 1973.

While a Civil Servant I progressed through the Wage Grade ranks from Shop Learner (WG3) through Aircraft Systems Electronic Mechanic (WG12). I was promoted to General Schedule as an Electronic Technician (GS8) and wound up as a GS11.

I left Civil Service in 1983 for a Principal Electronics Engineer position with Lockheed Sanders in New Hampshire, which became BAE Systems. I retired from BAE Systems in 2007 as a Principal EW Systems Engineer and became an independent EW & Avionics Design Engineering Consultant. I just relocated to Santa Maria California where I will consult part time with the USAF at Vandenberg AFB and play with my four Grand Kids!

The highlights of my life have been my service with the Brigade, 42 years working for the US defense industry, my US and International Patents, and my beautiful Wife, two Sons, Daughter, three Grand Sons and Grand Daughter.

It's been a "Great Ride" for someone who never got around to finishing his Engineering Degree!

Graham David Thomas Town

General Info:

How the Pentagon honors "Our Troops" <http://www.wkrg.com/forums/viewthread/23/>

ANNUAL WARD 8 PICNIC
DATE 24 July 09
12:00 Hrs
Location: Ward 8



It's that time again. Come on Down to the Ward. Friends and family are welcome. Meet those old friends again and make some new ones also. (Sherrill says "call someone and make it a date")

A reply by June 20th to the below address, or leave a message on the phone number as to the number of people in your group would be appreciated. We want to make sure that we have enough food to accommodate everyone. I thank you in advance for your help in making this a great day.

PO Box 313
S. Hadley MA., 01075
Phone: 413.533.2681

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If there are any 2/503 troopers who served in RVN in any year, who have not yet received your 2/503 Combat Service Citation issued and signed by former battalion commanders Col. Dexter, Carmichael, Walsh and Sigholtz, please send me your name (as you want it to appear on the citation) and address and it will be mailed to you. Please let your 2/503 buddies know that this citation is available.

Smitty

Rto173d@cfl.rr.com

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As we have reported in previous newsletters, The Chapter is sponsoring a Little League Team this year. The logic was to improve our community awareness, get some PR, and the Chapter thought it was a good thing to do. The Officers fought with the "sponsor name", it was decided "Chosen Company" in honor of our supported unit. The Officers knew that the name would also generate questions, and interest in our Chapter. They are a wise old lot! The league name is The Yankees, I know, I know, don't even say it!! We had no say on the league name. As of this newsletter, they are undefeated. www.norwoodll.com

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The Viet Nam Moving Wall will be in Plymouth, Mass, "on the waterfront" 3 June – 8 June

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"It is God's job to forgive Osama Bin Laden
It is our job to arrange a face to face meeting"

General H. Norman Schwarzkopf

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