

Taro Leaf

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24TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION

TARO



LEAF

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE 24TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION - FOUNDED 1945



TIGER
TANKS
OF THE
KOREAN
WAR



Cover Story
Page 14

John Klump's World War II Story

Sadly, John E. Klump passed away Sept. 28, 2016. Klump was a 24th IDA Life Member and a past president of the association. The following is an excerpt from **Legends of Indiana Post 452**, a story written by John Crosby for the American Legion Department of Indiana, and published online March 29, 2016.

John Klump was born in his father's tavern in New Alsace, Indiana, in 1925. The bar - Klump's - had been opened by his father in 1914. His father was also a corn and bean farmer. Klump, the youngest of nine children, knew his elder brothers would eventually run the farm, so he volunteered for the draft.

He was drafted into the U.S. Army two weeks after graduating high school in 1944, trained as an infantryman in the 24th Infantry Division and deployed to the Philippines. Klump soon found himself in the heat of action. His unit spearheaded the invasion of Leyte.

KLUMP'S WWII STORY

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24



John Klump shows his U.S. Army photo from 72 years ago. Klump recently passed away. He was 91. See **FALLEN COMRADES** - Page 20. Photo by Johny Crosby.

24th ID Veteran Recalls Pacific Island Battles

Hobert Yeager was 18 and working in a gas field in rural West Virginia when he received a draft notice in the mail in 1943.

"I didn't think much about it at the time, I guess. A close buddy of mine was also drafted the same day," Yeager said. The two left for boot camp together, but after training they were separated. His buddy fought in Germany while Yeager was sent to the South Pacific.

"My buddy didn't make it home," Yeager, now 92 years old, recalled.

24TH ID ISLAND BATTLES

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25



World War II veteran Hobert Yeager rests at the WW II memorial during an Honor Flight trip to Washington, D.C. in November of 2012. Yeager was drafted in 1943 and served in the Pacific Theater where he fought battles on Leyte Island with the 21st Infantry Regiment. U.S. Air Force photo by Sr.A. Kelly Galloway

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Taro Leaf, Volume 70, Issue 4, Fall 2016

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**COMING
UP NEXT**

Taro Leaf, Winter, Issue 1, Vol. 71
Deadline for submissions: 01/01/2017
Delivered to members by: 02/15/2017



Greetings, Taro Men & Wives, Kids, Grand Kids

Well, another reunion is in the history books. San Antonio, Texas, was a great pick for this year's reunion. We had a great time. I really want to thank everyone who attended this event, especially the WWII & Korean Veterans and their wives that made the long trip

from all over the United States. Also, a big thanks to the children and grand children who accompanied our 24th IDA members. Our WWII and Korean Veterans are heroes, and are a part of history. We will never forget our brave 24th ID soldiers. First to Fight, Victory.

We really had a great reunion. I must say our hospitality suite was well stocked with a variety of snacks and many types of refreshment. A big thanks goes to Mike Frederick of Frederick Management Events for coordinating this year's reunion.

Every day of the reunion started with a free breakfast buffet. On Monday, we took a city tour and had a very nice luncheon at The Mi Tierra Café. Our guide was very well versed on all the city highlights. We went into a very famous Cathedral in the heart of the city - what a beautiful interior - not to mention the complete tour of the famous Alamo.

On Tuesday, the men's & ladies' breakfast was delightful with our annual members meeting. My tenure as president has ended and Don Maggio will be our newly-elected president. Don was a previous leader several years ago and graciously has agreed to lead again. Our next venture, Tuesday, took us to Fort Sam Houston. We toured the medical museum. What an experience it was to see all the medical achievements the U.S. Army has evolved throughout the years. Very impressive!

Then, on Wednesday, we travelled to the San Antonio Missions and River Walk Cruise. There are a total of five missions in and around the San Antonio area. The missions were a part of how the Spanish brought Catholicism to this famous area.

After a break for several hours, we all attended our Memorial Banquet. Our guest speaker was Bob Driscoll, a retired U.S. Army Major, and the director of the Army Medical History and Heritage Center at Fort Sam Houston.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
CONTINUED ON PAGE 25



A Big Thank You!

I want to start by sending out a big thank you to everyone who submitted stories for the Taro Leaf.

I really appreciate your help. Please keep your stories, photos, and letters coming. I look forward to hearing from all of our 24th IDA members.

I am working hard to provide balanced coverage in each issue of the Taro Leaf. Troops from every era (World War II, Korea, The Cold War, and Desert Storm) will be represented in some way in every issue of the Taro Leaf. So, if you don't see your story published right away, it might be because I have too many stories from a particular era and I'm saving your item for the next issue.

But, please don't think I have too many stories! The Taro Leaf will **always** need your stories. I just don't have room to run them all in any one single issue. To provide balanced coverage, I may have to spread some stories out over the four issues we publish every year.

I also have to set priorities based on a story's timeliness. Time sensitive items are given top priority. This includes things like reunion news, or timely news items. Also, stories from World War II vets always take top priority to publish, since we are losing so many of our WWII members to the passage of time.

Each issue also features a "cover story," focusing on a different era of the 24th Infantry Division's history. Last issue, Summer 2016, the cover story featured Desert Storm veterans. This issue's Fall cover story highlights the Tiger Tanks of Korea. The Winter 2017 cover story will be about Taro Leaf troops in Germany, and the Spring 2017 cover story will feature World War II vets. Each issue, I will announce the cover story topic for the next issue, and will always invite members to contribute their stories about that topic.

The Taro Leaf is your publication - it is what you make it. Please email me at 24thTaroLeaf@gmail.com or you can write to me at:

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Finally, I want to welcome our new president, Don Maggio, and thank our outgoing-president, Tom Appler, for all his great service. Victory!

JW Sternickle

HARROWING TALE OF SURVIVAL IN CAPTIVITY

EDWARD "GRADY" HALCOMB completed his medic training and spent 13 months on the American base at Okinawa. A week before his tour was up, Halcomb was told he and some other soldiers wouldn't be going home after all. It was early June, 1950.

"They loaded us up on a Japanese tug and we took off," he said. "After we got out to sea, they told us where we was going.

"Everybody said, 'What the hell is in Korea?'

"Well, we found out real quick like."

On June 25, 1950, 135,000 North Korean soldiers - hardened from years of Imperial Japanese occupation, fighting with Soviet weapons and planning - poured across the 38th parallel in South Korea.

The ill-equipped and ill-trained post-WWII American and ROK (Republic of Korea) soldiers, though they fought fiercely, were quickly pushed back. Halcomb, now a medic with the 1st Battalion, 29th Infantry Regiment, found himself in the middle of a horrifying bullet-point in history.

"We hit Pusan and then they loaded us up in trucks and took us up to Chinju, and on the 26th of July, they sent us to a little town called Anui," he said. "At the same time, they told us we were backing up the 3rd Battalion of the 29th, which was 45 miles away.

"That was a hell of a backup. They evidently told them that they were backing us up."

Halcomb's situation, along with the rest of the American soldiers, quickly deteriorated. "Well, they hit us both at the same time and annihilated both battalions," Halcomb said. "There was 11 of us left at one o'clock in the morning on July 27."

Halcomb and a handful of other survivors made a last stand at Anui's schoolhouse. "They was throwing grenades down the hall at this school, and we were picking them up and throwing them back," he said. "We'd run out of ammunition.

"At 1:30 in the morning, we surrendered to them."

The war had only been on for one month, so the men, who would be among the first POWs of the war, had no idea if they would be summarily executed, treated humanely or something in between.

"That morning, they came in and took our nice, pretty combat boots from us and give us their little old short shoes," Halcomb said. "We had to cut the toes out of them in order to be able to fit, and our toes were hanging out of the front of them. That's how we started our march north."

"The entire march American POWs who were too injured or too sick to keep up were shot in roadside ditches and alongside mountain trails."

As Halcomb's group moved from Auni, to Taejon, to Seoul, it was joined by hundreds of other American POWs, bringing the total to 376.

The senior medic in the group, Halcomb's job was to set up a sick room wherever the men ended up. "That's a lot of what kept me going during that time," he said. "I knew I had a responsibility as the senior medic to look after the rest of the men."

