



VP-68 Hawk's Nest



Volume No. 31

VP-68 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

July 2009

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), its parent and supporting Navy squadrons, and those interested in preserving the name and history of VP-68.



2009 Spring Fling

2009 Spring Fling

The annual VP-68 Alumni Association "Spring Fling" picnic was held on Saturday, 06 JUN 2009 at the NAS Patuxent River Beach House. Activities started at 1100, we conducted a business meeting then spent an enjoyable afternoon of fun, laughs and camaraderie with old friends.

This turned out to be one of the best attended Spring Flings with nearly 100 Blackhawks and guests attending. The weather was absolutely Pax-Perfect and we had some first-time attendees, several former members and a bunch of the old regulars there. The ship's store couldn't keep up with the demand so we need to re-order some new supplies. Our VP Wyman Bailey manned the grill and kept up with the hungry demands of the attendees.

We had "Officer Appreciation Day" as a promotion of our VP-68 Alumni Association to entice more former officers to join and participate in our events. We had several show up and join and it was sure great seeing them again.

Another advantage of new members is new sea-stories, or a different twist to the old ones!!! We heard more than one "this is no sh__" at the beginning of each new story!!

We conducted a business meeting with reports from the officers and committees. A special thanks and recognition went out to the committee of the 2008 Fall Deployment.

Offshore in the bay, Alumni "Captain" Greg Mitchell was piloting a charter and came close to shore to blow the horn and wave to the Blackhawks. Greg runs his charter out of his home in Florida and was in the area but couldn't stop in for the picnic. (more on Greg's sea charters in a future Hawk's Nest)

After things wrapped up at the Beach House, about 40 folks headed down to the Catamaran Restaurant at Solomon's Island for an evening of fine food, libations, laughter and more sea-stories. It was a beautiful evening so we all sat out on the deck, had a great dinner with a view of the water and sunset.

Spring Fling Continued on page 2

2009 Fall Muster

Mark your calendars for the VP-68 Alumni Association Fall Muster to be held on Friday 02OCT09 & Saturday 03OCT09 at the Naval Recreation Center (NRC) Solomon's.

Those that attended last year's event there can attest to the great location and fun event we all had and this year will be a no-miss event also.

Tim Humphries and Lew Abbott have volunteered to head up the event and welcome help and suggestions for activities.

We ask that you please advise us if you plan to attend so that the committee can plan and execute the food logistics.

See pages 9 & 10 for more details and reservation info and be sure to check our website for updated information as we get closer to the event.

www.vp68.org

2010 – 40 Year Reunion

Yes, you read it correctly....next year will be 40 years since the establishment of Patrol Squadron Six-Eight (VP-68) in November 1970. It will be in the PAX or DC area and held in our anniversary month of November 2010.

The Alumni Association is in the initial stages of planning and forming a committee so we ask you to forward any ideas and suggestions to our President Jacque LaValle at:

jacque.lavalle@verizon.net

Navy Humor

"The Five Most Dangerous Things in the US Navy"

- A Seaman saying, "I learned this in Boot Camp..."
- A Petty Officer saying, "Trust me, sir..."
- A Lieutenant (JG) saying, "Based on my experience..."
- A Lieutenant saying, "I was just thinking..."
- A Chief chuckling and saying, "Watch this s__t..."



Tri-Care • Medicare • Social Security

(submitted by Kevin Dillon)

(Sources: Navy Times; Aviation Week; Military Times and Fleet Reserve Association Today)

TRICARE MADE SIMPLE: TRICARE is a distinct Department of Defense (DoD) health care program. As a Reserve military retiree, you will be covered by TRICARE upon retirement at age 60 until age 65. If you have a retired ID card (DD Form 2), you will see that the medical expiration date is the day before the month in which you turn age 65. MEDICARE coverage begins the first day of the month you turn 65. Eligibility for TRICARE begins at age 60, based upon successful application for retirement pay. The retiree and eligible family members are automatically covered by TRICARE Standard the day you reach age 60. Three options for retirees under age 65 are:

TRICARE STANDARD: Currently no annual fee; medical services provided by medical treatment facilities (MTF) or any TRICARE authorized provider of your choice; a 25% co-pay for a civilian provider; annual family deductible of \$300. A good choice if freedom of choice is a priority to you.

TRICARE PRIME: Currently \$460 per family annually; medical services provided by medical treatment facilities (MTF) or any TRICARE civilian network providers; Primary Care Manager (PCM) provides or coordinates your health care and makes referrals for specialty care; no deductible; claims filed by provider directly to TRICARE.

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- New ID cards reflecting retired status are required for TRICARE coverage.
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- A catastrophic cost "cap" is a cap on the amount you have to pay for TRICARE covered medical bills in any fiscal year (01Oct to 30 Sep). The cap is \$3,000 on allowable services covered under TRICARE STANDARD and EXTRA. You are fully responsible for costs above allowable amounts and for charges for treatment and services not covered by TRICARE.

