



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

2005

ISSUE 05-3

RONNIE'S MESSAGE CENTER JOHN B. SUMMERS, 5494 ABERDOUR LN. ST LOUIS, MO. 63129
INTERNET LOCATION : HLPMATE284@AOL.COM TEL. (314)845-2086
284th FA BN WEBSITE: [HTTP://HOMETOWN.AOL.COM/FABN284/INDEX.HTML](http://HOMETOWN.AOL.COM/FABN284/INDEX.HTML)

Greetings, Helpmates,

Well, for the first time, I made another mistake. I spell checked the newsletter, and thought I had corrected everything, but I noticed a few glitches when I had copied it. The spell checker checks spelling, but it will let words go through which are spelled right, but a typo which is a word sails right through. So a word like trip will be correct, even though you meant trim, or trio. And I didn't put a space on the back cover between "robinsis". That was supposed to say "Robins is. I will do the same this issue, tho. Forgive.

I received an E-mail from the daughter of Harry Karis informing me that Harry had died the 31st day of March. He had been ill for some time, but lost his long battle with lung cancer on that day. I expressed the condolences of our group for this great loss, and invited her to be in touch if we could be of help. I always invite the immediate family to continue their contacts with us, and I handle this as they wish.

A few returned bulletins and address changes.:

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Glenn Bennett | 945 Kertesz Dr. Clinton, Oh 44216-9472 |
| William Mawhinney | 850 Beech St. Apt. 402 Washington, Pa 15301-6523 |

I have re-sent the newsletter to these new addresses, and will change our roster addresses if they are not returned.

I have received E-mail from David Hawkins reporting that he was unable to reach Elmer Worden (Chief) by phone. Apparently he had a problem reading the phone # and needed to get the correct one. Chief had been in the hospital with a significant heart problem, and I did not include this in the last issue. I gave him a different phone #, and he was able to contact him at

that time. Chief recovered enough to get back home, and his correct phone contact is (715) 799-4524. Dave will advise me of developments.

Hawkie still wonders if a reunion is possible for this year. I have had a few positive responses to my feelers, but nothing certain at this time.

I received a call from Bill Stepaneks daughter who told me that Bill died early in May (7th). He had a severe heart attack, and did not survive. I had asked her if her mother would like to stay on the roster, and she thought she would like to get the newsletter. I passed sympathy and condolences on to the daughter, and asked John W. if he would send me the Chicago Tribune Obit notice. I will try to put more info about it in this issue. We are getting fewer and fewer.

Just got back from a quick trip to Florida, and had to re-do my Florida chore with my property. One of the properties is going thru the probate process, and when that finishes, the home may be sold. Then I can be finished with that deal. But the other property will have to be foreclosed, I believe. The family pays one payment, then neglects the next 3. I had to meet with the attorney about that one, and he will proceed as he thinks best. Things go slowly there. Snail pace, or slower.

Ray and Marge Crismond were both under the weather when I was on the west coast. I was only there 2 days, but didn't bother them when they were both seeing doctors. I did visit with George and Dorothy Ralcewich on a weekend. We had a leisurely lunch, played some cards, made plans for a lunch later in my visit, and I popped back over to brother Gene's house for the rest of the week.

The next week I holed up in the condo, and listened to the hammering, sawing and traffic of units being repaired after the hurricane season. They still were working on a significant number of the units, and the kids pad had been repaired, and rented for the last 3 months. Son John had had his insurance people do the repairs on the unit, and they finished quickly and did a good job. The place looks like new, and with all new furniture and carpeting, it really is new. They are going to have to put in new windows, though, and the insurance company is dragging feet on this project. The high wind, and the sand scouring, really made them look bad. While I was down there, the first one of '05 came across Central America, but stayed well south of any part of Florida.

I really just relaxed at the condo, saw my relatives, ate too much, and just enjoyed doing nothing.

On Monday, May 23, our west side group got together in Zephyrhills, and had our usual con-fab. George and Dorothy Ralcewich, Ray and Marge Crismond, Marion Hartley, and I met at the Village Inn, and spent a couple of hours as we ate. Won the war again, and talked mostly about our shrinking membership, and our poor failing health. Marion is downsizing, and has sold her mobile, and has not decided what she will do when she has to leave her place. Her kids want her to come back to Pennsylvania, but she has gotten used to the temperate climate, and will have to be prodded a little, I fear.

Marge and Ray still have been under the care of their doctors. Marge has considerable trouble breathing when exerting, and Ray is getting some basic tests which we oldsters seem to require. They both looked good on this trip, and Marge ate a good lunch, then a small dessert—and enjoyed both.

I went from our lunch back over to the east coast, and bunked in for the night at a local motel. My nephew drives me over to Orlando. The last trip I missed my departure time by a few minutes, and had to wait for an afternoon flight. They require a full hour check-in before a flight, and no rule bending was possible. This time I made sure, and got over a couple of hours early.

