



ACADIANA CHAPTER DISPATCH

ACADIANA CHAPTER 82<sup>ND</sup> AIRBORNE DIVISION  
ASSOCIATION

CHAPTER MEETS AT HOLY CROSS CHURCH, 415 ROBLEY DR., LAF.  
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:  
(337) 684-6175 or Cell (337) 288-2730  
2424 Pierre Matte Road, Branch, LA 70516

**The July Meeting will be held on Saturday July 1<sup>st</sup> (the first Saturday) at Holy Cross Church, 415 Robley Drive, Lafayette, La at 1030 hrs. in Building D.**

**THE SOUTHWEST AIRBORNE MEMORIAL DAYS REUNION HOSTED BY OUR CHAPTER WAS AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS.**

We had 69 people from Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, Ohio, and Florida who registered for the event. We had 75 present for our closing banquet. Everyone had a great time enjoying the fellowship and camaraderie of fellow paratroopers. Our 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division National President Ed Herlihy came from Connecticut to be with us.

We had a good number of door prizes for those who attended and we thank those who helped so much with this by donating items. Those who assisted in this were: (1) Retired SFC Lionel

Elie; (2) Dwight "Bo" Ramsey (3) Richard Schales; (4) Brian Fladmo; (5) Guy Rogers and (6) John Girard. The silent auction was a great success and we thank those who helped in all of this. Those who supplied items were: (1) Ralph and Phoebe Gaudet; (2) Brian Fladmo; (3) Brett Fruge; (4) Lionel Elie; (5) Matthew Lane; (6) Bradley Robicheaux; (7) Bruce Stacy; and (8) Guy Rogers.

We thank Chapter Trustee Roosevelt Solomon for supplying the Jambalaya for lunch on Friday and Chapter Sect/Treasurer Marcus "Mark" Melancon for supplying the Shrimp Alfredo Linguini for lunch on Saturday.

Thanks also to LTC (R.) Bruce Stacy for donating the cigars (Cuban) that were auctioned off. The Tabasco basket auctioned off was donated by Richard Schales.

We thank those who assisted in guiding the groups to the tours on Saturday. Everyone reported they enjoyed them. The only complaint I heard was there were no alligators on the Swamp tour. That was probably due to high water, which has an effect

on them. Those who attended the Vermilionville tour found it interesting and enjoyed the information given out by the role players throughout the village.

The banquet was well attended with 75 present.

LTC John M. "Mike" Barefield was very well received by those in attendance as was his lovely wife Kerri. His address was appreciated by his audience of paratroopers who were pleased to hear about their legacy being carried on in today's Army. We appreciate the invocation and benediction from Chaplain Carl O. Brown.

Sunday morning we had an excellent Chapel service conducted by Chaplain Brown assigned to the 519<sup>th</sup> MP Battalion at Ft. Polk. Chaplain Brown served with the 505<sup>th</sup> of the 82<sup>nd</sup> including a combat deployment. His sermon from the first Chapter of Joshua was informative and all who heard it appreciated God's promises. Everyone enjoyed a great breakfast buffet before departing.

It was voted that the Houston Chapter would host the Southwest Memorial Airborne Days reunion

meeting next year in Houston on the 8-10 June 2018.

**CELEBRATION OF THE DESIGNATION OF THE 82<sup>ND</sup> AND 101<sup>ST</sup> DIVISIONS AS "AIRBORNE DIVISIONS" AT CAMP CLAIBORNE, LA. MONDAY AUGUST 14, 2017.**

A ceremony will take place on Monday August 14, 2017 at Camp Claiborne, LA. celebrating the designation of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division to the 82<sup>nd</sup> "Airborne" Division on August 15, 1942. The 101<sup>st</sup> Division which had been organized in March 1942 along with the 82<sup>nd</sup> at Camp Claiborne was designated the 101<sup>st</sup> "Airborne" Division on 16 August 1942.

The commanders of the 82<sup>nd</sup> and the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division will be present along with BG Brito, Commander of the JRTC and Ft. Polk, LA.

Those who wish to attend will have to be at the entrance to Camp Claiborne west of the intersection of Hwy 167 and LA 112, (by the Camp Claiborne entrance sign) **NOT LATER THAN 0930. (NOTE: I suggest 0900.** The ceremony will occur at 1000 hours and people will be bused to the site of the old Camp Claiborne Headquarters (which is of course a forested area). The program will last until 1145 hrs so be aware and I suggest you bring sufficient water and dress for the heat.

If you wish to come, please let me know so I will have an idea of how many will come from our Chapter and to make sure you understand what will occur.

**2017 NATIONAL CONVENTION:**

Planning continues for the 71<sup>st</sup> National Convention August 9-13, 2017 in Orlando, FL as well as for celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Division. Registration is \$100 per person, which includes 2 formal dinners and food and drink in the hospitality rooms. The host hotel will again be the Rosen Centre, 9840 International Drive, Orlando, FL, just minutes from many of the Orlando vacations attractions. The rooms are \$85 per standard room. Bring your family and take advantage of the great rates at a world-class hotel in one of our Nation's premier vacation spots. Please go to the following link for more information and to register today! <http://www.paratrooperdz.com/2017-national-convention/> Check out the 2017 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division Association 71<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention –ORLANDO Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/479575888817905/?f-t-s>

I sent out forms to attend earlier. IF YOU NEED ONE, CONTACT ME.

**AIRBORNE HISTORY C-47 AT THE NATIONAL WWII MUSEUM IN N.O. LA.**

Going back to September 2006 in our "Acadiana Chapter Dispatch" newsletter we found this information on the C-47 that was donated to the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, LA. **September 2006 information follows: C-47 aircraft donated to the museum.**

*This particular aircraft **098** has quite a history. It flew 82nd Airborne Pathfinders into Normandy for the invasion. It flew 101st Airborne Division Pathfinders into Holland. It also flew resupply air-drops to the 101st while they were surrounded at Bastogne. The last "Airborne" mission this plane flew is that it dropped paratroopers of the 17th Airborne across the Rhine river at Veysel, Germany.*

*Chapter members Randy Vidrine and Lorne Quebodeaux went (September 2006) and had an excellent time visiting with the personnel from "The World War II Museum" of New Orleans and also the re-enactors who were wearing proper period uniforms and exhibiting the weapons and equipment of the era (at the Lafayette airport). NOTE: The aircraft had been restored and then was flown to Lafayette, LA where it was on exhibit for about a week. It was then flown to New Orleans where*

it was disassembled and then reassembled inside the main museum building where it hangs from the ceiling on exhibit.

**RECRUITING            NEW  
MEMBERS.**

Keep your antennae tuned for "Airborne" veterans. Keep a copy of the Chapter's application form handy to give to anyone you meet who tells you they are a paratrooper. Be sure to tell them that we **must have a copy of their DD 214** showing the award of the Parachutist Badge **or a copy of their Jump School Certificate,** or any other official document showing issuance of jump wings. **We also must have proof of Honorable Discharge,** which will be on the DD214 or by copy of an Honorable Discharge. Wear your Airborne cap or shirt to identify yourself as an aid in recruiting members. Remember, without some identification, no one knows you were "Airborne."

Thanks and "Airborne All The Way!"



John R. "Randy" Vidrine  
HHC 2/325<sup>th</sup> Dom Rep 1965  
Chapter Chairman Acadiana  
Chapter 82<sup>nd</sup> Abn Div Association  
2424 Pierre Matte Road  
Branch, LA 70516-3631  
Home Ph (337) 684-6175  
Cell Ph (337) 288-2730  
E-mail: [jrvidrine@aol.com](mailto:jrvidrine@aol.com)

