



80th Blue Ridge Army Reserve Association

March 1st, 2011

NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Blue Ridge Post 50 Members,

Greetings to all and thank you to everyone who contributed to this newsletter! This has been a very busy quarter for the Blue Ridge Association and the 80th Training Command here in Richmond, VA. Since January 1st we have had an increase of 26 new members who have joined our Post and we have forwarded their dues to Andy so they are now proud members of the 80th Division Veterans Association as well. A special thanks to Andy Adkins and Pete Herbert for their diligent work updating our membership rolls as Secretaries for the organizations.

LTC Grant Porter
President

RECENT EVENTS

The January 2011 Commander's Conference:

The Blue Ridge Association participated in the 80th Training Command's Commander's Conference and Awards dinner held in Virginia Beach from 27-30 January 2011. We had 22 new members join during this conference. Secretary Pete Herbert and LTC Terry Singleton set up a great new display that we purchased to showcase the Blue Ridge Association's achievements and members. During the Awards dinner, Blue Ridge Vice President CSM Doris Wollett and I had the honor of presenting \$200 cash awards from the Blue Ridge Association to each of four recipients of the 80th Training Command Awards program. The 2010 award recipients included junior MILTECH of the Year Award recipient, Mr. Geoffrey McClendon of the 800th Logistics Support

Brigade; Senior MILTECH of the Year, Mrs. Mary Danner of the 102nd Division; AGR of the Year, MSG Denise Chavis of the 80th Training Command; and Instructor of the Year recipient, SSG Charles Andrews of the 12-100th (CA), 3rd Bde, 100th Division. Two additional awards will be presented later this summer to the Soldier of the Year and the NCO of the Year. Along with the presentation of awards, we also took time to speak to the audience about many of the Blue Ridge achievements and to recognize all the Blue Ridge members in attendance that night. The Blue Ridge Association also presented a Polo Shirt and coffee mug to the Guest Speaker, LTG Sterling, Chief of Staff and Deputy Commanding General of TRADOC.

The Blue Ridge Association Holiday Party:

Blue Ridge members celebrated the holidays together with a nice dinner party on 18 December with 36 participants at the Iron Bridge Sports Park in Chester, VA. Attendees brought over 50 toys that were donated to the “Henrico Christmas Mother” group who helped over 6,000 families in need this year with clothing, food, and toys. Special thanks to VP Doris Wollett and Donna Herbert for their help in setting up the event!

FUTURE EVENTS

Blue Ridge Luncheons:

The 1st Quarterly Blue Ridge Luncheon is planned for 23 March 2011 at Pino’s Pizza Italian Family Restaurant, 4112 Meadowdale Blvd. in Richmond, VA 23234 at 12:00 Noon. This will be the first of a series of informal luncheons that is intended to bring together current local members on a more frequent basis and attract new members to the organization. All are welcome to attend. We are not planning to have any formal guest speakers, just fun and camaraderie. If interested, please RSVP by 22 March 2011 to either MSG(R) Pete Herbert at edmond.herbert@usar.army.mil or CSM Doris Wollett at doris.wollett@usar.army.mil.

80th Training Command Change of Command:

Please join us as MG John McLaren will pass the Command of the 80th to his successor, (TBD). The event is scheduled for 14 May 2011 at 1400 hours at Fort Lee. We salute MG McLaren for his many years of great service to the 80th and are grateful for his continued service to the Blue Ridge Association and 80th Division Veterans Association. The point of contact for this event is LTC Anthony Taylor, at 804-271-5807 or anthony.taylor@usar.army.mil.

MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

* COL James J. Braxton was recently honored as a Black Engineer of Year Award (BEYA) recipient during the 25th Annual BEYA-STEM Global Competitive Conference held in Washington D.C. from 17-19 February 2011. The national black-tie awards Gala

honors the nation's top Black Engineers as well as other leaders in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). COL Braxton received the "Diversity Leadership in Government" award for his achievements as the Chief of the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The weekend events included a Stars & Stripes Dinner on Friday night that was attended by the Chairman and all of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and many other military leaders to include General Kip Ward, Commander, U.S. AFRICOM. COL Braxton has served with the 80th for a large part of his 40 year career in the military to include being Commander of the 4-318th, Deputy Chief of Staff for Resource Management, and now in his current position as the Command Inspector General for the 80th Training Command.

