



READY RIFLES and the Regulars "SITREP"

Official Newsletter of the
Veterans of the 52nd and 6th Infantry Regiments Stationed in Bamberg Germany 1972 to 1990



Vol 11 Issue 06

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2025 Las Vegas Reunion

Make plans to join us in October of 2025 as we return to the spot where the first reunion was held, Las Vegas. We are busy nailing down dates and hotels and activities. Our intention is to have the dates and hotel nailed down by this October. Once those are nailed down we will finalize the reunion activities.

Who said Old Bastards Couldn't Fight

Summary of Old Age & Treachery - The Unstoppable 77th Infantry Division

The Fat Electrician – Nic

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Su5-_KuDf8

This is an AI generated summary. There may be inaccuracies.

The Unstoppable 77th Infantry Division," explores the value of old age and experience in warfare through the example of the 77th Infantry Division during World War II. Known as the "Old Bastards," this experimental unit was made up mostly of older soldiers, defying the common belief that older men were not effective in combat. The division, with an average age of 33 years old, proved their worth during basic and advanced training, outperforming younger divisions in a war game. Despite their success, they faced skepticism regarding their physical capabilities and underwent rigorous tests to prove their mettle. The 77th Infantry Division went on to make significant contributions in the Pacific Theater, securing key locations and supply routes with minimal casualties. Their impressive performance earned them the nickname "old bastards" and "77th Marines" from the Marines themselves. With over 43,000 confirmed kills, the division was the busiest in the Pacific Theater, and its members received numerous decorations for their valor.

Before World War 2, the military was small and underfunded, with outdated equipment and limited battle doctrine. America knew it needed to rebuild its military to make a meaningful impact in the war, but the public was reluctant to get involved. The government began drafting young men in 1940, and by December 1941, after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States had officially declared war on Japan. To test the capabilities of older men in the military, the 77th Infantry Division was formed, with an average age of 33 years old, making it a significant departure from the typical 23-year-old drafted soldiers. This division was an experiment to determine the physical capabilities of older men in combat and was a massive undertaking, as standing up a new division from scratch was no easy feat.

The division, composed mainly of middle-aged men, had already experienced life's challenges before joining the military. As a result, they required minimal discipline and life lessons from drill sergeants, allowing them to focus on their training. During basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, the 77th ID surpassed all other new training divisions, impressing Winston Churchill, who visited the base. After completing basic training, they excelled in their advanced training as well. Military officials took notice of their success and sent them to Louisiana for a war game against a new division of 23-year-olds. In this war game, the 77th ID, using their cunning and experience, outperformed the younger division, leaving them in awe. The mental toll of these tactics, combined with the harsh living conditions, proved to be too much for the younger division, ultimately leading to the 77th ID's victory.

Their effectiveness in a war game by disrupting enemy communication lines and feeding them false intelligence. However, their success raises questions about their physical capabilities, leading to experiments at Camp Hider in the desert. The soldiers were forced to build their own base from scratch, including digging wells and building mud huts. They were then subjected to grueling marches and six-day exercises with limited food and water, resulting in some deaths. The soldiers jokingly created a medal to commemorate their time in the desert. Despite the Army's refusal to recognize the medal, the 77th was sent for advanced rifle marksmanship training and then to test a new subzero temperature sleeping bag in freezing conditions. Despite the cold winter conditions and the lack of tents and fires, the 77th ID continued to outmaneuver their opponents, employing psychological warfare tactics like stealing their vehicles and equipment to disrupt their communications. Eventually, they were informed they would not be going to D-Day but would instead be sent to the Pacific to aid the Marines, undergoing amphibious landing training. The 77th took this training seriously, as they were heading into a jungle environment against the Japanese, who were presumed masters of their environment.

The Unstoppable 77th Infantry Division," the 77th Infantry Division, composed mostly of middle-aged men, is sent to reinforce the Marines during the Battle of Guam. Marine Corps General Holland "Howling Mad" Smith, who has previously expressed his doubts about the Army's capabilities, plans to disband and peace meal out the entire division. However, to his surprise, the 77th ID performs exceptionally well in battle, racking up 2,741 confirmed kills with only 248 in return. This impressive ratio of 11 to 1 against an enemy with home field

advantage and fortified machine gun positions earns them the nickname "old bastards" and "77th Marines" from the Marines themselves. Despite their expected rest and relaxation in New Caledonia, the division is instead sent to help General MacArthur's stalled divisions in the Philippines.

The 77th Infantry Division arrives at Leyte with determined energy, aiming to cut off Japanese supplies at Ormoc Bay. Despite being outnumbered and facing skepticism from higher command, the division executes a successful amphibious landing, swiftly taking over the bay. They proceed to go on an intense two-month rampage, securing key locations and supply routes, racking up an impressive kill count while suffering minimal casualties. Their strategic success and efficiency in seizing the Cararo Islands reveal the Division's incredible tenacity and foresight in thwarting potential kamikaze attacks. Ultimately, their pivotal actions lead to securing both Leyte and the Cararo Islands, setting the stage for the Battle of Okinawa and earning them a reputation for conducting a textbook level campaign.

