

ICFN LAWRENCE P. CUZZUPE 15 April 1964



I, Lawrence "Larry" Cuzzupe, was born 1 November 1944, at Eugene, Oregon. My eyes and hair are brown. My father was Italian and my mother was Irish. I'm the oldest of three. My sister lives in Riverside, New Jersey, and my brother in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Late in 1962, just before my 18th birthday, and before graduating from Lincoln Northeast High School in Lincoln, Nebraska, I joined the Navy as a "kiddie cruiser." Boot camp was at Great Lakes, Illinois where I also went to Interior Communications "A" school. My first duty was aboard two training ships: USS LAMAR (PCE 899) in Milwaukee, and USS PARLE (DE 708) in Chicago.

On 15 April 1964, I was received for duty on board USS FRANK E. EVANS (DD 754). I was assigned to "R" Division. The first advice I got was to, "Never bring back the movie Shane from the movie exchange. If you do, something bad will happen to you." Evidently, prior to my arrival, the movie had been overdone to the point of "mutiny." I never did!!

I remember being in dry-dock at Long Beach. There were two other ships in this one dry-dock with us; a LPH carrier in front with FRANK E. EVANS and another destroyer, side by side, behind it. I regret never getting any pictures of this unusual situation.

When we left for Westpac in '65, we carried a blaze orange, 16 or 17 ft. remote controlled speedboat on our helo deck. Evidently it was to practice firing on North Vietnamese torpedo boats which were considered a threat at that time. (This was shortly after the Gulf of Tonkin incident.) The boat was launched. Each group was to take turns firing at it. We were second or third. Our gun crew blew it to a smithereens, which ended the firing exercise.

It was a great experience aboard FRANK E. EVANS. I had never been outside the continental U.S. I'll never forget my first sighting of Diamond Head, all the exotic places we visited, and being out to sea.

It was late 1965. I was twenty-one years old and returned to Lincoln, Nebraska. For the first few years, I had three different jobs, then joined a Vet Medicine Company, which later was purchased by Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, where I spent a 30 year career.

In February 1971, I was transferred to the Twin Cities in Minnesota. I was married, had three children, then divorced in 1991. I met my current wife in '93 or '94. We eventually married in 1999. I retired officially that same year.

My three children are all married. My oldest daughter is the mother of my two grandchildren, Ellen & Ethan. My second daughter is expecting their first child, a girl, October 2008. My son is a firefighter in the Twin Cities and they are expecting their first child, a boy, November 2008. In addition, I have three step-children and five step-grandchildren.

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