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# Lo Lo throws his second straight no no.

# THE NEWS & REPORTER

CHESTER COUNTY'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1869

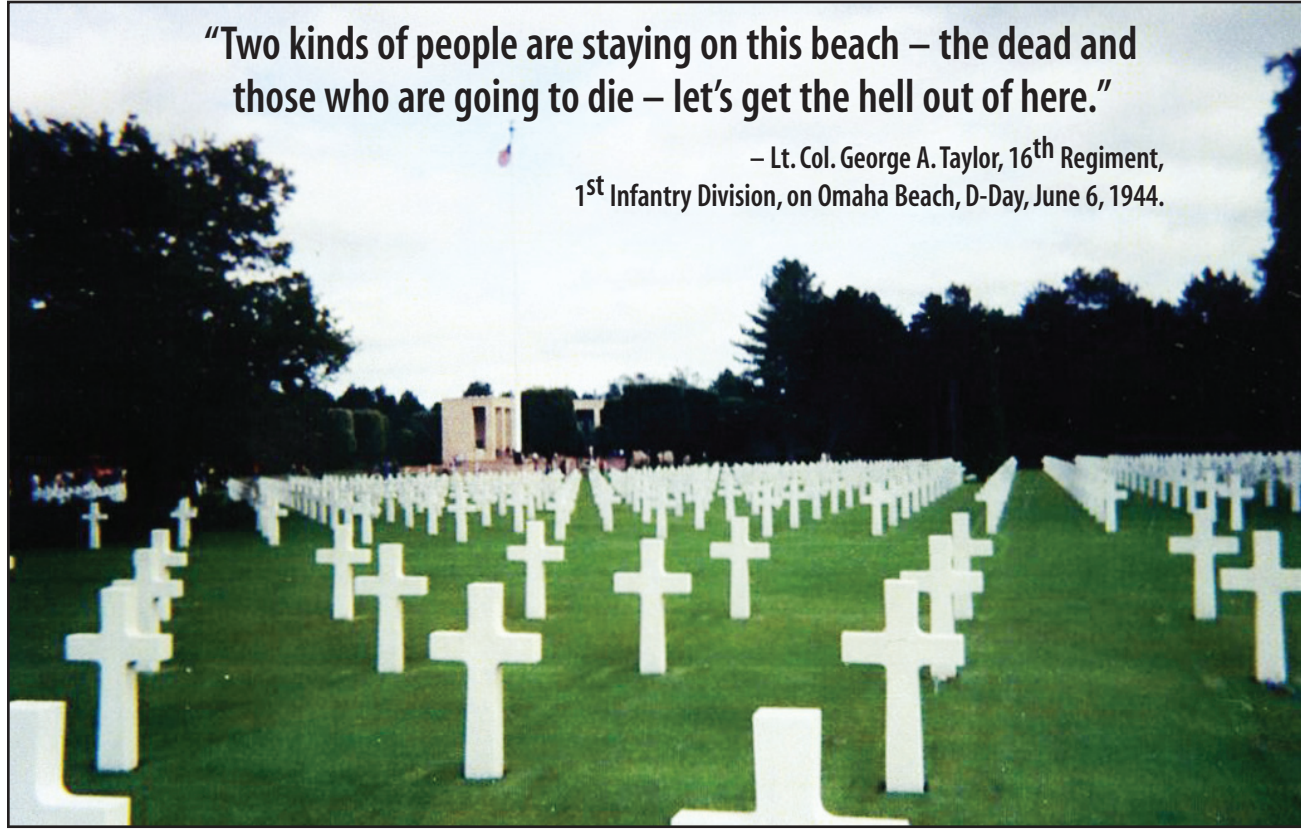
Issue 43, 1 Section, 12 pages

FRIDAY, MAY 29, 2009

50 Cents

**"Two kinds of people are staying on this beach – the dead and those who are going to die – let's get the hell out of here."**

– Lt. Col. George A. Taylor, 16<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, on Omaha Beach, D-Day, June 6, 1944.



