

The

Post Oflag 64 Item

All the News That's
Been Geprüft

Nearly Everybody
Reads THE ITEM

“Get Wise – ITEM-ize”

2nd Quarter 2024

Good Ole USA

Of Undetermined Worth

Editor/Printing and Mailing

Elodie Caldwell
2731 TERRY AVE
LONGVIEW WA
98632-4437
elodie@oflag64.us

Treasurer

Bret Job
2801 SW 46th ST
CAPE CORAL FL
33914-6026
bretj@mac.com

Webmaster

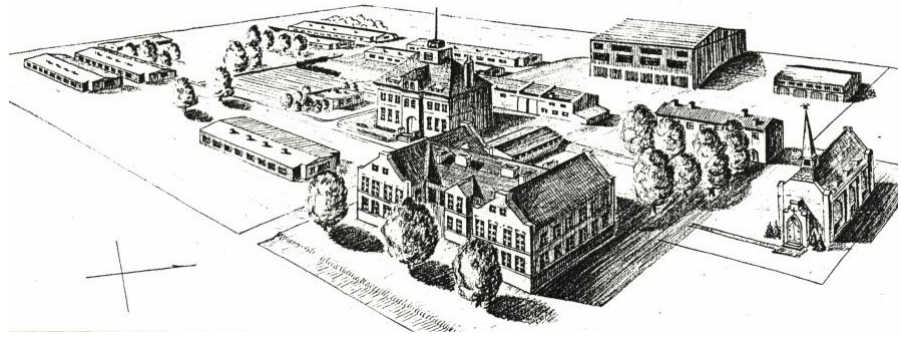
Bill Caldwell
2731 TERRY AVE
LONGVIEW WA
98632-4437
webmaster@oflag64.us

Contributors to this issue

Peter Gaich
Barney Herrera
Rosa Di Francesco Lee
David Little
Marianne Liggett Merriam
Ann Chapel Rogers
Dave Stewart
Anne Meltesen Trujillo
Linda Vitale
Marvin Williams

We apologize to any others we may have overlooked and thank all who have contacted us.

NOTE: The Oflag 64 Remembered website and the Post Oflag 64 ITEM are independent entities and do not operate under the auspices of any other organization.



Drawing by Jim Bickers, shown without barbed wire fences or guard towers

The Flag that Inspired the National Anthem



The preserved flag resting on an angle with protective lighting at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington D.C.

On September 14, 1814, U.S. soldiers at Baltimore's Fort McHenry raised a huge American flag to celebrate a crucial victory over British forces during the War of 1812. The sight of those "broad stripes and bright stars" inspired Francis Scott Key to write a song that eventually became the United States' national anthem. Key's words gave new significance to a national symbol and started a tradition through which generations of Americans have invested the flag with their own meanings and memories.

amhistory.si.edu/starspangledbanner/

Best to you,
Elodie Caldwell, ITEM Editor, elodie@oflag64.us
Bill Caldwell, Webmaster, webmaster@oflag64.us



A Little Company Business

Many Thanks

We wish to express our continued gratitude to Minuteman Press for their ongoing excellent service in printing our ITEM each quarter. The quality of their printing and the timeliness in which the ITEM is printed is very much appreciated. Thank you Mike Vorse, Nate Howe, Samantha Lemire, and the entire team!!!



And MANY THANKS to Ric Kolseth, our POW Database manager, for uploading the updates we send. Please check the website POW Database page to make sure your Kriegy's information is correct and email us any changes at: elodie@oflag64.us

Postage Fund Contributions



For contributions to the Postage Fund (which not only covers the cost of printing and mailing the ITEM to our remaining Kriegies or their widows, but also pays for running the Oflag 64 website), please make your checks payable to Oflag 64 Postage Fund, and send them to:

Bret Job

2801 SW 46th St
Cape Coral FL 33914-6026

OR

Elodie Caldwell

2731 Terry Ave
Longview WA 98632-4437

Postage Fund Contributors

Ann Rogers

THANKS to all who have donated.

* * *



Veterans History Project

If your Kriegy participated in the Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress, we would like permission to use his video interview and/or transcripts as we help prepare for displays for the museum. Please click on this link <https://bit.ly/3Cbv7Sk> and enter your Kriegy's name in the search bar at the top of the page to see if he participated. I entered my father's first and last name with the word "collection" after it and his interview came right up. See the last page of this ITEM for the Consent to Use Materials form. Please use the same form if your Kriegy participated in any other similar project.

