

## POST OFLAG 64 ITEM

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### WINTER 1999

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#### CHARLESTON 1999

The Reunion in Charleston was a howling success. Attendance broke a record.

Pat and Martha did an outstanding job of managing the affair.

Everybody was well pleased with the occasion and we have included in this issue a description of what happened for the benefit of those who did not attend.

We even have a flag. It will be brought to Laughlin and maybe Duanne can get the hotel to fly it in front like the Holiday Inn did in Mt. Pleasant!

#### LAUGHLIN, NV IN 2000

The Louisville connection didn't work out for 2000 so Duanne Kennedy will proceed as originally planned.

#### SPOKANE WA IN 2001

Herm Littman will proceed with plans for 2001 as originally planned.

#### COLUMBUS, GA IN 2002

Don Graul, George Britto and Bill Warthen will handle the affair



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW Y2K

PUBLICATIONS

*The Waters Story* \$19.50  
*My Tour of Russia* \$ 5.00  
*The Men of Oflag 64* \$ 20.00  
*The Oflag 64 Directory* \$ 3.00  
*Oflag 64 Audio Tape* \$ 5.00  
*Original Roster-Oflag 64* \$10.00  
*Tribute to TF Baum ( Paperback)* \$15.00

Make check out to Oflag 64 PF and mail to the Editor.

*In the Presence of Mine Enemies* \$10.00  
 Make check payable to and send to:

Mrs. Rose Daniels  
 5100 Sharon Road. Apt 603  
 Charlotte, NC 28210-4720

*Escape to Russia* \$35.00  
 Make check payable and send to:

H.Randolph Holder  
 383 Westview Drive  
 Athens, GA 30606-4635  
 Pho. (706)549-3337

We have a roster of the men at Hammelburg and a debriefing of Col Goode and LTC Lockette. They are being bound in one booklet and will be ready for mailing shortly. Price will be \$ 7.50 which includes S & H.

Graf, Ed	Marable, Paul	Waters, Pat
Sherman, Jim	Bates, Jim	Desmond, Henry
Korber, Evelyn	Clark, Gen A.P.	Waldman, Sid
Heisler, Chris	Hansen, Kermit	McDonough, Agnes
Robbins, Dudley	Holder, Boomer	Davis, John
Klinkenborg, Ray	Sharick, Eugene	DeSanto, Tony
Batte, Ed	Greene, George	Waful, Don
Smoak, Earl	Chappell, Roy	Higginbotham, Carroll
Lee, Royal	Keiser, Martin	McDonough, Agnes
Drake, Jay	Shirk, Lucy	Waldman, Sid
Littman, Herm	Batte, Ed	Desmond, Henry
Wernette, Don	Danie, Rose	Davis, John
Hyatt, Kenneth	Moore, Charles	Miles, Richard
Baum, Abe	Kleysteuber, Margaret	Lawler, Martin
Manton, Richard	Bond, James	Christensen, Jean
Christensen, Jean	Creech, John	Nelson, Annette
Roberts, Ormond	Cupit, Mary	Dinne Frank
Hoskot, Nat	Lussenden, Don	Hoskot, Nathaniel
McDonald, John	McDonough, Agnes	Ellsworth, Reid
Littman, Herm	Higginbotham, Carroll	Rinehart, Ed
Barton, Irene	Segal, Stanley	Barrett, Joe
Gray, William	Bradford, O.L.	Kanner, Marcia
O'Neill, Robert	Wright, Lillian	Britto, George
Yarock, Irving	Holder, Boomer	Graul, Don
Sharp, Wilbur	Johnson, Errol	Sherman, Jim
Sherman, Jim	Moss, Alfred	Korber, Evelyn
Casner, Al	Mitchell, Thomas	George Juskalian
Warren, Chester	Jones, Curtis	Jane Graffagnino
White, Vincent	Robin, Alvin	Anthony Cipriano
Cory, Bill	Woodhurst, Stan	
Gever, Jean	MacArevey, Jim	
Lawson, Tom	Lowe, Lewis	
Bryant, A.W.	Walters, Warren	
Cheatham, Bob	Chevalier, Marvin	

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## Persons attending the reunion in Charleston

Ainsworth, Joe and Ruth(2)  
Ball, Ralph, Maggie Wagner (D)  
& Jay W (GS) Shonda Prescher (friend)  
Barett, Joseph, Mary.(2)  
Baum, Abe and Eileen  
Bickers, Jim, Emmy(2)  
Bedient, Carl and Elmira Barnes (2)  
Britto, George and Betty (2)  
Brooks, Glenn and Ruby(2)  
Bryant, Art (1)  
Calpin, Mike (1)  
Cecil, Albert & Dorothy (2)  
Chappell, Roy , Helen(2)  
Cheatham, Robert (1)  
Chevalier, Marv, Faye(2)  
Corbin, Rolland and Bette (2)  
Cramer, Slick and Dorothy (2)  
Creech, John (1)  
Desanto, Anthony (1)  
DiFrancesco, Doc, Maria,  
& Pat Bender, Maria Christiann, Rosa(5)  
Diggs, Frank (1)  
Edsal, Lester & Edie (2)  
Garris, Herb(1)  
Gould, Eugene(4)  
Graf, Ed & Peg (2)  
Gray, Bill and Jean (2)  
Graffagnino, Mrs. Jane (1)  
Graul, Donald (1)  
Harrell, Bill and Duna,  
& Jim and Debbie Livingston S/L & daughter (4)  
Heisler, Walter, Gloria(2)  
Holder, Boomer & Clementi (2)  
Jones, Curtis, Norma(2)  
Juskalian, George and Lucine (2)  
Kanners, Marcia, David (son) Sue d/l ((3)  
Keiser, Martin (1)  
Keith, Bob and Vivian (2)  
Kellahan, Richard and Helen (2)  
Kennedy, Duane & Helen Sandi (2)  
Klinkenburg, Ray(1)  
Korber, Mrs. Evelyn & daughter Mary Mason(2)  
Lee, Royal, Harriet(2)  
Littman, Herm & Lucy  
& Carole Littman Lester (D) & Phil Lester (S-I-L)  
Lowe, Lew, Janet, Charlie (3)  
Lussenden, Don and Lucy, Debra and Jessica (4)  
Miller, Thomas, Eleanor(2)  
Mitchell, Thomas (1)  
Nelson. Lewis (2)