PHOTOS PROVIDED

A cemetery near Omaha Beach in the Normandy area of France – 4,300 American and Allied soldiers lost their lives just in Omaha, one of five areas of operation for the D-Day Operation. The other beaches were code-named, Sword, Gold, Juno and Utah. President Barack Obama may fly to France to help commemorate the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D-Day invasion. Below, the insignia of the 1st Infantry Division.

**Buddy Hernandez will soon board a plane, headed ...**

## BACK TO THE BEACH

BY STEPHEN GUILFOYLE  
editor@onlinechester.com

Buddy Hernandez doesn't get seasick. This son of Lando takes pride in it, telling a yarn about a deep-sea fishing trip he took once with a jet fighter pilot.

The pilot, who could do fantastic maneuvers and barrel rolls, spent the voyage literally spilling his guts. Buddy just smiled and fished.

Rough or easy, the sea doesn't bother Buddy. After all, he's been in rougher, tougher places at sea.

The English Channel, to be precise. June 6, 1944, actually.

That day, he was with 3rd Platoon, C Company of the 18th Regiment of the U.S. Army's 1st Infantry Division — "the Big Red One."

The first wave went in at 6 a.m. The 16th Regiment was in that wave.

If not for a mix-up, Buddy would have been in that

outfit, and he is certain he wouldn't be here, alive today, to tell his story.

The 16th and the rest of the first wave got torn to pieces by German machine guns and cannons raining bullets and shells down all morning. More than 1,500 men were killed in that first wave, Buddy says.

So the call went out. The second wave started going in around 7, hours early. The second wave included the 18th Regiment, which included Buddy.



Buddy boarded his Higgins boat, a landing craft, and headed out over rough waves to his part of the "Longest Day," when the Allies captured Normandy, France, starting the offensive that would end World War II in Europe.

Buddy saw things that day he still can't get out of his mind, blood and guts, real blood and guts, arms and legs, pieces of real men hanging off metal "hedgehogs," blood in the water, blood on the sand.

Yet for all the horror, next week he's going back, back to that beach.



**"Greatest Generation"**

This will be Buddy Hernandez' third trip back, he says, but "it's probably the last one."

Ernandez is one of the greatest generation. He and millions of other young American

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Buddy Hernandez, today, thinking back to his experiences. He now lives in the Lesslie area of York County, just over the county line from Lando, where he was born and raised. Top, Buddy Hernandez, a Lando native, in his Army uniform.

## Memorial Day Wrapup

*Steen honored at First Baptist of Lowrys*

From release

Mack Steen, an ex-prisoner of war, was honored at First Baptist Church of Lowrys during its Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day and Veterans Appreciation Day service on Sunday, May 24.

The service remembered U.S. veterans and honored fallen heroes. Past and present members of the

Armed Forces were recognized and thanked for their dedicated service. The service is a way of paying respect to ancestors and teaching children about their past. Stories were told about the departed and the sacrifices made for freedom. "In God We Trust" was the marching cry as soldiers went into battle.

The Rev. Mike Shaffer is pastor of First Baptist Church of Lowrys.



Keely Lynn Orr, 4, recited The Pledge of Allegiance to her grandfather Mack Steen. They are shown next to a POW-MIA flag de-claring, "You Are Not Forgotten."

PHOTO PROVIDED

## SLED arrests police chief

BY STEPHEN GUILFOYLE & NANCY PARSONS  
Staff Writers

Online Chester.com

Web posted at 12:30 p.m. Wednesday

Mike Revels, current Fort Lawn police chief and former Great Falls police chief, was arrested Wednesday and terminated later in the day.

He's already had a bond hearing and been released, according to information obtained by The News & Reporter and Great Falls Reporter Wednesday morning.

He turned himself in to SLED agents Wednesday morning, according to a press release and a jail log. He is charged with one count of misconduct in office. Chester County Magistrate Dianne Moore set a \$5,000 personal recognizance bond, so he was

released after being booked.

