

# 'Thundering Herd'

Newsletter of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association



Ardennes, Rhineland, Central Europe

**Winter - 2012 - Vol. I No. 3**

## President's Message

Holiday greetings from the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association!

I hope that everyone has had a warm and wonderful Holiday season, filled with the joys and pleasures of Christmas, Hanukkah and the New Year!

Last year saw the first full year of operation of the newly re-organized Association. We held our annual Reunion in September, and the organizational meeting of the Association on that Friday evening before our tour to the WWII Reunion visit to Gettysburg. At the annual meeting, we hosted approximately 45 original veterans, members and friends and family. At the meeting, new By-Laws were approved, and an election brought the following officers on board:

Vern Miller (130-HQ) – President Emeritus

Andy Waskie – President

Gloria Layne – Vice President

Carol Neumann – Treasurer

Okey Taylor (58 AIB) – Historian

Rev. Norm Olson (49 AIB) - Chaplain

Committees Chairs:

Rick Miller – Newsletter

Joseph Neddill – Membership

Sallie Shapiro – Merchandise

Technology and Web Site – Jack Lynch & Scott Thorpe

We still need volunteers to serve in the following open committees:

Reunions/Events

Fund Raising

Communications

## **Brief Report on the Reunion, Association meeting and WWII Tour to Gettysburg**

### **8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association – September 14 – 16, 2012**

A crowd of 45 including 13 WWII veterans met on Friday evening September, 14, 2012 at the Holiday Inn in Bensalem, PA to re-organize the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association, adopt new By-Laws, and elect 2013 officers.

Interim president, Andy Waskie called the meeting to order and presented the meeting agenda. After opening introductions and greetings, an invocation was delivered by Association Chaplain Rev. Norm Olson, 49-C.

The By-Laws were adopted unanimously; followed by an election of officers for 2013.

After a lively discussion of the future of the Association and events and projects, a reception was enjoyed by all attendees with refreshments and beverages.

Attendees enjoyed a large display of artifacts, photos, books, documents, and souvenirs of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division veterans.

On Saturday, a large contingent of Association members and 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division veterans departed Bensalem for a WWII focus tour of Gettysburg.

The itinerary included visits to the Gettysburg Battlefield Museum, Cyclorama Painting, and Film, followed by a battlefield tour.

After checking into the Hotel (Country Inn & Suites), the group departed for a sumptuous dinner at the historic ‘Fairfield Inn’ (1767). After dinner, we returned to the Hotel for a reception hosted by the Association in the lounge.

Sunday dawned bright, clear and comfortable with perfect weather. We departed the Hotel to drive to the Eisenhower Farm where the attendees enjoyed a tour of the Farm, and the WWII Show – Demonstration – Reenactment. A thrill for the veterans was a ride around the compound in a 1942 Dodge ¾ ton weapons-carrier,

similar to the very ones the men had used in service. To the cheers of the visitors and crowd, the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored tankers stood tall and stoically accepted the accolades. Afterwards, a superb luncheon buffet was taken in the historic 'Dobbin's House' in Gettysburg. We left the area to return to Bensalem in our coach and viewed a WWII documentary on the way.

All agreed that they enjoyed the Reunion Tour immensely, and it was also agreed by the Association officers that there would be a 2013 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association Reunion next year. Time and place to be determined. But, the 2013 Reunion will take place in Mid-September, 2013 and be located in Carlisle, PA with visits to the Army War College and other related sites. Please keep the date open.

### **Photos of the 2012 Reunion and Gettysburg Tour**

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/v3662vcdk1rn9cr/RxrS7p2Jof?m>

Our Association 'Facebook' page has become very popular with over 120 participants sharing photos, stories, reminiscences, and details on veterans. I encourage all interested to sign on to facebook, and then enroll in **Association 'Facebook' page**. Please consider joining for updates and information!

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/269231523148647/>

I have been trying to collect stories of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division, the veterans, and images to keep in an archive that will be made available to any and all interested. These items, no matter how mundane will be treasured by future generations and historians. Please send me all the stories and photos you can. I have also embarked on a project to create an 'oral history' for each and every living veteran to preserve for posterity. At the Reunion, we were able to video-tape several of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division attendees. I will try to continue this effort, but also encourage the families to use the Iphone technology to interview loved ones and send me the file.

We still have a number of 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division **souvenir items**: a decal and Association baseball cap.

The caps are gratis to original veterans

\$10 to members

\$15 to non-members  
sent via post.

