

101st Airborne Division Association
Michigan Chapter

THE MICHIGAN SCREAMING EAGLE

Volume 1 (2)

July 15th, 2021

Greetings Screaming Eagles,

After 15 long months, we were finally able to resume our monthly meetings on May 19th in Livonia. As with every monthly meeting, we began with the Pledge of Allegiance -recited slowly and thoughtfully, followed by the invocation from our Chaplain, Dave Kelly -spoken with reverence and solemnity. For those meeting -or thinking about meeting, in “satellite groups” in their local communities, the following prayer opens our Livonia meetings:

Almighty God, who has brought us together in this Association to uphold the ideals of the Airborne trooper, keep us faithful and true to the finest things in American life. Sear in our memories our wartime experiences so that they may be the inspiration for our peacetime activity. Strengthen and protect the armed forces of our nation that they may be a safeguard against those who would want to overthrow our way of life. Grant us the grace to fearlessly contend against evil and to make no peace with oppression. Help us to use our freedom for the maintenance of Justice among all men and nations. Grant that we may do this and all other things in the memory of our departed comrades, whose presence is among us and never to be forgotten. Bind us to thee and to each other in steadfast loyalty to the ideals for which we offered our lives in battle. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

This prayer was selected to open our meetings as it seems to best capture both the spirit of who we are and the essence of our mission and purpose, as described in the first edition of *The Michigan Screaming Eagle*, (Volume 1 (1)): We are members of Michigan’s Airborne community; our purpose -simply put, is to uphold and advance the ideals and values of the Association in local communities throughout Michigan. Specifically, to uphold our ideals of *equality, liberty, freedom, and justice for all* and to advance our core values of *patriotism, self-sacrifice, and commitment*. And we do this “...in the memory of our departed comrades, whose presence is among us and never to be forgotten.”

As we advance these ideals and values, we create ripples in our local communities -a “ripple effect”, if you will, and in so doing fulfill a sense of moral purpose. A ripple effect is said to occur when there is an initial disturbance to a system -a stone drops into the water, for example, and the effect is to create the ripples that begin to move outward through the system - like the ripples moving across the pond. A ripple effect can take place in any system like, for example, an eco-system, ideological system, educational system, or family system.

The initial disturbance in the system can be a force for that which is *right* and *good*, or a force for *wrong* and *evil*. It all depends... It depends on the underlying ethic and ethos -or system

of values, of the individual or group that disturbs the system. When a dedicated and committed group of individuals share certain core values and unite in the cause of defending, preserving and advancing equality, liberty, freedom, and justice for all members of their community, they become force-multipliers and a formidable force to be reckoned with. They can disturb and defeat oppressive and tyrannical ideological systems like, for example, the ideology of Aryan Supremacy and the global ambitions of Nazi Germany in WW II or, more recently, those of the ISIS Caliphate in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and elsewhere.

Disturbing Systems. Creating Ripples. Patriotism. Self-sacrifice. And unabashedly advancing our core values of *equality, liberty, freedom, and Justice for oppressed people*. These are the thematic threads that connect the articles in this 2nd edition of our newsletter. They are found within and between our monthly meetings, memorable presentations, and the contributions received from our chapter members to the *Markers and Milestones* section.

Our May 16th and June 19th Meetings; Our 2021 Annual Reunion

At our May 16th meeting there was quite a large turnout, given that the CDC and the state were then in but the very early stages of relaxing their guidelines and restrictions. Everyone was eager and ready to meet. Unfortunately -and *fortunately*, we could not proceed with our scheduled monthly program because of a technical problem -a computer “glitch”, and the video selected could not be shown. Nobody seemed to mind, however. Indeed, the atmosphere quickly turned into that of having a “mini-annual reunion” in mid-May: There was a palpable excitement in the air upon seeing old friends and catching up since we last met in February 2020. And, of course, there was an undercurrent of sadness in remembering those who had passed and were no longer with us. Their presence was amongst us, however; they will never be forgotten. As it turned out, we were *very fortunate* that we did not have our scheduled program. We planned, God laughed, and everything turned out just fine -as it usually does.

