

VINSON HALL RETIREMENT COMMUNITY CAMPUS NEWS & VIEWS



Summer 2022

CEO Corner

Embracing Change

As I reflect on my time at Vinson Hall Retirement Community, I think back to what attracted me to this community. I marvel at VHRC's legacy as a place of security and dignity for those who loved and lost military officers. Individuals who served and those who supported their successes. Since those early days, as I learned and as I'm sure you know, VHRC adapted to meet the needs of the community it serves and of the older adults who call VHRC home.

I know that VHRC will continue to grow and expand, meeting the needs of older adults over the years and decades to come. This campus is full of extraordinary individuals who have led extraordinary lives: residents, board members, and staff. These individuals will ensure that VHRC continues to be the vibrant community it is and make it an even better place to live and work. I will keep an eye out for this news, as VHRC – its residents and staff – will always hold a very special place in my heart.



As I continue to reflect, I am very proud of what we have accomplished, including:

- VHRC continues to be a highly desirable place for seniors to live. We have maintained high occupancy in our independent living, assisted living, healthcare and memory care neighborhoods, and we have a robust waiting list;
- VHRC was named the best senior living community by Arlington Magazine in 2021;
- Arleigh Burke Pavilion is five star rated, the top rating awarded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid;
- VHRC refinanced nearly \$70 million in debt with an anticipated savings of \$10 to \$12 million over the next 12 years; and,
- Vinson Hall at Home launched expanding resident care associate services and programs for our residents.

Our community also grappled with COVID-19, which caused a great deal of heartache and stress. I am so proud of my team and their person-centric approach to this crisis. I know that as VHRC moves forward, this approach will remain in place, because of the strong commitment of putting people first.

These successes and VHRC's ability to overcome challenges will help pave the way for the future, which I know will be bright, full of innovation, and occasions of joy and connection between residents, staff and community members.

— Libby Bush

Navy Marine Coast Guard Residence Foundation News **Still Standing Strong, Grateful after Pandemic**

By Michelle Crone, Senior Director of Philanthropy & Engagement

Spring is always a joyful time of year, but I've been feeling a special sense of elation these days. After two difficult years of the pandemic, it feels especially good to see COVID in the rearview mirror and look ahead to happy times again. At the Foundation, we are grateful that all of us – the residents and staff of Vinson Hall Retirement Community – are still standing strong.

Our strength as a community to weather the worst in recent years is directly due to your support.

So as 2022 got underway, we took time to express our gratitude to all our donors – more than 250 last year – by calling to thank everyone during our fourth annual Thank-a-thon in January. Then in February, we hosted a Thank You Happy Hour for our 4- and 5-star donors, whose combined contributions amounted to more than \$200,000 last year. To say we are grateful to all our supporters is an understatement!

Now we are full swing into events and plans for the year! We kicked off our Annual Membership campaign for 2022 at the end of April by introducing a new series of stories, "The Difference You Make." These stories highlight a few of your fellow residents and devoted staff whose lives you've touched by donating to one of the Foundation's four funds: Resident Assistance, Employee Caring, Innovation & Enhancement, and Wounded Warrior Transitional Housing. It truly is the difference you make in our community that makes VHRC the special place that it is.

Meanwhile, we are excited to announce that



Senior Director of Philanthropy Michelle Crone and CEO Libby Bush share a smile with Foundation donors CAPT Jay Arnold, USN (Ret) and Mrs. Carol Saunders at the 4- and 5-Star Happy Hour.

we are re-launching our Wounded Warrior Transitional Housing program, which has been on hiatus during COVID. For the past six months, we have formed a new partnership with Navy Wounded Warrior at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. This group is the Navy's sole entity that coordinates the non-medical care of wounded soldiers and transitions them through recovery. Preparations are nearly complete, and we hope to welcome our first warriors to campus – into one of the two apartments set aside for them through this Fund – in the next few months.

And yes, the Gala is back! After a three year pause, we are delighted to announce that the Gala, the Foundation's major annual fundraiser, will be held on Saturday, Sept. 24! The theme this year is "A Night in the Caribbean" – think Caribbean cruise, at the Captain's table – and we hope you can join us for a great evening of food, fun and fellowship. Stay tuned for more updates, as we at the Foundation continue to find ways to celebrate you and this very special community we are privileged to support! ❖

Technology Assists Healthcare Team

In healthcare, identifying patterns is one of the keys to successful patient care. However, patterns in the form of blood pressure readings, weight and temperature measurements, and other statistics and observations can become a blur of numbers and data that require significant time to analyze. Thanks to the purchase of new technology, made possible through funding from the Navy Marine Coast Guard Residence Foundation's Innovation and Enhancement Fund, Arleigh Burke Pavilion's healthcare administrative team is now able to identify and respond to these patterns more quickly.



