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## 2014 RANGER HALL OF FAME NOMINATIONS REQUESTED

Nominee must be a member in good standing of WAR or an associate organization. Submit candidate nominations and a brief bio to WAR President, Bob Dawes, 3710 East 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Denver, CO 80205 or [bobdawes@gmail.com](mailto:bobdawes@gmail.com) no later than (NLT) 15 September 2013.

Those selected to submit a packet will be notified and made aware of the requirements NLT 10 October 2013. All information required to complete the packets must be in our hands NLT 30 November 2013. The packets must be completed NLT 31 January 2014. WAR will convene our board consisting of the following Rangers: Gary O'Neal, Bill Block, Milton Lockett, Roger Brown, Gerry Klein and Pete Bacerra. The board will decide which packets will be move forward.

These dates are tentative in as much as the submission date has not been determined or published by the RHOF Board however do represent a workable timeline and will be enforced until or if there is a significant change in submission procedure by RHOF Board.

## BRAGG AMONG U.S. ARMY LEGENDS

Courtesy The Blackshear Times

### *Ranger inducted into Hall of Fame*



*Retired Master Sergeant Tom Bragg of Blackshear (center) stands with (l-r) COL Kyle Lear and CSM Dana Cooper*

In the lore of the Army Rangers, Blackshear resident Tom Bragg is now the elite of the elite.

The retired Master Sergeant was inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame in a ceremony held Wednesday, 24 July at Fort Benning.

“It humbles me to see how I could be pictured [in the Hall of Fame],” says Bragg, 74.

The 2013 class of 16 inductees includes an Army Chief of Staff and three-star Generals. “That’s pretty high cotton,” he says. “To be in that crowd now is completely amazing!”

Rangers must pass rigorous training designed to prepare them for special operations – and many Soldiers do not make the cut. Aspects include endurance and the ability to lead a small unit in combat through ground, air, or amphibious missions.

Bragg’s career is marked with achievements in training and leadership. The Soldier’s service included two tours in Viet Nam, time as a Ranger Instructor and as an Army Recruiter, as well as



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multiple examples of risking his own life to aid others.

Bragg has also been noted for his resilience. While training Rangers, he had an accident that crushed two vertebrae and fractured his right hip. Seven days later he left the hospital and returned to his Company where he served as the first platoon Leader for ten months. He was the only Staff Sergeant Platoon Leader of his Company, while his Platoon accomplished 75 missions and lost only one man.



*Bragg in a service photo as a teenager and present day with his honor medals.*



*A collection of tokens and pens made from bullet casings commemorating his service to country and induction into the Ranger Hall of Fame*

The Hall of Fame program touted Bragg's will and dedication to getting a job done. "He routinely accomplished what seemed to be impossible," it stated. "In every endeavor he leaves his mark of excellence!"

Bragg enlisted in the Georgia National Guard in 1955; then joined the Regular Army about a year later to become a paratrooper. He was a demonstrator in an early Rangers-In-Action demonstration, showcasing hand-to-hand combat and rappelling for President John F. Kennedy.

In April, Bragg was inducted as a Distinguished Member of the Ranger Training Brigade at a ceremony also at Fort Benning. He was introduced in a speech by Max Haney, a fellow Ranger whom Bragg saved from a fall during mountain climbing training in 1960. Bragg was recognized for putting himself at risk again in Viet Nam to quell a violent exchange of friendly fire. During the confusion Bragg ran amid fire to get his men to hold their weapons fire, ultimately diffusing the matter.

About a dozen people from Blackshear attended the ceremony in support, he says. "This community is so patriotic!"

Bragg is also the Chaplain for the Echo Company Long Range Patrol / Charlie Company, 75<sup>th</sup> Infantry (Ranger) as well as the Worldwide Army Rangers. It's a role Bragg takes as seriously as tasks from his active duty days. I have a chance to pray with hundreds of people who are not Christians."

