

get 20 dollars equivalent per month. See <http://bestcubaguide.com/cuba-poor-country-salary/>. However, there are no income taxes, medical services are free, education is free, and many items are heavily subsidized. Our meals were about 12-20 CUC for full meal and a bottle of wine was about 20 CUC. Cubans do not eat out much if at all with those prices. There are little sandwich shops of varying categories with varying prices – we did not sample them.

Our bus was made in China and was very nice. It had good air conditioning and a very clean bathroom. As we left the airport, we saw quite a few revolutionary propaganda billboards and murals. We headed to the east for our first hotel with a stop for lunch along the way. On the north shore of Cuba we soon saw an oil and gas drilling rig – Cuba has crude oil and gas recovery along the north shore. Cuba has a deal with Venezuela to purchase oil at \$50 a barrel. That was great when the price of oil was around \$100 per barrel, but not so great now. Cuban oil production is slowly coming online, and is not yet enough to provide all they need.

Some meals were included with our tour. Our first lunch was at a small restaurant on the north shore where we got our introduction to Cuban food. Food quality was variable during the trip. People were not really impressed with our first meal, but hey, we were in Cuba and life was good. Another curious thing – even some of the butter was from China.

Our first night was spent in the resort area of Varadero at the Club Kawama, an all-inclusive resort http://www.gran-caribe.com/english/hotel.asp?hotel_code=stcgcvkawama. The first room we were shown had a very moldy smell with some paint peeling off the wall. We were shown another room which was OK – and had a better view of the grounds. The facilities were spread out over a large property in a lovely setting.

Before dinner, we toured the resort area in the bus and made a stop for a complimentary mojito (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mojito>) at Xanadu, <http://www.varaderogolfclub.com/en/xanadu.asp>, the former mansion of a branch of the DuPont family. It was sunset time and it was a glorious sunset.

Back at the Club Kawama, dinner was a buffet which everyone agreed was about the worst that they had ever had. You know it is bad when several said the

chocolate ice cream was the best part of the meal, and it wasn't anything special! The pool, the beach, the drinks, and the people were great. The TV in the room got a snowy picture of the college football championship game, but I decided to sleep instead. The bed wasn't all that comfortable, but we contented ourselves that we were experiencing Cuba. The breakfast buffet the next day was OK.

People-to-people started in Matanzas — with the Federation of Cuban Women – all girls are automatically members starting at age 14 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federation_of_Cuban_Women. The purpose of the Federation, as told to us, is first Defense of the Revolution then to promote women's issues. What they told us was the beginning of the “party line.” It goes something like this: we love Cuba, we want to be in control of our destiny, we are happy, things are OK but we need some improvements. We met no one on our trip who was against normalization of relations and resumption of trade between Cuba and the US. That seemed to be universal, and there was great happiness when the presidents made their simultaneous announcements. Return of the “Cuban Five” was very important to them as they are Heroes of Cuba.

After 24 hours in Cuba here are some impressions that remain. The roads are generally not crowded except in Havana and then not too bad. The roads are kind of OK, because the traffic is light with very few very heavy trucks pounding on them. There are a lot of people waiting for rides along the roads. A great many of the buildings are in disrepair and some are too far gone to be renovated without great cost. Some buildings have been restored to their original architectural beauty, but right next door the roof and interior of the next building may have fallen in. Colonial and pre-revolution architecture was ornate with beautiful columns, arches, and embellishments on the facades.

Our lunch after the Federation meeting was in an old elegant restaurant/hotel right on the square in Matanzas – and the meal was really good. After lunch we proceeded to the Hotel Nacional de Cuba, <http://www.hotelnacionalde.cuba.com/en/home.asp>, mostly restored to its past grandeur. We had a good view from our tiny room, but there are problems with various aspects of the rooms. Rapid flushing of the toilet 3 times or more resulted in success. Our interior room lock was not working. The first

night our TV came to life loudly on a vacant channel with loud hissing noise. Thereafter, we unplugged it at bedtime. Drinking water only comes from bottles, not the taps anywhere. Several of the ladies were worried about using ice in the drinks. Our son, Jeff, says, “That's what stomach acid is for.” We appear to have survived the ice we consumed.

While in Havana, we had some lovely meals at paladares, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paladar>, family run restaurants. One wonders how they acquire the items on their extensive menus. ■

Editor's Note: *Walter will write more about the rest of their week in Cuba.*

In Memoriam: Bob Hyding (2) Passed away on 2 Nov 2014.

In Memoriam: Charles H. “Buck” Lloyd (1) passed away November 12, 2014 in Oswego, NY

In Memoriam: Harvey Huetter (8) passed away on December 4th in Burlington VT

In Memoriam: Ed Hoynes (18) died peacefully at home on January 15.

In Memoriam: Lloyd and Dee Adams (23) requested that Classmates be notified that their youngest son Mathew, age 49, passed away on 4 December 2014. He had been suffering from a malignant brain tumor.

Rise and Shine!

