

Buddy Line[®]



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

August 2015

Webmaster Bob Bureker presents the new www.uwss.org

FRATERNAL ORDER OF UNDERWATER SWIMMERS SCHOOL
U.S. NAVAL SCHOOL UNDERWATER SWIMMERS
KEY WEST, FLORIDA
1954 - 1973

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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. 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.

President
Robert J. "Bob" Bureker

Vice President
Dr. David Byers

Secretary/Treasurer
Robert W. Shouse Jr.

Logo Gear & Buddy Line Newsletter
Don & Art Stone

The new website with the same www.uwss.org address is designed to be more compatible with the cell phones and tablet devices that are coming into use for viewing web pages as users move into the digital age on those smaller screens.

You may notice that the center part of the page and the sidebar move as the user moves down the page while the background image does not move, but shrinks to fit the device. ..Continued on page 4 at Webmaster.

UWSS LOGO ITEMS



All prices include shipping.

- Beefy-T t-shirt.....25.00 ea
white or ash gray, large logo back, small logo pocket
Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL*
- Long sleeved t-shirt.....28.00 ea
white or ash gray, large logo on back,
small logo on front (no pocket)
Sizes S, M, L, XL,XXL*
- Polo shirt 50/50 cotton/poly.....28.00 ea
white or ash gray, small logo on pocket.
Sizes M, L, XL, XXL*
- Pique polo all cotton.....29.00 ea
birch gray, embroidered logo left front ,(no pocket)
Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL*
- Blue denim shirt, short sleeves38.00 ea
embroidered logo above pocket
Sizes M, L, XL, XXL*
- *All shirts size XXL add \$2.00 ea**
- Cap – natural with logo20.00 ea
- Baseball cap – blue, embroidered logo.....30.00 ea
Cap 3.00 less if ordered with shirt
- All service mug – old logo front, new logo back..20.00 ea
- Embroidered Patch 12.00 ea
- UWSS logo decal – transparent or white3.00 ea
- UWSS Plaque – bright brass on blue60.00 ea
- UWSS commemorative coin 12.00 ea
enameled brass, raised design, 1 5/8 inch diameter
- UWSS all-service commemorative coin..... 15.00 ea
enameled brass, raised design, 2 inch diameter
- Bright LED pocket flashlight, shark rider logo10.00 ea
- Key Chain with enameled logo medallion 10.00 ea

**Make check to FO/UWSS
Send with order to Don Stone
1440 SW 5th Ave
Boca Raton, FL 33432**

Questions? e-mail: stonefish8@gmail.com
or phone (561) 391-6727
All logo items are pictured on the web site

Secretary/Treasurer’s Report

Membership August 2015	264 members	
Account Balance June 2015		13,080.51
Dues		+870.00
Logo gear sales		+208.63
Buddy Line printing & mailing		-176.57
Logo sales mail expense		-85.64
Misc office expense		-296.41
Account Balance August 2015		13,600.52

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 U.S. Naval Underwater Swimmers School Key West, Florida from 1954 to1973.

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

FO/UWSS Officers

- President..... Bob Bureker
 - Vice President..... Dave Byers
 - Secretary/Treasurer..... Bob Shouse Jr
- 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 phone: (561) 391-6727
snail mail: 1440 SW 5th Ave., Boca Raton, FL 33432

WEBSITE: www.uwss.org

Buddy Line by 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 mail out. To receive the Buddy Line by email, send your request to buddyline@uwss.org.

Dues (\$25.00 for 2 years) are payable in May of odd numbered years. Your paid thru date can be found on your label or in the Buddy Line delivery email. Make check to FO/UWSS and send to Bob Shouse Jr., 274 Boca Ciega Point Blvd N., St Petersburg, FL 33708.

The Executive Corner

Bob Bureker, President
Dave Byers, Vice President

Hello everyone, I hope this publication finds you well, happy and prosperous. I have been reviewing the images from the UWSS web pages and it brings back memories of some good and some hard learning experiences. I especially remember some of the night swims with Frank Marshall he did not like that training and always wondered if those flashes in the dark were from several small fish or one really big one!



