

# USS SAM HOUSTON VETERANS' ASSN., INC.

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# The Raven

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USS Sam Houston Veterans' Assn., Inc.—a 501(c)(19) Organization.

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

### Shipmates & Associate Members:

It's been more than 8 months since the last newsletter. Finding time to allot to newsletter production has become more difficult. I assembled about half of the material in this edition of "The Raven" while traveling round trip via Amtrak between Wilmington, Del. and Louisville, Kentucky at the end of July 2017. That travel was associated with attending a yearly Educational Summit in Louisville that was sponsored by the Military Reunion Network (MRN) of which I am a member. I had about 60 hours of uninterrupted time during the travel to devote to the newsletter. At home, time for completion of any newsletter is piecemeal and can add months toward completion. Nonetheless, we have the first edition this year. I will not be able to produce another newsletter until about May 2018 because I will soon begin the 2018 Reunion-Information Packet to be issued no later than mid-March 2018. Meanwhile, if anything important crops up that you need to be aware of quickly, I'll issue a Membership Memo.

On 31 December 2016, **CAPT Ed Griffing** left for Eternal Patrol. I served under him during his entire command of **USS Sam Houston** during a period within 1970—1972. Ed and his wife, Kennon, attended each of our reunions. I will miss him. An article contains an up-to-date list of all who have been added to the Eternal Patrol list since the 2016 Reunion.

Please read on as this newsletter contains a variety of topics that you, the members, submitted. Thanks to all who provided information for our newsletters; keep sending me content. I have to be careful what I place in our newsletters to avoid copyright infringement. The public has all but forgotten about this law, and those who are aware of its existence have condensed it to mean "one can reproduce anything provided no money will be made." This is a grave misconception. Moreover, I do not have time to attempt to contact authors of some of the material that members submit to obtain written permission from the authors to reproduce their material.

**Howard Dobson [ETR2(SS), Gold, 1969-1972]**  
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## **BURIAL OF CAPT ED GRIFFING AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY**

On 19 Jun 2017, **John Catlin** (LT, Gold & O72, 1971-1973), **Jim Hoey** [ETR2(SS), Gold, 1971-973], and myself attended the funeral service for CAPT Ed Griffing at the Old Post Chapel on Joint Base Myer Henderson-Hall and his burial at Arlington. We three attendees all served under CAPT Griffing during his entire tenure aboard **USS Sam Houston**.

He and his wife, Kennon, attended all of our reunions.

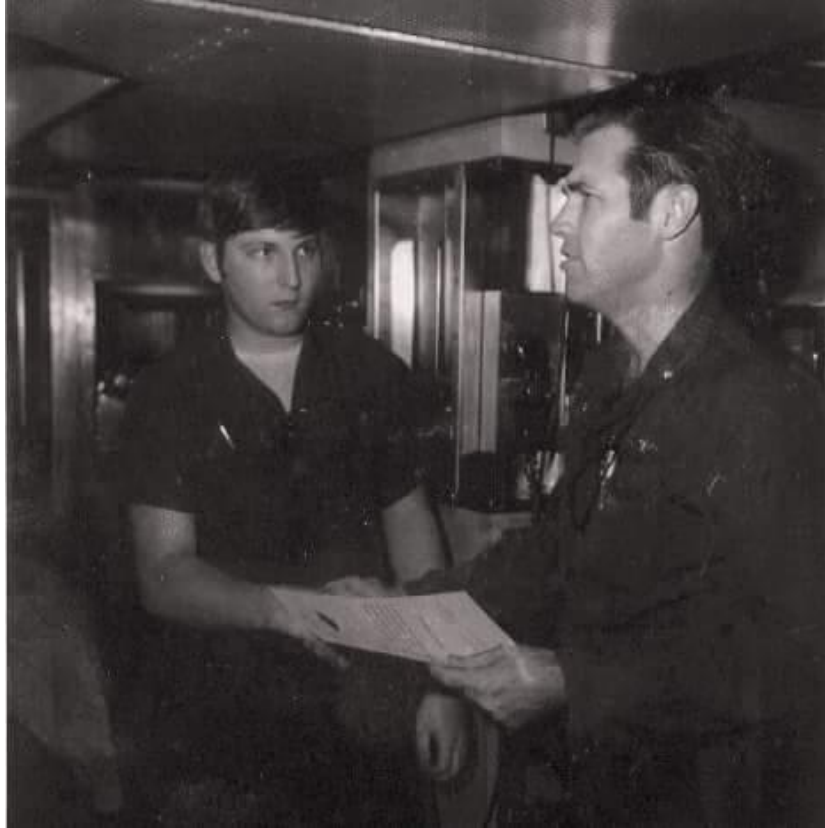
*Howard Dobson*



NOTE: If anyone will need to enter Joint Base Myer Henderson-Hall for a funeral service or repast, you must use only the Hatfield Gate to enter the base if you do not have an ID issued by the Dept. of Defense or are not in a vehicle with a person who has a DoD-issued ID. That gate is hard to find, and GPS devices will not recognize the gate by name and will consistently lead you to the wrong gate if you just enter the base's name. Use the following address for your GPS device to be directed to the proper gate:

**104 McNair Road, Arlington, Va.**

**PICTURES OF CAPT ED GRIFFING ABOARD THE BOAT**



18-year-old **John Sheppard** [FN(SS), Gold, 1971-1972] receives his Dolphins from CDR Ed Griffing in 1972.



CDR Ed Griffing congratulates Chief **Robert Glinski** [MMCM(SS), Gold, 1970-1972] at his promotion to Master Chief on 01 Dec 1970.



## PICTURES OF CAPT ED GRIFFING ABOARD THE BOAT (cont.)

Picture submitted by **Chip Porter** [ETN2(SS), Gold & O72, 1971-1976]

*Left to right back row:*

**Mike Donker**, ETN2(SS)

(I don't remember the middle guy)

**Gene Shoup**, ETC(SS)

*Left to right front row:*

**CAPT Ed Griffing**, CO

**Gerry Williams**, ETN1(SS)

**Chip Porter**, ETN2(SS)

This picture was taken during the last Gold Crew Patrol before the Blue Crew took the boat to Charleston Navy Yard in 1972.



## GOLD CREW HALFWAY PARTY PICTURES

Submitted by **Howard Boone** [EM2(SS), Gold & O72, 1971-1974].



