



VP-68 Hawk's Nest



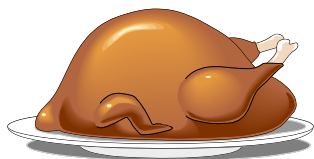
Volume No. 39

VP-68 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

December 2011

The Hawk's Nest is the official newsletter of the VP-68 Alumni Association, chartered in 1998 in the state of Maryland for the sole purpose of uniting in a central organization all former "Blackhawks" of Navy Patrol Squadron 68 (VP-68), it's parent and supporting Navy squadrons, and those interested in preserving the name and history of VP-68.

Published Quarterly: 15 MAR - 15 JUL - 15 SEP - 15 DEC



Happy Holidays



Fall Muster / Navy Memorial

(by Jacque LaValle)

On Saturday, 19 November 2011, in conjunction with our annual Fall Muster, the VP-68 memorial plaque was installed and dedicated at the U.S. Navy Memorial in Washington, DC.

Forty Blackhawks and guests attended. The event began with folks arriving starting at 1100 and as each group arrived they were greeted by the wonderful Navy Memorial staff and directed down the ladder to the memorial area/museum. Folks were able to visit the Navy Log and see many of the memorial plaques already on display. Muster was convened on the Quarter Deck at 1130.

As a bonus, Dale Grimm's son, Dale Jr., was on hand to display some remarkable flags from the WWII era, including a command pennant from the USS Nelson. This was the ship that Kevin Dillon's uncle served on during the war.

At 1200, everyone mustered in the memorial theater where we were entertained by a 30 minute video, "At Sea", showcasing the U.S. Navy and its many missions, from air to submarine, from destroyers to Sea Bees. Though the film was relatively up to date (2000's time frame) the movie did lack any reference to the patrol mission. There were no shots of P-3s, P-8s, or even SH-60 LAMPS. Much of the aviation was either on the carrier or on F-18s in the air.

Next on the agenda was an introduction by Joe Odenthal, our MC. He welcomed all who were in attendance and gave a brief history of the memorial plaque. Then the director of the Navy memorial was on hand to give us some words of the Navy Memorial's mission. Joe then allowed any of the past skippers and CMCs to say a few words. Skipper Brad Kirley spoke briefly and no other comment was given.

VP-68's last Skipper, RADM Jeff Lemmons was the last person to speak as he was our guest speaker. And what a wonderful speech he gave. He recalled the history of the squadron, the great times we had and the great folks that he still runs into nearly every day in his new duties. If anyone remembers AD2 Barringer (spelling?), he is RADM Lemon's duty driver at the Pentagon. How cool is that?

Jeff continued with a brief but informative talk as to where the navy is going today with regard to the reserve force and the overall Navy mission. He included the promise of the P-8 fleet standing up soon as the airframe heads to OPEVAL in 2012.

(continued on page 5.. Fall Muster)

Patron 68 Cruise April 2012



You read that correctly, we're going on a cruise!! Pack your seabags (if you can find them) or use standard luggage as we have reservations made through Carnival Cruise Lines to sail aboard the luxury liner Carnival Pride. The 7-day cruise departs from Baltimore on Sunday, 29 APR 2012

and returns to Baltimore on Sunday, 06 May 2012.

See VP-68 Cruise UPDATE on page 5

The Officers and Staff of the VP-68 Alumni Association wish you and your families a very warm, safe, blessed and Happy Holidays

M-11 MEMBERS REMINDER:
2011 IS ALMOST OVER,
SEND YOUR 2012 DUES NOW

(NOTE NEW TREASURER ADDRESS ON PAGE 19)

2012 SPRING FLING

To help recruit former Officers who are non-members of the VP-68 Alumni Association, we have a special offer for you for the 2012 Spring Fling picnic.....

see SPRING FLING on page 5.

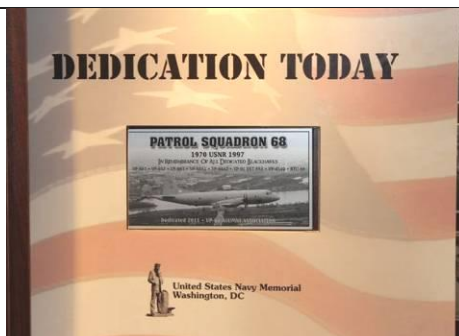
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1970 USNR 1997

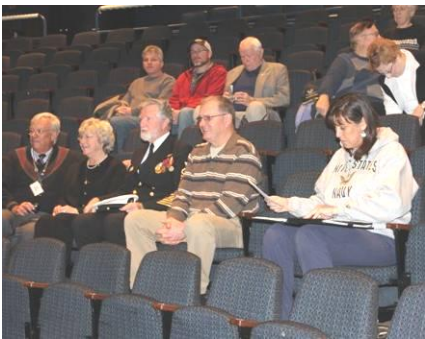
IN REMEMBRANCE OF ALL DEDICATED BLACKHAWKS

VP-661 • VP-662 • VP-663 • VP-68A1 • VP-68A2 • VP-91 DET PAX • VP-4549 • RTU-68

Dedicated 2011 • VP-68 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



(photos curtesy of Jacque LaValle & Dick Fickling)



(photos curtesy of Jacque LaValle & Dick Fickling)



Fall Muster (continued)

Lastly, I was tasked to read the list of our dearly departed members and there were other names offered from the audience that were remembered as well. Carri Blazek tolled the bell after the reading of each name. At the conclusion of the reading of names, the memorial plaque was displayed on the theater screen as taps was played in the background.

At the conclusion, many gathered within the museum to reminisce and prepare for lunch at the Hill Country Barbecue Market Buffet around the corner from the Memorial.

Once at the Hill Country Barbecue Market, we all gathered within the bar area (duh) which was reserved for VP-68 only. From there we drank and ate and told many more sea stories and watched Dale Grimes, in his full dress blues Navy uniform, sitting by the window as all of the lovely ladies walking by would salute him and blow kisses at him. Dale still looks good in his Chief's uniform, white beard and all.

By the way, the Navy Captain in the photos was AT2 Chris Sterns when he was in VP-68. He is now a CO for a depot unit.

As in all of our gatherings, time flew by way too fast and before we knew it, folks were departing and heading home with another fine memory of a great Black Hawk gathering.

So Blackhawk's, when you are visiting Washington, DC, be sure to visit the U.S. Navy Memorial and see our very own VP-68 memorial plaque.

Visit the U.S. Navy Memorial website at:

<http://navymemorial.org>

It is a beautiful plaque of a VP-68 P3-C LW-04 flying over Arlington National Cemetery with Washington, DC in the background. The plaque honors all Blackhawks of VP-68 along with all of those dedicated personnel of our parent and the supporting squadrons of VP-661, VP-662, VP-663, VP-68A1, VP-91 Det Pax, VP-4549 and RTU-68.

Again, a most sincere and grateful "Well Done" to Joe Odenthal for spearheading the committee to raise the funds for the plaque, having the plaque designed and produced along with making all of the arrangements with the U.S. Navy Memorial for the dedication.

Replica VP-68 Memorial Plaque

Blackhawks may have their very own replica of the VP-68 Memorial Plaque that is in the Navy Memorial Museum.

Enclose a check for \$150 and the completed application found on page 20 and send it to the Memorial Foundation.

Questions?call or email Paul T. Haley at:

202-380-0760 ext 760

paulhaley@navymemorial.org

SPRING FLING – 14 APR 2012

(by Jacque LaValle)

Who says you can't get something for free these days? To help in our membership drive, the executive board is going to make the 2012 Spring Fling at Pax River Non-Member Officer Free Day. (see page 18 for list of current members)

That's right, we are inviting the VP-68 wardroom who are not current VP-68 Alumni Association members to the Spring Fling on Saturday, 14 April 2012 at **NO CHARGE FREE!** No strings, no pressure. Spread the word and let's see if we can have a record showing at this year's Spring Fling. It is so important that we reach out and contact former Blackhawks and get them to join our Alumni Association.

If you know a former Blackhawk's address, please forward their information to Dick Perkins or print the Alumni Association Member Application located on the last page (page 21) of this

newsletter and give it to a Blackhawk who is not a member. Have them fill it out and bring it to the Spring Fling.

Contact Dick Perkins for more info at:

vp68co@yahoo.com

NEW MEMBERS...

**PLEASE USE APPLICATION
ON PAGE 21 TO JOIN!**

PATRON 68 CRUISE **29 Apr to 06 May 2012**

(by Wyman Bailey)



Blackhawks....Santa Claus is not the only one making his list and checking it twice this time of year!! So am I...and we have 30 folks currently signed up. (see the list below)

Aye matey, and a lovely bunch of Blackhawks they are!!

Fred & Judy Haynes
Cornelius & Clarissa Stripling
Wyman & Kay Bailey
Dale & Catherine Grimes
Jay & Karen-Rozycki Wildpret
John & Nancy Carr
Kathy Wright & Cheryl Meyer
Nancy Frey & Elaine Schneider

Dick & Sylvia Perkins
John & Hedy McDermott
Ed & Brenda Stanfield
Joe & Jean Odenthal
Jim & Irene Rozycki
Eric & Denise Patten
James & Angela Rowe

your name here ???
your name here ???
your name here ???

your name here ???
your name here ???
your name here ???

Carnival Cruise Lines will close the VP-68 group discount rate for our members on **15 DEC 2011**, and we only have 6 staterooms still available for this cruise. If you would like to sail along with the Blackhawks this spring, contact Tradewinds Travel at the below numbers to get your reservation in.

If you are undecided, send a deposit. You still have until 01 FEB 2012 to get a full 100% refund if you can't go.

Libby Croston – Tradewinds Travel
301-317-4548 or 866-781-4548 toll-free
trwindstvl@aol.com

Important Dates to Remember:

For those of you have already signed up, remember that your final payments are due by 01 FEB 2012.

Also, if you are booked and find the need to cancel, you have until 01 FEB 2012 to do so. After that date, they are not able to make 100% refunds on cancellations. Call for details.

Go to: www.vp68.org

Detailed information about the cruise may be found in the following past issues of the Hawk's Nest:

1 – Volume 37, JUL 2011, pages 1, 5, 12, 13 & 14

2 – Volume 38, OCT 2011, pages 1 & 5

I will be glad to answer any questions you may have about this cruise so feel free to contact me at:

410-960-2008 or baileymod@msn.com

Blackhawk People News

Harry Lee Smith – Ouch #1 **ATV ACCIDENT-01NOV11**

(**Editor's Note:** The below is from an email Harry Lee sent.)

