



RAINBOW DIVISION
Veterans Memorial Foundation

REVEILLE

VOL. LXXXVI

JUNE 2006

NO. 5

Rainbow On-Line: www.rainbowvets.org

Chairman's Message

Despite 14-hour workdays every day since April 20, "P and P Plantscapes" (Patti Hughes' and my business) is six weeks behind schedule on its commitments; Rainbow Scholarship applications are pouring in; 242nd Regimental Chapter dues are coming in daily; and commitments I have to two community organizations are looming over me like impending doom. It's imminently certain that I'm going to be scrambling to get everything lined up for Kansas City which is just two months away as I write this. The final straw is 66 yet unread e-mail messages. Do I think I'm going to make it???

Absolutely; certainly. With fellow Rainbowers like Herb Butt, Jon Janosik, John Walker, Dee (and Barbara) Eberhart, Ken Carpenter, Hugo Grimm, Charlie Fowler, Bob Weiss, Pete (and Rose) Pettus and a great group of willing trustees all backed up our ever-willing and helpful women's auxiliary group, everything will be done on time – count on it.

With most of us either knocking on the door for admission to octogenarian status or already having been granted admission, probably every one of you can cite a set of conditions to match my commitments. We have different stories but all live with uncertainties. Please – let me urge you to plan to continue your Rainbow commitments as though you were certain to be able to meet them rather than allowing uncertainty to chart your life path. Plan as though you are certain to be in Kansas City and register now. Start looking for airline tickets now. Fuel prices are more likely to rise than drop and tickets will cost more as we get well into summer. Hotel reservations can be canceled without loss of funds if one observes the deadlines. Proper attention to details as one orders airline tickets can provide flexibility in gaining refunds also. Get yourself moving, now!!

Kansas City is going to be a really fun reunion. There are enjoyable

CAMPAIGNS
World War I: Lorraine-Champagne- Aisne-Marne- St. Mihiel-Meuse-Argonne.
World War II: Central Europe- Rhineland- Alsace-Ardenne.
War on Terrorism: Iraq.

OVER THE RAINBOW

As much as I detest this portion of my responsibility, it becomes necessary to announce that we have lost Past National President John J. McGovern.

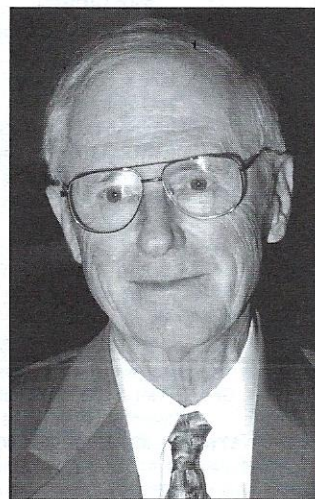
John passed away after a lengthy illness resulting in pneumonia, at Flower Hospital, Sylvania, OH on Saturday morning, April 8th. Visitation was Tuesday, April 11 from 8 to 10 p.m. Mass was conducted Wednesday, April 12 at St. Joseph Church at 10 a.m. Burial was at Mt. Calvary Cemetery at Dubuque, IA on Saturday, April 15.

John was born on March 25, 1924 in Peosta, Iowa to Joseph and Teresa McGovern. He received his undergraduate degree from Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa, and his Masters Degree from the University of Iowa. John was a veteran of WWII serving in the U.S. Army's 42nd Rainbow Division, Co. B, 232nd Inf., and a former POW. He remained very active with the Rainbow Division, serving as National President. John represented the division in Germany during the 50th anniversary of the ending of WWII and the liberation of Dachau. John was a member of Conn-Weissberger American Legion, Knights of Columbus and the Sylvania VFW Post. He was a chemist for Coulton Chemical for 20 years.

He married Rosemary Friedell, and graduated from Iowa's School of Chemical Engineering. From the marriage, six girls and one boy were born. One daughter has passed away. John was a staunch follower of the Iowa Hawkeyes and the Chicago Cubs.

John, over the years as far as I am able to discern, did not seem to get excited or out of sorts, especially with the number of duties he seemed to end up with for Rainbow. He was a great help to me in my area. I enjoyed our association and will miss his guidance.

Respectfully,
Herb Butt



John McGovern

activities planned for every evening. Pete Pettus has already engaged an Iraqi war veteran to speak at the luncheon. There's a dinner theater evening available to everyone. There's a Truman Library tour available. There are unit dinners available, and I know that the 242nd Regimental Chapter dinner being held at the hotel will feature musical entertainment. 242nd President Tom Dillingham has indicated that non-242nd Chapter people can also sign up to attend the dinner. Hospitality rooms will be

going strong. The opportunity for camaraderie and the usual warm social interaction and mellow atmosphere we have grown to appreciate will all be there – if you are there to make it happen. Do it, not only for yourself, but also for everyone who is counting on you.

