



# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

## MailCall No. 2111

June 17, 2012

*517th Parachute Infantry Regiment  
460th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion  
596th Parachute Combat Engineer Company*

Website  
Mail Call  
Mail Call Archives  
Roster (from 2008)

[www.517prct.org](http://www.517prct.org)  
[MailCall@517prct.org](mailto:MailCall@517prct.org)  
[www.517prct.org/archives](http://www.517prct.org/archives)  
[www.517prct.org/roster.pdf](http://www.517prct.org/roster.pdf)

## *Kansas City National Reunion – Sign up Now*



**I WANT YOU!**

... to join me one more time in Kansas City.

**Sign up Now!**

**Annual National Reunion**

Kansas City, MO

July 12-16, 2012

[Program](#)

[Registration Form](#)

[Hotel Registration Form](#)

Here is a partial list of who will be at the Kansas City Reunion:

Mel Dahlberg	George Kennedy
Kaare Allen Johnson	Steve Kennedy
Claire Giblin	Brenda Verbeck Mortensen,
Ponnie Davis	James
Dick Seitz	Nancy Armand
Babbie Boyle, Mimsey Boyle,	Christine Bunce
Babsy Boyle-Claydon,	Justin Jolly
Joe Boyle	Bob and Pat Vaught
Peggy Boyle-Oshiel	Teresa Cobble
Leo Dean	Joanne Barrett
Gene Frice	Bruce Broudy
Karen Wallace	Eileen Broudy
Robin Homedew	Bob Barrett
Jeannie Davis	Paul Abbene
Darrell Egner and Darrell	Michael and Rhonda Wells
Egner, Jr.	John Strojan
Al Sperry	Virginia Jorgen, Barbara
Morris and Beverly McDowell	Nance, Nancy Boian
Roger and Gloria Goodsell	Floyd Immerfall, Brenda
Leslie and Paul Perkins	Alicea
Richard Hammel	Lory Curtis
Mark Schroeder	Scott and Deana Ross
Hal and Helen Beddow	Jess Rossi
	Wade Gilbert



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### MailCall News

I was so sorry to hear about the passing of our friend **George "Don" Spears**. I always looked forward to seeing him and his wife Juliette at our reunions. Also was disappointed that my scout buddy, **Myrle Traver and wife, Betty**, will not be attending the KC reunion. I'll be praying for your recovery Myrle, may the good Lord Bless the both of you...

#### Mel Dahlberg

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Hi Bob

I just wanted to let the gang know that **Darrell Egner** had his gallbladder removed about a week ago.

Darrell is now at home and he has rehab nurses coming in. He is getting better so he can be at the reunion in July.

I told Darrell I was going to let you know and also I told him I was going to tell you all he sounds just like himself "Crabby as usual", none of us would know Darrell any other way!!!! Haha

#### Chris Lindner

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This is quite inspiring....however, members of my WWII unit, the 517th Prcht Regimental; Combat Team remembers Curahee in different terms....it is a mountain, located in Camp Taccoa, GA, and, to my memory, must have been 10 miles high...or it seemed that way when we fell out of our bunks, put on running trunks and shoes (we didn't have our parachute boots then), and RAN up that mountain, did a lot of exercises, then ran back down that mountain, then to clean up and dress up before we could get into the mess hall!!!!

This was sent to me by Harvey Wein, a member of our World Wide Airborne Club here in The Villages. Harvey got his wings at Ft Benning, then moved to Israel, where he served in the Israeli Army.

#### Phil McSpadden

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wV2r42l6sQo>





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Bob, This message is for **David Clark** the relative of **Corwin Clark**. My Cousin **Layton Pippin** and Corwin were killed by the same shell. I have visited the area where they were killed. I would like to talk to David very much. My mail is [garandaddy@yahoo.com](mailto:garandaddy@yahoo.com).

Thanks  
**Morris McDowell**

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Hi Gregory,

Here is a note from **Bob Cooper**, who served with **Homer Beaver**. No pictures unfortunately. Bob cannot travel, but you might be able to call to write to him and see if he has any more info.

Good luck,  
Bob Barrett

PS: Here is Homer's enlistment record. There might be info here to track down relatives in the Ohio area.