* * * * *

A Change of Focus For the Future

Due to the diverse functions and services of each of our entities working on behalf of all things "Oflag 64", the ITEM will now focus primarily on things of historical interest, to information relating to our website, to research, and to Kriegy news and information.

The Friends of Oflag 64, Inc. (the non-profit) and the Polish-American Foundation for the Commemoration of POW Camps in Szubin (both of which contribute to and produce THE Oflag DAILY BULLETIN EXTRA) focus more on the progress of the Museum and donations to the cause, both financially and through artifact donations. Please watch for their twice-yearly publication.

Thanks for your patience with this change. If you have questions for "Friends" about their mission, function, and donations, please check their website at:

<https://friendsofoflag64.org>

and if you have questions for the Foundation regarding their mission, function, and museum news, please check their website at:

<http://www.szubinpowcamps.org/en/>

* * * * *

National POW/MIA Recognition Day

Coming up on Friday, September 20, 2024 (National POW/MIA Recognition Day), we will have the great opportunity to once again honor those who were prisoners of war and those who are still missing in action.

If you would like to participate with other Kriegy families in this activity, wherever your Kriegy is interred, please honor him by placing a daisy and small American flag at his gravesite.



We would love to see your photos. Send copies to: elodie@oflag64.us



MAIL CALL



It's always a great pleasure hearing from our Oflag 64 families. Thanks for keeping us in "your" loop and for sending information. We love reading about how and what you are doing. Please stay in touch!

PAT DIFRANCESCO BENDER, daughter of the late Kriegy Vincent J. "Doc" DiFrancesco – wrote asking what we knew about the book TASK FORCE BAUM written by James D. Shipman. We checked with Peter Domes in Germany, our expert on Task Force Baum. He wrote that the book is historical fiction but based on a true story with some actual names included.

CINDY SHARPE BURGESS, daughter of the late Kriegy Wilbur B. "Bill" Sharpe – wrote asking about how many Kriegies are still with us. To our knowledge, there are three: Robert E. Levin, Sr., Robert E. Starr, and John R. Rodgers, Sr., but there could be a few we don't know about. Additionally, she reported that she had a fabulous tour of the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford VA. She said it is a magnificent venue and beautiful memorial to our brave patriots. She encourages anyone interested in WWII to put it on their bucket list.

KEVIN DZIELECKI, grandson of the late Kriegy Stanley J. Rydzewski Jr. – wrote that he has the diary his grandfather kept while at Oflag 64. Because we have little information about his grandfather, we asked for more information. We hope to hear from him soon.

PETER P. GAICH, son of the late Kriegy Peter N. Gaich sent a photo of his grandfather that was sent to him by his cousin. Also in the photo is pictured Bill Cory and "Spud" Murphy. (See the Kriegy News and Information section.)

MARY EMILY KOLLER HABIG, granddaughter of the late Kriegy Francis Michael Habig – wrote to let us know that her grandfather was a resident of Oflag 64 for about 18 months and left with the evacuation march. She works in software development and has volunteered to help with our site if needed. Additionally, she may have content to add. We look forward to hearing more from her.

ERIN HASTINGS, granddaughter of the late Kriegy Michael J. Calpin – wrote asking for as much information as we could send about her grandfather's story. We didn't have much in our files but were able to send photos and articles about her grandfather found on Ancestry.com We knew Erin before she was married but lost contact, so it was good to hear from her again and get her updated contact information.

SUSAN HILL, daughter of the late Hammelburg Kriegy James H. Mills – wrote that she had recently found a number of her father's writings, including before he went to Germany as well as memories of the Battle of the Bulge and his capture. She said they were well-written accounts. She also found a transcription of an interview he did with Justin Greene, a physician who was there, and some memories of his friendship with Jack Hemingway. She was hoping to find a place to send his writings. We put her in contact with Peter Domes in Germany, who know all things about the Hammelburg.

BRET JOB, son-in-law of the late Kriegy Ray E. Holmquist – received a Postage Fund check from Ann Rogers for the John Waters' book. It has been deposited to the fund. (Thanks to Ann Rogers for her donation.)

WARREN JONES, son of the late Kriegy Charles L. Jones – wrote to catch us up on his activities, including a current cruise to Alaska with a friend who lives in Juneau. He was looking forward to seeing the highlights, mainly the Mendenhall Glacier which has receded considerably in the last 100 years.