Oshlo, Evelyn, David and Kathy Beauchamp (3)  
Peeples, Rod & Evelyn (2)  
Rathbone, Jack, Julie R. Gionfriddo (2)  
Rinehart, Ted, Barbra(2)  
Robin, Alvin, Martha(2)  
Sharick, Gene (1)  
Seringer, Joe & Joanne (2)  
Sharpe, Wilbur (2)  
Sherman, James & Jeff,  
& Emmerson, David and Mila and Nancy Azar (4)  
Slack, John (1)  
Thomson, Vinton & Donna Warriner(2)  
Thompson, Bob, Gladys & Robert (3)  
Waful, Donald (1)  
Waters, Pat and Martha (2)  
Galloway, Robert, Heather and Tillson (3)  
Warthen, Bill, Dorothy & Ellen(3)  
Woodhurst, Stan and Dorothy(2)  
Yarock, Irv(1)

Please note the number of family members!  
It appears that our reunions are becoming a family affair. A lot of the children and grandchildren took an active part in the reunion. That made an even better reunion.

OFLAG 64 POSTAGE FUND  
 JOE SERINGER TREASURER  
 Statement of Receipts and Disbursements  
 From September 6 1998 thru October 10. 1999

Receipts for the period:

Contributions to the Fund	\$ 4224.00	
Sale of Books	1032.00	
Reunion 1998 Reimbursement	932.78	
Miscellaneous	20.00	
Total Cash Received		\$6208.78

Disbursements for the period:

Copies	\$ 2004.55	
Cost of books	1006.41	
Postage	557.40	
Supplies	236.42	
Telephone	78.32	
Miscellaneous	74.76	
Total Cash Disbursed		\$3957.86
Excess Receipts over Disbursements		\$2250.92
Cash from September 5 1998		\$8791.58
Balance Checking Account October 10, 1999		\$11042.50

Oflag 64 Reunion  
Charleston, October 22-24, 1999

Friday: pm

I arrived at the Holiday Inn where I checked in, then went to the hospitality room around 9:30 pm. The room had pretty much emptied out, but there were a few "kriegies" including my father, Dr. Di Francesco, who showed me the letters from Tom Brokaw and Senator McClain, the photographs brought by the families and the "kriegie stoves" and other memorabilia. Other late nighters were Irv Yarock, Don Waful and Bob Thompson. It always impresses me that these men can be so vibrant and sociable at 10 pm after a full day of food, tours, joking and storytelling. As the evening wore on, other families arrived from dinner in Mt. Pleasant or Charleston.

Saturday: am

We ate breakfast early in order to be on time for the 9:00 bus to Patriot's Point. Even before we approached the area, we could see the massive aircraft carrier, Yorktown, in the distance. It was a windy day, so windy that Roy Chappell, lost his 10-gallon hat. He replaced it with an attractive straw number which left red marks on his forehead. We had to cross a bridge to get to the ship and once there, climbed many steps to the flight deck. We toured the ship, a veritable naval war museum, for an hour and a half before boarding the tour boat which took us to Fort Sumter. At the Fort, we listened as a guide spoke of the history of the Fort where the first shots of the Civil War (also known as the War Between the States, or the War of Northern Aggression) were fired. We walked around, visited its museum and gift shop, then departed for the Yorktown again where we lunched in the mess hall.

Saturday: pm

Arriving back at the Holiday Inn, the Di Francesco clan decided to visit Charleston before dinner. We drove around the historic section, marveling at its famous porched houses and spent some time in the crowded market area. Back at the Holiday Inn, photographs were taken outside prior to the Farewell Dinner. While we dined on local delicacies, we were lavishly entertained with stories and songs by the Plantation Singers, a group of Gullah women whose unique language and culture contribute so richly to this area of the South. Some of the Oflag 64 men needed little encouragement to get up and join these women in music and dance. I will always remember George Britto and Charlie Lowe (?) shaking tambourines and dancing with the Plantation Singers. The dinner ended with the distribution of many wonderful door prizes, including copies of the Merck Manual, some Oflag 64 wristwatches, an original painting by Jim Bicker, a blue heron doorknocker donated by Pat Cochran and Rosa Di Francesco Lee and several Charleston gift baskets.

Sunday: am

Sunday's breakfast and Memorial Service was emotional and beautiful. While Helen Chappell played the piano, Roy Chappell led us in the selected hymns. Herb Garris read the names of those who have passed on in the last five years. Chaplin Painter from The Citadel conducted a short service and gave a sermon focusing on a passage from Proverbs: 20:29: "The glory of young men is their strength, the beauty of old men is gray hair." The colors were then retired by cadets from The Citadel. We bade farewell to old and new friends as many departed for homes all over the United States.

Oflag 64 Reunion '99 was a valuable experience which will remain with me for many years to come. Charleston is one of the most beautiful cities I have ever seen. Thanks to the Waters family for making this a reunion to remember.

Pat DiFrancesco Bender

Subj: Oflag 64 reunion  
Date: 99-10-26 08:20:23 EDT  
From: pbender@mciu.org (Pat Bender)  
To: TH07448@aol.com

Dear Bob,

I was fortunate enough to attend this year's wonderful Oflag 64 reunion in Charleston with my parents, **Dr and Mrs Vincent Di Francesco**, my sister, **Maria Di Francesco Christmann** from Silver Spring, MD, and my sister, **Rosa Di Francesco Lee**, and her husband, **Pat Cochran**, from Ft. Pierce, FL. Besides the Waters Clan, we think we had the largest party there, and we probably had the most fun. The men of Oflag 64, their wives and families remembered us from past reunions and we felt privileged to be in their company.

