



May 2015

Volume IV

BLUE ROCK BUZZ

"DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF DOMINICK "TED" SCIARRA"

PERSON OF INTEREST...



Ray Abbott - Played soprano for the Diamond State Cadets from 1957-60 and Blue Rock from 1960-66. Ray also played an integral role in the Bench Ceremony for Roy Jones and Greg Papaleo.

Commander of the American Legion Middletown Post 25, is a native of Delaware and currently lives with his family in Townsend. Ray's military career spanned 4 decades in which he served the United States Army for 27 years.

His military career started on October 20, 1966 where he was trained in supply and small weapons repair. Ray served a 12 month tour in Viet Nam and at the end of that tour was released from active duty on August 18, 1968. After spending 7 years as a civilian he decided to return to the military. Having prior service experience, he was placed in the "Minute Man" training program and subsequently "Armored Crewman" training. After completing all the necessary training he proceeded to his first permanent duty station, Fort Riley, Kansas, and served as the gunner on the Platoon Leader's tank. During that time, he was promoted to Sergeant E-5.

After serving at Fort Riley, Ray was sent to the 3rd Squadron 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment in Germany, where he enjoyed 3 years of border patrol on the Czechoslovakian border. While there, he was promoted to Staff Sergeant E-6. The Armored Cavalry averaged 9 months out of the year in the field between border patrol, tank gunnery, Reforger, etc.

In September of 1980 his 3 years in Germany came to a close. He was sent to Fort Knox, Kentucky as a permanent duty station. Here he received an Army

Commendation Medal for his service in Germany. At Fort Knox, he was placed in the Armor School as a Subject Matter Expert to assist in bringing the M1 Abrams tank online.

Finally, with his enlistment ending on June 1, 1983, he decided he had enough active duty; however, he was not ready to completely hang it up. He immediately entered into the Army Reserve with the 100th MTC in Louisville, Kentucky. He spent about a year and a half there and then moved back to Delaware. After spending almost 2 years with the 2076th United States Army Reserve as an instructor, a conflict with his civilian job forced him to leave the USAR.

In January of 1990, Ray entered the 304th Civil Affairs Brigade in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. While serving as an Office Administrator, his unit was activated for duty in the Persian Gulf that year. On December 27th, he was activated and shipped out on the 30th of December and didn't return until May. Upon his return, he was again awarded the Army Commendation Medal. He remained in that unit until 1995 and in the meantime was retrained as the NBC NCO for the unit. In 1995, he transferred to the Delaware National Guard's aviation unit in New Castle.

In the Delaware National Guard, Ray served as the NBC NCO where he successfully led the unit through a series of inspections performed on various levels by different

teams. In 1999, Ray Abbott officially ended his military service. Ray was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal, the customary Certificate of Achievement from the President, the Order of the Griffin, and other awards.

Following his retirement from the Army, Ray found new ways to serve and joined the MOT Young Marines serving in various positions up to and including Commander. He also joined The American Legion Middletown Post 25 where he also serves as Post Commander and has recently completed 4 terms as District Commander for the 10 American Legion Posts located in New Castle County. Additionally, he was instrumental in helping Middletown Post 25 initiate a Sons of The American Legion Squadron. Since forming the Squadron, Ray has served as the Commander of the Squadron and held various other offices. Additionally, he has taken responsibilities in the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of the Delaware to include 2d Vice Commander, 1st Vice Commander, and recently completed two terms as Detachment Commander. Under his leadership the Detachment was the first in the Eastern Division to achieve 100% and completed the membership year in first place within the division both years.

Furthermore, as a licensed CDL driver, he drives the Campus Shuttle every Monday for the VA Hospital and takes the patients on the VA's bus to numerous outings for

such events as bowling, horseback riding, community events, etc. on the other days of the week.

IN THE PAST...



