

USS BRISTOLDD857 VETERANS ASSOCIATION SUMMER 2019

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World Team Sports, Face of America Bike Ride

2019 *Contributed by Diane
Coleangelo*

Friday May 3, 2019-

I did see the 2 gentlemen from Kosovo (they were also at last year’s ride). I went over to them & wow they remembered me from last year (!!!). We hugged & talked. They were with a group of people, so I said good bye to them and went outside to get gear from my car. The group that was with them, came over to me & introduced themselves. They were officers with the military and they came to support the 2 gentlemen that would be riding.

Attended a reception before the regular dinner. The reception was invitational because there was a challenge to raise \$2000.00 by May 2. I raised almost \$2200.00. So, I was invited to this reception along with others who also raised this amount of money. Hard to say how many people were invited, maybe 35-40, and not everyone attended who were eligible.

There was also another challenge to be the top 25 money raisers.

The first 2 people had corporate ties. So they raised a lot of money. These numbers are not accurate because I don’t have the

final count, but the number 1 person raised about \$57,000, the second \$38,000. They received a special gold bib number with numbers 1 & 2 respectfully.

And the most important number 3 fundraiser was Tara:

Who is a DOG!!!

Her owner was able to ask people that she knew & worked with to donate in the dog’s name. She is a service dog.

She raised \$7800.00!!!!!!!!!!!!

She received her own special jersey. She is also special because she can only walk on 3 legs.

Then we went to the dinner. Met people that I knew & met some new people.

Sat with a woman from upstate NY who suffers from PTSD. She is 100% disabled. Her name is Rhonda. She will be riding on a recumbent bike. It was rented for her so she could ride. Shas never been on a recumbent before. She also has a service dog, Remy.

Saturday May 4, 2019-

7:30 am start: In Arlington, Va.

Met up with my guardian angel, Reyner. 8 years ago, he did not leave my side when I was taking medication for my epilepsy. Always good to see him. He brought along a co-worker, Art, who had never done this ride before.

I also met a New Brunswick middle school teacher & a guy whom I've seen on previous rides who wears a t-shirt that has a number 10 on it (I think it's the logo for his company-exit 10 on the turnpike).

We did 55 miles today & we ended at an industrial complex that has Flying Dog Brewery, in Frederick Md. So, we all got 1 free beer. They also had food trucks. I sat near a group of guys, one used to live in NJ and the others mostly, MD & VA. We chatted about the ride, how many times we have done it (12 for me!!!). I told them some stories of previous years. They put our bikes under a tent, which was good because it poured that night.

Bike Marshalls are a great group of people. They keep us safe on the ride. There are a few who like to tease me that I need to pedal faster or else I will end up in the SAG van (support & gear).

But as I bike & listen to people talk and see their faces, it makes me think that this organization is a wonderful one.

I also heard 2 people talking regarding one of them knowing a veteran who had 2 blast injuries (separate incidents). He asked the vet, if you could it all over would you have joined the Army. He said absolutely. I would go right back in.

Gina, who I've seen for the past 10 years told me about her adventure team challenge last September. She also rode with World T.E.A.M. Sports from West Point to NYC.

At one of the rest stops, I talked to 2 English ladies. The both had (over their riding clothes) handmade orange & lemon slices tops. I asked them why they were wearing those tops & one of them said look at my name. Everyone's name was printed on their bibs. Her name is Ms. Orange. So, they paired themselves as lemon & lime slices. Ms. Orange

also told me that she is in the world Guinness records because she dressed as a lime slice for the London marathon. She came in as the first fruit crossing the finishing line.

Sunday May 5, 2019- Frederick, Md

We were prepared for a rainy day. 100% forecasted for rain. We needed to start at 6:30 am sharp because Frederick, Md was having a marathon that morning. We started out with a light rain. After 3 miles the rain picked up as well as the wind. It was raining so hard, I really could not see because of the rain on my eyeglasses & then dripping down behind my glasses into my eyes. A bike marshal pulled me over & told me it was time to go into the SAG van. I was relieved because of the dangerous conditions. I was not alone in that 14-passenger van. There were already 3 people in it & we all said the same thing: We could not see because the rain was hitting our glasses very hard.

Now when you are in the SAG van, everyone gets very chatty & friendly.

Rhonda, who I mentioned above was also pulled over as well as several others. We had about 6 people in the van. We were going to the first rest stop & most of us agreed that after resting we were going to bike to the next rest stop. As soon as I exited the van, I started shivering. The temperature had dropped & it was still raining. Our CEO received a report that we would have to modify our course to the next rest stop because a bridge was under water.

Then the final decision: he cancelled the ride. No one argued. But now 470 cyclists plus their bikes plus the volunteers had to be transported to Gettysburg. That was where our celebration was to have taken place

& also many people parked their cars there or were going to be picked up there.

So, all the SAG vans (4) were packed with people. There was also a coach bus.

In my van there were 4 adaptive riders and 10 able-bodied riders. And Rhonda was in my van.

Imagine if you are an adaptive rider in a recumbent bicycle and the rain is coming on you in sheets & sideways. Water from passing cars & huge puddles were also a danger to our adaptive riders. We all thought it was the best decision.

As we were traveling to Gettysburg, I listened to Rhonda & Juan talk about their experiences in the service. Rhonda was in the Navy & Juan the Army.

They talked about the VA hospital not giving them information about rides such as FACE OF AMERICA. Or other services that are available to them.

Rhonda had appendicitis while in the service. As she was recovering, she went out one night with a friend, just to get out and go to a restaurant. Their car was T-boned by a guy who ran a red light. She had to be extricated & spent 3 months in the hospital. She has had over 15 surgeries.

She also said that there are places that are ignorant about service dogs. She said she was in a public building & was asked to leave because she came in with her dog. She explained that Remy was her service dog. The place threatened to call the police if she did not leave. The police were called & she left & went right over to the police station to tell the captain to read up on service dogs (federal law) & that they are allowed EVERYWHERE. She is dealing with a lot of anger

because she lost her career in the Navy.

Juan was in a special unit in the military police. The pack that he had to wear during his shift weighed 95 lbs. He did not say how he was injured, but has gone under many back surgeries. He also stated that the VA does not advise veterans of the organizations such as WORLD T.E.A.M. SPORTS. He stated that he will be getting a service dog. He also is dealing with anger issues.

Even though the Sunday ride was cut short, everyone's attitude was positive. No one complained. We all talked in our van while being transported to Gettysburg.

Also while in the van, I listened to Juan & Rhonda talk about their injuries and was very appreciative of the sacrifices that people make when they join the service and are injured.

World T.E.A.M. (the exceptional athlete matters) Sports is a very special organization that empowers lives through sports. It is very inspirational to ride along side our veteran men & women who have served in the military. I am fortunate that I can participate on this ride & share their stories with you.

Editors's Note: Diane Coleangelo is a volunteer Emergency Medical Technician with Point Pleasant Boro EMS, NJ. This is the twelfth year that she has been a volunteer with this event. God bless her.

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The Prisoner of War

This piece suggested by "Charlie" Weaver

October 26, 2018

Red McDaniel was brutally tortured as a POW in Vietnam, but survived six years in captivity thanks to his

faith and his family. Over 40 years later, he's still fighting for his co-pilot and the men still listed as Missing In Action.

I'm intimidated at the thought of interviewing Red McDaniel. And the five-hour drive from Buies Creek to his home in Alexandria, Virginia, on a particularly hazy, humid early August morning isn't doing much to calm my nerves. In fact, it's only giving me more time to question my questions.

What do you ask a man who spent nearly six years in a North Vietnamese prison; three of those years on the receiving end of some of the most brutal torture ever described [by someone who survived it]? How do you even pretend to understand? What if I ask the wrong thing?

I came across the compelling story of Capt. Eugene "Red" McDaniel by accident about a month earlier. Searching for information on Campbell's football program before it began its 56-year hiatus in 1950, I found his name on a list of Campbell Athletics Hall of Famers. The big capitalized letters "POW" stuck out to me, and I had to learn more.

And, boy, was there more to learn.

I read all 192 pages of his 1975 autobiography, *Scars & Stripes*, almost in one sitting. I moved on to a short documentary he appears in called "The Spy in the Hanoi Hilton." I watched all 17-plus hours of Ken Burns' recent documentary, "The Vietnam War."

Portrait of Capt. Eugene "Red" McDaniel painted by Gerard Bianco while McDaniel helmed the USS Lexington. The painting now hangs in the U.S. Naval Museum in Washington, D.C.

I wanted to learn as much as I could about this man — now 86 years old — and the war he fought in before I wasted a single, valuable minute of

his time. I rarely ever feel this way about the men or women I've interviewed over the years — that I might be wasting their time.

I arrive at his modest two-story home — a stone's throw from George Washington's Mount Vernon in Alexandria — just after lunch. I'm met at the door by the man himself — still very much recognizable as the young, handsome fighter pilot from the countless photos I've seen taken 45 and 50 years earlier ... before and after "the experience."