On June 19th, we met once again during which time there were two memorable presentations. The first was a special presentation made by Secretary John Sosa to long-time chapter member Herman Kasoff in recognition of his distinguished military service during WW II. On behalf of all chapter members, Secretary Sosa presented Herman with a commemorative statue of “Iron Mike,” on the base of which is inscribed something of his life-story as an American Patriot, a member of the 3rd Ranger Battalion, the First Special Service Force (FSSF), the 474th Infantry Regiment, and his participation in the European, African, and Middle Eastern Campaigns.

It was a very moving, personal, and powerful presentation. A more elaborate and detailed recounting of this special presentation begins on page three (3-5). Also, photos of the presentation were taken by our chapter photographer, Bob Hall and can be found in the “Monthly Meetings” section on our website (101stairbornemichiganchapter.com).

And the second presentation at our June 19th meeting was a video presentation, *Searching for Augusta, the Forgotten Angel of Bastogne*. It told the story of Augusta Chiwy, the forgotten Belgian nurse who quietly and courageously served as a volunteer providing vital medical support and treatment to U.S. soldiers during the siege of Bastogne in December 1944 and January 1945. She worked tirelessly with Captain John Prior, a U.S. Army physician, and with fellow Belgian nurse Renee Lemaire, treating injured soldiers during the Battle of the Bulge.

Born in the Belgian Congo in 1921, Augusta was the daughter of a Belgian veterinarian from Bastogne and his Congolese wife. In 1940, at the age of 19, she went to Leuven to train as a nurse. On December 16th, 1944 -the day the Germans launched their massive offensive, she was returning to visit with her family in Bastogne for Christmas. Within days, the town was surrounded by German troops advancing into Belgium during the Battle of the Bulge. She tended to civilian and military casualties with her uncle, a physician, until December 21st when she volunteered to serve as a nurse at the first-aid station of the 20th Armored Infantry Battalion, 10th Armored Division, commanded by Dr. John Prior. She worked at the first-aid station in the Rue Neufchateau and wore an Army uniform so she could go into the field and tend to the wounded at great personal risk to herself.

Augusta Chiwy – the forgotten Angel of Bastogne, was finally remembered on June 24th, 2011 when she was appointed Knight of the Order of the Crown; the medal was presented to her on behalf of King Albert II of Belgium by Belgium’s Minister of Defense. On December 12th, she was awarded the Civilian Award for Humanitarian Service by the United States Department of the Army, presented to her by the U.S. Ambassador to Belgium. On March 21st, 2014, she was recognized by her hometown as a Bastogne Citizen of Honor; ... no longer was she *The Forgotten Angel of Bastogne*. Augusta died in August 2015 at the age of 94. R.I.P.

Following the video presentation at the June 19th meeting, 35 copies of the U. S. Constitution were distributed for those present, their family members, their neighbors, their friends, ... whomever. Requested by a chapter member, these copies of the Constitution were provided by Hillsdale College at no cost to either the member or the chapter. For those meeting - or thinking about meeting, in satellite groups in their local community, certainly consider contacting Hillsdale for copies of the Constitution. They are very timely and responsive to such requests; it’s part of their educational mission. Education takes many different forms, the cumulative effects of which can gather and ripple through our local Michigan communities.

Our annual reunion will be held this year from September 10th–12th at the Comfort Inn and Suites in Fenton, MI. Our annual banquet will be held at Lucky’s Steak House on Saturday evening, September 11th, at which time chapter members Dennis Rebecca and Russ Eaton -two former chapter presidents, will once again perform one of our most sacred ceremonies to remember and honor the memory of those who have gone before us, those still missing from our ranks, and those still waiting to come home.

This year our banquet dinner falls on the 20th anniversary of “9/11.” We will be remembering and honoring all those who lost their lives in the Twin Towers in New York city on September 11th, 2001 and all those who gave lives in their courageous search and rescue/recovery efforts. Make plans now to join with your fellow chapter members and patriots at our 2021 annual reunion! (Lodging and Banquet information, the weekend’s Schedule of Events, and the Registration and Menu Selection Form, can be found on pages 10 & 11).

