DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 3RD BATTALION, 509TH INFANTRY, (AIRBORNE
724 POSTAL SERVICE LOOP # 8500
JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, AK 99505

REPLY TO ATTENTION OF

APVR-ABNB-CDR

18 November 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Welcome to the 3rd Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment (Airborne)

1. I would like to personally welcome you to 3rd Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment (Airborne), 4-25 Brigade Combat Team (Airborne) at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. We are looking forward to you joining our Arctic Airborne Family.

2. The Geronimo Battalion has a long and rich history of service during times of war - most recently in Iraq and Afghanistan, where the Soldiers of the 509th made great strides in the fight against terror. I am very proud to serve in this highly decorated Battalion, and I am certain you too will take pride in standing among the ranks of these Paratroopers.

3. Over the coming months we have much to accomplish and very little time to do it in. The Battalion will be participating in Operation Cobra Gold in Thailand, a rotation at the JRTC at Fort Polk, and preparation for our deployment to Afghanistan in the fall of 2011. We will do our best to give you time to settle in, but be prepared to hit the ground running when you arrive at Fort Richardson.

4. You and your family are important to us, and transitioning to Alaska is a challenging feat. If you need assistance or simply have questions, I encourage you to call the Battalion Family Readiness Support Assistant, Ms. Karla Ayala, at karla.j.ayala@us.army.mil or (907) 384-2857.

5. Point of contact for this memorandum is CPT Jared N. Davis at (907) 384-3476, jared.n.davis@usarpac.army.mil.

SHAWN L. DANIEL
LTC, IN
Commanding

2 Encls
1. 3rd BN 509th IN REGT (ABN) History
2. 3rd BN 509th IN REGT (ABN) Calendar Highlights

HISTORY OF THE 3-509TH INFANTRY (ABN)

The history of the 3-509th begins with the creation of the 504th Parachute Infantry Battalion. Originally constituted on March 14, 1941 Company A, 504th Parachute Infantry Battalion was officially activated on October 5, 1941 at Fort Benning, Georgia.

The 504th moved to Fort Bragg, North Carolina for training in February 1942. There it joined with the 503rd Parachute Infantry Battalion to form the 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment. On 24 February 1942, the 504th became Company D, 503rd PIR.

The 503rd sailed to Scotland in June 1942, becoming the first parachute unit to go overseas in World War II. It was attached to the British 1st Airborne Division for training. The training included mass tactical jumps from C-47 aircraft at 350 feet, extensive night training, speed marching for 10 miles to and from the training area daily and, on one occasion, 32 miles in 11 hours. On 2 November, the 503rd was staging for Operation Torch, where it would spearhead the allied invasion of North Africa. On that day, as C-47's flew over the English countryside, the 503rd was redesignated Company D, 509th Parachute Infantry. The 509th paratroopers were ready to jump into history's most devastating war with the first American airborne assault.

Operation Torch, which began on 8 November 1942, was the longest airborne operation ever attempted, up to that point. The 509th flew in C-47s over 1600 miles from England to seize Tafarquay Airport in Oran, Algeria by parachute assault. One week later, after repacking their own chutes (every man was his own rigger), the battalion conducted its second combat jump on 15 November 1942 to secure the airfield at Youk-Les-Bains near the Tunisian border. From this base the battalion conducted combined operations with various French forces against the German Afrika Korps in Tunisia. One unit, the 3rd Regiment of Zouaves (French Algerian Infantry), awarded their own Regimental Crest as a gesture of respect to the American Paratroopers. This badge was awarded to the battalion commander on 15 November 1942 by the 3rd Zouaves' Regimental Commander and is, to this day, authorized for wear by all members of the 509th Infantry.

The invasion of Italy began in September 1943 with an amphibious assault at Salerno. The 509th was initially in reserve with the 82nd Airborne Division in Sicily until the Italian beachhead was in danger. On 14 September, while the 82nd Airborne Division dropped inside American lines to reinforce the beachhead, the 509th jumped behind enemy lines to cut supply trains leading to the German defensive positions. On its third parachute assault at Avellino, Italy the 509th found their DZ had been occupied the night before by the 6th German Armored Panzer Division. After landing directly on the 6th Panzer Division, the 509th operated independently for some two weeks behind German lines in company and platoon size elements. Despite its inability to fight as a unified battalion, the 509th successfully carried out its mission by creating havoc in the German rear area. Separate units scrounged for food and water among the Italian civilians until the unit finally reassembled in Salerno on 28 September 1943. Total casualties were 123 killed or captured including the 509th commander and his entire staff.