Do I call it "the experience?"

To break the ice, I hand him an Elon University alumni magazine that was sitting in his mailbox by the door. McDaniel attended and graduated from the rival school after his two years at the then-Campbell Junior College.

"Looks like they beat me to it," I joke, handing him the magazine. This gets a laugh as we're immediately joined by his wife, Dorothy (whose 1991 book, *After the Hero's Welcome*, is equally fascinating) and the couple's oldest son, Michael, who handles media requests for his parents and made today's meeting possible.

I'm invited to sit in the living room on a couch that I swear my grandmother also owned during my youth. I begin with the small talk — his Campbell experience. How he met Dorothy on his first day in Buies Creek and how they knew they were meant for each other. Theirs is a great story. And I'm all too happy to tell it.

But my mind is elsewhere. I want to ask about Vietnam. Ten minutes into our conversation, there's a pause, marking the end of their "how we met" and "why I joined the Navy" tale. I see my opportunity.

"When was the first time you'd ever even heard of Vietnam?"

I've prepared for these next two hours. The intimidation has become excitement. Few people get a front row seat to hear a story like this. I only hope I can do it justice.

There is no feeling quite like knowing you are in a strange country, surrounded by a people who know no rule but death to the enemy. On top of that, of course, is the jungle. There is nothing compared to tropical jungle when it comes to survival. It is thick, thorny, full of unexpected dangers, ruthlessly hot and defiant of man. ... A man is soon aware of its immensity, its gigantic suffocating encirclement, its relentless squeeze on life systems that depend on air, good water and food.

— Capt. Red McDaniel, *Scars & Stripes* —

Red McDaniel had flown more than 80 missions with his bombardier and navigator, Lt. James Kelly Patterson, when he was called to fly his 81st mission from the carrier *Enterprise* on May 17, 1966. This was to be another Alpha Strike, the bombing of a “high-value target” from his A-6 fighter jet — part of Operation Rolling Thunder, intended to pressure North Vietnam’s communist leaders and weaken their ability to wage war against the U.S.-supported South Vietnamese.

He shaved that morning, remembering not to apply after-shave lotion or deodorant (these were luxuries in Vietnam, and the slightest hint of these smells could give him away if he was shot down).

Published in 1975, “Scars & Stripes” tells the harrowing tale of Capt. Eugene “Red” McDaniel’s six years in a North Vietnamese prison. Photo courtesy of Mike McDaniel

“But, even as I finished shaving, I did not consider being shot down and taken prisoner,” McDaniel wrote in his book, *Scars & Stripes*. “The chances of being killed were

more real, and for this I had to prepare my mind every morning.”

McDaniel had never even heard of Vietnam a decade earlier when he joined the Navy after graduating from Elon. Baseball might have been the better option, as he hit nearly .400 during his time at Campbell and Elon, but McDaniel was already in his mid-20s and felt “too old” to climb through Minor League farm systems for a crack at the big leagues. He chose flight school in the Navy because, like sports, it presented a challenge. Flying the A-6 off of aircraft carriers was considered “elite,” he says, and he wanted to be the best.

He was deployed to South Vietnam in November 1966 — by that time, the number of U.S. military personnel there had grown from 184,000 at the beginning of the year to nearly 400,000 by year’s end. Neither Red nor Dorothy would have guessed the war would last another six years.

“It was just a war, you know? And that’s what Red was trained to do,” says Dorothy, who wrote in her book, *After the Hero’s Welcome*, that their “good bye” involved — much to her surprise — a reminder from Red to sign Michael up for Little League in the spring.

Michael remembers his good bye vividly. He was 8 at the time, and he carried a small reel-to-reel tape player with him and recorded his dad’s words before he left.

“I don’t know why I did that,” he says. “I just remember at the time wanting to capture it, knowing he was going to be gone for a while. The last thing he told me was to take care of mom while he was gone.”

A big mistake, Red adds with a laugh. “I guess I didn’t think I’d be gone that long.”

About 60 miles inland on that fateful morning in May, McDaniel and Patterson began seeing surface-

to-air missiles coming up “like telephone poles with fins on one end.” The fifth missile exploded between their jet and another, and the shrapnel took out their A-6’s hydraulic systems. The jet began to nosedive toward the North Vietnamese hills. At 2,000 feet above a 3,000-foot mountain range, Patterson ejected first. Moments later, McDaniel shot out of the cockpit. The two parachuted in different directions from the eventual crash.

“I remember floating down,” McDaniel says, “and thinking how relieved I was that I wouldn’t have to fly any more missions. I remember very vividly landing in a tree, then falling 40 feet from that tree and crushing a vertebrae when I landed.”

The pain was immense, but McDaniel was able to radio to the other pilots on the mission that he had survived the crash. He ditched his parachute and strapped on a survival pack — his goal was to march up to the top of the hill so he could be spotted by rescue helicopters that would surely be searching for him over the next 24 hours. His other goal was to avoid capture.

At 10 that night, McDaniel saw a propeller aircraft fly overhead with its lights on. He tried to radio, but there was no response. He fell asleep that night on a tree trunk and woke up the next morning to continue his trek toward rescue (constantly pulling leeches off his skin as he walked). He saw two jets fly by that morning, the pilot of one radioing in to say the “jolly green giants” (helicopters) would arrive in 45 minutes.

Seven hours later, McDaniel still waited.

At 1 p.m., a bullet flew by his head. He turned around to see two Vietnamese men aiming at him from 25 yards away. Within a minute, about 15 men joined them.

“They had a mangy dog with them,” he wrote in Scars & Stripes. “They were all barefooted, except for a couple who wore sandals made out of a rubber tire. I noticed their feet were bleeding, which meant they had been moving around all night looking for me; that explained the sounds I had heard in the night and this morning. So now I simply stood there staring back at them, conscious of how little they seemed in their floppy, pajamalike clothes, not sure of themselves even now that they had me. This was ‘the enemy,’ I thought, but looking at them, all I could think was that they appeared to be more like a bunch of kids out in the jungle looking for something to do.”

Two thoughts ran through McDaniel’s mind: “Where is the Air Force?” and “God, where are you?”

That evening, roughly 8,300 miles away, Dorothy McDaniel received a visit at her Virginia Beach home from an officer dressed in all white. “Red’s down,” was all the man, accompanied by a chaplain, could say.

That night, Dorothy told her three children — Michael, 8, David, 6, and Leslie, 4. Michael received the news first after a family friend had taken him to the ice cream shop. He got home that evening with a big wad of bubble gum crammed into his mouth, he recalls.

“Mom meets me at the door and says, ‘Let’s go back to your room and talk,’ he says. “She sits me on the bed and says, ‘Let me hold your bubble gum. What I’m going to tell you might make you cry.’”



After being shot down over the North Vietnamese mountains, Capt. Eugene Red McDaniel and Lt. James Kelly Patterson parachuted

into different directions. This photo from a pilot of a jet that accompanied the team on their bombing run shows shortly after their ejection. Patterson survived the landing, but after three days, was never heard from again. Photo courtesy of Mike McDaniel

It’s at this point in his book — between falling from that tree and being captured — that McDaniel takes a few pages to backpedal and tell the story of how he met Dorothy Howard on his first night at Campbell College in 1950.

It’s a strategic placement by the editor and it’s a story that is vital throughout the six years of his imprisonment. Meeting Dorothy marked his true introduction to Christianity. And it was faith that held Red McDaniel together as he endured and withstood brutal torture and — even worse to him — the uncertainty of what tomorrow would bring.

I tell Red and Dorothy from the beginning that I’m going to ask a lot of Campbell questions. I’m probably the 2,000th person to interview them about their shared POW experience. Campbell, however, is unique to today’s talk.



Dorothy Howard and Red McDaniel met on the night of Red’s first day of classes at Campbell College in 1950.

McDaniel tells me that on his first day of school in Buies Creek, he filled out a form at registration and paused at a question you don’t see at too many colleges today: Are you a Christian?

“I didn’t know how to answer that,” McDaniel wrote then, and shares again now. “I believed in God and Christ, but I wasn’t sure what I had that would qualify me for the title. But I put ‘yes’ down anyway; after all, I was at Campbell for athletics, not religion. So it really didn’t count in the end. But I knew, deep down, that it did.”

That same night, he met Dorothy Howard, the daughter of beloved professor Charles Howard, who had lost both of his parents, two brothers and a sister to tuberculosis when he was younger, and was raised by his grandparents. He served as a pastor for 26 different congregations in North Carolina and preached more than 25,000 sermons in 23 states. He succeeded University founder J.A. Campbell as pastor of Buies Creek First Baptist Church when Campbell died in 1934, and four years later, became Campbell College’s first religion professor.

Dorothy, her husband recalls, had a “grace and poise about her that made me want to be around her,” and her family’s faith in Christ had an impact on him. He realized faith required much more than belief.

