



761ST NEWSLETTER

September 1, 2006

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
761ST TANK BATTALION & ALLIED
VETERANS ASSOCIATION

Volume 2, Issue 1

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- ♦ The 58th reunion was a great success.
Read all about it on page 5
- ♦ 761st Proclamations 2006 on page 9
- ♦ Questions about the 761st history? —
- Ask the Historian—Page 14



Jonnie Stevens, Jr., Anthony Santoro and John Fanotto

Monday May 8, 2006, the 61st anniversary of victory in Europe - Francois Delattre, the Consul General of France, presented France's highest distinction, the coveted Legion of Honor, to nine American World War II Veterans for their critical role in liberating France. The investiture took place at the French Consulate Building, 934 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY.

The recipients were as follows: Jerome Baker (357th Inf. Reg.); Joseph Behhler (320th Inf. Reg.); Edward Dawes (52nd QM); John Di Monte (30th Inf. Reg.); John Fanotto (55th QM);

Robert Langevin (USN); Bertram Linder (12th Inf. Reg.); Anthony Santoro (47th AIB) and Johnnie Stevens, Jr. (761st Tank Bn.).

Johnnie proudly received this award despite his battle with advanced cancer. It took uncommon strength, endurance, and courage on his part to be present. Sitting for hours was excruciatingly uncomfortable and dangerous. There were very few dry eyes in the room as France's Consul General presented him with this honor.

In a heartfelt speech, Consul General Francois Delattre imparted the following words:

Monsieur le sénateur, Messieurs les Conseillers à l'Assemblée des Français de l'Etranger, Monsieur le Président de la Fédération des Anciens Combattants Français, Mr. Le Président Bruce Boeglin, Chers amis anciens combattants, **[Mister Senator, Advisers with the Parliament of France from abroad, Mr. President of the Federation of French Ex-serviceman, Mr. President Bruce Boeglin, dear friends ex-serviceman and] dear American veterans and friends,**

C'est un grand honneur pour moi —une vraie émo-

*ARTICLE BY JOE WILSON, JR.

tion aussi, vous le savez- de vous accueillir ce soir au Consulat général de France. ***[It is a great honor for me - a true emotion also, you know - to accomodate you this evening at the Consulate-General of France.]***

En ce 8 mai, qui célèbre la victoire alliée sur les nazis, nous sommes réunis en effet pour entretenir la flamme sacrée du souvenir et de la mémoire. ***[On this 8 May, when we celebrate the allied victory over the Nazis, let us be reunited indeed to maintain the flame of the memory and the memory.]***

Souvenir de ces combats, auxquels les forces françaises et la Résistance ont pris toute leur part, pour la défense de la patrie, pour la défense aussi de nos valeurs. ***[To remember the combat, wherein French forces and Resistance took their share, for the defense of the fatherland, for the defense also of our values.]***

Mémoire de ceux qui ont payé ce combat de leur vie : nous leur devons, et nous vous devons, d'être aujourd'hui ce que nous sommes, et d'abord de vivre libres. ***[Remembering those paying for this combat with their lives: let us, as we must, and we owe to you, be what we are today, and primarily living free.]***

Rendre hommage aux anciens combattants, c'est pour moi le premier devoir d'un serviteur de l'Etat et de la Nation. En rendant cet hommage, nous pensons aussi à ceux qui agissent aujourd'hui pour la paix sur les différents théâtres d'opérations de part le monde, et nous leur exprimons notre soutien. ***[Paying homage to ex-serviceman, for me the best servants of the State and Nation. While giving this homage, we also think of those acting today for peace in the various theatres of operations of the world, and let us ex-***

press our support.]

May I switch to English to extend a warm welcome to the American veterans who are with us tonight. Your presence honors us all.

As we are celebrating today the sixty-first anniversary of our common victory on tyranny, I would like to pay tribute to you and to all the American veterans who were critical in liberating France and Europe. The French will never forget what they did, what you did, to restore our freedom.

Today we also remember the ultimate sacrifice of so many of your comrades. Many rest in French soil and all will rest forever in our hearts. In the soul and the mind of each French citizen, young and old alike, there is this profound and eternal gratitude toward our American friends.

As a natural consequence, whenever the essential is at stake, France and the United States have always stood shoulder to shoulder to defend and promote their shared values.

It is true today as our two countries are each other's best allies in the fight against terrorism. To



take just one example, American and French Special Forces are side by side in the mountains of Afghanistan to track down Bin Laden and his Al-Qaeda supporters.

In the same vein, our two countries face together the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. France and the United States have the same position on Iran and the nuclear issue, based on the shared view that Iran must not be allowed to become a nuclear weapons' state. As you know, we are now

National Officers

Mr. Floyd Dade, Jr. — National President

Mr. Charles W. Womble — First Vice President

Mr. William McBurney — Second Vice President

Mr. Kenneth C. Tait — Secretary

Mr. Gloucester Stephens — Treasurer

Mr. Edward Walker and Mr. Rufus Taylor — Chaplains

Mr. Wayne Robinson — Historian

Mr. William D. Smith — Webmaster

Mr. Rufus Taylor—Chairman, T.G. Hill Fund

**761ST TANK BATTALION AND ALLIED VETERANS ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 211009
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48221**

at a critical stage of intensive consultations within the United Nations Security Council on this difficult issue.

Ladies and Gentlemen, today we are paying a special tribute to nine American heroes, who more than sixty years ago risked their young lives for the freedom of France and Europe. I would like to extend a warm welcome to their families and friends, who have come from various places to show their admiration and gratitude.

These nine American veterans of the Second World War have been nominated to the Legion of Honor by the President of the French Republic Jacques Chirac.

The French Legion of Honor was established to reward outstanding services rendered to France, on the basis of personal merit. Since its creation by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802, the Legion of Honor has been France's highest distinction and one of the most coveted distinctions in the world.

Before proceeding with the official part of the ceremony, I would like to give the floor to Guy Wildenstein, President of the American Society of the French Legion of Honor.

Ladies and Gentlemen, now, our national anthems.

I would like now to personally address each of the nine American veterans we are honouring tonight before proceeding, on behalf of the President of the Republic, with the presentation of the insignia of Chevalier of the Legion of Honor.

Jerome Baker

You served in the anti-tank company belonging to the 357th infantry regiment.

You took part in the landing in Normandy on D-Day. Then with your unit, you went to the North of France and later Alsace-Lorraine where you participated in the siege of Metz from September 14th to November 19th, 1944. At the end of December 1944, you left the Siegfried line to take part in the battle of the Bulge until the end of January 1945.

Finally, from January 1945 to March 1945, you participated in The Rhineland campaign.

In recognition of your bravery, you received the prestigious bronze star medal.

Joseph Biehler

You served as a corporal in the 320th infantry regiment. Your unit was in the Normandy campaign from the start, landing at Omaha Beach on D-Day, June 6th 1944. You took part in the offensive action southwest of St-Lo.

You also participated in the campaign in the North of France. In August 1944, your division secured Mortain-Avranches and rescued the 30th division "Lost Battalion". Then racing across France through Orleans in September, in the start of the Rhineland campaign, your unit captured Nancy and secured Chambrey, then drove on to the German border in October.

You also participated in the battle of the Bulge and were there when Bastogne was relieved on December 25th-26th, 1944.

For meritorious service, you received the good conduct medal.

