

# Our Family News Letter

Issue 99

Greendale, Wisconsin

December 2017

## Don Heck In The News

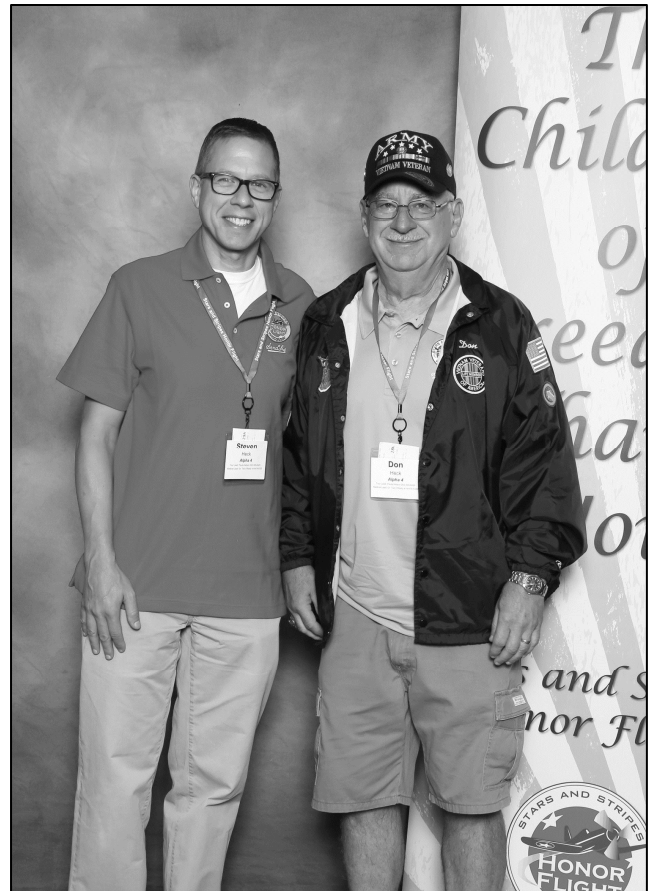
Since our last Family News Letter, my youngest brother, Don Heck, has been quite busy. As many of you know, Don served in Vietnam during the war and has been very active with veterans groups, especially Chapter 767 Vietnam Veterans of Racine. Don was instrumental in having the mobile Vietnam War wall memorial displayed in Racine. He has also been involved in providing support to veterans through the VA in south eastern Wisconsin.

In his own words Don told us about being selected to fly to Washington D.C. on the Stars and Stripes Honor Flight. His comments and photo follow.

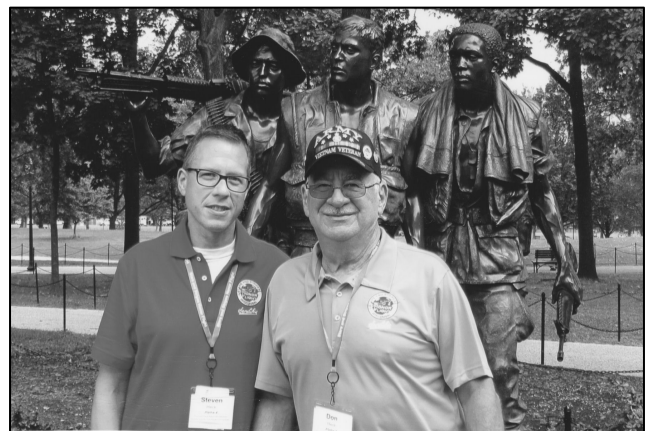
What a special honor and surprise I had this afternoon. The Stars and Stripes Honor Flight committee called me and told me I was selected to be on the flight to visit the Vietnam Wall in Washington, D.C. on September 16th. It brought tears to my eyes when I received this call. What an honor to be selected.



Don selected his son Steve Heck to accompany him on the Honor Flight which took place in September, 2017.



L-R: Steve and Don Heck on the Honor Flight.



Steve and Don Heck at the Vietnam Monument in Washington D.C. September, 2017.

On September 28, 2017, Don sent the following e-mail message with an attached photograph.

In his message Don said, "What an honor I had this evening. The Stars and Stripes Honor Flight called me Saturday to inform me that I was selected to attend an event with Vice President Mike Pence. I had a chance to talk to him and have a picture taken."



L-R: Mike Pence, Vice President of the United States and Don Heck.

I asked Don when he was going to meet with Donald Trump and he jokingly told me that Donald Trump wanted to meet with him on the following Wednesday but Don had to turn him down because he had a golf outing planned for that day.

In the September 2016 issue 94 of Our Family News Letter I included an article and photo of Don Heck meeting with the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Paul Ryan. Busy Guy!

