



# Geronimo!



VOLUME 7, ISSUE 1

MARCH 2019

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**509  
Man  
of  
the  
Year**

**Don  
McElroy**

**SEND E-MAIL  
ADDRESS TO  
[PhilipHand-  
scomb@msn.com](mailto:PhilipHand-scomb@msn.com)  
AND WE WILL  
SEND YOU A  
COPY OF THE  
NEWSLETTER**

**DON MCELROY WILL BE HONORED AT THE 2019 AIRBORNE AWARDS FESTIVAL AS THE 509TH MAN OF THE YEAR. IT IS BEING HELD AT COLUMBUS, GA, 4/3/2019-4/6/2019 AT THE HILTON GARDENS INN.**

- SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:**
- 509 Board & Reunion
  - 2019 REUNION info
  - MEMBERSHIP APP
  - 509 events
  - In Memory
  - 509 PIA NEWS
  - 509TH WEBSITE LINK

# Reunion 2019 Fort Smith, AR

**THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE MEMBERSHIP INVITE YOU TO ATTEND THE 2019 REUNION, TO BE HELD AT FORT SMITH, AR FROM 6/5/2019 TO 6/9/2019 AT THE DOUBLE TREE INN BY HILTON, 700 ROGERS AVE., FORT SMITH, AR.**

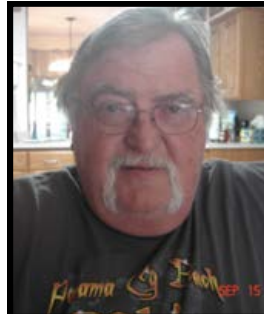
OUR EXECUTIVE BOARD 2018—2019



Jamie Garza,  
President



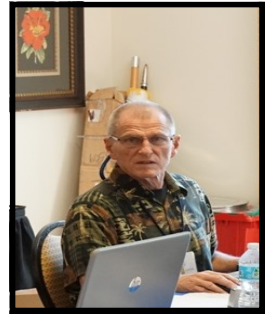
Don McElroy,  
Vice-President



Dale Fairbanks,  
Treasurer



Margot Handscomb,  
Secretary



John Eaves ,  
Membership



Philip Handscomb  
Sergeant at Arms

**Plan to attend the reunion at Fort Smith, AR,  
June 5 through June 9, 2019!**

**REMEMBER: The Executive Committee and the  
Trustees will be elected/re-elected, and the loca-  
tion of the 2020 Reunion, will be voted on. We are  
going to have some fantastic activities at the reun-  
ion (see pages 6&7), and there is a lot to see and  
do in and around Fort Smith. SEE YOU THERE!**



Dave Bush,  
Trustee



Barry Simpson,  
Special Projects

TRUSTEES



Henry Hyde



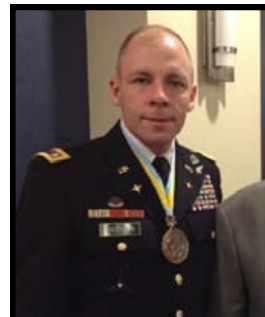
Tryggvi Larum,  
Special Projects



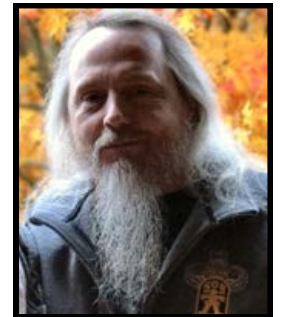
Tom Tsvigas



Lee Barber



Matt Anderson



Kevin Boatman



# CSM Paul B Huff Medal of Honor Memorial

Barry Simpson attended the Memorial Ceremony for Medal of Honor Recipient, Paul Huff, which took place at 1100 on Saturday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Hillcrest Memorial Gardens in Cleveland, OH. Thank you, Barry, for representing the 509 PIA at this memorial!



