



HELPMATE BULLETIN

NOVEMBER

3

Issue 04-5

RONNIE'S MESSAGE CENTER JOHN B. SUMMERS, 5494 ABERDOUR LN. ST LOUIS, MO. 63129
INTERNET LOCATION : HPLMATE284@AOL.COM TEL. (314)845-2086
284th FA BN WEBSITE: [HTTP://HOMETOWN.AOL.COM/FABN284/INDEX.HTML](http://HOMETOWN.AOL.COM/FABN284/INDEX.HTML)

Greetings, all,

Sorry about the last bulletin being so short, but there was just nothing to write. I had hoped to put those expected at the reunion in this issue, but it will have to wait until I come back from Florida.

I received a letter from Marion Hartley just before mailing the last issue, so did not get to put it in. She had just returned from Pa. where they had a lovely memorial service for Bill, and was just as touching as the burial service. It was held chiefly for Bill's folks, and she was glad that they accomplished this.

She had gone to Pennsylvania for a couple of weeks to help get her head back on straight. She knew that Bill was ill, but not nearly ill enough to pass away. She appreciated the small memorial I sent in our names, and will be donating it to an Alzheimer's Research Organization.

She had found some pictures and books which Bill had, and she will bring them to the reunion. She is remaining in Florida, She intends keeping up with some of our activities, and she is most welcome to do so. I am sure that she will join us at our lunches. Bill was always present, even to the last.

Bob Rosen sent a letter and a kitty donation a few weeks ago. He is doing well, and the kids have left him very little to do in the business, and I suspect that he doesn't mind.

The family has been occupied recently with a significant illness of a daughter. A tumor was removed from her lung, along with part of that organ, and survived the surgery, and the 3 months of Chemo which was suggested. She is recovering from the secondary effects of the process, and things seem to be going better at this time.

Bob is going to the Caribbean in September, and will do his thing in the Kayak, and on the tennis court, as usual. I hope there is enough of the islands left after the recent onslaught of Hurricane Frances. That was an odd one, and a wicked one.

Sumiko will be going to Japan in the near future. She will spend 3 or 4 weeks there visiting with family and friends.

All of you guys from "B" battery get to the upcoming reunion. Bob wants to see you there.

Thanks for the letter, the news and the donation for Miss Kitty.

I got one returned bulletin. Michael Kittell has moved to Pennsylvania, so I changed the roster to reflect this change.

One of the ladies who own one of the manufactured homes in Florida died last week. I am going to have to get down there to finish up the legal work on her unit, so that the heirs can have the estate probated, and divide it with the government. I am going to have to get some legal work done with the one unit which is not being handled well, and get it out of my hair.

My poor aching pelvis is still aching, but is getting much better. I get very stiff and sore when I sit a long time, and I wish there were something smart that I could do with the problem.

Went out to a scheduled ROMEO dinner with some friends. This is a group of RETIRED OLD MEDICS EATING OUT, all my age or older, and had a nice visit. They meet every 4th Thursday of the month, so I will try to keep up with them.

I have been getting ready for the reunion. There are lots of copying chores to be done, and it doesn't do itself. I will try to get an ac-

curate roster made up, and this is hard, as I have so little contact with the guys. It is fairly accurate, but somehow or other my mailing list has gotten hit by some glitch, and some names got off the thing. I put some back on from other files, but these may be inaccurate. Let me know if anyone you know does not get a bulletin. I will add the name again.

Hurricane Charlie went through Florida and hurt lots of places I know well. All of my relatives did not suffer damage, but they knew what was going to happen. I was in the small one that skirted New Smyrna Beach a few years back, and they are awesome. The wind is fierce and the rain is flying so fast that it stings your skin. This one did not come close to the kids condo, but it may well have.

Our weather here has been hot and wet for the past week. The roads get wet, then the sun just evaporates the water, and it gets steamy for the next 6 or 8 hours. I pretty much stay in the house, though, so I don't mind it.

