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164th Infantry News: June 2002

164th Infantry Association

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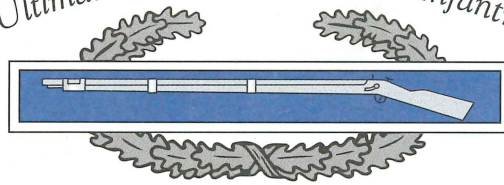
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The Ultimate Weapon the Combat Infantryman



THE 164TH INFANTRY NEWS

Vol. 42 • No.2

June, 2002

MY DAD / SWORDS

My Dad, Erwin Ventsch, was a proud member of the 164th Infantry, Company A. He graduated from Van Hook High School in 1934, joined the CCC's where he worked in Dunseith, North Dakota, and Medicine Lake, Montana, for



Extensive collection of Samurai Swords - Warren Ventsch

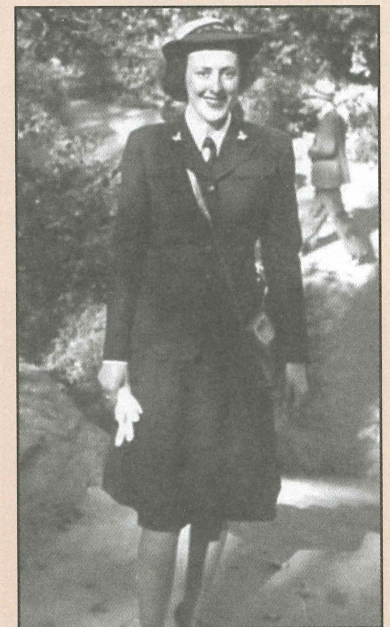
three years. He continued to do farm labor in Homestead, Montana, area until he was drafted in April 1941. Dad was sent to Camp Claiborne, Louisiana, and attached to the 164th Infantry, the "Farm Boys" from North Dakota. You know the rest of the story, West Coast duty, March of '42 on the boat to Australia, then on to New Caledonia, where you were organized into the Americal Division. On New Caledonia, Erwin was a 'Deer Hunter'. (My understanding is they were real deer, not the 'dears' some of you guys were stalking!) Erwin was then transferred to the 'Peep Troops', a motorized unit for quick assaults, but alas, no roads on the 'Canal when he arrived in December '42. He never mentioned much about the jungle fighting, when we kids asked, he'd say, "Whatever I did over there, was for God and Country." After Guadalcanal, Dad was shipped to the Fiji's for R & R; in April '43, he was transferred to the Illinois 132nd and deployed to Bougainville on January '44 for another 'snip at the nips.' Dad was awarded the "Bronze Star" for valor on Hill 260, and rotated home in February '45. Mom (Laura Sevalson) met him at the train in Van Hook, North Dakota, her "Knight in Shining Armor" was

I Was Proud to Serve... in the Navy; and "Joined" the 164th by Marriage

Betty Ratterman, Widow of Sgt. John Connolly, Guadalcanal Veteran, M Company 164th Infantry

As I was growing up, in the years after World War I, everyone was intensely patriotic. We learned it at home, at church and in the local shops and dusty streets of our little community, Glasston, North Dakota, Walsh County, the smallest of small towns in the Red River Valley. Schools, too, were learning grounds of patriotism. We heard many stories of local citizens' military service, their heroism, their battle wounds and other afflictions. We learned from all this to love our country with a passion, above all but God and family. And so, like millions of other Americans who had grown up in those years with much the same values, I reacted with shock and anger, and with patriotic fervor, to the December 7, 1941 sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. And I resolved to do my part, in some way, in what everyone knew was going to be the long struggle

continued on pg 5



Betty Ray - U.S. Navy Training for Navy Dental Corps, New York City

skinny, mustached, yellow from eating Atabrine, and had Malaria. They were married six days later, and I hit the ground about 20 months after that, followed by three brothers and a sister (NOT all at once). My name is Warren Ventsch, (U.S. Navy, 65-69). I'm an associate member, along with my Mother, Laura. We attend the 164th Reunions in memory of

next page

MY DAD / SWORDS continued...

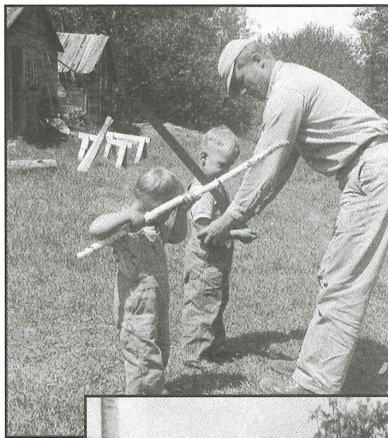
Our Hero, First Sergeant Erwin Ventsch. (Last Roll Call - December 11, 1994) It was at an early age, that I became interested in Military History. This interest has developed into a collection of Military items: German daggers, medals, and samurai swords (I have ten swords). I'm a member of the Japanese Sword Society of the United States, a group that study and preserve the art of the Japanese sword (the older 'hand forged' blades are actually works of art). I can read the Kanji writing on blades, to help identify the sword maker, age and location of the blade. I recently researched a sword for the Anti-Tank Company from Harvey, North Dakota. Once, I asked my Dad, "Why didn't you bring any Jap Swords home from the war?" He replied, "I saw a lot of swords, but I was more concerned about bringing my ass home in one piece." Dad's two brothers, Art and Werner, fought against their own uncles in the "Battle of the Bulge" in Europe; that's my interest in Nazi Germany (there's



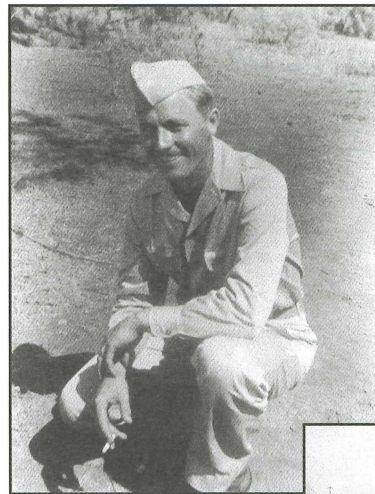
Lt. Col. Al Schuldt and his collection - North Dakota National Guard - Japanese Field Gear - Valley City Barnes County Museum will be on display in the lobby of the reunion hotel

family over there). Lt. Col. Allen Schuldt, of the present day North Dakota National Guard, shares some of the same interests. We would like to bring our collection of Japanese items to the next 164th Reunion in Bismarck for display. We could even put on a 30-minute presentation on the items and swords we've collected. If you bought back a sword, or other items from the islands, bring it along. We could give you an appraisal and possibly some history on your sword. I'd also like to invite you to stop in downtown Valley City on the way to the Reunion in Bismarck, and tour the Barnes County Museum. We have an excellent display of military items, and other North Dakota artifacts. We're open six days a week (year

around) from 10 AM to 4 PM and it's FREE. It's a nice break between Bismarck and wherever. THE COFFEE'S ALWAYS ON...IN VALLEY CITY, NORTH DAKOTA 58072. Warren Ventsch P.O. Box 515 Valley City, ND 58072-0515 701-845-4450.



Erin, the drill instructor

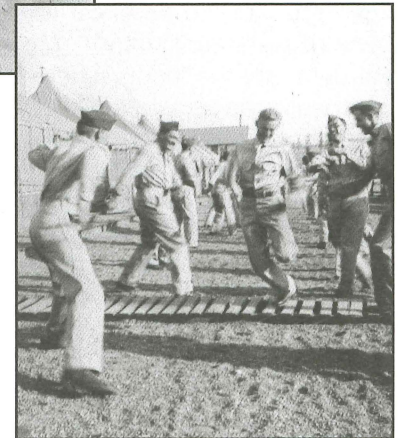


*Erwin Ventsch
A Company*



Erwin Ventsch on right (other soldier unknown) native family Fiji Islands

To liven up your spirits and prove your macho - Camp Claiborne, Louisiana - running the gauntlet a.k.a. as Hot Ass



IT MAKES CHRISTIANS

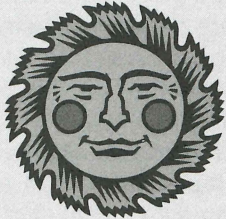
A Fighting Army Chaplain Tells What Happens to Men's Moral Values in the Stress of Battle by Capt. Richard H. Chase, Chaplain, U.S.A. We were awakened at 2:30 a.m. We marched seven miles to our sector of the front, reaching there just before sunrise. In a few minutes the companies were occupying their predetermined positions and the men began digging in. At daylight, Herman the Hitlerite, started hammering our sector with artillery, showering our foxholes with shell fragments until noon, when he transferred his affections to another area. After one barrage in which shrapnel rained all around our shelters, a sergeant dryly remarked, "That stuff makes a Christian out of you, doesn't it?" "Yes," replied a lieutenant fervently, "And I was praying in six different languages." Artillery barrages, bombings and strafings "make a Christian out of you." They send a man to his knees because, as Abraham Lincoln said of himself, he has no other place to go. God is his only hope of safety, since pillboxes, fortifications, foxholes – everything devised by man – have proved inadequate to protect from injury and death. Every day more and more soldiers in my regiment look to God, according to the dictates of their own consciences, for enlightenment, hope, protection and peace. Each Sunday I see in my congregation the faces of men who never attended chapel in the States, men who have not prayed, read their Bibles, or even visited a civilian church in years. In spite of the difficulties of holding services during combat – difficulties encountered by all chaplains attached to front-line outfits – I have found my congregations are from four to ten times larger than those of a year ago. This is a convincing answer to those who want to know whether in wartime soldiers turn away from or turn to religion. Fear, duty and love call these men to worship but, during combat, the strongest of these motives is fear, a fear that acts like a constant goad. Few soldiers are free from it after they have once been in action and seen the devastating effects of high explosives. Recklessness disappears from the actions of seasoned men. Only a fool or a saint is not afraid before going into battle – the fool because of his lack of knowledge, and the saint because he is so absorbed in the welfare of others that he forgets himself and consequently opens his heart to receive the blessings of God. Killing is particularly repulsive to American soldiers because of their education, religious training and lofty ideals. Because no man in his right senses enjoys it, no amount of instructions in viciousness can make the American soldier relish killings; for, as one company commander told me, "When I saw the look of wild horror in that Italian soldier's eyes and heard his pitiful cry for mercy, I couldn't run him through with my bayonet." Most soldiers adopt the attitude that it's a grim task they must perform, a task forced upon them directly by the evil ways of the Axis powers, therefore, a retribution, a judgement. When I consulted a good friend of mine about killing (and he is a steady churchgoer) he analyzed himself and the men in our regiment as follows: "When I left the States for England, I recoiled from killing Germans and Italians. I was ready to do it, because I felt I owed it to my country. If the Army had sent me against the Japanese, it would have been a different story.