## Gary Heck is also a volunteer

My much older brother, Gary Heck, is also a busy guy down in South Carolina. When he isn't golfing or sailing his pontoon boat he can be found as a volunteer for all sorts of causes. Gary sent in the following photograph.



Gary Heck collecting donations to help people with intellectual disabilities for the Knights of Columbus.

I think that my folks would have been really proud of both Don and Gary.

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# From the Newspapers...



While researching newspaper articles I ran across an article about my first cousin, Bruce Mikel, and his lost wallet. The article appeared in the Racine Journal Times on Thursday, 7 December 1967.

## “Professor’s Missing Wallet Returns – After Five Years.”

“Nearly five years ago Carthage College language professor Bruce Mikel was walking in light snowfall in West Berlin en route to the Yugoslavian consulate to pick up a travel visa. After disembarking from a cab on the return trip he discovered his wallet was missing. Mikel reported the loss to West Berlin police, but the wallet was never recovered. It contained little money, but it did have Mikel’s draft registration card, birth certificate, social security card, voter registration and some irreplaceable family photographs.”

“ Mikel returned to America in 1963 and joined the faculty of Carthage College, Kenosha, last fall. This week he opened a manilla packet from the Department of the Army special services headquarters in West Berlin and out dropped his

long-lost wallet – nearly five years after he lost it in January 1963.”

“When I saw the Army address and Official Business stamp on the envelope, my first thought was, My God, I’ve been drafted, Mikel said. I also thought this is what happens when you don’t finish your PhD theses.”

The article goes on describing how the wallet found its way to Bruce at Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

Bruce Mikel died on 29 August 2003 in Milwaukee.

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Racine Journal Times Friday, 10 July 1936

## “Little Girl Injured.”

“Otilia Mikel, 13, of 1212 Hagerer Street, suffered slight injuries when the cars of John Mikel and William C. Dassler, 1738 Deane Boulevard, figured in a crash at Sixteenth Street and Grove Avenue at 4:45 P.M. yesterday.”

NOTE: John Mikel was my grandfather and Otilia was my aunt.

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Why is Lorraine Heck so unhappy?  
Turn the page to find out.



Lorraine was working in the garden in October of this year, and got tangled up with some cocklebur weeds. Her daughter, Cheryl Ann Heck, came home from work and found her mother in a not-so-happy-mood. Cheryl said that she had them stuck in her hair as well as all over her sweater. Getting them out of her sweater was the easy part. Cheryl said that it took hours to get them out of her mother's hair and a lot of shampoo and rinse. Lorraine didn't fall down; she just got too close to her work.

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## **155 Year Old Document Finds It's Way Home.**

I had a very pleasant surprise at a meeting of our computer genealogy group, MPAFUG, on August 9, 2017. One of our members, David K. Miller, came up to me at the meeting and handed me a large mailing tube. He said that the tube contained a document that I would be interested in and that he was giving it to me as a gift. We

opened the cardboard mailing tube and unrolled a very fragile document. The edges were worn and some areas were missing.

The document was created in 1862 and thus was 155 years old. The document was the roster of Company F of the 19<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment of the Wisconsin Volunteers. On the left side of the document was my great grandfather's name, Henry Heck, a Private.

The document called a Soldiers Memorial, was issued or sold to soldiers as they completed their basic training.



The question is did this document belong to Henry Heck? David K. Miller said that the poster came into the possession of his great-great grandfather, Gulic Eggleson before 1918. Gulic served in the 19<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment but was in Company E, not Company F.

Gulic Eggleson lived in the same places as Henry Heck, including Dover and Waterford. He enlisted at the same time as Henry Heck. He probably was a member of the Grand Army of the

Republic (GAR) as was Henry Heck. No doubt they knew each other.

David K. Miller provided the known history of the poster.

### **The secret life of a Civil War poster:**

1) Until 1918, Dover Township, Racine County; 2640 Mealy Road, Waterford Wisc.; owner Gulic Eggleston (1827 - 1918) - a Veteran of the 19th Company E.

2) 1918 - 1924, Dover Township, Racine County; 2640 Mealy Road, Burlington Wisc.; owner Simon Gulick (1856 - 1936) - son

3) 1924 - 1927, 930 Forest St. (now Lincoln Memorial Dr.), Racine Wisc.; owner Bertha Howe Nelson (1882 - 1988) - granddaughter

4) 1927 - 1952, Evanston, Illinois; owner Bertha Howe Nelson (1882 - 1988)

5) 1952 - 1965, 925 Blaine, Racine Wis.; owner Bertha Howe Nelson (1882 - 1988)

6) 1965 - 1975, 10327 North Shore Dr., Duluth, MN 55804; owner Bertha Howe Nelson (1882 - 1988)