The 77th Division is sent to secure the nearby island of Leima, which houses a Japanese Airfield guarded by 5,000 soldiers. The chain of command underestimates the 77th, believing them to be backup, but they quickly prove their worth by securing the island in just six days, with minimal casualties compared to the enemy. During the Battle of Okinawa, the 77th is tasked with taking Hacksaw Ridge, a 100-foot high cliff face where the 96th Infantry Division had failed. One medic, Desmond Doss, a conscientious objector, saves 75 men by lowering them down the cliff face. The 77th eventually takes the ridge, but Desmond Doss is mortally wounded. The division then faces the challenge of breaking through the Shuri line, a natural wall of hills and cliffs manned by 50,000 Japanese soldiers. The battle lasts 32 days, resulting in 14,000 Japanese casualties. After securing Okinawa, the 77th is shipped back to the Philippines, where they receive word of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, sparing them from an invasion of Mainland Japan. However, they must first eliminate remaining Japanese military members scattered throughout the Pacific.

During the Philippine campaign of World War II, where approximately 5,500 Japanese soldiers were hiding in the mountains and unwilling to surrender to the 77th Infantry Division. The soldiers had a deep-seated fear of the 77th, who had gained a reputation for being effective in combat but not taking many prisoners compared to other units. The ratio of enemy soldiers killed to those taken prisoner by the 77th was significantly higher than that of other US forces. Despite this, the 77th needed the Japanese soldiers to surrender so they could go home. The soldiers were eventually persuaded to surrender to younger soldiers who were sent up the mountain to accept their surrender, leading to a humorous and unexpected outcome. The 77th Infantry Division, known as "old bastards," went on to become one of the most effective fighting forces in the Pacific Theater, with a high enemy-to-friendly casualty ratio.

With over 43,000 confirmed kills, the 77th Infantry Division was the busiest in the Pacific Theater. Their members received six Medals of Honor, 19 Distinguished Service Crosses, two Distinguished Service Medals, 335 Silver Stars, 22 Legions of Merit, 25 Soldier Medals, 4,433 Bronze Stars, and 16 Distinguished Unit Citations. The speaker expresses his fascination with the story of the 77th Infantry Division, despite his initial mental image of the soldiers being like "15,000 angry drill sergeants" due to most of them being from the East Coast

Family Members Who Have Passed

Sheryl Luman

Wife of Tim Luman



Obituary in July.

Linda Burnett

Wife of Bob Smith

October 13, 1958 ~ May 5, 2024 (age 65)



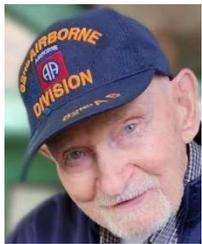
Ms Linda Burnett, 65, of Old Buncombe Rd Union passed away on Sunday May 05, 2024. Ms Burnett was born the daughter to the late Mr Waymon Hand, and Mrs Patricia Hand. Surviving in addition to her mother, her husband Bob Smith, one brother Mr Rusty Dees (Judy), and one sister Ms Lucretia Banks. A private memorial service will be held by the family at a later date. Lewis Funeral Home and Crematory has charge of the arrangements. To send flowers to the family or plant a tree in memory of Linda Burnett, please visit our floral store.

<https://www.lewisfuneralhomeofunion.com/obituary/Linda-Burnett>

Col. Robert Spear (Ret)

Father of Ron Spear

February 9, 1931 – May 16, 2024



The Reverend Doctor COL (Ret) Ralph Sorlie Spear, 93, passed away peacefully on Thursday, May 16, 2024, in Greensboro, NC, surrounded by loved ones. A Celebration of Life Service will be held at 4pm on August 31, 2024, at Bethel Presbyterian Church in McLeansville, NC. The Rev. Paul Rhodes and Rev. Tony VanCura to officiate. Full military honors will be performed by the U.S. Army Honor Guard immediately following the service.

Ralph was born on February 9, 1931, to the late Christian and Ingborg Spear in Greenville, Michigan. He pursued an extensive education, earning a B.A. in Psychology and Philosophy from Dana College, Blair, NE, in 1954; a Master of Divinity from Trinity Seminary, Dubuque, IA, in 1958; a M.S. in Guidance and Counseling from Long Island University, Brooklyn, NY, in 1973; and a Doctor of Ministry (D. Min) from Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, MN, in 1980. His thesis was titled "Parenting Enriched Through the Priesthood of All Believers."

Ralph's first pastoral ministry began as an Intern at Nazareth Lutheran, Cedar Falls, IA from 1955 – 1956. His first call was as a pastor at a two-point parish, Luverne Lutheran Church and Hofva Lutheran Church, Luverne, ND from 1958 - 1963. He entered the US Army in 1963 as a Chaplain with the 11th Air Assault Division/1st Air Cavalry Division in Fort Benning, Georgia. It was during this assignment that he earned his Parachutist Badge, a distinction he revered to his last days – "AIRBORNE!!" as he was fond of saying with much enthusiasm. As an airborne troop chaplain Ralph completed rigorous training and jumps with his troops.