Harry Lee in ATV Wreck with Jack Hollen aboard. Harry Lee said below is one of my favorite quotes, and I really did not want to live it! The Quote: "Given the Opportunity, Stupidity Wins out Most of the Time!"

My Apology: First: to Jack Hollen who was in the accident with me, for the damage to body and mind. Second: My Fellow Members of North Cherokee AWA Hunt Club, my thanks to all who helped put on our youth hunt without Jack or myself to help.

The Accident: 1600 Hours, 01 November 2012.

Jack Hollen and I were riding my Yellow ATV checking out places to put blinds and getting ready for the North Cherokee Youth Hunt at my 70 acre farm on the Clinch River just above Kyle's Ford (US 70 and the Clinch River). As we began our ascent up the steepest trail on the property the ATV begin to loose footing in the leaves, and even as Jack and I both leaned forward the ATV front wheels came off the ground.

You can probably guess what happened next, (when the angle of ascent exceeds the angle of descent, something has gotta give) the ATV flipped and Jack and I landed under my 650 lb Bombardier Traxter ATV then bounced downhill about 20 feet. The strange thing about this accident is that I had taken my friend Charlie Grindstaff up this same trail just a few days earlier.

This ATV flip and the events that follow will convince even me that we had someone from the Big Sky (was it the Great Spirit?) riding with us and we are two very lucky guys to be alive today! Thank you Lord! May you ride with us again, only more safely the next time.

I would guess that I do not need to tell you that Jack and I were in bad shape after being "kissed" by a 650 lb ATV. We lay about 10 feet from each other, hurting really bad. Jack calls out to me, "Harry Lee, are you ok? Jack later told me that I was "white as snow" and he thought I was gone! We both lay on the ground for 5 or 6 minutes after the accident to gather ourselves.

I should say that the Clinch River Farm has no cell phone service and we were in no condition to make our way down the steep trail on foot. Harry Lee finally decided he could flip the ATV back over onto its wheels, and he did. However, it didn't want to start. Jack directed Harry Lee to roll backwards down the steep grade to a point where they could turn it. After several tries, Harry Lee got the engine started and they made their way back to Harry Lee's truck, rode that thing up the ramp onto the truck... and departed the scene. Harry Lee finished off the tailgate by backing into the gate on his way out of the farm.

Now came a BIG Decision...where to drive for Hospital Treatment in our physical condition. The farm is 25 miles west on Hwy 70 from Rogersville, TN with a very small Hospital...20 Miles North on TN 33 from Sneedville, TN with an even smaller hospital...and about 70 Miles from Bristol, TN a Major Hospital.

We decided to head for Bristol. We made it, but only by stopping half way to Bristol. After one miserable week in the hospital, Jack and I are home and trying to get our bodies back in shape to go hunting and also to safely ride ATV's.

Jack wound up with 5 broken ribs, a collapsed lung, and many other hurting places. Harry Lee has 3 broken ribs, a collapsed lung, broken collar bone and 3 cracked vertebrae in his spine. He also has damage to his liver and kidney. Harry

Lee also said his whole head looked like it had been run over by a sanding machine, but no brain damage. Harry Lee's HS buddy Ray Brittan says, If you ain't got one, you can't damage it! My buddy Ray really summed it up. "Harry Lee and his injured partner are two lucky dudes. They were in a no-man's land...without cell phone service...with serious injuries...and their only transportation was turned upside down. They are extremely lucky they were able to right that vehicle, get it started, and maneuver themselves off that mountain.

Harry Lee attributed their survival skills to their military training.... and I say it also took some adrenalin and courage. I am very happy that Jack and I got out of the problem, he was steady as a rock! I am proud to have him as a friend. I will keep you posted on our recovery from the accident.

.....Harry Lee

Gail and I Saw the Back/Spine Doctor on 11/11/11. Both good and bad news from the X-rays. My collar bone is healing well. My ribs are on their way too, but he expects the healing process to take about 12 weeks on both. Pretty bad multiple breaks on the collar bone. Spine fractures are pretty bad too.

Looks like I will have to have an operation on my back or I'm going to be about 1 to 2 inches shorter. I go back to the doctor on 12/09/11 to let them take a second look and schedule the operation. At least 3 of the vertebrae are damaged. I am feeling better each day and the soreness is working itself out. I would be most happy if the left sooner.

My nurse, driver, cook, housekeeper, companion, and slave driver (Gail) is taking great care of me. Good thing too as the Doctor tells me I will probably not be able to drive until about the first of January, if then. No riding long distances in the truck either.

.....Harry Lee

Editor's Note: You can contact Harry Lee and wish him a speedy recovery at: 423-956-9991 or hlee@promotionsusa.com

Garret Fahl – Ouch #2

2011 RENO AIR RACES CRASH

For several years, Garret Fahl and his family have had up-front reserved seats in special box seating sections in front of the grandstand seating. You couldn't ask for a better place to view the National Championship Air Races.....until this year!

We have all seen the news coverage of the 16 SEP 2011 horrific plane crash at the Reno, Nevada Air Races. Videos show the planes flying at elevations as low as 50 feet and as fast as 500 mph near the grandstand when suddenly one of them went nose diving into the crowd.



Continued on Page 7.....

Garret Fahl (continued)

Blackhawk Garret Fahl and his family were four sections (about 70 feet) away from where the plane hit. The impact (shown below) left a 3 foot deep crater in the tarmac where the box seats were located.



Garret was hit by large flying debris and knocked off of his motor chair. He said he thought it was part of the engine that hit him. After helping him up and back onto his chair, his sons rushed to the adjoining seating sections to render aid to the many victims lying among the debris.

The videos show folks rushing to aid the folks in the impact area and Garret says two of the rescuers shown were his two sons (in tan shirts) that were there with the family.

He said that "carnage" best describes the victims in the impact area. Although, lucky that there was no explosion and fire, injuries were many and severe including loss of limbs. A total of 11 people were killed (1 pilot and 10 spectators) and 69 people were injured, many of them critically.

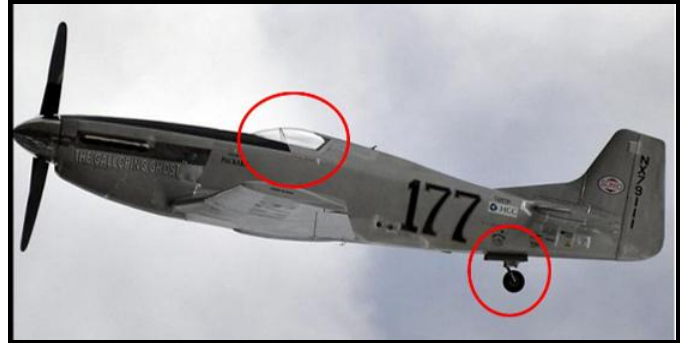
He initially did not go to the hospital, but later suffered pain and did seek treatment. He suffered 3 broken ribs, a broken shoulder blade and air in his chest cavity. He is slowly on the mend and grateful to be alive after surviving the catastrophe.

Editor's Note: In researching this topic, investigation of the crash shows two possible scenarios:

First theory is that home videos and photos (below) show a piece of the tail (the elevator trim tab) falling off of the plane just prior to the plane going inverted and crashing.



The Second theory is that the pilot's seat broke. Moments before the crash, photos (below) show the plane with: 1) the tail wheel deployed (originally was retracted) and 2) no visible sign of the pilot in the cockpit. Even if he was unconscious, he would be strapped into his seat and still be visible in the photo.



Thought is that the seat broke under the 4G to 6G forces experienced causing the pilot to slide back, down and away from the pedals, the throttle and the control stick thereby losing any control over the aircraft. In being thrown back he may have inadvertently hit the rear wheel deploy switch. The cause is still under investigation and may be some time before the results are final.

Meanwhile Garret....we all wish you a very speedy recovery and hope to see you at one of events soon.

Brad Kirley

2011 HAWAII IRONMAN COMPETITION

Editor's Note: If you thought the Squadron PT was tough, imagine doing it now at our age, but...100 times the distance!!

That is exactly what former skipper Brad Kirley did earlier this year by competing in the Triathlon "Iron Man" competition in Hawaii...his fourth time!! Makes a man want to put down the remote and get out and run....well....maybe think about it a lot. I asked Brad, who kept a log, to share his adventure with us. He sent it and below follows excerpts from his awesome adventure. Brad, it is an impressive story and thanks for sharing it with us. Email Brad for the whole story at:

bradkirley50w@yahoo.com

The 2011 Ford Ironman World Championship Triathlon was held on Saturday, 08 OCT 2011 at Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. It consists of a 2.4 mile Swim + 112 mile Bike + 26.2 mile Run.

NBC will be televising the event on Saturday, 10 DEC2011 at 1630....and Brad might be in an interview.

Saturday 01 OCT 2011: The waiting area in LA airport was full of Tri-Geeks (like me) all wearing something from a Tri somewhere, mostly Ironman insignia, all fit, trim, in shape, male & female, all ages, would be really intimidating to someone who had hopes of placing in this thing. (not me of course, survival, I mean finishing by midnight is my goal).

Kona, Hawaii: Donna and I got to Kona, got the bags and rental car and drove thru town on way to our timeshare. The place was full of people walking around, all the restaurants seemed full, banners all over the place as we were driving along Ali'i Drive where the finish line is. Finally got to bed at 330am body time, 930pm here. Off today to pick up the bike and do a short ride to test it out, knee is ok, not great, but ok, didn't like the long second flight.

I am glad to be here, enjoying it all, excited about the week, and yes, in the back of my mind, wondering, "WHAT THE HELL WAS I THINKING???"

Continued on Page 8.....

Blackhawk People News (cont'd)

"IRONMAN" (continued)

Monday 03 OCT 11: We woke up early since 6 hr time change. Went to the grocery store to stock up and then to get my bike from the bike shipping company pick up area. It made the trip over fine, only needed to adjust the computer pick ups and put the pedals on it. I rode the bike off and Donna took the car on home with the groceries. I got a nice 15 mile ride in, the new bike worked great.

