



# Geronimo!



VOLUME 3, ISSUE 2

APRIL 2015

# 509 MAN OF THE YEAR



The 509 PIA Man of the Year, Col. Darren Wright, was honored posthumously, in Atlanta, GA, at the All Airborne Awards, on April 4, 2015. His wife, Wendy, children, and mother, Kathy Rice, were there to receive his plaque. Barry Simpson represented the 509th at the awards.

(see pg. 2)

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

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- 509 MAN OF THE YEAR
- YARBOROUGH MUSEUM DEDICATED
- MEMBERSHIP APP
- 509 REUNION APP
- 1ST & 3RD HONORS
- 509 PIA NEWS
- 509TH WEBSITE LINK

<http://509thgeronimo.org/>

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**509 REUNION**  
**SET FOR TACOMA**  
**SEPT 2-6, PGS 6/7**



**The 509 PIA Man of the Year, Col. Darren Wright,** was honored posthumously, in Atlanta, GA, at the All Airborne Awards, on April 4, 2015. His wife, Wendy, children, and mother, Kathy Rice, were there to receive his plaque. Barry Simpson represented the 509th at the awards. Hal Persun, President of the 509 PIA received a letter of thanks from Col. Wright's mother, Kathy Rice, thanking the association, especially Barry Simpson, for inviting them and taking such good care of them while they were in Atlanta. She said it meant a lot to the family that, her son, Col. Wright had been chosen as the Man of the Year, and it was something the family would treasure always, The four day All Airborne Awards included the awards ceremony on Saturday night, the Ladies Luncheon on Friday, and trips on Thursday to the Atlanta History Center, Smith Family Farm, The Swan House, and Mary Mac's Restaurant. Some other 509ers in attendance were: members of the Animal Farm, and Tina and Greg Velasco. Greg is a Past-President of the 509 PIA. (Please see pictures)



This is the floral spray that the florist in Arlington is sent to Don McElroy's father's memorial in Washington DC, on behalf of the 509 PIA.



**The Distinguished Member of the Regiment Ceremony** took place at the 1st Battalion (airborne) 509th infantry Regiment, on Thursday, April 2, 2015, at 1030 hours, in fort Polk LA. Presiding at the ceremony was LTC Matthew J. Tackett and CSM Brian E. Stover. Honored at the ceremony were:

**WORLD WAR II** - LTG William P. Yarborough (accepted by his son, Lee Yarborough), COL Morton Katz, CPT Carlos Coolidge Alden, CSM Paul B. Huff, and PFC John C DeVanie.

**ITALY** - CSM Frank A. Grippe

**FORT CHAFFEE, ARKANSAS** - CSM Michael A. Ferrusi

**FORT POLK, LA** - CSM Eric G. Crabtree, SGM Matthew J. West, SFC Eric D. Luneau

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, ALASKA** - PFC Justin A. Casillas, (accepted by SFC Collins)



The 1st Battalion (Airborne) 509 Infantry  
Has invited members of the 509 PIA  
To the Change of Command, when  
Lieutenant Colonel Matthew J Tackett  
Relinquishes Command and  
Lieutenant Colonel Curtis L. Rowland, Jr.  
Assumes Command of the 1st Battalion 509th  
July 1, 2015, at 1000 Hours, on Warrior Field  
Fort Polk, LA

**Hal Persun, President of the 509 PIA , John DeVanie, Past President 509 PIA, John Eaves, Lee Barber and Philip Handscomb, Trustees 509 PIA, and Margot Handscomb, Secretary 509 PIA were all present at the dedication of the LTG William P. Yarborough Museum, on April 2, 2015. They also attended the Distinguished Member of the Regiment Awards. Philip Handscomb attended the Dining In Dinner later that evening.**





SPCs Benfer and Moses after the downhill slalom



SPCs Benfer and Moses after the downhill slalom



SPC Sager conducts PCCs before SP



Cold Load Training prepared Scouts for UH-60 Insertion and Extraction



SPC Stoner passes 9-line MEDEVAC report

**The 3rd Battalion 509 Parachute Infantry Regiment keeps busy in the field. Tom Tsvigas will represent the 509 PIA at the Change of Responsibility Ceremony for CSM Scott Beeson, on June 17, 2015, at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Anchorage, Alaska. Good Luck Scott, you have been a great help to the 509 PIA**