Edward Dawes

You served as a truck driver in the 52nd quartermaster truck battalion. Your unit was specialized in amphibious invasions and river crossings.

You enlisted in 1942 and in February 1943 you took part in the Tunisia campaign. Then, with your battalion, you made an amphibious landing in Sicily on July 10th, 1943.

Finally, in August 15, 1944, you participated in the invasion of Southern France between Toulon and Cannes.

For meritorious service, you received the good conduct medal.

John Di Monte

You served as a platoon sergeant in the 30th infantry regiment. With your unit, you took part in the landings in the South of France on August 15th, 1944 in Marseilles.

Subsequently you went north and were wounded in Strasbourg on October 3rd, 1944. You were the only surviving member of the platoon.

For meritorious service, you received the Purple Heart medal.

John Fanotto

You served as a corporal in the 55th quartermaster base depot. Your unit, which was in charge of supplies and gasoline, landed at Utah beach, then after the bombing of St. Lo, moved on to liberate towns between Avranches and St Lo. For you, the campaign ended in Reims, at the largest army supply depot, where you remained one year.

Your duties also included interrogating prisoners of war and constructing POW enclosures.

For meritorious service, you were awarded the good conduct medal and the victory medal.

Robert Langevin

You enlisted in the US Navy, at the age of 20, on October 29th, 1942.

You trained as a machinist's mate on the USN TR3, which was a salvage and rescue ship.

On D-Day, the ATR3 was among the first ships to come into the range of the German artillery guns on the cliffs of Normandy.

With your unit, you were responsible for towing disabled landing craft off the beach all day long. You also pulled disabled destroyers and gunboats out of the Channel. This action provided a clear, unobstructed approach for the hundreds of landing rafts, infantry troops, trucks, jeeps, ammunition artillery guns, food tents, medical supplies and medical personnel.

After June 25th, the ATR.3 was stationed in the port of Cherbourg from where you rescued the crew of the Leopoldville, a Belgian troop ship carrying hundreds of American infantrymen, which was torpedoed five miles off the coast of Cherbourg.

For meritorious service, you received the good conduct medal, a letter of commendation and the victory medal.

Bertram Linder

You were a combat infantry officer in "E" company belonging to the 12th infantry regiment. With your unit, you landed at Utah beach on D-Day where you were wounded. You refused evacuation in order to assist the beach

commander. You fought at Sainte-Mere l'Eglise and Saint-Lo and took part in the liberation of Cherbourg.

Your regiment then fought its way to Paris where, as you could speak French, you served as liaison with the French 2nd armoured division commanded by General Leclerc. In recognition of your bravery, your heroic achievement and your exemplary leadership, you received the prestigious American medals: the "Purple Heart" and the "Bronze Star".

Anthony Santoro

You served in the 47th armoured infantry battalion.

With your unit, you landed at Utah beach on June 10th, 1944 and then took part in the liberation of Saint-Lo.

In recognition of your bravery, and for meritorious service, you were awarded the good conduct medal and the victory medal.

Johnnie Stevens

You served as a staff Sergeant in the 761st tank battalion, which was the sole armoured unit composed of African-Americans deployed in Europe.

With your unit, you took part in battles in Northern France and the Ardennes. You were wounded in France on November 11, 1944.

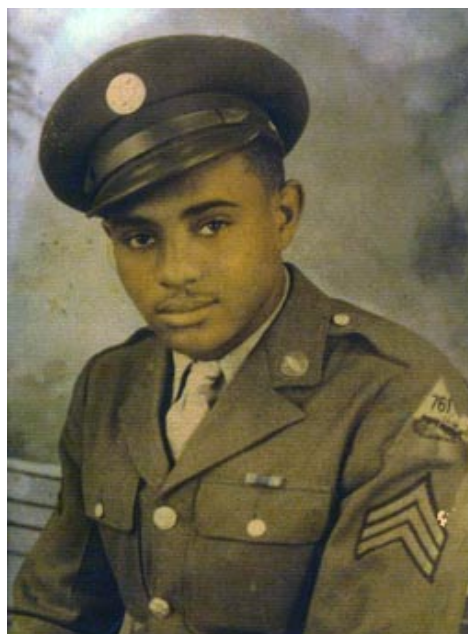
You belonged to a battalion which received a presidential citation for extraordinary heroism. I quote part of the citation:

"The 761st tank battalion distinguished itself by extraordinary gallantry, courage, professionalism and high esprit de corps displayed in the accomplishment of unusually difficult and hazardous operations in the European theatre of operations. During 183 days in combat, elements of the 761st were responsible for inflicting thousands of enemy casualties and for capturing, destroying, or aiding in the liberation of more than 30 major towns. This was accomplished while enduring an overall casualty rate approaching 50 percent".



**LEGION OF HONOR RECIPIENT JOHNNIE STEVENS, JR., HIS WIFE EVELYN, FAMILY AND FRIENDS AT THE CEREMONY.
(PHOTO BY CHRISTINA S. DEVAVEN, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY)**

Mr. Stevens, you personally received the prestigious American medals: the Purple Heart and Bronze Star.



JOHNNIE STEVENS, JR. (1942)

To Johnnie Stevens

Dear Mr. Stevens,

Congratulations on being awarded France's highest military honor for your service in the famed Black Panthers Tanker Battalion. You have not only helped to liberate half the world long ago, you leave an inspiration for centuries to come.

God bless you,

Tom Hanks (Actor)

Dear Mr Johnnie Stevens,

I would like to send my best wishes and my congratulations for your LOH award received from the French Government.

You deserved this and we are full of respect for what you did for us during your ETO time.

We realize we got freedom in 1944 by liberation of the US soldiers with heavy sacrifices in France and Belgium (Battle of Bulge). We haven't forgotten and will never forget.

Our greetings from Holland through a digital flowercard,

Pierre Ackermans

Maastricht. The Netherlands.

58th Annual Reunion—Killeen, Texas



PICTURED L/R: TJ MANN, CHARLES WOMBLE, BARON BATES, JAMES B. JONES, JOHN A. HOLMES, WAYNE ROBINSON, JOHN WESTON, WILLIE TOPPS, EUGENE MATHEWS, LZ ANDERSON, AND PETER WALLACE

The 58th annual reunion of the 761st Tank Battalion and Allied Veterans Association was held in Killeen, Texas from Thursday August 17th, until Sunday August 20th at the Plaza Hotel and Conference Center. The Association held its 48th annual reunion here almost 10 years ago, to the day, (August 1996). The similarities, as well as the differences, are striking.

In 1996, the reunion was hosted by Beverly Taylor who was then president of the Central Texas Chapter of the 761st Association. In 1996, on Thursday morning August 22, on his 71st birthday, James E. Williams of Killeen unveiled the first of eight new street signs that said "761st Tank Battalion Blvd". Raul G. Villaronga was the mayor of Killeen who welcomed us on behalf of the City of Killeen and the principle speaker was the Secretary of the Army, Togo West, Jr. Secretary West spoke of the battle performance of the 761st during the war and its subsequent impact on the army as a whole. West went on to state "You were good. I'm here not because you were good. I am here because you were there. Thank you for your example."

