

# CANDOER News



A quarterly Newsletter dedicated to Communicators AND Others Enjoying Retirement

July 2007

Summer Issue

Volume 7 – Number 2

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Welcome to the summer issue of a Newsletter dedicated to the **CANDOERs** (Communicators **AND** Others Enjoying Retirement). This newsletter will be distributed quarterly. New issues will be posted on the Web for viewing on or about, January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15.

The **CANDOER** Web site and newsletter may be viewed by going to the following URI: [www.candoer.org](http://www.candoer.org)

***The success of this newsletter depends on you. I need contributors.*** Do you have an interesting article, a nostalgia item, or a real life story you would like to share with others? Do you have a snail-mail or an e-mail address of one of

our former colleagues? If you do, send it to me at the following e-mail address:

[candoercat@gmail.com](mailto:candoercat@gmail.com)

or to my snail-mail address:

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Please, **NO** handwritten submissions.

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**Support bacteria. They're the only culture some people have.**

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### **Cat's Corner**

Keep in mind as you read this issue, it contains stories written by your colleagues of their life's adventures BOC, DOC and AOC. Please, I need stories. Sit down and write them and send them to me.

The one-liners used in this issue were in my e-mail queue one morning from four different people. They are, "The Wisdom of Larry the Cable Guy."

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**Eagles may soar, but weasels don't get sucked into jet engines.**

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### **Retiree's Report**

Tom Paolozzi hosted a going away party at Bravo's Italian Restaurant in Fairfax for Gary and Debbie Bobbitt. They are in the process of moving to North Carolina. By the time you read this, they will have made the move.

The following people were in attendance: Gary and Debbie Bobbitt, Dave Ames, Bob Caffrey, Bob Catlin, Dave Collins, Paul Del Giudice, Hal Hutson, Dick Kwiatkowski, George Moon, Tom Paolozzi, Joe Sting, Dan Ullrich, and Roberta Walbridge.

Two pictures, taken at Bravo's, may be found on the web site ([www.candoer.org](http://www.candoer.org)). Go to the Main Menu and look for the menu item, "Picture Gallery."

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**If you think nobody cares, try missing a couple payments on your car!**

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### **Hypocritic Booze**

By James F. Prosser

It's a well known fact that adherents to the Islamic faith are prohibited from producing, transporting, selling, storing, or consuming alcoholic beverages. Violation of this sharia law brings physical punishment to violators in varying degrees of severity, usually depending where the infraction takes place.

Foreigners residing in or traveling through Islamic countries find themselves confronted with requirements to follow the law - or else.

Foreign Service personnel who have served in these countries undoubtedly can relate some rather interesting stories of how in places there may have been some secretive "home brewing" and surreptitious consumption going on.

When I had a regional communications position in Nairobi, I often visited posts where Islam was the only religion. Djibouti was one of those places.

On one of my visits there, it happened that our Ambassador was an old friend of mine from when we served together in the former Belgian Congo and subsequently in Belgium itself. So rather than having me put up in a hotel, he and his wife invited me to stay with them at the residence for the duration of my brief visit.

For dinner one evening, the Ambassador had a few friends over from the ex-patriot community. I met a very interesting British businessman who had an "import/export" business. Being

curious, I inquired as to just what product(s) he would be handling. He responded that he dealt in Scotch whiskey exclusively.

Expressing my great surprise, I said, "How is this possible in Djibouti, a 100% Islamic country?"

"No problem," he replied, "as long as I do not sell any of it in this country. I just re-export it to vessels calling at Djibouti for sale abroad. The Djibouti government collects their fees and is delighted to have the business." Hmmm. Being against alcohol, the Muslims here must be rather selective in their application of sharia law.

My curiosity really aroused now, I asked him how the Scotch whiskey arrives in Djibouti. He said, "It comes to me from Scotland in a 40-foot shipping container about once a month. It is stored in a customs-controlled warehouse. Two or three times a week, dhows from Yemen and Saudi Arabia come across the Red Sea to pick up several dozen cases of Scotch to dispose of along the Arabian peninsula littoral for 'unspecified customers' by burying the boxes at night in the sand at isolated places. The dhow operators pay me in cash for each load."

Kidding him, I suggested "Gee, all I need to do is have a power boat to follow any dhow, watch where they bury the Scotch to later come and retrieve a free supply for myself."