EDD FISHEL - I already recounted the bus episode of the Massachusetts turnpike where one of our wheels passed before us in the middle of the night. I also read where someone recounted the story of one of our buses getting stuck in an elevator tunnel at War Memorial Stadium in Rochester, NY.

In the event you missed the latter, we ingeniously forced flag poles under the wheels and rocked the bus until it freed itself by rolling along the flag poles. An accomplishment much easier said than done.

“Zany” Mike Dennis had a slap stick routine that surfaced during stressful times, where he would run “full speed” directly at one of our buses and literally smash himself up

side it. I can still hear Patty Gallaway's laugh, over everyone else's, as this *apparent* fool would repeat this mayhem until he finally had nothing left and would just melt to the ground. He resembled one of those "wacked out lizards" that surreys frantically upright, in no particular direction with all extremities uncontrollably flailing away. Too funny, Mike.

Some of the "Gross Outs" that occurred on the Groudy Animal Bus were probably too wrong and not fit for printing. I gave this subject considerable reflection and have decided that it best be left in the past, especially since some of the corps' Chica's and present day spouses might be in observance of these accounts.

Wednesday practice at the AL post in Pennsgrove , sometime in September of '66. Fat Harry Geisler approaches me as I'm casing my snare drum at rehearsal completion. "Hey Fishel...we need somebody to drive the Delaware bus back to Crossroads Shopping Center." You're looking at me?

"Yea."

I'm only 15 Harry! I don't have a driver's license yet.

"Yea, I know but we think you can do it."

We're talking bout a 15 year old driving a decrepit busload of kids over the Delaware Memorial Bridge? At night? In the rain?

"Just stay in the right lane on the bridge.

Why can't Elmer Gallaway drive it?

He got sick so Ted drove him home and I have to drive my own car back to Delaware. "Get your ass out here and get on it!"

Cool, I can do this...

The trip was fairly non-eventful until we arrived at the bridge. In following Harry's orders of keeping to the right lane, I quickly learned that I couldn't keep the bus far enough away from the side of the bridge to prevent the right rear tire from scraping the steel curb. By the time we reached Delaware, the entire buss was filled with thick black smoke. I observed, while driving, that this bus doesn't track in a straight line. The rear wheels were permanently skewed causing them to track to the right of the front wheels. The lady at the toll window told me to pull the buss off to the right as I may have a serious problem requiring attention. Several other motorists mentioned that our bus appeared to be "experiencing complications."



Screw that! I'm getting this thing to our destination ASAP. I've had

enough of this adventure and I don't need the cops to come snooping around. After finally arriving at Crossroads everyone left the bus for their cars, but not without comments such..."Ted's going to kick your Ass!"

I walked to the right rear to inspect the damage that most certainly had to be there. The entire sidewall of the tire was scraped so thin that I could have popped the sucker flat easily, using nothing but my index finger.

I just pushed the door shut, tripped the lock lever and left her in the middle of the shopping center parking lot...as directed.

"Just stay in the right lane on the bridge."

I later asked Harry if he knew that by staying in the right lane, the bridge would destroy the right rear tire.

“Shut-up Fishel!”

I swear to this day, he walked away laughing.

PRESCRIPTION ALLEY...

Mike Dennis - Mike is struggling with bouts of falling down with an inability to walk; he's been hospitalized seven times within the last year. The doctors are perplexed as to why he is having these difficulties and are running a gamut of tests. Please keep Mike in your thoughts and prayers.



Jimmy Cossetti - Jimmy has been released from the hospital and is beginning the long road to recovery. If you like, you may want to drop him a line...he certainly sounded like his ole self on the phone the other day.

Mike Cable - Mike seems to be getting around a little bit better these days; we sincerely hope that he is well on the road to recovery.

BLUE ROCK NEWS - A message from the President...

