



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

MailCall No. 2266

April 12, 2015

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

517th PRCT 2015 Annual Reunion



2015 National Reunion

New Orleans, LA June 25-28, 2015

[Program Info](#) [Hotel Information](#)

[Event Registration](#) [Hotel Reservation](#)

Registration Cut-off date: May 22

BEST WESTERN PLUS LANDMARK HOTEL – NEW ORLEANS, LA
(800) 277-7575 OR (504) 888-9500

www.bestwesternlouisiana.com/hotels/best-western-plus-landmark-hotel

2601 Severn Avenue, Metairie, LA 70002

The Best Western is located just seven miles from downtown New Orleans and the French Quarter.

Reservation Information

Call the number above and please remember to reference the 517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team Reunion or you can visit www.afr-reg.com/517th2015 and click on the hotel reservation link to receive the discounted group rate.

Group Name: 517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team Reunion

Reunion Dates: June 25-29, 2015

Rate: \$92.99 + tax (currently 12.75%) Rates will be honored three days before and after reunion dates based on availability at times of request.

Cut off Date: 05/22/15 Late reservations will be processed based on space availability at a higher rate.

Cancellation Policy: Attendees must call 24 hours prior to scheduled arrival date to cancel reservations and avoid being charged a cancellation fee of one night's room including tax.

Parking & Shuttle Information

The Best Western Plus Landmark Hotel offers complimentary parking to all guests. The hotel does not offer shuttle service to or from the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. Taxi cabs are available on the lower level outside the baggage claim area and typically charge about \$20-25 each way.

Wheelchair Rental

ScotAround rents both manual and power wheelchairs by the day and week. Please call (888) 441-7575 or visit www.scotaround.com for more information or to make reservations.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Gene Frice Services at Arlington National Cemetery



On Tuesday, March 24, **Gene Frice** and his beloved wife Margaret were honored at Arlington National Cemetery. I'm attaching some photos of the impressive full honors funeral. It was a fitting tribute to a man who'd spent so much of his life in service to his country. I could see that it was being photographed by people with lots better equipment than I have, so I am hoping others will have better pictures.

Allan Johnson 596, Joanne Barrett (daughter of **Ben Barrett**) and I traveled to attend. Once there, we connected with 517 family members **Wade Gilbert** (son of **Earnie Gilbert**), as well as the entire Frice clan. Ran into **John Coffee** from PA at the services as

well. **Tom Copsey** and **Rick Seitz** both joined us after the services - it was a nice if brief second generation gathering. **Mardy Donahoo** was there as well, and it's always great to see her.

While there, we took the opportunity to pay respects at Ben and Fran Barrett's grave, only half an Arlington block away. One of the pictures I'll carry in my mind is of Joanne and **Karen Frice** walking back arm in arm, having placed flowers for Ben and Fran.

Everyone made plans to see each other in New Orleans at the June National Reunion. Please join us.

Airborne all the way –

Claire Johnson Giblin





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

MailCall News

Have you booked your reservations to the June National 517th reunion in New Orleans yet? The registration cut-off date is May 22. The AFR registration site ([Event Registration](#)) lets you see who has officially registered, and that list already includes:

- Kay (Jonientz) Bowman
- Bruce Broudy and Eileen Broudy Shaw
- Claire Giblin (and Allan Johnson)
- Carol (Roseberry) Dreesen
- Kenton Immerall
- Rick Seitz
- Rick Sweet
- Melvin Trenary

And I also know of a few more people who also plan to attend and are in the process of registering:

- Joanne Barrett
- Bob and Paula Barrett
- Mimsey Boyle
- Karen and "Team Frice"
- Lory Curtis

We always claim that every reunion will be the last, but this is a very stubborn group, so I don't want to repeat that. But this should be a fun time with a tour of New Orleans and a visit to the National WW2 Museum.

Note that the registration link also has a link to register at the Best Western Hotel. Some people have reported problems with the website saying that no more rooms are available. But we do have rooms reserved for the 517th. If you have a problem, just call the hotel at (800) 277-7575 or (504) 888-9500.