It's a certainty that I will be in Kansas City – ready to go. It's a certainty that I and many others want to see you there. Make it a certainty. Start now!!

Ted Simonson
Chairman

THE RAINBOW REVEILLE

Official Publication of the
RAINBOW Division Veterans
Memorial Foundation

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THE RAINBOW REVEILLE

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42nd Rainbow Foundation

July 11-16, 2006

**Hilton Kansas City Airport Hotel
Kansas City, MO**

Tuesday, July 11

2:00pm - 7:00pm Reunion Registration open

Wednesday, July 12

7:00am - 8:30am Reunion Registration open
9:00am - 2:00pm CITY TOUR (description follows)
11:00am - 2:00pm Scholarship Committee Meeting with Working Lunch
2:00pm - 3:30pm Memorials Committee Meeting
2:00pm - 5:00pm Auxiliary Bazaar
3:30pm - 4:30pm 222nd, 242nd, FA Unit Meetings
4:00pm - 7:00pm Reunion Registration open
7:30pm - 10:30pm Reunion Welcome Remarks and Opening Ceremony,
Followed by Early Bird Party

****Everyone is urged to be present for the opening ceremony at 7:30pm****

Thursday, July 13

8:00am - 9:00am Audit Committee Meeting
8:30am - 10:00am Reunion Registration open
9:00am - 10:30am Auxiliary Executive Committee Meeting
10:00am - 12:00pm Auxiliary Bazaar
10:30am - 12:00pm Constitution and Bylaws Committee Meeting
1:00pm - 2:00pm Budget Committee Meeting
2:00pm - 3:00pm Membership Committee Meeting
3:00pm - 5:00pm Auxiliary Business Meeting
3:30pm - 7:00pm Reunion Registration open. Additional hours will be
posted at the reunion if needed.
5:45pm - 10:30pm NEW THEATRE RESTAURANT (description follows)

Friday, July 14

8:00am - 9:30am National Auxiliary President's Breakfast
8:00am - 9:00am Resolutions Committee Meeting
8:30am - 10:00am Banquet seating reservations for Saturday Banquet
9:00am - 11:00am Auxiliary Bazaar
9:00am - 12:00pm Trustees Meeting
12:00pm - 1:00pm Luncheon
1:30pm - 5:00pm TRUMAN MUSEUM (description follows)
2:00pm - 5:00pm Auxiliary Bazaar
6:30pm - 10:00pm Unit Dinners (222,232, 242 & FA)

Saturday, July 15

8:00am - 9:30am Auxiliary Bazaar
8:30am - 10:00am Millennium Chapter Meeting
10:00am - 11:30am Memorial Service
12:00pm - 1:00pm PNP and PNAP Luncheons
1:30pm - 3:00pm Foundation Membership Meeting
3:00pm - 4:00pm Auxiliary Chapter Secretaries Meeting
4:30pm - 5:30pm Catholic Church Service
4:30pm - 5:30pm Protestant Church Service
6:30pm - 7:30pm Chairman and President's Reception
7:30pm - 10:00pm Banquet Dinner

Sunday, July 16

Farewells and departures

National Reunion

July 11-16, 2006

Hilton Kansas City Airport Hotel
Kansas City, MO • (816) 891-8900

The Hilton Kansas City Airport is located at 8801 NW 112th St., Kansas City, MO 64153, just minutes from the Kansas City International Airport (MCI). The Kansas City Hilton offers spacious guest rooms, each with coffee makers, iron/ironing board, and hair dryers. The hotel has a sundries area, newsstand (USA Today), and an ATM for your convenience. Relax in the hotel's pool or fitness room or play a little tennis on their on-site tennis court. Handicapped-accessible and non-smoking rooms are subject to availability. Please request these special accommodations when making your hotel reservation. Parking for guests staying in the hotel is complimentary. Check-in time is 3 p.m.; check-out is 12 p.m. The Café Weatherby serves American and International cuisine featuring top Kansas City steaks in a casual dining atmosphere. The Café Weatherby is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. Room service is available 24 hours a day.

The hotel provides a complimentary shuttle to and from the Kansas City International Airport (MCI) that runs every 15 minutes. You may want to consider other transportation, as space is limited on courtesy services.

The nearest RV park with full hook-up is the JJ Campground, about 30 miles from the hotel. JJ Campground is located at 19116 Scott Road, Holt, MO 64048. The park recommends reservations be made immediately due to limited space and availability. For information, directions and reservations, call (800) 693-6316.

Should you need to rent a wheelchair for the reunion, ScootAround rents both manual and power wheelchairs by the day and week. Please call their toll-free number at (888) 441-7575 for details.

Vendors, schedules, and prices are subject to change.

