

THE GAZETTE

Published for members of the SHAPE/Chièvres, Brussels and Schinnen communities

5k fitness run

There will be a 5k run Feb. 9 at 9 a.m. The run will start at the Community Recreation Center. This is the first of a new monthly 5k program to promote fitness and outdoor recreation throughout the community.

Don't go breaking your heart

February is Healthy Heart month. The SHAPE Health Clinic will have healthy heart awareness activities Feb. 7 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the main entrance. There will be a free oatmeal breakfast, blood pressure, height and weight checks and door prizes.

Chièvres commissary

Some of the regular Commissary phone numbers are not operational for an unknown period of time. If you need to call the Commissary, dial the temporary line DSN 361-6491 or civilian 068-27-6491.

Haz Mat training

The Mandatory Hazardous Material Training for Chièvres Air Base will be held from Feb. 6 until Feb. 8. More information in the community briefs section.

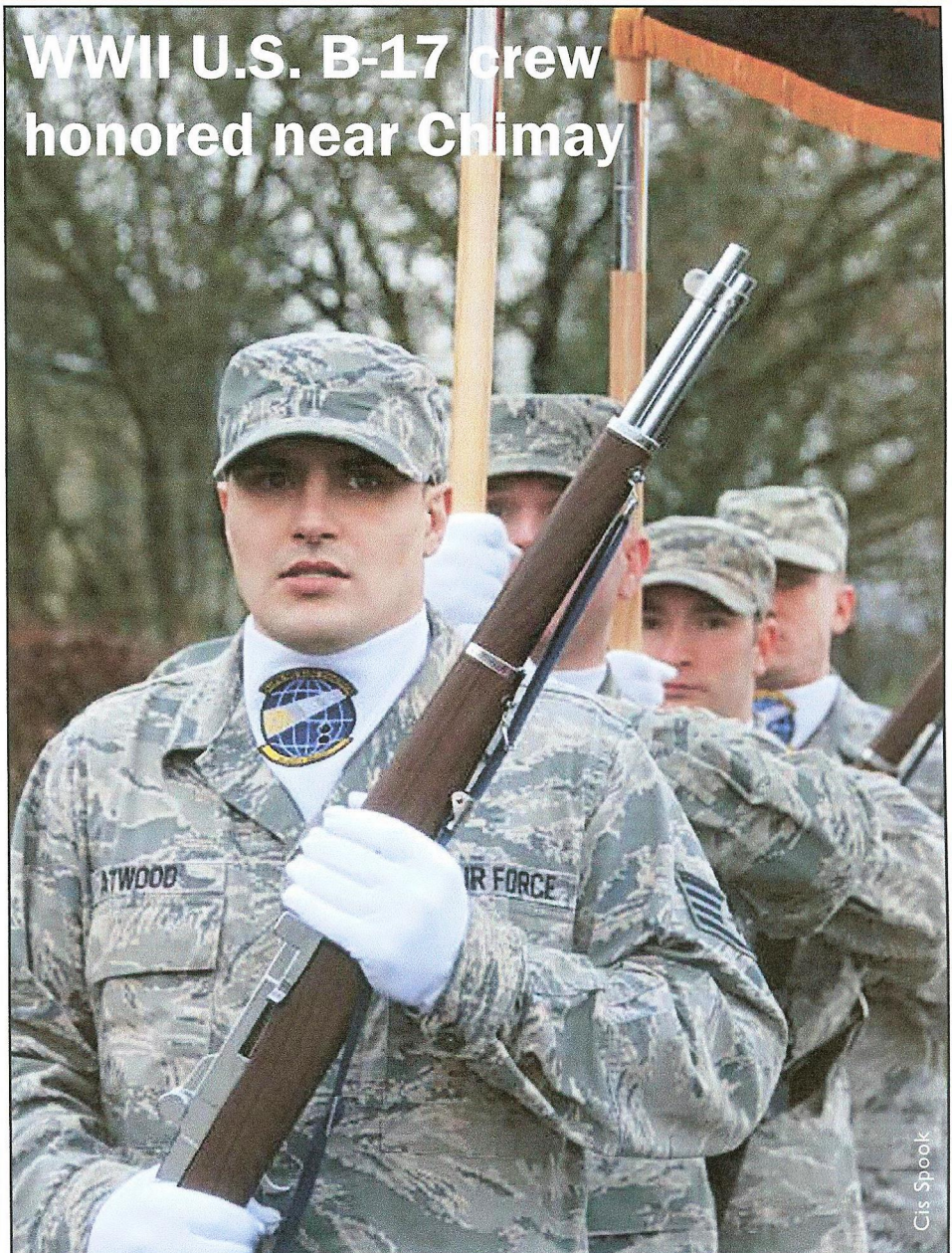
Gazette submissions

Send your requests for publication to usarmy.benelux.imcom-europe.list.pao@mail.mil.

Road Conditions

To check the road conditions in your area, go to www.usagbenelux.eur.army.mil

WWII U.S. B-17 crew honored near Chimay



(Front to back) Staff Sgt. Tanner G. Atwood, Senior Airman Mark S. Lemerond, Senior Airman Nathan M. Joshlin and Senior Airman Bryan A. Calenda from the 424th Air Base Squadron stand ready Saturday, February 2, 2013 at the start of the ceremony honoring the crew members of the Susan Ruth, a B-17 that crashed in a field at Macquenoise, near Chimay early February 1944.

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Lt. Col. Tracy W. Patterson, Commander 424th Air Base Squadron, stands with other participants at the ceremony, Feb. 2. (U.S. Army photos by Cis Spook)

Susan Ruth | continued

Special to the Gazette



The 424th Air Base Squadron Color Guard marches off the memorial dedicated to the B-17 Susan Ruth crew members.

were captured. Tail gunner William Slenker remained in hiding until American forces liberated the area in September 1944. Evading capture for three months, co-pilot George Eike, navigator Robert Benninger and right waist gunner John Pindroch were caught in a forest hideout near Chimay and

