

Buddy Line



Newsletter of Fraternal Order of Underwater Swim School, Key West, Florida

August 2007

THE EXECUTIVE CORNER

By Gerry Flowers with Bob Holmes

Panama City UWSS Reunion 2009 "Why Should You Attend? "

Sometimes, you just have to wonder...where does the time go? Seems like yesterday Bob Holmes and I were putting pen to paper (under the direction of our den mothers, Don and Art) for the May 2007 UWSS newsletter. And lo and behold! here it is, time for another "Executive Corner" contribution for the newsletter. I am informed, (nicely but firmly) that it was due. . . yesterday. Or the day before. Now for our excuse, and it is a good one.

We have been in Honduras, specifically, Cayos Cochinos, Bob's paradise offshore, north east of La Ceiba, holding high- level talks about the next reunion in Panama City in 2009. Our deadline was tough to meet as Hurricane Dean was running rampant through that area.

Reunions, what purpose do they serve?? Well, to be honest, three years ago, I could not have given you a good answer. Now, I think they are terrific for body and soul and I am in a position to tell you why. (Of course, only in my humble opinion). I don't remember how I got the call, or if I called someone, but Doc Rio and Don Stone were instrumental in me attending the UWSS Key West reunion in 2006. As part of the deal, they would ensure that no harm would come to me because I was in the Marine Corps. They assured me that everyone was friendly and it was not a trick. Keel- hauling was for the guys that should be attending, but were not. For me, the rest is, as they say . . . history.

It was my pleasure to meet Don and Art Stone, Chief Mike, Doc Rio, Bob Holmes, Roger Lynch, and everyone else, and see firsthand the organization that was built with the Diving School and the United States Navy being the foundation and cement (bricks and mortar?) that created it.

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Buddy Line Archives Added to Web Site

Have you been to the FO/UWSS web site?
www.uwss.org



FRATERNAL ORDER UNDERWATER SWIMMERS SCHOOL



U.S. Naval School Underwater Swimmers, Key West, Florida, welcomed its first class in 1954 and trained over 6000 divers before officially closing its doors in 1973. Students came from all branches of the U.S. military, from several civilian government departments, and from allied forces. Former staff and students look back on their days at UWSS with pride and fond memories.

The Fraternal Order of Underwater Swimmers School was organized to keep lines of communication open for former staff and students. Associate membership is open to all who share an interest in the goals and activities of FO/UWSS. One of the most important reasons for our existence is our biannual reunions held at various locations selected by members' votes. The Buddy Line newsletter is published quarterly.

This is our home page. The Reunion page tells the story of the 2007 reunion with many pictures. The History page describes the beginning of FO/UWSS and has pictures from all previous reunions. The Newsletter page allows you to view and download any past issue from the Buddy Line archives. These were added in June. The Contact page has contact information and a new member application form. The Logo Gear page has pictures and prices for all logo gear available. Webmaster, Art Stone, welcomes your comments and suggestions. artstone4@cs.com

Thanks to all who have shared photos from the reunion and class pictures. Keep sending them and we'll keep publishing as many as we can.

**Get your Buddy Line by email
to enjoy the photos in color!**

UWSS LOGO ITEMS



The following logo items are currently available. We can obtain other items if there are enough requests. Prices include shipping and have slightly increased to reflect the recent postage increases.

White Beefy-T shirt..... 15.00 ea, 2 for 26.00
Large logo on back, small logo on pocket
Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL

Ash gray Beefy-T shirt..... 16.00 ea, 2 for 28.00
Large logo on back, small logo on pocket
Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL

White long sleeved T shirt 18.00 ea, 2 for 32.00
Large logo on back, small logo on front (no pocket)
Sizes S, M, L, XL

Ash gray long sleeved T shirt 19.00 ea, 2 for 34.00
Large logo on back, small logo on front (no pocket)
Sizes S, M, L, XL

White polo shirt, 50/50 cotton/poly.. 20.00 ea, 2 for 36.00
Small logo on pocket. Sizes M, L, XL, XXL

Ash polo shirt, 50/50 cotton/poly..... 20.00 ea, 2 for 36.00
Small logo on pocket. Sizes M, L, XL, XXL

