

## **THE OPALTORIAL**

**Sometime during the past week someone in our Association said or wrote to us, "Dick, we need an editorial about what happened to  
THE SANDESTIN REUNION!"**

**Well, that's kind of a toughy. Over the long long miles on the way home we did a lot of head scratchin' (dang splinters). We thought (for starters) we could get our grandson to draw a cartoon for the cover.**

### ***BUT OPAL WASN'T FUNNY!***

**Consider this, though: -- for two and a half years the Krauts tried their best to flatten the 82nd and failed miserably; but a young lady from the Caribbean succeeded in doing it in a couple of hours -- and miserably.**

**In the following pages you will find some of the flavor of that misery and we will leave you to savor some of the pathos of all of our disappointment as expressed by some of our comrades and comradees.**

**Finally, we suggest you read Mary Ryland's determined resolve and then  
TAKE HEART!!**

*Dickie Bird*



# The 82nd Fighter Group Association



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RALPH "Monty" POWERS - 95th

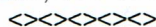
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JACK DUNCAN - 97th

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1996 REUNION CHAIRMAN

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ROSTER - CHUCK LUKE

PAST PRESIDENTS

Will Hattendorf & Harley Vaughn

# SOME SANDESTIN BUSINESS

&

A WORD OR FOUR OR MORE  
ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

First of all, friends, this newsletter would ordinarily appear around the middle of November and one of the reasons for this is that it usually takes two or more weeks just to get the photos straightened out.

However, we only have three pictures of the Sandestin Gala Gathering.

The main reason for **N O W** is that we know that most of you are anxious to learn about what happened to your buddies and their ladies. Jo Ann & I hadn't been home more than ten minutes (Friday the 13th) when the phone rang and it was Jerry Loewenberg wanting to know why we hadn't gotten the newsletter out yet! (Just kidding, Jerry)

Another reason for **NOW** is that Hank Phillips is anxious for all of you who sent money to him or to the Inn to know that the Inn will refund the total amt. sent (those who used credit cards will have their billings credited immediately while those who paid by check will need to wait a little longer). There are some of Hank's expenditures that can't be recovered and that is understandable. Hank thinks the amount deducted will average about \$25.

The next page is a partial list of members who made a gallant effort to get to Destin or who were early arrivals. Hank wants you to know that if you were an early arrival and are not listed it's because he is not familiar with many 82nd faces and *there were no name tags!*





# WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT SANDESTIN ARRIVALS, Etc.

(Note: Noi indicates "No Other Info")

1. JIM BAKER: Jim drove to Sandestin, Noi
2. CARL BALUCHA, Noi
3. BILL & AUDREY BARR: See story
4. JOHN BUCKLES, Noi
5. TOM CARHART: Embrey mentioned seeing Tom. Noi
6. CHAPPIE: Aborted, Noi
7. CHARLIE CHARLTON, Noi
8. AL DEFORGE: Several folks mentioned Al, Noi
9. RUTHIE DONOHOO, Noi
10. JACK DUNCAN: See story
11. M.E. ELLISON: Aborted, Noi
12. RALPH EMBREY: See story
13. LOLA GIERTZ: Turned back with the Medlevs
14. JOHN HENDRIX: Disappeared into the Florida swamps and we haven't heard from him since. (Just kidding) According to Medley, John went to south Florida to visit a daughter.
15. KEN HERRICK: See story.
16. MARGE HOELZEL: We were worried about Marge but she's OK. See story.
17. BILL HOLEMAN: Got as far as Eglin and then drove north ahead of the storm.
18. BRYCE HUGHES: Medley reported that Bryce started out and then turned back.
19. LINK JONES: Canceled. See phone call.
20. WAYNE JORDA: Lives just across the Choctawhatchee Bay from Destin. Intended to register on Friday. One of the Association's "Founding Fathers" and had missed the last 8 Reunions.
21. JOHN KANE: Got to Hank's house and stayed there until evacuated.
22. REUBEN KOIVUNIEMI: Canceled
23. DB LINGENFELTER: Was blown into the Gulf.
24. JOHN LITCHFIELD: Was an early arrival and was an evacuee. Noi
25. CHUCK LUKE: Was an early arrival and evacuated to HUNTSVILLE, AL where his son lives.
26. GEORGE MARVIN: Was an early arrival and was evacuated with the rest of them but not before he let everyone know that **BOSTON** has never had a HURRICANE - much less one named OPAL!
27. OLEN MEDLEY: Turned around.
28. MEL MULLIN: We think it was Olen who told us that Mel had turned around & returned to Marion, IN
29. SLICK MORGAN: Was an early arrival. We know that because Embrey said he had some kind of an argument with him.
30. ROY NORRIS: Roy was pulling his boat to Sandestin and went into a borrow pit with it. A lady in front of him had to stop suddenly so Roy had to take evasive action. But he got as far as Montgomery before he decided to return to Cincy. Was he surprised, though, when he saw old DB drive into his driveway on Sunday! Oh, the boat was undamaged, thank you!
31. DICK OSTRONIK: Stayed at Hanks place until evacuated (with Kane)
32. LARRY PEPLINSKI: Turned back at Atlanta
33. CHARLEY PINSON: An early arrival. Noi
34. MONTY POWERS: An early arrival. Noi
35. BOB ROBERSON: A no show.
36. DEL RYLAND: See Mary's letter.
37. BILL SCHILDT: An early arrival. Noi
37. JOHN SEBRING: A no show
38. FRED SELLE: Had to turn back. Pictures at 11!
39. BUDDY STROZIER: See phone call.
40. PINCUS TABACK: Had to turn back at Memphis.
41. HARRY TERRY: An early arrival. Noi
42. LUTE THOMPSON: An early arrival. Noi
43. CLAYTON TILLAPAUGH: Canceled
44. W.R. BUCK: A brand new 82nd Association member, W.R. was an early arrival. We will try to follow up with more info.
45. DICK WILLISIE & FRANK HURLBUT: Both arrived just in time to be evacuated. This was to be a memorable Reunion for Dick as it was to be the first for his wife Marilyn. It was also supposed to have been the first Reunion for Bonnie Chapman.

