

# Buddy Line



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

November 2006

## President's Corner by Don Stone

### It's A Go! Reunion 2007 in Key West

OK members, we are on track for Reunion 2007 in Key West at the Trumbo Point Annex May 10-13

Mike Driscoll and family moved to Key West, and one of the first things Mike did was to contact the command and finally get an answer to our reunion request. As it stands now, we also have a block of 75 rooms at the Visitor Quarters (Fly Navy Building). So get your room request on the priority list ASAP. Send your room request to me by email, phone, or snail mail now. See Buddy Line address and phone on page 2.

The form for the information required by the VQ (names, ssn, military rank, credit card info) will be included in the February Buddy Line. This information is required for room confirmation and must be returned before March 15th. Details and reunion registration forms will be published in the February Buddy Line along with the latest base entry requirements.

Thanks to John Bartleson, our reunion announcements are appearing in many publications. We got several new members from these announcements last year.

We'll have some important topics to discuss and decisions to make at the business meeting

1. Should we elect new officers at this meeting? President and Vice President have two year terms and secretary/treasurer has a four year term. The current officers' terms could be cut one year or extended one year to match up the terms with the reunions.

2. Should we create a board of directors for the officers to confer with when making important decisions? The board might consist of former officers and a couple of representatives of the membership. Perhaps one of them should represent one of the other armed services in our organization.

3. Nail down Reunion 2009 location and reunion committee.

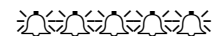
## New UWSS Mug



Our new mug, sporting an old UWSS logo on front and back (the same logo as on our lapel pins), is the result of much research to find a better quality mug. We were unhappy with the old mugs because some didn't hold up well; some faded in the dishwasher and some cracked in the microwave.

The manufacturer of the new mugs guarantees them to be dishwasher and microwave safe. They say the logos are baked on at 1700 F and are permanent.

See the logo gear section to order yours.



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year  
from Don and Art



**UWSS LOGO ITEMS**

The following logo items are available, so send in your orders and they will be shipped pronto. Prices include shipping. Availability is subject to change. We can obtain other items if there are enough requests.

White Beefy-T shirt..... 13.00 ea, 2 for 24.00  
Large logo on back, small logo on pocket  
Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL

Ash gray Beefy-T shirt..... 14.00 ea, 2 for 26.00  
Large logo on back, small logo on pocket  
Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL

White long sleeved T shirt ..... 16.00 ea, 2 for 30.00  
Large logo on back, small logo on front (no pocket)  
Sizes S, M, L, XL

Ash gray long sleeved T shirt ..... 17.00 ea, 2 for 32.00  
Large logo on back, small logo on front (no pocket)  
Sizes S, M, L, XL

White polo shirt, 50/50 cotton/poly.. 18.00 ea, 2 for 34.00  
Small logo on pocket. Sizes M, L, XL, XXL

Ash polo shirt, 50/50 cotton/poly..... 18.00 ea, 2 for 34.00  
Small logo on pocket. Sizes M, L, XL, XXL

Pique polo, all cotton, birch gray..... 20.00 ea, 2 for 38.00  
Embroidered logo left front. (no pocket)  
Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL

**Coffee mug with old logo front & back ..... 13.00 ea**  
10.00 ea if ordered with shirt

Cap – natural with logo 12.00 ea  
8.00 ea if ordered with shirt

Baseball cap – light tan, embroidered logo 15.00 ea  
12.00 ea if ordered with shirt

UWSS logo decal  
Transparent background 2.00 ea  
White background 2.00 ea

UWSS logo lapel/tie pin 4.00 ea

UWSS plaque - Bright brass logo on blue 25.00 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 5<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Boca Raton, FL 33432**

**Secretary/Treasurer's Report**

Membership- November 2006	211 members
Account Balance August 2006	\$7,320.38
Dues	+1,250.00
Logo item sales	+995.00
Buddy Line printing & postage	-174.28
Logo purchases	-836.18
Account Balance November 2006	\$8,554.92

**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**

President ..... Don Stone  
Vice President.....Bob Holmes  
Secretary/Treasurer ..... Roger Lynch

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

e-mail: [buddyline@uwss.org](mailto:buddyline@uwss.org) or [stonefish7@cs.com](mailto:stonefish7@cs.com)  
snail mail: 1440 S.W. 5<sup>th</sup> Ave., Boca Raton, FL 33432  
phone: (561) 391-6727 fax: (509) 472-6492

**WEBSITE:** [www.uwss.org](http://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 [buddyline@uwss.org](mailto:buddyline@uwss.org).