The group was force-marched all the way to Pyongyang, North Korea's capital, after American-led U.N. forces began to turn the tide and kick the North Koreans back across the 38th parallel and beyond.

The entire march American POWs who were too injured or too sick to keep up were shot in roadside ditches and alongside mountain trails. They were also strafed by some U.S. aircraft.

TALE OF SURVIVAL
CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

By the time the group finally reached the North Korean capital, 296 POWs clung to life, according to W. Thomas McDaniel's book, "The Major."

"We were losing eight or ten a day on the march and after we got into Pyongyang," Halcomb said.

The starvation and deaths continued in Pyongyang, but the remaining POWs began to spot B-29 Super Fortress bombers, indicating U.S. forces were closing in.

Halcomb was put on burial detail. The North Koreans allowed the Americans to bury their dead in a Christian village about a mile or so from the school where they were held.

"When we'd leave, I'd tell them (the civilians) maybe tomorrow I'd need three or four more graves and they'd dig them for us that night and have them ready for us when we got there," Halcomb said.

"It was now or never for Halcomb."

But the sympathetic civilians also provided something else of value: information. They gave Halcomb and the others on the burial detail updates on the approaching U.N. forces.

One day in early October, the burial detail came back to a stomach-churning site. "We came back to the compound and they had all the troops lined up and ready to head out for Manchuria," Halcomb said.

With the frigid Korean winter fast approaching and most of the POWs too weak to make such a march, hopes for surviving and finding some way to once again reach U.S. soil were all but gone.

"We had talked about escaping," he said. "There was

five of us on the burial detail. As it all wound up, we left out down this little roadway about wide enough for four abreast and all the guards lined up in the rear or up at the front of the column."

It was now or never for Halcomb.

He and his four pals from the burial detail waited for their opening. "We came to this little entrance way between two buildings and the five of us ran up in there," he said. "It was a dead end about from here to the wall, so we ran out and fell back in with the group.

"We went about another 50 yards and did it again, and they were marching this way so we just hugged that wall. They marched right on past us."

Halcomb, 1st Lt. James B. Smith, Cpl. Jack Arakawa, Sgt. 1st Class Robert Morris and Sgt. William Jones hid in an abandoned house for five days.

"At the Christian settlement, they told us that the Americans were going to be there on the 20th of October," Halcomb said. "So we got on the outskirts of Pyongyang and broke into this house that was deserted because that whole part of the village had headed for the hills, evidently.

"Luckily, there was a big urn full of water and a couple of small ones, one with flour and the other had sesame seeds in it."

Five days later, Halcomb spotted a South Korean flag. They were saved.

Just what they were saved from, Halcomb would not know until later. Halcomb had just missed being killed during the Suncheon Tunnel Massacre.

"In October, 1950, at Pyongyang, when the fall of the city appeared imminent, the Communists loaded approximately 180 American prisoners into open railroad cars for transport northward," according a U.S. Senate report on Korean War crimes. "These men were survivors of the Seoul-Pyongyang death march and were weak from lack of food, water and medical care. They rode unprotected in the raw climate for four or five days, arriving at the Suncheon Tunnel on October 30, 1950."

Distinguished Service Cross Citation

The President of the United States of America (authorized Act of Congress 9 July 1918) has awarded the Distinguished Service Cross to Private First Class Edward G. Halcomb, Company B, First Battalion, 29th Infantry Regiment for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed enemy from 20 August 1950 to 19 October 1950 on the Korean Peninsula. Wounded, captured and imprisoned in Seoul after the Battle of Anui, Private First Class Halcomb despite his junior rank, assumed the responsibilities of chief medic, caring for the American Prisoners of War. He supervised nine other medics and cared for the most severely wounded while exposing himself to rampant diseases afflicting the starving and dying patients. When the enemy retreated from Seoul, he alone volunteered to stay with the weakest prisoners who were forced to walk with the main column on a grueling 120 mile march to Pyongyang. By placing himself with the most disabled, Private First Class Halcomb increased the probably of his own execution as the enemy guards executed soldiers whose physical condition became a burden or slowed the pace. Once the column reached Pyongyang, he helped plan and conduct a successful daring escape with four other soldiers from the heavily guarded city. He demonstrated persistent courage, compassion and self-sacrifice in the face of enemy brutality and starvation. Private First Class Halcomb's actions are in keeping with the finest traditions of military service and reflect credit upon himself, the 24th Infantry Division and the United States Army.

Halcomb knows the story well. The men killed in the Suncheon Tunnel Massacre were friends.

"They took the major and all the prisoners that was left and told them to go up in this train tunnel and they was going to go get them some food," he said.

"So the major took them all and told them to go in, sit down and rest. The North Koreans set up machine guns and just opened fire, fanning fire, into the tunnel there."

A handful managed to play dead and elude the North Koreans.

"With all of them that had escaped and the ones that played dead there in the tunnel, there was 52 of us left out of the 376 (original POWs)," Halcomb said.

Right after the massacre, U.S. Army paratroopers

landed in the vicinity of the Suncheon Tunnel.

"My brother happened to be one of the troopers," he said. Halcomb's brother, Earl, knew Grady was missing in action and hadn't yet learned of his escape.

"He went through that tunnel," Halcomb said as his lips quivered, "rolling boys over... looking for me. A day or so later, he seen the Stars & Stripes - I don't know how in the hell he got one up there in a fox-hole, but he got one - there was a picture of me."

In 2016, Halcomb was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions during the Korean War.

SEE PAGE 27 FOR MORE ABOUT HALCOMB'S AWARD
This article is an excerpt from a story by Clifford Davids. The story originally appeared online at the Florida Times-Union's Jacksonville.com website.

LETTERS AND ITEMS FROM THE INTERNET

DEAR EDITOR

Today I received the Summer issue. Good Job.

Read the story about the Solopilots. Very interesting. Happy that I never required their service. I read the article to say that the “Copters” were imbedded in the year 1951. But in my time of Jul. 1951 thru Feb. 1954, I never saw one.

As I recall, my first month was about 1/8 mile south of the MLR and within walking distance, behind us, to an Aid Station. I was there a few weeks when our Triple A outfit was moved to the rear. After a week at Battalion Headquarters, we were sent with our the M16 half-track (with turret mounted quad 50s) to guard a bridge a few miles east of Chun Chou. And I never saw a “Copter” when in that area. Just wondering.

*Sincerely,
Marvin Reed*

325th Tank Battalion, 24th ID



Company “A” 2nd Platoon, 1st of the 19th, 24th ID (Mech) Nov. 1965, Turkey.
Photo found on Facebook, from John J. Bates.