Besides the Di Francesco clan, other children and grandchildren who attended the reunion were: **Debbie Harrell Livingston**, from Atlanta and **Bobby Harrell** from Walterboro, SC, **Debra Lussenden Rusnock** and **Jessica Rusnock** from Michigan, (daughter and granddaughter of **Don Lussenden**), **Julie Rathbone Gionfreddo**, from Livermore, CO, **Kathy Oshlo Beauchamp**, from Madison County, VA and her brother, **David Oshlo**, from Houston, TX, who were there with their mother, **Evelyn Oshlo**, **Beth Durgin Ward**, from Chapel Hill, NC, whose mother, **Virginia N. Durgin** had contracted chicken pox and could not attend, **Pat Waters**, his wife, **Martha**, Pat's son, **Geordie**, from Baton Rouge, LA, Pat's daughter, **Heather**, her husband, **Robert Galloway** and their son, **Tillson**, **Susan** and **Dave Kanners**, from Rochester, Michigan who were there with Dave's mother, **Marcia**, **Maggie Ball Wagner**, from Tulsa, OK, who was there with her son, **Jay Wagner** and his girlfriend, **Shonda Prescher**, from Edmond, OK, **Robert Thompson, Jr.**, from Sugarland, TX, **Charlie Lowe**, from Phoenix, AZ, **Ellen Warthen**, from Atlanta, GA, **Carole Littman Lester** and **Phil Lester**, daughter and son-in-law of Herman Littman, from Plano, TX, **Jeff Sherman**, from Oakland, CA and **Mary Korber Mason**, daughter of **Bill Korber**, from Neola, IA, who attended with her mother, **Evelyn Korber**.

I apologize if we left out anyone. If we did, please feel free to contact the item or myself, so that your name and comments can be included in the next item. Thank you to my sisters, **Rosa Lee** and **Maria Christmann**, who helped to conduct these interviews.

Here are the comments from the people listed above:

"It's an honor to be among these men." (**Debra Lussenden Rosnock**). • "This is one of the best (of four) reunions I've been to. Charleston is old, green, and really pretty - a great historic city." (**Julie Rathbone Gionfreddo**, a veterinary ophthalmologist). • "I am loving the reunion. This is the first I've attended. We plan to have a 'post chicken pox' reunion with the **Holders** and **Frank Diggs** because my mother was unable to attend this year." (**Beth Durgin Ward**). • "I love hearing the stories from these guys. They are the real American heroes, and people need to listen to them. Their stories need to be told to the next generation." (**Susan Kanners**). • Susan and Dave travel often from Michigan to their home on Kiawah Island, SC). "I can't imagine what the march was like. I am amazed at what these men went through on their 400 mile march from Oflag 64 to Brandenburg." (**Jay Wagner**, a history major). • "I really enjoyed all the stories. Each man has his own perspective. I wish we had time to hear more stories. These guys are true survivors." (**Maggie Ball Wagner**). • "I had the good fortune to visit Europe, including Hammelburg this year (1999) and it's an honor to meet a lot of the men who were involved in that march." (**Robert Thompson, Jr**) • "This is my third reunion. I enjoy meeting the people my parents have been talking about for years." (**Charlie Lowe**). • "We wouldn't be here today if it weren't for these brave men. They are all heroes and I am so proud of all of them. It is truly an honor to be here with them." (**Maria Di Francesco**)

Christmann). • "Our Dad instilled in us his love of country and respect for the freedom we have, but I did not appreciate all that it meant until I joined the Oflag 64 family in Atlanta. I am honored to be among heroes." (Rosa Di Francesco Lee).  
 • "I still say that it is one of the most touching times I spend with my father. I think it's very interesting how much the men remember their experiences and how positive their outlook is about them." (Ellen Warthen). • "This is the fifth reunion we have attended with my father, Herman. Every year the experience means more to us. We can't conceive of missing one." (Carole Littman Lester). • "This is my 10th reunion and one of the best except for the one in San Diego." (Jeff Sherman). • "This is the most accepting group of people you'll ever run into. They have a common bond and you know the old saying, 'what doesn't kill you makes you stronger,' these men have endured such terrible things and they have become stronger for it." (Mary Korber Mason).

I would like to encourage those "kriegies" who have not shared their stories in print or in other forms to do so. We all want to hear them or read about them. It's important that this information continues to be handed down to the younger generations.

- Pat Di Francesco Bender

Pat Bender  
 High School Librarian &  
 KidsConnect Volunteer  
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 (215) 233-3177 x13  
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We are beginning to accumulate quite a few e-mail screen names. It is a great way to communicate with others. If you have a computer and would like to be included in the list below please contact me, Bob Thompson, @ [THO7448@aol.com](mailto:THO7448@aol.com) and I will put you on the list as below. We had more screen names than the ones below, but something happened and they got away from us.

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Pat Waters	<a href="mailto:GPWATERS@aol.com">GPWATERS@aol.com</a>
Roy Chappelle(Texas) (New Mexico)	<a href="mailto:rjhrclov@tvec.net">rjhrclov@tvec.net</a> <a href="mailto:rjhrclov@nmex.com">rjhrclov@nmex.com</a>
Tony Cipriani	<a href="mailto:ajcpow@classic.msn.com">ajcpow@classic.msn.com</a>
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Judy Winkle (Whorley-daughter)	<a href="mailto:jjwink2@juno.com">jjwink2@juno.com</a>
Bill Kleysteuber	<a href="mailto:william.r.kleysteuber@us.arthurandersen.com">william.r.kleysteuber@us.arthurandersen.com</a>
Martha Miles-widow-Richard)	<a href="mailto:Martmiles@aol.com">Martmiles@aol.com</a>
Robert Galloway	<a href="mailto:GallowayRD@aol.com">GallowayRD@aol.com</a>
Don/Lucy Lussenden	<a href="mailto:donlucy@wwnet.com">donlucy@wwnet.com</a>
Ellen Warthen	<a href="mailto:ewarthen@mindspring.com">ewarthen@mindspring.com</a>
Bob Keith	<a href="mailto:robkeith36@mindspring.com">robkeith36@mindspring.com</a>

Pat Waters furnished this overview of the happenings at Charleston. General Waters would have been very proud to see all his former comrades in arms and his family enjoying each others company at this gathering!

### REMEMBERING THE OFLAG 64 REUNION MT. PLEASANT, SC

The Reunion started unofficially when Martha and I invited the early arrivals to 'watch the changing of the tide' at our home. Upon my arrival at the Holiday Inn to pick up the few, to my surprise and excitement, there were about twelve I had not counted on as to arrive early, but after some quick car arrangements, we all loaded up to trek the few miles to my home to find a surprised but happy Martha there to greet and dine us all. The evening passed all too rapidly and all were returned to the Holiday Inn.