City Tour

Wednesday, July 12

Kansas City is known as the City of Fountains. See why as we make our way through the area. Drive through Westport, the renovated historic district featuring some of Kansas City's oldest buildings. This area marks the beginning of the Santa Fe Trail. Other points of interest include the Lewis and Clark Point, and the Liberty Memorial, which is the only memorial dedicated to those who served in World War I. This is a great place to take pictures of the Kansas City skyline. You'll have free time for lunch on your own at Country Club Plaza, Kansas City's premier retail, restaurant, and entertainment district. The plaza offers more than 150 shops and restaurants nestled within old-world architecture, captivating foun-

tains, and expressive works for art.

9:00 am board bus, 2:00 pm back at hotel

\$29/person includes bus and guide.
Lunch on your own.

New Theater Restaurant

Thursday, July 13

Spend the evening at the New Theatre Restaurant. Enjoy a buffet-style dinner and then Broadway's most recent hit musical revival of Fiddler on the Roof. Set in 1905, FIDDLER ON THE ROOF takes place in Anatevka, a small Jewish village in Russia. The story revolves around the dairyman Tevye and his attempts to preserve his family's traditions in the face of a changing world. It's a story rich in faith, love and family that pays big dividends in laughter! Show-stopping tunes include "If I Were a Rich Man," "Matchmaker, Matchmaker," "Sunrise! Sunset," and "To Life." The New Theatre Restaurant always provides top quality entertainment with great food. The tour price includes dinner, show, tax and gratuity, but specialty drinks and desserts are not included.

5:45 pm board bus, 10:30 pm back at hotel

\$66/Person includes bus, escort dinner and show.

Truman Museum

Friday, July 14

Embark on a trip to the Truman Museum. Enjoy the exhibits, films, and memorabilia of Harry Truman's presidency and private life. See a full-scale reproduction of the White House Oval Office, circa 1948, as well as gravesites of Harry and Bess Truman. A film depicting the life of Harry Truman is offered every hour on the half hour and runs approximately forty-five minutes. After leaving the museum you will drive by the Truman Home.

1:30 pm board bus, 5 pm back at hotel

\$32/Person includes bus, guide and admission.

Driver and Guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices. Please be at the bus boarding area five minutes prior to the schedule time.

All tours require minimum of 30 people, unless otherwise stated.

Cancellation and Refund Policy for Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.

For attendees canceling reunion activities prior to the cut-off date, Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. (AFR) shall process a full refund less the non-refundable AFR Registration fee (\$5 per person). Attendees canceling reunion activities after the cut-off date will be refunded to the fullest extent that AFR's vendor commitments and guarantees will allow, unless the non-refundable AFR registration fee. Cancellations will only be taken Monday through Friday from 9:00 am

until 5:00 pm Eastern Standard Time, excluding holidays. Please call (757) 625-6401 or e-mail cancel@afri.com to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Refunds processed 4-6 weeks after reunion. Canceling your hotel reservation does not cancel your reunion activities.

Don't Forget Veterans' Day in Birmingham

November 9, 10, 11, 2006

Just a brief reminder of that important event. This year we will be back at our favorite hotel, the Sheraton Birmingham. The rate this year will be \$72 plus tax, with complimentary shuttle from the airport running every 30 minutes. The telephone number for the hotel is (205) 324-5000. Don't forget to mention the Rainbow Division Veterans Memorial Foundation. As usual, we will get started by getting together for supper in the hotel dining room on the evening of the 9th. The tour on the 10th will include Shoney's for breakfast, then on to the Barber Motorsports Museum (admission \$8 per person), the Alabama Theater, the 21st Street Viaduct for our wreath-laying ceremony, the Rainbow Memorial at the VA hospital, the Peanut Factory, and back to the hotel for lunch in the hospitality room.

If you have attended this event in the past, you know what a wonderful time you will have. If you haven't, you don't know what you have been missing. Don't wait any longer! Mark your calendar now and make plans to attend the largest Veterans' Day celebration in the country. You won't regret it.

If you have any questions, please call Charles Fowler, (603) 432-2635.

Chaplain's Prayer

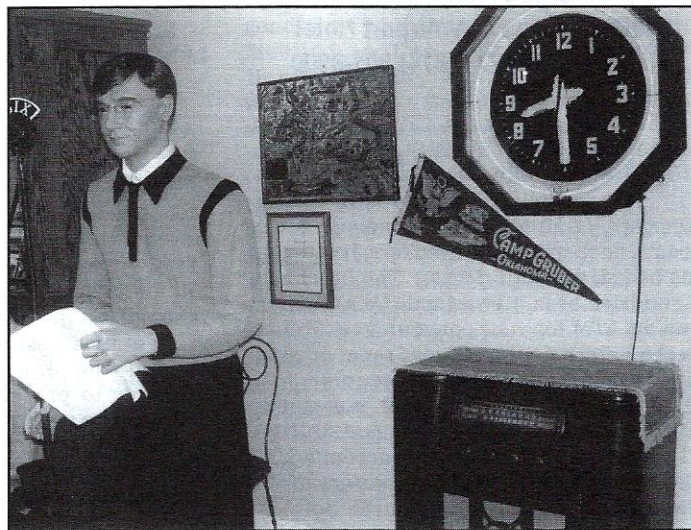
A Prayer for Today

O God:

*Give me strength to live another day;
Let me not turn coward before its difficulties or prove recreant to its duties;
Let me not lose faith in other people;
Keep me sweet and sound of heart, in spite of ingratitude, treachery, or meanness;
Preserve me from minding little stings, or giving them;
Help me to keep my heart clean, and to live so honestly and fearlessly that no outward failure can dishearten me or take away the joy of conscious integrity;
Open wide the eyes of my soul, that I may see good in all things;
Grant me this day some new vision of thy truth;
Inspire me with the spirit of joy and gladness; and make me the cup of strength to suffering souls.
Grant this, O Lord, we pray.
Amen.*

Norman P. Forde
Memorial Foundation Chaplain

The Trail of the 42nd Rainbow Division



March 21, 2006

Mr. Hugo Grimm
32 Austin Hill Ct.
Wentzville, MO 63385

Dear Mr. Grimm:

Enclosed is a picture, as you requested, of the "Rainbow Trail" plaque. I have hung it in the display regarding Camp Gruber.

As you will recall, the display we have used this mannequin to represent a radio announcer for KBIX, a local station in the 1940s, still on the air today. The audio feed for the announcer is news about Camp Gruber, a visit from President Franklin Roosevelt eating in the mess hall, and discusses the 42nd Rainbow Division being trained there.

I felt this was an appropriate place for it to hang, and the text in the frame below it contains a version of Mr. Carr's story about the plaque.

Hope this meets with your approval.

Linda Moore
Three Rivers Museum
220 Elgin
P.O. Box 1813
Muskogee, OK 74402

The Rainbow Trail

by John L. Carr

The plaster fresco "The Trail of the 42nd Rainbow Division" has ended its trail at the Three Rivers Museum in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Like the path the 42nd Division took through Europe during World War II, the fresco traveled a circuitous route to get from point A to point B.

The map, commissioned by Col. Ed Keating during Austria's post-war occupation, depicts the Rainbow Division's course from Marseilles to the German-Austrian border. The legend that was supplied by Keating placed the original purchase price at two cartons of American cigarettes. Col. Keating carried it with him at his postings around the world and had it with him when he "passed over the Rainbow" at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas.

Col. Keating's daughter, Kathy, passed it on to John D. Carr, then National President of the 42nd Rainbow Division Veterans Association, during his 1984-1985 tenure, at the bequest of her mother Peg, Col., Keating's widow. The map remained in John Carr's possession until he entrusted it to Hugo Grimm in February 2005, so Hugo could take it to the Division's reunion. At the reunion it was decided that the map should be presented to the Three Rivers Museum in Muskogee, Oklahoma where it will be displayed with the rest of the 42nd Division's memorabilia.

For more information about the 42nd Rainbow Division, contact Three Rivers Museum.

Memorial Day

General Order 11

"Let us, then, at the time appointed, gather around their sacred remains and garland the passionless mounds above them with the choicest flowers of spring-time..."

Let us raise above them the dear old flag they saved from dishonor; let us in this solemn presence renew our pledges to aid and assist those whom they have left among us as sacred charges upon the Nation's gratitude – the soldier's and sailor's widow and orphan."

Major General John Logan
Commander-in-Chief
Grand Army of the Republic

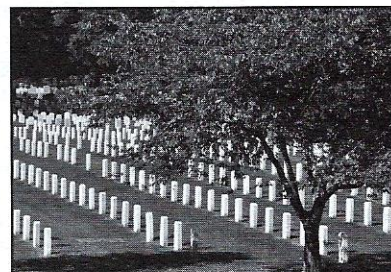
A Reaffirmation

Memorial Day is the day we remember and honor those who lost their lives fighting for our nation. But more than a day to decorate the graves of our honored dead, Memorial Day is a reaffirmation of faith.

Faith in a Creator who intended all people to be free. Faith that those who fight for freedom will prevail over those who fight for tyranny. Faith that the natural and universal pursuits of mankind – freedom, justice and democracy – will remain attainable because free people will fight for them.

Memorial Day is not only about remembering the men and women who made the Supreme sacrifice. It is about acknowledging and protecting the ideals they died for; so their sacrifice shall not be in vain.

Through our efforts, America's faith in freedom, justice and democracy will remain intact. And so will the blanket of freedom that our honored dead bequeathed to us.



At 89, a Daughter Reclaims Story of Her Soldier Father

by Rich Tosches
Denver Post

She had known sadness before.

Her tears fell hard in 2003 when her husband died, ending 70 years of marriage. But now, inside a tiny museum as thunder cracked and a cold and heavy rain pounded against the roof, veterans gathered to honor their own. And sorrow came to visit her again.

