



HELPMATE BULLETIN

Official Newsletter of the 284th F. A. Bn. WWII

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Greetings all,

By the difference in the date on the last bulletin, and when you got it, you just know that something happened. Well, it did, big time. I was copying the issue, when the copier stopped copying. Just died on the job. I called the repair spot, and they were supposed to be on the job the next AM, but it didn't happen. I was to go to Mississippi to one of the gambling spots, and I did. The copier didn't get fixed for another week, but the Tunica, MS. Slot machines fixed me much faster than that. But I had a good time, and enjoyed the company of several more losers, so it wasn't that bad. The machine started leaving dirty copies, and the repair tech cleaned out the debris, and gave me the good news that it might need a new bag of developer, and I was thankful that I was going to get off with just a service call charge, but when I started copying again the smudging was still there, and he had to make another trip to do the developer thing. Hope that will fix it for a while.

I used up a lot of the ready cash I won on the boat at the reunion, believe me. The slots paid nearly nothing for the first 4 hours, and I have never seen such tight machines in my life. But they began to pay better as we were taken to other casinos, so the rest of the trip was better. I ate much too much, of course, and my blood sugar got kind of out of range, but I expected that.

I have been unable to get the obit notice for the General, but I am still trying, and I hope I can put it in this issue at a later time. I was in touch with both a son and a daughter of Gen. Sanders, so maybe I can get some of the details from them via E-mail.

We are beginning to have some weather one

would expect in mid fall at this time. It is much cooler recently, and the trees are losing their foliage. It was not nearly as colorful this year, probably caused by the amount of rain we got in the summer.

I received a call from Clair Schneider on the 11th, wishing me a glorious "Veteran's Day". It was cold and rainy here, so his call was a welcome interlude. We talked about anything, and about nothing, and found out that he was getting oodles of books backing up his pet peeves. He gets into deep reading, and follows up on his beliefs. It is always a great delight to hear from Clair. Thanks for the call, Clair.

And Norb Obecnyc called to inquire whether I had sent out a recent newsletter. Of course I had, and he should have gotten it already, but I reassured him that he should get it soon. He has an internet locate with his son, and he had not known of Gen. Sanders' death. He will have to chastise his boy. Maybe his locate has changed, though, and I wouldn't know about it.

He tells me that Marie is fine—still uses a walker to get around, but is doing as well as can be expected. He wants me to tell all of his friends HI for him. Thanks for the call, Norb.

John Wasilewski's mother died in mid-Nov. She had been incapacitated with Alzheimer's for several years, and became steadily worse over time. The family kept caring for her until it became physically impossible, so she was transferred to a specialized nursing facility where she passed away. John and his family have been assured of our sympathy and condolences, and am sure it is appreciated. This disease is a plague on humankind. Our loved one make strangers of those who are caring for them, and nothing seems to help. Please

let us know, John, if there is anything we can do to help,

I received the bulletins back from James Thurman, and from Eddie Walker. I sent the former to his winter address, and there was a small P.O. # change in Eddie's address, but I sent it back before I could write this note. I will try to remember it and put it in later. And on the 29th, I received the one addressed to James Thurman back with no notations. So if anyone is in touch with James, ask him to send a deliverable address for his Bulletin.

Had some very bad luck in the family last week. My grandson's ex-wife was crossing a street the day before Thanksgiving, and she was struck by a big truck, and injured so severely that she died within an hour. Her vision is poor from a hereditary condition, and she had misjudged the danger, and the accident happened. The truck stopped a block or so down the street, and apparently the driver cleaned the blood off his truck, then went on. A relative got the license number, and the man was arrested very soon thereafter. If only he had not left the scene, he was probably unable to prevent the accident, and would have been exonerated. But he probably became excited, and drove away. My grandson has the custody of his 2 sons by their marriage, but they were visibly upset by the occurrence. They are 7 and 4, and do not realize the situation fully, but it was a terrible event. My daughter, Nancy, takes care of the kids after school, and they will benefit from this arrangement. Life is full of bad stuff. Be careful.