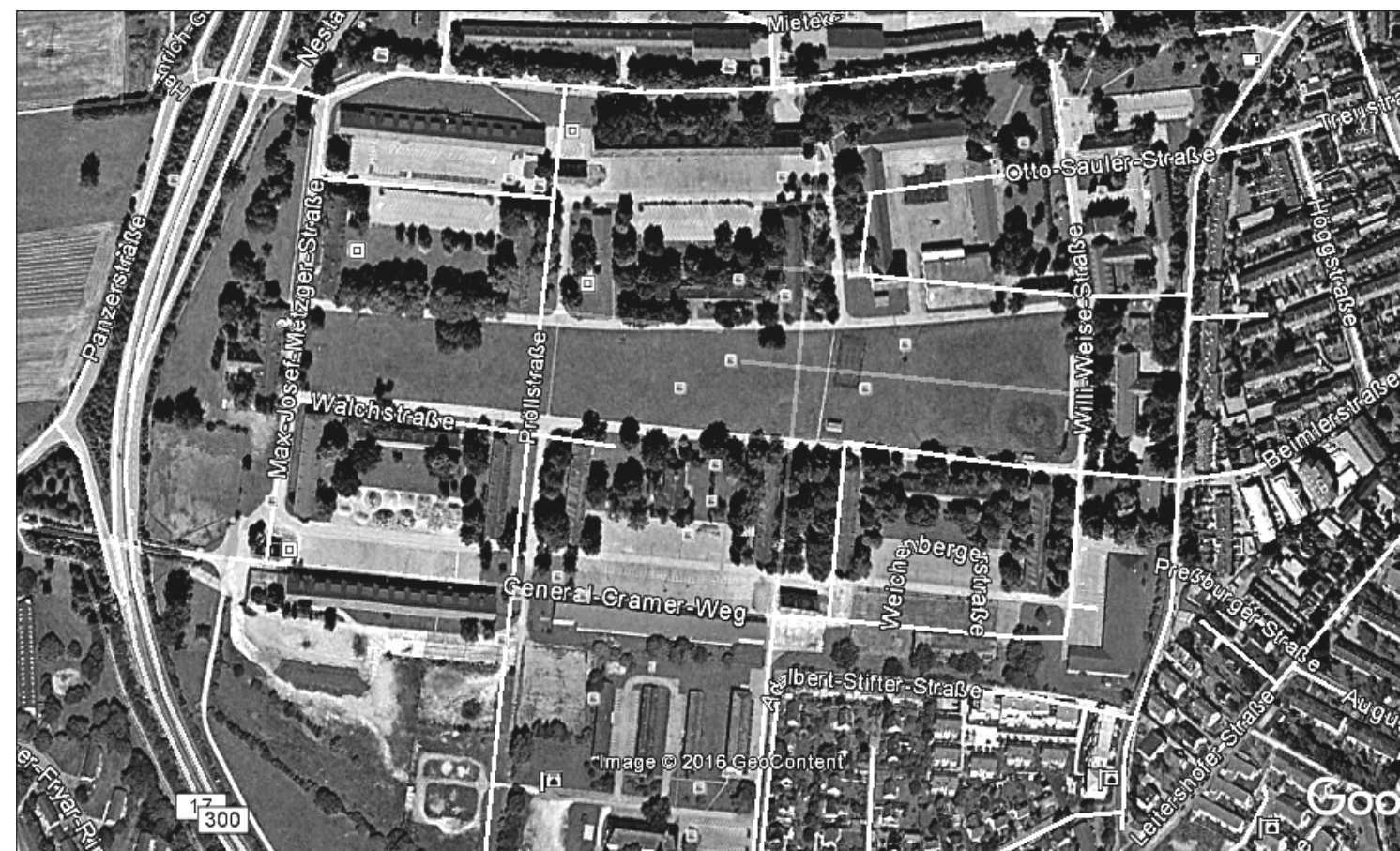
1st Plt, D. Co, 2/7th Inf
Also with HHC, Scouts, 2/7th

From James Caza

FROM - Wesley Morrison

Received an email from Lacy Barnett (Med Co, 34th Inf, Japan & Korea, 49-51) wanting to know if anyone is interested in purchasing sheets of the 1982 Korean War Postage Stamp. He has these stamps in sheets of 50 & 100. In later emails, he indicates he has an extensive collection of Ryukyuan (Okinawa) Stamps issued when Okinawa was under the US Administration.

Anyone interested, please contact Barnett directly at abarnett27@frontier.com.



Remembering Sheridan Kaserne, Augsburg, Germany

STORY BY THOMAS APPLER

Above is an image of Sheridan Kaserne in Augsburg. This image is from September of 2001. Most 24th Infantry Division members who served there will recognize the parade field in the middle of the photo. From there, they can remember where they were billeted.

On the right side of the parade field was a mess hall and the HQ Support Command during the period of January 1964 through September 1966. On the left side was a mess hall for the other side of the kaserne. The main gate was on the right side of the parade field. The 24th Infantry Division was a reserve division in Germany during this time.

I worked in the Transportation Office on Sheridan Kaserne. We had the responsibility to coordinate convoys to the training areas mostly Hoenfels and Grafenwehr, that operate to this day.

We also had the responsibility to get all military freight moving from the 24th Infantry Division back to the USA.

By July, 2007, Sheridan Kaserne had been completely torn down - all 163 acres of it. The City of Augsburg was going to convert this land into an industrial park complex and shopping areas. The only buildings that remain on Sheridan Kaserne are the Chapel and the Officers Club building.

Kaserne translates as “barracks.” It is the typical term used when naming the garrison location for American forces stationed in Germany.

Other kaserns in Augsburg that have been torn down include Infantry Kaserne, Flak Kaserne, and Gablingen Kaserne. Reese Kaserne is the only kaserne remaining (when this story was published in 2007).

From the Taro Leaf, Vol 61(1&2) Winter-Spring 2007.

HELP!

We need your stories about Germany!

The next issue of the Taro Leaf (Winter 2017) will feature the 24th in Germany.

Send your story today. 24thTaroLeaf@Gmail.com

THIS ISSUE'S QUESTION: What was your most memorable military meal?

MEMORABLE MEAL

November, 1951. I was a PFC with Headquarters Company, 19th Inf. Regiment, 24th Infantry Division. My time came up for R & R in Japan, we were flown from Korea to Camp Drake, Japan. We arrived late at night, approximately 11 or 12 at night. We were given the first bed that I had slept in in 8 months, clean sheets, shower, and Class A uniform. The meal that night was ribeye steak, baked potato, salad, desert, and fresh milk. That was the best meal that I can remember in 24th Inf. Division.

*B.G. Gene E. Spicer (Retired)
Commiskey, IN*



Desert Shield Dinner with President Bush. Thanksgiving, 1990.

SOMALIA STORY

My most memorable meal while in the 24th ID was when I was deployed to Somalia for Operation Restore Hope. 1/64 Armor arrived in Somalia in October 1993. We were eating MREs and T-Rats for quite some time. November, when Camp Victory was set up to occupy, we had a decent chow hall built. Thanksgiving was T-Rat turkey. However, when Christmas came around, pizza was sent over packed in dry ice for the soldiers deployed to Somalia. The pizza was sent to us by Pizza Hut, if I remember correctly. The pizza was actually terrible, the dry ice ruined the pizza, it was tough as nails and dry. But because we have been eating MREs and T-Rats for awhile, it was a welcomed change. We were also starting to eat regular food, but the Pizza Hut pizza was definitely the most memorable.

*Phil Bouffard
1st Battalion, 64th AR*

KOREAN KPs

During the Korean War we had Koreans acting as KPs. It got to the point they learned how it was done, and so took over many of the cooks duties. This was fine with us, as we considered them better cooks than our own.

One time, we had an inspection from 8th Army who stayed over for dinner. The KPs faded back into their jobs as the assigned GI cooks served the meal. As soon as the inspectors left, the Koreans took over cooking, and the meal that night was considered one of the best.

*Carl Wipperman
724th Ord, Korea
June 1950 - July 1951*

EGG-CELLENT APPETITE

I was reading this request in my Taro Leaf and thought of my experience in Korea. I was in Korea for 17 months, and near the end of that tour, we had fresh eggs one morning - the only time we had fresh eggs in 17 months. On that morning, the cook, named Joe, asked me how many eggs I wanted. As a joke, I told him, "fourteen." He said, "I'm cooking you 14, and you had better eat them." I did eat all 14 eggs with about 6 slices of toast and cereal. I had a terrific appetite while I was in the Army for two years. I was in Korea Dec. 1953 to Apr. 1955.

*Charles "Tommy" Northam, Jr.
Princess Anne, MD
Life Member*

NEXT ISSUE'S QUESTION

What's your favourite story about your best military friend?

Send your one-paragraph answer to the editor.

Don't delay, send your answers today! 24thTaroLeaf@gmail.com

From Pitch Black to Daylight Embarrassing Moments in Battle

STORY BY THOMAS F. CACCIOLA

In the Chorwon area (North Korea), Able Battery 955 Field Artillery Battalion received march orders to move into the valley, quietly and in the dead of the night (about 10 to 11 p.m.).

It was a moonless night. No one was allowed to turn on a flashlight or light a cigarette.

The lights on the "CATs" (Caterpillar-made tractors that pulled the 7 ½ ton 155mm guns) were not on. The mess (food) truck (with no lights) was making coffee and hot soup and the roads were full of dust.

