



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

Lee HUe



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

## MailCall No. 2467

March 21, 2021

*517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment  
460<sup>th</sup> Parachute Field Artillery Battalion  
596<sup>th</sup> Parachute Combat Engineer Company*

## MailCall News

76 years ago this week:

545 26 MAR 45

### Vast German Mine Field Found by Airborne Units

WITH 82ND AIRBORNE DIV.—Paratroops and glidermen of the 82nd have discovered a mine field that "extends as far as you can see," according to 1/Lt. Joseph J. Novik, of Tarrytown, N.Y. and the Airborne Engrs. "It is worse than anything I have ever seen or heard about."

Discovered by the 517th Parachute Combat Team, the field is intricately criss-crossed with booby traps and anti-personnel mines and is perhaps the most elaborate encountered, First Army officers said.

A Co. advanced down a mud-bound road, and hit six dug-in pillboxes, which covered the roadway with a curtain of cross-fire. The company called for artillery.

B Co., armed with information passed on by the 517th Parachute Combat Team reconnaissance and accompanied by engineers set out to pass directly through the mined field under cover of darkness, exploding charges as it went.

They encountered Schu mines, with charges in small wooden boxes, designed to blow the feet off advancing soldiers. There were "potato mashers," "egg grenades" and rockets fastened to trip wires. "B" mines were set to spring into the air when stepped on, spraying shot for yards around. There were other cylindrical concrete mines, filled with shrapnel, armed with trip wires.

Despite such intricacy, B Co. cleared a path. Aided by 155mms A Co. pushed the Germans from the pillboxes.

The two companies swept aside the infantry opposition, converged, and took their objective.

### 83rd Tank Runs Amok With Doughboy Aboard

WITH 83RD INF. DIV.—A big white tank which suddenly went berserk must have been near Bols west of the Pic. N. Ky. a ed on of th next

Ski calibre the until seizis mand clip up the tank 37mm Sol sound on a Ski until then grens rou



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

RE: **Keneth Baker Tucker**

Hi Glenn,

I'm not finding much about Kenneth Tucker in my own records, although these records are very incomplete. I did find a photo on **Earl Boone**'s page of F Company photos. It is just labeled as "Tucker" and looks like one of the photos that you sent. But it also says from Lebanon, IN.

[http://www.517prct.org/photos/earl\\_boone/earl\\_boone.htm](http://www.517prct.org/photos/earl_boone/earl_boone.htm)

I do see your Dad listed in that NARA enlistment records. He enlisted at Ft. McPherson, Atlanta, GA in 1943, and was from Irwin County, GA. Born in 1924.

<https://aad.archives.gov/aad/display-partial-records.jsp?f=3475&mtch=40&q=tucker+kenneth&cat=WR26&dt=893&tf=F&bc=sl&pg=2>



Can you confirm whether this photo is also your Dad, before I add it to the page I am building.

Regards,

Bob Barrett

Good morning Bob.

Thanks for doing this for our family, it means a lot.

That pic is definitely NOT my Dad.

The info is correct...he was born on September 2, 1924 in Ocilla, GA (Irwin County).

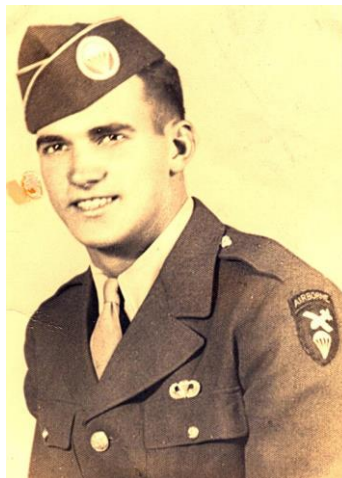
These two photos are of my father (see attachments).

God bless you and your family.

Hope you have a blessed Easter.

