



Issue 2
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THE CANOPY

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA ALL AIRBORNE CHAPTER

*Connecting sky
soldiers, past and
present.*

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

All American Week took place from May 22nd to May 25th at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, marking the last event before its renaming to Ft. Liberty on June 1st. Hosted by the Fayetteville chapter and the Triple Nickel association at Moon Hall, the week featured free-flowing beer and barbeque, culminating in a record-breaking Division Review and an association banquet where honors were awarded to the NCO, Trooper, and Jumpmaster of the year.

In contrast, the 77th Annual Convention was held at the Sheraton in Pentagon City, Washington, D.C., offering nightly banquets, distinguished guests, and the election of new officers for the regimental and national associations. Attendees were treated to visits to the US Army Museum and Arlington National Cemetery, tours of the monuments, and entertaining gatherings in the top-floor hospitality room, complete with auctions, storytelling, and spirited renditions of "blood on the risers." Continued on **page 4**.



FROM THE CHAPTER

The chapter remembers Vern Phillips and Operation Shoebox donations. Continued on **page 8**.

AIRBORNE UNIT UPDATES

82nd Airborne Division: trooper awarded the Soldier's Medal; additive manufacturing to improve logistics **page 9**. 101st Airborne Division: artillery raid during Operation Lethal Eagle III; change of command to MG Brett Sylvia **page 11**. 11th Airborne Division: welcomes students back; Keris Strike 23 completed **page 13**.

Army Base Renaming Cheat Sheet

Ft. Benning ⇒ Ft. Moore	Ft. Bragg ⇒ Ft. Liberty
Ft. Gordon ⇒ Ft. Eisenhower	Ft. A.P. Hill ⇒ Ft. Walker
Ft. Hood ⇒ Ft. Cavazos	Ft. Lee ⇒ Ft. Gregg-Adams
Ft. Pickett ⇒ Ft. Barfoot	Ft. Polk ⇒ Ft. Johnson
Ft. Rucker ⇒ Ft. Novosel	

DIRECTORY & CHAPTER CALENDAR

CHAPTER OFFICERS

Chairman	Tony Alger	(719) 310-8951
Vice Chairman	Jerry Brust	(405) 823-4483
Treasurer	Heath Davenport	(571) 641-9057
Secretary	Rich Troop	(610) 823-7505
Sergeant at Arms	Frank Dochniak	(352) 259-2441
Service Officer	Joyce Damon	(352) 208-4963
Recruiting / Villages	Tony Alger	(719) 310-8951
Recruiting / Ocala	Tig Blackman	(352) 591-4752
Exec Committee	Frank Dochniak	(352) 259-2441
Canopy Editor	Ron Dahlgren	(407) 577-1746

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, September 4 th	Labor Day
Saturday, September 9 th , 1300 hrs	Chapter Meeting at VFW Post 8083
Monday, September 11 th	Patriot Day observances
Sunday, September 17 th - 23 rd	Freedom Week (AR, FL, KS, OK, TX)

FROM THE EDITOR

Listen up troops!

First, let me say that I'm excited to get back into our monthly meeting tempo. I look forward to getting to know each of you better and exchanging stories. We all have a few good ones, some more true than others!



During the national association activities this summer, I was honored to receive a nomination from our chapter for a National Director's seat. During the annual convention, I was confirmed for the role and sworn in. Thank you to those that supported me! I hope to bring honor and credit to our chapter by doing my best to enable the national organization.

Speaking of the national organization, next year's national convention will be here in Orlando, hosted by the Tampa chapter. I want to make sure we do our part to make it a success. We have nearly a year to prepare, so there's no excuse!

Here in my second issue, you'll find a write-up of the national activities from the summer, updates from our chapter, and updates from some of the airborne units. If you have any concerns, comments, news, or events to share with our community, please reach out to me by email at <ronald.dahlgren@gmail.com>.

Airborne All The Way!

Ron Dahlgren Editor, The Canopy

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Welcome back from summer break. A lot has happened over the summer months. All American Week was a great success with Rich Becker as our delegate and Ron Dahlgren both attending. Ron met FORSCOM Commander, General Andrew Poppas while there. Also JP Paviot got to brief Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin III in Ste Mere Eglise, Normandy during the D-Day celebrations there this year. MG LaNeve, 82nd Airborne Division Commander visited him again at his LaFiere home and complex during the annual 82nd Airborne jump and trip there. I only wish I could have attended. Great that some of our guys are getting some exposure, eh?

We lost a great trooper Vern Phillips. He made his last jump on July 23. His wife Pat is doing fine since she has their daughter staying with her to help around for the next few weeks.

Also in July the 82nd Airborne Chorus performed at the America's Got Talent (AGT) competition on TV. What a recruiting tool. I've seen them many times over the years and they are great. They're in the second phase of competition. Also the 82nd Convention was held this year in Washington D.C. What a treat. The Washington Chapter really went all out to make this convention special planning trips to the sites and monuments there. The location of the venue was very close to a big Mall, the Pentagon and Air Force Memorial. We were very close to Arlington National Cemetery and the Marine Corps Base. Ron Dahlgren was elected as a National Director for the 82nd Airborne Association. Well done Ron. Also attending one of the Banquets was Audrey Paviot, daughter of Marie and JP Paviot who is a member of our Chapter. It was nice catching up with her and the LaFiere Complex events for the upcoming 80th Anniversary of D-Day June 6, 2024.

