

The BULGE BUGLE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION • VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC.

VOLUME XXXII NUMBER 1

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

FEBRUARY 2013

KEEPING THE LEGACY ALIVE: VBOB teams up with the National Infantry Museum

Read the full story on pg. 16



The VBOB Executive Council presented a \$25,000 check to the National Infantry Foundation at their September 2012 meeting. Front row, l-r: Mike Sierra of the National Infantry Foundation, Executive Council members Mary Ann Bowen, David Bailey, Lou Cunningham, Alan Cunningham, Madeleine Bryant, and Mike Levin. Back row, l-r: John Schaffner, John Bowen, Dee Paris, George Chekan, and Doug Dillard.



Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc.
 PO Box 27430
 Philadelphia, PA 19118
 703-528-4058
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 Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc.
Publisher/Editor: George Chekan,
 9th Infantry Division
Historical Research: John D. Bowen,
 Associate Member

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* Deceased

CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

ALABAMA

Gen G.S. Patton, Jr. (11)
 Vernon Miller 205-951-0265
 1409 John Wesley Dr
 Birmingham, AL 35210-2203

ARIZONA

Arizona (26)
 Leo Hoffman 480-654-6674
 5725 E. Mc Dowell Rd., Lot 211
 Mesa, AZ. 85215

Southern Arizona (53)
 George McGee 520-298-3220
 7830 E. Hampton St.
 Tucson, AZ 85715-4214

BELGIUM

5th Fusiliers of Belgium (38)
 Marcel D'Haese 00-32-2-673-49-76
 Boulevard du Souverain N 49 Box 4
 1160 – Brussels, BE

CALIFORNIA

Fresno (5)
 Arthur Steffensen 559-266-2997
 7469 S. Cedar Ave
 Fresno, CA 93725-9749

Golden Gate (10)
 Doris Davis 650-654-0101
 889 Bauer Dr
 San Carlos, CA 94070-3613

Southern California (16)
 Gordon Heame 818-784-8980
 4363 Hayvenhurst Ave.
 Encino, CA 91436

San Diego (51)
 Robert D. Schrell 858-274-5738
 2530 San Joaquin Ct.
 San Diego, CA 92109

CONNECTICUT

Connecticut Yankee (40)
 Richard Egan 203-634-0474
 79 Alcove St.
 Meriden, CT 06541

COLORADO

Rocky Mountain (39)
 A. Wayne Field 719-598-2234
 6030 Fencepost Dr
 Colorado Springs, CO 80919

DELAWARE

Brandywine Valley (66)
 Charles Gaffney 302-762-3023
 907 Shipley Rd
 Wilmington, DE 19803-4927

FLORIDA

Florida Citrus (32)
 Gerald Myers 863-686-2121
 320 E. Palm Dr
 Lakeland, FL 33803-2650

Indian River (41)
 John Gaynor 321-549-3529
 901 Culpepper Ave
 Palm Bay, FL 32909

Southeast Florida (62)
 George Fisher 561-585-7086
 3456 S. Ocean Blvd #503
 Palm Beach, FL 33480

Golden Triangle (48)
 Clarence Buckman 352-687-8175
 53 Redwood Track
 Ocala, FL 34472

Florida Southwest (67)
 Vincent Runowich 727-323-3793
 4063 10th Ave N
 St. Petersburg, FL 33713

INDIANA

Northern Indiana (30)
 Barry Veden 219-874-9873
 507 Duneland Beach Dr.
 Michigan City, IN 46360

Central Indiana (47)
 Chis Schneider (317) 362-6015
 1795 Cherry St
 Noblesville, IN 46060

IOWA

Hawkeye State (44)
 Harold Lindstrom 563-585-4926
 3131 Hillcrest Road
 Dubuque, IA 52001-3908

KANSAS

Northeast Kansas (69)
 Mark Collins 785-340-8262
 PO Box 8556
 Topeka, KS 66608-0556

MARYLAND/DC

Maryland/DC (3)
 John Schaffner 410-584-2754
 1811 Miller Rd
 Cockeysville, MD 21030-1013

MASSACHUSETTS

Lamar Soutter/Central (22)
 John McAuliffe 508-754-7183
 425 Pleasant St
 Worcester, MA 01609

MICHIGAN

West Michigan (23)

James Wibby 231-938-2995
3471 Blackwood Dr.
Traverse City, MI 49686-3887

MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi (33)

James Hunt 662-328-8959
804 20th Ave
N. Columbus, MI 39705

MISSOURI

Gateway (25)

Kent Stephens 618-344-1616
107 Bluffview La
Collinsville, IL 62234

NEW JERSEY

Peter F. Leslie, Jr (54)

Paul M. Hennessey 973-366-4610
179 E. Central Ave.
Wharton, NJ 07885

Fort Monmouth (56)

Larry Lynch 732-842-5923
37 Princeton St.
Red Bank, NJ 07701

Fort Dix/McGuire (60)

Donald D'Amato 609-304-3590
1503 Denham Court
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054

South Jersey (61)

Ed Steinberg 609-886-2418
202 Holly Dr
Rio Grande, NJ 08242

NEW YORK

Mohawk Valley (28)

Kenneth H. Rowland 315-736-5836
1550 Herkimer Rd #106
Utica, NY 13502

Hudson Valley (49)

Allan Atwell 518-371-8449
9 Greenlea Dr
Clifton Park, NY 12065

Staten Island (52)

William Abell 917-299-9766
297 Clarke Ave
Staten Island, NY 10306

Duncan T. Trueman (59)

Elliot Hermon 845-344-6181
3 Putter Way
Middletown, NY 10990

Long Island (63)

William Mueller 516-731-2488
27 Eve Ln
Levittown, NY 11756-5511

OHIO

Blanchard Valley (42)

Tom Tomastick 740-965-8329
10194 Galena Point Dr.
Galena, OH 43021

Ohio Buckeye (29)

John Kalagidis 330-492-2214
2545 58th St N
Canton, OH 44721-3451

Gen D. D. Eisenhower (35)

Richard Shape 937-843-3854
211 Oakcrest Ct
Russells Point, OH 43348-9508

Alton Litsenberger (68)

Wendell Ellenwood 614-389-5059
6000 Riverside Dr., Apt. #A204
Dublin, OH 43017

PENNSYLVANIA

Delaware Valley (4)

Gary Lambert 856-304-3106
123 Garfield Ave
Collingswood, NJ 08108

Susquehanna (19)

George Waters 717-488-6311
303 Honesdale Rd
Waymart, PA 18472

Western Pennsylvania (24)

Leroy Schaller 724-238-2297
1839 Route 259
Bolivar, PA 15923

Ohio Valley (31)

Pete Yanchick 724-375-6451
1161 Airport Rd
Aliquippa, PA 15001

Southcentral Pennsylvania (45)

George Schneider 717-464-9442
237 Willow Valley Dr
Lancaster, PA 17602-4782

Lehigh Valley (55)

Morris Metz 610-252-3694
125 Richard Garr Rd
Easton, PA 18040-6916

Reading (64)

George Moore 610-582-8690
207 Shockey Dr
Birdsboro, PA 19508

Cumberland Valley (6)

John Fague 717-530-8817
308 Lungan Ave
Shippensburg, PA 17257

RHODE ISLAND

Rhode Island (24)

Manuel Ribeiro 401-253-7369
50 Greylock Rd
Bristol, RI 02809-1631

SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina (7)

Ernest R. Kirby 803-788-4126
7524 Yorkhouse Road
Columbia, SC 29223

VERMONT-NEW HAMPSHIRE-MAINE

Tri-State (17)

Edward Deverell 603-485-7464
12 Stevens Dr
Hookset, NH 03106-1683

VIRGINIA

Crater (43)

S. W. George, Jr. 804-526-6725
101 Hanover Ave
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

WASHINGTON

Northwest (6)

Jim Pennock 206-783-0212
3006 NW 61st St
Seattle, WA 98107

CONTACT INFORMATION

Membership Office:

Kevin Diehl, Tracey Diehl,
703-528-4058,
email: kevin@battleofthebulge.org;
tracey@battleofthebulge.org

*For dues, certificates, quartermaster,
donations and membership:*
Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc.
PO Box 27430
Philadelphia, PA 19118
Telephone 703-528-4058
email: tracey@battleofthebulge.org

*For stories, articles, letter to the editor
for inclusion in The Bulge Bugle:*
Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc.
PO Box 336
Blue Bell, PA 19422
Telephone 484-351-8844
email: ralph@battleofthebulge.org

VBOB WEB SITE:

**www.battleofthebulge.org
or www.vbob.org**



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Douglas C. Dillard (Col. Ret.)
82nd Airborne Division

Greetings to members, families and friends of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc. In my initial letter to the membership I want to address some matters of significance that the Executive Council and I will pursue in the New Year. First I wish to say I am honored to have been elected to this position and I pledge to the membership that I will try very hard to provide progressive leadership and professionalism, in my role as your President, that the past presidents have done so well.

As I assumed the Presidency, I felt more contact with the state chapters was very necessary. In that regard, I sent each state chapter President a personal letter addressing my desire for more communication. I would remind the chapter presidents that an outstanding requirement is for state chapters to send in a copy of their annual report. This has fallen aside over

the years and only the Arizona chapter has been very diligent in sending to the National their annual reports...thanks. I appeal to the other state chapters to do the same, so we, at National, can see what is happening around the country and benefit from some of the things that state chapters do each year. I wish to stimulate greater communications with the state chapters, increase our Associate Memberships and on every occasion take advantage of every opportunity to publicize the role the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge played in World War II. We occasionally hold or attend events in the Arlington National Cemetery. Some are on "short fuse" notice—however, I would ask that when these events are known, we make every effort to attend and show maximum support for our Association.

Regarding the future of the Association, we must make every effort to recruit and sustain associate memberships. Every current member is a recruiter, so when attending a gathering at other veterans and or social groupings, make an effort to recruit someone. Be sure and have an application in hand. I have attended many retiree days at local military posts and recruited members from other Veteran's organizations, as well as my own airborne association. It can be done...so please make the effort!

With respect to state chapters, I want to stimulate greater communications with our chapters and our chapter in Belgium, as well as our friends in Luxembourg. At our annual reunions, I plan to schedule part of our business meeting time to reports by representative from the chapters. I would also request that Chapters submit reports on their activities to the National Chapter so the information can appear in the Bugle and be shared by all our members. We know many activities are conducted around the country by the chapters but we do not know any of the personalities or the themes of such events.

As National President, attendance at the Department of Veterans Affairs committee meetings affords me the opportunity to be aware of policy making at the national level that affect our veterans. This information is both informative and potentially productive, in that, we may have the opportunity to inject information that could improve VA actions for our veterans.

Finally, I welcome the opportunity to serve the members of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc and I am honored with the trust you have placed in me as your National President.

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Check out our Website www.battleofthebulge.org

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE 3RD ARMORED "SPEARHEAD" DIVISION

The 3rd Armored "Spearhead" Division (which was nicknamed "Spearhead" by Lt. Gen. Joseph L. Collins) advanced 102 miles in one day through enemy territory on our way to Paderborn, Germany and captured, the Nazi Armored Force Headquarters there. The story of that advance was overshadowed by the story of Gen. Patton's 3rd Army "rescue trip of 100 miles to rescue the 101st airborne Division through friendly territory in France that was cleared of all enemy activity. (That story of Gen. Patton's 3rd Army "rescue mission" was more important).

We, (the 3rd Armored "Spearhead Div. of the U.S. First Army) also liberated two concentration camps. One was at Nordhausen, Germany and the other was at Lingenau. And it was also the 3rd Armored Div that captured the manufacturing plant of the rocket V-2 buzz bomb in Nordhausen. And it was the 3rd Armored Div. of the U.S. First Army, that advanced the furthest into Germany. All the way to Dessau, Germany on the Elbe River, where the U.S. troops met the Russians coming from the East on their way to capture Berlin.

I was proud to have served under the leadership of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower.

**Marvin H. Mischnick,
3rd Armored Division**

A TREAT IN THE FIELD

When out in the field, there were some rare occasions when we found ourselves a treat. One of these was when we stumbled upon an underground wine cellar, which we found randomly across the countryside, or in the towns and villages we passed through. As our unit moved through Germany, crossing the Moselle River, we stumbled on one of these wine caches. We all piled in the cellar of the house to pick out a bottle for ourselves. I grabbed up the prettiest wine bottle I spotted near me, not really paying attention to the fact it had been opened before and recorked.

Tilting it back, I downed a huge swig, realizing as I swallowed it wasn't wine. The family had used an old wine bottle to store kerosene to use as a lamp while in the cellar and I had just gulped it down! I went to the company medic and told him what had happened. "Well, ain't much I can do for ya," he said. "Can't you at least give me something to me barf it up?" That's what we finally decided on, and it was worse coming back than going down. I didn't end up poisoned, which was what I half expected. But I belched kerosene for two weeks... I was afraid to get around any open flames! And you can be sure when we found some of those wine cellars, I paid more attention to what I grabbed.

**Loman Sparks,
87th ID, 346th IR**

HELL BREAKS LOOSE

"On December 16, 1944, we were in Luxembourg. About 2:00 in the morning on Saturday morning, all hell broke loose. We were mostly in a pine thicket and two companies next to mine were badly wounded. When daylight came, Germans and Americans were laying everywhere. Later in the day, we counter attacked on a hill. Captain said, "Sergeant, get your scout and get out there!" The sergeant said to me, "Troxell, let's go!"

As we advanced, the Germans opened up on me with machine guns. Dirt and bark from trees were flying everywhere. In a second, I fell behind a tree. The Lord was with me. I didn't get hit. The Germans were on the skyline. We could see every move they made. From that Saturday morning until late Wednesday evening, we didn't get a bite to eat.

**Gilbert Troxell,
87th ID, 345th IR, Co G**

LECLERCQ FAMILY (BELGIUM) ADOPT GRAVES

Seeking Information on 4th and 30th Infantry Division Men Buried in Belgium:

In the year 2000 – the 55th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge – VBOB Life Member Patrick Kearney (11 ARMD DIV) made arrangements for the Leclercq Family of Belgium to adopt the graves of two 11th Armored Division men who are buried at the American Military Cemetery at Henri-Chapelle – Edward M. Frank (63rd Armored Infantry Battalion) and Lewis F. Grove (55th Armored Infantry Battalion).

The Leclercqs have recently adopted the graves of two more American soldiers who are buried at Henri-Chapelle – Lewis E. Humber (12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division) from Hillsborough County, Florida and Joseph J. Santangelo (120th Infantry Regiment, 30th Infantry Division) from Cook County, Illinois.

The Leclercqs would like to hear from anyone who is related to, or who was friendly with, these two men. If you have any information on Lewis or Joseph, please write to:

Famille Leclercq, 5 Avenue Paul de Lorraine, B-1410 Waterloo, Belgium.

Patrick Kearney, 11th AD

NURSES ON COVER – NOV BUGLE

I was serving with the 77th Evacuation Hospital during the Battle of the Bulge. Much to my pleasant surprise I discovered on the front page of your November 2012 issue the picture of six nurses who served in the same unit. I knew everyone of them, met with them at our yearly reunions after the war.