Questions??? Contact TRICARE directly at:

1-877-TRICARE or www.tricare.mil

3 EAL 'Reserves' Set Safety Record

(submitted by Kathy Wright)

The article was published in The Falcon, July 12, 1978.

Patuxent River, MD: William T. Gaffney, Dennis R. Manskar and Schuler C. Suydam share a common bond. All are Eastern Airline pilots based in Washington, and all 3 are Lt. Commanders in the Naval Air Reserve. What's more, each takes one weekend a month and 2 weeks of active duty for training each year. They fly Lockheed P-3A Orions as aircraft commanders with Patrol Squadron 68 (VP-68).

The men and aircraft of the squadron proved themselves recently when the squadron set a safety record for reserve patrol squadrons. Nicknamed the Blackhawks, the squadron traveled to Rota, Spain for summer training, and it was during this deployment that they logged their 40,000th hour of accident-free flight. Based at Patuxent River, MD, the 3 Eastern 2nd officers know well the importance of safety in the airline – as well as in maritime patrol work hunting submarines.

Navy Humor

A young man with a wild and multi-colored hairstyle sits next to an old retired Chief on a park bench and the old Chief starts to stare at the young man. "What's the matter, old man?" says the young man. "Never done anything crazy in your life?" The old Chief replies: "Yeah. When I was in the Navy, I got really drunk one night and had sex with a parrot. I thought you might be my son."

Round Engines

(submitted by Bill Schott)

Remember S2F's, P2V's, P5M's, UF's, R4D's, R6D's, RB50's, T-28's AD-1's and even H-34's where you sat on top of a R-1820? This is dedicated to all those who flew behind/between ROUND ENGINES!! We gotta get rid of those turbines, they're ruining aviation and our hearing!!

A turbine is too simple minded, it has no mystery. The air travels through in a straight line and doesn't pick up any of the pungent fragrance of engine oil or pilot sweat.

Anybody can start a turbine. You just need to move a switch from "OFF" to "START" and then remember to move it back to "ON" after a while. My computer is harder to start!!

Cranking a round engine requires skill, finesse and style. You have to seduce it into starting. It's like waking up a horny mistress. On some planes, the pilots aren't even allowed to do it!!

Turbines start by whining for a while, then give a lady-like poof and start whining a little louder. Round engines give a satisfying rattle-rattle, click-click, BANG, more rattles, another BANG, a big macho FART or two, more clicks, a lot more smoke and finally a serious low pitched roar. We like that! It's a GUY thing...

When you start a round engine, your mind is engaged and you can concentrate on the flight ahead. Starting a turbine is like flicking on a ceiling fan: useful but hardly exciting. When you have started his round engine successfully, your Crew Chief looks up at you like he'd let you kiss his girl, too!

Turbines don't break or catch fire often enough, which leads to aircrew boredom, complacency and inattention. A round engine at speed looks and sounds like it's going to blow any minute. This helps concentrate the mind!

Turbines don't have enough control levers or gauges to keep a pilot's attention. There's nothing to fiddle with during long flights.

Turbines smell like a Boy Scout camp full of Coleman Lanterns. Round engines smell like God intended for machines to smell like.

Pass this on to an old recip guy, his son, or anyone who flew 'em!!

And then the fight started...

The old Master Chief's wife sat down on the couch next to him as he was flipping through the channels. "What's on the TV?" she asked. **'DUST!'** he barked....

AND THEN THE FIGHT STARTED!!!

Happy 4th of July!!



Recently, the torch on the Statue of Liberty was re-opened to visitors. It has been closed since the Sep 11 2001 terrorist attacks on New York in fear that visitors could not get out in an attack. The above photo was taken at Camp Dodge in Des Moines, Iowa (date unknown) and used 18,000 officers and troops. The photo had to be sculptured or directed by the photographers out of proportion to make it appear correct to the lens.

Different color uniforms and with what appears to be white tape or bandage on the heads of some soldiers without hats on were needed to create the lines. If taken from a plane it would appear distorted. It was done the same as painted directions on the road today are to appear correct to drivers in cars.

Some interesting facts are that the base to shoulder is 150 feet; the right arm is 340 feet; the widest part of arm holding torch is 13 feet; the right thumb is 35 feet; thickest part of body is 29 feet; the left hand is length is 30 feet; the face is 60 feet; nose is 21 feet; the longest spike in the head piece is 70 feet; the torch and flame combined is 980 feet; number of men in the torch and flame is 12,000; the men in the torch alone is 2,800; the men in the right arm is 1,200 and the number of men in the body, head and balance of figure is only 2,000.

