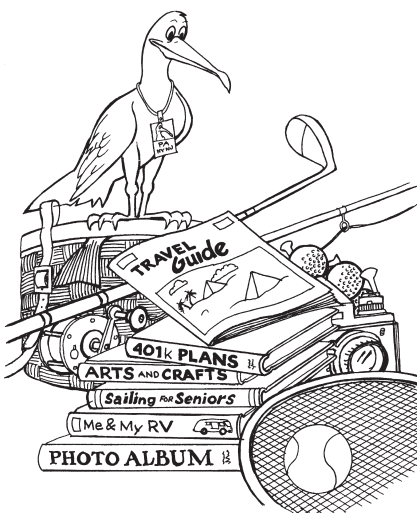


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**“Don’t forget Where You Put
Your para-phernalia.”**



President’s Message

After several years of turmoil and tragedy flowing from the Bridgegate caper and other questionable incidents surrounding the Port Authority, those issues have now been essentially resolved in the courts and the Port Authority has been re-focusing its efforts on its basic traditional role of moving people and goods through the Port District. This is good news.

There are continuing controversies, to be sure, but now they are mostly related to core issues like the capital plan and the critical decisions involved in allocating scarce resources to an ever growing agenda of regional needs. The high profile demands for a new bus terminal, added rail capacity across the Hudson River, upgrading of the region’s airports, and the like, now seem to be dominating the PA’s public discussion. At the same time, the residual negative fallout from the experiences of the past several years has adversely affected the PA in terms of the public trust, the organization’s reputation and the severe impact on the career staff. To address these major items, as well as those less tangible issues, will undoubtedly call for constant attention for the foreseeable future. There are no easy answers and decisions will require patience, persuasion and deft negotiation among conflicting constituencies. In many ways, this is a continuation of its more typical historical role since the PA was formed back in 1921.

The impact of all of this has been felt in the PA retiree community in a number of ways as well. We have heard feedback from retirees who tell us that they no longer “brag” to their family and friends about their prior association with the PA. In addition, we continue to receive questions of concern regarding the arbitrary cancelation of the retiree E-ZPass benefit and the enactment of certain revisions and adjustments in the retiree medical benefits. These uncertainties and topics of ongoing concern are not good news.

On a positive note, however, we are pleased to report that all retirees (*regardless of when they retired*) in the various union groups that challenged the loss of the E-ZPass benefit have had this benefit reinstated following the decision of the New York State Supreme Court. (**Please note:** *This is a change from our past reports to you about this. We had previously been advised that reinstatement would be applied **only** to those active and retired individuals who were covered by the provisions of the specific labor contract that was the subject of the grievances and lawsuits.*) . In light of this recent information, all retirees from these particular union groups

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Board Highlights

The Quarterly Meeting of the Board of Directors was held on October 11, 2016. Reports of the Committees were given. Expenditures were slightly higher this quarter resulting from an additional printing for the membership drive. A discussion about possible future expenditures ensued which may include legal fees associated with any possible proposed changes in health care benefits, possible constitutional convention or changes in website management. It was reported that PARA's audit report for the years 2014 and 2015 is complete. The Board approved stipends to the auditors who provide the services and to the PARA webmaster who does an outstanding job of managing the website.

PARA recruitment efforts continue with our presence at both PA and PATH pre-retirement seminars. Discussion was had as to how to get information to future retirees who may not attend pre-retirement seminars possibly by getting Human Resources to assist. There are eight (8) Board members up for reelection in 2017. The Board discussed possibly recruiting persons in non-Board positions if significant contributions could be made to the Board. Also suggested was the expansion of the board to over 25 members to capture those who would reflect the skills and interests of more recent retirees and those who may be retiring over the next several years. Of significant concern is the stalled legislation covering the future of the Port Authority and the approval of a Chief Executive Officer. It was reported that people on Medicare are experiencing a significant erosion of Medicare and ExpressScripts benefits. PARA reminded HR that retirees are counting on the level of coverage that they were assured they were entitled to when they retired. It seems that the industry is changing and the question is how or if these changes will affect retiree benefits. This subject will continue to be monitored closely.

Peter Rinaldi was asked to be a technical advisor on a children's book called *Poppy's Purpose* about the restoration of one of the two PATH cars that were damaged in the 9/11 attacks. The book's author is Marie Betts Bartlett, published by G. Boreas Publishing and is available for purchase.

