



# 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion Association Newsletter January 2010

**Fayne Haynes**  
Association Chairman  
615-584-4284

**Dianne Kelton**  
Treasurer /  
Memorials & Flowers  
615-483-4017

**Rick Pidosny**  
Web Site & Roster Data Base  
www.microrap.biz/612th-tdb  
734-516-5709

**Susie Pidosny**  
Secretary & Newsletters  
734-516-6906



I would like to begin with an apology for the delay in getting out this newsletter. I had planned to have this completed and in the mail in November but as you know that didn't happen. Rick and I had two trips planned in October and November. When I returned home from the November vacation, I quickly got busy cleaning and decorating for the holidays. I over did it and wound up spraining my back which put me out of commission for several weeks. After that, I spent most of December trying to get caught up and hurt my back again!

I'm fully recovered now and eager to share some 612<sup>th</sup> news with you all.

## Remembering Tena Phillips



Unfortunately, I have to begin with some very sad news. On December 7, 2009 our beloved friend, **Tena Phillips** passed away. As you know, Tena worked alongside **Jack Flanagan** for many years as the association secretary and treasurer. When Jack passed away Tena was instrumental in keeping us going.

*Katherine "Tena" Phillips was born the daughter of Walter and Margaret (Siebert) Markwardt in Caldwell, Texas on March 23, 1923. Katherine was received as a child & heir of God through Holy Baptism on February 03, 1924. She was*



*confirmed in the Christian faith at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Houston, TX in 1955, where she remained active & faithful in the church & school for these many years since.*

*Katherine Markwardt & the late Travis Phillips were joined together as one-in-Christ through Holy Matrimony in Fayetteville, Texas on February 06, 1944. This union was blessed with one endeared daughter, Vivian Kay. (However, Tena claimed all the kids around and especially her Godchildren).*

*Tena was on the Bowling League for many years, still serving until recently with official tasks; treasurer of Our Redeemer LWML for several years, member of Our Redeemer Stewardship Committee; served on the office committee helping the church secretary correlate newsletters (still driving to the main Post Office downtown to mail them, and, traditionally on the return trip would stop at Sonic for corn dogs and onion rings), making phone calls, collecting fundraiser offerings & mites (always setting an example with her own generosity); served on the Friendship Committee, helping with every funeral for bereaved church family members until she went into nursing care. Tena still attended, and assisted with, her late husband, Travis Phillips' 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion reunions (in distant states). Tena was always willing and capable. Her loves were her family, her friends, her church & pastor, LWML, bowling, and the reunions. She was loved by many and will be sorely missed. Her legacy will live on.*

*Katherine Phillips, after serving her Lord well for these many years, it has pleased Him to take her home to Himself and the mansion prepared for her on Monday, December 7, 2009 at the age of 86 yrs, 8 mo, 14 days.*

*Katherine Phillips leaves behind to await a joyful reunion in heaven ... Daughter .... Vivian Kay Ogodowicz; and husband Alvin,*

*Grandson .... Travis Eugene Thetford, and wife, Sara, Granddaughter .... Christina Johnson, and husband Steven, Grandchildren.... Jackson, Hannah and Audrey Thetford and Cameron Johnson. Numerous Godchildren, Hosts of Friends; Our Redeemer Church Family*

I would like to offer my sincerest gratitude to **Glenda Millar** for contacting me about Tena's passing and for sending Vivian's touching eulogy for her mother so that I could share it with all of you. Tena's eulogy is attached at the end of this newsletter.

Donations in memory of Katherine "Tena" Phillips may be sent in care of:

Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church  
161 West Road  
Houston, Texas 77037

Letters of condolence to Tena's family may be sent to:

Vivian K. Thetford  
103 Millstream  
Houston, Texas 77060



## 56th Reunion Wrap-up



Our reunion committee included (L to R) **Fayne Haynes, Candice Northcutt, Dianne Kelton, Avery Sanders, Janice Bellamy and Mary Ann Wesoly.**

Our 56<sup>th</sup> reunion took place from **Thursday, July 30<sup>th</sup> thru Sunday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>** at The

**Fairfield Inn and Suites** in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Our 2009 Reunion hosts were:

- Fayne and Beatrice Haynes
- Janice and Jim Bellamy
- Anita and Randy Stanley
- Don and Eileen Haynes
- Melvin Haynes
- Avery and Sara Sanders
- Dianne and Jimmy Kelton
- Steve and Judy Sanders
- Candice and Matt Northcutt
- Melissa and Tony Galligani
- Chloe and Celina Northcutt

In Attendance:

