

# USS BRISTOL DD 857 VETERANS ASSOCIATION

[ussbristodd857.org](http://ussbristodd857.org)

Editor: Ed Lynch [edwardclynch1@verizon.net](mailto:edwardclynch1@verizon.net)

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**Government Retaliates Against Navy Chaplain who Sued over Government Shutdown of Catholic Mass** *This article contributed by Deacon Bruce Burnham*

Father Ray Leonard, the Catholic Navy Chaplain who sued the Department of Defense and the Navy after he was barred from celebrating Mass at Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base in Georgia during the recent the Government shutdown, is now the target of Government retaliation even though the Department of Justice indicated the day after the lawsuit was filed that he could resume his duties as a Navy Chaplain.

The retaliation involves repeated Government assertions that the employment contract under which Father Leonard was working is no longer “valid”, demands that he must sign a new contract containing several pages of onerous new terms if he wants to be paid and refusals to pay for services he had already performed.

As a result, the Thomas More Law Center (“TMLC”), a national public interest law firm based in Ann Arbor, MI, on January 6, 2014 filed an amended complaint in their original federal lawsuit to prevent further retaliation against Father Leonard for exercising his constitutional rights. The amended complaint added a claim against the government for its retaliation toward Father Leonard which occurred after the filing of the initial complaint.

Father Leonard just returned to America after spending ten years ministering to impoverished Tibetans in China. Consequently, withholding Father Leonard’s earnings for approximately two

months left Father Leonard himself in an impoverished condition. Yet, he continued to minister to his congregation by scraping up enough money for food and rent payments for housing near the Naval Base which he serves.

Father Leonard has stated in an affidavit;

“In China, I was disallowed from performing public religious services



due to the lack of religious freedom in China. I never imagined that when I returned home to the United States, that I would be forbidden from practicing my religious beliefs as I am called to do, and would be forbidden from helping and serving my faith community.”

The amended complaint discusses how on October 21, 2013, a mere week after blowing the whistle on the government’s unconstitutional actions, the government told Father Leonard that his contract would no longer be considered “valid.” The government presented Father Leonard with a new employment contract containing five additional pages of far more onerous terms than his original contract.

Prior to the original lawsuit, which TMLC filed on October 14, 2013, Father Leonard had been operating under his original contract without

complaint. The original contract was even recognized and affirmed by the Navy and the Department of Justice in subsequent documentation on October 16, 2013.

From October 1, 2013 through the present, Father Leonard has continued to perform his duties as a military chaplain under the original contract. The Navy paid him for his work during the month of October. However in November, the government inexplicably refused to pay Father Leonard. The government’s withholding of income lasted from the beginning of November through the end of December. After repeatedly denying Father Leonard’s payment, the Navy finally approved an invoice for payment at the end of December.

TMLC attorney Erin Mersino, counsel for Father Leonard, explained,

“The Petition Clause of the First Amendment protects individuals who challenge the unconstitutional actions of the government from retaliation. The Archdiocese for the Military Services confirmed that no other military chaplain contracts were under review or subjected to the same scrutiny as Father Leonard’s. Thus, due to the timing of the Navy’s actions and the information gleaned from the Archdiocese for the Military Services, all signs point to Father Leonard being singled out and subjected to unlawful retaliation for bringing the government’s practices to light.”

On October 4, 2013, during the Government shutdown, Father Leonard was ordered to stop performing all of his duties as the Base’s Catholic Chaplain, even on a voluntary basis. He was also told that he could be arrested if he violated that order.

*Continued on next page*

Additionally, Father Leonard was locked out of his on-base office and the chapel. Father Leonard was denied access to the Holy Eucharist and other articles of his Catholic faith. The order caused the cancellation of daily and weekend mass, confession, marriage preparation classes and baptisms as well as prevented Father Leonard from providing the spiritual guidance he was called by his faith to provide.

The services of other Christian denominations at Kings Bay were allowed to continue throughout the shutdown. Only Catholics were left without services.

A day after the original federal lawsuit was filed, three attorneys from the Justice Department contacted Erin Mersino by phone and indicated that Father Leonard could resume all his religious duties and that the Chapel would be reopened for all Catholic activities. Those representations of the Justice Department attorneys were confirmed by orders to Father Leonard through the Navy chain of command. However a week later, the retaliation against Father Leonard began.

Richard Thompson, President and Chief Counsel of the Thomas More Law Center, affirmed,

“Although Father Leonard is for the moment being paid, based on the government’s pattern of inconsistent conduct, there is no guarantee that the Government will not again claim the contract is invalid and refuse payment. Our Amended Complaint is necessary to seek the Court’s protection from further government retaliation.”

The Department of Justice has requested an additional sixty (60) days to respond to the amended complaint, and the Court ordered their response by March 3, 2014.

.....

**Delta Airlines Honor Guard, Atlanta, GA, Airport**  
*Contributed by Doug Lipert*

*Editors note: This video depicts the disembarkation of the remains of one of our Brothers from the war zone.*

*Note this is at Atlanta, Ga. Airport . This is wonderful. Thank God for the Americans who still stand for dignified patriotism. I had no idea Delta does this. God Bless them! Thank You Delta Airline employees.*

[http://www.youtube.com/embed/c\\_VGxfmDmEo](http://www.youtube.com/embed/c_VGxfmDmEo)

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**Who is Charlie Weaver?**

**Earl "CHARLIE" Weaver**

*Joined NAVY 1960 - Boot in San Diego - MM "A" school in Great Lakes - Sub School in Groton - Assigned to USS Spikefish SS-404 in Key West - Nuclear Power School in Groton (dropped out) - sent to USS Bristol DD-857 in Newport- Transferred to USS Grenadier SS-525 in Key West - Shore Duty at Corpus Christi, NAS - Second Class Diving School Naval Gun Factory Wash DC. - Subic Bay Philippines SRF - First Class Diving School Wash DC - SCRF Danang Vietnam - USS Bolster ARS-38 Pearl Harbor - Submarine Development Group San Diego - TAD USS Halibut SSN-587 - Team 1 Special Ops (Wire Tapped the Ruskies) - Discharged 1972 in San Diego. 11 years, nine months and 3 days.*

*Was at the Bay of Pigs CUBA 1961 - Cuban Missile Crisis 1962 - Two tours in Nam as Salvage Diver - Saturation Diver at Sub Dev Grp 1 .*

*And I am Still alive - So I joined an Outlaw M/C*

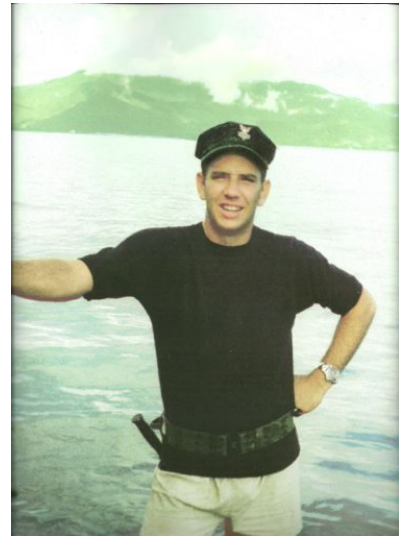


Photo above: Charlie in Viet Nam



Photo above: Charlie on his new Triglide, Dallas, TX

*Charlie's Credentials:  
DIVER VNV / LV M/C  
Chapter E Dallas, TX*

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**THE ZIPPO LIGHTER - A GI's BEST FRIEND**

contributed by Ed Lynch copied from "Together We Served"



From WW2 through the Vietnam war, the Zippo lighter was a valued possession among many American GIs who took the opportunity to have them engraved with artwork and personal messages. According to collectors, over 200,000 Zippos were used by GI's in Vietnam. The Zippo played a part in almost every daily activity. The shiny top provided a handy mirror and the lighters flame warmed their food at meal time.

GI's kept salt in the bottom cavities, called canned bottoms, of their Zippos, to replenish lost body salt. Other legendary Zippos were used to transmit signals or even provided a shield against enemy bullets. Staff Sergeant Naugle, who was saved because he was able to signal his position to the rescue helicopter, had a Zippo in his hand. Among men that had a close call with death, one of the luckiest was Sergeant Martinez, who kept a Zippo in his chest pocket. A bullet struck his chest, only to be stopped by his Zippo. This was reported in Life magazine and also appeared in various advertisements attesting the Zippos finest attributes.

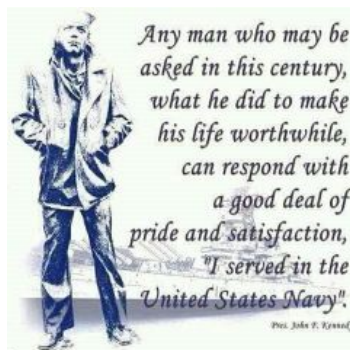
Zippos were also used in military operations, where Marines and Soldiers would spray gasoline over the area to burn enemy compounds and dwellings. A soldier would usually carry a Zippo in the chest pocket of his jungle fatigues. Some

would insert one in the camouflage band of the helmet or put one into the magazine pouch of an M-16. Alcohol, diesel oil and even gasoline were substitutes for lighter fluid when this was not available. Zippos were made of tough stuff! Zippos were also used as IDs and canvasses. Post Exchanges in Vietnam carried a large amount of Zippo lighters, which explains the reason why there was so many Zippos in Vietnam.

By this time, Zippo merchandise quickly found its way onto the black market. Soldiers were able to buy brand new Zippos without having to go to the PX store. Vietnamese craftsmen would engrave anything from pictures to phrases onto the Zippo. The most popular motif engraved on a Zippo was the map of Vietnam.

Zippo lighters used by the GI's during the Vietnam War have become collector's items. Every Zippo from the war bears mute witness, conveying a great sense of having been there on the battlefield. The GI's who faced death and stood on the brink of hell, carrying their Zippos, transformed these simple lighters into an integral part of their own bodies and souls. Zippo lighters have since become valuable collectors items commanding high prices at auctions.

**The Proud Sailor** Contributed by Charlie Weaver



**Thank You Brothers**

Contributed by Charlie Weaver

We Nam vets chewed the same dirt, fought the same war and we fought it together. Now we have one another and together we stand. Never again will we let a Brother stand alone when they come home. No matter what war blood is blood and brotherhood is brotherhood.

Once I stood in the night with my head bowed low.  
In the darkness, as black as could be  
And my heart felt alone.  
And I cried oh Lord  
Don't hide your face from me.

Hold my hand all the way,  
Every hour every day,  
From here to the grave.  
I know.  
Take my hand.  
Let me stand  
Where no one stands alone

Like a king I may live in a palace so tall  
With great riches to call my own.  
But I don't know a thing  
In this whole wide world  
That's worse then being alone.

Hold my hand all the way.  
Every hour, every day.  
From here to the grave,  
I know.  
Take my hand.  
Let me stand.  
Where no one stands alone.

Take my hand.  
Let me stand.  
Where no one stands alone.

Continued on Page 5 Thank You Brothers

**USMC Overcomes ACLU Adversity Contributed by Charlie Weaver**

If you look closely at the picture right, you will note that all the Marines pictured are bowing their heads. That's because they're praying. This incident took place at a recent ceremony honoring the birthday of the corps, and it has the ACLU up in arms. "These are federal employees," says Lucius Traveler, a spokesman for the ACLU, "on federal property and on federal time.. For them to pray is clearly an establishment of religion, and we must nip this in the bud immediately."

When asked about the ACLU's charges, Colonel Jack Fessender, speaking for the Commandant of the Corps said (cleaned up a bit), "Screw the ACLU." GOD Bless Our Warriors. Send the ACLU to Afghanistan!

Please send this to people you know so everyone will know how stupid the ACLU is getting in trying to remove GOD from everything and every place in America May God Bless America, One Nation Under GOD!

What's wrong with the picture? ABSOLUTELY NOTHING! GOD BLESS YOU FOR PASSING IT ON! I am sorry but I am not breaking this one....Let us pray! Prayer chain for our Military...please don't break it

THIS NEEDS TO GO AROUND THE USA MANY TIMES SO KEEP IT GOING

Lets put the ALCU in combat for a few weeks and then see what their beliefs would be.