On 10 December 1943 the battalion was reorganized and redesignated Company A, 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion, and recognized as an independent unit. During this period, October through December 1943, the battalion operated with Darby' s Rangers, and fought as Mountain Infantry in the high ground above Venafro, Italy.

The next major operation for the 509th was an amphibious assault (represented by the fifth arrowhead on our unit crest) at Anzio, Italy, on 21 January 1944. Still operating with Darby's Rangers, the 509th was in the first assault wave of the invasion force. The Rangers sent two battalions against an elite German

Armored Division on the beachhead, while the 509th was assigned a critical defensive position which they held despite heavy losses. For its heroic actions in stopping the desperate German counterattack at Carano, Italy, the 509th was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation, the first parachute unit so honored. In addition to the battalion award of 29 February, Charlie Company won a second Presidential Unit Citation for a night attack on 14 March. It was in these skirmishes near Carano, Italy that Corporal Paul B. Huff became the first and only 509th paratrooper to be awarded the Medal of Honor.

After Anzio, on 14 August 1944, the 509th conducted its fourth parachute assault at Le Muy, once again spearheading the allied invasion into southern France. December 1944 saw the 509th attached to the 101st Airborne Division in time for the Battle of the Bulge. In another defensive mission, against incredible odds, the 509th held out from 22-30 December at Sadzot, Belgium, against two Panzer Grenadier Battalions, both elite German mechanized infantry units, and earned the battalion its second Presidential Unit Citation. In January, tasked with an offensive mission, the 509th advanced in the hills of St. Vith, Belgium, capturing and holding critical high ground for the passage of the 7th Armored Division. After the action, which left only seven officers and forty-eight enlisted men in the entire battalion, the 509th fell victim to reorganization one last time.

Toward the end of World War II, separate Parachute Infantry Battalions were no longer considered necessary, and the 509th was disbanded on 1 March 1944, with the survivors and returning wounded being sent to the 82nd or 13th Airborne Divisions as replacements. The 509th was later reconstituted on 12 May 1947 in the Regular Army as Company A, 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion, and redesignated on 27 March 1963 as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 509th Infantry, with subsequent assignment to the 8th Infantry Division.

In January 1973, the 3rd Battalion of the 509th Infantry was activated. At the same time, the existing 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 509th Infantry were designated as dual-capable, mechanized and airborne. To provide greater mobility to the Mediterranean area, the 3rd Battalion of the 509th Infantry was redesignated as the 1st Battalion of the 509th Infantry (Airborne Battalion Combat Team.) On 1 September 1973, the 509th was relieved from assignment to the 8th Army and subsequently moved to Vicenza, Italy. In 1975, one company of the 509th moved to the continental United States to fill the requirement for a company sized Airborne/ Pathfinder unit to support the United States Army Aviation Center at Fort Rucker, Alabama. The redesignation of the 509th Airborne Battalion Combat Team in Italy as the 4th Battalion, 325th Infantry in July 1983 left C Company, 509th Infantry (Airborne/Pathfinder) as the only remaining unit of the Regiment. In May of 1993 509th was relieved from assignment in Army training and Doctrine Command and 1-509th PIR began duties as the permanent OPFOR at Ft. Polk's JRTC.

Nearly a decade later, the 509th once again unfurled its colors to serve in the Global War on Terror. 3-509th Infantry (ABN) was activated on 15 September 2005 to join America's only airborne brigade in the Pacific theater. Just as the 509th paratroopers of the Second World War, the 509th once again stands ready to fight anytime anywhere to defend American freedom.

