



BADGER AIRBORNE NEWS

BADGER STATE CHAPTER * 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION ASSOCIATION

July 2010

The All Americans

New Members:

**Fred Gebhart
Chilton
Robert Stephenson
Appleton**

Welcome Home!

Jump In:

**Stevens Point
Flag Dedication,
Col. John Scocos Speaker,
BSC Meeting
July 31, pg. 2-3**

**Airborne Wounded War-
rior program.** Contact
Gerry Diemel, 715-758-
8365; or, Frank Morris,
715-693-6161.

**82nd Convention
Charleston, W. V.
August 18-21, 2010
Convention Registration
Fee: \$82 per person
All convention registra-
tions post marked after
Aug. 8 will be \$92 per
person (Pg. 7)**

**Glider Symposium
Sept. 9-11 Madison, Wis-
consin's biggest Glider
Rider & Pilot Tribute!
Headlined by Maggie and
82nd Association Exec
Sec. Santiago Tijerina**

**Highground Chili Cook-
off
October 2
BSC Airborne Chili Team,
Howard Rennhack and
Tom Laney expect to win
this!**

WWII Vets Roll to Washington D.C.

By Herb Huebschen, 325 GIR

What a wonderful tribute to the aging soldiers of WWII, the Greatest Generation! It all began in February 2010, with a local business called Finnegan's RV Center of South Beloit, Illinois, which organized the trip. Mark Finnegan had a novel idea; to travel by motor home and coach bus instead of by air (Honor Flights). Mark's business furnished nine motor homes and chartered four motor coaches to transport 128 veterans for the trip. Another sixty volunteers, including nurses and other staff provided support during our adventure. We had the luxury of a registered nurse assigned to each vehicle, and plenty of volunteers were aboard to assist the vets who needed it. All vehicles carried snacks to keep our energy levels high, and there was plenty of on-board storage for wheelchairs and walkers. . . . after all, we're beginning to get old! Mark Finnegan and the organizers would not accept a single penny from the vets to help defray the cost of this considerable undertaking. Donations were raised from individuals and local corporate donors to finance the trip. We were honored to have Mark Finnegan drive one of his RV's all the way to Washington DC and back as the lead vehicle, towing a support trailer. The caravan departed South Beloit at 6am on May 17th, and hundreds of friends and relatives waved goodbye to the vets.

We reached Somerset, Pennsylvania, the first night. The next morning we departed the motel for the Flight 93 memorial. It's in a big field that the plane crashed, and for now, the memorial is only temporary. Surviving



Mark & John Finnegan with Herb. Three of the nicest guys in America? Absolutely!

relatives of this terrorist attack have placed remembrances on the site, similar to those on the Vietnam Wall.

The next day we reached historic Frederick, Maryland, and boarded three motor coaches for a guided tour of the area's civil war sites. That evening their American Legion treated all WWII vets to a wonderful dinner. The final day of our Vets Roll Tour we boarded motor coaches for an all day tour of Washington D.C. We visited the WWII memorial, the ultimate purpose of our trip, and it is a truly impressive site. We also visited most of the other memorials that people come to see when they visit Washington on their vacations.

At 6:30am on May 20th we departed Frederick for the long ride west. The Indiana State Patrol escorted our caravan all the way across Indiana. When we reached the Chicago Skyway Bridge, the Illinois State Patrol was waiting for us and escorted our caravan all the way through Chicago. . . . lights flashing! Our final destination was a large parking lot in Beloit, Wisconsin, and

I have never seen a "Welcome Home" like the one we received when our caravan arrived. Hundreds of people were waving flags and shouting to the vets, "THANK YOU, THANK YOU". A large banner proclaimed "Mission Accomplished", and fire trucks, ladders extended, were present. And tears were shed.

To quote from a letter to the editor of the Beloit Daily News, "What Mark Finnegan, his family, and the Finnegan's RV Center accomplished is nothing short of miraculous." Yet another news story stated, "This was a tremendous responsibility to take on for the organizers of this trip, and it couldn't have been done any better."

