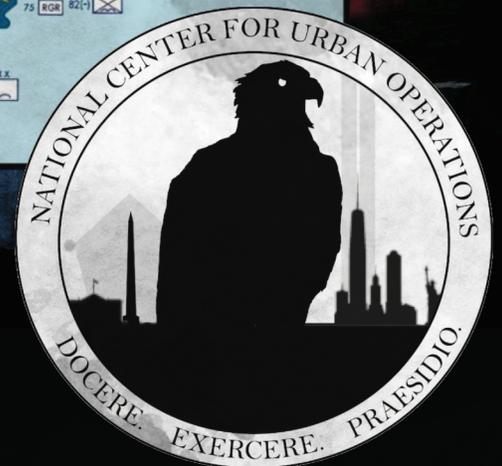
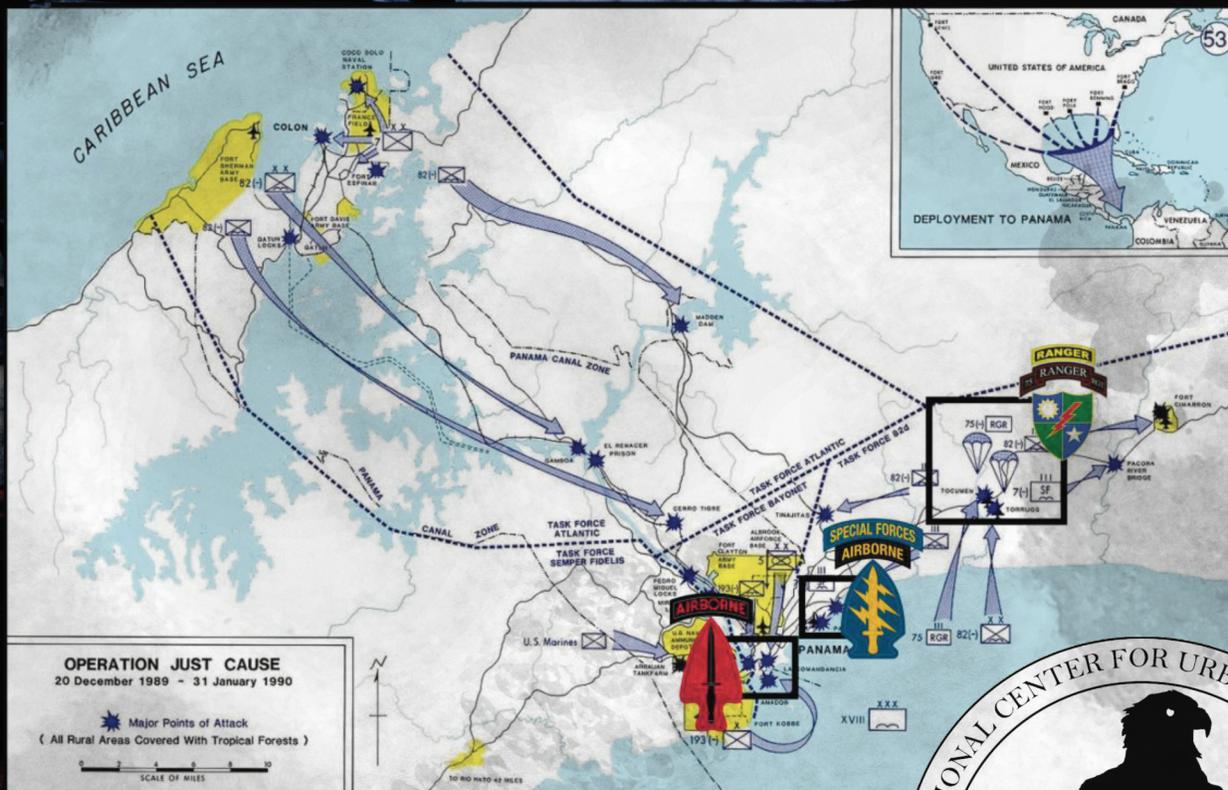


PATROLLING

Winter 2026 ◦ 75th Ranger Regiment Association, INC. ◦ Volume 38 Issue I

Dense Urban & Subterranean Target analysis process



DANIEL DEFENSE

DANIEL™ H9

HANDGUN RAFFLE



75th Ranger Regiment Association, Inc.

Drawing will be May 22
at the bi-annual reunion
Scan the QR Code or visit
www.75thrra.org to purchase
tickets



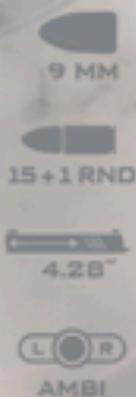
1 Ticket - \$20
6 Tickets - \$100

FEATURES:

- Low Bore Axis For Less Muzzle Rise & Faster, More Accurate Follow-Up Shots
- Straight-Pullback Trigger & Trigger Safety Blade For Precision Control & Improved Safety
- One-Piece-Machined Ambidextrous Slide Stop & Reversible Mag-Release Button For Superior Ergonomics
- Cold Hammer Forged Barrel, 1:10 Twist, 6 Groove, Polygonal Rifling
- Type 7075 Aluminum Grip For Less Weight and More Strength
- Balanced-Texture Grip Panels For Comfort & Secure Purchase
- Compatible with Most Popular Red Dot Optics
- Slim Profile For Optimal Maneuverability & Concealability
- Steel Factory Sights With Dovetail Cut
- Low Friction Magazine Finish for Smooth Insertion/Removal

SPECIFICATIONS:

Model	DANIEL H9
Caliber	9x19 MM
Action	Striker-Fired, Reciprocating Slide, Tilted Barrel
Magazine Capacity	15 Rounds
Barrel Length	4.28"
Overall Length	7.69"
Overall Height	5.12"
Overall Width	1.2" (Slide Stop)
Slide Width	1.0"
Weight	29.6 oz. (Unloaded Magazine)
Accessory Rail	STANAG 4094
Sights	Fixed: Fiber Optic Front, Black-Out Rear - U-Notch
Safety Devices	Trigger Safety Blade, Trigger Safety Plunger, Striker Block
Trigger Type	Metal Construction, Straight Pull w/integral Safety Blade



Sponsored by
The 75th Ranger Regiment Association

DDM4V7

The first DDM4 to feature M-LOK attachment technology with a Daniel Defense MFR 15.0" rail. A mid-length gas system provides smooth, reliable cycling in virtually any conditions while reducing perceived recoil and wear and tear on parts.

FEATURES:

- + 15" rail with M-LOK attachment technology provides weight savings and plenty of space for accessories
- + Daniel Defense improved Flash Suppressor significantly reduces flash signature
- + 16" chrome-lined, heavy-phosphate-coated Government-profile barrel for accuracy & durability

SPECIFICATIONS:

Barrel Material:	4150 Chrome Moly Vanadium
Barrel Type:	Cold Hammer Forged
Barrel Profile:	Government
Rifling Twist:	1:7"
Gas System Length:	Mid-length
Muzzle Device:	Flash Suppressor
Overall Length:	32 1/4" - 35 7/8"
Weight (unloaded):	6.20 LBS
Rail System:	MFR 15.0



5.56

16"

M-LOK

PRODUCT

MANUFACTURING

DDM4®V7®	02-128-02081-047
DDM4®V7® (CA COMPLIANT)	02-128-02081-055
DDM4®V7® (NO MAG)	02-128-02081-067



THE RANGER CREED

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Special Contributors & Supporters of Patrolling

- Stephen Odin Johnson
- Travis West
- CSM (Ret.) Joey Blacksher
- Task Force Dagger
- Rick Barela
- National Center for Urban Operations
- Jill Stephenson

Recognizing that I volunteered as a Ranger, fully knowing the hazards of my chosen profession, I will always endeavor to uphold the prestige, honor, and high esprit de corps of my Ranger Regiment.

Acknowledging the fact that a Ranger is a more elite soldier who arrives at the cutting edge of battle by land, sea, or air, I accept the fact that as a Ranger my country expects me to move further, faster and fight harder than any other soldier.

Never shall I fail my comrades. I will always keep myself mentally alert, physically strong and morally straight, and I will shoulder more than my share of the task, whatever it may be, one hundred percent and then some.

Gallantly will I show the world that I am a specially selected and well-trained soldier. My courtesy to superior officers, neatness of dress and care of equipment shall set the example for others to follow.

Energetically will I meet the enemies of my country. I shall defeat them on the field of battle, for I am better trained and will fight with all my might. Surrender is not a Ranger word. I will never leave a fallen comrade to fall into the hands of the enemy, and under no circumstances will I ever embarrass my country.

Readily will I display the intestinal fortitude required to fight on to the Ranger objective and complete the mission, though I be the lone survivor.

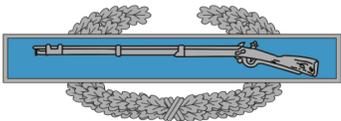
Rangers lead the way!

RANGER BREAKFAST SCHEDULE

Great thanks and appreciation to the Rangers who organize and keep these gatherings going!

If you know of a Ranger Breakfast in your AO that is not listed send me the date & time, and don't forget the point of contact so I can give credit where credit is due!

South Indiana Ranger Breakfast -POC: no point of contact known	<u>Merry Go Round Restaurant</u> on the <u>1st Saturday @ 0800</u> 2101 North Fares Ave. Evansville, IN. 47711
N. Alabama / S. Tennessee Luncheon -POC: no point of contact known	<u>Greenbrier Restaurant</u> on the <u>1st Saturday @ 1000</u> 27028 Old Highway 20 Madison, AL. 35756
Raleigh Ranger Breakfast -POC: no point of contact known	<u>Big Ed's City Market Downtown Raleigh</u> on the <u>1st Saturday @ 0800</u> 220 Wolfe St. Raleigh, NC. 27601
San Antonio area Ranger's & Special Forces Meet-up -POC: no point of contact known	<u>Rock and Brews</u> on the <u>3rd Saturday @ 1100</u> 5702 Landmark Pkwy. San Antonio, TX. 78249
Middle Tennessee Ranger Lunch -POC: Michael T. Hall - (615) 815-4747	<u>Quinn's Neighborhood Pub & Eatery</u> on the <u>2nd Saturday @ 1200</u> 1010 Murfreesboro Road Franklin, TN. 37064
Flora-Bama Ranger Monthly Meet-up -POC: Chris Rivers - mideastinf@aol.com	<u>Flora-Bama Lounge</u> on the <u>1st Saturday @ 1200</u> 17401 Perdido Key Drive. Pensacola, FL. 32507



WHO WE ARE :

The 75th Ranger Regiment Association, Inc., is a registered 501©19 corporation, registered in the state of Georgia. We were founded in 1986 by a group of veterans of F Co 58th, (LRP) and L Co 75 (Ranger) Inf. The first meeting was held on June 7, 1986, at Ft. Campbell, KY.

WHAT WE DO:

The 75th Ranger Regiment Association participants in a variety of events that support our members and the active duty regiment. Each event is reviewed by the Board of Officers for merit and how it will promote the Association. Our current projects include; awarding scholarships (to qualified individuals) through our coordination and with the support of the National Ranger Memorial Scholarship Foundation. We also provide support to the Best Ranger Competition and any other events the officers regard as beneficial to the association ethos.

We hold biennial reunions (in conjunction with the 75th Ranger Regiment Rendezvous) and business meetings. The association officers (President, 1st & 2nd Vice Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer), are elected at the biennial association business meeting. This reunion is held at Columbus/Fort Moore, GA Subordinate units hold off-year reunions at various locations across the United States per their unit schedule.

OUR MISSION:

1. To identify and offer membership to all eligible members of the 75th Infantry Rangers and those who served in the Long-Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) Companies, Long-Range Patrol (LRP) Companies and Detachments, Vietnamese Ranger.
2. Advisors of the Biet Dong Quan (BDQ). Also eligible are those members of LRSU units that trace their lineage to Long Range Patrol Companies that were attached to Brigade or larger units during the Vietnam War and the members of the 75th Ranger Regiment.
3. To sustain the Association. To promote and establish fellowship of the Special Operations ranger community by recruitment and encouragement of active duty and recently separated Rangers to become members.
4. To assist, when possible, those active units and their members who bear the colors and lineage of the 5307th Composite Provisional Unit (CPU), 475th Infantry Regiment, 75th Infantry (Ranger) Companies (Merrill's Marauders), 1st and 2nd Battalions (Ranger) 75th Infantry, the 75th Ranger Regiment, consisting of Regimental Headquarters 1st, 2nd, 3rd, STB, and MIB Ranger Battalions, successor units, or any additions that are activated and assigned to the 75th Ranger Regiment.

Eligible Units

75th Ranger Regiment

75th Ranger Regiment, designated in 1986, and all subordinate, assigned and attached units

1st Battalion (RANGER)75th Inf., activated in 1974

2nd Battalion (RANGER)75th Inf., activated in 1974

3rd Battalion (RANGER)75th Inf., activated in 1984

75th Ranger Regiment HQ Company, activated in 1984

75th Ranger Special Troops Battalion, activated in 2007

75th Ranger Military Intelligence Battalion, activated in 2017

WWII Rangers

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Battalions • 5307 Composite Unit (provisional)

Korean War Rangers

Specific units will be listed in future Patrolling Magazines

Long Range Surveillance:

Any Long Range Surveillance Company or Detachment that can trace its lineage to, or is currently assigned to a Brigade or larger element, that was deployed to Vietnam as listed in section 2, 3, or 4.

Long Range Patrol

- CoD (LRP)17th Inf.
- Co E(LRP) 20th Inf.
- Co E(LRP) 30th Inf.
- Co E(LRP) 50th Inf.
- Co F (LRP)50th Inf.
- Co E(LRP) 51st Inf.
- Co F (LRP)51st Inf.
- Co E(LRP) 52nd Inf.
- Co F(LRP) 52nd Inf.
- Co C(LRP)58th Infantry
- Co E(LRP) 58th Infantry
- Co F (LRP)58th Infantry
- 70th Infantry DET(LRP)
- 71st Infantry DET(LRP)
- 74th Infantry DET(LRP)
- 78th Infantry DET(LRP)
- 79th Infantry DET(LRP)
- Co. D (LRP)151st Infantry

75th Infantry Ranger Companies

- Co A (RANGER)75th Inf.
- Co B (RANGER)75th Inf.
- Co C (RANGER)75th Inf.
- Co D (RANGER)75th Inf.
- Co E (RANGER)75th Inf.
- Co F (RANGER)75th Inf.
- Co G (RANGER)75th Inf.
- Co H (RANGER)75th Inf.
- Co I (RANGER)75th Inf.
- Co K (RANGER)75th Inf.
- Co L (RANGER)75th Inf.
- Co M (RANGER)75th Inf.
- Co N (RANGER)75th Inf.
- Co O (RANGER)75th Inf.
- Co P (RANGER)75th Inf.
- Co D (RANGER) 151st Inf.

Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol

- V Corp (LRRP)
- VII Corp (LRRP)
- 9th Inf. Div (LRRP)
- 25th Inf. Div (LRRP)
- 196th Inf. Bde. (LRRP)
- 1st Cav. Div. (LRRP)
- 1st Inf. Div. (LRRP)
- 4th Inf. Div. (LRRP)
- 101st Abn. Div. 1st Bde. (LRRP)
- 199th Inf. Bde. (LRRP)
- 173rd Abn. Bde. (LRRP)
- 3rd Inf. Div. (LRRP)

Vietnamese Ranger Advisors BDQ

All units of the Biet Dong Quan (BDQ)

Presidents

- 1986 - 1988..... Bob Gilbert
- 1988 - 1990..... Billy Nix
- 1990 - 1992..... Bob Gilbert
- 1992 - Roy Nelson (resigned)
- Milton Lockett (resigned)
- 1994..... Duke Dushane (selected by Directors)
- 1994 - 1996..... Roy Barley
- 1996 - 1998..... Rick Ehrler
- 1998 - 2000..... Terry Roderick
- 2000 - 2002..... Emmett Hiltbrand
- 2002 - 2004..... Dana McGrath
- 2004 - 2005..... Emmett Hiltbrand
- 2005 - 2007..... Stephen Crabtree
- 2007 - 2009..... William Bullen
- 2009 - 2011..... John Chester
- 2011 - 2013..... Joe Little
- 2013 - 2015..... Bill Anton
- 2015 - 2019..... Richard Barela
- 2019 - 2021..... Stephen Johnson
- 2021 - 2025..... Art "Doc" Attaway
- 2025 - Present..... Rick Merritt





PRESIDENT'S BRIEFING

RICK MERRITT



Happy New Ranger Buddies!

I hope your holiday season was well spent surrounding friends and families.

As we move into the new year I look forward to leading our association throughout 2026.

Hope to see plenty of you at the US Army's Best Ranger Competition 12-14 April at Fort Benning.

The 75th Ranger Regiment Rendezvous is scheduled for the week of 22-26 June.

I will be at Benning next week and ask Miss Linda, RHQ Command Secretary, for the detailed schedule if it is out yet?...such as a Regimental Mass Tac Jump; Change of Command, Banner Day events/competitions; BBQ; Socials; etc.

While at Benning I would like to lock in a hotel for our association with a "block of rooms" and hospitality room.

Any other events y'all would like to consider?...remember this is not our bi-annual reunion/business meeting; our last one was at 1/75/Savannah & before that it was at 2/75/Olympia.

Our next one is in Columbus in 2027 & we will look for the Ranger Regiment to host us as they did the last two, in Olympia with 2/75 & in Savannah with 1/75.

With our next one at Benning we will ask for hosted events from 3/75/RSTB/RMIB/RHQ; perhaps we do it earlier in the year...I was thinking...during the Best Ranger Competition?

Or during the week of the 2027 Ranger Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony. Anyway, here is what I have so far for the Ranger Rendezvous this June:

- Tuesday, 23 JUN: 1800 RHOF Dinner
- Wednesday, 24 JUN: 1300 RHOF Ceremony
- Wednesday, 24 JUN from 1100-1200: 75th RR DHMOR

Updates from our appointed Board of Advisors, all past presidents of our association:

Steve Johnson and "Doc" Art Attaway are working on our way ahead on the awarding of the Ranger Tab for our association's

Vietnam Ranger Company Veterans and the Congressional Gold Medal (CGM) request.

Steve and I are meeting the Infantry Center's senior leaders to discuss the tab efforts.

Art is collecting and putting together the documentation we need to support our request for Congress to award the CGM.

Rick Barrera is working hard processing our 11 packets as candidates for US Army Ranger Hall of Fame Induction this year.

In a few weeks we will vote on our 11 packets as we are allotted our top three to go forward to the RHOF Board to compete against other Candidates within the Ranger Community.

We will announce our three as soon as we vote on them.

Rick will represent us on the board at the Army level voting.

He has been doing this job for us for multiple years and I thank him for his efforts. Well done RB.

We have expanded our Unit Director's within the 75th Ranger Regiment's Battalions to add Company Unit Directors. (UDs)

This will assist in flow of information and help the current Battalion UD's representation and span of control for their Rangers as 51 years of Veterans (41 from 3/75) are obviously in the thousands five decades later since their reactivation in 1974 (1st & 2nd) & 1984 (3/75). We feel these new UD's will enhance our membership drive.

We have our first two from 3/75. Kurt Buchta, our 3/75 UD & IVP now has Rangers Randy Ramaglia (B3/75) and Kenny Johnson C3/75).

PRESIDENT'S BRIEFING

RICK MERRITT

Randy was a TMLDR with Task Force RANGER in Mogadishu ("Blackhawk Down") & Kenny was a WPNS PSG as an 11C and also a Veteran of Operation Just Cause, parachuting into "Torres Tucomen" International Airport, Panama in 1989.

We are working on the additional one from 1/75 & 2/75 with BN UDs, James Spenser & Hugh Roberts, respectively. Thanks RBs!

Our IT Gurus, Chris Borrelli, 75th RRA Administrator; Sam Chartier, Patrolling Magazine Editor & Lee Garcia, our 2VP, continue to update, upgrade and expand our footprint within our website and social media platforms.

We appreciate their efforts!

Get ready for our annual raffle drawing during the Ranger Rendezvous at our Hospitality Room.

Tickets will go on sale very soon on our website.

Daniel Defense (DD) has graciously said yes to donating another weapon this year. Thanks to DD for sponsoring us each year.

See their ad in our Patrolling Magazine and website; contact me for a very generous discount they offer to our membership.

As I close I want to thank every Ranger for their service to our Nation and we will never forget our Brothers KIA/KIT nor the severely WIA and our Gold Star Families.

Please keep our active-duty Rangers in your prayers and to those quietly deployed throughout the world, Godspeed.

V/R,

Ranger Rick Merritt

RLTW

From the Editor

Rangers,

I hope you've all had a Merry Christmas and that this New Year treats you kindly.

Some of our members have reported having received phishing emails from scammer's impersonating 75th RRA leadership. These criminals are looking to steal your money through trickery. Thus far they have asked for help paying vendors asking for payments to be made from Zelle, PayPal or have asked for gift cards claiming some thinly plausible reason why your help is required.

NO ONE at the 75th RRA will ask for money to be paid to an entity other than directly to the 75th Ranger Regiment Association - period!

This is far from the only scam out there, and they are constantly evolving - becoming more sophisticated, so my advice is to cultivate a **healthy** paranoia! If someone is trying to create a sense of urgency it's likely a scam.

Otherwise, I am still looking for Rangers to step up and help with Patrolling Magazine and for Rangers willing share their experiences. If you have a story you'd like to tell - reach out and let's work!

Ranger's Lead the Way!

- Samuel H. Chartier

V-1/75

Elected Officers

75th Ranger Regiment Association
PO Box 2200
Orangevale, CA 95662
www.75thrra.org

President

Rick Merritt
912.332.6692

president@75thrra.org
remerritt75@outlook.com

First Vice President

Kurt Buchta
706.464.8188

kurt.buchta@yahoo.com

Second Vice President

Lee Garcia
706.604.4925

lgarcia2204@gmail.com

Secretary

Tom Sove
209.404.6394

tsove@spcglobal.net

Treasurer

Joe Posato
202.288.4747

jposato@verizon.net

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Advertisements for products or services do not constitute an endorsement by the Association. Manuscripts, photographs, and drawings are submitted at the risk of the individual submitting the material. Captions must be submitted with any photographs or graphics.

The Officers and the Editor reserve the right to edit submissions for clarity and space constraints. Every precaution will be taken to preserve the intent and scope of the author. The Officers and Editor reserve the right to refuse any submission that is in bad taste, offensive, or discredits unnecessarily an individual or group.

Deadlines are the 7th of February, May, August, and November for the four yearly issues of March, June, September, and December respectively. POSTMASTER Send address corrections to:

Patrolling
P.O. Box 2200
Orangevale, CA 95662



CHAPLAIN'S PRAYER

DAN KNIGHT



Ranger Brothers,

My first job in the Regiment was as the Weapons Platoon Leader in A Co, 3/75. I signed into the unit in August, 1991. All the rifle companies then had weapon's platoons that contained mortars, AT, and about the time I signed in, they added a sniper squad/section. The AT and Snipers were sometimes consolidated and employed as sections but more often attached by teams to one of the three rifle platoons. The mortars (then we had only 60mm tubes) were always consolidated in a two-gun section with the attached Fire Direction Center/Platoon HQ. So, I spent most of my time with the mortar section and since I was a graduate of the Mortar Leader's Course would sometimes serve as check computer in the Fire Direction Center (FDC).

I enjoyed working with the Rangers who made up the mortar section. We are fortunate that when issuing guidance for reforming the modern-day Ranger Battalions, Gen Abrams charter only said, "battalion will contain no hoodlums or brigands." If the charter had said "no deviants or miscreants," I suppose they would not have even had mortars (everyone reading this just thought of some Ranger mortarman you remember who was one sick puppy), but I digress.

The reason I bring up the mortars is because as an indirect fire weapons system, the mortar is only as good as the aiming post. Most of you will get this metaphor and understand that the aiming post are the markers that keep indirect mortar fire well-placed, disciplined, and effective. Mortarmen live by a simple truth: accuracy isn't a one-time event—it's a discipline. You "lay" the tube, you "refer" to your aiming posts, and you "realign" when drift shows up. Without that cycle, deflection creeps, elevation slips, rounds wander, and the mission pays for it.

Our faith is no different. If we don't keep referring to the fixed point—Christ and Scripture—we drift. In fact, there was an old battle drill in FM 7-90 that all mortarmen will recognize called, "Refer and Realign Aiming Posts". In mortar gunnery, the aiming posts are critical. They provide a fixed reference point so that the gunners can adjust fire accurately. Over time, recoil settles the baseplate, also simple human error like bumping the gun tube can cause drift. That's why mortarmen periodically use the drill to "refer and realign aiming posts" — they do this by checking their sights against the aiming posts, correcting deviations, so that the rounds for future fire missions land where they are intended.



Spiritually, I believe this process of refer and realigning is a powerful metaphor:

Here it goes--

The mortar tube = your life, actions, and decisions.

The mortar round = your words, deeds, and influence.

The target = God's mission and calling on your life.

The aiming posts = Scripture and Christ Himself.

Refer and realign = repentance, recalibration, and renewal through God's Word.

The same principle that allows Ranger mortarmen to stay on target can be used to keep us on target. Scripture calls us to continually check our point of aim:

Hebrews 12:2 reminds us to "fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." He is the ultimate aiming post.

Psalms 119:105 declares, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." God's Word is the calibration tool that keeps us on target.

Philippians 3:14 urges us to "press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." So as Rangers always press forward in combat, we press forward spiritually toward the eternal objective.

Lamentations 3:40 — "Let us test and examine our ways and return to the Lord." This verse is a direct call to "refer" — examine your aiming post and if it is off, then adjust back to God's Word.

You see brothers, realignment isn't weakness — it's discipline. Just as we zeroed our weapons before every mission, we must zero our hearts and minds daily in God's Word.

So as veterans of the 75th Ranger Regiment, let's continue to live the Creed not only in service but in spirit. Let's stay disciplined, focused, and aligned with the One who gives us our true mission.

Stay disciplined. Stay aligned. Stay on Target!

Rangers Lead The Way!
Chaplain Dan Knight
601.998.5087
dan.knight@hotmail.com



Ranger Dan Knight served multiple tours in 3/75, 2/75, and RHQ and has 11 combat deployments with various airborne and SOF units. He retired in 2017 and enjoys his time working with the 75th RRA, Three Rangers Foundation, and his local church. He spends his free time with his family and grandkids on his small farm in Star, MS.



FIRST NOTICE OF DEADLINE FOR 2026 OFFICER ELECTIONS

The officer positions of **1st Vice President** and **Secretary** are up for election this year. Our bylaws require specific deadlines for notice to members, receipt of campaign statements from candidates, distribution of ballots, and receipt of ballots.

The first deadline requires **notice**, both via Patrolling and digitally, to members regarding these deadlines 120 days out from July 1, 2026, the date the officer's terms take effect. This notice in Patrolling will satisfy the paper notice requirement, while you all will receive another notice digitally on **February 9, 2026**.

If you wish to run for either 1st VP or Secretary, your **campaign statement** must be received by the secretary by **March 11, 2026**, which is 90 days out from July 1, 2026. The incumbents are Kurt Buchta, 1st VP, and Tom Sove, Secretary. So, get your campaign statements in by then or you will be shut out of running for office. Statements can be sent via mail to: 75th RRA, PO Box 2200, Orangevale, CA 95662, or digitally to tsove@sbcglobal.net.

Ballots will be sent, via mail and digitally, between April 1, 2026, and April 16, 2026. You likely will receive both, but you cannot respond using both. Only one ballot form will be accepted. Each ballot will direct you to where you must send the completed ballot.

Ballots must be received by June 20, 2026. They will not be counted if received later than that, both via mail and digitally. So please do not dilly-dally.

The candidates receiving the simple majority of ballots shall be declared the victor. Victors will be notified, as will the general membership, and the officer terms will begin on July 1, 2026 and run for two years to June 30, 2028, per our bylaws.

Any questions, let me know.

*Tom Sove
Secretary, 75th RRA
Vietnam Veteran*

SATURDAY/26
JUNE 20TH

2026 GENERAL ELECTION

VOTE FOR
1ST VICE PRESIDENT
SECRETARY

RANGER SMITH

About me
Lorem ipsum is simply dummy text of the printing and typesetting industry. Lorem ipsum has been the industry's standard dummy text ever since the 1500s, when an unknown printer took a galley of type and scrambled it to make a type specimen.

VOTING DATE
JUNE 20TH
www.website.com

Unit Directors

HQ/75th RANGER HHC

Thomas Maier

email: maier3m@aol.com
phone: 910.425.6412

3rd BN, 75th RANGER RGT

Kurt Buchta

email: kurt.buchta@yahoo.com
phone: 706.464.8188

A/75-D/17 LRP-V Corps LRRP

Stan Jones

email: stan6542@yahoo.com
phone: 317.966.0645

D/75

Richard "Herd" Nelson

email: rnelson134@cfl.rr.com
phone: 407.601.2801

G/75-E/51 LRP-196th LRRP

Al Stewart

email: aliniraq@yahoo.com
phone: 336.423.8960

K/75-E/58 LRP-4th DIV LRRP

Roger T. Crunk

email: rogercrunk@msn.com
phone: 970.858.4579 (c) 970.640.3815

N/75-74th LRP-173rd LRRP

Rudy Teodosio

email: sfoda184@hotmail.com
phone: 404.386.9331

ARVN RANGER ADV, (BDQ)

Bill Miller

email: bietdongquan@yahoo.com
phone: 803.641.9504 (c) 803.292.2571

1st BN, 75th RANGER RGT

Jim Spencer

email: james.r.spencer11@gmail.com
phone: 912.658.9316

75th Ranger STB

Rob Ciaccio

email: rciaccio@gmail.com
phone: 706.326.0456

B/75-C58 LRP-VII CORPS LRRP

MARC L. THOMPSON

email: marc.thompson321@gmail.com
phone: 610.913.8183 (c) 610.763.2756

E/75-E/50 LRP-9th DIV LRRP

Duane L. "Poncho" Alire

email: duanealire2345@comcast.net
phone: 505.469.0272

H/75-E/52 LRP-1st CAV LRRP

Pete Dencker

email: pdencker@outlook.com
phone: 615.202.4804

L/75-F/58 LRP-1/101st LRRP

Charles "Chuck" Reilly

email: chuckreilly@netzero.com
phone: 424.408.9894

O/75-78th LRP

IF INTERESTED CONTACT:

Association President
Rick Merritt

VACANT

LRRP DETACHMENT-3rd ID

IF INTERESTED CONTACT:

Association president
Rick Merritt

VACANT

2nd BN, 75th RANGER RGT

Hugh Roberts

email: hughra57@gmail.com
phone: 253.468.2363

75th Ranger MI BN

Bill Burkett

email: bill.burkett80@gmail.com
phone: 706.536.9437

C/75-E/20 LRP

John Everly

email: johndelaire@comcast.net
phone: 215.870.3368

F/75-F/50-25th DIV LRRP

John McGee

email: irishlrrp@tampabay.rr.com
phone: 352.346.2141

I/75-F/52 LRP-1st DIV LRRP

David Hill

email: lurp268@yahoo.com
phone: 775.315.5695

M/75-71st LRP-199th LRRP

Lyle Webster

email: lylwebster@gmail.com
phone: 805.824.2133

P/75-79th LRP

Thomas A Jones

email: tomjones12@yahoo.com
phone: 870.356.2532

Company D (RGR) 151st ABN/ 151st LRS INF Det / Co C 152 LRS

C. Larry Rhodes

email: clarryrhodes@me.com
phone: 812.483.1387

F/51 LRP

Richard "Dick" Moyer

email: dickmoyer702@yahoo.com
phone: 702.610.9097

The following individuals have been appointed by the President of the 75th Ranger Regiment Association to their respective positions to facilitate the day-to-day operation of the Association.

Chaplain
Dan Knight
Dan.knight@hotmail.com
601.988.5087

Legal Advocate
Travis West
twest@westdunn.com
608.535.6421

State Coordinator
Marshall Huckaby
770.658.8159
nationalcoordinator@75thrra.com

WWII Merrill's Marauder's Liaison
Jonnie Milillo Clasen
classenjonnie@gmail.com
706.689.0153

Website Management
WWW.75thRRA.ORG
Chris Borrelli
chris.borrelli@75thrra.org
703.969.9265

Patrolling Editor
Samuel H Chartier
707.835.3703
editor@75thrra.org
rangercs75@icloud.com



Gold Star Family Advocates

Sandee Markwell Rouse
goldstars75thrra@aol.com
904.705.9374

Jill Stephenson
iambenkoppsmother@gmail.com
612.868.7446

Dianne Hammond
rgrmom175@gmail.com
609.230.9511



LEGACY

By: JILL STEPHENSON



In the summer of 2024, my father was going through some personal belongings and discovered the death certificate for his great-great grandfather that his mother had given to him a number of years ago. His name was William A. Stephenson. He died at the age of twenty-one from Typhoid fever on July 19, 1863 while actively serving with the 38th Iowa Infantry during the Civil War. He left behind a wife and a young son. The death certificate stated that CPL Stephenson was laid to rest at Jefferson Barracks Cemetery in St. Louis, Missouri.

When my dad shared this with me, I immediately knew that I had to go and visit his grave. At the time I was living in NW Arkansas, which meant the location was about a five hour drive. This would entail an overnight stay so I put it on the back burner thinking I would plan a trip for the following spring. Not long after this, I received an invitation to speak at an AUSA event in Rolla, Missouri for late October.

I looked it up on a map and discovered that it was only one hour south of St. Louis. I accepted the invitation and let the person who contacted me know that I would need hotel accommodations for the night before. I would make the drive, allowing myself plenty of time to go to the cemetery and find the grave of my great-great-grandfather. I was excited for the adventure.

