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Rear Admiral Bruce L. Gillingham
U.S. Navy Surgeon General



Listy and Bob Visit
Our Nation's Capital
to Attend Bruce's
Retirement Celebration.



Washington D.C. in the Spring

By Listy Gillingham

Bob and I joined the Gillingham Clan for a fun trip to Washington D.C. to witness Admiral Bruce Gillingham's (Bob's younger brother) official retirement from the navy. We got there a few days early so we could take in the sights and check out many of the museums that we have never had time to see when we've driven through the last few times. Listy has been to DC several times as a principal of a middle school participating in the 8th grade trip with over 100 kids. Needless to say, this adventure was much calmer, and made the trip a little more peaceful in terms of managing what we needed to see.



We arrived on a Thursday night and didn't get to our hotel until almost 10 p.m. however the bar was open, and we were lucky to get to watch San Diego State win their elite eight game against Creighton while we had our dinner (Go Aztecs!).

The next day was spent walking all around the DC area checking out the White House, walking through the mall, and for both of us, seeing the African American Museum for the first time. We loved seeing how interactive and interesting they made each of the displays as they shared the historical contributions and facts surrounding the life and times of what being black in America was like over the years.



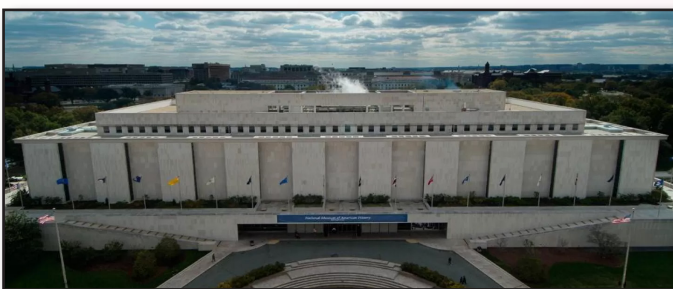
One of the displays that I really liked was where they took an old car (like a Chevy) and cut it in half leaving off the trunk and the back seat, allowing you to stand behind the steering wheel of the car. The windshield became a video for you to see and the dashboard was a computer screen where you could touch it to select various options as you “drove” across America following the “Green book” which was a travel guidebook that showed Black Americans how to travel across country safely. The book gave you hotel and cafe options that welcomed people of all races to eat or stay there (what a novel concept). Sad to think that at one time, the world was so unfriendly that a book had to be published to show where you would be welcomed as you traveled, but that was the sign of the times.



The first two floors were a little depressing as they showed slavery and the prejudiced, they endured over the years that set the stage for the civil rights movement. The top two floors were more about pop culture, sports, and other great accomplishments in almost every segment of society that came about from the black community over the years. The stories they shared were all inspirational on so many levels as they broke barriers to getting where they wanted to be and making it easier for the next generation.



We then ventured into the American History Museum checking out a lot of cool displays about how our country has evolved over time. We saw it through a different lens as the displays showed transportation, advertising, communication changes, cooking, etc. You name it, they seemed to have a room dedicated to highlighting it.



The next day, we continued on our quest to see history in the making. We stopped at the National Archives to see the original Constitu-

tion and other important artifacts that are held for viewers to see. We made our way through the Holocaust Memorial which was also an incredible journey through a dark time in history where hate dominated common sense. When you enter the Holocaust Museum, they give you an Identification Card with a real story about a person who lived during the Holocaust. Some were survivors and others not. As you walked the 4 stories of this museum you were instructed to read the pages from your ID card that corresponded with each floor (the floors were organized from 1920's, 30's, 40's to liberation day). It helped give you a more personalized approach to what was happening at the time. There is definitely not enough room in this article to share all of the displays or how they carted you through the museum as if you were a Jew being herded from one location to the next. But they did an amazing job in helping you see the atrocious way the Jews and Gypsies were treated during World War II. Again, we left feeling unsettled and shocked to see and feel the first-hand accounts of the survivors who shared their stories in a video at the end.



