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FLAMIN' CAIMAN TALES

SEPT 2016

CAIMAN Family and friends: Summer is almost over and this year's reunion in Tucson was outstanding. For those who missed this year's event, please try to make the next one in Little Rock in May 2018. Doug Smith and Bob Dengel will travel to Arkansas next year to make arrangements for our 2018 reunion including reasonable hotel accommodations, sightseeing tours, etc. I hope to see everyone who can breathe at the 2018 reunion.

John "Yeo" Fagereng, Commander

REUNION 2016

CAIMAN had another great union in Tucson. Sixty-eight shipmates plus guests attended. We had six shipmates that attended their first CAIMAN reunion. They all enjoyed it and said they were looking forward to the next one. David Sullivan's (48/49) wife made a red, white, and blue quilt for the reunion. She also furnished a unique pen and all the CAIMAN shipmates signed the quilt. We had a special drawing for the quilt and Carl Scott (58/59) was the lucky shipmate who won. We had several drawing prizes donated by shipmates. Al "Lee" Vassar (71/72) won the grand prize which was a wood cutaway of the CAIMAN furnished by the CAIMAN Assn. This was the third reunion that a shipmate designed and bought a special tee shirt for each attendee. Greg "Hawkeye" Baer (69/71) has posted the photos from the reunion on the web site. We also celebrated two birthdays during the reunion. We had Libby Amato, wife of Sam (68/71) and Laurin "Clete" Boyer (69/71) come up to the front and everybody sang happy birthday to them. Libby blushed but Clete just stood there. I noticed that several shipmates wore ties to the final dinner. I plan to work hard to get our auctioneer at the next reunion so we can raise more money for the CAIMAN Assn.

OLD TUCSON

Our visit to Old Tucson was a lot of fun. Old Tucson is a movie set that is set up as an old western town complete with all the stores and other buildings. Just like in the movies, Old Tucson has a saloon. What sailor would not visit a saloon. CAIMAN sailors felt at home. They had a show complete with dance hall girls. We had a couple of stars among the crew. John Jurcheck (68/70) danced with one of the young ladies. She commented that he was a tall drink of water – which he is. Laurin "Clete" Boyer (69/71) was recruited to be part of the show. He did a great job even though he did not know what to say. Lucky's wife, Carol Ehrnschwender (69/71) was in the medicine man show. She had to move fast to avoid getting drenched. Phil Punzel (69/72) won the fast draw contest and his opponent did a great death scene. The actors called him "Cowboy Bob". I happen to mention his new nickname when he won one of the drawing prizes. I always try to mention any accomplishment of our shipmates, no matter how small.

NEXT REUNION

The next CAIMAN reunion will be just east of the Mississippi in Little Rock, AK. This is also the home of the USS Razorback SS 394. The wives can see the plush living conditions we had on CAIMAN. We know they will be impressed. Bob "Dings" Dengel (64/68) and myself (67/69) will be traveling to Little Rock in May 2017 to plan the reunion. We are trying for a tentative date of the second week in May 2018. When we have firm dates I will put them in a newsletter.

USSVI (SUBVETS) CONVENTION

Seven CAIMAN sailors attended the U.S. Submarine Veterans Inc. convention in Reno this August. Bob "Dings" Dengel (64/68) and wife, John "Yeo" Fagereng (67/68) and wife, Ken Fleming (62/?), Marty "Gabby" Hays (53/55), Jim "Buckets" Hunnicutt (68/69), Doug "Smitty" Smith (67/69), and Gurney "Butch" Warnberg (66/70) and wife were the attendees. Everyone had a great time meeting former shipmates, making new friends in the submarine community, telling sea stories, and talking about all that weren't present. Just like a reunion with many more attendees. The 2017 convention will be at the Rosen Shingle Creek hotel in Orlando, FL on August 31 thru September 5, 2017. The 2018 convention will be a seven-day Caribbean cruise aboard the Holland America, MS Nieuw Amsterdam, on October 20 – 27, 2018. The cruise will depart from Fort Lauderdale FL, include stops at four ports in the Caribbean and return to Fort Lauderdale. AAA Washington is the group coordinators. Contact Kim Hedges or Amy Ross at 866-573-6351 for more information. Remember, on a cruise we have the opportunity to stretch the cost of the cruise over several interest free payments prior to leaving so that the hit on the bank account is spread out.

CAIMAN SHIPS STORE

Since the carryon bags were so popular at our reunion, Dings and I decided to order more and sell them at the Sub Vets convention. They were in demand. We made more money to help at the next CAIMAN reunion. We have more so if any Sub Vet bases want to add the bags to their storekeeper's inventory, contact Dings or myself. We do have a bulk price for 10 or more bags. Help make money for more free beer.