Please Note: The above list doesn't include about 60 "No Shows" (for want of a better term) most of whom fully intended to attend the Sandestin Reunion. We can only assume that each one is as devastated as those named above with the cancellation of the Reunion.

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Mighty Missives From The  
MAIL BAG

From Del & Mary Ryland (to M&M Powers)

We trust you are safe and sound! Hope you weren't among the "fleeing motorists" who were "sitting ducks" in clogged traffic. Do let us know your story. Poor Hank! We feel so sorry for all the work he and Marlene had done and we hope they and their home escaped unscathed. I've just written them a note.

We called Larry Peplinski. He got as far as Atlanta, learned of the cancellation and returned home safely.

We arrived in Phoenix at 11 PM Thurs. and were home in our "nest" by midnight. We can laugh now but can scarcely believe such an adventure. We had no trouble retracing our path on Highway 85 and then on I-10. (we were planning to return our rental car in Mobile) and found a room in a Pensacola motel only to be evacuated four hours later to Booker T. Washington High School! 2,500 people were scattered around the cafeteria, hallways, etc. The natives brought coolers, mattresses, cards, games and you name it.

We had TV weather reports until the power went out. A little while later auxiliary power lessened our anxiety. Del stretched out on some newspapers in a hallway alcove while some kids were playing cards next to him.

We were served Red Cross food in ample supply.

After seven hours of this we were finally on our way to Mobile. When we turned our car in at the airport we learned that flights were irregular so we rented another car and drove to Gulfport, caught an American Eagle plane (with only eight on board) to Dallas and then a full flight to Phoenix!

We are looking forward to Boston next year -  
**UNDA UNTED**

Ed's note: Mary, please forgive me for rearranging things a little; and many thanks to Monty Powers for relaying it. -- DB

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ADORIMINI SHOP TALK

It's Sept. 6 and this AM I had just finished working in my wood yard (we have an EARTH STOVE and its wonderfully cozy during the winter) and was on my way to lunch when the phone rang. It was Roy Norris. "Hey, Link, I just now received a check for \$279 from TUTTOSTORIA in Parma, Italy! That gives us enough money to pay Steve Blake in full and I'm getting his final payment off this PM!"

There are a lot of folks out there who never thought we would ever see this day. Even Steve has wondered now & then. So let's all give 82 loud Huzzahs for a great team, a great writer and a super great book about a super super great outfit.

huzzah -- huzzah -- huzzah -- !!!

"The SANDESTIN Kicker"

This is the name we've given to the little four page NL we sent out to you about a month ago. We have received many warm responses and we really appreciate them. Roy Norris reports he has received several dues checks as one of the by-products of the "Kicker".



## CALL FROM JACK DUNCAN

Jack was one of the early birders that descended on Sandestin a couple of days earlier. He reported that the mini-reunion was a lot of fun with about 25 to 30 old timers wining and dining together.

Jack said he got the word to get out of town about 3 AM Wednesday. He said he was stopped by a trooper who asked where he was going. Jack replied, "Texas". "Well, you're going in the wrong direction. Get on I-10 at the next stoplight and go west, young man!"

Jack said the trip back to Texas was a piece of cake but he heard that behind him a truck jack-knifed and held up traffic 30 miles behind him.

You can all grit your teeth for pore old Jack. He was headed for the orthodontist for the third operation since his return from Florida.



FROM BUDDY STROZIER

How far did you get toward Sandestin? We had planned to get to Baton Rouge by Tuesday evening but as we heard more & more about OPAL decided to Monroe, LA and take a reading from there. The next AM we were convinced and headed back home.

It sure appeared like Opal was zeroing in on the 82nd Reunion, didn't it? And after Hank had done such a great job getting everything lined up so well.

Buddy sent a copy of an article on "REUNIONS" that appeared in the Retired Officers magazine. The author is William C. Anderson of Boise, ID. He had been a pilot in the 451st BG (24s) out of Cerignola, Italy. He remembers the 82nd well. Brit May, a neighbor of mine, was also a pilot in that Group.

It's a good article, too. Hey George, do you want me to send it to you?

Thanks Buddy. We're looking forward to seeing you in Nov.

