



VP-68 Hawk's Nest

Volume No. 25

VP-68 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

July 2007



2007 SPRING FLING

The annual VP-68 Alumni Association "Spring Fling" picnic was held on Saturday, 05MAY07 at the NAS Patuxent River Beach House. We had over 60 Blackhawks and guests attend this year. Along with our usual Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania and West Virginia bunch at the picnic we had Wally Forville and Bruce Blackwelder from North Carolina, Vic Kraft, Sid Nichols and George "Doc" Durity came up from South Carolina, Paul Toutant made it down from Wisconsin and Rex Wyers was up from Florida.

The weather held off enough for the outdoor cooking to be done but the showers cancelled our horseshoe games.....next year!!! Lots of good food was to be had and our hats off to Jacque LaValle and his staff of volunteers for a job well done.

As our By-Laws require, a business meeting was conducted. Reports were given by the Secretary and Treasurer and were voted on and accepted. Joe Odenthal nominated Jim Rozycki as Editor of the Hawk's Nest and Jim accepted. A discussion was held about possibly holding our next reunion there at NAS Pax River and Jim Rozycki nominated Joe Odenthal to head up the committee to investigate locations and dates for the next reunion...Joe accepted.

In the FEB07 issue of the Hawk's Nest Jim Rozycki told of the biplane ride he experienced up in the Pittsburgh, PA area. Here, Mike "Doc" Gerrerred gives Jim a "**Barnstormer Aero**" ballcap to remind Jim of Mike's business in the Baltimore area, **Lite-Flight**, that offers hot air balloon rides and also open-cockpit biplane rides. Call Mike at 410-836-1116 or go to www.fun-flying.com and make plans to have him take you up for a ride. (More on "Doc's" flying adventures in a future issue.)



After we shut down the picnic, a bunch of folks reconvened over to a restaurant on the boardwalk in Solomon's Island for a great meal, lots of laughs and sea-stories. We all hated the evening to end, but promised to keep alive the spirit of VP-68 and keep the picnics and parties going for years to come.

April 2007 Fly-In

On Saturday morning, 28APR07, the Blackhawks converged on the Mid-Atlantic Air Museum at Reading, PA Regional Airport. We had three aircraft supported by two ground vehicles.

The aviation group consisted of Jacque and Chris LaValle who flew in from St. Mary's County, MD airport in a Cessna 172, Ed Stanfield from Frederick, MD in a Cessna 172, and John LeNard (who likes to fly with company) flew from College Park, MD aboard a Cessna 172 to Salisbury, MD to pick up Bill Schott who lives in nearby Bivalve, MD then on to Reading, PA.

Ground transportation was handled by Jim Rozycki who drove up from Pittsburgh, PA and Wally Chance who drove up from Centreville, MD.



Everybody met at the Malibooz Bar & Grill at the terminal building at 1100 and had lunch.

After lunch we drove around the field to the Mid-Atlantic Air Museum and met up with our tourguide, Paul Heidecker, a volunteer at the museum. He gave us a great tour through



the inside of the museum pointing out some unique items from days gone by like the model of the Custer



CC-W-5 "Channel Wing" plane from 1964 above. After the inside tour we ventured outside where the weather had changed from sunny and warm to overcast, windy and chilly.

There on the ramp they have aircraft in various stages of work from shells to airworthy. The first plane we saw was the C119 Flying Boxcar being worked on and then went to the "Channel Wing" that we heard about inside. This is an odd plane to look at but they say it might even be produced again.



After looking at several other aircraft...there she was, P2V-7, former Patrol Squadron Six-Seven (VP-67) Papa-Lima 9, b/n145915. Some of us had seen her fly years ago at an airshow but time outside on the deck has taken its toll. As Paul told us, they just don't have enough volunteers and time to keep up on all of the aircraft (we know a recruiting pitch when we hear one and we talked a little about it). Unfortunately, even with all of the accumulated P2 flight time between us we were not allowed inside. We all told Paul stories about P-2s and explained the plane to him as he was not as familiar with it as we all were.