Pique polo, all cotton, birch gray..... 22.00 ea, 2 for 40.00
Embroidered logo left front. (no pocket)
Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL

Coffee mug with old logo front & back 15.00
12.00 ea if ordered with shirt

Cap – natural with logo 14.00 ea
10.00 ea if ordered with shirt

Baseball cap – light tan, embroidered logo 19.00 ea
16.00 ea if ordered with shirt

UWSS logo decal
Transparent background 2.00 ea
White background 2.00 ea

UWSS logo lapel/tie pin 6.00 ea

UWSS plaque - Bright brass logo on blue 27.00 ea

UWSS commemorative coin 5.00 ea
1 5/8" diameter, enameled brass with raised design

**Send payment with order to Don Stone,
1440 SW 5th Ave
Boca Raton, FL 33432**

Secretary/Treasurer's Report

Membership- August 2007	234 members
Account Balance May 2007	\$9,291.82
Dues	+225.00
Logo sales	+801.00
Buddy Line printing & postage	-285.86
Logo expense	-367.67
Supplies	-12.77
Account Balance August 2007	\$9,651.52

FO/UWSS Mission

The Fraternal Order of Underwater Swimmers School was formed in order to keep lines of communication open between personnel of the armed forces who were staff or students at the Navy Underwater Swimmers School Key West, Florida. Associate membership is open to family, friends, and others who share an interest in the goals and activities of FO/UWSS. Associate members do not have voting privileges, but are encouraged to participate in all other activities..

One of the most important reasons for our existence as an organized group is to plan for and participate in biannual reunions, which will be held at various locations to be selected by members' votes.

FO/UWSS Officers

PresidentBob Holmes
Vice President.....Gerry Flowers
Secretary/Treasurer Don Stone

The Buddy Line newsletter is published quarterly in February, May, August and November. Buddy Line editors are Don and Art Stone.

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WEBSITE: www.uwss.org

All logo items are pictured on the web site

Buddy Line by email

If you use email you may prefer receiving the email version of the Buddy Line newsletter. It is delivered to your inbox as a .pdf file for Adobe Acrobat Reader.

The benefits to you are faster delivery and **color** photos (when originals are color).

The benefits to the FO/UWSS are the savings on printing and postage for the Buddy Line mailout.

To receive the Buddy Line by email, send your request to stonefish7@cs.com.

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It was the first reunion of any sort that I had ever attended (remember, I Do...live out of the country) as I was always too busy or had one excuse or another for not going to anything after the War and used living in Canada as a major excuse.

Doc Rio ultimately convinced me to go, and I'm sure glad I did. Reunions are not just about seeing old buddies and sharing stories and re-acquainting friends and families. They allow you to meet folks you've never met before, shake their hands, and make new friends with people with shared experiences. Reunions make for . . .human connection and that's always a good thing, especially with what most of us, spouses included have been through.

Had I not attended, I would never have met these people. My life is better all around for meeting Rio, Bob, Don, Aaron, Rudy, Dee Clark, Doc Clarke, other Marines, and all the others, and their spouses. Who else could I share fabulous experiences with, hearing firsthand from speakers like Bob Shouse, Rudy Enders, and Doc Rio? (Mind you, I had to shave once and go to the head twice, during Rudy's talk, but it was all great and an honour to share his stories.

Ladies and gents, let us do this again and again for as long as we are healthy and able. I cannot tell you how much I look forward to being coerced into buying mugs, shirts, and pens from the ladies. Hearing what folks have been up to and just shaking their hands.

So, tell the folks you know, get them back into the loop, and if you find anyone that is not a member and even looks like they would be comfortable in the water...sign 'em up.