Left: **Pat Pecorelli** [IC2(SS), Gold, 1969-1972]  
Right: **Howard Dobson** [ETR2(SS), 1969-1972]

## ETERNAL PATROL ADDITIONS SINCE THE 2016 REUNION

The following list contains those for whom we learned are on Eternal Patrol since the 2016 Reunion:

<u>LastName</u>	<u>FirstName</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Crew</u>	<u>OnShip</u>	<u>OffShip</u>	<u>Departed</u>
Angelo Jr	Michael	TM1	B	1969	1972	6/29/2017
Barnett	Roscoe	ETN2	G	1961		7/6/1976
Brooks Jr	Robert H	EM1	B	1969	1970	4/28/2017
Fountain Jr	Richard C	MM	SSN	1989		7/19/2012
French	Satterlee G	FTC	G	1961		1/23/2002
Griffing	Edward P	CDR	G	1970	1972	12/31/2016
Hardy	Earl L	LT	B	1965	1967	8/12/1991
Jackob	Keith J	TA	G	1972	1973	11/28/2002
Jarrett	David	FTM1	B	1963	1966	10/4/2007
Koski	Archie A	ENC	G	1961		4/9/1988
Macy	Arley D	MM1	B	1965		2/23/2016
Myers Jr	William G	ET1	G	1965	1970	8/10/2006
Rushlow	Richard G	RD1	G	1961	1964	3/4/2017
Scott	Raymond H	MTC	B	1975	1978	7/1/2014
Skeens	Charles A	SK2	B, O72	1972	1977	11/12/2014
Stanton	Blair P	MM1	B	1966	1968	1/23/2015
Szombatfalvy	David A	MT2	G	1975	1979	9/20/2016
Thomas	Terry G	MM1	B	1970		8/23/2010
Tomac Sr	Richard E	MM1	G	1962	1965	7/7/2017
Ulrich	Louis D	MM1	B	1965	1966	9/7/2015
Untermeyer	David G	MM2	O72	1972		6/12/2007
Wray Jr MD	Reginald P	LT	G	1967	1969	6/12/2013

**Paul Orstad** [TM1(SS), Gold, 1967-1970] informed me that **Michael Angelo** had received his Final Orders and included the picture on the right. Paul comments: "Mike was one of the Senior Master Chiefs in the New London area in the late 80s through the early 90s. He sat on my COB Board."

**Michael Angelo**



## AGENT ORANGE and GUAM

A while back, I placed an article in our newsletter at the request of Chip Porter in which he requested that anyone who was stationed aboard the boat and has been diagnosed with problems related to Agent Orange contact him. I was perplexed by his article because I was connecting his information about exposure to Agent Orange with service aboard **USS Sam Houston**. To me, his article was not making much sense because I was certain that Agent Orange was not used in Guam. I didn't question Chip because I was not in Guam at the time. Then, I began to think that maybe he was talking about some of the stuff becoming airborne and traveling from Vietnam to Guam.

Chip has provided a document from the VA which not only validates that Agent Orange was stored at Andersen Air Force Base on Guam but that the general population showed signs of exposure to Agent Orange. The problem was not the storage alone but spillage and leaks that occurred. This resulted in both ground and airborne contamination. Surveys at the base indicated that concentrations of Agent Orange in some locations were almost 2 trillion times the level currently established by the EPA for exposure to the substance. Refer to the first paragraph of the document on the following page.

If you have been diagnosed with issues possibly related to Agent Orange but you and your doctor have rule out exposure to the Agent Orange because you were not in Vietnam, you and your doctor might want to rethink the situation because you could have been exposed to Agent Orange while on Guam. If you don't have any related issues or believe that you don't, keep in mind that you could have received a significant exposure if you were stationed in Guam.

If you think that you might have been exposed to the stuff or want more details about a potential exposure, contact Chip. His contact information is on the roster that is included with this newsletter mailing.

**Howard Dobson**

Source: U.S. Office of Veterans Affairs

**Agent Orange Concerns Beyond U.S. Vietnam Veterans**

Agent Orange exposure has also become an issue for military personnel stationed outside of combat zones and for U.S. civilians as well. Soldiers stationed on Guam who handled Agent Orange have become ill and



symptoms of TCDD (dioxin) poisoning are apparent in the general population of the island as well.<sup>130</sup> TCDD contamination as a result of Agent Orange handling has been measured at up to 1900 ppm in some areas of Andersen Air Force Base on Guam.<sup>131</sup> Given that safe levels of TCDD have been placed at below 1 ppb by the EPA and even lower by many state regulatory agencies (toxic effects have been measured at parts per trillion), this implies an extraordinary level of contamination. TCDD has been shown in laboratory animals to have multigenerational impacts, not just on the offspring of exposed animals, but on the next generation as well.

Figure 19. Agent Orange Spraying in Vietnam (Source: BBC)

In addition to new studies detailing health impacts, there is ongoing research to more accurately calculate levels of TCDD contamination of Agent Orange, and thus, exposure as a result of the use of Agent Orange. According to recent studies by Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health<sup>132, 133</sup> the amounts of TCDD contaminant in Agent Orange were up to four times greater than previously estimated. The equivalent of 600 kg of pure TCDD was sprayed and spilled in Vietnam. Given that this is a compound for which yearly emissions by the chemical industry are measured in grams and exposure thresholds are calculated in picograms, this represents an extraordinary amount of dioxin.

According to Dr. Arthur Galston, Professor Emeritus at the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, who spoke at the Yale University conference, *The Ecological and Health Effects of the Vietnam War*, "the use of Agent Orange as a defoliant and herbicide in Vietnam was the largest chemical warfare operation in history, producing considerable ecological as well as public health damage."<sup>134</sup> Further studies<sup>135</sup> show that dioxin levels remain high in many Vietnamese exposed to Agent Orange and even their children. U.S. bases, such as Bien Hoa for instance, still show dioxin contamination levels of 1.2 ppm<sup>136</sup> and food samples taken from the area in 2002<sup>137</sup> show dioxin levels approaching those found during the Vietnam War. As a result of exposure to TCDD contamination and Agent Orange, numer-



## 2016 REUNION-MEMORY BOOK TO BE DEDICATED TO CAPT ED GRIFFING

**Brad Lawrence** [IC2(SS), Gold & O72, 1972-1973] who produces our Reunion-Memory Books expects that he will have our 2016 Reunion-Memory Book ready for purchase by Nov 2017. He has been unable to devote time to the book since the 2016 reunion because of a succession of deaths in his family, his being involved in moving, and a sequence of demanding situations at work—all taking precedence in his life.