We got to meet up with family on Saturday night. Bruce and Jeannette hosted a family gathering at an Irish Pub to help celebrate his retirement and welcome all the out-of-town guests. It also gave Bruce a chance to acknowledge some of the colleagues he worked with closely at the Pentagon. Bob and I marveled over how many admirals we were meeting who all shared nice comments about Bruce. Bob wrote a song (I'm sure that surprises you) which we passed around to everyone in attendance to help serenade the newest retiree.



Sunday was our first sunny day and what made it fun was being in town to experience the National Cherry Blossom Festival on the Mall. The cherry blossoms were in bloom all over the city, which was great to see given they can only be viewed for about 3 weeks before they start to fall off. The festival was all about kite flying and so families came out in large numbers to celebrate a sunny day in D.C. and to fly their kites. We saw hundreds of kites in the air and loved being part of something special. We also made our way to see the National Portrait Museum, The Natural History Museum, and more of the American History Museum.

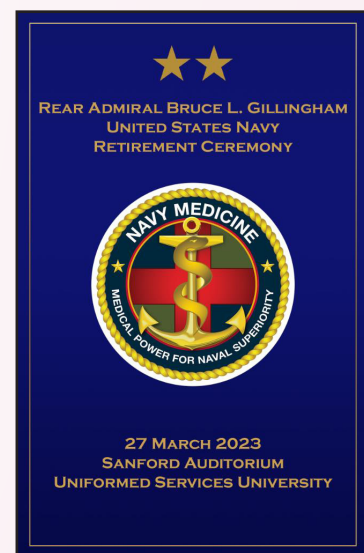
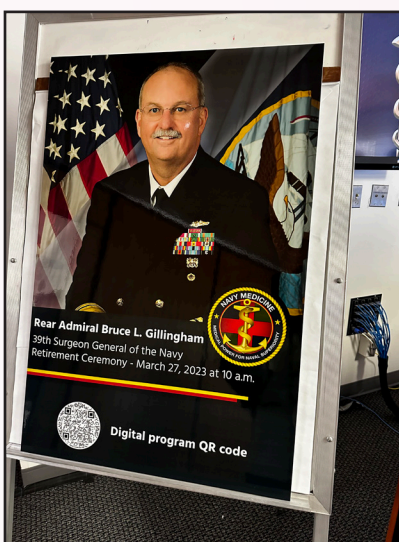
We also found time to escape back to our hotel to watch San Diego State play for the Final Four win with Bob's brother Dave and his wife Sue at our hotel.

Bob's sister Amy, and her husband Rich, with two of their kids (Nick and Molly) met us for dinner on Sunday night. They live in Minnesota, so it was great to get together with them and it happened to be Molly's 14th birthday, which made it fun for us too.

Monday, was all about Bruce and here is Bob's description of that morning from a proud brother's perspective:

"We're just back from Bruce's retirement ceremony in Washington, D.C., a truly special event. It was held in an auditorium at his medical school (Uniformed Services University for Health Sciences), where his career had all begun. In attendance were all the mucky mucks you might expect, including the Chief of Naval Operations who gave some fine remarks about Bruce and his naval career, but also thanks to Jeannette and their kids (all in attendance). Two particularly moving elements were the "Old Glory" ceremony wherein this beautiful poem was read by a member of Bruce's staff as a folded flag was passed slowly from an Ensign to a Lieutenant. J.G., to a Lieutenant, to a Lt. Commander, to a Commander, to a Captain, then a 1-star Admiral. That person then turned and handed the flag to Bruce, a 2-star who walked solemnly to Jeannette and handed the flag to her. Not a dry eye in the place.

The Saturday night before, we were able to meet many of Bruce's staff who helped him lead 40,000 military personnel. All in attendance were quite



Clicking on the program will download a full copy of what was passed out to the guests. It has a lot of pictures from Bruce's career and also has the "Old Glory" poem mentioned in this article.





casually dressed and heartily joined in to sing one of our goofy songs. But, to our surprise, as he was recognizing a number of them for their service, these "ordinary" folks turned out to be a collection of admirals, captains, and commanders with amazing service records, all clearly quite proud to have worked with and for him.