<http://aad.archives.gov/aad/record-detail.jsp?dt=893&mtch=14&cat=WR26&tf=F&sc=24994,24995,24996,24998,24997,24993,24981,24983&q=beaver+homer&bc=,sl,fd&rpp=10&pg=1&rid=5554066&rlst=815392,1570509,3602245,3784470,7032015,3629840,4369470,4482137,5534613,5554066>

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Subject: **Homer Beaver**

Dear Bob

I don't have any pictures of Homer. But I was in the same Platoon as Homer he was Good soldier. We had many conversations together. I understood he was an excellent Golfer. I have always thought about him another good friend of mine. **Floyd Polk** was in same house that blew in France. I am now 93 and on Oxygen. Can not travel much bad back Low Red cells in my blood Still able to use Computer.

AB/all the way  
**Robert R Cooper, Co D**

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many thanks bob, will do so, will let you know if i can manage to get one, will send it to you for the 517th website, again many thanks for your help

best regards

**Gregory NEGRO**

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demain 16 juin encore un rendez vous avec l'Histoire qui ne dois pas tomber dans l'oubli...commémoration de la tuerie de nos FFI Varois à st Martin de Braume . alpes de haute provence. Nous y serons.... 10h30. Vous etes tous les bienvenus en toute simplicité.

**Tomorrow, 16th of June, We celebrate the terrible slaughter of 15 french southern France resistants by the germans. Do not forget...**

**Jean Michel Soldi**  
AIRBORNE MUSEUM "15 Aout 1944" Association

Just wanted to pass along some of our work:

<http://www.infidelsincorporated.com/shop/517th-airborne-poster.html>  
<http://www.infidelsincorporated.com/shop/517th-parachute-regimental-combat-team-poster.html>

RLTW!

K

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**Kelly S. Hyde**

Airborne Ranger Designs | Infidels Incorporated

tele: (704) 951-RNGR

[web](#) | [shop](#) | [twitter](#) | [facebook](#)

Owner, Operator, Artist, Ranger.



I'm still having some issues getting all the MailCalls getting delivered. Let me know if you or anyone else is not getting them weekly.

Several people are rejecting the emails. Their mailboxes may be full, or they have changed their email providers. If you know them, or can check on hem let me know. – Bob B.

Account not available: [Garfield517@Comcast.net](mailto:Garfield517@Comcast.net) Tom (Art) McAvoy

Invalid recipient: [janiceatp@charter.net](mailto:janiceatp@charter.net) Janice Smith





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Excerpt from [The Hotton Report](#) by Robert K. McDonald (Dec 15, 2006)

**Bill Boyle's** 1st Battalion detrucked in the woods above Soy about the time Charlie Bryson was shooting up the Verdin house. They had been sitting in the trucks for 21 hours, lamenting their lack of winter clothing while pondering what lay ahead. Seven truckloads of paratroopers, representing a quarter of Boyle's battalion, had gotten lost en route in the impenetrable fog and freezing drizzle. There was no time to wait for them to arrive, nor to go looking for them. Boyle had his men stack bedrolls, collect ammo and prepare to move out immediately. Howze radioed him for a status report at 1630.

"Can you jump off at 1700?"

"No," said Boyle.

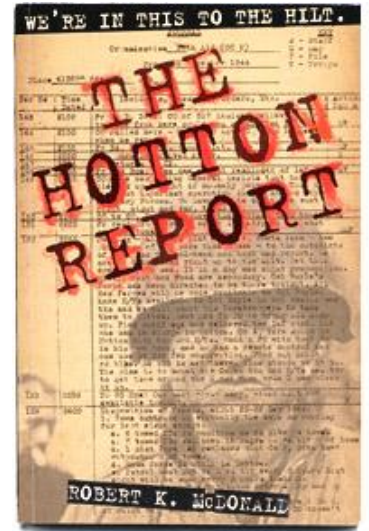
"1730?"

"I could."

"It will be dark then," said Howze. "Can you make it 1700?"

"Well, yes."

"Okay, I'll give you back five minutes then. Jump off at 1705."



Howze's rush to get them moving was due in part to the latest message from Sam Hogan. Now in Marcouray, Hogan's vehicles were running out of gas, which meant they would be stuck there unless resupplied. This was a long shot given the nearest fuel dump was in Barvaux, 15 miles away. More to the point, any resupply would have to go through Hotton or Soy, beyond which the area was teeming with enemy. Howze told Hogan they were working the problem. Hogan, correctly, understood this to mean the chances of reaching him were slim at best. He coolly radioed back that he had plenty of ammo and food, adding that the artillery was "going both ways." In other words, Howze knew that Hogan would not only be of no help clearing up the Hotton situation, but he had just become a situation himself. He needed Boyle's paratroopers now more than ever.