Wally Chance suddenly broke away from the group, ran under a wing and came as close as we know to having an "ordnanceman coronary"!!!

There under both wings were hung four 5" HAVAR rockets (High Velocity Aircraft Rockets) and Wally told us some stories about his experiences with them. An excited flight engineer, John LeNard, took us under the wheel well and was pointing out various systems. John remembered what all of the switches and valves did and that would have made a NATOPS evaluator proud.

Wally just couldn't take his eyes off 'em rockets! Geez, if only we could just shoot one of 'em off!!

Ed, Bill and Jim told some JEZ stories but not as entertaining as Wally's rocket stories.

Even though it was chilly, we just couldn't get enough time around this bird...looking at her from every angle, remembering flights, getting to sit in the nose bubble during a flight (best seat in the house), fellow crewmen, countries visited, telling our different stories there.



Jacque and Wally had some fun simulating "pressure differential" test on the relief tube vent under the tail and knowing what it was really used for, they decided to keep their distance!!

We finally said good-bye to PL-9 and promised to come back another day (warmer) and hopefully with a promise to have a look inside!! Our guide Paul then took us inside their hanger to look at some restored aircraft and see first hand work being done on them. There they have a complete workshop where they restore and fabricate parts when they cannot acquire them elsewhere. Many dedicated volunteers work many hours on these aircraft and take pride in their work. It was most impressive.



There are display cases filled with equipment and models and even this official Navy P2 pamphlet showing that Navy cameras in Navy aircraft are "versatile" (bet one of you old salts out there still have a copy of this). If you do, let us borrow it to feature it in a future issue of the Hawk's Nest.

We finished off our tour by presenting Paul with his very own VP-68 ballcap (thanks Wally)

and a promise that we would return someday and bring some other P2V vets.

Pulling into the terminal parking lot for the three crews to file departure flight plans we noticed a bottle on the ground. E-gads!!!



Somebody left some perfectly good whiskey!!! What sailor would throw that away!!! We'll leave the rest to your imagination! As with all of our VP-68 Alumni Association functions, there is lots of fun and laughs to be had.

Wally and Jim stayed and watched the aircrews man their planes and taxi away and went to the restaurant to have dinner before their drives home.

John LeNard provides the rest of the narrative....The LaValle's were the first to take off, and Bill and I were in line behind Ed. As I performed the pre-take off run-up, the engine was missing on the right mag. The first guess with a rough running mag check is to make sure it is not carbon build up, so I ran the engine at a higher power, leaned and after 20 seconds did another mag check. Since the engine sounded better, I repeated this twice before the mag drop was within limits and there was little roughness. So I called the tower and told them we were ready to go.

By this time Ed had taken off, and we figured that Jim and Wally had driven away as they probably thought we were long gone. With full power applied we started down the runway but just as I rotated and the end of the runway disappeared under the nose, the airplane began to shake.

As I am trying to think of all the things to do 100 feet in the air, no runway left with an engine running so rough, Bill calmly gets on the intercom with a question that can only come from someone who bounced off a mountaintop in Ireland in a P2 (see April 2007 issue) "John, does your engine always vibrate like this?"

Fortunately, the engine kept giving enough power to get us back to the field, and the local mechanic came back from his party to pull the offending spark plug where we found a big ball of lead. As if that wasn't enough, on the way back there was an electrical hiccup that took our generator off line but having studied and practiced on the P3 electrical system for several decades, resetting the C172 generator was a piece of cake. Will Bill ever fly with me again?...will anyone else in the squadron ever fly with me?...time will tell!

Rex Lake and John Carr weren't able to make it to the museum because shortly after take-off out of Fairmont, WV airport early that morning in marginal weather, they lost a generator on their Cessna 172 and had to return quickly to homebase. Fortunately, all planes and cars made it home safe and sound. Stay tuned to the ongoing adventures of the "Blackhawks"!!!