Bob Barrett

From **Nila Gott**:



Marine Cpl. Carpenter on Letterman, a must watch

Medal of Honor recipient

Semper Fi!

Thank God for our military.

https://www.youtube.com/embed/PRFX5qpaxwE?feature=player_embedded

Kyle Carpenter threw himself on a grenade to save his buddy Marine.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



Leo Dean: Is that a new tattoo?

Picture from: [First Airborne Task Force Facebook page](#)

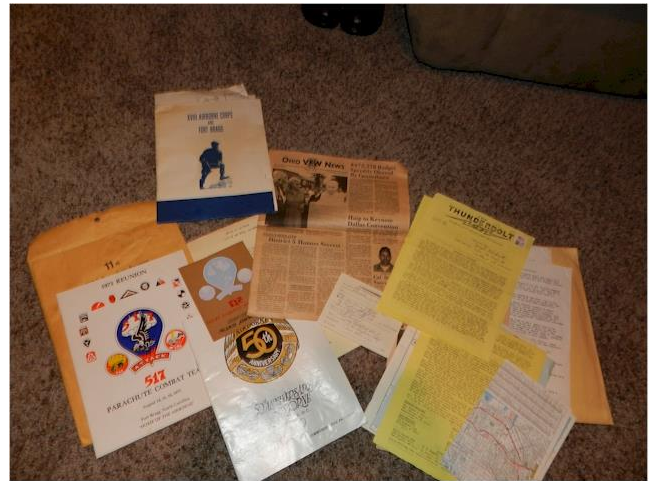
Hi Bob

I just got back a few pieces of **Cpl Joseph BLACKWELL** who served in the 517th in Operation Dragoon in the south of France.

I am looking for information about this paratrooper and his picture, can you help me?

Thank you in advance
Awaiting a response from you
sincerely

**Michel
QUILEZ**





517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Hi Michel,

I do not have a picture, but this question was asked before, back in 2007.

I found the following conversations from 2006 and 2003. I do not have a copy of the book *Le Debarquement de Provence* which tells one story about Sgt. Blackwell.

Bob B

PS: I also see that Cpl. Blackwell was wounded in Piera Cava on Sept 8, 1944. I don't see any records of him returning to duty with the 517th after that.

And there are a couple of brief mentions about Blackwell in Gerald Astor's "*Battling Buzzards*" book.

Bob B.

From <http://www.517prct.org/mailcall/1217.htm>

Shelia Weyth

I have among my deceased father in-law's effects the identification bracelet for a man named **J.W. Blackwell** the numbers below the name are C A 517 P. I. R.

Does anyone remember this man? I can only assume that he was someone my father in-law came in contact with possibly during the battle of the bulge. **Clarence I. Wyeth**, my father in-law was in the Army on the ground during this battle. I guess I wonder if J.W. Blackwell was someone he saved, rescued, or someone who died in his arms? Do you know what J. W. stands for? Thanks for any information you may have.

Sheila Wyeth

Hello Sheila Wyeth ,

Joseph W. Blackwell Co. A was listed on our 1995 roster. His address at that time was Parkview Drive Hubbard, OH 44425-2228. Has not been on a recent roster.

I cannot find him on our 1944 Christmas roster. I will place your request in "Mail Call" and perhaps someone will recall information about him

Thanks for your interest.

Ben Barrett



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Ben,

Thank you for your information. I am glad to hear that J.W. Blackwell survived the war. That doesn't explain why I have his I.D. bracelet but maybe we will hear something. Thank you for your information. I know more than I did before.

Sheila

Hello Shelia Weyth,

My son found in an old Mail Call this information about Joseph Blackwell.

Wayne is the son of Tom Cross who is a retired Colonel and active with the 517 PRCT.

Ben

Dad,

I would think that "C A 517 P. I. R." means Company A. I also do not see anything on the 1944 roster or Casualty reports for Blackwell.