In closing, please attend the September 9th meeting with your thoughts and concerns.

Airborne All the Way!

Tony Alger, Chairman



2023 CANOPY BOOSTERS

Thank you for your support!

Tig Blackman
Heath Davenport
Nick Harty
Darla & Jay Tatman
Howard Northrup

Jerry & Robby Brust
Frank Dochniak
Regis Rossa
Marianne & George Zablocki

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES



WASHINGTON, D.C. The 77th annual convention of the 82nd Airborne Division Association was held from August 9th to 12th. Our friends at the DC Chapter were hosting. The convention was situated at the Sheraton in Pentagon City. This hotel was in a great location with lines of sight to the Capitol Building, the Pentagon, and lots of DC area traffic!

The events started early on Wednesday the 9th with a wreath laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. Before this trip I had never had the honor of visiting Arlington. My wife's maternal grandfather is buried in section 60, so we took a trip to his marker later in the visit.

Wednesday night included an incredible dinner hosted by Walter Rauscher. It was truly *nonpareil!*



Unfortunately, the jump was scrapped for this convention - allegedly due to aircraft availability.

Thursday included transportation to the U.S. Army National Museum. The general working the museum has put in time with the 82nd, so we received VIP treatment for the visit. This is a really great museum in a striking building.

Next time you are in the DC area, you must make time to see the museum. As the general said, "this is our museum".







FT. BRAGG, NC The 82nd Airborne Division hosted All American Week from May 22nd to May 25th - the last event to be hosted before the installation was officially renamed to Ft. Liberty. As such, any shirts, mugs, stickers, or hats saying "Ft. Bragg" were a hot commodity!

We kicked off the week with the Division Run followed by sporting events around the base. The combatives tournament was a fan favorite again this year. I tried to eat every meal at one of the many DFACs on Ft. Bragg. Nothing beats an Army meal - tell me I'm wrong!

The week culminated with the Division Review (again, no airborne operation) and the association banquet. All American Week is a real treat. The memories that come back from being on the base are just amazing.

Rich Becker was also present from our chapter, so be sure to ask him for pictures too!



No Airborne Review in years? We need to bring it back! Call your congressman! Call Division HQ! Let them know the veteran paratroopers and the world need to see what the 82nd is made of!



FROM THE CHAPTER



Vernon "Vern" Phillips passed on July 23rd, this summer. He is survived by his wife, Pat. Vern served with the 82nd Airborne Division and the 187th regimental combat team.

His celebration of life was held on Saturday, August 5th. Heath Davenport attended, representing the chapter.

Heath helped the Honor Guard fold his flag. Pat gave a history of Vern including his trials during the last three years.

Rest in Peace, Vern.



Operation ShoeBox Garage Sale raised \$755 for the charity. Fran Dolan and his neighbor Judy Brody organized the sale with items donated by Frank Dochniak, Bob Janhke, Kenny Hall, and others. Any unsold items were then donated to the OSB Thrift Store on Route 25 in Belleview.

Operation ShoeBox sends out 500 ditty bags of goodies each week to our troops in harm's way.





82ND AWARDS SOLDIER'S MEDAL, GETS LEAN S4

Images by Staff Sgt. Julius Harris and Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Hornby, 82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs Office



FORT LIBERTY, NC — In a poignant Soldier's Medal Award Ceremony on August 11, 2023, the 82nd Airborne Division honored 1st Lt. Joseph Guerra for his extraordinary courage during an active shooter incident on June 11, 2021. On that terrifying evening in Columbus, Georgia, Guerra put himself at great risk, covering a fellow Soldier with his body, protecting her from the assailant's bullets. Once the shooter had fled, he and his comrade immediately provided first aid to three wounded victims, staying with them until medical help arrived.



Maj. Gen. Christopher LaNeve, the commanding general of the 82nd Airborne Division, emphasized the rarity and prestige of the Soldier's Medal, with only 240 active-duty Soldiers receiving it in the present day. The highest Army individual decoration honor for valor in a non-combat event, the Soldier's Medal stands as a symbol of bravery beyond the call of duty. LaNeve praised Guerra's actions as embodying the very spirit of the American Paratrooper, describing it as "the courage of normal humans, attempting superhuman things for our country, our allies, the unit, and most importantly, for each other."



In a heartfelt statement, Guerra underlined the importance of taking training seriously, recognizing that anyone may unexpectedly find themselves in a situation that requires extraordinary courage and skill.

FORT LIBERTY, NC - On July 26, 2023, the Airborne Innovation Lab at Fort Liberty, NC hosted the Basic Additive Manufacturing Course, an intensive four-day workshop aimed at nurturing technological innovation within the Army. Service Members delved into a diverse curriculum, exploring foundational concepts of additive manufacturing including Computer Design, Recreation of Objects, Reverse Engineering, and 3D Printing. U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Samuel Serra showcased his skills through a capstone project, while Warrant Officer Dylan Castoria and his subordinates made a cross-country journey to participate, reflecting the wide-reaching interest in this cutting-edge field.



