Washington Artillery
Veterans Association
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The Washington Artillery

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June 2012

WAVA NEWS
Committee Appointments

Active Battalion:	LTC Steven M. Finney	(504) 301-2159
	MAJ John DiMartini	(504) 738 7472
	CSM James M. Vicellio	(225) 328 1639
Audit:	Joseph Taranto, Chm.	(504) 834-3302
	Jim Ledet	(504) 887-2910
	Joe Centanni	(504) 733-1141
Budget/Treasurer:	Norvin Schexnaildre	(504) 889-0837
Sergeant at Arms:	LTC Brian P. Champagne	(504) 394-1913
Charter Bylaws:	Peter Breslin, Chm.	(504) 810-6739
	Joseph Taranto	(504) 834-3302
	Anthony LaNasa, III	(504) 452-0358
Secretary:	Russell Mayeur	(228) 255-7689
Finance:	Nelson Ardoin	(504) 738-9634
	Jay Hotard	(504) 339-2121
	Joseph Taranto	(504) 834-3302
	LT Anthony LaNasa, III	(504) 452-0358
Fraternal:	Joe Centanni	(504) 733-1141
	Renda Besson	(504) 340-2987
Food/Beverage:	Ray Hartman, Chm.	(504) 715-5704
	Joe Centanni	(504) 733-1141
	Joseph Whitman	(985) 249-2255
	Renda Besson	(504) 340-2987
Historical:	Glen Cangelosi	(504) 391-1174
	Jacques Walker	(985) 882-9973
Legal:	Peter Breslin	(504) 810-6739
	Joseph Taranto	(504) 834-3302
Membership:	John DiMartini	(504) 738-7472
Newsletter:	Fred Muhs	(504) 236-3958
		fmuhs@cox.net

What's Inside!!!

New start time for Meetings, see page 2
Dates of Meetings, Socials & Reunion
President's & Commander's Message
Officers and Board Members
Dues/Membership Application/New Members
Seafood Social Order Form

Nominations:	Russell Mayeur, Chm.	(985) 255-7689
	Jordan Jones	(985) 331-2093
	Joseph Whitman	(985) 249-2255
	Jay Castagnetta	(985) 285 8883
	Edward Daigle	(504) 289-6965
Parliamentarian:	Peter Breslin	(504) 810-6739
	Joseph Taranto	(504) 834-3302
Planning:	Jordan Jones, Chm.	(985) 331-2093
	Nelson Ardoin Jr.	(504) 738-9634
	Russell Mayeur	(985) 255-7689
	Edward Daigle	(504) 289-6965
	Jay Castagnetta	(985) 285-8883
	LT Anthony LaNasa, III	(504) 452-0358
Programs/Publicity:	Jordan Jones	(985) 331-2093
Recording Secretary:	Jay Castagnetta	(985) 285 8883
Socials:	Joseph Whitman	(985) 249-2255
	Renda Besson	(504) 340-2987
	Ray Hartman	(504) 715-5704
	Edward Marx	(504) 931-9651
	Anthony LaNasa, III	(504) 452-0358
	Keith Bonnet	(504) 723-1350
Photographer:	Eloise Mayeur	(228) 255-7689
Telephone:	Joe Centanni	(504) 733-1141
Website:	Jay Castagnetta	(985) 285-8883

WASHINGTON ARTILLERY VETERANS ASSOCIATION

WAVA NEWS

No. 12-3 **To Perpetuate the Spirit of the Washington Artillery (The 1/141FA under many numeric designations).** June 2012

WAVA Officers

Ron Besson	President
Joseph Whitman	1st Vice President
Joseph Centanni	2nd Vice President
Russell Mayeur	Secretary
Norvin Schexnaildre	Treasurer

Board of Directors

TERM EXPIRES - DECEMBER 2012

Ronald Besson (Barbara)	(504) 347-5026
Peter Breslin (Peggy)	(504) 810-6739
Joe Centanni (Lupe)	(504) 733-1141
Jim Ledet (Susan)	(504) 887-2910
Norvin Schexnaildre (Loyce)	(504) 889-0837
Joseph Taranto	(504) 834-3302

