

A HISTORY OF THE 306th BOMBARDMENT GROUP - EIGHTH AIR FORCE
Russell A. Strong, 4900 Appleridge Ct., Dayton, Ohio 45424

I am endeavoring to put together a good history of the 306th Bombardment group, an idea which has been in my mind for some years. I am working diligently on the matter, collecting all kinds of data and working through the official history and records of the group. I served as a navigator with the 367th Squadron from June through November, 1944, and currently am director of news and information services at Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio. I solicit your assistance in my project.

I am interested in any special materials which you may have, such as good photographs of personnel, battle damage, plane insignia, etc. I am also interested in commendations (other than the usual Air Medal and DFC) you may have received, special stories which you may have in your possession, letters that are highly descriptive of combat action, or any other documents. I would appreciate receiving xeroxed copies. But, if you do not have such facilities readily available, I would appreciate the loan of materials which I might copy and return to you immediately. I am also interested in manuscripts of memoirs which you may have prepared, particularly if they were done within a couple of years of the events. Again, I would appreciate copies or the opportunity to copy them.

Name John E. CORCORAN, Jr
Address 84 Abbott Rd. Wellesley Hills, MASS. 02181
Telephone 1-617-235-1397 Date 10/14/75
Occupation INS. Broken Employer CORCORAN + HAULIN INS. Agency, IN
Address 40 GROVE St. Wellesley MA. Telephone 1-617-235-3100

Service Record:

Before joining the 306th:

BASIC Training 9/42, Miami Beach gunnery school, FT TYNDALL Fld, FLA, Radio School, SALT LAKE City, UTAH, 1ST PHASE, BLYTHE, CALI, 2ND. LAREDO, Tex 3rd ARMARILLO

After leaving the 306th:

91st B.G. (MOS 938) McDILL Field, Westover Fld. Home

306th Record:

Arrival Date CIRCA 6/43 Squadron or other unit 367
MOS BTO Combat Status AERIAL GUNNER
Missions Completed 25
Promotions NIL
Decorations 1 AM 3 olcs 1 DFC olcs SS DSM DSC MH SM
PH Battle Stars Three ? other

DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATION ?

(OVER)

Corcoran & Martin

Insurance

INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.

40 GROVE STREET * WELLESLEY, MASS. 02181

JOHN E. CORCORAN, JR.

JOHN J. HAVLIN

TELEPHONE: 235-3100

October 16, 1975

Mr. Russell A. Strong
4900 Appleridge Court
Dayton, Ohio, 45424

Dear Russ:

In the course of our chat one afternoon you had upon one list the name "William L. Cullen, Boston College 1944". Since I am a graduate of Boston College it was easy for me to locate him. I had a nice chat with him and below is what I developed, some of which you may already have:

1. William L. Cullen, 7 Marshall Road, North Reading, Mass., Tel. 1-617-664-3277
Navigation - 368th flew from 3/44 to 6/12/44. Twenty-four missions (he was supposed to fly twenty-eight on a pro rata basis which I am certain you are familiar with). On #24 he was badly shot up and hospitalized for nine months.
2. John W. Curtis - Pilot - you show him on your list
507 W. Alston, Hobbs, N. M. 88240.
3. Bill Mitchell - Co-pilot in school system or radio broadcasting Marquette, Michigan.
4. Dan Cookman - Tail gunner - Silver Lakes, Iowa - near Mason City.
5. George Y. Wortham - B.T.O. retail hardware business North Little Rock, Arkansas.
6. Paul Carsten, -Bombardier - finished thirty missions and killed shortly thereafter in a truck accident.



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2.

October 16, 1975

Mr. Russell A. Strong

7. Francis E. O'Brien, Gunner - Shawinigan, Pa. - possibly dead
8. George Curley, Gunner - small town, Texas
9. Joseph Trigani, Gunner - New York City
10. Dr. Albert Fink, Anesthesiologist at Base Hospital of 306. Thought to be at Beth Israel Hospital, Boston, Mass.

