

MONDAY FEBRUARY 7, 2011

# SQUADRONS & SHIPMATES NEWSLETTER



Hi Everyone,

I hope everyone is beginning to thaw out from the very wintery weather. Atlanta had one of the worst snowfalls in 25 years shutting down the city for 3 ½ days. It seems that there is virtually no snow removal equipment in Atlanta. We did have a white Christmas, the first since 1882.

My surgery on December 22<sup>nd</sup> went very well and I can breathe better than ever. All of you who use a CPAP machine and want to get rid of it may want to consider the surgery. It worked great for me. I am almost back to 100% but still a little tired on some days. No more snoring according to Sue and she is delighted.

There is a lot of news to report so please read everything very closely. Please don't skim over these newsletters as many of you have confessed to me you do.



## NEW MEMBERS

We are presently sending out letters to all squadron members, one squadron at a time. Last week we had five new fighter pilots join Squadrons & Shipmates. Two are former POWs and one of them spent almost 8 years at the Hanoi Hilton. Now we hope they all attend the reunion in October so we can meet them. They will be on the next roster, which will be issued shortly.

## PLANK OWNER LAPEL PINS

Kenneth Limbacher had a great idea to develop a Plank Owner Pin for all our plank owners. Below is the final artwork that Ken has already approved.



It is my understanding, according to naval regulations that all navy personnel are considered a plank owner if they were on board any ship the day it was commissioned or re-commissioned. Our ships were re-commissioned 2 and 3 times so if you were on board during those times, you are considered a plank owner. I am aware there are differing opinions about this and still much discussion about the issue but please don't shoot this messenger. If you are a plank owner, you should wear these pins proudly on your hat or tee shirt. Please order enough for you family members too. We need to know if we can sell at least 100 of these pins. It will cost an extra 20 cents in postage to mail this to you because they cannot be processed through the regular postage machines. The die mold is very costly if we only order the minimum of 100. We will need to sell them for at least \$5.00 each to cover the cost. The corporation will make a little profit. We may be able to reduce the price a little if we sell more than 100. The problem is, we need the funds to pay for the first 100. Anyone can order these pins. We just need to know how many pins the membership wants. Please e-mail me your order and I will announce the price

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after all the orders are received. It is possible the price could be as low as \$4.50 each if the orders are close to or greater than 200. If you don't care about the price, please send \$5.00 for each pin you would like to order. Your checks will not be deposited until we have the pins in hand and they are ready to be shipped.

### 2011 SAN DIEGO REUNION

#### Post-Reunion Cruise



We are planning a post-reunion cruise to the Mexican Rivera, which will leave from Long Beach (not Los Angeles) at 4:30 PM on Sunday, October 30, 2011. Details of the cruise are on the "Vacations to Go" web site. The cruise number is 17614. I didn't announce this earlier because the cruise is scheduled on the ship that had a fire in the engine room last fall. I figured everyone would think I had really lost my mind. However, Bob Bostley convinced me otherwise. He said this would probably be the safest ship afloat because they cannot afford to have another incident. The ship is scheduled to sail again in about two weeks.

The cost of the cruise, per person, is as follows and includes all port charges and taxes:

|               |          |
|---------------|----------|
| Inside Cabin  | \$535.21 |
| Ocean View    | \$635.21 |
| Balcony Cabin | \$775.21 |

The cost for a 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> person in each room is:

|               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| Inside Cabin  | \$235.21 each |
| Ocean View    | \$265.21 each |
| Balcony Cabin | \$295.21 each |

Please read the information on the "Vacations to Go" web site, which details gratuities and any other applicable charges.

In order to receive the group rate a \$250 deposit is due by February 21, 2011 and the remainder is due by July 6, 2011. After February 21st, you can still sign up for the cruise; however, the price may be higher or lower.

These prices are refundable as follows:

Cancel,

|                             |                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Before July 6 <sup>th</sup> | 100% refundable |
| After 7/6 before 9/16       | 50% refundable  |
| After 9/16 before 10/17     | 25% refundable  |
| After 10/17                 | no refunds      |

You will see that the prices on the web site for this cruise are somewhat less than our group price. This is because, if the cruise is booked through the web site, the cost is **non-refundable**. Web site prices are:

|               |                      |
|---------------|----------------------|
| Inside Cabin  | \$429.00 (bunk beds) |
| Ocean View    | \$595.29             |
| Balcony Cabin | \$725.21             |

Please remember, if you buy your tickets off the web site, this does not count toward the group purchase and the free cruise.

