



*Joe and Tink Bolster, doing one of the many things that they love . . . biking in the Adirondacks.*

## CDA Man of the Year, #12079 Joe Bolster

*by Peggy Bolster #14508*

Keeping secrets in a family of 14 children is no easy task but we tried very hard to do just that this summer. Maybe it was the arrival of non-Dudley Bolsters from places like San Francisco and Boston that tipped Dad off, or the fact that we were all wearing matching Dudley shirts? In any case, it was well into dinner before he began to consider sincerely the fact that maybe he would be recognized as the CDA Man of The Year. Surprise or no, Dad certainly had no time to prepare for the fact that 12 of his 14 children, seven of his children in-law and 12 of his grandchildren would be on hand with stories and anecdotes about him. Andy Bisselle kicked the festivities off with a purposely-cryptic missive detailing a few of the facts about this year's recipient.

"He was born approximately 3/4 of a century ago in a humble town in western Massachusetts. In his early years, he worked as a soda jerk at the family-run soda fountain. From his modest beginnings, and seeing that Colgate was well beyond his reach, he instead settled for the Ivy League, poor guy! Once among the Ivy Leaguers, he never left. Often mistaken for Paul Newman, he is known for his subtle, yet sharp wit, as well as his devotion to his alma mater. In 1994, he moved to Westport to guide the Leadership Campaign as Dudley's Director of Development. I visited Westport often during those years, but never set eyes on him, he was working too hard! The 2005 CDA Man of the Year is the consummate family man, **camper #12079, Joseph L. Bolster, Jr.!**"

As soon as Dad was introduced, the entire population of Witherbee hall erupted in a standing ovation as he made his way to the front. At this point, **#8191 Alf Kaemmerlen**, long-time friend, fellow Princetonian and Dudleyite, shared a handful of little known facts about Dad, as well as a few stories from Dad's days in the Development office at Princeton University.

**#8804 John Storey**, Director of Development, shared a few observations about his fund-raising mentor and friend. "One is lucky in life to find a mentor. Joe has been generous with his time, unfailing in his instincts, and has helped me to be a better contributor to this place we all love so much, Camp Dudley."

My turn next, and I invited my whole family to join my father and me up front. And even I was struck by how quickly the Witherbee pews cleared out. The place looked relatively empty! **#10645 Jim Bolster** was the first of four Bolster children to speak and he regaled the crowd with a story about Dad and Jim's Dudley trunk for Camp Dudley. "Everyone came to Camp with a regular trunk, a black foot locker. Well, one night, Dad brought home a huge wooden crate-looking thing and told me it was for Dudley. I looked at him

like he was crazy. 'But, Dad, nobody uses stuff like this. I can't even lift it!' And Dad pointed his finger at me and said, 'Look, do you want to go to Camp Dudley?' He then pointed to the oversized, wooden trunk and barked, 'Then pack it!' Little did I know that that trunk would survive to this day and my nephew Bo McKinley now uses it at Dudley!"

**#13282 Jane Bolster**, Joe's second daughter, sixth child, and one of the first women staff at Dudley, read a piece she had prepared. "Thank you, Camp Dudley, and the Board of Mangers for honoring Dad. And thank you, Dad, for finding this wondrous place, upon Bill Sword's recommendation. And thank you Dad, for your feeling of familiarity with Dudley — not only is this a camp with a cabin named Princeton, this is a camp that must have reminded you a lot of our own family — starting with numbers, the sheer numbers — and everyone was assigned one. Mine is Bolster #6, camp #13282. And boys. Lots of boys."

**#11436 Tom Bolster**, who never needs a microphone, surprised the crowd by speaking rather seriously to Dad, thanking him for his countless contributions to Dudley, his family, and to Tom's life. "I am proud to be your son, thank you.

"I brought up the rear, which, as I pointed out to the crowd, I have been doing all my life.

