



# THE BLADE



A Newsletter of the 63d Infantry Division Association, USAR

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## Message from Your President

Dear Members and Friends,

As I move into my third year as your president, I am reflecting on where we have been as an association in the past two years. One of my challenges when I first took this position was to prepare documents and pictures from the past activities of the 63d Infantry Division USAR and succession commands along with those of this organization for preservation and storage. Along with that project I was privileged to attend the 62d Reunion of the 63d Infantry Association WWII. Last year, we saw the dedication of the new 63d Regional Sustainment Command building at Moffett Field. Displays in that building include items that we sent them. I attended the 63d Reunion of the 63d Infantry Division Association WWII and will report more on that event later in the newsletter.

Where am I going with all of this? We are in a time of transition and preservation of the history of the 63d as we and our predecessors have known it. Both associations have done well at preservation of their history. Historians from the current 63d command have contributed to that effort. The WWII Association is at a cross roads in terms of its future as it's numbers fade away. The 63d commands as we have known them have changed and no longer have the command footprint in Southern California.

What is the future of our association? That is the question. Our members currently live all over the country and world. The current mission and design of the 63d RSC does not offer much opportunity for recruitment of new active reserve members currently assigned to the 63d.

How do we remain a viable organization/what is our purpose? These are issues that our board is beginning to address. We need to increase our numbers and participation to be able to serve our military family in the future. We welcome your participation in this process. If you have any thoughts or want to serve on our committee, contact a member of the board.

EXTRACT OF ARTICLE II. PURPOSE: The purpose of this Association shall be: To perpetuate the history and honor of the 63d Infantry Division (USAR); to promote and enhance the national security of the United States of America through a strong military program; and to provide assistance and support to the members and their families.

As we meet these challenges, I am again honored to serve as your president.

God Bless America,

LTC Bev Houghton AUS (Ret)

## Board of Governors Officers and Committee Chairpersons for 2011-2013

During the Annual Meeting of the 63rd Infantry Division, USAR, the following members were elected to the Board of Governors for a two year term, 2011 to 2013, LTC Beverley A. Houghton, COL Alfred M. Diaz, BG Charles K. Ebner, MSG Ulric L. Grigsby, Jr., MG Jerry J. Josten and CPT Danny L. Staggs.

At the 26 August 2010 Board of Governors meeting an election of officers for the next year was held. The results are: President--LTC Beverley A. Houghton, Vice-President--COL Alfred M. Diaz, Secretary--LTC Donald Wirth, Treasurer--BG Charles K. Ebner and Assistant Secretary--SGM Thomas Gorden Jr.

President LTC Bev Houghton appointed the following Committee Chairpersons: National Interest--COL Alfred M. Diaz, Publications, THE BLADE editor LTC Donald Wirth, ANNUAL REPORT--COL Lydia Collins, Website--LTC Donald Wirth, Membership--CW4 Lee Carson, Arrangements Board Meetings and Annual Meeting--COL Alfred M. Diaz

## The 63rd Reunion of the 63rd Infantry Division Association WWII

By LTC Bev Houghton

This amazing event was held on 18-20 August, 2011 in Indianapolis, Indiana. What was most amazing is that this was the 63rd consecutive reunion this group has had. There were over 60 in attendance including over 30 WWII veterans. What started as family affairs remains so today. Over time,

children have assisted and taken over the planning for these annual events. Attending this reunion was MG Michael J. Schweiger the incoming Commander for the 63rd Regional Sustainment Command. He was the guest speaker for the event and presented every veteran with a coin. Also present was Mr. James Schwab Jr.' 63rd RSC PAO, Mr. Robert Rebolt, 63rd RSC Historian, and MSG Manual LaBoy, 63rd RSC acting CSM. Mr. Rebolt and Mr. Schwab spent hours videotaping interviews of a number of the veterans present.

Last year Mr. Christianson, who was then the 63rd RSC Historian, did video interviews which were made into a CD. Copies of this CD were presented to the attendees of this year's reunion.

Also present was M. Dolores Milhous, the daughter of Lt James Robinson 63rd Infantry Division Medal of Honor recipient. This was the first time she had been able to connect with any of the 63rd Infantry Division veterans. The 63rd ARCOM Headquarters Building 4 is named after him.

