



# 315TH NEWSLETTER

Published by  
WORLD WAR II 315th TROOP CARRIER GROUP ASS'N.

August 2007



## 2008 Reunion to be in Omaha!

Next summer Omaha, Nebraska will be the hosting site for the next 315<sup>th</sup> reunion. The Board made the decision just a few weeks ago. Omaha is an outstanding choice as it is just about equal distance from both coasts and all major airlines fly in and out.

As details are now being nailed down, our plan is to stay at the Embassy Suites in the Old Market area of downtown Omaha, which is perfectly located about 10 minutes from the airport. This area is the most popular part of town and includes unique shops, boutiques, pubs, restaurants, and entertainment all within a historic neighborhood. Bookstores to bakeries, art galleries to antiques, clothing to collectables are all within walking distance from the hotel and handicapped accessible.

The presence of Offutt Air Base and the Strategic Air Command gives Omaha many points of interest for Air Force veterans. In addition, the Strategic Air & Space Museum is regarded as the nation's foremost facility of its kind. The \$29.5 million museum is a 300,000 square foot building that includes WWII and Cold War aircraft and artifacts. A unique feature is that visitors have the opportunity to watch the restoration of warplanes as technicians prepare them for display. Their website address is: [www.strategicairandspace.com](http://www.strategicairandspace.com) Check it out to learn more about this incredible museum!

Next to the hotel, and along the Missouri River, is the Heartland of America Fountain with its 300 ft. water jet and light show. Should you decide to cross the river to Council Bluffs, Iowa you can join in on the fun at one of the numerous casinos, all within minutes of your hotel.

A few blocks away is the Durham Western Heritage Museum (an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution) located inside the impressive Union Station, a beautifully restored art deco landmark. Here is an opportunity to explore history with 65,000 sq ft of exhibits including restored train cars, WWII era sculptures and an authentic soda fountain.

What would a trip to Omaha be without seeing Boystown? Mickey Rooney's Oscar winning performance along with Spencer Tracy as Fr. Flanagan, made Father Flanagan's Home for Boys a national landmark. You will be very impressed with the history museum. Tour and see what is being done to help modern day orphans prepare to step out into the world and become leaders in their community. No doubt, you will be impressed! And believe it or not, there are now girls in Boystown as the name has been officially changed to "Girls and Boystown."

Omaha is where you will find the #1 zoo in our nation, the College World Series, and the home of kazillionaire Warren Buffet. But most importantly, you will find your 315<sup>th</sup> friends, all of who will be enjoying the fun. See you there!

# 315<sup>th</sup> TROOP CARRIER GROUP ASSOCIATION

Olmsted, Florence, Aldermaston, Blida, Spanhoe, Amiens

## OFFICIAL NOTICE BOARD

### Message from the President:

This past June, my thoughts traveled back to June 1944. I wondered what it must have been like the day before D-Day, the briefings about the invasion to come, telling the crews what to expect, and getting ready for the mission, which would prove to be one of historical significance. I believe there are still many memories of that day and night that are yet untold, so I encourage any of our members to share some of those memories with the younger generations of the 315<sup>th</sup> TCG Association. In return, I will share with you how I am using some modern technology to try to re-capture a bit of that history.

For those of you with computers linked to the Internet and/or iPods (devices have the ability to play digitized music as well as audio recordings called "podcasts"), there is a five-minute podcast of FDR's D-Day speech and prayer. If you never had the opportunity to hear this very moving and inspirational speech, or you would like to hear it again, the link address is <http://odeo.com/channel/437623/view>. It is an indelible moment in time, as poignant today, as it must have been then.

I also found a website [www.6juin1944.com](http://www.6juin1944.com) that outlined the D-Day mission for the troop carrier groups under the 52<sup>nd</sup> Troop Carrier Wing, including the 315<sup>th</sup> TCG under Col. Hamish McLelland. It spoke of gathering at point Elko and then proceeding across the Channel after leaving the Portland Bill headland. At 500' altitude, the navigation and interior lights were turned off, leaving only formation lights and amber recognition lights. Flying on for 57 miles to point 'HOBOKEN', the aircraft were to turn southwest towards the Cotentin peninsula with only formation lights on the "lowest practicable intensity". The French coast was crossed at point code 'MULESHOE' for the 101<sup>st</sup> and point code 'PEORIA' for the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne. Is this the way those of you that flew these missions remember it?

