

The Beidorn Switchboard

28th Field Artillery Regimental Association

Volume 1 Edition 2 February 2020



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Meet the NEW Coeditors of the 28th FARA Newsletter!!!

Pat & Janet Malherek, Coeditors 28 FARA Newsletter



Pat served in 2-28 FA from 1983-1987. He was the Battalion Fire Direction Officer, Commander of B Battery, Battalion S-2, and Commander of C Battery. Following his time in 2-28, Pat was an Assistant Professor of Military Science at The Ohio State University, held several staff positions in the 1st Infantry Division Artillery at Fort Riley, Kansas, and was the Professor of Military Science at Utah State University, retiring in 1996. Since 1999, Pat has been employed by Charles County Public Schools in La Plata, MD, as a JROTC instructor at Maurice J. McDonough High School.

Janet served in the 141st Signal Battalion from 1983-1986. She was a platoon leader in both A and C Companies and the Battalion S-1. She is currently employed by Charles County Public Schools as the College and Career Advisor at St. Charles High School.

Pat and Janet met while they were stationed in Ansbach, Germany. They currently reside in La Plata, MD. They have four children and one grandchild. Their son Chris, who was born in Germany in 1986, lives in Corpus Christi, TX, with his wife Michelle and son Jack Patrick. He was on active duty for 10 years as a Naval Aviator and is currently a reservist in the U.S. Navy and a pilot with Delta Airlines. Their daughter Jennifer, born in 1988, is on active duty with the Navy and is currently assigned to the USS Ross in Rota, Spain. Her husband, Randy, is also in the Navy and is currently serving an assignment in Japan. Their son Andrew, born in 1996, graduated from East Carolina University and currently resides in Spring, TX. Their youngest son Michael, born in 1998, is a senior at Virginia Tech.

We are very excited to continue to be a part of the
28th Field Artillery Regimental Association!!! 😊



Presidents Corner
Tough Decision
Tommy Houston



First off, please join me in thanking Pat and Janet Malherek for taking over as co-editors of our newsletter. I know they will be great and will have a product that you will enjoy reading each quarter.

I know there a lot of questions about the Reunion this year. If you have been following the monthly “View from Bleidron Tower” you know that your board of directors has been struggling with the decision about when (in some cases if) we hold the Bi-Annual Reunion this year at Fort Sill.

Let me explain why we are struggling with this decision.

Our Association Bi-Laws state that we will attempt to have a Reunion every two years. It was decided back at our last Reunion in New Orleans that we would hold the next reunion in conjunction with the dedication of our monument at Lawton/Fort Sill with a goal of doing it in 2020. I must confess at the time, those of us who agreed on that goal had very little knowledge of what our monument may cost or how rapidly we could raise the funds for the monument. But we needed a goal so we set it for 2020 and have doing our best to meet that goal.

The Reunion is very much tied to the monument because the very reason we are holding the reunion at Lawton/Fort Sill is because of the Monument dedication, otherwise we would probably do it somewhere else this time around. No offense intended to those of you who live or like Lawton/Fort Sill, but there are probably some more interesting and easier places to get to for a reunion.

Despite some great efforts and contributions by some great people, we are not as far along with fundraising as we would like. Generally, we have about half of the money that we need to procure, fabricate, transport, emplace and landscape our monument. Basically, our decision to move forward with the Reunion is based on our Association having enough funding to do all the things associated with the monument without going into debt.

Our original decision point on procurement of the Monument and locking down the Reunion was December 2019, but the board decided to kick the can down the road for two months to see if we have any indication that our fund raising would improve. If we would have made the decision in December, then that decision would be to postpone, but we wanted to give it a couple more months.

It would be easy to say that the glass is half-full, but I assure you it is not the case. Actually, when you look at the efforts of you board of directors and members what has happened over the last 10 months is really remarkable. If you know anything about non-profits, you know that establishing one and getting organized is not an easy task. This is especially true when everyone is a volunteer and that the Board of Directors is scattered, literally from the Atlantic to Pacific and many points in between. What is remarkable to me at least is that in just over 9 months, we were able to navigate through all the bureaucracy of State and Federal laws to get the Association stood up and organized as well as raising over \$10,000.

OK, So, where are we? The board has pushed out the decision on the Reunion and the Monument procurement to our meeting on February 23. If we have enough money or at least some assurances that we have most of the money to make the monument a reality, then we will push forward with the Reunion in September of 2020. If we do not then we will delay the reunion to a later time, perhaps the Spring of 2021.

How can you help? Well, you are already helping by just being a member. However, if you would like to do more and, if you have not done so already, then I suggest that you purchase one of our commemorative pavers or bricks. 100% of the profit we receive from Brick sales goes to fund the monument. You can also help by spreading the word to other 2-28 vets, encourage them to join and possibly donate either through purchasing a brick or through personal donation.

One final way you can help is to suggest a Company or Organization that you know of that has a record of donating to Veterans organizations. This is particularly true if you or a member of your family is employed by them. Get me the information about the right person in the at company who handles charitable contributions and I will send them a letter to request the donation. We have already sent out letters to companies such as USAA, Lowes, Home Depot and most of the Defense Contractors with some mixed results.

Rest assured we are going to have a monument and we will have a Reunion. It is just an issue of when.

GUNSHOT!



1st Vice President
28th Field Artillery Regiment Monument Update
Bill Dunham

Do you remember the Stanley Kubrick classic film *2001: A Space Odyssey*? In it there appears a black monolith that is precisely 1 foot thick, 4 feet wide, and 9 feet tall (1x1, 2x2, and 3x3). There have been many interpretations of the monolith's meaning. I personally believe it represents knowledge.

Our "monolith" will not be a perfect shape but will be 8 inches thick, 32 inches wide, and 72 inches high. It will not represent knowledge but will represent the sacrifice of nearly 10,000 veterans of our regiment who served during the Cold War. It will stand permanently with the monuments of other artillery organizations in *Centennial Park* at the Field Artillery Museum, Fort Sill.

The process of getting this task done has been and remains a long and arduous process. Initially we had to find the granite and determine its cost. Luckily, I live a little more than an hour from the **Granite Capital of the World**, Elberton, GA. A visit there revealed that black granite that size would cost us about \$8,000.

Then I drove to Fort Sill to meet with the museum's curator who turns out to be a veteran of Herzo Base. We selected an appropriate site for our monument and he gave me the packet of papers that contained the process of donating it to Fort Sill. Then I met with a local landscaper to determine how much it would cost us to have his company install the monument. That estimate came to a staggering \$18,000. When dealing with the government there are just so very many rules and regulations he has to follow. He does a lot of work at Fort Sill so he is very familiar with the process.

We then contacted a brick company in Pittsburg to set up the process of selling commemorative bricks to fund the cost of the monument. Our design calls for a total of 192 bricks to form the walkway to the monument. Our profit, if we sell all 192 bricks, would be about \$19,000. To date our brick sales have been abysmal.

I returned to Fort Sill to select a different site for our monument and to give our design plans to the appropriate bureaucracy. By moving the site, we have saved a couple thousand dollars on the installation cost.

To date we have completed about half of the necessary steps to getting approval to install the monument. Our site and our design have been approved. The paperwork to Facilities and Engineering has been submitted. Tommy has sent a letter to the CG expressing our desire to donate the monument to Fort Sill. We are now waiting on the F&E approval and the request for the donation to be approved by INSCOM at Fort Sam Houston. Once that is done, we will have formal approval for the donation.

We are currently at a point in the process that we have to decide whether to proceed with the installation to coincide with our reunion in September at Fort Sill or to delay it until a later date. The bottom line is that we have yet to raise enough money to fund the process completely. We currently have about 40% of the necessary amount. Tommy has been a busy bee soliciting donations from various corporations. We should have decisions on those in the upcoming weeks. Our board of directors will not approve the purchase until we have enough money for the complete process.

1st Vice President...continued

So, we need everyone's support to see this endeavor to fruition. The best way for us to fund the monument is through the purchase of commemorative bricks. I have purchased several: One for me and my service to the regiment; one for my bride and her support to me; one for 1SG Ed Carmichael who passed away years ago; and one for my two boys, their spouses, and my two granddaughters. I will purchase one for MAJ Jack McGehee whose organization has donated \$1,000 to our efforts.

I strongly encourage everyone to go online and purchase a brick that will honor your service to our regiment, help pay for the monument, and be a permanent reminder to everyone who visits the museum.

Our board of directors plans to make a final decision on the fate of our monument in early February. In the words of Ralph Ripley, "We will have a monument; it's just a matter of when."