This time, Lucy Chavez cried for a man she didn't know, a man who died 87 years ago clutching his Army rifle in a muddy trench in France. This time, she cried for her father.

Delfido Garcia was a sheepherder in this San Luis Valley gateway settlement. He was born in 1891. When World War I began, he - like almost every young man across the country - stepped forward to fight. His daughter, Lucy, was born in 1916. They spent a few brief months together in a small house on the outside of town.

And then he was gone. He was killed in action 13 months later, on Oct. 15, 1918. He is buried in the Meuse Argonne American Cemetery in Romagne, France. Delfido Garcia was 27.

Friday, American Legion Post 110, the Garcia Post as it has been known since 1920, dedicated a plaque to its namesake, the first man in the San Luis Valley to die in WWI.

And Lucy, who is now 89, got to say goodbye.

"I always wondered who he was, what kind of man he was," she said, her voice just a whisper. "I always wondered about my father. I always missed him."

No one else seemed to know who Delfido Garcia was. Cecil Hall, a World War II veteran, lifelong resident of the small (population 550) farming community and a member of Post 110 for 60 years, decided to find out.

"I was in combat in World War II for 24 months," said Hall, 81. "It's important to me, it really is, to remember anyone, in any war, who gave so much."

And for a few moments, his mind went back to a beachhead in Italy where he lost so many friends.

"I had lots and lots of buddies, and lots of them didn't make it," he said.

"I had a little book and each night back then I wrote the names of my buddies in it. When they died, I put a little cross beside their name and the date. I still look at that book," he said.

A few years ago, Hall submitted a story to the local paper, the Saguache Crescent, asking for help tracking down the history of Garcia. The story made it to the Internet and a military historian from Londonderry, N.H., stepped in with the answer.

Garcia, after leaving his sheep,

became a member of the 167th Regiment of the 42nd Infantry Division. He was killed in action just 26 days before the armistice was signed ending WWI.

Lucy, his only daughter, was 10 months old when he left home. She was not yet 2 when he died. She was raised by her grandmother and grandfather - Delfido's parents.

Friday, in a small adobe museum along U.S. 285, his family and several generations of veterans gathered to dedicate a plaque to his memory. About 40 people from the small town filled the room. They sang. They spoke. Dennis Neuhaus, a veteran of Korea and Vietnam, played Taps on his trumpet. They ate cake. And they choked on the emotion.

"I present this plaque to you," said big Sam Chavez, Lucy's son and a 20-year Air Force veteran who came from Dallas for the brief event, "in memory of my grandfather."

And then he cried.

"You think you have control over your emotions, but then you lose it," he said later. "It's because of the memory. Coming face to face with a memory. All these years you hear little stories about who this man was, my grandfather, but you never really stop to face it."

"For me, having been in the military, I think about how scared he must have been. He was a shepherd, he didn't speak a word of English, and all of a sudden he's in the Army, in France, fighting for this country."

He nodded toward his mother.

"Everything she knows about her father came from stories told by her grandfather and her grandmother," he said. "A couple of photographs. That's it. That's all she ever had." Lucy won't discuss what became of her mother.

Lucy, who now lives in Salida, smiled as the festivities began to wind down. She hugged her son, Sam, and her other children who made the trek to this sagebrush prairie on Veterans Day. But the smile soon disappeared.

"I didn't know today would be so big, that so many people would come to remember my father," she said. "I don't want to sound crazy, but I was talking to him today. I said, 'Dad, look what you did.' Today, I was proud of my Dad."

Over & Back

by John McGovern
Company B - 232nd Infantry

Continued from April Issue

It was very cold the night of the 17th (we had lost the windows on the 16th) and when the mortar fire continued for some time in our area, we decided about 10 o'clock to get warm (I didn't realize my feet were already frozen) as the Germans were not likely to attack while their mortars were dropping. When we got to the

basement, there was a fire in a potbellied stove, and the room was packed with civilians and soldiers. We sat by the stove and I was asleep before my rear touched the floor, since Tuttle and I had not slept for several days. The anti-tank squad kept some sort of watch on the first floor and when a tank started our way in the morning, they sounded the alarm. When I got to the top of the steps, the tank was already parked on our side street. Before I got to the second floor, there were grenades exploding around the house. We were mostly blind to the east because of a small building in the side yard. The Germans were behind this building throwing grenades at the window wells and the east basement door. They quickly demanded surrender and someone yelled "Kamerad," although I could only hear a woman screaming. It suddenly got very quiet and the Germans got strident, so I went back to the basement, opened the door and went up into the side yard. A German officer started to search me and, when he found several types of ammunition, he said, "Chicago Gangster."

I didn't completely realize it at the time, but there were several reasons why I wasn't going to survive that yard. I was first out of the house (apparently, the Germans often shot the first out to get better cooperation from the rest), I had a grenade hooked on my field jacket, my inside pockets were packed with souvenir swastikas and shoulder patches, 18 German POWs had been shot a kilometer away, and I had to avoid stepping on dead Germans to get through the side gate. However, God apparently takes care of drunks and Irishmen (according to my father).