Finally, I have chosen Omaha, Nebraska as the location for our next reunion. I believe the dates will be May 16-19, 2008, which is appropriately Armed Forces Day weekend. I am still negotiating with Embassy Suites, which I hope will provide an excellent location and accommodations for our members. With everyone's help, I hope to make this a very memorable reunion.

I'll continue with a tradition started by Len Thomas and say, "STAY WELL!"

Jamie Zartman

*The WW II 315<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Group Association publishes this newsletter irregularly.*

*Jamie Zartman  
President*

*Gary Ertel  
Vice President*

*Mary Lynn Schwietz  
Editor*

*Cathy Beck  
Assistant Editor*

## ***Taps***

**With deep regret we record the loss  
of these comrades.**

**(If you were close friends a letter to their family  
would be truly welcome.)**

J.W. Way	309 <sup>th</sup>	3.27.07
Harold R. "Hap" Reedquist	310 <sup>th</sup>	2.18.07
Edward E. Born	310 <sup>th</sup>	11.11.06
William D. McGriff	34 <sup>th</sup>	11.03.06
Woodrow D. Olsen	310 <sup>th</sup>	10.11.06

## ***Treasurer's Report 2007***

### **Treasury Report**

**Bank Balance Dec. 31, 2006 \$5881.49**

### **Income**

Dues	170.00
Sales Items	52.50
Other	<u>11.00</u>

**Total Income 233.50**

### **Expenses**

Family Sports Lettering	<b>94.50</b>
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**Bank Balance June 30, 2007 \$6020.49**

### **Supplies in stock**

13 Caps w/insignias @ 15.00	195.00
23 C-47 Lapel Pins @ 7.50	<u>172.50</u>
<b>Inventory value</b>	<b>\$367.50</b>

## ***New Editor Next Issue!***

The next issue of the 315<sup>th</sup> newsletter will be sort of a "homecoming" issue because Stan Smith's daughter, Valerie, has offered to be the editor in honor of her father. As you know, Stan was the editor of the newsletter for many years. I took over when he could no longer sacrifice the time and energy it took to get this out. No doubt, she will bring a fresh vision to the newsletter and I am excited for the 315<sup>th</sup> to experience that.

I feel I have learned so much from this experience. Writing these articles has given me a perspective I never would have had about my father's years in World War II. He still looks back on those years as some of the best in his life because of the people he met, the places he saw and the lifelong friendships he made. Facing adversity together creates strong bonds. I have been able to experience those bonds at numerous reunions. My brothers and sister feel blessed to be part of the 315<sup>th</sup>.

On page 5 you will find a letter I found this year when cleaning out my father's mother's attic. It was fun to read and it is abundantly clear that even though you faced the ultimate challenge together you guys obviously never lost your sense of humor!

You are a great bunch of guys and I look forward to seeing you in Omaha in 2008!

**Mary Lynn Edney Schwietz**

## ***Dues***

Just a reminder, if you haven't paid your \$20 dues yet this year you can send them to Dick Ford (address on back of newsletter).

Books are still available.....

AIRBORNE TROOP CARRIER Three-One-Five Group - \$20  
SKY BLAZER (George Doll's Diary) - \$17

Postage (New rate) \$3 first book, \$1 each additional book

Make Checks Payable to: Walka Books  
New addresses since Katrina:

George F. Cholewczynski  
2709 Royal St  
NEW ORLEANS LA 70117  
e-mail : walka\_books@cox.net  
Tel : 504/948-9979



An old Italian man lived alone in the country. He wanted to dig his tomato garden but it was very hard work as the ground was hard. His only son, Vincenzo, who used to help him, was in prison. The old man wrote a letter to his son and described his predicament.