Tuesday 04 OCT 11: Went down to the King K Hotel area, headquarters for everything and where the swim starts and transition happens. I got a 3/4 mile swim in. The waves were big swells with a few bumps on the surface, not too bad. At one point, I stopped to look around and get my bearings and noticed something floating near me, a log or something I figured but couldn't really tell, then remembered, with my goggles on, I could look underwater and see so I did and there, looking back at me was a big turtle.

After the swim, and there were many, many people swimming, I went for a run home. Our place is 1.8 miles from town. While on my run, and tons of people out running, all the time, and biking there are runners and bikers going in every direction all the time. Anyway, two guys pass me and I realize that one of them is Macca, Chris McCormack, the reigning World Champion, having won last year. He also won in 2007 so he is a two time winner and only 3 have won it three times. So, I put it in high gear and ran up to him, yelling Macca. He yells back, Hey Mate. Very cool, running with the World Champ, and, I can truly say, I caught him and passed him (ok, only by 2 inches) on Ali'i Drive, the famous finish road (we were father out on the same road).

After cleaning up, we went back to the King K Hotel to registration and packet pick up. That went smoothly and we toured some of the gift shops they have set up in tents and then on home.

Wednesday 05 OCT 11: I went for one last bike ride, out the Queen K Highway towards the airport. I rode 19.8 miles, farther than I had planned but was fun and tons of people out riding. I felt like I was going right along but all the guys and most of the gals blew by me like I was standing still...different level of competition out here for sure. Thankfully, my goal is to finish...not to win with this talent.

After the ride, I went to town where Macca was signing his new book and got him to sign the book, photo, and magazine and we had a short chat. Then on the way back, I saw Mark Allen, 6 time winner of this race and one of the legends and got to talk to him for a minute or two. (Donna says I'm a groupie, ok, I admit it, I am.) That evening we went out for a fish dinner.

Thursday 06 OCT 11: On Thur morning, at 8am, there is an underwear run. Seems a bunch of years ago, three guys wore their tightie-whities thru town to protest the Europeans who were running all over in their Speedo's. It grew from there and is now a popular part of the week. When we got down there, a little before 8am, there were hundreds of people around, about half in some form of underwear or costume, and the other half to watch, including us. They start the run up one street and loop around and down the main street with everyone cheering and clapping and taking pictures. Very funny and fun.

Then, I went for a (hold on to your hats, those who know my training habits), yes, another swim. A short 21 min swim to get used to the salt water and swells. My friend the turtle wasn't around but plenty of others were getting in a morning swim. I should add that the eye candy for both Donna and I is very good around here. You have never seen so many fit people in one place in all of the world.

That afternoon, I spent putting my bags together, pre-race, T-1, mid-bike, T-2, and mid-run. Then we went to the pre banquet, a huge outside dinner for 1,850 athletes and their guests and families and kids and parents. Very nice show, Hawaiian theme and then introduced lots of people and then showed a very cool movie about the race and people and past winners

Friday 07 OCT 11: We went

Today I am resting and have to turn in the bike & helmet, T-1 and T-2 bags. The pre and mid bags go in tomorrow am. After that, it's off to the grocery and home to rest more, early dinner and early to bed, getting up at about 4am I think.

My race number is 204, our room number is, drum roll please, 204, spooky huh also today, while down checking in my bike and T-1 and T-2 bags, a bus came by and almost got stuck trying to make two turns as part of Ali'i Drive is now cut off for finish line prep. Number on the bus, you guessed it, 204, big numbers across the back of it. Very spooky huh, maybe I'll be 204th from the end to finish...ha ha.

The bike is now checked in, T-1 and T-2 bags hung, studied the in and out routes of transition, different from 2000 when I first did this race. Am as ready as I'm going to be I guess. What an experience. I went to bed at almost 10 pm, Fri. evening, had planned to go at 9:30pm. Slept pretty good, waking about every hour, wishing it was time to get on with it.

Saturday 08 OCT 11.....THE RACE: Had set the alarm for 4:05am but got up at 3:45am, was now fully awake and ready to go. Had breakfast of peanut butter and jelly toast, banana and 2 Fig Newtons with some Gatorade and 1 Advil (total so far: 1). Shaved and dressed, said good by to Donna (she got up later and came down in time for the start), and headed out for the 1.8 miles to the start area around the back of the King K Hotel with the hundreds of other racers.

First tent is body marking. Only the arms get marked here. Then on around and drop off the special foods bags, mid-bike and mid-run. Next comes a weigh station and everybody gets weighed. I weigh 183.8 with sneaks, long pants, long sleeve T-shirt and Speedo on. Not bad for me. Next we come around to the bikes.

I get to my bike, find a volunteer with a pump and do my tires. Since they put all the old guys and gals together in the low numbers, we are right next to the Pro's. I see many of them getting ready, #'s 1-99 are Pro men, 100-199 are Pro women, then some important people like the gal who was on "The Biggest Loser" weight show is there, and then us old geezers. Four in the over 80 men category (3 finish). After milling around there a bit, wander over and get dressed and drop off my pre-race bag.

Tri-Geeks paragraph: Transition (T-1 & T-2) is different here. We are used to setting up our towel with all our stuff laid out on it, bike gear in front and run gear in back. Here, only the bike and helmet are there. As you run in from the swim, you get your bike bag and go into the changing tent, change and lube up, run out and way around to your bike, and on out to the mount line. After the bike, dismount and a volunteer takes the bike from you, and you run along and grab your run bag, actually they see you coming and a volunteer has it off the hook and hands it to you, into the changing tent, change and run out.

In the changing tents, a volunteer is there to help you. They stuff your used stuff into the bag, help pull down your shirt, apply sun tan lotion, gob it on as it were and just assist you, encourage you and be a short term friend. Think they also monitor your condition to see if you are OK to go onto the next leg of the race.

Continued on Page 9.....

Blackhawk People News (cont'd)

"IRONMAN" (continued)

We mill around next to the stairs leading into the water and they play the National Anthem and then the cannon roars and the Pro's are off at 6:30am. The age groupers are then let into the water and some swim and get ready, I stand in knee deep water and take it all in. The crowds are huge and all along the sea wall. I can spot Donna, a hundred and fifty yards away in the hundreds of people. She has an orange sign on a stick and I see it waving back and forth. I wave but she never can see me as we all look alike in the water. But for me, it is comforting to know she is there and where she is.

Finally, at about 6:50am, I get in the water and head out a little toward the start line, staying towards the back of the crowd. There are 1,859 of us, minus the Pro's, maybe 60 or so of them, in the water, an amazing scene.

At 7:00am sharp, the cannon roars a second time and we are off on the beginning of our 140.6 mile journey.

The Swim (2.4 miles):

As soon as the cannon roars, the sea turns into a churning flail of arms and legs (see below). It's known as "swimming in the washing machine" and this is truly it, as not a series of wave starts, but rather, one big, all at once, here we go.



I'm toward the back but still people all around me and we start off. Luckily, I get into my rhythm pretty quickly and am going well only getting knocked every now and then, someone hitting my feet, or hitting someone with my hand but we are all at about the same speed so no big deal and we all go on, straight out, orange round bouy's marking the way, always a happy sight to see another one go by.

The bad thing about being back here is that there are a bunch of folks who don't exactly swim straight, me included. So often, someone is in front of you and crossing your path, getting in your way, you have to look and see if they or you are off course and then correct if you and cut behind them if they are crossing.

Finally, almost half way, come to the turn, a big sail boat and as I go by I ask a guy hanging over the side for a beer but he says they don't have any so I swim on. About a hundred yards or so across the end and another boat and you turn for home with red angle bouys marking the way back in.

Not long after starting back, I'm swimming next to a woman and we are side by side, stroke for stroke, and look at each other every time we breathe. We stay together, like that, for about 3/4 of the way back, a long time. The good thing about this is that you tend to stay in a straight line much better than swimming alone.

I can hear the crowds and announcer now and swim on in to the steps where volunteers help you up onto them.



T-T:

Thru the showers, actually hoses hanging down from a tent but you can get some of the salt water off your face and hair and body. Grab your bike bag from a volunteer who has seen your number and grabbed it for you. Into the changing tent (separate ones for men and women), strip quickly, a volunteer there to help you when needed. They put your used stuff in the bag, help you pull your shirt down (impossible alone

when partly wet), put sun screen on your shoulders and arms, talk to you, make sure you are OK, and encourage you by lying...things like you look great, you're doing great, etc. Into bike gear and run out, a long way around all the bikes and from the back up to the front and grab your helmet, put it on, buckle it, (Susan Fu, got the order now), then grab your bike and run out to the mount line.

Bike (112 miles):

Cross it and mount up, and ride off, only 112 miles to go, on the bike anyway. The crowds are thick here and shortly I see Donna's orange sign and pull left a little so she can see me coming, we wave at each other and off I go. There is a short loop out and back and you come right thru town again, saw Donna again and up the hill, the crowds very heavy and cheering you on like you are leading the race, really something and very encouraging to say the least. Up the hill and left onto the Queen K Highway toward the airport.

At about 19 miles from the turn around in Hawi (pronounced Ha-Vee), you make a 90 degree left turn and suddenly are going down a big hill. I'm zooming very fast, and about half way down the mile long hill when it hits me, I'm going to have to go back up this somb--ch on the way back. It's not a happy thought and I can't enjoy the rest of the downhill, thinking about climbing back up it. At the bottom, another 90 degree right turn and you start up. The last 18 miles to the turn



around are mostly up hill. Up and the winds really start to build, and build, and build until I'm doing 7-8 mph, on level parts, pedaling for all I'm worth. Now a sign says 7 miles to Hawaii and I do some mental math, I know I get another PBJ so I'm excited.

How quickly things change in the Ironman. Finally get to the little town, make a U turn over a timing mat (to be sure all go all the way out there), and start back. I get my bag, stop to unload it all into my shirt and bike and ride off. I ride on as I start to eat my PBJ and take 3 more Advils (4 total now for the day). There are aid stations every 7 miles or so on the bike and every mile on the run. A volunteer hands you a bottle of water or a Poweraide or Coke, a part of a banana or orange slice or a GU as you ride by.

Continued on Page 10.....