Son John and his wife were at the condo the

whole week after I was there. I met them as they came in, then got out. of the way. John would make Jell-O nervous.

The flight home was smooth. There was a full plane, but only 3 in first class, and Nancy always puts me in that section. She can tell which flights will be most likely to have space, so I have never missed a flight recently.

It was good to get back home. Weather is hot, but my house is cool.

I have had an interesting E-mail from the son of one of our original members. His name is Bill Orthel, and his father William Orthel was in "A" Btry of the 284th, he tells me. His dad was overseas with us, and he has been thru the After Action reports in HELPMATE READY and our website.

His dad died in 1990, of heart disease, and his mother died some years later.

I have had several such inquiries before, and little can be done for them except refer them to our website, etc. But our steady computer whiz seems to have a way to find some data in queer places, and I always refer these inquiries to John Wasilewski, and he helps them find some of what is available on the internet. But when they are from "A" Btry, they always get our "A" whiz, David Hawkins name as a definite reference. Bill did contact Dave, and the latter did not remember the father, but he was going to look through his volume of photographs to try to find him. He asked to be added to our mailing list, and I am happy to add his name to our files. If any of you might be able to help Bill, here is his address:

Bill Orthel
P.O. Box 1084
Durham, CA 95938

I suggested that he print out our HELPMATE READY on our website, which may be helpful to him in his search.

I received a call from Irv Merrill a day or two ago. He called to tell me that he was going to be in this area sometime in September, and was hoping that I could get together with he and his wife. At this time, I do not have anything in the oven for that time, so perhaps we will be able to spend some time together. It would be nice to see Irv again. He has been

active in our doings in the past. We will see.

Well, Hurricane season has begun down south. I can hardly wait to see how this year turns out. Couldn't be as bad as last year, tho, so I will just hope for some better luck than we had in 2004. The first chance didn't amount to much, apparently. But the season is only an infant at this time.

Got an E-mail from Ray Crismond. He tells me that Marge is doing some better, and I am glad for that. Ray was a little bit under the weather when I was down last month, but had seemed better before I left.

I received a call from Irv Merrill's oldest daughter a day or so ago. She was trying to help Irv and Ginnie with their plans, and will be with them when they come over. He is going to see relatives in the Iowa area, and also wants to visit his birthplace on this trip. This happens to be in Eastern Iowa, and he will try to get all of that done, and drop down to see me here. I am sure that I will be available, but there are just a few members in this area, and I have not been in touch with any of them. But it will be good to see Irv. His daughter tells me that they will be coming over after Sept. 6, and I hope to find something that we can talk about at that time.

Irv and his daughter are going to fly into St. Louis, visit relatives here and in Illinois (close-by), and visit with me for a day or so, then will go up to Iowa to see his boyhood home, then over to central Iowa to see relatives, then will fly out of Des Moines to California. He does not know if Ginny will make the trip, as she does not do well on trips. Time alone will tell if her travel will be possible. If anyone is in the mood to join up with us, let me hear. The Sept. 6 & 7 date will probably be firm. I am just a phone call away.

We had a terrible fire in St. Louis the other day. An industrial gas distribution point caught on fire on the 24th of June, and burned almost completely. The flames were shooting up several hundreds of feet, and the exploding propane gas tanks, and acetylene tanks were being thrown hundreds of feet when they exploded. Several large secondary fires in buildings and parking lots were started by the shrapnel and resulting fires. Even took over Oprah's

program, so you know it was a busy time. No known casualties resulted, fortunately.

Received a note from John W. on the internet. He has been having several family deaths in the recent past. His mother-in-law died soon after she was required to be hospitalized, and it turned out that she had lung cancer. She had been a heavy smoker but it had not been suspected. John's mother's brother died the same day. He was an industrial painter, and his lungs were know to be in bad shape.

John was checking on the possible mini I was wondering about in the Chicago area. We have lost a few members from there in the last few months, and I have heard nothing exciting about a reunion up there.

Thanks for the note, John. Keep hoping for better luck with the project.

I had a call from Marion Hartley. She is doing well, and has sold her large mobile home in Dade City. She told me that the local group had gotten together for a lunch recently.

She is arranging a sort of low work residence living style, and she will get a spot in Pennsylvania, close to her relatives. They had been encouraging her to move back to the north, and Marion feels that this would be the best arrangement for all concerned. She had earlier put in an application for such a unit, and it finally came through just a month or so ago. Good luck, Marion. I feel you would do well to get around your folks again. And I know that they will be pleased to have you near. Just keep in touch. But I know you will.

The obit notice concerning Bill Stepanek was printed on May 8, and listed all of the Stepanek family, and the burial time and place. He had 6 children, 14 grandchildren, and 10 great grandchildren.

I will close for this time, and hope the news will pick up for another newsletter in the near future. Things are going well here in St. Louis, and hopefully, that will remain the same. I am probably going to try to get down to Florida in August after my trip to Las Vegas with the kids.

As ever,

JBS

