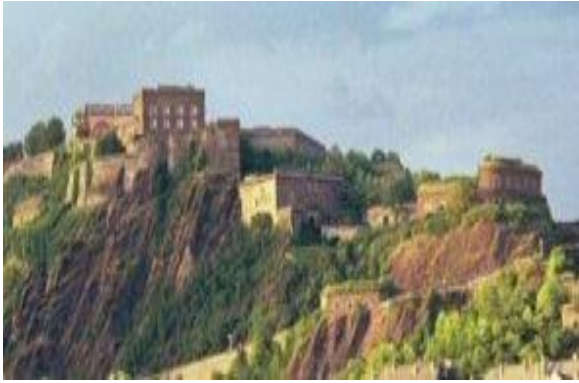


THE CASTLE NEWSLETTER



Issue 38

JULY 2022

President's View

By Gil Bernabe

Hello 17th Artillery veterans, spouses and friends!

Normally the July Castle Newsletter begins with emphasis on the next reunion. This time this letter is written with a heavy heart. In May we lost our good friend Bill Beers. Since we first met Bill at LZ Schueller – just west of An Khe, Vietnam, he was always a hard worker – especially around the howitzers – and he was always a good friend. Charlie Battery Executive Officer Bill Dahlin, remembers Bill Beers very vividly as Beers was one of the heroes of that fateful April 3, 1968, night. Beers guarded his area with much success after the ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) had deserted its post and left that area wide open for the Viet Cong sappers to march onto the fire base. Beers and his mighty few kept the VC at bay.

Bill Beers was always a staunch supporter of the 17th Artillery Regiment Association. At the time of his death, he was serving as second vice president of our organization. Bill and Cuma (who died in 2019) Beers will be greatly missed. May they rest in peace!

Now, let's talk about our September 2022 Reunion – scheduled for the Radisson Hotel in Branson, Missouri. Do the board a favor and get yourself and your guests registered for the reunion. Hotel reservations must be made by August 11 and reunion registration must be completed by August 20. The deadlines are imposed so we do not incur any extra charges for reserved hotel rooms. After August 11 – rooms may still be available and the 17th Artillery rate may or may not be available. The deadline for reunion registration is linked to the number of meals we will order for our two catered events. Registration instructions are included in this newsletter!

The cruise and dinner on the Showboat Branson Belle make up a special event for this reunion and is planned for Wednesday, September 14, in late afternoon. Judy Dingman worked diligently to get our group a good price for the cruise, entertainment and dinner on board the Branson Belle. This cruise requires registration on-line. So, hurry up and get it done – if you have not registered yet. See instructions inside!

Our lunch at the Keeter Center at College of the Ozarks is set for Tuesday, September 13, at 1:00 pm. June and I, along with Judy Dingman, will be visiting the Keeter Center in July to work out our final details.

During our annual general membership meeting, we will vote on the procedures for the Flower Fund. Please pay attention to this issue – so you may express your desires.

We are also having a Fire Sale on many of our 17th Artillery Association items that we have been dragging around for many years.

At the General Membership Meeting we will have elections again. We will solicit nominees at the first gathering for the offices of President, Second Vice President, Secretary and Scholarship Chairman.

This July 2022 Castle Newsletter also contains many other interesting items – five scholarship winners, the always meaningful Chaplain's Corner, 2022 Reunion Schedule, etc.

Don't forget to bring your items for the always popular and entertaining auction!

So, do not tarry. We'll see you at the 2022 17th Artillery Association Reunion at the Radisson in Branson, MO!



Radisson Hotel in Branson, Missouri, is the site of the 2022 reunion.

17th Artillery Regiment Association's 23rd Annual Reunion Branson, Missouri September 12 to 17, 2022

What: The 2022 Annual Reunion will be held at Branson, Missouri.

When: From Monday, September 12, to Saturday, September 17, 2022. Check out Saturday, September 17, 2022. The board members will arrive on September 10 and 11 for the Annual Business Meeting.

Where: Reunion Headquarters at Radisson Hotel Branson, 120 South Wildwood Drive, Branson, MO 65616



Hotel Reservations: To make your hotel reservations:

1. Call directly to: Radisson Hotel Branson – 1-417-335-5767 – then PRESS 9 for the Front Desk – to make your room reservation.
2. Mention that you are with the 17th Artillery Association Reunion – September 12 through September 17.

Room Rates: **\$99.95 per night plus tax.** Room rates are from September 10 to September 17, 2022. Room options include: 2 double beds, 2 queen beds or 1 king bed. Accessible rooms are available. Reservation deadline: August 11, 2022, to receive the 17th Artillery Association room rate of \$99.95 per night plus tax (13.35%). The rate is available three days pre and post event, for those who might want to extend their time in the area.

Hotel deadline: **Reservations made after August 11, 2022, will be based on availability.** Check-in time is 4:00 p.m. and check out time is 11:00 a.m. The hotel provides free WiFi, on-site restaurant, indoor pool, fitness center, and free parking. If you have to cancel, cancellation must be made 24 hours before check-in on September 12, 2022 (one day before scheduled check-in time), to avoid being charged.

Registration Fee: The Reunion Registration Fee will be \$65.00 per person. (See Reunion Registration Form in this newsletter.) The fee includes Monday's Welcome Social, Thursday's Annual Banquet, five breakfasts and some hospitality room snacks.

Remember to bring your 17th Artillery historical pictures, movies, and items for the always entertaining AUCTION.

**Come & experience the beauty and historic allure of the Branson area.
Treat your self to a late summer vacation to unique and fun Branson shows,
sight-seeing, a cruise on the lake aboard the Branson Belle and
enjoy being in a veteran-friendly environment.**

REGISTRATION FORM CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 4

SCHEDULE CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 21

17th Artillery Regiment Association Reunion 2022

Dining and Entertainment Options

By Judy Dineman

A dining and sightseeing option is at **College of the Ozarks** (<https://www.cofo.edu/>), also known as Hard Work U. This college is different from most in that the students work on campus to pay their tuition and graduate debt-free. The Christian-based college also has a focus on patriotism. For several years, the college has arranged tours to some of the battlefields in Europe and Vietnam for veterans and students.

The **Dobyns Dining Room** features a farm-to-fork dining experience. The Dobyns Dining Room was recognized by the regional *417 Magazine* as the Best Branson Area Restaurant in 2021. Staff members are students, some of whom are pursuing degrees in hospitality or culinary fields. The food is excellent! Reservations are required.

Other areas of interest at the College of the Ozarks are Patriot Center, the Ralph Foster Museum (home to the car used on the Beverly Hillbillies, a large gun collection and other items of interest), the mill, the tractor museum, the greenhouse and a gift shop with items made by students. Did I mention you can order your holiday fruit cake here? Check the website listed above to learn more.

To take part in the luncheon at the Keeter Center, send Gil and email and tell him you will attend and the number of guests.

How to Make Reservations for Optional Showboat Branson Belle Dinner/Cruise Scheduled for 17th ARA Reunion in Branson

One of the Reunion major events is a dinner-cruise and show on the Branson Belle. This event will take place on Wednesday, September 14, in the early evening. We have made reservations for the 5:30 cruise. We would like you to make your **reservations prior** to arriving in Branson. We are working with Steve Presley and Eagle Travel to facilitate many administrative requirements for our reunion.

1. Visit <https://eagletravel.com/17th/> and type in the password of 1722. *(If you take your time and read everything carefully, it will go much easier. You might have to scroll down to see more choices.)*
2. At the top- Select either *Pay with Credit Card* **OR** *Pay with Check*.
3. Fill in all registration requirements (your name, guest name [spouse or real guest], your arrival and departure dates at the hotel, mark **YES** that you are staying at the Radisson; then provide your address; phone and email address).
 - a. Eagle Travel will provide us a list of our members attending.
 - b. Enter the number of folks in your party. Your total cost will show up.
4. Next - click the orange PayPal button and either login to your PayPal account to process a payment -**OR**
 - a. click the "Pay with Debit or Credit Card" button at the bottom of the page and below the BLUE PAY PAL button.
 - b. Enter credit card information
5. Once the payment is processed, confirmation e-mails will be sent to both you and Eagle Travel. You will receive receipts from both Eagle Travel and PayPal if paying by credit card.
6. If you select Pay with Check, you will complete the form and receive an e-mail confirmation that includes instructions on mailing a check to Eagle Travel.
7. We plan on having a good time on September 14! Attire for the dinner/cruise is probably what you are wearing during the reunion (nothing real fancy). They will take a photo of you after boarding; the photo will be available for purchase later.