Brad suggested that the 2016 Reunion-Memory Book be dedicated to CAPT Ed Griffing who had attended all of our reunions. If you wish to submit any memories that you have of him for inclusion in the book, please forward them directly to Brad <[bradale@gmail.com](mailto:bradale@gmail.com)>. For those without Internet access, please use the following postal address:

PO Box 5693  
Carefree AZ 85377

## 2018 REUNION ABOARD THE QUEEN MARY

I and the group-sales staff of The Queen Mary (Long Beach, Calif.) after nearly 6 months of negotiations finally agreed on a contract for our 2018 reunion to be hosted aboard the ship from 06-08 Sep 2018. This reunion promises to be a memorable one especially because it is being hosted aboard a National Historical Monument that has the unique sub-classification of being a Living Museum. The all-inclusive, guest room cost is \$115.20 for a Standard 1-Bed or a Handicapped-Accessible Room and \$138.23 for a Deluxe King Room. Suites are available at a much higher cost. All guest rooms except the Handicapped-Accessible Rooms have portholes that open.

I plan to distribute the 2018 Reunion-Information Packet between late Feb and early Mar 2018. **The most important thing that that you must know at this time is that, if you intend to participate in the reunion, you must make your guest room reservations well in advance of the reservation-cutoff of 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time on 08 Aug 2018 for assurance of getting the discounted room rate. THIS IS A MAJOR DIFFERENCE RELATED TO GUEST ROOM RESERVATIONS THAT WAS NOT A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR WITH OUR PREVIOUS REUNIONS.** What this means is that if, for example, our guest room block becomes filled at the end of June 2018—which is before the cutoff date of 08 Aug 2018—those making reservations in July 2018 might have to pay full price for a guest room IF any guest rooms are available. This is the contracted agreement with The Queen that I tried to have changed. If the room block fills quickly, I might have a chance of increasing the number of rooms in our block.

With our prior reunions, our guest room blocks had been filled before the cutoff date, but extending the discounted guest room rate was not a major issue because the hotels had many guest rooms that were not included in room blocks of all group contracts with the hotels during the periods of our reunions. Those hotels were not losing much revenue by continuing to offer the discounted rate—even beyond the cutoff—after our room blocks were filled because the rooms would not have been sold anyway. This will not be the case with The Queen. This hotel sells out every weekend through many spontaneous reservations from individual visitors to the area. Thus, The Queen maximizes its profits by charging full price for a multitude of spontaneous reservations. The Queen will make an effort to offer our reunion attendees the discounted rates after our room block is filled, but the chance of getting it is less than with our previous reunions. **Reserve your room early!**

Not being able to provide a near exact number of attendees at our reunions is the unsolvable root cause of booking our reunions. If the number of guest rooms that are reserved for our reunions are not filled, a hotel loses money because it could have booked those rooms otherwise and earlier. This situation is known as guest room attrition or, simply, attrition. It is seriously problematic because most hotels impose attrition penalties in their contracts. Because I cannot predict with any accuracy the number of attendees at our reunions, I provide hotels with conservative numbers to avoid paying guest room attrition penalties. The situation worsens when the number of attendees falls short because the “free” meeting rooms that were arranged will now cost. The SHVA neither has money available for these fees, does not collect money during registrations for these potential fees, and cannot expect reunion attendees to go into their pockets after the fact to pay these fees which can cost each attendee a hundred dollars or more! I must play it safe with hotel contracts.

What is known about The Queen is that it sells out EVERY weekend! The moral: if you are serious about attending, you will be better off the sooner that you make your guest room reservations. I'll receive monthly rooming-list counts from The Queen beginning in Apr 2018 and will forward that information to all to help with your planning. If many members reserve their guest rooms very early, I might be able to increase our room block.

For now, please plan to attend and be prepared to reserve your guest room very early. You will have until the 08 Aug 2018 to have submitted your Reunion-Registration Form with payment to me.

## **BASICS OF SELECTING REUNION HOST CITIES**

I thought that I'd give our members some of the basics concerning the selection of a host city for our reunions. Hopefully, this will be the first in a series of articles related to the major aspects of military-reunion planning.

Many of you are aware that I am a member of Military Reunion Network (MRN). This is an organization whose agenda is to provide a variety of information, activities, and networking related to military-reunion planning and the reunion itself with the goal of conducting reunions that are cost-effective, trouble-free, and memorable. MRN's events are invaluable. Things constantly change in the hospitality industry, and military-reunion planners need to be aware of those changes such that they can take advantage of the good ones and avoid the bad ones. In other circumstances, some reunion planners have long been doing things that they should not be doing and are reminded of these pitfalls.

MRN hosts a variety of events from April through October of each year. The ConFAM is the most abundant. These 3-day events are a combination of a "conference" and a "FAMiliarization" Tour of the area in which it is held. By attending some of these ConFAMs, I gain some insight into the potential of a city to host one of our reunions. MRN's other events vary slightly in structure.

Convention and Visitors Bureaus (CVBs) of many cities and areas of the country host FAMs during the same period. These are events that involve only tours of the areas—only "wining and dining" with no registration fee. *These are independent of any MRN events.* If I am interested in an area, I'll contact that CVB and request to be added to the list for the next FAM. This is how I was able to visit two locations related to our 2020 reunion with a third one to occur in Oct 2017.

Thus, I have some background knowledge of many popular locations, and that information can come in handy during the suggesting of and/or voting for reunion locations during our Business Meetings at reunions. For proposing locations, I prefer that the members be involved such that they suggest general sections of the country or cities within those sections. Later, I can whittle down the list to about 3 locations that require further evaluation. Keep in mind that I am working 2-4 years in advance.

Five A's are involved in the selection of a host city/area for a reunion. These are: **Availability, Affordability, Accessibility, Attractions, and Atmosphere.** I usually begin with Accessibility because, alone, it can eliminate a city/area immediately. Also, some aspects of Accessibility become a subcategory of Affordability. When dealing with Accessibility, I don't contact any person; I just check the Internet to see if Southwest Airlines serves the city's airport. If not, I reject the city because to attend a reunion there, attendees will pay premium airfare. This will likely deter attendance. (About half of our reunion attendees have travelled via air.)