Time is wasting and procrastination is no longer an option. Please join our association, purchase a brick, and let's get this done! We were very fortunate to have served in the regiment in a battalion that was one of the very best in the army. I consider the three years spent at Bleidorn as the very best of my 20. The memories, the people, and the mission remain very important to me as I hope it does to you. Many of you remain my very closest friends whom I believe, even 35 years later, could be counted on to help me if I needed it. I would do the same for you.



2nd Vice President Reunion on Hold!

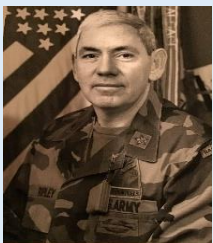
Tim Gorrell

We are all extremely excited about the next 28th Field Artillery Regimental Association Reunion!!! However, the exact dates and location will be driven by the decision based on if the association has enough money to proceed with the monument.

So as for now it's a.....



Thank you for your patience. We will get information and details out to everyone as soon as we have it!!!



Treasurer
Report as of 31 December 2019
Ralph Ripley

The Association continues to do well financially. Each month we grow incrementally through Memberships, Direct Contributions and Memorial Brick sales. Our President has been working hard to secure corporate contributions to the Association. Our requests are being considered by a number of companies for their 2020 contribution budget. This has been no small effort and Tommy Houston is to be commended for the hard work he has put into this effort.

Our Budget year runs from 1 October to 30 September so we are now in a new Fiscal year. We are required to file Tax documents and renew our State Registration and both of those things have been done. We do not have a lot of expenses. Most of what we have spent has been for setup and required maintenance. The biggest expenses that we have each month are online fees associated with website payment systems. Memberships and Brick sales continue at a few each month but we need more participation. If you are enjoying this newsletter and have not joined or bought a brick to remember your service, come join the team.

Our cash flow since inception is as follows:

Revenue		\$16,352
Memberships	\$1,865	
Contributions	\$9,697	
Memorial Bricks	\$4,790	
Expenses		\$1,301
Startup	\$669	
General	\$86	
Online Fees	\$483	
Current Cash Balance		\$15,051

The Association has few liabilities. There will eventually be a small charge back to the vendor for Bricks. We keep track of the estimated amount each month. Recognize your service by purchasing a brick with your name or someone else you want to honor to be placed at the monument at Ft Sill OK.

Membership renewal will begin in February 2020. We will be offering a lifetime membership for those who are interested.

Madonna Stecher continues to be the mainstay of the Association's financial team. She has done an outstanding job of managing all the day-to-day financial matters. I cannot say enough about the job she has done.



Secretary

Keeping 2-28 Alive!!!

Barbara Pollock

Greetings 2-28 FA Association Family!

We have made it through a year as an association and have been working hard as a board to meet the requirements to organize. Below are a few of our *Highlighted Accomplishments* since our previous newsletter:

- Welcomed Newsletter Editors: Pat and Janet Malherek
- Approved Lifetime Membership as an option to the Association
- Renewed our Federal and State Taxes
- Welcomed 16 member Families to the Association since our previous newsletter (*see section to welcome new members*)
- Made critical decisions regarding the Reunion
- Numerous Solicitations Sent for Donations for the Monument
- Correspondence sent to the Commanding General of Ft Sill, OK regarding the gifting of a monument to the museum
- Set a Budget for the Association

2-28 FA Association WELCOMES the following NEW MEMBERS since our Previous Newsletter:

Allen	Robert
Baczynski	John Jr and Lilith*
Bonda	Fernando and Dolores*
Boyce	Michael
Broadus	Harry and Carol
Davidson	Donald Jr and Loni
Donaldson	Wayne and Olivia
Dubinsky	James
Hartman	John
MacEnroe	John and Susan
Manderson	Joseph*
Owen	Ronald and Vickie
Pendergraft	Curtis
Price	Karon*
Scarborough	Duane and Sue
Sealey	William and Katherine
Smith	Robert A. and Linda
Snead	John and Debby

*(*Indicates we are awaiting membership dues.)*

Just in case you were not aware, like back in the day, this is a competition. **LET THE RACES BEGIN!!!**

The Stats for the Win, Place and Show:

WIN: Charlie Battery and HHB are tied with 24 Association Member/Families

PLACE: Bravo Battery and Service Battery are tied with 5 Association Member/Families

SHOW: Alpha Battery is in third place with 4 Association Member/Families

(NOTE: Some members claimed multiple Battery Assignments so we gave them credit.)

Now that you know that we are **“Off to the Races”**, what are you waiting for??? **RECRUIT** your former 2-28 FA brothers and their families to join the Association!



**28th Field Artillery Association (FARA) Wants YOU!!!
MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION!!!
Renewal Process & Lifetime Membership Options!!!**



Greetings 28 FARA Members, We have made it through our first year as an Association. Without your membership, getting through this past year would not have been possible.

WE THANK YOU!

As we journey through our second calendar year, we will continue the mission of further establishing the Association. With this comes the time for renewal of membership, an opportunity to join for the first time, or a choice for Lifetime Membership. Our membership drive kickoff for 2020 is February. You can select one of the three membership options by going to the 28 FARA Website:

www.28FARA.ORG

Please review the steps and options listed below for joining.

Membership Options

Year to Year Membership:

- a) For those joining for the first time the fee is \$40 for your first-year of membership.
- b) Membership renewal for 1 year is \$25.

The Association is offering lifetime membership for interested members as follows:

- a) Members that are currently under 60 years of age: \$350
- b) Members that are currently between 60 to 69 years of age: \$250
- c) Members that are currently 70 years of age or older: \$150

Those members who joined in the last quarter (October-December) of 2019 will receive a discount of \$25 toward lifetime membership but not for annual renewal. Here are some examples of how that works:

Example 1: Tom is 65 years old joined the association on an annual basis (\$40) in November 2019 and wants to enroll in a lifetime membership. His fee for a lifetime membership will be \$325 (\$350 minus a \$25 discount).

Example 2: Bob is 72 years old and joined the association in October 2019 on an annual basis (\$40) and wants to enroll in a lifetime membership. His fee for a lifetime membership will be \$225 (\$250 minus a \$25 discount).

Example 3: Fred joined the Association in October 2019 on an annual basis (\$40) and simply wants to continue on an annual basis without enrolling in a lifetime membership. His annual dues will be \$25 for 2020.



Senior NCO of the Board
Everybody Fall IN!!!

Charlie Moretz



“Greetings”

Well I do not know about the rest of you, but that introduction was my first formal letter and request from my draft board. It was also my entrance into what a Major at the board called “THE GREEN MACHINE.

We are not sending any “FORMAL” requests, just looking for those REDLEGS, WRENCH TURNERS, PENCIL PUSHERS and all past veterans of the Battalion. Yes, the membership committee is looking for you and asking for help. As before when the call was put out, the Battalion responded in force.

You ask, “What can I do? Good question. Contact one of the members through social media, (i.e. Facebook, NCO’s Past and Present, You know Your in the Artillery, and other such social media venues. Of course, you could just go to the web site, 28FARA.org.

Through the help of previous members and those current members, we are beginning to grow. We are currently 56 members strong. We are continually growing through past members as yourself, informing others of the Association and getting involved. It is only through you that this Association will be a success.

We have such high aspirations for the Association. First and foremost to reunite and honor the service of the veterans of the Battalion through reunions as well as having a forum on social media. We have tackled this through task by having a monument constructed for those 2-28 members, surrounded by a brick walkway.

Of course, the funding to procure, build transport is all-dependent on membership and donated funding. This is where you are essential... The membership committee could use all the help we can get. If you are interested, contact SENIOR NCO @28fara.org. There is a place on the sign up roster awaiting your name.

In closing, I encourage you to revisit the site 28fara.org, maybe purchase a paver (Brick). There is no better way to memorialize ones service, maybe not for yourself, but for a spouse or former soldier.

REDLEG



1st Enlisted Member of the Board/Webmaster

What is great about our Web Page...

George Hardin

Website Statistics January 2019 to Date

Unique Users: 759

User Sessions: 1,200 (One device accessing many pages = 1 session)

Devices Used: Desktop 456, Mobile 248, Tablet 55

Site Clicks: 7,700

User Country of Origin: US, Germany, China, India, Turkey

Password Managers

How many of you have written down your passwords or used the name of your dog for your all your login accounts? The best thing you can do to prevent someone from hacking your online accounts is by using long, complex passwords. When you use a password manager, you only need to remember one master password, which is used to unlock all your other complex passwords. Passwords are stored on your computer fully encrypted, so even if someone steals your computer, tablet or cellphone, they cannot unlock your passwords without the master password. I use Roboform Password Manager, but there are several free and paid password managers. This is how password managers work: When I setup a new user ID and password combination (the password is generated automatically by the password manager), the password manager saves that information for that website. The next time I go to that website, the password manager automatically fills in the user ID/password fields after I unlock the program with the master password. Since I have the same password manager on my desktop, cell phone and tablet, all login information is kept in sync on all devices so I can login to any website using any device.

