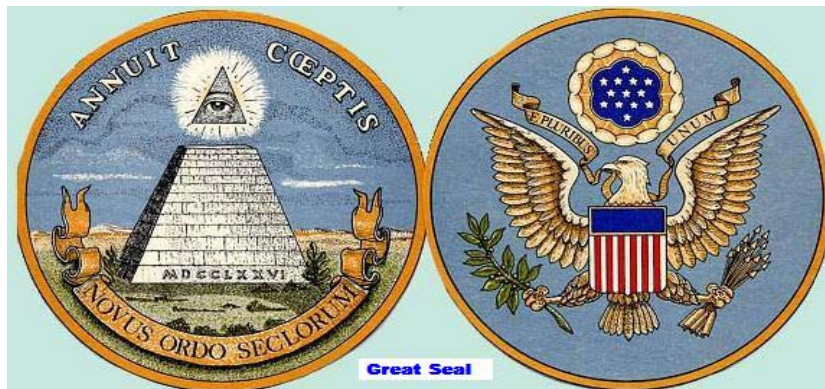


CANDOER News



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 **E**njoying **R**etirement). 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:

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Please, NO handwritten submissions.

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The **CANDOER** News will be available in three formats: the first format is as a web page; the second format is as a PDF file; the third format is as a Microsoft Word document.

The PDF file and Microsoft Word document will allow you to download and print the newsletter exactly as if I had

printed it and mailed it to you.

If you are unable to read the PDF formatted newsletter, you can go to www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html and download the FREE reader. When installed on your computer, it will allow the automatic opening of any PDF file.

Nothing sucks more than that moment during an argument when you realize you're wrong.

Cat's Corner

As a follow up to the previous issue on the closure of our training center at Warrenton, I am happy to inform you that we had an excellent turnout and that Don Clayton, and the rest of the training center staff, gave us an excellent tour of the facility, the new training needed for the New Professional IT personnel, and then topped it off with an outstanding picnic lunch.

A day well worth the time needed out of my busy schedule of bass fishing.

I had hoped to be able to publish several pictures of the event that were taken, but so far have not received any from the training staff.

They are in the process of the next couple weeks of moving personnel, supplies and equipment to the new training facility at the FSI Campus.

In case you were not aware, State's training program at Warrenton was no longer an IRM program. Several years ago the staff, building and duties were transferred to FSI.

The on-liners "random thoughts" were received from Paul Del Giudice.

Bob Burkhart made an excellent suggestion for **CANDOERS** to send in their experiences as to how they came about entering the Foreign Service.

Byron Hallman's and Jim Prosser's stories are part of this issue. You will find the Late Pete Gregorio's story in issue 51, Volume 5 - Number 4 and Dick Kalla's story in issues 77 & 78, Volume 8 - Number 3 & 4.

I disagree with Kay Jewelers. I would bet that on any given Friday or Saturday night, more kisses begin with Budweiser than Kay.

A new way of life

By Bryon Hallman (formerly Green)

I was 23 years old when I entered the Foreign Service. It was the 4th of July, 1964 and a few of my contractor friends and I were in a local fire house bar drinking Rolling Rock beer celebrating my forthcoming departure from the "valley."

I was to begin my FS career Monday, July 5. Well, that day and evening passed, and so did the Rolling Rock. I must have set my 1959 Coupe Deville on automatic pilot because the next thing I knew it was 4:00 a.m. and my dad was knocking on my car window, now in his driveway. He said, "Aren't you supposed to go to Washington today." Panic struck. I ran to my room, took a shower, grabbed my bags, and drove 175 miles to Washington by 9:00 a.m. My Cadillac was long, clean, and impressive, and I needed a place to park. I saw a vacant parking place at the 23rd Street entrance where other Cadillacs were parked. So I thought, "Hey that looks like a good place to park." How lucky I was to have found that spot so close to the entrance. I was young, new, and just as green as my Cadillac.

