

# PATROL GUNBOAT ASSOCIATION

## GUNBOAT RIDERS

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### 2003, VALLEY FORGE, PENNSYLVANIA

Early in May, 2002 I traveled to Pennsylvania to check out several hotels for our 2003 reunion. The hotel industry is recovering well from the events of 2001 and it is fortunate that we are able to negotiate our reunions this far in advance. After contacting the Convention and Tourism Bureau and explaining our needs and price range, I had dozens of hotels to choose from. I narrowed the list down to about eight facilities and requested proposals. From the packages that I received, I decided to visit five hotels, spending at least one night in four of them. I checked out several of the larger properties and found that while eager to host our reunion, most were unwilling to make many of the concessions that we have been able to enjoy in the past. Room rates all fell into the \$75.00 - \$90.00 range with meal functions running in the \$30.00 to \$35.00 range.

I had pretty much made up my mind on where to have our 2003 reunion and was preparing to return to Virginia Beach when our CVB contact suggested that, on the way home, I check out one more property. From my experience, the folks at the Convention and Visitors Bureaus are the pros when it comes to knowing what their cities have to offer and I always welcome and value their suggestions. So, my last stop before going home was the Sheraton Park Ridge Hotel and Conference Center in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania.



My highest priority in selecting a hotel has always been the enthusiasm and professionalism of the staff and the condition of the property. I also wanted to keep the 2003 room rate in the \$80.00 - \$90.00 range so as many crewmembers as possible would be able to afford to attend. Unfortunately, the sales manager was not available and since I showed up without an appointment, I was unable to do any negotiating. But, I did tour the property and from what I saw, I was certain that if the

rates were reasonable, the Park Ridge was going to be the site of the 2003 reunion. The lobby area is impressive, it is clean and well lit with plenty of room to sit and relax while you wait for friends to arrive. The sleeping rooms are also clean and spacious with all of the amenities you would expect from a fine hotel.

Following my return from Pennsylvania, it was time to spend some time on the phone with the Park Ridge. I won't bore you with the specifics of the negotiation process, but suffice to say, the Park Ridge is anxious to host our 2003 reunion. On June 14, 2002 I signed a contract with the Sheraton Park Ridge Hotel for our 2003 reunion. The room rate is \$79.00 per night, single, double, triple, quad. Our guaranteed room block is 198 room nights from Wednesday, August 20 through Sunday, August 24, 2003.

The hotel has agreed to provide our required complimentary rooms for raffle table prizes as well as a complimentary pool side hospitality room from Wednesday through Sunday. The Park Ridge also agreed to provide a complimentary Wine and Cheese Reception for early arrivals on Wednesday, August 20, 2003. Our Buffet and Banquet Dinner prices are within our usual range, not to exceed \$32.00 for adults.

Our itinerary will be the same as in previous years, Wednesday will be an early check in day with the Wine and Cheese Reception that evening. Thursday will include an all day tour; Friday will include a full day tour and the Friday Night Buffet Dinner. Saturday morning we will again have a short business meeting in the morning followed by a short afternoon tour. Saturday evening will be the Banquet Dinner followed by live entertainment. Sunday morning will be farewells until the 2004 reunion.

Please fill out and return the included Reunion Survey Sheet at your earliest convenience.

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# Patrol Gunboat Association

## 2002 50 - 50 WINNERS

Each year I have 50 - 50 tickets printed up for the drawing that is held at the reunion. The money we generate from this program is essential to the Association for us to be able to pay for reunion expenses such as Hospitality Room refreshments, raffle table items and entertainment after the Saturday Night Banquet. Half of the money received from the sale of 50 - 50 tickets is awarded to the three lucky winners. Fifty percent of the prize money goes to the first place winner, thirty percent to the second place winner and twenty percent to the third place winner. The remaining half of the money generated is kept by the Association for reunion related expenses.

Each crew member receives 12 tickets, these tickets are included in one of the Association Newsletters. Those who want to participate need only fill out the ticket stubs and return them to me along with a check for \$1.00 for one ticket, or \$10.00 for 12 tickets. We continue to sell 50 - 50 tickets throughout the year and at the reunion up until the start of the Banquet Dinner on Saturday night. Right after the Banquet Dinner, we draw the three lucky tickets and announce the winners.

