

SA Thomas Michael Burden, USN, XXX-XX-2069

Attachment 12: Katherine L. Lockridge, Marriage, Family &
Individual Therapist, Lake Forest, CA

June 24, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a Marriage and Family Therapist, licensed by the state of California, and have been in full time private practice for twenty-six years. I saw Tommy Burden and his parents for family counseling from 2/6/2001 to 6/26/2001.

The primary focus of our work centered on family dynamics between an eighteen year old adolescent and his parents. The areas of conflict in the family appeared to reflect the adolescent differentiation process. The therapy included communication skills; conflict resolution; parental boundaries and resulting consequences; adolescent choices and resulting consequences. His parents' goal for him was for him to be more accountable and responsible. Tom felt they were unfair in their assessment of his work and appreciation of his efforts.

Psychotherapy notes from a few sessions reflect the "interference" by a neighbor named "Blake". On one occasion "Blake – their neighbor – loaned Tom their (Blake's family) car and hide Tom's car in the garage – switching cars back and forth. Don plans to confront Blake about his current and past interference." "Tom defended Blake . . . felt they (his parents) over-reacted to the car situation – (I) addressed the fact that his dishonesty with them is a problem to them more than wanting him to drive a crummy car to prom."

I have a Masters of Education in Secondary Education and taught junior high for three years; high school for two years; and worked full time for seven years in a high school ministry program. While adolescents will often select additional or alternative adult role models during this time in their lives, the selection of role models who are counter to their family's value system or good citizenship can be very counter productive and disruptive to their own developing value system; identity; view of authority; and sense of responsibility.

Tom is responsible for his own choices and decisions. This was a concept I tried to help him understand during our work. However, when other adults demonstrate a lack of respect for parental authority and encourage the disregard and violation of such authority, it does help establish an unhealthy attitude toward authority as a whole. Adolescence is an impressionable age and experiences during this stage of life can have a strong influence on the course of a life. Tom definitely had some confusing, counterproductive, and negative influences about authority during this time in his life. I hope this is helpful.

Sincerely,



Katherine L. Lockridge, M. Div. Marriage and Family Therapist

SA Thomas Michael Burden, USN, XXX-XX-2069

Attachment 13: Don and Pamela Burden, Parent Affidavit

**DON AND PAMELA BURDEN
2765 CROCKETT CIRCLE
LOS OSOS, CA 93402
805-528-5196**

June 17, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

As Thomas Burden's parents, we are writing this letter to support his effort to have his Navy discharge status changed from a "less than honorable" to "general". We believe there were some very unusual factors that negatively influenced Tom, prior to, and at the time of his AWOL and subsequent discharge.

In the summer of 2001, after graduating from high school, Tom needed to separate himself away from the group of friends he had in Costa Mesa and in particular a neighborhood family (Blake Schow). This adult parent and his wife had been encouraging and abetting Tom in some very self destructive behaviors. (We will address that later in this letter.) He was on a course that would be very damaging to his growth and maturity. Since additional schooling (college) was not something Tommy wanted or was prepared for at this time, we agreed, as a family, to have Tommy move to Washington DC and live with his older sister and her husband (Julie and Kirk Brustman). This would remove him from the immediate problem of the neighbor and would give him a chance to join the military. They were both willing to help acclimate and prepare him to join the Armed Services. Both our daughter and son-in-law were experienced military personnel having served in Military Intelligence in the US Army after graduating from college. They both served in Kuwait, and Kirk had earned the "Soldier of the Year" award while in the US Army. He was at the time and is currently employed by the Army as a private contractor. When Tom went to join the Navy, he did it alone, traveling to the nearest recruiting station, and was quite proud to report to us that he scored as high as he did (87%) on the initial tests (See attachment). He was looking forward to being trained for a career "in anything I want to do, once I get to my ship" is how he phrased it.