The terrain below Soy was a vast, gently sloping field framed by Soy Road on the left and the railroad line from Hotton to the right, several hundred yards wide and stretching nearly a mile to the Sur les Hys woods and the Quatre Bras road junction. Johannes Bayer's forces were dug-in just back from the tree line between Quatre Bras and the railroad line. Five StuG III self-propelled guns anchored both sides of Soy Road at Quatre Bras, three more were set back deeper in the woods, and several hundred infantry were hunkered down in 40-plus slit trenches facing out over the field. The StuG III was one of the older weapons in the German arsenal. Originally intended to be a tank killer but now employed for close-range infantry support, it consisted of a tank hull with a non-traversable 75-mm cannon and two machine guns. It was a formidable weapons system, but its inability to swing its gun and relatively thin armor rendered it vulnerable to infantry weapons such as bazookas. As always, the challenge confronting an attacking force was just getting close enough to hit them. Here, Boyle's paratroopers had to cross almost a mile of open field.

The 517th - about 450 men strong - lumbered past Howze's CP a little before 1800. Just below the village, they dispersed into the field under a thin veil of moonlight, keeping close to Soy Road. Several of the American tanks knocked out earlier in the day were still burning, the others appearing as dark angular shadows on the barren ground. Boyle's paratroopers advanced about 350 yards toward the tree line when they came under intense fire. Howze heard the clatter and boom from his CP as he was leaving to confer again



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with Rose. A moment before, he had received a message from Anderson advising him that Hotton was under attack by tanks and infantry. "Need help," Anderson pleaded.

\* \* \*

Bill Boyle was making no headway in his attack. At 2110, he radioed Howze that he was taking fire from two sides, and had sent part of his force toward Melines in an attempt to out-flank the enemy position. This wasn't the result Howze had hoped for. He reminded Boyle that it was "imperative" to push the attack and "reach Hotton as quickly as possible."

There weren't many options open to Boyle given the terrain. There was simply too much firepower in his front – machine gun, mortar, and tank fire – and too little cover to attack across the field. Organizing his forces to the left of Soy Road, he sent two platoons into the steep woods above Melines on the chance they might be able to strike the enemy from the side or rear. Once in the woods the platoons split up, flanking the road Lt. Socha's patrol had taken the previous morning. Halfway down the hill they came under machine fire, the ink-black woods streaming with tracer rounds. Here there was plenty of cover. Spreading out, they worked their way toward the source of the fire, silencing two machine guns with grenades. They heard the distinctive creak and rattle of tanks coming toward them, and identified two Mk IVs protected by *grenadiers*. The platoon positioned on the higher slope above the road split up to flank the tanks from the rear, while the other platoon positioned below the road targeted the lead tank from its right side. Platoon sergeant **Clark Archer** with Boyle's B Company recalled that the *grenadiers* were "eliminated relatively quickly." Closing in on the tanks, the paratroopers fired bazookas at close range knocking out both Mk IVs. The burning tanks now effectively road-blocked the back entrance to Soy..

Hearing more tanks heading their way, the paratroopers rejoined the rest of their force on Soy Road, which had advanced less than 200 yards in their absence. Colonel Howze, meanwhile, had summoned Boyle to his CP. He had just returned from his meeting with General Rose, who was leaning on him ever harder to relieve the pressure in Hotton.

"The Commanding General insists that this is to be cleared up tonight if humanly possible," he told Boyle. "This is the most important operation in the Allied Expeditionary Forces. We have got to do it. We must fight night and day to do it." If that wasn't clear enough, Howze double-stamped the message: "Shove this attack through tonight."

Boyle had come to fight, but wasn't about to waste his men on a whim, particularly for some colonel he had just met. He intended to protect his men as best he could so they at least had a fighting chance. Right now, he told Howze, crossing that field was a mistake. Howze couldn't disagree since he had left seven tanks on the same field earlier that day, while inflicting little or no damage on the enemy. Together they formed a new plan. If the road to Ny was open, as they believed it was, Boyle would take one of his companies through Ny to Barvaux Road, then move south to Hotton. It was the same route the Warden-Smithers task force had taken the morning before. Once there, they would sweep the enemy from the village, then attack east through the woods toward the rest of the 517<sup>th</sup>, under the command of his Executive Officer Don Fraser, attacking from Soy. When the two forces joined up, they would have purged the enemy from the Sur les Hys woods and secured the three-mile line between the two villages.