From left to right, here are the names the nurses:

Marion Cross
Enid Wherley
Mary Ewing
Dorothy Gillette
Bessie Walker
Esther Sipple

**Andre Jamar
Lifetime Member**



2012 : A YEAR IN REVIEW



VBOB partnered with the **National Infantry Foundation** (see page 16)

VBOB made an agreement with a publisher to produce a book, **"The Battle of the Bulge—True Stories from the Men and Women Who Survived,"** compiled from *The Bulge Bugle* (see page 19)

VBOB's website expanded to include:

650 veterans' photos

185 stories & news items

50 books listed

All *Bulge Bugles*

New Members

Our successful Associate membership drives helped us gain many new members in 2012:

Regular Members: **52**

Associate Members: **320**

Current membership totals:

Regular Members: **2730**

Associate Members: **1480**

Chapters status:

Current: **51**

Disbanded: **2**

179 members, friends and family attended the **VBOB 31st Annual Reunion** in New Orleans, Louisiana



Donations received:
\$7,810.00

Governmental activities:

- IRS 990 Form filed
- VA annual corporation continuation report filed

Congratulations to all who were awarded the French Legion of Honor

May our deceased rest in **eternal peace!**

Thanks to all We couldn't do it without your contributions

HERE'S WISHING YOU A HAPPY, HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS 2013



Please notify us when you hear that any member of our organization has recently passed away, so that we may honor them in a future *Bulge Bugle*. Also, kindly notify us of any errors or omissions.

MEMBERS In Memoriam

Please send notices by mail:
VBOB, Inc.,
PO Box 27430,
Philadelphia, PA
19118-0430;
or by phone:
703-528-4058;
or by email:
tracey@battle-
ofthebulge.org.

We have received word, as of January 10, 2013, that these members of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc. have also passed away in 2012:

Abele, Jr., George F	184 AAA Gun Bn	King, Leland M	35 InfD
Bowditch, Leonard T	84 InfD	Krouse, Paul W	11 ArmD
Bowser, Warren H	5 InfD	Leighton, Cy	145 Engr Cmbt Bn
Bush, David G	6 Cav Recon Gp	Linhart, Robert W	80 InfD
Datri, Joe A	87 InfD	Maier, Andy	476 QM Trk Regt
Deantoni, Quinto	83 InfD	Mattucci, Louis G	4 InfD
Debick, Timothy R	10 ArmD	Mayfield, Clell I	83 InfD
Del Pizzo, Anthony C	80 InfD	Mckown, Jack D	75 InfD
Digby, Sr., James H	9 ArmD	Michura, Ed	26 Inf
Dmohowski, Anthony S	5 InfD	Nicholar, John V	80 InfD
Dobinski, Thomas J	275 AFA Bn	Novetti, Palmer L	793 FA Bn
Emple, Irving B	9 ArmD	Pendleton, Philip C	2 ArmD
Engle, Joseph E	90 InfD	Pope, F T	99 InfD
Eulie, John A	8 ArmD	Prezette, Stanley	135 Ord MMC
Evans, Ralph F	9 ArmD	Sauer, Fred W	87 InfD
Fischbeck, Albert W	80 InfD	Schmidt, Adam P	75 InfD
Fleming, Thomas J	75 InfD	Segroves, Jay W	75 InfD
Franklin, Benjamin	87 InfD	Seymour, Stanley A	266 FA Bn
Freshwater, Kenneth L	489 AAA AW SP	Shook, Jay M	7 ArmD
Gallina, Lawrence	135 AAA Gun Bn	Smith, Harold S	Greenwood, MS
Greene, Michael J L	11 ArmD	Smollon, Frank J	99 InfD
Greiner, Esley B	527 Engr Lp Co	Snell, George W	99 InfD
Griffin, Mark	2 InfD	Swinford, Charles E	76 InfD
Grossenbacher, Alfred E	28 InfD	Vander Broek, Daniel C	1303 Engr
Hanson, Vernon A	95 InfD	Walt, Michael R	75 Tp Car Sqd
Hillgartner, Glenn O	87 InfD	Williams, Robert T	296 Engr Cmbt Bn
Hill, Leamon D	639 AAA AW Bn	Winters, Norman R	4 ArmD
Hughes, Jr., Mortimer M	2 InfD	Worden, Sherwood F	78 InfD
Hunt, Jr., Charles	253 FA Bn	Young, Woodrow W	4 InfD
Katana, Thomas A	87 InfD	Yourkavitch, Joseph W	106 InfD

179TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

by James M. McCabe, Battery B

The 179th FA Bn landed on Utah Beach, Normandy, France on 13 August 1944 as part of General George S. Patton's Third Army and attached to Fourth Armored Division. Our first brush with the enemy came the following night. We had our first fire mission on 22 August 1944 at dusk. Our artillery battalion stayed at Boisie-Rot, France from 22-24 August. In a short time we destroyed fourteen artillery pieces, horse drawn train and several hundred Germans, in this position the 179th had three men killed. I looked in a burned out German tank and observed one of the tank crew that had burned and about all that was left was his intestines still in place looking like link smoked sausage.



The 179th FA Bn was assigned the task of holding outpost at Fresnes-ne-Saulnois, France from 19-24 September 1944. Under dense fog a German tank was firing down on us from the hill above. Our artillery started firing point blank at the tank. The climax came on the fifth day when it was determined that Germans were preparing a strong counter attack. I manned an outpost several hundred yards from the Battery with my machine gun in place and dug a two man foxhole. My partner and I sat back to back to observe both directions. It was raining steadily and there were two of our men with bazookas about fifty feet away. About mid-afternoon you could hear tanks beginning to rumble. It was overcast and still raining. Tanks were on our right moving toward our outfit. I was continually praying to my God for help. There were several tanks in that group. The clouds began to part. In a little while, a squadron of P-47 fighter planes was circling overhead waiting for a clearing. It wasn't long before they started diving on moving tanks with machine guns firing and well-aimed bombs stopped the German tank movement. One of the planes didn't come out of the dive and exploded on contact with the ground. While this was taking place, there was much smoke and explosions. The 179th FA finished the task. The 35th Infantry Division relieved the 179th before nightfall. The 179th was recommended for the Presidential Citation for defense of this critical spot. The 179th had two men killed.

The 179th went in a holding position at Athienville, France from 28 September to 1 November 1944. On a quiet Sunday afternoon in mid-October, I was writing a letter home. I was sitting in a vehicle that my machine gun was pedestal mounted on. "B" Battery commanding officer was strolling around the battery area and stopped and was talking with me. At this time we heard the chatter of machine gun fire and roar of planes. I manned my machine gun and told the battery commander to get in my foxhole. The battery commander was larger than I and had difficulty squeezing in my foxhole. Scanning the sky, I saw German ME-109 fighter plane coming my way at tree top level to my left. I started firing just before the plane crossed in front of me. My tracers showed that the plane was being riddled by machine gun fire and started a nose dive. The plane crashed landed about 300 feet to my right, exploding on impact with the ground. The battery commander was pleased with the results that

Sunday. Five ME-109 fighter planes were attacking our area and five planes were shot down. On the first day of November 1944 the 179th FA left Athienville, France, going toward Germany.

On the afternoon of 19 December, the 179th FA left position Maginot Line at Rimling, France where our batteries were firing across the German border. We were unaware at the time that we were headed for the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium and Luxembourg. During the period of 11-17 December, the 179th FA Bn was called upon twice to furnish five percent of its table of organization strength for infantry replacements. In addition to my machine gun duties and because of the ammunition section manpower shortage, I was called on to assist the ammo section with unloading, stockpiling and delivery of 97 pound projectiles plus powder charges to the battery gun section. During the Bastogne mission, the 179th FA Bn was firing over 1,000 rounds of 97 pound projectiles in a 24 hour time frame. The temperature got down in the range of 13 degrees below zero and mostly in the zero range while supporting the 4th Armored Division during the Bastogne mission. The snow was deep and we used quarter pound TNT charges to break the crust of the ground in order to dig foxholes. My shoes cracked where they bent and hurt my feet. I cut strips from a wool blanket and wrapped my feet and stuffed them in my oversized rubber boots. My blood soaked woolen underwear would freeze to my backside and with any movement, I could feel and hear the cracking. I was evacuated on 31 December 1944 by the battalion medic. Arriving at the hospital in Luxembourg City, I was put in a bathtub and warm water was continuously poured on my backside and the underwear was cut off a little bit at the time until it was all removed. I was then sent to a convalescent hospital in Nancy, France. When I was finally healed and I was released from the hospital back to duty, I returned to my outfit. I have many more memories of the Battle of the Bulge and the 179th FA Bn travel across Europe from Normandy to Czechoslovakia, with Luxembourg, Belgium, Germany and Austria in between, that I could ever put on paper!

The end of January, the Bulge was no more and the 179th went in the holding position from 1-24 February 1945 at Siebenater (Bockholz), Luxembourg near the German border. "B" Battery moved in this large field that was covered with snow that was pretty deep and had small raised up mounds scattered around the field. Since we were in a holding position the kitchen truck set-up and began serving us hot meals. After a few weeks, the rains came and the snow melted. The small mounds scattered in the field turned out to be dead German soldiers. On 24 February 1945 we moved out of this area and went into Germany supporting the 4m Armored Division.

In Germany around March 1945 while stopped on a road in the country-side for a period of time, an enemy soldier (sniper) began firing on our column from a field. I kept looking and preparing to fire my 50 caliber machine gun but couldn't see him. Firing continued at intervals and one of the artillery gun crew called out that he saw the sniper rise up and shoot. He instructed me to watch his small caliber tracer that he was going to fire. I watched the location of the tracer, which appeared to be near some small bushes located near what looked like a drainage ditch. After a few minutes I saw the sniper rise up to fire again. At this time I fired a good many shots because of the distance between the sniper and myself. After firing, I didn't see the sniper again. In a few minutes I saw our half-truck going in the direction of where I had fired with the executive officer and several non-coms. They got out of the vehicle and were standing in a group looking (Continued)

down watching the sniper die. They got back in the vehicle and went back to the front area of the column. The incident was never mentioned, even though many of the battery had seen what happened. About 30 or 40 years later, I asked one of the non-coms (who later became first sergeant) who was in the half-truck checking on what I was shooting at, if I had dreamed that incident. His reply to my question was, "That incident was no dream. I have waited all of these years for you to ask me about it." He said, "The German soldier that I had shot was nearly cut in two and he had the SS tattoo showing that he was one of Hitler's elite troopers." He also said that the German soldier had a P-38 pistol that was hit with one of my shots.

On 1 April 1945, Easter Sunday, in a small town or village near Frankfurt, Germany, our battery had pulled out on the road from the field, where we had bivouac the night before. While waiting for the Battalion to move out, I had my K-ration breakfast. Our vehicle was one of the last in column. The rest of the Battery and Battalion were stretched out through the town. There was a small low fenced in apple orchard next to the road and a barn with an open hayloft facing the road. I had a nature call and stepped over the fence thinking I was out of sight. At this time, what sounded like a German burp gun (rapid fire) started shooting and dirt was flying all over me. I looked up toward the barn and the open hayloft and saw some German soldiers around what seemed to be a jammed burp gun because it was not firing anymore. I jumped the low fence, climbed on my vehicle and started firing my 50 caliber machine gun. In a very short time the barn and hayloft were in flames. There was no activity seen in the hayloft. About the same time, snipers throughout the town started firing on our column which had started March order. Machine guns throughout the column started firing on the snipers as we went through the town. That night we were a distance from the town that we had left and you could still see the red glow of fire in the sky.

In Germany around April 1945, we were going up a hill and it had been raining. Dead German soldiers had fallen all along the edge of the road, probably from machine fire from our tanks or fighter planes. I was manning my machine gun mounted on the tractor pulling our 155mm howitzer. Vehicles in front of us had made a rut, sliding a little bit sideways; one of the dead German soldier's head was right beside the rut. The large tires on our 155mm howitzer were sliding in line with the soldier's head. I couldn't look at what I thought would happen. I didn't look back. The sight of our sliding howitzer will always be in my memory. On our drive through Germany about March and April, we came upon and near several fenced in barrack type buildings housing prisoners of war soldiers, labor camps and others. I remember this British POW running up to me with a big hug. He was so happy to see us! Reaching in his pocket, he came out with a large brass nut (about the size of a quarter + or -) with brass buttons soldered on each side, probably from his overcoat. I asked the POW what it was and he showed me it was a cigarette lighter he made while a POW. With tears in his eyes he handed it to me and said, "I want you to have it." That cigarette lighter was prized by me for many years and was misplaced several years ago. I hope that it will show up eventually.

I went into one of the labor camps occupied by laborers from countries Germany had invaded I assumed. They worked and harvested the farms and also did factory work. All of them we saw were very happy to see us. The first thing that they asked for was

cigarettes. We were able to give them some. One of them wanted us to see the barracks or someone in there. We couldn't understand what he was saying and he motioned for us to follow him. A couple of us followed behind him and went in this long barrack. Inside were two rows of double bunks with some of them occupied. The smell was like nothing I ever encountered. By this time we bade them good-bye but couldn't get out before receiving many hugs.

Our column was stopped along the road in one of the small towns. Off to the side of the road was a mound of dirt and a small homemade cross marking a grave. Walking along the road going in the opposite direction from us were two men with sticks to assist them in walking. They hobbled up to our vehicles, pointing to their mounds, indicating they wanted food. Both men were nothing but skin and bones. They were given food and the look on their faces said it all as they walked away in their striped clothes. It seems like many of the fenced in barrack type camps were located in East Germany. When you would see these men in striped clothes, it would mean that they were out of one of the camps. Usually the guards in these camps would leave just ahead of the advancing allies. Some of the camps were probably more humane than others. But, the one with that human waste smell in close quarters will stay in my memory. I was told about one and saw the pictures of skin and bones with heads attached and stacked like cords of wood, hardly recognized as humans, waiting to be tossed in a furnace had to be the worst. At the end on VE day, 8 May 1945, the 179th FA Bn was near Zechovice, Czechoslovakia (7-10 May). There was dancing in the streets by the Czechs and we were all very happy.

We moved back to Germany as military government forces (10 May - 1 June, 1945). We ended up in Bogen, Germany located on the Danube River, 1 June 1945. We set-up road blocks on all roads coming from the east, and we detained German soldiers who were fleeing the Russians. After searching them, they were moved to the fenced in compound with barracks located near Bogen. "B" Battery was housed in a former two story court house in Bogen. After a couple of weeks the Germans stopped coming and the compound was full. My buddy, Joe, and I were picked along with others to pull guard duty in the convoy transporting the German prisoners to a destination unknown. One morning before daylight, a large number trucks, jeeps and men assembled at the prisoner compound to start loading prisoners. The German prisoners must have sensed where they were going. At the start of the loading, one of the prisoners dashed around to the dark side of the truck and disappeared in the darkness and couldn't be found. The convoy was loaded without any other mishaps. Jeeps with two men were scattered throughout the convoy. Dawn was breaking as we headed toward Austria. The convoy was going a pretty good speed when one of the prisoners jumped off the truck. The convoy couldn't stop. Our jeep was near the end of the convoy. Every few hours the convoy would stop for periods of time. I assume for directions and nature stops. On one of the stops, we were in the mountains on a narrow road with a cabin close by. Someone came out and one of the prisoners asked if they had water.

They answered, "Yes". After consultation, six were allowed to go inside the cabin; we could see the front and back with no problem. After a little while, March order was passed through the column to be ready for movement in a few minutes. We called to the prisoners that we were ready to go. They came out but I counted only five getting in the truck. I called to my buddy, Joe, who was close by the cabin. He went inside and lifted a spread on the bed that was hanging to the floor and called to come *(Continued)*

out. The prisoner came right out and climbed into the truck. In a few minutes the convoy started moving out.

