

PATROL GUNBOAT ASSOCIATION

GUNBOAT RIDERS

<http://gunboatriders.com>
<http://www.gunboats@yahoo.com>
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Terry W. McManuels 1673 Kilt Street, Virginia Beach, VA 23464 (757) 479-2261

RESERVATION CUTOFF DATES

The cutoff date for the 2002 reunion is fast approaching. Reservations must be received by the hotel no later than July 1, 2002. After that date, the hotel is not required to honor our special group rate of \$89.00. That same date is the cutoff for tours and other events at the reunion. We will continue to take reservations on a first come, first served basis after the cutoff date, but you run the risk of missing out on an event if your reservation request is late. Requests for tours and meals will be accepted on a space available basis, with priority given to new members who have just found out about the Association. Tickets for tours will be available at the reunion in the event there are seats available on the bus. We did a great deal of negotiating this year in order to keep the tour prices at a minimum. If you have not submitted your reservation package and check yet, you should do so as soon as possible in order to insure availability.

I have received the first Hotel Pickup report that lists the names of all confirmed reservations. The numbers are actually a bit better than last year. Perhaps that is because of the Free Upgrade Drawing for early reservations. I'm sure however, just like last year, we will have many members making their reservations at the last minute. As of June 6, 19 members had made their reservations with the hotel.

A reminder for those members not staying at the hotel this year. I would rather you join us for the festivities even if you aren't staying at the hotel. Remember however, the Sheraton is in the business of renting rooms to their guests. The rates and incentives that the hotel provides to groups like ours is based on a guaranteed number of "Paid Nights" that our group purchases from the hotel. Our contract with the Sheraton stipulates a minimum number of paid nights that I estimated based on the results of the reunion survey that was mailed out with the December Newsletter. In the event you live locally and plan to attend the Banquet Dinner on Saturday Night, if you will be consuming alcoholic beverages, please consider staying at the hotel that night. So, 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. It is also advisable to call the Sheraton Chicago Northwest to confirm any mail in reservations. You can call the hotel at (847) 394-2000.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE

Every year, in this edition of Gunboat Riders, I try to let those members attending their first reunion know what to expect when they arrive at the hotel. As soon as you finish checking in, ask the desk for the location of the Patrol Gunboat Association Hospitality Room. This should be the first place you go to after checking into your room. The Hospitality Room is where you will receive your registration package with your nametags, meal and tour tickets, you will be able to purchase raffle tickets, additional 50 - 50 tickets, get your coffee mug and Chicago souvenir, and get a 2002 Chicago Patrol Gunboat Reunion Ballcap. Next, you should sign the Association Guest Book. If there are events that you want to attend and have not registered for prior to arriving, you will be able to do so when you register provided there is space available. You will also be able to get answers to any questions you may have. Once all the administrative items are taken care of, you can grab a beer or soft drink, a handful of chips or pretzels and visit our Historian's display tables. There will be lots of memorabilia available along with ships rosters, lists of members and books with listings of the membership sorted by state, by city and by ship. Finally, grab a chair, sit down, relax and visit with some of your old shipmates and prepare for the weeks festivities.

HOTEL RATE CHANGE

I just want to let everyone know that the Room Rate has been dropped to \$89.00 per night. The hotel has now agreed to reduce the rate by \$2.00 per night for members. If you have already made your reservation at the higher rate, it will be adjusted accordingly.

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Patrol Gunboat Association

A LOOK AT NUMBERS

I would appreciate it if you would take the time to read this very closely. I am not trying to confuse you with numbers, but it is very important to our future that you understand the procedures that I must use to determine our needs for the reunions. Please understand that the numbers that you see here are used by me and by the hotel sales staff in order to determine the prices and concessions that we receive when we contract for the hotel to host our reunions. Also remember that these negotiations start taking place more than a year prior to the reunion. Lastly, remember that the final determination of prices, complimentary concessions and total number of rooms blocked for the reunion are firmly set in the contract that I sign each year, as well as penalties for failing to meet these minimums. The only source for this information is the Reunion Survey and our historical data from previous reunions.

I use the data from the Reunion Survey to help determine the number of people we can expect to attend the reunion. Here is a look at the numbers so far.