- Dean Uhles and Grandson Mike Uhles
- Mary Ann Wesoly
- Iris Morris
- Greta Childs
- Flo Lefton
- Carolyn VerHoven
- Hazel Scott
- Dianne Kelton
- Candice, Chloe and Celina Northcott
- **Avery and Sara Sanders**
- Anita Stanley
- Jim and Janice Bellamy
- **Fayne and Beatrice Haynes**
- **Talmadge and Ruth Riley**
- Ronnye and Janice Riley
- Howard Haynes (Faynes cousin)
- **Jesse and Hazel Weaver**
- Their daughter Pat Weaver Armstrong
- Son John Weaver
- Daughter Mary Weaver Hartman
- **Donn Fischer**
- Don Haynes
- Joey Bellamy
- **Earl and Glyn Sain**
- Dorothy Tomlinson

Special thanks to **Dorothy Tomlinson, Dianne Kelton and Fayne Haynes** for sharing their reunion memories with me for this newsletter.

**Dorothy Tomlinson** noted that **Dianne Kelton**, her daughter **Candice Northcutt** and her

mother **Sara Sanders** provided the entire home cooked meal on Friday night and it was delicious! There were enough leftovers for Saturday's lunch. After dinner, Bingo was played and as usual, **Jim Bellamy** was a masterful letter caller. Everyone enjoyed the games and the great number of prizes.

Dorothy brought me one of the gift bags that Dianne presented to each family at the reunion. It was absolutely wonderful – so much time and effort were put in to them from the “Go Army” mug to the hand painted 612<sup>th</sup> Christmas ornament and all of the clever little sayings, etc. **Well done Dianne!** You did an outstanding job.

Saturday night's banquet was catered by Jean Lamb and reports were that the country cooking was great! There were 52 in attendance.

Saturday afternoon's business meeting - The big discussion seemed to be whether to continue with our reunions. Dianne, Candice and Janice were willing to continue to plan and host if the vets wanted to continue. Some of the vets felt we should call it a day but most of the ladies voted to continue since they all enjoy the fellowship. And since it is always a wise man that listens to his wife ☺ it was decided that we would continue on with the reunions. **Dates for next year's reunion are Thursday July 29 thru Sunday, August 1.**

After the business meeting Dianne called Tena to let her know everyone was thinking of her and that she was sorely missed. Tena didn't attend this year because she was afraid of falling.

Dianne also gave a financial report, which is listed, under the dues section of this newsletter.

At the Saturday night banquet, entertainment was provided by Robin Gwaro, a member in Dianne's church choir. Robin sang several songs dedicating “Go Rest High on That Mountain” by Vince Gill to the veterans that lost their lives in combat and to those that had died since the war. They also watched the DVD “Before You Go” which can be viewed online at: [www.beforeyougo.us](http://www.beforeyougo.us)

A special plaque of appreciation was presented to

each veteran in attendance. Plaques included the Tank Destroyer emblem along with the recipients name and the inscription that read “*For Your Years of Service to Our Country*”

As always, our Ladies kept the food tables loaded with homemade cakes, brownies, cookies and more!

**Our Flower Fund Raffle** was a huge success as always.

A reporter from the local Murfreesboro paper “The Reader” ([www.rutherfordreader.com](http://www.rutherfordreader.com)) as well as one from “The Daily Journal” came out and interviewed several of our veterans. The articles and several nice photos were included in the Sunday paper. Dianne e-mailed me a link and **Fayne Hayne's** mailed a paper copy so I am able to share the articles and some photos with you.

Fittingly the “Daily News Journal” article was titled “*The Greatest Get Together - WWII vets gather for 56<sup>th</sup> reunion*”. The article by Doug Davis read.

*World War II veterans from the 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion shared war stories and renewed friendships this weekend in Murfreesboro. “This is the 56<sup>th</sup> year we have had the reunion, and it may be the last,” said Fayne Haynes of Murfreesboro. “Last year, we only had six people out of 1,000 (soldiers in the 612<sup>th</sup>) that were able to come.”*

*The same number of veterans attended this year. But it has been dwindling due to age, illness, or death.*

*The tank destroyer battalion was responsible for destroying German tanks during the war.*

*Haynes, a Shelbyville native, recalled knocking out three German tanks with a gun in Honsfeld, Belgium in December 1944 during the Battle of the Bulge. A fourth shot went into the German Infantry.*

*Haynes headed for a house to take cover.*



Earl and Glyn Sain show special appreciation plaque.

