

CANDOER News



A quarterly Newsletter dedicated to Communicators AND Others Enjoying Retirement

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Welcome to the latest 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

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? If you do, send it to me at the following e-mail address: candoercat@gmail.com

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**"Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go."
- Oscar Wilde**



Cat's Corner

Fishing has become an obsession with me. I 'bank' fish on average of five times a week, in the evening and, yard work allowing, I get out in my boat on average of three times a week. I am lucky in that I live within five miles of two major Maryland fishing grounds, the Potomac River and Mattawoman Creek. Both have free launch sites.

The other evening, returning from two hours of fishing along the bank of Mattawoman Creek in Indian Head, MD, I was pulled over, in my Ford Ranger, by a Charles County police officer.

He informed me that my rear license plate light was burnt out and asked me for my driver's license, ownership card, and proof of insurance.

I produced all three items. (I keep them in an envelope on my sun visor because my truck is the neighborhood truck that any of my neighbors may use at anytime they wish.)

After waiting about 20-25 minutes for the officer to write the ticket I notice two more police cars, with lights flashing, coming down the road. One pulled in behind the first police car and the other

pulled directly in front of my truck and backed up against my pumper.

The first police officer then came up to my window and asked me if I had another driver's license. I responded, "No, why would I need another driver's license," to which he responded, "because this one expired in 2002."

He went back to his car and wrote up a ticket for driving on an expired license, and a warning ticket for having a burnt out license plate light and then returned to explain to me that in 2002 when I turned in my Commercial Driver's License and obtained a standard Class C driver's license it appears that it was never recorded by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and therefore my driver's license was invalid. He suggested that I go to the DMV the next day and find out what was going on. He then informed me that I had to call someone to come get my vehicle, and me, because without a valid driver's license I could not continue to drive home. (This explained the officer's car parked against my front bumper.)

I called Nancy and she got our youngest son, Tim, and they came and got me. Nancy drove me home and our son drove the truck home.

The next day Nancy drove me the DMV in Waldorf, MD. We were lined up at the front door when they opened.

I explained to the clerk what had happened and showed her my expired, invalid driver's license.

She responded that she knew exactly what had happened and that they would correct the computer records to show that the driver's license was valid, through October of 2007, which still meant that I had been driving for one year without a valid driver's license.

She also explained that because the problem was created by a computer error they would issue me a new license to cover 2008 to 2013, but I would have to pay the fine (\$60) for not having a valid driver's license for 2007, and the \$30 fee for a new five-year license.

She also explained if I had not come into the DMV to get it straightened out before November 1, I would have had to start from scratch like I was a first time Maryland driver. That would have meant getting a learner's permit, taking 40 hours of driving lessons, 12 hours of classroom instructions, and 80 hours behind the wheel with a licensed driver. This would have cost approximately \$800 dollars all together.

I asked her if she could give me something to take to court with me explaining this computer glitch, because I was not going to pay the \$60 fine, but take it to court and fight it. She said no that it was still my responsibility to make sure I had a valid driver's license that they only sent me a notice of renewal as a courtesy.

The great thing about our DMV is their efficiency. We were in and out of there in less than 30 minutes.

So, in the long run, a burnt out rear license plate light that cost \$2 to replace, and a \$60 ticket saved me \$738 dollars.

The on-liners found in this issue were received from Paul Del Giudice and are glorious insults from an era when an astute use of words was still valued, before a great portion of the English language got boiled down to four-letter words.

The exchange between Churchill & Lady Astor: She said, "If you were my

husband I'd give you poison," and he said, "If you were my wife, I'd drink it."

I Join the Foreign Service

By Dick Kalla

(Author's Note: Below is an excerpt of a chapter from my self-published memoir. In it, I explain how I joined the Foreign Service. I'm sure that many of you have similar stories.)