Friday August 23, 1996 started as a wet dreary day with a damp mist. The

groundbreaking ceremony for a permanent memorial to the 761st was scheduled then and Lt Gen H.G. Taylor (Army Ret), former III Corps and Fort Hood commander was the guest speaker. In the middle of the ceremony, the weather changed from a mist, to a light drizzle, and then a downpour. Spirits remained high in spite of the weather. This was the first trip back to Killeen for many reluctant members however the Texas chapter and the City of Killeen managed to help them overcome their apprehension.

On November 10, 2005 the new memorial for the 761st Tank Battalion was dedicated. The event was hosted and financed by the Central Texas Chapter of the 761st Association



CITY OF KILLEEN, TEXAS COIN

of which Lt Col Wilbert Byrd (Army Ret) is currently president. Beverly Taylor, who now lives in Arizona, was able to fly in to see a long-time quest finally come to fruition. In addition, seven original 761st members were able to attend. The memorial was awesome and when word got around, everyone wanted to see it in person. After the memorial dedication, there were so many requests to change the location of the next reunion to Killeen that the Detroit chapter relinquished their responsibilities for a 2006 Detroit/Pontiac and instead will sponsor the 2007 reunion.

Lt. Col. Wilbert Byrd (Army Ret), president of the Central Texas Chapter of the 761st Association, and chapter members, assumed responsibility for the 58th reunion in Killeen and by all accounts it was very successful.

Friday morning the honorable Timothy Hancock, Mayor of Killeen, invited all attendees to the Killeen City Hall for a reception. Each veteran was given a Killeen "coin," an idea that Mayor Hancock said was "borrowed" from the military. Everyone enjoyed hors d'oeuvres while the mayor introduced all of the city council members, police and fire chiefs, the city manager and most of the city's administrative managers.

After the city hall reception, the bus took everyone to Fort Hood to see

58th Annual Reunion—Killeen, Texas



761ST TANK BATTALION MEMORIAL

the 761st Memorial. Brigadier General Vincent K. Brooks, who is now stationed at Fort Hood, took time out of his busy schedule to greet and welcome the 761st reunion attendees at the memorial. Several attendees were also at the dedication in November and felt that seeing the memorial the second time was as impressive as the first.

After stopping for lunch on the way back to the hotel, the first business session was held. The meeting lasted about



two hours and the rest of the evening was spent "catching up." Much of the reunion was recorded by *Double 7 Film* for use in the documentary they are working on about the 761st. Friday evening was mostly a roundtable type discussion with members reminiscing about the past while *Double 7 Film* recorded the interaction.

On Saturday morning four candles were lit at the memorial service for

WILLIE TOPPS AND DAUGHTER ARE GREETED BY MAYOR TIMOTHY HANCOCK, CITY MANAGER CONNIE GREEN AND COUNCILMAN ERNEST WILKERSON (MAYOR-PRO-TEM)



TJ MANN, WILLIE TOPPS AND EUGENE MATHEWS CATCH UP ON THE TIMES OVER COFFEE IN THE HOTEL LOBBY

**BRIGADIER GENERAL
VINCENT K. BROOKS, WHO
IS NOW STATIONED AT
FORT HOOD, TOOK TIME
OUT OF HIS BUSY
SCHEDULE TO GREET AND
WELCOME THE 761ST
REUNION ATTENDEES**



L/R— CHARLES WOMBLE, GLOUCESTER STEVENS, JOHN WESTON AND JOHN HOLMES ARE WELCOMED TO KILLEEN BY COUNCILMAN ERNEST WILKERSON

58th Annual Reunion—Killeen, Texas



THE MAYOR OF KILLEEN, TIMOTHY HANCOCK AND HIS WIFE GREET JUANITA HAYES AND HER FATHER, WILLIE TOPPS DURING THE ANNUAL BANQUET. LT COL WILBERT BYRD (ARMY, RET), IS IN THE BACKGROUND.

the comrades lost this year; John M. Simmons, Lloyd P. Johnson, Mark Henderson and Robert Nealy. The memorial service was followed by a second business meeting.

The Honorable Timothy Hancock, Mayor, City of Killeen was the guest speaker at the banquet Saturday evening. Mayor Hancock spoke of the changes that the city of Killeen went through "because of you." He stated that Killeen is now a robust city of 112 thousand residents with a city government and populace that embraces all



WAYNE ROBINSON – I FOUND IT— CAN I KEEP IT?

of its citizens and celebrates diversity. By the way, Mayor Hancock mentioned: "the bus company that owned the bus that Jackie Robinson had his incident on, is now minority owned." Because of you!

This year the T.G. Hill Assistance Fund will award Ms Tiara Shanay Millander of Detroit, Michigan, an award of \$1,000 and the "Persons of the Year" awards went to Ivan Harrison, Jr. and Beverly Taylor.



TJ MANN, A RETIRED CHICAGO POLICE OFFICER, WITH ONE OF KILLEEN'S FINEST

**THIS YEAR THE T.G. HILL
ASSISTANCE FUND WILL
AWARD MS TIARA SHANAY
MILLANDER OF DETROIT,
MICHIGAN, AN AWARD OF
\$1,000**



THREE GENERATIONS OF TANKERS. EUGENE MATHEWS, SGT CRUMM, CURRENTLY AT FORT HOOD, AND WAYNE ROBINSON

President's Corner – A Special Message

**“PUT FORTH ALL THE
POSITIVE SELFLESS
ACTS THAT YOU CAN
FOR THE BETTERMENT
OF THE 761ST TANK
BATTALION AND
ALLIED VETERANS
ASSOCIATION”**

As you may already know, Floyd Dade has been having health problems for a while now. The following note is the most recent update from his wife Edris dated September 5th.

Hi Folks:

*Monday, August 28, 2006 Floyd was transferred to:
California Pacific Medical Center-Davies Campus
45 Castro, SF CA 94114 -1010
Room 164-B
(415) 600-9619 or
(415) 600-6000*

So far, they have not started any physical or occupational therapy.

. He still goes to dialysis three times per week.

So far, Floyd has not returned to sitting on the side of the bed like he was doing before this surgery (coronary artery by-

pass and aortic valve replacement). I am trying to take care of myself, but I am staying in the hospital on a cot in Floyd's room. Take care, Edris



One of Our Very Own

Lloyd P. Johnson served in the army as a cook from 1940 until 1945 and as a member of “B” Company in the 761st Tank Battalion. While in Texas, he trained in Jackie Robinson’s unit. Lloyd’s life was very full and active. He worked as a main-

tenance and handyman in his earlier years and most recently as an Apartment Manager for an apartment complex.

Shortly before his death, he expressed a wish which was to receive the medals he never received for his service with the 761st. Because of his deteriorating health getting the medals became a priority for his family. After submitting the paper work they contacted his US Congressional Representative, Julia Carson, and asked if she could expedite the process. Rep Carson interceded on his behalf and was able to present him on April 19, 2006 with the medals that were so important to him.

On May 1, 2006 Lloyd passed having his last wish fulfilled.



LLOYD P. JOHNSON (LP)

GRATEFUL: Army veteran Lloyd Johnson, 90, and his sister, Elizabeth Steele-Jones (center) admire World War II-era medals presented Wednesday by U.S. Rep. Julia Carson (right), who rushed the request.

