



HELMATE BULLETIN

Official Newsletter

of the

284th F. A. Bn. WWII

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Greetings, Helpmates,

I had inadvertently left out of the last issue some news of Warren Ellis. He suffered a golf injury to a shoulder, and had some orthopedic work done on that extremity. He is improving, but expects to have a rotator cuff repair in the near future. It will certainly cut into his sporting life, but hope the doctors fix it so that he can hit those 345 yard drives again. Dream on.

And Warren has another internet address. He can be reached at:

warene@comcast.net

I do not know if his netzero locate is still working, but the one listed just above is where I have him at this time.

Good luck, Warren on the shoulder. They do good work down there on us old duffers. That is a pun, not a golf term. Sorry about leaving out this news, but my note in the previous issue was misread, and I thought I had put it in.

And did anyone notice when our next reunion was to be held? Look at the last newsletter, and you will notice that it will be in 2002. Another of my senior moments, I would guess. I have corrected this, so we are now correct as to date and year. Just another senior moment, I guess.

Received this E-mail note from the daughter of one of our members, Paul Martin.

"I just received the Helpmate Bulletin official Newsletter and read in there about my father. I am sorry to report that he passed away on Sun January 12 after 2 bouts with pneumonia. I am slowly getting around to notifying everyone. Beverly Nehls - daughter "

Another of our members, GONE.

I had a message on my answering machine from the daughter of Clarence Wilkinson requesting her name be removed from the mailing list. Thank you for the call, and I will certainly comply.

And Clair Schneider left his mark on my machine. I will have to call him to see how he is taking care of the world. I doubt that the present situation could exist unless Clair gave his encouragement. More, after I hear more from him.

I received an E-mail from Ray Crismond and he told me that he did not receive the note from Paul Martin's daughter notifying us of his death. If he did not receive the note, I may expect that others of you did not, also. I am going to update my address book, and put everything in again. I thought it was OK, but it may not be. Thanks for telling me, Ray.

And in Ray's note he tells me that Marge has been under the weather. She had developed a cough, and had to be hospitalized with a pulmonary infection. Well, then she had bad results from the antibiotic used for the primary infection, and had to be readmitted to do business with the gastric complications which resulted. She is now home, but is extremely weak, and is still under care. See what happens when I get beat in cards, Marge. Seriously, medicine reactions are common, and they must be watched. But Marge is a very good patient. She will do what she is told. Now, Ray-----????

Some of my good friends just got back from the St. Petersburg area, and didn't exactly love the weather. This must have been a bad time for Mother Nature, and she is getting even for something we must have done. It will get better, tho. It is spring in St. Louis, and it will get warm, and nice, and green, and livable.

I got a call from Al Scoville on my answering machine, and called him back to give him the address of Gen. Sanders. He is in his up-

per 80's, and enjoys good health at this time. His wife died about 5 years ago, and he is at the homestead, and enjoys the many good memories which live there.

He visits Boca Grande and his daughter on rare occasions, and his sons help keep him out of trouble in Connecticut.

He tells me that he has changed his license plate to LP284—(Liaison Pilot 284), so he is a real member of our elite now.

I told him that I had not heard from the General for a year or so, and do not know anything about his current status. The General is 94 now, will be 95 in November. Al will let me know what he discovers after he writes him.

And as I mentioned earlier, I also got a call on my answering thing from good old Clair Schneider. As long as I had a phone in my hand, I called Clair. He is in the middle of gardening, and he and Carol have enlarged their garden plot, and have all sorts of things going there. His health is good at this time, and he hopes to live to be 125.

He was going to call the Stensbergs before he called me, but that didn't happen. So he is going to give me a report when he does call them.

He is thinking about New Orleans, and I am sure urging him to try to make it. Always good to talk to Clair. You never know what he will bring up next. He gets a regular offer to go to Maine, but this year he turned it down. He is a guest of someone in Kennebunkport, and gets to go to church with the Bush family. Well, if you pray together, you will stay together.

Got an E-mail from David Hawkins tonight. He sent me the story of "TAPS", and it's origin and the words. Nice history, and certainly has a place in this world's culture.

Nothing from his and Virginia's meandering so maybe they are sitting tight this spring. I sure do hope we have a good turnout at the upcoming reunion. When I talked with Al Scoville, he wondered if this were going to be the last one. I told him that I hoped not, and I feel sure that we will find a way to keep together. Thanks for the contact, Hawkie. Stay healthy. Another big HI to Virginia.

Had a little frost on the grass this morning. I had hoped that we were finished with the

cold, but it is still March, and that means about anything in St. Louis.

