

# HELPMATE BULLETIN

Official Newsletter  
of the  
284th F. A. Bn. WWII  
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## ISSUE 05-2

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Greetings, folks,

Well, summer is about upon us, and let's hope for a pleasant one. Our winter in this area was a mild one, generally, and well deserved by all.

I had barely gotten the stamps pasted on the mail when the phone rang, and one of the doctors I know asked if I would be willing to help with his project of writing a book on the Battle of the Bulge. He was going to use our local chapter as the basis for his article, and try to get all the stories possible as we lived them.

I showed up for the interview, and they were interested in feelings, fears, and many things which were long out of my memory. I had told them that we were on the south fringe of the actual Bulge, but they wanted as much as I could remember for completeness sake. I am sure that I added little. All I remembered was the cold, the knee deep snow, the cold, and the cold. We will see how that turns out.

Got a call from Bea Beck. She had gotten the address for Mary Brown (Chester—"B") from Bob Rosen, and it was the same one I had for her. We had a long chat, and I told her that we might be able to get a mini reunion going this fall. She goes to Wisconsin, I believe, to see family each summer, so she might be enticed to join us.

I also got a call from Mugs Stensberg shortly thereafter. Mugs calls because she doesn't like to write much. She and I discussed Clair Schneider some, and she was going to call him to keep contact going.

They are living back in their home town in an assisted living facility, and she likes it very much. Jerry is doing well, if you discount all of the failing systems we all are going through. I thank you for the call, Mugs. Keep in touch, and keep Clair talking.

Pat Maier called one fine morning to report that he had not been covered up with Mt. St. Helen's ashes, but they were in the news there. He tells me that

things go well out there, and he is feeling fine, considering. He gave me the impression that he might be able to join a reunion in the Chicago area while on one of his family visits. I told him that it was not crystallized, but the more support we can get, the more likely we may be able to work something out. Thanks for the call, Pat.

Marie Obecnny sent me a short note, and a remembrance card from Norbert's funeral. I am going to try to put in in this issue before I mail it out. Thanks, Marie. I know you miss Norb, but keep busy. It slowly gets better.

I got an E-mail from the son of Louis Masker, and found out that he has been dead since 1970 (brain tumor). Son, Ed, has been getting the newsletter since then, and continued receiving them after his mother died, 13 years ago. He would like to stay on our mailing list, and hopes to get better acquainted with some of the 284th guys. He and his family are staying in the home which Louis built a long time ago, so if there are any of the people who knew Louis, say "hello" to Ed. I assured him that the kitty was healthy at this time, but hints in the newsletter would invite fodder when things got low. Glad to have you, Ed. Keep in touch.

Have been in touch with John Wasilewski in the near past. I had mentioned that I had given my last CD of our pictures to the Battle of the Bulge people, and he sent me several more. Thanks so much, John. They are so easy to work with, and my scanning leaves so much to be desired. John tells me that he is having some problem with his CD cover program, but he will get that corrected. He is a whiz on the machine. Thanks again, John. Keep in touch.

I got the last Bulletin mailing back from the new address I had from Mary Brown. So we are back at square one with her address.

Got an E-mail from the Hawkins' several days ago. He thought that he might make it to a Chicago area mini if it could be held. He visits the northern states with relatives, and could be able to plan a trip around both. It is sure worth thinking about. Keep in touch.

I received several books concerning Patton from John W. I have gotten into 2 of them to some extent, and should be able to see how the world felt about him. They will probably have no references to our service, but I hope there is some reference to his troops. One of the books is about the "ghost corps", which deals with the situation before "D" day, I believe. I will keep the books in good shape, John, and will get them back to you later.

Jerri Polson called me in the recent past. No real problems, just wanted us to know that she was doing well. She still keeps the books for the Health Food Store, but is taking it easier as days go by. She wants me to tell everyone "HI" and to stay well.

And in the mail I received a torn open envelope to the Message Center from Al Pavlick. It had been stapled to keep in a check for Miss Kitty, and nothing else. I got a phone call from him some time later and he is well. Jackie is still plagued with her body pains, but otherwise is fine. I brought up a Chicago area mini-reunion and he thought it would fly. Al gave me his E-mail address, but I can't find it now. Do me a great favor, Al. E-mail me a hello, and I will put your locate in my book.

Thank you so much for the donation, Al. It will help keep the postage paid for a while.