TERM EXPIRES - DECEMBER 2013

Nelson Ardoin, Jr. (Charlene)	(504) 738-9634
Jay Castagnetta	(985) 285-8883
LTC Brian Champagne (Denise)	(504) 394-1913
Ray Hartman (Eva)	(504) 715-5704
Jay Hotard (Betty)	(504) 339-3121
MSG Errol M. Williams, Jr.	(985) 237-4136

TERM EXPIRES - DECEMBER 2014

MAJ John DeMartini (Sandra)	(504) 738-7472
CSM Edward Daigle	(504) 289-6965
Russell A. Mayeur, Sr. (Eloise)	(228) 255-7689
Joseph Whitman (Nancy)	(985) 249-2255
LT Anthony LaNasa, III	(504) 452-0358
Fred Muhs (Pat)	(504) 236-3958

Attention to Orders

Effective 01 March 2012, Major Steven M. Finney has been promoted to Lieutenant Colonel. WAVA extends their congratulations to LTC Steven M. Finney on his promotion and pledges their continued support of the battalion.

Annual Dues

Please check your mailing label for the status of your dues. Annual dues for 2012 and previous years are payable immediately. Consider becoming a member in perpetuity. Membership/dues form is attached herein.

WAVA MEETINGS/SPECIAL EVENTS

3rd & 4th Quarter of 2012

July 17	Board Meeting
August 21	General Membership Meeting
September 18	General Membership Meeting & Social
October 16	Board Meeting
November 20	General Membership Meeting
December	To be determined

Please Mark Your Calendar for All Meetings

WAVA will hold its meetings at Jackson Barracks in the 1/141 Armory. Enter the north gate from the St. Claude Avenue and drive toward, the now closed, N. Claiborne Avenue gate to get to the 1/141 Armory.

1700 hours - WAVA Room opens for refreshments
1800 hours - Evening meal is served
1900 hours - Meeting starts

Socials and special events will be held there also, unless noted otherwise.

New WAVA Members

Life Member: Robert E. Williams, COL, AUS, Ret., Dewey Smith, Lawrence J. Fritz

Member: Ronald L. Wattigny, Clay M. Thomas, Matthew E. Lehrmann, Eugene J. Gurtner, Donald Rowan, Robert Seaton

Life Associate Member:

Associate Member:

Taps
Allan Dubea

President's Message

First and foremost I find myself thanking everyone again for a successful seafood social. The seafood dinner was attended by 182 members and their guests. We did have some issues and they are being addressed as these comments are being written so they are not repeated. Also, again, I'd like to thank LTC Finney, MSG Williams, and the men of the active battalion for all of their continued support, and I would be remiss if I didn't mention the Social Committee (Joseph Whitman, Ray Hartman, and Renda Besson). These men continue to amaze me with the outstanding work.

Our membership continues to grow by leaps and bounds. Attendance at our general membership meetings remains strong. Please continue to bring a friend you believe may be interested in being a part of the association either as an active or associate member. You can find out what the requirements are by visiting our website at www.washingtonartillery.org.

I'd like to take a few of your moments to talk about an issue I'm passionate about. Our veterans. Please continue to support these fine Americans. Saying 'Thank You' simply isn't enough. I have certainly been accused of being too passionate and as you well know I'm not always 'Politically Correct'. If we remain silent nothing will change. Did you know unemployment among our returning veterans is at 24 percent? If you are aware of employers looking for good employees and the jobs pay well please let me know and I will insure that information is passed to the appropriate people who can insure it is disseminated at battalion formations as well as posted on unit bulletin boards. For your information Jay Castagnetta informed me the railroad companies will be hiring more than fifty thousand (yes, that's 50,000) people in 2012. They hired more than fifteen thousand people in 2011. They appear to be experiencing very high retirements now and are replacing those people as quickly as possible. The opportunities are abound and the railroad industry is infamous for good pay and excellent benefits. Veterans with medical issues continue to have excessive waits for appointments at VA facilities. Sometimes their wait is as long as three to five months. Medicaid and welfare recipients can receive a 'Gold Card' which allows treatment at ANY medical facility or hospital immediately. Should our veterans receive any less?