Once you become a member of the 28Fara, you can access member contact information

at <https://www.28fara.org/login.php> .

You may also access the 28Fara Forum

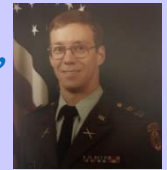
at <http://28faraorg.freeforums.net/>

If you need technical help, shoot me an email

at enlisted1@28fara.org.

Chief Information Officer, Special Assistant

Dave Dehnel



Judge Advocate, Bill Savage

As we all know this is an election year but not only at the local and national level but also at the 28th Field Artillery Regimental Association. The positions coming to the end of the two-year term are: **President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Senior NCO, 1st EM, and 2nd EM.** There are also other positions that are appointed positions: **Chaplain, Chief Accounting Officer, Chief Information Officer, Veterans Assistance Officer, Judge Advocate, Quartermaster and Historian.**

How and when the election will be conducted is contingent on the status of the Bi-Annual Reunion scheduled for September 2020.

If you would like a copy of the bylaws for description of the positions, please email daviddehnel2@gmail.com.

Bill Savage and I will be conducting a review of the members to identify members with expertise and / or desire to fill these roles in preparation for the election by the general membership. We will be reaching out to the general membership via email and phone.

So, if you are interested in a position, would like to make a nomination or just have questions please contact Dave Dehnel or Bill Savage.

Although the Secretary and Treasurer are four-year terms and not up for election this cycle, if you have expertise or desire to assist these officers please contact us via email.

Contact Information:

Dave Dehnel / daviddehnel2@gmail.com / 919-523-2542 (mobile) leave message

Bill Savage / getsavage1@me.com / 719-332-7166



Veterans Assistance

Unlike the IG, I am really here to help!
Frank Phillips



Francis Dale Phillips
VA Accredited Service Officer
American Legion
Department of France

Friday, January 24, 2020

Veterans Commissary and Exchange Privileges **INSTRUCTIONS**



Preface: WASHINGTON – Beginning New Year's Day, 2020, commissaries, post exchanges and recreational facilities across the Department of Defense will open their doors to more than 4.1 million additional veterans.

Privileges will be extended to veterans who are Purple Heart recipients, former prisoners of war, and all who have any level of service-connected disabilities. Individuals who are designated, as primary family caregivers of eligible veterans will also be granted privileges if they are recognized under the Department of Veterans Affairs' Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

Source: https://www.army.mil/article/231261/commissaries_exchanges_welcoming_more_veterans_in_2020

Currently for Germany only

Following this checklist will assist you in obtaining your privileges. Please complete each question.

- Question: Do you have a Veteran Affairs Claim Decision letter stating that you have a Service-connected disability of 0% or above?**
 - If you do have a service-connected condition, continue to next question.
 - **If not:** Visit your nearest Veteran Service Organization or VA Office to submit your Claim.
 - Proceed to next question when accomplished.

- Question: Do you have a Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC)?**
 - If you have a VHIC card, proceed to the next question
 - 1. **If not:** you must be enrolled in the Veteran Health Care System! You can accomplish this by filling out the VA Form 10-10EZ or calling 001 877 222 8387.
<https://www.va.gov/health-care/how-to-apply/>
 - 2. Plan to visit the States to obtain a VHIC card.
 - a. Prior to departing to CONUS, you should contact the local VA hospital in the area you are visiting. Visit <https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/allstate.asp> Ask them if your records are on file in their system and make an appointment. (If your files are in the system, you will not need a copy of your decision letter)
 - i. Please be aware that it takes 5 to 10 working days to receive, via mail, your VHIC card.
 - ii. They will not send the card overseas; they only send the card to an APO address or to a local US mailing address (relative).
 - a. Proceed to next question when accomplished.



Francis Dale Phillips
VA Accredited Service Officer
American Legion
Department of France

Friday, January 24, 2020

Question: Do you have an Installation Access Card (IAC) to access a military installation?

→ If you have a base installation pass, please proceed to next question.

→ **If not:** You will need the following documentation in order to apply for your installation pass

Veterans residing in Germany:

- Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC)
- Valid Passport
- PGCC (German Police Good Conduct Certificate (Führungszeugnis)
 - This may be obtained at your local city hall (Rathaus)
- Current German residency permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis).
- AE Form 190-16A (Application for Installation Access)
 - AE Form 190-16A can be found online at <https://www.aepubs.eur.army.mil/>
- AE Form 604-1B (Security Questionnaire)
 - AE Form 604-1B can be found online at <https://www.aepubs.eur.army.mil/>
- LNSP – Local National Screening Program (If residing in the EU - will be submitted through IACS)

Tourist visiting Germany up to 90 days:

- Valid Passport
- Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC)

→ Contact your nearest military IACS office for an appointment or walk in possibility.

- Visit <https://home.army.mil/imcom/index.php/garrisons> Then search IAC
 - Be aware that the Installation Pass will limit you to access Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and one US military installation.
 - Proceed to next question when accomplished.

Question: Do you have a German “Pink” customs card?

→ If you have your German Customs Form, please proceed to last question.

→ **If not:** Contact the nearest US military customs office.

- Visit <https://home.army.mil/imcom/index.php/garrisons> Then search “customs”.

Veterans residing in Germany:

- You will need the following
 - Valid Passport
 - Current German residency permit (Aufenthaltserlaubnis).
 - VHIC (Veteran Health Identification Card)

Tourist visiting Germany up to 90 days:

- Flight Itinerary showing when you entered Germany and when you leave
 - Must use privileges a minimum of 30 days or more!

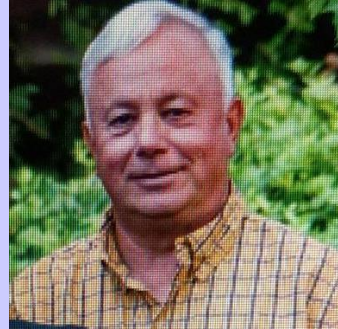
Once you visit the local US Customs Office, on base, and have met the requirements, you will be issued a **Status Verification** form that you must take to the local German Tax Office (Zollamt): You will be issued a German Customs **Certificate** (Pink Card). At the end of each month, you must take the receipts of all US purchases (Commissary and PX) to the Zollamt and pay German taxes on your purchases.

- Proceed to next question when accomplished.

QUESTION: Why are you not shopping yet?

Frank Phillips (Francis Dale Phillips) USAG ANSBACH MPD VSO, UNIT 28721 BOX 6511, APO AE 09177
Tel: +49 9802 83 2269 Wed & Fri 1300-1600

email: francis.phillips2@va.gov



Chaplain's Corner COL(R) Chaplain Danny Marksberry

2020, a new year, a new decade! At the beginning of a new year and in this case a new decade often brings reflection on the past — our challenges, our opportunities, our failures and our victories. It is good to look back to gain insight from the past but we must move on in the present to the future. Paul says in Phillippians:13&14 "But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus".

In this new year and new decade as we "strain toward what is ahead", whether it be difficulties, challenges or victories, my prayer and challenge is that we make our decisions and take our actions according to the wisdom God gives us. Romans 8:28 Paul states, "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose." James 1:5 Tells us "If any of you lack wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given him".

Dr. Warren Wiersbe told about an associate of his, a gifted secretary who was going through great trials. She had had a stroke, her husband had gone blind and then taken to the hospital to die. Dr Wiersbe saw her in church and assured her he was praying for her. "What are you asking God to do?" she asked. He said I'm asking God to help and strengthen you. She said I appreciate that but pray one more thing. Pray that I'll have the wisdom not to waste all of this!

She knew the meaning of James 1:5! In this new year and decade may God grant us the wisdom to not waste all this!

May God Bless,

Chaplain Danny Marksberry



Grafenwöhr

Bill Dunham

INTRODUCTION

Grafenwoehr was such an important part of our lives back in 2-28. It seemed our whole year revolved around when we were going to Graf and how long we would be there. The impact was not only felt by the soldiers, but also had a significant impact on the wives and families. Wives had to take care of the kids, pay the bills and do all of those things to keep the home fires burning. There are many a story about a soldier who showed up with wife and kids in a strange country, found out as soon as he signed in that the unit was at Graf. As soon as he drew his TA-50, he was on the van to Graf, leaving wife and kids in a guesthouse to fend for themselves in a strange country where they didn't speak the language and knew next to nothing about where to go to get things done.