MEDALS FOR HIS METTLE

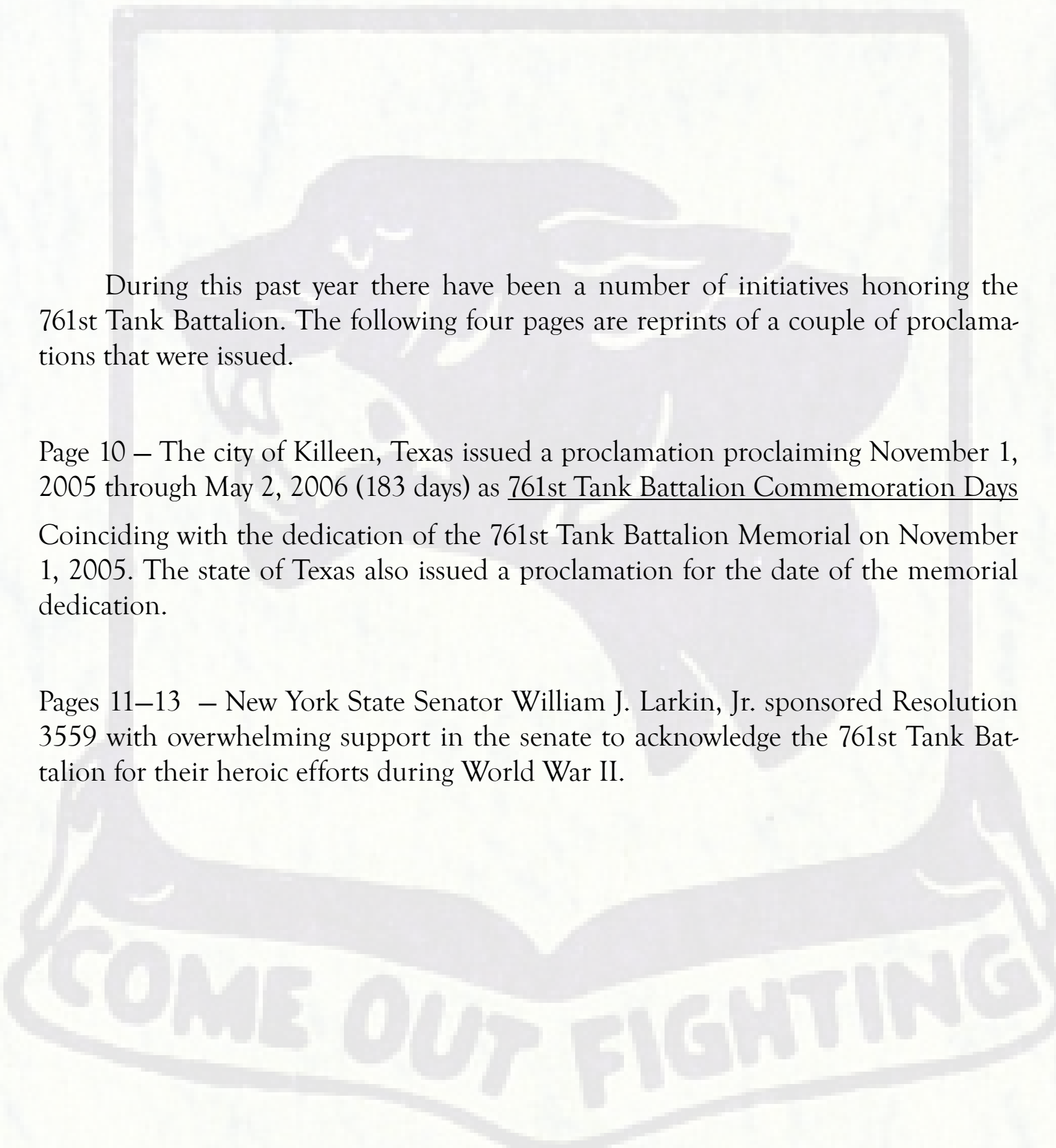
Awards from World War II bring long-overdue recognition to terminally ill U.S. Army veteran at Methodist Hospital

PHOTOS BY MATT DETRICH

NEVER TOO LATE: Lloyd Johnson sheds tears while receiving honors he earned but never received for serving in the Army during and after World War II. The six medals and Army Marksmanship Badge were presented to Johnson in his room at Methodist Hospital.

EUROPEAN TOUR: An Army of Occupation Medal with a Germany clasp pays tribute to Johnson's postwar service in that country.

ARTICLE FROM THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR – APRIL 2006



During this past year there have been a number of initiatives honoring the 761st Tank Battalion. The following four pages are reprints of a couple of proclamations that were issued.

Page 10 — The city of Killeen, Texas issued a proclamation proclaiming November 1, 2005 through May 2, 2006 (183 days) as 761st Tank Battalion Commemoration Days Coinciding with the dedication of the 761st Tank Battalion Memorial on November 1, 2005. The state of Texas also issued a proclamation for the date of the memorial dedication.

Pages 11–13 — New York State Senator William J. Larkin, Jr. sponsored Resolution 3559 with overwhelming support in the senate to acknowledge the 761st Tank Battalion for their heroic efforts during World War II.



PROCLAMATION

Office of the Mayor

WHEREAS During World War II, the War Department approved the formation of three African American tank battalions— 758th, 761st and 784th arrived at Camp Hood, Texas in September 1943 for intensive armor training; and,

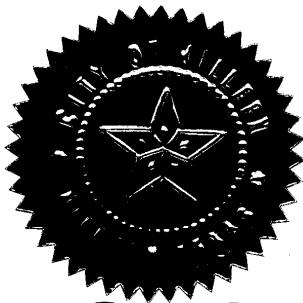
WHEREAS In August 1944, the 761st departed Camp Hood for the European Theater of Operations. The 761st Tank Battalion was the first African-American armored unit to step on German soil and see combat in WWII. They were assigned to the famous III Army of General George Patton. The 761st fought in four major allied campaigns including the Battle of the Bulge. The 761st Tank Battalion fought their way through six European countries for 183 consecutive days of nonstop combat. The 761st Tank Battalion earned the name "Black Panthers" through sacrifice, service and outstanding performance; and,

WHEREAS The awards won by this outstanding WWII fighting unit include 296 Purple Hearts, 11 Silver Stars, 70 Bronze Stars, and 8 battlefield commissions. The Presidential Unit Citation was awarded to the 761st Tank Battalion on April 20, 1978. In 1997, the Medal of Honor was posthumously awarded to Staff Sergeant Ruben Rivers, of the 761st Tank Battalion.

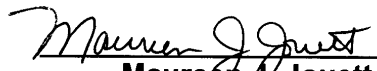
NOW THEREFORE I, Maureen J. Jouett, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Killeen do hereby proclaim November 1, 2005 through May 2, 2006 as

761st Tank Battalion Commemoration Days

within the City of Killeen, and encourage all citizens of the "City Without Limits" and "Home of America's Heroes" to recognize the tremendous contributions of this outstanding band of men. All of our citizens are asked to celebrate the contributions and sacrifices of these brave men who placed their lives in harms way protecting American values and preserving democracy for the world.



In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Killeen to be affixed this 1st day of November, 2005


Maureen J. Jouett, MAYOR

WILLIAM J. LARKIN, JR.
SENATOR, 39TH DISTRICT
CHAIRMAN
MAJORITY STEERING COMMITTEE
PLEASE RESPOND TO:
ROOM 612
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BLDG.
ALBANY, NY 12247
(518) 455-2770
1093 LITTLE BRITAIN ROAD
NEW WINDSOR, NY 12553
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THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK

March 10, 2006

CHAIRMAN
RACING, GAMING &
WAGERING COMMITTEE
COMMITTEES
COMMERCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
& SMALL BUSINESS
ELECTIONS
FINANCE
HEALTH
INSURANCE
TRANSPORTATION
VETERANS, HOMELAND SECURITY &
MILITARY AFFAIRS

Enclosed please find a copy of Resolution Number 3559, which was passed by the New York State Senate on February 15, 2006. This Resolution honors the 761st Tank Battalion for their heroic efforts during World War II.