In summary, if you ever have the opportunity, do visit the Mid-Atlantic Air Museum in Reading, PA at the Reading Regional Airport (RDG). There are plenty of signs and billboards to direct you to the museum. Take the tour both inside and outside and meet some dedicated folks who like us, love airplanes.

Visit their site on www.maam.org

Old Sailor Joke #1

Two elderly sailors in a Navy retirement center were sitting on a bench under a tree when one turns to the other and says "Slim, I'm 93 years old now and I'm just full of aches and pains. I know you're about my age. How do you feel?" Slim says, "I feel just like a newborn baby." "Really!? Like a newborn baby!?" "Yep!" Slim replies. "No hair, no teeth and I think I just wet my pants."

Old Sailor Joke #2

Morris, a 92 year-old ex-sailor went to the doctor to get a physical. A few days later the doctor saw Morris walking down the street with a gorgeous young woman on his arm. A couple of days later the doctor spoke with Morris and said, "You're really doing great, aren't you?" Morris replied, "Just doing what you said Doc: "Get a hot mamma and be cheerful!" The doctor replied loudly, "Morris, I didn't say that. I said, You've got a heart murmur; be careful!!"

(Editor Note: save your boos for later...there's more!!!)

P-3 Replacement

The aircraft chosen to be the replacement for the aging P-3C Orion is the Boeing P-8A Poseidon Multi-mission Maritime Aircraft (MMA). The P8-A is a modified Boeing 737-800ERX airliner, bringing together a reliable airframe and high-bypass turbo fan jet engine with a fully connected, state-of-the-art open architecture mission system. Coupled with the next-generation sensors, the P-8A will dramatically improve anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and anti-surface warfare (AsuW) capabilities.



The nine-person crew will consist of two pilots, five mission crew, one relief pilot and one in-flight technician.

The plane's lethality consists of a 5-station internal weapons bay, 4 wing pylons, 2 centerline pylons and the search stores will be 2 rotary reloadable, pneumatically controlled sonobuoy launchers.

Some specifics about the P-8A are:

Propulsion: Two high-bypass CFM56 turbofan engines
 Length: 129.5 feet Height: 42.1 feet
 Wingspan: 117.2 feet
 Weight: max takeoff 188,200 pounds
 Airspeed: 490 knots (about 593 mph)
 Ceiling: 41,000 feet
 Range: 1,200 nautical miles radius / 4 hours on station
 Crew: nine (9)
 Armament: torpedoes, cruise missiles, bombs, mines



The Navy plans to purchase 108 P-8As with the first aircraft delivered to Pax River for flight test in 2009. The first squadron is planned to be operational (IOC) with the P-8A by 2013. Budgets and world events change things but that is the current plan to date.

Benefits

Submitted by Dick Fickling

Having recently joined the ranks of the retired, I have been exploring our benefits. We recently used one that you don't have to wait until you are retired with pay to use, Shades of Green (SOG).

SOG is one of the three military resorts that you can book, for very reasonable rates, based on pay grade (around \$100+ for a standard room), and take the whole family if you want. As would be expected, you need to plan well in advance of when you want to book your vacation, I would suggest at least six months in advance, and peak seasons are obviously more difficult.



A standard room, pictured, included two double beds, refrigerator, nice balcony with views and a sitting area with table and chairs.

SOG is located on Walt Disney World (WDW) Resort property in Orlando, FL. It is convenient to all the attractions with free shuttle service to the WDW parks. We broke the shuttle code early, the main bus runs every 20 minutes to the Disney transportation hub, the others run hourly. Go to Disney and switch to their buses or monorail, much quicker way to get around.

SOG offers discounted tickets to all of the WDW Parks, and some of the other Orlando attractions if you are inclined to wonder back toward town. They even offer a shuttle to some of the other attractions for a small fee. We found more than enough to do to keep us busy at WDW.



