



# HELPMATE Bulletin

## Official Newsletter

### of the

## 284th F. A. Bn. WWII

September 26  
2002  
Issue 02-5

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Greetings, Helpmates,

First of all, I must apologize to beautiful Carole, Clair Schneider's better 2/3, for misspelling her name on the first page of the last issue. I noticed it when I had finished copying the issue, and rather than remake the whole 2 pages, I thought it best to just throw myself on the mercy of the group, and go on. Even when I "spell-checked" the error it did not correct it.

E-mail from Harv Smith has news that he will not be at the reunion. He will be visiting relatives during that time. He may see Pat Maier at the west coast when he visits a daughter there. The Smiths are also going to look at a retirement unit while out there. We will never see you and Ann again, Harv. There are 3 or 4 of our group out there. You will have your own minis then.

Got a bulletin returned. Right postage, no address. Guess it got in with the labeled ones, and the thing was returned. Have never had that happen before, but there always seems to be a first. Another example of "for the first time I have made another mistake". At least it is getting mailed promptly. How about you Florida guys? Are you getting them in 4 or 5 days?

I received an E-mail from Richard Rizzio with info that he was not going to be able to get to the reunion, due to a previously scheduled function with one of his sons. He especially hated it, because he lives in Traverse City, Mi, and it would not have been a huge trip for him to get to Livonia for the reunion. But he will hope for next year, and we wish that he could come to meet all the oldsters. As I said, maybe next year. His net locate is rizgourmet@juno.com.

Have had Siggie Larsen's bulletin returned. I asked that anyone who might be in touch with Siggie to let her know that her address is

wrong, but no news as of now.

And Harvey Osborne's newsletter came back. I fired up my handy dandy look-up program, and found a different address:

2895 Rte. 26  
Cincinnati, NY

I received word from one of Edna Forcade's daughters that her mother died early last summer. Edna had fallen and broke her hip, and the doctors would not replace the bone, as her heart condition would not permit it. She went progressively downhill over the next 3 months, and finally died early last summer. Her name was removed from the roster.

Irv Merrill called me on the 18th, and let me know that he would be at the reunion. I have always been glad to hear from Irv, as he has been at several of our functions, and I try to see him whenever I get to the west coast. His good friend, Harry Hudson, another of our officers, will not be able to make the trip to our reunion. His health is such that the trip would aggravate his already strained respiratory problems, and he will not attempt it. Maybe Irv can get to Anderson while he is in Livonia. Thanks for the call, Irv. Will be glad to see you.

On the 20th, I received the bulletin sent to Anthony Broska as return to sender. Handwritten on the cover was a note "Deceased. Please return to sender". I will remove Tony's name from the roster, but I cannot give you any of the details on his passing. If any of you do know, please let me know.

I drove over to Olney, Ill this Wednesday to see brother Gene, who came up from Florida to see the home folks. Went over to Vincennes Ind. To see another brother who was placed in the hospital there for the bad disease. We

had a nice visit. I was glad to see him looking rather good—after a 2 unit blood transfusion. He has had past problems, and is apt to outlive me.

Am getting ready to make the trip to Detroit in 2 weeks. I have so many things to get ready for the booklets I always try to get to the guys. We should have between 15 and 20 this time, and all raring to go. With any luck, we will have a brand new member this reunion, but I am going to hold off until I get back naming the lucky guy. Really we all are the lucky ones. It is really nice having a new member attend a reunion, and they enjoy it so much. We have a great time, 5 or 50. And we will again this time.

I received an E-mail from a daughter of Irene and Clarence Wilkinson with news that Irene is in a nursing facility suffering from Alzheimers. She asked that I remove Irene from the mailing list, but also asked if I had any info on my recollection of him during wartime. I gave her our battalion locate on the web and let her know that the Helpmate Ready history was on that spot. If any of you have some material which may interest her, her web address is [ufeather@aol.com](mailto:ufeather@aol.com), and I am sure that she would appreciate hearing from you. I will ask her for her address, and will put it in the newsletter at this position. It is:

Sally Jo Laegeler

2673 Logan St.

Highland Park, IL 60035-1420

She told me in another E-mail that her dad did not talk much about his army service, and the kids all would like to know a little about it. I had included a little bit about his escape from Fort Driant, and also his part in getting the ice cream we all enjoyed so much.