Theresa Morgan, Director of Nursing, shares how RealTime helps Arleigh Burke Pavilion better care for its healthcare residents.

The technology, called RealTime, is a software application that pulls information from resident care reports generated and filed by ABP's nurses. The software filters the information on a daily basis into easy-to-access and easy-to-read charts and graphs. With RealTime, medical information that previously required significant time to gather and analyze can now be understood quickly and easily.

"With RealTime, we can look at patterns and put the right interventions in place," said Director of Nursing Theresa Morgan. "Without having to click on each resident's chart and reading all the shift reports, the information is right here in a snapshot. With RealTime, we can identify patterns quickly. By being able to identify the patterns quickly, we can provide better care for our residents."

Theresa, along with Lisa Desmond, VHRC's Director of Clinical Operations, first began looking into RealTime for infection control. Specifically, VHRC's clinical team wanted to ensure that they were being good stewards of antibiotic treatments. Theresa explained that quite often in healthcare, antibiotics are prescribed for conditions that are not infections. RealTime monitors antibiotic prescriptions and

makes them easier to track.

"RealTime provides great antibiotic surveillance. It helps track what types of infections our residents have and tracks antibiotics prescribed. We try to decrease the number of antibiotics used to be good stewards of antibiotics, and RealTime helps us do that," said Theresa.

To fully explain how RealTime works, Theresa provided a hypothetical example. By clicking on a resident's name, she can easily see everything the nurses have reported about the resident in the past seven days. Abnormal lab reports and major alerts, such as wound care or significant weight loss, are quickly and easily visible. This is information that can be shared with the resident's doctor as well, which is especially helpful when any significant variations in the resident's vital signs such as blood pressure or temperature are identified. These quick views replace the more cumbersome process of combing through the resident's charts or numerous nurses' reports.

"If I were to go to this resident's charts in Matrixcare [the database used by ABP's nursing team], I would have to open each nurse's note, read it, and manually pull out the information
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Generous Anonymous Gift Keeps Giving

Last summer, a Sylvestery family member, who wishes to remain anonymous, donated \$50,000 to The Sylvestery in gratitude for the care and compassion that our memory care community shows its residents. These funds continue to be put to good use in The Sylvestery.

Most recently, and per the donor's request, items were purchased to spruce up The Sylvestery's courtyards. As all those who have visited The Sylvestery know, the courtyards are at the heart of the community, which is designed like a figure eight encircling its courtyards, so they are visible as you walk through the hallways. Activities staff frequently hold events in the courtyards, which offer a secure outdoor space for residents to gather.

The funds could not have come at a better time, since a maintenance project to repair the community's foundation, which affected the courtyards, wrapped up in early May. With the digging and repair work completed, the donated funds helped provide colorful flowering plants for the courtyards as well as a patio set. These plants and flowers can be enjoyed by all, whether they are looking out at the gardens or spending a sunny afternoon in the courtyard.

The Sylvestery also used some of the funds to purchase virtual reality goggles. These goggles allow residents to experience vivid 360-degree scenic views of nature or other places or events. Thanks to this technology, TS residents are able to visit and explore from the safety of their home.



A Sylvestery resident, wearing virtual reality goggles, watches a video while activity coordinator Carlos Leiva provides assistance.

With the goggles on the resident, an activities coordinator plays a video on his or her smart phone or iPad that is linked to the goggles. This allows the resident to access memories or emotions in response to the video. Residents can virtually visit gardens, parks or even ride roller coasters, all the while seated next to a coordinator, who can step in to adjust the goggles or pause the video. Some residents were even able to virtually attend a wedding when a TS family member provided a 360-degree video of the event.

"Although most of our residents did not grow up with this technology, they are proving their adaptability and embracing it," said Analisse Vasquez Soto, Assistant Administrator of The Sylvestery. "Our hope is that with this technology and with the care of our staff they will be able to live life without limits." ❖

Software Provides Current Health Snapshot

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I need," Theresa explained. "Whereas RealTime looks at all of that for us and pulls it all into one snapshot."

Theresa has hopes that RealTime can be fine-tuned to better support ABP's administrative

team. Once the pilot project ends, she plans to incorporate RealTime into her care management program for the coming year. "RealTime, through its presentation of data, helps show us what is happening now – and helps us better care for our residents," said Theresa. ❖

The Private and The Colonel

By Jerry Norris

In May 1953, I requested our Local Draft Board to advance my number and issue an immediate notice to appear. After Basic Training, I again volunteered for duty in Korea and was on home leave for 10 days during the Christmas Season before deployment. My older brother, Tom, had just returned after spending 10 months as a Combat Medic on Korea's Heartbreak Ridge. Before leaving, he advised me to have a good time at the Army's expense while I was being processed at Ft. Ord, California. He said to me: "Look, they got you, so don't bother reporting for any immunizations, orientation sessions on what to do if captured, etc. Instead, take advantage of the free movies, bowling, ping pong games, and PX privileges – and just have a grand time before you get on that barf bucket of a troop ship to Korea."