Carnival has also reduced the number of paid cruises needed in order to receive one free cruise from 18 to 16 passengers. This is how it will work. For every 16 passengers in our group, one lucky person will get a free cruise. If 16 tickets are sold the "prize" will be between \$320 and \$560 depending on the average of the group sales. The winner(s) will receive a check, 4-6 weeks after the cruise from Carnival Cruise Lines for the average price of the group's purchases. The "prize" does not include the port charges. We will

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have a raffle on board to determine the winner. The group will also decide if they want to contribute to the corporation and buy more raffle tickets for \$1.00 each. Bob and Marion Bostley already have their balcony suite picked out. Our other director of Squadrons & Shipmates, Walt Glover will be attending the reunion too and will also be going on the cruise. Sue and I plan to go as well. This is a great way to make new friends and plan other trips if you like to cruise. **To register go to:**

<https://secure.vacationstogo.com/vtg/group/home.cfm?g=15738&s=1581004>

**then click on "SIGN-UP"**

### Bus Coordinator

The corporation has hired a bus coordinator, Rob Wallace, to be sure we get the best bus service in San Diego. He has been doing reunions for the military for 20 years and has coordinated over 600 reunions. We want to be sure the buses are clean and the companies that are used have insurance and there will be no breakdowns. We want to ensure everybody will enjoy the reunion so we are going the extra step to be sure you are happy. Rob said he will have Budweiser donate 20 cases of beer for us and that will sure help with the refreshments. Mr. Wallace has also suggested a post-reunion bus trip to Long Beach to see the Queen Mary and Los Angeles to Grauman's Chinese Theater and other points of interest in Los Angeles. It would be Sunday, October 30, 2011 after the Getaway Breakfast. So if you would like to extend your trip for one more day and go on this day trip, please e-mail me ASAP so we can make plans. The hotel will extend your room for 3 days after the reunion if there is space available so make your reservations now.

### Reunion Attendee Roster

We have added some new columns to the Reunion Attendee Roster. If you requested a room at the Crowne Plaza

Hotel, it is indicated in Column K. Column L indicates the number of nights reserved at the hotel. If you made a reservation at the Crowne Plaza and there is no number highlighted in green, please e-mail me ASAP. If you have not made your reservations at the Crowne Plaza, then please do so as soon as possible. They will not charge your credit card until you check in. You can cancel if you need to up to 3 days before your reservation commences and not be charged. The link below can be used to make hotel reservations. It is very simple and no human being is involved so the chance for error is minimized.

<https://resweb.passkey.com/go/fdrandmidwayreunion>

Also, if you would please review the sightseeing tours and venues to be sure they are correct. If they are blank, we would ask that you send in your Reunion Sign-up Sheet with your choices marked. You do not have to send any money now. We just need to know how many buses we will need for each venue and what size buses we will need. This will help us greatly! Some members have already paid for their expenses. Their names are highlighted in yellow in Column Z. The Balance Due indicates the amount that is still owed when the time comes which will be around August 1<sup>st</sup>. Please help us with this.

### Buddy List

If there are any single members who want to share a room and expenses, please let me know so we can add your name to the Buddy List.

### Guest Speakers

I had a discussion recently with Dave Batson and he told me that he is a member of a dying breed, which is a fighter pilot. When I stopped to think about what he said, it made a lot of sense. Our weaponry is now so advanced that air-to-air combat is a thing of the past. We will always have pilots in our military but a fighter pilot is something that we may never see again because of the supremacy of our aircraft. I just received an

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e-mail from Maddie Register today and guess what it was regarding, an unmanned combat fighter aircraft. The link is below.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BSHguWeBHo&feature=feedu>

Having a group of these very unique individuals among our membership is something we should be very proud of. We hope you all make an effort to meet Dave Batson and Rob Doremus at the next reunion. Dave is a very humble person and claims he was just doing his job. We all had jobs to do while in the navy but few of us were targets. At least three of our members were targets who were shot down during the Viet Nam War and one during World War II while he piloted his landing craft onto Omaha Beach on D-Day. It would be a shame not to meet these combat veterans while we have the chance.

Last month Raleigh Plesko was driving through Columbus, Ohio and stopped to take Rob Doremus and his wife, Alice to dinner. He said they are a great couple and was very happy to meet them.

### ST LO REUNION ASSOCIATION

Raleigh Plesko is planning on inviting the St Lo Reunion Organization to our reunion in October. For those of you who may not know the St Lo was originally named U.S.S. Midway. A Kamikaze pilot sank her two weeks after the name was changed. There is a legend that it is bad luck to change the name of a ship. I don't think it has been done since. St Lo was sunk on October 25, 1944 and that just happens to be the date of our reunion. We hope they will attend. Over 750 men were in the water for over 2 hours when the ship sunk. Only 9 still attend the reunions. Their ranks are dwindling and it would be nice to meet some of the remaining survivors.

### TEE SHIRTS and HATS

We now have a large inventory of tee shirts, which already have San Diego printed on the back, along with Atlanta.

Please download an order form from the web site to order your tee shirts and hats if you have not done so. It would be nice if everyone were in "uniform" when we visit the Midway Museum. The corporation's name on the back of hats and tee shirts looks great. Sue says we look good coming and going. Do all your guests have a tee shirt and hat? Hint Hint

### Time Check (From Sue)

On some air bases the Air Force is on one side of the field and civilian aircraft use the other side of the field, with the control tower in the middle. One day the tower received a call from an aircraft asking, "What time is it?"

The tower responded, "Who is calling?"

The pilot replied, "What difference does it make?"

The tower replied, "It makes a lot of difference.

If it is an American Airlines flight, it is 3 o'clock.

If it is an Air Force plane, it is 1500 hours.

If it is a Navy aircraft, it is 6 bells.

If it is an Army aircraft, the big hand is on the 12 and the little hand is on the 3.

If it is a Marine Corps aircraft, it's Thursday afternoon and 120 minutes to "Happy Hour".

"OOPS" -



**We never handled bombs like this**  
That's all folks, for now