If Southwest Airlines serves the area, I look into Availability and Affordability in combination. These involve primarily dealing with hotels in the area to see if they can accommodate us sometime during Sep-Oct, what room rates they will offer, and if they provide complimentary airport-shuttle service. I seek full-service hotels because most limited-service hotels cannot provide the services that we need and I require. Contact with hotels is established through the CVB in the city/area. I send a Request for Proposal (RFP) to the CVB which then distributes it to hotels in the city/area that might meet all or most of the requirements in the RFP. I eventually receive the proposals and can usually eliminate some hotels.

The next process involves "Attractions." I do this in conjunction with a detailed evaluation of prospective hotels. ConFAMs and FAMs are the best ways to deal with these. What must never happen is to arrange a reunion without having visited the potential host hotel. Proposals sent by hotels are essentially sales pitches—good features of the hotel—and usually do not address many of the requirements provided in a Reunion Planner's Request for Proposal (RFP). What's not included in a proposal will likely be troublesome in some way when dealing with terms of a group-sales contract for the reunion.

Dealing with contracts is a topic of its own and cannot be discussed in a quick manner. It's no surprise that hotels are in business to make a profit. To most of the public, this is accomplished via costs of guest rooms. Hotels also have fees for use of meeting rooms. But what a hotel is really selling is "time"—and not in the form of clocks. A hotel cannot receive on 06 April revenue for rooms not sold on 05 April! There is no way that a hotel can receive missed revenue from previous days. To prevent this loss, hotels require that groups sign contracts to reserve guest rooms and meeting spaces. The groups are guaranteeing revenue to hotels for a specific number of guest rooms and/or meeting rooms for a specific date or dates. In most cases, the group becomes financially responsible for the total costs of all guest rooms, meeting rooms, and group meals mentioned in a contract regardless of the number of persons who attend the reunion. If a hotel sets aside a bunch of guest rooms and meeting rooms specific to the size of the planned attendance AND the group arrives with much fewer attendees, the hotel will be left with empty guest rooms that it could have sold ever since the group would have decided it would use the hotel. That money cannot be recouped because the days have passed during which the hotel could have sold the rooms. Similarly, if a group arrives with fewer attendees, meeting rooms assigned to the group will be too large for the group's needs. Again, the hotel has missed the opportunity to sell the larger meeting room to some other larger group at any other time before the group's arrival—more lost revenue.

**Howard Dobson**



## 2020 REUNION PROGRESS

I departed the Business Meeting at the 2016 Reunion with a list of 10 cities/areas in the midsection of the country to evaluate for hosting our 2020 reunion. The results of my evaluation of these cities has resulted in 3 of them making my short list: *DuPage County, Ill. (a Chicago suburb); Omaha, Neb.; and Grand Rapids, Mich.* I visited DuPage County during a FAM in Apr 2017 and Omaha in Jul 2017 and will visit Grand Rapids at the end of Oct 2017. The final choice will be between Omaha and Grand Rapids based primarily on which will provide the better deal. DuPage County will be a last resort should BOTH Omaha and Grand Rapids develop issues that will prevent either from being selected before I would sign a contract. Ground transportation from both Chicago-area airports to any host hotel in DuPage County will either be complex and relatively cheap via local rail service or expensive and relatively fast via commercial shuttles and taxis. What occurred for each of the other cities such that they did not make the short list follows:

### **San Antonio, Tex.**

Proposals with room rates too high; expensive airport-shuttle service.

### **Kansas City, Mo.**

Proposals with room rates too high; no complimentary airport-shuttle service; some limited-service hotels submitted proposals with reasonable guest room rates. Limited-service hotels are problematic.

### **Houston, Tex.**

No response from the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) there. This was my third attempt to get a response from the CVB in five years. This city is apparently not interested in the military-reunion business. It likely seeks high-profit, corporate business.

### **New Orleans, La.**

Hotels are much too expensive; none have complimentary airport-shuttle service. I am reluctant to select a gulf coast city or Florida for a reunion during hurricane season based on certain contract terms with hotels.

### **Oklahoma City, Okla.**

No proposals received from hotels. This is probably the result of hotels not being able to meet most of the requirements in my Request for Proposal.

### **Branson, Mo.**

Ruled out because getting there via air is inconvenient: Southwest does not serve the Springfield-Branson Airport, and that airport is 50 mi. from the northern city limits of Branson—expensive airport-shuttle service.

## CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED TO SUPPORT THE SHVA

As usual, the SHVA needs contributions from members to help support the operation of your organization. This year, only 10 members out of 460 have sent contributions. Hopefully, this is the result of the previous request having been in the previous newsletter issued in mid-Dec 2016—just before the Christmas season. People forget, and I'm at the top of that list! So, I appeal to you to contribute if you are able and before you might forget.

If you are able to contribute any amount, please send a check or money order to our Treasurer at the address below. If most of our members contribute only \$20, this will result in substantial funds.

I have been and still use some of my own money in support of the SHVA—especially related to travel associated with evaluating reunion locations. Printer inks, stationery, and postage are a few of the other major expenses. But since both my wife and I retired in 2013, I've depleted our "extra" money. So, now I need to depend on contributions more than ever.

If you are able to contribute, please send a check or money order payable to "USS Sam Houston" to our Treasurer at the address below:

**Mark Manzer**  
**10118 NE 41st Ave**  
**Vancouver WA 95686-5811**

I thank you in advance for your contribution.

**Howard Dobson**

## MILITARY DISCOUNT AT LOWE'S HOME-IMPROVEMENT RETAILER

In May 2017, the national home-improvement retailer Lowe's, has expanded its everyday, military-discount program to include all honorably discharged veterans. A related article from the "Military Times" website explains:

*"The chain also has expanded the 10% discount to Lowe's online shopping, which will include free parcel shipping. It will provide for faster checkout and add the ability to use the discount at self-checkout in stores," said Lowe's spokeswoman, Karen Cobb. "But the procedure for getting the discount has changed: active-duty service members, retirees, and veterans must sign up online for the Lowe's personal-shopping card to qualify for the discount. **This is not a credit card.** Spouses and dependent children up to age 18 can also get the discount, although the online signup process doesn't include an option for spouses or children.*