And "that's the way it was," to quote Walter Cronkite. This adventure was yet another "mission accomplished" for veterans of the "Greatest Generation." The Finnegan family organized this trip to honor their father, a WWII Navy veteran himself, who unfortunately passed away in 2000 and didn't get to see the

Continued pg. 6



Badger State Chapter

82nd Airborne Association

Officers

Mike Haller, Chairman
608-356-3235
Bob Shrader, Vice Chair
920-748-5299
Tom Laney, Secretary
715-962-4365
Reuben Clark, Treasurer
608-222-4833
Gerald Diemel, Sgt. at Arms
715-758-8365
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Badger Airborne News

Send in your AIRBORNE news and stories!

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<http://82ndassociation.org/index.html>



Apache Smoke

By Tom Laney, Secretary/Editor



Greetings from Lake Algae!

It was great to see BSC members attending LZLambeau, one of the most moving events in Wisconsin's unparalleled history of spiritual and material support for Veterans. WWII Screaming Eagle Ben Rous, a BSC leader who stood up first for respect and honor to RVN Vets, had to be smiling from above as these Soldiers were finally welcomed home.

Wisconsin's NG Commander, Brig. Gen. Dunbar made a good speech about "The Long Red, White & Blue Line" to which we all belong. He will be giving that speech to our Glider Symposium along with honoring Wisconsin's Glidermen.

<http://www.2ndwwiiglidersymposium.org/Home>

Mucho thanks to LZLambeau Airborne Beer Tenders Chris & Leon Meidam, Frank & Marge Morris, Bob Shrader, Gerry Diemel, George Banda, Jim & Jeff Romlein, Rosemary Dessesles, Bill Drephal, and Joel Sys for all your help in raising \$482 for our Chapter! Special thanks to 101st Old Abe Chair Jim Romlein for including the BSC in this effort!

Thanks also to Mark Anderson and his sister Heidi for welcoming us to their Green Bay home for an Airborne BBQ! Mark had to work late but Heidi was the perfect hostess!

As our country crumbles to usury and avarice, it's sometimes easy to forget the core goodness of most Americans. Thanks to Herb Huebschen for his wonderful story about the All American Finnegan and their love of WWII Vets. It is a hopeful reminder that whatever happens, there are still a lot of nice people in the world and the Finnegan are right there at the top!

Thanks to Judy Durkee for again escorting a WWII Vet on an Honor Flight to the WWII Memorial and for getting a nice story published about 101st WWII Vet Glenn Johnson in the Rhinelander newspaper.

Ditto Howard Rennhack whose award of WWII Combat Jump Wings to BSC Member Floyd Pratt, 17th Airborne made the Jackson County Chronicle.

Congrats to Jim "Maggie" Megellas who was honored by the Texas DAR in April and the American Hellenic Educational Association in May. In July Maggie received the DAR's National "Medal of Honor" in Washington, DC and met with the Joint Chiefs. We have asked Sen. Feingold to meet with LTC Sims, who was the ExO who originally submitted Maggie for the MOH. Maggie is now 93. He will be visiting the 82nd and 101st in Afghanistan following the Glider Symposium in Sept.

Kipp Hartman sent an email from Mike Brennan, Madison, saying 173rd Paratrooper Sal Giunta will receive the Medal of Honor for his heroic efforts to save Mike's son Josh. Story is here: <http://biggovernment.com/jhanson/2010/07/01/honoring-ssg-sal-giunta-likely-first-living-medal-of-honor-recipient-since-the-vietnam-war/>

Major Airborne thanks to Lester Schwarm for again bringing his Airborne Display to the Baraboo Air Show. Lots of people went through the Airborne Tent and talked to us about the Airborne. "I was in the 101st Airborne in WWII but this is the first time I have ever seen the Airborne get the credit it deserves," said one Paratrooper with tears in his eyes. Thanks to Bob Shrader, Mike Haller, Charlie Nelson, Gene and Donna Strutzenberg and Frank Morris for making this such a huge success with the public. Thank you to S/Sgt Jose Gonzalez, 32nd Infantry, for not only furnishing a huge CP tent but also putting it up and taking it down!