I followed his advice to the letter. Then, early one morning, at about 2 a.m., I was roughly pulled off my top bunk by an MP (military police) who had a flash light taped under his chin, which in an otherwise darkened barracks, gave his presence a most menacing demeanor. As he pulled me up eyeball to eyeball, he said for all in the barracks to hear: "A slacker, eh? I finally got you!"

The MP had me stuff my duffle bag in a rush, then he quick-marched me to a nearby barracks, which had other MPs posted at the door. It would soon become apparent that it was a disciplinary barracks. I had no chance or opportunity to inform him that I had actually volunteered for Korea and was thus not trying to avoid duty. Every time I tried to explain, he simply used a lot of language that he sure didn't learn in Sunday school to pipe me down. Once in the barracks, I was sent through a gauntlet of medics who injected me with every vaccine in the books. Then, along with three other enlisted personnel, who seemed to be in the same situation as myself, I was sent to a nearby air base and ushered aboard a waiting MATS (Military Air Transport Service) bound for Tokyo.

All of the other personnel aboard were officers.

The penalty for attempting to avoid duty in Korea was that instead of being shipped over on a 17-day barf bucket,

we were to be flown there in only 3 days and thus thrust early into whatever it was that we had tried to avoid. Our first refueling stop was Hickam Air Base in Hawaii. The plane commander was a full-bird colonel. He said to us: "This is a four-hour fuel stop. Don't leave the base."

I noticed a big black caddy, a limo, off to one side of the main building. I went over and asked the driver if he was available. When he nodded in agreement, all four of us enlisted personnel piled in and left the base. The driver was very talkative. He explained why he was taking us to a certain night club and why it was better than the one we just left. We visited about eight or nine different clubs around Oahu. Everybody in them was having a good time and they were friendly to us Army-types, so we were able to cage a few free drinks here and there.

Finally, our driver suggested that we get back to Hickam or we would miss our flight. On the way there, we passed a beautiful, empty beach, moon dappled and inviting. We asked the driver the name of the beach. When he responded that it was Waikiki, we collectively exclaimed, "Wow, no kidding." I suggested to the others that we stop, get out, and at least get our feet wet on this most famous beach. They readily agreed in the full belief that this would give us something special to talk about when we got to the cold

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Jerry Norris with tank crewmate in North Korea.

The Private and The Colonel

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mountains of North Korea.

The water was tepid, with still some lingering warmth in the sand from the day's sun. Finally, after frolicking around, we got back into the limo, dressed hurriedly as we sped along. When we got to Hickam, the driver noticed that the plane was about to pull up its staircase and drove directly to it. The colonel came down the stairs – he had been about to depart without us. He was rather upset and called us to attention in a stern voice. We snapped to as best we could, while still trying to lace up our wet boots and stand up as straight as our visits to multiple night clubs would permit. He looked wistfully at the big black caddy. Its driver looked back in a totally indifferent manner. (Great to be a civilian, eh?)

The colonel bellowed out: "Who is in charge here?" To my surprise, the other three pointed their fingers at me, saying: "He is, sir." The colonel came over to me and asked: "Well, what do you have to say for yourself ... Private?" He snapped out my lowly military rank with undue emphasis. The night air was soft, with a gentle breeze. As it was nearly the New Year and I felt quite happy with the night's brief interlude, I responded, quite unexpectedly – and to my own great surprise: "Happy New Year, Colonel, and may we all be able to say it again next year at this time."

His whole demeanor softened almost immediately. His stance went slack. He hesitated for a moment, then said in a solicitous voice: "And the same to you, son. Now, get on this plane."

We refueled on Wake Island, then proceeded onward to Tokyo. As we started to de-plane, the colonel made his way to the back where I was seated with the three other enlisted men. He handed me a parcel, saying, "Keep this as a memento of your flight here." Later, when I got to our barracks at Camp Drake just outside of

Ode to a Scone

By Margaret Dean

Were I a scone and fat like you
I'd butter me up--through and through.
Crumbles would lie beneath my napkin
Stained with berry, rasp or raisin,
The marmalade might give me pause.
Just time enough to lick my paws.

A Second Ode to a Scone

The humble scone
Looks like a mouse
As he doth roam
Toward hungry mouth.

Don't tell anyone what you've seen
'Cause dancing scones are in between
Disneyland and Peter Pan
With seconds at the donut stand.

The Last Ode to a Scone

This is it. This fare thee well.
You tasty scone you were truly swell.

