



VP-68 Hawk's Nest



Fall Muster and Election of Officers Held

The Fall Muster was held, the votes are in and the new slate of officers was elected. The Fall Muster was another success.

With some of our special out-of-town guest in attendance as-well-as folks we haven't seen in a long time. Lou Abbot, Pete Richard,



Rex Lake and Doc Durity pictured above. Pizza and beverages were plentiful and the alumni had a wonderful time. Lou Abbot was elected President; Kellie Gofus was elected Vice President; Jim Rozycki Treasurer, and Kathy Wright as Secretary. Their two year terms start January 1, 2005. Ed



Stanfield will continue to serve as Historian. As always, your support to the newly elected officers is important, volunteer for a committee, work on the reunion staff, help set-up the Spring Fling. Alumni were able to reminisce about times past. The brief

meeting was held to keep things straight and everyone had a great time. This was another event free to the membership.

Just so happened that Kathy Wright retired earlier in the day. For those lucky enough to be there, the ceremony was held in the Navy Museum at the Washington Navy Yard. The main speaker was Navy Historian Dr. Randy Papadopoulos. He is currently writing about the 9/11 terrorist attacks and had help from Kathy doing the research. In addition to Kathy, three others retired with her.



Crew News/Alumni News

Jim Rozycki reminded everyone who missed it, Don Peeling just celebrated a significant milestone, he is now eligible to draw reserve retirement, not saying how old Don is. Jim presented Don with a variety of gag gifts to recognize his newly found status. **Sheriff Don**, as some will remember from initiations, was in good surroundings to show off his newly found toys.



President's Corner

They say the happiest two days in a boat owner's life are the day he buys it and the day that he sells it. Well, the same is not true for the position of association president.

I assumed office under the saddest of circumstances and when Paul Randolph & I meet again we are going to have a serious talk about those events.

Leaving is also sad. The Association membership has provided the best support pool that any of the officers could ever wish for. But, after two terms, it is time to let new ideas take the helm.

I have a request as I leave: Continue to provide the support to that you provided to me, if you are naturally good at something, volunteer your talent to Lou, Kellie, Jim & Kathy.

Thanks to all Blackhawks for turning an unpleasant situation into an enjoyable tenure as President.

For the long range planner, tentative dates for the next reunion are November 4-6, 2005. Mark your calendars now.

Reminders
SPRING FLING

Time to think ahead, we will once again be at the Beach House, NAS Patuxent River, MD. The date is 30 April, 2005. Come early and enjoy the sun, fun and burgers, the activities start at 1100. Members eat and drink free, join the association and you too can eat free. For non-members there will be a \$5 charge. Please contact Lou Abbot if you DO NOT have a base sticker and/or ID card for access, if you don't you can't get on the base.

There are still prints, rubber stamps and other squadron items available from your alumni association. I am sure we will have a good stock at the Spring Fling, but if you can't wait or need something just in time for Easter, get in touch with Jim Rozycki for current prices. Jim can be found at rozycki-jjim@aol.com or the below address. We have the VP-68 Lithograph, "The Planes We Flew" rubber stamps and copies of "The Sky is Reserved" video. Order early and allow two weeks for delivery. Make checks payable to VP-68 Alumni Association and send them to:

VP-68 Alumni Association
2414 Rolling Farms Road
Glenshaw, PA 15116

From the Secretary's Corner

Please get in touch with me if you move or change email addresses, it is the only way we can keep track of you. Send your information to me by email - wright_kathleen@bah.com or snail mail - 4773 W. Braddock Road, Apt 204, Alexandria, VA 22311.

Alumni News. Time to renew your membership if you are an annual member, check the mail label and if

there is an "M" next to your name, your dues are due! Failure to renew means this is your last newsletter. Please take a moment and mail your check to the association. Make checks payable to VP-68 Alumni Association and send it to:

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Consider converting to a Life Membership and never have to write another check, annual dues are \$10, Life Memberships are \$100 unless you are over 75 and then it is only \$25. Life members receive a distinctive pin showing you are a Life Member.

Official News:

Some very sad news, Master Chief Bob Gath passed away Tuesday, 21 Dec 04. The viewing was Thursday 23 Dec 04 with the service at noon and immediately proceeded to cemetery. In lieu of flowers family suggests donations to:

St. Mary's Hospice
P.O. Box 625
Leonardtown, MD 20650

or

American Legion Post 7
1905 Crownsville Road
Annapolis, MD 21401



Bob Gath loved the Navy and VP-68 in particular. Through his ailments, he made it to our events when able. It was Bob Gath and Bill Trudell who organized the first VP-68 Reunion in 1990 and prompted us to organize an association to "keep the gang together". This we have done, and will always keep alive the memory of our dearly departed Blackhawks.

Retirement: AVCM (AW) Caroline J. Blazek retired at 1500 on Saturday, 8 January, 2005 in Hangar 14, Building 3148 at NSF Andrews Air Force Base, MD. A long time supporter of VP-68 and the Alumni Association, maybe now she can share more time with us.



Joe Odenthal accepts a certificate of appreciation from the Alumni Association Treasure, Jim Rozycki for his two terms of service during the Fall Muster business meeting. Joe was elected president for a second term after stepping in to fill the shoes of Paul Randolph. Joe led the organizations growth,

conducted the required meetings and was present for the Spring Flings and Fall Musters during his terms. The thanks of the association and its members to Joe for his leadership and keeping things going. For an all volunteer organization, keeping committees working, running the meetings and making sure we live by the by-laws falls to the president.

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