I am going to get started on my project of having our members write an interesting anecdote about our unusual experiences while we were over there. This incident is in Capt. Kittell's book, and it is true, for sure. Our 3/4 ton truck driver was Elmer Siegel. He doubled as the driver, and also acted as an aid man as needed.

Elmer was a smoker, but heavy. Just after we had gotten on the Normandy peninsula, we had to wait a few days for the batteries to be unloaded. We learned to dig in on those first few nights, and Elmer was a seasoned digger.

As we moved along in August, we continued acting like soldiers, and we dug in both ourselves, but also the aid station tent. We dug it down a few feet, and used the dirt removed to fill sandbags, which we piled up around the tent.

One darkish day, it started raining. We were all dug in, and so was Elmer. Several of us would bunk down in the aid tent, and it was quite safe, unless we got a direct hit. Elmer, as I said, was dug in, and to perfect his job, he staked his shelter half over the foxhole, to protect him from the rain. And it did a fine job. But rain is water, and water is heavy, and the shelter half began to droop from the collecting rain. No one was available to help him, and Elmer did his best thing. He just lit up a cigarette, and had a smoke while the water got deeper, and heavier, and the shelter half got fuller and fuller.

Finally, the ultimate happened. The pins would not hold any more weight, and the whole thing collapsed, soaking Elmer, his cigarette, and his disposition. We all laughed when the calamity occurred, and Elmer, good naturedly as possible, laughed with us. I was in pretty close contact with Elmer, he lived just 100 miles north of St. Louis in Quincy, and we laughed about this for years afterward. I often wondered why he didn't push up the center of his shelter half, and make sort of a tent of it. But he didn't and I am glad. What would we have had to talk about?

Now, come on, guys. Let's enjoy again some of your humorous or unusual stories. We need you, and this could be a great way to keep the

conversation going at the reunions.

We have an address change for Harvey Osborne. His last bulletin came back with this new locate:

1112 STARR RD

CORTLAND, NY 13045-6804

I will send him another Bulletin, and hope this one gets to him. Give us some mail, folks. We are interested, very.

Wanda Kiszka's bulletin was returned for the 2nd time, so she is lost in our records. If anyone is in touch with Wanda, kindly have her reach me so that I can resume sending news.

And the same goes for Leonard Leggett. His mail was returned for the 2nd time. If anyone keeps tabs on Leonard, have him reach me so that I can reinstate him.

Now I am going to give those with computers a very impressive locate. It is a composite picture of the entire earth at night, with the lights of the continents prominently shown. The locate is:

http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/image/0011/earthlights_dmsp_big.jpg

Then hit the "GO" icon. There are many neat things available on the net, and as I find some which are of general interest, I will list them. You must type them exactly as written, and do not forget the 2 underline characters there. I would invite others who find interesting views to send an E-mail with the locate. I love exploring.

We're back to winter again in St. Louis. It may pop some hail, or even a little snow tonite they say. Pretty much like every year this time.

I received an E-mail from Carol McElmurray in response to my call for news. She is the daughter of our faithful departed Helpmate, John Nightingale, and lives in the Colorado area. She is doing well, and says that they have had a very dry winter, so the recent snow is going to help them out this summer.

She and her sister, Margaret, were frequent attendees at our reunions, and Babe got to know the girls well on these visits. Carol enjoys reading the newsletter, and although many of those she knew are gone, she likes to read about what everyone else is doing.

Thank you for the note, Carol. Keep in touch, and give my regards to Sis.

Carole sent me another note with a picture of her house, and all the snow there, and also a picture of her hubby and a very vicious looking dog, who probably is gentle as spring rain. Thanks, Carol. Now I know who and what is protecting you.

Just saw Harv Smith on line, and said HI. He sent me an answer right away. He is super glad with his move to the Northwest. It has been very wet out there this winter, but the weather has not been cold, and his living conditions are super good. They have a 3 bedroom spot, and are in a condominium format, no outside work, and the maintenance handled by the assoc. They get 30 meals a month, their choice, and have great neighbors.

They have not been able to get together with the Maiers, what with doctor visits, etc., but it is their futures. New Orleans is a remote possibility, but not likely.

Thanks for the news, Harv. Hi to Ann. Write often. It is so easy.

I have been going over my lifelong accumulation of movies and photographs, and it is a big chore. Babe would have known many of the faces who grace the screen, but I have only an inkling of the owners. I want to get them together for the kids, and I got me a new digital camcorder to try to facilitate this chore. But it will take the rest of my time on this planet to get them all in order. The kids promised to help me, but you know how that goes.

I got an E-mail from Ray Crismond which tells me that the West Coast Brigade is going to have a lunch at Pappas on the 12th of April, at 1:30. I am sorry to report, but I will not be at the meeting, and I will miss it. First, I love the Greek Salad I always order there, and then I am going to miss seeing all the great people who will attend. Leave an empty seat there, folks. I wish I could be there.

