



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team



MailCall No. 2412

April 21, 2019

*517th Parachute Infantry Regiment
460th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion
596th Parachute Combat Engineer Company*

MailCall News

Sorry for the delay. I have back problems and headaches often, so I didn't do much the last couple days. I was wondering if you found any more information about the logos and copyright issues?. I think the book is completed except a possible forward by Debi and the inclusions of the logos. We were wanting to use the regular 517th and the oval parachute arm/hat patch but would love to make sure and have permission in writing. We're going to be out of town Thursday and part of Friday, but will have my phone and computer. Looking forward to speaking with you soon!

Terry Sidelinker
Spring Hill, FL



Sorry for the bother.... after weeks of searching, I just now accidentally stumbled into the info that we needed. The logo is Public Domain.

We'll let you know when the book becomes available!

Thanks,
Terry Sidelinker

Hi Terry,

So sorry to take so long to get back to you. I've been buried at work plus travelling, and I don't get to 517th correspondence as often as I would like. I've neglected the MailCall for a couple of weeks, and I do try to do that every week if I can.

In any case, I'm glad you found the info. Yes, the 517 logo is in the public domain. And pretty much anything you find on the website is available to use. Although I'm not the official representative of the 517th, lots of people from the 517th family have contributed to the website and I'm sure they do not mind use of their contributed stories and photos.

I also just sent you some more links and a couple of morning reports. My apologies if I had sent them before.

Bob Barrett



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Fw: Information regarding **1st LT Joseph Prager**

Bob, I wanted to thank you for your response several years ago to my son regarding his grandfather, my father. I was able to secure his jacket from the government and actually traced his time in the service from beginning to end. I created a rather large document tracing his time during WWII and after. I don't know what things you would like to have included in your archives but I'm happy to share what I have if it helps.

Attached is his photo taken in 1946. Yes, we actually have the photo you included and he is there!!

Regards,

Gary J Prager



460 HQ - Rome



517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Hi Gary,

I have added this Military history documents to our biography page, [Meet the Troopers](#).

See:

http://517prct.org/bios/joseph_prager/MILITARY%20SERVICE%20IN%20FOREIGN%20WARS.pdf

We are always looking for more stories, pictures and especially bios to remember these great men.

Thanks,
Bob Barrett

After my computer died on my, I'm finally back on line.... was off for about 5 weeks, but have most of my stuff back, but still lost a lot from my old hard drive.

Nothing to add, except I'm damn tired of this rain!!! Sunny California??? Well, it is a bit better than the fires!!!!

All the best to all of you.

Phil McSpadden

Hello Claire,

Thank you for all the documents. I will study them.

Do you think it is possible that **John Rupczyk** and **Frank Dallas** come with you for the commemoration and that you all came to Saint Cézaire on August 23, 2019.

I have a lot of work right now, but it's great after what I experienced with the disease.

Big kisses from France

Elisabeth Atlan

Hello, dear Elisabeth -

I hope you are well!!

I am sad to say that we cannot stay until 23 August. The celebrations five years ago were wonderful, and we truly enjoyed the warm welcome from the beautiful people of St. Cezaire.

I am copying Bob Barrett as well as other people I know are traveling but may not have their return flights yet.

Big hugs to little Ste. Cezaire!

Bisous -

Claire Giblin



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My mother, **Jo Anne Spencer Clark**, told me she was the first woman allowed to get married to a 517th paratrooper!

Bobbi-Jo (Spencer) McCauley



Jo Anne Spencer Clark, 97, of Colorado Springs, passed away on March 21, 2019. Born on July 6, 1921 in Columbus, Ohio to Paul R. Nicholson and Gladys (Stewart) Nicholson.

She graduated from Iowa State University 1943 with a Bachelor of Science degree. Jo Anne married **Dick Spencer III** in 1943. She lived in Des Moines, Iowa; Iowa City, Iowa and in Boulder, Colorado. She has been a Colorado Springs resident since 1951. She married Reverend Herbert W. Clark in 1985.

