



# THUNDERBOLT

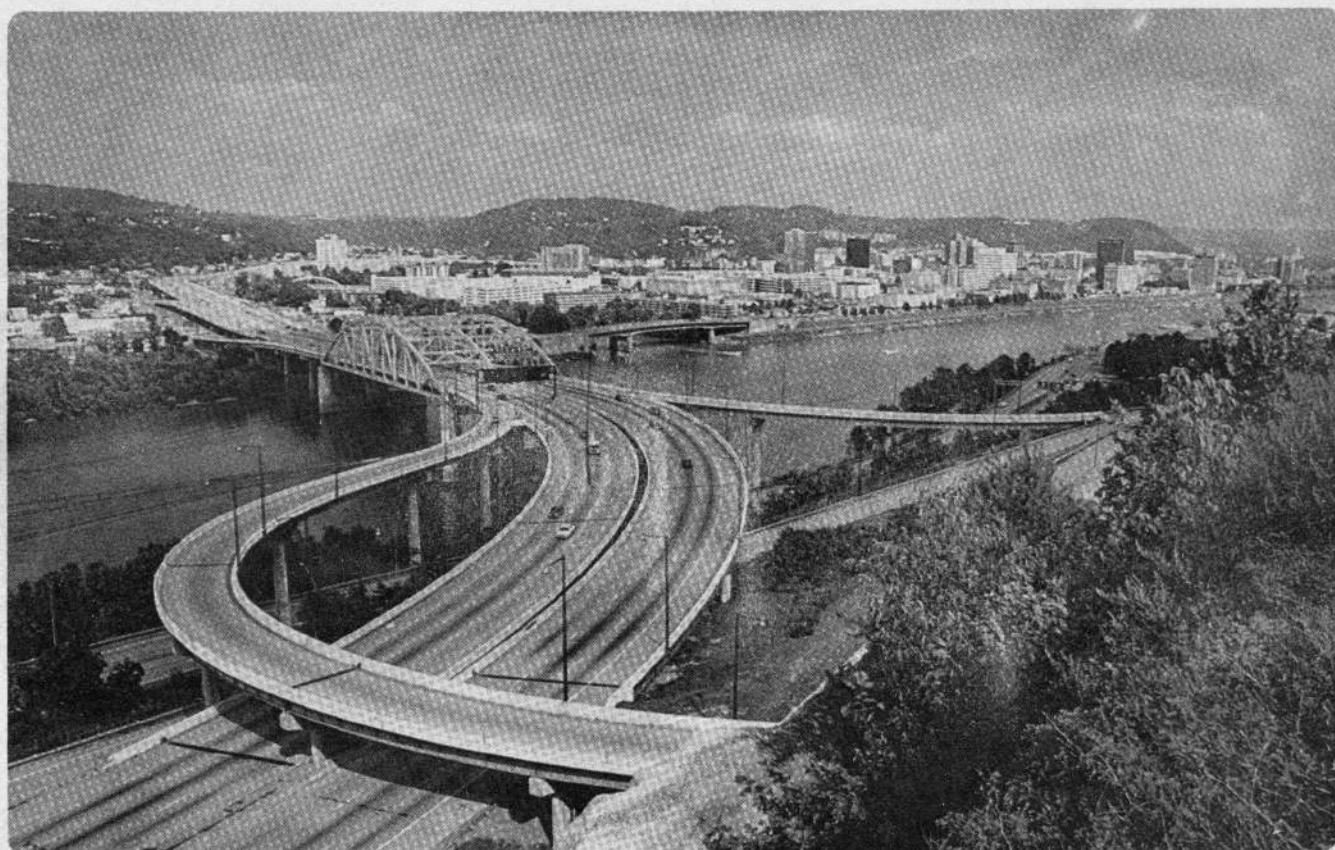
83rd INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION, Inc.

WORLD WAR II

Vol. 42 No. 3

Spring Issue 1987

## THE 41<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL REUNION



*Charleston, West Virginia*

August 20, 21, 22, 1987

**THE THUNDERBOLT**  
**Official Publication**  
**83rd Infantry Division Association Inc.**

The THUNDERBOLT is written by and for past members of the 83rd Infantry Division World War II and is published at 3749 Stahlheber Road, Hamilton, Ohio 45013

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**A SALUTE TO PAST PRESIDENTS WHO HAVE SERVED US WELL**

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Charles Abdinoor . . . . . 1959	*Harold H. Dopp . . . . . 1972	Carroll Brown . . . . . 1985
*Joseph F. Minotti . . . . . 1960	Louis J. Volpi . . . . . 1973	

\*Denotes Deceased

# Neppel, hero in WWII and ever since, dies at 63

Ralph Neppel died Tuesday (Jan. 27). He was a hero.

You wouldn't have gotten away with such talk while Neppel was alive. He might have belted you with the two pairs of artificial legs he kept in his car - one made him short, the other tall. Or he might have reminded you of the words he spoke in 1945 after winning the Medal of Honor: "The heroes don't live."

More than likely, he would have won your affection. "He literally had hundreds and thousands of friends," said one of them, Bill Potter of Iowa City. "He would have rather been known as being a real good person than being a hero."

To those friends, the Ralph Neppel who died Tuesday night of cancer was a 63-year-old man who, as his youngest sister once said, brightened every room he walked in, and who spent much of his life helping veterans and handicapped persons.

To the Iowans who did not know him, but who are old enough to remember World War II, Neppel will forever be the dimple-faced farm boy from Glidden whose bravery cost him both legs and earned him the country's highest honor.

It happened on Dec. 14, 1944 in Birgel, Germany. The 21-year-old Neppel, an Army sergeant, was a machine gun detachment leader. His squad was sent to defend two main streets in the village from a German counterattack. He sat by the corner of a building and waited as a Nazi tank and 20 infantrymen approached within 100 feet.

Neppel killed several Nazis, witnesses reported later. But tank fired a shell at point-blank range. Neppel's right leg was severed below the knee; other fragments shredded his left leg so severely it had to be amputated later. He was knocked 10 yards from his gun.

Inching forward on his elbows, Neppel crawled to his gun and killed the remaining Nazis. The tank turned tail and left. He was evacuated eight hours later, only after he insisted a wounded sergeant be taken first. President Harry Truman presented Neppel with the Medal of Honor in 1945.

Back in his home state, Neppel said the attention "makes me feel sort of funny. I really didn't do much. It was just a question of fighting on and doing what a fellow could or get killed. I don't know why people are being so wonderful to me..."

"I'm just a small-town boy. I've never known anything but simple things, and that's sort of the way I'd like to have it."

Charles "Buck" Walden of Iowa City said Wednesday he first met Neppel while both were recuperating in a hospital in England. He said everyone in the hospital - doctors, nurses, the wounded soldiers - were amazed by Neppel's cheerfulness.

"Although he laid next to me, and I knew he was in great pain, I never heard him complain," Walden said. "Not once, and he was always cheering up everybody else in the hospital, including me."

Practical jokes were a Neppel staple. One time,



*Ralph and Jean Neppel*

Walden said, Neppel rolled up magazines in his pajama legs and boots and told the nurses his legs were growing back. "He would complain about his toes itching, just to get laughs," Walden said.

The stunts continued in later years. One of Neppel's four children, Brian, 30, said his father had specially-made artificial limbs built. Then, at a party, he would start the night at his normal height, 5 feet 9 inches. As the evening progressed, he changed legs and walked in at 5 foot 3, "his knuckles dragging on the ground," Brian said. A while later, he returned standing 6 foot 3.

"Maybe every son says this, but I don't think you could have had a better dad," Brian Neppel said Wednesday.

Neppel moved his family from Carroll to Iowa City in 1964. He worked 19 years as a Veterans Administration representative, helping veterans and their families with government red tape.

"He'd go up to somebody who was depressed and despondent," Walden said. "Maybe they had a leg missing. He'd go up, pull up both of his pants legs and say, 'What's this I hear you got a problem, fella?'"

Friends said Neppel never mentioned his handicap, and strangers could not tell he had one.

"The only thing he flaunted was that he was handicapped and, by God, he was as good as you were," Walden said. "His favorite slogan was, 'Everybody's handicapped in some way. In some of us it just shows more.'"

Mr. Neppel was born Oct. 31, 1923, in Willey, son of Maximilian and Rose Werner Neppel. He married Jean A. Moore Dec. 27, 1945, in Carroll. He graduated from Buena Vista College in 1952 and did graduate work at Drake University.

He was also a part-time real estate agent for many years. He was owner and president of Johnson County Propane, Inc. from 1979 until his death.

Iowa City celebrated Ralph Neppel Day July 1, 1983.

Neppel served from 1970 to 1978 on the Governor's Committee for Employment of the Handicapped. He represented Iowa last year at a D-Day ceremony in Caen, France.

Mr. Neppel served on the Governor's Committee for the Employment of the Handicapped. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Veterans of Foreign Wars #3949,

Merle Hay American Legion in Glidden, AMVETS, the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, Disabled American Veterans and Legion of Valor.

He is survived by his wife, Jean of Iowa City; two sons, Max J. of Germersheim, Germany and Brian R. of Iowa City; two daughters, Vernona (Mrs. David) Ferguson of Conway, Ark. and Gail J. (Mrs. Michael) O'Donnell of Iowa City; two brothers, Arby and Matthew, both of Carroll; three sisters, Isabelle Feld, Agnes Stoolman and Arlene Dalhoff, all of Carroll; and three grandsons. His parents and one brother died earlier.

Graveside services were at Holy Family Cemetery in Lidderdale. An honor guard from the Iowa National Guard was present. They honored Ralph Neppel the war hero. His friends and family honored a different hero.

"He really didn't like being put up on a pedestal," Brian Neppel said. "He wanted to just be like the guy next door." A memorial fund has been started.

**Ralph Neppel Honored by Lincoln Day Dinner  
Sponsored by Legislator Paul I. Clymer**

The 2nd annual Lincoln Day dinner was held Saturday, February 21, 1987 at Meyers Restaurant, Richland Township, mixing large portions of patriotism with fund-raising for State Representative Paul I. Clymer, 145th District.

State Representative Samuel E. Hayes, Jr., Blair County, who is the Minority Whip in Harrisburg, was the featured speaker. He expounded on the sacrifice of America's forefathers, the opportunity of Americans and the country's legacy of excellence.

As part of a special musical program, tribute was paid to Ralph G. Neppel, a Congressional Medal of Honor recipient for his heroism as a member of the 83rd Infantry Division in World War II.

Neppel, who Clymer said exemplified patriotism and the American way of life, died last week.

A special musical tribute was paid to him and others who have served the United States.

Neppel had served with Norman Schuster, Commander of the Hartzell-Crouthamel Post 280, Perkasio, along with other members of the 83rd Infantry Division who attended the dinner, with their wives were Lou Volpi, Al Belvedere, George Pletcher and Lester Hauck, all from the Philadelphia Chapter of the 83rd.

Clymer said of the event, "It's done to make all of us feel good about America. It's just nice to step back and look at the freedom we have in our country."

**Neppel, World War II hero, dies**

**By Debbi Hegarty  
The Press-Citizen**

Almost everyone who met Ralph Neppel will feel a loss from his death Tuesday because almost everyone who met him liked him, friends and family said.

"He had a hundred thousand friends," son Brian Neppel said.

Neppel, an Iowa City resident since 1964, was well-known for the heroic actions in World War II that earned him the Congressional Medal of Honor, but he was well-liked for his warmth, generosity and sense of humor.

"A wonderful gentleman," Neppel's friend William Doherty said.

"He would walk that extra mile for people in order to assist them."

Neppel worked for 19 years as a Veterans Administration contact representative, informing veterans of their benefits and rights.

He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroic actions as the leader of a machine gun squad Dec. 14, 1944, at the Battle of the Bulge. Neppel and members of the 83rd Army Infantry were defending the village of Birgel, Ger-

many, against a German tank and 20 German infantry men.

An exploding shell from the oncoming tank injured everyone in the squad and blew Neppel 10 feet from the machine gun. One of his legs was severed below the knee and the other injured so severely it had to be amputated.

He used his elbows to drag himself back to the machine gun and killed the remaining German infantry men. The tank retreated.

Neppel treated the event with humility, as he treated most of his accomplishments, Doherty said.

"He said he felt he was cornered. He said even a rat would fight when he was cornered."

Neppel, born on Halloween 1923, loved practical jokes and costumes.

"He was forever putting on masks and wigs. Every day was Halloween for him," Brian Neppel said.

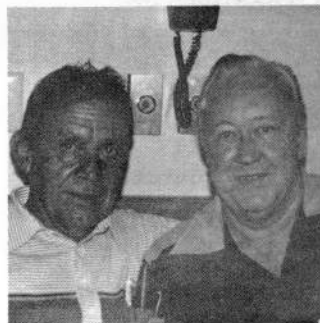
He loved children and would often put his three grandchildren atop the tractor he used in his two-acre garden or hook up a sled to give them rides in the winter, daughter Vernona Ferguson said.

"He was a kid at heart. He was always out in the fun."

An avid gardener, Neppel often grew far more than his family could eat.

"He kept quite a few people supplied with tomatoes and squash," Bea Fitzpatrick, a neighbor for 22 years, said.

"He was a wonderful friend and a wonderful neighbor.... We really feel like we've almost lost someone in the family."





