
HONORING TODAY'S VETERANS

CHESAPEAKE

Col. Mark A. Riccio, USA, retired on July 29th after serving 31 years. He's been a brother in Col. James D. Brady Camp 63 for the past 5 years. During most of that time, Br. Mark was either serving two tours in Iraq or volunteering for an extension in Afghanistan.

He had been assigned to the prestigious TRADOC Command at Fort Monroe in Phoebus, VA

Br. Mark initially served in the National Guard out of the 69th Regiment Armory in New York City after graduating from Fordham University. The unit was a stepchild to the famous 69th NY Regiment that formed the core of the Irish Brigade during the Civil War. After two years with the National Guard, Mark went Regular Army. He is shown with PDC Neil Hanlon, Dept. of the Chesapeake (left), and CC Thomas Grund just prior to his retirement ceremony.



IOWA



On July 29th, the 49th IA, SVR, recently provided the leading Honor Guard Detail for the Welcome Home Ceremonies for the 334th Brigade Support Command upon its return from the Afghanistan Theater of Operations of the Global war on Terror.

NEW JERSEY

Custer Camp 17 has raised \$5,000 for LCpl. Colin Pascik's "Road to Recovery Fund" without corporate sponsors.

During his first deployment to Afghanistan last year, LCpl. Pascik was hit by a pressure plate IED (improvised explosive device) while serving as a point-man with his squad. This took both his legs and slightly damaged his left arm. He is now at Walter Reed Army Medical center in Washington D.C. where he is learning to walk again on prosthetic legs.

The Monroe Central Post 262 VFW Post is conducting this rehabilitation fundraising project.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

When I joined the Sons over 12 years ago, I was told that the Rituals and Ceremonies of the GAR and the SUVCW were based on Masonic Tradition. Growing up, I had little contact with Masons, other than the good works done by the Shriners. I knew little about them when I joined the Sons and I must admit that I kept myself ignorant until last year. In something that I wrote in the past, I stated the fact that the Masons were a religion - I was quickly informed that they are not a religion any more than the Boy Scouts of America, or Kiwanis, or the Rotary are religions. Rather, the Masons are men who have joined together in a fraternity to improve themselves and the world. As the Nat. Chaplain of a hereditary organization that has its roots in the Masonic tradition - I felt a strong desire to find out more. I studied, went through the steps and found that there was nothing about the Masons that was in conflict with my relationship with God, my duty to my family or my Country. It is not a simple matter to join - it takes time and commitment. In my case it was certainly worthwhile. So much of what we do and say in our ceremonies now makes sense, in light of my affiliation with the Masons. There will be references to Masons in the Civil War and books (House Undivided - Masons in the Civil War) concerning the topic in the Chaplain's Section of our Website shortly.

Chaplain Jerry