

TARO

24th Infantry Division Association



FIRST TO FIGHT

LEAF



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**COMING
UP NEXT**

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About the Cover

The cover artwork by artist Albert Dorne was one of a series of posters commissioned by the U. S. Army during WWII to encourage civilians to support the war effort.



Greetings: I look forward to seeing many of you at our reunion in New Orleans. My only hope is that the weather will be cooperative. I know that the tours will be interesting and informative. Mike Fredrick has done an outstanding job of putting this reunion together.

I know that the fate of the monument is on everyone's mind. At this point, I only have one shot left in my arsenal. I will attempt to get an appointment with the Director of Arlington National Cemetery and, depending on his reaction, I will fly down, with over 40 pictures of monuments already located there, and attempt to persuade the Director to accept one more.

If this meeting fails to produce a positive result, then I will suggest that Dan Rickert may go ahead and have the monument placed in the National Cemetery at San Francisco.

I would like to thank George Vlasic for the great job he is doing in getting our events in all of the veteran publications. Good work George. I wonder if George would care to also include an invitation to join our organization in the next issues of veterans' news publications.

In closing, I urge all members to drink a lot of fluids, stay in the shade and do not overexert yourselves. Take Care.

Sal Schillaci, President



This medallion is available for deceased veteran's tombstones from the VA.



Hello Again, It amazes me how fast times flies by as we get older. I was shocked a few days ago to realize I had to get the next issue of the Taro Leaf put together. The way the process works I collect material from letters, emails, and other sources, mostly in my computers files. As the publication deadline approaches I begin the layout.

Starting, for page one, I begin the search for cover art, if nothing appropriate hasn't already come my way. For this issue I thought about going back to the U.S. Army's art resources (www.history.army.mil/images) since there's a large collection of material and its use is free.

The art I selected is a poster from WWII, one of many encouraging folks on the home front to give their best to support the war effort. I don't believe any such campaigns have been waged since WWII. I'm speculating, but I think it may be due to the lack of broad support for the wars we undertook in Korea, Vietnam, and the Middle East. It grieves me to think of all we have lost as we committed our military resources and our most precious assets, young Americans. Others may view it differently, but I believe the payoff from the Korean War was huge in saving South Korea from a terrible fate. I know little about the geo-political aspects of the Vietnam War, but my sense is there was little or no payoff. As for the Middle East, I think the jury is still out, but personally I wish we had never committed our troops there.

Our readers may wonder why the Editor got into this subject, and he is not sure himself. The Taro Leaf may not be the appropriate place for such ruminations. That said, I encourage our readers to speak their minds about current events and the state of our country. Frankly, I am very concerned about our future welfare, not so much for those of us who are well over the hill, but for our kids, and future generations.

I have commented in past issues about the essential need for members to contribute material for the Taro Leaf. Without your input there is no Taro Leaf. I don't know what I can say or do to encourage more of our readers to send notes, letters, articles, and pictures. I'm looking for ideas because the volume of material I receive has been dropping off the past year or more. Furthermore, a lot of what I get is from repeat contributors.

I know there are some thinking, "I sent material, but you never used it." They would be correct, and I regret some things just are not suitable because of the quality or content. Frequently I get photocopies of pictures which would not reproduce well enough to be discernable. If its pictures, please send originals and I will scan and return them promptly.

On the other hand we receive much excellent material such as you have found in past and this current issue. I sincerely thank you!

David Valley

Looking For

Dear Mr. Maggio, I am helping a Veteran, Robert MaGuire, who served with the 24th in occupied Japan. He was exposed to radiation. I am trying to obtain buddy statements in support of his claim from people who served with him 1945-1946 and who had skin cancer as a result. Any assistance you can provide will be very much appreciated. Vets can contact me directly. **Paul J. Brawley**, Service Officer, Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services, 380 Westminster Mall, Providence, RI 02903, 401-223-3683



David: I have been trying to help Loyal Perry Jr. learn about his father's service in Korea. We have determined Loyal Perry Sr. was in Japan and went to Korea in the first wave, as a member of the 52nd Field Artillery. We have not been able to determine what battery he was in, but Loyal Jr. would like to speak to anybody who may have known his dad. Attached are photos of his father. I, in particular, would like to find out what battery Loyal was in -- Lisa, might you know? Thanks! **Merry Helm**

Editor: My father, Capt. Lawrence L. Thomas, served with the 24th Infantry Division, 21st Infantry Regiment in Korea. He was born in Minneapolis, MN and moved to Chicago, IL, where he enlisted in the Army in June of 1941. He served as an enlisted man until October 1942, when he applied and was selected for Officer Candidate School. He served in WWII, and upon discharge he remained in there until April 1953 when he was called up for the Korean War. I know he was wounded while in Korea but nothing more. My father never spoke of his time in the Army either in WWII or Korea. He passed away in 1998. I remember a few days after he passed my mother received a phone call in reference to a reunion the 24th was planning. She was so distraught at the time she never asked for the name of the person who called. I have tried off and on to find anyone who may have known him or about him with no luck. I have no pictures of him from his time in the military. I have a son who is 15 years old with a desire to serve one day in the military. I was hoping that perhaps one day I might find something of his grandfather's service. If you can provide me with information about Capt. Thomas, I would certainly appreciate it more than I could express. **Randall Thomas**, 1626 73rd Ct., Elmwood Park, IL. 60707, Email: r116@aol.com



Brothers George and William "Bill" Peifer, of Northumberland County, PA, both fought in the Korean War as members of the 24th Infantry Division. Bill was in M Company, 21st Regiment, and was killed in action on April 25, 1951. George has always wondered whose life his brother saved on September 2, 1950, and he hopes somebody can help. The action is described in Bill's subsequent Bronze Star citation: The Bronze Star medal with V Device is awarded to Corporal William J. Peifer, RA13280136, Infantry, United States Army, a member of Company M, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, who distinguished himself by heroic action near Pohang-dong, Korea, on 2 September 1950. During an attack he observed a fellow soldier, who had been manning a machine gun, fall wounded. He unhesitatingly went to his comrade's side and carried him through intense artillery, mortar and small arms fire, to a position of relative safety. Returning to the unmanned gun, he delivered effective fire upon the enemy, inflicted heavy casualties, and destroyed two machine gun positions. Corporal Peifer's heroic actions reflect great credit on himself and the United States Infantry. Entered military service from Northumberland County, Pennsylvania.

Bill also received a Silver Star for his actions on the day he was killed: The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 9, 1918, has awarded the SILVER STAR (Posthumously) to SERGEANT WILLIAM J. PEIFER, United States Army, who as a member of Company M, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th ID distinguished himself by courageous action near Kanyong, Korea, on 25 April 1951. He was leading his squad in an assault on two enemy machine gun positions in the fog-bound area surrounding the town. Alone, he knocked out one gun emplacement and then started toward the other, but heavy enemy fire held him down and finally forced his squad to withdraw. He voluntarily covered the withdrawal and, while engaged in a fierce fire duel with enemy troops, was mortally wounded by an enemy round when trying to make his own withdrawal. Sergeant Peifer's courageous actions reflect the highest credit on himself and the United States Infantry.

If you have any information contact Merry Helm.



Dear Editor: I was in the 2nd BN **13 FA** and later in the **63rd FA** in '41-42. A story on page (?) brought back great memories of Camp Hakata, Japan. We would ride the train to the Bayside cabaret. I'm enclosing a picture taken at Bayside. Maybe others would enjoy seeing it. **George Frazier, Life Member 1803**, 300 Estelle Lane, Warminster, PA 18974.

George: Sorry, but I couldn't decipher all your writing. I did the best I could. It sure looks like you guys were having a lot of fun with the local wahines. **David**

Editor: Your letter in the Winter Taro Leaf about a tungsten mine caused me to recall a conversation with my dad just before leaving for Korea, May 1951. He said to keep my eyes open for tungsten outcroppings; I had no idea what to look for. Dad said to look for any different kind of formation in a host rock. I did but never spotted anything unusual. Dad figured with all the bombing and artillery it would disturb the ground enough to uncover unusual rock formations. It did, but all I ever noticed was a shale type of rock.

Over the years I studied more about rocks, always looking for a gold mine. Didn't find one but did discover a bit of silver and filed a claim. I gave it up when the government demanded cash money every year to hold the claim. The government can always change the rules, and does! That picture sure shows the rugged mountains

of Korea. I was never into any that were that bad.

Your comment about charities was true. My uncle Paul H. Reed warned me about the Red Cross. In 1942 he was boarding a ship and the Red Cross was selling coffee and doughnuts. I got the same treatment when I boarded in 1951 near San Francisco. Years later at a brush fire in California the Red Cross showed up with sandwiches and drinks for sale of \$1. Later the Salvation Army showed up with food –no charge. Guess who gets my money.

Audits have shown that only about 15% of Red Cross donations are actually used to help folks in need. Glad you mentioned Wounded Warriors, a very worthy cause. **Marvin Reed, Life Member, 26th AAA**, 2900 Right Hand Canyon Road, Palomino Valley, NV 89510

Hello David: I am enclosing a picture of me with the crew of people from Japan who conducted an interview on 25 June, 2008 about U.S. Army operations on Leyte and Omoc Valley.

The crew foreman Kohichi Ota is standing to rear of picture. The lady to left is M. Midori Yanaginara, who contacted me and set up interview. I believe someone from 24th IDA had given her my name.

Tom Kacich found out from my son Mike about crew from Japan and he came to my house for the interview.
Paul J. Cain 3109B Chatham Drive Phone 217 344-1462
Urbana, IL 61802 Cell: 217 893 1466, CO 'I' CO **34th RGT**.



Letters

Dear Sir: My friend, Justin Byron Fleming, passed away last Friday morning. I have been asked to give the eulogy at his service to be held on Friday, May 18, 2012. I would like to know if you or someone in his unit could give me any information about Justin and his service in the Korean War. His units were: 24th Infantry, 3 Battalion, 34th Regiment and 2 Battalion, 21 Regiment. **Mack Hickman**, KDH Global, LLC, 7201 RR 2222, No. 2422, Austin, TX 78730, Tel. 512-961-7010

Hello Mack: I have been in the country, away from the internet, so I am so sorry to have missed receiving your request in time to help you. My condolences on your loss. (I will put a notification of Justin's passing in the Taro Leaf, our association news magazine.)

Although this won't help you with your eulogy, I will just tell you that having been in the 34th Regiment indicates Justin was in some terrible battles in 1950, and that these continued throughout his tour. The 34th Regiment was left with so few survivors in the fall of 1950, that the men of his battalion were simply absorbed by the equally decimated 21st Regiment. Even when blended together, they were still hopelessly outnumbered by enemy forces, especially when the Chinese entered the war in November 1950.

In looking at my records, I note Justin was attached to Easy Company, 21st Regiment, and that he was awarded the Bronze Star for Valor for actions during the breakout from the Pusan Perimeter in September, 1950. Please let me know if you would like a copy of his citation. He also earned a Bronze Star for Merit. I see also that he was badly wounded during the Chinese Spring Offensive in April, 1951, and that he was separated from the army after this.

Please let me know if there is anything more I can do for you, Mack. Thank you for contacting me, and again I'm sorry I was too late to help you. **Merry Helm**, Historian: 24th IDA

David: I will not be able to attend the Sept. 16-19th New Orleans Reunion. My wife and I have been in an Assisted Living Institution for almost 3 years. We miss the reunions, but the Taro Leaf keeps us abreast of what's going on in the 24th. You are doing a great job! **Eric Diller, 34th, WWII, Life Member 1185** ediller@cox.net

Eric: May God bless you and your wife. We are happy to keep our "band of brothers" together via the Taro Leaf. **David**

David: Sorry my last letter was kind of messed up, but I was having bad luck at home. They told me my wife's life was over, but with God's help and good doctors, she's doing well now. She's 92, and I'm very happy. What I wanted to say was that the 24 ID was going to the UN in '54 to help France, but did not. Then in '70 the 24th was in 7th Corp in Germany, then in '75 back to Georgia. I was going there but they changed my orders. While in the old 24th I had a good time! I made Corporal seven times, but I finally made MSG. In '67 I got out. Carl Winningham, Jr., 11th FA, Life Member 1162. 21355 Sally Rd. Waynesville, MO 65583-8311314-774-2356

David: Memorial Day 2012...Bitter-sweet memories have happened to me on this special occasion. First, a close neighbor, a high school student, requested an interview. It was a special assignment to talk to a veteran and submit a report on Memorial Day. He began with various questions: when and from where did I enlist, which war, medals, rank, etc. I had all my memorabilia of pictures, newspaper clipping, citations, passionate letters with my sweetheart, like, "I don't mind the bitter cold of Korea because in your embrace there is warmth and comfort to me." I showed him all the articles I have submitted to the Taro Leaf. What have I learned from my three year term with the U.S. Army? ...discipline, control and absolute order.

Second, I had an interesting conversation with a fellow veteran at breakfast in a MacDonald's. He was in the Airborne and proud to be one of the G.I.s who dropped on Cabanatuan, Philippines who rescued the 100 POWs without any casualties. He reverently made a sign-of-the-cross meaning he was very safe, no injuries or wounds during the operation. I told him we had the same fate (lucky) and found out we both had the SFC rank. I am a Filipino and he was Latino... a brief conference of two ethnic nationalities.

Unfortunately, I was cited with a minor traffic violation. When I asked the CHP Officer if he was in the military, he replied, "Yes." For some reason he refused to answer my questions of what war, what unit? He brushed them off saying, "it's personal-confidential." We parted with a firm handshake. So, two sweet memories, one bitter...no bad. **P.Ed Rumbaoa, Life Member 2234**, 21128 S. Menlo Ave. Torrance, CA 90502-1725 310-320-0108

Ed: I hate to spoil your story about the veteran you met, but his account is fallacious. It was not an airborne raid. The Raid at Cabanatuan City was a rescue of Allied prisoners of war and civilians from the Japanese camp near Cabanatuan City, in the Philippines. On January 30, 1945, during World War II, United States Army Rangers, Alamo Scouts, and Filipino guerrillas liberated more than 500 from the POW camp. (Per Wikipedia) **Editor** (more from Ed on next page.)