The N&R has been told the charge relates to a period when Revels was chief in Great Falls. Revels left Great Falls late last year, after Richard Smith was elected sheriff, to succeed Smith as chief in Fort Lawn.

According to a release from SLED, Revels, 42, of 161 Forest Lakes Circle, Great Falls, was charged with misconduct in office (common law). Investigators say Revels stole about \$100 of \$200 from a victim in an investi-



Revels

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## County restricts sexual businesses

BY TRAVIS JENKINS  
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Chester County Council can't block sexually-oriented businesses from coming here, but it is putting some hurdles in the way of strip clubs and other such businesses.

Sexually oriented businesses, called SOBs, include a wide variety of operations. A plan approved by the council last month will make it more difficult for strip clubs, adult movie theaters, adult cabaret, adult modeling studios, adult motels, sex encoun-

ter centers, adult theaters, adult video stores and adult-themed arcades to locate in Chester.

The plan calls for SOBs to only be approved to open via a special exception from the county's Zoning Board of Appeals.

Chester County Planning Director Mack Paul proposed the change. He said the plan was brought about by the problems the county encountered with Club Fantasy in Richburg last year. Club Fantasy was operating as a strip

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## Pool opening, jazz show on tap Saturday

BY TRAVIS JENKINS  
tjenkins@onlinechester.com

The Chester Parks and Recreation Department has a big day planned on Saturday, with the opening of the city pool and the third in a series of concerts.

The pool will open for the summer season at 11 a.m. Saturday. Parks and Recreation Director Jack Sink said his staff has worked hard to get the pool looking good.

"It looks absolutely awesome," Sink said. "We've

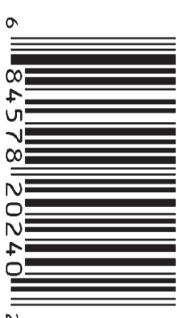
gone out and pressure-washed the whole pool. We've also upgraded the chairs and tables. The whole area is really looking good for our grand opening."

Sink said upgrades have also been made to lifeguard equipment.

The price to visit the pool has risen a bit. A day pass will now cost \$2.50, but Sink said a pass good for the entire season can be purchased for \$45.

For the first time in

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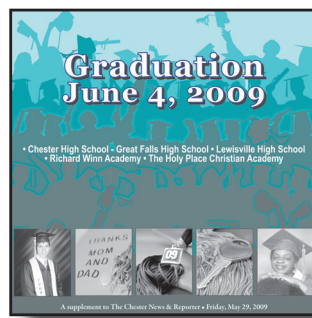
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INSIDE

Graduation 2009  
Check out this year's Chester County graduates in our special Graduation edition inside today's paper.



## VET

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men fought the Nazis, liberated death camps, fought real evil. Then they came home and built things, cars, planes, homes, creating a booming economic engine. They landed a man on the moon.

But the men who fought World War II are now senior citizens, and they are dying out — some reports put it at 1,000 a day.

Buddy just turned 84. When he first hit the beach, he was younger, much younger — 2009 marks the 65th anniversary of the Normandy invasion.

He was not yet 17, a student at Edgemoor High School, on the day everything changed for his generation. On Dec. 7, 1941, Japan launched a sneak attack on Pearl Harbor and the United States entered a war on two fronts, fighting Japan and the Nazis in Germany.

Before that, this Lando boy, this son of the mill village, had few worries. He had a couple of good coon dogs and he loved to hunt, shooting squirrels and other small animals in the hills around Fishing Creek.

But life changed. It was a frightening time, he says. He remembers reading in the old Charlotte newspapers about six men killed when German U-boats sunk fishing ships off the coast of North Carolina.

He registered for the draft when he turned 18, and he was called up a year later, in 1943.

## Training, deploying

Buddy went to Camp Webster in Macon, Ga., for basic training. His drill instructor was tough as nails. When his company reported, the lavatory in the two-story barracks was spotless the first night.

“You know who keeps it this clean?” the sergeant asked us. “You do,” Buddy says, acting the role and pointing his finger.

