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The Octofoil

9th Infantry Division Association

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5-1-2003

## The Octofoil, May/June/July 2003

Ninth Infantry Division Association

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# THE OCTOFOIL

224 North Grove Street, Valley Stream, N.Y. 11580

THE NINTH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION

Volume LVIII Number 3

May-June-July 2003

## GREATER NEW YORK AREA CHAPTER

### Memorial Day Service

The NY Chapter held its annual 9th Inf. Div. Memorial Day Service at the VA National Cemetery, Farmingdale, Long Island, NY on Saturday, May 17, 2003.

For the first time in three years of inclement weather which required services to be held indoors, we were greeted by a glorious May sunny day. At 10:30 AM, twenty-one assembled members, spouses and children marched from the parking lot with the Stars and Stripes and Octofoil standard bearers leading. A floral Octofoil wreath mounted on a wire tripod followed, carried by two Ninthmen to a location where the VA Staff has set up outdoor chairs, speaker's stand and sound system for us. The memorial service was presided over by president Ed Harris, beginning with the pledge of allegiance to flag and an invocation by George Nicklin.

Members were invited to speak of their reflections of lost buddies and events in WWII. Those who spoke included George Nicklin, Tony Varone and yours truly. Service ended with recorded Taps.

### A Short Meeting Follows

After the service we retired to the community room a short chapter meeting. Minutes of the April meeting were read by the Recording Secretary Marv Levy and the Financial report was presented by Treasurer/ Secretary Al Zenka.

Members views agreed favorably on the Lancaster 58th Reunion. National

Secretary/Treasurer Joe Killen gave the latest info on the upcoming 2004 reunion at Kutshers Resort Hotel in the Catskills Mts., NY. Killen also asked for opinions about having Gen. Tommy Franks, retiring U.S. Coalition Forces commander in Iraq (who is a former 9th Inf. Div. Vietnam soldier) as 59th Reunion Speaker. Most members were not so inclined.

Zenka reminded members about the mini-reunion at Friar Tuck, the 2nd week after Labor Day.

Meeting adjourned at 12 noon and we went to lunch at the Liberty 110 Diner in Farmingdale.

Attending the Memorial Service were: Joe & Emma Killen, Tony & Viola Verone, Tony DeRobertis & son John & grandson Anthony, Frank Pacific, Joe & Sadie Maiale, Dan Robinson, John Tschupp, Charlie Hoffman, Ed Harris, Domer & Donna Miller, Adolph Wadalavage, George & Kate Nicklin, Bill Muldoon and Marv & Barbara Levy. About 15 of us met for lunch after the meeting. Lunch tab was picked up by the NY Chapter.

### June 20 Meeting

The NY Chapter met at its regular command post on Friday, June 20 at the 69th Regt Armory, 25th St. and Lexington Avenue, NYC. Prez. Ed Harris opened the meeting after much delay in getting a meeting room. The six of us sat in a stairwell waiting for the armory custodian to open a room for us.

With no actual flag available we pledge allegiance to a painted flag in a wall mural showing WWI troops marching on a Manhattan Avenue. We then observed a moment of silence for our departed comrades.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read by yours truly and Financial Report given by Al Zenka. Correspondence was read from Fred Taylor and a condolence thank-you to the chapter from Mrs. Vally Tujague, on the passing of her husband and Ninthman Ray.

How to handle delinquent non-paying dues members were discussed with some recommendations which will be brought up at the next National Board of

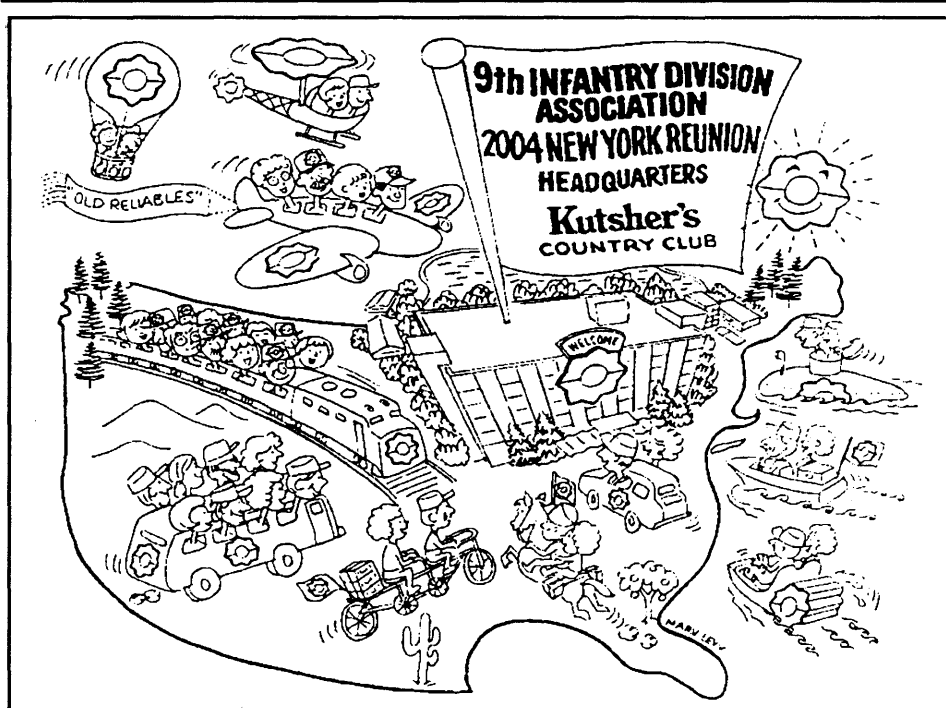
Governors meeting.

### A Long Island Command Post?

In years past, the chapter had many New Jersey members who traveled in to Manhattan to our monthly meetings. Many of them have since passed on, are ill, or moved beyond accessibility to New York City. With the move of Charlie LiBretto to Texas, the NY chapter has lost the most active and knowledgeable cinchpin of our group. We wish Charlie and his lovely wife Esta and family, the best for the future and happiness with their new home.

With the unavailability of other New Jerseyites -- Dan Quinn, Bill Canales and

(Continued on Page 3)



## KUTSHER'S COUNTRY CLUB WELCOMES THE "OLD RELIABLES"

**The Monticello, New York Resort Hotel will roll out the Red Carpet to meet and greet the Ninth Inf. Div. Assn. in May**

Plan to arrive at Kutsher's Country Club on Monday, May 10th afternoon for your check-in and room assignments. Then meander thru the lobby to the "Notorious" sign where you will find our Association registration tables staffed by the friendliest people this side of Heaven. On the way between the two check-ins you may have noticed that there are ample couches and seating arrangements for some good old-fashioned gab fests. There are many areas on the first floor that are conducive to a private chat between only two people or a larger group up to ten or more. Once you have said some of your hellos, there is enough time to do as you please before we move over to the dining room for our evening meal. I will not describe here what will be on the menu, but I will guarantee that you will love the meal that is placed before you from the minute that you take your seat until you push back away from

the table, completely satisfied.