Lineage

Constituted 14 March 1941 in the Army of the United States as Company C, 504th Parachute Battalion

Activated 5 October 1941 at Fort Benning, Georgia

Reorganized and redesignated 24 February 1942 as Company F, 503d Parachute Infantry

Reorganized and redesignated 2 November 1942 as Company F, 509th Parachute Infantry

Reorganized and redesignated 10 December 1943 as Company C, 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion

Disbanded 1 March 1945 in France

Reconstituted 12 May 1947 in the Regular Army as Company C, 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion

Redesignated 1 April 1963 as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3d Battalion, 509th Infantry

(Organic elements constituted 15 January 1972)

Battalion activated 15 January 1973 in Germany

Inactivated 31 August 1973 in Germany

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3d Battalion, 509th Infantry, redesignated 1 July 1975 as Company C, 509th Infantry, and activated at Fort Rucker, Alabama

Transferred 2 October 1988 to the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command and reorganized at Fort Rucker, Alabama

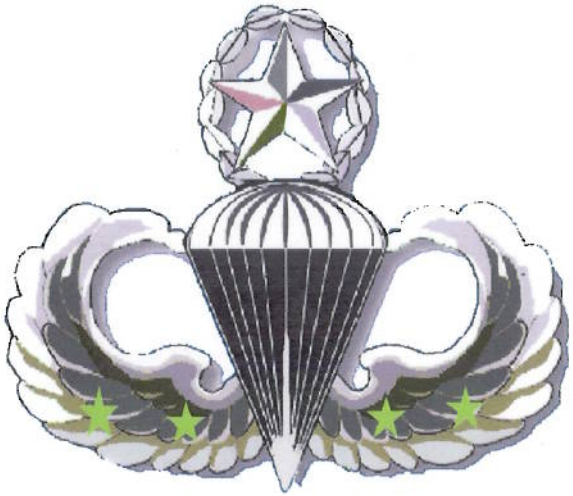
Inactivated 31 May 1993 at Fort Rucker, Alabama and withdrawn from the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command

Activated 15 September 2005 as 3d Battalion, 509th Infantry (Airborne) at Fort Richardson, Alaska and assigned to 4th Brigade, 25th Infantry Division

Campaign Participation Credit

World War II

Algeria—French Morocco (with arrowhead)
Tunisia (with arrowhead)
Naples—Foggia (with arrowhead)
Anzio (with arrowhead)
Rome—Arno
Southern France (with arrowhead)
Rhineland
Ardennes—Alsace



Distinctive Unit Insignia

Coat of Arms

Symbolism: The stylized gold figure of a parachutist on a black background is adapted from the device worn by the regiment during World War II and by which it was known throughout the Mediterranean Theater. The red field alludes to the red berets worn by the British 1st Airborne Division and the close association between it and the regiment during World War II in England and North Africa. The nebuly (heraldic delineation for water) white and blue bars (the colors blue and white are used for infantry) refer to the record-breaking parachute flight from England to North Africa on 8 November 1942. The two segments of the wavy blue bar simulate the streamers of the Distinguished Unit Citations awarded for the gallant actions at Carano, Italy and Liege, Belgium, and in being a heraldic symbol of water refers to the amphibious landing on the Anzio-Nettuno beachhead on 22 January 1944. The black pile simulates a parachute jump; the two sides refer to the ground defense the organization participated in during the Anzio and Ardennes-Alsace (Battle of the Bulge) Campaigns. The five arrowheads are for the five assault landings made by the regiment in World War II. A silver scroll with the black letters, "ALL THE WAY" is the motto of the Airborne and the regiment. The "prowling desert jackal over the crescent moon" is the regimental crest of the French 3d Zouaves Regiment, awarded by the Commander to 509th troops for gallantry during the airborne assault on Youk-Les-Bains, Tunisia.

Decorations

Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered LIEGE, BELGIUM

Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered CARANO, ITALY

Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered CARANO, ITALY – March 1944

French Croix de Guerre with Silver Star, World War II, Streamer embroidered MUY EN PROVENCE

Cited in the Order of the Day of the Belgian Army for action in the ARDENNES

Cited in the Order of the Day of the Belgian Army for action at ST. VITH

Insignia of the French 3d Zouaves Regiment

Insignia of the 3d Zouaves Regiment

Presidential Unit Citation (3 Awards)

French Fouragerre of the Croix de Guerre

3/509th Battle Streamers

For participation in the Algeria-French Morocco campaign. The unit spearheaded the assault with the first-ever parachute assault by an American airborne unit on 8 November 1942 into Oran, Algeria, also completing the longest airborne assault in history (1,600 miles).

