GREAT GRAND Uncle Dom
By: Henry Hernandez
2007

Dominick (Dom) Lopano is the great grand uncle of Henry Thomas Hernandez. He was born at home on June 3, 1925 to Nicholas and Jennie Lopano. He was born in a small town called North Tarrytown, which is now known as Sleepy Hollow, NY. He had 7 people in his family and was the youngest of 4 children. His sister Josephine died at the age of 3 from meningitis.

Growing up as a child was pretty uneventful in North Tarrytown. He went to Catholic school and had chores and played in the park with other children his age. His dad was a maintenance man at General Motors for 44 years. His mom stayed at home to raise the children and take care of the house.

In 1943, when Franklin D. Roosevelt was President of the United States and General Eisenhower was the Supreme Allied Commander, Dom was drafted into the war and volunteered to go overseas to Europe. He was only 18 years old. In the beginning of 1944 he landed in England where he trained for fighting for a few months. On June 3rd of that year he left of Normandy by boat and arrived there on June 8th. Two days after D Day started. He was in the 90th Infantry /357 Regimen of World War II which then traveled across to France until December. Dom remembers that time because his feet were so cold they felt frozen.

Dom had no friends with him in his unit because most of the other soldiers were from Texas. His brothers were also in World War II. His brother Joe was ground support for the paratroopers and his brother Gene was a meteorologist in the United States Air Force. He never got a chance to see Gene but he saw his brother Joe in Normandy and was happy to see him again in Belgium when the war was over.

Even though he did not have a chance to play any sports in the service, he was physically fit but lost quite a few pounds. In the war your meals are called sea rations. For breakfast the soldiers got a small portion of eggs, instant coffee and 2 cigarettes. For lunch they served cheese, instant coffee and 2 cigarettes. For dinner the soldiers usually got beans, instant coffee and 2 cigarettes. Dom didn't smoke so he usually would trade his cigarettes with other soldiers for food.

When Dom was finally able to go home he felt great for it had almost been 3 years since he was home. Both his brothers also came home safely. Once he was home he could not sleep for quite a time because there were too many bad memories. In the war he didn't save anybody's life but did see a lot of men die.

Once home, he went to Notre Dame College in South Indiana to study physical education. After he graduated he could not find a job so he worked at cleaning chimneys and carrying boxes for $1.00 an hour. His first real job was at National Can Corporation as a salesman, which he had for fifteen years. Finally in 1968 he started working at Ossining High School as a driver education teacher and retired in 1991.

Dominick Lopano is one of the many men who put his life on the line to protect our country. He is now 79 years old and still lives in Sleepy Hollow NY with his nephew John. Dom loves to sing old songs and sleeps a lot during the day. He never got married but is big part of the Hernandez Family. His is the Great, Great, Great Uncle of Henry Thomas Hernandez!