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Veterans to fly to combat site

United Press International
 WASHINGTON — Nearly 200 veterans and relatives, many of them Texans, will fly to Italy today to commemorate a World War II battle that one historian compares to the suicidal Charge of the Light Brigade.
 The group will go to the Rapido River between Rome and Naples, where 1,681 Americans from the Army's 36th Division were reported missing, wounded or dead after Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark ordered them across Jan. 20-22, 1944.
 The battle received little publicity because the nearby battle at Anzio and the bombing of the sixth-century Benedictine monastery at Monte Cassino attracted the press' attention.
 "Rapido is in human lives much more tragic than the Monte Cassino bombing," argues military historian David W. Richardson.
 Richardson will accompany the group Oct. 4 when it dedicates a 10-foot-tall granite memorial in Sant' Angelo to the battle.
 "It set the stage for the slaughter that was Italy," Richardson said, "an almost hopeless battle against a geography that even Hannibal didn't try to overcome when he marched on Rome."
 Julian H. Philips, 62, was a company commander when he and his men gathered near the river four decades ago.
 "The first time I saw it I thought I could jump it," he recalled. "But it was deep and it was fast."
 "In my battalion, when the crossing was over, E Company came back with seven men and no officers out of 180-200 men," Philips said. "F Company had 14 men and no offi-

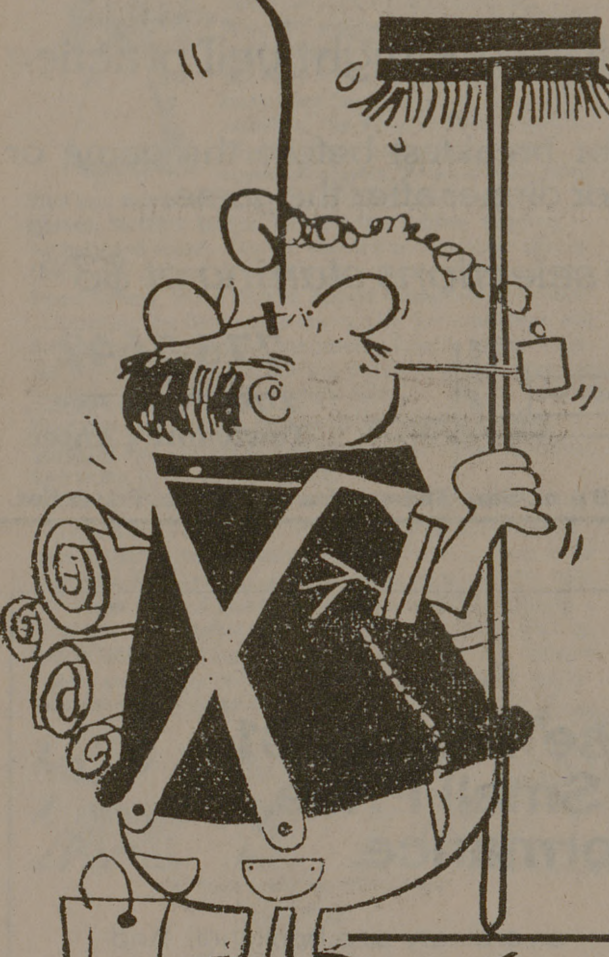
cers. I saw bodies of men stacked three-deep along the river."
 Philips never crossed that evening. A few days later, however, he was ordered to cross to draw the Germans' fire — enabling American spotters to pinpoint German positions. Taking five men, he crossed for a brief time and returned — an act that won him and his patrol Silver Stars.
 Crossing the Rapido, however, never meant to be more than a diversion. Clark said that he wanted to hold German troops and possibly draw them to the rugged area while other parts of his 5th Army washed ashore at Anzio.
 Once across the Rapido, the troops were to break the German defense known as the Gustav Line, join fellow soldiers coming up from Anzio and march into Rome.
 It never happened. The German commander borrowed a few extra divisions from Rome and pushed back the British units who were supposed to hold the high ground so the Americans could cross.
 Only about 400 Americans managed to cross the first night, with a few more crossing the next day. But no bridge for transport vehicles was built, and Clark eventually had to acknowledge defeat.
 "It was military ineptitude," Richardson said, "the thinking in the minds of some Allied leaders that they could blast their way through."
 He compared the Rapido crossing with the Charge of the Light Brigade in the Crimean War and the Australian troops' World War I attack at Gallipoli.

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Class photos for the Aggeland yearbook can be taken on campus or off. Both studios are open weekdays only from 8:30-4:30 (closed 12-1:00). Check schedule below for correct dates & locations.

Notice Change in Dates

SEPT. 17-OCT. 12 YEARBOOK ASSOCIATES OFFICE
 (1700 S. Kyle behind Culpepper Plaza 693-6756)

OCT. 15-26 Pavilion
 (on campus, for more information call 845-2681)

2 men in helicopter die in rescue attempt

United Press International
 KERNERSVILLE, N.C. — A daring two-man helicopter crew, killed in a futile air rescue attempt, were "men who never let fear stand in their way," fellow rescue workers said Wednesday.
 Pilot Tom Haroski, 39, and paramedic Stephen Richey, 25, died in the fiery crash of a television news helicopter Tuesday night while trying to save an injured welder dangling 110 feet high from a water tower.
 The welder, Charles Tompkins, 19, bled to death while hanging by his safety belt with the helicopter's rescue rope just 25 feet from his reach, authorities said.
 During the rescue attempt, the helicopter's rotor blade struck the tower, flipping the aircraft onto a building's roof and sparking a natural gas fire, which was quickly brought under control.
 "These were men who never let fear stand in their way," said Jim March, of the Forsyth County Rescue Squad. "It's really a terrible loss."
 Another rescue squad member, James Thompson, said, "They knew what the potential for danger was. Steve died doing what was important to him — what made him happy."
 Tompkins was disassembling the water tower with a cutting torch

when a 20-foot girder fell the wrong way and crashed onto him, Kernersville Police Sgt. Rickie Rumley said.
 The beam was only partially cut when it fell and trapped his leg against the tower, though the rest of his body still dangled from his safety belt.
 "If you can imagine being caught in a giant scissor, that's what it felt like," Rumley said.
 Rescuers tried a 75-foot aerial ladder and a 90-foot cherry picker to bring Tompkins down, but called Greensboro's WFMY-TV "Sky 7" helicopter after 2 1/2 hours of rescue effort failed.
 "The helicopter was our last resort," Rumley said. "When the helicopter went up, he (Tompkins) wasn't dead. We didn't want to endanger anyone's life for anything in the world."
 Haroski, who routinely worked as a helicopter pilot for WFMY, was an auxiliary officer with the Winston-Salem police. Police said he made many rescues, including finding two men trapped for two days last July in the middle of the Haw River.
 "Just in the time I knew him, he was a really great guy who would do anything for anybody," said WFMY news producer Mark Cowan. "He was always thinking about other people."

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