I would have had less compunction about killing them because of their inhuman acts at Pearl Harbor and Bataan. I believe that 95% of the men in the regiment thought that way before we fought the Germans and Italians. But after our first engagement and we had lost some of our pals, I thought that if I could kill 20 Germans and Italians, I could not compensate for the loss of one American. I was especially bitter after my best friend was killed. As time passes I am losing some of my viciousness, and I am grateful for this." This analysis accurately presents the attitude of many men. Although it discloses their reluctance to kill, it does not show it as vividly as the remarks of a second lieutenant who remains with rear installations much of the time and has not had to kill an enemy. He said that if he did, he would shoot because it was his duty and a matter of self-preservation. He knew it would be very, very difficult for him to fire at a man, especially for the first time. As he sighted down the barrel, he would be thinking of the other fellow's parents, of his wife and kids, of the unfulfilled dreams he and his wife would have, and how much he must want to get home. Such gentleness of heart is widespread in our Army. It may not be as well-defined as in the above case, but one finds it everywhere. Serving in the intelligence section of our regiment is a Czechoslovakian Jew who fled, after much persecution, from his native land to the United States. He was an officer in the Czech Army when the Germans invaded his country and told him he must go. At the time of his departure from Czechoslovakia, where he had to leave his mother, he was very bitter and filled with a thirst for revenge. During the intervening years, when he joined our Army and later obtained a commission as an officer, he lost his viciousness. At last he had the opportunity to vent his spleen on his enemies, but he found he had no desire. He could take no enjoyment in revenge. He was just sorrowful that people would commit the atrocities committed by the Germans in Czechoslovakia. Pity filled his heart instead of a passion for revenge. Among the forces that drive soldiers to fight in their first battle are patriotism, duty, self-preservation and a love of family and home. Very few start shooting because of a burning desire to revenge or a fierce hatred of the enemy. Usually these passions grow upon their minds after they are wounded or lose some companions. A regimental commander who has seen many months of action found this to be his experience. Of himself he said, "With each passing day I became more and more hateful and revengeful because of what the enemy has done to the world, my country and my friends." One should not assume that he can judge every man's reaction to killing by a set rule of thumb. This is impossible because no two people are just alike. Take, for example, the experience of an infantry officer who is lying in a protected spot. Beside him lay his company commander – dead. He felt heartsick. A German was within range of his Grande rifle, which was brand new and which he had been unable to fire before. He adjusted his sights as best he could, took aim and fired. The shot was ten feet from his enemy. Again he changed the windage and elevation of his sights and fired. This time he came much nearer his target. After a third adjustment, he sent a bullet through the German's head.

"It was strange," he commented, "to sit behind the sights of a gun, to kill a man and have no feeling about it. My chief emotion at the moment was a glow of pride in my weapon." He had been schooled to believe that an M-1 rifle was accurate. Now he had proved it. He experienced no sorrow, no satisfaction for reaping revenge, no excitement over destroying an enemy, just a hollow ache for his dead comrade.

******ABOUT THE AUTHOR:* U.S. Army Chaplain Richard H. Chase is attached to the famous 26th Infantry Regiment, which went through heavy fighting in Africa and Sicily. For his extreme bravery under fire he was awarded the Croix de Guerre and the Silver Star. His home is in Barrington, Rhode Island, where before the war he was a Christian Science practitioner and where his wife and two young sons still live.

*If you want a place in the sun,
you have to put up
with a few blisters.*



— Abigail Van Buren

America Stands Strong

NEVER FORGET

September 11, 2001, or December 7, 1941, or October 13, 1942 (164th landed on Guadalcanal)

It was on May 4, 1942, the first day of the Coral Sea Battle. Some of us who had come over to the Pacific War with Task Force 6814, prepared for battle. We were sure the Japanese were headed for an invasion of New Caledonia on their way to Australia. It was the first major battle since the Philippines Invasion in early 1942, and was termed "indecisive" since there were no clear winners, but the results were: 1 Japanese destroyer, 2 auxiliary minesweepers, and damage to another destroyer, a mine layer, a transport, and a cargo ship. It may have been indecisive for the bean counters, but it meant we were saved for another day. The following battle of Midway, when the Japanese code has been broken, and which was the first of the "Carrier Battles" and one which destroyed much of the Japanese Air Force, clinched the deal on the ocean, and Guadalcanal on the land. It was still a long way uphill, but the Japanese learned we could fight, and in a terrible way. Many of the 164th men in communications sections could hear the American fighter pilots talking on their radios during the fighting in the Coral Sea Battle. The 164th and all other units of the Americal Division were ordered to move into their prepared defensive positions as the Japanese forces were expected to land in New Caledonia. The 2nd BN 164th went into position at St. Vincent's Bay, 1st BN was on

the left and 3 BN at the Tontouta Airbase. The rest of the Americal moved into their assigned positions. The Navy carried out a very tough battle and defeated the Jap forces. Had the Japs won the battle, New Caledonia would have been captured and the supply lines to Australia would be cut. Intelligence reports indicate the next Jap invasion would be the Fiji Islands. Had the Japs captured the Fiji Islands, this with New Caledonia would have isolated Australia. Thanks to the Navy winning the Coral Sea Battle saving New Caledonia. The ocean highway to victory started at Guadalcanal. August 7, 1942. This was the date of the Battle of Midway, which changed the American attitude toward the Pacific War. This was a clear cut victory for the American Navy, and nearly destroyed Japanese air power, as so many carriers were sunk. We still had "Washing Machine Charlie" harassment at night on Guadalcanal, and the massive air raid in April 1943 as we left there for Fiji, but compared with what might have been, we were indeed lucky.

Editors Note: Many of the 164th people in the communications sections listened to the radio talks between the Navy Marine Pilots and talking to each other, about Japanese planes coming in to attack them.

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"Dracula Was a Lawyer"

authors Erin and Jack Mingo
(Conari Press)

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MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

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ahead. Eventually I would find my role. By that time, though, I was far from the familiar scenes of my childhood. In 1938, I had enrolled at the University of North Dakota, but was forced to leave after a year for medical reasons (thyroid problems requiring surgery). Afterward, I was eager to regain my health and get on with my life, one I had always imagined would take me to adventures far and wide. So, with two friends from Minneapolis, in October of 1942, I boarded a Greyhound bus bound for Los Angeles. We were as

excited as if we were about to embark on the Orient Express. thought L.A. was beautiful, and the weather gorgeous. The city was thriving with early war time industry, and employment was relatively easy to find. I took a job with Bank of America in their clearing office. My shift began at dawn and ended in early afternoon, leaving me time to explore and enjoy the attractions of California.

In The Navy

In January 1943, one of my early forays in Los Angeles took me to a motion picture matinee. In those days a feature of every visit to the movies was the newsreels, and on this day the Movietone News included scenes of the first contingent of U.S. Navy WAVEs arriving at Hunter College in New York City. These adventurous and patriotic women were shown in their snappy uniforms, learning to march and preparing to help defend our country by replacing able bodied seamen for active duty. That was all it took. Those movie scenes stirred up in me all the patriotic emotions instilled during my formative years. I left the theater immediately and headed for the Navy recruiting office. Why the Navy? I've often been asked that question in later years. Glasston, North Dakota, is landlocked to the Red River flowing North to Canada, and is the largest body of water near Glasston and Grafton, North Dakota. I suppose those news films must have been very persuasive. Then, like a lot of Midwesterners, I found the unfamiliar naval service exciting and exotic. But whatever the reason, I regarded my enlistment as an opportunity to not only serve my country and satisfy my patriotic stirrings, but also to travel and, as the recruiting

posters promised, "see the world."

Boot Camp

Unfortunately, as far as the travel was concerned, the Navy at that time was not assigning WAVEs to overseas postings. But no matter, there were plenty of locations in our vast country which were as exotic to me then as the lands of the Arabian Nights. I had to wait a couple of months after signing up, but when my orders finally came in April 1943, I learned I was to join a group of women at the Santa Fe Railway Station in Los Angeles and journey across the country to New York City and the boot camp training center for WAVEs, Hunter College in the Bronx, the same one I had seen in the newsreels. There were 40 of us in that group, and all the girls were great fun, very friendly, and from a variety of hometowns and backgrounds. We shared a six-day journey across the country's midsection, getting to know one another, and drinking in the sights along the way. At an overnight stop at St Louis, we even got a taste of the celebrity often accorded in those days to service personnel. We were treated to a large party, sponsored by the U.S.O. It was pretty heady stuff, and we weren't even yet in uniform. But really was soon to catch up with us. We ended up at the foot of Wall Street, at the 125th Street R.R. Station, where we were greeted by an officious petty officer, ordering us gruffly to lug our worldly possessions for several blocks to a subway station. There was no doubt in any of our minds: we were now truly in the Navy. Boot camp was several grueling weeks of the traditional, seemingly mindless activity, but it was all designed to, and very effectively did, shape a disparate bunch of soft and spoiled civilians into passable military personnel. We could not have been more proud at the end of it all when a reviewing admiral gave us high marks.