7) 1975 - 1988, Avery Road, Garrison, NY 10524; owner Bertha Howe Nelson (1882 - 1988)

8) 1989 - 1997, 1124 Bayshore Rd., Nakomis, FL 34275; owner Glenn C. Nelson (1913 - 2010) - great grandson

9) 1997 - 1998, 1007 N. Marshall St. Apt 311, Milwaukee, WI 53202 (built in 1977 - corner of State and Marshall); poster owner David K. Miller (1949- ) – great-great grandson

10) 1998 - 2003, 114 S. 3rd St., Evansville, WI 53536; owner Ronald L. Maxwell (1951- ) -

husband of a great-great granddaughter

11) 2003 - 2017, 128 Campion Dr., Evansville, WI 53536; owner Ronald L. Maxwell (1951- )

12) 2017 - 2017, 232 Bridge St. Apt 126, Burlington, WI 53105; owner David K. Miller (1949- )

13) 2017 – Present, 4910 Steeple Drive, Greendale, WI 53129; owner Bob Heck, great grandson of Henry Heck.

This well-traveled poster has been in Wisconsin: Madison, Dover, Waterford, Burlington, Racine; Illinois: Evanston; Wisconsin: Racine; Minnesota: Duluth; New York: Garrison; Florida: Nakomis; Wisconsin: Milwaukee, Evansville, Burlington, and finally Greendale.

The poster has been framed and now resides in my recreation room next to the recruitment poster of the 19<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment.

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### **Gloria and Bob Heck Celebrate 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with Trip to Ancestral Home in Czech Republic.**

While driving to Racine in April, 2017, Gloria and I were discussing what to do to celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, just three months away. Then Gloria surprised me with a question: “If we went to the Czech Republic, what would you want to see?” I told her that there were three things that I would want to see. I would want to see (1.) Prague, considered the most beautiful city in Europe; (2.) I would want to see Uhersky Brod where my mother and grandfather were born; and (3.) I would want to see the Village of Rudimov where my grandmother was born.

Gloria said, “Let’s do it.” On August 23, 2017 we started our nine day trip to the Czech Republic. It was a trip that we will never forget.

I had spent many years researching my Czech family history so I knew a lot about my family going back to the early 1700's. I knew the house numbers where my family members were born, lived and died. I knew all about house number 31 where my Pastyrik ancestors lived since 1780.



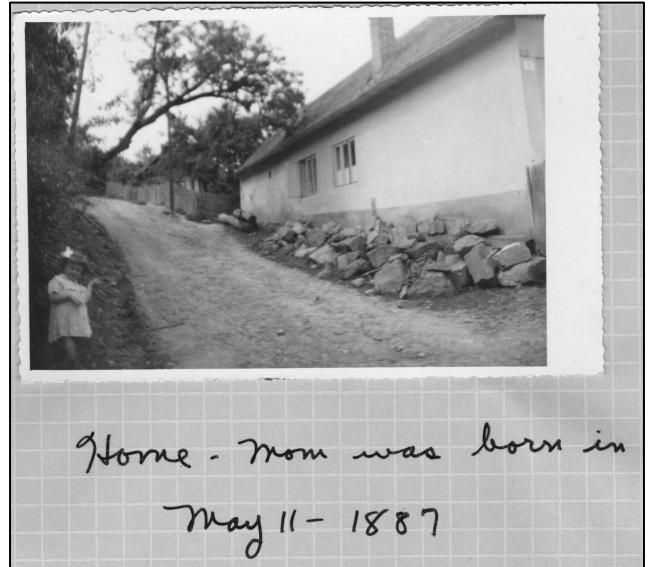
L-R: Bob and Gloria Heck standing in front of House number 31 at Rudimov, Moravia, Czech Republic. House number 31 is at least 247 years old. Many improvements have been made over those 247 years including the addition of a two car garage.

### **House Numbers Established in 1770.**

The Empress Marie Terezie (Maria Theresia) of the Austro-Hungary Empire reigned from 1740 through 1780. She made many significant changes in her empire. One of those changes was based on an act from February of 1770. This act set a framework for a new system of house numbering in the entire empire. As Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia belonged under this part of the Habsburg monarchy, it also affected every settlement in this region.

Prior to the house numbering act taking place, houses in the villages were often named by their owners, purpose of the building and so on. Based on the act from February 1770 houses in every village and every town received a house number between autumn of 1770 and autumn of 1771. Those house numbers remain in use today.

Houses were made of stone and brick and were rarely torn down. The houses were passed on from one family member to another, usually from the father to the eldest son.



This is house number 71 in the Village of Rudimov where my grandmother, Anna Pastyrikova was born. The picture was taken in 1914. The note was written by my mother Mary Ann Mikel Heck.