17th Artillery Regiment Association's Reunion Registration Form 2022 Reunion- September 12 – 17, 2022

Please fill out the Registration Form below

The association's registration fee will cover your breakfasts, Monday evening's Welcome Social, Hospitality Room refreshments and snacks, and Annual Banquet.

Please make your check or money order payable to: 17th Artillery Regiment Association.

Mail to the Association's Treasurer:

Rich Siebe
3060 64th Street
Sacramento, CA 95820 - 2004

CUT OR TEAR AND MAIL THE FOLLOWING TO OUR TREASURER.

(WITH YOUR CHECK OR MONEY ORDER TO ARRIVE NO LATER THAN AUGUST 1, 2022)

WE HAVE AN AUGUST 11 DEADLINE WITH THE RADISSON HOTEL.

Cut/tear here -----

NAME _____
(Please Print)

Battery _____ Battalion _____ Dates Served: From _____ to _____

Name(s) of Spouse, Relatives, and/or friends attending:

(Name tags will be printed from the names submitted)

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Registration fee: \$65.00 per person - X- Number Attending _____ = \$ _____
(number in your party)

Please donate toward the Hospitality Room Expenses: \$ _____

Check Total \$ _____

IN MEMORIAM: William K. Beers Jr.

William (Bill) K. Beers Jr. passed away peacefully in his sleep at his home in McVeytown, Pennsylvania, on April 22, 2022. He was a wonderful husband and father and a proud Vietnam Veteran. He served two tours in Vietnam; his first tour was with the 101st Airborne Division and his second tour was with the 2nd Battalion, 17th Artillery Regiment. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, camping, auctions and being with his family. He worked at Bethlehem Steel.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 50 years, Cuma (Varner) Beers, in 2019 and his parents, William K. Beers Sr. and Edith (Giboney) Beers.

Bill is survived by his son, Albert Beers of McVeytown; his daughter, Michelle Snelbaker and her husband Curtis of York Haven, Pennsylvania; seven grandchildren, Kyler and Catherine Bingham, Cameron and Justin Wright, Katilyn, Carrie and Aaron Snelbaker and four great-grandchildren, Allison and Tanner Bingham and Colton and Grayson Snelbaker.

Visitation was held Saturday, April 30, 2022, at the Lewistown Christian and Missionary Alliance Church in Lewistown, Pennsylvania. A memorial service followed. Inurnment was held at Juniata Memorial in Lewistown.

Bill had a repertoire of stories from his time in the United States Army. One story shared on the Guestbook of the 17th Artillery Regiment's website (<http://www.17thartilleryregiment.org/>) talks about the time Bill was wounded in Operation Junction City. He was placed beside other soldiers who were believed to be deceased. He said a "dust off" (Medivac) came for them, and it was taking only the wounded. When it started to leave, Bill put his arm over his face to keep the dirt out of his eyes. The crew chief saw Bill's movement and told the pilot not to leave that one was still alive. The crew chief pulled Bill into the helicopter by his wrist, and Bill woke up several days later in a hospital. The crew chief ended up living not far from where Bill was from and belonged to several organizations that Bill did. The crew chief was Charles D. Dicken (1943-2021) of Ridgeley, W. VA.

"My husband, Ed, and I visited with Bill at the 2021 reunion more than we ever had. We had seen him at every reunion we attended, but the time was right last fall to just sit and visit with him," said Judy Dingman, interim secretary of the 17th Artillery Regiment Association. "I learned he was there when Charlie Battery was overrun and the enemy was apparently coming in. Bill stopped his story, shook his head and said, 'I hate khaki!' The color of the



Bill Beers served his country in two tours in Vietnam.



The 17th Artillery Regiment Association sent a red, white and blue wreath to his funeral.



Bill Beers belonged to several veterans groups. He proudly wore the various insignias relating to his military service.

enemy uniform apparently still made him uncomfortable. Through the stories he shared, I developed a new respect for him. I will miss seeing him at reunions."

When Bill was laid to rest in Lewistown, the congregation was filled with numerous friends, relatives, and a lot of veteran's organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Viet Nam Veterans Association, 101st Airborne Association, and the 17th Artillery Regiment Association, according to information on the 17th ARA's Guestbook.

The following 17th ARA members attended Bill's memorial service: Dan Reeves, Paul Shepherd and wife, Jim Will and wife, and Richard Smith, chaplain. They were allowed to read condolences from other members who could not be there.

"Although Bill is gone physically, the memory of him will carry on. He was a good man, but God had a better plan," said Smith. "He's with Cuma now up in the clouds. He's now got a reason to sing out loud 'Hello Darlin', I'm with you and Jesus now.' We love you Bill and Cuma. Thanks for good times, work,



The 2019 reunion found Cuma and Bill Beers in attendance. The fun of comparing him to Conway Twitty continued. Unfortunately, it was her last reunion.

and patriotism you showed us. (Hand salute.)”

“Bill was supposed to come down and walk Cathy down the aisle when we got married, being both her dad and stepfather were deceased, but Cuma got sick. They always called her their ‘adopted daughter,’” added Smith.

Smith went on to say some people didn’t know that Bill was the son of a 101st paratrooper who made the infamous Normandy jump on D-Day. Bill followed in his dad’s footsteps.

“Bill was also one of the original designer/builders of ‘Tigerland’ at Ft. Polk, Louisiana, where I had the ‘Pleasure in Hell’ opportunity to take basic there 47 years ago from June – Aug,” added Smith. “He said he was only supposed to be there temporarily so he could make two or three jumps to stay on jump status. He filled in as a drill sergeant while waiting. (I could tell he was thrilled.) He said they pulled about a dozen of the troops there that had at least one tour under their belt to make Tigerland like a village from their experiences in Vietnam. From what I’ve read, it was somewhere around 50-75,000 troops that took a trip through there before heading to ‘Nam. (I was one of the five lucky ones out of my company that had signed up for artillery. That beautiful bus to Ft. Sill was prettiest sight I ever saw at the time!) My buddy from Roanoke who was stationed with me there at Polk, and had to remain because he was infantry, told me it was a very good learning experience that he didn’t care to go through again.”

“I think after Bill had two and half tours of Nam I looked at him and saw a very lucky and devoted soldier, as well as a patriot and, not to forget, a great friend.”

At reunions, there was always a lot of fun teasing Bill about being Conway Twitty.

“I don’t think he could ever convince himself that he looked like Conway Twitty, even after about 20 people thought that’s who he was,” said Smith. “I’ll never forget [at the reunion] in Colorado Springs, about seven or eight of us were sitting in the lobby and a man comes up thanking us for our service. Bill decides to pull his infamous Viet Nam picture of himself out of his wallet. ‘Who does this look like?’ asked Bill. The man looked at it and replied, ‘I never knew Conway Twitty smoked.’ Bill replied, ‘Damn. Even a stranger thinks I look like him!’”

Bill’s daughter Michelle and son Albert expressed appreciation for the flowers, calls and other forms of support members of the 17th ARA extended to them and their father .



Bill Beers posed with a group of his peers at the 2021 reunion in Gettysburg as the event wound to a close. Members shared hugs and handshakes amid comments of “see you next year” without realizing just how things could change in the ensuing year.

Appreciating the 17th Artillery Regiment Association

By Gil Bernabe

Have you ever wondered how much our veterans and their families appreciate the 17th Artillery Regiment Association? The emails below were sent to me and speak volumes about what our association means to so many 17th Artillery veterans and their beloved families.

Following is a thank-you note from Jerrie Miller (spouse of the late Sergeant Larry Miller, Charlie Battery, 2d Bn, 17th Arty, highly decorated veteran, combat medic and Lifetime Member #56). The second and third are emails from John S. Pappas, son of PFC John T. Pappas, who served with 17th Artillery during the Korean War.

May 2022

Gil,

Thank you so much for your assistance. Although it has been a number of years since I have attended a reunion, a number of members, some who served with Larry, have kept in touch. Sadly, over those years many of them have passed away.

It has been my privilege to have known many of the members and their wives and to have been witness to the bond between brothers in arms. Larry was proud to have been a life member and it was so meaningful to him to reconnect with some of those he served with during his tour in Vietnam.

