



VP-68 Hawk's Nest



Volume No. 35

VP-68 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

December 2010

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



Blackhawks with CAPT. Leon Bacon (center) prior to P-8 Poseidon tour

2011 Spring Fling

The annual VP-68 Alumni Association "Spring Fling" picnic will be held on Saturday, 30 APR 2011 at the NAS Patuxent River Beach House. This is the longest tenured event of our Association and there is hardly a better place to have a picnic. As always...the weather will probably be Pax-Perfect and the picnic activities will start at 1100 and go on to about 1800.

As required in the by-laws, a business meeting will be conducted with reports given from the officers and committees.

Every year, after the picnic, a large group of us go out to a great local restaurant for a seafood feast and more laughs, fine food, laughs, drinks, laughs and fellowship.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS.....30 APR 2011

06 NOV 2010 – 40 Year Reunion

WOW.....What a great time!! if you missed this event, you missed probably the best reunion yet!! Our VP-68 40-Year Reunion was held on Saturday, 06NOV2010 across from NAS Patuxent River Gate 1 at the **J.T Daugherty Event Center** and we had special room rate arrangements with the **Hampton Inn** about a block away for all attendees. Both of these facilities went way above and beyond to make our stay and reunion a pleasant experience. We had 98 Blackhawks and their guests attend the main event on Saturday evening.

Reunion Chairman Wyman Bailey (see page 5) and his Committee did a superb job of arranging every tiny detail from the Ready Room, the P-8 Poseidon tour to the main banquet.

Things started off as the VP-68 Ready Room was opened Friday afternoon in the Hampton Inn. Tons of VP-68 memorabilia, both from the squadron and personal items, were on display around the room and you just felt Navy the moment you walked into the room.

(continued on page 05)

If a picture is worth a thousand words...these speak volumes!
(see Reunion photos on page 2, 3 and 4)

Election of Officers

At the business meeting on 06Nov10, and in accordance with the Alumni Association by-laws, the below Officers were elected to 2-year terms of office for the years 2011 & 2012 beginning in January 2011. Elected were:

- President: Jacque LaValle**
- Vice President: Wyman Bailey**
- Secretary: Kathy Wright**
- Treasurer: Anna Gibson**

MEMBERSHIP NOTICE:

**IF YOUR ENVELOPE HAS A "M-10"
CIRCLED BEHIND YOUR NAME, YOUR
MEMBERSHIP IS ABOUT TO EXPIRE. SEE
"TREASURER" ON PAGE 9 FOR DETAILS**

*The Officers and staff of the
VP-68 Alumni Association
wish you and your families
a very safe and
blessed holiday season.*





06 NOV 2010 – 40 Year Reunion

(continued from page 01)

Attending this 40-Year Reunion really put me in a sentimental and melancholy mood. On that Friday, I couldn't get down to PAX River from Pittsburgh fast enough and on Sunday I didn't want it all to end. I saw shipmates that I had flown with for 20 years and have called "friend" for over 40 years. As in every event we have, I heard "sea-stories" that I hadn't heard before and laughed until I had tears in my eyes. Even the ones we have heard before were "embellished" by the teller to add new color to them. There is an old saying that "laughter is the best medicine"...how true! For two beautiful days I had my mind off world and personal problems and relished every moment. Friday evening went into the wee hours as we once again tried to hoot with the owls and soar with the eagles.....almost!!

On Saturday morning, the Hampton offered a very nice complimentary breakfast buffet to the guests and the Blackhawks mustered around the tables and laughed and enjoyed the moment. Later, folks started to head over to NAS PAX across the street to hit the Commissary and Exchange prior to our Visit to VX-1 and our P-8 Poseidon tour. The morning was chilly and windy out there on the ramp. We were greeted by Captain Leon R. Bacon, P-8A Poseidon Deputy Program Manager, who escorted us into the facility.

There we saw two P-8's inside the hanger with one outside on the ramp. For security reasons, we were not permitted inside of the P-8 but Captain Bacon gave an excellent brief on the plane, its mission capability, the types of various crews and some of the weaponry. Being surrounded by a bunch of old VP types, Captain Bacon fielded a variety of great questions. Oh, and by the way....the enlisted crews are now....ALL AW's!!!! (yes!!)

