

Winter 2021

# 84th Railsplitters Association

## Bugler



### Happy Holidays!

Can you believe we'll be closing out 2021 in just a few more days? Even though 2021 presented us with so many challenges we were able to gather together to celebrate each other at our many events enjoying good conversations, laughter, delicious food and most importantly opportunities to move past the pandemic.

We closed out our 2021 event schedule in September with our annual Steak/Chicken Fry. We were quite pleased with the number in attendance and greatly appreciated all your generosity in contribution of door prizes, silent auction items and the monies collected. Donations received toward silent auction items exceeded \$1,900. Using the monies brought in we're able to help local organizations that are oriented toward veterans and their families.

As we look forward to welcoming in the new year....

Our first event of 2022 will be the annual Valentine's Day Dinner on Saturday, February 12, 2022 at the Western Racquet Club. Entertainment featuring Jack Carr and his band of merry gentlemen will be provided. God willing, CW4 Ron DeVillers will accompany them with his musical talent on the trumpet. This event is casual dress with a buffet style meal. Invitation included in this edition of the Bugler. "Get your reply in early!"

Saturday, May 21, 2022 we will be hosting the annual Dining Out. This event is a semi-formal, sit-down event with entertainment. Event will be held at the Western Racquet Club.

Our annual meeting and elections will be conducted in June; we are working with the Cudworth-Stenz-Griessell-Smith American Legion Post #449, Brookfield, WI to lock in a date.

Saturday, September 17, 2022 the annual Steak/Chicken Fry will be held at Cudworth-Stenz-Griessell-Smith American Legion Post#449. We'd like to solicit your help in getting donations for the silent auction and door prizes. Feel free to contact any member of the board so arrangements can be made for pick-up or drop-off (if needed).

We'd like to acknowledge the life and service of COL (Ret) John C. Horter. Horter passed away on October 19, 2021 after battling cancer. COL Horter was our "go to guy"! He was involved in the founding of the 84th Railsplitters Association. He brought a sense of reason to our policies and discussion; he was our conscience! He did not hesitate to tell us when we were veering off course and missing the mark in meeting our mission. He will be irreplaceable but we will remain true to his ideals. Rest in Peace COL John Horter, you will be missed.

We'd like to enlist your help in getting the word out on our Association. We are always looking for new members. And as you know, word of mouth is the best form of marketing we have. Membership forms can be downloaded from our website: [84thrailsplitters.com](http://84thrailsplitters.com). If you are unsure of someone's membership, feel free to ask any member of our board or send an email to

[railsplitters84th@yahoo.com](mailto:railsplitters84th@yahoo.com) and we can verify status.

Thank you for your loyalty, support and dedication! Wishing all of you a happy, healthy and safe New Year! We look forward to seeing you in 2022.

Goldie M. Schuh, MSG (Retired)

President, 84th Railsplitters Association, LTD

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### Upcoming Events:

- ♦ Valentine's Dinner  
12 February 2022
- ♦ Dining Out  
21 May 2022
- ♦ Annual Meeting  
TBD
- ♦ Steak/Chicken Fry  
17 September 2022

## Please Join Us!

## RETIREES AND DISABLED VETS DUE FOR RECORD RAISE NEXT YEAR

The Department of Defense announced the annual cost of living adjustments that will benefit military retirees and survivors during calendar year 2022. Most military retirees will receive a 5.9 percent increase to their retired pay beginning with the pay they receive on January 1, 2022, which is the largest such increase since 1982. Likewise, survivors of members who died on active or inactive duty, or survivors of military retirees who participated in the Survivor Benefit Plan will, in most cases, see a 5.9 percent increase to their annuities beginning in January.

These cost of living adjustments are calculated based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers for the four quarters ending with the third calendar quarter of 2021 (July, August, and September 2021), and generally go into effect for all pay received beginning in January 2022.