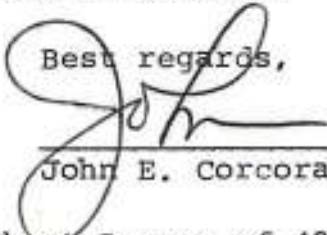
Bill Cullen gave me all the above from memory on the phone and I hope its accurate since I'm sending a copy of this letter to him. By the way, he and I were classmates at Boston College in the original class of 1945. Any more specific information could be obtained from him directly.

As I mentioned, I would be interested in the whereabouts of T/Sgt. Alexander Hayburn, Jr., of Louisville (cf. Hayburn Bldg.) He went down 10/14/43. Also, Lt. William Tackmier of Taft Jr. College, Taft, California. He finished up.

Also, Lt. George Byer the football player from Manhattan who went down in July 1943.

I enjoyed very much meeting and talking with you and of course look forward to your book. If I can be of assistance to you in finding anyone in the greater Boston area (or New England for that matter) let me know.

Best regards,


John E. Corcoran, Jr.

JEC:D

P.S. Add to your list a BTO Albert Berman of 423rd who finished around March 1944. Address 62 Walnut Street, Wellesley Hills, Mass. 02181.



1 December 1975

Dear John:

I'm sorry to have been so delinquent in answering your letter of Oct. 16, but I've finally unearthed it again.

Many thanks for the information which you conveyed at that time. It has been helpful.

I have not been able to locate Alexander Hayburn, Jr., in my Louisville searches. But, perhaps more can be done on it later. I am hoping I can push Bill Collins along into making much more of an effort to locate a lot of people than has been done so far.

If we are to have another reunion in 1976, we'll have to get busy on a real search.

Could you take a look for Peter Pappas in Haverhill? That's all I've got to go on so far, so if you can locate such a name, you might give him a call to check on it.

I'll be back in touch with you soon.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong

4900 Appleridge Ct., Dayton, Ohio 45424

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JOHN E. CORCORAN, JR.

JOHN J. HAVLIN

TELEPHONE: 235-3100

12/6/78

Dear Russ;

Many thanks for the photographs - I appreciate it very much.

An old. High school friend of mine from the 9155 is a member of the 2nd Schweinfurt Assn. and let me read what I considered an excellent book not only about the 8/17 and 10/14 raids which I was on but a fairly extensive behind the scenes view of the entire 42-45 period. It's "Decision over Schweinfurt" by Jack or Tom Coffey of the 91st. I recommend it highly if you haven't it in your bibliography. The 308th is mentioned but not as much as the 91st.

I haven't seen your friend Bob McCourt since I've been back but suspect he is not well.

Many Christmas and Best regards,
John Corcoran



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JOHN E. CORCORAN, JR.

JOHN J. HAVLIN

TELEPHONE: 235-3100

January 2, 1978

Mr. Russell A. Strong
Rt, 1 Turnpike Rd.,
Laurinburg, North Carolina 28352

Dear Russ:

Thank you for your note about the death of Alexander Hayburn in Louisville. At last I know he survived October 14th.

Another name in the recent 306th Echoes caught my eye in the obituary notices and I'm curious. The name is George Beyer, Jr. of the 367th shown as having died September 1945.

George was my original bombardier and a great guy. A good football player at Manhattan in 1938-41 era when they played good teams. My notes tell me he went down July 29, 1943 over Kiel. I'm quite sure he was captured and was a POW probably until August of 1945. Could it be that his incarceration caused his death?

I'd be interested in how you obtain your information. I'm struck by the fact that he turns up now after being dead for 33 years. If you know anything about his family I'd appreciate knowing about it.

I'm sending a copy of this letter to Bill Collins since I'm too lazy to write two letters!

Bill, Marjorie and I plan to go to Ireland, and England in late April. She seems to think the 8th is going at that time. Is that true and if so what are the details? We'd plan to stay in England a week and then go to Ireland. In other words I'm looking for an inexpensive way of getting over and back. Any suggestions you have would be helpful.

Best regards to you both,

John E. Corcoran Jr.

jec/es

c. William M. Collins Jr.



8 January 1979

Dear John,

Nice to hear from you, and I'll try to answer your questions.