Tokyo for onward processing to Korea, I opened the parcel. It was the Navigator's Flight Chart for our entire flight across the Pacific Ocean from Hawaii. The navigator had given it to the colonel who then passed it on to me. The message from the previous incident at Hickam, when the plane he was in charge of almost left without me was: No foul, no harm.

Given the time, it is probable that this colonel was a reservist, someone who had done his bit in WWII, a family man, called back to serve once again, leaving kids our age behind. Now, he was off again into the unknown. More than us, though, he knew what fear was; he knew what we didn't know. It was only when I became a family man myself that I could fully appreciate this moment at plane-side at Hickam Air Base, New Year's Day, 1954. I must have reminded the colonel of something. Maybe his own son, putting a dent in the family car after his first prom. But he owns up to it. Good kid, bad timing. Something like that. ❖

Traveling First Class

By Peter Linn

My dad served as an infantry officer in the U.S. Army from 1941 to 1971, covering three wars. During WWII, since he proved to be exceptionally good at training soldiers, he was never sent overseas to fight. My mom and her two young boys (Peter born in 1943 and Michael born in 1945) were happy about this. For Dad's successive assignments as a training officer, our family moved from one state-side post to another. Despite having received rapid promotions, Dad was concerned that a lack of combat experience would be an impediment to his career. To compensate, at the ripe old age of 33 and as a major assigned to Fort Benning, he completed training and became Airborne qualified.

With Dad's assignment to the Occupation Forces in Japan directed by General MacArthur in 1947, our family traveled to Japan too. During that period, family travel was a little different than today and so were pay scales. Dad traveled to Japan. I'm not completely sure how he traveled, but I know that Mrs. Linn and the boys, traveled by car to Seattle and thence by ship to Japan.

It was a many day journey, and for Mom many, many seasick days. During the journey, a WAC (women's auxiliary corps) major helped out and became a lifelong friend. When we returned in 1949, it was in a very unglamorous airplane, and then from Seattle to Fort Riley, KS by family car. Subsequent moves around the country were all by family car: 1952 to 1954 we went back to Fort Benning and 1954 to 1958 to Houston. During this time our family expanded to include another boy, so three in total, and a cocker spaniel.

In the summer of 1958, LTC Linn was assigned to join the military assistance staff in Athens. At the time, there was the understanding that for overseas tours, a family traveled to the destination low class and then returned first class. Our experience certainly lived up to that understanding.

To prepare to travel to Greece, we drove from Houston to Colorado Springs, through Dad's hometown in Kansas, and on to Washington, D.C. From Washington, D.C., we flew in a
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Art Show Featured Record Number of Artists



The Spring Art Show, held May 14 and 15, featured 36 Vinson Hall Retirement Community artists. The number of artists presenting at this year's annual event increased by 11 from last year. Artwork was produced in a variety of medias including painting, drawing, photography and photo restoration. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, last year's art show was not as festive. Art instructor Mel Mobley was very excited to have a more "normal exhibit with refreshments and the ability to invite guests to really celebrate our artists."

My 29th Home

By Elizabeth Batcheller

My husband and I met as teenagers at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine. Both of our fathers were Naval officers. We fell in love and were together as much as possible. Luckily for us, both of our fathers were sent to the same locations and we could continue seeing each other through high school and college. It was wonderful that we could be able to love and see each other.

My husband went to Princeton and I went to Marymount here in Virginia, just up the street from Vinson Hall. My husband completed Princeton and went into the Marine Corps to serve his country and I was a stewardess and an assistant buyer at Woodward and Lothrop.

Time moved along. And as my husband was a USMC officer, he was sent to Vietnam. While

serving there, he was shot and was hospitalized for a full year at the Bethesda Naval Hospital. He spent another two years getting back to a new normal. He received a Navy Cross for courage and good judgement.

We were married before he was sent to Vietnam at the Navy Chapel in Washington, D.C. We had two youngsters before this happened. We were a happy family. Trauma is felt by us all and isn't easy. It affects all of the family and can alter you personally. It was painful for us all.

Between being a Navy Junior and a USMC wife, I am now living in my 29th location. It is amazing that I am a stable, reasonable woman. You adjust and learn as you go and enjoy your life as well. Amen!!! ❖

Traveling First Class

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propeller-driven, windowless airplane to Gander, Newfoundland and then on to Shannon, Ireland. At that airport, we deplaned and my dad had two (or three?) Irish coffees; it was the first time I had seen him a little tipsy. Next, we flew to Frankfurt. We didn't know what time it was, but we all went to bed in the hotel and slept for about 15 hours. After a good meal, we embarked on the last flight, over the Alps and down to Greece. This trip had qualified as only about third-class.