Ralph's commitment to his country continued as he served as the Battalion Chaplain for the 1st Battalion of the 8th Air Cavalry, where he traveled to Vietnam on the USNS Geiger. As part of the "Jumping Mustangs," his unit built their own A-frame chapel in the jungle, although many services were also held in foxholes or in front of helicopters. He held the camaraderie of the Jumping Mustangs in high regard attending as many of their reunions as possible.

Following Vietnam, COL (Ret) Spear became the Assistant US Army Combat Developments Command Experimentation Center (USACDCEC) Chaplain at Fort Ord, California before he was stationed overseas in Japan as Post Chaplain in Hokkaido and then Okinawa. His final active-duty station was Fort Bragg, NC in 1973, as the Assistant Staff Chaplain to the Special Forces at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School.

During his tenure, the Army went through a significant drawdown following the Vietnam War, and COL (Ret) Spear was honorably discharged from active duty. His service did not end there though, as he continued to serve in the Army Reserves from 1976-1989. COL (Ret) Ralph Spear officially retired with 12 years of active-duty service and 13 years of serving in the Army Reserves.

His military service was recognized by awards that included Presidential Unit Citation, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal 2nd OLC, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with 3 Battle Stars, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with 60 Device, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Parachute Badge, Air Assault Badge.

After completing his course work for his D. Min. degree at Luther Seminary in St Paul, MN, he accepted a call to be Pastor of Our Saviour's Lutheran Congregation, Grafton, ND, from 1977 - 1980. During that period, he finished his dissertation for his D. Min. degree. Subsequently, from 1980 - 1982, he completed his Clinical Pastoral Education, along with being Interim Pastor at Ascension Lutheran Church, St. Louis Park, MN.

From 1982 to 1993, Ralph served as the Chaplain/Pastor at Passavant Retirement and Health Center in Zelienople, PA. Following retirement and prior to moving to North Carolina, he served in interim ministry as Pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church in North Versailles, a suburb of Pittsburgh, then as an interim Pastor of St. John's Lutheran (Stone) Church in rural Harmony, PA. Later he served as interim Pastor for St. Paul's Lutheran Congregation in Burlington, NC.

His father, Rev. C.L. Spear, passed when Ralph was 1½ yrs old. As the 'man of the house', he learned how to do many things at home by himself. He was an early adopter of DIY and passed that characteristic to his family. Ralph loved to work on cars, doing maintenance, needed repairs, and bodywork. He enjoyed doing home updates including building a darkroom, finishing a basement, adding new electrical circuits, adding a bathroom, and the list goes on. Ralph was a 'tinkerer' too, enjoying 'computering' and electronics. His hobbies included golfing, motorcycling, archery, chess, photography, and hunting (rabbits, squirrels, doves, and deer). He also liked to downhill ski, which some of his children and grandchildren are still passionate about today.

Ralph's family will always remember some of his favorite sayings which include: 'The best part of plenty of time is the first part!'; when cleaning up, 'Take your own things and one thing more!'; and when taking pictures, 'Say ostrich eggs!' or 'Frog legs in the frying pan!' to get people to smile.

He is survived by his beloved wife of 66 years, Nina; his children: Jon Spear (Petra) of Bethesda, MD; Ron Spear (Karin) of Naples, FL; Susan Fournier (Bryan) of Greensboro, NC; and Jeff Spear (Kate) of Cary, NC; ten grandchildren: Anders and Linnea Spear; Bryan (Audie), Devin (Abigail), and Erik (Carey) Spear; Samantha (Martin) Carlson, Christopher, and Jonathan Spear; and Gwendolyn and Vivienne Spear; and six great-grandchildren: Luke and Anna Spear; Everett Spear; and Gordon, Jessica, and Aaron Carlson; in addition to several nieces and nephews, extended family members and friends. In addition to Ralph's parents, he was preceded in death by his son, David Spear (Ellie), as well as his older sisters, Marion Eskildsen and Faith Andersen.

The family is deeply grateful for the care provided by ComForCare staff, particularly Ludwina Kotter, who helped care for Ralph in his last several months. Also, the family is thankful for the support of staff and friends of Heritage Greens Sr. Living. The staff of Wesley Long Medical Center, WhiteStone Skilled Nursing Facility, and AuthoraCare Hospice were also much appreciated during Ralph's final days.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be given in Ralph's honor to Bethel Presbyterian Church, 300 Knox Road, McLeansville, NC 27301, Christ Lutheran Church, 3600 Lawndale Drive, Greensboro, NC 27408, or a charity of your choice.