The next Quarterly Meeting of the Board was held on January 18, 2017. The meeting began with a discussion with special guest, Peter Goldmark, former Executive Director for the years 1977 – 1985. He began by saying that he is aware of the current challenges and while he continues to care about the organization and its future, he chooses not to look back or comment on current administration. He did point out that sometimes outside forces and trends tend to influence the course of action and that resistance to change could be a contributing factor to the challenges the agency now faces. He warned that it is important to keep up with the times and cultivate the youth of the organization. He also asked some very pertinent questions and gave PARA some points to consider when determining PARA's role, if any, in influencing the agency's future. He offered the thought that perhaps individuals could work through other organizations, such as "good government" groups, to

Continued on page 3 **Board Highlights**

Board Highlights *continued*



Dave Gallagher and Peter Goldmark
(photo courtesy of Liz DeLaura)

effect change and mold regional policy.

Committee reports were given. PARA finances remain in good health with a slight increase in assets. The PA reform legislation remains stalled in the NJ state legislature. It was suggested that active PA employees may wish to join PARA and we may try to encourage that effort perhaps through the PA News and the PA Credit Union. We discussed upcoming Board positions which will need to be filled and possible recommendations.

It was reported that United Health Care came to the Port Authority and recommended **against** encouraging treatment at the Cancer Treatment Centers of America because it felt the treatment and care of its patients is

not up to its standards. Also, there are minor changes in coverage for those who have Vision Care. Because the changes are relatively minor, the PA will not be sending this information out in a mailing. It is, however, posted on the PARA website and there is a brief update in this Newsletter under Refinements to Vision Insurance Plan through NVA. It was reported that the CWA is also getting its E-ZPass benefits reinstated. The IUOE and non-represented employees are not included as of this date nor have we received acknowledgement of the email President Gallagher sent to Chairman Degnan on the subject of E-ZPass reinstatement for non-represented employees. We discussed the upcoming vote on a Constitutional Convention during the next New York State election and what its agenda could mean to the Port Authority and its retirees. The role of PARA with regard to the vote to hold or not hold the Convention, with regard to the choice of Convention members and with regard to the Convention's program and any recommended changes to the NYS Constitution were briefly discussed, with further discussion to be held at future Board meetings. This subject will be closely monitored during the **upcoming months**.

Frank Lombardi was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Moles Organization for his outstanding contributions to the Engineering community and his service with The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

Jerri Raczynski

President's Message - continued from page 1

have received reinstatement and we have learned that they have been contacted individually by the PA about this matter. It was a long time coming and we are grateful to the union leaders for their perseverance in pursuing these cases to a satisfactory – and appropriate – conclusion for their active and retired members.

Unfortunately, there are many others across our retiree community who still have not been granted reinstatement of the E-ZPass benefit including all non-union retirees and retired members of a union group which did not grieve the matter. As a result, the PA's policy regarding retiree benefits, which has been in effect since the 1950's or

earlier, is now a mixture of haves and have-nots due to an arbitrary political directive and subsequent approval by the PA Board in November 2010. The overall situation has been partially rectified by the judicial decision from the New York State Supreme Court. We have requested that the PA leaders revisit this matter and reinstate this benefit for all retirees in accordance with the organization's policy that was in force at the time we retired. So far we have not received a response to our request but we will advise you of any changes as we learn about them.

It is time once again for our annual election of members to serve on the PARA Board. The details are included in this

Continued on page 4 **President's Message**

President's Message - continued from page 3

newsletter and we urge you to return your ballot (*and your 2017 dues if not paid previously*) promptly as a way to reflect your support of the nominees and of our ongoing efforts on your behalf.

In addition, we encourage you to urge your PA and PATH colleagues to join PARA if they have not done so already. There are now some 4100 PARA members but we know

that there are retirees (active staff are invited to join as well) who have not joined the organization. As the saying goes: "All are Welcome". Signup is easy and the information can be found on the homepage of the PARA website www.paranynj.org.

Dave Gallagher, President

TRIBUTE TO HAL MILLEY

PARA's Board was deeply saddened to learn of the death of Harold A. Milley on November 24, 2016. He was one of the eight founders of PARA and served as President from its inception until 1994. Together with a few other public retiree visionaries, he played a key role in the formation of the Alliance of Public Retiree Organizations (APRO) in New York. Hal's thought was that the unified voice of the Alliance could accomplish more for retirees, arguing for disparate approaches to retiree benefits.