We enjoyed the next two months, living in a hotel and swimming at the American Club while our parents found a house – which was very spacious, with a big yard, four bedrooms, porches, and a live-in maid. We flourished in a European-style, independent school system, with unusual teachers and an old run down mansion for a building and a gravel lot for playing fields. Our transportation to and from school and on school trips around Greece was in Mercedes tour buses. Americans were rich by the standards of

post-WWII and Communist civil war Greece.

About six months before our return, Grandmother Linn made her only trip out of the U.S. to accompany us on the grand tour home. It was summer 1960. We flew by jet from Athens to Rome, where we saw the sights for three days. From there we jetted on to Paris and enjoyed the restaurants and all the usual sights (Versailles, the Eiffel Tower). At my mother's instigation, the family, with three boys aged 17, 15, and 10 took in a show at the Folies Bergère. *Quelle excitation!* Next, to London, for Buckingham Palace, changing of the guard, and Harrod's department store. And then, we boarded the USS United States for a five-day voyage across the Atlantic to New York City. We experienced sliding back and forth on our chairs in the movie theater, promenading around the deck, having the Captain join our table, discovering ox-tail soup, and going to the restaurant at any time of day or night. For the first time, three boys could not finish all the food provided at the meals. Yes, we traveled first class! ❖

Follow Your Medications' Instructions or Else!

By Lorna Lagarde

When I was the Chief of Pharmacy at the Pentagon, I was informed that the Pentagon's CAPSTONE Fellows were traveling abroad to attend a conference. One of the fellows, a general, was giving the keynote address at the conference. (And for those who are not familiar with it, the CAPSTONE program is a series of courses, conducted by the National Defense University at Fort McNair, for newly promoted brigadier generals and rear admirals to ensure they understand how military forces are integrated.)

Whenever soldiers or officers travel abroad, it was my and my staff's obligation to prepare travels kits, which included any necessary medicines to treat local diseases. As the individuals traveling with this particular group were so senior, the responsibility fell to me to prepare their travel kits. I learned how many were traveling in the party and clarified which controlled substances were being transported. I also labeled each medication with the patient's name and the name of the drug with specific use directions.



Included in the travel kit were four sedative tablets for each member of the party. They were to take two of these tablets during the flight to the destination and two more on the flight home. As the flight prepared for departure, the physician traveling with the group distributed all four tablets to each member of the party with the proper instructions. During the flight, after having taken two of the tablets, the general who was to be the keynote speaker, woke up. I guess he was feeling anxious, so he decided to take the other two tablets.

When the plane landed, the general was still asleep. His companions could not wake him

up, making them very anxious themselves. Realizing that he had taken all four sedatives instead of the two prescribed, the physician in charge of the group decided to take the general to the hospital to get his stomach pumped, which is a very uncomfortable procedure. Afterward, the general was taken to his hotel to rest. The next day he gave his speech without giving any indication of the previous day's drama. I heard later that his speech was very well received.

The moral of the story: Always follow the instructions on your medication! ❖

Speculation on the Future

By Elisabeth Wilton

I understand why lots of folks believe in gods of wrath.
When many ills besiege the Earth it seems a likely path
For minds in search of answers to their existential fears.
The Apocalyptic Four still ride across the Vale of Tears.
The current Pestilence drags on and now the War begins.
Famine and Death are close behind – a game no one wins
Perhaps if humans self-destruct but Earth continues on
Some other species will emerge to pick up the baton.

Written March 2022

My Pony

By John Gardenier

Asked as an only child whether I would like a little brother to play with, I consistently replied, "No, I want a pony." That was my impossible dream.

As an adult, I noted that people tend to solve problems by jumping at an apparent solution. That risks insufficient insight into the full scope of the issues. A better way is to start from the simplest, most certain known fact and follow the logic. Each successive step must itself be certain and rigorous, thus needing experts, equipment, funding, and time. If feasible.

My new "impossible dream" was that somebody would hand me a big complicated, maybe even global problem where many experts had failed. I would solve it as above. That was so preposterous that I mentally equated it to my wanting a pony.

Early in my post-Navy career, I was an operations research analyst in the U.S. Coast Guard HQ Office of Research and Development. Congress directed the service to figure out how to reduce or eliminate the problem of massive oil spills from supertanker collisions like the 1969 Santa Barbara disaster. The rest of the Maritime Technology staff were experts in all the relevant forms of engineering, but this was an operations problem. I was the only "operations guy" so the boss said, "John, you handle it." After a thorough review of all prior research and investigations showed no clear path forward, I gleefully realized that I finally had "my pony."

My trivially simple starting point was that two huge chunks of metal had crashed together, opening the tanker hull and letting the oil out. Duh! A few accident investigations had indicated another vessel turned in front of the tanker's path. That almost never happens – mainly because everyone at sea knows that a loaded supertanker cannot readily change course so other ships stay well clear of it.