We traveled a few more hours and came to a fairly big town. I think we were still in Austria near Czechoslovakia border and in the Russian zone. The convoy pulled over and stopped while still in the town. While stopped several civilians were talking to the German prisoners on the truck. They left in a short time and men an elderly couple appeared. The lady was crying as she held one of the prisoner's hands. They stayed a long time holding hands and crying. I think it was one of the prisoner's parents. After being in this location close to an hour, the convoy moved out. Traveling several miles (I believe we were led by Russians) and we came to a barbed wire fenced in compound. The Russians were taking charge of the prisoners as we unloaded them. Several of the prisoners tossed men-watches to the GI's standing by the vehicles. I guess they preferred the Americans over the Russians. After all of the prisoners were unloaded, we followed the Russian vehicles a short distance to the buildings (I believe it was a Catholic convent.) By this time it was night Armed Russian soldiers appeared along with nuns with rings of keys (I think it was two nuns.) In my memory I picture a two story building with a long wide hall and rooms on each side. We probably had about 30 men including guards and drivers. There was a sort of a line following behind the Russians and the nuns. The rooms appeared to be locked. You could hear frightened children crying. There were women and children who had probably taken refuge at the convent. If the rooms were empty two men would drop off and the line would be shortened. If the room was occupied, the Russian soldier would motion them to leave. If the door was difficult to open, he would point his gun at the lock and make the nun that much more nervous, indicating that he would open it with the gun. Finally, our turn came. Our room was occupied by a mother and several children, who had started crying when the soldier motioned for them to get out. In a few minutes the mother and children came out carrying their few belongings. The Russian soldier motioned for Joe and me to go in. The soldier and the nun continued down the hall with the GI's that were left. Joe and I were standing in the doorway looking at that mother in the hall trying to comfort those crying children. Joe looking at me and said, "Mac, we can't do this." I was thinking the same thing before he said a word. We walked over to that mother and children and motioned for them to go back in the room. The look on their faces was truly that of deep appreciation. The mother and children returned to their room and the crying had just about stopped as they closed the door. Later on I heard a shot and have always wondered if that was a room the nuns couldn't get unlocked. We spread our sleeping bags out in the hall and went to bed with our shoes off and our clothes on.

After eating our K-rations breakfast, we returned to Bogen, Germany and continued our Army of Occupation. After a few months, we received orders to travel to Marseille, France, to board the ship to the Pacific. While waiting for the trip to Marseille, the war in the Pacific ended. Our orders were not changed, so we still went to Marseille to await our turn for travel to the states. After arriving in Marseille, Joe and I had duty at the Officers Club which was okay. After a month or two, I was sent to the Riviera on the Mediterranean at Nice, France. I had duty at the Motor Pool driving a jeep to check service stations gas consumption. I had a private room with meal service in a large hotel which was great. After

a couple of months, I received a call from the Battery and went by train back to Marseille. We boarded the Liberty ship back to the states. We landed at Newport News, VA after nineteen days at sea. Then we headed to Fort Bragg for discharge.

At wars end, the 179th Field Artillery Battalion final report showed the following:

- 8,996 rounds of 155 mm Howitzer projectiles were used against the enemy
- 2,350 tons weight of this ammunition
- 266 days of continuous combat
- Over 1,000 prisoners captured.

For its World War II service, the 179th Field Artillery was awarded combat participation credit for five campaigns: Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace, and Central Europe. It was also awarded the French Croix de Guerre with Palm for action at the Moselle River.

AFTER ACTION VS ACTUAL ACTION

by Dee Paris, 9th AD, 14th TB

An "After Action Report" is a report after an action. It could be shelling by enemy artillery, moving the command post to a new location, an administrative move to a new bivouac area or a combat action by a platoon or company. The AAR, as it is generally called, is made by a higher unit, such as battalion or division headquarters or higher level command element.

The higher headquarters writing the report is not involved in the combat action nor do they witness the combat. They must rely upon other and limited sources for their report. Yet their AAR becomes part of the official U.S. Army combat history, which is the source, of research by writers, historians and others. It may not be a complete nor accurate report - it reports only what the preparing unit knows about the action.

The After Action Report of the Headquarters 14th Tank Battalion of 1 Dec 44 to 31 Dec 44 is an example of such a report:

"At 201250 Company "D" called for artillery fire on the infantry in front of CR 515. The forward observer could not get contact with his battalion, so the fire was adjusted by a tank platoon leader who sent his commands to the Battalion CP. These were in turn relayed by telephone to the 16th Field Artillery Fire Direction Center. One battery was registered on the enemy by the fire direction center for use as a base point for future missions."

I assume the date/time of the AAR is correct - i.e. 12:50 noon on December 20, 1944. I was the tank platoon leader referred to in the AAR. I had five tanks widely spaced on a slight ridge before a large open field with forest in the background. I observed a large enemy infantry force preparing to attack across the open field and knew we would be overrun.

There was no forward observer present. I chose to radio directly to the battalion headquarters for artillery support. Generally, radio messages to Bn Hq were answered by a staff officer or enlisted man. I was surprised to receive the following response:

"Hello - Squirrel - this is Gopher. Send your message. Over."

Gopher was the radio call sign for the battalion commander, Lt. Col Leonard Engemen. I told him *(Continued)*

AFTER ACTION VS ACTUAL ACTION *(Continued)*

the situation and requested artillery support. He responded he would try to get it. Moments later he radioed they would fire a mission so I gave him my location to the best of my ability. I said, "Give me one round and I'll adjust the fire."

I then radioed my four other tank commanders to prepare for artillery support on our position. This was so the tank commanders who were exposed could partially close their turret hatches upon notice.

The next message from Gopher was "On the way." That first round burst near a treetop a few yards in front of my tank. I immediately radioed:

"Gopher - this is Squirrel. Great shot. Up 100 and give me all the fire you can." At this time the large force of enemy troops was crossing the open field. The fire of our 16th Armored Field Artillery Battalion was devastating. The enemy troops that were able hastily returned to the forest. They obviously decided not to cross that field again. I reported the results to Col. Engeman.

That night I became aware that the enemy troops were apparently recovering their wounded comrades. We withheld our fire and I cannot explain why. Many years later I learned our 16th Armored Field Artillery Battalion had the new Posit fuse, which explains how the first round detonated at the treetop in front of my tank.

BATTLE OF THE BULGE: ALONG THE SURE RIVER FRONT

by Arthur Schreckengost, 4th ID, 12th IR

After four weeks of constant attacks against an well entrenched enemy in the Hurtgen Forest, the Fourth Infantry Division was in dire straits. I mention this because I am convinced the Germans used this delaying action to "set-up" the forthcoming Battle of the Bulge! Some of our most experienced infantry divisions, including the 4th, 28th and 9th, were depleted by second line enemy units (mainly German allies such as Hungarian and Romanian) who in well developed defenses and in horrible weather conditions made the advancing American forces pay a heavy price for every yard gained! By December 4th we were no longer a viable fighting force.

HQ recognized this and on December 5th pulled the Fourth from action and sent it to Luxembourg for refit. Under the assumption that the war was in its final stage and that the German Army on the western front was incapable of mounting any serious threat, this was done in a leisurely fashion. The 12th Regiment, which I was assigned to, was posted north of Luxembourg City along the Sure and Mosel Rivers. The north and east banks of these rivers were part of the famed Siegfried defense line!

I was with F Company at Berdorf on December 16th when our morning patrol reported heavy enemy presence on our side of the Sure River. A mixed bag of infantry, heavy weapons and forward observer specialists made up our twenty-four man unit quartered in a large farm complex. We were ill prepared for any form of major defensive action since most of our supporting artillery and armored units had much of their equipment in maintenance or scheduled for replacement? However, we did

have fairly potent infantry capability consisting of three mortars, several water cooled 30 cal. mgs, one 50 cal. mg (jeep mounted), several BARs and a mixture of rifles and grenades. Our situation was further complicated by a very limited supply of ammunition and radios that had been so damaged by the wet conditions in the Hurtgen Forest that they were all but useless. This left us with only portable communication equipment with a maximum range of a few kilometers! All our other outposts were beyond this range since F company was responsible for about five/six kilometers of front? This was equivalent to what an entire division would normally control!

The Germans had intentionally kept the front quiet by not sending patrols to our side of the river (heavy snow cover would show their tracks) and by lightly manning the Siegfried fortifications. Thus when they hit us at dawn on the 16th of December we had to quickly react to keep from being overrun. Here our experienced infantry cadre saved us from being overwhelmed! Like all seasoned units they had prepared for the unexpected. An MLR had been set using the outer wall surrounding the farm buildings and positions on the upper floors of the house and barn. Here riflemen supplemented our strategically located mgs, BARs and mortars. When the enemy forces advanced through the cultivated fields surrounding the farm complex they were devoid of most cover except for a few apple trees. I was on the second floor of the house with a clear field of fire on both the north and east sides of the MLR. When the enemy advanced reached within approximately 200 yards of our position the order was given to open fire!

The heavy volume of fire must have shocked the enemy? I'm sure they only expected light resistance. Here their lack of information (no recent patrols) on our strength put them at a temporary disadvantage. They reeled back, then showing they were experienced troops, quickly recovered, and taking their casualties along, they fled back to the safety of the forest!

During the remainder of the day, the enemy probed our position several times to ascertain our strength. Each time we easily repulsed their advances. We had one meaningful encounter when oddly enough nearby enemy fire, on our west flank, seemed directed away from our position. Years later I learned this was a result of one of our patrols, under the command of SGT Potts, trying to take haven with us! Luckily they changed course and made it back to F Company HQ and eventual freedom.

Finally, about 3 PM, two German officers appeared, under a white flag, at the edge of the forest. We replied with a similar party outside the compound gate. After a parlay, our reps returned with the ultimatum to surrender or have our position destroyed by artillery fire. To emphasize their point several half-tracks, armed with high velocity 75 mm cannon, were stationed on the main road about a half mile from the farm! We had hoped to maintain our position until dark (about 4 PM) then attempt to escape in small groups to safety? With our ammunition almost gone, and with the knowledge of how destructive enemy artillery was, we knew our fate was sealed. After destroying our weapons, and burying any "loot", we marched into captivity!

Were we victims of poor command decisions? I choose to believe the Hurtgen was a major snafu that set-up the Bulge and caused many more casualties than if the half dozen divisions decimated there had been at full strength during the Bulge!

77TH EVAC HOSPITAL IN THE BULGE

by Andre Jamar

On December 16th the Battle of the Bulge began. During the day the robot bombs came over in increasing numbers until late in the afternoon there were actually ten within sight at the same time. That evening during the show there was an air raid alert and bombs were dropped on the town. Early the following morning two patients were brought in and through them news of the offensive was learned. The first patient stated he had been fighting a German paratrooper. A few minutes later a lieutenant was admitted and said he had been shot by a German paratrooper...

Germany's general staff had realized that the war of attrition at the Siegfried Line had no future for them but Field Marshal von Rundstedt had a plan and two panzer armies to carry it out. This was to break through the lightly held southern part of the First Army front and push to Liege and then on to Brussels and Antwerp on the north and toward Namur on the south breaking through between Monschau and Trier. The first phase of the offensive ended December 22

During the Battle of the Bulge, the personnel of the hospital worked harder than at any time. In addition to the large number of patients admitted the hospital was harassed continually by the bombing strafing shelling and the V-weapons which landed all about. During the afternoon of December 17 the fog and clouds cleared for a while and dog-fights were seen over the hospital. The robot bombs came over at 5 minutes intervals with scarcely a pause during day or night. In the afternoon the patients began coming in and their stories were repeatedly that of retreat, positions overrun, confusions, huge losses of men and material, temporary stand and then further withdrawal. There was no "strategic withdrawal". As far as these men were concerned, the powerful German forces were more than they could cope with and they had been forced to pull out.

Some of the operating personnel began working eighteen hours daily and by this means the backlog was overcome. Being in almost the exact center of the northern flank of the Bulge, the 77th was receiving nearly all the casualties from the northern flank. Once again there was a constant stream of patients to the operating room as the eight operating tables and two fracture tables were kept occupied night and day.

December 18 was a repetition of the previous day and night.

Verviers had become an important road junction, a bottleneck through which thousands of American and British troops were being funneled into the northern flank. The Germans were quick to appreciate this fact. From the maps it was obvious that there must be a large volume of traffic through Verviers if the central part of the northern shoulder of the Bulge was to be reinforced rapidly. Such a target was too valuable to miss and the enemy wasted little time in carrying out the expected attacks. On the night of December 19 the enemy planes came over and dropped flares which lit up the entire town as though it were day. This was perhaps the heaviest raid which the towns experienced during the entire Battle of Bulge.

During this particular night one of the patients was being questioned concerning the manner in which he was injured and the story which he told later appeared in the papers under the heading The Malmedy Massacre. He had been captured early that day along with about 140 American soldiers. They had been herded into an open field and when it was night several enemy tanks lined up along the road bordering the field. The men were forced into a tightly packed group and suddenly the machine guns from all the tanks began firing on them. The night was soon filled with moans of the dying but still the intermittent chatter of the machine guns continued. Finally these stopped and the officers and men of the German troops walked among the group of fallen men. If one of the prisoners moved or groaned he was summarily shot through the head. The patient had been only slightly wounded and although desperately frightened he lay quietly and made no sound. One of the men came close to him but passed on after a quick inspection. The patient dared not move and scarcely breathed for fear he would be discovered. After an interminable time the tanks finally turned off their lights and went on down the road. Only a few men were left to guard the mass of bodies. As it was now completely dark the patient finally moved slowly to the edge of the group and then into the woods where he at last stood up. He was soon joined by two others who could walk and they set out for their own lines through the darkness. After what seemed like hours they came upon one of the American troops and were soon back to the relative safety of the hospital. Later on it was possible to identify the German unit which had carried out this horrible affair.

December 20 brought more patients, more buzz-bombs and more work. December 21, 22 and 23 were more of the same. A continuous stream of patients during the afternoon and night, gradually lessening early in the morning and regaining momentum again during the afternoon was sufficient to keep all of the hospital personnel fully occupied.

On December 24 the sun was out bright and clear for the first time since the start of the Battle of the Ardennes. The Allied air forces were ready for such a break in the weather and that day there were hundreds of planes in the air. Dog fights took place over Verviers and a great number of German planes were shot down.

It was at this time that the hospital received a number of enemy patients who were dressed in GI clothing. They had been dropped by parachute behind the Allied lines and only after several days were the military police successful in capturing them.

Christmas Day 1944 will probably be forever the most unpleasant Christmas in the lifetime of thousands of soldiers. The personnel and patients of the 77th were no exception.

On December 30 the first good news began to trickle through. The Allied troops had gained the initiative and Bulge was beginning to shrink. Even with such good news, the work of caring for the wounded went on day and night.

Then the final order came through stating that the 77th was to move out.

**Save the Dates - September 3-8, 2013
32nd Annual VBOB Reunion
in Kansas City, MO!**

LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER NEWS

Submitted by Morris Metz, 94th ID, 301st IR

During 2010 and 2011, the following twelve Members of our Lehigh Valley Chapter, VBOB, were invited to the French Embassy in Wash. D.C.. to receive "The French Legion of Honor"

Donald W. Burdick, 16 FA BTN, Btry B

John A. Caponigro, 87 INF DIV 346 REG F CO

Evangeline Coeyman, 90 INF DIV 59 FIELD HOSP

Mark W. Kistler, 4 CAV DIV TR A

Nathan Kline, 9th AIR, 323 BOMB GP 454 B S

William E. Leopold, 75 INF DIV 291 REG C CO

Jack A. Lippincott, 9th ARMY 8 CONV HOSPITAL

Frank W. Maresca, 75 INF DIV 289 REG F CO

Morris D. Metz, 94 INF DIV 301 REG 3 BN HQ CO

Roy A. Minnerly, 11 ARM DIV, 5th REG 41 BTY

Gene R. Nadig, 75&99 DIV 750TK BN CO C

Floyd T. Stewart, 80 INF DIV 702 TANK BN

The Ceremonies were impressive, to say the least, recognizing that this award was created by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802, the Highest French Honor!