SOG has three restaurants on the property, an express café, plus coffee shop, ice cream shop, and a small AFEES exchange that has most everything you could want at the resort: sunscreen, sodas,

batteries, etc. There are three pools, kids to adults, golf, game rooms, and great places to just sit and relax. We found eating in the The Garden Gallery was our best bet, breakfast and dinner, buffet, and variety no matter what your taste.

SOG is a large hotel, WDW is a series of huge parks, bring your walking shoes and dress for everything is resort casual, I found no restrictions, and lived in shorts and polo style shirts. WDW not only offers the Magic Kingdom, Epcot, Disney MGM Studios and the Animal Kingdom Theme Park, but water parks and a downtown 'mostly adult' area called Downtown Disney.



We found there was not enough time to do everything so we concentrated our efforts on the four main parks. We chose the 'Park Hopper' option on our tickets

and often visited more than one park in a day, the morning at Epcot and the afternoon at MGM and back to the Magic Kingdom for fireworks.

One highlight of our trip was dinner at the WDW Polynesian Hotel, (you can make reservations via Guest Relations at SOG) for a late dinner. We timed it to be there for the fireworks from the Magic Kingdom, they pipe the sound in from the park and it is a most spectacular show.

We got maps of each of the attractions before going and plotted out our strategy. Some of the most popular rides can get long lines so go there first, there is also a Fast Pass available to you for



some of these rides that basically gives you head of the line privileges at a future time. If you don't mind getting split up with your party, some of the rides have single rider lines and you get on much quicker, pretending to be a single rider we often ended up on the same ride, just different seats. Disney has some of the most technologically advanced rides I have ever seen. I can't list them all but we rode everyone.

SOG offers weekly schedules for the attractions, there are often extra hours, not offered to the general public, available and each park has a daily schedule you can pick up at the entrance. The park schedules detail parades, fireworks and stage show times plus lots of other specific information.

For more info visit their webpage at:

www.shadesofgreen.org

Hail to the Chief Petty Officer

Submitted by Kathy Wright

Here is a link to a very well done presentation on Chief Petty Officers that is a display aboard the USS Missouri Memorial in Hawaii.

www.imageworkcom.com/w28.html

COMRESPATWING

Photos courtesy of John Benton

On Saturday, 23JUN07 the Reserve Patrol Wing Disestablishment was held at NAS Willow Grove. Who of us would have ever thought that this day would come in our lifetime?

About 300 former members of the various squadrons that formed the Wing gathered for the ceremony that afternoon.

Below are some of the photos that John Benton sent to us.....thanks John!



Here the Blackhawks were represented by 3rd and 4th from left kneeling in front J.J.Jones and Carrie Blazek and in back 2nd from left in tie is Dan Lalk and behind J.J. is Joe Odenthal and John Benton is behind Carrie.

The same sadness that we all felt at the VP-68 disestablishment ceremony in 1996 existed during this ceremony. Squadronmates from the various Wing Squadrons, now a bit older, gray or less hair, laughed and reminisced on sea stories and adventures lived.

While those days are now gone, we can all hold our heads up high due to the contribution we all made to help make the world a safer place to live in then. The Wing is now gone, but nothing will eradicate the fond memories and friendships we have and will have for the rest of our lives. This is why we have formed the VP-68 Alumni Association and will gather together for years to come to keep those memories and friendships alive.

Speaking of which....Lew Johnson sent us a picture of the original Crew 4. They used to call themselves the



REAR ADMIRAL JEFF LEMMONS BRIEFS THE CRPW REUNION CROWD ON THE MISSION CRPW HAS ACCOMPLISHED AND WHERE US NAVY MARITIME PATROL IS GOING FROM HERE. AS CAPTAIN CHRIS PATTON LISTENS. NAS WILLOW GROVE, PA JUNE 23RD, 2007

VADM Jeff Lemmons, Commander Naval Air Forces (more on VADM Lemmons later in this issue) briefs the crowd on the mission that CRPW accomplished and where US Navy maritime patrol is going from here while the last COMRESPATWING Commodore Chris Patton looks on.



