

Geodetic Survey Squadron/Group, Newsletter #35, 4 July 2014,

Greetings, Fellow Veterans of the Geodetic Survey Squadron and Geodetic Survey Group!

And Happy Independence Day!

A new book, *Our Declaration*, was just released by Danielle Allen, a political philosopher at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton. As the Declaration of Independence is the very reason we celebrate this day, it begs the question, have you ever read it? If you have not, or if it has been a while, you really should. *PBS Newshour* journalist Jeffrey Brown interviewed the author this week. The book invites a new appreciation for the Declaration of Independence, a document so fundamental to our American heritage that it is literally our nation's birth certificate. According to the author:

“...just go ahead and read the whole thing. It's only 1,337 words, which is, you know, two op-eds at most, so read the whole thing because it does make a coherent argument. But I think actually, in a funny way, the best way of seeing that argument is by starting at the end. Start with that resolution, when they unanimously declare that they're free and independent states with the right to make treaties and alliances and so forth, because at the end of the day, the point of the document is a decision. It's a decision to declare independence, but then to have to justify that decision. So, everything that comes before is that justification. And when one starts at the end that way, what one really gets is this beautiful example of the standard that we should all use whenever we make a decision and then need to explain the justification for it.”

You may see the interview or read the transcript here:

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/finding-empowerment-words-founding-fathers/>

The words of the Declaration of Independence are here:

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html

We are having a fabulous Fourth of July weekend here in the DC area.

Hurricane *Arthur* only grazed by the Mid-Atlantic Coast (except for the North Carolina Outer Banks) and helped clear out the hot, humid weather we normally have this time of year. I hope you are all enjoying your weekend too.

There was not much feedback from the June newsletter, so this will be a short one this time. I'm also in the middle of a home renovation project, and we are trying to finish up before taking off on some coast-to-coast travel this month to visit scattered family members.

Back-Pedaling from Earlier Cell Phone Advice

Regrettably, I didn't do my usual fact-checking before offering the cell phone tricks I placed in last month's newsletter. Both **Dick Bowen** and **Woody Woodard** pointed out that Snopes (a fact-checking website) says this advice is just another urban legend with a mixture of accurate and inaccurate information.

Here is more info from Snopes:

- Calling [112](#) on your cell phone will (in some parts of the world, primarily Europe) connect you to local emergency services, even if you are outside your provider's service area (i.e., even if you are not authorized to relay signals through the cell tower that handles your call), and many cell phones allow the user to place 112 calls even if the phone lacks a SIM card or its keypad is locked. However, the 112 number does not have (as is sometimes claimed) special properties that enable callers to use it in areas where all cellular signals are blocked (or otherwise unavailable).
- Cars with remote keyless entry (RKE) systems cannot be unlocked by relaying a key fob transmitter signal via a cellular telephone. RKE systems and cell phones utilize different types of signals and transmit them at different frequencies.
- The claim that pressing the sequence *3370# will unleash "hidden battery power" in a cell phone seems to be a misunderstanding of an option available on some brands of cell phone (such as Nokia) for Half Rate Codec, which provides about 30% more talk time on a battery charge at the expense of lower sound quality. However, this option is enabled by pressing the sequence *#4720# — the sequence *3370# actually enables Enhanced Full Rate Codec, which provides better sound quality at the expense of shorter battery life.
- Entering the sequence *#06# into a cell phone may display a 15-digit identification string, but that function only works with some types of cell phones, and the efficacy of reporting the ID number to a cellular service provider to head off unauthorized use of a lost or stolen phone is limited.
- Some business outfits such as (800) FREE-411 do provide free directory assistance services to cell phone customers. However, users should note that the service is "free" in the sense that FREE-411 provides directory information to callers at no charge, but cellular service providers may still assess charges related to placing such calls.

Read more

at <http://www.snopes.com/inboxer/household/cellphones.asp#GsuXGyP5zPtpYwcd.99>

Never take at face value anything that is in a chain mail---especially those that look like breathless tabloid headlines! Good places to check facts vs. rumors or outright lies:

<http://www.snopes.com>; <http://www.truthorfiction.com>; <http://urbanlegends.about.com>; <http://www.factcheck.org>; <http://www.politifact.com>; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/>

Bounced E-Mails

The following GSS veterans, for whom I have no other contact information, have fallen off the roster either due to a change in e-mail service or other problems. Here are the

names: **Bill Honecker, Lt.Col. James** (no first name listed) and **Ronald D. Wells**. *We'd like to get these veterans back on distribution, so if any of you have an updated way to contact them, please let me know.*

Final Notes:

We are now just about a year away from our next reunion in 2015 in Cheyenne. I'll be in touch with our volunteer committee soon to start firming up plans and to get things moving along.

We will also be offering another commemorative coin that simply celebrates the Squadron/Group as an organization of smart and dedicated folks. Watch for proposed designs in future newsletters, as well as more about the next reunion plans and progress.

From Bonnie and me to all of you, Happy Fourth and enjoy your summer!

Garrett
Field Survey & Astro
GSS/Cheyenne
April 1967 - May 1970 and January - December 1972

Nothing makes the Earth seem so spacious as to have friends at a distance—they make the latitudes and longitudes.

--Henry David Thoreau, Surveyor & Philosopher