



# 39<sup>TH</sup> ENGINEER BATTALION ALUMNI NEWS



[www.39thengrbn.com](http://www.39thengrbn.com)

May, 2021

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Here we are in the 5th month of 2021 and if you take all the news reports and cut the bs from each one, things are improving to the point that we will be able to be together this September-October in Dayton, OH.

I have had several conversations with our hotel and the news coming from them and the State of Ohio is that the pandemic has peaked and is gradually going down. Of course, there will be some stipulations and guidelines we will have to follow, but they should be easy for us; we let the US Army tell us what to do during our period of service. We will continue to monitor conditions in the upcoming months to assure that we do not hurt our members or put us in harm's way.

This year's reunion is set to resume in Dayton and will be the same as what we had planned for 2020. The reunion will start on Wednesday, September 29 and end Sunday, October 3, 2021. Our headquarters will be the Crowne Plaza Dayton Downtown, 33 East 5th Street with easy access off I-70, and will have the option of arriving 3 days before and staying 3 days later, if desired.

The Crowne Plaza has asked that when making your reservations for the reunion to call the toll-free number ([1-800-689-5586](tel:1-800-689-5586)). If, for some reason, that does not work, please call the hotel direct ([937-224-0800](tel:937-224-0800)). Of course you can also go on-line to the [39th Engineer Army Reunion](#) and reserve your room there. Just remember to mention "39th Engineer Army Reunion".

We will still do our trip to the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force that I believe all will enjoy without tiring us out. We will be giving the Light Denim Long Sleeve Shirt with pocket and the 39th logo embroidered on the left front to members registered at this year's reunion.

At this time, we have approximately 40 members/guests registered and still have a number of rooms in our block available. If you are anticipating attending this year, please at least make your reservations. If, for some unforeseen reason, you need to cancel, that can be done without charge if reservations are cancelled 48 hours prior to your scheduled check-in date.

**We are extremely fortunate to have a special guest at this year's reunion and a particularly good friend of Jim and Sandy Lewis. Tom Burke, Vice President of the VVA and his wife will be joining us at the reunion and will be the guest speaker at our banquet.**

We will also continue our Shotgun Raffles so we encourage you that would like to donate items for this year's reunion to please do so. 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 30, 2021.

Once again, I want to mention and cannot emphasize enough is that **"if you have the need for special accommodations such as a handicap accessible room, it is your responsibility to take care of that with the hotel when you make your**

**reservations**"; the Association cannot do that for you.

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

### **NEW MEMBERS**

Robert L. Hammond Jr.      Fred Peoples  
B Co. 74-77                      39th 68-69  
We now take time to say good-bye to our Comrades in Arms.

### **DECEASED MEMBERS**

Thomas Lawrence "Larry" Mattingly, A Co. 70-71 from Bardstown, KY. passed May 2, 2021. His obituary is later in this newsletter.

We held our second Memorial Service for all members who have passed at the Milwaukee reunion 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.

As always, Carolyn and I wish each of you good health and prosperity and please stay safe during this trying time of COVID-19; we look forward to being able to be with you all in Dayton, OH in September.

**BROTHERS THEN, BROTHERS NOW, BROTHERS FOREVER**

Bill Ray  
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## **FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT**

OPERATION CHASE: (Cut Holes And Sink Em) was a United States Department of Defense program for the disposal of unwanted munitions at sea from May 1964 until the early 1970s. Munitions were loaded onto ships to be scuttled once they were at least 250 miles offshore. While most of the sinkings involved conventional weapons, four of them involved chemical weapons. Part 1 appeared in our last newsletter.

## **OPERATION CHASE PART 2**

Myself, the staff sergeant squad leader, 6 soldiers and a cook were taken to the Guard Car that was what the general and his staff had rode in. It had 9 bunk beds, a full kitchen, a water tank, water heater, pump, shower, clothes washer and dryer, diesel generator and air conditioning. It also had a fully stocked refrigerator and freezer. We were to accompany the equipment back to Fort Knox. The Guard Car was put in the center of the flat cars with all of the equipment. I was given \$100 in twenties and was told to buy any food that we ran out of and keep the receipts.