.....  
**DON'T MESS WITH OLD PEOPLE!**

*Contributed by Charlie Weaver*

*There was this one nurse who just drove me crazy. Every time she came in, she would talk to me like I was a little child.*

*She would say in a patronizing tone of voice, "And how are we doing this morning?"*

*Or  
"Are we ready for a bath?" or  
"Are we hungry?"*

*I had had enough of this particular nurse. One day at breakfast, I took the apple juice off the tray and put it in my bedside stand. Later I was given a urine sample bottle to fill for testing. So you know where the juice went!*

*The nurse came in a while later, picked up the urine sample bottle, looked at it and said, "My, my, it seems we are a little cloudy today."*

*At this, I snatched the bottle out of her hand, popped off the top, and gulped it down, saying, "Well, I'll run it through again. Maybe I can filter it better this time!" The nurse fainted... I just smiled.*

.....  
**Thank You Brothers** *Continued from page 4*

*When I climbed into my rack each night I knew the men on the bridge*

*would steer us true and keep us out of danger. I knew the men in the engineering spaces would watch the dials, maintain the pumps and keep the boiler hot and the screws turning as required. I knew the deck force would work to make sure the ship was always clean, and shined when I awoke. I knew the men in the galley would have a hot meal waiting for me and coffee in the pot. The men in supply would make sure our holds were full of provisions and we didn't run out of good navy chow. I knew the sonar and radar watch would stay alert for any lurking threat.*

*I knew, if we got into harms way the men in gunnery were ready to protect me. I slept easy with all that effort unseen, and sometimes not appreciated as it should have been.*

*I am proud to have been a tin can sailor, and to all those I may not have thanked each night, thank you now for your service. Thank you for bringing me home safe after each voyage. I trusted each and everyone of you, and you never failed.*

.....  
**Mansions Of The Lord (Veterans Memorial)**

*Contributed by SSG Joe Zager, USA (Ret)*

This is a very beautiful tribute to our military men and women. This is simply awesome. However, after you click on Mansions; do not click on anything else. It will start playing by itself.

One of the best tributes to America's veterans and families... Turn up your sound and click on Mansions. Don't click on play now.

**Mansions!** < = = = **click here**

.....

***Boston Linguistics*** Contributed  
by Terence Clifford

Just so you people from MA don't forget your roots. And for those of you who try to understand us New Englanders.

The geographical center of Boston is in Roxbury. Due north of the center we find the South End. This is not to be confused with South Boston which lies directly east from the South End. North of the South End is East Boston and southwest of East Boston is the North End. There is no school on School Street, no court on Court Street, no dock on Dock Square, and no water on Water Street. Back Bay Boston streets are in alphabetical order: Arlington, Berkeley, Clarendon, Dartmouth, etc. So are South Boston streets: A, B, C, D, etc. If the streets are named after trees (e.g. Walnut, Chestnut, Cedar) you are on Beacon Hill. If they are named after poets, you are in Wellesley. Massachusetts Avenue is Mass Ave. Commonwealth Avenue is Comm Ave. South Boston is Southie. The South End is The South End. East Boston is Eastie. The North End is east of the former West End. The West End and Scollay Square are no more; a guy named Rappaport got rid of them one night. Roxbury is The Berry. Jamaica Plain is J.P.

There are two State Houses, two City Halls, two courthouses, and two Hancock buildings (one is very old; one is relatively new). The colored lights on top of the old Hancock tells the weather: "Solid blue, clear view." "Flashing blue, clouds due." "Solid red, rain ahead." "Flashing red, snow instead." (except in summer, flashing red means the Red Sox game was rained out!)

Most people live here all their life and still do not know what the hell is going on with this one: Route 128 South is I-95 south and it is also I-93 north.

The underground train is not a subway. It is the T, and it does not run all night (Fah chrysakes, this ain't Noo Yawk). Order the cold tea in Chinatown after 2:00 AM; you will get a kettle full of beer. Bostonians: think that it is their God-given right to cut off someone in traffic. Bostonians: think that there are only 25 letters in the alphabet (No Rs, except in idear.) Bostonians: think that three straight days of 90+ temperatures is a heat wave. Bostonians: refer to six inches of snow as a dusting. Bostonians: always bang a left as soon as the light turns green, and oncoming traffic always expects it. Bostonians: believe that using your turn signal is a sign of weakness. Bostonians: think that 63 degree ocean water is warm. Bostonians: think Rhode Island accents are annoying.

The bridge connecting Boston and Cambridge via Massachusetts Avenue is commonly known as the Harvard Bridge. (Or Hahvahd Bridge). When it was built, the state offered to name the bridge for the Cambridge school that could present the best claim for the honor. Harvard submitted an essay detailing its contributions to education in America, concluding that it deserved the honor of having a bridge leading into Cambridge named for the institution...MIT did a structural analysis of the bridge and found it so full of defects that they agreed that it should be named for Harvard. This is all true!

Do not pahk your cah in Hahvid Yahd. They will tow it to Meffad (Medford) or Summahville (Somerville). Do not sleep on the Common. (Boston Common). Do not wear orange in Southie on St. Patrick's Day. The Sox = The Red Sox. The Cs = The Celtics. The Bs = The Bruins. The Pats = The Patriots.

How to pronounce these Massachusetts cities correctly:  
Worcester: Wuhsta or Wistah.  
Gloucester: Glawsta.

Leicester: Lesta.  
Woburn: Woobun.  
Dedham: Dead-um.  
Revere: Re-vee-ah.  
Quincy: Quinzee.  
Tewksbury: Took-ber-ry.  
Leominster: Lemon-sta.  
Peabody: Pee-ba-dee.  
Waltham: Walth-ham.  
Chatham: Chad-dum.  
Samoset: Sam-oh-set or Sum-aw-set, but nevah Summerset!

Massachusetts Facts :  
Frappes are made with ice cream - milk shakes are not.  
If it is carbonated and flavored, it is tonic.  
Tonic means Soda.  
When we want Club Soda we ask for CLUB SODA.  
When we want Tonic Water we ask for TONIC WATER.  
Pop is another name for Dad.  
The smallest beer is a pint.  
Scrod is whatever they tell you it is, usually white fish. If you paid more than \$7 per pound, you just got scrod.  
It is not a water fountain... it is a bubblah.  
It is not a trash can... it is a barrel.  
It is not a hero, or a grinder... it is a sub.  
It is not a shopping cart... it is a carriage.  
It is not a purse... it is a pockabook.  
They are not franks... they are haht dahgs.  
Franks are money used in Switzzahland.  
Police do not drive patrol units or black and whites... they drive a crewza.  
If you take the bus, your on the looza crooza.  
It is not a rubber band... it is an elastic.  
It is not a traffic circle or round about... it is a rotary.  
"Going to the islands" means going to Martha's Vineyard or Nantucket.  
Send this to your friends who do not live in Boston! They won't believe it! Baw-ston-ians will get a kick outta it, too!

.....

**REMEMBER 1955 ?**

*Contributed by SGT Mike Grumpy*

*If they raise the minimum wage to \$1.00, nobody will be able to hire outside help at the store*



*When I first started driving, who would have thought gas would someday cost 25 cents a gallon. Guess we'd be better off leaving the car in the garage.*



*Did you see where some baseball player just signed a contract for \$50,000 a year just to play ball? It wouldn't surprise me if someday they'll be making more than the President.*



*I never thought I'd see the day all our kitchen appliances would be electric. They're even making electric typewriters now.*



*It's too bad things are so tough nowadays. I see where a few married women are having to work to make ends meet.*



*It won't be long before young couples are going to have to hire someone to watch their kids so they can both work.*



*I'm afraid the Volkswagen car is going to open the door to a whole lot of foreign business.*



*Thank goodness I won't live to see the day when the Government takes half our income in taxes. I sometimes wonder if we are electing the best people to government.*



*The fast food restaurant is convenient for a quick meal, but I seriously doubt they will ever catch on. See photo next page.*



*There is no sense going on short trips anymore for a weekend. It costs nearly \$2.00 a night to stay in a hotel.*



No one can afford to be sick anymore. At \$15.00 a day in the hospital, it's too rich for my blood.



**Senators urge aggressive fixes for POW/MIA operations**

*By Matthew M. Burke  
Stars and Stripes  
Contributed by Charlie Weaver*

Two U.S. senators are urging Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel to take aggressive action to fix the POW/MIA accounting operations. In a Jan. 9 letter, Claire McCaskill, D-Mo., and Kelly Ayotte, R-N.H., outlined the requirements of recently ratified legislation and strongly urged quick reforms.

“Recovering our POW and MIA personnel is a sacred obligation, and the families of our missing heroes deserve nothing less than full honesty and transparency from their government — but that’s not what they’ve been getting,” McCaskill said in a statement Tuesday. “The legislation we passed last month will allow us to hold the Pentagon accountable for taking concrete steps to fix this management mess, and we’re not going to let up on the pressure until this is done.”

The letter follows approval of the annual National Defense Authorization Act, which included an amendment that gave the Pentagon six months to fix the “systemic mismanagement” plaguing recovery efforts of the nation’s war dead and missing.

The amendment calls for an analysis of whether parts of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command and the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Person Personnel Office should be combined and a determination on which components should have direct responsibility for accounting and analysis. It also calls for an analysis of how other countries account for their missing to determine best practices.

McCaskill and Ayotte have taken the lead in seeking to root out alleged mismanagement at JPAC and DPMO since the release of two scathing reports over the summer. In July, The Associated Press exposed an internal review that chronicled turf wars and questionable recovery results that

*the JPAC brass had covered up. A Government Accountability Office report mirrored those findings.*

JPAC has admitted to holding phony repatriation ceremonies and allowing a Hollywood film production to shoot in the laboratory where the remains of fallen servicemembers are analyzed. Former JPAC and DPMO employees have told Stars and Stripes that JPAC officials actively argued against making identifications of World War II remains already in U.S. custody.

“We remain concerned that the Department is not adequately or expeditiously addressing the serious problems in the accounting community,” the letter to Hagel says. “The Department can and must do better.”

U.S. Army Pfc. Shantilla Robinson, left, U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Laura Noel, right, U.S. Navy



Petty Officer 3rd Class India Davis, back left and U.S. Marine Cassie McDole, back right, escort a flag-draped transfer case from a U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III during the U.S. Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command Arrival Ceremony, on Nov. 30, 2012, at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. MICHAEL R. HOLZWORTH/U.S. AIR FORCE



**Whatever happened to all those USAF fuel tanks that were jettisoned all over North and South Vietnam**

after the fuel was expended during their missions? *Contributed by Gary Johnson*

Apparently they're being put to good used as boats in the navigable rivers of SE Asia. F-4 Phantom fully loaded with fuel tanks and arms ...

**See Below:**

In case you were wondering what happened to all those fuel tanks our aircraft jettisoned over Southeast Asia



contained a spelling error. I went to the Arizona Secretary of State's office and they processed a replacement order for a new paver. A friend of mine has been visiting the memorial on a regular basis and he photographed the replacement paver, now installed. My friend was kind enough to photograph the paver and to email the photo.



Should anyone visit the USS Arizona Gun Barrel Memorial the paving stone can be found under the breech of the USS Missouri gun barrel.

I will be traveling to Phoenix at the end of April and will rephotograph the USS Arizona Memorial and the paving brick.

**Do you know this man?**

*Contributed by Gary Hults*



Some where in Greece.

**The following was written by Ben Stein and recited by him on CBS Sunday Morning Commentary.**

*Contributed by Don Tanner*

**My confession:**

*I don't like getting pushed around for being a Jew, and I don't think Christians like getting pushed around for being Christians. I think people who believe in God are sick and tired of getting pushed around, period. I have no idea where the concept came from, that America is an explicitly atheist country. I can't find it in the Constitution and I don't like it being shoved down my throat...*

*Or maybe I can put it another way: where did the idea come from that we should worship celebrities and we aren't allowed to worship God as we understand Him? I guess that's a sign that I'm getting old, too. But there are a lot of us who are wondering where these celebrities came from and where the America we knew went to.*

*In light of the many jokes we send to one another for a laugh, this is a little different: This is not intended to be a joke; it's not funny, it's intended to get you thinking. In light of recent events... terrorists attack, school shootings, etc.. I think it started when Madeleine Murray O'Hare (she was murdered, her body found a few years ago) complained she didn't want prayer in our schools, and we said OK. Then someone said you better not read the Bible in school... The Bible says thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal, and love your neighbor as yourself. And we said OK.*

*Then Dr. Benjamin Spock said we shouldn't spank our children when they misbehave, because their little*  
*Continued on Page 10*

**Spelling Error Corrected**

*Contributed by Marty Walsh*

I was in Phoenix, Arizona in December 2013 for the dedication of the USS Arizona Gun Barrel Memorial. During my visit I found the 8x8 paving brick that I had purchased last May. Unfortunately it

personalities would be warped and we might damage their self-esteem (Dr. Spock's son committed suicide). We said an expert should know what he's talking about.. And we said okay..Now we're asking ourselves why our children have no conscience, why they don't know right from wrong, and why it doesn't bother them to kill strangers, their classmates, and themselves.

Probably, if we think about it long and hard enough, we can figure it out. I think it has a great deal to do with 'WE REAP WHAT WE SOW.' Funny how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world's going to hell. Funny how we believe what the newspapers say, but question what the Bible says. Funny how you can send 'jokes' through e-mail and they spread like wildfire, but when you start sending messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing. Funny how lewd, crude, vulgar and obscene articles pass freely through cyberspace, but public discussion of God is suppressed in the school and workplace.

Are you laughing yet? Funny how when you forward this message, you will not send it to many on your address list because you're not sure what they believe, or what they will think of you for sending it.

Funny how we can be more worried about what other people think of us than what God thinks of us. Pass it on if you think it has merit.

If not, then just discard it... no one will know you did. But, if you discard this thought process, don't sit back and complain about what bad shape the world is in.

My Best Regards, Honestly and respectfully, Ben Stein

.....