New York, New York!

But, in the meantime, oh, the heady joy of just being in the Big City (we never heard the term "the Big Apple" in those days). We were given liberty after the first couple of weeks, and headed eagerly into the metropolis. On the crowded streets I remember practicing my still-awkward salute on what seemed like millions of superior officers. And my uniform then (I confess, those snappy outfits in that newsreel had been a definite attraction), still right out of the Supply Depot and not yet tailored, must have been a dead giveaway to my lowly status. I was appalled at the length of the skirt, which hung well below my knees! But I was in uniform, and part of an enormous parade of uniformed servicepeople all dedicated to a common cause, the service of our country. I was filled with pride. Somehow, the weeks flew by as we learned, from long hours of repetitive practice, to drill in fairly respectable formations. When not marching, we were indoctrinated in Navy discipline, rules, regulations, expectations and protocol. We heard what seemed like a thousand times, "There's a right way, a wrong way, and The Navy Way!" We came to believe and accept it. Psychological testing showed I could choose among any number of ratings (occupations); the only

exception was anything requiring mechanical ability (a lifelong disability). I opted to train as a Hospital Corpsman, envisioning myself as an angel of mercy to suffering sailors and Marines.

Corpsman Training

I was sent to the Corpus Christi, Texas, Pre-Flight School Hospital for training. There I learned many basics, such as administering injections (by plunging a needle into an orange). And, oh yes, I learned all too soon of the Navy's fetish for cleanliness... by sometimes scrubbing the "decks" from dawn to dusk. But eventually, I learned enough of the right things, apparently, and, with several others, was given my first active duty assignment: the Navy Hospital at Key West, Florida... with nine days delayed orders in New Orleans! There was no such thing as air conditioning in those days, or any way not

any place I ended up, and in mid-July it was humid and hot in the South. But I and my fellow new Corpsmen had fun exploring the Market and the old French Quarter, where we drank chicory laced coffee and dined at the famous Court of the Two Sisters. Slowly, we made our way across the bayous and magnolia country, and after a bus ride over the low bridges and causeways spanning the aquamarine waters of the Florida Keys, we landed at Key West. (If Hemingway was there in those days, I didn't run into him.) Key West was a sleepy, little village then, but was enlivened by large numbers of Navy personnel. It was very tropical, with gorgeous poinciana trees covered with scarlet blossoms, and lush, beautiful flowers and jungle-like growth everywhere. Our duty at the hospital was overseen by Navy nurses in starched, white uniforms and officer's insignia. I must admit,

I somewhat resented their often superior airs, though I admired them greatly and secretly longed to be one of them. Nevertheless, I was proud at the time to be just a Seaman First Class, and performed my duties with as much dedication and pride as any admiral. But Key West was not to be a major chapter in the story of my Navy career. After being there only a couple of weeks, orders came through nearly reversing my recent odyssey: another WAVE and I, Marie Fields, were to report for duty to the Navy Medical Supply Depot in Brooklyn. Back we went.

Back in New York

Arriving in Brooklyn in August of 1943, we were informed there were no Navy quarters available for us; we would have

to secure our own housing. As luck would have it, my companion lived only a few miles from the Supply Depot, in the Flatbush area of Brooklyn. She took me home for introductions, and I guess I passed, as Marie's mother invited me to stay with the family. (The Navy later did provide a service women's residence right on Broadway, in the heart of downtown New York, across the street from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where I was quartered for about two months. Among other things, my window there provided a lookout from which I watched Franklin Delano Roosevelt passing below in a motorcade, after his re-election to a fourth term as President.) Marie took up secretarial duties, and I was assigned to the Physical Lab. I had to hold my own there with five other sailors, all having higher rates. Our duty was inspecting all purchases of equipment and supplies for use in

Navy hospitals and shipboard sickbays. Among other things, I remember tearing apart mattresses to count the number of spring coils and the fiber content inside. Hundreds of other items also came under our scrutiny.

At "Liberty"

In our off hours, Marie and I took riding lessons in Prospect Park, in Brooklyn, and spent many weekends on "dude" ranches around the City, showing off our "skills." I'll never forget the old Irishman equestrian who trained us; he was more strict and daunting than the toughest First Class Petty Officer we

ever encountered as transients in a Navy Receiving Station. New York in those years was such an exciting place to be young and in uniform. All military personnel were VIPs, wherever we went. The city was ours: entertainment, dining, tickets to all types of events, "canteens" where all the major stars of the day came to entertain us. If you had a nickel for a subway ride, the Pepsi Cola Canteen gave away free hot dogs and all the Pepsi you could drink. I saw Frank Sinatra at his first engagement at the Roxy Theater, where young girls were screaming and fainting in the aisles. (I enjoyed Frankie's performance, but somehow managed to keep my emotions under control.) I remember all this off-duty activity fairly vividly now, but at that time it seemed most of our time was devoted to work, and studying for a hoped for promotion.



L-R (1) Betty Ray; (2) Dr. Gates; (3) Irma Shindler; (4) Dr. Baker (from Iowa); (5) Dr. Cunningh (from Minneapolis); (6) Helen Bridges (Boone, Iowa; can't identify three Navy Corpsmen Navy dental personnel at the Navy Pre-Flight School, Iowa City, November, January 1945

And at the end of a year and a half in uniform, I had progressed to Pharmacist Mate Second Class, and was entitled to sew two inverted red stripes, under a white, spread-winged eagle, on the sleeve of my jacket.

Dental Assistant Training

I also was beginning to give serious thought to how I might turn all this Navy training and experience into skills I could use when the war was over. I decided to see if I could get into the Navy's training program for Dental Assistant and Hygienist, not too great a leap from Pharmacist Mate. The Captain frowned when I submitted my request for transfer; such things were not routinely granted. Now, a negative Four-Striper is an enormous hurdle in the Navy. But the Navy runs on the Chain of Command... and an Admiral trumps a Captain any day. In this case, it was the Admiral in Charge of the Navy's Dental Division, whose office was at the Supply Depot next to our lab. Somehow, I guess, he heard about my request. I don't know what he may have done, if anything, but within a few days my orders for transfer came through. (Later, I astounded my coworkers in the Dental Clinic at the Bethesda Naval Hospital when this same Admiral came through on an inspection, and stopped suddenly in front of me. A hush fell over the assembled personnel, from the biggest Gold Braiders on down; mighty Admirals, the "scuttlebutt" has it, do not ordinarily pay much attention to mere enlisted personnel. I'll admit even I was holding my breath, especially since I had done a little bragging around the barracks before this inspection, about my acquaintance with this particular admiral. But, God bless him, he didn't let me down. "Why, Miss Ray (my maiden name)," he said. "How are you? And how are you getting along?" My stature was elevated immensely.)

My new orders were for Dental Assistant training at the Navy's prized medical facility, the Bethesda Hospital in Maryland. The training I received there was outstanding, and I was privileged to work with and observe some of the finest dental surgeons of the day. Many Washington, D.C. area celebrities were among our patients. On one occasion I assisted a WAVE officer as we cleaned the teeth of an obscure (at least to me at that time) young Congressman, Lyndon B. Johnson. Another time during my tenure there Secretary of State Cordell Hull, was a patient at the hospital. (Coincidentally, not long after that, while waiting in uniform at a bus stop at the hospital gate, I found myself being addressed by Mrs. Hull, who had ordered her limousine driver to stop in front of me. She offered me a ride, and, of course, I accepted. On the ride into Washington, she asked my thoughts about a number of things; I am a little chagrined all these years later to recall that I offered my opinions so freely.)

Iowa City

From Bethesda, I was sent to the Navy Pre-Flight Dental Clinic on the campus of the University of Iowa, in Iowa City. I wasn't thrilled at the time to be leaving all the excitement of first New York and then Washington, but this proved to be a wonderful assignment and my first duty as a full-fledged Dental Assistant was very fulfilling. There were 5,000 aviation cadets stationed on the campus, so we were kept quite busy. It was



Living it up in New York City L-R John Brophy - Marine returned from Guadalcanal; Marie Fietds, Navy WAVE; Tom ?, Pharmacist Mate; Betty Ray, U.S. Navy; Marine returned from Guadalcanal (The Marines seem to be wearing their military ribbons incorrectly.)

here that I earned my third stripe as a First Class Petty Officer. (When the war ended a few months later, I lacked only a few days of duty to be eligible for promotion to Chief Petty Officer; but I never considered "shipping over" to get the new sleeve emblem and anchor cap pin.) At times it seemed the war would never end. And, like millions of others, I prayed for the fighting to cease. Ultimately, of course, it did. On May 8, 1945, we celebrated the surrender in Europe; and then, as the Japanese surrender, on August 14, brought an end to all hostilities, I knew my Navy career would soon be over. I had enough points to be separated, and on November 10, 1945, I tearfully left the Navy at the Navy Separation Station at Balboa Park, San Francisco. I was, and today remain, very proud of my Navy service. It was tough but worthwhile, satisfying and fulfilling, sometimes frustrating and even demeaning (as, for instance, in some encounters with the inevitable "little" people promoted to positions of authority); and also loads of fun. I met and worked then with some of the finest people I have encountered in my lifetime since, and made friendships that endure to this day. I didn't experience the real horrors of war, that would shape and haunt many of my countrymen, including my future husband. But I have those years of my life, in the way my country determined I could best be of service. In retrospect now, as the familiar saying goes, I wouldn't take a million dollars for the experience... or for the right to say I did it.

