



39TH ENGINEER BATTALION ALUMNI NEWS



www.39thengrnb.com

March, 2019

President.....Bill Ray
 Vice President.....Mike Shaw
 Secretary.....Jim Lewis
 Treasurer.....Jim Shamblen
 Chaplain.....Fr. Vasilios (Billy) Bassakyros
 Sgt. at Arms.....Mike Male

Webmaster.....Walter Lester
 Historian.....Jerry Bright
 Member at Large.....Oly Guerra
 Member at Large.....John Lewis
 Past President.....Bruce Fonnest
 Reunion Chair.....Jim & Sandy Lewis

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to a new year and new challenges for each and every one of us. It is our wish that all are in good health and doing well in all aspects of your life. As we mature, life has a way of presenting new obstacles for us to deal with; I used to wake up from a night of partying with a headache knowing I was going to feel better. Now I wake up with all sorts of aches because I slept wrong with the prospect of remaining the same all day.

We have a terrific reunion planned for this year in Milwaukee and I want to thank Jim and Sandy Lewis for a job well done. They had some mighty big shoes to fill and sadly they didn't get the help that Gale had planned to give them. Going to various cities, negotiating with hotels for the best rates, and looking for sights that the members will enjoy are not all fun and games; it is hard work. I had worked with Gale for several years and he could still point out small mistakes that didn't seem a big deal at the time but could have caused problems later. Jim and Sandy have worked tirelessly on this and next year's reunion, so please give them a big Thank You when you see them; they deserve that and more.

The reunion will start on Wednesday, September 25 and end Sunday, September 29, 2019. We will also continue our Shotgun Raffles so we encourage you to donate items for this year's reunion. We are expecting a large turnout, so you need to make your reservations early by calling the hotel directly at either 414-345-5000 or 888-322-3326 and ask for the 39th ENG BN Alumni Association room block. Room rates are not guaranteed if reservations are made after August 26, 2019. In case you have to cancel, there is no charge if

reservations are cancelled 48 hours prior to the arrival date. We also ask that you send in your registration form and at least the minimum payment as soon as possible. This is needed so that we can make sure that we have everything to make your reunion a great one. Registration refunds will be made if we are notified by August 26, 2019. We are bringing back by popular demand a favorite gift for the membership this year; we will be giving the OD Green sweatshirt with the 39th logo embroidered on the left front to members registered. We will have a few extra for sale. Our reunion chair has put together several special trips that I believe all will truly enjoy without tiring us out. The itinerary is listed in full later in this newsletter. Our headquarters will be the Ambassador Hotel close to restaurants and sights for all to enjoy with a good room rate which allows you to come 2 days early or stay 2 days later if you choose. Although you have made reservations and received a confirmation number, you do have to abide by the hotel's check-in time which is 4:00pm. The hotel will attempt to accommodate early arrivals if possible. Once again, I want to mention and can't emphasize enough is that **"if you have a need for special accommodations, such as handicap accessible, it is your responsibility to take care of that with the hotel when you make your reservations"**; the Association can't do that for you.

Now for a big "Blue Bull Welcome" to our new member. Welcome and we look forward to seeing you at one of our future reunions.

NEW MEMBERS

Jesse Maldonado Gordon Crisp
 B Co 67-68 HHC 65-66

We held our first Memorial Service for all members who have passed at the Tucson reunion last year and we hope to be able to include the members we lost

during our time in Vietnam at the upcoming reunions. If you have a member that you would like to have recognized, please send me an e-mail with the member's name, unit and dates served and their date of passing.

DECEASED MEMBER

Darrel Lee Appleton, HHC 1967 from Buffalo, OK passed December 4, 2018. His obituary is later in this newsletter.

As always, Carolyn and I wish each of you good health and prosperity. We are so looking forward to seeing each of you in Milwaukee this September. BROTHERS THEN, BROTHERS NOW, BROTHERS FOREVER

Bill Ray

3rd Plt. C Co. 67-68

bill39th@sbcglobal.net

817-239-0787 (Cell)

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Recently I was reading about hypnosis. People perform amazing feats under hypnosis, and yet are unable to complete them in a waking state. After consideration, it seems to me that the difference is this; under hypnosis, the individual has no doubt that he can accomplish the deed, and just does it. Hypnosis is a direct shot at a person's belief button!

Too frequently in life each of us falls into the trap of self-doubt. We hesitate to do something because we fear it too difficult or concerned others may disapprove. Realize that failure to try guarantees failure. There are times we must take that leap of faith in ourselves and in others.