He personally initiated this Newsletter. At the outset he prepared all the articles himself – was writer, proofreader, editor and publisher, all in one. The amount of time spent in organizing the material, meeting with the typesetter, printer, etc. must have been enormous.

He joined the Port Authority in 1948 as a Police Officer. His career accelerated and he became the Assistant to the Director of Tunnels & Bridges in 1958, Assistant Manager of the Lincoln Tunnel in 1961, then Assistant Manager of the George Washington Bridge in 1964, a position he held until he was promoted to Manager of the Bridge in 1968. He held that position until his retirement in 1979.

Following are some remarks from those that had the privilege of working with him:

■ *When we speak of Hal we evoke the heyday of the Port Authority, when it withstood envious political encroachment, when it adhered to the purpose and intent of the Compact, where creativity and ambition were encouraged, which, when combined, created unshakeable morale. It was an Organization studded with icons among whom Hal was prominent. His acumen sustained his ease when dealing with the various disciplines, from engineers to the Officials of Fort Lee.*

When assigned from the Holland Tunnel to the GWB in 1972 I considered it a reward. By then Hal had achieved noticeable recognition for his leading the team that "civilianized" the Toll Collection function; an amazing feat when one considers the uproar a traffic jam can incur. Together we worked as a team to maintain the Bridge's integrity as well as its prominence. His abrupt retirement in 1979 caught us by surprise. His passing gives us the opportunity to savor the pleasure derived from our contact and acquaintance with him. May he rest in peace.

Jim Giorgi, Assistant Manager, GWB

■ *Hal Milley, a Marine, was a brave man. In the 1970's when there had never been a woman facility manager, he agreed to take a chance and accept a woman as his assistant manager at the GWB (a major revenue generator!). I was lucky enough to be able to fill that position for a year on a mobility assignment. Hal was a terrific manager, fair and decisive. He set high standards for leadership. I learned so much working with him: how to make certain that everyone in a negotiation took away some benefit; how to understand what people in front line positions such as Toll Collectors and Police Officers felt when dealing with a complaining bridge user; and much more. Hal was a strong believer in discipline (that marine basic training) and he enforced the rules, but he could always recognize the need for exceptions and made them with judicious relish. I feel so fortunate to have known and worked for him.*

Gene Gill, Management Services Department

Continued on page 5 **Tribute**



Liz DeLaura, Joe Vesce, Hal Milley, Frank Garcia at a GWB reunion at McLoone's in Long Branch NJ (circa 2013)

■ *I first met Hal in 1964 when I went to work for him at the George Washington Bridge. Besides being my boss, Hal became my mentor and my friend. He pressed me to go back to school and earn my college degree, he constantly gave me more challenging assignments, he got others interested in my career, and he arranged mobility assignments for me. Hal was clearly a "but for" in my Port Authority career and I will always cherish his generosity and friendship.*

Hal's accomplishments at the George Washington Bridge were extraordinary. Besides managing the operation of the world's busiest bridge and its attendant constant construction projects, Hal used his considerable management skills to successfully implement several major projects including: the installation of the first median barrier on the upper level, the first ever tolls increase, and the change over to one-way tolls.

Hal was extraordinary in another life as well. As a young Marine in World War II, he fought in several of the major battles of the Pacific theatre. Hal's life truly epitomizes the men and women of the Greatest Generation.

**Frank Garcia,
World Trade & Economic Development**

■ *"I met Hal in the 1970s when he was the Manager of the GWB and I was doing Traffic Engineering work at that facility. While I had worked with many other Airport, Land Terminals, Tunnels & Bridges, and Seaport Terminal Managers during my 40 year career with the Port Authority, Hal was clearly the best one I had ever worked with. He would always listen to my ideas, ask questions about them, explain how they were valid (or not), offer alternatives, and work towards a solution that was best for the true client – the motoring public using the Bridge. We may not have always agreed, but, at the end Hal made sure we all understood what was done and why. He was always even tempered and a pleasure to work with.*

I remember working on a Toll Plaza renovation project and the issue of toll collector safety came up. I offered to spend time in a toll booth with a toll collector, but Hal rejected that idea immediately. He said: "I cannot allow you to be exposed to any possible danger outside of your normal duties." Hal always demonstrated a clear understanding of all the issues and concerns for his workers.