A Civilian Again

I was eager as a new civilian to return to Los Angeles, which had made a favorable impression during my short stay there before enlisting. The city had grown in the intervening years, and housing was tight. But friends helped me secure an apartment, which I shared with two other women. Work was plentiful, and I landed a job as a dental assistant in the office of Beverly Hills society dentist. Many movie stars and studio executives were patients. It all seemed very glamorous. But after a year there, I wanted to get reacquainted with my roots. I called a North Dakota friends then working in L.A., and suggested we go home for a visit. She agreed. We left the driving to Greyhound. I was overjoyed to be home, and for a few weeks, basked in the love and attention my family

showered on me. Then, as planned earlier, my friend and I met in Grand Forks to visit a mutual friend. And, while there, we attend a University of North Dakota homecoming. That is where I was introduced to John Connolly, a Company "M" veteran of the 164th Infantry Regiment, who had gone through the Guadalcanal landings and battles, surviving the brutal beating his unit took at Henderson Airfield. He and his friend, Jim Fenelon (well known to readers of this publication) were attending the university's pre-law school. Happily Married It must have been a fateful meeting. I never did return to California, but remained in Grand Forks, getting to know John, or "Jack" as he was known. I lived with a family there who gave me much support and love. John and I were married the following June. The next semester, Jack began attending law school, and we secured housing on campus. But in that first year he was still suffering frequent bouts of malaria and depression, and was advised by his physician to enroll in another school, in a warmer climate. Which, it turned out, would be easier said than done. Most law schools were filled to capacity. However, the University of New Mexico, at Albuquerque, was forming a new law school, and Jack was admitted there in the fall of 1948. During our years there I worked for a wonderful dentist in the city. Jack was graduated in 1950, and we faced the usual decision: what, and where, now? Jack had become acquainted with a fellow student at the university who was considering a law career in Alaska. He heard all of his friend's rationalizations and arguments in support of going off to begin practice in what was then still a U.S. Territory, and a very remote one, at that. Jack listened to, and even challenged, his friend's stories of "the land of opportunity," which was sure to become a new State of the Union in the coming years, with a burgeoning population and unlimited demand for good lawyers. And then there was the Territory's unparalleled beauty.

Off to Alaska

In the end, Jack, himself, became convinced, and he convinced me. (The friend who was the cause of all this, on the other hand, never made it to the Far North.) With funds borrowed from Jack's mother, we bought a new pickup truck (the 1950 price: \$1,300!), and Jack built a box over the truck bed where we could store our meager possessions and sleep during the long drive over the still unpaved and rugged Alaska Highway. At that time the road newly piercing the northwest Canadian wilderness was pretty much a dusty track, only partly covered with gravel. Traversing - it was a great adventure! We left Edmore, North Dakota, on July 5, and connected with the Alaskan Highway at Fort Nelson in Canada, coincidentally a few days after the beginning of the Korean War. Roughing it to Alaska was no walk in the park, but we had fun and were thrilled by the vastness of western Canada, and the beautiful mountains, lakes and rivers we admired along the way. We slept in the box built on the pickup truck; I don't recall any motels along the Alaskan Highway. I prepared our evening meal along side the road. It was really a battle with the mosquitos bigger than a navy fighter plane. When we arrived in Anchorage, Jack worked with an established attorney until he could "write" the Bar exam, in October. I worked in the Base Exchange facility at nearby Elmendorf Air Force Base. Jack eventually went into a partnership practice. There were only 20 lawyers in Anchorage at that time, so it seemed we had made a good choice. Still, Anchorage was a small city, so clients were not beating down the door. But, slowly, Jack's reputation earned him a steady practice, which over the years involved him in three partnerships and practice on his own. We came to feel at home in Anchorage, where we

made many wonderful friends and enjoyed a lively social life, both with local residents and personnel from the nearby Air Force base and Fort Richardson, a large Army post just outside the city. In 1953 we adopted our son, Jim, and in 1955 our daughter, Brooks, was born. In his free time, Jack was able to indulge his love of the outdoors, of which there is an abundance in Alaska. He enjoyed frequent fishing and hunting trips in the Alaska wilderness (an exercise that usually involved chartered bush planes and expensive gear; we often were able to serve \$75-a-pound wild salmon to our dinner guests!). In this wild and exotic place, we experienced earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, destructive wind storms and avalanches. We came to take for granted soaring mountains and other incredible beauty, formidable creeping glaciers, diurnal ocean tides scaling a range of up to 36 feet, and even frequent bore tides, snows which accumulated to several feet in some places, wild animals and birds and salmon migrations. It was dynamic and exciting... and sometimes, as on a newly-white winter morning, absolutely serene! We also knew and participated in the excitement of Alaska Statehood, and were there during some of the early oil exploration that was the precursor to the later discoveries at Prudhoe Bay and elsewhere. We loved every minute of it! In 1964, after a fall moose hunt, Jack suffered a minor heart attack which incapacitated him for some time. But, by the following June he was declared fit, and was able to resume his practice full-time. Later, however, after a vacation trip to Los Angeles in October of that year, he had a massive and fatal heart attack the night we arrived back home. Our family was devastated, but with the help of loyal friends we picked up the pieces and, little by little, became whole again. In 1971, I married John Ratterman, a fellow Navy veteran, who then worked for Alyeska Pipeline Service Company. He retired as Manager of Public Relations for the company in 1989. We then moved to Bainbridge Island, Washington (which, after my 40 years and his 25 years in Alaska, was not an easy thing to do), where we still live. We have happily adjusted to retirement and island living. We enjoy a very quiet, almost rural environment, but are only 35 minutes by ferry from downtown Seattle, which has become one of the most desirable metropolitan centers in the country. A number of former Alaskans live near enough to visit frequently, and we have made many new friends in the area. Our daughter lives only an hour and a half away by road, with her husband. Their son is a junior at Gonzaga University, in Spokane, Washington. Our son and his family, including three lovely daughters, the eldest of whom is a freshman at the University of California at Riverside, live in the San Diego area.

(Editor's Note: JMF. Jack Connolly, Edmore, North Dakota, enlisted in M Company while attending the University of North Dakota. The 164th Infantry was federalized February 10, 1941, and sent to Camp Claiborne, Louisiana for alleged years training. M Company, a heavy machine/81MM Mortar Company as a unit of the 3BN, moved into the front lines on a very, very dark rain filled night, slipping in the deep mud. The 3rd BN held in reserve was ordered to move forward to plug the hole the attacking Japanese had punched in the marine lines. The area of the enemy breakthrough was very critical as it was less than a mile from Henderson. Connolly and his platoon were filtered into the foxholes under the direction of John Basilone, a marine sergeant that was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for this action. After WWII, Connolly using the G.I. bill, entered law school, University of North Dakota, and completed his law degree at the University of New Mexico.)

164th INFANTRY NEWS

The future of your 164th Infantry News is on very shaky ground as there still is a Cabal that is planning to limit the 164th Infantry News two (2) issues a year. Presently the 164th News is published four (4) times a year. True it doesn't always meet the quarterly deadline but members still get four (4) copies a year. Some of the individuals that are in favor of limiting the number of publications are the same ones that questioned printing in color. One individual stated "If the membership wants color in the 164th News let them read the Fargo Forum Sunday comics as they are in color." That statement shows a lot of class!! Another quote "I am worried about the quality of the newsletter and expressed the thought that there would be no money left for the association. This is the same individual that initiated and helped pass a resolution limiting the amount of funds the association could have in the bank. Apparently he wasn't thinking into the future when there would be projects the Association would decide to sponsor, for example the 164th Memorial Monument in the Veterans Cemetery. There were no surplus funds available. The membership, relatives of KIA's, and friends responded with generous contributions. A scholarship program was discussed but was effectively killed when one member leaped to his feet and said VOTE NO as the committee will be coming back each year for money. Unreal thinking as most of the WWII Military Associations have a scholarship program funded by donations from members. A \$500 donation from Mark Durley provided seed money to explore and incorporate a 164th Scholarship Program. Another area that caused concern was subsidizing the meals at reunions. Was that a fair use of association dollars for those that choose or couldn't attend due to health problems. As soon as the subsidizing of reunion meals was discovered it was stopped. The advocates for twice

a year issue will claim it reduces costs and save time by publishing twice. What are the funds being saved for? Twice a year will lower quality and the number of stories reporting individual experiences and pictures in WWII. With the membership being reduced by the Last Roll Call there will soon be no need for the 164th Infantry News. Many widows/family members of deceased members and friends of the 164th Association elect to continue receiving the news as associate members or associate life members and friends of the 164th Association. These individuals have been making substantial contributions to the printing costs. Their names and donations are listed in each quarterly issues. On the otherhand there are those association members that have been members and life members from the beginning of the association that have never made a donation to the publication costs of the 164th Infantry News. Apparently the proponents of the twice a year publication fail to read or comprehend the column Letters To The Editor, and what it means to the membership. There are so many stories and pictures submitted from WWII individuals that an issue of the 164th news could be published weekly.

Now your help is needed to resist the Cabal, Old grey beard, non-progressives to stop the movement for limiting the publication to twice a year. Any Association Member, Associate Member, Associate Life Member, if you feel the 4 times a year publication is meaningful to you in telling the history/story of the 164th Infantry write to the Editor:

164th Infantry News, Box 1111, Bismarck, ND 58502-1111 or Call Ben Kemp, S/T 701-222-4994. This is important and the quickest way to destroy/kill off any organization is to stop communicating with the membership.



