

# Buddy Line



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

November 2008

## FO/UWSS Reunion May 14-17, 2009 Panama City, Florida

### Update from Reunion Committee

Plans for the Reunion Schedule include the following activities. The Ice Breaker on Thursday night will be followed by a tour day on Friday and a fish fry that evening. Tours will be to the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center and EDU, both with goodie locker stuff for sale, and a visit to the Man-in-the-Sea Museum.

We are working on a static display and demos, where practical, of some of the new toys available to today's military diver, to include the latest SDVs (the unclassified stuff – which may not be much) display. (Before they move away to Hawaii)

There will be some special events for the ladies and we are discussing some sort of boat/snorkeling trip or harbor tour for all hands. Saturday morning is the breakfast/business meeting. The ladies will have a separate breakfast with guest speaker/entertainment. The Banquet is Saturday night

Additional information and registration forms will be in the February Buddy Line.

Sixty rooms have been blocked for us at the Visitor Quarters. Forty seven suites have queen beds and can accommodate two persons. Thirteen suites have a bed plus a sofa sleeper.

To make reservations at the Q's, contact Anne Sawyer: [anne.sawyer@navy.mil](mailto:anne.sawyer@navy.mil) or call (850)234-4217 or (850)234-4556. When you email/phone, please reference the Underwater Swimmer's School Reunion 14-17 MAY09 group. When making Q reservations by phone, you may not get an answer; just leave a message and she will get back to you within 24 hours.

The information required for making reservations includes for all: first/last name, rank, active?, retired?, how many in party?, last 4 of social, billing address for

Continued on page 3

## The PJ Story by Aaron Farris



CMSCT Joe Vigare ready for ocean jump 1961

Gerry Flowers and Bob Holmes, among others, asked me why Pararescuemen were required to attend the Navy Underwater Swimmers School in Key West. Allow me first to relate a little background about how Pararescue came to be, who we are, and what we do.

In August 1943, Lt. Colonel Donald "Doc" Flickinger, Sergeant Harold Passey, and Corporal William McKenzie made a parachute jump into the dense jungle of Burma to rescue a group of downed Airmen. That successful parachute rescue mission led ultimately to the formation of the Air Rescue Service together with the Pararescue career field in 1946. The U.S. Navy and Coast Guard both contributed greatly during this era by developing enhanced capabilities for water recovery by upgrading flying boat technology from the PY-4 and PY-5 to the improved high wing twin-engine PB1Y1.

Continued on page 7

**UWSS LOGO ITEMS**



The following logo items are currently available. We can obtain other items if there are enough requests. Prices include shipping.

- 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
- Cap – natural with logo ..... 14.00
- Baseball cap – light tan, embroidered logo..... 19.00  
Mug or cap 3.00 less if ordered with shirt
- Embroidered Patch ..... 7.00
- UWSS logo decal
  - Transparent background ..... 2.00
  - White background ..... 2.00
- UWSS logo lapel/tie pin ..... 6.00
- UWSS plaque - Bright brass logo on blue ..... 27.00
- UWSS commemorative coin ..... 5.00  
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 2008 248 members

Account Balance August 2008	\$ 9,901.66
Dues	+450.00
Logo gear sales	+344.00
Buddy Line expense	-113.05
Postage	-145.80
Account Balance November 2008	\$10,436.81

**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..... 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.

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**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

This commentary has been delayed a few days to view the outcome of this very Historic U.S. Presidential Election. As we watch the news and the events unfold, we have to collectively wonder if changes are in fact, in the near future. Certainly, many are needed regardless of political affiliations.

We are now just six months away from the 2009 reunion in Panama City. Woody Woodward and his Reunion Committee are working hard to make this a success. Rooms have been made available, activities are being planned and I hope everyone is thinking about seeing and reconnecting with friends and comrades.

