



THE PYRAMIDIERS

The Newsletter of the 98th Bomb Group/Wing Veterans Association

August 2012

OFFICERS

JOHN FORNWALT
Founding President

BILL SEALS
President
2526 Plumfield Lane
Katy, TX 77450
281-395-3005
colbillyseals@hotmail.com

DENNIS POSEY
Vice President
1780 Chasewood Park Lane
Marietta, GA 30066
770-509-7734
dennis_posey@att.net

SUZANNE (SIMONS) MIODUSZEWSKI
Secretary/Treasurer
Scholarship Chairperson
1137 Joyce Lane
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
734-678-3838
suzannes@me.com

LURA HAYES
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

DOLORES J. HARITOS
Editor
5 Elmbrook Road
Bedford, MA 01730-1810
781-275-0478
peterharitos@verizon.net

BONNIE HENSEL
Memorabilia Chairperson
317 Bristol Drive, Apt. C
York, PA 17403
717-848-9546
bjhnewstart@hotmail.com

DEVON POWELL
Historian
10382 Green Mountain Circle
Columbia, MD 21044
240-398-8018
98thbg.historian@gmail.com

Message from Bill Seals . . .



Our Last Issue?

Hopefully, this will not be the last issue of this newsletter that you will receive. It is however, the last one that will be edited by Dolores Haritos. Starting with the May 2007 issue, we were fortunate to have had the finest editor of a Veterans' newsletter, period! She has given generously of her time and talent despite health issues and other demands upon her time. She has been ably assisted by her husband and "computer guru"

Pete who has had his own health problems. Unfortunately, their health issues are demanding so much of their time that they simply are not able to continue doing the newsletter full time. To our good fortune, they have volunteered to contribute articles as they are able so we can look forward to enjoying their craftsmanship in the future. We all owe Dolores and Pete our heartfelt thanks.

A few years ago in this space I wrote that I would do whatever was necessary to keep this newsletter alive. Well, the time has come to put my money (actions) where my mouth was. Unless some nice soul comes forward to take the editor's job, I will try to do it starting with the November issue. Inevitably the quality of the editorship will suffer, but hopefully you will continue to find the newsletter both interesting and readable. Any suggestions for improvement will be happily accepted.

By the time you read this it will be time to start thinking about packing for our reunion. If you are able to attend, please come. I'll promise you'll have a great time and be glad you came. Hope to see all of you there.

continued on page 2

For the Record . . . Membership Update

Deceased

| LAST NAME | FIRST | MI | ADDRESS | CITY | ST | ZIP | AC | SQD | DOD |
|--------------|----------------------------|----|-------------------------|------------------|----|------------|------|-----|-----------|
| Edwards | Robert | D. | 1018 Eastview Dr | Jacksonville | AR | 72076-6049 | B-29 | 344 | 6/22/2012 |
| Grady | James (Lt Col ret) | H. | 684 Private Rd 2704 | London | AR | 72847-8226 | B-47 | 345 | 4/15/2012 |
| Honeycutt | Robert | H. | 112 Beech St | Rossville | GA | 30741 | B-24 | 344 | 4/30/2012 |
| Kidd | Terry | L. | 4480 N Cactus Rd | Apache Junction | AZ | 85219-9424 | B-29 | 345 | 1/25/2012 |
| Leonardini | Silvio | A. | 14 North Fairmont Ave. | Lodi | CA | 95240-2810 | B-24 | 344 | 4/11/2012 |
| Morey | David | A. | 2803 East Harrison #165 | Harlington | TX | 78550-5486 | B-24 | 344 | 5/11/2012 |
| Staudenmeier | Louis | J. | 1137 Race St | Ashland | PA | 17921-1224 | B-24 | 343 | 6/24/2012 |
| Wright | Wade | N. | 3105 Blackhawk St | Aurora | CO | 80011 | B-24 | 344 | 4/8/2011 |
| Pettigrew | Mary Ellen (Mrs Wesley) | | 1540 Kenland Ct | Colorado Springs | CO | 80915-1450 | B-24 | 415 | 3/29/2012 |
| Webber | Bonna Mae (Mrs Don) | | 3819 Laurel Ct | Saint Paul | MN | 55122-1622 | B-24 | 345 | 4/4/2012 |

Address Changes

| LAST NAME | FIRST | MI | ADDRESS | CITY | ST | ZIP | AC | SQD | CLASS |
|------------|--------------------|----|-------------------------------|---------------|----|------------|------|-----|-----------|
| Davis | Donald (Lt Col) | V. | 109 N Keene St Apt 331 | Columbia | MO | 65201-6896 | B-47 | 345 | |
| Havelaaria | Marion | H. | PO Box 1440 | Hallsville | TX | 75650-1440 | B-29 | 345 | |
| Lyons | George (Danny) | J. | 1146 N Central Ave PMB 355 | Glendale | CA | 91202-2506 | B-24 | 343 | |
| Van White | Harold | V. | 128 Dill St SE | Huntsville | AL | 35801-1803 | | | |
| Connors | Mrs. Rose Marie | | 2921 Bryer Ridge Ct | Export | PA | 15632-9394 | B-24 | 343 | Honorary |
| Diehl | Mrs. June | | 308 W 6th St | Milledgeville | IL | 61051-9120 | B-24 | 345 | Honorary |
| Homey | Mrs. Lolita | M. | 33400 Kuhio Hwy Apt C104 | Lihue | HI | 96766-1060 | B-24 | 415 | Honorary |
| DiPietro | Elisa | | 427 E Main St Apt 327 | Batavia | NY | 14020-2530 | B-29 | 344 | Associate |
| Miller | Rita | | 551 Aspen Glen Dr | Cincinnati | OH | 45244 | B-29 | 344 | Associate |
| Schinsing | Simone | | 227 S Fire Opal St | Ridgecrest | CA | 93555 | B-29 | 345 | Associate |

President's Message

continued from page 1

It will also be getting close to election time. Please remember to vote. Either you, or someone you loved,

paid the price to assure you and others would have the opportunity to do so.