This positive experience continued through Boot Camp and in the graduation ceremony he was part of the Color Guard, carrying the Navy Flag. However, because he was in the "delayed entrance" program, with his home base San Diego, and on a ship that never left port because it was being overhauled, Tom ended up back in the Southern California area, where he fell into the habit of seeing the very people that were destructive to his growth and we sent him away from. His frustration was also growing as he discovered he wouldn't be considered for a particular school he applied for and would have to wait months to take the appropriate test. We also remember him wanting to be part of the SWAC to assist with the Navy Seals, and later to go to the school that would train him in repairing engines. These disappointments and

frustrations (of nothing seeming to happen) followed one after another. His attitude towards the Navy deteriorated and undoubtedly showed in his dealings with his shipmates and superiors. Unfortunately his renewed associations with these "old friends" now were once again influencing his decision making. He didn't tell us his "plan" to get out of the Navy, and we were very shocked to learn what was happening.

The following is an explanation of the disturbing and unusual development with the neighbors that led to Tom leaving Costa Mesa. Our relationship with them was on the surface, friendly, neighborly and supportive as mutual parents. But what was actually occurring was the undermining of our parental responsibilities with Tom and the normal development of an adolescent. They encouraged him to disregard our decisions, family values and rules, and to deceive and lie to us. They also indulged him with almost anything that we denied him. We did not discover this interference and meddling until he was already over 18. This relationship abnormally affected his ability to understand and respect authority. It was during this period of time (from age 15-20) when he was extremely rebellious and disobedient. Professionals that we sought advice from (family counselors, public and private school officials, church members, attorneys) had never heard of such behavior and interference by adults who had children of their own. We are relating 3 specific examples (of many) to show how Tom lost his ability to think clearly and act rationally. His behavior in the Navy seems consistent with his inability to recognize the importance, as well as the experience, of respecting authority figures, especially when they were not giving him what he deemed as his "rights".

- When Tom was 16 "Blake" picked him up at school, and drove him to a train station to go visit his brother at college to have a "wild, drinking weekend". At the time we were 3000 miles away attending a grad school event for our daughter and had hired an adult teacher to stay in our home with Tom. We all were very concerned (especially the teacher) when Tom failed to return home that evening. We called everyone we knew who might have knowledge of his whereabouts, including "Blake" (who denied, knowing anything about it, obviously lying). Finally, by the afternoon of the next day we heard from Tom, who was back home, but lied at the time about how he was able to get to the train station without a car.*
- Before he began his senior year in high school, he asked and wanted to attend a new school in Tennessee, aimed at 16-20 year olds who wanted a smaller setting for learning, and do a lot of outside survival training. The school was run by a couple who we knew as excellent educators, and the husband was a retired marine. This appealed to Tom and he would still be able to earn his high school diploma that year. However, after only 2 months he became disenchanted and angry, did not like all the rules and had nothing good to say about it. Tom ran away one night from the school, and for 6 days we did not know his whereabouts. We did not know how he had managed the trip from Tennessee to California financially, until some*

months later when Tom told us that the Schows had wired him the money he needed to run away.

- *Shortly before his senior prom (we had worked it out for him to live at home, finish high school, while having family counseling, no drugs, no drinking) he wanted to use my husband's new car for the event. Because we felt it important for him to be satisfied with his own car, we said no. He complained for a while, and then it stopped. We thought, "Good, he's maturing". However, the night of prom, as we watched him drive off down the street, he pulled into the Schows' drive-way, got into their new car and drove off, while "Blake" parked Tom's car inside his garage and pulled down the door. When Pam approached Tommy later that evening about it, he said, "I told you I didn't want to drive my car, and when I told Blake, he said, " well, you don't have to drive your car, you can drive ours!"*

Following this last exampled incident, and since this was the first indication that we had of the Schows interference, Don met with them and made it clear they were to have no further contact with any member of our family. Obviously that demand was ignored. After leaving the Navy, it has taken Tom several years to actually grasp the damage this neighbor had caused to him in his understanding of parental and/or adult authority. He has worked hard at ridding himself of the "sense of entitlement he felt he deserved" while under the influence of the Schows. He has completely severed any communication with the Schows. We do not offer these incidents as an excuse in any way for Tom's behavior and decision to leave the Navy. However, it certainly explains the attitudes and behaviors that he developed and exhibited while under their influence. Proof of their continued influence and interference after he joined and was serving in the Navy is on Tom's personal exit paper. (attached) It lists this neighbor (Blake Schow) as his closest "relative".

