

BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBERT JOSEPH LEBLANC



p[Born: Vermilion Parish

Louisiana 6 November 1921

Schools: Louisiana State University, 1938 - 1942; BS 2005

Adjutant General School, Censorship Course, 1943;

Infantry Officer Basic Course, 1943;

Office of Strategic Services-Intelligence School, 1943;

Special Operations, OSS-1944;

Infantry Officers Advanced Course, 1951;

Command and General Staff College, Regular Course 1956;

Officers Advanced Course, Refresher, 1957, 1961, 1963, 1965;

Senior Officer Advanced Operations Course, 1962;

Senior Officer Preventive Maintenance Course, 1962;

CPR Weapons Course, 1962;

Combat Surveillance and Target Acquisition Course, 1964;

Senior Field Artillery Officer Refresher Course, 1966;

Engineer School, Disaster Recovery Course, 1966;

National War College, Defense Strategy Seminar 1966-67, 1969;

National War College, Moderator 1967 & 1969

Senior Officer Civil Disturbance Orientation Course, 1968;

Engineer Officer Orientation, 1968;

Civil Defense Staff College, 1968, 1971; Emergency Management

Infantry Staff Officer Refresher Course, 1969;

Army War College, Senior Reserve Component Officer Course, 1970.

University California Los Angeles- Advanced Postal Management

University California, Los Angeles- General Management

Postal Service - Customer Services

Industrial Relations

Employee and Labor Relations

Analytical Statistical Management

BRIGADIER GENERAL ROBERT JOSEPH LEBLANC

General Robert J. LeBlanc was born in the 1st Ward of Vermilion Parish, La., son of Edward J. LeBlanc and Neda Comeaux. He was educated in the Vermilion Parish Public school and graduated at Abbeville High School in 1938 where he lettered in Boxing, Football and Swimming, he was selected Best All Round Boy in the Senior Class of 1938. He enlisted in the Citizen's Military Training Corps in 1937 at Camp Beauregard, La., and attended three summer camps in 1937, 1938 and 1939. In 1939 he served as a Trainee Company Commander. He attended Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana and majored in Geology and Mathematic as well as participated in ROTC from 1938 to 1942. While an ROTC cadet he was on the LSU Firing Squad and also a Charter Member of the Pershing Rifle Company. While at LSU he was the Assistant Manager of the Photo Department at Stroube's Drug Store in Baton, Rouge, La. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant on 18 May 1942. He was called to active duty on 17 July 1942. He served as Platoon Leader and Company Commander in the Infantry Basic Training Center, Fort McClellan, Alabama. In 1943, he volunteered for duty with the Office of Strategic Services, (OSS), He served in 3rd U.S. Army, Headquarters, Special Operations' (Special Forces Detachment No. 11) as a Liaison Officer between Units of Patton's 3rd U. S. Army and the French Underground. He served with the VIII and XII Corp as well as with the Fourth Army Division attached to the United States Third Army in France. In 1945, he was transferred to the China-Burma Theater where he served as a Special Operations Officer with the OSS Detachment, Kunning, China. He was released from active duty in December 1945.

Upon discharge from active duty, he returned to Abbeville, La., attended Southwest Photo Institute in Dallas, Texas and upon graduation, opened LeBlanc's Studio. In 1949, he was employed as a Rural Carrier, U. S. Postal Service. In 1960, he was promoted to Postmaster, Abbeville, La. As Postmaster he expanded mail service in the City of Abbeville as well as secured the modernization of the Post Office. The Dallas Postal Region appointed him as a Training Postmaster for Louisiana. He also served as a member of the Dallas Region Personnel Panel. In 1972, he was promoted to Sectional Center Manager/Postmaster of Lafayette, La. where he supervised 93 Post Offices in Southwest La. While there he planned for the expansion of the Lafayette Postal area, including assuring the completion of a new Postal Facility on Moss Street with full mechanization capabilities. He also documented the need for new postal stations, which later became, the Energy Station, the Postal Square Station, and the Ambassador Caffery Station. Through his planning new facilities were planned for the entire Lafayette Sectional Center. While Sectional Center Manager/Postmaster, he recommended and swore in more Postmaster than any other SCF Manager. He received awards for leading the Region in reduction of Postal Accidents and Vehicle Accidents. No EEO grievance went above the complaint stage. Grievance rate was the lowest in the District.

After Hurricane Audrey, he was asked to take over the operations of the Civil Defense Office to restore the damages to Vermilion Parish. He supervised the

reconstruction of Pecan Island, Forked Island and the Henry Boston Area. He completed this with all expenditures being properly documented to the Federal Government. Six months later, he returned to the Post Office and remained a Part Time Director of Office of Emergency Preparedness, effectively handling a number of Hurricanes and Emergencies in Vermilion Parish as well as various duties in Emergencies for the State of Louisiana, including the Bogalusa Civil Disturbance in March 1969 in which he served as Commander, 1st Brigade, 39th Division, LANG, successfully protecting the marchers without serious injury. Members of the National Press indicated that it was the best planned military effort they had seen. His Parish Emergency Operations Plan and Implementation, with specific note of the Special Need Population Plan, was a model for the State of Louisiana. During Hurricane Lili and again in Hurricane Katrina and Rita he again demonstrated his administrative abilities in successfully evacuating the Parish with no one hurt or killed. He applied his extensive knowledge of Emergency Operations to assure that people were housed fed and provided all possible assistance. His knowledge of FEMA policies and procedures enabled the Parish Governments to obtain millions of dollars in federal aid. FEMA and the GOSEPH was quick to note the quick and efficient operations in Vermilion Parish.

