



# INCOMING



[www.101namveteran.com](http://www.101namveteran.com)

3003 Beason Ct., Abingdon, MD 21009-2723

Winter/Spring 2021

## From the Desk of our President

Fellow Warriors and Patriots

As we move forward into a new year, my most important thoughts and message is for each of you and your families to have a safe, healthy and prosperous 2021.

As we announced in our Fall 2020 newsletter, we will hold our 2021 reunion in Branson, MO. I am requesting that each of you who are planning on attending please send in your registration form(s) as soon as possible. As the Covid vaccine continues to be distributed across the nation along with the lessening of travel and group meeting restrictions I am confident that our reunion will be successfully held in August. It is imperative that we get a good idea of the number of attendees so that any adjustments to our schedule and hotel requirements can be worked out in advance.



*Ron in Vietnam D Co. 1/502*

*President Ron Long*

Another important benefit of early registration is the ability to post the current (constantly updated) list of attendees and their respective units on our web site. For the past few years I have been the national contact for reunion inquiries that stem from our reunion notice that we publish in the VFW, American Legion, and DAV magazines. This year we are adding the TWS online link (TogetherWeServed) and Military Reunion sites. Whether I receive inquiries via phone or email one of the first questions is "who attends these reunions". I then refer them to our web site with the current attendee list as well as the attendee lists from past reunions. Since a number of vets don't have or use the internet I actually review the list with them over the phone if they so request. This has been a very successful tool in that we have successfully added a number of new attendees in recent years and more importantly reunited combat brothers who may have lost contact.

It should be noted that if the reunion has to be cancelled again, we would as in 2020 fully refund your registration fees.

Please consider my request to register early. I am looking forward to seeing each of you again in Branson.



*Ron with daughter Jordan and wife Julie*

## Chaplain's Corner

Chaplain, Wally Morrow

Friends & Comrades:

As I'm writing this I am sitting in my screen porch in sunny FL where it is 78 degrees. It is Feb. 8, 2021. While back in sunny WI it is below zero in places. I feel sorry for my friends and family there. Well by the time you are reading this it should be improving.

As you can see I am back as your Chaplain. I would like to turn these duties over to someone who is more worthy of the title than myself. For those that follow me on Facebook you know that a lot of my posts are not very Godly. The last 4 yrs. have been hell for me as I watched a nation be torn apart by lies against our sitting President, Donald J. Trump. And after he was cheated out of a second term the lies continue. I know many of you voted for President Biden. That's OK. It is your right as a Citizen of the United States to vote for who you want in office. Mr. Biden calls himself a Devout Catholic. I am Catholic but I wouldn't call myself devout. I also would not call Mr. Biden Devout. A person who believes in the killing of innocent human beings is an advocate for murder. In my earlier years I thought Abortion was a right for a woman who was carrying an unwanted child. I still believe in the case of Rape, Incest and the Safety of the mother that it should be a viable option. I don't believe the Catholic faith teaches us that. So I for sure am not a Devout Catholic. That's why I believe Mr. Biden is not either. See, he believes it is alright to take an infants' life up to and including AFTER BIRTH. He signed a bill to support this world wide. My tax money is being sent to an organization that supports KILLING of our most INNOCENT.

As a soldier I was tasked with the taking of others lives. I've been asked if I had to do it over again, would I? The answer is yes. I had a job to do and if that meant taking a life then I did. Was this a Godly thing to do? I don't know, probably not. Will I burn in Hell or be admitted to Heaven? I will not find that out until I pass. In the meantime I struggle with being the best person I can be. I know it is only through the Grace of God that I'm still here to contribute in some small way to my Family and my Country. I know to some of you I come across as Hateful and at times I feel Hate Filled. I wonder sometimes how and why some of my friends and family put up with me. But what you see is what you get. I've been told I'm honest to a fault. I can't quote from the Bible but I believe in Jesus. I hope you will all join me in praying for our Country and those who are most vulnerable, the Unborn. I'm not sure how long it will take for our country to turn back to God. I'm afraid that the hate that's been generated over the last 4 yrs. against a sitting president will continue until this nation does just that.