Hope to see you all in Stevens Point!

All Airborne Memorial

Program:

1PM Colors Posted, VFW 568

Welcome, Bob Shrader, BSC Vice Chairman

Airborne Prayer, Lester Schwarm, 325 GIR, BSC Airborne Historian

Greetings, Jim Romlein, Chairman, 101st Airborne Old Abe Chapter

Airborne Memorial Organizer, Walter Pakulski, 13th Airborne

Main Speaker

LTC John Scocos
82nd Airborne, Former Secretary
Wisconsin
Veterans Affairs

Gun Salute VFW Post 568

Awards Banquet Follows at Blue Top Restaurant

3425 Church St.
715-344-8420

Drinks 3PM
Dinner 4PM

\$10.50 (includes tax & tip!)

Please send dinner checks by July 24 to
Reuben Clark, BSC Treasurer, 5318
Greenbriar Ln, Madison, WI 53714-3404

Hotels

Blue Top Motel

Single \$35
Double \$45
715-344-3434

(By July 18. Mention 82nd Airborne)

Americinn Plover

1501 American Dr.
(close to I-39 & Cty Rd. B)
Single \$80.96 + tax
Double \$89.96 + tax
715-342-1244

(By July 24. Mention 82nd Airborne)

All Airborne Memorial Flag Dedication

**Airborne Memorial
Bridge
Downtown
Stevens Point
1 PM Saturday
July 31
Public Welcome!**



1994—BSC Airborne Old Guard beat the bureaucrats to honor all our Airborne Brothers of U.S. AIRBORNE FORCES.



2010—Keepers of the Airborne Flame—Bev & Gerry Diemel; Frank and Marge Morris placed new flag poles at our Memorial and have beautified the site.

Airborne Memorial Banquet Follows Ceremony

Cocktails 3PM

Awards Banquet 4PM

Blue Top

Restaurant

3425 Church St.

Sunday Airborne Breakfast

Blue Top

9AM \$4.50 (+T&T)

Membership Meeting Minutes, Badger State Chapter, 82nd Airborne Division Assoc., AmericInn East, Green Bay May 22, 2010

A quorum being present the BSC meeting was called to order by Chairman Haller at 2:11pm.

Dedication of the meeting to all Vietnam Veterans by Mike Haller. Pledge & Prayer led by Mike Haller and Tom Laney.

Approval of Minutes from last meeting as printed in May 2010 BAN

Motion by Bert Schmitz Second by Bob Shrader to accept minutes as printed in May BAN. Mike Haller asked that the minutes reflect his approval of calls to the National 82nd Association office by Gaukel and Helms regarding the support letter for Col. Scocos. "Good move," said Mike. Carried.

Sec. Report. Written report distributed by Sec. Tom Laney addressed BSC Planning Committee, Air Show, Cross Plains Memorial Day and William Walsh, Stevens Point Flag Dedication, BSC Certificates of Appreciation, Gift memberships, Badger Airborne Website, Email signup, Maggie MOH, and the Sept. Glider Symposium. Laney asked about volunteers for the Quartermaster position and there were none. Laney agreed to fill this position temporarily until the next meeting, reorder Airborne flags, Airborne jewelry, 82nd window flags, Airborne Patches, Airborne coffee cups, Wings, Airborne stickers, Airborne glasses, Airborne floor mats and Airborne can coolers and have these things available to BSC meetings and events including the Baraboo Air Show. Jerry Deimel volunteered to handle American flags and jackets. The Airborne items re-stock was passed last year.

Motion by Laney, Second by Shrader to award BSC Airborne Certificates of Appreciation to Col. John Scocos, Judy Durkee, Ann Gaukel, Marge Morris, Frank Morris, Bev Diemel, Captain Ben Collins, Les Schwarm, Doc Stolp, Walter Pakulski, Liz Clark, Reuben Clark. Carried.