I knew how to find Elsie Crim. Now my head was clear from the beer drinking contest the day and night before. I looked presentable, but was

worried about how I would hide my hands as they were dry, cracked, and bandaged up to my forearm because of cement poison I had from my construction work. Ms. Crim was nice about it and after about 10 minutes directed me to an area where I would sign more papers, receive a briefing and a schedule of forthcoming classes to introduce me to life in the F. S.

I met two people who would become life long friends; Raymond Silva and Donald Ivanich. I had seen Ray the day of my initial interview several months before.

Ray, Don, and I decided to share an apartment. We were lucky. We rented an apartment in the Sherry Towers next to the Governor Shepard for \$185.00 per month.

That same day, I joined the SDFCU and took a loan of \$750.00, as many new employees did. Let's see, at about \$75.00 clear weekly, and considering my living expenses, I could safely make an allotment of \$50.00 monthly and repay the loan in 15 months. What discipline.

At the end of the work day we picked up my car from where it was parked, and I was told NEVER to park there again. Hey, it didn't look out of place to me. But from then on I'd park in the basement of the Sherry Towers or have the car washed at the corner and leave it there all day.

Don and Ray liked my car and would drive it some evenings while I would play the role in the back smoking a cigar.

July 27 was the first day of training in the Office of Communications. Ray and Don were in other classes a week or two behind. My class consisted of seven young women and two men; the famous Jacque Kincade and I, Nancy High, Mary Anne Nape, Mary Lou Alvear, and the

rest whose names escape me. We had a short briefing by Jack Coffey. That was the second, or was it the third, or was it the fourth highlight of my day since departing from home. Jack told us, with a smile, that there was \$95,000 in the budget to purchase and maintain communications equipment that fiscal year. Get that.

All newly hired had to be single at least for the first 90 days of employment; and that I was. I had no idea that in less than a year I would be married. I saw a pretty Latin looking girl walking past the classroom and I had to take another look. So to get her attention I asked if she was lost and could I help. Probably the only thing I knew that she didn't was that I was getting the better of the deal looking at her than she was looking at me. Mary Lou was wearing a white blouse, yellow dress, and had a purse thrown over her shoulder. She said she was looking for the OC training classroom. I immediately escorted her in and sat her down next to me on my right. Within the next week cupid had gone to work and we were using the same M-19 to type practice messages, she with her right hand, and me with my left. I guess that was the beginning of not only a career, but also a companion for life. From that time on when you saw only one of us, you would look for the other.

During that training period I would help several young ladies, (Mary Lou included) with communications procedures while Joe Hazewski did the same in his class one week ahead of me. The end of the training day meant it was time to go the Governor Shepard and cash in on the happy hour. Most of the ladies went home, but Glenn Turkelson, Jim Maron, Betty Coers, Barbara Anne Gregory, Joe Hazewski, Ray Silva,

Donald Ivanich, and I would have almost perfect attendance. Instructor George Hanna would join us at times and so would Lindy. Those poor waitresses would earn their money without a doubt.

At the apartment, I would always do the cooking and Don and Ray cleaned up. I liked that. It was a good trade.

At the end of training Mary Lou and I knew our destiny. She was scheduled to go to Bonn at the end of October and work for and with Lou Correrri, Fred Shalala, and Don Norton. I, on the other hand, had no co-workers to look forward to in Bukavu, which, by the way, is in Africa; not South America. What did I know?

My departure day had arrived. Mary Lou and I were at National Airport and I was checking in. There was a long line of passengers. My bags were overweight to the tune of about \$50.00. Hey, that was a lot of money. I opened my bag, while others watched me go to work taking out things I could carry. I was still overweight. Time was rapidly passing, and as I began opening my bags a second time I was told that it was okay to close them. A miracle had happened. All of a sudden my luggage wasn't overweight anymore and I was checked in. The passengers behind me suddenly were in a better frame of mind. I was green, but I saved fifty bucks.