Thanksgiving was marred by the above, but we met and ate too much, of course. The weather has been horrible, but that is to be expected this time of the year. Our meeting was much subdued by the recent tragedy, but life goes on, and we must move with it.

The next day I got fitted for a new set of glasses. I don't know if they are much different from the old ones, but on the way out of the shop, I stepped down a high curb, and fell flat on my ugly stomach. All I got was 2 deep skin abrasions on my right hand, and for that I am glad. I have got to either watch better, or quit walking the rest of my life. Could have been worse. Last time I busted my pelvis in 3 spots.

Bud DeFeo died late in November. He had planned attending the reunion, but apparently was hospitalized. Jean had been in touch with several of the group, and I understand he had serious lung problems. Bud was well liked by the group, and attended many of our reunions, even though he left our group in Kansas, to be part of a cadre for another battalion. He considered the 284th as his military spot. I gave Jean our sincere sympathy, and sent a memorial in Bud's honor. He will be greatly missed.

Got James Thurman's last bulletin back for second time. He is in neither of his addresses. If anyone is in touch with him, tell him that we have lost track of him, unfortunately.

George Ralcewich called to tell me of De-Feo's death. Wonders when I will get down. It looks like late December or early January, but the work on the condo will have to get done. I cannot believe how difficult it is to get work accomplished. Of course, there is a lot to be done, and apparently not enough workers to get it done.

I am getting the greeting cards now. As is my routine, I will relay any news the greeting contains, and since many of them will contain a bit of help for poor Miss Kitty, I will not comment on the donations. Just accept my general thanks for all.

Mary Ciccone always gets first card into my basket. She is well, and wishes everyone holiday greetings. Her card came on Nov. 17th, and warranted my pleasant surprise.

Bea Beck got in an early card, also, and was a cause for a phone call to her to get her Tony Brownlee's address. It was nice to talk to Bea, and I hope the info I gave her was correct.

She and the airlines are at odds this year. She had problems with delays, missed connections, and mistakes galore. But she survived. After one of her trips she came home to find that a bathroom fixture had cracked, and 49,000 gallons of water had escaped the system, and ruined some of her household furniture and flooring. She still has a home, not a wreck as some of Florida hurricane victims came home to.

Bea had a basal cell cancer on her scalp,

and had to have it removed. It has taken about 8 months to completely heal, and it left a dent in her scalp, but again, it could have been worse.

Millie Nelson sent a short note wishing all a wonderful holiday season, and a great new year. Her family trips, new births, and good health has made 2004 a great year. Millie has remained in general good health, for which she is happy.

Clara Chmura sends greetings to all. She is apparently in good health, but I am sure that she misses Stan a lot.

Dee and Tony send greetings, and no hint of any problems in the family. Hopefully that means that things go well at this time.

Eunice Tibbott wishes all a joyous holiday season. She enjoys good health, and is learning to read enlarged printing despite her recent cataract surgery, and the macular degeneration which has visited her.

Her family is fine, and growing up. Most of the younger ones are completing their education, and have no especial problems right now.

Eunice visited the WWII Memorial and was very impressed with the work. She visited Glacier National Park, and other areas in Montana this past summer, and enjoyed the trip much.

Dick Bozzo reports that his health has been good the past year, but that RaeMarie's cancer problem remains in remission, and she has been having increased trouble with pain, and difficulty walking. In addition, her doctors are constantly monitoring her blood sugar.

The Bozzo's had their 62nd wedding anniversary in mid December. He recalls that the war kept them from celebrating this happy event until their 4th. Great news, Dick. They have one grandson who is now in college, and has decided to follow a nursing career. Good choice.

Rightly Dick has sensed that our close group will no longer plan an annual meeting. Too few are able to participate, and what with disability and poor health, fewer can really plan as far ahead as reunions require. Sad, but true.

David and Virginia Hawkins send greetings to all. They have been physically pretty good, and have been able to visit friends and family, a cruise, a reunion, and other various and sundry diversions in the past year. Their kids and grandkids are all fine, the older ones were able

to vote. They had a great 2004, and hope a better one for themselves, and all of our group.