60

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: 1%
LIFE MEMBERSHIP: 67%

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From **Bob Osmon (17)**:

■ “Dear Bill, on Monday 8 December the Class of 1960, Hampton Roads Chapter, held their fifth annual Christmas party at Le Yaca in Williamsburg, Virginia. This year we had a record number of attendees, 53, attributed by most to the fact the Antonios have moved to Williamsburg and all their friends from Annapolis and DC are following them. New attendees this year included Becky & **Dick Pariseau (1)**, Gloria & **Bob Antonio (14)**, Joanne & **Bob Gamba (11)**, Joyce & **John Claman (3)**, Daren & **Doug Johnston (5)**, and Carol & **Dick Stoakley (17)**. We also had two very, very special new attendees: Daren Johnston and Inge Whitaker, both of

whom are new brides this year and were introduced with much love by their new husbands. We warmly welcomed them into the Class of 60 fold.

Our Class President, **John Michalski (6)**, then **Ed Clextion (10)**, and **Wick Parcels (12)**, the two flags in our Chapter, all made some very poignant and appreciative remarks about the camaraderie and closeness that our class experiences. Wick said our class is like one big fraternity. I think we all agree we have something very special between all of us. Later, the owner of Le Yaca, Joy Abid, who has a daughter who was graduated in the Class of 2011 and is now serving on a Riverine Boat, gave a few remarks on how wonderful she thinks it is that we still get together like this. She is quite happy that her daughter will experience this comradeship.

Rod Friedmann (5) was recognized as being the spark plug that puts together all our luncheons during the year. He attended even though his arm is in a sling. Paula gave him a few glasses of wine and he did just fine. Also recognized were Barbara Schlicht and Ginger Philbrick who found some wonderful Christmas ornaments with flickering candles to serve as our party favors for the ladies. **Doug Johnston (5)** gave a very moving blessing and we all sat down to a wonderful meal.

The ambiance was superb, the food delicious, and the camaraderie burst forth in full measure. The vote was unanimous to hold it at Le Yaca again next year, so I have already booked our reservation. We welcome all classmates who might enjoy attending.

Attendees included Catherine & **Ed Clextion (10)**, Prissy & **Wick Parcels (12)**, Beverly & **Ken Batchellor (12)** Joanne & **Bob Gamba (11)**, Paula & **Rod Friedmann (5)**, Daren & **Doug Johnston (5)**, Linda & **Bill Lewis (5)**, Sue & **Paul Cooper (5)**, Inge & **Al Whitaker (18)**, Sandra & **Bill Manning (14)**, Lynette & **Torry Rogers (3)**, Gloria & **Bob Antonio (14)**, Barbara & **Al Bissell (8)**, Joyce & **John Claman (3)**, Muriel & **Jack Greenhalgh (9)**, Karen & **Tom Inderlied (21)**, Sarah & **Ed McCaskill (8)**, Nancy & **John Michalski (6)**, Becky & **Dick Pariseau (1)**, Ginger & **Jim Philbrick (23)**, Sarah & **Bob Powers (8)**, Carol & **Dick Stoakley (17)**, Nancy & **Skip Sweetser (6)**, Mary & **Henry Von Kolnitz (22)**, Sandy & **Tom Wishart (22)**, Barbara & **Don Schlicht (23)** and **Bob Osmon (17)**.



'60: Tidewater Christmas group

To everyone in the Class of 1960, the Hampton Roads Chapter wishes all a very Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year, and a successful 55 year reunion in the spring. God bless. Oz ■



Clextion, Michalski and Sweetser



The Stoakleys and Whitakers



Philbrick, McCaskill and VonKolnitz



Gambas (below) Bissells (above)

From **Gary Chew (22)**:

■ "Bill. How did I get into USNA? 1955 - 1956 — two people: then Captain F.D. Giambattista '27 and Ed Clextion (St. Johns College High School, Washington, DC, class of 1956). I met the Giambattista family (the Captain, Mrs G, Mike, Thom, Frank and Helen (Cookie)) in 1947/48. They moved to Falls Church, VA around my 4th grade year - about five houses away from us. Frank G. and I became, and remain, life-long best friends. My family moved to post-war Germany for my 6th grade year, then to Arlington for grade 7; the Giambattistas, to California ... Korean war. We re-acquainted at Falls Church High midway 8th grade.

My family began crumbling in my 10th grade; separation early in 11th grade, divorce that year in December 1954. Mom started treatment for tuberculosis about Christmas. I continued 'schooling', and re-started hell-raising in D.C. Fridays - Sundays! Captain Giambattista observed much of this. I recall spending many weekends with the family, including some much-needed disciplining. In about February (1955) he handed me some papers/forms: "Have your mom sign these ... to get you into the Navy Reserves! Tell her that the Chief of Naval Operations is

allowed 72 Reserve and 72 Active Duty enlisted appointments to USNA. Of course you'll have to pass the Naval Academy Entrance Exam!" I was sworn-in to USNR on 15 March 1955. A bunch of us Airmen Recruits signed-up for 90 day "Boot Camp" at NARTU (Naval Air Reserve Training Unit)/Anacostia starting in June 1955, from which we would graduate as Airmen. While there I met fellow-Recruit Ed Clextan. Ed was a natural leader - and selected by the unit's leadership early-on to lead us! [I learned that he attended a prep school in D.C. Jan/Feb/March 1955, and that instructions there included teaching the academy exams!] I was about to start my senior year at FCH in September. (My class standing going-in was 201 out of 220!) I asked Ed if he would give me copies of his prep school assignments, notes and tests. He agreed; I recall getting them in early-Sept.