"Dear Vincenzo,  
I am feeling pretty bad because it looks like I won't be able to plant my tomato garden this year. I am getting too old to be digging up a garden plot. If you were here, my troubles would be over. I know you would dig the garden for me.  
Love, Papa"

A few days later he received a letter from his son.

"Dear Papa,  
I'd do anything for you Papa, except dig up that garden. That's where I buried the bodies.  
Love, Vinnie"

At 4 am the next morning, FBI and local police arrived and dug up the entire area without finding any bodies. They apologized to the old man and left. The same day the old man received another letter from his son.

"Dear Papa,  
Go ahead and plant the tomatoes now. That's the best I could do under the circumstances.  
Love, Vinnie"

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**If the professor on Gilligan's Island can make a radio out of a coconut, why can't he fix a hole in a boat?**

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Garden Rule: When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it is a valuable plant.

WAR DEPARTMENT  
HEADQUARTERS, ARMY AIR FORCES  
BUREAU OF ARMY PERSONNEL

5 September 1946

SUBJECT: Death of Officer Personnel in Office.

TO : Commanding Officer, 591st AAF BU, 1st MAT Group, Stockton Field, Calif.

1. It has been brought to the attention of this office that many officers are dying in the offices and refusing to fall over after they are dead. This will cease immediately.

2. Effective 15 May 1946, any officer caught sitting up after he is dead will be taken off the payroll immediately, ie, within 90 days. In those other cases where it is clear that the officer is being supported by a desk or other property clearly marked "U.S. Government" an additional 90 days is granted. The following procedure will be strictly adhered to:

a. If, after several hours, it is noted that the officer has not changed his position, the officer in charge will investigate. This will be done in an apologetic manner, of course, because of the highly sensitive nature of officers and the close resemblance between death and their natural working attitude. It is specifically directed that the investigation procedure be done quietly so that you will not disturb the officer if he is only sleeping.

b. If any doubt exists as to the officer's condition, it has been found that extending a government check (ANY KIND) serves as an acid test. If the officer does not immediately, or sooner, reach for it, you may conclude that he is very dead. In a few instances the instinct to grab a government check has been so strongly developed that you will soon encounter a reflex, a spasmodic clutch and a shedding of tears if he misses the check. Don't let this fool you. In time you will encounter several cases and will be able to distinguish quite readily between (1) Dead, (2) At work, (3) Quiet repose.

2. Fill out special form LSMFT W. 16851 (15) copies. Mail the first three copies together with his Physical Fitness report and type of three (3) first aid kits to this office. Several more copies will be forwarded to the messenger boy or janitor of the office concerned. The remainder must be sent somewhere; as any fool can plainly see, it really doesn't matter.

3. In all cases, a sworn statement by the dead man, covering his history of the past ten (10) years must be included. If the dead man cannot write, as is the case of most officers, his signature must be witnessed by two (2) pilots.

4. While awaiting orders for disposition of the relic, push the body aside to any unassigned desk and let the next sucker sit down.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

*Rigor Mortis*

RIGOR MORTIS

Lt. Colonel, Air Corps  
Adjutant

## Letters to the 315th

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To My fellow 315<sup>th</sup> Members,

The other day I was talking to Glenn Todd, the Historian in the 315th ALW. He had been going through some of our old records that I have sent to them. He asked me, "What ever happened to that old flag that use to fly over the Headquarters at Spanhoe and Amiens, that Bill Brinson brought home after the war? The one that he use to bring to the reunions that was posted at the Banquet when you had the Memorial Services?"

I had forgotten all about that myself. I seem to remember that he gave that flag to someone. Do any of you remember anything about this?

**Doc Cloer**

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Graduates of pilot classes of 1944 can join a group known as "Pilot Classes of 1944" which publishes a semi-monthly newsletter. Anyone interested can send annual dues of \$15 to Stan Yost, 13671 Ovenbird Dr., Ft. Myers, FL 339008-5816. This year's annual reunion will be held in September at Minneapolis, MN.