Learning that William A Stephenson was a civil war soldier was news to me. In fact, these were the first details of his life that I knew anything of. His death certificate stated his cause of death, where he died and where he was laid to rest, citing the specific location within the cemetery. The certificate was laid out in the form of a letter addressed to his mother. It also stated that he died as an active member of the 38th Iowa Infantry. The document that my father shared with me was the original. Knowing its history and holding it in my hands felt incredibly nostalgic. I felt a strong sense of kinship going back three generations with young Williams' mother in the loss of her son. Up until now I knew of no connection to the Infantry on my father's side of the family.



Deer at Jefferson Barracks

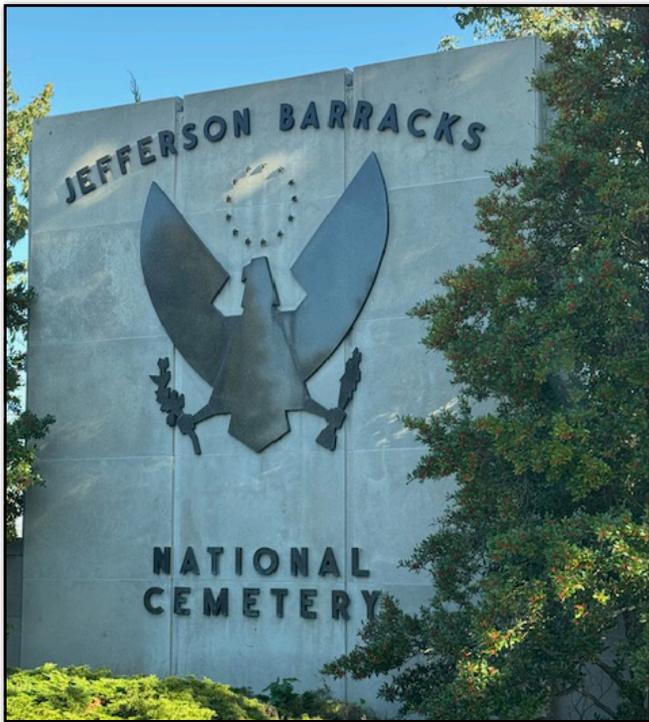
My mother's father honorably served during WWII as a member of the 34th Infantry Division Red Bulls from Minnesota. SGT LeRoy Rogers was my son Ben's great grandfather. Ben's respect and admiration for his service was nearly the entire reason Ben joined the military himself. The events of 9/11 made up the rest. It was clear to see from a young age that Ben would follow in his footsteps. Watching those dots connect and become the foundation for the legacy they would both leave behind was like watching an 8mm film in slow motion: their lives spliced together one scene at a time, becoming more than I ever imagined. Being a part of this connection and seeing the mutual admiration between them remains one of the greatest blessings of my life. Now that I knew about William Stephenson I longed to know more about him. His service during the Civil War bore in me a sense of connection between him and my son. I felt it. They both died at the age of twenty-one, one day and one hundred forty six years apart. William died on July 19, 1863. Ben died on July 18, 2009.

I arrived at the cemetery armed with William's grave location information. I had printed a map of the cemetery and set out to find him. I found the grave of a soldier with the same name but he wasn't from the Iowa Infantry. I was walking around the area, probably looking confused, when a man approached and asked if he could help me find someone. I showed him my coordinates and he led me to a different section which didn't lead us to the right place either. Turns out he was the superintendent and felt like something was off. He took a picture of Williams' death certificate and said he was going to look something up and would return shortly. I continued my waltz amongst the terribly faded civil war tablets. Many were barely readable except for the state of the Infantry Divisions they came from. The brutality of



weather extremes takes its toll after one hundred and fifty years. Mr. Peppers, the superintendent, came back and led me to the right marker. He also shared that he had discovered that PFC Stephenson's name was incorrect on his stone. It said "W.A. Stevenson." Well the "W" and "A" were correct but not the Stevenson.

He was able to discern this by looking at the dates of birth and death. Despite the error of his name, I was emotionally moved to have finally found him! I thanked Mr. Peppers and sat down next to my great-great-great grandfather and introduced myself. I was a bit overcome with emotion having so recently learned of his existence and because he died at the same age as my son. I imagined the two of them watching me from the heavenly realm dressed for battle. Two young soldiers who are related to me that paid the ultimate price for freedom one hundred and forty six years apart. Williams' name was almost completely worn off. I took several pictures from different angles in an attempt to best capture it. I wondered if anyone else had ever visited his resting place. At the time of his death his family was in Iowa. In 1863 traveling to another state wasn't easy and did not happen fast. I could very well be the only person to ever visit him here. The location was pretty. It was under a big tree on a small hill that overlooks the



Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery

Mississippi River. It was peaceful. After sitting for a while I decided to walk towards the river before heading to my hotel. A few minutes later I noticed a large doe standing in an adjacent field staring in my direction. She was by herself. I figured she had been watching me knowing of my presence long before I knew of hers. I was able to snap a couple pictures before she started walking in the direction I came from. I am one who believes in signs from loved ones. This felt like a sign from William. He was letting me know he was there. On my way out I watched that big doe catch up with two more and a young one who were bedded down steps away from Williams grave.

At my speaking event the next day, I made mention of my cemetery visit and newly found g-g-g-grandfather. I requested help from anyone in the audience who might be well versed in using [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) to help me find more information. When I was finished a man came over and told me he would be glad to do some research for me. We connected a few weeks later after he found more information. Turns out young William had one son when he died. That son would also be named William A Stephenson. He would then have a son who would become the father of my paternal great grandmother, Addie Mae Stepehnsen. Addie would have one child, my fathers mother - who would go on to have four sons, one

of them being my father. Pretty amazing how an only child can still be responsible for offspring that ripples ahead into multiple generations.

I have never stated that I come from a military family, yet in reality I do. It may not have been consecutive service from one generation to the next, however, there was definitely something in the genes from both sides that influenced my son to follow in their footsteps. I have grandfathers and a son that created legacies of service and sacrifice. Connecting the dots wasn't an easy task, yet now that I know it exists it will never leave me. I am grateful for my relatives who kept safe and handed down William Stephenson's death certificate. It is a thread through the generations of a family he would never meet and likely never imagined, having died so young.

Each of your loved ones have a legacy of service and sacrifice, whether they made the ultimate sacrifice or were willing to do so, there are future generations who may want to know about them. I encourage you to keep safe the records you have and talk about them (the people) often. Say their names and share their stories. They are important and they matter.

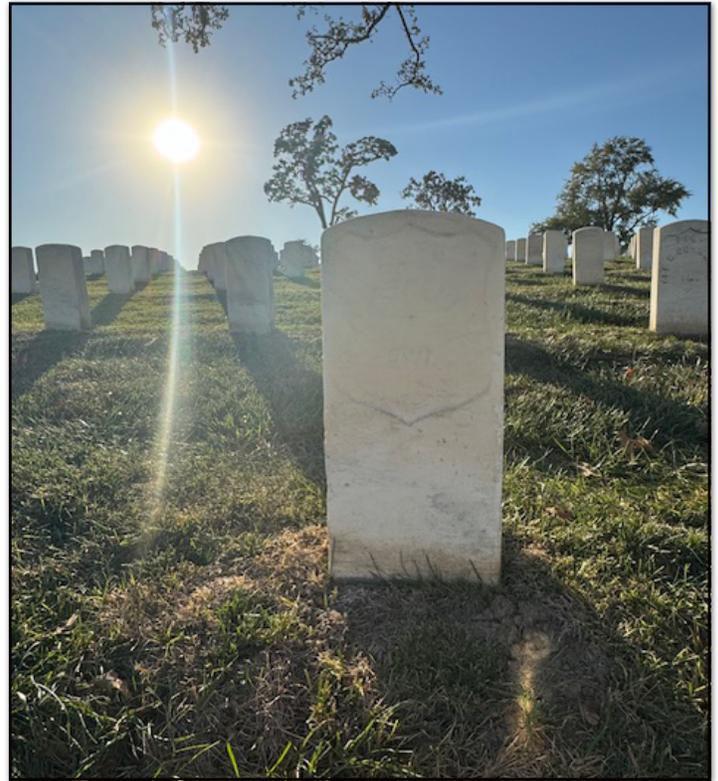


This is true for any veteran or their family member as well. You are all living legacies. What does your family know about your time in service? Where is your memorabilia, medals or any other items associated with your service? You never know if one hundred and forty six years after your passing a loved one may find your things, want to know more about you and might even find your resting place and sit with you for a while.

Here's hoping you all had a nice holiday season and cheers to a healthy, blessed, and prosperous 2026! RLTW!

P.S.

The gentleman who offered to assist in my research of Williams history followed up with me and provided some helpful information. I wasn't able to figure out who William's parents were, if he had siblings or locate any photos of him. His wife remarried and went on to have more children. Ancestry identifies her second husband as another grandfather however, neither he nor their children would be blood relatives. If anyone reading this has taken a deep dive into things like this and would be willing to help me find more information, please let me know. I would be abundantly grateful. You can email or call me. js@iamjillstephenson.com or 612.868.7446



William A Stephenson Grave at Jefferson Barracks Cemetery

Jill Stephenson is the Gold Star Ranger mother of CPL Benjamin Kopp, a 3/75 ranger who died of his wounds on July 18, 2009, eight days after being shot by a sniper in Afghanistan during his third deployment. Jill has been a part of the Ranger community since that time and is grateful for the (Ranger) family Ben gifted to her. She resides in the greater Tulsa, OK area with her father and her best friend, a four legged, very good boy named Ranger. She loves traveling and staying connected to Rangers all over the country.



Are you
...of the Scroll?

Scan the QR code with your
phone's Camera to join
The 75th Ranger Regiment Association





1st BATTALION, 75th RANGER REGIMENT

UNIT DIRECTOR - JAMES SPENCER

continued



On 26 SEP, Delta Company held a Change of Responsibility Ceremony to farewell 1SG Miles Q. Capehart. 1SG Capehart was instrumental in growing the capabilities inside Delta Company and continues to have an oversized impact on the Battalion. Delta Company is fortunate to welcome another phenomenal leader to continue moving the Company forward in 1SG Michael E. Young.



1SG Ross being promoted from MSG to 1SG with his wife, Lindsay

responsibility of Charlie Company to 1SG Ross. During his tenure of 17 months, commencing in March 2024, 1SG Young spearheaded countless training events and live-fire exercises, demonstrably elevating the company's operational readiness and proficiency. His exceptional leadership significantly contributed to the development of both non-commissioned officers and Rangers within Charlie Company, fostering a culture of excellence and unwavering commitment.



1SG Ross standing in front of the Company formation



Center: CPT Smarjesse handing 1SG Ross the Charlie Company Guidon

1SG Young and 1SG Ross Change of Responsibility: On Wednesday, 28 August 2025, First Sergeant (1SG) Young formally transferred



1SG Capehart with his family following the Change of Responsibility



Alpha Company: SGT Murphy and SPC Klein graduated from United States Army Sniper School. Additionally, SPC Klein was awarded the Art Prieto Field Craft Award.



Alpha Company winning team



1SG Capehart teeing off

Delta Company Golf Scramble / 1SG Capehart Farewell: Delta Company held a rec day Golf Scramble and build esprit de corps and to thank 1SG Capehart for his hard work. It was clear that he does not put the same time and effort into his golf game as he did with Delta Company.



1SG Capehart receives a plaque from Delta Company



1st BATTALION, 75th RANGER REGIMENT

UNIT DIRECTOR - JAMES SPENCER

continued



On Saturday, 20 September 2025, seven Rangers from Charlie Company demonstrated exceptional physical and mental fortitude by participating in the grueling "Table Rock 50k" ultramarathon in Morganton, NC. This demanding race spanned 31 miles with over 5,400 feet of elevation gain across diverse and challenging terrain. Charlie Company extends its sincere gratitude to the Sua Sponte Foundation for their invaluable support in enabling our Rangers' participation in this prestigious event. Notably, SGT Matthew Dunphy (BRC '24 winner) showcased remarkable endurance and skill with an impressive 9th place finish overall with a time of 5:07. This achievement exemplifies the unwavering dedication and spirit of excellence embodied by Charlie Company Rangers.



Rangers before the 50K at Table Rock State Park, North Carolina



Color Guard with members of RHQ and MG (R) John Raaen

Rangers during their Color Guard iteration at the award ceremony



distinct honor of performing Color Guard duties for a ceremony at USSOCOM HQ in Tampa, Florida. The event celebrated Major General (Retired) John Raaen, who was presented with the Congressional Gold Medal for his extraordinary heroism during the D-Day landings. As a leader within the 5th Ranger Battalion, then CPT Raaen fearlessly led his Rangers through intense enemy fire on Omaha Beach, ultimately linking up with the 2nd Ranger Battalion who scaled the cliffs at Pointe Du Hoc. This pivotal action contributed significantly to the Allied victory in Normandy. All Rangers from Charlie Company deeply respect and recognize MG (R) Raaen's unwavering sacrifice and dedication to our nation. His legacy serves as a constant inspiration for all who wear the Scroll.

Charlie company Rangers do Color Guard for MG (R) John Raaen: During the four-day weekend, select Rangers from Charlie Company had the

On Thursday, 18 September 2025, Charlie Company hosted an SFRG event at Hopper's Paintball in nearby Georgetown, GA. The event fostered camaraderie and teamwork as each platoon was divided into two teams, engaging in friendly competition throughout the day. The high spirits and laughter were testament to the enjoyment shared by all participants.



Rangers during ISV training navigate swampy terrain on HAAF



1st BATTALION, 75th RANGER REGIMENT

UNIT DIRECTOR - JAMES SPENCER

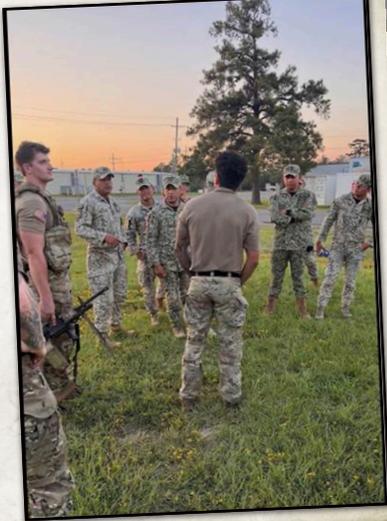
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Alpha Company executed a platoon-level live fire exercise at Fort Polk, LA, focused on a deliberate raid within an urban environment.



Jumpmaster Refresher

BD6 POI by Charlie Company Rangers for Mexican Special Forces: During periods of downtime at Fort Polk, LA, SGT Luna of 2nd Platoon fostered international camaraderie by providing a brief instructional session on Battle Drill 6 (BD6) TTPs and SOPs to members of the Mexican Special Forces. This informal professional development opportunity marked the third BD6 Period of Instruction delivered by 2C this year, highlighting their commitment to knowledge sharing and interoperability. Charlie Company recognizes the value of such exchanges and will continue to offer POI's to further strengthen our relationship's as an organization going forward.



On 26AUG25, 1st Ranger Battalion participated in hosting SECARMY, the Honorable Dan Driscoll. He discussed feedback from the NGSW at length, observed a BD6 LFX at Bradley Crose Shoot-house, and was briefed by Delta Company leaders on UAS, cUAS, limitations in current equipment, and lessons learned from recent training events.



Echo Company conducted off post training in Key West, Florida. The intent of the training was to ensure Rangers left competent in maritime navigation and operating in a maritime environment. Prior to executing the OPT, the company conducted physical training in the pool twice a week that culminated with every Ranger validating their ability in the water with a ten minute tread and uniform swim. At Key West, Echo Company learned how to use charts to navigate open waters and how to operate zodiac boats. The company executed day/night iterations of water STAR course and culminated with a mission for each platoon to seize and secure an island MSS. The



expertise learned in constructing and maintaining the zodiac boats will pay dividends when Echo Company is asked to operate in hostile, maritime environments.





1st BATTALION, 75th RANGER REGIMENT

UNIT DIRECTOR - JAMES SPENCER

continued

MFRT Rangers integrated with their respective rifle platoons to execute Platoon Live Fire Exercise at Fort Johnson, Louisiana. Each section (SNOT, UAS, cUAS, RSTA, and Stalker) provided key capabilities directly enhancing the lethality and effectiveness of the platoons in live-fire operations.



Delta Company UAS Operators attended the Robotics Lethality Course at JBLM to further refine their operational knowledge of the various Regimental UAS platforms and how to best employ them on the modern battlefield. During this course, our UAS operators successfully built their own FPV drone, increased proficiency in urban flight operations, conducted simulated FMPs in support of an assault force, and conducted live drops from various UAS platforms.



Delta Company executed an ISV Driver's Course in preparation for PLFX. Being the newest vehicle in the 1/75 fleet, 8x rangers were trained and certified on the vehicle. The training included gaining proficiency in: vehicle maintenance and familiarization, standard highway operations, and tactical / off road operations.



Delta Company BMP executed Training at Fort Drum, NY. Rangers participated in joint planning and execution of fires support of direct-action raids with Multi-National Partners. The BMP increased proficiency in mortaring and FDC operations integrating with fixed wing CAS, rotary wing fires, and HIMARs utilizing a variety of infiltration methods.



HHC hosted a family day event at the Rock DZ on 29 July. Families were invited to watch their Rangers conduct an ABO out of the same WWII C-47 aircraft that participated in the D-Day invasion, as well as enjoy food from several food trucks and enjoy a great atmosphere.





1st BATTALION, 75th RANGER REGIMENT

UNIT DIRECTOR - JAMES SPENCER

continued

USASOC Best Squad Competition

SGT Lofgren led Alpha Company 2nd Squad in the USASOC Best Squad Competition - winning the Competition!



Team photo at USASOC HQ after winning USASOC Best Squad



SGT Bradley attended The Military International Drone Racing Tournament (MIDRT) UK 25 focused on bringing international partners together to race FPV quadcopters and bring focus to the rapid expansion of drone-based warfare.



A Co honored the memories and sacrifices of SSG Jason Dahlke and PFC Eric Hario by conducting their HERO WODs on 28 AUG 25 while B Co honored the memory and sacrifice of SGT Alessandro Plutino by conducting his HERO WOD on 08 AUG 25.

SGT ALESSANDRO L. PLUTINO

AUGUST 23, 1982 - AUGUST 6, 2011
3RD PLATOON, BRAVO COMPANY
PAKTIA PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN



SGT ALESSANDRO L. PLUTINO

"SANDRINO"

- 3 ROUNDS -
- 100 AIR SQUATS
- 750 METER ROW
- 50 PUSH-UPS
- 25 KNEES TO ELBOWS



MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BATTALION

UNIT DIRECTOR - BILL BURKETT



I am honored and excited to assume the position of unit director for the 75th Ranger Regiment's Military Intelligence Battalion. CSM(r) Lee Garcia has done a tremendous job in amplifying the story of intelligence professionals throughout the organization. I strive to continue the narrative of highlighting achievements made by our Rangers as Regiment continues to set the example for others to follow.

While serving as RMIB Unit Director, I am eager to not only recognize the achievements of today's RMIB Rangers but also to preserve and share the stories of those who forged the path for tomorrow's intelligence professionals. It is vital that our current and future Rangers understand the history that shaped our intelligence mission and the foundation upon which we continue to build.



Rangers at the Launch Point at Dade-Collier Training and Transition Airport, Florida

During my time in the Regiment, I was profoundly shaped by extraordinary people. While my peers and superiors were influential, I believe I learned more about leadership and empathy from my subordinates and the young Rangers I served alongside. Their resilience and perspective taught me lessons that no other group could have.

I am also fortunate to represent Ranger Regiment and national mission force equities through my role at the USSOCOM HQS in Tampa, Florida. Through this role, I routinely visit the Regiment where I am continuously amazed and inspired by the Ranger intelligence community's adaptability and transformation in the face of the ever-evolving world and the threats presented by our adversaries. The ongoing efforts of the RMIB are undeniably "always out front" throughout the Military Intelligence Corps. The battalions' efforts directly contribute to protecting American interests and lives,

both at home and abroad.

As Lee mentioned in last quarter's edition, the RMIB HQs building is under construction and scheduled to be completed by summer 2026. While it might look like an average Fort Benning building, the RMIB HQ's is a symbol of the transformation Regiment has made to acknowledge all that intelligence professionals contribute to Regiment's mission and Abrams Charter. It will undoubtedly be a location in which phenomenal work will be accomplished and where young Rangers and soldiers will be molded into masters of their craft.

RMIB Rangers continue to *set the example for others to follow*. Since August 2025, RMIB Rangers have earned top graduate accolades and recognition at the Warrant Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the Army Basic Leader Course, the Defense Language Institute, and several other service schools. Nearly a dozen RMIB Rangers have graduated from Ranger school over the past three months. Of note, 1SG Pletch and SGT Henderson earned bachelor's degrees, while SSG Jacobo earned his associates degree – tremendous accomplishments. RMIB Rangers participated in the 32nd anniversary of the Battle of Mogadishu by running the "MOG Mile". An event dedicated to recognizing the sacrifice made by Rangers and other members of the special operations community on 3-4 October 1993. Finally, the RMIB continues to plan and execute operations in SOUTHCOM and AFRICOM – a testament that Rangers, regardless of occupational specialty, continues to lead the way!



CPT Nick Layden, Attack CO Commander, with the E2 post flight, Dade-Collier.

CW4(r) Bill Burkett served over 21 years in the U.S. Army, enlisting in 1998. He started his career as an intelligence analyst in an 82nd Airborne Division infantry battalion before passing the Ranger Orientation Program (ROP) in early 2002. He was subsequently assigned to the 75th Ranger Regiment's Military Intelligence Detachment (RMID). Over his career he deployed 13 times in support of the GWOT. As an intelligence professional, he has served as an ISR tactical controller (ITC), targeting officer, interagency liaison, senior analyst, deputy J2, and JTF J2. Bill currently leverages this extensive experience serving as SOCOM's joint mission analysis and future force manning lead in Tampa, Florida, representing the equities of the Ranger Regiment and all national mission forces.



42 YEARS AND COUNTING

BY: SAMUEL H CHARTIER



Linda Davis

Linda Davis started working for the Federal Government in her Junior year of high school at the vocational office program in Washington DC. She worked in the security office within the Office of the Secretary of the Army at the Pentagon.

She would attend school from 0800 to 1100 then take a bus to the pentagon where she would work from 1200 to 1700 every weekday. During her tenure she would regularly fill in for other secretaries when they would take leave. She sat as the Secretary for



In Review

the Deputy Secretary of the Army. During one two-week period she was the on-call stenographer for the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Among many other duties and assignments, she was tasked with and completed typing a revision to the Panama Canal Treaty which was 330 pages. She performed all her duties with *superb* accolades.

In 1970 she left the Federal Service to work as a Government Contractor at Lockheed Missiles and Space Company where she was the Office Manager and



Secretary for their Washington Office, located in Arlington Virginia.

Linda worked there until meeting her first husband in 1974 after which she moved to Alabama. However, she returned to Federal Service as a Clerk Stenographer at Lawson Army Airfield, Fort Benning Georgia.

In 1984 she applied for a Secretary /Stenographer at the 75th Ranger Regiment. She was interviewed by the Deputy Commander and was informed the next day that the position was hers – that was 31 days after the activation of the 75th Ranger Regiment. To this day Linda remains at the Regiment as the Secretary for the Regimental Commander/Command Group – She’s given more than 40 years to the Ranger Regiment and has no plans to stop anytime soon:

Linda Davis has served the Regiment through Operation Just Cause, Operation Gothic Serpent, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Inherent Resolve.

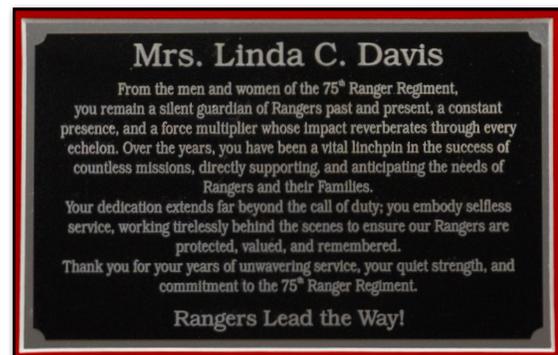
Her exemplary service and dedication to the Regiment has been recognized with the Meritorious Civilian’s Service Award, The Order of Saint Maurice-Cicis for Civilian Service, Two Commander’s Awards for Excellence and the Mr. Charles E. Pimble Special Operations Department of the Army Civilian Lifetime Achievement Award. Furthermore, in 2008, Former 75th Ranger Regiment Commander, Colonel Richard Clarke designated November 4th as ‘Linda Davis Day’



I’ll leave when they ask me to leave or if I become a burden – Once you become a burden, it’s time to go home... I’m not there yet!

Ranger’s Lead the Way!

**Linda Davis
Command Group Admin
75th Ranger Regiment**



A plaque presented to Linda Davis by the Command Group of the 75th Ranger Regiment honoring 40 years of service.



FORGED IN HARDSHIP

UNG RANGER CHALLENGE CADETS TRAIN AT CAMP MERRILL

By CSM (Ret) Joey D. Blacksher

Executive Director of Leadership Development and Senior Advisor
Cadet Leadership Academy University of North Georgia

What Happened

At 5 a.m. at Winding Stair Gap, well before first light, two squads from the University of North Georgia (UNG) Ranger Challenge team stepped off across the ridgelines of the Tennessee Valley Divide with full combat equipment and rucksacks. Distance and pace were deliberately undisclosed, forcing leaders to trust training, read terrain, and manage formations. Nobody fell off pace, and no one quit; they stayed together and finished together.

At Camp Frank D. Merrill — home of the U.S. Army's 5th Ranger Training Battalion — the squads executed a demanding series of events: equipment move; one-rope bridge at the Lower Mountaineering Area; weapons disassembly/reassembly (M4/M249/M240/M17); land navigation to a HLZ with grenade identification and an assault course; Tactical Combat Casualty Care/Casualty Evacuation; and a final movement to stop the clock. Depending on route selection, 20–25 miles were covered in about 12 hours across historic, unforgiving terrain.

“We don’t chase comfort — we chase standards.”

Why We Choose the Hard Path

We do hard things for the person to our left and right. That ethic — grit, resilience, and resolve — separates our cadets for whatever comes next: leading soldiers, building businesses, serving communities. Each difficult moment strengthened their unity and commitment to one another, reinforcing the idea that no one is left behind.

“Never shall I fail my comrades. I will always keep myself mentally alert, physically strong, and morally straight.” — Ranger Creed

This creed mirrors the ethic we saw on the ground — grit, resilience, and resolve learned in the dark, under a ruck, when the route is unknown and the standard is non-negotiable.

Leadership in the Dirt

Coach Casey Dunn — assistant director for leadership development and Ranger Challenge coach — built a tough, realistic plan and executed it with discipline. The Cadet Leadership Academy ensured standards and safety, but Dunn was in the dirt with his squads, moving event to event, showing what right looks like. That is leadership.

And then there was LTG (Ret.) James L. Terry. A combat-tested general doesn't have to show up at zero-dark-thirty, but he did. He stood with cadets after the ruck, looked them in the eye, and sent them forward over unforgiving terrain. Great leaders don't just talk about it; they show up when it matters most.



Leadership in Dirt
photo courtesy of Cadet Grace Botts, UNG PAO

FORGED IN HARDSHIP

By CSM (Ret.) Joey Blacksher

continued

“Great leaders don’t just talk about it; they show up when it matters most.”

Coach Casey Dunn explained that the mini-comp deliberately stressed communication under fatigue and decision-making under pressure — the same demands cadets will face in combat or crisis.

Load Management — Hard, Not Reckless



*Load Management
photo courtesy of Dr. Parker Hyde*

Hard training only works when it’s managed. Dr. Parker Hyde kept us disciplined on volume and intensity. Drawing on 12 weeks of tracked programming, Hyde applied TrainingPeaks and other load-management tools to forecast the ruck and lane demands with near precision — even predicting finish times and effort within minutes. That insight shaped a fueling plan for the cadets, with ready-to-consume foods and AMACX carbohydrate powders timed to sustain performance. Our stack — TrainingPeaks for planning and load, WHOOP for recovery and HRV, Nix biosensors for sweat and fueling, and SOMA NPT for cognitive performance under stress — helps us push with intent and steward our toughness instead of wasting it. Tools don’t create toughness, but leaders like Hyde help us protect it.

Hardship: What It Teaches

Hardship isn’t something to avoid — it’s the crucible where leaders are forged. Your worst day doesn’t have to be your last word. Setbacks happen, but character is revealed in how one responds. Fatigue forced choices: focus on self or put team before self. Again and again, the most powerful moments came when someone stepped up for the person next to them.

The Army doesn’t promise easy days, and life won’t either. What matters is having the grit to endure, the humility to own mistakes, and the discipline to keep moving forward.

**“Your worst day doesn’t have to be your last word.
Setbacks happen, but character is revealed in how one
responds.”**

Thanks to the 5th Ranger Training Battalion Command Team for opening training access on storied ground.

Terry’s presence underscored that great leaders don’t just talk about standards—they show up when it matters most.

Dunn’s leadership, design, and execution provided the framework and example for cadets to push themselves and succeed.

Hyde’s expertise kept cadets disciplined on volume and intensity, ensuring hard training remained effective but not reckless.

ROTC and Silver Team ensured training support and safety throughout.

Cadet Grace Botts, serving as PAO, captured coverage that documented the grit and resolve on display.



Photo courtesy of Cadet Grace Botts, UNG PAO

FORGED IN HARDSHIP

By CSM (Ret.) Joey Blacksher

continued

Expert Insight — Dr. Parker Hyde on Load Management

Question from the author:

Which WHOOP/TrainingPeaks/HRV indicators most influenced your recommendations?

Dr. Hyde's Response:

"The integration of WHOOP and TrainingPeaks this year has been pivotal for our success. Now we can track acute and chronic training load, recovery, and daily HRV. By combining these, we adjust intensity to get the right stimulus and adaptations. For example, one week out, we saw recovery scores dipping, so we created a tapering plan to maintain intensity while improving sleep and recovery. After the mini-comp, recovery dropped as expected, but scores quickly normalized — allowing us to re-enter a new training block faster than anticipated."

On the Ground: Cadet and Coach Perspectives

Question from the author:

Where did communication under fatigue break down—and how will we train it forward?

Coach Dunn's response:

"Communication broke down at different times for each team. Black Team had one major breakdown during the one-rope bridge event. This caused their rope bridge to be less effective, costing them valuable time. The Gold Team, being younger and less experienced, had communication issues early on and throughout the competition. Although painful at the time, it was a valuable lesson for Gold in understanding how effective communication directly impacts a team's performance. As far as training goes, the best way to train for hard things is to do hard things. Along with building technical tasks into our PT sessions, we will start introducing physical and KIM's game-style exercises into our technical training, which will put their communication skills to the test multiple times a week. Before the Brigade Competition in January, we will hold another internal competition to test the follow-through on lessons learned from the first mini-competition."

Question from the author:

What leadership decision under fatigue most affected your team's performance?

Black Squad Leader, Cadet Jacob Crawford's response:

"I believe the leadership decision that most impacted my team's performance was during the gear carry. I had to develop a system that distributed equipment effectively while also giving those who were struggling a chance to recover. By choosing the right gear assignments and setting a smooth rotation for the litter, we were able to work efficiently with quick transitions. This allowed us to gain a substantial lead on the other team and finish with a strong time." Crawford also singled out Alex Gray, a newer cadet who consistently demonstrated dedication and supported decision-making as his Alpha team leader — proof that commitment, not seniority, often carries the day.

Question from the author:

How did you pace your squad when the route and distance were unknown?

Gold Squad Leader, Cadet Elijah Williams' response:

"Going into the event blind, I knew that to pace my team effectively, I would have to take a multitude of factors into play. First, I had to think about which members were injured and how far I could push them, given the unknown distance, without aggravating their injuries. I also had to consider the new



CSM (Ret.) Blacksher
Photo courtesy of Kendle Blacksher

FORGED IN HARDSHIP

By CSM (Ret.) Joey Blacksher

continued

members' physical capabilities, based on their tryout results, since they had just joined the team. Once the unknown distance run started, my sole focus was on maintaining a pace that I knew the team could sustain for 10 to 20 miles without overexerting themselves, thereby enabling us to tackle the upcoming events effectively.”

Question from the author:

What do families and alums need to understand about the work that goes unseen?

PAO, Cadet Grace Botts response:

“Much of what makes this team resilient happens outside the spotlight — the prep, the recovery, the quiet moments of support. That’s where character and unity are forged.”

America’s Corps, Ready for What’s Next

This is what America’s Corps looks like — disciplined, direct, anchored in values. From ruck to rope bridge to CASEVAC, every rep carried a lesson in grit, resilience, and leadership under stress. Our Ranger Challenge cadets didn’t just train; they proved a standard.