REGINA KAKADELIS, who is working on a documentary about our late Kriegy Leonard Feldman – wrote asking for photos that could be used in their documentary. Permission was granted to use photos from our website, but with proper credit.

ANNE HOSKOT KREUTZER, daughter of the late Kriegy Nathaniel R. Hoskot – after reviewing the list of Kriegies who were captured on D-Day, wrote asking for information about her father's capture location. She asked if the men reported their place of capture or if it was the Red Cross that made the record. To our knowledge, the men reported their place and date of capture when their names were written on the roster of captured Kriegies when they arrived at Oflag 64. Anne and her husband also traveled to Paris to do further research about her father's war years.

DAVID LITTLE, grandson of the late Kriegy Thomas H. Wingate – recently sent a link to an article written about the late Oflag 64 Kriegy Wright Bryan who was a WWII War Correspondent. Check out Wright's story using the following link: <https://ww2ondeadline.com/2020/09/12/war-correspondents-captured-pows-wright-bryan-edward-beattie-john-mecklin/> David is great at finding these articles. We will be adding this and more of these stories to our website Links page ASAP.

DAVE STEWART, son of the late Kriegy Donald B. Stewart – wrote to let us know that his dear mother passed away on April 8. She was 99. (See her obituary in the TAPS section.) Our thoughts and prayers were sent to the family online. We know she is greatly missed.

NANCY THOMPSON WYATT, daughter of the late Kriegy Robert T. Thompson – wrote that she was pleasantly surprised to find a collection of Post Oflag 64 Items on the University of Florida's Digital Collections website. You can find them using this link: <https://ufdc.ufl.edu/results?q=post+oflag+64+item>



Kriegy News and Information

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

...and best wishes to our great KRIEGY PATRIOT AND HERO
Rupert Starr – 102 years
July 16, 1922



* * * * *

The following two photos were sent by Kriegy Robert Levin's daughter, Linda Vitale



Left: Robert's 104th birthday, celebrated with three of his great-grandchildren. Robert is our oldest living Kriegy to our knowledge. Congratulations Robert on 104 years!!

Right: Robert surrounded by his beautiful family after his wife's memorial service in January.

The photo below was sent by Marvin Williams. His dad was also a POW but in another camp and had ties to many of our Kriegies.

He wrote: I visited the Iowa Gold Star Museum in Camp Dodge Iowa on Friday, and the attached picture is the new display (new to me) of Bob Eckman's Oflag 64 model. When I last visited in 2016 it was displayed on a table. The enclosed display features an 8-minute video of Bob talking about Oflag 64 and a push button panel that corresponds to building names and locations.

The museum has added many interactive exhibits such as flight simulators and an operable Navy submarine periscope, so it was nice to see Bob's model is still an important part of the museum. The library does not have a digitalized database so I could not find any specific info on Oflag 64 POWs. At the Red Oak Iowa train and military museum, I did find Chaplain Daniels book.



You can find close up photos of Robert's model on our website at: <http://www.oflag64.us/model-of-oflag-64---us.html>

The next two photos were sent by Peter P. Gaich, son of the late Kriegy Peter N. Gaich. The back of the top photo was labeled, but not by his father, and the date was 1945 rather than 1943 as shown. We've been able to identify all in the photo. Left to Right: Hill T. "Spud" Murphy, Bill Cory, Peter N. Gaich.



Taken after escape from
Prison camp - Logan Road
Walked to the Russia
Reached up and returned
to U.S.C.

61
Lt. Peter Gaich, Jr. 1943
as Cory. First name
is unknown
Lived in B. Maryland
1913. Home unknown.
Lived in N. Carolina.

Dave Stewart, son of the late Kriegy Donald B. Stewart, has been working on a couple of Wikipedia pages. We reported last ITEM that he had just finished one for his father. Below is a portion of the page he has created for John H. Van Vliet Jr. with the help of John's son, John H. Van Vliet III. You can find the entire entry at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_H._Van_Vliet_Jr

If you're interested in creating a page for your Kriegy and/or can help others through this process, please let us know. Also, please let us know if your Kriegy already has a Wikipedia page. It would be amazing to see pages created for each of our Oflag 64 Kriegy Patriots and Heroes.

