



A Tribute From Our Grand Parents

The design for this living picture was laid out at the drill grounds at Camp Dodge, IN, situated near the Des Moines River. White tape was fastened to the ground to form the outline on which 18,000 the soldiers were marched to their respected positions.

In this body of soldiers are hundreds of foreign born – born of parents whose first impression of the Land of Freedom and Promise was a statue holding a beacon of light of liberty – The Statue of Liberty. Side by side with native sons these men, with unstinted patriotism, now offer to sacrifice not only their liberty but even life itself for our beloved country.

On the day this photo was taken it was extremely hot, only to be intensified by the mass formation of soldiers. The dimensions of the plating of the photo seem astonishing. A camera was placed on a high tower. From the nearest position of the camera occupied by COL Newman and his staff, to the last man at



STATUERE TALL: Titled "Statue of Liberty" this image was taken at Camp Dodge in Iowa and used as the cover of a book.

the tip of the torch was 1,235 feet, nearly a quarter mile. The appended figures will give an adequate idea of actual ground measurements.

Incredible as it seems there are twice the number of men in the flame of the torch as the whole remaining design, while there are eight times as many in the arm, torch and flame as in all the rest of the figure. It must be noted that the right thumb is five feet longer than the left hand, while the right arm, torch and flame is eight times the length of the body.

Base to shoulder: 150 feet, Right arm: 340 feet, Widest part of arm holding torch: 12-1/2 feet, Right thumb: 35 feet, Thickest part of the body: 29 feet, Left hand (length): 30 feet, Tablet in left hand: 27 feet, Face: 60 feet, Nose: 21 feet, Longest spike in crown: 70 feet, Flame on torch: 600 feet, Torch and flame combined: 980 feet, Number of men in flame of torch: 12,000, Number of men in torch: 2,800, Number of men in right arm: 1,200, Number of men in body, head and balance of figure: only 2,000.

Newsletter and Website Updates

“Skip” Pochowski developing a Alumni website and would like to hear from our members on what they would like to see a on the site. Recommendations can be sent to him at : ppochowski@wi.rr.com.

We are still looking into sending out electronic newsletter in lieu of the paper version. This was brought up in the last newsletter, but to

date I only received four requests out of 194 members. Please let me know at 84th alumni@charter.net, by mail or by phone.

This is your association, all we are asking is a little input from its members. It is hard to lead an organization of almost 200 members when we only hear from a small handful of members.

Fort McCoy Celebrates it's 100th Anniversary

Fort McCoy will commemorate its 100th anniversary (1909-2009), with special activities and events throughout the year. “It is certainly a significant milestone event for any military installation,” Linda Fournier, Fort McCoy PAO officer said. "Our yearlong commemoration will be a chance for us all to reflect back upon the many events that have shaped our installation's history, and it will be an opportunity to look forward to our next 100 years of service to our nation."

Several special activities commemorating the 100th anniversary of Fort McCoy will be included in regularly scheduled events at the installation, including the Armed Forces Day Open House (May 16) and Army Birthday/Flag Day June 14 (June 12, installation celebration; and June 13, special public celebration).

More information about these events will be released at a later date. Questions can be directed to the PAO at (608) 388-2407.

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Presidents Comments

Your Board of Directors met on 21 January 2009 and made some decisions concerning this year's schedule of events. The annual Dining In will be held on 25 April, same place, same time, etc. Wait...Not etc. What is not the same is the format, if you will, for the evening. In previous years, we have all enjoyed the efforts of Mr./Ms. Vice in maintaining the orderly process, and assisting the attendees with income redistribution. It occurred to the Board that this way to spend the evening may have run its course. And so, on at least a test basis for this year, no Mr./Ms. Vice, no fines if your ID card is the wrong color, or if you leave the dining area without requesting permission. We are retaining certain aspects of the event, rendering, we hope, an appropriate military air to the proceedings. In any case, please spread the word to those who may have been hesitant to come and join us in years past due to the concern over how the proceedings were conducted. This year, it's a night out with

friends. Period! Our guest speaker for the evening will be comedy stylings of LTC (R) Tom Vandenoorn.