After the tour and some time on the base visiting our old stomping grounds, we retreated to the warmth of the Ready Room where we conducted the Association business meeting and election of officers for the next two years. Then we secured the Ready Room and went to get ready for the main event at the Daugherty Center.

As I said earlier....WOW, what an event. The Blackhawks filled the room and had a great social hour. The group settled down to the tables and the appetizers and dinners were excellent. President Jacques LaValle introduced our guest speaker, Captain Bacon who did an outstanding job of presenting facts and figures to us along with some great humor.

In a side conversation with us, our guest speaker Captain Bacon commented on something well worth sharing. He noticed a very special camaraderie that we had that he said was rare. In his career, he spends a few years at a time in a unit or on an assignment and then receives orders and moves on to the next one. The folks in those units are doing the same, so it is rare that you make very close, long-time friends in that short time span. He was very impressed that after 40 years, that Blackhawks still gather and relive their times together spent in Patrol Squadron 68. Also impressing to him was then numbers of years that some flight crews spent together. He was in awe when we had a longest flyer contest and Ron Garman was last man standing with the most total years and presented Ron with a token of appreciation.

After Captain Bacon spoke, Jacques LaValle then acknowledged the VP-68 Blackhawk Plankowners, the Commanding Officers and the Command Master Chiefs that were in attendance. He then gave out some very nice door prizes and 50/50 raffle and then turned the rest of the evening over to the disc jockey that kept us going until 11pm.

After we closed the Daugherty Center, we retreated back to the Hampton Inn and the VP-68 Ready Room until the wee hours of Sunday morning. Then on Sunday morning, the gang met again at the complimentary breakfast buffet prior to checking out and starting our journeys back home. Dale Grimes surprised us by breaking out his guitar and playing some sing-alongs that got even other guests singing with us. He said he wanted to repay Dick Blosser for all of the times Dick did it on weekends and ACUDTRA.

Finally, sadly we said good bye, gave our hugs and promised to see each other again in the Spring Fling at PAX in April. None of us wanted to leave but WOW what a great time we had and what new memories we created.

40 Year Reunion Chairman

By Wyman Bailey

Fellow Blackhawks,

I want to thank everyone who helped in making the 40th Anniversary Reunion a smashing success. I couldn't get the smile off my face from the enjoyment I was experiencing watching everyone having so much fun from the Ready Room social to the formal banquet. Putting this reunion together was a labor of love from everyone involved. Jacques LaValle worked closely with me throughout the preparation process setting up the arrangements at the hotel and the banquet facilities.

Etta Anderson set us up with the excellent disc jockey. Becky Connick, Carrie Blazek, Lew Johnson, Kathy Wright, Ron Garman, Lou Abbott, Dick Perkins, Ed Stanfield, Joe Odenthal and Jim Rozycki were an instrumental part of the reunions success. It couldn't have been done without their dedication and enthusiasm.

This included bringing together all the memorabilia and setting it up for viewing in the Ready Room, procuring drinks and food, handling the raffles, procuring the P-3 model aircraft for the raffle, coordinating the P8-A tour, ordering flowers for the tables, arranging lodging for late comers, mailing out invitations and on and on. But in the end when it all came together the pay-off was more than worth it for everyone.

I would also like to extend a very special thank you to the individuals who made nice financial donations to both the reunion and to the VP-68 Memorial.

Thanks to all of you for supporting the VP-68 Alumni Association 40th Anniversary Reunion and I look forward to many more successful get-togethers.

Sincerely,
Wyman Bailey

40-Year Reunion Committee Chairman

Hawk's Nest Newsletter

(by Jim Rozycki)

During the business meeting held during our reunion weekend, out of concern for the Association treasury I brought up the subject of posting the newsletter on our website only rather than mailing the newsletter to members. My concern is that most of our members are Life Members, and we have very few new or yearly Regular Members to generate revenue. It was agreed upon by the officers and members present to first get a consensus from all members before a decision is made.

It costs an average of \$250 to publish and mail the newsletter to our membership. If we publish quarterly, that would equate to \$1,000 yearly. We receive an average income of about \$350 a year in annual memberships (which is decreasing). But, we also fund the twice-yearly social functions, Spring Fling and Fall Muster, free to members. At that rate, our Treasury could be depleted in about 10 years.