That faith was first challenged when the green helicopters never showed up for McDaniel and his navigator. Back home, Dr. Howard also struggled.

“My grandfather thought that if you got on your knees and prayed hard enough, God would perform miracles,” Mike McDaniel says. “And that never happened ... which was hard for him to accept.”

Dorothy McDaniel woke up from a deep sleep on the night she learned her husband had been shot down. Unsure whether he was captured or killed after his last radio transmission, she instinctively reached for her Bible on the nightstand and opened it. The pages flipped directly and unintentionally to Psalm 91 — a passage she says she clung onto for years.

You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday.

A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.

No harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent.

For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways;

They will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

You will tread on the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent.

“Because he loves me,” says the Lord, “I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.”

I know what’s coming next in the story. I read about the beatings McDaniel endured — the most notorious a weeklong torture session after an attempted escape by other soldiers. It’s this story that most remember about his POW experience. But I’m also stunned by other details of his imprisonment — the rat-infested cells, the inability to communicate with his family that he was alive, the lack of food and basic medical care.

And I’m watching McDaniel recall these memories without the slightest trace of stress, without a single wince. Later on, I ask him if the torture changed him. If it affected his marriage or even his sleep. His answer surprises me.

“In my 46 years back, I’ve only awoken one time with a bad dream that I was still in prison. One time. That’s amazing,” he says, punctuated like a true pride point. “For our last three years, there was no torture. I think those three years gave me time to realize there was still value in my life. Those three years allowed me to put [the torture] behind me.”

His son adds: “I remember vividly the Navy psychologist sitting us children down and telling us that dad had a rough-go and that he didn’t know what condition he’d be in when he got home. That scared the daylights out of me. We didn’t know what to expect.

“But we didn’t see any of that,” he says, looking over at his dad. “Not once.”



The “Little Vegas” area of Hoa Lò Prison, built for American POWs in 1967. Shown in a final inspection in 1973 shortly before the Americans’ release. Source: Wikipedia

I was beaten regularly by a two-man relay team with more than 120 licks with that fan belt. By now, I was passing blood ... and that meant there were internal injuries. My eardrum ruptured when they struck me across the head with my own shoe, and it too was oozing blood. They continued to beat me that way until I thought I would go out of my mind with the pain. I said, “Okay, I’ll tell you, stop.” And they stopped. I took a few minutes while they waited just to get my breath and allow the pain to dissipate a little, and then I said, “I don’t have any answer.” So back to the beating.

— **Capt. Red McDaniel, Scars & Stripes** —

A day after his capture, Red McDaniel was hauled off to the infamous American prison camp in Hanoi — dubbed the “Hanoi Hilton” — at 5:30 in the morning. He rode in the back of a small pick-up truck next to a 50-gallon drum of gasoline that spilled on him with every bump. The trip was excruciating, as McDaniel had yet to be treated for a cracked vertebrae and other broken

bones resulting from the ejection from his A-6.

He was tossed into a cockroach-infested cell and interrogated immediately upon his arrival. “You talk. Medicine later,” they told him. When he refused to give nothing more than his name, rank and serial number, he was tied up with ropes and bound so that his arms stretched behind his back and his shoulders were ready to pop out of their sockets.

“I pretended to pass out several times in hopes they would untie me and leave me alone,” McDaniel wrote of his first day as a prisoner of war. “But they were wise to that. At times, I would bite my shoulder hard to try to transfer the pain from one area to another. Then I began pounding my head against the wall, hoping for blood, something liquid to ease my terrible thirst.”

He was fed watery soup with leafy greens in it — just enough to keep him alive — those first five days. In between meals, the interrogations returned. Questions about the Navy’s new walleye missile, new targets in Hanoi and something called the “television bomb.” To satisfy his captors, McDaniel began talking ... not about his A-6 or other valuable information, but instead false information about A-1 jets and targets in the Demilitarized Zone. After the fifth day, he was taken to a wash area (to sleep, not to wash) and released from his leg irons.

Prisoners were paraded before angry crowds in Hanoi, where loudspeakers blared insults and encouraged the crowd’s abuse. Many in the crowd attacked the POWs. (U.S. Air Force photo)

“Eight hours later, I was put into solitary confinement,” he wrote, “and I began to get some sense of the horror that was ahead of me now. ... I knew I was up against a monstrous situation, against an enemy who seemed to take great

satisfaction in inflicting pain, who performed like robots in doing so.”

McDaniel had little communication with the other pilots imprisoned at his camp, and it was weeks before he was able to talk to an American — he asked McDaniel if he knew “the code.”

“Morse code?” McDaniel asked. “No,” he replied, “the camp code.”

Many of the pilots in Hanoi had been trained in a code system — a series of knocks or taps that could line up right and down with a five-column grid of letters to spell out words. One knock followed by a pause and one other knock made an “A.” One knock followed by two knocks was a “B.” He titled Chapter 4 of his book, “Communicate or Die” — “Men faced with the hopelessness of a military prison and the uncertainty of what a day might bring from the enemy ... soon become desperate to communicate with others. Morale was essential, and one of the keys to morale was to beat the enemy as often as possible in their attempts to keep us isolated.”

McDaniel and his fellow prisoners knocked on walls, water pipes and floors. They wrote notes using cigarette papers and toilet paper, their ink made from ashes and water. They crawled through ceiling vents for short visits to other rooms. The communication was important because it meant they weren’t alone. It symbolized camaraderie in the worst of environments.

“It gave me a purpose,” McDaniel says from his chair at home. “I go back to high school and college and remember how aggressive I was in athletics. The thought that you play to win. But I was also the biggest optimist in Hanoi. When guys would tap down to my cell and ask me when they’re going home, I always answered, ‘Two months.’ After six years of that, I lost a lot of credibility ... but, you know, that’s what they wanted to hear. That was

my livelihood to truly believe that answer. The one thing they could not take was my faith.”

Three years into McDaniel’s imprisonment, two Americans broke out of the Hanoi Hilton. McDaniel was unaware of their plans, but the prison communication system soon relayed the message to him that they had escaped. Both men were recaptured; one of them died during the torture that followed.

A month later, on June 14, 1969, North Vietnamese officers came for McDaniel and his cellmates, Al Runyan and Major Ken Fleener, to question them about their knowledge of the escape attempt. When McDaniel told the officers he had no knowledge of the attempt, his pants were pulled down, and the officers took turns hitting him in the rear with a rubber fan belt. He was then forced to kneel and keep his hands above his head (wrists locked in irons). When his arms finally fell after an hour on his knees, a guard hit him hard across the back of his head. When he could no longer hold his arms up, the guards tied them and kept them above his head with rope. McDaniel spent that night sitting on a stool. He was beaten with a rubber sandal across the face if he spoke or asked questions.

That was Saturday. On Sunday, much of the same — fan belt beatings, arms up and spending the night sitting on a stool. By Tuesday, McDaniel’s knees were infected from kneeling on the concrete floor. The guards continued to beat him — this time with bamboo sticks — if his arms dropped below his head. Halfway through the week, McDaniel confessed that his room was the source of the escape plans. It wasn’t. The confession bought him an hour of relief, until the officers figured out it was a lie.

The torture continued, and on the fifth night of beatings and no sleep, McDaniel became sick from the infections — his fever at 104 degrees. “So much came out of

those wounds that whenever I moved around in that small room, a trail of pus would be left behind along the floor.”

The torture reached its peak on the sixth night. McDaniel wrote in his book that he became irrational and grabbed a guard and began yelling at him. The commotion attracted other guards to the interrogation room, where they tied McDaniel’s arms again with ropes and this time pulled him up from the ceiling about two feet off the ground. At one point, his arm snapped in two.

“You’ve broken my arm,” McDaniel yelled at the officers. “No,” one replied. “We have not broken your arm. You have broken your arm.”

The next day, the guards tied damp cloths around his arms and around cords hooked up to a battery. The electric shock treatments went throughout the day. McDaniel recalled the pain as “blinding, but mercifully I was so tired that it was only another blurring dimension of the pain I already had.”

The final beatings came on Friday — 120 licks with a fan belt, passing blood in his urine, ruptured eardrum. When McDaniel couldn’t take it any longer, he told the officers what they wanted to hear. But none of the names he gave were part of any escape committee. None of the information he gave was true.

But the torture ceased. At least for now. After a week of brutality few men could endure, McDaniel looked to God. And he thanked him.

“That Friday night, I slept for the first time in a week. I was mistaken to think the interrogations were over or even the torture. But as I slept, it was a sleep of assurance — God was not far outside this hell. If I had to go on with this nightmare, then I was sure He was with me. Nothing else mattered.”



Above: After more than six years in a Hanoi prison, Red McDaniel steps to freedom at Gia Lam Airport in Hanoi, greeted by military personnel. Photo courtesy of Mike McDaniel

I interviewed Red McDaniel nine days before the passing of Arizona Sen. John McCain. Knowing the senator — the most famous of the North Vietnamese prisoners after his A-4E Skyhawk was shot down over Hanoi in October 1967 (a year and a half after McDaniel's arrival) — was close to death after a lengthy fight with brain cancer, I asked McDaniel about their relationship. About his thoughts on the final chapter of McCain's life.