# 509ers are awarded and do community service.

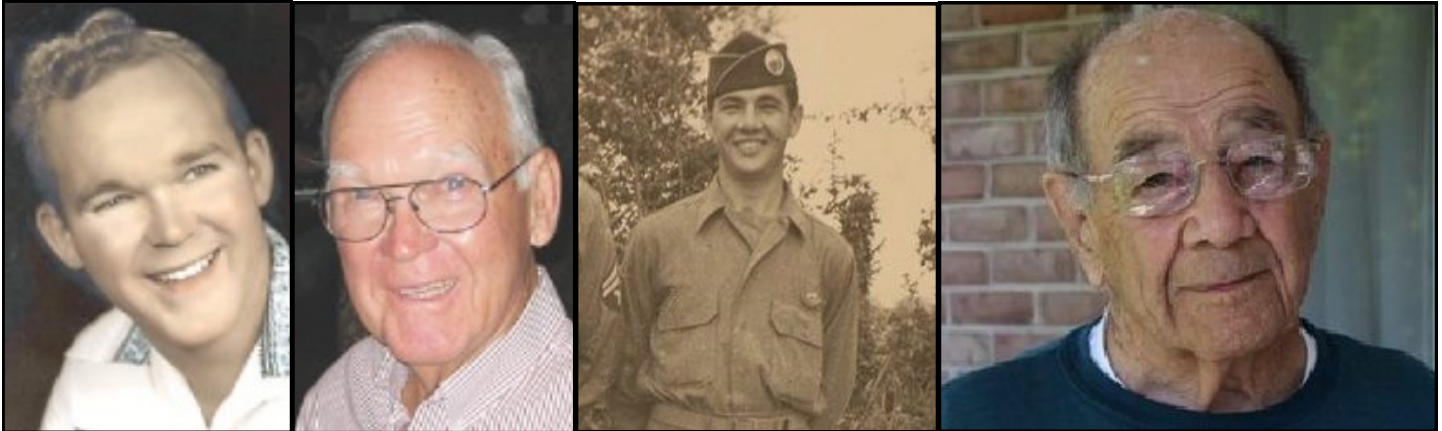


Col. Jason J. Jones, Spartan Brigade commander, pins The Bronze Star Medal, with valor, to Sgt. Sean P. Rogers during a ceremony Feb. 1, 2019.



On November 18, 2019, a local teen that was diagnosed with Hodgkins Lymphoma earlier this year was greeted by the JRTC and Fort Polk Commanding General, BG Frank at the 1/509 Infantry Regiment. BG Frank made him an honorary BG presenting him rank insignias and an official JRTC and Fort Polk lapel pin. Next, the 1/509 Pathfinders took Gregory under their wing bringing him to the weapons training simulator and to visit and explore some of the vehicles they use to fight and train rotational units here. Gregory was given his very own Opposing Forces uniform. But, there was an even bigger surprise awaiting him at home - his dream - a tree house to just get away from it all. The tree house was built by Fort Polk Soldiers with supplies and support of local businesses.





It is with an incredibly heavy heart that I have to share the news that fellow 509th Brother, Robert "Bob" Boggan, made his final manifest call. "It is foolish and wrong to mourn the men who died. Rather, we should thank God that such men lived," George S. Patton Jr. Like all Paratroopers, Bob was a helluva fighter - and did so until the very end!

Submitted by Kevin Boatman

Theodore Robert Houghton; had a life that spanned 94 years and he passed in 2018, on the day of his birth. A life lived to its fullest, a life of meaningful memories with family and friends and a life of purpose. Ted proudly served his country during World War II as a member of the 509th Airborne as a paratrooper in Europe. For the invasion in Southern France, he was attached to the pathfinders and then started a specific training to operate navigation aids to guide the main airborne body to the drop zones. He was wounded in the Battle of the Bulge and reassigned to the 508PIR until the end of the war.



It's with a heavy heart that I pass along that Mr. Harry E. Tracey has made the final manifest, passing on December 28th, 2018. I had the honor of presenting him with the Order of Geronimo almost a year exactly before he passed. I know the family was very proud of him, and he was proud to have been in the 509th, Heath Stanley.



On a cold December, 74 years ago was the beginning of the Battle of the Bulge, Adolf Hitler's Last Stand. One of the WWII's most violent battles. A few of the Independent Parachute units which fought in Southern France will begin to be deployed in the Ardennes a few days later and will suffer terrible losses. May we remember them!

