

JULY/AUGUST 2004
Class Notes – 1957

Responding to my threat to devote this column to news about my twin grandsons, *Joe Aein sends along the following: When do the twins start calculus? I am sure they will grow up before I do; but that may not be such a good idea. I haven't had a new, let alone good idea since I left Tech. So you are just going to have to go with what material you might get from the others. But if the truth be told, how will you know they aren't faking it like we did on our lab reports? But then who cares! Note: I wouldn't mind printing some tall tales. Joe adds a postscript. He has a granddaughter who is a whiz with a Leap Pad and much better behaved than he.

*Lester Gimpelson sends word that after 30 years living in Brussels he has sold his home there and plans to spend more of his time at his Beacon Street home built in 1828 which faces the Public Gardens. Les retains a *pied-a-terre* in Belgium in addition to a house on the Massachusetts coast just north of Magnolia. While bouncing around Europe since his retirement in 1987, he has spent more time not only in Massachusetts but also visiting family in Colorado and on the West Coast. Les also finds time for an annual pilgrimage to quiet sites on the Big Island and Kauai in Hawaii. In both Massachusetts homes Les keeps a supply of Belgian chocolates and at least a dozen varieties of Belgian beers ready for visiting classmates and others from MIT.

*Gerry Marwell reports that after 38 years in the Sociology Department at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the highest rated department of sociology in the country for about 25 of those years, he retired in January 2001. It turned out that his pension paid more than his salary, and it seemed contrary to what he had been taught in Course XV to teach for minus money. An angioplasty and prostate cancer surgery also slowed him down some. Gerry thinks he flunked Retirement 101, so when his wife, Bobbie decided to retire from her position as Title I coordinator and resident intellectual for the Madison Public Schools, he accepted a half-time position as Professor of Sociology at NYU. In August of last year they moved to a small apartment just off Washington Square, and Gerry moved into a tiny office at NYU. They have not sold their house in Madison in case it doesn't work out, and they plan to spend summers there. Gerry reports that New York has been exciting and demanding. Since he had not taught for two years he had to retool his courses. He teaches the 200-student introductory course along with one he has never taught before, the sociology of religion. After setting up their ten apartment, Gerry advises never to look for one there if at all possible, but he has begun to develop relationships with new colleagues and he and Bobbie are like kids in a candy shop, being much too frantic in their pursuit of the entertainment banquet available there. They go out to something there almost every other night. The Marwell's daughter Nicole is an Assistant Professor of what else, Sociology, at Columbia, which is another attraction of the city. Their son Evan who had been in New York, moved his wife and two children to San Francisco, after forming his third company, a hedge fund partnership. His first company, Infonxx, provides directory assistance to cell phone users. It started with only four employees and now employs over 3,000. Gerry's choice to teach sociology of religion has more to do with his writings about whether the world in general and the US in particular are becoming more secular or not, rather than any personal religiosity in the face of aging and death. After publishing six books and more than 60 articles, He finds

that his desire to understand the human condition is as strong as ever, but that the itch to make public pronouncements through publication has atrophied. Although current events have emphasized the importance of religion in the affairs of the world, his own observations argue that there is less there than meets the eye.

*Hal Smith relates that the November issue of Arms Control Today published his article on "Controlling Threat Reduction" which deals with the steps that the Department of Defense should take to reduce the danger of nuclear terrorism associated with poorly guarded Russian nuclear weapons. In a completely different publishing mode, Hal reports that his wife Marian has succeeded in obtaining and scanning a photo of the Phi Gammas, classes 57-60, cheerily singing away under the Christmas tree. It is available to anyone who e-mails a request. Also available is news of their grandchildren.

*Mike Brenner reports that he has two granddaughter and two more grandkids on the way. After 30 years in Executive Search, he morphed in the last few years into coaching corporate executives and private individuals. His calendar is pretty full, and he is enjoying this new focus very much. His wife is his partner in the venture and is doing Life Coaching for Women. You can see details on his website (brennerresources.com). Mike is also President of a not-for-profit called Fedcap, which provides employment and training for people with disabilities. They have an annual budget of over \$60 million, employ about 1500, and train over 3000 people per year. They are able to place about 90% of those they train. Mike did the NY Marathon in 2000 as a race walker in 5:43 and plans to compete again in 2005. Mike has let me know that his granddaughters are bright, independent and fun, in case my four year old twin grandsons are interested. Sounds good to me.

*Ben Inserra sends along this update. He is finally going to retire, or at least stop getting paid for working. He recently contracted for a house to be built in Port St. Lucie, FL which should be completed by the time you read this. Ben is looking forward to the change. He will still be working as a volunteer with Cape Cares, which sends medical and dental teams to Honduras, and this past March he made his twelfth trip there. Ben does a little of everything for them, translator, handyman, and chief cook and bottle washer. In Florida Ben expects no trouble in finding other volunteer activities to replace those he left behind when he moved south. He also hopes to finally learn the game of golf which he has been playing at for years without getting very good at it. Regular play should help. Finally, Ben expects to be able to do more pleasure traveling that has been on hold for the last few years for a variety of reasons.

*Ralph Gilbert relates that he is alive and well and living in Cambridge, MA. After receiving one degree in Engineering he returned to Tech and got a second degree, this time in Architecture. Following his academic stints, Ralph went on to play Monopoly, amassing a portfolio of five hotels, which he recently turned over to his son.

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