Mary Lou and I were sitting saying our good-bye's and keeping an ear for the announcement of my departure. Too much time had passed so I went to the counter to inquire about my boarding time. I was told that all the passengers had already boarded and the plane was taxiing for departure. In desperation I ran down the ramp and out on the tarmac waving my arms and yelling that I had to get on that plane. Airport employees were motioning me back, and

people were looking out the terminal probably wondering who the jerk was on the tarmac. This was my first assignment and I had to get on that plane. Then the engines were turned off, and the stairs moved next to the plane. Minutes later I was in the air embarrassed, but nevertheless on the plane. This time I was a little red, but still green, and on my way to my first posting in Bukavu, Congo where I could put my CW skills to good use.

There is great need for a sarcasm font.

Foreign Service – Twenty-eight years and twenty-one years beyond

By Jim Steeves

A review of the Foreign Service staff corps is one that reminds me of the old Army's regard for its enlisted personnel: They are useful but are not to be invited to swanky events unless unavoidable. One didn't even need to speak in the company of the elite to be correctly identified as staff personnel – just holding a white wine glass by the bowl instead of the stem gave it away. Even today, when meeting a retired diplomat one can easily detect the superior attitude upon learning that I was but a mere administrative staffer. It is interesting to note that this disparagement does not exist with regard to both current and retired members "the other agency."

Back in the days of OC, essentially created by Jack Coffee out of the mess that preceded it, those of us who did the vital work of providing communications between our various missions and the rest of the world, had a home base of sorts. OCers were a special breed and felt that OC was as much of a "home" as was the Foreign Service – an

organization within an organization. Many of us went to work as we would have had we worked for the local milk company but some of us felt a certain pride in both organizations. It was prideful, for example, that OC developed the systems we used in coordination with NSA, SNL and others; that we all played the game using the same rules and, when we came into contact with military communicators on some exercise, our pride could be described as shameful.

Things began to change as the apple polishers rose in rank and, eventually, one even sold out the whole thing to Security. We had been, in effect, a highly successful organization and with our well deserved reputation became highly desirable as an acquisition by another, larger organization whose accomplishments could be written on the back of a postage stamp.

If anyone in OC was interested in providing training to us communicators in the field, it wasn't apparent but then we were but one, two or three people in most embassies or consulates. We had the use of local staff when it was necessary to communicate with host government officials and few of us had a strong interest in or aptitude for learning languages. Indeed, we communicators might be transferred from Korea to Brazil to Bangkok and then Poland. Had we been given language training, half our time in the F. S. would have been spent in language training. Indeed, I came into contact with some communicators who weren't all that proficient in English. I recall so well having my English grammar corrected by a friendly frauline. It is a tribute to some of us high school graduates that a few rose to high rank in the Foreign Service because they were good enough but some rose far above their level of competence thanks to their

facility in polishing apples with the result that the structure of the organization failed to weather the assault from without. I could provide names but what would be the point twenty years after my retirement? What is important to me now is that I worked with some very fine people in my 28 years and maintain communications with some of them.

I totally take back all those times I didn't want to nap when I was younger.

First post in the Foreign Service

By James F. Prosser

Perhaps the three most recurrent questions asked of me are, "Why did you join the Foreign Service?", "How do you get into it?", and the most frequent, "What was your favorite post?"

When I was in grade school in the 1930-40's, radio was becoming quite popular. While in the Boy Scouts, I was working for a merit badge by building a radio. My first one was a crystal radio. I had to install an antenna. I took a long piece of wire and tied one end to a block of wood. From my upstairs bedroom window, I threw it as far as possible into the upper branches of a tree. Then I climbed the tree, got the wood block and heaved it once more to the next tree. Now I had a long wire antenna of about 50 feet. Imagine my delight and surprise when I connected the antenna to the crystal set and that night heard station WLW in Cincinnati! From Green Bay, that was another world. Reception at night was always best. With my simple coil and tuner, I heard a lot of distant stations. I was forever hooked on electronics and foreign places.

My grandfather's bookcase was in my bedroom. For me it was a treasure

chest of really interesting books. The ones on railroads, history and geography of far away places were my favorites.