For participation in the Tunisian campaign. The unit spearheaded the assault with a parachute assault into Youk-Les-Bains, Tunisia on 15 November 1942 where they fought against General Rommel's famed Afrika Corps.

For participation in the Naples-Foggia campaign. The unit spearheaded the assault with a parachute assault into Avellino, Italy, an area heavily occupied by a German Panzer Division.

For participation in the Anzio campaign. The unit spearheaded the invasion with an amphibious assault on 21 January 1944, and fought along side the famed "Darby Rangers".

For it's participation in the Anzio campaign, the unit was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation embroidered "Carano, Italy". In this campaign, CPL Paul B. Huff became the first U.S. Paratrooper and only 509th soldier to earn the Medal of Honor.

For heroic action during a night attack outside Carano, Italy on 14 March, 1944, Company C received a second Presidential Unit Citation.

For participation in the Rome-Arno campaign. During the spring and summer of 1944, the 509th fought its way up the Italian peninsula.

For participation in the Southern France campaign. The unit spearheaded the invasion with a parachute assault on 15 August 1944 into Le Muy, France. This was the fourth combat jump for the 509th.

For it's participation in the Southern France campaign, the 509th was awarded the French Croix De Guerre. The streamer embroidered "Muy En Province" represents that award.

For participation in the Rhineland campaign.

For participation in the Ardennes-Alsace campaign. The 509th was attached to the 101st Airborne Division during the Battle of the Bulge in the winter of 1944-1945.

The 509th was awarded a third Presidential Unit Citation embroidered "Leige, Belgium" during December 1944 for contributing to the destruction of elements of the 25th Panzer Grenadier Regiment, preventing the enemy from cutting the Grandmeniel-Erezee Road and slowing the enemy thrust.

Medal of Honor

Corporal Paul B. Huff of the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion was the first paratrooper to receive the Medal of Honor.

Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life above and beyond the call of duty, in action on 8 February 1944, near Carano, Italy. Cpl. Huff volunteered to lead a 6-man patrol with the mission of determining the location and strength of an enemy unit which was delivering fire on the exposed right flank of his company. The terrain over which he had to travel consisted of exposed, rolling ground, affording the enemy excellent visibility. As the patrol advanced, its members were subjected to small arms and machine gun fire and a concentration of mortar fire, shells bursting within 5 to 10 yards of them and bullets striking the ground at their feet. Moving ahead of his patrol, Cpl. Huff drew fire from 3 enemy machine guns and a 20 mm. weapon. Realizing the danger confronting his patrol, he advanced alone under deadly fire through a minefield and arrived at a point within 75 yards of the nearest machine gun position. Under direct fire from the rear machine gun, he crawled the remaining 75 yards to the closest emplacement, killed the crew with his submachine gun and destroyed the gun. During this act he fired from a kneeling position which drew fire from the other positions, enabling him to estimate correctly the strength and location of the enemy. Still under concentrated fire, he returned to his patrol and led his men to safety. As a result of the information he gained, a patrol in strength sent out that afternoon, 1 group under the leadership of Cpl. Huff, succeeded in routing an enemy company of 125 men, killing 27 Germans and capturing 21 others, with a loss of only 3 patrol members. Cpl. Huff's intrepid leadership and daring combat skills reflect the finest traditions of the American infantryman.