*“As I was going in, a big artillery shell hit the door,” said Haynes. “I got shrapnel in my left leg.”*

*He bandaged his leg and went to the second floor of the home.*

*“A mortar shell came through the window, hit the wall six feet up and exploded,” Haynes said. “I dropped flat on the floor when it exploded over me. I got a concussion and suffered 75 percent loss of hearing.”*

*He was ultimately taken prisoner of war and forced to march 15 miles on a bad leg.*

*“I was a prisoner of war for four months, and lost 50 lbs.,” said Haynes.*

*He later escaped with four other soldiers, in a plan he masterminded.*

*Even at age 87, Haynes remembers details of his ordeal in France, Belgium and Germany.*

*“It’s not a matter of will I remember it,” he said. “I can’t forget it.”*

*While Haynes was in Company B of the 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion, Avery Sanders of Murfreesboro was in Company C.*

*“I was working with the railroad company, repairing railroad tracks, when I was drafted,” said Sanders. “I said I’d go, I had no excuse not to.”*

*The army private was a gunner.*

*“You feared for your life from the time you hit the combat zone ‘til the time you leave,” Sanders said.*

*Though the only blood loss he had was a mashed finger, Sanders saw bullets hit a wall near his head. He was in Pilsen, Czechoslovakia in May 1945, when the European War ended.*

*“It made you feel a lot better,” Sanders said about Victory in Europe Day.*

*He was later transported to Paris, France, and thought he was going to be sent to Japan. Instead, he was sent to the 385<sup>th</sup> Military Police, to ride the train for security.*

*Back in Murfreesboro after the war, he worked for the York Medical V.A. in maintenance for 20 years and was a mechanic and farmer.*

*Earl Sain, 86, of Collierville was also in the B Company of the 612<sup>th</sup> Battalion as a medic, giving first aid to Army soldiers.*

*After he was drafted in December, 1942, he was trained as a dental assistant. But he was ordered to give first aid on the battlefield.*

*Even though, as a medic, he followed the infantry, he knew he was in harm’s way.*

*“Five times, I got concussions from shells and explosions,” Sain said. “But I’m glad I served. You want to contribute something and be a member.”*

*After the war, he worked as a dental assistant for the Veteran’s Administration hospital in Memphis for 34 or 35 years before retiring in 1977.*

*He has been coming to the reunions since 1988.*

*“I come for the fellowship, sharing with others your experiences,” Sain said.*

*Wives, children and grandchildren also gathered for food and fellowship in this 56<sup>th</sup> reunion of the Army soldiers who supported the second infantry in the European Theater during World War II.*

*“I didn’t think this was ever going to get here,” said Glyn Sain, Earl’s wife of 62 years. “The closer it got, the more excited I got.”*

*Dianne Kelton of Murfreesboro, Sanders’ daughter, said the group has been together so long that it’s like a family.*

*Over the years, the reunion has been held in 12 states and the District of Columbia.*

*Haynes has been the 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion Association chairman for the past three years.*

*“We like to see the guys (at the reunion),” said Haynes. “But I think the people need to remember World War II. It was part of the greatest generation. We withstood more than most. We came*

out of the Great Depression. We were used to hardships.”

Haynes formerly ran a wholesale candy company in Murfreesboro. Today he operates Haynes Flag and Flagpole Company at 401 West Lytle Street and has a World War II museum.

An American flag flies in front of the building.

### The article from The Reader is as follows:

612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion's 56<sup>th</sup> Reunion

“Only six members of the 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion from World War II were able to report to their 56<sup>th</sup> reunion. The gathering included wives, children and grandchildren held at the Fairfield Inn in Murfreesboro last weekend.

Part of their visit included Mr. Haynes' business on Lytle St., Haynes Flag and Flagpole Company. Also housed at this business is a World War II museum. Mr. Haynes, now 87, is a true American proud to have served his country and eager to share his wartime experiences, along with many pieces from the past, neatly displayed in the museum.

“Everybody needs to remember World War II. It was part of the greatest generation. We came out of the Great Depression and knew what hardship was,” said Haynes. He was one of many taken prisoner and after four months in captivity, he lost 50 pounds.

Young Americans between the ages of 20 and 40 should make a point to go by Mr. Haynes' business and thank him for everything he and millions more have gone through so we can go about our lives in freedom. In World War II alone, over 400,000 died for their country.



## Dues Are Due

Dues are \$5.00 annually and help cover the costs of printing and postage for our newsletters.

Dues may be mailed to:

**Dianne Kelton**  
**3745 Columbia Court**  
**Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129-1206**

**Please remember to make your check payable to: Dianne Kelton.** You can write “612<sup>th</sup> TDB” in the memo area. The bank will not accept checks made payable to the 612<sup>th</sup> TDB.