Thank you to you and all who serve on the board to continue the success of the Association.

God bless - Jerrie Miller

Next, we received two emails from John S. Pappas informing us that his father had served with the 17th Artillery Regiment in Korea. He had come into possession of his father's old photos from Korea. The text and the pictures below are from John Pappas' email. Thank you, John, for sharing your father's history with us.

May 2022

Greetings sir,

I believe my dad, PFC John Pappas, served with the Persuaders 17th Artillery Regiment in the Korean War. I just came into possession of some old photos this evening and I think they would be of interest and significance to your organization. My dad was a modest man who died way too young (47yrs old). He rarely spoke of his time in Korea but he was so very proud to have served this great nation. I have vague memories of him telling me that he drove a Half Track, towing a Howitzer behind it."

May 2022

Gil,

Thanks for taking the time out of your holiday to speak with me. It truly was my pleasure. I also enjoyed reading the history of the 17th on the association's website! It definitely gives me more of an



PFC John Pappas



The Persuaders (Battery A 17 Field Artillery Battalion) served during the Korean War.

idea of what my father may have been through over there...Thank you for your time and your service to our great country.

The photos [I'm sending] were brought home after the Korean War by my father, John Pappas. I know very little of my father's service in the war, as he died of leukemia in 1978 at 48 years of age. I was only 11 years old so I never got to know him as an adult.

Until yesterday, I only knew that dad trained at Fort Sill and drove a half track. After seeing the "Persuaders" photo, I felt like I finally had a small piece of the puzzle. I couldn't figure out the vehicle in the third photo attached, PFC John Pappas on the left. I've never seen a half track with a roof!

Anyhow, thanks again for your time and more photos will be following shortly.

Respectfully - John S. Pappas

Note: Check <http://www.17thartilleryregiment.org/> for the recent posting by Tom Kurtz of more photos of PFC John T. Pappas – 17th Artillery Korean War veteran.

2022 Information for 17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarships



Dr. Gilbert A. Bernabe, Chairman, Scholarship Committee

The 17th Artillery Regiment Association general membership approved the following scholarships and special awards for 2022.

- First Place \$2,500 – IHO MSG Richard Norman Jones – 2nd Bn & 3d Bn, 17th Artillery Regiment
- Second Place \$2,000 – IHO Billy Ray Foster – C Btry, 2nd How Bn, 17th Artillery Regiment
- Third Place \$1,500 – IHO SGT Edward Dingman – HHB, 2nd Bn, 17th Artillery Regiment
- Fourth Place \$1,000 – IHO Cecil LeGrand - B Btry, 2Bn, 17th Artillery Regiment
- Special Awards \$500 – All other applicants

The Association Officers and Members greatly appreciate the scholarship evaluator's attention to detail and dedication in selecting our 2022 winners for 17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarship awards. The winners selected include:

- a. First Place and the winner of a \$2,500 award is Kieran Dudek. This award is in IHO MSG Richard Norman Jones -- 2nd Bn & 3rd Bn, 17th Arty.
- b. Second Place and the winner of a \$2,000 award is Marissa Klingeman. This award is IHO Billy Ray Foster -- C Btry, 2nd How Bn, 17th Arty.
- c. Third Place and the winner of a \$1,500 award is Jeanette Flowers. This award is IHO SGT Edward Dingman -- HHB, 2nd Bn, 17th Arty.
- d. Fourth Place and the winner of a \$1,000 award is Megan Klingeman. This award is IHO Cecil LeGrand -- B Btry, 2nd Bn, 17th Arty.
- e. Fourth Place and the winner of a \$1,000 award is William Corie. This award is IHO all veterans of the 17th Arty.

Charlie Battery – Class of 1968-70

What: 2022 Charlie Battery Reunion

When: July 29 through July 31 -- check out August 1

Where: Nashville -- The Opryland Hotel and Resort

Special Event: Group Dinner -- July 29, at nearby hotel

Room Rate: \$125 per night

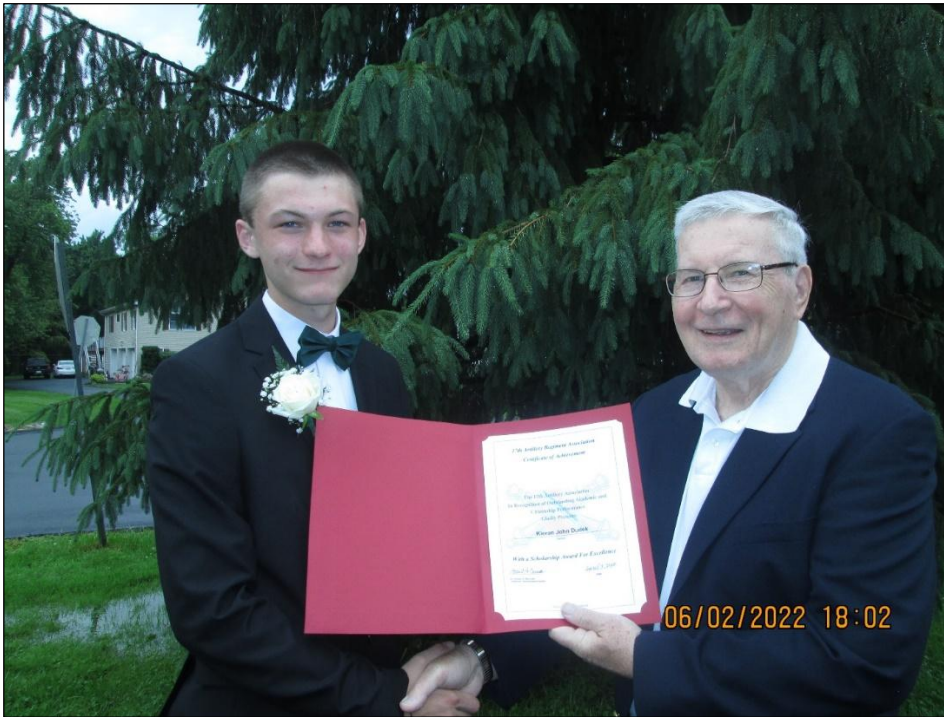
Point of Contact: Jeff Wilcox, cell (616) 581-9659, home (616) 241-0907, email wilcoxjswl@att.net

For reservation: call (615) 889-1000, follow prompts for reservations,

indicate you are with Charlie Battery, 2nd/17th Reunion or

visit <https://book.passkey.com/gt/218273227?gtid=bc43563f0d915fb748275d3148b5177>

17th Artillery Regiment Association Awards Scholarship to Clarkstown High School South Student



17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarship winner, Kieran Dudek, and his grandfather, Henry Dudek, display Kieran's 17th Artillery Regiment Association Certificate.

courses. He was selected for membership in the National Honor Society (two years), Mu Alpha Theta – Mathematics Honor Society (three years) and the Science Honor Society (two years).

A review of Kieran's high school activities reflects a very busy and dedicated student-athlete. He ran on the cross country, indoor and outdoor track teams all four years. He achieved the unique honor of being the team captain on all three teams. His dedication and hard work have made him one of New York state's most outstanding high school runners. His top times as of this article are: 800 meters: 1:58 and mile: 4:29. Kieran was selected as a New York State Public High School Athletic Association scholar-athlete. Kieran was also on the swim team and earned the 2021 award for being a Good Role Model

His high school counselor writes that "he is a very conscientious and goal-oriented student. Kieran thrives on a challenge and has a fierce determination to meet all goals.... Kieran has also demonstrated true leadership skills, being a volunteer firefighter for the past two years. His peers, as well as members of the faculty, see him as a leader because he has a good-natured manner and is very approachable."

For his outstanding achievements, Kieran Dudek was honored at his school's award ceremony and received a 17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarship Award of \$2,500. This 17th Artillery Association Scholarship was named in honor of Master Sergeant Richard Norman Jones, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion and C Battery, 3d Battalion, 17th Artillery Regiment. Kieran Dudek's connection to the 17th Artillery Regiment is through his grandfather, Henry Dudek, who served with Headquarters & Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 17th Artillery Regiment at Fort Sill, OK, and in Vietnam from 1964 to 1966.

Iceberg on the horizon!

Yes, in Branson, an iceberg -- or something resembling one to help accentuate the Titanic Museum. Each guest entering the ship will receive a boarding pass of an actual *Titanic* passenger or crew. Feel their spirit presence in the galleries where over 400 personal and private artifacts are on display. Many are on display for the first time in the world. This collection is valued at over four and a half million dollars. This is a self-guided tour. This is not too far from the Raddison Hotel.

