

**RONNIE'S MESSAGE CENTER JOHN B. SUMMERS 12658 ALSWELL LN. ST LOUIS, MO. 63128-2509**  
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### GREETINGS, HELPMATES,

Happy holiday wishes to all from the Message Center. Here in the midwest we have had a warm, dry fall – so far – and it just doesn't seem like it could be Thanksgiving already.

As I had told you in the last issue, I received a nice letter from Margaret Nightingale with some news of her current life. She has been taking a massage therapy course and has just finished passing the State Board Exam in her field on the first try. As she is building up a practice, and that doesn't happen in a day, she will do some Special Ed teaching at the residential center in which she has been employed for the past 9 years. She will be able to teach 184 days yearly, have regular school vacations and also have the summer off. With these props, she will also be free to work with her profession, and build up a following. You will do OK, Margaret.

Margaret has had her maiden name restored, and is legally Margaret Nightingale.

Her mother, Joan, has been having a rough time of it lately. She was in the hospital with a lot of fluid retention, but has come out of that in really good shape. She refuses to be confined to a wheel chair, and gets around with some bit of difficulty. Sister Carol has been visiting lately, and the 3 of them were going to Harrisburg the weekend following.

Carol is going to Florida to visit her daughter Sasha and family before returning to Colo.

Margaret sends greetings to all the group, and remembers fondly the reunions the family were able to make.

Thanks for the letter, Margaret. Good luck on your future endeavors.

No new news to report. Just got back from Florida, and had a nice visit there. I really went down to check on the condo, as it had been damaged during the recent storm. The adjuster

had been there, and I reached him, and he told me what to expect for the damages. I was not thrilled, but they don't really expect to woo you with their beneficence. I had one of the windows which had been damaged replaced, cleaned the place up a little more, and left the area, far from thrilled.

I went over to the west coast, and had a nice visit with the Crismonds. We had our usual Mhing game, and Ray beat Marge and I out, on the last hand. We chatted, talked with George Ralcewich, and decided not to have our usual get-together on such short notice. I did a little business in New Port Richey, and made a call to say "hi" to one of the members of the Knoxville FAM trip. Went back to brother Gene's house, had lunch with Jeep Rafeld and one of his friends, and came back to St. Louis. It was a short trip, and I was glad to be back.

I did have one exasperating happening on the trip. I often have one of the excellent fish sandwiches offered at one of the oceanfront eateries. It is a busy place, and I had to park a little bit differently this time, and on my way out of the place the diving seagulls diverted my attention, and I tripped over a bright blue parking block, and reinjured everything that had been clobbered by hurricane Irene. This time I hit the ER, and had xrays and other things done, and found no further aggravation of the previous damages. I have eaten there at many times, and the birds do bother, but they are there all the time. Learned to watch where my feet hit the ground. Don't get old!!!!!!

Jeep Rafeld and a friend joined me at China Jade just before I came back north. Never miss a chance to glom down 2300 calories.

The Ralcewich family had a very busy week just at the time I came down, so I just had a phone call to them this trip. I also called Mar-



tha Ellis, and unless I have the wrong number, I think she may be away. I called several times and got no answer, or machine. I will stop by to see her when I come down in January. She stays busy with church and friends.

Got back to St. Louis without further trouble. Well, while the plane was landing, the pilot pulled the plane up, and announced that a plane was on the landing runway, and he felt safer just going around once. Worked out fine, and it didn't even hit the evening news. Dan was there to take me home after my travels.

I received several returned bulletins on my return. Both were from widows who have 2 residences, and I always send to both about the times I suspect they will snowbird. So I guess all got their bulletins. Wasn't it a pretty issue. I had no problems at all with the copying, and I have learned to cure the flashing wrench by superficial cleaning of the lens system. We have a healthy kitty fund now, but not a ridiculous one. They get enough from us anyhow.

The weather is beginning to turn a bit chilly. That is the seasonal way, and it has been much too warm, and very much too dry this year. We had one good rain in October, and not any decent precipitation in Nov.