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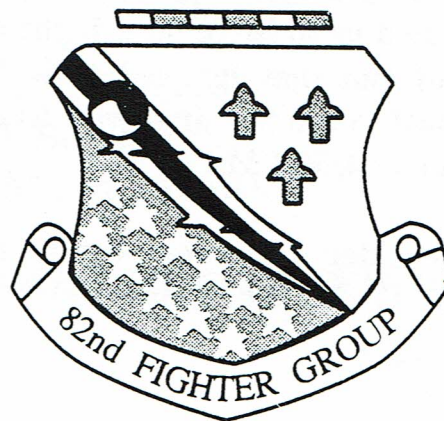
## IN MEMORIAM

LOUIS E. CURDES, Feb. 8, 1995

WILLIAM M. ERWIN, Aug. 5, 1995  
(Note: Was ill for a year)

PAUL F. JORGENSEN  
(See Obit, Page 13)

ROY KINNETT, March, 1995





# DENVER TO DESTIN TO DENVER

## In Three Easy Lessons

FROM RALPH & MEREDITH EMBREY

We enjoyed your short visit with us on your way home from Hurricane Opal. I almost wrote "REUNION" but I think "OPAL" is more appropriate. Opal stopped the Reunion before it could get started although I understand a few of the troops were able to have dinner together on 3 October. We arrived at The Sandestin about 11:30 PM on 3 October and saw a few of the troops as they were leaving to go North somewhere just to get out of the path of Opal. We saw John & Isobel Litchfield for a minute before they left. We also saw Hank Phillips. I asked him what he was laughing about and he replied, "If I don't laugh, I'll cry!" A very appropriate remark, I thought.

I'll give you a brief summary of our experience with Hurricane Opal. We left Denver on Delta at 3:30 PM. We met Al & Claire Deforge in Atlanta as they were going on the same airplane with us. Their baggage had gone to Ft. Walton Beach - or so they thought. When we got to Panama City we invited them to go to Destin with us in our rented car as they had no baggage and there would be plenty of room. We arrived at the Sandestin Resort about 11:30 PM and when we got to the lobby there were a number of people trying to decide what to do. Some were leaving, some were just checking in and others were renting cars. The hotel clerk told us that we should voluntarily leave now because by morning it would be mandatory. Al & I talked it over and decided to stay the night and get up early the next morning and leave. We finally got to bed about 1 AM!

We got up a 5 AM and went to the lobby. Al & Claire were there and we decided to get on the road for Atlanta ASAP. We ran into Chuck and Judy Luke who had rented a car and I understood that they were going to Huntsville where they have a son. George Marvin was going with them although George wasn't with them when we left at 5:30 AM.

We drove to Montgomery without too much traffic and very little rain. We were in and out of rain squalls all the way to Atlanta and arrived there without mishap about 2 PM. We went directly to the Delta ticket counter and told them we had been chased out of Destin by Opal and while our tickets were for 8 October to return to Denver we were ready now. They scheduled us to leave on a flight that was to leave at 3:32 PM. Al and Claire were also taken care of and they learned their baggage was still in Atlanta. I got the car turned in and returned to the terminal with five minutes to spare before our plane left. We arrived back in Denver at 4:30 PM.

We consider ourselves very lucky to have missed Opal and to have gotten home safe and sound. We hope everyone fared as well. See you in Boston.

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# A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW PRESIDENT

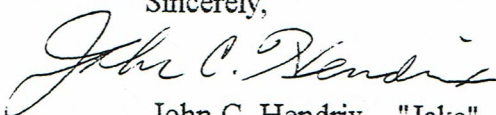
You are surprised. Well so am I, but since I am here I feel highly honored to be president of such a distinguished organization. I have heard the remark numerous times that this a pilots or officer's association. Personally, I have very little knowledge of prior rank. I know that we have a damn good group working shoulder to shoulder to make it the very best. Ralph Embrey jokes about me out-ranking him when he was a S/Sgt pilot. I remained a Tech/Sgt and Ralph retired as a bird Colonel, but he is still the same fine gentleman that I knew 50 years ago. That may be why we, in the ground crews, worked 7 days a week and sometimes 24 hours per day to maintain the high maintenance record to see that the pilots had the odds in their favor.

Remember that our group started out with mostly S/Sgt. pilots who set North Africa afire with burning enemy planes and we, as enlisted men shared in their victories as they shared in our outstanding maintenance of those planes. Rank didn't prevent us from working together then so we still welcome any rank from private to colonel and even a few generals who drop in now and then.

For you people who think formal attire is required for the reunion banquet, a coat and tie for men and dress or slacks for ladies is fine but not required. Yes, we do require shoes. The dance floor might have splinters.

We are working on two possibilities for 1997 reunion, but we are still open for offers. You can get the pros to do the hard work and you just coordinate. Please contact me if you are interested or know someone who is.

Sincerely,



John C. Hendrix "Jake"

PS Please read my insert.. If you have March 1989 News Letter, read President Will's letter. He had excellent foresight.

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## THE "DICK E. BIRD NEWS"

A copy of the above publication appeared in our PO Box about a year ago. We presumed it was via the courtesy of an 82nd member who thought, mayhaps, to have a little fun with our name! I put a little note regarding the gift in the Nov. '94 Newsletter and learned, perchance later that the doner was our very own Monty Powers.

We were absolutely delighted with the DB NEWS and promptly subscribed. We used up a

lot of our sabbatical time reading it. We heartily recommend the paper to ALL of our 82nd friends regardless of a possible dis-interest in our feathered friends.