Bob Parisi, Traffic Engineering

ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Up for re-election at our annual meeting whose terms are about to expire are: Holly Blausler, Steve Borrelli, John Fitzpatrick, Dave Gallagher, Rae Ann Hoffmann, Enoch Lipson, Frank Lombardi, and Peter Rinaldi. We will also be voting for three new Board Members: Frank DiMola, Cynthia Hadley-Bailey, and Donna Tucker. The Annual Meeting will be held at 11:15 a.m. on July 27, 2017 at the Times Square Hall, Port Authority Bus Terminal, in the Borough of Manhattan in the City of New York. Members who have paid their 2017 dues on or before July 21, 2017 will be entitled to vote. The names of the new candidates and those up for re-election, as well as their proposed term of office, are listed on the enclosed Official Proxy Ballot Card on which you can indicate your vote for all, some or none of the candidates or submit a write-in candidate of your choice if the individual is a member in good standing. You need not attend the meeting to vote, but PARA members are not only welcome, but encouraged to join us. Since seating at Times Square Hall is limited, it would help with our planning if you advise us of your plans to attend. Please let us know of your intentions by July 20, 2017 by mailing us notice at PARA, PO Box 2002, East Millstone, NJ 08875-2002 or by e-mail to davegallagher@paranynj.org. **Please return your completed ballot in the enclosed pre-addressed envelope, postmarked on or before July 21, 2017.** If you have not already paid your 2017 Annual Dues, you may include your check along with your Ballot. We always encourage members to exercise their right to vote and play an active role in their organization.

THE STORY OF MALCOLM MCLEAN

(reprinted with permission of The Maritime Executive)

It's a story that is also taken up in the

Gard Guidance on Freight Containers by Jeroen de Haas.

The concept of an intermodal container was first proposed by McLean. His "big box" idea, which has revolutionized cargo handling worldwide, came to him in 1937 while he waited most of the day to deliver cotton bales on his truck to a pier in New Jersey. "Suddenly it occurred to me: Would it not be great if my trailer could simply be lifted up and placed on the ship without its contents being touched?"

De Haas goes on to explain that the subsequent development of container shipping in the 1950s and 1960s was largely an American affair featuring McLean. Boxes similar to modern containers had already been used in rail applications. What was new in the revolutionary ideas presented by McLean was the belief that maritime efficiency could be vastly improved through intermodal containers and his perseverance in making it happen.

McLean converted the World War II tanker **Potrero Hills** to a ship capable of carrying containers and rechristened her the **Ideal X**. She made her maiden journey on April 26, 1956, sailing from Newark to Houston carrying 58 metal containers and 15,000 tons of petroleum. By the time the ship had been unloaded in Houston, the company was already taking orders to ship goods back to Port Newark in containers, writes de Haas. "Loading loose cargo on a medium-sized ship cost \$5.83 per tonne in 1956. McLean's experts calculated that the cost of loading the Ideal X at 15.7 cents per tonne. With numbers like that, the container seemed to have a future."

McLean grew into ship owning with his company Sea-Land. Initially the containers were loaded with their truck's chassis, but later the chassis was left behind, enabling containers to be stacked.

The first vessel to carry containers only was Sea-Land's **Gateway City** which made her maiden voyage on October 4, 1957.

WTC PATH Car Children's Book

Peter Rinaldi has brought to the attention of the PARA Board the publication of a new children's book on the restoration of one of the two WTC PATH Cars damaged during the 2001 attack. It is called "Poppy's Purpose", written by Marie Betts Bartlett and published by G. Boreas Publishing.

Poppy the PATH train car loved carrying passengers back and forth from New Jersey to New York. When the World Trade Center towers collapsed on top of her on September 11, 2001, Poppy was buried under the rubble - but safe. Still, by the time Poppy opened her doors to people again, her purpose had changed. Now instead of moving people, Poppy gives them a place to pause and appreciate how, even in really hard times, they can find goodness. Peter was a technical advisor on the book.

One of the restored cars, PATH Car 745, currently resides at the Shore Line Trolley Museum in East Haven, Connecticut.

Another children's book "The Little Red Light House and the Great Gray Bridge" written by Hildegard Swift, details the fate of the lighthouse after the GWB is built.