At our last reunion, we were blessed to have many of our members present, including Rudy and Marge Boesch. It is with great sadness that we have been informed that Marge Boesch passed on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November. This will come as a shock to many, as Marge was very active in the Naval Special Warfare Community specifically and the Navy Community in general. Our hearts go out to Rudy and his family and everyone that knew and loved Marge. She will be sorely missed by an awful lot of people all over this country.



Robert Leroy, (Bob) Darlington, passed away November 4, 2008 in Taylorsville, Utah at the age of 72. Bob proudly served his country in the US Navy as an Aviation Ordnance Chief Petty Officer and Diver in Explosive Ordnance and Nuclear Weapons Disposal. Cindi Pester (Bob's daughter) posted notice of his death on [executiveuwss@gmail.com](mailto:executiveuwss@gmail.com) on November the 6<sup>th</sup>. I would like to thank Cindi for letting us know. While I did not know Bob personally, many of you did and I think it is important to pass this information on.

I regret that these are but a few of the notices we will be hearing of over the next decade. With that in mind, I think that this makes attending these reunions and contacting classmates and friends all that more important. I always wonder where the time goes, from being a young Marine until now, heck, I wonder where the time went since the last newsletter. Hope to see you all in Panama City. Again, thanks to Woody Woodward and his Reunion Crew and Don and Art Stone for keeping **ME** pointed in the right direction.

**Reunion Update** - continued from page 1  
each, phone number, and credit card + expiration date for each person.

They can also accommodate campers and cabin use. Reservations should be made with the Outdoor Recreation Manager Gary Smith. [gary.k.smith@navy.mil](mailto:gary.k.smith@navy.mil)  
Comm 850-234-4091 FAX 850-230-7115

Questions/Comments please contact:

Bill Woodward, Ph: 850-785-7215, Cell: 850-814-9123, [gunnerww@comcast.net](mailto:gunnerww@comcast.net), or Bill and Sammie Garnett [wagretseal@comcast.net](mailto:wagretseal@comcast.net), [samgarnett@comcast.net](mailto:samgarnett@comcast.net), (h)850-234-8755, Sammie (c) 850-890-0604, Bill (c) 850-890-0605

## Editor's Corner by Don Stone

Besides the losses mentioned by Gerry, we have two more losses to report. One is member Patrick Badger, whose death was reported in Fire in the Hole. The other is friend to many of us, James H. "Hoot: Andrews, UDT veteran and plank owner of Seal Team Two.

Bart Bartleson has been busy getting the 2009 Reunion notice into numerous military organization publications. As a result, we are getting many inquiries about membership and new members from all branches of the armed services.

### Welcome aboard to these new members:

Frank Godwin UWSS class 54 or 55  
USN 1944-64.

Ernest Slattery UWSS class 4/55  
USN 1948-68

David Toothaker UWSS class 3/71  
USN 1970-90

Tommy Wright UWSS class 2/63  
USN 1957-76 submarine sailor

Don Beasley UWSS class 63 or 64  
USAF PJ 1956-87

Stanley Lawson Associate  
USMC 2<sup>nd</sup> Force Recon and 3<sup>rd</sup> Force in Nam.  
Marine diver, worked off subs in Key West

David Salisbury, UWSS class 5/65  
USN 1956-81 EOD

Jon Ilesley, UWSS class 5/66 and 5/73  
USN 1963-69 and 1973-89

Russell Kelly, UWSS class 12/69  
USN 69-91 EOD Kelly wrote: "UWSS was the best, hardest, most trying 8 weeks of my life. It changed me from a loner to a team player and instilled in me values like honesty and integrity that I will take with me to my grave. It was wonderful."



Class of May 1957 Photo from Trig Bakkom

Bakkom Gleason



Class of October 1955 Photo from Ricardo Bethart (Rutledge)

Front row: 1. Al Fiedler, 2<sup>nd</sup> row: 2. E. Sopchik, 4. Maarvin Heaps, 9. Larile, Back row: 5. Tappy, 12. Bethart



Class of February 1963 Photo from Tom Wright

Patterson

Wright

Instructor

Caruthers



Photos on this page are from Berny Diggs with information from Wayne Orr.

