

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)

Happy New Year, Goodbye Old one,

Here's hoping that all of the group has had a very pleasant early holiday, and will continue in this vein throughout the upcoming New Year. 2001 is certain to be better than 2000, if for no other reason that we are one year older, one year smarter, and one year more tolerant of the folks who inhabit this space with us.

I had a very pleasant visit with the members of the West Coast Area earlier in December, and altho it was cool, it was better than my family had it in St. Louis. I dropped in on the Ray Crismonds after Ray had let me in on the great advance he made in his life-- he joined the internet group. He is now rlc284@aol.com so get on the net, and send him a note. Ray beat Marge and me in anything that he did on that weekend. His luck was phenomenal, but he said that it was skill. But it was nice.

A few of us got together on short notice in Zephyrhills, and had a pleasant late lunch, won the war again, and had a good time generally just being with good friends. I cleaned up some of the junk which plagues me in that area, and got something done there, I hope.

I spent the next 2 weeks at New Smyrna Bch at the condo, visited relatives and friends, had a delightful lunch with Jeep Rafeld at our favorite Chine Jade spot, and just let the world pass by without trying to stop it. Jeep's grandson is a pilot in the Air Force, and he filled me in on the comings and goings of this busy guy. Took off for the condo again later, and really enjoyed the interlude.

This area on the seashore is so delightful. The soft breezes, gentle wave sounds, and time to relax does a lot for the spirit, believe me.

After a week on the ocean, I went back to the area where another brother lives, Auburndale. He is semi retired, and enjoys the slow life

which abounds in the South. Did my computer work there, and loafed until it was time to get back to St. Louis.

So I left the 60 degree weather in Tampa, and came back to St. Louis to 3 degrees, wind chill at -25. That will wake you up, believe me. There is about 7 or 8 inches of snow and ice on the ground, and no hint of decrease is expected. The temp outside now is 8, and it is expected to stay about the same for the next week or so. I liked snow when I was a kid, but all it is at my advanced age is banana peels, and hard when you land on it. But here I am, in deep snow, oodles of cold, and all such.

There is one address change which I will get to first. Irv and Ginnie Merrill were in move status when I saw them in Cal. Their new address is:

*1840 Tice Creek Dr. Apt 2212
 Walnut Creek, CA 94595-2459*

Now for the fun stuff. When I got home from Florida I had a few Xmas greetings awaiting me. I am going to try to do better this year. I always miss one or two, or forget to acknowledge a kitty donation, or the like. This year I will try to accurately list greetings, and I will place in this spot the fact that many of the cards contained donations, so that will be omitted from the narrative text. As of this writing, the kitty fund has just barely recovered from the loss of the last copier, and the money I put out has been replaced by donations in the near past, and the balance as of this minute is \$121.61, after the kitty donations from the greetings has been added. This is low, but I hope I do not need to pay repair charges in the near future. The members have always kept the kitty in the black, and I would guess that they will continue to do so. This is a great bunch of guys, and gals, and I never worry

about dough.

And on my answering machine on my return, were many calls from people who had tried to reach me in my absence. One stood out, tho, and I answered the call from our own Clair Schneider, calling to wish pleasant holiday greetings. I immediately returned that call, and we talked of many things, mostly fanciful, and solved all of the world problems we could. Clair is doing fine, and he wishes to wish all out there a very happy holiday, and a healthy, prosperous New Year. Thanks for the call, Clair. Needed that.

Now to recap the many greetings which I have received to date.

I will attack Bob Rosen's first. He sent a card which I know Sumiko selected, because the text was in Oriental characters. Now, it is not unusual that I cannot understand this part of the card, but Bob's writing is American English Oriental. I often kid Bob about his penmanship, and all in good nature, because mine is not much better. In any event, he wishes all of the group a happy holiday season, and the best for 2001.

Bob lost his brother (older) recently. They were in Europe, and his brother helped the shaky bridges we used to cross those rivers in France and Germany. Bob says that they were close together during the war, but never met in Europe. You know you have our united sympathy, Bob, in your loss.

He also listed the Jewish holidays which are always giving our reunion dates trouble. He is going to give Bud DeFeo the dates which are taboo for the religious members of the group. Thanks for the info, Bob.

Bob will do his Caribbean thing in Jan. and Feb., and finish up his time on the Florida east coast visiting family and friends. He will go back to that same area in May, for more tennis and water sports. Sumiko will go to Japan for a family visit in June, and some of her relatives will make the trip over here for a visit this summer.

Bob wishes all the best of the season, with a specially heavy dose for Lage and the Entiles.

Bob will surely be at the reunion, and he thinks that perhaps Sumiko will also make it this time. Super. We look forward to seeing

the person who put up with you for all these years. Just kidding!!!!