Since our last newsletter, dues have been received from:

- Pat Armstrong
- Robert Behney
- Janice Bellamy
- Anthony Cavataio
- Judy Darretta
- Dianne Kelton
- Isabella Kemp
- Iris Morris
- Judy Ramhoff
- Robert Reighard
- Talmadge Riley
- Earl Sain
- Avery Sanders
- Donn Fisher
- Dick Gaut
- Bill Groff
- Mary Ann Hartman
- Fayne Haynes
- Hazel Scott
- John and Carolyn Sowers
- Carson Spencer
- Anita Stanley
- Dorothy Tomlinson
- Jessie Weaver
- Mary Ann Wesoly
- Raymond Wesoly



**Treasurer's Report  
From Dianne**

Dianne reports that she received \$2000 from Tena and started an account Feb. 9, 2009.

**Memorials** were sent for:

- Geneva Smith
- Edward Winslow
- James Frank Boatwright
- Robert Noonan
- Pearl Noland
- David Duffy Barto

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| Spent on Memorials.....                  | \$250      |
| Mailings/office supplies/checks etc..... | \$296.03   |
| Reunion cost.....                        | \$907.57   |
| Plaques for veterans.....                | \$92.19    |
| Income at reunion.....                   | \$542.00   |
| Balance as of Aug 4, 2009.....           | \$1,181.21 |

Also I'm thrilled to say that daughter Candice is due June 2. So should have a new baby for reunion!

*Passings*



**Fares Cordova**

I received notice of the passing of Fares Cordova from his daughter Angela Lucero and was able to locate his obituary on-line from the Pueblo Chieftain. Angela wrote, "He is free from post-traumatic stress disorder. God Bless, let him sleep good."



Fares Cordova of Pueblo, went to be with the Lord on Jan. 22, 2009. Fares was born on Sept. 7, 1924, in San Acacio, Colo. He was

preceded in death by his loving wife, Annie Cordova; and his parents. He is survived by his children, Art "Jim" (Linda) Cordova, Jackie "Jerry" (Theresa) Cordova, Cathy (Marcy) Gonzales, Angela (Darryl) Lucero and Fares (Darlene) Cordova Jr.; 16 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; two brothers; two sisters; and numerous nephews, nieces, family and friends. Cremation has taken place. Memorial service, 11 a.m. Tuesday, Romero Chapel. Military honors by the Pueblo Veterans Ritual Team. Friends and family will be received at Romero Courtesy Hall following the service. Interment, 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, Fort Logan National Cemetery

Letters of condolence may be mailed in care of his daughter Angela Lucero, 1435 E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Pueblo, Colorado 81001.



**David "Duffy" Barto**

David "Duffy" Barto, 87 years old, of Slovan, PA, died on Friday, July 24, 2009, at The Donnell House in Washington, PA.

David was born in Slovan, PA, on June 11, 1922 to the late Lukaria Federoff Barto and the late Paul Barto. He married Alyce Lovin Barto in Burgettstown, PA, on June 30, 1951.

David was a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army in World War II, Purple Heart, Bronze Star Medal and Oak Leaf Cluster recipient. He was a Life Member of V.F.W. Post No. 6553 Barto Post and a Life Member of the Knights of Columbus, 3rd degree in Burgettstown. He was also a member of Burgettstown Area Senior Center. He was a 1940 graduate of Union High School.

He was retired as a Machinist from the Machine Shop of National Steel/Weirton Division.

Along with his parents, he was preceded in death by his grandson, Barry Clark Barto; his brothers, John, Fred, Sergie, and Steve Barto; his sisters, Nellie Panameroff and Pauline Guiddy and Repa Fuller.

He is survived by his wife, Alyce Lovin Barto; his daughter, Debra Sheridan (John) of Orland Park, IL; his two sons, David Barto (Deborah) of Paris, PA; and Michael Barto (Rosanne) of Severna Park, MD; his five grandchildren and two great grandchildren; his two sisters, Anne Kempa of Pittsburgh, PA and

Vera Bumbera of Florida.

Friends will be received at Steel & Wolfe Funeral Home Inc, 3721 Main Street, Weirton, WV, on Sunday, July 26, 2009, from 1-4 p.m. and 6-9 p.m. Mass of Christian Burial will be at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Burgettstown, PA on Monday, July 27, 2009 at 1 p.m. with Father Bob Staszewski officiating.

Burial will be at Our Lady of Lourdes Cemetery in Burgettstown. Military Funeral Service by: Barto V.F.W. Post No. 6553 Honor Guard.