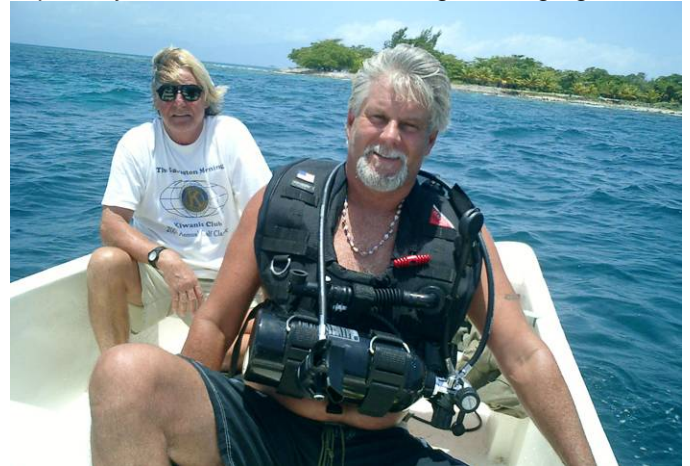
Now. . .for Honduras

Bob Holmes, our new President, asked me to come to Honduras and see the paradise he has been enjoying for the past three decades and a bit. We could also turn it into a meeting about the UWSS reunion. At first, I thought, "geez, I have other things I should be doing. . ."



but good sense finally made me say yes and commit to a visit. I followed Bob's instructions to the letter, up to and including bringing a calculator for changing currency, what taxi to take, how much to pay for it, and how to catch up with him in La Ceiba. It all worked perfectly and soon we were on the boat for Cayos Cochinos with our supplies.

Well, Cayos Cochinos was (is) paradise. We snorkelled, scuba dived, relaxed, talked, reminisced, and got to know each other. We discovered that our backgrounds are similar and we sure have a lot in common. Bob is the consummate host and diver, like a mother hen with instructions and tips on diving the local waters, but as a Marine, I kept my wits about me when enjoying a drink and - dealing with a Navy SEAL. I am glad I did, especially when I tried his new Zeagle diving rig and he



said he had to tie two cinder blocks around my ankles to supplement the twelve pounds on my weight belt in order to achieve the buoyancy "He" wanted. Phew, I called him on that and he apologized, said he did not know what came over him. I guess he thought I had fallen off a turnip truck somewhere in my past. All in all, we had a terrific time.

Ladies and gents, this is why we go to reunions. I've also had a wonderful invitation from Doc Clarke and his wife, a standing invite from Doc Rio, and many others. That is part of the formula.

Now, for the details of what has happened since the Reunion. Very importantly, Bob Holmes is working on a speaker for the Panama Reunion to talk to us about the brave new world of diving. In the meantime, we are planning to go to the next Reunion site, meet with Aaron Farrier, and scope out locations.

Aaron, one of the first to sign on as a UWSS member in its fledgling years, will be doing the initial reconnaissance of Panama City. I spoke to him this morning and he said he will be going to Panama City in the next few weeks to check out locations and all possibilities for activities and accommodations for the 2009 Reunion. He also mentioned he was sitting with Lou Roberts at a VFW having a beer. Aaron and Lou, having a beer..go figure. (Continued on page 4)

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(Lou is another UWSS member but unfortunately missed the 2007 Reunion due to health reasons).

It was also great to hear Aaron has signed on a few new members. I personally have scored two as well, namely, Matt Christiansen, Navy EOD and Lt Philip Knauth, a former Ranger, now living in Hong Kong. I was also fortunate to be challenged at the border by a Homeland Security officer and former Navy SEAL, one Michael Bailey. I have since put him in touch with several old

friends and I truly hope that Mike will join the outfit and attend the next reunion. If he has the experience I did, it will bring him back for years to come.

So urge the members that you know to attend, and if you find any new prospects, give them the website to visit and maybe, just maybe, we will soon be meeting some new friends, friends that share a common thread. In closing, Bob and I urge you to put the new Reunion event on your calendar. Don't leave it to the last minute and make sure you tell your friends that may have been passing on the reunion....to come and give it a try. Until next newsletter...Keep healthy and hope for peace in the world.