So the question is....

Would you like to continue receiving the Hawk's Nest newsletter in the mail or would you check the website regularly to see when the latest one is posted?? (I post them all there anyway so that you can download them and print them in color if you wish.) Please let us know what your choice is. Send it to me at:

rozyckijim@aol.com

We will announce the results of the survey at the Spring Fling.

Every Airplane Ever Built

(submitted by Brad Kirley)

With the link below, you will be able pull up every airplane that was built in every country in the world and every aircraft company. Want to check out almost any airplane ever built in the world? Old, new, military, civilian? Browse this site for a few minutes. You will be amazed at what has been done in airplane design. The amount of info available is unbelievable. Virtual Airplane Museum

<http://www.aviastar.org/index2.html>

Veteran's Day

(by Jim Rozycki)

As a 26-year veteran of active and reserve Navy, every year I have attended various local Pittsburgh Veteran Day parades and cemetery ceremonies. I have often said that of all my years of work, I had never received the day off work for being a veteran. Well, this year I received a very unique veteran "thank you" from a most unique group.

I have been involved as an adult leader in the Boy Scouts of America for over 35 years. This year, the 100th anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America, I was selected by the BSA Greater Pittsburgh Council to be the Course Director of a prestigious adult training program called Wood Badge. It takes a year of staff selection (24 adults) and preparation to conduct two, 3-day weekends of training. This year we had 54 participants on my course. During this year of prep, often one of my staff would mention my Navy service either on the U.S.S. Shangri-La (CVA-38) or in VP-68 and ask a question or two. Never in my wildest dreams did I suspect they were setting me up for "ambush". Finally, on



the last evening of the course this past October, at our dinner celebration for the staff and me, they got me!! Here, the staff had contacted the local Navy Recruiter, gave them the scoop on me, and

obtained "official" Navy letterhead and certificates that they presented to me to promote me to honorary "Captain" Rozycki for the evening.

The Recruiters gave them tons of Navy posters (used in our reunion Ready-Room), pens, decals, photos etc. to use for my dinner. My Culinary staff, dressed in uniform as my "crew", served dinner (9 courses) from the various countries I have visited with the Navy.



At the appropriate time after dinner I was asked to say a few words but the lump in my throat and tears in my eyes prevented me from saying much more than a very heart-felt "thank you". Yes, I cried, but they were tears of pride and gratitude for being appreciated as a veteran.



They created a center-piece, a huge model of the Shangri-La that they hand carved out of foam board, painted Navy Grey, rigged with lights and even had a fog machine pumping "smoke" out of the stack. We each took turns trying to land small glider planes on the deck. Mine made it onto the deck but it wasn't a pretty landing!! My buddy has it in his garage as it is too large for my Trailblazer and my wife Renee doesn't know I'm gonna bring it into our house yet so don't tell her OK!!

(I may be living in it soon...I'll let y'all know how it all works out!!)

So...even though you might think there are not a lot of folks who appreciate us veterans....believe me, they are out there and they do!!

Well...that's my Veteran's Day story...please send me yours!!

Veterans

(submitted by Brad Kirley)

You Can Leave The Military, But It Never Really Leaves You

By Ken Burger, The Charlestown Post and Courier

To those of you who have never served in the Military, you probably will not 'get' the meaning of the following. For those of us who have, we understand it completely. And we are better because of it.

Occasionally, I venture back out to the air base where I'm greeted by an imposing security guard who looks carefully at my identification card, hands it back and says, "Have a good day, tech sergeant."

Every time I go back onto Charleston Air Force Base it feels good to be called by my previous rank, but odd to be in civilian clothes, walking among the servicemen and servicewomen going about their duties as I once did, years ago.

The military, for all its flaws, is a comfort zone for anyone who has ever worn the uniform. It's a place where you know the rules and know they are enforced; a place where everybody is busy but not too busy to take care of business.

Because there exists behind the gates of every military facility an institutional understanding of respect, order, uniformity, accountability and dedication that becomes part of your marrow and never, ever leaves you.

Personally, I miss the fact that you always knew where you stood in the military, and who you were dealing with. That's because you could read somebody's uniform from 20 feet away and know the score. Service personnel wear their careers on their sleeves, so to speak. When you approach each other, you can read their name tag, examine their rank and, if they are in dress uniform, read their ribbons and know where they've served.