## The President's Corner

### Dear Buddies:

Things are beginning to fall into place for the 41st reunion. We hope each of you have made your reservation. The hotels are beginning to fill up. Those of you staying at the Elk River Town Center Inn, it would be advisable for you to check in before coming to the Marriott to register, etc. There will be buses running between the hotels for your convenience. (Although it is only three blocks). For early arrivals there will be Tri-State Dog Racing on Wednesday evening. Our tentative registration fee will be \$75 per person.

We are also having a professional photographer for group or individual pictures.

See you in Charleston, West Virginia. "Almost Heaven '87".

**John Hobbs, President**  
908th F.A. "B" BTRY

## Chairman's Message

Ralph Neppel, the only man in the 83rd Infantry Division during World War II to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor passed away January 27, 1987. The 83rd Division Association lost our number one member.

It was a privilege to know Ralph. Soft-spoken, shy, insisting that he be treated as just another member, these are the characteristics of a truly great man. He enjoyed being with the men who shared the experiences of his outfit. His outfit was the 83rd Infantry.

As most of you know, Ralph lost both legs in the heroic deed for which he was honored. Yet with much pain and discomfort, it did not keep him from being an active member of our association and honoring us by his presence at most of our reunions. His presence added to the excitement we all felt when he arrived. We will miss him.

To Ralph, his wife Jean and their family we extend our prayers and may the Good Lord look after you and take care of you.

**Stan Bielen**



## Greetings from the Secretary-Treasurer's Office

Here it is time for another article. We are certainly busy here in the office. Getting everything ready to go to the printer's besides keeping up with the dues as they come in. Lot of new ones coming in. A great deal of you members have not yet sent in your dues. **Please do so immediately.**

Next week we will start sending out reminder cards. Seems foolish to have to do this when we remind you in every issue of the **Thunderbolt** to look at your membership card and check the expiration date. If it does not say 1987 you are delinquent. But after we send the cards out quite a few of you will send your dues in to us and say "thanks" for reminding you. So that is what we will do. That does cost extra time and money but if that is what it takes to get you to send them in then that is what we will do. We want and need everyone of you to stay with us. We are losing quite a few by death which is very sad. The sympathy of the entire 83rd goes out to the families of these men. Our thanks to all of you men who report these deaths to us. Our thanks to all of you who send in individual letters of anything that will be of interest to the men out there in 83rd land. Especially do we thank all of our reporters. They help us make the book. If we cannot make out what some of you write, please let us know. We will correct it in the next issue. Sometimes we can't make out what you are saying and we write what it seems like it should be. So just correct us. We do not intentionally type it wrong.

This is a big book this time but we put in all that comes here to the office. It is your book, as I have always said since I took over. What you send in, as long as it does not hurt someone else we will print. We will not put in the book someone's opinion of some one else. That is not the background of the 83rd. We had enough fighting forty (40) some years ago. We will not put anything in that is not for the good of our organization. As I have told you, Pearl and I both love this job and will do everything in our power to keep the 83rd as it should be. Good feelings among us all.

We have certainly received a great deal of good comments from quite a few of you about the last issue and how much you enjoyed it. We will say to all of you who asked that we do not have a new printer. We are still with **The Oxford Press**. We are so proud to be connected with this company. They are great! They work very hard and we want to thank them. They have new machines. Takes less time to print the book. We are glad that you all enjoyed the book. Thanks, all of you who took the time to write. I am sure our printer at **The Oxford Press** will be glad to hear your good comments.

Along with the dues and this book we are also working on the reunion. There is a tentative program in this issue. Also a tentative cost of \$75.00 per person as registration fee plus your hotel fees and dues. We will be working more with John Hobbs at the executive board meeting in May.

We will be going to Pennsylvania on May 14, 15, 16 and 17, to work with both the West Virginia Chapter and the Philadelphia Chapter on the reunion for next year. This is a new procedure and one we will explain to you in the next issue. Pearl and I will be celebrating our 45th wedding anniversary on the 15th of May while we are in Pennsylvania. Stan and I have promised we will try and close the meeting early enough for me to take her out to dinner that night. Generous of us, don't you think? Ames and Helen Miller are coming over to go with us. We will go as far as Pittsburgh on Tuesday to meet with Larry and Sue Leonardi and we will then all travel together to do some touring and sight seeing along the way. Will let you know in the next issue what we see that we think will be of interest to you next year as you to the reunion in *Hershey*.

There are quite a few places to see in West Virginia. It is a beautiful place so plan on enjoying yourself. You will see by the program that you will have plenty of time to do what you want to do. We have had comments from some of you that you would like time on your own, so the West Virginia Chapter has done just this. We will see how it works. When you go home after the reunion please let us know. We are sure that whichever hotel you are in you will be well pleased. Each hotel is bending over backwards to help you do this.

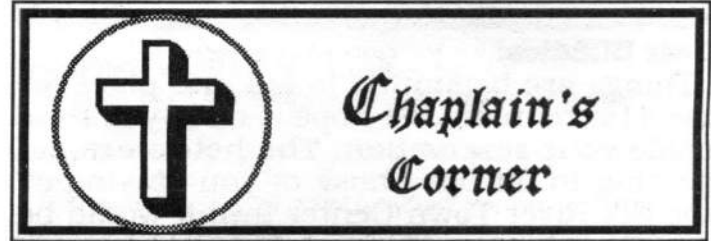
Pearl and I with Ames and Helen Miller were there on the 14th and 15th of February to meet with the West Virginia Chapter and we think it will be a very good reunion. We stayed at the Elk River Town Center Inn and they could not have been nicer to us. Reservations are coming in very well. All I can say is to get your reservations in. We will be waiting to greet you in the lobby of the Marriott Hotel at the registrations table. Your Executive Board will also be there to help you with any problems. Look us up. We will have name tags on to assist you. **Come and enjoy yourselves.**

The History Book of the 83rd Infantry Division including "**Thunderbolt Across Europe**" is out. If you did not order one and would like to purchase one we have them here in the office. The price of the book plus postage and handling is \$38.00. It is a beautiful book and one you can be proud to own.

**I have left the saddest part of this letter until last.** This volume is dedicated to one of the bravest and finest men it has been my privilege in my lifetime to have known. I am sure you all knew our CMH soldier, Ralph Neppel. He was a man that we could all be proud to say was our friend. When I got the word from Jean Neppel that Ralph had passed away I could not believe that Ralph was gone. When we last saw him in Knoxville last year how happy he was. One of our memories is of he and Jean together on the banquet night as they were introduced. They were both smiling and so happy. We have all lost a very brave man who never mentioned his disability. Had you not known of that disability you certainly wouldn't from any word out of Ralph. He was a true soldier from the beginning of the way until he passed away in January. I can remember the word coming back to us from the front line that a soldier had been wounded and both legs blown off and was still giving the enemy **The Works** propped up in his

position. **Truly, truly**, a great man! We will all grieve for this dear person. Thank you, Ralph, for all your years of kindness. May you truly rest in peace. Our sympathy from all 83rders goes out to Jean and her family. Jean, this book is dedicated to your wonderful husband and father of your children.

**Bob Derickson**



It's a quiet evening after a hectic day in which Laura and I brought my mother home from a month's stay in the hospital. I feel that writing these words to all of you will be the best therapy to release some of these body tensions.

Received some notices about some of our buddies that have passed away---Edward Thomas Co. "B" 329th---Allen Bretzius Co. "H" 330th---Anthony A. Mamone---"C" Btry 908 F.A.---Ralph Neppel Co. "M" 329th, our C.M.H. buddy---Ted Szymanski "A.T." 329th. Bob D. and John P. will combine any names they have received and they should be listed in this issue.

Just mentioning Ted's name brings a couple of tears to my eyes. Fourteen years ago Ted gave me a precious "gift of life" by donating blood for my open heart surgery. As we of the Cleveland Chapter paid our last respects and Ken Vencl played "taps", I wished I could have returned some of that precious gift and bought him more time on this earth. However, it is not our decision as to who will stay and who will leave.

I know it seems early to be thinking of Memorial Day (May 25), but in the past few years the participation of all us citizens in the parades, Church services, cemetery visits, or putting our country's flag in full view in remembrance of our deceased veterans has been diminishing. I am speaking of every man or woman who gave up their lives so that we can enjoy the freedom we have now. Ernie Pyle, war correspondent, who is buried in Hawaii said "I guess it doesn't make any difference once a man is gone. Medals and speeches and victories are nothing anymore. They died and the others lived, and no one knows why it is so. When we leave here for the next shore, there is nothing we can do for the ones underneath the wooden crosses here, except perhaps to pause and murmur, "Thanks, pal."

President Eisenhower prayed that peoples of all faiths, all races, all nations, may have their great human needs satisfied; that those now denied opportunity shall come to enjoy it to the full; that all who yearn for freedom may experience its spiritual blessings; that those who have freedom will understand also its heavy responsibilities; that all who are insensitive to the needs of others will learn charity; that the scourges of poverty, disease and ignorance will be made to disappear from the earth, and that, in the goodness of time, all peoples will come to live together in a peace guaranteed by the binding force of mutual respect and love.

In the week ahead let us make a '**commitment**' to reach out and touch someone. Let us make a special effort to lend a hand to people in need -- by visiting

the sick, calling someone who is alone, turning an understanding ear to someone who is troubled, or giving of ourselves in any other way that might help comfort the suffering.

**REMEMBER** -- Compassion is what makes a person feel pain when somebody else hurts

**Casey Kowalec**  
"C" Btry. 322 F.A.

## Death Notices

Jair S. Kaplan served with the Army in Europe in World War II, earning the Bronze Star Medal. We would be grateful if you would include notice of my dear father's passing in the next issue of your good spirited publication, **The Thunderbolt** which he was a devoted reader of.

We are including a picture taken in Luxembourg dated July 1945, while he was, we assume, still with Hq. 330th with which we understand he served as a German P.O.W. interpreter, as well as an M.P. We hope that the picture along with the other material can be included.

Perhaps you could also be kind enough to ask any of your readers who were his buddies if they have any memories of experiences they had with him we would be most grateful to hear from them. My father at that time was called 'Jerry' by his friends.

I also enclose a contribution to the Association in his memory to help maintain your efforts to keep veterans in touch through the years and across the miles.

With many thanks and best wishes I am,  
Oren Kaplan, 10111 Brunett Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20901

Dear Bob:

I believe I sent you the notice that Leavitt F. Frey, "M" 331st, 83rd Infantry Division, died October 25, 1986. My wife, Helen and I attended the funeral. I promised his wife I would notify you and you would mention it in the next **Thunderbolt**.

His wives' name is Zoe and he has a son Roger, a retired Colonel.

It took me a long time to get him to join the outfit, but he finally did. As reunion time would draw near his heart would always act up and he never made a reunion. He was our supply Sgt. and Sgt. McCarthy knew him well. Thanks, Bob, and take care.

Austin McCann

Dear Mr. Derickson:

This letter is to let you know of the death of my husband, William E. Griffith, who passed away November 28, 1986. I have been ill for about two months or I would have written you sooner.

Bill always enjoyed the **Thunderbolt** magazine and would have liked to have attended the reunion at Charleston, West Virginia this coming year, as that is our home state.

He had been ill for the past two years with a heart

attack and two operations. Then he developed cancer of the lungs. We were married forty-nine (49) years and I miss him terribly, but thank God he was a good Christian man, so he has just gone home to be with the Lord. He loved to talk about his army buddies at Camp Atterbury, Indiana and at Camp Forrest, Tennessee. So many have gone on before him. I sincerely hope you have a great reunion in August and that many of the 83rd Division will attend.

God Bless you,

Mrs. William E. (Norlene) Griffith

Romolo A. F. Manna, Lynn, MA, passed away in February, 1987, after a lengthy illness. He was a World War II veteran, having served as a corporal in the antitank company of the 329th Regiment in Europe, Africa and the Middle East. He received the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star.

From Nick Francullo

Thomas Pollard-from wife, Carmella-83rd M.P.-no date given

James E. Gearheart-from Floyd Richmond-"H" 331st-2/25/87

Allen Bretzius-from Casey Kowalec-"H" 330th-no date given

Anthony A. Mamone-from Kowalec & Rood-908th F.A.-no date given

Ted Szymanski-from Casey Kowalec-A.T. 325-no date given

William E. Griffith-from wife Narlene-"E" 331st-11/28/86

C" Btry. 322 F.A. Albert Coelho-from Pat DiGiammerino-324th-no date of death

Willard Plant-from Pat DeGiammerino-no division, no date

Jair S. Kaplan-word from family-"HQ" 330th - 12/25/86

Levitt F. Frey-from Austin McCann-"M" 331st - 10/25/86

Frank DeStefani-from Thomas Rybarczyk-Serv.908th-11/29/86

Henry S. Brzeski-from Frank M. Fauver-"HQ" 329th-10/2/86

Romolo A.F.Manna-from Nick Francullo-"A" T.329th-1/17/87

Domnic Normand-from Frank Ball-308th Engr.-12/86

Clyde Martin-from step-daughter-453rd A.A.A.-1/21/87

Miles J. Brtna-from brother Frank-"CN" 330th-2/7/87

Eunice Marek-wife of John Marek-1/7/87

Robert Heidel-from John Marek-"B" 308th Engr.-no date

Ed Thomas-from wife Kitty-"B" 329th-1/31/87

Joseph D. Roy-from John Houston-"A" 330th-12/13/86

Major John F.Eagan-from John Tisdell-"L" 329th-8/86

Merle N. Schonner-from wife Helen-"F" 330th 12/10/86

Leroy W. Wilkinson-from wife-Medics-329th-11/15/86

Joseph P. Healy-from sister-"A"331st-1/17/87

William E. Griffith-from wife Narlene-"E" 331st-11/28/86

Mario DeFelice-from Wilson Day-Div.Hqs-1/22/87

*These are the death notices that have come here to the office. The sympathy of the entire 83rd Association goes out to the families of all these listed.*

## News from the 783rd

You have all seen the T.V. advertisements of the fellow lying, in his sales pitch, well, after talking to some of you fellows it has become necessary for me to take a pre-med course to pass on all the medical reports.