And this attitude can be applied to other aspects of life, be it health issues, finances, etc. Wake up believing you are going to feel great...going to accomplish something that day. Remember the sports adage..." You miss 100% of the shots you don't take". Believe in yourself, take the shot. You may just be surprised and hit the mark. Your action has the potential to make another's day better, and surely you don't want to miss that opportunity.

As the kids say...JMO.

Mike Shaw

C Co. 70-71

nsxtarge@bellsouth.net

678-895-1871 (Cell)

FROM THE CHAPLAIN

PTSD

All of us who are or were combat veterans know the effect that combat has on an individual. Our VA Hospitals are filled with those suffering from PTSD and other related problems as some of us have. We know too well the devastating trauma that PTSD has on our ability to function and live a happy and healthy life.

The daunting data recently released claims that an average of 20 Iraqi and other conflict veterans commit suicide every day. What an overwhelming and horrific statistic. In the case of Vietnam Veterans, one in three is being treated for PTSD. So what can help our brothers and sisters in arms from becoming a statistic of the destructive after-effects of war, and moreover their treatment?

"According to Father Andrew Sioleti, the chief chaplain at VA New York Harbor Health System in Manhattan says that "... the sacrament of reconciliation and retreats are additional aids for veterans. Another spiritual tool is more active: 'One way of healing from your trauma and your pain and your moral injury [is] to start doing good things...' What he suggests is to start volunteering and helping others who cannot help themselves or who are in need.

Furthermore, in a study reported in "Psychology Today" veterans with PTSD who use service dogs have been found helpful in treating its effects. "The veterans who had a service dog reported significantly fewer symptoms of PTSD and better scores for psychological well-being, coping skills, and other measures of well-being."

Moreover, "survey results also showed that veterans with a service dog had less sleep disturbance, lower levels of anxiety and anger, and less alcohol abuse than those on the wait-list," for a dog. "These results suggest service dogs can help military veterans with PTSD both physiologically (as measured by cortisol awakening response) and psychologically."

Finally, we all know or have felt the consequences of PTSD, and what it does to our wellbeing. As you can see from the above research some headway has been made in trying to alleviate the disastrous after-effects of war on both mind, body, and soul. Hopefully, in the near future, a multidimensional approach will be found and instituted for all who feel the effects of PTSD.

Fr. Billy Vasilios

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Several thousand sailors and Marines who served aboard ships off the shores of Vietnam have filed for AO benefits thru the VA. In Washington, a bill was introduced (The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act) in both houses of Congress to provide assistance. The House passed the bill allowing for benefits and compensation by a vote of 382-0. However, two Senators, Mike Enzi (R-WY) and Mike Lee (R-UT) voted against it citing "budgetary and operational pressures that would happen at the VA." The Washington Post reports, the federal appeals court sided with the veterans voting 9 to 2 to reverse a decade old ruling of "boots on the ground" as a basis for benefits.

Congratulations to our Navy brothers in arms for winning an important case for benefits.

Jim Lewis, Secretary
Co A; 39th ENGR BN (CBT)
Veteran's Service Officer (VSO)
Vietnam Veterans of America
6664 W. 157th Lane
Lowell, IN 46356 Cell 219-730-8140
In God We Trust

FROM THE REUNION CHAIR

Our 2019 reunion will be here before you know it. The reunion will begin Wednesday September 25th and we will end Sunday morning September 29th. So looking forward to seeing everyone again. There are a limited number of rooms at the Ambassador Hotel so PLEASE, get your reservations in early. If your plans change before then, you can always cancel, but when they go – that's it. Hotel information, Ambassador Hotel, 2308 Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, WI. 53233. Phone 414-345-5000 or toll free 888-322-3326 and ask for the 39th Engr. Bn. Alumni Association room block at a special rate of \$115.00 plus tax per night. *Room rates for our block are guaranteed until August 26, 2019.* Room rates are good for 2 days prior and 2 days after the event. Complimentary guest parking.

Airport is General Mitchell International Airport Milwaukee located approximately 13 miles from the hotel. **The Ambassador Hotel does not have shuttle service to and from the airport but there are several**

alternatives for those flying in.

We've been advised that Go-Rite bus service at the airport will transport for \$14/pp; taxis in the \$35 range, they also have UBER.

Airlines flying into General Mitchell are:

Air Canada, Alaska, American Airlines, Allegiant, Delta, Frontier, Southwest and United Airlines.