Lest We Forget

Our nation is at war. As Americans and patriots who love this land, it is our duty to ensure that everyone is reminded of those who made the ultimate sacrifice and of those who continue to pay the price in the pursuit of freedom.

- The young and idealistic doughboy of World War I. His country needed him and he went willingly. More than 116,000 Americans lost their lives in that war.
- During World War II, Americans again fought, not just for themselves, but for the entire world. And 400,000 died.
- Then came the biting cold of Korea. There, on a frozen peninsula, 37,000 Americans paid the price.
- In Vietnam, 58,000 lost their lives, and thousands more remain unaccounted for to this very day.
- During the mercifully short Persian Gulf War, another 300 Americans died to preserve someone else's freedom, to save someone else's homeland.
- Since the terrorist attacks on September 11, over 3,000 Americans have lost their lives.

We Get Letters

Hi Ken,

Well-known 542nd Field Artillery Battalion Rainbower, Walter Pierce, was 96 years "young" on December 20, 2005. Walter's phone number is (781) 893-0170.

Sol Feingold, who assisted Col. Linden on a book about Dachau, is now in a veterans' geriatric unit in Bedford, Mass. and can be reached at (781) 687-4027.

Yours in Rainbow,
Larry Rosen

Gray and Silver... Fading Away

by T.G. Jordan

You may find them sitting at high noon in
the shade
On the courthouse square, at the old hardware store...
Somberly, they loiter, eyes wrinkled,
squinting,
Exuding a wisdom that radiates plainly,
an aura...
And... there are experiences of which they
silently carry,
Things you and I cannot imagine... for we
know it not.
They are in the golden years, graying and
silver...
As they reflect under the shadows cast by
the old oak.
The elderly woman, who quietly remembers
the absence of those
Old warriors - having to take on their
duties, and family,
As she was sometimes affectionately
dubbed "Rosie" -
Who fabricated those silver angels of
death...
And angels of deliverance... and who rode
in spirit
As painted symbols on the wings of angels.
Our generation does not remember the
names and places...
Names that are clouded by new dust...
Bouganville, Iwo Jima...
The Ardennes, and Malmedy...
Twelve O'clock high over Dresden...
And for it all: For the flood of crimson fallen
on foreign soil.
For the sweet sweat of labor, continuous...
And for the tears shed from sea to shining
sea.
You and I can freely live, to stand in their
wake,
Thanking God for those silent, graying pillars
of strength...
And courage, who stood in harm's way -
and who now stand
As fading shadows of dusk
In these often troubled times...

Submitted by Danforth Parker Bearse

Memories of World War II

Fifty Years Later - Part 2

by the late PNP Ted Johnson

Tonight I am deep in Niederbronn, which is deep in the Hardt Mountains. We finished the circle at Kilstett and stopped and had wine with a family in LaWantzenau and exchange gifts. We went on to Weyersheim and refused wine. We then headed north along the Rhine to all the little towns we were in - up by Soultz, Drusenheim, Sessenheim, Herrlisheim, Hatten and Rittershofen (The latter two are inscribed on the Arch of the Arc D'Triumph in Paris) and on to the west. Endless numbers of little villages that stretched over 33 miles - defended by three infantry regiments (minus support units) that had already been kicked around a great deal. That gives each regiment an average of 11 miles; that means each battalion had to cover 3½ miles; that means each company had about one mile; if there are 5,280 feet a mile, and there are about 100 men left in a company, then you have 520 feet between each man. If one assumes that everyone was distributed evenly, which of course was not the case, this was the line that held against elements of 7 or 8 different German divisions.

On through the valley, there to stop at St. Avoird and the American military cemetery for the Alsace campaign, where still rest some 16,000 World War II men who have lain there in majestic peace these 50 years. 50 years, while the rest of us have gone home to a marvelous welcome, have gone back to friends and family, and girlfriends and wives. 50 years, while we pursued our education of our jobs, lived through the beautiful years of quiet peace right after the war, and those magnificent years of eternal growth in the economy, during which almost all of us, who returned prospered. 50 years of getting married, raising children and watching them grow and get their education. Unfortunately, seeing some of them go off to war again. 50 years of a vowed intent to make the material things we always enjoyed in this country, available to those all over the world, and in the last half of those 50 years to see that generosity resented. After 50 years of claiming to have kept a pledge, but somehow not finding the answer. Therefore, for 45 years, the world has lived in apprehensive concern and fear for the perpetuation of life on earth itself. Oh, how much those crosses, revered and so graciously cared for as they are, represent the measure of how much they gave. But, if in their giving, despite the failure of those who survived to find ultimate answers for the future - these men had but known that they were a successful crusade to rid the world of evil it then was; if they could be sure that we have not forgotten what they did, then I still think they would rest in peace.

