



## From the Desk of Roundtable President Charles Holt

March & April 2024 Newsletter

[www.WWIIroundtable.com](http://www.WWIIroundtable.com)

Bonjour! I LOVE WINTER! Last month I ice skated every day during that deep freeze on a lake in Marion County...WUNDERBAR! But we all like a warm meeting room with friends old and new every month...where we can hear a LIVE presentation about WWII and that era—so much better than the COVID-era Zoom programs. Attendance is increasing due to exceptional LIVE presentations...like the one this month with WWII veteran Ira W. Rhodes. In March, we welcome back our VP, Kathryn Lerch, who is presenting a program on the subject of her newest book, *Your European Correspondent—Alma De Luce 1939-1941*. So spread the word, invite your friends and family, and RSVP each month ASAP. I ALWAYS look forward to it and all the happy faces in the crowd.

*Charles Holt, D.O.*

WHERE HISTORY AND  
HEROES MEET



WWII HISTORY &  
WARTIME STORIES  
*for Everyone!*



Ernie Pyle  
WWII Pulitzer Prize Reporter

MONTHLY DINNER PROGRAMS

*Live Guest Speakers*  
Northside Events & Social Club  
(formerly "Knights of Columbus")  
2100 E 71st Street,  
Indianapolis, IN 46220

Doors open - 5 PM  
\$11 Buffet Dinner - 6 PM (RSVP)  
Program - 7 PM

WWIIROUNDTABLE.COM

**Dinner 6-7:00 at North Side Social! Please RSVP**

**7:00: Trivia Presentation 7:15 Featured Program**

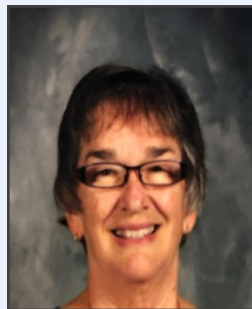
### Programs March-April 2024

March



**Kathryn Lerch, RT VP & Editor**  
*"Your European Correspondent*  
*Alma De Luce 1939-1941"*

April

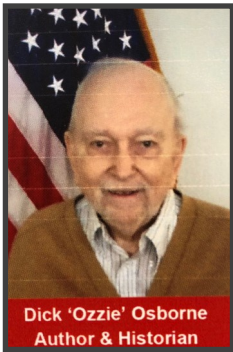


**Preview: Linda Minton, Author**  
**Round Table Member**  
*"Honoring Vietnam Veterans"*

### Roundtable Board

Charles A. Holt, President  
Open, 1st VP  
Kathryn Lerch, 2nd VP  
Treasurer, Andy Fulks  
Asst Treas., Richard Eisgruber  
Meeting Arrangements: Karl &  
Jan Kleinbub  
At Large: Brad Damon, Travis  
Petrie, Marlene Mendonsa, &  
Steve Hogan  
Web/Audio/Visual:  
Travis Petrie & Steve Hogan

**Regular Monthly Dinner \$11++ Join us in person if you are able!** Be sure to send your monthly dinner RSVPs to Karl Kleinbub: [knj1002@myinestar.net](mailto:knj1002@myinestar.net) or phone 317- 607- 6948 **no later than Thursday prior to Monday's program!** (Do not rsvp via the website!) A head count for Northside Events & Social Club (K of C) is very important. Also, please have CASH in exact change \$11 ++ tip for your meal. We encourage you to invite a guest! Thank you!



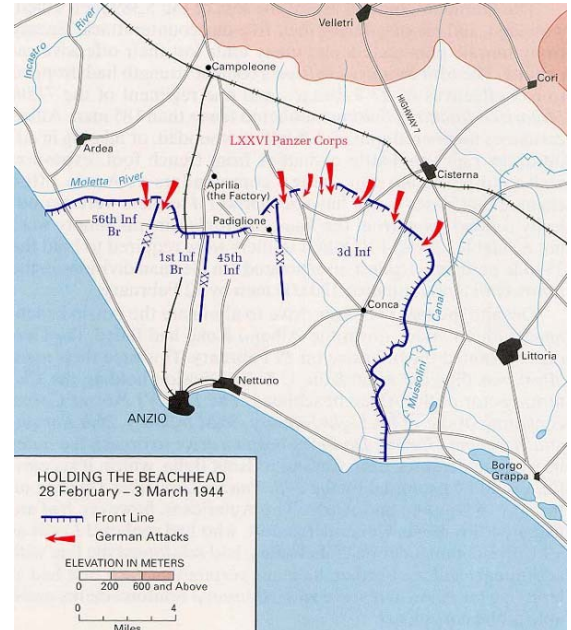
## WW 2 Trivia for March & April 2024

Inspired by Ozzie's earlier trivia reports . . .

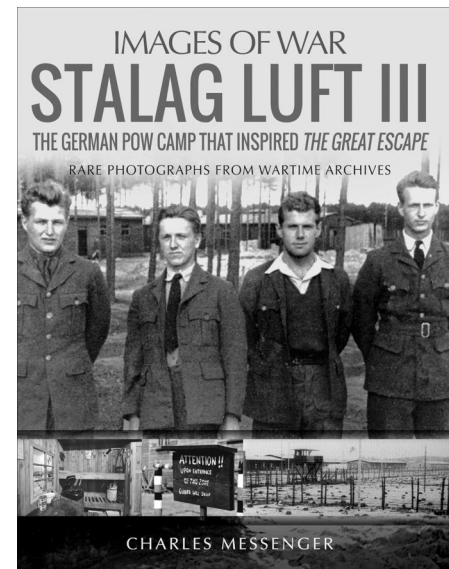
*Eighty Years ago! . . . in March & April 1944 . . .*

- ◆ March 3 — Anzio, Italy beachhead “German forces attack the line held by US 3rd Division
- ◆ March 4 — Soviet forces launch new attacks in Ukraine, north and east of Ternopol
- ◆ March 6 — US heavy bombers raid Berlin for the first time. A force of 660 bombers is sent and 69 are lost.
- ◆ March 8 — USAAF heavy bombers raid Berlin for a second time. About 10 percent of the force of 580 bombers is lost despite the escort of 800 fighters.
- ◆ March 15 — Forces of the US 5th Army launches new attacks on Cassino. A preliminary bombardment consisting of 14,000 tons of bombs and 190,000 shells is directed on the town.
- ◆ March 19 — *In Hungary...* German forces occupy Hungary (Operation Margarete) to prevent a Hungary from withdrawing from the war and ensure a line of retreat for German forces to the east as well as continued access to Hungarian oil resources.
- ◆ March 24—*In Germany...* The great escape from Stalag Luft III, a German prisoner of war camp near Sagan, takes place during the night (March 24-25). Of 76 Allied airmen who take part, 50 are recaptured and executed.
- ◆ April 3 — *In Occupied Norway...* Operation Tungsten: the German battleship Tirpitz is attacked and damaged by 41 Barracuda bombers, escorted by 41 fighters, from the carriers (Victorious, Furious and 4 escort carriers) of the British Home Fleet.
- ◆ April 15 — The US 15th Air Force sends 500 sorties to Bucharest and Ploesti
- ◆ April 21 — *In Liberated Italy...* Marshal Badoglio forms a coalition government.
- ◆ April 27—*In Britain...* During the night (April 27-28), 3 American LST landing craft, conducting an invasion exercise (Exercise "Tiger"), are torpedoed by German E-boats in Lyme Bay. A total of 638 troops are killed. This incident is kept secret for fear of damaging Anglo-American relations.
- ◆ April 30— *In the Caroline Islands...* US Task Force 58 (Admiral Mitscher) raids the Japanese base at Truk for a second day. Over the two days, the Japanese lose 93 aircraft out of a total 104 while the Americans lose 35 planes. Meanwhile, American Admiral Oldendorf leads a force of 9 cruisers and 8 destroyers to bombard targets in the Sawatan Islands, southeast of Truk.

See source: <https://onwar.com/wwii/chronology/194404.html>



**Anzio Beachhead 1944:** Source <https://history.army.mil/brochures/anzio/map3.JPG>



*Stalag Luft III: The German Pow Camp That Inspired The Great Escape* (Images of War)

In early 1942, the Third Reich opened a maximum-security prisoner-of-war camp for captured Allied airmen in Lower Silesia, now Poland. Called Stalag Luft III, the camp soon came to contain some of the most inventive escapers ever known.

## Liberation of a Stalag Luft Camp & Remembering Leonard Rose . . .

Leonard Rose, also known as "Rosie" was a member of our Indianapolis WW2 Round Table. He passed away in 2006. A few of our long-time members may remember how we stood for a prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance, and then Rosie always added to those assembled: "Play ball!"

According to his obituary he was a prisoner in Stalag Luft III. "Rosie" was "inducted into the service on February 15, 1943." After Gunnery School in Laredo, TX., he joined "Crew formation at Salt Lake, UT and crew training in B-24's at Davis Monthan, Tucson, AZ." Eventually he went by "troop ship to Oran, North Africa to Naples, thence to their base in Cerignola, Italy. He was with the 15th AF, 459th BG, 758 BS. His B-24 was hit over Germany on his 28th mission on Aug. 29, 1944. He bailed out over Yugoslavia and was taken prisoner by the Germans. He was put in a prison at Budapest, Hungary and held 16 days in solitary confinement. He was then taken by 40 & 8 boxcar through Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Germany to the prison camp Stalag Luft IV in the town of Kiefheide and railroad station of Grossstychow in the Pomeranian Sector of Northern Germany at the crossing of the 16 and 54 meridian of the Globe. He and the other prisoners were marched out of Stalag Luft IV by the Germans on February 8, 1945 and walked more than 500 miles. They were liberated by the Russians who, in turn, locked them up for three weeks. He escaped and reached the American Army on May 20, 1945. Rose was the Indiana Dept. Commander, and Indiana Hoosier Chapter Adj. Treas. since 1979. He had more than 2500 names and address of ex-POWs from Stalag Luft IV. There were more than 10,000 prisoners in February 1945 before they were marched out by the Germans." [Source: <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/leonard-rose-obituary?id=18909891>]

It was fortunate that the Legacy Initiative at Park Tudor School also did an oral history interview with Rosie and portions were published in *Words of War* (Vol. 2) in 2004. Rosie flew in combat for forty-two days, beginning with his first mission on July 17, 1943. After their plane was hit, they were trying to get back to Italy. Unfortunately, as he reported: "We run out of fuel and we run out of engines and so we parachuted out and we ended up landing in Yugoslavia. Then I was captured by the Croats and the next day they turned us over to the Germans, and then they Germans took us to Budapest, Hungary and put me in an old prison that was 1,000 years old. I spent three weeks there in solitary confinement, and then after that they put us in box cars, and took me due north to what is now Poland, but then they [took] us over to Germany and we were in a prison camp and they had 10,000 of us there." Later, when he was liberated by the Russians, he escaped from them. "We went over the wall that night to survive. . . . We walked all night because we knew that if we went west we was finally getting to the Allies, and so come daylight we got scared . . . There was a big pine forest . . . so we crawled up in that pine forest in a big pile of pine needles and just slept all day." They "walked between twenty-five and forty miles in two nights, then come daylight they reached the Mulde River" and "it so happened that the 69th Infantry Division had a pontoon bridge" and "they sent us across the bridge and so that's when I got back to the Americans. That was the day that Heaven couldn't be any greater. . . . They took off our old clothes and burned them. I had four hot showers, good American food, changes of clothes . . . And when we went to bed that night I said 'Lord, Heaven couldn't be sweeter than this, 'cause that was a day I will always remember.'" Let us remember "Rosie" and heroes like him from WW2 who made sacrifices for all of us. [Editor note: if you wish a full copy of his story, email [klerch@parktudor.org](mailto:klerch@parktudor.org) for a pdf from this anthology]

**Please send us suggestions for future programs!**

### **New Member & Renewal Annual Dues Now Being Accepted for 2024**

**Veteran Family \$20.00; Non-Veteran Family \$25.00; WWII Veterans/widows FREE Membership**

Please mail your check to: WWII Roundtable 917 E. Walnut St, Lebanon IN 46052 or Pay at the dinner

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

WW2 Veteran? \_\_\_\_\_ Post-WW2 Veteran? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, branch & period of service \_\_\_\_\_



As a courtesy to others, with the winter season's rising number of viruses or flu-bugs, please Do Not attend the dinner if you are ill, or possibly becoming ill, as you may be contagious to others.

*Same time, same place, great speakers and remember to invite a guest!*



Books maybe pre-ordered or possibly purchased at the March meeting—this depends on the printing schedule! [More information coming soon!](#)

**As a preview to the newest book from the Park Tudor Legacy Initiative Project, here are some praise quotes to whet your reading interest!**

**Dean Armstrong:** "I have read with great fascination the letters of Alma De Luce concerning her travels with her correspondent husband, Dan, in the days preceding the outbreak of World War II. From the voyage on the SS *Normandie* to Europe, to the escape from Calcutta to the United States on the USS *President Madison*, her eye for detail is phenomenal. Her descriptions are great even down to the details of the caique escape from Athens in 1941. If you want a great read about Europe as it descends into war and chaos, this is a great book for your library." — **Armstrong is a graduate of VMI, a retired airline pilot, and leads WW2 tours to Normandy and the Pacific**

**Ian Ona Johnson, PhD:** "This remarkable collection recounts Europe's descent into war from the vantage-point of Alma De Luce, the adventurous wife of an AP reporter, and a photographer and writer in her own right. Her letters home detail society being drawn into the maelstrom of conflict from Budapest to Beirut, and many places in between. This latest product of the Park Tudor Legacy Initiative brings to life a fascinating woman's adventures and observations

during a critical moment of history." — **Johnson is the P. J. Moran Family Assistant Professor of Military History, The University of Notre Dame** Author: *Faustian Bargain: The Soviet-German Partnership and the Origins of the Second World War* (2022). Johnson spoke to our WW2 Round Table in July 2021 about his book *Faustian Bargain*.

**Dr. Charles Holt, President, Indianapolis WW2 Round Table:** "Home Run! Once again, Kathryn Lerch has run the bases with her account of Alma De Luce. Wow! What an exciting TRUE story that could easily be made into a great movie. First, millions foresee WWII coming. Alma and her AP correspondent husband get the dream job of covering the rapidly escalating European news. Then, they, themselves are caught in the maelstrom of Nazi Germany taking over the whole of Europe and must escape or be imprisoned or even die! I know Kathryn. I have seen and heard and read her breadth of WWII acumen. I want all to read this book!"



**Emily Hackwelder, Park Tudor Class of 2025:** "I came to Park Tudor knowing that I wanted to be a part of the Legacy Initiative. The idea of preserving wartime stories and the opportunity to publish books was fascinating to me, and I couldn't wait to join. . . . The Legacy Initiative has never written a biography of a woman before, and I was very eager to change that. While reading Alma's letters, I became captivated by her story and became even more determined to see this project through to publication. The Alma De Luce project started out small, [but] . . . we have been joined and assisted by other dedicated members of our Legacy Initiative group. Almost two years later, our little passion project has evolved into [our] main focus. Getting a chance to watch this book move from the earliest stages of development to publication has been an incredible experience, and I'm so glad to be a part of sharing Alma's story with the world."

Pre-order book forms coming soon! Books may also be purchased on-line at [Blurb.com](#) beginning in late March or April (details soon)