He said, "You would never return alive from such a trip."

Ever wonder how many cases of Scotch whiskey can be put in one 40-foot container?

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**Those who get too big for their britches  
will be exposed in the end.**

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## **Danger in Ibadan**

By George McKinney

While CPO in Ibadan, Nigeria, there was a coup and the Nigerians did not like us at all.

It was a Saturday and I had to go to the Consulate to check incoming traffic (a one man communications post).

While in the Consulate, located on the second story of a bank, I got an emergency call on our radio from USIS. The USIS officer was yelling that they had set the building on fire.

I ran up to the roof, since USIS was just across the street, and yep, by golly, they were burning it down. The first tour officer was yelling at me, what do I do, what do I do.

I got on the radio and said, "Look Jim, you are black, take off your suit coat, pull your shirt outside your trousers, and get the heck out of there and go home."

I saw him go out a rear window of the building and he was safe.

He called me back a few minutes later and thanked me for the suggestion.

Now, my turn ... While up on the roof, where I had all of our antennas, (we ran HF ratty circuits), I thought I had better check everything. Well, about three minutes later I see approximately 12 Nigerians enter the door to the roof with knives and spears. I thought ok, only one way down, except jumping, so you better do something.

My main antenna was located on a circular cement pad, with dimensions of about 8 feet around and about 10 feet tall. I started running around that stupid cement dome with the Nigerians chasing me. Now think about it, all they had to do was stop and they had me, but no, they kept running behind me yelling (chanting). After about three or four

minutes of this, I raced towards the roof door, slammed it shut. They were stuck on the roof. You could not open the door from the outside, so I won that one.

I went back into the CPU, called the Congen and told him what happened, he said they were also having serious problems in Lagos and for me to get out of there.

I did not realize really how serious the danger had escalated at the time. I took an Embassy vehicle on the ground floor parking lot and was attacked before I got to the street. Sadly, I ran over two Nigerians and finally got on a main street. I called my wife on our radio and told her I was on my way home and to open the gate to our compound when I told her to.

Bad luck again, about half way to my compound, there was a jeep with a 50 cal. machine gun coming towards me. I veered off onto another road and then saw him once more before I took a side street. I finally reached home, safely.

No one came to the compound, so that was the end of that ... FOR NOW ... My wife and I watched numerous large fires that night.

Another story relating to the same subject later on.

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### Change is inevitable, except for vending machines.

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#### Humor

The below poem was received from Stu Branch, DASC Retired.

#### Crabby Old Man

What do you see nurses? ... What do you see?

What are you thinking ... when you're looking at me?

A crabby old man ... not very wise,  
Uncertain of habit ... with faraway eyes?

Who dribbles his food ... and makes no reply.

When you say in a loud voice ... "I do wish you'd try!"

Who seems not to notice ... the things that you do.

And forever is losing a sock or shoe?

Who, resisting or not ... lets you do as you will,

With bathing and feeding ... the long day to fill?

Is that what you're thinking? Is that what you see?

Then open your eyes, nurse ... you're not looking at me.

I'll tell you who I am ... as I sit here so still,

As I do at your bidding ... as I eat at your will.

I'm a small child of Ten ... with a father and mother,

Brothers and sisters who love one another.

A young boy of Sixteen with wings on his feet

Dreaming that soon now ... a lover he'll meet.

A groom soon at Twenty ... my heart gives a leap.

Remembering, the vows ... that I promised to keep.

At Twenty-Five, now ... I have young of my own.

Who need me to guide and a secure happy home.

A man of Thirty my young now grown fast,

Bound to each other ... with ties that should last.

At Forty my young sons ... have grown

And are gone,  
 But my woman's beside me ... to see  
 I don't mourn.  
 At Fifty, once more ... babies play 'round  
 my knee,  
 Again, we know children ... my loved one  
 and me.

Dark days are upon me ... my wife is now  
 dead.  
 I look at the future ... I shudder with  
 dread.  
 For my young are all rearing ... young of  
 their own.  
 And I think of the years ... and the love  
 that I've known.

I'm now an old man ... and nature is  
 cruel.  
 Tis jest to make old age ... look like a  
 fool.  
 The body, it crumbles ... grace and  
 vigor, depart.  
 There is now a stone ... where I once  
 had a heart.