YANKEE DIVISION REUNION

Yankee Division Veterans Association

June 6, 7, 8, 2013

Sheraton Hotel, Warwick RI

Contact Robert Raney 978-531-2257

U.S. HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM HONORS

WORLD WAR II VETERANS

Submitted by Stephen Goodell,

Director of Veterans Outreach,

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, America's national memorial to the Holocaust, will honor all the brave soldiers who fought in World War II as part of its 20th anniversary commemoration.

I'm writing to inform you about our plans for this milestone occasion, which include a National Tribute in Washington, DC, as well as a National Tour honoring Holocaust survivors and World War II veterans in four cities across the country. We hope as many veterans as possible will join us at these historic gatherings and request your assistance in sharing this information with the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge.

As you know well, World War II was the salient event in the 20th Century – and its legacy continues to shape the 21st. The values we cherish were threatened by cruel and oppressive ideologies. But the generation that signed up and put on a uniform, which believed in the essential goodness of America, and which unselfishly answered the call to duty, was a generation willing to sacrifice everything to preserve our way of life. The freedoms we enjoy today were assured by the veterans of World War II. The Museum recognizes this, and thus wishes to reach out to all American veterans of World War

II and to accord to them our highest honor and deepest gratitude.

At the National Tribute in Washington, DC on April 28 - 29, 2013 we will bring together the people who lived this history – Holocaust survivors, World War II veterans, rescuers, and their families – in the largest numbers we can – along with U.S. and European officials and Museum supporters and partners, for what will most likely be the last gathering of eyewitnesses on this scale.

Working in close cooperation with the World War II Memorial, we are expecting thousands to join Elie Wiesel, our founding chairman, at this two-day gathering, which begins with a Tribute Dinner on Sunday, April 28th at the Washington, DC Convention Center – free for survivors and WWII veterans, who may bring one companion for \$50. Regular cost is \$250/person. At the Tribute Dinner, we will present the Museum's Elie Wiesel Award, our highest honor, to the American service men and women who fought in World War II, with Susan Eisenhower accepting on their behalf. Through this tribute, we hope to remind the American public, especially our youth, of just what was at stake during World War II and the enormous sacrifices that were made to preserve the free world.

The National Tribute continues on Monday, April 29th at the Museum, which will be closed to the public to mark this historic occasion. The day will begin with a ceremony on our Eisenhower Plaza featuring the flags of the U.S. Army Divisions that liberated the Nazi concentration camps. An Open House follows with a day of special programs, tours, and family activities throughout the Museum. In addition, "affinity tables" will provide opportunities for those from the same divisions or communities to socialize. The day, which includes lunch, is free with advance registration.

Since we know that many veterans and survivors may not be able to travel to Washington, DC for the National Tribute gathering in April, we are hosting free, daylong public events in three cities: Los Angeles (February 17), New York (March 3), and Chicago (June 9). Throughout the day, veterans and their families will have the opportunity to meet with curators and conservators about personal collections. They may attend panel discussions with well-known experts, presentations of rarely seen film clips from our collection, and participatory family activities. And, of course, there will be opportunities to socialize. The day will conclude with a special tribute to local survivors and World War II veterans.

We would be honored if your members could join us at one of the local National Tour events or consider traveling to Washington, DC in April for the National Tribute. And, we hope everyone will bring their children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren!

You may register now for the tour events in Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago and/or request an invitation to the National Tribute in DC by accessing our website: www.ushmm.org/neveragain.

If you have questions contact Stephen Goodell at 1-866-998-7466, 1-202-488-0484 or via e-mail at sgoodell@ushmm.org.

VBOB 1ST PERSON VIDEO SERIES

A new video series of VBOB 1st-person accounts has arrived at our website www.battleofthebulge.org. An inaugural collection of 15 Veteran's stories at roughly 5 Minutes each were recorded at last September's VBOB reunion in New Orleans. Log on to see & hear the wide range of Vet testimonies.



Charles W. Early's story

A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL

By John Bowen, VP BOB Historical Foundation

The 2012 December Commemoration of the Battle of the Bulge, was held at the beautifully renovated DoubleTree Hilton Crystal City, in Arlington VA from 14 – 16 Dec 2012. We couldn't have asked for better weather which was delightful for these three days. This year we had a large increase to over attendees for the events. A great time was had by all.

Some people arrived for a couple of days ahead of the rest to enjoy Washington. Promptly at Noon on Friday, the 14th of December, people started registering with Mary Ann Bowen and Candie Shimming, and then headed for the Hospitality Room to renew acquaintances and meet new friends. The Hospitality Room as always was well stocked with snacks and refreshments. The Room was decorated for the Holidays with an ample supply of books and memorabilia about the Bulge spread out on tables lining the walls of the room.

At 4:00 PM, Associate Milly Sholly hosted the decorating of our Christmas tree with the photos of Bulge Vets who had provided them this year or in past years as well as the insignias of the various units that served in the Bulge. For Veterans who had attended previously but were not here this time, an Associate member volunteered to place the photo on the tree. In short order what was essentially a bare tree, soon began to sparkle as the Vet photos were added as well as the unit insignias. The Tree Decorating has now become a tradition on opening day to honor all of our Bulge Veterans.

Shortly thereafter at 5:30 PM, that evening we boarded buses



Bulge Veterans and their guests at the Belgium Ambassador residence.

to attend the Reception of the Belgium Ambassador. The attendees were invited to the Belgium Ambassador's lovely French Renaissance residence which was beautifully decorated for the Christmas Season. Each Veteran and his/her guests were greeted, with a warm welcome, by Ambassador and Mrs. Matthysen. There were eighty-two veterans and their guests that attended the reception. An open bar and delicious finger foods were served prior to remarks expressing thanks by the Ambassador, of his country's gratitude to our Veterans for liberating them not once but twice during World War II. "Those who fought in that long, cold, fierce battle were so involved in the daunting task of routing the enemy that they probably did not have time to consider their role as peace-makers. With hind-sight, however, we know that they did make a significant contribution to winning the war and creating lasting peace in Europe." Belgium is forever grateful for the sacrifices of our Veterans.

The Ambassador, assisted by his Military Attaché, BG Mike Delobel, in the presence of Under Secretary of the Army Dr. Joseph W. Westphal and the Ambassador of Luxembourg, Jean-Louis

Wolzfeld, then bestowed the Belgium Fouraguere 1940 on two Bulge Veterans present, Henry B Dewey, 99th Inf Div. and Alfred H. M. Shehab, 38th Cavalry Squadron. These veterans were part of a unit cited twice in the Daily Orders of the Belgian Army for heroic actions during the Battle of the Bulge. Thirteen Awardees, who could not be present were also recognized and their awards were received in their names by VBOB President J. David Bailey.

These awardees are: Billy R. Bradford, 99th Inf Div, Corsicana TX; Salvador J. Campagno, 99th Inf Div, Denver CO; Albert M. Gainor, 99th Inf Div, Raleigh NC; Clyde F. Housel 99th Inf Div, Port Charlotte FL; John J. Keenan, 7th Armored Div, Bloomfield Hills MI; Arthur R. Lara, 99th Inf Div, Scottsdale AZ; Gene R. Lash, 99th Inf Div, Moore OK; Antonio Mendez, 9th Inf Div, CA; Clyde D. Riley, 99th Inf Div, Blythwood SC; Bernard Sprecher, 99th Inf Div, Miami FL; Raymond J. Wenning, 30th Inf Div, Coldwater OH; and Joseph Wolfer, 9th Tactical Command, Boynton FL.

Following the awards gifts were presented the Ambassador and Mrs. Matthysen for their gracious, by BOB Historical Fndn. President, Alfred H. M. Shehab.

The reception then resumed with a sumptuous buffet of food and desserts especially prepared by the superb chefs at the Residence. It was a night to remember. We are indeed grateful again for the hospitality of the Belgium Ambassador Matthysen and his wife in hosting our veterans.

The next morning, we made way to Fort McHenry MD to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the War of 1812 and partake in their special flag ceremony. After touring the new National Park Service Visitors Center and viewing their outstanding patriotic film on the part that Ft McHenry played in the War of 1812, we then processed into the Fort and were allowed to unfurl a replica of the gigantic flag that flew over Ft McHenry during the siege which inspired Francis Scott Key to pen the words which now is our National Anthem.

Leaving Ft McHenry we proceeded to Baltimore's Inner Harbor for a couple of hours of sight seeing, lunch or shopping on our own. Some visited the USS Constellation docked in the Inner Harbor. We headed back to our hotel to get freshened up for our annual reception and Commemoration Banquet in the Washington Room of the DoubleTree Hotel.

The Banquet opened to the stirring beat of the Fife and Drum as the 3rd Inf Bn Color Guard posted the Colors; the anthems of Belgium, Luxembourg and the United States were played by Alan Cunningham. Greetings were brought by Major Patrick DeSmedt, Deputy Military Attaché of Belgium representing the Ambassador of Belgium, His Excellency Jean-Louis Wolzfeld, Ambassador of Luxembourg and MG Michael S. Linnington, Commanding General of the Military District of Washington.

A very interesting talk was given by LTG Theodore C. Nicholas II, Asst Director of National Intelligence, whose father had served in the Battle of the Bulge. He talked about what he had learned from his father about the Bulge and gave a very down to earth discussion of the service that these veterans gave in the Bulge.

Following his talk, the Battle of the Bulge Person of the Year Award was announced. James E. Triesler, a teacher at the Math & Science High School at Clover Hill High School in Midlothian, VA, was honored as the recipient for his continuous and significant contributions to maintaining the memory and history of the Battle of the Bulge. Through his initiative he had developed a sought after course



Belgium Ambassador Matthysen lays wreath at VBOB Memorial in Arlington National cemetery.

by students to study WWII and the Battle of the Bulge. Through his and his students efforts they developed an outstanding web site called "It Took A War," presenting interviews of Veterans, many of them VBOBers, letters that had been sent during the war, what the home front was like and a treasure trove of material. You may want to visit it the site at www.ittookawar.com for a great web site. You may even want to support these students and teacher with material that you have.

Doug Dillard, Incoming VBOB President, then presented J. David Bailey, Outgoing VBOB President with the Order of St Maurice, CIVIS, awarded to a civilian who has given support and encouragement to members of the US Army Infantry. VBOB Certificates we given in appreciation to our guests and

Battle of the Bulge Commemorative Plates provided by Glenn Yarborough and the Belgian/American Association were given out to all new attendees by Paul Goffin.

The next morning everyone was up early for wreath layings at the World War II Memorial by Richard J. Whalen, 3816th QM (GS) Co and Tom Ingram, 90th InfD at the Bulge portion of the monument. We then proceeded to Arlington Cemetery where VBOB was joined at the VBOB Monument for wreath layings by Ambassador Matthysen of Belgium and Ambassador Jean-Louis Wolzfeld of Luxembourg and by our VBOB members Mike Levin, 7th Armored Div and George Watson 87th Inf Div. Following these wreath layings we then proceeded to the Tomb of the Unknowns where Douglas Dillard, 82nd Abn Div, Incoming VBOB President and Alvin Sussman, 106th InfD laid the VBOB wreath in memory of all VBOB Veterans who have died. Mike J. Levin, 7th Armored Div and Bill Leunig, Sr. 285th Engineering Cmbt Bn then laid a wreath at our small VBOB Memorial opposite the amphitheater.

It was now time to head back to the DoubleTree Hotel for the VBOB Luncheon in Windows Over Washington with its great view of the City. The warm soup hit the spot. Following lunch and remarks by outgoing VBOB President J David Bailey, 106th InfD, he installed the elected officers for 2013. Our new VBOB President Doug Dillard, 82nd AbnD, then addressed to group.

We would like to thank Bill and Ethel Bearisto for the sizable donation that they gave to VBOB as a result of the wonderful time they had at the Battle of the Bulge Commemoration.

Until next December, stay healthy!

ORDERS FROM VBOB HQ



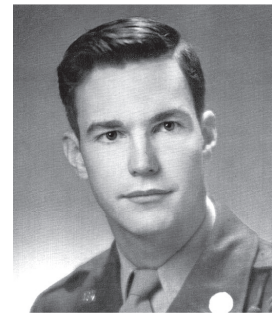
**Charles Bailey,
26th InfD, 112th Inf, HQ Co**

We are trying to honor all our members by displaying their photos (preferably in their WWII uniforms) on our website. Please send a copy of your photo (photos will not be returned) to:

**Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge
PO Box 336, Blue Bell, PA 19422**

**View the photos at:
WWW.BATTLEOFTHEBULGE.ORG**

Click on the word "Photos" (below the helmets), then choose appropriate alphabetized photo gallery by veteran's last name



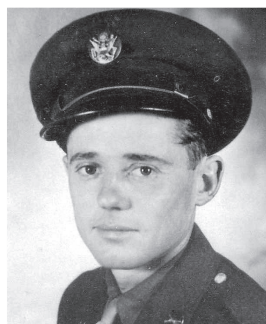
**Donald Dillon,
2nd InfD, 23rd Inf, Co I**



**James McCabe,
179th Field Artillery, Bat B**



**Henry Pietrowski,
238th Engr Cmbt Bn, Co C**



**Walter Poole,
4th ArmD, 10th AIB, Co C**



**Joseph Rahie,
5th InfD, 2nd Inf, Co M**

Perpetuating the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge at

by Alan Cunningham, Associate

FULFILLING THE VBOB MISSION STATEMENT

When I was asked to chair a futures committee for the Executive Council in January 2011, I looked to the VBOB Mission Statement for guidance. It was clear that the first mission — *Perpetuate the memory of the sacrifices involved during the Battle of the Bulge* — fell under the purview of the futures committee. The importance of this mission is the central reason for having a futures committee. I

immediately looked for ways to perpetuate the memory of members of VBOB. I felt that working with Army museums was a good way to get the word out about the sacrifices of veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. Our planned annual reunion in September 2011 in Columbus Georgia gave me the perfect opportunity to talk with one Army Museum about working with VBOB to fulfill this mission.



VBOB members visited the National Infantry Museum during our 30th Annual Reunion, September 2011, in Columbus, GA.

VBOB Reunion in Columbus, GA in September 2011 & visit to the Infantry Museum

In September 2011, VBOB had our annual reunion in Columbus, Georgia. The National Infantry Museum was on the agenda and the trip was well worth it. Their mission is to provide a better appreciation of the sacrifices American Infantrymen make to protect our freedom, which complements our mission very well. The museum is open from 9 am – 5 pm Monday through Saturday, 11 am – 5 pm Sunday, and on Monday holidays. The 190,000-square-foot museum opened in June 2009 on a 200-acre tract of hardwoods and pines just outside the gates of the Fort Benning Maneuver Center of Excellence. It is one of the Army's largest installations, the home of the Infantry (and now also Armor). Each week, Fort Benning graduates hundreds of soldiers on a parade field just behind the museum. These graduations draw friends and family members from all over the country. A visit to the museum is an integral part of the curriculum for every new Soldier. In April 2012 — less than three years since opening — the National Infantry Museum welcomed its 1,000,000th visitor.

A need for more Bulge exhibits in museum

The museum was extensive and had a room dedicated to World War II; however, the Battle of the Bulge only had one information board, which was not very extensive. As a result, it became clear that the Battle of the Bulge needed additional highlighting at the museum. Because of the very high number of visitors to the museum, VBOB could obtain more visibility and forward our mission to “Perpetuate the memory of the sacrifices involved during the Battle of the Bulge” if we could get the Infantry Museum to highlight the Battle better than was currently being done.