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/greensboro-nc/ralph-spear-11821551>

Succession Roster

We had a very strong response to our Sound Off request on Facebook, 80+ names. Zak is working on getting all the new information recorded. We will send out an updated Roster and Succession Roster in the July Sitrep. If you are not on Facebook, we are trying to capture the names of as many as possible of the ~15,000 soldiers who served in 1-52 and 76 Inf in Bamberg during the Cold War. Please see our current Succession Roster attached. We have made some progress on this roster, and we would like the momentum to continue.

What We Need:

1. We ask every soldier to look at the list and help us move names from below the grid into the grid. We also hope everyone will remember names we do not have and pass that to Bill Burt, along with whatever other information about their time in Bamberg, or their current contact information you might have.

2. Look for copies of old promotion orders, assignment orders, training courses, other documents that have your name and that of fellow soldiers. maybe TMP drivers training, gunner qualification, Nijmegen March...etc. Anything you have that documents soldiers in the battalion will be useful.

3. Remember the soldiers next to you in formation, on a vehicle with them, working with them in the motor pool, eating with them in the mess hall, or sharing pup tents or hot bagging sleeping bags.

Asking for Help is Part of Your Strength

A little boy was trying to lift a rock. His father was there watching the little fellow trying to move the rock. His dad heard him grunting and straining to roll the rock over. He asked the boy, "Are you using all your strength?" He answered, "Yes daddy I am using all my strength." The dad said, "No you're not." The little boy replied, a bit angrily, "Yes I am!". The dad replied, "No you're not, you haven't asked me to help you. Son I am part of your strength."

It may be one of the hardest things to do, but asking for help is part of your strength.

Some History

June Dates of Interest

<https://www.historyplace.com/specials/calendar/june.htm>

June 4, 1944 - During World War II in Europe, Rome was liberated by the U.S. 5th Army, led by General Mark Clark. Rome had been declared an open city by German Field Marshal Albert Kesselring amid Allied concerns the Germans might stage a Stalingrad-style defense that would devastate the historic 'Eternal' city.

June 6, 1944 - D-Day, the largest amphibious landing in history, began in the early-morning hours as Allied forces landed in Normandy on the northern coast of France. Operation Overlord took months of planning and involved 1,527,000 soldiers in 47 Allied divisions along with 4,400 ships and landing craft, and 11,000 aircraft. The Germans had about 60 divisions spread along France and the Low Countries. American forces landed on two western beaches, Utah and Omaha, while British and Canadian troops landed farther east on Gold, Juno and Sword beaches. By the end of the day 150,000 Allied soldiers and their accompanying vehicles had landed with 15,000 killed and wounded.

June 9, 1898 - The British signed a 99-year lease for Hong Kong, located on the southeastern coast of China. Hong Kong, consisting of an area measuring 400 square miles, was administered as a British Crown Colony until July 1, 1997, when its sovereignty reverted to the People's Republic of China.

June 10, 1652 - In Massachusetts, silversmith John Hull opened the first mint in America, in defiance of English colonial law. The first coin issued was the Pine Tree Shilling, designed by Hull.

June 10, 1942 - In one of the most infamous single acts of World War II in Europe, all 172 men and boys over age 16 in the Czech village of Lidice were shot by Nazis in reprisal for the assassination of SS leader Reinhard Heydrich. The women were deported to Ravensbrück concentration camp where most died. Ninety young children were sent to the concentration camp at Gneisenau, with some later taken to Nazi orphanages if they were German looking. The village was then completely leveled until not a trace remained.

June 11, 1994 - After 49 years, the Soviet military occupation of East Germany ended. At one time there had been 337,800 Soviet troops stationed in Germany. Over 300,000 Russians died during World War II in the Battle for Berlin.

June 12, 1898 - The Philippines declared their independence from Spain. The islands were named after King Philip II. Once freed from Spain, the islands were then invaded and occupied by U.S. forces. They became an American colony and remained so until after World War II.

June 14, 1775 - The first U.S. Military service, the Continental Army consisting of six companies of riflemen, was established by the Second Continental Congress. The next day, George Washington was appointed by a unanimous vote to command the army.

June 14, 1777 - John Adams introduced a resolution before Congress mandating a United States flag, stating, "...that the flag of the thirteen United States shall be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white on a blue field, representing a new constellation." This anniversary is celebrated each year in the U.S. as Flag Day.

June 14, 1922 - Warren G. Harding became the first U.S. President to broadcast a message over the radio. The event was the dedication of the Francis Scott Key Memorial in Baltimore.

June 18, 1812 - After much debate, the U.S. Senate voted 19 to 13 in favor of a declaration of war against Great Britain, prompted by Britain's violation of America's rights on the high seas and British incitement of Indian

warfare on the Western frontier. The next day, President James Madison officially proclaimed the U.S. to be in a state of war. The War of 1812 lasted over two years and ended with the signing of the Treaty of Ghent in Belgium on December 24, 1814.