17th Artillery Regiment Association Awards Scholarship to Frank W. Cox High School Student

The 17th Artillery Regiment Association recently awarded college scholarships to five deserving students, who included three granddaughters and two grandsons of members. The five scholarships totaled \$8,000. Each scholarship winner received a monetary award, a congratulatory letter and a 17th Artillery Regiment Association Certificate of Achievement. Each year the 17th Artillery Regiment Association awards scholarship grants to children and grandchildren of veterans and current active-duty soldiers who have served with this proud regiment. Applicants must meet the association's eligibility requirements and are evaluated on academic achievement, community service, extra-curricular activities at school, an essay on a different annual topic and a faculty member's letter of recommendation.

One of the top 2022 winners is Marissa Klingeman, a current student at Saint Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri, and a graduate of Frank W. Cox High School in Virginia Beach, Virginia. During her high school years, Marissa was an outstanding student academically. She enrolled in the Advanced Studies Diploma program and took 12 Honors or Advanced Placement Courses and earned outstanding grades in all courses. As a top-notch student, she was selected for membership in the National Honor Society (three years) and the French Honor Society (three years).

In her high school activities, she was the captain of the award-winning marching band color guard. The musically talented Marissa also played the flute in the school's concert band. In 2021 she was awarded the "Esprit De Corps" award for her consistent, positive display of team spirit. In college she is a member of Kappa Alpha Theta - Eta Omega Sorority and the university's Dance Marathon. Despite her busy academic schedule, she works 10 hours per week in the alumni office, soliciting donors for the university.

Marissa's university academic advisor notes that "Marissa is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts Degree with two majors. Her primary major is Criminology and Criminal Justice and her secondary is Psychology... She has already become involved on campus. She joined Kappa Alpha Theta sorority in her first semester and started a job on campus engaging with alumni this semester. These commitments show she values service and community, both of which appear to be values of this association."

For her outstanding achievements, Marissa Klingeman received a 17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarship Award of \$2,000. This 17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarship was named in honor of Private First Class Billy Ray Foster, C Battery, 2nd Howitzer Battalion, 17th Artillery Regiment, who was killed in action in Vietnam.

Marissa Klingeman's connection to the 17th Artillery Regiment is through her grandfather, Michael Klingeman, who served with B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 17th Artillery Regiment in Vietnam, from 1969 to 1970.



17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarship winner Marissa Klingeman and her grandfather, Michael Klingeman, display Marissa's scholarship award.

Billy Bob's Dairyland

Looking for just a good burger and fries for lunch or supper in an atmosphere akin to the drive-ins of the '50-'60s? Billy Bob's is the place for you! The menu features typical drive-in fare, but it's oh so good! One piece of advice if you choose to eat there: be very careful about ordering a "double" or larger burger on your first visit. And – it's not too far from the Raddison Hotel, site of our 2022 reunion!

17th Artillery Regiment Association Awards Scholarship to West Aurora High School Student



17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarship winner Jeanette Flowers is with her father, James Flowers.



Jeanette Flowers with her grandfather, Richard Flowers, a 17th Artillery veteran.

on academic achievement, community service, extra-curricular activities at school, an essay on a different annual topic and a faculty member's letter of recommendation.

One of the 2022 winners is Jeanette Flowers, a 2022 graduate of West Aurora High School in Aurora, Illinois. During her high school years, Jeanette applied herself diligently to her academic course work. She was enrolled in the Standard High School Curriculum and achieved excellent grades. Jeanette made time to participate in the school's Junior Reserve Officer Training Program (ROTC) program and participated in JROTC all four years. Through her dedication to the program and hard work, she earned the rank of Technical Sergeant. Jeanette's future plans are to attend college and major in psychology.

Jeanette's school counselor/academic dean writes that "Jeanette is a student in the Character House (one of the top-class groups). She is well-rounded, likeable, mindful, observant and an empathetic student. Jeanette is a willing and very hard worker who has demonstrated a mature sense of priorities. Whether she is working as a volunteer for Feed My Starving children, cleaning up the highway or cleaning up headstones at a military cemetery, she always performs these tasks with a positive attitude and a smile on her face."

Jeanette served her community well by participating as a coordinator for the Community Service Team and as a staff member for the JROTC Drill Team.

For her outstanding achievements, Jeanette was honored at her school's award ceremony and received a 17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarship Award of \$1,500. This 17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarship was named in honor of Sergeant Edward Dingman, a longtime member of the 17th Artillery Regiment Association, who served as a communications specialist with Headquarters & Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 17th Artillery Regiment in Vietnam. Jeanette Flower's connection to the 17th Artillery Regiment is through her grandfather, Richard Flowers, who served with C Battery, 2nd Battalion, 17th Artillery Regiment at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and in Vietnam from 1964 to 1966.

The 17th Artillery Regiment Association recently awarded college scholarships to five deserving students, who included three granddaughters and two grandsons of members. The five scholarships totaled \$8,000. Each scholarship winner received a monetary award, a congratulatory letter and a 17th Artillery Regiment Association Certificate of Achievement. Each year the 17th Artillery Regiment Association awards scholarship grants to children and grandchildren of veterans and current active-duty soldiers who have served with this proud

regiment. Applicants must meet the association's eligibility requirements and are evaluated

Sight and Sound Theater

From the bustling streets of Jerusalem to the raging Sea of Galilee, *Jesus* is an action-packed musical state adventure for the whole family, according to information on the Sight and Sound website (<https://www.sight-sound.com/shows/branson/jesus/2022>).

Join Peter, Nicodemus, Mary Magdalene and a multitude of others as they journey alongside the most famous person ever to walk the earth. Witness the most miraculous events in history as Jesus sets sail with fishermen and makes disciples out of the least-expected. The lives he touches will never be the same. Experience the greatest rescue story of all time as it comes to life on stage with massive sets, special effects and live animals in this original stage production. You'll find this is not your typical stage performance!

17th Artillery Regiment Association Awards Scholarship to George Mason University Student

The 17th Artillery Regiment Association recently awarded college scholarships to five deserving students, who included three granddaughters and two grandsons of members. The five scholarships totaled \$8,000. Each scholarship winner received a monetary award, a congratulatory letter and a 17th Artillery Regiment Association Certificate of Achievement. Each year the 17th Artillery Regiment Association awards scholarship grants to children and grandchildren of veterans and current active-duty soldiers who have served with this proud regiment. Applicants must meet the association's eligibility requirements and are evaluated on academic achievement, community service, extra-curricular activities at school, an essay on a different annual topic, and a faculty member's letter of recommendation.

One of the 2022 winners is Megan Klingeman, a 2021 graduate of Frank W. Cox High School, in Virginia Beach, Virginia. During her high school years, Megan applied herself diligently to her academic course work and to her unique musical talents. She was enrolled in the Advanced Studies Diploma curriculum and achieved excellent grades. Megan displayed her all-round musical aptitude as she played the violin, double base and percussion instruments. Megan was in the school's marching band for four years and was selected to play in the orchestra and concert ensemble – also for four years. She also found time to perform in the school's theater program. Megan is currently enrolled at George Mason University and is majoring in Art History and Astronomy.

Megan's essay for the scholarship competition, "What Does Veterans Day Mean to Me?" provides the reader some most interesting and meaningful observations from a child raised in a military family.

"Veterans Day is and always will be an extremely important day for me. Though many people believe this day is simply just a day off from school or work, I fully understand that it is so much more than that. On November 11 of every year, we remember and honor the men and women who have sacrificed everything to serve our country and granted us the many freedoms we have today. One day of the year is spent where we commemorate and remember the courage and commitment it took for these veterans to uproot their life and fight on behalf of keeping everyone safe."

"As a military child, living around military veterans and experiences is nothing out of the ordinary. Living in a community with both a large active duty and veteran population has given me a front row seat in seeing and experiencing the sacrifices that one must make in the military. I wake up to the national anthem and the various military branch songs, jet noises during lunchtime and colors in the evening. Each and every day, I hear these small yet memorable things that make me proud and grateful that we have a day designated to the veterans in my life."