Bragg and his wife Marji have a son, Thomas A. Bragg Jr., and a daughter, Tammy Bragg Lovins. Bragg remains an active servant in the community through his church, civic groups and a recent stint on the Pierce County Board of Education.



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## GATHERING OF WARRIORS

The Airborne Rangers of the Korean War; Echo 20<sup>th</sup> Infantry RLRP/ C Ranger 75<sup>th</sup> Infantry and the Worldwide Army Rangers gathered at the Wingate by Windham hotel at 1711 Rollins Way, Columbus, Georgia for the first ever “Gathering of Warriors” for Worldwide Army Rangers 22 – 27 July.



*Hospitality Suite*



*Welcome sign upon entering*

It was an event filled week as old friendships were renewed and new friendships were forged.

Unfortunately Ranger Bill Block fell and broke his kneecap the week prior and was unable to attend. Ranger Rex Masters, President of the Airborne Rangers of the Korean War also was unable to attend as his knee replacement from 22 years ago decided to malfunction at the hotel where they had stopped for the evening on 21 July. Ranger Masters was forced to return home. Keep these Rangers in your thoughts and prayers as we wish them a speedy recovery.

Activities began for early arrivals on Sunday as David and Ann Santini hosted a social at their home Sunday evening. Guests included Ranger John Walsh from the Airborne Rangers of Korea in

addition to the Henry Caro Chapter members Bob Dawes, Willie and Darlene Snow; Thomas and Margie Bragg and Pete and Lynda Bacerra.

With the Ranger Regiment Airborne Assault cancelled, members began gathering at the patrol base and renewed friendships. Ranger Wesley Rash ventured to Fort Benning and he and his son-in-law exited the 34 foot tower at the Airborne School. Ranger Walsh had to find a Dining Facility and enjoy some of that “Good Army Chow!”





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## Distinguished Member of the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment

Tuesdays highlight consisted of the Distinguished/Honorary Member of the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment investiture ceremony conducted in Marshall Auditorium. CSM Darrin J. Bohn; CW5 Billy Frazier Jr.; MAJ Scott M. Gilpatrick; SGM(R)

Michael "Ted" Kennedy; CSM(R) Bobby Lane; CSM Eddie Noland; COL Frederick M. O'Donnell; CSM (R) Philip S. Pich; CSM (R) James D. Pippin; CW5 (R) Dionisio Rivera-Lugo; SGM (R) Kenneth M. Turner; and CSM Bradley K. Meyers were invested as Distinguished Members of the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment and Ms. Christina Bartruff and Mr. James P. Regan were invested as Honorary Members of the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment.

Tuesday evening was the Ranger Hall of Fame Dinner at the Ranger Hall of Fame. War Members

RGR Thomas Bragg; RGR Bob Gilbert; and RGR Howard "Max" Mullen were honored as were fellow inductees SGM Mathew Berrena; LTC James Dabney; CSM Doug Greenway; SGM Patrick Hurley; CSM Joe Mattison; CSM Andrew McFowler; MSG Vincent Mellilo; GEN Peter Schoomaker; CSM William Smith; LTC Frederick Spaulding; LTG Gary Speer; MAJ Carlton Vencill; and CSM Charles Williams.

## Ranger Hall of Fame Induction

Ranger Thomas Bragg, Ranger Bob Gilbert and Ranger Howard "Max" Mullen and RGR Vincent Mellilo from WAR were inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame on Wednesday. The ceremony was held in Marshall Auditorium. Ranger (Doctor) Carlton G. Savory was the guest speaker.



*RGR Bragg views his photo among this year's Inductees*

Also inducted this year were RGR Mathew Berrena; RGR James E. Dabney; RGR Doug Greenway; RGR Pat Hurley; RGR Joseph Mattison; RGR Andrew McFowler; RGR Peter J. Schoomaker; RGR William M. (Bill) Smith; RGR Frederick L. Spaulding; RGR Gary D. Speer; RGR Carlton P. Vencill; and RGR Charles P. Williams.