June 19, 1865 - In Galveston, Texas, upon the arrival of Union troops, Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger read General Order No. 3: "The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States [President Lincoln], all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves..." As a result, an estimated 250,000 enslaved African Americans in Texas were finally freed. The day is now celebrated as Juneteenth to commemorate Emancipation and to recognize the struggle for freedom and equality of African Americans.

June 20, 1782 - The U.S. Congress officially adopted the Great Seal of the United States of America.

June 22, 1941 - Starting at 3:15 am, some 3.2 million German soldiers plunged headlong into Russia across an 1800-mile front, in a major turning point of World War II. At 7 am that morning, a proclamation from Hitler to the German people announced, "At this moment a march is taking place that, for its extent, compares with the greatest the world has ever seen..."

June 23, 1865 - The last formal surrender of Confederate troops occurred as Cherokee leader and Confederate Brigadier General Watie surrendered his battalion comprised of American Indians in the Oklahoma Territory.

June 24, 1948 - Soviet Russia began a blockade of Berlin. Two days later the Allies responded with an emergency airlift to relieve two million isolated West Berliners. During the Berlin Airlift, American and British planes flew about 278,000 flights, delivering 2.3 million tons of food, coal and medical supplies. A plane landed in Berlin every minute from eleven Allied staging areas in West Germany. The Russians lifted their blockade of Berlin on May 12, 1949, however the airlift continued until September 30th.

June 25, 1862 - During the American Civil War, the Seven Days Campaign began as Confederate General Robert E. Lee launched a series of assaults to prevent a Union attack on Richmond, Virginia. The Campaign included battles at Oak Grove, Gaine's Mills, Garnett's Farm, Golding's Farm, Savage's Station, White Oak Swamp and Malvern Hill, resulting in over 36,000 casualties on both sides. Despite losing the final assault at Malvern Hill, the Confederates succeeded in preventing the Union Army from taking Richmond.

June 25, 1876 - General George A. Custer, leading 250 men, attacked an encampment of Sioux Indians near Little Bighorn River in Montana. Custer and his men were then attacked by 2000-4000 Indian braves. Only one scout and a single horse survived 'Custer's Last Stand' on the Little Bighorn Battlefield. News of the humiliating defeat infuriated Americans and led to all out war. Within a year, the Sioux Indians were a broken and defeated nation.

June 25, 1950 - The Korean War began as North Korean troops, led by Russian-built tanks, crossed the 38th parallel and launched a full scale invasion of South Korea. Five days later, U.S. ground forces entered the conflict, which lasted until July 27, 1953, when an armistice was signed at Panmunjom, formally dividing the country at the 38th parallel into North and South Korea.

June 26, 1945 - The United Nations Charter was signed in San Francisco by 50 nations. The Charter was ratified on October 24, 1945.

June 28, 1862 - During the American Civil War, the siege of the Confederate city of Vicksburg began as Admiral David Farragut succeeded in taking a fleet past the Mississippi River stronghold. The siege continued over a year.

June 28, 1914 - Archduke Francis Ferdinand, Crown Prince of Austria and his wife were assassinated at Sarajevo, touching off a conflict between the Austro-Hungarian government and Serbia that escalated into World War I.

June 28, 1919 - The signing of the Treaty of Versailles formally ended World War I. According to the terms, Germany was assessed sole blame for the war, forced give up Alsace-Lorraine and overseas colonies, and pay reparations of \$15 Billion. The treaty also prohibited German rearmament.

Medal of Honor

MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT JOHN W. MEAGHER

<https://www.cmohs.org/recipients/john-w-meagher>



RANK: TECHNICAL SERGEANT

CONFLICT/ERA: WORLD WAR II

UNIT/COMMAND:

2D PLATOON, COMPANY E, 2D BATTALION, 305TH INFANTRY,
77TH INFANTRY DIVISION

MILITARY SERVICE BRANCH: U.S. ARMY

MEDAL OF HONOR ACTION DATE: JUNE 19, 1945

MEDAL OF HONOR ACTION PLACE: NEAR OZATO, OKINAWA, RYUKYU ISLANDS
CITATION

PRESENTATION DATE & DETAILS: JUNE 14, 1946

THE WHITE HOUSE (LAWN), PRESENTED BY PRES. HARRY S. TRUMAN

BORN: DECEMBER 5, 1917, JERSEY CITY, HUDSON COUNTY, NJ, UNITED STATES

DIED: APRIL 14, 1996, LYONS, NJ, UNITED STATES

BURIED: ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY (MH) (64-1701), ARLINGTON, VA, UNITED STATES

Citation: He displayed conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty. In the heat of the fight, he mounted an assault tank, and, with bullets splattering about him, designated targets to the gunner. Seeing an enemy soldier carrying an explosive charge dash for the tank treads, he shouted fire orders to the gunner, leaped from the tank, and bayoneted the charging soldier. Knocked unconscious and his rifle destroyed, he regained consciousness, secured a machine gun from the tank, and began a furious one-man assault on the enemy. Firing from his hip, moving through vicious crossfire that ripped through his clothing, he charged the nearest pillbox, killing six. Going on amid the hail of bullets and grenades, he dashed for a second enemy gun, running out of ammunition just as he reached the position. He grasped his empty gun by the barrel and in a violent onslaught killed the crew. By his fearless assault T/Sgt. Meagher singlehandedly broke the enemy resistance, enabling his platoon to take its objective and continue the advance.

