

PATROL GUNBOAT ASSOCIATION

GUNBOAT RIDERS

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE MCMANUELS FAMILY

Here we are once again, it's the Holiday Season. Let us give thanks for the many blessings that we have shared over this past year. As in previous years, I would like to use this edition of "Gunboat Riders" to express my thanks to all who have helped me make the 2000 Reunion a success as well as the highlight of the year for me. I want to say a special thanks to all of the shipmates and their families that we have had the pleasure of meeting and corresponding with over the past year. Every e-mail, letter, postcard and phone call I get from a former crewmember reminds me how fortunate I am to have had the privilege to serve in the Gunboat Navy. You are truly an Outstanding Crew, proof that those who are veterans of the

Veterans who put their lives on the line everyday. Let's all say a prayer for their safe return. It is their vigilance and sacrifices that ensure our way of life and keep America strong.

Wishing each of you the Happiest of Holiday Seasons.

Terry and Nancy McManuels

Nancy and I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas, a festive Holiday Season and a prosperous, healthy and happy New Year. We are looking forward to seeing all of you in San Diego in August, 2001.

REUNION ANNOUNCEMENT HITS THE STREETS

On December 12, 2000 I mailed out newspaper and magazine announcements to 572 newspapers and 61 magazines around the country. If your newspaper does not carry the release, it may be because it is not in my data base file. If you don't see the announcement in the next few weeks, please let me know the name and address of your local newspaper so that I can add it to the file.

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Gunboat Navy were and remain the best in the Fleet.

As we celebrate the holidays this year, let us not forget that today, just like in the days of the Patrol Gunboat Navy, there are many Shipmates, Soldiers, Airman and Marines that continue to support and defend the Flag, far away from home, loved ones and families. Recent events on the USS Cole remind us that even in today's peacetime Navy there is a price to pay for peace. Please take a moment during the Holiday's to give thanks to the

Patrol Gunboat Association

The Florida Vote

The purpose of the Association Newsletter "Gunboat Riders" is so that we have a forum to pass on information relevant to the Association. I use it to pass the word about the reunions, information about the hotel, about tours and meals and other items of interest to the Association.

Gunboat Riders was never meant to be a political forum, and it will not be used as such now. Obviously there is a "But" coming, and here it is.

"But", the events in Florida concerning the Military Vote being routinely disallowed in many cases due to the Absentee Ballots missing postmarks is an issue that I as well as other veterans must comment and take action on. As many of you know, I spent twenty six years in the Navy. Every year, commands make an extraordinary effort to convince the men and women in the military to exercise their right to vote. To hear on the news that Absentee Votes, many from military men and women are routinely thrown out for administrative reasons is something that I cannot ignore. I am fairly certain the today's leadership all the way up to the Joint Chiefs will make an effort to correct many of the administrative problems concerning Absentee Ballots and how they are processed at overseas commands. I also feel it is essential that those of us here at home make an effort to ensure that our state and local election officials consider the uniqueness of Military Duty overseas when processing Absentee Ballots.

We should all be pro-active on this issue. Regardless of your political affiliation, Republican, Democrat or Independent, to fail to provide our Men and Women in the Armed Forces a fair and equal voice in the election process is wrong. They should not forfeit their right to vote because they happen to be stationed somewhere that does not utilize postmarks. The discarding of absentee ballots from military men and women is not unique to Florida either. Apparently it is common practice in many states to enforce strict standards on absentee ballots. One of those standards is the requirement that an absentee ballot be postmarked prior to election day. If this results in the rejection of an absentee ballot from a servicemember who has no control over whether or not a postmark is used, then it needs to be corrected. We have all been there, lets see if we can make it better for those that continue to "Carry On".

INSUFFICIENT POSTAGE?

I recently received a welcome aboard package back that I had sent to a new member of the Association. It came back due to insufficient postage and apparently the recipient refused to pay postage due. I then took it to the Post Office and had them check the weight and while close, it was within the weight limit for the postage that I had used. If anyone is receiving newsletters from me that include a postage due amount, please let me know so that I can either increase the amount of postage that we use or take it up with the Post Office if it is their error.

NEW MEMBERS IN FILE

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

Name	Ship	Contacted
Arnold, Wayne	Welch	11/24/2000
Caddell, Willie B.	Grand Rapids	10/18/2000
Chasse, Robert L.	Beacon	09/20/2000
Hammett, Larry D.	Gallup	09/21/2000
Herd, Charles	Tacoma	09/20/2000
Hubbard, Robert H.	Graham County	11/06/2000
Monzelowsky, Gary V.	Green Bay	11/12/2000
Osgood, Edward Bruce	Chelis	11/06/2000
LSilva, Donald P.	Tacoma	11/07/2000
Stein, John	Chehalis	11/27/2000

MOVING? PLEASE SEND ME YOUR NEW ADDRESS

The September edition of Gunboat Riders included the Post Reunion edition and so went to all the crewmembers in the data file as of that date. It seems that many of our members have moved, so I got their Newsletters back. Many of these individuals have moved far enough back that the post office will no longer forward and many no longer have the forwarding address on file. In the last three months we have had at least seven crewmembers changed to missing status because I no longer have a valid address. This means that we are losing members that we have worked hard to locate. On the ones that I get a good address on from the post office, I resend the newsletter to them. However, I end up paying postage on two letters instead of one. There are also a few "SNOW BIRDS" in our group, former crewmembers with summer and winter addresses. There just isn't any simple way to automatically update my data base file to correspond with your move dates. The simple solution is for you to advise me of your change of address. Without this information, your mail will be returned to me and I end up paying additional postage to mail it a second time. If mail is returned without your new address, it is discarded and I change your membership status back to missing in my data file.