I need to quiz David about his current E-mail address. My mail no longer reaches him.

Received greetings from the Rafelds. They were chased about by the various sets of hurricanes, so our missed phone calls may have been when they had to evacuate their digs for safer ground.

Jeep still has the vision problem, and had a cataract operation, but his macular degeneration persists. He has had some facial nerve problem, and is having pain from whatever is happening there. They wish all a happy holiday season.

Norbert and Marie Obecny sent greetings, and on the phone the other evening Norb was very anxious that I tell all the group Hi, and happy holidays. He tells me that he had not yet gotten his last bulletin, but have heard nothing more, so maybe he got it.

Gerry and Mugs Stensberg also wish all of our group super holiday greetings. They enriched my card with some Wisconsin cheese which I will devour in about 4 days. Thanks, folks. You are too kind.

George and Dorothy Ralcewich sends greetings to all, and hope that the small group at our last reunion spells the end of our reunions. I hope not, also, George, but it is hard to get any of the motels interested when so few will attend. We will still have our little local meetings, but on the local level. Maybe our good friend Shirl will try one in Fredericksburg next year. Will see.

Meanwhile George is fine, Dorothy is still a bit "squeaky", and all goes well in Riverview.

Bob and Sumiko Rosen also wish all a nice Holiday Season. He is now 95% retired, and all he has is a chair in the board room which they let him occupy.

Bob will be heading for the Caribbean in February, and Sumiko will travel to Japan for the 13th anniversary of her mother's death, which is a very important event for the family.

Ray and Marge Crismond are doing well. He tells me that he expects the Donaldsons down in January, and for me to get my bones down for our usual lunch and mini. No word

about Ray's problem at the reunion, so I suspect things go well health-wise in Holiday. It will be good to see you in January.

Marion Hartley sent a note with her greetings to all. She was very happy to see all of the group in Holiday, but laments the fact that the group is getting smaller.

She is cleaning house in case she wants to get a smaller place to live in. While she was at work, she fell off a small stool, and gashed a leg and had to have a significant repair. It is still sore, and she is staying on the floor for a while.

She stays busy with church work, but still comes home to an empty house, and a cat that just says "meow". Thinks it is time for me to come down so that we can have a lunch.

And last in this bunch of greetings, and last on our battalion roster, Charles and Ruth Zimmer send greetings to all, and sends thanks for keeping the Bulletin going to keep our group somewhat oriented. It gets difficult at times, but it is no trouble, really.

I will wait a few days before adding more names. It is so good to hear from old friends, and wartime buddies, and I enjoy greatly this contact.

On the 17th I received greetings from Lois Weary. She is well, and tells me that this spring she had a fall, and broke her wrist. But that is healed, and she is going to keep from doing that again. Lois went with us when we went back to Europe in the early 90's, and was a welcome addition to our group. Most of that group have gone on, unfortunately.

Margaret Cody sends greetings to all, and is doing fairly well after Charles' death. She visited friends in Rhode Island, and found it was a welcome change. She remains in good health, and hopes to keep that going. She registered Charles in the WWII Memorial, and thanked me for sending the certificate. I am glad, Margaret, and hope many of the others do the same.

Zelma Rigney wishes all a great holiday, and a healthy 2005. She apparently is well, and is thankful for good health.

And last, but not least, Fred Beltz sends good wishes to all from Pennsylvania. He asked especially that I send his greetings to all the Help-mates and wishes for a happy, healthy holiday season, and the upcoming new year.

I received a call from George and Dorothy Ralcewich on the 18th. He is my bearer of all bad news. He tells me that he had word that Helen Markoski, wife of Eddie, passed away in the near past. He does not know any of the particulars, but just the fact. In addition, he heard from another source that Ginger Shick, widow of Bill, also has passed on. We are dwindling, and that will continue.

He also has been in touch with Jean DeFeo, and she is going to try to keep in touch with our group if at all possible.

All goes well with George, and he is awaiting my arrival down south so that we can have a few lunches.