Mail your \$15 subscription to:

DICK E. BIRD NEWS  
P.O. Box 377  
ACME, MI 49610-0377

**YOU WILL BE RICHLY REWARDED!**

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*Thought you folks  
might like a copy  
of this letter! ♡ A+B*

1415 Borah Avenue  
Moscow, Idaho 83843  
October 12, 1995

Dear Family and Friends:

What an experience we've had! We've just returned from Fla. where we nearly got blown off the map! Hurricane Opal was en-route to the Carribean when we left to attend Bill's 82nd Fighter Group reunion in Sandestin, Fla. on Oct. 4th and to incidentally use a week of Condo exchange the week before at Marina Bay Resort at Ft. Walton Beach. We rented a car, settled in at the resort on Friday, the 28th of Sept. and were congratulating ourselves with a nice spot to rest after crossing the country and landing in Pensacola. Bill even had a day (Sunday) of collecting with Bob Turnbow while Audrey enjoyed the pool and read. We all went out to dinner for yummy Italian cuisine at "The Olive Garden". Then as the weather report kept warning of nearby hurricane "Opal", we began to be a little tense. Things went from bad to worse and the county commissioner called Tuesday night to tell us it would be wise to move from Marina Bay to a safer place as the storm was headed our way and was very dangerous with winds of 155 miles an hour! So we put water in 2 containers, gathered our cheese & crackers and 2 cans of sardines, 2 hard boiled eggs, and a bottle of orange juice, and headed for the closest shelter at Ft. Walton Beach, which was the local High School. The place was meant for 400, but we were 1400 souls there--all lined up along the walls in the corridors and in the cafeteria. We did not have blankets or pillows as suggested by the evacuation notice, but kind folks gave us one of their sleeping bags and a blanket to use. We had arrived Weds. morning early and fortunately found a little indented doorway and 2 chairs to claim as "our spot". The day wore on with hundreds of people walking up and down the corridors to the bathrooms near us.. (they deteriorated to a terrible state by nightfall needless to say!). There were 50 people on respirators, some on oxygen, lots of babies and children as well as other nursing home people along with just plain folks, all needing shelter. The Red Cross volunteers did a fantastic job of feeding that crowd--children first, and then the adults. Peanut butter sandwiches with applesauce, fruit cocktail, and pure water was the first meal, which we did not accept, as we had our own...and they were afraid of running out at that time. The storm made landfall around 5PM at Ft. Walton Beach with a Force #3--marked down from a Force #5, which incidentally is a humdinger of wind and rain! It was going sideways as we watched out front doors rather than up and down! We slept on the concrete floor which became wetter and wetter as time went by, but our gift of a newspaper put under us helped some, and the indented doorway was away from the hall traffic somewhat. By midnight we saw the storm had abated, so decided to try to sleep in our rented car. A curfew was on so the police man wasn't too willing to let us do that, but he relented when he realized putting Bill's fused back on the concrete floor was next to impossible and we promised not to go anywhere. There were some bouncy gusts as we slept, but we were so tired we ignored it. By morning things had calmed down, and we had breakfast in the school cafeteria which had been donated by nearby restaurants and grocery stores. After curfew was lifted we journeyed very



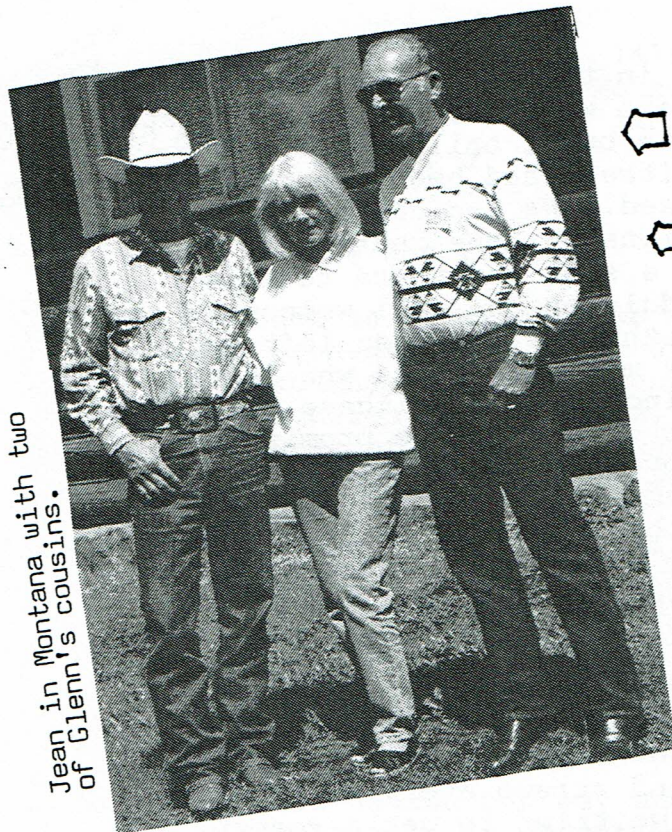
carefully as lines were down, poles in the roads, trees uprooted everywhere, to Marina Bay Resort where we still had 2 nights stay owed to us. It was closed, so we ate our 2 boiled eggs and checked to see if Bill's damaged suitcase had been mended at a shoe repair place...it also was closed. We decided to go to Sandestin Inn where we had reservations for the reunion in hopes they would still be available. Not a soul was there to answer our "yoo-hoos", but we saw the schedule on the wall welcoming the 82nd Fighter Group! We found the bathrooms and then left to return to Marina Bay Resort where we met the owners who let us have our rooms back for overnight since Bill's suitcase still had to be retrieved and since we had our own water; we promised not to flush! There was no water, no power, no electricity anywhere, but we gratefully slept on a good bed that night and had sandwiches and a beer purchased at the local Circle K which had happily opened to clear out perishables. I made sun-tea on the deck and we filled a wastebasket with swimming pool water for wash-ups, and we ate in comfort after a quick solitary dip in the pool. It was hot and humid, but we were able to leave doors open for cooling off at night. 5 boats were beached below us..one almost in the swimming pool! 2 boats had sunk in the bay from the storm-surge. Piers were gone and the BarBQ area below us had concrete tables and benches broken and strewn every which way...truly a mess. In the morning we tried to get a reservation at a motel in Pensacola so we could fly home on Sunday, but nothing was available anywhere there. We then drove to Mobile, Alabama to get a change of flight and found a Holiday Inn to stay in. Bill was such a marvel at being able to drive through 5PM traffic to the airport as well as just to find everywhere we needed to be...He no longer flies airplanes but he sure can fly on the ground! What a guy! (Audrey says).

