

A senior's thanks

After a 38-year career in the Navy and nearly 30 years in Brevard working in elder care, I often run into people from my past. In fact, I never know where the next call for help might come from. Recently I was intrigued by a call to our Helpline because the name on caller ID was the same as a man I had known long ago. Here is a short version of the story.

The call I took was from a woman whose husband had been an engine man on a submarine, the USS Cochino, back in 1949 in the Barents Sea, north of the Arctic circle. The Cochino and the USS Tusk, another submarine, were at sea conducting exercises when a fire broke out on Cochino. The sea was rough, and in trying to transfer men from Cochino to Tusk several were burned. One was the Executive Officer, who in managing to save several men, was badly burned himself.

Ten years later, I was preparing for my



**HELPING SENIORS
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my gold dolphins to qualify as a submarine officer. The tests consisted of an in-port examination and a test at sea by the Division Commander. My Division Commander was thorough and tough in his examinations. The first test was at sea on a submarine different from mine. In preparing for the tests it was common to ballast the ship light or heavy, and shift water from aft forward to make it bow heavy on the dive, all designed to test the officer on his ability to recognize and correct problems.

As I gave the order to submerge the

ship, the dive started normally. But both plane operators did their job incorrectly, increasing the dive angle. I was holding on to the ladder to the conning tower, while water coming from the auxiliary manifold shorted out the electrical circuits in the control room, and the master gyro spilled its mercury. In short, we had a mess, but I managed to level us out at 300 feet. When the Division Commander asked if I was worried when all this happened, I said I was doing what I had been trained to do. That was the only at sea test I did. The following week he pinned my gold dolphins on and congratulated me on my successful qualification.

The irony of the story is that the Executive officer on Cochino, the submarine in the fire, was the Division Commander who qualified me in 1959 and was a shipmate of the husband of the lady who called us for help. It truly is a

small world. The caller needed help staying in her home and knew about us through Hometown News and our weekly radio show.

Throughout my life I have met many wonderful people to whom I owe thanks. That chain continues here in Brevard County through my work with seniors who need help. To those who have provided financial assistance, we owe a tremendous Thank You and a prayer for your continued help as we work to assist those in need. Many thanks.

Author's comment. For a complete description of the incident, google Cochino fire. I was at 400 feet once when we had a fire, and it is an experience. I am thankful to be here.

Contact Helping Seniors at 321-473-7770, at www.HelpingSeniorsOfBrevard.org, or at P.O. Box 372936, Satellite Beach, FL 32937.

Rants

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Watch out for slippery bathroom floors

I recently had an experience I'd like to share with all who stay at hotels and occupy an accessible (disability) room with a

roll-in shower, which has no curb between the shower area and the main part of the bathroom, merely a hanging curtain.

I took a shower shortly before bedtime and, as probably often happens, some of the shower water, along with soap and shampoo, spilled beyond the curtain onto the main tiled floor a short distance from the shower area, making it very slippery.

The following day, after I had left the hotel for several hours and the room had

been cleaned, I walked into the bathroom, made it to the sink, and both feet started to slip sideways. It was so bad that I had to hold onto the sink and otherwise would have fallen onto the hard slippery tile floor.

Evidently, the floor had been casually mopped, spreading the residue from outside the shower over the entire bathroom floor, rather than separately cleaning and drying it.

The only way I was able to use the bathroom was to spread bath towels on the floor between the door and the sink and toilet, reducing a probable serious accident.

I informed the front desk and stayed elsewhere the next few days.

If this experience is read about by others, perhaps possible accidents will be prevented. Maybe hotel chains should be notified somehow.

The tradition continues... Come join the fun!

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