I talked with Clair Schneider a week or so ago, and we continue to discuss politics, the weather, and not much else. He told me that he was going to try to visit with Jerri Polson in the near future, as he lives rather close to their business. About 4 days later, I get a package from Amazon Books, and he had sent me two books on one of his favorite targets, private business doing war work, supported by the politicians. I think this is the theme of the books but I won't know until I digest them. He tells me that I will want to read parts of the doings several times to fully digest it. Just what I need, Clair. By the time I will finish reading them, I will be in Jefferson Barracks Cemetery pushing up daisies. No, the deer keep any foliage cleaned up there.

I received a note from Dave and Virginia Hawkins with news that they have just returned from 3 weeks or so in Pennsylvania. They were visiting a son and his family there, and had a very fine time on the visit. They planned a 2 day stay in Washington, D.C., and saw the major exhibits that were offered there, including the new WWII Memorial, recently dedicated. They thought that this was a splendid piece of art, and would be well received in the years to come. Hawkie tells me that he had taken a num-

ber of photos, which he will bring to Holiday.

Hawkie plans to spend a few days before the reunion at an Elder Hostel in St. Pete, and hopes to check out a home site he has owned for some time, but which has appreciated in value enough to possibly sway him to market it, and avoid the dangers and damage which the Florida storms produce. In Texas, they have very warm weather, but fewer damaging storms. It had been at the 100 degree mark much of July and August, but you can stay in your home, and cool yourself nicely.

Hawkie admonishes me to keep healthy, and do not fall around and get injured. Good advice, Dave, but my feet and my head do not seem to coordinate, and those things happen.

Thank you for the kitty fodder. It can be used handily.

Well, Hurricane Francis has become history, but it has left fingerprints all up the Atlantic seaboard. The rains were torrential, and the damage significant. The mechanics down there are well suited to these situations, tho, and they jump in and limit damage quite well. The winds and the tidal changes often ruin the beaches, however, and this takes time to heal.

I received a call from George Ralcewich this past week. Things go well down there, in spite of the high winds which crossed near them (Charlie). They are keeping their doctor appointments, local chores, and otherwise trying to enjoy their golden years. I told him that my plans to come down were in the works and that we would surely get together before the reunion. We talked about the loss of Bill Hartley, and of our surprise at his quick death.

My plan is to get down to New Port Richey for some business problems after the fate of the current hurricanes has been decided. I was in one of the small ones some years back, and I don't want another such experience. One of my mortgagees died last week, and I will have to help survivors get some of the legal work accomplished. I will also get some legal help on my problem property, and get the thing out of my hair.

I noticed that our web site has had over 1250 hits in it's lifetime. John had done a great job, keeping that project up to date. I suspect that some discussion at the reunion will be di-

rected toward this item. It is a great spot, and many people have contacted the area for help with locating info for their family members who were in the war.

I received an E-mail note from Shirley Dawson concerning the reunion. She will be coming down with some of her family, and knows that she will enjoy the trip. It will be good to see Shirl again, because I have many memories of previous reunions, when Pappy was alive and well. Good to hear it, Shirl.

Had another short postponement of my expected trip down south. The relative of my deceased tenant had to change plans, and will not be down until a week later, so I will go down on Tuesday, the 21st, for the work. The plane situation is better then, anyway, so it will just be a few days delay. It will be good to see some of the Helpmate bunch again. Also will be able to get some of my reunion plans consolidated, and also to get myself thoroughly trounced by Marge in our card games.

I received a nice letter from Marion Hartley thanking us for the memorial which I try to send to all of our deceased members. She was in Pennsylvania for several weeks, and while there she had a memorial service for Bill with his family. It was a difficult time, but she is glad that she did it.

She tells me that she is going to bring some pictures, and other material which Bill had, to the reunion. She is looking forward to seeing some of the familiar faces which show up at the reunions. We will be glad to see Marion, too.

Thank you for the letter, Marion, and for the kitty donation.

Also heard from Eunice Tibbott this week. She sends greetings to all, and added a bit of kitty litter, for which thanks is warranted. She has had some problems with her vision, as some degree of macular degeneration is beginning.

Her family is doing well. One of her family is starting college at Penn State, and several other younger ones are just enjoying teenage life. They spent some time in Virginia on one of the islands. Weather was good, but the wind made boat fishing nearly impossible, but was fine for clamming.

Eunice registered Dick's name in the WWII

Memorial listing, and added his army-days picture. I was glad to see his listing, and I am going to recommend this at the reunion for all of the members.