*RGR Mellilo congratulated by Mrs Singlaub*



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## Brown Family Bar-B-QUE

Following the Hall of Fame Ceremony there were two Bar-B-Ques for the Rangers to participate in. The Ranger Bar-B-Que at Freedom Hall at Lawson Field on Fort Benning where Rangers were recognized for their achievements during the Ranger Games held throughout the day on Wednesday. The second choice to enjoy southern Bar-B-Que that evening was at Roger Brown's annual cookout. Good food and fellowship was shared at both events.



*RGR Stringham, RGR Cobb, and RGR Brown*

## COL CHRISTOPHER S. VANEK ASSUMES COMMAND OF THE 75<sup>TH</sup> RANGER REGIMENT

By [Sgt. 1st Class Michael R. Noggle](#)



*Lt. Gen. Joseph Votel, former 75th Ranger Regiment commanding officer, passes the Regimental Colors to Col. Christopher Vanek, assuming command of the 75th Ranger Regiment, during a change of command ceremony at the National Infantry Museum, July 25.*

FORT BENNING, Ga., (July 31, 2013) -- Current and former Rangers, Families, friends and members of the community watched as the 75th Ranger Regiment bid farewell to one commander and welcomed its next at the National Infantry Museum on 25 July.

Col. Christopher S. Vanek assumed command as the 18th commander of the 75th Ranger Regiment from Col. Mark W. Odom. Lt. Gen. Joseph L. Votel, 12th commander of the 75th Ranger Regiment, hosted the ceremony and commended the Rangers standing in formation.

"Every Ranger knows their creed by heart and truly upholds the honor, prestige, and high 'esprit de corps' of our Ranger Regiment," Votel said. "The Ranger Regiment is battle hardened, with great men deployed now in harm's way. Our great nation owes



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these brave souls a debt of gratitude for the sacrifices both they and their Families have made."

Votel said the key to these values and traits starts with the leadership at the top. Commanding the Regiment comes the responsibility of commanding the only force that has remained constantly deployed since the wars began in 2001.

"(Odom's) time in command has been defined by constant combat operations against the most dangerous terrorists and insurgent networks in Afghanistan," Votel said. "Time and time again, on more than 2,500 raids, the Rangers displayed a blend of talent, motivation, skill and raw courage that is their hallmark. And our nation is safer for it."

During his tenure, Odom was commended for his advancement of the Ranger casualty response system, which was a model program for combatant commanders designed to save lives on the battlefield. Votel also praised Odom on his professional development program for the leaders within the regiment.

"There is no doubt in my mind that our leaders will continue to live up to Abrams' charter and make the Army better for their small unit expertise and master leadership," he said. "There is simply not a better group of leaders in our Department of Defense, I know, I have looked. And Mark is the reason why."

Odom thanked the Rangers of the Regiment, and all those who gathered to see the men standing in formation. He acknowledged Rangers past and present who dedicated and invested so much in to the Regiment.

"Most of you came here to the ceremony this morning not to watch three officers pass the colors, but rather to take stock in the Regiment, to check up on your investment," he said. "Some of you made permanent investments with your sons and

husbands, and remain part of it for life."

Odom said the Regiment produces many leaders, both in the enlisted and officer ranks throughout the Army. Currently standing there are 24 battalion commanders, 11 brigade commanders, 19 battalion command sergeants major, 16 brigade Command Sergeants Major and 20 nominative or flag officer Sergeants Major who had once served in the 75th Ranger Regiment.

"The Regiment is not a closed circuit system," he said. "It does not discriminate between supporter and assaulter. If you want to know what the future of the Army looks like, keep looking straight ahead."

Before turning the reins over to Vanek, Odom left the audience with one last statement on the regiment. "The Regiment is built around the organization rather than the individual. It has special people and it can perform special missions, but it is the organization, the Regiment that gives each one of us the opportunity to be special and do great things."