Those military retirees who retired during calendar year 2021, and all military retirees who retired under the REDUX retirement system may receive a slightly different annual cost of living adjustment. The complete list of updates to military retired and retainer pay, and survivor annuities, allowances, and premiums can be found at <https://militarypay.defense.gov/Pay/Retirement/Cola.aspx>.



### Former Railsplitter receives lifetime achievement award from the Department of Defense



At 91 years old, a Racine man received a prestigious award from the Department of Defense. This special award has only been given out to 16 Wisconsinites in the past 50 years.

This past October, Colonel Donald Ford was wheeled out from his rehab room to a celebration outside at Ascension All Saints Hospital. Ford would soon find out he was going to receive a lifetime achievement award for dedicating decades of his life to serving in the U.S. Army and the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. ESGR is a Department of Defense Program that promotes cooperation and understanding between employers and their citizen soldiers.

Wisconsin Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Chairman Michael Williams said out of hundreds of volunteers, only a few people are selected. He said this special award is given to an individual who has been a member for more than 20 years and meets other qualifications. This award has only been given out to 16 Wisconsinites, "Consistent service to the organization, showing leadership, patriotism, participation and numerous activities and events," Williams stated.

Retired Lt. Col. Del Halverson, who is also a member of the ESGR, said he's been a lifelong friend of Ford's. Ford joined the Army as a young man, Halverson said, and in 1952 Ford went to Officer Candidate School. He then attended Infantry Officer Basic School and, after graduation, was assigned to a division at Fort Ord, the former U.S. Army post on Monterey Bay of the Pacific Ocean coast in California. Ford completed his military active duty and joined the Reserves and the 84th Division, finishing about 30 years of service. He was eventually inducted into the Infantry OCS Hall of Fame. "His career was outstanding," Halverson said. "He's a full colonel, one grade below a general officer. He commanded a brigade, that's one level below a division, and ended his career as a chief of staff of the 84th Division."

Ford was married to Rita Nobles and had four children, including his son Michael who was at the surprise celebration with a huge smile on his face. "I'm so proud of him," he said.

Ford stated that memories of his service still come back. "They come by the month, sometimes by the week, sometimes by the day," he recollected. He had just two words about receiving the award; he said he was "honored" and "humbled." Ford told us he wasn't expecting any of this, but he's grateful.



# A GREAT LOSS

## TRIBUTE TO COLONEL (Ret) JOHN C. HORTER by



MG (Ret) Michael M. Berzowski

Colonel (Ret) John Charles Horter passed away peacefully early Tuesday morning October 19, 2021 following a bout with cancer just short of his 83<sup>rd</sup> birthday in November. Some of us were lucky enough to have known him most of his adult life.

He was the personification of the seven Army Values which he not only preached but practiced in all of his endeavors, military or otherwise - loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage. I think if you take a moment to reflect upon your association with him you can easily match him with those values and think of examples where they were demonstrated whether in a military setting or not.

When it comes to military service, it would be virtually impossible to find someone more dedicated than he was. He practiced all of the leadership traits in particular setting the example. He was a lucky fellow in that during the time he served the 84<sup>th</sup> Division (Training) was large enough and located so as to afford him the opportunity to serve at successive levels of staff and command jobs in increasingly challenging situations. He excelled in every assignment and received recognition for his service in terms of awards, decorations and promotions.

John's priorities were his faith, family, the Army, his civilian job and his leisure time, in particular his lake cabin. He approached all of them with the same degree of enthusiasm and industry. He was a dedicated family man who relished and reveled in the accomplishments of his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren as well as other family members. He worked hard at trying to build and maintain relationships and was successful in doing so. He was one of the most patriotic people you could meet in a lifetime.

He routinely exerted himself with regard to his civilian employment to include time as an officer at Graf Beverages and a Financial Planner/CLU for MONY. I have been personally apprised on an unsolicited basis as to the high esteem with which he was regarded at MONY.