John H. Van Vliet Jr

2 languages

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- Career
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 - After World War II
- Marriage and children
- Death
- Philosophical and/or political views
- Recognition
- Media
- See also
- References
- Further reading
- External links

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

John H. "Jack" Van Vliet Jr (November 9, 1914 – February 5, 2000) was a career **United States Army** officer. He graduated from the **United States Military Academy** (U.S.M.A.) in 1937, fought in North Africa with **II Corps (United States)**, and was captured during the **Battle of Sidi Bou Zid** on February 17, 1943. While a captive of the Germans, Van Vliet Jr and fellow POW Captain **Donald B. Stewart** were selected to attend the **Katyn Commission** investigation into the Polish officers found murdered in the Katyn Forest near **Smolensk, Russia**.^[1] Van Vliet Jr and Stewart were U.S. Registered Code Users who sent coded messages from **Oflag 64** to **MIS-X** in **Fort Hunt**^[2] New Jersey which identified the Soviets as the perpetrators of the massacre. After their liberation, they testified before the **United States House Select Committee to Conduct an Investigation of the Facts, Evidence, and Circumstances of the Katyn Forest Massacre** about their experiences at the Katyn Commission exhumations.^[3]

John H. Van Vliet Jr



Van Vliet Jr circa 1952

Born	November 9, 1914 Texas City, Texas
Died	February 5, 2000 (aged 85) Sandy Springs, Georgia
Occupation	United States Army
Spouse	Miriam Samelson
Children	Jacqueline, Susan, Sara, and John H. Van Vliet III

Early life and education [edit]



Van Vliet Jr at the U.S.M.A. in 1937 (front row on the left wearing sun glasses)

John Huff Van Vliet Jr was born into a military family on November 9, 1914. His father, Colonel **John H. Van Vliet Sr**, graduated from the U.S.M.A. in 1913.

An "Army brat", Van Vliet Jr lived in multiple places including China, the Philippines, and even at West Point during the time his father was an instructor at USMA. He was graduated from **Wentworth Military Academy** and was appointed to the US Military Academy Class of 1937 with a Senatorial Appointment from Kansas. As a cadet, he was a member of the track team, the swimming team and the Protestant Chapel Choir.

Career [edit]

After graduation and commissioning as a Second Lieutenant of Infantry, Van Vliet Jr served at Fort Washington MD, and then with the **27th Infantry Regiment** in Hawaii.

World War II [edit]

In September 1941, Van Vliet Jr was ordered to go to the United Kingdom (UK) in civilian clothes where he observed the British Army and took specialized British Army courses. He briefly returned to Fort Benning as an instructor at the Infantry School before traveling again to the UK to take command of the 3rd Battalion of the **168th Infantry Regiment (United States)** (3/168th Infantry) and lead it during the **Operation Torch** invasion of North



Ann Rogers, niece of the late Kriegy Frank Aten and one of our Kriegy Research Group biography writers, with Memorial Day in the US just behind us, shared the following article. We don't often think of the service our Chaplains gave to our country during the war. The article was a good reminder.

CHAPLAINS CORPS WILL OBSERVE ANNIVERSARY

The Army Chaplain's Corps, this Sunday [25 July 1945] will observe the 70th Anniversary of the founding of the corps at Fort Benning with Chaplains delivering special messages at all of the chapel services.

Of the 6 Chaplains honored with decorations presently stationed at Fort Benning, 2 served as Chaplains at Oflag 64 in Szubin, Poland:

- Chaplain Robert Hall wears the Purple Heart and Presidential Unit Citation with Oak Leaf Cluster
- Chaplain Robert M. Hennon wears the Presidential Unit Citation and a Battle Star