The real stunner, however, was Bruce's staff's gift to him. All had noticed a portrait of his team in Iraq, where Bruce and this group were tasked with stabilizing the soldiers who presented with horrific, seemingly mortal wounds. Together, the team achieved a 98% save rate for these folks, allowing them to be airlifted to the nearest hospitals. The gift then was the presence of most of the team at Bruce's ceremony, including perhaps their most miraculous save, a man whose right leg had been completely blown off. Despite his blood pressure being 60 over 0 and flatlining 3 times, he survived, and completed his career in the military as a Lt. Colonel teaching at West Point.



It was quite a day, and in his remarks, Bruce underscored his gratitude for the support he had received from Jeannette, his family, and countless folks in the military. Though the official retirement date isn't until May 1, it's safe to say that Bruce has the Pentagon in his rear view mirror, and he's heading west!"



After that, we returned to the downtown area and walked all around the Capital and visited Ford's theater as well. We had dinner together and toasted another successful trip together in our lovely retirement years as it was back to San Diego early the next morning!

Sadly, just about a week after the retirement celebration, Bob's father passed away in his sleep. Below is a reproduction of the "Life Tribute" published in the San Diego Union Tribune a few weeks later.

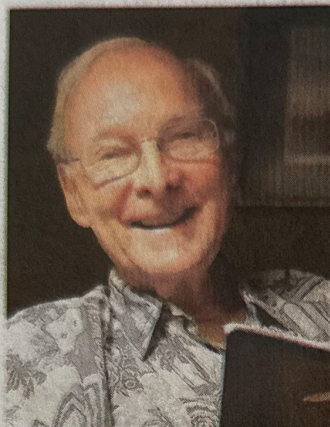
Life Tributes

David Gillingham

August 30, 1930 - April 2, 2023

EL CAJON — David Ray Gillingham, MD, a retired anesthesiologist, passed away peacefully at home on April 2, 2023. Our Dad was 92, and he and our mother had celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary this past December.

Our Dad was born in Long Beach, California, to Harry Raymond Gillingham and Irene Bess Gillingham on August 30, 1930. A teenager during WW2, he started working at a gas station at age 14 while attending Wilson High School, sparking a lifelong love of cars passed on to some of his children. Dad graduated from Pomona College in Claremont, CA in 1952. While there, he met his future wife Martha Hendee in a mandatory Music Appreciation class, later crediting her with being the "guiding force" in his life. They were married in December 1952, and Dad reported for duty with the Navy about a month later. His duty stations included Washington, D.C., and Seattle, Washington.



Separating from the Navy in 1956, Dad worked in retail, with an airline, and with Naval Investigative Service while completing his prerequisites for Medical School at the University of Colorado, a career choice inspired by a book on Albert Schweitzer found in his father-in-law's extensive library. After medical school, Dad returned to active duty with the Navy and completed his internship in Jacksonville, FL - a duty station #3 son Bruce would later command. He applied for submarine duty, and in 1964 the family moved to Groton, CT, for his assignment to the USS Thomas Edison (SSBN-610) Gold

crew. Completing three Strategic Deterrent Patrols, he was transferred to the staff of Submarine Squadron 2 at Point Loma and moved the family to Coronado, traveling cross-country in a station wagon - with 4 boys and 2 dogs. He was then accepted into an anesthesia residency program at the Naval Medical Center, San Diego (#3 son Bruce would command there too), and about that time moved the family to a large, old home in La Mesa, where over the course of 18 years all 6 of his children would graduate from Helix High School. Separating from the Navy in 1970, Dad joined Anesthesia Service where he worked for 15 years. In 1975 Mom and Dad purchased and rehabbed the Spreckels mansion in Coronado where they lived for 5 years before moving to Mt. Helix in 1980. They then divided their time between a house in Palm Desert, their home on Mt. Helix, with an occasional foray to their condo in Beaver Creek,

Colorado. Dad worked at Grossmont Hospital in obstetric anesthesiology until he retired in 2004 after assisting hundreds of births and garnering the admiration of countless colleagues and patients. In retirement, he enjoyed riding his bike (and shopping for cars), hosting family gatherings, reading, happy hour in his spa, writing letters on his manual typewriter, and going to Padre games.