*"The discount is linked to a MyLowe's account which can be shared by a household," said Megan Lewis, a Lowe's spokeswoman. "Once a service member signs up for the discount program, it will be linked to a MyLowe's card that can also be used by his/her spouse. Lowe's has offered discounts to military members and veterans for more than a decade. Previously, the 10% discount at Lowe's was available every day to active-duty service members, retired military and other veterans receiving VA benefits who showed their identification. For other honorably discharged veterans, the discount was limited to three days—Memorial Day, July 4 and Veterans Day.*

*"The verification process is designed to be a simplified, one-time signup," Lewis said. "Military and veteran customers can simply present their MyLowe's card at checkout rather than show military credentials at each checkout, Cobb said."*

Registering for the new process is best performed at a store and is the only way if you do not have Internet access. **You must take your DD 214 to the store because customer service needs to verify your date of discharge under honorable conditions. Showing any qualified ID or a DD214 at checkout is being phased out and will no longer be the way to receive the discount at the stores.—be mindful of this change. You must establish an account.**

When registering online or at a store, a new account—a **myLowe's** account—will be created for you. **This is not a credit card account.** You have the option to receive a myLowe's card. If you choose not to receive the card, simply provide your phone number to a cashier at checkout to get the discount. (I chose to use my phone number because I'm carrying too many cards!) Get the myLowe's Card if you usually use self-checkout machines; you are not able to enter your phone number at self-checkout machines—at least yet.

**Howard Dobson**

*PS: A somewhat related matter is the military discount offered by "Home Depot." When I investigated this retailer many years back, I spoke with someone at the corporate headquarters who informed me that the chain has no corporate policy concerning the discount. Hence, each store not only has the option to offer a discount but also specifies the percentage and/or a maximum dollar amount. Years ago, only one of a few stores in my area offered a 1% (not a typo) discount but has since discontinued it.*

## ANOTHER LOCAL YOKEL DOES GOOD!

In Dec 2016, I received an address update for one of our members: **Brian Lepine** [ET2(SS), SSN, 1983-1986]. Brian remained in the Navy and achieved the rank of CAPT. Until recently, he had a prestigious assignment at Naval Station Norfolk. CAPT Lepine is now the Commanding Officer of Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, GA. Congratulations are undoubtedly in order!

Another one of our shipmates, **Ernie Lockwood** (CDR & CO, SSN, 1983-1987) achieved the rank of CAPT and had served as the CO of the Bangor Trident Base in Washington State.

Many of those who served aboard **USS Sam Houston** worked in some prominent positions both in the Navy and civilian life. I am not one of them, and I admire them for their achievements.

**Howard Dobson**

## DAVE KELSON ACKNOWLEDGES PAUL ORSTAD

Dave Kelson [TM2(SS), Gold, 1969-1971] recognizes the achievements of Paul Orstad [TM1(SS), Gold, 1967-1970].

January 2, 2017

*"I recently learned that, in a ceremony on Wednesday, December 7, 2016, retired Chief Petty Officer Paul W. Orstad, 'Big Sam' Gold Crew (1967-1970), was inducted into the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame Class of 2016. A tremendous honor and, in my opinion, well deserved. Captain Bivens once wrote in an email that 'Big Sam was a good boat because of good sailors!' Paul Orstad was, and still is, that kind of shipmate. He was my mentor, and now, I'm proud to say 'old friend.'*

*"Congratulations, Chief."*

Picture of Paul Orstad courtesy of the USSVI.



## ANOTHER "DO GOODER" FROM THE CREW

I received the following information from David Koeppen [ETC(SS), Gold & O72, 1971-1974] who is outwardly humble about having received a Citation from CAPT Ed Griffing as he explains below.

*"While I can't beat a Navy Commendation Metal, I did receive an undeserved Citation (Enclosed). [Ed. note: Dave is referring to the Navy Commendation Medal that Don Kassakatis {ET1(SS), Gold, 1968-1971} received for saving the life of a shipmate whose hands became locked on an energized electric circuit.] As I mentioned at our last reunion, the Sam Houston had failed its last (OPERATIONAL REACTOR SAFEGUARDS EXAMINATION), being it the blue crew, it was, nonetheless, the Sam Houston. It would appear to me that the proper maintenance procedures were not followed and/or improperly done.*

*"The RPI (rod position indicator) in particular had two precision potentiometers—one top and one bottom—with a small screwdriver to turn and a locking device to hold in place. Whoever had done the previous calibrations only turned the screw but did not loosen the holding device, thereby damaging the device. I replaced almost all of the potentiometers for the RPIs. Also, the power supply had some bad diodes.*

*"CAPT Ed Griffing spent a lot of time in AMR # 2 during my first refit on Sam as I was not yet a Qualified Reactor Operator to do maintenance. Bottom line; had the Blue and Gold Crew Reactor Division personnel done their jobs good, chance no citation.*

*"In about 1967 on the Ethan Allen, the 3M maintenance was started for the forward end. Seeing the handwriting on the wall, I implemented a version for the RC Division. It paralleled the existing system but used the same format as the forward end. After shore duty, the system was in effect."*

V/R  
DAVE

A copy of Dave's citation is on the following page.



**CITATION AWARDED TO DAVID KOEPPEN**

S/R

Commander Submarine Squadron Sixteen  
takes pleasure in commending  
SENIOR CHIEF ELECTRONICS TECHNICIAN DAVID EMORY KOEPPEN  
UNITED STATES NAVY  
for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For outstanding performance of duty as the Leading Petty Officer of the Reactor Controls Division in USS SAM HOUSTON (SSBN 609) GOLD from August 1971 through July 1972. Displaying exceptional initiative, industry, and professional competence, Senior Chief Petty Officer KOEPPEN contributed significantly to the engineering readiness of SAM HOUSTON for two POLARIS deterrent patrols. During this short time aboard, he instituted significantly improved procedures for administration of the Reactor Controls Division. The improvement was of such magnitude as to cause specific, favorable comment on the ship's most recent Operational Reactor Safeguards Examination. He has applied his superior technical knowledge and leadership ability in a highly effective program to train his subordinates.

The extraordinary leadership, professionalism, initiative, and loyal dedication to duty demonstrated by Senior Chief Petty Officer KOEPPEN reflect great credit upon him, SAM HOUSTON, and the United States Navy.