The 761st Tank Battalion, first activated on April 1, 1942, served as an invaluable component to the Allied success in World War II. As a result of your great fighting abilities, the 761st spearheaded a number of General George S. Patton's moves into enemy territory, ultimately leading to victory. It is important that we recognize the heroic efforts of your unit, since these efforts not only proved critical during the war, but paved the way for the Civil Rights Movement here in the United States.

Given the sacrifice and dedication of the 761st Tank Battalion, it was an honor to sponsor this resolution and I am pleased to provide you with this copy. It is my sincere hope that you will share this resolution with the entire 761st Tank Battalion & Allied Veterans Association.

Sincerely,

William J. Larkin, Jr.
New York State Senator

WJL/fgp
Enc.

State of New York Legislative Resolution



Senate No. 3559

BY: Senators Larkin, Alesi, Andrews, Balboni, Bonacic, Breslin, Bruno, Connor, DeFrancisco, Diaz, Dilan, Duane, Farley, Flanagan, Fuschillo, Golden, Gonzalez, Hannon, Hassell-Thompson, Johnson, Klein, Krueger, Kruger, LaValle, Leibell, Libous, Little, Maltese, Marcellino, Marchi, Maziarz, Meier, Montgomery, Morahan, Nozzolio, Onorato, Oppenheimer, Padavan, Parker, Paterson, Rath, Robach, Sabini, Saland, Sampson, Savino, Schneiderman, Serrano, Seward, Skelos, A. Smith, M. Smith, Spano, Stachowski, Stavisky, Trunzo, Valesky, Volker, Winner, Wright and Young

HONORING the 761st Tank Battalion for their heroic efforts during World War II

WHEREAS, Members of the United States Armed Forces, who served so faithfully and courageously in wars in which our Nation's freedom was at stake, as well as in the preservation of peace during peacetime, deserve the highest commendation of this Legislative Body; and

WHEREAS, February has been designated as Black History Month in our Nation to celebrate and recognize the contributions of the Black community; this joyful month-long celebration is held across New York State and America to fittingly note the contributions of African-Americans throughout history and in all fields of endeavor; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to honor the 761st Tank Battalion, the "Black Panthers," for their heroic efforts during World War II; and

WHEREAS, This is a special tribute to the men of the 761st Tank Battalion, strong, dedicated men whose courageous deeds received so little notice in spite of their immense value in the successful defeat of Germany in WWII; and

WHEREAS, The first black armor unit to see combat, the 761st Tank Battalion had no headlines or movies to extol their tremendous exploits; although they spearheaded many of General Patton's attacks, they were never represented in any films; and

WHEREAS, For 183 days, the Black Panthers continually engaged in combat and defeated the best that Germany had, although they were usually outnumbered and faced superior weaponry; it was the 761st Tank Battalion who punched the hole in the Siegfried Line through which General Patton's tanks subsequently poured and raced across Germany; and

WHEREAS, Silence echoes around the deeds of the 761st Tank Battalion in spite of their exceptional courage and boldness in battle; they fought for six months without relief, and also defeated superior German forces that had stymied, stalled, and frustrated other units of General Patton; and

WHEREAS, The German breakthrough in the Ardennes Forest precipitated the famous action known to the world as the Battle of the Bulge; the 761st Tank Battalion was tasked with taking the German stronghold in the town of Tillet; every other American unit that was assigned to take the town had been beaten back; and

- 2 -

WHEREAS, Tanks, artillery, and infantry inside the Ardennes Forest had assaulted Tillet and all had failed to take it; after a week of steady fighting against entrenched SS troops, the Black Panthers took Tillet and drove the Germans out in full retreat; these are but a few of their remarkable accomplishments during the war; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is very pleased to have this opportunity to express its gratitude to the men of the 761st Tank Battalion for their tremendous sacrifices made for our Nation and for the benefit of all Americans; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor the 761st Tank Battalion for their heroic efforts during World War II; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the members of the 761st Tank Battalion.

ADOPTED IN SENATE ON
February 15, 2006

By order of the Senate,



Steven M. Boggess, Secretary



**WE WERE REAL
GOOD BUDDIES
IN THE 761ST.
WE TRAINED
HARD ON THE
TANKS AND IT
PAID OFF...**

Staff Sergeant Levi "Yogi" Bough shared his wartime exploits in a telephone conversation from his home in Switzerland last week.

Levi's family came to the Bronx from St. Croix when Levi was two years of age. He was in his freshman year at Virginia Union when he was drafted. He trained at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, Fort Knox Kentucky, Camp Claiborne Louisiana, and Camp Hood Texas. His voice grew stronger as he recalled the bonds of friendship and determination shared as a member of the 761st Tank Battalion.

"We were real good buddies in the 761st. We trained hard on the tanks and it paid off in combat overseas."

In the Battalion's first action in the Lorraine, Levi saw combat at Salival as a Dog Company bow machine gunner and radio operator in Warren Crecy's tank crew:

Crecy stopped the tank near the edge of a clearing in the woods. His voice was calm over the intercom, telling us to get ready, the Jerries were coming through. We saw those grey uniforms and opened up with everything we had- co-ax machine gun, 37mm gun, bow gun. Up top, Crecy stepped out of the turret and walked tracers in. You should have seen him. He didn't fear anything.

After his best friend, Scotty
(Technician 4 Horatio Scott of
Lynn, Massachusetts) *got*

killed, Crecy just hunted the Jerries and killed them without mercy. Sometimes, he would jump off the tank and just gun them down with pistol or grease gun."

After two months in light tanks, Bough had seen enough.

"I got to the point where I just didn't want to kill any more. I knew this meant big trouble. I told Crecy, but he was very understanding. He told English (Captain Richard English, Dog Company Commander) and I got transferred to the Commo Section working the radios and doing

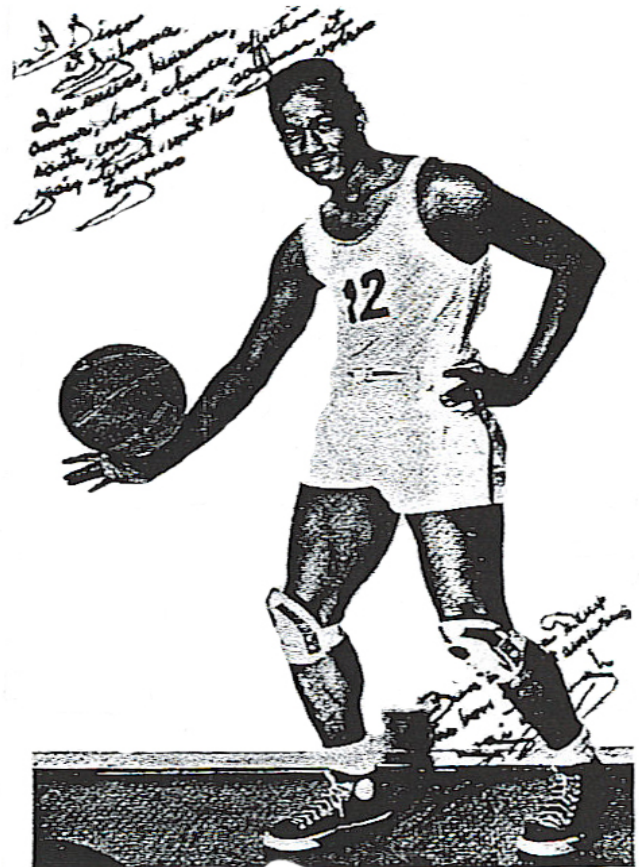
Morse Code."