**Good one for today!**  
*Contributed by Charlie Weaver*



**Don't Judge my Path if You Have not Walked my Journey.**

Hi Lord, it's me.

We are getting older and things are getting ...bad here.

Gas prices are too high, no jobs, and food and heating costs too high. I know some have taken you out of our schools, government and even Christmas, but Lord I'm asking you to come back and re-bless America . We really need you! There are more of us who want you than those who don't! Thank You Lord, I Love You.

.....

**Its official, DD-214's are NOW Online.**

<http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs/index.html> ^

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has provided the following website for veterans to gain access to their DD-214s online: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov/> This may be particularly helpful when a veteran needs a copy of his DD-214 for employment purposes. NPRC is

working to make it easier for veterans with computers and Internet access to obtain copies of documents from their military files. Military veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may now use a new online military personnel records system to request documents. Other individuals with a need for documents must still complete the Standard Form 180, which can be downloaded from the online web site. Because the requester will be asked to supply all information essential for NPRC to process the request, delays that normally occur when NPRC has to ask veterans for additional information will be minimized. The new web-based application was designed to provide better service on these requests by eliminating the records center's mailroom processing time.

Please pass this information on to former military personnel you may know and their dependents.  
.....

**Call us Rednecks if you will but we do have some good ideas!**

*Contributed by SGT Mike Grumpy, USA (Ret)*

**Use for Old Socks on a Cold Winters Night!**



**Never let it be said that I am a fountain of useless information...**

.....

**Texas For those fellow Texans and those adopted TX friends.**

*Contributed by Ron Conran*



**A Texas good-bye** *Contributed by Charlie Weaver*

**From a friend in Texas:**

Patriotism,... Texas and Chris Kyle:

I just wanted to share with you all that out of a horrible tragedy we were blessed by so many people. Chris was Derek's teammate through 10 years of training and battle. They both suffer / suffered from P T S D to some extent and took great care of each other because of it. 2006 in Ramadi was horrible for young men that never had any more aggressive physical contact with another human than on a Texas football field.

They lost many friends. Chris became the armed services number #1 sniper of all time. Not something he was happy about, other than the fact that in so doing, he saved a lot of American lives. Three years ago, his wife Taya asked him to leave the SEAL teams as he had a huge bounty on his head by Al Qaeda. He did and wrote the book "The American Sniper." 100% of the proceeds from the book went to two of the SEAL families who had lost their sons in Iraq. That was the guy Chris was.

He formed a company in Dallas to train military, police and I think firemen as far as protecting themselves in difficult situations. He also formed a foundation to work with military people suffering from PTSD. Chris was a giver not a taker. He along with a friend and neighbor, Chad Littlefield, were murdered trying to help a young man that had served six months in Iraq and claiming to have PTSD.

Now I need to tell you about all of the blessings. Southwest Airlines flew in any SEAL and their family from any airport they flew into free of charge. The employees donated buddy passes and one lady worked

for four days without much of a break to see that it happened. Volunteers were at both airports in Dallas to drive them to the hotel.

The Marriott Hotel reduced their rates to \$45 a night and cleared the hotel for only SEALs and family. The Midlothian, TX. Police Department paid the \$45 a night for each room. I would guess there were about 200 people staying at the hotel. 100 of them SEALs. Two large buses were chartered (an unknown donor paid the bill) to transport people to the different events and they also had a few rental cars (donated). The police and secret service were on duty 24 hours during the stay at our hotel.

At the house the Texas DPS parked a large motor home in front to block the view from reporters.

It remained there the entire five days for the SEALs to congregate in and all to use the restroom so as not to have to go in the house. Taya, their two small children and both sets of parents were staying in the home. Only a hand full of SEALs went into the home as they had different duties and meetings were held sometimes on an hourly basis. It was a huge coordination of many different events and security. Derek was assigned to be a pall bearer, to escort Chris' body when it was transferred from Midlothian Funeral Home to Arlington Funeral Home and to be with Taya. A tough job.

Taya seldom came out of her bedroom. The home was full with people from the church and other family members that would come each day to help. I spent one morning in a bedroom with Chris' mom and the next morning with Chad Littlefield's parents (the other man murdered with Chris). A tough job.

*Continued on Page 21 A Texas good-bye*

## Master Sergeant Roy Benavidez (August 5, 1935 - November 29, 1998)

Master Sergeant (then Staff Sergeant) Roy P. Benavidez United States Army, who distinguished himself by a series of daring and extremely valorous actions on 2 May 1968 while assigned to Detachment B56, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces, Republic of Vietnam. On the morning of 2 May 1968, a 12-man Special Forces Reconnaissance Team was inserted by helicopters in a dense jungle area west of Loc Ninh, Vietnam to gather intelligence information about confirmed large-scale enemy activity. This area was controlled and routinely patrolled by the North Vietnamese Army.

After a short period of time on the ground, the team met heavy enemy resistance, and requested emergency extraction. Three helicopters attempted extraction, but were unable to land due to intense enemy small arms and anti-aircraft fire. Sergeant Benavidez was at the Forward Operating Base in Loc Ninh monitoring the operation by radio when these helicopters returned to off-load wounded crewmembers and to assess aircraft damage. Sergeant Benavidez voluntarily boarded a returning aircraft to assist in another extraction attempt. Realizing that all the team members were either dead or wounded and unable to move to the pickup zone, he directed the aircraft to a nearby clearing where he jumped from the hovering helicopter, and ran approximately 75 meters under withering small arms fire to the crippled team. Prior to reaching the team's position he was wounded in his right leg, face, and head. Despite these painful injuries, he took charge, repositioning the team members and

directing their fire to facilitate the landing of an extraction aircraft, and the loading of wounded and dead team members. He then threw smoke canisters to direct the aircraft to the



team's position. Despite his severe wounds and under intense enemy fire, he carried and dragged half of the wounded team members to the awaiting aircraft. He then provided protective fire by running alongside the aircraft as it moved to pick up the remaining team members. As the enemy's fire intensified, he hurried to recover the body and classified documents on the dead team leader. When he reached the leader's body, Sergeant Benavidez was severely wounded by small arms fire in the abdomen and grenade fragments in his back. At nearly the same moment, the aircraft pilot was mortally wounded, and his helicopter crashed. Although in extremely critical condition due to his multiple wounds, Sergeant Benavidez secured the classified documents and made his way back to the wreckage, where he aided the wounded out of the overturned aircraft, and gathered the stunned survivors into a defensive perimeter. Under increasing enemy automatic weapons and grenade fire, he moved around the perimeter distributing

water and ammunition to his weary men, re-instilling in them a will to live and fight. Facing a buildup of enemy opposition with a beleaguered team, Sergeant Benavidez mustered his strength, began calling in tactical air strikes and directed the fire from supporting gunships to suppress the enemy's fire and so permit another extraction attempt. He was wounded again in his thigh by small arms fire while administering first aid to a wounded team member just before another extraction helicopter was able to land. His indomitable spirit kept him going as he began to ferry his comrades to the craft. On his second trip with the wounded, he was clubbed from additional wounds to his head and arms before killing his adversary. He then continued under devastating fire to carry the wounded to the helicopter.

Upon reaching the aircraft, he spotted and killed two enemy soldiers who were rushing the craft from an angle that prevented the aircraft door gunner from firing upon them. With little strength remaining, he made one last trip to the perimeter to ensure that all classified material had been collected or destroyed, and to bring in the remaining wounded. Only then, in extremely serious condition from numerous wounds and loss of blood, did he allow himself to be pulled into the extraction aircraft. Sergeant Benavidez' gallant choice to join voluntarily his comrades who were in critical straits, to expose himself constantly to withering enemy fire, and his refusal to be stopped despite numerous severe wounds, saved the lives of at least eight men. His fearless personal leadership, tenacious devotion to duty, and extremely valorous actions in the face of overwhelming odds were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service, and reflect the utmost credit on him and the United States Army.

## Immigrant dreams founder off Long Island

*Contributed by Peggy Cronin-Hannan*

*I look where the ship helplessly  
heads end on,*

*I hear the burst as she strikes,*

*I hear the howls of dismay,  
They grow fainter and fainter.*  
– From "The Sleepers" by Walt Whitman

**Lynbrook, N.Y.** -- The immigrant voyage of millions of Irish to America was legendary for its trials. But perhaps none who ventured out into the Atlantic had as perilous and tragic a journey as the 100 or so Irish men, women and children who set forth in October 1836 on the barque Mexico and the ship Bristol.

Little remembered today, the wrecks of these two vessels, with the loss of 215 lives off Long Island's South Shore, shocked all who heard or read of them, and made for spectacular headlines for months to come. Taken together, the wrecks were among the deadliest maritime accidents in U.S. history to that time.



**Currier print of the wreck of the Mexico.**

Most of the victims on the Bristol drowned after a rogue wave washed

over the deck and below decks, as the ship remained stuck about 400 yards offshore. The Mexico's casualties, including 36 women and 22 passengers below the age of 11, froze to death while waiting on the deck for a rescue effort that never came.

Their fates augured wholesale change in the government's laissez-faire neglect of the maritime industry, with measures better insuring safer travel along the Atlantic seaboard, including tasking federal revenue cutters, which evolved into the Coast Guard, with sea rescues.

The avoidable deaths of so many so close to land, perishing so wretchedly, gripped the nation's imagination. Even poet Walt Whitman, 17 at the time and living on Long Island, later vividly wrote about the event, most notably in his poem, "The Sleepers," from "Leaves of Grass."

For the past three years, the ships' ill-fated passages have been the subject of an annual commemoration, held the Friday before Thanksgiving, sponsored by two local groups -- the Gaelic Society of the Parish of St. Agnes Cathedral and The Historical Society of East Rockaway and Lynbrook.

Members of the groups gather at Rockville Cemetery, at the Mariners Burial Ground and its monument, unveiled in 1840 to commemorate the wrecks' victims. The plot's marble obelisk was funded through donations from local farmers and baymen, and from money salvaged from the dead who lacked next of kin to claim their remains.

This year's 15-minute service drew Lynbrook village historian Arthur S. Mattson and 10 others. During the rites, Mattson read from the casualty list of the Mexico, from his new book, titled "Water and Ice: The Tragic Wrecks of the Bristol and Mexico on the South Shore of Long Island" (Lynbrook Historical Books, 2010, 288 pages, illustrated).

The compendium read like an Irish directory, with 54 of the 115 dead having originated in Ireland, bearing surnames such as Barrett, Brennan, Burns, Devine, Dwyer, Dolan, Higgins and so on.

Mattson talked, in particular, about five young women from County Cavan aboard the Mexico "who died taking such a gamble to get to America." The five women from Cavan, Margaret Barrett, 25; Bridget Devine, 20; Catharine Galligan, 25; Mary Smith, 25; and Eleanor Tierney, 18, were among 10 from the county on the ship, along with seven passengers from Cork and seven from Dublin. Thirty other passengers described their homelands simply as Ireland when arranging for their passages.

Records from the Bristol are spottier, but revealingly 18 of the 19 steerage passengers who survived the Bristol's wreck were Irish, from among the 68 traveling steerage. These included John Carr, from Kildare; William Dairy, a laborer from Derry, along with his wife or sister Elizabeth; Richard Faulkner and Peter Markey from County Louth; John Finnigan, a wheelwright, and Michael McGintry, from Dublin; James Gaffney, from Cavan; Patrick and Thomas O'Mealy, and Michael and Catharine Mooney, from Offaly; three members of the Warren family from Wicklow; and a deaf mute from Derry, known only as Michael, 40 years of age.

Below, at Lynbrook's Mariners Burial Ground, after Friday's commemoration (left to right), John Raphael, Bill Carroll, Debbie Wynne, Patricia McGivern, Joe Beyrer (piper), Bob Sympson, and historian Art Mattson.



Closing the ceremony, bagpiper Joe Beyrer, a Rockville Centre resident

and Lynbrook middle-school teacher, played a medley comprising “Amazing Grace,” “Going Home,” and finally “The Bristol” (named for the English city, not the ship). Wrote Mattson later, in an article for the local newspaper: “It felt as if his music penetrated the earth to the remains of those young girls, and flew to heaven.”

Speculation arose during conversations after the ceremony: Did the 10 emigrants from Cavan hail from the same townland, perhaps driven from their tenant holdings by a hardscrabble economy or a mercenary landlord? Mattson expressed a desire to learn more about the circumstances of these 10, noting he never before considered that they may have traveled from their homes together.

Mattson takes pains in his book to create the context for their exodus. Citing research by Arthur Gribben (“The Great Famine and the Irish Diaspora in America,” 1999) and Stanley Johnson (“History of Emigration,” 1913), Mattson, in “Water and Ice,” points to what Irish peasants faced by 1836 – elimination of home-based work by a depression a decade earlier, the advent of factories, periods of localized potato blight, and a dramatic rise in population.

After the ceremony Mattson wrote: “We all – Catholics, Protestants, and anyone else – bowed our heads as the ‘Hail Mary’ and ‘Our Father’ were said. There is no doubt in my mind that many of the girls lying nearby prayed the identical prayers that we were saying, as they stood on the deck of their wrecked ship in zero-degree weather just 200 yards off Long Beach – and slowly froze to death in sight of the land of their dreams, America.

