



# HLPMATE BULLETIN

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

SEPTEMBER 18  
2001  
ISSUE 01-5

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Hello, Helpmates,

Received a letter from Joseph W. Summers, son of William Summers, Service Btry, with a request for an address change to 58 Main St., Apt 9, Little Ferry, NJ 07643. He included a donation for Miss Kitty, and requests having the copy of the newsletter to him. He remembers a lot of talk about the group when his father was alive, and how much his dad enjoyed the contact with those of the 284th he knew. He remembers few names, and also the Ralcewich visit in past, when George and Dorothy visited with William at some time in the past. It will be done, and gladly. His dad and I were associated in some of the members minds. They always asked if I was Bill's little brother.

Elmer Worden's bulletin was returned, with the message that he was not known to the PO people. Does anyone know what happened with Chief? His name always hits the chatter at all the reunions.

And there is a new address for Clair Schneider. The new one, and his new phone # is:

9615 WOODS LANE

HEBRON, IL 60034

New Phone (815)648-4155

Clair called on the 28th, his usual happy self. He is working on the reunion, but nothing is for certain at this point. Will need to go to the UP of Michigan and visit daughter on Lake Huron. He is currently having good health, for which he is thankful. He has been in touch with the Stensbergs, but did not elaborate on the contact. Thanks for the info, Clair. Hi to Carole.

Got a note from Dorothy Hartwig. I had made an error in her street address, and this was fixed. She is in her new home, and will soon be on the internet. Her web locate is dothartwig215@cs.com. She had some inquiries as to the history material, and I told her that much of

what she asked about is on our website. Thank you for the correction. I had it right on the other files which I sorted by different fields. Keep in touch.

Brother Gene and wife are up here for a while. He comes up each late summer to visit with his northern relatives, and his daughter, who is disabled with MS. We will bang around some, eat too much, and visit with some of the folks here in St. Louis. Always resets his time clock to get back to some of his roots. One of my other brothers, Dale, who lives in Sebring, FL has developed some balance problems, and is having that evaluated. He is a dance skater, skates regularly, and is the one who lives in the same town which Joe Molnar stays in in the winter. He thought that something had happened to Joe, but was going to look into it, but never has. If you are reading this, Joe, write me a note so that we can stop worrying.

I got a message from John Wasilewski that he had called to get a reservation, and was told that the list was filled up, and that no more reservations were being taken. I got Bud on the line right away, and he found that they had not increased his request for rooms from 20 to 30, and he feels that it will be right in the future. John and Mrs. W. were going to be able to stay 2 nights, but then had to leave for another commitment. I sent him Bud's 2 E-messages, and maybe the situation will be resolved at once.

My sister in law got the intestinal flu on her visit here. She about dies when she has to vomit, and I know what she means. Was in bed one whole day of the 2 she was here. Got a call from her today (9th) when she got back to FL, and she thinks she will live. It was good to have them visit me. They are the ones I stay

with when I go south.

And Dorothy Hartwig mailed me on line, that I had fixed her address on the newsletter. I found that I had put an extra number in the zip-code, otherwise all is OK. She is going to get in touch with Jerri Polson in the near future. They don't live too very far apart.

Am going to the southern lands tomorrow for a few days. I will catch up on this issue, and try to get a small issue out before reunion time.

Back in the saddle again. The trip south was only partly successful. I had spent about a week in New Smyrna Beach cleaning up the few things I always try to do at the condo so that was accomplished. I ate my usual fish sandwiches from Sea Harvest, and whiled away the time with other bad habits. I put in a new computer and printer there, so that I will be able to work with my hobbies a little more easily. There were several shark biting incidents while I was there, It has always been known that there are sharks in the water. The fishing boats throw all their excess bait into the ocean at Ponce Inlet when they return from a days fishing and the sharks are waiting for the easy meal which this produces. The area is a must for the surfers, and they have know of the shark presence, but ignore it. Most of them just paddle back out for another run on the top of a wave after being nipped by a fish. Not for me. I am a motel camper, and a warm pool surfer.