This article is a 3 part series about getting ready to go to Graf, what we typically did while we were there and then coming home and recovery. What is remarkable about all of this is that after talking to some of the spouses at the reunions, many of them didn't realize what exactly took place on these Graf rotations other than their spouse was out in the field and live firing. It is our hope that this series of articles not only helps our wives to understand what Graf was all about, but will provide the opportunity for soldiers to remember the times (some good, some not so good) they spent at Graf.

ARTICLE

Graf. That 4-letter word that provided all of us so many different feelings. For most of us it provided us the opportunity, in today's vernacular, to hone our craft. Back in the day it simply gave us the chance to put steel on target.

Graf is the largest NATO training facility in Europe encompassing 232 square kilometers. It provides units live fire and maneuver ranges that support everything from small arms to tanks, artillery, aerial gunnery, and close air support. It has 43 artillery-firing positions and two impact areas.

This will be the first in a series of articles about Graf. Today we will deal with: *How did the battalion get there?*

Grafenwöhr continued....

It all starts, like most things in life, with a budget. We were fortunate to be in Europe during a period of time where we had the budget to do almost anything we wanted. So the plan would be for the battalion to go to Graf for 2-3 weeks and do our thing. Planning for each rotation began about 6 months out.

It all began with our operations sergeant, Pete Volin, heading to Graf for what he called, “the real estate auction.” It would be his job to attend the monthly meeting at Graf and he would bargain as best he could to get us prime real estate areas for our units. Sometimes he would return with the biggest smile on his face as he got us the very best of the sites. Other times he would look like a whipped puppy and let us know that he did his very best.

After that all of the paperwork had to be completed and figured out. He had to coordinate with the Polezi to get permission to move all of our vehicles not only to the railhead at Katterbach but for our convoy clearances on the autobahn. Things had to be figured out to the minute, you know how OCD the Germans are. He also had to do the same for our return.

Then the certification process began. Each gun section would be evaluated by the 3 chiefs of firing battery on their ability to be safe. This training would occur over at Urlas and again movement to and from had to be coordinated.

When the sections were certified as being safe then the senior NCOs and the firing battery officers would have to go to Graf to take a safety test. They would have to compute Safety Ts, pass a written test, and finally pass a hands-on test of the settings on the time and VT fuzes. Failure was a huge embarrassment. If you couldn't pass you couldn't do your job.



Grafenwöhr continued....

Then each battery commander had to begin figuring out the myriad of supplies needed. Everything from BA-30s, to plastic ware, to grease or alcohol pencils and pens, to toilet paper, to MREs, and anything else imaginable. Most of us kept a list from previous rotations and simply used it and made any modifications (especially taking into consideration the time of the year).

Now the packing began. If we were going to Graf in the winter everyone had to take all of their cold weather gear. You had to pack your MOPP suit. Remember those? Each person had to figure out what clothes to pack: Number of sets of BDUs, underwear (especially socks), gloves (I know I always need at least one extra pair because I was always losing the right handed glove), boots, field jackets, ponchos, LBE, flashlights, electric razors (battery operated ones worked well), rubber boots, sleeping bag, blanket, and mess kit. How we ever got all of that stuff packed and loaded is still a miracle. NCOs had to make certain that each of the soldiers packed everything they might need.



About 30 days from deployment the S-3 shop would have to publish the 5 paragraph operations order (situation, mission, execution, service and support, and command and control). It was a huge undertaking that resulted in about 20 pages of print. Then the thing had to be run off, collated, stapled, and finally disseminated to the various commands and entities.

The mess hall had to figure out food rotations and schedules for the time we were gone. Have you ever tried to figure out meals for about 400 people for about 30 days? I don't really know how they did it but I remember signing a lot of food requests.



Grafenwöhr continued....

The same thing had to happen with our POL. How much fuel were we going to need? How were we going to get it to the vehicles? We had to figure out how many rounds each battery would be able to fire and get the corresponding number of powder canisters, primers, and fuzes. Radios had to be fully mission capable, our CEOs distributed, the KY-38s calibrated, flashing yellow lights installed and checked out, convoy flags put on the appropriate vehicles, and march times and routes figured out.



Once all of the planning was done all we had left to do was execute the plan. The howitzers and other tracked vehicles with drivers, section chiefs, and officers would leave the motor pool and head to Katterbach. At the railhead each vehicle would be meticulously loaded under the watchful eyes of the German train masters. When completed they would wait for their departure time. The crews would load in the passenger compartments and settle in for the train ride.



Grafenwöhr continued....



Meanwhile, back at the kaserne....the wheeled vehicles would leave at their departure time. It was a harrowing experience cruising along at about 80 kph while the German traffic was whipping by at speeds between 100 and 150 kph. The worst part of the trip was at 5k hill. That seemed to be when we would lose most of our vehicles. The poor maintenance personnel would be busy picking up stragglers for miles and miles. While most of us could find Graf while blindfolded there were select few convoy commanders who tried to invade East Germany.

The last part of the Graf puzzle was the rear detachment. The S-1 usually remained at Bleidorn and would become the rear battalion commander. He would be in charge of the soldiers who were in/out processing, pending disciplinary action, medically unfit, or for any other reason unable to deploy.. The S-1 would also act as the liaison for all of the dependents who, for some, would be totally alone far, far from home for the first time in their lives.

The next iteration of this saga will be what we did while at Graf. To assist in the writing please send me your recollections and stories so that I can incorporate them into the newsletter. Send the information to bdunham53@yahoo.com. I expect to hear a lot of untold/forgotten stories to appear. Please remember that the statute of limitations has long since expired so we are all safe.

2-28 Trivia

EVERYBODY LOVES TRIVIA!!! We didn't have anybody submit answers for the trivia questions in the first edition of the 2-28 Newsletter; so we decided to do something a little different. Instead of having a contest, we are going to continue to publish trivia questions....but we are also going to publish their answers. The answers will be able to be found in a different part of the newsletter for those who would like to challenge themselves!!! ☺ We know several of you are anxious to see the answers to all the trivia questions from the first edition. Therefore, in this edition we are republishing the trivia questions and providing you with the answers!!! ENJOY!!!



2-28 Trivia Military Related



1. 2-28FA was a nuclear capable unit, how many nuclear weapons was the Battalion Authorized to Carry?
2. What was the exact name of the program whereby soldiers were cleared to be around nuclear weapons?
3. What was the nomenclature for the Nuclear projectile that was authorized in the Battalion?
4. Lariat Advance was the code word used to announce a practice alert. What word was used to describe an actual, real world, Alert?
5. By regulation and SOP, how long did the Battalion have to clear the Kaserne?
6. What was the area called where the Battalion deployed to on an alert (do not include the Ammo upload site)?
7. When an alert was called, how long was the Battalion authorized to upload its basic load of ammunition?
8. What was the name of the two local training areas used by the Battalion?
9. How many .50 Caliber Machine guns were authorized for the Battalion?
10. Describe what items must be worn at MOPP Level 3?
11. What hot meal was always served to the troops during an alert?
12. What was the name of the unit that was permanently "attached" to 2-28 for Quarters and Rations and went with us on every deployment?
13. What was the official title of our General Defense Plan (GDP)?
14. Our go to war plan had us supporting the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment. To what squadron was 2-28 FA assigned as Direct support to.
15. What were the geographic center of the Grafenwoehr impact area?
16. By what means of transportation did the Battalion Deploy to Graf?
17. What was the name of the old church that sat in the middle of the training area at Grafenwoehr?
18. Name the other Battalion Sized units that were stationed in the Ansbach Military Community (excluding Illesheim and Crailsheim).
19. Name the other Battalions and their calibers in the 210th Brigade during the late 70's through mid 80s and on what Kasernes they were located?
20. What was the official name for the personnel section of the Battalion?

Bonus question: What the full nomenclature for the prime mover for a RATT RIG?

****Answers can be found on Page 41...**

2-28 Trivia Community Related

1. Where was the Starts and Stripes Book Store located in the late 70s through Mid 80s
2. At which PX facility were civilian clothes sold?
3. Where, exactly, was the Ansbach Community Library located?
4. What was a German Cleaning Lady called?
5. What was the zip code for 2-28 FA/Bleidron Kaserne?
6. Name the US Housing areas in Ansbach
7. Name all the Kasernes that made up the Ansbach Military Community in the late 70s and early 80s.
8. Where was the Barber shop on Bleidron Kaserne?
9. Where was the child care center located in Ansbach?
10. What was the Ansbach Military Community Newspaper titled?
11. What was the name of Ansbach's German American Football Team?
12. On What Kaserne was the "official" Ansbach Military Community Tennis courts?
13. On what Kaserne was the Travel and Leisure office located
14. On what Kaserne was the video rental?
15. If you rented a video, how long were you allowed to keep it without having to pay a late fee for return?
16. What was the primary electric voltage for the housing area?
17. On what Kaserne was the Arts and Crafts Center?
18. Where did you have to go to pay your phone bill?
19. Name the official Armed Force Recreation Facilities in Germany.
20. Where was the Battalion Mail Room located?