I mailed out almost 600 surveys with the December edition of Gunboat Riders. As of this date, there have been 107 surveys returned. Of those 107 Surveys, there were 78 positive responses, either 50, 75 or 100 percent certain that they would attend. There were 29 responses stating that they would not be able to attend. I do a little manipulation of the numbers by comparing them to the four previous reunions. Historically, 17.7 percent of the 50 percent certain to attend will actually attend. Of those stating that they are 75 percent certain to attend, 63.5 percent actually do and of those 100 percent certain to attend, 82 percent actually have done so in the past three years. Using these figures, I signed a contract with the Sheraton Hotel guaranteeing the room block for the 2002 reunion. I also used the numbers from previous reunions to make the guarantees for the buffet and banquet dinners. I cannot overstate the importance of this survey.

ATTIRE FOR THE PICNIC AND BANQUET DINNER

It seems that us guys tend to play follow the leader when it comes to appropriate attire. So ladies, for the Friday Night Bar-B-Que, slacks are fine, shorts if the weather is warm would also be appropriate. Remember, dinner will start early in the evening and might run until fairly late depending on the entertainment. What ever is considered comfortable casual attire is appropriate for Friday Night. Saturday is a bit more formal, we will be having a guest speaker and dancing after dinner. A sport coat and tie would be appropriate for the Saturday Night Banquet.

"ROOM UPGRADE"

On 01 June, 2002 we held the drawing for the free room upgrade from those reservations received by that date. The winner was Bruce Carlson, a former USS WELCH (PG-93) crewmember. Bruce will have his room upgraded to a suite at no additional charge.

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>	<u>Contacted</u>
Ansel, William	Green Bay	06/05/2002
Boos, Leroy W.	Douglas	05/15/2002
Carlson, Bruce L.	Welch	04/30/2002
Defalco, Paul	Welch	06/10/2002
Fisher, Steven O.	Douglas	06/12/2002
Groff, James L	Beacon	04/09/2002
Gross, Allen N.	Gallup	05/09/2002
Gullings, Richard	Tacoma	04/28/2002
Langley, Kevin T.	Welch	04/09/2002
Mathis, James C.	Crockett	05/03/2002
Muck, Mike P.	Welch	06/06/2002
Murdock, Don	Tacoma	04/27/2002
Posey, Alvin B.	Chehalis	04/20/2002
Rupp, Paul F.	Graham County	05/26/2002
Sievking, Robert	Marathon	06/04/2002
Smith, Clarence M.	Douglas	06/10/2002
Tuller, James A.	Chehalis	04/27/2002
Van Raalte, Timothy J.	Crockett	05/23/2002
Walker, William	Grand Rapids	06/05/2002

2002 50/50 Drawing

Checking the data base, we have had more than \$700.00 in 50/50 tickets returned so far. We will continue to sell 50/50 tickets until the reunion banquet. 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. Each year we use the proceeds from the 50-50 ticket sales to help with reunion expenses such as the cost of printing meal tickets, name tags and name tag holders, entertainment for the Saturday Night Banquet and a myriad of other expenses. 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. Remember, 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.

TIME TO PANIC AGAIN?

Each year around this time I start to panic. I keep remembering the line in the contract that mentions the dreaded "Attrition Clause". This is the line that states how much I will be required to pay in the event the Association fails to meet the contracted room block. Keep in mind that I made the room block based on the responses that I received to the Reunion Survey. The initial cut off date was July 1, 2002. I just spoke with the hotel and requested that they honor our group rates until July 15 and they agreed, extending the cut off date an additional two weeks. If you still plan to attend the 2002 reunion, I urge you to get your registration packages to me as soon as possible and make your hotel reservations without delay. The direct phone number for reservations at the Sheraton is (847) 394-2000. Be sure to let them know that you are with the Patrol Gunboat Association.