I went over to the west side after a week at NSB, and tried to reach George and Dorothy Ralcewich. Got their answering machine, and left a message. Called again that night, and got the same result. I went over to Tarpon Springs a few days later, and got in touch with the Crismonds, and we had a few hours together on several days. Marge and Ray beat me at cards, we again ate too much, and I got the business accomplished which took me over to that area. I called Paul Martin, and he tells me that his doctor has not been kind with his auto privileges. His daughter takes him around to his haunts, and he helps at the local church with chores

in the church building where his son-in-law is the minister. He is in reasonably good health, and is working out the various problems which are with him since the death of Millie in the recent past. I was glad to talk with Paul. He was one of our steadies before Millie became ill.

Ray called George while I was over there, and got no answer. I hope that the Ralcewich family problems lessen.

I sent Bud DeFeo an E-mail asking for the final attendance so that I can make up the name tags which I try to get done ahead of time. And I will also get the other lists and data printed up for the reunion. This newsletter will be a short one, but I do want to get it out to see if we may not be able to get another person or two to make the trip to A.C. We will have fewer chances to meet as we grow older.

Bud has gotten a meeting room which will hold about 60 people, but he has not found out how much this will cost us. I have been through this before, and I think he will be surprised to see the bottom line cost. In such an open spot as the Casino, we might be able to work without a meeting room, but it is certainly handy to have a spot in which to visit, and rehash the war. Bud is still working for us, and will do the best he can. I will have more on this later.

I had a telephone visit from the grandson of Chester Brownlee (Tony Brownlee) on the 28th. He called to thank us for the great amount of information he got from my recommendations and from the Bn website. He tells me that Chester is in the Vet. Adm. Hospital in Idaho, and that they are working with him regarding some intensive therapy at this time.

Good luck, Chester. Keep us posted.

Got a note from a No. Illinois Helpmate, Alice Edwards. She has been busier than when she was in her career. She is always on the go. She sends a donation for the kitty, and my thanks to her for that. Her husband would have been 84 this year. She maintains good health for now.

Thanks for the donation, Alice. The newsletter needs help, too. Write once in a while.

I have E-mailed Bud, and he tells me that he is arranging to have a meeting room during the day for a couple of the days, and he will take care of some snacks for the room. He is trying to get me the list of those expected, and I want

to put that in this issue of the newsletter, so that you all will know who to expect to see at the meeting.

I just got an E-mail from Shirley Dawson, and she reported to me that the Nightingale girls have just told her that their mother, Joan, has had a severe stroke, and is unresponsive at this time. Joan has had several problems in the near past, and has also had a diabetic problem which was currently under control as I understand it. But she has been quite confined to her immediate environment, and unable to ambulate freely. The Nightingale girls have been frequent visitors to our reunions, and I wish that this terrible occurrence had not happened, but we have no control over these things, and we must continue as best we can. I am fearful that Joan will not survive this horrible complication, and I am sure that the girls would appreciate your best thoughts and your prayers for their mother. Please keep us posted, and I will report further when I have a further update on Joan's condition.

I got a call from Jerri Polson this AM with the news that she cannot make the reunion in A.C. She has always come with Clair Schneider and she has been out of touch with him for some time. She does not want to fly, and the companion which she traveled with in the past is also not able to make it. In any event, she wishes me to greet fondly all those attending, and thinks she may be able to make next years meeting if it is anywhere in the area. She is doing well, works 2 or 3 days a week keeping books for the family business. We will miss Jerri, but certainly understand the facts.

And another E-mail from Shirley Dawson was received, and Joan Nightingale has not survived her severe stroke. She expired Sat. night (9/1/01) after another apparent stroke. I am supposed to hear more from Margaret, so I will add more if there are more facts to report.

Well, I spent a very lazy labor day today. I had several of the kids over visiting, and they beat me badly at cards. They always do, but they get a kick out of mauling the old man. The weather was extra nice, and the promised showers did not show up at all. Now my labor starts. I have to get this bulletin out, and prepare to get my bones to AC for the reunion.

I am still hoping to hear from Bud before Wednesday, so that I will have 2 days to copy, label, and mail the bulletins. I had hoped for much earlier mailing, but it didn't happen.