The Pat Maiers send greetings to all, and are hoping to recapture the fine time they had in N'ville. They had a great time, and surely hope that they can bring the family with them. Things go well in the northwest, and greetings to all are the wish of the Maier's.

Rae Marie and Dick Bozzo send greetings for all. Rae's cancer remains in remission, and she had a right knee replacement in October. Her convalescence was hampered by a drug reaction, for which testing is being done. She will have the other knee replaced in the future, when all of the testing and medical problems are under control. Great news, Rae. Hang in there. One thing at a time.

Paul Martin sends greetings, and we hope that he is settling down after the death of his Millie. He has moved to Palm Harbor, and I hope that he will be able to join us as we get together on the West Coast Brigade activities. I was unable to find Paul's new phone # when I was down there, but I didn't have the best phone directory, I think. Send it along, Paul, and I will publish it in a bulletin.

Gerry and Margaret Stensberg send regards to all, and news that they are now great-grandparents [in October]. They haven't seen the wee one yet, but will go to Duluth this Xmas if the weather isn't too bad. Mugs tells me that she has trouble writing, but otherwise things go well in the north.

Marge and Ray Crismond sent several photos taken at the reunion. I know that things are going well in Holiday, and the health problems which they both have had seem to be at rest at this time. As I said earlier, Ray was at his best in the card games, and he did not mind letting Marge and me know of his temporary insanity in the games. Good luck on the internet.

Millie Nelson sent a newsy letter with her wishes. She was given a visit to Florida by her son, and for 10 days enjoyed the snowbird life. Bill had passed away just 3 months before, and Millie wasn't sure she was up to the trip, but she had a great time, including visiting with Mel and Betty Donaldson. If you get down again, Millie, be sure to let the folks down there know. Any reason for a luncheon is valid, and a visit

from you certainly would qualify.

I hope that things are beginning to quiet down for you, Millie. It does take time for the whole process to occur.

Norb and Marie Obecný send wishes to all, and that is all. Things must be going well in Ill. or Norb would have let me know. Some of his photos from WWII are on the website, and he was surely a handsome young soldier.

Eunice Tibbott admits that she is another year older, and has the expected aches and pains that another year deals one, but she keeps active, and walks her mile a day, usually. She will be in Florida in March, and will be very close to the west Florida group. She will stay in:

Reflections # 1006
900 Gulf Blvd.
Indian Rocks Beach, Fl 33785
PHONE: (727)593-5807

Things go well at the Tibbott's house, and all of her grandchildren are in college, high school, or gainfully employed. Life is fine.

Eunice tells me that a lifetime dream came true this past summer when she went to Oberammergau, Austria, for the *PASSION PLAY*. She enjoyed the scenery, and the whole experience was uplifting.

Eunice reads the newsletter on our website, and feels that our site is one of the better ones she visits. Thanks to John Wasilewski, I would agree. Keep in touch.

Shirley Dawson sends greetings to all, and hopes all have a very healthy New Year. She is getting things ready for the celebrations, and that is harder to do all the time. She has been doing well, apparently, and relates no current health problems. Thank you for your prayers, and for your good friendship. Hang in there. Shirl is on the net, SHIRLD248@AOL.COM.

Dorothy and George Ralcewich send greetings to all, but that is all. We talked ourselves out at our little luncheon. It is always good to hear from the folks we see often.

Tony and Dolores Lembo send greetings to all, and remind me to keep in touch with their boys, who are on the internet. Again, no mention of any health or life problems, so I assume things go well in their neighborhood.

Dave and Virginia Hawkins send regards to

all, and via the internet remind me of their 80 degree weather there in Texas. I don't know what political persuasion they adhere to, but they just know that one of the guys will make it bad, then the other will come in and make it worse. BAH,HUMBUG!!!!

They did their usual thing during the summer. Went north in May and enjoyed several weeks of rain in Wisc., when it was really needed in their Texas Valley. Visited family and friends thruout the summer, and the time passed quite fast. They visited our money in Las Vegas, and donated some more to their coffers.

Older kids are in college, and the younger ones are doing well. In November, took a Caribbean cruise with family, and enjoyed this a great deal.

Mel and Betty Donaldson send greetings, and will see me in January when I get down. They will make the trip down sometime in Jan. and I think we will connect, somehow.

Bee Beck went to Wisconsin several times this year. Oldest daughter had to have some cancer surgery, and needed some temporary help, which Bee was glad to provide. Her recovery went well, fortunately, and Bee hopes for the best for the patient.

Lois Weary hopes I am doing well in the new home, and you can rest assured that I am. She got to know Babe on our European trip in '93, and she is glad that I have much of my family in the near area. It really does help. But they baby me too much. Guess they think I need it.