Contact with the Infantry Historical Society while in Columbus

The National Infantry Foundation was formed for the sole purpose of planning, raising funds for and operating Infantry Museum. The Foundation has since formed a formal partnership with the Army to manage the facility and its priceless contents. As a result, while in Columbus I contacted them about a way to increase exhibits on the Battle of the Bulge and VBOB. I worked with the foundation over the next year to put together a plan that VBOB would sponsor at the museum to highlight the Battle of the Bulge. One element of that was the showing of two World War II film — *Americans in the Bulge* and *Marching Once More* — to be shown for free in the IMAX Theatre, which would include a special VBOB display in the IMAX lobby.



A special display in the IMAX lobby showing VBOB-sponsored Veterans Day screenings of two Battle of the Bulge films.

the National Infantry Museum & Soldier Center



Soldiers lined up at the entrance to the National Infantry Museum, Soldier Center, and IMax theater on Veterans Day 2012.

Signed a sponsorship pledge and provided funding

The Executive Council approved a \$25,000 donation to the National Infantry Foundation to sponsor our partnership and the check was presented to the Foundation at our September 2012 Executive Council meeting. The movie showings are to be on special days throughout the year, especially Soldier graduations and holidays. The kick-off was on Veterans Day, November 11, 2012.

Opening of VBOB-sponsored attractions on Veterans Day 2012

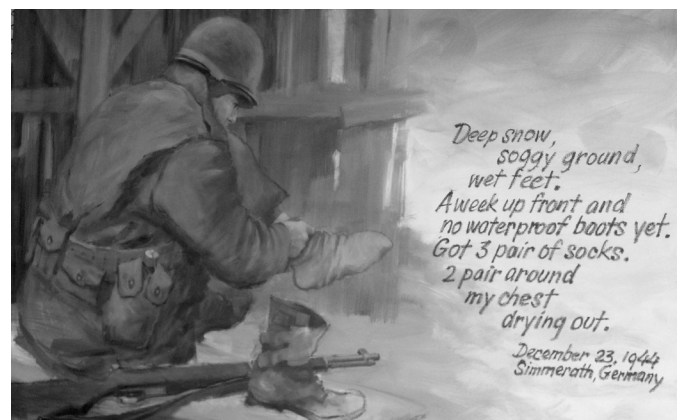
Our President, COL (Ret.) Doug Dillard, traveled to the Infantry Museum on Veterans Day to be there for the opening of movies and other festivities at the museum. VBOB received publicity in the Infantry Heritage Newsletter and recognition at the events, which included the VBOB special display in the IMAX lobby.

Continued support and follow-on

The sponsorship we provided to the Infantry Museum will make the movies available in perpetuity. In addition, our program will receive special attention at all holidays for the next two years leading up to the 70th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. Hopefully, we will be able to forge similar partnerships with other museums like the new National Museum of the United States Army on Fort Belvoir Virginia to be built in 2015.



Above: LTG (Ret) Carmen Cavezza, Chairman, National Infantry Foundation, speaking on Veterans Day 2012 and below: a Battle of the Bulge exhibit, both at the National Infantry Museum.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

VBOB is going to Kansas City, MO for our 32ND ANNUAL REUNION

September
3 – 8, 2013



Street view of Kansas City (left). An exhibit at the National WWI Museum (above) at Liberty Memorial (below left). Inside Union Station (below right).



Embassy Suites KCI:

Room/suite rate \$126/night includes:

- All taxes
- Daily full breakfast buffet
- Daily two-hour Manager's Reception
- Complimentary airport shuttle
- Free parking

Sites/attractions being considered:

Kansas City, MO:

National WWI Museum
Union Station
Sprint Center

Fort Leavenworth, KS

Independence, MO:

Harry S. Truman Library & Museum
Truman Home
National Frontier Trails Museum

Ladies: shop 'til you drop at Zona Rosa, a shuttle ride from our hotel

Harry S. Truman Museum & Library (above right), and Zona Rosa shopping center (right).



Complete details in the May issue of *The Bulge Bugle*. Get your credit card ready!

2013 VETERANS TOURS

Full color brochures of the following Veterans tours will be available on the VBOB website as soon as they are finalized (www.battleofthebulge.org). Remember, these are not just pilgrimage tours for our Veterans. They are also an important and essential service to our younger generations and friends of Veterans who want to learn as much as possible about our Veterans' achievements, so that they can proudly continue to commemorate and honor them over the years to come.

PILSEN LIBERATION FESTIVAL AND PRAGUE

MAY 3 - 12, 2013 Arr Frankfurt - Dept Prague. This is the biggest and most famous World War II Liberation Festival in Europe. It welcomes all American World War II Veterans as liberators and guests of honor with their families and friends. General Patton and Third Army who liberated western Czechoslovakia are especially revered.

'MEMORIAL DAY 2013' IN THE BULGE, AND NORTHERN BULGE TOUR

MAY 22 - 30, 2013 Arr Brussels - Dept Frankfurt. Memorialize those who gave the supreme sacrifice. You are guests of honor in the prestigious Memorial Day ceremonies at the Battle of the Bulge Cemeteries. Then we explore the Northern Bulge battlefields. The tour is of special interest to all First Army Veterans and their families. We also go through the Aachen/Rhine battlefields and Huertgen Forest. Our itinerary will be customized according to the requests of our group members.

LUXEMBOURG-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP FESTIVAL, AND SOUTHERN BULGE TOUR

JUNE 16 - 26, 2013 Arr Paris - Dept Frankfurt. The Luxembourg-American Friendship Festival celebrates the Battle of the Bulge and warmly welcomes all American World War II Veterans and their families as guests of honor. We explore the Southern Bulge battlefields in depth. This will specially interest all Third Army Veterans and their families. Our itinerary will be customized according to the requests of our group members.

GRAFENWÖHR US BASE AND MUNICH

JULY 31 - AUG 7, 2013 Arr Frankfurt - Dept Munich. Grafenwöhr is the biggest and most important US base in Europe. Many Veterans of Postwar and Cold War Europe have great memories of their time at Grafenwöhr. Visit it at the time of its spectacular German-American Festival, and see Nuremberg, Munich, Berchtesgaden and much more too.

FOR MORE INFORMATION about special customized group tours and/or the above tours, contact Doris Davis, President of VBOB Golden Gate (San Francisco) Chapter. Email doris@battleofthebulge.org, or Tel: (650) 654-0101 (PST).

"Words cannot describe the experience of standing on the very ground where my Father was in World War II. I couldn't help but wonder what went through his mind back then. I felt closer to my father during my trip." Doris Davis (Father - Leonard J. Schneider served in 79th Division, 313th Inf. Rgt)



VBOB BOOK OF STORIES

Thank you to those who have sent in the release form. We have decided to extend the cutoff date for receiving release forms from January 31, 2013 to March 31, 2013 because we have received release forms from only 170 of the 550 authors who submitted stories.

HAVE YOUR STORY INCLUDED IN OUR BOOK – THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE – BY TAKING THESE 2 STEPS

1. Fill out the VBOB release form you were mailed.
2. Send the completed release form to:

VBOB
PO Box 336
Blue Bell, PA 19422

If you have any questions please contact Ralph Bozorth at:
484-351-8844 or
email: Ralph@battleofthebulge.org

If we do not receive a signed release form from you by March 31, 2013 we cannot include your stories in the book.

ST PATRICK'S DAY PARADE SUN, 17 MARCH 2013, 11:30 AM

Our National organization and all Chapters have been invited once again to march in our Nation's 42nd St. Patrick's Parade, down Constitution Avenue from 7th to 17th Streets NW. VBOBers can march or ride in our Nation's Parade as you feel up to it. Vehicles will be available for the walking wounded, furnished by the Military Vehicle Collectors Society. However, as many of you as can march are asked to show the younger generations how it is done!

So get your marching shoes shined! We will gather outside the old Smithsonian Castle, on the Mall side, Jefferson Drive. Look for the VBOB Flag and WWII Uniforms & the WWII vehicles. Please wear an overseas cap and your medals or ribbons. The march is about one mile.

Those who would like to car pool and need a Parking Pass can park on Jefferson Drive inside the mall entering from 14th Street but you would need to get there by 11:00 AM or earlier to park. You will need to contact John D. Bowen, a week ahead to obtain the Parking Permit allowing time for the mail to get it to you.

Mark your calendars for the 17th of March. See you there! Call John Bowen, 301-384-6533, or email: johndbowen@earthlink.net for further information and to let him know that you are coming.

Best Metro stop is Constitution on the Mall and just walk towards the Capitol and the Smithsonian Castle will be on your right on Jefferson Drive. See you there!

★ ROLL CALL of NEW MEMBERS ★

Due to your great response to our Associate Membership mailings, we'd like to welcome aboard these folks whose new memberships started between October 1, 2012 and January 10, 2013:

Agosta, Tom	Marlboro, NJ	Associate
Alesi, Jean M	Franklin Park, IL	Associate
Anderson, Hazel	Boylston, MA	Associate
Angeles, Michael	Lakeside, CA	Associate
Angstadt, Zedra K	Reading, PA	Associate
Argiriou, William	Cranbury, NJ	Associate
Aughenbaugh, Madeline	Rio Rancho, NM	Associate
Bacall, Liz	Palm City, FL	Associate
Balch, Prescott	Purchase, NY	Associate
Barnes, Edith	Doylestown, OH	Associate
Bialosky Jr, Jack	Moreland Hills, OH	Associate
Brauer, Jeff	Fairfield, CT	Associate
Brough, Daniel C	Fall River, MA	Associate
Brown, Mathew	Wichita, KS	Associate
Bruno, Judy	Ocean Springs, MS	Associate
Burgett, Bill J	Juneau, AK	Associate
Caba, Judith	Columbia, SC	Associate
Caba, Rebecca	Ft. Eustis, VA	Associate
Campanelli, Vito	Brick, NJ	78 InfD
Campbell, Linda	Warwick, RI	Associate
Chapman, Brenda	Long Beach, MS	Associate
Christman, Annette	Dublin, OH	Associate
Connolly, William S	Clearwater, FL	Associate
Cressman, George	Woodbine, GA	Associate
Cronin Jr., Frank	Durham, NC	Associate
Daniels, David R	Sobieski, WI	Associate
Deitchley, Kenneth	South Bend, IN	Associate
Depietress, Warren	Alequippa, PA	Associate
Descoteau, Armand L	Worcester, MA	80 Tk Bn
East, Richard N	Williamsburg, VA	Associate
Ebner, Emma	Bethlehem, PA	Associate
Ehinger, Michael L	Fort Wayne, IN	Associate
Engels, Tina	Evanston, IL	Associate
Engen, Gary	Augusta, GA	Associate
Engle, Michael	Allentown, PA	Associate
Engle, Michele	Coopersburg, PA	Associate
Erbaugh, Carolyn P	Mineral, VA	Associate
Evans, Pat	Colby, KS	Associate
Evans, Richard E	Cortland, OH	Associate
Evans, Thomas D	Littleton, NC	Associate
Fague, Jeffrey	Danville, PA	Associate
Federico, Pasquale (Pat)	Patchogue, NY	Associate
Feierstein, Hirsh	Baltimore, MD	Associate
Fischetti, Steve V	Los Gatos, CA	Associate
Fliegelman, Janet W	East Brunswick, NJ	Associate
Fliegelman, J J	East Brunswick, NJ	Associate
Fliegelman, Mindy	East Brunswick, NJ	Associate
Fliegelman, Oren	East Brunswick, NJ	Associate
Fox, James M	Davenport, FL	Associate
Freeland, Rudolph	Hopkinsville, KY	82 AIB
French, Ronald D	Ballwin, MO	Associate
Freshwater, Josephine	Natrona Heights, PA	Associate
Galambos, Luke	Chicago, IL	Associate



NEW MEMBERS SPOTLIGHT: VBOB Associate David Orlosky recently signed up all 5 of his brothers as Associates to honor their deceased father, Gregory Orlosky, 75th InfD. Pictured above at Gregory's 80th birthday party in 2005: left to right, rear, are Bill, Ray, Mom Margaret, Dad Greg, sister Kathy and Mark. Left to right, front, are Dan, Greg and David.

Gianopoulos, Nicholas C	Lancaster, PA	99 InfD
Goldstein, Charlotte	Lansdale, PA	Associate
Graf, Linda	Miami, FL	Associate
Greger, Douglas L	Plainview, NY	Associate
Greger, Jeffrey	Fairfax, VA	Associate
Grindahl, John	Fargo, ND	Associate
Harvier, Michael	Edison, NJ	Associate
Hastalis, Noel Burr	Ridge, IL	Associate
Heckman, Betty M	Allentown, PA	Associate
Helle, Robert E	Curtice, OH	35 InfD
Helton, Jim	Bristol, VA	Associate
Hoke, Jack	Hanover, PA	Associate
Hollywood, John H	Crofton, MD	Associate
Homrighausen, Nicole	Cypress, TX	Associate
Hood, Brian L	Worcester, MA	Associate
Hood, Tina M	Worcester, MA	Associate
Hopkins, Adrienne	Pleasantville, NY	Associate
Huckaby, Linda	Horton, AL	Associate
Hunt, Jane S	Columbus, MS	Associate
Johnson, Gary	Roswell, GA	Associate
Juno, Donna	Cross Plains, WI	Associate
Kadous, Calvin J	Tucson, AZ	Associate
Kates, Jacob	Newton, MA	4 InfD
Katz, Jacob	Natick, MA	4 InfD
Kelleher, Maryanne S	Chester Springs, PA	Associate
Kelley, John R	Beaver Falls, PA	Associate
Kielczewski, George	Quebec, Canada	Associate
Klemmer, Karen	Clermont, FL	Associate
Kneepkens, Mark	Wauwatosa, WI	Associate

(Continued)