For her outstanding achievements, Megan was honored with a 17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarship Award of \$1,000. This scholarship was named in honor of Cecil LeGrand, a long-time member of the 17th Artillery Regiment Association who served with B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 17th Artillery Regiment in Vietnam. Megan Klingeman's connection to the 17th Artillery Regiment is through her grandfather, Michael Klingeman, who served in Vietnam with B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 17th Artillery Regiment from 1969 to 1970.



17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarship winner Megan Klingeman, and her father, Senior Chief Michael Klingeman III, display Megan's scholarship award.

Driving to Branson from points east? Check this out!

The Missouri National Veterans Memorial in Perryville is a sister wall to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. You will find it adjacent to the farm fields in southeast Missouri rather than amidst the hustle and bustle of a metropolitan area. It is situated in the exact manner as the original. It's just a lot closer for a lot of folks in the Midwest and points further west to visit than traveling to the nation's capital. It all started in 1968 when Jim Eddleman made a promise to himself in Vietnam: He would one day honor his comrades if he made it out alive. For more information, visit <https://mnvmfund.org/>. Check it out. You won't be sorry you did.

17th Artillery Regiment Association Awards Scholarship to Baton Rouge Community College Student



17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarship winner William Corie receives a scholarship check and certificate from his grandfather and 17th Artillery veteran Dave Rowell.

The 17th Artillery Regiment Association recently awarded college scholarships to five deserving students, who included three granddaughters and two grandsons of members. The five scholarships totaled \$8,000. Each scholarship winner received a monetary award, a congratulatory letter and a 17th Artillery Regiment Association Certificate of Achievement. Each year the 17th Artillery Regiment Association awards scholarship grants to children and grandchildren of veterans and current active-duty soldiers who have served with this proud regiment. Applicants must meet the association's eligibility requirements and are evaluated on academic achievement, community service, extra-curricular activities at school, an essay on a different annual topic and a faculty member's letter of recommendation.

One of the 2022 scholarship winners is William Corie, a 2020 Live Oak High School graduate and a current student at Baton Rouge Community College. During his high school years, William enrolled in a challenging curriculum and complimented those standard educational courses with a study of automotive technology and a welding course. In his regular academic courses, he graduated with an excellent 3.7 grade point average. In his welding and automotive technology courses, he proved himself "a man with many talents" as he prepared for future employment. In his welding courses he finished with a Welding I certification, and in his

automotive courses he earned an Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certification, which is a credential that demonstrate a mechanic's skills and expertise in different areas of automotive repair and maintenance.

At Baton Rouge Community College, William's college major is "Process Technician." What does that mean? He is training to become a plant operator. His college course of studies includes training on a distillation unit where students separate glycol and water. The classes teach students how to draw the plant, run the plant as a team and many soft skills such as communication and working as a team. Students have other classroom instruction that compliments the hands-on activity. In the classroom, students are taught everything from chemical formulas, how the process variables affect the product and extensive computer base training.

This career program is a major necessity to train the next generation of plant operators. Recently, William competed for an intern position at one of the companies that supports this professional program. As a result of training at Baton Rouge Community College, William has been offered and accepted an internship in operations at the local Formosa Plastics Plant in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Some of the other supporting companies include Exxon, Dow Chemical and Shell. This professional training and career program is a major necessity to train the next generation of plant operators for the Louisiana region where William lives. He expects to complete his training and graduate in December 2022.

For his outstanding achievements, William Corie was awarded with a 17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarship Award of \$1,000. This 17th Artillery Regiment Association Scholarship was named in honor of all veterans of the 17th Artillery Regiment. William Corie's connection to the 17th Artillery Regiment is through his grandfather, David Rowell, a Purple Heart recipient who served in Vietnam with A Battery, 2nd Battalion, 17th Artillery Regiment from 1968 to 1969.

Don't Forget to Support Our Auction

On Thursday, September 15, will have our Annual General Membership Meeting followed by the always entertaining auction. As you know, the auction *raises funds to support our scholarship program*. Please remember to bring an item or two for the auction. We will wrap up Thursday with our 2022 Reunion Annual Banquet.

Of course, in between all these exciting events we will have plenty of time to socialize and enjoy each other's company.

Before you forget – find the Reunion Registration Form in this Newsletter, fill it out and mail it, along with your \$65 per person to Rich Siebe. See you soon at our Headquarters at the Radisson Hotel. Deadline to register is August 20.

We need to get the meal count in soon after. We need to know if you are coming – so we can plan how much food to order.

And, of course, hurry and make your hotel reservation, also at the Radisson Hotel.

Deadline to register for a hotel room: August 11, 2022.

Chaplain's Corner

Life is Like a Clock...

Richard A Smith, Chaplain (Rsmith3024@nc.rr.com, 919-995-2163)

I hope all of you reading this are doing well. For us here in North Carolina, it seems like we didn't have much of a winter, and it just went into a late spring. Baseball has started. (I promise not to brag about our oldest grandson stealing the most bases in his little league.)

I lost two friends yesterday due to health reasons. It dawned on me that in about three months I have lost five friends, and four of them I'd known over 40 years with the exception of two. I was within five years of age on all but two.

I guess yesterday it hit me that we are not in this world forever. Every hair on your head has been counted. Each day that we live our "body clocks" tick away another minute. We don't know when that final minute will be, but what happens when that final minute comes? I've talked about this before, but I feel it's worth mentioning again.

Did you have time to ask yourself, "Did I try to live a Christian life? Did I accept Jesus Christ? Did I ask for forgiveness of my own sins and those that sinned against me?" Think about it, because when that "clock" quits ticking it's too late to ask. Ask yourself these questions NOW! Tomorrow is not promised.

I want to share two verses with you:

1) *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 6:23*

2) *And if the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through the Spirit, who lives in you. Romans 8:11*

The greatest reward I get out of my job here is asking those questions of our members who are terminal, and realize it, and hearing them say "yes" to those three questions. Keep in mind your clock is ticking away just like mine. Be ready when the alarm goes off!

We have some sickness and distress among our association:

1) Bill Dahlin--kidney failure

2) Harry Fetsick--a bad fall on his knee that required three surgeries (and possibly a fourth) along with other health problems

3) Gene Johnson--kidney problems

4) Peggy Dages (widow of Mike)--back surgery

5) Norm and Annette Jones--health problems

6) Tom Kurtz--care giver

7) Jack Stroud--cancer

Members or family of members who have passed away this year include:

1) Bill Beers--organ failure

2) 1st Sgt. Bobby A. West (Ret.) He was with Norm Jones in Viet Nam in 1968. His son said he served in two battalions of the 17th Artillery Regiment.

3) Steve Schlicher--cancer from Agent Orange

4) Riche Siebe's uncle

Please don't hesitate to call or email me if you know of a member with sickness or who is in distress.

Looking forward to seeing you all at Branson! Until then...

God Bless,

Richard A. Smith-Chaplain 17th ARA
(A Btry/4th Bn '74-78)

OLD REDLEG'S POEM

As I got out of my car today I saw a bird fly

Way up in the sky. I noticed his chirp

Was loud to my surprise.

I stepped on a stick.

And heard it make a click.

The TV had a loud sound

My wife asked why I had turned it down.

I used to keep it loud

But today it wouldn't touch the clouds.

36 years ago tomorrow one of our daughters came into the world to give us a show like no one has known.

We prepare to go to a birthday dinner

And eat like a bunch of sinners.

Our oldest grandson in my lap he takes a seat.

He thinks he and grandpa are neat.

He hugs me and tells me he loves me

as he repeated it after I said, "Huh?"

I replied that I heard him the first time

"I just wanted to hear it again!"

He looked closely at my ears and yelled out,

"Grandpa's got hearing aids! He can hear now!"

He knows only a little about why and how

But I told him," The VA gave me something I lost years ago today.

My "rich uncle named Sam" became my daddy and said now you're going to become a man!

There was a time when I didn't move as slow

but I got a little older so it goes.

I guess you could say I got the "Redleg's Cannonier's Badge" today.

I fired a lot of 8" 202 pound artillery cannon rounds almost half a century ago. Today God and the VA were good to me. I didn't have to go to war like a lot of my friends and relatives did but I've been shown again today with God's faith and a prayer, He's always there.

Richard Smith

(Written after receiving his hearing aids from the VA after trying almost 44 years.)