February 1964  
Class Photo  
From Robert Evers

Front row: 1. Evers

Back row: 2. Winningham



July 1963  
Class Photo  
From Robert Darlington

Row 1 (front):

- 1. Tatterson, 2. Patterson,
- 4. Pots, 5. Robert Darlington,
- 6. Ingram

Row 2:

- 1. Hammerly,
- 4. Poncho Urigules

Row 3:

- 3. Stan Ryley, 5. Don Reves

Row 4:

- 6. Durby

October 1959  
Class Photo  
From Ron Douglas

Kneeling L-R: Harrison,  
CWO O'Connor, Douglas,  
Stephens, Cerra, Kern

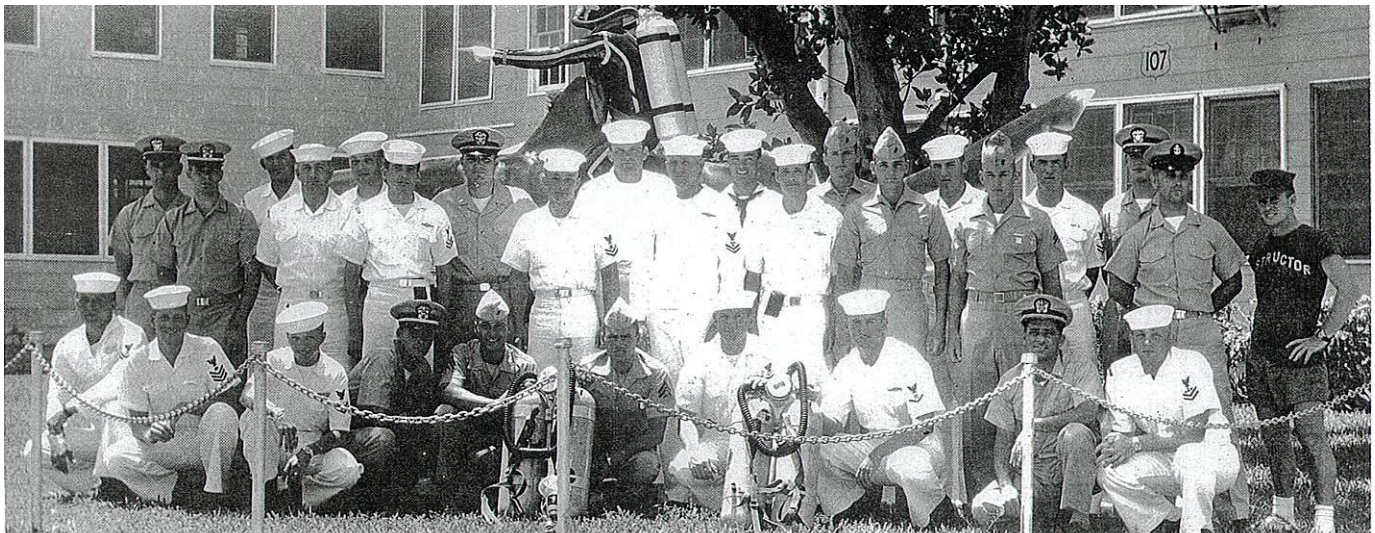
Standing L-R: Lt Stevens,  
Barber USMC, Lt Lowrey  
USMC, Kamanski, CWO  
Benson, Carlson, Stone,  
Instructor Pence





October 1958  
Class Photo  
From Don Checote

- Identified are:
1. Hazelwood, Proctor
  2. Joe ?
  3. Lester ?
  4. "Mush" Morton
  5. Don "Indian" Checote



Merlin Simonson provided additional names for this April 1966 class photo from Andy Sendry that appeared in the August Buddy Line. They are First Row: 4. Ens Larry Sand, 9. Lcdr Lou Nasife; Second Row: 1. Ens John George, 9. Chief Alton Speer, 10. Instructor, John Rabbit; Third Row: 1. Ens Kevan Acton, 4, Ltjg Mark Hampton, 5. Torres, 10. Ens Merlin Simonson.