When the Battalion reached Teisendorf, Bavaria in spring of 1945, Bough was ordered to guard German prisoners. He got permission to open a dance hall for the tankers, and the German girls followed. But not immediately.

"At first, the German girls were afraid of us. They said they were told that black soldiers were cannibals. Gradually, they came to see how we were helping them and treating the prisoners humanely. Then, the tensions eased and quite a few GIs and German girls became involved. Some of them gave up everything to be



WAYNE D. ROBINSON



LEVI YOGI BOUGH

with the guys."

Bough met his wife Charlotte in Teisendorf. They were married and returned to New York in 1946, where Bough resumed his studies at St. Francis University in Brooklyn until 1950. Bough was awarded a scholarship and stipend allowing him to continue his studies in the Political Science and Philosophy at the University in Lausanne, Switzerland. Bough excelled as a member, then trainer of the basketball team, leading the team to four championships.

His son, Gideon Levi was born in 1960. Gideon is now Director of the Department of Education, Lugano, Switzerland. Bough and Charlotte discovered spiritual fulfillment as a Seven Day Adventists.

To this day, Bough describes his experiences as a tanker with pride. He is one of the lucky few who can point to photographs at pages 116, 119, and to the Pittsburgh Courier article at page 134 of Trezzvant Anderson's book, *Come Out Fighting*, and remark to himself, "I was there."



YOGI BOUGH

Ask the Historian

Tankers, Relaxing In Austria, Turn Up With crack Basketeers

By TREZZVANT W. ANDERSON

WITH THE 761st TANK BATTALION IN AUSTRIA — (AN P)
- Now that the wars have ended for the fighting 761st tankers, the fellows have been out on the athletic fields limbering up from their tank-and-turret cramps, and out of the jumble have tropped a number of crack hoopsters whose names are well known on the basketball floors back home.

★ HEADING the five for the 761st are such figures as: Yogi Bough, New York City who was on Henry Hucles' "dream team" at Virginia Union in 1938, 1939, 1940 and 1941; there's Leroy Johnson of Greencastle, Ind., who caged them for Henry Kean's tough combo at Kentucky State in 1938, 1939 and 1940. There is Leslie James, the former Cleveland pro cager, Prescott McNeil, of New York who played at Shaw university, Henry Wiley a New York City cager, Claude Paxton of Red Bank, N. J., the former national hop-skip-and-jump champion, who hooped them with Giles Wright's Xavier "Gold Rush" at New Orleans; and there is Wilbur Slaughter, who dropped them through the net for West Kentucky college.

Also Steven Reid, of Portsmouth, Ohio, from Florida A. and M.; Robert Cooper, of Georgia, also from Florida A. and M.; Jimmy Coles, of Baltimore, Nat. Johnson of Philadelphia from Virginia State college; Jimmy Caldhell, of Springfield, Ohio, Frank C. K. Alexander, of Philadelphia. Finally Stewart of St. Paul, at Lawrenceville, Va., a native of Richmond.

NOW THAT they've stopped the cannon-fire from their tanks and are getting a slight rest, the lads are trying a few while counting points in anticipation of getting back to the boards as soon as they return to the U. S. A.

ARTICLE BY TREZZVANT W. ANDERSON FROM 761ST COME OUT FIGHTING BOOK

**I GOT TO THE
POINT WHERE I
JUST DIDN'T
WANT TO KILL
ANY MORE**

You can reach the 761st Historian with questions or comments at the following address:

1565 Plumtree Road,
Springfield, MA 01119,

or by e-mail at:

wrobi95144@comcast.net.

By Wayne D. Robinson, National Unit Historian, 761st Tank Battalion

MAIL CALL

Hello! I just found your website today. I only learned about the identity of the 761st Battalion when I came across Kareem Abdul Jabbar's book in my local library in Toronto, Ontario. The unit is of particular interest to me because my mother lived in the city of Steyr, Austria in 1945 when the 761st rolled into town.

She was shocked by the soldiers she saw. Big, strong young men, but "black as night" she once told me. She'd never seen an African-American before in her life (she was 14), and only knew of them through the Nazi propaganda she received as an education in school. At first she was terrified -- though fascinated -- but she said that was quickly dispelled.

The black soldiers, she told me, were far kinder and friendlier to the locals than the white troops who rolled in afterwards. Whereas the white troops referred to the locals as "Heinies" and "Krauts" in the most insulting tones, she found that the black soldiers took a different attitude, evidently -- she thinks -- because they knew too what it had felt like to be put down by others. They gave away everything they had -- cigarettes, chocolate, food rations (to this day my mom still thinks of SPAM as one of the world's great delicacies. They had been slowly starving until the Americans arrived) to the locals. She remembers too one scene near the downtown of Steyr. A white American soldier had been smoking a cigarette and tossed the burning butt away when he was done. An old man -- probably hadn't even SEEN a real, non-ersatz cigarette in a couple of years -- stooped over to pick up the

smouldering butt to get at least a couple of drags off of it. The young white American soldier turned around and ground it out before the old man could reach it and stalked off. A few seconds later, a black soldier who had been sitting on a bench nearby and who had seen the whole thing got up, walked over to the old man, patted him on the shoulder and offered him the last two smokes he had in his pack-age. The old guy just about dissolved into tears. My mom never forgot that.

She also told me -- and I don't know if this was true or not -- that there was an American Club in Steyr for the recreation of the troops. There were often dances held there and she said she liked dancing with the black soldiers best because they really knew all the newest American dance steps (new to her because of course that sort of thing was viewed as "degenerate" by the Nazis and was never allowed in Austria under their rule) and were much more athletic and free with their dancing. For my mom, who was a trained dancer this was a lot of fun. She always speaks fondly of the black troops who arrived in Steyr in 1945 -- the 761st!

Jeff Hubbell

Toronto, Ontario

761st Tank Battalion Association:

I am contacting you for the purpose of presenting a venture to construct a permanent Memorial of the 761st Tank Battalion at the General Patton Memorial Museum. Please contact me

regarding this venture.

Rafael C. Danam, 2nd Lieutenant, Assistant Curator & Special Projects MGR.
www.generalPattonMuseum.com

Gumm, Jonathan M (PKI)
Hello, my father and four of my uncles served in WWII and I believe that they served in the 761st because of the notes that were written on the original pictures that they returned home with after the war. I am curious if you or any of your colleagues have any knowledge of soldiers by the last name of GUMM from the state of Kentucky.