* SGM Michael Buddin retired after 36 years of service on 19 February. SGM Buddin spent most of his years with the 108th Division before coming to the 80th back in 2007. He has contributed greatly to the TASS world, and to the Army as a whole. He was mobilized in 1991 for Operation Desert Storm, then for two more years at Fort McClellan from 2004 to 2006, and then again for a year at the US Army Reserve Command prior to coming on board with the 80th in 2007. Mike says he will be back to visit at the Change of Command ceremony in May and to participate in the annual 80th Retirement Ceremony in July. We look forward to his continued service with the Blue Ridge Association.

* SGM Sharon Campbell who was recently selected for a civilian position at Camp Parks, in Dublin, CA.

* MSG Virgil Coleman and his family took a ten-day trip to Oahu, Hawaii this past December. This was an eventful trip for the Coleman's family; which consisted of Virgil, Mercedes and their 20 year-old college son, Quintin. The Coleman family visited Pearl Harbor and saw the USS Bowfin Submarine, the USS Missouri and the Pacific Aviation Museum as well as the Doyle Pineapple Plantation, the Polynesian Cultural Center, Schofield Army Barracks, Hickam Air Force Base and the North Shore part of Oahu.

* COL Michelle Cooper is working with Veteran Actor, Mr. John Amos, to spearhead the production and provide support for his one-man performance of Halley's Comet at the Constitution Hall in Washington, DC on April 24, 2011.

* LTC (P) Glenwood Hence was recently selected to become the new Deputy Chief of Staff, G3, (Operations). Congratulations to Glen on his upcoming promotion! Also, Mr. Glen Hence was also recently selected for a full-time civilian position as the Staff Operations and Training Officer for the 80th G-7 office.

* Pete Herbert and his wife Donna welcomed their first grandchild, (a boy), named Parker Michael Herbert, born Friday, February 18th. Pete's son, Mike and his wife Mandy, also of Midlothian VA, are the proud parents. Welcome to the World Parker!

* LTC (P) Eric Imajo was selected to become the next Chief of Internal Review for the 80th Training Command. Congratulations to Eric on his upcoming promotion!

* CPT Zovera Jackson opened a new dance-fitness and wellness studio this January. Congratulation and good luck to her as an entrepreneur! Photos from the opening of CPT Jackson's studio can be seen now on the 80th Training Command's flickr page found at: www.flickr.com/photos/80thtrainingcommand.

* SGM Giovanni Mejia returned from a year-long deployment to Afghanistan. Welcome back and thank you for your service to the country!

* Member LTC Cynthia Norwood is the point of contact for the Wall of Honor Ceremony, scheduled for 26 May at 10:00 at the Virginia State Capitol in Richmond. She is looking for volunteers to work at this event. If interested, please contact her at cnorwood@oag.state.va.us or 804-539-4872. The following speakers are confirmed: Marine Lieutenant General "Willie" Williams, Major General Long (Adjutant General of Virginia), Charles Cowheard (twin of a fallen Hero), the Governor of Virginia, the Lieutenant Governor, and the Attorney General. LTC Norwood has also led an effort to purchase Apple iPads for our Wounded Warriors staying at the Richmond VA Polytrauma Center. Those wishing to contribute to the purchase of iPads for our recovering veterans are encouraged to contact her for that as well.

* Blue Ridge members LTC Terence Singleton & SFC Scott Kallio led the way in participating in the annual Gumbo and Chili cook-off on 23 Feb 2011. Terence's gumbo and Scott's chili were to die for in this fight to the finish gastronomical event. Thanks to Terence for making this contest come to fruition again this year.

* Anthony Taylor was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, (LTC), effective 30 Aug 10.

Thanks again to everyone who contributed. Please let me know if I missed any significant events for Blue Ridge members and I will include your input in the next edition.

* Please review the association's website to keep yourself abreast of future activities at: www.blueridge.us/. We are also featured on Facebook at www.facebook.com/BlueRidgeAssociation and on the Flickr website at www.flickr.com/photos/BlueRidgeAssociation. For those of you who tweet, you can find us at www.twitter.com/80thBlueRidge. Thanks to Andy Adkins for maintaining our website! We will be making an effort to keep it updated with information about members and highlights of the organization. Please send suggestions for website updates or newsletter articles to edmond.herbert@us.army.mil.

“STRENGTH OF THE MOUNTAINS”