In the meantime if there is someone out there who is willing to take over the reins of this Chaplain's job please contact Ron Long and/or give me a call and we can talk about it.

I'm sorry for the politics but it has been hard to separate it from most conversations considering the state of our union.

Until next time I hope you survive the winter unscathed and that spring brings us hope for the future. Let us all pray for our military that God will protect them wherever they are. May god Bless You and May God Bless America.

Chaplain,

Wally Morrow

A/1/502 AIRBORNE!

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the organization or its officers.



# From the Desk of the Secretary

Dave Nesbitt  
mdnesbitt@aol.com

**Covid-19:** I'm the kind of person that believes he can overcome any illness or obstacle that is thrown his way. I suppose a lot of that mindset comes from my upbringing in South Carolina and probably from the training and application of the tough assignments we had in the Army. Everyone in the 101st believes he is one of the "tough guys" that can do anything; I'm sure you feel that way too. In my comments in the Fall 2020 edition, I was feeling confident that the vaccines being developed by at least three manufacturers would soon eliminate the corona-virus that has placed us in a state of suspense this past year. As we prepare to go to press with the Winter/Spring 2021 edition, I must tell you that I, and my wife, tested positive on January 4, 2021. I thought it was going to be like the flu or a winter cold that many of us suffer each year. It had a lot of similar symptoms but I also had chills and fevers that lasted about three days, and there was the coughing, aching and weakness, and no desire to do much of anything. We quarantined as suggested and after the fourteen days, we retested, it was negative again on January 18. We both received the first Pfizer vaccine on Saturday, January 30 from a local hospital. Since then we've only suffered a sore spot on the arm where the needle went in. I'm surprised that VA hasn't called. I did submit my desire to get the vaccine on the portal they have us create online. I received a call one day from VA in Tampa; the caller said I could come there to get the vaccine. Only problem with that is, I live 400 miles away. Another message did finally arrive in my VA portal from New Orleans. That's a 10 hour drive so I declined. To date, I've heard nothing about being vaccinated at the VA Center that's only 40 miles away. I hope everyone is having better luck in getting tested and vaccinated. We did finally get the second vaccination and had a few symptoms afterward. My wife said I had "Brain Fog" but that's been an ongoing problem for me. I think I'm just getting too old and a bit lazy. Her diagnosis sounds better, so I'll use that.

**Reunion 2021:** It's a fact that Covid-19 is of great concern, not only for our health but for the reunion we have planned in Branson, MO. One day the news suggests that once we are vaccinated, all should begin to get better. Then, the next day they tell us about another virus strain from the UK, and yet another from South Africa. Apparently, the safest thing to do, wear your mask, wash your hands, social distance from others, get the vaccine, when and where it's available. I want to keep a positive attitude as I'm looking forward to seeing Branson in August. Others are feeling as I do, we already have 43 people signed up; you can see who's coming by looking at our website, [www.101namveteran.com](http://www.101namveteran.com).

The Radisson Hotel staff is prepared and ready for our arrival. This hotel has a full time restaurant, bar and swimming pool. There is entertainment within walking distance or a short drive to see all that is on "the strip" as the locals call it. It's not that type of strip; it's generally singing, good music and dancing in a family atmosphere.

To make things even more exciting, we have arranged for a late afternoon cruise on a real paddle-wheeler, the Branson Belle, that also features a floor show and dinner. This is a two hour trip that begins at 4 PM. We will provide bus transportation from the hotel and back at the conclusion of the trip. All of the Officers of the organization will be taking this trip and we encourage everyone to join us. This event will be on Thursday, August 26, 2021. To make reservations, you may go online to [www.gatheringsplus.com](http://www.gatheringsplus.com) and click on, "My Events" and scroll down to our logo. You can then select, "Register Now" and just fill in the blanks. After filling in all the blanks, click on "Add to my Cart". Then scroll back up and click on the shopping cart to complete your purchase. **(You may have issues doing this on an older smart phone. If so, try it on a laptop or computer)** You can also call 417-338-4048; Monday thru Friday between 9am to 4:30pm CST, to make reservations. The cost of this adventure is only \$54.65 per person, which includes the cruise, dinner and floor show!! The deadline for reservations is July 26, 2021. Don't wait, sign up today.