More Pics from Reunion 2007 Key West



Photo from Tom Brechtel

Photos from Doc Rio





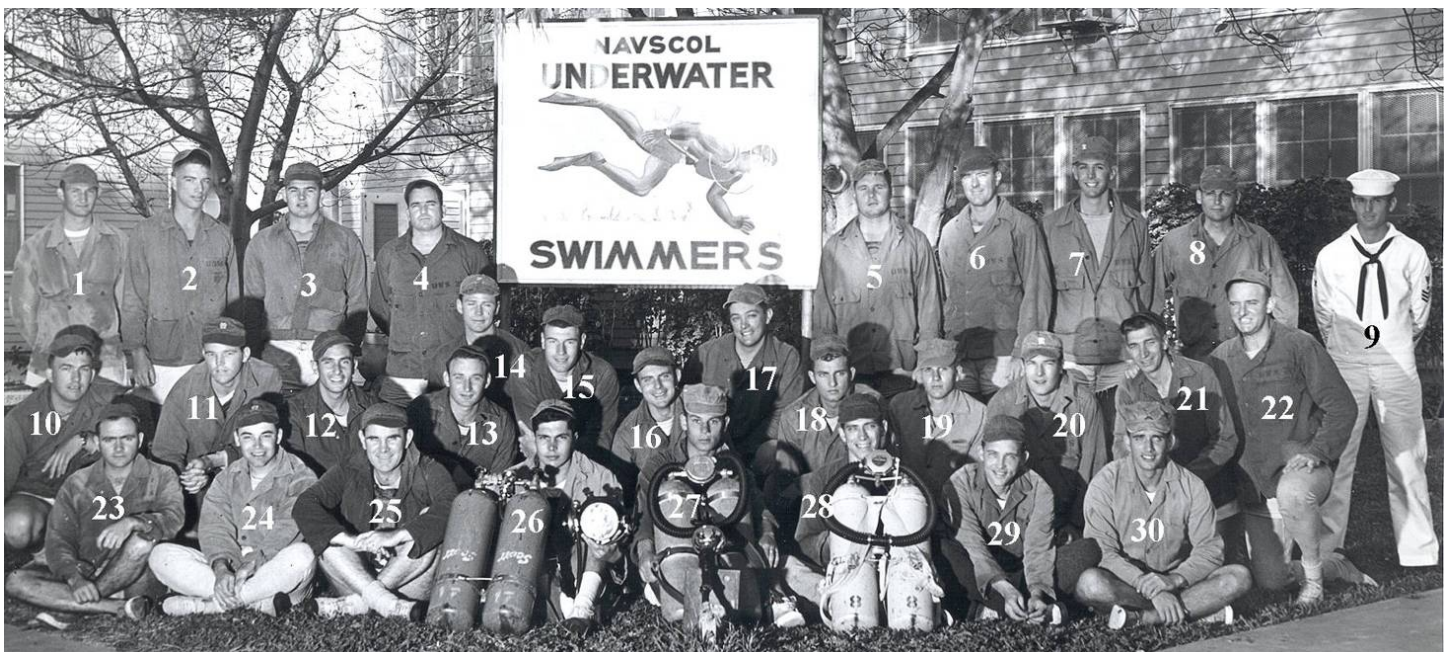
EOD Class 1-64 - August 1963

1 J D Crowley, 2 William W Smart, 3 John D Patten, 4 Bruce E Rebbetoy, 5 Ralph E Vahle Jr, 6 Charles B Spina, 7 Terrance Wood, 8 Steve T Nally, 9 Clarke Lewis, 10 Joseph Gay, 11 Francis W Harkness, 12 Derwood N Cox, 13 Harvey Hill, 14 Carl W Nolan, 15 Robert E Powell

Both Class Photos from John Bartleson

Class of February 1958

6. Dewitt L. Moody, 9. Richard Pence, MN1 Proctor, 12. Donald Stone, 15. Richard Dunbar, 17. Ens Gordon Brumfield



Membership Application

Fraternal Order of Underwater Swimmers School

Full Name: _____

Wife's Name: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Branch of Service: _____ Dates of Service: _____

Dates & Class # at UWSS: _____ or Associate Membership: _____

Send copy of class picture if you have one. 2 Year Membership \$25.00

Make check payable to UWSS and mail to Don Stone, Treasurer, 1440 SW 5th Ave, Boca Raton, FL 33432



The Way It Was

In this classic underwater photo, sent by Bob Shouse, a diver is seen entering a bell used in buoyant ascent training. The old gear worn by the diver dates the photo to the middle 1950's. Those fins didn't give the thrust like duck feet, but they were easier on the legs and feet. Students wore web belts with hand holds on them so that the safety men could hold them down until it was safe to release them for the ascent.

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