As parents who naturally see the good in their children, we can say that Tom has been slow to mature, but thankfully we have been able to keep an open communication with him. He is making positive choices now, starting his senior year in college with a major in Geomatics, and is recently engaged to a wonderful young woman who will also graduate next spring. Tom has also shown many leadership qualities at his college, managing people well and being an exceptional organizer of large school events in his role as a college Senator. He has taken an active part in forming and participating on his college's men's soccer team, and doing so as a backup goalie. He is showing a team spirit of working together, even though he may not be the star. We can see a responsible young man emerging from an angry, confused, and misled adolescent.

We urge you to recommend an upgrade for Tom due to the very extenuating circumstances surrounding his short service career, and allow him to have the opportunities offered those who never chose to raise their right hand and pledge to defend our great country. His lack of finishing his military commitment will always be a wound to us, as we hold dearly the belief that EVERY American should serve their

country in some capacity to really understand the meaning of "freedom" and "safety". Pam's father, grandfather, uncle, and brother, our daughter and son-in-law and Don have all honorably served. Please give Tom a chance to correct this grave mistake that he now acknowledges he made.

Most respectfully,

Don and Pamela Burden

Pamela Burden
D & B

SA Thomas Michael Burden, USN, XXX-XX-2069

Attachment 14: Jane Rider, Director of Student
Development, Oregon Institute of Technology



May 27, 2009

Naval Discharge Review Board

Dear Board Members,

I currently serve as Director of Student Development at Oregon Institute of Technology. I have held my position the last seven years. I have twenty four years experience working with student services. Responsibility areas include: advisement of student government officers, campus activities, clubs and organizations, new student orientation, the outdoor program, multicultural and international student services and our Diversity Center. I have a number of responsibilities related to the effective administrative of our department. Yet over the years, the facet of my position I have found most rewarding is that of advising our many student leaders and staff members. We quickly learn to spot those students who have the traits, skills and abilities to be successful leaders. In early 2007 I met Thomas Burden as he was interested in starting a soccer club on campus. In meetings and discussions it quickly became apparent that he would be an excellent candidate for one of our student staff or student officer positions. Tommy brought previous college leadership experience, having served as a Resident Advisor at an Alaska college. I encouraged him to pursue running for office or a position as a staff member in one of our student programs. He did so, running for the non-traditional senator position on ASOIT and he was elected for the 2007-08 school year and re-elected for the 2008-09 academic year.

Last year the ASOIT team worked on a variety of initiatives among them planning a demanding week of numerous events tied in with the 60th anniversary of the college. Tommy had many creative ideas and at year's end wanted to coordinate a Taco Feed lunch with a local restaurant located just off campus and quite popular with our students. He was dedicated to making this event happen and coordinated an amazing event attended by over 500 students, faculty and staff -- easily the highest attendance of any event in recent memory. Tommy also helped out with a number of the other 60th anniversary events and during the summer helped to coordinate a special orientation event specifically designed for students who are non-traditional in terms of their age, marital /family and/ or veteran status. He facilitated a round table discussion and was helpful to students throughout fall quarter as they brought issues and concerns forward to the officers of ASOIT. He has served on a number of university committees and commissions over the past two years and can always be counted on to show up for meetings on time and prepared despite his class demands.

Tommy currently holds a position on our Outdoor Program staff and he has brought energy and new initiatives to his work with this student run group. He has a good sense of humor, is creative in coming up with new ideas and is hard working with respect to various projects he has championed. He has worked on a variety of events and initiatives with the group, served on various committees and can always be counted on to keep his commitments. Tommy is now working to coordinate an end of the year Outdoor Program event and has proved to be highly dedicated to those events and activities he truly believes in. Tommy is honest, ethical, straight forward and genuinely invested in representing his fellow students. He meets deadlines, follows various rules and regulations and is well respected by his peers. I believe Tommy has grown immensely in the past two years and will continue to serve his fellow students as he progresses toward graduation. If you need any other information or assistance please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jane Rider'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jane Rider
Director, Student Development
Oregon Institute of Technology

SA Thomas Michael Burden, USN, XXX-XX-2069

Attachment 15: Albert H. Jones, Executive Director, Carden
Hall School, Newport Beach, CA

Carden Hall

A Private School

Puckett & Faraj, PC
2181 Jamieson Avenue, Suite 1505
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
Email: Haytham@puckettfaraj.com

Gentlemen:

This letter is written in support of Tom Burden.

