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FLAMIN' CAIMAN TALES

MAY 2016

COMMANDER'S SCUTTLEBUTT

Shipmates – We are getting closer to our April reunion in Tucson. Please try to get your registration money to Smitty at his new address before he leaves for Arizona the first of April. This will be an outstanding reunion for all of us. It is always good to get together every two years to reminisce about the “Good Ole Days.” See you all in Tucson.

John “Yeo” Fagereng, Commander

I HAVE MOVED

I have moved so my address and phone number have changed. CAIMAN's secretary/treasurer's address and phone number also changed as we are the same person. The new address is:

4987 ILLAHEE Rd NE (in caps to read easier)
Bremerton, WA 98311

Home phone 360-692-8232

Cell 360-731-5233

All mail will be forwarded for six months. After that it will be returned. Update your records, sailing list is updated.

NEWSLETTER DELIVERY

This newsletter is the May 2016 edition, but it is being delivered in March 2016 because the reunion is in April 2016. If this confuses you, I have good news - you are not alone. I had to explain this to Yeo three times and I believe he just decided to accept the fact that he needed to write his comments this month. The important item is I convinced him to write his comments.

REUNION PHOTOS

Some of our shipmates have not been showing up for the reunion pictures on the last afternoon of the reunion. I can understand that not everyone wants to purchase pictures, but those of us that do would like to see all your smiling faces. Also, we would like the pictures to match the list of attendees.

CAIMAN FUNDS

We, your board, operate the CAIMAN Assn on a very small budget. Our goal is to only have a small amount of money on hand for the next reunion. We are a bit lower than we like for this reunion. So we are asking shipmates to pay their dues and buy souvenirs from the ship store at the reunion. Of course, any donations will be gladly accepted and we will have a container handy at the reunion for those donations.

SUBMARINE BOOKS

As I mentioned in an earlier newsletter I collect books about submarines, mainly during WWII. Several shipmates won submarine books in the drawing at the last reunion. If you no longer desire to keep any books or have other books you believe I might be interested in, please contact me, if I don't have it, we will discuss a deal. You can bring the book to the reunion in Tucson as that will save shipping.

DIRECTIONS

Interstate 10 comes in to Tucson running North and South. From the North, take exit 257 then take a left on Speedway Blvd. From the South also take exit 257 but take a right on Speedway Blvd. The hotel is about 8 miles straight down Speedway Blvd and is on the left. If you are coming from the West take Interstate 8 or 10 to Tucson and follow the directions for South bound. From the East, follow Interstate 10 into Tucson and follow the directions for North bound. I have no doubt there are other roads but these are the easiest ways that I can find to the hotel.

REUNION PRIZES

The association has purchased the grand prize, a cutaway of CAIMAN. This six-layer cutaway is so finely detailed that museums have given their stamp of approval. The framed size is 22.5" wide by 8.5" high. The cutaway is made of basswood and is mounted on a Baltic Blue matte with a cherry finish frame. We also have other prizes donated. Remember you have to be present to win. You can buy tickets and give them to a shipmate that is attending the drawing. You better hope he remembers which tickets are yours.

REUNION CLOSING DATE

The final count in for the Old Tucson tour is due by 10 April 2016. We need a minimum of 75 attendees. If we don't have 75 sign up for the tour, CAIMAN pays the difference. As most of you know I wander a bit going to and coming from the reunions. I am leaving Bremerton and heading toward Tucson on 2 April 2016 so I need all registrations to me by 1 April 2016. The hotel is a bit easier as far as a count for meals. We can give them a final count a few days in advance of the luncheon.
Don't forget to make your room reservation and send in your reunion registration with a check.

NEW SHIRTS

We will have at least one new shirt design this reunion and several of the old favorites. A shipmate donated a tee shirt for the reunion. If you attend you will get a free tee shirt handed to you at check-in. Extras will be on sale at a reduced price after everyone registered for the reunion has checked in. We also have some other new items. Bring your check book and we will do our best to have a reason for you to use it. Yes, we do take cash, but no credit cards.

TOURIST ITEMS

There are many activities around Tucson to see and do. Your reunion planners only picked one. We will have maps and pamphlets in the hospitality room so you can plan some other sights to see. There are several Indian ruins and nature sights in Arizona. Of course, we want you to do this on your way home. All shipmates enjoy your company and all the “true” sea stories during the reunion. Don't disappoint us by not being in the hospitality room.