David: I am writing in regards to the phone call on May 8. I called about the article in the Spring 2012 issue about Richard Quatier of Vancouver, WA who passed away September 5, 2011. I wrote a letter to him on May 27, 2006 in regards to his son who was lost in the conflict during the Korean War, namely Robert Daune Quatier. He was listed as missing in action while defending his position on the south bank of the Kum River near Taejon, South Korea, on July 16, 1950. At that time the Quatier family was yet seeking closure of the situation. I ask if this could be a related situation. if you possible find out I would appreciate hearing from you. or you might cover it in the next issue. I search every issue to look for the possibility of finding a buddy. so far it has happened a few times. Quite often I meet new friends. You have a very fine magazine, David. Respectfully yours: **Gilbert Hoogendoorn**, 34th RGT, 5419 West Dardanella, Apt. 230, Sioux Falls, SD 57106-6205, 605-339-9835

All Taro Leaf Readers: This is a satirical comment about two important items that have been written and illustrated in the Taro Leaf. It is about time to review the facts, farce, or follies that have been expressed by responsible persons.

1. The National Medal of Honor Memorial at Riverside, CA Veterans Cemetery. a.) The MOH is a sacred medal awarded individually only to the most courageous valorous recipients, most often posthumously or fortunately alive to accept it with humility and pride. b.) Is it proper to erect monuments or should we also provide an edifice for all the military awards and most of all our flag, the Stars and Stripes? c.) That the MOH National Memorial at Riverside is absolutely useless and unnecessary.

2. The monument for recipients of the MOH from the 24th ID to be dedicated at Arlington National Cemetery. a.) Are there really 14 or 15 recipients with PVT Ova Kelley to be confirmed? b.) Is the name of George G. Libby correct or should it be middle initial "D?" c.) Shouldn't we emphasize the MOH Medal more importantly than just "placed as shown." The logo with the flying ribbon of the 24th ID has been enshrined at the Punchbowl Cemetery in Hawaii. Why the duplication? d.) How do we designate those brave ones who perished or survived the onslaught of WWII or Korean War? e.) Should we symbolize a better looking significant supporting structure or just a plain common bronze work slab? f.) In previous issues of the Taro Leaf several designs have been mentioned, but never publicized. The first Resolution by Hon. Rep. Lee concluded that the design shall be submitted to Congress and then specifically to be approved by the Sec. of the Army. We do not seem to be consistent with our statements/policies. Now someone is considering the option to erect the monument in Riverside. How absurd! **Ed Rumbaoa**

Hon. U.S. Rep Kathy Hochul (NY): I can anticipate your possible reply, so I'll just "jump the gun" (so to speak). Please pardon the pun. I have submitted recently my MOH design to Hon. Senator Barbara Boxer and Hon. U.S. Rep. Hon. Laura Richardson. I'll be glad to send another copy in case they both have mis-filed or to say the least, ignored or forgot about it. I bypassed the monument committee of the 24th IDA because President Schillaci rejected my proposal in favor of the current design. That was their decision at the Laughlin, Nevada reunion last year. Ironically, the MOH design was supposed to be approved finally by the Hon. Sec. of the Army. I feel honored if you would consider my design which was refined by the Los Angeles Harbor Occupational Center, Graphic Fine Arts Div. The unique structural support is still being developed; it is different from the common tombstone slabs of Arlington National Cemetery. Thank you for your kindness and attention. **P. Ed Rumbaoa**

Editor: I recently met a young woman at a retirement party for a Coast Guard Capt. Brian Offord. We were in conversation and I told her my husband, PFC Eugene A. Fay was in the Second World War with the 24th Infantry in the South Pacific also the 34th Infantry. She gave me your email address to contact. Gene never told anyone that he earned 2 Bronze Medals. I found his discharge papers after he had passed away. He was in the New Guinea, Biak Island, Leyte, Mindanao and maybe Saipan, in the first wave on the beach of 5 of the 8 major invasions. I was wondering how I could find information on what happened to have these deserving medals. He, like so many never talked of the war until he was in a conversation with my first husband, Gordon just before Gordon died. After this conversation ended and Gene went home, Gordon dictated this to me and at a later date I was able to have Gene put it in his own words. Still, nothing was ever said about him earning Bronze Medals. Looking on his discharge papers dated September 2, 1945, (Army Serial number 10 100 904) it says: APC 1 Bronze Star PLR with 2 Bronze Stars. I thought you would like to read this remarkable account that happened just before the war ended. It happened on Mindanao, in the Philippines. It is an attachment. If you could give me any information of who to contact for this I would greatly appreciate it. **Barbara Fay (Readers: Please turn to page 9 to read the remarkable story that was told to Historian, Merry Helm,**

David, A few thoughts on staying safe in New Orleans for the upcoming reunion. New Orleans, like any major city has a crime problem. Some of the crime stats are at the top of the charts. As with most major cities, most of the crime is restricted to neighborhoods. Neighborhoods that your membership will not normally go into, but when you are out visiting sites, be aware of your surroundings. Stay with the crowds. If you are visiting Bourbon Street and don't go too far down (away from Canal Street). If you see the crowd has thinned out, go back toward Canal Street. If you want to visit the uptown neighborhood, do it from a tour bus. You can see the neighborhoods from a streetcar, but the streetcar will beat your kidneys to death - no shock absorbers on them. Follow the usual tourist trails, the French Quarter, Aquarium at the foot of Canal Street, Riverwalk on the river, Jackson Square to name a few. Don't over do the drinking away from your hotel. Stay aware of your surroundings. Stay safe and enjoy your visit to New Orleans. **J. Smith** (Sorry, I lost some of his ID. Editor)



The Gimlets (photo left) of Love CO, 21st RGT held their 32nd annual reunion in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Submitted by **George Vlasic**, Life Member
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Letters

David: Thanks for putting my article in the Spring Taro Leaf, page 5, also for my poem, Sayonara, on page 29. As a result I have received telephone calls from Weightman (first man lost) and from Doris Downing Miller. Her father was killed at Mad Dog Hill the day after I was wounded and two days after I helped resupply the unit. A touch with others from the past is always very comforting. Also enclosed is my poem, *Patrol*, about Korea. It was written on a troop ship in 1952 returning to the States. It was among other entries that I had intended to complete it at a future date. I found it in my papers May 15, 2010 and decided it was complete the way I had left it. **Robert "Bob" Hickey, Life Member,** 7800 County Road 327, Blanket, TX 76432

Patrol

Through the swirling mists of the valley,
The ragged mountains rise.
Reaching with their craggy peaks
Toward the starless skies.
As it whistles through the pine trees,
The cold wind moans its mournful cry;
Singing to the weary land,
A deathless lullaby.
The swampy marsh of the rice paddy,
Sucks at weary feet.
Until each step must seem the last,
And hearts with anguish beat
The rocky trail looms before,
With its torturous steep ascent
And numb legs push onward
Though suffering hell's torment
Upon the crest a cold snow lies,
Whipped by the bitter wind.
To freeze the feet and numb the minds,
Of the weary half-dead men.
In the lee of a ledge, the leader halts.
Bearded and hollow of eye,
The others huddle in the cold
Too filled with misery to die.
Then one and all they bowed their heads,
And offered up a prayer.
To the mighty God of all the world,
To show them mercy there.

Bob: Thank you for your letter from which we now know you were the author of "Sayonara." It is a great poem which I am sure touches the heartstrings of many of us who served in Japan. I appreciate the other pictures you sent, but (and this is a message for all our readers) they were poor copies which could not be printed in the Taro Leaf. If you will send the original photos, I can copy and return them. **David**



Two blondes find three grenades, and decide to take them to a police station. One asked, "What if one explodes before we get there?" The other says, "We'll tell them we only found two."

A blonde is in jail. A guard looks in her cell and sees her hanging by her feet by her belt. "What are you doing?" he asks. "Hanging myself," she

TO THE HOME GUARD

I'm pulling all my punches, "but I've
just got this to say
It has been three months at least
since last I drew my pay
I'm tired of being a "Dogface", so
help me God I am
Of eating cold "C" rations and marjarine and spam;
Of being in these rice paddies afraid
to show my head,
For fear some sneaking, sniping Chinese
might fill it full of lead;
Of being here in Korea under these
'apple trees alone
And I think of dear Old America and my
pals who stayed at home,

Way back when I told the folks back
home I'd volunteered to fight
They said, "God bless you son and
bring you home all right
They called me an "Occupation soldier"
and an Army tourist too
They said you'll never see the front
or even get a view.
What's more you'll have, a picnic across
the ocean's foam
But they made darned sure they didn't
go, my pals -who stayed at home.

I can see them walking down the street
their chest's thrown out in pride
I can hear them "snowing" all my girls
as they save their stinking hides
For a cue stick is their rifle and their
beer is rich with foam
They have no T34s to dodge in the
traffic lights back home .

So, I'll "choagie" on up hill 842 with
my ammo buckled about
I'm only a UN "policeman" but I'll
sweat this deal on out
If a bullet has got my number, I'll just
die without a moan
But I want to dedicate this respectfully
to my pals who stayed at home.

Joe Brimm, Co G, 5th RCT, This poem was published in the troop ship, USNS Gen. Meigs, newsletter, 30 July 1951.

replies. "It should be around your neck!" says the Guard. "I know but I couldn't breathe," she replies.

(Now this one actually makes sense) A blonde was asked, "Why do scuba divers always fall backwards off their boats?" To which she replied, "If they fell forward, they'd still be in the boat."

A REFLECTION OF GOD'S DIVINE INTERVENTION

As told to Barbara Fay by Gene Fay

I have received permission from Barbara Fay to share the following story regarding her husband Gene's experience in the 34th Regiment/24th Division in the South Pacific. It is a marvelous account about something that has long interested me – miracles/visitations on the battlefield. I have had the honor of hearing two other such accounts and wish I could gather enough of them to write a book. Attached is a photo of Barbara and Gene. (To clarify the following, Gene was Barbara's second husband. They married after Gordy died.) Merry Helm, Historian

I had an experience during World War II that to human comprehension seemed miraculous. I have only shared this experience with three or four people and then, never in depth. This happened over fifty years ago, but I don't think that a week has passed by during these fifty years that I have not thought about it. Each time, I thank God for His Goodness and care for me. A miracle is defined as an extraordinary event manifesting a supernatural work of God. My experience was one of these events.

Several years ago, I visited Gordy and Barbara at their cabin at Timberline Village. During the course of our visit, Gordy asked me a question about my war experience. He asked if I had ever been aware of an Angel helping me during the war.

If it had been anyone but Gordy, I probably would have said no and changed the subject. But I had much respect and affection for Gordy, and when he asked that question, I suddenly realized that I had such experiences. But never had I thought about the angel aspect. I then began to remember incidents and began sharing them with him.

One of these experiences occurred during the Leyte (Philippine Island) operation. The date was October 20, 1944 and three days before my twenty-fifth birthday. The thought had crossed my mind that whatever lay ahead, I just hoped to live at least long enough to see my twenty-fifth birthday, a quarter of a century. What a strange thought at a time like this!

My company was on the first wave. As we neared the shore, the off shore shelling was very heavy, and the navy coxswain piloting our landing craft panicked and dropped the ramp in 10-12 feet of water. Some men drowned, and the rest made it to shore.

One of the men was carrying heavy radio equipment, and I offered to carry it for him, as he was sick. As I jumped into the water, I sank to the bottom and fought to get this heavy load off my back. I came to surface and scrambled to shore. I had to detail-strip my rifle because there was a considerable amount of sand in the rifle bore, and I could not fire my weapon.

My company had gone in on the first wave and spearheaded the offensive in our sector for twenty-one or

twenty-two days without relief. The men were weary and near exhaustion.

We were finally relieved for what we thought would be a day or two of rest -- but this was not the reason. A company (not in our regiment, but in our division) was trapped on high ground about two or three miles on our left flank. Of the initial strength of their company, one hundred men had been killed, and of the one hundred or so left, over half were severely wounded, and their supply of ammunition was nearly gone.

The Japanese would very easily overrun their position and soon. My company was pulled out of the line for the purpose of reaching them first, and bringing their wounded to our base camp. As tired as the men were, there were no adverse comments. This trapped company was part of the family, and this mission had to be taken. A large contingent of Medical corpsmen followed us carrying stretchers and medical supplies.

We thought that the mission would take probably three days. Unfortunately, it took eight days. It was brutal and to human sense, a nightmare. We lost quite a few men during the ordeal. To further complicate matters, beginning on the fourth day it began to rain, torrential style, and continued for the next five days without any interruption.

We completed the mission, and as we neared our base of operation, I had trouble in walking. I sat down on the road side and took off my boots and socks. When I did this, all the skin on my feet and up to six inches above my ankle peeled off. Coupled with the mud and dirt that had oozed into my boots. it was a pretty grotesque sight.

I sat there until all the wounded had been taken care of, removed my boots, and finally a couple of Medical Officers came over to see me. They looked at my feet and shook their heads. They then turned their backs on me, presumably so I wouldn't hear their comments. But I did hear. One of the officers said, "This young soldier is in a bad way. He requires immediate attention, and we're not able to give it to him here. By the time we get him to a hospital, I'm afraid gangrene will have set in and he'll lose his legs."

I suppose I should have been concerned about losing my legs, but I wasn't. Obviously, I wasn't able to maintain the level of thought that a Christian should have, but I always maintained the overall conviction of God's Allness and my Oneness with Him. He had sustained me through almost three years of combat, and I had survived incredible situations. He had taken me this far, and I knew that I wasn't going to wind up with no legs. Of this I was confident.

The medics picked me up the next day, and I was put on a ship and taken to New Guinea. Three days more had elapsed. When I got there, the medical men looked at my legs and feet, and the scenario was the same. They shook their heads.

I wasn't concerned or resentful, for the reason that I don't think they knew what or how to tend to me. As I recall, the only action they took was to try to clean the areas by bathing my feet in warm water.

I lay on my cot for a week and noticed that skin was beginning to form on both my legs and feet. A scabbing process usually takes place prior to skin forming. This was not so in my case. At the end of another week I was almost back to normal -- to the doctor's amazement. By the end of the next week I was ready to return to my regiment, but the hospital kept me for another week to rest.

The reason for this speedy and painless recovery was because I was blanketed by Truth emanating from the prayers of my mother. A member of the family told me later that after dinner each night, she retired to her room and prayed for me until the early hours of the morning. This she did for the nearly four years I was away from home.

Early in 1944, the Army started the rotation system, a program whereby servicemen who had served for twenty-four months overseas would now be eligible for rotation back to the United States. They would then be reassigned to a non-combatative unit and would not be sent overseas again.

We drew numbers and of the one-hundred-fifty men eligible, my number came up almost last. The program specified that on a monthly basis, only three men would return home to the U.S. The reason: eventually our regiment would be hitting the shores of Japan proper, and the odds of survival were too high -- it would be a scenario of certain death.

Very few men actually returned home on rotation, because during periods of combat, no one was sent home, and sometimes an operation lasted two to three months. Unfortunately, the army never doubled up the lost months -- just three men went home when the operation was over. Many were killed before their number came up. I was always asked if I wanted a furlough, but I always declined. Only one man ever took a furlough.

