



## FROM THE MICHIGAN CHAPTER

by Keith Sousa, Chapter President

Greetings from the Great Lake State. Our chapter continues to grow slowly as we get new members. We have been trying to reach out to new members through social media, as well as by handing out business cards with our chapter information to people we meet who served in the 101<sup>st</sup>. We meet the third Wednesday of each month for lunch and normally have a guest speaker. Our "lunch bunch" normally has approximately fifty members in attendance, although in December and June, many of our spouses or significant others also attend. Our chapter has an annual reunion in Michigan, which was held in Frankenmuth, Michigan (Little Bavaria) last September, and is scheduled to hold another in Fenton, Michigan in July of 2018.

Unfortunately, we lost one of our WWII members in May; John Nasea, who passed away in his sleep at the age of 95. John was a member of Bravo Battery, 321<sup>st</sup> Glider Field Artillery Battalion, and participated in the battle for Carentan. He was shot in the leg as his glider was getting ready to land in Holland for "Operation Market Garden". He joked that his feet never touched the ground in Holland before he was evacuated to England to recover. His feet finally touched Dutch soil when he was 90 years old as he and his daughter Melissa took a tour of that country. He even got a ride in a WWII ambulance, but was able to sit in the front seat. John attended college after the war and received both Bachelor's and Master's degrees in chemistry. He worked as a chemist for Ford Motor Company for over thirty years before his retirement. He and his wife Mildred were married for over 58 years. She preceded him in death in 2010. John was survived by; daughter Melissa; son John (Joan); granddaughters Brittany and Chelsea; and daughter Sheila. John was smart, funny, easy to talk to, and very proud of his service with the 101<sup>st</sup>. He will be missed.

During our May "lunch bunch" we received a presentation about "Following in Our Dads Footstep" by Jeanette Novak. Jeanette recently traveled to Europe to see where her Dad had served with the 101<sup>st</sup> during WWII. He was a member of the 506<sup>th</sup> Infantry, who fought through France, Holland, Belgium and Germany. She took numerous pictures and shared a lot of them during her presentation. Jeanette and her sister Janice are both active members of our chapter who joined because their Dad had been a Screaming Eagle.

In early May this year, some members of our chapter were able to travel to Fort Campbell to observe the Week of the Eagles ceremonies. John and Kathy Sosa, Don and Marty Reddeman, Dave Kelly, my brother Doug and I had a great week seeing the post, and more importantly meeting and talking to many Soldiers. We also attended Memorial Ceremonies for the 501<sup>st</sup> Infantry, the 327<sup>th</sup> Infantry, as well as the Division Headquarters. We witnessed the division run (with approximately 12,000 Soldiers participating), and had a chance to see many of the static displays that were set up and talk to the Soldiers who were tasked to man these displays. One of the highlights was eating at the 2d Brigade consolidated dining facility (DFAC). It was great to talk to Soldiers and to eat chow with them. We also had an opportunity to visit the Air Assault School, and were given an overview of the school along with rappelling and equipment demonstrations and displays.

During our visit, a lot of Soldiers thanked us for serving and for paving the way for them. Overall, it was a great week. At a time when our country is going through a lot of turmoil, I was truly encouraged and enlightened by the enthusiasm and professionalism of these young Soldiers, many of whom have deployed numerous times to Afghanistan, Iraq, and other parts of the world in defense of our country and its ideals. I know that we are in good hands thanks to our current Screaming Eagles, as well as those active duty Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen

and Coastguardsmen, along with the members of the Reserve Components (Guard and Reserve) who are currently serving.

During Memorial Day, our Chapter participated in ceremonies at the Holly National Cemetery, in Holly, Michigan. We were able to present a wreath in honor of all Airborne Forces. The wreath was created by Dennis Rebecca and Russ Eaton (both former past chapter presidents), and Bob and Marcia Hall. The wreath depicted airborne, air assault and glider wings, and contained the poem "On Flanders Field"; the origin of the poppies used to commemorate the end of WWI and in support of all military Veterans. The chapter has agreed to present this wreath during future ceremonies honoring Veterans. We will not have a "lunch bunch" in July or August, but we're looking forward to our upcoming state chapter reunion (20-22 July) in Fenton, as well as seeing everyone at our luncheon as we restart our program in September 2018.



John Nasea (1922 – 2018) Battery 2, 321<sup>st</sup> GFA (WWII)



Airborne Wreath