With Warmest Regards,

Bill Seals, President

Message from the Secretary/Treasurer

Hello. It's hard to believe August is almost here and before you know it our Colorado Springs Reunion will be here! This is a place I've never been, but I remember how much my Dad enjoyed the Reunion he attended there with my Mother, so I am really looking forward to it. I feel somewhat this is a 'touchstone' for this organization—to think of the men of the past while looking towards the future of today's Air Force. Of course, the fact of seeing so many dear friends makes it that much better!

Since our last edition we have a new **Scholarship Award** recipient, who will bring honor to the memory of those who made this possible, past and present; and hopefully share their stories and legacy. The Scholarship Program is a wonderful thing this organization should be proud of. Many thanks to John Fornwalt, Founding President, for suggesting we needed to do this! In my mind, John is a fine example of a man who represents the character of the 'Greatest Generation'.

I was very saddened to recently learn we had lost so many of our own, including another of that Greatest Generation, Louis Staudenmeier. I was fortunate

to get to meet and know him along with his lovely wife, Winn, at several reunions. A B-24 gunner, he participated in the raids over the Ploesti oil refineries in Romania. Lou's plane was shot down over Hungary in 1944 on return from his 50th mission. He was captured and interrogated by the local Hungarian authorities and turned over to the German forces. Ultimately he was transferred and imprisoned at Stalag Luft IV in what is now part of Poland. In February 1945, he and the other prisoners were forced by the Germans to march out of camp on what is now known as the "Black March" to avoid the advance of the Russian army. He and his fellow prisoners were forced to march in harsh winter conditions approximately 500 miles in 86 days. They were finally liberated by the British Army in May 1945. Our deepest sympathy to Winn and her family.

As always keep me up to date with any address changes or news of members, and if you have an email address please share it with us. Contact me if you have any questions regarding your membership status. Hope to see you in Colorado Springs!

Susie Mioduszewski, Secretary/Treasurer

98th Bomb Group Veterans Association Scholarship

The 98th Bomb Group Veterans Association's 2012 Scholarship in memory of Sgt. William Simons is awarded to **Cody Gulp** of Round Rock, Texas. Cody was chosen for his academic performance, dedication, leadership and service to his community. A National Honor Society Member, he has already completed 29

college hours as a high school student while working twenty hours a week, and has been accepted into the Business Honors Program at Texas A & M University. His goal is to graduate with a double major in Business Honors, Business Administration and to receive an International Business Certificate while completing an MBA.

When asked what Patriotism means Cody responded "I first think of the founders of our nation and the signers of the Declaration of Independence. They put everything at risk to pursue our independence and establish a government with freedoms like no other. Patriots have been stepping up ever since to maintain these freedoms. I have great respect for the patriots that served our country in the 98th Bomb Group/Wing

continued on page 4

Scholarship continued from page 3

crowding B-24s during WWII, B-29s during the Korean Conflict, and B-47s during the Cold War. Patriotism is also demonstrated by participation in civic affairs and knowledgeable voting at all levels of government. I am looking forward to exercising the right and privilege to vote earned by so many of our veterans.”

The Officers and Members of the Association hope this Scholarship helps to preserve the memory of all the brave men of the 98th Bomb Group, past, present, and future; who put their lives in harm's way to fight for the freedom we continue to enjoy today.

Congratulations and best wishes, Cody, as you begin this new chapter in your life!

The Scholarship Award Program is funded primarily through donations, which are greatly appreciated and can be sent to the Scholarship Chairman, Suzanne Mioduszewski.

Message from the VP

Just wanted to give everyone the old “thumbs up” on Colorado Springs! Yes, the fires were too close for comfort especially to the Air Force Academy. I thought for a minute I was going to have to go out there and be a volunteer firefighter. Although they did evacuate many of the personnel and families from the Academy along with thousands of others from Colorado Springs, it will not impact our visit. I have checked with each of our venues in the last few days and each is a GO for our Reunion. We are looking forward to seeing you at the foot of the Mountain!

Planning Our Reunions . . .

For several years I have had folks ask me about who I/we use to plan our trips.

I have used Alice Hyatt with Tzell Travel Group in NYC for many years. She put together the 98th Cruise in 2005 or 2006, and in 2008 she handled the trip to

Romania for the Ploesti folks. I can't count the number of trips she has planned for other people I have sent her way not to mention all the 98 trips and personal trips she has done for me. As you know I can't recommend anyone but I can share that she is who I use and have never had a complaint.

Alice Hyatt – Tzell Travel Group • 119 West 40 St. 14FL • New York, NY 10018 • (212) 340-0297 • (917) 591-1228–Fax • AliceH@Tzell.com • <http://AIRMARTRAV.COM>

Directions to the Colorado Springs Marriott

Our 2012 Reunion Hotel

Coming from the South on I-25 1) Head North on I-25 to Rockrimmon Blvd., Corporate Center Dr. & Nevada Blvd. (Exit 148) • 2) Make a left on Rockrimmon Blvd. (first stop light) • 3) Make a left onto Tech Center Dr., just past the Shell Station on the right • 4) The Hotel is on the right-hand side.

Coming from the North on I-25 1) Head South on I-25 to Rockrimmon Blvd., Corporate Center Dr. & Nevada Blvd. (Exit 148) • 2) Make a right on Rockrimmon Blvd. (second stop light) • 3) Make a left onto Tech Center Dr., just past the Shell Station on the right • 4) The Hotel is on the right-hand side.

Coming from the Colorado Springs Airport 1) Head West on Drennan Road to Academy Blvd. • 2) Turn left on Academy Blvd. and follow Academy to the I-25 North Entrance • 3) Take I-25 North to Rockrimmon Blvd., Corporate Center Dr. & Nevada Blvd. (Exit 148) • 4) Make a left on Rockrimmon Blvd. (first stop light) • 5) Make a left onto Tech Center Dr., just past the Shell Station on the right • 6) The Hotel is on the right-hand side.