Louisiana has approved a new state identification card or driver's license with the word 'VETERAN' emblazoned under the photo of the applicant. This will become law in August 2012, at no charge to the applicant. Proof of this status will be required. Your discharge papers or their equivalent should suffice. I also believe a military ID card will be OK. This will allow veterans to receive discounts from retailers offering them. These new licenses or ID cards can be obtained at any Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) office later in the year. As more information becomes available we'll get it out to you.

May God Bless
and ***Try Us!***
Ronald R. Besson

Commander's Comments

Please let me begin by thanking the members of WAVA for their continued support to the Active Battalion. The money donated for the Battalion's MWR event during annual training was appreciated and all Soldiers were able to enjoy the event. The months of May and June were focused on preparation and execution of annual training.

May's drill was spent at home station conducting Soldier briefs and preparing for annual training. We also had the honor of rendering a Salute for the 377th Theater Sustainment Command Change of Command Ceremony in Belle Chasse, Louisiana. Twenty-five soldiers from the battalion volunteered their time to scoop out the rubber ducks after the Rubber Duck Derby at Bayou St. John. Proceeds from the event went to benefit Second Harvest Food Bank.

June 1st to June 14th the Battalion participated in annual training. The first week was spent at home station and the units were split between Jackson Barracks and Camp Villere. The Soldiers conducted Combat Life Saver training, Operational Security briefs, Equal Opportunity briefs, and Composite Risk Management briefs. Preliminary marksmanship instructions were given in order for the Soldiers to have a good weapons qualification.

The second week of annual training was spent on the M4 zero and qualification ranges. All Soldiers that attended annual training had the opportunity to shoot day qualification, NBC fire, and night fire. Despite the downpours and the rising temperatures all Soldiers qualified on their assigned weapons with no injuries. Training ended Friday evening with the Battalions MWR festivities. Soldiers enjoyed hamburgers, hotdogs, steaks, and cold beer before returning home for recovery operations. This year's annual training was an overall success and the Soldiers had excellent training take place.

Again, thank you all for your continued support!

LTC Steven M. Finney
Try Us!

Washington Artillery License Plates

Washington Artillery license plates are rapidly developing into the "real deal". The plates will be available to current members of the Washington Artillery and documented veterans of the unit. The exact method of getting one of these plates is under development as is the availability date, but the process is moving to completion. Below is a shot of the plate under development.

Saint Barbara

Saint Barbara was beheaded by her pagan father, Dioscorus, when she refused to renounce Christianity. After he executed his daughter, Dioscorus was consumed by a blinding flash of lightning. Barbara came to be regarded as the patroness of those in danger from thunderstorms, fire, and explosions. Early artillerymen sought her protection because of the uncertain reliability of early cannon.

WAVA Members Receive The Honorable Order of Saint Barbara

The United States Army Field Artillery Association and the United States Army Air Defense Artillery Association maintain the Order of Saint Barbara as an honorary military society of the United States Army Field Artillery and the United States Army Air Defense Artillery. Members of both United States Marine Corps and United States Army, along with their military and civilian supporters, are eligible for membership.

There are two levels of membership in the order, The Ancient Order and the Honorable Order. The most distinguished level is the Ancient Order of St. Barbara and those who are selected for this honor have achieved long-term, exceptional service to the field artillery and are authorized the award by the Commanding General, United States Army Fires Center of Excellence and Fort Sill. The Honorable Order may be approved by the first colonel in the recipient's chain of command.

At the Saint Barbara Night celebration in March, Michael Kreutz received the Honorable Order of St. Barbara award. Renda Besson, unable to attend St. Barbara Night, received his Honorable Order of St. Barbara award at the April WAVA meeting presented by Major Stephen Finney, commander of the 1/141 Field Artillery Battalion, aka The Washington Artillery.