Regards,

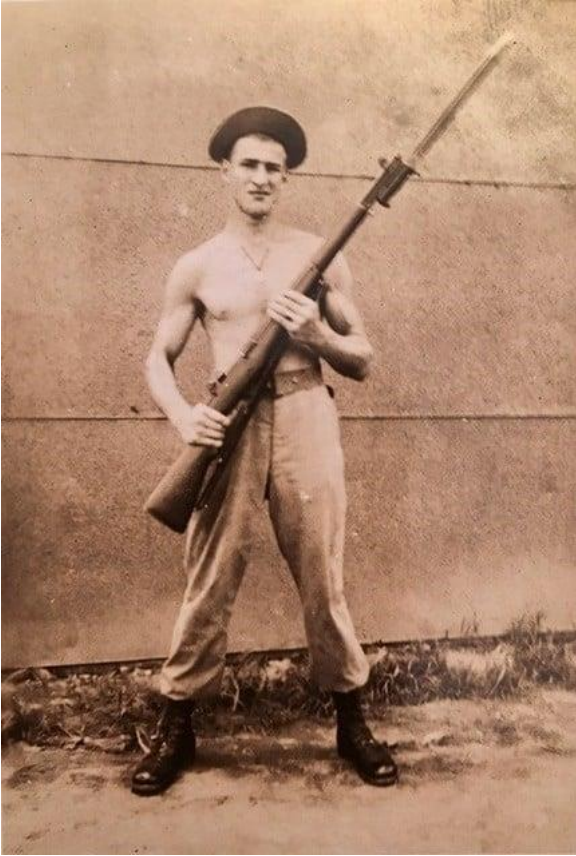
Glenn







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From **Loïc Jankowiak**'s Facebook's page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1472895329686741/>

RE: **S/Sgt. Gordon Lippmann**, HQ/1

Just rolled through your pictures. Awesome stuff! I'll be purchasing the book. It never ceases to amaze me that their unit was disbanded. Honored to learn about their stories!!!

My cousin in the picture, at age 18, at Toccoa.

**Rob Lofthouse**

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Hello,

I have a website I thought you might consider sharing on your resources and links page. Either way, I'm also looking for any feedback to make the site better. I put together a map of all military museums around the United States and am trying to make finding museums by location easier. Each museum's page also shows all other military history locations nearby.

This project started as a college assignment born out of my passion for military history. A passion which grew during my 5 years as a KC-130 Loadmaster with the Marine Corps.

Aviation Museums - <https://www.milsurpia.com/military-history-museums>

Example Museum Page - <https://www.milsurpia.com/places/15>

Thanks for your time,  
Patrick Luther

**Patrick Luther**

[www.milsurpia.com](http://www.milsurpia.com)

[www.patrickluther.com](http://www.patrickluther.com)



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Hi Loïc,

Unfortunately, I do have the original black and white photographs from **Roberta Riddle**. But many of the pictures are very small scrapbook pictures and not the best quality, like this one where the photo is 1.5 inches by 2.5 inches. I've had similar small photos from other people as well. I don't know what kind of camera or prints they used. But I'll send you my original scans,



Bob Barrett

Hi Bob – Thanks for all you do in keeping the 517<sup>th</sup> alive in the memories of the sons and daughters of the troopers. I've attached an updated copy of the Chronology that I've been working on. As I've always said, it's a work in progress, and this is simply the latest iteration. Would you mind removing the old version for the website and substituting this one? I still have a long way to go and hope to have another update in a few months. Let me know if you have questions. Thanks, and be well!

Mark Landreth

Wow. Mark has assembled this unbelievably detailed document, "*A Chronology of the 517th PIR (With a Focus on E Company and 2nd Battalion)*". So far this document is 138 pages, and still growing. He has entries from dozens of sources, with all sources documented.

Here is a very short sample from March 1945. I will post it on the website very soon. -- BB

|  |  |                        |                                    |  |
|--|--|------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 3/1/45   |  | 517 <sup>th</sup> PRCT | 13 <sup>th</sup> Airborne Division |  |
| The 517 <sup>th</sup> PRCT is attached to 13th Airborne Division.  |  |                        |                                    |  |
| Mid-March 1945   |  | 517 <sup>th</sup> PRCT | 13 <sup>th</sup> Airborne Division | Letter dated 7/9/02 from Robert H. Newberry, Captain, C.O., E Company                                    |
| After we were in Joigny for a few weeks we were ordered to move to an airfield outside of Liege, Belgium and prepare for a jump across the Rhine River ( <i>possibly Operation CHOKER?</i> ). While we were then waiting to jump, General Patton over ran the jump zone and our mission was canceled. Shortly after that on May 9th, 1945, the war ended and we were ordered to return to Joigny once again. |  |                        |                                    |  |
| 3/22/45  |  | 517 <sup>th</sup> PRCT | 13 <sup>th</sup> Airborne Division | General Order #24, Section I - CAMPAIGNS, WORLD WAR II-List of battles and campaigns. Dated 4 March 1947 |