“As the son of immigrants, I am thankful for brave people like these, the risk takers, who made America what she is today.”

**FRONT AND CENTER:** Those present at the ceremony included Bill Carroll and Debbie Wynne, who co-founded the Gaelic Society at St.

Agnes Cathedral in 1982; Bob Sympson from The Historical Society of East Rockaway and Lynbrook; Patricia McGivern, a member of both organizations; and John Raphael, president of the Gaelic Society. (Contact John Raphael, at 516-678-1008, for more information about the Gaelic Society, which will host a Mass at the Cathedral, Saturday, Dec. 5, in honor of deceased members.)

#### THE CRUEL FATES OF THE BRISTOL AND MEXICO



The Bristol departed The Prince’s Dock, in Liverpool, on Oct. 15, eight days before the Mexico and foundered off the beach of Far Rockaway, Nov. 21, 1836, with the loss of 100 -- 95 of 127 passengers and 5 of 17 crew members. The ship had been waiting since dark for a pilot to arrive to guide them through the Narrows, but the New York pilots, who then had a monopoly and little regulation, ignored the captain’s signaling, preferring to keep the Sabbath.

Above, Thomas Chambers' painting, “Rockaway Beach, New York, with the Wreck of the Ship Bristol,” c. 1840. (Indiana University Art Museum)

Later that evening, a storm, strong currents and a crewman’s error drove the Bristol toward Rockaway Shoals. With the ship grounded, pounding seas destroyed the ship’s two lifeboats. Soon, a rogue wave washed over the Bristol, stripping the ship’s hatches. Subsequent waves surged below decks, trapping 49 of 68 steerage passengers, and the rising water level took their lives. Many passengers in the more-costly quarters also drowned.

The Mexico, meanwhile, had a much more difficult crossing, encountering nearly constant storms and pummeling seas, and took 71 days, twice as long as the Bristol, to reach New York. Arriving New Year’s Eve, Captain Charles Winslow signaled for a pilot’s assistance to get to a berth in Manhattan.

Tragically, callously, the pilots had adjourned to a Manhattan saloon to ring in the New Year, according to local historian Arthur S. Mattson. Winslow tried to keep the ship away from the treacherous shorelines while he waited for a pilot to finally respond to his signals, but currents, a navigation error, and a storm carried his ship to the Long Beach shore.

As well, the Mexico was overloaded, with a cargo of iron bars and coal, which added to the difficulties facing its crew during the crossing and in keeping from the shoals. In fact, the ship’s 111 passengers were, in the eyes of the ship’s owners, merely a commodity, occupying a cargo deck leased to a passenger broker.

The crew of the Mexico, weakened by the punishing waves, frigid temperatures, and weeks of battling high winds and flailing seas, and hampered by temperatures of 3 degrees Fahrenheit, lost both lifeboats in launch attempts. Not till 3 p.m., four hours later, did a rescue boat reach the Mexico, led by 51-year-old local wreck-master Raynor “Rock” Smith, who ignored the perils the waters posed to his long boat and six-man crew.

Smith’s boat had been pulled as much as eight miles by a horse or team of horses across land and frozen bays and inlets to reach the beach. He and his men took in eight survivors, including Winslow, four other crewmembers, and three passengers who had volunteered to help crew the ship. The remaining 108, severely famished, terrified passengers were left behind.



Captain Winslow prepares to jump into 'Rock' Smith's rescue boat, leaving the ship's mostly Irish passengers to fend for themselves. Those remaining could only hope that the boat, or others like it, would return. Day turned to night, though, as Smith and his crew, and other would-be rescuers refused to risk another trip to the Mexico as the seas churned unabated.

A correspondent for the Morning Courier and New York Express described the aftermath: "When (passengers) perceived that no further help came from the land, their piercing shrieks were distinctly heard at a considerable distance, and continued through the night until they one by one perished. The next morning the bodies of the many unhappy creatures were seen lashed to different parts of the wreck, embedded in ice." **WGT**

While shipwrecks today are more the exception than the rule, entering port in the early 19th-century Age of Sail wasn't always smooth sailing.

In [Trinity Church Cemetery](#) in Washington Heights, a storm-tossed ship is carved in bas relief on the gravestone of one Arthur Donnelly. The marker poignantly recalls a once famous maritime tragedy in New York City's history that began to unfold on November 20, 1836.

At about 9:00 in the evening, the [Bristol](#) had voyaged across the Atlantic from Liverpool, England. After nearly five weeks at sea, it had finally come within sight of the beacon on New Jersey's Sandy Hook, the southern sandbar marking the entry to the Lower Bay of New York City's harbor. Captain

Alexander McKown signaled for a pilot boat, but none came.

By 3:45 a.m., a storm had come and run the ship aground upon Far Rockaway, the sandbar on the harbor's north side. Donnelly got his wife Sophia, his children and their nursemaid Vinissa, and his widowed mother-in-law into the first lifeboat.

Despite the early morning storm on November 21, 1836, residents in Far Rockaway rushed from their houses down to the beach. Local fishermen darted their small boats into the pounding surf. For hours, all attention hung on the grim spectacle of a ship sinking about a quarter of a mile out, and of passengers clinging to the limp shrouds of her masts.

According to reports of time, the cook and steward threw themselves overboard. Mothers called to their children; husbands to their wives, but the next wave muted their cries. The ship went ashore on the sandbar at 4 a.m., the wind blowing a gale from the southeast. Rushing on deck, steerage passengers were swept off by waves "almost as soon as they made their appearance."

Cabin passengers remained below until the deck cabin was washed away, in which time Captain McKown had made preparations for their safety as best he could. Donnelly stayed aboard ship to assist the captain with other passengers, and eventually "died a victim of his own philanthropy."

News of the tragic incident praised the valor of local rescuers, but also condemned the villainous robbers "watching like cormorants for their prey" to struggle ashore. The surviving passengers had only the clothes they stood in; their trunks, which had drifted ashore, were immediately broken open by the "worse than demons" on shore, and their contents stolen.

The [Bristol shipwreck](#) was followed soon after by that of the [Mexico](#) in nearby waters. The two maritime tragedies--often spoken of together--promoted radical protocol measures

to ensure New York Pilot accountabilities.

"When you called and said, 'Arthur Donnelly', I had to sit down," says historian Arthur S. Mattson, who details the two events in his 2009 book, [Water and Ice: The Tragic Wrecks of the Bristol and the Mexico off the South Shore of Long Island](#). "This is the Bristol's 175th anniversary."

Today, a mass grave in Lynbrook (in the Hempstead township on Long Island) and Donnelly's illustrated gravestone up in Washington Heights are somber memorials to the casualties of both disasters and to the waning years of the Golden Age of Sail.

*Water and Ice: The Tragic Wrecks of the Bristol and the Mexico on the South Shore of Long Island, by Arthur S. Mattson.*

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## COPPER COATED MICROCHIP IMPLANT ALLOWS TERRORISTS TO SPEAK TO GOD

The implant is specifically designed to be injected in the forehead. When properly installed, it will instantly allow the terrorist to speak to God. It comes in various sizes: Generally from .223 to .50 cal.



The exact size of the implant will be selected by a well-trained and highly skilled technician, who will also make the injection. No Anesthetic is required. The implant is likely to be painless. Side effects, like headaches, nausea, aches or pains are extremely temporary. **Some**

bleeding or swelling may occur at the injection site. In most cases, you won't even notice it.

Please enjoy the security we provide for you.

Best regards,



THE LORD DOES  
the forgiving...



It's OUR Job To  
ARRANGE THE MEETING!  
U.S. MARINES

**A Sailor's**

**Thoughts** Contributed by Charlie Weaver

Some random and rambling thoughts accumulated from various quarters over the years. A bit of introspection from an "older" sailor.

A sailor will walk 10 miles in a freezing rain to get a beer but complain mightily about standing a 4 hour quarterdeck watch on a beautiful, balmy spring day.

A sailor will lie and cheat to get off the ship early and then will have no idea where he wants to go.

Sailors are territorial. They have their assigned spaces to clean and maintain. Woe betide the shipmate who tracks through a freshly swabbed deck.

Sailors constantly complain about the food on the mess decks while

concurrently going back for second or third helpings.

Some sailors have taken literally the old t-shirt saying that they should "Join the Navy. Sail to distant ports. Catch embarrassing, exotic diseases."

After a sea cruise, I realized how much I missed being at sea. We are now considering a Med cruise visiting some of my past favorite ports. Of course I'll have to pony up better than \$5,000 for the privilege. To think, Uncle Sam actually had to pay me to visit those same ports 55 years ago.

You can spend two years on a ship and never visit every nook and cranny or even every major space aboard. Yet, you can know all your shipmates.

Campari and soda taken in the warm Spanish sun is an excellent hangover remedy.

E5 is the almost perfect military pay grade. Too senior to catch the crap details, too junior to be blamed if things go awry.

Never be first, never be last and never volunteer for anything.

Almost every port has a "gut." An area teeming with cheap bars, easy women and partiers. Kind of like Bourbon St. , but with foreign currency.

If the Guardia Civil tell you to "Alto," you'd best alto, right now. Same goes for the Carabinieri, gendarmes and other assorted police forces. You could easily find yourself in that port's hoosegow. Or shot.

Contrary to popular belief, Chief Petty Officers do not walk on water. They walk just above it.

Sad but true, when visiting even the most exotic ports of call, some sailors only see the inside of the nearest pub.

Also under the category of sad but true, that lithe, sultry Mediterranean beauty you spent those wonderful three days with and have dreamed about ever since, is almost certainly a grandmother now and buying her clothes from Omar the Tent maker.

A sailor can, and will, sleep anywhere, anytime.

Do not eat Mafunga, ever!

Yes, it's true, it does flow downhill.

In the traditional "crackerjack" uniform you were recognized as a member of United States Navy, no matter what port you were in. Damn all who want to eliminate or change that uniform.

The Marine dress blue uniform is, by far, the sharpest of all the armed forces.

Most sailors won't disrespect a shipmate's mother. On the other hand, it's not entirely wise to tell them you have a good looking sister.

Sailors and Marines will generally fight one another, and fight together against all comers.

If you can at all help it, never tell anyone that you are seasick.

Check the rear dungaree pockets of a sailor. Right pocket a wallet. Left pocket a book.

The guys who seemed to get away with doing the least, always seemed to be first in the pay line and the chow line.

General Quarters drills and the need to evacuate one's bowels often seem to coincide.

Speaking of which, when the need arises, the nearest head is always the one which is secured for cleaning.

Three people you never screw with: the doc, the paymaster and the ship's barber.



In the summer, all deck seamen wanted to be signalmen. In the winter they wanted to be radarmen.

Do snipes ever get the grease and oil off their hands?

Never play a drinking game which involves the loser paying for all the drinks.

There are only two good ships: the one you came from and the one you're going to.

Whites, coming from the cleaners, clean, pressed and starched, last that way about 30 microseconds after donning them. The Navy dress white uniform is a natural dirt magnet.

Sweat pumps operate in direct proportion to the seniority of the official visiting.

Skill, daring and science will always win out over horseshit, superstition and luck.

We train in peace so that in time of war the greater damage will be upon our enemies and not upon ourselves.

"Pride and professionalism" trumps "Fun and zest" any day.

The shrill call of a bosun's pipe still puts a chill down my spine.

Three biggest lies in the Navy: We're happy to be here; this is not an inspection; we're here to help.

Everything goes in the log.

Rule 1: The Captain is always right.  
Rule 2: When in doubt refer to Rule 1.

A wet napkin under your tray keeps the tray from sliding on the mess deck table in rough seas, keeping at least one hand free to hold on to your beverage.

Never walk between the projector and the movie screen after the flick has started.

A guy who doesn't share a care package from home is no shipmate.

When transiting the ocean, the ship's chronometer is always advanced at 0200 which makes for a short night. When going in the opposite direction, the chronometer is retarded at 1400 which extends the work day.

If I had to do it all over again, I would. Twice.

When I sleep, I often dream I am back at sea.

Good shipmates are friends forever

**Moe Berg: A second-rate baseball player but a first-rate spy.**

*Contributed by Ray Storey*

When baseball greats Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig went on tour in baseball-crazy Japan in 1934, some fans wondered why a third-string catcher named Moe Berg was included.

The answer was simple: Berg was a US spy. Speaking 15 languages—including Japanese—Moe Berg had two loves: baseball and spying.

In Tokyo, garbed in a kimono, Berg took flowers to the daughter of an American diplomat being treated in St. Luke's Hospital--the tallest building in the Japanese capital. He never delivered the flowers. The ball-player ascended to the hospital roof and filmed key features: the harbor, military installations, railway yards, etc.

Eight years later, General Jimmy Doolittle studied Berg's films in planning his spectacular raid on Tokyo.