**GERONIMO!**



America's First Combat Parachute Troops



America's Most Decorated Paratroop Battalion



### 509<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Association Reunion

June 5th – 8th, 2019

~ DoubleTree by Hilton - Fort Smith, Arkansas ~

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Attendees with You: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Food Allergies? (if so, what type): \_\_\_\_\_

**Reunion Registration Fees (select what you want):**

- Over 21 (includes banquet & full CP/alcohol access): \_\_\_\_\_ x \$120.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Under 21 (includes banquet, no alcohol, but access to CP): \_\_\_\_\_ x \$70.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Banquet Only (does not include CP amenities/alcohol) \_\_\_\_\_ x \$55.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Bean Bag Toss Tournament (fee is for a 2-person team): \_\_\_\_\_ x \$20.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Dues (if applicable):**

- Active Duty Member (one time, while on active duty): \_\_\_\_\_ x \$25.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Regular Member (annually): \_\_\_\_\_ x \$25.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Associate Member (annually): \_\_\_\_\_ x \$25.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Legacy Member (annually): \_\_\_\_\_ x \$20.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- TOTAL = \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**LOCATION:**

DoubleTree by Hilton Fort Smith City Center  
700 Rogers Avenue  
Fort Smith, AR 72901

Click Here: [DoubleTree by Hilton Website](#)

**RESERVATIONS:** To call the hotel and reserve your room, please call: (479) 783-1000 and ask for the rate code *509 Paratrooper Reunion*.

Room rates are \$109 per day, which includes a fully cooked breakfast for two (2) and complimentary Wi-Fi. Tax is currently 9.75%. Parking is complimentary.

**DEADLINE:**

For our hotel block reservation is: **May 13th, 2019**. That's as long as the block is not filled by that time! After that date and once the blocks are filled, room rates will be set by the hotel.

**TRANSPORTATION:**

The hotel operates a complimentary shuttle service to and from the airport.

**PLANNED AGENDA:**

The "Command Post" (CP) provides a full-sized meeting room to relax, visit, and just hang out with friends. It also includes complimentary snacks, beverages (e.g., sodas, regular/decaf coffee, hot water f/tea, etc.), and alcohol (21 and older)! The costs of these things are included in your registration fee. Please tip your volunteer bartender!

Ensure that you register/pay for additional attendees that want to access the CP or join the banquet dinner on Saturday.

**WEDNESDAY – June 5th Location: BELLE STARR ROOM**

- CP room opens at 1:00 p.m. and closes at midnight.
- Normal amenities will be available, along with 509th merchandise and reunion check-in and registration support.

**THURSDAY – June 6th Location: BELLE STARR ROOM**

- This date marks the 75th Anniversary of D-Day! The Association plans to observe this day and will update attendees on the details once the schedule is firmed up!
- CP room opens at 9:00 a.m. and closes at midnight.
- A complimentary lunch has been arranged for all registered guests! It will be hosted by Mr. Dewey Orrick, who owns/operates: Soooooielicious BBQ (competition BBQer). It will include all pulled pork brisket, chicken thighs and sides! We're not sure if we can have him host this on-site at/near the hotel yet. More information to follow. Dewey is a huge supporter of military and law enforcement and does these things at cost. Also, he produces his own selection of BBQ sauce at a nominal fee, so consider taking some home! Check him out on Facebook (great pictures of his BBQ):  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1060866383934545/>
- CP room may be closed if we host lunch at a nearby off-site location.