"IRONMAN" (continued)

I am now going downhill, wind at my back, going very fast and loving it. But, it ends quickly and I'm pedaling again, but mostly down until that long mile up that I was dreading earlier on the way out. Turn toward home and ride on. At mile 80, I am averaging 15.1 mph, despite the slow wind into Hawi. At 85 miles, still 15.1 avg. But now the winds are in my face again, road is up and down, seems more up than I remember down on the way out and by mile 100, my avg is now 14.7. I dropped .4 of a mile avg in 15 miles with an 85 mile base.

After the airport, the winds start to drop a little and the pace picks back up. Just after the airport is the Energy Lab where the run goes in, does a loop and comes back out so the road is full of runners going both ways on the left side of the road, we are biking on the right and in between and sometimes in our face, are spectators on all kinds of bikes wandering around. Only a few miles to go...so I am bustin it.

On the last turn before going into T-2, I see Donna and her sign on the side of the road and yell at her. On to the dismount line, and a volunteer takes the bike from you. My avg is back up to 14.9 so I am pretty happy about that for sure. I almost get a cramp in my right leg trying to get it over the bike so I have to put it back over and lower the bike a bunch so I don't have to lift my leg so high...not a good sign I think to myself.

T-2:

Run into the area where the showers were, late now they're all gone, and past the hanging bike bags, a volunteer has mine ready, I grab it and into the changing tent. Another volunteer is there to help, dump out running gear, strip out of bike gear, dress, he puts old stuff in bag, talks to me, encourages me, I assume evaluates me, and I thank him for volunteering and off I go. 2 more Advil (up to 6 now) on way out of T-2.

Run (26.2 miles):

Run up a short hill by Donna and stop and talk to her for a few seconds, assure her I'm doing OK, feel fine, and have time to make it. I run on and the first 10 miles are an out and back on Ali'i Drive, past where we are staying, I think, if I had a key, I could go in and take a nap but luckily have no key with me.

Finally to the turn around and start back to town. All I can think about is after hitting town, it's a 16 mile loop out to the Energy Lab and back, seems like a long, long way to me but, one-mile-at-a-time as Donna tells me.

Just before town, I'm walking and somebody yells "Go Navy" as I'm wearing my new Navy shirt so I have to start biking again...can't disappoint the crowd. I miss Donna on this pass thru town and she misses me too. Up a hill out of town, same one did on the bike, and up to the Queen K. It's dark now and we have glow things around our necks and hanging on our race belts. Parts of the road have street lights but much of it is very, very dark and the only way to see a runner coming at you is the glow stick around his or her neck.

Mile after mile, the aid stations go by, I try some soup, was very good in 2000, warm chicken broth, salty but this time it tastes good going down but my stomach sends a very quick message to the brain, no more of that s*&%&^ so I pass on that for the rest of the nite. At every aid station, I ask for a beer but they say no, I thank the volunteers for helping.

At one point I'm walking with a guy who didn't qualify, wasn't a passport winner like me, but was a celebrity of some sort. Seems he's the guy for 50 Cent and also Lady Gaga. Not sure what he does but he's one of the features on NBC so maybe we'll see in Dec. He says 50 cent has a million dollar bet with him that he can't finish...Goes to charity. I say he's going to make it for sure, math is still being done at every mile but getting easier now. I also suggest a great charity for

him....ME, but he says, or claims, the charity was already picked but I encourage him to reconsider. At the turn around in the Energy Lab, you get your mid-run bag, my third PBJ of the day, unless you count breakfast, then 4th. Take final 2 Advils of the day, (8 total).

Just as you exit the Lab, they have a big Ford sign and you run over a timing chip and it displays a message Donna had typed in a day or 2 before. It says 204, Brad Kirley, One mile at a time, Love DK. That was fun to see and I know, about 6 miles to go. Dark, mostly alone now, last few miles are hard but the end is in sight and I know if I can pick up the pace a little, will for sure be under 16 hours so I'm trying to run more and walk less. Down into town and left turn to go out a ways, down a little hill, people are thick now, all yelling at you, very encouraging and fun. Last turn and onto the famous final stretch down Ali'i Drive.

In the street now, in the middle of the closed road, people all around yelling at you, and into the finisher chute. It is probably 100 yards long, and lined with people, stands on one side, they are hanging over the fence, banging it with their hands or whacking together those air noise things. The sound is incredible, you'd think I was winning, not at almost 11pm at nite.

What a feeling...It's over, elated, proud, tired, sore, but for the 4th time, second in Kona, an IRONMAN.



Start 7:00:00 AM
Finish 10:50:01 PM



"Ironman" Brad Kirley

Results:

=====

Swim: 2.4 miles - time: 1:45:04 20/29 division, 1,722/1,918 overall, 1,295/???, Men

T1: 6:24

Bike: 112 miles - time: 7:30:25, 25/29 division, 1,772/1,918 overall, 1,299/???, Men

T2: 8:25

Run: 26.2 miles - time: 6:19:38, 23/29 division, 1,718/1,918 overall, 1,259/???, Men

=====

Total: time: 15 hr 50 min 1 sec, 23/29 division (men 65-69), 1,717/1,918 overall

Editor's Final Note: WOW...What a great story! Now I am really ashamed of the shape I am (NOT) in. When I was in the Squadron, I used to run 5 miles around a local park lake (Rex Lake got me doing that)...retired from the Navy, I walked around the lake...now, 20 years later...I drive around it!!!

Thanks and congrats "Ironman" Brad!

Blackhawk People News (cont'd)

Ron Garman

Editor's Note: In the Vol. 36, March 2011 issue of the Hawk's Nest, I showed the below photo as "photo trip down memory lane". Little did I know of this plane's significance.



Ron Auth emailed me that this plane actually ditched in the Pacific with Blackhawk Ron Garman aboard as the Plane Captain. I asked Ron Garman if he would share his story with all of us. As an aircrewmembers, we all heard many times..."this is a drill...this is a drill...prepare to ditch." Ron tells us of the real thing.

So Blackhawks...fasten your seatbelts and get ready for some exciting reading below....thanks a million Ron(s).

VP-661 P-2V DITCHING IN 1964

(submitted by Ron Garman)

Eight P2's of various model configs departed NAS-NARTU Anacostia in early February 1964. A very cold climate to a fairly warm climate at Los Alamitos, California. Just prior to departure I was reassigned from the CO's crew to another crew by the CO in order to satisfy a Plane Captain shortage. My comfort zone developed a minor angst. I was a very satisfied 2nd Mech skater that had been with the crème-de-la-creme Crew One of VP 661. Captain Jack's 2P was Lt. Leo Bud Green. The NAV was LCDR Joe Donahue. The best-of-the-best, all personally selected by Captain Jack.

Doug Gallagher was the Ace-of-the-Base Plane Captain. Lew Johnson, the Super Manager of the excruciating arcane world of the diiti-diiti-da-da's that only he could decipher. He parlayed the incomprehensible crashing world of billions of cosmic HF electrons into clear intelligence that the CO received via hand written CAC'ed notes from Lew's crew station. No matter where we skulked about in the mysterious world of maritime pursuits the Navy Command Ops Center had a reasonable posit on our whereabouts. Comforting when one considered the alternative in a ditch in ,say, the Bearing Sea or the North Atlantic.

Our MAD-ECM-Julie was Ron Auth, the son of the Squadron Leading Chief. His brilliant analysis of the arcane output of this gear was impeccable, considering that most of this gear was all 2nd WW leftovers. John Widner tweaked and massaged the cranky radar into a vision worthy of a Rembrandt, and although it wasn't designed as a weather radar, he managed to keep us out of the rocks in the crushing Nimbus.

Time has dimmed the remembrance of the remainder of the crew. Hugh Lee may have been Ordnance. Hugh had two significant attributes. At 5'6" and 129' he could hoist a rocket/bomb load with the biggest and strongest. His second attribute can only be explained by understanding the secret behind the 13 buttons. Tzigane (Fr) .

As for me, I was a Second Mech because I graduated number two (out of 12) in the RAG at VP-26 and later passed the Plane Captain check ride with VP-661. This as an Aerial Photographer's Mate. It was a big quandary to VP-26. I was allowed in because my following orders had an attachment letter that stated I was in the process of changing my rate to AD. I was the last flying PHA since WW II. I also graduated last in MAD training at 'The Grove'. So much for my interest in the MAD operation. I was allowed to fly the PC position by Gallagher when he so choose.

Our trip to Alamitos was uneventful and I drew some comfort from the cockpit crew of LCDR Clete Mishler (Mitch) and LT Bud Laynor (Bud). I was getting to know the rest of the crew. Altizer (2nd Mech), Hoppen (Julie), Harley (Radar).....the others beyond recall. We had 2 local fam flights out of Los Al. Our 3rd flight was cancelled because of a howling Sana Anna wind. That night we went to a local watering hole called the Chatter Box while the ground crews worked at removing the sand from the aircraft. We were back in quarters by 2200. At noon the next day we launched...Bud keyed the mike.

- "Ground. 6 Alpha One ready for taxi."
- "Roger 6 Alpha One You are cleared to runway One Eight via taxiway Able then Dog. Hold short of One Eight."
- "Roger. 6 Alpha One is cleared to 18 via Able then Dog. Hold short at 18.
- "That's a Charlie 6 Alpha One, Contact the tower on 128.25 at Dog."
- We completed the T/O check lists.
- Lt. Laynor advised the crew to prepare for T/O.
- Miitch asked Bud to call the tower. He nodded to me. We were in sync.
- On the runway, the jets were set to 100% and the 3350's where stood up to T/O power.
- "6 Alpha One you are cleared runway heading to 2000'. Upon reaching 2000, right turn to 270. Contact center on 133.15.
- "Roger 6 Alpha One to 2000' then a right turn to 270. Contact Center 133.15 "

After contacting the Center, Mitch retarded the jets to 96% and pulled the recip's back to climb power, then pulled the jets to idle but the number one jet would not drop below 96%. We discussed the problem and decided that the only recourse was for me to drop into the nose tunnel and pull the fuel breaker to starve the engine. That completed, we RTB'd to Los Al. Maintenance adjusted the copper wiper on the fuel control rheostat. Some oil was added to the engine. It was tested and we flew out to the Op area. The cranky jet shut down as advertised.