Iowa Chapter

Greetings, Rainbowers. We all had a good time and great food at our April meeting in Des Moines. Thanks to Harold & Mary Reit for making the reservations at the Machine Shed. We did not have a separate area for the meeting which prompted some people at the surrounding tables to offer congratulations and thanks for our efforts in WWII. This always gives me, and I am sure, the rest of you, a feeling of pride and gratitude. God bless America!

Harold Reit is officially my entertainment officer. He came to the meeting bearing table decorations, gifts, and prizes for several games and, of course, a joke or two. He really added some life to the meeting. I am expecting great things from you, Harold.

We had the usual gift exchange and some of us received useful items! We had 20 people attending; hope to see you again in September. Several of our regulars were not present; we missed you. Our next meeting, Sept. 11, will be at the Ronneburg Restaurant in Amana. A private room will be reserved if we provide the number of people attending by Sept. 1. I will send you a reminder, about Aug. 15 with directions, and a RSVP card to be returned to me.

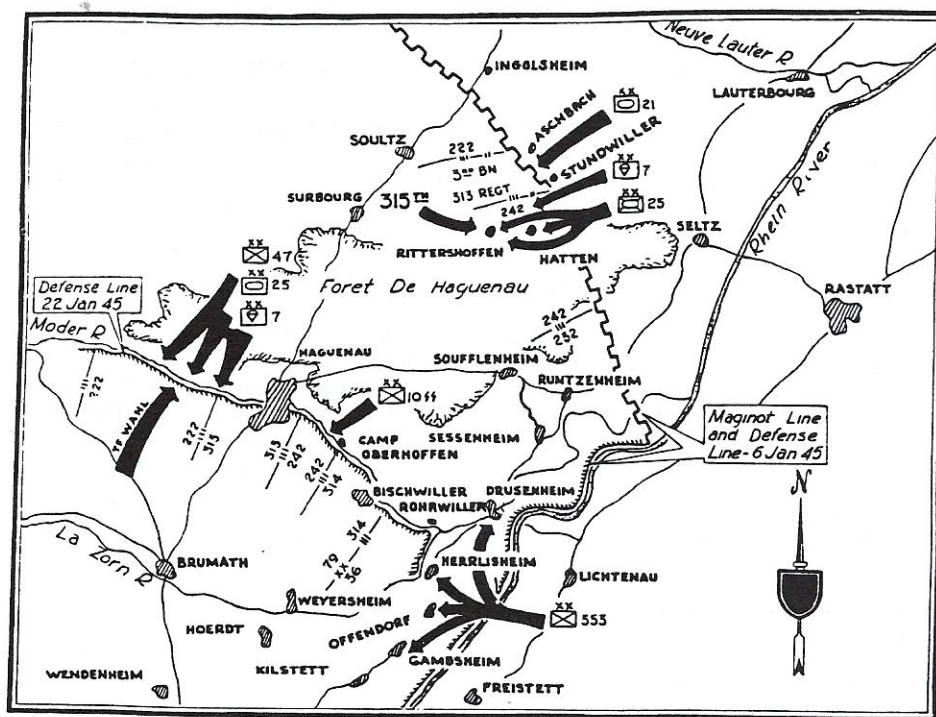
Lise Pommiois, the authoress of "Winter Storm" about the Rainbow in France in WWII, was the featured speaker at the History Round Table in Ft. Snelling, MN, on April 13. Seven WWII vets were on a panel to answer questions. Two were from the 42nd, Vasil Ivanoff and me. There were 400 attendees. Meetings are held monthly. Lise spoke about the 42nd, 99th, & 100th Divisions' actions that took place during the German offensive in Alsace, Dec. '44 & Jan. '45. (Ed. note: The 99th did not serve in Alsace. They were in the Bulge and had a great record.)

The trip that Evelyn and I started in Davenport on April 13, went to the Twin Cities, Ft. Snelling, La Crosse, WI, then to Cleveland, OH (including a funeral there), and then to the Irish Hills, MI area for the funeral of a nephew and finally back to Davenport, for a total of 2,300 miles. Gas prices were slightly below \$3, but we did find one at \$2.74.

I have been asked to serve the remaining Trustee term for the National Rainbow Foundation left open due to John McGovern passing over the Rainbow. He served the Rainbow faithfully in combat and for many years in the Association. I will do my best.

Remember the National Reunion in July in Kansas City. If any of you attend, give us a call and we will get together.

Yours in Rainbow, God bless our troops,
and God bless America,
Jim Schaefer
563-391-4018



German "Nordwind" Offensive

Operation Nordwind (Final Crisis)

by Dick Engler

Continued from January Issue

The first Nordwind attacks began on schedule. At 2320 hours on 31 December, under bright moonlight, white-clad figures began to move on American outposts and probe for strong points in the Saare Valley and in the mountains south of Bitche.

