



FLAMIN' CAIMAN TALES

MAY 2007

COMMANDER'S SCUTTLEBUTT

Well shipmates, it's time to get your dues paid for 2008. Dues are \$10.00 for two years or, you can pay \$75.00 for a lifetime membership. Why, because Smitty and I traveled to Branson, "Missoura" on April the 23rd for a 4 day Military Reunion Planners Conference. It was a great success as we booked the Lodge of the Ozarks for next May's CAIMAN reunion. It is located right on the main strip in Branson with easy access to shows, restaurants, shopping, and entertainment sites. The prices are reasonable and the weather should be excellent for our May 19th to the 22nd reunion next year. If you are flying to the reunion, transportation to Branson from Springfield, Mo. Airport is \$40.00 per person one way by shuttle. Round trip for a couple is \$160.00. Rent-a-car at the airport for around \$165 for your whole stay at Branson plus you will have transportation once you arrive at the hotel. There are a number of car rental agencies at the airport for your convenience. I sincerely hope to see everyone at our reunion in beautiful Branson, Missouri.

John "Yeo" Fagereng, Commander

REUNION

Yeo and I have returned from Branson, MO and our next reunion is planned. Circle the dates **May 19 – 22, 2008** on your calendars. While back in the Ozarks, we discovered that Missouri ends with an "A". Also, somehow I lived through another session of Yeo's driving. Yeo and I have reached an understanding. If we do this again, I will drive and he will sit in the passenger seat and do the screaming and shouting. I believe it is only fair that we share the duties.

HOTEL

The Lodge of the Ozarks is the place. Make your reservations by calling 800-213-2584. Rooms are \$69.00 a night or \$77.05 after tax. The room rate is good for two days prior and two days after the reunion dates. If you would like a refrigerator in your room mention that when you make your reservation and they will give you a room with one at no extra cost. Handicap rooms are also available. Reservations will close on April 15, 2008. After that date, rooms maybe available in the hotel, but probably not at our price. Their web site is www.lodgeoftheozarks.com.

RVER'S

There is a Branson City Ordinance against sleeping in an RV in a parking lot. If you stay at the hotel you may park your RV's in the hotel parking lot. The closest recommended RV Park is Chastian's RV Resort (417-334-4414). I suggest you make reservations.

HOSPITALITY ROOM

We have a huge hospitality room. We will have plenty of room for beer and sea stories. We expect around 250 people. We had 192 attendees in 2004 and 219 in 2006 so we believe that 250 is an accurate estimate. Remember, with that many people around, if you don't show up we will talk about you. So to protect your reputation, you better be at the reunion. As usually we will have free beer, soft drinks and snacks. This year we will also have coffee, tea, water, and lemonade. Also you can bring any food or drinks you like into the hospitality room. More good news, we did much better on prices this time. The hotel has been warned that we have a diving alarm and it is not quiet.

BANQUET ROOM

The banquet room that the hotel has for us will hold 300 so you will be able to pick your dining partners. This is where we will have a breakfast, furnished by the Association, on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Also our buffet luncheon on Tuesday and our final banquet on Thursday will be in this large room. We can NOT bring our own drinks into the banquet room. We will have a no host bar start an hour before the banquet. The luncheon and the banquet will be \$25.00 each per person.

EVENT

We were not going to plan any group event because of the many shows and attractions available in Branson. But we changed our minds. There is a paddle wheel boat, The Branson Belle, that steams or paddles on Table Rock Lake. The cruise includes a large lunch, a show, and a chance to stroll the deck when the boat is underway. The good news for the wives is it does not submerge. For the salty ones, you can see what it is like to cruise on the surface. The full event will take about 3 hours. Because of the size of our group, our cost is \$40.00 a person. Many of the shows, including the Branson Belle, will pose you and your partner and take your picture as you enter. Later the picture will be available – **for a price**. You can refuse either the pose or the picture later. Guys, the ladies do like souvenirs so you might make points by getting the picture.