We had a 50 by 100 NM box as our sanctuary with the inside edge 50 NM off the beach. The hard deck was 1000'. The COM and NAV/DME were controlled in the cockpit. This was important because to the western side of our posit was a live firing fleet exercise. Our limited electronic suite was just enough to provide the AT's with some training in their specialties. My duties were monitoring and recording the fuel burn and giving my attention to the gauges. Cake!

Around 1700 the winds on the deck were starting to pick up. We climbed up to 3500. Most for the crew moved to the Nav Station to annotate and compare their logs. The crew was switching their aldis's to red. The sun had descended into the Western Pacific. Dark and quiet. The engines hummed the usual mesmerizing drone. But, The night sky was completely black. No stars. Then a healthy lightning flash. The winds instantly increased with a pounding roller coaster effect.

Continued on Page 12.....

P2 Ditching (continued)

I was sitting side saddle in the PC seat. I looked aft to see what the crew was doing. Most were still at the Nav Station. The white lights came on full in the After-Station. Damn. There goes the night vision. I reached for the light switch along side the PC seat but as quick as they came on they went out. Strange.

Then the light was there again but this time there was smoke...**FIRE**. Ah Marone! 'We're on fire'; I hollered to the Plane Commander. 'There's a fire in the after station'; I detailed. His response was immediate; 'Get back there and see what's on fire.' Calm and cool.

The emergency check lists were started. I dove over the wing beam into the Aft-Station. Oh f---!! The fire is coming up through the deck. My first thoughts were control cables and oxygen bottles. I grabbed the fire extinguisher off the bulk head. The force of the fire blew the powder back at me. One of the crew discharged another extinguisher with the same result.

The last bottle was in the tunnel in the nose. I went forward. Gave Mitch and Bud the grim news and went into the nose tunnel. I couldn't get the bottle out of the clamps. Frustrated and pissed-off, I laid back on the tunnel deck for a second and looked up at the crewman's face that was masked in fear.

At that point the adrenalin kicked in at a higher level and I ripped the bottle from the bulk head. It had no effect on the fire. Not good news for the cockpit. The winds and rain were at full fury as we descended toward the ocean.

Mitch said tell the crew to bail out. I advised him that they are all on the Nav Deck because the fire in the Aft-Station was blocking the deck hatch. He said drop the nose gear and let them bail out there. The bail out horn was blaring. More bad news from me. Four of the chutes were in the back.

I told those with chutes that I was going to lower the nose gear so they could bail out. Their response was immediate (expletive deleted)-You! We're staying. 'Tell them to strap in'. I looked for my May West and jacket. Both were gone. I grabbed a loose flight jacket and put it on and sat in the PC seat.

Bud Laynor was sending the MAY-DAY on 121.5. At 500' Mitch called for the landing lights. The rain was horizontal and completely obliterated the wind screen. 'Turn them off came the command'. He advised me to take a ditching station. I sat on the deck hatch to the tunnel. It was not a ditching station and had no seat belt. Mitch was flying blind. He was estimating the wind direction and wave action, the latter with the use of the RAD Alt.

The first impact wasn't too concussive the second one felt like we hit a freight train. The plexiglass nose caved in and the sea water blew the deck hatch up. I hit the over head. A brief period of incomprehension occurred. As I re-acquired my senses I could see several members of the crew going out the Astro Hatch. My legs were numb but I could feel the cold water filling up the plane. I floated toward the Astro Hatch. A view of the radio compartment was devastating. It was a twisted mass of metal. No one could have survived in there. .

As I pulled through the hatch, I saw most of the crew in the water off the starboard side but, no pilots in sight. Hanging on to the edge of the Astro Hatch I lowered into the plane and looked into the cockpit. Both pilots were gone.

Pulling myself back up, I saw the devastating effect that occurred to the plane. The tail was twisted up and rotated to the right about 45 to 60 degrees. Smoke and steam were rising through the carnaged remains of the after-station.

The smell of Av gas permeated the blowing wind.

The crew gathered together. Fighting the wave action the pilots swam past the starboard wing toward them. Over the roar of the wind I could hear someone hollering for me to get into the water. I rolled off the fuselage onto the wing and into the water. Fortunately the back of the flight jacket filled with air and provided me with floatation protection. As I struggled against wave action heading toward crew several of them swam to assist me.

As they pulled me away Hoppen said; 'I've got to go back...I forgot my logs.' My hand went to my survival knife. I screamed; 'Hoppen, I'll kill you if you try.'. He nodded in difference to my comment. As we pulled away the plane sank in about four minutes after floating with a broken fuselage. We watched in silence.

Mitch did a head count and found that we had all survived. But we didn't have a raft. The one that was hauled out of the plane had ripped and was worthless. The one in the Aft-Station didn't get out. The one mounted in the upper fuselage was launched by who ever pulled the 'D Ring' but the wind caught it and was blown away.

One of the crew broke away from the crew gaggle and started swimming after the raft. The crew shouted for him to stay put but to no avail. After about twenty minutes the raft came into view being paddled by the crewman. The waves were still a challenge but the rain had stopped.

It was estimated that we ditched about 20 to 25 miles off the beach. In reality, we must have been closer because when we crested a wave we could see the distant lights of the shore line. After we all boarded the raft the sound of an aircraft's engines could be heard above the roar of the wind.

None of the flares in the May Wests worked. The single cell lights quit. Someone fired some tracer bullets and the crew in the aircraft saw us. It was LCDR Dave Satterfiel and his crew. Seems that when the May-Day went out it was triangulated from Seattle to San Diego. They knew where we were and directed the other plane to us. No one else was flying that night because of the weather. Only the Navy was.

The plane crew dropped a flare pattern and in about an hour a Coast Guard Helo came on the scene. As he lowered the basket Mitch and I had a debate about who was going up in the basket. I said I wasn't going. He said I was...I lost.

While lowering the basket, the Helo got caught in a trough...Mayhem. The tail rotor struck the water and the Helo did a 360 and landed in the water up against our raft. A couple of the crew in the raft tried to push us away from the Helo. As the Helo tilted, the blades were slashing into the waves. I was laying prone in the middle of the raft with my head resting on Mitch's legs. I rolled over to see if he was OK. It looked like he had been cut in half by the rotor blades.

That vision drove the remainder of the swallowed sea water back into the raft. As a wave pushed the Helo down on the far side of the raft the whirling blades above us gave the crew enough time to push away and clear the Helo. At this point Mitch sat up. Thank God...he was OK. We heard a voice from the ocean shout out for help. Airman Lewis was tossed from the Helo and now it was our turn to rescue him. Nine men in a 7 man raft. A second Helo arrived about an hour later.

The story gets vague here. As it was related to me, a Marine Helo was going to launch and the pilot was told to stand down because of the weather. He and his Sergeant Crewman decided to go anyway. They pulled me and 2 of my raft mates from the ocean and hauled us to Camp Pendleton. The rest of the crew was picked up the next day by a Coast Guard boat.

Continued on Page 13.....

P2 Ditching (continued)

At the hospital they started to work on me. I had crushed vertebra and a compacted ileus. I was still in the flight jacket that had Mitch's name tag attached, thus the Doc's thought they were dealing with a Navy LCDR. At that point I reached into the inside pocket and I pulled out a .38!! Not a happy group. Even less so when they found out that they had a PHA3 wearing a LCDR's Flight Jacket and carrying a loaded weapon. Navy order was restored after a lengthy discussion with the squadron. They cut away my orange flight suit. The legs were scorched from the fire.

After a few days of pain killers I was given the first of three post-ditch Boards. All of the rest of the crew received one. The Board Chair consisted of the former VP Program Manager, Captain Peterson, The TAR VP CO, Captain Lane with whom I flew with on active duty and the Squadron and NARTU Safety Officers.

It seems that one AT3 said that I had placed a half open can of jet engine oil on the deck in the After-Station and we taxied out with it still sitting there. Not true! I had placed it on the Budda and told the driver to dump it in a bowser. He said he would. It took a Los Al Admin Chief (the recording Secretary for the Board) to locate the Mech in question. My description of the Mech struck a cordant note, The Chief knew him. He was a Reg Nav enlisted who was to provide assistance to us if we required help. He said he took the open can to a Bowser at the hangar.

I subsequently was given a third Board by a TAR Chief from NARTU Anacostia. Same questions same answers. Another point worth mentioning is that a similar model P-2 was at Alamitos being prepped for Litchfield Park. The decking in the After-Station was pulled and an accumulation of old hydraulic oil was found in the bilges. A case of hydraulic oil was all ways stored under the steps in the Aft-Station.

Further, the 1800cc oxygen bottles were lying horizontal in the bilge. Each had piping leading from the bottle head through a stringer and into a pressure relief valve. This about 19" from the bottle head. They found heavy friction wear in the lines going through the stringer to the pressure relief.

Conclusion: The piping was worn through and instantaneous combustion occurred, setting off a raging fire. Further it was concluded that we were damn lucky not to have blown up in the air...a loss that might have never been resolved.

The plane went down in 2,200 hundred feet of water. A wing tip tank washed up on the beach. It was taken to Los Al for disposal. A 661 tin-bender pulled off the tank fin from the tank. It rests in my personal Ready Room at home. The 'D Ring' from the raft also resides with the fin.

Epilogue:

In 2009 I was a member of a senior softball team the Howard County Reds in Columbia, Maryland. I was in the batting cage one day and as I swung to hit the ball I would grunt. One of my team mates, Larry Kinbom asked me why I grunted when I swung. I said because I had previously crushed some vertebra and there was always some pain when I swung. 'How did that happen?'; he asked? 'Plane ditch'

With that his eyebrows married his hair line. 'When?' '1964' 'Where was this ditch?' 'About 25 miles off the coast of Dana Point'. He stared out at the ball field for a while. 'What kind of a plane?' 'Navy Neptune,' Remember the date?' February 11, 1964." His next statement floored me. 'I was the Coast Guard Ops Officer on duty that night I launched the Helo that went out to rescue you. We were both lost at that moment in the ' Oh my God what are the Odds.?''

That conversations was done in front of our Coach, Ed Kirk, the former Assistant Deputy Director of Intelligence at (#####) "Sorry" Larry Kinbom retired as a Captain. He died in 2009. Mrs. Kinbom still resides in Columbia, Maryland. I discussed this story with her at Larry's wake. Mr. Wilson the rescued Coast Guardsman, also resides in Columbia although I've never had the pleasure of meeting him in person.