A year-and-a-half later, there were only five men ahead of me in the rotation system. We were on the Philippine Island of Mindoro staging for a landing and an offensive assault on the City of Davao. Before we left, I was again asked if I wanted a furlough. I thought about it and even considered taking one. I wanted to see my mother and my Grandmother Fay once again. At this time, I had been overseas three-and-a-half years, and I didn't know if I could survive another combat mission. In the end, I turned it down.

During the war years, my company went ashore in a first wave assignment seven times. I was in the hospital and missed two of these missions.

We made the landing on Mindanao sometime in April 1945. When we reached the outskirts of Davao, the enemy resistance was very heavy, and we were pinned down by excessive artillery fire. It was devastating, and casualties began to mount.

As I lay face down on the ground, the thought came to me very strongly that I wasn't going to survive the day. I had endured many such artillery attacks before, and never did the thought ever come to me that I wasn't going to live through it. The thought came to me almost as though a voice or an omen was telling me that I was going to die on this day. It became plain to me that when faced with the extreme measures of death, the human element was helpless, and the only resort was to our Father, God.

Setting caution aside, I sat up and took from my jacket a small New Testament Bible, which I carried in my pocket wrapped in a rubber sack to keep it dry. I opened the Bible at random and turned to the Book of Ephesians, Chapter 6: 13-14. It read as follows: "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about you with Truth and having on the breastplate of righteousness."

As I sat there, a piece of shrapnel hit my shoulder. I grabbed my shoulder to see if blood was there. It was not injured. At my side was a hot and jagged piece of shrapnel. I could not pick it up...and yet it had not even torn my jacket!

In a state of confusion and danger, a hurried command was given to my company and Third Battalion Headquarters to skirt the flank of our sector and advance in the direction of the artillery fire and to destroy the weapons and the personnel firing them.

We soon learned that two companies were not sufficient for the task and, three days later, we were three or four miles from the main body of our regiment. My company started with two hundred men was now down to forty-seven. I don't recall how the other company fared. We had lost contact with the main body of our regiment.

I will not go into detail, except to say that we encountered strong resistance from superior Japanese forces, and we were continually diverted from our mission. At the end of the third day, we were within two-hundred yards from the weapons, but we weren't aware of it. In the late afternoon, we dug in on a rather barren plateau area with no cover and steep terrain on both sides.

We were in visual contact by the Japanese, and then a frightening development began. It was as though the Japs had drawn a large "X" over our perimeter and started at one end to fire large artillery shells on us -- then lowered the elevation and fired again.

We watched in abject horror, as we were trapped and helpless. The shelling was progressing towards my fox hole. I was covered with dirt as a shell struck nearby. At this point, I stood up and shouted as loud as I could, that "God is the only power." I shouted this over and over. To the amazement of all, the next shell never came. We waited five minutes, then ten minutes, and after fifteen minutes had elapsed, we got out of our holes, picked up the wounded, and orderly removed about one-hundred yards to our rear.

We were still in the sight of the Japs, but all during the night they continued to fire...and all the shells went over our heads and perimeter. The men could not believe or understand what had happened. But I knew that it was God directing and sparing the company.

At four o'clock in the morning of the third day, the soldier sharing my fox hole nudged me and said, "I'm exhausted and can't keep my eyes open. I'm sorry." I understood and took over the watch. I then watched the sun rise that morning and realized I would never see that sight again. I knew what every soldier in the company knew...that we were surrounded. I had been in much combat, and I knew when a no-win situation existed. We didn't have enough men to mount any kind of an offensive. The Japanese had too many men in our sector and would have stopped us.

Our other choice was to stay in our fox holes and wait for them to overrun us...which they could have done easily. Considering all of this caused me to be low in spirit. I realized that I was never going home and deeply regretted such an eventuality.

As the sun rose, and daylight was an hour old, the men stayed in their fox holes. My hole was nearest to the enemy line, and I had a commanding view of the entire perimeter. All of a sudden a jeep appeared, driven by a lone driver. I never saw the jeep wind its way through the maze of fox holes, because it didn't and couldn't have. I would have seen it and heard it. It appeared right next to the captain's fox hole and about fifteen yards from mine.

I then heard someone call my name...the Captain wanted to see me. When I went to him, he said that he couldn't believe what he had just heard. Aside from cursory comments, he said, "Am I losing my mind?" He continued, "This jeep driver has just driven four miles through a no-mans land, surrounded by Japs and land mines, when whoever gave the order didn't know where we were. No one would have ever given such an order to anyone. Besides, you know that we do not replace anyone on furlough or rotation when we are on a mission in enemy territory, and besides, you turned a furlough down. I don't know who gave such an order, but it must have been from someone with a higher rank than mine. If you want to go, go...at least you'll be alive tomorrow!"

I wanted to leave, but as I looked around at my comrades, I saw a bunch of poor devils in an ill-fated situation. I knew they would never see tomorrow. By staying, I wouldn't have been that much more of a help, but I couldn't leave, and I told the Captain that I would stay. I walked back to my fox hole and saw the jeep driver sitting in his jeep looking at me and waiting for me. He was silhouetted by the sun. I couldn't see his face clearly, but I could see him smiling at me and as much as saying, "I am waiting for you...you will come." I can't explain what happened, but I found myself turning back to him. I got into the jeep and said, "Let's go."

As we drove away, I asked the driver how he ever found us. He smiled and just shrugged his shoulders. I asked him if he knew that the roads were mined? He smiled and nodded in the affirmative. He never gave me an answer. I never spoke another word to him. I noticed that he never bore any side

arms and that there was no rifle in the jeep.

When we arrived at the beach, there was only a small contingent of men bringing in ammunition and supplies. The only officers I saw were two second lieutenants. No one of any higher rank ever appeared. I looked around and then looked back at the jeep and driver...both had disappeared. I never saw them again.

I stayed on the beach for five days and was then taken to a troop ship anchored off shore. I sat on this ship for forty-three days and enjoyed each moment of peace and quiet and solitude.

I arrived in the United States and had my forty-five day furlough. At the end of the furlough, I reported to the Officer of the Day at Fort Lewis. He told me that a large bomb of some kind had been dropped on a place in Japan called Hiroshima and that he had orders to suspend any further shipment of supplies or personnel overseas. He told me to go back home for a few more days and then report back to him. A few more days, and another atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki.

The war was soon over, and Japan surrendered. I was sent to Fort Ord in California. While I was there, one of my buddies in my old company was on his way home and stopped by to see my mother. He said to her, "The good Lord was certainly looking out for your son; the day he left, the Japanese overran our position, and I can count on one hand those that survived."

I assumed that those few played dead and crawled away under the cover of night. That jeep driver was most certainly God's messenger who plucked me out at the right moment.

How true is the working of the Father. WITH HIM, ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE.



David: This is a picture of my husband, Eugene Fay, taken in 2006. He was just a few months before his passing. He was standing in the hallway of the grade school he attended as a child in Seattle. It was a reunion celebration. **Barbara Fay**

Barbara: The resolution is poor, but I like to show it, anyway. **Editor**

IOWA SOLDIER RETURNS HOME 60 YEARS LATER

Following discovery of remains in Korea, more than 60 years after an early Korean War battle, SFC Edris "Eddie" A. Viers returned home. Viers, a 32-year old Swan, Iowa native serving with Battery A, **555th Field Artillery Battalion, 24th Infantry Div.**, was last seen Aug. 12, 1950 as his unit engaged with North Korean forces near Pongam-ni, Republic of [South] Korea in what became known as the "Battle of Bloody Gulch." During the fighting, enemy forces overran the 90th and 555th Field Artillery Battalions, inflicting heavy casualties.

Viers was officially declared deceased on Dec. 31, 1953, but his remains were never recovered. In early 1951, the remains of an unknown American soldier from the Pongam-ni battle – initially buried Oct. 19, 1950 – were exhumed from the U.S. military cemetery in Masan, Republic of Korea.

Analysis at the Army's Central Identification Unit (CIU) in Kokura, Japan, failed to associate the remains to a specific individual, and they were reinterred as Unknown Remains X-124 at the National Memorial

Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii (also known as the "Punchbowl") in 1956.

In 2011, the Joint Prisoners of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command - Central Identification Library (JPAC) exhumed the X-124 remains for re-analysis. Based on the date and location of death, and using biological profiles developed at the CIU in the 1950s, they compared these remains to all unaccounted-for losses from the battle of "Bloody Gulch." This re-evaluation led to the association of the X-124 remains to Viers. In late 2011, the U.S. Army notified Viers's surviving family members of his positive identification.

Viers was born May 29, 1918 in Swan to William W. and Mabel B. (Beeson) Viers. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in November 1940 and served in New Guinea and the Philippines during World War II. After WWII he served with the U.S. Army as part of the occupation forces in Germany, then deployed to Korea in 1950.

Power of Prayer by Joe Langone, Task Force Smith, 21st RGT

When fighting a war with the infantry, besides attacking, or repulsing an attack, there is patrolling. Patrols are normally broken down into two categories. The first patrol is known as a combat patrol. This entails the probing the enemy's line, finding a weak point, then attacking a certain objective. The second patrol is called a reconnaissance patrol. This patrol is usually sent out prior to our ground attack to determine, if possible, where, in the enemy's defensive line, is the weakest point. It is also employed to try and determine the enemy's strength. It seemed as though, every time my Company sent out a patrol, I was picked to go with it.

This morning, one day prior to my Company scheduled attack on a Chinese held position, we left our base camp with about a fifteen man infantry patrol and one American tank. Our comrades wished us well, as we departed our base camp, as they knew the importance of bringing back accurate and meaningful information of the enemy's strength.

The ground we had to probe was a hill, actually a small Mountain, covered with thick foliage and trees as we started up one of the fingers. Heavy growth of vegetation is both good and bad. Good because we are harder to see, but bad because we could not see either. As we climbed single file up one of the fingers, we were probably no more than 2,000 meters, when we came under heavy automatic weapon fire. A fire fight ensued between us and the Chinese until we were ordered to fall back. Our tank support started to fire rounds over our heads allowing us to withdraw safely.

Arriving safely back to our base camp, our comrades eagerly greeted us hoping for the best. When explained we could probably expect one heck of a fight the next morning, all felt dejected and concerned. One of the boys suggested that we form a prayer circle and pray to God for our safety during the pending attack in the morning. It was an earnest prayer with much meaning being exerted from each soldier.

When the first light of dawn appeared the following morning, our meal, before entering combat, was bread, black coffee, and scrambled eggs. Your stomach is so nervous that I guess the Army figured that would be all that would stay down. We arrived at our battle positions probably around 0700 hours in the morning and waited for our artillery and mortar barrage to lift before we made our ground attack. Nothing glorious about being in the infantry and conducting a ground attack of an enemy held position.

The Captain yelled, "Let's go men" and off we went. We could hear heavy fighting going on in the other sectors, but for some strange reason, we were attacking unopposed. We secured our objective once we reached the top and found that not one man was lost. There were many more attacks like this yet to come, and many more prayers going up from the combat soldier, but this one, a Circle of Prayers from a bunch of scared guys, will always be remembered.

Combat Veterans – “We Band of Brothers”₁

There’s a mystic bond of brotherhood that binds warriors who have shared the experience of combat. No matter what branch of the service, what engagement, or of what duration when a warrior engages the enemy in combat he touches a place in his soul that has no equal.

Gen. Douglas MacArthur said, “The soldier (marine, sailor, airman) above all men is required to practice the greatest act of religious training...sacrifice. In battle in the face of death and danger he discloses those attributes his maker gave when he created man in his own image. No raw courage or brute instinct can take the place of the divine help which can alone sustain him. No matter how horrible the incidents of war may be the soldier who offers and gives his life for his country is the noblest development of mankind.”

For many this ultimate of life’s challenges is not something sought after or relished. Especially in wars past many were drafted into the military and assigned to the front. With reluctance they took up arms to face an enemy. They recognized an obligation to serve their country, and for those who passed the test of fire they developed a sense of patriotic pride which is in a class by itself.

Today’s warriors are volunteers who feel a sense of duty to serve and are willing to take on whatever comes their way. However, this doesn’t make it any easier to face the ultimate test where their life is in imminent danger. Also, unlike past engagements for many of today’s warriors multiple tours are more commonplace.

The combat warrior is one who is defined by and recognized by every branch of service. At times awards are not given to those worthy, or given to some unworthy, but by far most combat awards are given to those deserving. Each service has specific criteria which must be met.

Army

After the U.S. declaration of war in 1941, the U.S. Army had difficulty recruiting **Infantry** volunteers, unlike its other more glamorous branches (e.g. **Tank Corps**, and the **Army Air Forces**). To increase recruitment and raise *esprit de corps*, **General Lesley J. McNair, Army Ground Forces** commander conceived of a large, recognizable combat service badge, for the infantry ranks. On 7 October 1943, the War Dept. formally established the **Combat Infantryman Badge**. The CIB is the **U.S. Army’s** combat service recognition awarded to soldiers—enlisted men and officers holding **COL** rank or below, who *personally* fought in active ground combat while an assigned member of either an **infantry** or a **Special Forces** unit, of brigade size or smaller, any time after 6 December 1941.

The U.S. Army also recognizes the combat service of medics with the **Combat Medical Badge**, awarded to medical personnel who serve alongside infantry units, and the **Combat Action Badge**, awarded to combat units other than **Infantry** (**Armor**, **Cavalry**, **Field Artillery**), **combat support (CSC)** and **combat service support (CSS)** soldiers who serve in combat in contemporary wars without delineated front lines. This last badge, the **CAB**, was created in 2005 for soldiers who, otherwise, qualify for neither the **CIB** nor the **CMB**.

Navy/Marines/Coast Guard

The **Combat Action Ribbon (CAR)** is a personal military decoration of the **United States Navy**, **United States Marine Corps**, and **United States Coast Guard** which is awarded to those who, in any grade including and below that of a **Captain** in the **Navy** and **Coast Guard** (or **Colonel** in the **Marine Corps**), have actively participated in ground or surface combat. To be awarded the **Combat Action Ribbon**, the individual

Must have rendered satisfactory performance under enemy fire while actively participating in a ground or surface engagement.

The **Navy**, **Marines**, and **Coast Guard** also recognizes the combat service of corpsmen with the **Combat Medical Badge**, awarded to medical personnel who serve alongside combat units.