The trip there only took 2 days but the trip home was going to be much longer. We were hooked up to trains and taken to the next train yard where we would be parked for a while and then we would be hooked to another train and taken to the next train yard. We ate pretty good; one of the men pulled KP each day but they all pitched in since there was nothing to do and the card game could not continue until the table was cleaned.

Our water tank soon ran dry, so when we pulled into the next rail yard, we checked and made sure we weren't hooked to a train. I went to the office building in the middle of the yard, walked up the stairs and loudly made the men there aware that I was coming so as not to startle anyone. When they got over the surprise that there were men in the one car. I explained to them that we needed our water tank filled. Come to find out that they were all WW2 veterans. They had an engine cut our Guard Car out and bring it over to the office building where there was a hose and faucet to fill our water tank. The Engineer was also a veteran. They had us use their showers so that when we left, we were clean and our water tank was full. The next day we were hooked to another train and were on our way to the next train yard.

(to be continued)

John Lewis  
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## FROM THE SECRETARY

Greetings All,

Just returned from our site visit to Washington, DC for our 2022 reunion. It was all business as we researched and visited seven hotels – all top notch and anxious to accommodate our group.

DAYTON is going to be here before you know it. Please be sure to get your hotel reservations in soon. People are traveling again and rooms sell out quickly. The reservation number (1-800-689-5586). If, for some reason, that does not work, please call the hotel direct (937-224-0800)...always ask for the 39th Army reunion rate for our dates of Sept 29 thru Oct 3, 2021.

Some local attractions are the Air Force Museum (we will be booking bus rides); The Wright Brothers home and museum; The Carillon Park is my favorite with an animatronic show about all the inventions discovered by Ohio inventors – there is a brewery on site as well and Jim can attest to their local beers; just a few minutes from our hotel is a free (donations accepted) Packard Studebaker museum with cars on display; The Funk Music Hall of Fame if that's your thing; and the local cemetery houses the likes of the Wright Brothers, Irma Bombeck and other notables.

The Crowne Plaza Hotel is taking all the possible Covid-19 precautions and, hopefully, the outdoor music fests will be able to entertain us, weather permitting.

Dayton International Airport is host to Allegiant, American Eagle, Delta and United Express Airlines.

Don't miss out! Call ASAP and reserve your room. See you in Dayton!!

Respectfully,

Jim and Sandy Lewis, Secretary/Reunion Co-Chairs  
A Co. 67-68

Jim1010lewis@yahoo.com  
219-730-8140

## REUNION 2021

The reunion dates are Sept. 29 thru Oct. 3, 2021. The Crowne Plaza is easy access off I-70 and airlines into Dayton International Airport include Allegiant, American, Delta and United. There are several non-stop flights out of major hubs. Our hotel offers a *free shuttle* to and from the airport. Rental car companies at the airport are Alamo, Avis, Budget and Enterprise. We have scheduled two tours on Thursday.



**Dayton Aviation Heritage Park, Wright Brothers Interpretive Center.** Tour this small museum depicting the life of Wilbur and Orville Wright and the early days of flight.



Included is a 20-minute video providing an overview of the Wright's and their contribution to history.



And then the location where the action took place - **Huffman Prairie**. This is the actual site with a replicate to the catapault used by Orville and Wilbur. If available, a park ranger will provide a detailed summary of the time the brothers spent in this field and guests can get out or stay on the air-conditioned coach. Limited walking at these two sites.



**The National Museum of the U.S. Air Force** galleries present military aviation history, boasting more than 360 aerospace vehicles and missiles on

display – many rare and one-of-a-kind – along with thousands of historical items and powerful sensory exhibits that bring history to life and connect the Wright brothers' legacy with today's stealth and precision technology.

The newest 4th hangar opened in June 2016, houses the Presidential planes, along with space exhibits and a guided tour of Southeast Asia exhibit.