The night is young! We're only getting started. We'll stroll from the dining room, through the hotel, up to the Launching Pad. We will have our Welcome Party there with beer and soda, some pretzels and chips to pick on. There will be an open cash bar for those who favor a stronger libation. While we enjoy each others company, the house orchestra / dance band has begun to arrive at the near-by Stardust Night Club Room and they invite us to dance to their music. After we get winded from dancing, the stage will be turned over to a comic, or a singer. Some sort of act will go on to entertain us. When the show is over, the dance band will resume for as long as people wish to dance. That will conclude the program for the first day.

### NO STRIP TICKETS

The Board of Governors are scheduled to convene on Monday, May 10th at 4:00 PM in the Sportsmen's Room. At

(Continued on Page 3)

## Worcester - 2003 "Lest We Forget"

We who call ourselves the "Friends of Father Connors"  
shall meet again in praying for our dead on  
Sunday, October 19, 2003  
at the ten o'clock Mass at the  
Church of the Immaculate Conception,  
Grove Street, Worcester, Mass.

We will also remember in our prayers the men that wore the Octofoil,  
returned home with us and have now gone to their eternal reward.  
A service will follow the Mass at our memorial on the church grounds  
to honor the dead (4,581) that are listed on the Microfilm  
set into the wall of our memorial.

We will sponsor a luncheon at the Holiday Inn,  
500 Lincoln Street, Worcester, MA 01605 at 12:30 P.M.

As our good friend Tom Boyle had always stated,

"We will have you on your way home by 3:00 P.M."

We invite all members to join us as we pray for our dead.

We have reserved rooms at the Holiday Inn, Worcester.

Reservations must be made by yourselves by Sept. 21st, 2003.

The phone number is 1-508-852-4000.

Reservations for the luncheon must be made payable to  
"Ninth Infantry Division Association"  
at a per person cost of \$20.00 and mailed to  
Herbert E. Olsen

Should you have problems, please call 1-508-420-3320  
The CP room will open Saturday afternoon, October 18th.

Tom Boyle - Fran Maher - Ron Murphy  
Herb Olsen

PS:- Father Bill Champlin has replaced our friend, the late Msgr. Needham as pastor of the  
Church of the Immaculate Conception.



## TIP OF THE HAT

Remembering the Memorial Fund and their buddies who have answered their last Roll Call, we thank the following members and friends.

Mr. & Mrs. Norris Gray in memory of Jean and Richard Baudouy of Co. M 47th Inf.

Richard G. Granbery in memory of Albert O. Fullerton of the 9th Recon Troop.

Lawrence McLaughlin in memory of Raymond Gilbert of the 47th Inf. Regt. Headquarters Co.

Mrs. Julia Klimasz in memory of her husband Anthony, a proud "Old Reliable"

Ted Curless in memory of Clarence "Ed" Combs of Co. E 47th Inf.

Mr. & Mrs. Norris Gray in memory of Henry Santos, a dedicated Florida Chapter member of the Ninth Inf. Div. Assn.

Mrs. Elizabeth V. White in memory of her husband, Curtis E. White of Co. C 39th Inf.

Mrs. Suzanne Johnstone in memory of

Henry Santos of the 15th Combat Engineer Bn.

Richard G. Granbery in memory of Marion Anderson, wife of Gordon Anderson of the 9th Recon Troop.

Mrs. Antoinette Mastrangelo in memory of her husband Peter Mastrangelo of Co. B 47th Inf.

John H. Losnes in memory of all the deceased members of Co. L 39th Inf.

Mrs. Suzanne Johnstone in memory of her husband Bruce B. Johnstone, a proud "Old Reliable"

Louis Sieben in memory of the deceased members of the Medical Detachment of the 47th Inf.

George H. Brown in memory of those for whom Taps Sounded in the March-April '03 Octofoil.

Trevor E. Jones in memory of Jake Nailor and all the other comrades who have gone ahead to prepare the final bivouac.

## GREATER NEW YORK AREA CHAPTER

(Continued from Page 1)

Herminio Suarez (who valiantly attends sometimes in spite of his affliction) and recently moved Al Lubrano and our chaplain, ailing Al Lipton, the NY chapter is "down to precious few..." so goes the September song.

Most of the current attending members meeting in Manhattan are from Long Island and Queens. Other borough residents are apparently not able to attend due to ill health, distance or late nighttime travel back home. Based on the large turnout at our annual Holiday Party and Memorial Day Services outside the city, where many of those members do not travel to NY chapter meetings, Joe Maiale suggested that we consider holding a more convenient meeting place on Long Island -- in the daytime!

As a test, we will hold a meeting in November at a location on Long Island close to the city line, convenient for rail, bus and auto. Still-driving members will make every effort to pick up Ninthmen who are disabled. The NY chapter hopes members who haven't joined us in the past will do so to renew old comradeship, which has always been the hallmark of the 9th Infantry Division Association. Don't miss this opportunity to participate. Your ideas, gripes and suggestions will always be appreciated. You will not find a more

gratifying group than being with your fellow Ninthmen.

See details below.

### Friar Tuck Mini-Reunion

The June meeting is the last meeting before the summer hiatus. The fall meeting will be held during the Friar Tuck mini-reunion September 8 to 12, 2003. If you are interested in attending, contact Al Zanka at address below. Details of costs and accommodations are the same as last year.

Members attending the June Meeting not mentioned earlier: Joe Maiale, Joe Rzesniowiecki and Adolph Wadalavage.

### Dues Due

It's dies time comrades, for those who haven't paid their dues for 2003. It's \$10 for one year, \$25 for 3 years, and \$75 for Lifetime Membership. Make checks payable to NY Area Chapter, 9th Inf Div. Assn and send to Al Zenka, Secretary/Treasurer, [REDACTED]

Have A Good Summer !

Marv Levy  
Co A 60th

## KUTSHER'S WELCOMES THE "OLD RELIABLES"

(Continued from Page 1)

present, our agenda has no signs of unusual items to be dealt with, and it appears to be a "business as usual" meeting.

Tuesday morning the General Meeting will begin at 10:00 AM. After lunch, the new Board of Governors will meet starting at 4:00 PM.

Our Memorial Service is scheduled for Wednesday morning at 10:00 AM.