They spent an hour and a half sorting through the details before Howze reported the plan to Rose. Rose replied by sending his two platoons of about 60 men from the 509<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment. They would be folded into **Don Fraser's** force attacking from Soy. The clock showed it was now December 23<sup>rd</sup>. It would be the beginning of a very bloody day.



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Dear American friends,

I am a French historian working on the history of an English Church that was built in Grasse (French Riviera) in 1891.

During world War Two the Germans were expelled from Grasse by the 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment who landed in Provence during operation Dragoon on 15 August 1944 and liberated Grasse on the 24th (I guess it was the second battalion but am not sure). The English Church in Grasse was used by the Germans and then by the American troops, as stated by a witness. That witness gave very few details except that being an English resident in Grasse she had feared the Germans, but of course was much relieved when the Americans arrived. She explains that the Americans had a church service in the English Church (St John the Evangelist) every evening as during the day, they and the "padre" as she called him, went to the front before coming back in the evening. She does not give the name of that "padre".

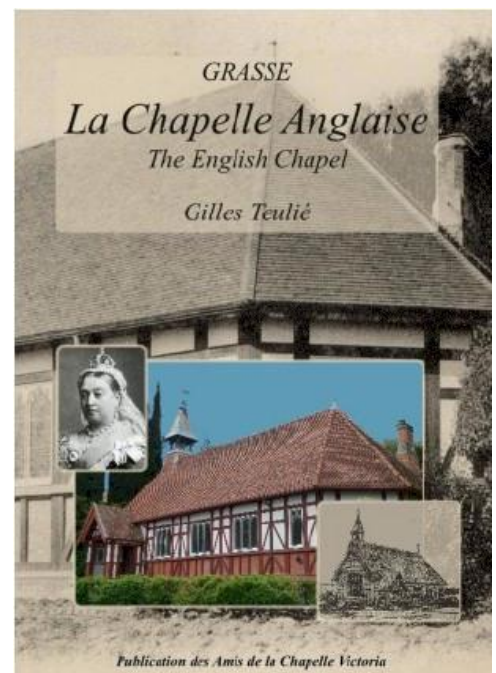
Could you be so kind as to help me to trace the chaplain she refers to? He might be the chaplain of the 517th PIR. On your web site I found references to a **Cpt Charles Lynn Brown**, Regimental Chaplain and **Cpt Alfred J. Guenett**, Catholic Chaplain. Can anybody confirm? Any photographs of those chaplains? Any photographs of American troops during service in Grasse and more particularly in that church which is easy to recognized as it is a Half timbered church (I can provide pictures of the church is anybody is interested). Any accounts of the soldiers presence in Grasse ?

Thank you for your help

With my best wishes

Gilles Teulié [gilles.teulie@free.fr](mailto:gilles.teulie@free.fr)

Here are a couple of pictures of the church, from a publication by Gilles Teulié. Does anyone remember the church? -- BB





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Dear Bob, Do you by any chance have the email address of **Jay Sutcliffe**, who was sending in quite few emails to mail call a few years ago?

I would like to ask him a question about one of the old mail calls.

Thanks  
**Jean-Loup**

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Hey Bob,

I am in need of contact information for members of the PRCT that are in the Tacoma area. My grandfather is going to be receiving treatment for the next 2 weeks at the American Lake veteran's facility, and it would be great if other members of the PRCT would be able to come and meet him, considering he is normally living out in Ocean Shores, about 100 miles from Tacoma.

One person I can think of who still lives in Gig Harbor is **Hal Roberts**. I unfortunately did not get his contact info this last reunion, but I would love to help facilitate him coming out to meet him the weekend of Father's Day, if at all possible. Any help would be great.

Thanks

Scott Ross  
Grandson of **Norman L. Ross, Jr.**  
I Co. 3<sup>rd</sup> Battn. 517<sup>th</sup> PRCT.

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Hi Scott,

I hope Norman is OK. Tell him that we were asking about him and saying some prayers for him.

Unfortunately, I don't have a current record of addresses, but I can get you started. There is an old address list at <http://517prct.org/roster.pdf>, but it hasn't been maintained since 2008. There are a number of troopers from WA, but only a couple that get the MailCall. (Note that most of the people on the list do not have email.) I hear occasionally from **Don Gentry**, but he is a cousin of a trooper, not a trooper himself.