- Wheelchairs (30) and motorized carts (10) are available on a first-come, first-serve basis for free.
- The IMAX Theater, within the Museum, will have a show for an additional fee of \$7, for any guest that would like to shorten their walking tour. Show titles and times will be announced on the way to the Museum, for any guest that would like to buy their ticket upon arrival.

• A nice cafeteria is available for lunch (on your own) at the museum.

Friday is left for you to go touring on your own. The Hotel shuttle will go within a 5-mile radius of our hotel.

Some attractions for individual sightseeing are: 2nd Street Market, Carillon Park, America's Packard Museum, and Hawthorn Hill.



freight house. Reminiscent of European markets, it's

**2nd Street Market** hosts local growers, bakers, culinary specialists and artisans fill the charming historical

alive with vendors, people and activity during market hours. Hours of operation: Thursday-Friday 11:00am to 3:00pm, Saturday 8:00am to 3:00pm and Sunday 11:00am to 3:00pm. (600 E. 2nd Street/1 mile from hotel)



**Carillon Park** immerses you in the region's history – from Dayton's founding in 1796 through

two centuries of expansion, industrialism and innovation. Learn about these revolutionary achievements while strolling through the Park's 25 historical buildings and interacting with the hundreds of artifacts in the exhibits. Meet the "founding fathers" of Dayton (Wilbur Wright, Orville Wright, Col. Edward Deeds, Charles "Boss" Kettering and John Patterson) in an amazing 4D Theater production in the theater.



See the original 1905 Wright Flyer III, the world's first practical airplane and National Historic Landmark, 1835 B&O steam locomotive (Grasshopper), and the first automobile self-starter. This park has plenty of benches to take a break and enjoy the grounds. Have lunch at the **Carillon Brewing Company** or the quaint Culp Café. Open:

Monday-Saturday 9:30am to 5:00pm;  
Sunday 12:00pm to 5:00pm. (1000 Carillon Blvd., 1/3 mile from hotel).



Built in 1917, **America's Packard Museum** is the only restored Packard Dealership operating as a museum. It houses the largest public collection of



Packard automobiles and memorabilia in the world. Hours of operation: Sunday-Saturday 12:00pm to 5:00pm. (420 S. Ludlow Street/half mile from hotel.)



**Hawthorn Hill** is Orville Wright's success mansion.

Join the ranks of Charles Lindbergh, Henry Ford, and Thomas Edison as visitors to the world's first pilot's last home. Hours of operation: Monday-Saturday 9:30am to 5:00pm and Sunday 12:00pm to 5:00pm. (1000 Carillon Blvd./3 miles from hotel)

## FROM THE CHAPLAIN

### THE NIHILIST!

While I was in my undergraduate years, I had the opportunity to study and read many different genres of literature written by authors from all over the world. Some of the most interesting reads were from India, Greece, China, Italy, and Russia. All of these reads gave a different view of their individual societies and daily life that are dissimilar to our Western Civilization. However, it was from Russian authors that I found most interesting and insightful since they dealt with the downfall of the Russian hierarchical system and its societal decay. The total destruction of Russian society gave birth to the crippling effects of full-blown Communism for the good of the people.

It was all spawned by a Nihilistic view of society and its norms.

The definition of Nihilism according to the dictionary is as follows: 1. a viewpoint that traditional values and beliefs are unfounded and that existence is senseless and useless. 2. Nihilism is a condition in which all ultimate values lose their value. Ronald H. Nash. 3. a doctrine that denies any objective ground of truth and especially of moral truths. 4. a doctrine or belief that conditions in the social organization are so bad as to make destruction desirable for its own sake independent of any constructive program or possibility. 5. the program of a 19th-century Russian party advocating revolutionary reform and using terrorism and assassination." These are the effects of the destructive nature of a Nihilistic view of society and culture.