Coming from the Denver Airport 1) Follow Pena Blvd. to Westbound I-70 to I-225 South. • 2) Travel on I-225 South and merge onto I-25 South to Colorado Springs. 3) Head South on I-25 to Rockrimmon Blvd., Corporate Center Dr. & Nevada Blvd. (Exit 148) • 4) Make a right on Rockrimmon Blvd. (second stop light) • 5) Make a left onto Tech Center Dr., just past the Shell Station on the right • 6) The Hotel is on the right-hand side.

Editor's Farewell

Over the years it has been my privilege to serve as Editor for the 98th Bomb Group/Wing Veterans Association. However, the time has arrived when I must attend to other challenges in my life. It has been a rewarding experience to communicate with members of the Greatest Generation and their families. I enjoyed bringing them some information, joy and laughter into their lives. As a retired U.S. Air Force Officer, I participated in a variety of assignments and overseas travel. An experience of interest was in the Middle East at Dhahran Air Force Base in Saudi Arabia. I would like to share a brief comment about that assignment.

As an Air Force Nurse, I was stationed at Dhahran Air Force Base in Saudi Arabia. I experienced life as an American living in a Muslim country. Needless to say policies for citizens were strict and rigidly reinforced. No drinking of alcoholic beverages, no stealing and no religious indication were allowed. Frequently, Muslim anatomical parts were severed from the body for violation of these rules. Americans stationed in this country respected their policies, did not criticize or attempt to interfere with their way of life. As a matter of fact, many Muslims working on the base received health care as needed by the American physicians and nurses. In retrospect, effort was made to be gracious guests in this host country. Although many changes have occurred in the American relationship with Saudi Arabia there is hope that they will view Americans with greater respect and dignity. It was a pleasure to have the opportunity to serve in their country.

I wish for all of you good health and an enjoyable summer season. I urge you to continue to support this wonderful 98th Bomb Group/Wing that continues to offer so much to our surviving veterans.

Dolores J. Haritos, Colonel USAF (Ret)



Medal of Honor

by Dolores J. Haritos, Editor

Americans should be cognizant of the highest military award, the “MEDAL OF HONOR” which is bestowed on those who distinguished themselves through heroic acts above and beyond the call of duty. Due to the nature of the bravery it is often awarded posthumously. These outstanding individuals are the finest example of selfless service to a grateful nation. We remember George Washington establishing the first formal system for rewarding gallantry by American soldiers. He created the “Badge of Military Merit.” Early in the Civil War, 1861, the “Medal of Honor” was signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln.

The primary purpose was to boost morale, promote re-enlistment and to prevent troops from deserting. In 1863 a soldier named William Harvey Carney dropped his rifle and picked up the Stars and Stripes when the flag bearer in his company was shot. He was wounded but never dropped the flag. For his valor Carney became the first African-American to receive the Medal of Honor. Since the Vietnam War only seven have been awarded posthumously. This includes Delta Force sniper Sergeant First Class Randy Shughart and Master Sergeant Gary Gordon who defended Delta Force Black Hawk helicopter pilot Chief Warrant Officer Michael Durant and his crew during the battle of Mogadishu in 1993. Both men lost their lives in this battle. The Medal of Honor was presented to their families posthumously.

For actions occurring since the beginning of World War II, 861 Medals of Honor have been awarded. In total 627 Medals of Honor have been awarded posthumously.

The Medal of Honor has evolved in appearance since its creation in 1852. The present Army medal consists of a gold bar surrounded by a wreath, topped by an eagle on a bar inscribed with the word “Valor.” The medal is attached by a hook to a light blue moire silk neckband that is 1.1875 inches in width and 21.75 inches in length.

There is a version of the medal for each sub-cabinet component of the Department of Defense: the Department of the Army; the Department of the Navy; and the Department of the Air Force. Before 1965, when the U. S. Air Force design was adopted, members of the U.S. Army Air Forces and the U.S. Air Force received the Army version of the medal.

As the United States Coast Guard becomes part of the U.S. Navy in time of declared war, the only member of the Coast Guard to have received a Medal of Honor, Signalman 1st Class Douglas Munro, was posthumously awarded the Navy version for action during the Battle of Guadalcanal. A separate Coast Guard medal was established in 1963 but no design yet existed for it.

In the rare cases (19 thus far) where a service member has been awarded more than one Medal of Honor, current regulations specify that an appropriate award device be centered on the Medal of Honor ribbon and neck medal. To indicate multiple presentations of the Medal of Honor, the U.S. Army and Air Force bestow oak leaf clusters while the Navy Medal of Honor is worn with gold award stars.

A ribbon bar is worn for situations other than full dress uniform. The ribbon bar is the same shade of light blue as the neckband, and includes five white stars pointed upwards in the shape of an “M.” When the ribbon is worn, it is placed in the first position (top left when seen on the uniform) in order of precedence. For wear with civilian clothing, a rosette is issued instead of a miniature lapel pin (which usually shows the ribbon bar). The rosette is the same shade of blue as the neck ribbon and includes white stars. The ribbon and rosette are presented at the same time as the medal.

On October 23, 2002, Pub. L. 107-248 was enacted, modifying 36 U.S.C. #903 authorizing a Medal of Honor flag to be presented to recipients of the decoration.



The flag was based on a concept by retired Army Special Forces First Sergeant Bill Kendall of Jefferson, Iowa, who designed a flag to honor Medal of Honor recipient Captain Darrell Lindsey, a B26 pilot from Jefferson who was killed in World War II. Kendall’s design of a light blue field emblazoned with 13 white, five-pointed stars was nearly identical to that of Sarah LeClerc’s of the Institute of Heraldry. LeClerc’s design, ultimately accepted as the official flag, does not include the words “Medal of Honor” and is fringed in gold. The color of the field and the 13 white stars, arranged in the form of a three bar chevron, consisting of two chevrons of five stars and one chevron of three stars, replicate the Medal of Honor ribbon. The flag has no set proportions.

The first Medal of Honor recipient to receive the official flag was Sergeant First Class Paul R. Smith. The flag was cased and presented to his family along with his medal. A special ceremony presenting this flag to 60 Medal of Honor recipients was held onboard the USS Constitution on September 30, 2006.