FOR THE LADIES

We have the three rooms directly above the hospitality room that also includes a terrace. For the ladies that may be tired of hearing the same sea stories and the “do you remember so and so” stories, there will be chairs and tables for your use. The ladies can tell their own “sea stories” and the “you won’t believe what he did” stories. We will have wine available and the beer is just a short distance away to help with the stories. Just a little reminder that we greatly appreciate what you ladies do for us and how you tolerate us. Thanks for everything.

RESTAURANTS

Speedway Blvd is referred to a “restaurant row” so besides the hotel dining room we will have several other restaurants to choose from. You will have a variety of types of food choices.

TUCSON WEATHER

The average weather predicted for Tucson in the middle of April is around 85 degrees. So dress accordingly. If you are coming from the Northern states, bring your summer attire. In April the average rainfall is slight. Something the Pacific Northwest and California people will appreciate. We have received our share and someone else’s share of rain this winter.

NEWSLETTERS

Anyone desiring to shift from receiving the FLAMIN’ CAIMAN TALES in the mail to receiving it in email, can inform me using my email address #dbfrider@comcast.net (delete first character). Please include your name as email addresses, such as mine, don’t always identify the user. This will save CAIMAN some money as email is free. Some of our shipmates prefer to receive a printed copy and this is fine. This is our association so we will always honor your wishes.

REUNION COINS

Your board is running out of sayings to put on the reunion coins. Any ideas will be welcome. You can bring them to the reunion or email me with your suggestions. Remember keep it clean and CAIMAN oriented. Nuc sayings will not work. “Up all bunks, field day” were suggested but voted down. We asked that the coins stay with CAIMANITES. Good news – Hawkeye monitors the on line auctions and no CAIMAN coins have shown up. We will have samples of the boards to display your coins and information on how to order one. Big Stone’s brother makes the boards and the money goes to help the school where he teaches. It is a good cause and a beautiful way to show off your collection of coins. We will have coins for sale in the ships store if you need any to complete your collection.

AGENT ORANGE

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has issued a “clarified” definition of inland waterways for purposes of determining presumption for coverage of ailments associated with the Agent Orange herbicide that still excludes the so-called “Blue Water” Vietnam veterans. A federal court had ordered the VA to reevaluate its policy of denying Agent Orange benefits to Navy sailors who served in the Vietnam War on the ships off the coast of Vietnam. A veteran’s association representative

said “To state with such confidence that the toxin, Agent Orange, could not cross from inland water ways or harbors into open seas is a rejection of the laws of nature: As if some imaginary line drawn across the mouth of a river or bay had the ability to stop ocean currents from flowing.” Veteran associations state they will continue to seek a legislative remedy to reverse current policy that discriminates against Blue Water veterans who have health problems commonly associated with herbicide exposure and make them eligible for service-related VA medical and disability benefits. Veteran’s associations further state many want to forget about the Vietnam War, but we should never forget those who served during the Vietnam War.

VA BUDGET ROLL OUT

The 2017 federal budget requests \$182.3 billion for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) - \$78.7 billion in discretionary funding and \$103.6 billion in mandatory funding for veteran’s benefit programs. The discretionary request is a 4.9 percent increase over the 2016 budget.

The current disability appeals process is complicated and ineffectual, resulting in veterans waiting, on average, almost 5 years for a final decision on an appeal that reaches the Board of Veterans Appeals. The budget provides funding for creating a more streamlined appeals process. The budget request provides 12.2 billion for community care, as compared to \$10.5 billion in FY 2016. Over the past decade, the VA has seen a significant increase in veteran claims. The VA has taken numerous steps to manage the increase in claims, improve quality of care, and to streamline the delivery of that care. However, there have been scandals, budget shortfalls, disciplinary issues and a lingering backlog. The budget request also includes 70 billion in advance funding for FY 2018.

ETERNAL PATROL

This is always a sad article to include in our newsletter as we have lost more shipmates and an adult supervisor.

Cox, David MoMM2(SS) (47/47) 29 March 2015
Hinkle, Grendle QM1(SS) (45/46) 18 June 2015
Choate, Grant E. EN1(SS) (70/72) 29 December 2015
Cruz, Eugenio A. MSCS(SS) (47/48) 29 December 2015
Hnatovic, Laurel Wife (58/58) 14 February 2016

SAILING LIST

I am still working on the lost list but it is becoming very difficult to locate our missing shipmates. My goal is to locate 100% of our shipmates. Any assistance will be greatly appreciated. I will have my computer at the reunion so if you have any idea where a missing shipmate might be, we can check the internet and try and locate him. I have access to several of the locator sites on the internet.

Sailing List:	1288
Expected at the next reunion:	493
Eternal Patrol:	795
Lost List:	141

More decorations for valor have been awarded, per man, to the submarine service than any other Navy Branch.