Thank you, Jonathan Gumm

Dear Sir or Ma'am,

The Commander of Fort Leavenworth, KS has recently approved a process and set aside space on post (next to the famous Buffalo Soldier Memorial) to memorialize African-American units which served in the U.S. Army during the segregated era. As a tanker myself, I am well aware of the distinguished history of the 761st and thought you be interested in the possibility of including the 761st in the memorial area. As of this writing, the 555th Parachute Infantry Regiment is planning

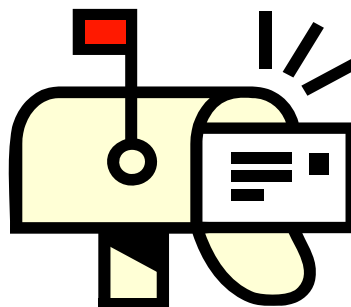
to commemorate a bust to their regiment this fall. They will be the first African-American unit to be memorialized in this area.

Fort Leavenworth has a standing committee, of which I am a member, which considers requests and coordinates with associations. If you are interested, I can put you in touch with the head of that committee. Best wishes.

Timothy R. Reese, COL, AR
Director, Combat Studies Institute
Flint Hall
Ft. Leavenworth, KS 66027

Vernon Schmidt wrote:

I'm a WWII combat infantryman who served in the 90th Div and I'm looking for some black tanker who may have liberated a small town in Bavaria, Germany (Leuchtenberg) on or about April 24, 1945. A small 9 year old Austrian boy serving in Hitler Youth group was part of the remaining force defending this town when a Sherman tank halted in front of this kid and demanded to know where all the German soldiers were. He states that this black GI held him until he showed them a hidden tunnel where they were in hiding. This 9 year old kid is now 70 years old and a close friend of mine and has written a fascinating story but with a void in it. He would like to find who this tanker GI was and if still living and thank him for changing his life's destiny. Was it the 761st? The stories I've read say the 761st did not serve with the 90th but A Co 357 reg't of the 90th also was in this town on the same day according to after action re-



MAIL CALL

ports. Finding who this might be or the unit would be most appreciated. Parts of this story can be found on www.tankbooks.com titled "Born On The Wrong Side Of The Fence" I'd like to hear from some one. I can furnish maps of this area. Hope you're out there.

Vern Schmidt

Hello,

I recently read *Brothers In Arms: The Epic Story of the 761st Tank Battalion, WWII's Forgotten Heroes* by Kareem Abdul Jabbar and was touched by the story of these great men and their contributions to the United States of America in War World II. I could not find a place on your website to express my thanks and gratitude to these men and their families, so I am hoping you will make my feelings known.

I want to thank you, for all that you had to endure, and all that you contributed and sacrificed in the face of so many obstacles. I want to offer my condolences to the families and friends of those lost to you in the war.

I work at the Registrar's Office at the University of Central Florida, where the Veteran Services are also housed for the University. Every month or so, they make a display in the hall near our office about some aspect of military history. Recently, after reading Jabbar's Book, I asked a member of Veteran's Services if they might make a display honoring the 761st Tank Battalion. I hope they take my suggestion, and that it will help to educate even more people about the Battalion and its significant contribution to

American History. If they do so, I would like to send you a picture of the display so you might know that your story is being spread beyond me to those around me.

Again, Thank you so much.
Sincerely,
Sherry Lynn Hays
University of Central Florida

Good Morning Mr. Smith.

Just wanted say that I visited the web site of the 761st. And thoroughly enjoyed it. Reuben Rivers was my mother's first cousin, and we are so very proud of Reuben and the whole 761st. My reason for writing you is to find any information on the memorial which is located at Ft Hood, Texas, (commemorated in November of 2005). Could you tell me if this will be an annual thing or where I could find any info on reunions, gatherings, etc pertaining to the 761st. Would appreciate any information that you can provide or if you don't have the info, could you direct this email to anyone who would have the information? Again, I think the website is awesome, and you have done a great job. We were so luck to find your website. My husband, Sam Maxie, Sr found the site, and he was in the military during the Vietnam conflict. My name is Loretta Jones, my mom is Jewel Jones (live in Shawnee Ok, born in Hotulka, Ok), my children are Sam Maxie, Jr., Sheena Wharry and Dar-sche Wharry. Thank you so much Mr. Smith and Blessings to you.

Sincerely,
Loretta Jones

To the Soldiers, Officers, and Families, of the 761st Tank Bn.

Thank you, all, for your proud, brave Service, and Sacrifices.

It is wonderful that your story is told.

Respectfully,
Wayne S. De Vore
Sgt., 3rd Sqdn (Air), 5th Cavalry, 1972-1975

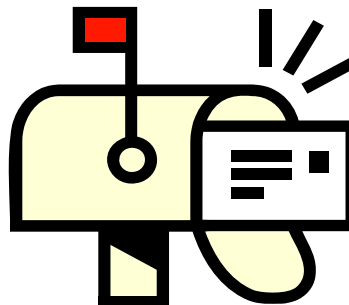
Rita McFadden wrote:
Dear Sir..I have been researching the 761st as an interested "relative" to the brave members of the 761st tank battalion. my dad, is Billie C. Thompson, deceased 12-10-1982. When he enlisted in 1942. he came to the 761stin 1944. he composed the S-4 combat diary, the battalion supply section. My dad was from 1000 East Lynn Street, Springfield MO. I have a son that is graduating high school this year (we live in South Carolina) and was made aware of scholarships for families/off springs of American Legion vets. he became discouraged when learning that the service person had to be from South Carolina, my dad was from Missouri. do you know of any grants/scholarships

for grandchildren, relatives as they relate? I am also very interested in obtaining a log in and application for this site. I will try to attach a picture of a portrait of my dad. . Thanking you in advance for your assistance and my god watch over and keep you.

My name is Lloyd Mims Sr., I'm a officer with Donald Lockett VFW Post 6488. Recently the members of our post celebrated Loyalty Day, with a luncheon, showing the documentary aired by the History Channel, (about the 761st) to the general public. For many years we have been putting on programs in an attempt to educate the community about the contributions and sacrifices African-Americans have made in our Armed Forces. Over the years we have made arrangements to bring individuals to our area such as: Capt. Luther Smith (Tuskegee Airman), the family of Sergeant Eddie Carter (Medal of Honor recipient), just to name a couple.

Any information you can help us with, names, addresses of any survivors of 761st will be greatly appreciated or if you prefer rely this email to them. We have learned that Mr. McConnell and Mr. Stevens reside in N.J., but have been unable to contact them. Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely, Lloyd



Scholarships and Educational Assistance Available to 761st Family Members

There are two established scholarships that are associated with the 761st Tank Battalion. The Paul L. Bates Memorial Scholarship Fund and the T.G. Hill Educational Assistance Fund.

The Paul L. Bates Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in 1999 in memory of Colonel Paul L. Bates who, perhaps more than any other single person, shaped the battalion into the remarkable unit that it became. Colonel Bates was a 1931 graduate of Western Maryland College (on July 1, 2002, the name officially changed to McDaniel College), and during his college years was an All-American football player.

The scholarship was established as a tribute to the brave men who fought under his command and provides awards for lineal descendants of members of the 761st Tank Battalion who served with the unit from August 1944 through April 1945.

Recipients must be accepted to and attend McDaniel College, possess and maintain a 2.0 grade point average at McDaniel College and demonstrate financial need.