So here we are, home again, and grateful survivors of Hurricane Opal. Now we know we can handle one of the worst kind of disasters possible! It is only now that Audrey is feeling really jittery as she recalls the happenings...i.e. a car ran over felled wires in front of us and swinging telephone poles as we drove by. Something was watching over us as we recognized one serendipity after another along the way!...For instance, while in Pensacola, Bill turned on "Bayou St." rather than the one he was told to. He misunderstood the southern pronunciation, but it happened to be the right street! Then at the place repairing the suitcase, when Bill again found it closed, he had to stop and push a branch from under the car. Then we were going to leave, but the car wouldn't start. Bill found a phone nearby to call Alamo Car Rentals and found that one needs to step on the brake to make these new chevy's unlock. While he was on the phone, the owner of the repair store arrived briefly and Audrey hailed him and in that moment we were able to get Bill's bag or we would have missed him! Bill said, "You know, I've always had that car start before without braking first!"...?????

BOGC and much love from  
The Grateful Alive!

*Audrey and Bill*  
Audrey and Bill





Jean in Montana with two of Glenn's cousins.

# **THE REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE** **Ralph "Monty" Powers, Chairman**

Guess what? You're right. Monty's report is currently lost under one of several piles of debris in Heinz Hall! However, I think the following summary is reasonably accurate (if not fairly):

It being determined that George Marvin has declined to continue as President because of his duties as the Boston Reunion Host and as Charlie Charlton has declined to continue as Vice President for reasons of health is befall to the NC Chair to seek other possible nominees.

This was no mean task and actually smacked of being slightly nasty! But dogged determination plus some suggestions proffered by some interested members gave us this slate:

President - **JOHN C. HENDRIX**  
 V.P. - **OLEN MEDLEY**  
 Sec./Tr. - **ROY E. NORRIS**  
 95th Rep - **RALPH "Monty" POWERS**  
 HQ., 96th & 97th Reps as before  
 Immediate Past Pres. **G. MARVIN**  
 \* The above constitutes the  
**EXECUTIVE BOARD**

After discussions with Parliamentarian and Plenipoteniarian, **Jerry Loewenberg**, it was ruled that the above action is consistent with the By-Laws of our most honorable Association.

## **THE JEAN CULL STORY**

The events of the past month or so and the present desparate condition of *Heinz Hall* (my war torn office) leaves us wanting for exact factual data regarding this terrific lady, so we'll all must bear up under a woefully destitute memory (Gad, what a heavy cross for both of us to bear)!

It could be geologic eons ago that we received a letter from Jean asking us for any information about her father, Glenn Davies. Glenn, a 96th pilot, was shot down on a fighter sweep on Feb 9, '45 (see page 239 - Adorimini).

My guess is that Jean had been seeking info about her father for years until, finally, a B-26 association sent her our name. We scraped up several 96th pilots who might have known Glenn and asked them to respond to Jean if they had any info. We know, at least, that Don Correa & Dick Willsie communicated with her.

The 82nd FG History, Inc. sent her a copy of ADORIMINI.

We recently received a very touching letter from Jean with the enclosed photo. **Jean, welcome to the 82nd Family!**

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## **CORRECTIONS & ADDITIONS TO PAGE 3**

We are in considerable error in our reporting of the early arrivals to Sandestin. Based on letters that have arrived since page 3 was set up we list the following errors and or additions:

1. Charilie Charlton brought his son.
2. Ruth Donohoo brought her daughter Patricia Donohoo Snell
3. Bryce Hughes
4. Mel Mullin
5. Richard & Zeta Gadbury
6. Walter Zurney

As near as we can tell, there were 66 early arrivals (including Hank & Marlene) and this is accurate to one standard deviation - or - + 5%!

Jo Ann drove back to Boise via NOME, AK to pick up another Baloney Slicer!

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## DICKIE BIRD'S DISA "CHEEP" MENTS

Prior to leaving for Sandestin I made all kinds of plans for you guys & dolls.  
#1: I was bringing a large (24 X 36 in.) B & W photo of a flight of four 97th planes - flying in line - off the coast of Long Beach, CA just prior to evacuating the ZI in 1942. For those of you who missed the first half dozen Reunions it was the custom to display these pictures for GIs & Occifers to sign. Somewhere along the line the custom was abandoned and I was going to try to revive it.

In addition I also had the same sized photos of a B-25 & a B-17 to display.

#2: We noted in the Sandestin Kicker that was sent out a month or so ago that the ever lovin' 1st Fighter Group Association had just printed its history entitled "AN ESCORT OF P-38S".

This very excellent book was written by John Mullins, a 1st Fighter pilot. The hard cover, 200 page book lists for \$32.95 but we can get it for you for \$27 which includes postage & handling. We had brought a copy to Sandestin so you could see the professional job John has done on it. Send your checks to me & then give me a month or so for delivery.

#3 We had also brought four boxes of "ADORIMINIS" with us and were counting on selling most of them to the active duty guys at Tyndall.