On Wednesday, registration began with signs being hung, banners unfurled and the OFLAG 64 flag raised outside. As many gathered, conversations began and great fellowship and renewal of acquaintance were enjoyed by all, especially Martha and me. By early evening, we had about 95 of the group 'checked in' and that evening, an Oyster Roast and Frogmore Stew was served. Much to the disappointment of Bob Thompson, there were no frog in the stew, but we all enjoyed a laugh over this. Gladys was quite relieved...she only likes them fried I'm told.

Thursday morning brought a more serious time as the Reunion was called together. Wando High School provided a Color Guard to post the Colors, Reverend Furbach gave the opening prayers and message. Helen and Roy Chappell led us all in song and joyful tribute to America. Mayor Cherryll Woods-Flowers gave some supportive words on her sincere appreciation of the men's efforts and accomplishments along with a very strong welcome and thank you to all for coming to Mt. Pleasant. Bob Thompson then took over the business of the group.

Decided on and voted for was the reunion of 2000 to be in Laughlin, NV. And for the year 2001 it will be celebrated in Spokane, WA. 2002 will see us all in Columbus, GA. Other matters were discussed and in general there was a renewal of fellowship and enthusiasm to 'carry on.'

After noon, the busses for the tours assembled and we all loaded out. About 55 folks went to Charleston for a lunch and city tour, 16 to Patriots Point and Fort Sumter and another 12 to Boone Hall and Fort Moultrie. All returned about 5:00 to get ready for our dinner cruise.

With little effort, we all transformed ourselves into more beautiful people and boarded buses within an hour to go to the dock for departure. The vessel was about ours and ours alone as we set sail out into Charleston Harbor. A wonderful dinner was served and music was played for those to dance who wanted. We were 'at sea' for about 3 hours and returned all well fed and seemingly happy.

Friday morning found us again gather together for some 'from the heart' talks by Tony DeSanto, Herb Garris and Abe Baum. Tony shared his three worst but most gratifying experiences of his time with the Germans. Herb gave an educational and enlightening talk about how he sees the younger people as he works in volunteer areas of training on that which he is so skilled...survival. Abe Baum remarked about how disappointed he was that night on the hill just outside of the Hammelburg camp when he had to tell all those prisoners he could not take them all back to the American lines. What an honor it is to be in the presence of men like these.

In the afternoon, we all loaded up to visit the Citadel where a Friday Parade was held which honored many, but especially the Men of Oflag 64. After the review, Gen Segnious, former President of the Citadel, came



over and saluted all for their courage and service. Also paying his respect was the President of the Alumni Assoc. And also a former POW from Viet NAM.

A reception followed in the Mark Clark Hall where many visited and the Citadel graduates of the group could proudly accept the praise of others for the outstanding presentation of the Corps that day. Bill Warthan was in heaven and well he should be. The Corps was magnificent.

About 6:00pm we all boarded the busses for the Holiday Inn only to find that traffic in Charleston is terrible. One couple missed the bus and taking public transportation home, beat most of us. Another got lost and still got there early. It was a long day!

Saturday morning, another 65 left for Patriots Point and Fort Sumter while others went on their own. A few stayed about the Inn where they visited.

Saturday evening, about five, a photographer arrived to begin our group picture. Two were taken, one with the ladies and one without. We all had a great time staring into the sinking sun! All those who have paid for theirs should have them by the time you read this...

Dinner followed an open bar cocktail party and by 7:00 we were all seated. Among all of our special guest, we had a visitor join us who we of Mt. Pleasant believe built our wonderful town. Johnny Dodds, for who the main highway is named and who was a three term Mayor. I had the pleasure of introducing this Legend of Mt. Pleasant, he has since written me of what a wonderful feeling he had among all of OFLAG 64.

Following dinner, there were the Gulla Singers giving us some 'local culture' and providing a bit of the South Carolina history. A few comment followed as we adjourned for the evening.

Sunday morning, there was a sit down breakfast before the closing ceremony. Joining us here we had Chaplin Painter from the US Air Force who was quite overwhelmed by the members of OFLAG 64 but 'got it together' to deliver a fine worship service and impressive message. A strong spiritual tenor was reached through song and prayer as again Roy and Helen led us onward.

Herb Garris read the departed names and a somber feeling followed. As we reached the close, many eyes showed redness, but among the tears was the sparkle of what we know is there...  
**'till we meet again.'**

Additional comments by Bill Warthen about the trip to the Citadel.

We were visited by three Generals while at the Citadel parade. Major General Grenalds, who is in his third year as President of the Citadel. He was a West Point honor graduate, a Rhodes Scholar and chose the Marine Corps as his branch of service. Major General Obbie Seignious, who became president of the Citadel in the early 80's, and General Goodpasture, a commander of NATO and Superintendent of the US Military Academy at West Point.

We (Bill and Dottie) went back to the Citadel for their 55<sup>th</sup> reunion and had the opportunity to thank the President of The Citadel for the attention and reception we received while at the Academy especially the cadets who acted as our guides and presented the colors at our Sunday morning gathering.

Overheard in the lobby of the Holiday Inn, Charleston- " Pat Waters has spent so much time at the Holiday Inn that Martha thinks he has a girl friend there named "OFLAG"

GEORGE BUSH

April 28, 1999

Though I am not able to attend the reunion of the surviving POWs from Oflag 64 in October, I did want to send greetings and pay my personal respects to all who gather.

Each one of you is a hero in the truest sense of the word, and your courage and sacrifices reflect the great spirit of which General MacArthur spoke at West Point: that of duty, honor, and country.

These are words that mean something dear and special to me. They have guided my life as they have guided yours.

As a former fellow Navy man myself, and as a former Commander-in-Chief, I salute each of you for taking up the torch of freedom and answering your country's call to duty. I also join you in remembering those who made the ultimate sacrifice for freedom. All Americans owe them a lasting debt of gratitude.

With respects and best wishes to all,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "G. Bush".

PAGE 10

P. O. BOX 79798 • HOUSTON, TEXAS 77279-9798

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# MAIL CALL

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Our Guest Editor, **Irv Yarock**, has read all your letters and says,

**Sid Waldman**, Cleveland, OH writes that he was sorry he couldn't make it to Charleston, but has hopes for the next year. How many of you remember that as a member of the sand-box brigade it was Sid who slipped off the bed board runway in the attic and his leg came through the ceiling in my (Irv) cubicle and we spent all night repairing and camouflaging the hole in the ceiling. Primary thanks goes to the ingenuity of **Lou Otterbein**. Thanks for the donation to the postage fund.

