

# VERTICAL RISE

SUPPORTING THE SOLDIERS AND FAMILIES OF SECOND RANGER BATTALION



Volume 1

The Official Newsletter of the Pointe du Hoc Foundation

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## August 11, 2016 Was a Good Night to be a Ranger

**R**anger Regatta II, 2016's annual fundraiser, was a huge success for the Foundation. The event yielded \$25,000 for our support activities in 2017.

The evening began at the Tacoma Yacht Club, with cocktails and a silent auction. Our 200 guests had an

opportunity to bid on goodies from trips to Hawaii and on the Amtrak Cascades train from Portland to Vancouver, to handmade quilts and imported Italian handbags, to two customized AR-15 rifles.

It was a Ranger support event, after all...

Once everyone got settled in, Foundation Chairman Mike Okita introduced Second Battalion Executive Officer Kitefre Oboho, who demonstrated the evolving Ranger taste in alcohol by concocting the historic Ranger Grog with several fellow Rangers. Once judged fit for consumption by the Battalion Commander, Ken Burgess, a taste was offered to our more adventurous guests.

Seventy-Five Rangers and spouses joined our guests at dinner, and set sail with them for a twilight cruise sponsored by the Tacoma Yacht Club. Entertainment and desserts were provided as our guests enjoyed the spectacular scenery around Commencement Bay.

The Foundation also recognized two very important people with special awards. Longtime supporter and contributor Joe Williams received an award for his ongoing, generous support to the Foundation. We also recognized Ranger Family Readiness Group member Laura Suders as our Volunteer of the Year.

Plans are already underway for our 2017 fundraiser, again planned for August. We'll be updating you right here, and via e-mail as our plan evolves. And as always, thank you so much for your generous support of the Foundation.

### **Director Profile: Mike Okita**

Second Battalion is a big part of our Foundation Chairman's life; when asked to give a bit more, he answered the bell



Mike Okita (at right) with a myopic Boba Fett, JBLM, 2011

**T**he Foundation benefits greatly from the Directors and Advisors who have worn the tab, and who understand in depth what the life is like and what Ranger families need to ease their burden.

Mike Okita's career in Second Ranger Battalion is long and distinguished, with tours of command for both a Company and the Battalion itself.

With the support of our other Directors, Mike spearheaded the effort to fund and build the Second Ranger Battalion Memorial that, now complete, adorns the field next to the battalion headquarters building,

Since accepting the Chairmanship of the Foundation, Mike has tirelessly supported the evolving mission of the Foundation. He has traveled all around the Sound to promote Pointe du Hoc, and his efforts have led to many new donors and partnerships from Seattle to Olympia.

In addition to his Ranger experience, Mike has occupied several executive leadership positions, including Brigade Commander, Joint Task Force-Bravo, Honduras; Chief of Staff, 82nd Airborne Division; Chief of Strategy, Multi-National Forces Iraq; and Executive Officer to the Multi-National Corps Commander, Iraq.

Mike is a graduate of the University of Dayton with a degree in Mathematics, and holds advanced degrees in Administration and National Security Strategy.

Mike continues to lead an excessively active life as the Director of Army Training Operations for Engility Corporation, a leading defense contractor based in Virginia. In this role he oversees training solutions and simulations support for customers throughout the Department of Defense.

Mike and his Nurse Practitioner wife Lynn live in DuPont Washington, where they spend time together when Mike is not on the road for his day job, fishing or participating in local Spartan Races

They are also the recent grandparents of Miles, a frequent visitor from the wilds of Wenatchee.

We are fortunate to have him with us.

Do you have a donor or Director you'd like to know better? How about an accomplishment you'd like to share with other friends of the Foundation? Just drop us a quick e-mail at [info@pointeduhocfoundation.com](mailto:info@pointeduhocfoundation.com), and we'll make sure we get the word out to our family of supporters.