When the mess sergeant yelled, "Coffee and soup ready," guys were stumbling over one another in the dark farmland valley to get to them.

It was so dark, and so much road dust got into the large coffee containers, that all I got was a cup of mud.

The cook said, "Just skim the dirt off the top." Dirt or no dirt, the coffee tasted awful.

Anyway, the Chinese troops were to get a surprise from our artillery! We set up quietly and in the dark. We were at one end of the valley, all ready to fire, when suddenly an Army searchlight unit at the other side turned its lights directly on us and our guns.

Their job was to expose the Chinese in the dark, I guess. The huge searchlights (five to six feet in diameter) were resting on Army flatbed trucks, powered by gas generators. The unit probably had five to six big lights.

"A" Battery guys (including myself) were petrified! We were perfect targets for the Chinese artillery. Maybe the searchlight unit thought

955th FA With 24th ID

Excerpt from, "24th Infantry Division Taro News," May, 1951.

The 955th FA Bn, commanded by Lt. Col. Knowlton, was attached to this division on 8 April, 1951 and has since done a fine job of keeping those 155 MM howitzer projectiles going out when needed.

Reflecting some of the old "Dodger hustle," these boys from Brooklyn have fired over 17,000 rounds in support of the infantry.

The Battalion is a New York National Guard unit recalled to active duty the 19th of August 1950 and trained at Fort Lewis, Washington. Approximately 40% of its members are from Brooklyn. (That's a village on the eastern sea-coast of the U.S.A., in the quaint providence of New York.)

They arrived at Pusan on the 2nd of February, 1951, and after a short period of conditioning on the Korean roads and mountains, moved north to join the fight.

Some 2,200 Chinese, if they could talk, could testify that the Battalion knows its business.

Needless to say, the Division is glad to have Lt. Colonel Knowlton and his "955th" around.

*Submitted by Thomas F. Cacciola - (201) 567-7279.
24th Infantry Division Taro News, Vol. II, No. 9, 21 May, 1951.*

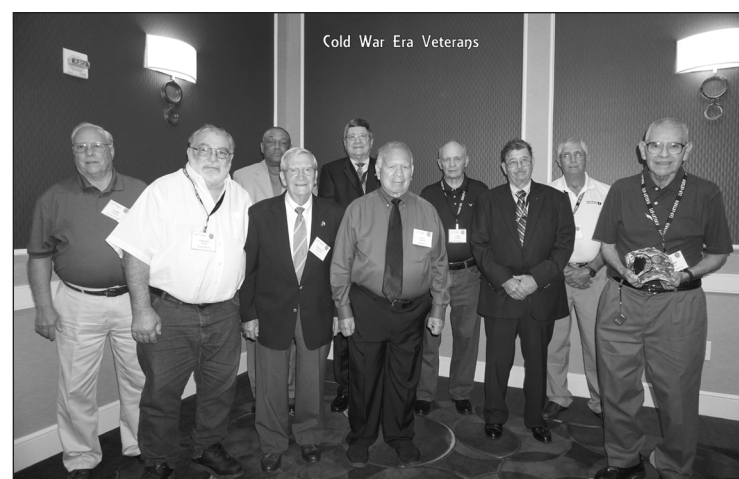
we were the Chinese. Fortunately they shut off their lights within 2-3 minutes, and everything went pitch black again.

What an experience. Not one Chinese unit fired at us. They could not find our position in the pitch black night. Thank God!

Originally published in "Graybeards," the Official Publication of the Korean War Veterans Association, July/August, 2016.

Submitted by Thomas F. Cacciola.
He can be reached at (201) 567-7279.

SAN ANTONIO REUNION PHOTOS SEPT. 2016



Cover Story



(Above) David Teich, Sr., on top of his M46 Patton tank, Cora-G (named after his wife). Tank crews attached to the 24th Infantry Division painted tiger faces on their tanks, thinking it would scare superstitious North Korean troops.

TIGER TANKS OF THE KOREAN WAR

Tank crews from the 6th Tank Battalion were attached to the 24th Infantry Division during the Korean War. For a short period, their M46 Patton tanks were painted with a unique yellow “Tiger Face” design. Commanders ordered tiger faces painted on tanks as a part of a psychological warfare campaign, thinking that “Tiger Tanks” would scare superstitious Chinese and North Korean troops.

According to the Chinese Zodiac, there are 12 animals and five elements associated with the calendar. February 1950 to February 1951 was the Year of the Tiger. The five elements of the calendar include earth, wood, water, fire, and metal. Metal was the element associated with 1950-1951, so US commanders thought that a “metal tiger” would be sure to frighten the North Korean troops.

But, enemy troops were not superstitious and did not flee in terror at the sight of the “Tiger-Faced” tanks. In fact, the bright yellow tanks became easy targets.



“Many of our tiger tanks were being wiped out because the tiger painting made the tanks an obvious target,” explained David Teich, who was with the 6th Tank Battalion. “It sure made my tank, Number 51, stand out a very long way off. You couldn’t hide it. We had to repaint all of them back to their original OD color (olive drab). I have seen many different versions of the Tiger paintings but in my opinion the 6th Medium Tank version was the best one.”

According to Teich, the job of designing the “Tiger Face” was given to Capt. John McCrary, commander of Company “C,” 6th Tank Battalion.

McCrary had a natural eye for art, so he went out to most of the tank companies and, using chalk, he outlined the faces of the tigers. Crews were then issued paint and many painted their own tanks to look like tigers. Other tank crews got help with the painting from 24th ID support troops.

Richard A. Gumm, 85, from Marietta, OH, was a mechanic with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 21st Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division. He painted two of the “Tiger-Faced” tanks.

KOREAN WAR TIGER TANKS

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17



M46 Patton (Used by the 6th Tank Battalion)

Year Fielded: 1949 **Total Produced:** 2015

Weight: 48.5 Tons **Armor Thickness:** .5 Inch to 4.5 Inch

Armament: 90mm main gun, .30-caliber machine gun (hull), .50-caliber machine gun, .30-caliber machine gun

Main Gun Ammunition: Armor Piercing, High Explosive, High Explosive Anti-Tank

Crew: (5) Commander, Gunner, Loader, Driver, Hull Machine Gunner

Engine: Continental AV-1790, 12-Cylinder, Air-Cooled, Gas Engine, 810 hp

Speed: 30 mph **Range:** 80 miles

Fuel Capacity: 232 gallons



(Above) Arthur W. Brule, Headquarters Communications, 5th RTC, is pictured next to an M46 Tiger-Faced tank. (Left Top and Bottom) Students climb on a “Tiger-Faced” tank during a field trip to the First Division Museum in Wheaton, IL. An M46 “Tiger” can also be seen at the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, PA.



24th ID Vets March in Memorial Day Parade

STORY BY K. DARRELL WILLIAMS

PHOTOS BY John Humphreys, Studio 660 Photography

Twenty-five years after Desert Storm, 500 Gulf War Veterans marched down Constitution Avenue on Memorial Day to honor and remember the 383 service members that died during the Gulf War.

Among the marchers were Veterans from all five branches of service: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard. Yet one group stood out with the largest contingent from any unit, the 24th Infantry Division!

One could not go too far in DC over Memorial Day weekend without hearing the calls of “Victory!” and “First to Fight!” from Taro Leaf Desert Storm Veterans.

MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19



KOREAN WAR TIGER TANKS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

In his spare time, Gumm did some painting for his company, mostly lettering helmets. He painted officers’ bars, colonels’ insignia, sergeants’ stripes and regimental insignia on one side of helmets and the duty emblem on the other side.

“Some guys discovered I did that and wanted to know if I could paint a couple of tanks to look like tigers,” explained Gumm. “I’d never painted tanks before, but I told them I would give it a go if they gave me some idea of what they wanted. I painted two tanks to look like tigers as best I could.”

The tankers wanted a total of four tanks painted with tiger faces. But they could not wait for Gumm to paint the other two – they had to return to the front lines. So they planned to return in a few days, so Gumm could finish the job.

“After those first two tanks were painted, the guys went wild! They were very happy with how the tiger faces turned out,” said Gumm. “They thought they would go back to the front lines and win the war. But when they came back, they said the North Koreans weren’t superstitious.”