Social Security Administration (SSA) Articles of Interest

Since January 2012, Joe SanSevero has been receiving and posting SSA Articles sent to him by Everett M. Lo, Regional Public Affairs Office of the SSA – New York region. These articles are available for your perusal by going to the PARA website (paranynj.org) and clicking on Benefits, then SSA Articles of Interest.

CANDIDATES BIOGRAPHIES



Francis DiMola - known to his friends and colleagues as “Frank” joined the Port Authority in July, 1976 as a Facility Operations Agent (later renamed “Tunnels & Bridge Agent”). Frank followed his father’s footsteps and joined the Port Authority police in 1979 and several years later pursued other career opportunities as an airport operations supervisor at LGA. Given

his prior police and airport operations background, Frank was invited to participate on the Port Authority’s counter terrorism task force with the Office for Special Planning. He was later accepted into the Port Authority Management Associates program where he continued to develop his skills and experience with supervising Holland Tunnel operations; managing properties & negotiations with airline tenants at EWR; and later as Assistant Manager of aeronautical services at EWR. Frank also negotiated lease agreements for TB&T and PATH, and later served as Assistant Director in Aviation overseeing Properties & Development, and as Assistant Director in Aviation for Operations, Security & Technical Services. Frank retired in 2011 after serving 5 years as Director of the agency’s Real Estate Services Department. Frank comes from a family of Port Authority employees and his father (Frank Sr.) previously retired as a Port Authority police sergeant. Frank resides in New Jersey with his beautiful wife of 36 years and has three adult “children” and one granddaughter. He continues to work with the JFK airline community as Executive Director for the Terminal 4 Airlines Consortium.



Cynthia Hadley-Bailey - began her 27-year career as a Port Authority Police officer in 1980. Her first assignment was with the PATH System and later was assigned to patrol at the George Washington Bridge, World Trade Center and the Passenger Ship Terminal. Cynthia later was appointed a Police Detective in 1987 and conducted several investigations at

all Port Authority Facilities, until her retirement from the Port Newark Marine Terminal in July of 2007. A highlight in her career was assisting with the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force in the investigations of the 1993 bombing and 2001 attack on the World Trade Center.

After retirement, Cynthia spends her time giving back to her community of West Orange volunteering in several organizations. She is active in the Rotary Club, the local NAACP, coordinates a tutoring program in the townships school district, and serves as the treasurer for the Port Authority Retired Detectives’ Association.



Donna Tucker - was a career employee with the Port Authority of NY & NJ last working in its Office of Business Diversity and Civil Rights (OBDCR). Donna was an assistant manager in charge of the office’s S/M/W/DBE certification unit, where she reviewed relevant legislation impacting Minority/ Women-Owned/Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, as well as reviewed applicant

firms to determine their eligibility to participate in the program.

Donna’s Port Authority career started in 1966, ending with her retirement in December 1998. During her time with the PA she rose through the ranks beginning as a Secretary in the Organization and Procedures Department which later became MSD until its sunset in 1987. At that time she held the position of Junior Administrative Assistant and retired as a Principal Business Development Representative from OBDCR.

She started her “second” career in 1999 as the Chief of Staff at the Regional Alliance for Small Contractors, Inc., an organization well known for its training and outreach programs to enable M/W/DBEs to competitively bid and participate on various projects. As second in command, her duties run the gamut from administrative to operational aspects of the organization.

She is well known and respected in the M/W/DBE community. She is a past Harlem YMCA Black Achiever honoree, a Queens Top Woman of the Year Awardee, and an Odyssey International Awardee for Excellence for her contributions to the M/W/DBE community.

RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS

On behalf of the PARA Board and the general membership at large, we extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to Herb Ouida, Jack Savage, Chuck Seliga and Ken Vitty for their service to PARA over the years. Both Jack and Chuck served as PARA’s watchdogs for New York and New Jersey Governmental activities affecting retirees. We wish them well as they transition to other activities and we hope they will continue to enjoy their retirement for many years to come.



Jim Starace, Peter Zipf, Frank Lombardi
(photo courtesy of Port Authority of NY & NJ)

The Moles Award for Outstanding Achievement in Construction

Frank Lombardi was the 2017 member recipient of The Moles Award for Outstanding Achievement in Construction in recognition of his Leadership in facilitating and improving Communication, Understanding and Partnering among Contractors, Engineers, Owners and Labor. The Moles, a prestigious national organization of the heavy construction industry, which includes tunneling and foundation work, gave Frank its annual award at an event January 25, 2017 held at the Hilton Hotel in New York and attended by 2,000 people.

