

U.S. Coast Guard Academy Class of '53 Newsletter July 2009

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.*

Seattle Mini-Reunion (9/21 to 9/25/2009)

The June '53 Newsletter contained information and the registration form for the **Seattle Mini-Reunion** that the planning committee (**Dick and Meris Donnelly, Kirk and Jackie Greiner, George Everett and Barbara, Bud and Betsy Mathieu, Ed and Joyce Nelson, and Dimp Spadafora**) have put together.

We have a great group of classmates and friends who are planning to attend.

Whether or not you will be able to attend, **please complete and return the registration form to Wee Smith by August 15th.**

The 2010 Fredricksburg, VA Mini-Reunion

Ted Smith and Bill King are working on the dates for this and are ironing out the details for it. The information about it will be sent to all classmates this fall.

What do you remember about the Ponchos we had when we were cadets??

Recently, **Bob Benson** asked what happened to the ponchos that we had when we were cadets? We discussed it but couldn't remember:

a. were they were issued to us individually (i.e., did we stencil our names on them?) or were they issued to us on a temporary custody basis like our rifles were, and that we had to turn them back in?

b. did we take them on cruises with us or did we take them to Elizabeth City for flight training or

Cape May for the rifle and pistol ranges?

c. what uniforms did we wear with our ponchos?

Please send me a note (19 Coachman Pike, Ledyard, CT 06339) or an e-mail (jdsbridge@aol.com) and let me know what you remember about our ponchos.

Misc. Bits and Pieces from or about our classmates (in alphabetical order)

Ken Barrett, (16 Captains Way - Gerrish Island, Kittery Point, ME 03905 - e-mail: barret1719@aol.com) sent his regrets that he and **Eve** will not be able to attend the Seattle Mini-Reunion. He said **Eve** has early Alzheimer's disease and is uncomfortable in unfamiliar situations. He says they have been really fortunate however, because her doctors have her taking two drugs which together have been more effective in delaying the effects of her Alzheimers disease. Ken says he has stepped back from some of his activities but continues as the Treasurer and a trustee of the Episcopal Diocese of Maine and two foundations.

Larry and Barbara Bates' son, **Scott** has been in Baghdad, Iraq working for the National Democratic Institute helping the Iraqi Parliament prepare for Iraq's national elections to be held in January. In September **Barbara** plans to go to Japan and China to visit her son, **Skip**.

Bob Benson was in his home town of Needham, MA in June on his way to watch his grandson play in a Little League playoff game, when he found himself on "**Admiral Gracey Drive**", a short road leading to the Needham H.S. athletic fields. **Bob** said this brought back the memory of his mother's call to then-Cadet **Gracey's** mother in the spring of 1949 to find out if attending CGA was going to be the "right experience" for her son. The call had been brought about by an article in the local newspaper announcing Cadet **Jim Gracey's** graduation from CGA. **Bob** sent a note to **ADM Gracey, CGA '49** telling him "I may be one of the few in the Coast Guard who have driven on your street." **ADM Gracey** sent **Bob** back a nice thank you letter which recalled being a "Summer Ensign" in 1949 when our class started at CGA, and explained that the naming of "**Admiral Gracey Drive**" came as a surprise to him but that he thought his friends in the Needham H.S. Class of '45 must have had 'something' to do with it.

And, in another **Bob Benson** "small world story". While **he and Beverly** were in Atlantic City, NJ recently, they stopped to see the house in which **Bob** had lived 73 years ago. In the course of conversation, the owner of the house remembered "someone" from his high school who had gone to the Coast Guard Academy". The "someone" was **Conrad Nagle**, who

was originally in the Class of '52 and then "started over" with our class on July 6, 1949. Connie left CGA on 3/22/50 and we have not heard from or about him since then. *Have any of you??*

Ed and Becky Daniels sent their regrets that they won't be attending the Seattle Mini-Reunion. "We don't venture too far away during hurricane season, for obvious reasons, and late September is a peak time. We can go to our condo in Black Mountain and can get back to New Bern from there in 6 to 7 hours in order to 'batten down the hatches'. Getting home from Seattle would be a challenge!"

Ed Farmer (*journeyer75@yahoo.com*) sent an e-mail saying that Thailand continues in political turmoil and that a genuine civil war is "waiting in the wings" to happen. The hotels in Bangkok, which was once a tourist mecca, are now struggling to keep a guest register of at least 20 people every night. But, Ed says he's "cool" being there for the time being because it's so much cheaper to live there on a pension than in America or other 'western' destinations.

On May 28, **Jim Grabb** joined the '53 Octogenarian Club! His mother was also born on May 28, she in 1901 and he in 1929. Jim said he recalls some good advice he received from VADM Ken Cowart, CGA '26, who was 80 in 1985, "Never pass up a chance to go to the bathroom or to sit down."

Bud Grader (11 Highland Terrace, Marblehead, MA 01945, Tel. 781-631-0066 or Cell 781-439-5888; e-mail: *charlesgrader@hotmail.com*) is home while participating in a "cutting edge" experimental clinical program at Mass. General Hospital for treatment of his malignant brain tumor. Fluid was removed from his tumor to make a vaccine which he's now receiving over an 8-week period. **Bud** greatly appreciates hearing from classmates. If calling him, mornings are better than afternoons or evenings.