"Oh boy," his son, Mike, says through a winced smile. "If you want to get him talking for 20 straight hours, get him talking about that."

I knew there was bad blood between McDaniel and McCain before asking the question (articles have been written about their disagreements following the war). I struggled with whether I was going to bring it up. That's not what this story is about, I told myself.

But it's timely. And it's important.

"You need to hear this," the captain says to me. His tone is stern, more so than when he recalled his weeklong torture following the escape attempt. "It may not be part of your story, but you need to hear this."

And so I listen.

McDaniel was looking out of his cell on Oct. 26, 1967, when he heard an explosion and saw a man floating down by parachute toward Truc

Bach Lake outside of Hanoi. John McCain — the son of well-known Admiral John S. McCain — landed in the lake and nearly drowned before being pulled ashore by North Vietnamese villagers, who crushed his shoulder with the butt of a rifle and bayoneted him in the groin area. He spent six weeks in a hospital after the Vietnamese discovered his lineage, and McCain's status as a prisoner of war became national news. In March 1968, McCain was placed into solitary confinement — that same year, he refused to be released unless all prisoners who were captured before him were released first. He remained in solitary for two years.

You've almost certainly heard this story.

The bitterness between McDaniel and McCain developed years later during McCain's involvement — along with Sen. John Kerry — in the U.S. Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs in the early 1990s. The committee found "no compelling evidence that any American remains alive in captivity in Southeast Asia."

It's a finding that McDaniel says he will never accept.

McDaniel knows his bombardier Patterson ejected safely from their A-6 on May 19, 1967. He knows Patterson was able to establish radio contact with other aircraft in the area for four days. He knows that on May 21, Patterson reported that enemy forces had taken a recovery kit that had been dropped for him.

Beyond that, nothing is certain. When McDaniel was released in 1973, he assumed Patterson had died. When he began to serve the Navy as a liaison to Congress, he says he began to see evidence that Americans were still alive in Southeast Asia. He was told in 1986 that men with Patterson's knowledge of A-6 technology were dubbed "MBs" in the intelligence community — "Moscow Bound."

McDaniel believes, without a doubt, his friend wound up in Russia (there have been testimonies and reports written since, both corroborating and conflicting with this claim).

McDaniel has no idea if Patterson is alive today — he would be 78 years old — but the thought that he was possibly left behind was and is today a soul-crushing revelation. Since his return, McDaniel has been a vocal advocate of the national POW/MIA movement, whose advocates believe several U.S. soldiers and airmen were kept alive by Communist forces after the U.S.' involvement in the war ended in 1973 and that the U.S. government has covered up their existence ever since.

Dorothy McDaniel's book, *After the Hero's Welcome*, goes into her husband's work and advocacy in Washington, D.C., in great detail. She writes about the toll her husband's fight with those who "closed the book" on searching for living POWs had on him and his trust in his government.

"I had prayed that Red's disillusionment with the high-ranking [U.S.] officials ... wouldn't do him in, leaving him bitter and despairing," she wrote. "The Vietnamese had not been able to break his spirit. The ultimate tragedy would be for his own countrymen to do what his enemy in Vietnam could not."

I tell the McDaniels this is all fascinating, but I attempt to assure them this is supposed to be a story of courage and faith and family and resilience.

I'm not looking cover ups or conspiracies.

But I also see this hurts McDaniel more than any torture session he endured.

McDaniel talks about his torture in Vietnam like he's recalling a bad vacation. The descriptions are

brutal, but he's mostly emotionless in telling the story. Throughout the nearly four-hour interview in his home, his emotions only really come alive when he's talking about Patterson and his fight for the truth. It's a topic he brings up multiple times on this day, even after questions that are clearly attempting to steer the other way.

"I've come to the conclusion that it'll take divine intervention [for the truth to come out]," McDaniel relents. "Somehow, God will let it out. Maybe not in my lifetime."

Before I boarded the plane, I turned and looked at Spot, the camp commander who was now officially releasing us to our country. I remember all those threats in prison: "You will never go home! You will be forty years old before you get home!" But looking at Spot now, I did not feel like gloating. For me, it was going home to a new life, to loved ones. What was it for him? I didn't know. Looking at him now, I did not think of the many hours of interrogation under him, the torture, the harassment. He was just another man in another part of the world who had done his job. ... I did not see him as an animal, void of emotion. I saw him now as just a human being, and somehow I wished we could all sit down there on that tarmac and talk over what life is all about — what it could mean, free of bars and cells and all of the strange, terrifying things that go into political doctrines that separate us.

— **Capt. Red McDaniel, Scars & Stripes** —

The letter arrived at the McDaniel home the same day as a solar eclipse — March 7, 1970. Dorothy McDaniel remembers this because that letter shared front page news with the natural phenomenon in the next day's *Virginian Pilot* newspaper.

Dear Dorothy, Michael, David, Leslie:

My health is good in all respects — no permanent injuries. You are my inspiration. Children, work, study, play hard, help each other and Mommy be strong for our reunion. Invest savings in mutual funds and stock. Your decisions are mine. Dorothy, I love you deeply.
Eugene
15 December 1969

He survived.

After more than six years in a Hanoi prison, Red McDaniel steps to freedom at Gia Lam Airport in Hanoi, greeted by military personnel. Photo courtesy of Mike McDaniel

Three years and 10 months after the McDaniel family learned their husband and father was shot down and captured in North Vietnam, they finally had proof he was alive. They believed it the whole time — until news comes otherwise, there's always hope — but they never had the proof, despite countless hours sifting through photos and videos ("propaganda") the Vietnamese had released over that time period. Despite numerous attempts to write Red and force the Vietnamese government to release the names of their captured soldiers.

But now they knew. "All the hard work, the grueling, emotionally-draining speech-making and public appearances had finally resulted in a six-line letter from Red," Dorothy wrote in her book. "He was alive! He was alive, and the North Vietnamese had admitted he was alive. To me, that meant they couldn't let him die."

Dorothy had become a public face (one of several) for all POW/MIA wives during the Vietnam War. She was one of the founders of the National League of Families of Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia, and she served as the state coordinator for POW/MIA families in Virginia. She appeared on television, was interviewed for countless newspaper articles and in

November 1968, she made the first of several speeches to help focus public attention on the hundreds of men held captive in Southeast Asia (she thought her first speech would be in front of a small group of "church ladies" ... it turned out to be a huge group that filled a fellowship hall).

And she was and is certain that her refusal to follow the government's suggested "keep silent rule" by speaking out and sending letter after letter to her husband's captors led them to finally allowing McDaniel to write that first letter in 1969. She was convinced the North Vietnamese government would respond to public opinion — they regularly allowed hand-picked reporters into Hanoi to write fluff pieces on the "humane treatment" the prisoners were receiving.

"The decision to go public with my personal story — to expose my family to public scrutiny — was [scary]," she wrote in her book. "But how do I sit back and not try? I believed that Red's life was on the line."

The public's watching eye did make a difference. While Red McDaniel slowly recovered from the weeklong torture and beating he endured in the summer of 1969, word began coming in from new prisoners that POW wives back in the United States were persistent in their efforts to demand better treatment of their husbands. In October of that year, the prisoners began receiving better food.

"Now they gave us bread most of the time with our soup," McDaniel wrote in his book. "We were getting canned meat at times. Sometimes candy. Food packages were finally coming through, and now the Vietnamese were not holding them back so much."

In December that year, McDaniel wrote his first letter home. Also that month, the guards allowed the prisoners to attend a Christmas

church service (even though the North Vietnamese “preacher” spoke of U.S. imperialism and warmongering, McDaniel says it was still nice to sit among his fellow prisoners).

It was still prison. And it was by no means comfortable. But McDaniel’s final three years in North Vietnam did not include torture. He was never again beaten. He says those final three years are the reason he was able to write *Scars & Stripes* in 1975, just two years after his return. He was able to put the nightmare behind him and focus on his faith and his future.

Red McDaniel and nearly 600 other POWs were released from captivity on March 4, 1973. McDaniel, who shed few tears in Hanoi except for his lowest moments, says the tears came easily at the sight of a C-141 aircraft that awaited him on a North Vietnamese runway that day. “Even as God had stayed at my side through all that time and taught me things that were to change my life completely about His reality and His presence in suffering, somehow that American plane socked home some of the things that made America and God great,” he wrote.

McDaniel and the now-former POWs came home to a hero’s welcome — a far cry from the reception many Vietnam vets received during and after the war. He had heard much about the protests and division back home (the Vietnamese were happy to share that news), but he saw little to none of that. Part of it was because the public had genuine sympathy for their experience. Part of it was because he lived in Virginia — a much more military-friendly state than other areas.