Other than the dining in, please mark your calendars for 17 June 2009, the date of the annual meeting of the membership, and 12 September 2009 for the steak fry. Both events will be held at the Stenz-Griesell-Smith American Legion Post, 3245 North 124th Street, Brookfield. We are attempting to enlist individuals knowledgeable in the TRICARE and retirement benefit process to talk with us in June.

A final note...Please let me know your wants and needs from this association. I can be reached at 414-577-1728, or mqnpapa@yahoo.com. Thanks for your attention.

Bill McKeown, Colonel (Retired)

President

Vice President's Comments

Conversation with an 84th Division Supporter

On January 22nd, Bill McKeown and I spent two hours talking with Martha Krantzthor Osvat.

A diminutive energetic 80+ year old, Ms Osvat wanted to learn more about the 84th Division Alumni Association. Why you ask? As a teenager she was liberated from a 'work camp' by elements of the 84th Infantry Division in April 1945.

Her story is not unlike thousands of other displaced people who by accident of birth became enemies of the Third Reich.

Born in Transylvania as part of an affluent family of bankers and industrialists, she lived a very positive life. With the onset of World War II and the German occupation, life became difficult and the family needed to sell the family piano to make ends meet. An SA officer, the paramilitary arm of the Nazi Party, visited the house under the pretense of buying the piano. He asked for a tour and was impressed by the art and quality of her parent's home. He assured her, he would be back tomorrow with the money for the piano.

He did arrive the next day with a truck but not to transport the piano but the family to the "Ghetto". This was the start of a long journey from her home, to Poland, to Auschwitz, and finally to an SS work camp where she and her mother made components for V1 and V2 rockets. Her skills as a musician at playing the piano and the accordion served her well and aided in her and her mother's survival. After working in the factory during the day, they entertained their

guards at night. The SS women guards kept them fed for their entertainment 'value'.

Her tale of survival is outlined in one of her many poems that we were honored to be allowed to read. She authored a book in 1997 titled "Pulse of the Vineyards". She has since decided to compile a series of poems for a second work that is yet unnamed.

Ms. Osvat's tale of survival was one that was both sad yet uplifting. Not once in our two hour conversation was there a hint of negativity. She found and conveyed the sunny side of what could be described as a very dark street. She has a PhD in Psychology, she has learned to cope.

She talked of her liberation, of the generosity of the 84th Infantry Division soldiers and how she worked as an interpreter for the Germans then the Allies, beginning with the Americans and then later, the French. She speaks six languages. She spoke of the difficulties of returning to her home now in Hungary under communist rule.

Four families now occupied her home but she and her mother were able to get the main bedroom back. She said with a smile that; "the bathtub was filled with potatoes. The families were not very sophisticated and did not know what a bathtub was for." This wry positive humor made the time fly past.

Ms Osvat has agreed to join us for the April Dining In. Please join us in welcoming her on April 25th.

William L. Vanasse, Jr., LTC (Retired)

Vice-President

Remember the Army running/ marching cadences?

Here is one you should remember!

Mighty Mighty Army

We are the ARMY

The mighty mighty Army

We ain't the Airforce

The high flying Airforce

We are the ARMY

The mighty mighty Army

We ain't the Navy

The deck swapping Navy

We are the ARMY

The mighty mighty Army

We ain't the Marine Corps

The jar head Marine Corps

We are the ARMY

The mighty mighty Army

The Story of Taps

The 24-note melancholy bugle call known as “taps” is thought to be a revision of a French bugle signal, called “tattoo,” that notified soldiers to cease an evening’s drinking and return to their garrisons. It was sounded an hour before the final bugle call to end the day by extinguishing fires and lights. The last five measures of the tattoo resemble taps.

The word “taps” is an alteration of the obsolete word “taptoo,” derived from the Dutch “taptoe.” Taptoe was the command — “Tap toe!” — to shut (“toe to”) the “tap” of a keg.