Once again, I would like to thank you for your membership in the Michigan Chapter. It’s only through your continued interest, support, and participation that we are able to band together, remember those who have gone before us, and uphold and advance our core values, shared history, and proud traditions in our local communities.

Disturb. Create ripples. ...Wear the Screaming Eagle patch. Fly the American flag! Become active in your community. And to those who question why we do such things, comes this reply, - pointed, if necessary, “Because, we are proud of our history and nation. We are Michigan’s Screaming Eagles! And we continue our legacy....”

Support the chapter and each other;
Be safe and cautious;
Stay healthy, positive, and moving ever-forward...

Patrick B. Kavanaugh, Ph.D., President
101st Airborne Division Assn., Michigan Chapter

Airborne!

Special Presentation to Chapter Member Herman V. Kasoff
by Secretary John Sosa

(Just prior to lunch Secretary Sosa was called to the lectern to make a special presentation to Herman V. Kasoff, one of our more distinguished members.)

Secretary Sosa began by speaking about a young eighteen-year-old who was plucked out of high school and drafted into the armed forces in 1943. They were very turbulent and difficult times for our great nation. The United States had been attacked at Pearl Harbor without warning by the Japanese Imperial forces. The war had been raging in Europe since 1939 and America knew it was just a matter time before we would enter WWII. That young man was Herman Kasoff, drafted out of high school and sent to Fort McClellan, Georgia for three months of rigorous training, after which he was shipped overseas to the European Theatre of Operations (ETO).

Landing first in Casablanca, Morocco, Herman's war-time odyssey continued through North Africa and Libya, onto Sicily, and then to Naples, Italy where he was with the 3rd Ranger Battalion. Herman was approached by an Army captain and informed that he had "volunteered" to be part of a fighting force that would "punch a hole" in the frontlines along the Italian peninsula under the cover of darkness. During the subsequent fighting in San Pietro, Italy, Herman was struck by shrapnel in one leg, fell twelve feet, and seriously injured his knee. After spending three months in a field hospital, he learned that most of his battalion had been killed or captured by the German forces defending Italy.

Herman received new orders assigning him to First Special Service Force (FSSF), a joint American-Canadian commando force, also given the well-deserved and -feared moniker, "The Devil's Brigade," by the local German commander. Two days before D-Day, the Rangers were within sight of the gates of Rome, when Herman was wounded again, this time in his elbow. He recovered without being evacuated to the hospital, and then participated in "Operation Dragoon," the allied invasion of Southern France.

After perilous months of combat, the First Special Service Force was disbanded in November 1944. The Canadians were sent back to their home regiments and the Americans were scattered amongst the airborne units in the E.T.O. Fortunately for Herman, he was reassigned to the 474th Infantry Regiment, which was part of General George S. Patton, Jr's. Third US Army. Six months later, in the spring of 1945, Herman was ordered to drive his company commander to the Buchenwald concentration camp, one of the Nazi's earliest and largest camps in Germany.

Herman feels it was more than just a coincidence that he was singled out to drive his commander to the camp: Herman is Jewish. And the memories of what he observed still remain very alive and with him to this day. Death was in the air as they approached the camp. General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower arrived the same day - "The ovens were still warm, everywhere there were bodies stacked like cordwood in and off railroad box cars."

Herman would continue fighting the war for a few more months in Europe. Then -while stationed at the border of Czechoslovakia, came the news that the Germans had unconditionally surrendered. Herman then focused on the probability that he would be sent to the Pacific Theatre of Operations. Good news arrived from higher headquarters, however: Men like Herman who had fought in the European and Mediterranean Campaign were given the choice to volunteer for assignment to Norway.

Herman was now twenty years old, only two years removed from high school. Finally, he was in charge of his destiny. Norway would be his last assignment in the E.T.O. In Norway, he was assigned to process and ship German Nazi troops back to Germany. In Norway, his first encounter with the Germans was at the Oslo airport where he was approached by a German officer who handed him his luger as his "act of surrender." Herman has never forgotten this face to face encounter with his mortal enemy, someone who participated in the persecution and murder of millions and millions of Herman's fellow Jews and other so-called undesirables. After Norway was secured and all German combatants were deported back to Germany, Herman finally set sail for home.