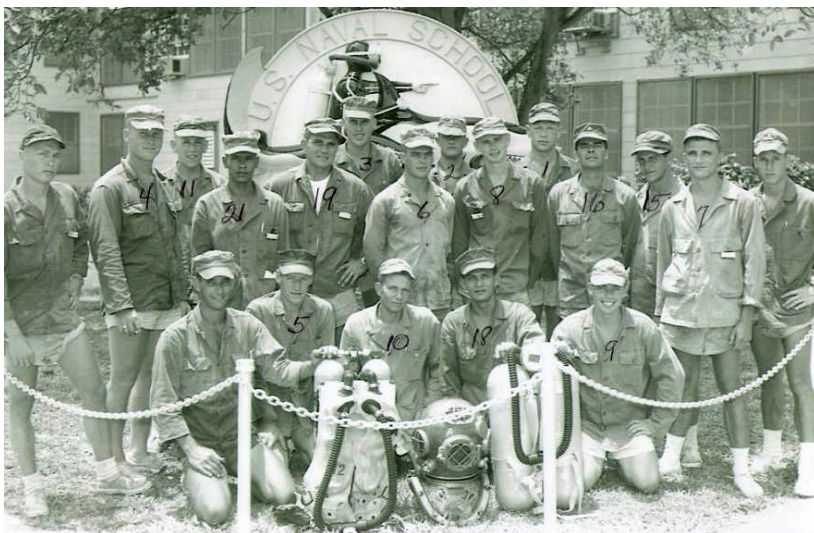
Class 7/62  
 Grad May 1962  
 Diver 2<sup>nd</sup> Class/  
 Scuba Diver EOD

Wayne said there were about 87 members starting the class (top photo). CDR Ken Ploof was the CO and Kappesser and Tappy were instructors he remembered.



The middle photo is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Divers Graduation photo

The bottom photo is the EOD Divers graduation photo. They were also trained in the MK5.



This photo is numbered to match the numbers on the EOD Divers class roster

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Shelden, James L    | 2. Simmons, Wm P       |
| 3. Heinz, Michael K    | 4. Pendry, John W      |
| 5. Sybrant, Gordon D   | 6. Goad, James E       |
| 7. McDowell, William M | 8. Navin, Richard S    |
| 9. Orr, Wayne K        | 10. Sanders, James E   |
| 11. Becker, Donald D   | 12. Blizzard, Howard L |
| 13. Erdmann, John F    | 14. Hess, Jerry M      |
| 15. Azevedo, Carlos O  | 16. Braile, Fernando   |
| 17. Patin, Alton R     | 18. Amansec, Romeo     |
| 19. King, Thomas C     | 20. McGill, Richard H  |
| 21. Ramos, Felix O.    |                        |



Class of May 1955

Photo from new member,  
Ernest Slattery

Class of March 1963  
Photo from Jim Nobel

Front row: McLennon, Macabee  
Middle row: Studdard, Noble, Breslin, Messer,  
Dana, Dirkx (class proctor)  
Back row: Forrest, Martin, Livingston, Brasher



## Correction



In the August Buddy Line we incorrectly identified Dow Byers as Dave Byers. The photos were given to us by Dave but, of course, the item was about his father, Dow, and the first place ribbons Dow's shark with rider won at the Monroe County Fair.

We were notified of our mistake by Dow's widow, Annice Byers. After an apology from Don and a request for information about the model for the rider, Annice wrote this letter describing the creative efforts.

*"Don, Thank you for the apology*

*The gentleman who was the model was an instructor named Caltenback. He screamed and hollered because he was in a body cast for a long time.*

*The face and hands were Dow's. When we did his face, I asked him if he would get annoyed if I didn't put straws in his nostrils. He used a few choice words and we completed the face.*

*Hope this is what you needed.*

*Annice"*

Thanks to Annice for contributing that bit of history for our archives. We're also told that part of Caltenback's discomfort was heat from the setting plaster of paris.