OLYMPICS

Our favorite alligator is getting around and becoming famous. Caimans made an appearance at the Olympics. According to newspaper reports, hungry caiman alligators were in the water on the Olympic golf course at holes two, three, five, and nine. They took the opportunity to ensure that everyone knew that they were there and to watch some great golf games. They did not attack any of the golfers, but the newspaper stated they were after other game, as in other animals. Caimans like sailors are always looking for a good meal.

REUNION DRAWING PRIZES

Dings and I were able to pick up a couple of items for drawing prizes at CAIMAN's next reunion. We are always looking for items that are submarine oriented. Shipmates help greatly at each reunion by donating items for our drawing. In January, Greg "Hawkeye" Baer (69/71) and myself will be going to the Presentation Products show in Las Vegas again looking for prizes and gifts. It is always interesting there and we do get a lot of free ink pens. Dings is thinking about attending also. He says he could use more ink pens. We do not take our adult supervisors, but we don't have time to get into trouble. We are very busy visiting all the booths and we have to check in regularly.

SUBMARINE MUSEUM

Since Buckets was at the convention in Reno, I took some more items down for the St. Marys Museum. I was unable to ride my trike down due to the number of items I had but I did get to drive my new pickup to Reno. I wanted to make sure I could haul all my winning back. That didn't become a problem. I was fortunate to meet Keith Post, the St. Marys Museum Executive director. He is very appreciative of the items CAIMAN has send to him via Buckets. Like all of you, I am very proud to have been a member of the US Submarine Force. This is why I do all I can to support our history by donating items to the St. Marys museum. There is an underwater museum near me in Keyport, Washington, that has a very small area about submarines while most of their exhibits are about other aspects of underwater activities. They do not seem interested in expanding their submarine exhibits so we send all donated items to the St. Marys museum. Buckets is willing to deliver any items for us. There are 25 museum submarines in the United States. Two are Russian, one German, and 22 US Submarines. St. Marys museum, near Kings Bay in Georgia, does not have a submarine, but they have a lot of great displays. When I visited there they gave me copies of every article they had on CAIMAN, which I gave to our historian, Hawkeye.

SUBMARINE MEMORABILIA

This is a reminder that submariners are the only group that makes the effort to save our history and memorabilia. As our group ages more and more of us will be receiving eternal patrol orders. If there are any submarine items that your family does not want, please contact me and I will ensure that it will become a CAIMAN drawing prize or go to a submarine museum. My phone numbers are: home 360-692-8232, cell 360-731-5233. My email address is: #dbfrider@comcast.net (delete the first character). We have CAIMANITES in all but five states so I can arrange a pickup of items.

BINNACLE LIST

We have two shipmates on the binnacle list. Warren "Pops" Pospisil (70/71) is in treatment for pancreatic cancer. He is receiving chemotherapy and his tumor has shrunk. Buckets keeps us informed on Pops as they both live at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in DC. Walter "Ned" Reeves (64/68) had a heart attack and recovered nicely, but is receiving kidney dialysis. Gerry "GT" Shafer (64/68) keeps us inform on Ned. Both shipmates plan to make the next reunion in Little rock.

ETERNAL PATROL

We lost more shipmates, wives, and dear friends to Eternal Patrol orders. They will be greatly missed by many shipmates. This is always a sad article to include in our newsletter.

Fairbairn, Donald FT3(SS) (51/54) 13 May 2016

Brown, Eleanor, Wife (66/69) 9 June 2016

Jefferson, Joseph LT (44/44) 18 June 2016

Preston, Leon EM3(SS) (48/49) 28 July 2016

Hnatovic, Ronald EMCS(SS) (58/58) 11 August 2016

Brammeier, Wayne SN(SS) (47/48) 31 August 2016

Sailors, rest your oars.

SAILING LIST

I am still working on the lost list I have not given up. Due to the age of most of our shipmates, many move into assisted care or move in with their children. This removes them from any locator sites on the web. This makes it very difficult to locate them. Sometimes I can locate a relative, child or sibling, and that helps me locate them. I have even used ex-wives. I hope I am wrong but I believe that most of the lost list has received eternal patrol orders. I also search Veteran's burial sites. Ken "Pig Pen" Henry, a retired submarine sailor has helped tremendously. He kept the U.S. Submarine Veterans of WWII membership rolls so he has access to a lot of information. If while thinking about the "good old days", a wife's name or home town pops into your memory, please let me know.

Sailing List:	1288
Expected at the next reunion:	487
Eternal Patrol:	801
Lost List:	141