VA News – Caring for Your Back and Neck

<https://www.veteranshealthlibrary.va.gov/LivingWith/BackNeck/caring/>

Relieving Back Pain

Back pain is a common problem. You can strain back muscles by lifting too much weight or just by moving the wrong way. Back strain can be uncomfortable, even painful. And it can take weeks to heal. To help yourself feel better and prevent future back strains, try these tips:

Ice - Ice reduces muscle pain and swelling. It helps most during the first 24 to 48 hours after an injury. Wrap an ice pack or a bag of frozen peas in a dishcloth. (Never place ice directly on your skin.) Place the ice where your back hurts the most. Don't ice for more than 20 minutes at a time. You should use ice several times a day.

Medicines - Over-the-counter medicines include aspirin, acetaminophen, and ibuprofen. They can help ease discomfort. Some also reduce swelling. Tell your health care provider about any medicines you are already taking. Take medicines only as directed.

Heat - After the first 48 hours, heat can relax sore muscles and improve blood flow. Try a warm bath or shower. Or use a heating pad set on low. To prevent a burn, keep a cloth between you and the heating pad. Don't use a heating pad for more than 15 minutes at a time. Never sleep on a heating pad.

Self-Care for Low Back Pain

Most people have low back pain now and then. In many cases, it isn't serious and self-care can help. Sometimes low back pain can be a sign of a bigger problem. Call your doctor if your pain returns often or gets

worse over time. For the long-term care of your back, get regular exercise, lose excess weight, and learn good posture.

Take a short rest - Rest your back for a day or two to begin healing. Use a firm mattress or the floor. Have your lower back firmly supported with a small pillow or towel. Keep your knees slightly bent, with another pillow under them. Every few hours, get up and walk as much as you can.

Reduce pain and swelling - Cold reduces swelling. Both cold and heat can reduce pain. Protect your skin by placing a towel between your body and the ice or heat source.

- For the first few days, apply an ice pack for 10–15 minutes every hour while you're awake.
- After the first few days, try heat to ease pain.
- Over-the-counter medicines can help control pain and swelling. Try aspirin or an aspirin substitute, such as ibuprofen.

Exercise - Exercise can help your back heal. It also helps your back get stronger and more flexible, preventing any reinjury. Ask your health care provider about specific exercises for your back.

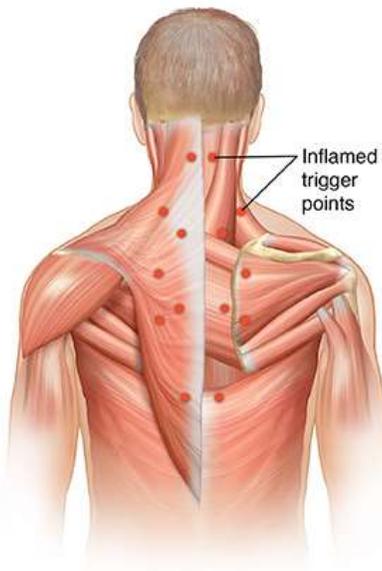
Use good posture to avoid reinjury. The following tips can help:

- When moving, bend at the hips and knees. Don't bend at the waist or twist around.
- When lifting, keep the object close to your body. Don't try to lift more than you can handle.
- When sitting, keep your lower back supported. Use a rolled-up towel as needed.

Call your health care provider if:

- You're unable to stand or walk.
- You have a temperature over 101.0°F.
- You have frequent, painful, or bloody urination.
- You have severe abdominal pain.
- You experience loss of bladder or bowel control.
- You have a sharp, stabbing pain.
- Your pain is constant.
- You have pain or numbness in your leg.
- You feel pain in a new area of your back.
- You notice that the pain isn't decreasing after more than a week.

Relieving Tension in Your Back



Being relaxed helps keep your mind healthy and your back ready to move. Take short breaks often. Walk around. Stretch. Switch tasks. And give these relaxation methods a try.

Deep breathing - Deep breathing is a simple way to reduce stress. You can do it almost any time you need to relax.

- Breathe in slowly through your nose. Let your lungs and stomach expand.
 - Hold your breath for 2 to 3 seconds.
 - Breathe out slowly through your mouth until your lungs feel empty.
- Repeat 3 to 4 times.

Guided imagery - This method helps you to visualize a calming environment. It uses all 5 senses to create a deeper sense of relaxation. Guided imagery can be done on your own. Or you can listen to someone talk you through it.

- Step 1. Sit or lie down in a comfortable space. Make sure there are no distractions.
- Step 2. Visualize a relaxing place. It could be a place you've been before. Or it may be a place you imagine.
- Step 3. Using your 5 senses, focus on what you see, hear, smell, taste, and feel in this place.
- Take slow, deep breaths during this exercise. Focus on how calm this relaxing place makes you feel.

