



HELPMATE BULLETIN

Official Newsletter

of the

284th F. A. B n . W W I I

June 21

2008

Issue 2008-2

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Dear Helpmates,

Well, I think the handwriting is on the wall for the newsletter. I have so much trouble getting any production from these silly hands, and my computer is giving me fits with my Publisher program. I am going to try to fix the problem, but so far it has been hard to find a cause.

Am back on the machine now, and still not able to type well, but will continue. I had some notes to pass on from members, and they have gotten misplaced. I am sure I will locate them, but it is aggravating not to have the ease of doing simple things I used to enjoy.

Some of this may already have been reported, so ignore the repetition.

I got a note from Leonard Leviton late in January. He was glad to receive the newsletter, and was hoping I could continue getting the newsletter out. His was the only communication I have gotten, so you can imagine how difficult it is to manufacture facts when none are available. He sent a nice donation which should cover any expense I may incur in the future. I thank you much, Len.

Len told me that he was worried that Fred Beltz had not contacted him for some time, so he called him, and found him at lunch at an extended care facility. Fred had lost a leg, as reported earlier, but was feeling better.

Since then I received news that Fred has

died from his infirmities, and was buried in Pa. with full military honors. He was well liked by our members and did splendid work with his local burial unit until the last year or so.

Received news from the Mielke's that Robert's wife had died in mid-March. I know no more than that, and I know that the family knows that our group sends deep sympathy to them in their great loss. We are all getting a few extra days alive.

Al Pavlick called in late March to report that he was still among us, and missing Jackie very much. He still remains under care for the usual age related problems that we all know, and sends greetings to all.

Clair Schneider has called several times in the past months. He reported that Mugs Stensberg suffered a broken hip after a fall, and was doing fairly well, with help from family. She apparently is living alone, and is weathering her injury quite well. Mugs will do fine. She is tough.

Clair and his General are doing well, and are looking forward to the upcoming warm season. They had a lot of snow in northern Illinois this winter, and any relief will be welcomed. It is always good to hear from Clair. He enjoys life, and anyone in it. Thanks, C.

I have had several calls from George and Dorothy Ralcewich. George has been keeping the VA medical group busy chas-

ing down a small blood loss problem, and no cause can be found. At last report, they have decided to keep testing, but not treating the problem too vigorously. He feels fine, and I am glad that this minor problem may be behind him. These nice folks keep me informed about the West Coast Brigade. Their recent contact with Ray and Marge Crismond finds things stable medically, and hopes that they may get together in the near future. On my last visit there, Marge was not feeling well, but not in a hospital. I am so glad to hear from G. & D.

As I mentioned, I made a trip to Florida in March to clear up my real estate problems and hopefully that is the case now. My brother in Auburndale had developed a lung infection, and I helped out there a bit, as needed. His wife has not the best vision, and does not drive any more, so they have to get outside help, which is not too easy at times. They keep in touch periodically, and try to lend a hand if I can.

I went to the Hard Rock Casino in Tampa with George and Dorothy R., and didn't lose too much. We had dinner and a leisurely chat together, much enjoyed by all.

I got an E-mail from John Wasilewski, in late April. He had heard from someone in Dalem, France who had found out that our unit was instrumental in the recapture of their village, and sent some photographs of the town as it is today, and an E-bay locate with some of the local history. John sent them some of our photos of that period, and hoped these might prove familiar to some of the older folks there.

As reported last issue, I received an E-mail from Michelle, the daughter of Eugene Mason, one of the members of "A" battery, and I referred the inquiry to Joel Hawkins, who was able to send her any info he had, and included a photo or two also. I surely thank Hawkie for this great service, and I am sure Michelle also appreciated this kindness.

I got a call from Gen. Sanders daughter, Ann Forester, on May 8. She wanted to make sure

that I was still alive. She has several irons in the fire in reference to an area at Fort Sill which will honor her dad, and our leader. She made reference to wishing to establish a museum of sorts, and will be trying to find some exhibits if any are available. She has the attention of some of the Fort Sill brass, and I believe she will try to establish a website to help publicize her plan. She is so proud of her dad, and I can understand this. We had a long conversation, and I enjoyed the call very much. She will keep in touch with me, and I told her that I was going to keep the newsletter going if at all possible. I will let you know what develops with this project.