Bob Harden, Donny McKay, and J.J.Jones look on in disbelief as Carrie Blazek takes the VP-66 pennant away from John Benton. CRPW Reunion 23Jun07 NAS Willow Grove, PA

Bob Harden, Donny McKay and J.J.Jones look on in "disbelief" as Carrie Blazek takes the VP-66 pennant away from John Benton. Your newsletter staff is trying to get the "story" on this and will report it to you in the future.

As various friends gathered for photos, sprinkled in them were some VP-68 veterans.



Photo # NH 63037 "Old Salts" on board USS Hartford, Winter of 1876-77

"Old Salts" but changed it to the "Skypigs" after airplanes were invented!! See how many of them you can name and send us your guesses. (Lew still looks the same!!!)

Captain Estes Fund Reminder

In the April 07 Hawk's Nest we featured an article about a drawing we will have for an original Morgan Wilbur acrylic painting of a VP-68 P-3 at altitude with contrails that was won by Paul Monaghan at the last reunion. The proceeds of the drawing will be donated to the U.S. Navy Memorial in honor of Captain Harry A. Estes. Tickets are \$5/each and 5 for \$20. Please make out your checks to: VP-68 Alumni Association with the memo noted: "Capt. Estes Fund". We included an addressed envelope with that newsletter for your use.



We have received a good response and will run the sales a little longer. Don't hesitate, do it now, mail us your checks! We will announce the winner of the painting and the details of the Memorial Fund in a future Hawk's Nest. Thank you all in advance for contributing.

NOTICE: I received an "Estes" envelope from the Baltimore, MD area, zip 212__ with no return address, not sealed shut and no check in it. If you think it might be yours, contact Jim Rozycki at rozyckijim@aol.com or call me at 412-487-5854. You're not in the drawing and I can't send you your tickets.

Naval Academy Exam

Submitted by Nick Schaus

One last class before graduation at the Naval Academy and the Instructor gave out one final assignment. "Given one metal pole, two bags of cement, a selection of shovels, a wheel barrow and any other tools you find necessary, one Chief, one Petty Officer and a selection of Seamen, describe the process you will take to erect the pole so that the flag hung from it can be seen from hundreds of feet away...You have two hours...begin!" The near-Ensigns began to write with concentration and at the end of the two hours the Instructor collected the papers. Quickly paging through them he announced the grades. "Ladies and Gentlemen, there are some thorough and detailed responses here, but only one "A" awarded. I would like to read it to you: "In order to erect the flagpole I would say the following: Chief, put up the flagpole."

Blackhawk People News

First Salute

Submitted by Jim Rozycki

I recently received a unique honor. A young man, David Antico, that I've known with the Boy Scouts since he was 8 years old asked me to render his "First Salute" at his commissioning ceremony as an Ensign in the U.S. Navy. David graduated from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, PA with a BS in Nursing and also participated in the Navy R.O.T.C. program.



So on Saturday morning, 19MAY07 the commissioning ceremony took place at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall and I rendered David his salute. As a Scoutmaster, it is so rewarding working with these fine young men. To see them make Eagle Scout, then onto college and start their careers and know that you influenced them in some way is so rewarding and fulfilling to me. Ensign Antico, NC, USN received his orders to the National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda MD and reported in July to the 3-West Cardiac Stepdown Unit. If you happen to be at Bethesda, please welcome one of the newest members to the Navy "family" and say hello for me.

P.S. For those of you envious that my dress whites still fit me...*DON'T BE!!*...mine shrunk (especially in the waist) so I borrowed these from John LeNard!!

Retirement

The Director, Space and Network Warfare Program announced that Captain Daniel J. Lowen will retire on Saturday, 04AUG07 at 1400 hours. The ceremony will take place at the United States Naval Observatory in Washington, D.C.

Promotions

Congratulations to Curtis Michel for being selected for Commander. As a Blackhawk, Curtis made CPO in 1988 and LDO in 1992.