I received a request from Doris Smith, widow of Lester, who requests that her name be removed from the mailing list. She has enjoyed reading the Bulletin in the past, but now rarely sees a name she recognizes. I understand completely, Doris, and will do as you request, but be assured that you may be placed back on the roster if you request it. You and Lester were attendees at many of the functions, and will always be in our memory.

The son of Bill Nelson sent me an E-mail late last month with news of his dad's (Wilfred Nelson) death. Wilfred (Bill) has had a protracted illness, and was a frequent visitor at our functions in the past. A nephew recently sent a family history which prominently honored Bill's war record.

I will keep Millie's name on our roster, and will welcome any of the family to join us at our reunions in the future.

Those of us in Helpmate join you in your

sorrow at Bill's death, and our deep sympathy and condolences are offered for your loss.

The recent Bulletin for George Ford was sent back, as he has probably gone to his winter home in Daytona Beach area. I will be down in January, George, so expect a call from the Message Center, and enjoy the recent Bulletin which I sent to So. Atlantic Avenue.

I also received a nice note from the son of Wanda Kiszka with news that his father had died in the late 80's, and that I had been sending the newsletter to his mother. She had also died several years ago, and the son, with whom she lived, had forgotten to let me know. I certainly understand how that can happen, but I will remove her name from the roster after this issue goes to the Helpmates. I certainly do not want to burden any of our group with unnecessary mail, and the Kiszka family has our sympathy on the loss of both parents.

Last Sunday, Nov. 30, my younger sister Mitzi passed away after a short illness. She was a resident of Angie La., and had been in some medical distress for several years.

My three brothers met me in Metairie, La. On Tuesday, Dec. 2, and we stayed over for her burial on Wednesday. Mitzi was 68, and she had 3 sons and a daughter. Two of the boys are physicians, and the other has a PhD in psychology. The daughter teaches handicapped children in La. Although her death was not unexpected, it was sudden, and we were all greatly saddened. It was nice to see my relatives down there, but the circumstances under which the meeting occurred were not the best. We are born to die. And we do so, at regular intervals.

An E-mail from John Wasilewski reached me with information relayed to him from Pat Maier concerning the German Death Camps. He gave me a locate, and considerable info was on the net about the various labor and death camps.

He went to see Norb Obecny, gave him some of his CDROMs of all of his pictures, and made scans of some which Norb had. He is going to made the disks available to me. John is a real go-getter, has the know-how to do these exotic things, and enjoys getting involved. We are lucky to have such interested relatives of



our members. Very lucky.

I received an e-mail from Bud and Jean De-Feo with the sad news that a son of Jean's died of his malignancy. It occurred in November, and has saddened the family group. Bud asks that you remember the son in your prayers, and forgive him if he neglects card sending this year. We understand, Jean and Bud. If we can do anything to help, let us know.

I have received more returned bulletins. Sarah Allen's was returned with the note that no such address existed, so I will try again. If any of you know how Sarah may be reached, let me know.

And James Thurmond's bulletin was returned also. I re-sent that to his Arizona locate, and hope it reaches him OK.

Got a call from Charles and Ruth Zimmer on the 7th. Both had cataract surgery in the near past, and Charlie had glaucoma surgery as well. They went to Alaska earlier, and Ruth came back with Alaskan Flu. The ailment lasted for a long time, but she finally whipped it. Charles' brother also had it. They were going on a S. American cruise, but have just about decided to postpone. Charles asks me to send a recent roster for Xmas card purposes, and so I did.

I will finish this issue with a list of the Xmas cards which I have gathered, and will attempt a recap of news gathered therefrom. Most of the greetings asked me to wish all the members a joyous holiday season, and I will not repeat this as it will be assumed. Also, many of the cards contained donations for the kitty, and this will be omitted in my remarks.

Bob Rosen writes that his inability to get good plane and auto reservations. He was going to the Caribbean, but his reservations there were cancelled by the arrival of one of the hurricanes scheduled for the area. He is doing a lot less in the business, and is proud of the job the younger generation is doing, keeping the enterprise afloat which he began so many years earlier. Health is good, family is fine. Sumiko is probably going to Japan in the spring, and he will take off for another try in the islands if possible.

