

MHS 1964 Class Notes

Issue 9 - April 2020

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Bob Allan writes, "THANK YOU, BOB POWERS! IT IS NICE TO HEAR FROM AN OLD FRIEND.

THESE DAYS IT IS NICE TO HEAR FROM ANYONE!

Everyone here is still healthy. My wife and I have stayed in quarantine at home since the evening of Thursday, March 12. We wave to family and grandkids through the window! Food gets delivered. I have gone to the office twice to bring work home, living by phone, email and meetings by ZOOM.

I could share some random thoughts, some witty, some not! But, today is not the time.

I was confident that we would all survive by being careful. But after Tuesday's news anticipating hundreds of thousands of deaths in coming weeks and the devastating effect this virus is having on the sailors on that aircraft carrier ..now I am very worried.

Someone once told me, when you're at the end of your rope, tie a knot at the end and hang on for the ride!

Stay safe. Hang on. Keep in touch."

John Boyce writes, "Staying in Florida until the virus is under control. At least the weather is warm."

Dennis "Moose" Brogna writes, "Well, my wife and I had scheduled a trip to Australia/New Zealand for March, but the virus screwed that up. So I rescheduled it for December, a 10 day cruise Sydney to Sydney. Hopefully we'll be able to take the trip. Down here in SC it's not as bad as it is up north. We can still go to the beach providing we keep distance between others. This week Myrtle Beach cancelled all resort reservations until May 1st and there's talk of closing the airport. Most people are staying in their homes, but because I'm involved with the local fire department, I'm out often. Well, stay safe everyone and hopefully this crisis will pass."

Brad Buck writes, "Since we're highly encouraged to stay in, or around our home, this has proven to be a good time to get some yard work done, and some painting. In fact, I started painting the exterior of our house here in South Carolina a couple of days ago. I have to go get some more paint today, so that I can continue this project.

I hope that all of our classmates will get through these times in good health. Take care, and do your best to stay healthy."

Paul Cappers writes that he has written a book, *Better at 71*. You can order a copy at the publisher's website, www.harmoniousblacksmithpress.com, in either print form or electronic download. *Better at 71* explores many aspects of senior life that can be fulfilling, enjoyable, yes, even BETTER than the life you have experienced to date. With self-deprecating humor, the author leads you through such interesting topics as "the telephone-pole philosophy," "the slower minute hand," and "imperfection and marriage," as well as the more conventional themes of kindness, love and faith.

Stephen Condit writes from Finland, "I hesitate to write, because few of you will remember me, as I was only one year at Milton. But publishers encourage authors to assist in marketing, so here is my contribution. The London-based academic press Anthem Press published last summer my magnum opus, possibly my last opus, ***Anarchism in Local Governance: A Case Study from Finland***. It is a philosophical memoir of my career as a local politician and citizen activist in my hometown of Savonlinna. It is rather heavy going and prohibitively expensive, but a cheaper paper-back edition is planned for this coming autumn."

Cheryl Farrington writes, "Thank you for reaching out. I'm hoping you and your family are doing well and staying healthy. Wish I had something exciting to tell you, but it's pretty much dull here. I'm not complaining. It's just how it is right now. Just trying to take this one day at a time like everyone else."

Harold Fienberg writes, "Hope all is well with you and the rest of our class."

Most of us remember the Polio epidemic in 1954. Beaches were closed and schools were not opened when scheduled. Ironically, we were in the high risk group at that time because we were young. Guess we just can not get a break.

Stay safe and healthy."

Eliot Gilbert writes, "My wife and I have been 'sheltered in place' in Dallas for 3 weeks now. My son went to an island in the Bahamas to wait out the pandemic. He must have believed Trump's initial prognosis, but came back in a week fearing he would be stuck there for months."

We were supposed to be in Palm Springs last weekend for a wedding and some golf. Everything was canceled, but the decision had nothing to do with the virus! We were also going from there to San Antonio for the holidays and Grandparents day at the grandchildren's school. That was canceled because of the virus.

I don't know anyone who has the virus, but my brother tested negative In Boston, and a Dr I play golf with, who went on a cruise in Feb, tested positive for the flu just after coming back.

Hope everyone stays well!"