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Dear Friends,

Recently I bought a 3-volume book set (1336 pages) about trainings accidents in the United States (**Fatal Army Air Forces Accidents in the United States 1941-1945**), ISBN 0786421061, written/researched by Anthony J. Mireles. In these years more than 7,100 airplanes were lost in training and transportation and some **15,530 pilots, crewmembers and ground personnel** lost their lives in these accidents. Volume 3 includes an index by name, per date, per tail number and type of aircraft as well as state where the accident happened.

I have informed you before that I am working on Rolls of Honor for every Troop Carrier Group, who lost personnel during WW-II. There is still a lot to do. "One day in the future" these Rolls will be put in a book to be published by the National Liberation Museum 1944-1945 at Groesbeek in Holland.

I had a few names of men who were killed in the United States during training. I checked out the books and found very interesting information about these men, the books gave information where the accident happened, who were in the plane, who were killed/wounded/injured.

NOW A QUESTION TO YOU and I understand that I am asking you for information that happened loooooooooong time ago, but can you advise men who were killed in training accidents in the States, prior going overseas. The books do not give Squadrons or Groups, I hope you can help. Any information is more than welcome, also pictures of the men.

Thank you and greetings from overseas!

Jan Bos  
Dukaatstraat 5  
6532 RE Nijmegen, Holland

June 24, 2007 – Sunday morning

This is "Mrs. Mike" writing (wife of Mike Ingrisano). We wanted to finally get in touch with you about reburials at Arlington of some from your 315th TCG. We're sorry we didn't get in touch with you in advance, but so many other things (travel, reunion responsibilities and just plain life) were pressing. Better late than never, we hope.

We assume you already know about this, but I have copied some Internet information we were sent by e-mail (see page 9), that the downed remains of a 315th crew were identified and being reburied. We then wrote to Jan Bos in Holland and of course he was aware of it. He was the one who said it was a 315th TCG crew.

You may know we live in one of the Washington, DC, suburbs, and so we hoped to go to Arlington for some of the burials, if possible. As it was, we were traveling on June 8, and could not attend that one.

By astounding coincidence, we had an unexpected houseguest that needed to do some research at Arlington on June 13, and we arrived at the exact time to meet Abendschoen's funeral. We were not dressed for a funeral, so stayed back as much as we could. I have never taken photos at a funeral or burial before, but thinking of the 315th, I did take a couple of snapshots, trying not to look like a tourist. Unfortunately, we only have an "old fashion" camera, and we have not developed the film yet. We will send copies of the pictures in the next few months.

I can't say for sure if we will be able to go to Yenner's burial on July 30, but we'll let you know. It just seemed to us that TCG "family" should attend these special burials.

Nancy and...

Valor Without Arms

Mike Ingrisano (316th TCG)

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Hello,

My grandfather died 9-21-1944, after dropping Polish paratroopers near Arnhem during Operation Market Garden.

Recent DNA lab work conducted by the Army has enabled his remains to be separated from a common grave and he will be receiving a long-awaited military funeral in East Texas on June 9, 2007.

I am going through some of his letters to home and came across some mentions of a party he helped plan, which I later correlated with an account on this website from the logs. I also found the name of a real comedian he mentions having a good time with named Jack Sternoff. I'm wondering if you have a way to contact the group and see if anyone remembers Lt. C.W. Biggs (picture on page 9). I (and my family and his son, Cecil William Biggs) would love to hear from any and all.

Sincerely,

Adam Ashford Biggs

972-548-7912 home

469-396-7230 cell

7901 Blacktail Trail, McKinney, TX 75070

## Greetings from Spanhoe....

It was a great honour I could attend your reunion at Branson.

We have decided to organize another Operation Spanhoe next year the weekend of the 13th & 14th September 2008. This time we will be running an Arnhem theme. If any of the 315th veterans or second generation would like to come over we are going onto Arnhem with some British Paras and Polish Paras who flew from Spanhoe. It would be great to have the 315th represented. -- Stephen Barker

[barkersigns@aol.com](mailto:barkersigns@aol.com) Work Tele No: 01780 755514 Home No: 01780 756862

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## For fun... Farmers Wisdom

The old farmer had a large pond in the back, fixed up nicely with picnic tables, a barbecue pit, horseshoe courts, and some apple and peach trees. The pond was properly shaped and fixed up for swimming when it was built.



