



John Muir Charter School **GRIT** Pomona CCC

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California Conservation Corps—Pomona Satellite



REMEMBERING B.T. COLLINS

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He had been called a lot of things over his lifetime; irascible, irreverent, colorful, brave, wacky, creative, valiant, dynamic, caring, and even “Hook.” ; (the last, as the result of having lost an arm and a leg in 1967 while serving as a Special Forces - Green Beret - Marine in Vietnam) The late B.T. Collins was probably all of those things and more. He lived life to the fullest. The one thing that he was not – was a defeatist. He had a strong belief in the ability of people to grow and change. He didn’t see the loss of an arm and a leg as a handicap, responding to a television reporter who asked him how it felt to have a handicap. After a reasoned amount of awkward silence, B.T. replied, *Cont. pg. 5*

STAFF SPOTLIGHT Jennifer Dulay

When The Grit asked if I could be in the Staff Spotlight, I thought to myself, if only I had a time machine. I would go back and re-live some of my younger CCC years. I heard about the CCC through a couple of my friends who joined the Corps and went to the Del Norte Center. I was working at Subway at the time and when I heard about the “Corps” I had no idea what it was about. It could have been a military program for all I knew. But it didn’t matter. I wanted to go to Northern California, to get out of the big city and away from “Cold Cut Combo’s, hold the bell peppers”. So I applied at the Employment Development Department in Riverside and asked to go to the Del Norte Center, the furthest north you can get, and I end up in San Diego, the furthest south you can get! So, at this point, I get to what was then called the La Cima Center, a CCC Fire Camp. The Center staff issued me a “tootsie-roll” (a brown mechanic suit, with big white letters on the back that said, CCC), a brand new pair of Prison Industry boots and a retro, 1970’s shiny jacket. Shortly after our gear issue, we were driven to an abandoned 6th Grade Summer Camp called Camp Marston in the town of Julian. We had 20+ people in this 2 week Orientation Training. I was one of 3 females. We head to our barracks, one for the males and one for the females.

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STAFF

- John Berge; Advisor
- Andrew Coll; Managing Editor; Features
- Carol Aguayo; Associate Editor; Features
- Harvey Piggee; Music/Concert Reviews
- James Burthe; Gamer Review/Commentary
- Colton Kegeler; Bucket of the Month

Staff Spotlight

*To the right front;
Conservation Supervisor;
Jennifer Dulay
Yes, she was a BLUE HAT...*



Do You Like Good Music...

What it do my fellow corps members, hope all is well with you and your musical journeys. As for me I'm still digging deep so I can pump out some more reviews. Well lets see, lets talk music shall we? My pick of the month goes to T.I., yea I know weird right? Of course you all know he's soon to be incarcerated, and because of that I guess he felt he needed to push out a quick release before then, and I must say its going to be, if it already isn't, A HIT! I'm sure you've all heard the single "Dead and Gone" featuring Justin Timberlake. The beat enough is epic, but the message he added in there was definitely a plus. The lyrics are inspiring and encouraging as he exposes his past and shows how one can move past a rough

life. The rest of the album isn't bad either. Take it from me, I barely listen to mainstream hip-hop, but I definitely recommend this album to anyone who has ears. Now with that being said, I want to open your ears to something I want to pull off the old iPod, Poison the Well, I know I'm pulling a quick 180, but you know I have to add some of my personal flavor. This band has been around since the early millennium and they aren't showing signs of stopping. Their latest album, "Versions", tells their journey with the tone of music instead of being vocal about it. There's nothing I love more than chatting about music. As always I encourage you all to close your eyes and open your ears.

—Harvey Piggee



MUSIC REVIEW

STAFF SPOTLIGHT CONT.

