

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

JUNE 27

2009

Issue 09-1

Dear Helpmates, Greetings,

Happy spring. It will be nice to enjoy warm weather again. This issue may finish the publication of our newsletter. There is just no communication occurring. We are fewer in number by now, and what with medical appointments, and the like, we have less time for travel, family gatherings, and the like. I will try to put out an issue whenever enough news hits the message center, but the issues will surely be delayed, and infrequent. I have enough in the kitty to put out several more letters, and money is not the problem.

I have had several calls from Clair Schneider in the last few months. On the call on March 14, he passed on news that Jerri Polson had died on March 1. She was a grand gal, always cheerful, and quite helpful for years. She will be missed. In all the other calls we saved the world, and all those in it. It is always nice to hear from him.

And I got several calls from George and Dorothy Ralcewich. They spend a lot of time at the Veteran's hospital clinics, taking care of minor medical needs. We used to hit the Hard Rock Casino a time or two on my visits. Other than that, not a word from any of the Helpmates. So, all in all, it has been a good run. I cannot even begin to tell all of our members what a wonderful experience it has been to belong to such a wonderful group as we had.

Now for some good news. In late May, John W. and I both heard from Dominic Sciaretti, one of our "B" battery members who had accidentally found the website, and made use of the area to contact us. He found the material interesting, and made several phone calls to former buddies. He will stay in touch, and is sorry he had not kept up with us in all the past years. Glad to have you aboard Dominic,

Now, even tho the newsletter will not be published any more, the website will be maintained, and can be used as a contact area for the members use. John W, will try to keep it going, and those members who have computer skills can use this as a meeting place for contacts. The correct address is:

www.284thfabn.com

Please use this means for communicating. Several people will be monitoring the site, and the internet can keep us somewhat in touch.

It has been a genuine pleasure helping keep our great group together. Do keep in contact as best you can, and take care. DON'T GET OLD,

Fondly, JBS

VIRGIL PUGH

Virgil Pugh, age 90, of West Frankfort, died peacefully at his home Friday, January 9, 2009. He was born December 8, 1918 in Franklin County, Il. to Loren Pugh and Grace (Darnell) Pugh. He married Aileen (Weatherly) Pugh on December 24, 1938 in Benton, Ky. the love of his life passed July 28, 2000. Survivors include his daughter, Mary Jane and husband, Bob K. York; grandson, Richard York; granddaughter, Julie Broy and husband, Tom; great grandsons, T.J. & Tyson Broy; and by sisters-in-law, Joan Pugh, Joann Harkins, Betty and husband, Bill Prusaczyk and brother-in-law, John Maddaleno and many nephews and nieces. He was preceded in death by his parents, wife, Aileen, brother, Bernard and sisters, Evelyn Thompson and Gloria Maddaleno. Virgil was a member of Trinity United Methodist Church in West Frankfort, the UMWA, the VFW and Masonic Lodge. He served in the capacity of Staff Sergeant in the US Army 284th Artillery in the European Theater Normandy to Austria. He fought in the Battle of the Bulge and was awarded the bronze star for his valor and was honorably discharged in 1945. He worked for Old Ben and Freeman Coal Mining Companies and was an avid gardener and baker.. Funeral services were held Monday, January 12, 2009 at 11 a.m. at the Parker-Reedy Funeral Home in West Frankfort with Rev. Alan Summers and Ron Clem officiating. Burial was in the Tower Heights Cemetery in West Frankfort with military rites by the American Legions of Orient and Zeigler and by the VFW of West Frankfort. Visitation was from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Sunday at the funeral home. In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to Barnes-Jewish Hospital Foundation for research in respiratory diseases and will be accepted at the funeral home. For more information or to sign the guest register visit

Published in the Daily American News from 1/10/2009 - 1/13/2009

Some later news—A note in late May from Dick Bozzo lets us know that wife Rae Marie is encountering some medical problems recently. A benign tumor was found in the bile system. and is going to have to be removed for fear that it may become malignant. They are waiting for a date when this will occur. One of his sons has retired, and may now wish that he had worked longer. One of his granddaughters who works in a local hospital has become quite expert in mammography, and her husband, who works in xray imaging, is soon to graduate as an RN. Their only grandson, a certified EMT, is hoping to join a local police force. Dick is doing well, and sends greetigs to all.

Got a phone call from Clair S. and things go well in Illinois. His garden is doing well, and their weather is currently behaving. He advised me to read a book which he recently found, and I wrote the name down, only to mislay it in one of my senior moments. Now the paper is lost, along with much of my mind.

Our web master, John Wasilewski has been elevated to Circuit Court Judge of Cook County. He has been an Associate Judge, and I am certain that the elevation was well deserved. Congrats from all, John.

I will not shut down the message center, but will send out occasional issues with any news which arrives.