Well, I haven't seen hail for 5 or 6 years, but I sure did see some today. We were promised a storm system, but was predicting mostly wind and rain, but it fell pretty heavy to be rain. The pellets were larger than marbles, and the grass was covered in just 5 minutes. Then just as quick as it started, it stopped. One of my good

friends has been having some garage cement problems, and I will bet that he has some dimple problems on his new car now. It is supposed to rain hard tonight, and it sure looks like it may.

Do you all remember hail? Well, we got acquainted with this knobby moisture the other day here in St. Louis. We had some pellets about the size of small marbles, then an hour later another bout with hail about the size of a quarter. They really thumped down on the roof and rattled those metal shields which are up there. One of my friends had a 2002 Buick which got a ding or two, and had them bumped out right away. Our weather in general is acting like late winter, hot one day, then cooler the next two.

Just got a call from Charlie and Ruth Zimmer. They were inquiring about a few things concerning New Orleans.

They just came back from cruise to the Islands, and Ruth ended up with a severe virus infection which really beat her down. It started out respiratory, but ended up everywhere. Had to spend some time in the hospital, and they never did really know what caused it. She is feeling fine, now, and they are planning on the reunion later. This may be the new virus that has hit around. They have discovered the cause, but no cure will be available for years.

It will be good to see the Zimmer's again.

We are having a heavy thunderstorm at the time, and the rain is very heavy. They put some sort of a drain in one of my window boxes in the basement, and I hope it works. I have never gotten any water in my house, but this is built on a solid rock hill, and I know the water would stand in place forever if it ever rained that hard.

I received a letter from Herb Smith on the 19th of April. He and Betty had a good winter, but missed greatly the presence of Harvey and Ann. Throughout their entire lives they have never been further apart for any significant time period.

Herb has been having E-mail problems, and he was unable to get them corrected, so he now has a new carrier. His E-mail locate from now on will be:

bhrock@patmail.com

Please change your lists to correct this change.

Betty had her right hip replaced 2 years ago, and Herb has had trouble keeping up with her since. He has developed a glaucoma problem in his left eye. This eye was hit with an ischemic optic neuropathy several years ago, so his good right eye is still in working condition.

Herb included some fodder for Miss Kitty, for which I am very grateful.

Thanks for the news Herb. Do write oftener.

Easter day here was tolerable. We were promised rain, but we got none to speak of. The kids got to go outside to hunt their Easter eggs, and that was a relief. At our house we gathered at Nancy's house (next door), and had brunch. All of the kids were there, and most of the kids kids. We ate a leisurely early lunch, and made the most of our pleasant gathering. Need to do this oftener.

This newsletter was a pleasure to get together. I had an increased number of inputs, and this genuinely is what we needed. Keep up the good work, and it will keep me happy, and the newsletter a newsletter. I see several of the group on the internet quite often, but I hate to break into your train of thought, and don't bother you. If it is something important, though, I will.

I am going to leave the date expected to finish this issue on the front page. Almost a month before I expected it to be finished. You all done good.

I am placing a reservation form on the last page of this issue. Your name will be on the back of the form, but fill it out completely, if you please. I have put all the items the hotel wants on the form, and those who get there a day early will get the reunion rate, I have been told. I always get there a day early, but I have stuff to set up, and sometimes some printing to do. I hope John Wasilewski is able to get down, as he has the computer knowledge to do what I am not able to get done.

Take care of yourselves, and STAY HEALTHY.

As ever,

JBS

REGISTRATION FORM
BRENT HOUSE
1512 JEFFERSON HIGHWAY
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70121

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: () - _____

ARRIVING: _____ DEPARTING: _____

Accommodations Desired: 2 Dbl Single 1 Queen

Special needs: _____ Smoking/Nonsmoking

Payment by: Cash Credit Card: MC VISA AMER. XP OTHER:

Credit Card # _____ Exp. _____

Reservation Deposit: AMT _____ Check _____ Money Order _____

Double check to see that your name is on the back of your reservation form.

Please reserve early. It does help the planners finalize their plans quicker.

There are very few reunions which remain. Future visits will probably be on the local level, with those in the area attending. Dave and Virginia Hawkins have made a personal trip to this facility, and feel that our group will be happy with the accommodations, and the available attractions.

At the present time, the kitty is healthy. I have sufficient funds to put out 2 more newsletters after this one, and my present state of health should permit this strain on the body to be endured.

Especially thanks to those who have sent in notes, or have called me personally. It does make the newsletter an easier chore to develop.

JBS