**Hal Roberts** is on the old list, and used to get MailCall, but his email [jharob@comcast.net](mailto:jharob@comcast.net), started bouncing in January 2012, so I had to remove it from the MailCall list. (I hope he is OK.) I remove people from my list after they bounce 3 times in a row.

I just sent a note to **Helen Beddows** who sends out the Thunderbolt, and she might have a more current list.

One other thought is to check with **Gene Frice**. He is in Oregon and might know folks in the northwest. Gene Frice ([genesir@gmail.com](mailto:genesir@gmail.com))

Bob Barrett





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We appreciate your concern, Bob. Luckily it is a routine treatment for his Alzheimer's.

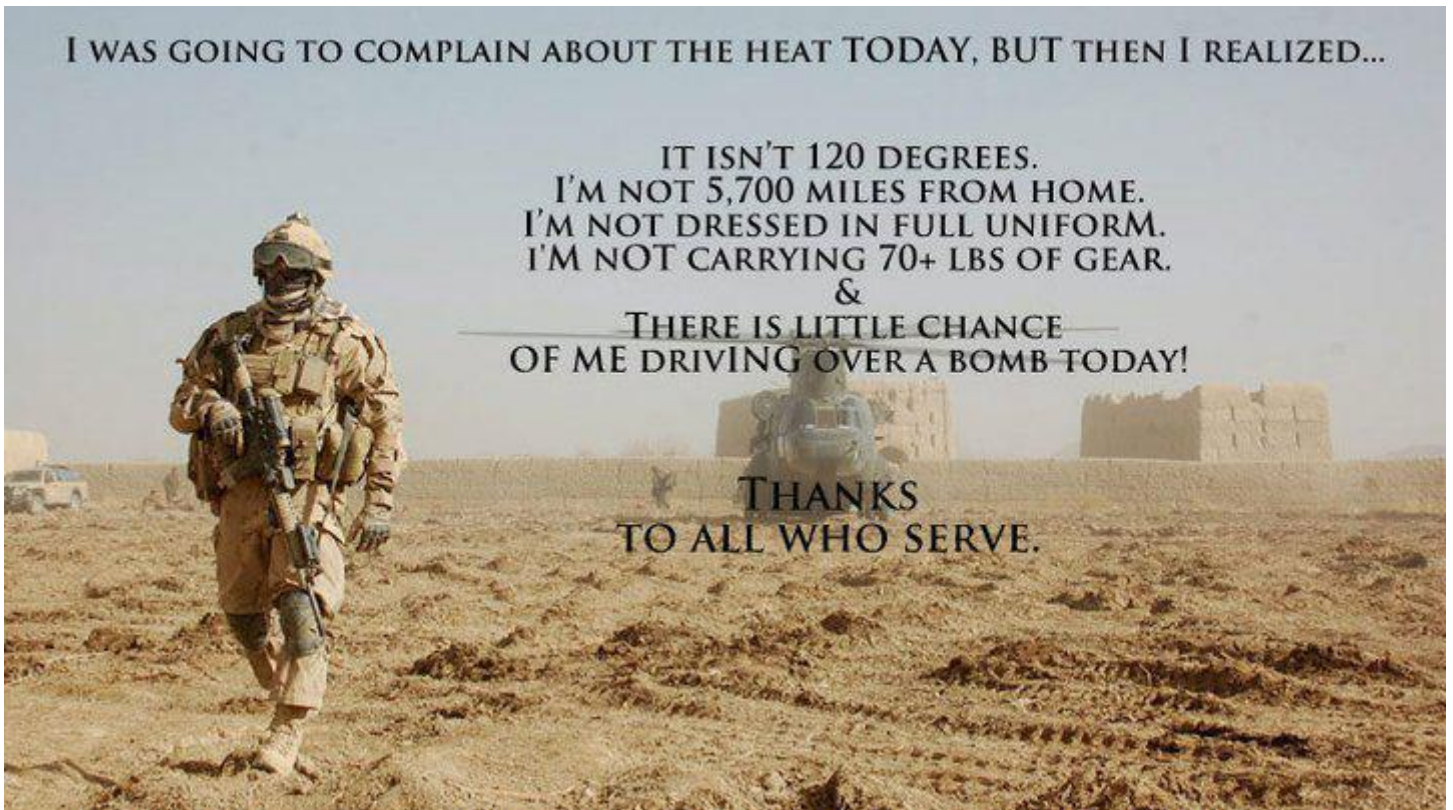
### **Col. Frice:**

I met you at the Mini-reunion in Palm Springs in 2009. We had the little baby that was the talk of the event. I unfortunately did not get to see a lot of you in Atlanta last year. I was wondering if you may have contact information for **Hal Roberts** or other 517th vets in the Tacoma area that would like to spend a few hours with my grandfather at American Lake in the next week or so. I know he would really enjoy it. We would be willing to help out with any transportation arrangements.