Charles and Margaret Cody regret having missed the last few get-togethers, but will do some better next year. Doctors take up much of

their free time, it seems. Sounds familiar.

The Hawkins family send news of their wanderings thruout the past year. Early they tried their luck in Vegas, and found some of the bad variety this trip. To Philadelphia area in Feb. for family visits. Home in March, and to their Wi. Home thereafter. In May they meandered the area around Yellowstone, studied the geology there, and some of the history of the area. Later, Virginia's brother and his wife joined them for another try at Vegas, results a little better. In August, granddaughter Erica spent a week at a hockey training clinic, and they did their duty at that time. Just after this trip they flew to Philly, enjoyed their smallest grandchild on this trip. Then to Branson, and the reunion, and then a flight to Hawaii, and a 10 day cruise of the islands.

Thanksgiving was spent in Kenosha with family, and then back to Texas. What a busy body, David. Don't get old.

Pat Maier sends news that things are going a lot better at this time. He has great hopes for getting to the next reunion. I get an occasional E-mail from his daughter, keeping me up on the news from the northwest.

I also get an occasional E-mail from Eunice Tibbott. She received the news of Bill Nelson's death from Millie, and notes that Bill and her late husband, Dick, were good buddies. On her way to a Branson vacation she was in St. Louis and enjoyed the areas she knew from when she worked here in 1946. They were in Branson 3 days, and saw 7 shows.

Don and Betty Donaldson wanted to tell what a nice time they had at the reunion. Their oldest grandchild recently got married, and they were thrilled at the enjoyment of this occurrence. They will see the group in west Florida in mid-January.

Jeep and Jerry Rafeld hopes for the best at this time of the year, and will hope to see me when I get down in January.

Norb and Marie Obecnny wanted to wish all of us a prosperous, healthy 2000. Norb and John Wasilewski have gotten together on some of the pictures of the old days.

George and Dorothy Ralcewich were sorry that they had so little time to visit with my last visit to Florida. They will change all that, and



ills of the aging body. They are awaiting the annual January trip, probably so that they can beat me up at Mhing. I haven't been practicing for it, so they probably will. Love it.

Got a short note from Tony and Dee Lembo with Xmas wishes, and, and good hopes for the next century.

Al and Minnie DeMonaco send their usual colorful greeting, and Al wonders if I remember the Xmas Eve when Capt. Kittell delivered a problem birth of a French baby. Sure do, Al, and I have gotten Christmas cards from that girl's sister for 4 years. Al and Min made a trip to Italy this past summer, and had a great time over there.

He also wonders if I remember going into a German home where the father was holding a child who told us "Heil Hitler". Don't remember that, Al, but I also don't ever remembering having seen a German Nazi. They cleaned up their act when the 284th got over there.

Rae Marie and Dick Bozzo passed on the news that Rae's cataract operations were successful, and her other medical problems are remaining in remission at this time. Great news, Rae Marie. Last year certainly was a good one for you folks. May your good fortune remain for the future.

Lois Weary has been a busy one lately. She has gathered 6 grandchildren, and has one great-grandchild. Tells me there are 18 of the Weary's when they all get together.

Lois went to Niagara Falls in September, did a camping trip in New England in October, and in November she took a bus trip to New York City to do some shopping, etc. Busy, as I said. Keep it up, Lois. Keeps you young.

Janet Kleinman did a neat job on her greeting. She printed it up special, and sent it "To Doc". A good job. I will have to take lessons in January when I see Moe and Janet. I will have more time this trip, and I intend seeing all of the west coast renegades several times.

I trust that Moe and Janet are doing well. I have several of the people down there who should know, and they tell me that Moe gets around a little less, but seems to be doing OK. Certainly hope this is the situation, folks. But I guess we all are less active than we were, even a few years ago.