The picture above is one of my memories of Frank Marshall my swim buddy from UWSS to Vietnam. Frank crossed the bar in 1983 and he was a great guy. I was surprised to get a comment on one of my YouTube.com videos the other day from Frank's nephew, Kenneth Marshall. I left a comment for him and then a few days later there was a comments from Frank's daughter, Julian Marshall, and his son, Lemar Marshall, asking to hear more about Frank. It is amazing to get contact from them after all these years. If you have a minute watch the short video of our team in Da Nang, Vietnam EOD 1965. Check it out on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IL2nLZK3PK4>

I was so sorry to see the tragedy that we have four of our unarmed Marine brothers killed without a means of defending themselves. Maybe we could take some lessons from our Israeli friends? Do you

think this little fast food shop I visited in Tel Aviv is going to be hit by a Terrorist? Off duty military are armed over there.



They even go to the beach armed. Just a fact and maybe an answer to some our current problems.



I was in Israel working for the Embassy when a terrorist attack on the beach took place. The bad guys tried to take over a hotel on the beach coming in on an inflatable boat. They did not last long due to some heavy weapons fire. The hotel room window below mine took a stray round.

I am looking forward to our next Reunion 2017 in San Diego. Contacts are being made as we go to press. A former EOD SEAL friend of mine, Carl Swepton, which lives near San Diego has agreed to join the Reunion preparation team. My lovely wife Dalia, and I are attending 7th annual EOD Group One picnic on Gator Beach Coronado at the end of August. We will enjoy the weather after the heat of August in Phoenix. There are many entertaining places to visit in Southern California. We promise to scope out some of them with the future 2017 Reunion in mind. (Continued on page 4)

Executive Corner – continued from page 3

Reunions are enjoyable for my wife and me. The National EOD Association has one coming up for us in September. It will be in Vegas this time around. The Navy EOD Association has in the plans a wonderful choice, Hawaii for 2016!

It is great to meet and greet a fine group of shipmates that are really the cream of the crop. If you stop to think about it the reason we enjoy these times together is because the few that actually become a graduate of a high attrition rate program are really the finest and toughest. Personally it is fun to hear the stories get longer and more glorious every time they come around. Until next time, take time to enjoy the fair winds and following seas of your days in this country we all worked so hard for, they will not come around again.

I am still looking to add more pictures to our website, good color images are rare. Please take the time look at what you may have in an old album or box. If you find some color or B&W photos of the school training or class photos that we don't have posted send them to me. Make sure you indicate who, what, where and when. If you want to keep originals just get a really good color or black and white scan and email them to me. If you do not have a quality scanner it is easy to just take the original's to Kinko or some place that does that sort of thing and have them do a sheet or two with their professional scanning device. Email your scanned images to president@uwss.org or send them snail mail to Bob Bureker 202 W. Coral Gables Dr. Phoenix, AZ 85023-7470.

By the way anyone coming out this way let me know and we can get together for lunch or a coffee. Please feel free to call me if you have questions or comments about the website or computer information that you would like to chat about. My cell number is 602 679-9284. Constructive comments and suggestions are always very welcome. Be well and stay safe, Bob Bureker

Welcome New Member

Thomas A. Field of Elkton, FL
USN 69-76 UWSS 7110

Webmaster Continued from page 1

This is the intended design to accommodate the smaller video screens. Of course on a regular size monitor like a desktop or laptop computer the image will fill the full screen and you can see more of the background image or the viewing window can be shrunk down in a smaller size as needed to accommodate having more than one window open at a time.

You were there!

THE DIVING DUTY SUMMARY SHEET on the next page, which was contributed to the UWSS archives by Merlin Simonson, will bring back floods of memories to each of you. We want to hear about those memories, those life changing experiences, and the challenges mastered with your swim buddies.

Every evolution on that sheet has many stories to be told. Dave Byers is starting us off with his version of the 1,500 yard swim.

The assignment for all members, student or instructor, and sometimes both, is to share **your** recollections about the 1,500 yard swim for the next Buddy Line. If a different evolution stirs up a story, that's OK. Send that along too.

Send your stories (and questions) by email to buddyline@uwss.org; or by snail mail to Don & Art Stone, 1440 SW 5th Ave, Boca Raton, FL 33432