In my last year of high school, I joined the Wisconsin National Guard. I couldn't wait until I got my hands on those radios of the 127th Infantry which just returned from World War-II. When the Korean War started, I and several of my high school buddies immediately enlisted in the various military services. My choice was the US Air Force.

Basic training of six weeks was at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas. The installation was overrun with new recruits. Most had to stay in tents erected in the center of what used to be a glider field. With no water or electricity, these were truly field conditions. The nearest water and latrine was about 100 yards away. Conditions were miserable; hotter than Hades in the day, and rather cool at night.

Like many others, I was given an aptitude test. It was determined my specialty would be electronics and I was to be shipped out to Keesler AFB, Biloxi, Mississippi in a couple days. I was delighted! Basic training was finished in less than two weeks. I was homesick. Everything was brown and dirty. A troop train took us from San Antonio to Biloxi.

Arriving at Biloxi, everything was lush green. I thought I had died and gone to heaven! I could sleep in a building again. Classes were at night. The school was nine months duration of rigorous mathematics, electronics fundamentals, and airborne radar maintenance. It was hard, but I loved it. Upon graduation, I was really looking forward to an overseas assignment, for most airmen seemed to be getting them. Not me. They shipped me to the 403rd Troop Carrier Wing of the Oregon

Air National Guard at Portland International Airport, Oregon! Not even an Air Force Base! The 403rd had just recently been activated and was soon to be shipped to Japan to support United Nations Forces in Korea.

But not me! The commanding officer said the unit had too many airborne radar mechanics. I was directed to remain and report to the commanding officer of Base Communications for duty. Arriving there, the 1st Sergeant asked if I could type. "Yes", I said. "Good. Report to Sgt. Hemingway. He's going to make a cryptographer and cryptanalyst out of you!" I hadn't the foggiest idea of what he was talking about. I soon learned and loved it. But I still wanted to go overseas.

I applied regularly for overseas assignments, but the squadron CO told me in so many words, "Prosser, as long as I'm here, you are going to be here!" And so it was for over three years. When the CO was transferred, he even told his replacement "Don't approve any Prosser requests for overseas duty!"

At the end of my third year on the job, still not having had any formal cryptologic or cryptanalytic training, they sent me to school at Scott AFB, Illinois for three weeks. One of the instructors was Sgt. Larry Meyers. It was a most fortuitous meeting. We became friends.

One night after class (classes were at night) we stopped for some refreshments in a cafe. I expressed my disappointment at never getting an overseas assignment, now that my four year enlistment was drawing to a close. He said, "Why don't you join the Foreign Service? You can do basically the same work for them and it is all overseas."

I had no idea of what he was

talking about. He went on to explain about the Foreign Service. Not only that, but he had been in the Foreign Service before joining the Air Force! He was a diplomatic courier assigned to the European regional courier office then in Paris, France in the late 1940s. Amazingly after leaving the Air Force, Sgt. Meyers went into the Marist Fathers' seminary and subsequently was ordained a priest! How's that for a string of unusual career changes, diplomatic courier - teacher - priest?

Taking Sgt. Meyers' advice, I wrote the State Department, promptly received an offer of employment, passed the usual examinations, and seven months after my discharge from the US Air Force I was on my way to Washington.

Joining the Foreign Service certainly helped me realize my overseas ambition. After eight weeks of cryptographic training, Elsie Crim assigned me to Saigon of then French-Indo China. I was very pleased.

For making travel arrangements to post, I had to go through the Department's famous Mrs. Eleanor Sanford. I think she did not like dealing with Pan American World Airways. That day she was promoting Northwest Orient Airlines.

I must have come to her on a good day, for she gave me everything I wanted in routing, especially the stopovers en route. Perhaps it was because I wanted most of my flights on Northwest Orient Airlines. That way I could get, at no extra cost, a few days stopover at home in Green Bay, Wisconsin, but then had to fly on to Seattle, Anchorage, Tokyo, Hong Kong, and eventually Saigon.