In lieu of flowers, the family strongly requests that Memorials be made to the: Barry Clark Barto Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o 130 Steubenville Pike, Burgettstown, PA 15021



### Robert T. Noonan, Sr.

Robert T. Noonan, Sr., 90 of Andover, died on February 11, 2009. He was born on April 15, 1918, in Lawrence to Maurice and Mabel (Metcalf) Noonan.

Bob was a devoted husband and a loving father whose passion was enjoying life with his family. In his early 20's, Robert served for 2 years in the Vermont Division of the Civilian Conservation Corps. He also served bravely in the European campaign of World War II as a gunner in an antitank destroyer in the Panther Division of the 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion.

Mr. Noonan was an award winning life insurance agent for John Hancock for over 35 years in which time he also as a well-respected union representative and Arbitrator.

Bob was an active member of the Andover Knights of Columbus Council 1078. He served as their Building Association President and Trustee and in 1965, helped to

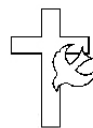


secure their first building where he often enjoyed playing the card game "45's" with other council members.

Mr. Noonan was preceded in death by 2 brothers and 8 sisters. He is survived by his loving wife of 67 years, Arline Mercier Noonan. His surviving family members include his sisters, Ethel Lessard and Judy Gianopoulos, his loving daughters, Nancy Choquette and her husband Joseph of Durango, Colorado; Kathleen Kendall of Lawrence, MA; his sons, Richard Noonan of Peterborough, New Hampshire, Robert and his wife Linda Noonan of Spring, Texas, Michael and his wife Mary Noonan of Salem, New Hampshire and Daniel and his wife Ellen Noonan of Durango, Colorado; 17 grandchildren, 22 great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Bob's funeral mass was celebrated in St. Augustine Catholic Church, 43 Essex Street, Andover, at 10 AM, Friday, February 20, 2009. Calling hours were held in the Burke-Magliozi Funeral Home, 390 North Main Street, Andover, from 4 to 8 PM on Thursday, February 19, 2009.

Donations in Robert's memory may be made to Odyssey Healthcare, 100 1-45 North; Suite 300, Conroe, TX 77301. Interment was in St. Mary-Immaculate Conception Cemetery in Lawrence.



### Leslie Pearl Noland

Sadly, just prior to our 2009 reunion



word came of the passing of another of our lovely 612<sup>th</sup> ladies – Pearl Noland. Pearl was a ray of sunshine and one of the sweetest ladies I have ever had the pleasure of

knowing. I'll always remember Pearl and her daughter Nancy in their perfectly matching outfits at each reunion. Our sympathies go out to Nancy and the entire Noland family.

Leslie Pearl Noland, age 79, of Tuscaloosa, died July 2, 2009, at DCH Regional Medical Center. Services were 3 p.m. July 5, 2009, at Piney Grove Baptist Church with Rev. Albert Lyles and Rev. Lawrence Rogers officiating. Burial followed in the church cemetery with Sunset Funeral Home, a Dignity Memorial Provider, directing. The body lay in state one hour prior to services at the church.

Her husband, Rufus Noland, son, Rufus Hale Noland, Jr., and parents, Joseph Leslie and Tiney Pate Cook, preceded her in death.

Survivors include her son, Dennis Reid Noland (Dorothy); daughters, Elizabeth Gaile Phillips and Nancy Carol Ewing (Jay); sister, Earline Wilson (Clyde); brothers, Seaborn Cook (Lena), Denzil Cook (Edna) and Buddy Cook (Patricia); grandchildren, Jennifer Edgeworth (Shane); Scott Noland (Kristie), Sherry McCallister (Chris); Darryl Loftis, Tracy Phillips (Kim), Tammy Henderson (Ricky) and Tracy Watkins; great-grandchildren, Rebecca Noland, Kelsey Noland, Kristen Weidenback, Madaline Edgeworth, Virginia Edgeworth, Aaron Wilson (Jeni), Blake McCallister, Aerial Wilson "Sunshine", Kristen McCallister, Daniel Phillips, Noah Phillips and Austin Henderson; great-great-grandchild, Alyssa Wilson; and extended family, Eddie and Ann Tinsley and Newt, Maggie, Brian, Steve and Debbie Loftis and Chris, Frank and Nikki Kelly and children, Tina Logan and children and Cindy Hopkins.

She loved her church family and community. She was always ready to help in anyway she could when someone was sick.

She was involved in numerous Out-Reach services.

Pallbearers were Tracy Watkins, Larry Wallace, Alvin Powell, Brad Noland, Newell Wyers, Barry Montgomery, Parson Wyers, and Johnny Grammer.