Bonus Question: What was the price of a meal if an enlisted Dependent Wife ate in the mess hall for Dinner?



With each issue of the Newsletter, the Editorial Staff will highlight members of the Association. To gather their memories of their time in Germany with the Battalion. To make sure we get those memories from different perspectives, we will interview Officers, NCOs, EMs and Spouses. This month's interviews are with: Major (Retired) John Williams, Master Sergeant (Retired) Tommy Thornton, and Scott Deal.



**Interview with Major (Retired) John Williams
B Battery FDO/XO, Aide to VII Corps Artillery Commander**

When were you assigned to the Battalion, What was your MOS and Duty assignment(S)?

NOV 84 to Mar 87 - FDO and XO Bravo before departing to be the Aide to VII Corps Artillery Commander.

What was your marital status when assigned to the Battalion and if you were married, where did you live?

I was single and lived in the BOQ just outside the fence. I had a key to the small gate between my room and Bravo.....made for an easy arrival during Alerts.

Who were your bosses in the Battalion and what do you remember about them?

Captains Malherek and Bailey. They were two totally different guys. They both trusted me, but never missed an opportunity to "guide" me, after which I went and did it my way. It almost always went well; however, when it did not we had additional "guidance sessions".



When you hear the term “Graf” or “Grafenwoehr” what comes to mind?

Never as bad as everyone made it out to be. Bravo was squared away and we just did our thing. We had great NCOs who allowed me to get all the sleep I needed. The food that arrived on the Deuce-and-a-Half twice a day was fantastic. I won't resurrect the whole story, but slightly unauthorized trips to the O'club were outstanding. After being caught once by "Major McCausland," we decided to make it a night and joined a bunch of Brits at their base camp, it was a bit more lively than ours. Thank you to all the leadership that forgave us.

What did you like best about your time in the Battalion?

The Camaraderie was never matched, it wasn't even close: The Ski Trips, Budvar Nights, and being on our own Kaserne was!

What did you do after duty hours and when you had time off?

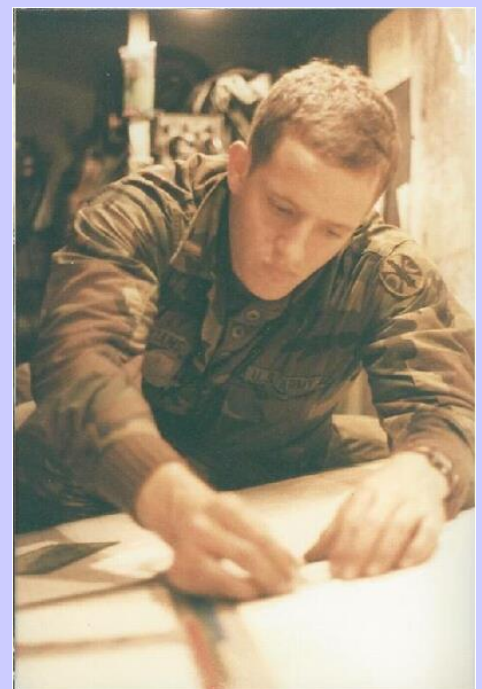
I enjoyed lifting Weights and running in all the Volksmarches in the area. I'll never forget getting calls occasionally from LTC Michaud to meet him for a beat down on the tennis court....did I mention that it was almost always before 6am on SATURDAYS....OUCH!!!

What person do you remember the most from your time in the Battalion?

SGT Stephen Rhodes, SSG (now CSM) Keith M. Young, and LTC Ripley. Rhodes kept the calculations extremely accurate in the FDC; SSG Young, our base piece, set the highest standard in every regard; and LTC Ripley taught me systems, kindness that some may not remember, and let me go to be the General's Aide (the highlight of my career).

Did your assignment to the Battalion have an impact on the rest of your life? If so How and What?

I simply learned firsthand what right looked like and how to achieve success without banning fun in the process.



What was the funniest thing you can remember from your days in Ansbach?

Mark Winniki taking the tires and rims off of John Sweeny's Porsche and getting a police report to make the joke VERY REAL.

Give us an overview of your life after Bleidorn (Marriage, kids, jobs, where lived, Career etc.).

Married Maureen Baldy (a retired O-6 and Pediatric Dentist) who I met when I was the Aide. We have two boys: John Paul, a Sophomore at Virginia Tech; and Luke, an 18 and Free, not really, a brand new Marine Private. He is presently training at Sill with plans to attend UA Huntsville and be a HIMARS Reservist until gaining his degree. I retired in 2004 and started golfing almost every day. I help Maureen run her practice and keep the books when I am not performing one of my many duties as City Councilman of Mobile, AL.; Feb 7 will make 13 years. LIFE IS GOOD.

What would you like to see with our 28th FA Association?

We just need to keep getting together!!! Monuments are great, but we only have so much time to enjoy each other!!!





**Interview with MSG (Retired) Tommy Thornton
Sergeant First Class, Motor Sergeant/Gunnery Sergeant C Battery**

When were you assigned to the Battalion, what was your Battery, MOS, and Job assignments?

I was assigned to 2-28 in April of 1981 and was initially assigned to Battalion Maintenance in Service Battery, which at the time was being run by CWO Bill Savage. The NCOs in Battalion Maintenance, besides myself, there was MSG Leonard as the Battalion Motor Sergeant, Sergeant Shaefer, Sergeant Dwy, and Terry Donaldson. I didn't stay in Battalion Maintenance very long. A month or two after I got there, the Charlie Battery Motor Sergeant was relieved, and I went over there to replace him. So, I spent the rest of my tour as the Charlie "Steel" Motor Sergeant. My MOS was 63D40 Track Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor.

What was your marital status and where did you live?

I was married. I got there first and lived in the Barracks. When my family came over, we initially lived in the temporary quarters there at the Bleidorn Housing area thanks to CSM Salt. When permanent housing became available, we moved out to Katterbach Housing area that was next to the Airfield and the DODs (Department of Defense School System) High School.

Who were your bosses and what do you remember about them?



CPT Tom Houston Reenlisting SFC Tom Thornton SFC Tom Thornton and 1SGT Willie Salary

Well technically, my bosses in Charlie Battery were the Battery XOs who had the extra duty of being Battery Motor Officers (LT Brandt, LT Fallen and LT Gorrell). But really my boss most often were the Battery Commander's I had, Captain Bo Martin and Captain Tommy Houston.

I remember Captain Houston most of all, I guess. What do I remember about him? Well when he first came in, I thought he was cocky because he was always doing stuff himself, I think, to try and show us NCOs that he knew what he was doing, and he did seem to know what he was doing. He really grew on me as both my Commander and a friend. At some point we became as close as brothers. He would tell us what he expected, and he would let us NCOs go do it. We never wanted to let him down.

We had a great Battery with the Senior NCOs being 1SGT Willie Salary, Chief of Smoke Wayne Donaldson and myself. Smoke ran the gun line and I ran maintenance; we supported each other. When he needed mechanics to do something, I made sure they did. When I needed the Firing Battery to do something, Smoke made sure they did. Above all, we always made sure the mission was accomplished.



Pulling a pack in the field



Busted track and stuck at Graf, never fun

When you hear the word “Graf” or Grafenwoehr what comes to mind?

First thought is “Oh Crap!” But then again, I didn’t mind it and often looked forward to it. You see, when we were back at Bleidron, we simply maintained the vehicles, but when we went to Graf and began using them for what they were built for, the maintenance people would actually spend our time fixing them. The mechanics got to do what they had been trained to do in the environment that they were supposed to. For example, pulling and replacing a howitzer pack in a blizzard verses pulling a pack in a nice warm motor pool where all your tools were right there. They had to work sometimes all night with no sleep in that crappy weather. It was the reason the mechanics were there.

There were also the tactics. I would often pull the OP rotations that my troops were required to do, which having an E-7 do that is a bit different, but I didn’t want to tell them to do something that I wasn’t willing to do. I would always take a turn at perimeter security/guard, especially if my mechanics had been up at all hours fixing something and they needed rest.

What were the toughest times you remember in the Battalion?

I don’t remember any really tough times. We were trained well, and we took on every task as we were supposed to.

I do remember that one of the frustrating things was getting parts, particularly when we were in the field. Being a Corps Artillery unit, the way we got parts was not as well organized as with a unit in a division. Most times, when we went to Graf, we would have to scrounge parts from other units since it took so long for us to get them normally through our support unit which was up in Nuremburg.