Catcher Moe Berg

Berg's father, Bernard Berg, a pharmacist in Newark, New Jersey, taught his son Hebrew and Yiddish. Moe, against his wishes, began playing baseball on the street aged four. His father disapproved and never once watched his son play. In Barringer High School, Moe learned Latin, Greek and French. He graduated magna cum laude from Princeton—having added Spanish, Italian, German and Sanskrit to his linguistic quiver. During further studies at the Sorbonne, in Paris, and Columbia Law School he picked up Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Indian, Arabic, Portuguese and Hungarian—15 languages in all, plus some regional dialects.

While playing baseball for Princeton University, Moe Berg would describe plays in Latin or Sanskrit.



Tito's partisans  
During World War II, he was parachuted into Yugoslavia to assess the value to the war effort of the two groups of partisans there. He  
*Continued on next page*

reported back that Marshall Tito's forces were widely supported by the people and Winston Churchill ordered all-out support for the Yugoslav underground fighter, rather than Mihajlovic's Serbians. The parachute jump at age 41 undoubtedly was a challenge. But there was more to come in that same year.

Berg penetrated German-held Norway, met with members of the underground and located a secret heavy water plant—part of the Nazis' effort to build an atomic bomb. His information guided the Royal Air Force in a bombing raid to destroy the plant.



*The R.A.F. destroys the Norwegian heavy water plant targeted by Moe Berg.*

There still remained the question of how far had the Nazis progressed in the race to build the first Atomic bomb. If the Nazis were successful, they would win the war.

Berg (under the code name "Remus") was sent to Switzerland to hear leading German physicist Werner Heisenberg, a Nobel Laureate, lecture and determine if the Nazis were close to building an A-bomb. Moe managed to slip past the SS guards at the auditorium, posing as a Swiss graduate student. The spy carried in his pocket a pistol

and a cyanide pill. If the German indicated the Nazis were close to building a weapon, Berg was to shoot him—and then swallow the cyanide pill. Moe, sitting in the front row, determined that the Germans were nowhere near their goal, so he complimented Heisenberg on his speech and walked him back to his hotel.



Werner Heisenberg—he blocked the Nazis from acquiring an atomic bomb.

Moe Berg's report was distributed to Britain's Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, President Franklin D. Roosevelt and key figures in the team developing the Atomic Bomb. Roosevelt responded: "Give my regards to the catcher."

Most of Germany's leading physicists had been Jewish and had fled the Nazis mainly to Britain and the United States.

After the war, Moe Berg was awarded the Medal of Merit—America's highest honor for a civilian in wartime. But Berg refused to accept, as he couldn't tell people about his exploits. After his death, his sister accepted the Medal and it hangs in the Baseball Hall of Fame, in Cooperstown,

Your Freedom Wasn't & Still Isn't Free!

.....

**I was walkin**

*Contributed by Charlie Weaver*

I was walkin down the street one day,

I seen a man comin my way,  
He looked at me with cold dead eyes,

And I started to realize,  
The closer I got to this man-  
The more I could see  
The man I was lookin at-  
Was lookin like me..

Our distance diminished ,  
we were face to face,  
There wasn't a soul in all of the place

Each man stood there waiting for  
what happens next,  
but both knew the answer,  
neither one was perplexed,  
I let the man pass, but as soon as I did,

I spun back around- all I saw was a kid..

No more than 8 this boy could have been,  
not tormented by hate, nor guilty with sin,

In what seemed a lifetime  
He smiled and waved,

I knew in that instant that I had been saved,  
From the pain and the ache and the demons inside,  
From the sorrow and hate, the anger and pride..

I walked down the street feeling better that day,  
when I waved to the man, he disappeared right away !

.....

**In Memoriam**

*Pete Fleishman MM 2 1952-56 Richard J. "Pete" Fleishman, age 81 of Lansing, IL, passed away on Saturday, January 4, 2014 with his loving family by his side. He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Louise (nee Johnson) Funeral services for Pete will be held on Wednesday, January 8, 2014 beginning with Prayers 10:30 AM at the Schroeder-Lauer Funeral Home, 3227 Ridge Rd., Lansing, IL and proceed to St. Ann Catholic Church, 3010 Ridge Rd., Lansing, IL for an 11:00 AM Mass of Christian Burial. Interment will follow at Holy Cross Cemetery in Calumet City, Illinois. Friends are invited to visit with Pete's family on Tuesday, January 7, 2014 from 3:00 - 8:00 PM at the funeral home. In lieu of gifts, memorial donations may be made in Pete's name to the Humane Society of the Calumet Area, 421 45th Ave., Munster, IN 46321. Pete honorably served his country during the [Korean War](#) in the [U.S. Navy](#). He was a member of St. Ann Catholic Church, a foreman for Refax Incorporated, an avid Bears fan and Notre Dame nut, and an avid fisherman. He was a lifelong member of the Knights of Columbus and past President of the 4th Degree. He was also a member of the Elks and [VFW](#). Above all, he was a loving husband, devoted father, and caring grandfather and he will be dearly missed by his family and all who knew and loved him. [www.schroederlauer.com](http://www.schroederlauer.com)*

**The Battling Boys of Benghazi(Anonymous)**

*We're the Battling Boys of Benghazi, no fame, no glory, no paparazzi.*

*Just a fiery death in a blazing hell  
defending the country we loved so  
well.*

*It wasn't our job, but we answered  
the call,  
fought to the consulate and  
scaled the wall.*

*We pulled 20 countrymen from the  
jaws of fate,  
led them to safety and stood at the  
gate.*

*Just the two of us, and foes by the  
score,  
but we stood fast to bar the door.*

*Three calls for reinforcement, but  
all were denied,  
so we fought and we fought and  
we fought till we died.*

*We gave our all for our Uncle Sam  
but xxxxxx xxxxxx didn't give a  
damn*

*Just two dead Seals who carried  
the load  
no thanks to us - we were Just  
"bumps in the road".*

.....

**Who Works when DC  
closes due to snow?**



.....

**To Realize** Contributed by Sharon Inman

*To realize the value of a sister/  
brother  
Ask someone  
Who doesn't have one.*

*To realize the value of ten years:  
Ask a newly  
Divorced couple.*

*To realize the value of four years:  
Ask a graduate.*

*To realize the value of one year:  
Ask a student who  
Has failed a final exam.*

*To realize the value of nine  
months:  
Ask a mother who gave birth to a  
stillborn.*

*To realize the value of one month:  
Ask a mother  
Who has given birth to  
A premature baby.*

*To realize the value of one week:  
Ask an editor of a weekly  
newspaper.*

*To realize the value of one minute:  
Ask a person  
Who has missed the train, bus or  
plane.*

*To realize the value of one second:  
Ask a person  
Who has survived an accident.*

*Time waits for no one.*

*Treasure every moment you have.*

*You will treasure it even more  
when  
You can share it with someone  
special.*

*To realize the value of a friend or  
family member:*

**LOSE ONE.**

*Remember...Hold on tight to the  
ones you love!!!!*

.....

*Roger Valentine contributed this article from the American Legion Magazine*

**'The Wrong Side Won'**

As a Vietnam War veteran, I agree completely with Uwe Simon-Netto's article (December). Those like the press and the many protesters kept me in hibernation for almost 20 years. This account showed the brutality of those we fought once they came to power. There was nothing good or honorable about leaving the South Vietnamese to the communists of the North just because of Walter Cronkite's story about the Tet Offensive. We and our commanders knew that it was a decisive win.

There is a lot out there about it, including this great story. The problem is getting people other than Vietnam War veterans to read it.

— David J. Markham, Erie, Pa.



This article touched some sore points for me. I served in Da Nang and Saigon in 1965 and 1966. Last year, my wife and I spent three weeks in Vietnam visiting those places and the delta.

Shortly after returning from the war, I attended two funerals in uniform to honor fallen comrades. At each, a distraught mother asked me, "Is this war worth it?" I couldn't answer then, nor when I retired 20 years later. The difference was that in 1966 I was a young veteran, not yet exposed to the questions, vindictiveness and betrayal. Twenty years later, politicians, people and even the opposition turned tail and abandoned the issue.

Simon-Netto closes with an abstract hope that our sacrifice will eventually bear fruit. I can testify that seven of the 10 Vietnamese we met in our three weeks visiting were warm and friendly. At least four made it clear that they were sorry the Americans left, and that they hope our countries can grow together — meaning side by side. Perhaps the author's hope is redeemed, at least in part.

— Peter E. Stevenson, Easley, S.C.

I think the American public likes to forget about the Vietnam War. The U.S. press at the time did not properly inform the public and was completely biased. I spent my two-year service (as a German citizen) at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. I was lucky to not be sent to Vietnam, but I saw 50 percent of draftees sent to that hellhole.

— Klaus D. Mareck, Fort Washington, N.Y.

We sponsored a Vietnamese refugee family in 1975, one of thousands that came to this country rather than live under communism. We were dismayed, and still are, at the many Americans who sympathize with the international Marxist movement.

Those who cheered at the communist victory over South Vietnam and spit in the faces of our military are now running this country. It sickens me that so many don't know the facts. We even import goods made by their slaves. I saw trousers for sale in our VA store tagged "Made in Vietnam."

I hope everyone reads this article. Thanks again, Vietnam veterans. God bless each one.

— John R. Chandler, Amarillo, Texas

**"If You Can't Fix It With A Hammer, You've Got An Electrical Problem."**

*Contributed by Charlie Weaver*

This was written by a 21 yr. old female who gets it. It's her future she's worried about and this is how she feels about the social welfare big government state that she's being forced to live in! These solutions are just common sense in her opinion.

This was in the Waco Tribune Herald, Waco, TX

PUT ME IN CHARGE . . .

Put me in charge of food stamps. I'd get rid of Lone Star cards; no cash for Ding Dongs or Ho Ho's, just money for 50-pound bags of rice and beans, blocks of cheese and all the powdered milk you can haul away. If you want steak and frozen pizza, then get a job.

Put me in charge of Medicaid. The first thing I'd do is to get women Norplant birth control implants or tubal ligations. Then, we'll test recipients for drugs, alcohol, and nicotine. If you want to reproduce or use drugs, alcohol, or smoke, then get a job.

Put me in charge of government housing. Ever live in a military barracks? You will maintain our property in a clean and good state of repair. Your "home" will be subject to inspections anytime and possessions will be inventoried. If you want a plasma TV or Xbox 360, then get a job and your own place. In addition, you will either present a check stub from a job each week or you will report to a "government" job. It may be cleaning the roadways of trash, painting and repairing public housing, whatever we find for you. We will sell your 22-inch rims and low profile tires and your blasting stereo and speakers and put that money toward the "common good."

Before you write that I've violated someone's rights, realize that all of the above is voluntary. If you want

our money, accept our rules. Before you say that this would be "demeaning" and ruin their "self esteem," consider that it wasn't that long ago that taking someone else's money for doing absolutely nothing was demeaning and lowered self esteem.

If we are expected to pay for other people's mistakes we should at least attempt to make them learn from their bad choices. The current system rewards them for continuing to make bad choices.

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### A Little Patriotic History *Contributed by SSG Joe Zager, USA (RET)*

Frank Sinatra considered Kate Smith the best singer of her time, and said that when he and a million other guys first heard her sing "God Bless America" on the radio, they all pretended to have dust in their eyes as they wiped away a tear or two. Here are the facts...

The link at the bottom will take you to a video showing the very first public singing of "GOD BLESS AMERICA". But before you watch it, you should also know the story behind the first public showing of the song.

The time was 1940. America was still in a terrible economic depression. Hitler was taking over Europe and Americans were afraid we'd have to go to war. It was a time of hardship and worry for most Americans.

This was the era just before TV, when radio shows were HUGE, and American families sat around their radios in the evenings, listening to their favorite entertainers, and no entertainer of that era was bigger than Kate Smith.

Kate was also large; plus size, as we now say, and the popular

phrase still used today is in deference to her, "It ain't over till the fat lady sings". Kate Smith might not have made it big in the age of TV, but with her voice coming over the radio, she was the biggest star of her time.

Kate was also patriotic. It hurt her to see Americans so depressed and afraid of what the next day would bring. She had hope for America, and faith in her fellow Americans. She wanted to do something to cheer them up, so she went to the famous American song-writer, Irving Berlin (who also wrote "White Christmas") and asked him to write a song that would make Americans feel good again about their country. When she described what she was looking for, he said he had just the song for her.

He went to his files and found a song that he had written, but never published, 22 years before - way back in 1917. He gave it to her and she worked on it with her studio orchestra. She and Irving Berlin were not sure how the song would be received by the public, but both agreed they would not take any profits from God Bless America. Any profits would go to the Boy Scouts of America. Over the years, the Boy Scouts have received millions of dollars in royalties from this song.

This video starts out with Kate Smith coming into the radio studio with the orchestra and an audience. She introduces the new song for the very first time, and starts singing. After the first couple verses, with her voice in the background still ringing, scenes are shown from the 1940 movie, "You're In The Army Now." At the 4:20 mark of the video you see a young actor in the movie, sitting in an office, reading a paper; it's Ronald Reagan.