SHOWS AND ATTRACTIONS

There will be discount tickets available for many of the shows and attractions. Be prepared – Branson likes Veterans. Almost all the shows did a Veterans tribute and many asked all Veterans to stand and we were applauded by the audience. It is nice to be a good guy again. While talking to many of the show's reps we were told that Veterans will receive a larger discount on tickets than a normal group price. We will have more information in other newsletters and at the reunion.

AIRLINES

The following airlines land at Springfield, MO airport.

Delta Connection

American Eagle

United

Northwest Airlines

US Airways

Continental Express

Allegiant

Also there are direct flights into Springfield from:

Dallas/Fort Worth

Denver

Chicago

Memphis

Minneapolis

Cincinnati

Atlanta

St. Louis

TRANSPORTION

The airport shuttle from Springfield to Branson is \$40.00 a head each way. Using my superb math skills I come up with \$160.00 a couple for a round trip. Enterprise rents cars for about that price a week. Once again using my math skills, if two couples rent a car they can save more money – then spend it in the CAIMAN Ship Store. Also transportation around Branson is not the best. The city plans on people driving or using a tour bus. Renting a car will make it much easier to see the shows that are available. Car rentals available in Springfield:

Alamo

Avis

Budget

Enterprise

Hertz

National

Thrifty

FOOD

For you not from the Southern US, the food is prepared a little different. But, after 4 days in Branson for the Planners Conference I can speak from experience. It is good and they give you plenty. Remember a newsletter back I mentioned that Yeo had lost weight. I will not be insensitive and say he gained weight, but Judy was looking for the cattle prod when I left California.

TEMPERATURE

The weather in Branson in May averages 65. Since we are in global warming and the reunion is a year away, the average temperature will probably be 65.1.

EMAIL ADDRESSES

I have attempted to send an email to the shipmates of people that have had medical problems and when we receive reports of people going on Eternal Patrol. I say attempted because I have had many emails come back as we do not have a valid email address. Please keep us informed of your correct email and mailing address.

**Some ships are designed to sink,
others need our assistance.**

MAP

There is a map of Branson attached. This is not to scale and does not show every attraction or show that is available. The Lodge of the Ozarks is on Highway 76 to the port side as you look at the map. The symbol for the Lodge is a square. The Branson Belle is located on Table Rock Lake at the lower left of the map.

ELECTIONS

It is time for elections for the offices of Commander, Secretary, and Treasurer. All incumbents are running for re-election. Any nominations can be sent to me (email address) or 360-377-4763 or from the floor at the reunion. All I ask is please make sure that the person wants the position before you nominate him. Yes, you may nominate yourself.

RECOVERING

AL Loundon is back home and doing fine. His voice is a little hoarse from the ventilator but he can talk and is going to make our next reunion. This means we will have some new sea stories and some of the ones we heard will be told correctly.

ETERNAL PATROL.

We have had some shipmates go on Eternal Patrol recently.

CHULOS, Leo QMC(SS) 49/?

EWING John E. LCDR 49/53

JACKS, Jerry D. EMCM(SS) 63/64

PIAZZA, Peter ENC(SS) 44/45 Plankowner

ROECKLEIN, Robert G. LTjg 44/45 Plankowner

THOMAS, Donald F. MoMM2(SS) 45/46

Sailors, rest your oars.

HONORS

Bob Walters was recently presented the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI) Historical Naval Ships Association's Ship Maintenance Preservation & Exhibition Award for his outstanding and dedicated work on the USS Blueback. The Blueback is the Submarine Museum at Portland, OR. Bravo Zulu, Bob.

SAILING LIST

Our current Sailing List is up to 900 shipmates. The Sailing List is the shipmates we have located, both still with us and on Eternal Patrol. The lost list is the shipmates we know about and are attempting to locate. Current totals are:

Sailing List:	900
Expected at the next reunion:	546
Eternal Patrol:	354
Lost List:	548

**70% of the Earth's surface is covered
by Submarines looking for targets.**