But, the country was at war (World War I) and patriotism was high and there was a message to be sent to the world!! And we thought that VP-68 quarters were long!! Imagine the cost to do this today??

Lost 'n Found

(submitted by Jim Rozycki)

Hey you boys and girls, go down to that basement or your garage and start going through all of those old boxes of Navy stuff that you have been saving for 30 or more years. I did, and I found something I have been looking for for about 20 years. In among all of my old active duty orders from the 70's and 80's I located a lost treasure. On my last trip to Hawaii with VP-68 before I retired, I asked the bartender at the Hale Koa for his recipe for my favorite drink there...the Mai Tai!! He wrote it down on a piece of Hale Koa stationary for me and I filed it away, never to be seen again until just last week.

Actually, my first experience with the Mai Tai there was in the mid 70's and our ordancemen (they always know what and where to drink!!) when Lew Mekulch and I arrived at the Hale Koa and still in flight suits went straight to the bar. On our table was a square cardboard box with pictures of tropical drinks on all 6 sides. When the waitress asked us what we would like to drink, Lew flipped her one of the boxes and told her we would both like to try one of each of the drinks pictured. A VERY BIG MISTAKE!! Woke up the next morning on the balcony floor of our room 12 floors up, still in flight suits, pockets filled with tiny drink umbrellas and stirrers and not a single memory of the night before! My crew said I had a great time!!

So here for your drinking pleasure...is the Mai Tai as served to many a Blackhawk at the Hale Koa Hotel on Waikiki Beach, Hawaii.

Mai Tai

1/4 shot orange curacao
 1/4 shot orgeat syrup
 1 full shot sweet & sour juice
 2 full shots pineapple juice
 1/2 shot white rum
 1 full shot dark rum
 Float with 151 rum
 (Fill bucket glass with cube ice)

Editor's Note: Ashj youz may know, there are sheveral, in fact many vershions of the Mai-Tai. I have practished thish reshipee shince I found it and I ahshure y'all itsh shertinly gonna pleashe you!! I can shay thish from firshst hand experiensch!! Cheeeersh!!

First P-8 Poseidon

submitted by Ed Stanfield, Nick Schaus, Kevin Dillon
and excerpts from articles by David Fulghum in
Aviation Week & Space Technology, 18April2009



First P-8A Poseidon – BUNO 167953

The maiden flight of the P-8 Poseidon was conducted on 25 April 2009 and during 2009-10 three will be in the flight-test program that will last through 2011. The first unit is to be operational by 2013. For veteran aircrews, the change from the long-serving turboprop P-3C Orion to the new P-8A Poseidon turbofan is designed to be intuitive and seamless. But for those who won their wings on the P-3A of the 1960's, the change in mission profile, user-friendly equipment and advanced communications is stunning. Starting with creature comforts, the bone-jarring, filling-loosening, rough-weather ride of a P-3 (product of short, stiff wings) gives way to a far smoother, wing-flexing flight in the Boeing 737-derivative P-8A. Reducing physical stress and motion sickness (editor: hey, who got sick!!) among aircrews during long-endurance flights will decrease fatigue and increase the ability to handle complicated tactical problems.

Considering the need for in-flight refueling, room for a relief crew and smaller fleet size compared to the P-3 force, the length of the P-8A missions are sure to get longer. You can react very quickly with this platform because you can go higher, faster, further and stay on station longer.

Meanwhile, in Boeing's P-8A Poseidon mission crew mock-up on the ground in Seattle, my tutor is a long-time P-3A veteran and you can see it is nothing like the days and nights in a P-3A....no ashtrays full of cigarette butts or half-empty cups of the world's worst coffee!! And the imperious navigator, hung-over flight engineer and cranky ordnanceman have been replaced with well-mannered software packets and automated machinery.



The cockpit crew has shrunk to two but the flight deck is an interactive part of the mission with tactical picture displayed to give the pilot and copilot real-time situational awareness. The left side of the P-8 holds 5 or 6 members of the mission crew. Instead of straining to pick submarine signatures from scribbling on long rolls of paper, the digital displays present waterfalls and wheels of digital color.

Each crew position has two 24-inch color displays stacked vertically and can be customized. They display a barrier line of SSQ-53F sonobuoy pinpoints surrounded by overlapping circles. Each aircraft can carry 126 sonobuoys including the SSQ-62E active-pinger extended-echo ranging models. The system can monitor up to 64 buoys at once since operators no longer have to identify noises or complex signals. Algorithms pick out the patterns, ID the target and then display movement through easy-to-grasp digital graphics that include history lines. All the while, acoustic fingerprints are being assembled and matched to the mission computer's threat library for increasingly accurate target ID.