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

517th committed to the Central Europe Campaign - The parameters of the campaign were the areas occupied by troops assigned to the European Theater of Operations, east of a line 10 miles west of the Rhine River between Switzerland and the Waal River until 28 March 1945, and thereafter east of the east bank of the Rhine. The duration was 22 March to 11 May 1945.

|         |  |                        |                                    |  |   |
|---------|--|------------------------|------------------------------------|--|---|
| 3/24/45 |  | 517 <sup>th</sup> PRCT | 13 <sup>th</sup> Airborne Division |  | "Ridgway's Paratroopers" by Clay Blair, pp. 440 |
|---------|--|------------------------|------------------------------------|--|---|

FAAA (First Allied Airborne Army) had originally earmarked three divisions for VARSITY: Miley's 17th, Chapman's 13th and Bols's 6th British. Owing to the airlift shortage, early in the more detailed - and realistic - planning it became clear that one full division had to be eliminated. Inasmuch as VARSITY was to be in support of Montgomery, the British 6th Airborne Division (the in process of transferring from Holland to England in order to utilize British aircraft) had to be retained in the lineup, and one American division had to be scrubbed. Because it was combat hardened and most of it had not yet made a combat jump (the 505th had) Ridgway chose to keep Miley's 17th Airborne Division. The British 6th would consist of about seventy-five hundred men, the 17th about ninety-eight hundred men - a total force of about seventeen thousand.

|                  |  |                        |                                    |  |   |
|------------------|--|------------------------|------------------------------------|--|---|
| Early April 1945 |  | 517 <sup>th</sup> PRCT | 13 <sup>th</sup> Airborne Division |  | "Ridgway's Paratroopers" by Clay Blair, pp. 478 |
|------------------|--|------------------------|------------------------------------|--|---|

As the US and British forces sped across Europe into the heart of German, the XVIII Airborne Corps had been left behind.....The XVIII Airborne Corps, Ridgway learned, was to be assigned four infantry divisions for its Ruhr campaign. Ridgway (and Hodges) naturally wanted - and asked for - the 82nd and 101st, but Eisenhower and Bradley turned them down.

The 82nd and 101st had been positioned on the west bank of the Rhine in the Dusseldorf-Koln area as strategic reserve, less Taylor's 501 and Gavin's 508., which had been detached and put on standby for possible platoon-size jumps into POW camps (Operation JUBILANT). Nor were the 13th and 17th available. Simpson, hanging on to the 17th, intended to use it in his sector of the Ruhr campaign; the 13th was still on standby for a possible jump into the alleged Nazi redoubt in Bavaria (Operation EFFECTIVE).

|                |  |                        |                                    |  |   |
|----------------|--|------------------------|------------------------------------|--|---|
| Mid April 1945 |  | 517 <sup>th</sup> PRCT | 13 <sup>th</sup> Airborne Division |  | "Ridgway's Paratroopers" by Clay Blair, pp. 496 |
|----------------|--|------------------------|------------------------------------|--|---|

Eisenhower and Bradley remained convinced almost to the end that Hitler and his cronies would withdraw from Berlin to a "redoubt" in the mountains of southern Bavaria and wage a tough, bitter fight to the death.

Chapman's green 13th Airborne Division had been put on standby for a possible jump into the "redoubt" area (Operation EFFECTIVE). But when Bradley commandeered IX Troop Carrier aircraft to support his April drive to the Elba with ammo and gasoline, the jump had to be canceled, in part for want of airlift.