Honorary pallbearers were friends and neighbors of the Piney Grove community, Yellow Creek community, members of the Piney Grove Baptist Church, Dr. Ferguson, Dr. Anne Lewis, Dr. Azam, the wonderful nurses on CSICU unit at DCH Regional Medical Center, and members of the Mount Paran Church.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Piney Grove Baptist Church Out-Reach, 3712 Nicol Park Road, Tuscaloosa, AL 35406.



SUSIE'S SNIPETS

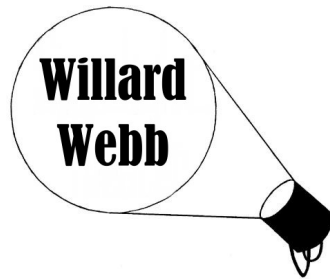
This past October Rick and I visited some dear friends in Crofton, Maryland. The highlight of our trip was our long awaited visit to the National World War II Memorial in nearby Washington, D.C. It was with great pride in the sacrifices my dad and his fellow veterans of the 612<sup>th</sup> TDBn made that we displayed the 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion banner at the memorial for all to see. It was also our hope to represent those of our 612<sup>th</sup> veterans that have been unable to travel to Washington to see "your memorial". Trust me when I say that the folks that designed and built the World War II Memorial did you proud. It is truly a loving and worthy tribute that will stand for all eternity to remind future generations of your bravery and great sacrifices. You will not be forgotten. We took lots of photos and are excited to share some of them with you in this newsletter.

Since January of 2009, I have been successful in registering over 148 of our veterans with the National World War II Memorial Registry. Work continues in my attempt to compile a master list of our 612<sup>th</sup> Veterans. My goal is to register each and every one of the heroes of the 612<sup>th</sup>. I will not let them be forgotten.

Thank you, thank you, thank you to **Judy Darretta**, (daughter of the late **Paul Darretta**, A Company,). Judy recently contacted us after reading about our search for old newsletters and rosters in our April 2009 newsletter on-line at [www.MicroRAP.biz/612th-tdb](http://www.MicroRAP.biz/612th-tdb). Judy sent us some old newsletters, which were a treasure trove of names as well as a complete roster of A company!

Judy also wrote that her dad very much enjoyed reconnecting with his army buddies and attending reunions as often as he could.

## *Spotlight on Our Veterans*



In this issue of our newsletter, I would like to spotlight my dad, Willard Athel Webb. He was born on March 18, 1917 in Smithville, Tennessee. In my entire life, I've never heard him called Willard or Will; mom and everyone else always called him "Webb".

Webb left Smithville for a job with the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) and relocated to Lexington, Tennessee. There he met an auburn haired beauty named Kitty Marie Reeves and they were married on October 7, 1937.

Drafted into the army in December of 1942, Webb reported to Fort Oglethorpe for basic training, leaving behind a wife and month old son David.

After completing basic training, Webb was off to Camp Hood in Killen, Texas. Although he was an expert marksman, he began training as a driver with A Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon of the 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion of the newly established Tank Destroyer Forces.

He served proudly through 5 major battles and was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation and 5 Bronze Battle Stars.

After being discharged, Webb tried to put the war behind him. He never spoke of it, only occasionally sharing with my mother some of the horrors he witnessed and he never attended a reunion.

He returned home to his life in Tennessee and soon relocated his family to Michigan. He worked a variety of jobs and eventually found full time work as a driver and loader for U.S. Truck. By then his small family had grown to include another son, Michael and a daughter Susan.

Suffering from what my mom said would now a days be called "post traumatic stress disorder"; my dad was never the same man after the war. However, back then a "man was a man" and you dealt with your problems as well as you could.

In the spring of my 10<sup>th</sup> year, we buried my father. I never really got to know the man that he was or would be. Although the memories of my father have begun to fade there is one thing of which I am certain, he was and always will be my hero.

Visiting the World War II Memorial this past fall and pausing at the wall of remembrance for those 400,000 soldiers that never made it home, I found myself wondering how many thousands more made it home only to find their lives shortened or destroyed by the horrors and ravages of war?



## 57<sup>th</sup> Reunion Info

Our 57<sup>th</sup> Reunion will once again take place in the lovely city of Murfreesboro, Tennessee. The dates are July 29 to August 1, 2010. Dianne Kelton and Janice Bellamy and their families have once again offered to organize and host our reunion. We will be returning to the Fairfield Inn and Suites located at 175 Chaffin Place, Murfreesboro, TN., 37129. I don't have any information on the rates for this year but I will have all that information confirmed in our April/May newsletter. The phone number for the Fairfield Inn is: 615-849-1150. In recent years Mike, the sales manager at the Fairfield Inn has gone out of his way to keep our rates as low as possible so if there is any increase this year it would most likely be a small one.