PRICE OF DUTY

52 were killed in action or died of wounds

34 were detained by the enemy

108 were wounded in action

3 died of diseases while detained by the enemy

12 were listed as non-battle casualties

602 were awarded with 754 decorations including 15 Distinguished Service Crosses

1 was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal

44 were awarded Legions of Merit

104 were awarded Silver Star Medals – 3 with Oak Leaf Clusters

9 were awarded the Soldier's Medal

314 were awarded Bronze Stars – 12 with Oak Leaf Clusters

1 was awarded with an Air Medal

234 were awarded Purple Hearts – 10 with Oak Leaf Clusters

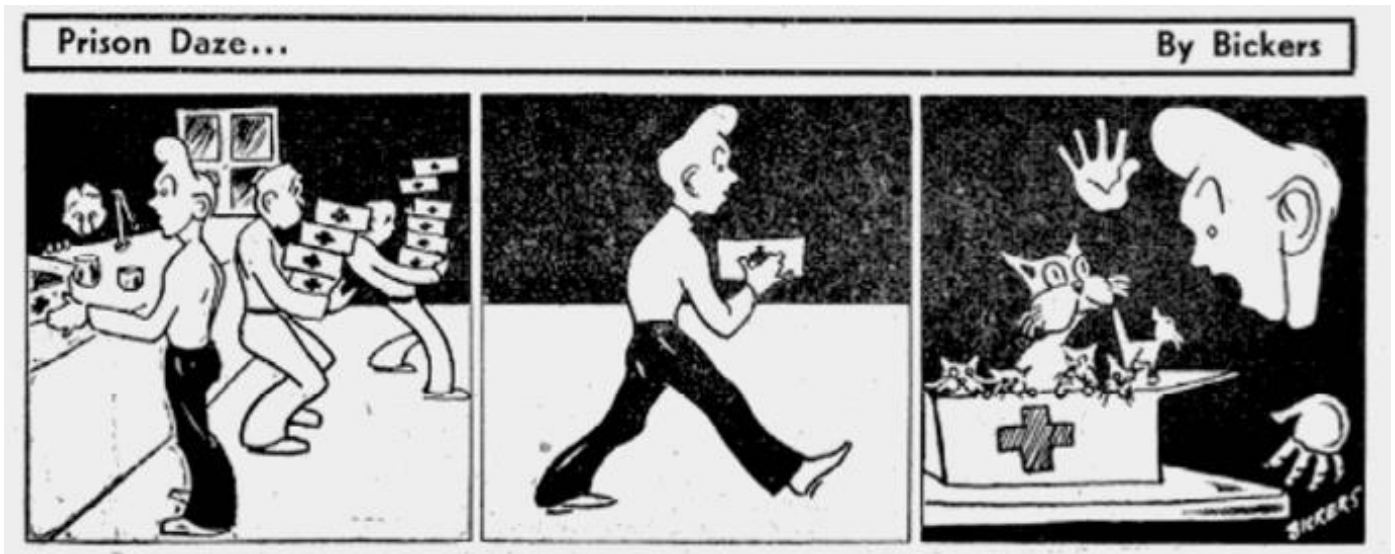
7 were awarded distinguished foreign decorations

Source Excerpts: *The Columbus Enquirer (Columbus Georgia) Friday, July 27, 1945*

Also sent by Ann Rogers, was the following photo. Little booklets like these are three of several that were passed out to WWII American soldiers in Europe. You may have found some among your Kriegy's belongings.



The cartoon drawing below was done by the late Kriegy James F. Bickers and was printed in the August 1944 ITEM. Our Kriegies had a bundle of stories to tell about Red Cross Parcels after the war. They, by necessity, became quite creative in making the items they received last as long as possible.



Over the last year, we have been including a copy of some of our website pages in our ITEMS. We hope they have been helpful to you as you've either searched our site or wondered what was on it. If you have any questions regarding where to find specific information, please contact us. We would be happy to direct you. The following is a copy of our current What's New page. You can access it by clicking on "What's New" near the top left of our homepage.

WHAT'S NEW ON THIS SITE?

DECLASSIFIED

June 27, 2024
Home > Books
Added [Beyond Valor](#)

June 26, 2024
Home > Galleries > Reunions > 1976 Reunion
Added 2 reunion documents

June 15, 2024
Home > Site Index
Minor updates

June 7, 2024
Home > Galleries > Kriegies > Wartime Kriegy Photos
4 photos added, marked NEW; 1 photo updated
Home > Galleries > Kriegies > Kriegy Pastimes
1 photo added, marked NEW; 1 photo updated

June 3, 2024
Home > Galleries > Kriegies > Wartime Kriegy Photos
6 photos added, marked NEW
Home > Galleries > Reunions > 2004 Pittsburgh and 2006 New Orleans reunions, documents added to the end of each reunion's photos
Home > Archives > Kriegy Biographies
Added 1 new biography, Billy Bingham

May 6, 2024
Home > Archives > Kriegy Biographies
Updated Col. Drake's biography

April 1, 2024
Home > Archives > Kriegy Biographies
Added 2 new biographies

March 28, 2024
Home > TAPS
Updated and added new name

March 23, 2024
Home > The ITEM Newsletter
New issue: 1st Quarter 2024

March 17, 2024
Home > Archives > Kriegy Biographies
Added 1 new biography

March 13, 2024
Home > Archives > Kriegy Biographies
Added 5 new biographies and updated Cory & Otterbein
Home > Links of Interest
Added 2 new links
Home > Search This Site
Improved function of site search feature

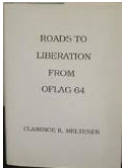
Publications

We're always looking for a hard copy of books written by or about our Kriegies and their experiences during the war.