Also significant was the decision of the Board to make this the last official reunion of the Association. There are still a few chapters that are viable and next year's board meeting will be scheduled in conjunction with one of the chapter meetings. All members of the association will be invited to what will probably be a one day event.

Our association has 3 seats on the board of the WWII Association. Current board members are COL Al Diaz, LTC Milt Houghton and LTC Bev Houghton who were all present at this meeting. The association has accumulated extensive documents of their history. Some of this has already been presented to various museums. In anticipation of a day when the organization will dissolve decisions have already been outlined in great detail for disposition of remaining assets. Museums that have and/or will be offered historical files and photographs include the Infantry Museum, Fort Benning Georgia; Camp Landing Museum, Camp Blanding, Florida, Camp Van Don Museum, Centreville, Mississippi; the Army History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania; and the newly planned Army Museum at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

## In Memoriam

### **MAJ George L. Dutton**

December 22, 1927 - August 17, 2010

George Leonard Dutton was born in Philadelphia, PA December 22, 1927 to Morris and Mary Dutton. George was the baby in the family with two older sisters. He was a go getter even as a youngster. George met the love of his life Warrienne (Jay) as a young 16 year old while visiting his sister in Santa Barbara. He went back to Philadelphia and finished high school

and joined the Coast Guard as WWII was still going on. He was trained as a Radioman and was soon transferred to San Diego. George remembered a little 15 year girl he met three years before and decided to see if she still remembered him. And she did! George and Jay were married on June 17, 1948 and went to college together. Their first son, Thomas, was born three weeks before George graduated from UCSB. He was immediately inducted into the Army as a Second Lieutenant and was sent to Fort Benning, GA. And then on to Korea. Upon leaving the service, George went to work for the Boy Scouts of America as a Scout Executive in Alameda, CA. There, they added two more sons to the family, Dave and Paul.

The family moved to Canoga park when George was hired to work as Scout Executive for the Great Western Council. As the boys grew, George and Jay found themselves involved with little League, Boy Scouts, music lessons, school and church activities.

George enjoyed years of square dancing and singing with the Crescenta Valley Highlanders. He was very proud of his sons and all their accomplishments. He loved his Family and he loved his Church and Church Family.

George was a member of: Kiwanis Club of Canoga Park, Vice President. Rotary Club of Van Nuys, Member of the Board. Salvation Army Board in Van Nuys. American Legion Post 20 in PA. and President of the Apach Square Dance Club in Granada Hills. Member of the Board of Managers at the Verdugo Hills YMCA. Past President Crescenta Valley Highlanders Chorus and Member of the Board. Member of the Church Leaders Council for the United Methodist Church of Tujunga.

George retired from: United Way of Los Angeles, where he worked on government accounts. Boy Scouts of America, where he served as Exploring Director for the San Fernando Valley Council. U.S. Army, Major and member of General Staff of the 63rd ARCOM.

George served in the Army during the Korean War and was awarded the Bronze Star.

George is survived by his wife Jay, sons and daughter-in-laws; Tom and Jani, Dave and Mary, Paul and Lisa. Also Grandchildren: Nathan, Nolan, Kate, Logan, and Jennifer Dutton. And sister, Millie Murphy.

George was a founding member of the Board of Governors starting in 1966 thru 1967. He became a Life member in March 1979. It is through the contribution of members like this, that 63rd Infantry Division Association was formed.

### **COL William J. M. Monsanto**

Passed away September 13th at age of 86 of natural causes. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Betty, sons Bill and Steve, his daughter-in-laws Rose and Dee Dee, granddaughters Jennifer, Lauren, Shelly and Tammy, Great Grandchildren Cierra and Isaiah and a sister, Beatrice, in

Texas.

Bill was born in the Panama Canal Zone. He moved to Los Angeles to graduate from USC. He served in the U.S. Army in Europe during WWII, where he was captured, and held as a POW in Germany.