Bee Beck writes in her note about getting a greeting from Bob Rosen, one of her Bob's good friends from "B" battery. She has many pleasant memories of this friendship, one of her late husbands most valued. At last news, Bee was doing well, and was active and healthy. Keep it up, Bee. And keep shining those floors.

Harv and Ann Smith were sorry to have to miss the reunion, but it couldn't be helped. They will certainly try to make it next year, if at all possible. I certainly hope so, too. You are missed.

Bill and Ginger Shick are having some health problems. Ginger has had some trouble getting around, and Bill tells me that he is on a steady diet of oxygen. Both of these conditions will slow anyone down, Bill, and I am glad that you remember past reunions fondly. Keep your good attitude, and hang in there.

I had become concerned about good old buddy Fred Beltz. I usually heard from Fred about 3 or 4 times a year letting me know how his memorial squad was doing. I have not heard any thing at all for months, and hoped things were OK. I got his cherished blessing, and his Xmas greeting, and felt quite relieved upon getting it. Write every 3 or 4 months, friend, or you will cause me to get gray hair from the worry. I trust things go well with you, Fred. If our next reunion meets in Knoxville, try to join some of the others from around you, and gather with us.

Charles and Ruth Zimmer hope to enjoy a clearer 2000 because of the successful work on their ailing eyes. They are already planning the next reunion, luckily rather close to them. Charles volunteers any help he or Ruth can be in the planning of that event. Thanks, Zimmers, you may get a call. Will see.

By the way, I have just changed your street address to Roxburg, not Roxbury. Is that the correct address?

Today I received a neat computer letter from the Warren Ellis home in Manasota, Fl. I have never heard of Manasota. Is that a mixture of Manatee and Sarasota?

In any event, enjoyed the splendid job you did, and will have to enlist your talents in making niceties for the newsletter.



The message on the publication stressed that the peace and beauty of the season was available to all of us, and the hope that it will remain the entire life span of the receiver was the hope of the sender.

Thank you so much for the extra work this put you to.

Gerry and Mugs Stensberg send greetings and more thanks for the reunion. Mugs is having eye problems, and has gotten a video screen which she can use to better advantage. She also uses the Milwaukee library to get talking books, and lets someone else read for her.

Clara and Stan Chmura send greetings, and I am going to assume things are going well with them, as they didn't tell me otherwise.

Don and Zelma Rigney are sorry to have missed the reunion, and hope they will be able to make the next one. Again, no reason to assume that they are undergoing any health problems at this time.

Jerri Polson enjoyed what little of the reunion she was able to get to, and hopes to make the next one more completely.

Bill and Millie Stepanek also missed the late reunion for good reason. Bill was found to have some renal stones in his bladder, and required several sessions of ultrasound treatments to get them removed. Then he had other associated renal problems which will be attacked next month.

The Stepanek's were in west Florida some time in the past, and visited all the attractions in Bradenton, Sarasota, and the west coast region. They hit the time between 2 of the hurricanes, so the trip was very enjoyable. Their family increased by 3 new great-grandchildren last spring, and they have another one on the way.

Herb and Betty Smith did a lot of traveling in the past year, including a 50th college reunion, then a 50th wedding anniversary with all the family at Fenwick Island. They will be expecting a fourth grandchild early next year, so this year has been a great one. Health is in good shape after Herb's early year problems, and they hope that all of the group enjoy a beautiful Xmas season, and a better 2000.

Martha Ellis has been blessed with excellent 82nd year health, and with the help of

wonderful friends, good family, and genuinely great memories welcomes the new century.

Joe and Flo Zielinski send greetings, and the news that all is fairly well in the health area. Joe tells me that all of the medical problems I gave to Flo in a recent newsletter are in fact his own. Sorry about that, Joe. Told you that I was getting Alzheimers. Joe was unable to get a knee replacement because of blood pressure conditions, so he just doesn't walk as far, or as fast as he usually did. Life drags on.

Shirley Dawson comments that my busy life all over the country keeps me busy, but she thinks I should slow down a little. Shirl remains in good physical condition and with the help of her great friends, she is content to slow down a lot. She asks that I give a very special "hello" to the West Florida group, some of whom have been very close to she and Frank in the past. I can tell you that your names come up a lot in our discussions.