2nd Star for RADML Lemmons

Submitted by Nick Schaus

On 30MAY07 the Department of Defense announced that Navy Reserve Rear Adm. (lower half) Jeffrey A. Lemmons has been nominated for appointment to the grade of Rear Admiral while serving as Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve/Vice Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, San Diego, California. As many of you know, Jeff is a long-time Blackhawk. Joining VP-68 in 1984, LCDR Lemmons served as a 3P with the Crew 4 "Skypigs" (he is too young to be on the photo on page 6!!) and as CDR Lemmons, was our last Commanding Officer and officiated over our VP-68 Disestablishment Ceremony in 1996.

We offer RADML Lemmons a most heart-felt and sincere CONGRATULATIONS!! Hope to see you soon at one of our upcoming functions.

"Remember Me"

Submitted by George "Doc" Durity

Please check out this very impressive and heart-moving video created by 15 year old Lizzie Palmer about our men and women in the military.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ervaMPt4Ha0>

or go to

www.youtube.com and Search: Remember Me

Editor's Note: The video is 5-1/2 minutes long and about half way through it are photos of returning military folks reuniting with their families. One picture is of a very young soldier holding his 4 month old infant daughter (dressed in a red outfit) Rachel for the first time at the airport. This young man, PFC James Short, is the brother of my daughter-in-law Jennifer Rozycki and this was when he returned home from Iraq. Watch these various clips out there...let us know if any of your family or friends are in them.

Breaking News

Ever trying to keep up on world events, we sent our unabashed news staff in search of some earth-shattering news to give to you and here is what they found.



This photo now gives us documented proof that marriage does exist in the animal kingdom!

Swim Qual

Submitted by Jacque & Chris LaValle

Upon departing the Mid-Atlantic Air Museum in Reading, PA on 28Apr07 we flew to a unique airport, the Flying W Airport Resort in Medford, NJ for the evening.

It has a nice outdoor deck and patio "The Landing Strip Beach Club" with its famous airplane-shaped swimming pool adjacent to the ramp.



The resort also has the challenging 18-hole Golden Pheasant Golf Club on it. This could be a good place for a future "Fly-In" and what better place to conduct a "Rubber-Ducky" swim qual than in an airplane-shaped pool? Check it out at: www.flyingwairport.com.

Afghanistan Update

Email received from Bob Barnes

Looks like we'll be doing convoy duty, 15-18 hr trips, 80 lbs of body armor, know what knights of old felt like..too tired to chase damsel in distress!! Our Seabees got rotated out, so depending on Army Corps of Engineers to enhance our creature comforts, painful, uphill, soliciting, contracting, awarding to get anything done here. At least Seabees could be bribed (cases of beer) and they could build anything! Tried to mail home copy of LES, sent back marked "too thick", not to exceed 2 folded pages, pushing us to use post cards..free mail service back home?..don't believe them! Carton of smokes \$28...these are tax free? PX making a killing. This is contractor's war, they eat free, sleep free, use our PX, never go outside of wire, quit when they want, refuse to work, and make 20 times serviceman's pay. Say "hello" to the Blackhawks for me.....Later, Bob robert.barnes2@us.army.mil

2007 FALL MUSTER

The annual VP-68 Alumni Association "Fall Muster" is scheduled for Saturday, 13Oct07 at the Sports Page Club (Bldg 1442) on Andrews AFB, Washington, D.C.. Activities start at 1600 with free pizza and sodas for current paid members, \$5.00 for all guests and others. A business meeting will be conducted per our By-Laws.

Reminder: to get on base, current DOD ID cards and/or vehicle base stickers are required. If you do not have one of these you cannot get on base.

From the Treasurer

Please note that the mailing address for the Treasurer has changed and all dues payments and financial matters are to be mailed to:

VP-68 Alumni Association
708 Schindler Drive
Silver Springs, MD 20903-1330

Make checks payable to: **VP-68 Alumni Association**
 Questions??? contact John LeNard at 301- 445-2261
 or email at johnlenard01@comcast.net

New Members

We now have 169 current paid members. At the Spring Fling we signed up 4 new members:

Steve Danskar, L-07
 Gary Ferko, M-07
 Rick Montrose, M-07
 Michael Sims, M-07

Unfortunately, Mike Sims left without giving me his completed application. I have his cash, but no way of contacting him. If you know him, please tell him to call John LeNard at 301-445-2261.