Patricia and Steve Entile send greetings to all. She remains well, and even works a couple of days a week. Steve is still at home, and she enjoys cooking for him.

Lloyd Lage had visited them several times this summer, and has had nice visits with them. Lloyd and Pat have been good friends since early childhood.

She tells me that their good friend Mary Brown broke her ankle some time back, and had to spend some time in rehab environment. I believe we lost track of Mary a while back, so if she wishes, I can put her back on the mailing list. I have her name still but no current address for an address.

Mel and Betty Donaldson reported in, but did not sign the card. I understand that they are going to be in Riverside after the middle of January. It will be good to see them.

Ann and Harvey Smith are doing well out in Oregon. They finally got to go to Hawaii for a time in a time-share apartment. They spent a lot of pool time, touring time, and relaxing time, and Ann was glad that Harvey finally decided that it was only half as much plane time from the west coast as from Penn.

They added their first grandson early this year, as their daughter, Kristi presented them Devin Petit, the best thing since air was invented. The daughter lives in Eugene, Oregon, which is not too far away from their base home.

Herb and Betty spent some quality time with them this summer. Herb is not much for getting his feet of the earth under any circumstances, so it was a victory to have them visit. The trip

home was somewhat bumpy, apparently, so they are not anticipating having them out soon. Ann and Harvey intend going back to Penn this summer to see them.

Do keep in touch.

Harry and Florence Podolsky send warm greetings to all. Harry has been having some medical problems, but hope things are better by this time.

I received a greeting from John Wasilewski and welcomed the warm greetings proferred. He quite recently lost his mother who had advanced Alzheimer's, and had been severely affected most recently. I believe that they are creeping up on a remedy for this plague. We sure do need it. It can easily tear up a family.

Joe Zielinski sends greetings, and news that his second operation on his knee did not turn out well, so there will be more next year. He walks with assistance, but still is unsteady. He hopes the next one will do better.

Well, no wonder my greeting to Don Haaning came back. He sent me a note postmarked Nov 20, and I got it just today (12/23). He was sending me his address change. He tells me that he visited Carney in February, and enjoyed it so much that he is going to try again next year. I got his greeting back about a week ago, and thought we had lost him, but his letter had been damaged in the mail, and just reached me. His new address is:

631 E. Telfair Circ.
Wilmington, NC 28412

As I mentioned earlier, the many donations I received in the cards are much appreciated. The recent repairs to the crazy copier ate up a lot of the reserve, and now it is filled a little higher, fortunately. Thank you all again for the greetings, and for the folding green.

I had a long chat with Ann Forester, the General's daughter, yesterday. She is sending me the Obit notice which was posted in the paper, and which has the General's picture on it. I will put it in the Bulletin when I get it.

It seems that the General had very much to do with the development of the demonstration area at Fort Riley, and she has been contacted by some of the staff to have that area named after Gen. Sanders. She is awaiting more on the subject, and I will keep this item up to date

as more news develops. We talked about many of the experiences which had shaped his career, and maybe we can get a few of them in our record. He always did consider Helpmate as his most important command.

I am going to get ready to close this issue, as I must get ready for my Florida chore. I hope it will be warmer down this year than it was in January of last year, but it will surely be warmer than it will be in St. Louis.

I just got word that my ailing sister-in-law passed away this morning. I will definitely go down to the sooth with my son. I had changed my mind, and was going down next Tuesday, but will go by car, instead.

Please do not whip me with a wet noodle if the newsletter appears less frequently in the future. It takes me a little more that a day to get it ready for mailing, and there is little more than bad news to print recently, and my bones are getting slower, and my typing even slower yet. And it depends a lot on what comes in. I have the E-mail route to catch many of you, and that is easy, quick, and positive, and I am going to use it more and more. But the Message Center is open for business. Write, or E-mail me, and I will get it.

That means that I will close this issue, and start getting it ready to mail. I had intended putting the General's more complete obit in this issue, but that won't happen now. Do take care of yourselves, and do keep in touch.

As Ever, happy greetings

JBS