The 'D' ring is from a raft packed by Walt Farbaugh a PR 1 TAR Rigger at NARTU Anacostia. I still owe him the obligatory reward usually given to a Rigger that packs. The ring was given to me by the crewman that pulled it on the ditch.

Captain Sullivan was one of the greatest influences in my life. He set an example that directed the remainder of my life. Crew One visited me at Pendleton. Lew Johnson brought a copy of the February 12 1964, Los Angeles Times. The headlines read; "Gail force winds batter LA, Navy Bomber Ditches, Rescue Helicopter crashes during rescue". It's framed in my Ready Room.

With the exception of Lt. Laynor and myself none of the crew ever flew again. Lcdr. Mischler would send me letters from various hot spots around the world. My last was from Cambodia in 1974.

(Thanks to Lew Johnson and Becky Connick for clearing out some of the cob webs while trying to remember what happened 47 years ago.)

Ron Garman

Crew Chief Humor

(submitted by Bruce Blackwelder)

A pilot died at the controls of his plane and went to pilots' hell, where he found a hideous devil and three doors. The devil was busy escorting other pilots to various "hell rooms." "I'll be right back - don't go away," said the devil, and he vanished.

Sneaking over to the first door, the pilot peeked in and saw a cockpit where the pilot was condemned to forever run through preflight checks.

He slammed that door and peeked into the second. There, alarms rang and red lights flashed while a pilot had to avoid one emergency after another.

Unable to imagine a worse fate, he cautiously opened the third door. He was amazed to see a pilot getting ready for a flight while crew chiefs diligently put the final touches on a perfectly-maintained aircraft, helping him out of the Ops truck and carrying his helmet bag....even bringing him coffee and saluting him sharply as they presented the forms for his approval.

The pilot closed the door and quickly returned to his place seconds before the devil reappeared.

"Okay," said the devil, "Which door will it be, number 1 or number 2?" "Um, I want door number 3," answered the pilot.

"Sorry," said the devil. "You can't have door number 3....that's the crew chiefs' hell."

Did you know.....?

(by Jim Rozycki)

When you view issues of the Hawk's Nest on our website and see links to other websites or folks email addresses all you have to do is "click" on them and you will go to that site directly rather than have to type it all over yourself...TRY IT!!

www.vp68.org

Taps...myth / true origin

(by MSG Jari A. Villanueva, USAF, ret.)

(Taps Historian and Bugler)

<http://tapsbugler.com/>

Editor's Note: There are several email versions going around about the origin of the song TAPS that is played at funerals. I



wanted to do an article and started to research this topic and came upon the above website.

Take note that at the end of his presentation the author, Jari A. Villanueva, offers a challenge and reward for proving the origin.

THE MYTH:

It starts with, "It all began during the Civil War..." and goes on to relate the story of a Union Captain Ellicombe and how he finds his wounded Confederate son on a battlefield. The story is that the music of Taps is found in the

pocket of the young man and that's how the call came into being. It is a heartwarming and poignant story...

This story, of course, rates up there with the one that Colonel Oliver North tried to warn us about Osama Bin Laden during Congressional hearings and the one that Lee Marvin and Captain Kangaroo (Bob Keeshan) met as Marines on Iwo Jima,. Both stories contains a kernel of truth somewhere (North did testify at Congressional hearings, and Marvin and Keeshan were both Marines), yet the stories themselves are false. And like them, the Captain Ellicombe story is a yet another MYTH that makes it way around thanks to the Internet. Bad history, and we get to see a lot of it, needs to be corrected.

The story of Captain Robert Ellicombe and his Confederate son is a myth, a fake, a tall tale, a good anecdote to tell around the old campfire, but a story that, outside of the fact it takes place at Harrison's Landing, holds no truth whatsoever.

This is one of those stories that is reprinted and forwarded to others and makes its way around the Internet around Memorial Day, Independence Day and Veterans Day. The story gets printed in papers, newsletters, and, sad to say, even on some military websites as the true version of how the bugle call of Taps came into existence.

I have sounded the call thousands of times as bugler in national cemeteries and at hundreds of memorial services. I am also a bugle historian who has spent much time researching this topic. I was the curator of the Taps Exhibit at Arlington National Cemetery and am a Civil War re-enactor. I, along with other history buffs, have researched the real story and have tried to squash this myth.

24 Notes That Tap Deep Emotions

TAPS – THE TRUE ORIGIN

Of all the military bugle calls, none is so easily recognized or more apt to render emotion than the call Taps. The melody is both eloquent and haunting and the history of its origin is interesting and somewhat clouded in controversy. In the British Army, a similar call known as Last Post has been sounded over soldiers' graves since 1885, but the use of Taps is unique with the United States military, since the call is sounded at funerals, wreath-laying and memorial services.

Up to the Civil War, the infantry call for Lights Out was that set down in Silas Casey's (1801-1882) Tactics, which had been borrowed from the French. The music for Taps was changed by Union General Daniel Butterfield for his Brigade (Third Brigade, First Division, Fifth Army Corps, Army of the Potomac) in July of 1862.

Daniel Adams Butterfield (31 October 1831-17 July 1901) was born in Utica, New York and graduated from Union College at Schenectady. He was the eastern superintendent of the American Express Company in New York when the Civil War broke out. Despite his lack of military experience, he rose quickly in rank. A Colonel in the 12th Regiment of the New York State Militia, he was promoted to Brigadier General and given command of a brigade of the V Corps of the Army of the Potomac. The 12th served in the Shenandoah Valley during the Bull Run Campaign. During the Peninsular campaign Butterfield served prominently when during the Battle of Gaines Mill, despite an injury, he seized the colors of the 3rd Pennsylvania and rallied the regiment at a critical time in the battle. Years later, he was awarded the Medal of Honor for that act of heroism.

As the story goes, General Butterfield was not pleased with the call for Lights Out, feeling that the call was too formal to signal the days end. With the help of the brigade bugler, Oliver Wilcox Norton, Butterfield wrote Taps to honor his men while in camp at Harrison's Landing, Virginia, following the Seven Day's battle. These battles took place during the Peninsular Campaign of 1862. The call, sounded that night in July, 1862, soon spread to other units of the Union Army and was even used by the Confederates. Taps was made an official bugle call after the war.

The highly romantic account of how Butterfield composed the call surfaced in 1898 following a magazine article written that summer. The August, 1898 issue of Century Magazine contained an article called The Trumpet in Camp and Battle, by Gustav Kobbe, a music historian and critic.

He was writing about the origin of bugle calls in the Civil War and in reference to Taps, wrote: *"In speaking of our trumpet calls I purposely omitted one with which it seemed most appropriate to close this article, for it is the call which closes the soldier's day. . . . Lights Out. I have not been able to trace this call to any other service. If it seems probable, it was original with Major Seymour, he has given our army the most beautiful of all trumpet-calls."*

The Challenge: The Taps Myth

If you believe the Ellicombe story and that the Butterfield-Norton Story is not true, here is a challenge.

If you can prove the Captain Robert Ellicombe - Confederate Son Story I will give you a Gold Plated, Vincent Bach Stradivarius Field Trumpet (bugle) valued at \$2,000.00.

This is rare instrument-one-of-the-kind made for the US Army Band used at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington.

HERE IS WHAT YOU WILL NEED

Proof of the existence of Captain Robert Ellicombe.

- 1. You'll need his unit and pension records.
(Remember he has to be in the US Army at camp at Harrison's Landing during the summer of 1862.)**
- 2. The name of the son and where he is buried.**

DEADLINE.....JULY 1, 2012

.....GOOD LUCK!!

Possible new Chinese anti-submarine warfare aircraft emerges

(submitted by Nick Schaus)

(source: Google "Fanell's Red Star Rising" Group)

November 22, 2011:

China recently revealed the Y-8GX6, its answer to the American P-3C maritime patrol and anti-submarine aircraft. Both aircraft are similar in shape and equipment. Until the Y-8GX6 can be seen in action, it's difficult to say how close the two aircraft are in capability.

Images have emerged of a possible new Chinese anti-submarine warfare (ASW) aircraft based on the Shaanxi Y-8 transport. Hosted on Chinese defense websites, the pictures show the four-engined turboprop with a large radome under its nose and with weapon bay doors in the open position.



Most significantly, they also show a long appendage from the aircraft's tail, which could house a magnetic anomaly detector (MAD) - an essential sensor for detecting submarines.



The Chinese Y-8GX6 is a four engine turboprop aircraft that weighs 61 tons, has a 38 meter (124.7 foot) wingspan and a cruising speed of 660 kilometers an hour. The Y-8 is based on the Russian An-12 and U.S. C-130.

The similar American P-3 is based on the Electra civilian airliner that first flew in 1954, although only 170 were built, plus 600 P-3s. About 40 Electras, and over 200 P-3s, are still in service. The 61 ton P-3 has a 32.25 meter (100 foot) wingspan and can stay in the air about ten hours per sortie. Cruise speed is 590 kilometers an hour.

The P-3C is being replaced by the P-8A, which is based on the twin-engine Boeing 737 jet transport. Like the P-3C, the Y-8GX6 carries radars and other sensors, as well as over five tons of sonobuoys, depth charges and torpedoes.

China is believed to operate an aircraft known as the Y-8X in the ASW role, but purported images of this aircraft show that it lacks a MAD boom.

An effective ASW capability would greatly augment China's access denial strategy. Potential foes such as the USA and Japan operate sophisticated submarine forces, which would play a vital role in any future conflict.

1947 Blue Angels

(submitted by Vince Apostolico)

Here is an awesome video "[The Horsemen Pay Homage To The Blues – Then and Now](#)" of an airshow where the 2009 Blue Angels aircraft fly with the 1946 Blue Angels aircraft.



The original 1946 Navy Flight Demonstration Team started with the Hellcats for about 3 months and then they flew the Grumman F8F-2 Bearcat with its big, powerful R-2800 piston engine from 1946 to 1949. This video shows the current Blues pilots getting into the cockpit of the Bearcat and experiencing the origin of the Blue Angels.

Then you get to see the flying formation of the current Blue Angels flying two of the F-18 Hornets alongside of the "Horsemen" Flight Team flying three of the F8F-2 Bearcats.