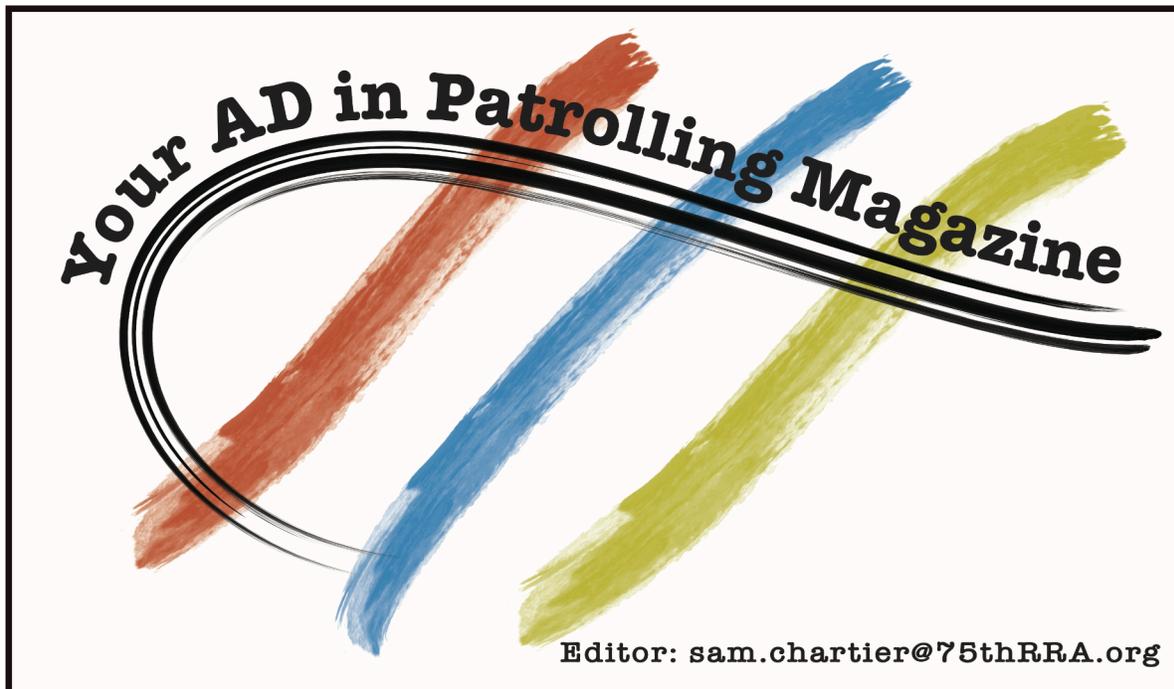
“Civilize the mind, make savage the body.” — Boar’s Head Brigade Ranger Challenge Team Motto.

From this mini-competition, we carry forward:

- Tighter communication
- Cleaner execution under pressure
- Smarter recovery and readiness

This wasn’t a finish line — it’s a marker along the path. The work continues, and both Ranger Challenge teams will be ready for what’s next.

*Joey D. Blacksher Executive Director, Leadership Development & Cadet Leadership Senior Advisor, University of North Georgia
Command Sergeant Major (Ret.) Joey D. Blacksher served more than 22 years in the U.S. Army, culminating as the Command Sergeant Major of the 5th Ranger Training Battalion in Dahlongega, Georgia. He now serves at the University of North Georgia as Executive Director for Leadership Development & Cadet Leadership Academy Senior Advisor.*





HONORING THE LEGACY OF MOGADISHU BY STANDING WITH TODAY'S SOF FAMILIES

By: Task Force Dagger Special Operations Foundation Communications Team

On October 4, 1993, the Battle of Mogadishu—"Black Hawk Down"—ended after two days of intense urban combat. Task Force Ranger's courage under fire and refusal to leave anyone behind became part of Special Operations history. That story also lives at the heart of Task Force Dagger Special Operations Foundation (TFDSOF), where two veterans of that battle have helped shape the organization: Board Chairman Mark Stephens and the late MG Gary Harrell, Emeritus Executive Board Member, both U.S. Army Special Operations (Ret).

This past October, as the Special Operations community paused to remember Mogadishu, TFDSOF joined in honoring those who fought and fell—and in recommitting to the unfinished work that followed: taking care of the warriors and families still carrying the scars of long, quiet wars.



Mark Stephens

"In Mogadishu, we learned—sometimes the hard way—that your life can change in seconds and that no one gets home alone. That truth didn't end when we flew out of Somalia. Today, Task Force Dagger is how we keep that promise to never leave a teammate or their family behind, long after the shooting stops."

- Mark Stephens, Chairman of the Board - U.S. Special Operations (Ret).

That promise lives through the Foundation's three core lines of effort: **Immediate Needs assistance, the SOF Health Initiatives Program, and Rehabilitative Adaptive Events.** Together, these programs support more than 500 SOF members and family members each year through services designed to heal, rebuild, and empower—providing mission, purpose, and focus long after the uniform comes off.

Immediate Needs: "We Have Your Back"

For many SOF families, crisis doesn't wait for a clean VA answer or an insurance approval. When a child needs urgent surgery, when cancer treatment requires travel across the country, or when unexpected illness pushes a family to the financial brink, TFDSOF steps in to close the gap.

Through its Immediate Needs program, TFDSOF supports requests that fall outside traditional DoD, VA, or insurance coverage—everything from helping a family reach a pediatric heart transplant center, to providing service dogs, to covering fuel, flights, and lodging so families can stay together during chemotherapy or major treatments.

Each request is vetted in coordination with the U.S. Special Operations Command Warrior Care Program, ensuring assistance is targeted, responsible, and delivered when it matters most.

Health Initiatives: From "This Is Your New Normal" to Real Recovery

If Immediate Needs support keeps families afloat during crisis, the SOF Health Initiatives Program helps warfighters reclaim long-term health and recovery.

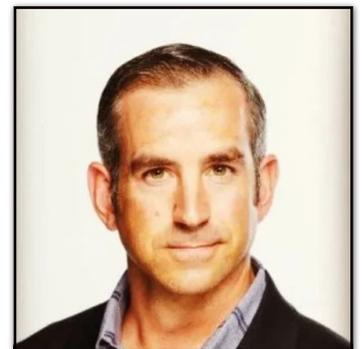
Built on the lived experience and vision of retired Green Beret Geoff Dardia, the program uses a functional, whole-person approach to address root causes of chronic issues—TBI, toxic exposure, hormonal disruption, sleep challenges—rather than simply managing symptoms.

Through a network of leading partners—including the Cleveland Clinic, hyperbaric centers, trauma-informed mental health providers, and innovative diagnostic and treatment clinics—TFDSOF provides access to care that often sits beyond standard DoD or VA offerings.

Since 2015, the program has invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in advanced care for SOF personnel and families—helping restore function, clarity, and hope.

"Too many of our guys are told, 'This is your new normal,' while their bodies and brains are quietly falling apart. The intent of our Health Initiatives program is to flip that script—to chase root causes, not just write another prescription. We want SOF operators and their families to get their lives back, not just survive their service."

- Geoff Dardia - Director of SOF Health Initiatives



Geoff Dardia



HONORING THE LEGACY OF MOGADISHU

continued

By: Task Force Dagger Special Operations Foundation Communications Team

Rehabilitative Adaptive Events: Healing in the Water and Beyond

Recovery is more than appointments and test results—it's reconnecting families, rebuilding trust, and rediscovering joy together. That's the heartbeat behind TFDSOF's Rehabilitative Adaptive Events (RAE), including its flagship program: **Dagger Dive in Key West, Florida**.

For more than a decade, Dagger Dive has brought SOF veterans and families to the water for a week-long adaptive diving retreat. Learning to dive together, families explore the waters off Key West as a team, building confidence, easing isolation, and strengthening communication strained by years of deployments, injuries, or invisible wounds.

TFDSOF's RAEs now reach far beyond the ocean. Through a partnership with the **National Ability Center (NAC)**, TFDSOF offers seasonal, family-centered retreats—from SOF couple-focused ski and snowboarding events to whitewater rafting adventures—each designed to foster connection through challenge, teamwork, and shared experience.

In addition, **Florida state support** is enabling TFDSOF to expand regionally throughout Florida with more accessible, year-round opportunities for full-family healing.

Across every retreat, **education is foundational**. Participants receive guidance, insight, and information on treatments and resources that can support healing long after the program ends, ensuring families leave with both renewed connection and practical tools for continued progress.

Other RAE efforts, such as **Joint Recovery Team (JRT) missions**, extend healing into a different kind of depth. On JRT expeditions, medically retired SOF veterans help locate, map, and document the remains of World War II service members who never made it home—literally living out the creed that no one is left behind.

Community Momentum: From SOF Week to Local Front Lines

Task Force Dagger has continued to strengthen its role within the wider SOF community. At SOF Week 2025 in Tampa, TFDSOF closed out a record-breaking week: the annual auction and raffle raised more than a quarter million dollars for Immediate Needs, RAEs, and Health Initiatives, and the Foundation was selected for a grant through the **GSOB Gives Back** program. TFDSOF leaders also moderated a standing-room-only Medal of Honor panel, highlighting the ongoing need for long-term SOF family support.

That momentum echoes far beyond conference halls—into living rooms, hospital rooms, mountain trails, riverbanks, and dive boats. These are the places where TFDSOF's work is felt most directly. Whether at a Black Hawk Down memorial gathering, a family stepping off a boat in Key West, or a warfighter walking into a specialized clinic with real hope for the first time, each moment reflects one continuous mission: ensuring those who bore the heaviest burdens of war are not left to navigate the aftermath alone.

Why It Matters

Task Force Dagger Special Operations Foundation exists because freedom has a cost—and healing takes a team. Founded and led by members of the SOF community, TFDSOF understands the pressure, tempo, and cumulative impact that decades of conflict have placed on operators and their families.

From honoring Mogadishu's legacy to walking beside today's SOF families through crisis, recovery, and post-service transition, TFDSOF is doing more than retelling the story of sacrifice—it's helping write the next chapter: one of healing, connection, and hope.

If you'd like to stand with us—through partnership, sponsorship, volunteering, or direct support—you can learn more at taskfordagger.org.

To get involved or connect with our team directly, please reach out to info@taskfordagger.org. Your commitment to the mission helps ensure no SOF warrior or family faces the aftermath alone.



Dagger Dive Program Participants



ARMY HONORARY SERGEANT MAJOR RICK MERRITT



By Stephen Odin Johnson

All of the 75th Regiment, except for a few Ranger newbies, knows about CSM(RET) Rick Merritt, especially the fact that he has served as its Regimental Sergeant Major. A lot of the Army and other branches of the service's key personnel and staff recognize CSM Rick Merritt's name straight away; and with the last moniker bestowed him, he is now the new Honorary Sergeant Major of the Army.

Congratulations, RSM Rick Merritt!

As I was writing this information about the Army's newest Honorary Sergeant Major Rick Merritt, I wondered what artificial intelligence has gathered on our esteemed member of the 75th Ranger Association's President Rick Merritt.

So, first I had to find out and review what artificial intelligence was in a succinct manner and share that with our readers without putting them to sleep or turning the page.

Here is Artificial Intelligence's (AI) own perception of itself:

Artificial Intelligence is an interdisciplinary field that encompasses several core technologies and concepts:

- **Machine Learning (ML):** A fundamental approach to AI that uses data and algorithms to train computers to make predictions or decisions without being explicitly programmed for every step.
- **Deep Learning (DL):** A subset of machine learning that uses multi-layered neural networks (computational models inspired by the human brain) to process vast amounts of data and recognize complex patterns, enabling tasks like image and speech recognition.
- **Natural Language Processing (NLP):** This enables computers to understand, interpret, and generate human language, powering applications like virtual assistants, translation software, and chatbots.
- **Computer Vision:** Allows machines to "see" and interpret visual information from the world, used in facial recognition, medical image analysis, and autonomous vehicles.
- **Robotics:** The field of engineering focused on developing robots, which can use AI to operate autonomously and perform complex, often dangerous, or repetitive, tasks.
- **Generative AI:** A type of AI that can create new content, such as text, images, music, or code, in response to user prompts by learning the patterns in its training data.

Now let's cut to the chase to find out what AI knows about our 75th RSM. Secondly, AI's listing the responsibilities of his new position as the Army's Honorary Sergeant Major.

AI: Throughout his 36-year military career, Rick Merritt accumulated over 57 months in combat and participated in more than 1,500 raids during operations in Panama, Somalia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. He held significant leadership roles, including Command Sergeant Major of the 75th Ranger Regiment, Division Command Sergeant Major for the 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), Command Senior Enlisted Leader for the Eighth U.S. Army in Korea, and Command Senior Enlisted Leader for two U.S. Joint Special Operations Command task forces.

His distinguished service has been widely recognized. He was inducted into the U.S. Army Ranger Hall of Fame in 2023 and named an Honorary Sergeant Major of the Army in October 2025. He is also a Distinguished Member of the 75th Ranger Regiment and an inductee into the 10th Mountain Division "Warrior Legends" Hall of Fame. Additionally, he was awarded the *Primicerius*, the highest level of the Order of Saint Maurice.

Since retiring, Merritt has remained active in the military community. He mentors soldiers and serves on the board of the Sua Sponte Foundation, a non-profit supporting veterans, active-duty Rangers, and Gold Star Families. He also works as the Director of U.S. Army Special Operations Programs for Republic Mission Systems, Inc., and as a Military Consultant with Daniel Defense. He and his wife currently live in Richmond Hill, Georgia.

AI

The title of Honorary Sergeant Major of the Army is an informal recognition of extraordinary dedication to the Army and its soldiers and does not carry a specific set of official duties or responsibilities. Instead, the role is centered on continued mentorship, advocacy, and serving as an inspiration to soldiers and leaders across the force.

For Rick Merritt, this will involve:

- **Mentorship and Advising:** Continuing to serve as a key advisor and mentor to senior military leaders in both the conventional Army and Special Operations communities.
- **Public Speaking and Engagement:** Volunteering as a keynote speaker and participating in unit Leadership



ARMY HONORARY SARGENT MAJOR RICK MERRITT

continued



By Stephen Odin Johnson

Professional Development (LPD) sessions to share his extensive experience with soldiers.

- **Advocacy and Support:** Leveraging his status to support advocacy groups for veterans, active-duty Rangers, and Gold Star Families, such as serving on the board of the Sua Sponte Foundation.

- **Preserving Heritage:** Sharing first-hand accounts of Army heritage and operations to connect current generations of soldiers with their history and inspire pride in their service.

The position reflects his ongoing commitment to "give back to his Army" even in retirement, rather than a formal, mandated set of duties.

Editor’s Note (SOJ): Interesting to note that the Honorary Sergeant Major of the Army (SMA) was established in 2016 to those soldiers or civilians personifying the ethos of life-long support for its soldiers and their families. Honorary members include:

- **Lt. Gen. David E. Grange Jr. (Ret.):** A decorated Army Ranger and Hall of Fame recipient, he was named the honorary SMA in 2016.

- **Gen. Frederick Kroesen (Ret.):** A former Army Vice Chief of Staff.

- **Elaine Rogers:** The CEO of the USO Metropolitan Washington-Baltimore, she was the second civilian to receive the award.

- **Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth "Rock" Merritt (Ret.):** A World War II veteran of D-Day, Operation Market Garden, and the Battle of the Bulge, he was named the fifth honorary SMA.

- **Gen. James C. McConville (Ret.):** The 40th Chief of Staff of the Army, named honorary SMA in 2023.

- **Denzel Washington:** The actor and director received the honor in 2021 for his work with the Fisher House Foundation and his film work centered on soldiers' experiences.

- **Command Sgt. Maj. Richard "Rick" Merritt (Ret.):** A veteran of the 75th Ranger Regiment, he was named the Honorary Sergeant Major of the Army during the AUSA 2025 Annual Meeting

Stephen Odin Johnson - Former editor of Patrolling Magazine. Former president of the 75th Ranger Regiment Association, Vietnam Veteran - Legend!



PROTECTING WHAT YOU HAVE EARNED

CONGRESSIONAL GRIDLOCK REGARDING VA CLAIMS REPRESENTATION

By Travis West



As currently written, federal law provides that veterans of the 75th Ranger Regiment, like all who have served, are entitled to a robust and non-adversarial process when applying for earned disability benefits through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Congress has historically required that anyone assisting a veteran in the preparation or prosecution of a VA claim must be accredited. This ensures that veterans are represented by qualified individuals who adhere to strict standards of conduct and are subject to VA oversight.

However, the post-9/11 era has seen the rise of unaccredited claims consultants who operate outside this long-standing regulatory framework. A 2006 amendment to the governing statute removed criminal penalties for providing unaccredited representation and advocacy to veterans and enabled the development of these organizations, which often use titles like “benefits advisors” or “claims coaches.” Although accredited advocates often point to the fact that current law prohibits unaccredited individuals from charging fees, the elimination of criminal penalties has rendered VA powerless to enforce the statute. In contrast, proponents of these services argue they are filling a gap created by the substantial claims backlog following the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which caused veterans to seek faster support than could be provided by the traditional accredited representatives.



PROTECTING WHAT YOU HAVE EARNED

By Travis West

continued



The legal landscape governing who can help veterans and what they can be charged is in a state of rapid change. This issue is very nuanced and detailed, and this article cannot fully cover all the related ground. However, it provides a breakdown of the key legislative and legal battlegrounds affecting veteran representation.

I. The Regulatory Firewall: Free vs. Fee-Based Assistance

The current regulatory landscape divides representation into two main categories: accredited and unaccredited.

Accredited Representatives and the Fee Structure

Federal law defines three categories of accredited representatives: Veterans Service Organization (VSO) representatives, attorneys, and claims agents. Accreditation is managed by VA's Office of General Counsel (OGC), which enforces strict standards of conduct and may suspend or revoke accreditation for violations.

By law, VSOs, such as the VFW and American Legion, must provide their services to veterans free of charge. Attorneys and claims agents may charge fees only after the VA has issued a decision on the initial claim. This prevents them from charging for help with filing an original claim but allows them to charge for challenging or appealing unfavorable decisions.

Any fee charged by an attorney or claims agent must be reasonable and is subject to VA review. Most attorneys and claims agents will charge their fees on a contingency basis. For these, any fees under 20% of the veteran's backpay are presumed by law to be reasonable, while fees exceeding 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % are presumed unreasonable. If a fee is 20% or less, the VA may pay the representative directly; fees exceeding this limit must be recovered from the veteran.

Veterans should also keep in mind that, unlike Social Security claims, contingency fees associated with VA disability claims are not capped. In 2026, fees for assisting an individual with an SSDI claim are capped at the lower of \$9,200 or 25% of the backpay awarded.

For example, an individual might hire an attorney to help with an SSDI claim with a fee agreement that requires payment of the max allowed by law (e.g. the lower of 25% or \$9,200). In this circumstance, for any backpay awarded at \$36,800 or less, he would owe his representative 25% of the award. So if his award was \$30,000, the fee would be \$7,500; however, if the award were \$50,000, the fee would be capped at \$9,200.

By way of contrast, let's assume a veteran hired an attorney to assist with an appeal of an adverse VA disability benefits claim on a 25% contingency fee basis. If we use the same amounts identified above, the fee would be \$7,500 on an award of \$30,000 in backpay, and would be \$12,500 on an award of \$50,000 in backpay.

Unaccredited Services and Fee Structures

Unaccredited consultants argue that veterans should have a choice as to who represents them, and those choices should not be artificially limited by "Big Brother" or paternalistic regulations. Because they are not subject to OGC's jurisdiction, they operate without the restrictions placed on accredited representatives, allowing them more flexibility in structuring fee agreements, often charging for initial claims. One of the most common fee structures currently used by some (but not all) of these services requires the veteran to pay five times the value of any increase rating awarded by VA.

For example, let's assume that a single, currently-unrated veteran with no dependents hired an unaccredited consultant to assist him with filing a claim. The 2026 rating schedule provides that if the veteran received a rating of 10% rating he will be entitled to a monthly payment of \$180.42. So, under the fee structure described above, he would owe a fee of \$902.10 to his consultant. At the other end of the spectrum, if the veteran received a rating of 100%, he would owe \$19,692.90.

Separate from the disparate fee systems, veterans also must be aware of the risk associated with unaccredited consultants that arises from a lack of oversight by VA. Unaccredited consultants are not



PROTECTING WHAT YOU HAVE EARNED

By Travis West

continued



subject to the standards of conduct outlined in VA regulations. Veterans who are unhappy with the services provided by an accredited representative have recourse through the VA (and state bar associations for attorneys); however, no such recourse is available to veterans who are unhappy with unaccredited claims consultants.

II. The Congressional Stalemate: GUARD vs. CHOICE

The issue has led to a legislative battle in Congress over how to address unaccredited assistance, with three competing proposals being debated in the 119th Congress (2025–2026). The central conflict pits the desire to enforce the current free-service system (GUARD) against efforts to legalize paid initial claims (CHOICE, which largely superseded the earlier PLUS Act).

The Enforcement Approach: The GUARD Act

The Governing Unaccredited Representatives Defrauding VA Benefits Act (*GUARD VA Benefits Act*, H.R. 1732, 119th Cong. (2025) (as introduced)) aims to restore criminal penalties for individuals who charge veterans for claims assistance without VA accreditation. This approach is supported by most VSOs as well as the National Organization of Veterans' Advocates (NOVA). Its proponents argue that it strengthens enforcement and protects the integrity of the free-assistance system. As discussed more below, some of these organizations -- including NOVA in particular -- also stress the need for Congress to include language that federal law (Title 38) supersedes or preempts inconsistent state laws in order to prevent confusion nationwide.

The Legalization Approach: The CHOICE Act (Superseding the PLUS Act)

The Preserving Lawful Utilization of Services for Veterans Act (*PLUS Act*, H.R. 1656, 119th Cong. (2025) (as introduced)) was an early proposal aiming to legalize fees for initial claims. Support for this legislation was largely superseded by the Certified Help Options in Claims Expertise for Veterans Act of 2025 (*CHOICE Act*, H.R. 3132, 119th Cong. (2025) (as introduced)), which has become the primary legislative vehicle for this policy. The CHOICE Act aims to create a path for accredited representatives to charge a prospective fee for initial claims. The most recent versions of the bill propose a new fee structure: the lesser of \$12,500 or five times the monthly increase in benefits awarded. This fee structure would be closer to the limitations imposed under Social Security regulations.

Debate of this legislation has been fierce. On the one hand, the CHOICE Act bill is strongly opposed by most VSOs, who argue the prospective fee structure is predatory and could lead to veterans being in debt. NOVA also argues that this fee structure would frequently cause a veteran to go into debt to pay the representative, as the fee can exceed the retroactive award. Conversely, organizations representing the unaccredited services lobby, such as the National Association for Veterans Rights (NAVR), applaud the CHOICE Act, viewing it as a move that "preserves Veterans' freedom of choice" and expands access through the free market.

Current Legislative Status and Compromise

The CHOICE Act passed out of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on a highly partisan, divided vote (12-11) in May 2025. However, as of this writing, the bill's future in the companion Senate committee remains uncertain, facing strong opposition from major VSOs.

In the absence of a federal consensus and with an eye toward breaking the gridlock, some have urged Congress to consider adopting a simpler, veteran-friendly solution if it decides to allow paid initial claims: simply "move the line" on the existing accredited system. This would allow accredited representatives to

Are you ...of the Scroll?

for those who lived the Ranger life





PROTECTING WHAT YOU HAVE EARNED

By Travis West

continued



charge a contingency fee (like the current 20% of back pay model) for initial claims, ensuring all fee arrangements remain under the strict regulatory and ethical oversight of the VA. So far no formal action has been taken with regard to this proposal

III. The State Battleground: Federal Preemption and State Laws

With Congress stalled, the legal battle has shifted to the state legislatures and federal courts.

- **Guard-Like Laws:** Unaccredited companies are challenging state laws, such as those in New Jersey and Maine, that criminalize their fee-charging business models, arguing that the states are overstepping their authority because federal law should preempt state action.
- **Plus-Like Laws:** Conversely, accredited advocates and VSOs are challenging state laws, such as Louisiana’s 2023 law which allows unaccredited companies to charge up to \$12,500, arguing these state laws conflict with the federal regulatory scheme.
- **Veteran Fraud Lawsuits:** Some veterans and State Attorneys General have filed lawsuits, such as those in Texas and North Carolina, alleging fraud, deceptive trade practices, and recovery of illegal fees against unaccredited consultants. Notably, a federal *Qui Tam* (whistleblower) lawsuit against an unaccredited company is proceeding in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina.

IV. Conclusion

The bottom line is that veterans have earned their benefits and deserve ethical, competent representation. Although federal law requires that the VA system is supposed to be non-adversarial and easy-to-understand, all-too-often it has become anything but. For those veterans who would like assistance with their claims, the current state of affairs essentially provides two options. First, they can work with VSOs, attorneys, and claims agents, which operate within a federally regulated framework under oversight of the VA’s Office of General Counsel. These accredited representatives are not permitted to charge fees for initial claims assistance, and in most instances appeals by paid agents and attorneys are on a contingency basis. Conversely, because unaccredited consultants operate outside this regulatory firewall, they commonly can (and do) assist veterans when filing initial claims and have flexibility when setting up fee structures. However, there is no oversight or recourse through the VA for unsatisfactory service and fee structures may carry greater financial risk. Understanding the shifting landscape of VA claims representation is essential to ensure veterans receive the representation they deserve.



Travis James West

Travis James West is an owner and one of the managing partners at the Wisconsin-based law firm West & Dunn. He practices in the areas of veterans disability benefits and civil litigation. Travis has been inducted into the Fellows of the Wisconsin Law Foundation, is a past president of the Dane County Bar Association (DCBA), and is a member of the National Organization of Veterans Advocates (NOVA) where he serves on the organization's Amicus and Litigation Committee.

Travis served as a member of the 75th Ranger Regiment from March 2001 through June 2004. He maintains an active role in the Ranger Community, where he currently serves on the boards of directors for the Three Rangers Foundation, National Ranger Memorial Foundation, and United States Army Ranger Association. He previously served as a Unit Director for the 75th Ranger Regiment Association and was a member of the Ranger Hall of Fame's voting board. He also maintains memberships with Veterans of Foreign Wars and Disabled American Veterans.

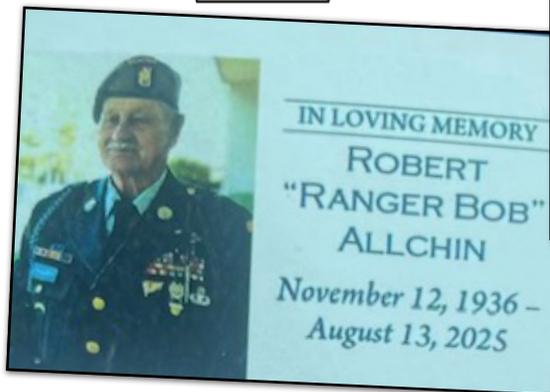
Travis lives in Madison, Wisconsin with his wife, Ryan, and his daughter, Julia. He enjoys sailing and backcountry hiking.



We had a lot of great soldiers in Alpha Company, but Ranger Allchin was one of the best. I'm glad he and his wife Pat were able to make the first 2 reunions in Waco. Rest easy Ranger, you've earned it.

Robert F. Allchin ("Ranger Bob") Obituary

Greenwell Springs, LA - Retired 1st SGT Robert F. "Ranger Bob" Allchin, age 88, passed away on August 13, 2025. He was born in Pemberton, NJ but was a resident of Greenwell Springs, LA. Robert was a US Army Airborne Ranger of 27 years, where he was decorated with many awards and citations to include 3 purple hearts. He was also a JROTC instructor for EBR Parish for 25 years. Robert will be missed by all who know him. Robert is survived by his wife of 54 years Patricia A. Allchin, daughters; Helen R. Patin, husband Dee Patin of Pride, LA, Sue Owens of Baton Rouge, LA, and Gayleen D Courtney, husband Jason Courtney of Lakeland, FL, son; Gregg Allchin, wife Candy Allchin of Cumming, GA, 10 grandchildren as well as 11 great grandchildren. Robert is preceded in death by his daughter, Carol A. Rodney. Relatives and friends are invited to the Chapel of Central Funeral Home, 9995 Hooper rd. Baton Rouge, LA 70818, on Sunday August 17, 2025, for a visitation beginning at 3:00PM until 7:00PM. Visitation will continue Monday August 18, 2025 at 11:00AM until the funeral service beginning at 12:00PM. A burial is to follow at LA National Cemetery. The family would like to extend a special thanks to his faithful nurses/caregivers; Lisa Crutcher, Brittany Schnebelen, Tami Tucker, and the Hospice Team from Clarity Hospice of BR.



IN LOVING MEMORY
ROBERT
"RANGER BOB"
ALLCHIN
November 12, 1936 -
August 13, 2025

I noticed two Firefighters as Pall Bearers in Bob's funeral pictures and asked his daughter Helen, *Was Bob a fireman?* "Stan Jones, that was my son and Grandson, but Dad was a firefighter in Miami in the early 60's before joining the Army." She attached a couple of pictures of Bob.

What a loss! So sorry to hear this. Rest in peace good and faithful warrior. Prayers for all RANGERS, friends and family. 2026 reunion was a good call. Wish we could have had him one more time. Robert Allchin, SALUTE!"
- E.J.

I'm so sad to hear this news. Sending prayers to Pat and the family.
- Tiffany, Marie & Danielle



Prayers for Pat and their Family. R.I.P. Ranger Brother. He will be Missed in 2026 Reunion!!! From Karen & Mike Theisen: Our hearts break for you Pat. Keeping you in our hearts and prayers! Such a wonderful man. God has another amazing Ranger in heaven to watch over our Ranger family! He will be missed by many. SALUTE RANGER ALLCHIN RLW.
- D.J.

I sent Timex a query to see if they could find the commercial that Bob was in This is their reply: Thank you for reaching out and sharing your request. I understand how important it would be for you to view the Timex commercial from the 1980s featuring Robert Allchin, especially given its significance to those who served with him. After checking all available internal archives and resources, we unfortunately do not have access to this specific vintage commercial. I'm sorry we aren't able to provide or locate this advertisement for you at this time. If you need any further assistance, please let us know. Timex Support Team
- Timex Support Team



A/75-D/17 LRP-V CORPS LRRP

UNIT DIRECTOR - STAN JONES

continued

Bob 'Rattlesnake Jake' had many contacts and one I remember was with the EOD that sometimes did their training on ranges where some range cattle had been killed. One time that sticks in my mind saw us going out to one of the ranges with Bob and his buddies at night, butchering/boning the meat off less mangled range cattle in an area they had already cleared of explosives, hauling it off the Range then loading part of it in Bob's VW van, taking it to his home and placing it in his freshly bleached bathtub. We cut and wrapped and drank (imagine that!!!) stopping to fry up some of the meat with potatoes and peppers.

There was quite a bit of meat, a lot of knife work and we were pretty tuned and tired when we finished cutting and wrapping. So tuned that we didn't clean out the tub before celebrating a good job finished and passing out.

We were awakened by a long, loud scream. It seems Mrs. Bob had come home late and was going to take a bath, but when she turned on the bathroom light, she saw her bloody tub and bathroom and as she was shocked, she screamed bloody murder. Who knows what went through her mind when she turned on the light, but bob finally calmed her down. We spit shined her bathroom as well as we could in our condition/. The next morning we had a quick breakfast then bob hauled us back to the barracks (after washing out and vacuuming his VW van) Laughing the whole way with that wonderful smile on his face, his unlit stub of a cigar in his mouth, he explained, still laughing, that his wife had banned us from the Allchin home for a 'while'. After that we started butchering in an outlying location one of his buddies had procured, cut and wrapped everything, then split the meat and they all took it to their homes packaged and ready to eat. No more bloody bathtubs. I'll never forget that crazy scream, waking up disoriented and scared and I'll



Bob & Patricia Allchin

never forget you 'Rattlesnake Jake', your memory always brings a smile to my face and makes my heart smile. You will be missed! Bob was truly a good human being!

- Mike Degel

IT'S OFFICIAL, from Roy Bissey: This announcement will serve as the official kickoff for the Alpha company reunion in Branson, Missouri. Here you will find details regarding the host hotel and instructions for making your reservations. In the immortal words of our own RANGER Eddie J. Alexander: "*Plenty of time* is the fuel for **PROCRASTINATION**". As of today, 25 Aug 2025, there are 248 days or 8.26 average months remaining before we meet again. The dates selected for this event are **Thursday, 30 April 2026 through Sunday, 03 May 2026**. If this sounds like "plenty of time", please see the above quote attributed to EJ Alexander. The host hotel will be the Clarion Inn Branson at 2820 West Highway 76 Country Blvd. in Branson, Missouri. The hotel has an onsite bar and restaurant, two swimming pools each with a hot tub, fitness center, laundry room, a meeting room at our disposal and is centrally located on the '76 Strip'. Entertainment abounds, some within walking distance of the hotel and none too far away.

- To make reservations call Group Sales at **417-251-5192**. The code to use for our group rate is "**Alpha Company**". The rate is \$139.00 per night and includes all taxes and fees. This rate is guaranteed for five days before and five days after the reunion dates in the event you would like to spend some extra time in Branson. I have tested the reservation system and it is now ready for your call. If you desire to stay before or after the official dates, tell the reservations folks this first, they may not remember to ask. Remember: "plenty of time....".
- Rooms are either Double Queen or King balcony rooms, same rate.
- A full buffet style breakfast is included for two guests per room, additional guests will be \$5.00 each. A cook to order option for some items is available at no extra cost.
- Should you choose to enjoy meals at the hotel restaurant and/or drinks at the bar you will be accorded a 10% discount as a member of the group. There are many, many local eateries waiting to serve you any type of cuisine imaginable.
- Your leadership group will be negotiating a catered lunch on Friday and catered dinner on Saturday evening served in the hotel dining room or possibly the meeting room by the hotel staff.
- If you encounter difficulties making reservations or have any questions or requests please call me, Roy Bissey, at 307-752-6428 or email me at r_bissey@yahoo.com.



A/75-D/17 LRP-V CORPS LRRP

UNIT DIRECTOR - STAN JONES

continued

You should have received an email or two on the reunion from Roy. If you have not, let me or Roy know. PLEASE book your room as soon as you know you are going. We need to have a minimum of 20 rooms booked March 1st in order to secure the discounts and Hospitality room. We have 13 rooms booked as of December 1st. I'll defer to Roy and EJ's "PROCRASTINATION"

There was a questionnaire mailed out this summer about your preference to receive the Patrolling Magazine by mail or find it online. It was your choice to make. If you did not reply you will continue to receive it by mail.

