



MOORESTOWN'S JOHN HOSPODAR

FROM D-DAY TO DEBORAH

September 1943. During the height of World War II, 18-year-old John Hospodar heard the call to duty and voluntarily enlisted in the Army Signal Corps. John entered the Army at Fort Dix, New Jersey, then was shipped to Fort Crowder in Missouri for boot camp and Army radio school, where he was taught critical skills of establishing lines of communications in combat areas.

On June 7, 1944, less than eight months after enlisting, John was packed shoulder to shoulder on an amphibious landing craft in the English Channel, motoring toward the beaches of Normandy, France to participate in one of the largest military operations ever conducted. It was

here that he was assigned to the 90th Signal Corp, 90th Infantry Division, as part of General George Patton's Third Army. "It was the day after D-Day when we landed on Utah Beach in the early evening and we couldn't believe our eyes," John recalls. "Once we were on shore we then had to make our way up the hill way across the beach. We were advised by our paratroopers to sit tight, as the Germans were just beyond the bluff. Nightfall set in quickly and soon after, German planes repeatedly buzzed the beach, dropping flares. These flares made the night as bright as day. Once they had clear vision they started bombing the beach. That's when we dove for the biggest ditches we could find. Crammed into a hole with a bunch of guys and bombs exploding all around our position, we knew training was officially over and this was the real deal!" After the bombings and during a continuous fight, John and his team were able to advance over the hill and establish their communications center.

The Army Signal Corps managed communications and information systems to support the combined armed forces. John was assigned to a communications truck with

three other men. "The Germans were always able to easily detect our signal truck, so the other soldiers never wanted us anywhere near them," he chuckled. "So we would try to position the truck at the base of large hills in the opposite direction from where the Germans were aiming their artillery shells so that they couldn't hit us." Sleeping under the truck, in barns or ditches for nearly a year, John's trek took him from the coast of France all the way to Czechoslovakia. "It wasn't until the war started to wind down, did we get a chance to stay in some hotels with beds. That was a real treat. I even saw General Patton once during the war—and, yes, he was wearing his famous ivory-handled revolvers!"

The accomplishments of the Third Army during this campaign were astonishing:

- Liberated or captured 81,522 square miles of territory
- Liberated or captured an estimated 12,000 cities, towns, and communities
- Liberated the Flossenborg concentration camp in Flossenborg, Germany
- Enemy losses estimated at 1,280,688 captured, 144,500 killed and 386,200 wounded

After the war, John returned home and embarked on a 37-year career as an executive at Campbell's Soup in Camden, married Rita – his wife of 67 years – and created an army of his own. The Hospodars currently are blessed with four adult children, three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

In 1943, the country and the world needed assistance and John willingly and selflessly did what was necessary. As a result, many lives were saved.

In 2010, John needed to have his life saved and Deborah Heart and Lung Center was there for him. Dr. Lynn McGrath, Deborah's legendary cardiothoracic surgeon, performed open heart surgery on John, providing him with these seven (and counting) additional healthy years with his family. Because of Deborah's 95-year philosophy of providing world-class specialty healthcare while never issuing a bill to a patient, the Hospodars have become loyal supporters of the Deborah Hospital Foundation and regularly attend donor luncheons. Due to past support from generous community-minded individuals, Deborah was here when John and his family needed us. The lesson is simple: You Give. People Live.

Deborah Hospital Foundation proudly recognizes the Hospodars for their longtime support and also for Mr. Hospodar's brave service to our country. Thank you, John!



Please consider making a gift to the Deborah Hospital Foundation today to ensure that our life-saving care will always be available to those who need it. To make a gift please visit us at www.deborahfoundation.org/donate or text DEBORAH to 91999.