Air Force

The **Air Force Combat Action Medal** is a relatively new medal issued by the **United States Air Force**. It was first awarded on June 12, 2007 for actions from September 11, 2001 to a date to be determined and may be awarded posthumously. For the purposes of this award, the combat conditions are met when defending the perimeter to conduct official duties - either ground or air and come under enemy attack by lethal weapons while performing those duties, and are at risk of grave danger, or **Individual(s)** are defending the base (on the defended perimeter), and come under fire and engage the enemy with direct and lethal fire, and are at risk of grave danger also meet the intent of combat conditions for the award. Also, personnel in ground operations who actively engage the enemy with direct and lethal fire may qualify even if no direct fire is taken--as long as there was risk of grave danger and other criteria are met. Central to the integrity of this combat recognition is the adherence to these combat conditions prerequisites.

Note: There are other **Air Force** combat awards, such as the **Air Medal**, however I could not find any comprehensive information about these awards. I would appreciate input from knowledgeable persons.

The writer, TL Editor, David Valley is a Korean War Veteran, 19th RGT, 24th ID, and holder of the CIB. He has designed Combat Bracelets for those awarded the CIB, CMB, CAB, CAR, and POW. Write, email, or call for more info 858 485-7550.

Power of Prayer...Again

Having spent five years in WW II with two of them being in combat in the SW Pacific, I often wondered why I made it home safely. Then, I read an article by my sister, a Benedictine nun. Sister Rita Cain, OSB, was asked who had been an important spiritual teacher in her life. Her reply was:

"My parents were, but mostly, my mother. She and my father raised 12 kids. We said the rosary every night during World War II. Immediately after dinner, we cleared the table, said the rosary and, then, did the dishes.

"I was in high school and had two brothers, two sisters, and two brothers-in-law in the service. Sometimes, we would go weeks without hearing from any of them. My parents must have been petrified, but they never built a fear in us. I learned that prayer was more important than dishes or dates or the radio. It was our connection to God."

I remember Rita's words when I think about my experiences in the war. On our Leyte landing, I had a sniper peel the bark off a tree right next to my head. I dropped down and rolled away. I alerted Trank and Sullivan to see if they could spot the sniper and saw LT Barrow stand up to look for Company I and the sniper put a bullet through his head. When Trank and Sullivan spotted this sniper in a palm tree some 50 feet ahead, he was shot and fell to the ground.

A short time later, we were clearing a trench some distance in from the landing area. I was on one side with PFC Chou holding his tommy gun on the other. Captain Wai from Regiment Headquarters joined us. A lone Japanese soldier rose up, fired one round and killed Captain Wai right beside me. There were a number of other close calls like the time a tracer bullet burned the hair off the back of my head. I cannot help but feel that at the same time these incidents took place, my family was kneeling at the kitchen table in Ivesdale, Illinois saying the rosary.

On Christmas Day in 1945, the six of us who had been in the service were home to have dinner in that Ivesdale farm house with all of the family who had prayed for us every night we had been away. With the help of my children, Christine Schmidgall and Michael Cain, we published a book about this family of twelve. It can be purchased online and at some bookstores by asking for "And Then There Were Twelve"

Paul J. Cain, 34th Infantry Regiment, Company I & K - WW II
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It happened by chance that I received three stories about prayer for this issue of the Taro Leaf. I tend to be a believer myself. After I returned from the Korean War, during nine months service of which I was never wounded, I learned my mother said a Rosary for me every night before going to bed. What's special about mother's? Dying G.I.s can often be heard crying out for their mothers, not their fathers. Some time after I returned from Korea my father asked me, "Why didn't you ever write to me?" I was surprised at the question and that he was so emotionally concerned. I said something like, "I thought I was always writing to the family, I just addressed letters to Mom, because she always wrote the letters to me." I don't know if he found my answer to be satisfactory, but it always bothered me that I had caused him to grieve. Editor



On 27 April 2012, I saw the culmination of a 4½ year labor of love! I received the "Women in History Award" by the Daughters of the American Revolution, in El Cajon, California, as well as a "Special Congressional Recognition" by Congressman Duncan D. Hunter of California! It was given to me because of the work I did in getting the "Honor Our Fallen Prisoners of War Act" through Congress. The measure was eventually adopted and entered into military regulations.

Some years ago, I asked members of a patriotic website if anyone knew my late uncle (CPL Melvin H. Morgan, 24th ID) who perished at age 20 from starvation in a North Korean Prisoner of War Camp, 6/12/1950.

I was immediately put in touch with Wilbert (Shorty) Estabrook, (Life Member 347) a man who had been imprisoned with my uncle in that infamous North Korean hellhole, well over 50 years ago. Shorty and the millions of members (literally) of patriotic veterans and civic groups, the media, members of government, and the military alike, were of immense help and value in pushing through federal legislation that would finally garner the Purple Heart Medal for those gallant American Service members who died in enemy captivity between 7 December 1941 to the present, and into the future too! And had it not been for the help of these wonderful people, and others, this project might have never materialized!

Now, thanks to you all, these 17,000 to 21,000 gallant and dedicated Americans, who perished in enemy captivity, and who had not previously been eligible for Posthumous Purple Heart recognition, are now eligible for this magnificent medal, our nation's oldest military award.

To you who served (and yet serve) in our military, to their families, and to their families yet to be born, I offer up my gratitude and thanks for allowing me to work on their behalf. It was indeed an honor and a privilege to be of service to you all, and to all of you I offer up a rousing cheer for your jobs well done! I also offer you my thanks for your sacrifices of blood, sweat and tears, for without you all, there might not be a United States of America! Brenda Sue (Morgan) Tavares, Associate Member 1805 La Posta Road, Campo, California 91906-2206, sgt1@sciti.com 619-478-1136 **Congratulations Brenda on a job well done! Editor**

RECENT NEWS FROM THE DEPT. OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VA Selects Site for the New Louisville Replacement Hospital

The Department of Veterans Affairs has selected a site to serve as the location of a 21st century medical center in Louisville, Ky., replacing an existing 60-year-old facility. [More information](#)

States' Attorneys General Action A Victory for Veterans and the GI Bill

Officials of the Department of Veterans Affairs applauded a decision by the attorneys general of several states to give VA the rights to use the *GI Bill*.Com website, after the website's original owners QuinStreet Inc. agreed to give up the internet site to settle a lawsuit by the states.

[More information](#)

32nd National Veterans Wheelchair Games Begin in

Richmond More than 500 of America's best wheelchair athletes, all disabled U.S. military Veterans, have arrived in Richmond, Va., for the 32nd National Veterans Wheelchair Games being held June 25-30. [More information](#)

Impact of VBA's New Challenge Training Program

The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) has developed a comprehensive and integrated Transformation Campaign Plan to achieve our 2015 goal of eliminating the disability claims backlog and processing all claims at a 98 percent quality level. Along with improved processes and technologies, investment in our people is a key component of VBA's transformation to a 21st Century organization. [View the report.](#)

VA Publishes Draft Strategy Plan for Women Vets

VA's Women Veterans Task Force has developed a comprehensive action plan to focus on resolving critical issues facing women Veterans. [View](#) the 2012 Draft Report: Strategies for Serving Our Women Veterans. [Leave comments.](#)

VA Gulf War Task Force Report Released VA has released the second in a series of annual reports from its Gulf War Veterans Illnesses Task Force, outlining how the department will address the concerns of Veterans deployed during the Gulf War of 1990-1991. The report focuses on efforts to improve the delivery of health care for Gulf War Veterans, including the launch of a prototype clinical care model specifically for Gulf War Veterans. [View report](#)

VA Publishes its 2011 Highlights for the Citizen On November 15th, VA published its 2011 Performance and Accountability Report (PAR). The PAR enables the President, Congress, Veterans Service Organizations, and the public to assess VA's performance on behalf of America's Veterans. The 2011 Highlights for the Citizen, which presents the most important information from the PAR in a condensed, user-friendly format, is now available. [View the report page](#)

Confidential Support for Vets in Crisis The [Veterans Crisis Line](#) offers free, confidential support to Veterans in crisis, as well as their family and friends 24/7/365. Call 1-800-273-8255, chat online.

Vets Line Up for Retraining Assistance

Unemployed Vets between 35-60 with no remaining GI Bill benefits may qualify to receive assistance to train for a high-demand job under the Veterans Retraining Assistance Program. [Learn more](#)

Go Red to Fight Heart Disease VA and the American Heart Association are raising awareness of heart disease in women Veterans. Through the Go Red Heart Match database, women Veterans can connect with other female Veterans/service members who have experienced heart disease. [Learn more](#)

Veterans Obtain Job Opportunities at Hiring Fair The VA Veterans Hiring Fair closed on Friday. Many Veterans have secured job offers with future employers. [Watch the video.](#)

My HealtheVet is the VA's Personal Health Record. It was designed for Veterans, active duty Servicemembers, their dependents and caregivers. My HealtheVet helps you partner with your health care team. It provides you opportunities and tools to make informed decisions.

All users who have a My HealtheVet account are able to view their self-entered information. If you are a Veteran enrolled at a VA facility and have an *upgraded account, you may be able to view: Information you self-entered into My HealtheVet; Parts of your official VA health record (as it becomes available); Your **Department of Defense (DoD) Military Service Information**

Take time to [Register Today](#) and then get your upgraded account the next time you visit your VA facility.

**To upgrade your My HealtheVet VA patient account, you will need to go through authentication. This is a process by which VA verifies a Veterans' identity before allowing access to their VA health record. To learn more, go to: [Upgrading your My HealtheVet account through In-Person or Online Authentication.](#)*

Readers: The underlined copy above are internet links that will take you to the related information on the VA's website. Obviously, you cannot address it from the Taro Leaf hard copy. If you use a computer, go to our 24th IDA website and click on this Taro Leaf issue. Otherwise if you are interested and want more information on these subjects, call your local VA office. **Editor**

Living Large

Dear Taro Leaf Readers: After all our safe return from the rigors of military life, perilous war experiences and anxiety of survival, we must pursue optimistic attitudes to enjoy God's blessings. Let us remember the favorite convincing phrase of the recruiters, "Join the service and you will see the world." Now we have the opportunity to look at other places, see other people with the unlimited liberty of being close to our loved ones instead of having been apart, flirting with "mama-sans, musumes, and wahines."

On our cruise the "Princess of Pater," a daily bulletin listing our everyday activities, set aside a schedule for military veterans to get together and reminisce old memories. We met Navy, Air Force including a WWII vet, frail but still able to travel. The Marines are always the aggressive type, they brag a lot. But I joked with them saying, they should have been with the Army because 'We are always faithful.' I love the Marines, but I do not like the Marine Corps. We also received a special invitation to meet with the ship's Captain.

We had buffet meals and formal dinner, waiter served with varied menu choices. We saw Broadway quality musical shows, current popular movies, seminars on money matters, comedies and passenger talent shows. We enjoyed fresh linens daily, made up bedding, and more amenities. Cruising is really a respite from the hum-drum of daily life. Well, what are you waiting for? Let's go aboard. **Ed Rumbaoa**

From the Editor: Ed chided me for not putting this information in the last issue, pointing out I had previously asked for material about "Living Large" as an inspiration to our comrades to spice up their lives. He has a valid point. It has also encouraged me to write about a special cruise Dottie and I took a few years ago.

I was invited to be a guest lecturer aboard the most extraordinary cruise ship afloat. This ship, called The World, is the largest privately owned yacht on the planet. Those who live onboard continuously circumnavigate the globe, spending extensive time in exotic and well-traveled ports and waking up in a new destination every few days. The ship is loaded with amenities but it is unique because it has 160 luxury condominiums (\$5-10 million per) owned by very rich people from Europe, Asia, the U.S. and Canada. As the ship continually sails around the globe, they and their guests reside aboard as long as they wish. Some retired persons make the ship their only home. You can find more details on internet at www.aboardtheworld.com.

It was the summer of 2006 when Dottie and I boarded The World in Hong Kong to begin a fabulous 18 day cruise to and around the Philippine Islands. My only obligation was to present a series of lectures about Gen. Douglas MacArthur and his experiences in the Philippines. Some of the lectures I did in uniform as the General himself and even included a re-enactment of his famous coming ashore at Red Beach, Tacloban, on the island of Leyte.

The most memorable event however, was one which probably saved Dottie's life. She had experienced heart problems for

several years with random occurrences when her heart would beat very rapidly causing her to get weak from the over-exertion. About a week into our cruise she awoke with this problem. I called the infirmary and quickly a nurse came to our suite. She was a huge Norwegian, well over six feet tall and built like an Amazon. After listening to Dottie's heart, the nurse picked her out of bed as easily as lifting a sack of groceries and put her in a wheelchair.



Dottie's nurse and doctor on the cruise ship, "The World"

The ship's infirmary was state-of-the-art equipped and had a doctor waiting for us. He was even larger than the nurse. Dottie was immediately hooked up to an IV and monitoring equipment. I explained Dottie's history of problems as we watched on the monitor. Her heart was beating at almost 200 pulses per minute and rising. The doctor administered two drugs that should have stopped the fast pulse, but they did not. He then injected a 'last resort' drug and soon her heart rate began to decline.

Her pulse rate went down and down, and became dangerously slow, until it stopped! If you have ever seen a loved one go flat-line, it's enough to stop your own heart. Another drug was injected and after what seemed an impossible time of waiting, a blip and then another appeared on the monitor. The following day Dottie was perfectly normal and enjoying the cruise.

A most important by-product of this episode was a set of charts and records the ship's doctor gave me. Immediately after coming home I took them to Dottie's heart specialist and after examining her and studying the charts he sent her to the hospital for a pacemaker. She likely wouldn't be alive today without that pacemaker. As an update, because of a change in healthcare providers, Dottie had to get a new cardiologist. We requested that her records be forwarded from her previous doctor. I was surprised to see the centerpiece of her records was the set of charts taken on The World. Her new doctor examined them and said, "Now I understand exactly what your problem was." **David**



Holiday Inn Downtown New Orleans Superdome

330 Loyola Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70112 1.800.HOLIDAY

MEETING AT A GLANCE

| | Pre Day One Sunday Sept 16, 2012 | Day One Monday Sept 17, 2012 | Day Two Tuesday Sept 18, 2012 | Day Three Wednesday Sept 19, 2012 | Post Day One Thursday Sept 20, 2012 |
|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| MORNING | Arrivals | On Own Registration Lobby Area 9:00 am – Noon Hospitality Suite 9:00 am – Noon | Ladies Breakfast 8:00 am – 10:00 am Men's Breakfast 8:00 am – 10:00 am Board Meeting 10:00 am – Noon | On Own Hospitality Suite 9:00 am – Noon | Departures |
| | Arrivals Continue Registration Lobby Area 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm Hospitality Suite 1:00 pm – 6:00 pm | Super City Tour 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm Depart Lobby Area Return Lobby Area Hospitality Suite Noon – 6:00 pm | WWII Museum Tour 1:30 pm – 5:00 pm Depart Lobby Area Return Lobby Area Hospitality Suite Noon – 6:00 pm | Steamboat Natchez Tour 10:30 am – 2:00 pm Depart Lobby Area Return Lobby Area Hospitality Suite Noon – 6:00 pm | Departures Continue |
| | Hospitality Suite 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm Complimentary Punch and King Cake 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm Hospitality Suite | On Own Hospitality Suite 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm | On Own Hospitality Suite 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm | Mardi Gras Banquet 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm Hospitality Suite 9:00 pm – 11:00 pm | |
| PARKING NOTE: The hotel has a special rate of \$13 per day for our reunion. | | | | | |

NEW ORLEANS DOWNTOWN



Van Beck Dedicates Veterans Memorial

By Tom J. Thiel, Webmaster

Don Van Beck, Executive Director Veterans Memorial (VMFP) at Fountain Park Leesburg, Florida, addresses a crowd of over a thousand at the May 19, 2012, dedication ceremony for the recently-completed memorial that is located across from the City Hall in downtown Leesburg.



