



by Harry Zirkelbach September 3, 2018
Stars and Sun date 35251

With non apology I begin speaking to honor Labor Day 2018 here in Windsor Gardens, in the great State of Colorado, U.S.A.. But even earlier today I joined some 60 other residents, retrieved the U.S. and Colorado flags from storage and furled them on either side of each building entrance. Will take them down in their evening.

These symbols of freedom unnoticed by immediate neighbors when hung. . But, all wandering our community are reminded, this as n important day ... for some reason

First these vignettes.

I have a daughter eachesingle elementary school in Denver, a poor neighborhood. She encourages all to excel, as do teachers. A girl excels, islet a congratulatory letter.

Later the girl comes to class shouting, "I got a letter? Its from you Miss Z." Yes I know I wrote it".

"You dont understand!understan! I got a letter; read it.The child continue;d then teacher understood.

Imagine ... the first letter the family had ever received and it went to their child. She was backi \in school to let us know her family shared her accomplishment.

Then at the local grocery store.

Customer enters,. Goes to the canister containing handy-wipes. Removes one. Goes to Grocery Cart, wipes the handle thougoughly. Neatly dispend=s the soled cloth. The pheads into the store.

Another female enters,
Handsome female teenager, tattooed all over her visible limbs. Goes to the electric carts, hops in and continues her task.

Now my story.

I received two letters that literally changed my life.
Were received weeks apart, June 1944.

I had been graduated from the University of Detroit on May 31 1944. For the first time Mom nd Dad came to Detroit,.There, attending the graduation, see the big city and my friends. We return home at once for their daughter, my only sibling, Patricia Zirkelbach was to marry Harold Goetz June 2 1944.

A week to remember for all concerned.

Late in my Senior Year at the University of Detroit I had applied for a Commission in the U.S.Navy. While I and

others applying had been. advised that we had been accepted, none had yet had been notified formally, with notice to report to Active Duty.

For three years as an Engineering student at the University, the Erie Draft Board routinely deferred me from the draft. Imagine my surprise when home that first week of June, and that same Draft board ordered me to report for Induction within a few weeks..

I appeared before the Daft Board the next day. Imagine my wonder; I did not knew these men not they me. This cadre who had deferred me every three-month for three. years, were now ordering my Induction, ignoring the education they had repeatedly encouraged. While treere I mention my pending appointment to the Navy. That made no difference. The date I was to report for induction was not changed. However, they did say, should the appointment be received, their Induction Order would be cancelled..

So unemployable with that threat, I would spent most of June before the Appointment as Ensign was received. And when received weeks lager, i too was dated 1 June 1944.

Presented to the Erie Drafft Board, my name was removed from their Draft records.

A benefit to me; Navy Orders gave seven weeks to report for Active Duty at Fort Schuyler New York, 28 August. So I would return to Detroit, formalize the swearing in, purchase Uniforms from Hudson's Department store. My first tailored suits.

Home I walked about town as Ensign. Still, it would be years before I realized that these two letters changed my life forever.

At Fort Schuyler I would be accepted for training in Mine Disposal, meet a cadre of magnificent men, and never again openly book or office door that hinted of Engineering.

But what a wonderful new life was to follow these 74 years.

The second missive negating the first, taking me far from home to a life time of adventures unimaginable in novels or textbooks.

And today I am happy to be here with you Labor Day, tell me of those two one page letters.