JAPS CALL IT HONOR This Imperial Japanese marine lies dead in a pillbox on Tarawa, a victim of his own bullet. Rather than being taken alive by invading United States marines, he chose to die "in honor" by placing the muzzle of his rifle against his heart, and pulling the trigger with his big toe.

My grandfather once told me that there are two kinds of people: those who do the work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group; there was less competition there.

— Indira Gandhi

LETTERS



To The Editor :

Dear Jim, Enclosed is a check to go to the Newsletter fund in memory of Ralph Gaugler. Eli thought so much of Ralph, he was a wonderful friend since they served together at Camp Rucker in the early (Korean Conflict) 50's. Ralph was truly one of a kind. Thank you and Ben for the work you do on the outstanding newsletter. Every issue is read right from the mailbox! Best to all!

Sincerely,

Marjorie Dobervich
312 Burke Blvd.
Devils Lake, ND 58301



Dear Mr. Fenelon, You guys do an incredible job, and I've really appreciated receiving the News regularly even after Neil died in 1991. He and I were married only six years; and I was immersed in your activities over these years and made friendships with many of the veterans as well as their wives. I was pleased to boast to others about the longevity of the 164th Association. But now I think it's time to "hang it up." I've saved many of the copies for Neil's children and grandchildren, but here with this donation I am discontinuing our Life Subscription. Please accept the enclosed check for whatever purpose would be useful. I do this with a tug at my heart strings!

Sincerely,

Dixie Tangen
4300 W. River Pkwy. #176
Minneapolis, MN 54406-3677

P.S. I think Neil was in a Headquarters Company as well as Company G. (Ed. Note: Neil Tangen was a good officer and a good friend. Your decision to discontinue the Life Membership is reluctantly accepted. You were always active in the Minnesota/St. Paul Chapter. Good luck and good health.)



Ben Kemp, Secretary/Treasurer, Please send me four bumper stickers. Enclosed for a check for \$25.00 - \$10.00 for the stickers and \$15.00 for the Newsletter. I was with G Company 164th from New Caledonia to Japan.

Thank you,

C.W. Hewes 317 Pennewill Drive
New Castle, DE 19720-1811
302-328-4339

In honor of Jim Fenelon's 80th birthday on April 8th, I know this newsletter for the 164th is his favorite project, so please use the check for expenses or whatever else you choose. While growing up in Bismarck, he was always known as the star in the window and I still denote that in letters to him and he signs his letters to us the same way. We were neighbors in Bismarck and his sister, Mary Ann Sagehorn, my closest friend.

Sincerely,

Nancy Heising
1760 Daffodil Lane
San Diego, CA 92120

(Ed. Note: Nancy, what a pleasant surprise. I am happy to be the big 80. It is better than the alternative. I remember when I returned from overseas you were visiting my sister, Mary Ann, and you said you must be the Star in the Window. We have had a lot of fun about this title. The Star in the Window referred to, is the one that families placed when they had a family member in the Service. I'm glad it never became a Gold Star.

Thanks again for your generous gift and remembering me.) The Star in the Window.



41 - Fred R. Maier, Your letter stated that you weren't listed among those attending the last 164th Reunion. To be listed as attending the reunion, you must sign your company roster. All members attending a reunion should sign the company roster in which they served. Widows may sign the company roster their husband served in.

Registration Committee



Ben, Sorry about being AWOL. Here is a check for dues \$10.00. Included is \$5.00 for two bumper stickers.

Thanks,

Gene Brinkman
2551 Martha Lane
Hamilton, OH 45013-4258



Ben Kemp,

Sir, I would like to order four bumper stickers of the 164th. I hope everything is going well with you. I saw in the Americal Newsletter about a Forest Nearhood, no address, Last Roll Call; could this be Horace Nearhood from Toledo, Ohio? I enjoy getting the 164th Infantry News. Enclosed is \$10.00 for stickers and \$10.00 to keep the 164th News going. Nicholas Ostapchuk

582 Ramona St.

Rochester, NY 14615-3232

(Ed. Note JMF: The Nearhood that answered Last Roll Call was the twin brother of Horace F. Nearhood, 2564 Lima Ave., Toledo, OH 43513-2612. The twin brothers served in the 164th Infantry and were each awarded a Purple Heart for wounds received in combat.)

Hi Ben, I thought I notified everyone when I moved, but the postmaster said I forgot to tell the 164th News. My new address is:

Robert Shea
1700 Waterford Drive, Apt. 111
Vero Beach, FL 32966-8044

Thanks,
Ben Shea
Dog Company

Sirs, Enclosed is \$105.00 for the 164th Newsletter, which I enjoy very much, and \$5.00 for two bumper stickers. Thank you for your attention to any request.

Yours Truly,
Willis Clark
Box 463
Dickinson, ND 58602

(Ed. Note: Willis, your generous support of the 164th is appreciated. Thanks.)



Mr. Ben Kemp, My son, Associate Member, William H. Falk, just received the March 2002 Newsletter, which lists him as AWOL on dues. Since he is only six, I am taking care of the dues for him. You should know that we have received no notice about the dues, although this might be because his address is listed as 32 Silverwood Drive, Lafayette, CA 94549, and our address is actually 72 Silverwood Drive. Please change this in your records. In any event, enclosed is a check for \$100.00, which should take care of Bill's dues for a few years.

Thank you.
Theresa Fenelon Falk
William (Bill) Falk's Mother & Jim Fenelon's Daughter
72 Silverwood Drive
Lafayette, CA 94549

(Ed. Note fr. JMF & BK: Please accept our apologies. The address error has been traced to a staff person. This person has been docked five day's pay. Bill Falk's dues payment for 10 years will probably last longer than the 164th Association. Thanks.)
Bill - the MPs have been called back to their base.



Great News! Have been waiting for a bumper sticker or a license plate to become available. The one I have has been on the car for a long time and shows it! Please send me four stickers. Check is enclosed - keep the balance. Hope to see you all again at one of these reunions.

John R. Remillong
97 Mandarin Road Winter
Garden, FL 34787-3801



I enjoy your newsletter. Keep up the good work.

Thanks,
Roman Jalousynski
30976 Xylite Street NE
Cambridge, MN 55008-6700



Dear Ben, Enclosed is \$24.00 for my dues for 2002-2003 and \$4.00 for the 164th directory. I thought my 2002 dues were paid. Sorry about that. I do not want to miss the 164th News. Also want to support the Association. Great Work! The News Magazine...

Sincerely,
Geneviene Swenson
1007 18th Avenue S
Grand Forks, ND 58201

(Ed. Note: Gen is the widow of Ken Swenson, M Company.)



Sirs, Please send one bumper sticker. Am sending check for \$10.00. Use the remaining \$7.00 as you see fit. I would also be interested in purchasing some T-shirts or sweatshirts with the 164th logo on the. If available, please let me know either now or at reunion time.

Thanks,
Elroy O. Greuel
531 Langer Avenue S
Casselton, ND 58012-3618



Dear Sir, I would like to order two bumper stickers. Enclosed is a \$10.00 check, \$5.00 for stickers and \$5.00 wherever.

Thank you.
David Lokken
505 3rd Avenue
Rogers, ND 58479-4111



Ben, Enclosed is a check for \$25.00 for two bumper stickers and \$20.00 contribution to the 164th Newsletter.

Thanks,
Wendell W. Wichmann
10701 Cardington Way, Apt. 102
Cockeysville, MD 21030

Ben Kemp, Enclosed is \$10.00 for dues and \$10.00 for the Newsletter. I was interested in the picture "Play Ball." Allen Brown is my husband. Allen is in a convalescent hospital and is unable to enjoy the newsletter. However, I did take the letter to him and showed him the picture and read him the article.

Helen Brown
833 W. Kanai
Porterville, CA 93257

(Ed. Note: I remember Allen. After WWII we attended the University of North Dakota at Grand Forks, North Dakota. At the reunion Allen will be included, in our prayers. Tell him hello.)



Dear Sirs, Just a note to let you know that our dear husband and father died on March 14, 2002. The 164th was never far from his thoughts. He really enjoyed your Newsletter. We were so fortunate to have 57 years together.

Sincerely,
Mrs. John J. Miller
2041 Aldercrest St.
Seaside, OR 97138

(Ed. Note: We share your great loss. John was a good officer.)



Dear Ben, I would like to order the 164th directory - \$4.00. Enjoy your newsletter. Also send two bumper stickers - \$5.00.

Thank you,
Joseph Ramsfields
1024 S. Lang Ave.
Denison, TX 75020



Enclosed check for \$15.00 - \$12.00 dollars for the 164th Infantry News and \$3.00 for the bumper sticker.

Thanks,
Doris M. Martin
415 N. Mandan St.
Bismarck, ND 58501-3743



Ben Kemp, 164th Infantry News, Please send two 164th bumper stickers and a Regimental Pin. Enclosed is a check for \$20.00 - \$10.00 is for the Newsletter.

Howard A. Goddard
3699 Curlew St.
San Diego, CA 92103-3933



Dear Sir, Please send two 164th bumper stickers to Clarence Risser, 1119 University Drive, Lot 925, Bismarck, North Dakota 58504. Also included are dues for 2003.

Thanks.
Clarence L. Risser
1119 University Drive, Lot 924
Bismarck, ND 58504

Dear Sir, Enclosed is my check for \$15.00 for six of the 164th colorful bumper stickers described in the March 2002 issue of the 164th Infantry News.

Sincerely,
Tony Hannel LTC USA (RET)
1001 Rosewood Ave.
San Carlos, CA 94070-3837

P.S. I am disabled, have been in a wheelchair the past two years. I am now at home after 11 months hospitalization. I regret being unable to attend future reunions. Please carry on your good work for the 164th!