### **Supporting our Partners: The Dimmer Family Foundation**

We're fortunate to have many great relationships with other benevolent organizations. Here's what we're doing to return the many favors they've done for us



A fragment of history – a preview of the introductory video produced by the Pointe du Hoc foundation in support of the Dimmer Family Foundation's West Point Parents' Club dinner at the Hyatt Regency-Bellevue, January 2017

**A**s is so often the case, our donors and friends are involved in many other causes and activities. And we're delighted when we can provide some reciprocal support to our supporters.

When we were approached by Diane Dimmer of Tacoma's Dimmer Family Foundation for a little assistance with the West Point Parents' Club dinner they were sponsoring in January 2017, we jumped at the chance to assist.

The dinner will commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Diane's agenda includes a Hawaiian-themed dinner and entertainment, along with a panel discussion featuring four World War II volunteers: an Army Nurse, a Jewish Army Sergeant whose family escaped Hitler's Germany and who was among the first soldiers to enter Dachau, a B-17 navigator who was shot down over Yugoslavia and succeeded in returning to his unit, and a Navy radarman at the Battle of Leyte Gulf.

The Foundation is contributing production services for a short video which will introduce the four panelists to their audience.

We have been creating our own promotional videos for several years and can provide the results they

need quickly and effectively.

Interested in learning more about Diane's dinner party or the Dimmer Foundation? Feel free to drop her a line at [dianedimmer@harbournet.com](mailto:dianedimmer@harbournet.com).

## **2016 Was a Good Year to be a Ranger**

**A**s we close out the year, we can look back with pride on the services and activities that we've provided to Ranger families, enabled by our donors, supporters and friends.

### **January: One Good Cause Supports Another**

The Pointe du Hoc Foundation sponsored two Ranger teams entered in the January 23rd, 2016 "Fight for Air" Stair Climb. This annual fundraiser, a race up Seattle's Rainier Tower, is sponsored by the American Lung Association. This was the second year that we sponsored 2d Ranger Battalion soldiers in this event.

### **May-August: Financial Planning Seminars**

We sponsored two financial planning seminars for JBLM Rangers and families in May and August of 2016.

Charles Hartford, a Merrill Lynch Wealth Management financial planner and former Army Ranger came up from his home base in San Diego and volunteered his time to talk to Ranger family members about budgeting, investing, and preparing for common family events and retirement.

The seminars were sponsored by the Foundation after surveying the command group on what types of services were needed most by the Battalion.

### **June: Ranger Open House**

With the strong support of the Battalion, we held our Ranger Open House for sponsors and friends of the Foundation on June 1<sup>st</sup>. These rare opportunities for civilians to meet with the command group and Second Battalion Rangers on their home turf, to learn about their missions and history and to tour their facilities and combat systems are essential to recruiting new supporters. And as always, we made some new friendships and renewed some old ones.

### **August: Ranger Poker Run**

Foundation Director Randy Inman as approached last summer by the President of the local Chapter of Killer Man's Sons, a Motorcycle Club of and for current and former Army Rangers. The Chapter wanted to hold a charity Poker Run on our behalf. This turned out to be a fun activity for everyone involved, and netted \$1,000 for the Foundation.

The Foundation is proud of its accomplishments in 2016 and grateful to its benefactors for all that they do to help us in our endeavors. If you like to help us make 2017 even better, please contact us at [info@pointeduhocfoundation.com](mailto:info@pointeduhocfoundation.com), and we'll make sure you're on the list for our next opportunity to help.



The Pointe du Hoc Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization commemorating and supporting the Rangers of Second Battalion and their families. We provide academic scholarships, transition assistance, life skills counseling, wounded warrior family support and unit activity assistance.

The Pointe du Hoc Foundation is not officially endorsed by the Department of Defense or the 75th Ranger Regiment. Contributions to the Foundation are tax deductible. The Foundation respects the privacy of its donors and will not share or sell donor information.

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