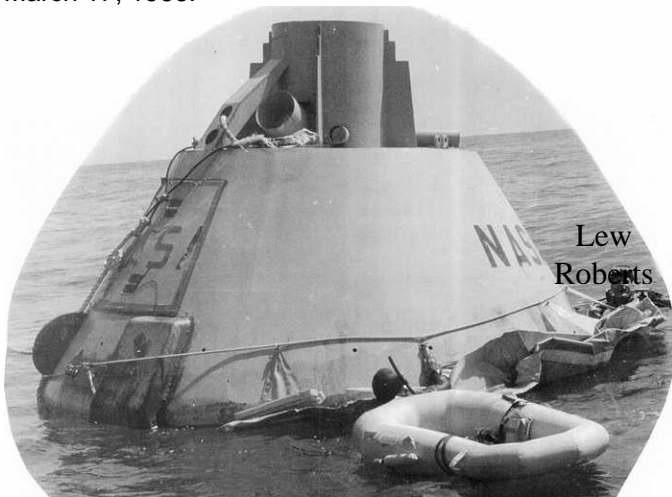
## The PJ Story – continued from page 1

In 1943, a mixed group of about 25 individuals from the U.S. Army Air Force, U.S. Coast Guard, and Canadian Air Observers were given parachute training at the U.S. Forest Service Smoke Jumper's School in Missoula, Montana. These first Pararescuemen (PJs -- Pararescue Jumpers) were organized into local base rescue units.

On 29 May 1946, the Air Transportation Service formally established the Air Rescue Service with PJs, airplanes, aircrew members, and support personnel. The mission was to acquire such training that would allow rapid PJ deployment anywhere, anytime, around the globe to quickly rescue downed pilots and be capable of extending assistance to anyone else needing help. Between 1946 and today there have been a total of only about 2,500 Pararescuemen.

To insure adequate medical treatment of survivors, the PJs were given extensive medical training. PJs have been trained to go any where in the world to survive and thrive. Mountains, forests, deserts, and oceans were, and still are, our training grounds.

In the early 60's NASA started to call upon the Air Rescue Service to assist with spacecraft and space hardware retrieval. During manned space flights, Pararescuemen and their support aircraft and crew were deployed to strategic sites around the globe. In the event a primary splash-down site could not be reached, Pararescuemen, already airborne, raced the spacecraft to the splash-down site to jump and recover craft and crew. I'm proud to say that PJs A/2C Glenn M. Moore, A/1C Eldridge M. Neal, and S/Sgt Larry D. Huyett recovered Gemini 8 astronauts David R. Scott, and Neil Armstrong in an emergency Pacific Ocean landing on March 17, 1966.



While stationed in Hawaii around 1959-60, and surrounded with more water than land, Pararescuemen began to experiment making ocean parachute jumps with self-contained underwater breathing apparatus (SCUBA). The initial SCUBA gear was purchased in Honolulu at a store called, "Toys for Men." Ocean deployment with full SCUBA gear would allow the PJs to

parachute into any ocean in the world to provide survival assistance, medical aid, and effective logistical coordination to insure a successful rescue.

The Air Force initially assigned SCUBA training for all PJs at the U.S. Navy Underwater Swimmers School at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. At about the same time Pararescuemen started attending the other Navy schools in Key West and the U.S. Navy Second Class Divers School in San Diego.

During those initial times, the Air Force was so short of potential Pararescuemen that it provided waivers for men up to 38 years old. Tragically, one PJ died during training. The Navy had a 30 year old limit for going to the school. After Tom Rowe died at Key West, the Air Force quickly adopted the Navy's age limit of 30.

Fast forward to 1964 and North Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. These were the countries where the supplies traveled to support the Viet Cong in South Vietnam.

American pilots from all branches of the services were starting to get shot down far behind enemy lines in these countries. PJs were crewed with every Rescue aircraft in Southeast Asia. In addition to being part-time door gunners on these aircraft, it was their primary mission to be lowered by hoist and cable to the ground to give emergency medical assistance to aircrew survivors, get them on the hoist and up to the airplane to safety. Of the approx 250 PJs we were able to train and keep in the career field, we needed about 75 in S.E.A. at all times for 9 full years.

