

Jerry Kusky works on the East Coast in the commercial nuclear industry

By: LaRAYNE WATTS

Jerold (Jerry) Kusky was born in Seattle to Joe and Nadine Kusky. He attended elementary school and junior high in Aberdeen. The family moved to Raymond at the beginning of his freshmen year. His brother and sister are both graduates of Raymond High School, John Kusky (Class of 1968) and Joyce Van Tuyl (Class of 1974). His parents now live in Gig Harbor.

Jerry graduated from RHS in 1971 with a class of 76 students. While in high school Jerry was president of Honor Society in his senior year and played football. He says, "I was a part of the Class A State Champion football team. I played offensive tackle my junior year and offensive tackle/defensive nose guard my senior year. We were undefeated both years due to some really good athletes and the exemplary coaching of Coach Wahl, Coma, and Johnson."

He adds, "Although I didn't realize it at the time, both of these activities taught me the value of teamwork and the importance of leadership."

Jerry said that there are several teachers he remembers fondly, but two stand out. "First was our principal, Mr. Anderson," he said. "He was committed to making RHS a great school. His energy and leadership set an example for the students and faculty. I'd also like to mention Wyley Beatty (or "Master Beatty, as we used to refer to him). He made the math classes interesting. When there wasn't enough students for college algebra, he gave up his free period so that two of us could take the class anyway."

After graduating from RHS Jerry married Carolyn (Lyn) Burkhalter (Willapa Valley High School, Class of 1970) in April 1972 and enlisted in the Air Force shortly thereafter. He completed basic training and electronics training, then volunteered for the White House Communications Agency, where he worked until he was discharged.

After that he attended the electrical Engineering College at the University of Washington and, later, the Graduate School of Business Weekend Program at the University of Chicago.

After graduating from UW, Jerry entered a Westinghouse Nuclear Training Program and has worked in the nuclear industry ever since. He worked for Westinghouse and then fifteen years for General Electric Nuclear Energy. He spent the next four years as an executive for two small startup companies before returning to Westinghouse where he is presently a manager for Westinghouse Nuclear Services.

While in the Air Force, Jerry's family lived in Biloxi, Miss.; Alexandria, Va.; and Hagerstown, Md. He traveled throughout the U.S. and to Russia, Yugoslavia, and Korea.

The family also moved several times during his civilian career, living in Seattle; Idaho Falls, Idaho; Pittsburg, Pa.; Grand Ridge, Ill.; Monroe, Minn.; Atlanta, Ga; Reading, Pa.; Morgan Hill, Calif.; and Alpharetta, Ga. They are currently living back in the Pittsburg area. They have traveled to Panama and to Western Europe. He adds, "In the last year, I've also had business trips to Sweden and Mexico."

Jerry and Lyn have two daughters. Jennifer, age 27, majored in accounting at Penn State and then went on to Ohio University to get her MBA. She is now a controller for a hospital in Lancaster, Penn. Their younger daughter, Jessica, age 25, graduated from Penn State with a degree in Environmental Resource Management. After two years in the Peace Corps in the Republic of Panama, she is now a Park Ranger for the US Park Service in White Sands, N.M.

Jerry's interest include golf, wine and professional baseball. He said, "Last year's vacation consisted of a week of golf in North Carolina and then several short trips to see baseball games in New York City, Cleveland, Atlanta, and Cincinnati. One of the advantages of living on the East Coast is that everything is close."

Jerry says the he mostly keeps in touch with Raymond by e-mail. "I was sent pictures of RHS being torn down," he says. "A lot of memories came down with that building."

Jerry's advice to this year's seniors is, "Get a good education and go on to college. You can't predict the future, but a good education will always be with you. Technology will continue to bring change, so prepare for it. When I was in high school, we didn't have microwave ovens, VCRs, DVDs, cell phones, personal computers, or the Internet. The world really is becoming smaller, so embrace it."



RHS Alumnus Jerry Kusky, 1971