(Above) The M46 Patton Tank saw action throughout the Korean War. Its 90mm main gun was able to destroy North Korean (Russian-built) T-34/85 tanks and fire rounds against bunkers and fortifications.

“These guys were really nervous wrecks. They said that there was just no place to hide a yellow tank. They got shot up pretty bad. We had to paint those two tanks over. We had to paint them OD again.”

The 6th Tank Battalion was sent to Korea in July, 1950, where its units were attached at various times to the 1st Cavalry Division, the 27th British Commonwealth Brigade and the 24th Infantry Division. The battalion was equipped with new M46 Patton tanks.

The tank was given the nickname, “Patton,” in honor of the WWII general, George S. Patton, Jr. The M46 Patton was an upgrade from the M26 Pershing heavy tank developed at the end of World War II. Many

of its features reflected new design concepts including a more powerful engine for better speed and agility and an improved main gun for better firepower. However, it had terrible gas mileage, averaging three gallons of gas to travel just one mile.

The tank saw action throughout the Korean War (1950-1953). Its 90 mm main gun was able to destroy the North Korean (Russian-built) T-34/85 tanks and fire rounds against bunkers and fortifications. During the latter part of the war, it was used for indirect fire support. About 200 M46s were used by US forces in Korea.

“The tanks we had were M46s, the newest at that time and the first time to be used in combat,”

said Rudy Kardynal, 6th Tank Battalion, B Co, second platoon. “It was a beauty to drive - wobble stick, foot brake and gas. It could easily go 40 MPH.”

If you want to see one of the “Tiger-Faced” tanks in person, there are at least two on display in the United States.

One “Tiger” tank can be seen at the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, PA. The other tank is at the First Division Museum at the Cantigny “tank park” in Wheaton, IL (near Chicago).

www.carlisle.army.mil/ahec/trail/aht.cfm

www.firstdivisionmuseum.org/museum/exhibits/tank-park/default.aspx

DONORS

Jarmuszka, Edward	6th Tank	\$10.00	Taro Leaf
Koschak, Lawrence	52nd FA	\$10.00	Taro Leaf
Kroeck, Walter	19th Inf	\$25.00	Taro Leaf
Moritz, Robert	Div Arty	\$10.00	Taro Leaf
Newell, Linwood	19th Inf	\$10.00	Taro Leaf
Perdue, Ernest	19th Inf	\$10.00	Taro Leaf
Shaffer, Carl	19th Inf	\$40.00	Taro Leaf
Jones, Ivins	24th QM	\$40.00	Taro Leaf
Thornton, Douglas	34th Inf	\$10.00	Taro Leaf
Owens, Roderick	26th AAA	\$10.00	Taro Leaf
Coaxum, Joseph	19th Inf	\$5.00	Taro Leaf
Erwin, Gary	2nd Bde	\$5.00	Taro Leaf
Mozelenski, Joseph	19th Inf	\$10.00	Taro Leaf
Vogl, Wiliam	6th ank	\$10.00	Taro Leaf
Slaney, Maurice	34th Inf	\$10.00	Taro Leaf
Swanson, Myron	19th Inf	\$10.00	Taro Leaf
Maggio, Donald	24th Adm	\$15.00	Taro Leaf
Cauble, Jakie	24th Adm	\$5.00	Taro Leaf
Handley, Edward	19th Inf	\$25.00	Taro Leaf
Johnson, DeWayne	24th Sig	\$10.00	Taro Leaf
Eckardt, Raymond	19th Inf	\$5.00	Taro Leaf
Reichett, Kenneth	19th Inf	\$10.00	Taro Leaf
Kroeck, Walter	19th Inf	\$25.00	Taro Leaf
Crawford, Rudy	34th Inf	\$10.00	Taro Leaf
Blankenburg, Joan	Assoc	\$10.00	Taro Leaf

Are Your Dues Due?

Look at the back cover of your current Taro Leaf magazine. If the date shown above your printed name and address shows that your dues have expired - your dues are due! Please pay the past due amount and one year forward. Please send your payments to John Dunn at the address shown on the back page of the Taro Leaf. Thanks!

24th IDA Annual Financial Report

INCOME	8/1/14-7/31/15	8/1/15-7/31/16
Membership Dues	\$7,180.00	\$8,470.00
Full Life Payments	\$4,215.00	\$1,800.00
Partial Life Payments	na	\$1,395.00
Assoc. Member Dues	\$315.00	\$120.00
Donations	\$4,175.00	\$3,593.00
Reunion Donations	\$12,190.00	\$11,446.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$28,075.00	\$26,824.00

EXPENSES	8/1/14-7/31/15	8/1/15-7/31/16
General Office	\$851.00	\$1,382.00
Taro Leaf Publication	\$23,157.00	\$16,901.00
Reunion Expense	\$4,209.00	\$3,077.00
Drawing Payout	\$4,000.00	\$3,000.00
Liability Insurance	\$750.00	\$750.00
Fees	na	\$119.00
Donation--Wheel Chair	na	\$16,000.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$32,967.00	\$41,229.00

NET INCOME	(\$4,877.00)	(\$14,405.00)
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ASSETS	7/31/2015	7/31/2016
Regions Checking	\$36,295.00	\$23,245.00
Regions CD	\$35,870.00	\$35,749.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$72,165.00	\$58,994.00

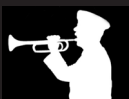
Info provided by John Dunn, 24th IDA Treasurer.

NEW MEMBERS

Quinter, William C.	21st Inf, Co K	Lifetime Member
Woolf, Anthony K.	69th Arm, 3rd Bn	Lifetime Member
Bennett, James H.	19th Inf, Co C	Korea 51-52
Rivera, Louis	4/54 Arm	Germany 68-69
Reyes, Felipe	24th Div	Germany 63-67
Jimenez, Raul	24th Div Arty, HHB	Germany 64-65
Ortega, Cecilio	24th Abn Bgde, Co C	Germany 57-59
Bouffard, Philip	1/64th Inf, HHC	Stewart 93-95
Sternickle, JW	24th ID, HHC	Stewart-Storm 89-94
Dillon, Harry S.	5th RCT, Co 555	Korea 51-52

TAPS

FROM THE SECRETARY’S REPORT



Coats, Warren E.	215 Wooden Shoe Ct. N., Christianburg, VA	24073	34th MP	Korea	7/11/2016
Cauble, Jakie A.	230 Concord Road, Ashville, NC 28803		24th Adm	Korea-Germany	9/28/2016
Klump, John E.	9736 N.Dearborn Road, Guilford, IN 47022		34th Inf, Co E	WWII	9/28/2016
Trinca, John G.	25426 Highwoods Drive, Antioch, IL 60002		21st Inf, Co C	WWII-Japan	9/13/2016

Do You Know The Words to the Division Song?

Visit the 24th IDA Website and hear it for yourself.

www.24thida.com/audio/audio_files/division_song.mp3

MEMORIAL DAY PARADE
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

The Victory Division veterans represented proudly, many of them serving as parade team and group leaders, and all wore custom dog tags with the names of our division’s fallen along the parade route. Remembering and honoring our fallen is what the National Memorial Day Parade was about, and veterans also marched to bring awareness about the National Desert Storm War Memorial, according to Scott Stump, president of the National Desert Storm War Memorial Association.

“I found it to be extra special since the parade route was the same one used back on June 8th of 1991 during the Gulf War Victory Parade,” remarked Scott Stump, president of the National Desert Storm War Memorial Association. “I was also told by the folks who run the parade (the American Veterans Center) that in their 12 years of hosting this event, they have never had an entry evoke such a strong emotional reaction as our group did! The bottom line is that people are remembering just how important Operation Desert Storm was, and those who served are!”

The Desert Storm War Memorial, to be built in Washington, DC, will honor all Gulf War veterans and their families. The names of 383 U.S. service members that were killed in Desert

Shield and Desert Storm will be etched on the memorial’s “inner sanctum.” The memorial’s proposed design incorporates the famous “left hook” maneuver that the 24th Infantry Division played a major role in, and is credited with breaking the back of the Iraqi forces.