In 1967 he moved with his family to Santa Ana. Along with his regular profession as an accountant / auditor, Bill always loved the Military, so after being discharged following WWII, he joined the Army Reserve and was very active until his retirement from the Reserve. He was also active and enjoyed several organizations including Orange County Shrine Club, Santa Ana Elks Lodge 794, National Sojourners, O.C. Grand Jury Association and CSEA.

Funeral services were held at Fairhaven Memorial Park on Thursday, September 17th at 9:30 a.m. with burial at Riverside National Cemetery.

Bill joined the 63rd Infantry Division Association, USAR in 1969 and became a Life Member August 1991.

#### **COL Andrew D. Amerson**

Born 10 July 1944 - Died 29 August 2010

Andrew D. Amerson "Andy" was a longtime fan of Big Bear. He came as a child to snow camp, had his honeymoon here, visited frequently and moved here as soon as he retired.

Andy was born in New York City, and moved with his mother to California at 4 years of age. He commuted between California and Michigan when his parents divorced. He had an early interest in music and learned to play the string bass and the bagpipes as a teenager. He played with an all-city orchestra in high school. He Graduated from Beverly Hills High School, and attended the University of Michigan where he became the "Phantom Bagpiper." serenading young ladies after curfew. He graduated with a B.A. in History and a commission in the U.S. Army Reserve. He was deferred for UCLA Law School and entered the JAG Corps after passing the California Bar. He served on active duty at Fort Dix, NJ. South Vietnam and Fort Bliss, Texas. After leaving active duty he stayed in the Reserves and served in various legal positions with reserve units in Southern California. He retired from the JAG Corps as a full Colonel and was head legal officer for the Army Reserve organization covering California, Arizona and Nevada.

In his civilian profession. Andy was a Deputy Attorney General with the California Department of Justice, working primarily in criminal appeals and death penalty cases for 26 years. He kept his interest in music and could frequently be heard practicing the bagpipes in the parking structure at the Attorney General's Office.

After retiring to Big Bear Lake, he was active in the American Legion. The Historical Society, St. Columba's Episcopal Church and a Scottish-American organization Clan Chattan.

He often provided legal services for no charge to people whom he felt needed and deserved help. He was a founder and active member (string bass, banjo, percussion) of The Holcomb Valley Boys folk band, playing at community and charity events and appearing regularly first at the Brewery and more recently at the Log Cabin Restaurant as well as at events at the Discovery Center and Moonridge Animal Park. He became the National Commissioner of Clan Chattan (like the Chairman of the Board)."

Andy is survived by his wife. Susan, son David, daughter-in-law Shannon, grandchildren Jonas and Maggie, and his sister Mimi. A memorial is planned for spring when his son returns from civilian service in Afghanistan. A party in Andrew's honor was held on October 2, 2010 at the Log Cabin restaurant.

#### **CSM William E. Jacobi**

#### **LTC William Hodges**

William A. Hodges, affectionately known as "the Colonel". Bill was a longtime Whittier resident. Born June 3, 1921, he passed away peacefully Nov. 19, 2010. He will live on through his wife, Marion, children Eric Hodges and Gail Hoffert, stepchildren Mary Richards, Mike Thomas and Dick Thomas and 7 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren. Bill was a decorated Army veteran reaching the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and served overseas in WWII and the Korean War. He was a member of the First Christian Church of Whittier for most of his life. Proud of his career as a design engineer in the aerospace industry, he worked on the Apollo project, sky lab, the B-1 bomber, C-17 cargo and the space shuttle. Most recently he was the senior design engineer for a 48 inch high efficiency telescope located in San Diego country. He was a Shriner, Sojourner and Mason. He was much admired by his peers and was a loving family man. He will be greatly missed. Services were held Saturday, November 27 at Rose Hills.

#### **LTC Durwood D. Hicks**

Passed June 2008

### **63<sup>rd</sup> RSC Change of Command**

On Saturday, 17 September 2011 at Moffett Field NAS, MG Michael J. Schweiger assumed command of the 63rd Regional Support Command. LTG Jack Stultz, Chief of the Army Reserve and USARC Commander presided over the ceremony. Units represented for the ceremony were the 63rd RSC Headquarters Company, the 191st Army Band, the 300th Army Band, and the 395th Army Band.

