

LST534 Newsletter

January, February, March 2012

Volume 15 , Issue 1

“BEFORE YOU GO”

The Story Behind “Before You Go”

In the early morning hours of a summer evening in 2002, Dr. Sam Bierstock was returning from a cross-country trip.

Better known as “Dr. Sam” to millions of people, the doctor had just performed an engagement with his band “Dr. Sam & The Managed Care Blues Band® “. A professional musician and entertainer as well as a physician, Dr. Sam had been entertaining and making political commentary using satire, great music and humor since 1996 when he formed “Dr. Sam and The Managed Care Blues Band”. With performances in more than forty states, and many thousands of CDs sold, Dr. Sam had been taking on managed care and it's impact on healthcare in the United States with such riotous tunes as “You Picked A Fine Time To Leave Me Blue Shield”, “You're One Hip Mama ('Cause They Won't Pay For Two)” and many others. His music with a message and good natured humorous commentary had been featured nationally on CNN, National Public Radio, People Magazine, USA Today and many other national forums.

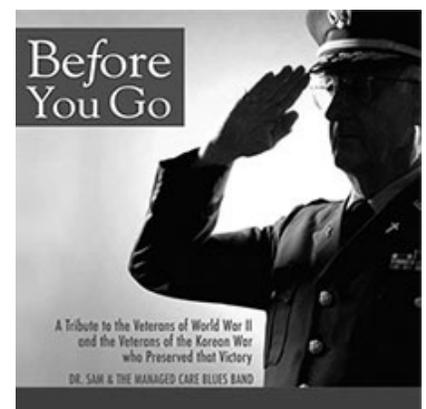
On one particular evening, Dr. Sam was tired. He had parted with his band members and was

headed home from a cross-country gig that had returned him to his home base in Florida at 1 A.M. After retrieving his car from the parking lot, he handed his parking ticket to the elderly man in the collection booth. Retrieving his change, Dr. Sam wished the attendant a good evening. He was somewhat started when he received an unexpected angry and resentful reply, “I took two bullets for this country, ’ the attendant said, “and look what I am doing now!”

Uncertain how to respond initially, Dr. Sam pocketed his change, rolled up his window and began to drive off. The time that it took to drive ten or fifteen feet from the toll booth was enough for him to digest what had just happened. With no one behind him, Dr. Sam backed up, rolled down his window and addressed the elderly attendant. “Sir”, he said, “I have a wonderful life in this country, and I want to thank you sincerely for what you did to preserve our way of life in this country. Saying nothing in response, the man began to cry.

As he drove home in those early morning hours, Dr. Sam was haunted by what had just occurred. As a “Baby Boomer” his early years of life were within a decade of the end of the Second World War. His step-father had been wounded in Italy,

and other family members had served in the armed forces. Distant relatives had perished in the holocaust. What would have happened, he thought, if we had lost World War II to Hitler and his Nazi henchmen? He realized that not only would our entire way of life and system of freedom be destroyed, his parents and grandparents would have been killed, he would never have been born and his children would not exist. The same fate would have been met by virtually all other members of minorities, many religious groups, and the disabled. The personal freedoms that we take so much for granted would have disappeared. “How”, he thought do you thank someone enough for the existence of your children, and for all the freedoms and opportunities that we all take so much for granted?”



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The next morning, Dr. Sam wrote the lyrics to "Before You Go". The lyrics came easily to him since they came so much from the heart. The challenge then came in setting them to music.

For months he struggled with finding the right musical genre. Should it be a patriotic song resounding with majesty, or a country tune? He had consulted several well known and successful professional song writers who felt that his lyrics were more of a "poem" than song lyrics and suggested that he re-work them. But what he had written was what he felt, so he resisted a change in wording. He sent the lyrics to fellow musicians, and to authors of film scores. No one seemed to take interest or express a willingness to tackle the lyrics and the message.

During the summer of 2005, Dr. Sam was on his way to yet another gig with his band. The band had a new keyboard player, John Melnick. Classically trained as a pianist, and a seasoned singer and entertainer, John was on his first road trip with the band with scheduled stops in Philadelphia and Scottsdale. Walking through one of the airports, Dr. Sam casually mentioned to John that he had been struggling with putting some lyrics to music and couldn't seem to find the right fit. "Let me take a shot at it," John offered. The result was "Before You Go".

With the music provided by John Melnick, Dr. Sam went into the studio with John and his production team, John Catalano and Newell Bate. With Andy Russell on the drums, John

Catalano on guitar and bass, Dr. Sam on harmonica, and John Melnick providing both keyboard and vocals and Peter White harmonizing "Before You Go" became a reality at last.

Feeling that they had produced a very high quality "demo" recording, Dr. Sam and John began "shopping" the song in an effort to interest a well known celebrity singer, certain that a highly recognized and popular singer would assure that their message of thanks would be spread more quickly if it was recorded by someone of national stature as a recording artist. As negotiations continued, time continued to pass. Acutely aware that the Veterans of World War Two were being lost to age and time at a rate of 1,000 to 2,000 per day, they made the decision to release their recording for free listening on the Internet, in the hope that the message would be spread by those who heard their tune and forward it on to others. To enhance the impact of the song, Dr. Sam created a visual presentation to accompany the display of his lyrics, attempting to include as many of the branches of service of the armed forces, the allies, both sexes, and as many ethnic groups as possible in order to fortify a recognition of all who had done much to preserve our way of life—and our very lives.