Some of the current "Horsemen" Flight Team are former Blue Angel pilots themselves and they narrate this video.

Near the end of the video watch the face of the 90-year old former Blues pilot in the cockpit of a vintage Bearcat as he reminisces about his last flight in 1950. The look on his face tells the story well beyond words.

Be sure to hit the Full Screen icon (lower right corner) when the video comes up.....ENJOY!! (Thanks Vinny!!)

<http://www.neptunuslex.com/2010/12/10/good-day-at-the-patch/>

Inner Peace

A doctor on TV said in order to have inner peace we should always finish things we start and we all could use more calm in our lives.

I looked around my house to find things I'd started and hadn't finished, so I finished off a bottle of Merlot, a bottle of Chardonnay, a bottle of Baileys, a bottle of wum, the remainder of Valiumun scriptins, and a box of chocletz.

Yu haf no idr how fablus I feel rite now. Sned this to all who need inner peeess. An telum u luvum.



Photo Flashback

(by Jim Rozycki)

In going through materials I have from previous reunions etc., I found an 11"x17" zerox copy of VP-662 posing on, and in front of, a squadron P-2V aircraft. I forget who gave it to me!

At the bottom center, it has CDR. H.A. Estes, USNR and MAY 1967 under his name. In May of 1967, I was on a Navy aircraft carrier on the other side of the world.

But....I have a feeling that some of you might have been in this photo. If you were there, please contact me and give me some details about the photo, the squadron at that time and any other info and I will print it in a future issue.

Master Chief & the Cuckoo Clock

One night Master Chief was invited out for a night with the 'boys.' He told his wife that he would be home by midnight, 'I promise!' he said. Well, the hours passed and the margaritas went down way too easily. Around 3 a.m., a bit loaded, he headed for home.

Just as he got in the door, the cuckoo clock in the hallway started up and cuckooed 3 times. Quickly, realizing his wife would probably wake up, he cuckooed another 9 times. He was really proud of himself for coming up with such a quick-witted solution, in order to escape a possible wifely conflict. (Even when totally smashed.....3 cuckoos plus 9 cuckoos will total 12 cuckoos MIDNIGHT!)

The next morning his wife asked him what time he got in, and he told her 'MIDNIGHT'...She didn't seem pi__ed off in the least. Whew, I got away with that one he thought! Then she said 'We need a new cuckoo clock.'

When Master Chief asked her why, she said, 'Well, last night our clock cuckooed three times, then said 'oh sh_t.' Cuckooed 4 more times, cleared its throat, cuckooed another three times, giggled, cuckooed twice more, and then tripped over the coffee table and farted.

**Did you circle 14 APR 2012
on your calendar yet???**

Piney Flats Christmas tale..

(submitted by ole HLS himself)

Three good ole boys died on Christmas Eve and were met by Saint Peter at the pearly gates. 'In honor of this holy season' Saint Peter said, 'You must each possess something that symbolizes Christmas to get into heaven.'

The first good ole boy fumbled through his pockets and pulled out a pack of matches. He lights one and says, 'These are candles'. 'You may pass through the pearly gates' Saint Peter said.

The second good ole boy reached into his pocket and pulled out a set of keys. He shook them and said, 'These are bells.' Saint Peter said 'You may pass through the pearly gates'.

The Creative Genius started searching desperately through his pockets and finally pulled out a pair of women's panties. St. Peter looked at him with a raised eyebrow and asked, 'And just what do those symbolize?'

HL replied, 'These are Carol's.'

TriCare • Medicare • Social Security

(submitted by Kevin Dillon - source: *Military Officer MOAA*)

Blackhawks, time to consider writing your Congressmen and Senators: Recently the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) and House Armed Services Committee (HASC) leaders endorsed White House proposals to make military health care and retirement benefits more like civilians'.

Even Sens. Carl Levin (D-Mich) and John McCain (R-Ariz) chair & ranking minority member both endorsed the proposals offered by the White House to curtail military health care and retirement benefits.

Some have suggested a combination of changes to both Tricare For Life (TFL) enrollment fees and pharmacy (copayments) which would constitute a substantial double hit on the TFL population. . It appears that in the process of trying to cut the \$1.2 trillion deficit, they are looking at our benefits as a source of savings. I am very involved with MOAA and will have more to report next issue but you need to check into and watch what the House and Congress are proposing to do with your earned benefits.

Here's Why...#2

(submitted by Ed Stanfield - source: Navy Times)

Ever wonder where the saying "knows the ropes" came from? Well...to say that someone "knows the ropes" means that they are thoroughly able to do the tasks associated with their job.

The meaning of the phrase has changed over time. While today it indicates expertise, it originally referred to the beginner. The statement was printed on a seaman's discharge to indicate that he knew the names and primary uses of the main ropes on board ship, according to the Navy publication "Origin of Navy Terminology".

In other words, "This man is a novice seaman and knows only the basics of seamanship."

Editor at work....

(by Jim Rozycki)

My wife caught me in action doing this December 2011 Hawk's Nest so I thought I would share it with y'all. First, you have to set the mood: VP-68 Lithograph on the wall, had my VP-68 ballcap on, the glass of wine (usually some sort of a rum concoction) in my hand, and the jazz station playing on my satellite radio...ah, Life is Good!



This shot is unusual in that I was feeling very creative and was using my home computer, and two laptops all at the same time. I pull various sources up on each and cut and paste and download into the Hawk's Nest, then I edit them all.

My wife did not permit me to show you the messy room behind me...the bed was totally covered with various piles of paper and magazines...hey, a good editor needs his resources!

That all said...please keep the stories, jokes and articles coming to me. I especially want stories of what **YOU** are doing these days...this is **YOUR** newsletter. This issue shows that!

President's Corner

(by Jacque LaValle)

On behalf of the executive board and officers of the Association, I would like to extend to everyone a heartfelt thank you for making the VP-68 Alumni Memorial plaque at the United States Navy Memorial a resounding success. Without your financial support and Blackhawk spirit, this event would not have happened as quickly as it did. Special kudos for: Joe Odenthal, who chaired the committee and did most, if not all, of the leg work to make this happen; RADM Jeff Lemons, who presented a truly inspiring oration of our reserve community of the past, present and future; and Carrie Blazek for stepping up on short notice to toll the bell for each Blackhawk we honored that day. We had a terrific membership showing and it was truly inspiring to see those who attended in uniform. Again, thanks to everyone that made this a memorable event.

We still have much to look forward to in 2012. I always look forward to reading the next edition of the Hawk's Nest newsletter and truly appreciate all the work Jim Rozycki does to publish each outstanding issue. I wish we had folks like him writing our P-8 NATOPS. From what you can see in this edition, the spring will be packed with plenty of Blackhawk events to attend.

Spring Fling will be at the right time in April and the VP-68 Alumni Cruise will commence just two weeks later. Kudos to Wyman Bailey for bringing this event to reality. Remember, you only have until December 15th to make your reservations at the agreed-to basement bargain price.

There is also renewed interest during 2012 to have a VP-68 Alumni Fly-In, but I need your input as to where, when and how long. Some have suggested doing a fly-in in conjunction with the World War II Air Show at Reading, PA the first week-end of June. If you haven't been there before, it's well worth trip. Please let me know via email so we can begin the planning process.

We are also planning another unique opportunity for the 2012 Fall Muster, which I'll keep under wraps until the committee has a firm handle on the details, but trust me, you won't be disappointed.

As 2011 comes to a close, our Alumni Association has much to be grateful for. Our legacy spanned nearly half of the 100 years of Naval Aviation. Many of us were deeply rooted in that history and some continue to make the stories of tomorrow.

During this holiday season, please remember those who are no longer with us, stay in touch with those who still are and reach out to all shipmates and solders who need our support for years to come.

May everyone have a blessed holiday season, stay safe and I look forward to serving you in 2012.

Correction & Clarification to the last Corrections & Clarifications

George "Doc" Durity, referring to the Vol. 37 issue "Word" article, pointed out to me that I omitted him as 1979 VP-68 Sailor of the Year. Thus, in the Vol. 38 issue, I so duly noted it.

I received an email from Lou Abbott saying that **HE** was the 1979 (AT1 Abbott) VP-68 Sailor of the Year and sent a photo of his SOY plaque to prove it. What's an Editor to do?

Well...both boys are correct!

"Doc" Durity was the VP-68 **TAR** Sailor of the Year and MMC Lou Abbott was the VP-68 **SAR** Sailor of the Year. The plaques do not have TAR or SAR on them!!

Editor's Note: AT1 Abbott? I always thought Lou went directly from birth to Master Chief!!! Congrats again to both you lads.

Alumni Association Members

(as of DEC 2011)

We continue to receive requests from members for contact information for other Blackhawks. While we encourage members to keep in touch with each other, we also respect the privacy of each member's personal information.

Our VP-68 Alumni Association Privacy Statement: "The VP-68 Alumni Association holds membership information confidential and does not sell, disburse or distribute this information and uses it solely for Association purposes."

In compliance with our Privacy Statement, if you are trying to locate a Blackhawk, please email any of the officers. If we know the Blackhawk's contact information, we will pass on your request to them and they can contact you directly.

That said.....below, from our member register, are the members of the VP-68 Alumni Association as of 01 DEC 2011.

If you do not see your Blackhawk friends names...

CALL THEM AND GET THEM TO JOIN!!!

If you see their name, but don't see them at our events...

CALL THEM AND GET THEM TO COME!!!