The course symbolized more than just a learning experience, serving as a catalyst for future leadership and transformation within the divisions. Open to all services and organizations throughout the Army, the impact of this hands-on course extends beyond individual skills and marks a commitment to innovative growth and tactical excellence. Participants, such as Staff Sergeant Samuel Serra, foresee the knowledge gained as shaping the next generation within the division, making the Airborne Innovation Lab a key player in the Army's vision for progress.



Did you know the Kevlar PASGT helmet, introduced in the 1980s, weighed 4.2 pounds, the ACH introduced in 2002 weighed 3.88 pounds, and the most recent ACH Gen 2 weighs only 2.94 pounds? Every ounce counts when it's on your head!



101ST GETS A NEW CG, WRAPS OP LETHAL EAGLE 3

Images by Sgt. Kimberly Villigran and Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Truesdale
101st Airborne Division Public Affairs Office



FORT CAMPBELL, KY - The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) marked a pivotal moment as Maj. Gen. Brett Sylvia took command from Maj. Gen. JP McGee in a traditional change of command ceremony at Fort Campbell, Ky, on July 20, 2023. The symbolic passing of the division's colors was presided over by the commanding general of the XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Liberty, Lt. Gen. Christopher Donahue, who acknowledged the division's long history of excellence. Maj. Gen. Sylvia, having previously served within the division, expressed gratitude and readiness, stating that assuming command was "a dream come true." He also praised his predecessor, McGee, for his investments in the division's readiness and lethality. McGee reflected on his time in command with pride, confident in the 101st's ability to face challenges and believing it to be in "exceptionally capable hands" with Sylvia. The ceremony encapsulated a legacy of determination and unity, preparing the division for future triumphs.



FORT CAMPBELL, KY - On August 10 and 14, 2023, units from the 101st Airborne Division conducted a series of intense artillery raids as part of Operation Lethal Eagle III at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Golf Company, 6-101st Aviation Regiment "Varsity," and Bravo Battery, 3-320th Field Artillery "Red Knights" Air Assaulted four M119 Howitzer cannons during limited visibility, executing rapid firing missions before a swift exfiltration. Days later, Soldiers from Charlie Battery, 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, executed an air assault night artillery raid, coordinating with the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade. With precision and skill, they prepared their M777 Howitzer cannons for transport by CH 47 Chinook helicopters, ensuring success in a pre-planned 21-day training exercise aimed at building Soldier and unit lethality.



1st Lt. Alex Shemel described the process, outlining how the Howitzers were flown into the helicopter landing zone (HLZ), fired, and then transported back by Chinooks. The crews worked diligently in setting coordinates, loading rounds, and firing, concluding the mission around 0100 with an after-action review to assess performance and areas for improvement. Operation Lethal Eagle III is more than just a training event; it's a manifestation of the 101st Airborne Division's unmatched ability to emplace warfighters through vertical envelopment. As the operation continues across Tennessee and Kentucky, it emphasizes the division's focus on unit cohesion and lethality in preparation for their next rendezvous with destiny.

The M777 Howitzer has an effective firing range of over 13 miles and a well-trained crew can send 4 rounds per minute downrange.



11TH AIRBORNE CONCLUDES KERIS STRIKE 23, WELCOMES STUDENTS BACK

Photos by SPC Aaron Downing and Staff Sgt. Christopher Dennis



SG BULOH, Malaysia - The 11th Airborne Division successfully participated in Keris Strike 23, a significant bilateral military exercise in its 28th year, totaling approximately 3,000 U.S. and Malaysian service members. The exercise concluded on August 4, 2023, offering the Arctic Angels an essential opportunity to test and share skills such as military police tactics, explosive ordnance disposal, medical operations, and jungle survival training. Major General Brian Eifler, the commanding general of the 11th Airborne Division, joined Malaysian Lt. Gen. Dato Tengku Fauzi for the closing ceremony. The cooperative exercise further underscored the meticulous planning and adaptable warfighting approach necessary for the diverse and challenging terrains within the Indo-Pacific region.



The 11th is based in Anchorage, AK. This exercise was in Sungai Buloh, Malaysia. July in SG Buloh averages 97° high, 81° low, 29 rainy days per month with an average of 5" of rain. Anchorage in July averages a high of 65°, a low of 52°, and a scant 1.8" of rain. Leave the cold weather gear and bust out the wet weather gear!





ANCHORAGE, AK - Members of the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment from the 11th Airborne Division, also known as the Arctic Angels, made a special appearance at Bartlett High School on August 17, 2023, to welcome students and faculty back for the first day of the 2023-2024 school year. As part of ongoing community outreach efforts, the soldiers greeted students, held doors, and even performed Color Guard detail at six schools across Anchorage and Fairbanks. The initiative demonstrated the unit's commitment to community engagement and support, fostering positive relations with local schools.



THE CANOPY

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