First on the list is Art. Art had three by-passes done at Christmas and while the operation was a success he unfortunately had a stroke. It affected his voice and right hand. I am pleased to tell you I spoke to "Olde" Dog last Sunday and he sounded like his old spit and polish self.

My second call was more news of the same. Aubrey Wilcox went in for a hernia operation. On the pre-op x-rays, they found a spot on the lung and the hernia was pushed into the background. Again I'm pleased to write that Aubrey had a successful removal of a cancerous lung lobe. He, too, sounds like his spiffy old self, he just doesn't feel like it yet.

My third, and I hope my last call for awhile, was long lost Ernie Jim Christian. He had been doing real well in his retirement until late Spring. Ernie started to run out of gas with a daily, low-grade fever. To make a long story a little shorter, Ernie has a rare heart disease called Amoloidosis. It's a viral infection, which leaves a waxy substance in your arteries. Again for the third time I'm happy to write that Ernie hasn't broken step with the important principles of life. In fact he has taken this in stride and Ernie is "sprinting" along.

Now the best news to come out of all three of these medical reports is the fact that all three of these strong characters are all going to try to make it to the reunion! Millie got Art's Christmas cards out but Aubrey and Ernie want to extend an apology for not getting all their cards out. You're excused!

Now for the Christmas card reports: Gene and Ginny DelPrete still go to so many dances that Gene has a voluminous file on all the bands in the area and he gets dozens of calls asking his advice. Just like Atterbury, Phil Reese always wanted to look at his "girl" file....Joe and Patty Stubber will see us in West Virginia...and likewise, Candy who is maintaining his health...Hersh and Midge Weaver are smartly spending February and March with daughter in Arizona...Gert Blasko reports that Steve's arm is much better, in fact he was to try golf shortly. I heard it rumored that Steve was suffering from "Post Atterbury Chug A Lug Syndrome"...Doc and Agnes are fine-getting ready to see grandchild and Lloyd Grayson. Que and Inez also fine and also reunion bound...Bert, the boss, and Al Unfried are chipper again except for the sawdust up Al's nose...Joe Brown, one of our last known "virgins" is looking forward to seeing us at the reunion...Mettie Harris also reported in for George, who must have been chopping his wood...I was wrong about Bill Manning. He did not fall in a molar but rather fell down his front bank just before the reunion. He sustained a bad break in the ankle and "spent all that fun time

in the hospital." Bob and May Burns sent a long typed letter describing their whole interesting year in detail. Bob is a road runner. He runs bodys to the cemetery and blood to Detroit...also a nice long letter from Ivan Gilman. The bad news was Pat's second eye operation did not succeed but that's not going to stop Pat. "She is self-driving her car, helping the economy of the stores." Ivan is also keeping another promise and will be renting an apartment in England during the month of August...Alyce and Carl are always writing and both are still enjoying their careers. Of course Alyce is still so young!...Bill and Martha are back on the square dance trail again. At Christmas Bill was still upset over the "lucky Mets"...interesting note from Ray and Mimi Wiggins. They are both in "A-1 health." Ray states he played his 169th round (Dec.9th) "Walked 36 holes, carrying my clubs. I challenge Bryars, Blasko, Jones and Barbara to come close to that, notwithstanding they're so much younger!" Ray Downing, you notice he left you and me out of that list?

...Ray and Louise Downing went to California in March. Ray in commenting on my new move said, "We moved so much, I was accused of moving every time the house got dirty."...Ed Perko was having a tough, cold, lonely winter, so I hope you decide to come in August. It will be different, Ed...Dot Forster writes that things are going better for her...Frank Salontay likewise wrote a nice long letter. You know guys, he has it made. He hunts, plays golf, and talks to the dog, and the dog doesn't talk back. If the weather is o.k., Frank has it made, if not, he still doesn't have to go to the Malls and shop! Al Bensimon wrote two letters. He and Ruth bought a new "castle" in Florida. He used sixteen gallons of inside paint! Sounds like a good place to visit next winter. Al also called Henry Krebs and they are hoping to meet "half-way" for a dinner. Keep us posted Al, for Henry still owes us life history.

Phil Reese had a pinched nerve in the neck but is now o.k. Last and not least were cards from the Barbaras, Bishop, Labbe's and the Mohons. I want to thank you all, for all your messages. It makes this job easier and I'm more interesting for everyone, so keep them coming, besides Christmas.

From the tone of these letters and phone calls I'm now positive the 783rd will be on a par with last years' reunion, so until August.

*Hut Two,*

**Rags Rangnow 783rd**

**P.S.** Decided we needed an update on Lloyd Grayson, so I just called and while he's not feeling the best Lloyd isn't complaining. He's grateful for what he has and is really looking forward to Doc's and Agnes's visit this month.

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## Cleveland Chapter

Hello Buddies:

We are all fine here in Cleveland unless someone comes up with something new, I hope not. Our meetings are becoming a regular hassle. It's hard for us to get volunteers to take charge of the goodies. We have only a few members that are willing to take on



the task of providing the food, ice and refreshments mainly because we're all spread out. Maybe we should disregard the party atmosphere and just have a plain old fashioned meeting.

Dom Christopher and wife, Ann always bring a couple of trays of pizza that everyone enjoys. Then Dom opens up his heart some more and raffles off a bottle of "Dago Red", for the women which the winner enjoys receiving. Thank you, Dom and Ann for your generosity, we do appreciate it.

We lost another buddy, Ted Szymanski. A pretty good bunch showed up for the funeral, in the most adverse weather of the winter, proving that we're still loyal 83rd men.

I was at the lake front last week looking over the damage done to the piers, etc., and got to talking to a guy about things in general when he mentioned being in the Service. I found out he was a Medic in the 329th. A short guy named Mike, maybe some of you Medics will remember who he is, I didn't get his name, (last), because when I asked him about joining the Association or our Chapter he wasn't interested and I wasn't about to beg him. Those kind just rile me up. He said he went in on "D" + 6, in advance unit, maybe that will help you Medics identify him.

The weather here has been fantastic, I only cleaned my walk of snow just once. Rain you don't have to shovel. The fishing should start in a few weeks, then I'll get Earl Lindsey out and Rollie Warner if he promises to not get sea sick again.

Got a nice letter from Jim Prentice commending the Cleveland Chapter for our Memorial Day showing. Thank you, Jim. It's nice of you to take that kind of interest in our Chapter, (we all thank you).

Most of the Cleveland Chapter plan on attending the West Virginia Reunion. I am still on the fence but am leaning towards going along. I know that I'd be kicking my butt if some new member of my "Co" was there asking about me. Being a creature of habit you can almost bet yours truly will be there, first I'd better get my reservation in.

There being nothing else to write about, I'll end by wishing health and happiness to all of you.

God Bless You,  
Al Uridel

## Company H

Hello Buddies:

Here come that man again, I am sure that many of you wish that something would happen so that my letter wouldn't be published in the **Thunderbolt** for at least one edition. I am sure that many of you got tired of seeing my face almost every time you walked into the Orderly Room at both Camp Atterbury and Camp Breckenridge and also on many occasions while overseas. I am sure that when we left Germany and started for home, you figured that you saw the last of Larry Redmond, but here I am still at it.

Over the years I have tried hard to keep Co. H men together, I have sent rosters of names and addresses of all the men I have been able to locate, there are many more I wish I could locate, but I just can't seem to be able to do it. I have asked each and every one of you to check through any old papers or records that you may have and lets try and come up with a larger list.

By the time you receive this book, you will have received a letter from me asking you for a Booster Ad for the Reunion Ad Book. Many of you do answer me and many don't. Thanks to the help of a few men, I do get extra money that I am able to include some of the deceased on our Ad Book Page. The cost of a Booster Ad is only \$5.00. Many of us belong to the American Legion or the VFW, and as we all know, along with paying dues, we get Christmas cards and all occasion cards plus Christmas stamps and all this costs us extra, in our Association we only seek your help once a year and this is to help with Reunion expenses.

As we all know, time is running out for many of us, this year we lost Leo Labuda, we have lost about 10 or 15 in the past five years. Lets try to keep Co. H going as strong as we can and as long as we can. How about trying to make at least one Reunion and meet a Buddy.

Your Buddy,  
Larry Redmond

### WILL WE CHANGE

Haran R. Martin  
Co. C-33

I was a World War I baby  
But a World War II fighting man.  
I was in the U.S. Army 83rd Infantry  
Fought for freedom and our land.

Yet, we still have much trouble  
There are things I don't understand.  
Why we must keep on fighting  
To keep peace in our land.

We spend billions of dollars  
To keep other countries calm.  
We send food and clothing  
We wish no one harm.

Some of these countries are laughing  
They think we are a big joke.  
The way we run up a huge deficit  
And how they keep us broke.

They keep a little stink going  
They know they have it made.  
Because the good Ole United States  
Will come running to their aid.

We all talk about nuclear weapons  
Every country has some made.  
Trying to outsmart each other  
All this keeps everyone afraid.

There is a way to gain peace  
Only through God this can be.  
Open your heart, invite Him in  
And He will set you free.

## Dixie Chapter News

This reporter arrived back in Greenville Sunday, March 15th at 6:00 p.m. after enjoying the good meeting in Williamsburg, Virginia. I had a really good time and feel safe in saying the other 80, more or less, who attended looked like they did too.

Special thanks to our hosts, John and Virginia Cox and all their helpers. Marva and I went in on Thursday night and found many there ahead of us. The hospitality room was open and available to all the whole time we were there. Members brought good snacks. The bar had many choices and did not run dry. John even had hot dogs and chili. They were kept hot as long as the hospitality room was open!

Taking in many interesting historic sights and shopping opportunities held fascination and fun for many and the sun shown the entire week-end. I know that you want to be kept informed about the many who are ill. Mary Muldrow had to see her eye doctor in Atlanta just two days before the meeting. You were missed, Mary and Buck. At the time of this writing her eye is doing well but she is fighting the flu bug. Get well, Mary.

Lacy and Melba Satterfield were missed. They felt they were needed at home with their elderly parents. M. L. Baker is in Duke Hospital at this time. Be assured, M. L. that we your 83rd friends are praying that you may find many moments of comfort and peace. We love both you and Joyce. Johnny Ball is in the Salisbury Hospital. Is now talking with his family more and we hope things will continue to improve for you, Johnny. Hazel, we hope to see you again soon.

We were glad to hear from Larry and Mary Redmond, by phone, during the meeting. Nice of you to

call. Do come when you can. We in Dixie Chapter were saddened at the news of the death of Ed Thomas on January 31, 1987. Thank you Lacy Satterfield, Billy Walker and Joe Fogleman for letting Kitty and the family know that we care by being with them at the time of the funeral. Our thoughts and prayers are with you, Kitty.

Back to Williamsburg meeting and coming attractions. It was good having with us: Margurette and Bob Parsons from Franklin, Tennessee; Al Rinaldi, Richmond, Virginia; Mr. and Mrs. Casey Szubski from Cleveland, Ohio; Mr. and Mrs. James Redden from Indianapolis, Indiana; George Naylor's daughter-in-law and her mother. Also George's granddaughter. Was glad to have one of our National Chaplains, Casey Kowalec and his wife from Seven Hills, Ohio.

From the Executive Board we had Chairman Stan Bielen and with him was his wife, Fran. They came in from New Jersey. Also, with us, Brig. General James Gibson and his wife Dottie. James has become a member of **National** and The Dixie Chapter. The lucky half and half winner was Dottie. Come back---hear? If you were not mentioned we still care about you and please be with us often. Dixie Chapter covers many southern states. If you are reading this and want to join us-get in touch.

Our next meeting sounds like another good chance for good times. It will be in Atlanta at the Embassy Suite Hotel at the 1275 and U.S. 41 exit on May 29 and 30. More details later. Be there. Those who enjoyed dancing at Williamsburg will get a chance to enjoy dancing again on Friday night in Atlanta. See you soon.

**LeRoy McManaway "M" 329th**

Reporter

*P.S. I'll bring a deck of cards and TV film.*

## Dixie Chapter Sick Call

Hi Bob:

Hope you and Pearl are enjoying life. Haven't heard how Pearl did after her operation. No news is good news so I have always heard. We are having sad news in our Dixie Chapter. Edward Thomas "B" 329th, Roanoke, Virginia, passed away last night. I got a call this morning before I got out of bed telling me of this death. Johnnie H. Ball is in the VA Hospital at Salisbury, North Carolina. Been there since late September. He is on the breathing machine. M. L. Baker has been sick since the meeting at the Pines in 1985. He has been in and out of Duke Hospital. LeRoy McManaway went in the hospital after our Christmas Party. I don't have any word on him. I assume he is doing o.k. Haven't heard from Bob Grazier in a while. I guess he is doing o.k.

We are approaching the sad times again as we did in '44 and '45 with broken hearts. Thank God he spared us as long as He did. You may use this sick and death news in the Dixie Chapter Column along with the reporter news.

We love you both,

**Dot and Haran Martin**

## K 330th

We wish to extend our sympathy to Lena Anthos and Betty Hanes. Each lost her mother this last year.

At last report Krebs was greatly improved. Keep up the good work, Jack, we are looking forward to seeing you in Charleston.