One sunny Seattle day during this very same summer, I went to the Federal building in downtown Seattle to see what job offers they might have on file. Actually, I don't remember exactly why I went, but it was probably because the people at the unemployment office, who controlled my spending money that summer, insisted. But, whatever the reason, I went. Upon arrival, I was directed to speak with one of the job counselors. I wasn't really looking for government employment. After all, I had just spent nearly four years in the Navy working for the government. But, what did I have to lose by listening? It wasn't like I couldn't take a little more time to work on building up a nest egg before going back to school. There were no jobs available locally, but it was explained to me that recently there had been a recruiter visiting from the State Department looking for individuals with my qualifications (i.e. those who had done communications work in the military). For some reason, this piqued my interest (maybe a chance to finally travel and see the world?) so I took the forms that had been provided and, after completing them, sent them off. I quickly forgot about it. The summer was coming to an end, so I started making plans to return to school in the fall. About that time, however, I received a call from someone in the recruiting division of the State

Department who asked if I wanted to come to Washington, D.C., for interviews and a medical examination. The travel, room, and board for the week that I would be in Washington would be paid by the State Department. Why not? A free trip across the country for a week sounded pretty good to me, so I said that I would be happy to take them up on their offer. It wouldn't be seeing the world, but at least I would get a chance to see a little of the east coast and would be flying over the entire U.S. After years spent traveling around the world, that doesn't sound very impressive now; but, at the time, it seemed like it was a very big adventure.

A short time later, I was on a plane winging my way to our nation's Capitol and the wonderful Allen Lee Hotel. The Allen Lee is a quaint (others who have stayed there will probably have different descriptions of this fine establishment) hotel. It is only one block from the State Department. That made it convenient for the Office of Communications to arrange cheap rooms for prospective employees coming for interviews and even for those who had already been hired and were there for training. The Allen Lee still stands in all its glory, but I doubt that new recruits are still staying there. The Allen Lee was and still is painted a stark white. At first, and last for that matter, glance, the Allen Lee is all angles. It was built at the end of an irregularly shaped block, and whoever designed it must have decided to follow the contours of the angled streets that it bordered. The interior rooms mirror the exterior and consist of many sharp corners jutting hither and yon. The decorations, at least when I stayed there, were clearly not from the 20th century. I guess that could make it quaint, but to me it was just old.

Communications training is now done at Warrenton, a small town in rural Virginia. I don't think anyone these days would put up with the Allen Lee's rather Spartan living conditions, but maybe some coming for short stays still stay there because of its close proximity to the State Department. In any event, suffice it to say that I was happy just to have a free room close to the State Department for my first trip to Washington, D.C.

Anyone who has ever visited Washington, D.C., in August will understand what I mean when I say that what I remember most about my week in Washington was the heat and humidity. I had never encountered high humidity before -- this just doesn't occur on the west coast. It does, however, happen with some regularity in late summer in the D.C. area. Stepping outside my hotel that first morning, I thought something was wrong with me. I was wet all over and it wasn't raining. What a strange feeling. My nice clean white shirt that I had brought for the occasion was soaking wet. The gray wool tie around my neck and the wool sports coat I brought (the only one I owned) served to exacerbate the situation. During the week, we were prodded and poked by the medical people. We were interrogated about our past by the shrinks and the security people. And, we were questioned about our communications skills to determine if we had the necessary qualifications and aptitude for the job. Despite this, there was still plenty of time to explore; and, even with the humidity, I made it a point to see all the sights I could squeeze in during the week. Through this steam bath I strode, making sure I made it to all the monuments the other historic spots within walking distance. Seeing all

that history made a lasting impression on me, as did the humidity. Little did I know that in the future I would live in countries where the heat and humidity was this bad all year around, and I would even grow to like it.