Buddy tells stories with elaboration. He takes time

for details. He gestures, raises his arms for emphasis. He often closes his eyes, as if trying to picture the scene. After a few minutes, he really settles in. He relaxes into his natural Lando accent and the tale comes at its own speed of his time on “O-mee-ha Beach.”

Basic finished after about four months, and everyone was ordered onto a train and sent to Union Station in Washington, D.C.

“A man will meet you at the station and tell you where to go,” they were told.

At the station, he was put on a truck and taken to Fort Meade, Md. He carried his duffel bag to a parade ground. He and thousands of other young men were told to wait until they heard their names.

It took forever. Soldiers played poker and gin rummy, Buddy says, while they waited. There was a lunch break in the middle of the day. At the end of the day, Buddy was the only man left standing on the parade ground.

The lieutenant, a guy “so young, he looked like he had just graduated from Clemson,” was not happy to see Buddy. He questioned Buddy, who said his name was never called.

The lieutenant took Buddy to see a colonel, and the colonel heard both out. The colonel asked Buddy to find his name in the list, and it was there. Then the colonel asked the lieutenant to read the name aloud. He stuttered, yet insisted he had called it out on the field.

“The colonel says, ‘If you can’t say it now, you obviously couldn’t say it then,’” Buddy says. But the train he was to take had left hours before.

Buddy had some spending money in his pocket. He’d sold Butler and Leeds, his coon dogs, to a Rock Hill man who admired the dogs yet promised to sell the dogs back, no questions asked, if Buddy made it back.

The colonel found Buddy a bunk. A week later, another



Buddy Hernandez at a cemetery near Omaha Beach.

er mass of men filled the parade ground. Buddy was put on a train again, sent to Camp Shanks, N.Y., briefly, then put on a boat in a six-to-eight-boat convoy to England, to train for the invasion.

## The Big Red One

That was how he ended up in the 18<sup>th</sup> Regiment. He also learned the 16<sup>th</sup> was the unit he should have been assigned to. Both were in the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry, the Big Red One, but the 16<sup>th</sup> was a week ahead of the 18<sup>th</sup> while they trained for the invasion. Until D-Day, that is.

The Big Red One was an experienced, busy division. Its men had landed in North Africa, Sicily and Italy. The ones who survived were experienced and tough. Guys like Buddy beefed up platoons that had suffered heavy casualties, but it gave the fresh replacements a chance to work with battle-tested soldiers.

Buddy’s convoy landed at Liverpool, England, and he made his way to a camp near Portsmouth, where they trained for more than a year.

They knew their job and they knew the plan. They were to take the beach, off-load tanks and supplies and fuel. They were to head inland to assist airborne troops who went in June 5 to places like Sainte-Mere-Eglise, Cherbourg.

But when they hit Omaha Beach, everything went bad.

## The Longest Day

Only one unit landed at its intended location that day. Nothing else went right, but the few officers who survived were innovative.

The 16<sup>th</sup> hit the beach first, Buddy says.

“About all of them died,” he said. So the klaxon on their boats called, “All hands on deck, all hands on deck.”

The second wave had to go in early.

He got in his Higgins boat with 30 other soldiers, rode the waves and hit Omaha Beach for the first time in his life.

The men were loaded down with every piece of equipment that could be conceived, but once they landed, Buddy says, soldiers started stripping down to the essentials — ammo and weapons, ammo and weapons.

The beach was almost impossible to pass through — barricaded with concrete, concertina wire, mines.

Buddy remembers how his squads got through. A destroyer, the USS Frankford, turned parallel to the beach and shelled the German positions, stopping the deadly fire that was pinning down the men on that part of the beach.

Buddy fought 12 to 14 hours, dodging bullets, firing his Browning Automatic Rifle, stripping ammo off the wounded and the dead, trying to stay alive.

It was night, around 9 p.m., when his fighting stopped, briefly. With a little time to regroup, they headed inland.

“I got one thing that nobody can ever take away,” Buddy says. He was there, on “Bloody Omaha,” the biggest battle ever fought, and he survived.