But I did a search in the MailCalls and found this in MailCall #517:

Bob

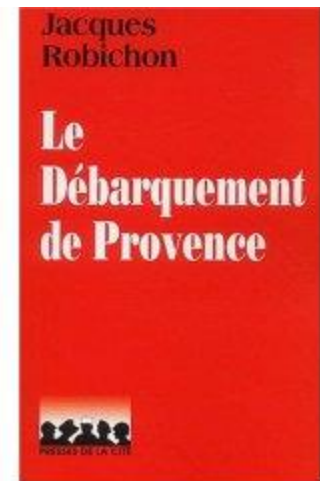
Subj: **Re: MAIL CALL NO. 516 517TH PRCT July 26, 2003**

Date: 7/26/2003 8:33:20 PM Eastern Daylight Time

From: [Crosswc](#)

Ben, I was looking around a used book store today and found a history of Operation Dragoon entitled, "*The Second D-Day*", written by **Jacques Robichon**. The book was translated from French by Barbara Shuey for the Army Times Publishing Company in 1962. It was first published in France under the title "*Le Debarquement de Provence*" (15 Aout 1944). It was first published in the United States by Walker and Company, Inc.

There is a terrific section that outlines the aborted mission of Sgt. Joesph Blackwell and his men to capture Gen. Neuling and his staff at Villa Gladys and describes in some detail the action of 1st Battalion at Draguignan. Good mentions of **Gen. Seitz, Col. Boyle** and **Gen Zais**. There are also interesting accounts of the airlift.



I am passing along to my Dad so that he can read and put in a little context for me, I am sure he will share with the unit historian. It was a great find, written so close after the action that the recollections are fresh. There are also some pretty interesting recollections from the German side.

Best wishes, -wayne



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF SAN MATEO, CALIFORNIA

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS: the 517th Parachute Combat Team, comprised of the 517th Infantry Regiment, 460th Field Artillery Battalion and the 596th Combat Engineer Company, all Parachutists; this intrepid military unit renowned for its brilliant combat records in Italy, France, Belgium and Germany; a unit attached to many, owned by none; and

WHEREAS: for its distinguished, gallant and meritorious service of the officers and men during combat in World War II, earned many foreign and domestic awards, decorations and battle streamers for the Regimental Colors as well as being awarded the Presidential Unit Citation to one of its Battalions and the Congressional Medal of Honor to one of its enlisted men, and

WHEREAS: the "BATTLING BUZZARDS" have continued on with their patriotism and courageous spirit into their respective endeavors, still experience the Airborne Comraderie that bonded them from Toccoa, Georgia through World War II;

NOW THEREFORE, I, FLORENCE RHOADS, Mayor of the City of San Mateo, hereby do proclaim August 11, 12 and 13, 1983, as

"517th PARACHUTE INFANTRY COMBAT TEAM DAYS"

in the City of San Mateo, and urge all citizens to recognize this military organization as one which served its country with honor, dignity, valor and distinction.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused seal of the City of San Mateo to be affixed this 1st day of August, 1983.