My mother entered a tuberculosis sanatorium in October, 1955. My younger brother and I lived in an apartment by ourselves. I crammed; quit the basketball team, quit dating, quit weekend trips to DC. I had weekly dinners with the Giambattistas, from whom I continued to receive great encouragement. We took the exams on 10 December 1955. About mid-April I learned that I had passed the exams. I subsequently passed physical and psychological tests. I received my USNA acceptance letter about a week before high school graduation, and was sworn-in at USNA on 15 June 1956.

What a trip my life has been. I have been very, very fortunate. All thanks to and GOD bless: the departed and living Giambattista family members, **Ed Clextan (10)**, the U.S. Naval Academy, the Navy, and my wife Jane and present family these past 54.5 years. Gary" ■

From **Dave Schnegelberger (16)** in sunny Florida:

■ Bill, here's the photo (**Bill Lewis (5)**, **Dave Schnegelberger (16)**, **Jim Fitzgerald (16)**) from our dinner, finally. Enjoyed out time together; maybe next year we'll be able to do it again. Thanks Dave. ■

SUMMER SEMINAR

Help that outstanding high school junior you know experience a busy week at USNA this June.

Go to www.USNA.edu/Admissions to apply online.



Lewis, Schnegelberger, Fitzgerald

From **Mike Merrill (20)**:

■ "Received this from **Charlie Roberts (20)** yesterday. Mike, Mary Challis and I tied the knot yesterday afternoon. Below is a photo of the event with me and Mike Himsworth in uniform. Below the photo is a nice summary by Mary's youngest son, Jim Challis. Merry Christmas, Charlie"

"What a wonderful day for my beautiful Mother and her charming new husband. They were both gleaming.... Mom was looking as lovely as ever as the blushing bride...and Charlie looked the epitome of the distinguished Naval Officer. Charlie, after over 20 years of retirement, still fits into his dress blues like a glove! Cheers to the newlyweds!" ■



Mary & Charlie Roberts

61 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: 3%
LIFE MEMBERSHIP: 69%

PRES: **RADM Jerome F. Smith Jr., USN (Ret.)**
CORR SECY: **RADM E. S. (Skip) McGinley II, USN (Ret)**
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Due to the unexpected passing of CAPT Bob Denis, USN, in January, the following is the final '61 column submitted by Bob. His obit will appear in this issue (or the next). RADM Skip McGinley has been selected to be the new editor/correspondent for the Class of 1961 news.

Greetings once again classmates. First thing you know, it'll be spring and the diggers & fillers will be hard at work in the Yard. Hope all is going as well as can

be expected at our age with all of you. With a baker's dozen wins over Army and a whacky and wild finish to the Poinsettia Bowl, the mids finished another highly successful football season. As **Chuck Davis (23)** said: "Ugly, but we'll take it." A sentiment shared by most of us. Lots of inputs this month, so without further ado, let's get on to:

People Stuff:

Bob Sherer (4) reports on the annual pipe-off between the USNA/USMA Pipe & Drums held the night before the Army game in Baltimore:

■ Army prevailed 7-5 in the annual pipe-off between the two service academy Pipe and Drum Corps. I hope the football team's performance was sufficient consolation for the musicians. ■

Our trusted correspondent in Tidewater, VA Ned **Kuhns (7)** has two reports. The first on the monthly luncheon:

■ We held our monthly 1961 luncheon on Thursday, 11 December as a warm-up for the party at Bob & Peg's. Had a better than usual turn-out with lots of good conversation about the recent Class cruise and stories about interviews with Admiral Rickover. Attending were: **Mike Bradley (3)**, **Marc Bruno (1)**, **Ken Craig (7)**, **JP Decker (8)**, **Bob Graham (18)**, **Jim Henderson (15)**, **Jim Joyner (1)**, Joe Kuhn (Bonnie Campbell Kuhn's husband), Ned Kuhns (7), **Fred Lowack (7)**, **Tom McNicholas (9)**, **Buzz Needham (12)**, **Kurt Rohdenburg (20)**, **Charlie Stewart (6)**, and **Dave Timm (20)**.

Our no-host luncheons are held at 1130 on the second Thursday of every month at the T.K. TRIPPS restaurant on South Independence Blvd. in Virginia Beach. Any classmates who might be in the area are cordially invited to attend. Recently we've had **Tom Markley (12)** and **Bob Zalkan (8)** join us when they were in the area. ■

Ned also reports on the Army party:

■ In the event you were not able to join us at Bob and Peg Graham's beautiful home to watch another (the 13th) Navy victory over Army, we thought you would enjoy the photo nearby. As you can clearly see, as usual, it was a very festive event with delicious food and beverages. Many were wearing the 2014 "Beat Army" buttons provided by **Ed Straw (7)**. We owe the Graham's another major thanks and BZ for hosting us for the 13th consecutive year.