Jo Anne was interested in the arts, education, volunteering, water coloring, played cribbage at the senior center, and was very fond of her family and friends. She was a lifetime member of St. Paul's United Methodist Church; a President's Club member of University of Iowa; Iowa State University alumni. She is a charter member of PEO Chapters EA and FT and served as President of both. She was also

involved with the Pioneer Museum, Questers, Kinnikinnik DAR and Magna Carta Dames.

Jo Anne volunteered for 25 years with Pikes Peak Mental Health Association in the "Stepping Stones" program, she was voted "Volunteer of the Year" in 1995. Since 1981 Jo Anne served as a Foundation Board Member of Pikes Peak Community College, where in 1989 she established a continuing scholarship in honor of her 3 children.

Survived by her daughters, Barbara and Debbie, both of Colorado Springs; her granddaughter, Jade of Missoula, MT; her sister-in-law, Madge of Colorado Springs; and numerous nieces and nephews. Preceded in death by her son, Richard C. Spencer; her husbands, **Dick Spencer III** and Reverend Herbert Clark; her brothers, Paul and Jim Nicholson; and her sister, Phyllis Sherman.

Memorial service will be held Saturday, April 13, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. followed by a catered reception at Memorial Gardens Funeral Home and Cemetery, 3825 Airport Road in Colorado Springs.

The family would like to thank the staff of The Residence at Village Green and Suncrest Hospice for their loving care of Jo Anne. Memorial contributions in Jo Anne's memory are welcomed: Spencer-Clark Scholarship Fund at Pikes Peak Community College, Foundation Office, 5675 South Academy Boulevard, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80916 (719) 540-7554.

See "Meet the Troopers" biography of [Lt. Richard "Dick" Spencer III](#), HQ Company, 3rd Battalion

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Recent submissions on the 517th PRCT Guestbook:

Submitted by	Comments:
Name: COL Stevenson M. Wallace (Ret) From: Savannah, GA E-mail: smacgw@GMAIL.com	SGT Charles E. Wallace , G Company, 4th Platoon- he was my father, he passed away Jan 2004 in Nashville, TN. We were at the reunion in Nashville in the 80's. He was my inspiration for becoming a n airborne soldier in Special Forces. He talked about the Bulge, freezing weather, trenchfoot and German mines that failed to explode due to being frozen. Would like to contact other G Company connections. When is the next reunion? Added: April 17, 2019
Submitted by	Comments:
Name: Edward Karesky From: Massachusetts E-mail: edk313@hotmail.com	My father, 1st Lieutenant Sidney I. Karesky , born 2-2-1921 in Boston, Mass , and passed away in Phoenix, Arizona on January 17th, 1987 at the age of 65. He enlisted while visiting Chicago in May of 1940 and was officially retired in 1950. Dad was wounded in the Battle of the Bulge. He had two sons, Edward and Raymond Karesky who will always honor his memory. Not a day has gone by since his passing that I haven't thought of him. Love you, Dad Added: April 2, 2019
Submitted by	Comments:
Name: Terry Sidelinker From: Spring Hill, Florida E-mail: atstsidelinker@gmail.com	Entering this for my wife Debi Barger Sidelinker. Her Uncle, C.B.Jones was killed in Belgium in 1945. Debi is editing a book written by her mother about C.B. growing up and his military life and death. Thank you to all that served. All gave some, some gave all! Added: April 1, 2019

Hi Terry,

In case you haven't found it, there is some information and pictures about CB Jones on our website.

http://www.517prct.org/photos/c_b_jones/c_b_jones_part1.htm

http://www.517prct.org/photos/c_b_jones/c_b_jones_part2.htm

See more at: <https://www.google.com/search?q=cb+jones&sitesearch=517PRCT.org>

Also attached are 2 morning reports from the dates that he was wounded Jan 4, 1945, and officially Died of Wounds (DOW) on Jan 8, 1945.

I would love to be able to post all or parts of this info to our website. Or at least a link to the book, when published.

Regards,

Bob Barrett

MailCall@517prct.org



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I hope you and yours are well.

Judi Crowe, Pvt. Gruwell's niece, has granted permission for a memorial plaque to be placed at the cemetery in Montaurou, France in honor of her uncle, **Pvt. Robert R. Gruwell**.