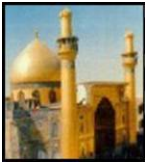


Jim Spencer added names to the March 1955 class photo from Jerry Padrta that appeared in the February Buddy Line. They are

- Bottom Row: 1. Frank Gush,  
2. Page, 4. Jim Spencer,  
5. Sid Faulk;

- Top Row: 2. Stg Brestwer US  
Army

**Thanks to all who send photos and names. These will become part of the UWSS archives.**



## *Najaf Chronicles*

*By Rick LaRoche*

*UWSS member, Rick LaRoche, who works for the US State Department as Action Officer for Najaf, continues to share short narratives of his life and feelings as he carries out his sometimes dangerous duties in Iraq.*

December 4, 2004

The Marine Corps birthday, Thanksgiving and the battle for Falluja have come and gone in the “cradle of civilization.” I am writing this edition as I watch a breaking news story on CNN about Navy SEALs and alleged abuse/torture of Iraqi prisoners. I’ll return to the Falluja and SEAL issues later.

As we stood outside in formation under the pleasantly warm Iraqi sun, Marine helicopters swooped low to salute the troops and the Corps. The Marines don’t like to skip their birthday no matter where they are. The only thing that was postponed was the “two beers and 1 rum punch” per Marine that had been promised. Wiser individuals decided that it was not right to celebrate “that much” while two of the Battalion’s companies were preparing to fight or already fighting in Falluja. The “booze event” was postponed until everyone had returned to Hotel. Enterprising Marines also realized that by adapting to the local culture and “fasting,” they could get a lot more mileage out of the three drinks they would get☺

Thanksgiving was uneventful, and food was plentiful at FOB Hotel. I was surprised at what the Marines came up with: loads of turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, vegetables, pumpkin and pecan pie. Just like my old Chief Petty Officer (sorry), I mean mom used to make. Of course, it wasn’t quite the same without some college or pro football to watch after stuffing yourself. It is getting cold in Iraq (finally), with lows dipping into the 30s F. and highs barely topping 60 F. It’s a pleasant change, except when you need to use the toilet in the middle of the night. What we fondly referred to as the “blue boxes of death” (port o potties) for the furnace-like temperatures inside them in the summer have morphed into icy dungeons. Oh well! You don’t gotta like it; you just gotta do it.”

As I mentioned earlier, two companies of Marines from our base went to Falluja to help out. I have since had the chance to talk with these brave, young men about what they saw and experienced, the vast majority of which is NOT featured by our beloved U.S. press. It seems CNN and others thrive on finding what may or may not be

“errors of judgment” made by young men and women in an environment that most of the press never has and never will experience (even the embedded journalists!). A young Marine Officer (25 yrs. old) told me about groups of insurgents who would pretend to surrender by holding up white flags and then shooting the Marines as they approached. This is also a violation of the Geneva Convention, but it doesn’t seem to count if the “bad guys” do it. They found insurgents with pre-placed and pre-tied tourniquets on their appendages, so that they could “snug them up” when hit and continue to fight. They also found needles with adrenalin and loads of other “stimulants” to keep them going night and day. Many of the wounded insurgents would fasten grenades inside their clothing where they couldn’t be seen (pins attached to a piece of cloth), so that when a Marine tried to remove the clothing to treat them, the grenades would explode, even if the insurgent was too weak himself to pull the pin.

Then there was the mutilated body of a “western woman” found by the Marines. That got little coverage that I could see. Her arms and legs had been cut off, her internal organs cut out and face mutilated beyond recognition. And that’s just the tip of the iceberg of what these “animals” do to westerners and Iraqis alike. Yet the press sends of hours of transmission about a young Marine who shoots a wounded insurgent who is “allegedly” unarmed. How is he supposed to know there isn’t a grenade there? Are we supposed to think for one minute that the insurgents wouldn’t have done the same thing to a wounded Marine?

I knew they would come looking for SEALs eventually. Did they do anything wrong? Well, not from the photos I’m seeing on TV now. The animals they are dealing with do not just say: “OK, I give up and will cooperate completely with you.” They continue to fight after they have been captured. They continue to resist and do anything they can to make life difficult for their capturers. Am I defending torture and physical abuse? Absolutely not! I just think we need to look at the environment and conditions in which these unfortunate events take place. It’s very easy to judge a person – that is until we have to stand in their boots under the same pressure and make the same snap decision.

I want to close on a positive note. It will soon be Christmas! I’m heading to Sweden Dec. 19 for a two-week break. I can’t wait to see my wife and son. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all of you.

Rick La Roche

*The material in the Najaf Chronicles is not for public use and may not be re-printed or used in any other context.*

## 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 to Roger Lynch, Treasurer and mail to FO/UWSS, 1440 SW 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, Boca Raton, FL 33432

### The Way It Was

John Bartleson with a nice sized black grouper -- back in the old days, when they were plentiful, and the only limit on the take was what you were willing to clean.

All you had to do was take a short swim off the beach and you could bring home a fish or lobster dinner.

That's the way it was!



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