

“The Price and Sacrifice for Freedom”

Rev. David J. Bauer



Chuck Svoboda &
George Fitz, WW II
Anzio Comrades

High school sweethearts, Chuck and Eleanor Svoboda, were married on December 20, 1941. The Pearl Harbor attack on American battleships by Japan had happened just nine days before. The United States declared war with Japan immediately and Germany declared war on the United States.

Just eight weeks after his wedding Chuck received a letter of “greetings” from the draft board. He passed his physical on February 19, 1942, and was placed on a train with other Chicago boys bound for Texas. Eventually they would be deemed battle-ready and with 5,000 others shipped to the British Isles and eventually to North Africa. Chuck and his fellow soldiers would serve under Major General George S. Patton, through years of 1942 & 1943.

But in the beginning of 1944 there was a special plan afoot to take control of Italy from the command of Field Marshal Albert Kesselring and his German troops, an opportunity to race into Italy from the beachhead (south), drawing enemy troops away from western France, where allied forces were preparing for an invasion of Normandy. Under the command of Lt. General Mark Clark and local Maj. General John Lucas, on January 22, 1944 50,000 American and British troops splashed through the winter-cold Mediterranean waters to establish a beachhead. They were ordered to dig in and wait; for what, they did not know. Chuck and his men obediently dug their holes and trenches into the swampy beachhead.

The German army shifted forces to contain the beachhead. Gunfire erupted from inland toward the ships off the shoreline; the ships returned fire. But many of the enemy shells were meant for the troops dug in, and shells dropping into any of the tiny holes on the beach would destroy the men crouching within. Mortars were firing both ways, with plenty of machine gun bullets and regular bombing. To make matters worse, the Germans installed a pair of long 280 mm cannons mounted on railway train cars in inland mountains 30 miles away. The guys on the beach called them “Anzio Annie.” They could hear the distant boom as the guns fired, and then there was the earthquake of the shell’s impact and explosion. One could never predict where the shell might land on the beach or its damage.

There were days and nights when the gunfire from both sides continued for hours uninterrupted around the clock. The ground shook. Days turned into weeks, weeks into months, with men occupying their holes in the ground, their only protection from explosions and shrapnel on the 7 by 30 mile stretch of Italian beach. Almost four months went by before the men were commanded to move inland. K rations were thrown into their holes usually in the dark of night. Many times Chuck would be hit on the head by these packages tossed into his hole. They ate when it came to them. Water was

in short supply. When it rained, they caught water in their helmets for bathing or filled their canteens.

At night, any light would pinpoint where they were; they could not light a fire for heat or use a flashlight to read. By day the sunlight burned their faces; there was no shade to be found. There were lots of new experiences for city boy, Chuck. One day a snake entered his foxhole; he picked it up and threw it out. There were wounded men to care for each day. A man in the hole next to Chuck went out of his mind; they evacuated him to an off shore ship for medical treatment. One night a driver of an amphibious truck – a “Duk” frightened by a near miss of a shell from Anzio Annie, stopped his truck near Chuck’s hole, jumped out and ran. The Duk had a load of mortar shells, sure to draw enemy fire the next day. Chuck jumped out of his hole and onto the truck, and after grinding gears a few times drove it far away from their temporary home, parked it and walked back. One morning Chuck announced to his buddies: “I’m getting out of here to stretch my legs!” But when he climbed out to walk, a German plane flew right out of the morning sun. In midst of machine gun fire erupting on both sides of him kicking up clods of dirt, Chuck dived back into his hole.

On a starless night Chuck heard a voice outside his foxhole: “Do not be alarmed, I am not the enemy; I am Chaplain McGee.” In the dark of the night, the chaplain slid into Chuck’s hole for a visit. Chaplain McGee began quoting parts of Revelation 21-22 from memory. It was inspirational to hear Scripture on heaven in the midst of chaotic surroundings. McGee prayed with Chuck and then slid out to visit the next hole. Chuck was a new Christian at this time and the visit encouraged him greatly in the midst of his uncertain environment.

Four months of waiting at Anzio Beach caused Winston Churchill to reflect: “I thought we should fling a wildcat ashore and all we got was a stranded whale on the beach.” However, as senseless as the beach occupation would seem, it opened the door for a successful invasion on the beach of Normandy June 6, 1944. Had the distraction of Anzio not been there, Normandy would have been



Chuck & Eleanor Svoboda
Married Dec. 20, 1941
Drafted into Army Feb. 19, 1942
Founder of Bible Related Ministries 1973

more heavily fortified for sure. Of the 120,000 total occupation at Anzio, 7,000 men died, with 30,000 more wounded or missing. An estimated 44,000 spent time in hospitals for wounds, disease, malaria or dysentery.

