

U.S. Coast Guard Academy Class of '53 Newsletter January 2011

About this Newsletter: The Class of '53 Newsletter is published "as soon and as often as we can get around to it". Its purpose is to keep members of our class informed about our classmates' lives and activities, and to occasionally provide some tid-bits of trivia and information.

Because not all of our classmates are members of the Alumni Association, and not all of our classmates have e-mail, and the deadline for articles for our class notes section in **The Bulletin** is almost two months before it's published, there will be, from time-to-time, duplications and gaps in what is included here, what is sent by e-mail or "snail-mail", and what appears in **The Bulletin**.

Send items for **The Bulletin** and this **Newsletter** to: Wee Smith, 19 Coachman Pike, Ledyard, CT 06339 - Tel./FAX 860-464-8425 or e-mail to jdsbridge@aol.com.

In Memoriam Hilda Conrad (August 28, 2010)

I am sad to have just learned from **Jim Conrad**, (721 Pinebrook Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23462, Tel. 757-467-1777 - home, Tel. 757-373-3160 - cell, that his wife, **Hilda**, died back in August. **Jim and Hilda** had been married almost 53 years. **Jim** said that **Hilda** had been diagnosed with lung and liver cancer more than four years ago, and that at that time, her doctors gave her "just a few months to live", but she proved them wrong! And, then on several other occasions during the last four years, her doctors again gave her a similar short-term terminal diagnosis, but each time Hilda courageously fought and survived until she finally succumbed last August.

I'm also sad to pass on the following e-mail that I just received from **Dick Donnelly**, who is presently "wintering" in California, (54467 Southern Hills, LaQuinta, CA 92253, Tel. 760-289-6532, e-mail: radcesi@aol.com).

"Back in October while Meris and I were touring Israel, Egypt and Jordan, I had a lot of dry coughing, some large enough to make me slow down what ever I was doing. Because of all the dust, particularly in Egypt, I thought it was regional caused. We returned to Bellevue, WA in late October and repacked to go to La Quinta for the Winter. By the second week in November, I was downright uncomfortable and went off to the local Critical Care unit in La Quinta where I was sent to the ER in the main hospital for further analysis. Late that night I was admitted to the hospital and the next few days seemed like one test after another with no real findings of the cause for my right lung being filled with liquid. After draining almost nine liters of liquid with three different taps and no negative test results, I was sent home with the understanding that further tests would be required. The following week after a scan I was readmitted to the hospital with a new found clot in my right lung. Almost a week later I was released, with more tests still to come. After running out of any more non-invasive testing it was decided that

an invasive biopsy of the lung and cavity, plus a "glue" job would be required. That was done on Jan 7th. A week later, we were told that the pathology report indicated that I had Mesothelioma, sometimes referred to as 'asbestos lung cancer'.

Right now I am in a "holding mode" recovering from the biop procedure which I understanding was more aggressive than initially planned because of the tissue found. My next doctor's appointment is on Jan 26th when he will give us his recommended approach to on-going care. Based upon my reading to date the options are not many or ones to look forward to.

I have been told to eat well and keep up my walks to keep the whole body as healthy as possible. We are trying to find and to look into all possibilities including better medical support and expertise. If any of you have had family or friends suffer through Mesothelioma and you are comfortable in sharing info with me it would be appreciated. Getting old is sometimes tougher than you want. Hugs, Dick and Meris"

As we start the new year and I "look back at 2010"..... these were some of our **2010's "highlights"**: having 55 people attend the wonderful *Fredericksburg, VA mini-reunion* coordinated by **Ted Smith** and **Bill King**; **Dan Colussy's** visit to the Academy as the *2010 '53 Fellow*; the number of excellent entries in the annual *Ernie Rowland Cadet Art Show* which our class sponsors; and our class reaching over 80% of our five-year pledge of \$200,000 for "our" Leadership 44 in just three years!

Sadly, our "low points" in 2010 were losing these classmates: **Gene Trainor** (Jan. 3rd); **Bud Grader** (Feb. 12th); **Dave Howland** (Mar. 14th); and **Bill Linn** (Apr. 4th), and as noted above, **Hilda Conrad** (Aug. 28th).

Looking ahead, some of **2011's "prospective highlights"** are: we have a good number of classmates planning to attend our Sarasota, FL mini-reunion (May 2nd to 6th); and, "our" Leadership 44" will be the Academy's first one and it will be delivered this summer! (More to follow about this when it's known.)

Sarasota, FL Mini-Reunion (May 2 to 6, 2011): In December, packets of information about the reunion were "snail-mailed" to all of our classmates who had previously indicated they probably or possibly were interested in attending it.

If you did not receive this mailing, or now think that you might possibly be interested in attending it, please let me know!

CGA's next Superintendent - In case you haven't heard, RADM Sandra L. Stosz, Class of '82, will be relieving current Superintendent, RADM J. Scott Burhoe, this

summer. She was the first Academy woman graduate to make Admiral; and, she will be the first woman to head any of the U.S. service academies. RADM Stosz, 50, currently is the Coast Guard's director of reserve and leadership; she has had 12 years of sea-duty; is a former C.O. of the CG Recruit Training Center in Cape May, NJ; and, she is married to Bob Volpe, a retired Coast Guard LCDR.

Misc. "Newsbits" about some of our other classmates (in alphabetical order)

In December, **Kaye Boggs** (350 Cherry Drive, Satellite Beach, FL 32937, Tel. 321-777-2700, e-mail: mwboggs@cfl.rr.com) was selected as the Brevard County Watercolor Society's (BWS) Featured Artist of the Month. **Mike** said, "I have to 'blow her whistle' because she won't". There's a nice article about **Kaye** (including some of her paintings) on the BWS website, <http://brevardwatercolorsociety.org/2010/12/01/kaye-boggs>.

Jim Conrad, who since 1989 has enjoyed doing courier work and other odd jobs as needed for a Virginia construction company, said he has experienced his own share of medical issues over the last several years. These have included having nine blood transfusions and two platelet infusions because of some internal bleeding problems. In 2009 he also had three stents put in to correct some blocked arteries. **Jim** has not been able to keep his e-mail operating at home, but he said that he can be reached on his e-mail account at work, jconrad@armadahoffler.com.

During these last two weeks of January, **Rick and Beth Cueroni** will be taking a two-week cruise aboard the Oceana cruise liner *Marina* on her maiden voyage. They will fly to Barcelona, Spain and then make port calls in Malaga, Spain; Casablanca, Morocco; and Tenerife, Canary Islands. (Note: Do you recall that Tenerife was also our last port call on our first class cadet cruise?).

Even though he suffered a broken thumb (by slamming a door on it) and during a routine annual stress test his doctors discovered he needed a fourth stent to correct a blocked artery, **Jim Irwin** reported that he and **LaVerne** are doing "just fine" in Arizona (890 N. Granada Dr., Chandler, AZ 85226, Tel. 480-656-2343, e-mail: jcilmg@cox.net) and they do **not** miss the New England snow storms they left behind in Connecticut.

Ted Smith continues to share his wonderful bugler talents playing 'TAPS' at military funerals. On January 24th, he will be playing TAPS at the funeral for Jeanne Shields at Arlington National Cemetery. Mrs. Shields was the widow of VADM William D. Shields, Class of '31, and one of the Academy's largest benefactors who gave over \$200,000 to establish an endowment fund to make the Academy more beautiful, enrich the social interaction of cadets with the Academy's faculty and staff, and provide items for which appropriated funds are inadequate.