**Charles Raymond Hughes**. Memphis, TN is living in a retirement community and a product of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne is having eye trouble but still appreciates the comradeship developed at Oflag 64 and on the long cold march ending at Mooseburg.

**Caroll Higginbotham**., "Higgie", Fallon, NV planned on Charleston, but if he made it I missed him. Thanks for the donation to the postage fund.

**Tony DeSanto**, Offenberg, Germany, again I (Irv) guess I didn't get around as much as I should have, because I missed him too, but. I guess he made it because he already had his tickets. He was a Liaison Officer with the 110<sup>th</sup> Inf of the 28<sup>th</sup> Division. Thanks for the donation to the postage fund. ( Note from Bob T, Tony made it and greatly enjoyed the reunion- It was his first meeting with the Oflag 64 bunch and we are all looking forward to seeing him again in Laughlin next year).

**Jimmie Kanaya**, Gig Harbor, WA planned on being at Charleston, but had to cancel. Jimmie received a battlefield commission in the medics and spent his time in support of the 442<sup>nd</sup>. He never carried an intrenching tool, always able to inhabit the foxhole of a soldier he evacuated. Jimmie's folks were unfortunate in being interned during WWII. Any of you in Scouting? A great story of an active Scout Troop organized in an internment camp in a recent issue of Scouting Magazine.

**H. Randolph "Boomer" Holder**, Athens, GA did make it to Charleston but prior to the trip sent in an interesting story about a 30 year Navy veteran named Jim Connell who is deputy chief of an eight person Moscow-based team that has spent the last 3 years visiting ex-pow camps, searching files, doing hospital interviews, etc in an attempt to resolve the status of missing service personnel. So far, they've only shipped back the remains of one American pilot, but have resolved the fate of several WWII MIA'S. He indicates that they are getting cooperation from the Russians and speaks highly of the U.S. Governments dedication to the search.

**Don Waful**, Syracuse, NY writes "see you in Charleston" and did make it. Last saw him discussing the mechanics of his musical instrument, the slush pump, and the technicalities of music written with double flats. Thanks for the donation to the postage fund.

**Alan Dunbar**, Las Vegas, NV sorry he couldn't make it to Charleston, but health problems kept **Lilo** from flying plus keeping Alan healthy is a full time job. Alan is keeping his hand in by doing some research on air fares, etc. that might benefit the rest of us.

## MAIL CALL

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**Mrs. Win Hall**, 237 East Howard St. Apt E-4 Tyron, NC 28782 is still interested, but a previous commitment prohibited her from coming to Charleston. Note her new address from New Jersey.

**Ruby Cannon**, Waco, TX would have like to be with us at Charleston, but didn't feel like she was psychologically ready. Maybe next year. I think this is the first one she and **Roger** missed. **Roger** even made the one in New Jersey when they talked the Secretary of the Air Force into flying them up in a government plane,

**Annette Secor Nelson**, 12535 Morgan RD, Hudson FL 34669 came to a few of our reunions with Dick, now deceased. She misses old friends, particularly mentioning **Jim McArey** and **Roy Chappell**. Must be anticipating a Y2K problem because she says she won't be able to make a reunion in 2000 or 2001. Thanks for the postage fund donation.

**Clarence Meltesen**, San Francisco, CA had a full plate arranged. Charleston, a march from Fort Benning to his Ranger reunion was by way of Andersonville.. etc, got hit by several things at once, hospital, mandatory stay-at-home stuff, plus hemorrhagic cellulitis. Hopes to be able to make it next year.

**Mrs Richard Miles**, Redlands, CA no note but thanks for the donation to the postage fund.

**John Davis**, Annandale, VA couldn't make it to the reunion but did send a contribution to the postage fund. Thanks!

**Padraig O'Dea**, Bloomfield, NJ couldn't make Charleston, but is keeping up by ordering our available literature.

**Marv Chevalier**, Iowa City, IA did make it to Charleston, but had to brag about his age by telling us of a 24 year old grandson studying for a PHD or MD at the University of Washington. Congratulations. Something to be proud of, but we are all in that age bracket now.

**Henry Desmond**, Columbus, OH expresses appreciation to Bob for publishing the Item. Thanks for the donation to the postage fund.

**Jim Bickers**, Wilmette, IL I (Irv) think this might have been their first time at a reunion. Either that or now that he's eating regularly I didn't recognize him. We owe a lot to Jim whose sketches and cartoons helped those of us who claim sanity to make it.

**Martin Lawler**, Geneva, NY usually see him in Washington with the 1<sup>st</sup> Division, but don't recall seeing him this year. Thanks for the donation to the postage fund.

**Jean Christensen**, Loveland, CO many thanks for the major boost to the postage fund.

**Agnes McDonough**, Hempstead, NY wife of Captain "Red" sends her regards as well as a donation to the postage fund., Thanks.

**Reid Ellsworth**, Chandler, AZ sorry couldn't make the reunion, but like the red sox, maybe next year. Thanks for the donation to the postage fund.

## MAIL CALL

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**Herb Garris** Pinehurst, NC alerts us to an upcoming Military Intelligence Book Review. Someone trying to copyright the name PINEHURST and collect from every Pinehurst in the country. Just too many lawyers. We have the same thing up here with a 100 year old BAY ATATE SAVINGS BANK, and a newcomer BAY STATE FEDERAL SAVINGS. where they answer the phone "Bay State Bank" The book should be interesting!

**Evelyn Oshlo**, Cullpepper, VA donated a bottle of "cheer" to be passed along from reunion to reunion and in a raffle style drawing **Elizabeth Batte** won the honor of safeguarding or passing it along at a future reunion. If the motor on your boat conks out, we might excuse a few nips.

Time and distance kept Irv from responding to any more letters so I (Bob T) will answer the rest of them.

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**Clementi Holder (Boomer)**, Athens, GA received her issue of the Henry Soderberg book about Oflag 64 and remarked as to their friendship with Henry and Claire. She also remarked as to an excellent Remembrance Day in Athens, GA and also about an hour long interview, radio style, with veterans of four wars which brought out some splendid points.