PRESIDENT'S BLOG - Bob McLaughlin

10 DAYS TO WW !!!

The **BRACKT** (Blue Rock Alumni Core Team) has been working steadily to prepare for The Reunion in Wildwood on FRI-SAT, June 5th and 6th, 2015. Several other alumni have drawn up alongside the team to assist and support in the planning and implementation of the Reunion. Your response has indicated that 60 alumni will be in attendance for SAT ... and we know that many others who have not responded are sure to be there also. I am working on an e-FLYER to inform you of the final plans for the weekend. That will have been distributed by Facebook and Email by the time you get this BUZZ for MAY from Our Editor In Chief, Mike Batten.

We will take a few minutes at the Cape Cod Hotel to share our vision and activity to date. We want to focus on the BR family that day ... having a great social time with food and refreshments provided by **BRACKT** ... and realizing you have been in the sun all day enjoying the Parade, we want to be very brief in that sharing ... while maximizing the social time. Therefore, allow me to share some updates and cast some vision in this BLOG.

PURPOSE LEG #1 - FAMILY • COMMUNITY • FELLOWSHIP

Social Media - It should not be a surprise to anyone that Facebook has been buzzing for months now with posts, PM's, and texting about the Alumni. You have joined in and been a source of information, excitement, appreciation, and encouragement for the core team and each other. *Thank you!* We realize that all alumni are not on Facebook, therefore we do our best to communicate via Email and Website also. We are recording concerns, ideas, etc. you have shared and are adding them to our Parking Lot ... a repository for discussion and consideration after WW. We have come to know you better and trust it is reciprocal for you.

Live Conversation - Social media is great, but nothing can replace live conversation in person and by phone. This has occurred and resulted in great exchange with fellow alumni. We want to encourage more of the same in WW at Kelly's and the Cape Cod ... therefore during the social time at the Cape Cod the alumni team will be circulating, reuniting with old friends, making new ones, and taking the time to listen to what you would like to see in the alumni as we go forth after WW.

Official Alumni Association - As one of the core team members put it ... we are a **great group of alumni** that have worn the Black and Yellow with pride ... and left an awesome mark on Drum Corps ... and we have Harry and a few others along the way to thank for making it so. We have a long way to go to become official ... an entity that can do more than we have done. It depends on the road and journey we have to travel to get there ... and a sufficient number of alumni that are willing to join the journey. More to come after WW.

Future BR Family Events - Ideas are in the works ... and we look forward to hearing your ideas as we socialize in WW.

PURPOSE LEG #2 - LEGACY

Photos of Memorabilia and Past Years - Two photo shoots by Mike Batten and Bob McLaughlin with Bill Ives and a professional photographer at Archie's Post in Upper Darby, PA have resulted in awesome photos of the great uniform we were all proud to wear. An excellent Audio-Video walk down memory lane by Frank Gatlin and Jim Tarlton was released in mid May ... much to the appreciation and enjoyment by all. These two events have provoked increased interest in loaning or donating memorabilia to the core team for building a photographic Blue Rock Legacy ... which will be also incorporated into a DCX Photographic Legacy for all the Drum Corps world to see and enjoy. Slide shows of what we have so far will be viewable at the Cape Cod in WW.

WW Photoshoot - We will attempt to capture high quality photos of any memorabilia present in WW. We will have a room at the Cape Cod set up like a studio to digitally capture their images.

DCX Photoshoots - These events will resume in the Fall at the Archer-Epler AL-VFW Post in Upper Darby, PA. We hope to have much more to digitally capture for our Legacy ... including DM and CG Captain uniforms.

Legacy Items - Include but not limited to: uniforms, shakos, boots, flags, bugles, drums and other percussion instruments, awards, trophies, photos, newspaper/magazine articles, letters, pennants, recordings, LP jackets, contest programs, street jackets, T-shirts ... and one item we are very proud to have in our possession ... **the Hall of Fame Plaque awarded posthumously to Dominic (Ted) Sciarra by DCA** ... the man who started it all! We only wish he was still with us to share the brotherhood and sisterhood that lives on and won't die ... and kick a few butts ... we still need it from time to time.