Tom was a student at Carden Hall for the first nine years of his education. He was in my eighth grade class for his last year. He is certainly a very bright young man. I found him to be receptive and easy to teach.

One important thing that stands out in my memory is almost unbelievable. A neighbor (and parent with three students in our school) would directly undermine the Burden's authority and parenting of Tom by giving him gifts and letting him use a car. These actions were not sanctioned by the Burdens, and they made it very difficult by undermining the family value system. This situation made it hard for Tom to establish his values and chart a sound course through his teenage years. Carden Hall just completed its 46th year with close to 500 students each year. A situation like this has never occurred before or since.

Tom and I met last April, and I was very impressed by his values. He seems to know now who he is and what kind of a man he plans on becoming. Tom seems to have grounded himself in traditional values, such as honesty, trustworthiness, integrity, and reliability. Thus, he is remaking his life on a very positive track. In view of his solid maturity and clear thinking, I feel that Tom deserves an upgrade to a general discharge. Tom expressed a deep desire to find a way to serve his country in the military, if possible.

I feel that Tom Burden has a very bright future.

Sincerely,


Albert H. Jones

Mr. Jones' background:

1953	Graduation from USMMA, Kings Point, New York
1953-1954	Destroyer duty (Task Force 77) – Korean War
1955	Naval Special Forces (BUDS – Class 13)
1955-1956	UDU – 1 & UDT – Team Twelve
1956-1960	USN Reserve
1958	Stanford University – MBA
1963-2009	Executive Director and Owner – Carden Hall, a Private School

Executive Director: **Albert H. Jones**

SA Thomas Michael Burden, USN, XXX-XX-2069

**Attachment 16: Walter A. Shubin, Former Naval Officer &
Long Time Family Friend**

Walter A. Shubin
10751 Cranks Road
Culver City, CA 90230
310-836-6049

June 17, 2009

Haytham Faraj, Esq.
Puckett & Faraj, PC
2181 Jamieson Ave.
Suite 1505
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mr. Faraj:

I have been asked to write a letter of recommendation for Thomas Burden. I am a former Naval Line Officer who served for one year in Vietnam, and for two years on the staff of Admiral John S. McCain Jr. in London. My service was during the 1960's. I have been a close friend of Tom's parents for several decades and have known Tom, his sisters, and brother since the day they were born.

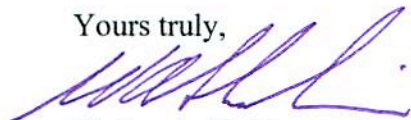
In order to decide whether or not to write this letter, I recently had a personal meeting with Tom to learn about his motivations and what his intentions were. His problems with the Navy have always puzzled me, as they seemed so out of character for him.

We had an open discussion and Tom answered my questions in an honest and forthright manner. He freely acknowledges that he made a serious mistake, is sorry for it, and wants to make amends. Tom also demonstrated the maturity and responsibility of an adult who was ready to move his life in a positive direction. Clearly he is no longer an irresponsible nineteen year old.

Tom has returned to college, is doing well academically, and is involved in many extra curricular activities. He told me he would like to re-enter the military, serve honorably, and right his former wrong. I think this is commendable, and believe he would be a credit to today's military.

Sometimes it takes awhile to grow up. I remember when I was nineteen and was not very grown up. I too could have easily taken a wrong turn. The reason I didn't had very little to do with any good judgment on my part. I think people deserve a second chance when they are ready to take responsibility for their mistakes and move forward. I sincerely believe this is one of those times.