To this day, God Bless America stirs our patriotic feelings and pride in our country. Back in

1940, when Kate Smith went looking for a song to raise the spirits of her fellow Americans, I doubt whether she realized just how successful the results would be for her fellow Americans during those years of hardship and worry.... and for many generations of Americans to follow. Now that you know the story of the song, I hope you'll enjoy it and treasure it even more.

Many people don't know there's a lead in to the song since it usually starts with "God Bless America ...." So here's the entire song as originally sung. [Click here](#) [Click here: YouTube#%21](#)

### Sack Lunches *Contributed by Tony Molnar*

I put my carry-on in the luggage compartment and sat down in my assigned seat. It was going to be a long flight. 'I'm glad I have a good book to read. Perhaps I will get a short nap,' I thought. Just before take-off, a line of soldiers came down the aisle and filled all the vacant seats, totally surrounding me. I decided to start a conversation.

'Where are you headed?' I asked the soldier seated nearest to me. 'Petawawa. We'll be there for two weeks for special training, and then we're being deployed to Afghanistan'

After flying for about an hour, an announcement was made that sack lunches were available for five dollars. It would be several hours before we reached the east, and I quickly decided a lunch would help pass the time...

As I reached for my wallet, I overheard a soldier ask his buddy if

he planned to buy lunch. 'No, that seems like a lot of money for just a sack lunch. Probably wouldn't be worth five bucks. I'll wait till we get to base.'

His friend agreed.

I looked around at the other soldiers. None were buying lunch. I walked to the back of the plane and handed the flight attendant a fifty dollar bill. 'Take a lunch to all those soldiers.' She grabbed my arms and squeezed tightly. Her eyes wet with tears, she thanked me. 'My son was a soldier in Iraq ; it's almost like you are doing it for him.'

Picking up ten sacks, she headed up the aisle to where the soldiers were seated. She stopped at my seat and asked, 'Which do you like best - beef or chicken?' 'Chicken,' I replied, wondering why she asked. She turned and went to the front of *Continued on next page* plane, returning a minute later with a dinner plate from first class.

'This is your thanks.'

After we finished eating, I went again to the back of the plane, heading for the rest room. A man stopped me. 'I saw what you did. I want to be part of it. Here, take this.' He handed me twenty-five dollars.

Soon after I returned to my seat, I saw the Flight Captain coming down the aisle, looking at the aisle numbers as he walked, I hoped he was not looking for me, but noticed he was looking at the numbers only on my side of the plane. When he got to my row he stopped, smiled, held out his hand and said, 'I want to shake your hand.' Quickly unfastening my seatbelt I stood and took the Captain's hand. With a booming voice he said, 'I was a soldier and I was a military pilot. Once, someone bought me a lunch. It was an act of kindness I never forgot.' I was embarrassed when applause was heard from all of the passengers.

Later I walked to the front of the

plane so I could stretch my legs. A man who was seated about six rows in front of me reached out his hand, wanting to shake mine. He left another twenty-five dollars in my palm.

When we landed I gathered my belongings and started to deplane. Waiting just inside the airplane door was a man who stopped me, put something in my shirt pocket, turned, and walked away without saying a word. Another twenty-five dollars!

Upon entering the terminal, I saw the soldiers gathering for their trip to the base. I walked over to them and handed them seventy-five dollars. 'It will take you some time to reach the base. It will be about time for a sandwich. God Bless You.' Ten young men left that flight feeling the love and respect of their fellow travelers.

As I walked briskly to my car, I whispered a prayer for their safe return. These soldiers were giving their all for our country. I could only give them a couple of meals. It seemed so little...

A veteran is someone who, at one point in his life, wrote a blank check made payable to 'citizens of United States 'for an amount of 'up to and including my life.'

That is Honour, and there are way too many people in this country who no longer understand it.'

.....  
**Lest we forget.....Here is a true story to contemplate.**  
*Contributed by Charlie Weaver*

Here is another true story that is effective for anytime of the year, so I will send it today and other special days that we honor our men (and in this case) women who have the courage to fight and guard our freedoms, yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

The events of Sept. 11, 2001, put an F-16 pilot into the sky with orders to bring down United Flight 93. Late in the morning of the Tuesday that changed everything, Lt. Heather "Lucky" Penney was on a runway at Andrews Air Force Base and ready to fly. She had her hand on the throttle of an F-16 and she had her orders:

Bring down United Airlines Flight 93. The day's fourth hijacked airliner seemed to be hurtling toward Washington. Penney, one of the first two combat pilots in the air that morning, was told to stop the plane.

"I genuinely believed that was going to be the last time I took off," says Maj. Heather "Lucky" Penney, remembering the Sept. 11 attacks and the initial U.S. Reaction. The one thing she didn't have as she roared into the crystalline sky was live ammunition. Or missiles. Or anything at all to throw at a hostile aircraft. Except her own plane. So that was the plan. Because the surprise attacks were unfolding, in that innocent age, faster than they could arm war planes, Penney and her commanding officer went up to fly their jets straight into a Boeing 757. "We wouldn't be shooting it down. We'd be ramming the aircraft," Penney recalls of her charge that day. "I would essentially be a kamikaze pilot."

For years, Penney, one of the first generation of female combat pilots in the country, gave no interviews about her experiences on Sept. 11 (which included, eventually, escorting Air Force One back into Washington's suddenly highly restricted airspace). But 10 years later, she is reflecting on one of the lesser-told tales of that endlessly examined morning: how the first counterpunch the U.S. Military prepared to throw at the attackers was effectively a suicide mission.

"We had to protect the airspace any way we could," she said last week in her office at Lockheed Martin, where she is a director in the F-35 program.

Penney, now a major but still a petite blonde with a Colgate grin, is no longer a combat flier. She flew two tours in Iraq and she serves as a part-time National Guard pilot, mostly hauling VIPs around in a military Gulfstream. She takes the stick of her own vintage 1941 Taylorcraft tail-dragger whenever she can. But none of her thousands of hours in the air quite compare with the urgent rush of launching on what was supposed to be a one-way flight to a midair collision. First of her kind. She was a rookie in the autumn of 2001, the first female F-16 pilot they'd ever had at the 121st Fighter Squadron of the D.C. Air National Guard. She had grown up smelling jet fuel. Her father flew jets in Vietnam and still races them. Penney got her pilot's license when she was a literature major at Purdue. She planned to be a teacher. But during a graduate program in American studies, Congress opened up combat aviation to women and Penney was nearly first in line.

"I signed up immediately," she says. "I wanted to be a fighter pilot like my dad." On that Tuesday, they had just finished two weeks of air combat training in Nevada. They were sitting around a briefing table when someone looked in to say a plane had hit the World Trade Center in New York. When it happened once, they assumed it was some yahoo in a Cessna. When it happened again, they knew it was war. But the surprise was complete. In the monumental confusion of those first hours, it was impossible to get clear orders. Nothing was ready. The jets were still equipped with dummy bullets from the training mission.

As remarkable as it seems now, there were no armed aircraft standing by and no system in place to scramble them over Washington. Before that morning, all eyes were looking outward, still scanning the old Cold War threat paths for planes and missiles coming over the polar ice cap. "There was no perceived threat at the time, especially one coming from the homeland like that," says Col. George Degnon, vice commander of the 113th Wing at Andrews. "It was a little bit of a helpless feeling, but we did everything humanly possible to get the aircraft armed and in the air. It was amazing to see people react."

Things are different today, Degnon says. At least two "hot-cocked" planes are ready at all times, their pilots never more than yards from the cockpit. A third plane hit the Pentagon, and almost at once came word that a fourth plane could be on the way, maybe more. The jets would be armed within an hour, but somebody had to fly now, weapons or no weapons. "Lucky, you're coming with me," barked Col. Marc Sasseville. They were gearing up in the pre-flight life-support area when Sasseville, struggling into his flight suit, met her eye. "I'm going to go for the cockpit," Sasseville said. She replied without hesitating. "I'll take the tail." It was a plan. And a pact. 'Let's go!' Penney had never scrambled a jet before. Normally the pre-flight is a half-hour or so of methodical checks. She automatically started going down the list. "Lucky, what are you doing?"

Get your butt up there and let's go!" Sasseville shouted. She climbed in, rushed to power up the engine, screamed for her ground crew to pull the chocks. The crew chief still had his headphones plugged into the fuselage as she nudged the throttle forward. He ran along pulling

safety pins from the jet as it moved forward.

She muttered a fighter pilot's prayer - "God, don't let me [expletive] up" - and followed Sasseville into the sky. They screamed over the smoldering Pentagon, heading northwest at more than 400 mph, flying low and scanning the clear horizon. Her commander had time to think about the best place to hit the enemy.

"We don't train to bring down airliners," said Sasseville, now stationed at the Pentagon. "If you just hit the engine, it could still glide and you could guide it to a target. My thought was the cockpit or the wing." He also thought about his ejection seat. Would there be an instant just before impact? "I was hoping to do both at the same time," he says. "It probably wasn't going to work, but that's what I was hoping."

Penney worried about missing the target if she tried to bail out. "If you eject and your jet soars through without impact" she trails off, the thought of failing more dreadful than the thought of dying. But she didn't have to die. She didn't have to knock down an airliner full of kids and salesmen and girlfriends. They did that themselves.

It would be hours before Penney and Sasseville learned that United 93 had already gone down in Pennsylvania, an insurrection by hostages willing to do just what the two Guard pilots had been willing to do: Anything. And everything. "The real heroes are the passengers on Flight 93 who were willing to sacrifice themselves," Penney says. "I was just an accidental witness to history." She and Sasseville flew the rest of the day, clearing the airspace, escorting the president,

looking down onto a city that would soon be sending them to war.

She's a single mom of two girls now. She still loves to fly. And she still thinks often of that extraordinary ride down the runway a decade ago. "I genuinely believed that was going to be the last time I took off," she says. "If we did it right, this would be it.

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**ARLINGTON CEMETERY**

**Jeopardy Question:**

On Jeopardy the other night, the final question was "How many steps does the guard take during his walk across the tomb of the Unknowns?" All three contestants missed it!

1. How many steps does the guard take during his walk across the tomb of the Unknowns and why?

21 steps: It alludes to the twenty-one gun salute which is the highest honor given any military or foreign dignitary.

2. How long does he hesitate after his about face to begin his return walk and why?

21 seconds for the same reason as answer number 1

3. Why are his gloves wet?

His gloves are moistened to prevent his losing his grip on the rifle.

4. Does he carry his rifle on the same shoulder all the time and,if not, why not?

He carries the rifle on the shoulder away from the tomb. After his march across the path, he executes an about face and moves the rifle to the outside shoulder.

5. How often are the guards changed?

Guards are changed every thirty minutes, twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year.

6. What are the physical traits of the guard limited to?

For a person to apply for guard duty at the tomb, he must be between 5' 10' and 6' 2' tall and his waist size cannot exceed 30. They must commit 2 years of life to guard the tomb, live in a barracks under the tomb, and cannot drink any alcohol on or off duty for the rest of their lives. They cannot swear in public for the rest of their lives and cannot disgrace the uniform or the tomb in any way. After two years, the guard is given a wreath pin that is worn on their lapel signifying they served as guard of the tomb. There are only 400 presently worn. The guard must obey these rules for the rest of their lives or give up the wreath pin.

The shoes are specially made with very thick soles to keep the heat and cold from their feet. There are metal heel plates that extend to the top of the shoe in order to make the loud click as they come to a halt. There are no wrinkles, folds or lint on the uniform. Guards dress for duty in front of a full-length mirror. The first six months of duty a guard cannot talk to anyone nor watch TV. All off duty time is spent studying the 175 notable people laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery. A guard must memorize who they are and where they are interred. Among the notables are: President Taft, Joe Lewis {the boxer}, Medal of Honor awardee, Audie L. Murphy, the most decorated soldier of WWII and of Hollywood fame.

Every guard spends five hours a day getting his uniforms ready for guard duty..

ETERNAL REST GRANT THEM  
O LORD AND LET PERPETUAL  
LIGHT SHINE UPON THEM.

In 2003 as Hurricane Isabelle was approaching Washington, DC , our US Senate/House took 2 days off with anticipation of the storm. On the ABC evening news, it was reported that because of the dangers from the hurricane, the military members assigned the duty of guarding the Tomb of the Unknown

Soldier were given permission to suspend the assignment. They respectfully declined the offer, "No way, Sir!" Soaked to the skin, marching in the pelting rain of a tropical storm, they said that guarding the Tomb was not just an assignment, it was the highest honor that can be afforded to a service person. The tomb has been patrolled continuously, 24/7, since 1930.

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**A Sailor's Lot** *Contributed by  
Charlie Weaver*

*To unknown places, far off shores,  
on lonely, lonely seas  
in ships we go, across the waves,  
... to find our destinies.*

*Each man who sails the ocean's depths,  
beyond horizon's line,  
must give unto the lusty sea  
his heart, his soul, his mind.*

*The open water, mistress proud,  
will brook no other love,  
be it a wife, a home or land,  
she holds her self above.*

*To see her when she feels a need  
to hear a gentle voice,  
or at the times her ardor gives  
importance to her choice.*

*To feel the rhythm of her breast  
and know her song at night,  
or ken the rise of her desires  
is purely one's delight.*

*Again, to know the moment  
of her anger as it rips  
and tears the canvas  
of the fragile, fragile ship.*

*Her wants, so utmost over all,  
encompass every bar,  
her demands remain a constant  
and are known to every star.*

Each shoal and rock, each shallow cove,  
to her are merely toys,  
to use at will to separate  
the strong men from the boys.