Historical Highlights

- ★ First U.S. Airborne unit deployed overseas, arriving at Land's End, England on 10 June 1942.
- ★ Executed the lowest altitude mass parachute jump in history, exiting the aircraft at 143 feet in England during June 1942 rehearsals.
- ★ Initially awarded the "right" to wear red berets by British MG Sir Frederick A.M. Browning, Commander, 1st Airborne Division, who made the 509th honorary "Red Devils."
- ★ Performed America's first combat parachute insertion on 8 November 1942, following the longest combat invasion in history, of 1600 miles from England to North Africa.
- ★ Conducted five combat jumps during World War II: three into North Africa, one into Italy, and one into France.
- ★ Led an amphibious invasion with Darby's Rangers at Anzio, Italy, on 22 January 1944, and subsequently participated in a successful allied campaign that lasted 70 days.
- ★ First airborne unit awarded the Presidential Unit Citation, 29 February 1944. Also awarded a second Citation on 14 March 1944.
- ★ Paul B. Huff, a member of the 509th, was the first American paratrooper to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor on 29 February 1944 at Anzio, Italy.
- ★ Participated in the Battle of the Bulge.

1Q- Calendar Highlights

1 Oct - 11 NOV: QRF- (24 hour recall is the most restrictive standard). It may inhibit some family travel plans- On-going

19-27 Oct: Battalion (-) deploys to YTA (vic Wainwright) (HHC, B, D, F Companies)

27-28 Oct: Parent/teacher conferences (ASD- check with school for release times)

28 Oct: Key Caller Training @Bldg 600 6-8pm POC Tracie West 384-7687

28-29 Oct: Parent/teacher conferences (MatSu- No school)

29 Oct: No School (ASD)- Professional Development Day

1 Nov: Key Caller and VMIS training @ Ed Center 9-1PM POC Tracie West @ 384-7687

1 Nov: Comp time for those who deployed to YTA

5-7 Nov: Strong Bonds Marriage Retreat

7 Nov End of Daylight Savings Time(turn clocks back an hour)

10 Nov: CAC & FRG Steering Committee Meeting

11-14 Nov: Veteran's Day Weekend

18 Nov: Hail & Farewell (HHC)

25-28 Nov: Thanksgiving

25-26 Nov: No School(Both Districts)

8 Dec: CAC & FRG Steering Committee Meeting

10-27 Dec: QRF - (24 hour recall is the most restrictive standard). It may inhibit some family travel plans.

17 Dec: End of 2nd Quarter (both districts) (NO School for ASD)

20 Dec: 1/2 Day Schedule Starts

20-31: Winter Break(Both Districts)

25-27 Dec: Christmas Weekend

271200 Dec 10- 092359 Jan 11: Battalion Block Leave

* Company level overnight/late night training will vary from Company to Company. I'll let the Co Cdrs address that individually.

RED: Training Holidays
GREEN: FRG Events
BLUE: BN/TRNG Events
BLACK: Other
Orange: ASD/Matsu school dates

2Q- Calendar Highlights

271200 Dec 10 - 092359 Jan 11: Battalion Block Leave
10 Jan – 4 Feb: Battalion CONSKILLS- Fort Richardson
12 Jan: CAC & FRG Steering Committee Meeting-
14-17 Jan: Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend
15-17 Jan: Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend (ASD- No School)

4-6 Feb: Strong Bonds- Single Soldiers
7-17 Feb: Company Focused Airborne Operations
7-18 Feb: Able Company- Cobra Gold 2011- Thailand
9 Feb: CAC (Leadership in Thailand- No FRG Meeting in Feb?)
16-17 Feb: Parent/teacher conferences (ASD- check with school for release times)
18 Feb: No School (ASD)- Professional Development Day
18-21 Feb: Presidents Day Weekend
19-21 Presidents Day Weekend (ASD- No School)
24 Feb: Hail & Farewell
25-27 Feb: Strong Bonds Marriage Retreat
28 Feb – 16 Mar: Battalion Weapons Density- Fort Richardson

4 Mar: End of 3rd Quarter (both districts) (ASD- No School)
5-12 Mar: APD Spring Break
9 Mar: CAC and FRG Steering Committee Meeting
10 Mar – 2 May: QRF - (24 hour recall is the most restrictive standard). It may inhibit some family travel plans.
11 Mar: Training Holiday
21 Mar – 8 Apr: Team/Squad LFX- Fort Richardson
31 Mar: State-assigned Testing Day (ASD)

RED: Training Holidays
GREEN: FRG Events
BLUE: BN/TRNG Events
BLACK: Other
Orange: ASD/Matsu school dates