Bob Heck standing in front of House 71 in August 2017.

We stayed in the City of Uhersky Brod (population 17,533) which is about 12 miles away from the Village of Rudimov (population 247).

When we entered Rudimov we first stopped at house number 31 and took many pictures. We had an appointment to meet with the Mayor of Rudimov and the Fire Chief. The Mayor told us that when we were at house number 31 word had spread through the entire village that we were there taking pictures. They gave us a tour of the fire station that was formed by my ancestors.



L-R: Tereza and Lubor Soucek, Iva Soucek, Bob & Gloria Heck, Martin Soucek. Iva is the mother of Lubor and Martin. Tereza is the wife of Lubor. Iva's grandmother and my grandmother were sisters, making us 2<sup>nd</sup> cousins. The Souceks all live in Uhersky Brod or a suburb of Uhersky Brod. Uhersky Brod is located near the Slovak boarder in the region of the White Carpathian Mountains in Moravia, Czech Republic.



Bob Heck pointing to the City of Uhersky Brod with the Village of Rudimov in the background.



Bob Heck pictured standing at the baptismal font at the Catholic Church in Uhersky Brod. The font was built in about 1603 and was where my grandfather and my mother were christened. My grandfather, John Mikel was christened in 1883 and my mother Mary Ann Mikel Heck was christened in 1912.

Our trip began with a flight from Milwaukee to Toronto and from Toronto directly to Prague. We spent three and a half days in Prague, and did a lot of walking, drinking Pilsner beer, and eating some great Czech meals. We toured Prague, had a river cruise, and really had a great time.

Some of the significant sites that we visited included the Charles Bridge built in the 1300's, The Prague Castle built in the 800's, the St. Vitus Catholic Church which was under construction from the year 925 and wasn't completed until 1929 (1,004 years, just like our freeway construction.), the Municipal House and the Smoke Tower, and the Church of Our Lady before Tyn built in the 1300's.

We dropped in on six bakeries looking for kolaches, which are Czech pastries filled with a farmer's cheese and golden raisins and topped with apricot or prune. My grandmother made them every Saturday. Much to our surprise we did not find any in Prague. My cousin, Martin Soucek, told us that kolaches were a Moravian pastry and are available in all of the bakeries in Uhersky Brod. He brought us a box of them.

On Sunday, August 27<sup>th</sup> we had a most enjoyable train ride for four hours that took us from Prague to Uhersky Brod and to the foot of the White Carpathian Mountains. It was amazing to see the countryside change as we traveled on an electric train that was quiet, smooth, and fast. The total distance by train was 200 miles.

Around Prague the countryside was flat and similar to Wisconsin. As we traveled east the terrain started to change to rolling hills and finally into the foothills of the White Carpathian Mountains. The Slovak Republic, often called Slovakia, lies in the White Carpathian Mountains.

Martin and Lubor took us up into the mountains where we saw a memorial dedicated to two B-17 bombers that were shot down and crashed in 1944. The villagers rescued the survivors of the crashes and hid them from the German Army for the duration of the war. An elderly lady from the village told us the story and pointed out exactly where the B-17s crashed. She told us that on the day before our visit that three surviving American Airmen and their families were there to thank the villagers and to place white flowers on the memorial. The memorial is shown below.



Our trip to the Czech Republic was one that we will never forget. It was emotional yet a happy event in our lives. I especially want to thank Gloria for making the suggestion in the first place. What a great way to celebrate 50 years together. I love you and I know that you love me.

## Our Family News Letter On-Line.

Thanks to Bill Heck, 99 issues of Our Family News Letter are now available to you on-line and for free. They are available to you at the following web address:

<http://ourfamilynewsletter.com/>

Just go to the web address shown above and select a year and then an issue. There are four issues per year starting in 1993. Each issue is usually eight pages in length and in PDF format. That's 792 pages of our family history!

You should feel free to share the web address and the newsletters with other members of your family. If we don't share our family history, someday there won't be anyone around to tell our story.

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**Thanks to our contributors...**  
My deepest thanks go to all of our readers but especially to those who are the contributors who help keep this newsletter going with their generous donations. This list is for the period January 2017 to November 2017.

Frank Lamping  
Howard Heck  
Pat (Heck) Merritt  
Don & Sharon Heck  
Ann (Pfeiffer) & Daniel Kelley  
Mary Kay (Heck) & David Hansen  
Steve Pfeiffer & Joanne (Heck) Pfeiffer  
Robert M (Bobbie) Heck  
Cel, Barbara Schneider, Rick & Jim Heck  
Gary & Carol Heck

Contributions to keep Our Family News Letter going are always welcomed and can be sent to:  
**Robert J Heck, 4910 Steeple Drive,  
Greendale, WI 53129.**