As an Employee of the Police Jury, he prepared an Organization Plan, Job Description and Pay Plan which was implemented by them.

After World War II, General LeBlanc joined the Louisiana National Guard and organized Company "H", 156th Infantry in Abbeville Louisiana. He negotiated a lease for five acres of property on the Airport Grounds for 99 yrs at one dollar a year with the City of Abbeville, upon which the State built first: a Gun Shed which was used as an Armory, and later; an Armory and Vehicle Shop were built. He later held assignments as Battalion Operations Officer and Battalion Commander where he implemented sound training based on his world war II experience and Army Doctrine. His battalion became one of the only full war strength units in the U. S. Army. In 1959 he became Brigade Executive Officer. He was

promoted to *Colonel* in 1960, at which time he became the Deputy Brigade Commander, 39th Infantry Division. With his position in the Guards he was instrumental in the location of a Battle Group Headquarters which later became a Battalion Headquarters in Abbeville, and a Brigade Headquarters for Lafayette. As a Battalion and Brigade Commanded he was instrumental in the successful conduct of Platoon, Company and Battalion Army Training Test. In 1963 upon reorganization of the Division, he assumed command of the 1st Brigade, 39th Infantry Division. In December 1967, he assumed command of Emergency Operations Headquarters, Louisiana Army National Guard. He was promoted to *Brigadier General of the Line* on 1 December 1967. On 19 November 1968, he assumed command of the 256th Infantry Brigade (Separate). This Brigade was noted as being one of the highest rated Brigades in the Army National Guard. He was assigned as Director, Emergency Operations on 1 March 1972 and Commanding General, Louisiana Army National Guard Command, New Orleans, Louisiana on 9 May 1972, where he commanded all the Army National Guard Units.

Decorations and Awards: Legion of Merit, Bronze Star medal, American Defense Service Medal; American Campaign Medal; European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with three stars; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with One Star; World War II Victory medal; National Defense Service Medal (Korean War); Armed Forces Reserve Medal; Expert Infantryman Badge; Louisiana Distinguished Service Medal, (2); Louisiana Cross of Merit; Louisiana Emergency Service Medal; Louisiana Longevity Medal;

Awarded *Distinguished Service Award, Vermilion Parish, La*, for services to community and state. Inducted into *LSU Cadets of the Old War School Hall of Honor* on November 4, 2000. Inducted into *Order of Living Legends*, by the Acadian Museum of Erath, Louisiana on October 6, 2001. He was recognized with the *Humanitarian Award* by the citizens of Vermilion Parish. He was inducted into *Louisiana National Guard Hall of Fame* March 17, 2006. On January 10, 2006 named "*Chevalier*" of the *Legion of Honor*" by the President of the French Republic. He was selected as *King of the Vermilion Parish Cattle Festival* of October 2006. He was selected as the *Woodmen of the World Vermilion Parish Outstanding Citizen in 2007*. He was awarded *Order of Saint Maurice* by the U. S. Army chief of Infantry;

Civil Affiliations: American Legion; Veterans of Foreign Wars; *President, Woodmen of the World*; *Awarded the Mr. Woodman award for Outstanding Service*, Kiwanis Club; U.S. Civil Defense Counsel; National Guard Association of the United States, *Member of the Executive Council*; Member and *Past President, National Guard Association of Louisiana*; *Alternate Member, U.S. Army Reserve Policy Board*. He served on the Church Council of St. Mary Madeleine Catholic Church. He was *Chairman of the Census Committee* for that Church. He has served as a member of Abbeville General Hospital Board of Commissioners since November 1986 to date, where he is *Chairman and Personnel Committee Chairman*. He is a member of the Executive Board of the *Famille de LeBlanc*, and serves as its *Genealogy Chairman* and researched and printed for the *Famille* the book: "*Descendant de Daniel LeBlanc & Francoise Gaudet*." This book was used for the worldwide reunion of the *LeBlanc Family* in Erath, La., in 1999. In 2004 he was elected *President of Famille de LeBlanc*. He is a board member of the *Louisiana Military Hall of Fame and Museum* and was elected *President of that Board in 2007*. He also wrote a book **Another Citizen Soldier Public Servant** about his life and the various positions he has held.

General LeBlanc was married to Helen Della LaPlace (Deceased), daughter of Paul LaPlace and Della Delino. They have three (3) children: Bobbie Lane LeBlanc married to Joseph Barton Alexander Tinker, Helen Denise LeBlanc married to John Ziegler and the Donna Marie LeBlanc Thibodeaux. They have seven (7) Grandchildren: Adrienne Michelle Tinker married to Timothy Dell Wright, Robert Joseph Tinker, Kathryn Joy Tinker married to Adrian Vega, Jonathon Paul Tinker married to Christiana Humphries, Courtney Lane Thibodeaux, Brooks Benjamin Thibodeaux and Brittlyn Denee' Thibodeaux. They have seven (14) Great Grandchildren: Maria Tierney Wright, Timothy Dell Wright, Jr., Erin Nicole Wright, Benjamin Wright, Avery Vega, Della Lane Vega, Kennedy Grace and Kohlyn Brooks Thibodeaux and Alexander Reece, Andrew Paul, Anastasia Della Tinker. Ellenia Lane Dore. Johan and Amalie Dore