I've had contact with several and wish to report good intentions in the coming reunion. Get those reservations in. Also, keep those letters coming.

This past winter, I have located six buddies that joined the Company after the bulge. Chester Walkins, Richard Ryan, William McCara, Ted Walker, Gerald Noble, and Stanly Lawrence. Some of them are interested in the reunion. I hope to see all of them there.

This week, Dorothy and I had a nice visit with Stanley and Marjorie in Indianapolis. Last September we toured the Virginia States. Spent a very enjoyable week-end with Gus and Lena. They are very gratuitous hosts. See you all in Charleston.

**Lester Elkins**

## Florida Chapter

Here's hoping that you all had a delightful winter, and before we know it we will all be in Charleston, West Virginia for our annual reunion. If you have not made your reservation yet, I suggest you send it in as soon as possible. I gather that the rooms are going very fast, so send in your reservation as soon as possible.

In the last issue of the **Thunderbolt**, I neglected to mention the new officers of the Florida Chapter for 1987. They are: President, Parker Black; Vice-President, Bill Nagel; Secretary Treasurer, Dave Benick; Judge Advocate, Paul Buchman; and Chaplain, John Clevenger.

The Florida Chapter met in Silver Springs the week-end of January 30 and 31st. We had a record turnout of sixty-five (65) members and wives present and needless to say we all had a super good time. All arrangements were made by Yvonne and Lou Lizotte, and Dana and Frank Sharp. They did a great job of entertaining us for the week-end. The dinner they served Saturday evening was just what we needed to top off a wonderful week-end.

We had the pleasure of seeing some of our buddies join us, who haven't been to our meetings in a long time, namely: James Emanuol, Fred Barnes, Bill McKie, and Col. Granville Sharpe who brought a great many pictures. John Clevenger and John Stewart were ill, and were unable to attend.

Our next meeting will be in New Port Richey, and will be hosted by Elizabeth and Walter Marshall. From the report I received from Walter the Florida Chapter is in for a treat and a few surprises. The meeting will probably be the first week-end in May.

I know that Geri and Ralph Gunderson had a good time in Silver Springs, as many of their "D" buddies were present, including their Captain, Harry Grave-lyn, Wilbur Campbell (A) and many others. Also the Gunderson's daughter, Carole and her husband were there. We do miss Sam Klippa who always attended our meetings and hope he will be well enough to join us in the near future.

Lu and Charles Caven, Sue and Larry Leonardi are spending some time in Florida. They joined Millie and myself when we visited Ruth and Dave Feig who are staying in Miami for a couple of months. We all had a delightful day together. Have a happy and healthy spring and until our next issue, stay well.

**Dave Benick "A" 331st**

## Kentucky Chapter Report

Arthur Doggett had open heart surgery on December 15, 1986. He had three by-passes and during the surgery he suffered a stroke. It affected his right side and his speech. He is home now and goes to the hospital for speech and physical therapy once a week. Mildred reports that he is responding satisfactorily. Keep up the good work Arthur. We are all pulling for you.

Herschel McIntosh has been in the hospital and is now home. He is on insulin. Doing much better. Im-

ogene reports that he is doing much better.

Wilson Day has been in an out of the hospital. He has had a couple of heart attacks. Is home now if he will just obey Vi.

Nora Lee Walter's mother passed away. Our best wishes to all the sick and our sympathy goes out to Nora Lee.

Seems to be a great deal of sickness this time of the year. My mother is doing as well as can be expected. She is in the wheel chair part of each day now.

**Bob Derickson**

## MICHIGAN CHAPTER NEWS

Please excuse me for not getting a letter in the last issue, but not having much to report makes it easy to forget.

The Michigan Chapter had their annual Christmas Party on December 18, 1986, and a good turn out it was. Those attending were: Bill and Jean Goodwin, Lee and Dorothy Hectric, Jack and Hankie Dougherty, Nick and Sylvia Barbu, Vito and Virginia Palazzolo and Ed Zerucka. We had dinner at one of the finest restaurants down river. A good time was had by all of us. We will be having another outing in the Spring.

This winter, Michigan Chapter members were Florida bound, Lee and Dorothy Hectric, Nick and Sylvia Barbu, Jack and Hankie Dougherty. I didn't go out of town this year, because my daughter Anna Maria and husband moved back home from San Francisco. My health has been much better this year because of the mild winter.

**Sick Call**-Hankie Dougherty went into the hospital for surgery and returned home after a couple of weeks recovery. Hopefully she will be ready to go come reunion time in August.

**A word about shirts and caps**-In all the years that I've made shirts and caps for the 83rd members, I've been real proud to see the results at the reunions and at the Memorial Service.

There comes a time when all good things come to an end. I'm not able to get 83rd patches anymore, so I guess I'll have to quit making them. Or maybe you will have to furnish your own, if you want a shirt made and cap also.

As far as the jackets, I had 150 made, 1/2 lined and 1/2 unlined. I've already had orders for about 1/2 of them. Those of you that have ordered them and have received them have already written to me stating how much you like them.

I'm sure that I'll get orders for all the rest. These will be the last jackets I'll have made so get your orders in while they last. I've already had to increase the price because they cost more than I was selling them for. I've sent each chapter a sample jacket so that everyone will have a chance at ordering one for themselves.

I will bring whatever jackets I have left to the reunion in August. Looking forward to the reunion in West Virginia. God willing, Virginia and I will be there.

Hoping everyone had a joyous Easter holiday. God Bless All,

**Vito and Virginia Palazzolo** reporting, "G" 329th

# New England Chapter News

Hello Buddies:

First of all I would like to report on our Christmas Party as I was not able to get it in on the December deadline, as Mary and I had to be on a plane on December 9th for Las Vegas and I did not have the pictures ready.

We had a full house. We all arrived around 12:00 noon and headed for the Chapter room. There it was, food, drinks and all kinds of goodies. We had a ball clear up till 5:30 or 6:00 p.m., and we headed back to our rooms for a little rest and to spruce up for dinner which was held in a private room and the dinner was great. Oh! by the way, we would all like to thank Dot and Jim Brennan for setting up all the rooms and the table of prizes. Really a great job. After taking a few pictures, we again headed back to our Chapter room to exchange gifts with good old Saint Nick and more drinks and laughter. For those who attended for the first time we were sure glad to have you with us. We all enjoyed you. They were:

Bob and Ada Barber, William Kent O'Connell, Burt and Rose Simons, and Simon and Kathleen Etzel. We welcome all of you to our great New England Chapter and hope to see more of you at our other get-togethers. We also had Nick and Mary Francullo, Lou and Emma Ross, Dutchy and Helen Smith, Hazel and August Farias, John and Esther Ferriera, Bill and Jeannette McKee, Warren and Sue Boucher. We all had a great time with Santa singing songs and ending with "God Bless America." We missed having with us Bill and Betty Davis, Helen and Joseph Lichacz, and Jim and Betty Barber.

By the way, sorry good buddy Roy Orsene, that you did not get your letter for the Christmas party. As you know as a retired letter carrier some mail just doesn't get through due to those damned machines. Hope to see you at a get-together soon. Would also like to say to all our New England Chapter members we also missed seeing all of you.

If there are any of you who would like to join our Great New England Chapter, we welcome you with open arms. My name and address: Nick Francullo, 10 Beesom Street, Lynn, Massachusetts, 01902. Write to me and I will answer you immediately. Thanks!

On the sad side I received word of the passing of one of the Charter members, Nick Panaro of Stamford, Ct., "CN" 330th, and Roland Manna of Lynn, Mass. who was with AntiTank, 329th on January 16. They will be missed by all of us. Our condolences go out to their families.

On the road to recovery is Lou Rossi. I see him and his wife, Emma at Mass every Saturday night and he is looking better every day. Keep it up Lou, we have got to make the next reunion. Good old retired President, John Donohue is coming along slow, but just can't do any traveling as yet. John, we all miss you.

Dutchy and Helen Smith were off to Aruba in Jan-

uary for a week of good sunshine and also they will be celebrating their 45th wedding anniversary on February 20th. Mike and Marie Champey will also celebrate their 45th. Nick and Mary Francullo will be celebrating their 41st also in February. May all of you have a long lasting and happy marriage together along with lots of good health.

Just received a letter from Larry Redmond telling me of the sad news of the death of our Congressional Medal of Honor Buddy, Ralph Neppel. The entire New England Chapter sends out our condolences to Jean and family. Ralph will be missed by all of us. All for now.

Your Buddy always,

**Nick Francullo**, 3rd BN. HQ. 330th



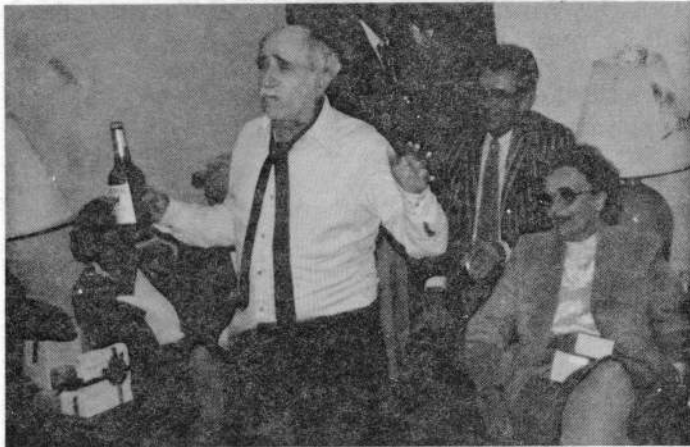
**Good Old Santa**



**Kathren & Simon Etzel — You are a winner**



**A Great Christmas Party....**



**God Bless America**



**Marie, what do you want?**



**Our Good Looking Girls!**

## *Fifty Years Together*

1937

1987



*Mr. and Mrs. Haran R. Martin, Sr.*

## *Pot Of Gold*

*The golden year is here at last  
It's like one beautiful dream.  
Years have flown by so fast  
Unbelievable how quick it seems.*

*As we've reached, and aged together  
This awaited day has begun.  
As we display our love for each other  
We've reached the rainbow, and beyond.*

*As we journey on through life  
Feelings grow closer day by day.  
God put love in our hearts  
He placed it there to stay*

*We've put all our trust in God  
We give Him thanks as we pray.  
For the blessings He has bestowed  
Upon us along the way.*

*Especial thanks to you dear Lord  
For bringing us both together.  
Filling our lives with happiness  
And sweet love for each other.*

## Pittsburgh Chapter News

The year came in on a sad note with the death of John Marek's wife, Eunice. A goodly number of chapter members paid last respects at the Copeland Funeral Home in Coraopolis, Pa. Double tragedy hit the Gene Costanzo family with the death of his son, George on January 6. On January 29 his beloved wife, Yolando, passed away. The following short poem was penned by Gene:

*She was a friend as you all know,  
Her name was Yolando Costanzo.  
I think she would of had me say this,*

*To thank all of you that I may have missed.*

At the March meeting a moment of silent prayer was observed in honor of Ralph Neppel, the 83rd Congressional Medal of Honor winner who passed away on January 29.

**NOTES:** A new member, Harry Pritchard, formerly of L, 330th was introduced. He resides in Lincoln Boro, Pa.....Paul Dietrich and Bill Mattes are co-chairmen of our fund raising committee...Bill Harold has been vacationing in Florida...Mike Rudy, B Bty., 908th retired from Conrail on November 18, after forty years of service...Joe Danylo and Gene Costanzo will be in Europe between May 24 and June 10. They will attend the rededication services of the 83rd Villa in Carentan....The Spring Dance scheduled for the Monessen Elks had to be cancelled due to the sale of that building. A group of chapter members will take a trip to Atlantic City, N.J. instead in the hopes of getting rich quick. Good Luck.

**"Fran" Beerhalter**

### 83rd Infantry Division History Book

If you ordered one of the History Books, you should have it by now, and know how wonderful it is. If you did not order one and would like to have one you may still get one.

The Reprint of 83rd Infantry Division (The Thunderbolt Across Europe) is now available. Send your order in with your check payable to: 83rd Infantry Division Association, Robert Derickson, 3749 Stahlheber Road, Hamilton, Ohio 45013

The cost of the book is \$38.00 including postage and handling. This is a hard covered book and has in addition to the Thunderbolt Across Europe, two hundred and twenty-five (225) personal stories of 83rd veterans. Also a list of men killed in action and those that died from wounds during the battles.

## WARREN CHAPTER NEWS

All of us from Warren were shocked and saddened to learn of the untimely death of our friend from Iowa, Ralph Neppel. His friendly smile and personality will be missed by everyone in the Association. We express our deepest sympathy to Ralph's wife Jean and the Neppel family.

By the time the next Thunderbolt is published, summer will be right around the corner. Our meetings will be held outdoors, Liz Skovran, John Shamrock and George Bellay will have planted their gardens, our chapter golf league will be in action, the Voracek's, Gautschi's and Titus' trailers will be ready for camping at Paradise Lake. Our wives will give the men the lists of "Jobs to Do" and we will look for someone to do them. Retired gentlemen aren't supposed to work that hard.

**Sick Call:** Louise Bellay spent the first week in March in the hospital and is home recuperating.

**Congratulations To:** Joe and Angie Phillipone on the birth of their second grandchild. Daughter, Peggy and husband, Larry Greiner, are the proud parents of their second beautiful baby girl, Courtney. Born in January.