One evening, the old guy decided to go down to the pond and look it over. He hadn't been there for a while. He grabbed a five-gallon bucket to bring back some fruit.

As he neared the pond, he heard voices shouting and laughing with glee. As he came closer, he saw it was a bunch of young women skinny-dipping in his pond. As he approached, he made the women aware of his presence.

At once, they all went to the deep end. One of the women shouted to him, "We're not coming out until you leave."

The old man frowned, "I did not come down here to watch you young ladies swim naked, or to make you get out of the pond naked." Holding up the bucket, he said, "I'm here to feed the alligator."

*Moral: Old age and treachery will triumph over youth and skill...*

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### SUPPORT A FAMILY:

THE PROSPECTIVE FATHER-IN-LAW ASKED, "YOUNG MAN, CAN YOU SUPPORT A FAMILY?"  
THE SURPRISED GROOM-TO-BE REPLIED, "WELL, NO. I WAS JUST PLANNING TO SUPPORT YOUR DAUGHTER. THE REST OF YOU WILL HAVE TO FEND FOR YOURSELVES."

### Question?

How is it one careless match can start a forest fire, but it takes a whole box to start a campfire?



## 5 World War II Dead Coming Home at Last

The remains of five members of the U.S. Army Air Forces who died in Operation Market Garden in Holland during World War II have been identified and are being returned to their families for burial with full military honors.

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced that:

- 1st Lt. Cecil W. Biggs of Teague, Texas will be buried June 9 in Teague.
- 1st Lt. William L. Pearce of San Antonio was buried April 27 in Louisville, Ky.
- 2nd Lt. Thomas R. Yenner of Kingston, Pa., will be buried July 30 at Arlington National Cemetery.
- Tech. Sgt. Russell W. Abendschoen of York, Pa., will be buried June 13 at Arlington.
- Staff Sgt. George G. Herbst of Brooklyn, N.Y., will be buried June 8 at Arlington.

The men were flying a C-47A Skytrain on Sept. 21, 1944, to deliver Polish paratroopers to a drop zone south of Arnhem, Holland, in support of the U.S. Army's largest airborne operation.



**1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Cecil W. Biggs died when his plane crashed over Holland in 1944.**



**1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Cecil W. Biggs standing in front of one of the many planes he piloted. Biggs died while flying a C-47a aircraft, Serial No. 42-93029, nickname: *Eileen*.**

"Soon after departing the drop zone, the plane crashed and there were no survivors," a statement from the Pentagon said. "The Germans opened the dikes in the region where the plane crashed and flooded the area before any remains could be recovered."

When Dutch people returned to their homes in Arnhem the next year, they recovered remains from the Skytrain's wreckage and buried them in a nearby cemetery. A U.S. Army graves registration team later disinterred the remains, which were reburied as group remains in 1950 at the Zachary Taylor National Cemetery in Kentucky, the Pentagon said.

In 1994, a Dutch citizen located more human remains and other crew-related materials at a site associated with this C-47 crash. They eventually were turned over to U.S. officials.