McDaniel College is a private four year college of the liberal arts and sciences. There is a flexible curricula at both the undergraduate and master's degree level where students from 31 states and 17 countries prepare for their future lives. Over the years the college has grown from a single building with 37 students to 40 buildings on a 160-acre campus populated by 1,600 undergraduates and 1,300 graduate students. The average class size is 17 students and there is a student-faculty ratio of 12 – 1. This enables a close-knit community where learning is collaborative and every student receives personal attention.

For information about McDaniel College and how to apply, visit the McDaniel College web site at www.mcdaniel.edu.

The T.G. Hill Education Assistance fund has provided support to many young students over the years with over \$87,000 in cash awards. In 2005 there were two awards of \$1,000 to each of two students.

The assistance provided to the young students is different from other scholarships in that the student receives a check in their own name and has the freedom to use the money at their own discretion. This is important because many students who receive other forms of financial support, family or institutional, experience a financial gap that puts a strain on family resources and/or is not covered by other sources. There are many extra costs associated with higher learning that are often overlooked until the student is faced with difficult choices.

Can I join a professional organization in the field I am majoring in, can I afford books in my field that are not required reading for any of my courses, those reference books are so expensive but it would help so much to have my own set or it could just be that my socks get wet when it rains because of the hole in my shoes—whatever.

The T.G. Hill Educational Assistance Fund is provided through donations to the 761st Tank Battalion & Allied Veterans Association by both members and friends. The Association is chartered as a non-profit corporation with 501(c)(3) status. Donations to the educational assistance fund are always welcome. Checks should be made out the 761st Tank Battalion & Allied Veterans Association with the notation T.G. Hill Education Fund in the memo area. The mailing address is as follows:

761st Tank Battalion & Allied Veterans Association
P.O. Box 211009
Detroit, Michigan 48221

McDaniel College Contact Information

Contact Admissions

Phone: 800-638-5005
 Email: admissions@mcdaniel.edu
 Address: McDaniel College
 Office of Admissions
 2 College Hill
 Westminster, MD 21157

Contact Graduate Admissions

Phone: 410-857-2500
 Fax: 410-857-2515
 Email: gradadms@mcdaniel.edu
 Address: Graduate & Professional Studies Office
 Academic Hall, 2nd Floor
 McDaniel College
 2 College Hill
 Westminster, MD 21157-4390

For information on scholarships and financial aid contact the Director of Financial Aid at email: pwilliams@mcdaniel.edu or phone: 410-857-2233

An additional contact for more information about the scholarship, contact:

Ms. Debbie Leazer
 Assistant Director of Donor Relations
 McDaniel College
 2 College Hill
 Westminster, MD 21157
 Phone: 410-857-2251
 E-mail: dleazer@mcdaniel.edu

T.G. Hill Educational Assistance Fund

For an application write to:

761st Tank Battalion & Allied Veterans Association
 P.O. Box 211009
 Detroit, Michigan 48221
 Attn: T.G. Hill Educational Assistance Fund



TAPS

THE 761ST NEWSLETTER HAS LEARNED OF THE FOLLOWING DEATHS. OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY GOES OUT TO THE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF THE DECEASED.

JOHN M. SIMMONS	JANUARY 23, 2006
LLOYD P. JOHNSON	MAY 1, 2006
MARK HENDERSON	JUNE 24, 2006
ROBERT NEALY	DECEMBER 9, 2005
JOHN HOLT	FEBRUARY 14, 2005
NEWTON LONG	JUNE 12, 2004



ANYONE WHO KNOWS OF A MEMBER'S DEATH PLEASE
NOTIFY THE NEWSLETTER SO THAT PERSON CAN BE
LISTED IN TAPS AND ALSO ON THE HONOR ROLL AT
THE NEXT REUNION

COME OUT FIGHTING

The Official Newsletter of the
761st Tank Battalion & Allied Veterans Association

Organization Address
761st Tank Battalion & Allied Veterans Association
P.O. Box 211009
Detroit, Michigan 48221

Kenneth C. Tait— National Secretary
Phone: 313-361-2986
E-mail: kcttnt@aol.com

We're on the Web!

www.761st.com

New Directory

The Latest directory created for the 761st Tank Battalion and Allied Veterans Organization was several years ago and a lot has changed since then. If you know of any former 761st members or of their families please forward their information so that we may mail them future issues of the 761st newsletter. There will be valuable information on topics such as scholarships available to family members, activities of the 761st Tank Battalion and Allied Veterans Association and updates on individual members.

Statement of Publication

This is the official publication of the 761st Tank Battalion & Allied Veterans Association. It will be published on a tri-annual basis with publication dates of April 30, August 31, and December 31. All members and associates are encouraged to support the voice of the 761st. Reader response will ultimately determine the frequency of publication.

The news letter is intended to be a vehicle for the members and associates to express opinions, make suggestions, share experiences and especially to keep in touch.

All letters and stories submitted will be considered for publication but they must be signed. Letters requesting that the writer's name be withheld will be honored and stated so in the printed article. Because the Association is a non-profit organization, letters espousing a political position will not be printed.

Unless stated otherwise, the views printed in the newsletter are those of the article's writer and do not necessarily represent the views of the Association leadership or the editor of the newsletter.

The Association is not responsible for the accuracy of articles submitted for publication. It would be impossible to check each story. Therefore we rely on the submitter to research each article.

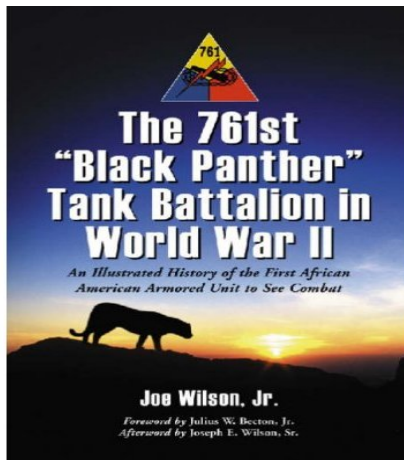
The editor reserves the right to edit letters to conform to space limitations and grammar.

You are encouraged to actively participate in the newsletter by submitting your letters, stories, photographs and suggestions.

Letters may be submitted to:

Ivan H. Harrison, Jr.
7518 Hamilton Ave
Burr Ridge, Illinois 60527-6923
ivanharrisonjr@hotmail.com

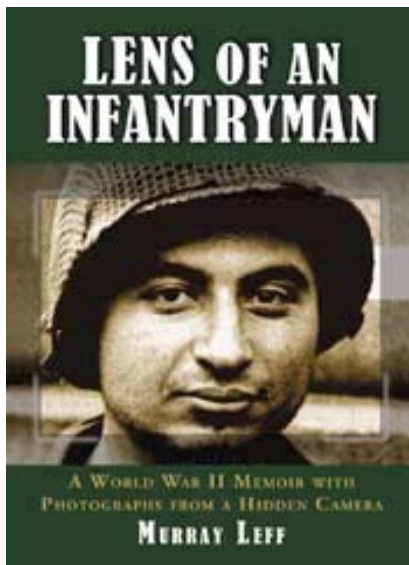
New Publications (this fall)



761st Black Panther Tank Battalion in World War II: An Illustrated History of the First African American Armored (Paperback)

by Joe Wilson, Jr.
(Afterword), Julius W. Becton

ISBN: 0-7864-2862-7



Lens of an Infantryman A World War II Memoir with Photographs from a Hidden Camera

Murray Leff
ISBN 0-7864-2867-8

(The 784th is mentioned in great detail with pictures, maps, etc.)