The next morning, our Trainer, a former Army Drill Sergeant wakes us up and tells us to get up and be ready to hike to the Camp's kitchen for Breakfast. We had 15 minutes to eat, and it took us 15 minutes to hike there. We had bag lunches so we only had to hike to Breakfast and Dinner...thank goodness! After the 3rd day of hiking, exercise drills and evening classes, 1 of the 3 females quit and the friend that went in with me on the "buddy system" sprains her ankle. I did not want to stay by myself, but the trainers talked me into staying. The barracks was dark and lonely, but somehow I made it through to the next day. I found that **new boots** + miles of **hiking** = **BLISTERS!** It even snowed once while we hiked. The Trainer made us hike up and down this one steep hill, in the mud. Once we got up the hill, we did 20 push-ups, once we got down the hill, we did 20 sit-ups. We had to do this 10 or 20 times with mud to our knees. There was a husky guy named Grainger who couldn't do it anymore. The Trainer said that if he ate an earthworm, he didn't have to do the rest of this drill. I

volunteered to eat one, because my blisters were raw at this point - So, I ate one...and will never, ever, ever forget why I did.

Only eleven people graduated from that training, and I was one of them. That was the most difficult, mentally and physically demanding thing I have ever done; but the rewards seemed endless from that point on. I went to Washington D.C. to attend the National Association for Service Conservation Corps Conference, because Cathy Barr (now a C-I, or Crew Supervisor in Ukiah) had to go to Leadership Training instead and I took her spot. Imagine getting paid to see the Nation's Capital! After 6 months in the CCC, I became a Green Hat for recruitment. I found my real passion after going to Leadership Training in San Luis Obispo - I became a Crew Leader during my 11th month. I got in more trouble after Leedy Dunkle promoted me to a Red Hat than I ever did wearing any other hat. (I think it's because I worked for Steve Kirsch). Leedy also encouraged me to take the C-I exam... Months after I took the exam,

I met Captain Reed at a Fire in Cabazon. I asked if he thought I should take time out from the Corps instead of becoming a C-I. He told me to "never let opportunities pass you by, because you'll never know if you'll get that chance again." So shortly after that, I began my CCC staff career at Pomona as a C-I for 7 years, then 2 years as a C-II and currently a Conservation Supervisor.

If someone told me 18 years ago that I would be in a job where I would hike, spike and make a difference in young people's lives, while enhancing the community, I would have thought they were crazy! I loved my Corps member days and every CCC position since! Everyone needs a champion, and I was lucky to have a few along the way.

Thank you Jennifer for your service to the California Conservation Corps and your unwavering support of the JMCSEducation Program at the Pomona Satellite.

Writers Block

“Chill Sergeant,” he said, “kid’s been through a rough night, let him pull himself back together.”

It was plain as day that Anocibar wasn’t one for kids or teens. The loser probably had trouble keeping a girl. I knew right off, from the ring on his finger, that Davison had kids. He knew what it was all about. I then turned to Sergeant Anocibar. He was an idiot. I had been sitting on the back of an ambulance, with what remained of my men on either side of me. I stood up to my full height of six foot and glared at Anocibar

“Have you ever stared death in the face Sergeant? I said venomously to Anocibar. I looked straight into Anocibar’s eyes when I said this. He turned pale. “Have you ever known that sometime, somewhere, in a fight, that you might not survive? Have you ever been in a fight, knowing that because your opponent was bigger and by far stronger than you, you could be killed? Cuz that’s what it’s like out here Sergeant. You go places, constantly watching your back. No matter where you go, you’re never safe. It’s not fun, but it’s life.” I waited for Anocibar to say something. “I...I...um...” Sergeant Anocibar, still pale, fell silent. I saw his eyes travel to my right arm and then to my left shoulder where medics had placed bandages to stop the bleeding. Anocibar turned away and Davison took over.

Gamer Review

Yo, CCC brothers and sisters! Allow me to introduce myself. I’m James Burthe. Fresh outta C.O.M.E.T. and stoked to be here. I look forward to interacting and working with the whole lot o’ ya! Look for the bearded pasty kid with the long hair if ya wanna say hello. I’m hard to miss and friendly, for the most part!

If there were any defining R.P.G. (Role Playing Game) series that I had to choose, it would be the franchise that spans from the N.E.S. (Nintendo Entertainment System) through the current generation of consoles. It’s a series that is constantly emulated by others and has influenced generations of gamers and game makers alike. “Final Fantasy.”

For the few unfamiliar with the series, it’s quite the typical R.P.G. Active and/or turn based battle systems based on a Rock, Paper, Scissors system of Magic, albeit a bit more complex than

A kid isn’t very likely to have this is he?” I asked, raising my right hand. On the back of my hand was a pair of black angel wings, flanking a Celtic Cross. A very distinctive tattoo, if you knew what it meant.

