

## *Surprise, Your Life is Changed*

*05-29-2017 by Harry Zirkelbach  
Stars and Sun date 34781*

*This Memorial morning differs from others for me. This Holiday required that before arriving in the Aspen Room, I along with eighty others Windsor Gardeners, arose, took key to a locker in their building, recover the United States and Colorado Flags, march to the building entrance. There unfurl the US flag, face the building left entrance, attach it to the flag's pole metal support. On the opposite entrance facade, the Colorado flag.*

*At sunset, flags will be taken down and stored for the next event, Flag Day, 14 June. Those volunteers, seven times this attendance.*

*Now the other story. I shall begin with a mental review of the times I have stood before man and my God, raised the right hand, said "I do". Of course, change was expected for those moments, because you volunteered. Most of the time. Still in every such encounter, there are events which come as a "Wow. I never expected that."*

*Yes, plenty in the military WWII and beyond for thirty years. Then in marriage beginning 28 April 1951, and the year earlier on October 1, having Mayor Quigg Newton swear-in me and 23 other Police Recruits to the Denver Police Department.*

*There was no hint of adventures and Gotchas that these and other less defined agreements might serve to this stage I share with you today.*

*Mentioned previously, the founding of U.S. Navy Bomb and Mine Disposal by Draper Kauffman a 1932 Annapolis graduate. Denied*



acceptance to duty because of budget restraints that year, he re-entered the Navy in 1941 after working for the British on disposition of Nazi unexploded munitions dropped on that isle beginning 1940.

Draper's first assignment, establish separate Navy Mine and Bomb Disposal Training Schools. He personally recruited every Officer candidate for those first classes, men attending Colleges east of the Mississippi. Two criteria stood out, Lust for life, curiosity. The Gung Ho, afraid of nothing, never appeared in those classes. Remained a rarity. Thoroughly trained in Disposal duties, these men were not going to have life ended or celebrated because choosing that Navy wartime career. And surely weren't being trained to do this in peace.

Risk existed, injury and fatality were uncommon.

As for taking a spouse, no teaching helps. It must be lived.

Other. With 17 years of formal schooling, and a year in Navy Mine Disposal school, it is my judgement that the most effective teacher I would meet was at the Denver Police Academy. Sgt. Ben Dies. A one man band then. His forte, knowledge, humor, repetition. He seldom made a point in training without a memorable humorous anecdote.

Still, of the twenty-four that completed those four week of training just seven remained the 25 years needed to retire. None had been fired. And while two were shot and died in the course of enforcing the law, the other sixteen simply quit for personal reasons.

So did Ben Dies.

Why? Many reasons. Here are two. Two-thirds of the Police must work the evening or early morning shifts. That's destructive of a social life with the rest of society, for the Officer, and more importantly, wife and children. And then this pretty universal, there is the family concern for the loss of that bread winner.



*These constant complaints have an eroding effect on the Officer.  
While I never met with another Officer after they quit,  
I do recall wives regularly complaining.*

*And in these day when Police have College degrees,  
there are many civilian employment enticements.  
Its not the surprise, it's the constant that changes those lives.*



*Photo above. Barbara and Harry celebrate 66th Wedding at Chart House Genesee Mountain.*