1. The Medal of Honor confers special privileges on its recipients. Entitlement to receive a monthly

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Medal of Honor

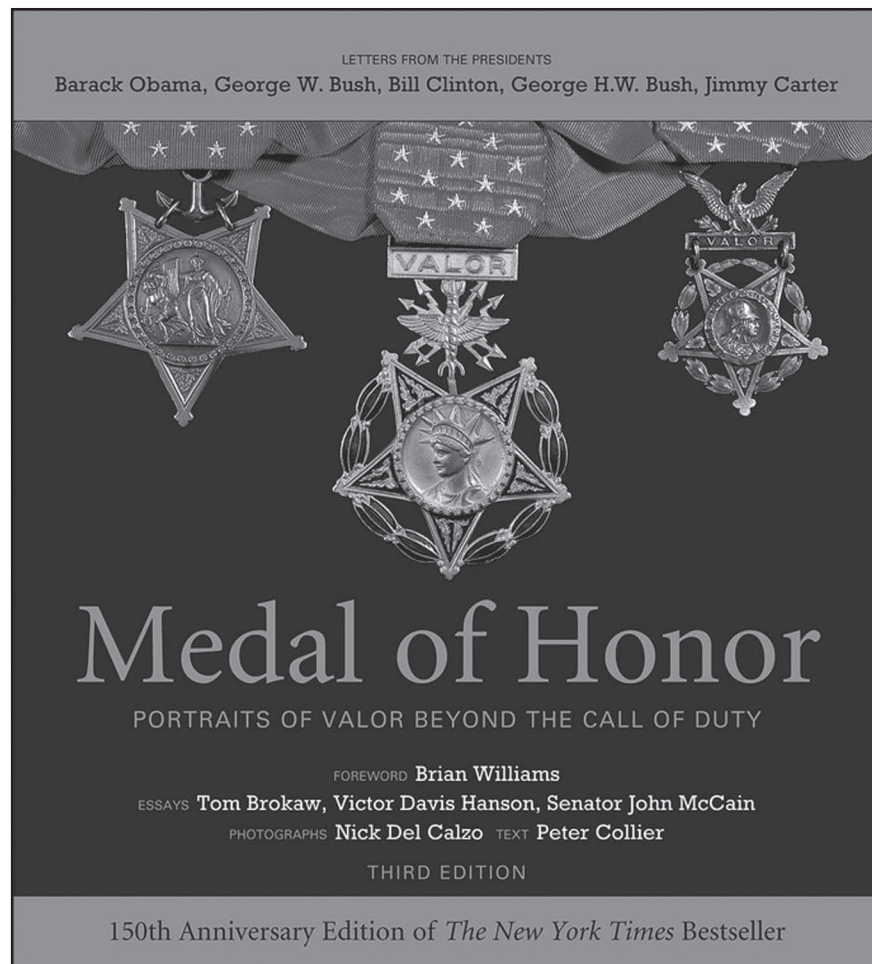
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pension above and beyond any military pension of which he might be eligible. The pension is subject to cost of living increases. As of 2011, the pension is \$1237.00 a month.

2. Enlisted recipients of the Medal of Honor are entitled to a supplemental uniform allowance.

3. Recipients receive special entitlements to air transportation under the provisions of POD Regulation 4515.13-R.

For more on the Medal of Honor, you might want to read the book noted in the photo below. Look for it in bookstores or your local library.



4. Special identification cards and commissary and exchange privileges are provided for Medal of Honor recipients and their eligible dependents.

5. Recipients are granted eligibility for interment at Arlington National Cemetery, if not otherwise eligible

6. Fully qualified children of recipients are eligible for admission to the United States military academies without regard to the nomination and quota requirements.

7. Recipients receive a 10 percent increase in retired pay under 10 U.S.C. #3991.

8. Those awarded the medal after October 23, 2002, receive a Medal of Honor Flag. The law specified that all 103 living prior recipients as of that date would receive a flag.

9. Recipients receive an invitation to all future presidential inaugural balls.

10. As with all medals, retired personnel may wear the Medal of Honor on "appropriate" civilian clothing. Regulations specify that recipients of the Medal of Honor are allowed to wear the uniform "at their pleasure" with standard restrictions on political, commercial, or extremist purposes (other former members of the armed forces may do so only at certain ceremonial occasions).

11. Many states offer distinctive Medal of Honor vehicle license plates to recipients without additional charges or fees.

12. Although not required by law or military regulation, members of the uniformed services are encouraged to render salutes to recipients of the Medal of Honor as a matter of respect and courtesy regardless of rank or status.

When one reads these inspiring and powerful stories about those who have been awarded the nation's highest military honor, one wonders about their rationale and motivation. What does it mean about courage and human nature? What makes a person facing certain death willing to save the lives of others? What is it that gives a person the strength to carry on and endure unspeakable acts of torture under the hands of the enemy and continue to function. If every person, if put into the same situation capable of such action. Is it possible for all of us to be a hero.

Let us take a look at a few of our outstanding Medal of Honor heroes.

Ploesti Raid Medal of Honor Recipients

In 1943 in the city of Ploesti, Romania seven oil refineries were producing oil and gas to support Germany's war effort. A plan was implemented to destroy these fields and refineries as a means to force the Nazis out of the war. The attack took place 1 August 1943, and met with severe resistance. During the raid many aircraft and crews were lost. They flew into flak, explosions, heavy smoke and blistering heat. There were approximately 500 crew members who did not return. Losses were staggering, heroism unsurpassed.

Ploesti Raid Medal of Honor recipients included: Major John Jerstad, 2nd Lt. Floyd Hughes, Colonel Leon Johnson, Colonel John Kane, and Lt. Col. Addison Baker.

Additional Medal of Honor Recipients

Henry E. Irwin While a crew member aboard the aircraft "City of Los Angeles" in the spring of 1945

Ploesti Honorees



Ploesti Raid Medal of Honor Recipients

1. Maj. John Jerstad
2. 2nd. Lt. Lloyd Hughes
3. Col. Leon Johnson
4. Col. John Kane
5. Lt. Col. Addison Baker

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Medal of Honor

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Henry “Red” Irwin was severely burned. During a combat mission he picked up a 20 pound white, 1300 degree F phosphorous canister which exploded in his face and carried it to a window to save the crew. His face was charred beyond recognition. Although severely burned, fortunately he survived. Henry E. Irwin was born 8 May 1921 in Adamsville, Alabama. As a young man he enlisted in the U.S. Army and began his participation in World War II.