I made a very bad PLF on August the 23rd, just happened to be our 45th Anniversary. I was coming home from a fire run (I still drive a tanker when needed to help out), and I was crossing our gravel drive when I rolled my ankle and went down on my right arm and shoulder. Long story short I did a mid-humerus dissection, clean break right below my shoulder replacement prosthesis. Good thing is the shoulder didn't get hurt. I think I started physical therapy too soon as I went back under the knife on Oct. 13th to reset the bones, they had separated about 1/4 of an inch. So now I'm in a sling for 6-8 weeks and the wood shop is closed until January.

LAST MINUTE update before sending in the article. Gary Linderer will be our guest speaker at the dinner/banquet. Gary is a published author of many books on Viet Nam LRRP/Ranger Companies, a long-time friend of Fred Stuckey and a founding member of the Long Range Recon Association and has a new book coming out in January. He donated several books to our raffle in 2024 in Waco. Gary lives in Branson and has given several suggestions on things to see and do while there. Lots of good dinner/show options, most restaurants give 10-20% discounts to veterans. Sites to see include: Table Rock Show Boat, College of the Ozarks Memorial Gardens, Shepherd of the Hills, the 1st BassPro is in Springfield, Lamberts Cafeteria just north of Branson (Home of the thrown rolls).

This issue will come out sometime in January, so Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all. Stay safe and we'll see you in 2026.

- Stan
RLTW

From Roy Barree...Hooooaahhh!! In 1971 I was an 18 year old in central Texas working on a drilling rig trying to support my wife (which was the wrong one at the time) my 9 month old son and myself. I came home one day and my wife met me in the living room handing me an envelope with my name on it. I took the envelope, and sat my oilfield nasty, self, down on the floor. I took the contents of the envelope and started reading. A few moments later I jumped to my feet and started dancing with joy. I was drafted into the army. My wife started crying. She wanted to know why I was so happy. I screamed I'm going into the army and I don't have to put up with this oilfield crap anymore. She responded, but you won't be here with us. I screamed, you will just have to deal with it! I made it through boot camp and training as a unit armor for repairing and modifying firearms. My new home was at Fort Hood as the "A" company "7th Cav. Unit armorer". Two years there and I reenlisted to go be part of the "A" company 75th Inf. Rangers" which was also on Fort Hood. Being a member of that family gave me opportunity how to face life with its good and bad values, no matter what they presented. I learned the three actions it takes to overcome what life offers. Not necessarily in the same order every time, depending on the action needed. The three values, "Improvise, Adapt, Overcome"! I took these values with me for the rest of my life. After accomplishing an education in design engineering and working as a designer for many years I had an opportunity to work for the "Department Of Defense" in combat zones. My first assignment was in Afghanistan at Kandahar. The three years I was there the worst action we encountered was an attack on a small village about half of mile from the post. The Taliban attacked the village for a distraction so they could come at us from other directions. It didn't work! We had troops in place waiting for them. I had another encounter worse than Kandahar. I went up on the Pakistan border to the Salerno F.O.B. for about 18 months and we had an everyday encounter for trying to keep Taliban from entering Afghanistan. The worst encounter I experience in life was the day I was going home. While waiting at the flag pole for my ride home, it happened. Taliban attacked the post from all four directions. The encounter lasted three days. We couldn't get any air or artillery support due to the fact that our encounter with the enemy was too close to the base. However, we did accomplish and overcome the situation. All my team members teased me about the going away party the Taliban surprised me with. I went home and took a very dangerous job. I became a substitute teacher in public schools. I am not telling danger stories of encountering that job.

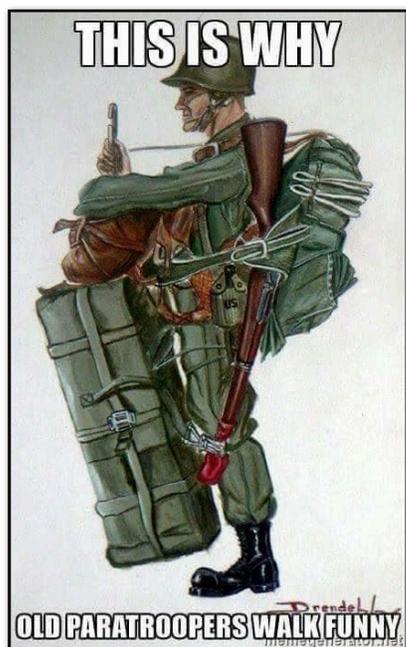
Stan served in Alpha Company From November 72 - July 74, then shipped to Berlin Bde., Leaving the Army after 4 years. He worked at the USPS for 35 years. He has 2 sons, 7 grand kids and 8 greats. He is in his 39th year as a volunteer firefighter and currently the Chief of Department. Current status - Tanker Driver. He hails from Indiana.



B/75 - C/58 LRP - VII CORPS LRRP

continued

UNIT DIRECTOR - MARC L. THOMPSON

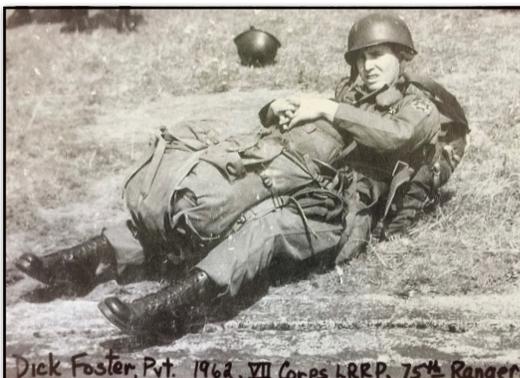


*And They Wonder...
Photo courtesy of 517prct.org*

Greetings and Salutations fellow LRRPs, Rangers, and Jayhawks... Please stay safe, and stay healthy.

I am a little slower getting around these days. Had a full right knee replacement in October, so that will slow you down a touch. And they wonder why we have bad knees...

I have been saving this photo for a long time – it needs to be published!



*Dick Foster-PVT.-1962 VII Corps LRRP
Photo courtesy Dick Foster*



IN DISTRESS

ILL B/75 MEMBER - BERNIE HOMIAK

FROM Tom Sove: Marc, I just received a note from the wife of Bernie Homiak. She asked me to send on this message: Bernie has severe vascular dementia and Alzheimer's dementia. He cannot speak, write, and has bad hearing. He is in a skilled nursing facility. I comped his membership for 1 year, so Patrolling will still get to him this year.

STAN HARRELL - VII CORPS LRRP, C/58LRP, B/75

This is Stan Harrell and I have a bad request. My son passed away day before yesterday (early December) and I need to ask if anyone of my friends can give me a donation to help pay for his funeral. If so let me know and I will send you my address. Please contact the Unit Director to help contribute.

TAPS

LARRY LACROIX

From: Jerry Laviano: 8 December 2025

Larry Lacroix passed away 23 November 2025. He came to B/75th at Ft. Carson in January of 1969, and was in the company for two to two-and-a-half years.

STUART "WORKHORSE" LANE

Monday, 1 December, 2025

RIP Stuart "Workhorse" Lane

Dear fellow LRRPs:

I was just informed yesterday by Joe Touchon that Stuart "Workhorse" Lane passed away on 15 October, from cancer. Unfortunately we have no further details to share with you, except that both Joe and myself have been in contact with his daughter, Wendy Lane, who lives in Kentucky. She said that she was at her late



*Larry Lacroix in Vietnam 1967-1968
Photo courtesy Jerry Laviano*



B/75 - C/58 LRP - VII CORPS LRRP

continued

UNIT DIRECTOR - MARC L. THOMPSON

dad and mom's house attending to sorting out the estate, and that she was leaving today to return home, where she will begin writing a proper tribute to her dad. Her mother Diane passed away just last year, and she also lost her grandmother in between these two losses. She asked to give her a few days or a week to reconnect with her again when she will be better able to provide more info to us. Hold close to those of us LRRPs who are still alive, and never forget all who have passed away before us, all fine soldiers and all very good men. Kindly pass this message along to those not included in this notice As we learn more, we will immediately share that with you all.

Thank You – JTC - Airborne All The Way - Amen

Thomas Forde: Another great guy gone. Were at that age guys. If you don't hear from me Google my name.

Kirk Gibson: "At that age...". True enough Tom, but I'm dying as slowly as I can. Stay healthy, do stuff to keep your flippers flapping, and laugh every day. Kirk

Steve Lengel: Glad you are keeping us informed. Don't know how you do it...

SAM STOREY

FROM DONNA STOREY

Tue, Nov 11, 2025 at 7:04 PM

This message to Joe Chetwynd. I received PATROLLING issue with memorial to Sam. Thank you to all responsible it was very nice and happy Veterans Day to all!

FROM JOE CHETWYND

Special thanks to Marc Thompson, VII Corps LRRP Co (ABN) Unit Dire

Special thanks to Marc Thompson, VII Corps LRRP Co (ABN) Unit Director for having a copy of the 75th Ranger Regiment Association quarterly Patrolling magazine, sent to Donna Storey and the entire Storey family. It arrived, properly so, yesterday, 11 November, on Veterans Day.

For those who might still doubt it.. there is a God in Heaven above. AMEN

JTC

(U.D. NOTE: Credit for the copy of Patrolling goes to Tom Sove – our Secretary.)

FROM DONNA STOREY

Dear Joe,

I'm sorry so long in responding. I've been in a swirl of paperwork, etc. I have thought of you all frequently. Especially Joe T. It was so nice of him and Steve L. to attend Sam's service. I hope they both had good luck on their trip and arrived safely at home. We are doing well. This Father's Day will be hard on the girls I'm sure. But we will all go on keeping precious memories of Sam.

On Fri, Jun 13, 2025 at 11:05 PM, Joe Chetwynd wrote:

We have just received this note of thanks from Donna Storey, expressing her gratitude to both Joe Touchon and Steve Lengel, both of whom drove from their homes to attend the viewing of Sam Storey on Sunday (Joe, from Texas – about 1500 miles, and Steve from Florida, about 500 miles). His church service and burial was held on Monday.

I hope that we LRRPs will still stay in contact with the Storey family, either by Email or by postal mail, presently, as we do not have Donna's home or cell phone number. Sam's cell phone has been discontinued, of course.

Thanks, too, from all us LRRPs, to Tom Forde for having sent the beautiful floral wreath and a tree to be planted in Sam's memory at the time and place of choosing of the Storey family, and, most especially thanks to both Joe Touchon and Steve Lengel, who took it upon themselves to drive great distances to be our LRRP representatives. The display of our LRRP affection, deep respect and admiration for Sam as brother paratroopers was on full display, and the Storey family is most appreciative of it all.

Airborne All The Way, JTC

RIP Samuel Boyd Storey. We are all right behind you. See you on The Great DZ above, God willing.

Originally from Colorado, Marc Thompson now calls Pennsylvania home. He served in B Company Rangers from 72-24, was an 'original' NCO of 1st Ranger Battalion and served in other airborne, special operations and infantry units. He attended Tufts University earning a BA in Political Science and History. He is the CEO Thompson Technologies and has been the UD since 2004.



RANGER VOYLES

reports that all are present and accounted for in the Northwest (Bob Lund, Curtis Christopherson, Tony Richardson, and others).

DOC JEANS

Doc Jeans reports that he is alive and well and still kicking! Contact UD for telephone number.

HEARD FROM

Curtis Christopherson, Greg Phillips, Mike Moser (via FB).

TIM LEADBEATER



*Tim's Newest Bike
Photo by Tim Leadbeater*

Watch "Retiring to Ride My Motorcycle! Here's My Strategy" on YouTube

<https://youtu.be/iuMxYFGJ770?si=bkulxG-ORtBjDG7Y>

This guy has me re-thinking. I may have also "retired to ride" in 2011 in light of all the miles I've traveled and places I've visited on two wheels since then. Places include seven Canadian provinces, all the Western and mountain states multiple times, Sturgis 3 times, Minnesota, Tennessee, North Carolina (multiple times), many rides to Key West (including 5 with my Uncle Reg on the back from 2013 to 2019), the Big



*Tim's Indian
Photo by Tim Leadbeater*

Island of Hawaii, New Zealand, the European Alps (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Italy) twice. For the majority of these rides, Barb was on the back chronicling our travels with her amazing photography skills.

14 years later since I retired in 2011, I'm still "in the saddle" now with an Indian Chieftain and a Honda NT1100.

Tim Leadbeater

Watch "Dire Straits - Brothers in Arms [On the Night -92]" on YouTube. Mark Knopfler wrote this as both a protest of the 1982 Falklands War between the UK and Argentina and a tribute to those who fought and died there. Today, it is often played at military funerals in the UK. It is poignant and considered by many as their best rendition. Mark shines on guitar.

https://youtu.be/au4MRhg5BHE?si=yu9_H6mWpvbxB9-d

JOE CHETWYND

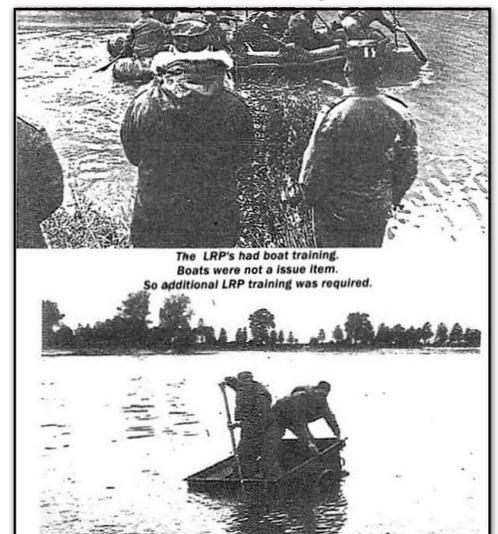
Happy Veterans' Day!

We Band of Brothers.. and sisters,.... and family,..... one and all .

AMEN

VETERAN'S DAY

Subject: A thought on November 11
Though long ago and far away,
To me, it seems like yesterday.
Memories - some sad, some good,
We did the best that we all could.
Not just today, but every day,
I salute your service, and I say,
"Thank you Vets, you're all good men,
And bet if asked, you'd do it all again."
- Kirk Gibson



*The LRP's had boat training.
Boats were not an issue item.
So additional LRP training was required.*

*LRP's had boat training. Boats were not an issue item so additional LRP training was required.
Photo courtesy of Bill Mathiak*

Stay warm, stay safe, stay healthy... To Absent Friends:

Until next time... V/R:

Marc L. Thompson, Unit Director

Originally from Colorado, Marc Thompson now calls Pennsylvania home. He served in B Company Rangers from 72-24, was an 'original' NCO of 1st Ranger Battalion and served in other airborne, special operations and infantry units. He attended Tufts University earning a BA in Political Science and History. He is the CEO Thompson Technologies and has been the UD since 2004.



I Ain't healed
 Just learned how to hide it
 Smile on the surface
 Hell burning inside it
 Acting like I am fine
 But who am I trying to fight with
 Yeah, I Ain't healed.

I laugh loud so nobody
 sees the truth, cause
 Sadness hits harder when its
 Tied to you, friends keep
 Saying man you are doing
 Great, Yeah they don't see
 The nights I suffocate.

I AIN'T HEALED!!!!

History of Company 5 (RANGER) 151st Airborne Infantry

The 151st found itself called upon to stop spread of communism in South East Asia. Company D (Rangers) 151st Infantry went to Vietnam to perform reconnaissance and intelligence gathering missions. Once again, the 151st distinguished itself in battle achieving an impressive combat record. On May 13, 1968, 12,234 Army National Guardsmen in 20 units from 17 states were mobilized for service during the Vietnam War. Eight units deployed to Vietnam and over 7,000 Army Guardsmen served in the war zone. Company D (Ranger), 151st Infantry, Indiana Army National Guard arrived in Vietnam in December 1968. As part of the II Field Force, the Indiana Rangers were assigned reconnaissance and intelligence gathering missions. Operating deep in enemy territory, Ranger patrols engaged enemy units while conducting raids, ambushes and surveillance missions. "Delta Company" achieved an impressive combat record during its tour in Vietnam; unit members were awarded 510 medals for valor and service. The gallant record of Company D, 151st Infantry symbolizes the Army National Guard's performance in Vietnam.

Just over 7000 Army National Guardsmen served in the Vietnam War. Of these, only one unit would stay together from activation and serve in combat as a National Guard unit. Company D (RANGER) 151st Infantry (AIRBORNE), was the only National Guard Infantry unit to serve in Vietnam.

In November 1965, the Indiana National Guard's newly-formed, 1st Battalion (Airborne) 151st Infantry, and its parent 38th Infantry Division were members of the Selected Reserve Force (SRF). SRF units were to be among the first selected in the event of a wide-spread reserve call-up by the president. The 38th Infantry Division fully expected to be called to active duty, and the inclusion of an airborne battalion was thought to be highly valued. However, despite the Joint Chiefs of Staff's recommendation for reserve forces to be mobilized for service in Vietnam, the Department of Defense decided not to use them and no large-scale call-up of reservists ever materialized. As a result of the DOD's reorganization of the National Guard, in 1967, several National Guard Divisions were broken up and realigned. Although the 38th Infantry Division survived, it was forced to lose its coveted airborne infantry battalion. Indiana Adjutant General, MG John S. Anderson was able, however, to retain enough airborne qualified personnel to form two long range patrol (LRP) companies, under the auspices of the Military Department of Indiana (MDI). This resulted in the formation of Delta & Echo Companies (LRP), 151st Infantry (ABN). The assets of the two units were later used to form a single company; designated Company D. The company headquarters plus one platoon were based in Greenfield, Indiana, with two others stationed in Muncie, and Evansville, Indiana.



The war in Vietnam continued to escalate and so did resistance to the war at home. Several states began using the guard to control demonstrations, especially on college campuses. The future for Company D took an ominous turn with the North Korean seizure of the USS Pueblo and North Vietnam's "Tet" incursion into many cities and villages of South Vietnam. These events laid the political justification for D/151 and some 20,000 other National Guardsmen and Reservists to be activated. Quite unexpectedly, Company D was informed that summer camp training for 1968 would be held in March, at the Army's Jungle Warfare Training Center, in the Panama Canal Zone. Many of the men could not quite believe it when the cadre of the jungle school informed them that they were

Continued on following page

John Maglinger

In Review



John served as assistant Ranger team leader and later as Ranger team leader in the Third Platoon. John has only attended one reunion of the D Company rangers since returning home from Vietnam. He wanted to blend into society and not think of, or meet head on, the aftereffects of war. That worked okay for a lot of years, but after he retired and had time to contemplate his past, things got a bit different.

John joined the Indiana National Guard in mid 1966 and attended basic training at Ft Gordon GA, along with about 5 other men from the Evansville IN unit. From there he went to Ft Ord CA for AIT where he was the top Combat Efficiency Expert and was awarded a statue. He was part of the 210 men called to active duty in May 1968, and shortly thereafter was sent to Radio school at Ft Knox KY along with about 20 other men from the company.

John saw contacts with the enemy on several patrols, but the one that took place before the team's photo was taken was the most brutal. The claymores worked as planned and took out the 5 VC and NVA effectively and after the firing was over, the sweep revealed lots of needed information.

One thing he remember quite well, is that while in Vietnam his vocal displeasure of the Army and the War, got him accused of **assertion** and sent to a board of review at II Field Force. Surprisingly

he was an E-4 when entering the meeting but came out at E-5. So much for punishment.



John Maglinger & Ben Vanderlinden

John has had heart trouble since age 54, high blood pressure, etc. I was able to convince him to apply for VA Benefits, of which he was rated at zero percent. He went to the VA on some occasions and gets his meds there, but no one at the VA ever suggested he file for Disability benefits. I wish him well. He is now age 78 and married.



Team photo after heavy 12 man contact.
Photo courtesy of Wayne Turner



D/151st - LRP / LRS

UNIT DIRECTOR - C. LARRY RHODES

continued

headed for Vietnam. Three weeks after achieving a 98 percent graduation rate in Panama, President Johnson activated the unit. On Monday, May 13, 1968, the same day that peace talks began in Paris, 8 officers, 1 warrant officer and 195 enlisted men departed the Indiana National Guard Headquarters at Stout Field, in Indianapolis, and convoyed in WWII-era trucks to Ft. Benning, Georgia.

GEN William Westmoreland, the recently appointed Army Chief of Staff, directed the United States Army Infantry School to provide the company with all available assets, and attached the company to the 5th Battalion, 31st Infantry, 197th Infantry Brigade, on Kelley Hill, for administration and logistical support. Upon arrival, the company began 26 weeks of intensive unit and individual training. All members of the unit were already airborne qualified, and after a brief administration period, the men of Company D attended a variety of Army schools. Many graduated from the Ranger, Pathfinder, Jump Master, RTO and other courses. During this period, the unit began to receive regular army (RA) and draftee (US) replacements to fill losses due to expirations of enlistment, training and security clearance failures, sole surviving sons, brothers and other men deemed unqualified for ranger service in Vietnam. After the company finished individual training, the Ranger School established a modified three-week ranger training program for the entire unit. Additionally, the company received training from the British and Australian SAS, at Eglin AFB, in advanced patrolling and tracking concepts. Company D was declared by the Infantry School as the best trained unit in its history. Just prior to deployment, the unit's commander, CPT Kenneth Himsel, was promoted to Major and sent to Vietnam as an individual replacement. His newly promoted brother, CPT Ronald Himsel, became Company D's commander. On 20 December 1968, an advance team left to set up the company's new home, Camp Atterbury (EAST), located adjacent to Camp Frenzell-Jones, in Long Binh. The compound was the former home of Battery B, 6th Battalion, 56th Air Defense Artillery, and was secured to provide a base camp for D/151. On 28 December 1968, the remainder of the company departed Ft. Benning's Lawson Army Airfield on C-141A Starlifters in three contingents and arrived in Vietnam on 30 December 1968.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff had tentatively planned for D/151 to join XXIV Corps, in the I Corps Tactical Zone (I CTZ). Troop ceilings, however, caused these plans to be changed. Due to Company D not being infused, as other Guard units were, United States Army Vietnam (USARV) was directed to deactivate Company F (LRP) 51st Infantry (ABN) and replace it with D/151. Company D was assigned to II Field Force Vietnam (IIFV) with the mission of conducting long range patrols in War Zone D, in the III Corps Tactical Zone (III CTZ). The 199th Light Infantry Brigade conducted a one week orientation course with the unit, and Company D received four more weeks of intensive, mission-specific training from the provisional II Field Force Long Range Patrol Company, formerly Company F (LRP), 51st Infantry (ABN). F/51 instructed its successor unit in patrolling concepts unique to the capital area battlefield. F/51's commander, MAJ George M. Heckman, a former Special Forces instructor and executive officer of the MACV Recondo School, assumed command of D/151 due to his experience and vast knowledge of long range patrol operations. By mid January 1969, Company D personnel were going on patrol with F/51 for long range patrol orientation and were deemed operational on 23 JAN 69. On the unit's very first patrol with Company F, a team from first platoon made contact with the enemy and M-60 machine gunner, Gerry Brantley, earned the company's first purple heart. It is extremely doubtful that D/151 would have achieved its staggering battlefield reputation without the professionalism and competence of F/51.

On 1 FEB 69, the Department of the Army (DA) reorganized all regular army LRP units to "letter" Ranger companies of the 75th Infantry. DA also issued a general order that increased the authorized strength of D/151 from 214 to 230 personnel. This action increased the number of patrol platoons from three to four, increased the number of patrol personnel from five to six, and authorized a Major as commander. The order also changed D/151's parenthetical designation from "LRP" to "RANGER." Additionally, USARV was

Sometimes it's a Small World...

Carl DeLong survived 11 month tour of Vietnam with Co D 151 Indiana Rangers. There was an anonymous person planting small bombs in parking lots around Indianapolis IN around 1983. Unfortunately Carl was the victim of one of these bombs and lost his leg in the explosion. About 6 months later, he just couldn't stand his condition and ended his life.

Don Worthington was at the cemetery laying to rest one of his friends and from where stood, looked down and there was Carl's marker. RIP Ranger DeLong!!!

You were one of the GOOD GUYS

directed to secure 20 slots in each of the first three MACV recondo classes, beginning in January, and unit members began to attend this highly elite school run by the 5th Special Forces in Nha Trang, following the completion of unit training with F/51.



D/151st - LRP / LRS

UNIT DIRECTOR - C. LARRY RHODES

continued

On 8 FEB 1969, the "Indiana Rangers" began patrolling into AO INDIANA, in southern War Zone D, in Long Khanh and Bien Hoa Provinces. D/151 had trained as a reconnaissance unit at Ft. Benning. This changed quickly as the Indiana Rangers now found themselves under the operational control of the II Field Force G-3 operations section. The G-3's most accepted method of intelligence gathering were ambush patrols along trails, and adjacent to the Song Dong Ngai and Song Be rivers. Company patrols sometimes also ventured into the "Heart-Shaped Woods" and "Iron Triangle" areas of Binh Duong Province. Company D's principle enemy was the infamous "Dong Ngai Regiment," and many D/151 tpatrols locked horns with NVA/VC units of the Dong Ngai in bunker complexes and base camps throughout III CTZ, with the Indiana Rangers at a considerable numerical disadvantage.

Army aviation was paramount in contributing to the remarkable combat record of D/151. Insertions and extractions, frequently under fire, were performed by the "Annie Fannies" of the 117th Assault Helicopter Company. Cobra gunship support, often the Indiana Rangers' most effective method of breaking contact with a larger, determined enemy force came courtesy of the "Playboys," of the 334th Armed Helicopter Company. Both companies were members of the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion, 1st Aviation Brigade, and had rotating sections assigned to Company D on a permanent basis. The all vital communication relay and aerial observation was performed by the "Aloft" pilots, as they were known, of the 74th Reconnaissance Aviation Company. The men of the 74th RAC provided constant radio-relay from the teams to the Company's tactical operations center (TOC) back at Camp Atterbury (EAST), in Long Binh, and were the first to know of enemy contacts and problems with the teams. Countless Indiana Rangers are alive today because of the valor, courage and raw determination of these three Army aviation units. Tragically, the only air loss during D/151's tenure was due to a mechanical problem in the company command and control helicopter, resulting in the death of all aboard, including aviation section leader, CPT Michael "Iron Mike" Reitz; 3rd platoon leader, Indiana Ranger, 1LT George Kleiber; and his replacement, Indiana Ranger, 1LT Kenneth Cummings, who had arrived to the company just two days prior. Today, thirty years later, they are still sadly missed.

III Corps Tactical Zone contained the capital, Saigon, as well as most of South Vietnam's industrial and logistical areas. Company D patrols were also used to provide early warning of enemy movements into these vital areas, including the giant Long Binh-Bien Hoa logistical base. During Company D's tenure in Vietnam, D/151 fielded 974 patrols, killed over 100 enemy soldiers and lost only 4 of their own in direct combat. In the unit's first six months in Vietnam, alone, the Indiana Rangers reported 134 separate enemy observations and participated in 94 combat engagements with 76 NVA/VC killed by direct fire. Many others were killed by helicopters, Air Force tactical aircraft and artillery. Several patrols reported a massing of enemy troops during Tet of 1969. Most patrols were made up of five or six man teams but many 12 man teams were conducted when previous information suggested that contact was likely. One mission, in May 1969, led by Indiana Ranger team leader, SSG Jon Ellis, a National Guardsman from Anderson, Indiana, counted 600 NVA as they advanced south. The staff officers, clerk-typists and other II Field Force rear echelon personnel were getting their early warning. On this particular night, SSG Ellis did not pull his team back to a remain-overnight-position, but elected to stay within visual sight of the enemy trail. Forced to initiate due to enemy movement, SSG Ellis engaged the massive enemy formation while directing artillery and aviation assets upon the enemy. SSG Ellis was able to safely evade the enemy and extract his team with no friendly casualties.

RA and US soldiers recruited to take their place, replaced National Guard losses due to death, wounds, hardships and early-outs for college. These new members were first required to successfully complete an in-country training program staffed by a cadre of veteran Rangers. The new men also had to be approved by all members of the team to which they were assigned. In early November, the 73 remaining National Guard members were moved from the base camp at Long Binh to Bien Hoa in preparation for the unit's return to Indiana.

On 20 November 1969, Company D (RANGER), 151st Infantry (AIRBORNE) commenced stand-down procedures and returned home to a grateful state and nation. Indiana Governor, Edgar G. Whitcomb, declared 26 November 1969 as "Unity Day" and ordered all state and county offices closed in recognition of Company D's homecoming ceremony held that evening at Tyndall Armory, in downtown Indianapolis. Company D was also awarded the "key to the city" by Indianapolis Mayor, Richard Lugar. The emotional highlight of the ceremony took place when the Rangers of Company D stood at rigid attention as the names of their killed in action were read aloud. Four members of Company D made the supreme sacrifice on Ranger missions, with two additional deaths resulting from a helicopter crash. Indiana Rangers were decorated 538 times in Vietnam. 19 Silver Stars, 1 Soldiers Medal, 123 Bronze Stars (88 with "V" device for valor), 101 Purple Hearts, 111 Air Medals and 183 Army Commendation Medals (29 with "V" device for valor) were awarded for valor and achievement. No other single Army Infantry company was as decorated during a one-year period of time as the Indiana Rangers.



E/75-E50 LRP-9th DIV LRRP

UNIT DIRECTOR - DUANE L. "PONCHO" ALIRE

continued

This report recaps our 2025 reunion in Smyrna, TN last October. It's also our 18th biennial unit reunion. The first reunion was an informal gathering of some guys in Baltimore, MD in 1993. We have gathered almost every two years for the last 32 years.

The Reunion Recap: This year our reunion sponsor was former 9th ID Platoon Sergeant Elbert Oris Walden (aka "Ole Sarge Walden"). At 89 Ole Sarge Walden is a legend in E50/E75 having served 22 years in the US military (US Army & US Air Force. He deployed twice to Germany, twice to Korea, once to Panama and once to Vietnam. In Vietnam he received the Silver Star Medal. He is also the recipient of E50/E75's highest award, the Matsuda/Nelson Award. The latter award recognizes his outstanding military and civilian service and his continuing contributions to our



informal, all volunteer, quasi-military "unit" of Vietnam veterans (1966-1970).

The over-arching purpose of our reunion was multifold – to recognize our military service, to celebrate our enduring friendships, to enjoy the activities offered in our host city and to honor our 27 KIAs and the 157 E50/E75 warriors who have passed away since returning home from the Vietnam War.

Reunion Coordinators: Thanks to Brad and Kathy Runge, Reunion Coordinators, for a job well done. Kathy is Ole Sarge's daughter.

The First Timers: Just like "back in the day" we had two Funny New Guys (FNGs) attend the reunion. The first veteran, E50/E75 LRRP/Ranger, Ted Speroff (March 1968-March 1969) is from Franklin, TN. The second veteran, E50/E75

LRRP/Ranger, Joe Marchese (April 1968-April 1969) is from Brick, NJ. As in the past, we took them under our wings and guided them through the reunion.

Ted Speroff's contact information can be found in our 2021 Unit Directory. Joe Marchese's contact information will be available in our forthcoming, updated edition of our Unit Directory.

Ole Sarge Walden Day Proclamation: E50/E75, in cooperation with the State of Tennessee and town of Smyrna TN, presented a proclamation to Old Sarge Walden designating October 11, 2025 as "Ole Sarge Day" in recognition of his military and civilian service.

The proclamation ceremony was held at the Capt. Jeff Kuss USMC Memorial at Lee Victory Recreation Park. The park commemorates the tragic June 2, 2016 in-flight accident of United States Marine Corps Captain Jeff Kuss while flying as Blue Angel #6 in practice for the Great Tennessee Airshow, in Smyrna.



An F/A-18C Hornet, similar to that flown by Captain Kuss, is the centerpiece of the memorial.

INSERT PHOTO NO. 1. An F/A-18C Hornet, similar to that flown by Captain Kuss, is the centerpiece of the memorial. The memorial plaza features hundreds of engraved pavers including the recently installed E50/E75 paver.

Unit Meeting: Since 2019 we have discussed the idea of creating an honorary membership category for the unit. As I stated above, we are a group of veterans who formed an informal, all volunteer, quasi-military "unit" of veterans who served in E50/E75 in Vietnam between 1966 and 1970.

We believe the veterans of the 9th ID E60 Long Range Surveillance (LRS) (1980s) are the 9th ID's organizational successors of E50/E75

LRRP/Rangers in the post war period.

When the US involvement in the Vietnam War ended in 1973, the US Army reorganized the 9th ID, moved the unit from Fort Riley, KS, to Fort Lewis, WA, and began training the soldiers to perform long range and counter intelligence surveillance patrols essentially the same mission performed by the E50/E75 LRRP/Rangers in Vietnam.

At this year's reunion, we considered two resolutions that would (1) create an "Honorary Membership" category, and (2) would allow E50/E75 veterans to consider E60 veterans as potential honorary members.

To be considered for honorary membership, E60 veterans are required to have demonstrated their commitment to E50/E75 by (1) attending a minimum of two biennial reunions, (2) demonstrating a commitment to support E50/E75 reunion activities, and (3) when called upon by name verbally affirm their desire to be an honorary member of E50/E75.

E60 veterans, who meet the criterion for honorary membership and are approved by the E50/E75 members present at reunions are granted honorary membership in E50/E75 9th ID and are also granted all of the rights and privileges associated with membership in E50/E75.



The memorial plaza features hundreds of engraved pavers including the recently installed E50/E75 paver.



E/75-E50 LRP-9th DIV LRRP

UNIT DIRECTOR - DUANE L. "PONCHO" ALIRE

continued

These rights could include but are not limited to, voting at biennial Unit Meetings and holding appointed positions and/or elected positions. The two resolutions passed.