But still we wander down to her  
and beg her for her hand,  
and leave our loving wives at home,  
and leave our native lands.

.....



**A Purple Heart** *Contributed by Charlie Weaver*

A Purple Heart does not beat,  
There is no claim of victory or  
defeat.  
Acts of war for many who dare,...  
Courageous minds are those it  
declares.

A Purple Heart does not bleed,  
An ounce of freedom it  
painstakingly feeds.  
A scar, a limb, a perilous life,  
No questions, no answers or a strife.

A Purple Heart does not falter,  
Sacrifices are many on a combat  
altar.  
Distant hues of a battled land,  
Senseless resolution for a political  
man.

A Purple Heart does not spare,  
Accolade of a wounded memory and  
despair.  
Heroes are those that it conceives,  
Indebted honor who receive.

**1 x 1** *Contributed by Charlie Weaver*

My neighbor just told me he's been  
sober for 12 years today. Too bad he  
can't celebrate...

Saw my nutritionist yesterday. Set a  
bottle of wine on the table and said  
here, build a diet around this...

I would eat more turkey bacon if  
they'd remove the turkey...

Think I'll walk today because my  
flask fell out of my pocket  
somewhere back there...

I'm shopping for new health  
insurance and my agent asked me if  
I could pass a piss test, I said "for  
distance or accuracy?"

The one who doesn't read good  
books has no advantage over the one  
who can't read them.

90% of women don't like men in  
pink shirts. Ironically, 90% of men  
in pink shirts don't like women.

It's strange that, despite all the  
warnings, I've never seen a  
tombstone that read: "Died from not  
forwarding that e-mail to 10  
people."

A girl phoned me the other day and  
said, "Come on over, nobody's  
home." I went over. Nobody was  
home.

.....

**One day I accidentally  
overtured my golf buggy....**  
*Contributed by Charlie Weaver*

Elizabeth, a very attractive and keen  
golfer, who lived down the street on  
the golf course, heard the noise and  
called out, "Are you okay, What's  
your name?" "Its Jack , and I'm  
Okay thanks," I replied. "Jack ,  
forget your troubles, come to my  
home, rest a while, and I'll help you  
get the cart up later."

"That's mighty nice of you," I  
answered, but I don't think my wife  
would like it." "Oh, come on,"  
Elizabeth insisted. She was very  
pretty, very sexy and persuasive .... I  
was weak. "Well okay," I finally  
*Continued on next page*  
agreed, and added, "but my wife  
won't like it."

After a restorative brandy, and some  
creative putting lessons, I thanked  
my host. "I feel a lot better now, but  
I know my wife is going to be really  
upset." "Don't be silly!" Elizabeth  
said with a smile, "She won't know  
anything. By the way, where is  
she?"

"Under the cart!" I said....

.....

**SR-71 Blackbird** *Contributed by Gary Johnson*

*Blackbird...Bye Bye*

*Quote from Soviet pilot about Kelly  
Johnson's accomplishment with the  
SR-71:*

*Soviet Mig Pilot Belinko Recalls:  
Chasing the SR-71 along the  
Siberian Coast in a Mig-25, I could  
not match it's speed.*

*One flight in the Mig-25 and we had  
to change our engines. I could not  
believe that such technologies  
existed.*

**FROM AN SR-71 PILOT....Very  
interesting read.....**

In April 1986, following an attack  
on American soldiers in a Berlin  
disco, President Reagan ordered the  
bombing of Muammar Qaddafi's  
terrorist camps in Libya My duty  
was to fly over Libya and take  
photos recording the damage our  
F-111's had inflicted.. Qaddafi had  
established a 'line of death,' a  
territorial marking across the Gulf  
of Sidra , swearing to shoot down  
any intruder that crossed the  
boundary. On the morning of April  
15, I rocketed past the line at 2,125  
mph.

I was piloting the SR-71 spy plane,  
the world's fastest jet, accompanied  
by a Marine Major (Walt), the  
aircraft's reconnaissance systems  
officer (RSO). We had crossed into  
Libya and were approaching our  
final turn over the bleak desert  
landscape when Walt informed me  
that he was receiving missile launch  
signals. I quickly increased our  
speed, calculating the time it would  
take for the weapons-most likely  
SA-2 and SA-4 surface-to-air  
missiles capable of Mach 5 - to  
reach our altitude. I estimated that  
we could beat the rocket-powered  
missiles to the turn and stayed our  
course, betting our lives on the  
plane's performance.

After several agonizingly long  
seconds, we made the turn and  
blasted toward the Mediterranean.

'You might want to pull it back,' Walt suggested. It was then that I noticed I still had the throttles full forward. The plane was flying a mile every 1.6 seconds, well above our Mach 3.2 limit. It was the fastest we would ever fly. I pulled the throttles to idle just south of Sicily, but we still overran the refueling tanker awaiting us over Gibraltar ....

Scores of significant aircraft have been produced in the 100 years of flight, following the achievements of the Wright brothers, which we celebrate in December. Aircraft such as the Boeing 707, the F-86 Sabre Jet, and the P-51 Mustang are among the important machines that have flown our skies. But the SR-71, also known as the Blackbird, stands alone as a significant contributor to Cold War victory and as the fastest plane ever-and only 93 Air Force pilots ever steered the 'sled,' as we called our aircraft.

The SR-71 was the brainchild of Kelly Johnson, the famed Lockheed designer who created the P-38, the F-104 Starfighter, and the U-2. After the Soviets shot down Gary Powers' U-2 in 1960, Johnson began to develop an aircraft that would fly three miles higher and five times faster than the spy plane-and still be capable of photographing your license plate. However, flying at 2,000 mph would create intense heat on the aircraft's skin. Lockheed engineers used a titanium alloy to construct more than 90 percent of the SR-71, creating special tools and manufacturing procedures to hand-build each of the 40 planes. Special heat-resistant fuel, oil, and hydraulic fluids that would function at 85,000 feet and higher also had to be developed.

In 1962, the first Blackbird successfully flew, and in 1966, the same year I graduated from high school, the Air Force began flying operational SR-71 missions. I came to the program in 1983 with a sterling record and a

recommendation from my commander, completing the weeklong interview and meeting Walt, my partner for the next four years. He would ride four feet behind me, working all the cameras, radios, and electronic jamming equipment. I joked that if we were ever captured, he was the spy and I was just the driver. He told me to keep the pointy end forward.

We trained for a year, flying out of Beale AFB in California, Kadena Airbase in Okinawa, and RAF Mildenhall in England. On a typical training mission, we would take off near Sacramento, refuel over Nevada, accelerate into Montana, obtain high Mach over Colorado, turn right over New Mexico, speed across the Los Angeles Basin, run up the West Coast, turn right at Seattle, then return to Beale. Total flight time: two hours and 40 minutes.

One day, high above Arizona, we were monitoring the radio traffic of all the mortal airplanes below us. First, a Cessna pilot asked the air traffic controllers to check his ground speed. 'Ninety knots,' ATC replied. A Bonanza soon made the same request. 'One-twenty on the ground,' was the reply. To our surprise, a navy F-18 came over the radio with a ground speed check. I knew exactly what he was doing. Of course, he had a ground speed indicator in his cockpit, but he wanted to let all the bug-smashers in *Continued on next page* the valley know what real speed was 'Dusty 52, we show you at 620 on the ground,' ATC responded.

The situation was too ripe. I heard the click of Walt's mike button in the rear seat. In his most innocent voice, Walt startled the controller by asking for a ground speed check from 81,000 feet, clearly above controlled airspace. In a cool, professional voice, the controller replied, 'Aspen 20, I show you at 1,982 knots on the ground.' We did not hear another transmission on

that frequency all the way to the coast.

The Blackbird always showed us something new, each aircraft possessing its own unique personality. In time, we realized we were flying a national treasure. When we taxied out of our revetments for takeoff, people took notice. Traffic congregated near the airfield fences, because everyone wanted to see and hear the mighty SR-71. You could not be a part of this program and not come to love the airplane. Slowly, she revealed her secrets to us as we earned her trust.

One moonless night, while flying a routine training mission over the Pacific, I wondered what the sky would look like from 84,000 feet if the cockpit lighting were dark. While heading home on a straight course, I slowly turned down all of the lighting, reducing the glare and revealing the night sky.

Within seconds, I turned the lights back up, fearful that the jet would know and somehow punish me. But my desire to see the sky overruled my caution, I dimmed the lighting again. To my amazement, I saw a bright light outside my window. As my eyes adjusted to the view, I realized that the brilliance was the broad expanse of the Milky Way, now a gleaming stripe across the sky.

Where dark spaces in the sky had usually existed, there were now dense clusters of sparkling stars. Shooting stars flashed across the canvas every few seconds. It was like a fireworks display with no sound.

I knew I had to get my eyes back on the instruments, and reluctantly I brought my attention back inside. To my surprise, with the cockpit lighting still off, I could see every gauge, lit by starlight. In the plane's mirrors, I could see the eerie shine of my gold spacesuit incandescently illuminated in a celestial glow. I

stole one last glance out the window. Despite our speed, we seemed still before the heavens, humbled in the radiance of a much greater power.. For those few moments, I felt a part of something far more significant than anything we were doing in the plane. The sharp sound of Walt's voice on the radio brought me back to the tasks at hand as I prepared for our descent.

**San Diego Aerospace Museum**

The SR-71 was an expensive aircraft to operate. The most significant cost was tanker support, and in 1990, confronted with budget cutbacks, the Air Force retired the SR-71.

The SR-71 served six presidents, protecting America for a quarter of a century. Unbeknownst to most of the country, the plane flew over North Vietnam, Red China, North Korea, the Middle East, South Africa, Cuba, Nicaragua, Iran, Libya and the Falkland Islands. On a weekly basis, the SR-71 kept watch over every Soviet nuclear submarine and mobile missile site, and all of their troop movements. It was a key factor in winning the Cold War.

I am proud to say I flew about 500 hours in this aircraft. I knew her well. She gave way to no plane, proudly dragging her sonic boom through enemy backyards with great impunity. She defeated every missile, outran every MiG, and always brought us home. In the first 100 years of manned flight, no aircraft was more remarkable.

The Blackbird had outrun nearly 4,000 missiles, not once taking a scratch from enemy fire.

On her final flight, the Blackbird, destined for the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, sped from Los Angeles to Washington in 64 minutes, averaging 2,145 mph and setting four speed records.

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**Denzel Washington, Patriot**

*Contributed by Vinnie Sillaro*

Remember this next time you walk up to the ticket window of your local movie theater with \$10 in your hand. The Media (accidentally?) missed this one!

Please read this: The troops overseas would like you to send it to everybody you know.

Don't know whether you heard about this but Denzel Washington and his family visited the troops at Brooks Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas (BAMC), the other day. This is where soldiers who have been evacuated from Germany come to be hospitalized in the United States , especially burn victims. There are some buildings there called Fisher Houses. The Fisher House is a hotel where soldiers' families can stay, for little or no charge, while their soldier is in the hospital. BAMC has quite a few of these houses on base, but as you can imagine, they are almost filled most of the time.

While Denzel Washington was visiting BAMC, they gave him a tour of one of the Fisher Houses. He asked how much one of them would cost to build. He took his checkbook out and wrote a check for the full amount right there on the spot. The soldiers overseas were amazed to hear this story and want to get the word out to the American public, because it warmed their hearts to hear it.

The question is, 'Why do: Britney Spears, Lindsay Lohan, Paris Hilton, Tom Cruise and other Hollywood fluff make front page news with their ridiculous antics, and Denzel Washington's Patriotism doesn't even make page 3 in the Metro section of any newspaper except the local newspaper in San Antonio ?'

A true American and friend to all in uniform!

See photos on page 30

**VA issues new ID cards**

*Contributed by Charlie Weaver*

WASHINGTON (Feb. 21, 2014) -- The Department of Veterans Affairs is issuing new Veteran Health Identification Cards (VHICs) to about 4 million veterans and family members enrolled in VA's health-care system.

The new cards provide a more secure means of identification for veterans due to Social Security numbers and dates of birth no longer contained in the card's magnetic strips or bar codes. Instead, the cards now display an Electronic Data Interchange Personnel Identifier number as the "member ID" on the front of the card and embedded in the magnetic strip. These numbers will be unique to each cardholder.

While The American Legion understands the need to convert to a more secure ID card system, it is urging the department to ensure that no VA enrollee is denied timely access to health care during the card transfer.

According to VA, mailing of the cards "will begin soon. Because we will be reissuing 4 million cards, we ask for your patience during this time." A new VHIC will be automatically mailed to veterans who have the old Veteran Identification Card (VIC).

Last September, VA suspended the issuing of VICs to allow time for changing its systems to read the new card. However, VA has continued taking veterans' requests for cards - the requests have been put on hold but will be produced and issued as soon as the final system changes are ready.