At the end of the week, I was told that if I passed the security clearance, I would be hired into the Foreign Service of the United States. I saw nothing better in my immediate future so decided I'd give this traveling thing a go. However, because of the heavy demand and subsequent backlog, security clearances were taking up to six months to complete. Upon my return from Washington, D.C., I decided not to go back to school so I would be prepared to leave quickly when notified. I was now ready to take the next big step in my life and "see the world." This college thing would have to be put on hold for a while. I moved back home to Raymond and worked as a longshoreman when they needed extra help. This went on for nearly four months without a word so, in a weak moment, I decided I needed to find steadier employment. I felt a little funny living at home without at least going to school. I called a friend from the Navy who was working in Beverly Hills as a teletype operator for a stock brokerage company. He had been after me to come down for some time; and, better yet, his company had an opening. I could be his assistant. While it wasn't travel overseas, it was at least a way to work full time. Besides, since I was no longer going to school, there was nothing to keep me in Raymond. All my friends had long since moved away for school or work; and I needed, I believed, a little more stimulation.

So, off to Los Angeles I went. I found a studio apartment in Hollywood with wall-to-wall cockroaches and a

swimming pool. Unfortunately, it was winter and the pool was not in use. The weather was still balmy, kind of like Raymond in summer, but the locals didn't swim in the winter no matter what the temperature said. It certainly wasn't cold enough to slow the herds of cockroaches. I started work and was living the high life working by day and hunting cockroaches at night when the State Department called about a month after I arrived and asked if I wanted to go to London. My name had finally cleared through the security process. Living in Hollywood and working in Beverly Hills had a romantic ring to it and was kind of fun, but it couldn't compete with the opportunity to finally exorcize my travel demons. Soon thereafter, I gave notice, left the cockroaches to someone else, and went back to Raymond to visit family and pack prior to flying to Washington, D.C., to begin training.

A few weeks later, I found myself back in the Allen Lee. Before I had a chance to even unpack my suitcase, the telephone rang. On the other end was Bob Kile. Bob's first words to me were, "Let's get out of here." He then went on to explain that he and I were in the same class in training, and he was the first one in the class to arrive. I, he said, was the second and he already hated the Alan Lee's ambiance and had decided that he would move out immediately. Happy to oblige and more than willing to make a friend in this new place, I quickly agreed to participate in Bob's scheme. As you can imagine, it took a week or so to accomplish, but move we did as soon as it was possible. One of our other classmates, Joe Zeman, was being assigned to Washington for his first tour. His wife would be joining him after training, so he needed to find a

permanent place to live. The three of us would share the rent for that apartment during training, and then Joe would take over payments when Bob and I left for our assignments after completing our instruction. It seemed a perfect plan.

Actually, it wasn't perfect. We needed to rent a car because, unlike the Alan Lee, our new living quarters weren't within walking distance of the Department of State. We also needed to rent some furniture, at least beds, because it was an unfurnished apartment, and Joe's furniture wouldn't be arriving until later. Then, part way through training, Bob and Joe got into an argument; and Bob decided to move in with another of our married classmates who was also renting an apartment. This created new problems of transportation; but, luckily, it was near the end so I stuck it out.

Training was easy. Paul Del Giudice was my class instructor and he made the Foreign Service sound like a wonderful career. For me, it was almost a refresher course of the work that I had done in the Navy. Sure, there were a few new wrinkles because the State Department did things a little differently. There was new terminology to learn and different procedures and equipment to study, but the basic work was the same as what I did in the Navy at Moffett Field. I enjoyed my training in Washington, but soon it was over and I was off to my first assignment. Halfway through training, I was told that I would not be going to London. Instead, Copenhagen, Denmark, was to be my new home. Apparently, the fellow that I was to replace was married, and he was finding it too expensive to live in Denmark. Since I was the only person in my class being assigned to Europe, I was picked to replace him. Finally, after all those

years, my traveling adventure was about to begin. I was about to see the world!

"I didn't attend the funeral, but I sent a nice letter saying I approved of it." - Mark Twain

In The Land That Made Me, Me
Author Unknown

Long ago and far away, in a land that time forgot,
Before the days of Dylan, or the dawn of Camelot.
There lived a race of innocents, and they were you and me,
Long ago and far away, in the Land That Made Me, Me.