Later, jbs

E-mails received from former Helpmate members or survivors

Subject: Re: 284th Field artillery Battalion
From: DOMSCIA@aol.com
Date: Sunday, May 31, 2009 8:08 AM
To: HLPMATE284@aol.com

John So good to hear from you I must confess I wish i had kept in touch earlier in my life with all the old buddies of mine in Battery B and elsewhere. I didn't realize there was a web site for our outfit until I just got a brainstorm and decided to type in 284th FA and lo and behold up came all the info i needed. I did get in touch with Roy Frederickson in Glenview Illinois and we had a nice chat after 64 long years. and i also called Bob Rosen but his wife said he wont be back from vacation until early June and will give him my message then. The detailed helpmate of our exploits from beginning to end is amazing and as i read it I must confess I choked up a bit. Anyways please forward the newsletter as you mentioned My address is 2120 Indigo Drive Clearwater, Florida 33763 Best wishes Dominic Sciarretta. I tried to get in touch with Elmer Trent but the number given I cant seem to connect

Subject: Helpmate
From: hearthwaye@aol.com
Date: Friday, June 26, 2009 7:47 AM
To: HLPMATE284@aol.com

Ed Hearthway
442 Monticello Avenue
Salisbury, MD 21801

Good morning Sir,

In reading the AAR from *Helpmate Ready*, and the additional information included on the web site, I have found out more about my Dad's time in the Army than I ever knew. Previously, his DD 214 provided some information, as well as limited information from MD documents; nothing in comparision to the 284th FA web page.

I do have a few questions, none to serious.
My intent is to provide a display case reflecting my Dad's time in the Army to leave for my daughter, Megan. She never knew her grandfather, and this will be just one of the pieces of his life and our family. I want it to be as accurate as possible.

Dad's service outside of the U.S. was from 2 July 44 to 18 Jan 46 (from the DD 214). The Battles and Campaigns as stated on his DD 214 include Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland, and Central Europe. Information from a MD publication after WW II states that my father received 4 BS, and a P. Unit Cit. While this information is supported in the 284th FA Bn. *Who We Are*, my Dad's DD 214 does not mention the 4 Bronze Battle Stars or the Presidential Unit Citation. **My question: Is my Dad entitled to the Presidential Unit Citation and the 4 Bronze Battle Stars, and if so, what ribbon/medal would reflect the citation?**

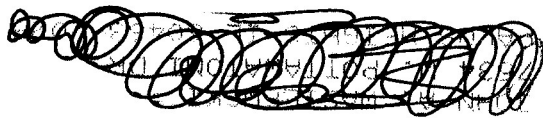
On my Dad's DD 214, his Military Occupation Speciality and Number is listed as, Chief of Section 844. **Question: Could you tell me a little of what his responsibilities included and what was the 844?**

I have spent some time putting together a format for the display: including Dog Tags, 3rd Army Patch, artillery pins, etc. **Question: Is there any particular item that would be meaningful to my Dad that I should not forget?** I realize this is a tough question, but I thought another member of the 284th FA might have an opinion.

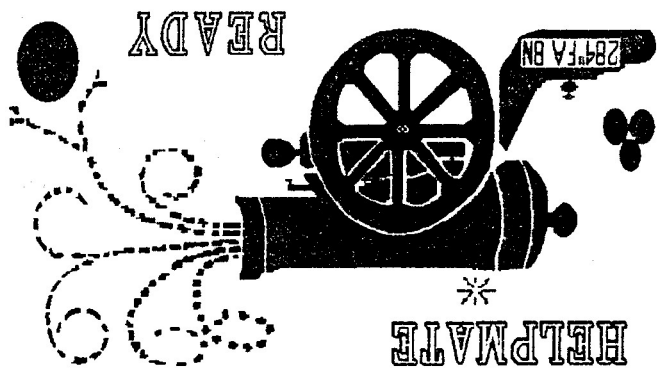
What did the organizational structure look like that included the 284th FA Bn. I know it was under Patton's 3rd Army.

And my final question, is there anyone from Battery C that I could contact that might remember my Dad.

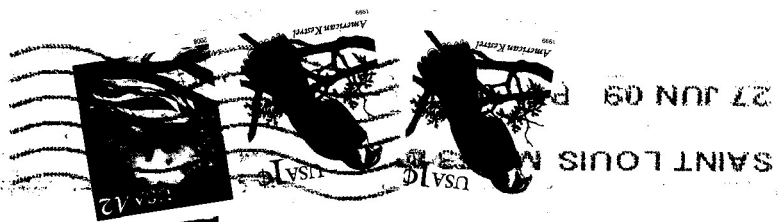
As a child I remember my Dad showing me numerous patches. Recently, I spent some time looking at them and trying to decide what was what. Keeping in mind, my time was spent in the Corps, it took me a while to figure out the Army Divisions, Bn's, Groups, etc. It all came together when I read the AAR from *Helpmate Ready* and *284th Field Artillery Battalion, Who We Are*. I realized my Dad could not have been in each of those Divisions, Bns, etc, but I could never figure out why he had them. Apparently, he obtained a patch for each (most) of the Divisions, Groups, Battalion that were supported by the 284th FA. No question here, just a thank you for filling in one of the blanks.



“HELPMATE”
284TH FA BN VII



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POSSIBLY
THE
END

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