Besides all of that, he found time to be extremely active in the 84<sup>th</sup> Division Alumni Association (later the 84<sup>th</sup> Railsplitters Association), the American Legion Post No 449, Kiwanis of Elm Grove and the Manitowish Waters Alliance. In all of these activities his leadership skills and work ethic allowed him to excel.

From a personal point of view, they only made one John Horter. He was one of the few people I know about whom I never heard a disparaging remark. He was a great friend, companion, mentor, advisor and confidant. He had a great sense of humor and was fun to be with. He had a greater effect on my family than I did with regard to certain important matters. He was always there.

He fought the hard fight, never shirking from duty and responsibility and deserves the respect he has earned. We salute his life and salute him in death and hope to meet and be with him again. There is a time for everything.





Send your pictures to  
[railsplitters84th@yahoo.com](mailto:railsplitters84th@yahoo.com).







## The Soldiers Night Before Christmas

'Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone,  
In a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone.  
I had come down the chimney with presents to give  
And to see just who in this home did live.

I looked all about a strange sight I did see,  
No tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.  
No stocking by the fire, just boots filled with sand,  
On the wall hung pictures of far distant lands.

With medals and badges, awards of all kind  
A sober thought came through my mind.  
For this house was different, so dark and dreary,  
I knew I had found the home of a soldier, once I could see clearly.

I heard stories about them, I had to see more  
So I walked down the hall and pushed open the door.  
And there he lay sleeping silent alone,  
Curled up on the floor in his one bedroom home.

His face so gentle, his room in such disorder,  
Not how I pictured a United States soldier.  
Was this the hero of whom I'd just read?  
Curled up in his poncho, a floor for his bed?

His head was clean shaven, his weathered face tan,  
I soon understood this was more than a man.  
For I realized the families that I saw that night  
Owed their lives to these men who were willing to fight.

Soon 'round the world, the children would play,  
And grownups would celebrate on a bright Christmas day.  
They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year,  
Because of soldiers like this one lying here.

I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone  
On a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home.  
Just the very thought brought a tear to my eye,  
I dropped to my knees and started to cry.



The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice,  
"Santa don't cry, this life is my choice;  
I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more,  
my life is my God, my country, my Corps."

With that he rolled over and drifted off into sleep,  
I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.  
I watched him for hours, so silent and still,  
I noticed he shivered from the cold night's chill.

So I took off my jacket, the one made of red,  
And I covered this Soldier from his toes to his head.  
And I put on his T-shirt of gray and black,  
With an eagle and an Army patch embroidered on back.

And although it barely fit me, I began to swell with pride,  
And for a shining moment, I was United States Army deep inside.  
I didn't want to leave him on that cold dark night,  
This guardian of honor so willing to fight.

Then the soldier rolled over, whispered with a voice so clean and pure,  
"Carry on Santa, it's Christmas Day, all is secure."  
One look at my watch, and I knew he was right,  
Merry Christmas my friend, and to all a good night!



Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of those who passed away recently:

MG Vance Coleman

LTC Dick Peterson

COL John Horter

LTC Willie Petzrick

SGM Thomas Eberhardy

Best wishes for a speedy recovery:

LTC James Nitzsche

Marilyn Olczak, wife of CW5 Dennis Olczak

MAJ Steve Kassens

Karen Clark, wife of CSM Charles Clark

Remember to send any information, or correspondence for Get Well, Encouragement, Sympathy, etc. to:  
Mary Orley at (414) 425-0256 or email, [maryo\\_44@yahoo.com](mailto:maryo_44@yahoo.com)

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Please support:  
Cudworth-Stenz-Griesell-Smith  
American Legion Post 449  
Home of the 84th Railsplitters  
Association

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## Humor noun

hu·mor | \ 'hyü-mər, 'yü- \

#### Definition of *humor*

**1a:** that quality which appeals to a sense of the ludicrous or absurdly incongruous : a funny or amusing quality // Try to appreciate the *humor* of the situation.



***“Let’s try this one more time, soldier -  
where’s the other shoe?!”***