I miss all those little things you take for granted when you're in the ranks, like breaking starch on a set of fatigues fresh from the laundry and standing in a perfectly straight line that looks like a mirror as it stretches to the endless horizon. I miss the sight of troops marching in the early morning mist, the sound of boot heels thumping in unison on the sidewalks, the bark of sergeants and the sing-song answers from the squads as they pass by in review.

To romanticize military service is to be far removed from its reality, because it's very serious business, especially in times of war. But I miss the salutes I'd throw at officers and the crisp returns as we crisscrossed on the flight line. I miss the smell of jet fuel hanging heavily on the night air and the sound of engines roaring down runways and disappearing into the clouds. I even miss the hurry-up-and-wait mentality that enlisted men gripe about constantly, a masterful invention that bonded people more than they'll ever know or admit.

I miss people taking off their hats when they enter a building, speaking directly and clearly to others and never showing disrespect for rank, race, religion or gender. Mostly I miss being a small cog in a machine so complex it constantly circumnavigates the Earth and so simple it feeds everyone on time, three times a day, on the ground, in the air or at sea.

Mostly, I don't know anyone who has served who regrets it, and doesn't feel a sense of pride when they pass through those gates and re-enter the world they left behind with their youth.

Face it guys [and gals], we all miss it. Whether you had one tour or a career, it shaped your life.

One Nation Under GOD.

**Keep our service men and women
in your prayers....always!**

Tri-Care • Medicare • Social Security

(submitted by Kevin Dillon from the below sources)

Navy Times; Aviation Week; Military Times, AUSN Navy Magazine, Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) Today and Military Officer

Rising TRICARE Costs

Once again the subject of increasing TRICARE costs has hit the news -- the latest proposal being offered by the bipartisan Debt Reduction Task Force. One of the stated goals of the bipartisan task force is to reduce the cost of military health care by imposing greater cost-sharing on TRICARE beneficiaries. Some retirees could see their TRICARE premiums increase by as much as \$2,000 a year. The rationale is that the program was originally designed so that retiree's premiums would cover 27 percent of the total cost of TRICARE. The program fees have not increased since TRICARE replaced CHAMPUS in 1995; in today's dollars retirees are only covering 11 percent of the program cost.

The task force report states that active duty personnel and their dependents use less than half (42 percent) of TRICARE's total cost, pay no premiums or co-pays. Thankfully for this group, the Task Force decided to focus "exclusively on retirees and their dependents, for whom benefits have expanded without a significant change in cost-sharing." The task force report lays out a plan that would raise working age retiree premiums, cost-shares and co-pays so that working-age retirees would once again cover the 27 percent of TRICARE costs as was part of the original plan. Increasing the fees seems to make sense from a purely economic point of view.

In addition, Medicare-eligible retirees using TRICARE for Life as a supplement to Medicare would be required to begin paying "minimal cost-sharing" amounts under the plan. Based on the language of the report this cost-share increase is to "maintain equity among retirees -- both between different cohorts of military retirees and between military and the wider community of seniors that also faces higher costs."

Here is a glimpse at what future premiums, cost-shares and co-pays would look like based on the panel's suggestions.

- A married retiree with less than \$20,000 in annual retired pay would pay \$730 in year one, \$900 in year two. These larger incremental raises would stop in year five when the yearly fee would hit \$1,260 an increase of \$800 a year.
- Those with retired pay of \$20,000 to \$40,000 would pay more. The highest enrollment fees, for those drawing more than \$40,000 in retired pay, would top off in year five at \$2,460, or \$2,000 more than they pay now.
- Fees for outpatient visits would more than double, to \$28.
- Working-age retirees using TRICARE Standard plan or TRICARE Extra would be charged an enrollment for the first time of \$150.
- Pharmacy co-pays in TRICARE retail network -- now \$3 for generic, \$9 for brand-name drugs on formulary and \$22 for non-formulary drugs -- would be reset at zero for generic drugs, \$15 for brand names on formulary and \$45 for brand names off formulary.