#4: At the business meeting I was going to rise to a point of order (is there such a thing in an 82nd business meeting?)

so that I could bring before our august body the very important matter of the "ARCHIVES" of the 82nd Fighter Group Association.

Consider this Ladies & Gentlemen: what we have in our Western Culture in the way of history - we have because someone had the sensitivity and consideration to gather such together and deposit them in a responsible institution.

Consider this also: There is no doubt in our mind that the 82nd Fighter Group compiled an unmatched record during WWII. Do we not, then, have the responsibility to seek the best possible procedure to establish an "82nd FIGHTER GROUP ARCHIVES?"

Please respond! A note to your Squadron Rep or any other Association official (the NL Editor ain't one of these) or to any regular member whom you believe has some clout in our Association (i.e. Mr. Bones). Remember, also, that TIME'S A WASTIN'!

#5: During our banquet on Sat. Eve., Oct. 7, I was going to ask for the floor so I could lead you all in singing "HAPPY BIRTHDAY" to Jo ann on the occasion of her 74th. I also would have had a little bauble in my pocket to put on one of her fingers.,

Finally, Ladies & Gentlemen, we want to thank you all for your concerns for our health during our enforced sabbatical. We have felt all the warm huggies you have sent via ESP. We are well mended and are happy to get on with our "BALONEY SLICING JOB!"



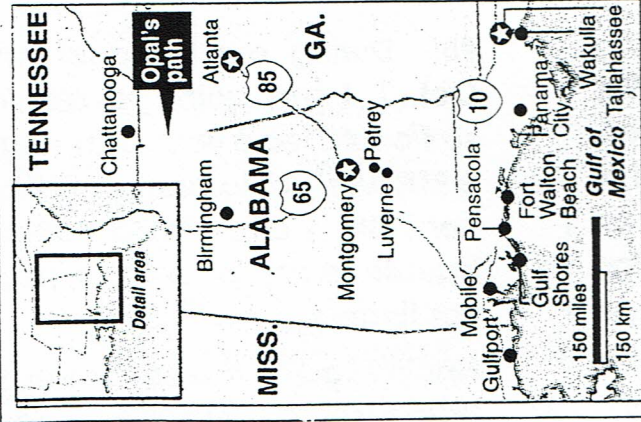
# Hurricane Opal cuts Swath of destruction

Storm kills 15,  
leaves 2 million  
without power

The Washington Post

DESTIN, Fla. — Hurricane Opal cut a deadly and destructive path through the South on Thursday, killing 15 people in four states and altering the homes, resorts and condominiums that line a 120-mile stretch of Florida's famous Gulf Coast beaches.

Florida officials said fast-moving Opal, which disintegrated into a tropical depression as it made its way to the Midwest, was one of the most destructive storms ever to



## Hurricane Opal damage

After growing into the strongest storm to hit the Gulf Coast since 1969, Opal winded quickly. It was downgraded Thursday to a tropical depression.

### Preliminary damage reports

#### Florida

Damage estimates: \$1.8 billion  
Left without power: 537,000

#### Georgia

Damage estimates: Not yet available  
Left without power: 392,000

#### Alabama

Damage estimates: Not yet available  
Left without power: Approx. 1 million

41,500 lost power in North and South Carolina.

AP

## THANKS, DOROTHY

Dorothy Ragland is a cousin of my college pal, LEE RAGLAND, former 95th pilot. Dorothy and I have been corresponding for the last two years regarding matters pertaining to the Ragland Family. We were to meet the first time on Monday, Oct. 9 in BLACKSBURG, VA but Opal had other ideas.

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PLEASE SEE OPAL/A8

## Opal

FROM PAGE A1

hit the state. Initial estimates are that Opal caused at least \$1.8 billion in insured property damages, second only to Hurricane Andrew, which devastated a portion of South Florida in 1992 and caused \$17 billion in damages.

In Florida, a 76-year-old woman was killed in her home in Crestview, where the storm spawned a tornado. The Associated Press reported that in Georgia, seven people were killed in accidents related

■ Opal washes out Winston Cup qualifying. B1

to Opal. In Alabama, six died in weather-related accidents, including two people killed when a tree fell on a trailer, and in western North Carolina, a man was killed when a tree fell on a mobile home.

Opal knocked out power to nearly 2 million people in Florida, Georgia, Alabama and the Carolinas, and many, especially in the Florida panhandle, were without water. Fifteen Florida counties were approved for federal emergency aid, and National Guardsmen were posted in Panama City, which was under a dusk-to-dawn curfew.

All along Highway 98 here Thursday, residents staggered back to their beach town homes and looked with horror at the great destruction that Hurricane Opal had wrought.

The Miracle Strip, as it's known here, has never looked worse.

Houses were flattened, storefronts battered. Fallen trees and debris filled most roads. Most towns had no power, and gas and ice were virtually impossible to find.

In nearby Fort Walton Beach, Rev. Ray Blanchard discovered that his church's entire roof had been crushed by the storm. He spent the morning there picking through rubble as the sun cast a bright glow upon his pews.

"I've never seen anything like it," Blanchard said. "But despite this we still feel very lucky. Yesterday my wife thought that we should come inside the church during the storm but at the last minute we decided against it and left town instead."

Opal hit land early Wednesday evening with 125 mph winds that in some places gusted up to 150 mph. It spared little in its path.

But because the coastline had largely been evacuated, most of the damage it did was strictly to property. Many residents here said Thursday that they were at least grateful that only a few lives had been lost and a few people had been hurt, but for many the hardships from the storm have only just begun.