Membership

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 are \$10, Life Memberships are \$100 unless you are over 75 and then it is only \$25.

Calling All Blackhawks:

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

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

4773 W. Braddock Road, Apt 204,
 Alexandria, VA 22311.

Association Officers

| | | |
|----------------|---|--|
| President | Lou Abbott louabbott1@verizon.net | |
| Vice-President | Jacque LaValle jacque.lavalle@verizon.net | |
| Secretary | Kathy Wright wright_kathleen@bah.com | |
| Treasurer | John LeNard johnlenard01@comcast.net | |
| Historian | Ed Stanfield edstanfield@mrisc.com | |

From the President

It is really nice to get together with former shipmates, renew acquaintances, tell sea-stories, find out what has happened since the last get together and so on. As my predecessor once said, "VP-68 isn't making any new shipmates."

Fortunately there is a core of Alumni members that sticks together and readily volunteers to organize the Spring Fling, Fall Fling, social events and reunions. They also volunteer to do the mundane administrative tasks and perform basic "grunt" work that goes for the most part unnoticed.

Unfortunately there is a larger number of former members who either don't know about the Alumni Association and it's activities or choose to distance themselves from the past for whatever reason.

The "core" members have tried many times and continue to recruit new members, spending countless hours attempting to locate former shipmates. My hat's off to this group of dedicated folks.

The PAX River area has probably the largest concentration of VP-68 sailors, but also the smallest number of Alumni Members. That puzzles me. I see folks often and mention the Association and events without much success.

We need to continue seeking out those former shipmates and let them know about the Association, our web site and encourage new membership. I challenge every former VP-68 sailor, enlisted, officer, spouse, brother, sister, son, daughter and former contractor support personnel to spread the word. Don't let the bond we had as a squadron fade.

Our 2007 Fall Fling is in the planning stages as you read this newsletter. Come on down! We also have our 40th Reunion coming up soon and I think everyone would enjoy seeing each other again. Planning needs to begin soon. Fall out, carry out the Plan of The Day and recruit a former VP-68 sailor!!!

Old Sailor Joke #3

The old Chief and his wife were sitting in the living room and he said to her, "I never want to live in a vegetative state, dependant on some machine and fluids from a bottle. If that ever happens just pull the plug". With that she got up, unplugged the TV and threw out his beer!

From the Editor:

By Jim Rozycki

I have been publishing the VP-68 Alumni Association "Hawk's Nest" newsletter since FEB06 and having been recently officially nominated and elected as the Editor/Publisher I'd like to thank you for showing confidence in me but I need all of your help on this.

We are always in need of articles, jokes and Blackhawk People News. I need news about YOU and what you're up to these days...work, retirement, family, hobby etc. Let us know what your children, grandchildren and yes...even great grandchildren are up to. Some of them are in the military...help us to share your pride!

We would like to publish the newsletter quarterly, one reason being that as you all move around the country (and don't notify us of your address change!!) the newsletter gets forwarded to you or returned to us with the new forwarding address on it.

Please let me know if you enjoy the newsletters and also what you would like to see in future issues.

Sooooooo, I promise to publish if you promise to submit things to write about.....deal?

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

Last Old Sailor Joke

The old retired Master Chief shuffled slowly into an ice cream parlor and pulled himself very slowly and painfully up onto a stool. After a minute, catching his breath, he ordered a banana split. The waitress asked kindly, "Crushed nuts?" "NO!" he barked...."Arthritis".

(OK, now you can boo...abidy-abidy..."that's all folks!")

**HOPE TO SEE YOU AT THE
2007 FALL MUSTER
13 OCT 07 • 1600
SPORTS PAGE CLUB
BUILDING 1442
ANDREWS A.F.B.**