Susan Hackley writes, "With one son in Alaska and another in Germany, we're dealing with the coronavirus in very different environs. My husband Paul and I are enjoying work and life at home and figure if we don't start decluttering and organizing now, we never will. We live in JP and enjoy daily rambles in the Arnold Arboretum and Larz Anderson Park. Our daughter and her family live in Wellesley, and they are rigorously socially isolating, so we see lots of them. Our five and three year old grandsons come for a weekly sleepover, which gives their parents a break. I am beyond grateful that I finished my documentary film, *Veteran Children: When Parents Go To War*, a year ago. We've had many showings, including at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans on Veterans Day, and we've been accepted to two film festivals. One purpose of the film is to urge people to talk about what the impact has been on their family of having a veteran parent. Our website is www.veteranchildren.com. I admire Janice Blake and all the beautiful work she has done to illuminate her family member's WWII service."

Chris Jepson writes, "Hi Bob. Thanks for compiling Class Notes. I commend your effort and regard it as a wonderful public service to MHS class 64. I had lunch with Dave & Joan White, Bob Cadigan, and Bob Anderson (65) a month or so back at Granite Links in Quincy before all this Covid hit the fan. It was great to catch up. Like most others, travel plans have been postponed and just trying to stay active in a confined sort of way. Two of my three kids are nurses, so I have a real concern for their well-being. I'm sure other class members with family in

"health care" can relate. My son Christopher works in the intensive care unit at Memorial Sloan Kettering in NYC and is on the front line so to speak. Wishing all, good health and happiness."

Nancy Kornetsky Okstein writes, "I'm hunkered down in Phoenix, AZ. Luckily the weather is beautiful so taking a daily walk helps keep my spirits up.

I have two grand-daughters graduating from high school this year. Of course, all graduations, proms, senior days, etc. are cancelled. And who knows what fall will bring when time to start college. Made me reminisce about senior year at MHS and the many great teachers and good friends. I'm still in touch with a few.

Wishing all my "elderly" friends a safe time."

Mary Lang Sellers writes, Hi Bob, guess I am feeling inspired to answer your request. I retired in mid-October from my nursing job at the Community HealthCenter of Cape Cod where I had been working for over 15 years, some of it for the "Free Clinic" in Falmouth, MA. At the beginning of November I moved up to Ontario Canada to live with my daughter, Shaun who is a PhD student at McGill in Montreal in Ecological Economics. Needless to say, she is not currently in Montreal but home here in the woods of mid Ontario, near Algonquin Park for any of you who are hikers/campers. We still have a fair bit of snow which is slowly melting away, (it is supposed to snow tomorrow), and the mud season is approaching. We are doing well here, self-isolating, living off the grid, with solar panels, wood heat, it is a very sustainable home thanks to my daughter. Also have the company of 2 lovely dogs: a white Pyrenees and a rather treat oriented friend's dog we have been babysitting while they were in Mexico, he should be going home in a few days. Keeping up with friends via the internet and phone, cooking, projects, webinars, reading and of course Netflix. Stay safe all and keep washing those hands."

Linda Lewis Santoro writes, "Best wishes for staying safe and away from the virus! We are "in" in FL, passing the time with books, games and jigsaw puzzles, -- and catching up with old friends like all of you, and new ones as well."

Cynthia Lien Burgess and **Brad Burgess**, write, "Brad and I are just hanging out. Yard work all done - no excuse with warm weather and plenty of time! Last fall we did a river cruise on the Danube River including Prague. Bob McCusker and Ron and Ginny Peterson were also on the trip. Other than that, it has been a quiet winter. We are in our third week of being at home but feel it can only help to get rid of this virus. We cancelled a trip to Italy and Croatia in September. Too many unknowns now so we will do it next year. It won't be too long before our boat goes in the water so that will give us something to do. So we hope you are all well!"

Janice Marad Blake, in September 2019 published *The Battalion Artist*, a book about the World War II paintings of Nat Bellantoni. Put together with Nancy Bellantoni, Janice's longtime friend and Nat's daughter, *The Battalion Artist* is available through both Amazon and The Hoover Press (latter offers a downloadable downloadable pdf as well as the hardcover book at <https://www.hoover.org/research/battalion-artist>). Janice describes how Nancy and she set about putting together their book and summarizes her part in this project at <https://janiceblake.com/writing-the-battalion-artist-what-was-nat-thinking/>. Janice is in the process of writing her second book about her Uncle Joe's stories - stay tuned!

Bruce McEnany simply writes, "Safe And Well for NOW!!!!"

Ron McNeill writes “The McNeill's are staying put in Mendham, NJ. We hope you are all safe and healthy! Although a bit unnerving to be so close to the virus epicenter (45 west of Manhattan), Joan and I are content to staying put and to waiting out the scourge. I think most of you will agree the state of retirement is an advantage to the notion of staying home and to keeping our distance. Other than walks in the neighborhood, I've not left the house for 31 days.