Our Dad was proud of his family and is survived by his wife Martha who now resides in Blossom Valley, sons Dave (Susan) of Coronado, Bob (Listy) of La Mesa, Bruce (Jeannette) of Coronado, Jim (Gretchen) of La Mesa and daughters Libby (Brinton) of Blossom Valley and Amy (Rich) of Excelsior, MN. He had 26 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren.

Interment will be at Miramar National Cemetery at a date in the future. Per his wishes, no funeral is planned.

Annie Mulholland Wins Biliteracy Teaching Award!

By Listy Gillingham



San Diego
LEADERSHIP
IN BILITERACY
SYMPOSIUM


san diego county office of
EDUCATION
FUTURE WITHOUT BOUNDARIES™

Annie Mulholland was honored this month at the San Diego County Office of Education Leadership in Bilingual Symposium. The program outlined the following information as to why they chose Annie for this prestigious award:

“Ann Mulholland, Spanish Immersion Teacher, Riverview International Academy has made exceptional contributions to Spanish language immersions education.

Since 2015, Annie has demonstrated remarkable teaching skills and dedication to her students, creating a vibrant learning environment while fostering a love of the Spanish language. She has played a crucial role in strengthening the Spanish immersion program with her innovative approach to language learning. Annie’s commitment to her students’ growth has led to excellent student outcomes and instilled in them an appreciation of cultural diversity. As an inspiring member of the Riverview community, Annie consistently supports and uplifts her fellow educators. Her receipt of the Bilingual Award is a testament to her incredible talent, dedication, and enthusiasm, which has positively impacted students, colleagues, and families alike.”



Annie began her career at the primary campus for Riverview International Academy as a first-grade teacher. After a few years, she decided she was ready for a change and transferred to the upper grades by moving into a 3rd grade classroom. The move helped her as she worked through the 2020 pandemic as many of her students had experienced her as their teacher in their earlier years. Annie’s innovative approaches to learning were also noted when the district held a contest for redesigning your classroom. As a result of this award, Annie got the latest and greatest in furniture to help facilitate a vibrant learning environment that she imagined.

She has been a model teacher and has presented many of her ideas at district and school in services.

We are very proud of her for representing our teaching legacy in such a positive way!



Jeff and Carol's Weekend Adventure in New Jersey



By Jeff & Carol Benesch

The Rios Twins just turned 9 years old, and we flew across the country to celebrate their parties with them, Benny, and their folks, and friends. The fact that Alaska Airlines lost our luggage after pulling it off the plane on Friday morning in San Diego just put a bit of a kink in those plans.

When we landed, we stood in a long line to file our report and were promised an early morning delivery to our hotel in Edison. We had to go to Target to get the basics, which fortunately was in the same location as our hotel. Unfortunately, Alaska tried to deliver my bag to an apartment in Manhattan, not to our hotel in Edison, New Jersey.

To make a long story short, after many, many phone calls to the delivery agency, and many more trips to the mall for make-up, more clothes, and toiletries, we received our bags:





Carol's arrived on SUNDAY morning at 2 AM, and Jeff's arrived at noon on Sunday. And Jeff was leaving the next morning for home.

Since our days and evenings were filled with a BBQ dinner on Friday night at the Rios house, a yoga party on Saturday for Sofia at the family's yoga studio/dojo and concluding with a Sunday viewing of Guardians of the Galaxy, part 3 with a dozen of Mateo's friends at a local theater, our substitute clothing would have to suffice for most of the activities.



The kids also stood out at the dojo on Saturday morning for Sensei Miguel to put them through their paces. Jeff flew back on Monday AM, but Grandma Carol stayed at the Edison house for an additional week.





The plan was to see Sofia in her dance competition on Saturday night, the 13th, and then fly home early Sunday for a Mother's Day celebration with the local Benesch family. Hopefully Carol will sleep a bit on the flight. But that's not all that's exciting on the Homefront:



The 3 owlets, Luke, Leia and Obiwan, are fledging (learning to fly). Two have already left the owl box and explored the nighttime backyard, but all 3 return to the box so their momma can bring them a fresh rat each night. Flying is one thing, learning to hunt is a different skill entirely. They sure make a lot of noise from the owl box each night, probably asking their mother for food! They are quite a sight as they fly around the back to perch on tall buildings, in trees and bushes, and our chimney.