Being trained in computers, including simulation technology, I set out to determine conclusively the time and distance parameters that would define any possible path to such a collision. I set up the general scenario. My naval engineering colleagues programmed in the proper hydrodynamic equations and ship coefficients needed. Running the simulation hundreds of times allowed me to put firm bounds on the relevant dynamic factors.

For experiments, I had access to a huge and complex Maritime Administration merchant ship simulator with all the varied high-tech expertise to operate it – at an affordable price. But how could I get top-notch supertanker captains onto the simulator to try to resolve the horrific scenario I intended to put them in? "No problem," my Coast Guard bosses said. All the big companies had billions of dollars at stake and really needed some solutions. Plus, they trusted the Coast Guard to make a strong research effort. Everyone really wanted to help, so I really did get active mid-career supertanker captains into my project.

The next problem was that I had no training in the psychology of supertanker "watchstanding" or of how to induce realistic "at sea" behavior on a simulator. Enter a contractor to the simulator staff who was a Ph.D. cognitive psychologist with a career in Navy and maritime seafarer training systems, including experience with senior officers on ship simulators!

So, what happened? It all worked beautifully thanks to dedicated expert efforts by over a dozen people with a wide range of skills. That project was very helpful to several years of follow-on efforts, in the U.S. and internationally, that have reduced the danger markedly. Meanwhile, I published my successive research results and interacted collegially at numerous conferences regarding maritime safety. I gloried in the many resulting personal associations and travels, including to England, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Japan, Saudi Arabia and elsewhere. I really enjoyed "riding my pony!" ♦

Letter from Prague

By Sally Russell

Sally and Ted Russell and their two children, four-year-old Douglas and two-year-old Dickie, moved to Prague in June 1968 with Ted's position in the Foreign Service. Their arrival was just two months prior to the invasion of that country by the Soviet Union in an effort to suppress the reforms begun during the Prague Spring (January to August 1968). Sally noted that the current crisis in Ukraine mirrors the events that occurred in 1968 and shares this memory from that time in Prague.

Prague, Czechoslovakia – All last winter while I was a docent at the National Gallery and my husband was studying Czech at the Foreign Service Institute, we dreamed of Prague, and suddenly in June we were here with our two children – Douglas aged four and Dickie aged two and a half – to start a two-year tour at the American Embassy.

It was a marvelous summer – the warm weather and generally sunny skies matched the heady mood in Czechoslovakia where the liberalization program of Alexander Dubcek was underway. Tourists flocked to visit this beautiful city of Romanesque buildings, Gothic spires and Renaissance and Baroque palaces.

We ourselves were living in a part of the city, the Mala Strana, that is in itself a national monument, and in the Embassy building that is a palace started in 1650 and finished in the early eighteenth century in the Baroque style. The palace houses the Embassy offices, the International School of Prague that runs through the eighth grade, and fourteen apartments for Embassy personnel. The children romped in the seven acres of terraced gardens that stretch up the hill behind the Embassy, and from the top of the hill we enjoyed one of the most spectacular views of Prague. Crossing the Vltava River on the Charles Bridge, one would hear as much German, French, Italian and English as Czech. The young girls sported mini-skirts and the young men long hair and beards. The Czechs were enjoying the glorious weather, such a contrast

to the long sunless winters here, to canoe, swim, drive their amazing assortment of rehabilitated, ancient Tatra and Skoda automobiles out into the countryside, and even to play softball – a sport the Embassy introduced here several years ago and to which the Czechs took avidly.

A high point of the summer for us was the Fourth of July reception given by the Ambassador to which hundreds of Czechs came, many more than in previous years. We settled down and started taking trips to nearby Bohemian castles with the children on weekends, and the children and I were beginning to learn a little Czech.

Then suddenly, our seemingly normal life changed. On the morning of August 20 Douglas was taken ill and the doctors at the Children's Clinic said they would have to operate for appendicitis. We decided to go instead to the U.S. Army Hospital in Nuremberg and arrangements were made for a helicopter to meet us at the German border. We left Dickie behind with friends at the Embassy.

All seemed normal as we traveled through the Czech countryside and crossed the border. We telephoned back to the Embassy that evening to check on Dickie; all was quiet. The next morning we awoke to the startling news on the radio of the invasion. Ted immediately started making plans to return to assist with the evacuation of the several thousand American tourists in Czechoslovakia. The doctors gave us the good news that Douglas did not need an operation and Ted left for Prague the day after the invasion and returned in time for the fire in the Embassy and for the much publicized incident in which two Russian soldiers stationed themselves in the Embassy garden and started picking American apples. When Dickie was brought out to me in Germany a week later, he was full of tales of guns going boom-boom and of the tanks and Russian soldiers that he had seen on the drive to the border. Until he joined me in Germany, I was probably one of the few people in the area trying to get back to Prague. However, it was decided that it would be better for me to sit things out in Germany while Douglas recuperated

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Lesson Learned

By Eleanor Barron

As my friends at Vinson Hall know, I was born and raised in Manhattan. Among the many wonders of New York City are the many businesses there. These businesses provided part-time work over summer vacation to many students.