My cohort, Joe Maiale, is trying to fit in a round of golf for any members who wish to play. Right now, it looks like the only time open is on Wednesday after lunch and prior to our cocktail party before the banquet dinner. All duffers will meet at 1:30 PM and pray that their round of fun is over before 4:30 PM. That leaves them one hour to get out of the golf duds, shower, and get fancied up for cocktails. No problem, a piece of cake.

### NO STRIP TICKETS

Everything is under one roof except the golf of course. No need to leave the premises. There is entertainment in the mornings, before lunch, after lunch, evenings, all on the house. But don't overlook the fact that we are used to entertaining ourselves too. We may be getting slower but we haven't lost the quick wit with the snappy retort. Yeah, we did OK in our day.

Make a check to :- "59th Reunion 2004" in the amount of \$50 per person in your party and send it to 224 North Grove St., Valley Stream, NY 11580 along with your room reservation form. Don't chop up your Octofoil. Find a copier machine and lay the part that you want face down, close the lid, and push the button. Your Octofoil is saved.

I am disappointed that the hotel will be closed after lunch on Sunday due to it being Mother's Day. I would not like to stay overnight in an empty hotel with no food service. No matter how little the owners would charge, it would still be too much. So there will be no early arrivals unfortunately. Yes, I'm sorry about that too. I always plan to be a day early just in case. We are all in the same boat, so to speak, just like all times.

For those who prefer to use their credit cards, let me remind you:- You WILL PAY ALL SALES TAXES and they are approximately 8.75% percent added on to your bill. With a CREDIT CARD, Reservations and PAYMENT IN FULL must be sent directly to Kutsher's Country Club Resort Hotel and Conference Center, Monticello, New York, 12701. Kutsher's can be called toll free at 800 431-1273 or pay line at (914) 794-6000.

Use your Credit Card if you must; but consider that you are losing the protection of the Association's "umbrella". The money that you would save by not paying taxes could be cut in half and donated to the Association's Memorial Fund if you so desired

## LADIES CORNER

Haven't heard from anyone since the Reunion except Marlynn and Clarence Ray (L - 47th) who sent us some pictures from the get-togethers at Lancaster. Hope everyone else is OK.

The hospitals that we sent \$200 each to are as follows:

- 1.- Veterans Hospital in Los Angeles, California
- 2.- Veterans Administration Clinic in Allentown, PA.
- 3.- St. Albans VA Hospital, Queens County, New York.

I worked at the Allentown VA Clinic this past week and so I checked at the office to be sure that our check was received from the Ladies Aux. and they said that it had.

We (including our vegies in the garden) are all doing the backstroke. Rain is an ugly word here in Allentown, PA. Sunshine is a rare commodity since May. Hope we get the sunshine promised for next week. We need to dry out.

I am looking for ideas for the next Reunion Ladies Meeting. Any ideas? Write and let me know. Till then have a good and healthy Summer.

Mrs. Jean D. Geary, Ladies Aux. Pres.

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### EDITOR'S APOLOGIES

In my first issue (Jan.-Feb. 2003) I made two blunders. One was to let my proof-reading eye stray and miss the wrong handling of Chester H. Jordan's name. Instead of Jordan, it came out Gordon. For this I have apologized by letter and over the internet. This now is number three. I hope that the Co. K 47th scribe's temperament has been placated. The second faux-pas was to list "Ole Miss" J. W. Baswell's name in the Taps Sounded column. I had been told of his passing and did not check further for positive proof. At the reunion, Mrs. Agnes Speers told me that JW had had a heart attack back in October and when she saw my listing she called down to Mississippi (That's what I should have done) and spoke to his kin who said that JW was feeling poorly but on the mend. When I returned home I called down to Sturgis and JW himself answered the phone. I was so glad and happy to hear him that for the moment I was overcome to the point of tears. Yes, I have learned another lesson; check out every rumor before you print and you won't have to wipe the egg off your face. Sorry about that, JW. Glad you're still here, ya hear.

Joe Killen,  
G- 47th

# Are You Up To Date With Your Dues?

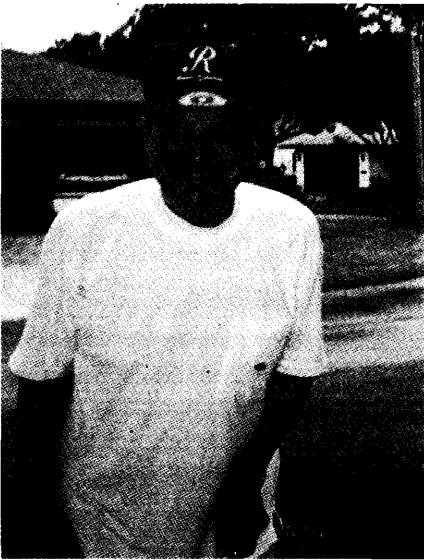
# FLORIDA CHAPTER NEWS

IT'S ALL SET! The contract for the Florida Chapter Reunion has been signed. The dates are November 6, 7, and 8th at the Holiday Inn, Port St. Lucie, FL. The Hospitality Room will be set up early on Thursday, November 6th to accommodate those members who might arrive a day earlier or early on Thursday. Check in time is 3:00 P.M. or earlier if rooms are ready. The room rate is \$59.00 per night double or single occupancy. Chairman Arthur Coulon has put together a wonderful agenda. On Thursday night we have dinner at a fine restaurant. Then on Friday we go on two cruises starting at 11:00 A.M. followed by a group lunch and then go on the second water cruise...all for a low package price of \$32.00 per person. At 6:00 P.M. we have our Banquet Dinner at the Hotel. This is a departure from having our banquet on Saturday night. Reason being is that we received a special discount price to attend a Buffet/Dinner Show at Club Med for Saturday night starting at 6:00 P.M. Full details will be sent out to all Florida Chapter Members approximately 5 weeks prior to opening day. It's not too early to make plans to attend. Mark your calendar...bring a family member...a relative or a friend. Any National Organization member wishing to attend our Florida Chapter Reunion may do so by contacting Art Coulon at [redacted] or get in touch with Emil De Donato at [redacted] will send you the Information sheet and the Order Form.

### MEMBER NEWS

Dr. MARTIN GROSS: Good News! Mary met and proposed marriage to Rosalyn Weiss tentatively set for sometime this coming September. In my phone conversation with Dr. Gross, he stated that he has moved to 1602 Abaco Drive, Apt 1-A, Coconut Creek FL. 33306, new phone number: 1/954/956-9333 (please note your membership roster of this change). We were happy to receive this good news and we wish Marty and Rosalyn many years of good health and a happy life together. Congratulations are in order.