As to Alexander Heyburn, I had tried to locate him several times in the last several years, and always came up blank. I recently had occasion to call a Louisville law firm, and noted in the corporate name that one of the men was a Heyburn. After completing my main business, I asked to speak with him. I explained what I was seeking, and he told me that he was Alex's cousin, and that Alex had died a year or so ago. I then remembered that you had inquired about him at Miami, and so dropped you a line.

Another project I have been working on is trying to locate at least one member from each crew shot down in which there were survivors. I've just grabbed names at random of those whom I knew had survived the accident and prison camp. Beyer's name came up in this way, and I passed it along to my contact in VA in Washington.

He is able to slowly get names through their system where I can give a full name and serial number. On an average of 25 names on a sheet, he will get back to me about six deceased, and three to five for whom they have addresses. Then I prepare envelopes of materials, and they address them and forward them. They will not give me addresses. On one list Beyer's name came up with the cryptic data, and nothing else.

However, I find on double checking things that I made a mistake on his date of death. It should read 12 Mar 70. That doesn't help any, as I can't give you any other information on him.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "K...".

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40 GROVE STREET • WELLESLEY, MASS. 02181

JOHN E. CORCORAN, JR.

JOHN J. HAVLIN

TELEPHONE: 235-3100

Dear Russ;

12/10/75

Peter Pappan was easy: 331 Broadway, Haverhill, MASS. 01830. He is 58, alive and prospering - a very close friend of Harold Lightbown whom I'm sure you have been in contact with.

He was there early starting with 10/42 and actually finishing in July of '43. He was a ball turret gunner with the 369th and seemed to know "Wild Bill" Casey, K. C. Jones et al. He went to the 1st gunnery school they had (in Las Vegas) and was quite friendly at the time with Henry Cordeny (6'5") (your Fla. Friend)

He indicated there was a Bob Sibley living near him (an insurance man in Haverhill) who was adjutant of the 423rd. He also mentioned a Capt Stankey (?) sp. whose name is vaguely familiar to me.

It would seem like a person of this type could tell you more on the very early days.



Merry Christmas
John Corcoran

Corcoran & Havlin

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40 GROVE STREET • WELLESLEY, MASS. 02151

JOHN E. CORCORAN, JR.

JOHN J. HAVLIN

TELEPHONE: 235-3100

June 22, 1979

Mr. Russell A. Strong
Rte. 1 Turnpike Road
Laurinburg, North Carolina 28352

Dear Russ:

I enjoyed thoroughly the May issue of "Echoes" particularly the article about Schweinfurt.

I was a bit chagrined however to learn after all these years that we aborted! My memory - hazy of course - is that one who aborted - usually due to mechanical failure - saw neither flak nor fighters - and more importantly did not get credit for the particular mission.

That morning I was with Lt. W. J. Tackmier 42-30767 and we led the 367th. My notes say that some thirty minutes into "Festung Europa" we lost one engine and couldn't keep up. I can't say if it was mechanical or flak but it was smoking badly and we couldn't maintain speed. Tackmier left the formation - rather involuntarily - and apparently decided our best chance was on the deck. I recall we were subjected to flak and at least several fighter attacks.

We got back early of course, and I remember the bottom of my ball turret had many cartridge links indicating I'd fired a number of rounds. We had flak damage and while I'm not sure I feel we must have dropped the bombs somewhere in Germany.

In any event we got credit for the mission and were airborne four hours and thirty-five minutes. This compares with the August 17, 1943 trip which took six hours and twenty-five minutes.

I probably told you this in Florida but my most vivid recollection was being met by Major George Buckey our C.O. and Capt. Kenneth Reecher - operations officer - both of whom cried openly when we told them what happened and few - if any - would be back. It really didn't seem too long a time until Kirk came back.



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40 GROVE STREET • WELLESLEY, MASS. 02181

JOHN E. CORCORAN, JR.

JOHN J. HAVLIN

TELEPHONE: 235-3100

2. June 22, 1979

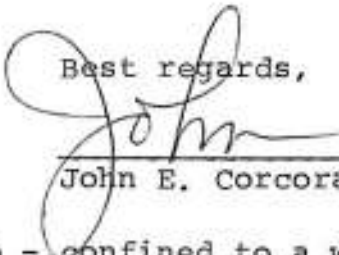
Mr. Russell A. Strong (continued)

Just for the record William Bissen (42-30727) was William C. Bisson of Athens, Georgia, buried in Holland I believe. In my notes I show the following: I saw nine chutes from Butler's plane. (He went down early). Gone are May, Bocelli, Adams, Pulliam, Sherrill, George Toney, Hayburn, DeBuyser, Harris, St. Louis, Bisson, White, Butler and Alexander.