I was too young for a work permit, so I lied and got a job as a clerk in a distributing firm across the street from Bryant Park, right in the heart of the city. I earned \$16 a week. As I had few expenses, this income was used for lunch money and subway fare, with the remainder put into savings.

At work, I was intrigued by my fellow clerks. They were so different from my friends and classmates. I befriended them all. One day a fellow clerk told me a sad story. She then asked to borrow \$10 until payday. I gave her the money until Friday. Well, two Fridays came and went and no repayment. I finally told my older sister, who was also working part-time at Lord and Taylor. She said she would come over on payday and see the culprit.

She did come and spoke to my fellow worker. She told her to pay her sister or she would speak to the manager. I got my \$10 and learned one of many lessons, to quote Shakespeare: neither a borrower nor a lender be. ❖

Letter from Prague

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from his illness.

Exactly one month after the invasion I returned home to the Embassy uncertain of what I would find. On our trip in from Germany I saw nothing except one armored vehicle and a few patrols, although heavy track marks in the mud pointed to areas where Russian troops were camping. Many of the walls of Pilsen, the city famous for its beer, had recently been whitewashed to blot out the anti-Soviet graffiti put up during the Arst dramatic days following the invasion. The road signs were still crossed out in many places; right after the start of the invasion the Czechs had destroyed or altered most road and street signs. There is the tale of the column of Russian tanks that circled one Czech city for three hours unable to decide which way to get into the center. A few new signs, however, had been hastily made and pointed in the right direction – *Mockba* (Moscow) 1800 kms.

The Embassy had returned to normal on the surface and the children soon started nursery school. A few days after my return we went to Wenceslas Square where young Czechs had confronted Soviet tanks. The facade of the National Museum at the head of the square was still heavily pockmarked from machine gun fire.

Large crowds still gathered at the foot of the Statue of Saint Wenceslas to place fresh flowers and light candles in memory of the Czechs killed in the square. The windows of shops displayed photographs of Dubcek and President Svoboda along with the words *J sme svami* (We are with you). We hesitated before entering a Bulgarian restaurant on the square for lunch but were reassured by the hand-written sign placed over its name – “under Czech management.”

As winter approached – the leaves changed color and chestnuts fell off the magnificent old trees in the Embassy garden. Mini-skirts gave way to drab raincoats. The Russians largely withdrew from the cities and their presence was felt less. There was sufficient food in the stores. We started visiting art galleries again, our Saturday hobby. We learned that artists we admired had relocated to Paris and Yugoslavia. Workmen continued to restore buildings in the historic parts of the city, buildings that had been neglected for 20 years. They once again began to sport white, cream, and even yellow or green facades. A few tourists came straggling back into the city. Yet this was an occupied country and the mood of the previous summer was lost. In the garden, the children no longer played cowboys and Indians but the good guys versus the bad guys, and if their pretend gunfire sounded a little more realistic, we all knew what they were remembering. ❖

Taps

By Roy Easley

Army Air Force Brigadier General "Fred" Maxwell died in May 2004, several months shy of his 98th birthday. The next year I met his widow, Olive Maxwell. Learning that I was a graduate of West Point, and faced with the facts that Fred's classmates had all "passed on," and that she and Fred did not have children, she asked if I would author a memorial article for publication in the West Point periodical "TAPS." I responded that I would consider it an honor to write General Maxwell's memorial article. I slightly altered and shortened that 2006 article for publication here.



In the 1928 Howitzer (West Point's yearbook), his classmates saw Alfred Rockwood "Fred" Maxwell as follows: "The cavalier is not dead, for he lives in Fred. A ready smile, handsome in its debonair stages, and congenial throughout all the various moods that it depicts, and Fred has won his way into the hearts of his fellow man...Yet Fred is only partly the social man, never taking the common path but striking out for himself and emerging with experiences and adventures that make him at once the envy and pride of his classmates."

BG Maxwell did not disappoint his fellow West Pointers as he followed a career path full of experiences and adventures different from those encountered by the vast majority of his classmates. In the early Depression years, he flew the U.S. Mail at Cheyenne, WY, where the head winds were sometimes stronger than the speed of the airplane, requiring some ingenuity to reach one's destination. Claire Chennault, LT Maxwell's check pilot at primary flying school, knew really good pilots when he saw them. In the years that followed, Fred became a test pilot at what is now Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio and was rated a Command Pilot and

Combat Observer. Graduating near the top of his West Point class, Fred was well-suited to pursue graduate education and training, receiving a master's degree in aeronautical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and graduating from both the Air Corps Technical and Engineering Schools at Wright Field. After WWII he graduated from the National War College.