Nihilism is a devastating seed that slowly worms its way into the psyche of people who feel that there is no hope. In today's society in America, we hear these same sentiments from young people all around us. In a book written by Monks John Marler and Andrew Wermuth entitled "Youth Of The Apocalypse: And The Last True Rebellion," they say that today "We are fighting the machine of Nihilism. The mad prophet of Nihilism, Friedrich Nietzsche, defined Nihilism in its absolute form: 'That there is no truth; that there is nothing in itself.'"

Moreover, the above statement by Nietzsche is in itself contradictory. "The statement 'There is no Truth,' is itself a metaphysical statement. It is not made from sensible knowledge and cannot be proved. Rather, it is a confession of faith in untruth. That 'there is no absolute state of affairs' is itself an absolute statement with its own truth claim. In claiming its own absolute truth that there is no absolute truth, Nihilism contradicts itself and proves its own utter falsehood."

On the other hand, people today see the axioms that represent our Judeo-Christian belief as very judgmental and not all-inclusive. What gives our faith-based life cohesion is the fact that we know empirically the truth that God exists because He sent His only begotten Son to save us from ourselves. This gives the faithful an attitude and lifestyle that reflects the love, mercy, and values that His Son has shown us in this world.

Finally, those who have lost hope and declare that there is no truth are deluding themselves and are living and believing in a truth that does not exist. Each of us can live as if nothing matters, but that is a fallacy in

itself. What we do here on earth will be our judge in the future. All of us will face His love or eternal judgment no matter what we believe. So, live your life as if your life depends upon it, because it does.

## OBITUARIES



**Thomas Lawrence "Larry" Mattingly Sr.**, 71, of Bardstown, passed away Sunday, May 2, 2021, at his residence. He was born on July 4, 1949, in Loretto to the late Joseph Linton and Lillian Lyvers Mattingly. Larry was the owner of Mattingly Silos, of the Catholic faith and was a U.S. Army veteran. He cherished his grandson, Will

(who called him Pap Pap) and all the time they spent together. Larry also liked the outdoors with fishing, dirt track racing, watching boxing, and loved his cat "Duke" that stayed by his side every day.

Besides his parents, he was preceded in death by his siblings, Ann Mattingly, Janet Cissell, Rosie Mattingly, Anthony Mattingly, Francis Mattingly, Charlie Mattingly and Arthur Mattingly.

Larry is survived by his wife of 48 years, Doris O'Bryan Mattingly, his daughter, Stephanie Mattingly, of Bardstown; his son, Thomas L. "Tommy" (Jessica) Mattingly Jr., of Bardstown; his grandson, William Thomas "Will" Mattingly; his siblings, Marlene Mattingly, Sara (Howard) Hutchins, Norma (Jerry) O'Daniel, Joe (Rose) Mattingly, Bernie (Janie) Mattingly, Patty (Walt) Mattingly, Margaret (Mike) Reece, Mary Ann (Jackie) Riggs, Theresa (Johnnie) Mullen, Bill (Sabra) Mattingly, Steve (P.J.) Mattingly and Jude Mattingly.

The funeral was held on Thursday, May 6, at Houghlin-Greenwell Funeral Home, 1475 New Shepherdsville Road, with the Rev. Jason Harris officiating. Interment was in St. Vincent de Paul Church Cemetery.

## SOME THOUGHTS . . .

I have long admired those who have the ability to succinctly state an idea. Here are a few of my favorite military-related ones - - -

"Whoever said the pen is mightier than the sword obviously never encountered automatic weapons." - Douglas MacArthur

"We sleep safely at night because rough men stand ready to visit violence on those who would harm us." - Winston S. Churchill

"The Army is the true nobility of our country." - Napoleon Bonaparte

"This will remain the land of the free so long as it is the home of the brave." - Elmer Davis

"America without her Soldiers would be like God without his angels." - Claudia Pemberton

"Freedom is never free." - Anonymous

"It doesn't take a hero to order men into battle. It takes a hero to be one of those men who goes into battle." - General H. Norman Schwarzkopf (I wonder how many men under his command misspelled his name???)