This year we sold \$1490.00 in 50 - 50 tickets. Of this, \$745.00 was distributed as prizes and an equal amount is kept by the Association. The winners of the 2002 50 - 50 drawing were:

- First Place: Doug Fauls, USS Grand Rapids \$372.50**
- Second Place: Dan Martucci, USS Douglas \$223.50**
- Third Place: Howard Wick, USS Antelope \$149.00**

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## 2002 BALLCAPS AND COFFEE MUGS

Once again I ordered ball caps from Eagle Crest INC. in Jacksonville, FL. These are custom embroidered, "Made in America" ball caps, identical in quality to the ones ordered by the Navy Exchange for ships and shore commands. Each crew member who purchased \$20.00 in Raffle Table Tickets during the reunion received a free ball cap. Additionally, everyone who registered at the reunion received a commemorative Patrol Gunboat Association 2002 Coffee Mug.

We still have a number of 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001 ball caps and coffee mugs left. I have gotten much better at guessing the number of people who will attend the reunions so we have fewer Saint Louis 2000 and San Diego 2001 ball caps left than we do of the previous years. For those of you who want to own a complete set from each

reunion, we will be selling them until they are all gone. The 1998, 1999 and 2000 sets, consisting of a ballcap and a coffee mug will be available for \$16.00, which includes shipping. The 2001 Mug and Cap set is \$25.00 which also includes shipping. I have changed the pricing since the post office now has

## 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>
Baca, Bernie	Asheville	07/16/2002
Baumann, Peter A.	Gallup	08/03/2002
Baumiester, Michael V.	Canon	09/06/2002
Bayless, Kennett E.	Antelope	06/27/2002
Black, Richard	Crockett, Chehalis	09/03/2002
Boyce, Roderick A.	Asheville, Gallup	09/08/2002
Brendt, Bernard C.	Surprise, Graham County	09/20/2002
Brown, Fred R.	Grand Rapids, Benecia, Antelope	07/08/2002
Carle, Mark V.	Beacon	09/24/2002
Casey, Robert L.	Ready, COSDIV 32	06/20/2002
Chambers, Donald R.	PATDIV 21, Douglas	09/02/2002
Daniel, James E.	Chehalis	06/18/2002
Decker, Joseph D.	Crockett	09/22/2002
Ellis, Johnnie N.	Ready, Antelope, Graham County	09/18/2002
Fuller, Michael J.	Grand Rapids	09/10/2002
Hartshorn, Lindsey	Graham County	06/19/2002
Hyson, Wayne	Graham County	08/21/2002
James, Robert C.	Crockett, Green Bay, Antelope	08/27/2002
Kingsley, Richard L.	Grand Rapids	08/26/2002
Kubenka, Ken	COMCOSRON THREE	07/02/2002
McElroy, Percy	Asheville	08/26/2002
Parus, John J.	Canon	08/18/2002
Perry, Fredrick C.	Antelope	09/02/2002
Slippy, Thomas G.	Antelope	06/25/2002
Smart, Don R.	Canon	08/08/2002
Stamper, Lee	Asheville	08/17/2002
Torres, Elliot	Beacon	08/15/2002
Trahan, Robert F.	Crockett	06/23/2002
Tropepe, Steven	Green Bay	07/15/2002
Wible, Thomas R.	Graham County	08/09/2002
Wilson, Herman	Asheville	09/02/2002



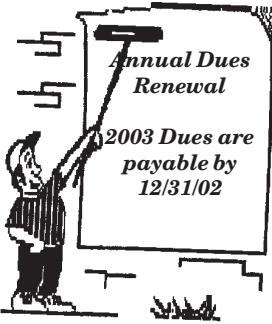
variable rates for priority mail shipping. This way the postage is already figured into the price.

As usual, we had hats and mugs made for the 2002 Chicago Reunion. Unfortunately this is a black and white photograph, the mug is actually in color and it looks great. The hat is blue with the flag in color, lettering in gold and the ship in silver/grey. There is a limited number of hats and mugs left so they are being sold on a first come, first come basis. The 2002 Mug and Cap set is \$25.00, shipping included.