Within one week "Before You Go" was being downloaded at a rate of 400 to 500 downloads per day. By the end of the first six weeks, downloads totaled more than 450,000 peaking at 50,000 per day at one point. E-mails began pouring in, with profound

expressions of gratitude for the recognition extended to World War Two veterans by the song—not just from veterans of that war themselves, but from veterans of all the wars since, people in active service, and especially from the sons, daughters, and grandchildren of the veterans of World War Two.

Sons and daughters told of their parents and grandparents never talking about what they had seen or experienced during the war. Just as "Before You Go" expressed:

"You never boasted, bragged or asked
For adulation for your past
You did the job you knew was right
And quietly you cry at night."

Our thanks go to all of those who have listened to "Before You Go" at www.beforeyougo.us, and have passed it on to friends, family, radio, and television stations, printed media, religious groups and organizations of all types.

Dr. Sam's and John Melnick's goal from the beginning has been to get this message to every surviving veteran of World War Two while we still have them, to their families and to their descendants. "Before You Go" has had its own life, thanks to all of you who have helped spread the message of thanks.

The website now offers anyone to burn their own DVD using our music and pictures of their own choice—so they can make a personal tribute to their veteran family member as a gift or memorial of their service. It's a

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very neat feature and a lot of people and organizations take advantage of it to pay tribute to their own family member, friend, squadron, organization, etc.

There is a demo site at http://www.beforeyougo.us/create_your_own_video.

Visit www.beforeyougo.us today. And the LST 534 family thanks Dr. Bierstock for his love and passion for veterans.

In Sympathy

Norris C. Long, QM2c, died peacefully on November 10th, 2011. Norris celebrated his 100th birthday last December. Norris had a love of opera, and supported the opera companies locally for years. He once told me that it was no fun getting older because all your friends die on you. But Norris was lucky to have a close knit group of friends and a few family members who kept in close contact. For all those who knew Norris, our lives are blessed because of his friendship. May he rest in peace.

Carl Wendt, S1c, passed away on October 12th, 2011. Carl was married to his grade school sweetheart for almost 60 years when she passed on in 2007. His daughter said he really never recovered from his wife's death. Carl was 84 when he passed away. His mind was alert but the emphysema

caused his failing health. We send our sympathy to his family and may he rest in peace.

New MVP Program At VA

This is to enlighten veterans like you on a new program MVP—Million Veteran Program. This is a research and development study on the genes and health of our veterans that use the Veterans Administration health services. The purpose of the study is to understand how genes affect your health as well as others. All the data collected within the next five to seven years will make a great study of one million veterans linked to health traits. This may lead them to preventing many health issues and treating them with the knowledge they gathered from these studies. Check it out.

Call the VA at 1-866-441-6075. They will send you a brochure. You will have a questionnaire sheet to fill out, if you wish to participate. The next step is to make a visit to the VA hospital and have them draw a small vile (teaspoon) of blood. You then get your beautiful MVP pin to wear on your jacket or cap.

The VA is your friend. Think about it. Look it up on their Web site at: <http://www.research.va.gov/mvp/>

Credit: Peter Leasca, US LST Association

HOLIDAYS

January

1 New Year's Day
16 Martin Luther King



February

14 Valentine's Day
20 President's Day
29 Leap Day



March

11 Daylight Savings Time
17 St. Patrick's Day
20 First Day of Spring
30 National Doctors' Day



January 4

Ed Overstake
2440 World Parkway Blvd. E.
#38
Clearwater, FL 33763

January 14

Frank Frame
PO Box
Jal, NM 88252

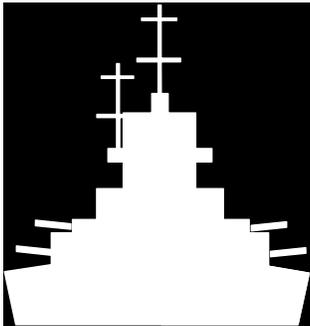
February 3

William Dox
443 South Main Street
PO Box 756
Massena, NY 13662

March 26

Willie Gunn
105 Bull Street
Swainsboro, GA 30401

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250 West 49th Street
Suite 400
New York, New York 10019



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Just for Fun

HUSBAND QUOTES

Do you know the punishment for bigamy? Two mother-in-laws.

A man inserted an ad in the classifieds: WIFE WANTED. Next day he received a hundred letters. They all said the same thing: YOU CAN HAVE MINE.

The most effective way to remember your wife's birthday is to forget it once.

First guy (proudly): My wife's an angel!" Second guy: "You're lucky, mine's still alive."

Jokes from the Scuttlebutt

NAUTICAL TERMS

In memory of James Richard Drew who contributed to this column until his passing.

Knot— A measure of speed equal to one nautical mile (6076 Feet) per hour

Knot—A fastening made by interweaving rope to form a stopper, to enclose or bind an object to form a loop or a noose, to tie a small rope to an object or to tie the bands of two small ropes together.

Rope—In general, cordage as it is purchased at the store. When it comes aboard a vessel and is put to use it becomes a line.

Editor and Comments:

Linda Alvers

250 W. 49th Street, Suite 400

New York, NY 10019

1.800.237.1224