Currently we're looking for **The Fighting 36th Historical Quarterly**, volume 1 (#1-3), volume 2 (#1, 2, 4), volume 3 (#4), volume 4 (#1), volume 12 (#2). If you have any of these issues and would be willing to donate them, please let us know.

Are you looking for these? Please contact.....

Vic Kanners' Diary "Horseshit and Cobblestones" is available through [Marilyn Kanners Beckham](#) (Vic's daughter). You can write to her at: 3608 W BRADFORD DR, BLOOMFIELD HILLS MI 48301-3353. New email address is: marilynkbeckham@gmail.com



Lynne Meltesen, daughter of the late Kriegy Clarence Meltesen, has sent us a few more copies of his fantastic resource book, **"Roads to Liberation"**. If you would like a copy, please contact [Elodie Caldwell](mailto:elodie@oflag64.us) at elodie@oflag64.us. The book is available at no charge but you are asked to pay for S & H. (Thank you, Meltesen family, for providing these books.)

TAPS

Kriegy Wives

Jean "Jeannie" M. Carlick

1937 ~ 2024



Jeannie was born in Paducah, KY, on September 29, 1937, to Horace and Rebecca Meyers. She was a graduate of Paducah Tilghman High School; received her bachelor's degree from the University of Texas at Austin; studied at the University of Valencia, Spain; and received her master's from Murray State University.

After college, she taught Spanish, French, and Latin in high schools in Texas, Colorado, and the Louisville area. One day, while visiting her mother in Paducah, Jeannie received a prank call that

rattled her, so she called the police to report it. A local judge [the late Kriegy] named Sam Carlick, whom her family had known since she was a child, returned the call...and asked her to dinner. She returned to Paducah, married Sam, taught at Tilghman and Heath High Schools, and reared a daughter, Bethany. They lived in Paducah for many years before retiring to the Washington, DC, area to be near Bethany and her family.

Jeannie was active in the Paducah community, serving as an original violinist in the Paducah Symphony Orchestra, being elected to the school board, and volunteering with Temple Israel, among other endeavors. Music was one of her main loves, and, until the end, she held encyclopedic knowledge of the classical canon. A voracious reader, she maintained an extensive library, happy to be surrounded by her books.

Even as her eyes began to fail her, she slogged through The Washington Post and New York Times daily, always eager to talk about the latest news at weekly family dinners she hosted.

But her biggest joy was her granddaughter Samara (Sammie), her BFF with whom she had a very special bond. From the first time she held Sammie until the last time they saw each other, love and laughter (and maybe some sharp humor) radiated between them. One of Jeannie's greatest pleasures was hearing Sammie sing and lip-synching along with her (the one thing missing from her musicality was the ability to carry a tune!). Every family dinner ended with an impromptu concert, the perfect dessert for those gathered around the table.

Jeannie was generous beyond measure, and Bethany hopes to carry on her legacy of kindness and compassion, and appreciation for a good glass of wine, cheese, and chocolate. She also promises to take excellent care of – and maybe even play - Jeannie's beloved 18th-century violin.

Jeannie considered Bethany's husband Dave "more of a son than a son-in-law" and enjoyed their frequent – and maybe expletive-filled - conversations about current events.

Jeannie is survived by her daughter Bethany Carlick Weinstein, son-in-law David Weinstein, granddaughter Samara Weinstein, and granddogs Quinn and Blue, all of Alexandria, VA; nephews David and Ben Carlick and niece Susan Cooper, of California; and a slew of cousins in the DC area, Paducah, and other areas of the country. She was predeceased by her parents and Sam, her beloved husband of 42 years; and many dogs, including several spoiled Scottish terriers.

There will be a celebration of her life on Saturday, July 13, in Alexandria. She will be buried with Sam in Arlington National Cemetery at a date still to be determined.

Mom, "DD," Jeannie... we will love and miss you ad infinitum.