Flying across the U.S. in DC-3 and DC-4 planes was a time-consuming adventure. In Seattle I changed to a

Lockheed Constellation which took me all the way to Tokyo. (But that's a separate story.)

It was my first time out of the country. We didn't have "jet-lag" then, for no one ever thought up a name for this disruption of a person's circadian rhythm. But nonetheless by the time I arrived at my stopover hotel in Tokyo I had a very bad case of whatever one wished to call it in 1954. I was so disoriented (in the orient) that I wasn't sure if I was more exhausted or hungry.

Mrs. Sanford's advice for the Tokyo stopover was really appreciated, for it let me get rested for the next segment of the journey, which was to Hong Kong. There I left Northwest Orient Airlines, stayed overnight to catch the next Air France flight to Saigon (also a Lockheed Constellation).

Now in those days, Saigon was in the news almost daily, and it wasn't good news, because the French Foreign Legion was getting beaten badly not only by the Viet Minh (predecessors of the Viet Cong), but also by a number of less well organized sects conducting guerilla warfare not only amongst themselves, but with the French too.

The flight left Hong Kong in the late afternoon, and by the time we were coming over Saigon it has been dark a couple hours. Looking down, I could see flashes of white light which obviously came from the mouths of howitzers or other artillery pieces.

Air France was not put off by what I thought to be a rather dangerous situation. We landed and as soon as the plane was on the runway, the tarmac lights were turned off.

In quick order, the plane pulled up in front of the airport terminal, left off about a dozen passengers and their luggage, closed the doors and taxied

away, never even stopping their engines! The plane took off with the white flashes visible in the distance and booms of shells exploding, falling quite far off their mark if they were intended for the airport.

The airport is total darkness. Everyone is disappearing. No one was there to meet me! I didn't speak French and all of a sudden I realize I am in what appears to be a zone of conflict.

No customs or other formalities. No airline personnel anywhere. All is darkness with exploding shells in the distance. And I'm alone. What am I doing here?

Finally, I found a Frenchman, who luckily spoke a little English. I explained my predicament and asked where I could get a taxi to the American Consulate General. He explained, "No taxi! Shooting! Bang, bang! Come, I take you!"

Then the Frenchman with a flashlight takes me into the airport bar (he must have been the bartender). He went behind the bar and grabbed a case of "33", the local beer. We then went over to his car parked around the corner from the terminal and started driving off towards downtown Saigon.

We are driving with no lights! At the airport perimeter our car is stopped by a French Foreign Legion machine gun post. The Frenchman throws the occupants about five bottles of "33" and off we go! The same procedure is repeated two more times on the road into Saigon, which turned out to be an otherwise uneventful journey.

Eventually, we found the Consulate General and he dropped me off. I thanked him profusely. Marine guards had just recently been assigned Saigon. The one on duty this Saturday night let me in the lobby, and called the duty

officer who happened to be in the building. The duty officer was stunned when I related my story. He said "The city is under complete curfew! Air France should never have landed, but with Air France, I'm not surprised! Control of the airport changes almost every night."

The duty officer then told me the Consulate General was not expecting anyone to arrive that day. He telephoned the Personnel Officer, who was even more flabbergasted because she was never advised I had even been assigned to Saigon!

My first night at my first Foreign Service post was spent sleeping in the lobby of the Consulate General.

The next morning, Eric Baxter, the code room supervisor came in to incredibly find a newly-arrived code clerk he never knew was coming!

My reception at the post was the talk of everyone for days. Apparently the Operations Memorandum notifying Saigon of my assignment was in a delayed or missing air pouch.

In those days, personnel assignments and movements were NEVER made telegraphically. And international telephone calls (if you could even get through) were strictly "life or death" matters.

Saigon was an incredible first post - exciting, dangerous, never a dull moment, but a wonderful experience.

If I had to do it over again, I would not change anything.

P.S. I am still in contact with the Marine Security Guard who befriended me that first night in Saigon. We'll meet again at the periodic Saigon reunion next April in Albany, Georgia.

See you next quarter!