Another reason for the cancellation was that Eisenhower and Bradley wanted a more powerful and experienced force to cut off or invade the redoubt.

Accordingly, Patton's Third and Sandy Patch's Seventh armies were ordered to converge in Bavaria near Munich.

After the collapse of the Ruhr "pocket," when the 101st was no longer required as a strategic reserve, SHEAF assigned it to Patch's Seventh Army for the redoubt campaign, more or less in place of the 13th Airborne Division.



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I have a hand-written 517 poem. It's not dated. It was with my grandma. Would you be interested?

I believe it was my dad's brother **Kelmer Garrett**. Do you by chance have a record of him? Let me know if you can read the poem.

**Dede Garrett**

## A Poem of the 517th Infantry

Here is the story of our company from the beginning

We took basic at Toccoa and jumped at Benning

From there we went to Camp Mackall

And for a while stayed on the ball

Later on, at our Colonel's request

Broke army records in a physical test

Then came maneuvers in the mud in rain

But it didn't change our boys; they stayed the same

So from there we went to P.O.E.

Then boarded a ship for over the sea

For sixteen days on the salty brine

We docked and we were shortly put on the line

We were not there long when they drew us back

For they had planned another attack

Then came the night to load in the plane

The boys still joked and talked the same

Three hours we flew in the night

Then came the long awaited red light

Yet in our faces, no fear could show

We hit the ground; All was calm and still

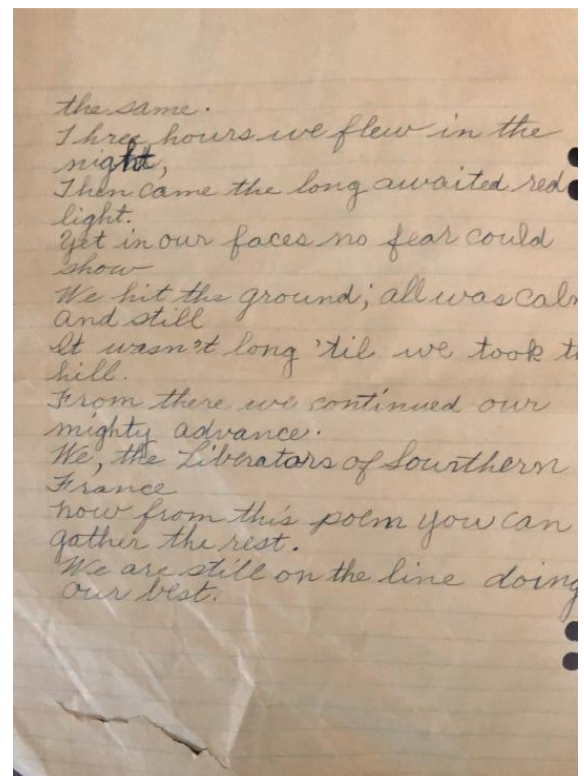
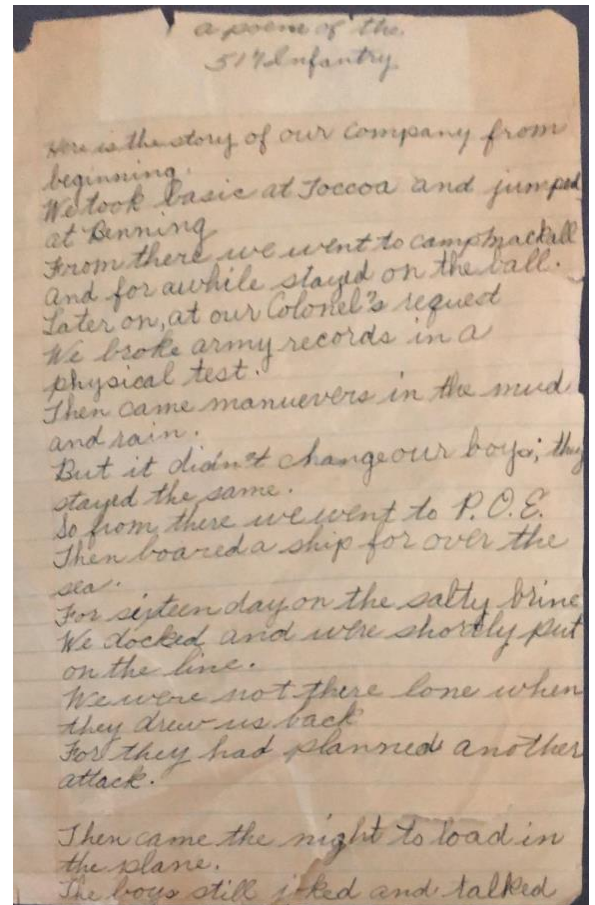
It wasn't long till we took the hill