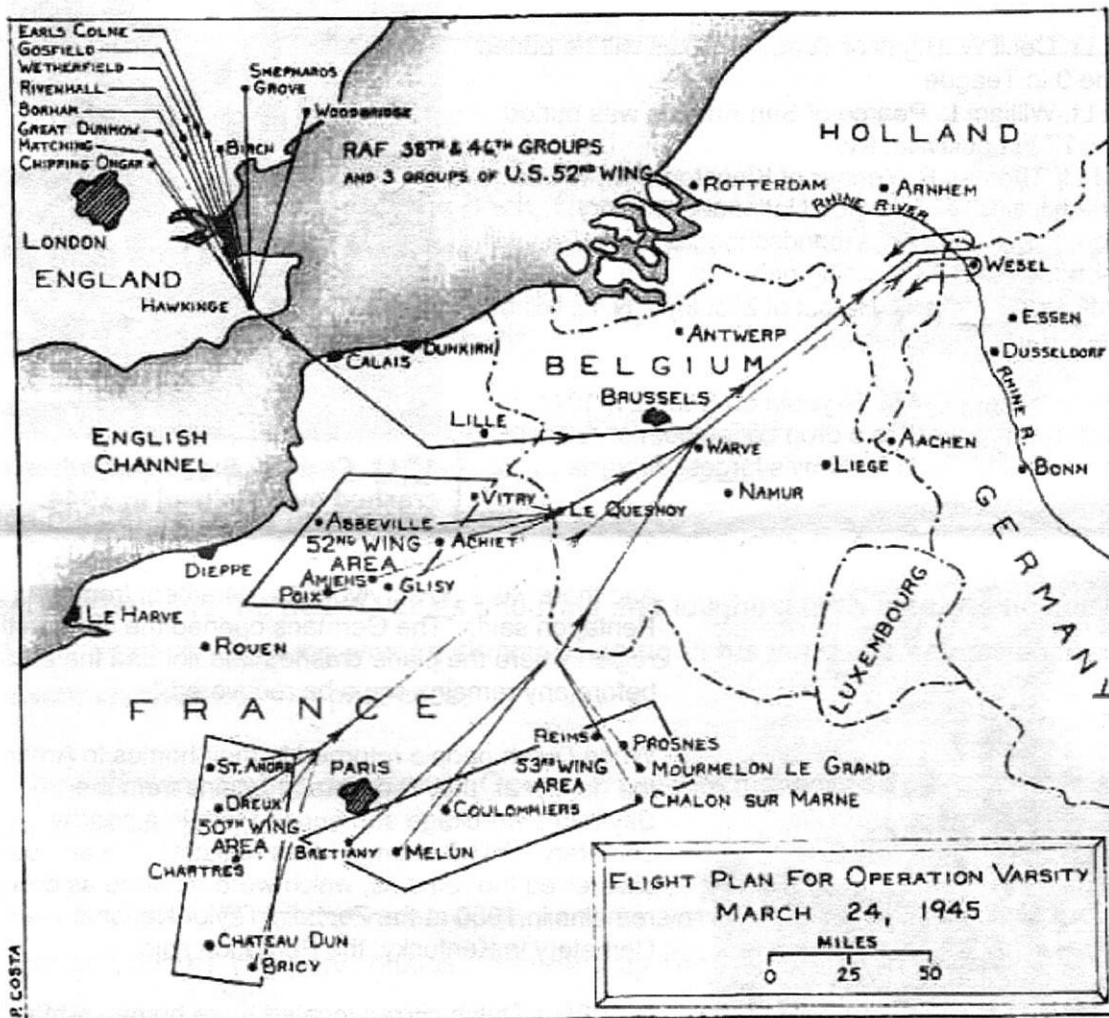
Scientists from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used dental records and mitochondrial DNA in the identification of the remains of these five men.

From: <http://www.fayobserver.com:80/article?id=263594>

March 24, 2007 was the 62<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of Operation Varsity. Many Troop Carrier planes, especially, were shot down. Many young Troop Carrier crews and glider pilots were killed or wounded. If you participated in this operation, Jan Bos would like to record your story.

## Lest We Forget – 24 March 1945 – “Operation Varsity”

The 17th Airborne Division and the British 6th Airborne Division took off from Airfields in France to make the Rhine River Crossing in "Operation Varsity". Some 906 **WACO CG-4A** gliders (with some 578 gliders in a double tow) loaded with men, jeeps, artillery and other equipment with the C-47s and the vulnerable C-46s made the historic crossing. A combined force of 17,000 men was dropped in just over two hours in an area containing 85,000 German Troops. The worst single day in history for "Airborne Casualties" was the 1,070 members of the 17th Airborne and the British 6th killed and the thousands wounded on that day.



How well I remember that day just 62 years ago. We all experienced many training flights and parachute jumps in preparation for the **BIG DAY**. 24 March 1945 was that big day. I personally was assigned to Co A 194th GIR. 1st Sgt Robert Kepler and I along with 10 men and a glider pilot made the crossing in the **CG-4A Glider**. There were two gliders behind each C-47 and we were in the "Short Tow". We were very fortunate with no trouble in landing. Many comrades were not so lucky and paid the **Supreme Price**.

