

PATROL GUNBOAT ASSOCIATION GUNBOAT RIDERS

http://members.visi.net/~macs/index.html

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RESERVATION CUTOFF DATES

We are approaching the cutoff date for reservations. Since we have recently located quite a few new members, we have extended the cutoff date for tours and banquet reservations. Armed Forces will accept reservations until July 30, 1999. After that all requests for tours and meals will be accepted on

a space available basis, with priority given to new members. If you have not submitted your reservation package and check to Armed Forces Reunions yet, you should do so as soon as possible in order to insure availability. Remember, all tour and meal requests received after July 30, will be held, subject to availability. Additionally, if you still have not made your hotel reservations, you need to do so now. **This is very important.** The \$89.00 room rate is only guaranteed until the cutoff date. After that, room rates will be determined by availability. As a reminder, the standard rate for the Fairview Park Marriott Hotel is \$184.00, so be certain to make your reservations prior to the cutoff date in order to receive the special \$89.00 group rate. It is also advisable to call the Fairview Park Marriott to confirm any mail in reservations. You can call the hotel at (703) 849-9400.

"1999 REUNION SURVEY"

When I mailed out the March 1999
Newsletter, I included all the necessary
information and forms for registering for the
1999 Falls Church Reunion. I also included
a survey form for you to return to me. This
form is intended for planning purposes
only, a way for the staff at Armed Forces
Reunions INC and myself to estimate how many
people would be attending the reunion. We use the numbers
from this survey to anticipate how many buses to reserve, how
many rooms to block at the hotel, how many reservations to
anticipate for the restaurants and how big the reception area
and banquet halls will have to be for the buffet and banquet
dinners. This same information package is mailed out along

with the newsletter to every new contact made since March. The response has been fair; however, many folks haven't returned them yet. If you still have not returned your survey form, please do so as soon as possible. **Remember**, it's a survey, not a

commitment!

CHILDREN'S MENU

It seems that once again I have made an error. This time it is on the registration form for the Buffet and Banquet Dinner Children's meal prices. The Friday night Buffet Dinner for children under 12 is \$20.00. The cost of the Chicken Fingers Children's meal at the Saturday Banquet is also \$20.00. I apologize for any inconvenience, I assure you that any over payment will be refunded.

"1999 BALLCAPS"

I have ordered Patrol Gunboat Association Ballcaps from Eagle Crest INC in Jacksonville, FL, again this year. These are custom embroidered, "Made In America" Ballcaps identical in quality to the ones ordered for ships and shore commands by the Navy Exchange. These hats will be available free with the purchase of \$20.00 in raffle tickets for the Saturday Night Raffle Table Drawing. Ballcaps can also be purchased for \$15.00 dollars each. After the reunion, any remaining hats will be available for sale for \$15.00 each plus shipping. I am also having Special Commemorative Coffee Mugs, as well as a small souvenir unique to the 1999 reunion. There items will be given out at the reunion to every crewmember in attendance.

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Patrol Gunboat Association

KEEP YOUR FORK

There was a woman who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness and had been given three months to live. So as she was getting her things "in order", she contacted her pastor and had him come to her house to discuss certain aspects of her final wishes. She told him which songs she wanted sung at the service, what scriptures she would like read, and what outfit she wanted to be buried in. The woman also requested to be buried with her favorite Bible. Everything was in order and the pastor was preparing to leave when the woman suddenly remembered something very important to her. "There's one more thing," she said excitedly. "What's that?" came the pastor's reply. "This is very important," the woman continued. "I want to be buried with a fork in my right hand." The pastor stood looking at the woman, not knowing quite what to say. "That surprises you, doesn't it?" the woman asked. "Well, to be honest, I'm puzzled by the request," said the pastor.

The woman explained, "In all my years of attending church socials and potluck dinners, I always remember that when the dishes of the main course were being cleared, someone would inevitably lean over and say, "Keep your fork." It was my favorite part because I knew that something better was coming, like velvety chocolate cake or deep-dish apple pie. Something wonderful and with substance! So, I just want people to see me there in that casket with a fork in my hand and I want them to wonder 'What's with the fork?' Then I want you to tell them: "Keep your fork. The best is yet to come."