**Robert Galloway**, Charleston, SC writes as to his appreciation of the cooperation he is getting in preparing the documentary about Oflag 64. ( Those folks with the cameras all over the place at Charleston were Robert's people). Robert hopes to be able to go to Schubin and Hammelburg this winter to get the feel of what he is doing. Hopefully the documentary will be ready sometime next spring.

**Bob Keith**, St. Petersburg, FL showed up at Charleston for his first reunion. He brought an interesting set of photos. The first night out on that long cold march he hid out in the hay and the next day went back to Schubin. He found a camera with some film and proceeded to make about 30 photos of the camp as we left it on Jan 21, 1945. He is trying to figure out a way to pass the photos around so everybody can see them. He is planning to scan them into his computer and place them on a home page. They should be available around the middle of December. If you want to access his home page you should go to—

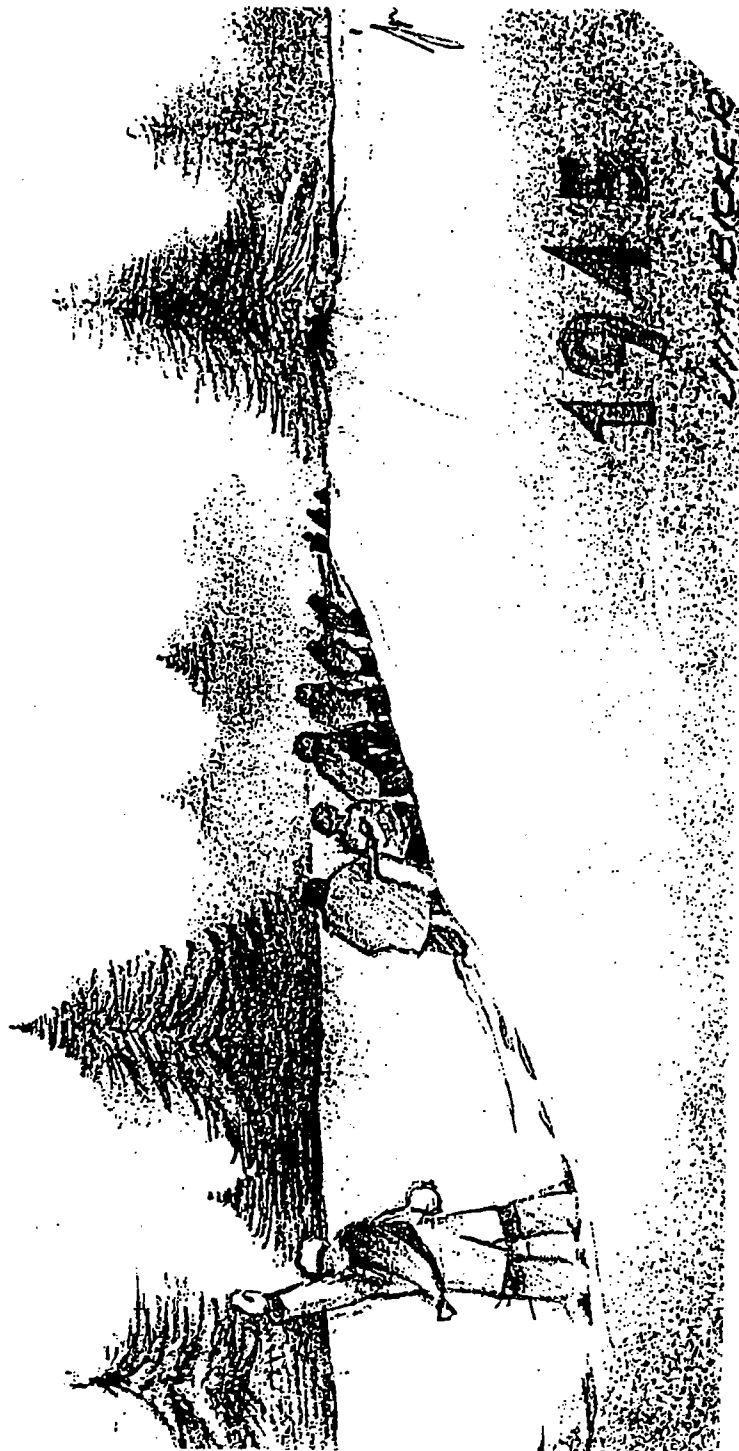
<http://robkeith36.home.mindspring.com>

**Herm Littman**, Spokane WA ordered some extra books of the Task Force Baum and also sent along a donation to the postage fund. Thanks, Herm.

**Jane Graffagnino**, Hamilton, GA writes of the great time she had at Charleston. She also mentioned the death of a good friend, **Arthur Mallory** of La Grange, GA. The good Dr and Arthur were bunkmates at one time during their confinement. Thanks for the donation to the postage fund.

**Mrs. Joyce A Scherer**, RR 2 Box 26, Monrovia, IN 46157 asks that anybody that knew her husband "**Clem**" or "**Blondie**" write to her and tell her about some of their experiences with him. She says she misses him very much.

Jim Bickers broke out his sketch book again and brought this sketch to Charleston. Kinda reminds you of Jan 21, 1945 at about 10:30 in the morning



# Playground by the river

## Four-season fun in Laughlin

By ANNE Z. COOKE  
NEWS-PRESS CORRESPONDENT

**L**AUGHLIN, NEV. — Spangles and feathers aren't on the bill tonight at the Fiesta Showroom, in Harrah's Casino, in Laughlin. Though slot machines and blackjack tables are just steps away, tonight's entertainer, Ronn Lucas, "The Man Who Can Make Anything Talk," is facing a different crowd.

Perched on a stool, Lucas, a ventriloquist, trades jibes with his dummy, Scorch, a "green teen-age dragon" whose smart-mouthed patter might well bore the over-the-hill gang. But Lucas, right on the money with this audience, has been playing to big audiences for a year.

In the third row, three junior high school kids lean forward expectantly. Next to them, a middle-aged couple in T-shirts and rumpled shorts slouch comfortably, arms folded. Across the aisle, two little girls in pink dresses, their eyes shining, sit with their mom and dad. And a cursory glance at the rest of the audience turns up a mix of ages and dress — but nary an octogenarian. Laughlin is thinking young. Thirty-three years after its founding, only to become a mecca for senior citizens, the blue-haired image is fading. With a can-do spirit that would make Yankee Doodle blush, this town of 8,000 on the Colorado River, 27 miles north of Needles, is busily re-inventing itself as an all-season playground for the 35 to 55 crowd.