Knightlii, Robert W	Alpharetta, GA	Associate	Stoudt, Michael	Roslyn, PA	Associate
Koral, John D	Endicott, NY	Associate	Strohl, Sammy	Coopersburg, PA	Associate
Landry, Steven	Belair, MD	Associate	Talmadge, Gina	Hackettstown, NJ	Associate
Lieberman, Kathi E	Rocky Hill, CT	Associate	Tanqueray, Christiane	Vitry-Sur-Seine, France	Associate
Lockshin, Shirley	S PalmBeach, FL	Associate	Tansits, Colin	Jermyn, PA	Associate
Lorenz, Steve	Independence, IA	Associate	Umbrella, Shaun	Liberty, MS	Associate
Lynam, Jr, R J	Sunbury, OH	Associate	Unruh, Helen C	Odessa, DE	Associate
Lynch, Kevin B	Oneonta, NY	83 InfD	Wacholder, Joseph P	Elizabeth, NJ	Associate
Main, Thurman	Delaware, OH	264 Fa Bn	Waechter, Curtis	Medford Lakes, NJ	Associate
Mansbach, Gerald	Carmel, IN	8 ArmdD	Waldroup, William E	Kannapolis, NC	158 Cmbt Engr
Mansfield, Carmella E	Muncie, IN	Associate	Wall, John R	Arcadia, FL	Associate
Marino, Douglas	Mt Kisco, NY	Associate	Walter, Richard J	Fairfield, PA	Associate
Martin, John T	Galvin, WA	Associate	Warren, Janet C	Dubuque, IA	Associate
Martin, Robert Rick	Shelton, WA	Associate	Watson, Vicky	Austin, TX	Associate
Mayfield, Barbara	Hoover, AL	Associate	Waugh, Sheri	Edmond, OK	Associate
Mcarthur, James	Vail, AZ	Associate	Weisenthal, David	Laguna Beach, CA	Associate
Michael, Harold	Milford, OH	Associate	White, Mike	Watertown, NY	Associate
Mills, Shannon	Concord, NH	Associate	White, Pearl A	Columbia, SC	Associate
Mischenko, Martin T	Mineville, NY	Associate	Winters, Curtis	Elkins Park, PA	Associate
Monaco, Chris	Weatherford, TX	Associate	Wood, Janet H	Bristol, TN	Associate
Monaco, John H	Mineola, NY	Associate	Woodson, Wilma M	Sebring, FL	Associate
Monaco, Lynn	Weatherford, TX	Associate	Yager, Gary	Sandusky, MI	Associate
Myers, Lawrence	New Brunswick, NJ	Associate	Zarka, Roman	Marietta, GA	Associate
Nelson, Cynthia L	Boulder, CO	Associate	Zimmerer, Ruth	Juno Beach, FL	Associate
Nelson, Rudolph S	Lake Mills, IA	Associate			
Nicholar-Bivens, Barbara	East Sandwich, MA	Associate			
Nolan, Connor	Wallingford, CT	Associate			
Oerther, Charlie E	Louisville, KY	Associate			
Orlosky, Daniel	Brandon, FL	Associate			
Orlosky, Gregory	Sefner, FL	Associate			
Orlosky, Mark	Ft Myers, FL	Associate			
Orlosky, Raymond	Silver Springs, FL	Associate			
Orlosky, Willliam	Gloversville, NY	Associate			
Otto, Travis	Tampa, FL	Associate			
Pavluchuk, Sr Margaret	Reading, PA	Associate			
Peterson, John	Gaithersburg, MD	Associate			
Phillips, Richard L	OceanView, NJ	Associate			
Pizzetti, Edward J	Oxford, MA	75 InfD			
Powell, David	Tucson, AZ	Associate			
Pratt, Jeremy	Poughkeepsie, NY	Associate			
Raap, Michael	Franklin, WI	Associate			
Reiman, Rita	Carmel, CA	Associate			
Repp, Christopher J	Hollywood, FL	Associate			
Riley-Goldberg, Patty	New Prague, MN	Associate			
Rogowski, Patricia	Chicopee, MA	Associate			
Roxburgh, Jessie M	Sacramento, CA	Associate			
Samberg, Ruth S	Merced, CA	Associate			
Schneider, Garth C	Hortonville, WI	Associate			
Schwartzberg, Jason	Norwalk, CT	Associate			
Sernoffsky, Elaine	Elizabethtown, PA	Associate			
Shapiro, Philip	NewYork, NY	Associate			
Sharp, Berna D	Tucson, AZ	Associate			
Sharp, Doug	Wichita, KS	Associate			
Shea, Leonard	Methuen, MA	Associate			
Shireman, Michael	Columbus, IN	Associate			
Sinclair, Scott	Santee, CA	Associate			
Smith Jr, James E	Oakley, CA	Associate			
Soria, Marshall V	Fresno, CA	28 InfD			
Sperry, Kyle D	Colorado Springs, CO	Associate			
Stevens, Steve	Irwin, PA	Associate			

We certainly are pleased to have you with us and look forward to your participation in helping to perpetuate the legacy of all who served in that epic battle. You can help immediately by:

- Talking to people about VBOB and suggesting that they also join
- Spreading the word about our website: www.battleofthebulge.org or www.vbob.org
- Sending us articles to be included in *The Bulge Bugle*
- Attending our annual reunion in Kansas City, MO (See pg. 18; full details and registration information will be in the May 2013 issue of *The Bulge Bugle*.)

IN THE NEWS

Photo: William Dakos/City of Sanibel



In January 2013, the City Council of Sanibel, FL honored eight local veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, including VBOB members Norval Williams, 80 InfD (at far left), and Joseph DiGregorio, 106 InfD (at far right). Ted Tyson of the Sanibel Veterans Group helped organize the event, which was covered in local newspapers and on TV news.

THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES

Joseph A. Tedesco, 4th ID, 377th AAA AW Bn

I was 21 years old when I went into the Army. I took my basic training at Fort Eustis, Virginia. I was sent to Camp Stewart, Georgia. It was an anti-aircraft outfit. There were four batteries to a battalion and I was put in Battery D. They made me a gunner on the 50 caliber machine gun. There were two sections to a battery and each section had 40 millimeter guns. They had a Sergeant, 2 Corporals, 2 truck drivers plus 12 men in each section. We would go to the firing range and shoot at a sleeve target that was towed by an airplane. It was pretty hard to hit the target, but the more we shot, the better we got. We also had to learn how to identify German airplanes. One day we loaded all of our guns and trucks on railroad cars and went to Camp Carrebell, Florida where we were to begin amphibious landing training. They would put us in LCI or LCP Boats and go out into the Gulf of Mexico about a mile, then they would turn around and head for shore. Sometimes the landing crafts would hit a sandbar, they would let down the ramp and we had to get off. Sometimes the water was two feet deep and other times it would be up to our chest. While we were there, we went through the infiltration course. We had to crawl under barbed wire while they were shooting live ammunition over our heads. One night, they took us to a tall building that had a cargo net over the side. We had to get on the net and go down it into a boat that was at the bottom. They had some soldiers at the bottom that would swing the net simulating a ship that was sinking. We went back to Camp Stewart and our Colonel made us pitch our pup tents on the ground in the open field.

In July, we went to Tennessee for maneuvers. It was hot and dusty and our Colonel would not give the drivers any rest so they had a bad time staying on the road. One day, a truck with some soldiers in it from another battery went over a cliff. Two soldiers were killed and the rest were sent to a hospital. Then our Colonel decided to change out drivers. We stayed in Tennessee awaiting orders to go overseas. We finally went to Camp Shanks, New York and got on a ship that took 14 days to cross the Atlantic. We landed in England and took over a vacated school Chat we used for our barracks. In March, we became part of the 4111 Division area and my gun crew was sent on maneuvers with them up in Wales. We had to waterproof all of our guns and trucks and then we went out into the channel. One night while we were out, we were attacked by German E-Boats and lost 749 soldiers and sailors. The Army kept it a secret for 40 years. Today there's a monument in honor of all the men that lost their lives that day.

While we were in Wales, my Sergeant got sick and went to the hospital. He never came back, so the Captain made me acting Sergeant. When we got back, I saw some strange trucks in the motor pool. They were called half tracks and had four 50-caliber machine guns mounted on a turret. These guns could turn all around as well as up and down. An officer and a Corporal came over to me. The officer said he would like me to take command of one of the tracks but said I would only be a Corporal. He said he knew I would be a Sergeant soon, but he still wanted me to take the half track. He said I had to make up my mind what I wanted to do. I told him I would take the half track, so the Corporal that was with him became a Sergeant instead. Now I had to pick my own men for the track. There would be only five of us and a driver. I picked men that I knew were good with the machine gun and

also a good driver.

The invasion began on June 6th and my battalion went in at Utah Beach on the 12* of June. The 4th Division had gone in on D-Day, June 6th. My half track was sent to the 42nd Field Artillery. They had four tanks with 105mm Howitzers. Their Captain treated us as one of his own soldiers. He made sure that if we needed anything we got it. We would get all our rations and our clothes if we needed any from them in convoy. After we took Cherbourg, we were in what they called The Hedgerow Country. The Germans had dug into the hedgerows and had good cover in which to hide. Our infantry was losing a lot of soldiers and could not make any headway. General "Teddy" Roosevelt was given the job to get the infantry moving. The General got the idea of using the half tracks up front to strafe the hedgerows because we had so much fire power. Each one of our guns would fire 500 to 600 rounds a minute. So on July 12th we went up front. I set up in a field and had my men dig their fox holes about 30 yards from the track. My Captain came up to see how we were set up and asked me where my fox holes were. I told him where and he said to "dig them around the half track". I told him I thought it was a bad idea because the Germans would try to knock out the half tracks and a near miss would put my men in danger. He said "that's an order." So while he was still there, I had my men start to dig. As soon as he left, I told my men to use the holes they had first dug. The Captain went to another track that was two fields away from mine and he told that Corporal the same thing he told me and that's what the Corporal had his men do. We were hooked up by phone to an officer who was up front and could see the Germans and he would tell us when to shoot and when to stop. We would shoot so much and for so long that sometimes one of the barrels would burn out. We had eight extra barrels that we had tested on the firing range. With special gloves, the men would change the burned out barrel and keep on shooting. That first day, my driver started to cry. He couldn't take it so I put him in a fox hole and told him to stay there so he would feel safer. When we got back that day to a safe area, I told my Captain that I wanted a new driver. I told him why and so he gave me someone else. We went up again the next day and did the same thing. That night, a good friend of mine who was on the track two fields away would not say anything. He was always joking around and laughing, but this night he wouldn't say anything. I asked him what was wrong and he said he felt funny and could not explain how he felt. He said he wasn't sick or afraid, he just felt funny. I told him to stay behind the next day but he said he was going up anyway. By this time the Germans knew just about where we were and the shells were getting closer. One exploded pretty close so I told my men to get into the fox holes. The next volley came in and a shell hit a tree two fields away. When it exploded, it covered all of the half track and the fox holes. The driver was hiding under the track so he didn't get hit and he came running to me and said all the men were wounded. I told him to stay with my men and I ran over to the track. The first hole had the Corporal in it and he had a big hole in his hip. I used both my first aid kit and his to bandage his hip and he said to look after the rest of the men. I checked the holes on that side and they were empty. I ran around the track and the last fox hole had my friend in it. I knew he was dead because he had shrapnel holes in his back and his helmet. I took him out of the hole, dragged him away from the track, and covered him with a blanket. By this time, our Captain heard (Continued)

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about it and came up. Well I was so mad at him, that I made a lunge towards him but he held out his hands to stop me and said, "I guess you were right about digging the fox holes away from the track," but it was too late... I lost a good friend. We heard later that Teddy Roosevelt asked our officers, "what are your half tracks doing, they are killing all the Germans by themselves," so I think we did a good job because now our infantry was starting to gain ground.

Next came St. Lo. This time the big brass got the air corps to help. Three thousand airplanes were to leave England and bomb the Germans. The artillery was to mark the front lines with smoke shells and the planes were to drop their bombs beyond the smoke onto the Germans. Well the first wave of planes did, but somehow the wind drifted back blowing the smoke onto our soldiers. Before the big brass got word to the planes, we lost a lot of soldiers and also a General NC Near.

The Falaise Gap is where we had thousands of Germans surrounded and the English were to close the Gap to the North of us but they must have stopped for tea because thousands of Germans got away to fight another day. We were now getting close to Paris and the 4th Division could have gone into Paris but the big brass wanted to give the honor to the French's General LeClare. So the 4111 Division had to wait for them to catch up, they got in front of the 4th Division and marched into Paris. We were the first Americans in Paris and the people went crazy. We could not move our track because we would have run over someone. The people were wall to wall on the streets. They would give us wine and flowers and the girls would climb on all the trucks, jeeps and half tracks kissing everyone. They were so happy to be free from the Germans. We spent the night in the park but no one slept because the French would come over with gifts and wanted to talk.

We left the next morning and had the Germans on the run. It was open country and our tanks were moving right along with no trouble. We set up one day near a town called San Quentin. A boy and girl about their teen years came by and were looking at our track. I got talking to them and they made me understand they came from Italy and they wanted me to go see their parents. So I went and their parents were very happy to see us. They made us some coffee that was made of roasted wheat and chicory. It was awful, but we said it was good. The father asked us if the Germans would come back. I told him they were gone for good. He then took me outside and started to dig until he uncovered a long box where he had hidden two bikes. He told us that if the Germans knew he had the bikes they would have taken them. He told us there would be a street dance that night and we should go see it. Two of us went and the people were singing and dancing and, of course, drinking. The men came out to the square and they had two women with them. These two had been collaborating with the German soldiers so they put them in the center of the square and shaved the hair off of their heads.

We were on the move again. We were in convoy when a German airplane came out of nowhere and began strafing the convoy. My men and I jumped off the half track and jumped into the ditches and empty fox holes that were nearby. It was dusk when this happened and by the time it was over and we were able to get back into our track it was dark. There was a smell like someone had crapped in their pants, so we looked at everyone on the track and we saw that one of my men had jumped into a fox hole that

a soldier had used as a latrine. This poor guy was covered all the way down the front of him so he had to throw away his clothes and put on clean ones. We had a good laugh over that.

It was stop and go all night and in the morning, we found out why. Our airplanes had strafed a German convoy that was using horses and wagons to move... the road was full of dead Germans and horses. We finally got a tank with a snow blade on it to push everything off the road. The word came down that if we saw horses that were badly wounded to shoot them rather than make them suffer. It was hard to shoot some of the horses because they were so beautiful. It was 2:30 PM when we finally got to set up. We dug our fox holes, ate our C-rations and now it was getting dark. My men asked, "Who was going to start pulling guard?" I told them no one because we could see the battalion headquarters in a field near us. I said if they're here, we must be miles from the front. Besides, we would be up early. The next thing I knew, someone was shaking my foot. I looked up and it was my platoon Sergeant who I hadn't seen since we left England. He asked me who was on guard and I told him no one. He said the Captain was on the road and wanted to see me. So I reported to the Captain and he wanted to know who fell asleep while on guard so he could court marshal the soldier that fell asleep. Well that's all I had to hear. My men and I had been together for two and a half years and we were like brothers so I wasn't going to tell him anyway. When I told the Captain I didn't post anyone, he told me, "you're a buck private; who's next in command?" Each one of my men was called up to the Captain and they all said if Tedesco was not good enough, neither were they. He got red in the face and said he would find someone to take command. We got a new Corporal from one of the 40 millimeter guns. He was with us two weeks and one day he was up in the turret of the gun when off in the distance we could hear anti-aircraft firing. It had to be a German plane so I told the Corporal to get ready just in case the plane would come within our range. Well the plane did come and I am yelling at the Corporal to shoot, but he never did. The phone rang and they wanted to know how many rounds we fired. I gave the phone to the Corporal and he said he did not shoot because he thought they were friendly planes. Later that day, he took me aside and said that he did not know how to operate the guns. I said, "you mean to tell me that for two weeks our lives were in your hands and you're just telling me now you don't know how to operate the guns." So I had to teach him all about the guns. The war was something else. Back home the only time we would see someone dead was at a wake. Now all we would see were dead soldiers every day both Germans and Americans so it's hard to see what the war was like. When the weather was hot, they would bloat up to twice their size. Between the smell of all of them, plus the dead cows and horses, it would make you sick. But as time went by, you got so used to it that you forgot what fresh air smelled like. You also had to get used to seeing just parts of bodies and soldiers so burned up you couldn't tell if they were Germans or Americans.

Our Division was then sent to the Huertgen Forest. This place was hell. You were afraid to put your foot down because the Germans had put mines under the leaves and many soldiers lost their feet and legs. When the Germans would shell us, the shell would hit the tree tops and explode raining iron shrapnel down on us. I was lucky to get the engineers to clear a path up a hill. Once they cleared the path, they put white tape around the *(Continued)*

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trees on both sides and we had to stay inside those white tapes. We were so high up, one day German planes flew by and we were eye level with them. I was the first one to get into the gun turret. I picked up the first plane in my sights and although we were taught to shoot short bursts, I shot almost all my ammunition at the first plane because if I was short, the bullets might hit one of the planes that were behind the first one. I saw smoke coming out of the first plane so I knew he was hit. He made a right turn and headed towards his front but it was too far to hear if he crashed. We were there from November to December and then we finally got a rest. We drove to Luxembourg and for two days we thought the war was over.