**Meetings:** There was no meeting in December, but Warren Chapter members and their lovely ladies, held our annual Christmas party at Warren's finest restaurant - Cafe 422 on the strip. As usual, we had our own private room with plenty of refreshments to top off an excellent dinner. The ladies furnished the centerpieces for the tables and raffled them off later, to the lucky winners. Birdie Titus furnished hand made favors for everyone. A tip of the hat to George Bellay and his committee who set up the arrangements.

**January:** Ray and Margaret Voracek hosted this meeting at their home in Maple Heights, Ohio. Margaret went all out in preparing the sumptuous meal. Refreshments and the usual card game followed. A tip of the hat to Babe Gautschi who once again hauled nine people there in his Van.

**February:** We all gathered at the home of John and Pat Shamrock for this meeting. Thanks Pat, for a fine roast beef dinner and refreshments. After the card game, everyone had to brave the cold weather and clean several inches of snow off their cars, for the return trip home. Poor Ray and Marg Voracek had to travel 50 miles back to Maple Heights, amid a heavy snow storm.

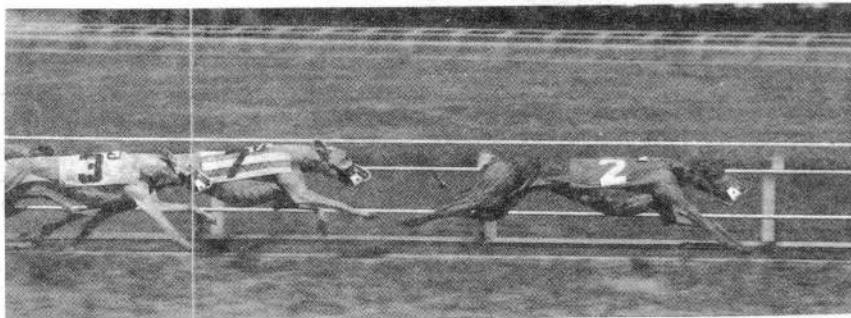
Well, that is all the news from Warren for now, so once again from all of us to all of you---Good Luck, Good Health and Happiness for the summer.

**Lee Titus**

Chapter Reporter



# Dog Track Racing....



An evening at the Tri State Greyhound Park! What better way to celebrate or to treat yourself to an exciting night out?

Tri State offers the best in sporting action - with plenty of seating, closed circuit TV, and more fast-paced excitement per mile!

So come out and join your buddies!

Cost **\$5.00** per person - this includes transportation and admission to track. Buses leave hotel at 5 p.m. They serve a full course dinner meal priced at **\$12.95 to \$18.95**.

We, the West Virginia Chapter, would like to plan a Patio Party at a special group price of **\$6.00**.

Please check if you want to attend Patio Party.

Complete and mail to: **John Hobbs, 1401 Camden Dr., Charleston, West Virginia 25302**

## EARLY BIRD RESERVATION FORM WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19, 1987

Enclosed is Payment of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ For \_\_\_\_\_ Persons

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Patio Party ( )

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Tentative Schedule

### WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19, 1987

1-3 p.m. Registration Marriott Hotel

5 p.m. Dinner on your own

Tri-State Racing Dog Track

### THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 1987

7 a.m. Golfing on your own

Breakfast on your own

9-11 a.m. Registration Marriott Hotel

Noon Lunch On your own

Shopping on your own

Shopping information will be posted on bulletin board

1:30-3:30 p.m. Registration Marriott Hotel

Dinner on your own

8-9 p.m. Charleston Classics (Choral Group)

8-10 p.m. Open Bar-Hospitality Room-Marriott Ball Room

### FRIDAY, AUGUST 21, 1987

Breakfast on your own

8-10 a.m. Registration

10-12 Noon Membership Business Meeting Marriott Ball Room

10 a.m. Shopping etc. City transportation will be available for touring

Lunch-on your own

1:30-4 p.m. Registration Marriott Hotel

2-4 p.m. Hospitality Room Open Bar - Grand Ballroom

6 p.m. Social Hour-Cash Bar-Civic Center

7 p.m. Dinner at Civic Center and Entertainment

### SATURDAY, AUGUST 22, 1987

Breakfast - on your own

8:30-10:00 a.m. Registration

10:00 Noon Membership Business Meeting Ballroom-Marriott

Ladies-Shopping and lunch on your own

2:00 p.m. Memorial Service-Civic Center Fountain

2:30-4:30 p.m. Hospitality Room-Open Bar - Grand Ballroom

4:30-5:30 p.m. Mass Marriott Hotel

6:00-7:00 p.m. Social Hour-Cash Bar-Civic Center

7:00-12:00 p.m. Dinner Program and Dance

### SUNDAY, AUGUST 23, 1987

Breakfast on your own and Farewell!



# 83rd Division

The 83rd Infantry Division Association Incorporated was formed by three men (all residents of the District of Columbia and Citizens of the United States). They are Alan F.S. Mackenzie, Gurney S. Jaynes, and Daniel G. Hagman. This organization's birth date was in 1946 and is having it's 41th Reunion in Charleston, WV August 20, 21, 22, 1987.

The 83rd Infantry Division Association holds a reunion every year at different locations through the United States. By doing this it allows more men to have the opportunity to attend regularly. Now we are finding that our attendance is growing larger and larger since we have more fellows retiring and less family responsibilities. It is a wonderful sight and feeling to see these men meet up with old buddies they haven't seen since they were discharged. You can also make a lot of new friends that helped make the Division have the outstanding record it owns. From the time it

landed on the Omaha Beech and Utah Beaches through Normandy, Ardennes, Brittany, Rhineland and Central Europe where we ended up 40 to 50 miles short of Berlin to wait for the Russians to join us at the Elbe River.

Now we would like you members out there to take this page from your book to the editor of your local newspaper or broadcasting facilities in your vicinity. That way we can pass the information about our reunion on to those 83rd men who do not know about this organization. They may wish to join our organization or go to a reunion to meet a buddy they haven't seen for a long time.

We would like to thank you in advance for doing this and for helping to make the 83rd Association even greater.

Please send any request for information to:

•**Robert Derickson**, National Secretary & Treasurer, National Headquarters, 83rd Infantry Division Association, 3749 Stahlheber Road, Hamilton, OH 45013

or

•**Stanley Bielen**, Executive Board Chairman, 83rd Infantry Division Association, 71 Glenwood Terrace, Fords, New Jersey 08863

SEND YOUR ADVTS. EARLY, as they play a very important role in our program.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Unit \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the size Advt. you prefer.

- FULL PAGE @ \$60<sup>00</sup>  
 HALF PAGE @ \$35<sup>00</sup>  
 QUARTER PAGE @ \$18<sup>00</sup>  
 BOOSTER ADVTS. are \$5<sup>00</sup>

Make Checks Payable to:  
**83rd Infantry Division Assn.**  
 W. Va. Chapter Reunion Fund

Send advts. and checks to:

**JOHN E. HOBBS**  
 1401 Camden Dr.  
 Charleston WV 25302



**To The Editor:**

Sylvain Fishman, owner, age 78+ years old, retired jewelry chain executive, sports car enthusiast, Mercedes 190 SL in the '50s; Jag 4.XKE in the '60s and E V-12 owner since June, 1971; Eunice Fishman, spouse, 77 years old, artist and A.K.C. Dog show judge.

Jaguar: 1971 E-type V-12 Series III

Because of the ages of all three above, I suggest the theme on caption of the photos should be "The Seniors."

The location of the photos is Ft. Lauderdale on the bank of the Intra-coastal waterway with background of the East Las Olas drawbridge and behind this is the famous Ft. Lauderdale "Spring Break" area. On two of the slides the paddle wheeler "Jungle Queen" appears going through the drawbridge. On one of the slides is the laughing car with my plate showing my membership in the World War II 83rd Infantry Division.

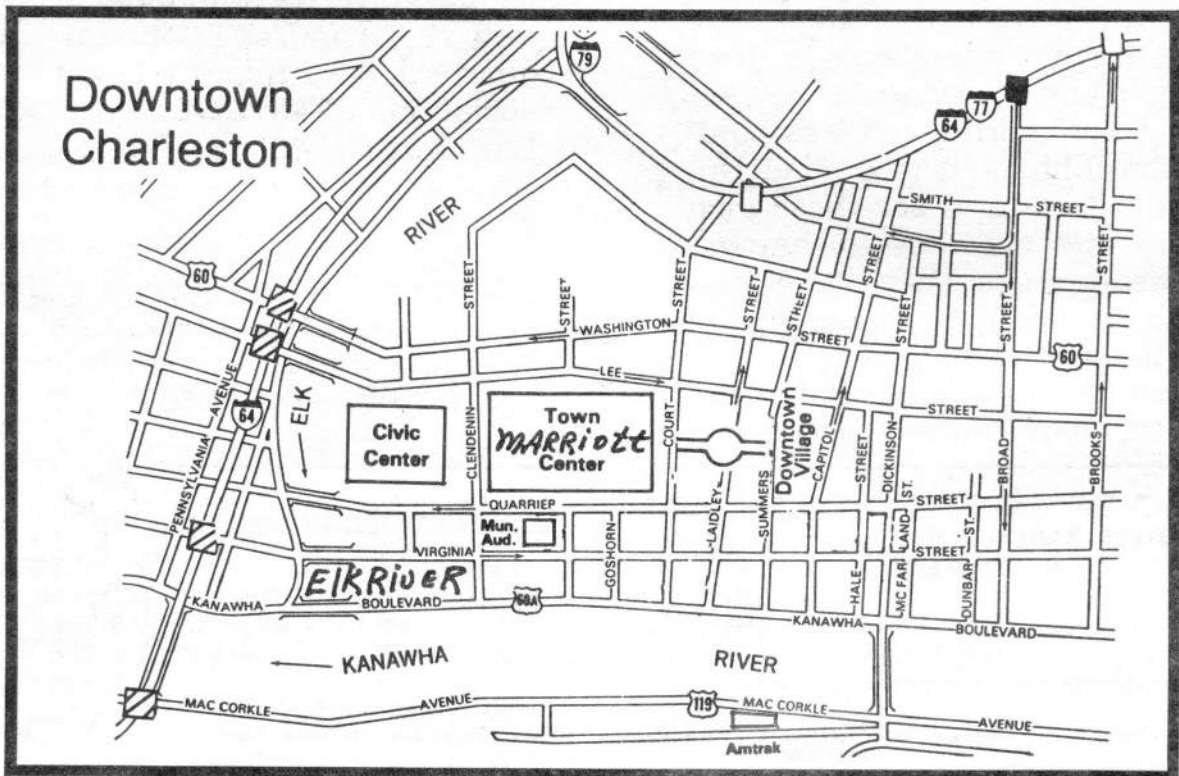
Wish me luck,

**Sylvain Fishman, Florida**

# The 41st Annual Reunion

**The Marriott Town Center  
Charleston, West Virginia**

**August 20, 21, 22, 1987**



## BOSTON CHAPTER

It has been slow here in January and February on meeting because of the weather. However, we have been on the telephone a lot which keeps us in line.

We have a meeting coming up shortly after this writing. Pat DiGiammerino and a few others have been down with what we call **The Bug**. At the St. Patrick's Day meeting I will give them a **Sip of Irish Coffee** and it will put them in good spirits I'm sure.

For Kent O'Commell, our fine historian, I will have a taste for you with New England corned beef and cabbage.

Larry and Fran Arrigo are expecting another grandchild I believe in June. They are thrilled with this news.

Christmas Eve Pat DiGiammerino was in a very bad accident. He was injured and his Caddy was totaled. Pat is back in condition. Next year Santa will walk to his stops. Huh!

I was told that Albert Coelho and Willard Plant died. They were both from the 83rd Division but their units are unknown at this time.

I guess I better get this short report in the mail before the deadline.

**Amby Tynan**

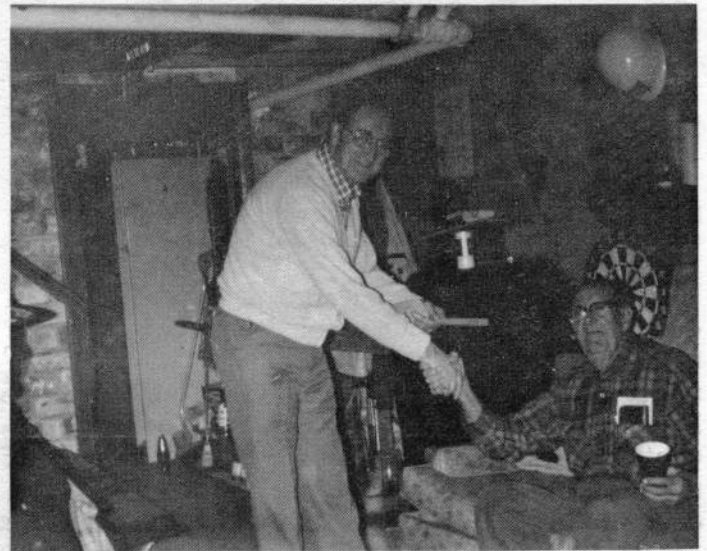
Boston Chapter



*Boston Chapter Meeting—'Do you really mean that!'*



*Charlie Miller trying to 'make' it with the women.*



*Larr Arrigo and Bob Hunnewell with one of the winning tickets.*



*Archie Strang, Mike Amicone, Bob Hunnewell, Amby Tynan at Boston Chapter Meeting.*



*Pulling out the winning ticket...*

# West Virginia Report

Hello Good Buddies:

I feel like I've been missing the boat lately, by missing a meeting or two. Just seems hard to be in two places at the same time.