"The true soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him." - G.K. Chesterton

"We live in a world that has walls and those walls need to be guarded by men with guns." - Aaron Sorkin (Also a famous line from the movie "A Few Good Men")

"Those who stand for nothing fall for anything." - Alexander Hamilton

"The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing." - Albert Einstein

"Any man who may be asked in this century what he did to make his life worthwhile, I think can respond with a good deal of pride and satisfaction: 'I served in the United States Navy.' - John F. Kennedy // Ditto for all of the other branches of service.

And to add two of my own:

"Few activities can provide as much comradery, satisfaction and entertainment as attending this year's 39th Reunion in Dayton, Ohio."

"People who expect the worst are seldom disappointed." - Michael Shaw

So with that, I look forward to reconvening our group and swapping tales in September!

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Shaw, Member at Large

C Co. 70-71

nsxtarga@bellsouth.net; 678-895-1871



**2021 Annual Reunion  
39th Engineer Battalion Alumni  
Crowne Plaza - Dayton, Ohio**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ for name badge \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Guest name \_\_\_\_\_ for name badge \_\_\_\_\_

Unit and Years in country \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact & Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Registration fee: \_\_\_\_\_ \$50.00 member \_\_\_\_\_ \$45.00 Spouse/Guest Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Member Gift:** Long Sleeve Denim Shirt Sizes: S - M - LG - XL - XXL - XXXL (**circle one**)  
(Registration includes member gift, hospitality supplies, pizza/wings party, beverages & snacks)

Special requests for beverages or snacks? \_\_\_\_\_

**10/01 U.S. Air Force Museum** \$35.00/person \_\_\_\_\_ number attendees Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**<https://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil>**

**Banquet:** \$40.00/person \_\_\_\_\_ number attendees Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Menu Selection includes Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans w/Lemon & Garlic, Fresh Garden Salad w/Assorted Dressings, Warm Rolls, Iced Tea and 39<sup>th</sup> Sheet Cake for dessert.**

**Menu Choices:** (Choose one per person)

**1. Herb Roasted Prime Rib w/Horseradish Cream Au Jus** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Grilled Salmon w/Creamy Leek Sauce** \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Grilled Chicken w/Honey Brie Dijon Sauce** \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Vegetarian Plate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total enclosed** (min. deposit required to hold all selected events \$100/or pay in full) Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**(Fully refundable if canceled prior to Aug. 29, 2021)**

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.)

Arriving via (check one) \_\_\_\_\_ flying \_\_\_\_\_ driving

Crowne Plaza airport shuttle 937-224-0800

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

**Make checks payable to: 39<sup>th</sup> ENG BN**



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

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# 2021 39TH ENGINEER ALUMNI ASSOCIATION REUNION ITINERARY



<b>Mon</b> <b>Sep 27</b>	Early arrivals Meet with hotel staff	<b>Fri</b> <b>Oct 1</b>	6:30-9:00am Breakfast Open Day for Individual Sightseeing Hospitality Room open all day
<b>Tue</b> <b>Sep 28</b>	Officers arrivals; set up hospitality room Hospitality Room Opens	<b>Sat</b> <b>Oct 2</b>	6:30-9:00am Breakfast 10:30 am General Membership Meeting in Hospitality Room Open Afternoon for Sightseeing
<b>Wed</b> <b>Sep 29</b>	10:00am Exec. Board Meeting 12:00pm Registration		6:00pm Social hour Cash Bar, Hosp Rm closed 7:00pm Banquet and Cash Bar 8:00pm Blue Bull presentation, announcements Hospitality Room opens following Banquet. Raffles and Silent Auction Winners announced.
<b>Thurs</b> <b>Sep 30</b>	6:30-9:00am Breakfast 9:45am Load buses for tour of Air Force Museum. Lunch on your own at Museum Restaurant. 3:00pm Return to Hotel 3:30pm Hospitality Room Opens	<b>Sun</b> <b>Oct 3</b>	6:30-9:00am Breakfast 8:00am-Noon Farewell in Hospitality Room & Clean-up