

To: kPeter J Paffrath@LEXMARK
cc:
bcc:
Subject: K-Bay Reunion

Pete,

It was great hearing from you. Your letter ultimately found me. The address was an old one. I had moved from there about three years ago. It was a very small town, and what usually happened with mail that arrived after I left, the post office delivered it to my daughter who lives there, but for whatever reason they tried to forward your letter to me and I think it took awhile. Must be new postal clerks.

The reunion sounds great. Unfortunately, I have previous commitments that week-end that cannot be changed. Please keep me on the roster and hopefully, if it happens again, I can make it.

It has been a long time. I appreciated your sending the battalion picture and labeling your name. However, I remembered who you were and so didn't need the label. I was trying to match up some of the other names with the pictures. Was able to do a few but got hazy on a couple. I have the picture framed and hanging in my office at home. I'll send the picture that you sent me. If you or someone has time, I sure would appreciate their labeling their names on the picture and returning it to me.

When I left the battalion in Vietnam, I was assigned to Oregon State University as Executive Officer of the NROTC Unit. Headquarters said that I would stay there until selected for Colonel and then would be sent back to Vietnam.

In the meantime, a child was born to us who had Down Syndrome which changed my life. It was at that point that I decided to retire from the Marine Corps, got a doctorate in Special Education and spent the next thirty years as a professor in that field. I was one of those professors who never taught a course. I was strictly a research type. Started off researching better ways to educate children with severe disabilities, gradually moved to research in behavioral difficulties among children and ended up dealing with juvenile delinquents. Survived for thirty years on a plethora of federal and state grants and contracts.

When I retired from the Marine Corps and became a professor, my wife thought I would stay home more. Unfortunately, because of extensive professional writing, I acquired a bit of a national reputation and spent a good deal of time on airplanes. Building up the mileage helped with family relations since it allowed us to take loads of trips overseas. The federal government also sponsored a few superb trips and some foreign countries also paid our way. All in all it has been a fabulous thirty years.

My family is all well. My wife and I are celebrating are 50th

wedding anniversary on August 9th. We are having a big bash at a local winery. (Of course, we Oregonians think we have much better wine than you Californians.) If you or any other K-Bay Marines are in the area, you are welcome. There are a number of my contemporaries who are coming.

When we were in Kaneohe, we had four children, three girls and a boy. The boy, Stephen, died when he was 21 of cancer. The three girls are married and all live within an hour's distance of us. We currently have thirteen grandchildren. In fact, when I finish this letter, I am playing golf with a 16 year old grandson who drives the ball more than 250 yards, but we older fellows who can't quite hit it that far anymore have learned to keep it straight.

My son with Down syndrome has done very well. He ended up being an eagle scout. For his eagle scout project he decided to go around to schools to tell kids what it was like to be retarded. He got to be rather famous. Was invited to the White House, was written up in Reader's Digest and ended up speaking to more than 15,000 people around the country. He is getting married on September 12 to a young lady who also has Down syndrome.

Since I retired as a professor three years ago, I have tried to improve my golf game which suffered horribly over the years. It is gradually getting better. Our local county commissioners have used up my volunteer time. They asked me to chair the Commission on Children and Families and had me orchestrate the writing of a juvenile delinquency prevention plan for the county. That took two years and we have just started implementing it and so I got the task of supervising that. As my wife says, it keeps me from being a dirty old man and chasing some sweet young thing.

Pete, it was wonderful hearing from you. I am truly sorry that I cannot attend the reunion. Please convey to all the old members of the battalion my very best regards. Serving with them was one of the greatest honors of my life, and I thank them for having made my job so easy and pleasant. I wish you and them happiness and good fortune.

Best regards,

Bud

New address: 3420 SW Cascade
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(541) 753-1241 (evenings)