**Annual Raffle:** An annual fund raiser is held for the purpose of receiving donations to take care of the month to month expenses of running the organization. This year we have 3 great prizes to choose from; your choice of either Hotel Rooms during the reunion or CASH; whichever you prefer. **First prize** is a free 4-night stay at the Radisson during reunion week or \$400 cash. **Second prize** is a free 3-night stay at the Radisson during reunion week or \$300 cash. **Third prize** is a free 2-night stay at the Radisson during reunion week or \$200 cash. The winning tickets will be drawn on Saturday, August 28, 2021 at the reunion banquet. You do not have to be present to win the cash prizes. Make multiple copies of the tickets on page 8 if you need more. We appreciate your support!

**Melbourne Florida Event:** In 1994 a group of 101st Vietnam Veterans met in the campground at Wickham Park, located at 2500 Parkway Drive, Melbourne, 32935. This was the very first meeting of those who formed the organization to which we now belong. Over the years since that first gathering, we have continued to have an "unofficial" reunion there and we intend to do so again April 15-18, 2021. We have retained Lot 130 in Campground C for all these years and we will set up a tent there as our Headquarters. We do not plan to set up in the vendor's area of the park this year. So, if you attend please come to the campsite to visit. There will be a massing of the colors on Saturday, April 17 at 11:00 A.M. and an LZ Helicopter landing with a Huey and Cobra. Live bands will play music throughout the weekend and the Traveling Wall will be set up on Sunday, April 11th and remain in place until April 18th.. Thomas Trott is our Melbourne coordinator and color guard captain. He will place a wreath at The Wall in memory of the fallen.

## ***TAPS***

We just received this letter from our fellow-member Wayne Dugger about the loss of his daughter Wendy on March 7th. Please keep Wayne and his family in your prayers.

*You are receiving this because you are my brothers.*

*This is the picture of my first meeting with my baby girl when I returned from Vietnam on May 19, 1969. Wendy was born on Feb 3, 1969 while we were in the valley.*

*Wendy went to be with our Lord on Friday March 5, 2021 after battling the effects of a severe stroke about a month ago.*

*This has been a difficult day. I miss her.*



## ***BOOSTERS***

Members and non-members who donate to help defray mailing costs, etc. Names will stay in 1 issue (an \* indicates an additional donation in that time frame). (Any amount accepted) Mail to: 3570 Green View Pkwy., Sumter, SC 29150

Malcolm Craig\*, Leon Kubin, D.W. Rada, John Sorge\*, Charles Nessler, Geof Scanlon, Leslie Carter\*, Kara Phan Abbott

## ***SICK CALL***

**Johnnie Lindsey, HHC (Medic) 1/327 (66-67)** has been receiving treatment for pancreatic cancer, to include chemotherapy and surgery for the past two years. He says that he now feels great. He is trying to stay busy. In recent months, he and a friend began working on a boat and they had planned to cruise the intercostal waterway but, they have a new plan. They now plan to create a party barge and rent it to folks who want a place to party on the river. Sounds as if Johnnie is well and enjoying life to the fullest. Please continue to pray for Johnnie and contact him by phone at 903-293-5722, he would love to hear from you. You can also e-mail him at: [toplindsey@aol.com](mailto:toplindsey@aol.com).

**Rod Green, A Co. 1/502 (68-69)** fell a month ago and broke ribs again for the fourth time. He says he is all healed now though.