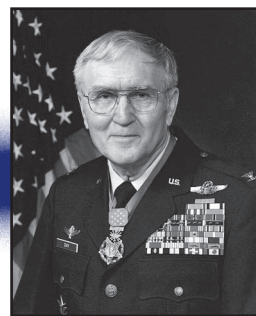
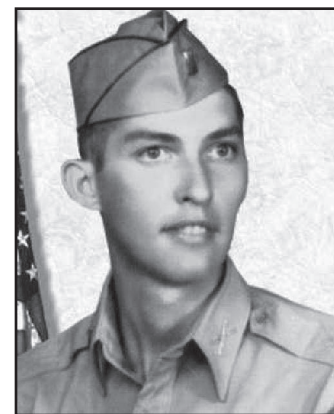
Audie Murphy Audie Murphy rose to national fame as the most decorated U.S. Combat Soldier of World War II. He received every decoration for valor that his country had to offer, some of them more than once including five decorations from France and Belgium. He is credited with killing over 240 of the enemy while wounding and capturing many others. He was a legend within the 3rd Infantry Division.

George Everett (Bud) Day As a U.S. Air Force Colonel, George Day served as a Command Pilot during the Vietnam War and was shot down over North Vietnam in 1967. He was severely tortured after being shot following an escape attempt. They marched him to Vinh, put him in the rope trick which almost pulled his arms out of their sockets. They beat him over the head with a wooden rod until his eyes were swollen shut and his unshot, unbroken hand was beaten to a

pulp. Much time was spent in leg irons in the famous “Heartbreak Hotel.” Colonel Day was born February 24, 1925 in Sioux City.

Van T. Barfoot On June 15, 1919 Van T. Barfoot was born in Edinburg, Texas. In 1940 he enlisted in the U.S. Army. On May 23, 1944 near Carino, Italy, he set out alone to flank German machine gun positions from which gunfire was raining down on his fellow soldiers. His advance took him through a minefield but having done so, he proceeded to single handedly take out three enemy machine gun positions and returned with 17 prisoners of war. And if that weren’t enough for a day’s work, he later took on and destroyed three German tanks sent to retake the machine gun positions.

Daniel K. Inouye Born in Honolulu, Hawaii September 7, 1924, he served as a sergeant and squad leader in World War II. Inouye was in high school when Pearl Harbor was bombed. He quit school and enlisted in the Army. Assigned to the 442nd Regimental Combat team, he saw action in Rome, Italy and France’s Rhine Valley. Inouye was given a battlefield commission as a Second Lieutenant during this period of the war. During one of these World War II battles he was severely injured by a force that virtually tore his arm off. Currently he serves as a U.S Senator from Hawaii.



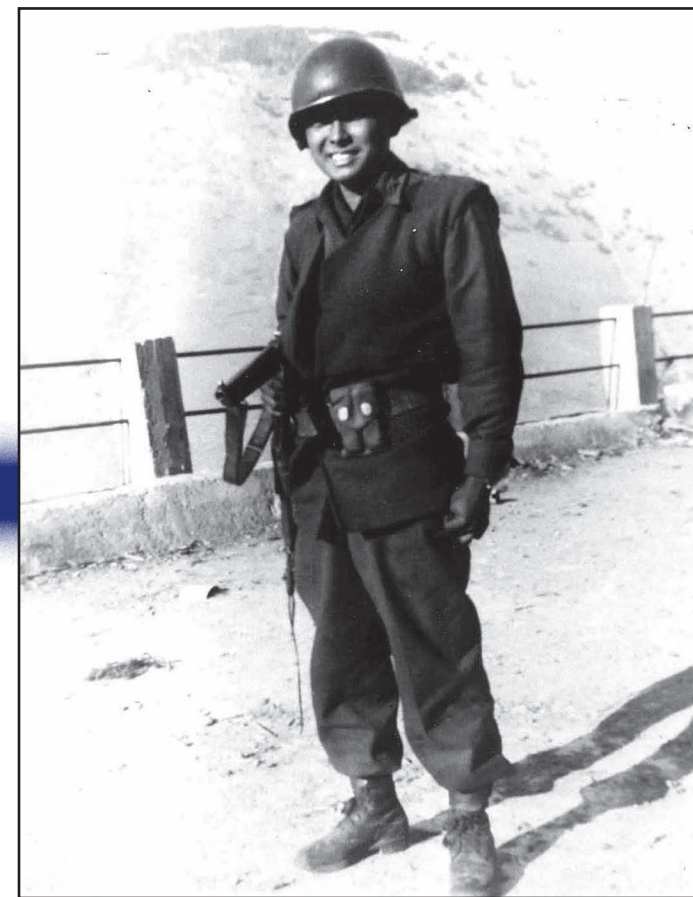
Medal of Honor recipients pictured on this page (left to right) are: Van. T. Barfoot, George Everett (Bud) Day and Henry E. Irwin.



Above: Monument and graves, at the Chattanooga National Cemetery in Tennessee, of the Civil War Medal of Honor recipients in Andrew’s Raid.

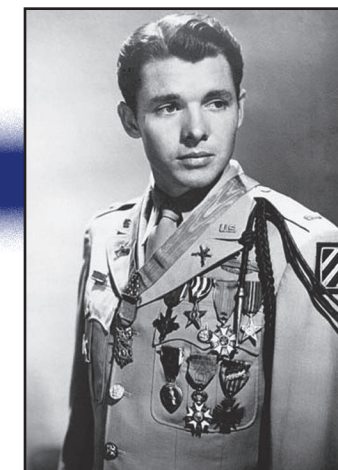


At right: The grave of a recipient at the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial.



At left: Medal of Honor recipient Daniel K. Inouye.

Below: Medal of Honor recipient Audie Murphy.



