

SEPTEMBER 2003 Class Notes for 1957

*Tolly Kizilos writes to say, "I have often thought about sending in some news, but never had anything that might be of special interest to anyone who knew me as a college student. So much has changed for all of us. We grow out of things, we grow in things and we just plain grow, whether we like it or not! But, it seemed unwise to never write a word all these years, so I decided to surface and put my oar in the water and paddle away, now that Jack seems to be receptive to any news at all. The challenge is to summarize 45 years of life in a couple of paragraphs. I think I can do it:

"After getting my S.M., Betty Ahola (Course VIII) and I were married in Cambridge. It was the best decision I made in my life, and the essential part of 44 years of a great family life. The Lord has blessed us with three sons, all happily married to wonderful women, and with six delightful grandchildren, all of them perpetually in motion and in pursuit of "entropic" rearrangements of anything that's not bolted down to the floor. Most of us live in Minnesota, our home for over 40 years now. Summers, I go to the lake for fishing, reading and writing (I stopped doing 'rithmetic a couple of years ago!)" After some fun years of Engineering Research (in Aerodynamic Controls), and an MFA in Writing and Modern Literature funded by a good fellowship, I went into Organization Development (O.D.) in 1971 and built a career at Honeywell. Two years after I had been on this job I realized that I had taken all my electives in Psychology, some in Group Dynamics with Professor Edgar Schein, who by the time I went into O.D. had become known as the "father of O.D. Sometimes our gut knows better than our brain what is better for us, or what we are better at doing! That would be my advice to any young people who happen to stray into this column of old fogies in the Tech Review. I became an ombudsman in the company, then a consultant, a manager, and finally, a Director of Organizational Development, introducing several innovative people management systems and enjoying helping people with career development, work conflicts, teamwork and quality of life. I retired early in 1990 and have been busy ever since with many other projects. I have been teaching Participative Management at the MBA Program of the University of St. Thomas in Minneapolis as an adjunct professor; I have been doing some consulting for small businesses; I have been lecturing on Theology, Orthodox Christianity, Theodicy, which explores the many facets of the problem of Evil in the world and other topics; I have been writing a lot, especially in the last five years. My first book, a novel, was published in 1976, while I was still working. In the last two years I wrote two books on theology, and my fourth book published last November is titled "Once Upon a Corporation: Leadership Insights from Short Stories". It is a set of 27 tongue-in-cheek stories, parables, satires, parodies of Socratic dialogues and Machiavellian ploys among other fictions, some of them published previously in HBR, Personnel, and AMA Review. I wrote these stories over a period of about 10 years to highlight three values of organizational leadership: heart; backbone; and brains. Anyone who has lived in the corporate world and wants another chuckle remembering it can take a look at the book by going to the publisher's site at www.iUniverse.com or the other web store and asking for the title, or my name.

"I haven't had any contact with any of our classmates since our 25th reunion, but as time stretches out, my thoughts go more often to the past and to our common experience at Tech. For me, MIT wasn't a happy or an unhappy experience; it wasn't good or bad; Tech wasn't all meaningful or all pointless; MIT didn't extrude me or stamp me with any

kind of brand. MIT just happened to me. It was an experience that even now touches parts of my life and gives them a shade, a taste and a feel that wouldn't have been there otherwise. I am proud of the old Alma Mater – paradoxically proud for enduring it, and realistically proud of the learning about life that the great teachers, who taught us between lectures and exams of the main subject. These great minds cannot be forgotten, and neither can Room 240!

“Most of all I value what I learned from my classmates. I learned enduring values by following the example of others and making sure I didn't repeat their mistakes. The relationships with some of you are unquestionably the highlights of my MIT experience, always treasured and fondly remembered, and sometimes told to grandchildren for their own development.

“Yes, MIT happened to me, and I'm doing well not because of it, not in spite of it. It was the best of times and the worst of times – it just happened, and it's a good thing that it did.

“I hope to hear from those of you who happened to notice my existence in that other realm we all inhabited so long ago.”

*Paul Nicholson provides an update on his invention, LightRamp 2000, the solution to the problem of “the last mile” bringing fiber to the desktop. He expects a patent to be issued shortly and is raising money for his company, Infotonics out of Telecom City in Malden, MA.

*Frank Regan e-mails that after MIT I took a job with Westinghouse ARM (now defunct and deservedly so) in Baltimore, where I worked for four years. One year of worthwhile experience and three years of distraction and office politics which made me wish I had never got involved in engineering. However, I did get a position with the Naval Surface Warfare Center in 1962 where I did some interesting work for just about 40 years. Work was a delight and challenging, and also gave me a chance to renew acquaintance with old MIT friends and some faculty. I was encouraged to develop technically, and I actually taught as an adjunct faculty member of the University of Maryland. It was a great deal of fun and made me envy the full time academics despite their often- paranoid behavior. I wrote two books on the dynamics of atmospheric reentry as well as lots of forgettable technical papers and reports. Sometime in the years I managed to stay married and father four children, two boys and, you guessed it, two girls. I'm still proud of my MIT connection and education.

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