From there we continued our mighty advance

We the liberators of Southern France

Now from this poem you can gather the rest

We are still on the line doing our best.







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Thanks, Dede. I will be reprinting this in the next MailCall newsletter, later today. See: <http://517prct.org/mailcall/2467.pdf>, but give me until later in the day to post it.

Your Grand-Uncle was **Kelmer M. Garrett**, Technician Grade 5 with the Service Company of the 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team. I can see in my records that he was with the 517<sup>th</sup> in Italy, and jumped into Southern France in August 1944. He was wounded (maybe twice) in Southern France in late 1944 and rejoined the unit in Belgium during the Battle of the Bulge.

Regards,

Bob Barrett

Dear Bob:

Loved the picture of **John Lissner**. I had not seen this picture before.

John was my wonderful godfather. Dad (**Dick Seitz**) later told me when I asked how he decided to ask Uncle John to be my godfather, he said he didn't know what possessed him to do so given what a hell raiser John was, in addition to being a great officer. Uncle John proved to be an exceptional godfather with whom I stayed close until his death and who always guided me to be a dynamic Catholic.

**Pat Seitz**



Wishing a Happy Birthday to **Babbie Boyle**.

**Paul Abbene**

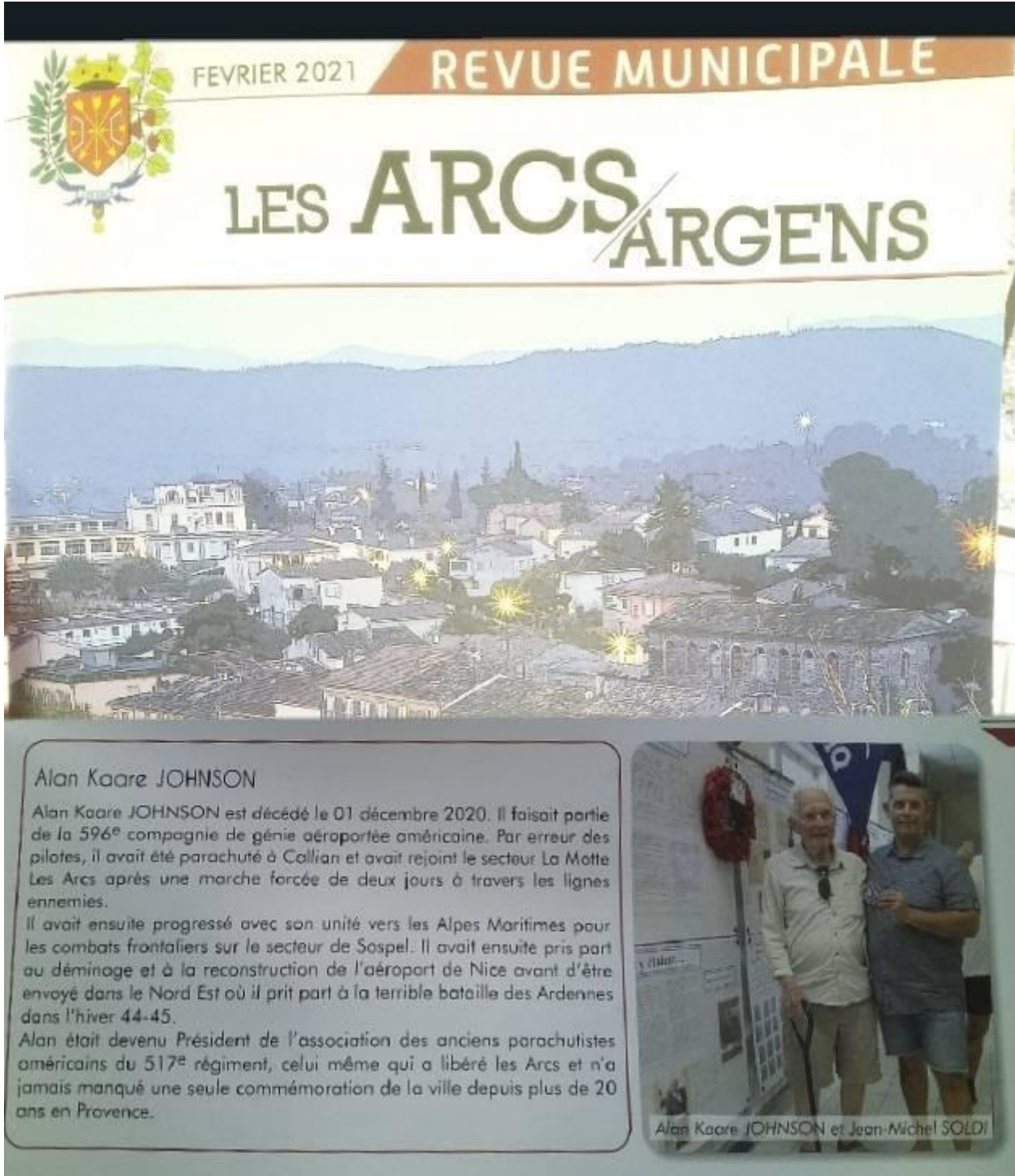
[It was Babbie Boyle's 99<sup>th</sup> birthday on May 3.] -- BB