### Important Phone Numbers



Please keep these phone numbers handy in the event you need to contact someone with the 612<sup>th</sup> TDB Association.

#### 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion Association

##### Contact Numbers

Association Chairman:  
Fayne Haynes 615-584-4284

Treasurer/Flower Fund:  
Dianne Kelton 615-483-4017

Secretary/Newsletters:  
Susie Pidosny 734-516-6906

## Roster Updates



An updated membership roster will be included in the April/May 2010 Newsletter.

### ***BEFORE YOU GO ...***

By: Dr. Sam Bierstock and John Melnick

Quietly you've all turned gray  
You did your job, you saved our way  
Our life and freedom you preserved  
We've thanked you less than you deserved.

You never boasted, bragged or asked  
For adulation for your past  
You did the job you knew was right  
And quietly, you cry at night

For bodies maimed and comrades lost  
For sights beyond our furthest thoughts  
For what you've lived and felt and seen  
For what the cost of freedom means

You leave us blessed with every breath  
That cost you arms and legs and death  
You won the worst and greatest war  
We owe you more, we owe you more.

Thank you for your wondrous feats  
For open speech and quiet streets  
For worship as we chose to pray  
For preservation of our way.

Before you go, we need to show  
That in your silence we still know  
What you accomplished and what you did  
For who we are and how we lived.

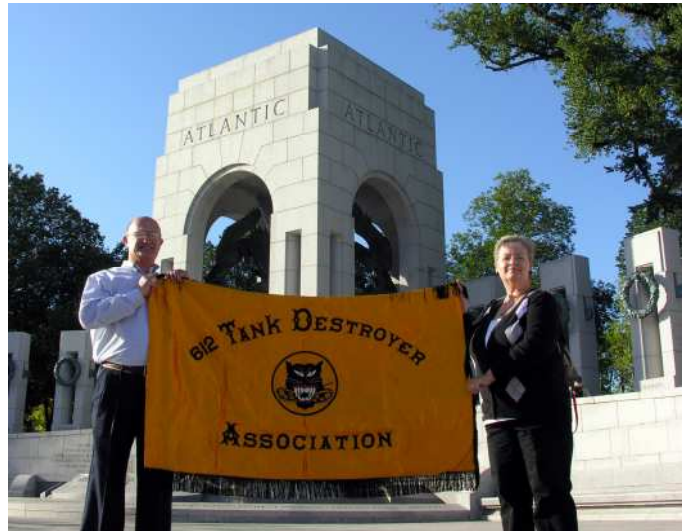
So go with love from wives and sons  
And daughters for a job well done  
From kids who've never seen a tank  
We give you thanks, we give you thanks.

Thank you for your wondrous feats  
For open speech and quiet streets  
For worship as we chose to pray  
For preservation of our way.

For homes and jobs and baseball games  
For many colors, many names  
You saved our lives and we're still free  
From shining sea to shining sea.

Thank you, thank you  
Thank you . . . . . go in peace

## Susie and Rick at the World War II Memorial Washington, D.C.



## Eulogy to Katherine "Tena" Phillips by her daughter Vivian Kay

My mother's life has been blessed in so many ways by God. She was raised during the depression, and she made the most of that experience. Being raised in the small town of Fayetteville, Texas as the third child in a family of four Siblings, she learned very early how to fight for what she wanted!

I loved to hear the stories of her youth such as when a neighbor invited my mother and my Aunt Nuxie (the baby of the family - whose real name was Vivian --- and I do not have a clue where the 'Nuxie' came from) for a piece of pie. During the depression that was a real treat, but my grandmother made my aunt finish a chore first. My mother went on over to the neighbor's house, of course, and when Aunt Nuxie joined her at the neighbor's, Mother had eaten **BOTH** pieces of pie! My aunt was so mad she chased my mother all the way home with a butcher knife, and by the grace of God (and probably some intervention from my grandmother), Mother survived that close call with death. Experiences like this made her the "strong willed woman" that she was. With determination she completed high school and went on to business school, which was not the norm for women in those days.

My mother met my father (Travis Roy Phillips) at a local dance, but she was not an easy catch. Daddy would catch a ride anyway he could from Bastrop to whatever town in and around Fayetteville that was having a dance on Saturday night. When the dance was over, Daddy would sleep on my grandmother's front porch in the cold and rain or the hot summer nights hoping to see her again on Sunday morning. In 1944 they married and Daddy left for France during World War II. When he returned a couple of years later, they were blessed with an adorable daughter --- ME!