In 1971, Frank joined the Port Authority in its Engineering Department and worked on many projects revitalizing the PA's airports, bridges, tunnels, bus terminals, numerous Port facilities, the PATH system and the original World Trade Center. He faced major challenges rehabilitating the World Trade Center following its bombing on February 26, 1993. In 1995, after completing that work, he was promoted to Chief Engineer.

He played a prominent role on the PA crisis management team assembled to tackle the daunting challenges facing the agency after the 9/11 attack on the WTC. Under his leadership, the restoration of PATH service to Lower Manhattan and New Jersey was achieved in record time, a critical step for the recovery of Lower Manhattan and the region. The enormous efforts to rebuild the WTC site were begun under his leadership. He presently serves as an Adjunct Professor in Engineering at both Manhattan College and NYU.



Dave Gallagher and Bob Boyle

Refinements to Vision Insurance Plan through NVA

For those active and retired employees covered by Vision Insurance through NVA, two refinements to the plan have been implemented, effective January 1, 2017:

1. Fixed Lens Option Program: Lens options for eyeglasses – such as tints, coating, progressives, and transitions – purchased from a participating NVA provider will now have fixed pricing. Previously, lens options were priced at wholesale cost plus 20 percent. This new program makes it clearer what the member cost share is for each lens option.
2. NVA EyeEssential Program: For additional purchases over plan allowances, the EyeEssential Program provides discounted pricing at participating network providers. For instance, if a member has already used their frames allowance but wants to buy additional frames, the program would provide a discounted cost at 35 percent of retail price.

Both programs apply only when utilizing a participating NVA network provider. For additional information or questions, contact Benefits hotline at (212) 435-2870.

PARA Board meets with Former Executive Director Bob Boyle

The PARA Board followed up its January meeting with Peter Goldmark with a meeting with Bob Boyle in April. Bob served as the PA Executive Director from 1997-2000 and has been a PARA member for a number of years.

He shared his perspective and insights with us regarding the PA “leadership” environment. He focused particularly on the intricacies and historical background of the relationship between the Executive Director and the PA Board and, in turn, of the PA leaders (both the Board and the Executive Director) with the respective governors of the two states. Although his personal experience dates back a number of years, his comments provided a glimpse into what he described as the early stages of the prevailing forces that have grown to impact the PA's key decisions in these times. While we all may have an idea about these dynamics, it was most informative to hear Bob's views and his concerns.

On behalf of the entire PARA membership, we extended our appreciation to Bob and to Peter for sharing their views with us as the PA continues to navigate through these challenging times.

Following My Interests

by Carl Selinger

A Spotlight Article

OK, let's get this out of the way: I don't like when I'm asked "Are you keepin' busy?"

"No," I usually say—almost two decades after "retiring" from Mother PONYA—"I'm following my interests." I try not to use the "R" word, you know, "retired," and either say I'm NOT (the R-word), or I'm semi-R, or I'm still working, which I am, sort of. (I hear some of you who know me, *That Carl, always the smart-ass!*)

So I'm following my interests: ideas ("Ideas are always welcomed!" is still on my business card), teaching, teaching soft skills, writing, and mentoring. Let me tell you briefly how this all evolved.

I had no big plan when I left Aviation in 1999. At that time, I was interested in aviation business development, teaching transportation planning at Cooper Union, and giving professional development seminars on soft nontechnical skills. My activities evolved as my interests evolved. To me it's always been zero-sum: the more you do in one area, the less you devote to another less-interesting one.

My initial consulting-oriented activities took me to nice places (all around the US, Hong Kong, Australia) but, eventually, didn't satisfy me because I never saw things actually getting done. So I began to pass on potential involvement in more of the same; studying, suggesting, not doing. Meanwhile my interest in teaching at Cooper Union was well along when I started the new R chapter in my life, and would continue another fifteen years; totaling 35 years of marking papers (yuk!) and challenging the minds of senior civil engineers. Unconsciously I had begun replacing topics I was less interested in teaching (e.g., multinomial logit modal split models—"It's in the textbook") with recasting the course's curriculum by integrating more "real-world" topics (e.g., analyzing the transportation in the neighborhood where the student lived). To this

day, the best job one of my students ever did was an analysis of Hoboken transportation circa 2000; superb job but, no, not much has changed.