Don who served with the 34th Infantry Regiment, HHC, 1946–47, and his wife Julia, have devoted an enormous amount of time and energy over the last five years to this beautiful Memorial to all veterans from Lake, Sumter, and Marion Counties. They are also regular attendees at the Florida 24th

IDA luncheon and mini-reunion programs .

At 60 feet in diameter and 7 feet high with 2,800 square feet of space, VMFP is one of the largest Veteran Memorials in the southeast U.S.



The dedication took place at noon after an Armed Forces Parade through Leesburg at 10:00 AM. KWVA of Lake County, Chapter 169, had a trailer pulled by a National Guard Humvee in the parade. I wonder if anyone besides me felt shivers as the folks on the street waved and saluted us as we rode by. KWVA's Chapter 169 Color Guard posted colors at the commencement of the Dedication Ceremony.

That's me, Tom Thiel (next column), pointing to my name on the memorial wall. There are over 8,000 names already engraved on the wall leaving room for 32,000 more before the wall will be totally filled.



In the afternoon Rolling Thunder held one of the most impressive ceremonies I have ever seen, next to Leesburg City Hall honoring POWs/MIAs. Twenty-fourth IDA Bill Allen of Terra Verde, FL, a Korean War POW for 31 months, was an invited speaker at the event. Bill, author of *My Old Box of Memories, Thoughts of the Korean War*, struggled a bit telling the audience about his return from Korea in 1953.

If you have not yet read Bill's book, you may want to get a copy (\$15.00 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling to Bill Allen, C. Co 1950-53, 421 4th Ave. N., Tierra Verde, FL 33715-1730, wallen2@tampabay.rr.com, phone 727-866-8337), or at least read the brief review of it on <http://cid169.kwva.org>. Click the "Stories" button or the "Books" link at the bottom of the home page.

Here we are on Leesburg's Main Street waiting for the parade to begin; from left: Max Stomburg, Ted Jansen, Art Burke, Dwayne Hall, Tom Thiel and Jack Reynolds (Jansen, Hall and Thiel are 24th IDA members). The lady in blue behind Jack is Florida State Representative H. Marlene O'Toole, who rode with us on the parade through downtown Leesburg.



For more information on the Dedication, including three short YouTube portrayals, go to www.cid169.kwva.org Click the link "VMFP Ded YouTube" at the bottom of the Main Page. More information about VMFP is at the same site; click on the link "Veterans Memorial at Fountain Park Leesburg."



Tom J. Thiel, Webmaster
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 Telephone: 352 408-6612

In the last Taro Leaf, I said: "I'm considering buying a new scanner capable of quickly scanning both sides simultaneously, which would make the process quicker, but that is a few too many \$\$\$ at this time."

That resulted in a number of responses; I remember calls or emails in the order I received them from John Dunn, Ed Farmer, John Trinca, and Marilyn Cooper ; perhaps there were others too—I appreciated them all. But, Ed Farmer, the 24th IDA's Verbeck Award recipient in 2005, was quite persistent; he contacted me several times. He said he wanted to support my efforts to convert all the paper Taro Leaf magazines, and other paper documents to your Association website, www.24thida.com.

He asked what scanner I needed. So, based on several reviews I found online, I settled on a Canon DR-M160, which scans about 80 pages a minute. But, it cost about \$940.00! While it looks rather large, it only has a footprint about the size of an old land-line phone!

Ed sent me a check for the entire amount! Thank you so very much Ed, both from me and from your association and our efforts to provide a web site of similar quality to its excellent Taro Leaf magazine!

I ordered the scanner from Amazon.com. It came on Thursday, June 7, and I have been infatuated with the DR-M160 ever since. Rather than bore you with performance details I will say that it will scan an entire Taro Leaf (the largest was 112 pages) in well under a minute! That is so fast I can scan twice, once as black and white, and again as a color or grayscale document; I use the latter to insert better photos into the scanned image and still maintain a reasonably small file size. As of today (June 10), about 10 years of Taro Leaf's have been added, and by the time you see this in the printed Summer 2012 Taro Leaf issue, I will have converted all the Taro Leafs that I have.

This leads me to say: "I need more old Taro Leafs!" I appeal to you to provide me with the Taro Leafs that I do not have (I've only been a member for about 10 years now). I need all the Taro Leaf magazines that are listed on the table herein. The needed copies are shown in the columns labeled "Missing." Only the ones missing are shown as I have some throughout the entire period. (Note that you can also easily determine missing issues from the website itself; there is no entry in the table of issues.)

It may be that there were periods where no Taro Leafs were published; I don't know. If anyone does know I would appreciate your telling me.

Also, note that in order to scan them with the Canon scanner, I need to cut the magazines into single sheets for feeding through the scanner. I also have a flatbed scanner, but would not want to use that very much. I would rather not return your magazines but if you so desire please let me know that. Please send your Taro Leafs to the address shown below.

Material other than Taro Leaf magazines has also been uploaded to the website. John Shank's "Yang gu, Korea, A Pictorial Interlude," is one of the most recent books added. Another recent addition was Gordon Talbot's "24ths 15th Anniversary." There have other additions that I cannot recall, too.

The site now takes 1.8 GB of computer storage and it has 2,175 files, where a file can be anything from a single photo to a whole 400-page book. I am "estimating" it to have around a half-million pages and photos!

I appreciate your cooperation. This is your site, so I need your material for the site. Please send it to the below address, or call me to discuss putting your material on your web site for all the world to view.

Tom J. Thiel, 19147 Park Blvd., Eustis, FL 32736, Telephone: 352 408-6612, Email: 24thidaweb@gmail.com



**Donate Your
old Taro Leafs
to our
website!**

Please see **Web Report** for details.

Tom Thiel, Webmaster
 19147 Park Place Blvd
 Eustis, FL 32736-7262
 Call 352-357-3943 or 352-408-6612
 or at: 24thidaweb@gmail.com

Taro Leaf issues needed for Association website

| YEAR | Vol | Missing | YEAR | Vol | Missing |
|---------|-----|----------------|---------|-----|--------------------|
| 1947-48 | 1 | No. 6 | 1973-74 | 27 | All |
| 1948-49 | 2 | Nos.3,4,5,6 | 1974-75 | 28 | Nos. 1,2,4,5,6 |
| 1949-50 | 3 | Nos. 1,5,6 | 1975-76 | 29 | Nos. 1,3,4,5,6 |
| 1950-51 | 4 | Nos. 1,4,5,6 | 1976-77 | 30 | Nos. 1,2,3,4,5 |
| 1951-52 | 5 | All | 1977-78 | 31 | All |
| 1952-53 | 6 | All | 1978-79 | 32 | Nos. 1,3,4,5 |
| 1953-54 | 7 | All | 1979-80 | 33 | Nos.1,6 |
| 1954-55 | 8 | All | 1980-81 | 34 | Nos. 2,3,4,5,6 |
| 1955-56 | 9 | All | 1981-82 | 35 | Nos. 2,3,4,5,6 |
| 1956-57 | 10 | All | 1982-83 | 36 | All |
| 1957-58 | 11 | All | 1983-84 | 37 | All |
| 1958-59 | 12 | All | 1984-85 | 38 | Nos. 1,2,3,4,6 |
| 1959-60 | 13 | All | 1985-86 | 39 | All |
| 1960-61 | 14 | All | 1986-87 | 40 | All |
| 1961-62 | 15 | All | 1987-88 | 41 | Nos. 1,3,4,6 |
| 1962-63 | 16 | All | 1988-89 | 42 | Nos. 1,2,3,5 |
| 1963-64 | 17 | All | 1989-90 | 43 | Nos. 1,4, 6 |
| 1964-65 | 18 | All | 1990-91 | 44 | Nos. 3, 4, 5, 6 |
| 1965-66 | 19 | Nos. 1,2,3,5,6 | 1991-92 | 45 | Nos, 2,5,6 |
| 1966-67 | 20 | All | 1992-93 | 46 | All |
| 1967-68 | 21 | All | 1993-94 | 47 | No. 1 |
| 1968-69 | 22 | All | 1994-95 | 48 | Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 |
| 1969-70 | 23 | All | 1995-96 | 49 | No. 1 |
| 1970-71 | 24 | All | 1999 | 53 | No 4 |
| 1971-72 | 25 | All | 2001 | 55 | No 4 |
| 1972-73 | 26 | All | | | |

A year ago we presented the early chapters of this book about Task Force Smith. We now resume the story.

The 21st Infantry Moves Up

The 21st Infantry Regiment of the 24th Division had now crossed from Japan to Korea. COL Stephens, commanding officer of the regiment, arrived at Taejon with a trainload of his troops before noon on 7 July. Stephens, a bluff, rugged soldier, reported to General Dean for instructions. Within the hour Dean sent him northward to take up a delaying position at Choch'iwon, support the 34th Infantry, and keep open the main supply road to that regiment.

At Choch'iwon all was confusion. There were no train schedules or train manifests. Supplies for the 24th Division and for the ROK I Corps troops eastward at Ch'ongju arrived all mixed together. The South Korean locomotive engineers were hard to manage. At the least alarm they were apt to bolt south with trains still unloaded, carrying away the supplies and ammunition they had just brought up to the front. American officers had to place guards aboard each locomotive.

COL Stephens placed his 3d Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Carl C. Jensen, in position along the highway six miles north of Choch'iwon. A little more than a mile farther north, after they withdrew from their Ch'onan positions, he placed A and D Companies of the 1st Battalion in an advanced blocking position on a ridge just east of the town of Chonui. Chonui is approximately twelve miles south of Ch'onan and three miles below the point where the Kongju road forks off from the main highway.

Late in the day on 8 July, General Dean issued an operational order confirming and supplementing previous verbal and radio instructions. It indicated that the 24th Division would withdraw to a main battle position along the south bank of the Kum River, ten miles south of Choch'iwon, fighting delaying actions at successive defensive positions along the way. The order stated, "Hold Kum River line at all costs. Maximum repeat maximum delay will be effected." The 34th Infantry was to delay the enemy along the Kongju road to the river; the 21st Infantry was to block in front of Choch'iwon. Dean ordered one battery of 155mm howitzers of the 11th Field Artillery Battalion to Choch'iwon for direct support of the 21st Infantry. Also in support of the regiment were A Company, 78th Heavy Tank Battalion (M24 light tanks), less one platoon of four tanks, replacing the 24th Reconnaissance Company tanks, and B Company of the 3d Engineer Combat Battalion. The 3d itself was to prepare roadblocks north of Kongju along the withdrawal route of the 34th Infantry and to prepare all bridges over the Kum River for demolition.

Messages from General Dean to COL Stephens emphasized that the 21st Infantry must hold at Choch'iwon, that the regiment must cover the left flank of the ROK forces eastward in the vicinity of Ch'ongju until the latter could

SOUTH TO THE NAKTONG, NORTH TO THE YALU

Roy E. Appleman



fall back, and that he could expect no help for four days. General Dean's intent was clear. The 34th and 21st Infantry Regiments were to delay the enemy's approach to the Kum River as much as possible, and then from positions on the south side of the river make a final stand. The fate of Taejon would be decided at the Kum River line.

The Fight at Chonui

On the morning of 9 July, the 3d BN, 1st Infantry, completed moving into the positions north of Choch'iwon, and COL Jensen began registering his 81-mm. and 4.2-inch mortars. Engineers blew bridges in front of Chonui. By noon the 21st Regimental Headquarters received a report that enemy tanks were moving south from Ch'onan. In mid-afternoon, Capt. Charles R. Alkire, in command at the forward blocking position at Chonui,

saw eleven tanks and an estimated 200-300 enemy infantry move into view to his front. He called for an air strike which came in a few minutes later.

Artillery also took the tanks under observed fire. Five of the eleven tanks reportedly were burning at 1650. Enemy infantry in Chonui came under 4.2-inch mortar and artillery fire. Observers could see them running from house to house. The men on the low ridge east of Chonui saw columns of black smoke rise beyond the hills to the northwest and assumed that the planes and artillery fire had hit targets there. Aerial observers later reported that twelve vehicles, including tanks, were burning just north of Chonui. At dusk another air report stated that of about 200 vehicles on the road from P'yongt'aek to Chonui approximately 100 were destroyed or burning. The third and fourth tactical air control parties to operate in the Korean War (Air Force personnel) directed the strikes at Chonui.

While this heavy bombardment of the enemy column was still in progress, COL Stephens arrived at the forward position about dusk and announced he was going to stay overnight. In their front, burning Chonui relieved the blackness of the night. Enemy patrols probed their position. Unless all signs failed there would be action on the morrow.

About 500 men of A and D Companies and fillers for B and C Companies who had arrived at Pusan too late to join Task Force Smith for the Osan action comprised the composite battalion of the 21st Infantry at the Chonui position. They occupied a three-quarter mile front on a low ridge 500 yards east of Chonui and on a higher hill 800 yards south of the town. Rice paddy land lay between this high ground and Chonui. The railroad and highway passed between the ridge and the hill. Still another hill westward dominated the left flank but there were too few troops to occupy it.

From the low ridge east of Chonui one normally could see the road for a mile beyond the town, but not on the morning of 10 July. The day dawned with a ground fog billowing up from the rice paddies. With it came the North Koreans. At 0555 the American soldiers could hear enemy voices on their left. Fifteen minutes later those on the ridge at the center of the position heard an enemy whistle at the left; then firing began in that direction. Soon, some of the men near COL Stephens began shooting blindly into the fog. He promptly stopped them. At 0700, enemy mortar fire began falling on the ridge. Lt. Ray Bixler with a platoon of A Company held the hill on the left. The rate of small arms fire increased and those in the center could hear shouting from Bixler's platoon. It was apparent that the main enemy attack centered there, coming from the higher hill beyond it.