Since leaving the army, Herman has spent most of his professional career in the construction and real estate industry. Like most veterans of WWII, he began rebuilding his life and the country as well, never forgetting why he and millions of other young men like him answered the call to duty, finished the job, and returned home without asking for anything more than the dignity of work and the peace within which they could raise their families.

Over the years, Herman has maintained ties with his fellow comrades from the First Special Service Force. He estimates that he has attended at least fifty reunions both in Canada and the United States. He has served as president of the First Special Service Forces (FSSF) Association three different times. We are proud to say that Herman has been a member of the Michigan chapter for over ten years and is one of our elder statesmen from that era.

In recognition of his service to his country and community, the chapter presented Herman with a replica statue of "Iron Mike," inscribed with these words:

**Herman Kasoff, American Patriot, 3rd Ranger Battalion, First Special Service Force, 474th Infantry Regiment, European, African, and Middle Eastern Campaign
-Presented by the 101st Airborne Division Association, Michigan Chapter-**

Our Michigan chapter has been blessed with having so many patriots from WWII and Korea as members. We hold them dear to our hearts and cherish the time we can spend together. They are fading fast in their numbers. It is our responsibility to thank them during the living years and to keep their memory and stories alive after they are gone. They have - both the living and the deceased, given us so much. God bless America!

Markers and Milestones: (Editor, John Sosa)

Four contributions to the *Markers and Milestones* section were received from our chapter members since this section was introduced several months ago in the first edition of the newsletter. Each contribution speaks implicitly -if not explicitly, to the far-reaching ripple effects created within local communities (the Vietnam Wall in Missouri), on families in far off places (the Philippines 1943), within military families in Michigan (a daughter's Assumption of Command 2021), and a suicidal mission that changed the course of WW11 (the Doolittle Raiders 1942). ... Each story embodies our core values of patriotism, self-sacrifice! and, commitment.

-Received from chapter member Leo Flory (lflory@floryenterprise.com):

There is a new 'full scale' Vietnam Wall in Perryville MO about 60 miles south of St Louis on 1-55. It's called, 'Missouri's National Veteran's Memorial.' It is an amazing place!

-Received from chapter member and 1st Vice President John Malejan¹ (airborne511@aol.com):

¹ A member of the elite 11th Airborne Division -the 511th Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR) - also known as "The Angels," John was only 17 when he jumped on February 23rd, 1945 at the

(a letter from a survivor of the Los Banos Internment Camp in the Philippines)

September 8th, 2020

Mr. Malejan, Sir,

This is a thank you from a Los Banos survivor. I was 6 weeks old on February 23rd, 1943. My parents, Pedro and Grete, and my grandparents, Pedro Sr. and Theresa, and many aunts and uncles were saved. Only in the book, *Rescue at Los Banos*, by Mr. Bruce Henderson did I understand the raid. So, thank you.

I would have written sooner had I known how or to whom. Please understand that my parents were largely silent about their experiences during that time. Yes, I got sketchy stories, but my mother would shut down conversation, so it tapered off.

I got your address from a letter from Trevor M. Larson, who urged me to reach out to you. I didn't know him until seeing on Facebook he was present in Luzon for recent celebrations on the end of the war.

Allow me to expand on the ripple effect just in my family's survival. Pedro and Grete had eight children, of whom I am the oldest. I have three adult children, but no grandchildren. My brother Louis has three adult children and many grandchildren. Billy has three children and some grandchildren. Maria Paz has a son and two grandchildren. Theresa has no children of her own, but married into having several children who love her more than their mother, and through them is a grandmother. Tony has two children and a few grandchildren. Andrew has a son. Margo has two sons.