The revision that gave us present-day taps was made during America’s Civil War by Union Gen. Daniel Adams Butterfield, heading a brigade camped at Harrison Landing, Va., near Richmond. Up to that time, the U.S. Army’s infantry call to end the day was the French final call, “L’Extinction des feux.” Gen. Butterfield decided the “lights out” music was too formal to signal the day’s end. One day in July 1862 he recalled the tattoo music and hummed a version of it to an aide, who wrote it down in music.

Butterfield then asked the brigade bugler, Oliver W. Norton, to play the notes and, after listening, lengthened

and shortened them while keeping his original melody. He ordered Norton to play this new call at the end of each day thereafter, instead of the regulation call. The music was heard and appreciated by other brigades, who asked for copies and adopted this bugle call. It was even adopted by Confederate buglers.

This music was made the official Army bugle call after the war, but not given the name “taps” until 1874.

The first time taps was played at a military funeral may also have been in Virginia soon after Butterfield composed it. Union Capt. John Tidball, head of an artillery battery, ordered it played for the burial of a cannoner killed in action. Not wanting to reveal the battery’s position in the woods to the enemy nearby, Tidball substituted taps for the traditional three rifle volleys fired over the grave. Taps was played at the funeral of Confederate Gen. Stonewall Jackson 10 months after it was composed. Army infantry regulations by 1891 required taps to be played at military funeral ceremonies.

Taps now is played by the military at burial and memorial services, to accompany the lowering of the flag and to signal the “lights out” command at day’s end.

U.S. Army Cadet Command History

The Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), as it exists today, began with President Wilson signing the National Defense Act of 1916. Although military training had been taking place in civilian colleges and universities as early as 1819, the signing of the National Defense Act brought this training under single, federally-controlled entity: The Reserve Officers' Training Corps.

Army ROTC is the largest officer-producing organization with the American military, having commissioned more than half a million second lieutenants since its inception.

Women have been an integral part of the Army ROTC since school year 1972-1973. The first group of females from ROTC were commissioned in school year 1975-1976. Today, women constitute 20 percent of the Corps of Cadets and more that 15 percent of each commissioning cohort.

In April 1986, the U.S. Army Cadet Command was formed. With its headquarters at Fort Monroe, Virginia, Cadet Command assumed responsibility for more than 400 senior ROTC units, four regional headquarters, and the Junior ROTC with programs in more than 800 high schools. Cadet Command transformed the ROTC from a decentralized organization turning out a heterogeneous group of junior officers into a centralized command producing lieutenants of high and uniform quality. An

improved command and control apparatus, an intensification and standardization of training, and improvements in leadership assessment and development helped produce this transformation of pre-commissioning preparation.

Today, Army ROTC has a total of 272 programs located at colleges and universities throughout the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico with an enrollment of more than 20,000. It produces approximately 60 percent of the second lieutenants who join the active Army, the Army National Guard and the U.S. Army Reserve. More than 40 percent of current active duty Army General Officers were commissioned through the ROTC. Of even greater importance is that ROTC trained and educated officers bring a hybrid vigor to our officer corps by drawing on the strength and variety of our social fabric. This reduces the natural tendency of armies to drift into inbred professional separatism. Cadet Command accomplishes this by combining the character building aspects of a diverse, self-disciplined civilian education with tough, centralized leader development training. This process forges a broad-gauged officer who manifests the strength and diversity of the society from which he or she is drawn as well as the quality of strong officer leadership.

Cadet Command is also responsible for the Junior ROTC.

TRICARE USER FEE UPDATE:

A new report from the Congressional Budget Office shows why some military retirees and veterans could face higher out-of-pocket costs if the Obama administration and Congress take bold moves to reform the U.S. health system and to make federal health programs more efficient. Among 115 "options" presented, though not endorsed, in the CBO report, several focus on raising TRICARE out-of-pocket costs for retirees and one for families. Others would tighten access to VA hospitals and clinics, or raise VA health fees, for veterans with no service-connected conditions. Working-age military retirees will find here some of those familiar cost-saving ideas endorsed by the Bush administration to raise TRICARE fees, co-payments and deductibles for retirees under age 62 and their spouses. But other options are new and, if enacted into law, would raise health costs for Medicare-eligible military retirees and for active duty families. One option suggests having the VA health system disenroll millions of current users who have no service-related injuries or ailments.