Faid Pass, Tunisia, And 17th Field Artillery Regiment POWs Part Two

By Thomas R. Kurtz

At the Mooseburg German POW camp, the enlisted men from the 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment were separated from their officers. From Mooseburg the enlisted personnel went through as many as five different POW camps before ending up in one of two POW camps, either Stalag 2B, Hammerstein in the vicinity of Koslin and Stolp, West Prussia, or Stalag 3B Furstenberg, Brandenburg, Prussia.

Stalag 2B was known as the worst of the German POW camps due to the number of beatings of the POWs. Stalag 2B covered over 25 acres and was divided into four compounds which were separated by barbed wire fences. The American POWs occupied five, one-story, stone buildings. The barracks were full of three-tier bunks which were too numerous for the barracks' cubic spaces and the quarters were overcrowded. Prisoners slept on tables, chairs or on the floor while waiting shipment to works detachments. The camp had a strength of 4,807 enlisted men, all ground forces. The entire camp was surrounded by two barbed wire fences. Inside the base camp, which housed 1,000 Americans, consisting of permanent camp staff, non-recognized NCOs, medics and the physically unfit. The remaining 3,800 were on 141 work detachments, some as far as 350 kilometers from the base camp. All privates had to work. NCOs could volunteer. Nearly all POWs are employed on large farms in Pomerania where the main crop was potatoes. Working POWs received 70 pfennigs a day in lager geld. Non-working POWs received no pay.

More barbed wire fences formed compounds and sub-compounds. A total of 10,000 Russians lived in the East Compound, while other nationalities – 18,000 French, 1,600 Serbs, 900 Belgians and Americans were segregated by nationalities in the Northern Compound. Within the American enclosure were a playing field, workshops, dispensary, showers and delouser. At times more than 600 men were quartered in each of the single-story barracks. It contrasted with the Russians' barracks which held as many as 1,000 POWs apiece. Barracks were in two parts divided by a center washroom which had 20 water taps. Drinking water was always available, except during the POWs' last two months, when it was turned off for a part of the day. Bunks were POW regulation triple-decker with excelsior mattresses, and each POW had one German blanket, plus two others from the Red Cross. In the front and rear of each barracks was a urinal to be used only at night. Heat for the barracks was provided by three stoves for the front half and two stoves for the rear half. The fuel ration was insufficient. In December 1944, fuel ration was cut to a low of 12 kilos of coal per stove per day. The Germans withheld part of the fuel ration on warmer days.

Harshness at the base stalag degenerated into brutality and outright murder on some of the commandos. Beatings of American commandos by their German overseers were too numerous to count, but records reflect 10 Americans in work detachments were shot. Reasons given by the Germans were that they were trying to escape. Witnesses said otherwise, that they were clear cases of murder.

In August 1943, the newly opened Stalag 2B was for privates of U.S. Ground Forces with a strength of 451. The main stalag functioned as a headquarters for work detachments in the region and seldom housed more than 175 POWs. There were 99 works camps that Stalag 2B supplied POWs to work the fields in the area. At its peak in January 1945, the number of American POWs was put at 7,200, with close to 5,315 of those were out on nine major commando companies. The number of nine commando companies and POWs each were: Company Lauenberg with 65 commandos teams consisting of 1,700 POWs; Company Stolp with 40 commandos with 700 POWs; Company Runmlesberg 28 commandos with 550 POWs; Company Koslin 25 commandos with 450 POWs; Company Falkenberg 15 commandos with 315 POWs; Company Jastrow 25 commandos with 450 POWs; Company Dt. Krone 20 commandos with 550 POWs; Company Schlochau 12 commandos with 200 POWS, and Company New Stettin 15 commandos with 350 POWs.

STALAG 2B



Stalag 2B Guard Tower in the center of the American compound.

POWs at the 99 work camps had the same hours during each workday. Each workday the men rose at 0600 and had breakfast consisting of Red Cross food, potato soup, bread and hot water for coffee from the farm kitchen. At 0630 they washed their spoons and enameled bowls and cleaned their quarters. Shaving and washing were done in three large wash pans filled from a single faucet with only cold water. The outdoor latrine was a three-seater. At 0700 they rode out to the potato fields in horse-drawn wagons driven by coldly hostile German farmhands who would welcome an opportunity to shoot a "kriege". Under armed German guards, they dug potatoes until 1130, when they road back to the farm for the noon meal, which consisted of Red Cross food supplemented with German vegetable soup. At 1300 the trip was made back to the fields until returning to their quarters at 1630. The evening meal at 1700 hours consisted of food from Red Cross packages, and the farmers supplied vegetable soup, potatoes and gravy. After the meal, the POWs could sit outside in the fenced pen (30' by 8') until 1830, then the guards locked them in their section of the work camp for the night. On Sundays, the guards would let the POWs lounge or walk back and forth in the fenced compounds. A good deal of time was spent by the POWs washing their clothing and scrubbing their quarters. Once a month, each POW received a large Red Cross food box holding four regulation Red Cross parcels. Parcels were stored in the guard room until issued. The average tour of duty on a farm commando lasted indefinitely. Work at other detachments lasted until the specific project had been completed. Other than housekeeping chores benefiting POWs, no work was performed at the base POW Camp, Stalag 2B.

Clothing was a source of contention. The Germans insisted that they had the right to keep the POWs' old clothing when the POWs was re-outfitted with Red Cross supplies. This made it necessary for the POWs to work in rain and mud with their one and only uniform. Eventually the Protecting Powers did see that POWs were allowed to keep their old uniforms.

On January 28, 1945, the POWs received instructions to be ready to evacuate the camp at 0800 hours the following morning. With the instructions to move, a plan was developed to move the POWs from the camp based on 25-man groups with 200 men in each group and NCOs in charge. That plan fell apart the next morning when the German guards ordered the POWs to fall out of the barracks; when 1,200 men had assembled on the road, the remaining 500 were allowed to stay in the barracks. The 1,200 men in a disorganized column were marched out of the camp into the cold and snowy weather. Red Cross food was available during the march. The next day the column was broken down into three groups of 400 each with NCOs in charge of each group.

For the next three months, the column was on the move averaging 22 kilometers a day, six days a week. The winter weather was bad, raining, snowing and bitter cold. Overnight stays were in barns,(heated or unheated), stables and sometimes unsheltered on the ground. German rations were inadequate and often consisted of a typical watery soup, but several times the POWs got a good thick dried-pea-soup. From the POW camps passed by the column Red Cross food was obtained during the march. At every stop a Sergeant McMahan bartered coffee or chocolate for potatoes which he issued to the troops. The ability of the POWs to steal helped a lot. When a weakened POW dropped out of the column, he would wait to be picked up by another column. One period on the march when Red Cross food was exhausted, the guards became surly.

At Dahlen on March 6 and 7, the column dwindled to some 900 Americans POWs. On March 19 at Tramim, 800 men were sent to work on commandos, leaving only 133 POWs who were joined a week later by the large commando company from Lauenberg. On April 13, the column was strafed by four Spitfires near Dannenberg and 10 POWs were killed. The rest of the column went ahead to Marlag 10C, Westertimke. At Westertimke they met the POWs who were left behind at Stalag 2B. They had left on February 18, reaching Stalag 10B, after an easy three day trip. They were moved to adjacent Marlag 10C on April 16. Westertimke was liberated by the British Army on April 28, 1945.

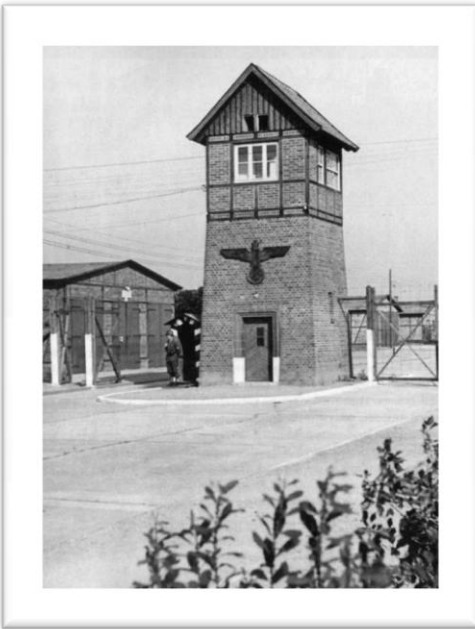
After reviewing the National Archives on World War II POWs, I was able to identify 66 soldiers from the 17th Field Artillery Regiment captured in North Africa during February 1943 and held at Stalag 2B: one captain (male nurse), two sergeants, one sergeant T-5, three corporals, 16 privates first class and 43 privates. Again, all POW records did not reflect branch or parent unit.