That brings us up to this date. I will hold sending this out for a while yet, and hope something worthwhile happens worth putting into this issue.

On April 17 I received a call from George Ford, whose address had been lost recently. He has moved, and now resides:
224 AUGUSTA DR,
STATESVILLE, N.C. 28625

He just turned 85, and remains in generally good health. He inquired as to the location of Robert Rosen, and I thought Bob was still in Media, Pa. Bob generally calls me a couple of times a year, but have not heard from him in the recent past.

Thanks for the call, George. Will send you a copy of the last bulletin.

Clair Schneider called on the 22nd, and was sorry to report that Shirl Dawson called to tell him that she is battling some of the medical problems which catch up with us oldsters. She asked him to report the news to me, and I hope that Shirl does well. The medical advances for us elder guys are stupendous. I had a stent put into an artery in my brain a few months ago—completely unheard of just a short time ago. My internist has developed a bone marrow ailment, and he has high hopes of being completely cured in a year. I still have the opinion that the "GOLD YEARS" were

badly named.

Clair and I had our usual disorganized talk and agreed to continue our contacts. His son is nearing the end of his problems with the army.

I think that I will have to make another trip down south. My brother is not doing well, and I try to be of some help for him. I got some freebies at the Hard Rock which may come in handy, and I also have to review some legal work there for my trust. Will be glad to get out of the house for a change. These golden years have deadened my existence. For sure.

I sure do wish some news would hit my mail box. Surely some folks out there are doing something worth sharing with the group.

Son John and another couple took their plane on a vacation trip to Yellowstone. The plane lost electrical power somewhere over Nebraska, and they put it in a shop there. A rental car took them to the Park, and they will pick up the plane and fly home—if nothing else happens. He is nearly finished with his instrument rating, and loves being in the air. I was just as happy when I owned my TWA (Teeny Weeny Airline), and was glad when he learned to fly in the plane. As it turned out, when they got back to the plane, the weather was so bad that they were not able to safely fly it home, so he is flying back tomorrow with another instrument trainee as a passenger, and will fly the plane home at last.

I got a call from George and Dorothy on the 11th. Things go well in Florida, and no hurricanes have visited them yet. George has been plagued with a mild anemia, and his treatment has produced enough side effects that they are now giving the medicine IV drip. Takes extra time, but hopefully he will not have the side effects which were occurring. They have been in touch with the Crismonds, and will probably be planning some social events when all are well.

Got a phone call on the 13th from Clair

Schneider. He had been trying to reach Shirl Dawson, but got no answer, but did reach "Mugs" Stensberg who is doing well with her orthopedic deals, but developed "walking pneumonia" and is treating that. All goes well with Clair and his group. One of his grandsons is going to Europe as an exchange student soon, and he wonders how he will do with the French people. We always seem to talk a long time about nothing, but it sure is good to hear from him.

Lots of rain here. All of these rivers are at or above flood stage, and water is over the street next to the Mississippi. Not like it was in 1993, but higher than we like it. What with all of the world tragedies, the oil crisis, and the threat of global warming, this seems like one of the better reasons to experience the "golden years".

I got a call from Al Scoville's son on the 14th with news that Al had passed away after an extended illness with coronary disease. He had been under hospice care at his home, and died peacefully there. His son told me that he enjoyed the newsletter so very much, and wished to continue receiving them. Will do this, gladly.

Al was very dedicated to our group, and on our reunion in St. Louis, he invited me to join him at the display of an air force group which was meeting at the same time. I have some photographs stowed away of this occasion, heaven knows where. I made his son aware that our deep sympathy is with Al's family in their great loss.

Received an E-mail from Ray Crismond on the 13th. He has changed his internet provider, and is using Verizon. Will have to keep in touch a little better.

That's all for this issue. Stay well, and don't get old. It is bad for your health.

As ever,
JBS