During the term of the deployment of Pararescuemen to combat in Vietnam, PJs were awarded the following commendations: 1 Medal of Honor (Pitsenbarger); 10 Air Force Crosses; 79 Silver Stars; over 100 Distinguished Flying Crosses; thousands of Air Medals and other awards.

Our PJs of today train and are in combat with Special Tactics troops around the world. The Pararescue career field is unique in the annals of military history because we are trained exclusively for combat rescue and survival. If a PJ recruit is injured in training, the Air Forces classifies that as a combat related injury. You'll not find another such outfit in any other military anywhere else in the world.

Due to a high attrition rate we recruit extensively. There's a PJ detachment at Lackland AFB, Texas, where we interview every Air Force recruit to find PJ volunteers. Of those who initially qualify, we start them on a 10 week physical training program. Usually about 80 will start and about 8 to 10 will finish. Those who do will be directed into a 2-year 'Pipeline' training program. At the end of the Pipeline training only 4 or 5 will graduate as Pararescuemen.

Now you know the rest of the story.

Living by the motto: *These things we do that others may live.* CMSGT Aaron Farrior -- PJ Retired. Key West graduate September 1962

## 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 & Class # at UWSS: \_\_\_\_\_ or Associate Membership: \_\_\_\_\_

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

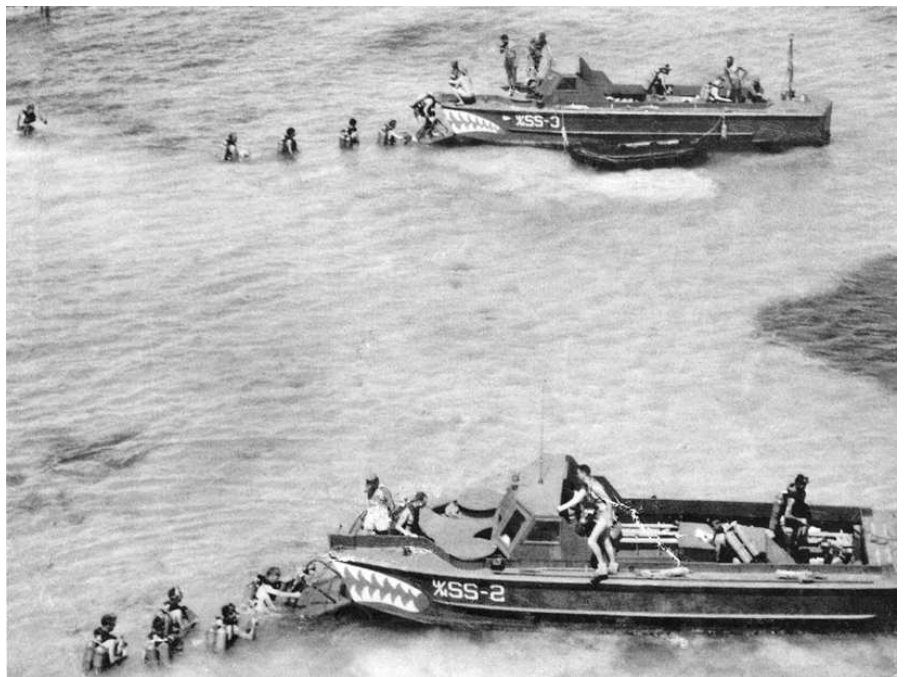
Make check payable to UWSS and mail to Don Stone, Treasurer, 1440 SW 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, Boca Raton, FL 33432

### The Way It Was

Students loading for a SCUBA swim equipped with older style twin steel 2100 psi tanks.

Photo was probably taken in 1955 or 1956 because the LCPRs that were used later were completely open affording the coxswain increased visibility.

Photo from UWSS Archive.



Fraternal Order of Underwater Swimmers School  
Buddy Line Newsletter  
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