Mother was a tough cookie, with strong moral values, and a love for God. You could see this in everything she did. When she passed away on December 7 (Pearl Harbor Day), I thought it was a very fitting day for her to go to heaven because the war and the depression molded the person she became.

For one thing, my father loved his military life, and together Mother and Daddy journeyed every year to his 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion Reunions -leaving me in Tennessee most of the time. Daddy enjoyed 33 years of these reunions before his passing, and Mother continued for another 20 years. She didn't just go for the FUN - she became the treasurer and made sure flowers were sent to each Veteran's family when they passed. So, you could say she spent 53 years in the military.

Of course, we cannot forget her tenure with Selective Service either. She was an exemplary employee, and she retired from Selective Service when the "draft board" closed down after 30 years of employment. Did I say retire? Not for long, because she went right back to work at Gulf Printing working an additional 15 years and retiring once again. Now for most people that would have been a full life, but my mother's work ethic was so strong, she held other "jobs" as well.

She loved her Lord and Savior, and she demonstrated it through her service in teaching the Primary and Kindergarten Sunday School classes at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church for many years. I do not remember what year she started, but she was still teaching when her grandchildren, Travis Eugene and Christina (Chrissy) Elise began their walk with Christ. She was a devoted member of the Lutheran Women's Missionary

League (aka as the LWML). She served in various leadership roles, and until the fall of 2008, you could always find her collecting money at Our Redeemer's locally renowned Turkey Dinners. In 2006, when I told her I thought she needed help and I wanted her to consider an Assisted Living Center, she said, "Well, I can't go until after November 2nd's, Turkey Dinner!" And, so it was!

Another love of hers was singing in the church choir. I am not sure how many years she was in the choir, but I sure hope no one is sitting in her spot at the back of the church where she greeted every member and collected hugs and kisses from every child.

Oh and we cannot forget the church bowling league. That began her love for bowling. Though she never was a 300 bowler, she served both the church league and the Lads and Lassies League faithfully as both their secretary and treasurer. She went to numerous city, state and national tournaments. She was a Director for many years, she worked with the Junior Bowling Leagues, and she was recognized for several awards including the Member Emeritus Award in 1996 for devoted and valued service to the Houston Women's Bowling Association (HWBA). Even when she could no longer physically bowl, she still gave her time to the HWBA as well as the men's Bowling Association - in the office as well as keeping score during tournaments.

You are probably wondering when she had time for family! Well the good news is she only had one Child. She was a loving mother, and her work ethic and teaching skills were not wasted. She made sure I knew the Fourth Commandment, and she definitely taught me who the BOSS was. She guided my life in many ways, and she was so thrilled when she became a Grandmother and Great-Grandmother. As Chrissy and I talked last night, Chrissy mentioned mom's homemade oatmeal (not microwave!), her chicken and dumplings, and her cornbread dressing. Trav and Alvin would have added her sweet potatoes with marshmallows, too. Which by the way, I don't think anyone who tasted her dressing and sweet potatoes who didn't rave about them. Mother was also blessed with four adorable great-grandchildren who also loved her --- Jackson Eugene, Hannah Marie and Audrey Elizabeth Thetford and Cameron Elise Johnson.

Mother loved people, and in a way she had numerous children. She was Godmother to about 10-15 Godchildren - many of whom are here today. A Godmother's role is to insure they grow spiritually especially if they lose their parents, and she did that too.

My comments are made to the Glory of God in thanks for the many blessings God gave my mother. Yes, she was dedicated to every cause she undertook. She was a great wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, Godmother, friend and bowler. She was a good cook, a dedicated worker in numerous organizations, and you never wanted to play against her in cards, dominoes or any games. But today I really want to celebrate her life and service to her Lord and Savior.

She gave me my Christian upbringing, and I thank God with all my heart for her love and guidance.

Christ is Risen; He is Risen indeed and today my mother is in paradise with Him!

# 2009 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion Association Reunion



Anita Stanley, Janice and Jim Bellamy



Ronnye and Janice Riley



Dorothy Tomlinson



Earl and Glyn Sain



Talmadge and Ruth Riley



Beatrice Haynes

## 2009 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion Association Reunion

# We Salute Our Veterans



Avery Sanders, Earl Sain, Talmadge Riley, Jesse Weaver, Fayne Haynes and Donn Fischer



*A Prayer  
for Our Troops*

*“Lord, hold our troops in your  
loving hands  
Protect them as they protect us.  
Bless them and their families for  
the selfless acts they perform for  
us in our time of need.*

*Amen.”*