2001 REUNION SURVEY

In the last newsletter I mailed each former crewmember a 2001 Reunion Survey. So far, I have had 91 of these surveys returned to me. As I stated at the bottom of each survey, it is not a commitment, it is just a survey that I use to help determine how many busses we will need for the tours, what size facilities we will need for meals during the tours and the number of rooms that will have to be blocked at the hotel. If I don't receive your survey, I must assume that you will not be attending the reunion. If at a later date you should decide to attend, it could cause some difficulties in the planning of the reunion and associated events. So, if you are definitely not planning to attend, please advise me. If there is a slim chance that you will attend, then check the appropriate box on the survey sheet and return it to me. I would appreciate your assistance, it makes planning a successful reunion so much easier.

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DADDY'S DAY

Her hair up in a pony tail, her favorite dress tied with a bow.
Today was Daddy's Day at school, and she couldn't wait to go.
But her mommy tried to tell her, that she probably should stay home.
Why the kids might not understand, if she went to school alone.

But she was not afraid; she knew just what to say
What to tell her classmates, on this Daddy's Day
But still her mother worried, for her to face this day alone
And that was why once again, she tried to keep her daughter home

But the little girl went to school, eager to tell them all
About a dad she never sees, a dad who never calls
There were daddies along the wall in back, for everyone to meet
Children squirming impatiently, anxious in their seats

One by one the teacher called, a student from the class
To introduce their daddy, as seconds slowly passed
At last the teacher called her name, every child turned to stare
Each of them were searching, for a man who wasn't there

"Where's her daddy at?" she heard a boy call out"
"She probably doesn't have one," another student dared to shout
And from somewhere near the back, she heard a daddy say
"Looks like another deadbeat dad, too busy to waste his day."

The words did not offend her, as she smiled at her friends
And looked back at her teacher, who told her to begin
And with hands behind her back, slowly she began to speak
And out from the mouth of a child, came words incredibly unique

"My Daddy couldn't be here, because he lives so far away
But I know he wishes he could be with me on this day
And though you cannot meet him, I wanted you to know
All about my daddy, and how much he loves me so

He loved to tell me stories, he taught me to ride my bike
He surprised me with pink roses, and taught me to fly a kite
We used to share fudge sundaes and ice cream in a cone
And though you cannot see him, I'm not standing all alone

'Cause my daddy's always with me, even though we are apart
I know because he told me, he'll forever be here in my heart"
With that her little hand reached up, and lay across her chest
Feeling her own heartbeat, beneath her favorite dress

And from somewhere in the crowd of dads, her mother stood in tears
Proudly watching her daughter, who was wise beyond her years
For she stood up for the love of a man not in her life
Doing what was best for her, doing what was right

And when she dropped her hand back down, staring straight into the crowd
She finished with a voice so soft, but its message clear and loud
"I love my daddy very much, he's my shining star,
And if he could he'd be here, but heaven's just too far,

But sometimes when I close my eyes, it's like he never went away."
And then she closed her eyes, and saw him there that day
And to her mother's amazement, she witnessed with surprise
A room full of daddies and children, all starting to close their eyes

Who knows what they saw before them, who knows what they felt inside
Perhaps for merely a second, they saw him at her side.
"I know you're with me Daddy," to the silence she called out
And what happened next made believers, of those once filled with doubt

Not one in that room could explain it, for each of their eyes had been closed
But there placed on her desktop, was a beautiful fragrant pink rose
And a child was blessed, if only a moment, by the love of her shining bright star
And given the gift of believing, that heaven is never too far.

WEB SITE VOLUNTEER WANTED

We are still growing and with the 2001 reunion press release mailed, we should have another influx of new members after the beginning of the year. It's time to consider having someone assist me with some of the collateral duties of running the Association.

I am looking for someone that would be able to assist in managing the Web Site. The cost of the Site is covered by Annual dues, so all that is required is someone with the time and knowledge to keep the Site updated. Any Volunteers?

FROM THE ASSOCIATION HISTORIAN

The Association Historian now has a new e-mail address, it is now rctfdd@worldnet.att.net. Please send originals or copies of Commissioning Programs, Change of Command Programs, or any ship photo's that you may have and they will be included in separate files for each ship and staff that comprise the Association. Include your name, address and phone number and e-mail address so that I may annotate each item with it's source. Please send any items that you wish to donate to:

Dave Donaldson
2603 Woodcock road
Sequim, WA 98382
(360) 683-5268

e-mail: rctfdd@worldnet.att.net

If you have any original photographs of your ship, I would appreciate it if you would have a copy made and send it to me so that I might have it scanned and placed on the Web Site. If you want the photograph returned, please make sure to include your mailing address and I will send it back to you.