Florence P Rhoads

MAYOR of SAN MATEO
FLORENCE RHOADS

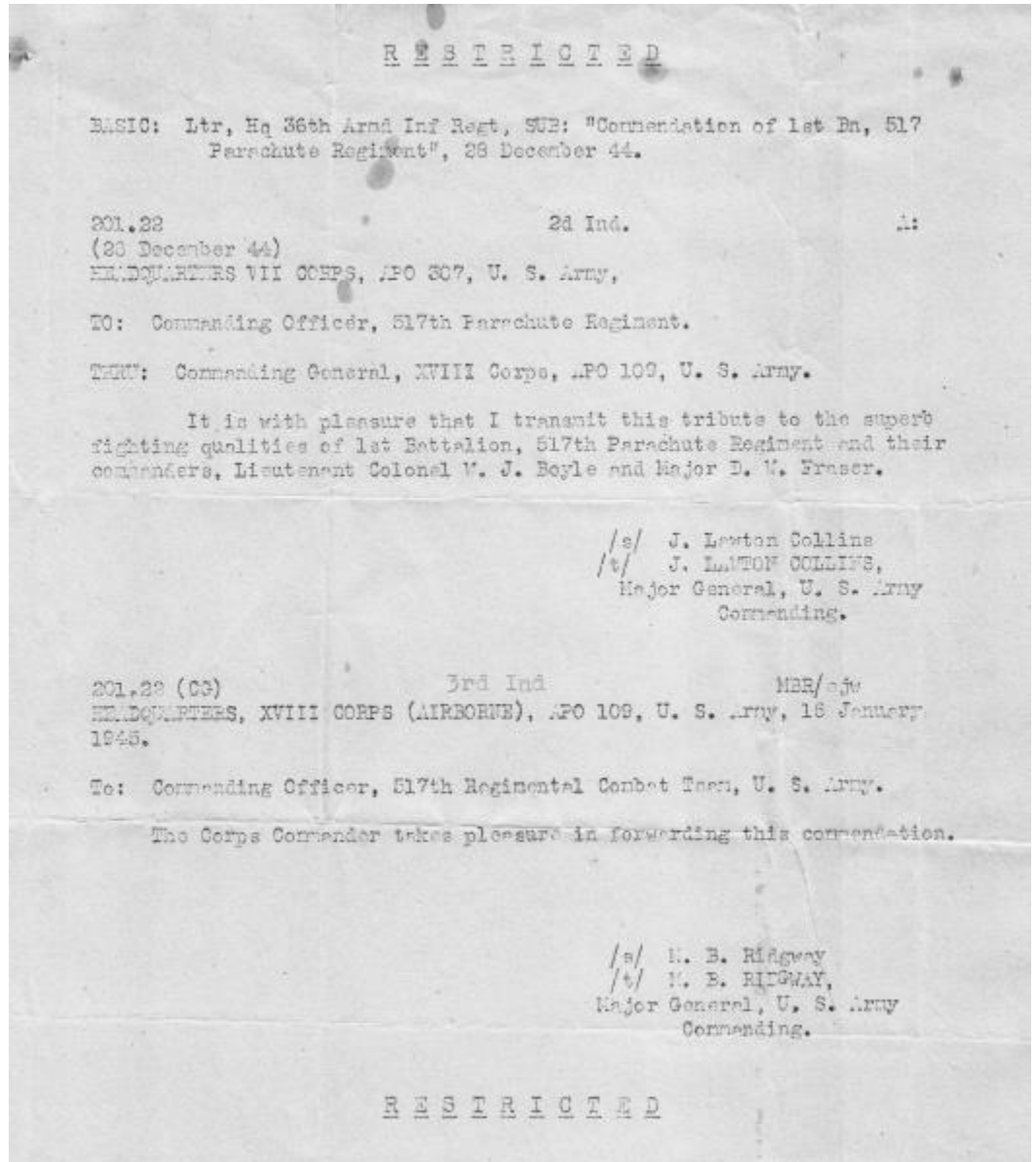


517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Bob,

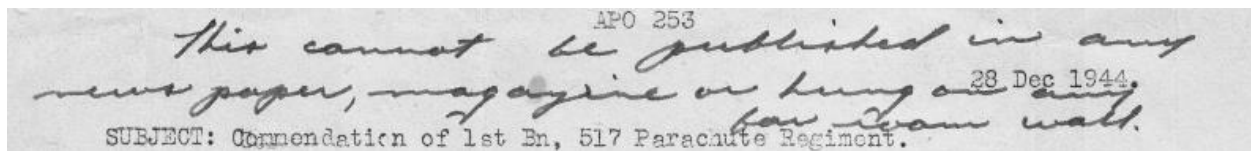
Still going through some of Dad's files and came across this commendation from **Maj Gen Ridgway** for the 1st Bn 517th efforts Dec 22-26, 1944 during the Battle of the Bulge.

Roger Sullivan
Son of **George A Sullivan**



See all three pages at: [Ridgway Commendation](#)

We have a another copy of this already on the website via **Heather Riiey**. It looks like both versions are original paper copies. I will also add this one to the website, since it has an extra handwritten note:



"This cannot be published in any newspaper, magazine or being ??? ???? for ?????? wall?"