# Patrol Gunboat Association

## 2002 FINANCIAL STATUS

Association dues for calendar year 2003 are due by December 31, 2002. We have had excellent growth this year, our data base now holds the names of 2150 former crewmembers with names and addresses of 834 crewmembers from the Gunboats and associated staffs. We collected



\$5405.00 in 2002 dues, and currently have \$1080.00 in dues for 2003. Calendar year 2002 saw the Association membership grow an additional 68 new members. The increase in dues paying members has made it possible for us to remain in the black, with sufficient funds in our account for us to avoid bank charges. The membership present at the first reunion in Peoria, IL, in 1998 voted on annual dues of

\$20.00. This money is used to cover the costs of producing and mailing the quarterly newsletters, maintenance of the Association's Internet Web Site and the printing and mailing of the Association Membership Directory. These funds are also used to pay for the mailing of over 700 newspaper and magazine press releases each year to announce the date and location of our next reunion. Press releases are produced and mailed between January and March of each year. Those members paying dues also receive a copy of the Association Membership Roster with addresses and phone numbers of other former crewmembers.

Each and every year the continued success of the Patrol Gunboat Association is dependent upon your support. As our membership increases, we become more and more financially sound. As a reminder, your dues status is printed on the mailing label sent with this newsletter. The label for this issue will indicate your dues status for both the current year and calendar year 2003. To determine your dues status, check the label on the envelope that this newsletter came in. **If there is a "RP" on the label to the right of your name, then your dues are paid for the upcoming year. If there is a "RNP" or "RNPI" on the label, then your dues are not paid and should be remitted prior to the end of the year.**

Your First and Last Name  
Your Ship of Station, **(02-RP, 03-RNP)**  
Your Street Address  
City, State and Zip Code

The sample label above for example, indicates that the member is current for 2002 dues, but has not paid their 2003 dues. If the label has **(02-H, 03-H)**, then the member is an Honorary Member and is exempt from Association Dues. If **(02-RNP1, 03-RNP)**, this indicates that the member is in their first year of membership, and that their 2002 and 2003 dues are not paid. I know it sounds complicated, but this is how I manage to filter the data base for labels and keep track of who should receive which newsletters and directories.

## 2002 RAFFLE WINNERS

Here are some highlights from the 2002 Raffle Table Drawing. Everyone who purchased \$20.00 in Raffle Table Tickets received a FREE Chicago 2002 Reunion Ballcap. Tickets for the Raffle Drawing were available only at the reunion and the winners had to be present to claim their prizes. A few shipmates were really lucky to win some great prizes. As always, we gave away a Dumas Model of the USS Crockett, a 52" plywood and fiberglass model. This is no kids toy, putting this model together is a major task. So far, none of our previous winners have completed one. I put one of these models together a few years back and I have to say, it was a challenge. We also gave away 4 classic plastic Revell Models of the PG's that I purchased on E-bay. I also have some for future reunions. Rich Smoktunowicz (PG-86) won one free night at the 2003 Reunion and Rita Struse (PG-87) won two free nights. We are hoping she brings Frank along.

Once again Paul McGurgan's (PG-88) wife Jodi made us one of her wonderful quilts and donated it to the raffle table. It was the first thing to go again this year. A special thanks to Jodi for her hard work and generosity. Other items included a Lone Sailor Plaque, and another Dancing Ostrich.

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## REUNION PHOTO ALBUM

Each year we set up a Hospitality Room for everyone to relax in. This is basically where all the fun happens. Chicago saw us go back to our normal hospitality room setup.

As in previous years, our Historian Dave Donaldson created a wonderful display of memorabilia in the Hospitality Room. This includes many photo albums that have been put together with pictures of the past reunions. Dave does a fine job of providing the majority of this display as well as transporting it back and forth to the reunions. Since we are finally on solid financial ground, we are now able to afford to UPS much of the memorabilia that Dave puts out for the rest of us to enjoy.