And gladly, a note from our little teddy bear, Fred Beltz. Fred has been very quiet in the near past, and that worried me greatly. I usually got a note from him every 4—6 months, but got nary a word in the past year. That makes me nervous, because when that happens, I usually get the Helpmate Bulletin back, with bad news. I surely am glad to hear from Fred. He didn't write much, but I know he wishes all of the group the best of the season, and a very good 2001.

Rita McCready sends a note to all the members of the group. She wishes all the best of the Holiday Season, and a Great New Year. Thank you, Rita. Hope things go well with you. Write once in a while. Need to hear how things go

with our widows.

I had heard from Herb Smith earlier, and Harvey and Ann send nice wishes. They had hoped to get to Nashville, but didn't get to, so are hoping to make New Jersey next year. We hope so, too, and be sure to bring the wives. They spent about 3 weeks on the Florida west coast, and also with Ann's sister somewhere in the east. Nice family reunions, and good times were had by all. Let us know where you were, Harv. We always try to work in a lunch or something when our guys end up in the neighborhood.

The Pat Entiles send greetings to all. They are fine at this time, but Pat hates to drive to just about anywhere, so they stay at home a lot. I think I will have to get a reunion to the Aurora area, because I enjoy seeing our good friends from northern Ill. I hear a lot from the members who remember you all. Don't let Pat hide himself under the proverbial rock. He is so well remembered.

Jeep and Gerry Rafeld send greetings to all, and they didn't write much, because Jeep and I talked it out in China Jade while I was down. I mentioned this earlier, but I always am available for that small chore.

Zelma Rigney sends regards to all. Things are hopefully better in her area now, but it does take time for the immediate memories to calm down. I am glad that you enjoy reading the Helpmate Bulletin. That is why I try to keep it going, even when it becomes a chore, and I have to make it sort of a diary of what I am doing.

Joanne Koss sends regards to all from Cold Cold Wisconsin. John Koss was well regarded by his men, and his name pops up repeatedly at the reunions. Thank you for your lovely thoughts. Do write oftener.

Jerri Polson always wants to wish all the best of the season. She will go to Wisc for the holidays. Randy will get her and drive her back to snowy Wisconsin. Things go well with Jerri, and she will keep us posted on her busy life.

Bill and Millie Stepanek wish all friendly hellos during this Holiday Season. Warm handshakes, and close hugs will help, too. They do not get out much anymore so their travels now are close to home.

Bud and Jean DeFeo send greetings, and a few pictures from the reunion. I hope they are prophetic, for the date on the bottom is listed as 8/26/01. The thought is the important thing. Details can be less important.

Bud notes that there is no news on the Taj at this time. Just keep us posted, Bud.

Al and Minnie DeMonaco send regards, and ask that we keep all the snow in St. Louis. I don't think we have much choice, Al, but we have enough here to share with you, should you change your mind.

Things must be going well in the DeMonaco family, as no mention is made of medical or other problems.

Bill and Marion Hartley send regards, and news that the medical problem with Marion's ticker continues to improve. Great news, folks. Will see you shortly down there. When is the strawberry festival coming off down there?? Hope to make it, this year.

And holiday greetings from Moe Sweetgall and Janet. No news, so that is good news. I hope to have a few visits with these good folks when I get down in January.

Now, this finishes off the greetings which I have received up to December 23, 2000. If I get any tomorrow, I will add these, otherwise I want to get this newsletter off, and get ready to refill my travel suitcase, and attack Florida.

You may have noticed that I have not put in birthdays all this year. I am keeping a listing of these anniversaries, but we all know we are getting older, and I often forgot to add the list to the bulletin, so I just retired that function at the age of 65. If you wish, I will keep them in the newsletter, otherwise, everyone gets a year older, and I don't have to forget.

Eva McFerrin's bulletin was returned as "not deliverable". Anyone in touch with her?

Same for Sarah Allen. "No such number" was the message on the bulletin.

The latest cards were delivered on Sat. 12/23. Charles and Margaret send greetings, and not any more news, so I will assume that things go well there. I will be down as already noted, and will contact them at that time.

Joe and Flo Zielinski send regards to all the group. Joe has the usual old-age complaints, but Flo tells me that she puts up with them

as one of those things. Hope all goes well in Chicago, and keep me posted as to your situation.

Martha Ellis sends her usual cheerful wishes. She doesn't tell me why she keeps so busy, but I suspect that church and family keep things moving there. I will keep trying to catch you, Martha, and I will finally see you in Lakeland.

Harry and Florence Podolsky send greetings to all, and on a card which Babe would have love to see. Cardinals were her favorite bird, and Harry's card has several birds on it, with a beautiful male cardinal in the foreground. Thanks for the sentiments, folks. Stay well.