“Those wings!” Davison breathed. “The mark of the Midnight Angel!” Shock hit Davison as he realized part of what happened.

“Captain, what’s the Midnight Angel?” Anocibar knew he had heard the name before, but couldn’t quite place it. He was new, he had to be.

“It’s not what, it’s who Sergeant.” Davison answered his partner. “The Midnight Angel controls the city’s underground, but—” Davison stopped in mid-sentence and looked thoughtfully at me. “I thought the members of the Academy of the Midnight Angel had black and white wings tattooed on their hands, why are both of your wings black?” I was caught, Davison had noticed the one distinction that set the members of the Academy and I apart.

“I was hoping you wouldn’t notice that. You’re right.” I said to him. “The lowest ranked Acolytes do have black and white wings. The higher ranked Acolytes have white wings. However, only one person, and one person only, has black wings.” It was dangerous telling them this, but I felt obliged to do so. For reasons unknown to me, I felt they deserved to know. There was an aura around Davison that made me feel safe. Maybe that’s why I was telling them.

that. Fire beats Ice, Ice Beats Earth, Lightning beats water. I won’t bother listing all the possible combinations, just a little generalization. There are also physical damage types, as well. Swords, Guns and fists can be utilized to inflict damage to the enemy H.P. (Hit/Health points). Using Magic requires M.P. (Mana/Magic points). You start off with only so much H.P. and M.P., but as you level up by defeating enemies, you gain more and more of each respective one. When you reach zero H.P. (or in the case of Final Fantasy 12, zero M.P., too), it is game over.

There are also several different character classes that serve a different purpose. White mages heal. Black mages use black magic. Red and blue images use status, time and enemy magic. Warriors use blades and shields. Thieves use daggers and steal items from enemies. Those are the most basic classes. There are several different ones through each individual game. Only in a few do you actually have the choice of choosing your own character class.

My personal favorite aspect of the series, without a shadow of a doubt, is the music. For the most part,

Anocibar & Davison stared at me for a minute without saying anything. It was probably from shock. Their minds finally pieced it together.

“Then you’re him.” Davison said, breaking the silence. A statement more than anything, but a correct one nonetheless. He was right though. I was indeed, and without a doubt, the Midnight Angel



——— Excerpt from a novel in the works, by Andrew S. Coll. This is the tattoo on the back on the hand of the main character.

Nobuo Uematsu composes the music for each game. His last REAL contribution was Final Fantasy 10. I feel it was his best and most diverse musical offering in any Final Fantasy game. From bludgeoning heavy metal to über melodic Japanese Synth Pop, I have a hard time believing that so much amazing music can come from a single mind. His music truly brings the emotions of the stories to light.

My goal with this article is to summarize the basic elements of the series. Huge stories, epic battle systems and job classes, grand music and challenging strategies. Even the early games on the N.E.S. and S.N.E.S. pack as much story and game play as any game out today, just without the fancy graphics, visuals, and sound. I hope this inspires a few people to go and pick a few of these classic games up. They’re all truly gems of the video gaming universe.

———James Burthe

“What handicap?” He continued; “now, if you were missing an arm and a leg, you’d be handicapped – but hey, I’m good-looking, I’m Irish, and I’m from New York.”

The California Conservation Corps has been a value-added agency in California since 1976, in no small part due to the leadership of its eight directors over the years. From Boyd (Buck) Hornor (1976-1977), to the current Director, David Muraki, who was appointed by Governor Schwarzenegger in 2007. During B.T.’s tenure as CCC Director, Corpsmembers were called out to help in the mitigation of a Mediterranean Fruit -Fly epidemic. Malathion was used in aerial spraying in an effort to thwart the infestation. Corpsmembers who were involved in the mitigation effort were anxious about possible harmful effects of the spray. In a colorful display of leadership, B.T. wanted to show the corpsmembers that they would be safe working in a pesticide-treated environment. He called a press conference and on a live television news feed, to the surprise of the Corpsmembers present and the dismay of his family, B.T. drank a beaker of the liquid Malathion. Perhaps that episode led him to coin the CCC mantra; “Hard Work, Low Pay, and Miserable Conditions.”