The Mayor of Montauroux, Jean Yves Huet and the sculptor, Claude Bernard are working to get the plaque made. It will most likely be unveiled in August, the 75th anniversary of Pvt. Gruwell's death and the anniversary of Operation Dragoon. I understand that members of the 517th PRCT and their families will be in Southern France in August. I hope that you and the French officials can coordinate things so that members of the 517th PRCT and their families can attend the unveiling. It would be a great honor to Pvt. Gruwell's memory if this can be coordinated. Pvt. Gruwell is the only member of the 517th that has never been accounted for. At least we know what cemetery he is buried in and perhaps in the future, he will be found.

I do believe that Mr. **Clark Archer**, the 517th Historian would be glad to attend if her could. As you know, Mr. Clark was the person who searched for Pvt. Gruwell in the 1990s and sent the documentation to the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center in Carlisle, PA, where I found them and wrote Pvt. Gruwell's story.

Here are the email addresses for Mrssrs. Huet and Bernard:

Jean Yves Huet, jean.yves.huet@wanadoo.fr

Claud Bernard, fondurane@wanadoo.fr

Please keep me advised.

Sincerely,

Joe Figueiredo

Hi Joe,

Thanks for the info. That is great news!

Unfortunately, **Clark Archer**, the 517th historian who tried to search for the remains of Pvt Gruwell in the 90's died many years ago. There are a few people from the 517th family and possibly a trooper or two who are hoping to get to France in August. I will keep them informed through the MailCall newsletter, especially as the ceremonies get closer.

Regards,

Bob Barrett

It is with sadness that I'd like to report that Mr. **William McGary**, 517th has passed away on March 17th, 2019. He was proud of his service and attended the fall Honor Flight in 2014. He would come by my office and share some of his experiences, while he still drove. It has been an honor to serve Mr. McGary.

Dagmar Youngberg

VSO NMDVS Office - Carlsbad



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William Martin “Bob” McGary



On March 17, 2019, three-days short of his 98th Birthday, Our Irish Father, Uncle, Grandfather, Great-Grandfather and Friend, celebrated this St. Patty's day by taking his final nap. He left us peacefully, as befits a man who showed quiet strength through all that this life had to throw at him.

Born in Clyde, Texas, March 20, 1921, to parents John William McGary and Maggie Laura Copeland, Bob was Big Brother to ten siblings. The depression-era meant hardships that the McGary's took in stride, with Bob quitting school in the 6th grade to help on the farm. Bob only missed the softball that he enjoyed playing as a child; many years later, he still had mad skills with a softball that he loved to how to his Grandchildren. In 1940 at the age of Nineteen, Bob joined the Army, serving six years in the infantry, assigned to the ETO (European Theater of Operations). Attached to the 517th and then the 101st, Bob's boots carried him through much of the war in Europe; part of the occupying force in Sicily, then Naples and Rome. Then in 1943 while stationed near Rome Italy, he earned his Paratrooper wings. He was part of Operation Dragoon as the Allied forces invaded Southern France, and eventually earned his Purple Heart at the infamous Battle of the Bulge; pushing the Nazis back to the East through the snow-packed forests of Belgium. The recipient of a Bronze Star with a "V" device (denoting Valor in Combat), Bob was always humble about his deeds, choosing to focus on the human aspects; the people he knew, and the way the experiences shaped him. But oh how we love his stories of those days. In 1946, Bob "re-up-ed" for 3 more years, serving as a Mess Sergeant (Cook). Most of us know his bread, rolls, biscuits, and everything else he could make from a little flour and some water. Bob's handiness in the kitchen was ever-present as the family grew, and who can ever forget Bob's famous "Cayenne-Pepper shots"? Bob would insist to this day that his longevity was due to a little cayenne pepper in water every day. Bob's days in the military were only the first of many occupations Bob enjoyed; having spent entire careers in both the Railroad and the Oil-Rig industries. He somehow found time to also work Undercover with the D.E.A. in Arizona, which carried many more stories for us to enjoy. As Bob "slowed-down", most around these parts knew him as the "Snow-Cone Man", as he and Trinidad drove the streets of Carlsbad.

Bob's Marriage to Elizabeth brought his first child, Bill, who also waits for his Father on the other side. In 1960, Bob married the Love of his Life, Trinidad Torres McGary, who preceded him in death in 2017. This union merged two families into one, with Trinidad & Bob's children; Sophia (DeLeon), Bill, Edward, Patricia (Saldivar) and Ralph, then growing the family to include three more: Lillian (Miller), Cyndi, and DeaEsta (Solomon). The McGary clan has grown from there to include twenty Grandchildren, many Great grandchildren, and even more who call themselves part of the family.

Bob was always a religious man, with stories of times when divine providence saved his life during WWII. In the '70s, The Bob & Trini McGary family joined themselves to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, where for the rest of their days they remained as active as their health would allow. Though Bob would never be accused of being a saint, he loved God, and he showed it in the way he treated others with honesty, kindness and generosity, even when he didn't much care for them.

Bob's legacy is strength and perseverance. He believed, and taught us all, that "you can do anything, if you hold your kisser right".



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Hello, all!

I just got off the phone with **Morris McDowell**, aka Luther, whose cousin **Layton Pippin** was in the outfit. He is hoping to come to France this summer for the 75th anniversary, his first trip ever to France (though he went to Belgium, and did meet the Targnions, years ago).

He is looking to be there as inexpensively as possible, and I am copying Karen because I know you camped with re-enactors last year! Do we have any suggestions for him, as a single at a hotel will be expensive. I know there are many AirBnB options in Draguinan. Is there a friend who might be willing to rent a room or help in any other way?

The second question is that he would really like to get up to Sospel. **Patou and Roland**, I have not even checked to see if you're scheduled to be around in August - but I guess it is time to start planning!

I think that he would love to see Sospel and Col de Braus/Hill 1098, but it is either a long day trip or an overnight.

I am also including **Mike and Julie Black**, who have been interested in coming.

Eric, do we have a schedule of events yet? Should I check with Alison?

I hope all is well with everyone.

Much love -

Claire

Hi Eric!

I know that some of us already have flights and Patou has said that we need to let her know how many will be visiting Sospel after the 15th.

Can you please send a rough itinerary?

I know that the 16th at the Rhone is occurring only with officials. I plan to ask Alison if we can have a small gathering during an afternoon like we did 5 years ago.

Thanks. Bises and hugs!

Claire

On March 3, 2019 at 11:27 AM **Karen Wallace** wrote:

We did camp, was rough but enjoyed it. We had brought sleeping pad and bag, warm enough but wet when it rained. We will probably do it again tho. Please keep us informed of events, we will be there.

Wayne karen and fisher



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On April 11, 2019 at 6:10 AM Eric RENOUX <cabrian9@hotmail.fr> wrote:

Bonjour Ma Chère Claire !!...

I hope that all is ok for you all, I saw some of your publications on FB, but I'm not very active on FB !.

Well about celebrations for this 75th.... I think will organise the 14th in the morning at Le Mitan. For the afternoon, I can tell you nothing because this year it will be a big Official Celebration !!! and it will be very hard with security, protocol, Politics and officials persons !!... and Bla Bla Bla !!... you know !...

For the 16th I hope to be able to organise the same program than last year, if you agree. Tell me that you want to do if you have an other idea or something new??? We organise for you, for your father and for the memory of all the other men like Leo, Dick, Peter, Gary, etc... not for me !

C'est dommage pour le cimetière US !... It was really great for the 70th !... 🙄

I'm in contact with Michele and Cheryl DILLARD, they organise a trip with a 551st group , I don't know if you plan to join with them ?

I'm in contact with **Theresa PUGH**, daughter of **Charles PUGH** 596th ! She plan to come in august.

Tell me if you need help to check or reserve with hotels ot for anything !...

Do you know who plan to came in august and if you have a listing. I'll check with differents contacts I have and cross with you're. We try to have a listing with every body for a good organisation !.

Hope a beautifull 75th in Provence !...

On t'embrasse ainsi que toute la famille et Alan !...

Many hugs for you all !! 😊

Laura, Laurence & Eric

Hi, Eric -

I think I've copied everyone I know to be coming from the 517th.

We have rooms at Col de l'Ange in Draguinan; we may wind up staying with friends in Les Arcs, but that is unknown at this time.

So far, we are:

definite:

- Morris McDowell (Morris needs to book a room and is available to bunk with someone!)
- Allan Johnson - me - Jim Giblin

Probably coming: Karen - Wayne - Fischer Frice Wallace

- Melanie Hanson



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- Mike and Julie Black
- Bruce and Liz Broudy - maybe Eileen Broudy Shaw (Bruce has expressed an interest in following the 551 itinerary, which they'd sent to Mail Call earlier)
- Bob Webber and son Bruce

14 August: Le Mitan morning - La Motte evening events

15 August: Le Muy in the morning; Les Arcs in the evening

16 August: Valbournes closing ceremony (probable) and lunch with friends

I am disappointed to report that the ceremony at the Rhone, usually on the morning of the 16th, has not occurred for the last couple of years. If you attended 70th anniversary observances, you remember what I do: the many volunteer groups and re-enactors, together with cemetery and sometimes US government officials in a heartfelt ceremony of thanks and friendship. Sadly, this seems not to be specific to the Rhone but rather has evidently occurred all over, with volunteer/living history organizations being scaled way back or eliminated totally from ceremonies at ABMC sites. The ceremony that replaces it is attended by many dignitaries and often members of the US 6th Fleet; it is large, later and far more official in nature.

I will write to our favorite associate there and ask if we can use the side garden for a gathering of friends (which we did five years ago), at some other time if people think it's a good idea.

The "official" ceremony at the Rhone will almost certainly conflict directly with a friend's ceremony (likely at Valbournes). For me personally, I am saddened that friends who inaugurated these events are being pushed aside. Last year, we attended the same ceremony - but it was held at Valbournes instead. I prefer the Rhone to the chateau, to be sure - but I don't know what other venue could support this event.

We have attended the "official" ceremonies at the Rhone, probably three times in recent years, and I cannot recommend it for my father. It's long, hot and tiring.

There are many other times to visit the Rhone, and we do. We can go and help take the flags down at 4:30 (as Dad and Leo did one year), and we often make a quick visit simply to pay respects. I would say we probably go over three times on an average trip. My point is that there are many times to pay respects or visit to place flowers if you'd like (they now have vases and water taps, so we can bring our own flowers for graves. I think that this might be something we'd like to do for the 75th for the men of the 517th, and it wouldn't be too costly if we get market flowers).

I would love to visit Sospel, where the 517 was also instrumental. Patou and Roland would like to know how many people would like to visit there after the 14/16 August events.

So this is what I have thus far. Bruce Broudy - please add Eileen's email (how can I not have it?).

Hugs to all! I cannot believe we'll all be there together! I miss you all!

Claire



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I am seeing more and more collections of 517th memorabilia on eBay. It's sad that this stuff is now auctioned to the public, but I hope it ll gets picked up by people who care about the troopers, not just to make money. Currently I see letters and photos from **Don Pargeon** (Service Company) and **John Duarte** (B Company)

I also see on eBay this hand-made metal sign for sale. It's \$35 plus \$16 shipping. If anyone buys one and let us know if he quality is any good. It looks nice. – Bob Barrett

Special Operations Group Presents "Military Insignia 3D" collection by Serge Averbuk,

517th Airborne Parachute Infantry Regiment Metal Sign – 13” x 17”

We hand make all of our custom metal shapes in the USA using heavy gauge american steel and a process known as sublimation, where the image is baked into a powder coating for a durable and long lasting finish. This custom metal shape is drilled and riveted for easy hanging. Metal not Tin



<https://www.ebay.com/itm/517th-Airborne-Parachute-Infantry-Regiment-Metal-Sign-13-x-17/323746941044?hash=item4b60d24874:g:5B0AAOSw4S1cTMQp>

Greetings Bob, hope all is well. Full disclosure, I am a big Buster Keaton fan. This image is from his film called “The High Sign”.

In the film the “Blinking Buzzards” are band of boardwalk thieves who pull Buster into one of their schemes.