And another card from Fred Beltz. He sent some writing in this one, too. He is the chaplain for his Honor Guard, and they have performed 229 military funerals this year. He is also chaplain of his VFW post 2493. Fred remembers my speaking of Robert Pensock, and he remembers the family. Believes that the elder Penstock had a radio store in Hazelton. Same fellow, Fred. Give him my best hello if you run into him. He particularly remembers the 283rd at Camp Funston, because the bugler used to play his trumpet in the barracks near us. Thanks for the letter, Fred. As I said before, I worry when I don't hear.

John Wasilewski just gave me the locate on a web page "William J. Street". It has been posted by a relative, I suppose, but Bill died on March 21 of this year. It is for this reason I was not able to reach him via internet. I will put more in the next bulletin.

That's All Folks.

JBS

KNOWN INTERNET LOCATES - MEMBERS OF THE 284TH F. A. BN.

IRVV42@AOL.COM
WARENE@JUNO.COM
HSMITH4580@AOL.COM
BHROCK@BELLEATLANTIC.NET
DON1BETTY@AOL.COM
PHOEBEK@HOME.COM
CMC@MAIL.FONE.NET
A1COM@USAOR.NET
CHBZZ2687@AOL.COM
ENT@PSU.EDU
JOHNW98765@AOL.COM
HLPMATE284@AOL.COM
CAROLE@RSG.ORG
HAWKINSJD@EARTHINK.NET
FOURLEM@MINDSPRING.COM
LENL12@MAIL.TRILOGY.NET
JEBU01@AOL.COM
DEB@GRIBSKOVGLASS.COM
RLC284@AOL.COM
SHIRLD824@AOL.COM

IRV MERRILL
WARREN & IRENE ELLIS
HARVEY SMITH
HERB SMITH
MEL & BETTY DONALDSON
J KLEINMAN & MOE SWEETGALL
MCELMURRAY, CAROL
AL DEMONACO'S SON
NORB OBECHNY'S SON
EUNICE TIBBOTT
JOHN WASILEWSKI (ED'S SON)
JOHN SUMMERS (MSG. CENTER)
CLAIR SCHNEIDER
DAVID & VIRGINIA HAWKINS
TONY LEMBO'S FAMILY
TONY LEMBO'S FAMILY
BUD & JEAN DEFEO
PAT MAIER'S DAUGHTER
RAY CRISMOND
SHIRLEY DAWSON

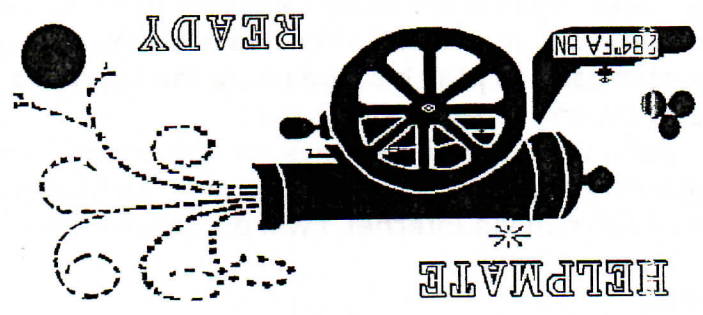
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AL DEMONACO'S SON'S E-MAIL CAME BACK LAST OCTOBER. MAY BE WRONG.
MARGARET NIGHTINGALE HAS A LOCATE, BUT I CANNOT FIND IT.

IF YOU HAVE OTHER HELPMATE LOCATES, PLEASE NOTIFY ME. WE NEED THEM.

Dated Material, Request Prompt Delivery
Address Correction Requested

JOHN A. WASILEWSKI
7534 W. POTTAWATOMI DR.
PALOS HEIGHTS IL 60463-2028



RONNIE'S MESSAGE CENTER
JOHN B. SUMMERS, CUSTODIAN
5494 ABERDOUR LANE
ST. LOUIS, MO 63129

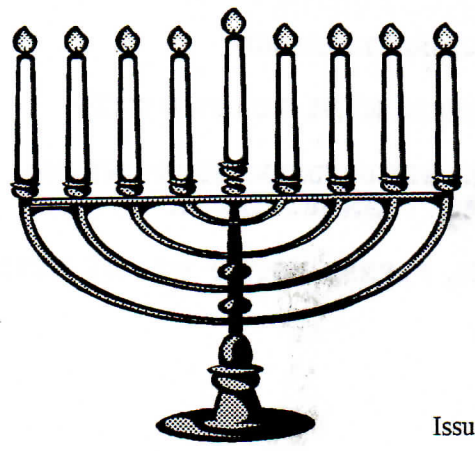
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