A concentration of friendly registered mortar fire covered the little valley between the two hills and in the early part of the morning prevented the enemy from closing effectively with Bixler's platoon. But an enemy force passed to the rear around the right flank of the battalion and now attacked the heavy mortar positions. At the same time, enemy tanks came through Chonui on the highway and passed through the infantry position. The men on the ridge could hear the tanks but could not see them because of fog.

At 0800 the fog lifted. Chonui was still burning. Four tanks came into view from the north and entered the village. Stephens radioed for an air strike. Then the men heard tank fire to their rear. The enemy tanks that had passed through the lines earlier were joining their flanking infantry force in an attack on the American heavy mortar position. Stephens had already lost wire communication with the mortarmen; now he lost radio communication with them. The mortars fell silent, and it seemed certain that the enemy had overrun and destroyed them.

Although artillery still gave support, loss of the valuable close-in support of the 4.2-inch mortars proved costly. North Korean infantry came from Chonui at 0900 and began climbing the ridge in a frontal attack against the center of the position. The artillery forward observers adjusted artillery fire on them and turned them back. Men watching anxiously on the ridge saw many enemy fall to the ground as they ran. The T34's in Chonui now moved out of the town and began spraying the American-held ridge with machine gun fire.

Shortly after 1100, intense small arms fire erupted again at Lieutenant Bixler's position on the left. The absence of the former heavy mortar fire protecting screen enabled the enemy to close with him. The fog had lifted and men in the center could see these enemy soldiers on the left. Bixler radioed to Stephens at 1125 that he needed more men, that he had many casualties, and asked permission to withdraw. Stephens replied that he was to stay—"Relief is on the way." Five minutes later it came in the form of an air strike. Two American jet planes streaked in, rocketed the tanks without any visible hits, and then strafed the enemy infantry on the left.

The strafing helped Bixler; as long as the planes were

present the enemy kept under cover. Soon, their ammunition expended, the planes departed. Then the enemy infantry resumed the attack.

While the air strike was in progress, survivors from the overrun recoilless rifle and mortar positions in the rear climbed the ridge and joined the infantry in the center of the position. At 1132, according to Bigart's watch, friendly artillery fire began falling on the ridge. Apparently the artillerymen thought that enemy troops had overrun the forward infantry position and they were firing on them. Enemy fire and tanks had destroyed wire communication from the battle position to the rear, and the artillery forward observer's radio had ceased working. There was no communication. Stephens ran to his radio jeep, 100 yards to the rear of the foxholes, and from there was able to send a message to the regiment to stop the artillery fire; but it kept falling nevertheless.

As the men on the ridge crouched in their foxholes under the shower of dirt and rocks thrown into the air by the exploding artillery shells, Stephens at 1135 received another report from Bixler that enemy soldiers surrounded him and that most of his men were casualties. That was his last report. The enemy overran Bixler's position and most of the men there died in their foxholes. Even before the friendly artillery fire began falling, some of the men on the north (right) end of the ridge had run off.

About the time of Bixler's last radio message, someone yelled, "Everybody on the right flank is taking off!" Stephens, looking in that direction, saw groups running to the rear. He yelled out, "Get those high priced soldiers back into position! That's what they are paid for." A young Nisei from Hawaii, CPL Richard Okada, tried to halt the panic on the right but was able to get only a few men together. With them he formed a small perimeter.

At 1205 COL Stephens decided that those still on the ridge would have to fall back if they were to escape with their lives. On a signal from him, the small group leaped from their foxholes and ran across open ground to an orchard and rice paddies beyond. There they learned, as thousands of other American soldiers were to learn, that crossing flooded rice paddies in a hurry on the narrow, slippery dikes was like walking a tightrope. While they were crossing the paddies, two American jet planes strafed them, thinking them enemy soldiers. There were no casualties from the strafing but some of the men slipped knee-deep into mud and acquired a "lifelong aversion to rice."

Stephens and his small group escaped to American lines. In this action at Chonui, A Company had 27 wounded and 30 missing for a total of 57 casualties out of 181 men; D Company's loss was much less, 3 killed and 8 wounded. The Heavy Mortar Company suffered 14 casualties. Of the total troops engaged the loss was about 20 percent. Upon reaching friendly positions, Stephens ordered COL Jensen to counterattack with the 3d Battalion and regain the Chonui positions. Jensen pressed the counterattack and regained the ridge in front of the town, but was unable to retake Bixler's hill south of the railroad. His men rescued about ten men of A and D Companies who had not tried to withdraw under the shell fire.

Jensen's counterattack in the afternoon uncovered the first known North Korean mass atrocity perpetrated on captured American soldiers. The bodies of six Americans, jeep drivers and mortar-men of the Heavy Mortar Company, were found with hands tied in back and shot through the back of the head. Infiltrating enemy soldiers had captured them in the morning when they were on their way to the mortar position with a resupply of ammunition. An American officer farther back witnessed the capture. One of the jeep drivers managed to escape when the others surrendered.

American tanks on the morning of 10 July near Chonui engaged in their first fight of the Korean War. They performed poorly. In the afternoon, tanks participated in the 3d Battalion counterattack and did better. One of them got in a first shot on an enemy tank and disabled it. Two American light tanks were lost during the day. Elements of the N.K. 4th Division had pressed on south after the capture of Ch'onan and they had fought the battle of Chonui. Leading elements of the N.K. 3d Division, following the 4th by one day, apparently came up to Chonui late on the 10th. They found the town such a mass of rubble that the reserve regiment bypassed it. On the afternoon of 10 July American air power had one of its great moments in the Korean War.

Late in the afternoon, a flight of jet F-80 planes dropped down through the overcast at P'yongt'aek, twenty-five air miles north of Chonui, and found a large convoy of tanks and vehicles stopped bumper to bumper on the north side of a destroyed bridge. Upon receiving a report of this discovery, the Fifth Air Force rushed every available plane to the scene, B-26's, F-80's, and F-82's in a massive air strike. Observers of the strike reported that it destroyed 38 tanks, 7 half-track vehicles, 117 trucks, and a large number of enemy soldiers. This report undoubtedly exaggerated unintentionally the amount of enemy equipment actually destroyed. But this strike, and that of the previous afternoon near Chonui, probably resulted in the greatest destruction of enemy armor of any single action in the war.

Perhaps a word should be said about the close air support that aided the ground troops in their hard-pressed first weeks in Korea. This support was carried out by United States Air Force, Navy, Marine, and Australian fighter planes and some U.S. fighter-bombers. Beginning early in the war, it built up as quickly as resources would permit. On 3 July the Far East Air Forces established a Joint Operations Center at Itazuke Air Base, on Kyushu in Japan, for control of the fighter planes operating over the Korean battlefield. This center moved to Taejon in Korea on 5 July, and on 14 July to Taegu, where it established itself near Eighth Army headquarters.

By 19 July, heavy communications equipment arrived and a complete tactical air control center was established in Korea, except for radar and direction-finding facilities. Advance Headquarters, Fifth Air Force, opened at Taegu on 20 July.

The forward element in the control system of the close air support was the tactical air control party, consisting of a

forward air controller (usually an officer and an experienced pilot), a radio operator, and a radio repair man who also served as jeep driver. Six of these parties operated with the 24th Division in Korea in the early days of the war. As soon as others could be formed, one joined each ROK corps and division, and an Air Liaison Officer joined each ROK corps to act as adviser on air capabilities for close support.

The Fifth Air Force began using T-6 trainer aircraft to locate targets on and behind enemy lines. The controllers in these planes, using the call sign "Mosquito," remained over enemy positions and directed fighter planes to the targets. Because of the call sign the T-6's soon became known in Army and Air Force parlance as Mosquitoes. The Mosquito normally carried an Air Force pilot and a ground force observer. The plane was equipped with a Very High Frequency radio for contact with tactical air control parties and fighter aircraft in the air. It also had an SCR-300 radio for contact with front-line ground troops. The ground force observer and the pilot in the Mosquito, the control party, and the forward infantry elements coordinated their information to bring fighter aircraft to targets where they delivered their strikes, and also to direct ground fire on enemy targets in front of the infantry.

In the early part of the war the F-51 (Mustang), a propeller-driven fighter, predominated in the Air Force's close support effort. This plane had shown to good advantage in World War II in low-level close support missions. It had greater range than the jet F-80 and could use the rough, short fields in Korea. Most important of all, it was available. For close support of Marine troops when they were committed later, a tried and tested plane, the Marine F4U Corsair, was used. The F-51 was capable of carrying 6 5-inch rockets and 2 110-gallon napalm tanks, and it mounted 6 .50-caliber machine guns. The F-80 could carry 2 110-gallon napalm tanks, and mounted 6 .50-caliber machine guns with about the same ammunition load as the F-51. It could also carry 2 5-inch rockets if the target distance was short.

Both the F-51 and the F-80 could carry 2,000 pounds of bombs if the mission required it. The F4U could carry 8 5-inch rockets, 2 110-gallon napalm tanks, and it mounted 4 20-mm. cannon with 800 rounds of ammunition. If desired it could carry a 5,200-pound bomb load. The F-51 had a 400-mile operating radius, which could be increased to 760 miles by using external gas tanks. The F-80's normal radius was 125 miles, but it could be increased to 550 miles with external tanks. The F4U had a shorter operating range. With external tanks it reached about 335 miles.

This concludes the current episodes. In the next Taro Leaf the story will continue on July 10, 1950 with the battle of Choch'iwon. The internet is the origin of Appleton's book from which these accounts have been drawn. For easier reading foot notes and other reference materials have been eliminated. Readers interested in the referenced source material may go to the internet or a public library. I have also done some reformatting for easier reading.

Editor

My father **Boyce Huson**, Life Member #272, has passed away and we would like to cancel his subscription of Taro Leaf. Thank you, Hyla Abelmann

Justin Byron Fleming, Life Member 1055, passed away last Friday morning. I have been asked to give the eulogy at his service to be held on Friday, May 18th, 2012. His units were: 3rd BN, 34th RGT and 2nd BN, 21 RGT. Here is the wording of Justin's BS/V: The Bronze Star Medal (Letter "V" device) for heroic achievement is awarded to SFC Justin Byron Fleming, a member of CO E, 21st RGT, who distinguished himself by heroic action near Kumchon, Korea on 22 September 1950. During the advance on the town, the enemy counterattacked against his company and inflicted many casualties. Organizing a group from company headquarters personnel he led them in an attempt to locate and evacuate the wounded. During the entire fire fight he led his men, through intense tank, mortar and small arms fire to the wounded and successfully removed them to the rear areas. SFC Fleming's heroic actions and complete devotion to his comrades with utter disregard for his own safety reflect great credit on himself and the United States Infantry.



Harry A. Mullens, COL (ret.) died January 25, 2012 at age 80 in Haines City, FL. He enlisted in the Army in 1950 and retired after 28 years. He served in the Korean War with the **3rd Engineers**. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Edith who resides at 66 Strathmore Drive, Haines City, FL 33844. Life Member 914.

Paul W. Yesensky died at age 80 at Williamstown, NY. He joined the Army in 1949 and served with the **5th RCT** in Korea. Paul was severely wounded on 13 October, 1951 and returned to the U.S. He later re-enlisted in the Air Force. He was at one time national president of the 5th RCT Association of Korean Veterans. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Joan.

"Since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with Him. 1Thessalonians 5:8-24

Therefore encourage one another, and build up one another, just as you also are doing. But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.

And we urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient

FALLEN COMRADES



Angelo R. Saccente died May 14, 2012. He was a Korean War Veteran serving with the U.S. Army **3rd Engineers**. He was a lifetime member of the V.F.W. Post # 8093 of DeBary and the Korean War Veterans Association. He is survived by his loving wife, Helen, of 51 years. Member, 1787 McFarlane Ave., Deltona, FL 32738.

Gene H. McQuitt of Olathe, KS passed away May 13, 2012. He was a member of K CO, **21st RGT** and served in Korea in '50-'51. He is survived by his wife Wilma.



Charles W. Jeremiah died February 15th, 2012 at age 83. He served with C CO, **21st RGT**, '49-'50. Life Member 1181. He is survived by his wife Ruth, P.O. Box 257, Willisville, IL 62997.



Ervil Austin (SFC) died May 10, 2013 in Lebanon, MO. He served with K CO, 19th RGT in Korea, '51-'52, and participated in Operation Nomad. He is survived by his wife Betty.



Chaplain's Corner...

with all men. See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all men.

Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit; do not despise prophetic utterances. But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil.

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass."

To God goes the glory, Chaplain Glen Carpenter

Reflections of Korea

I'm writing while I still have my faculties and while I can still print. I was only in the 24th for about three months in late 1951 and early 1952. I felt I should write about my time as I saw it.

Ti Collins, (Winter Issue 2012) was 'right on' when he said it got cold, and 30 below was no exaggeration. I was one of the last replacements to arrive on a hill called "Yoke". They expected to receive 20 replacements, but got just two. I could see the hill was pretty thin with people. But, I was new to the business. I was so new that when they sent someone down to escort me to the hill, I walked all the way with an empty rifle... It seems there was a lot of no-man's-land in between. If you're lucky you live long enough to learn; I learned.

Being one of the last on the hill, I got the foxhole that no-one wanted. It had a wide open side where they could put a 50 cal. machine gun. It had all the comforts, like a grenade pit, and a poncho over the entrance. I guess there were too many guys getting killed in their sleeping bags, (standing guard in them) so, the order came down that every other man had to turn in his sleeping bag. There was no other way to get warm, so we just got cold. Sixty years later I've still got cold weather fungus.

One day we were going on a push. It was early in January, 1952. We stayed up all night, but didn't go. The next night it was the same. Then the third night they said we were going on the push and we stayed up until about 2 A.M. We were walking zombies by then. We finally left the hill and went on the push. We walked for what seemed like 2 hours, and then turned north. As we walked into a valley, all hell broke loose. They had the valley all zeroed in with mortars. I was standing next to an old gun emplacement two sandbags high. I tried to dig under the sand bags.

The next thing I knew I was back at company and being transferred into 225th RGT of the 40th Division. Some of the 24th were going to Japan, but they needed combat veterans to stay with the 40th who had just arrived in Korea. You were selected by points. If you had 1-12 points you went to Japan with the 24th. Also, if you had 20-36 points, you went to Japan. If you had 12-20 points you were transferred to the 40th. I'm sure the 21st lost a lot of men that day, but I don't see anything written about it. I'm sure it was during the Peace Talks, and nothing more was said.