I got back Joe Molnar's bulletin from Sebring, so he has disappeared from our roster for the present. If anyone is in touch with Joe, ask him to send me his present location.

Got a note and donation from Don Haaning. He had gone to Florida for part of the winter, but did not get together with Jim Carney or George Ralcewich because he had to leave the area early. He didn't elaborate as to why he was gone early, but hopes to make better connections next year.

Don sent some food for the kitty, for which many thanks are given.

Ruth Williams sent a letter and a donation in the near past. She is very satisfied with her new living arrangements. She has downsized and enjoys the condo living much more than the previous situation. I know what you mean, Ruth. I did the same thing.

I see Ruth often on the internet at very odd hours. Of course, that means that I also hit the machine at very odd hours. Her son is not too far away, and comes over often for visits. She always keeps a "honey-do" list for him, and appreciates his help.

Other than the usual age related gripes we all have, Ruth is doing well.

Thanks for the letter, and the donation. It will help.

I received a nice note from Marie Obecnny with a few more hints about Norbert's health. He didn't want her to tell anyone about this problems, but his Carotid arteries were blocked on both sides, and he had a lot of trouble sleeping. He died in his sleep, and was active to the end.

Marie tells me that her daughter sent out several E-mails, and received no answers. I replied instantly to the E-mail I got from their daughter, and cannot understand why she never received it. I usually get a message that my mail was not, or could not be delivered, and I am told why. I believe I have responded to all the messages from any Helpmate, but it is a fact that computers are not perfect.

Dick Bozzo sent me a newspaper article about a Nazi A-bomb test at Ohrdruf in 1945 which killed hundreds in that area. We had some dealings with the place, as you know, but I had never heard of this accident before. Apparently the test was not successful, and did not achieve fission, but it scattered radioactive debris all around the area.

Dick had cataract surgery to his left eye in March, and turned out well. Otherwise, he is in rather good shape, suffering most of the complaints we older ones develop. Rae Marie has not been as lucky. Her breast cancer has remained in remission, but she is mildly diabetic, and has constant pain in her knee. She had a replacement of the right knee, but her doctor does not recommend the same for her left. She gets around with difficulty, and it is hard for Dick to be unable to alleviate her pain.

They are to be blessed by their 3rd great grandchild this fall, and fortunately, all the family live close by, and they can enjoy the togetherness this makes possible.

Thanks for the letter, Dick. Hang in there.

Ann and Harve Smith sent an E-mail late in March. They tell me that Mt. St. Helen has apparently gone back to sleep for a while. The mountain is still sending up some steam and is shaking the earth a little, but has cooled down enough to let the Park Service open up some of the observation posts to let the people get a little closer to the action.

Ann had an operation on her foot, and other than causing a limp, and a little slow down, the orthopedic boot she was forced to wear for a while seemed to do well. She did not get to do her garden as desired, but that will happen.

Harve is having a problem with a heart valve and if it continues getting smaller, will have to have it replaced. But that is some time away. He does well, health wise, and is in good shape.

They expect to come east in September to visit family, and spend some time on the seashore with Herb and Betty. They have a local bus which takes them to the Indian Casino, and they often dine there, and lost a little on the hungry slots.

Thanks for the note, Harve. Stay healthy.

John W. is something else. He found obits on 2 of our members of the past, and sent them to me. The first was on Arnold Nutter, who did his service with Helpmate, and the other was Richard Kujawski, also listed as a 284th soldier. Arnold died in Braceville, Ohio last month. Richard died March 31 at age 80. He lived in Manitowoc, WI, and was buried with military honors in that city. I hope that some of our group remember these men. They were never on our roster, and I do not remember having seen them at any of our functions. I have printed up the Obit notice, and will be happy to share it with anyone who asks.

Thank you so very much John, for your help. The weather in St. Louis has been sort of delightful lately. We have gotten a little less rain than usual, but the temp has been just short of delightful. Coolish in the AM, then warms up to the middle 70's in the afternoon. We can stand a little more of this.

No mail for the last 8-10 days. No, make it 18. Guess this will have to be another short letter again. I will put the memory notice for Norbert Obecny here, and get it ready for the Mail.

I will be in Florida for a week or so in the near future, so maybe I can generate something to write from there.

Take care of yourselves, and stay healthy.

As Ever,

JBS

John, I will send you an extra newsletter, and you can use the obit notices on them to scan into this space. This printing will not be on the newsletters I send out, but you know how to doctor these things into proper items, and I am not that expert.