Finally, I did not as you know respond to your kind letter of March 15. Quite frankly five children either in or recent graduates of college preclude any donation of the magnitude you mention.

I wish you - however - the best of everything in your work and hope to see you in Phoenix if I can make it.

Best regards,


John E. Corcoran, Jr.

JEC:D

P.S! Saw Bob McCourt one month ago - confined to a wheel chair - looks poorly.



11 March 1981

Dear John:

How about checking out Joseph Patrick Ryan in Boston. I note three such names in the Boston book and one in Quincy. He was bombardier for Charley Schoolfield, 369th, in late 1943. Perhaps one of these four is the right man. Let me know, and we'll get him on the mailing list, if possible.

Talked with Bob McCourt a couple of times recently Seemed to be in good spirits

Hope things are well with you--lots of sales, no claims.

Best,

TO: Russ Strong

FROM

CORCORAN & HAVLIN

Insurance Agency, Inc.
287 LINDEN STREET
WELLESLEY, MASS. 02181

SUBJECT: Kudos

DATE: 8/20/82

FOLD ↑ I imagine Mr SMATLACK'S letter brightened up your day!
Who is he - the literary critic of American Opinion? I
suppose if you lived in Brightwater NY you'd have an
opane! Seriously congratulations on a fine book, well
written particularly all of the names. I think I read
that you were going to England. If so

PLEASE REPLY TO →

SIGNED

REPLY

please say hello for me to Cyril Norman,
and Mary (wife) Jordan & Connie Richards et al. of
FOTE

DATE:

SIGNED

Best reg.
John E. Corcoran

Why not write & tell him that anyone
who flew between 11/44 - 5/45 get
no credit. All milh. runs!

1

TO

Russ Shroy

FROM

235-3100

CORCORAN & HAVLIN

Insurance Agency, Inc.

40 GROVE STREET

WELLESLEY, MASS. 02181

SUBJECT:

Joseph Patrick Ryan

DATE:

3/24/81

FOLD ↑

Sony but 3 of the 4 J. P. Ryan's were Joseph Paul. The 4th was Joseph Patrick in WW II but on the infantry! I sent you letter to Bert Perlmutter in Fla. He was a wait

PLEASE REPLY TO →

SIGNED

gunner for Schoolfield all

REPLY

thru '43 and he may have a better or more recent line on Ryan.

DATE:

SIGNED

Best regards
John Corcoran

TO *Russell Shroy*

FROM

235-3100

CORCORAN & HAVLIN

Insurance Agency, Inc.
40 GROVE STREET
WELLESLEY, MASS. 02181

SUBJECT: *hello-*

DATE: *11/13*

FOLD ↑

*Congratulations on going to press. "Rebel
O'BSTAT." You've done a lot of work I know. I
thought I'd skip a year which is why I missed
St. Paul. Merry Christmas to you and yours*

PLEASE REPLY TO →

SIGNED

John Corcoran

REPLY

DATE:

SIGNED

CORCORAN & HAVLIN INSURANCE
287 LINDEN STREET
WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS
Telephone: 235-3100

DATE: MARCH 17, 1988

TO: RUSS STRONG

RE: 306TH ECHOES

RUSS,

I READ WITH INTEREST THE LISTING OF PILOTS IN YOUR
LAST ISSUE.

IN AN IDLE MOMENT, I CHECKED OFF THE PILOTS I EITHER
KNEW, KNEW OF, FLEW WITH OR COULD RECOGNIZE, IN THE 367TH. THIS
WOULD COVER THE PERIOD 6/43 TO 12/22/43. HERE ARE THE RESULTS:
I KNEW 24 PILOTS: 10 FINISHED A TOUR, 7 WERE KIA, 5 WERE MIA/POW
ONE WAS INTERNED AND ONE WAS WOUNDED (DID NOT FINISH). ABOUT 42%
FINISHED.