When the reunion ends the very first thing I usually do is make a note to myself to remember to take pictures at the next reunion. It seems that I can manage to set things up, arrange meals and tours and the other festivities, but when it comes to taking photographs of the actual reunion, I just seem to always forget. If anyone who attended the Chicago Reunion has some good photographs that they would like to share, please send copies of them to Dave. We would all appreciate it. We would like original copies made from the negatives that we can keep and put in albums for others to enjoy. We are particularly interested in photos of the Hospitality Room and the Banquet Dinner. However, any photographs that you think would interest the rest of the Association would also be appreciated. We would also like to scan some of them and put them on the Association Web Site.

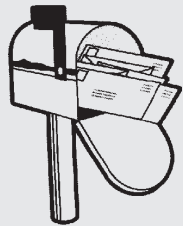
If you include your name and address with them, they will be returned, if you so desire. The name and address of the Association Historian and Web Master are:

<http://gunboatriders.com>  
Web Master  
James Thomas  
6000 La Salle Drive  
Fredericksburg, VA 22407

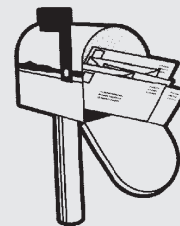
Patrol Gunboat Association  
Historian  
David Donaldson  
779 N E Josephine Ct.  
Hillsboro, OR 97124

# 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.



### ANN MARGRET AND THE VIETNAM VET

Richard (my husband) never really talked a lot about his time in Vietnam other than he had been shot by a sniper. However, he had a rather grainy, 8" x 10" black & white photo he had taken at a USO show of Ann-Margret, with Bob Hope in the background, that was one of his treasures.

A few years ago, Ann- Margret was doing a book signing at a local bookstore. Richard wanted to see if he could get her to sign the treasured photo, so he arrived at the bookstore at 12 o'clock for the 7:30 signing. When I got there after work, the line went all the way around the bookstore, circled the parking lot, and disappeared behind a parking garage. Before her appearance, bookstore employees announced that she would sign only her book and no memorabilia would be permitted. Richard was disappointed, but wanted to show her the photo and let her know how

much those shows meant to lonely GI's so far from home.

Ann Margret came out looking as beautiful as ever and, as second in line, it was soon Richard's turn. He presented the book for her signature and then took out the photo. When he did, there were many shouts from the employees that she would not sign it. Richard said, "I understand. I just wanted her to see it." She took one look at the photo, tears welled up in her eyes and she said, "This is one of my gentlemen from Vietnam and I most certainly will sign his photo. I know what these men did for their country and I always have time for "my gentlemen". With that, she pulled Richard across the table and planted a big kiss on him. She then made quite a do about the bravery of the young men she met over the years, how much she admired them, and how much she appreciated them. There weren't too many dry eyes among those close enough to hear. She then posed for pictures and acted as if he was the only one there.

Later at dinner, Richard was very quiet. When I asked if he'd like to talk about it, my big strong husband broke down in tears. "That's the first time anyone ever thanked me for my time in the Army," he said. Richard, like many others, came home to people who spit on him and shouted ugly things at him. That night was a turning point for him. He walked a little straighter and, for the first time in years, was proud to have been a Vet.

I'll never forget Ann-Margret for her graciousness and how much that small act of kindness meant to my husband. I now make it a point to say "Thank You" to every person I come across who served in our Armed Forces. Freedom does not come cheap and I am grateful for all those who have served their country.

If you'd like to pass on this story, feel free to do so. Perhaps it will help others to become aware of how important it is to acknowledge the contribution our service people make. (GMendoza)

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### K&E CRAFTS

On this years raffle table we put a selection of K&E items. The holder of the winning raffle ticket was able to select one item to be made and shipped to them following the reunion. Harold and Nancy Lankford (PG-97) selected a clock in an oak frame with our 2003 Reunion Photo. Ed Reynolds of K&E Crafts, being a master at this sort of thing, placed the hull number on the photo for Harold and Nancy.



You can see a complete selection of K&E items on the Internet at [http://www.kec-co.com/gunboat\\_riders.htm](http://www.kec-co.com/gunboat_riders.htm). Keep in mind the Association receives a percentage of all sales from K&E Crafts. I have seen most of their products and I assure you that they are top quality and something you will be proud to own.

### 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:**

**Departed**