Let us all say a prayer for those **1388 HEROES in the 17th Airborne Division** who paid the Supreme Price in World War II and for our **Distinguished Veterans and Valued Comrades** who have passed on since the end of hostilities. We survivors are all "nearing the end of the road" and must count our blessings day by day.

**GOD BLESS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Sincerely, Del Townsend

## *Fatal Army Air Forces Aviation Accident in the United States, 1941-1945*

During World War II, the air over the continental United States was a virtual third front. The little-known statistics are alarming: the Army Air Forces lost more than 4,500 aircraft in combat against Japanese army and naval air forces in the war. During the same time, the AAF lost more than 7,100 aircraft in the United States to accidents in training and transportation. Such accidents claimed the lives of more than 15,530 pilots, crewmembers and ground personnel, and the stories of their deaths are largely forgotten.

This work chronicles the 6,350 known fatal AAF aircraft accidents that occurred in the continental United States from January 1941 through December 1945. Each crash summary, based on official records, provides details such as crash location and cause, the people involved and the type and number of aircraft. An aircraft serial number index, a record of AAF aircraft still listed as missing, crash statistics and a directory of AAF stations in the United States are included.

### **About the Author**

**Anthony J. Mireles** lives in Calumet City, Illinois.

His book is called *Fatal Army Air Forces Aviation Accidents in the United States, 1941-1945*. (See letter on Page 6 from Jan Bos.)



A man and his wife walked into a dentist's office. The man said to the dentist, "Doc, I'm in one heck of a hurry! I have two buddies sitting out in my car waiting for us to go play golf. So forget about the anesthetic and just pull the tooth and be done with it.

We have a 10:00 AM tee time at the best golf course in town and it's 9:30 already. I don't have time to wait for the anesthetic to work!"

The dentist thought to himself, "My goodness, this is surely a very brave man asking to have his tooth pulled without using anything to kill the pain." So the dentist ask him, "Which tooth is it sir?"

The man turned to his wife and said, "Open your mouth, Honey, and show him."

**AMAZINGLY SIMPLE HOME REMEDIES!**

1. If you are choking on an ice cube, don't panic. Simply pour a cup of boiling water down your throat and presto. The blockage will be almost instantly removed.
2. Clumsy? Avoid cutting yourself while slicing vegetables by getting someone else to hold them while you chop away.
3. Avoid arguments with the little woman about lifting the toilet seat by simply using the sink.
4. For high blood pressure sufferers: simply cut yourself and bleed for a few minutes, thus reducing the pressure in your veins. Remember to use a timer.
5. A mousetrap, placed on top of your alarm clock, will prevent you from rolling over and going back to sleep after you hit the snooze button.
6. If you have a bad cough, take a large dose of laxatives, then you will be afraid to cough.

*Sometimes, we just need to remember what the rules of life really are:*

*You only need two tools: WD-40 and Duct Tape. If it doesn't move and should, use the WD-40.*

*If it shouldn't move and does, use the duct tape.*

**Change of address, deaths, new members, etc.** should be sent to Mike Knight. His address is 1806 Azure Way, Murfreesboro, TN 37128. Email address is: [mknight@bellsouth.net](mailto:mknight@bellsouth.net)

**Annual dues of \$20, donations and requests for caps** should be sent to Dick Ford at P.O. Box 4399 Sunriver, OR 97707-1399. Dick's e-mail address is: [Dickfordfire@aol.com](mailto:Dickfordfire@aol.com)

Anyone who wants to **submit an article** or anything else please send it to: Valerie Smith, 145 N Fourth Street, Grand Junction, CO 81591. Valerie's email address is: [vsmith@cmmn.org](mailto:vsmith@cmmn.org)



Miles M. Hamby  
 6505 Hillside Ln  
 Alexandria VA 22306-6425

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**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

ML Schwietz  
 WWII 315th Troop Carrier Group Assoc.  
 1318 N. 126TH ST.  
 Omaha, NE 68154