I AWAIT WITH BATED BREATH THE STATS ON BALL TURRET
OPERATORS!

John Corcoran

TO:

John Story

CORCORAN & HAVLIN
INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.

287 LINDEN STREET
WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS 02181
Phone: (617) 235-3100

SUBJECT:

Tel #s

DATE:

9/8/80

Kuss - This is all I can do out of the books I have. The rest I'll peck away at + probably have to go to the library.

Complication! Effective 9/1 we have another new code 508 which is generally west of 128. No one knows what it is what

PLEASE REPLY TO →

SIGNED

John Brown

REPLY

I'll try to bump them to Vegas

DATE:

SIGNED

3/6/89

Hi Russ,

Those orders dated 4/26/43 were cut I think close to the end of our 3rd phase. From Dalhart we got a delay in route furlough of 8-10 days to Kearney, Neb to pick up a plane. We then flew the northern route, Dow Field, Lab. Greenland Iceland, Prestwick. We went to BOVINGSTON for orientation for a couple of weeks so I would guess we got to Thurleigh about June 10-15. My 1st raid was 7/10 (CAEM) and we had flown a bit prior to July 10

Re the orders, there were 2 crews to be assigned to 367th crew 10 & crew 3 (Parks & Bisson) (Squadron was 467th) we were crew 3 Pilot William C. Bisson (KIA 10/14/43) Eickles, I don't remember him at all. Navigator was Edgou P Ferguson and Bombadier was George BYER (BEYER). They both went down over Kiel 7/29/43 flying with one of the 2 BROWNS (They were F/O). Argenton, Coulter, Coursons & Bloom flew 25 together. Twing flew about 10 with us, then finished up in January 44. Bell went down over Berlin 1/44. As you can see, we never flew as a crew together, even though we came over together.

The Parks crew were good friends of ours since we had gone through 3 phases together & ended up in 367th.

Parks was an interesting guy, allegedly a former commercial pilot a great technician but combat flying was too different I guess. Poor Don Elliott finally became a 1st pilot and was killed taking off one morning hitting something at end of runway (10-12/43?) Hayburn, Henderson, De Buisson, ~~Harris~~ Harris all went down over Schomburg with Bisson 10/14/43. De Buisson & Harris were POW or was Hayburn. Harris was an officer in the Ed Paw group.

You may see some other names on the order that may be familiar to you since most of this group went to ETO. Some could have gone to 423, 368, 369 etc.

Best regards
John Cowan

PS - Note name of provisional group
Bombadier. Capt Revort Marshal?

9 March 1989

Dear John:

Many thanks for the loan of the orders. I immediately got them copied so to return your original to you.

There were actually three other 306th crews on the orders:
John Jackson, Wesley Courson and Willard Lockyear.

All of this information will help me straighten out some of my records that had kind of hung limp before.

Jackson's crew didn't show up at Thurleigh until late July, but the rest of them evidently came about the same time you did.

This typewriter ribbon looks like it ought to be replaced, zI'll
Have to pick up a new one in the morning.

Again, my thanks for your help.

All the best,



HELP THE HANDICAPPED

Plus - Jack was originally on Lt. W.C. BISSON's crew with me. (We came over together).

PS - Bob McCount is very bad - he's been in intensive care for a week. A severe breathing problem plus the MS.



John Brown

RECORD UPDATE

306th Bomb Group Association

(Please complete as much of this form as you wish, and return to
 Russ Strong at the reunion, or mail to Russ Strong, 5323 Cheval
 Place, Charlotte, NC 28205) Little Rock 1989

Date complete 9-26-89

LAST NAME: CONCORAN FIRST NAME: John TITLE: MR.
 Street address: 86 Abbott Rd Telephone: (617) 235-1397
 City, state, zip: Wellesley MASS. 02181

Date of Birth: 3-10-24 Wife's name: MARJORIE
 College(s) attended: BOSTON College Degree(s): BS Econ. Year(s): 1948

Last employment and job title:
CONCORAN & HAVLIM INSURANCE Agency, Inc. Product Manager

Reunions attended: (by year or location) Vegas, Dallas,

Serial #: 11088568 Squadron: 367 Speciality: Ball Turret Gunner
 Date joined 306th: enca 6/43 If combat, what crew: Lt. Will. BISSON ET AL
 Special duties or assignments w/306th: Ball Turret operator
 Number of missions flown: 25 Date of last mission: 12/22/43
 Date left 306th: 1/2/44 Highest rank/grade with 306th: S/sgt.
 Other 8th AF units served with:

91ST B.G.