98th Bomb Group Veteran Inducted into the Rhode Island Aviation Hall Of Fame

Roland Stumpff, a former 344th Bomb Squadron B-24 pilot during WW II, has recently been RECOGNIZED, HONORED and INDUCTED into the Rhode Island Aviation Hall of Fame, not only for his exploits during WW II but also for his Sixty plus years of contributions to U.S. Aviation History.

Roland probably inherited his love of flying from his father, who was experienced in WW I with the Jenny, Spad and Nieuport. On his first attempt to join the USAAF just after Pearl Harbor, he was rejected because he was not yet 18 years old and had not finished high school. After finishing high school and on his 18th birthday, he reapplied and was accepted into the Aviation Cadet Program (March 1942). He got his wings in August 1943 and was assigned as a flight instructor in B-17s and B-24s. He also flew patrol missions out of Cuba armed with depth charges.

When he received his orders for the war zone, it was to be the 98th Bomb Group in North Africa. Flying a new B-24, he took the Southern Route from West Palm Beach, FL via Trinidad to Tunisia where the 344th B.S. was at the time. His crew flew some missions out of Tunis before moving to Italy. On June 24th, his tenth mission, to Ploesti his B-24, SKY WOLF S/N 42-73136, was hit by flak over the target and lost two engines. He nursed the aircraft as far as he could and finally with wounded aboard had to make a crash landing. All crew members survived and were taken prisoners by the Bulgarians and interned at the Shumen, Bulgaria POW camp. Unfortunately with the name of STUMPPFF (obviously German), Roland was subjected to continuous interrogation and physical abuse by his German captors. Shumen POW Camp was also the temporary home of other 98th prisoners.

Roland later went back to Bulgaria as a witness for the OSS regarding War Crimes against the Germans.

After returning to the United States, Roland was assigned to a B-25 group as engineering officer and test pilot. On VE Day, he was flying a B-25 out of Albany Georgia. When he heard the news, the Germans had surrendered and the war in Europe was over, he was so excited that he did three barrel rolls at 800 feet. He was arrested and confined to quarters. However, probably he was not convicted because of some people he knew in high places.

After the war, he continued to fly with several national guard units including F-80s with the New York ANG. Eventually he went to Cornell University graduating with an engineering degree and working with diverse companies such as Corning Glass and ITT Europe.

Roland is retired with his wife Marjorie in Riverside, RI. He is an accomplished glider and sail plane pilot, a Colonel in the Confederate Air Force and has flown the Texan T-6 in the "Missing Man Formation." Roland worked extensively with the Collings Foundation in the restoration of The All American, the only fully restored B-24 in the world still flying. NOTE: The Confederate Air Force Liberator was an LB-30, not a B-24.

We congratulate Roland Stumpff for his much richly deserved honor. The above report was compiled from OFFICIAL AIR FORCE DOCUMENTS, RHODE ISLAND AVIATION HALL OF FAME, and personal correspondence and talks with Mr. Stumpff, whom I have known for more than 25 years.

Herb Harper

former Historian, 98th Bomb Group Vets. Assoc.

Celebrate It While You Can...

Today is Band of Brothers' Day

"You may have served in Combat or in noncombat. You may have retired out or you may have served for a short time. You may have been a draftee or a volunteer. You may have served in the Corps, Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard or the Merchant Marines, BUT YOU SERVED. You did not run off to England or Canada, etc. YOU DID YOUR JOB HONORABLY and for that I am PROUD to call you Brother. You may have served during Korea, WWII, Vietnam, Persian Gulf, Iraq or Afghanistan, But you served, you did not run. You have a DD214 with those words "HONORABLY DISCHARGED" the two most noble words in the world. Again I am proud to know each and every one of you.

Brother, life is too short to wake up with regrets. So love the people who treat you right. Forgive the ones who don't, just because you can. Believe everything happens for a reason. If you get a second chance, grab it with both hands know this. If it changes your life, let it. Take a few minutes to think before you act when you're mad. Forgive quickly. God never said life would be easy, he just promised it would be worth it.

Today is Band of Brothers' Day; send this to all your brothers, fathers, sons and fellow veterans you know. Happy Brothers' Day!

To the cool men that have touched my life: Here's to you!! I was never a hero, but I am thankful I served among them.

A real Brother walks with you when the rest of the world walks on you.

Send to all your Band of Brothers, because the fake ones won't."

Steve Corbitt, 1 Lt, Team 13, 41st CA CO, Bon Song, 68-69

It's a Great Day To Be a Soldier!

MIRACLE

The following was submitted to our Editor. It has made the rounds in emails, blogs, and web sites. The text below was uploaded to one such site by Dan Sorkin. You can plug the term "B17 1943 flight" into your search engine and come up with multiple re-tellings of this miraculous flight.

The term "Greatest Generation" doesn't mean just people but can be equally applied to some of the finest aircraft designs of all time; the C-47 transport, P-47 Thunderbolt and P-38 Lightning, both superb fighters! And of course the B-24 Liberator, the F4U Corsair (the Navy's greatest carrier fighter), the P-51 Mustang (arguably the finest fighter aircraft of its time) and finally the B-17 who's crews said would bring them home in almost any condition and here's one of those conditions! Tough Bird

A mid-air collision on February 1, 1943 between a B-17 and a German fighter over the Tunis dock area became the subject of one of the most famous photographs of World War II. An enemy fighter attacking a 97th Bomb Group formation went out of control, probably with a wounded pilot, then continued its crashing descent into the rear of the fuselage of a Fortress named *All American*, piloted by Lt. Kendrick R. Bragg, of the 414th Bomb Squadron.

When it struck, the fighter broke apart, but left some pieces in the B-17. The left horizontal stabilizer of the Fortress and left elevator were completely torn away. The two right engines were out and one on the left had a serious oil pump leak. The vertical fin and the rudder had been damaged, the fuselage had been cut almost completely through—connected only at two small parts of the frame—and the radios, electrical and oxygen systems were damaged. There was also a hole in the top that was over 16 feet long and 4 feet wide at its widest and the split in the fuselage went all the way to the top gunner's turret.