But New Year's Eve was merely a time of reshuffling movement and frigid guard and outpost duty for the men of Task Force Linden. Few were aware that their orphan cousins to the north along the Rhine were already on their way west to help in defense against a German offensive. Some in the 232nd Infantry, who were called to stretch their sector coverage to Sessenheim and beyond, knew of Task Force Herren (of the 70th Division) and its move on New Year's Eve.

But no one in the Task Force had any inkling of the high-level meeting on January 3 where Gen. Eisenhower and Gen. DeGualle argued over the defense of Strasbourg. The decision at high levels to hold Strasbourg and extend the French First Army sector to cover its defense was felt in the ranks simply as more confusing moves. Truck and marching columns on icy roads. Aching muscles and searing lungs. Stop. Move out again. "We're staying here tonight." Then suddenly "Load up!" "Where we goin'?" "Back where we were."

The time of trial approached for Task Force Linden. In the Saare Valley, the German drive had stalled by January 3 after gaining only a few miles. And in the

mountains the exhausted forces of both sides were locked in stalemate at Philippsbourg, Baerenthal and Wingen. The Germans had been held short of the Vosges exits. Their corps and division commanders pleaded for the commitment of the two reserve panzer divisions down the main roads leading through Philippsbourg and Baerenthal to provide the punch needed to break out of the mountains at Niederbronn and Zinswiller.

But very high up – some say Hitler himself made the decision – new improvisations were introduced. Himmler's force would wait no longer. It would cross the Rhine immediately without waiting for further developments in the mountains. And the reserve armor, the 21st Panzer and 25th Panzer-Grenadier Divisions, would be moved eastward to the Wissembourg sector and attempt a quick dash south through Soultz to Haguenau and on to Saverne. An SS panzer corps was created for this new axis of attack, and a third panzer division, the 10th SS, was scheduled to join in this drive depending on developments.

And so the excruciating conditions were created for the trials of Task Force Linden: overextended, without integral artillery and engineers, regiments displayed under command of other divisions or in special task forces, battalions often fractionated from regiments and companies from battalions. And for the first shock, those conditions were compounded by that constant, maddening factor of reshuffling movement.

The deck was especially stacked at Gamsheim.

Gamsheim, January 5-6. Task Force Linden was moving on January 5. Relinquishing the defense of Strasbourg to the French, it was shifting north. It was mov-

ing into the Wissembourg Gap, into case-mates of the Maginot Line sited in little villages north of Haguenau Forest and in the forest, and its outpost line along the Rhine would now begin near Drusenheim, north of its older sector of responsibility. As it moved, decisions in the German camp were bringing about the concentration of the German Nordwind effort in these very sectors. The German armor was moving to the Wissembourg Gap; and the German Upper Rhine forces were launching their assault across the Rhine.

In "the earliest morning twilight" on January 5, the German Upper Rhine forces, using assault boats and three specially constructed ferries, put a composite force across the Rhine near Gamsheim north of Strasbourg. Two infantry regiments had crossed by the night of the first day. But the assault power for the bridgehead, most of it also across by that first night, resided in a special task force of assault guns, anti-tank and AA artillery units under the command of a commander of panzer troops. The AA artillery regiment of this task force was described in German accounts as "richly equipped with 8.8 cm guns and richly supplied with ammunition." The German account also said that the commitment of "the AA artillery regiment was especially effective when its fire was concentrated, owing to the high rate of fire of its 8.8 cm guns."

Many veterans of Task Force Linden could testify to the concentrated German firepower at Gamsheim. They underwent their baptism of fire there in hastily formed combat groups that moved against the bridgehead from the south and west. (The thin defensive line of the 232nd in this sector had felt the fury some hours before.) Men of all regiments, some companies intercepted while in transit north, were pressed into the counterattacks. Communications poor; coordination lacking; support from tanks and artillery spotty or nonexistent.

In the ranks, vague rumor substituted for real information. "We're goin' up to kick the butts of a Jerry patrol that crossed the Rhine. Grab some prisoners. Be back by breakfast." "There are a few snipers in the town across the tracks by that church spire. We're supposed to clean them out."

Ground haze clearing. Stumbling, heavy going on crusty snow. An empty, icy field, but haystacks in the distance... then machine guns firing, cries and shouts, an effort at further movement, but then to the ground. And now the 88s, fast-firing, screaming, methodical, patterned sweeping of frozen ground; shrieking razors from rounds that hardly dent the frozen surface.

They fell back. And some tried again. One element of the northern group penetrated and cleared much of Gamsheim. But then the German tanks appeared. They fell back again... in the north, to the Landgraben Canal; in the south, to the edge of Kilstett. The French came. And Task Force Linden proceeded to its assignment north of Haguenau Forest and outposting north of Drusenheim along the Rhine.

To be continued

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*WWII History Book will be
available at the National
Reunion in July.*

In Memory of Claude Brown

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