EUGENE KORTH: A phone call from his wife "Del" followed by a detailed letter and photo, informed this writer of the demise of her husband Eugene on May 23, 2003. Gene was born on June 8, 1925. He served with the 9th Recon Troops until his discharge in 1945. Del and Gene moved from their Michigan home to Sun City Center, FL in 1985. According to his wife Delphine "Del" Eugene suffered many different illnesses during the past 20 years. He suffered a broken leg followed by some severe heart problems while living in Michigan. He appeared to show signs of recovery after their move to Florida but then other complications set in. Del described his final days in Sun City Rehab Center and Tampa General Hospital as pure "hell". He suffered conjunctive heart failure, pneumonia, blood clot in his lungs and a touch of Parkinson disease...which ended up his demise. Our condolences go out to Del, who cared for her "workaholic" husband throughout his ordeal. They were not blessed with any children of their own but do have nephews and nieces. Funeral services were held on May 27, 2003 with a Catholic Mass at Prince of Peace Catholic Church in Sun City Center, Florida. Delphine Korth can be reached [redacted]



HOWARD GRANGER: A note from his nephew stated that Howard passed away on June 28, 2003. He served with Hq. Co. 15th Engineers throughout the European Theatre. Howard was not able to make our Florida Chapter Reunion in St. Augustine because he was staying with his brother and sister in Tucson, Arizona during that time period. He has attended several National Reunions. Although his home is in South Carolina, Howard was a active member of the Florida Chapter. Condolences may be sent to his home at 1601 Castle Pinkney Road, Columbia, S.C. 29233.

LOUIS VIVOLO: For many years, Louis and his wife Phylis would spend the winter months in the Orlando area and then return to their home in Revere, Mass. In a note received with his three year's dues, Louis said that he and his wife will no longer spend their winters in the Sunshine State. We regret learning that they are not able to travel long distances any longer. We had hopes that they might have joined us during our coming reunion in Port St. Lucie. Louis has been a member of the Florida Chapter for a long time.

9TH INFANTRY DIVISION PINS: The Florida Chapter wishes to express their thanks to many National members from all over the United States for their overwhelming response in purchasing their handsome designed Emblem

Pins that were designed and produced by the Florida Chapter. We regret that we will not accept any future orders as we are all out of them. We thank you again for support knowing that you will wear them with PRIDE.

### WOMEN'S AUXILIARY NEWS

Dora Coen sent a note saying that she could not make the 2002 Chapter Reunion in St. Augustine...but will make every effort to attend future Chapter reunions with her sister. Since the demise of her husband William in September 2000, Dora has been spending some time with relatives in Pennsylvania in addition to taking trips to Branson, MO and Alaska. We were happy to hear from Dora. We would appreciate receiving news from other Florida Chapter Women's Auxiliary members so please make an effort to send your stories to Audrey De Donato.

Emil J. De Donato



### TAPS SOUNDED

*There is no Death !  
What seems so is transition  
This life of Mortal breath  
is but a suburb of the life elysian  
Whose portal we call death.*

### TAPS SOUNDED

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Raymond Tujague<br>Co. L 39th Inf.                | Joseph Trout<br>Regt. Hq. Co. 47th Inf.                         |
| Irving L. King<br>Co. B 39th Inf.                 | Howard C. Granger, CWO<br>Hq. Co. 15th Engr. Bn.                |
| Lea Moser<br>Wife of Ira Moser<br>Co. L 47th Inf. | Benjamin A Murell<br>"Benny the Bomber"<br>Medic with 39th Inf. |
| Eugene Korth<br>9th Recon Troop                   | Raymond Gilbert<br>Regt. Hq. Co. 47th Inf.                      |
| Albert O. Fullerton<br>9th Recon Troop            | Michael Pelle<br>3rd Bn. Hq. Co. 47th Inf.                      |



2003 Lancaster, PA Reunion Scene

Left to Right: Joe Maiale (standing), Sadie Maiale, Emma Killen and Rodger Alsgaard



COMPANY K NEWSLETTER

"The LAST LETTER Plus ONE"

47th Infantry  
Chester H. Jordan



PREDICTIONS OF MY DEATH  
WERE EXAGGERATED

It is truly embarrassing to admit I am still alive. X-rays in April showed no growth. The doctor hasn't a clue, he said, "I give up, you might live forever." So, I am writing the first K LETTER after my final one.

Nothing has changed with me: I still play 9 holes, 3 days a week; get out a monthly family newsletter; purchase, and play with the latest gadgets on the market. My wife, ALICE, after 6 months of the Shingles, has not fully recovered. She is eating better, and active enough for me to go back to golf, but she still hurts and is 15 pounds underweight.

ROLL CALL

JOE KILLACKY has called several times and seems to be doing as well as can be expected as the youngster of K. It's probably because he got K headquarters kicked out of the Priest's house in Kalterherberg, in Dec. '44. We had to move from a comfortable house with a wood-fired water heater into snow up to our canteen. GOD looks after His own.

Our K COMPANY nurse, HELEN HOLMES sends us flowers and get well cards every week. I feel so guilty about living. I am sure if she lived near she would nurse this damned cancer right out of my lung, and give me a chance to go to my just reward in a more dignified way. In the meantime, she flies between New Jersey, New Mexico, Florida, and drives to Atlantic City to get rid of her surplus cash.

Dr. GEORGE NICKLIN is still amongst the quick, and still trying to save the world from itself. Good luck, doctor.

RED THOMPSON and EDITH are still in poor health and hating every minute of it. It is rough for a basketball champion not to be able to run and shoot, but he has come through tough times before, and he'll do it again.

I know that GEORGE BASTEDO is still alive because HELEN keeps me informed.

I got a letter from RED PHILLIPS, the M CO. CHRONICLER, wishing me Godspeed to the Great Beyond and eulogized me as the MOST NEGATIVE PERSON he had ever met. But, before I could celebrate my championship, I remember he had stayed in the army and an officer rarely hears NAY from anyone other than his wife and children. Too bad, I am running low on superlatives.

WAR

The Third Division, Marines, and Special Forces stomped the Iraqis before I could get into the war. Their machines and equipment are awesome. The nice thing about the NEW army is that everyone rides to work. It's not going to make me re-up, but that, coupled with their pay might make me consider the proposition.



Here are some examples of Army pay: A raw recruit makes \$1,023/mo. for the first 4 months \$1,106/mo. or \$13,272/yr. thereafter. A private 1st class makes \$1,304/mo. or \$15,648/yr. Beginning pay for a master sergeant is \$2,858/mo. or \$34,296/yr. The raw recruit makes 4 times more than a First Lt. in combat during WWII.

They also get additional pay for food, housing, moving, technical proficiency, special duty assignments, cost of living, clothing, family separation, overseas, and retirement. To keep them happy the enlisted

persons get a minimum of 6% raise each year and the officers 5%. This is a little better than the \$21.00/mo. I was paid in 1939 when I joined the National Guard Cavalry.