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COMMEMORATIVE CAPS AND MUGS

Eagle Crest INC. will again be making the ballcaps for the 2002 Patrol Gunboat Association Reunion. These are custom embroidered and "*Made In America*". They are identical in quality to the ones ordered for ships and shore commands by the Navy Exchange. As usual, one ballcap will be free with the purchase of \$20.00 in raffle tickets for the Saturday Night Raffle Table Drawing. These ballcaps can also be purchased for \$15.00 each. After the reunion, any remaining hats will be available for sale for \$15.00 each plus shipping. As a reminder, I still have hats and mugs from previous reunions. Anyone interested in collecting the entire set of hats and mugs can contact me for prices or check out the Gunboat Riders Web Site

We will also have special Commemorative Coffee Mugs made to celebrate our fifth annual Gunboat Association Reunion as well as a small souvenir unique to the 2002 Chicago Reunion. The coffee mugs and souvenir will be given out to every crewmember at the reunion during registration. Any remaining

mugs will be available for purchase after we return from Chicago. Last year we changed companies for the coffee mugs. The



2001 coffee mugs looked great and are a better quality mug. We are able to use actual photographs instead of graphics, making them even more attractive. While they do cost a bit more, I think that they are well worth the extra expense. Below you will find a graphic of the 2002 coffee mug. For those of you who have not

seen one of the coffee mugs (the graphic is black and white, the mugs are actually in color), the photograph of the ship will be on the front of the mug, the list of the seventeen PG's will be on the rear. The hotel logo will be in the middle opposite the mug handle.

I finally received the 2002 reunion souvenir for this year, I think you will find it useful both during the reunion and after you get home.



2002 REUNION



PATROL GUNBOAT ASSOCIATION



- USS ASHEVILLE (PG-84)
- USS GALLUP (PG-85)
- USS ANTELOPE (PG-86)
- USS READY (PG-87)
- USS CROCKETT (PG-88)
- USS MARATHON (PG-89)
- USS CANON (PG-90)
- USS TACOMA (PG-92)
- USS WELCH (PG-93)
- USS CHEHALIS (PG-94)
- USS DEFIANCE (PG-95)
- USS BENICIA (PG-96)
- USS SURPRISE (PG-97)
- USS GRAND RAPIDS (PG-98)
- USS BEACON (PG-99)
- USS DOUGLAS (PG-100)
- USS GREEN BAY (PG-101)

EXERCISE PROGRAM

I received this from my father who like all of is getting older every year. There is no question that a good exercise program can help you stay healthy. Here is a good program for building arm and shoulder strength. You might want to adopt this three times per week regimen.

Start with a 5 pound potato sack in each hand. Extend your arms out straight and hold them there as long as you can. After a few weeks, move up to 10 pound potato sacks. Eventually, work your way up to 50 pound potato sacks and finally to where you can lift a 100 pound potato sack in each hand and hold your arms out straight for more than a full minute.

Next, start putting a few potatoes in the sacks, but be careful not to overdo it at this advanced level.

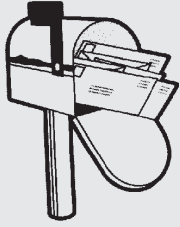
PHOTOGRAPHS NEEDED

Many of us took lots of photographs when we were on the gunboats. I like most others favored pictures of the outside of the ship, particularly when we were running on the turbine. Of course, there are plenty of official photos of the ships available, but again these pictures are of the exterior of the ship.

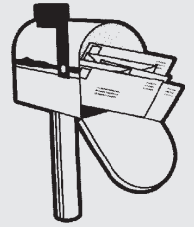
What I am looking for is photographs of the inside of the ships, particularly pictures of the crew living spaces, mess decks, chiefs quarters and officers staterooms. If the situation were to come about where an individual or a company wanted to restore one of the ships to its original configuration, these photographs would be necessary in order to make that restoration authentic. Pictures of the engineering spaces, combat and the bridge would also be appreciated.

How about looking in that old box or trunk and see if you can assist me with this project. Enough said.

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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 Lee Blankenship {PG-86}:** Thanks, I had a great time at the San Diego reunion. I thought that everything went very smoothly, was well-organized, was easy to find, and was top-notch in every way. I had the opportunity to visit with some "old" shipmates and make new friends. The Fri tour (the only one I participated in) was terrific.
- ☐ **From Shipmate Ed Enlow {PG-101}:** We have a conflicting function during the reunion, sorry we cannot be there as I know Chicago is almost in my backyard. Have a great reunion, our thoughts will be with you.
- ☐ **From Shipmate Bob Peters {PG-88}:** Thanks very much for all your effort and planning for a successful and enjoyable reunion. Paul Bennett told me you were a pro and the San Diego reunion certainly supports that observation. (Thanks for the kind words, but when you speak of pro's, Paul Bennett should be at the top of your list).