Three days after leaving Vietnam, McDaniel was reunited with his family. “For how many nights had I visualized this moment?” Red wrote. “For how many nights, throwing that little ball of bandages up and down in my cell, did I see

this scene, live it over and over in anticipation? And now there it was.”

Mike had grown considerably. He was 8 when his father left, and now he was 15. David was 13 and Leslie — practically a baby back in 1966 — was 11. McDaniel took his wife in one arm and swept his daughter up with the other. The crowd at the Portsmouth Naval Hospital cheered. Many — including the media — cried. It was a picture-perfect scene.

McDaniel would spend several weeks in the hospital to fully recover physically. His transition into his home was slow and deliberate (seeing bright colors after six years of gray was hard to get used to). But soon, life began returning to normal. Upon his return, he received the Navy’s second-highest award for bravery, the Navy Cross; as well as two Silver Stars, the Legion of Merit with Combat “V,” the Distinguished Flying Cross, three Bronze Stars with Combat “V” and two Purple Hearts for wounds received while in captivity. He returned to the Navy and served as the commanding officer of the USS Niagara Falls in 1975 and ’76 and was commanding officer of the aircraft carrier, USS Lexington, from ’77 to ’78. He would go on to serve as director of the Navy/Marine Corps Liaison to Congress in the late 70s and early 80s before retiring in 1982.

But his most important work would come after retirement, speaking on behalf of the men he believes were left behind in Vietnam and creating the American Defense Institute, a nonprofit organization built to increase public awareness of the need for a strong national defense. He ran for Congress in North Carolina in 1982 as a Republican, losing to Democratic incumbent Charles Orville Whitley, and in 1988, he went on a national speaking tour of U.S. Navy commands to encourage military personnel to vote and to speak on his experience as a POW. At 86, he still speaks at public events. He still

receives letters from around the world. And despite his fight, he still loves his country.

As they have several times on this day, McDaniel’s thoughts go back to Lt. James Kelly Patterson as we’re winding down. He recalls Patterson’s skill — he could hit a target within 15 feet from thousands of feet up. He was the heart of the A-6 aircraft. McDaniels says he was “just the pilot” — give me a banana and tell me where to steer.

He reveals that Patterson’s dream was to be a pilot himself. Bad eyesight kept him out of the cockpit, however. On one five-hour flight across the ocean, McDaniel surprised his friend by swapping seats with him shortly after takeoff (really difficult to do in such cramped space), and Patterson flew for four hours before the two switched seats again before landing. Had they been caught, it would have been a costly reprimand.

But McDaniel shared that story with the Pentagon after his return when they asked him for three things for their records that only Patterson would know. The happy story trails off into sadness.

“He’s probably angry for what he’s had to do,” McDaniel tells me. “His mother and father died without knowing what happened to him. And I’ve seen what it’s done to his brother. It’s just a sad situation.”

And this is how the interview ends. I have another five hours-plus ahead of me on the road, and it’s getting close to dinner time for the McDaniels. Dorothy invites me to stay over and use a guest bedroom. She insists, in fact, after I turn down the offer a few times. When Mike reminds her she’s asked me five times already, she replies, “Well, I’ll ask him a sixth time.”

Red McDaniel grabs a few hardback copies of *Scars & Stripes* and signs one for me and another for my father-in-law, who served in the

Navy and was aboard the USS Ranger during combat operations in Southeast Asia in 1966. The family tells me I have a place to stay the next time I bring my family up to visit Washington, D.C. — an incredibly kind gesture, considering how loud my kids are and the fact that I’ve known them less than four hours.

Mike McDaniel walks me to my car in front of the house. We talk a little about his parents and what exceptional people they are. He says earlier that one of the things he learned from his father and his experience was forgiveness. The fact that his father could forgive the men who beat and tortured him sticks with him to this day.

Outside, we talk about the other message that resonates. He tells me he lost his son over two years ago. The car he drives today — the one with a Philadelphia Eagles sticker on it that I poked fun of earlier before I knew better — was his son’s. Mike and his family were able to deal with this tragedy because of the experience and the lessons learned from Red McDaniel’s capture in Vietnam 40 years earlier.

“We’ve all had tragedy in our lives,” he says. “My father set the example with his belief that in all things, God works for good. We’ve seen that in our lives. When I lost my son, my dad told me, ‘Michael, this is a tragedy, and I can’t take that hurt away. But from my perspective, if I had known God would use what I went through in my captivity to eventually help people, it wouldn’t have made my captivity any easier. But it made it worth it. There will be good from this. I can’t explain how, but there will.’”

“I see it,” Mike adds. “Even just going through all of this again talking with you today, it brings back how blessed we are that we’ve had him home all these years. We’ve also had a chance to see the fruit from it. God’s promise in His word is definitely true.”

Contributors: Billy Liggett Writer

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**NO MUFF TOO TOUGH
NO DIVE TOO DEEP
HOO YAH**

Contributed by Charlie Weaver



Something to go into the work week with. These are shots of an old school diver Martin Spyk. Being on the bottom in a Mark-5 and diving mixed gas is a level of sketch I can’t even fathom 😊. I’m truly honored to be a part of this tradition. This is why the Mark-5 Dive helmet is the most recognized symbol in diving. To all you old timers out there, thank you for your service and hoo-ya!

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Transformation underway across the Military Health System— By Tom McCaffery, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs

The Military Health System is one of America’s largest and most complex health-care delivery systems, and the world’s preeminent military-medical enterprise. Saving lives on the battlefield and caring for 9.5 million beneficiaries in one of the nation’s largest health-benefit plans, the Military Health System (MHS) is embarking on a new chapter, ushering unprecedented reform to military medicine. This transformation marks a new way of doing business – from military treatment facility (MTF) management, to electronic health record (EHR) employment, to TRICARE benefit enhancements – and we are working hard to provide medical readiness and health-care

delivery that is more integrated and effective than ever before.

Organization Changes in the Military Health System

Oct. 1, 2018, was a landmark day for the Department of Defense (DoD) and military-health care. Jumpstarting one of the largest organizational changes in decades, the Army, Navy and Air Force began the process of transferring the administration and management of their military MTFs to the Defense Health Agency (DHA). Part of a larger effort to implement reforms across the MHS, this historic change was mandated by the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017. The law requires all MTFs to adhere to DHA-established standardized policies, procedures and clinical and business processes. In addition, through a phased approach, the DHA will assume direct responsibility for all MTFs across the MHS.

As such, the DHA will be responsible for MTF budgetary matters; information technology; health-care administration and management; administrative policies and procedures; and military-medical construction. We began the first phase on October 1 with the hospitals and clinics at Fort Bragg, Pope Field and Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, North Carolina; Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida; Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi; and Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina. These facilities are in addition to the DHA's existing management of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Fort Belvoir Community Hospital and their associated clinics. Subsequent phases of the MHS transition plan will include more than 50 percent of all hospitals and clinics in the continental U.S. coming under DHA control by October 2019 (phase 2), the remaining hospitals and clinics in the U.S. moving to DHA control by October 2020 (phase 3) and overseas hospitals and clinics by

October 2021 (phase 4). Once complete, this transition will enable the MHS to better support the DoD's medical-readiness requirements; provide a more consistent and higher quality experience for our patients; and deliver a more integrated military-health enterprise that reduces the costs required to operate the system, freeing up resources to invest in additional priorities.

Our highest priority is ensuring our medical forces are ready to support combat forces in the field, around the globe and building and sustaining a world-class health-care system geared at ensuring a medically ready force. The reforms underway create new opportunities for our providers both in our MTFs and through civilian-sector partnerships to build and maintain clinical skills – part and parcel to delivering on our readiness mission to support the warfighter, their families and retirees.

We will also be able to deliver a more integrated and consistent experience for our patients, whether they are active duty, retired or family members. For the first time, all of the department's health-delivery functions will be under one roof. The DHA will be responsible for both purchased care – what our beneficiaries receive from the civilian sector – and direct care – what our beneficiaries receive at our MTFs. This consolidation will produce a better experience for our patients when we implement improvements such as standardizing appointment scheduling systems and streamlining referral processes.

Deploying a New Electronic Health Record

As the MHS embarks on unprecedented reforms, we are utilizing new tools to position us for a successful future. We continue to deploy MHS GENESIS, the new EHR for the military, which will provide enhanced, secure technology to manage health—

connecting medical and dental information across the continuum of care, from point of injury to the MTF. MHS GENESIS will replace our legacy systems, which lack the capability to support the delivery of modern, integrated health care. We are scheduled to roll out the next wave in the fall of 2019, with the system-wide completion targeted for calendar year 2023.