And Shirl sends a donation to Miss Kitty with check # 1999. Now that is a great gesture. It is a good gift, Shirl, with a good check number.

That takes care of the card and greeting action for this year. The cards were all acknowledged, I hope, and I ask your forgiveness if I have neglected, or misreported anything, as I have cards galore, and I lose track of lots of things lately.

A general wish from the Message Center to all of the Helpmates is for a glorious and enjoyable Holiday Season, and a happy, healthy, prosperous New Year, New Century and New Millennium. Can only say that once a lifetime.

In the mail recently I received a thank you note to the group for the memorial sent to Millie Nelson on the death of Wilfred. I try to send a note to the survivors of our deceased Helpmates, and will continue this in the future. I had received notice from one of Bill's sons of the death, and acted accordingly.

Well, up jumped the Devil. The copier did #1 page, and quit. Will do my best to get this out in a day or two. Don't get old. That is true for anything, I guess.

Bye for this century.

AS EVER  
JBS



Really – Up did jump the devil. I had printed Page #1 and had to put in a new toner tube, and got absolutely nothing. I readjusted the toner tube, twisted all the movable knobs, and finally picked the brain of the business machine repair place, who know that I am on a limited budget, and still required a visit to tell me that a vital part, a high voltage current generator, had blown, and the machine was not usable in the present state. He tells me that he has not had a Ricoh 5010 in his shop for 10 – 15 years, but that he will look for the part, and could possibly find one, but not yesterday. So our poor copier is on it's last legs, and will have to get an essential part, or it is in it's grave. I will keep you posted via this copy of the newsletter, and I will put out a bulletin on the world-wide web about it's failure. In the meantime, I will continue putting this issue in neutral, and keep updating it as I can't send it yet.

No mail on the 22nd of December, so most of the greetings will already have been received by now. It kept me hopping, for sure, and this machine setback is really a disaster. I suppose I should have been a few days earlier, but you know what they say about hindsight. In any event, I will keep writing until the end. I have 581,41 in the kitty, and I will take this to Kinko's or the like next Monday, if the part I need is not forthcoming. I guess I should not crab too much about the machine. I have put nearly 610,000 copies on the thing, and it had been turned back before I got it.

Joan Koss sends thanks for sending her the bulletin. Glad to do so. She wonders if I had read "*The Greatest Generation*" and I must confess that I have not. I am in the middle of "*Citizen Soldiers*" by Ambrose. There are lots of new publications out this year.

Clair Schneider just called to pass along the cheer of the season. He and Carol do well, and are sort of home bodies during the cooler weather. We discussed the poor copier, and he thinks he realizes the dangers of growing older. Your parts wear out. Even the ones which do not wear out, slow down. He wishes me to wish all of his friends seasons greetings, and New Year wishes for health and happiness. We also discussed the copier problem,

and He agrees that things are manufactured with planned obsolescence in mind, and that won't change. I agree.

Thanks for the call, Clair.

I received a nice card from the Entiles, also in Tuesday's mail. They recently got together with Roy Frederickson and his wife, and with Lloyd Lage for a gabfest. Had a nice visit. They hated missing Branson, but just couldn't make it. Next year, maybe. They are healthy, and think of us often.