But inside this old carcass ... a young  
 guy still dwells,  
 And now and again my battered heart  
 swells.  
 I remember the joys ... I remember the  
 pain.  
 And I'm loving and living ... life over  
 again.

I think of the years ... all too few ... gone  
 too fast.  
 And accept the stark fact ... that nothing  
 can last.  
 So open your eyes, people open and see.  
 Not a crabby old man.  
 Look closer ... see ... ME!!

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**What happens if you get scared half to  
 death, twice?**

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## The Diplomatic Telecommunications Service©

A copywritten article by Bill Weatherford

This is a brief, informal, strictly unofficial, and far from comprehensive, look at communications in the Foreign Service, as it was during my service, from the perspective of a retired Department of State communicator.

This document grew out of a presentation made to the now-defunct Area Joint Communications Committee [AJCC] in Manila, in mid-1986. The AJCC was made up of representatives of all U.S. Government communications activities, civilian and military, in the Philippines and coordinated communications between and among its members. The Communications Programs Officer (CPO) was the Embassy representative to the AJCC. The author was CPO Manila from late November, 1983, until late August, 1986.

For those interested in the history of cryptography and cryptanalysis I recommend *The Codebreakers* by David Kahn, published by The MacMillan Company, 866 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. It is now out of print but can often be found in used book stores.

Another recommended book is *Big Machines* by Stephen J. Kelley. This is a study of the cryptographic security of the German Enigma, the Japanese machine we called "Purple", and the U.S. SIGABA/ECM. It is published by Aegean Park Press, PO Box 2837, Laguna Hills, CA 92654.

William O. Weatherford  
 Albuquerque, New Mexico  
 January 6, 2006

The mission of the Department of State is six-fold:

The advancement, preservation,



and protection of American interests in the international community of nations;

The avoidance of war through diplomacy;

Negotiations with the Russian Republic via the Washington/Moscow "hot line"<sup>(1)</sup>;

To negotiate an end to hostilities in the case of war;

To reconstitute the international relations of the United States following a conflict;

and,

The maintenance of command and control communications for the foreign affairs community.

The Diplomatic Telecommunications Service (DTS) exists so that this mission can be carried out.

What is the DTS, and where did it come from?

The history of communications in the Department of State begins with the Committee on Secret Correspondence, a direct ancestor of the Department, created during the American Revolution. The Committee was established by the Continental Congress to communicate with Colonial representatives in friendly European capitals. The purpose of communications then, as now, was to enable our emissaries abroad to maintain contact with the "home office" in order to receive instructions and report on local conditions and the attitudes of the government to which they were accredited. The fastest means of international communications available was the sailing ship. Security came from giving messages to trusted individuals serving as couriers and the use of various methods of encipherment, usually nomenclators where symbols,

numbers, and such, are used to represent individuals, places, words and phrases. Because of the hazards of travel (piracy, storms, British warships, etc.), it was common practice to send messages by more than one ship to ensure the arrival of at least one copy.

The first Department of State communicator of the modern era was Thomas Morrison. He was hired as a telegraphic clerk in 1870 after serving as a civilian military telegrapher with the Union forces during the Civil War. His circuitry? Two Morse Code telegraph lines to the Western Union Telegraph office in downtown Washington, D.C. Mr. Morrison served the Department for 55 years, retiring in 1925 at the age of 79. Not only was he our first communicator, he started a tradition a great many of my generation in the DTS followed – he was ex-military.

In the years after World War I, the Department used substitution-cipher code books. These contained page after page of five letter groups, many of which could generally be pronounced as words, with each group representing a specific word or phrase commonly used in diplomatic correspondence. The books were bound in various colors, with each color representing the security level of that particular code. Widely used throughout the Foreign Service, they were not changed very often and the phonetic groups in the more commonly used editions were soon committed to memory by the officers who used them. They also became familiar to our allies, and others. This was known to US leaders, as demonstrated by an incident in late 1940. In an effort to prevent a break in US-Japanese relations and avoid war with Japan, President Franklin D. Roosevelt instructed his Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, to send a message to

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<sup>1</sup> I assume the "Hot Line" is still operational, given the current world situation.

the Emperor through Ambassador Grew in Tokyo using the "GRAY" code, saying he didn't care if the Japanese picked it up.