Typical of a POW triple-decker bunk in POW barracks. Photo taken at Stalag 2B.

STALAG 3B

Stalag 3B at Furstenberg served as the base installation while numerous working commandos operated within a considerable distance. Also connected with Stalag 3B was a stalag infirmary, a stalag lazaret and a hospital at Gorden. Stalag 3B was spread out on a plain, two kilometers southwest of a railroad station and two kilometers from a glasswork. The American camp, which during the early part of 1944 consisted of six wooden barracks, was 350 meters from the entrance of the stalag. The POWs barracks in early 1944, were divided into two parts, each housing from 150 to 190 men or an average of a little over 300 men per barracks. In early 1945, when the men were evacuated, 12 instead of six barracks were supplied for the Americans, whose compound measured 300 by 2,000 feet, and 450 men instead of 300 were logged in each barracks. Electric lights were insufficient, and the barracks consisted of a central passageway with tables and stools placed near the windows. When the barracks were full, some of the tables were removed to install more bunks.



The lavatories in the center of each barracks always had 24 running water faucets available for the 300-400 men in the barracks. Nearby were large cement tubs for the laundry, but no hot water was available. In the corner of the central laundry was a stove used exclusively for preparation of individual dishes. The kitchen was spacious and well lighted but lacked utensils. An additional barracks served as a recreation hall, theater, church, and library. This barracks was entirely built with materials from the Red Cross -- crates, paper, cans, etc.

From the intelligence report dated July 18, 1944, all privates were forced to work. NCOs were encouraged to do likewise. Work was usually agricultural or on camp improvements projects. Some POWs reported they worked on railroads and in quarries. From the November 1945 report there were five commando detachments. In February 1944, 668 soldiers were employed in construction of a power plant at No. 1 (Trattendorf); 14 volunteer NCOs were doing agricultural work at No. 2 (Schprbus); 67 soldiers were digging, building embankments and doing similar for German railroads at No. 3 (Markisch-Heide); 27 NCOs were doing agricultural work at No. 4 (Schuhlen); and 13 NCOs were employed in agriculture at No. 7 (Roitz).

The most severe problem encountered at Stalag 3B by the POWs was the continual repetition searches and the confiscation of items such as cigarettes, clothing and food. On March 2, 1944, the POWs were forced to stay outside the barracks for 12 hours as 50 German civilians were allowed to search the American compound and confiscate articles as they wanted. Some U.S. POWs were court-martialed for refusing to work and four

others were held for court-martial for throwing food to the Russians in a neighboring compound.

On January 13, 1945, POWs from Stalag 3B were marched west on a two-hour notice. Roads were jammed with refugees and troops. POWs from Stalag 3B had expected to be left there until overrun by the Russians. At 1500 hours the POWs were told to be ready to move in two hours. It was three to four hours before they left camp, and then they spent two more hours outside before movement got underway. Each man had half of a Red Cross parcel issued three to four days before the march started, but no food was on hand at the start of the march. Although ample stocks of Red Cross parcels were kept at Guben, a few miles away, the Germans made no effort to bring them to Stalag 3B for distribution. On the first day the column marched until 1700 hours, February 1, 1945, a total of 24 consecutive hours from the time they had been alerted to move. This long march was made through snow, ice and deep puddles. The POWs then were jammed into small barns to sleep. The next seven days they completed their march to Stalag 2A (Luckenwalde) 108 kilometers west of Furstenburg, arriving February 7, 1945. For food during the march, they had a total of one loaf of bread and one-half pound of cheese per man, plus one ration of soup distributed only once to the POWs. Horse carts followed the column and picked up the POWs too sick to keep up with the column. On the march the German guards were guilty of no brutality and sympathized with the POWs.

POW records from the National Archives reflected on April 23, 1945, Private Anthony J. Kolacinski, was reported being executed, shot while trying to escape. This was the only record I found of any of the 17th Field Artillery Regiment soldiers captured in North Africa to be executed.

In early May 1945, Corporal Richard J. Nichols, who served with the 17th Field Artillery Regiment at Faid Pass, woke up to find the German guards at the camp gone. Six of the POWs there left on foot toward the Elbe River. Three days later they caught up with U. S. troops on the East side of the Elbe River. Corporal Nichols was taken to Halle, Germany, where he was debriefed by the Army and flown to Le Havre, France, where he happily boarded a crowded ship home.

Corporal Edward A. Deaton, in an article on his days as a POW, said on the march sometimes the POWs slept in fields along the way. Eventually they came to a large farm with several outbuildings. Deaton and three others slipped unnoticed into one of the outbuildings. The next morning it was quiet, and they opened the door to see everyone else was gone. A nearby German lady appeared and pointed in



the direction the POWs had gone. The other three men decided to catch up. Corporal Deaton headed in the opposite direction. He made his way across country, mostly unnoticed by the German civilians who had other things to worry about than one straggling escapee. After a couple of days without any food, Deaton stopped at a German farmhouse and after hand gestures he was able to obtain some food in a paper sack from the German lady at the farm. From there he ventured into a small village where he saw numerous civilians digging what looked like foxholes. Stopping an elderly man and through hand gestures again found out the direction he was heading in was towards the Russians which he did not want and turned around in a opposite direction. Deaton eventually found three other escaped Americans and they ended up on a street corner in another village. They were approached by a German civilian on a bicycle. One of the three other Americans spoke German, and the German civilian told them he could lead them through German lines towards the American lines and away from the Russians. The group took off, only to run into a German officer and a small band of troops and were taken to another POW camp. Later the American POWs were freed by American troops and hauled off in big transportation trucks.

In one of the several POW camps where Edward Deaton was held, a fellow soldier from Deaton's unit came by three white handkerchiefs. Upon them he wrote a poem about the battle that led to their capture at Faid Pass. One night, one of the handkerchiefs was given to Denton which today he still has.

The writing on the handkerchief is as follows:

*The sun rose from behind Faid Pass, to announce that the dreadful nite had passed.
 And there in the valley coming so fast, were Germans and Panzers of every class.
 Rommel was running he was forced; the British Eight Army made his cause lost.
 We were so few, but the orders were tossed. Hold him, men, at any cost.
 We hit the dirt side by side, fired bullets and shells into his front so wide.
 We were trapped – so many died.
 But God above knows how hard we tried.
 Creeping and crawling bit by bit, the enemy was closer, hit after hit.
 Bodies were falling, still no one quit. Till their machine guns were shoved in our pits.
 I pray that you will never see, Hell in its fury as we did.
 It will never be forgotten, by them and me.
 The Fourteenth of Feb., in Forty-Three*

*Ed Murphy, P.O.W.
 (Sergeant Edward Murphy)*

The POWs remained in Stalag 3A until April 22, 1945, when the camp was liberated. Stalag 3A was turned over to the Americans on 6 May. The archives POWs record search reflected the 17th had a total of 105 soldiers held as POWs at Stalag 3B: three staff sergeants, 12 sergeants, 39 corporals, 11 privates first class and 40 privates. Again, some POW records did not reflect branch or unit identification.

NOTES:

- A. Part Two on the POWs from the 2nd Battalion gives only a general view on their conditions and activities during their captivity and does not cover all aspects or conditions at the POW or work camps where they were held.
- B. Without the packages and new clothing provided by the International and American Red Cross, conditions at all POW camps would have been far worst for the American POWs. The Red Cross packages assembled by volunteers in the United States held non-perishable food, such as raisins, coffee, dried milk, orange concentrate, canned fish and chocolate bars, as well as cigarettes, soap, medicine and clothing.
- C. Former Sergeant Hubert G. Edward, who served as a gunner in a howitzer section with the Regiment, gave a talk on his World War W II experiences at the Central Carolina Community College on November 12, 2019, during which he stated that the 2nd Battalion at Faid Pass lost 30 officers, 199 enlisted men and all of the of battalions' vehicles, except one. This is the first data on the casualties suffered by the 2nd Battalion that I have found. With my current figures on the KIAs, MIAs and POWs, I can account for 16 officers and 172 enlisted. Currently, I have found no recorded list of the regiment's World War II KIAs. Unknown is the number and names of KIAs who were shipped back for burial in the United States. A reprint of a newspaper article about Hubert G. Edward can be found in the June 2019 Castle Newsletter, page 13.
- D. In February 1944, the 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment was redesignated the 630th Field Artillery Battalion and activated on March 1, 1944. The 630th was formed as an eight-inch towed howitzers battalion, tracker drawn. Misfortune followed the new designated battalion as it had a total of 156 of its soldiers taken as POWs during World War II. A search of



the National Archives Records of POWs reflects the battalion during the Battle of the Bulge, in Belgium, on December 24, 1944, had 145 of its personnel taken as POWs. The battalion had one of its POWs, Private John H. Horridge, die while in captivity. Private Horridge was captured on December 26, 1944, and held at Stalag 9G, Bad Sulza, Saxe-Weimar. The 630th Field Artillery Battalion provided fire support to I Corps of the French Army from November 14, 1944, to March 10, 1945.