What did you like best about your assignment to the Battalion?

I really liked the couple's retreat that the Chaplain ran. We would do really good things and the kids were taken care of, so it was your spouse and yourself, really didn't have to worry about much when you were on the couple's retreat. I recall we went on a Rhine River cruise and went to Oktoberfest. It was great.

What is the funniest thing you can remember from your time there?

Not sure I should say this one, but it has been 40 years so why not. We were at Graf and we had one of those middle of the rotation breaks where we could go to the Top Five Club and drink. We had been at the club the night before. The next day after finishing up the between rotation tasks and putting the vehicles to bed, some of the Chiefs, Smoke and myself went to the Top Five Club again. When we got there and tried to get in, the club manager met us at the door and said that we were not welcome this night because of what we had done the previous night. We looked at one another and not a soul knew what he was talking about, none of us could remember what happened!

To this day, we cannot recall what supposedly happened the previous night at the club.



Give us an overview of your life after Bleidorn?

I tried to extend at Bleidorn but due to some family health issues, I had to pull my request. So, my next assignment was CONUS to a Lance Missile Battalion at Fort Sill. The Lance unit obviously didn't shoot as much as we did in 2-28. They would go to White Sands Missile Range to shoot and it was typically only one battery and only one or two sections once or twice a year. I went with them to White Sands, because you need maintenance no matter where you go. I stayed at Fort Sill for 3 years and then was back on orders to Germany.

For this assignment to Germany, I went to 2nd BN 5th FA in Neu Ulm which was another M-109 Unit in the Big Red One. After three years in Neu Ulm, we came back to the states to Fort Hood. I was now a Master Sergeant and when I got to Hood, they couldn't find a slot for my grade and MOS, so I was assigned to the S-4 section of the 1st Cavalry Division Artillery.

Along comes Desert Shield and Desert Storm and before deployment, I was reassigned to the Tiger Brigade of the 2nd Armored Division for the War. I went through the war with the Tiger Brigade. When we got back, the Tiger Brigade was transferred to the 1st Cav. So, we all changed patches again.

I retired from the Army in 1992, lived in Copperas Cove near Fort Hood, TX, and worked on post at the Directorate of Logistics as a civilian.

I retired from DOL and we moved the family to Belton, Texas. I am now fully retired with my wife Nancy. We have three grown daughters Nancy, Cindy and Tommie, two of which are married and there are grandchildren.

What would you like to see with our Association?

I would like to see us having enough members that we do not have to raise funds to do the things we want to do with the scholarships. To sort of be self-sufficient and have enough money just based on our large group of members. I understand we must raise money for the monument now because we are just getting started, but I would like to see us have enough members in the future that we won't have to raise separate money for things like this.

(Interviewers Note: I was Tom Thornton's Battery Commander during 1983/84 in Charlie "Steel". Tom Thornton set the conditions by which I measured every Maintenance NCO that I was ever to encounter in my 20+ Army Career mostly around Battalions and Batteries. In my mind, none of those Maintenance NCOs came close to Thornton's caliber and professionalism. This statement is remarkable when you consider that for over two years, while I was serving as a Senior Field Artillery Trainer at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin CA, I got to observe every CONUS based M-109 unit in the active Army and evaluate the unit's maintenance operations when they were going through a test that is only short of actual war. None that I saw were as good as Tom Thornton.

Back in those days in Charlie Steel, Tom Thornton was so good as a motor sergeant, in fact that, when we were short an E-7 13B and couldn't "fleet up" a Staff Sergeant, Tom cross trained and became our Gunnery Sergeant as well as Motor Sergeant, laying the battery as if he had been doing it his whole career and always within ARTEP Standards)



**Interview with Scott Deal
Sergeant, Gunner and Section Chief C Battery
By Tommy Houston**

When were you assigned to the Battalion, what was your Battery, MOS, and Job assignments?

I was assigned to 2-28 in August of 1981 and left in 84. I stayed there my whole 3-year enlistment and extended for 18 months. 2-28 was my second assignment with my first being at Fort Ord California on the old M-101A1. My MOS was 13B, at 2-28, I started out as a Cannoneer, moved up the section to #1 man, Driver, Gunner and finally as a section chief. I was in C Battery for the whole time I was there.

What was your marital status and where did you live?

I was married and lived in Government Quarters on the economy. We lived in a high rise building only a block or two from the Kaserne. Our Quarters were on one of the top floors with an absolutely awesome view of the town of Ansbach. These quarters were different than most of the others because the Army leased them from someone, and they contained all ranks. EMs, NCOs and Officers lived there and were separated by floors or stairwells.

Who were your bosses and what do you remember about them?

I spend most of my time in SSG Fred Morris' gun section. He was a good chief but was very quiet and didn't talk much. When he did talk, it was always something important. He was kind of hands-off gun chief in that he trained us on what to do and then let us do it. But you couldn't ever have a real conversation with him because he was so quiet. But he ran a good section and we always won base piece for the time I was in his section.



**SSG Fred Morris,
Gun Chief**

I was also in SSG Bill Viock's section for a while. He was also a good Chief but quite a bit different than SSG Morris.

One of the things that impressed me very much were the Senior NCOs in the Battery, particularly the Chief of Smoke, SFC Wayne Donaldson and the Motor Sergeant SFC Tom Thornton. They were both Combat Vets and it was reassuring to me that if the balloon went up, we had these two NCOs in the Battery that had been in combat and knew what to expect.



SFC Wayne Donaldson



MSG(R) Tom Thornton(L) and
SFC(R) Donaldson (R) at the
2018 Reunion in New Orleans

Donaldson ran a no-nonsense gun line. If somebody wasn't doing what they were supposed to or didn't follow the Battery standard on how we did things, he would give them a "Tango, Tango, Alpha" which was short for "Tank Trail Action". That meant the section had to march order, take down their nets, go out on the tank trail and reoccupy. If they messed that up, he would make them do it again. I am proud to report that I never got one of his Tango, Tango Alphas, either as SSG Morris' gunner or when I was a section chief.

When you hear the word "Graf" or Grafenwoehr what comes to mind?

Misery! No that's not totally true. I really got excited about Graf because that was when we got to fire the Howitzer, basically to do what we were trained to do. I loved the gun and made it my business to know everything I could about the M-109 and Field Artillery in general. Oh, there was the miserable stuff to Graf that people like to remember, the cold wet weather, getting stuck in the mud. Man, we really tore that place up with the tracks. Every firing point you went to was ripped up and muddy by the tracks.



*The Remains of A Battery
M548 at Graf*

I do remember being there and seeing a 548 blow up from A Battery. We were in a firing point nearby when it happened, and I think it was full of Ammo because the explosion was spectacular.

What were the toughest times you remember in the Battalion?

Probably being gone on the Holidays. I remember one of the toughest times was that we had NATO Guard over Christmas and we ended up spending Christmas at that place with my family back in Ansbach. There were other Holidays where I had duty, or we were at Graf or some other training. Those were some tough times.

What did you like best about your assignment to the Battalion?

It had to be the travel. You could go places that most people only heard about in School. For not much money you could go to Paris for a weekend. One of my favorites was that I went to Venice, Italy. Also going to Oktoberfest was a real blast. Many good times there!

The other thing that was great about my time there was that my son was born while I was assigned to the Battalion. He was born in the Nurenborg Hospital. I recall being so happy and excited that I hugged the Doctor! He then pointed to his collar and I discovered he was a Captain! But he took it in good stride.

Whom is the person you remember the most from your time there?

There were many but I think the biggest one was my buddy Sgt Pavlick. We had both sort of come up together in Charlie Battery and were good friends the whole time we were there. I sure wish I could find him today, I've looked but can't seem to locate him.

What is the funniest thing you can remember from your time there?

Well, there were lots of things, but it depends on your definition of funny. But I will give you one. For one of our Graf trips I was scheduled to ride the train that had all the tracked vehicles and Gamma Goats loaded. The train would often sit there for hours before the German's got around to actually hook up to it and move to Graf. This meant everybody would sit around and pass the time waiting on the German train people. This one time, after we got everything loaded and we were just sitting around waiting, Terry Johnson and I had snuck some beer on the train. We drank what we had brought with us pretty quick and it didn't seem like the train was going to move any time soon, so we lit out to go to the Bohnhoff (train station) to get some more beer. Only problem was after we got the beer and when we got back, we discovered that the train had left. Worst than that our individual weapons were on the train!!!

We went to Graf the next day with the convoy or the busses. The other guys covered for us evidently, because we never got in trouble over it.

Give us an overview of your life after Bleidorn?