**Mary Marlowe**, wife of our Sgt at Arms, **John Marlowe**, I wanted to let everyone know of the most recent injury suffered by Mary Marlowe. John says that Mary fell 10 days ago and broke her "other" ankle and was scheduled for surgery today. You may recall she broke the other ankle in a fall while visiting her sister's gravesite in 2018. I have doubts that they will be able to attend the reunion with us as they had planned. Please keep Mary and John in your prayers. We certainly wish Mary the best and pray for a speedy recovery. Cards may be sent to them at 10430 SW 199 St., Cutler Bay, FL 33157

## ***HONORARY AIR ASSAULT BADGE***

The 101st Airborne Division, with assistance from the 101st Airborne Division Assn, has authorized the issuance of the Air Assault Badge as an Honorarium Award to eligible Vietnam Veterans. For information on the application and displaying of this award, click on each of the two links below. All applications, with supporting documents, must be received by 1 May 2021. An awards ceremony is scheduled for 24 June from 12 to 3 pm to coincide with other events during the Week of the Eagles (21-25 June 2021) at Fort Campbell.

To download the form go to this link and follow the instructions.

<https://screamingeagle.org/honorary-air-assault/>

## Update from our Reunion Committee Chair, Ed Barbour

I was, along with everyone else, very disappointed that we and higher authorities cancelled our Aug. 2020 reunion due to the COVID pandemic. I hope our next reunion in Branson will be a go. I, Dave Nesbitt, and others are planning the Branson reunion for Aug. 25-29 and we need the help of all attendees. Branson is a place that has the highest regard for veterans that have served our nation. The Radisson Hotel exhibits the "Hall of Honor". However, there are no nearby military facilities, but it is an area of great entertainment groups and individuals. But more importantly, we have a chance to commemorate our past on a one-to-one personal basis.

I have suggested that we get a group of at least 50 or more to go on Thursday at the 4pm to the Showboat paddle-wheeler (The Branson Belle) for a cruise that offers dinner and a show that lasts 2 hours, then take the bus back to "the Strip" to the show starring the Presleys at 7:30pm. The Presleys are a musical family group of all ages that have been playing there for the past 53 years. They were the originals in Branson. When I previewed Branson last year, I saw both shows and it was a blast. However, when I called the Presleys for this year, they were off during the time we will be there. Therefore, I suggest the Haygoods who will have a show on Thursday August 26th at 7:30 pm. I was told that they would honor and recognize the 101st as a group at the show. I believe Branson will be sending out a whole list of entertainment options to attend at other times during your stay.

The other matter we need to consider is getting there. Most airlines come into the Springfield Airport (SGF) which is about an hour away. The drive is easy. Most people going to Branson rent a car because there are so many events to see and it would be good if you have the option of going to events on your own. Also, if friends can get together and share a vehicle and coordinate airline schedules, that would be an option. Branson has a regional airport (BKG) phone (417-334-7813) you also can check out, but it seems to be tentative. The Branson Airport is only 1.4 miles from the Radisson Hotel. Airlines that service Springfield to Branson are Allegiant, American, Delta Connection, Northwest Air-link, and United Express, however in this Covid environment, we had better check out the availability of these airlines in and out of Branson. Branson Airport also rents cars by Enterprise, National, and Alamo. You can call the Springfield Airport (417-869-1031) for availability of airlines to Branson.

For you golfers, there are about ten courses in the area. The Tiger Woods course called Payne's Valley (417-339-5420) is a 72-par course.

See you in Branson as we have a lot of catching up to do. Ed Barbour



Dear Friends,

On January 13, 2021, Representative Gus Bilirakis (FL) introduced H.R. 303, the Retired Pay Restoration Act.

This bill would extend concurrent receipt authority to longevity retirees with service-connected disabilities rated 40 percent or less. Under current law disabled veterans with longevity retirement from active military service who are also in receipt of a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability determination of 50% or higher may retain both military retirement pay and their compensation.

DAV strongly supports H.R. 303 as it would end the unfair policy of forcing many military longevity retirees to forfeit some of their retired pay in order to receive equal amounts of disability compensation from the VA. This legislation is in accord with DAV Resolution No. 002 and would eliminate concurrent receipt for all longevity retirees.

Please use the prepared letter or draft your own to urge your Representative to support and cosponsor H.R. 303. As always, we appreciate your support for DAV and thank you for participating in DAV CAN.

