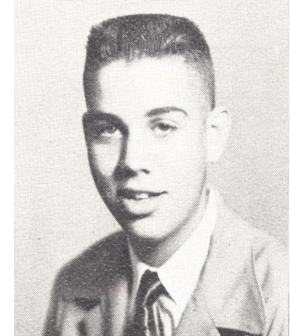




Mr. Terence "Terry" Burke Class of 1955



I was born in Taft on October 26, 1937, attended and graduated from St. Mary's Primary School. Taft Union High School was my next step in my education. It was all new. We had lockers and lots of books (I learned later that we really didn't have that many books), many new friends along with the old friends, and moving from class to class throughout the day. My best classes were in math, mechanical drawing, and science; not too good in English & social studies.

The teachers at TUHS were outstanding and taught me much more than just what was in the books. I learned to apply myself to a project/problem whether it was learning "Rule 1 Warning" in English or drawing freehand to scale in Mechanical Drawing. Yes, this is where I started to "grow up". What did I take away most of all from the classroom? Algebra, Geometry, & Mechanical Drawing – I use them regularly, all the time, even to this day. From there I moved to Taft Junior College and graduated two years later with my AA Degree.

I then spent one year working in the oilfields to earn money to continue college. I always planned to finish college - - that was just the way it was to be. The following year, I started my junior year at the University of California-Long Beach and graduated in January 1961. Why Long Beach? Well, it was a convenient location, reasonable cost, and, above all, it had a good Life Sciences Department. My goal was to become a Marine Biologist, and I graduated with a BS in Zoology. Why Marine Biology / Zoology? "I liked it" and I thought I would like to spend the rest of my life performing research in that field.

While at Long Beach I received my military draft notice and decided that the Navy would be a better way to go. I entered into Navy Officer Candidate School and, while there, volunteered for Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) School. The Big reason why? Well, it paid an extra \$100 a month for hazardous duty pay. Also, the program included 3 months in Key West, FL attending Navy EOD Diving School and 7 months in Indian Head, MD (about 35 miles south of Washington, DC) attending EOD School. So, it would give me those things I loved – swimming, scuba diving in the ocean, and "Ocean Adventure". Those two schools were probably the best in the world and, upon graduation, one knew all about all types of ordnance – underwater, ground, special weapons, chemical, and biological.





My first civilian job was managing an explosive test facility just outside of Washington, D.C. In 1974, I began my civilian career with the Navy back in Indian Head, MD designing, developing, fielding, and supporting the tools and equipment used by the EOD operators in all services. From there I went up to headquarters in Arlington, Virginia managing the Joint Service EOD Program. We moved the office out of headquarters building in the late 80's and it was back to Indian Head, but still doing the same Program Management work.

I retired from the government in December 1999 and celebrated retirement and the new millennium together. A week after I retired, I started work as a self employed consultant supporting the EOD Program Office where I had just retired as Deputy Director. Big change? – Yes, now I was working for the same people who used to work for me! Nicely, things have gone well, and what I intended to last no more than a couple of years, is still ongoing. The work today involves autonomous, unmanned underwater vehicles used in mine warfare and other underwater search operations. It is an interesting, fast paced technology.

I met my wife, Doyce, in 1984 through a friend, and we were married in 1985. She was a real estate agent, and a good one at that, but she can't even begin to read a map. I've never been able to figure that one out. We enjoy eating out, exercising and traveling. We are looking forward to the day when we can spend more time seeing the sights in and around Washington, D.C., as well as the rest of the country and abroad. Our first real sightseeing trip in the United States took place en route to the Taft Union High Class of 1955, 50th Reunion. We drove across on a southern route and returned on a northern route after visiting Doyce's parents in northern California. We departed Springfield, Virginia (home) the last week in April 2005 and visited/toured a total of seven National Parks and several National Monuments including Grand Canyon, Sequoia Nat'l Park, Kings Canyon, Yosemite Nat'l Park, Grand Teton Yellowstone, and Mount Rushmore (on the 4th of July). The total trip ended up taking almost three months. It was well worth it!

Looking back, it's been a good life overall. Nothing fancy or exotic, but rewarding at times with the good times outnumbering the bad ones. What more should a person wish for?