Enrolled veterans who do not have the old VIC may contact their local VA medical center's enrollment coordinator to arrange to have their pictures taken

for the new cards, or they may request a VHIC at their next VA health-care appointment. Veterans must provide proper identification in order to receive the new cards.

To receive VHICs in a timely manner, veterans enrolled in VA should make sure their mailing addresses are correct. To update or confirm an address with VA, call (877) 222-VETS (8387). If the post office is unable to deliver a VHIC, the card will be returned to VA.

While VA regrets the delay in providing veterans their new cards, the cards are not required to receive VA health care. The VHIC is for identification and check-in at VA appointments. It cannot be used as a credit card or an insurance card, and it does not authorize or pay for care at non-VA facilities.

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The article below was written by Dr. Joyce Brothers in 1963 after the [loss of the USS Thresher and the 129 men aboard her](#). It attempts to explain the reasons that Submarine sailors are who and what they are.  
*Contributed by Charlie Weaver*

### **Risk is an Inspiration in Submarine Service**

The tragic loss of the submarine Thresher and 129 men had a special kind of impact on the nation ... a special kind of sadness, mixed with universal admiration for the men who choose this type of work.

One could not mention the Thresher without observing, in the same breath how utterly final and alone the end is when a ship dies at the bottom of the sea ... and what a remarkable specimen of man it must be to accept such a risk.

Most of us might be moved to conclude, too, that a tragedy of this kind would have a damaging effect on the morale of the other men in the submarine service and tend to

discourage future enlistments. Actually, there is no evidence that this is so.

What is it, then, that lures men to careers in which they spend so much of their time in cramped quarters, under great psychological stress, with danger lurking all about them?

### **Bond Among Them**

Togetherness is an overworked term, but in no other branch of our military service is it given such full meaning as in the so-called "Silent Service."

In an undersea craft, each man is totally dependent upon the skill of every other man in the crew, not only for top performance but for actual survival. Each knows that his very life depends on the others and because this is so, there is a bond among them that both challenges and comforts them.

All of this gives the submariner a special feeling of pride, because he is indeed a member of an elite corps. The risks, then, are an inspiration, rather than a deterrent.

The challenge of masculinity is another factor which attracts men to serve on submarines. It certainly is a test of a man's prowess and power to know that he can qualify for this highly selective service. However, it should be emphasized that this desire to prove masculinity is not pathological, as it might be in certain dare-devil pursuits, such as driving a motorcycle through a flaming hoop.

### **Emotionally Healthy**

There is nothing dare-devilish about the motivations of the man who decides to dedicate his life to the submarine service. He does, indeed, take pride in demonstrating that he is quite a man, but he does not do so to practice a form of foolhardy brinksmanship, to see how close he

can get to failure and still snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

On the contrary, the aim in the submarine service is to battle the danger, minimize the risk, to take every measure to make certain that safety rather than danger, is maintained at all times.

Are the men in submarines braver than those in other pursuits where the possibility of sudden tragedy is not constant? The glib answer would be that they are. It is much more accurate, from a psychological point of view, to say that they are not necessarily braver, but that they are men who have a little more insight into themselves and their capabilities.

They know themselves a little better than the next man. This has to be so with men who have a healthy reason to volunteer for such risk. They are generally a cut healthier emotionally than others of similar age and background because of their willingness to push themselves a little bit farther and not settle for an easier kind of existence.

We all have tremendous capabilities but are rarely straining at the upper level of what we can do; these men are.

The country can be proud and grateful that so many of its sound, young, eager men care enough about their own status in life – and the welfare of their country – to pool their skills and match them collectively against the power of the sea. I am proud to say I was one of the few that can call themselves "Submarine Sailors."

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This story is not completely accurate. Please see: <http://www.snopes.com/politics/military/denzel.asp>.



**Our Coast Guard Brothers**

*Coast Guard Medevacs  
Woman From Cruise Ship Off  
Ocean County*

*Coast Guard crew had just finished training when call came in. From Manchester-NJ Patch*

*Posted by Daniel Nee (Editor) , February 06, 2014 at 05:35 PM The U.S. Coast Guard medevaced a woman from a cruise ship in the Atlantic Ocean off Toms River on Thursday, 6 February 2014.*

*Coast Guard watch standers at Sector Delaware Bay in Philadelphia received notification from the cruise ship Carnival Splendor of an 84-year-old Canadian female who fell, injured her hip, and was in need of medical attention, the Coast Guard said in a statement.*

*A helicopter crew from Coast Guard Air Station Atlantic City arrived on scene, hoisted the woman and transferred her to AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center in Atlantic City, the statement said.*

*"This case is a great example of how Coast Guard training has a real-world impact," said Lt. Marc McDonnell, the aircraft commander on the case. "Our aircrew had just completed hoist training when <http://o.aolcdn.com/dims-shared/dims3/PATCH/format/jpg/quality/82/resize/443x295/http://hss-prod.hss.aol.com/hss/storage/patch/715bb4d7f328a04534bd6927207d57dd> we received the medevac request. Our rescue swimmer and flight mechanic did an exceptional job managing the medevac and we were able to quickly transport the patient to the hospital for further care. It's great to see how our training can make a difference in someone's life."*

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**Passing the Purple Hat to You** *Contributed by Jean Olszak*

In honor of women's history month and in memory of Erma Bombeck (1927-1996) who lost her fight with cancer. Pass this on to five women that you want watched over. If you don't know five women to pass this on to, one will do just fine.

IF I HAD MY LIFE TO LIVE OVER - by Erma Bombeck (written in Dec. 1979)

I would have gone to bed when I was sick instead of pretending the earth would go into a holding pattern if I weren't there for the day.

I would have burned the pink candle sculpted like a rose before it melted in storage.

I would have talked less and listened more.

I would have invited friends over to dinner even if the carpet was stained, or the sofa faded.

I would have eaten the popcorn in the 'good' living room and worried much less about the dirt when someone wanted to light a fire in the fireplace.

I would have taken the time to listen to my grandfather ramble about his youth.

I would have shared more of the responsibility carried by my husband..

I would never have insisted the car windows be rolled up on a summer day because my hair had just been teased and sprayed.

I would have sat on the lawn with my children and not worried about grass stains.

I would have cried and laughed less while watching television and more while watching life.

I would never have bought anything just because it was practical, wouldn't show soil, or was guaranteed to last a lifetime.

Instead of wishing away nine months of pregnancy, I'd have cherished every moment and realized that the wonderment growing inside me was the only chance in life to assist God in a miracle..

When my kids kissed me impetuously, I would never have said, 'Later... Now go get washed up for dinner.' There would have been more 'I love you's, more 'I'm sorry's.'

*But mostly, given another shot at life, I would seize every minute; look at it and really see it; live it and never give it back..*

**STOP SWEATING THE SMALL STUFF!**

Don't worry about who doesn't like you, who has more, or who's doing what instead, let's cherish the relationships we have with those who do love us... If you don't mind, send this on to all the women you are grateful to have as friends.



*Continued on page 31*

Maybe we should all grab that purple hat earlier.



Please send this to five phenomenal women today in celebration of Beautiful Women's Month.



If you do, something good will happen--you will boost another woman's self-esteem.

**KEEP IT LIT!**



These are the colors that represent the different cancers.



All you are asked to do is keep this circulating, even if it's to one more person, in memory of anyone you know who has been struck by cancer. A Candle Loses Nothing by Lighting Another Candle. Going!

**A Texas good-bye** from Page 11

\*\*\*George W Bush and his wife Laura met and talked to everyone. The Seal Team one on one. They went behind closed doors with Taya for quite a while. They had prayer with us all .You can tell when people were sincere and caring.

\*\*\*Nolan Ryan sent his cooking team, a huge grill and lots of steaks, chicken and hamburgers. They set up in the front yard and fed people all day long including the 200 SEALs and their families. The next day a local BBQ restaurant set up a buffet in front of the house and fed all once again. Food was plentiful and all were taken care of. The family's church kept those inside the house well fed.

\*\*\*Jerry Jones, the man everyone loves to hate, was a rock star. He made sure that we all were taken care of. He and his wife were just making sure everyone was taken care of...Class... He donated use of Cowboy Stadium for the services as it was determined that so many wanted to attend. The charter buses transported us to the stadium on Monday at 10:30 am. Every car, bus, motorcycle was searched with bomb dogs and police. I am not sure if kooks were making threats trying to make a name for themselves or if so many SEALs in one place was a security risk. I don't know. We willing obliged. No purses into the stadium!

We were taken to The Legends room high up and a large buffet was available. That was for about 300 people. We were growing.

A Medal of Honor recipient was there, lots of secret service and police and Sarah Palin and her husband. She looked nice, this was a very formal military service. The service started at 1:00 pm and when we were escorted onto the field I was shocked. We heard that about

10,000 people had come to attend also. They were seated in the stadium seats behind us. It was a beautiful and emotional service. Bagpipe and drum corps were wonderful and the A & M men's choir stood through the entire service and sang right at the end. We were all in tears.

The next day was the 200-mile procession from Midlothian, TX to Austin for burial. It was a cold, drizzly, windy day, but the people were out. We had dozens of police motorcycles riders, freedom riders five chartered buses and lots of cars. You had to have a pass to be in the procession and still it was huge. Two helicopters circled the procession with snipers sitting out the side door for protection. It was the longest funeral procession ever in the state of Texas. People were everywhere. The entire route was shut down ahead of us. The people were lined up on the side of the road the entire way. Firemen down on one knee, police officers holding their hats over their hearts, children waving flags, veterans saluting as we went by. Every bridge had fire trucks with large flags displayed from their tall ladders. people all along the entire 200 miles standing in the cold weather. It was so heartwarming.

Taya rode in the hearse with Chris' body so Derek rode the route with us. I was so grateful to have that time with him.

The service was at Texas National Cemetery. Very few are buried there and you have to apply to get in. It is like people from Civil War, Medal of Honor winners a few from the Alamo and all the historical people of Texas. It was a nice service and the Freedom Riders surrounded the outside of the entire cemetery to keep the crazy church people from Kansas that protests at military funerals away from us. *Continued on next page*

\*Each SEAL put his Trident (metal SEAL badge) on the top of Chris' casket one at a time. A lot hit it in with one blow. Derek was the only one to take four taps to put his in and it was almost like he was caressing it as he did it. Another tearful moment.

\*\*After the service Rick Perry and his wife, Anita Perry, invited us to the governor's mansion. She stood at the door and greeted each of us individually and gave each of the SEALs a coin of Texas (she was a sincere, compassionate, and gracious hostess). We were able to tour the ground floor and then went into the garden for beverages and BBQ. So many of the team guys said that after they get out they are moving to Texas. They remarked that they had never felt so much love and hospitality. The charter buses then took the guys to the airport to catch their returning flights. Derek just now called and after a 20 hours flight he is back in his spot, in a dangerous land on the other side of the world, protecting America.

**I Am An Old Salt** *Contributed by Charlie Weaver*

Long ago I was a Sailor.  
I sailed the Ocean blue.  
I knew the bars in the Phillipines...  
The coastline of Vietnam.  
  
I knew well the sting of salt spray,  
The taste of Spanish wine,  
The beauty of the Orient...  
Yes, all these things were mine.  
  
But I wear a different hat now,  
Jeans & leathers too.

My sailing days were long ago...  
With that life I am through.

But somewhere deep inside of me...  
The sailor lives there still.  
He longs to go to sea again,  
But knows he never will.

My love, my life, is here at home,  
And I will leave here never.  
Though mind and body stay  
ashore...  
My heart's at sea forever.

**Three Things In Life !!**  
*Contributed by Charlie Weaver*

**Three things in life that, once gone, never come back**  
1. Loved ones  
2. Words  
3. Innocence

Three things in life that can destroy a person  
1. Anger  
2. Pride  
3. Un-forgiveness

Three things in life that you should never lose  
1. Your word  
2. Honesty  
3. Kindness

Three things in life that are most valuable  
1. Family & Friends  
2. Health  
3. The ability to forgive

Three things in life that are never certain  
1. Fortune  
2. Success  
3. Dreams

Three things that make a person  
1. Love  
2. Kindness  
3. Honesty

Three things that are truly constant  
Father - Son - Holy Spirit

I ask the Lord to bless you, as I pray  
for you today, to guide you and  
protect you, as you go along your  
way.  
God's love is always with you,  
God's promises are true.  
And when you give God all your  
cares, you know God will see you  
through.

**Balls** *Contributed by Charlie Weaver*

1. The sport of choice for the urban poor is BASKETBALL.
2. The sport of choice for maintenance level employees is BOWLING.
3. The sport of choice for front-line workers is FOOTBALL.
4. The sport of choice for supervisors is BASEBALL.
5. The sport of choice for middle management is TENNIS. And...
6. The sport of choice for corporate executives and officers is GOLF.

**THE AMAZING CONCLUSION:**

The higher you go in the corporate structure, the smaller your balls become. There must be a boat load of people in Washington, D. C., playing marbles.