



VP68 Hawk's Nest

Volume No.2

VP68-Alumni Association

January 2000

SPRING FLING HUGH SUCCESS



A very successful Picnic was held at Pax River on May 22, 1999. Over 70 alumni attended, ate burgers and dogs, drank a beer or two, and enjoyed a great day with good friends.

We held our 1st 50/50 raffle. **John McDermott**, AWCS, was the winner. His take \$68, yes it was a 68/68 split, 'go figure'!

Lew Johnson, retired, sold patches and hats to raise funds for future events. **Steve Cawi**, AT1, VP66, chairperson of the Fund Raising Committee is working on a Ship's Store, so we will be able to buy things at future events and hopefully on-line.

A Certificate of Appreciation was presented to **Lou Abbott**, retired, and **Kellie Gofus**, AKC, VP64, for their tireless work setting up and hosting the **Spring Fling at Pax River**.

THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY, NOV. 03-05 2000

All former Blackhawk's are cordially invited to celebrate with us on **November 03-05 2000**. Reservations for an elegant banquet room and a block of rooms have been made at the Colony South Hotel, which is a 5 minute drive from the back gate of Andrews, AFB. Tentative plans are to have a casual Friday evening social at Andrews (time and location TBD). Saturday morning a brief Alumni Association business meeting with election of officers, will be held. Saturday afternoon you are free to tour DC at your leisure (have you ever seen the Navy museum, the Navy Memorial?) or play a round of golf on the base.

Saturday evening there will be cocktail hour, dinner and dancing in the ballroom. Sunday a breakfast buffet will be available at the hotel. Please keep these dates available and pass 'the word'. We will provide detailed information, as it becomes available. Co-Chairs for the reunion are **Lew Johnson** and **Harry Lee Smith**.

NAVY/NAVAL RESERVE'S "OLD SALT" RETIRES

Captain Harry Lee Smith, USNR, retired from the Naval Reserves, on 25 Sep 99, with 41 years, 8 months and 17 days of service. With his retirement Harry relinquished the title of the "Old Salt" the Navy's person with the most time served.

He retired in a joint ceremony with five other Captains, one Commander and one Lieutenant on the Display Ship USS Barry, at the Washington Navy Yard.



Lou Abbott, **Lew Johnson**, **Becky Connick**, **Bob Smith**, and **Carrie Blazek** attended the ceremony to wish him 'Fair Winds and Following Seas'! **Bob Smith** was the PPC of Crew 4 from 1970 to 1980 and the XO of VP-68 from 1979 to 1980. Bob is retired from the Navy and is a Capt. for U.S. Airways. **Lew Johnson** is a former Crew 4 'skypig' now retired. **Becky Connick** was the first female Master Chief at NAF Andrews and **Lou Abbott** is former VP68 and VAQ209 CMC. **Connick** and **Abbott** are both retired from the Navy. **Carrie Blazek** was the last CMC of VP68 and is currently the CMC of VP66, Willow Grove, Pa.

FALL DRILL WEEKEND

Since many of our members are no longer on active drilling status, and we know how much you miss drill weekends! Our plans are to have two Alumni social events every year. In late April or May we anticipate having a "Spring Drill Weekend" (the Spring Fling) in the Patuxent River area and a "Fall Drill Weekend" at Andrews AFB.

So shine those shoes, get a haircut, and tuck that tummy in. Quarters will be held and we're going to have a personnel inspection. (Just kidding!)

Awards, Retirements, Advancements Commissionings, etc.

CDR 'Sig' Johnson took the helm of VP66, Willow Grove, Pa. on 27 Mar 99.

Capt. Jeff Lemmons, last VP68 CO, relinquished the command of CVN NE, Willow Grove, Pa. and took the helm of the KEF Det, Willow Grove, PA on 18 Sep 99.

Captain Ike Puzon, former VP68 CO, retired from active duty this fall and is currently working for Senator Max Cleland, D-Georgia on Capital Hill.



CWO Scott Grzybowski was commissioned on March 6, 1999, at NAF Andrews. He has received a waiver to fly and is the only CWO C130 Flight Engineer currently on active flying status. Scott is a former VP68 AE FE.

Ensign McAfee former VP68 ordnanceman and 1st Class Petty Officer, was commissioned on 27 Mar 99 at the VP66 change of command. His commissioning was CDR Mitchell's last official act as CO of VP66. He continues to drill as the Assistant Material Control Officer at VP66.