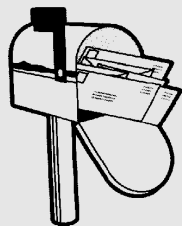
SAN DIEGO REGISTRATION

If you attended the 2000 Reunion in Saint Louis, I hope that you didn't notice any changes in the registration procedures. Your events package with your meal tickets, itinerary and name tags may have seemed even better than in previous years. Previously the arrangements for all reservations, name tags, tour arrangements and registration packages had been made by Armed Forces Reunions INC. This year, at the Saint Louis Reunion, Nancy and I produced and assembled the packages. I had already found that I could do the name tags; in fact, I produced and printed the watermark on the name tags for the first two reunions anyway. As far as tours go, I used the same company that Armed Forces utilizes for other Saint Louis Reunions.

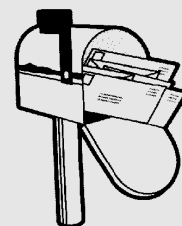
I learned a great deal while we were with Armed Forces. Our group however is just too small for Armed Forces which is why they encouraged me to handle the details on my own rather than by using their services. Besides, I feel that we can save a little money by doing it on our own and still have a professional looking package. As far as I know, there weren't any complaints with the registration packages. If there were any complaints, or if anyone has any suggestions for future reunions, please let me know.

It is my hope that these changes will reduce some of the costs and will allow a few more former crewmembers to join us for the 2001 Reunion in San Diego.

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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 Dan McGowan {PG-84}: I had a good time at the St Louis reunion and am looking forward to the one in San Diego. I served on the 84 from 70 to 72.**

☐ **From Shipmate Dale Boroff {PG-90, 98}: I was an FGT-1 on both the Canon (Sept 69 to Jan 71) and Grand Rapids (Dec 71 to Dec 72)**

☐ **From Shipmate Don Silva {PG-92}: Great memory generator. Came aboard in May of 70 as ETN3 just in time to move from San Diego to Guam and then on to Cam Rahn Bay.**

☐ **From Shipmate James S. Thomas {PG-84}: Now that the Newsletter is out, Terry you have done another super great job in setting up an Outstanding Reunion. This makes three in a row and am sure that San Diego will as good if not better.**

☐ **From Shipmate Robert Burbage {PG-92}: Being a young pup, I served on the Tacoma in 80 and 81 and was sadly part of the decom. crew. The Tacoma and the Welch were later sold to Columbia as high speed drug chasers. Chief T, Chief Mitch, Chief Ringhand, Pat, Ramos, Kessler, Bru, Wick, Doc and everyone else that can't remember I sure hope you remember all the fun we had. Those were by far the best years I spent in the Navy. *Lovers, Fighters, Gunboat Riders!!***

"Twas the night before Christmas, compartments were still, The sailors were sleeping, as most sailors will.
The ditty bags hung by the lockers with care, In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there.
The men were all peacefully dreaming in bed As visions of liberty danced in each head.
The Chief in his skivvies, hopped into his rack, Having just came from town and a quick midnight snack.
When out on the deck there arose such a roar, I ran to the porthole to find out the score.
I stuck out my head and started to shout, "Just what in the world is this noise all about?"

A moon made for boondocking showed with a glow, It was downright cold out, 'bout seven below.
What I saw out there looked like those Mardi Gras floats, 'Twas a Captain's gig drawn by four white Navy goats.
In the boat was a man who seemed quiet and moody, I knew in an instant St. Nick had the duty.
As quickly as Monday his billy goats came, He whistled and shouted and called them by name.
"Now Perry, now Farragut, Dewey and Jones, What's the matter John Paul, got lead in your bones?
A little to Starb'rd, now hold it up short, No fluffing off now, or you'll go on report!"

He was wearing dress "Reds" that fit like a charm, His hash marks they covered the length of his arm.
The gifts to be issued were all in his pack, The gedunk was ready to leave on each rack.
His eyes they were watering, his nose caked with ice, He wiped it with canvass, then sneezed once or twice.
He opened his mouth and started to yawn, It looked like the Sun coming up with the dawn.
The stump of a pipe, he held tight in his teeth, And took a small nip from a bottle beneath.
He wasn't so big, but he must have been strong, I figured he'd been in SEALs early and long.
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old Tar, Who said "Evenin' Matey, here have a cigar."

He filled every seabag with presents galore, And left us all leave papers, right by the door.
With "Anchors Aweigh" he climbed back into place, A broad smile was creeping all over his face.
One look at his watch and he started to frown, "This mid watch is certainly getting me down."
Then out to the breakwater and into the night, The gig started fading, the landscape was bright.
"Merry Christmas" he said, as he drove on his way, Now I'll finish my rounds and sack in for the day."

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