Vanek's previous assignment at the Regiment was as the deputy commanding officer from 2009 to 2011. He previously served as commander of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, from 2011 to 2012, and then attended the Naval War College from 2012 to 2013.

"Col. Chris Vanek is no stranger to the Ranger Regiment or to the path it has traveled over the last 12 years," Votel said. "He has held nearly every leadership position in this organization, and his experience in and out of the Regiment will make this unit even better ... there is simply no one better to pick up the mantle of leadership for this great Regiment. And that is exactly what our Rangers deserve."





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## Lady Rangers Tour Midtown Columbus

Concurrently during the change of command, the lady Rangers enjoyed a bus tour of historic midtown Columbus and the Springer Opera House.



*Lady Rangers Tour Historic Midtown Columbus*

This was followed by dinner at Miss Minnie's Uptown Restaurant and souvenir shopping at the Brother's General Store.

## Echo 20<sup>th</sup>/Infantry LRP/Charlie Ranger 75<sup>th</sup> Infantry Memorial

Friday morning, Echo 20th Infantry LRP/Charlie Ranger gathered at the Ranger Memorial to honor their fallen comrades.



*Posting the Colors*



*Rendering Honors*





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## **GATHERING OF WARRIORS BANQUET**

Friday evening was highlighted by the “Gathering of Warriors” banquet held in the multipurpose classroom at the Ranger Training Brigade. Challenged by the late arrival of the bus transportation and an inoperative air conditioning system, the festivities were off to a slow start, but the bus arrived and thanks to CSM Vaughn Overton of the 4<sup>th</sup> Ranger Training Battalion, portable air conditioning units soon cooled the banquet area.

The Social Hour in the Ranger Hall of Fame allowed everyone to meet and greet our guest speaker MG(R) Jack Singlaub and the Commandant of the Infantry School, BG David Haight and his wife Bonnie.



*Remembering the Fallen*



*Retiring the Colors*



*Lady Rangers in Attendance*



*Social Hour*



*Rangers “Past” and “Present”*





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At the conclusion of the social hour, the guests moved to the banquet hall. The ‘Colors’ were posted and the guests were seated, MS Ann Sherman Wolcott, a “Gold Star Mother” narrated the “Fallen/Missing in Action Ceremony.



*Serving the “Ranger” Punch*



*Fallen/Missing In Action Table*

Upon completion of the punch bowl ceremony, “Toasts” were presented and the meal was served. Following a brief intermission, the guests were treated to MG(R) Singlaubs presentation. Upon completion of MG Singlaubs remarks, the evening concluded with the retirement of the ‘Colors!’”

Following the “Fallen/Missing in Action Ceremony the “Ranger” Punch was prepared. Six members of the 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment volunteered for this mission, fully knowing the hazards of their chosen profession.



*MG(R) Singlaub addresses the audience*



*Preparing the Ranger Punch*



*Retiring the ‘Colors’*



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## The After Party Party

Saturday evening, Ranger Pete Bacerra and Lynda hosted and after party party at their home on Paprika Lane. The party enabled everyone to relax and unwind after the event filled week of Ranger Activities.

operating the WAR Store at the Windham Hotel during the “Gathering.”

A good time was had by all and it was a fitting close to the “Gathering of Warriors.”

## Photographs from the Gathering of Warriors

You may view more than 400 pictures from the 2013 *Gathering of Warriors* compliments of RGR Bob Stein at the following site:

<https://picasaweb.google.com/114132911708450951024/ECompanyLRPreunion713?authuser=0&authkey=Gv1sRgCMer-bT3srOfXw&feat=directlink>



*Back row: Charlie Craft; Milt Hendrickson; Bab Dawes; David Santini; Daryl (Bones) Benton; Art Hill; Ray Marshall; Bonifacio Romo; Willie Snow. Front row: Pete Bacerra; “Boston”*