America's First Combat Parachute Troops



America's Most Decorated Paratroop Battalion



509th Parachute Infantry Association Reunion
September 2-6, 2015 - Holiday Inn Express & Suites, Tacoma, Washington

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

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

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

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of those attending with you: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Registration: Number attending (including soldiers) \_\_\_\_\_ X \$120 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number less than 21 yrs. old attending \_\_\_\_\_ X \$ 70 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Association Dues: World War II Vets are paid in full life time members \$ \_\_\_\_\_ 0 \_\_\_\_\_

Dues for WWII Vets and Family Members \_\_\_\_\_ X \$20 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Dues for Post WWII Vets and Non Vets \_\_\_\_\_ X \$25 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Housman and Associates - 509 Reunion

Mail registration, checks and/or Credit Card Payment to:

Housman and Associates

1309 Pasa Tiempo

Leander, TX. 78641

Or FAX Credit Card Payment to 512-259-5571.

Credit Card Payment - All Information Requested Below is Required to Process Your Payment

Name exactly as it appears on your credit card: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Provide the Address Your Credit Card Bill is mailed to: \_\_\_\_\_



*America's  
First  
Combat  
Parachute  
Troops*



*America's  
Most  
Decorated  
Paratroop  
Battalion*



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

*September 2-6, 2015 – Holiday Inn Express & Suites, Tacoma, Washington*

The registration fee includes CP room Wednesday – Saturday, September 2-5. In the CP room we will have our usual bar, sodas, coffee, decaf, hot water for tea and snacks and on Saturday night we will have our banquet. Reunion Fee is \$120



We are currently working on a jump or tour for Friday September 5, 2015. We will have more information on this event closer to the reunion. There will be an added expense for this event.



If you have not paid your Association dues and would like to take care of that now there is a place on the registration form to include your dues with your registration payment. Please make checks payable to Housman and Associates. There is also a 509<sup>th</sup> PIA membership application enclosed for your convenience if you would rather send your application and payment directly to Barry. Dues payments can also be made on site in Tacoma.



## **HOTEL RESERVATION INFORMATION**

*Holiday Inn Express & Suites*

*2102 South C Street*

*Tacoma, Washington 98402*

**For reservations:** Call for reservations at 253-272-2434, Sleeping room rate (includes a full buffet breakfast each morning up to 2 people per room) \$129.00 (standard room) King \$139.00 plus 13.5% Tax and \$1.50 tourism tax.. If you would like to reserve your sleeping room online please copy and paste the following link into your browser.

<http://tiny.cc/HIExpressReg>

Hotel is non-smoking. The hotel does allow pets for a \$50 non-refundable fee. When you call for your reservation you must ask for the pet friendly rooms.

**DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS:** August 11, 2015

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The hotel does not have a shuttle service. I am currently negotiating with a local company to give our group a discount on transportation to and from the airport. I will post that as soon as I get the information finalized.

**Organization Dues Statement**

**January 1-December 31**

**Annual 509<sup>th</sup> PIA Membership**

- |                  |                          |   |                        |
|------------------|--------------------------|---|------------------------|
| <b>CHARTER</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>WORLD WAR II VETERAN</b>                       | <b>LIFETIME MEMBER</b> |
| <b>LEGACY</b>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>IMMEDIATE FAMILY OF VETERAN</b>                | \$20.00 per year       |
| <b>REGULAR</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>POST WORLD WAR II 509<sup>TH</sup> VETERAN</b> | \$25.00 per year       |
| <b>ASSOCIATE</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>NON 509<sup>TH</sup> VETERAN</b>               | \$25.00 per year       |

*Please make check payable to:*

**509<sup>th</sup> PIA**

*and send to:*

**509<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Association**  
**47 Washington Ave.**  
**Box 310**  
**Wheeling, WV 26003**

**We Need Your Support**

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

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

Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

**509<sup>TH</sup> SERVICE:**

Unit: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Period: \_\_\_\_\_

Combat Tour: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Period: \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER COMBAT UNIT:**

Combat Tour: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Period: \_\_\_\_\_

*If you do not want your name and information listed in a member directory please check the box*