Four E60 members, who were present, met the selection criterion. They were David Coles, Billy Siemens, James Thornblad and Brian Reed and were approved as honorary members of E50/E75.

Unit Treasurer's Report: We have not yet completed the financial report related to the reunion. Bob has submitted his receipts for the two rental vans and the three pendants presented to the Warrior Women – Bev Koontz, Kathy Runge and Patti Stone. However, as of this date we have not received the bank statements and financial records from Brad and Kathy Runge.

Unit Chaplain's Report: We have fully incorporated the "Fallen Since Vietnam" memorial service into our reunion itinerary. This memorial service was tested at the 2021 reunion in Mobile, AL and blended into our memorial service itinerary at the 2023 reunion in Green Bay, WI and at our recent reunion in Smyrna. We'll continue to refine this memorial service as we move forward.

The title "Fallen Since Vietnam" or as the program bulletin reflects "Fallen Memorial Service" were used for this special memorial service to remember our brothers who have died since returning home from their service to our country in Vietnam. Both are awkward.

I welcome any input from E50/E75 members and our new E60 honorary members regarding the name of this memorial service. Specifically, I'm interested in a name that accurately represents the memorial service's purpose and complements our KIA Memorial Service.

2027 Reunion: Bob proposed that the 2027 E50/E75 reunion be held in Santa Fe, NM and Poncho as the sponsoring member. His proposal was approved by the unit members.

Note: We will continue to meet informally in Branson, MO, at the LRRP Rally in the off years. Remember to make your room reservations early.

Election of the Unit Director: Bob nominated Poncho as the next unit director. His nomination was approved by the unit members.

Special Thanks: We extend our wholehearted appreciation to Deputy Unit Director Bob Hernandez, Unit Treasurer Tom Koontz, Unit Chaplain David Stone, and Unit IT Specialist Patti Stone for sharing their time, treasure and talent with our unit. Each is a valuable player in the organizational leadership of E50/E75.

Communications Reminder: Effective communications is a continuing effort. Dave and Patti are updating our Unit Directory. Let's help them by keeping them informed of any changes in our personal contact information or directory entry and by letting them know when one of our own passes away. Also, please make sure to designate a point of contact (POC) in case of an emergency or death of a veteran.

Unit Director's Award: During the banquet Tony Hanlon (Sept 1967-Sept 1968) was recognized with the Unit Director's Award for Exemplary Service to E50/E75 for his two terms as Unit Chaplain.

Patti Stone was presented a \$500.00 cash award for her continuing service as our IT Specialist.

Matsuda/Nelson Award: This award is named for former US Army Captain Clancy Matsuda and First Sergeant Roy D. Nelson, two early leaders of E50 Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol, and is the highest level of recognition we bestow on a member.

Poncho, assisted by US Air Force Major Kenzi Pridgeon, presented the Matsuda/Nelson Award to: Thomas Orland Koontz, David Parker Stone, and Robert Hernandez – each for their military, civilian and volunteer service, and for their loyal support of the Ranger Community.

Major Pridgeon is the daughter of E50/E75 LRRP/Ranger, Dennis McNally and currently serves with the 172nd Attack Squadron in Battle Creek, Michigan as a pilot and flight commander.

Ranger Duane Alire is serving his third "tour of duty" as Unit Director of E50/E75 9th ID. He was inducted into the US Army in July 1967 and served as a LRRP team leader in Vietnam for most of 1968. He returned home in 1969, graduated from Adams State College in Colorado and served as a park ranger in the US National Park Service for 30 years. He retired in 2001 and spends his time exploring America's wild places – traveling, hiking, camping, reading, studying and in the words of former US Senator John Lewis "Getting in good trouble, necessary trouble".



Poncho, Tony Hanlon, Tom Koontz, David Stone and Robert Hernandez.



G/75-E/51 LRP-196th LRRP

UNIT DIRECTOR - AL STEWART

continued



If you have not read our G Company/E 51st Company Association President Bill Martin's article published in our last August Sua Sponte news edition, you need to:

It has been said that change is eternal. As humans we have become quite adept at managing changes that we encounter in our lifespan. But this ability and the results of our actions are also dependent upon our perspective.

Soloman was noted to have said there is "nothing new under the sun." Maybe he was referring to the ultimate outcome or result of a certain endeavor.

Music is one example. Possibly, in pre-historic times humans began to hit sticks against trees or logs. This percussion eventually grew into rhythms. Later, someone learned how to pluck a string like one fitted to bows. More instruments came as we evolved and eventually a spinet / piano combined percussion and strings to produce many varied notes. While the instruments became progressively sophisticated from acoustic to electric to synthesized, one could argue that the goal had remained the same...make music. These varied instruments (tools of music) from percussion to brass to woodwinds to strings could be combined to make a symphony of music of sophistication and harmony. While each instrument has its unique qualities, the sound is made more appealing with the support of the others which enables the total sound which cannot be achieved individually.

We see a similarity in sport teams. It takes varied players with appropriate skills to come together to achieve desired goal.

A key requirement to achieve proposed goals / results is to have good communication. Communication has had quite an evolution especially in recent times. The invention of writing brought about the most profound change to what had once been solely face-to-face communication. That ideas could be captured and shared with others was a sensational achievement. When we were young, we had Pen Pals. The ability to communicate with people in other towns or states was amazing. Of course, now with the technology of the internet which brought us E-mail, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok and others, communication can be instantaneous. This can be good or sadly can be dangerous and divisive. Posts of questionable veracity may be taken as a statement of absolute truth. As the saying goes, a lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is still putting its shoes on. Thus, misconceptions can have great influence.

Like great symphonies, forms of government are born of many ideas, but in America chief among them is that the government is one of the people, for the people, a Republic. There are of course a variety of ideas or theories on how to achieve this noble goal.



Regardless of their station, all citizens are subject to at least some of the needs in Maslow's hierarchy. A government that can create such a society would be the envy of the world. Our great American experiment has indeed been that country. Because of our system, people from the world over have been drawn to our shores. We have benefited from the infusion and variety of ideas and experience of our citizenry.

However, a key issue is that we need to consider that a diverse number of ideas may lead to the same desired result. So, there is a need for open mindedness in consideration of the path to take.

Unfortunately, we have come to a point where we may not consider all sides of an argument. Some believe there is only one path or solution and that is the only way. That belief prevents us from accepting any compromise and labels doing so as failure. Because of this we label those that disagree as the enemy. If there is disregard for the needs of some sections of the population, we have abandoned the goal of creating a more perfect Union. In doing so we ignore the goal of

the phrase E pluribus unum. When absolute power is the main goal and it is acceptable to do anything, no matter how extreme, to get it, fairness and empathy are forsaken, and we are farther away from the goals stated in the preamble of our constitution.

It carries a lot of weight regarding what our country is dealing with now and highlights a sad situation that should be an issue for each of us. It does not matter what your political stance is, but we should all support our Constitution and our system of government, and the success we have enjoyed as a Nation. The founders of our country gave us the best means of government, with the separate powers including, Legislative, Judicial, and Executive branches, all within one government to separate three branches of power so that no single entity rules. Sadly, we seem to be in a vortex where power is sucking us down, in difference to our Constitution with three separate powers of government.

As you should know by now, most of my exercise is in the form of turning pages in books. I never get winded or break a sweat while reading. One book I recently read gives me serious concern about the state of our military, and especially Special Forces. I read and re-read a book titled, THE FORT BRAGG CARTEL. Having served in the military and law enforcement, I was dumbfounded by the lack of leadership and accountability associated with the Special Operations Community, and that State and Federal prosecutors turned their collective backs on serious crimes. When there is no accountability for corruption and illegal activity, it only gets worse. This book is a sad commentary of our military and especially that of the military leaders in Special Operations Command. Hopefully, things are better now, but the military command personnel certainly failed in leadership and accountability.

Al Stewart attended Basic Training and AIT at Fort Polk, the NCO Academy, Jump School and Ranger School at Fort Benning. He was with Golf Company, attached to the 23rd ID (Americal) operating in both the Chu Lai and DaNang areas. After Vietnam he was stationed at Fort Hood with the Alpha Company Rangers until his service was complete.



F/51 LRP

UNIT DIRECTOR - RICHARD 'DICK' MOYER



Membership voted Ed Dvorak to continue as the President and Treasure. It was also voted that Dick Moyer would continue as the Secretary. Several items that the President brought up during our meeting.

Dear Members,

Our September 2025 reunion turnout was excellent. Our members, spouses and widowers had an excellent time catching up with each other and visiting the Football and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, West Side Market in Cleveland, Ohio. We also made an unplanned stop at the b.a. Sweetie Candy Company which offered 4,500 + classic and contemporary items, plus a soda shop. For us seniors that was a major treat! Our association dinner was enjoyed by everyone. Those at the reunion included:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 1. Ed & Pat Dvorak | 11. Peggy Clements (Widow of Dwight Clements) |
| 2. Dick Moyer | 12. Van & Glenda Kominitsky |
| 3. Ralph & Shelby Boldt | 13. Bob & Carol Edwards |
| 4. John Gordon | 14. Steve Calderon |
| 5. Dennis & Debbie Cameron | 15. Claud Hamilton |
| 6. Jim & Josephine Kovach | 16. Tommy Thomas |
| 7. Warren Lahara | 17. John (Al) Souza |
| 8. Gerry & Patty McGough | 18. Michael & Amelia Black (Eastman Guests) |
| 9. Mark & Mari Eastman | 19. Mike & Carol Cartwright |
| 10. Diane Morris (Widow of Keith Morris (Lurch)) | |

- A. Better communication with members when we plan for future outings. He discussed the difficulties in planning the September 2025 reunion when no response came from the membership. All members present indicated they agreed in providing a better response when asked for input.
- B. We developed a process whereby the next reunion will be selected from the members that are in attendance. That process produced a buy-in and excitement about where we are traveling to and the local sites that are available to visit.
- C. As the continuing President, he will personally travel to the new reunion location, select the hotel within our criteria, and will stay overnight in the hotel (at his expense) to observe if it meets the groups standards.
- D. Ralph Boldt has been selected by the President to conduct the research for the 2027 reunion and will select three additional members, one to be an alternate, in case one becomes ill or has other personal events that prevents them from continuing in that capacity. The alternate will be on all conference calls but will not have voting privileges. Dick Moyer, as the secretary, will also attend all conference calls and will have a vote. If there is a tie, the President will be the tiebreaker.
- E. It was voted that we continue to hold our reunions every two years.

Article from Stars and Strips (early 1968) - Re-Print

The man I am writing about could have been the boy next door or the gentle blonde-haired kid from the corner supermarket of not so long ago. The "boys" are bound together by their trade. They are all volunteers. They are in the spine-tingling, brain twisting, nerve wracking business of Long Range Patrolling. They vary in age from 18 to 30. These men operate in precision movements - like walking through a jungle quietly and being able to tell whether a man or a animal is moving through the brush without seeing the cause of movement. They can sit in an ambush for hours without moving a muscle except to ease the safety off the automatic weapon in their hand at the first sign of trouble. These men are good because they have to be in order to survive. Called RP's for short, they are despised, respected, admired - and sometimes thought to be a little short on brains by those who watch from the sidelines as a team starts out on another mission to seek out the enemy. They are men who can take a baby or small child in their arms to stop his crying. They share their last smoke, last ration of food, last canteen of water - kind in some ways, deadly in others. They are men who believe in their country, freedom and fellow men. They are a new kind of soldier in a new type of warfare. They may look the same as anyone you may have seen in a peace march, draft card burning or any other demonstration - but they are different. Just look in their eyes. Better yet, just ask them, for they are men. These men stand out in a crowd of soldiers, it is not just their tiger fatigues but the way they walk, talk, or stand. You know they are proud because they are members of Long Range Patrol.

- Author unknown



My First Mission as a LURP

I arrived in Vietnam on the first of May 1968 during the final throws of the infamous Tet Offensive. I had just come off of three weeks of leave after completing Jump School, at Fort Benning. We landed at Bien Hoa Air Base at night. The base was being probed by enemy mortar fire. "Welcome to Vietnam"!!

We were transported to the Replacement Center by buses, once the "all clear" warning was issued. I spent about 5 or 6 days at the center waiting to be assigned to a unit. I assumed I would get assigned to one of the airborne units that was currently deployed in "Nam".

I was pulling guard duty near the food storage area when a NCO came and got me telling me I had just been assigned to the "F" Company 515 Infantry Airborne, Long Range Patrol, a "LURP" company. I thought, "What the hell is a "LURP?" 1 and another replacement were driven by Jeep to the company area. We were driven down a road that led to a gate and gate guard. A sign over the gate read, "Welcome Camo Linsey-Lattin." The whole compound had a high beam built around it. The driver said, "Good Luck...these guys are crazy bastards!" As he dropped us off at the Company Office. We were introduced to the first sergeant and the executive officer and assigned to a platoon. I was assigned to first platoon where I was directed to a hut and a bed, and then I went to the supply room where I was issued bedding and my field gear.

After getting settled in a little, we went to the mess hall for dinner. After dinner, I was free to kind of roam around the compound and check things out. I introduced myself to several other men in the area. They had a little enlisted men's club at the end of the platoon area where you could get a soda or a beer and some chips or other snacks. They even had a makeshift outdoor movie screen. At night, they would show a movie if they were able to get one.

The next morning, I started to be trained on what they did and how they did it. I first was given a refresher course on first aid, you were required to be able to dress wounds, flush eyes, give albumin through an intravenous catheter to help replace blood loss during major bleeding, and morphine surrets for pain. There were no medics assigned to "F Company.

I was then instructed on what was expected of me and how I was to rig my own equipment that I would be carrying to the field. Then I was told what our mission was. A 5 or 6 man team would be inserted into enemy territory to collect intelligence. We were to do this hopefully without being detected. I was thinking to myself, "Holy shit!! What the hell have I gotten myself into?!" Then I remembered what my Dad had told me as was boarding the plane headed to Fort Dix where I would be leaving the States to be deployed to "Nam". Dad's exact words were "Do not volunteer for!!"

A few days passed before I was assigned to a team. There were several duties that you would be assigned to while you were not in the field. Gate guard, TOC guard, fill sand bags, rebuild and reinforced our ammo bunker, etc. I was assigned to a team and the next afternoon we were briefed on our mission. We would be inserted by helicopter into an area that had just been hit by an airstrike. We were being sent in to assess the results of the airstrike. We put on our camouflage jungle fatigues and painted our faces with camo sticks. We boarded the helicopter and were whooshed off to our landing zone (LZ). The chopper whooshed down tree top level and we flew several meters before the chopper dived into LZ that was selected. We were out of the chopper before it touched ground and then the chopper immediately took off again. We ran for cover into the thick jungle. We moved very stealthy through the jungle after assuring ourselves that we had not been detected. The team leader moved us several meters from the LZ and we set up our defensive perimeter and waited to observe the area.

At this point I realized that my jungle fatigues were soaking wet from sweat. Night was coming fast from the dense jungle that surrounded us. As the darkness closed in around us, we could hear rustling and then voices. We came to the ready, and as we did so, an enemy soldier ran right passed the edge of our perimeter. A team member quickly dropped him with a burst from his M-16. The radio operator advised headquarters that we had made contact with the enemy. We were instructed to see if the enemy soldier was alive, and if so, be prepared to bring him to the LZ and he would be extracted with the team. The soldier was alive but gravely wounded. We were instructed to start heading for the LZ. It was now pitch black and we are trying to get through the jungle, carrying the wounded soldier. It was a miracle we found the LZ in the absolute darkness in the jungle. It was a very surreal feeling the warm blood, touching me on my cold sweat soaked jungle fatigues as I took my turn carrying the wounded soldier. We made it to the LZ and the team leader handed me a strobe light and told me to turn it on and hold it straight up. As I stood straight up and reached high into the air I turned on the strobe light and thought how long it would be before bullets start flying at me and wondered if this would be my first and last mission? We heard the chopper coming and swooped down and we ran to it as quickly as possible. We were flown to a med evac unit where we delivered the wounded enemy soldier; he was still alive but barely. We were then flown back to our company area to be debriefed. After debriefing, we went to our hatches, cleaned up a little, and went to the mess hall they opened up and gave us some hot chow.

We went back to our hut and tried to settle in for the night. As I lay there on my bunk I thought, "This is going to be a very long tour, and will I survive?" From that point on, I made sure I listened and learned as much as I could from the men that had been doing this for 5 or 6 months and were still alive. My father's words came back to me again. "Do not volunteer for anything!" And to this day, I don't remember volunteering to be one of these crazy bastards!!

Richard (Dick) Moyer SGT
F Co 515t INF (Long Range Patrol) Airborne
Team 1/6 First platoon team 6
P Co 75th Ranger Regiment



H/75-E/52 LRP - 1st CAV LRRP

UNIT DIRECTOR - PETE DENCKER

continued



Brothers – greetings from Tennessee! Want to start this article off by honoring one of our brothers who did not make it back – Loel Largent.



Loel was born on 13 March 1959 in Rusk Texas. He was a member of the Rusk High School Class of 1968. Following graduation he enlisted in the Army in August of 1968 and ultimately achieved the rank of Sergeant. Loel

was buried in the Cedar Hill Cemetery in Rusk. There is a garden in Rusk commemorating the life of Loel. When his family received his personal belongings they found 2 poems in his wallet...



*“If you would walk along the street in a small country town Tell me, just what would you see if you stopped to look around?
Would it be the flowers and the soft green grass at your feet?
Or would you see the beer cans and garbage in the gutter along the street?
Would you see beautiful children playing in front of happy homes?
Or would you see the prideless tramp who on the dark street roams?
I hope that the majority who read this little verse would see only that which is better and say a prayer for that which is worse!”*

*Oh for a single day when all that is, is gay.
Just for one beautiful night,
When every star is shining bright.
A time when every soul abounds with love,
And each heart in flight on wings of a dove!
When every eye would see but gay colors,
And every mind, will peace among brothers.
Oh, for a day, when love is no longer a lease.
- Just one day - in a world of PEACE!*

Account of Loel and bull Durham’s Last Mission

By Paul Alfaro (deceased, Reb. 2021)

Paul was assigned to team Three six as the ATL. The TL's name was Bull. “There was Loel, Whitey from my old team and two cherries. Both Bull and Loel were short with just 24 and 25 days left in country. It was strange that they were still in the field, but I guess the CO had his favorites in the company. The TL did not say a lot. It might have been because he was short, and did not want to take the time to know me. Maybe he felt he was getting the short end of the stick from the CO. In fact he did not speak to me until the next day before our mission. “I heard good things about you from Spanky. I think everything will work out okay.” “I feel the same way, Bull.” “Loel's my point man, he has been for twelve months. I hope you do not mind. ” “Mind? Bull, you are the TL, not me. It's whatever you want.” Tay Ninh was our next mission and because of all the action that was coming out of there I was a little apprehensive. “How do you want to work this?” “Well,” as I spread out the map, “I thought if we landed over here we could work our way in towards this trail.” “Let's not waste time. Let's just land next to the trail and go into the jungle right here” as he pointed with his finger on the map. I did not say a word. It was his team and he knew what he was doing. That night we spent at base camp I did not sleep much. In the morning we were inserted. As we ran into the tree line we saw the trail, it had not been used. Going in an additional 25 feet, we stopped. As we sat, out of the corner of my eye I saw movement. We then picked up after about ten minutes and moved farther into the wood line.

It was there, we found the real trail. As we moved down the trail we found foxholes with food and water next to



H/75-E/52 LRP - 1st CAV LRRP

UNIT DIRECTOR - PETE DENCKER

continued

them. The enemy had seen us come in and had moved back. I turned to look at the cherry. The weight of the pack was already making him fall behind. I then motioned for Bull to stop.

We continued to move slowly down the trail. As we came to a bend, they were waiting for us. Two of them were standing and not in position yet. I opened up on them with my M-16, placing my fire directly in their midsections. The initial return fire hit our radioman in the head. The bullet tore the left side of his skull exposing his brains. He fell forward. The rest of us had already hit the ground and were returning fire. Luckily, we were in a small depression, so it was hard for the enemy to get a clear shot at us, even though we were only twenty feet from them. As I saw them move trying to get to a better position to fire at us, I put a round in them. We were fighting forty men, but they must have been raw recruits, because all of their rounds were going over our heads. At that moment the radio man started to moan. Bull stopped firing to help the radio man. He placed a bandage around his head, not to stop the bleeding but to keep dirt from getting into the wound. I didn't think it was possible for him to still be alive.

As he moaned the enemy increased the tempo of their fire and direction. We were helpless as we watched him and could not give him anything for the pain. We tried to talk to him. We screamed at him. We did everything but hit him to keep him alive.

I turned around and somehow Loel was behind me laying on the ground. The cherry was in the rear and dazed. He was not firing because we were in the front. Just then an RPG slammed into our position. "Cover our rear and get that man up." He looked at me not knowing what to do. I yelled at him to turn around to protect our rear in case the enemy tried to out flank us. I looked at Loel and saw a bullet hole in the right side of his head, just above his ear. I turned and saw that Bull also had a bullet hole above his ear. I yelled at the cherry to look for a sniper in the trees, and a red line appeared across his cheek.

He turned his head, "I see him. I see him. He is in the trees". "Well, shoot him" He picked up the M-79 and shot just above the sniper. The explosion tore his head off and the body hung there. "I got him! I got him!" "Good. Now cover our rear!" Whitey was on the radio calling for an extraction team. Then the enemy decided to rush us. There were about ten of them and I think they wanted to take us alive. That was their mistake. I was shooting on instinct as I fired my rifle left to right they fell back, as if they hit an invisible wall. In that instance I realized, I was surrounded in total darkness. I was aware but had the strange sensation of floating without substance, moving towards a light. My first thoughts were of my parents, my brothers and sister. What is going to happen to them? Who is going to take care of them? The closer I floated towards the light, the brighter it became. I realized that this was death. Any thoughts of my family did not matter anymore. My life was over and I was dead.

Death did not want me at that moment and I returned. It seemed like hours but it had only been a fraction on a second. I was still fighting. I reached down and turned the URC-10 on. (The URC-10 is a beacon or locator if left on for five minutes this was a code for the whole area to be bombed.) Whitey saw a woman in black reaching for him and was shooting at her. "I see death! I see death!" he yelled. "Whitey, get down! You are going to get hit." Then the enemy stopped firing and he sat down. "She is gone, Chief. She is gone." I knew they were going to attack us again, but from which direction? Whitey and I were the only ones fighting and had expended nearly all of our ammo. "Whitey, get Bull's ammo. You take the right side." I then stripped Loel of his ammo and got ready. "Talon three six, Talon three six, Blue Max two eight Lima." "Chief, Blue Max is on station." It had been 45 minutes of fighting and finally help had arrived. "Two eight Lima, I am sending up a star cluster to mark our location." "Three six, roger. Got star cluster, be there in a minute."

The enemy decided to attack us again. We were lucky that they did not change the direction and were still to our front. A B-40 RPG slammed into the trees behind us and two grenades landed five feet from me. The explosion was close, but Bull's body was in front of me and absorbed most of the concussion. "Those gooks are throwing grenades at them. This is two eight Lima, where do you want me to fire?" "Lima this is three six, fire 360 degrees all around us." "Three six, how close?" "Lima, ten feet." "Three six, that's too close." "Lima, do not worry about us. Just get them off our back." "Three six, mark your position... OK, three six stand by." The helicopter began to dive and opened up with his mini-gun. The jungle cowered as the deadly rain bent the vegetation. Deliberately he began to encircle us with his fire. "How is that, three six?" "Closer, Lima, closer." The circle became smaller until the ground churned in front of us and the cries of the enemy echoed in the jungle as the mini-gun ran over them. "Three six, I see thirty gooks leaving the area, I am going after them." "Lima let them go and cover our ass." "Sorry three six, but I see them in an open field and I am not going to let them get away." "Sonofabitch!" We are alone again. "Talon three six, this is dust off five five, over." "Five five this is three six." "Will be at your location in about four minutes, over." "Whitey, you and the cherry get Nelson on the dust off. I will cover for you." I looked to see how many rounds I had left, there were only three.

The radio man was placed on the med-evac helicopter and left. The extraction helicopter came to pick us up, but we were not going to leave Bull and Loel's bodies. "Come with me," I said to the door gunner. He looked at me as if I was insane. "OK, give me your M-60." He did and I ran back to where the bodies were to wait for Whitey and



H/75-E/52 LRP - 1st CAV LRRP

continued

UNIT DIRECTOR - PETE DENCKER

the cherry. About a minute later they came and one of the pilots was with them. This beautiful sonofabitch came out of his helicopter and was helping us carry the bodies back. I could not believe it.

I heard the moans of the enemy that were still alive. I walked into the bushes and could see the pile of bodies as they lay there, the M-60 had a mind of its own as it opened up on the wounded soldiers. "Come on Chief, come on. They're dead, let's get out of here." I looked and the cherry was standing next to me. As we lifted off, an air strike started to hit the area we had just left. With my hand I reached down and turned off the URC-10. Flying back to Tay Ninh, I looked at the bodies thrown in a corner as if they were garbage. The tears began to drop from my eyes. Both Bull and Loel had less than a month left before they were to return home. It seemed a waste for them to die with so little time left. If I am going to die, I hope it's soon. I do not want to suffer anymore."

Rest in Peace Brothers!

For those who've fought for it, Life has a flavor the protected will never know

RLTW



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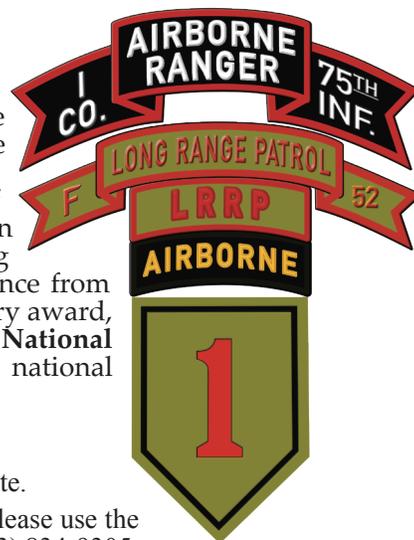
UNIT DIRECTOR - DAVID HILL



1st INF. DIV. LRP-Ranger

Vietnam Veterans - 2026 Reunion

Chattanooga, Tennessee was unanimously selected to be the city / venue for the 1st Infantry Division, LRP-Ranger Veteran 2026 Reunion. Our Reunion will be held there next May 6-10. This year's Reunion Hosts Committee is being headed by Debbie Douglas, with her Team including Judi McGath, Nancy Bennett, and Cheryl Allday. This great city, situated right on the Tennessee River, in the southeast corner of Tennessee, has much to offer, and it will be an exciting event. Chattanooga is rich in history and loves and honors American Veterans of all wars/eras. In addition to being the site of one of the American Civil War's key battles, it is also just a short distance from another one: the Chickamauga Battlefield National Park. Our nation's highest military award, the Medal of Honor, is continuously chronicled and celebrated in and by the city's **National Medal of Honor Heritage Center**. Chattanooga was also the host for the 2025 national convention of the **Congressional Medal of Honor Society of the United States**.



Reunion Dates: Wednesday, May 6 - Sunday, May 10, 2026

If you would like to arrive earlier on Monday, May 4th or 5th, you will receive the same rate.

Please make your hotel reservations as soon as possible but no later than April 6, 2026. Please use the attached link below for your reservation. Our reservation contact person is Shelby Rector (423) 834-9305. If you are arriving Monday or Tuesday before the reunion starts, please call Shelby and have her add these nights to your reservation.

Springhill Suites Hotel has generously provided our Reunion exclusive use of its great hospitality suite, which overlooks the Tennessee River, and shares a courtyard with a great restaurant: "Scotties On The River".

Springhill Suites is a Marriott property so please remember to add your "Marriott BonVoy" member number to your reservation. If you are not a member, you may join for free.

Rate: King and Queen rooms are the same rate of \$147.00/night plus tax. SpringHill Suites is located on the beautiful Tennessee River. If you would like to request a River View room there is an additional \$15.00/night charge.

Please note there is an additional parking fee at the hotel. As you will find out in Chattanooga, parking is very limited and can be costly. When you make your reservation from the attached link, at the top of your reservation our reduced rate is \$10.00/night plus tax. This is your rate! When you receive your reservation confirmation it will show \$18.00/night plus tax. Please disregard the \$18.00 (hotel is not able to remove the wording from reservation) but you will not be charged \$18.00/night.

Springhill Suites by Marriott
485 Riverfront Parkway
Chattanooga, TN
37402
(423) 834-8300



<https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-Link.miid=1756141155418&key=GRP&app=resvlink>



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UNIT DIRECTOR - DAVID HILL



PRIMARY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

May 6: Arrival and informal reception.

May 7: Day trip to Chickamauga Battlefield National Park. A VIP tour of the battlefield will be led by a National Park Guide. The tour will then be followed by dinner at "1885 Grill", where attendees will be entertained by "Freedom Sings USA" and its Grammy Award-Winning Singer-Songwriters and other local musical artists.

May 8: Numerous activities and tourist venues to visit (see below: "Things To Do" below).

Guided tour of the "Coolidge National Medal of Honor Heritage Center", which displays celebrates MOH Recipients of all US wars and conflicts.

Final Reunion Dinner, held in the Medal of Honor Center and catered by "Mission BBQ".

May 9: No set activities. See "Things To Do".

May 10: Departure

TRANSPORTATION

Primary Local Airport: Chattanooga Metropolitan Airport (symbol "CHA"), is close to downtown Chattanooga and our reunion hotel, and served by a number of airlines. Rental vehicles available.

Alternate Airports:

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (symbol "ATL"), is located two hours/128 southeast of Chattanooga. One of the busiest airports in the world, "ATL" offers many flights to and from anywhere in the US, and extensive rental vehicle options.

Nashville International Airport (symbol "BNA"), which is located two hours/132 miles northwest of Chattanooga.

Surface: Chattanooga is astride US Highway 75 and other arteries.

Good news on Springhill Suites Hotel parking fees:

If you have a **handicap license plate or a handicap placard displayed**, SpringHill Suites will waive the \$10.00/night plus tax parking fee for your entire stay. So, even if you are driving a rental vehicle, bring your handicap placard with you and display it.

THINGS TO DO IN OR NEAR CHATTANOOGA

Ruby Falls:

Ruby Falls is the tallest and deepest underground waterfall open to the public in the United States. Take a guided Classic Waterfall Tour, Lantern Tour or Extended Cavern Experience Tour along the scenic cavern trail to the breathtaking waterfall. See ancient geological formations, millions of years in the making, and learn about the cave's storied history.

Tennessee Aquarium:

Dive into two worlds of wonder and excitement at the top-rated aquarium in America. Begin with the freshwater exhibits in the River Journey building. The adventure continues with the Ocean Journey building. Experience two aquariums and IMAX movies in one great city.

Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum:

The Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum (TVRM) in Chattanooga delves into the city's rich railway history, dating back to 1850. Despite the decline of the rail industry in the mid-20th century, local enthusiasts founded TVRM in 1961 to preserve and restore historic railway equipment. Visitors can explore a variety of exhibits, including historic railway cars and locomotives, and a new exhibit building with special displays.

Creative Discovery Museum:

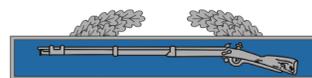
One of the nation's top children's museums, Creative Discovery Museum inspires children's passion for learning through play. Whether creating a masterpiece in ArtSpace, exploring life on the farm in Little Farm House, operating a lock and dam in Tennessee RiverPlay, or launching a rocket into space in STEM Zone, this museum is full of hands-on family fun.



HQ's 1st Infantry Division (LRRP)

F Company 52nd Infantry (LRP)

I Company 75th Rangers



The 1st Infantry Division has always lived by its motto: "No Mission Too Difficult; No Sacrifice Too great; Duty First." Organized in 1917 by Major General John J. Pershing, the 1st Infantry Division, later to be known as the "Big Red One", was the first American division to see action in Europe during World War 1. Again, in World War II, the Big Red One was the first to reach Britain and then land in North Africa, Sicily, and France (at "Omaha Beach" in Normandy). It held the Elsenborn Ridge northern line against the counter-attacking Germans during the "The Battle of The Budge" and then pushed them back into Germany, ending the war. It was later to be the second entire



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US. Army infantry division deployed to Vietnam, the remainder of the division joining its 2nd Brigade “in country” on 1 Oct. 1965.

Faced with aggression from communist North Vietnam and widespread terrorist and guerrilla activities of the Viet Cong, the government of South Vietnam asked the Free World for assistance. By 1965 the situation had reached the point where US units had to be summoned if South Vietnam was not to be overrun by the communists. The bulk of the 1st Infantry Division reached Vietnam in October 1965 after the 2nd Brigade's advance party had arrived in July of that year. The division was established in III Corps (War Zones C and D), with basecamps located in Phouc Vinh and Lai Khe and its division headquarters at Di An. Division headquarters was subsequently moved to Lai Khe.

While each maneuver (or “line”) battalion in the 1st Infantry Division had its own “Recon” platoon, it soon became clear that a separate, dedicated, long range reconnaissance unit was needed for operations throughout the division’s extensive Tactical Area of Operation (TAOR). Accordingly, in April 1966, 1st Div. CO, MG Wiliam DePuy, ordered the creation of a provisional Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) platoon. Since the divisional reconnaissance role was the designated mission of its armored cavalry squadron, 1st Sq/4th US Cavalry, the LRRP platoon was placed under the squadron’s D Troop (Air) aerial scout unit, based at its Phu Loi basecamp. It would be directed and supported by D Troop’s transport and gunship helicopters and work in concert with its Aerial Rifle Platoon (ARP). In recognition of the unique and solitary combat role of the LRRPs, they were given the radio call-sign “Wildcat”, followed by the actual team number. That call-sign had the additional value of letting any division aircraft receiving a call for assistance from any “Wildcat” station, would know it had emanated from a very small infantry team and relief was needed immediately. The D Troop pilots became especially adept at and dedicated to supporting LRRP missions. After initial recruiting and training, the first LRRP teams were created and commenced operation. Another unique aspect of the LRRP detachments and their successor organizations (the LRP and Ranger companies) was that, regardless of whether they were part of an airborne division or brigade or a non-airborne parent unit (in our case, the 1st Infantry Division), all their ‘airborne-qualified’ soldiers were to receive their highly-valued ‘jump pay’ while in the unit.