I just called the Taj Mahal, and got a royal runaround. They gave me a few names of people who were registered, and not much more. They gave me several reasons why no more was allowed to be given, and I have had the same excuses given in years past, but I poorly understand it. I will wait one more day for an E-mail from Bud, then will send this on, or will wait until after I return, whichever comes last.

I did not get Bud's report, so I will put more substance in this issue, and give you the Taj story when I mail this.

Over the week-end received phone calls from Pete Sawicki, and Charles Zimmer letting me know that they expected to join us in AC.

Now, to start the reunion news. 5 or 6 of us were expected the day before the reunion. Don and Betty Donaldson, Jean and Bud DeFeo, Ray and Margie Crismond, Bill and Marion Hartley, and I arrived on the 10th. George and Dorothy Ralcewich also arrived then, but a goof somewhere in the system had left their names off the list, so they had to stay in another motel on the Boardwalk. We had no spot to land in the first day, so we met accidentally on the Casino floor, and commiserated on our losings, or grinned big if we were winning. Not many grins, but we expected that.

Bill Hartley had his own special grin. He had just been cleared of a cancer diagnosis that very week, and was told to quit seeing the VA people with his medical complaints. Marion appeared to be happy with life, and was glad to be in company with her 284th friends.

Marge Crismond had no real complaints. She had hit a few machines, and her early slot luck was very good. Mel and Betty Donaldson had no real problems to air, and they started making some, trying to beat the machines.

Bud and Jean DeFeo were all around the place, trying to arrange, or perfect, the situation at the Taj. I had very good luck, early, but it had begun to level out by evening.

The food was very good. The general motif of many of the places was geared to the New York Deli style, and the sandwiches offered were not

Only too large for my eyes, but also for my stomach. But I managed to get enough to eat, and I suspect that I didn't gain too much.

In the late AM, you all know what news was on the TV. We were fearful that many of those who had registered may not be able to attend. However during the day most of those who were expected did in fact show up.

During the day the following Helpmates did show up, and were registered.

George and Dorothy Ralcewich

Harvey and Ann Smith

Herb and Betty Smith

Warren and Irene Ellis

Charles and Ruth Zimmer

David and Virginia Hawkins

Shirley Dawson, daughter, and friend.

Tom and Lydia Galati, Bud's friend

Pete and Rose Sawicki

Bob and Sumiko Rosen

Jim and Mildred Carney

Jim Carney is our battalion "baby", and this is just the 2nd reunion that he has attended. It was good to see he and Mildred there.

Warren and Irene Ellis will go from the reunion to their Florida nest after the meeting. We will see more of them this winter when we get together at the reunions we have down there on the west coast.

Bob and Sumiko Rosen were around a lot, and I can reassure you that our "tontine bottle" has survived to date. Sumiko loves the water, and she spent time at the hotel pool. Bob looked around in vain for his friend, Lloyd Lage, but finally gave up.

Shirley Dawson showed up with her daughter, Peggy Van Hooser, and one of her good friends, Muriel Cranif. She has not become the greatest gambler, but she did pull a few handles, and tap a few buttons. Told me that she didn't win a thing, but didn't lose a lot. Her son-in-law showed up later in the evening, after catching a ticket in Virginia for not wearing a seat belt, and had added another hit for not having a car registration slip. So he started out in the hole, but again, he had a good time.

I have a new area code for the Zimmers:

(859)223-7667 is their new phone #. Their son was getting a second wife over the weekend, but they were in better hands with

us, they said. More later about this fine couple.

The Hawkins' added greatly to our enjoyment of the meeting. They were going to Las Vegas shortly after this get together, where Hawkie will add to his fortune, good or bad. They were healthy, voiced no real troubles, and were their usual friendly selves.

The Smith boys and their wives were early attendees. Herb, or was it Harv, said that his chief problem in life was being called the other's name. I told him to be careful. His twin may die, and they would bury him. Doubt that, though.

Bud and Jean were joined by friends from NJ, Tom and Lydia Galati. They have been best friends for years, and Bud invited them to our gathering.