P-8A Increment 1 is the basic aircraft. The Navy is designing a software baseline that can be upgraded every 2-3 years. To support that, the aircraft has 50% extra electrical, cooling and computing power. There also is room for 12 tons of additional growth. The future platform will be able to provide EW data and have kinetic weapons to complete the kill chain.

The initial P-8's will carry a mechanically scanned, 200 mile range, APY-10 radar without air-to-air mode but does have navigation, surface search, periscope detection, ISAR, SAR and weather operations.

An ordnance panel holds a stores menu, with sonobuoy inventory set up with preflight insertion. New menus pop up at a touch and operators can command a sequence of sonobuoy deployment and hydrophone depth/communication channels.

The basic mission crew composition will be a Tacco who also serves as mission commander, perhaps a backup Tacco in place of a navigator and at least three operators. Some international customers plan to fly an additional EW officer in the sixth position. The Navy will decide for each mission what operator expertise they put on. If it's an ASW mission they go heavy on the acoustic crewman and an overland ISR mission (like Iraq & Afghanistan) in support of ground commanders may focus on electronic warfare or EO/IR sensor operators.

The P-8 is going to provide a forward-deployed, flexible, scalable option for the national command authority. It can be deployed where we don't have a strike group, but you can put the eyes and ears of the fleet there. In peacetime it can provide counter-terrorism, counter-drugs, anti-piracy and counter-smuggling capabilities. In times of international tension it can provide surveillance of critical sea lines of communication any where in the world and has weapons aboard to complete the kill chain.

General Characteristics

Primary Function: Anti-Submarine and Anti-surface Warfare.

Contractor: Boeing IDS

Date Deployed: First squadron is planned for 2013.

Propulsion: Two high-bypass CFM56 turbofan engines

Length: 129.5 feet (39.47 meters).

Height: 42.1 feet (12.83 meters).

Wingspan: 117.2 feet.

Weight: Maximum gross takeoff, 188,200 pounds

Airspeed: 490 knots.

Ceiling: 41,000 ft.

Range: 1,200 nautical miles radius with four hours on station.

Crew: Nine.

Armament: Torpedoes, cruise missiles, bombs, mines

P-8 Poseidon 1st flight video

<http://www.ghspaulding.com/P-3,%20P-8A%20updates.htm>

Blackhawk People News

Lou Abbott

Shortly after the Spring Fling, Lou was admitted to the hospital ICU. It seems that in changing medicines and dosages per doctor's orders, his body reacted unfavorably. Here is Lou's account...."I have been vacationing at St Mary's Hospital for several days in Intensive Care. Having all those holiday benefits such as transfusions, 4 units of blood and having a 24/7 constant visual on the attending nurse(s), 3 IV's, heart monitor, endoscopy (spelling), bed pans and the ever pleasant catheter. I was released just before the 4th of July and took 10 days off work, working partial days and now full time. Still very weak but getting better gradually". We wish Lou a speedy return to normal good health.

Jim Rozycki's son Jeff

Irene and I have been moved to tears with all of the calls, prayers, and emails we have received from so many of you about our son's accident. We had prayer-circles all up and down the east coast and want to make sure we reach out and thank all of you who prayed for Jeff. We felt the power of the prayer and it helped all of us get through this nasty situation.

On 29MAY09 Jeff and his wife were driving north on I-65 just north of Birmingham, AL when a 7"x9"x1" thick, 10-pound piece of truck brake drum came crashing through the windshield from the southbound lane and crushed the left side of Jeff's face. It crushed part of his forehead, and all of his cheekbone, eye socket, nose, and upper and lower jawbone. Miraculously he stayed conscious and was able to pull the car off of the Interstate, he has vision in that eye and didn't lose any teeth. To date he has had three major surgeries and one minor one but still faces more to reconstruct the eye socket. Jeff wanted us to convey his gratitude to all of you for your thoughts and prayers. Thank you!

"The Word" Revisited

Here is a continuation of excerpts from "The Word" that our Association Historian AWCM Ed Stanfield published from 1974 until his retirement in 1990...It was the most sought after unofficial publication and read by most Blackhawks (next to Playboy) on their monthly drill weekends. Then, in 1980, at the top of each one, Ed always had words of wisdom written or better known as "Stanfield's Axiom of the Month". Here are a few "Axioms", still applicable even in today's times.

- No matter which way you spit, it's up-wind!
 - Never, never play leapfrog with a unicorn!
- We will include more of them in future Hawk's Nests.

Now...some excerpts from the year 1975!

JUL-1974 (missed last issue)

1) The Belvedere was "streaked" again on Saturday night of the Port Weekend. The streaker ran in the front door, sat down with two startled young ladies, drank one of their drinks, and scooted out the back door. The ladies say he may be the same streaker from last month as they recognized a prominent feature. Also, suspicion is that he may be an Aircrewman as the only thing he wore this month was a flight helmet with the sunvisor pulled down. The girls were said to be upset as he did not pay for the drink. (I say, where would he have carried his wallet??) Stay tuned!!