Any help would be appreciated.

Thank You  
**Scott Ross**

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### **School district names new post school after Seitz**

March 29, 2012

By Pamela Redford, Fort Riley Public Affairs

[School district names new post school after Seitz](#)



An artist's rendering of LTG Richard J. Seitz Elementary School shows the facility in its completion.



Retired Lt. Gen. Richard J. Seitz, center left, meets with Ronald Walker, superintendent, Geary County Schools, left; Principal Sammie Devin, center right; and Marcie Teenor, Lincoln Elementary and director of business operations.



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JUNCTION CITY, Kan. -- Fort Riley's new elementary school has a name.

"LTG Richard J. Seitz Elementary School" was unanimously approved by Unified School District 475 Geary County Schools Board of Education Jan. 9 during its monthly meeting.

"(Retired Lt.) Gen. Seitz was chosen because of his commitment and steadfast support to the education of all Geary County students, and we are honored to be able use his name," the district said in a press release.

USD 475 Geary County Schools superintendent Ronald Walker said the passion for naming the school after Seitz was found in his history.

"(Retired Lt.) Gen. Seitz is one of the great scholars of our time. He is very intelligent, but humble. He has the ability to lead large brigades into battle, or he is equally comfortable following orders. His character and his spirit represent everything good about humankind. He is the role model we want all our students and staff honor," Walker said.

Seitz has been a very active supporter of Geary County schools, Walker said, recalling he has visited many of the schools to offer his time and talent to discuss leadership, past experiences and views of the world. He often stops by just to say, "hello" to staff and students, Walker said.

"He never misses an opportunity to recite the district's accomplishments to young officers, enlisted or any Soldier for that matter. (Retired Lt.) Gen. Seitz can be heard many times telling anyone within listening distance that Geary County is the best (school) district in the State," Walker said. "He enjoys interacting with our school district and our students. I can honestly say (retired Lt.) Gen. Seitz is our number one fan."

Seitz, who had a 35-year career as an Army officer and paratrooper, commanded the 2nd Battalion, 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment during World War II, the 82nd Airborne Division and the XVIII Airborne Corps. He retired in 1975 at Fort Bragg, N.C.

His military awards, decorations and civilian citations include: the Silver Star, the Distinguished Service Medal -- third award, Legion of Merit -- second award, Bronze Star -- second award, Air Medal, Purple Heart and the Combat Infantryman's Badge.

Seitz said he was on a trip to Florida when he first heard of his nomination by the district when Maj. Gen. William Mayville, 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley commanding general, informed him of the school board's vote.

"I am deeply conscious of the era that is mine, and I really am honored that they decided to have this great, great building in my name. That is beyond words," Seitz said. "I've been an advocate of education, especially teachers, all my adult life, and I realize how important the teachers are. They're the ones that will distinguish that school -- not my name."

As a Leavenworth, Kan., native and a lifetime supporter of Geary County schools, Seitz has worked on school bonds for the construction of Junction City Middle School and other elementary schools in the district.

He said the energy-efficient design of the new elementary school and the construction of the gymnasium will serve the students and staff well.

"The gymnasium is able to accommodate the strongest forces of a tornado and is able to provide a shelter for the school," he said.

USD 475's 15th elementary school is located in the Camp Forsyth area of Fort Riley and will feature:

- Collaboration area for students to gather and learn together
- Special art and sciences room





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- Room for parent volunteers
- Specially constructed-Federal Emergency Management Agency certified gymnasium
- Open space around the building
- Bicycle racks and a shower to encourage students and faculty to bike to school
- White-reflective roof used to reflect radiant sun rays, decreasing the air-conditioning load
- Rain water collection from the roof into underground tanks used to flush toilets and provide water for cooling tower
- Collection point for recyclable materials
- Occupancy sensors in classrooms to shut off lighting and heating, ventilation and air conditioning when unoccupied
- Operable vents on windows for natural ventilation
- Direct line of vision to the exterior in 90 percent of all occupied spaces

The school also will be a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design silver certifiable, green-energy building and will meet all of the anti-terrorism and force protection design components required by Fort Riley.