Can someone help me make out this note? -- BB



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

In Memorium

From 2014:



Stewart Falcon, HQ/2

Mr. Falcon passed away Tuesday, June 17, 2014 at Our Lady of The Lake Regional Medical Center-Baton Rouge. He was age 93 and the retired owner of Falcon Pest Control.

A resident of Baton Rouge and a native of Donaldsonville, LA, he was a decorated Army veteran and the recipient of numerous citations including the Purple Heart, World War II Victory Medal, American Defense Medal, EAMETO Medal, Good Conduct Medal and the Bronze Arrowhead.



Robert R. Jacobsen, Service Company

SHREVEPORT, LA - A memorial service celebrating the life of Robert R. Jacobsen will be held Saturday, March 8, 2014 at 1:00 p.m. at Lakeview United Methodist Church. "Jake", as he was known to his friends, was born in Vermillion, South Dakota on June 14, 1921 and passed away March 3, 2014 after a brief illness.

Robert was a member of America's Greatest Generation. Growing up during the depression, he began working at age nine to help his widowed mother. At 17 he joined the CCC.

When his National Guard unit was activated at the beginning of WWII, he came to Louisiana for training. He visited Shreveport on a weekend pass and met Mary Agnes Walters, who became his bride. When the 517th Parachute Combat Regiment was formed he was one of the first volunteers. He fought on Anzio beach, jumped into southern France, fought in the Battle of the Bulge, and received a Purple Heart.

After the war Robert attended Vo-Tech school and learned upholstery. He worked for Holmes Pontiac for 20 years and then became co-owner of J & H Trim shop. He was known for his meticulous craftsmanship and specialized in restoring the interior of antique cars. Robert earned his pilot's license and enjoyed fishing, playing poker with his buddies, and watching old movies. In recent years his greatest joy was his granddaughter Katie, who affectionately called him Babu. Independent and strong willed, at age 92 he still lived at home and drove his old truck.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

72 Years Ago This Week - 1943

April 6, 1943: Camp MacKall. 17th Army rules:

“We can tolerate no weaklings.”

26. BORROWING AND GAMBLING are discouraged. Non-commissioned officers are forbidden to lend or borrow money from, or gamble with privates.

30. DISCRETION is especially enjoined in connection with your conduct in the presence of civilians. Do not accost or “cat-call” to any civilian.

Office of the Division Commander

Camp MacKall, North Carolina
April 6, 1943

MEMORANDUM:

TO : All Enlisted Men Assigned to this Organization - For Information and Compliance.

1. Congratulations on your acceptance into a combat organization. You have elected to enter an elite fighting corps, an Airborne Division. We can tolerate no weaklings. You must set yourself into a new and difficult routine. The notes that follow here are to assist you.
2. REGULATIONS AND ORDERS are designed to promote efficiency and good order within the military establishment. Many of these regulations and orders are similar to those under which you lived before entering the Army, but some will be new and the reason behind them may not be apparent. Proceed cautiously and ask questions freely until you learn the rules, and then play the game accordingly. Any soldier who makes himself liable to disciplinary action by violating regulations or orders is either a mental defective or a reckless fool.
3. BULLETIN BOARDS display notices and orders for the information and compliance of all members of the organization. Read the company bulletin board daily. Posting on this board is considered sufficient notice to all men present for duty and ignorance will not excuse failure to comply with any directive or detail so posted.
4. MILITARY COURTESY is of first importance to the recruit. Study Chapter 2, FM 21-100 at your earliest opportunity and refer to it often.
5. INTERIOR GUARD DUTY is shared by all officers and enlisted men. General Orders for sentinels (paragraph 193, FM 21-100) must be memorized before you can leave the reservation.
6. TIME: The Army of the United States uses the 24-hour clock system, in which A.M. and P.M. are eliminated. 1:00 A.M. is called and written as 0100. 1:00 P.M. is called and written 1300. From 12:00 noon until midnight, time is figured by simply adding the hour past noon to 1200 - 5:45 P.M. becomes 1745;

See: [Camp MacKall - 17th Airborne Rules](#) for the full set of rules.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

70 Years Ago This Week - 1945

The newspaper clipping below is an item I found in my mother's scrapbook. The clipping is old, but speaks of four 517th men of 14 from the original cadre that made it home. They were some of my Dad's best friends. **Al DeShayes, Willard Nichols and Orville Donaldson.**

Michael N. Arterburn, son of **Nello R. Arterburn** S/Sgt, 3rd Battalion, Co. G (received Feb 2004)

S, WATSEKA, ILL., MONDAY, APRIL 16, 1945

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not unlikely that Byrnes will become Secretary of State.