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3. News Articles on 17th Field Artillery Regiment Veterans: POW Memories Haunt Cody Man, by Mark Heinz, February 13, 2013 (www.codyenterprise.com/news/local/article_9e86d97c-762a-11e2-9db500119bb2963f4.html); Central Carolina Community College, College News; Hubert G, Edwards speaks on his WW II experiences at CCCC program, www.cccc.edu/locations, dated November 12, 2019; Newspaper article on Corporal Richard J. Nichols' POW experience; New Jersey Times article about Corporal Michael Modugno, Battery F, at Stalag 3B.
4. American Prisoners of War in Germany: Prepared by Military Intelligence Service War Department, Stalag 2B, dated July 15, 1944, and November 1, 1945.
5. American Prisoners of War in Germany: Prepared by Military Intelligence Service War Department: Stalag 3B, dated July 18, 1944, and November 1, 1945.

Proposed Revisions for Flower Fund

- 1) Flowers and/or a 17th Artillery wreath shall be sent to:
 - a. Current and former officers of the Association and their spouses.
 - b. Life members and their spouses who have been active within the past five years. (Attended reunions, made donations, etc.).
- 2) Time permitting, the Chaplain shall text, email or phone the family and suggest the family please mention the veteran's service in the 17th Artillery Regiment in the veteran's obituary. For example, include the following sentence in the obituary: "(Name of the veteran) served with the 17th Artillery Regiment in Vietnam, Korea, Germany, Vietnam, Iraq or Afghanistan (as appropriate)."
- 3) Ordering the 17th flowers or wreath for the deceased: Chaplain orders the flowers and pays with his credit card.
- 4) Chaplain sends the credit card receipt for the flowers or wreath to the Association Treasurer for reimbursement from the Association's monies.

Communications through our 17th Artillery Regiment Association Newsletter--it's critical that veterans' family members please communicate to the 17th Artillery Regiment Association Chaplain when their veteran is ill, in the hospital, in hospice, in a nursing home or has passed away.

Our current Chaplain's contact information is:

Name: Richard A. Smith

Phone: (919) 995-2163

Email: rsmith3024@nc.r.com

17th ARA “FIRE SALE”

The current inventory of 17th ARA clothing items has been dragged around from reunion to reunion with very few sales. Therefore, the Board of Officers has approved this Fire Sale.

The purpose of this sale is to reduce the inventory at a discounted price. Reducing the inventory will make life easier for the association Quartermaster and will raise funds for the general fund and the scholarship fund.

Our main goal is to sell these items at the **2022 Branson Reunion**. However, if you wish to purchase some items prior to that, contact Phyllis and work out your purchase.

Make checks payable to: 17th Artillery Regiment Association or 17th ARA. Mail orders and online orders will include a shipping and handling fee.

For Sale at 50% discount of listed price – unless marked otherwise.

ITEM	Size / Number			Total
17th Arty Caps	Blue	Solid - 2	Mesh - 10	
	\$25.00 ea +S/H \$5.00	Black	Mesh - 3	15
17th Arty Jackets	Small – 2 \$29.00	Medium - 4	Large - 0	
	2 XL – 8 - \$31	3XL – 2 - \$33	4XL - 0	10
Grey Polo Shirt	Small – 3 \$24.00	Medium - 2 \$24.00	Large - 0	
	2 XL – 3 - \$27	3XL - None	4XL - 0	8
White Tee-Shirt	Small – 1 - \$19	Medium - 9	Large - 0	
	2XL – 10 - \$21	3XL – 5 - \$23	4XL - 0	25

For Sale as marked – Funds to general fund

50th Anniversary – Vietnam Metal Buttons – 8 - \$5.00 each

Magnets – 49 - \$10.00 each

Two (2) rolls of small round 17th Artillery Association STICKERS –

FREE with each sale and to each 2022 Reunion attendee

Patches to sew on – 4 - \$5.00 each

Decals – Black – 23; White – 28 - \$5.00 each – or - Free with each sale

Metal 17th Arty Unit Crests – 16 - \$5.00 each

American Flag Lapel Pins – 9 - \$5.00 each

Lanyard – approximately 355 - \$1.00 each

General Franks Coins – 9 – Sale price: \$20. 00 each

Sale of Life Member Coins and Challenge Coins –to Scholarship Fund

a. **Life Member Coins** - Sale price: \$25.00 each

b. **CHALLENGE Coins**: Sale price: \$25.00 each

For purchases before the 2022 Branson Reunion - Contact: Phyllis Flowers at (630) 842–7337 or email: Grandmas.prayers@att.net

Questions: contact Gil Bernabe at Gilbernabe29@aol.com – or (903) 421–6266.

No reserved purchases without payment. “Money talks” and you know the rest.

Schedule for 2022 Reunion 17th Artillery Regiment Association

Sat - 9/10	Sun -- 9/11	Mon -- 9/12	Tues -- 9/13	Wed -- 9/14	Thu --r 9/15	Fri -- 9/16	Sat -- 9/17
	Breakfast – Pay as you go	Breakfast – Pay as you go	Breakfast – association pays	Breakfast – association pays	Breakfast – association pays	Breakfast – association pays	Breakfast – association pays
		In Hospitality Room			In Hospitality Room		
Board members arrive		10 a.m. Open Registration Table	Self-guided Tours and Shows	Self-guided Tours and Shows	9 to 11 a.m. Annual Membership Meeting	Self-guided Tours and Shows	Check out and travel home
	Noon – Hospitality Room Set up	Shop for Hospitality Room			11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Auction		
	1 to 4 p.m. Annual Board Meeting Hospitality Room	3 p.m. Open Hospitality Room					
			Optional Event: Lunch at Keeter Center, College of Ozarks 1 to 3 p.m. Tour Veterans Memorial		2 to 4 p.m. Annual Banquet Catered Event		
Group Supper	6 p.m. Group Supper	5 to 7 p.m. Welcome Social Catered Event		Optional Event: Branson Belle -- Dinner Show and Cruise <u>Sign-up info is elsewhere in newsletter.</u>			

This Newsletter has been approved by the Board of Directors.

Gil Bernabe
Association President
www/17thartilleryregiment.org

Receive “The Castle” By Email

To help defray the cost of postage and printing of the association’s newsletter, please sign up to receive “The Castle” by email.

To receive the electronic newsletter, notify the association’s interim secretary, Judy Dingman, at jdningman65@gmail.com with your **current** and **correct** email address and receive the newsletter much faster.

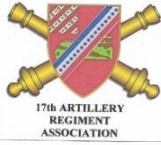
We will continue to mail the newsletter to anyone who does not have an internet connection.

You must be a **PAID-UP, ACTIVE MEMBER** to receive the newsletter.

Association Officers 2022

Gil Bernabe, President
Dave Rowell, First Vice President
Position Open, Second Vice President
Judy Dingman, Editor/Interim Secretary
Richard Siebe, Treasurer

Richard Smith, Chaplain
John (Jack) Picciolo & Tom Kurtz, Historians
Richard & Phyllis Flowers, Quartermasters
Edward (Ed) Hitchner, Webmaster
Gil Bernabe, Scholarship Chairman



Judy Dingman
16351 Lawrence 1200
Aurora, MO 65605-7188



Operation Enduring Freedom (2009) Combat Out Post (COP) Gator, Zabul, Afghanistan: One of two M777A2, 155mm towed howitzers from the 3rd Platoon, Battery A, 3rd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment, 5th Stryker Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 2nd Infantry Division. During this period Battery A's three firing platoons provided indirect fire support for the 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division and a Romanian Infantry Battalion.

17th ARTILLERY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

THE CASTLE