Former 63rd Commanders present for the ceremony included MG Paul Mock, MG Robert Ostenberg, and MG Bruce Casella

who is the current AAFES commander. Also attending was M. Dolores Milhous, the daughter of LT James Robinson, 63rd Infantry Division Medal of Honor recipient.



LTG Jack Stultz & MG Michael J. Schweiger



## National Interest

*The following article expresses the opinions of the author, COL Al Diaz, and are not necessarily the position of the Association.* On September 19, 2011, President Barack Hussein Obama unveiled his plan for economic growth and deficit reduction. Part of the President's plan, which the White House asserts will fully fund the proposed American Jobs Act, were several suggested changes to the cost and structure of military retirement benefits. The plan announced by the President calls for the following:

- 1) Introducing "modest" annual enrollment fees for TRICARE for Life, beginning with a \$200 annual enrollment fee per person in FY 2013 that would be increased annually thereafter.
- 2) Adjusting TRICARE pharmacy co-payments to closer parity with Federal employee health plans by shifting retail pharmacy from dollar co-payments to percentage co-payments, starting at 10 percent for generic drugs and increasing to 20 percent. Brand name and non-formulary drugs would start with a 15 percent copayment and would rise to 30 percent over time. Mail order generics would be free, but brand drugs would increase to a \$20 co-payment and \$35 for non-formulary, with each increasing to a \$40 co-payment.
- 3) Establishing a commission to modernize military retirement benefits. The recommendation would follow a BRAC-style process, where the Congress could only either accept or reject the suggested changes.

The White House appears to be totally unaware that retired military personnel and their spouses already suffer a significant increase in their health care costs when they reach age 65 and are forced to pay premiums for Medicare Part B (at a minimum cost of \$1,384.80 per person or more based on higher incomes) to become eligible for TRICARE for Life benefits. By comparison, prior to age 65, retired military personnel and their spouses are eligible for TRICARE Prime (at a current annual premium cost of \$230 individual or \$460 family) or TRICARE Standard at no annual premium cost.

Another fact about which the White House appears to be totally unaware is that there is currently no additional administrative cost to the government associated with enrollment in TRICARE for Life. Eligibility for TRICARE for Life is established by the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) and paying Medicare Part B premiums. DEERS is an existing worldwide computerized database of uniformed service members (active duty and retired), their family members, and others who are eligible for military benefits, including TRICARE for Life. Charging enrollment fees for TRICARE for Life would primarily create a new government bureaucracy to collect and account for those enrollment fees. The annual cost of the new bureaucracy could easily exceed the annual enrollment fees

proposed to be collected.

The White House also appears to be unaware that although Medicare provides no coverage for medical costs incurred outside the United States and its territories, retired military personnel and their spouses (age 65 or over) who reside overseas must pay premiums for Medicare Part B to remain eligible for TRICARE for Life benefits. Medicare collects the Medicare Part B premiums while the Department of Defense bears the TRICARE for Life overseas benefit costs.

The proposed increases in TRICARE Pharmacy benefits would apply not only to retired military personnel and their dependents but also to dependents of active duty personnel, many of whom can't afford such increases. TRICARE Pharmacy fees are currently intended to cover the administrative and mailing costs of providing medications and to encourage the use of lower-cost generic or approved formulary drugs. The cost of the drugs themselves, that are procured by the government in significant quantities, are currently covered primarily by the government. This is not a civilian-style drug insurance plan, but a plan that recognizes the sacrifices made by military personnel and their dependents while on active duty, as well as a plan to encourage military personnel to continue serving in the armed forces until they are forced out or become eligible for retirement. Civilianizing the TRICARE Pharmacy benefits would harm military retention.

The proposed modernization of military retirement benefits by a BRAC-style commission is recklessly ill-advised and dangerous. The White House and other want-to-be reformers appear not to realize that, unlike civilian companies where retirement at age 65 is the norm, the armed services do not want the bulk of military personnel to remain in active status until retirement at age 65. Only the most promising officers are permitted to remain in active status beyond 20 years. And retention in active status beyond 30 years is extremely rare. Warrant officers and enlisted personnel find it easier to remain in active status for 30 years. But active status beyond 30 years is again extremely rare. Most officers are forced to retire after 20 years of service, just when their children are in or entering college. And most of these relatively young forced retirees, still of working age, do not step immediately into high-paying civilian jobs with full health care benefits. Retention in the armed forces would suffer radically if radical changes are made to the military retirement system.