I have received an undeliverable bulletin from Gertrude McFadden, and would appreciate any one of the members help in getting her new address. This usually means that the addressee has entered assisted care facilities, or has moved in with family, or has died. HELP!!!!!!

I received a call from the daughter of Stan Chmura, recently deceased, to inquire as to my getting some photographs which the family found after Stan died. I assured her that I

did indeed have the photos, and during the short chat I told her that I had sent her an E-mail with that info contained. Well, in looking over the problem, I found that I had misspelled her locate, and the proper address is:

[nunnarij@yahoo.com](mailto:nunnarij@yahoo.com)

Please change your information to record this new address.

Clara Chmura is doing well, and the daughter tells me that after Stan read the bulletin, the whole family sneaked peeks at the issue.

Henry Curran's newsletter returned with notation that he is deceased, request no further bulletins. Will accommodate. Sorry to lose another Helpmate, but that is life.

Getting ready to start to the reunion. I had hoped to gather another Helpmate or so in the Chicago area, but it did not happen.

I called Clair Schneider yesterday to finalize our plans for the reunion, and got Carole's voice mail. Left a message for him to call back, but he has not responded yet. Sent an E-mail to him repeating what I told him on the phone, and have not heard anything from that, either. If I show up without him, you will hear more, you can bet. There are so many ways to miss connections, and I know most of them.

I just got an E-mail from the son of Ed Rafferty, and they will not be able to make the reunion this year. Jim, the son, reports that Ed is handling many of the things his ailing wife does, and will not travel to Livonia because it would be too hard on all concerned. Mrs. Rafferty has leukemia, and it all but disables her greatly. We are sorry not to have his presence, but that is certainly understandable. Maybe next year, Jim. Sorry indeed, that you are not able to join us. He was my surprise one.

I received a call from Millie Nelson yesterday asking if I might have room for her to ride to the reunion if she were able to make arrangements. I assured her that it could happen, but that she would have to meet me somewhere on I-55 on the way up to Chicago. We talked some, and she decided that she would let one of her sons decide if it would be possible. Millie and Bill were frequent attendees when Bill was alive, and many of the people know her. She has some relatives in the Livonia area, and could be double-dipping with this trip. She will be back

with me today (6th) and we can plan.

Just heard from Millie Nelson, and she will not be able to make the contact for a ride, but will take the train to Detroit. It will be good to see her, and I am sure that she will enjoy the reunion. Will report more after the affair.

Daughter Nancy and husband are going to the condo for a week or so. She is the paper applier, the window scrubber, the picker upper, and the general do gooder, and she will supervise the laying of tile in the bathrooms. She is going to paint a few things, and will be sure to make all realize that she was there. I will go down in late October, and hang around until about Thanksgiving, then go home, and return for December and January. That seems a bit heavy, tho. I have never stayed down that much before. Tough job, but someone should do it. I don't mind suffering.

Am writing this from Livonia, and our annual reunion. Everyone is out feeding faces at this minute, but almost everyone expected have checked in, and we have already won the war. We have a frequent attendee, Al Pavlick, to be the director, and it sure was good to have him here.

Safely back. I picked up Clair on the way to the reunion, and escorted him to the meeting without damage. We arrived after 3 PM as was planned, and met a few of the group already in place there. Ray and Marge Crismond, Mel and Betty Donaldson, Al Pavlick, George and Dorothy Ralcewich, Charles and Ruth Zimmer, Clair Schneider, and myself visited for a while, then walked to a local restaurant for the evening meal, and again visited more after that. Shirley Dawson and daughter Peggy VanHoosen arrived late in the evening, and that filled up that day's business. The next day, Warren and Irene Ellis, Bill and Marion Hartley, Irv Merrill, and Bob Rosen came in. David and Virginia Hawkins, and John Wasilewski arrived the next afternoon. We had expected Millie Nelson, but she was undoubtedly unable to attend. She had worked with me for a ride, but felt that she could not get from her home to an area which we had chosen, and called me to tell me that she was going to go by rail, and be with her son in the Livonia area, then join us at the motel when

possible. We were sorry not to have had her for a visit, but there was surely a good reason, and I hope she contacts me about it.