The DoD purposefully deployed MHS GENESIS in four initial sites to identify and address lessons learned from initial implementation and utilize those experiences and best practices to inform the next wave of MHS GENESIS sites. We are seeing MHS GENESIS enable easier monitoring and response to patient health through an enhanced set of tools: data reporting and tracking capabilities, improved analytics, computer-aided decision support and a user-friendly patient portal. We've seen significant improvements in the four initial MHS GENESIS sites: a substantial decrease in the percentage of emergency-department patients who left without being seen; patient risk-alert systems leading to enhanced clinical decision making; and an avoidance of tens of thousands of duplicate lab tests. Like our broader transformation plans, at the heart of these efforts is a concerted push toward standardization, integration and readiness – and we are moving in the right direction.

TRICARE Enhancements

What do these major organizational changes mean for our beneficiaries? Our ultimate goal is to enhance the quality of care and improve access to health care for all our beneficiaries –making an already strong MHS even better. Alongside the MHS transformation come a number of ongoing enhancements to the TRICARE Health Plan. Over the last year alone, we have kicked off new TRICARE contracts for managed care through our civilian networks, which is more convenient for our beneficiaries when they

move, reduces administrative costs, and requires our managed-care support contractors to provide broader access to primary and specialty-care networks. We also rolled out the new TRICARE Select benefit and implemented a series of enhancements for TRICARE beneficiaries, including expanded access to preventive care, urgent care and mental-health services.

From November 12 through December 10, 2018, TRICARE held its first Open Season enrollment period, the annual period when beneficiaries can make changes to their plan for the following calendar year. Also, we replaced the Retiree Dental Program effective December 31, 2018, and now offer our 3.3 million retirees dental coverage through the Federal Employee Dental and Vision Insurance Program, or FEDVIP. Most beneficiaries are also now eligible for vision coverage – something DoD has never offered before. With 10 dental and four vision carriers, FEDVIP provides greater choice and scalability for 4.1 million eligible beneficiaries.

Bringing it all together: what we seek to achieve

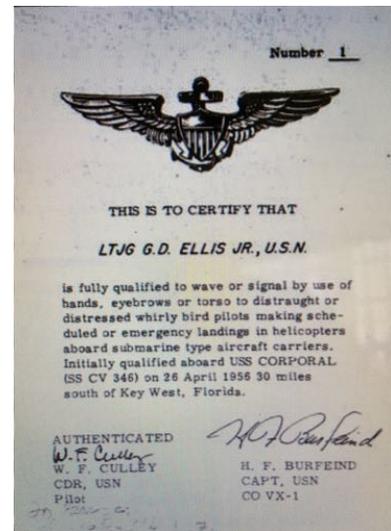
The major initiatives underway within the MHS are important steps in answering the call of DoD Secretary Jim Mattis to focus on three lines of effort to execute the National Defense Strategy: enhancing lethality, expanding alliances and partnerships and reforming the way we do business. Secretary Mattis’s call for business reforms is aimed, in his words, at “greater performance and accountability.” Our MHS reforms and the deployment of MHS GENESIS are setting us up to better support medical-readiness requirements and health-care delivery through integration and efficiency. These efforts help lower our costs, working to ensure the department has the resources to sustain the health benefits on which our Service members, retirees and their families depend.

Ultimately, all of these changes – the Military Health System transformation, MHS GENESIS, TRICARE enhancements – are aimed at taking the DoD’s health enterprise to the next level. Amidst these changes, we remain steadfast in our commitment to support readiness, both for our combat forces and for medical personnel. We are committed to meeting the evolving needs of today’s warfighter, and we will continue to deliver the highest quality health care for our 9.5 million active duty, retiree and family members who play such a critical role in keeping our country safe and secure. Our Service members and beneficiaries deserve nothing less.

The First Graduates of First Class Diver School 1969

Contributor: CharlieWeaver

Charlie Weaver top row R



USS CORPORAL SS 346 “RESCUE” of helicopter

Contributed by Charlie Weaver



Charlie Weaver while serving in submarines



MY HOME IN 1964 TUBES AFT !

UPDATE: Navy Blue Water Vietnam Veterans Get Big Win

The [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) will not appeal a January court ruling that [ordered it to provide health care and disability benefits](#) for approximately 90,000 veterans who served on [Navy](#) ships during the Vietnam War. The action likely paves the way for "Blue Water Navy" sailors and [Marines](#) to receive [Agent Orange](#)-related compensation and VA-paid health care benefits. *VA Secretary Robert Wilkie announced to members of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee on March 26 that he will recommend the Justice Department not fight the decision.* Former service members have fought for years to have their diseases recognized as related to exposure to the herbicide Agent Orange. TREA will

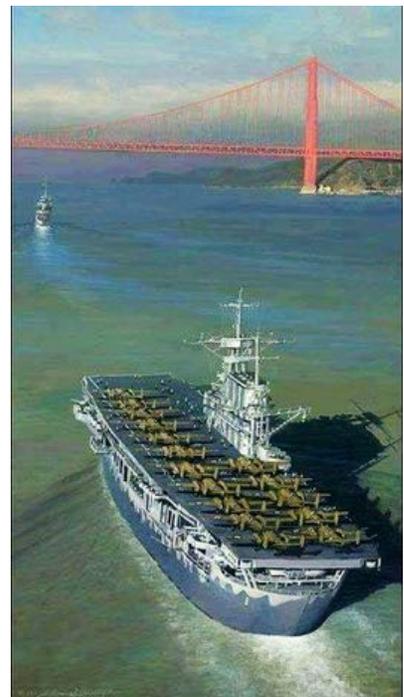
continue to monitor actions and provide updates as they occur

Editor's Note: As of 13 June 2019, US Senate has passed this measure and has forwarded to President Trump for his signature.

USS Hornet CV 8 Enroute WESTPAC 1942.

Contributed by Charlie Weaver

The Hornet leaving San Francisco in 1942 with Jimmy Doolittle's B-25's on board. The first strike against Japans mainland. I never saw this picture before today. Just awesome.



This photograph appears in some accounts of the Corporal incident, but it's clearly not the same event. Note that the helicopter is #52, whereas in our story the helicopter is #51. Still an interesting historical photograph; if anyone has more details on this picture, please add them.

. D. Ellis, the intrepid LTJG who risked life and limb to stand along the aft side of the sail to provide important hand signals to the pilot (literally feet from his face, was awarded this special citation by the helicopter captain and his boss.

Remember the Days



[U.S. Sailors](#)

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Humor in Uniform

I was standing at the bar at the VFW one night minding my own business.

This FAT ugly chick came up behind me, grabbed my behind and said, "You're kinda cute. You gotta phone number?"

I said, "Yeah, you gotta pen?"

She said, "Yeah, I got a pen".

I said, "You better get back in it before the farmer misses you."

Cost me 6 stitches...but,

When you're over seventy.....who cares?

I went to the drug store and told the clerk "Give me 3 packets of condoms, please."

Lady Clerk: "Do you need a paper bag with that, sir?";

I said "Nah... She's purty good lookin'!...."

When you're over seventy.....who cares?

If you thought that our mess decks were small, think about the below size aboard diesel subs.

Contributed by Charlie Weaver



I wonder how many could eat at the same time without having to stand. I remember having to stand to eat midday meal while on a cruise to the Caribbean.

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I was talking to a young woman in the VFW last night.

She said, "If you lost a few pounds, had a shave and got your hair cut, you'd look all right.";

I said, "If I did that, I'd be talking to your friends over there instead of you.";

Cost me a fat lip, but...

When you're over seventy.....who cares?

I was telling a woman in the Club about my ability to guess what day a woman was born just by feeling her breasts.

"Really" she said, "Go on then... try."

After about thirty seconds of fondling she began to lose patience and said, "Come on, what day was I born?"

I said, "Yesterday."

Cost me a kick in the nuts, but...

When you're over seventy.....who cares?

I got caught taking a pee in the swimming pool today.

The lifeguard shouted at me so loud, I nearly fell in.

When you're over seventy.....who cares?

I went to our VFW last night and saw a BIG woman dancing on a table.

I said, "Good legs."

The girl giggled and said, "Do you really think so?"

I said, "Definitely! Most tables would have collapsed by now."

When you're over seventy.....who cares?

I probably sent this to you before.
When you're over
seventy.....who cares?

"Count your life by smiles, not tears,
count your age by friends, not years,
and remember we do not quit
playing because we grow old.... we
grow old because we quit playing"

Contributed by Charlie Weaver

.....