Mr. Michael Kreutz

Mr. Kreutz is a high school graduate with 2 years of trade school at, Delgado Trades and Technical, Junior College. Mr. Kreutz was a career Master Electrician, Louisiana Electrical Contractor, Industrial Oil Refinery, electrician for 32 years.

Mr. Michael Kreutz is a former member of the 1/141 Washington Artillery. His military service was during the Cuban Missile crisis, and the Viet Nam War era. On September 15, 1961, he enlisted in the Louisiana Army National Guard, and remained in the Guard for a period of 9 years, including 6 months of time, serving Active Duty, at Fort Jackson, South Carolina for basic training and the remaining four months in the Field Artillery School at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. His rank at the time of his Honorable Discharge was Specialist E5. His decorations include the National Guard Army, Armed Force Reserve medal; the Louisiana Army National Guard Cold War metal; the National Defense Service medal; and the State of Louisiana, Veterans Honor metal.

Mr. Kreutz has been or currently is a member of the following associations: the B. P. O. E. New Orleans Elks Lodge, the American Legion Post 415 (25 years), the Army Historical Foundation, the National Museum of the United States Army since, 2005, A.U.S.A. 0246, since June 2011, U.S.F.A.A. since August 2011, and the Washington Artillery Veterans Association since 2007.

Mr. Renda Besson

Mr. Besson is a high school graduate. He has completed the LSU Firefighters Training Academy, the Jefferson Parish Firefighting Training Academy, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (BATF) training seminars as they relate to firefighting duties. He worked 33 years for Northrop Grumman Shipyard and served at all levels of the Marrero Ragusa Fire Department for over 10 years advancing to District Chief. He has been a member of WAVA for over 10 years and is a member of the Louisiana Fire Chiefs Association.

In 1955, he enlisted in the Louisiana Army National Guard, Btry C, 527th AAA Battalion. He served four years before the 527th was reorganized into the 4th Battalion 141st Field Artillery. He was actively engaged in the transition from AAA to FA. He has maintained an association with the Field Artillery since enlisting in the Louisiana National Guard and has been a member of WAVA for over 10 years. He is a key member of the WAVA Social Committee and is instrumental in the success of our social events.

Mr. Besson has received several awards for his service to the State of Louisiana for his participation in emergency call ups, as well as having been recognized for outstanding military service. He is the recipient of the Army Achievement Medal, Louisiana Emergency Service Medal, and the Louisiana Veterans Service Medal as well as the National Defense Service Medal.

Rest in Peace, SGT Vinson
A story that needs telling…

Charles Duke was attending the executive committee meeting coordinating planning for the 2012 events marking grave sites of civil war veterans; it was hosted by Gen. Albert Sydney Johnston Camp, of the Sons of Confederate Veterans in Houston, TX.

These graves, located in Houston, were heretofore unmarked and were progressing toward receiving a marker. Charles noticed that one of the veterans was a Washington Artillery veteran by the name of SGT. Van Buren Vinson. Charles Duke is a veteran of the Washington Artillery and a Perpetual Member of WAVA now living in Houston, TX. He sent an email to Pete Breslin telling Pete of SGT Vinson. Pete forwarded the message to Ron Besson, and they disseminated the message accordingly. It turns out that Jay Castagnetta was working in Texas at the time, clearing some unexploded ordnance at or near Ft. Hood. Jay established contact with Charles to coordinate their efforts to participate in the grave marking ceremony of SGT Vinson.

Catharine Vinson, great-granddaughter of the sergeant was located but was unable to attend the grave marking so; WAVA would provide family representation at the marking ceremony. Charles and Jay felt it was the least they could do, and took pride in the opportunity to represent WAVA. They perform the honors for our deceased WA member and represented his family at the event. It also came to light that there was an earlier gravestone dedication in 2007 for another WAVA veteran, Jesse Averitt Bryan of 5th Co., WA, buried in the adjacent and connected cemetery, but at that time, there was no one to make the connection with WAVA in the process.