On a lighter note, there is at least one incident on record where a retiring Foreign Service Officer, at a dinner given in his honor, delighted his colleagues by giving his after dinner speech in code. The more junior officers present reportedly had some difficulty in following his remarks.

With the exception of a very few leased circuits, notably to London and Paris, the Department was totally dependent on commercial telegraph companies for communications. Western Union and Mackay Radio were two of the U.S. carriers used. Overseas, our Embassies and Consulates relied on their local PTT (the host government owned Post [mail], Telephone and Telegraph services) for service. Twenty-four hours was considered excellent transmission time for an IMMEDIATE message - assuming of course that a weekend or local holiday didn't intervene. (Most telegraph companies and PTT's routinely closed Friday night and didn't open again until Monday morning.)

World War II brought us better security, in the form of electro-mechanical, rotor-based, off-line code machines<sup>2</sup> and, courtesy of the U.S. military, where military circuits were available, faster communications. After the war, we were faced with the fact that commercial facilities, especially in the lesser developed areas of the world, were inadequate to meet the needs of an expanding American diplomatic presence.

In 1946, when the planned removal of a U.S. Army radio network in

the Middle East threatened our ability to maintain communications in the area, we established our own CW network, the first in what was to grow into the DTS. By the early 1950's, requirements in East Asia led to the establishment of a network there and the Regional Relay Facility (RRF) at Clark Air Base was established to support it. In 1959/1960, greatly increased communications requirements created by the independence of a large number of former European colonies led to a radio network in Africa. RRF Monrovia was established during this period.

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**Life isn't like a box of chocolates. It's more like a jar of jalapenos.**

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### **Carnival in Thailand**

By Tim Lawson (Retired)

I thought I would share this with you. Perhaps take you away from the daily grind for a few minutes. I had originally sent this in another form to my Mother and my Aunt, simply recapturing a recent night's outing to a carnival here in Thailand with the family. But the Ferris wheel ride really did spark some synapses in the old cerebral-cortex and I had thoughts, some real, some fiction that I've since added. Some colleagues (several it seems, but for sure, at least one) have encouraged me to do more of this from time to time, so here is a little bit. A simple, barely true story from the often self-realigning margins of my dreams, left unscathed now, for the first time since I was a freshly minted 23 year-old with my first EER and EER process, leaving my mind thereby exceptionally clear. For your entertainment and enjoyment!

Last night we went to the Carnival, again. We ate Pad Thai, Sushi, and

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<sup>2</sup> This device was known by the US Navy as the ECM-2, and by the US Army as SIGABA. We called the version we used the MEC.

other seafood plates, along with some pork and various Thai "snacks" sitting alongside the Krabi Noi river bank where chairs and tables were set up for "Songkran" festivities, and the Thai New Year Holiday.

There, right in front, was a long row of brightly red-painted food stalls, stretching for maybe 20 meters or more, show-casing every kind of Thai food one might imagine (or might not imagine) and with Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and Indian cuisine to boot. One stall was offering "fried crocodile and deer meat," among its delicacies, that I considered, from a distance, and then quickly moved along.

As we ate (with Auemporn and Nong Pu drinking their mixed watermelon, cashew nuts, dragon-fruit, sticky-rice, etc., malt-like cold drinks), we listened to the flowing melody of old style Thai music, that seemed to be in rhythm with the flow of the people, the food, the cooks, the scents, as it was generated from large speakers scattered here and there and everywhere; and we watched some performers, maybe a rock band or a ballad singer-to-be, setting up for a show on a huge yellow stage erected just outside the local Krabi Police Box--if the police were sleeping, they wouldn't be for too I don't think. We ate and watched the people walk by; they walked, looked at us, smiled, meandering along in consideration of the Smorgasbord highway running out alongside them. And just behind them, indeed barely inches away, needing to keep one lane of traffic open and going through the heart of Krabi-Town, one lane reserved as such held cars and trucks (going somewhat slow, maybe) and motor-bikes (zipping right by at their typical break-neck speed) the whole time--

adding more movement and yet another dimension, this one of possible danger, to everything else going on immediately around, round and around, us.

