

Bisonalities, Again



A quarterly Newsletter dedicated to the Alumni of Waterford & Fort LeBoeuf High Schools

July 2006

Summer Issue

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Welcome to the summer issue of the **Newsletter** dedicated to the alumni (students, teachers, and administrators) of Waterford and Fort LeBoeuf High Schools. This newsletter will be distributed quarterly. New issues will be posted for viewing on the Web on or about, January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1.

The Bisonalities, Again Web site may be viewed by going to the following URL: www.geocities.com/candoer1

The success of this newsletter depends on you. I need contributors. Do you have an interesting article, a nostalgia item, a real life story, or a picture you would like to share with others? Do you have a snail-mail or an e-mail address of one of your former classmates? If you do, send it to me at the following e-mail address:

catlinb.candoer@verizon.net

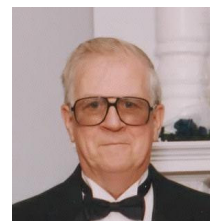
or to my snail-mail address:

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Please, **NO** handwritten submissions.

This newsletter is available free on the Web to any and all alumni, teachers, and administrators, past or present, of Waterford High School or FLBHS. If you know an alumnus, teacher, or administrator who would be interested, tell them about the Web site. None of the material in this newsletter has a copyright, unless otherwise noted. If you wish to print the newsletter and make copies to distribute to other alumni and/or friends, please feel free to do so.

Editor: Bob Catlin - Class of 1956



Cat's Corner

Well, here it is summer in Southern Maryland. We have had an unusually wet summer, so far. We normally average three days in June that get over

95 degrees. This year we have only had one 95 degree day. In addition, we are 3.4 inches above our normal yearly rainfall. During the last seven days of June, we received 14 inches of rain, nine in a 72 hour period. We are seeing days that get into the high 80s only to be followed by days in the low 70s. Once it reaches the 80s around here, it usually keeps going up into the 90s and 100s

Nancy has fully recovered from her two previous surgeries, one on her right Achilles tendon and one to reconstruct the joint of her right thumb where it attaches to the wrist.

In early May, Nancy and I made a trip to Erie to visit with friends and relatives. While there I met with the class of 1956 reunion committee to finalize plans for our 50th class reunion.

I still need stories. Please, set down and put your memories of your days at Waterford on paper and send them to me.

Thanks to Nancy Mustang, a friend of mine, for the Cartoon you will find on page 3.

Nancy and I will be in Waterford from the 17th through the 30th of July for the reunion of the Fort LeBoeuf High School class of 1956, Heritage Days, and to visit with friends and relatives. The FLBHS class of 1956 reunion is July 20 and Heritage days starts on July 21.

The "Pearls of Wisdom" you will find between stories were sent to me by a friend that I worked with for 35 years who now lives in Sydney, Australia.

Government's view of the economy could be summed up in a few short phrases: If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it. -- Ronald Reagan (1986)



Anchors Aweigh

By Joe Leech, Class of 1956

The time was 1955 and we were juniors. The draft and military laws required all able body males to register, and to do some combination of military service; eight years of reserve with some active, some inactive; two years active duty and six years inactive reserve; or some various combination. The exact rule eludes my memory, as is the case with many things from 1955. But what I recall is that among our classmates, a feeling of patriotism stirred and a group of us, probably four or five, trekked into Erie and joined (enlisted in) the Naval reserve.

I know why I did it and what my motivation was; not sure about the others. I do know very distinctly, 17 MAY 55 was my "pay date" and official enlistment date.

That summer, shortly after school was out, it was off to Bainbridge, MD for "boot camp." A photo still adorns our picture wall here at home . . . All dressed up in "blues" and at the time nice and thin. That always makes me wonder how back in high school I got dubbed with the nickname "Stoker Belly." Darn! I'd give anything to have THAT build (and weight) again.

Boot camp finished, the summer ended, and it was back to school, and also to "drill." The group of us made a weekly Monday night trek to the Navy

Reserve Training Center at 21st and State Streets. Drill was for four hours a session and we had to get 16 hours in in any given month. When we left for home, a common stop was Parenti's Pizza on upper Peach Street, and at that time, pizza was just taking hold as a favorite snack food. (Anyone think they remember the first restaurant pizza sold in Waterford? As I recall, it was at then June Seager's restaurant next door to "Herb and Helen's").

Reserves continued, and in the summer of '56 after graduating, our two week cruise was a cruise on a Destroyer Escort, DD579, the Whitehall, out of Philadelphia to Halifax, Nova Scotia.

I didn't know anything about Halifax and we didn't have a very good briefing. I thought it would be cold and damp and packed mainly winter clothing. We were told we would have three days shore leave when getting there and I wanted to make the most of it.