The food at the Taj was very good. There were several spots which were modeled after New York Deli's, and the food was plentiful, and tasty. I ate in several of them, and was well pleased. The only bad food I got was a BLT at the HARD ROCK CAFÉ, which lasted me all night.

The Rose Room A we were assigned was so spacious. They had really set it up a lecture type room, but we got a table in there, and were very comfortable. The room was usually empty, because there was little time to make any plans, and because of the terrible news which was coming from all the TV's in the casino. Our only contact usually, was the chance meetings we had on the casino floor when you ran across some of our people.

We paid a registration fee of \$10.00 per person, as we anticipated a charge of about \$150+ for the meeting room. However, the gods were with us, and they later waived any charge for the room. We were, however, not allowed to take any food or drink into the room which was not furnished by the hotel. Coffee was \$25 per gallon, plus tax and service charges, and even the lightest snacks were \$12 to 18 a pound, again plus tax, and the service charges. So we were drinkers on the hotel at the slots, where a drink was offered by roaming people. You were expected to tip the nice lady, of course, but that happens everywhere.

The Boardwalk was exactly as we had walked in the Ocean City visits. Many curio shops, T-Shirt shops, candy shops, T-Shirt shops, curio

shops, and candy shops. Several of our group went to a sort of museum which had some historic fingerprints, and which was interesting, and free. But the weather we had was lovely, and the ocean breeze was quite soft and cool.

All in all, we had a lovely time there. We had no idea that it was difficult to visit much, but we did enough of that to catch up until next year.

The Thursday night dinner was held in one of the buffet areas. They put us all at one table, and we ate our fill of prime rib, and almost any thing we wanted. Ant they had about 61 dessert choices, so we all ate several of them, and got more calories than we needed.

Getting away was a great problem. My plane in Philly was not going to go, so I got an extension on my car rental, and was going to drive it home. The Zimmers were hung up by a 3-leg itinerary, with hours of wait between— if it went at all. So I volunteered to take them to Lexington on my way through the USA. And I did a good job, as long as they were driving. In a town called St. Albans, WV we stopped in about dusk to eat at the Cracker Barrel to eat. When we left, we got onto I64, and were tooling along when the road became filled with stopped cars, and mine didn't quite stop, and I hit the car in front of me. Waited around for a policeman, who had told the lady I hit not to move her car, and was mentally bashing myself in the head. When the police finally got there, he took a statement from the lady I hit, and just then another 3 car crash happened on lane 3 of this stretch of I64. He called in to the office, and told someone to get someone out to put up a warning sign, or they would be working accidents all night. A wrecker put my disabled auto on a flat bed, did the same to the 2 ended crash of the other side of the highway, and started to take the Zimmers and I to a local motel for the night. While we were enroute, they gave yet another accident report, and the policeman was rather upset. No one had yet gotten to put out a warning. On our way to the motel, there was a yellow arrow at the beginning of the barrels they place to constrict lanes, and at the same spot, the

lanes were cut down from 2 to 1, and there was lots of rushing there. I do not see that much could have been done, but I do wish that we had known that the possibility of problems was present. None of us were hurt, nor were any ones in the other car, but I sure was sorry that it happened.

My son drove in from St. Louis and took his errant dad, the Zimmers, and the exactly same type of vehicle which I had just crashed from the accident scene, to Lexington, then to our homes in St. Louis.

So much for that. I am going to put some news from the Nightingale girls in this issue, and try to get this in the mail.

So much for another reunion, another chance to see good friends, and another year added to our already advancing ones. The next reunion will be in the Detroit area, so get your schedules ready for this one. Mel Donaldson is going to try to get us set for the next reunion. It will be more expensive, in all surety, but also that much more precious for those of us who are nearing our last visit with old friends.

Take care, and stay healthy.

JBS

*In Loving Memory of*

*Jeanne T. "Joan" Nightingale*

*Date of Birth*  
June 13, 1922  
New York, NY

*Date of Death*  
September 1, 2001  
Onondaga Hill, NY

*Services at*  
Norris Funeral Home  
Wednesday, September 5, 2001  
11:00 AM

*Officiating*  
Reverend Keith R. Shinaman

*Interment*  
Onondaga County Veterans Cemetery