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

Thank you madame mayor of Les Ville de les Arcs sur Argens to dedicate a page to our friend **Allan Johnson**

- **Jean Michel Soldi**







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## Administrivia

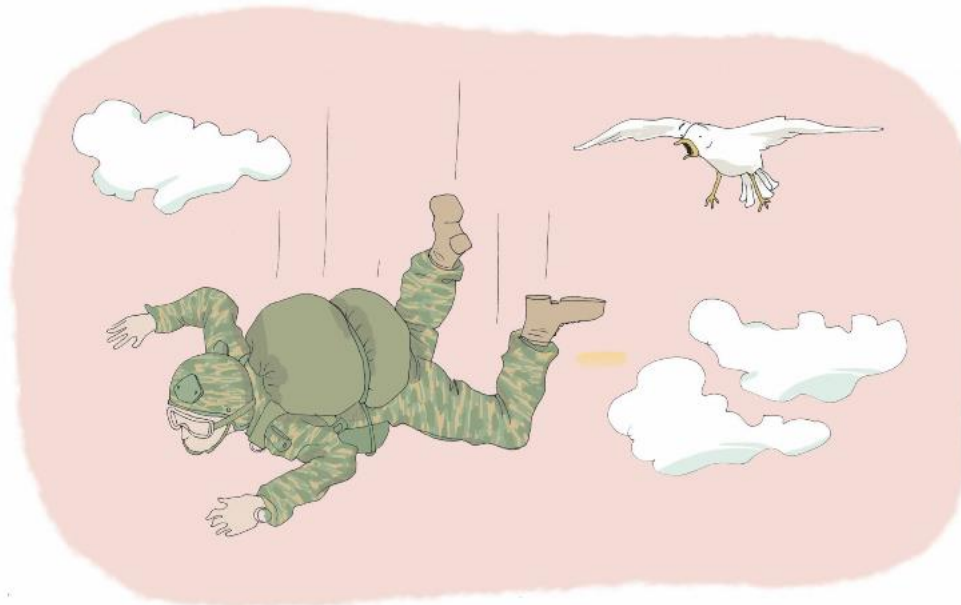
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- If you send me email that you do not want included in MailCall, just label it as FYEO.
- I now understand how Ben could get confused about what he already posted and what he didn't. If I miss something, please just send it again.

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Navied

*“Good god, man, flap harder!”*