



# THE 461<sup>ST</sup> LIBERAIDER



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SOMEWHERE IN THE USA

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

We are obviously rolling out a new format with this issue of The Liberaider. I have asked numerous times and continue to ask that you send in any stories you've been told by our veterans, manuscripts that have been written, letters home, anything to further the memory and legacy of our veterans and to further educate those of us that are left. The new format has become necessary because this material just isn't being sent to me to be published. At least this format will result in a cost savings to produce and mail as opposed to the booklets that have been produced and mailed for many years now.

The 2022 Wichita, Kansas reunion was a good one. We met September 15-18. Wichita is a surprisingly nice city with lots to see and do. The 3100 square foot hospitality room was open all day Thursday as people arrived and was soon a beehive of activity. Mr. David Webster again brought a literal museum with him that included a Norden bomb sight, and an actual .50 cal waist gun on a flexible mount, complete with ammo belt and box. He also had a multitude of other artifacts on display. What a treat that was. We began with the usual meet and greet informational dinner and meeting on Thursday evening before retuning to the hospitality room for more fellowship. Friday featured tours of McConnell AFB featuring a tour of a Boeing C-47 refueling aircraft, lunch at the base community center, a tour of the Kansas Aviation Museum and lastly, a stop at the Wichita Veterans Memorial plaza along side the Arkansas river. For diner that evening, groups broke up into small groups for individual group or bomb wing dinners. The hospitality room reopened after dinner until after midnight. Saturday again featured a relaxed day in the hotel with four different speakers giving presentations on various things related to the Fifteenth Air Force. Saturday evening was the main banquet. After supper, we were treated to the music and songs of Mr. Kenny Ray Horton. A twenty-one year veteran of the Navy's country bluegrass band, Country Current. Kenny Ray is now retired from the Navy and tours the country performing for audiences of all types, featuring his own songs and down home style. A Color Guard was provided by Ed Clendenin (376<sup>th</sup> BG) and the Sons of the American Revolution Wichita chapter with the men all wearing Continental Army uniforms. It was spectacularly done while Kenny Ray lead us in the pledge of allegiance and sang the National Anthem. Sunday morning featured a church service and a military memorial service led by a retired Air Force Chaplain. After lunch, we toured the Museum of World Treasures in Old Town, Wichita. Sunday evening featured the farewell dinner as we prepared to head home Monday morning. The Marriott hotel was immaculate in every way and the staff was exceptional in their level of service and smiling faces. The food there at every meal was exceptional. It was a great place to meet.

*Hughes Glantzberg*

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## TAPS

Squadron	Name	MOS	Date of Death
766 <sup>th</sup>	Robert V. Hayes	612	November 3, 2022

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!**

**The 2023 461<sup>st</sup> BOMB GROUP REUNION**

Combining once again with  
The Fifteenth Air Force Bomb Groups (H).

October 12—15, 2023

*The Washington DC Suburb Of  
Fairfax, Virginia*



***Make plans now to attend. Meet with like minded Veterans and their families to honor the heroes of the 461<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group and other Fifteenth Air Force Bomb Groups. Begin new friendships and continue old ones!***



## My Dad

My father was Colonel Fredric E. Glantzberg, Commanding Officer of the 461<sup>st</sup> Bombardment Group (H) from late October 1943 until September 1944. He took command from Lt. Col. Willis Carter. He moved the group from Wendover Field, UT to Hammer Field, Fresno, CA. There he completed the training of the group during November and December.

During January and February 1944, he led the group across the US to Florida, down to Brazil, across the Atlantic to North Africa and finally to their new station at Torretta Field located about nine miles southwest of Cerignola, Italy.

Although the bomb group flew B-24 Liberators, my father acquired a P-40 that he used to shepherd the formations as they headed out on missions if he wasn't actually flying the mission himself. The idea was that if the formations were nice and tight, the enemy fighters couldn't get close enough without being hit. This saved a number of lives. My father had the P-40 stripped of armament so the P-40 was lighter and he could fly around the B-24 formations to keep them tight. On one particular mission, the group was forming up as it crossed the Adriatic Sea to Yugoslavia, and my father was in his P-40 all the way across. When the group got to the coast of Yugoslavia two ME-109s came in. Seeing a nice tight formation of B-24s, the enemy aircraft decided not to attack but did notice a lone P-40 in the area. My father's. Since a ME-109 normally was faster than a P-40, they chose to go after the P-40 instead of the B-24 formation. My father dropped down on the deck, perhaps 100 feet above sea level, and raced back across the Adriatic and outran the ME-109s because his P-40 was a little lighter and faster than regular P-40s. Unfortunately, he burned up the P-40 engine and had to go get another P-40. I mention this story because checking the 461st website you will see a page dedicated to the P-40, and there are two parked on the field.



The group started flying combat missions on April 2, 1944. My father led that mission and during the next five months flew a total of fifty missions. On July 22, my father led the 49<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing on a mission to Ploesti, Romania. As usual, flak was heavy, and my father's plane took a hit in the right wing, knocking out the #4 engine and starting a fire in the #3 engine. Needless to say, the plane lost altitude. After losing some 8,000 feet, my father and Lt. John Specht, his co-pilot, managed to get the plane under control. The dive had extinguished the fire in the #3 engine. They got it started again and managed to return to base though a little later than normal.

On April 13, Lt. Steele's plane was damaged after hitting the target at Budapest, Hungary. My father led a small formation of B-24s to chase the JU-88s attacking this damaged aircraft. Although they were not successful in saving the damaged aircraft, they did stop the attack.

Of course, my father was my hero. He led the 461<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group against some of the more difficult targets of the Fifteenth Air Force. His military career began in 1929 and he retired in 1959. After an aircraft accident in 1932, my father was missing some three inches of his skull right above his right ear.

I mention these stories about my father for two reasons. First, I'm very proud of him and his service. Second, I want to encourage readers of this newsletter to submit their stories. I know that we have very few veterans from WWII left. Family members or friends of families with stories about the 461<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group, please submit your stories to me. It doesn't matter how long or short your story is. The important thing is to keep the stories alive. Every story is a part of history and we must never forget what those men did to preserve our freedom!