

## **Sergeant Angelo A. Ripellino (Rip)**

By Irving T. Shanley

Angelo Ripellino volunteered for the United States Army and the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment in October 1942. The Regiment was a newly formed unit being assembled at Camp Blanding, Florida where the Regiment underwent 13 weeks of rigorous basic and advanced infantry training. At Camp Blanding, Private Ripellino was assigned to Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion. Following training at Camp Blanding, the Regiment was transferred to Fort Benning, Georgia for three weeks of parachute training. Private Ripellino was awarded his parachute wings after completing the required five parachute jumps from a C47 flying over Lawson Field at Fort Benning. The Regiment then moved to the newly built Camp Mackall, North Carolina for tactical training for nine months, including maneuvers in South Carolina and Tennessee.

While at Camp Mackall Private Ripellino was promoted to Private First Class and later to Corporal and Squad Leader in the 81mm Mortar Platoon. He was later promoted to Sergeant in the Mortar Platoon. He participated in the parachute invasions of Normandy, France on D-Day, June 6, 1944 and Nijmegen, Holland on September 17, 1944, and in the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium during the winter of 1944-45. Sergeant Ripellino was medically evacuated during the Battle of the Bulge. During the war in Europe, the Regiment was part of the 82nd Airborne Division commanded by Major General Matthew Ridgeway and Major General James Gavin.

Sergeant Ripellino returned to his home in Akron, Ohio where he married his high school sweetheart, Josephine Donatelli. Angelo and Josephine were the parents of three children and grandparents to four grandchildren. Sergeant Ripellino passed away in July 2002. Rip and Josie were married for 57 years.

Sergeant Ripellino was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, Parachute Wings, French Fourragere, Belgian Fourragere, Militaire Willems Orde Degree of Knight from Holland, Presidential Unit Citation, National Defense Service Medal, American Campaign Medal, Europe-Africa Campaign Medal with four battle stars and invasion arrowhead, WWII Victory Medal, and Good Conduct Medal.