This replacement process continued until my course's curriculum looked more like a consultant team project covering all the topics in the curriculum, packaged in several "deliverables" with final reports and presentations—all graded. Real world meets classroom. (Proud that many of the roughly 700 civil engineering students who took my class now hold senior positions in transportation, so I can vicariously share a bit in their success!) Then, on a drive back from Vermont a few years ago, and trying to find more time for some things--zero-sum, remember?—I decided I was no longer interested in teaching, per se, so I turned the class over.



Which brings me to my writing, now a big part of my life. I have to admit, though, *I don't really like to write*. Huh? Even writing this piece for PARA was wait-till-the-last-minute. *Why did I agree to do this?* The point is that I *can* write, but I'm only interested in writing when I'm motivated about something. I know this sounds muddled, so let me try to explain. First of all, writing is hard; don't let anyone kid you. Writers start off with a blank piece of paper or computer screen, then spend countless hours producing something, only to face repeated rejection. (A few writers I know compete for who gets the most rejections; an admirable sign of persistence.) So how did I become

a writer? I didn't set out to do that, it was a chain of events. It started with my Cooper class, when I almost accidentally started giving professional development seminars on soft skills to young engineers. Maybe it was the quirky title, riffing off the George Carlin schtick: "Stuff You Don't Learn in Engineering School." It caught on.

Continued on back

Following My Interests - continued:

So when I left the Port Authority, one of my “priority goals” was to write a book about “Stuff.” Three years later it was still a “priority” but not one word had been written; consulting jobs and teaching and cleaning the lint out of my navel all intervened. Until one evening at a Barnes & Noble writing group on “getting published” pointed me to a writer’s support group based at the Montclair (NJ) Library. This small band of writers in The Write Group--now grown to holding over thirty writing events every month--provided just the right amount of peer pressure to FINALLY write my book. (It was the needling of Glory Read, a diminutive retired marketing executive, who would sit next to me at weekly support meetings and look up to me and practically screech: “Caaarr! [Can Carl have three syllables?] That doesn’t sound like you’ve done very much writing last week.” Ouch. One day I’ll get her and her little dog. But it worked. One thing led to another and within a year I wrote my book--*my baby!*--got it published and even translated into Chinese. And it’s still selling a decade later. So I was a writer, a “globally-published author.”

And bringing this up to the minute, my seminar has been offered as a free six-hour online course (a MOOC in the parlance, “Massive Open Online Course”) which just finished its first airing in March on the MIT edX platform sponsored by IEEE. (Sorry for all the acronyms.) Meanwhile, I’m working on a memoir about things that happened to me in my life and career; it starts with “A Day at the Office,” about my being trapped for over five hours in elevator #66 after the 1993 WTC bombing. You can see my artifacts in the 9/11 Museum and my letter to my family by searching online, try “Carl Selinger letter”. So I’m a “writer.”

The remaining slice of the pie of my interests is mentoring. I find nothing more fulfilling than being able to build a relationship with young people, usually engineers (many from Cooper Union), and being there to help them, give them advice, or a shoulder to lean on. This is way beyond “coaching,” which I tried for a bit (e.g., resume writing, career planning) but found little satisfaction, so I stopped. Typical is currently helping a first-year civil engineer who’s having serious troubles with a micromanaging, unreasonable boss in her small engineering firm. Being there for her—texting, phoning, meeting up—to help her cope, better

understand the situation, and be assertive in staying or moving on. Like life, there are not always happy endings to be sure. But the close contacts provide me a tremendous fulfillment that I can’t explain, being able to help the dozen or more young people who, in many cases, have become friends.

So “following my interests” resonates much more with me than just keepin’ busy, whatever that means. Actually, the first thing I usually ask when I start mentoring someone, is for them to write down 3-5 things that interest them. (A corollary is to identify what does NOT interest them.) One young engineer told me “big bridges”... and now she’s well along in her career in that direction. No surprise. I’ll be driving to Maine in a few weeks, and I’ll use the time to think about things: important decisions I need to make; what priorities I have; and what interests me these days. And then take action.

If anyone wants to discuss any of this, contact me at carlselinger1@gmail.com or call/text at 973-953-0937.

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