1. Arguing with a woman is like
reading the Software License
Agreement. At the end, you
ignore everything and click I
Agree

2. Way too many of the stories
about my family end with, "and
that's why we're not allowed to go
back there any more."

3. What's with everyone wanting
to run a marathon these days? I
can't even motivate myself long
enough to run an errand

4. If cleanliness is next to
godliness then my car must be the
portal to HELL

5. When I say I need a cat nap,
I'm saying I need to sleep
constantly, only waking to eat,
stretch and glare at people

6. I thought the internet was
originally created to save time. So
what happened?

7. This gal is winking at me. Now
she's using the other eye. Never
mind. she's passing out

8. If your child threatens to ever
leave home, be sure to get it in
writing.

9. I told my ex gf that his paying
\$3.00 for Smart Water isn't
working

10. Ain't no sunshine when she's
gone. Ain't no psychotic
meltdowns, either

11. I was waiting for a call last
night so I put my phone under my
pillow, woke up this morning, my
phone was gone & \$1 in it's place.
\$\$\$+ tooth fairy

12. I texted my ex gf "Wish you
were here." I do that every time I
walk through a cemetery

13. When I was 5 and scared, I
asked my Mom if I could sleep
with her. She said no. She didn't
want to risk the monster following
me into her room and killing her

14. Being an adult is easy. it's like
riding a bike, except the bike is on
fire. Everything is on fire. And
you're in HELL

15. My Mom says that she's at the
age where her mind still thinks
she's 29, her humor suggest she's
12 while her body mostly keeps
asking if she's sure she's not dead
yet

16. Don't bother walking a mile in
my shoes, that would be boring.
Spend 30 seconds in my head.
That'll freak you right out.

17. Somedays I really believe that
my horoscope is going to say: Just
don't kill anyone today.

18. I'm not a hot mess. I'm a spicy
disaster.

19. Well, this morning has started
out like a galloping golden
retriever on a freshly waxed
hardwood floor

20. My ex gf's soul is so twisted
even Satan don't want it.

This week's oldie

21. A friend is someone you call
when you need bail money,,but
your Best Friend is sitting right
there beside you saying "The
party's not over until the mugshots
are taken !

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Doctor Visit

I was due for an appointment with
the gynecologist later in the week.
Early one morning, I received a call
from the doctor's office to tell me
that I had been rescheduled for that
morning at 9:30 am. I had only just
packed everyone off to work and
school, and it was already around
8:45am. The trip to his office took
about 35 minutes, so I didn't have
any time to spare. As most women
do, I like to take a little extra effort
over hygiene when making such
visits, but this time I wasn't going to
be able to make the full effort.

So, I rushed upstairs, threw off my
pajamas, wet the washcloth that was
sitting next to the sink, and gave
myself a quick wash in that area to
make sure I was at least presentable.
I threw the washcloth in the clothes
basket, donned some clothes,
hopped in the car and raced to my
appointment.

I was in the waiting room for only a
few minutes when I was called in.
Knowing the procedure, as I'm sure
you do, I hopped up on the table,
looked over at the other side of the
room and pretended that I was in
Paris or some other place a million
miles away.

I was a little surprised when the
doctor said, "My, we have made an
extra effort this morning, haven't
we?" I didn't respond.

After the appointment, I heaved a
sigh of relief and went home. The
rest of the day was normal .. Some
shopping, cleaning, cooking. After
school when my 6 year old daughter
was playing, she called out from the

bathroom, "Mommy, where's my washcloth?"

I told her to get another one from the cupboard.

She replied, "No, I need the one that was here by the sink, it had all my glitter and sparkles saved inside it."

Never going back to that doctor again..... never.

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Ventriloquist Apologizes

A young ventriloquist is touring Norway and puts on a show in a small fishing town. With his dummy on his knee, he starts going through his usual dumb blonde jokes.

Suddenly, a blonde woman in the fourth row stands on her chair and starts shouting, "I've heard enough of your stupid blonde jokes. What makes you think you can stereotype Norwegian blonde women that way? What does the color of a woman's hair have to do with her worth as a human being? It's men like you who keep women like me from being respected at work and in the community, and from reaching our full potential as people. Its people like you that make others think that all blondes are dumb! You and your kind continue to perpetuate discrimination against not only blondes, but women in general, pathetically all in the name of humor!"

The embarrassed ventriloquist begins to apologize, and the blonde interrupts yelling, "You stay out of this! I'm talking to that little shit on your lap."

Contributed by Don Tanner

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Those fabulous Jewish Comedians

Contributed by Earl "Charlie" Weaver

You may remember the old Jewish Catskill comics of Vaudeville days:

- Shecky Greene,
- Red Buttons,
- Totie Fields,
- Joey Bishop,
- Milton Berle,
- Jan Murray,
- Danny Kaye,
- Henny Youngman,
- Buddy Hackett,
- Sid Caesar,
- Groucho Marx,
- Jackie Mason,
- Woody Allen,
- Lenny Bruce,
- George Burns ,
- Allan Sherman,
- Jerry Lewis,
- Carl Reiner,
- Shelley Berman,
- Gene Wilder,
- George Jessel,
- Alan King,
- Mel Brooks,
- Phil Silvers,
- Jack Carter,
- Rodney Dangerfield,
- Don Rickles ,
- Jack Benny,
- Mansel Rubenstein,
- And so many others.

Couple of my favorites were Myron Cohen and the great Joan Rivers.

There was not one single swear word in their comedy.

Here are a few examples:

I just got back from a pleasure trip. I took my mother-in-law to the airport.

I've been in love with the same woman for 49 years! If my wife ever finds out, she'll kill me!

What are three words a woman never wants to hear when she's making love?
"Honey, I'm home!"

Someone stole all my credit cards but I won't be reporting it. The thief spends less than my wife did.

We always hold hands. If I let go, she shops.

My wife and I went back to the hotel where we spent our wedding night; Only this time I stayed in the bathroom and cried.

My wife and I went to a hotel where we got a waterbed. My wife called it the Dead Sea. She was at the beauty shop for two hours. That was only for the estimate. She got a mudpack and looked great for two days. Then the mud fell off.

The Doctor gave a man six months to live. The man couldn't pay his bill so the doctor gave him another six months.

The Doctor called Mrs. Cohen saying, "Mrs. Cohen, your check came back." Mrs. Cohen answered, "So did my arthritis!"

Doctor: "You'll live to be 60!"
Patient: "I am 60!"
Doctor: "See! What did I tell you?"

Patient: "I have a ringing in my ears."
Doctor: "Don't answer!"

A drunk was in front of a judge. The judge says, "You've been brought here for drinking."The

drunk says "Okay, let's get started."

Why do Jewish divorces cost so much? They're worth it.

The Harvard School of Medicine did a study of why Jewish women like Chinese food so much. The study revealed that this is due to the fact that Won Ton spelled backward is Not Now .

There is a big controversy on the Jewish view of when life begins. In Jewish tradition, the fetus is not considered viable until it graduates from medical school.

Q: Why don't Jewish mothers drink?

A: Alcohol interferes with their suffering.

Q: Why do Jewish mothers make great parole officers?

A: They never let anyone finish a sentence!

A man called his mother in Florida, "Mom, how are you?"

"Not too good," said the mother. "I've been very weak."

The son said, "Why are you so weak?" She said, "Because I haven't eaten in 38 days."

The son said, "That's terrible. Why haven't you eaten in 38 days?" The mother answered, "Because I didn't want my mouth to be filled with food if you should call."

A Jewish boy comes home from school and tells his mother he has a part in the play. She asks, "What part is it?" The boy says, "I play the part of the Jewish husband."

"The mother scowls and says, "Go back and tell the teacher you want a peaking part."

Q: How many Jewish mothers does it take to change a light bulb?

A: (Sigh) "Don't bother. I'll sit in the dark. I don't want to be a nuisance to anybody."

Short summary of every Jewish holiday: They tried to kill us. We won. Let's eat.

Did you hear about the bum who walked up to a Jewish mother on the street and said, "Lady, I haven't eaten in three days." "Force yourself," she replied.

Q: What's the difference between a Rottweiler and a Jewish mother?

A: Eventually, the Rottweiler will let go.

Q: Why are Jewish men circumcised?

A: Because Jewish women don't like anything that isn't 20% off.

Memories of the good ole days.

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Multi-drug-resistant fungus known as C. auris affecting hundreds in New York.
Contributed by Marty Walsh

Of the 643 cases diagnosed nationwide, 323 were in New York State, including nine in Nassau County. Medical scientists are working to develop a diagnostic because the infection is difficult to detect, and a new type of antifungal medication is in the works.

By the time New York's health commissioner announced the emergence of a multi-drug-resistant fungus two years ago, the microbe already was infecting the sickest of the sick in hospitals and nursing homes.

New York to date has recorded more cases of the multi-drug-resistant fungus *Candida auris*, known as *C. auris*, than any state in the country. Of the 643 cases diagnosed nationwide, almost half — 323 — have occurred in New York. The numbers include confirmed and probable cases, and health officials could not definitively say how many deaths have come as a result of the fungus.

Most of the infections have been concentrated in New York City, according to the state Department of Health. But hospitals and nursing homes in surrounding areas — Nassau, Westchester and Rockland — also have had cases. All date from the time when the fungus was first reported as a threat by state Health Commissioner Howard Zucker in 2017.

Medical scientists are scrambling to develop a diagnostic because the pathogen is difficult to detect with current hospital laboratory methods. Others are at work on a new type of antifungal medication they hope won't be repelled by the organism.