TWO INTERESTING STORIES

World War II produced many heroes. One such man was Lieutenant Commander Butch O'Hare. He was a fighter pilot assigned to the aircraft carrier Lexington in the South Pacific.

One day his entire squadron was sent on a mission. After he was airborne, he looked at his fuel gauge and realized that someone had forgotten to top off his fuel tank. He would not have enough fuel to complete his mission and get back to his ship. His flight leader told him to return to the carrier.

Reluctantly he dropped out of formation and headed back to the fleet. As he was returning to the mother ship, he saw something that turned his blood cold. A squadron of Japanese bombers were speeding their way toward the American fleet. The American fighters were gone on a sortie and the fleet was all but defenseless. He couldn't reach his squadron and bring them back in time to save the fleet. Nor, could he warn the fleet of the approaching danger. There was only one thing to do. He must somehow divert them from the fleet.

Laying aside all thoughts of personal safety, he dove into the formation of Japanese planes. Wing-mounted 50 caliber's blazed as he charged in, attacking one surprised enemy plane and then another. Butch weaved in and out of the now broken formation and fired at as many planes as possible until finally all his ammunition was spent. Undaunted, he continued the assault. He dove at the planes, trying to at least clip off a wing or tail, in hopes of damaging as many enemy planes as possible and rendering them unfit to fly. He was desperate to do anything he could to keep them from reaching the American ships. Finally, the exasperated Japanese squadron took off in another direction.

Deeply relieved, Butch O'Hare and his tattered fighter limped back to the carrier. Upon arrival he reported in and related the event surrounding his return. The film from the camera mounted on his plane told the tale. It showed the extent of Butch's daring attempt to protect his fleet. He had destroyed five enemy bombers. That was on February 20, 1942, and for that action he became the Navy's first Ace of WW II and the first Naval Aviator to win the Congressional Medal of Honor. A year later he was killed in aerial combat at the age of 29.

His home town would not allow the memory of that heroic action to die. And today, O'Hare Airport in Chicago is named in tribute to the courage of this great man. So the next time you're in O'Hare, visit his memorial with his statue and Medal of Honor. It is located between terminal 1 and 2.

Story number two:

Some years earlier there was a man in Chicago called Easy Eddie. At that time, Al Capone virtually owned the city. Capone wasn't famous for anything heroic. His exploits were anything but praiseworthy. He was, however, notorious for enmeshing the city of Chicago in everything from bootlegged booze and prostitution to murder.

Easy Eddie was Capone's lawyer and for a good reason. He was very good! In fact, his skill at legal maneuvering kept Big Al out of jail for a long time. To show his appreciation, Capone paid him very well. Not only was the money big; Eddie got special dividends. For instance, he and his family occupied a fenced-in mansion with live-in help and all of the conveniences of the day. The estate was so large that it filled an entire Chicago City block. Yes, Eddie lived the high life of the Chicago mob and gave little consideration to the atrocity that went on around him. Eddy did have one soft spot, however. He had a son that he loved dearly. Eddy saw to it that his young son had the best of everything; clothes, cars, and a good education. Nothing was withheld. Price was no object. And, despite his involvement with organized crime, Eddie even tried to teach him right from wrong.

Yes, Eddie tried to teach his son to rise above his own sordid life. He wanted him to be a better man than he was. Yet, with all his wealth and influence, there were two things that Eddie couldn't give his son. Two things that Eddie sacrificed to the Capone mob that he could not pass on to his beloved son: a good name and a good example.

One day, Easy Eddie reached a difficult decision. Offering his son a good name was far more important than all the riches he could lavish on him. He had to rectify all the wrong that he had done. He would go to the authorities and tell the truth about Scar-face Al Capone. He would try to clean up his tarnished name and offer his son some semblance of integrity. To do this he must testify against The Mob, and he knew that the cost would be great. But more than anything, he wanted to be an example to his son. He wanted to do his best to make restoration and hopefully have a good name to leave his son.

So, he testified. Within the year, Easy Eddie's life ended in a blaze of gunfire on a lonely Chicago Street. He had given his son the greatest gift he had to offer at the greatest price he would ever pay.

What do these two stories have to do with one another? Well, you see, Butch O'Hare was Easy Eddie's son.

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:

Charles F Tucker

Ship:

Asheville(PG-84)

Departed

05/07/2002