"Vegas has gotten too big and commercial," said Joanne Graves, from Council Grove, Kan., wearing slim-cut blue jeans, a blond pixie cut and a crystal necklace that glowed. "Everybody's in a hurry. I know. I've been there six times."

Leaning over to chat, she confessed that after three decades working for AT&T and an early retirement buy-out, she was having the time of her life. "I like Laughlin so much better," she said. "It's casual and people are friendlier. And this area is prettier, too, with the mountains and the river and all."

Rimmed by two low mountain ranges and bisected by the shimmering blue Colorado River, Laughlin teeters on the river's edge, surrounded by sun-baked dirt, a cream-colored wasteland stretching to the horizon. A sort of latter-day pioneer town, it was purpose-built for gambling, with no-nonsense architecture and concrete hotels bedecked with neon lights and surrounded by parking lots. But lack of pretense has its own appeal.

"We've always had a slower pace and a more casual approach," says Meg Curry, from the Laughlin Visitors Bureau, whose office is in a trailer next to an empty lot. "Gambling is just part of what people do in Laughlin," she said. "You can water ski, rent SeaDoos (personal watercraft: a motorcycle and handlebars mounted on a dinghy hull), go to the movies, shop, picnic or swim in the river, go bowling, all kinds of things."

The shift to a younger crowd is most visible on the River Walk, a 2½-mile path that follows the river bank past the casinos, from the Laughlin Bridge south to Harrah's. Everybody uses the River Walk to go from one casino to the next, and to get down to the river's edge.

Senior citizens are indeed here, sipping an early-morning cup of coffee and watching the river roll by. But so are couples walking, mothers pushing strollers, teen-agers loitering, kids playing at the water's edge and people feeding the ducks that swim in the protected

## Laughlin: Playground by the Colorado River

### LAUGHLIN

Continued from Page H1

pools that form next to the boat docks.

Good restaurants have also arrived.

Most hotels have at least one gourmet dining room: The Steakhouse at the Ramada Express, the Gourmet Room at the Riverside, the Hickory Pit at the Edgewater. The best is Granny's, at the Pioneer, white table-cloth cuisine in a colonial-style dining room. The waiters hover attentively, the furniture is English and the first class menu proffers Maine Lobster, salmon,

steaks, pheasant, duck, buffalo T-bone and a long list of appetizers and salads.

"There was a time when you built it and they came," said Richard Langlois, a Flamingo Hilton spokesman, over breakfast in the Flamingo's best restaurant, Alta Villa (open to Flamingo Club members for breakfast and lunch and to the public for dinner). "We knew low cost was still important.

There's no other place where you can spend a week for under \$300. But by early 1990s, people wanted more than a clean room, a bar of soap and slot machines."

When the Flamingo remodeled in early 1998, said Langlois, they added luxury suites for the first time, room service and VIP check-in. They've also also concentrated on improving their entertainment, booking recognizable star-power.

"Entertainers who were at their peak 10 years ago draw huge crowds here," said Langlois. He ticked them off on his fingers: Chicago, Randy Travis, Engelbert Humperdinck, Wynonna (Judd), Chuck Berry, Kenny Rogers and Wayne Newton. "In Vegas you'd pay \$80 or \$100 to hear Wynonna. Our tickets are \$25."

Visitors accustomed to budget rates shouldn't worry, however. Laughlin's mid-week vacation packages are still a deal. At the Flamingo Hilton, \$89 buys three nights in a double room with two buffet breakfasts, two buffet dinners, two tickets to a show and a coupon "funbook" worth \$100. Similar deals for two and three nights are \$70 at the Colorado Belle, \$99 at the River Palms and \$89 at Harrah's.

And now some are pitched to

families. At Don Laughlin's Riverside Resort, a two-nighter for \$75 includes two hours of free child care in the Kid Kastle, the Riverside's licensed child care facility, four games in the hotel's new Brunswick Cosmic" bowling alley, with 34 lanes and two passes to any first-run movie in the Riverside's theater.

"This town was built on seniors, no doubt about it," said Joel Barez, director of sales at the Riverside Resort. "And it's still as mellow and laid back as ever. But we're going to a mixed market. You can bring grandma and grandpa, mom and dad, kids, the whole family. There's something for everybody."

Bob O'Neill, Santa Barbara, CA sent in this newspaper clipping from Laughlin, NV. He said Laughlin, NV was a little closer to him than Charleston and he would probably make it to Laughlin.

# The Loves of His Life

## THE LOVES, FROM PAGE E-1

And so, God was forthwith paged in that first year of World War II from a North African foxhole . . . and He answered.

"When that German came upon me," Don Waful recalled, "I was either going to get shot or get captured. And I got captured."

...

Waful celebrated his 83rd birthday five days ago. And he did so at P&C Stadium on the opening day of the 1999 baseball season as the SkyChiefs edged the Rochester Red Wings, 2-1. But then, where else would this chatty fellow have been? Where else would the 28-year president of our community-owned ball club have spent his afternoon?

Where else would he be other than on the north side, beneath his cap and schmoozing with the regulars?

"Baseball is a marvelous game," said Waful, who could have been a kid 75 years younger talking about cotton candy. "I just love it. I really do."

Well, he must. A stockholder since 1961, a member of the Chiefs/SkyChiefs' board of directors since 1963, and the organization's president since 1971, Waful has been as much a part of Syracuse's professional baseball scene for these past 39 seasons as shinguards, pine tar and bad calls by near-blind umpires.

Amazingly, he is not alone in his longevity. Board chairman Dick Ryan, vice-president Clayton Andrews, treasurer Anton Kreuzer and, of course, executive vice-president Tex Simone have, like Don Waful, all been involved with the Chiefs/SkyChiefs since the citizens of our area dug deep, at \$10 per share, for the \$32,500 it took in '61 to acquire an International League franchise that would grow in value to some \$10 million and become an area staple.

But while Ryan, Andrews and Kreuzer have chosen to remain fairly anonymous, and while Simone usually has been off pulling a tarp, it has been Don Waful who has so dutifully sold booklets of game tickets out of his pocket and has so happily slapped the backs of fans through all these years.