No moss is gathering under **Kirk and Jackie Greiner's** feet! From the 8th to the 21st of August, they are going to Morocco with a close friend who has been diagnosed with terminal cancer (12 weeks to live) and one of her lifelong desires has been to visit Morocco. A week and a half after the Greiners return from Morocco, they are going to Russia and will get home Sept. 17th, just before our mini-reunion!

In June, **Ralph and Diane Hill** enjoyed a wonderful tour of Prague and then a cruise on the Danube through the Czech Republic, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria. They found it most interesting to learn about Eastern Europe history and its rich culture before the Communist era. On September 13-20, the **Hills, Ted and Mary Frances Smith, and Wade and Sally Smith** will be taking an Alaskan Holland America cruise before attending our '53

mini-reunion in Seattle.

Dave Howland advises that he and **Nan** are both still healthy and busy. Nan is Bar Harbor's librarian and Dave still digs his own clams and is active in the local MOAA chapter and Navy League. Their travel has been "limited to New England - by choice - mostly to see kids or grandkids and one great grandchild".

Bernie Hoyland reports that he and Peggy "with 8 children, 21 grandchildren, and lots of nieces and nephews we just manage to find something to do to keep them busy".

Jim and LaVerne Irwin are getting away from Arizona's heat by "summering" in Wilmington, NC and visiting their daughter Julie's and their son Matt's families there.

Bert Keyzer said "I'm doing quite well - I miss Rin a lot, but I am so very thankful that all his suffering is over. I'm very comfortable living in my home here in Messiah Village, (991 Oak Oval, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055). It's a good place for me to be -- close to church, stores, pharmacy, bank, etc. Anything I might need is here and our daughter, Sue and family live only 15 minutes away and we see each other often. Two of their teen-agers still live at home so that keeps things pretty lively. By-the-way, I've recently become a Great Grandmother. It's hard to believe that another boy has joined the "Keyzer Clan" - Now there are eight grandsons, only one granddaughter, and one great grandson -- the Keyzer name goes on! I'm thankful for that!"

Bill and Dixie Linn (3 Mahogany Way, Elk Ridge, UT 84651, e-mail: *cwilllinn@msn.com*) were hoping to be able to attend our Seattle mini-reunion, but **Dixie's** diabetes has progressed to the point where it is difficult for her to travel and she is unable to walk very far. They send their greetings to all our classmates and report "we are living happily and quietly here in Utah. Our second son, David, married late in life. He and his wife now have three children bringing our grandchildren total to 11. The youngest, a boy, is just 9-1/2 month's old. Our oldest granddaughter and her husband have moved here from California so we have lots of family close by. It is a little unusual to have a 28 year old and a 9-1/2 month old grandchild but we do."

Gerry Lipsett, who is back living in his home in Mass. (34 Pond St., Cohasset, MA 02025, Cell 857-205-5034; e-mail: *byglip@gmail.com*), enjoyed a nostalgic visit aboard the EAGLE in Boston this summer. Gerry said he felt like the *Ancient Mariner* telling sea stories to the cadets about how it was 60 years ago when we made a port call in Boston on our

short cruise during Swab summer. He was also interviewed by a reporter from Boston's WBZ-TV station. Gerry says he is doing o.k. living by himself even though he still needs a feeding tube because of the difficulty he has in swallowing food.

Dick and Donna Littlefield, who are "summering" in Vinalhaven, Maine, also had a wonderful visit aboard the EAGLE when she made a port call in Rockland, Maine in July. Among the changes **Dick** noted that have been made to the EAGLE since we sailed on her as cadets, were that the hammocks have been replaced with bunks!

Bob Lynch's recovery from the major esophageal cancer surgery that he had in May has been very slow. He expects to be in the Tucson Medical Center until mid-August while he is regaining some of the weight and muscle tone that he has lost. He will welcome and greatly appreciate hearing from classmates! Cards should be sent to his home (8572 E. Mustang Trail, Hereford, AZ 85615). **Iris** can be reached at irislynch@dtg-llc.com

Roger Madson (163 Saloli Way, Loudon, TN, 37774, e-mail: jawanada@charter.net), Tel. 865-458-2305) said he has found it necessary to move **Juanita** to a memory care facility. Fortunately, it is only five minutes from home. He also added "Every year when June 5th (our CGA graduation date) rolls around, I stop and reflect, if only for a few minutes, about what a great experience it has been."

Roger Mowell (13915 Pebblebrook, Houston, TX 77079) sent a note saying "**Jerry** and I recently got back from a cruise on the Island Passage in Southeast Alaska. It was really fun but I think we better stay put for awhile. I flunked retirement three times but I tried it again last October and I believe I'll succeed this time. We continue to be in good health and still mobile. We are lucky to have our three surviving children, and their spouses, and six grandchildren living within ten minutes of us and we get together quite often. In January we attended a family wedding in the Washington, DC area and then drove down to see **Bill and Helen King** for a few days in early February. It's always good to be with friends of long standing."