Long-range patrol detachment teams were designed to infiltrate objective areas prior to division operations and obtain information on enemy locations and perform terrain analysis, lengthy ground searches were required, because many trails and streams were covered by thick jungle canopies and not observable from the air. Missions were normally three to four days and, as most would be conducted 15 or more miles from the nearest friendly lines contact was only by radio, though use of ground identification panels, mirrors, strobe lights or flares could be used ‘in a pinch’. Most teams consisted of six men, although there were occasional 12-man hunter-killer teams, who at times carried out ‘prisoner snatch’ missions. UH-1 ‘Huey’ helicopters inserted teams into targeted areas, often making false landings to fool the enemy as to in which Landing Zone (LZ) the team had exited the aircraft. The teams would then quickly scramble into the nearest cover and “lie dog”, listening intently while ensuring their insertion had not been detected, before moving out on their mission.

Under its first commanding officer, Capt. John Sanders, the LRRPs conducted long range recon patrols within the 1st Div. TAOR (north and west of Saigon to the Cambodia Border), as separate missions or directly in support of large divisional operations. Their missions were conducted as far south as the Mekong Delta and north to Tay Ninh Province, Loc Ninh, and An Loc, near the Cambodian Border and were part of Operations Birmingham, Cedar Falls and many smaller “search-and-destroy” operations. Their doctrine and tactics were developed and tempered by combat during their first year of operation. Through “lessons-learned” from their initial operations, additional teams were formed, and the various specialized team member roles were established. Their regimen of constant training included a focus on air and ground insertion and extraction, ambush tactics, land navigation and use of supporting arms (both air and artillery) as well as the myriad of specialized small unit tactics to their mission. A

1st Lieutenant Harold Lowery
F Company 52d Infantry (LRP)
August 1968 - January 1969

Captain Allen A. Lindman
F Company 52d Infantry (LRP)
I Company 75th Rangers

January 1969 - March 1969
1st Lieutenant Jerry M. Davis
I Company 75th Rangers
March 1969 - April 1969

Captain Reese M. Patrick
KIA 14 May 1969
I Company 75th Rangers
March 1969 - May 1969

Captain Hamor R. Hanson
I Company 75th Rangers
May 1969 -October 1969
Major James J. McDevitt

I Company 75th Rangers
October 1969 - November 1969
Captain Robert D. Wright
I Company 75th Rangers
November 1969 - March 1970



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constant was the practicing of “Immediate Action (IA)” drills, designed to allow them to quickly break contact from enemy forces encountered in what became increasingly frequent “meeting engagements” with numerically superior Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) forces. Though reconnaissance was still their primary role at this stage, they often had to fight to survive. The LRRPs suffered their first casualty with the death of Sgt. Rudolph Algar Nunez, Killed-In-Action (KIA) on 13 June 1966 near An Loc Special Forces camp. He was to be just the first of a total of twenty-nine LRRP-Rangers killed-in-action over the course of the next nearly four years of the Big Red One’s tenure in the Republic of Vietnam. The LRRP Platoon was under the command of Capt. Hal London during the period May-July 1967, with Capt. Jack Price assuming command for the period Aug/67-July/68. Unit commanders for the rest of our unit’s operation in Vietnam were as follows:

In September 1967, the 1st Division moved the LRRP platoon from under D Troop and to Lai Khe and placed it directly under the control of the division’s G-2 (Intel) command. In recognizing the invaluable LRRP contribution to overall ground operations, in late November 1967, MACV Commanding Officer, Gen. William C. Westmoreland, directed that each Army infantry division and independent brigade in Vietnam was to augment its “provisional” long range patrol capability to a company-size unit. Accordingly, the new F Co./52nd Inf (LRP) was formed in Lai Khe, and accelerated recruitment and training begun (while nonetheless sustaining the current mission). New F Co. recruits had to be either airborne or Ranger-qualified and/or have a minimum of six months infantry combat experience. Many of those who volunteered from the “line” infantry units had decided that “there had to be a better way to fight [the war]. A selection process was quickly implemented, additional LRP teams organized, and team training commenced. As many team leaders and other team members as could be temporarily spared from operations were sent to the 5th Special Forces-operated “Recondo School” in Nha Trang. Its compressed but demanding three-weeks Recondo course (reputedly one of the best schools ever created by the US Army), refined and improved the combat leadership and tactical skills of experienced LRRPs, while providing new patrollers with the best possible “pre-combat” infantry training available. This training was to prove invaluable. In addition, as the new patrol teams would now also often pursue a more aggressive, “direct-action” combat posture, the second “R” (reconnaissance) was also dropped from their previous “LRRP” unit designation.

While helicopter-borne insertions would continue to be utilized by the F Co. LRP teams to conduct missions in the far reaches of the III Corps Military Region, a paucity of air assets, and the need for “screening” operations around major 1st Div. basecamps, fire support bases, and “line infantry” units, a significant number of “short” and “medium” range patrol missions were also conducted.

Another insertion tactic which was utilized was the “stay behind” insertion, whereby a team accompanied one of the division’s ‘line infantry’ companies, as part of a standard ‘search and destroy’ sweep into a very remote part of the division’s Area of Operation (AO). The team would then slip away from the larger infantry unit and ‘stay behind’ somewhere along the route and continue with its own mission. It might accompany the line unit as far as that unit’s extraction, wait until they had been extracted, then set up its own ambush/overwatch in the jungle near the extract LZ to see what developed after the NVA thought all Americans had departed the area. It might instead just proceed to the team’s “recon box” to conduct its own mission. This was a highly effective tactic, resulting in the capture of either solid recon information or enemy body count.

Even shorter-range missions frequently resulted in the team’s use of ambush tactics, either employing small arms or, preferably, through directing artillery and air strikes upon enemy forces--engaging them at longer range. One demonstration of the success of this type of mission was on the night of 31 January 1968, when Sgt. Ron Luse’s team “Wildcat 2”, sitting in an ambush/overwatch position northwest of Phu Loi, observed first a platoon, then an entire enemy battalion crossing the open rice paddies from the village of Tan Phuoc Khanh over to the neighboring An My. Calling the impending contact to the Phu Loi base command, Wildcat 2 directed artillery and heavy-mortar fire upon the enemy formation, badly damaging it as it fled into An My. Thus was intercepted the first attack upon Phu Loi of the enemy’s 1968 “TET Offensive”. It was to require three more days of hard fighting by the division’s infantry and armored cavalry to eliminate that enemy unit, but Phu Loi was spared from a direct ground attack.

Though less well-known than the communist’s “TET 68 Offensive”, on 5 May 1968, the enemy launched their “Mini-TET Offensive”. Though somewhat smaller in scope, nonetheless, over 100 US and allied cities and base camps were attacked, again resulting in major contacts between allied troops and the NVA. F Co. teams were in continual contact with enemy forces throughout the remainder of the month, making many sightings and springing numerous ambushes, both directly with small-arms or through directing artillery and/or air upon enemy units. One such action, on 11 May 1968, again at the same spot where “Wildcat 2” had ambushed the NVA on 31 Jan. 1968, resulted in the destruction by Phu Loi-based artillery and helicopter gunships of another NVA battalion.

As many of the original F Co. LRPs were due to soon complete their combat tours, the need for replacing them became an urgent matter. Embarking on an aggressive recruiting campaign, the company’s officers and senior NCOs met with incoming infantry as they reported in to the 1st Division’s replacement depot in its Di An



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headquarters base camp and word was also put out to each of its line infantry battalions. The criteria for new volunteers were that they had to be in an infantry MOS and airborne-qualified. Though the unit was, and always would be, totally comprised of volunteers, for at least a dozen or so young paratroopers, F Co.'s 'recruiting' may have more closely resembled their being '*shanghaied*'. These guys, all having just received their Jump Wings at Ft. Benning, Georgia, had arrived at the Long Binh 90th Replacement Battalion with preliminary orders sending them to either the 101st Airborne Division or the 173rd Airborne Brigade, when they suddenly found that they had instead been reassigned to a "mysterious" unit called F Co/52nd Inf (LRP), 1st Inf. Div., in a place named Lai Khe. These new 'volunteers' had no idea what 'LRP' stood for and virtually nobody at the 90th could tell them much (though a couple did shake their heads and give them the old "You'll be sorry!" taunt). After arriving in Lai Khe, they were, of course, given the opportunity to truly volunteer to stay, which all of them did.

As so many of the veteran Lurps had DEROS dates sometime in the July 1968 timeframe, F Co's officers and senior NCOs/Team Leaders quickly established and implemented a hasty, intensive and thorough Lurp combat training program. While most new Lurps had previously arrived in the unit largely as individual replacements, this new batch of Lurps eventually numbered over twenty—all to be trained at the same time. The company's highly experienced Team Leaders and its Training NCO, quickly established a much-needed training curriculum. The new volunteers were quickly rotated through classes on topics essential skills including land navigation, field communications, requesting and directing artillery and air support, helicopter insertions and extractions, rappelling, patrolling, team member roles and responsibilities, establishing ambush/overwatch and 'Remain Overnight (RON) positions, rifle marksmanship, deployment of claymore mines, and, of course, countless 'Immediate Action (IA) drills--eventually incorporating 'live fire' into the IA drills. Each Team Leader then selected new team members from among the trainees to bolster existing, veteran teams, or to form new ones, retaining at least a couple of veteran Lurps on each 'new' team to solidify them. The "new guys" then honed their newfound skills through team training, running short-range missions 'outside the wire' near Lai Khe. F Co. thus quickly expanded from its current 6-7 operational teams to nearly a dozen. The new guys learned their lessons well and went on to serve with the distinction throughout their tours.

Following the training and reorganization, a number of teams were sent to operate from our other 1st Division base camps of Quan Loi, Phu Loi and Dian, as well as some of the division's Fire Support Bases (FSB), located near its main north-south supply route of National Highway 13. Some missions required pre-establishment of a comms Forward Operating Base (FOB) to keep the teams in communication with their Lai Khe base and key supporting units—particularly their artillery and helicopter and fixed-wing air support.

The need to grow F Co. was soon to be quite evident as, for it and the rest of the American military units in Vietnam, 1968 would be the bloodiest year of the war. Of our LRRP-LRP-Ranger unit's combat losses of twenty-nine men Killed-In-Action (KIA), seventeen were lost during the fighting in 1968. On 21 October 1968, all six of Sgt. Bill Cohn's team were lost on a single mission, along with the four helicopter crewmen who had attempted to extract them while all were under enemy pursuit. Exactly a month later, five of Sgt. Felix Washington's six-man team (including himself) were lost. On 27 February 1969, three men of SSgt. Enrique Cruz' six-man team were killed, with a fourth succumbing to his wounds a day later (for more information on this mission, refer to Sgt. Bill Goshen's book, War Paint).

All our KIA represented grievous losses—but to lose so many men on single missions was particularly devastating. The names, pictures, and other details of each of the wonderful young men we lost can be found at our unit website: <http://www.f52i75.org>, under the tab at top entitled "Our KIA". We toast each of them, individually, at each of our unit reunions, and will do so as long as we can still hoist a glass. RIP guys! You honored us by your brave service and will never be forgotten.

A major change was soon to occur for F Co. Rather than create an entirely new unit designation for such an elite force as the Army's LRP companies had become, the Department of Army looked to its rich heritage and, on 1 February 1969, designated the 75th Infantry Regiment as the parent organization for all Army LRP companies and replaced the parenthetical designation 'LRP' with 'Airborne-Ranger' for these units. Therefore, Company F, 52nd Infantry (LRP) was deactivated, and its members reassigned to Company I/75th Inf (Airborne-Ranger). On 1 February 1969, the 75th Ranger Regiment was reactivated and all LRP Companies in Vietnam became Ranger Companies. 'Same mission/ different name'. Also in February 1969, the second TET offensive started. Our unit was ordered to send four teams to FSB 'Thunder Base II', on Hwy 13, north of Lai Khe. We were to patrol and observe the Song Be River corridor for enemy movement heading to Saigon. Teams were generally deployed only two at a time, though to adjacent recon box locations. This ensured that they would get adequate support from our all too often scarce helicopter transport and gunship resources. Most teams made contact within the first or second day after their insertion and had to be extracted quickly. The enemy now knew to be on the lookout for our teams, even employing 'counter-recon' teams throughout the III Corps Military Region in which we operated, in order to find and eliminate our teams. Our teams were a thorn in their side that they wanted to eliminate whenever possible.



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UNIT DIRECTOR - DAVID HILL



In January 1969, to focus more of our assets in the southernmost portion of the 1st Division's AO, about half of the company was deployed down to the Big Red One's southern-most base camp of Di An. They took wall lockers, foot lockers, and everything else they would require, as it was not then known how long they would be operating in our of Di An.

In early 1969, Company I continued the shift away from a strictly 'area reconnaissance' tactical doctrine to the employment of aggressive ambushing and use of 'heavy' or 'hunter-killer' (comprised of 10-12 men) tactics pioneered in the just-prior LRP era.

The I Co. Rangers continued to operate aggressively and successfully, generally achieving higher enemy 'body counts' (the standard by which combat success was generally measured in the war) than entire line infantry battalions.

A conversation was held at Quan Loi between the division's First Brigade Commander and its Third Brigade Commander shortly before F Company 52nd Infantry (Long Range Patrol) was transformed into Company I (Ranger), 75th Infantry. The conversation concerned the Big Red One LRRP's loss of Sgt. Cohn's team and Sgt. Washington's team. At that time, the Rangers numbered only six active teams. The First Brigade Commander complained that Ranger intelligence had not been very reliable before the enemy had overrun of his Quan Loi base camp perimeter. The 3rd Brigade Commander said: "What do you mean that these Rangers did not perform up to expectations? Sgt. Crabtree's Ranger team had warned your staff in advance of that attack and that the enemy was heavily infiltrating the area and Quan Loi was in grave danger, but they rejected his assessment. Don't you know that their (Ranger teams') enemy KIA's exceed any battalions in your Brigade?"

Robert D. Law, Company I (Ranger), was the first member of the 75th Infantry

Rangers to receive the Medal of Honor, having willingly sacrificed his own life for his teammates by jumping upon an enemy hand-grenade which had been thrown into their position. Only three Rangers LRRPs received our nation's highest combat valor medal while assigned to these type units.

From 1 January 1969 until deactivation, due to the US Army's 'Phase III Vietnamization' withdrawal scheme, on 7 March 1970, I Company (Ranger) teams conducted 372 classified tactical operations (with 205 recorded sightings of the enemy). The "Iron Rangers" of I Co. directly engaged the enemy 191 times.

ARVN RANGER ADV, BIỆT-ĐÔNG-QUÂN

UNIT DIRECTOR - BILL MILLER



Fellow Rangers and Co Vans

Over the last year my wife and I have downsized to a new home in the same town but the new home is less maintenance and is handicapped friendly. Consequently, I have stuff all over and in storage. As I was going through boxes after boxes I ran across a journal my father kept during WWII. Therefore I thought a lot you might like to see some of what he wrote.

Background:

My father 1st Lt. William C. Miller was a B17 Pilot assigned to the 301st Bomb Group, 419th Bomb Squadron based out of Foggia, Italy. On his 29th mission February 25, 1944 to bomb



the Regensburg Air Craft Factory over Germany he and his crew aboard the "Screamin Eagle" were severely damaged but were able to make over the Alps, but were forced to ditch the aircraft off the beach at Anzio. All crew members survived and were picked up by the US Navy and returned to their base.

On March 30, 1944 his 33rd mission to bomb the Steyer Aircraft factory in Austria, his bomb group was attacked by approximately 200 enemy fighters. Once again his aircraft "Vagabond" suffered severe damage to two engines and he had to fall back and eventually ditched in the Adriatic Sea and the entire crew was captured by the Germans.

Excerpts from the Journal

These are from the personal journal of 1st Lt. William C. Miller ASN 0-686580 US
Army Air Corp, Stalag Luft I, Barth Germany Prisoner #4433

Tuesday Feb 27th 1945:

No Breakfast. Supper spam, spuds, peas. ¼ Red Cross parcel today. Reading "Journey in the dark" by Martin Flavin

Wed. February 28, 1945:

Breakfast was oatmeal. Supper was "C" rations, spuds & turnips. Got my first letter from Vicky (My Mother) since November. Thank God she is ok. Hope she heard from J.K. Smith, probably will not find out for sure until I get home. Big explosion nearby about 15:45, there was no Air Raid alarm so it might have been a small earthquake. In an Air Raid last night a twin engine ship strafed something close by.

Thursday March 1st 1945:

No breakfast, supper was Tuna, spuds, red cabbage. Played Monopoly today and yesterday but did not win.

Friday March 2, 1945:

Breakfast, spuds and prunes. Supper; stew, spuds and red cabbage. The PA system is now completely installed. 78 more men arrived today.

Monday March 5, 1945:

No breakfast. Last night the Germans put Tavernet in solitary confinement for opening the shutter. I ate the last of my personal parcel today. I was spaghetti and was full of mold. I'll probably get dysentery, but I don't care. I'm so hungry I could eat a baked cat. Supper stew, spuds, Kraut.

March 17-26, 1945:

Stew and spuds. The best news in months, "FOOD!!! 2400 parcels came in today and more on the way (we hope). This means ¼ parcel per man. Received 2 letters from Vicky, 2 from Dad.

April 10, 1945:

Since my last entry many things have happened and have happened so fast I have been unable to remember. First, on the 3rd of April Max Schemling ex-heavy weight champ was here to spread the good will. The next morning our mess hall burned down between 5 and 7, but very little was lost except the building and fixtures. Then we started to cook in our room and what a mess. 16 men using one stove and fuel so short that we can have only 6 breakfast, 6 suppers and no dinners each week. April 8, four years in the Army and only a 1s Lt. The next day I made a cold cake and it was very good even if I do say so myself.

April 30, 1945:

Jerry's leaving, Russians on the way. Maybe they will be here tonight, or tomorrow.

May 1, 1945:

Jerry's all gone except 3 or 4, stole all money. The camp was officially turned over to us at 2300 hrs yesterday. It's 1730 hrs and no Russians and no water.

The Russians did liberate the camp on May 2, 1945. At that time there were over 8,000 US, British, Canadian, French and other allied Officers.

My father went on to become a fighter pilot during the Korean War and retired shortly after the Cuban Missile crisis.

As a side note some years ago I received a phone call from the son of the Bombardier on the March 30th mission and it turned out that he was with the 75th RR 1st Battalion in 1974 and Mike Martin was his 1st Sergeant.

Biet Dong Quan Sat!

Mu Nau

Bill Miller

Unit Director

Ranger Bill Miller enlisted in 1965 and was assigned to the Vietnamese 2nd Ranger Group in Pleiku in 1967 as the communications Sergeant. After being discharged in December of 1968 he earned a BS in Electronic Technology and worked as an engineer for the Bechtel Corporation until retiring in 2005.



L/75-F/58 LRP-101st LRRP

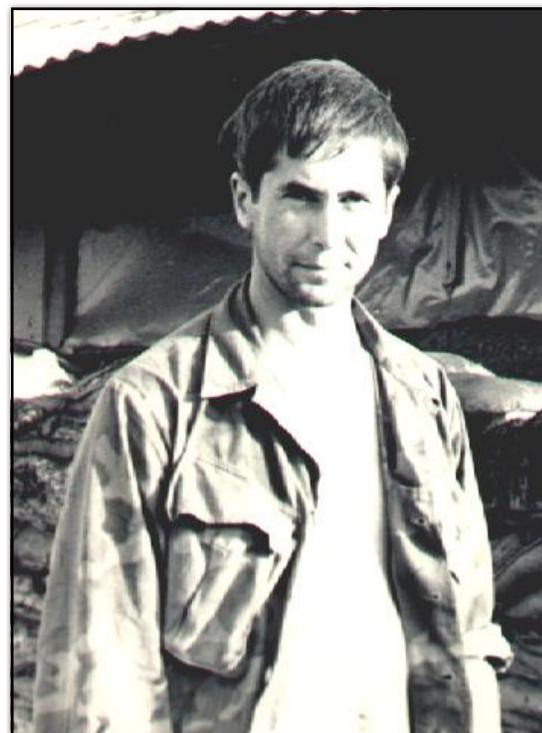
UNIT DIRECTOR - CHARLES "CHUCK" REILLY

continued



It's the Holiday season again for one and all, and excuse me for stating the obvious, but are the years going by a lot faster now or is it just me? "As Time Goes By" was that famous song that Sam (Dooley Wilson) sang in "Casablanca." It should've been called "As Time FLIES By." Anyway...here we are again and I would like to wish all my fellow Rangers and LRRP brothers a very happy and Merry Christmas. Of course, by the time this issue hits your mailboxes, it'll be halfway to spring, but it's the thought that counts. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all. 2026...it doesn't seem possible. The old guard is changing once again. One of these days, this column will be taken over by someone from Gen X or younger. But I'm not ready for the mothballs yet.

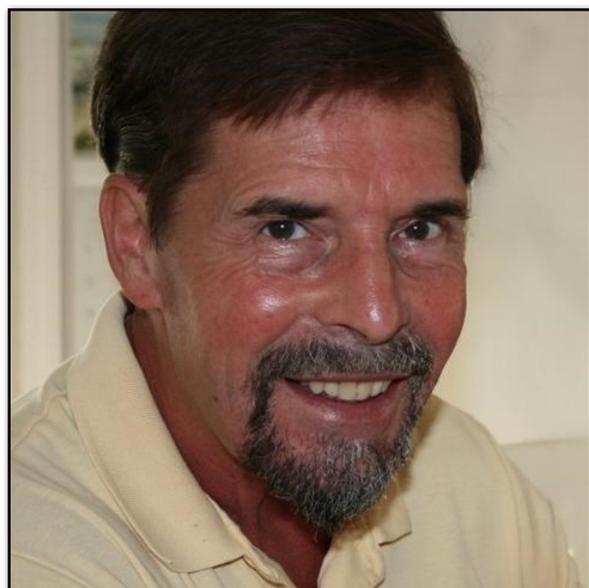
In the last issue a photo of Dave Hazelton somehow didn't make it in, so I've included two this time. One of them while he's getting an award from the 2/17th Cavalry's commander LT. Colonel Robert Molinelli, with Captain David Ohle next to him. I believe the other man in the photo is Sgt. Zentner from "L" Company. The other picture is a nice shot of him in a casual pose around the company area. Hazelton, as most of you know, is a Canadian and was a great team leader during his time in the field. He later became an excellent and knowledgeable member of the company's Tactical Operations Center (TOC). Hazelton was one of a number of



Dave Hazelton in casual pose

Canadian volunteers (Fido Vodden, Tom Sweetnam, and Rob McSorley were some of the others) and he made a very positive impression on all who knew him, as did the other gentlemen. Sadly, Rob McSorley did not survive the war. Over the years, I've noticed that few Americans even know about Canadians who served in the U.S. Armed Forces in Vietnam. All they remember is that draft dodgers headed up to our northern neighbor in droves during the prime war years, some never to return---even after President Carter's amnesty edict. Neither does the general public know anything about Australian forces and/or Korean soldiers (ROKS) in Vietnam. Let's face it, the U.S. general public is not

very knowledgeable about the war, and young Americans even less so. That's about as political as I can get for this publication.



David Bush

The well-known saying "Thank you for your service" may sound a bit trite and contrived nowadays. It has obviously lost some of its power and sincerity. But it wasn't long ago when veterans would never hear such a thing from just about anyone. I remember the first time someone said it to me. It was in Washington D.C. and a year or two after 9/11. I was heading to the D.C. Vietnam Wall memorial for a service when an attractive young lady literally ran across a busy avenue and asked me if I was a Vietnam Veteran and going to the Wall. When I answered "Yes," she immediately extended her hand and said "Thank you for your service!" She said it with such passion and sincerity it almost knocked me over. She then ran back across the avenue as quickly as she had run up to me, and was soon on her way. It was something I would always remember. Since that time, I've always appreciated the gesture, even from strangers. When I got back from the war in 1971, "Thank you for your service," was the last thing I would've heard from anyone, even my best friends and immediate family. We've all come full cycle from those days of yore, and I believe for the better. I know I've covered this subject before in this publication, but I believe it's worth repeating. And now for the news of the day....



L/75-F/58 LRP-101st LRRP

UNIT DIRECTOR - CHARLES "CHUCK" REILLY



This article is not supposed to be an obituary column, but I must tell you that Dave Bush passed away several months ago (October 2025) in Hamilton, Ohio. He was in the company in 1970-71 and was wounded-in-action in late June of 1971. I remember it well since it was on a mission where I was the Team Leader and Bush was the ATL. As it turned out, it was the last company mission for both of us. Also present on this mission were Steve MacAlpine, Fred Karnes and Dave Quigley. I have no recollection now regarding the sixth member, but I know we had one. Luckily for Bush, the bullet fired from an AK-47 passed right through his shoulder but missed a lot of bone and tissue. It was the perfect example of the "Million Dollar Wound" and Bush was able to head home after a brief trip

to the infirmary. Fifteen years passed before I saw him again. It was at our first company reunion in 1986 at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, when we finally hooked up. He said his arm gave him some trouble here and there, but not to lose any sleep over it. As for MacAlpine, Karnes and Mr. Quigley, they were all veterans of Hill 809 and nothing seemed to phase them in the least during the mission---even a little enemy fire. After that ordeal, I guess they were used to bullets flying around. All these gentlemen survived the war.

Dave Bush had a long and happy life with his wife of 50 years, Sheri, three children and nine grandchildren. He was originally from Kentucky but spent the majority of his life in Ohio while working at the General Mills Corporation for 45 years. He was 75 years old when he died. I have included a photo of Dave from his later years but was unable to find one from his days at Lima Company. I know I've seen a few of them over the years. If anyone out there has possession of a photo of Bush from Vietnam, please forward it to me when possible. I would like to display it in the next issue of *Patrolling*.

I would like to inform everyone that some of our Ranger Brothers are suffering with serious illnesses at the moment. This distressing news also includes some of our former officers of the company, but because of privacy issues, I am not at liberty to give out names. As for other news and stories.....I would like to emphasize that I am very open to hear from anyone out there who has some pertinent information that would be of interest to anyone who reads this publication. Stories about former



hazelton zentner molinelli

missions are always welcome. Stories about fishing and hunting trips are also welcome along with any photos from these expeditions. Lately, during my spare time, I've read two great books. One is Tom Brokaw's "The Greatest Generation" which is mainly about World War II soldiers and their families back home during the conflict. The other one is "D-Day" by Stephen Ambrose. "D-Day" was published in 1994, so there's plenty of first-hand accounts from the men who survived that hellish day. 31 years later (2025), nearly all of them are gone now. The 101st Airborne Division is well-represented in the book, especially the accounts of their airborne landings behind the lines in the early morning hours of that day. The book also does a good job of contrasting the commanding generals (i.e. Dwight "Ike" Eisenhower and Erwin "The Desert Fox" Rommel) and the reasoning for their respective strategies. Unfortunately for Rommel (and lucky for us), he could not make critical and decisive decisions without first consulting Hitler, who literally slept through the battle as no one dared to awaken him. Rommel later got involved in the July 20, 1944 plot to kill Hitler, a mere six weeks after D-Day. The plot failed and afterwards Rommel was forced to commit suicide or else his family and staff would've been prosecuted and most likely executed. It was an undeserved ending for a great general. On the other end of the scale, Ike became president of the United States. Anyway, I recommend both books even if they have nothing to do with Vietnam or any later wars. Well, that's about it for now. I hope all of you are enjoying life and staying in the best of health. God bless you all in the coming year. As always, RANGERS LEAD THE WAY!

A brief biography: Charles Reilly was a member of "L" Company Rangers from October 1970 to July 1971. After the army, he worked as a Union Representative for the USWA (United Steelworkers of America) and later as a Corporate Recruiter for an IT Integrator in San Diego. He is originally from Providence, Rhode Island and now resides in Manhattan Beach, California. He retired in 2020 and has been the Unit Director for the 101st ABN Rangers and LRRPs for the last ten years.



N/75-74th LRP-173rd LRRP

UNIT DIRECTOR - RUDY TEODOSIO



LRPs & Rangers, I want first wish ya'll a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2026. I am grateful that our Heavenly Father grant us another year even as our numbers lessen



ISG 'Big' Frank Moore



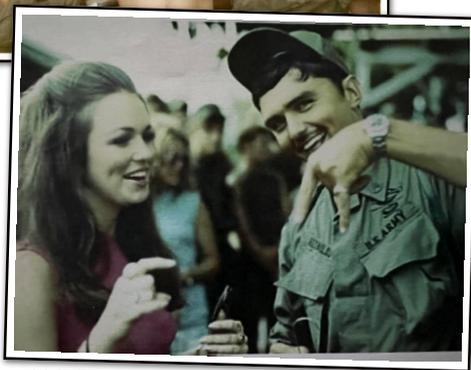
Rudy Teodosio On belay 1971



each year.



Donut Dollies visit to Ranger Hill LZ English 1971



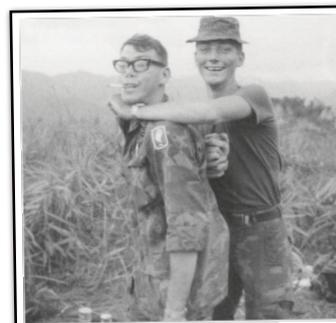
SSG Paul Reynolds (Graduate University of Oklahoma) countersign Ms Phyllis George (Graduate of the University of Texas).



Ms Phyllis George Miss America (Former Miss Texas) w/ SSG Paul Reynolds (G-75 Ranger / 2-503 Abn Inf) N-75 Ranger) LZ English Vietnam 1971



Ranger Jon Vaught & Ranger "Peanut" House being entertain by Donut Dolly Miss Susan 1971





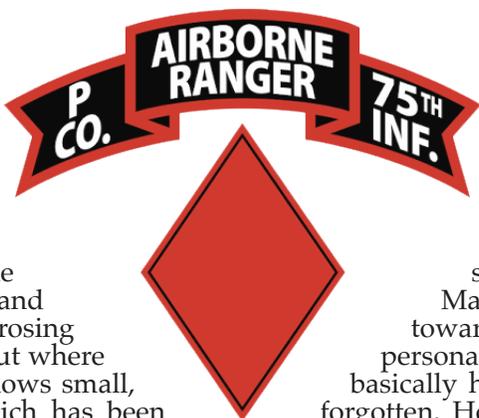
Good morning my brother. I just wanted to take a few minutes and inform you of my latest progress with my Brain Cancer so you are aware and would share it with our group. The Doctors in Houston should be very proud of their work as I am still alive and kicking. They say that the progress resulting from being in the clinical trial have slowed the cancer to the point where it is not growing any larger and there are indications that part of it is necrosing or dying off. This is the brain Cancer but where it has metastasized to my spine still shows small, very small but still active growth which has been significantly decreased through the Clinical Trial Chemotherapy which I have been involved in at M D Anderson in Houston. I owe my life to them as I am certain that without their assistance I would not be typing this email. I thank God for being alive and am trying to enjoy life daily as I can.

Tom, what a great reunion we had. Nested in the hills of Arkansas the resort location couldn't have been better. All of us appreciate your efforts to make it a special time and it was. Viewing the vehicles and equipment brought back memories of yesterday and I am envious that he has an operational 3/4 ton truck. They were my favorites. To all the Papa Rangers who didn't or weren't able to attend, they missed a grand time to be with our Brothers, Sisters and family. My son Kelly and daughter Kendall both told me that they understood me just a little bit better as a result of meeting everyone else who had served with me. It's not a complicated relationship, we served together in combat and are now brothers, to me it is easy to comprehend.

Just wanted to take a minute to tap on a subject that is dear to me. Gary Norton has already started working on the Christmas fund for junior enlisted Rangers and I wanted everyone to take a look at their yearly donations and if you can budget some money to help with this project, it would be welcomed. We have one major sponsor but all individual donations hugely help and if you can, please do so. Route any check to Tom or directly to Gary who is still handling the funds with the assistance of Linda at Fort Benning and the Ranger Association.

Also I would like to make another plea for each of us, who are able, to chip in some cash to the unit fund that provides the Papa Company items we all cherish. Tom made some really nice purchases for the reunion and we raised some good money there. I have no idea where we will meet next time but be assured, I will be there and look forward to seeing you then. I am heading back to Houston next week where I spend about 3 weeks a month getting treatment and staying alive. Thanks to Marie for making this possible for me to still be alive with some comfort and safety at our RV which we set up just South of Houston in Pearland. If you happen to drive through town, please give me a call and let's get together.