The main feature of the memorial is a curved, Kuwaiti limestone wall, which both encloses and envelopes an inner memorial space. The curved wall is reflective of the “left hook” maneuver and also serves the purpose of shielding visitors both visually and acoustically from the noise of the city.

The memorial authorization has already been secured as legislation passed Congress on a vote of 370-0 to authorize the memorial and was signed into law on Dec. 19, 2015. It will be built entirely with private and corporate donations. Fred Wellman, chairman of the group’s Public Relations Committee, said the goal is to raise \$25 million. For more information and to partner in the effort, please visit www.ndswm.org.

Plans are already underway for Desert Storm veterans to march again in the 2017 National Memorial Day Parade. Victory Division veterans will represent the 24th ID in full force and honor our unit’s fallen soldiers. If you are a Desert Storm 24th ID veteran and would like to march next year, contact Chaplain Darrell Williams at 24thidaweb@gmail.com.

FALLEN COMRADES

John E. Klump of New Alsace, IN, died Sept. 28, 2016, at age 91. John was a Life Member, Past President, and was on the Board of Directors for the 24th Infantry Division Association.

John served as a platoon sergeant, assigned to the 24th Infantry Division, 34th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Battalion, Company E, 1st Platoon in the Southwest Pacific Theater of Operations. Battles and Campaigns include: Leyte, Luzon(Bataan and Corregidor), Mindoro and the invasion of Mindanao Island, Southern Philippines. Later, after all hostilities had ceased with the Japanese armed forces, he served with the occupation forces in Japan.

He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal (combat heroism), Purple Heart (wounds sustained on Mindanao), Army Good Conduct Medal, American Defense Service Medal, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with 2 Bronze Service Stars, WWII Victory Medal, Army of Occupation Medal and the Philippine Liberation Ribbon with 1 Bronze Service Star. John was also awarded the Rifle Marksman, 57MM Expert and Combat Infantryman Badges.

He entered the service on June 14, 1944, and was honorarily discharged on May 18, 1946. John was also a founding Member of New Alsace American Legion.

He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Hilda. Condolences may be sent to his daughter, Cindy Hilty at 9736 N. Dearborn Road, Guilford, IN 47022-9789.
LIFE MEMBER

John G. Trinca, 90 years old, of Antioch, IL, passed away Monday, Sept. 12, 2016. He was a member of the 24th Infantry Division, serving in the U.S. Army during WWII. John earned a Bronze Battle Star as well as other medals. Interment with military honors was held. Condolences may be made in an online guest book at www.strangfh.com.
LIFE MEMBER



Elminie "Minie" Johnson of Fayetteville, MO, passed away on Aug. 16, 2016, at age 79. Minie (pronounced "My-knee") was an Associate Life Member and the wife of Billy Johnson, past President of the Association and past Editor of the Taro Leaf. She was a devoted supporter of the 24th Infantry Division Association. Services were held in Arlington National Cemetery. She was preceded in death by her husband, Billy. Condolences may be sent to the family at 1910 Faber St., Fayetteville, NC 28306-4504. **PHOTO** - Minie and Billy Johnson on their wedding day, Dec. 29, 1958.
ASSOCIATE LIFE MEMBER



Jakie A. Cauble of Asheville, NC, died Sept. 28, 2016, at age 89. He was a member of the Association and served with the 24th ID in Japan & Korea (1953) and Germany (8/1967 to 8/1968). Jakie served in the Merchant Marines before joining the US Army, retiring after 26 years of service. He was preceded in death by his wife, Gerda. Condolences may be sent to his daughter, Shirley Maggio at 411 Concord Road, Fletcher, NC 28732-9734.
LIFE MEMBER



David Arthur "Art" McWilliams of Logan, IA, died March 12, 2016, at age 92. Art entered the US Army in September, 1944, and served in the Philippines with Company F, 34th Infantry (2/09/45-9/30/45). He was wounded (6/10/45) and received a Purple Heart. He was discharged on February 28, 1946. Art was a member of the Pisgah American Legion. He was preceded in death by his first wife of 41 years, Lois; and he is survived by his second wife of 27 years, Andrea.

Rodney Wayne Johnson of Sonoma County, CA, passed away on July 10, 2016, at the age of 88. Rodney enlisted in the U.S. Army in October, 1946, and served with the occupation forces in Japan (Sasebo, 34th Infantry Regiment, 47-48). He was preceded in death by his first wife of 33 years, Carolyn; and he is survived by his second wife of 29 years, Carol. Condolences may be sent to his wife and family at: 6535 Warehill Rd., Santa Rosa, CA 95404.
MEMBER



John "Jack" Hanusek of Clermont, FL, passed away on August 1, 2016, at age 85. He served with the 24th Infantry Division during the Korean War. After his retirement as a teacher, he went on to work for the DoD at Fort Monmouth, NJ, for 12 years. Jack is survived by his wife of 49 years, Jill.
LIFE MEMBER

Sidney A. "Sid" Mathes of Waukesha, WI, passed away on Dec. 16, 2015, at age 88. He was a 24th ID World War II, Occupation of Japan Veteran. Sid was a member of VFW Post 721 and Soat-Vergenz and American Legion Post 8, where he was a Chaplain and a past Commander of both. Sid was also a member of the Military Order of the Seam Squirrel Cooties. He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Mary Jean. Condolences may be sent to the funeral home at www.WaukeshasFuneral-Home.com.
LIFE MEMBER



Wilmer R. Frye of Williamsburg, PA, passed away on Sept. 9, 2016, at the age of 87. Wilmer was a veteran of the Korean War, serving with the 5th Regiment Combat Team. He was also a life member of the Bonner Sollenberger American Legion Post 456, Williamsburg Memorial Post 6086, and Disabled American Veterans. Interment was with full military honors. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, P. Joyce.

Billy J. Smith, Sr., 82, of Zellwood, FL, passed away Friday, June 06, 2014. Billy served in Korea with the 26th AAA, 24th Infantry Division, 07/49-01/51. Billy was a member of the F&AM, Scottish Rite, Shriners, American Legion, 24th IDA, and the VFW. Condolences may be sent to his son, Billy J. Smith, Jr., 3220 Round Lake Rd, Zellwood, FL, 32798-5403.
MEMBER

Candelario "Candy" Torres of Santa Barbara, CA, passed away Dec. 29, 2015, at age 85. Candy served in Korea as a member of the 21st Infantry Regiment. He was the recipient of the Combat Infantry Badge, Korean Service Medal, UN Service Medal, Army of Occ. Medal and Two Bronze Stars. After his return from Korea, he remained very active in Veteran organizations. He was preceded in death by his wife, Louise.

PLEASE
SEND ALL
OBITUARIES
TO THIS
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The Taro Leaf Editor
21541 Wolf Lake Court
Crest Hill, IL 60403

(Please include a photo if available)

Information can also be emailed to
24thTaroLeaf@gmail.com

**SOUTH TO
THE NAKTONG,
NORTH TO
THE YALU**
Roy E. Appleman



This is a continuation of a story published in the Summer 2016 issue of the Taro Leaf (Vol. 70, Issue 3).

Chapter XIII, “The Enemy Flanks Eighth Army in the West,” continues...

The late Roy E. Appleman’s book, written for the Center of Military History, has been called the most accurate and complete review of what happened during the early months of the Korean War. Appleman (1904-1993) entered the U.S. Army as a private in 1942 during World War II. After completing Officer Candidate School in 1943 he was commissioned a 2nd lieutenant and was sent overseas to the Pacific Theater in 1944. During both WWII and Korea he served as a combat historian. His other books include *Okinawa: The Last Battle* and *Ridgway Duels for Korea*. He received the Army Commendation Ribbon in 1945 for performance of duties as combat historian in the Okinawa campaign and his contribution to the Okinawa book. Appleman retired from the Army in 1954 as a lieutenant colonel.