Jeannie's obituary can also be found at:

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/alexandria-va/jean-carlick-11782729>

Lois C. Pravidica

1933 ~ 2024



Lois C. Pravidica, 91, passed away on May 18, 2024. Born January 5, 1933, in Rockford, Illinois, she was a daughter to Ennio and Angelina (Gallina) Valentine. She also had five siblings, Mary Ann (Cervi), Richi, Carl, Claudette and Ron. A graduate of Muldoon High School, she was employed after graduation by Illinois National Bank. She was then hired by Greenlee Textron and worked there most of her life until her retirement after a wonderful career. She also worked several years after retirement in the office at St. Bernadette Catholic Church.

She married [the late Kriegy] Rocco Pravidica on May 17, 1975, in Rockford Illinois. A longtime member of St. Bernadette Catholic Church, Lois enjoyed her monthly ladies club group, trips to the Riverboat, gardening and in her free time, drawing became a favorite pastime. She was also known as the best caregiver to her mom and siblings. She recently was graciously welcomed into the Grand Victorian Assisted Living by her amazing new best friends, Barbara, Janice and Sylvia.

She will be missed by those who loved her especially her sons Luke Cannella and Marc (Cindy) Cannella; grandchildren Bianca (Chris), Nicolas (Adri), and Kiera (Daren); her great grandchildren Bronson and Emma; as well as numerous nieces, nephews, and friends.

She is predeceased by her parents, her husband Rocco; her sister Mary Ann; her brothers Richi, Carl and Ron.

Luke and Marc would like to give a special heartfelt thank you to the amazing staff at Grand Victorian especially Marci Herschlag, Barbara, Janice, and Sylvia. Another special heartfelt thank you to Northern Illinois Hospice, Lori Bellone, Joane Anderson, Jeff and Diane Walker for their loving attention to their mother especially in her final days.

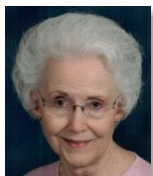
A visitation will take place on Thursday, May 23, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. until the time of Funeral Mass, 10:00 a.m. at St. Bernadette Catholic

Church, 2400 Bell Avenue, Rockford, Illinois 61103. Burial to follow at Calvary Catholic Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the St. Bernadette Catholic Church. To send online condolences or share memories, please visit www.fitzgeraldfh.com

Lois' obituary can also be found at: <https://www.fitzgeraldfh.com/obituaries/lois-pravidica>

Mary H. Stewart

1925 ~ 2024



Mary Louise Hoch Stewart "Mary Lou" passed away on April 8, 2024 at the age of 99.

Mary Lou was born on April 4, 1925 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She was the second of seven children born to Monica Evelyn Fox and Louis Anthony Hoch. She fondly recounted her childhood in Wisconsin where her father was a pharmacist and her grandfather owned a cabin in the Dells. When Mary Lou was in the seventh grade, the family drove to Oregon where her father ran a youth camp as part of the Civilian Conservation Corps of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal Program. They passed by Mount Rushmore, which was under construction. She found that she loved traveling and learning by seeing different places.

Mary Lou was gifted musically. She attended Webster College in St. Louis until her family relocated to San Antonio, Texas due to her father's military service during World War II. She transferred to Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU) and graduated with a Bachelor's in Music in 1947. Her goal was to teach music at the elementary grade level because she was "crazy about little children." Mary Lou then became a music teacher at Ursuline Academy.

In 1948, Mary Lou married Army officer [the late Kriegy] Donald Boyle Stewart (Don) in the chapel at Fort Sam Houston. Their first of five children followed a year later. The children were born and raised in various locations across the US and Europe, including San Antonio, La Rochelle (France), Frankfurt (Germany), and Fort Sill

(Oklahoma). The family was also stationed in Braconne and Paris (France), and Staten Island (New York). Don referred lovingly to Mary Lou as the "domestic commander" as she raised an Army family. Mary Lou gladly undertook the bulk of the work involved in moving and then establishing a new home time after time. Speaking about their transfers, she stated that she could follow or be left behind, and she was not going to be left behind. She also expressed much appreciation for the educational opportunities that their children enjoyed by experiencing so many different places and ways of life up close and in person. Mary Lou kept the fires burning at home until Donald retired. Upon retirement, Mary Lou and Don settled again in San Antonio. They were always for each other the one and only "Love of their Life."

Music remained very important to Mary Lou throughout her life. As a young mother, she played the piano in the home. Later, she got an organ. She played the organ in church while stationed abroad. Mary Lou and Don attended many concerts, and she always wanted to sit where she could watch the pianist's hands as they played. Even in her most senior years, she attended the concerts held at her retirement home and enjoyed dancing and tapping her fingers along to the music. Her other interests include her devotion to the Roman Catholic faith, sewing, and needlework.