**FRIDAY – June 7th Location: BELLE STARR ROOM**



- CP room opens at 9:00 a.m. and closes at midnight.
- Another complimentary lunch will be provided on this day for all registered guests! This will be a true Southern "Mudbug Boil" (Crawfish Boil), hosted and paid for by one of our own 509th DMoR: Mr. Eric "Skid" Luneau! It will include spicy boiled crawfish, sausage, corn, potatoes, etc. If you have a shellfish (or other) allergy, make sure to let us know in advance! He is prepared to boil a separate pot without the shellfish. Again, we're not sure if we can have him host this on-site at/near the hotel. More information to follow.
- CP room may be closed if we host lunch at a nearby off-site location.
- We will also have a bean bag toss tournament around 4:30 p.m. at the hotel. Sign your team up and pay in advance with this registration form or on-site. It's only \$20 a team, (2 person team).
- SATURDAY – June 8th Location: MEMPHIS/TULSA ROOM (large dining area)
- Be advised WE MOVE to the Memphis/Tulsa Room on this day!
- CP room opens at 9:00 a.m. and closes at Noon/12:00 p.m., to allow for the board meeting.
- Membership board meeting begins at Noon/12:00 p.m. and ends at 2:00 p.m. Normal CP amenities and bar will be closed during the board meeting.
- CP room will re-open following the board meeting and closes at 3:00 p.m., to prepare the room for the dinner banquet.
- Dinner banquet reception will begin at 5:45 pm, preferred dress: "business casual" attire. There will be a cash bar (hotel operated) until 8:30 p.m. (during dinner).
- At 6:45 the Posting of Colors will be conducted.
- Our CP bar will re-open at 8:30 p.m., and a DJ will be onsite for dancing after dinner.
- After dinner we will also conduct the 50/50 raffle and auction. We welcome auction items! If you have any auction items to donate, please contact: [abn509thassoc@yahoo.com](mailto:abn509thassoc@yahoo.com)

#### Local Attractions:

- Fort Smith National Historic Site (Established in 1817 by French fur trappers and pioneers. Part of the "Trail of Tears" and also manned during the Civil War.)
- Judge Parker Museum (Fort Smith is home to the famed "Hanging Judge" - Isaac Parker, portrayed in the John Wayne movie 'True Grit'. The first black deputy U.S. Marshal west of the Mississippi, Bass Reeves, also worked for Judge Parker.)
- Fort Smith National Cemetery (Among many incredible heroes, BG William O. Darby [Darby's Rangers] is buried here, as Fort Smith was his birth/hometown.)
- Gen. William O. Darby Monument (Bronze statue located in Cisterna Plaza, downtown Fort Smith)
- Miss Laura's Social Club (The only former bordello on the National Register of Historic Places.)
- The Park at West End (Complete with a Ferris Wheel from the 1935 World's Fair in San Diego.)
- Chaffee Barbershop Museum (Dedicated to the memory of Elvis Presley receiving his first military hair cut at Ft. Chaffee)
- Chaffee Crossing Historic District (Established during WWII and home to the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) and 1-509th Airborne Infantry OPFOR from 1987-1993.)

**\*\*If you would like to view and/or download the PDF version of the reunion registration form, please click here: [2019 509th PIA Reunion Registration Form](#)**

**All questions should be directed to: [abn509thassoc@yahoo.com](mailto:abn509thassoc@yahoo.com)**

Return application and payment to:  
509<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Association  
P.O. Box 43  
Owatonna, MN 55060  
Make payable to:  
509<sup>th</sup> PIA



Membership application,  
renewals and member  
record updates can also  
be processed online at:  
[www.509th.org](http://www.509th.org)



### 509th PARACHUTE INFANTRY ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

*(Select your membership level; see next page for definitions)*

- CHARTER MEMBER (WWII Veteran) – Free Lifetime Membership
- HONORARY MEMBER – Free Lifetime Membership
- LEGACY MEMBER – \$20.00/year
- ACTIVE DUTY MEMBER – \$25.00/one-time fee (for duration of active duty)
- REGULAR MEMBER – \$25.00/year
- ASSOCIATE MEMBER – \$25.00/year

NAME (FIRST MI LAST): \_\_\_\_\_  
*(As you want it to appear on your membership card)*

SPOUSE'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ YOUR OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(No e-mail address may limit your access to information)*

SERVICE INFORMATION: ON ACTIVE DUTY \_\_\_\_\_ IN RESERVES/NATIONAL GUARD \_\_\_\_\_ RETIRED MILITARY \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Check any that are applicable)*

509<sup>TH</sup> SERVICE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE SERVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Platoon, Company, Battalion) (Mo/Yr – Mo/Yr)*

COMBAT TOUR(s): \_\_\_\_\_ DATE(s) SERVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Platoon, Company, Battalion) (Mo/Yr – Mo/Yr)*

TO JOIN OR RENEW: <https://509th.org/>