On the train coming back from Hyde Park yesterday afternoon, Byrnes helped Mr. Truman revise today's address to Congress. A first draft had been put together from Mr. Truman's rough notes by George Allen, former commissioner of the District of Columbia and long a prominent figure in the Democratic national organization.

Watseka Sergeant 1 Of 4 Left Of 14 Paratroopers

With the 517th Parachute Combat Team on the Western Front—A bull session was going on in one of the rooms of the barracks the other night, and four of the battle-weary veterans were having a talk of their own. They were glad the outfit was relieved after heavy and bitter fighting in Belgium and Germany.

They seemed to be reminiscing, too. Of the fourteen cadre which helped form this parachute company of the 517th Parachute Combat team, they were the only ones left. Four out of fourteen. They called themselves the "Four Leftovers." They are Sergeant Willard Nichols, Sparta, North Carolina; Sergeant Nello Arterburn of Watseka, Illinois, and Thompkinsville, Kentucky; Sergeant Orville L. Donaldson of Haleyville, Ala-

bama; and Corporal Albert P. Deshayes of West Lincoln, Nebraska.

These "Four Leftovers" were in the same class at the Parachute School at Fort Benning, Georgia. They were in the old original 513th Parachute Infantry and received their wings at the same time in December 1942, class 44. They went to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, shortly after, and on March 15, 1943, they left for Toccoa, Georgia, to form the original members of the 3rd Battalion, 517th Parachute Combat team. They trained their own squads and helped them with words of encouragement when the going was toughest.

Since coming overseas in May of 1944, they have fought in Italy, jumped in the invasion of Southern France, have fought in Belgium and Germany. The going has been rough, as seen by their "fruit salad." They have all been decorated at least once. They take pride in pointing out the men they helped train who have received awards, promotions, and responsible positions.

Just before the jump into Southern France on August 15, they vowed not to shave until relieved. On D plus 15 they thought they had better shave. They thought the paratroopers were to be relieved on D plus 5. Finally, on D plus 94, they were relieved after having chased the enemy from France through the Maritime Alps

and into Italy. They didn't have a beard—only a 12-day growth of whiskers.

Cpl. Deshayes was unable to join his outfit after the jump, so he joined forces with the French Maquis and led them on patrols, disrupting communications, and was instrumental in the surrender of La Roche Fortress at Fayance, France. From this fortress 174 Germans were captured with numerous small arms and field pieces. For this action he received the DSC. He was also awarded the Purple Heart for wounds received when an enemy mortar shell hit near him.

Sgt. Nichols single-handedly wiped out a machine gun nest which had pinned down his platoon. For this action he was awarded the Silver Star Medal. He has the Purple Heart as the result of an enemy shell which hit nearby and wounded him.

Sgt. Donaldson was shot in the leg by a sniper, and for his wounds he has received the Purple Heart.

Sgt. Arterburn has been awarded the Bronze Star Medal for heroic action against the enemy.

The armadillo kills snakes by rolling them and cutting them to pieces with its jagged, sawtooth armor.

The sun is losing weight at the rate of 300,000,000 tons a minute, merely by shining.



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

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, or just click on the unsubscribe link on the email.
- Send any news, stories, or feedback to: 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 Donations, In Memory of... etc.) and make all checks payable to:

517 PRCT Association, Inc.
c/o Miriam Boyle Kelly
19 Oriole Court
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

Website	www.517prct.org
Send MailCall news to	MailCall@517prct.org
MailCall Archives	www.517prct.org/archives
2015 Roster (updated!)	www.517prct.org/roster.pdf
Thunderbolt (Winter 2014)	www.517prct.org/archives