The pastor's eyes welled up with tears of joy as he hugged the woman good-bye. He knew this would be one of the last times he would see her before her death. But he also knew that the woman had a better grasp of heaven than he did. She knew that something better was coming.

At the funeral, people were walking by the woman's casket and they saw the pretty dress she was wearing and her favorite Bible and the fork placed in her right hand. Over and over the pastor heard the question, "What's with the fork?" And over and over he smiled. During his message, the pastor told the people of the conversation he had with the woman shortly before she died. He also told them about the fork and about what it symbolized to her. The pastor told the people how he could not stop thinking about the fork and told them that they probably would not be able to stop thinking about it either. He was right. So the next time you reach down for your fork, let it remind you, oh, so gently, that the best is yet to come.

May God bless you and keep you safe!

I received this in my e-mail at the same time that I found out that Steven Skripac (USS Gallup) had passed away. When I talked to his wife Margaret, she had mentioned that Steven was a good man and that she will miss him very much, and that the years they were together were wonderful. Steven had just found out about the Association this past December and when we talked on the phone he spoke of his tour on Gallup with enthusiasm.

NEW MEMBERS IN FILE

Following is a list of new members that have been located since the last newsletter was published.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Ship</u>	Contacted
Ackley, James M.	Douglas	05/25/99
Beebe, Paul H.	Tacoma	04/06/99
Bloxham, Thomas A.	Antelope	06/14/99
Brown, Brady A.	Surprise, Ready	05/17/99
Caldwell, James D.	Ready	06/08/99
Clifford, William M.	Tacoma	04/19/99
Collins, Montey	Defiance	06/12/99
Darrow, Homer	Defiance	06/12/99
Eaton, James S.	Surprise	04/16/99
Gainey, Raymond C.	Canon	05/29/99
Hedquist, Douglas B.	Douglas	04/05/99
Henderson, Gary L.	Tacoma	05/30/99
Hudspeth, Donald C.	Antelope	06/14/99
Johnson, Allan K.	Chehalis	05/24/99
Knapp, Edwin J.	COSDIV 32	04/07/99
Lankford, Harold M.	Welch, Surprise	06/06/99
Ledvina, Thomas N.	Beacon	06/15/99
Metoxen, Gary G.	Gallup	06/01/99
Michael, Willie	Green Bay	05/24/99
Mohn, Bobby	Graham County	04/24/99
Naillon, Milburn	Marathon	06/07/99
Norris, Frank G.	Asheville	03/26/99
Phillips, Phil	Graham County	04/01/99
Powell, William E.	Antelope	06/05/99
Ruggiero, Ronald W.	Marathon	05/22/99
Sexton, Sidney O.	Surprise	06/12/99
Stemford, John S.	Unknown	05/15/99
Sutherland, Terry	Asheville	04/04/99



CAN'T GET GUNBOATS OUT OF YOUR BLOOD!

This is the back of Jim Jarvis' Motor Home

Patrol Gunboat Association

WHEN YOU ARRIVE

As soon as you finish checking in to the hotel, your first stop should be the Hospitality Room for check-in. There will be signs with directions to the Association Hospitality Room in the Hotel Lobby. In the Hospitality Room you will find tables set up where you will be able to purchase raffle tickets for the Saturday Evening Drawing as well as additional 50 - 50 tickets if you desire. You will receive your 1999 Association coffee mug and your unique Falls Church 1999 Reunion Souvenir. I also have a few of the 1998 puzzles left over from Peoria as well as a limited number of 1998 coffee mugs for those that want to collect the entire set. I also have some of the 1998 Ballcaps remaining for those who want them. Next, you will register with the Armed Forces Reunions Representative. You will receive a large envelope with your name tags, tickets for all tours that you have selected and meal tickets for the buffet and banquet dinner.