Motion by Laney, Second by Shrader to authorize Jerry Diemel to purchase and maintain stocks of American flags and BSC jackets. Carried. Rasmussen said flags are available from the State for \$9.

The members decided not to order sweatshirts or jackets at this time. Bert Schmitz said Tom Hacker has a great jacket for about \$85 and will look into that as well as contacting Taybron Sweaters to see if we can order sweatshirts on demand.

Motion by Laney, Second Morris to table sweatshirt purchase pending Schmitz call. Carried.

Motion by Rasmussen, Second Morris to approve Honorary Membership for Evelyn Ward. Carried. This formalizes Honor to Ward bestowed by original BSC members on Glenn Ward's widow. Glenn was KIA in 1945 fighting for his 508th Brothers.

Vice Chair Report. Bob Shrader reported on raffle—four guns will cost \$1700 and our gross on 1000 tickets sold will be \$3300.

Motion by Morris, Second by Diemel to reimburse Shrader for printing and permit expense of \$140.79. Carried.

Treasurer's Report. Reuben Clark was unable to make the meeting and his written financial report was distributed by Haller. \$8000 was moved to the checking account. Discussion on a new BSC budget was delayed until next meeting.

Chair Report. Mike reported on upcoming Baraboo Air Show being dedicated to Vets. We will have a Les Schwarm display, parachute, GI Joe, Ike jacket, 82nd Banners and flags, BSC T's and other Airborne items for sale, raffle tickets, Airborne photo displays, BSC brochures and newsletters, need someone to pick up glider panels in Marshfield. Need volunteers. Dave Green Welcome Home, 101st Old Abe and 82nd Southern Chapter welcome to join us. Importance of fundraising stressed by Haller and Schmitz.

Motion by Schmitz, Second by Rasmussen to pay for Sept. 9-11 Glider Symposium accommodations for Exec. Sec. Santiago

Tijerina, per 82nd Association protocol (\$95 + tax, per night). Carried. Question was raised whether we ought also to

pay for his meals. Laney will check and report to next meeting.

Haller reported we will place an Airborne Display Case at a Military Museum in Portage temporarily. Mike presented the new BSC t-shirt.

Motion by Rasmussen, Second by Morris to sell the t-s for \$12 at the Baraboo Air Show. Carried.

Rasmussen asked if we want to send boxes to Paratroopers overseas? He can get us the addresses and also asked if we'd be interested in sending boxes to Paratroopers in the 32nd Infantry which has many Airborne members? Schmitz said we should only send to 82nd Paratroopers.

Discussion was held on re-designing the BSC Challenge coin.

Laney passed around a news article from the Jackson County Chronicle on Howard Rennhack pinning combat Wings on Don Olson, 502 PIR, 101st, Black River Falls. We will be doing the same for Floyd Pratt soon. All invited.

Motion by Rasmussen, Second by Shrader to adjourn. Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Laney, BSC Secretary

AIRBORNE MEMORIAL BRIDGE

You can place your name on this memorial to all our Airborne Brothers and Sisters for only \$100! Contact Mike Haller for more info. 608-355-2382.

Look Airborne!

The BSC has jackets, t-shirts, sweatshirts, ties, caps, flags, pins, patches, medals, cushions, cups, glasses, etc. for sale.

If we don't have it we can get it. Competitive prices and all proceeds go to benefit your Chapter.

Chairman's Comments

Hello members, wives, guests of the Badger State Chapter.

Please read minutes of our Green Bay meeting on May 22nd. After our meeting most of our members stopped at the LZ Lambeau appreciation of Vietnam veterans at Lambeau Stadium. This was an impressive program honoring Vietnam veterans. There were some 1244 white empty chairs on Lambeau's football field representing Wisconsin's Soldiers who were KIA. I didn't see a dry eye in the stadium of 30,000 people.

Also through the efforts of Jim Romlein, Chair of the Old Abe Chapter and our BSC members they helped serve beer on the grounds. Reuben received a check for \$482 for their efforts. We will have a report at our next meeting.