82nd Fighter Group Association  
NEWSLETTER  
Issue # 34  
BOISE, IDAHO Oct. 31, '95



# PAUL FRANCIS JORGENSEN

1919 - 1995

LT. COL. PAUL F. JORGENSEN, USAF (RET), AGE 76 DIED AT WILFORD HALL MEDICAL CENTER ON 18TH SEPTEMBER 1995.

HE BEGAN HIS MILITARY CAREER BY WAY OF ENLISTMENT IN THE NAVAL RESERVE IN 1937 AND WAS CALLED TO ACTIVE DUTY IN 1940 TO SERVE ON THE U S S HEYWOOD UNTIL DISCHARGED IN 1941. LATER THAT YEAR HE ENLISTED IN THE U S ARMY FIELD ARTILLERY AND IN 1942 BECAME AN AVIATION CADET. HE GRADUATED FROM PILOT TRAINING IN CLASS 43C IN MARCH 1943 AT DOUGLAS, ARIZ. AND WENT ON TO FLY FIFTY P-38 COMBAT MISSIONS WITH THE 82ND FIGHTER GROUP IN NORTH AFRICA AND ITALY. HE WAS CREDITED WITH THE CONFIRMED DESTRUCTION OF THREE GERMAN ME-109'S AND HIS DECORATIONS INCLUDED THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS AND THE AIR MEDAL WITH TEN OAK LEAF CLUSTERS.

AFTER WORLD WAR II HE JOINED THE CALIFORNIA AIR NATIONAL GUARD AS A PILOT AND AT THE SAME TIME ATTENDED SOUTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY IN LOS ANGELES WHERE HE GRADUATED IN SEPTEMBER 1948 WITH A BACHELORS DEGREE IN ACCOUNTING AND TWO YEARS OF LAW. IN OCTOBER 1948 HE WAS RECALLED TO ACTIVE DUTY WITH THE AIR FORCE AND SERVED IN PROCUREMENT PLANNING AND IN THE COMPTROLLERS OFFICE IN THE HEADQUARTERS, AIR MATERIAL COMMAND AT WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB. IN 1949 HE WAS A PILOT ON THE BERLIN AIRLIFT RETURNING TO WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB AFTER THE AIRLIFT ENDED. IN 1950 HE WAS ASSIGNED TO THE WESTERN AIR PROCUREMENT DISTRICT IN LOS ANGELES AND IN 1951 ASSIGNED TO THE DEPOT AT TACHIKAWA AFB, JAPAN AS DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTING. IN 1953 HE RETURNED TO CIVILIAN LIFE BUT REMAINED ACTIVE IN THE AIR FORCE RESERVE AT NORTON AFB, CALIF. IN THE COMPTROLLER AND PROCUREMENT FIELDS. IN 1979 HE RETIRED FROM THE AIR FORCE AND THE AIR FORCE RESERVE AS A SENIOR PILOT AFTER 42 YEARS OF MILITARY SERVICE.

IN CIVILIAN LIFE HE WAS A MANAGER OF CONTRACT PRICING AT THE CORPORATE OFFICES OF ROCKWELL INTERNATIONAL IN EL SEGUNDO, CALIF. RETIRING FROM ROCKWELL IN 1980.

HE MOVED FROM BURBANK, CALIF. TO SAN ANTONIO IN 1985 AND WAS A RESIDENT OF AIR FORCE VILLAGE II WHEN HE DIED.

HE WAS A QUIET MAN — WITH DEEP AND ABIDING LOVE FOR COUNTRY AND COUNTRYMEN. HE LOVED ANIMALS AND GARDENING AND HIS VILLAGE FRIENDS. HE WAS ACTIVE IN THE DAEDALIANS, A FRATERNITY OF MILITARY PILOTS AND THE RETIRED OFFICERS ASSOCIATION.

HE IS SURVIVED BY THE FORMER BETTY MAY DEGEN, HIS WIFE OF 55 YEARS, ONE DAUGHTER BARBARA JEAN KISSLAN AND HUSBAND, JOHN HENRY, OF FLORIDA, FOUR GRANDCHILDREN, DONNA MARIE, ROXANNE, LISA ANNE AND JOHN PAUL, AND TWO GREAT GRANDCHILDREN, PHILLIP AND BRITTNEY.

MAY PAUL FIND EVERLASTING PEACE AS HE TRAVELS HIS LAST JOURNEY IN THE COCKPIT OF HIS P-38 "THE BETTY MAY."



# FROM WASHINGTON TO WASHINGTON !!

with Chuck & Judy Luke

## REFUGEES FROM HURRICANE "OPAL"

This is the story of three of the refugees from hurricane "Opal" and the history of the shortened 1995 82nd Fighter Group Association reunion.

As is their custom, Chuck and Judy Luke took advantage of Delta's senior citizens ticket program and made their annual visit to their dispersed family members. They started from their home in Seattle WA. and flew to Portland Maine to see their only daughter. After celebrating birthdays and playing lots of golf etc., they flew to Huntsville AL. to see number 2 son and family. We all piled into a rented Van and drove to Sandestin to spend four wonderful days together prior to the reunion. The rented Van resulted because, as usual, dear old Mom and Dad had too much luggage to drive in a regular car.