BUSINESS MEETING

A quick note about the Saturday Morning Business Meeting. At the 1998 Reunion in Peoria, some crewmembers were under the impression that the Business Meeting was for crewmembers only. This is not the case at our business meetings. As I explained to each crewmember when I first made contact with them, this Association and the reunions are a family affair. The reason I try to arrange interesting tours and quality meals is so that the reunion would be something that you would be proud to bring your wife and children to. We discuss future reunions and Association finances as well as take suggestions from the membership. That membership includes everyone in the Patrol Gunboat Family.

HOTEL LOCATION

The Fairview Park Marriott is located at 3111 Fairview Park Drive, Falls Church, VA 22042. The hotel is five minutes from shopping at Tysons Corner Center and Galleria. It is convenient to museums and downtown Washington, D.C. The hotel is 14 miles from National Airport and 20 miles from the Washington/Dulles Airport.

If driving;

From Richmond, Take I-95 North, Exit to I-495 (Capital Beltway) North toward Frederick. Take Exit 8 off I-495 (Arlington Blvd - Route 50 East). Follow signs to Fairview Park exit, take Fairview Park South exit, hotel is on the left.

From Baltimore, take I-95 South toward Washington. Exit I-495 West toward Northern Virginia. Continue on I-495 to Exit 8 (Arlington Blvd - Route 50 East) exit. Follow signs to Fairview Park exit, take Fairview Park South exit, hotel is on the left.

From Washington, D.C. take Route 66 West to I-495 South. Exit I-495 at Exit 8 (Arlington Blvd - Route 50 East) exit. Follow signs to Fairview Park exit, take Fairview Park South exit, hotel is on the left.

ASSOCIATION DIRECTORY!

I am now to the point where I want to publish a directory of former Gunboat Crewmembers listing their home address. For each record in my data file, I have included a field to indicate whether or not you want me to release your name and address to other former crewmembers. I fill in this field whenever I receive the survey sheets back from you. Many records have this field blank, either because you never returned the survey, you returned the survey and left this field blank, or I contacted you prior to my putting this field in the data base file.

On the address label used to mail this newsletter is a code in parenthesis. This code indicates your membership status. "RP" indicates Regular Member, Dues Paying. "RNP" and "RNP1" indicates Regular Member, NOT Paying Dues. Next you will find a slash (/) and either "Y", "N", or "U". If your membership status is followed by "/Y", then my records indicate that I can release your address. A "/N" indicates that I should not release your address and "/U" means that the record field is blank.

I plan to publish a directory of former crewmembers that will be mailed out with the post reunion special edition in September, 1999. If your label has a "/Y", then your address will be included, if it has a "/N" or "/U", then I will just list your name only. If you want to be included in the directory, please contact me and let me know if it is all right to publish your address in the directory.

AIRPORT SHUTTLE SERVICE

Currently, Super Shuttle ground transportation is \$13.00 for the first person, \$8.00 each additional person from National Airport. The current fare from Dulles Airport to the Fairview is \$17.00 for the first person, \$10.00 each additional person. The number of stops required will determine the time it takes to arrive at the Fairview Park Marriott. Northern Virginia Sedan (703) 862-2476 is \$30.00 per car from National Airport; \$35.00 per car from Dulles Airport. You can also use the Metro Service from National Airport. Take the Orange Line to the Dunnloring Metro Station. The hotel will pick you up at the Dunnloring Station.

RV AND MOTOR HOME PARK

For RV hookup service, call the Lake Fairfax Park at (703) 471-2476 or Bull Run Park at (703) 631-0550. Ask for information, reservations and directions to determine which is most convenient for you.

MASTERCARD

Lockheed F-16 Fighting Falcon - \$25 million dollars Lockheed F-117 Stealth Fighter - \$45 million dollars. Boeing B-52 Stratofortress - \$74 million dollars. New B-2 Stealth Bomber - \$2.1 billion dollars. A decent map of downtown Belgrade - Priceless.