Every two years CBO presents daring options for Congress and the executive branch to weigh in trying to control federal spending. The new report, "Budget Options, Volume 1: Health Care," is unusual in that it focuses entirely health care, an Obama policy priority, and its arrival is unscheduled. It's also significant that the CBO director who led this work was Peter R. Orszag, President-elect Obama's nominee to be his director of the Office of Management and Budget. OMB is responsible for assembling the president's annual budget request to Congress. How bold will his economic team be? "We are going to go through our federal budget, as I promised during the campaign, page by page, line by line, eliminating those programs we don't need and insisting that those that we do need operate in a sensible, cost-effective way," Obama said in November as he announced Orszag's nomination to join his cabinet. "We're also going to focus on one of the biggest, long-run challenges that our budget faces, namely the rising cost of health care in both the public and private sectors," Obama continued. "This is not just a challenge but also an opportunity to improve the health care that Americans rely on, and to bring down the costs that taxpayers, businesses and

families have to pay. That is what [OMB] will do in my administration." Obama added, "Peter doesn't need a map to tell him where the bodies are buried in the federal budget. He knows what works and what doesn't, what's worth our precious tax dollars and what is not."

Indeed, in the CBO report's preface, Orszag gets special thanks for having conceived the report and being instrumental in its development. Many of its options deal with adjustments to Medicare, Medicaid, private health insurance rules and the Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan for federal civilians. Most ideas are aimed at cutting costs but some would enhance benefits. The 226-page report can be read online at <http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/99xx/doc9925/12-18-HealthOptions.pdf>. Here are some options that would touch military people and veterans:

- TRICARE-For-Life Fees (Option 97) – The military's health insurance supplement to Medicare could see higher user costs. Under this option, beneficiaries would pay the first \$525 of yearly medical costs plus one half of the next \$4725 of costs charged to Medicare. So the extra out-of-pocket cost for TFL users would be up to \$2887.50 a year. This amount would be indexed to rise with Medicare costs. The change would save \$40 billion over 10 years. But CBO said it also could discourage some patients from seeking preventive care or proper management of chronic conditions. So it could negatively affect some patients' health.

- Tighten VA Enrollment – The VA healthcare system would be directed to disenroll 2.3 million Priority Groups 7 and 8 -- individuals who are not poor and have no service-related medical needs. Estimated savings would be \$53 billion over 10 years but Medicare spending would rise by \$26 billion in the same period as elderly among these vets shifted to Medicare. CBO said 90 percent of these vets have other health care coverage. But this change could leave up to 10% unable to find affordable care.

[Source: Military.com Tom Philpott article 31 Dec 08]

Editors Note:

If there ever was a time to write to your Senators or Representative to express your disapproval or opinion on this or any military cuts this is the time.

Goodbye Norm and Thanks

MSG Norm Neitzke, MSG, USAR, Ret., passed away this past 9 December 2008, at the age of 82, survived by his wife Lucille, son Keith and two daughters Jane and Colleen. Norm was an Honorary Member of the 84th Division Alumni Association, as one of "our Greatest Generation Veterans from World War II".

Norm was a Milwaukee native who did not attend his graduation from Washington High School because he was at Army Boot Camp. Norm joined the 101st Airborne Division as a replacement in 1945 and assigned to Easy Company in the 506th Airborne Regiment that became immortalized by Steven Ambrose's book *Band of Brothers*

and was later made into HBO series of the same title. Norm is mentioned in this book on page 261 and also appears twice in the HBO series talking about his experiences.

Norm returned to the United States to get married, raise a family and work in the insurance business eventually starting the Tri-County Insurance Agency. Norm also continued to serve in the Army Reserve and was an alumnus of the 84th Division USAR. Norm and Lucille often attended 84th Division Alumni Association events and was honored as one of our special members.