We got to Luxembourg on the 12th of December and on the 16th of December the Battle of the Bulge started. The Germans broke through our lines killing and capturing thousands of American soldiers. There was a lot of confusion because some of the Germans could speak perfect English. They knew all our slang words, all our ball players and movie stars. They would turn the road signs around so we would be going the wrong way. It was sad to see so many of our soldiers running to the rear and throwing their guns away. One officer surrendered 7,000 of his men because they just came from England and did not have time to set up in a good position so rather than have his men killed, he gave up. Our outfit went out in the country about two miles from the town we were in. There we found a mansion that must have belonged to a Duke or Baron. It was beautiful and we made it our command post. The Germans were shooting at us for two days and never hit the mansion. An officer told the Captain to give him a jeep and a radio operator and he would go see if he could find where the Germans were. The Captain said okay and the officer took off. For three more days the Germans were shelling us and we heard nothing from the officer who left. Each day we changed codes for the day. Our radio operator asked the Officer radioing in for the code for the day...the answer he got was the wrong one. So he told the Captain that a German was on the radio who could speak perfect English and that maybe the officer that had left to go up front must have been killed or captured. Our Captain said "let's get out of here." He then came to me and said for my crew to take the tail end of the convoy... we would be the last ones out. On the way back to the town that we were first in, a truck went into a ditch and couldn't get out. Being the last ones out, I couldn't just leave him in the ditch so we got out our cable, pulled him out and he took off towards the town. We still had to rewind our cable and when we got to the town there was no one there. We came to a crossroad and went across, but that was a mistake because the Germans saw us and started shooting at us. We made a fast U-turn and went back to the crossroad. This time we took a left turn and two miles down the road we found our artillery set up and they were shooting at the mansion we just left. Our Captain had left an officer and a radio operator in a patch of woods near the mansion. The officer said ten minutes after we left the Germans were in the mansion. Our artillery shot at the mansion most of the day and when we went back, the mansion was nothing but rubble. There were dead soldiers all around the place and trucks were burning up. The American soldiers started to loot any thing they could find but our Captain had them put everything back.

During the Bulge, one of our half tracks got hit. The men were slightly wounded but the track was in good shape. All they needed

was a driver. The motor pool Sergeant remembered that I used to drive one when we were in England. So they came looking for me and I went back to the command post. It was there I saw my Captain for the first time since he busted me and he gave me a choice. I could drive a truck or drive the half track, so I took the track. Now I had to wait for a crew. There was a house and a barn there and I killed three chickens and gave them to the kitchen section to cook. They had made a kitchen up in the barn. An American tank came by and the Germans were shooting at it. They missed and the shell hit the top of the barn. I ran to see if I could help and I met two soldiers coming out of the barn. They said that two soldiers were killed and some were wounded. Just then, I got a funny feeling like someone was telling me to get into the house. So I grabbed the two soldiers by the shoulders and said "let's get in the house!" We had just made it to the house when another shell exploded. I hit the wall on one side of the hallway and the other soldier hit the wall opposite me. I could feel my right leg burn and my left hand. I looked at the soldier opposite me and his right leg was gone. I looked at myself and I was covered with blood and chips of bone. It was from the other soldier. I yelled for medics and the soldiers in the back rooms came running out and looked after the soldier whose leg was gone. They looked at me and said to run to the barn because there was a medic there. I made it to the barn and they stripped me and bandaged my leg and then took out the shrapnel that was holding my gloves on my hand. They put me in a jeep and I went to a field hospital. I was there for two days and then I went back to the command post. I found out that the two soldiers that got killed were cleaning the dam chickens that I killed. I never heard what happened to the soldier who lost his leg.

We finally got a crew and a new Corporal so we moved out. Now we were near the German pill boxes. The mess Sergeant had a kitchen set up in a pill box that was 200 yards from where we were. We would take turns to go eat two at a time. The Corporal and one of the men were the last to go. The mess Sergeant told the Corporal that he wanted a soldier to help with KP. The Corporal got back and told the soldier who was with him to go back and pull KP. That meant that he had to walk all the way back when he was just there a few minutes ago. That was the last straw. This soldier picked up a hammer and was going to hit the Corporal on the head. The Corporal saw the motion and he ran looking for the First Sergeant. When the First Sergeant came, the men told him all of the crazy thing this Corporal made them do since he was put in charge. The First Sergeant told the Corporal to get his gear and leave. He turned to me and said for me to take over and he would see that I got my rating back. This made the men happy.

We had a mission to go up front again and one of my men said he didn't want to go. He said I could either shoot him, or have him court marshaled, but he wasn't going to go up front. Well I knew this soldier had been in the room where all the men got wounded and he did not get a scratch. This happened twice to him so I told him to stay behind and we went up without him. The next day, we had to go up again, and this time he said he was coming with us. The day before, he just had a feeling that something might happen to him. During the war, there was snow on the ground and one day as the snow was melting we saw a hand sticking out of the snow. We didn't know if it was an American or a German, so two of us pulled on the hand and out came a dead German soldier. His face was white and wrinkled. We took out his wallet and there were pictures of him and his family and here he was *(Continued)*

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dead at our feet. That's when we would feel sorry because it could have been one of us. What happened at that place will always be in my mind. There was a creek near by that we would get our water from. We would always put pills in our drinking water, but this time the pills did not work. The reason they weren't working was because we did not realize that under the snow that was melting and going into the creek, were dead soldiers, cows and horses and we all got dysentery. I was sick as a dog for eight days.

By this time the Bulge was just about over. We had pushed the Germans back to where they started from. We had 19,000 soldiers killed. I don't know how many were captured or how many were wounded, but I know that the Germans lost twice as many as we did. Our outfit was sent back into France to clean up some pockets of Germans that we bypassed. We were with an outfit that the Captain told me there were 500 German soldiers in a town that was over the hill from him. He said that I could shoot at any time during the night at any movement we saw on the hill because it would not be any of his men. It was here that I almost got shot by one of my own men. That night, we were all sleeping in a large tent when I had to go to the John. I left the tent and when I tried to get back in, I couldn't find the opening so I was making a lot of noise. All at once, I heard someone from inside the tent say, "Don't move or I'll shoot." That scared me so much that I think my voice changed. I said, "It's me. Look at my bed roll and you will see that it's empty and I am outside." So they let me in but one of my men still had his gun pointed at the opening of the tent.

During our last move, we ended up with the Japanese-American soldiers from the 442nd Field Artillery that had come up from Italy. The Captain called me over and gave me a bottle of whiskey. He saw the gun I had and he said he had one just like it but it was all apart. He found it on a dead German who was in the water and he did not want it to get rusty so he took it apart and could not put it together again. We worked on it until we got it firing again and he wanted to buy mine. I told him no, I was taking mine home. We came to a farm and we had to cross a wooden bridge. The old farmer came out and said the bridge was "kaput". I didn't believe him so I got my driver to start across. He was nearly across when the bridge gave way. The bumper caught the bank on the other side and the trailer was holding up the rear of the track. My driver got so mad at me he said, "You got us into this mess so now you can get us out" and he left. I got two trucks to pull me back out. It was lime to leave and I could not find my driver so I drove and got in the convoy. Good thing we had to wait because now I saw my driver and he was drunk. I put him in the track and while we were waiting and old man was picking up all the cigarette butts that the soldiers threw away. When he got near my track, my driver got out and hit the hands of the old man and the butts went flying and the old man ran away.

I had a good friend in the artillery that was a forward observer. He and an officer would go up front and direct the artillery when to shoot, how far and left or right until they hit what they were shooting at. He only had to go up front when his name came up, but instead he would take the place of another soldier whose name came up if that soldier would give him his months' pay. I told him he was nuts to do that, but he said that if he had my cigarette lighter it would bring him good luck. So I would give him my lighter and he would give me his wrist watch. I don't know what happened that one day, but he went up front without my lighter

and he got killed. They told me they couldn't even find his shoes, so it must have been a direct hit by a shell. So once more, I lost another very good friend.

As we kept going south, we reached Austria and started to see a lot of slave laborers. They were skin and bones. We gave them all the c-rations that we did not like and they were happy to get them. I saw some slaves skinning what I thought was a deer, but it was actually a police dog. One of the slaves could speak English and he told us that they started out with 3,000 slaves and as the weak ones would fall, the German guards would club them to death. They didn't want to shoot them because they were afraid that the Americans would come to investigate the shooting.

The war ended while we were with the Japanese and we had to find our battalion, The Japanese-American soldiers got on both sides of the road and began making snowballs. As we drove off, they threw all the snowballs at us. I guess it was their way of saying good-bye and good luck. To me they were the best. We found our battalion and our battery in a small town. We had 500 German prisoners in a stockade. Another Corporal and I got the job of going to the farmers and asking them how many prisoners they needed to help on the farm. Each morning we took them to the farms and dropped them off with a guard and picked them up at 4:30 PM.

Now the point system came out you had to have 85 points to go home. I had 120 points so I and some others left for England. We got stuck loading low point men to go to the Pacific theater. This was in July. The war with Japan ended in August and we were still in England. Finally we were put on trucks and went to Wales where they put us on a ship that took 14 days to cross the Atlantic. We landed at Camp Dix on the 23rd of October and it took three more days before we got discharged. A group of us that lived in Upstate New York got on a train that would stop at all the towns to let off the ones that lived there. We got on this train at 2:30 AM on the 26 of October and I got to Rochester at 2:30 PM. It was a happy day because my family was waiting at the station.

The funny part of this story is that I left home on the 26th of October 1942 and got home on the 26th of October 1945.

This is my story of an old soldier.... Joseph Tedesco

CONCLUSION

The men on my half track came from different parts of the United States. We would share our last cigarette and share the last bit of food. We showed each other pictures of our loved ones that we left behind. We would write to the wives and girlfriends (and, of course, Mom and Dad) and tell them how brave we were and not to worry about us. We would comfort the ones who lost a family member back home and we would feel sorry for the one who got a Dear John letter from his girlfriend and we would comfort each other when we were getting bombed or shelled by the enemy. We were together for three years, and I never heard anyone say a bad word about one another...we were like brothers. I was happy when the war ended because now my men could go home to their loved ones but I was sad at the same time because I was thinking of all the soldiers who weren't going home.

I and millions of soldiers gave the best years of our lives so that our children, grandchildren and those to follow would live in a free world. Thousands of young soldiers gave their lives for the freedom we have today.

We were brothers... may they rest in peace and God Bless them all.

BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE BULGE

By Girard Calehuff, 87th ID, 345th IR, Co D

Metz, France, 6 Dec 1944

The 345th had its baptism of fire at Metz France when it took over from the 2nd Infantry Regiment of the 5th Division in the attack on the fortress system around Metz France. D Company was billeted in a private home near the rail station and I picked up a Metz-Saarbrücken ticket as a memento. I still have it somewhere. Fort St. Quentin surrendered on 7 Dec 44 and Fort Plappeville the following day. Credit for the action was given to the 5th Division due to the minimal involvement of the 345th in the actions. Baptism of Fire for the Regiment and Division actually occurred at Fort Jeanne D'Arc on 8 Dec 44 and the division's first casualties were sustained. The Fort surrendered to the 26 Division on 15 Dec 44 shortly after the 345th was reassigned to the Saar Valley Campaign on 12 Dec 44.

Moronville Farms, The Saar, France 15-23 Dec 1944

This was the 345th's first real experience with front-line conditions and over the next week we fought our way across the French/German border in the Saar Valley into Mendelsheim Germany. Heavy casualties were experienced for the first time. Memories of this week were usually associated with fighting the elements as much as fighting the enemy. Persistent rain and snow produced the first cases of trenchfoot. D Company managed to avoid this problem for the most part due to the efforts of the company commander, Captain John Muir. Captain Muir had established the practice that company cooks would deliver a hot meal and clean socks to each group in Company D immediately after sundown and pick up a pair of dirty socks from each soldier. The socks were washed & dried in the rear area for redistribution with the next hot meal. Captain Muir was very positive regarding the hot meal each day and we missed very few during the entire course of the war. Company cooks did not have an easy time under him.

Battle of the Bulge, 25 Dec 1944

The regiment had been pulled out of the Saar to be an active reserve against the German Offensive thru Belgium and Luxembourg now known as The Battle of the Bulge. We had left the Saar during a rain/snowstorm with temperatures in the mid teens. It was miserable. Christmas Day 1944 was especially memorable as the storm lifted, it was bright and clear, and we watched the continuous streams of aircraft being directed to attack the German forces in the breakthrough area. We cheered them on as we thoroughly enjoyed an endless pancake breakfast prepared by our cooks and bakers who had moved out ahead of us to have a memorable breakfast ready on arrival. Breakfast morphed into a full load Christmas Dinner as we recirculated thru the chow line, pausing only to wash our mess kits on occasion. We proceeded on to Rheims where we were refitted and brought up to strength in preparation for our assignment directed at reducing the Bulge in the Allied lines. We were also transferred to General Patton's Third Army for the duration of the war. On 28 Dec 1944, our first assignment was to secure the critical road junction at Pionpre, attacking thru Moiricy and Jenneville.

Moiricy, Belgium, 29-30 Dec 1944

The attack on Moiricy is clearly described on pp 68-69 of

the 345th Regimental History and I'll elaborate on it to include that part where I and others of "D" company were intimately involved. Our Mortar section was assigned to accompany and support Companies A, B and C, 345 Infantry Regiment on the attack. Following a day of fierce fighting, Moiricy was taken, the Germans had withdrawn and many of the battalion had moved into attached barns in the village to regroup, eat and rest. The mortar section had caught up with the main body of the battalion and had joined with them in the protection [from the elements] of the barns.

The Germans had launched a fierce counterattack first at Jenneville, then at Moiricy and under the weight of the action, battalion command ordered a withdrawal from Moiricy to allow artillery to open fire on the German troops in the city. Our first indication of the change in fortunes was a frantic message from one of the sentries that "A German tank is in the village square and is firing down the streets at any movement". An order to withdraw had been issued however the radio with our group had been damaged and we never received the message. We quickly were brought up to date on orders and everyone took off on their own on what might be unkindly described as a route. Some from rifle companies B and C and some of D Company never got the message and remained in the town all night.

I had gone a very short distance from the barn that I had occupied with the others when I realized that our mortar was still in the barn. No one had thought to bring it out and it would be surely needed when we regrouped. Joe Noorhoek, one of the mortar section realized the situation at the same time and we reversed course and went back to the guns. I picked up the entire three piece mortar and Joe picked up two or three mortar shell packs in addition to our own personal packs. We were weighted down.

Each piece of a three piece, 81mm mortar weighs about 45 pounds and is considered a load for one squad member. I had picked up approximately a load weighing close to 135 pounds and Joe had about the same load in ammo for the mortar. We went about two or three miles out from Moiricy and ran into Captain John Muir, D Company Commander, standing in the middle of the road. He had recognized the situation and organized a defensive position on the high ground outside the town. The enemy meanwhile decided to pull out of Moiricy during the remainder of the night.

Carrying that weight [135 pounds] never bothered me too much, however I can remember some episodes of back pain later in the war, however they never lasted too long and did not to my recollection, slow me up a lot. I never claimed any problems associated with my back at discharge.

Later following the war, I had severe back problems in my late 20's. The pains were so intense that I could only lie on the floor and would need assistance to get up. I blamed the back problem on work that I was doing for my company, The Agricultural Instrument Company. I never connected it with my wartime experiences. After my back problems were behind me I found out in during a regular medical checkup that the part of my spine in the area where the nerves were being pinched had fused together and essentially eliminated the problem. I seldom have problems today.