CWO4 Joe Odenthal, retired from VP-64 (Condors) at NAS Willow Grove on 10 April 99 after 30 years of service. Joe was reputed to be the last drilling **PLANKOWNER** of VP-68.

CDR Lemons, CDR Oard, CDR Lowen, CDR Sinnett, and CDR Duxbury were promoted to Captain in 1999 and **AT1 Franco** was promoted to Chief Petty Officer.



Fair Winds and Following Seas Chief!

ADC Dave Boyce passed away on 13 Dec 99. He was my mentor and a friend. When I came to VP68 as a know it all 1st Class Petty Officer, Chief

Boyce was the man who gently pointed me in the right direction time and time again. He was an airlifter, keenly aware of the unique problems associated with that mode of operation. He always seemed to have a group of 'young' kids around him. A real chief who developed all his people, he worked with any one who wanted to learn and grow. A classic example: one Friday night before we launched out, midway on deployment, we had to perform an engine change to get an 'up' airplane. With everyone 'over there', he gathered his troops together; 1 AE, 1 AD, 1 AMH, and several AZs and Yns. He put us all to work. We robbed an engine and flew out in the morning, safely and on time. Dave only saw what we could do.

Although I could not make the funeral, I am proud to say that VP68 was well represented. **Dick Blosser, Bob Seaver, Randy and Crystal Sharp and Jim Rozycki** were pallbearers (all in uniform). They conducted a flag ceremony at the cemetery and presented Dave's wife Mary Alice with the folded flag. (Thanks shipmates!)

He was 56 years old and had recently retired. He leaves his wife Mary Alice, two adopted children ages, 4 and 6, and two older sons from a previous marriage behind. I share their loss and send them my best. Carrie Blazek

OTHER ALUMNI NEWS

Kathy Wright, former aircrew survival swim instructor has now taken her love of the water to the Anazostia River. She paddles on a competitive Dragon

Boat team from the Captiol Rowing Club. The team won 3rd place in the 1000-meter race at the New York City Open Championships this past fall.

Bob Gath, retired former VP68 CMC hosted a mini fly-in at Lee Airport on 24 November 99. **Rex Lake**, retired VP68 FE and **Vic Kraft**, retired, were among the attendees.

Ron Alonzo, retired VP68 TAR CMC has been diagnosed with the early stages of Alzhimers. He is doing well, but has given up his job at the golf course in Jacksonville and will be moving to Las Vegas to be closer to his family. He would love to hear from his old shipmates. You can write to him at 13377 Drayton Drive, Springhill, Fl. 34609. 904-666-8011.



Don Peeling former VP68 CMC, hosted a VP-68 CPO cruise on the Potomac this fall. There was an excellent turn out of 20 Blackhawks and significant others, including **Jaques Lavalle**, former Maintenance Master Chief and current VP92

CMC and **Burt Brookes**, former VP68 AE FE. A wonderful dinner was served at Hogates and the evening was graciously capped off with a water tour of Georgetown.

President's Corner

The Pax River Spring Fling was a great success, everyone had a good time and a chance to revive old times, discuss what was going on in their life and the families got a chance to see us old timers' reminisce.

As you can see, we plan to continue with 'drill weekends' in the future. We will need volunteers to help arrange things, setup and organize these gatherings. Please contact one of your officers if you are interested in helping with any event. Membership continues to grow, but I am still concerned about those we have lost touch with or those who don't donw about the Association. Please, in your contacts with alumni, touch with or those who don't know about tell them about our organization, ask them to join, get in touch, update their address, most important, just stay in touch! Don't assume they know about us just because they are



Elaine Schneider and Jacques Lavalle share at moment at the Spring Fling, Smile folks, we know you had a good time!

alumni. Several new members joining during the Spring Fling had only recently found out about the organization by word-of-mouth around the base. With the 30th Reunion just a 10 months away, the address list will become more important every day. There are many squadron mates we have lost touch with because they moved, their forwarding order has expired, and we have no new addresses.

The membership committee, headed by **Dave Foy**, dfoy80@aol.com is working on ways to update the list, and several members have done searches of Internet databases. We still need everyone's help. Please pass the word.

