

OC24-69, 50th Company, June 2026 – AT EASE!

Hello 50th Company:

I have a few things to report on this month, so let's get to it.

TAPS - RIP: We recently confirmed the passing of two of our classmates and friends: Gary Bottoms and David Hanner. Gary Bottoms, a member of the 6th Platoon, passed away on December 8, 2025. David Hanner was a member of the 1st Platoon; he passed away on February 28, 2025. The obituaries for Gary and David can be found on the following links:

[Gary J Bottoms](#)
[David Hanner obit](#)

Using the links, you are able to leave belated messages for their families and friends. Both classmates were good men and fine comrades. May they rest in peace.

“CITIZEN SOLDIER” by BRIAN WALRATH: One of our 50th Company "stars," Brian Walrath, has been at it again. He recently published an update to his book, Citizen Soldier. As you will remember his first edition has a lot in it about 50th Company, and the second has even more. Rather than try to explain the changes to his newest edition, I will let Brian do it:

"I've finished a second edition of "Citizen Soldier", which is different from the first edition in a few ways. Most importantly, it contains additional information and stories about Bob Arnold, Jim Durkin, Tom Roberts, and Rodney Shortell. It also uses a higher quality paper that allows for color pictures. Plus, it corrects some errors and typos from the first. Unfortunately, primarily because of the higher quality paper, I've had to increase the price to \$21.00 to be above Amazon's minimum of \$19.43. This gives me a royalty of a whopping \$.94 per book.

Lastly, I've also created a Kindle edition, for those who prefer that media. There are still some layout issues in the Kindle edition which I have not resolved, but nothing that has a major effect.

I doubt that many folks who already have the first edition will rush to buy the second, but I thought I would inform you about it in case you know others who might be interested.

Thanks again to all of you who shared your stories.
Brian"

Gents: I have read the second edition. I can tell you that it is excellent and will certainly bring back lots of memories. Besides, at \$.94 per book Brian will need to sell a bunch of them to maintain his current life style. All kidding aside, way to go Brian! We are very proud of you. Lou

REUNION NEWS: By now, you have all seen the barrage of emails and videos put out by our CMT (Crack Marketing Team), so I won't repeat the details of what we have already said. It's all on the Santa Fe Reunion Page of our website.

I would, however, remind you that we are within 90 days of our "muster" in Santa Fe. If you are still considering whether to join us in Santa Fe, now is the time to decide. The Planning Team has everything in place, and we are ready to go. Also, there are several positive surprises in store, so please join us if you are able.

If you haven't noticed, we are all now Octogenarians (or just short of this honored status). Everything we do these days is more complicated and difficult to accomplish. So, this may well be 50th Company's Swan Song reunion. My Bottom Line: Please join us if you can in Santa Fe, September 6 thru 9. All the registration information is on the website. If you decide to come, even if it's your first reunion, you definitely will not be sorry!

SHOOT THE BREEZE ZOOMS: Every month or so we have Company-wide Zooms where classmates get together for very informal "shoot the breeze" sessions. These provide us with an easy way to catch up with our OCS buddies. There is no agenda and we only have two rules: first, to socialize in a friendly manner; and second, not to let the country's divisive politics interfere with our friendships. We have had anywhere from six to 20 classmates meet together on these sessions. We hope you will join us for the next one, even if you have never attended before. Keep your eye on your email in-box for the next announcement or email me and ask for information on the next Shoot the Breeze. We would love to see you!

Fourth of July Celebrates 250 Years: As we approach the July 4th holiday, a couple of things come to mind. First, how lucky are we to experience the 250th birthday of this great nation that we live in. As soldiers who met our nation's call, we are a special part of that history. Second, July 4th is a special day for many of us since it marks the 56th anniversary of the day we shipped out for the greatest adventure of our lives, Vietnam. July 4, 1970 is burned into my memory as one of the toughest days of my life. Who can ever forget having to say goodbye to your loved ones, possibly for the last time? So, as I enjoy the celebration on the Fourth of July I will be thinking of all you. Have a safe holiday.

That is all for now. As always, thanks to Brian Flora for his edits.

Stay Healthy; Stay Well; and, above all else, Stay Positive.

Lou Lallo