2) Russ Rousculp, Aircrew Career Counselor, informs me that a beer machine has been ordered for the barracks. We may catch up to the Air Force yet!!

JAN-1975

1) Sea Story of the Year: We've got some guys in VP-68 that

have been around a long, long time. Now, there is one particular fellow who happens to be the only one I know who has a blimp to his credit. Just because of one little error, there was this big, long "pssssssssshh". You've seen inflated balloons whishing around a room when released haven't you? Now, think of a blimp in a hanger. The crew bailed out of the gondola and the tractor driver ended up surrounded by a big, deflated bag. Ask AW2 Dick Kraft about the details.

(Editor's Note: More on this story in a future Hawk's Nest)

MAR-1975

1) Crew 4: Each crew has their own personality and Crew 4 certainly has theirs...Lcdr. Smith, Chief Gallegher, Johnson, Apostolico and Oswald to name a few!! I flew to San Diego with them and it was the first time that I've been on a flight that the plane was up and the field was down...no runway lights! So during the waiting period, a somber Crew 4 ceremony was performed recognizing the departure of Mr. Fink from the Naval Air Reserves. Mr. Fink completed his law studies and is joining a law firm in Baltimore so in light of current events, the crew presented him with the following: a bundle of cash to be used as hush money, a file to aid in providing an exit from any undesirable place of internment, a wrench (as any befitting plumber should have) and a yellow ribbon for his wife to tie around the old oak tree!! Mr. Fink commented on how he'll miss the crew camaraderie and spirit-de-corps and hopes that years of humanizing the Navy not be lost...the field lights came on and the ceremony ended. Also..part of the Crew 4 preflight checklist is to divide a landing gear tire into pie sections with chalk and number each section. The crew draws numbers and the lucky soul who's number is in contact with the ramp when the flight is over gets to buy the crew beer!

APR-1975

1) AW1 Greg Mitchell will be joining VP-68 as the Crew 12 SS3. He is coming to us from VP-30.

2) LCDR Shug & LCDR Estrin were selected for CMDR.

3) Beginning in May the airlift to Columbus will be moved to the Port weekend only. And the Pittsburgh airlift gang will now be picked up at the Air Force side of the airport again rather than at Warehouse #1 (that's spelled WAREhouse!!).

4) Great shades of Julie and Jezebel!! TIME magazine reported "U.S. Navy devices were able to pick up the stricken Soviet submarine's (Golf Class) last throes in the northwest Pacific Ocean. A Soviet task force couldn't locate the sunken sub and consequently project "Jennifer" was born.

5) Navy officials in the Tidewater (Norfolk) area have "stripped" officer and enlisted clubs of go-go dancers during lunch hours saying that sailors and officers will be more productive if they don't linger too long over their lunches and if they aren't distracted by go-go dancers.

MAY-1975

1) It's all over. South Viet Nam is gone. With 55,000 American dead, 250,000 injured, untold Viet military and civilian casualties, 150 billion dollars, sweat, blood, anguish & heartache...it will all be quiet for now...for a while.

2) Crew 13 gets the "perseverance award". Four months in a row they've tried for that Type 6 in Bermuda. Plus, they get the scenic tour of Burmuda each time..between plane and ASCAC!

3) HAIRCUTS...Would you, please?

JUN-1975

1) Silver Fox Ron Garman converted from ADR1 to ADJ1. Dick Kraft, Art Sullivan and Chris White made AW1. Morgan Wilbur made AW3 and Pete Knowles, Bill Schott and John Webster passed the AWC exam and are now up for selection for Chief.

2) Wigs are legal for drill weekends but the campaign against the lengthy locks is still in full swing.

JUN-1975 (continued)

3) Congratulations! Crew 13 got that Type 6 on the 5th try!
 4) Project UNICOM: Last month Cmdr Fink spoke to the squadron on the subject of the Naval Reserve reorganization. He said that "one of the problems with the Navy is that it is out of touch with the real world. When the fleet is out to sea it is isolated and when they are in port the men spend their time drinking and copulating. For this reason, the Reserves can be a real help for the regular Navy. Besides holding our own in drinking and copulating, we are civilians the majority of the time and have more perspective on the functioning world". He also noted that another problem is that the Chief of Naval Reserve is a regular Navy Admiral rather than a Reservist.

JUL-1975

1) AWC Dave Altdorfer (recently selected for Senior Chief) is off to join the VP-68 detachment in service of the Shah. He'll spend several weeks of Lockheed Camel Riding School in Burbank, CA before going to Iran. Congratulations & good luck!