He was 19 years old.

## The war in Europe

Buddy walked every mile, he said, from the beach, with fire fights every day and many nights, 50 miles to battles in Belgium. His last combat action was in Aachen, the first German city conquered in the war.

He helped liberate a work camp. It wasn’t one of the death camps that epitomize the evil of Nazi Germany. But it was also not a pleasant sight. He had to delouse the workers, mostly women and young children.

He then helped drive the displaced Czechs and Slavs back to their homelands in the Balkans.

He became part of the occupation until he got orders to head west. He boarded a boat, the Mexican Victory, which carried him past the white cliffs of Dover and back to the United States.

## The Statue of Liberty

On the 15-day sea voyage back, counselors told the men to put the war behind them, to forget the bad and look forward to the good that would come when they got home.

If he saw it on his way over to Europe, he doesn’t say. But he does mention it as part of his return. When the Mexican Victory pulled into New York harbor, Buddy saw the Statue of Liberty. It meant something to him.

The troops took a short hop to a nearby station and Buddy and the soldiers were put on a train, again. This time he got a sleeper cabin in a fancy Pullman car.

He and his fellows were unloaded at Fort Bragg, N.C., and told to stick around if they wanted to serve in the peacetime army, or hit the road. He wanted to get the hell out, so he hit the road, hitching a ride to Charlotte with a guy whose brother showed up in a car.

A bus from Charlotte took him back to Chester County, to the old company store in Lando. His siblings were all babies, so there was no one to meet him. He walked the last bit to his home.

His mother “grabbed him by the neck,” he says. She cried.

“I’m glad to see you home,” she told him. She knew he would be getting out sooner or later, but she didn’t expect him “so soon.”

It was Jan. 17, 1946. He had been away for almost three years.

## An American life

He got a job at a printing company, took some classes under the G.I. Bill, but after showing fellow members of the American Legion that he could cook, he talked himself into opening a restaurant. His mother had taught him to cook as a young man and he liked it.

He opened the Columbia Street Grill, a restaurant where the Cyclone now stands. He was leasing the space, but later opened his own restaurant, Buddy’s Drive-In, on the J.A. Cochran Bypass, in the ’60s.

He met Beverly at a Sugar Bowl a few years before and the two got married, had a daughter. They worked hard to build a nice life for themselves. They ran the restaurant for almost 30 years.

They’ve leased half of the drive-in to various Chinese restaurants over the years. But they keep the other half

for themselves, keeping it ready and clean. Every Fourth of July, they cook barbecue for sale. Buddy smokes his barbecue and won’t give up his recipe.

So he managed to put a lot of it behind him, as he was advised.

But he can’t keep it all inside.

## Peace

Buddy says that any man who has fought in a war knows it has just one lesson. War is terrible. The man who’s been to war doesn’t believe in war. He wants peace.

When World War II ended, the whole world was at peace.

“Didn’t last long, did it?” he says.

Soldiers like him hailed the creation of the United Nations. What a wonderful thing, he says — an organization that would prevent war.

Yet every few years, there’s another war.

“Where the hell is the U.N.?”

His voice carries obvious disgust over the war in Iraq. It shouldn’t have happened, he says.

## Heroes

His experience has taught him much. Though the survivors of World War II are lauded as the greatest generation, though the soldiers who fought are hailed as heroes, Buddy says there are no heroes who can talk about Omaha Beach today.

The only heroes are already over there, buried beneath crosses and Stars of David in the fields of France.

He and his wife will visit those fields again next week, with a British survivor of the battle they met and befriended a few years ago. They are riding over on a ferry from England to France, almost the same sea route Buddy took in 1944.

Media reports say President Barack Obama will speak at a ceremony over there. A soldier attached to the State Department in Paris has obtained tickets for the Ernandezes and their friends to the official program on June 6, 2009.

## In a word

The counselors years ago told him to forget it, don’t talk about it, but he can’t forget.

He puts the whole experience into one word, using its real meaning.