Finally, July 28, 1945, Chuck ended up in Fort Sheridan, north of Chicago, being processed for release. The officer in charge tried to persuade Chuck to “volunteer” for another tour of duty. But Chuck protested, “Just look at the paperwork sir. I have already been on three major campaigns in Africa and Europe.” As the officer reviewed the paperwork, Chuck continued, “Look outside that window. See the two women standing there alongside that man. One is my mother, the other my wife, alongside my brother. I haven’t seen or talked to them for three and one half years. I have done my duty sir; I’m marching out that door and going home!” The officer snapped a salute; Chuck was honorably discharged from the army and returned to civilian life. He had earned a Good Conduct medal, the European-African-Middle Eastern Theatre Ribbon with six battle stars, and the bronze arrowhead denoting his assault experience. He received one service stripe, six overseas service stripes, a ringing in his ears with hearing loss and the beginning of skin cancer on his face from those months in the brutal sun of Anzio Beach.

It is good to reflect upon the lives and sacrifice of veteran soldiers who served to protect and preserve our freedom. We recognize their service especially around Memorial Day and Independence Day; we are thankful for their loyalty to our country. Pastor Chuck Svoboda would be used of God in his civilian Christian service. He was instrumental in organizing sixteen churches and helping hundreds of churches go in the right direction through conflict and other testing times. He was a true soldier down to the very last days of his life.

(The preceding experience is an excerpt from the third chapter of “Crossfire,” the story of Chuck Svoboda, authored by David J. Bauer.)



Ladder Hint: To prevent marring the side of your house or an inside wall, use old woolen or cotton socks slipped over the top end of your extension ladder.

Quick Screen Repair: To patch small hole in window screen use a drop or two of clear color nail polish.

Grilling Safety: Keep either an open box of Baking Soda nearby, or a shaker bottle filled with Baking Soda to sprinkle on grill grease fires. Do not use water to put out a grease fire, as it will cause the fire to splatter or explode.

Coffee Filters: An object that costs very little for a large pack at the Dollar Tree. They can be used to cover food in microwave. Clean windows, mirrors or chrome. It can be placed between dishes to protect them from scratches. Wrap Christmas ornaments in filters to protect them. Filters can be used as a spoon rest while cooking or to clean up small counter spills. They can be used to strain soup stock or to tie fresh herbs in while making soup.

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Rev. David J. Bauer, Director



“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people” –Proverbs 14:34.

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**Rev. David J. Bauer's
Director's Itinerary**

June 22-23 Grace Conference Lake Zurich, IL

June 26-30 IFCA Int. Convention, Covington, KY

So far, schedule open for July pulpit supply.

RECIPES

Amish Chicken Casserole

2-1/2 Pound Chicken Breast, grilled or pan fried.

1/4 Cup Butter

4 Tablespoons White Flour

1 Quart Water

1/2 teaspoon Seasoned Salt

2 Tablespoons Salt

1/2 Package Brown Gravy

1 Cup chopped American Cheese or Cheddar

2-3 Quarts Mashed Potatoes & 3 teaspoons melted butter for finished topping. (Can use instant or regular mashed potatoes.)

Cook Chicken, then cut into small pieces and set aside. For gravy melt Butter in pan. Add Tablespoons of white Flour, Salt and Seasoned Salt Stir well, then add one quart Water. Heat until thickened, stirring constantly. Add Brown Gravy mix as needed. Stir in Shredded Cheese. Mix liquid with Chicken Pieces and put into the bottom of a large casserole dish. Put Mashed Potatoes on top of Gravy-Chicken mix. Drizzle three teaspoons melted Butter on top. Bake at 275 degrees for 1-1/2 hours, or until heated completely through.

BRM Field Report #7

Life moves on in and around our office as we serve churches daily calling for help.

A church to the far north of us is settling on a pastoral candidate at last. We pray for them and have been kept apprised with what is going on by members and board. They are voting this month on whether or not to call this man a candidate.

We advised a pastor to not make every issue in his church a conflict. Some things we just live with. Pastors must make judgment calls on what to fight over and what is unimportant. If we struggle over every issue, we will wear ourselves out very quickly.

We encounter situations where leaders are trained, but are never given an opportunity to serve. As leaders, we must give those we have invested time into, room to lead and especially to make some mistakes on their own. To shelter them or to do the job for them will not be good for them in the long run. We learn leadership by leading. 2 Timothy 2:2

In a similar way, several of our churches have been rejecting resumes of pastoral candidates who have not had direct experience as a multi-staff pastor. Some have served on multi-staff positions. It begs the question: "Just how does a pastor become a lead pastor of multi staff?" Somewhere along the line he must actually start doing it, right?

BRM must constantly be training new pastors and associates who will work in the field for us. Though we answer calls at our office covering many situations, we must give others an opportunity to serve with us. Any man we send out to preach or cover a church situation represents us and our philosophy of ministry. If such a man presents himself badly it will reflect upon us and our ministry.

We are finishing the month of June with presenting displays at the Grace Conference, Lake Zurich and at IFCA International Convention in Covington, KY. We have many friends in both fellowships and look for new contacts and pastoral possibilities.

Sincerely,

Rev. David J. Bauer Psalm 34:19

See pics of many events on BRM Facebook!