<https://dav.quorum.us/campaign/30823/>



**101st Airborne Division Vietnam Veterans  
27th Annual Reunion  
Branson, Missouri  
August 25-29, 2021**



## Reunion Registration Form

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ MI: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s) Names: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Alt. or Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Unit in Vietnam: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name/Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ **\*\*How many will attend Ladies Luncheon? \_\_\_\_\_**

Each **101st Veteran Registrant** gets a FREE Polo Shirt w/ Collar & Pocket, Size: Sm - Med - Lg - XL - XXL - 3XL - 4XL (Circle One)

Number Registering \_\_\_\_\_ X \$80.00 per person Registration Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Late registration fee is \$90.00 after July 31, 2021. Send check or money order only. Make all checks/money orders payable to: 101st Airborne Division Vietnam Veterans NO REFUNDS ALLOWED AFTER July 31, 2021**  
**Mail completed form and payment to:**

**101st Airborne Division Vietnam Veterans, 3570 Green View Pkwy., Sumter, SC 29150-7066**

Our Saturday evening banquet meal this year will be a plated dinner with three options, please indicate your selection and that of your guest(s) by writing number 1, 2 or 3 in the appropriate block below. If you have special diet needs please so indicate by note with your registration or email the secretary at mdnesbitt@aol.com no later than August 1, 2021.

Registrant's Selection \_\_\_\_\_ Guest Selection \_\_\_\_\_ Add'l Guest Selection \_\_\_\_\_ Add'l Guest Selection \_\_\_\_\_

(Each person please select one meal option)

1. Beef Tenderloin Medallions with Demi-Glace.
2. Chicken Mansfield, a Boneless Breast of Chicken Stuffed with Herb Dressing & Topped with Mornay Sauce.
3. Vegetarian, Choice of Vegetable Lasagna or Eggplant Parmesan or Zoodles Spaghetti\* (\*Denotes gluten free)(Circle choice)

*Each Banquet Dinner will be served with Ozark Salad (Mixed Greens, Tomato & Cucumber) and a choice of dressings, Chef's choice of Starch & Seasonal Accompaniments, Hot Rolls and Butter, Chef's choice of Dessert, Coffee, Iced Tea and Water.*

Registration fee includes the hospitality room with free refreshments the entire weekend, the Friday evening Pizza party and Auction, a reunion shirt for 101st veterans; admission to the awards ceremony and banquet meal on Saturday evening.

**\*\*The ladies lunch is free to all ladies in attendance. we just need a head count to order the meals (See above).**

If you need additional copies of this registration form for your guests please make as many copies as you need.

Those not pre-registering will be allowed to pay the late fee upon arrival at the reunion registration desk in Branson, MO.

Please note that we need you to register no later than July 1, 2021 if you wish to have a reunion shirt as these must be ordered well in advance of the reunion; without early registration you may not receive a shirt. We may have only a few extras; we cannot afford to stockpile shirts. In the past some have requested extra shirts. If you wish to order extras we need to know how many and the sizes now. Each standard size shirt will cost \$18 per shirt. There is a charge of \$20 for shirts size 3X and those 4X will be \$22. If we are requested to mail these shirts to you, add \$7.00 per shirt for S&H.

Payment for extra shirts must be received before they can be ordered. All shirts are men sizes only.

To order extra shirts, state how many: \_\_\_\_\_ and show Size: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ submitted for extra shirts.

## **101st Airborne Division Vietnam Veterans 27th ANNUAL REUNION\*\*AUGUST 25-29, 2021 BRANSON, MISSOURI**



Our reunion for 2021 will be held in Branson, MO during the period of August 25-29. Reunion headquarters will be at the Radisson Hotel, conveniently located where there's plenty of entertainment for our guests. Branson is famous for it's veteran friendly atmosphere and events.