Box breathing - This is a type of deep breathing exercise. As the name suggests, it helps to visualize a box with 4 equal sides as you do the exercise. Box breathing can be very helpful with relaxation.

It is done in 4 easy steps:

- Step 1. Breathe in through your nose for a count of 4.
- Step 2. Hold your breath for a count of 4.
- Step 3. Breathe out for a count of 4.
- Step 4. Hold your breath for a count of 4.
- Repeat.

Adjust the length of the steps as needed (for instance, 2 seconds instead of 4 seconds for each step).

Relieve tension - Muscle tension can create tender spots called trigger points. The tips below may help ease muscle tension.

- Press the trigger point if you can reach it. If not, lie on a soft tennis ball, or ask a friend to press the spot. Use steady pressure for 10 to 15 seconds. Breathe deeply. Repeat a few times.
- Massage trigger points with ice for 2 to 5 minutes. Press lightly at first. Slowly increase firmness.

Progressive muscle relaxation - This is a widely used relaxation method. It is sometimes called deep muscle relaxation. The aim is to become more aware of your body and learn to become physically and mentally relaxed. It also helps to reduce muscle tension caused by stress. Relaxing in this way can help you cope better with stress.

- Start by focusing on a certain group of muscles.
- First, actively relax these muscles.
- Then tense the muscles for a short while.
- Next, fully relax them again.
- Repeat these steps with other muscle groups until your whole body is relaxed.

Be careful not to tense to the point of physical pain. And be mindful to take slow, deep breaths throughout the exercise.

Neck Problems: Relieving Your Symptoms

The first goal of treatment is to relieve your symptoms. Your healthcare provider may recommend self-care treatments. These include resting, applying ice and heat, taking medicine, and doing exercises. Your healthcare provider may also recommend that you try physical therapy.

Self-care treatments - Pain can end quickly or last a while. Either way, you'll want relief as soon as possible. Your healthcare provider can tell you which treatments to do at home to help relieve your pain:

- Lying down for a short time takes pressure from the head off the neck.
- Ice and heat can help reduce pain. To bring down swelling, rest an ice pack wrapped in a thin towel on your neck for 10 to 15 minutes. To relax sore muscles, apply a warm, wet towel to the area. Or you can take a warm bath or shower.
- Over-the-counter medicines such as ibuprofen, naproxen, and aspirin can help reduce pain and swelling. Acetaminophen can help relieve pain. Use these only as directed.
- Exercises can relax muscles and ease stiffness. To prepare, drape a warm, wet towel around your neck and shoulders for 5 minutes. Remove the towel. Then do any exercises recommended to you by your healthcare provider.
- Reducing stress may help prevent recurring neck pain. Emotional stress can increase neck tension. It can make your recovery take longer. Activities that may help reduce stress include deep breathing and meditation.

Medical therapies - If self-care treatments aren't helping relieve neck pain, your healthcare provider may suggest physical therapy.

- **Physical therapy** is done by a specialist trained to treat injuries and musculoskeletal disorders. Your physical therapist (PT) will teach you how to strengthen muscles, improve the spine's alignment, and help you move properly. Treatment methods used in physical therapy may include:
- **Heat.** A special heating pad called a neck pack may be applied to your neck.

- **Exercises.** Your PT will teach you exercises to help strengthen your neck and improve its range of motion.
- **Joint mobilization.** The PT gently moves your vertebrae to help restore motion in your neck joints and reduce neck pain.
- **Soft tissue mobilization.** The PT massages and stretches the muscles in your neck and shoulders.
- **Electrical stimulation.** Electrical impulses are sent into your neck. This helps reduce soreness and inflammation.
- **Education in body mechanics.** The PT shows you ways to position and move your body that protect the neck.
- **Other treatments** If self-care and physical therapy don't relieve your neck pain, your healthcare provider may suggest other treatments. For example, medicines or injections can help relieve pain and swelling. In some cases, surgery may be needed to treat neck problems.

Merchandise for Sale:

Unit Crest Hats



We still have hats from the reunion, for sale. Contact me if you are interested. The cost is \$20.00 We have 6 left, but more can be ordered.



Coins for Sale

We have a several coins for sale. They are left over from the 2021 San Antonio Reunion and the 2023 Washington DC reunion. See the

pictures below.

Coasters for Sale

We also have sets of coasters. A set comes with one 1st Armor Division patch and one 52-unit crest. We do have some 6th infantry crests on a few if you want one of those instead on a 52-unit crest. The cost is \$12.50 for a pair. More coasters can be ordered.



You can pay for them in several ways.

How to Pay

Check, payable to "Veteran of the 52nd and 6th Infantry Regiments, Inc". Mail to Mike Streff 25 South Point Lane, Moneta, Virginia 24121 PayPal <https://www.152-76inf-coldwarvetsbamberg.org/support-our-cause> You can pay using credit card through PayPal or use PayPal to pay. Use "Support our Cause" button – and specify what items you are purchasing. All proceeds go into our general fund.