PURPOSE LEG #2 - CARING

WWTD? - What would Ted do? ... today in 2015? In the past year I have learned a lot more about Ted that I didn't know ... even after 4 plus years of being under his leadership. He cared in so many ways. The ranks of drum corps in the 50's thru early 70's wasn't filled by an international recruitment of the best trained, young musicians and dancers ... it was the recruiting of neighborhood and local community youth ... most of whom were not trained to play musical instruments or maneuver with flags and rifles. I am amazed at how many kids Ted loved and tangibly aided ... kids with nothing constructive to do, some from bad home lives, even some who weren't on the law's most loved list. He was tough on us all ... loved us ... and helped prepare us for life.

ALL ALUMNI - 1959 THRU 1975 - I marched in the middle years ... late 1966 thru 1970. I know few of the alumni that marched before me and even fewer of those that marched after

me. The core team would like to see a solid and ongoing connection be established for all alumni.

What and Why - People respond to knowing someone cares ... people live better lives when they now someone cares ... physically and psychologically ... tangibly and intangibly.

This would seem to be the most difficult leg of the PURPOSE STOOL to further develop and sustain. It will and has started small. Over the years several alumni have kept in touch, sent cards, visited especially when ill or in loss of life. Our hats are off to them. We can all play a role in caring.

Depending on the future organization of the alumni we may be able to care tangibly as an organization of caring people ... some of us can care tangibly now ... it has already happened in the past 6 months ... by creative alumni who found or created a way for themselves and others to care.

Right now we can all care by keeping in touch, sending cards, visiting, etc. ... not only with the alumni we know ... but with the alumni we'll meet anew in WW.

I trust that this BLOG has aided you in better understanding where our hearts and minds are with respect to the alumni. There is so much more to come. As I have stated in earlier communiques ... we see ourselves as SERVANT LEADERS ...

SERVANTS FIRST ... LEADERS SECOND

IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY...

TOM SCOTT.....MAY 1ST
BUTCH DENNEY (NJ BUTCH)....MAY 4TH
JANET MCCROSSON.....MAY 7TH
MIKE PETCHEL.....MAY 15TH
JOANIE FRENCH.....MAY 16TH
MICHAEL CABLE.....MAY 16TH
JESSE RADOWICZ.....MAY 17TH
KEITH BROWN.....MAY 18TH
PEANUT HICKS.....MAY 26TH
RALPH PACE.....MAY 27TH
ROBBIE FRENCH.....MAY 28TH
BETH DRAPER JACKSON.....MAY 30TH
IRENE WOJ.....MAY 30TH

UPCOMING EVENTS...

HIDDEN TREASURES IV: *Songs of Larry Kerchner*

A Sandi Durell Production

BIRDLAND
EST. 1949

"The Jazz Corner of the World"

Sunday, May 31, 2015 • 6 PM
315 West 44th St., NYC 10036

FEATURED ARTISTS*

Klea Blackhurst
Carole J. Bufford
Jim Brochu
Dennis Chicchino
Alexis Cole
Natalie Douglas
Shana Farr

Eric Michael Gillett
Nina Hennessey
Marissa Mulder
Mark Nadler
Karen Oberlin
Stacy Sullivan
Nick Ziobro

Tex Arnold - *Musical Director*

Klea Blackhurst - *Host*



"For me, the music of Larry Kerchner is an oasis of joy... It is lovely to be associated with him."

— *Michael Feinstein*

"Your songs are the best thing going!"