I set up my computer, and we registered on Tuesday, and after a breakfast affair, a group of our Helpmates set out for Greektown to one of the casinos. As far as I knew, there were no big, big winners at this session, but all had a good time. We arrived back at the Motel later in the afternoon. and the car I was in had many unusual problems. The route we returned by was poorly marked, and with 4 co-pilots all with little knowledge of the Detroit architecture, all of the bad which could happen, did happen. We ended up going on a north route instead of west, we returned back to downtown Detroit to retrace our steps, we nearly ran out of gas, and in trying to replenish our fuel, we stopped in at a service station where a drug bust, or something was occurring, and on our way out of the station we saw the sign for the route we wanted to take. Al Pavlick was in sort of a hurry to leave that area, and we finally got home just as the group went to the "Outback" restaurant for dinner. We had eaten at this same facility the last Lavonia reunion, and it was superb.

When we returned to the Motel, several more of the group had arrived, and were registered, and we all had a nice visit together. Shirley Dawson and daughter were the most recent guests arriving. The rest of the evening was spent visiting, reliving the war, and filling up with the snacks that were available to us.

Wednesday was mostly an in-house day, and we renewed old memories, welcomed several new attendees—Dave and Virginia Hawkins, John Wasilewski, and Bob Rosen. Bob had in his possession the "tontine" bottle, and his tale of taking a sealed bottle of alcohol, intended for any use, was told, and retold. He had some big problems with the security people, and after being thoroughly searched, and his luggage memorized, he was let on the plane. Bob had inadvertently cracked the case of the bottle many years ago, and had just had a new one put into service, so we all were reassured that it was probably intact. This will be for consumption by the last survivor, and that won't be me.

Most of the afternoon was passed by much

computer work by John Wasilewski and myself in copying the CD made by John of the pictures made available by several of the Helpmates. A group of the members were shown how to do many things on the computer, and all learned a lot which John helped us with. He is a computer whiz, and really can make the ornery thing behave. He had brought a scanner, and with this equipment, he put several of the pictures which were donated by the widows of Stan Chmura, Bill Shick, and Dick Williams into our group of pictures which are in the process of being copyrighted. Several CD's were burned for the use of the Helpmates who wanted them. A very productive afternoon and evening resulted.

We drove to a Chinese restaurant for dinner, and repeated exactly what we had done the previous day with the delicious food. I sat by Bob Rosen, and he really digs using chopsticks. I still ate too much, and drove my blood sugar wild the next AM. The variety was outstanding, and everything was well prepared, at least to my taste.

Thursday we all met for breakfast, and had the Motel Continental Meal. Afterwards, a few of us went to another casino, and I made my usual donation. One of the group, who shall remain nameless, put about 6 coins in a 50 cent machine, and waited for about an hour for the bells to stop ringing, and walked out of the casino a lot richer. We all jealously congratulated her on the good fortune, and we were secretly glad that one of our own could take some money away from the place.

I had inadvertently put the problems we had with Al Pavlick's journey back to the Motel as a Tuesday event, but actually it was from the Downtown Casino that this occurred. I will not repeat this, so make the correction mentally at this time. We had a bad Thursday afternoon, indeed.

Our banquet was held at a local "Olive Garden" and it was superb. The service was superior, the food was good, and our guest, John Wasilewski treated everyone to any of the drinks not covered by the meal provided. Some of Mel and Betty's family joined us at

this meal, and we got to meet some of the folks who make up his heritage. Another group was in the room, so we decided to hold our meeting back at the Motel.