S.A. White  
S. A. WHITE  
CAPTAIN, U. S. NAVY  
COMMANDER SUBMARINE SQUADRON SIXTEEN



## LARRY FERRELL RECEIVED THE "SILVER ANCHOR AWARD" FROM THE USSVI

The USSVI issued **Larry Ferrell** [MM1(SS), Blue, 1968-1970] the prestigious "Silver Anchor Award." Larry is also the Commander of the Maine Base of the USSVI. The text of the certificate contains details related to the award.



## MILITARY-EXCHANGE PURCHASES AVAILABLE TO HONORABLY DISCHARGED

Jim Hoey sent me an e-mail on 28 Jun 2017 which informed me that military veterans will soon be able to shop tax-free through the on-line (Internet), military-exchange system. Upon my investigation, "soon" is 11 Nov 2017. This news appeared on the "MilitaryTimes" web site that included the procedure for registering. This web site mentions that the verification process uses the web site <VetVerify.org>, and this is NOT a scam. I successfully registered in about 2 minutes.

Those who successfully register will only be able to use the on-line, military-exchange system; you will **NOT** be able to shop at brick & mortar stores on bases. **You may register now, but the program does not begin until 11 Nov 2017.**

I suggest that you visit the following military-exchange web site to begin the process: <[www.shopmyexchange.com](http://www.shopmyexchange.com)>. This is one of the 4 military-exchange web sites. I am suggesting this web site only because it's the one that I used to register. Registering at either web site will suffice for all. Look for a link on the home page that has wording related to "Veterans On-Line Shopping Benefit"; web-page designs change frequently. The three other web sites for registering and shopping are:

a) <[www.shopcgx.com](http://www.shopcgx.com)>, b) <[www.mymcx.com](http://www.mymcx.com)>, and c) <[www.mynavyexchange.com](http://www.mynavyexchange.com)>

My guess is that in-person shopping at exchanges is not permitted because security regulations do not permit nonretired vets "ready" access onto military bases. Even if you ride onto a base with a qualified person, you will not be able to purchase items at the Exchange there. Your purchases are limited to the on-line, military-exchange system.

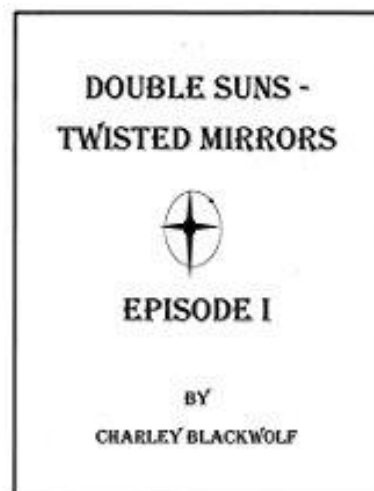
Anyway, activating a registration link will bring up the VetVerify.org web site. This web site relies on veterans' records that exist in the Defense Manpower Data Center database. If a veteran's records are not there or are incomplete, the veteran will receive instructions on how to upload the necessary information. During the verification process, you will enter your name, date of birth, last 4 digits of your SSN, and your e-mail address. If everything checks out, you will be registered for shopping in about 1 minute after you begin the process.

If you encounter problems during the registration, contact the VetVerify.org Customer Call Center at 844-868-8672.

## BRUCE FULBRIGHT CONTINUES HIS LITERARY SKILLS

**Bruce Fulbright** [MM1(SS), Gold, 1965-1970] or "Charley Blackwolf" as he is known in the literary industry, has written a 7-episode, e-book novel entitled *Double Suns—Twisted Mirrors*. These episodes are only available from e-book sellers such as, Amazon.com, Google Store, and the Scribd Store, among others.

Four episodes are available at the time of issuing this newsletter. Bruce informed me that the episodes might be somewhat on the "adult" side. They delve into human frailty, love gained and lost, jealousy, political corruption, conquest and its brutality, possibilities of space travel by bending space and time using magnetic fields, amplifying nuclear forces of super-heavy elements, the potential for man-machine cyborgs, and the results imposed on a civilization when they see their sun die! Each episode has about 150 pages. Check his books out; you might be mesmerized.





## **WHEN GOD CREATED A SUBMARINER**

When the good Lord created a Submariner, it was almost 2300 on the sixth day. An angel appeared and said, "You're having a lot of trouble with this one. What's wrong with the standard model?"

The Lord replied, "Have you seen the specs on this order? It has to be able to think independently, yet be able to take orders; have the qualities of both a scientific mind and a compassionate heart; be able to mentor juniors and learn from seniors; run on black coffee; handle emergencies without a Damage Control Manual; respond competently to critical incidents; decipher cryptographic codes; understand pneumatics, hydraulics and sonar; have the patience of a saint and six pairs of hands; not to mention the strength of three its size!"

The angel shook its head slowly and said, "Six pairs of hands—no way!"

The Lord answered, "Don't worry; I'll make other Submariners to help. Besides, it's not the hands which are causing the problem; it's the heart. It must swell with pride when a Shipmate earns his Silver Dolphins—which above all else signifies the crew members trust it with their lives, sustain the incredible hardship of life at sea in a steel tube, beat on soundly when it's too tired to do so, and be strong enough to continue to carry on when it's given all it has."

"Lord," said the angel touching the Lord's sleeve gently, "Stop! It's almost midnight."

"I can't," said the Lord. "I'm so close to creating something unique. Already I have one whose hands blend knowledge with skill to perform the most intricate procedures, yet are strong enough to patch a ruptured seawater pipe; whose ears can discern the sonar sounds of a myriad of ocean life, yet detect the slightest shift in ventilation; whose mind can practice the science of nuclear submarining, yet not lose sight of the art of teamwork; and whose eyes can peer through a periscope to identify a hull-down ship, yet search within to embrace and personify honor, courage, and commitment."

The angel circled the model of the Submariner very slowly. "It's too serious," the angel sighed.

"But tough," said the Lord excitedly. "You cannot imagine what this Submariner can do or endure."

"Can it feel?" asked the angel.

"Can it feel! It loves ship, shipmates, and country like no other."

Finally, the angel bent over and ran a finger across the Submariner's cheek. "There's a leak," pronounced the angel. "I told you you're trying to put too much into this model."

"That's not a leak," said the Lord. "It's a tear."

"What's it for?" asked the angel.

"It's for joy, sadness, disappointment, pain, frustration, and pride."

"You're a genius!" exclaimed the angel.

The Lord looked pleased and replied, "I didn't put it there."

Filled with pride, the Lord continued, "Great things are planned for this Submariner. It will be one of many and together they will lead a legacy of excellence like none has known before."