DIVING DUTY SUMMARY SHEET

DATE	DEPTH	TIME	EVOLUTION	EVOLUTION	INST. SIGNATURE
	FT.	MIN.	LIGHT WEIGHT	SCUBA	
4-19-66	15 FT.	17 MIN.	OPEN/CIRCUIT 500 YD. SCUBA	SWIM TIME	<i>Bye</i>
4-19-66	15'	17 MIN.	750 YD O/C SCUBA	COMPASS ACCURACY SWIM	
4-20-66	30'	28 MIN.	1000 YD O/C SCUBA	TIME SWIM	<i>Bye</i>
4-20-66	30'	28 MIN.	750 YD O/C SCUBA	TIME SWIM	
4-21-66	60'	10 MIN.	60 FOOT DIVE O/C SCUBA		<i>Bye</i>
4-22-66	40'	20 MIN.	O/C SHIP'S BOTTOM AND CIRCLE LINE SEARCH		
4-22-66	40'	10 MIN.	O/C HARBOR PRACTICAL		<i>Bye</i>
4-25-66	130'	10 MIN.	O/C 130' QUALIFICATION DIVE		
4-26-66	30'	35 MIN.	O/C 1500 YD SWIM		<i>Bye</i>
4-27-66	30'	20 MIN.	PLANE BOARD AND CLUMP LINE SEARCH O/C SCUBA		
4-27-66	30'	10 MIN.	COMPASS LINE SEARCH O/C SCUBA		<i>Bye</i>
4-28-66	15'	25 MIN.	800 YD COMPASS ACCURACY SWIM O/C SCUBA		
5-3-66	35'	9 MIN.	JACK BROWN MASK HARBOR BOTTOM SEARCH		<i>Bye</i>
5-4-66	35'	20 MIN.	JACK BROWN MASK 1-MAN FLANGE PROBLEM		
5-5-66	35'	27 MIN.	JACK BROWN MASK "SHIP'S FITTER'S NIGHTMARE" PROBLEM		<i>Bye</i>
5-6-66	35'	31 MIN.	JACK BROWN MASK 2-MAN FLANGE PROBLEM		
5-11-66	15'	15 MIN.	MARK II 500 YD. COMPASS ACCURACY SWIM		<i>Bye</i>
5-12-66	15'	20 MIN.	MARK III 750 YD COMPASS ACCURACY SWIM		
5-16-66	15'	10 MIN.	MARK IV HAND HELD SONAR PRACTICE		<i>Bye</i>
5-16-66	15'	30 MIN.	MARK V HAND HELD SONAR PRACTICE		
5-17-66	15'	30 MIN.	O/C HAND HELD SONAR PRACTICE		<i>Bye</i>
5-18-66	15'	30 MIN.	O/C HAND HELD SONAR PRACTICE		
5-19-66	60'	20 MIN.	MARK VI 60 FT. QUALIFICATION DIVE. CIRCLE LINE.		<i>Bye</i>
5-24-66	150'	10 MIN.	MARK VII 150 FT. QUALIFICATION DIVE. CIRCLE LINE		

NAME (LAST) (FIRST) (MIDDLE) SER. NUMBER DATE
 SIMONSON MERLIN DAVID 700164 ENS.

1,500 Yards or Bust .by David A. Byers

Dave was the just turned 14 years old son of Dow Byers, UWSS instructor, when he was allowed to take the SCUBA course along with the regular students. Here is his personal story of the 1,500 yard swim.

One of the hardest evolutions in the basic UWSS SCUBA course was the 1,500 yard swim. As a timed exercise, the swim was designed to test the outer range of the swimmer's physical ability to reach the beach target. The 1,500 yard swim was supposed to be completed within 35 minutes. Doing the math, 4,500 feet divided by 35 minutes equals an average 129 feet per minute – UNDERWATER (allegedly). This was the marathon event of underwater swimming.

However, there were a couple of issues that complicated the exercise. First, you had to fight a current that would sweep you off course, so everyone was actually swimming farther than 1,500 yards to compensate for the drift. Course corrections were done with a compass that you used to take bearings to the target then swim the bearing. Since the bottom is featureless, the compass allowed you to stay focused longer on swimming as opposed to popping your head up every five minutes to see how you were doing.

Note: Several years later, I became a pilot and during my navigation lessons - guess what? Dead reckoning is the practice of taking a bearing with your compass, then flying the bearing. Been there - done that.

The second issue was that no one actually completed the swim underwater. The capacity of the government-issue scuba tank was around 75 cubic feet at 2,400 psi and everyone had twin tanks. However, with the exertion of swimming, even twin tanks were not enough. The air was used up by most swimmers at about 1,000 yards into the swim...which meant the last part of the swim was finished on the surface. You were not allowed to ditch your equipment, so everyone ended up schlepping along with their gear and a partially inflated BCD which was not very streamlined for efficient swimming.

There was one other complication for some. If your team was falling behind or being swept by the current, the instructors would come alongside in the LCPR and harass you.