Some of the readers will recall I was a ham then . . . and I'm talking not about the actor, but the licensed radio amateur. I had gotten on the radio (from the "ham shack" in my closet in our apartment above the store) and set out a directional "CQ" to Halifax, and in the process hooked up with VE1FQ, Brit Fader. Brit was a couple years older than me, and we became friends. He agreed to pick me up at the dock when we pulled in, which he did, and he took me to his home to stay with him for those three days. He had a '54 Buick convertible, and took me sightseeing . . . and the weather was warm and full "summer." We also went down into the "conversion to tourist in progress" catacombs and went exploring. Great fun! Stayed in touch with Brit for several years via the radio, but then lost touch.

OK . . . here's the real memory

lapse part: Who were the other guys that enlisted together? I feel embarrassed for not remembering that because we spent so many Monday nights riding to meetings together. I think maybe Bill Marsh, Jim Myers ???

You other guys, drop "Cat" a line and identify yourselves, and share a memory or two of your Navy time. Did you stay in the reserves? Do a career?

As to me, most of you know the story. I went on to college down at Meadville, and it was impossible to drive to Erie each Monday for meetings. The Military was not all bad. Allegheny (college) had a USAF ROTC department, and to cut to the chase, things got worked out where the Navy Reserve would discharge me if I'd enlist in the AF Reserve, which I did. The AF Reserve would waive drill attendance in lieu of participation in ROTC. Of course I had to meet the attendance requirements, or they had the right to put me on active duty at the enlisted grade I held at the time . . . BUT . . . on the other hand if I completed the four year program, the USAF would credit me for longevity pay for all the reserve years. Heck of a deal! Upon graduating and getting commissioned four years later . . . I was a brand new 2nd Lt. with nearly six years for pay, all because of joining the Navy Reserve.

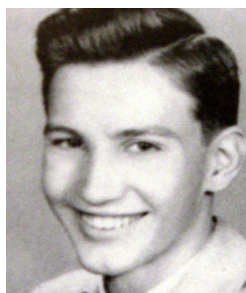
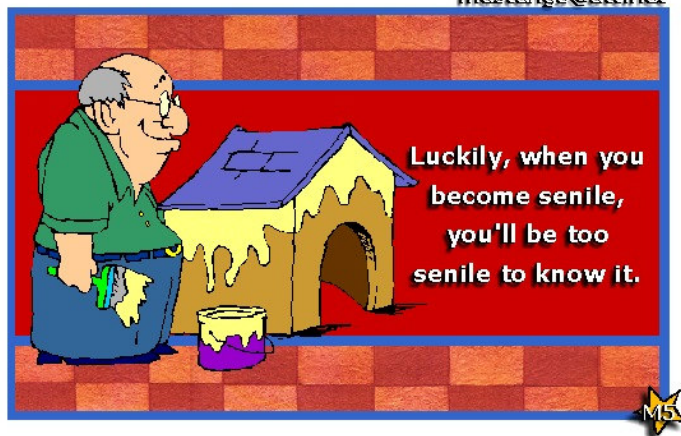
OK you guys . . . if there's a million stories in the big city, there has to be at least one or two more about YOUR Navy time.

Let's hear from you swabbies!

Just because you do not take an interest in politics does not mean that politics won't take an interest in you. – Pericles (430 B.C.)

Humor

mustang5@att.net



Charles Atlas and Me

By Herb Walden (Class of 1956)

Chances are I'll never be built like Charles Atlas. Having passed my 60th birthday some years ago leads me to this conclusion. That and I just took a look in the mirror.

It's too bad too, because I planned on it as a kid. It was all due to those comic book ads. Remember the skinny little guy at the beach getting sand kicked in his face by a big bully? Then along comes Charles Atlas and his "Dynamic Tension," and the 98-pound weakling bulks up and beats the living daylights out of the bully!

Unfortunately, I never had enough money to send for the Dynamic Tension stuff, whatever it was. I'd start to save up, and then a Popsicle or candy bar would come along and, well, it was just one thing after another.

As a teenager, I still had bulging muscles in mind. (And in mind only, I

might add). So I bought a pair of grip exercisers. You know - - - those things you squeeze that look like nutcrackers. One would have been enough. I could have switched hands from time to time, but the catalog only sold them in pairs.

I used those things for a couple of days and couldn't see any difference, except that I got blisters in the palms of my hands, and my arm muscles got so tired I could hardly hold a bottle of pop.

By the time I reached my early twenties, I was still committed to having a body like Charles Atlas. (Isn't it a happy coincidence that his name just happened to be "Atlas?" I wonder if there was a Mrs. Atlas).

I sent away for a bodybuilding program that involved no equipment. Just exercise. I was faithful to the program, too. I kept at it for three, maybe four days. Not consecutive, of course, but spread out over a two-week period.

Well, I just couldn't see that it was doing any good. All that was happening was that it was making me tired, and since I was born tired, I didn't need that!

Many years have passed since those body building days. I had sort of forgotten about it until, as I mentioned, I glanced in the full-length mirror, (Something I generally avoid if at all possible). I'm afraid it's too late for Charles Atlas to do anything for me. I just have to accept the fact that I am not going to beat up that beach bully with the sand and all.

But over the years, I developed a much simpler solution to the problem.

I quit going to the beach!

A government big enough to give you everything you want, is strong enough to take everything you have. – Thomas Jefferson