Thanks again for the letter, and the kitty fodder. It will be used.

Got a call from the Zimmers. Charlie was double checking on the reunion plans, and I reassured him that all was on track. Ruth has been having some medical problems, but does get around with some difficulty. The rest of the group seems fine, so we will be glad to see them in October.

And Clair Schneider called to remind me to stay on my feet. I received several of the books he thought I needed to read, and they are heavy. No, HEAVY. But I always enjoy the calls Clair makes. He took Jerri Polson to lunch recently, and she is still working in the business, but less than earlier. Clair does not think that he will be able to make the reunion, but I told him that I was printing up a badge for him.

And George Ralcewich called to tell me that he was in touch with Pat Maier, and Pat could not reach Jeep Rafeld in Florida. I was at my brother's house, and Jeep's phone is a local call from there, and I also was unable to reach him. George and Dorothy will be at the reunion and will join us in our festivities. His area was not greatly harmed by the windstorms.

I also received a note from Bob Rosen later in the week. He tells me that his daughter Ann had to have surgery and removal of part of a lung. Then chemo, and finally is feeling better in spite of the problems. She is getting back into the business, and things finally seem to be going in the right direction.

Bob will be going to the Caribbean in late September, but will be back in plenty of time for the reunion. He hopes to see Lage, and a few others from "B", and I hope he does, too.

Since turning 79, Bob has had the duties at the business diverted from him. I should hope that will be a good thing, Bob.

Sumiko will be going to Japan for 3 or 4 weeks sometime in the near future, and Bob tells me that if he comes back from the reunion to an empty house, he knows where she is.

Thanks for the news, Bob, and for the kitty

donation.

I had thought to send this along before the reunion, but I wanted to be sure to report on all who were expected, and I will never be able to finish that, and still get it out in less than a week. So I will just make a report after we get together in Holiday.

I just heard from Crismond that the DeFeo's will not be able to make it to the reunion. I have had several E-mails from Bud in the recent past and he did not mention this to me. Also, the grandson of our deceased member, Chester Brownlee, "B", will try to attend. He had told me that he wanted to meet some of the "B" battery guys, and it is generally down to Bob Rosen at this time. Lloyd Lage made it to many of the affairs, but has not been present the last 2 reunions. It will be good to have another generation attending. It will not be long until they will be the only ones who can wave the battle flag of the Helpmates.

Got a call from Pat Maier this AM. He tells me that they are dodging the smoke from Mt. St. Helen's this week, and hope it does not rain on their parade. He has developed a hernia, and the doctor does not him to put off having it fixed, so he will not make the reunion this year. He asked me to be sure to tell all his Helpmate buddies a fond hello for him. He also has some dental work which needs doing, so he will have that done while he is under the weather from under the knife. All goes well in the west, and he is feeling fine recently.

Well, the hurricanes, and the reunion, are past history. We gathered the group, won the war again, and left the south in the good hands of the southerners. Those attending were:

Ray and Marge Crismond, Tony Brownlee and friend Amber, George and Dorothy Ralcewich, Shirley Dawson, Shirl's daughter and son-in-law, Peggy and Larry VanHooser, Shirl's granddaughter and her husband, Edi and Trever Bell, Bob Rosen and our bottle, Marion Hartley, Mel and Betty Donaldson, David and Virginia Hawkins, and little old me. I had called Jeep Rafeld before I went to the west coast, and got no message or answer. I hope this does not signal bad news from Dundee.

Expected, but unable to attend were the DeFeo's, and the Warren Ellis family. Sickness

prevented the DeFeo's from attending, and I was not able to find out about Warren and Irene.

We had a very subdued gathering, with no real activities planned. Our meeting room was hardly used, as the groups congregated in one room or another.

On the 2nd day, Ray got quite ill, and finally had to be taken to the hospital for overnight observation. He had an episode similar to the one he suffered in Springfield, when the reunion was held there. But he was out the next day, and he joined us for our big meal, and was there the rest of the time.

The group enjoyed the presence of the grandson of a former "B" battery member and his special friend. Tony Brownlee from Utah, was able to come down, and there he had a big meeting with Bob Rosen, also from "B", and a special friend of Chester Brownlee. Tony had been greatly raised by Chester, and had been well acquainted with Bob from the stories he had heard. Bob Rosen had come in one day after we all had arrived, and the hotel did not have a record of his reservation, but we kept him anyway.