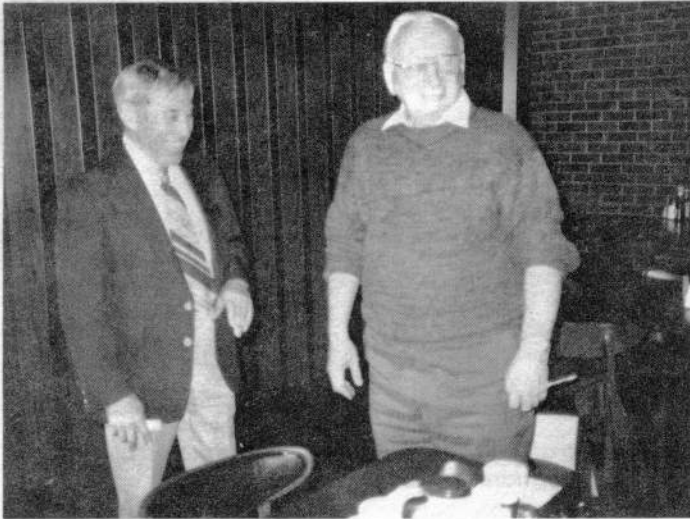
Attended a Committee meeting at Town Center Inn on February 14th. Present were John Hobbs (National President), Bob Derickson (National Secretary-Treasurer), Ames Miller (Member Executive Board), Jim Dunkin (West Virginia Chapter President), Chauncey Hunt (National Sgt. at Arms), Rex Carson (National Sgt. at Arms), and yours truly, John Shepherd (Staff Reporter). Ladies present were Freeda Hobbs, Pearl Derickson, Helen Miller and Linda Dunkin.

A tentative schedule was presented by John Hobbs for review on the up-coming reunion, with a few bits and pieces to be added. We hope this reunion will be

"Wild and Wonderful" as our State Motto implies. Excitement is beginning to build, now that Father Time is closing the gap. Everyone wanting to attend get your reservations in early, don't be left out. Sadly missed will be our Chaplain, Eugene Persinger,



**Paul Pauly and Chauncey Hunt**



**Harold May and John Shepherd**



**Rex Carson, Don Petry and John Hutchinson**



**Parkersburg Meeting—December 7, 1986 L to r.: Jim Dunkin, Albert Martin, Walter Sabel, Eugene Persinger; back row John Hobbs, Chauncey Hunt, Don Petry**



**Esta Petry and Evelyn Shepherd**

who recently passed away. He was looking forward to this reunion.

Not too many years ago Eugene asked me for help to start a State Chapter, and with the help of John Governor, Sam Klippa and other Charter members we got it off the ground. Now here we are ready for the big one. I'd like to thank John Governor for remembering Eugene in the Winter Issue of the **Thunderbolt**.

Sunday, February 15th, the following Chapter members enjoyed eating out at Western Sizzler Steak House, I-64 exit in Hurrigan, West Virginia. Present were Don and Esta Pettry, Chauncey and Tressie Hunt, Paul and Mary Palley, John and Mabel Hutchinson, John and Evelyn Shepherd, Harold May and Rex Carson.

Our next chapter meeting will be in Glendale, West Virginia, Sunday, March 15th. A good turnout is expected.

So for now, to coin a phrase, Spring is just around the corner. See all of you in August.

**John Shepherd, "L" & "HQ" 331st**



**Tress Hunt and Mary Pauly**



**Parkersburg Meeting, Dec. 7, 1986— Front row, l. to r.: Tress Hunt, Lina Dunkin, Freda Hobbs, Esta Petry; back row: Mrs. Sabel and Helen Persinger.**



**Don Petry, John Hutchinson, Mabel Hutchinson**

REUNION	
Financial Statement	
83RD INFANTRY DIV. ASSOC.	
KNOXVILLE, TENN.	
AUG. 1986	
<b>INCOME</b>	
AD Book.....	\$9188.00
Advance Money.....	265.00
Registration.....	68415.60
Crafts.....	810.05
50/50.....	750.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME.....</b>	<b>\$79428.65</b>
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>	
Printing.....	\$2495.00
Refund-Advance Money .....	265.00
Travel Expense.....	210.00
Telephone-Ad book.....	25.97
Ad Book-Refunds.....	123.00
Postage-Ad Book.....	432.00
Postage-Other.....	327.72
Memorial Service.....	161.50
Hospitality.....	3536.41
Entertainment.....	2100.00
Transportation.....	3330.00
Meals to Hotel.....	61443.63
Flowers.....	97.91
Name Tags and Supplies.....	673.38
Audio Equipment.....	345.61
Court Reporter.....	466.00
Registration Refund.....	99.40
Decorations.....	524.19
Miscellaenous.....	149.00
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>\$76806.17</b>
<b>Net —</b>	<b>\$2622.48</b>



*Women of the Boston Chapter*



*Charlie Lussler showing off his hat.*

## Hi 323rds:

First order of business is to raise money for our Memorial Page in the 83rd ad book. John Pollack has already sent me his money. It is nice to remember our Buddies. So, if possible, send a couple of dollars when you read this so you will not forget.

Bill Shaner is on another trip. Lois and Bill are really enjoying retirement?

I had a long talk on the telephone with Don and Amy St. John. They were on their way to the Irish Club to sip some Irish Coffee.

Ed McCouch is doing well after his illness and we hope his wife Joyce is also doing better now.

The weekend of March 19th I will be going up to see George Polites with some pictures to duplicate. We plan to make some for everyone. I also hope to see Metellinos at the same time.

Write your buddies and try to get them to West Virginia in August. We want this to be a good turnout. Bill Kopcroft hopes to make it along with Kelley Wallace. Captain Starbuck said he would try to make it. Don St. John, Bill Shaner, John Pollack and I am sure Al Covi will be there.

My wife, Nancy, was just on the phone with David and Nancy Nellies. Dave is doing well and will be at the reunion in August of 1987. He heard from Dallas Williams and Buck Taylor. Everyone is fine. I must write Buck and Dallas along with Jack Knight.

I spoke with Tom Papile on the telephone. It was

good taking with him. Tom has been troubled with his hip and knee and may have to have replacements on both. Our condolences go to Tom on the death recently of his sister.

I tried to contact Ritchie but got no answer but the mail does not come back.

I was told recently that Chambers from the Air Section died in 1980.

That's all for now.

**Amby Tynan**

323rd FA

## POEM

*This poem, seems to fit the situation in most of our lives today.*

Just a line to say I'm living,  
That I'm not among the dead,  
Though I'm getting more forgetful,  
And more mixed in the head.

For, sometimes I can't remember,  
When I stand at foot of stair,  
If I must go up for something,  
Or, I've just come down from there,  
And, before the frig, so often,  
My poor mind is filled with doubt,  
Have I just put food away, or  
Have I come to take some out.

And, there are times when it is dark  
out,  
With my night cap on my head,  
I don't know if I am retiring  
Or just getting out of bed.

So, if it's my turn to write you,  
There's no need in getting sore,  
I may think I have written,  
And don't want to be a bore.

So, remember - I do love you,  
And wish that you were here,  
But now it's nearly mail time,  
So, I must say "Goodbye".

There I stood beside the mailbox,  
With a face very red,  
Instead of mailing you my letter,  
I opened it instead.

**Haran Martin**

# Don't Sacrifice Our OLDER VETERANS!

A Message from Dr. Nicholas F. Sallese, Director,  
New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs

In the last decade, a common term was "generation gap." In today's parlance, it is "intergenerational warfare" (AARP term). A minority (thank God) of the "yuppie" generation speak of benefits for the elderly at the expense of the young, and the huge national debt is attributed to programs for senior citizens.

This is not a valid conclusion. I have never met parents or a grandmother or a grandfather who didn't want more for their children or grandchildren. Some sacrifice their meager earnings in their golden years to pay the high tuition rates of a college education or the vast sums of money required to purchase a new home for these cherished young people of their beloved family.

This is the social formula enumerated so often by the Governor in his messages to the family of New York. It is the same message that has been the tradition of the Chinese, Japanese, Blacks, Europeans, Eskimos, and yes even the Native Americans (American Indians). It is the formula of a civilized society that is inherent in the teachings of the Church - Catholic, Protestant, and Jew.

Those who would set up a "wall" between generations motivated by greed do a disservice to their own generation as well as to the senior citizens. Servicemen and women died on the fields of battle so that younger generations could enjoy freedom and live free from fear.

Veterans' benefits in New York State have resulted from partisan initiatives on the part of legislators and a willingness of a Governor's response to this political virtue. Although the needs of different generations of veterans differ - few World War II vets still seek employment, and few Vietnam vets need retirement benefits - we in New York can treat their **needs** separately without treating the **veterans** differently. A new Temporary State Commission on the Readjustment Problems of Vietnam Veterans will soon be in place to find solutions to the broad scope of that generation's problems. Similarly, the Division of Veterans' Affairs is committed to a study of the long-term care needs of our older veterans, taking a parallel broad look at the needs of our World War II and Korean veterans. This way we meet the needs of **all** our veterans.

We cannot serve our magnificent veterans by treating them as a homogenized commodity, but we can and must provide equally for their needs. Our DVA is in close harmony with the New York State

Office for the Aging to create programs for our greying veterans. That's as it should be - This is the American way - This is America's greatness - This is our tradition of one generation of veterans helping another. This is the true concept of "the New York family." We are proud of it.

**Services Help Track Down Military Retirees-**  
Veterans can get in touch with retired friends through each service's locator service.

The veteran should write a letter to the retiree, and place it in a stamped envelope with the retiree's name and the veteran's return address on it.

A note to the locator service should include available information about the person being sought; such as, name, rank, Social Security Number, birth date and known duty stations; and the reason for wanting to contact the person.

If the requester is on active duty, active Reserve, or retired from any service and includes a Social Security Number, the Air Force does not charge. It does charge civilian requester \$2.85. The other services do not charge a fee. The search service will contact the requester only if the friend cannot be located. Here are the addresses:

## **ARMY**

HQDA  
Attn: DACF-ISRV  
Alexandria, Virginia 22331-0522

## **AIR FORCE**

HQ AFMPC/DPMD 003  
9504 IH 35 North  
San Antonio, Texas 78233-6636

## **MARINE CORPS**

Commandant of the Marine Corps  
Marine Corps (MHP-30)  
Washington, DC 220380

## **COAST GUARD**

Commandant (G-PS-1)  
U>S. Coast Guard  
Washington, DC 20593

## **NAVY**

Retired Personnel Locator  
Naval Reserve Personnel Command  
440 Dauphine Street  
New Orleans, LA 70149

## F Company quartered in Luxembourg

Dear Bob:

As a former member of the 83rd Division, 330 Regiment, F Company and current member of the Association I decided that I would send you some pictures that I have of some of the places in Luxembourg where the F Company men were quartered during the war.

During October and November 1944, the members of F Company spent many days in the town of Mondorf les Bains, Luxembourg, and in the print marked #1, F Company was quartered in the double house at the right of the photo. The address is 36/38 Avenue des Bains and the building at this time houses a bank. I am sure many of the members will recognize the place. The single family home at the left in the picture was that of the Thomes, and they befriended many of the American soldiers.

The print marked #2 was directly across the street from 36/38 Avenue des Bains so it would be 37 Avenue des Bains, the local post office.

The print marked #3 was taken at the entrance to Mondorf les Bains and as I remember the mess trucks were set up near the hotel in the picture. I can vividly remember walking past the signs as we went



#1



#2

to eat our meals each day in Mondorf.

The print marked #4 shows the Catholic Church on the hill in Mondorf. Since it is so high it could easily be seen from all over the town.

If any of the pictures generate any interest or if you can use them in the **Thunderbolt** feel free to use them as you wish. I have some other prints of other places in Luxembourg where the F Company members were outposting during the Fall of 1944 and if you have any need of same, please let me know.

I recently received my engraved copy of the 1987 publication of the History of the 83rd Infantry Division and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I would like to recommend it to any former members of the division. The section dealing with the individual histories of the former members was most interesting.

A former member of the Division who lived in Smyrna, Frank Powell, passed away a few years ago. His daughter told me he was a member of the 83rd. She did not state what section but I believe you had him on the rolls of the Association at one time as she told me about the reunion notice that he received for this summer in West Virginia.

**Charles V. Williams F-330**



#3



#4



# Letters.....

Dear Bob:

Just a few lines to let you know that I sure did receive my **Thunderbolt** and was glad to go through it, as I was one of the soldiers that received a three (3) days pass to Paris for naming our outfit the **Thunderbolt**. The phrase that I used was with a "mighty punch."

I saw one of the boys that served with me in the **Thunderbolt**, Sgt. Angelo Del Guidice. Will look and see if I have an army picture of myself. If so I will send it to you.

Thanks to all of the staff of the **Thunderbolt**.

Staff Sgt. of the Kitchen of the 83rd Division, 908th  
FA Btry A  
**Stuart B. Hitt**

Hi Bob:

Hope by this time your wife is completely recovered, and things have returned to near normal, you sure had a rough time for a while.

Doris and I spent about two weeks in Hawaii in February. We stayed in Honolulu and visited much of the island, Pearl Harbor, Polynesian Culture Center, Bishops Museum, Brigham Young University and many other places, it was a great trip.

Bob, the fall issue of **Thunderbolt** came by my correct address, Box 178, but this time it came Box 156, which is the old box number. I was lucky to get it, only with the good nature of the postal workers. As you mentioned, we can't afford to throw copies away because of wrong addresses.

Now for a little pat on the back, you and Pearl certainly do one fine job for our association, I thank you.