The hotel is located at 120 South Wildwood Drive, Branson, MO 65616. Our special reunion room rate is \$92.95 plus taxes per night for a double, queen or king room. The price includes two hot buffet breakfasts each morning. We have set aside 50 rooms each night and requested that a good number of handicapped rooms be available for our guests. If you require handicapped facilities, it is suggested that you call the hotel directly to ensure you get the accommodations you need. If you encounter any problems with your reservation, contact Dave Nesbitt at 803-491-4186. Also, be aware that the special room rate will be available two days prior to the reunion start up date and for two days after the close of the reunion.

You can make hotel reservations by copying the following link and inserting it into your computer search box:

<https://www.radissonhotels.com/en-us/hotels/radisson-branson/deals/101st-airborne-vietnam-veterans> .

If that doesn't work for you, it will be on our Facebook page, which is at 101st Airborne Division Vietnam Veterans or by calling the hotel at 417-335-5767. The link will also be added to our website, [www.101namveteran.com](http://www.101namveteran.com). This link will allow you to make reservations online with the reunion information already entered for our group. You just need to insert your arrival and departure dates and select the room you desire. They will also require a major credit card number. If you call the hotel, be sure to tell them you are with the 101st Airborne Veterans group so that you will be shown in the block of rooms we reserved for the reunion. **The cut-off date to reserve rooms at our special rate is June 25, 2021.** After that date reservations will be based on hotel availability. The Branson area is really busy during the Summer months so book early. If for any reason you make reservations and have to cancel, the hotel will release you from the reservation if you notify them at least 24 hours in advance of your planned arrival date.

The Branson Regional Airport (BKG) is nearby but it has limited flights and no airport shuttle service. I learned that Frontier Air flies in to Branson. If you plan to fly, we suggest you go in to Springfield Airport (SGF) and rent an auto and make the 45 minute drive on a four-lane highway to Branson. When Ed Barbour, Reunion Chairman, conducted recon on this site, he flew in to Springfield, MO and found that renting a car was the best way to reach his destination. There are many other attractions located in the city, go online to: [www.ExploreBranson.com](http://www.ExploreBranson.com). They will send you a free Visitors Guide.

As is always the case, the Reunion Registration and the Hotel Registration are two separate items so be sure you register early for both. There is a Reunion Registration Form in this newsletter on page 6 that should be completed and returned to the 101st Secretary with your registration fee in the near future. If you encounter any problems reserving your room or have questions about the schedule, contact Dave Nesbitt, Secretary at 803-506-3120.

***We look forward to seeing everyone at the reunion, please register  
and reserve your room early!! Thanks.***

## 2021 Annual Fundraiser - Free Reunion Hotel Room or Cash

Each year we have one fundraiser to help defray the expenses of running the organization. This year we are raffling “3 Great Prizes” to choose from; your choice of either Hotel Rooms during the reunion in Branson or Cash. **First prize would be a free 4-Night Stay at the Radisson Hotel during the reunion week or \$400 CASH; Second prize would be a free 3-Night Stay at the Radisson during the reunion week or \$300 CASH; Third Prize would be a free 2-Night Stay at the Radisson during the reunion week or \$200 CASH.** Now that’s a deal, whether you attend the reunion in Branson, MO or not, you can still win!! If you attend the reunion, you may have your hotel room paid in full for 2, 3, or 4 nights; you could win more than once. If you don’t attend the reunion, you will get the CASH if you’re the lucky ticket holder. We suggest you buy lots of tickets now!!!

Tickets: The price of (1) ticket is \$5.00, (6) tickets are \$25.00 and (12) tickets are \$50.00. Desire more tickets? Simply make copies of those shown on this page. Once you have the desired number of tickets and have inserted your name, address and phone number, please forward them with your check or money order made payable to: *101st Airborne Division Vietnam Veterans*, at 3570 Green View Pkwy., Sumter, SC 29150. The winning tickets will be drawn at our reunion banquet in Branson, MO on August 28, 2021. A separate ticket will be drawn for each prize offered. If you are the winner, and not in attendance at the reunion, we will call you.