Our 3 children are: daughter & husband located in Katonah, NY (3 grand boys ages 7, 4 and 4 mo.), son in Portland, OR, and daughter in Jersey City (she's home with us). Thank you, FaceTime, for daily connections with family!

Stay home and stay safe my friends!”

John Merrick writes, “Hi Bob, thanks for the "Hey" ...hunkered down in Austin TX,...look forward to the letter.”

Paul Nangeroni writes, “My wife Vickie and I are well. I'm (still!) practicing violin a lot and hoping my Ristorante Piccolo gig will resume by Fall or Winter. I'd like to record some violin and piano classics later this year or next. I guess I'd like to create some musical legacy, and I've got the time to polish some of my past repertoire.

The other day in a supermarket I commented to a fellow senior gentleman how some folks look better from a distance. He agreed and we both had a good laugh!

Never thought I'd be a Tampa Bay Bucs fan. What are the odds Brady could play against the Pats in a Super Bowl?

I hope all of you are staying well and doing what you really enjoy to pass this time of isolation.

Jeri Needel Epstein writes, "We are socially isolating in the middle of Washington DC. The entire city is shut down. It's possible to order curbside from some restaurants and you have to stand in line (6 feet apart) to enter food stores. There is a ten person limit per store. Most of us use food delivery services.

It has certainly been an opportunity to spend more /all the time with family, do your own housekeeping, beauty regimen, etc. In short: survivalists have been ready for this for a while. Our dog may/ may not be delighted for the constant company. She surely gets walked a lot more. Having a large, erratic dog helps people to keep automatic social distancing.

My husband has just entered his fifth retirement. After a lifetime as a senior partner in a multinational law firm, he joined the board of the University of Maryland Centers for Environmental Studies which does oversight on the Chesapeake Bay's ecosystem. I am on the board of a charter school, Arena Stage, and an elected official — at the very bottom rung of DC Government. It's astonishing how popular you become when you are willing to work for free.

I hope you and yours are healthy and remain that way.”

David Pierce writes, “As you are probably aware, I am the US Representative for a private orphanage in Kiev, Ukraine. My wife and I provide hosting for children during Winter and Summer vacations to give a blessing and hope for the future. Many of these children have been abandoned, and abused both physically and emotionally. We find host families that take the children and show care and love in their homes. This past Winter we had 6 children and 6 host families, and you can see our group at the Orlando Airport (attached).



The other news, which is related, I continue to provide travel services to a small group of clients. 10% of the profits from this business goes to support the orphanage known as The Father's House. It is a private orphanage and is supported by donations. During this Pandemic, the orphanage is really struggling to feed the children as many donors are fearful. I have sent personal funds as the travel / cruise business is nearly at a standstill. I have provided a link to the Father's House website (it is a 501C3 charity) in case anyone would like to help during this terrible pandemic. Link to Father's House: <https://www.a-fh.org/>. My wife and I are shown under "Key Staff".

The other "good news", and a blessing is that during the Winter hosting, we applied to Shriners Hospital for corrective surgery for one of the girls that was abused so badly that she has a deformed leg. They have agreed to provide the corrective surgery without cost when the pandemic is lifted. :)

My wife and I continue to actively cruise and have planned a 14 night Norway cruise on Princess in August (virus permitting!)"

Barry Polonsky writes, "My family is grateful for happiness and good health and I wish the same for all of our classmates."

Bob Powers writes, "For those who have not heard, Sandy and I sadly lost our daughter-in-law last August during liver transplant surgery after a very long battle with cancer - you can read some of Erika's truly amazing story at <https://www.cnn.com/2019/08/23/health/erika-zak-liver-transplant-obituary/index.html>. On the positive side, our six year old grandson in NY successfully battled Burkitt's lymphoma last spring and is now a healthy seven year old second grader.

Sandy and I felt truly lucky this winter to be able to return to our favorite Caribbean island for some needed rest and rejuvenation. We were in Anguilla in mid-March when the coronavirus first started to spread in the US and had flights home booked for April 1, when we heard that the airport would be closing to flights from the US. We got online right away and were very lucky to book the last seats on a flight to Boston for Monday, March 16. At the time, Anguilla had zero cases of coronavirus and we had been seriously considering staying longer than April 1 (as Anguilla seemed the safer place to be), but the prospect of not being ABLE to get home to Cape Cod was the decider.