AUG-1975

1) If it moves-salute it, if it doesn't-paint it!! The Naval Construction Battalion Center recommends the Navy consider painting inside aircraft hangers with a white urethane paint that reflects light and allows mechanics to work under airplanes without flashlights or extensions.

2) This month Cmdr Barbee will pass the reigns of command to Cmdr Fitzgerald. Cmdr Estrin to be the X.O.

SEP-1975

1) AW1s Pete Knowles, John Webster, Bill Schott and AT1 Diamond were selected for Chief. While they all worked hard to get the proper coffee-cup curl in their fingers, Knowles and Webster fell short on pot bellies..too skinny to be Chiefs!!

OCT-1975

1) Still more rumors about the VP-68 move to Andrews, maybe a decision from the Wing by later this fall.

2) No more: Starting this month the system of Alpha, Bravo, Charlie & Delta system of classifying aircrews will be replaced with C1 thru C4. Difference? Nomenclature mainly, I think!

3) Aircrewmembers Bob Powell & Jim Rozycki advanced to AW1 and J.Wolf and Frank Notarnicola selected for AW2.

4) On arrival from the airlift, the Pittsburgh crew discovered that the "midnight auto supply" had riddled their "base bomber" car of engine parts. Base Security's comment was "somebody stole something off of THAT car?"

NOV-1975

1) LT Nick Schaus and LT Harry Lee Smith, the squadron Intel officers have finally made the move to the Vault Room. They presented a couple of excellent RECON lectures last month with great slides (and some of Soviet stuff too!!). They're doing great work and are available for make-up missed lectures.

DEC-1975

1) A program is being set up where either the C.O. or X.O. of a Reserve squadron will be a TAR. Plus is TAR officers get more chance for a command billet they don't have now and minus is SAR officers will lose billets.

2) After four years with VP-68, HM1 Fred Davis is transferring to Norfolk and being replaced by HM2 George Durity from NARDET and the resident expert on the X-ray machine. Fred is teaching George how to use the special corkscrew needle reserved exclusively for VP-68 personnel and George is trying to associate all of the rib cages he's seen over the years with all of our VP-68 faces now.

President's Corner

(by Jacque LaValle)

Take a moment to reflect back when we were still serving at VP-68. Did it seem to you that things were so much simpler then? We all had our military obligations, to show up each and in some cases, every weekend to serve the call. Whether it was studying the NATOPS, taking a CDI exam, flying a pilot trainer or doing to an off sight exercise, getting those phase inspections done in time for deployment, turbine and propellers changes... whatever the task, we never genuinely complained about the job. And the reason is clear, we loved what we did, we loved the people we worked with and each shared a sense of accomplishment because we knew that what we did made a difference. How many of you still remember your preflight routine, morning coffee and doughnuts, tool inventory, department meetings, deadlines, evaluations (ugh!), working off a pre-flight gripe, setting condition 5, those chili dogs at the Gedunk, a relaxing dinner with your buds on Saturday nights, the BEQ, quarters, John LeNard at the podium (ahhhhhh). These are our memories we will forever cherish.

And here we are today. Most of us retired from the reserve program, very few of us still serving. Yet our lives have become more complex, more involved and we are doing things that makes us reflect on "where did I have the time to serve in the reserves?". This is where I find myself. I've been retired from the reserve program for nearly 6 years, heavily involved with my career supporting both engineering and the integrated test team for the E-2D platform, with travel taking me to all corners of the country. I was selected the technical chairperson for the 2010 SAE power systems conference, a daunting task of managing engineering subject matter experts whose papers might be published. I was selected as an airport advisory committee member for my local airport. My spare time is filled with flight students from all walks of life, an adventure in and of itself. Mix in a few trips to visit our children and grandchildren and you see I have a full plate. And I am sure you can recount all that you have done since retirement and are just as busy as I am.

But one thing I will always have time and room for and that is to be with our Blackhawks. Our association is unique in that we are an exclusive group of people who worked and played together and built that bond that only squadrons can cultivate. My point is the VP-68 Alumni Association continues to keep the interaction alive. Our 2009 Spring Fling was a resounding success. This year's fall muster at Solomons should prove to be just as successful as last year. And before I forget, I'd like to thank Tim Humphreys for taking the helm on the fall muster this year. Help me to keep this drive alive by attending as many social events as possible, by sharing your memories of the great times we had when we wore the uniform, by Googling up 'what's his name' that used to be in your shop and have a beer with them.... Then ask them if they would join or renew their membership into the association.

One last thought as I hit the road for another business trip. If you have a VP-68 ball cap or an old flight jacket or "T" shirt with our logo on it, wear it every once in awhile. You'll never know who might come up to you and say "Hey, I was a Blackhawk once". What an inspiring way to meet old friends. While on the road I will have a list of people who I intend on looking up while I'm away. Do you?