1.9% Pay Raise Not Likely

The House passed their version of a continuing resolution (CR) that will provide funding to keep the government operating through September 2011. If it makes it through the Senate and is signed by the President, the bill, dubbed the FY2011 Year Long Funding Act, would provide \$513 billion in Defense spending, \$4.9 billion more than the 2010 levels. But the biggest news for most troops is that the House voted to freeze Federal pay while giving the okay for the 1.4% military pay increase requested by the President. The house had previously proposed a 1.9% increase which seems highly unlikely at this point. In either case, the 2011 pay increase is likely to be less than half of last year's and is assured to be the smallest military pay raise since 1962. The House's CR bill includes proposals to increase funding for Basic

Allowance for Housing and Basic Allowance for Subsistence and \$1.56 billion for TRICARE to address cost increases.

Editors Note: Thanks Kevin for the information. It is most imperative that we all remain alert and informed to what the House and Senate have planned for our earned retirement benefits. If any of you are following the issues closely and have some input for this column, we would gladly publish it but please make it factual, not opinionated.

Blackhawk People News

Bob Barnes home from Afghanistan

(06 Dec 10 emails from Bob Barnes)

Bob Barnes is finally back in CONUS from his second tour Afghanistan and is processing his retirement papers. He is currently in Ft. Benning but expects to be home by Christmas. He has a lot of stories to tell us and we will be publishing them for you.

robert.barnes2@us.army.mil

Taps: CDR Dave Craig

CDR David Lowell Craig, 70, died peacefully at his home in Charlotte on September 22, 2010. He was diagnosed with cancer late last winter and was getting along fine until the past couple weeks. CDR Craig retired from the U.S. Navy in 1986 after serving his country for 23 years. He served as an air antisubmarine officer. His last assignment was commanding officer of the Naval and Marine Corps Reserve Center in Charlotte. Among other honors, he was the recipient of the Bronze Star. He was active in the Naval Reserve Association, Military Order of the World Wars, and Military Officers Association.

Taps: Donald Howard

Reverend Donald T. Howard, 71, of California, MD died Tuesday evening, November 16, 2010, in the Hospice House of St. Mary's in Callaway, MD. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy Air Reserve in April 1957, serving at NARTU Jacksonville, FL., NAS New Orleans, LA., Andrews Air Force Base, Washington, DC, VP-68 NAS Patuxent River, MD, and VP-62 Jacksonville, FL. After retiring from the Navy in February 1978 as an Avionics Master Chief, Don worked for several defense contractors before accepting a position in November 1980 with Naval Aviation Logistics Center, Patuxent River, MD., retiring from PMA 207 Naval Air Systems Command in November 2000.

Master Chief and the Christmas tree

Old Master Chief wasn't in one of his best Christmas spirit moods when his grandson asked him why we put angels on top of the Christmas tree.....so he told him!! When four of Santa's elves got sick, the trainee elves did not produce toys as fast as the regular ones, and Santa began to feel the Pre-Christmas pressure. Then Mrs. Claus told Santa her Mother was coming to visit, which stressed Santa even more. When he went to harness the reindeer, he found that three of them were about to give birth and two others had jumped the fence and were out, Heaven knows where. Then, when he began to load the sleigh, one of the floorboards cracked, the toy bag fell to the ground and all the toys were scattered. Frustrated, Santa went into the house for a cup of apple cider and a shot of rum. When he went to the cupboard, he discovered the elves had drunk all the cider and hidden the liquor. In his frustration, he accidentally dropped the cider jug, and it broke into hundreds of little glass pieces all over the kitchen floor. He went to get the broom and found the mice had eaten all the straw off the end of the broom. Just then the doorbell rang, and an irritated Santa marched to the door, yanked it open, and there stood a little angel with a great big Christmas tree. The angel said very cheerfully, 'Merry Christmas, Santa. Isn't this a lovely day? I have a beautiful tree for you. Where would you like me to stick it?'

And that boy....began the tradition of the little angel on top of the Christmas tree.....not a lot of people know this!

VP-68 Alumni Association

(by Jim Rozycki)

I am proud to say that I am one of the co-founders of the VP-68 Alumni Association and I would like to say a few words about where we have come from and where we are going in the future. In 1990 our very first-ever VP-68 reunion, the 20-Year Reunion, was hosted by my dear friends and mentors Chiefs Bill Trudel and Bob Gath. They didn't have computers and emails to work with...they did it the old fashioned way with phone calls, letters and faxes. They recognized the friendships bonded and special camaraderie in the squadron and had this vision to keep it alive.