I had three close buddies and we got together when we were at company. I saw one of them when we were going home. I'll always wonder about the other two. I watched a set of CD's about Korea 1950-1953. And, there was nothing from the fall of 1951 to the late winter of 1952. It's almost like I wasn't there. Guess, I'll never know.

I feel better having written this. Maybe someone else that was there then will understand. It was a very cold winter.

Irven Thomas, Company D, 21st RGT

THANK YOU NOTE

I would like to acknowledge the many notes, remembrances, rosters and other information that association members have donated over the past several years. Here are some recent contributions to our archives:

Henry "Hank" Leerkamp, Love Company, 34th Regiment, provided an interview, a memoir, and photo from Korean War. Hank was captured in the early fighting and was a Tiger Survivor.

Irven E. Thomas, Dog Company, 21st Regiment, provided a Korean War memoir of his three months with the division before being transferred into the 225th Regiment, 40th Division, when the 24th rotated back to Japan in early 1952.

Norton Goldstein, a.k.a. Goldy Norton, Signal Corps, 21st Regiment, has donated his original copies of five poems written between 1949 and 1951, describing himself as the "unofficial poet laureate of the 21st Regiment" during that time period.

Gerald P. Rettela, Able Company, 34th Regiment, sent memorabilia and articles regarding the regiment in Japan and Korea in 1954.

George "Chip" Peifer has supplied photos and valor citations awarded to his brother, William, who was killed in action April 25, 1951. (See "looking for" this issue.) Peifer also supplied photos of two childhood friends who were killed in action while serving with the 24th in the opening weeks of the war: D. Keith Rotherel, KIA July 19, 1950, and Warren "Dogs" Heim, who was captured and died on the Tiger Death March (Heim's remains have not been recovered).

Colonel (Ret) Tom Brown, Ft. Fort Stewart Garrison Commander during Desert Storm, has contributed a very sizable donation of articles, publications and memorabilia related to the 24th ID in Desert Shield and Desert Storm. **Many thanks to all!, Merry Helms, Historian**



The dreaded Japanese Zero of WWII made by Mitsubishi. This fighter plane ruled the skies of the Pacific until The U.S. P-51 Mustang built by North American stole its thunder.

QUARTERMASTER ORDER FORM

HAT PIN MEDALS ALL \$5: 1. Philippines Liberation 2. Nat'l Def Svc 3. Good Conduct 4. Silver Star 5. Pacific Campaign 6. Armed Forces Reserve 7. Army Occupation 8. POW 9. Distinguished Svc Cross 10. ETO Campaign 11. Soldiers Medal 12. Meritorious Svc 13. United Nations 14. American Defense 15. Vietnam Svc 16. American Campaign 17. Armed Forces Expeditionary 18. U.S. Flag 19. Army Dist Flying Cross 20. Korea Svc Ribbon 21. Army Commendation 22. WWII Victory Ribbon 23. Marine Corp Expeditionary 24. Korean Svc Medal 25. WWII Victory Medal 26. Bronze Star 27. Purple Heart 28. Air Medal 29. 24th ID 31. 19th RGT 32. 37. Combat Medic Badge 38. Army Desert Storm 39. Vietnam Heaven & Hell 104. Desert Storm 110. Philippines Presidential Unit Ribbon.

PATCHES: 42. 24th ID color \$6. 43. 24th IDA \$6. 58. 19th RGT Color \$6. 59. 21st RGT Color \$6. 60. 34th RGT Color \$6. 61. 11th FA BN Color \$6 62. 13th FA BN Color \$6 77. 5th RCT \$6 87. 6th Tank BN Color \$6. 91. 63rd FA BN Color \$6. 97. 24th ID Korean Vet \$6. 107. Division Artillery \$6. 108. 29th Inf Div Color \$6. 109. 24th ID Victory Patch \$6.

CRESTS: 52. 24th Sig \$9. 53. 19th RGT \$9. 54. 21st RGT \$9. 56. 11th FA BN \$9. 57. 13th FA BN \$9. 63. 24th ID \$9. 75. 3rd Eng BN \$9. 76. 14th Eng BN \$9.

CAPS: 65. 21st RGT White \$15. 66. 21st RGT Dark Blue \$15. 69. 24th IDA White w/Taro/Germany \$12. 70. 24th ID Red w/Taro/Germany 71. 24th IDA Red \$15. 72. 24th ID White/1st to Fight \$15. 73. 24th IDA Green (X) 74. 24th ID White Mesh (X) 78. 5th RCT Red w/patch \$12. 80. Desert Storm Vet \$12. 81. POW/MIA Blk \$15. 82. WWII Vet Blk \$12. 101. WWII Veteran w/CIB \$15.

MISCL: 40. **Ladies Necklace** 19th RGT \$5. 41. **Ladies Bracelet** 19th RGT \$5. 46. 24th ID Window sticker \$2. 85. CIB Window sticker 2x5 \$3. 86. **BUMPER STCKER** 24th ID "Proudly Served" \$3. **BOLO TIE:** Taro Leaf Gold w/Blk Braid \$15. **BELT BUCKLE:** 50. Taro Leaf w/Silver Buckle \$15. **NECK WALLET:** 94. 24th ID Green \$5. **KEY CHAIN:** 95. 24th ID \$10. **FLAGS 3'x5':** 90. 24th ID Outdoor Screen Print \$65. 102. Korean War Silk Screened \$65. 103. Korean War Vet Silk Screened \$65. **CHRISTMAS CARDS:** 93. 10 cards w/env. \$8. **CD:** 98. 24th ID Songs & March \$10. **DVD:** 99. 24th ID Punchbowl Memorial/Hawaii \$15. **License Plate:** 79. 24th ID w/Taro Leaf/First to Fight/Victory Div \$8. **HISTORY BOOK:** 96. **T-SHIRTS \$15 ea.** 24th ID Hawaii Div/Black in Color (Sizes XXL/L/M) 24th ID Hawaii Div/White in color (Sizes 2XL/XL/L/M) **NEW ITEMS:** 116. 24th ID Airborne Hat Pin. Bumper Stickers: 24th RGT Div PROUD TO SERVE. Also have bumper stickers for WWII and the Korean War. 120.

CIB BRACELET \$35 (order direct from Sektor Co., Box 501005, San Diego, CA 92150 - Free shipping)

Circle item number for purchase and indicate quantity. Shipping and handling is \$5.00. Allow 2-4 weeks for delivery. No phone orders. I suggest if you have an email address send me an email first, before ordering any items and I can check and see if I have them in stock. We do not accept credit cards. Make checks payable to the 24th IDA. Send the completed form and your check to:

Quartermaster John Walters, 313 Heritage Overlook, Woodstock, GA 30188.
Email: 1k34cspd@gmail.com

QM Notes: I recently secured a large quantity of hat pins, medals, patches, etc. from Albert McDoo with the 5th RCT out of Tampa. Their QM had passed away and they were getting rid of his inventory cheap so I got a good deal on the items. I am in the process of going through these items for inclusion in our inventory, which will hopefully be ready for the next TARO LEAF. In addition I would like to encourage all TARO LEAF readers to use my email to

request items **before** ordering to see if I have the certain items they want. This will accomplish two things, first save you 45 cents in postage and second, once they email me I can send them a more user friendly inventory list than what appears in the TARO LEAF. Thanks for your understanding.

Quartermaster, John Walters
EMAIL: 1k34cspd@gmail.com

Notices

Please contact your Congressional Representative NOW!



Write a letter to your Representative asking them to support Congresswoman Kathy Hochul's bill to honor the Army's 24th ID and its 14 Medal of Honor recipients through a memorial marker to be installed at Arlington National Cemetery. We need broad support from our members if we wish to see this deserved recognition in our nation's most prestigious cemetery. We also need your financial support, please send a donation to President Sal Schillaci. (SEE MORE DETAILS ON PAGE 12)

-----Cut out and mail-----



24th Infantry Division Association



John A. Dunn, Sec'y./Treas.
9150 Highway 51
Westover, AL35147-9527

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Occupation _____

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- ☐ Enroll as Member
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- ☐ 12 Months Dues \$15.00
- ☐ Life Membership \$200, or
- ☐ Installments \$40 / 5 years

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24TH INF. DIV. ASSOC.**

Unit

i.e. 5th, 19th, 3rd Engr., 955 FABn., Etc.

Bn.

Co.

P

It./Bat.

Squad

Location(s)

i.e. Pearl, WWII, Japan, Korea, Germany, Ft. Stuart, Lebanon, Somalia, Desert Storm, Ft. Riley, etc

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Location

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| of Chaplin Fethoelder | | | |
| Underwood, John | 34th Inf | \$10.00 | Taro Leaf |
| Vickers, William E. | 34th Inf | \$50.00 | To honor |
| Alfred Jorgesen | | | |
| Vihlidal, William | 21st Inf | \$10.00 | Taro Leaf |
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The teacher gave her fifth grade class an assignment to get their parents to tell them a story with a moral at the end of it. The next day the kids came back and one by one began to tell their stories.

Kathy said, "My father's a farmer and we have a lot of egg-laying hens. One time we were taking our eggs to market in a basket on the front seat of the pickup when we hit a bump in the road and all the eggs went flying and broke and made a mess"

"And what's the moral of the story?" asked the teacher.

"Don't put all your eggs in one basket!"

"Very good," said the teacher. "Now, Lucy?"

"Yes, ma'am, my daddy told me this story about my uncle Bob. Uncle Bob was a Green Beret in Vietnam and his helicopter got hit. He had to crash land in enemy territory and all he had was a bottle of whiskey, a machine gun and a machete. He drank the whiskey on the way down so it wouldn't break and then he landed right in the middle of 100 enemy troops. He killed seventy of them with the machine gun until he ran out of bullets, then he killed twenty more with the machete till the blade broke and then he killed the last ten with his bare hands."

"Good heavens," said the horrified teacher, "What kind of moral did your daddy tell you from that horrible story?"

"Don't f*** with Uncle Bob when he's been drinking."

As a group of soldiers stood in formation at an Army Base, the Drill Sergeant said, "All right, all you idiots fall out."

As the rest of the squad wandered away, one soldier remained at attention.

The Drill Instructor walked over until he was eye-to-eye with him, and then raised a single eyebrow. The soldier smiled and said, "Sure was a lot of 'em, huh, sergeant?"

A SGT and his Platoon Leader are bunking down in the field for the night. The SGT looks up and says, "When you see all the stars in the sky, what do you think, sir?"

The LT replies, "Well, I think of how insignificant we really are in the universe; how small a piece of such a grand design. Why? What do you think of, Sergeant?"

"I think somebody stole the damn tent."

It was a dark, stormy, night. The soldier was on his first assignment, and it was guard duty. A General stepped out taking his dog for a walk. The nervous young private snapped to attention, made a perfect salute, and snapped out "Sir, Good Evening, Sir!"

The General, out for some relaxation, returned the salute and said "Good evening soldier, nice night, isn't it?" The PVT replied "Sir, Yes Sir!"

The General, pointing at the dog, "This is a Golden Retriever, the best type of dog to train."

The PVT glanced at the dog, saluted yet again and said "Sir, Yes Sir!"

The General continued "I got this dog for my wife." Without thinking the soldier said "Good trade Sir!"

NEW MEMBERS

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Aber, Edgar A. | 5th RCT | Korea 51-52 |
| Bogardy, Richard F. | 19th RGT | Germany 67-68 |
| Brickey, Mitchell L. | 14th FA | Stewart 90-92 |
| Ceccato, Robert A. | 21st RGT | Korea 51 |
| Clapsaddle, Ben C. | 69th Arm | Stewart 85-90 |
| Dechert, Louis T. | Associate | U.S.Army 50-91 |
| Krizan, Ferdinand E. | 19th RGT | Germany 61-63 |
| Kudish, David | 24th Med | Korea 54-56 |
| Ortiz, Daniel M. | 15th RGT (M) | Desert Storm 90-93 |
| Perry, Loyal C. | Associate | Father, 24th, Korea |
| Raley, Samuel W. | 5th RCT | Korea 50-51 |
| Rogers, Charles R. | DISCOM | MMC Stewart 92-94 |
| Rooney, Robert F. | 11th FA | Korea 51-52 |
| Stoliker, Lawrence F. | 19th RGT | Korea 52-54 |
| Stoliker, Robert | 19th RGT | Japan-Korea 52-54 |
| Zagorac, Jr. Michael | 24th HQ | Germany 64-66 |

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Tashiro, Kenneth A., 19th Inf HQ, #2408
Tomlinson, Audie B., 34th Inf 2nd Bn #2409

My Korean Experience, 1952-1954

October 1, 1952 My Order to Report for Induction came from my Indiana Local Board, Selective Service System. Basic and advanced training, further classes as an artillery mechanic, MOS 4802 (military occupational speciality) Fort Bliss, Texas, some leave time and then I found myself embarked from San Francisco, Ca. on the USNS W.M. Black. It was June, 1953.

After 30 days at sea, the next port was Sasebo, Japan. A week of drill, more training, lots of .30 cal firing exercises, then next port was Pusan, Korea. An overnight troop train north to Seoul, then another train to Chonchon, the division rear area for the 45th Division near the 38th. parallel. It was now July 21, 1953. Artillery dueling could be heard easily.

My unit assignment came the Tank Company, 279th. Infantry Regiment, positioned on the MLR (main line of resistance) . Pork Chop Hill, Sand Bag, Castle, Line Minnesota. A few clicks north were elements of the Chinese 97th. I.R., 33rd. Division of the 60th of the Chinese Communist Forces Army.

While still at division rear I noticed a soldier with both hands heavily bandaged. He told me he had picked up a hot WP (willie peter, i.e. white phosphorus) mortar shell that landed in their bunker and tossed it out. Later I learned that Paul Winchell, well known ventriliquist, the voice of Jerry Mahoney, was his brother. When I saw U.N. railroad cars with wounded troops coming from the North, I started to wonder about

what was waiting for me up there. But, there was a cease fire agreement on 27 July, 1953.

For me, six days of combat! My company had taken a few artillery rounds. Officially I was now a Korean War combat veteran. My Korean service medal now had a Bronze Service Star. A KWSW was awarded me on the 50th. anniversary of the Korean War. It literally took an Act of Congress. A Korea Defense Service Medal was added later, much less officially.

The 45th. was ordered to remain in position, maintain combat readiness. In October, 1953 we moved off the DMZ into the Yangu Gu Valley sector. In early 1954 the 24th I.D. replaced the 45th. They left Korea. I stayed. Now I was assigned to the tank company, **21th RGT**, I was now Taro Leafer. Same place, same tanks, for over a year...North of the 38th. Line.