At the meeting we had many thank you's to those who were there, and to the planners of the reunion. Dave Hawkins was asked to give a presentation on the research he had done for a possible 2003 reunion. His target city was New Orleans, and he had some interesting rates in that spot. He was encouraged to continue his research, and report to us whenever he could get some final figures determined. At this time he asked for help from those who had planned previous reunions, and we reported some of the do's and don'ts as planning proceeds. This is a super spot for our needs, and we do not need to go into some of the less attractive areas to have our meeting. A new WWII "D-Day Museum" has apparently been established, which could be a great addition to our reunion. The meeting finished and we will hear more from David in the future. Al Pavlick had to miss the dinner and the meeting because of an earlier commitment.

At this reunion I received several donations from various persons, so the kitty is healthy for a while. Mel gave me a donation from the remains of the reunion fee, and that helped also. I have enough in the kitty to support our needs for at least 5 or 6 months, I believe. I will shout my needs, if they arise. I later received an added donation from Mel with the last of the cash he had from the registrations.

I got a call from Norbert Obecny on the 21st, and told him that we went through his outskirts on the way to the reunion. His wife injured a leg somehow, and he could not get away while she was incapacitated. He trusts we had a nice time, and I assured him that this was the case. He is doing well, and asked me if I could send him some of the literature which I prepare for the attendees of each reunion. I have done this, and he will get the jobbies soon, and he will have the latest roster available. Thanks for the call, Norb. And good luck to the wife.

I have been in touch with John W. recently, and he sent me a CD with some computer material on it, and I was able to put it to good use. He tells me that his mother was in good spirits

when he got home, and for that he was glad. He felt that his trip may have upset her, but that did not seem to be the case. I again thanked him for his participation in our reunion, and I think that he enjoyed himself at the function.

Ray sent me an E-mail to let me know that he and Marge got home OK, altho tired. He enjoyed himself, and I know that Marge must have.

I received a note from Marion and Bill Hartley with a donation for Miss Kitty. She does most of the driving for the family now, and feels safer at this activity. Bill has a knack of getting lost. He would have been great in our car in Detroit. I thank you for the donation, and will see you in the near future.

I plan getting this on the way in a day or so, and I would like to finish out most of this page before I send it. I have printed most of the news I learned at the reunion, and tried not to make any of it up, so I will wrack my brain for a few more paragraphs, and get this on the copier for transmission.

I think that I will put our battalion internet locates in the bulletin, again. I get many messages by this means, and would like to try to get even more by this simple means. This is a current list.

Irv Merrill	irrv42@aol.com
Warren, Irene Ellis	warene@juno.com AND warene@netzero.net
John Wasilewski	johnw98765@aol.com
Clair Schneider	carole@rsg.org
Dave Hawkins	hawkinsjd@earthlink.net
Tony Lembo	fourlem@mindspring.com AND lenl12@mail.trilogy.net
Bud DeFeo	jebu01@aol.com
Pat Maier (Dau)	deb@gribskovglass.com
Ray Crismond	rlc284@aol.com
Shirl Dawson	shirl824@aol.com
Margaret Nightingale	margaret_nightingale@hotmail.com
General's grandson	plsander@us.ibm.com
C. Brownlee's G/Son	tonbro@rocketmail.com
Jack Newell (Dau)	bgmac@alltel.net
Dorothy Hartwig	dothartwig215@cs.com
Siegel's G/Dau	everything@hostsite.net
Chmura's Dau	nunnerij@yahoo.com
Rich Rizzio	rizgourmet@juno.com
Wilkinson's Dau	ufeather@aol.com
Herb Smith	bhrock@bellatlantic.net
Mel Donaldson	don1betty@aol.com
Janet Kleinman	phoebek7@home.com
DeMonaco's son	tiamo4@acninc.net
Harvey Smith	hsmith4580@aol.com
Herb Smith	bhrock@bellatlantic.net
Carol McElmurray	cmc@fone.net
Eunice Tibbott	ent@psu.edu
John B. Summers	hlpmate284@aol.com
Jack Newell Daughter	bgmac@alltel.net

I am sure that there are others, but I will correct this list often. Use it to talk with your friends. Take care of yourselves, and write some news.

AS EVER, JBS