Car rental companies located at the airport are:

Alamo - 1-800-327-9633 / TDD 305-468-2132

Avis - 1-800-831-2847 / TDD 800-331-2323

Budget - 1-800-527-0700 / TDD 800-826-5510

Dollar Car Rental - 1-800-800-4000

Enterprise - 1-800-325-8007 / TDD 800-736-8227

Hertz - 1-800-654-3131 / TDD 800-654-2280

National - 1-800-328-4567 / TDD 800-328-6323

Thrifty - 1-877-283-0898

Wednesday September 25, 2019 we will open the hospitality room with registration and our annual pizza party that evening. We also will be holding our annual Shotgun Raffles; members wishing to donate items are encouraged to do so. Drawings will be held on our final night during our banquet.

Thursday we have scheduled a tour of the Milwaukee County War Memorial, Milwaukee Art Museum, the former Pabst Brewery, Lunch at Mader's German Restaurant and Sightseeing Cruise of Milwaukee - cruise sails through downtown Milwaukee and neighborhoods on the Milwaukee River and out into Lake Michigan.

Friday we will tour the Harley-Davidson Museum, Veterans Administration Hospital and the Fisher House.

Saturday is our general membership meeting and election of officers. The afternoon free for sightseeing.

Saturday evening will be our annual banquet with cash bar available in the Marquette Room across the street from the Ambassador Hotel. Hospitality room will be closed until after the banquet.

Sunday morning we will say goodbye and box up the hospitality room for our 2020 reunion in Dayton, OH.

The Ambassador Hotel will serve a continental breakfast in our hospitality room each morning of our event. The hospitality room will be open daily.

Here are some interesting sites to see close to the hotel. Our hotel offers a shuttle into town and back, so no worries about parking/traffic.

Pabst Family Mansion – just down the street from our hotel

Milwaukee Brewers Stadium – no game during our visit but may have tours and some restaurants in the stadium

River walk featuring the “Bronze Fonz”

Many local eateries featuring German dishes and more

Paddle boat taverns

Marquette University

Usingers sausage factory and **Kessler** brat stores

Once again I will mention and can't emphasize enough is “if you have the need for special accommodations such as handicap accessible it is your responsibility to take care of that with the hotel when you make your reservations”; the Association can't do that for you without breaking the law.

This year registration forms and money will be sent to: Bill Ray, 6205 Big Springs Drive, Arlington, TX. 76001 or e-mail to bill39th@sbcglobal.net.

Members are encouraged to submit registration forms and at least the minimum payment as soon as possible to ensure that we have everything needed to make your reunion enjoyable. Refunds will be made prior to August 26, 2019.

BLUE BULLS

FIGHT, BUILD and DESTROY

Jim & Sandy Lewis

A Co. 67-68

Jim1010lewis@yahoo.com 219-696-0140

sllewis6664@hotmail.com 219-775-0256

OBITUARIES

Darrel Lee Appleton, born August 25th 1944 to Joe Bill and Iva Chase Appleton in Woodward, OK. Darrel graduated high school in Selman, Oklahoma and attended NWOSU in Alva, Oklahoma. Darrel served in the U.S. Army from 1965-1967, a year of which was spent in Vietnam. He was awarded 2 Bronze Stars, the National Defense Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal as well as Expert Rifle. Darrel married Karen Barnett and to this union was born two sons, Darren Appleton and Dale Appleton. On October 11, 1985, Darrel married Karen Graybill and gained another son Koll Graybill and a daughter Toni Graybill. Darrel worked as an Assistant Manager at Buffalo Feeders and at OK Calf Feeders. Darrel also was a life-long farmer and rancher. Darrel enjoyed spending

time with his kids and grandkids. Darrel was a member of the First Christian Church of Buffalo, Oklahoma. Darrel passed away on December 4th, 2018 at the Kansas Soldier's Home in Ft. Dodge, Kansas. Darrel was preceded in death by his father, Joe Bill Appleton. He is survived by his wife Karen Appleton, children: Darren Appleton and his wife Alinda of Enid, Oklahoma, Dale Appleton of Copan, Oklahoma, Koll Graybill and wife Becky of Copeland, Kansas, and Toni Lynch and husband Matt of Buffalo, Oklahoma. Grandchildren: Kyle Rutledge, KT Graybill, Lacey Jones, Callie Graybill, Dawson Appleton, Hannah Appleton, Mason Appleton, Ty Appleton and Jaxson Millirons. Great grandchildren Joe, Adam, Marilyn, Eli and Rose Marie. Darrel is also survived by his mother Iva Appleton of Buffalo, Oklahoma and brothers Delbert Appleton and wife LaNetta, Bruce Appleton and wife De'ett and sister Barbara Burum, sister-in-law Kay Dunham and husband John, and many nieces and nephews, other family and many friends.

39TH BEB

Amazing how time flies, as I only have about 90 days left in command. LTC Stew Gast will be my replacement. Our Change of Command is currently scheduled for 29 May 2019.