Getting back to WAR, they still haven't departed Afghanistan. We should have been out, long before now and left the policing to the French, Germans, and Russians. We should do the same with Iraq. The oil contracts aren't worth having to associate with that class of people. The THIEF OF BAGHDAD has a million descendents. If we don't want to get completely out, move to Kuwait and police them with drones.

One thing that helped the soldiers earn their pay was wearing those chemical suits all the way to Baghdad. Can you imagine the misery of riding in 90 degree heat in those rubber suits, much less walking. I can remember those lousy GI raincoats, in the cool temperatures of Northern Europe, feeling like a steam bath.

Our chemical preparedness was a little less comprehensive, as soon as we set foot in Normandy, out went the mask, replaced with rations, V-Mails, soap, onions, or anything else you needed. We had a gas alarm in Normandy and probably the only people with masks were supply sergeants and staff officers who didn't have to carry them.

SHIRTS

The 47th Infantry Regiment Assn. had a reunion in April, which I was unable to attend; but they had some great 9/47 shirts for sale. They were \$25.00 for a white golf shirt with an octofoil on the left breast and a 47th shield on the left sleeve. I bought them for my 3 sons and myself. I don't know if they are still available, but if any are interested, I shall inquire.

REUNION

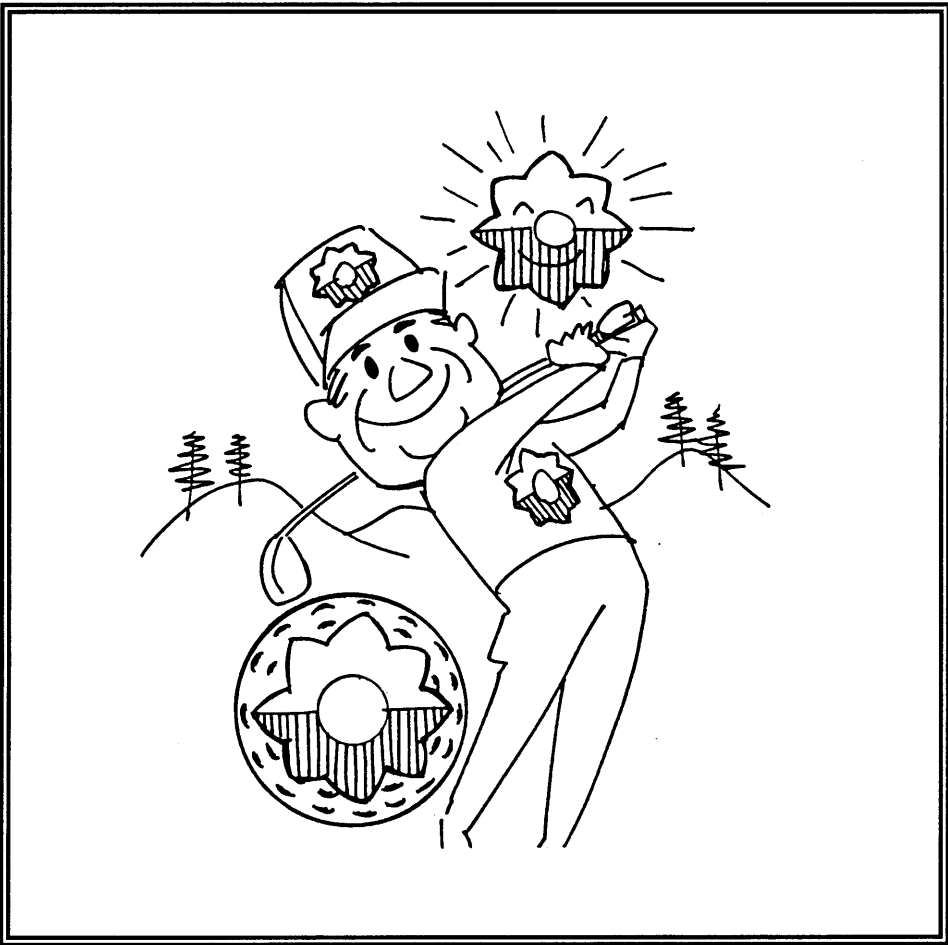
If any of you attended the reunion, send me pictures for the next letter if there is one.

EDITOR'S COMMENT

The above newsletter also had a picture of Chester H. Jordan's new hat, that has rolling lights but lacks an audio system to play the National Anthem. That picture cannot be printed using the current methods at our disposal. Only "GLOSSY" pictures can be printed.

Two issues ago (Jan.- Feb. 2003) the printer's helper mistakenly changed Chester H.'s name from Jordan to Gordon. I'll take the blame for letting the "Faux-Pas" slip through onto the presses. Sorry about that, Chief. It won't happen again.

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# Ninth Recon Report

John Bonkowski

This was our 35th Reunion since we first began attending back in 1960. Because of my recent back surgery at the time we were making our reservations it didn't seem possible that we would be making this one in Lancaster. But our prayers were answered and we were fortunate to be there.

Upon our arrival, we appreciated a helping hand with our luggage from Everett Tapp, Chester Mikus and others. Having a first floor reservation we were expecting direct access from our car like we had in Worcester and most other places where we stayed. However, everything turned out fine and there was no problem. It was great to be among our friends again and we were surprised how many made that extra effort despite their handicaps.

Al & Felice Perna along with Charles & Ester LiBretto did a great job putting this Convention together. Everyone who had anything to do with it deserves our appreciation. The Memorial Service was impressive and the Widows' participation very special.

What about the Wednesday evening Dinner and Stage Show? Those that left right after the lights went out found out later that it was only an intermission. We should have listened to Yogi Berra who proclaimed that "It's not over till it's over". We thank Jim Dawson for sharing the ride to and from the show.

Mike Belmonte informed us that Gordon Anderson's wife, Marion passed away recently. We were also informed that Gordon wasn't doing so well and may be leaving the Illinois Chapter to live with his son in another state. This is sad news especially for those of us from the Recon Troop. I was looking forward to seeing some at this Reunion but I was the only one there from our group.

The Michigan Chapter was well represented and we were honored to have Elmer Wagner elected National President for the second time. We wish him our very best in the coming year.

On the way home from the Reunion we were pleasantly surprised to see some of our friends at the West bound Rest Centers. First it was Mike & Ann Belmonte then Jack & Nadine Collier followed by Pete & Marge Radichio and their party. We all managed to get around a two lane stand still tie up a few miles back by using the open left lane that took us right on through. We were wondering if any of our group were caught in that bumper to bumper mess that originated at an exit with cars backed up across two lanes of the W76 PA Turnpike.

