

TODAY'S BLUE BADGE

*Special On Line Edition
Exclusively for On Line Viewers*



Behind the Scenes Things You Need to Know

Nearly all members of the Combat Infantrymen's Association are proud and loyal members just as the elected and appointed board members are. There are daily decisions that have to be made and time does not always allow these items to be brought before the membership. This is why an executive board consisting of 11 members was created. Every issue of Blue Badge lists those 11 board members. Each decision is carefully weighed for its value to the entire membership. Many of the decisions and actions are posted on the association website for all to see. The relevant ones are also reported in the Blue Badge.

The Board also recognizes that an informed membership is a better membership with fewer doubts about the decisions. Within the past six weeks there have been some significant decisions that had to be made. For this reason a new Blue Badge feature "Today's Blue Badge" is being implemented. This will be an on line version similar to this issue. Presently there is no "set" publication schedule. It will be published when news, accomplishments, problems, etc merit alerting the membership. It will be strictly an online publication. It is up to each person to keep looking on the Association website for updates. The web address

is www.cibassoc.com and look for the Blue Badge tab.

The purpose of this and future issues of Today's Blue Badge is an attempt to keep you in touch with the inner workings of the association and perhaps give you a better appreciation of the responsibilities and work done on your behalf by the board. Nothing contained herein is intended to be accusatory. What you read is simply narratives of what is going on. In some cases where legal action may be necessary the amount of details that can be released are limited but we have tried to give you the "big picture" without infringing on anyone's legal rights.

All information that can be released is contained herein so please hold your questions. They will be answered in due time—when the situation permits. More information will be presented at the annual business meeting in San Antonio. If you have not made your reservation, please do so. This will be one of the most important meetings in the Association's history. Please be a part of it.

On the following pages you will find summaries of several incidents that have severely impacted the CIA. As you read through these articles, stop and think for a moment, what can I do to prevent situations like this from reoccurring? Your ideas are welcome.

As we implied earlier, this is not a "detail" oriented publication, perhaps you can compare it to "Headline News". The

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Election Irregularities

It is a sad but true fact that significant irregularities have been discovered in the balloting to elect a new National Commander. Where to begin is difficult. The best place is probably to say that a system of checks and balances which was built into the system to catch any irregularities such as proxy voting, double voting, non-members voting and the like is working. The ballots once received at National Hq are not just put into a box to be counted at the convention. Each ballot received is compared to the active membership list to insure only qualified voters participate and have their ballot counted. Because of this system of check and balances it was noted that 859 envelopes marked "Ballot" had been received. The word Ballot appeared to be identically printed (as opposed to hand written) by the same printer or stamp pad. Probably, a stamp pad because the word Ballot stamped (printed) was correctly placed in the left hand corner but not in exactly the same position on each envelope. Next item to raise question was all of these ballots were post-marked from the same city – Tacoma, WA but had the return address of members from all over the United States. It became obvious that an attempt to "stuff" the ballot box was underway. To confirm the suspicion the National Commander randomly called several of the members whose ballot had been received. Not a single member called by the Commander had voted nor had given permission for anyone to vote for him (which is a proxy vote that is not allowed.)

The matter was then turned over to an attorney to find the source of the illegal voting. That investigation is continuing. We are also communicating with the Postal authorities to see if mail fraud has been committed. If we get a positive answer then we will work with the postal authorities to find the source.

The attorney has contacted some members whose ballots were received and he has received multiple sworn and notarized affidavits from individuals who have sworn they did not vote nor authorize anyone to vote for them. This proves beyond any question that voter fraud is occurring. But wait, there is more. Also included in these 859 ballots are votes from members who are dead – some died as long ago as 2012. In one instance, a deceased member voted twice. There are other cases of members, who as far as we know are living, voting twice. Some of those voting twice did so because they received a ballot from an unauthorized source. This negated both votes. For obvious reasons all of those nearly all 859 ballots have been disqualified.

This is a pathetic turn of events. It is so sad that the association has to spend money on legal matters, but this or similar actions simply cannot be, will not be tolerated. Because of the current investigation and possible legal action no further comments will be made at this time. Further information will be disseminated at the National Convention.

James Bourgeois Withdraws As Candidate

Citing his wife's on going health problems and the she care she will require as his reason, former Deputy Commander James Bourgeois announced his withdrawal from consideration as the next National Commander. He stated that his wife was his top priority (and none of us can argue that point) and in giving her the care she deserves he did not feel he could exercise the duties required by the office of National Commander

The voter's committee will meet as scheduled and count the valid ballots. With only two candidates for the office, and one of them having announced his withdrawal from consideration, this may seem like a waste of time. It's not. Remember that former Commander Earl Kennedy was elected by write-in ballot so the election must continue as scheduled to insure every legitimate vote—including any for a write-in candidate is counted.