I thought that I was able to drive myself and get to my appointments as well as taking care of myself and maintaining the RV while Marie took care of the house in



Jackson as well as her 89 year old Father who has substantial medical issues. On one of the return trips from Jackson back to Houston I took a full on Face Plant into a gas pump in Lafayette LA resulting in severe bruising to my face as well as some brain damage resulting in a loss of sight and additional debilitating symptoms. I got on the phone and called Marie who was on the next flight smoking toward Houston and is continuing to personally care for me yet. The wounds have basically healed but the aftermath will never be forgotten. How lucky I am and fortunate that she was able to drop everything to come to my aid. Our son Kelly is running the house in Jackson and recently got promoted to Major in the MS NG. We are all very proud of and for him That's the plus but imagine thrusting a single person full time employed as a cop who is the middle of a hard press love adventure with a wonderful beautiful lady with two young children. I told the both of them that if they didn't do something about it they might well miss out on a wonderful life story. Kelly asked about my feelings for the kids if he adopted them I had to remind him that not only myself but my four brothers and sisters were all adopted by my mother when she married my Dad after our birth mother passed. I hope I gave him an affirmative answer. Most recently while living in Houston, Marie and I are once again trying to get compensation for Agent Orange which had been repeatedly denied at the Jackson MS VA. They screamed at me there that just exposure didn't work, you had to have Cancer. Well guess what, I've got cancer so lets see where this claim goes. There were multiple racial boundaries' that were difficult to work around in Jackson which do not seem present at the Houston VA.

By the by, Because of double vision as a result of my accident, I have lost my driving privileges and this loss of mobility really hurts. I've been driving since I was 15 and having celebrated my 75th birthday this past week that means I've been driving for 60 years. Yes I miss being able to get around but I don't want to put myself or another or others in danger because I'm stubborn. So here it is, I'm getting old, can't drive, I'm dizzy all the time because of double vision and our home in Jackson needs our assistance but we live most of the time in Houston. on the flip side. Marie and I have never been closer, I' praying more and still playing guitar. I have chemotherapy again Oct 9 so please remember me in your prayers. I so deeply appreciate all who do. You are helping keep me alive. I'm not ready to give up and I'm still fighting hard as I can. Like it owes me money!! Live goes on and you have to roll with the punches. You win some, you lose some but you dress for them all. Remember getting off the choppers and it was raining? we just off into the rain soaked jungles and Charlie Miked. No difference here, just a beautiful face to wake up to in the morning. No disrespect to you guys but there is no comparison. I love you all. Please feel free to reach out and say hello. I always enjoy speaking with you.

- Yonko Out!



RANGER HALL OF FAME

BY: RICK BARELA

continued



Members of the 75th Ranger Regiment Association, well it that time of year again and the holiday season is well upon us. Hoping the weather and holiday season in your area cooperates and you have a very pleasant holiday with family and friends. We do have quite a few events coming up in 2026 within the ranger community, i.e. The Best Ranger Competition and the Ranger Hall of Fame voting in April 2026 with induction ceremonies later that year.

This year, the Ranger Hall of Fame selection criteria underwent two major revisions, which will have a considerable impact on the number of inductees beginning in 2026. The RHOF board decided that, from now on, only ten members will be inducted instead of fifteen. A ranger can be nominated for the RHOF as many as five times, but if they are not selected by the fifth nomination, they lose eligibility for future nominations. *Under the new by-law change, rangers who were not selected during the prior three-year process are ineligible for nomination.*

You are asking why, well the simple reason is we were catching up as our Hall of Fame came to be in 1992 with the inaugural induction year. We started with over twenty-three members inducted that year and continued that trend until the by-laws were developed to read fifteen inductees per calendar year.

All units should have already submitted their Ranger Hall of Fame packets to our association board for review. Remember we are looking for the absolute best who served in a Ranger unit and promoted the Ranger Ethos after service. Our association board reviews each packet and provides a numerical score for each candidate. Afterward, the top three scores are submitted to the Ranger Hall of Fame Selection committee for consideration by the full board review.

The Ranger Hall of Fame board must receive all packets from the organization NLT 26 Feb 2026. The full board will convene 17 April 2026 in the Darby Room of the 75th Ranger Regiment Headquarters on Fort Benning to make the selections for the 2026 induction ceremony.

As before each voting member of the board must record a numerical score on a scale of 0 to 5 on their ballot for each nominee (0 being the lowest score and 5 the highest). Once the voting is complete, the RHOF Coordinator will generate an order of merit list, beginning with the nominee who received the highest total score and ending with the nominee who achieved the lowest total score. Before voting ends, any board member who assigns a candidate a score of "0" must explain their reason verbally.

The new rule allows up to ten rangers each year to be chosen for induction into the Ranger Hall of Fame. This does not include Honorary Inductions or Medal of Honor recipients who meet the eligibility criteria. Neither Honorary nominations nor Medal of Honor recipient nominations will count towards a nominating party's yearly quota.

Any questions please feel free to contact me regarding this or any matters regarding the Ranger Hall of Fame.

Rangers Lead the Way!!



Lieutenant General Gary D. Speer

Ranger Gary Speer perpetuated the Ranger Creed every step of the way in his 37 years of distinguished service to our nation. From the Cold War to the Global War on Terrorism, to operations in southwest Asia, he led the way as a creative, innovative trainer, a masterful tactician, and a moral and ethical leader. In every leadership position, he was recognized as the leader for his command in developing, streamlining, and often times, transforming processes while improving the training, combat readiness, and quality of life for his soldiers and their families. As one of the original members of the 1st Ranger Battalion, and later commander of the 2nd Ranger Battalion, he was recognized for his mental and physical toughness, his authentic leadership style, his tactical moxie, his high standards, and his ability to build and strengthen winning teams. During those formative years for the 1st Ranger Battalion, he was deeply involved in the actual writing and documentation of the training objectives (task, conditions, and standards) for every individual and collective task. This process provided the basis for what the Army ultimately developed as soldier's manuals and arpeps. He also participated in and subsequently led the 2nd Ranger Battalion's transition and integration into Joint Special Operations and the planning and rehearsal for multiple contingencies worldwide. As a senior leader for coalition forces in three unified commands, his ability to forge enduring partnerships across diverse, foreign forces was heralded by our National Command Authority and leaders of allied nations. Ranger Speer was the true embodiment

of the Ranger Creed in positions of great significance to our Armed Forces. Throughout his magnificent career he truly "always endeavored to uphold the prestige, honor, and high esprit de corps of the Rangers".



RANGER HALL OF FAME

By: RICK BARELA

continued



Master Sergeant (ret) Howard 'Mad Max' Mullen jr. is one of the most dynamic and innovative ranger instructors to serve during the 1980's and early 1990's. A 26-year army veteran, MSG Mullen is known to most as 'Mad Max' Mullen for his bold, motivating, and aggressive leadership style. MSG Mullen served in Alpha CO, 1st Battalion (Ranger), 75th Infantry Regiment, Bravo CO, 2nd Battalion (Ranger), 75th Infantry Regiment, Charlie CO, 3rd Battalion (Ranger), 75th Infantry Regiment, and the RS-2, 75th Ranger Regimental Headquarters. On October 25, 1983, MSG Mullen conducted a 500ft combat parachute assault on the island of Grenada as part of "Operation Urgent Fury" with Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion (Ranger), 75th Infantry Regiment. He served as a Senior Ranger Instructor and Head Combatives Instructor with 3rd Ranger Company "Morgan Team" committee group, city week from 1985-1987 and Charlie Company, 4th Ranger Training Battalion from 1987 to 1991. MSG Mullen also served as the primary number one man (NCOIC) on the hand-to-hand 0-4 Demonstration Team and as the primary bayonet instructor. While serving in this capacity, he has also conducted over 200 0-4 hand-to-hand combatives demonstrations to Ranger students, visiting dignitaries, and general officers.



Master Sergeant Howard Mullen

During this time, he performed ranger hand-to-hand combat demonstrations in over 30 high schools on behalf of the 2nd Recruiting Brigade: at times performing up to five demos a day at the high schools. Max tested and evaluated the army M-9 bayonet for feasibility in knife fighting and unarmed combatives and was recognized as a three-time Ranger Instructor of the cycle while serving as a Ranger Instructor. In 1987, MSG Mullen was instrumental in the co-authoring of the US Army Combatives Manual, FM 3-25.150. He volunteered to assist the Mountain Ranger Camp Cadre Augmentation to walk and grade patrols for the Desert Phase of Ranger Training at Dugway, Utah before a permanent cadre was stood up. MSG Mullen is the true definition of a dynamic, effervescent Ranger leader, and effectively sparks a flame in all who encounter him.



MEET THE RANGER FOR LIFE TRANSITION COUNSELORS



Three Rangers Foundation's Ranger for Life Transition Counselors are located at the battalion level as a direct point of contact for transitioning Rangers. This program is powered by Wounded Warrior Project® to honor and empower post-9/11 injured service members, veterans, and their families.



Will Walker, 1/75



Ned Longoria, 2/75



Tony Mayne, 3/75,
RSTB, RMIB, RHHC





VSO CLAIMS FILING

RICK BARELA

continued

Happy Holiday Season to all members of the 75th Ranger Regiment Association. Many may not know, but I am now an accredited VFW Assistant Department Service Officer (ADSO). Sadly, I can only assist those in Kentucky when filing claims. However, I can provide some valuable information on filing claims and hopefully expedite them through the VA system.

The first thing to understand is the Veteran Service Organizations such as the VFW, American Legion, Am Vets, Purple Heart Association, and others do not charge a fee for claims services. However, they cannot promise or guarantee what you will receive regarding benefits.

NOTE: Please understand, Service Officers from the Veteran Service Organizations are not in the approving authority chain for the Veterans Affairs claims process. They can assist you in completing the required forms and submitting them on your behalf. All correspondence from Veterans Affairs regarding your claims should be kept for future filings as needed.

Please note and very important, if you filed a claim with a claims advocate, legal firm or lawyer, the Service Organizations are not allowed to represent you unless you have a “letter of release” from advocate, legal firm or lawyer. Please note not all these agencies are bad but if you want to pursue this route it is best to do comprehensive research on what they charge and review any contract they place in front of you.

1. To assist your VSO in filing your claim, please ensure you have the following documentation
 - a. **DD-214 showing all dates of service – Discharge paperwork from Reserves/National Guard.**
 - b. **Any previous claim forms and letters of “denied claims or approved claims” so we can ensure they file for the correct paperwork regarding previous claims.**
 - c. **If you have a service-connected rating, please provide this documentation for review.**
 - d. **Bank Account Information, this is necessary for initial claims filing**
 - i. **Bank Name and location.**
 - ii. **Bank Routing Number and Checking or Saving Account Number**
 - e. **If you are filing to add your spouse and/or dependent children, you will need to provide a copy of your current marriage License, any divorce decrees, and birth certificates for your dependent children under the age of 18.**
 - f. **APPEALS: This requires all documentation for the initial claim and denials and letters of terminating current benefits. Important: You will need new and relevant data to attach to the appeal.**
2. If you are filing a claim under the “Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022 known as the “Pact Act” or “Camp Lejeune Water Contamination Claim” and were previously denied and have received a letter stating to refile, please bring a copy of the letter and any supporting documentation that was requested on the letter so it can be placed on your claims form.
3. Family Members filing for **Dependent Indemnity Claims (DIC), Survivor’s Pension benefits, Aid and Assistance, or Assisting in Funeral/Burial expenses for the veteran.** We will need to provide a copy of the death certificate of the veteran if deceased stating the death was caused by service-related injuries or illnesses. This document will be filed with the claim so please ensure it is not the original.
4. If you are listed as the legal guardian of a veteran, or dependent child, please bring a copy of the documentation stating this so it can be attached and verified by the Veterans Administration claims office.



RANGER CASH - RIP

By TARA HARRIS



Raleigh Miles Cash, 54, passed away peacefully on September 20, 2025, after a short but courageous battle with cancer.

Raleigh was born in Seattle, Washington, and grew up traveling often for his father's work, which meant he never had one single place to call home. Over time, though, he learned that *home* wasn't a

location — it was the people you love and the life you build together. For the past 11 years, he found that true sense of home in Richmond Hill, Georgia, surrounded by his wife and sons.

Raleigh was a devoted husband, father, brother, and friend. He shared 26 wonderful years of marriage with his wife, Jennifer, his partner and constant support through every high and low. Together they raised two incredible sons, Hunter and Mason, who were his greatest pride and joy. He is also survived by his brother and sister-in-law.

Raleigh proudly served in the United States Army as a member of the elite 75th Ranger Regiment from 1990 to 1999. During his military career, he

deployed in support of operations in Somalia in 1993, including those associated with the Battle of Mogadishu, widely known as *Black Hawk Down*. This mission stands as one of the most significant and demanding combat operations of the era.

As a U.S. Army Ranger, Raleigh was part of a brotherhood defined by discipline, courage, and unwavering commitment to fellow soldiers and mission. His service reflected the highest ideals of the Ranger Regiment—selfless service, resilience, and honor. He carried those values with him throughout his life, earning the respect of all who knew him.

Continuing his military career after leaving the Regiment, Raleigh served as part of a military Joint Task Force under the Joint Chiefs of Staff, where he played a key role in rewriting the Close Air Support doctrine. His work strengthened communication and coordination across service branches, helping ensure clearer and more effective joint operations.

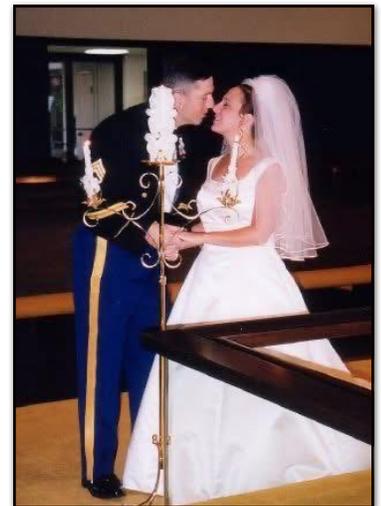
After leaving the military, he continued his commitment to service by working for ComEd in Illinois before ultimately finding his true calling as a Care Coordinator. In this role, he supported wounded, ill, and injured Special Operations members — work that meant everything to him. It allowed him to care for his brothers in ways he and so many of his fellow service members had not been afforded during their own time in uniform. It was the job that fulfilled his heart.

A lifelong Michigan Wolverines and Chicago Bears fan, Raleigh brought the same passion to game day as he did to life — loud, loyal, and never without an opinion. He also had a gift in the kitchen, creating unforgettable meals without ever needing a recipe. Cooking was his love language, a way of bringing comfort and laughter to every gathering.

Raleigh's humor was one of a kind — sharp, bold, and sometimes a little rough around the edges, but those who truly knew him saw the heart behind every joke. He was the kind of person who made an impression everywhere he went, and those who loved him will forever carry his laughter, stories, and spirit with them.

A celebration of Raleigh's life was held on November 7, 2025, at 12:30 p.m. EST at Fort Mitchell National Cemetery, where he was laid to rest with full military honors.

Raleigh Miles Cash will be remembered for his strength, his humor, his love for family, and his ability to make anywhere feel like home.





DENSE URBAN & SUBTERRANEAN TARGET ANALYSIS PROCESS

INTRODUCTION & ANALYSIS

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR URBAN OPERATIONS

Purpose: The purpose of this article is to introduce a military-familiar researcher audience to the Dense Urban & Subterranean Target Analysis Process (DUSTAP) in order to facilitate their contribution to an UNCLASS DUSTAP database in support of USASOC direct action company (DAC) contingency planning and partner / general purpose force interoperability. It defines key terms and concepts that will serve as a baseline for their generation of a DUST-Profile. These terms include dense urban environment, complex adaptive system, grand strategy, national command authority, irregular warfare, direct action, close quarters battle, operational variables, civilian considerations, elements of infrastructure, and progressive breaching. It uses three direct action operations by special operations forces (SOF) at the start of OPERATION JUST CAUSE, 20 December 1989, as case studies to illustrate the applicability and utility of the DUSTAP and forecast its relevance to modern contingency operations during irregular warfare in the dense urban environment.

Note for the Editor:
Article has been edited
and condensed for length

Audience: Researchers (undergraduate Cadets, graduate Officers, & professional civilians) A Glossary is available at the end of the primer that defines all terms of art.

Classification. UNCLASSIFIED.

All doctrine is UNCLASSIFIED.

All information relevant to OPERATION ACID GAMBIT is UNCLASSIFIED IAW US Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) Public Affairs Office, 1999.

All information relevant to TF RED & Tocumen-Torrijos Airfield Seizure and TF BLACK & Contralario Broadcast Tower Sabotage Raid is UNCLASSIFIED IAW US Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) Command Historian, 2000.



Green Beret Sergeant Major (Retired) Rick Lamb of the US Army 1st Special Forces Command (1SFC), Operator Sergeant Major (Retired) Joseph Vega of Special Forces Operational Detachment Delta (SFOD-D), and a Ranger Squad Leader equipped similar to Master Sergeant (Retired) Jose Gordon of the US Army 75th Ranger Regiment (75RR) stand among their respective special operations assault forces. Each executed decisive direct action operations during OPERATION JUST CAUSE, the liberation of Panama from dictator Manuel Noriega, 20 December to 31 January 1989. The success of each of their missions relied upon an effective dense urban & subterranean target analysis process (DUSTAP).

Photo Credit: SGM (R) Rick Lamb, SGM (R) Joe Vega, and Unknown.

“Speed, surprise, violence of action -- and a fail-safe breach. Everyone forgets the last one. You’re not doing anything inside that room if you can’t get to it and then into it.”

- Master Sergeant (Retired) Jose Gordon, Ranger Master Breacher

**THE FOUR FLOOR WAR:
THE DENSE URBAN & SUBTERRANEAN TARGET ANALYSIS
PROCESS (DUSTAP)**

The National Center for Urban Operations
20 December 2021

NCUO

National Center for Urban Operations

The Situation

The first thing he noticed was the green. The fist-size 23-millimeter tracers streaking through the pre-dawn sky from the shot-out barrels of the Soviet-hand-me-down ZPU-4 surface-to-air batteries glowed emerald, not crimson red as he'd always expected, as they arced past the starboard parachute door of the lumbering C-141 Starlifter aircraft. The loadmaster had just pulled open the troop door for then Staff Sergeant (SSG) Jose Gordon to assume his jumpmaster position for final checks before unleashing the first stick of Rangers onto Tocumen military airfield below where a company of Noriega's "Praetorian Guard" waited to "greet" them. As he checked to the rear for obstacles and then reoriented on the horizon in search of his "one minute" landmark, he could see the sprawl of Panama City to the east and barely make out the airfield coming up. Somewhere amidst that blur of runway lights and tower beacons lay "Objective Pig:" 3rd Platoon, Charlie Company, 1st Ranger Battalion's (3C/1- 75RR) destination for the evening. His platoon leader (PL) didn't know much about

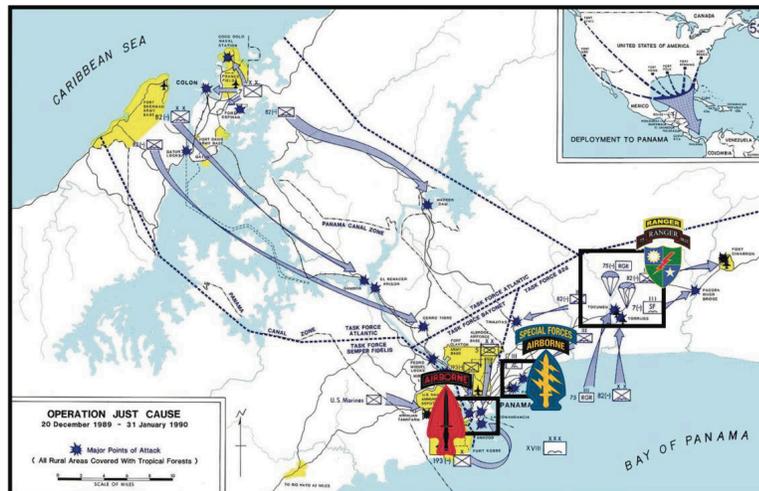


Figure 1: Highlighted areas of operation (AOs) for the urban direct actions featured below, superimposed on OPERATION JUST CAUSE scheme of maneuver from 20 December 1989.

the Panamanian Defense Force (PDF) 2nd Infantry Company's barracks layout itself- but his brief made a pretty good argument for why seizing this airfield was important to isolate the city and demonstrate Noriega's political impotence to any Panamanian that still doubted it. Some floor plans would've been nice- but at least Jose could reassure his guys that the objective they'd spend the next few hours risking their lives for was critical to the liberty of an oppressed people. After all, that's all a Ranger leader could really hope for. 30 minutes prior, then Sergeant First Class (SFC) Joe Vega wafted in the putrid scents of that same Panamanian morning. He could smell the *barriada bruja* even from his "hooch" on Fort Clayton from which he'd conducted close target reconnaissance (CTR) on the Carcel Modelo political prison over the past few months. He'd traversed the mean streets of downtown Panama City every day since BLUE SPOON went into effect, undercover as a Military Police sergeant "inspecting" the conditions of Noriega's fortified "gulag" under UN mandate. Inspect he did: but not to confirm the barbaric "management" of that squalid hell- hole -- that fact was well-known. Instead, he was developing an intimate understanding of the structure to inform the imminent hostage rescue of American citizen, Kurt Muse, being planned by his fellow assaulters in Special Forces Operational Detachment Delta (SFOD-D): OPERATION ACID GAMBIT. His detailed debriefs had included the height and hinge placement of every door; length and contents of every hallway; and thickness and composition of the walls (best he could tell) as the assault force planned its every step in the compound, with primary, alternate, contingency, and emergency means of getting to Muse before he was executed. As the four MH-1J "little birds" and two AH-1 attack escorts of 1st Battalion, Army 160th Special Operations Aviation Group (SOAG)¹ began spinning up on the tarmac, he sipped the Turpentine-flavored excuse for coffee the dining facility (DFAC) had served him and tried to suppress the frustration that his Squadron hadn't gotten the mission. But no matter, he thought, Noriega wasn't about to go easily- there'd be plenty of work to do before this country was free.

Later that evening, three Green Beret Special Operations Teams (SOT)² of Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group (C/3-7), a subordinate unit of "Task Force Black," donned their AN/PVS-5 night-vision-goggles and press-checked their Colt Model 723 assault rifles before "hot loading" the loitering MH-60A Blackhawks at Albrook Air Force Base. Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA) 795 Weapons Sergeant, Sergeant First Class (SFC) Rick Lamb, had been subjected to some annoying talk radio in his day but none as obnoxious as what Noriega was now pumping over the airwaves from the Contraloria General broadcast tower overlooking coastal Panama City. In an age far before Facebook, radio was the battleground for the people's will and Noriega was using it to plead for every Panamanians' support. He reminded them of all the entitlement programs and drug money he'd doled out to them over the years- while imploring them to resist the American invaders to their last breath with kitchen knives and roadside bombs. Nothing a few well-placed bricks of M112 and hydrogel couldn't overcome, Lamb thought, as the blades above him propelled the assault craft up into the stifling heat of the Caribbean afternoon....

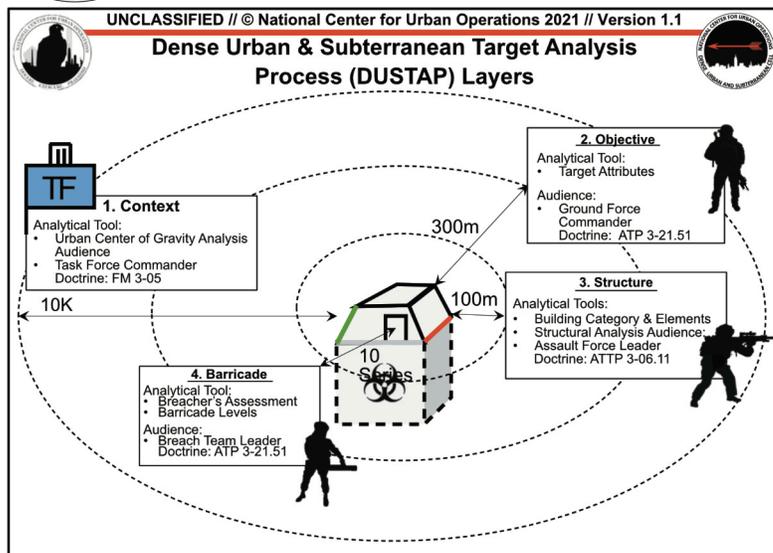


Figure 2: The Layers of the Dense Urban & Subterranean Target Analysis Process (DUSTAP)

THE PROCESS

Three different targets inside the dense urban environment³ of Panama City executed by three different direct-action forces in the same 24-hour period

(Figure 1). What drove them to these objectives over other possible targets in the eight hundred-thousand person city? What attributes of the target were important to the ground force commander's (GFC) tactical plan? What principles of structural analysis informed the assault force leader's (AFL) confined-space clearance plan? And what elements of each barricade informed the master breacher's forcible entry plan? Each of these assault forces relied upon the assessments of a dense urban & subterranean target analysis process to answer these questions.

The Dense Urban & Subterranean Target Analysis Process (DUSTAP) is a proposed, unclassified framework derived from existing US Army doctrine to inform a direct-action company (DAC)⁴ commander's decision-making

regarding an objective's significance relative to other possible targets in a city and the characteristics of that target most vital to executing an effective assault (Figure 2). It is a four-layer process assembled by the NCUO at the request of Charlie Company (Hard Target Defeat), 3rd Battalion 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) (C/3-7) that will facilitate the generation of a dense urban & subterranean target portfolio (DUST-P). These "layers" can be conceptualized via a "four floor war" model building on the imagery of the "three level fight," in which the assault force must understand the given layer and prioritize nodes against which to align resources before progressing to the subsequent layer (Figure 2A). The analysis of each layer informs decisions by a different echelon of leadership, the elements of which range from theatre rules of engagement to breaching tool selection, and will be discussed in that respective section. This DUST-P will be securely stored but readily accessible to SOF partner & general-purpose forces (GPF) so as to serve as a departure point for interoperable training scenarios and contingency planning. It complements the intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPOE) process and related geospatial analytical products generated by entities like the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) and platforms like Palantir Gotham. But DUSTAP also provides stand-alone, analog understanding in the event the force does not have the time, technology, or authorities to access these: as was the case for C/ 3-7 on the afternoon of 20 December 1989 thirty-two years ago. The DUSTAP is most appropriate for the irregular warfare (IW) strategic context, in which the assault force is part of a larger mission to preserve the city's functionality in order to reinforce a chosen government's legitimacy and, consequently, preserve the loyalty of the local populace to it, as was the case during the Siege of Mumbai, India, 2008.⁵ This is in contrast to the large scale combat (LSCO) strategic context in which the assault force contributes principally to the defeat of an entrenched enemy even at the expense of the city's functionality, as in the Battle of Mosul, Iraq, 2017.

Ideally, the strategic context of conflict is clearly articulated by US national command authorities (NCA)⁶ at the grand strategic level⁷ before operations commence so that tactical assault forces understand if they should interact with structures in the city as "key terrain" or

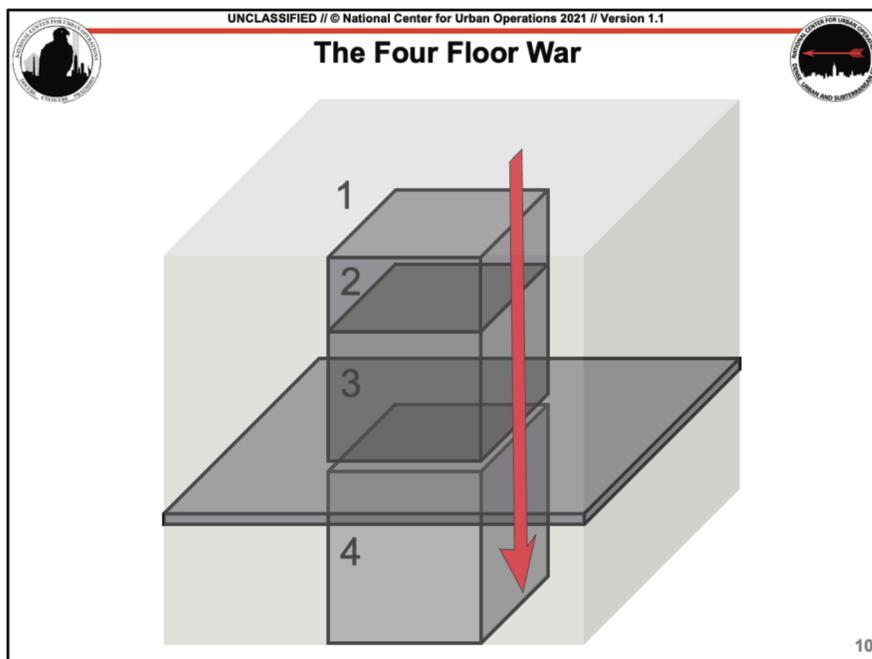


Figure 2A: Conceptualization of DUSTAP as a "Four Floor War," building on the imagery of the "Three Level Fight."

“critical centers of gravity”. This context is characterized as either irregular warfare (IW) or large-scale combat operations (LSCO) and can be framed by one question: to what degree does the NCA care if the city continues to function? Dense urban environments are best thought of as complex adaptive systems (CAS), sharing similarities with biological metabolism and ecosystems. This functionality is relative to the equilibrium of the that particular city, defined as the state in which the “capacity” and the rate of “flows” through critical “agents” meet the “needs” of its population.⁸ These “needs” are categorized across the operational variables of political, military, economics, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment, and time (abbreviated as PMESII-PT in doctrine). Under the metabolic model, this equilibrium of “agent capacity” and “resource flows” can be thought of as a “healthy” condition, with the most important “flows” being the elements of infrastructure, including sewage, water, electricity (power), academics, trash, transportation & traffic, medical safety, and other (abbreviated as SWEAT-MSO in doctrine). “Agentt” are categorized by the civilian considerations of areas, structures, capabilities, organizations, people, and events (abbreviated as ASCOPE in doctrine). The durability and redundancy of these agents dictate the resiliency with which the system endures shocks and maintains equilibrium. The city is no longer “healthy” and, by some theories, can even “die”, if agents become degraded to the point of failing to facilitate the capacity and flows required to meet the population’s expectation of needs. This dysfunctionality can reach a tipping point where triggers induced by environmental change or threat actors shifts the loyalty (or subservience) of a population from a weakened incumbent government to a competitor who demonstrates (or claims) the ability to meet these needs more fully. This competition among actors for control of a given population by affecting the agents of urban functionality is the intent of irregular warfare in the city. The most important agents upon which this functionality depends are considered “critical centers of gravity” (CCOGs). When electricity went out, trash piled up, and violence spiked in post-Saddam Baghdad, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi leveraged dissatisfaction among the Sunni populace to win allegiance away from the US-backed Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) to the Islamic jihadi terrorist (IJT) organization, Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). If the NCA decides that the existential threat posed by an enemy is so significant that it allows the city’s functionality to be disrupted so to prevent its capture or retention, it issues strategic guidance that trickles down the chain of command and into the rules of engagement that dictate large scale combat operation (LSCO) tactics, techniques, and tools among the assault force, referred to as “high intensity” direct action. In the event of LSCO strategic context, physical structures and human agents are simply “key terrain” to be seized, destroyed, or exploited to gain advantage over the opposing military force. But if the NCA decides that preserving the city’s functionality is important, this irregular warfare (IW) strategic context will manifest in rules of engagement referred to as “precision” or “surgical” direct action that prioritize the protection or seizure of the most important agents (“critical centers of gravity”) in order to sustain the city’s functionality and retain or regain the loyalty of the populace to the preferred government. IW strategic context is often so sensitive to risk that only special operations forces are proficient enough to conduct direct action within it.

Rangers of the US Army Special Operations 75th Ranger Regiment’s “TF Red-Tango” airborne assault to clear and secure the Torrijos-Tocumen Airport Complex in Panama during the period of darkness (POD) 20 December 1989 to begin the isolation of dictator Manuel Noriega’s failing regime during OPERATION JUST CAUSE. From upper left, clockwise: common operating picture depicting battlefield geography and assault objectives for subordinate Ranger elements of 1st Battalion and 3rd Battalion; “Rangers in Panama” depicting a jumpmaster similar to Staff Sergeant (SSG) Jose Gordon conducting duties prior to deployment; consolidation and reorganization around the Torrijos Air traffic control tower the following morning; a ranger squad similar to that of SSG Gordon’s 1st Squad, 3rd Platoon, Charlie Company, 1st Ranger Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment (C31/1-75RR).

Photo attribution in Bibliography.



The liberation of Panama from the oppression of dictator Manuel Noriega was an irregular war intended to use military force to restore legitimate governance and preserve Panama’s City regional and global functionality. In addition to safeguarding American lives, President George H. W. Bush’s grand strategic objectives included 1) the capture of General Manuel Noriega to be tried for the killing of Americans, the refusal to honor election results, and his declaring war against the US; 2) the enforcement of the Torrijos-Carter Treaty to protect the neutrality of the Panama Canal; and 3) the combatting of drug trafficking facilitated by Noriega using Panamanian assets. This does not mean “high- intensity” direct action did not occur- as evidenced by the AC-130H pre-assault canon fires on and M113 armored personnel carrier isolation of *Carcel Modelo* structures prior to the raid- but such tactics were the exception to the “precision” direct action used throughout so as to preserve CCOG functionality. Unlike the ouster of the Iraqi Army from Kuwait in 1991, the invasion was not conducted to defeat the Panamanian Defense Forces: military domination was rather a means to the ends of restoring government services such as canal management, freedom of information, and the democratic process by reinstating the function of various structures. Restoration of these functions were critical to the delivery of legitimacy and political power to the rightfully-elected government of President Guillermo Endara, necessary prerequisites to a stable future for the Panamanian people. And so Joint Special Operations Task Force South (JSOTF-S) planners set about the process of identifying those “critical centers of gravity” upon which the functionality of Panama depended.