The 424th Air Base Squadron Color Guard, Lt. Col. Tracy W. Patterson, 424th Air Base Squadron Commander and members of the SHAPE community joined the local community in honoring Capt. Howard Snyder's crew from the B-17 Susan Ruth, nicknamed after his wife, that crash landed in a field at Macquenoise near Chimay after it was hit by enemy fire, February 8, 1944.

Two crew members, ball turret gunner Louis Colwart and radio operator Ross Kahler were killed in the plane. Bombardier Richard Daniels, left waist gunner Joseph Musial and top turret gunner Roy Holbert

executed along with other air crews and Belgian resistance members by the Nazis in April 1944.

Snyder evaded capture and spent the next seven months fighting with Belgian and French resistance units. He wrote a personal account of the crash while with the underground, of which the following excerpt:

"The bursting of 20 mm around our ship was the first indication that we had been singled out. I could hear 20 mm striking and exploding as they hit the ship. Pieces of equipment and parts of the ship were flying about striking my feet and legs," Snyder wrote.

"When the oxygen cylinders exploded, the concussion stunned me for a few moments. I became slowly conscious of the fact that the entire cockpit was filled with smoke and flames. After calling through the interphone for the crew to jump, the fire was getting so hot I could hardly stand it. As I crawled down to the escape hatch, I was surprised to see Benny and Dan still in the nose. We went out through the nose hatch.

"I could hear nothing but the tremendous roar of the wind. After pulling the ripcord, the rushing air roaring in my ears stopped suddenly and a most wonderful and peaceful quiet settled over me.

"With the peaceful country coming up to meet me, baked in sunshine, the war and all that had happened only a few second before seemed like a bad dream long ago," Snyder concluded.

"I don't think Capt. Howard Snyder ever could imagine that 69 years after the crash, you fine people from this area, would stand here and remember the sacrifices he and his crew made for freedom," Patterson said in his speech. "I am extremely proud to stand here with you this morning," he concluded.