

LEWISTON TRIBUNE

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SATURDAY,
9/7/13.

TO: John Sullivan and family

SUBJECT: Our beloved Sully

Write a letter to replicate the famous letters that Sully sent to so many of his friends?

Really, that can't be done:

I mean, it would be so flat done by anyone other than Sully: Beautiful Nancy, my wife, is fine (relate that hair got done at the beauty shop, some health issues, my extreme patience, exaggerated probably). My golf game sucks (I'm getting older but not better). Here's what I've been doing (coffee, with whom; not a Shriner, so can't report on that; a rundown on friends' health challenges). An update on former Lewiston banker and port commissioner, John Givens, also a Kennewick guy.

And certainly, I've no chest full of "funnies," whether from Reader's Digest (Humor in Uniform, etc.) or a plethora of print and online sources. Only Sully developed his library of every growing, almost always, always tasteful pieces of humor. No one, including me, is capable of such accumulation.

His home Xerox bill must have been a major item in the budget....or else Sully owned a chunk of Xerox stock.

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Instead, let me select one little piece of Sully lore.....his continuing military service.

When returning to Lewiston in January, 1961, following graduation from the University of Oregon and my tour of duty in Army Armor at Fort Knox, Ky., I rejoined the Tribune reporting staff.

A. L. Alford Jr.
President, TPC Holdings, Inc.
Lewiston Tribune/Moscow-Pullman Daily News

(208) 848-2250
1-800-745-8742

I had an eight-year obligation in the Army Reserves and had weekly meetings in Clarkston in the Diagonal Street building that had been the first Tri-State Memorial Hospital site. Every Monday we gathered for the Reserve meeting at 7 p.m., wearing the khaki uniforms and polished black shoes.

Two to three of us were second lieutenants, wearing the brass single bars, later to be changed to the silver bar of a first lieutenant, finally to double silver bars of captain. Sully, along with a covey of 10 or so others, all wore their silver clusters, designating that they were lieutenant colonels. All were World War II veterans--- Sully and a collection of diversified characters, including Harvey (Slug) Walker, Irv Faling, Roland Bird, Marv Daniel, Henry Ard and on and on.

One of us presented a military "lesson," perhaps a combat exercise and infantry maneuvers. It was pretty boring....except for presentations by one of three. Sully's humor was the tops. Walker, of course, would exaggerate some past experience, like what to do if during a combat situation you had to take a crap. Sully would then out-do Slug with an even higher tale. Faling, who had an ego larger than a tank, would tell a tale that was a taller than Mount Borah, or relate that he was the star in Breakheart Pass along with actor Charles Bronson, and Sully with craftiness would interrupt and out-do him.

It was eight years of entertainment, courtesy of Sully and his ways. I called it the Sully Meeting, because he was the highlight. Early on, I learned one lesson: Never question the Vietnam War. That was one line that Sully did not cross, or did the other high ranking officers.

At a first of second meeting that I attended, I saluted. Said Sully: "Forget that B.S. We don't do that here."

The second highlight was what to do after the meeting when it concluded at 9 p.,m.

One option: Go to Tom Smith's Nut Shop for a chocolate sundae. That was the favorite of Colonels Walker and Bird.

The other option: Go to Smitty's Barrel for a couple of glasses of beer. This, naturally, was the favorite of the couple of second lieutenants.

So where did the second lieutenants go? Of course, it was wherever Colonel Sullivan decided to go. He was our leader. About 55 per cent of the time, it was beer. After a couple of glasses, Sully would announce: "Well, boys, I'd better get home. Dee is waiting for me, the lucky girl." We'd follow suit, after one more glass.

Sully was the leader of the choir. Of course. He was irreplaceable.

- Butch