(Ed. Note: Sorry about your health problem. You will be included in our prayers at the reunion. Hannel was a member of the 27, 164thers that returned to Guadalcanal in 1992, 50 years after landing there October 13, 1942.)



Hi Ben, Please send me two of the new bumper stickers. Enclosed is my check for \$5.00. Hope to see you next September at Bismarck.

As Ever,
Paul E. Dickerson
1630 Easton NW
North Canton, OH 44720



Ben Kemp, Enclosed is a check for \$25.00. Please send me two bumper stickers for \$5.00 and use the balance for the Newsletter expenses.

Sincerely,
Howard Lauter
14 Alaco Lane
Milford, NJ 08848-1905



Ben, Received two bumper stickers and think they are terrific. If you have enough, I would like four more for other uses than on the bumper. Thanks for having such nice stickers available. Hope to see you in September.

Sincerely,
Al & Fran Olenberger
3420 Corral Drive, #211
Rapid City, SD 57702

(Ed. Note: Thanks. Glad you like them. Some members are framing them and hang them on the wall.)



Hi Jim, Happy belated birthday! Did you get that \$1,000.00 check I sent you on the 8th of April? Hope so, but you never know about the mail!

Ben Kemp, Secretary/Treasurer

(Ed. Note: Thanks for the 80th birthday greeting. I checked the envelope for the check. It must have been a self-dissolving check or the Post Office lost it.)

Hello To All, I hope you all are well and hardy. Let me say at the start, I am proud to have served with a great bunch of men and a great outfit. As a native Californian who was transferred into it at Fort Ord from my old outfit, the 159th Infantry, 40th Division California Guard. I didn't like it at first, but I am glad they did at the end. I got to know a great bunch of men. I have never been to North Dakota and it looks like I never will get back to see my old friends - the ones that are still here. I am going to be 80 this July, and don't get around too well. Well, enough about me. I saw in the March News talking about the transports we sailed on to Australia on the Coolidge. I have a picture of her over on her side with men going down her side, the Queen Elizabeth - she was a big one, and last, but not least, the Mariposa. The escort was the cruiser U.S.S. Chester, a heavy cruiser - CA27 was her hull number. Well, I guess that's about all from me. Say hi to all my buddies that are still here from the motor pool. They were a great bunch of drivers. Our Motor Sgt. Bob Hammond, was from Cando, North Dakota. I saw that Loyd Underdahl was joined up. Well, this is it again. Go 164th and good luck to all!

Sincerely,

Victor Athias
266 Miller Ave.
Mill Valley, CA 94941-2868

(Ed. Note: Thanks for the good words about the North Dakota boys. North Dakota is a great state with great, warm, hospitable people with a good sense of humor to endure the weather. I may be in your area soon to visit my daughter and grandson in Lafayette, California. I will call you.)

Dear Ben, Please see my check #4801, dated April 3, 2002, in the amount of \$50.00. Desire that you send me two bumper stickers. Also, \$4.00 for the Directory; the "left over" is for the News. Enjoyed our conversation via the phone; we enjoy the News - complements to Jim Fenelon and regards to you all! From "Texoma."

Sincerely,

Lawrence (Red) Willmer
MSGT-USAF - (RET)
15737 S. County Road #206
Blair, OK 73526-9246

Dear Mr. Paulson, Enclosed is a copy of my father's obituary for the 164th Infantry Newsletter. He always looked forward to receiving his copy. Jim Jewell's daughter,

Mary Gatzke
243 Lake Blaine Drive
Kalispell, MT 59901

Ben, Please send me four bumper stickers.

Thanks,

Vernon "Pete" Hanson
1225 8th Avenue S. South
Saint Paul, MN 55075

Attn.: Editor Jim Fenelon In response to your comments following the letter from Col. Al Wiest (164th Infantry News - March 2002), I can recall some details of the convoy carrying troops across the Pacific Ocean in 1942. I was first Sergeant of K Company, 164th, on board the President Coolidge. Other ships in the convoy were the Queen Elizabeth, the Mariposa, and the U.S. Navy heavy cruiser Chester. The Mariposa and the Coolidge were refueled from a tanker in the Marquesas Islands, about a mile offshore. I recall seeing balloons aloft over the Chester being used for target practice. While the Queen Elizabeth landed in Sydney, Australia, the Mariposa and Coolidge docked in Melbourne. From Melbourne we were taken to New Caledonia aboard three Dutch ships. The Coolidge, carrying troops and equipment, was later sunk by one mine and then another at Espirito Santos in the New Hebrides.

Sincerely,

Anthony A. Hannel LTC USA (RET)
1001 Rosewood Ave.
San Carlos, CA 94070-3837

(Ed. Note: Thanks for the information about the convoy to Australia.)

Dear Ben, I was stunned when I read the Last Roll Call of my former Platoon Sgt. Lloyd Gillespie of Company C, whom I served under at Camp Rucker, Alabama. I sent a donation in his memory to Clelian Heights School for mentally retarded children run by Sisters, who informed me that the address I had was outdated, but I noticed his widow had joined the 164th as an Auxiliary Member. The Nuns would like to have her present address to acknowledge his honor. Ben, keep up the good work as I look forward to receiving the 164th News. Enclosed is a self-addressed envelope.

Bernard "Ben" Krisko
449 Finley Road
Belle Vernon, PA 15012-9321

Ben, I want to order two bumper stickers - check for \$5.00 enclosed. I want to extend my thanks to you and the other fellows that do so much to keep the outfit going. I'm very grateful to you and the others.

Ken Shaver
21350 Eveleth Street East
Bethel, MN 55011

Hi Ben, Please send me two of the colorful bumper stickers. Enclosed is my check for \$5.00. You guys are doing a great job for the 164th Infantry News. I really enjoy it. Keep it up.

Ken Shaver 21350
Eveleth Street NE East Bethel,
MO 55011-9621

*May you die in bed at 95 - shot by a jealous spouse.
An Irish Proverb*

NOW HEAR THIS!

164th Infantry WWII Veterans, As you are already aware, recipients of the Combat Infantryman or Combat Medical Badge for the period December 7, 1941, to September 2, 1945, are authorized a conversion award of the Bronze Star Medal. Veterans who have not received their award of the Bronze Star Medal may make application to the National Personnel Records Center, ATTN.: Army Medals Section, 9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63132-5200. Veterans should produce a copy of their War Department Form WD AGO 53-55 (Report of Separation - Enlisted) or 53-98 (Officer) when writing to the center. The reverse side of the Honorable Discharge Certificate should show entitlement to the Combat Infantryman or Combat Medical Badge in the "qualifications" block or "awards and decorations" block. If the National Personnel Records Center is unable to determine an individual's entitlement, they will forward all available supporting documentation to this office for a final determination. We appreciate your support of our veterans and the men and women serving in our Army today. Sincerely, s: Deborah W. Ivory Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army Chief, Military Awards Branch

(Ed. Note: J.M.F. The following procedure is recommended when

- submitting the documentation for your much deserved Bronze Star:
- 1) contact Senator Dorgan (D) North Dakota, Federal Square Bldg., P.O. Box 2250, Fargo, North Dakota 58107 - Attn.: Judy - telephone 701-239-5389, or your local County Veterans Service Office;
 - 2) request Standard Form 181. This form must be completed by you or surviving relative to comply with the Privacy Law;
 - 3) forward your completed documentation to Senator Dorgan's Field Office in Fargo - Attn.: Judy; and
 - 4) request Senator Dorgan's assistance in expediting your application. By submitting your application to Dorgan's Fargo office, it will avoid the extremely long delay by mailing directly to the Military Awards Branch and will also avoid the long delay of screening mail because of the anthrax problem caused a few months ago. The information will be sent electronically to the records center and with a U.S. Senator encouraging the federal agency to act promptly, they will. Senator Dorgan assured me that any individual that served in the 164th Infantry, December 7, 1941, to September 2, 1945, will be assisted even if they are not from North Dakota. If you are not a resident of North Dakota, you may contact your U.S. Senators and follow the same procedures.)

Pay? Who gets Paid ???

When the 164th landed in Melbourne, Australia, after a smooth ocean voyage on the President Coolidge, men were given passes to visit downtown Melbourne to view the cultural aspects of the city, above all else, to meet beautiful girls, try the various beers and spirits. There was one hitch to going ashore. The enlisted men had not been paid for 30 days. No money jingling in one's pockets definitely inhibits social activities. The officers were paid, but not the enlisted men (rank has its privileges). Some individuals discovered that pawnbrokers where available for quick loans. This is a pawn slip for a compass, issued to J. Fenelon on April 9, 1942. A few coins received were not put into the poor box or the church collection. The beer tasted very good. I hope the statute of limitations has expired on the placing of a G.I. compass in the pawn shop.

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PHONE CENT. 510

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Lent this day to M. *J. Fenelon* 9 1942

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N.B. - Closed on Saturday 12.45 p.m.
Persons remitting money must forward same by Post Office Order or Draft with Pledge Ticket. Cheques will not be accepted under any circumstances.
All Transactions Strictly Confidential.