Once I got to the end of my assignment, my enlistment was up, so I was processed out of the Army at Fort Dix, New Jersey. One of my big regrets is that I did not reenlist and stay in the Army. I guess hindsight is all 20/20 but to this day, I wish I had stayed in.

I went back to my home in Indiana and worked construction for a while. A common occurrence in Northern Indiana in Construction is that work is difficult in the winter, so I got laid off. My Stepdad had an opportunity for me in Illinois with building office buildings that I worked for a while. After some years I went back to in Wabash Indiana and worked for the Bulldog Battery Company. I guess over the years I have done all kinds of things. I did real estate for a while, owned several properties over the years and still do. I have played the guitar since I was a kid and played in band for a long time. Only problem with being in a band is that you don't make much money. I always had to have other jobs to support myself. Because of the band scene, I owned a tavern for a while. I got into driving a truck and currently work as a truck driver for Transport America and drive a route between Joliet Illinois and Toledo. I have been married and divorced a few times, but I am currently with Carolyn who is my ex-wife now girlfriend.

What would you like to see with our Association?

First off, you guys have done a great job with getting all of this set up. My hats off to you and I am damn glad you did it. I think the monument is such a great idea and am looking forward to being there when it is dedicated. Obviously keep it up with the Reunions. I had a blast at our reunion in New Orleans and can't wait for the next one. Finally, I think the Association needs to be there to help the veterans of the Battalion as best it can. We all helped each other when we were in the unit years ago, why not now?



**This is the first part of a three-part series.*

The “Go to War” Missions of the 2nd Battalion 28th Field Artillery

By Tommy Houston

Our Battalion was fortunate in one way in that our “go to war” mission was focused in one geographic area, West Germany. This is unlike many of the stateside units of today whose “real world” go to war missions are a vague in regard as to where in the world they might fight or whom they will be fighting against. In our Battalion, for 20+ years we knew that if we went to war it would be in Germany against the Warsaw Pact.

In this article, I will talk about the progression of the Battalion’s “General Defense Plan” mission also known in US Army Europe as OPLAN 33001.

The 175mm years



M-55 8 Inch SP Howitzer



The M-107, 175MM Gun from 2-28FA

The 2nd Battalion 28th Field Artillery came into being at Hindenburg Kaserne in the early 1960s when the 1st Battalion 75th Field Artillery was reflagged as the 2nd Battalion 28th Field Artillery. At the time of activation, the Battalion was equipped with the M-55 self-propelled 8 inch/203MM howitzer but in 1966 these guns were replaced by the M-107 175MM self-propelled gun. The unit was subsequently moved from Hindenburg Kaserne in Ansbach to Bleidorn where it remained until reflagged as 3rd Battalion 17th Field Artillery in 1989.



7th Army and US Army Europe (USAEUR) Patch

The Non-Divisional Field Artillery in Europe in the 50s and 60s was all organized under 7th Army. The Battalions were then assigned administratively to the two corps Artillery's (V and VII Corps) as well as Field Artillery groups since Artillery Brigades did not exist at the time. Also, both Air Defense and Field Artillery was considered the same branch so you might find HAWK missile units, Field Artillery Cannon and Missile Battalions all under the administrative command of a Field Artillery Group.

This very loose command and control arrangement for Field Artillery meant that 7th Army could assign any non-divisional Artillery Battalion to any mission across the US Army's entire frontage in Germany. During the 50s and 60s the General Defense Plans (GDP) were very general and most non-divisional unit were given only rudimentary guidance on their specific go to war mission as well as what real estate in Germany they were going to occupy.

Alerts were called regularly which had the Battalion loading up and moving to a local deployment area (LDA) and from there they would find out what their next mission would be. A lot would be determined once Intel was developed concerning the Warsaw Pact's intentions.

The VII Corps Sector

The very high order GDP plan for Europe did not change significantly in the years of the Cold War. Basically, the US Army units stationed in Germany were all assigned to NATO CENTAG (Central Army Group). The US Army had two Corps, with V Corps in the North and VII Corps in the South but all non-divisional Artillery, to which 2-28 was one, belonged to 7th Army that would assign missions in time of war.

Being a 175MM unit, 2-28 represented the highest caliber and longest range of the Field Artillery guns in Europe after the 280MM Howitzers (Atomic Annie) were retired. To that end, they became the "long shooters" in the Army and it was general knowledge that their mission would be General Support of the Corps and/or General Support of one of the subordinate divisions in the VII Corps.

But any specifics as to where the Battalion would go if the balloon went up was more speculation than a hard mission with specific position areas to occupy.



Changing an M-107 back to 175MM in Korea

One interesting fact is that, although 2-28 FA was designated a 175MM outfit, technically the M-107 carriage could accommodate an 8-inch tube as well. During the Vietnam war, units often "swapped out" the 175MM tube for the 203MM tube which could be accomplished in a couple of hours with organizational maintenance. In the VII Corps Support units, there were many 203 MM tubes that could be issued to 175MM units in time of war.

Because these units technically belonged to 7th Army, all the soldiers of the Non-Divisional Artillery units such as 2-28 FA, wore the 7th Army Patch. Later, they would wear the patch of the VII Corps, and it was not until the establishment of the Field Artillery Brigades that they would wear the patch of the 210th Brigade.

Sick Call

The following Veterans or Family Members are/or have been infirmed.

Please contact the Chaplain if you know of any more.

We want to make sure they know we care and are thinking of them.

- *Peter Volin - Numerous complications, Serious**
- *Anne Ripley - Hospitalized, back home and recuperating**
- *Scott Deal's significant other, Carolyn - Hospitalized, back home and recuperating**
- *Harry Broaddus - Medical Issues**

Honors To Those Who Have Passed On

*In loving memory of great soldiers, family members, and friends
who have gone before us.*

We hold your memory close in our hearts today and always.



**Command Sergeant
Major David Stewart**
Battalion Headquarters



Krista Stewart
Wife of
CSM David Stewart



**First Sergeant
"Sonny" Bumgardner**
A Battery and
Service Battery



Ann Salary
Wife of
First Sergeant Salary



SFC John Spellman
B Battery



**First Sergeant
Ed Carmichael**
Headquarters Battery



Barbara Ann Carmichael
Wife of First Sergeant
Ed Carmichael, HHB



**First Sergeant
Russel Meinke**
HHB and
Service Battery



**Sergeant First Class
Earl "Cornbread" Jones**
C Battery and
B Battery



Cathy Lange
Wife of Major
Paul Lange, HHB



Linda Smith
Wife of
Sergeant First Class
Bob Smith
C Battery



How We Can Help

We understand how stressful and difficult the passing of a loved one can be. At our age, all of us have been through this at one time or another and in one capacity of another.

One of the goals of our Association is to make sure that, within our power and means, that every veteran of the unit is provided the proper honors upon their passing and to provide the surviving spouse with as much assistance as we can give. All of this is based on the desires of the family of course.

The rules and regulations of the Veterans Administration and the Department of Defense can be confusing. Also, when a death occurs, there is not a lot of time to go look for the information. Also, we have found some funeral homes are well familiar with the rules and regulations, whom you need to contact etc and some are not.

To help our members, the Association will appoint a duty officer from the board of directors to be available every 90 days to assist the family of the Veteran or Family member. The duty officer familiar with all the information that you need as well as having access to the resources of the Association. This support continues after the funeral.

Besides information to assist the family, we wish to provide honors to the Veteran, but much of what we can provide will be dependant on location and how many members can attend the services. As a minimum, the Association can provide someone for the Family to call and get information. However, depending on location and the availability of other veteran members, here are some examples of the services we can provide:

- Depending on how many veterans that can attend the services, provide fellow 28th FA veterans as pall bearers.

- Provide the Battalion Colors and appropriate guidon to be displayed at appropriate services. These will be shipped Fedex to a 28 FA member who is in the area who will be responsible for the display as well as returning the items to the Association.

- A "soldiers cross" consisting of a helmet, dummy rifle with Bayonet, boots and dog tags. These will also be shipped to a veteran member that is in the area and can attend the funeral who will be responsible for setting up the display and returning it to the Association.

- Depending on member availability a 28 FA member/vet who will represent the Association/Battalion and can speak of the member's service at the Service.

- The Association Chaplain will be available via phone to council and support

- Setting up a donation account through the Wounded Warriors foundation or a Veterans Charity of the families choice in the veterans honor.

- The least we will do is to ensure that the Veteran/Family Member is honored on our web site, newsletter and official association functions such as reunions.