Mary Lou is survived by her children, Robert Stewart (Joan), David Stewart, Kathleen Herrera (Barney), and Barbara Stewart (Craig); 7 grandchildren, and 8 great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents Monica and Louis Hoch; her husband Don; daughter Monica Bishara; brothers, Joe, John, Louis, and Robert Hoch; and her sisters, Monica Hoch and Margaret O'Brien.

Mary Lou was a woman of contrasts - soft-spoken and spirited, elegant and strong, even tough when warranted. While her journey on this earth is done, Mary Lou made an indelible mark on our lives and in our hearts. Join us in remembering and honoring her.

The family extends their deepest gratitude to Compassion Hospice Texas and Tranquility at Arroya Vista for the loving and highly competent care that they provided.

In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation in her memory to Central Catholic High School of San Antonio, TX.

Fond memories and expressions of sympathy for the Stewart family may be shared at: www.sunsetfuneralhomesa.com

Mary Lou's obituary can be found at: <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/san-antonio-tx/mary-stewart-11761562>

Kriegy Kids

Mary Juliet "Julie" Gionfriddo 1954 ~ 2023



On Friday, December 15, 2023, Mary Juliet Rathbone Gionfriddo ("Julie") died in Albuquerque, New Mexico, at the age of 69, the only child of John and Lois Rathbone of Denver, Colorado.

Julie earned Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degrees at Colorado State University. She then worked in private veterinary medical practices in Tucson, Arizona and Logan, Utah before completing a Master of Science degree at Iowa State University. Julie became a board-certified veterinary ophthalmologist and joined the veterinary faculty at Purdue University where she taught and conducted research for 3 years. She then returned to Colorado State University and served on the veterinary school faculty for 14 years before retiring as a full professor in 2013. During her career Julie presented her veterinary ophthalmological research results at scientific meetings all over the world. After retiring, Julie lived in the cloud forest of the Andes Mountains near Mindo, Ecuador for 2 years, enjoying the spectacular animals and plants. The sudden need for specialized cancer treatment brought her back to Colorado in 2015.

Julie always loved the outdoors, and camping, hiking, and birding were among her favorite

activities. She also enjoyed running. She completed numerous marathons and other races, and she ran every day with her dog. Julie loved to sew and quilt with a group of friends. But she will be best remembered for her inordinate fondness for dogs. Her own pet dogs were always among the most pampered and overindulged animals on the planet. She was indeed a loving and devoted dog parent. Julie will be remembered as a sweet, kind, compassionate, intelligent, and eminently reliable person who dedicated her professional life to helping animals with eye problems.

Julie is survived by her husband James P. Gionfriddo, whom she married in 1975, and by her cousins Louis M. Scofield, Jr., of Beaumont, Texas, and Cheri Thieben of Littleton, Colorado.

No funeral or memorial services will be held. Donations may be sent to the Amphibian Ark, an amphibian conservation group Julie supported for many years, or to the American Cancer Society.

Julie's obituary and guestbook can be found at: <https://www.danielsfuneral.com/obituaries/mary-gionfriddo>

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We have not been made aware of any Kriegies or other Widows and Kriegy Kids who have passed away during this quarter. Please let us know if you become aware of any we haven't acknowledged previously.



If your Kriegy participated in a WWII history project of any kind, we would love to have permission to use the contents of his interview or report or other project. Please fill out the following form and return it to one of the people whose addresses appear at the bottom of the form. US Mail and email both work well.



Oflag 64 Remembered
Honoring our Kriegy Patriots and Heroes

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The materials may be used by the parties mentioned above to create a history of Oflag 64 POWs as they work to create a new museum in Szubin, Poland where the POWs were interned during WWII. (Please check at least one.)

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Elodie Caldwell
 2731 Terry Avenue
 Longview WA 98631-4437
elodie@oflag64.us

Rosa Lee
 600 S Dixie Hwy, Apt 755
 West Palm Beach FL 33401-5858
Roytree50@comcast.net



Dave Stewart
 7903 Diamond Trail
 Lago Vista TX 78645-4446
ds1vtx@gmail.com

Ann Rogers
 2105 Tennyson Dr
 Flower Mound TX 75028-3736
arogersxi@yahoo.com