BG Maxwell's military career is summarized in several brief lines in the West Point Register of Graduates and Former Cadets. This is unfortunate considering his outstanding service to the nation during WWII. During the first two years of the war he planned and directed the mobilization of all bombardment forces at Army Air Force Headquarters in Washington, D.C., service for which he received the Legion of Merit. Moving to the European Theater of Operations for the last two years of the war, BG Maxwell was director of operations of U.S. Strategic Air Forces in Europe, as well as U.S. Chairman of the Joint U.S. and Royal Air Force Operations Committee. This service was honored by the award of the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, *Continued on page 15....*

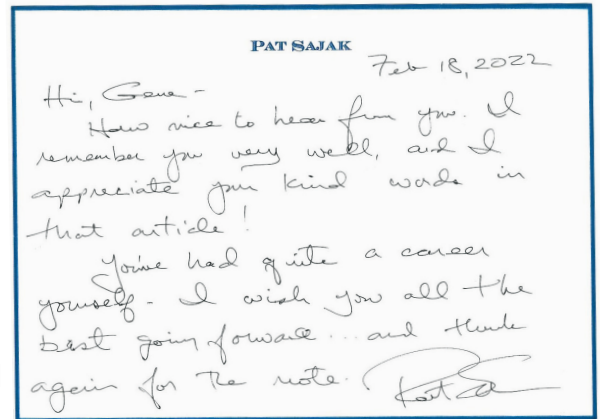
Reply from One of Those Famous People

In our last edition, Winter 2021/2022, in an article titled, Famous People and Me, Gene Wentz shared about his experience as a Officer in Charge of Network Radio for the Armed Forces Vietnam Network in Vietnam in 1968 where he met a young Pat Sajak. Gene sent that edition of Campus News and Views to the address he found for Pat Sajak. Pat sent back this reply:

Hi Gene –

How nice to hear from you. I remember you very well, and I appreciate your kinds words in that article!

You've had quite a career yourself – I wish you all the best going forward and thank you again for the note.



Taps

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Legion of Honor Chevalier Grade, the Croix de Guerre with Palm, and the order of British Empire Honorary Commander.

As time passes, fewer Americans fully understand and appreciate the enormous scope and complexity of the management of U.S. resources during WWII. Virtually all citizens participated in the effort, and a select number occupied significant leadership roles, demonstrating outstanding powers of analysis and the will to act. Fred Maxwell was one of these leaders, and his contributions to the creation and employment of the U.S. Army Air Forces in the extremely short time span of four years is reflective of his leadership and, more generally, the leadership displayed by others of the "Greatest Generation." The many diverse and complex areas and functions of preparing and leading the nation at war were truly mind boggling. Considering the extremely brief time frame, their accomplishments were monumental.

After the war, BG Maxwell occupied key positions as the U.S. Air Force became a separate military service. Moving to the Pacific and Far East in 1948, he assumed command of the Marianas

Air Material Command on Guam and later commanded the 19th Bomb Wing at Kadena Air Force Base, Okinawa in 1949. Afterwards he was appointed as chief of staff of the Twentieth Air Force on Okinawa. Returning stateside in 1950, he joined the Air Force Research and Development Command, ending his tour as deputy commander. He then became an advisor to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Research and Development. BG Maxwell's last active duty assignment (1955-57) was as commander of the Rome Air Force Depot in New York.

Following his 1957 Air Force retirement he served for many years in managerial and consulting roles for major corporations. Indeed, your West Points classmates know you well. According to the 1928 Howitzer Fred Maxwell was "quiet, of undisturbable equanimity, somewhat of a dreamer, he is happier by himself tinkering with some hobby."

After Fred's death, a close friend wrote the following: "Fred is survived by his wife of 57 years, Olive, and many of his friends and associates. We will miss him greatly and we shall keep his passion burning and strive to mentor those associates, just as he did for us. It is best summed up by saying – Good life, Good wife." ❖



Vinson Hall Retirement Community

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VINSON HALL RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

Campus News & Views *Summer 2022*



During the previous months we enjoyed many celebrations including our 95 and older birthday party at which VHRC's oldest resident, Col Peter Mirras, cut the birthday cake. Anna Coutlakis and Midge Holmes teamed up for some fun at our spring Cornbag Toss Tournament. Jim Davenport sports green on St. Patrick's Day. Our spring Art Show featured 36 artists including photographs by Barbara Fields.