NOTE: If there is an error in your name or membership or if your name is not listed, please contact our Treasurer,

Anna Gibson at: amchief@yahoo.com

LIFE MEMBERS:

Louis E. Abbott, L-01	David Altdorfer, L-02
Etta Anderson, L-10	Vince Apostolico, L-98
William H. Arnold, L-06	Alfredo Arroyo, L-98
Ronald P. Auth, L-04	Les Auth, L-98
Wyman H. Bailey, L-02	Jack Baker, L-01
James L. Battaglia, L-08	Janice E. Battaglia, L-08
James Beddingfield, L-06	John Benton, L-11
Steven Black, L-01	Caroline Blazek, L-98
Joe Brundage, L-00	Kevin R. Cahill, L-02
Donald C. Caldwell, L-02	Joseph Callejo, L-01
John P. Cann, L-01	John R. Carlin, L-02
John S. Carr, L-08	James M. Carrico, L-09
Steven P. Cawi, L-98	Stephen F. Cawley, L-98
Wally Chance, L-03	Ronald Cimo, L-07
Sylvia R. Connick, L-98	Ford Cox, L-10
Steve Danskar, L-07	Robert W. Davis, L-04
Dean DeHotman, L-11	Kevin L. Dillon, L-02
Ed Diraimo, L-05	Landon H. Donahey, L-98
Tom Donnelly, L-04	Howard M. Drogan, L-09
William H. Duxbury, L-01	Bill Eaton, L-99
Sharkey Estrin, L-04	Garrett A. Fahl, L-00
Frank Ferney, L-06	Richard J. Fickling, L-98
E. Byron Fisher, L-98	Richard S. Fitzgerald, L-06
Howard Flemming, L-06	Robert Fletcher, L-09
Arthur K. Foskett, L-04	Calvin Foster, L-05
David Foy, L-06	Nevins Frankel, HL-00
Glen Gadberry, L-08	Paul P. Gardner, L-04
Ron Garman, L-02	Mike Gerred, L-02
Anna Gibson, L-11	Timothy J. Gorman, L-98
David C. Graham, L-98	David P. Gray, L-00
Dale Grimes, L-00	Scott Grzybowski, L-01
James L. Hall, L-09	Doug Hannum, L-06
Raymond Harding, L-09	Merrill W. Hood, L-01
Arthur T. Humphreys, L-09	Ronald Jacobs, L-06
Lewis W. Johnson, L-98	Brian "Packy" Jones, L-00
Raymond Jones, L-06	Frank Kearney, L-00
Steve Kimberling, L-06	Bradford A. Kirley, L-98
Vic Kraft, L-04	Louis G. Kress, L-09
L. Rex Lake, L-06	Jacque D. LaValle, L-02
Dana K. Law, L-00	Jeffrey A. Lemmons, L-98

John M. LeNard, L-00	William R. Levin, L-02
Debbie Gath Lineberry, HL-05	Lawrence E. Luck, L-99
Charles G. Macgill, L-07	Pamela M. Mann, L-98
"Bunky" Maurer, L-09	A. Ray Miller, L-00
Greg Mitchell, L-01	Paul Monaghan, L-02
John "Blackie" Murdoch, L-05	Frank Notarnicola, L-11
Sidney K. Nichols, L-01	Ralph Nupp, L-06
Douglas W. Oard, L-05	Joseph T. Odenthal, L-98
Ralph Oman, L-98	Jeffrey Ostroff, L-10
C. Robert Paty, L-98	Stephen Peel, L-05
Don Peeling, L-99	Granville Pennypacker, L-04
Dick Perkins, L-03	Daryl G. Phillippi, L-11
Robert J. Powell, L-00	Patrick J. Quigley, L-01
Peter J. Richard, L-00	James M. Rozycki, L-98
Nicholas, J. Schaus, L-04	John Schneder, L-03
Bill Schott, L-08	Grag Schultz, L-02
Joseph Schwendeman, L-01	Crystal A. Sharp, L-01
Charles J. Sitko, L-00	Harry Lee Smith, L-00
Robert I. Smith, L-00	Daniel Smith, L-05
Charles O. Smith, L-01	Edwin Stanfield, L-00
Brenda Stanfield, L-08	Ronald Stevens, L-08
Cornelius Stripling, L-98	Richard J. Tennies, L-98
Tommy G. Thacker, L-00	Barry W. Thomas, L-05
Paul L. Toutant, L-04	Gretchen C. Trujillo, L-08
Albert G. Tullus, L-01	Fred A. Ulle, L-00
Tondelayo Varelli, L-01	Kathleen H. Vasquez, L-98
Ramon Veras, L-02	Kathleen Vigiano, L-03
Mary Ellen White, L-01	Ronald G. Whittaker, L-98
Morgan Wilbur, HL-00	Clyde Wilcox, L-11
Gary A. Wiser, L-04	Kathleen Wright, L-98
Paul Yaron, L-01	Nancy A. Yohn, L-04

REGULAR YEARLY MEMBERS:

John E. Brown, M-11	Nick Cercone, M-11
Theodore Davis, M-12	Gene DiGennaro, M-11
George W. Durity, M-11	Donald E. Gallagher, M-12
James Guilfooy, M-12	Frederick Haynes, M-11
Dan Headley, M-11	Al L. Hurst, M-12
Marshall Magee, M-11	John M. McDermott, M-11
Robert Seaver, M-12	Elaine V. Schneider, M-12
Richard J. Stohr, M-14	Robert S. Tait, M-11
Kenneth H. Winter, M-11	Rex Wyers, M-11
Vicki L. Wertz, M-11	

M-11 MEMBERS:
2011 IS ALMOST OVER,
SEND YOUR 2012 DUES NOW

(NOTE NEW TREASURER ADDRESS ON PAGE 10)

And then the fight started...

Ole Boats and his wife were at home watching TV. He had the remote and was switching back and forth between a fishing channel and the porn channel.

His wife became more and more annoyed and finally said: "For God's sake Boats! Leave it on the porn channel. You already know how to fish!"

.....AND THEN THE FIGHT STARTED!!

From the Editor:

Jim Rozycki

As always, I would like to thank all of the VP-68 Blackhawks who called, mailed and emailed me contributions for this issue of the Hawk's Nest newsletter.

Since all issues of the Hawk's Nest will now be "on-line only", we send post cards to notify Blackhawks to go to our website to read and download their Hawk's Nest.

It is so very important that, if you move, that you advise us of your address change.

Hawk's Nests will be published in:

March – June – September – December

Email me at: rozyckijim@aol.com

Call me at: 412-487-5854

Mail to me at: VP-68 Hawk's Nest
2414 Rolling Farms Road
Glenshaw, PA 15116-2564

From the Secretary

If you move and change your mailing address please let me know as that is the only way we can keep track of you. Send your address information to:

wright_kathleen@bah.com

or mail to: VP-68 Alumni Association
4924 25th Street S
Arlington, VA 22206

From the Treasurer

Members who have not renewed their dues by March of each year will be dropped from our roster, lose their membership rights and no longer receive this newsletter. Please consider converting to a Life Membership and never have to write us another check. Annual dues is \$10, Life Membership is \$100 unless you are over 75 and then it is only \$25.

All dues payments and financial matters are to be mailed to:

NOTE NEW ADDRESS
VP-68 Alumni Association
8095 Silver Fox Way
Chesapeake Beach, MD 20732

Make checks payable to: **NOTE NEW PHONE NUMBER**
VP-68 Alumni Association

contact Anna Gibson at: **410-257-2460**
or email at: amchief@yahoo.com

Former Blackhawks

When you are calling or sending emails to your Blackhawk friends, ask them if they are members in the VP-68 Alumni Association. If they are not...**please ask them to join!** Application: www.vp68.org

There are many former Blackhawks out there who still do not know of our Association. Give them our website or bring them to the next function.

Color Copies of Hawk's Nest

Color copies of current and past Hawk's Nest newsletters may be downloaded and printed in pdf format from our website: www.vp68.org

Membership Committee

The Membership Committee, headed up by Dick Perkins, is still searching for former Blackhawks who are not yet members of our Alumni Association. If you know of anybody please forward their names and contact info to Dick via e-mail at vp68co@yahoo.com

Membership applications may be downloaded from our website: www.vp68.org

Missing Blackhawks

We have a few "lost" Life Members who haven't told us of their move! If you know them or where they are please help us get their newsletter to them....have them contact Kathy Wright.

Alfredo Arroyo, L-98

2011 & 2012 Association Officers

President	Jacque LaValle jacque.lavalle@verizon.net
Vice-President	Wyman Bailey baileymod@msn.com
Secretary	Kathy Wright wright_kathleen@bah.com
Treasurer	Anna Gibson amchief@yahoo.com
Historian	Ed Stanfield edwin.stanfield@gmail.com

**SEE YOU AT THE
2012 SPRING FLING PICNIC
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anchors aweigh....

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29 APR – 06 MAY 2012**

Mark it in your planning book!!



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Replicas are exact reproductions of the plaque displayed on the Memorial Wall at the United State Navy Memorial, Washington, DC. Plaques are mounted on a handsome hardwood base, suitable for hanging or exhibiting on a desk. . If you have any questions, please call Paul T. Haley, at (202) 380-0760 Ext. 760 or e-mail paulhaley@navymemorial.org

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Card #: _____ Expiration date: _____ Signature _____
(Required)

PLAQUE NAME: _____ (ship, individual or group)

Approval: _____ date: _____
(Please sign order form)

Form 1-B/N 2009 Rev.

**Navy Patrol Squadron Six Eight (VP-68)
Alumni Association
8095 Silver Fox Way
Chesapeake Beach, MD 20732
410-257-2460**

www.vp68.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(please print)

name: _____

address: _____

city: _____

state: _____ zip code: _____

home phone: _____

e-mail: _____

when in VP-68?: _____

rank / rate / dept: _____

1) I hereby apply for the following membership (CHECK ONE):

☐ \$100 = Life Membership (one-time fee)

☐ \$25 = Life Membership **70 or older** (one-time fee) **DOB:** _____

☐ \$10 = Regular Membership (Annually - 01Jan to 31 DEC)

NOTE: Make checks payable to: "VP-68 Alumni Association",
mail check and completed membership application to above address.

2) I would be interested in serving on the following committee(s):

☐ Membership ☐ Nom. & Elections ☐ Audit / Budget

☐ Fund Raising ☐ Reunions ☐ Newsletter

☐ Constitution & By-Laws

The VP-68 Alumni Association was chartered in 1998 in the state of Maryland for the sole purpose of uniting in a central organization all former members of Navy Patrol Squadron 68 (VP-68), it's parent and supporting Navy squadrons, and those interested in preserving the name and history of Navy Patrol Squadron 68 (VP-68).

The Alumni Association shall conduct programs to perpetuate the memory of Navy Patrol Squadron 68 (VP-68) and to provide social and recreational activities for its membership. Life & Regular Membership includes: voting privileges; quarterly "Hawks Nest" newsletter; attendance at annual events; reunions and other functions.

Privacy Statement: The VP-68 Alumni Association holds membership information confidential and does not sell, disburse or distribute this information and uses it solely for Association purposes.

signed: _____

date: _____