VENMO. @Michael-Streff-1

Zelle – Use phone number 703-599-3723

Purchase your 52nd and 6th Infantry Gear



Figure 1 Left Sleeve

Bill Burt has information on the purchase of 52nd and 6th Infantry logo clothing and hats.

Go to the web site: <https://the52and6infantry.qbstores.com/home> or a link is posted on the groups website: <https://www.152-76inf-coldwarvetsbamberg.org/>

VA Information and Helpful Phone Numbers

Find a VA location

Main VA phone numbers

MyVA411 main information line

[800-698-2411](tel:800-698-2411)

Hours: 24/7

Telecommunications Relay Services (using TTY)

[711](tel:711)

Hours: 24/7

VA health care

VA health benefits hotline

[877-222-8387](tel:877-222-8387)

Hours: Monday through Friday,

8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET

My HealtheVet help desk

[877-327-0022](tel:877-327-0022)

Hours: Monday through Friday,

8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET

Civilian Health and Medical Program of the
Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA)

[800-733-8387](tel:800-733-8387)

Hours: Monday through Friday,

8:05 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. ET

CHAMPVA Meds by Mail

[888-385-0235](tel:888-385-0235)

Hours: Monday through Friday,

8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. MT

[866-229-7389](tel:866-229-7389)

Hours: Monday through Friday,

8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. ET

Foreign Medical Program (FMP)

[877-345-8179](tel:877-345-8179)

Hours: Monday through Friday,

8:05 a.m. to 6:45 p.m. ET

Quit VET (get help from a counselor to stop
smoking)

[855-784-8838](tel:855-784-8838)

Hours: Monday through Friday,
9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET

MISSION Act

[800-698-2411](tel:800-698-2411), Select 1

Hours: 24/7

Spina Bifida Health Care Benefits Program

[888-820-1756](tel:888-820-1756)

Hours: Monday through Friday,

8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ET

Caregiver support line

[855-260-3274](tel:855-260-3274)

Hours: Monday through Friday,

8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. ET, and

Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET

VA benefits

VA benefits hotline

[800-827-1000](tel:800-827-1000)

Hours: Monday through Friday,

8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET

GI Bill hotline

[888-442-4551](tel:888-442-4551)

Hours: Monday through Friday,
8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ET

Students outside the U.S.

[+1-918-781-5678](tel:+1-918-781-5678) This isn't toll-free.

Hours: Monday through Friday,
8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ET

VA loan guaranty service

[877-827-3702](tel:877-827-3702)

Hours: Monday through Friday,
8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. ET.

National pension call center

[877-294-6380](tel:877-294-6380)

Hours: Monday through Friday,
8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET

Support for SGLI or VGLI

[800-419-1473](tel:800-419-1473)

Hours: Monday through Friday,
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET

All other VA life insurance programs

[800-669-8477](tel:800-669-8477)

Hours: Monday through Friday,
8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. ET

Special issue hotline (Blue Water Navy Act, Gulf War, Agent Orange, and other information)

[800-749-8387](tel:800-749-8387)

Hours: Monday through Friday,
8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. ET

Burials and memorials

National Cemetery Scheduling Office

[800-535-1117](tel:800-535-1117)

Hours: Every day, 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. ET
Headstones and markers

[800-697-6947](tel:800-697-6947)

Hours: Monday through Friday,
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET

Other VA support

Women Veterans hotline

[855-829-6636](tel:855-829-6636)

Hours: Monday through Friday,
8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. ET, and
Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. ET

eBenefits technical support

[800-983-0937](tel:800-983-0937)

Hours: Monday through Friday,
8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET

Debt Management Center (collection of nonmedical debts)

[800-827-0648](tel:800-827-0648)

Hours: Monday through Friday,
7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. ET

Vets Center call center

[877-927-8387](tel:877-927-8387)

Hours: 24/7

White House VA hotline

[855-948-2311](tel:855-948-2311)

Hours: 24/7

Veterans Crisis Line [800-273-8255](tel:800-273-8255), Select 1
Hours: 24/7

Websites and Contact Info.

We have 3 websites. Our main website for distribution of information is <https://www.152-76inf-coldwarvetsbamberg.org/>. This is also the one that you can register for the reunion on. Also we are on Facebook, search the groups for 1st Battalion 52nd Infantry Bamberg Germany. The Facebook group is a public group. The other site is on the Ning network at <http://deltacompany-52nd-inf.ning.com/>, which is a private site where you need to have served in 1-52 to be able to enter. Please answer the question when requesting to enter these groups. My contact information is either by phone at 507-696-8429 or Email at Bill.Burt@152-76inf-coldwarvetsbamberg.org. You can also contact us through our main website <https://www.152-76inf-coldwarvetsbamberg.org/>.