If a veteran has not received the cap, they should contact me, preferably by e-mail [8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com](mailto:8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com)

A new member, Ralph Peeters of the Netherlands who has adopted the graves of 8<sup>th</sup> Armored men who lie at rest in Margraten Soldiers' Cemetery in the Netherlands has volunteered to be our correspondent in Europe and keep us informed of the events and actions on behalf of our honored dead, interred in Europe. His articles will appear in future 'Thundering Herd' newsletters.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division Association Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery**

I am presently working on our proposal to place and dedicate a permanent memorial plaque to the veterans of the Division who paid the ultimate sacrifice during WWII, and all the veterans living and deceased. I have filed a formal request and have been in contact with the Cemetery officials. We are in the preliminary stages, but the memorial may cost up to \$10,000 to manufacture, place and dedicate. Thus, we have much fund raising to do in the near future to gather this handsome amount.

We will also need to re-establish our **non-profit status** with the IRS for the Association in order to grant tax deductions for such donations. Would anyone with legal or financial experience like to speak head this effort? If so, please contact me asap.

### **2013 Dues are also now requested.**

Original 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division veterans are honorary members and pay no dues.

An Individual membership costs - \$20.

A family membership which includes all members of a household costs - \$35.

Donations are gratefully accepted from any source! To maintain the business of the Association, there are numerous costs involved. The monies to pay debts and responsibilities come from your memberships and any donations we may receive. Please be generous. This keeps our mission and sacred trust to memorialize the service of the veterans of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division and its memory alive into posterity.

Please send your membership dues via check made out to 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division

Association to:  
Andy Waskie  
2345 E. Dauphin St  
Philadelphia, PA 19125  
tel – 215-423-3930  
[8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com](mailto:8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com)

2012 marks the **68th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, where the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division first tasted combat in early January, 1945.** The courage and fortitude of the American Soldier was tested against great adversity. The quality of their response ultimately meant the victory of freedom over tyranny. We salute the Greatest Generation!

FREE FOR WWII VETERANS  
**BULGE REENACTMENT**  
**68th Anniversary Commemoration Battle**  
**TO HONOR VETERANS of WORLD WAR II**  
**Fort Indiantown Gap PA**  
**22 Jan – 27 Jan 2013**

The World War II Federation invites all vets to the Battle of the Bulge Reenactment this coming January and will again be honoring the WW II Veterans during the week, with a special Reception scheduled for Friday, 25 Jan 2013, free for WWII Vets.

Veterans may arrive after 1400 hours on Tues 22 Jan 2013. As usual, the Veterans will have a hospitality suite set up in their barracks as well as memorabilia & video displays. We most likely will be in Area 13.

Attendees should bring a pillow, sheets and a blanket (or a sleeping bag) for their bunk as well as wash cloth and towel and shower clogs. All sleeping is on lower bunks. Enjoy a week of camaraderie, relaxation, WWII videos, stories and hospitality and a chance to relive your basic training days in original WWII Barracks. Enjoy the transformation of the barracks area by the reenactors to WWII period and enjoy the many restored WWII vehicles. Meet reenactors who are interested in learning from WWII veterans about the period as well as the respect that they hold for you.

We will be transported by bus on Wed to a local HS for a Veteran Program. Flea Market will open at 1400 hours and will remain open to 2200 hours. Thursday's visit by bus to the VA Hospital in Lebanon PA for our annual visit, so we can meet with fellow veterans

On Friday the Federation will salute the Veterans. At 1600 hours there will be a Wreath Laying at the VBOB Monument and 21 gun salute, and a Tactical Battle Briefing at 1630 Hours in the Community Club. There will be a free reception there for WWII Veterans at 1700 hours (others may attend at \$15.00). As usual there will be 1940 Movies in Veterans Bldg #12-15 and hospitality in the Veterans' Barracks. The cost of the event is \$70.00 which includes 5 nights bunk in the barracks and Dinner and Period Entertainment USO-type show on the Saturday night.

On Sat 1030 hrs Veteran Tour of the Battlefield, at 1300 Public Battle scenario Area 12, 1700 Buses leave for Community Club, 1800 Dinner, 2000 period entertainment & talent show followed by dancing.

WWII Veterans will be free again this year. Non Veterans accompanied by a WWII veteran and others will pay \$75 for the 5 nights in the barracks which will also include the Saturday nite dinner (Option A). Those not wanting the Sat Nite Dinner the fee is \$50 (Option B). Those not staying in the Barracks but want the Sat nite dinner the fee is \$30 (Option C).

**If you would like a Registration packet contact John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904-3331, e-mail [johndbowen@earthlink.net](mailto:johndbowen@earthlink.net) or go to [www.wwiifederation.org](http://www.wwiifederation.org) Deadline for Veterans to register is 31 Dec 2012**

**Bulge Bugle – newsletter of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge (VOBB)**

<http://www.veteransofthebattleofthebulge.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/2012-Nov2.pdf>

All honors to the men of the 8<sup>th</sup> Armored Division both living and deceased!