

OC24-69 February 5, 2024 Reunion Planning Group Zoom Summary

The 50th Company Reunion Planning Group met via Zoom on February 5, 2024 to discuss our October 6 – 10 reunion in Springfield, Illinois. In attendance were Brian Flora; Steve Porter; Brian Walrath; Peter Nowlan; Bob Hines; Bill Thoroughgood; Craig Biggs; Jim Durkin; Scott Davis; and Lou Lallo. The meeting was chaired by Lou and this summary was prepared by Brian Flora and Lou.

1. Committee Reports:

- Comrades In Distress: Brian F. has fortunately received no bad news from any of 50th Company's classmates.
- Website: Bob said that visits to our website have dropped from a high of about 800 in the wake of the KC reunion to around 200 over the last 30 days. He attributes this to the lack of new content and videos. We will ramp things up as we launch videos and messaging for our October reunion. Bob also noted that there have been 17 views of videos on the website over the past 30 days.
- Videos: Scott ensured the group that he has a number of videos queued up that will be coming out periodically as we get closer to the Springfield reunion. Scott said his first video on the Kansas City reunion is ready to go and suggested it go out this week. Bob said that it would go out the following day.
- Missing Classmates: Bob noted that that we have tried multiple times and ways to contact the remaining six unaccounted for contacts (Gary Foster, Fred Hedgepeth, George Schmalhofer, Samuel Hagaman, Frank Coy, and John Curley), but still have not heard back from them. We are pretty sure our contact information is accurate, but we are unsure why they haven't responded to our overtures.

2. Reunion Planning:

- **Financing:** In order to estimate the per person reunion fees to cover hotel space usage, breakfasts, the pre-banquet cocktail, the dinner, photos, AV equipment, etc., Scott prepared a budget estimate. The cost of items covered by the reunion fee will be about the same as last year in Kansas City, but he noted his estimate is based on 50 individuals attending so the overall cost could go up or down depending on the final number of attendees. He also noted that last year we were about \$4000 short and had to dip into our reserve of donated funds to make ends meet. This year, so far, we have about \$4000 in donations to cover shortfalls. Scott recommended that the per person registration fee should be \$330, which is \$20 less than Kansas city, but still has a small cushion built into it for unexpected expenses. (Brian F. noted that the hotel room rate and parking is about \$70 cheaper per day than Kansas City.) **Bottom Line:** The Planning Group accepted Scott's recommendation. Information on how to register at the hotel and how to submit your \$330 per person reunion fee will be emailed to everyone by the end of the week.

- **Promotion of the Reunion:**

- Instead of sending out multiple surveys asking who's planning on coming, we are encouraging classmates to start making their hotel reservations as soon as possible. Reservations made, although they can be cancelled up until 24 hours before check-in, will provide a better indication of intent to attend than surveys.
- Scott has six more videos in the works which we hope will help promote the reunion. We decided to get one out every three or so weeks.
- Bob will send out the video that is already teed up.
- Brian, by the end of the week, will send out detailed instructions on how to reserve the hotel rooms and how to submit your reunion fee.
- Scott proposed the following motto/theme for the banquet:
"5th Reunion: "50th Company at 55." Lots of fives!

- We discussed a preliminary agenda for the reunion:
- Monday: optional morning and afternoon tours; late PM cocktails and a slide show presentation on Lincoln's ten-day Funeral Pageant by Brian F.
- Tuesday: optional morning and afternoon tours; late PM happy hour and photos; the banquet with a program to include a toast by Craig Biggs; a prayer by Mike Eberhardt; a new poem by Brian Walrath; and an appearance by a funny looking dude with a beard and a stovepipe hat.
- Brian F. offered to prepare a draft reunion schedule that gives a better sense of how things will unfold. The only "must-attend" event is the banquet. There are lots of interesting suggestions of things to do in Springfield, but they are all optional.

3. Future Meetings:

- No February, 2024 Shoot The breeze.
- March, 2024 Reunion Planning Group Meeting: Monday, March 18, 2024 at 2pm, ET.
- March, 2024 Shoot The Breeze: To Be determined.

Lou Lallo and Brian Flora