90 WHO??

June, 1927 a slim young teenager enlisted (approx. 17 yrs.) in A Company 164th Infantry and attended a two week military training encampment at Camp Grafton. Camp Grafton is located near the Metropolitan City of Devils Lake, North Dakota. The raw recruit had to master the manual of Arms (Rifle) learn how put on 1917 army clothes along with the wrap leggings. The teenager was so impressed and imbued with the annual summer military encampment that he never missed a summer camp at Camp Ripley, Minnesota or Camp Grafton until February 10, 1941. His way of life was changed after this date. The monthly National Guard Drill and summer encampments provided the youth with a few coins jingling in his pocket. He was very frugal with his coins and at 90 years the old man of the prairies/164th is still extremely frugal. Apparently lessons ingrained in him during the hard years of The Great Depression. Attending one of the annual encampments the lad made an attempt to launch a pugilistic career by engaging in the alleged sport of boxing. He weighed in at about 115-120 pounds (or approximately 7 1/2 stones), probable in the fly weight division, winning several bouts at Camp Grafton/losing some, his career ended when a deep cut over one eye was stopped by referee. February 10, 1941 a change in career status changed the lifestyle of the Bismarck (now a 2nd Lt.) boy. He along with 1750 men/boys of the 164th Infantry Regiment were federalized and sent for a year training with the 34th Infantry Division (Red Bull Shoulder Patch) Camp Claiborne, LA. December 7, 1941 made another profound change in the lifestyle of the stripling in A Company. The 2nd Lt. (a.k.a. "Shavetail") and the regiment left for Fransisco a port of embarcation, on to Australia, New Caledonia, Guadalcanal (to reenforce the 1st Marine Division) Fiji Islands and Bougainville. By this time the battle experienced former teenager was a Captain having met the Japanese in Mortal Combat. He had been decorated with a Silver Star for Gallantry in action against enemy forces on Guadalcanal. After a brief rest and more training, Fiji Islands. The young man, now a Captain/Company Commander accompanied the regiment to Bougainville for another crack at the Japanese forces. The regiment sailed from the Fiji Islands and landed on Christmas Day on Bougainville, here the Captain saw his first working volcano belching smoke. The army in its less than benign way had established a system that established a procedure for an individual with time in service battle stars, time over seas, and other military decorations could become eligible to return to duty in the States. Individuals with the highest number of points had their names thrown into a hat and if your luck was good and your name was drawn you were started on your journey back. Well! the young Captains name was picked from the hat. Lo and behold! it was Anton C. Beer, a.k.a. Tony. Tony eventually retired from military service as a Lt. Colonel. June 29, 2002 is another important date for "Tony" as he will be ninety (90) years on this terra firma. "Tony" was with the 27 members of the 164th WWII guys that returned to Guadalcanal, October 13, 1992, fifty years after landing there to reenforce in the 1st Marine Division. On the return trip to Guadalcanal he was

named Chaplin and charged with the duty to read the official prayer at the various historical spots on Guadalcanal. A search of the records indicates (90 yrs.) that Anton C. "Tony" Beer is the oldest surviving 164th Officer that left with the regiment in February 1941 for Camp Claiborne. "Tony" thanks for your service to the country and the 164th Infantry Association. Happy Birthday/good health and enjoy life-spend some coins for beer, etc.

ATTACKS

For the first time
in nearly 60 years, and for
only the third time in our
nation's history, Americans have
been attacked on their soil.
All of us at Great Clips wish to
express our sympathy to all victims
and their families. We are grateful to the
fire fighters and police officers who
rushed in to help rescue those trapped.
Their bravery cost many their lives.
Our thoughts and prayers are with
the families and friends
of all victims.

Credit: Great Clips For Hair

(Ed. Note: JMF – The three attacks referred to are - 1) the war of 1812 (when the British burned the White House / Capital; 2) sneak attack by Japanese on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941; and 3) the bombing of World Trade Towers, New York City, September 11, 2001. After the Pearl Harbor attack, the Japanese firing from a submarine shelled the oil field off the coast of Santa Barbara, California. A Japanese submarine launched a float plane, dropping a few bombs near a small coastal town in Oregon. Later in the war, the Japanese developed balloon bombs and launched them into the air stream - later named the jet stream. Many of these bombs reached the United States. Some of the balloon bombs landed in North Dakota, Iowa and New Mexico. The press was very restrained in reporting the situation so the enemy never learned that the balloon bombs had actually reached U.S. soil. Lacking information that balloon bombs had actually landed in the United States, the Japanese dropped the activity.)

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MANDAN, ND 58554-3024

WEBER, CLIFFORD J.
ND RET HOME BOX 873
LISBON, ND 58054-0673



The MPs have an APB (all points bulletin) for the AWOL members listed. Quick action on your part will spare you the knock on your door and keep you on the mailing list for the 164th news.

Model & photo credit: Sergeant First Class Shane R. Cole. U.S. Army Recruiting Station, Marshelltown, IA. Shane served in the 287th MP Co. 1981-83, Berlin Germany

May you live to be a hundred years with one extra year to repent.

An Irish Proverb

LISTEN UP, ALL 164th INFANTRY VETERANS

There's a nation effort underway to interview 164th Infantry WWII veterans, beginning with gathering the stories of those who served in World War II. Initiated by the Library of Congress and Senator Byron Dorgan, the project involves identifying those who have not yet told their story, arranging for an oral history session with an interviewer who is also a veteran of World War II, having the tapes transcribed by high school or college students, and archiving the tapes and transcripts, along with photographs at the State Historical Society of North Dakota in Bismarck where they will be cataloged and available to all residents of the state and citizens of the United States. The project, which involves the North Dakota Humanities Council, the State Historical Society, veterans' organizations, and Senator Dorgan's office, got underway in February 2002 in Cass County. We have developed kits that include the tape recorder and microphone, an outline to follow, and complete information about collecting the stories of the men and women from North Dakota who served their country between 1940 and 1946. We hope to schedule as many interviews as we can during the September 13, 14 and 15, 2002, reunion of veterans who served in the 164th during World War II. Please let us know if you would be willing to be interviewed. Send us your name, address,

and telephone number along with your service dates and any other information, and someone from Senator Dorgan's office or from the Humanities Council will contact you to set up an interview. A special room at the Holiday Inn, Bismarck, North Dakota, has been set aside for the interviews to be conducted. If you are willing to record your WWII experiences, please follow the instructions so that the number of interviewees can be determined and a specific time for your interview can be reserved. You will receive a tape recording of your interview. The interviews are open to all veterans that served in the 164th during WWII.

Contact: Everett C. Albers Executive Director North Dakota Humanities Council, Inc.
2900 Broadway E., Suite 3
P.O. Box 2191
Bismarck, North Dakota 58501-2191

Voice Mail: 1-800-338-6543 or
701-255-3360 in Bismarck-Mandan

Fax: 701-223-8724 or 888-255-1574

Email: council@nd-humanities.org

Web: <http://www.nd-humanities.org>

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE 164TH NEWSLETTER: As of May 2002



- \$100.00
Ford, Bruce M.
Watertown, SD (In memory of Art "Peep" Ford (Bruce is Art's Son)
Clark, Willis
Dickinson, ND Tangen, Dixie
Minneapolis, MN
- \$80.00
Heising, Nancy
San Diego, CA In honor of Jim (The Star in The Window) Fenelon's
80th Birthday -
WWII families having a member in the service hung a star in the window.
- \$50.00
Marchant, L. C.
Laramie, WY
Falk, William A.
Lafayette, CA
(6-year old grandson of James M. Fenelon. He also became an
associate life member.)
- \$45.00
Wittmer, Lawrence C.
Blair, OK
- \$25.00
Dobervich, Marjorie A.
Devils Lake, ND (In memory of Ralph Gaugler)
- \$20.00
Geston, John M.
Valley City, ND Lauter, Howard W.
Milford, NJ Wichmann, Wendell
Cockeysville, MD
- \$15.00
Hewes, Clayton W.
New Castle, DE
- \$12.00
Martin, Doris M.
Bismarck, ND
- \$10.00
Remillong, R. J.
Winter Garden, FL
Goddard, Howard
San Diego, CA
Brown, Alan
Porterville, CA
Ostapehuk, Nicholas
Rochester, NY
Maley, Weston
Lewistown, MT
- \$7.00
Greuel, Elroy O.
Casselton, ND
- \$5.00
Lokken, David
Rogers, ND

(Ed. Note from J.M.F. plus B. Kemp Secretary/Treasurer - Your continuing financial support is most gratifying as it is a clear indication that the membership wants the 164th Infantry News to continue to be published quarterly. Thanks/Merci Beacoup/Gracias/Danke.)

Ass. Life Members
William H. Falk
Lafayette, California
(Grandson of Jim Fenelon)

Nancy Heising
San Diego, California

Joe V. Hobot
Blaine, Minnesota
(Grandson of Jim Fenelon)

New Ass. Members
Eloise A. Rasmussen
Bellevue, Washington

New Members
Allen J. Olson
Elbridge, New York



Presidents Message

The September Reunion will bring us together again to renew friendships, talk about our time in WWII and to remember the men of the 164th that paid the full price for freedom. At the memorial service, the association members that have answered the Last Roll Call will be remembered. I have been a member of the 164th Association from its inception (1946 or 1947) and missed maybe two of the annual reunions. I have been given the opportunity to be elected President twice and have served on most of the committees. It will be a pleasure to welcome you to the September 13, 14, and 15, 2002, reunion. Thanks for the support, drive carefully, safe flight and good health. Let's have a great time.

Don Robinson President

I believe that the law was made
for man and not man for the
law; that government is the
servant of the people and not
their master.

- John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

164th Infantry Reunion September 13, 14, 15, 2002

Holiday Inn (Free parking in the ramp)
Sixth & Broadway

Bismarck, North Dakota

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Friday, September 13, 2002

REGISTRATION

1:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M. — Friday, September 13, 2002

2:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M. — Social Hour - Cash Bar, Hospitality Suite
Dinner on your own. A list of fine dining restaurants available at
registration desk.

8:00 P.M. - 11:30 P.M. — Dance & Entertainment - 188th Army
National Guard Band will provide splendid dance music, so put on
your dancing shoes, oil up the creaky joints and swing out — cash
bar.

Saturday, September 14, 2002

BUFFET BREAKFAST

7:00 A.M. - 8:30 A.M.

8:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon — Registration

9:00 A.M. - 10:00 A.M. — Memorial Service

10:00 A.M. - 12:00 Noon — Annual Business Meeting; Election of
Officers; Resolutions; Time; Place

LUNCHEON

12:00 Noon - 1:00 P.M. — Men & Women's Joint Luncheon 1:30
P.M. — Samurai Sword History Program and Company Reunions

2:00 P.M. — Bus Trip to Veterans Cemetery and the 164th Infantry

Monument (no charge).

*When you register, please indicate if you want to ride the bus to the 164th
Infantry Memorial, Veterans Cemetery.*

6:00 P.M. — Social Hour / Cash Bar

7:00 P.M. — Annual Banquet - Dance Music/Entertainment by the
famous 188th Army, North Dakota National Guard Band. Special
music/comedy program by Harvey Schilling.

9:00 P.M. — Drawing for 164th raffle tickets (3 winners at \$164 each)

Sunday, September 15, 2002

7:00 A.M.-12:00 noon — Breakfast Buffet

12:00 Noon — Good luck, good health, safe journey, see you next
year. Remember, this is only a tentative schedule. The
committee may have a few changes or additions to the program.
The registration fee is \$50.00 per individual. For the \$50, you will
have a social hour on Friday, a dance - no charge, a buffet
breakfast at 7:00 A.M., joint mens/women luncheon, annual
banquet, dance with two entertainment programs. On Sunday
morning at 7:00 A.M. you will be able to participate in a buffet
breakfast. A key financial support for the annual reunion is the
annual sale of the 164th raffle tickets. Three winners are drawn at
the dance. If you are too tired to stay awake until 10:00 P.M., you
need not be present if you are one of the winners. The members
not attending the reunion will be notified if they are a lucky winner.
Many individuals ordering raffle tickets state if they are a winner,
they donate to the 164th Infantry News or to the Association. To
increase your chances of winning, don't hesitate to order more
raffle tickets. The prize is \$164.00 dollars. Horace Forest
Nearhood will have available a beautifully carved walking stick
depicting the history of the 164th Infantry. Ask about it when you
register. Information about religious services will be available at
the registration desk. Many members may wish to bring guests to
one or more meal functions. You can purchase their tickets at the
registration desk.

Who Stole Col. Bryant E. Moore's Whiskey at Guadalcanal?

A couple of weeks before we were relieved from the Matanikau
River Operation, Al Sevigney and I caught a ride back to Lunga
Point with the kitchen truck, which occasionally came up to the
Matanikou Bridge so that the men could take turns and have a cold
pancake with jam and hot coffee.

We picked up new Marine fatigues and boots. While returning
from a bath in the Lunga River, we passed by an officer's wall tent,
and underneath the cot was a wooden box which read - Dewars
White Label Scotch. That black night in a pouring rain while sitting
in the kitchen tent, we decided to sneak over and steal that whiskey.
Al and I crawled on our bellies to Moore's tent, pried off the lid with
a trench knife, and pulled out one quart. We drank that and then
decided to go back and get another one.

We proceeded to drink the second one with the help of some
others including Cliff Ottinger. He was Capt. McGurran's Sgt. and
he provided grapefruit juice for a wash. We finished all but a few
inches in the bottom of that bottle then we quit. Early the
next morning I buried the remainder of that bottle under the Lunga
Bridge. Shortly thereafter, we returned to the Matanikou on kitchen
trucks. When the Regiment returned to Lunga Point and Col. Moore
found out his whiskey was missing in as much as there were only
two bottles in that box which we were unaware of, he had a Holy fit.

One day while bathing in the Lunga River, Col. Moore was
present, and was telling some other men about the dirty SOBs that
stole his whiskey, claiming it to be the only whiskey in the Regiment.
Al and I were in the water a few feet away and had to turn away to
keep from laughing, I later went to the Lunga River Bridge with an

old Marine friend, Clifford Fox, and dug up what was left of that
quart and finished it off.

After World War II, near 1950, I saw in the paper that Col. Moore,
now a General, was Commander of West Point and I thought what
fun it would be to tell him what happened to his whiskey on
Guadalcanal.

Before I got around to doing it, he was sent to Korea, to be 10th
Corp. Commander. His helicopter taking him to the forward area
made a forced landing. As he walked away from the helicopter, he
fell down and died of a heart attack. The poor guy never knew what
happened to his whiskey. I think Capt. McGurran had an idea who
did it as his Sgt. Ottinger was in on the party.

End of story - Ha Ha.

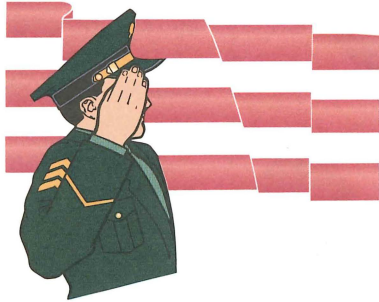
"Doug" Burtell

Hqd. Co. Recon Platoon

*(Ed. Note: The "Ring Knocker" was really in a rage about the loss of his
whiskey. Now, as to the looters, they committed several crimes - 1) they
were under legal age to be consuming spirits; 2) B&E - breaking and
entering, and 3) trespass. In a telephone call to Cliff Ottinger, he confirmed
and admitted participating in consuming the scotch and no doubt lifted the
grapefruit juice from the officers mess tent. Ottinger could be charged
with - 1) being an accessory after the fact; 2) pilfering juice from the
officer's mess tent, and 3) being under age and drinking liquor. Now all
three of the miscreants should face a general Court Martial for brutalizing
and diluting a great scotch whiskey. Maybe this was caused by lack of
experience with alcohol. Ho. Ho.)*



Last Roll Call



*If Tears could Bridge a Stairway,
and Memories a Lane,
I'd Walk Right up to Heaven
and Bring you Home again*

- Irish Tears

W. Mark Durley Jr.

Fresco, CA

Co L WWII Korean War

A very good friend of 164th and
Staunch Financial Supporter

Edward Gaik

Chicago, IL

O.J. Giallonardo

Natick, MD

Co B WWII

James O. Jewell

Coeur' Alene, ID

Co K WWII

John J. Miller

Seaside, OR

WWII

Stanley Pfau

Sacramento, CA

Co I WWII

Ralph R. Rothrock

Seal Beach, CA

Hq Co WWII

Joseph T. Tix

Waunakee, WI

Co G WWII

In Memory of Art "Peep" Ford

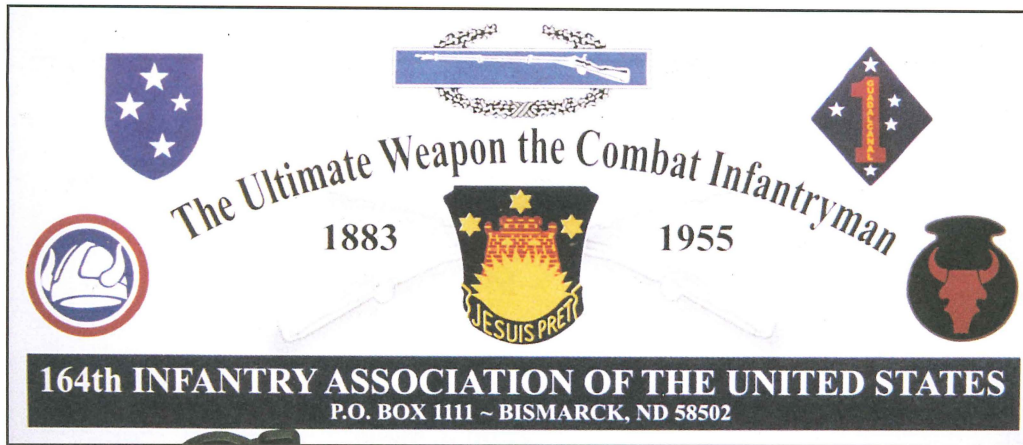
"Peep" Ford, Bruce M. Ford's father, was a life member of the 164th Association. Ford played in the 164th band. On Guadalcanal he served as a medic taking care of the wounded. The \$100.00 contribution to the 164th News was made in his memory by his family. In forwarding the memorial, his son, Bruce, stated "Peep's" oldest and best friends were his buddies in the 164th. He enjoyed the reunions until he was no longer able to attend and he looked forward to the 164th Infantry Association newsletter. "On behalf of my brother, Tom Ford, and our entire family, please accept the enclosed memorial in the name of your brother-in-arms, Art "Peeps" Ford." Signed, His Son, Bruce Ford

*Say a prayer for all our
comrades and wives for
good health and some
extra time as they have
earned it.*

*Many of the 164th
members are having
very serious health
problems. Throw in
an extra prayer for your
old buddies and their
wonderful companions.*



Bumper Stickers



The colorful bumper stickers shown here are available for \$3.00 for one(1) or two(2) for \$5.00. The cost covers postage and handling. The bumper sticker makes a good picture for framing and hanging in your office or den.

The insigna on the sticker covers the history of the 164th. Starting at the left is the Cemerical Division, blue, with the stars representing the Southern Cross. Americal Division formed in New Caledonia (a free French Island WWII), South Pacific, The

Combat Infantry Badge (CIB), The blue diamond patch 1st Marine Division Patch, authorized by General Vandergrift, lower left 47th Infantry Viking Division, center, 164th Infantry Regimental Crest, far right Red Bull, 34th Infantry Division, the 164th was part of the 34th Division until Dec. 7, 1941. Send your orders to Ben Kemp S/T.

"Every time you stop a school, you have to build a jail. What you gain at one end you lose at the other. It's like feeding a dog on his own tail. It won't fatten the dog."

– Mark Twain



THE 164TH INFANTRY NEWS

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Bismarck, ND
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164th Infantry News

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