The committees are formed, if you want to volunteer to help, please contact one of the committee members. We need your help to make all this run smoothly and if more members pitch in, the less everyone needs to commit to the efforts. Chairs are as follows: Constitution and By-laws, **Bob Seaver**; Fundraising, **Steve Cawi**; Nominating Elections, **Elaine Schneider**; Audit and Budget, **John LeNard**; Historian, **Ed Standfield**; News Letter, **Carrie Blazek**; Reunion 2000, Co-chairs **Lou Johnson** and **Harry Lee Smith**; Membership, **Dave Foy**; Spring Fling, Co-chairs **Lou Abbott** and **Kellie Gofus**.

The Reunion 2000 committee has made a lot of progress with a great location and the beginning plans for the event. Many thanks to **Lew Johnson** and **Becky Connick** for the many hours of work and research in finding the site for the 30th reunion. Also, special thanks to **Terry Gibson**, YN1, for her time and input for the reunion site selection efforts.

Dick Fickling - p3css1@aol.com

\$\$\$ TREASURER'S REPORT \$\$\$

The Alumni Association is in the green, reporting the following Membership Rolls as of 30 Dec 99: Life Members 30; Yearly Members 122; Associate Members 2; Report submitted by **Jim Rozycki**.



SECRETARY'S REPORT

With the 30th year reunion just around the corner please help us out with our VP68 master mailing list. During the picnic many folks were able to confirm their addresses and provided addresses of former Blackhawks who we had lost contact with. If you have recently moved or know former Blackhawks who you think we don't have a good address on please let me know. In the future we will be sending mass mailings regarding the 30th reunion and we want to contact as many former members as possible. Email me at wright_kathleen@bah.com or call me at work at 703-917-2953.



Wyman Bailey and John Carr
relax at the
Spring Fling.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to the new members of the VP68 Alumni Association since April 99, (in no particular order).

James Carrico, Iven Cole, Don Peeling, Greg Hinchliffe, Bill Eaton, Frank Ferney, John McDermott, Ron Jacobs, George Frey, Nancy Frey, Lawrence Luck, Sidney Matthews, Robert I. Smith, Wyman Bailey, David Sabol, Robert Barnes, Pete Richard, David Gray, David White, Patty Schmidt, Richard Brimmer, Dick Blosser and Jim Beddingfield

AND MEMBERSHIP

Membership dues are as follows:

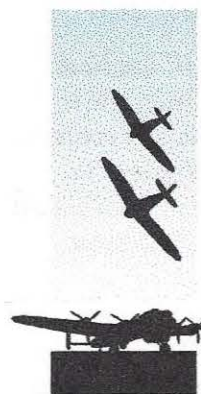
1-time \$100	=	Life Members
Yearly \$10	=	Regular Member

Regular Membership due in January

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Any former members of VP68 and it's parent and/or Supporting Units. Honorary Members are designated by the Alumni Association Board. Although we highly

encourage everyone to join and become active members of the Association. You do NOT have to be a member of the Association to participate in our activities. A slightly higher event fee will be charged for non-members.



LITHOGRAPHS AVAILABLE

Not like this, but a beautiful Limited Edition painting of the aircraft flown by VP68 and it's parent squadrons, that is the, PBY Marlin, PV-2 Harpoon, P2V Neptune and P-3 Orion, can be yours. Signed by Morgan Wilbur, the renowned military artist, this lithograph would make a great

addition to any home or office. Just \$37.50 mailed to you. Call/email Jim Rozycki.

RETIRING??

The Board voted to present a Certificate of Appreciation from the VP68 Alumni Association to all former Blackhawks upon retirement from the Naval Reserve. If you are coming up on retirement from the reserves please contact the Association Secretary Kathy Wright.

SEND US YOUR NEWS!

Thanks for all the news! Keep it coming. Carrie Blazek, 108 Denver Rd, Silver Spring, MD 20910 or email me at: mcblaze@erols.com

WANT TO TALK TO SOMEONE??

President – Dick Fickling – p3css1@aol.com

Vice Pres. – Paul Randolph – Paul_J@email.msn.com

Treasure – Jim Rozycki – Rozyckijim@aol.com

Secretary – Kathy Wright – wright_kathleen@bah.com

Historian – Ed Stanfield – estanfield@opf.com

<http://www.vp68.org>

Check us out on the web. Once again VP68 has its own web site, thanks to Steve Cawley, AW1. You can also get the latest e-mail addresses from him at:
http://www.cawley.org/vp68_email_list.html