Top service assignments after 306th: nil
 USAF retirement date: 10/15/45 Rank/grade: S/sgt.
discharged

Copies of old 306th orders, either from the Group or Station 111, or any of the
 squadrons or other units, will be welcomed by the secretary.

If you know of other 306th people who do not appear in the directory, please add
 their names and current or former addresses to this sheet so that we may search
 further for them.

From: whouli3947 <whouli3947@msn.com>
To: Russell Strong <Russell.a.strong306@worldnet.att.net>
Cc: Ralph E. Bordner <rbordner@bitwisesystems.com>
Date: Sunday, July 22, 2001 12:00 PM
Subject: Fw: John


----- Original Message -----

From: [John and Marge Corcoran](#)
To: [Bill Houlihan](#)
Sent: Sunday, July 22, 2001 5:57 AM
Subject: John

Hi: Bill and Ruth, the reason I have not responded lately: John is extremely ill, in May he was diagnosed with myelodysplastic syndrome (MDS). At present he is at Dartmouth Hitchcock Hospital in Hanover N.H. about an hour drive from here. My children have been wonderful, taking turns staying with me. His outlook at this time is very bleak, will keep in touch, Need your prayers, fondly Marge

John E. Corcoran

77; veteran, former insurance executive

 John E. Corcoran of Ludlow, Vt., formerly of Wellesley Hills and Newton, died Oct. 6, 2001, at home. He was 77.

Born in Newton, he was a resident of Wellesley for 50 years before moving to Ludlow two years ago.

Mr. Corcoran was a 1942 graduate of Newton High School. He graduated from Boston College in 1947. While attending college, he was co-captain of the 1947 national champions in hockey and was also a member of the Pike's Peak Club. Mr. Corcoran served in the U.S. Air Force during World War II.

He was the founder and president of Corcoran & Havlin Insurance Agency of Wellesley. Mr. Corcoran was past vice president and director of the Massachusetts Association of Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers. He was also a member of the Woodland Golf Club, Auburndale, the Wellesley Country Club, and the board of directors of Wellesley Cooperative Bank.

He leaves his wife, Marjorie T. (Yelle) Corcoran; four daughters, Trish Patrick of Sterling, Va.; Suzanne Jentsch of Gaithersburg, Md.; Maurita Adler of Myrtle Beach, S.C.; and Jacqueline Corcoran of Boston; one



John E. Corcoran

son, John "Jay" Corcoran Jr. of New York City, and nine grandchildren. He also leaves three sisters, Margaret Mary Grant of Newton, Anne Corcoran of Needham, and Susan Giovanella of Plymouth, and one brother, Daniel Corcoran of Newton.

A funeral Mass was celebrated in St. Paul's Church, Wellesley, on Oct. 10. Interment was in Woodlawn Cemetery, Wellesley.

Memorial donations may be made to the Visiting Nurses Alliance of VT and NH, Inc., 366 River St., Springfield, VT 05156.

Arrangements by George F. Doherty & Sons Funeral Home, Wellesley.

TO: Run Strong.

CORCORAN & HAVLIN
INSURANCE AGENCY, INC.

287 LINDEN STREET
WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS 02181
Phone: (617) 235-3100

SUBJECT: Stumblings in the Massachusetts delegation

DATE: 12/18/91

- I would not want John HUTCHINSON mad at me! I have never seen such a forceful, dramatic, vitriolic attack in print since "I accuse". Who is he talking about? Vickers I hope is one. On the boat in Pittsboro Ralph Borden gave me some background but I forgot.

Question: why am I bothering to belong to a group like 8th AFHS when they can't tell the difference between Chicago & Milwaukee. Merry Christmas
John Corcoran