The N.K. 4th Division Seizes the Koch’ang Approach to the Naktong

Having brushed aside the American and ROK force at Anui, in what it called a “small engagement,” the N.K. 4th Division turned northeast toward Koch’ang. A patrol from the 34th Infantry on 27 July had, from a distance, seen and heard the fighting in progress at Anui. Its report alerted Colonel Beauchamp to the possibility of an early attack.

Colonel Beauchamp had disposed the 34th Infantry in a three-quarter circle around Koch’ang, which lay in the middle of a two-and-a-half-mile-wide ovalshaped basin in a north-south mountain valley.

The 3d Battalion was on high ground astride the Anui road two miles west of the town, the 1st Battalion about the same distance east of it on the Hyopch’on road, a reinforced platoon of I Company at a roadblock across the Kumch’on road four miles north of the town, while the Heavy Mortar Company was at its northern edge. Artillery support consisted of A Battery, 13th Field Artillery Battalion, which had five 105-mm. howitzers in position two miles southeast of the town.

The 34th Infantry, not having been able to re-equip since Taejon, did not have a regimental switchboard. There were only a few radios. The regiment was short of mortars, bazookas, and machine guns.

Some of the men did not have complete uniforms, many had no helmets, most did not have entrenching tools. Every man, however, did have his individual weapon.

Before dusk of 28 July, forward observers could see a long line of enemy traffic piled up behind a roadblock that the 34th Infantry had constructed at a defile on the Anui road west of the town. They directed artillery fire on this column until darkness fell. Colonel Beauchamp then brought his two infantry battalions closer to Koch’ang for a tighter defense.

About dark, Beauchamp received orders to report to the 24th Division command post at Hyopch’on. There he told General Church of an anticipated enemy attack and of his plan to withdraw the 3d Battalion to a previously selected position three miles southeast of Koch’ang.

General Church did not agree and told Beauchamp to hold the town. Beauchamp thereupon telephoned his executive officer and told him to stop the withdrawal of the 3d Battalion. When Beauchamp returned to Koch’ang at 0300 everything was quiet.

In darkness an hour later (about 0400 29 July), a North Korean attack came from two directions. One force, striking from the north, cut off I Company. Another moved around the town on the north and then struck southward across the road east of Koch’ang. The 1st Battalion repulsed this attack, but then, without orders, fell back toward the secondary position three miles east of Koch’ang. Colonel Beauchamp met the battalion on the road and stopped it.

Before daylight the 3d Battalion, also without orders, fell back through Koch’ang, leaving I Company isolated to the north. This battalion ran a gantlet of enemy automatic and small arms fire for a mile, but in the protecting darkness suffered few casualties. After daylight the 1st Battalion rescued all but one platoon of I Company. The men of this platoon were either killed or captured.

During the predawn attack some small arms fire struck in the howitzer positions of A Battery, 13th Field Artillery Battalion, from a ridge 500 yards eastward. Maj. Leon B. Cheek, the battalion executive officer, awoke to the sound of the firing. Hurrying to the road he saw the battery commander, who said the enemy had overrun the artillery. The battery executive officer came up and told Cheek that everyone had “taken off,” although he had ordered the men to their foxholes. When the firing began, he said, someone yelled, “Run for your life!” Two squads of infantry attached to the artillery to provide security had joined the stampede.

**When the firing began, he said,
someone yelled, “Run for your life!”
Two squads of infantry attached to the
artillery to provide security had joined
the stampede.**

Cheek stopped the wild shooting in his vicinity and started toward the howitzers. He ordered all prime movers driven back to the gun positions. Twelve men from the artillery and the drivers of the prime movers obeyed.

From the infantry, a BAR man and three riflemen volunteered to go forward to cover the artillerymen while they pulled out the howitzers. Cheek placed these four men in firing positions and they soon almost silenced the enemy. A small enemy patrol of six or seven men apparently had caused the debacle.

Cheek and the twelve artillerymen loaded the equipment and ammunition, hitched the prime movers to the guns, and, one by one, pulled the five howitzers to the road. They then withdrew eastward.

During 29 July the 34th Infantry Regiment with-

drew eastward 15 miles to hill positions near Sanje-ri on the road to Hyopch’on.

From a point 3 miles southeast of Koch’ang the road for the next 10 miles is virtually a defile. The withdrawing 34th Infantry and its engineer troops blew all the bridges and at many points set off demolition charges in the cliffs overhanging the road.

The 18th Regiment of the enemy division pressed on after the retreating 34th Infantry. The N.K. 4th Division left its artillery behind at Koch’ang because of the destroyed bridges ahead of it. In advancing to the Naktong River on the Hyopch’on road, it employed only small arms and mortar fire.

It was anticipated that the enemy force which had captured Koch’ang would soon approach the Naktong River for a crossing below Taegu. This prospect created another difficulty for Eighth Army. To meet it, General Walker told General Church he would send to him the ROK 17th Regiment, one of the best South Korean units at that time. He also shifted the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, from the P’ohang-dong- Yongdok area on the east coast to Hyopch’on, where it took up defensive positions back of the 34th Infantry west of the town.

The ROK 17th Regiment, 2,000 strong, arrived at the 34th Infantry position in the dead of night at 0200 30 July. It went at once into positions on the high ground on either flank.

Only after the Koch’ang action did Eighth Army finally, on 31 July, identify the enemy unit in this area as the 4th Division. This led it to conclude in turn that the enemy force in the Chinju area was the 6th Division. Eighth Army then decided that the enemy effort against the United Nations’ left flank was in reality being carried out by two widely separated forces: the N.K. 4th Division from the Anui-Koch’ang area, to envelop the main battle positions on Eighth Army’s left flank, and the N.K. 6th Division from the Chinju area, to cut lines of communication in the rear, drive through Masan, and capture the port of Pusan.

**CONTINUED IN THE NEXT
ISSUE OF THE TARO LEAF (WINTER, 2017).**

REUNIONS

24th ID Desert Storm Reunion

Open to All 24th ID Vets, Family and Friends

Fort Stewart, GA - February 24-28, 2017

To receive more information, please pre-register for the reunion at www.desertstorm24id.com/reunionreg.html.

Email: reunion@desertstorm24id.com **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/24thIDreunion

Website: www.desertstorm24id.com

KLUMP'S WWII STORY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Klump charged the beaches on Mindoro and again on Luzon from amphibious landing craft, wading through chest deep water. He fought in the bloody week-long battle of Zig-Zag Pass. His unit endured the jungle terrain laced with trip wire booby traps and ambushes around every corner. More than 2,400 of roughly 2,800 Japanese dug-in at Zig-Zag were killed – only 25 surrendered and were taken prisoner. Attrition was staggering. Klump earned technical sergeant (sergeant first class) with just under two years of service in the Army.

His unit liberated allied POWs from the Bataan Death March from a camp in Mindanao. They were defending the airfield there when his company was assaulted by 200 Japanese on a Banzai charge. They fought through the night. At one point, a Japanese 172mm mortar landed 10 meters from his position.

"It's either your time or it isn't," Klump said. "Somebody up there must have thought it wasn't my time."

Klump fought back the enemy from close quarters. "It's really unbelievable when you look back on it," Klump said. "There are things you can't even describe. I came out of there looking like a skeleton. You could count every bone on my body. Being a 19-year-old kid fighting through the jungle while carrying 80 pounds of gear will wear on you."

The fighting dragged on day after day. The odds caught up with Klump fighting on a hill one day in Mindanao. You could say he got lucky, or that his luck ran out, depending on how you look at it. He was wounded when the BAR gunner directly in front of him took a Japanese grenade. Klump caught the man in his arms as he fell.

With the BAR gunner dead, Klump was caught alone with his lead scout, the rest of his platoon to the rear. They took cover in adjacent ditches on either side of the road.

"You could see the machine gun fire hitting the road between the ditches," Klump said. "The scout yelled to me to 'run for 12 seconds and fall into the next ditch for cover.' We ran ditch to ditch."

They bounded back to their platoon under Japanese machine gun and mortar fire.

"When we got back down, I noticed a younger guy holding his arm where it had been completely shot off," Klump said. "I grabbed him and brought him to the medics."