Sandestin was an absolute paradise. What a wonderful place for the reunion. A Tram was available at any time to go anyplace in Sandestin including one of the most beautiful beaches we had ever seen. Each day turned out sunny and the distant "Tropical Storm" created great waves for body surfing and other beach activities. Evenings were generally spent eating at restaurants on the beach while watching the beautiful sunsets. The most memorable night occurred when we we bought fresh shrimp, cooked them in beer in the kitchenette each room came with, and had a picnic at the city park on the beach. On top of all of the above, three pristine golf courses sat there beckoning us to play them. The call finally became unbearable for Chuck and grandson Michael and they played 36 holes the day before the kids had to leave on Tuesday October 3.

By this time "Hurricane OPAL" had turned and was headed straight for Sandestin! But not to bother, it was only a class 1 or 2 and should

not cause more than high wind and lots of rain for a day?

The day was spent helping Hank Phillips set up for registration and greeting the early bird arrivals. They were shown how the tram worked, where the shopping area was, and of course how to get to the beach. By this time there was a foreboding red flag up indicating no swimming!

Chuck and Bette Pinson had scheduled the tram for 6:00 PM to go to "Leanardo's" the local pizza and pasta parlor for dinner. All of the early birds decided to go with them. The look on the proprietors face was something to behold when approximately 20 boisterous and happy "Retired Old Folks" came pouring through their door. It looked like they had planned on two or three people and 5 takeout orders for the evening.

Little did we know that this was to be the "last supper" and the one and only function for the 1995 82ndFG reunion.

It was early to bed for the Lukes to prepare for the festivities of the next day!!? At midnight a telephone ring and a flashing red light on the phone awakened both. The flashing red light meant that there was a message in their electronic mailbox. Egad! the hurricane was now class 3 and expected to hit landfall in the Destin/Sandestin area. A voluntary evacuation was in effect?

"What does that mean?" "No car, no airport service, and too much luggage to bum a ride with Gadburys or any one else." "Oh well it is only a 3--this building is sturdy--might as well go back to bed and ride it out."

2:00 AM- Hank Phillips calls- "I'm out of here the reunion is cancelled! The Hurricane looks like it will be a class 4 with 140 mph to 150 mph winds." "Hank, what can we do? No car!!" "Don't know Chuck, maybe the National Guard will evacuate you!!?"



A call to the special number mentioned in the electronic mail revealed that the Sandestin personnel had no plans set for the evacuation but were to have a meeting around 4:00 or 5:00 AM. They would get back to us. What was the room number??!!

The better part of valor dictated that it would be prudent to get dressed and pack up so that a fast get away could be made if required. Further, a breakfast might be worthwhile in case there was no food where ever one might end up. The packing included all of the snacks and liquid refreshments left in the refrigerator.

Further forays into the halls and down to the front desk found others in an equal state of confusion. During one of the forays, the chief of security for Sandestin stopped to talk on his way to the then 5:00 AM meeting. The plight of those with out transportation was explained to him. After the meeting was completed, the security chief came out and indicated that there was one Budget rent-a-car and asked if anyone wanted to rent it. One microsecond of consideration later Chuck agreed to rent it. The condition had changed to mandatory evacuation and the hurricane upgraded to class 4.

Judy had contacted George Marvin, the only person known not to have transportation. Once the car had been rented George was picked up and they were on their way to Huntsville. It was reported that a million people evacuated the area between Pensacola and Panama City. There were lots of cars but it was an orderly exodus at least on the roads taken by these three refugees from Hurricane "OPAL".

ALIAS KANE, PINSON, HURLBUT,  
WILLSIE & OSTRONIK. O O O P S!!  
Just about forgot pore ol' Jackie D!!



**THESE ARE OPAL'S BOY FRIENDS**



**ONE OF THESE HAS GOT TO BE OPAL**



# **HERE'S A CHANCE TO GO DOWN IN HISTORY -- A G A I N !!**

**Robert Henderson, of Canon City CO, is the sculptor of the P-38 now at the *Air Force Academy* and which was dedicated on the occasion of the National P-38 Association Meeting in 1992. He has asked us to write this little pitch for him and mail his brochure along with this newsletter.**

**As you know, our own Dick Willsie has been working with Mr. Henderson to honor our great airplane and the men who flew them. The sculpture of the P-38 will be permanently located at March AFB and it will be dedicated on the occasion of the National P-38 Association Meeting at March in May of '96.**

## **LADIES\* & GENTLEMEN What s for din din on Saturday Nite, 1997 ????????**

You might recall that during the Non Business Meeting at the SANDESTIN INN on Sat AM, Oct. 7, '95, no one stood up and offered to host the 1997 Reunion in Odessa, MO. We've looked through our roster and can't find such a member. Somebody's lying. In any case, that leaves us in a serious dilemma -- that being where the dickens will we meet to swap more lies in '97?

Since ours is a democratic organization we have appointed ourselves as a committee of 1 to help in finding a solution. There are no clear answers but there are some ideas. #1, we receive pitches for our business from convention centers all over the US. Some of these are rather interesting; for example: Kansas City, MO, Oshkosh, WI, Sebring, FL & Leavenworth, KS. Also, from various directions we have heard of suggestions from our membership for Oklahoma City, OK, Salt Lake City, UT, Tucson, AZ and Santa Clara, CA. Interestingly enough, for one of these sites we have not one but THREE "co-hosts"!

You are hereby invited to voice your opinion and/or preference (one of you at the business meeting - *had it been held* - might have been planning to offer to act as a host). A short note (or even a post card) sent to Pres. John Hendrix, 14708, Bodger Ave. HAWTHORNE, CA 90250. With your in-put, John can then make a uni-lateral decision and we can get on with our business.

REMEMBER, THOUGH, TIME IS VERY IMPORTANT. It takes two years to plan and host a reunion. Thanks.