One of our 308 Engr. members died just before Christmas, his name is Domnic Normand, his death seemed to bring back memories of the war days, and one particular situation that involved Deek-as we called him.

Our B Co. was set up in a house about two miles west of the Mossell River near Mondorf, word came that we were to get ready for a river crossing, but first the approach area had to be checked for mines and booby traps. Sgt. Wagner sent Sgt. Mullins, Sgt. Faith, Lou Tidd, Salerno, Deek, Normand, Moose Collins and McDevitt. They checked Mondorf Hill and down into the village and got a lot of incoming mail, but luck was with them, nobody got hit, that opened the way for the 329th. When they got into the village the Germans really laid it on from across the river, small arms fire never let up for a day or two, finally our artillery got the message and laid down some pretty accurate fire. Sgt. Wagner told the cooks to get some hot chow packed up, those guys are catching hell down there and somebody's going to see that they get a hot meal. Sgt. Hicks was called in, being one of the best jeep drivers. Wagner said "Ball, you go with him." Going down the hill we took a couple bursts of 88's, we parked in a church

yard and everybody ate like tigers. Mike Hicks said "Where's Moose," then the bad news, he was severely wounded and taken out by the medics. Moose was Deeks' best friend. Hicks and I were ready to leave, they said "You're gonna catch hell going up that hill," and I'll never forget, Deek was our bazooka man, he said, "About the time you start up, I'll send them Krauts some trouble," it sure must have surprised them, we only caught about 3 or 4 88's going up that muddy trail. When we got back to headquarters we found about six shrapnel holes in the jeep. Moose Collins died three days later, and Deek was never the same.

Bob, maybe you could put this war story in the **Thunderbolt** in memories of our friend and buddy.

Sincerely,  
**Frank Ball**

Louis C. Allram, "B" 3rd Platoon squad leader of the 329th, gave up his life in Belgium during an attack on the enemy. There are only four surviving sisters now who would like to contact anyone who remembers their brother, "Louie". If you knew Louie or know anyone who did, please contact: Fran Allram Boser, 319 North 13th Street, Olean, New York 14760.

I was Louie's platoon leader and have corresponded with the family for many years.

**Frank Bollard**

Dear Bob:

Just a quick word of congratulations on the exceptionally fine quality of the printing and pictures in your Winter Issue 1987, Volume 42 No. 2 which came to me last week.

You must have a new printer or he must have gotten new equipment because the clarity of the print and the clearness of the pictures are an immeasurable improvement over past issues.

Although I only know John Piscitelli and Sam Klippa of the organization nationally, I have met Amby Tynan and Pat DiGiammerino at a meeting at Pat's home in Malden which is just a couple of miles from me in Medford. I enjoy reading the **Thunderbolt** and many of the names seem like old friends to me.

With best wishes to you and all the 83rd Division Association, I am,

Forthfully yours,  
**Frank Bradley**

Bob-

Will you please see that this note gets into the next issue of the **Thunderbolt**.

I appreciate it very much.

Thanks to all my buddies for their thoughts and prayers that helped to bring me thru my recent surgery. Your cards and letters were greatly appreciated, and it is nice to know you have so many friends

that care when you are ill.

The doctors say I am as good as new and I am back to living my normal life once more.

Thanks again my friends and buddies. May God bless you all.

Your buddy,

**Ed Paulino**  
C Btry-322 Bn.

Glad to hear you are so much better Bob.

February 19, 1987

Bob,

Count me in! I enjoy every issue of the **Thunderbolt**, it sure brings back memories.

Would like any former "C" Btry 908 members to know that I am well and enjoying my retirement in Connecticut.

Regards to all 83rd Buddies.

**Charlie Seewald**

Bob:

Reporting the death of Major John F. Egan, Ret. Jack died late in August in Nashua, New Hampshire.

For those who might remember Jack, he was a platoon leader and later Executive Officer of "L" 329th at Atterbury. When John Raikos left 3rd Bn to become Regimental Communications Officer, Jack became Communications Officer of 3rd Bn Hqs. 329th, a position he held at Breckenridge, Wales and Normandy.

I lost track of him after I was shot up. I saw the obituary in the Boston paper and attended the wake and funeral. My wife and I saw his wife, Irene, for the first time since we left Breckenridge and have seen her several times since.

**John Tisdell**  
"L" 329th

Gentlemen:

Apology and more apologies! I was wrong on at least two counts. One--not having adequate patience. And two--entertaining even a brief doubt that a book was really on the way. It came today!

The **Thunderbolt** History is a handsome volume, one that I'm proud to display. The work is professional. I believe everyone will be totally pleased with the final product.

I think I understand some of the delay. It was proper to wait for more individual contributions. I would have thought more former members of the units that went to Europe would have sent in their "updates." That's not the fault of the publisher or the Association, though.

I'm entirely satisfied with your efforts. Thanks for a job well done.

Sincerely,  
**Marion Harkey**  
1018 Crestview Drive  
Farmington, NM 87401

Hello Buddies:

Here it is time again to start preparing for another edition of our great **Thunderbolt**, I am sure that each and every one of you enjoy this wonderful publication, and look forward to the day the mailman delivers it. I know that almost all of the wives do.

Well, Buddies, it is hard to believe, but six months have passed since our last reunion and we are part way into the seventh month. A lot of water has passed over the dam since we last met. It is almost impossible to believe the number of names our Chaplain has received of deceased buddies since the reunion. I now that our hearts ache for the families of every one of them. The one that strikes the hardest right now is the death of Ralph Neppel, CMH. Ralph was a man that despite his misfortune, you never met him without his friendly smile, it was always a pleasure to meet him and his wonderful wife, Jean.

At the present time, the West Virginia Chapter is hard at work trying to give us a reunion to remember for many years to come. I had the great honor and pleasure to talk to our National President John Hobbs a few weeks ago and he asked me if I would help them with the Ad Book this year. As much as I wanted to say no, I just couldn't to such a fine gentleman as John, so here I am hard at it again. This letter is reaching about 2,000 of you men, and I sincerely hope that we can look forward to at least 1500 of you taking at least a \$5.00 Booster ad, or send an extra \$5.00 or two to help cover the names of some of our deceased. Let us not forget them.

Please get that check in the mail today, make payable to 83rd W. Va. Chp. Reunion Fund, and mail it to either me or John Hobbs, our names and addresses are found inside the front cover. Your help is badly needed to help make a successful reunion.

Your Buddy,  
**Larry Redmond**

Dear Bob:

Just a few lines to let you know that I sure did receive my **Thunderbolt** and was glad to go through it, as I was one of the soldiers that received a three (3) days pass to Paris for naming our outfit the **Thunderbolt**. The phrase that I used was with a "mighty punch."

I saw one of the boys that served with me in the **Thunderbolt**, Sgt. Angelo Del Guidice. Will look and see if I have an army picture of myself. If so I will send it to you.

Thanks to all of the staff of the **Thunderbolt**.

Staff Sgt. of the Kitchen of the 83rd Division, 908th  
FA Btry A  
**Stuart B. Hitt**

Dear Bob:

I just had a few names of the men that I was in the 83rd with. I have been writing to since I came home from the war. Out of the many some have passed away. Their names are: Mr. M. Brick, Mr. L. Kidd, Mr. Delguidice, Mr. Morgason, Mr. Hatem, Mr. F. Mangum, Mr. Dills, Mr. Lavine and Mr. Esborn Taylor.

I received the enclosed piece from Mrs. Taylor, with the wish that this would be in the **Thunderbolt**.

I do write to many of the boys and I do ask them if they wish to receive the **Thunderbolt** to please let me know.

I, Stuart B. Hitt was one of the men that was given a three day pas to Paris, France for one of the men that had put in the name of the **Thunderbolt** with a mighty punch.

Now, if there is a cost to this article to be put in the **Thunderbolt**, please let me know and I surely will be happy for it to be entered in. Thank you.

The Mess Sgt. of Bty. "A" 908th  
**Stuart B. Hitt.**

## "DADDY"

*Your footsteps echo, along the valleys, thru the pines. Your voice calls out, across the silence of time. Reminding me of golden days, when you laughed with joy, as you watched us play. Days pass swiftly, like water thru a stream, you watched us grow, and you helped us dream. Stand tall and proud, you always said. You shaped us well, with your guiding hand, from a laughing little boy, came a Man of God, and three giggling little girls, became Mothers and wives. You are mountains and music, and laughter and love, and our greatest gift, from heaven above. For you gave us the knowledge, that tomorrow will bring, a reunion in heaven, where together we will all sing.*

**In Loving Memory of Esbon Taylor  
Imogene and Family**

Hi Buddies:

Since I have been home from the war I have been writing to many of the men. Seven have passed away. But I still write to their dear wives and sure to get many answers back.

It's just like talking to them. What stories we exchange to each other, this has been going on for over thirty-five years.

What we went through and what snow storms we had in Germany and France. Never knew when a shell would fall in our area. Had some duds that did get close to us, but not knowing that they were duds we left the kitchen area fast to get under something and in so doing my little finger got caught on a nail that was supposed to have been taken out of a box. I had the stitches put in my finger right there on the field with a stick in my mouth to bite down on as the stitches were put in by the doctor. Today I still have the scar I guess to remember that accident.

The time that we traveled through the Hurtgen

Forest, we had to dig fox holes and we covered them with logs as many of the shells exploded over our heads knocking down branches all over.

Mess Sgt. of Bty. 'B'908th

**Stuart B. Hitt**

Hi Bob:

The deadline is six (6) days off, I hope this makes it ontime. I am mailing you a poem for the **Thunderbolt** along with one of our anniversary announcements for our Golden Wedding. I hope you can get this in the next issue.

How is Pearl doing? I hope you both stay healthy. We've had our part of snow and rain. Other than that the weather has been real nice. I am getting ready for four (4) days in Williamsburg, Virginia. I just talked with John Cox and the hotel has forty-two rooms reserved. Looks good.

Dot said give her fiftieth anniversary a big blow-up. She may not be around for another fifty.

Tell Pearl we will see you in West Virginia.

Love

**Dot and Haran**

*Happy anniversary, you two., Pearl and Bob. Wish that we could be there with you to celebrate but can't always do everything we want.*

## Book relates experiences of 18-year-old infantryman

Dear Robert:

Recently I had the opportunity to read a novel, **The Gentle Infantryman**, written by a long-time friend of mine, William Young Boyd. The book is well written and relates the experiences and emotions of an eighteen-year-old infantryman during the last months of combat in Europe during the Second World War.

For those of us who experienced combat duty and shall never forget those vivid memories, but find it difficult to express our thoughts about such an experience, can find in Boyd's novel a true and sensitive record of what it was to be a front-line combat infantryman in World War II.

At the present time William Y. Boyd lives in Nassau, Bahamas and in Panama City, Republic of Panama. His book has been published by the following publishing house: St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10010.

Boyd has based his work on first-hand observations as a combat infantryman in the European Theatre of War. Unlike most war stories, his book treats it not as grand and heroic acts, but the day-to-day life and feelings of the combat G.I.

A "super" year 1987 for you and Pearl.

Sincerely,

**Joseph A Lonteen, 'E' 329th**

# The Battle before the War

After combat experience our garrison discipline now seems quite unimportant, but during the training days it was a big thing. Every private understood the potent power of non-coms and officers, so it was natural that most GI's used their talents to avoid unfavorable attention that would make them bait for the worst details. I was one of these people, and managed to avoid attention until we set up camp in Wrexham, Wales. In spite of being a perfect angel the Captain snared me, and to this day I cannot understand why he was after my hide.

From the first day in Wales half the company was allowed out on pass each evening. Well, in a week three-quarters of the company was broke, so the rest of us were allowed out every night. By the end of another week only three of us were picking up passes at the orderly room. Most of the men lost their pass for not making the curfew. For a couple evenings three of us went on pass, then there were two. It was clear why Legg lost his pass, he was dating the same girl the Captain was, and it seems both showed up on the same night.

There were two reasons why I could afford to go out every night. I wasn't a smoker, but I took my cigarette ration, usually Old Golds, because the others preferred the Camels and Lucky Strikes. The Welsh loved those Old Golds, and a pack on the bar at the Bowling Green kept a black and tan in front of my stool all night during the darts and dominoe games. Also I discovered the local YMCA and a couple nights a week played ping-pong and danced with the nicest Welsh girls. The refreshments were only tea and cake, but home made! Eventually payday came around and I had more company willing to be introduced to the affordable pleasures of life.

Gradually, it again became apparent that almost all the company was restricted so at retreat, after the officers left, the platoon sergeants required everyone to write two letters a night. This included those who still had a pass. These letters would have to be censored by the officers, so in effect, they were confined also. I was behind in my writing so it was no problem to scratch out a couple letters, and still get out on pass. Now the officers were not all all enchanted by this extra work, and little did I realize that a certain few who went out on pass every night had caught their attention. Our first indication of this happened one morning during close order drill. The Captain appeared across the field and after watching awhile he bellowed, "Dickson, Morgan, close it up!" It startled us, but we didn't really jump because we knew he couldn't see that far, besides the other platoons were marching, and our platoon was standing at ease listening to our sergeant's instructions.