Yours truly,



Walter A. Shubin

SA Thomas Michael Burden, USN, XXX-XX-2069

Attachment 17: Peter Fuerbringer, Former Marine Corps &
Long Time Family Friend

From: peter fuerbringer [<mailto:pfuer@sbcglobal.net>]
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2009 2:26 PM
To: Haytham@puckettfaraj.com
Subject: Tommy Burden

My name is Peter Fuerbringer and my wife and I have been friends with the Burdens for over thirty years and have known Tommy since he was a baby. The Burdens lived across the street from us and we watched Tommy as he was growing up. A few years ago the Burdens moved and since then we have not seen much of Tommy but have heard about his new life from his parents.

I was in the Marine Corps 1960-63 and a few months ago his dad asked me to talk with Tommy about his military discharge. Tommy told me that he had gotten his act together and gone back to school and was planning on getting married. Now his goal is to correct his youthful mistake of going AWOL by returning to active duty and honorably completing his tour of duty. His request to reenlist and fulfill his military obligation honorably seemed sincere and honest. From what I can tell of Tommy's new life he has gotten his act together and I recommend that he be considered for another tour of duty.

Peter Fuerbringer
2713 Cardinal Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92626
pfuer@sbcglobal.net

SA Thomas Michael Burden, USN, XXX-XX-2069

Attachment 18: Ms. Chris Frazier, Student Programs
Coordinator, Oregon Institute of Technology

Naval Discharge Review Board

Dear Board Members,

Please allow me a moment to introduce myself. My name is Chris Frazier and I'm the Student Programs Coordinator at Oregon Institute of Technology. I've been in this position since April 1, 2008. Prior to being hired in this position I was a student at Oregon Institute of Technology and served four years in the Associated Students of Oregon Institute of Technology (ASOIT), two years of which were served as President. I earned my bachelor's degree in Communication Studies with a minor in Psychology in March 2008 and was then hired as the Student Programs Coordinator on April 1, 2008. These experiences combined have given me the opportunity to interact with many different college students from all walks of life. I've seen students succeed despite extreme personal hardships but I've also seen students fail due to a lack of learning and maturity.

One particular student I'd like to discuss with you today is Thomas Burden. I first met Thomas in the early spring of 2007 when he came to our office inquiring about how to start a club. He related to me that he had had some experience as a Resident Advisor at his previous school in Alaska and that he had a lot of passion for starting a club. I suggested to him that he should consider running for a student body office because I could see how much passion and excitement he could bring to my team. He took my advice and in May of 2007, was elected as the non-traditional senator and I was re-elected as the student body president.

When we returned to school in the fall of 2008 (September) the real work began. My first impressions of Thomas during those first three months were that he was somewhat of a "class clown" but had a lot of good ideas and insight to contribute to the team. At first it was a challenge to find his leadership style and find a way to make it shine. I learned that Thomas is someone who will return respect where given and will work very hard for someone he respects. He sometimes needed a little more direction than other leaders but I could see as time went on that he was learning a lot about the job and himself. By spring term (May 2008) Thomas came up with an idea for an event he wanted to do; a taco feed that would be free to all students and provided by a local vendor. It was amazing to stand back and watch Thomas take hold of this project and carry it through to fruition. In all my four years of student government I've never seen a more successful event!

I encouraged Thomas to run for a second year in student government and he was successfully re-elected in May 2008. Thomas was also hired as a trip coordinator for the Outdoor Program which is a program I directly advise as the Student Programs Coordinator. It has been amazing to look back at the Thomas I met in early spring 2007 and the Thomas I now know. He seems to take life more seriously, he meets deadlines, comes up with projects on his own without direction, he contributes positively to the team even if the team disagrees. Thomas is honest with his co-workers and the students he works with. He has demonstrated good judgment on all of the trips and events he has planned and carried out. He is now on the soccer team and is very dedicated to his team and practices good sportsmanship and teamwork. In sitting on hiring committees where some of his friends have applied for jobs within the same program he works, he has been very mature and unbiased in listening to each applicant and basing his opinions on what he feels is best for the team rather than only speaking on behalf of his friends.

I enjoy working with Thomas and feel he is a great asset to all of the teams I have had the pleasure of working with him on. I have seen a growth and transformation in him that is truly worthy of a change in his discharge status. I've always thought that college was more than just book learning but also learning about oneself and it appears to me that Thomas has spent this past year doing just that.