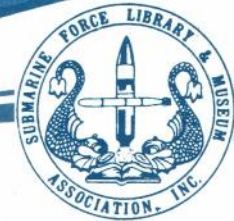
And with that the Lord rested. It was the seventh day.

*CAPT Jane F. Vieira  
Chaplain Corps, United States Navy  
15 May 2012*

**PAVER BRICK PURCHASED—SUB FORCE MUSEUM, NEW LONDON**

**At the 2016 reunion, the members approved the purchase of a memorial brick at the Sub Force Museum. This was accomplished in Nov 2016 as indicated by the following letter. Look for the brick if you visit the museum.**

**Submarine Force Library & Museum Association**  
1 Crystal Lake Road • PO Box 928  
Groton, Connecticut 06340  
860.448.0893 • association@sflma.org



November 29, 2016

Mr. Howard Dobson  
28 Colony Road  
Wilmington, DE 19802

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Anthony Quatroche  
CDR USN (RET)

Alan Ruditzky  
ON ELECTRIC BOAT RET

Dear Mr. Dobson,

Thank you for your donation of \$275.00 to the Submarine Force Library and Museum Association. Your gift was recorded on November 29, 2016.

The permanent paver walkway being created through the Brick Paver Project provides an enduring legacy to memorialize or honor our special heroes. The pavers are being installed as part of the walkway at the main entrance to the museum; and all who visit the museum will be able to see the laser engraved pavers as they enter.

Your gift to the brick paver project will enable us to expand and develop new exhibits, to grow our vibrant education program, and to continue to preserve and display artifacts depicting the rich history of the United States Submarine.

Once again thank you for your gift and welcome to the Submarine Force Library & Museum Association.

Sincerely,

David M. Goebel  
RADM, USN (Ret)  
President

Thank you!

No goods or service has been received in exchange for your donation. Donations to the Submarine Force Library and Museum Association, Inc. are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. For further tax advice, please consult your attorney or accountant.



**SUBMARINE FORCE LIBRARY AND MUSEUM ASSOCIATION**

**HOWARD DOBSON**  
Life Member

Membership Date: November 29, 2016  
Member Number: 2134

## MEMORIAL BENCH AT PATRIOTS POINT

In 2011, the SHVA purchased a granite memorial bench to be installed with others at the Cold War Submarine Memorial at Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum in Mount Pleasant, S.C.—near Charleston. During our reunion in Charleston in 2012, Patriots Point was one of our tour destinations. We held a Dedication Ceremony for the bench followed by our Memorial Service.

In the latter part of 2014, one of our nonresident members was in the Charleston area and decided to visit our bench. He later informed me that the seat portion was heavily stained with dark areas. He suspected that the source was a substance, such as a moss or algae. He ruled out bird droppings because of the lack of small masses within the stains. He supported his suppositions by mentioning that our bench was the only one under a tree.

This topic was discussed at the Business Meeting during our 2014 reunion in Seattle, and **Jack Harden** [RM2(SS), Blue, 1963-1966] who lives in Charleston volunteered to investigate. Meanwhile, I took a parallel path to attempt to contact persons at Patriots Point who might be responsible for maintenance and upkeep of the memorial grounds. I was not able to speak with anyone because they either did not answer my calls or did not return my calls. Later, I learned from Jack that the person who owns the property is a real estate tycoon and that he is attempting to get rid of most of the exhibits, memorials, and monuments on the property to make way for future development. As such, the owner has little interest in the upkeep of the memorial benches. Having not received a callback from anyone from the maintenance group at Patriots Point to date lends credence to Jack's supposition about the property owner. In July 2017—about three years after the initial notification of the problem—I would learn firsthand that little effort beyond periodic grass mowing is expended in the upkeep of the grounds at the memorial.

Jack became unable to visit the memorial as he had planned because his wife had developed a serious medical condition that prevented her from being left alone and which made traveling even short distances difficult. So, after his wife's condition improved significantly, Jack had decided that he and I should jointly visit the memorial and investigate the situation with the bench; I agreed. I spoke with a groundskeeper at a well-kept cemetery in Newark, Del. concerning what was used to clean granite memorials there. He recommended "New Stone" because it was highly effective, environmentally friendly, and did not attack grass or other vegetation. I ordered a gallon of the cleaner to be sent to Jack before my arrival. Jack had earlier suggested that his power washer would be an effective means of cleaning the bench periodically, but he was certain that the memorial had no source of pressurized water. If true, he could not use his pressure washer.

We visited the memorial on 06 Jun 2017. Our venture was more concerned with the effort needed to clean the bench as opposed to attempting to identify the substance responsible for the stains. We headed to the memorial with an arsenal of a gallon of New Stone cleaner; five, 1-gal. jugs of water; a few rags and towels; a plastic-bristle brush; and a small garden sprayer. The area had no source of pressurized water. The instructions for the New Stone cleaner required that a surface to be cleaned be first coated with water. So, we sprayed only water onto the bench. With only water on our bench, I scrubbed the surface, and the stains were easily removed with light force. We didn't use the New Stone cleaner; this was a welcomed situation.

A bench adjacent to ours had identical stains, but unlike ours, the stains within the crest were not removed with plain water. Apparently, the elevated surfaces within the engraved crest are not as polished as the other portion of the benchtop as is with our bench. We applied New Stone cleaner to the crest, and the stain was removed with little scrubbing effort. The initial report that our bench is the only one under a tree is incorrect. Of the 39 benches around the memorial, 12 are under trees, and many of these are stained.

With assurance that something from the trees is causing the stains, I want to learn from someone knowledgeable what could be the cause. I did not think to attempt to identify any of the trees at the memorial. (But for me, only two types of trees exist: evergreens and trees with leaves!) When college begins this fall, I'll attempt to consult someone at the University of Delaware who is knowledgeable in dendrology. (I don't want you guys to think that I am super educated—I had never heard of the word! I discovered it while trying to figure out who to consult on this topic.)

The next major decision is what to do next concerning our bench. Now that Jack knows that he can clean our bench in about 10 minutes with only water, he has volunteered to do so. But, the situation involves more than our bench. I'm thinking that the matter involves all of the 12 benches under trees, and Jack cannot clean all of them. My thought is to seek involvement of all of the groups that have benches at the memorial and pay to clean all of the benches at the memorial periodically in a collective manner. Donations to a local VFW, American Legion, or SubVets Base might be preferable to using a commercial business. My guess—and I mean guess at this point—is that the benches might need cleaning a couple of times in the spring only. A lady aboard the train during my trip home from Charleston mentioned that she experiences similar stains from trees around her home in the spring only.