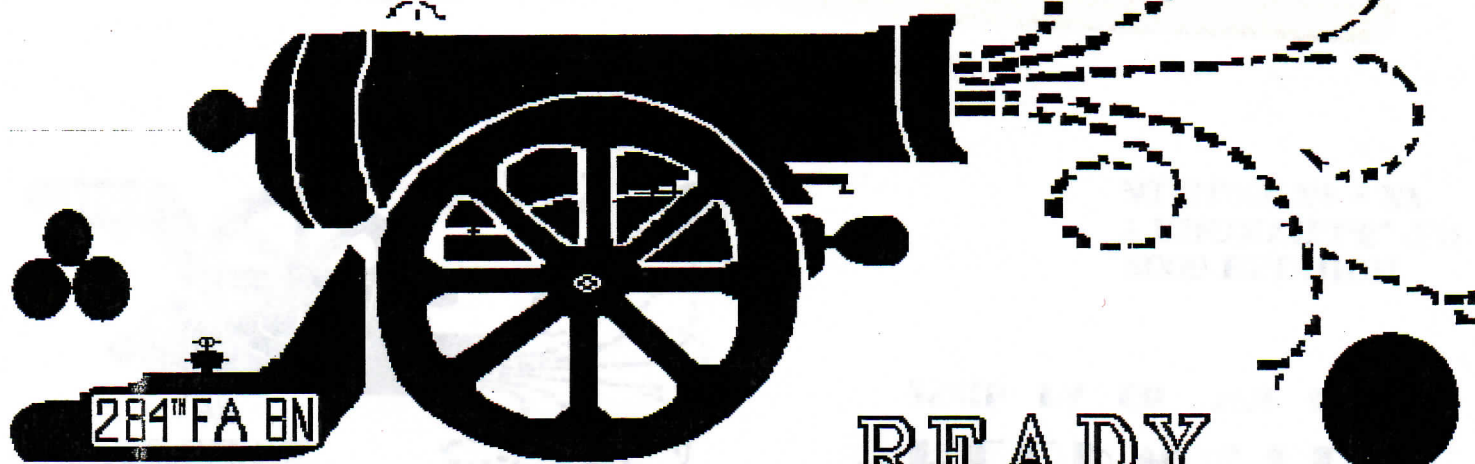
I just called the repair establishment, and Jerry, the boss, is going to copy the newsletter for us, and then will try to give us some help, so that we can get afloat again. As Clair and I were discussing this this morning, as goes the newsletter, so goes the Helpmate Battalion organization, as we now know it. Will do my best to keep things going.

As ever,

JB



HELPMATE



READY

**HOLIDAY GREETINGS**

**TO ALL**

**FROM**

**THE MESSAGE CENTER**



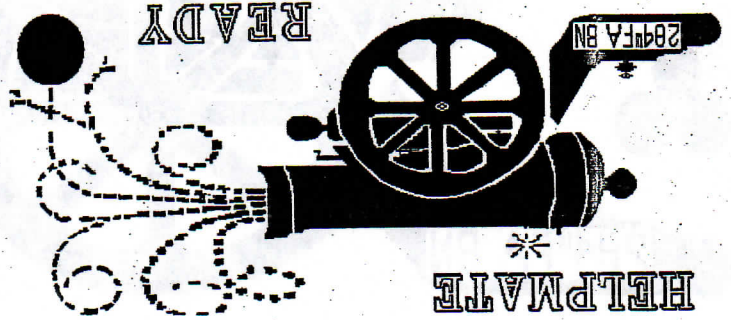
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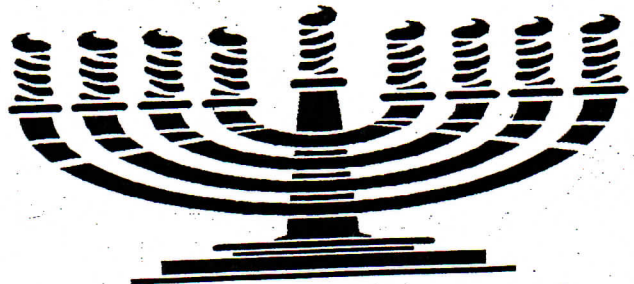
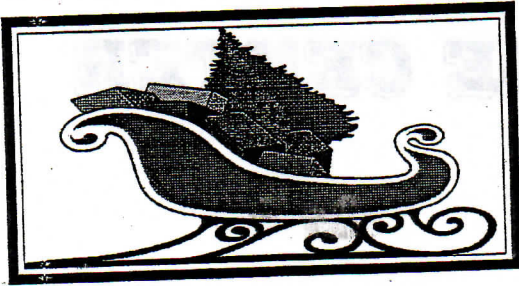


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HOLIDAYS

HAPPY



Issue 99-7