It was my chance to see the Yangu Gu valley develop and grow. Now I did my shooting with cameras. Hence, these pictures. Although I experienced several dangerous situations, mostly during the first few weeks in Korea, it was over before I realized what happened. I have no real tales to relate. Any stories from those who do, by far exceed anything I would have to say, or write about.. **John K. Shank**, P.O. Box 36051, Tucson, AZ 85740-6051 520-544-4623

*John: Thanks again for your pictures. John also provided some great pictures for the Winter, 2012 issue. **Editor***



Seoul Korea, Main Railroad Depot, 1954



At the MLR tanks were placed in bunkers and parked on rocks to prevent freezing to the ground. They were fully combat loaded on guard day and night.

Nearby the M-4 tank's 760 mm rounds were stored.

Shown to the right is an armored personnel carrier.



Note the novel way of getting access to the underside of a jeep for an in-field oil change and lube.

Central Florida's 19th Annual Mini Reunion

Thursday, November 1, 2012 through Sunday November 4, 2012 – St. Augustine Beach, Florida

Holiday Inn, 860 AIA Beach Blvd., St. Augustine Beach, FL 32080, Phone 904-471-255 / 800-626-7263 Fax 904-461-8450
Convention rates will be offered three days prior and three days after event. Guests need to make their own reservations and please specify that you are with the 5th RCT Association. If special accommodations are needed, please specify at the time of reservations.
Room Rates \$79.00 per night, plus tax and gratuity.

Friday, November 2: All Members Meeting 9-11 am; Beer & Get Together 7:30 pm.

Saturday, November 3: Cocktails in Scores Lounge (Cash Bar) 6:00 pm; Banquet Dinner 7:00 pm

Banquet Choices: A. Chicken Cordon Bleu \$30.00 B. Prime Rib -Medium \$30.00. Dinners Include: Tossed Salad with choice of two dressings, Baked Potato, Green Beans, Roll & Butter, NY Cheese Cake/w Strawberries, Coffee/Tea, Water, Dressings.

Please detach the coupon below and return with payment or indication that you will not be attending. Thank you, Bill.

***** Registration Deadline October 13, 2012 *****

Member Name _____ Badge Name _____ Spouse Name _____

Telephone Number _____ Guest Name _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Are you with the: 5th RCT _____? or 24th IDA _____? First time?: Yes _____ No _____

Registration Fee (Member Only) \$20.00

Banquet Dinner A. Chicken Cordon Blue No. _____ X \$30.00 = _____

B. Prime Rib -Medium No. _____ X \$30.00 = _____

Grand Total = _____

Make check or money order payable to: Bill Kane, 5023 Andrea Blvd., Orlando, Florida 32807
If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 407-275-7450, or 407-421-4465 (cell)

Florida 24th IDA Group

Dutch Treat Luncheons

October 2, Leesburg Golden Corral 11:45 a.m.

Space limited to about 50—please reserve by

Contacting: Tom Thiel, 352-408-6612 or

fl24thida@gmail.com

or Bill Stokes, 352-750-6741 wsswriter@centurylink.net

Future dates: December 5.

New Orleans Group Tour Descriptions

Super City Tour \$39

Travel Through Three Centuries of history, legends and romance as you encounter “The City That Care Forgot!”

Absorb the sights & sounds of the world famous French Quarter and historic Jackson Square, home of the Cabildo and Presbytere Museums.

Visit one of our historic cemeteries, referred to as “Cities of the Dead,” and learn about this unique above ground burial system.

Marvel at stories of voodoo and piracy on Bayou St. John, the waterway used by Jean Lafitte and his band of pirates, as we make our way to the shores of Lake Pontchartrain. View the longest bridge over water in the world, the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway.

Follow the path of the St. Charles Avenue streetcar, the oldest continuously operating passenger railway system in the world (until service was disrupted by Hurricane Katrina).

See the homes of former Kings & Queens of Mardi Gras, stately mansions and the world-famous, exclusive Garden District.

View Tulane and Loyola Universities across from Audubon Park, home to one of the top five zoos in the nation, The Audubon Zoo.

Includes cemetery stop and narrated motor coach tour.

Steamboat Natchez Cruise \$35

Your two-hour cruise from the heart of the French Quarter takes you back to when cotton was king and life was slow and as graceful as the current on the Mississippi. Let us show you New Orleans, one of the world's most active ports, as it can best be seen from the river aboard New Orleans' only authentic steamboat...The Steamboat NATCHEZ.

WWII Museum \$29 (\$22 w/military I.D.)

The National WWII Museum in New Orleans opened on June 6, 2000, as The National D-Day Museum. Founded by historian and author, [Stephen Ambrose](#), the Museum tells the story of the American Experience in *the war that changed the world* — why it was fought, how it was won, and what it means today — so that all generations will understand the price of freedom and be inspired by what they learn.

Designated by Congress in 2003 as the America's National WWII Museum, the campus includes:

[Louisiana Memorial Pavilion](#), showcasing the large artifacts of the war and exhibits on D-Day at Normandy, the Home Front and the Pacific.

[Solomon Victory Theater](#), a 4-D theater showing the exclusive Tom Hanks production, *Beyond All Boundaries*.

[Stage Door Canteen](#), where the music and entertainment of the “Greatest Generation” comes to life.

[John E. Kushner Restoration Pavilion](#) where staff and volunteers restore artifacts in public view.

[American Sector restaurant](#) and [Soda Shop](#) — delicious onsite dining options by Chef John Besh.

24th IDA National Reunion - New Orleans, LA

Holiday Inn Downtown New Orleans Superdome

September 16-20, 2012

NAME _____

UNIT _____ YEARS _____ LOCATION _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

GUESTS NAMES _____

IS THIS YOUR FIRST REUNION? YES: _____ NO: _____

MEAL SELECTIONS:

MARDI GRAS BANQUET FISH _____ CHICKEN _____ BEEF _____

PLEASE LIST ANY SPECIAL NEEDS: _____

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-------|--------|---|-------|
| REGISTRATION FEE (REQUIRED) | # PERSONS | _____ | x \$25 | = | _____ |
| MENS BREAKFAST | # PERSONS | _____ | x \$16 | = | _____ |
| LADIES BREAKFAST | # PERSONS | _____ | x \$16 | = | _____ |
| MARDI GRAS BANQUET | # PERSONS | _____ | x \$30 | = | _____ |
| SUPER CITY TOUR | # PERSONS | _____ | x \$39 | = | _____ |
| STEAMBOAT NATCHEZ CRUISE | # PERSONS | _____ | x \$35 | = | _____ |
| WWII MUSEUM MILITARY ID | # PERSONS | _____ | x \$22 | = | _____ |
| WWII MUSEUM SENIOR | # PERSONS | _____ | x \$29 | = | _____ |

GRAND TOTAL ENCLOSED..... _____

PAYMENT IS DUE NO LATER THAN AUGUST 13, 2012

PLEASE SEND PAYMENTS TO THE ADDRESS BELOW, AND MADE PAYABLE TO:

FREDERICK EVENT MANAGEMENT
9233 SHETLAND ROAD
EDEN PRAIRIE, MN 55347
(612) 804-9457

Confirmation of registration and itinerary will be sent out by August 20, 2012. A \$25 per person cancellation fee will apply to all cancellations received within 30 days of the event. Cancellations received within 15 days of the event will be non-refundable. Hotel reservations can be made by calling the Holiday Inn Downtown New Orleans Superdome at (800) 535-7830 no later than August 26, 2012. Be sure to tell them you are with the 24th Infantry Division Reunion to receive the discounted rate of \$89 plus tax. The rate is good for 3 days before and 3 days after the event if you wish to extend your stay. We'll see you soon in New Orleans!



New Orleans, Louisiana is beautiful and beguiling, eccentric, exciting and enchanting. Sultry jazz clubs, blues bars and supper clubs invite visitors inside. There's always a party going on. After the party, the best way to imbibe the true history and flavor of the real New Orleans is by taking a walking tour or carriage ride through the streets of the historic Vieux Carre (French Quarter) and the Garden District.

Visit secluded courtyards, haunted mansions and above-the-ground cemeteries, the "cities of the dead." Learn the scandals and secrets of New Orleans colorful past and present.

Mardi Gras is the biggest party of the year in New Orleans, but the rest of the year the city is just as relevant. If you miss Mardi Gras, catch its spirit year-round at the Louisiana State Museum Presbytere, located in Jackson Square.

Marvel at galleries of splendid Mardi Gras memorabilia. Around mid-morning listen for the sounds of a steam calliope calling visitors for a Mississippi Steamboat Natchez Cruise, a unique view of life along the mighty Mississippi River.

Scour the French Market for trinkets and treasures. Indulge in a cloud of powdered sugar with beignets and café au lait at Café de Monde.

The atmosphere around Jackson Square is colorful and entertaining as dozens of artists, street performers, fortune tellers, and professed psychics, compete for attention and tourist dollars.

New Orleans isn't just a place to visit, it's where you can enjoy an experience of a lifetime!

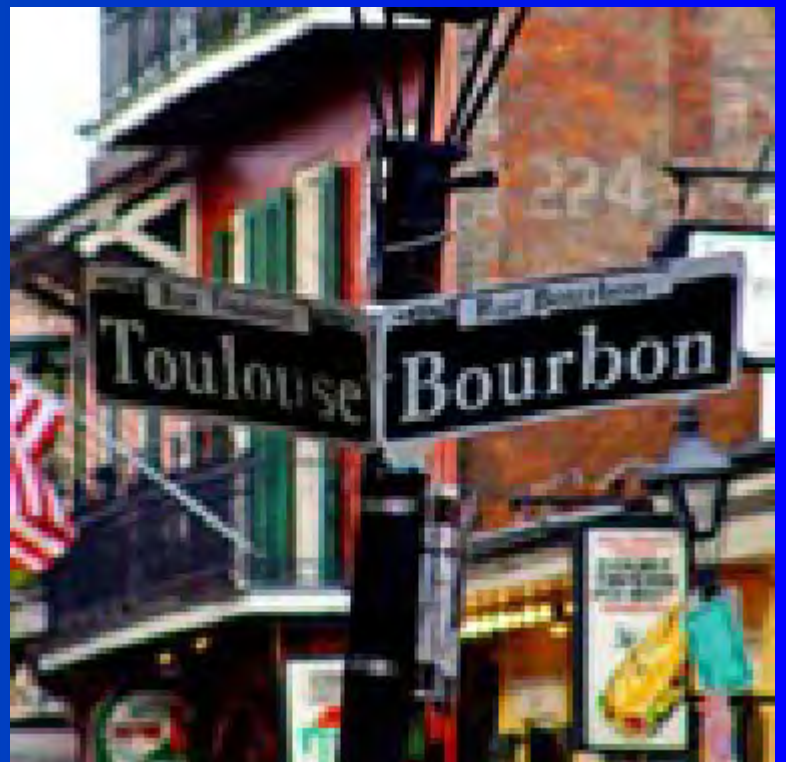
NEW ORLEANS

24th IDA Reunion Site

Mark your calendar now for
September 16-20, 2012

HOLIDAY INN SUPERDOME

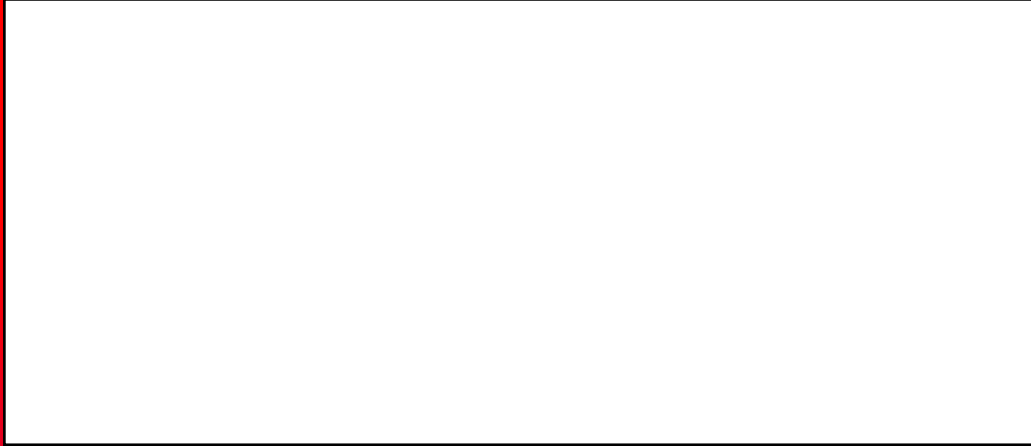
330 Loyola Avenue, New Orleans
LA 70112 1.800.HOLIDAY





John A. Dunn, Secretary/Treasurer
24th RGT Division Association
Hwy. 51, Westover, AL 35147-9527

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MEMBERS: Check your dues date above your address
12 months dues = \$15.00

Send Dues & Address Changes to:

John A. Dunn, Sec'y.-Treas.
24th Infantry Division Association
9150 Hwy. 51, Westover, AL
35147-9527

Send Obituaries to: Taro Leaf Editor

(Please include a photo if available)
Post Office Box 500907
San Diego, CA 92150
24thtaroleaf@gmail.com

Last call for 2012 Verbeck Award Nominations!

The 24th RGT Division Association is seeking nominations for the member you feel should be recognized with our Association's prestigious 2011 Verbeck Award. Association President, Sal Schillaci advises: "All have an opportunity to name their nominee for the award." Please send your recommendation and a brief write-up as to why you believe your nominee deserves to be so honored. You have until July 15, 2012 to make your submissions.

Verbeck Guidelines: The Verbeck Award is presented to that Association member who best displays the ideals of Bill Verbeck. He had an un-abashed love for the Division and its Association. The award is to be given to a member who displays those qualities of Bill Verbeck and effectively furthers the interests of the Association and the



This award is not intended to reward popularity, but to acknowledge a person's commitment and hard work in helping to make the Association more successful.

Send recommendations to any of the following members of the Nominating Committee:

Don Maggio, 411 Concord Rd.,
Fletcher, NC 28732-9734, 828-684-
5931 email: the24thidavp@aol.com

Dan Rickert, 2899 Calle Valdes,
Mission Viejo, CA, 949-215-7553

Gene Spicer, 8937 W. 750 N.,
Commiskey, IN 47227-9345, 812-
873-6548, email:
gspicer@seidata.com

Tom Thiel, 19147 Park Place Blvd.,
Eustis, FL 32736-7262, 352-357-
3943, email: