

Andy

(Continued from Page One) earning several medals including the Bronze Star. He was part of the Normandy landing and also saw action in Bastogne, Luxemburg, Austria and Germany. He remembers that when the 101st was going through Germany, the only vehicles the enemy had left were horses and "in every town old men came out to greet the soldiers waving flags but the young boys fired sniper guns at us."

Andy and his wife, Florence, who have been married 34 years, attended the 30th reunion of the 101st Airborne in Kentucky seven years ago and plan to attend more reunions once Andy is officially

retired. Everyone who knows him knows that Andy's retirement won't mean that he'll sit down all day and relax. More likely, he'll build another beautifully crafted stone wall around his home on Briar Crest Road, or play more golf with his golfing buddy Willard Hoover, or take his beloved little black dog, "Dee-Dee", for more than an hour's walk in the woods every day.

Then there is the tiered garden that Andy is building with railroad ties and has never quite had the time to finish. Andy has had a reputation for raising beautiful flowers since the time he grew and

sold seasonal flowers in a greenhouse behind the house where he used to live on the Tunkhannock Highway. He does not keep all the flowers he grows though, he uses many of them to decorate veterans' graves, a task he has assumed for many years.

Over the years, Andy has also planted a garden of well-wishers throughout Dallas.

When he says, "Just tell everyone I'm going to miss them, particularly the kids. I love them all and I'll miss the warmth of the people," Andy is telling us just what we all feel about him.

We'll miss you Andy-Our-Mailman.

VOA

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the Department of Housing and Urban Development until finding his true niche with the Volunteers of America.

Under Fred's guidance, the local branch of V.O.A. now operates two group homes, one for young boys on Academy Street in Wilkes-Barre and a second for girls on South Gates Avenue in Kingston. There is also a specialized foster home program where troubled children are placed with individual families and a church-funded prison education program at Luzerne County Prison as well as the Thrift Store at 575 South Main Street.

It is the Thrift Store and the VOA administrative offices in the rather dilapidated former American Clothing Outlet that have been the base of the problem with the city of Wilkes-Barre. The red, white and blue structure was purchased from First Eastern Bank under the seldomly-used Neighborhood Assistance Act but ran afoul of city restrictions when applying for a non-profit tax exemption. At the moment, the future of the building is still in limbo but hopefully approval will be granted at the July 21 zoning board meeting.

Fred, who could be called the personification of the word volunteer, believes deeply that "work and prayer" will come through for him this time as they have so often in the past. Then it will be full steam ahead with new programs, expansion of existing ones and finding new and better ways to help people who are hurting.

Fred's compassion and deep concern for all people is particularly obvious when he talks about children and their needs. On the subject of runaways, which has become an area of national concern, he observed that "a high percentage of runaways are never even reported as missing by their families." Over the years, he has found that most "don't run away because they're bad kids, but because they are running away from bad problems. It is their way of dealing with stress."

Children are also very important on a different level in Fred's personal life. He and his wife, the former Roberta Williams of Dallas, have a combined family of seven. Fred's first wife died when the youngest of their

four children was under two years of age and the oldest 8 years old and Roberta had three teenage children from a previous marriage. A testament to how well the Andersons have managed to make two families into one is the fact that Mrs. Anderson is presently enroute on a thousand mile trek to Michigan taking Fred's four children on their yearly visit to see his first wife's parents.

When Roberta Anderson returns, she will once again resume her responsibilities as Assistant Director of the Volunteers of America. Ironically, the Andersons had once been classmates at Westmoreland High School in Trucksville and met again and subsequently married when Roberta applied for a job with the then newly formed Volunteers of America. Up until two years ago when the military format of V.O.A. was changed, they both bore the title of Major Anderson. The husband and wife team effort of serving in the V.O.A. is not as unusual as one might assume.

The original founders of the organization in 1896 were a married couple - Maude and Ballington Booth - who were sent here from England by his father William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army. As the younger Booths became more Americanized and recognized that there were different needs in this country, they broke with the parent group and established their own American based organization with the help of Teddy Roosevelt.

Since then, the V.O.A. has grown and grown again to its present proportions which continue to serve the people well despite severe government cutbacks that have once again made private contributions and Thrift Stores the only viable answer to the economics of social service. Several people in this area are volunteer workers in the store or work with the children; others contribute money, or used clothing or furniture to help the needy.

Whatever you can do, you do with God's help seems to be Fred Anderson's motto and it would be difficult for anyone meeting him not to become just as enthusiastic about volunteering to help people.

WWV Attendance Policy Proves Effective

Last September, the Wyoming Valley West School District instituted a new attendance policy which required greater accountability on the part of each student along with

closer control of student absences by both teachers and administrators. Wyoming Valley West administrators report that the monthly average number of students unlawfully

absent is the lowest it has been in five years. To further illustrate the apparent effectiveness of the new attendance policy, the 1982 graduating class

had 30 students with absences of 35 days or more. This year's 1983 class had just three such pupils.

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Inmates

(Continued from Page One)

had completed 21 credits toward an Associate Degree before the funding ended and the program was discontinued.

"I was one-third of the way toward a college degree when the program ended," Vaccarello said. "I really enjoyed taking the courses and was disappointed when they were stopped."

At the time, Vaccarello was heavily involved with the Jaycees Organization and decided to approach them to see if maybe something could be done to continue the college courses for inmates.

He explained the idea to both the Jaycees and the prison administrators and, although both groups felt

his intentions were good, neither felt the community would render support to the inmates.

After much persuasion, however, Vaccarello received approval to begin searching for sponsors in November, 1980. He then proceeded to send out more than 3,000 letters to local businesses and civic organizations.

Vaccarello explained that the first 50 responses to his financial request were negative and he became disillusioned.

"All I got were letters from organizations that said they could not or would not contribute at the time," he explained. "I became very disheartened about the whole thing."

Then - in June of 1981 - Vaccarello received a

letter from Geppert Bros., Inc. in Colmar, Pa. with a check for \$100 toward his program.

"Suddenly I started to get excited about the whole thing," the inmate said. "When the money started coming in, we did a media blitz, saturating the television stations and the newspapers with our idea. And, in two weeks, we had received \$2,000 toward the program."

Today, there are many businesses and organizations throughout the state of Pennsylvania that have contributed to the sponsorship of the program.

Through the cooperation of Luzerne County Community College, the inmate college program was begun. Conducted through LCC's Department of Continuing Education because

the classes are taught off campus, the program enrolled 26 inmates in four courses the first semester and has grown to 50 inmates and six courses now.

Vaccarello explained that 500 inmates are eligible for the program but tough pre-screening exercises insure that no one enrolls in the program unless they qualify.

"We pre-screen the inmates before they enter the program," Vaccarello said. "And we do this to make sure they meet the necessary requirements because we don't want to waste the funds we have."

Vaccarello added that the inmates are quite serious about the program and don't take their studies lightly.

"The inmates pay for their own books," he said. "The average cost for two books is about \$45. The inmates here make between 76 cents and \$1.00 a day working at the prison. If a man is going to give up almost two months' salary to pay for his books, you can be sure he is going to be serious about his classes."

Vaccarello added that the inmates who attend the college classes are given no special treatment by prison administrators.

"Once in a while, there is a non-involved inmate who may be against the program," Vaccarello said. "But most of the inmates who are not involved in the program just leave us alone."

Vaccarello explained that the Dallas institution is the only institution in the state of Pennsylvania to have a college program of this kind, but that he is in the process of starting programs at both the Camp Hill and Graterford institutions. He is also attempting to find computer companies who are willing to donate computer hardware equipment to the Dallas institution so that the inmates there may participate in a computer course.

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