As you can guess the gang’s name and accompanying buzzard logo caught my eye and made me wonder if this might have had an influence on the logo and moniker of the “The Battling Buzzards” .

Those who could solve such a mystery would be found here in mailcall.

The film itself is good example of Buster in his early silent films. It can be found on YouTube along with most if not all of his films. I guarantee if you are not yet a Buster Keaton fan you will be after you after watching the genius in his prime. Enjoy.



All the best. - **Paul Abbene**

PS - Buster was a WWI veteran and includes some very funny rifle tricks in this film that he likely created while in basic to keep up moral.



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Hi All:

If anyone is going to the service at the Rhone American Cemetery this Memorial Day, please contact us at karstc@netzero.com

We are going and would love to meet other family members who have relatives that participated in Operation Dragoon. My Uncle was **Albert M. Robinson** of the 517th

Thanks in advance for posting this.

Kind Regards,
Cindy Karst
karstc@netzero.com
703 282 0558



D-Day 75th Commemorations at Camp Toccoa at Currahee are to honor the Soldiers and Veterans of the June 6, 1944 landings in Normandy.

Thousands of men lost their lives while the others continued to fight the fight to free the countries that was under German Occupations.

In the months that followed America and our Allies were able to change the course of the war to secure the freedom we are so fortunate to have today. We hope you will join us as we give thanks to these soldiers and the men and women that serve our Country today.

There will be 3 days of events this year we hope you will join us. More information to be posted for each event. You may register for the D-Day Run on www.active.com and purchase banquet tickets on CTC website. www.campoccoaatcurrahee.com



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In the past, we have mentioned a couple of famous people who trained as paratroopers at Toccoa and MacKall, including Rod Serling of *The Twilight Zone* and actor Harold Russell. I wasn't familiar with Harold Russell at all, but recently did some research and was surprised by what I found. Some strange coincidences with my Dad, Ben Barrett.

Harold John Russell was born in Canada and moved to Massachusetts after his father's death. (My Mother, Fran (Lawlor) Barrett, was a Canadian who also came to Massachusetts after her parent's death and finished high school.)

Harold Russell worked in a food market in Cambridge, MA before the war. (Ben Barrett owned a small laundry in Cambridge for most of his working years.)

Harold Russell was an Army demolition instructor at Camp MacKall with the 515th PIR. (Ben Barrett was also at jump

school with the 515th at Camp MacKall around the same time before he transferred to the 517th.)

Russell was training paratroopers at Camp MacKall NC on June 6, 1944 when some TNT he was using exploded in his hands. He lost both hands.

After receiving hooks, and training on them, he was chosen to make an Army training film called "Diary of A Sergeant". William Wyler saw the film and decided to cast him in *The Best Years of Our Lives* (1946). Harold Russell played Homer Parish. For this role he received 2 Oscars, a Best Supporting and one for being an inspiration to all returning veterans. He is the only actor to receive 2 Oscars for the same role.

After the movies, Russell enrolled at Boston University's College of Business Administration, from which he graduated in 1949. (Ben Barrett also graduated from BU's College of Business Administration, also in 1949.)

Mr. Russell became so adept with the hooks that replaced his hands, that he would often joke that he could do anything but pick up a dinner check with them.

He later went on to help establish AMVETS as a viable alternative to the American Legion for veterans, though his dream of an international veteran's organization was never realized. The top annual award of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities is called The Harold Russell Medal.

He later appeared in *Inside Moves* (1980) and *Dogtown* (1997). He lived with his wife on Cape Cod in Massachusetts. He wrote 2 biographies: "*Victory in My Hands*" (1947) & "*The Best Years of My Life*" (1981).

He is buried in Wayland, MA.



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Administrivia

If you miss any MailCalls, they are all available online at <http://www.517prct.org/mailcall/>

- At any time, if you want to be added or removed from the MailCall list, just let me know, or just click on the unsubscribe link on the email.
- Send any news, stories, or feedback to: MailCall@517prct.org
- If you send me email that you do not want included in MailCall, just label it as FYEO.
- I now understand how Ben could get confused about what he already posted and what he didn't. If I miss something, please just send it again.

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"Spring is here."