Thanks to Herb Olsen who intends

to keep the Memorial Week-end tradition going in Worcester, we'll do everything possible to be there. By then it will be almost a year since my surgery and that's how long the Doctor told me that it'll take for a full recovery, if all goes well. In the meantime, Rose & I have Graduations, Weddings, Picnics and all kinds of Celebrations to keep us busy. Many are out of town and God willing we'll try making most of them.

A final word of gratitude to Dan & Marie for all those years of devoted service to our Association. Then how fortunate we are for someone like you who was willing to take over the responsibilities when the time came. Thank you, Joe and God Bless.

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**Co. I - 47th Inf.**

Elmer R. Wagner

I remember the capture of Wollseifen very well. Our Second & Third Bns captured the little village on top of a plateau-like hill in a cold wet blinding snowstorm. We started out from Einruhr, which we had captured the previous evening.

I have traveled thru that area a number of times since WW II. Einruhr is a beautiful little tourist town now. The area just south of the two dams and east / southeast of Einruhr is a closed NATO troop training area used primarily by the Belgian Army. A road passes thru part of the training ground. Wollseifen is shown on the local map but is in the restricted area with no one living there. It is probably still rubble. I have stayed in Kalterherberg near Monschau a number of times.

Tourist boats from Einruhr use the reservoir areas around the dams now. Schmidt on the north side is also a nice tourist town and I have had lunch there at a nice restaurant overlooking the reservoirs to the south and Schwammenaul dam to the southeast. You'd never know that there was a war around there back in 1944 and 1945. The Urtalsperre dam and Ordensberg-Vogelsang, the Hitler Youth school is not visible but may possibly be seen from the tour boats on the lake.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Co. G - 47th Inf**

Allen J. Kelley

## *A Day in a Life in the ETO*

**Forrest Arnett and the Chicken**

Forrest Arnett was a gangly, raw-

boned young lad from the hills of Kentucky who was sent overseas as a rifleman replacement in November of 1944. Through the Repo-Depos and Division, through the 47th Service Company on up to the front where he was posted in Captain Kraft's G Company. Captain Waldo Kraft must have liked what he saw and he sent Forrest over to the First Platoon to be under the watchful eye of Joe Rzesniowiecki, our platoon sergeant. After a time Forrest was accepted as one of the gang in Bill Sanders' squad.

By the time the day of my story, February 8th, 1945, rolled around the platoon had been fleshed up with some more replacements, who also had to fit into the group. We were still not up to full strength to meet the Army T/O. The company was in the village of Wollseifen waiting for orders to continue the attack on Schmidt in the Huertgen Forest.

I guess that you could say that life for the GIs in Wollseifen wasn't too bad; but, it wasn't that easy either. Wollseifen is laid out like a huge capital "T". A person could walk about on the stem road all day long; but, you could not go out on the top road without drawing fire from Jerry, who was sitting across the lake watching what we were up to. Every now and then Jerry would throw in a shell or two just to let us know that he was still there.

As luck would have it, the First Platoon was put into the house at the corner where the stem road and the top road intersected, with Jerry looking at the front door. We were isolated during the daylight hours except for the telephone and the radios. The streets were all churned up mud that was almost soup due to the rain and drizzle that seemed to never let up.

During Warren Campbell's turn to watch the road, he announced to nobody in particular that a dumb chicken from across the top road was out in the road pecking away at the mud and was looking to have her head blown off by Jerry. Forrest took a look at the chicken pecking in the mud and said that he would fix the chicken right soon. He went to his pack and returned with a .45 caliber Colt automatic in his hand. Most of the platoon gathered to see what was happening. There were the usual guffaws and catcalls about the skill of Forrest with a .45. Forrest paid no attention to the gang. He took aim and squeezed the trigger. Everyone fell silent. Forrest's one shot had decapitated the chicken.

The headless chicken ran around for a bit and then flopped over to lay in the road on top of the mud. Forrest was pleased with the results and would not give in to having made a lucky shot. He knew that he could not retrieve the bird until later. He stood near the win-

dow watching the chicken and began planning how to cook it. He was talking aloud to all of how many ways he knew to cook chicken. With the restraints of our accommodations, Forrest decided to skewer the bird for roasting. Forrest was almost salivating thinking about the feast to come and it was all due to his prowess.

The night before a 2 and a half ton truck had come up to the village delivering rations and ammunitions, and now the driver was anxious to get back to Service company in Monschau. He was aware of Jerry watching the road, but insisted on taking his chances of running the gauntlet.

He reved up the truck at the bottom of the stem, shifting gears and gathering speed as he rolled up the stem road through the village. He floored the pedal as he turned onto the top road and slid around our corner.

The driver had the look of fear on his face as he straightened the truck and sped to the top of the rise and down the other side. Forrest had watched the entire event from our window and saw that the truck's front wheels missed running over his chicken. But, in the slide around the corner, the back wheels lined up the little chicken in their path. The chicken was squashed flat down into the mud, wasted completely.

Forrest was beside himself. In one motion, he turned, grabbed an M-1, and headed for the door. Big Dave Seldon tackled Forrest, who said that he didn't care about Jerry. He only wanted to take a few shots at that driver. After the truck was long gone and Forrest had calmed a little. Big Dave let him get up. Forrest went back to the window and stared at the flattened mess that once was a chicken. All of us felt sorry for Forrest, but nobody said a word to him as he was still fuming with rage. The rest of the day it was quiet in the First platoon's house.

After dark the visitors from Company HQ came over and the hecklers started. "Hey, we had Kentucky roasted mud chicken for chow. Ask Forrest if he has any left. It was delicious." And the unwary newcomer would feel the full fury of Forrest's disappointment. It became a private platoon story and we threw it up to Forrest whenever we saw a chicken in a farmyard.

Forrest survived the hostilities, forgot about that truck driver, and went home on points in August 1945, back to the hills of Kentucky. I wonder if he eats "Kentucky Fried Chicken"? And if he does, does he give a thought to the day that the truck ran over his chicken in Germany?

Submitted by Allen J. Kelley,  
G-47th Inf.

MICHIGAN CHAPTER NEWS

Michigan Chapter members attending the Lancaster reunion were Tom Hatton, Rodger Alsgaard, Elmer Wagner, Marilyn Martin, Everett Tapp, Jim Dawson, John and Rose Bonkowski, Harry and Blondine Sager, Bob and Florence DeSandy and Only Rishel. First time attendees were Don Sedestrom and Harold Ladoucher with their wives. Don and Harold served in the MPs after V-E day. Also attending his first reunion with his wife was Larry Holmes, whose father was in the 39th.

Chapter congratulations to Elmer Wagner, who was elected National President; and to Tom Hatton, who

was re-elected First Vice-President.