The key to all of this is timing. Our Chaplain, Danny Marksberry, is the Association's contact point for this type of support. Danny will connect the "duty officer" with the family so that we can render our offer of assistance. Make sure that the family knows to contact Danny if there is a death or serious illness that occurs to a Veteran member or family member. Danny will get the word out to the appropriate people. ***It is imperative that we know about the situation as soon as possible!!!***

To provide you with an idea of how the Association can assist, below is a check list that is used by our Bereivement Duty Officer once we are notified of the passing of one of our members:

Casualty Officer Check list for death of member of 28th Field Artillery Association:

- Receive death notification.
- Get as much information as possible, ie. obituary, widow/next of kin information, date of funeral and where and when it will be held.
- Determine if the deceased member is a retiree. (if so, see below)
- Disseminate to membership via email of the death including obituary if available. (Time is of the essence)
- Determine if any members are in the area that could possibly attend the funeral or other events. Contact those members to see if they can/will attend
- Contact the family and ask if they would like our help. If so, help any way needed
- Ask the family if it has the veteran's DD214, (Discharge Form). If not, and a replacement is needed, have them call 1-866-272-6272
- Ask the family if the veteran desires to be buried in his uniform. Have them send you a picture of the uniform and check to see if it is put together properly.
- Contact Treasurer or CAO to authorize flowers from the association, if enough lead time, if not find out which veterans organization they desire to receive the donation by the Association in the Veterans name.
- If a military headstone is wanted have the family inform the funeral director and the funeral home can the arrangements with the VA.
- If the service member is a retired Army veteran, in addition to the above do the following:
- Inform the family to make sure the survivor stops the retired pay. To report a retiree's death call 1-888-332-7411.
- Inform the Family that if the retiree is receiving disability compensation call 1-1-844-698-2311.
- If another member is attending the services, ask the widow/next of kin if they want to have a memorial at the funeral such as a soldier cross (helmet boots, fake weapon with bayonet and dog tags) to put in front of the funeral. Also if they would like the appropriate Battery Guidon present.
- If this is desired by the family, coordinate with another member that will be attending the services. Make sure they are OK with receiving "the kit" and setting it up.
- If this is acceptable to the family and the members attending, contact the Quartermaster to have the "kit" sent to a member attendign the service.
- Contact President of the Association to send a letter of condolence to the family.
- After the Services, Contact the members that did attend and find out how things went.
- Provide a copy of the obituary to the Webmaster and Newsletter editor.

(HHB includes the Battalion Staff)

Total Membership: 50

The numbers below the guidons reflect soldiers who were in any and all batteries during their time in 2/28 FA.



24



4



5



24

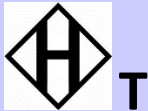


5

Corporate Donations

(Donations of \$1,000 or Greater)

Diamond H Timber LLC



Together in Hope



Bar S Meats



Individual Donations

Base Piece Donations

(Donations of \$500 or Greater)

*Tommy Houston

Flank Piece Donations

(Donations of Less than \$500)

*John Donahue

*John "The Box" Williams

Brick Fundraising



Customized Brick Sample

The 28 FARA is in the process of designing and installing a monument at Ft Sill commemorating our unit. When our monument is dedicated in the Fort Sill Centennial Park, it will be surrounded by brick mementos that will help, in part, to tell the story of our special unit and its soldiers. These customized bricks will ensure that the soldiers and family members of the 28th Field Artillery are honored through a lasting tribute that will be on the grounds of the home of the Field Artillery at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

**More information about how to order a brick, can be found on the
28th Field Artillery Regiment Association website at <http://28fara.org/Donate.html>**

Listed below are the people who actually purchased bricks. The list does not necessarily represent who the bricks were purchased “for” or “in behalf of”.

4/23/2019	Bill Dunham X 3
4/23/2019	Bill Dunham X 3
4/26/2019	Richard Swain
5/13/2019	BD (Martin Scheeher)
5/13/2019	Martin W Scheeher
5/10/2019	Ricky Earleywine
5/29/2019	Bill Dunham
5/27/2019	John Williams
7/21/2019	Ralph Ripley
7/22/2019	Thomas Houston X 3
7/24/2019	George Hardin
8/3/2019	Thomas Thornton
8/12/2019	Stephen Elle
8/16/2019	James Snitker
8/18/2019	Richard Swain
9/2/2019	Mark Fairbotham

9/8/2019	Ralph Ripley
9/25/2019	Linda Smith
9/27/2019	Don Davidson
10/15/2019	Shari Reinemann
10/17/2019	John Snead
10/18/2019	John Hartman
10/26/2019	Patrick Malherek X 3
11/8/2019	William Savage
11/16/2019	Allan Cupicciotti
12/11/2019	Gary Cheek
12/19/2019	Chris Dolan
1/1/2020	Charles Moretz X 2
1/9/2020	Wayne Donaldson
1/25/2020	Barbara Pollock
2/6/2020	Danny Marksberry X 2
2/6/2020	Madonna Stecher



**We want to hear from you!!!
We want to hear your ideas and suggestions!!!**

Contact Information for the Board of Directors

President and Chairman of the Board: Tommy Houston - President@28fara.org

1st Vice President/XO: Bill Dunham - 1stVP@28fara.org

2nd Vice President/OPS: Tim Gorrell - 2ndVP@28fara.org

Treasurer: Ralph Ripley - Treasurer@28fara.org

Secretary: Barbara Pollock - Secretary@28fara.org

Sr NCO Board at Large: Charles (Top) Moretz - SrNCO@28fara.org

Enlisted Board at Large and Webmaster: George Hardin - Enlisted1@28fara.org

Enlisted Board at Large: Dave Davenport - Enlisted2@28fara.org

Veterans Affairs Officer: Frank Phillips - Francis.Phillips2@va.gov

Chief Information Officer, Special Assistant: Dave Dehnel - CIO@28fara.org

Judge Advocate: Bill Savage - JAG@28fara.org

Newsletter Editors: Pat and Janet Malherek - Newsletter@28fara.org

**!!!TRIVIA ANSWERS!!!
Military Trivia Answers...**

1. 18, 6 per firing battery
2. Personnel Reliability Program
3. M-483A1 or W-48 Mod 1
4. There was no specific name for the real thing, you were just supposed to say
ALERT
5. Two hours from the time the call was received.
6. Local Deployment Area
7. 6 hours from the time the call was received
8. Urlass and Oberdachstetten
9. 41, 13 per firing battery, 2 in Service Battery on the VTRs
10. Suit, Booties, Mask. Gloves to be carried.
11. Ham and Beans
12. 256 Maintenance Detachment, Attached to Service Battery
13. OPLAN 33001, also the Cav called it Battle Stations
14. 1st Squadron located at Bindlach
15. 0409
16. Train, Convoy and Bus
17. Hophenoe or Audie Murphy Church
18. 501 Aviation, 501st MI, 141 Signal, 1/37 Armor, 2/57 ADA
19. 3/37 FA (8 inch) Herzo, 3/5 FA (8 inch) Merrill Barracks, 2/377 FA (Lance)
Herzo.
20. PAC (Personnel Action Center)

Bonus Question Answer: AM, Single Side Band

**!!!TRIVIA ANSWERS!!!
Community Trivia Answers...**

1. Katterbach
2. Katterbach
3. Bleidorn
4. Putsfrau
5. 09177
6. Bleidorn, Barton, Lehrberg, Katterbach, McGee Family Housing (Crailsheim), Stork Family Housing (Illesheim)
7. Bleidorn, Katterbach, Hindenburg, Barton, Stork Barracks (Illesheim), McGee Barracks (Crailsheim)
8. It was located in the first building on the right as you entered the front gate. Same building as the band and the MP company.
9. Katterbach
10. Old Ironsides
11. Grizzlies
12. Bleidorn
13. Hindenburg
14. Katterbach
15. 24 hours
16. 220 Volts
17. Bleidorn, in the motor pool
18. At the train station
19. Garmish, Berchtesgaden, Chiemsee, Munich, Bad Tolz
20. In the basement of Headquarters Battery

Bonus Question Answer: \$1.25

With each Edition of the Newsletter we want to share news and pictures (*past and/or present*) from members of the 28th Field Artillery Association. If you have anything significant in your life like the birth of a child/grandchild, a child graduating from college, entering the military, things your families are doing, trips you have taken, reunions, etc.....send them our way!!! We want to share them with our 28th Field Artillery Family!!! Please email them to us at...

Newsletter@28fara.org

This month, here are some memories of ANSBACH....ENJOY!!!



Memories of Ansbach

This is ANSBACH!!!

Downtown Ansbach

Aerial Photo of Ansbach





Downtown Ansbach (Martin-Luther-Platz)
Christmas Market in Ansbach
Hotel Schwarzer Bock
Herrieder Tor





St. Ludwig Catholic Church
Streets of Ansbach
St. Gumbertus
Deutsche Marks and Pfennigs!





**KEEP
CALM
AND
CALL FOR
ARTILLERY**