

Rip Van RINGLE AWAKES
ASLEEP SUNDAY JULY 4, 1976 THROUGH SATURDAY MARCH 3, 2018
A long lost Class Ring finally returns home to Class of 1967 Brian DeLuca!

Bi-Centennial 4th of July 1976 was the most the perfect day of Celebration across the Nation. It began that way for Brian DeLuca '67, as I and my friends planned a pick-up softball game and picnic at Denver's Judge Joseph E Cook Park in the Cherry Creek-Glendale area of the city. We went out on the open lawns of the park and put down some portable bases and plate to fashion our own field, then began play. In the course of the game, I played center field for my team. I made a play on a bouncing drive to center. The opposing runner leading off second broke for home on the first bounce – tagging up not required. I made a desperate attempt to gun the guy down at home, but the runner's head-start jump allowed him to score. Much worse than that run score, I lost my Cornflower Blue Linde Star '67 Ring on that throw. I'm a left-handed thrower and always wore the ring on my left ring finger. On the hard throw, the loose fitting ring flew off my hand onto the grassy outfield. I didn't notice it missing for another inning or two. I or other outfielders must have stomped it into the soil to no longer be in view. The celebrators joined in the outfield to search, to no avail. We all later adjourned to our favorite local pub to continue the Celebration of the day. While I lamented my loss, I remained with the revelers to be consoled and help drown my sorrows in microbrew! I lived close enough so I could walk home. The next day, I rented a metal detector and unsuccessfully searched for the ring. I thus wrote it off as a loss and lived without.

Then came the long hoped for but never expected call to my Seattle home on Wednesday February 21, 2018! A wonderful Denver lady called me to announce my ring had been found and she would make arrangements to return it to me. Her late Father and Navy Man retiree was out on one of his favorite pastimes of metal detecting at Cook Park. In Spring 2017, he found my ring, buried down about five to six inches in the soil where it first landed. Forty-one years of rain and snow had the ring percolate down to be sealed in the park. He knew it to be of great personal value to me and was working to locate me, but unfortunately passed away before success. The ring was however retained in a box of his other found items. Sometime later, after the family's period of mourning, his daughter was going through boxes of his "stuff" and found the ring. Following immediately was her call to AOG to get my contact information from the Lost Ring Department. The connections were made and a family friend of the lady was set to visit his Daughter and Grandson in Seattle, to celebrate the Grandson's second birthday – and bring The Ring! We met at my favorite nearby "Cheers" watering hole/seafood restaurant, to do the long-awaited and never expected handoff.

While I never previously knew the delivery man, we shared stories of our shared common paths of our USAF careers as unfolded in Denver many years ago.

The Ring has returned to its home on my left ring finger. Brian '67, one of the "Golden Boys"