LAYER 1: THE CONTEXT

Layer 1 of the DUSTAP, Urban Vulnerability Assessment Method (UVAM), is derived from FM 3-05 Special Operations (2019) and the Asymmetric Warfare Group’s Vulnerability Assessment Method (2014), with the purpose to inform the Task Force Commander’s identification of critical centers of gravity (CCOG) upon which the city’s functionality depends in order to protect or disrupt them. (Figure 3 & A3) The first step involves identifying a city’s most important function relative to a given strategic context amidst an area of operations (AO) under consideration. The second step filters possible structures through a crosswalk of civilian considerations (ASCOPE) and operational variables (PMESII-PT) to differentiate “centers of gravity” (COG) from other less important categorizations of urban terrain. Where a “center of gravity” is a structural node or resource flow critical to a city’s functionality, such as an air traffic control tower; an “ancillary COG,” such as a fuel depot, serves a similar purpose but is outside the AO; an “umbilical,” such as a powerline, connects the COG to other AOs; and a “vulnerable area (VA),” such as an airport departure terminal, is a structure susceptible to threat, but does not serve a critical role to the city’s function under consideration. Once “COGs” have been identified, these are filtered against their relative dependence on the elements of infrastructure (SWEAT-MSO) to down select the list further. The third step requires an analyst to assess this COG list against a specific threat profile such as “urban terrorism” or “special operations raid” across the risk variables (criticality, accessibility, recoverability, vulnerability, effect, recognizability, abbreviated as CARVER in doctrine). This risk assessment will identify those “centers of gravity” most vulnerable to a given target and allow planners to prioritize these “critical centers of gravity” for protection or disruption. In the case of OPERATION JUST CAUSE, twenty-seven discrete targets were attacked, cleared, & seized during the period of darkness 20 December 1989 by US forces- but this essay will only focus on the three aforementioned at Tocumen-Torrijos airfield; the *Carcel Modelo* prison; and the *Contraloria General* broadcast tower. Though planners at Joint Special Operations

Task Force South (JSOTF-S) employed detailed Operational Campaign Design and Military Decision-making Process (MDMP) methodologies to select these targets, UVAM provides similar insight into each’s significance. In the strategic context of OPERATION JUST CAUSE, Tocumen-Torrijos airfield was a critical center of gravity to the maintenance of Noriega’s political power. This site controlled his freedom of maneuver into and out of the city (much less the country) and demonstrated his ability to control urban flows. With regards to military and economic

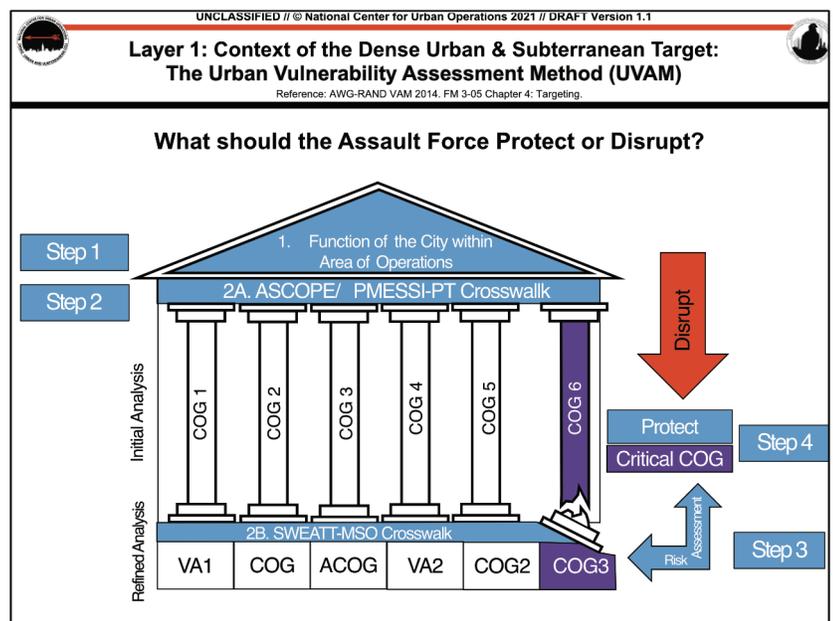
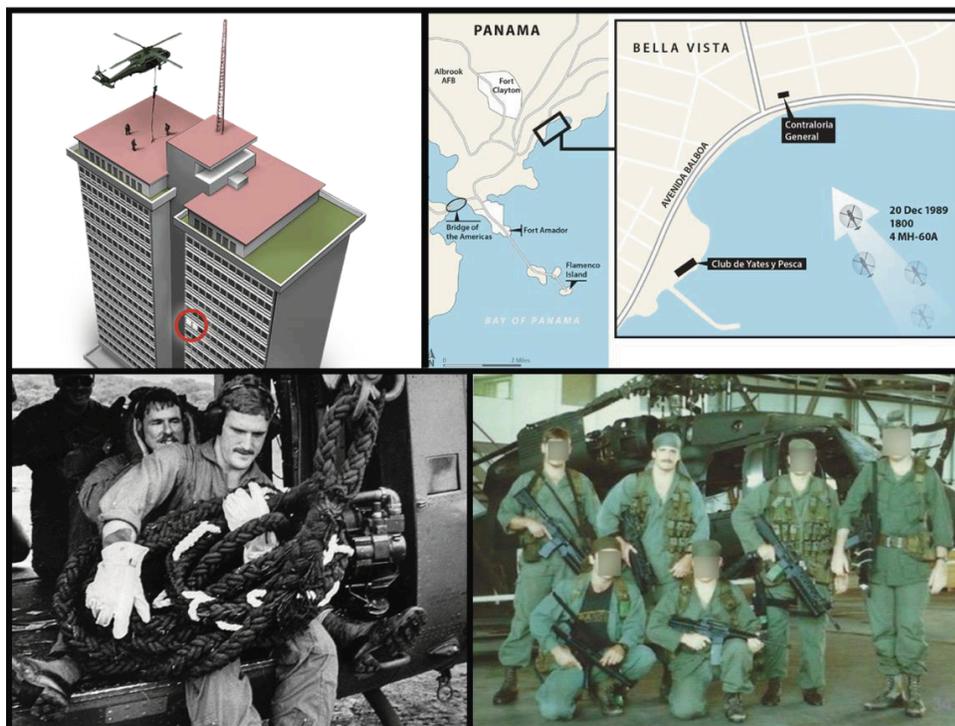


Figure 3: Layer 1, Urban Vulnerability Assessment Method (UVAM)

(logistical) variables, the airfield also held significance as a garrison for his “elite” Palace Guard, the PDF 2nd Infantry Company (2nd PDF), and provided a critical staging area for counterattacks and resupply into the city by PDF or Coalition forces. Crosswalking various targets through the operational variables, civilian considerations, and elements of infrastructure in light of this “political” function, the PDF 2IC barracks at Tocumen emerges as a “center of gravity” that supports this function. Filtered further through a risk assessment in relation to an airborne assault by a Ranger company, this structure is distinguished as a “critical center of gravity” against which the assault force should be aligned at the tactical level to achieve the strategically significant effect of undermining Noriega’s political power. Special Forces Operations Detachment Delta (SFOD- D)’s hostage rescue of Kurt Muse and the Green Beret Task Force Black’s decision to assault *Contraloria General* broadcast tower entailed similar logic. SFOD-D’s rescue of Muse demonstrated Noriega’s inability to control his most heavily defended prison and retain a prisoner, it’s worth noting, who was arrested in the first place for undermining Noriega’s political power via Radio Liberty broadcast. TF Black’s sabotage of the broadcast tower also contested Noriega’s political power by denying his ability to transmit pro-Regime messaging to wavering populace. Though Layer 1: UVAM may be a reductive process given the gravity of national mission objectives and the typically-robust suite of analytical resources available to select them, it provides a rapid means by which direct action forces can identify tactical-level objectives with strategic significance amidst the nearly infinite possibilities of the dense urban & subterranean environment.

Green Berets of the US Army 1st Special Forces Command “Task Force Black” C Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group (C/3-7) air assault to destroy the Contraloria General radio broadcast tower in coastal Panama City on the afternoon of 20 December 1989 in order to deny Noriega influence over the local population during an In-Extremis Operation. From upper left, clockwise: diagram depicting the Contraloria General tower and the ground tactical plan requiring infiltration onto the 17-story tall compound and vertical clearance down to the control room on the 7th floor by C/3-7; a map depicting the point of departure for the assault force from Albrook Air Force Base on mainland Panama and air element’s final approach to the tower on Balboa Avenue; Sergeant First Class (SFC) Rick Lamb’s preparation of the fast rope insertion extraction system (FRIES) aboard an MH-60A of Special Operations Aviation Detachment (SOAD) 617; SFC Rick Lamb’s assault cell of SOT 795, C/3-7. Photo attribution in Bibliography.



LAYER 2: THE OBJECTIVE

Layer 2 of the DUSTAP, Target Attributes, is derived from the Asymmetric Warfare Group’s ATP 3-21.51 Subterranean Operations (2019). Targets attributes are typically observed from about 300 meters inward and inform the Ground Force Commander (GFC) decision-making process with regards to form of maneuver, weapon effects, and enabler applications on the Objective (Figure 4 & A4). Target Attributes fall into one of six categories - Function, Mobility, Threats & Hazards, Mobility, Accessibility, Support Infrastructure, and Physical Structure - each of which is broken down further into sub-categories. The most important of these attributes for the GFC to recognize is the structure’s function, describing the purpose that is fulfilled by its operation and ranging from mission command to resource storage. By understanding the function of the structure and related target attributes, the GFC can assess the degree to which his element actually needs to physically assault the structure if that function can be disrupted more efficiently and with less risk by sabotage, subversion, isolation, or remote means.

Other GFC decisions informed by these target attributes include the composition of the force, isolation, containment, and overwatch positions, requests for technical enablers, coordination with interagency partners, and outload of specialized protection and survivability equipment.

In the case of the Green Beret's in-extremis sabotage mission, the Special Operation Teams (SOTs) of Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Forces Group (C/3-7) recognized and sought to disable the key function of the Contralaria radio tower: the broadcast of Anti-American *Radio Nacional* propaganda to a contested populace. Achieving the legitimacy of the elected government would require the trust of the people in President-elect Endara and their rejection of Noriega. Despite the

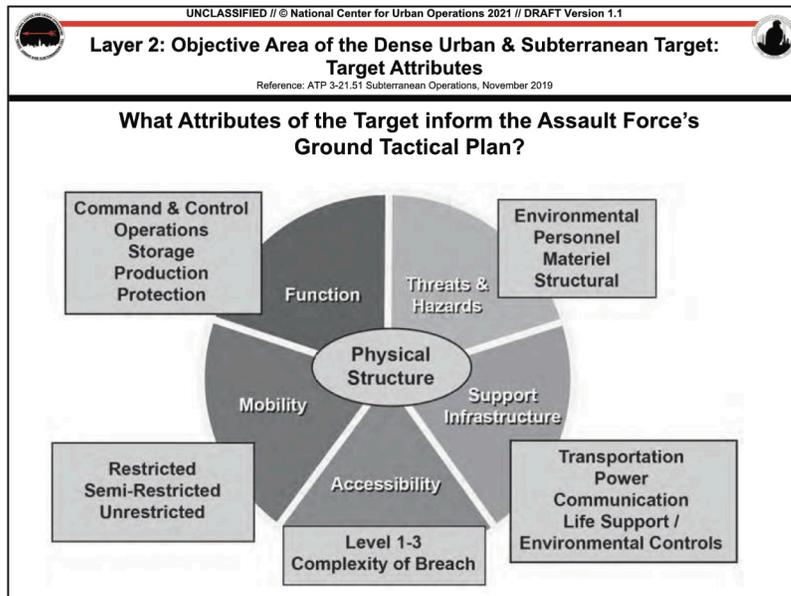


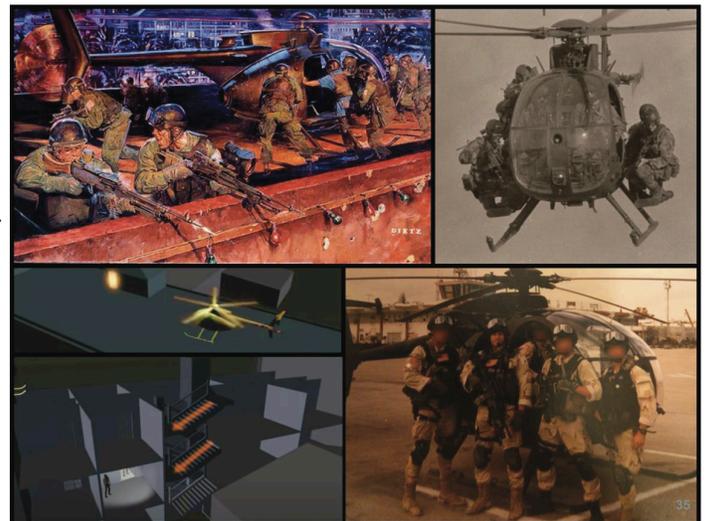
Figure 4: Layer 2 of the DUSTAP, Objective Analysis

LAYER 3: THE STRUCTURE

Layer 3 of the DUSTAP, Structural Analysis, is derived from [ATTP 3-06.11](#)

Combined Arms Operations in the Urban Terrain (2011). Structural analysis is the application of the principles of terrain analysis to a building, typically 100 meters and into the point of concern, to inform an Assault Force Leader's (AFL) confined space clearance plan (Figure 5 & A5). These principles include: obstacles, avenues of approach, key terrain, observation & fields of fire, and cover & concealment (OAKOC). Obstacles refer to the objects impeding movement along the mobility corridors into and internal to a structure. These include existing obstacles such as the barricades built into doorframes; reinforcing obstacles such as explosive traps; and unintentional obstacles resulting from cluttered furnishings or rubble debris. Avenues of approach refers to the specific corridors- horizontal and vertical; intentional and improvised- upon which an assault force relies to maneuver persons and equipment internal to the target compound. Key terrain refers to the physical structures that must be seized in order to achieve mission success. In other words, occupation or denial of this terrain will provide a marked advantage to either side in their pursuit of his tactical purpose. Key terrain can range from balconies overlooking concert halls to the supervisory control & data acquisition (SCADA) control rooms of hydroelectric dams. Observation & fields of fire refers to the degree to which physical structure hinders sensor line of sight and direct fire weapon lines of engagement. Finally, cover and concealment refers to the degree to which physical structure can prevent one from being detected

extensive strategic-level planning done for the invasion, the tower was not on any target decks available to the Green Berets at that time.⁹ Information about its attributes was collected via a single surreptitious flyover by the Company's Regional Survey Team (RST), human intelligence from sources, and open-source data from the Panamanian phone book. Little was known about the expected threat composition of "Dignity Battalion" personnel, actual floor on which the broadcast control room was located, or even how the tower technically emitted its signal. This lack of target knowledge resulted in friction for the assault force but extensive rehearsals and creative decision-making by team leaders like Captain Steve Boston, who simply persuaded the security guard to unlock the door instead of killing him and forcibly breaching it, allowed the team to gain rapid entry in pursuit of the FM broadcasts. Access to the objective achieved, the main effort transitioned to the assault force leaders responsible for clearing and securing the confined space of the high-rise.



Operators the US Army Special Forces Operational Detachment Delta (SFOD-D) air assault during OPERATION ACID GAMBIT to rescue hostage Kurt Muse minutes before H-Hour in the early morning hours of 20 December 1989 in order to demonstrate Noriega's inability to secure his own high value assets. From upper left, clockwise: "OPERATION ACID GAMBIT" artist rendering by James Dietz depicting the final seconds of the six-minute hostage rescue operation; an MH-6J "Little Bird" of 1st Battalion, 160th Special Operation Aviation Group (SOAG) with operators flanking the cockpit; a schematic depicting the confined space clearance plan as executed by SFOD-D; Sergeant Major (Retired) Joe Vega with a stick of SFOD-D operators prior to his valorous actions in the Battle of Mogadishu, 1993.

Photo attribution in Bibliography.

(i.e. seen) or influence by kinetic effects (i.e shot). “Building Categorization” can also be a helpful vernacular, distinguishing Category 1, improvised natural facilities such as caves, from Category 2, urban infrastructure such as subways, from Category 3, military purpose-built facilities such as bunkers. This layer of analysis also entails an investigation into “Structure Characteristics” such as area, height, and construction method and “Structure Elements” such as foundation, walls, and roof composition to inform breaching charge composition and collateral damage risk assessments. These elements of structural analysis will determine how the assault force leader (AFL) chooses to clear the structure, reflected in the organization, tasking, and arming of the force; whether spaces are cleared with deliberate or dynamic techniques; and the requirement for specialized equipment such as scalable offensive hand grenades (SOHG), drones, or retransmitters.

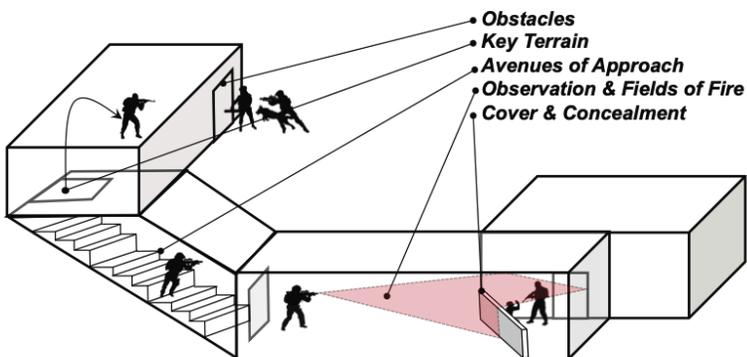
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Layer 3. Structure of the Dense Urban & Subterranean Target: Structural Analysis

Reference: ATP 3-06.11 Operations in Urban Terrain, Annex A, Section III, June 2011

What Principles of Structural Analysis Inform the Assault Force's Confined Space Clearance Plan?

- Obstacles
- Key Terrain
- Avenues of Approach
- Observation & Fields of Fire
- Cover & Concealment



Structure Categorization	Structure Characteristics	Structure Elements
1. Man-Made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rudimentary • Sophisticated 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Foundation 2. Walls & Roof 3. Barricades 4. Environmental Control/ Life Support 5. Transportation 6. Communication 7. Water & Waste 8. Power
2. Urban Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substructure • Civil Works 	
3. Military-Purpose Built	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Super, Surface, Subsurface • Shallow or Deep 	

Figure 5: Layer 3 of the DUSTAP, Structural Analysis

In the case of OPERATION ACID GAMBIT, operators of the SFOD-D assault force were intimately familiar with the structure of the *Carcel Modelo* prison from both human source collection (HUMINT) and close target reconnaissance (CTR). Built in the 1930s, the prison was intended for political detainees of the regime. But by the time of Muse’s incarceration, it was nearly eight times its allowable capacity of 300 tenants and was described as a “house of horrors,” swarming with PDF guards to keep the inmates in check. In accordance with Joint Task Force Southern Command’s Operation Plan 90-2 (JTF SO O-PLAN 90-2), SFOD- D was to synchronize the rescue of Muse with the initiation of pre-assault fires on the adjacent PDF Headquarters at *La Comandancia* in order to maximize surprise and diversion. The assault force was therefore given six minutes on target. An expectation of such “surgical”

direct action required near-flawless knowledge of the structure and the enemy within it- knowledge that SFOD-D acquired by leveraging a US Army doctor and by deploying operators in cover roles as military police, in the case of SGM (R) Joe Vega, whom the PDF was obliged to allow entry under international law. From the composition, thickness, and latch placement of the steel door on the roof; to the number of steps from the roof entrance to the first stairwell; to the placement of Muse’s cell in the floor plan, Delta managed to collect the meticulous detail required to build a scale replica of the structure in Eglin Air Force Base, Florida for rehearsals and contingency planning. Consequently, on the night of the raid, the assault force was able to infiltrate onto the roof, breach multiple level two barricades, clear the PDF threats on three levels, secure the “precious cargo” before his execution, and exfiltrate the site in the allotted six minutes as the AC-130H “Spectre” gunships overhead increased their rate of fire against targets in Panama City ahead of the invasion at 0100 hours.

LAYER 4: THE BARRICADE

Layer 4 of the DUSTAP, Barricade Analysis, is derived from ATP 3-21.51 Subterranean Operations (2019) and RTC 350-19 75th Ranger Regiment Breaching Guide (2015). Barricade analysis is the systematic identification and categorization of barricade (defined as “the door itself”) and portal (defined as the “door, frame, and associated hardware installed in the wall”) features based on the anticipated method of forcible entry to inform a master breacher’s assessment and entry plan (Figure 6 & A6).

The purpose of the breacher’s assessment is to prioritize the vulnerabilities in the barricade from most to least given the capability and tools available to his breaching element. After security has been established on the door, the breacher visually analyzes the door, outward to inward, moving through composition and orientation of components in the following sequence: portal, frame, handle, locking mechanism, reinforcement/ shrouds, hinges, windows, exposed bolts/ screws, “dogs” secondary deadbolts), returns/ retainers/ hydraulic assists, and advanced

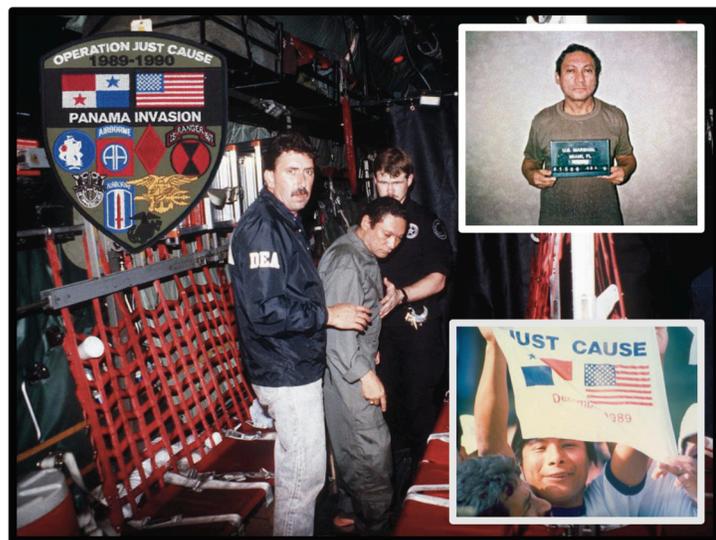
access/ biometrics. Only as necessary, he applies pressure to the door to determine direction of swing, its flexibility, its composition, and its status as locked or not. He then cross- references this assessment against the tools at his disposal to select the most expedient and least collateral-damage-inflicting method of gaining entry. Mechanical tools range from simple, such as Ruhl-Tech Halligan tools and Hinge rippers, to motorized, such as the Husqvarna K970 “quickie” saw, to hydraulic, such as the Holmatro DR200 ST door pry. Ballistic breaching uses specialized carbine & shotgun configurations, such as the Remington M870 with steel- powder “Hatton Rounds,” to obliterate locking mechanisms with minimal fragmentation. Explosive breaching involves a detailed understanding of explosive trains and chemical properties to construct charges out of primary ingredients such as Composition C4 (RDX) block, sheet, and cutting tape in order to defeat the barricade while minimizing fragmentation and overpressure. Finally, exothermic breaching involves the application of oxygen-igniting torches using 10,000-degree molten copper-steel alloy rods blown from the “muzzle” of a PC/TACMOD 1 Broco “gun” to cut through steel in excess of 1/2”. Having selected his method, the breacher then categorizes the door as one of four levels, ranging from level one requiring only mechanical and ballistic methods; level two requiring up to advanced explosive charges; and level three requiring “progressive breaching” of all four in combination. Level four doors possess the same properties of level three doors but are differentiated by the sensitive cargo within.

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Layer 4. Barricades within the Dense Urban & Subterranean Target: Breacher's Assessment
Reference: RTC 350-19 75th Ranger Regimental Breaching Guide, Chapter 2

What Elements of the Barricade inform the Assault Force's Forcible Entry Plan?

Figure 6: Layer 4 of the DUSTAP, Barricade Analysis



Former dictator Manuel Noriega is extradited back to the US for trial by federal law enforcement after the successful execution of OPERATION JUST CAUSE, 03 January 1990.

As SOT 795 completed their fast rope insertion onto the roof of the *Contraloria General* building, SFC Lamb's master breacher assessment of the steel door providing access from the building's roof determined it was a level two barricade requiring a purpose-built explosive breach- or a “one hour” level one barricade with the basic mechanical tools (a Halligan and bolt cutters) at the team's disposal. The absence of target, structural, and barricade analysis available to the team before infiltration meant that only enough explosive charge had only been brought to sabotage the antennae and the control room of the broadcast. tower- not to breach doors. Consequently, the team adapted their assault plan, choosing to conduct a high-risk improvised rope descent from the seventeenth story to a balcony on the fifteenth. Lamb and another assaulter made the descent without incident, clearing and securing the stairwell back up to the roof so as to allow access for the remainder of the team. In typical special operations fashion, the team overcame the challenges presented by the environment and completed the mission: but would have benefitted immensely from a detailed structure and barricade analysis of that portal before their arrival.

In accordance with Admiral (Retired) William McRaven's Theory of Special Operations (1996), simple plans, carefully concealed, repeatedly and realistically rehearsed, and executed with surprise, speed, and purpose by assault forces like 3rd Platoon, C Company, 1st Ranger Battalion (3C/1-75RR); Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta (SFOD-D); and Special Operations Team 795 of Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group



(Airborne) (C/3-7) on twenty seven (27) different objectives during the opening period of darkness (POD) of OPERATION JUST CAUSE forced the capitulation of the Panamanian Defense Force within forty eight hours of the offensive and Noriega's humiliated surrender less than two weeks later. This strategic success was, in part attributable to effective dense urban & subterranean target analysis. Though ideal conditions permit task force staff planners to leverage elaborate frameworks and digital geospatial common operating pictures for weeks in advance of a given operation, urgent or nonpermissive conditions may prohibit such luxuries. Under such circumstances, the rapid application of the four layers of the dense urban & subterranean target analysis process (DUSTAP) will provide a task force of hundreds down to a breach team of a few the ability to understand what structures in a given city are important to preserve or disrupt in the strategic context of national objectives; what conditions must be set or enablers leveraged to isolate, contain, or disrupt a given target; what tactics and techniques must be employed to effectively clear and secure the structure; and what tools must be employed to forcibly enter barricades within and accomplish the mission.

Footnotes

¹ The 160th Army Special Operations Aviation Regiment (ARSOA) was known at the time as 160th SOAG.

² Just as the modern Special Forces direct action company (formerly the Crisis Response Force (CRF); currently the Hard Target Defeat Company (HTD-C)) refers to its subordinate elements as Assault Troops and Reconnaissance Troops, Special Forces companies assigned to sensitive activities and missions during this period were known as the Commander's In Extremis Force (CIF) with subordinate Operational Detachment Alphas (ODAs) redesignated as either assault-focused Special Operations Teams (SOTs) or reconnaissance-focused Regional Survey Teams (RSTs), respectively.

³ A dense urban environment is defined as a concentration of humans greater than 7000 per square mile. This density entails a high frequency of supersurface, surface, and subsurface structures, stacking the physical challenges of the urban environment described by General (Retired) Charles Krulak's horizontal "Three Block War" with this vertical intensity to result in the complexity of the "Three Level Fight" observed by Colonel (Retired) Patrick Mahaney of the National Center for Urban Operations. ATTP 3-06.11 Combined Arms Operations in Urban Terrain (2011) defines "types of urban areas" as a function of person quantity inside a given municipal boundary, from village to megalopolis, but does not distinguish these environments based on density. Tactical execution of urban operations among security forces will change more dramatically as a function of human density than quantity.

⁴ Direct action is a specified core competency of special operations forces by USSOCOM authorized under Title 10 Section 130f and described as "short duration strikes and other small- scale offensive actions employing specialized military capabilities to seize, destroy, capture, exploit, recover, or damage designated targets." Direct action conducted at close range and under urgent conditions is known as close quarters battle (CQB). Under the popular scrutiny of the digital age, strategic context will dictate the proficiency level required of and freedom of maneuver allowed to a direct action force in order to accomplish a given mission under an allowable threshold of risk to force, civilians, and environment. Generally, proficiency will increase by unit as a function of selectivity and funding. The increase in proximity and intensity of this relationship between strategic popular will and tactical assault force freedom of maneuver is known as "strategic compression."

⁵ Irregular warfare (IW) is defined by the IW Annex to the National Defense Strategy (2020) as "the struggle among states and nonstate to influence populations and affect legitimacy." Large scale ground combat operations (LSCO) is defined by ADP 3-0 Operations (2019) as "sustained joint combat operations conducted as a campaign involving multiple corps and division aimed at achieving multiple strategic [military] objectives."

⁶ National command authorities (NCA) include the President, the Heads of Department, Congress, and the Combatant Commander for a given theatre who are charged by US law with the authority and responsibility to declare war, raise and deploy forces, and impose limitations on the violence that can be brought to bear to achieve grand strategic objectives.

⁷ The grand strategic level of war is the echelon above military at which politicians must decide on the ends, ways, and means of a given conflict against an entity contesting the will of the state by considering and integrating all instruments of national power as specified in Joint Publication 1: diplomatic, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement (DIME- FIL).



DUSTAP

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continued

⁸“Megacities and the US Army: Preparing for a Complex and Uncertain Future” by the 38th Chief of Staff of the Army Strategic Studies Group, pages 10-14, features a detailed discussion of cities as complex, adaptive systems, describing the characteristics and typologies most critical to understanding the functionality, resiliency, and stability required to maintain a “healthy” equilibrium.

⁹ Unbeknownst to the assault force, one of TF Black’s own RST’s had conducted close target reconnaissance (CTR) in support of JSOC against the *Contraloria General* broadcast tower in the days prior to the invasion, identifying detailed target attributes like the composition and vulnerabilities of the broadcast antennae. Had the ground force commander been given access to this intelligence, he could have generated a much more detailed ground tactical plan to disable the tower with less collateral damage, less risk to force, and perhaps emplaced his own psychological operations (PSYOP) element to replace the broadcasts with Pro-American narratives. But he was not due to information compartmentalization policies- those same policies DUSTAP is seeking to avoid for C/3-7 today.

This article was produced by the National Center for Urban Operations, the Dense Urban & Subterranean Cell - A cadre of current and veteran urban security practitioners who have committed their careers to confronting the complex challenges of the dense urban environment and facilitating the well-being of those within. The Author's include veteran leaders of the US Army Special Mission Units, 75th Ranger Regiment, Special Forces Regiment, Asymmetric Warfare Group, and the New York City Police Department, among others.

GLOSSARY of TERMS

- 1SFC- 1st Special Forces Command
160th SOAG/ SOAR- 160th Special Operations Aviation Group/ Regiment
C31/1-75RR- 1st Squad, 3rd Platoon, C Company, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment
75RR- 75th Ranger Regiment
ADP/ ADRP/ ATTP/ FM- Forms of Army Doctrine
AFL- Assault Force Leader
AO- Area of Operations
ATAK- Android Tactical Assault Kit
ASCOPE- The Civilian Considerations representing “Agents” in a City: Area, Structures, Capabilities Organizations, People, Events.
AWG- Asymmetric Warfare Group
CAS- Complex Adaptive Systems. Also, Close Air Support.
CARVER- The Variables Of Risk: Criticality, Accessibility, Recoverability, Vulnerability, Effect, Recognizability.
CCOG- Critical Center of Gravity
COG- Center of Gravity CQB- Close Quarters Battle
CTR- Close Target Reconnaissance
C/3-7- Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) DAC- Direct Action Company
DUE- Dense Urban Environment
DUGS- Deep-buried Underground Site (Category III Subterranean) DULOC- Dense Urban Leader Operations Course
DUST- Dense Urban & Subterranean Target (Category II Subterranean) DUSTAP- Dense Urban & Subterranean Target Analysis Process
DUST-P- Dense Urban & Subterranean Target Profile DUST-D- Dense Urban & Subterranean Target Database DTRA- Defense Threat Reduction Agency
GFC- Ground Force Commander
GPF- General Purpose Force
GTP- Ground Tactical Plan
HTD-C- Hard Target Defeat Company
IPOE- Intelligence Preparation of the Operating Environment IW- Irregular Warfare
JSOC- Joint Special Operations Command
JSOTF- Joint Special Operations Task Force JTFSO- Joint Task Force South
LSCO- Large Scale Combat Operations MDMP- Military Decision-Making Process MSG- Master Sergeant (Enlisted Rank 8) NCA- National Command Authority
NCUO- The National Center for Urban Operations
OAKOC- The Elements of Structural Analysis: Obstacles, Avenues of Approach, Key Terrain, Observation & Fields of Fire, Cover & Concealment
ODA- Special Forces Operational Detachment- Alpha
OPN ACID GAMBIT- Official title for mission to rescue hostage Kurt Muse. OPN BLUE SPOON- Official title for mission plan to liberate Panama.
OPN JUST CAUSE- Official title for mission execution to liberate Panama (OJC). PDF- Panamanian Defense Force
POD- Period of Darkness
PMESII-PT- The Operational Variables representing the “Needs” of a City: Political, Military, Economics, Social, Information, Infrastructure, Physical
Environment, and Time. ROD- Remain over Day
RST- Regional Survey Team (Special Reconnaissance ODA)
RTC- Ranger Training Circular
SFC- Sergeant First Class (Enlisted Rank 7)
SSG- Staff Sergeant (Enlisted Rank 6)
SFOD-D- Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta SGM- Sergeant Major (Enlisted Rank 9)
SOF- Special Operations Forces
SOT- Special Operations Team (Direct Action ODA)
SWEAT-MSO- Elements of Infrastructure representing “Flows” in a city- Sewage, Water, Electricity (Power), Academics, Trash, Transportation & Traffic, Medical, Safety, And Other.
SubTO- Subterranean Operations
TF Black- Task Force Black, 1st Special Forces Command TF Red- Task Force Red, 75th Ranger Regiment
USASOC- US Army Special Operations Command UVAM- Urban Vulnerability Assessment Method VA- Vulnerable Area



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