Our Chapter activities for the remainder of the year 2003 are as follows:

The first is our annual picnic and memorial service on Saturday, August 9 at Art and Mary Doering's home at [redacted]

Members bring a dish to pass and snacks. Plan to arrive early. We will eat at 12:30 PM. We will break for our annual memorial service, a very special occasion, remembering those who have gone on before us. We will name all who have passed away during the past year.

The next item is our Angola get-together, with the Illinois Chapter and other members in the Midwest. The date is October 14 and 15 at the Ramada Inn, 3855 N. State Road, Angola IN 46703. Check in time is 2PM. The Phone number is 1-260-665-9471.

When you make your own reservation, mention the Ninth Division to get the discounted room rate, \$62 plus 11% tax. You must make reservations by Oct. 1 You will need a credit card or, if mailing a check, a one night's deposit. Bring your favorite snacks and refreshments for the hospitality room.

Our annual Christmas party will be

held Wednesday, December 10 at the Bavarian Inn, Frankenmuth, MI. We must have a head count by Dec. 7. Please call Elmer Wagner at [redacted] 6 or Margaret Wisniewski at 1 [redacted]

When you get to the Bavarian Inn, go to the reservation desk and ask what room we are in. There is an elevator to all floors. No need to walk up the stairs. Our last year's price was \$16.50 plus 6% tax plus 15% tip.

Margaret Wisniewski  
Secretary, Michigan Chapter  
[redacted]

MAIL CALL

L Co. - 39th Inf

Edward V. Gill  
[redacted]

We think all will agree, that Al Perna, his wife and family. along with other volunteers ran a very successful reunion. Everything was well organized, and on schedule.

The people at Lancaster Host Hotel could not have been nicer to us. And the show was very enjoyable. We had a pretty good turn out for the reunion, and expect a larger group at Kutsher's in N.Y. State in May 2004. Once again Al we say thank you.

.....

K Co. - 60th Inf.

Fred Taylor  
[redacted]

I am enclosing a check for one years subscription to the Octofoil.

I was with K Co. 60th Inf. from North Africa through to the end of the war. I dropped my subscription after I got discharged. Would now like to continue as a member of the Association.

It won't be possible for me to attend the convention as I am 87 years old. I enjoy good health but my legs are beginning to slow me down. Sincerely,

.....

A Co. - 15th C. E. Bn.

Charles "Hoss" Johnson  
[redacted]

Kathryn and I were so happy to be able to attend the reunion in Lancaster, PA.

The whole affair was very well planned and the hotel was one of the best. We were impressed with the beautiful Memorial service and banquet program. The Banquet food was exceptional and the service was just great. It was especially good to see Tony Soprano and his wife there. A special thanks to you all who made the reunion so special. May God bless you.

.....

Co. D - 60th Inf.

Alexander Smith  
[redacted]

I just wanted to say hello to all the men of D-Co. 60th Inf. I hope all of you are well and doing fine. I'm up and about thank the good Lord. I guess most of us are feeling our age by now. I had a birthday on March 14th and turned 85 years old. I have had a very good life and a very happy marriage to my wife. We will be married 64 years if we live to see August 26th. We have three girls and one boy, and a bunch of grandchildren. My wife had a birthday this past Dec. 24th. She turned 80. I just have to tell people about my family.

I never see much of D Co. 60th Inf. I wish more of D Co. men would get their names in the Octofoil so we would know how they are doing. Come on boys, let us all hear from you. We still love you. I have one buddy I hear from. We always call each other on our birthdays. I will never forget the men of D Co. The buddy I hear from is Charles T. Walker, but just about every one called him "Pop" Walker. In case anyone would like to drop Pop a few lines, his address is:

Charles T. Walker  
[redacted]

I hope some one from D Co. would drop me a line if they remember me. I would love to hear from anyone who was in the Company. Oh, about every one called me "Smitty". No one ever called me by my first name which is Alex. Please put this in next printing.

.....

Co. E - 39th Inf.

Kenneth W. Hill  
[redacted]

Enclosed is my check for three more years membership in the Association. I started attending the annual reunions regularly in 1986 and haven't missed one since. There are quite a number of E - 39th men who read MAIL CALL regularly. My hello and best wishes to all of them

.....

Co. A - 47th Inf.

George H. Brown  
[redacted]

The Octofoil arriver on Monday 9 June 2003. Enclosed checks, one for the reunion deposit. The other in memory of those for whom taps sounded in the March-April 2003 Octofoil. even of those listed I know by name and association.

Steven Grey was in the M.P. The only time I remember seeing him was on the D-Day Tour in 1996. He was not active in the Association .

I didn't see a price on Kutsher's not that it makes any difference.

Take care and all the best to you and Emma.

.....

Co. A - 47th Inf.

Lawrence J. McLaughlin  
[redacted]

I recently became aware of the death of Raymond Gilbert, formerly of Florida. "Ray" passed away May 1st according to his son. "Ray" was the motor officer for the 47th Infantry Regiment during North Africa, Sicily, and England. He was then sent to the 1st Army Headquarters as their motor officer. Attached is my check to the Memorial Fund re: "Ray".

Sincerely

.....

2nd Bn. Hq. Co. - 60th Inf.

Wyett H. Colclasure  
[redacted]

Taps has sounded for Nila, my bride of 61 years. We were married in the 60th Infantry Chapel on 14 December 1941. The chapel is also known as "Col. Frank C. Mahan Memorial Chapel". Nila made P.C. S. 3 January 2003.

John D. O'Rourke, Ed Lusk and I were each wounded by the same artillery

shell on 8 April 1943. I have since moved into a smaller fox-hole.

God bless any contribution we may have made toward the betterment of mankind. At age 90 I move slower. Would like to see each of you. Regards.

.....

Co. B - 47th Inf.

Edward J. Samocinski  
[redacted]

Joined in 1947. Can't quit now!! Met too many great guys !! Sorry about being late. Wife terminally ill, keeps me busy at home with her. God bless us all.

Wish you luck replacing a great guy. Thanks.

.....

Seeking C Company - 60th Infantry  
Cindy Schwarze Hunter  
1929 Sunset Blvd.  
[redacted]

My uncle Albert H. Schwarze was in C Company, 60th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division. He joined his outfit on October 17, 1944 in the Huertgen Forest and was KIA between the towns of Echtz and Hoven, Germany on December 12, 1944.

I have been compiling information and doing extensive research on the 9th Division for the last 15 months. I visited France, Belgium and Germany last June and will return this May. As you can see, I would very much enjoy receiving the newsletter

I would appreciate hearing from anyone who remembers my uncle, Albert. Thank you.

.....

K Company - 47th Infantry

Joseph Killacky  
[redacted]

Happy New Year and good luck with the Octofoil. I'm sure you will give it the shot in the arm we all feel it needed due to Danny's illness. Funny how looking



## MAIL CALL

forward to seeing a few names we knew 60 years ago can still lift our spirits.