Brien Thomas Collins was born in New York in 1941; he died in his adopted Sacramento, CA on March 19, 1993. B.T. took full advantage of his short 52 years on this earth. After dropping out of college in 1965 he joined the Marines and asked to be sent to Vietnam. There, Collins turned down a safe job in the back lines and was sent to where he wanted to be - in the action. As a Marine he served his country as a Special Forces captain (Green Berets). During his last Vietnam tour in 1967, Collins lost an arm and a leg to a hand grenade. However, this did not stop, nor slow him down; Collins took on the life he set out to live. When he returned home he came to California and at the age of 26 entered law school. He was a quick study and rose to become President of the Student Bar Association. Politics makes strange bedfellows as evidenced by the pairing of B.T. and California’s then Governor Jerry Brown. While B.T. was a staunch conservative Republican, Brown was considered one of the most liberal Governors of our time. They became fast friends and Brown appointed him his Chief of Staff. After a colorful stint as Director of the CCC 1979-1981 – He was appointed to head the California Youth Authority (CYA) in March 1991 by Governor Pete Wilson. During his short Directorship of the CYA, he made headlines yet again for refusing to accept letters of complaint from wards of the state unless they displayed proper grammar and spelling. Shortly after his appointment to run the California Youth Authority, Governor Wilson convinced B.T. to run for a seat in the California Assembly, he won handily and held the seat until the day he fell victim to a massive heart attack. B.T. passed away in the lobby of a Sacramento hotel, where he had gone to listen to a lunchtime speech by Gen. Colin Powell, Chairman of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff.

B.T. felt strongly that our country’s war veterans should be honored and worked tirelessly to that end and was honored to be part of a team that developed the California Vietnam Veterans Memorial within Capitol Park. During a Vietnam Veterans Memorial service in Sacramento, a war veteran laid his own medals over B.T.’s grave along with a note saying, “You more than anybody made us proud to wear these.”

Scot Schmier; Conservation Administrator II - Inland Empire Center/ Pomona Satellite, recalls anecdotally; “The first time I met B.T. Collins was as a Cm in 1979, I was at the Bret Harte Training Academy. I had just completed, and endured 30 days of being away from home for the first time in my life. At 17 years old I was out on my own and on top of the world. I had found the job that was meant for me, even though the hourly pay rate was minimum wage (\$2.95 back then!). This job was everything I wanted in life (little did I know at the time it would be my life’s work). B.T. stood in front of 400 graduating Cms and gave us hell! He told us we would work long hours, in pouring rain and sweltering temperatures and no one would thank us, not even him! I later learned firsthand that people would thank us - make us feel like heroes. I look back and think what B.T. wanted to teach us and prepare us for was to not expect the praise, to find other reasons for working hard, personal growth being one reason. I also remember him telling us that in life it wasn’t important who had the fastest car, what was important was if the world was a better place because we were there. Many Cms were in disagreement, or felt maybe they had taken a job that was not for them, not me, for I was now convinced that I was in the right job and felt more emboldened than ever to go out and conquer the world!

I later went on to become a “Permanent Academy Crewleader” and was privy to watching B.T. deliver the same speech to hundreds of graduating Cms every month. For me, it was always a tremendous moment when he delivered his message. I could tell who had a chance of making it through the program and who would struggle, depending on how they reacted to his words. Some would cheer and get excited when he finished, while others would look around in disbelief. B.T. Collins - the most flamboyant and outspoken person I have ever met in my entire life. May God rest his soul!

Mark Shields passed on B.T.’s “Basic Rules” in a Washington Post article on April 3, 1993, less than a month after B.T. succumbed to the heart attack:

"One day over lunch, B.T. gave me his basic rules: 'You stand up for your people. You dig your own foxhole. Don't tell your best friend who to marry. Never argue with a cop. Always send handwritten thank you notes. The best friends you're ever going to make are the ones you don't like in the beginning. The best friend that will never let you down is integrity.'" From the Washington Post, 4-3-93, Mark Shields.

Thank you B.T. Collins, for your unselfish service and for your legacy to the Staff and Corpsmembers of the CCC.