These grave-marking ceremonies are the end-product of a collaborative effort by a number of cooperating organizations and individuals in the Houston area. These have included Trinity Church; Glenwood Cemetery Historic Foundation; Washington Cemetery Historic Trust; GEN. Albert Sidney Johnston Camp, Sons of Confederate Veterans; Southern Cross Chapter, United Daughters of the Confederacy; CDR Edward Lea Camp, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War; the San Jacinto Battleground Conservancy; the Harris County Historical Commission; Holland Lodge No. 1, AF&AM; Reagan Lodge No. 1037, the Masonic Grand Lodge of Texas; (and now add) the Washington Artillery Veterans' Association, and various other participating organizations and people. The headstones are often supplied by the Veteran's Administration. Occasionally, a stone may be required which is of a description other than the VA standard, so that it will match other stones in a plot, or a new stone that more correctly includes the veteran's military service information is needed.

Not every veteran is always considered eligible, and guidelines may vary from time to time, but an honorable service record, including true and faithful service (regardless of branch, component or affiliation) is generally required and must be properly verified during the screening process. Painstaking research goes into verifying the service record of each veteran identified. Substantial effort also goes into attempting to locate and contacting living relatives of each deceased veteran to be honored.

In the occasional circumstances where no living relatives can be located, usually an organization with special ties to the deceased veteran is asked to step in for the family and act as its surrogate for the commemoration and dedication ceremonies. At the April 28, 2012 ceremony, this included WAVA, and Holland Masonic Lodge No. 1 of Texas. The presence of family members or special organizations to "do the honors" really connects these deceased veterans with the present, and brings home the feeling that these veterans were real people who performed real service for our country under trying and very difficult circumstances.

Jay Castagnetta summed his feelings when he said, "I will tell you I have never been more proud of being a member of WAVA as I was as a participant in this event."

Charles Duke and Jay Castagnetta were present at this moving ceremony representing Sergeant Vinson's family and WAVA. They provided the details and photographs for this article. Thank you both for a job well done.

Visit the WAVA website:
www.washingtonartillery.org

Were You ever Confused about Saluting?

To amend title 4, United States Code, to prescribe that members of the Armed Forces and veterans out of uniform may render the military salute during hoisting, lowering, or passing of flag.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CONDUCT BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND VETERANS OUT OF UNIFORM DURING HOISTING, LOWERING, OR PASSING OF FLAG.

Section 9 of title 4, United States Code, is amended by striking `*all persons present*' and all that follows through the end and inserting `*those present in uniform should render the military salute. Members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute. All other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, or if applicable, remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Citizens of other countries should stand at attention. All such conduct toward the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag passes*'.

Passed the Senate July 25, 2007

WAVA Installs New Board Member

At the March WAVA meeting, a new board member was elected and installed. The new board member is MSG Errol M. Williams, Jr. of the 1/141 active battalion. MSG Williams is filling the slot vacated by Jacques Walker who submitted his resignation for reasons of increased personal responsibilities demanding his attention.

Washington Artillery Veterans Association (WAVA) Membership Application and Renewal

Name: (*Please print all information clearly*)		Send form & dues to: WAVA - Secretary P. O. Box 7584 Metairie, LA 70010	
Street address: city state zip			
Home Phone: Work: Cell:		Check as appropriate	
Spouse's Name:		Annual Renewal Dues ($15)	
E-Mail Address:		New Member ($15)	
Unit (BN):	BTRY (s):	New Associate Member ($15)	
Service Dates:		Member in Perpetuity ($150)	
		Associate Member in Perpetuity ($150)	
Date of Birth:		Change of Address	
Recommended by:		Date:	Ck. No.:
For Membership Committee Only			
Application Reviewed:		Approved:	Disapproved:
Comments:			
Membership Chairman's Signature:			