The next morning the whole company marched out in single file for a field problem. After the Cap-

dense woods he stopped the column to explain the exercise. The first thing out of his mouth was a roar, "Dickson, where are your gloves?" This disturbed me because I was the only one out of uniform, and he could see it. I managed to answer weakly, "They were lost on the ship, sir." He told me to see the supply sergeant, which I had already done, and then proceeded to explain our maneuver. The following morning he was leading the company exercises and during side-straddle-hop he shouted, "Dickson, snap it up!" I was way back near the rear and couldn't see him, so I knew he couldn't see me, so I just kept in time with the rest of the company, as I had been doing; and kinda smirking to myself. Suddenly a loud voice right in my ear said, "Didn't you hear the Captain?" Lt. Pontlitz had slipped in behind me, and with his hot breath on my ear I managed to squeak out a "Yes, Sir," and straightened up like a ram rod. Now for sure, I knew there was an organized effort to plague me so by keeping a low profile I managed to escape harrassment until the day we formed up for a full dress regimental parade and the Captain, as usual, was running the formation. Everyone was placed according to height with the tallest in the rear. He was lining up each column, and when he sighted down the third column on the left he roared, "Dickson, get in line!" As luck would have it, I was next the last in the second column over on the right. I just couldn't resist answering with a good strong "Yes, Sir." The whole company managed to stifle a burst of laughter, but I must have drained his coolant, for he immediately ordered the lieutenants to take over. The regimental parade was excellant, "B" Company never looked so good, and Colonel Crabill beamed with pride.

When we were out in the field the next morning the Captain climbed up on the trunk of a huge fallen tree and had the company sit in the tall grass in front of him. We all expected a class of some sort, but instead he held up a stack of cards. He said he would read the name on each card and if the company voted to return the pass he would do so. After the first ten cards were called and returned, he understood the company would deny no one. "Alright," he said, "all the passes are returned, but let one man foul-up, just one man, and the whole company will be restricted." In two nights we were all restricted. But it didn't matter, the order came for the regiment to move to Plymouth on the English Channel.

**Author's Note:** *Many times since then I have remembered Captain Orvil Shelton; his energy, his thoroughness, and his ambition to form a capable combat company. We lost him to a sniper in the hedgerows, but from that day on we pulled together like we never had before. Had he survived, I know he would have held us in the same high esteem that we remember him.*

**Richard A. Dickson** "B" Co. 329th

# From Battle of the Bulge to beautiful downtown Short Pump

## DIVERSIONS

By Steve Clark

Al Rinaldi and Charles Madison finally got together this week to talk about the similar combat experiences they had when they were teen-age soldiers fighting German troops in Europe in World War II.

"We both got wounded three days apart in the Battle of the Bulge near the same little town in Belgium, and now we're both living in beautiful downtown Short Pump," Rinaldi quipped while the two men shared war stories the other afternoon. "It's kind of unusual."

Rinaldi, 61, teaches government at Douglas Freeman High School, but is best known in the Richmond area for the championship football teams he coached at Highland Springs High School.

Madison, 62, is employed at Satterwhite Printing Co.

The two men live near each other in the Short Pump area of western Henrico County. But they never had met until this week, even though their war experiences are similar.

Madison, a native of Richmond, enlisted in the Army after he graduated from John Marshall High School.

Rinaldi, a native of Apollo, Pa., near Pittsburgh, also enlisted right out of high school.

"Tell you how small Apollo is," Rinaldi said. "One time my face showed up for about two seconds in a Paramount news reel about the war, and the marquee on the theater in Apollo said, 'Al Rinaldi Stars in the Movies.' My mother had to go three times before she figured out which one I was."

Both Madison and Rinaldi were grenadiers serving with Allied infantry troops that made the final push across Europe toward Germany after the D-Day invasion in June 1944.

"All my buddies called me 'Grenade Al,'" Rinaldi said. "It's a good thing I could throw a grenade, because I was a terrible rifle shooter."

I was a pretty good shot," Madison said. "But I was better with the grenades."

Both men were attached to Gen. George Patton's Third Army, 83rd Division, 3rd Battalion, 329th Regiment. The only difference: Rinaldi was in Company K, and Madison was in Company E.

## Germans 'fought like mad'

The Battle of the Bulge was waged during the winter of 1944-45, and was the Germans' last-ditch effort to keep the Allies from crossing the Rhine River.

"We were told they would fight fanatically," Rinaldi said. "And it was a good scouting report. They were SS troopers who fought like mad."

In January 1945, the Third Army was trying to crack through German lines near Petite Langlir, a town in Belgium.

"It was a small town, but it was an important crossroads," Madison recalled.

At the time, Rinaldi was an 18-year-old staff sergeant, a rank he had been given due to casualties. Madison was 19 and also had received a battlefield promotion to staff sergeant.

On Jan. 10, 1945, Rinaldi and some others in his platoon were in a field near some woods. It was extremely cold and the ground was covered with snow.

Rinaldi was trying to cross that snowy field to knock out a German machine gun nest with a hand grenade. Suddenly, an artillery shell from a German tank exploded near him.

"I was trying to pull the pin out of a grenade," Rinaldi said. "But I couldn't get it out because the pin was frozen. And thank God."

He is thankful because shrapnel from the exploding shell hit his right arm and knocked him unconscious. Had he pulled the pin, the gre-

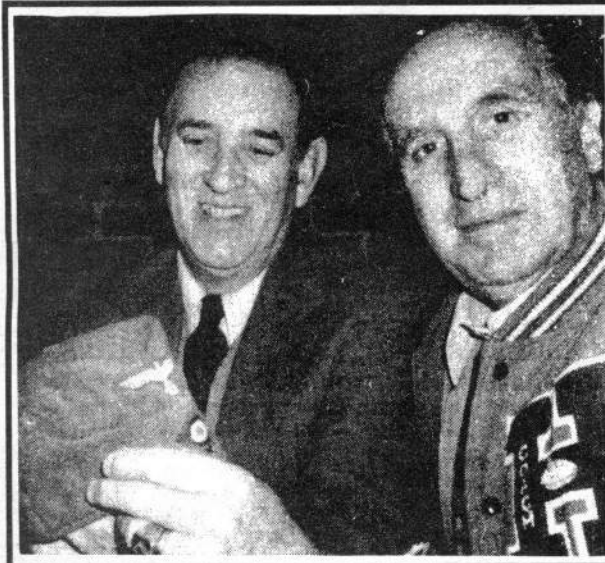
nade would have exploded, and Highland Springs never would have heard of Al Rinaldi.

"When I woke up, I threw off all the equipment on my back and zigzagged back across the field," Rinaldi said.

His right arm was paralyzed for a while because of damage to nerves. He still can't bend it all the way out.

"But no bones were hit," Rinaldi said. "And my wrist was not injured. That's why I could play basketball for the University of Richmond after the war, because the wrist on my shooting arm was not stiff."

That was the end of the war for Rinaldi, who was sent back to the States for rehabilitation at



# A Bronze Star, after 4 decades

Elusive heroic-service medal  
coming Middletown man's way

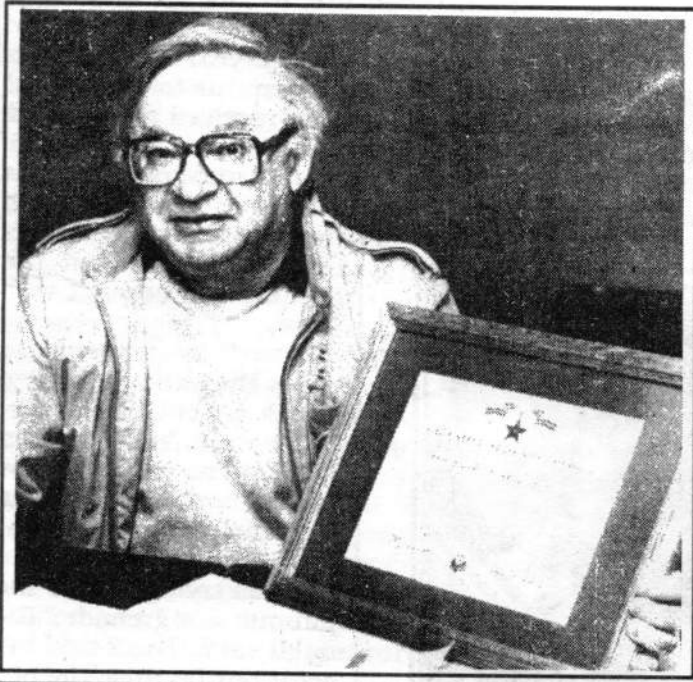
By Irene Wright  
The Cincinnati Enquirer

MIDDLETOWN, Ohio - It's 42 years late, but Middletown businessman David H. Fagen has been awarded his Bronze Star Medal, earned during the Battle of the Bulge in World War II.

year, which he spent in Germany soring through documents for the U.S. War Department.

"Time passed," said Fagen, who moved to the Middletown area about 15 years ago. "I guess I was thankful I survived the battles."

At the time, he wasn't upset, but later he changed his mind: "I thought if I earned the medal, why not make a good try at getting it? He began gathering documentation



McGuire Veterans Hospital in Richmond.

Three days after Rinaldi was wounded, Madison was leading a squad through some woods near Petite Langlir when shrapnel hit him in the leg.

"I fixed my own wound," Madison recalled.

Also, Madison's hands and feet suffered from frostbite.

## Maybe they can play some golf together

So the war ended for him, too, near that small Belgian town. When he got back to the States, he was sent to the treatment center at the Greenbrier Hotel in White Sulphur Springs, W.Va.

"That's where I got my first hole-in-one," Madison said. "I've had three more since then."

Rinaldi and Madison have something else in common these days. Both are planning to retire this year.

"Do you play golf, Al?" Madison asked.

"No. But I'm gonna start," Rinaldi said.

"Good. I'll be your teacher."

(Photo: on previous page Charles Madison (left) shows neighbor Al Rinaldi a German soldier's cap he brought home from World War II.)

about six months ago - starting with his battalion number, which he had forgotten.

From a series of letters back and forth to the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Mo., Fagen learned he had served in the Richardson Task Force, Company F, 2nd Battalion, 330th Infantry Regiment, 83rd Division.

The search brought back memories of when he was a 20-year-old infantryman in Belgium.

"I volunteered to scout the village of Sterpigny in Belgium which another private," Fagen recalled. "We found an American soldier hiding in a barn and took him back to our forces."

The volunteers led the unit back to the barn and a few farmhouses. Germans detected their positions and launched a three-day fight. At the end, Fagen and another soldier captured three Germans.

The Bronze Star certificate will hang in the living room of Fagen and his wife, Rachel, where it can be seen during visits by their children, Seth, an instructor at Harvard University, and Leslie, who is studying at Columbia University.

"As proud as I feel about getting the Bronze Star and wanting it as a symbol for our children, I also have thoughts of many of my fellow soldiers who never left Sterpigny - and there were quite a few." Fagen said.

The medal has many meanings for Fagen, especially as a symbol of "stick-to-it-ness" for his family.

"I hope it will encourage them to persevere in a job and have the courage to follow through," said the 61-year-old Fagen.

Fagen, owner of The Grand Exchange Lounge and the adjoining Alf's Drive-Thru on Breiel Boulevard in Middletown, received a certificate of award Feb. 19 and will get the Bronze Star in about 10 days.

He knew back in January, 1945, that he would receive the medal.

He had volunteered to scout a village and eventually helped rescue a soldier during the battle in the Ardennes, a chain of hills in western Europe. It was known as the Battle of the Bulge, the shape of the enemy line when the Germans made a major offensive.

The medal didn't arrive - not while Fagen recovered from a shrapnel injury to the head in a later battle in Neuss, near the Roehr River, for which he received a Purple Heart. Nor did it arrive the next year, which he spent in Germany soring through documents for the U.S. War Department.

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## *A message to all 83rd members....*

Anyone wishing to purchase shirts, coats, and caps may write to: Vito C. Palazzolo, 20000 Lancaster, Harper Woods, Michigan 48225 for information.

He will send you an application form.

National Lapel Pins, Bolo Ties and Necklaces  
**\$5<sup>00</sup> each**

(Postage and Handling Included) Contact the Association Office

**83rd Reunion** will be held at the Marriott Town Center in Charleston, West Virginia.

The dates are: **August 20-22-23, 1987.**

Start making your plans to attend, now!

## **DELINQUENT DUES NOTICE**

This will serve as the official notification to those of you who have not paid your dues for the year 86/87, which are due on or before August 1st, 1987.

Please refer to your 83rd membership card. If it shows August 31st, 1986, and you have not paid your dues in the last month, you are delinquent. So, respond immediately and provide the financial support that is needed for the continuity of your association.

On the other hand, if you are in such financial circumstances that you require assistance, please notify your Secretary so that a confidential notation can be placed on your record, and we will continue your membership.

Our thanks go out to all of you who responded promptly to our dues requests, and to the many of you so generously contributed additional amounts to help a buddy. It is our sincere hope that those who have not paid their dues to date, will be taking care of this in the very near future.

**Bob Derickson, Executive Secretary-Treasurer.**

## **THUNDERBOLT DEADLINES**

Deadline for ALL articles to be published in Thunderbolt must be at this office by Sept. 10; Dec. 10; March 10; and June 10.

**Robert Derickson, 3749 Stahlheber Road, Hamilton, OH 45013**

**83rd INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION, Inc.**

3749 Stahlheber Road  
Hamilton, OH 45013



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3749 Stahlheber Road

Hamilton, Ohio 45013

★

**OFFICE PHONE:** 513-863-2199

★

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**BULLETIN**

When you move and change your address, **PLEASE**, send me your change of address. It does no good to mail you a Thunderbolt at your old address. **The Post Office WILL NOT forward Third Class Mail.** It will just go to waste. With the cost of printing and postage this is very costly to the Association to have even one go to waste. Send your address change to the Association Office and not to someone else. Thank you all for your cooperation. **Send old and new address.**

Bob