Oh, there was truth and goodness, in that land where we were born
Where navels were for oranges, and Peyton Place was porn.
For Ike was in the White House, and Hoss was on TV,
And God was in His heaven, in the Land That Made Me, Me

We learned to gutt a muffler, we washed our hair at dawn,
We spread our crinolines to dry in circles on the lawn
And they could hear us coming, all the way to Tennessee,
All starched and sprayed and rumbling, in the Land That Made Me, Me.

We longed for love and romance, and waited for the prince
And Eddie Fisher married Liz, and no one's seen him since.
We danced to "Little Darlin," and Sang to "Stagger Lee,"
And cried for Buddy Holly, in the Land That Made Me, Me.

Only girls wore earrings then and three

was one too many,
And only boys wore flat-top cuts, except
for Jean McKinney
And only in our wildest dreams did we
expect to see
A boy named George, with lipstick, in the
Land That Made Me, Me.

We fell for Frankie Avalon, Annette was
oh, so nice,
And when they made a movie, they
never made it twice.
We didn't have a Star Trek Five, or
Psycho Two and Three,
Or Rocky-Rambo Twenty, in the Land
That Made Me, Me.

Miss Kitty had a heart of gold, and
Chester had a limp,
And Reagan was a Democrat, whose co-
star was a chimp.
We had a Mr. Wizard, but not a Mr. T,
And Oprah couldn't talk yet, in the Land
That Made Me, Me.

We had our share of heroes, we never
thought they'd go
At least not Bobby Darin, or Marilyn
Monroe.
For youth was still eternal, and life was
yet to be,
And Elvis was forever, in the Land That
Made Me, Me.

We'd never seen the rock band that was
Grateful to be Dead,
And Airplanes weren't named Jefferson,
And Zeppelins weren't Led.
And Beatles lived in gardens then, and
Monkees in a tree,
Madonna was a virgin, in the Land That
Made Me, Me.

We'd never heard of microwaves, or
telephones in cars,
And babies might be bottle-fed, but they

weren't grown in jars.
And pumping iron got wrinkles out, and
"gay" meant fancy-free,
And dorms were never coed, in the Land
That Made Me, Me.

We hadn't seen enough of jets to talk
about the lag,
And microchips were what was left at the
bottom of the bag.
And Hardware was a box of nails, and
bytes came from a flea,
And rocket ships were fiction, in the Land
That Made Me, Me.

Buicks came with portholes, and a side
show came with freaks,
And bathing suits came big enough to
cover both of your cheeks.
And Coke came just in bottles, and skirts
came to the knee,
And Castro came to power, in the Land
That Made Me, Me.

We had no Crest with fluoride, we had no
Hill Street Blues,
We all wore superstructure bras designed
by Howard Hughes.
We had no patterned panty hose Or
Lipton herbal tea
Or prime-time ads for condoms, in the
Land That Made Me, Me.

There were no golden arches, no Perrier
to chill,
And fish were not called Wanda, and cats
were not called Bill.
And middle-aged was thirty-five, and old
was forty-three,
And ancient was our parents, in the Land
That Made Me, Me.

But all things have a season, or so we've
heard them say,
And now instead of Maybelline, we swear
by Retlin-A.

And they send us invitations to join
AARP,
We've come a long way, baby, from the
Land That Made Me, Me.

So now we face a brave new world, in
slightly larger jeans,
And wonder why they're using smaller
print in magazines.
And we tell our children's children of the
way it used to be,
Long ago, and far away, in the Land That
Made Me, Me.

A member of Parliament to Disraeli: "Sir,
you will either die on the gallows or of
some unspeakable disease." "That
depends, Sir," said Disraeli, "whether I
embrace your policies or your mistress."

See you next quarter!
Take care and be safe!
Happy New Year!