The chapter now has raffle tickets for sale. A drawing will be held the first meeting after the last ticket is sold. If you would like to have tickets call Bob Shrader in Ripon. His phone number is 920-229-5464. We need to sell these tickets as fast as possible. We also have t-shirts and bumper stickers for sale. The t-shirts have the Badger Chapter logo on the front. I would like to see each member buy at least one t-shirt and bumper sticker. Please call Mike Haller at 608-356-3235 to purchase t-shirts or bumper stickers. Cost is \$12.00 for t-shirts and \$5.00 for bumper stickers.

The BSC participated in the Baraboo Air Show on June 25th, 26th and 27th. We had a tent donated and put up by the Baraboo National Guard. We displayed 82nd Airborne material and Les Schwarm had a display of the battles in Europe during World War II. Thank you Les.

Our next event will be at Stevens Point. We will dedicate the Airborne Memorial with two new flags on the new flag poles. Check the newsletter for the times and dinner afterwards. We will not have a chapter meeting at this event. As chairman, I cannot be present at the event and am assigning Vice Chair Bob Shrader to handle the program.

Also I would like to schedule an executive meeting with BSC officers on August 7th at 11:00 a.m. at the Farm Kitchen in Baraboo. I would like to extend an invitation to any interested members also. We need to plan our program for the rest of the year.

Mike Haller Go Airborne

More pictures and stories of Wisco Airborne in Maggie's All Wisconsin Airborne Reporter. Send an email to: tlaney1776@gmail.com for your FREE copy every four months!

Thank you Tom Gaukel!



Chairman Mike Haller and former Secretary John Givens presented a Certificate of Appreciation recently to former Chairman Tom Gaukel for his extensive work for the BSC.

Maggie Gets Freedom Award



The USMC's Ed Barnes and AHEPA Chairman John Galanis congratulate Jim Megellas on receiving AHEPA's Medal of Freedom in Chicago May 1. (Laney photo)

These are the World's Greatest Airborne Beer Tenders!



There are still lots of nice people in the world and the Finnegan's are at the top of the list!



Herb arrives in Washington and the entire Vets Roll contingent at the WWII Memorial courtesy of Mark Finnegan! Check the Vets Roll website for the dedication to Cy Finnegan and the whole story with dozens of pictures!

Herb Continued from pg. 1
impressive memorial erected to honor his comrades.
The RV I was in carried seven guys and a young RN, a female Navy Lieutenant. Another guy was a Navy pilot from an aircraft carrier. We took up a substantial collection for the nurse but she said she would not take it. She said she learned a lot about WWII from us and enjoyed the trip.

You can read the whole story here:
<http://www.vetsroll.org/index2.html>

2 More Very nice people!



Paratrooper Mark Anderson and his sister, Heidi were the host and hostess with the mostest at their Airborne LZ Lambeau BBQ held at their home for us. Mark is even offering his yard for Packer game parking! Thanks folks!

Airborne Tent big hit at Baraboo Air Show!



100's of people visited our Airborne Tent June 26, 27. We had a nice display by Les Schwarm; the Jim Megellas exhibit; and many photos and stories on Wisco WWII Airborne Vets. Above, Bob Shrader leads a family tour. Mike Haller, Les, Bob, GI Joe and Gene & Donna Strutzenberg at right. AIRBORNE!



Badger Airborne News
82nd Airborne Division Assoc.
E6304 866th Ave.
Colfax, WI 54730

U.S. PARATROOPERS



GLIDER RIDERS



Check your dues! Keep Badger Airborne News Dropping/Gliding in! RE-UP BSC today!

Floyd Pratt gets his Combat Jump Wings

BSC Member Floyd Pratt was honored in Black River Falls with family and friends as Howard Rennhack pinned his Combat Jump Star Wings on his chest. Floyd was with the 17th Airborne when they jumped into Operation Varsity in 1945. Thanks to Howard he now has the Bronze Star for those Wings. Thanks to Cassie Colson, the *Jackson County Chronicle* carried the story and it will be re-printed in *The All Wisconsin Airborne Reporter* soon. Howard sure has an eye out for those Airborne guys!

