



# Senior Guardian Angel

Caring and Compassionate

*"Always Here To Look Over You"*


**Call (239)-246-0501**

- Medication Reminders • Grocery Shopping • Errands • Doctor Appointments
- Cooking and light housekeeping • Grooming and personal hygiene • Nursing home visits

# Boat Rentals

Center Consoles, Pontoons, & Kayaks




## \$99

### Boat Rentals\*

Salty Sam's Marina  
239-463-7333

\*20 ft. pontoon boats only. Must present this ad. No other offers apply.  
www.saltysamsmarina.com  
FW08 EXPIRES 12/31/08

Enjoy the waters with our half-day or full day rentals

Voted SW FLORIDA'S Best Marina!

**2500 Main St., Ft. Myers Beach**  
**239-463-7333**  
[www.SaltySamsMarina.com](http://www.SaltySamsMarina.com)

Full Service Marina • Boat Sales & Service • Waterfront Dining • Ferry to Key West • Ship Store

## BULGE

From page 1

106th, just over from the States, were being sent up to replace it. We were relieved that there apparently was no danger of any battles breaking out. If there was any danger, we reasoned, our generals certainly wouldn't have pulled back the Second and sent in the 106th.

I was in a replacement depot in Givet — a repo-depo, as old-timers will remember.

Some of us were fresh replacements from the States waiting to be assigned to a permanent outfit. Others of us had seen action, been wounded and sent back to hospitals to recover, and were now deemed fit to join the war again.

It was quiet as usual that night, except for Bed-Check Charlie, our name for the lone German plane that regularly flew reconnaissance over our quarters after dark.

Between playing cards, reading (that was before television, remember, and even teenagers read back then), reminiscing about home, and scrounging food and coffee from whoever might have some, we idly talked about the 106th and wondered how those guys, most of them 18- and 19-years olds like us, were doing.

The next day, all hell broke loose. We couldn't see it, but we could hear it: distant cannon fire through the bleak, overcast sky. Something was going on for sure across the river in Belgium in the direction of Germany. Nobody told us what, but from the continuing sounds over the next couple of days, we knew it had to be a pretty big battle. We found out for certain while working down at the waterfront again just a few mornings after we first saw the 106th march in. Through the overcast, we saw them again, only this time marching in the other direction, in retreat. There was no spring in their step. The long, thin line was much shorter and much thinner. The bodies that been erect a few days before were stooped, moving with the resignation of defeat, of men who had experienced something horrible, but were still too much in shock to understand how or why. We learned later that the 106th had been decimated, with very high casualty rates. I also learned that both

of my cousins had been wounded. The rumors traveled quickly that night at the repo-depo. Most of them were true: The Germans had launched a counter-offensive and were headed for France again, and most of us would be sent up the line within a few days. Some time afterward, we heard that German intelligence had apparently known every move the Americans were making. As soon as the experienced U.S. troops were pulled back and the new inexperienced troops were on the line, the Germans launched their attack. German tank battalions made an immediate breakthrough. In fact, that was the term we used at the time for the German counter-attack: The Breakthrough. It was only much later that I first heard the term "Battle of the Bulge."

We had been outsmarted and, for a while, outfought. GIs coming through Givet who had been on the line told us stories of massacres, German tanks and troops mowing down fleeing Americans almost at will. The German Army seemed well on its way back into France.



In a few days I saw it first hand when I was assigned, ironically, to the Second Infantry Division. It was a few weeks before the tide began to turn

in our favor again. The weather had been miserable, the skies so closed-in that the superior U.S. Army Air Corps wasn't able to fly. Air attacks were needed to stop the German advance, now bulging deep into Allied territory. I remember being on the side of a hill somewhere in Belgium shortly after New Year's when suddenly the clouds broke and the sun came through. Soon we heard the drone of planes as wave after wave of U.S. P-38s flew right over our heads — from our hillside position it seemed almost alongside of us — and attacked the German lines. It was then that we knew that the Nazis' last-ditch offensive would fail.

Not long after that, we were on the offensive and in a couple of months the American troops reached Remagen and crossed the Rhine. But the breakthrough — the Battle of the Bulge — was scary as hell while it lasted.

— Robert Hilliard, now a Sanibel resident, earned a Combat Infantry Badge and a Purple Heart in the Battle of the Bulge.

Thanks for making NBC2 Southwest Florida's

# Most Watched Early Evening News!



count on  news

\*Information based on Nielsen Overnights 10/30/08-11/26/08