— *Julie Wilson*

"The truly gifted composer/lyricist blends the heart and mind for one purpose: to create music that unites the senses, exciting the memories of life to create a rebirth of hope. For me, Larry Kerchner is one of these precious few. His creations are joyous and my life is better for having lived in their beauty." — *Russ Weatherford*

Music Charge: \$25 • Food/Drink Minimum: \$10

Reservations:

212-581-3080

www.birdlandjazz.com

www.LarryKerchner.com

**Subject to Availability*



BLUE ROCK REUNION

Wildwood, NJ - 6/5/15-6/6/15

FRIDAY

- 7:00 AM BSGK Golf Tournament and luncheon for pre-registered BLUE ROCK Teams
- 8:00 PM Archer-Epler Concert ... for those interested ... American Inn • 510 E. 13th Ave. • North Wildwood



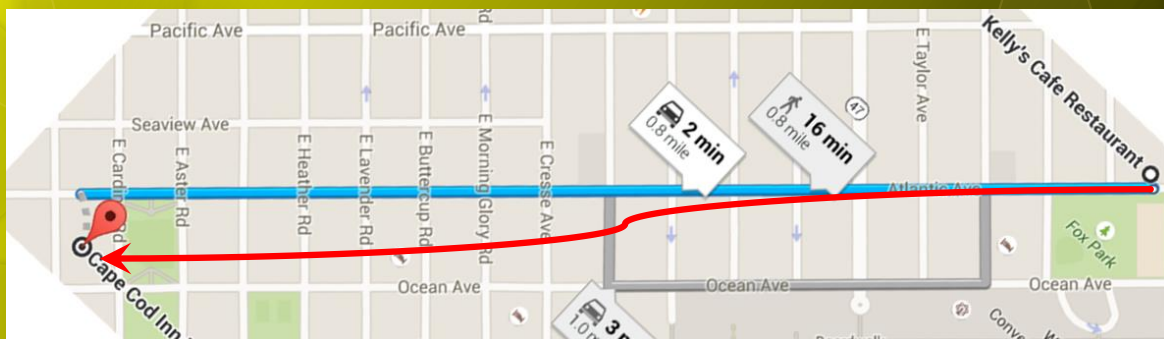
SATURDAY

- 12:00 Noon – Elks Parade
- 2:00 PM – Alumni Group Photo
- 4:00 PM – BR Social Time @Cape Cod Hotel
6109 Atlantic Ave. • ☎ 609.522.1177
Food and Beverages provided by BRACKT
- 4:30 PM - Sharing by
Alumni Core Team • Mike, Bob, & Harry
- 5:00 PM - More BR Social Time ...



UNTIL IT'S OVER

BR Legacy Photo Preview ★ Photo shoots
– Large & Small Groups & memorabilia *"A Touch of Old New England on the Jersey Shore"*
Core Team Mingling – want to learn what you want in a alumni association ★ And More ...





LETTER TO THE EDITOR...

Hello Mike,

Yesterday, I had the pleasure of spending some time with Dave Murphy (Father David F. Murphy) at a reception following the annual Blue Mass here in Wilmington. In speaking with him, I mentioned the four of you and the health issues that you, Chuck, Frank, and Mike Cable are going through. He was both surprised and concerned to learn of each. He asked me to let each of you know that he will remember all of you in his prayers and Masses.

I'm attaching a picture that was taken yesterday of Dave. I also want to let each of you know that he is being deployed next Thursday with the Delaware National Guard. Please keep him in your prayers, especially during his deployment. I don't know if you are aware, but beside his priestly vocation, he has been a dedicated chaplain for those in law enforcement in Delaware and a chaplain in the Delaware National Guard. He sure has come a long, long way since his days in drum corps.

Mike, I thought that maybe the picture could be used in a future newsletter. Upon his return, I will see if I can get him to possibly write something about his experiences.

I will continue to keep you all close to my heart and in my prayers as well.

Warm regards,

Paula

PAULA TUCKER BOULDEN

FATHER MURPHY is a former member of Blue Rock...



***A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO SENT ME INFORMATION
AND ARTICLES FOR THIS ISSUE.***

***FOR ALL YOUR BLUE ROCK APPAREL, COFFEE MUGS AND LICENSE
PLATES, GO TO BLUEROCK.US AND CLICK ON OUR STORE.***