

# Buddy Line



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

May 2009

## 2009 Reunion A Huge Success

The 2009 reunion, held May 14-17 on the Naval Support Activity base in Panama City Beach, was our biggest event ever. The reunion committee and the MWR staff of NSA went all out to provide an exceptional reunion for 165 members and guests. The entire Visitor Quarters was reserved for us, and the beautiful bay front location was a great setting for the outdoor activities.

Kudos and thanks go to the reunion committee, headed up by Woody Woodward. He was assisted by Sue Ellen Woodward, Bill and Sammie Garnett, Clay and Margaret Grady, Gary and Nancy Wilson, and Bob Barth.



Their hard work and attention to details provided an outstanding experience for reunion attendees.

The Icebreaker at the Main Deck Club on Thursday evening spilled out on to the new waterside deck where the drinks, the food and the camaraderie were enhanced by the view and the perfect weather.



Friday's activities included a morning tour of the Dive School and an afternoon Dive Locker tour. For the ladies who preferred shopping, bus transportation was provided to Pier Park shopping center.



The Fish Fry on Friday evening was at the nearby Marina Pavilions. Same view, same perfect weather. After the dinner of fried fish and hush puppies, we were wowed by gourmet desserts.

A fund raiser auction featured three glass logo discs made by Margaret Grady and memorabilia from Rudy Boesch. The glass logo discs went to Peter Blair, Don Stone and Jerry Hammerle. Rudy's donations of a Bowie knife, hats and Desert Storm clothing were won by Lynn Blair, Sylvia Vaughn and Chris Seger.



The Logo Store was very busy both Thursday and Friday evening. Don Stone brought a big load of logo gear with him and had very little left to take home. So now he is busy restocking. Thanks to Judy Padrta and Art Stone for helping with the Logo Store.



(More photos on page 4)

**UWSS LOGO ITEMS**



Due to increased costs and higher postage fees we are forced to increase prices. All prices include shipping.

White Beefy-T shirt..... 18.00 ea, 2 for 32.00  
 Large logo on back, small logo on pocket  
 Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL\*

Ash gray Beefy-T shirt..... 18.00 ea, 2 for 32.00  
 Large logo on back, small logo on pocket  
 Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL\*

White long sleeved T shirt ..... 20.00 ea, 2 for 36.00  
 Large logo on back, small logo on front (no pocket)  
 Sizes S, M, L, XL,XXL\*

Ash gray long sleeved T shirt ..... 20.00 ea, 2 for 36.00  
 Large logo on back, small logo on front (no pocket)  
 Sizes S, M, L, XL,XXL\*

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\*

**\*All shirts size XXL add \$2.00 ea**

Coffee mug with logo ..... 15.00

Cap – natural with logo..... 14.00

Baseball cap –tan or blue, embroidered logo.....20.00  
 Mug or cap 3.00 less if ordered with shirt

Embroidered Patch .....7.00

UWSS logo decal .....2.00  
 Transparent or white background

UWSS plaque - Bright brass logo on blue.....34.00

UWSS commemorative coin.....7.00  
 1 5/8" diameter, enameled brass with raised design

Key Chain with enameled logo medallion .....7.00

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

**Secretary/Treasurer's Report**

Membership May 2009 266 members

Account Balance February 2009	\$9,645.13
Dues	+2,475.00
Reunion Registrations	+9,130.00
Fundraisers at Reunion	+2,300.00
Logo gear sales	+4,387.00
Buddy Line + Postage expense	-373.79
Office expense	-169.98
Logo gear expense	-3,720.74
Reunion expense	-11,244.11
Account Balance May 2009	12,428.51

**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. Membership is open to all U.S. military trained scuba divers. Family, friends, and others who share an interest in the goals and activities of FO/UWSS are welcomed as associate members.

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 .....Bob 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.

e-mail: [stonefish8@gmail.com](mailto:stonefish8@gmail.com)

snail mail: 1440 SW 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 mail out.

To receive the Buddy Line by email, send your request to [stonefish8@gmail.com](mailto:stonefish8@gmail.com).

## The Executive Corner

By Gerry Flowers with Bob Holmes

Well folks, the 2009 UWSS Reunion is now in the books. What a successful get together it was. For the success of this reunion, we again have to thank our reunion committee headed up by Woody Woodward. We are all aware that it was organized and driven by their wives. Can we call a "spade a spade". This could not have been possible without the dedication of their better halves. Thank you ladies, we all have enjoyed the fruits of the committee's work. A big thanks goes to Don and Art Stone for the logo gear they haul around for us and the great enameled key chain in the package, and to all those that were worker bees on site.

Bob and I talked at length about how everything that took place after checking in at the Naval Facility was orchestrated to perfection. We all appreciate the magnitude of the task the committee offered to take on. From the ice breaker to the banquet, the logo gear to the auction, our speakers to the tours, it was a first class operation from start to finish. How about that mess hall!!

The food was terrific, the accommodation outstanding, the venues were perfect and the beach, sunsets and company we kept were wonderful. Our



tours of Naval Diving Operations, the E.D.U. and the E.O.D. facility allowed us all to see the fine young men and women that continue today, the legacy that you gentlemen initiated so many years ago.



We were privy to things we never expected to see and emotions we did not think we would feel. Watching 160 patriotic men and women, with their hands over their

hearts, pledging allegiance to their flag and country, then helping Lee Greenwood sing "God Bless the USA" touched me more than I can tell you.

We were treated to a touching flag folding ceremony compliments of Bo Burwell and his team. We saw the bar raised with a cakes and desserts as well the beautiful handmade UWSS glass logos. It was an experience to see the detail of the "Hard Hat Diver" that will eventually be a statue in front of the Dive School. To round it out, the beautifully handcrafted "Shark and Diver" that sat atop the 65 square foot cake captured every one's attention. Thanks to all of you on behalf of all the attendees.