Also, I'd like to introduce 2LT Morgan Kirchhoff. She has replaced LT Ricki Anciola as our POC for the Veterans Association. Lastly, we welcomed CSM Toby Kammer into the Bull Strike formation two weeks ago. He took the reins from CSM Robert Lake. So, lots of transitions going on here, but I'm very happy to report the battalion is very lucky with the talent we continuously see reporting for duty.

Also, there is an open invite to the Week of the Eagles here on Fort Campbell, May 20-23. For any Blue Bulls in the area it is a great time to plan a visit.

Please let me know if there is anything we can do for our Veterans.

BLUE BULLS! BULL STRIKE! AIR ASSAULT!

LTC Brian D. Sawser

Commander, 39th BEB



**39th ENG BN Reunion 2019 – September 25-28
AMBASSADOR HOTEL, Milwaukee, WI**

Name _____ for name badge _____

Spouse/Guest name _____ for name badge _____

Unit & Years in VN _____ E-mail address _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone _____ Cell phone _____

Emergency contact & Phone _____

Registration fee _____ \$50 members/_____ \$45 guests Total \$ _____
(Registration includes member gift, hospitality supplies, pizza & wings party and beverages & snacks)

Member OD Green Sweatshirt Sizes: S - M - LG - XL - XXL - XXXL (circle one)

Any special requests for beverages or snacks? _____

9/26 Milwaukee Driving Tour, River & Lake Cruise \$65/person _____ number attendees Total \$ _____

**9/27 Harley Davidson Museum, VA Hospital,
Fisher House** \$30/person _____ number attendees Total \$ _____

9/28 Banquet \$40/person _____ number attendees Total \$ _____

Menu Choices: (Choose one per person)

Roasted Chicken _____ Slow Cooked Pot Roast _____ Baked Cod Filet _____

All meals come with Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans Amadine, Garden Salad, Dressing and Fresh Dinner Rolls. Dessert will be the 39th Layer Cake (regular and sugar free)

Total enclosed (min. deposit required to hold all selected events, \$100/or pay in full.) Total \$ _____
(Fully refundable if canceled prior to August 26, 2019)

If paying by credit card: Circle one: VISA MasterCard Discover American Express

_____ Expiration Date: ____ / ____ 3-digit Code on Back of Card: _____

Describe any special needs (i.e., room amenities, mobility issues, dietary considerations, etc.)

**Mail Reservation Form and payment to: Bill Ray
6205 Big Springs Dr.
Arlington, TX 76001**

Make checks payable to: 39th Eng Bn



39th Engineer Battalion Alumni
941 W. Rio Guaymas
Green Valley, AZ 85614

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LOOKING FOR BUDDIES



Here is a photo from 1967, sent in by John Demidio. It's the S-2 platoon HHC, John is kneeling on the left. He's looking for any one of these Brothers. If you can help John, please contact Bill Ray at bill39th@sbcglobal.net and he will get you in touch with John.

2019 Reunion Itinerary

Monday, Sept. 23		Early arrivals
Tuesday, Sept. 24		Early arrivals (officers etc.) Set up hospitality room
	5:00 pm	Exec Board Meeting Hospitality Room open
Wednesday, Sept. 25	12:00 pm	Registration Hospitality Room open
	6:00 pm	Meet and Greet Pizza & Wings Party
Thursday, Sept. 26	6:00 – 8:30 am	Breakfast
	9:00 am	Milwaukee Driving Tour (Veterans Memorial, Pabst Brewery)
	12:00 pm	Lunch at Mader's German Restaurant (included in tour)
	2:00 pm	Sightseeing Cruise (Milwaukee River, Lake Michigan)
	4:00 pm	Return to hotel, Hospitality Room open
Friday, Sept. 27	6:00 – 8:30 am	Breakfast
	9:00 am	Harley Davidson Museum, VA Hospital, Fisher House Tours (Lunch on your own at the Harley Davidson Motor Restaurant)
	3:00 pm	Return to hotel, Hospitality Room open
Saturday, Sept. 28	6:00 – 9:00 am	Breakfast
	10:30 am	General Membership Meeting
	12:00 pm	Open afternoon for individual sightseeing
	6:00 pm	Social hour with cash bar, Hospitality Room closed
	7:00 pm	Banquet and cash bar
	8:00 pm	Blue Bull Presentation, announcements, raffle winners
	10:00 pm	Hospitality Room open
Sunday, Sept. 29	6:00 – 9:00 am	Breakfast
	8:00 am - Noon	Farewell in Hospitality Room and clean-up