"I'm a natural ham," the president said. "I like to get out in the territory and sell tickets to old friends. You know, I've already turned in \$8,000 this year, and I'll get to \$9,000 before I'm finished. And I like to wander the ballpark and say hello to everybody. I'm visible. I'm there. I love it."



Stephen D. Cannarella / Staff photographer

**DON WAFUL**, the president of the Syracuse SkyChiefs, stands in his front yard with the shovel used for the groundbreaking ceremonies at P&C Stadium. Waful, has been a member of the Chiefs/SkyChiefs' board of directors since 1963, and the organization's president since 1971.

This has forever been a good thing, a nice touch, a cheery constant. And with Pat Kelly now running the SkyChiefs down there in the home dugout, this whole smiling Waful experience is on its 21st Syracuse manager. Importantly, though, the time has come for this elder to receive the hugs he has so easily given for four decades. This, because the old man is pretty much on his own these days.

Remember Don Waful's fiancée? The stunner from New England? Olga Casciolini? Well, Don never did stop thinking of her — not once during the two years, four months and 12 days he spent as a prisoner of war in Chieti, Italy . . . and in Szubin, Poland . . . and in Lukenwalde, Germany.

Decent food and clean

week in a soft voice as he sat in his living room. "She was a beautiful, beautiful girl. But once she got sick, she never had a chance. I don't ever want to forget her. From the first day I saw her at a dance in Belfast, I could never get her out of my mind. And I still can't, to this day."

He says he'll attend some three-quarters of the SkyChiefs' home games this season — up from the half or so he has usually watched — because of the therapeutic value that will come with all those runs, hits and errors. It turns out that Olga was never much of a baseball fan, so in deference to her, Don had ventured out to the park only on alternating dates.

But now?

"I end up talking to the walls around here," said the 83-year-old president, gazing off to his dining room and to the stairs leading to the second floor. "Everything is a reminder of Olga. People have been very nice to me. They take me out to dinner and things like that, and it's fun. But at the end of the evening, I come home . . . and the house is still empty. She's not here anymore. She's gone. There's just the four walls."

The mortgage on his home used to be \$72.56 a month. But that was paid off nearly 20 years ago. And now, with his two sons having long since moved away to Massachusetts and to California, it is Don Waful's alone in every way.

Oh, he likes the place out on Cumberland Avenue behind Nottingham High School, all right. And he loves the memories that are everywhere inside of it. But he'll flee it as often as he can this spring and summer, just the same. And you can't blame him for that because where he was once a prisoner of war, this symbol of Syracuse baseball has become a prisoner of a broken heart.

Funny, huh? More than a half-century ago, V-E Day saved Don Waful from the POW camps and brought him to Olga. All this time later, a similar task now falls to P&C Stadium, which could ease this decent man's melancholy because he's been separated from the gorgeous nurse all over again. A long time ago, the old man outlasted the Germans, and that was good. This job, though, will be tougher yet.

Bud Poliquin is a columnist for The Syracuse Newspapers. His column regularly appears on these pages. To reach him, call 470-2213 or e-mail him at sports@syracuse.com.

clothes, fresh soap and hot water, snug beds and strong medicine . . . all of that may have been in short supply as Don Waful aged from 26 to 27 to 28 to 29 under the gaze of his captors. But thoughts of Olga never were. So when the war finally ended in Europe — or all that time after Waful had been captured by those Germans on Dec. 10, 1942, at 11:30 in the morning — and both the platoon leader and the nurse were reunited, they were married by the mayor of the French village of Palucl.

And for 53 years, Don and Olga — "Cassie," to her friends — lived happily ever after. Or until she died in her hospital bed barely seven months ago, at the age of 80, of leukemia.

"She was a wonderful, wonderful lady," Don said last



We had a lady come to the reunion in Charleston looking for information about her father who was caught in Africa. If anybody has any information please contact her at the address below or the e-mail address given.

Subj: Lt. Samuel Redden Webster, Jr.  
Date: 99-11-30 22:23:05 EST  
From: nancywsmith@home.com (Nancy W.. Smith)  
To: TH07448@aol.com, bwarthencybersouth.com@aol.com, sw5000@aol.com, pops5000@aol.com, annehorton@home.com

Dear Mr. Thompson,  
Martha Waters passed along to me your inquiry regarding our meeting when you were in Charleston for the POW reunion. I appreciated so much the time all of you spent with me in helping me to put together some of the pieces of my father's experiences as a POW. My nephew, Scott Hutto, was able to come down from Columbia on Saturday before you all left and was grateful as I was to be able to spend time with some of you. He had more information that I did since he had recorded some of the details from his grandfather before he died. I did not find anyone in your group who specifically remembered my dad, but some of them remembered names of others that we knew were with him. These are the details as far as I know:

My father, Samuel (Sam) R. Webster, Jr. was born in Mullins, SC and attended Clemson College prior to going into the Army. When he was sent overseas, he was in Ireland before traveling by ship (HMS Derbyshire?) and landing near Oran on November 8, 1942 as part of Operation TORCH. He was in 1st Battalion, 1st Armored Division. I think he was leader of 1st Charlie platoon (light tanks) and served under General Friedenthal. He was captured right outside of Tunis on December 10, 1942. They were flown from N. Africa to Italy. I know that he was in Chieti PG-21 but escaped somewhere in Italy while in a temporary camp as they were being moved closer to Germany. He escaped with Bill Harrison of Louisville, Ky who is also deceased now and with a Scotsman, Jock Short, who was evidently shot down during the escape. (I think he was under Capt. Rudy Barlowe in POW camp and had made numerous requests to attempt escape before it was finally approved.) My dad and Bill Harrison did eventually make it back to friendly lines and home to meet my older sister who was born when he was "missing in action"! He was always our "hero" growing up, but now we appreciate that he was a hero among heroes of the greatest generation. My sisters and I are hoping to find someone who knew him or can tell us more about what he may have experienced. It meant so much that many of you took the time to try to help me get this information. Thank you all so much. If anyone does have anything to add to the information I have or especially if anyone remembers my dad, they can contact me by e-mail or at (843) 884-3464.

Sincerely,  
Nancy Webster Smith  
130 Middle Street  
Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464

Pat Waters sent in this commercial for the Frogmore International Airport at Beaufort, SC.

If frogs can really fly airplanes we should quit eating them.