Samrie Devin, who grew up in the Camp Forsyth area and has been a principal in Geary County schools for the last 10 years, has been named the principal of Seitz Elementary School.

Seitz emphasized the thing that impressed him the most is the selection of the principal for the school.

"She's a proven administrator, having been principal at two schools, a master teacher and a dedicated leader, but she also brings a personal background. She was raised at Fort Riley and attended a school there ... really a dynamic leader," Seitz said.

Devin and Seitz have already spoken about his involvement in the school, Seitz said, noting he will do everything the principal asks him to do.

Pictures of Seitz will be posted throughout the school in the principal's office, library and commons area, Walker said. The outside of the building also will bear his name.

Walker said there will be a dedication ceremony and open house to honor Seitz when construction is complete. The date has not been finalized yet, but the school district will work with Fort Riley and Seitz, Walker said.

"We enjoy working with garrison on projects like this and will want to make sure Fort Riley and the school board work closely together on ceremonies ... the cooperative work between Fort Riley and USD 475 will be a true testament as we both honor this great warrior," Walker said.

The school is scheduled to open in fall 2012.






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From the Thunderbolt, Spring 1944 – The Fitness Test:

SIX

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**MEN OF 517**

Success in the battle goes to the troops who can "take one more step and fire one more shot" than the enemy.

The physical proficiency tests just completed give us an insight on our chances. Each unit in the Army undergoes the same tests and a company per battalion is selected by the testing headquarters to represent that battalion, as well as a Hq. or Ser. Co. per regiment. Selection of Rgt. Hq. Co., Co. B, Co. D, and Hq. Co. Third Bn. was made two days prior to the tests.

Three times in one day the U. S. Army Record was broken and we now hold not only first place, but second and third as well, "D" co. leading with 97.85 per cent, "B" co. a close second with 97.59 per cent and Hq. 3rd next with 96.53 per cent Regt. Hq.

Co. is close behind with 95.02 per cent. (The previous record 96.37 per cent was set just the day previous by our Parachute Engineer Co.).

Men, it took more than just physical strength to set those records—it took determination and the will to carry through—THAT wins battles—it took team work and that WINS battle—it took leadership—and that wins BATTLES.

I saw one man fall near the end of the 300-yard run. He struggled up and fell again. He couldn't rise so he crawled across the line. That's determination.

I saw another man just back from furlough and too ill to go on—too exhausted—so his company carried him and his equipment the full four miles—That's teamwork!

I saw each company as it neared the finish line of the speed march—they looked better than when they started—they're a rugged bunch, even if they can't sing—which they tried. That's Airborne. You stack up pretty well!

*Col. L. A. Walsh*  
*Commanding Officer 517th*



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### *Military Humor*

As a new paratrooper, I was struck by all the T-shirts on base emblazoned with the motto "Death from above!" Later I noticed a submariner with a T-shirt that declared "Death from below!"

Then, standing in line for chow one day, I was served by an Army cook. His T-shirt had a skull with a crossed fork and spoon underneath and yet another warning: "Death from within!"

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Soon after being transferred to a new duty station, my Marine husband called home one evening to tell me he would be late. "Dirty magazines were discovered in the platoon quarters," he said, "and the whole squad is being disciplined."

I launched into a tirade, arguing that Marines should not be penalized for something so trivial.

My husband interrupted. "Honey, when I said 'dirty magazines,' I meant the clips from their rifles hadn't been cleaned."

### *Administrivia*

- If you miss any MailCalls, they are all available online at <http://www.517prct.org/mailcall/>
- At any time, if you want to be added or removed from the MailCall list, just let me know.
- Send any news, stories, or feedback to: [MailCall@517prct.org](mailto:MailCall@517prct.org)
- If you send me email that you do not want included in MailCall, just label it as FYEO.
- I now understand how Ben could get confused about what he already posted and what he didn't. If I miss something, please just send it again.
- Donations for any programs involving the 517th should be sent to our new Association Treasurer: Identify the purpose of any donation (Annual Dues, etc.) and make all checks payable to:

**517 PRCT Association, Inc.**  
c/o Joanne Barrett  
70 Pleasant Street  
Cohasset, MA 02025