Ed Nelson (1160 Niagara Ave., Astoria, OR 97103, e-mail: radmed1@msn.com) is recovering at home after spending some time in St. Vincent's Hospital in Portland, OR to have his bovine artificial aortic valve and his pacemaker replaced. Since both were infected, he is getting a daily infusion of antibiotics at their local Astoria Hospital. Ed is disappointed that getting his stamina and appetite back have been slower than he expected -- He says "I need more patience, but I need it *right now!*"

Harry Oldford (1017 Lakemont Circle,

Winter Park, FL 32792) regrets that he and **Barbara** will miss the Seattle Mini-Reunion. He said, "I am afraid our days of flying are over. It's car, train, or bus travel from now on. The hassles we went through the last two times we flew were enough to turn us off forever!! My replaced knee and hip did not help the situation at all." He added, "We love our retirement village single family home on Lake Berry in Winter Park, FL. I enjoy piloting the 'Lake Berry Ferry' every other week, transporting our independent, assisted living and health center residents around the lake. I alternate with another 'Coastie', who as an Ensign, survived the sinking of the CGC HAMILTON during WWII. He later went on to captain a buoy tender and an Army coastal freighter in the Pacific. There are approximately 200 ex-servicemen and women living on our campus. We are the only two 'Coasties'!"

Bill Russell said he and **Margie** are "hanging in" and that their health is "stable". Their grandson, Travis Russell, is a second classman at the Academy, and this summer was a company commander for one of the A.I.M. (Academy Introduction Mission) companies.

Tom and Gerrie Sing report all is well with them as they spend January to June in their "winter home" in Palm Bay, FL and "summers" in NY (48 Avery Court, Neconset, NY 11767, Tel . 631-366-1391, e-mail: sinth01@yahoo.com). They have found the AutoTrain for their "commuting" back and forth to be nice. They leave Lorton, VA in the afternoon, have a bedroom and a good dinner in the dining car and the next morning arrive in Sanford, FL, only an hour's drive to Palm Bay.

In July, **Dimpy Spadafora's** granddaughter, Natalie Spadafora attended the third week of this year's A.I.M. (Academy Introduction Mission) program. A.I.M. is an orientation program for H.S. students who are between their Junior and Senior H.S. years who may be interested in an appointment to the Academy.

Barbara Trainor (14 Wellesley Rd., Scituate, MA 02066) advises that **Gene** continues in a nursing home and that **Bob West** faithfully visits him

Dave and Isabel Tredeau (5 Footpath Rd., Chelmsford, MA 01824) are doing well "with the usual bumps in the road". They sent their best wishes to all who are able to attend the Seattle Mini-Reunion.

Ted and Colette Wojnar (4640 Larkwood Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23464) spent the better part of May enjoying Boston and surrounds. He said "Grandson Jeff's graduation from Babson College and his pitching in the regional NCAA Baseball Tournament prompted the trip. With Stephen and Pam in Newton Center, MA and T.J. on the Cape it was an opportunity to enjoy getting together for a while and having some

family fun. Didn't make it to Fenway Park on this trip. We're saving that for our fall trip to watch the Red Sox win the World Series."

Editor's Note:

On July 30th, after I put this *Newsletter* in the mail, **Jane** and I will be flying to Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia with our daughter, Beth, who will be returning to her position as Principal of an International School there. The three of us are going to travel in Georgia for two weeks before Beth goes back to school.

Jane and I will return home on August 14th.

Wee Smith

Georgian Alphabet

ა	A a	ბ	N n	შ	Sh sh
ბ	B b	ო	O o	ჩ	Ch ch
გ	G g	პ	P' p'	ც	Ts ts
დ	D d	ჯ	Zh zh	ძ	Dz dz
ე	E e	რ	R r	წ	Ts' ts'
ვ	V v	ს	S s	ჭ	Ch' ch'
ზ	Z z	თ	T t'	ხ	Kh kh
თ	T t	უ	U u	ჯ	J j
ი	I i	ფ	P p	ჰ	H h
კ	K' k'	ქ	K k		
ლ	L l	ღ	Gh gh		
მ	M m	ყ	Q' q'		

HUGS

It's wondrous what a Hug can do
a Hug can cheer you when you're
blue,

A Hug can say, "I love you so,"
Or, "Gee, I hate to see you go."

A Hug is, "Welcome back again,"
And, "Great to see you!"
Where've you been?"

A Hug can soothe a small child's
pain
And bring a rainbow after rain.

The Hug! There's just no doubt
about it—
We scarcely could survive with
out it!
A Hug delights and warms and
charms.
It must be why God gave us arms.

Hugs are great for fathers &
mothers,
Sweet for sisters and brothers,
And chances are your favorite
aunts
Love them more than potted
plants.

Kittens crave them. Puppies love
them.
Heads of State are not above
them.
A Hug can break the language
barrier,
And make your travels so much
merrier.
No need to fret about your store of
'em;
The more you give, the more
there's more of 'em.
So stretch those arms without
delay,
And give someone a Hug Today!!

Courtesy of RSVP