"We don't know why it emerged," said Dr. Maurizio Del Poeta, a professor of molecular genetics and microbiology at Stony Brook University's Renaissance School of Medicine. At the very least, he is recommending hospitals develop stricter rules on foot traffic in and out of patients' rooms because the microbe can be carried on the bottom of shoes.

The pathogen clings to surfaces in hospital rooms, flourishes on floors, and adheres to patients' skin, phones and food trays. It is odorless, invisible — and unlikely to vanish from health care institutions anytime soon.

"It can survive on a hospital floor for up to four weeks," Del Poeta said of *C. auris*. "It attaches to plastic objects and doorknobs."

C. auris can cause lethal bloodstream infections in people with weakened immunity, which include organ transplant recipients, anyone with cancer, HIV/AIDS or other forms of immune suppression. The mortality rate for *C. auris* has been about 35 percent, but most patients who succumb to the pathogen have other debilitating conditions.

While Del Poeta and scientists nationwide search for answers, public health experts worry about the explosive problem of multi-drug-resistant pathogens of all kinds — especially bacteria — and the looming threat of having no drugs capable of conquering them.

The bugs not only have learned how to fight, they've learned how to win. "This is survival of the fittest," said Dr. Tom Chiller, who heads the division of fungal diseases at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

Chiller defined *C. auris*, which took the public health community by surprise, as relatively rare compared with multi-drug-resistant bacteria. Each year in the United States, 2 million people become infected with bacteria that repel antibiotics. About 23,000 die as a direct result, and countless others experience long-term complications.

"We look at this as another wake-up call. These bugs have adapted to be resistant," said Chiller, who added *C. auris* has developed mechanisms to thwart medications in each class of antifungal drugs.

There are only three classes in existence, and the microbe in the best of cases is resistant to only a few of them. In the worst, it's resistant to all.

"Multi-drug resistance is something that we have never seen before in a fungus," said Del Poeta, who specializes in fungi and fungal

diseases. He and his colleagues are working on an antifungal treatment at Stony Brook, and have developed a startup company around it called Microrid. The drug, which they define as a "small molecule" medication, already has defeated the fungi in animal models.

But as Del Poeta and his team double down on drug development, the microbe continues to spread. The situation has grown precipitously dire in recent weeks, state data show.

Last month, New York became the first state to confirm patients had died of "pan-resistant" *C. auris* infections, which means the pathogen was resistant to every antifungal developed.

While doctors are sometimes able to use combinations of antifungals to effectively treat some patients with drug-resistant *C. auris*, two people who were hospitalized in New York City were so overwhelmingly infected that the pathogen repelled every medication used against it. Both patients died, but neither the state nor city health departments would identify the hospital or hospitals where the deaths occurred.

The pan-resistant *C. auris* cases were the first in the nation. They also were determined to be rare, and medical experts are predicting they probably will not be the last.

"If we don't want it to become like *Staphylococcus aureus*, then we have to act now," said Del Poeta, referring to the bacteria that became the poster child of drug resistance when it developed the ability to defeat the antibiotic methicillin, garnering the name methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, or MRSA.

Once concentrated only in hospitals, MRSA now can be found in gyms, schools — virtually anywhere people congregate. *C. auris* is the first fungus to develop

characteristics associated with the worst bacterial superbugs: multi-drug resistance, high mortality in susceptible populations and the capacity to spread.

"In order to get *Candida auris* out of a room, you have to take away everything — doorknobs, plastic items, everything. It is very difficult to eradicate it in a hospital," Del Poeta said. He said his institution has never had a patient with *C. auris*.

All of Long Island's cases have been diagnosed in Nassau, according to state health department data.

"There have been nine *C. auris* cases diagnosed in Nassau County facilities since the start of the outbreak. One was diagnosed in 2017, six in 2018 and two in 2019," Jill Montag, a spokeswoman for the state Department of Health, said in a statement.

"Seven of the patients who had *C. auris* passed away, but it is difficult to say whether [or] how much *C. auris* contributed to their deaths because the patients had other serious illnesses."

Though the health department will not reveal the names of the Nassau hospitals, the agency plans to list the pathogen as a serious infectious agent in its next Hospital-Acquired Infections report, which is to be made available to the public later this year, Montag said.

Some experts in infectious diseases contend a web of secrecy has engulfed the issue of *C. auris*, masking critical details about the pathogen. A similar veil of secrecy has surrounded other deadly pathogens, such as "nightmare bacteria," carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae, or CRE.

Just as *C. auris* has infected the sickest of the sick, so has CRE, an often deadly bacterial infection that has contaminated hospital

equipment and infected patients worldwide, said Lawrence Muscarella, a medical safety expert in Montgomeryville, Pennsylvania. He was the first to blow the whistle on CRE contamination of duodenoscopes, an endoscope used for examining and performing therapies on the bile ducts, pancreas and the duodenum, the first section of the small intestine.

Now, he contends, too much secrecy surrounds C. auris.

“Hospitals don’t want to disclose the number of Candida cases they have had because they are afraid that patients won’t go to those facilities,” Muscarella said. “One of the biggest problems in U.S. health care is the total lack of disclosure.”

Muscarella accuses government health agencies of being more interested in protecting hospitals’ bottom lines than disclosing useful information to consumers.

Scientists who are working on ways to defeat multi-drug-resistant fungal infections describe their research as a race against the clock. In New Jersey, which is grappling with more than 100 C. auris cases, Dr. Neeraj Chauhan, a microbiologist at Rutgers University, is working on a diagnostic to spot C. auris in patients' specimens.

Chauhan said the fungus, which is a yeast, closely resembles Candida albicans, a yeast commonly found on human skin. C. albicans is what’s known as a commensal organism, which means it’s a friendly fungus, not a foe.

Not having a precision diagnostic delays detection of the fungus, and studies have shown that a delayed diagnosis carries a mortality rate of more than 35 percent. If C. auris can be quickly and definitively diagnosed, Chauhan added, it would speed the isolation of infected patients and prompt drug treatment.

“We know of four different C. auris clades,” he said, referring to groups of the organism, which are known to have evolved from a single ancestor. “There are the East Asian, the Southeast Asian, South African and South American clades.

“Around here, we see mostly the Southeast Asian clade,” Chauhan said, underscoring that he has no definitive way of telling how a yeast first identified in Southeast Asia made inroads into hospitals on the Eastern Seaboard of the United States.

The emergence of drug-resistant fungi marks a new chapter in the growing and often deadly saga of microbial resistance, which is best known as the strategy that bacteria use to circumvent antibiotics.

Scientists such as Del Poeta contend it’s time for new methods of addressing resistant microbes of all kinds because infectious pathogens have developed the power to outwit, outpace and outmaneuver humankind’s most potent agents of chemical warfare, many of them developed in the 20th century.

ABOUT CANDIDA AURIS

- C. auris, as it is known, became entrenched in New York about eight years after its initial detection in Japan in 2009. Doctors there isolated the microbe from a patient who had an ear infection. However, studies in South Korea of archived biological specimens suggest C. auris may have been evident in that country as early as 1995. “Auris means ear in Latin,” said Dr. Maurizio Del Poeta of Stony Brook University, noting how the fungus got its name. How it became the source of a New York outbreak is still a matter of debate.

- Some scientists posit that C. auris spread around the world after its discovery in Japan. Others, such as Del Poeta, suggest simultaneous infections that began globally, all around the same time.
- The microbe clings to surfaces in hospital rooms, flourishes on floors, and adheres to patients’ skin, phones and food trays. It is odorless and invisible.
- C. auris can cause lethal bloodstream infections in people with weakened immunity, which include organ transplant recipients, anyone with cancer, HIV/AIDS or other forms of immune suppression.

UPDATE: Navy Blue Water Vietnam Veterans Get Big Win.

Courtesy of the The Retired Enlisted Association Vol 38 No. 1 Spring 2019

The Department of Veterans Affairs will not appeal a January court ruling that ordered it to provide health care and disability benefits for approximately 90,000 veterans who served on Navy ships during the Vietnam War. The action likely paved the way for “Blue Water Navy” sailors and Marines to receive Agent Orange-related compensation and VA-paid health care benefits. VA Secretary Robert Wilkie announced to members for the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee on March 26 that he will recommend the Justice Department not fight the decision. Former service members have fought for years to have their diseases recognized as related to exposure to the herbicide Agent Orange.

In Memoriam

Kenneth Landherr

· September 9, 1933 - June 8, 2019

· Brooklyn, New York

Kenneth was born on September 9, 1933 and passed away on Saturday, June 8, 2019.

Kenneth was a resident of Brooklyn, New York at the time of passing.

He is a veteran of the U.S. Navy 1952-56 with most significant duty assignment on the U.S.S. Bristol DD-857, barber, cook, carpenter and artist.

Funeral Mass is in United Methodist Church 6614 Central Ave, Glendale, NY 11385 at 10:00 a.m. Burial will follow at the Calverton National Cemetery Wading River, NY 11792.

In lieu of flowers please make donations to Shriners Children's Hospital or Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church.