Besides my parents and grandparents, other relatives were rescued. My Uncle Ted married my Aunt Olive while they were interned. They came to the states, settled in Detroit, but had no children; however, after retirement they became foster parents to many children in need – I wish I had known this at the time, but they were always quiet folk. My Uncle Emilio's wife, Maria, died in the camp before the rescue, but his son, also Peter, was a pre-teen at the time of the rescue. (When I have a chance, I'll contact U.S. archives about this, because he's not in the official count.) Anyway, cousin Peter has two children and is currently living with his wife in Spain. My Uncle Andres never married, worked as an engineer in the U.S., and became a Franciscan lay brother in his middle years.

My Uncle Louis was not in the camp, but the rescue impacted his life because of the above connections. Louis escaped capture, went 'into the mountains' and was a guerilla for the duration.

Sir, thank you not only as a survivor, but representing the 'ripple' through three generations. Thanks for the action that saved so many.

Los Banos Internment Camp in the Philippines, his first of four combat jumps. The Angels successfully rescued 2,147 civilians held at the camp only days before their scheduled extermination by the Japanese. (see Bruce Henderson's *Rescue at Los Banos* (2015) for a full account of this historic raid).

Respectfully yours,

Peter Albert C.....

-Received from chapter member and Treasurer/Secretary John Sosa:

During the week prior to Memorial Day 2021, Kathleen and I travelled to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington to attend my daughter's Assumption of Command of the 170th Military Police Company on 27 May 2021. Captain Sarah M. Kromm was presented the company guidon by LTC Jeremy E. Kerfoot, Commander of the 504th Military Police Battalion. Afterwards a reception was held at the battalion headquarters. My Daughter is following in the footsteps of her mother, Colonel Carla S. Sosa, USA, Retired. She is married to Major Jeffery A. Kromm of the 2nd Infantry Division. We wish them success in their chosen careers.

-Received from chapter member Sven Hahr:

(Abstracted from the article, *The Last of the Doolittle Raiders*, published in the Wall Street Journal by Laura Hillenbrand on April 11th, 2021.)

Lt. Col. Dick Cole passed away at the age of 103. He was a member of the Doolittle Raiders, the group that conducted one of the most audacious and unlikely missions of WW II -the first Allied bombing of Japan. Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle lead the mission to avenge Pearl Harbor; then-Lt. Dick Cole was his co-pilot. Their mission was virtually suicidal; they knew before take-off they would not have enough fuel to reach the safety of the Chinese landing fields.

Cole had no parachute training. As his B-25 bomber ran out of fuel over China, he made his very first jump at 9,000 feet into the blackness filled with terror and the unknown. Fifteen of the 16 B-25s crashed -as every one of the raiders knew they would when they volunteered to go. The bombing did little damage, but their mission had a significant impact on the outcome of the war: They created a ripple effect. Shocked and stunned, the Japanese promptly contracted their forces, revised their plans, and redirected their focus on Midway Atoll. In winning the ensuing battle there, America began to win the war. At each raider reunion, there were 80 silver goblets, one for each airman. They'd drink toasts to those who'd died in the previous year, then overturn the lost men's goblets. The final goblet will soon be turned for Lt. Col. Dick Cole, the last of the young men whose courage, on a storm-swept day in 1942, helped turn the course of history. With his passing, the last of the Doolittle Raiders is gone. An epic chapter of history is now closed, but is certainly not forgotten. R.I.P.

Come join with us at our 2021 annual reunion in Fenton as we keep our traditions alive. We gather at our monthly meetings, satellite meetings, and annual reunions to remember our history and tell our stories. And some might ask, "Why is this so important?" Our history tells us where came from; our stories tell us who we are. And these questions -*Where did we come from? Who are we?* and, *What stories do we have to tell?*- are, in my view, *spiritual* questions -not

political or scientific. How we understand and answer each question defines our moral purpose as we move forward as members of Michigan's close-knit Airborne brotherhood and sisterhood. We must never, ever forget our history, where we come from, or who we are.

Every chapter member can take great pride in doing their part to disturb oppressive ideological systems and creating ripples in the cause of attaining *freedom, liberty, equality, and justice for all* whether in Normandy, Holland or Bastogne or -more recently, during the Cold War, in Vietnam, Iraq, or Afghanistan or -closer to home, in Arkansas in September 1957 when members of the 101st Airborne Division escorted nine students -the "Little Rock Nine," as they entered their school and finally integrated Central High School.