Patrol Gunboat Association



FROM THE MAILBAG

On this page, I want to print some of the comments that I have received from shipmates who either call or write to me. Due to space restrictions, I cannot include all of these comments. I will include those for which I have space in the current publishing period.



From Shipmate Donald Hudspeth {PG-86}: It was great to hear from you. Glad to hear there are a few of us still around. The newsletter sounds good, can't wait to get it. I was the "DOC" on the Antelope from 1970-73. One of the first Corpsman assigned to Patrol Gunboats. It was the Best duty in my 33 year career.

From Shipmate Bob Nolan {PG-93}: I have made my hotel reservations for the 1999 reunion, looking forward to it.
From Shipmate Howard Wick {PG-88}: I just got back from putting my check in the mail. You would be surprised at the comments I get from my hat over here.... especially retired Navy guys, My boss pulls my chain about being a PG rider and being a Navy guy working for the Air Force... all in fun of course.

From Shipmate Allan Johnson {PG-94}: I was on the precom unit and the commissioning crew. I served from 9 April, 1969 through 20 January, 1970. I was one of the many who were very, very, very seasick.

From Shipmate Vernon Clark {PG-98}: I admire what you're doing to bring PG sailors back together again. It was, beyond a doubt, one of the highlights of my career. What a group of wonderful people!

SCANNER AND PRINTER

Shipmate Paul McGurgan (PG-88) has again offered to bring a photo quality scanner and printer to the reunion, along with a laptop computer. He will be set up in the Association Hospitality Room where he will scan your photographs and make high quality copies to share with other crewmembers. He can also save them as a computer file that can be downloaded onto you computer.

1999 50 / 50 DRAWING

At of press time, there have been \$680.00 in 50/50 tickets returned. If you wish to purchase additional tickets, just drop a check in the mail to me for \$10.00 for each set of 12 tickets. I will complete the stubs for you. It would help if you could send me return address labels for the stubs. Like last vear, we will continue to sell tickets at the reunion for the 50-50 drawing up until the day of the drawing. Last year we sold \$1120.00 in 50-50 tickets, making the total amount of the prizes shared by the winners \$560.00. This was broken down into three prizes, \$280.00, \$168.00 and \$112.00. The purchase of 50/50 tickets is a great way to support the Association. Not only does it provide support, it gives you an opportunity to cash in on big bucks at the same time. You need not be present to win. We will make our drawings for the 50/50 winners on Saturday evening

following the Banquet Dinner and Raffle Table Drawing.

If you will not be attending this years reunion and you

still want additional 50-50 tickets, be sure to mail them to

me early. I will leave for Falls Church on the morning of

BUFFET AND BANQUET ATTIRE

The Friday Night Buffet Dinner will be a casual affair, dress for comfort. We will have a cash bar available throughout dinner and on into the evening. You can retire to the hospitality room after dinner, or you can remain and enjoy the comfort of the dining area while listening to soft background music provided by the hotel. A sport coat and tie would be appropriate for the Saturday Night Banquet Dinner. Following dinner, relax, loosen up and hit the dance floor while being entertained by the band PATUXENT.

WE ARE ON THE INTERNET

The Patrol Gunboat Association Web Site / Home Page Internet Address is:

http://members.visi.net/~macs/index.html

You can also find the Web Site by using a search engine and searching for "Patrol Gunboat Reunion". I have placed a separate page for each ship, as well as Squadron Staff's and the Graham County on the Web Site. There is also a muster list of crewmembers that I have located as well as a missing persons page. After the reunion, I plan to include a photo album using photographs taken in Peoria. If you have any pictures of the ships that you think would look good on the internet, please send them to me in either GIF, JPEG or original format.

The Supreme Commander

Following are names of **Patrol Gunboat Shipmates** that have met the Supreme Commander since the last edition of "Gunboat Riders". As this information is made available, I will include it in the following newsletter.

Shipmate:Ship:DepartedSkripac, Steven A.USS Gallup04/15/99

August 10, 1999.