Since getting back, we have been staying safe on the Cape by pretty much isolating ourselves from others. Besides taking some long walks, we've been out a very few times for necessities, but we've even started using Instacart for grocery deliveries. We're using FaceTime more to stay in touch with our family and with friends (had a dinner party recently via FaceTime). World has changed!!

I'm not really sure how this all ends. We'll all get through the pandemic, but I'm not sure life will ever go fully back to normal as we knew it. Even the prospect of going to a play or concert or out to a busy restaurant now seems somewhat daunting, but hopefully someone will find an effective medical treatment and/or a vaccine for the

COVID-19 virus, and something resembling our old normal will come back. In the meantime, I hope all of you are well and that everyone stays safe!!"

Ron Suffers writes, "Hello all! Please excuse me for not being more communicative over the years with my fellow classmates from Milton High. The standard alibi is "I was too busy," but that really is a weak excuse. All I can say is that I will try to connect more frequently going forward.

What we had in common 56+ years ago was Milton High, but now we all have this coronavirus environment as a shared experience. My father was born in March 1918 and was an infant when the Spanish flu pandemic occurred. I recall my grandmother mentioning that they made special prayers that he would survive (as 50-100 million people around the world did not). Gladly, my father made it through which enabled me to be here now. Some of your parents may have been alive in 1918. If so, did they relate any stories about it to you?

Like you, I am "staying home." I consider myself semi-retired and, since end-2019, I have not been working. Today, the number of people who filed for unemployment this past week was 6.6 million making it almost 10 million in just two weeks. I think it will be awhile before we see unemployment rates around 3.5%. In our social studies classes, did not we learn how tough life was for our parents and others during the Depression? I truly hope that history does NOT repeat itself and that the government can help support people until the virus is behind us.

For the past 25 years of my career, I have been doing internal audit work. I started doing this at Fidelity Investments until I was let go from there in 2002 due to layoffs relating to the dot-com crash. Thereafter, I have had a few "regular" employee jobs, but mostly my work has been as a temp contractor (doing internal audit work) for various companies such as Akamai, State Street, John Hancock, Bright Horizons, Wells Fargo, TD Bank and others. It certainly gave me excellent experience and the chance to expand my expertise.

What type or types of work have you done? What were important contributions that you made in your field? Was your work meaningful? While I have enjoyed doing the audit work, these days I wonder whether it was all transitory and only "for the moment" without much that is lasting or that had impact on people's lives. For example, my father was a pharmacist and you could say that his work was transitory; however, he had impact in helping people regain their health and feel better to conduct their lives.

Over the years, I have traveled a bunch and really would like to travel more. As you recognize there are more years behind you than ahead of you, I realize there is so much more (bucket list) to see and do. One thing that I contemplate from time-to-time is to do a cross-country trip by car with objectives of (a) seeing the country again [I've visited almost all states already] and (b) visiting with family who live in other states. Some relatives are much older than I am, and I would like to see them and be with them while they are alive (versus attending a funeral). Others are more or less my age or younger, but chances that they will visit me in Boston are small and I feel it appropriate to visit them while I am capable of doing so.

Talking about "capability," I have always been fortunate to enjoy good health, but 2019 taught me that I am not invulnerable. During 2019, I experienced some arthritis in a knee...then Lyme disease and then pneumonia. Just when I thought I would exit 2019 with just three health "strikes," I came down with the influenza...despite having a flu shot. I can empathize with people that have coronavirus because of the similarity of symptoms. With the current coronavirus environment up-ending much of what we do, that also makes you think that you could be vulnerable – regardless of all precautions that you may take.

Let me wrap up before exceeding my 5000 word limit. Regardless of all the worries about coronavirus, we all should look at the glass as half-full...or more. We grew up in the wonderful Town of Milton. We had super educational and interpersonal experiences at Milton High. We have lived lives with many happenings and much to be remembered. I wish that we all keep in touch and have good health for many years to come.

Best regards..."

Donna Winer Foster writes, "Hi Everyone. Well, we are still in Florida. Since Nov. Thought we would be heading home beginning of May, but we are rethinking. They just closed our pool and golf course and the community building has been closed for a couple of weeks. I guess we can sit in FL just as well as cold Rochester. My aches and pains do better in FL than in ccccold Rochester. 😊 Other than that, our winter has gone relatively well. But beaches, parks, golf courses, stores all closed. I hope you are all in good health, happy and living life as best as you can considering what is going on in the world.

All my best. Hugs! 😊"

In Memoriam

If you hear of the passing of any classmates, please let us know at info@miltonhighclassof1964.com. The most up to date list is currently at <http://miltonhighclassof1964.com/inmemoriam.html>.

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