It was during the volatile and turbulent times of the civil rights movement. On September 4th, 1957 nine African-American students arrived at Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas to begin school. They made their way through a hostile crowd that was shouting obscenities, hurling insults, and throwing objects. Once they reached the front door of the school, however, the National Guard prevented them from entering and they were forced to return home.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower -a former five-star General of the Army and Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force in Europe during WW11 - sent members of the 101st to enforce the federal court orders that integrated the Little Rock schools. The students returned on September 29th at which time they were escorted and protected by members of the 101st. And the students entered, finally integrating Central High School.

In the name of *equality, freedom, liberty, and justice for all*, another oppressive and racialized ideology and its discriminatory and exclusionary social practices - "Separate but Equal," were confronted and disturbed, and the effects rippled through the Little Rock community, its schools, and the lives of each of the nine students. And through our nation's educational system. Similar to the letter from the survivor of the Los Banos Internment Camp, an intergenerational effect was created that continues to ripple in the lives of the "Little Rock Nine," their children, and their children's children to this day.

... Come to the 2021 annual reunion and tell your stories!



MICHIGAN CHAPTER

101st Airborne Division Association





**2021 ANNUAL REUNION
SEPTEMBER 10TH – 12TH**

FENTON, MI

“THE SCREAMING EAGLES”

Normandy • Holland • Bastogne • Cold War • Vietnam • Iraq • Afghanistan

**101st Airborne Division Association,
Michigan Chapter
2021 Annual Reunion**

You are cordially invited to attend the Chapter’s 2021 annual reunion at the Comfort Inn and Suites in Fenton, Michigan from September 10th – 12th.

Lodging: Comfort Inn and Suites
17800 Silver Parkway
Fenton, Michigan 48430

For reservations call (810) 714-7171

Ask for “The 101st Airborne Block of Rooms”
Cost: \$109.65 per Night, plus tax (Includes Continental Breakfast)

(**Make Reservations no later than **August 13th, 2021**)

Banquet: Lucky’s Steak House Saturday, September 11th -5:30 p.m.
17500 Silver Parkway Attire: Women: Slacks, Skirt, Blouse, Pantsuit,
Fenton, Michigan Dress
(810) 750-1400 Men: Suit and Tie or Business Casual

Menu selections: (see the enclosed registration form)

(**Return Menu Selections Form no later than **August 21st, 2021**)

Schedule of Weekend Events:

Friday, September 10th – 7:00 p.m. Hospitality Room Opens

Saturday, September 11th

- 9:00 a.m. Executive Committee Meeting
- 10:00 a.m. General Membership Meeting
- 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Personal Time
(see the enclosed schedule of events & activities in and around Fenton)
- 5:00 p.m. Banquet Set Up at Lucky’s Steak House
- 5:30 p.m. Cocktails (Cash Bar)
- 6:00 p.m. Recognition of Fallen Comrades:
POW/MIA Recognition Ceremony
- 6:30 p.m. Dinner
- TBD Hospitality Room Open

Sunday, September 12th – Travel Home

2021 Annual Reunion
-Registration and Menu Selections Form-

(**Return no later than **August 21st, 2021**)

Registration:

Name(s) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State & Zip Code _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Menu Selections:

Choose one of the following menu selections for each attendee.
The cost of each selection is \$30.00 and includes the Meal, Tax, and Gratuity.

(Indicate the # of selections)

1) RIBEYE (16 ounce) # _____

2) Grilled Atlantic Salmon (Fresh dill sauce) # _____

Check Enclosed in the Amount of: \$ _____

Please send your completed Registration and Menu Selection Form and check to:

John Sosa, Treasurer
1569 Mill Street,
Lincoln Park, MI 48146-2358

If there are any questions, don't hesitate to contact Treasurer John Sosa at (313) 382-2341) or President Dr. Patrick Kavanaugh at (248) 660-3452.