**You do not have to be present to win!!**



Name (First, MI, Last):

Street Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Phone Number:



Name (First, MI, Last):

Street Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Phone Number:



Name (First, MI, Last):

Street Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Phone Number:



Name (First, MI, Last):

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Name (First, MI, Last):

Street Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Phone Number:

## A Famous Man by Keith Nightingale

*Reprinted with permission of the American Legion Magazine, February, 2021. www.legion.org."*

*Submitted by Charles Allen. Thanks Charles*

*Brothers, INCOMING has been generously given permission to feature this story about a brave 101<sup>st</sup> Brother who gave the last full measure. As with other Food Service Specialists when I looked him up on the Virtual Wall I was aghast to see no CIB indicated for him. When I checked HonorStates.org it indicated that he had been properly recognized with the award. Checking further I was more than overjoyed to find out that three other similarly situated Brothers in the 101<sup>st</sup> that I had been advocating for had indeed, likewise, been awarded the Combat Infantry Badge*

### **From mess cook to machine gunner, he quietly did his job, ignoring the taunts of soldiers he saved.**

"Famous" is a common word with many applications. It can refer to a person, event, place or thing. Or it can simply be the name of someone who exemplifies all of that. Such a man was Pfc. Famous Lee Lane of Poplar Bluff, Mo. Famous became truly famous on April 20, 1966, in Binh Thuan province, South Vietnam.

His name is inscribed on Panel 06E, Row 124 of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall. But that is not why he was – and is – famous to those of us who knew him.

I was first introduced to Famous Lane when I joined the 2-505/82nd Airborne in 1965.

Famous was a cook in the battalion mess. The unit deployed to the Dominican Republic as part of Operation Power Pack, and Famous first became famous there. Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC) Mess had several .50 cal's as part of its MTOE (Modification Table of Organization and Equipment). The weapon simply outweighed many in the mess, so Famous naturally assumed responsibility for its care, cleaning and use.

Famous was known at this time as a quiet, large man with an infectious smile. He seldom spoke but just went on with his work and that of others, without fanfare. He was the ultimate silent soldier in an organization where the voices and noises of combat were constant conditions.

Within a day after deployment, Famous took his .50 cal to the rooftop of the recently captured building occupied by HHC, 2-505. Soon, several aircraft of the rebel Dom Rep forces proceeded to strafe the troops. On the roof with Famous was a staff sergeant named Engle, of the anti-tank platoon. Engle was an ex-Wehrmacht soldier who had joined the 505 as a pathway to U.S. citizenship when the regiment was stationed in Germany.

Engle informed Famous that the planes were not going to hit them; he had significant experience against U.S. aircraft from previous combat experience. And if you could see wings wider than the leading edge, the bullets would pass beyond.

Famous then stood behind the .50 and engaged the aircraft with an experienced bird hunter's lead. One of the two aircraft was quickly hit, began burning and crashed. The other plane fled.

The rest of that deployment was pretty uneventful for Famous. But, within the 2-505, Famous became more and more famous for his successful shootdown of an enemy aircraft. That, however, did not change his demeanor or work ethic in any way.

At a later time, while we were both at Fort Bragg, I asked him with the usual naïve ignorance of a second lieutenant, "Why did your mother name you Famous?"

He looked at me and said in a quiet, patient voice, "She thought that would help me out." End of discussion. Soon, Famous left the 82nd and joined the leading elements of the 101st Airborne Division, now deployed to Vietnam.

*Continued on page 10*

## A Famous Man by Keith Nightingale (Continued)

Assigned to the mess again, as his stated military specialty, Famous found there was no real mess in deployed field units. Instead, he went to his NCO and asked to be assigned to a machine gun with the infantry.

The NCO took him to the HHC commander, who then asked his friend, the commanding officer of A/2-502, if he could use a large man who wanted to be a machine gunner. The assignment was made.

Famous joined the unit and quickly stood out for three primary reasons:

- He wanted to be there, when he could have stayed in the rear.
- He towered over most of the infantry.
- He was very focused and never complained; in fact, he rarely spoke. He just carried his weapon and did his job.