Questions...comments...suggestions...contact me at:

jacque.lavalle@verizon.net**Reminder:**

Circle 02 & 03 OCT on your calendar!
 Go do it right now!!!

From the Editor:

(Jim Rozycki)

As always, I would like to thank all of the Blackhawks who called, mailed and emailed me contributions for this issue of the Hawk's Nest newsletter. I am always in need of material so please don't be shy. What are you up to these days? Working? Retired? What is new with your family? Again, this is YOUR newsletter and we want to include everybody in it.

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Glenshaw, PA 15116-2564

Past Issues of the 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

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

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.

Mail all dues payments and financial matters to:

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

Make checks payable to:
VP-68 Alumni Association

contact John LeNard at 301-445-2261 or email at

johnlenard01@comcast.net

Treasurer's Request: The VP-68 Alumni Association is investigating the feasibility of becoming a 503(c) tax-exempt organization. If one of our members is a tax lawyer that can help me sort through publication 557, Form 1023, etc. please contact me at the above email.

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 any please forward their names and contact info via e-mail to Dick at.

vp68co@yahoo.com

Download membership applications from our website:

www.vp68.org

We currently have 180 paid members...need lots more!!!

Welcome Back to the Nest

We would like to welcome the below former Blackhawks back to the VP-68 Alumni Association "Nest".

J.R. "Byx" Bullick
James Carrico
Tom Daugherty
Gene DiGennaro
Howard Drogin
Robert Fletcher
Joe Fuchs
Bill Gaffney
Phil Greubel

Jim Guilfooy
Mike Hyder
Sam Kogel
Denny Manskar
Ed May
Jack Mumaw
Ron Richardson
Bob Tait
Ken Winter

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
Nancy Yohn, L-04

2009-2010 Association Officers

President: Jacque LaValle
jacque.lavalle@verizon.net

Vice-President: Wyman Bailey
baileymod@msn.com

Secretary: Kathy Wright
wright_kathleen@bah.com

Treasurer: John LeNard
johnlenard01@comcast.net

Historian: Ed Stanfield
edstanfield@mris.com

**SEE YOU AT THE
2009 FALL MUSTER
02 & 03 OCT 09
NRC SOLOMONS**

one last laugh...

Ole "Boats" 'n "Gunney"

Ole "Boats" and "Gunney" were out having a few and decided to do another "shooter" for old-times sake. Upon going bottoms-up on the shot, old Gunney kept going backwards off of the bar stool and landed out cold on the floor behind. Upon seeing that display, Ole Boats looked down at his friend and commented to the folks in the bar..."One sure thing about Ole Gunney, he knows how to stop when he has had enough"!!

VP-68 2009 FALL MUSTER

Under the lead of Tim Humphries and Lew Abbott, reservations have been made at Navy Recreation Center (NRC) Solomons for a "No-Host Social" on Friday evening, 02OCT09 at the "Club 9" and an all-day picnic on Saturday, 03OCT09 at the Large Pavilion (next to Club 9).

NRC Solomons is a beautiful facility located about 65 miles Southeast of Washington D.C. and about 16 miles North of NAS Pax River near the confluence of the Patuxent River and the Chesapeake Bay. Billeting is walking distance from the party zone...hence, no driving after partying!! the Large Pavilion and "Club 9" and are on the waterfront overlooking the Patuxent River, and the available NRC Solomons billeting accommodations include:

- Six Classic Cottages
- 7 Contemporary Cottages
- 5 Log Cabin Duplexes
- 4 Cozy Cabins
- 21 Bungalows
- 15 Apartments
- 2 "Yurts"
- 14 group campsites
- 55 primitive campsites
- 146 complete hookup sites
- 158 electric & water only sites

Photos and information are located on the NRC website. Billeting rates are based on rank and since the event is occurring "Off-Season", rates are even more attractive.

Make your lodging reservations to NRC at:

www.cnic.navy.mil/solomons/index.htm

Lodging & Reservations – Bldg. 411
 13855 Solomons Island Road
 Solomons, MD 20688
 800-NAVY230
 410-286-7301
 410-326-4280 fax

We are encouraging folks to make lodging reservations at the Rec. Center to eliminate driving. There will be plenty of partying and fun the entire weekend...stay for it! Should you not be able to get lodging there, here are some local motels:

Navy Lodge
 NAS Patuxent River
 Patuxent River, MD 20670
 301-737-2400

Comfort Inn Beacon Marina
 255 Lore Road
 Solomons, MD 20688
 410-326-6303

Holiday Inn Select
 155 Holiday Drive
 Solomons, MD 20688
 410-326-6311

Sleep Inn & Suites
 23428 Three Notch Road
 California, MD 20619
 301-737-0000

Super 8 Motel
 22801 Three Notch Road
 California, MD 20619
 301-862-9822

Hampton Inn
 22211 Three Notch Road
 Lexington Park, MD 20653
 301-863-3200

Days Inn (Old Belvedere)
 21847 Three Notch Road
 Lexington Park, MD 20653
 301-863-6666

Fairfield Inn by Marriott
 22119 Three Notch Road
 Lexington Park, MD 20653
 301-863-0203

Planned Schedule

FRIDAY, 02OCT09: CLUB 9 & PAVILION

1800-2300 "No-Host Social"
 Sodas, munchies & pizza provided.
 (*) BYOB, coolers & ice (*)
 Crew parties, picnic fun, water sports & beach activities (weather permitting).