We then crossed the street (carefully), wandering back into the world of the Carnival which by that time was all lit up. Lit up with various colored lights as the sun slowly set for the day bringing those lights into even brighter play. We bought tickets, rode a small, but seriously rowdy and possibly corrupt roller coaster, and we watched Nong Pu (my son) jump, roll, fall, climb and slide down on a large, air-filled "slide/gymnasium/helium balloon" thing-a-ma-jig. All the while the old style Thai music continued to flow throughout the gravel and rock parking lot-sized Carnival, the sky growing darker and the lights growing brighter, minute by minute, helping the gravel, the rocks, the pieces of trash and other debris, subside and give up their original dominance of the day.

Finally, as we were heading out to our own conveyance to head home, I caught a glimpse of some lights high up in the corner of my left eye and exclaimed for some reason, "Hey, we forgot to ride the Ferris wheel!" Well, it was an old one (super old it seems, judging from the rust and the large, black binder-clips, the same kind used for large paper files, FOIA folders or lengthy policy documents, placed to tightly (one hopes) cling to strategic joints making up much of the metal housing of the Ferris Wheel itself). Not a big Wheel, not really big at all, not even as big as the one I can recall my mother sitting in at Lakeside Park in a scary dream that came later under the veil of Parkside public housing in a second-floor room, but still intriguing and kind of special with its lights, its



music, its black paper-clips, and all the creaks, whining, cracking, rickety shakes and short wobbles, emanating from its metal poles and pipes as it moved--as it moved round and around, gliding (but not smoothly) through the night-time air. But when you got to the top, and from up there it seemed pretty darn high, you could see out over the whole carnival in fact, way beyond the food stalls along the river, into the lights of the town, flashing out into the villages and even jungles, where only a few lights peered back at you. But you had all the shining stars there too. It was something to behold!

Down on the ground, only occasionally peering upwards, an Old Thai Man, almost as old and rusty as the Wheel itself, lacking only the loss of two more teeth to earn him a mouth full of gums, charged with navigating the contraption, kept letting us go round and around, round and around, round and around, even after everyone else had long departed--or at least it seemed like they had. Round and around, round and around, to where even my Thai bride's smile slowly shifted into a kind of confused, amused and questioning wonderment about whether we might ever stop. The Old Man, as we passed him on what must have been our one-hundred and tenth circumnavigation of the known and unknown aerial boundaries of this parking lot Carnival, just smiled. But with each turn his smile seemed to also warn "hold on tighter this time, don't you think?" I took great delight in this circle of delusion myself. Several times the old man let us simply sit way up on the top for a few seconds or a minute, or maybe twenty minutes or more. We just sat, smiling, holding on tight to un-certainty. Waiting to see what might come or might

not come with the next circle, the next turn of the wheel.

As I sat on one side, with Auemporn and Nong Pu sitting on the other, I watched my son's eyes. His eyes flashed with excitement and possibility at every light as it moved across the night-sky. This was the first time he had ever been on a Ferris wheel (at least one of this age and architecture) and he held on tightly, but also closed his eyes temporarily when he would look down. I know that he was a bit scared by it, but also very fascinated too. Through his eyes, wide open and spiraling here, flashing there, along with the lights, I sensed that maybe, just maybe, I could feel how someone, or someone's son, or someone watching his son's eyes, would have felt during the 1908 Chicago World Fair, where Americans and other beings met one of the world's first-ever Ferris wheels (even then much, much larger than this one) but still, how maybe a similar creaking, cracking and whining noise, round and around, round and around, might have also both scared and fascinated them--just like my son on this night.

Perhaps even then some Old Man, of one nationality or another, full set of teeth or something less, running the contraption too, let his smile speak of dreams invoking promises of many great things yet to come. But with each turn, his smile also warned warily of implications for the world--how man's innovation, his drive, his desire for control, in all of its grandeur and boldness, was also full of creaks, whining, cracking, rickety shakes and short wobbles, and like the big, black binder-clip hinging and holding together the essential infrastructure, the house that man was so assured would protect and enrich us all, was actually

only a temporary nexus bridging a constantly increasingly narrow gap that closes between hope and despair. Where neither had any lock, any certainty, any guarantee about what might come next, what the next turn of the Ferris wheel might bring.

No. Just the small luck of another flash of light in a young boy's eyes was the best they might hope for--those restless souls riding the endless circles of the Ferris wheel, feeling its creaks, its whining, cracking, rickety shakes and short wobbles, while closing our eyes to its nightmares, and clinching ever so tightly to its dreams, circa 1908 and 2007."

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See you next  
quarter!  
Be well, be safe!