*Ann Santini and Bob Dawes*

During the party Ann Santini was presented a Worldwide Army Rangers Certificate of Appreciation for her dedicated work and support in coordinating the “Lady Ranger’s Tour and





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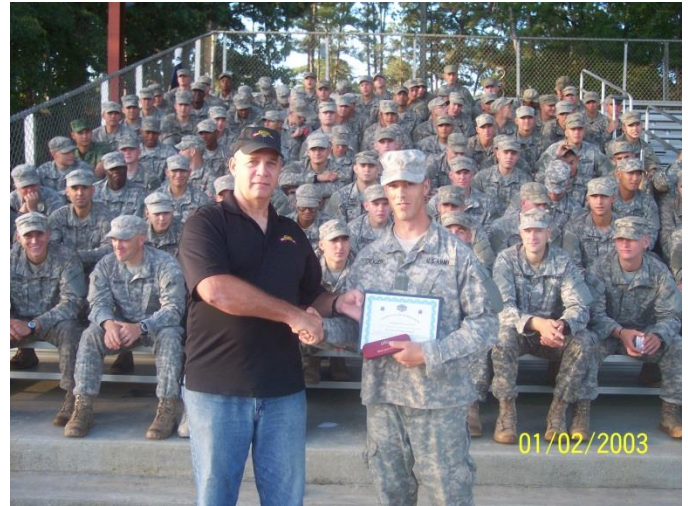


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## 100 RANGERS GRADUATE CLASS 8-13

The newest Ranger graduates joined our ranks on 23 August during their graduation ceremony at Hurley Hill. COL Rob Choppa, Chief of Staff, Maneuver Center of Excellence was the Guest Speaker. Class 8-13 began training on 24 June. 333 students trained with Class 8-13 and 100 met the standard for Graduation. Thirty five students were first time "Go's."

The Class Tactical Noncommissioned Officers were SFC Zepeda, A Company, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion; SFC Steven Zeitlin, C Company, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion; and SFC Jeffrey Newton, A Company, 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion.



*RGR Klein and Honor Graduate RGR Geiger*

RGR Geiger received a Certificate of Achievement from Worldwide Army Rangers and a "Junior's Bullet Pen" from Junior's Bullet Pens. Junior's Bullet Pen is named in honor SSG Chris Falkel, 3d Special Forces Group, who was killed in Action in a 54 hour firefight, 8 August 2005.

RGR (CPT) Justin Cunningham from the Maneuver Captains Career Course was the Officer Leadership Award Recipient and RGR (SPC) Brian Ringrose from the 82d Airborne Division was the Enlisted Leadership Award Recipient. They received a Certificate of Achievement from Worldwide Army Rangers and a \$50.00 gift card, compliments of Ranger Joe's, in recognition of their accomplishment.



*Class 8-13 listening to RGR Gilbert's presentation*

The Officer Honor Graduate was RGR (CPT) Eric Geiger from the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School.



*RGR Cunningham, RGR Hoffman and RGR Ringrose*



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Interservice graduates were RGR Taylor Riggan and RGR Gabriel Hensley from the United States Air Force. Allied Graduates are RGR Robert Colflesh from Singapore and RGR Oliver T. Macan-Santos from the Philippines.



*Front: (L-r) RGR Cunningham; RGR Riggan; RGR Colflesh; RGR Ringrose; RGR Macan-Santos; and RGR Geiger. Back: RGR Bacerra; RGR Hensley; RGR Gilbert; and RGR Hoffman*

## RGR BILL BLOCK UPDATE

Ranger Bill Block fell while attending the “Red Hat” Reunion in Atlanta the week prior to the “Gathering of Warriors.” He fractured his left knee cap and required surgery which occurred on 1 August. Bill now wears a leg brace and temporarily travels by wheel chair. His physical therapy is progressing as scheduled and his therapist has increased Bill’s exercises to six. Please keep RGR Block in your prayers as he marches along on the road to recovery.