At the conclusion of that very successful event, they "appointed" me the chairman of the next 25-Year Reunion!! They had recruited me to help and "engaged" me in some conversations about the future and I never saw they were setting me up!! But, if you knew them, you couldn't say no to them.

So by November 1995 at our 25-Year Reunion, the word of the decommissioning of VP-68 in 1996 was already on the street. No more drill weekends.....no more ACDUTRA overseas.....no more VP-68...by the next reunion, the Blackhawks would be no more!!

I had since already been involuntarily "retired" from the Navy in 1991 and with my good friend and cohort Paul Randolph, became one of the co-founders of the VP-68 Alumni Association. We enlisted a small committee of support and started the VP-68 Alumni Association with Dick Fickling as our President, Paul Randolph as the Vice-President, Kathy Wright as our (and still current) Secretary, me as the Treasurer and Ed Stanfield as the Historian. In July 1998, with help from an attorney, we officially formed the Association and became chartered in the State of Maryland. By-Laws were drawn up and Carrie Blazek published our first Hawk's Nest in February 1999.

But, with all of that, each passing year and event, some Blackhawk doesn't make it to our next events. We need not remind ourselves that age is (or has!) catching up on us. Every year, we do a picnic in the spring we call the "Spring Fling" and we do a social event in the fall called the "Fall Muster".

The last page of this newsletter is an application to the VP-68 Alumni Association. Please detach it and give it to a Blackhawk friend who is not a member. In fact, give them a stamped envelope addressed to us to help expedite their joining. They are out there...you know who they are...please get them to join us for the future of the Association.

Ole Boats and Gunney

(submitted by Ron Stevens)

(names edited to protect the innocent and the guilty!!)

Ole Boats and his good buddy Gunney were sitting in a deer stand in Newton County, TX early one cold December morning. Suddenly, a huge buck walked out over the corn they had spread in the low shrubs. The buck was magnificent...a once-in-a-lifetime animal. His rack was huge. Ole Boat's hand shook as his mind was already counting the Boone and Crockett points. Moving quickly, Ole Boats carefully aimed the Leopold scope on his .300 Win Mag at the unsuspecting buck. As he was about to squeeze the trigger on this deer of a lifetime, Gunney alerted him to a funeral procession passing slowly down Highway 87. Ole Boats pulled away from the gun stock, set the rifle down, took off his hat, bowed his head and then closed his eyes in prayer. Gunney was stunned. "Wow, that is the most thoughtful and touching thing I have ever seen you do. You actually let that trophy deer go in order to pay respects to a passing funeral procession. You are indeed the kindest man I have ever known, and I feel lucky to call you a friend." Ole Boats shrugged. "Yeah, well I felt like I had to. Hey, we were married for 37 years."

Naval Air Museum Photos

Use the below link to visit the Naval Air Museum at Pensacola, FL.

<http://www.cdsg.org/forums/viewtopic.php?t=337>

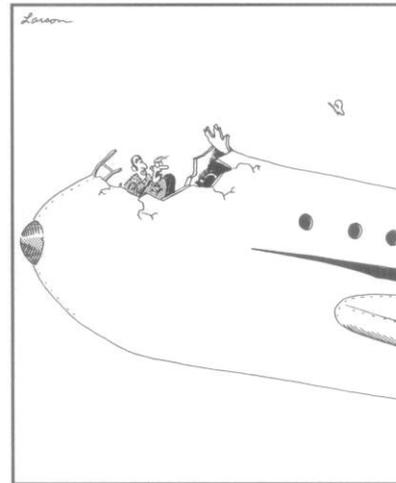
Nick & Harry Lee...

Harry Lee and Nick are drinking at the Fleet Reserve Club. Nick says, "Did you know that elks have sex 10 to 15 times a night?" "Aw crap..." says Harry Lee, "and I just joined the VFW!"

Aviation Far Side

(submitted by Jim Rozycki)

Here is another aviation-related The Far Side by Gary Larsen.....my "favorite" cartoonist.....enjoy!!



"Oh, great! Now there goes my hat!"