SATURDAY, 03OCT09: PAVILION ONLY

More of the same above...all day.
 1200-1700 Picnic food & Fall Muster activities
 Sodas, munchies, hot dogs & burgers provided.
 (*) BYOB, coolers & ice (*)
 1700-1800 Business meeting
 1800-1900 Grilled Steak provided
 1900-2300 Fall Muster activities continued
 (*) **VP-68 Alumni Association does NOT serve or provide any alcoholic beverages at our functions. (*)**

Registration Form Instructions:

- 01) Detach Registration Form on Page 10
- 02) Complete the Registration Fee line applicable to you.
- 03) Complete the attendance lines.
 FRI = # of people attending @ **FREE**= \$ 0.00 total
 SAT = # of people attending @ \$10.00 = \$ _____ total
- 04) Add them up and enter total due \$ _____ on Total line.
- 05) Write out check to VP-68 Alumni Association.
- 06) Complete personal information section.
- 07) **MAKE A COPY OF THE FORM FOR YOUR RECORD.**
- 08) Address envelope to: VP-68 Alumni Association
 1115 Ranger Ridge Road
 Lusby, MD 20657
- 09) Place both completed form and check into envelope.
- 10) Place postage stamp on envelope & MAIL IT!!!

REGISTRATIONS ARE DUE WITH PAYMENT BY SEPTEMBER 25, 2009.

REMINDERS:

- 1) Bring your alcoholic drinks, coolers and ICE! (no machine)
 (*) **VP-68 Alumni Association does NOT serve or provide any alcoholic beverages at our functions. (*)**
- 2) Bring those photo albums and some VP-68 memorabilia.
- 3) Remember to bring those Military ID cards for base access.
- 4) Please register in advance to help us with the food logistics.

QUESTIONS???

Please visit the VP-68 website at: vp68.org
 or contact Tim Humphries via mail (above) or email at:
arthur.humphries@navy.mil

**HOPE TO SEE YOU AT THE
 2009 FALL MUSTER
 02 & 03 OCT 09
 NAVY RECREATION CENTER
 SOLOMON'S, MD**

2009 FALL MUSTER REGISTRATION FORM

Additional information is available at www.vp68.org and in July 09 Hawks Nest Newsletter. Please mail this reservation form along with your payment to:

VP-68 Alumni Association - Fall Muster
1115 Ranger Ridge Road
Lusby, MD 20657

Make checks payable to: VP-68 Alumni Association

All VP-68 Alumni Association members are requested to report for Muster to:
NRC Solomons
Route 2, 4 – Patuxent Beach Road
Solomons Island, MD 20688
410-286-7301 and 7302

<https://www.cnic.navy.mil/Solomons/index.htm>
www.ndw.navy.mil/mwr/srcsolomons.html
<https://www.cnic.navy.mil/NDW/Recreation/NavyRecreationCenterSolomons/index.htm>

Please tell us your # of folks attending to help us with the logistics.

FRIDAY, 02 OCT 09, 1800-2300 “NO-HOST SOCIAL” @ CLUB 9 & PAVILION

Registration Fees:

Current Members & Guests attending are **FREE**..... People x \$ 0.00 = **FREE \$0.00**

SATURDAY, 03 OCT 09, 1200-2300 “FALL MUSTER” @ PAVILION ONLY

Registration Fees:

Current Members & Guests attending are **\$ 10.00/ea**..... People x \$ 10.00 = \$ _____

Must Be Paid at the Time of Registration..... **TOTAL = \$** _____

Make lodging reservations early. In addition to facilities at the Recreation Center there are hotels at Solomons Island and Lexington Park as well as the Navy Lodge at NAS Patuxent River, MD.

The Following information is **required** by NRC Solomons for all attendees:

Name of those attending: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone (how best to reach you): _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Years In VP-68: _____ to _____.

____ Yes I am staying at Solomons Recreation Center. Check In Date: _____

____ I am attending the Fall Muster, but staying elsewhere in the local area.

REGISTRATIONS ARE DUE WITH PAYMENT BY SEPTEMBER 25, 2009