This usually came in the form of offering you a ride to get you back on course ("no one will know") or just cajoling to get you to quit. I imagine only a few did succumb to the temptation but it had to be a buddy decision.

As exhausted teams reached the beach, it must have seemed like an eternity for the instructors waiting for the stragglers, some actually walking down the beach having landed somewhere else.

From my own personal experience, it was perhaps the most physically challenging exercise I had ever accomplished in my short life up till then.

My swim buddies were assigned I think as a cruel joke among the instructors. First, there was Luther T. Jones, a huge Air Force Para-Rescue airman. Then there was Rodriguez – fleet Navy, a short, stocky Mexican. And finally me, a 14-year old, scrawny kid. The original Three Amigos. We had been teamed up from the get-go and completed all of the evolutions trying to match the pace with each other and to keep up with the other, more equally matched teams. I think Jones suffered the most since he was the strongest and fastest and had to drag us along.

The 1,500 yard swim started on a typical warm Key West morning. I was the navigator with compass strapped to my right wrist (it was huge) and pointed the way. As an endurance exercise, we tried to stay up with the other teams we could see but as mismatched as we were, eventually fell behind. Then there was the current. We were drifting towards the dump and the correction angle was starting to get extreme. As we popped up to take another bearing, we could hear the LCPR approach and our class proctor Sol Atkinson started to sing the siren song. He dropped the ramp right in front of us and said to just hang on and he'll tow us back on course. That would have been sudden death - tantamount to a Drop on Request (DOR) and tagging us for life as non-hackers.

We refused and he started calling us losers, misfits; that we are going to fail to evolution and we should just quit now. Rodriguez muttered that he wished he had a hand grenade.

We got our bearing and ducked back below and just kept huffing and puffing till we all ran out of air. Jones, as the largest of the group by far, went first. Rodriguez was next and finally, me. What's funny was that they had the twin steel tanks while I was using a borrowed single aluminum tank. Like I said, I was pretty scrawny then, maybe 100 pounds wet or so.

We went to snorkels and started side-stroking towards the beach at an angle, still fighting the current. We eventually made it and I don't think we were the last. I was so exhausted, I just floated in the shallows until Luther picked me up out of the water by my tank and lugged me over the dry land. It was a very quiet ride back to the school. But we made it together as a team and to this day, I think this particular swim was one of the defining moments in my life.

Assignment for Members:

What were your recollections about the 1,500 yard swim?

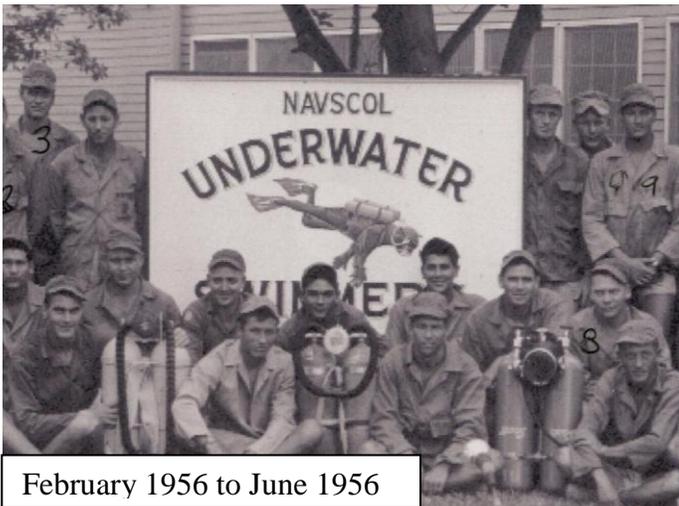
Our Evolving Identity – Signs of the Times



November 1954 to April 1955



January 1956 to June 1956



February 1956 to June 1956



Oct 1956 to Dec 1961



December 1961 to June 1965



April 1966 to June 1973

Membership Application Fraternal Order of Underwater Swimmers School

Full Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Wife's Name: _____ Buddy Line Newsletter by email _____ or snail mail _____

Branch of Service: _____ Dates of Service: _____

Dates of Class at UWSS: _____

Send copy of class picture if you have one. 2 Year Membership \$25.00 Make check payable to FO/UWSS
and mail to Bob Shouse Jr, Treasurer, 274 Boca Ciega Point Blvd N, St. Petersburg, FL 33708

The famous shark rider – where is he now?Last seen in San Deigo, California in 2004.



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