President's Corner

By Jacque LaValle

If I may quote Jim Rozycki's observation, "WOW...whatta great time!! Best reunion yet!!!" I couldn't agree more. The 40th reunion was an entire success with the P-8A Poseidon as our theme and the huge turnout of many alumni being the highpoint. Many thanks to everyone who pulled this event off successfully. Special thanks to Wyman Bailey, our reunion chairperson, to Captain Leon Bacon, P-8A Deputy Program Manager for PMA-290, our friends at Boeing IDE and Andrea Sommers, our gracious host at the Hampton Inn in Lexington Park, MD.

As 2011 looms on the horizon, I can say that 2009/2010 season was a terrific year for our Association. Several social events were attended by many and we were able to raise over \$1600 towards the VP-68 memorial plaque goal of \$3,000. This memorial is slated to be on permanent display at the Navy Memorial once completed.

The executive committee has heard you loud and clear with regard to our Topica issues. A VP-68 Alumni users group has been established with Yahoo.com and the plan is to retire the Topica account January 1st, 2011. To access the users group and ensure your on the latest email list, go to.....

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/vp68alumni/>

and select "Join this group". If you don't have a Yahoo user ID, you will need to create one (follow the directions given by Yahoo). It's that simple. But it's up to you to sign up. To date, there are only 10 members signed up. A final call will be sent on Topica to ensure everyone who still checks their email will receive the invite. We have already discovered many addresses that are no longer valid addresses or addresses that have not been accessed.

As president, I would like to thank everyone for your support over the last two years and am proud to continue serving as your president for the next two years. Installation of officers will happen in January. I would like to take this opportunity to thank John LeNard for his outstanding service as our Treasurer. Congratulations to Anna Gibson who was elected as our new Treasurer for the 2011/2012 season. As the new year approaches, the executive committee is already planning for some surprise events next year. Be sure to stay tuned to the vp68.org web site for news and updates.

As Chris and I prepare for our holiday trip to St. Petersburg, FL and Charleston, SC, I'd like to wish all of you and your families a Happy, Joyous and Safe Holiday season. See you at the Spring Fling!

Questions / Comments: contact me at:

jacque.lavalle@verizon.net

From the Editor:

Jim Rozycki

As always, I would like to thank all of the VP-68 Blackhawks who called, mailed and emailed me contributions for this issue of the Hawk's Nest newsletter. Our members are spread all over the USA and this is one venue to keep in touch with fellow Blackhawks. This newsletter is YOUR newsletter, so please send me information about yourself and what you are doing these days. Photos....please send me photos, especially if you have ones from the "early" years of the squadron.

Email me at: rozyckijim@aol.com

Call me at: 412-487-5854

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

From the Secretary

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

wright_kathleen@bah.com

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

From the Treasurer

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

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

**VP-68 Alumni Association
44746 Maguire Way - Unit J
California, MD 20619**

Make checks payable to:
VP-68 Alumni Association

contact Anna Gibson at 240-315-5886
or email at- amchief@yahoo.com

MEMBERSHIP

When you are calling or sending emails to your Blackhawk friends, ask them if they are members in the VP-68 Alumni Association and received this Hawk's Nest. If not...please ask them to join!

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

Color Copies of Hawk's Nest

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

Membership Committee

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

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

Missing Blackhawks

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

Alfredo Arroyo, L-98

2011-2012 Association Officers

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

**SEE YOU AT THE
2011 SPRING FLING
30 APRIL 2011
NAS PATUXENT RIVER
LEXINGTON PARK, MD**

Patrol Squadron Six Eight (VP-68) Alumni Association
44746 Maguire Way - Unit J
California, MD 20619
240-315-5886

NEW MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(please print)

name: _____

address: _____

city: _____

state: _____ zip code: _____

home phone: _____

cell phone: _____ (optional)

e-mail : _____

when in VP-68?: _____

rank / rate / dept: _____

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

- \$100 = Life Membership (one-time fee)
- \$25 = Life Membership **70 or older** (one-time fee) **DOB:** _
- \$10 = Regular Membership (Annually - 01Jan to 31 DEC)

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

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

- Membership Nom. & Elections Audit / Budget
- Fund Raising Reunions Newsletter
- Constitution & By-Laws

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

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

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

signed: _____ date: _____