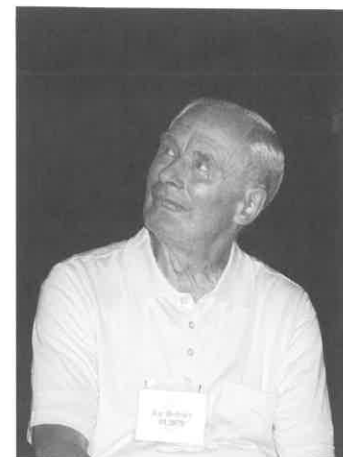
"I never stopped to think about it when I was a young child, but Dad's passion for Camp Dudley was a focal point for at least a week of every summer of my life. I was born in 1968, which, coincidentally, is also the year in which the Adirondack Northway was built. Amazingly, despite this new super-highway, I believed that Westport, New York, was north of Canada (!) . . . because it took us a full 11 hours to get here from Princeton, NJ.

"Our semi-annual trips to the North Country (we came at Christmas, too) always started in the wee hours of the morning, when Dad would rouse us in pre-dawn darkness, "Citizens, up and at 'em." We had already packed in brown bags the night before, a ritual Dad called, 'Green Bay Packers!' We were each allowed a brown paper grocery bag, but we could only fill it half way so it could be rolled down and tucked underneath the floor of the way, way back — where the youngsters sat. After packing, we were sent to bed in our clothes, to expedite the departure in the morning.

"So there we'd stand, in the invariably cold and dark morning awaiting our car assignments. We always had two station wagons. In my era, we had the red car and the blue car. Honestly, nobody wanted to ride with Dad. Riding with Dad meant classical music or very loud news radio. In Mom's car, on the other hand, we could listen to whatever music we wanted AND



*The Bolster "crowd" honors their father and grandfather, Joe at Hymn Sing.*



*Joe listens as Alf Kaemmerlen addresses the CDA family*



*Camp's Chairman, Charlie Johnson, IV, reads the 2005 Man of the Year inscription*

we could watch Mom chew gum; entertaining in itself!

"As we plodded along the highway, we drew up signs on cardboard. We printed the names of our favorite songs to hold up to Dad's car when they came on the radio. 'Dream Weaver,' 'Dream On,' in the Dad's car they held up signs that read, 'Dow Jones is down 60 points.'

"And in this way, Dad shared his passion for Dudley with us. Why else would anyone rise in the dark and herd a dozen kids into a car to travel to the middle of nowhere? Dad found something here that he believed in and trusted and he shared that gift with all of us, as well as with Camp Dudley itself for the last 39 years. Thank you, Dad, and, thank you, Mom, for patiently supporting and indulging us all these years." Chairman of the Camp Dudley Board of Managers, Charlie Johnson, IV, then read from a plaque made for Dad:

*Parent, grandparent, staff member, and two-time member of the Board of Managers, Joe Bolster #12079, has served Camp Dudley wisely and well.*

*Without doubt, Joe's greatest accomplishment is, with his wife Tink Murdock Bolster, the creation of a family of 14, 10 of whom have Camp numbers! When Joe brought his oldest son, Joe, III to Camp in 1966, a mutual love affair with Dudley developed that has lasted 4 decades. With 16 grandchildren, all potential Dudleyites, this affair may be eternal!*

*A 1952 graduate of Princeton, Joe returned to serve his alma mater as Director of Annual Giving. Upon retirement, Joe brought his substantial professional skills to Dudley as our Development Director, heading the very successful Leadership Campaign. As a Dudley Board member, Joe brought energy, enthusiasm and fair mindedness to important deliberations, consistently reflecting Dudley's motto "The Other Fellow First".*

*Joe continues to offer his experience generously, mentoring still the Dudley staff on an ongoing basis. For his lifetime commitment to Dudley, his infectious optimism and deep belief in the values of Camp Dudley, we are proud to honor Joseph L. Bolster, Jr., #12079 with the Camp's highest award, the CDA Man of the Year.*

After all this roasting and toasting, Dad himself stood at the podium and humbled us all with his natural and genuine display of, "The Other Fellow First." He began by pointing out that he really wasn't the "consummate family man" as Andy so eloquently put it, that, in fact, it was Mom who held it all together. He told the story that after a particularly grueling day on the home front for Mom, Dad came home to the ordered chaos that was our life and discovered Mom feeding baby #11. He inquired after her and then asked brightly, "How is Stephen?" "Joe, we don't have a Stephen!" Mom responded.

Join us in congratulating Joe, who can be reached at 55 Governors Lane, Princeton, NJ 08540.