In all the adrenaline of the fight, Klump didn't realize he was also hit. He spent the evening in a foxhole. He slept straight through the night, exhausted after several days of heavy fighting. He awoke to find his leg had swollen so badly he couldn't walk. It was then he realized he'd taken shrapnel from the enemy grenade that took the BAR gunner's life.

After recovering and receiving the Bronze Star and Purple Heart for his actions, he returned to the front line with shrapnel still embedded in his leg.

In all, he spent a week shy of two years in the Army, retaining the rank of technical sergeant. He wears shrapnel in his leg to this day, a reminder of the struggle he and hundreds of thousands of allied forces endured in the Philippines.

Klump picked up and carried on with his life after returning home from war. He and 24 other fellow veterans chartered New Alsace Post 452. He worked for his brothers on the family farm and in his family tavern.

One evening while tending bar, he met his wife of 68 years, Hilda. He and his wife have eight grandkids and three great-grandkids. He built a career for himself working 35 years as a dye maker at the Fisher Body plant, now General Motors, in Hamilton, Ohio.

Klump's Bar stayed in the family until 1992. Under new management, the bar is still serving loyal customers today under the original name Klump's and is somewhat of a landmark in the community.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Mr. Driscoll gave an astounding down to earth overview of his career and the mission of the U.S. Army's medical museum.

Our banquet meal was extraordinary. We had nothing but accolades. The chef and service crew were very attentive and professional. After the adjournment and closing of the reunion, we all gathered for a group picture, thanks to Claudell Bruner, wife of our vice president, Don Bruner.

The next reunion will be in October 2017, held in and around the

24TH ID ISLAND BATTLES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Nearly 70 years later, in 2012, Yeager was able to take his first trip to Washington, D.C., courtesy of the Honor Flight Network, to see the memorial that honors the 16 million who served in the armed forces of the U.S. during World War II, the more than 400,000 who died, and the millions who supported the war effort from home.

As a light infantry and mortar gunner, Yeager was assigned to the 21st Infantry Regiment, under the 24th Infantry Division, one of the first U.S. Army Divisions to see combat in World War II.

"There were three or four regiments on board to New Guinea," Yeager said. After the troops made landfall, they set up tents and camped at the bottom of the mountain for a few months while waiting for assignment.

"We could see General MacArthur's headquarters, 'Ol' Stovepipe', as we called him, from where we were camping," Yeager said.

In late 1944, the 24th division made an assault landing at Leyte Island in the Philippines, initially encountering only light resistance. However, once the 24th drove further into the Leyte Valley, they came under heavy enemy fire, facing snipers and mortar fire. There was constant attack for a good while, Yeager recalled.

"While in our fox holes at night, we were trained to sleep with our .45 loaded, with a round in the chamber, on our chest, with a finger on the trigger," explained Yeager. "On one particular night, I was resting when I heard a twig snap – without hesitation I pointed my weapon towards the opening of the foxhole and fired. I had just shot one of the enemy who was trying to sneak up on the foxhole and kill me with his bayonet."

"While at Pinamopoan Ridge, my buddy was killed right next to me by an exploding mortar - The Lieutenant to my left had his jaw blown off," Yeager said without emotion. With the entire regiment under constant fire and explosions all around, Yeager says he was lucky to only have had shrapnel driven into his sides.

Savannah, GA area. The 2018 reunion will be held in Branson, MO in September or October of that year. These locations have been approved by our Board of Directors, so put both reunions on your calendar. Personally, I'm really looking forward to the Branson reunion.

I would like to thank everyone for all your help during the last two years. It was my pleasure to lead the 24th Infantry Division Association and be a part of its continued success.

First to Fight... Victory!

Tom Appler

CWO-4, U.S. Army Reserve, (Ret.)

Past President, 24th IDA

When the fire subsided, Yeager was rushed to the 36th Evacuation Hospital for treatment. While there, he developed malaria.

"I don't remember much after that because my fever was so high," Yeager recalled. After 20 days, he was released and rejoined his regiment who were still fighting on the front lines in Leyte.

After taking Leyte Island, Yeager's regiment was sent to aid occupied Japan.

"We thought we were to go to Australia to pick up more troops, but were diverted and sent to Okayama, Japan," he said. "We passed through bombed-out Hiroshima on the troop train - I could see debris and rubble."

After 31 days in occupied Japan, Yeager returned home to West Virginia and received an honorable discharge in 1946. For his service and sacrifices, he was presented with two Purple Heart Medals, a Bronze Star, an Army Good Conduct medal, Victory Medal, Occupation medal and an Asiatic Pacific Campaign medal.

"After the war, I received a letter from the 24th division commander which stated: 'During the entire period, this regiment was attacked, fighting in terrain which favored the enemy more than us. The 21st Infantry Regiment counted 2,133 enemy kills... 14 captured prisoners. The total for the 24th Division was 5,149 enemy casualties. This regiment, therefore, accounted for 42 percent of the division total.'"

When asked what he thought of seeing the monuments in D.C., he replied: "It was good to finally be able see what had been built in our honor." On the bus back to the hotel, the chairman of the Honor Flight Network, Jim McLaughlin, addressed the 15 veterans on board: "Although none of you will ever accept the title, in my eyes you are all heroes."

Story provided by Kelly Galloway, 439th Airlift Wing Public Affairs. The story was originally published online January 2, 2013. Kelly Galloway is the granddaughter of Hobert Yeager, and is very proud of her grandfather's service during World War II.

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(Life membership payable in one sum or 5 yearly payments of \$40.00 each.)

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Walgreens Offers Free Flu Shots

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has teamed up with national retail pharmacy Walgreens to provide free flu vaccinations for enrolled veterans.

All veterans who are currently enrolled in VA care may walk into any of the over 8,000 Walgreens nationally (and the Duane Reade pharmacies in the New York metropolitan area) to receive a vaccination at no cost. After presenting a Veterans Identification Card and a photo ID, a Walgreens pharmacist administers the vaccine and transmits that information securely to the VA, where it becomes part of the patient’s electronic medical record.

To learn more about the partnership, call 1-877-771-8537 or visit the VA website at www.ehealth.va.gov/immunization.asp.

To locate a Walgreens store near you, call 800-WALGREENs (800-925-4733) or visit the Walgreens website at Walgreens.com/findastore. For more information on flu and flu vaccine, visit the VA Influenza webpage at www.publichealth.va.gov/flu or the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website at www.cdc.gov/flu.

We Need Your Stories!

The next issue of the Taro Leaf will feature stories about the 24th ID in Germany. The deadline for submissions for the Winter, 2017, issue is January 1, 2017. Please mail stories and photos to the Taro Leaf Editor, or email information to - 24thTaroLeaf@gmail.com.



Edward Halcomb with medals from his time in the Army. Halcomb recently received the Distinguished Service Cross for his service during the Korean War. He and members of his unit were taken as prisoners and marched 120 miles from Soul to Pyongyang. After 85 days in captivity, he and several others escaped to freedom.

24th ID Veteran Receives Distinguished Service Cross

Sixty-five years after Pfc. Edward “Grady” Halcomb took on the responsibility to care for the sick and dying soldiers on the Seoul death march, his country recognized him with the Army’s second-highest award, the Distinguished Service Cross.

During a brief ceremony in early March of 2016, U.S. Rep. Dennis Ross presented the award and read the citation, telling of Halcomb’s courageous actions as a 19-year-old medic sent to Korea in 1950. Halcomb, now 85 years old, retired from the Army at the rank of Sergeant First Class, risked his own life countless times in Korea on both the battlefield and as a POW caring for other sick and wounded American prisoners.

W. Thomas McDaniel, a retired Air Force colonel, was researching a book when he came across a long-lost letter recommending Halcomb for the Distinguished Service Cross.

It took an act of Congress, led by Ross in the House and Sen. Bill Nelson in the Senate, and the signature of President Barack Obama to issue a waiver so the long-overdue medal could be awarded.

“You are the only living POW to ever receive this award - an award of extraordinary honor given to an extraordinary gentleman,” Ross said during his brief speech.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HALCOMB
SEE STORY ON PAGE 5

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Members of the 24th IDA gather for a group photo at the San Antonio Reunion held September, 2016.

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