On one morning we all took a sea shuttle out to the gambling boat, anchored outside the legal limit, and we had several hours with the slots, and other diversions. There were no really big winners, but I hit a significant jackpot, and it paid for my hours of gambling.

The final meal was devoured on Thursday PM, and it was a very adequate buffet, which had given us a spot together, and we all had a very good repast. We did not have a real group meeting, but we did decide that any future reunions would be local ones, generally like we have on the West Coast group dinners. Bob Rosen brought along the survivor's bottle, and told us all how he was searched when he got on the plane for Florida. Thoroughly searched, and finally allowed to take his bottle with him to our reunion.

As mentioned, we have decided that no real future reunions are planned. If someone can get a small group together, here or there, they will have the newsletter available to publicize it, and so keep our contacts going.

Several of those attending donated to the

kitty fund, and that was appreciated much.

All in all, the group had a fine time, and all were glad that they took the time to join the reunion.

I intend keeping the newsletter going, and I would be glad to give any of you who find a reason for a mini-meeting a bit of publicity, if you notify me of your plans. I rather doubt that I am going to get more than 3 or 4 issues out per year, but I will do my best to keep the group together by continuing the letter. It gets harder to do, but I believe it is worth doing.

Those of you with computers can get some of the pictures of the reunion from our web page locate. John Wasilewski will post those which our attendees may send to him, but that may take a week or so to finish. I put a listing of the computer sites in our reunion booklet. I may try to get John W. to add this to our website.

I would encourage you to let your kids know of your wartime experiences. I get several E-mail requests monthly from individuals I don't even know trying to find a way to learn of the wartime history of family members who did not leave any hint of their activities.

We have the very beginning of a secondary group who may be able to carry on our history in John Wasilewski and Tony Brownlee. We really need that, because all too soon not one of us will be here to testify. And I do not hesitate to encourage those relatives we leave behind to not just consider the mementos from our service simply a junk collection. That is part of our history, and it was not junk when we saved it, and somehow it will mean more if some service organization could perpetuate our history by it's usage. Ray Crismond has many of the items which were in our possession, and he has faithfully kept them. I have some material also which belong really to all of us, and would surrender same to anyone who would safely keep them. In addition, John W. has compiled several sets of photos, and these are perpetuated on CD, and are available to the members. I have copies of this asset, and I know that John W. may be able to add even more photos to this collection.

These items have an intrinsic value, and should be safeguarded. Any ideas out there?

We need your thoughts, and your help.

I have been in touch with Ray C. recently, and he seems to be fine. I hope he can keep the episodes away from his door. Marge will keep him in step.

I just received news from Ann Forester, the General's daughter, that Gen. Sanders died this morning (Oct. 28th). He had been doing poorly earlier, and he and Beat had been in hospice before her death, but supplemental medications which Ann had given him seemed to cause an improvement. He was found to be so much better that they allowed him to come home, but was visited frequently by a nursing service.

Ann thought he had taken a step backwards recently, and tried to get the nurse to his home yesterday, but their schedule was so busy that they put it off until this AM. He had apparently died sometime during the night, and Ann was called to inform her of this.

Funeral services are going to be next Friday from a local establishment, and he will be buried with full military honors at Fort Sill Cemetery.

I talked with Ann for some time, and Gen. Sanders and she had designed a headstone for them, and on his side he had wished to use the misfiring cannon which I use on the newsletter. Her side has a bunch of roses inscribed thereon, as Ann told me that she did some art work, and loved to paint roses.

I assured Ann that the family has all of the Helpmate Group's sympathy in their great loss, and she appreciated much her dad's great love for our outfit.

On the 29th, I heard from John R. Sanders, a son of the General's. He lives in the Atlanta area, and he called to be added to the list we keep for newsletter purposes. We had a nice chat, and swapped a few stories. He wishes to be added to our lists, and it has been done.

I think that I will close this issue, and try for one more before Xmas. Do take care of yourselves, and keep in touch with one another, and with me. I need your help keeping this contact up to date.

Sorrowfully,
JBS