You mentioned Victor Chuck in your Christmas card. He was the "Head Chef" in K Co. I saw him at Fort Bragg in 1993 at the Reunion. He could make powdered eggs taste like Eggs Benedict.. Don't know if he was ever a 9th Assn. member or not.

If the reunions continue, I hope they can get them all at an airport hotel, where we don't have to travel 20/ 40 miles after the plane lands. Nobody seems to go much anyway, so what's wrong with just sitting around and talking. After all, isn't that the idea of a reunion.

Hope you had as nice a Christmas as I did, having all my kids and grandkids. Couldn't be better. Have a great year.

SECOND LETTER 4/6/03

My last Octofoil was the Nov./Dec. '02 copy. Are they still in print? Please send one if they are.

Hope all is well with you. Talked to Helen Holmes awhile back and she is doing well. I feel great. Played some golf despite the 70 temps one day and 30 the next; that's April for you.

Can't believe our tanks are probing into Baghdad today and they don't even know we're in there. The amazing thing is the low death rate of our troops, total of 160 or so is unbelievable. I remember when our K Co. alone was down to 35 men and more than once. Take care and best wishes.

.....

**Co. L - 47th Inf.**

Clarence F. Ray

What a great reunion in Lancaster, we surely enjoyed it very much. "L" Co. had five members there, namely: Myself and wife Marlynn, Henry and Jean Geary, Tony and Rose DeRobertis, Richard and Betty Jo Stoltz, and Ira Moser with his son and two grandsons.

If any Company or battery had more members present I would like to know about it.

I have been a member of the Association since it was formed in 1946. I bought a life membership when they first became available. Probably it was the best investment I ever made. Now that the Association is short of operating funds, I'm renewing my life membership and at 81 years of age, it is probably the worst investment I've ever made.

Enclosed is a check for the Life Membership and the rest is for the Memorial Fund in memory of Lea Moser, wife of "L" Company member Ira Moser.

The best to you. Keep up the fine work. It's really appreciated. Yours in comradeship.

.....

**Co. L - 39th Inf.**

Herbert Taff

Enclosed find a donation to the Association in memory of all the Gallant & Heroic Members who served with the Great Ninth Infantry Division.

I joined the Division January 1941, assigned to the 39th Infantry - Co. "L". I was lucky to participate in all 8 campaigns, North Africa to Germany. I was wounded in March, 1945 and spent the rest of the war in the 1st General Hospital, Paris. When the war in Europe was over, I was sent back to the States for discharge as I had 134 points. I was awarded the Silver Star, the Bronze Star with a Oak Leaf Cluster, a Purple Heart, and eight Battle Stars.

I would like to hear from my Buddies who served with me. My thanks to you and all the other people who are keeping the pulse of the Association alive. Sincerely,

.....

**Hq. & B Co. - 15th Engrs.**

Dick McGrath

I thank you a million times over for taking over the 9th Div. duties. If you contact Dan Quinn and his wonderful wife tell him we thank both him and her for the many years of their faithful services keeping us together.

The other day in our mailbox was the Octofoil and we have never got anything since the discharge of our Army service that made us so happy. First Octofoil since I can't remember when. Thank you and all your helpers for giving us something wanted. God bless you all.

I have made many reunions and I'm sorry that I can't make any more; but the Octofoil will take their place. I am a Life Member but this check will help to keep the Octofoil coming.

My best regards to all your helpers and God bless them for their work. Sincerely,

.....

**Service Battery - 26th F. A.**

William Bongiorno

I would first of all like to publicly thank Dan Quinn for his friendship, his comradeship in arms, but most importantly, for his tireless efforts and his many years of service to the Octofoil. As a former member of the Board of Governors and past President of the 9th Inf. Association I know the effort and time it has taken over the past decades in support of the Association. My prayers and best wishes go out to Dan and his family.

To bring everyone up to date, my dues are paid through 2005 for the Florida chapter and National. I pay in advance because it gives me an incentive to stick around for a couple of more years. (I hate to waste money). We can all remember days when we were overseas that we weren't sure if we would make it through our twenties never mind to reach our eighties. My wife Ellie and I are both eighty-five this year and have recently celebrated our 61st wedding anniversary. I can even remember that three day pass and drive from Ft. Bragg to Marshallberg, NC for the big day 61 years ago. I guess I broke the rules, but it has been worth it.

Although our health, Ellie's and mine, has not been the best over the past few years we consider ourselves blessed. God has been good to all of us who are still around to read the Octofoil. I am not too proud to tell that I shed a tear or two or twenty every time I read TAPS SOUNDED. So many friends, so many memories. When the National rolls around I always have some special memories of Franny Maher, Johnny Murray and Mac McKenzie; and I would like to donate a little something in their memory.

Just take a minute to think how times have changed since we left Ft. Bragg. We spent three plus years overseas fighting a war for our country, and our country just fought and won a war that lasted three weeks. I guess that we can say that we have seen it all. I hope everyone takes a minute to remember our past as well as our newly fallen comrades in arms for their sacrifices and may God bless them all. We are the lucky ones: we have been blessed to have each other. Our love and best wishes to one and all, I will always remain your Comrade In Arms.

.....

**L Co. - 39th Inf.**

Edward V. Gill

We think all will agree, that Al Perna, his wife and family, along with other volunteers ran a very successful reunion. Everything was well organized and on schedule.

The people at Lancaster Host Hotel could not have been nicer to us. And the show was very enjoyable.

We had a pretty good turnout for the reunion and we expect a larger group at Kutsher's in New York State in May 2004

Once again Al, we say thank you.

.....

**Hq. Co. - 15th Engr. Bn.**

Robert R. Newton  
Executor of the Estate of  
Howard C. Granger

Dear Sirs:

As requested by my Uncle, it is my sad duty to inform you of the death of Howard C. Granger, CWO (Retired) of [redacted] June 28, 2003 in Columbia, S. C.

Sincerely; Robert R. Newton, Executor.

.....

**Hq. Co. - 47th Inf.**

Janet Trout

Dear Members and Readers of the Octofoil,

Just wanted you to know another comrade passed away on Feb. 5, 2003. Joseph Trout, Ninth Infantry Division, 47th Infantry Regt.

He was proud of his outfit and told of some of his experiences and friends. He read the Octofoil from cover to cover to see if he knew or remembered some of the names written in there. Some times a smile or a tear would be evidenced; but thru all the problems Joe had he was 88 years old on Jan 16th. We were married 60 years, almost 61. The Octofoil came this week and I saw Ed Wisniewski name in there and I know Joe spoke of him.. Best Wishes to all of you.

THE OCTOFOIL

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