IRS MATTERS

In order for the Association to maintain its tax exempt status there are certain IRS rules that must be followed; the most significant one being you must file annual taxes and provide the required information. This was not done in years prior to 2013 and consequently the tax exempt status was nearly lost. This is just another example demonstrating that holding an office in the Association means more than having a title—there is work to be done.

Once again board members including Chief of Staff Nick Hubbell, Finance Officer Chris Callen and volunteer members of Chris' office staff, Head Trustee Earl Kennedy, Commander Jerry Jodrey and the paid services of a attorney finally negotiated a settlement with IRS and was able to restore the tax-exempt status. This was a totally avoidable situation which caused the volunteers to expend literally hundreds of hours of working with IRS representatives and also the unnecessary expenditure of Association funds for assistance from tax experts. The good news they were successful and our tax exempt status is back in place. That piece of work by these volunteers saved the association

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IRS Matters

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from dissolving. We all owe them our thanks. We hope this is a lesson learned to future leaders of the Association. IRS doesn't play games.

Division Commanders, you have reporting responsibilities as well, know what they are, when they are due, then submit them. FYI, your financial statements are now for the fiscal year 10/01—09/30 compared to the prior calendar year. Don't let the National Commander down by failing to submit your reports. If you don't know how, use some of your funds to get tax assistance.

Follow-Ups

As you probably recall from the July issue of Blue Badge there was an item about unauthorized renewal applications being sent to members. To update you on that story, we do not know how many renewal applications were sent by the responsible person. We do know that 20 members responded and paid dues a second time. They were credited with payment for the next year instead of refunding their dues. One member resigned over this (but thanks to a phone call by the BB Editor, he was reinstated). Although recruiting new members is a responsibility of every member, soliciting renewals is a responsibility of the National Commander and the Commander of Division 5.

In addition to some members receiving more than one renewal notice the wrong form was used. The form currently in use is formatted so the data entry person can take the information in sequence from the form and enter it into the member's record. The form used for the unauthorized renewals is completely out of sequence and slows down the data entry process considerably.

Once again, if you receive a renewal notice from anywhere other than the National Commander of the Commander of Div 5, do not respond and more importantly do not send dues. To be perfectly clear, there is no reason to believe that any of the dues collected was mishandled or not remitted to the National Commander. That is not the issue, the issue is duplication, confusion to the membership, and the appearance that "the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing."

You Should Know

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details will be published in the January or July editions of Blue Badge.

It may seem like these are all negative items, but be thankful that the system worked well enough to alert the command staff and that the board members were willing to devote hundreds of hours of their personal time to identify and recommend actions to correct them.

Although our current system of checks and balances stopped an attempt to "stuff" the ballot box, it also revealed several weaknesses in the system. Next election we will retain the same system of checks and balances, plus additional measures will be implemented. Only ballots sent by National Hq will be counted. Reproduced copies will not be acceptable. Ballots will be numbered to prevent duplication. Pending approval of a change to the by-laws no ballot will be included in the Blue Badge. Finally, ballots must be signed by the member submitting it.

There is also good news. Under the leadership of National Commander Jerry Jodrey and his cost cutting steps the Association treasury has grown substantially. The current bank balance (as of August 24, 2015) is \$81,916.00. Membership has increased, renewals are higher (though still not where we should be) and more people are subscribing to the on line Blue Badge. As a friendly reminder, the day is coming when there will be no printed Blue Badge. If you don't have a computer, better make friends with your local librarian or grand kids—or join the 21st century, buy yourself a computer and learn to use it.

More You Should Know Items

- There are no free Blue Badges by mail. There is a \$6.00 annual fee to receive the BB by mail. This applies to Life Members, 1st year War on Terror Veterans, and another "free" memberships. This category of members are notified by letter between Jan-March each year.
- If you are a Blue Badge subscriber and change e-mail addresses let the database manager know—if your notification "bounces" we have no way to find you. Also, you will need to re-subscribe to the email service
- If you are a member in good standing and have a change of address notify the data base manager of your new address. Otherwise don't complain when you stop receiving mail from the association.
- Only new members only get a membership card. Members renewing do not. Starting September 2015, when you renew you will get a sticker with your expiration date on it. Place this sticker on your original card. There is a \$10.00 fee to obtain a new card.

The next annual convention is in San Antonio, TX October 1-4. The annual business meeting is on Saturday morning Oct 3. Be there.