His eyes close, his arms shake a little as he says it, as if, there in his den, he’s actually already back there, back in ’44, back “crawling over nothing but dead people.”

As if he’s back on the beach.

“It was the most ... awesome ... thing ever.”



Buddy and Beverly Hernandez

## CITY

Continued from Page 1

recent years, the pool can now be reserved for private parties and functions.

“We’re going to offer private rentals this year. It would be great for birthday parties, church groups and ball teams,” Sink said.

The cost to rent the pool for city residents will be \$90 for an hour-and-a-half. An extra half hour can be purchased for \$30. The

cost for non-city residents will be \$120. Two lifeguards will be provided for all rentals.

Sink noted that pool rules still apply for private rentals, meaning there can be no alcohol on the premises.

Sink said a number of special events will take place at the pool this year, including a concert and a customer appreciation event.

Rachel Sosebee will manage the pool this year.

Also on Saturday, the parks and recreation headquarters at 161 West End, will be the site of “In a jazzy mood III” a concert featuring the Chester Jazz and Blues Band. The two previous concerts in the series drew packed houses.

“Columbus Pendergrass, who leads the band, and all the guys have been very appreciative of the reception they’ve gotten from the community,” Sink said.

The band has actually grown recently, with the addition of a vocalist on a couple of numbers.

“They really sound great,” Sink said.

There is no cost for admission, though Sink said the band does ask for a \$5 donation.

Food will be available at the event. For \$3, those in attendance can purchase a hot dog plate, which comes with chips and a drink.

The concert begins at 7 p.m. Saturday.

## SOBs

Continued from Page 1

club. Initial applications for the club’s opening did not indicate it was going to be an SOB, but that use became readily apparent once inspectors visited the club. The club was fined initially but did eventually get the correct paperwork to operate as an SOB.

Paul made an alteration to the city’s signage ordinance shortly thereafter which forced the club’s roadside sign to be very small. Since SOBs were not specifically banned in zoning ordinances, that was about all that could be

done, he said.

Late last year, the club owner and its operator were arrested and charged with operating a prostitution ring there. The club is now closed.

Councilman Brad Jordan said the ordinance was needed.

“They are allowed in general commercial now,” Jordan said. “And we’ve allowed general commercials to be located in residential areas. We don’t want one of these businesses in a residential area. We need to plug that hole.”

The council said they were resigned to the fact

that it would not be able to ban the businesses outright. County Attorney Joanie Winters said such business are protected by the First Amendment.

More than one council member said they all believe Chester is better off without any SOBs.

“I see nothing good coming from these types of businesses,” said Councilman Archie Lucas. “We don’t need something like this in Chester.”

Councilman Alex Oliphant said that in his younger days he had been in a strip club himself, and said he saw no redeeming value in them.

“They don’t represent anything that will benefit Chester County,” Oliphant said.

Oliphant said the council couldn’t simply zone the SOBs out of existence, but could place some hurdles in the way.

He said Paul’s plan was a good one, since having something go through the zoning board of appeals would mean that a public hearing would have to be held and news of the meeting would be advertised, meaning the public would know an SOB might be on the way.

The council unanimously approved the change.

## Getting it right

The News & Reporter is committed to accuracy in its reporting.

If you spot a factual error in a story or column, please call or e-mail Editor Stephen Guilfoyle. He can be reached at 803-385-3177 or at editor@onlinechester.com.

When a mistake is made, a correction will be run as soon as possible on the newspaper’s main jump page, which is generally on page 2 of each edition.

## THE NEWS &amp; REPORTER

Chester County’s hometown newspaper since 1869  
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The News & Reporter, a Landmark Community Newspapers Inc. of South Carolina newspaper (USPS-103-000) is published every Wednesday and Friday at 104 York St., Chester, SC 29706. Periodicals postage paid at Chester, SC. Subscription rates are as listed here. Street and counter sales at 50 cents per copy.

## Our Prices

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to News & Reporter, P.O. Box 250, Chester, SC 29706.