Military benefits for active, reserve, and retired personnel, as well as their survivors, must compensate adequately for the sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform and the

burdens borne by their families. Military retirement benefits should not be used as a piggy bank for economic stimulus or military budget cuts. What follows is a sample letter that can be sent to the President, your Senators, and your Representatives in Congress:

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
Dear \_\_\_\_\_ President/Senator/Representative

\_\_\_\_\_:

I am writing to urge you to ensure proposed economic stimulus, and on-going deficit-reduction efforts as a result of the "debt deal," don't undermine core career retention incentives such as military retirement and health care that are essential to sustain a top-quality all-volunteer force.

The last decade of war has only reconfirmed the extraordinary demands and sacrifices imposed on those who serve a career in uniform. Retention already will be at risk when the economy recovers and unemployment returns to more normal levels.

The retirement and health care package is the primary reason retention has been sustained through these difficult times. Civilianizing the military benefit package simply will not work, because military service conditions can never be civilianized. In 1986, Congress enacted much more modest changes to military retirement than are being considered now, and those had to be repealed a decade later after they hurt retention and readiness.

Military retirees and their spouses already suffer a significant increase in their health care costs when they are forced to pay Medicare Part B premiums to remain eligible for TRICARE for Life. Instead of TRICARE Prime at a cost of \$230 per year individual or \$460 per year family, or TRICARE Standard at no cost, those retirees and their spouses (age 65 or older) are forced to pay a minimum of \$1,384.80 per person per year for Medicare Part B (or more based on higher incomes).

The proposed \$200 fee for enrollment in TRICARE for Life is particularly ludicrous. There is currently no additional administrative cost to the government associated with enrollment in TRICARE for Life. Eligibility for TRICARE for Life is established by the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) and paying Medicare Part B premiums. DEERS is an existing worldwide computerized database of uniformed service members (active duty and retired), their family members, and others who are eligible for military benefits, including TRICARE for Life. Charging enrollment fees for TRICARE for Life would primarily create a new government bureaucracy to collect and account for those enrollment fees. The annual cost of the new bureaucracy could easily exceed the annual enrollment fees proposed to be collected for TRICARE for Life.

Please ensure ongoing economic stimulus and deficit reduction initiatives don't undermine long-term national security by devastating these vital incentives for career military service.

Sincerely yours,



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## **Address Service Requested**

### **AMBASSADOR PARK ACCEPTS FOURTH TERM**

Coronado resident Russell Park has been appointed to his fourth three-year term as Ambassador for the State of California by Lieutenant General Jack C. Stultz, Chief of the United States Army Reserve.

The Army Reserve Ambassador Program was established in April 1998.

Ambassadors work at the National, State and Community levels to promote awareness and support for the Army Reserve. He works with elected officials, government and civic leaders at all levels. At the unit and individuals level he works with employers and families to further understandings of the program and the benefits. Park works with all forms of the current media on individual, unit and stories of national interest.

In his appointment he is placed on the Department of the Army Protocol Precedent List in VIP code 5 (equivalent to a Major General).

Park also works on the Greater San Diego Chapter, Chief of Staff of the Army Retiree Council as the 1st Vice-President on all facets of Army Retiree benefits.

His organizations include: (life membership) Association of the United States Army; (life membership) Reserve Officers Association; (life membership) Military Order the World Wars; (life membership) 63rd Infantry Division Association USAR; (Founding Sponsor) National Museum of the United States Army; (Plankowner) United States Navy Memorial; Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves; Military Officer Association of America.

Ambassador Park and his wife of over 55 years, Judith Ann (Terkel) Park has lived in Coronado for over 15 years.

### **46<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division Association, USAR**

Sunday, 22 Apr 2012, has been reserved for our 63d Infantry Division Association (USAR) Annual Meeting at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Fullerton, CA.

**Save the Date**