



FLAMIN' CAIMAN TALES

www.flamincaiman.org

SEPTEMBER 2015

COMMANDER'S SCUTTLEBUTT

Summer is winding down and in about 7 months we will all be at the Radisson Hotel in Tucson, Arizona. If you haven't made reservations yet for April 18 - 21, 2016, here is a toll-free number for the reservation desk: 1-800-333-3333 or 1-520-721-7100. Tell the reservation person that you are attending the USS CAIMAN Reunion so you can receive the \$90.52 per night – otherwise you will pay the full price. The registration form for our reunion will be included in the January 2016 Newsletter. Remember, send it in if you plan to attend so we can plan for you and your guests. Since Tucson is a warm climate at least 500 shipmates, wives, and guests should attend. Soooo stay healthy and well and I will see you all at the Radisson in Tucson.

John "Yeo" Fagereng, Commander

REUNION

Once again we have a shipmate that has donated a tee shirt that commemorates our reunion. The tees will be given to all CAIMANITES that attend and extras will be sold at a reduced price. We have a few left from the CDA reunion and they will be available at a reduced price at the Tucson reunion.

VETERANS ID CARD BILL

President Obama recently signed "Veterans Identification Card Act" (H.R. 91) into law. The intent of the bill is to minimize the threat of identity theft and make it easier for veterans to prove their military service. Under current law, some veterans who did not serve for at least 20 years or receive VA health services must carry paper documents (DD 214) to prove their veteran status. These forms, used by many veterans, contain Social Security numbers and other details that could put veterans at risk of identity theft. The bill's sponsor, Rep. Vern Buchanan, (Fla.), called it "an example of what Congress can accomplish when lawmakers put partisanship aside and address the country's needs." The bill allows the VA to charge the veteran a fee to cover the cost of the program.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA RAIN

Southern California recently received a large amount of rain that was needed. Goat Sanderlin is still doing his part to conserve water, the same way he did on the boat. He uses his shower only when he considers a shower absolutely necessary. Civilians may not agree on what the Goat considers "absolutely necessary". A little item like that never bothers the Goat.

WEATHER

We are having crazy weather throughout the US. I try and keep track of any CAIMANITES that live in a disaster area but the weather is too weird this year. If you know of a CAIMAN shipmate that need assistance, call or email me. CAMANITES are one big family and will do what we can to assist each other.

SOCIAL SECURITY PAY BUMP FOR ACTIVE DUTY TIME

Since 1957, if you had military service earnings for active duty (including active duty for training), you paid Social Security taxes on those earnings. Since 1988, inactive duty service in the Armed Forces reserves (such as weekend drills) has also been covered by Social Security. Under certain circumstances, special extra earnings for your military service from 1957 through 2001 can be credited to your record for Social Security purposes. These extra earnings credits may help you qualify for Social Security or increase the amount of your Social Security benefit.

Special extra earnings credits are granted for periods of active duty or active duty for training. Special extra earnings credits are not granted for inactive duty training.

If your active military service occurred:

- From 1957 through 1967, the Social Security Administration will add the extra credits to your record when you apply for Social Security benefits.
- From 1968 through 2001, you do not need to do anything to receive these extra credits. The credits were automatically added to your record.
- After 2001, there are no special extra earnings credits for military service.

Note: In January 2002, the Defense Appropriations Act (Public Law 107-117), stopped the special extra earnings that had been credited to military service personnel. Military service in calendar year 2002 and following years no longer qualifies for these special extra earnings credits

How You Get Credit For Special Extra Earnings

The information that follows applies only to active duty military service earnings from 1957 through 2001. Here's how the special extra earnings are credited on your record:

Service in 1957 Through 1977

You are credited with \$300 in additional earnings for each calendar quarter in which you received active duty basic pay.

Service in 1978 through 2001

For every \$300 in active duty basic pay, you are credited with an additional \$100 in earnings up to a maximum of \$1,200 a year. If you enlisted after September 7, 1980, and didn't complete at least 24 months of active duty or your full tour, you may not be able to receive the additional earnings. Check with Social Security for details.

REUNION DONATIONS

CAIMAN shipmates have already donated prizes for the Tucson reunion. This is typical of CAIMAN sailors. The reasons are various, from an adult supervisor cleaning house to a shipmate wanting to pass on a souvenir to others. I am waiting to hear from a shipmate that has a possible item for a special drawing like we had at the CDA reunion.

GUESTS FROM OTHER BOATS

Submarine sailors from other boats have asked to attend one of our reunions to see for themselves why CAIMAN reunions have the outstanding ratings they hear about. I have told them that they are very welcome and CAMANITES will show them a good time. It is much easier to have them experience one of our reunions than to try and describe the great time we all enjoy.