The 345th continued to fight hard in a number of small towns, Rondou, Bonnerue, Tillet and others in this part of Belgium, reducing the Bulge and clearing out stragglers. until (Continued)

BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE BULGE *(Continued)*

mid January when it was transferred a “front line rest area”

Echternach, Luxembourg, 15 Jan 1944

We were on the high ground on the west bank of the Sauer River and the Germans occupied the high ground on the east bank. The city of Echternach was accepted to be ‘No Mans Land’ although the German’s controlled one small corner of the city and the Americans the major part. Action consisted of firing occasional mortar shells at likely targets and patrolling each night, scouting out the territory and taking any prisoners that were careless. The Germans did the same and it was suggested that the Americans would patrol until one or two in the morning and the Germans would have the field until daybreak. Casualties and fire-fights were minimal. In a sense, the Germans were also using the sector as a frontline rest area and no one wanted to rock the boat.

I was a forward observer for our mortar squad and thoroughly bored with the lack of activity. An offer to join one of the night patrols or Tiger Patrols was accepted and it was carried off without incident or a shot being fired. A bottle of wine was liberated in the process however the rest of my friends in D Company began to question my sanity by exposing myself to unnecessary peril.

Neuenstein, Germany, 2 Mar 1944

Following our stay at Echternach, the 345th moved thru the recently taken city of St Vith to resume the attack near the town of Heuem, just East of St Vith, in early to mid Feb 1944. Hard fighting in difficult weather brought us into the vicinity of Neuenstein/Neuendorf, Germany in early March. During a very short lull in the fighting, I decided to look up Jackson, the son of one of my dad’s friends in hometown, Williamsport PA. Jackson was a medic in another company in our regiment. Dad, in a letter, had asked me to look in on Jackson from time to time as he [Jackson] was really not comfortable in the infantry and his father was concerned.

By this time I had been promoted to Instrument Corporal for D Company and this position gave me a tremendous amount of freedom as no one really knew what I was doing at any time and really didn’t care as long as all of the instruments and communications were functioning. Jackson’s company was about a mile or so away and I managed a visit. On my way back to D Company, the German’s started shelling our positions and some of the shells were creating “air bursts” as they were set off by tree branches in the thickly wooded area. It was not an attractive situation to be out in the open while all this was occurring.

Fortunately a tank was parked nearby and, for protection against the shell bursts I dove underneath. When the shelling stopped, I began to sort out the situation. It was only then that I realized that I had been wounded and could not use my left arm. While I was not aware of the complete damage to my body, this concern took second place to another and potentially more serious situation. The tank had started up and the crew was not aware that I was underneath it without the ability to extricate myself. Fortunately another soldier passing nearby heard my yelling and helped drag me out from under the tank.

A medic station was close by and I made my way to it with a stream of blood coming out of my left jacket sleeve. It appeared, on first glance, that the left side of my body had sustained serious wounds. On stripping off my jacket and shirt, it was revealed that shrapnel, probably from a mortar tree burst, had penetrated my left shoulder and left chest. However they were not severe

enough to explain the stream of blood that had excited my jacket sleeve. The source of this stream was a wound in my throat, just in front of my Adams apple. The passing shrapnel had nicked a blood vessel but did no damage to the really important items i.e., esophagus, spinal cord and the like.

I was cleaned up, temporarily bandaged and sent to the Battalion Aid Station. This I did, walking under my own power, with enough energy to stop by D Company Command Post to report that I would be out of action for a short time. At the Aid Station, after evaluation, I was strapped in an ambulance and sedated for the trip to a rear area aid station and then to a hospital unit where the shrapnel was removed from my shoulder. Those pieces in my left chest remain even today and show up on X-ray photos where I usually have to offer an explanation. Occasionally I think they trigger the metal detectors at the airport but this is rare.

Recuperation took place in a hospital back in Bar-le-Duc France. After four weeks I was sent back to my unit, D-345 which was unusual for the time as wounded were usually attached to units with the greatest need. Returning to ones old unit was fortunate as you knew the group and was not an outsider. The war was winding down and this probably had some leverage.

During my absence, the 345 had made the dash to the Rhine, crossing the Moselle in the process. Finally I caught up with my unit, which had raced across Germany following the Rhine crossing which had occurred at Boppard near Koblenz. In mid April I joined them near Crawinkel in time for the dash to Plauen and Falkenstein near the Czech border with Germany which was our station at the end of the war.

We settled in to garrison life again, marching and drilling to impress the locals with our discipline and parade ground abilities. It was more like a troop of Sad Sacks than seasoned soldiers. Our lines were crooked and we had problems keeping in step. The final denouement came when our CO decided to carry out an “Inspection Arms”. Our last effort at this was in England some eight months earlier. Our weapons had changed, we had to be instructed on the new arms and when the inspecting officer almost had his head/hand shot off when a soldier messed up the sequence and chambered a round prior to pulling the trigger, we had to be reinstructed. If this skill demonstration had only happened once, it would be understandable. Re-occurring three times in one inspection was too much. The maneuver was terminated and we were left to impress the citizens with our youth and handsome appearance instead of our military bearing.

Early July found us shipping back to the United States to Fort Benning for a 30 day leave and retraining for the invasion of Japan. The two A-bombs made this moot and we were discharged when our discharge points allowed this action.

WORLD WAR II STORY

by Kenneth Mar, 2nd ID, 23rd IR, Co C

I was drafted during my second year of high school at the age of 18 year old. My military experience began at Camp Roberts near San Luis Obispo, California for seventeen weeks of infantry training in 1944, just in time for the Normandy Invasion. After two weeks of preparation and training in Southern England near Bath, I landed in Omaha Beach fourteen days after D-day and was put on a train to Brittany, France. This is where I joined the Second Infantry Division as a replacement *(Continued)*

WORLD WAR II STORY *(Continued)*

combat soldier. I experienced my first combat duty for the liberation of Brest, France. As soon as we finished clearing out the remaining enemy troops in Brittany and after the liberation of Paris, the Second Infantry Division was redeployed to the Siegfried line at the border of Belgium and Germany to await orders to invade Germany. I was taken ill and ended up in the hospital before a German counter-attack for the Battle of the Bulge. No sooner had I recuperated from approximately four days in a hospital in Belgium, I was hastily ordered back to my company to stem the tide of the German attack at the border. After two days of trudging through the snow in freezing temperatures we finally reached our objective with tank support by flushing the Germans out of the forest. I was dead tired and fell asleep in the captured German bunker oblivious of the enemy counter-attack in the morning. I was awakened by my buddy to join the other four soldiers to hold off a company the size of 100-200 attacking Germans. At that time, I realized we were out-numbered and deserted by our company with no alternative but to surrender as POWs (prisoners of war). I and three other fellow soldiers remained in the custody of the Germans as a POWs for two months, until the end of the war, May of 1945. Our liberation occurred when our captors deserted us to roam free in the local town where we scavenged for food in empty homes.

COAL MINER'S SON IN THE BULGE

by **Tammy Cheek, Staff Writer**
News Herald, Lenoir City, TN

Growing up active in the outdoors of rural west Pennsylvania helped Don Burgett when he fought during World War II, but he recalled, "I don't think anything can prepare you for what was going to happen." What would happen is Burgett would be fighting at the Battle of the Bulge, or the Ardennes Offensive of December 1944 through January 1945. Burgett, 83, a Tellico Village resident for 17 years now, grew up in the coal mining areas of Pennsylvania, his family following the coal mines town to town. His father was a coal miner, his grandfather was a coal miner, and his uncles were coal miners.

In 1943, he was 17 when his father told the youth he got Burgett a job in the mines. "My dad called me after I'd graduated from high school and called me to come to the house and talk to my new boss," he recalled. "I didn't quite understand what he was talking about because I had been delivering papers and didn't have a job as such. And it turns out, there was a straw boss in the mine, and my dad had talked to him and told him I was old enough to go into the mine and he had a job for me," Burgett said. "I told dad that I couldn't because I had enlisted in the Army." Burgett admitted his enlistment was a lie. His father told him he couldn't because Burgett was not old enough, but Burgett countered by telling his father he forged his father's signature. "And he said, 'You know you can go to jail for something like that,' and I said, 'Well, not if I'm in the army.' He said, Well, you have a point.' So that was the end of that discussion."

The next day Burgett enlisted, lying about his age, in the

U.S. Army. He would turn 18 three months later. Burgett entered the Army at a time when patriotism ran high. The attack on Pearl Harbor occurred only two years before. "I was gung-ho," he recalled. "I just felt we ought to kick the Japs." Ironically, though, he would be sent to Europe to fight against Germany. His ancestors came from Germany to America and fought in the American Revolution. "They couldn't speak English," he related with a laugh.

Burgett trained in Indiantown Gap, Penn., and Fort Meade, Md., as an infantryman. "As an infantry, you're really not trained for anything except firing a weapon," Burgett said. While he admitted the training was tough, it was also familiar to him. "I was brought up with weapons," he explained. "I had camped and trapped and hunted as a youngster. I ran a trap line before I went to school in the morning.

"I felt very comfortable," he added. "I was a good shot, and it just came natural to me." Burgett would take that training with him to the forested Ardennes Mountains region of Belgium on the Western front, where the Battle of the Bulge was being fought.

The battle was a major German offensive launched through the Ardennes Mountains region of Belgium and more specifically of Wallonia; France; and Luxembourg. The "bulge" was the initial incursion Germans put into Allies' line of advance. While the offense took the Allies by surprise, the Allies prevailed. Gen. George S. Patton's Third Army in the south, centered around Bastogne, attacked north and British Gen. Bernard Montgomery's forces in the north struck south, and the two forces met at Houffalize.

Burgett was 18 when he was shipped to Belgium that January, just before the battle was over. He went there as a replacement rifleman. "I went in right after the bulge had started," he said. "The Bulge started in the middle of December, and I didn't get there, thank goodness, until January." He said he remembered being cold and scared ... "something that I would not want any of our kids to be involved in, but it was something that you took care of your friends and your friends took care of you."

He observed war is not like TV, when one sees the whole war. He said he remembered he couldn't see the enemy or battleground. He could only see his buddy standing next to him and feel the cold and snow.

For Burgett returning to civilian life was not difficult. "I think back about the way we were treated as veterans and the way many of the ex-GIs have been treated," from other conflicts like Vietnam, he observed. "They fought just as hard as we did, had just as much in the way of hardships, etc., and yet we received, if you will, a hero's welcome."

Burgett served between 1944 and 1950 in the U.S. Army with Fox Company, 110th Battalion, 28th Infantry Division; the 689th Anti-Aircraft Artillery; 708th Anti-Aircraft Artillery; 1st MSL Battalion; 176th Artillery; and Co. B, 167th Quartermaster Battalion. After serving in Europe, he would also serve in Korea and become a lieutenant. He would serve 14 more years in the Army Reserves and become recalled, serving with an anti-aircraft outfit. After the war, as a veteran, Burgett received an opportunity to go to school with the GI bill. "I went to pharmacy school and worked as a pharmacist after I got out," he related. He then got a job *(Continued)*

COAL MINER'S SON IN THE BULGE (Continued)

with the pharmaceutical company, Parke-Davis.

"I had a very good 30-year career," he said. While overseas Burgett met a man who was in the 109th infantry while he was in the 110th. "That's the 28th Infantry Division," he said. "I ran into him in Pittsburgh. He was the chief resident of surgery at West Penn Hospital, and I was a hospital man for Parke-Davis. We wound up reminiscing about old times and became very good friends, and he introduced me to a gal who was chief X-ray technician. Her name was Joan Theresa Jochum." She happened to be the woman he would be married to for 48 years.

"If it hadn't been for the association with Andy I don't think I would have ever met Joan," he said. Joan was well-known in the Tellico Village community for her involvement in boating and the Pontoon Picnics. She passed away five years ago. The couple have three children— Bill Burgett, 52, who is serving in the U.S. Navy; Lee Ann Burgett, a teacher at Fort Loudoun Middle School; and Rick Burgett, 45, an engineer in Chicago-land. The Burgettes also have two grandchildren.

Even now, Burgett continues to serve his community. He is active with the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 1733 in Knoxville, sergeant-at-arms with American Legion Post 256 for Tellico Village and Rarity Bay. He is also a life member with VFW and the American Legion. He also serves as sergeant-at-arms with Loudon County Honor Guard, which consists of different posts of the American Legion and VFW. Besides his veteran service affiliations, Burgett is an active member of Saint Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church, and he founded the Tellico Boaters Assistance Response Team (T-BART), which assists stranded boaters on Tellico Lake.

MY WWII FLAG

By Jesse Bowman, 87th ID, 345th IR

I was drafted into the U.S. army on March of 1944. My basic training was done at Camp Walters Texas for 16 weeks and from there I went to Ft Mead, Maryland. I went there to be part of the replacement for another division that was shipped to Europe. Instead I went to Ft. Jackson, S.C. to join the 87th infantry and I had several weeks of additional training. The entire 87th division went to New York and we were deployed to Europe on October, 1944. I was trained as a gunner operator of an 80mm mortar with company D, 345th infantry of the 87th division. I fought in me battle of Morcy and then on to the Ardennes Forest and the Black Forest. I also fought in the Battle of the Bulge, St. Vith and then we crossed the Moselle River into Koblentz on the Rhine River and finished up our fighting in Plauen in Northern Germany, which is near the Chech border. The war ended and I was able to find a German, Nazi flag, which I brought back to the states from the city of Plauen.

While I was in Ft Bragg, I went to a military supply house and I bought a box of shoulder patches that represented most all of the attending military groups that fought in WW II. This included the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Marines and the Coast Guard. To me this flag represented the men and women that fought and won WWII. I did not win the war, you



did not win the war. We all won this war together. The flag hung in my basement for 50 years as a reminder of the lives that were given for freedom of all that was involved in the winning of WWII.

The local drug store owner in the town in which I have lived for 70 years has a museum, which represents many businesses that were located in Granite Falls, North Carolina, from years ago. He was told that I had missed Nazi flag in my basement and he wanted to see the flag. He asked if he could have it so he could place it into the museum and I of course said yes. He and his wife took it to a local company that cleaned, framed and sealed the flag for future generations to see and it remains in that museum which has a huge selection of antique, vending machines. I have a booth in the museum, which shows my barbershop as it was in the 60's and the Nazi flag hangs on that wall today.

For you WWII veterans, see if you can find your shoulder patch in the picture of the flag.

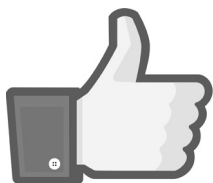
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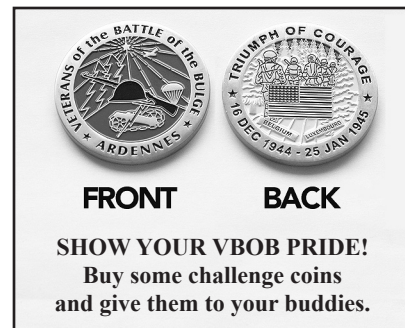
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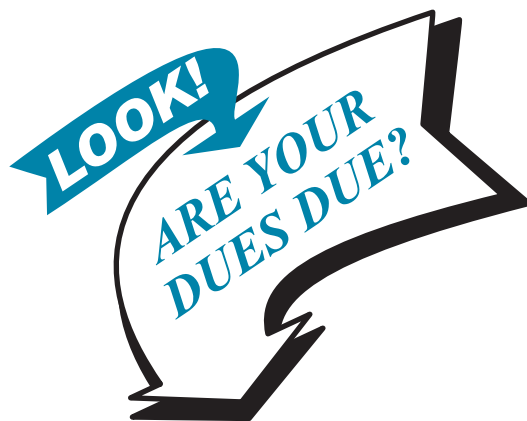
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