Window to Reopen for VA Benefits for Veterans Previously Denied

If you are an individual considered by the Veterans Administration a Category 8 member of the Armed Forces who was denied the opportunity to register with the Veterans Administration because of income after enrollment was discontinued in 2003, an enrollment window will reopen. The projected beginning of the window for enrollment is July 2009. Read the following, published originally by *military.com* for more.

VA To Offer Health Care to Previously Ineligible Veterans

WASHINGTON -- The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced today plans to re-open enrollment in its health care system by July 2009 to about 265,000 veterans whose incomes exceed current limits.

"We're pleased to be able to offer what has been called 'the best care anywhere' to many more new veterans," said Dr. James B. Peake, Secretary of Veterans Affairs. "We'll be able to provide these newly enrolled veterans with the kind of timely, high quality health care veterans who already use our system are accustomed to."

The change affects veterans whose incomes exceed the current VA means test and geographic means test income thresholds by 10 percent or less. Congress provided funds in VA's fiscal year 2009 budget to support the new enrollment.

In 1996, Congress established a priority-based enrollment system for VA and a uniform package of medical benefits for all enrollees. The legislation opened enrollment in VA Health Care system to all eligible veterans and required that each year the Secretary of Veterans Affairs

assess veterans' demand for services and determine if the necessary resources are available to provide timely, quality care to all enrollees.

Enrollment for the lowest priority of the eight groups--veterans who are not being compensated for a military-related disability and who have incomes above a set threshold--was suspended on January 18, 2003, although veterans in that priority group who were already enrolled for care were permitted to remain enrolled.

VA originally suspended enrollment for Priority 8 veterans because it was unable to provide all enrolled veterans with timely access to its health care due to a tremendous growth in the number of veterans then seeking enrollment. VA now plans to reopen enrollment for a portion of these veterans without compromising the Department's ability to provide high quality health care services to all enrolled veterans who are eligible for care.

VA's computer systems are being modified to accommodate the changes, and the Department is preparing communication and education materials to ensure that Congress, veterans service organizations, and the public are aware of the coming changes.

"The rule will take effect by June 30, 2009, if the regulatory process proceeds smoothly," Peake said. "We look forward to welcoming these newly eligible veterans into the VA system. VA will continue to monitor wait times to ensure the quality of care is not adversely affected."

The Secret to Getting Highly Discounted Cruise Tickets

The luxury, the excitement, the open sea ... a cruise can be the perfect vacation. Whether a first-timer, or a seasoned veteran, there are a variety of cruise destination and tailored options that can make the trip perfect for you. But what could make a cruise even better? How about paying 75 percent less than your fellow shipmates?

Believe it or not, if you are looking for a cruise vacation at a low price, you do have options. Since 1984, Vacations To Go has helped tens of thousands of people save millions of dollars on discount cruises.

Over the years, the company has built up a special relationship with the cruise lines. Through this unique relationship, Vacations To Go gets the best deals, many times before other companies, and sometimes even exclusives. Here's a sample of what the Web site offers:

90-Day Ticker

Find the best cruise deals at the 90-Day Ticker. This is a complete listing of last-minute cruises on the world's best cruise lines. The site is easy to use and you can view last-minute deals with information on destination stops, port city, ship type and more. It's not uncommon for users to save more than half what they would normally pay, with some cruises selling for up to 75 percent off.

Find a Bargain

If you prefer to book further in advance, or if you have a specific cruise line in mind, you can still find discounted prices in the "Find a Bargain" section. There you'll find a treasure trove of early bird discounts, two-for-ones and other cut-rate promotions, on every cruise line in the world. Special discounts apply for military personnel, police officers, teachers, groups and people who are 55-plus.

Cruise Specials

Cruise lines develop trips and itineraries to appeal to all types of people, and there are more than a thousand cruise destinations around the world. Cruises are perfect for singles, families with kids, people who have special needs, and more.

All you have to do to gain valuable access to this information is sign up for Vacations To Go's free weekly newsletter at www.VacationsToGo.com. Once you've found the discounted cruise you want, simply call or e-mail a cruise specialist and you'll enjoy a great vacation while saving a bundle.

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