(A book about the life of B.T. Collins has been written by his sister; Maureen . —————*Carol Aguayo*

Bucket of the Month

Hello again everyone, from the bucket section. Another month has passed, so we have found another car for you all to enjoy! Although the owner has been out on spike for quite a long time, there is no way that any of you could've missed the three-colored Honda sitting in the parking lot waiting for him to get back. Albert Traslavina, also known as Nature Boy, has a need for speed, and we believe he has found the perfect vehicle for himself. Albert's 1987 Honda CRX SI can't help but speed off like the wind when it comes time to leave the center. The car has been nicknamed "Rex" because of the car's model, and it sure lives up to its reputation when you hear it roaring down the streets. At this moment "Rex" has a mostly red paint job, with some white and black faces showing near the hood. When asked about his least favorite part about the car, Albert stated, "the colors have to go!" His goal with the paint job is to have the car two-toned, a charcoal grey top and a black bottom half. That sounds like it's going to be looking great when that's all over. Before he works on the paint job, he's planning on replacing the suspension and adding new brakes which were recently worn out. Even farther down the line, Albert wants to start adding performance parts to his Honda, and essentially completely rebuild his engine.



Albert "Nature Boy" Traslavina's 1987 Honda CRX-SI

Albert was looking for a car for quite some time until he came across a used car dealership in southern Pomona. That is where he first came in contact with his soon to be car. After hearing some information on the car, like the fact that the engine was originally made in Japan, and that it was a manual transmission, he was immediately convinced that this was the car for him. He was really excited to hear that it was manual transmission, because he likes to have to muscle through the turns; he sees it more as fun than anything else. Another thing that he liked about the car is the fact that he has complete control over how the car runs, from the RPMs to the gear it's in. Albert ran into a unique dealership where they exchange cash for the car. The going price for the Honda was \$2,500, but Albert used his diplomacy to lower the price to \$1,600. The next day he went back to the dealership and paid for the car in full.

Albert has had "Rex" for only about a month now, but with 221,000 miles traveled in its lifetime, it would seem that he has had this car for a lot longer. One of his most memorable moments he has had in his car so far, was when it was raining, he was in third gear and dropped it down to second while pulling the emergency brake and made a complete circle. Albert wants to hold on to this car for as long as he can, keep it maintained, as well as customize it a little. Farther down the line, he is looking forward in buying a 1996 Impala SS or 1996 454 SS.

Well, that's all there is for this entry of the Bucket of the Month, thank you Albert for allowing us to get to know your car a little better. Just to put this out there, we are looking at the term "bucket" just representing car. Any car can make it on our paper, and if you'd like to nominate a car to be here next month, feel free to get a hold of me!

Letters To The GRIT

Dudes and Dudettes at The GRIT; I think The Grit is cool, funky, and fun to read. Just curious; How did you guys come up with the name of your Newspaper? To be honest, when I see the name, I get this anxiety because I am reminded of working on the grade and getting all this dirt under my fingernails. It just bugs. Will you ever change the name of The Grit? D'OHHHH!!!!

Headbanger; So. Cali...

Thank you for your kind comments Headbanger. I also would like to suggest that you keep that protective Hard Hat on when you are on the grade... The Grit was so named in honor of the small town newspaper of the same name; The Weekly Grit.— The paper, beginning in the late 1800's was a way for rural folks to get a sense of

was happening in America. Bits of news and information was woven together from a cross-section of society and made for some interesting reading. Anyway, our GRIT Advisor; JMCS Teacher- John Berge delivered The Weekly Grit as a young boy, (No, not in the late 1800's) It was more like in 1960-1963. He earned .5 cents for each paper delivered. He still has the first nickel he earned and has placed it in a frame where it hangs prominently and hopefully overlooking his desk.

The GRIT would like to be the random news and views clarion that Corpsmembers read to find out what kinds of things are happening at CCC centers throughout California. We at The GRIT believe that Corpsmembers, Students of JMCS—Staff of CCC and JMCS are among California's greatest resource.

So, Headbanger, there it is there—The name stays!... And if you or any other person at any CCC Center has something to share with The GRIT, please send us a note at: cccgrit@gmail.com.....

Cheers; Andrew S. Coll