Incidentally, whomever or whatever group walked off with the "Shark and Diver" at the end of the evening, we all agree that it was a stealthy operation. But the men and women of NSW came to the conclusion that it was not a theft, but a rescue. Interesting. Anyway, please make arrangements to get it safely shipped back or allow us and the artist the peace of mind to know you will deliver it back in one piece to again sit atop the UWSS cake in Branson, Missouri.

For those that left before we finally closed the doors at the banquet hall, many missed seeing Navy SEAL legend Rudy Boesch, Leader of Men, Star of Survivor, brilliantly take charge of the Mark XXI, upright vacuum and display his prowess to those of us that were willing to watch him vacuum the room. He was not voted off the carpet. However, I think that photo may turn up in some interesting places.



In closing, both Bob Holmes and I would like to thank Woody Woodward and the committee, Don and Art Stone and all those that donated their time, expertise, and items for the fund raiser auction.

Most importantly, we thank everyone that made the effort to attend, have fun, hoist a brew, touch base with old friends and plan for two years from now. We hope everyone enjoyed themselves. WE sure did. For photos, please contact Doc Rio.

Friday Tours



Ice Breaker & Fish Fry



**Banquet Highlights**

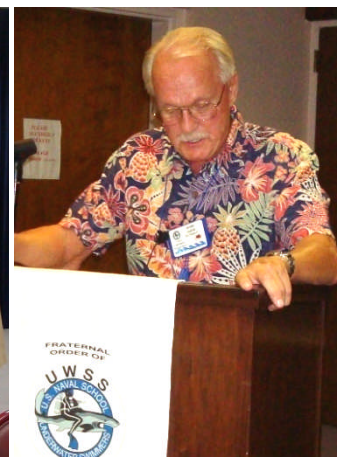
Bob "Doc" Clark, our favorite master of ceremonies, presided over the banquet program. Bo Burwell led, and explained, a flag folding ceremony and Sammie Garnett explained the symbols of the MIA White Table.



After dinner FO/UWSS president Bob Holmes introduced the guest speakers.

Commander Tim Richardt, commanding officer of the Navy Diving and Salvage Training Center, spoke about methods and equipment being used today in Navy diving.

Capt. Norm Olson, USN (SEAL) (Ret) shared stories of his long and interesting career in naval special warfare.



The elaborate triple cakes, trimmed with white chocolate sea shells and a sculpted fondant shark rider, was admired by all before dinner and found to be just as delicious as beautiful after dinner. The cakes were the artistry of pastry chef, Pam Bartram, daughter of Margaret and Clay Grady.



Bill Garnett started the door prize drawings with the best prize first – a glass logo disk hand crafted by Margaret Grady. He asked Kavan Checote to draw the first winning ticket.

Much to Kavan's amazement, he drew his own ticket, and in spite of his dad's embarrassment (as you can see in the photo), went home with a beautiful glass logo.

The prize drawings ended with the 50/50 drawing which was won by Jerry Hammerle.



## Editors Corner by Don Stone

Well, Reunion 2009 will go down as the largest and the most elaborate ever. The reunion committee, headed by Woody and Sue Ellen Woodward and Bill and Sammie Garnett, planned and executed it perfectly. The base supported the reunion completely and we gained many new members including active duty naval personnel.

At the business meeting, our executive officers, Bob Holmes, president, and Gerry Flowers, vice president, were unanimously reelected. Don Stone continued as secretary/treasurer in a 4 year term.



One of the most important things accomplished at the business meeting was a change in our membership requirements. A motion was approved to do away with the 2-tier system of membership. Full membership was opened up to all U.S. military trained scuba divers.



The last weekend in April was chosen for the 2011 reunion to avoid other events. This would make the reunion dates April 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, and 30<sup>th</sup>. As for the locale, several sites were discussed, but the majority favored Branson, MO because of the central US location and the unusual cooperation, friendliness to vets and facilities there. Jerry Padrta will chair the 2011 reunion committee with help from Ernie Caltenback, Norm Olson and Rudy Boesch. Jerry and Judy Padrta will research reunion facilities when they go to Branson in June.

A special thank you goes to Sammie Garnett and Sue Ellen Woodward who kept everything running smoothly from arrivals to banquet.



Saturday morning's breakfast at the General Mess fortified us for the day's activities. During the business meeting, the ladies were treated to a special program arranged by Sammie and Sue Ellen. This activity included games, prizes and an inspirational talk about happiness by Dr. John Savage.



Thanks to Gerry Flowers and Erasmo "Rio" Riojas for sending their reunion photos. Along with the photos taken by Don and Art, we have over 700 photos of the reunion. Look for more of them in future issues of the Buddy Line and on the website.

## Newest logo item very popular



A new logo item was introduced at the reunion. A key chain with enameled shark rider medallion was given to each member attending the reunion. The reverse side lists all the branches of the US military represented by UWSS students. The key chain is now available in the logo store for \$7.00.

## Membership Application Fraternal Order of Underwater Swimmers School

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Branch of Service: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Military scuba training place/date \_\_\_\_\_ or Associate Membership: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

### The Way It Was



The Acey-Ducey club, very conveniently located directly across the street from UWSS, was the establishment of choice for many social and military gatherings from wedding receptions to CPO initiations. As you probably know, Navy CPO's are right next to CNO's in importance. Pictured is new chief, ACPO Crowell, doing flutter kicks while wearing lead deep sea diver shoes to the amusement of UWSS CO Ken Ploof and assorted UWSS instructors, many of whom had been there and done that.

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