RECONSTRUCTING LOST MILITARY RECORDS

The blaze that ripped through the National Personnel Records Center in a St. Louis suburb shortly after midnight on July 12, 1973, consumed 16 million to 18 million official military personnel files in the days before computers kept such records safe. Few could have predicted the harm it would visit on the veterans who were denied VA benefits — some to this day — because they could not reconstruct their military service files. Veterans whose records have been lost can fill out a specific form at the National Archives website (<http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/na-13055-info-2-reconstruct-medical-data.pdf>) that authorizes the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) to search for other types of documents that would assist the veteran with their VA healthcare access or compensation claim, or for valuable research their family member's service history. For more information, visit the Department of Veterans Affairs website for veterans whose records were destroyed: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/COMPENSATION/NPRC1973Fire.asp>.

PRESIDENT CUTS ANNUAL ACTIVE DUTY PAY INCREASE

President Obama sent a letter to House and Senate leaders to notify them that he will cap military pay raises at 1.3 percent next year as a way to reduce defense spending. In the letter, he called the reduction as "unfortunate but necessary." The president noted that administration officials do not believe smaller pay increase (1.3 percent vs. 2.3 percent) will hinder recruitment and retention.

If it stands, the 1.3 percent raise will be the third consecutive year of increases that fall short of estimated private-sector wage growth, and will widen the gap between military and civilian salaries. For an E-4 with three years of service, the difference between the two potential pay raises would total about \$268 a year. A 1.3 percent raise would follow in the wake of 1 percent raises in both 2014 and 2015; the lowest annual military pay increases in the all-volunteer era that began in 1973. The House version of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA-H.R. 1735) provides a 2.3 percent pay raise for troops—equal to a private-sector pay increase—but the Senate NDAA (S. 1376) accepted the Administration's request for a lower 1.3 percent hike. FRA has urged legislators who are reconciling differences between the two bills to accept the House increase and to suspend the President's authority to change the pay increase by regulation for one-year.

Ed note: Retired pay raises normally follow active duty pay raises.

FOR NAVY RETIREES

If you are a TRICARE beneficiary and you have an emergency, make sure you go to an emergency room in order to ensure insurance coverage of cost. Use of urgent care coverage depends on your plan and, unlike emergency care, requires an official referral in order to be covered. Read more about urgent care coverage here:

<http://www.tricare.mil/CoveredServices/IsItCovered/UrgentCare.aspx>.

For advice, you can also call the TRICARE Nurse Advice Line at 1-800-874-2273, option 1. When calling the Nurse Advice Line, you will talk with a registered nurse who can give you healthcare advice, help you find a doctor or schedule a next-day appointment at a military hospital or clinic.

LUNCHEON

Our luncheon on Tuesday of the reunion will have our normal fun and games. After the meal, we will have the usual actives. There will be the inductees in to the USSVI Holland Club. It is time for elections for Commander and Secretary/Treasurer. Of course, Yeo and I are running. As usual, Yeo is buying the beer on Monday and I am buying the beer on Tuesday morning. We will also "honor" a CAIMAN sailor as we normally do. I know all, minus one, will enjoy this portion of our luncheon.

HOSPITALITY ROOM

Our hospitality room is a good distance from the front desk. I wonder what they have heard about sailors and their reunions. There will be plenty of room for all of us plus the free beer and soft drinks. As usual, Coffee and sticky buns will be available in the mornings for those that do not want the free breakfast buffet. Our diving alarm will only disturb a few guests. I suggested they put CAIMAN sailor's rooms around the hospitality room. Also we will have a shorter distant to stagger to our rooms at night.

ETERNAL PATROL

I am still hoping I will not have to include this item in our newsletters. As much as I dislike this, I will continue to keep CAIMANITES informed as our shipmates receive eternal patrol orders.

Speer, Richard L. MM2(SS) (60/61) 1 January 2014
Furio, Paul D. EMCS(SS) (48/49) 8 May 2014
Sipin, Domingo MMCS(SS) (49/53) 19 December 2014
Thompson, Richard STSCS(SS) (56/59) 28 August 2015
Sailors, rest your oars.

SAILING LIST

Here are our latest stats. I am still looking for shipmates. It is becoming very difficult to locate our remaining shipmates. Many on our lost list have received eternal patrol orders.

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| Sailing List: | 1287 |
| Expected at the next reunion: | 502 |
| Eternal Patrol: | 785 |
| Lost List: | 142 |

COMPRISING OF ONLY 1.6% OF THE NAVY'S WWII PERSONNEL, THE SUBMARINE SERVICE ACCOUNTED FOR 55% OF ALL ENEMY SHIPPING DESTROYED.