Few really knew him. He didn't converse much with others. And there were few fellow Black soldiers in his unit, predominantly composed of whites from the Deep South with prejudices and characteristics commonly associated with that environment at the time. (They were also the core of the life professionals and thoroughly competent in their work.)

Within the group, two young soldiers took it upon themselves to occasionally make fun of Famous or to ridicule him with others. Famous, fully aware, said nothing and went about his work.

On a hot April morning, Company A found itself looking across a large green rice paddy toward a brushy jungled area just beyond. Suddenly, shots rang out, and the troops went into immediate battle drill, dropping behind the dikes and returning fire. Gunships and artillery began to work the brush-hidden enemy positions. Famous quickly had his M60 working in support.

Suddenly he stopped firing, raised up from his position and looked to his direct front at two crumpled soldiers – two young troops who had often slighted him. This day, they were walking point and had triggered the initial confrontation. Both were wounded and lying on the open paddy, truly in no man's land. Famous could clearly see who they were – and how they were.

Without guidance or an order, Famous jumped up and began running straight to the pair, through continuous fire. He reached them and grabbed each under an arm – as if they were footballs – and began running back to the friendly position.

His size had alerted the enemy. He was a big, conspicuous target. And his machine gun, unmanned, was of no use.

As Famous made his final sprint into friendly lines with the two wounded men, he was hit by several bullets and killed on the spot. For this action, Famous Lee Lane was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

I will always remember him for being who and what he was, the truest definition of Famous, who needed no one's help to make an eternal name for himself.

*Keith Nightingale is a retired Army colonel, two-tour Vietnam War combat veteran and former assault commander in Grenada. He managed the Department of Defense's Counterdrug Task Force in Latin America, from Panama. In July 2020, he was inducted into the 82nd Airborne Division Hall of Fame.*



## 101st Airborne Division Vietnam Veterans Membership Application & Renewal Form

New Member/Associate (check here)  Member/Associate Renewal (check here)  Current Member card # \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (        ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Highest Rank Held in Vietnam: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Call Sign or Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicants for new membership please attach documents to establish your service with 101st in Vietnam.**  
e.g., DD-214, orders, manifests, etc. & forward to address below with \$200 for 11 yrs. \$60 for 3yrs. or \$25 for 1 yr.

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Battalion: \_\_\_\_\_ Regiment: \_\_\_\_\_ From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Battalion: \_\_\_\_\_ Regiment: \_\_\_\_\_ From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send with check or money order payable to: 101st Abn. Div. Vietnam Veterans at 16013 Blooming Rd.,  
Chesterfield, VA 23832-1538. Should you have questions, call Ed Barbour at (804) 745-4065.**

### Release of Information

I do  I do not  Authorize the release of my address, phone number or e-mail address to others  
from the 101st Airborne Division who may be trying to locate me for the purpose of renewing old friend-  
ships.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Where to Send Correspondence

**Membership** applications, renewals, and change of address should be forwarded to: 101st Airborne Division Vietnam Veterans, 16013 Blooming Rd., Chesterfield, VA 23832-1538. Questions? Contact Ed Barbour at (804) 745-4065 or by email at: [barboure101@gmail.com](mailto:barboure101@gmail.com).

For **General Correspondence** contact Dave Nesbitt, Secretary, 3570 Green View Pkwy., Sumter SC 29150-7066. Phone (803) 506-3120 or by email at: [mdnesbitt@aol.com](mailto:mdnesbitt@aol.com).

**Check your mailing label** on this copy of *Incoming*. The number next to your name in parentheses is your membership number. The number next to that is your dues expiration date. It's time to renew now if your date has expired. If you detect any discrepancy, email or call Ed Barbour. If your address is different from that shown on the label, please notify us of any corrections.

**Newsletter Items** should be sent to Earle Prior by email at [Earle.Prior@gmail.com](mailto:Earle.Prior@gmail.com). Phone 410-569-6030

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Any information you wish to place in future editions of *Incoming* should be forwarded timely as we do have deadlines. Information not published during the month it is received may appear in a future edition.

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