Although the tail actually bounced and swayed in the wind and twisted when the plane turned and all the control cables were severed, except one single elevator cable still worked, and the aircraft still flew... miraculously! The tail gunner was trapped because there was no floor connecting the tail to the rest of the plane. The waist and tail gunners used parts of the German fighter and their own parachute harnesses in an attempt to keep the tail from ripping off and the two sides of the fuselage from splitting apart.

While the crew was trying to keep the bomber from coming apart, the pilot continued on his bomb run and released his bombs over the target.

When the bomb bay doors were opened, the wind turbulence was so great that it blew one of the waist gunners into the broken tail section. It took several minutes and four crew members to pass him ropes from parachutes and haul him back into the forward part of the plane. When they tried to do the same for the tail gunner, the tail began flapping so hard that it began to break off. The weight of the gunner was adding some stability to the tail section, so he went back to his position.

The turn back toward England had to be very slow to keep the tail from twisting off. They actually covered almost 70 miles to make the turn home. The bomber was so badly damaged that it was losing altitude and speed and was soon alone in the sky. For a brief time, two more Me109 German fighters attacked the *All American*. Despite the extensive damage, all of the

FLIGHT

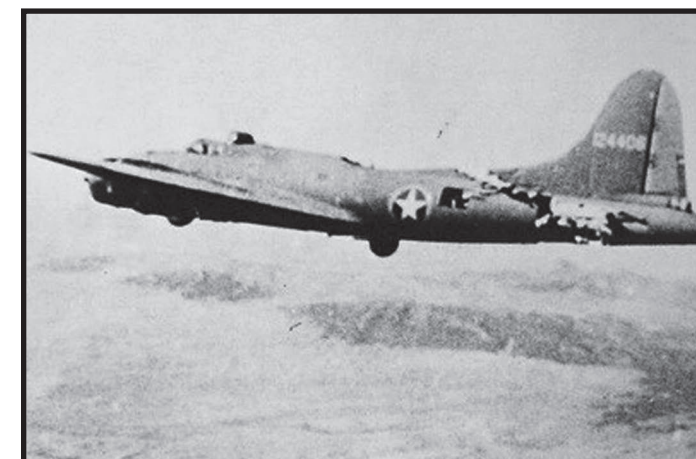
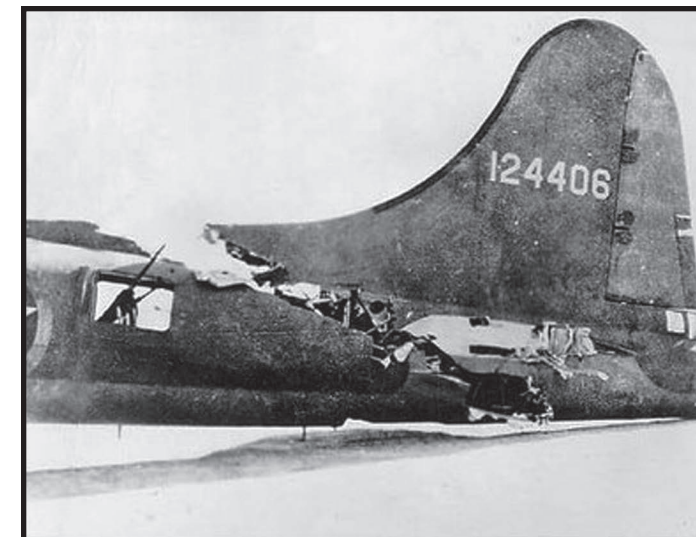
machine gunners were able to respond to these attacks and soon drove off the fighters. The two waist gunners stood up with their heads sticking out through the hole in the top of the fuselage to aim and fire their machine guns. The tail gunner had to shoot in short bursts because the recoil was actually causing the plane to turn.

Allied P51 fighters intercepted the *All American* as it crossed over the Channel and took one of the pictures shown. They also radioed to the base describing the empennage was waving like a fish tail and that the plane would not make it and to send out boats to rescue the crew when they bailed out. The fighters stayed with the Fortress taking hand signals from Lt. Bragg and relaying them to the base. Lt. Bragg signaled that five parachutes and the spare had been "used" so five of the crew could not bail out. He made the decision that if they could not bail out safely, then he would stay with the plane and land it.

Two and a half hours after being hit, the aircraft made its final turn to line up with the runway while it was still over 40 miles away.

It descended into an emergency landing and a normal roll-out on its landing gear. When the ambulance pulled alongside, it was waved off because not a single member of the crew had been injured. No one could believe that the aircraft could still fly in such a condition. The Fortress sat placidly until the crew all exited through the door in the fuselage and the tail gunner had climbed down a ladder, at which time the entire rear section of the aircraft collapsed onto the ground.

The rugged old bird had done its job.



Above: Unbelievable images of the stricken Fortress.

Reunion Schedule • September 10–14, 2012

98th Bomb Grp/Wing Veterans Association

The Secretary/Treasury will post registration times.

Hotel: Colorado Springs Marriott, 5580 Tech Center Dr., Colorado Springs CO, 80919.
Call: (800) 932-2151 for reservations. *Note: Departure date is Sept. 15, 2012.*

- Day 1 Monday September 10, 2012**
 4:00 PM Association Officers Meeting with Hotel Staff
 6:00 PM Cash Bar
 6:30 PM Welcome Dinner
- Day 2 Tuesday September 11, 2012**
 10:45 AM Bus to Royal Gorge Train, one of the most eye-opening train trips you will ever take. Beautiful scenery & unbelievable engineering/construction.
- Day 3 Wednesday September 12, 2012**
 9:00 AM Bus to AF Academy Tour & Lunch
- Day 4 Thursday September 13, 2012**
 8:15 AM Bus to Cog Train & Lunch, the ride alone is more than worth the trip; it's without a doubt one of the most scenic trips in the Rockies (14000 ft).
 10:00 AM Bus to Garden of the Gods & Lunch, Mother Nature at her finest; other than the Canyon's of Utah this is one of the most breath-taking sights we have seen.
- Day 5 Friday September 14, 2012**
 9:00 AM Bus to Ladies Event (to be determined)
 9:15 AM Executive Board Meeting
 9:45 AM General Meeting 98th Veterans Association
 6:00 PM Bus to 98th Banquet at Peterson AFB

NOTE. The elevation of Colorado Springs is 6,008 feet, and the top of Pike's Peak (The top of the Cog Railroad) is 14,110 feet. Also, the evenings can be quite cool and the top of the mountain will be cold. Please plan accordingly.

Questions? Contact: Bill Seals (281) 395-3005 or (281) 415-7392
 Dennis Posey (770) 971-3972 or (770) 826-7237

Photo of our hotel and directions may be found on pages 4 & 5 of this issue.

Reunion Registration

98th Bomb Grp/Wing Veterans Association

Registration Fee \$75.00

Last Name _____ First _____
 Name as you want it to appear on your name tag _____
 Address _____ E-Mail _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Sqd _____ Years _____ A/C _____ Duty _____
 Spouse/Guest Last Name _____ First _____
 Spouse/Guest Name as you want it to appear on name tag _____
 Address if different _____

Banquet Food Request . . . Choice of One (1) Plated Entré

- #1 Orange Horseradish Glazed Roast Pork
- #2 Seared Six-Ounce Chicken Breast with Boursin, Tomato and Artichoke with Lemon Garlic Butter
- #3 Broiled Top Sirloin with Burgundy Mushroom and Demi Glace
- #4 Oven Roasted Cod Filet

Your Choice # _____ Guest Choice # _____

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|---------|--|-----------------|--------------------|
| Sept 10 | Day 1 – 6:30 PM – Welcome Dinner | \$20.00 x _____ | Persons = \$ _____ |
| Sept 11 | Day 2 – 10:30 AM – Bus departs for Royal Gorge Train | \$40.00 x _____ | Persons = \$ _____ |
| Sept 12 | Day 3 – 9:00 AM – Bus departs AF Academy Tour & Lunch | \$25.00 x _____ | Persons = \$ _____ |
| Sept 13 | Day 4 – 8:15 AM – Bus departs for Cog Train, Garden of the Gods Tour & Lunch | \$50.00 x _____ | Persons = \$ _____ |
| Sept 13 | Day 4 – 10:00 AM – Bus departs for Garden of the Gods Tour & Lunch | \$20.00 x _____ | Persons = \$ _____ |
| Sept 14 | Day 5 – 9:00 AM – Bus departs for Ladies Event (Dress Cute) | \$20.00 x _____ | Persons = \$ _____ |
| | Registration Fee | \$75.00 x _____ | Persons = \$ _____ |
| | Annual Dues | \$15.00 x _____ | Persons = \$ _____ |
| | Total | | \$ _____ |

Make checks payable to: **98th Bomb Grp/Wing Veterans Association**

Please return completed registration form & check to: Ms. Suzanne (Simons) Miodusezwski
 1137 Joyce Lane
 Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Just a Common Soldier

(or *A Soldier Died Today*) by A. Lawrence Vaincourt

He was getting old and paunchy and his hair was falling fast,
And he sat around the Legion, telling stories of the past
Of a war that he had fought in and the deeds that he had done,
In his exploits with his buddies; they were heroes, every one.

And tho' sometimes, to his neighbors, his tales became a joke,
All his Legion buddies listened, for they knew whereof he spoke.
But we'll hear his tales no longer for old Bill has passed away,
And the world's a little poorer, for a soldier died today.

He will not be mourned by many, just his children and his wife,
For he lived an ordinary and quite uneventful life.
Held a job and raised a family, quietly going his own way,
And the world won't note his passing, though a soldier died today.

When politicians leave this earth, their bodies lie in state,
While thousands note their passing and proclaim that they were great.
Papers tell their whole life stories, from the time that they were young,
But the passing of a soldier goes unnoticed and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution to the welfare of our land
A guy who breaks his promises and cons his fellow man?
Or the ordinary fellow who, in times of war and strife,
Goes off to serve his Country and offers up his life?

A politician's stipend and the style in which he lives
Are sometimes disproportionate to the service that he gives.
While the ordinary soldier, who offered up his all,
Is paid off with a medal and perhaps, a pension small.

It's so easy to forget them for it was so long ago,
That the old Bills of our Country went to battle, but we know
It was not the politicians, with their compromise and ploys,
Who won for us the freedom that our Country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger, with your enemies at hand,
Would you want a politician with his ever-shifting stand?
Or would you prefer a soldier, who has sworn to defend
His home, his kin and Country and would fight until the end?

He was just a common soldier and his ranks are growing thin,
But his presence should remind us we may need his like again.
For when countries are in conflict, then we find the soldier's part

Is to clean up all the troubles that the politicians start.
If we cannot do him honor while he's here to hear the praise,
Then at least let's give him homage at the ending of his days.
Perhaps just a simple headline in a paper that would say,
Our Country is in mourning, for a soldier died today.

FREEDOM *Is Not Free*

This poem was written by Kelly Strong when he was still in high school. It was inspired by his father, a career marine. Kelly Strong later became a Commander in the U.S. Coast Guard.

I watched the flag pass by one day,
It fluttered in the breeze;
A young Marine saluted it,
And then he stood at ease.

I looked at him in uniform,
So young, so tall, so proud;
With hair cut square and eyes alert,
He'd stand out in any crowd.

I thought... how many men like him
Had fallen through the years?
How many died on foreign soil?
How many mothers' tears?

How many pilots' planes shot down
How many died at sea
How many foxholes were soldiers' graves
No, Freedom is not Free.

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Freedom Is Not Free

continued from previous page

I heard the sound of Taps one night,
When everything was still;
I listened to the bugler play,
And felt a sudden chill;

I wondered just how many times
That Taps had meant "Amen"
When a flag had draped a coffin
Of a brother or a friend;

I thought of all the children,
Of the mothers and the wives,
Of fathers, sons and husbands.
With interrupted lives.

I thought about a graveyard
At the bottom of the sea,
Of unmarked graves in Arlington.
No. Freedom is not Free!



I Pledge Allegiance to the Flag, of the United States of America, and to the Republic, for which It Stands, One Nation under God, Indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for All!