## MEMORIAL BENCH AT PATRIOTS POINT (cont.)

One final note concerning upkeep of the grounds at the memorial is that a large shrub which is adjacent to one bench has nearly overgrown the bench. Anyone who cuts the grass at the memorial can't help but notice that the bush has overgrown that bench. For me, this is further evidence that management of the property has little concern with upkeep of the grounds and monuments at the memorial.

Some pictures related to the investigation follow. Jack and I had arrived shortly after a light rain. Water produces dark areas on the benches that are not stains. Also, rain had begun after we had packed our gear while I was taking the "after cleaning" pictures.

### BEFORE CLEANING



The darkest areas of the bench seat are the stains. Within the crest, the engraved dark areas are not stains. But, the dark, upper, flat areas within the crest are stained. On the base, the dark areas are wet areas from rain. The lighter areas under the seat are dirt that accumulated because of prior heavy rains that likely had repeatedly submerged the base.

A close-up of the stains and a portion of the engraving. This photo shows more clearly that the engraved areas are not stains.

### AFTER CLEANING



All stains were removed with only water and a plastic-bristle brush. The dirt on the base and under the seat was readily removed with water and a rag.

The dark areas are wet areas after cleaning.

The dark areas in the crest are all wet areas that had not completely dried after cleaning.

The dark dots are rain drops; rain had begun after cleaning.

## MEMORIAL BENCH AT PATRIOTS POINT (cont.)



This bench is located off the forward starboard quarter of the memorial along the walkway.

Whoever mows the grass behind the bench cannot help but notice that the bush has overgrown the bench. Somehow, I'll try to bring this particular bench to the attention of groundskeeper's management.

### BEFORE



The darker areas on the surface of the crest are stains that we could not remove with water only. The upper surfaces within the crest of this bench are not as polished as the rest of the seat area. This is more conducive to the material that is causing the stain to become imbedded in the rough granite. (The white area at the lower left is one of our white towels.)

### AFTER



The stains were easily removed after wetting the area with water, pouring on some New Stone cleaner, and letting it set for about 5 min. Moderate scrubbing with the plastic-bristle brush removed the stain. The darker area is still wet after rinsing with water. THIS BENCH IS UNDER THE SAME TREE AS OUR BENCH AND ADJACENT TO OUR BENCH.



## ENGRAVED WOODEN PLAQUES AND OTHER ITEMS

I received the following e-mail from a submariner:

*"Shipmates,*

*I am the current president of the USS Lafayette Association; I qualified on Lafayette in Jan 1980 and retired from the Navy in Dec 1995. I have a home wood-working business and have reproduced many of the 41 For Freedom ship's patches as wooden plaques. I would like to offer plaques and cribbage boards on your website (or at least a link to my website), if that is ok with your membership. My website is <[www.bubblehead3d.com](http://www.bubblehead3d.com)> if you would like to see samples of my work.*

*Gary Christopher  
Oskaloosa, Iowa"*

Gary's e-mail address is:  
<[garyalan59@gmail.com](mailto:garyalan59@gmail.com)>

A link to Gary's web site is on the SHVA's web site. The link is identified as:

[www.BubbleHead3d.com](http://www.BubbleHead3d.com)

The description for this link mentions "... a variety of woodwork items related to submarines."



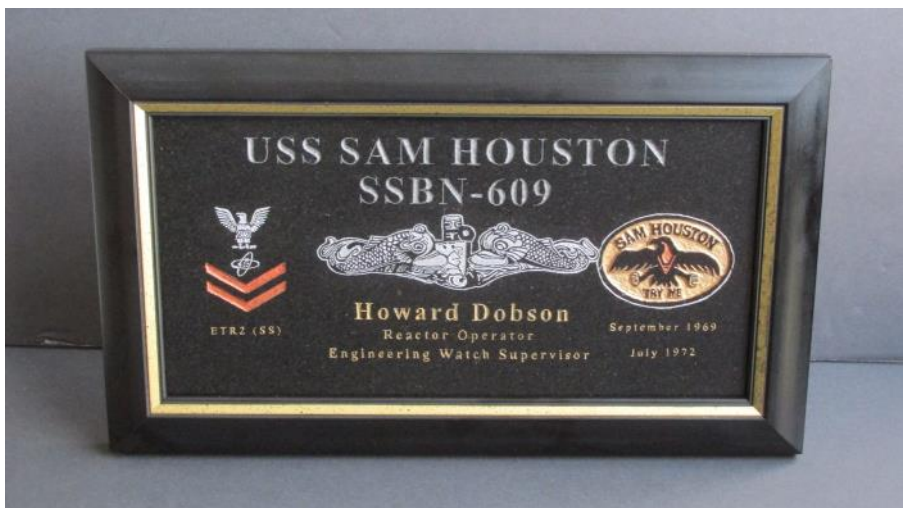
## ENGRAVED GRANITE PLAQUES BY ONE OF OUR OWN, FRANK WOECHAN

The previous newsletter had an article which mentioned that **Frank Woechan** [MM1(SS), Blue, 1974-1978] produces and sells custom, hand-engraved, granite plaques. Well, I received mine, and it is a fabulous work of art! I highly recommend that you order one. The plaque is so magnificent that I had it professionally mounted in a high-quality frame. The plaque is proudly displayed on a table in my living room.

Contact Frank if you would like to order a plaque. E-mail is the best means of contacting him—at least initially. His e-mail address is <[fwoechan@gmail.com](mailto:fwoechan@gmail.com)>. If you don't have Internet access, contact me for help.

Frank's plaques are custom and can be about almost any topic, and he can make custom sizes.

I guarantee that you'll be overjoyed with a plaque from him. Place your order today!



**Howard Dobson**



## HUMOR

### 1. FIRST E-MAIL MESSAGE

Hi, Fred.

This is Alan next door. I have a confession to make.

I've been riddled with guilt these past few months and have been trying to pluck up the courage to tell you to your face, but I am at least now telling you in text as I cannot live with myself a moment longer without your knowing.

The truth is that I have been sharing your wife day and night when you're not around; in fact, probably more than you. I haven't been getting it at home recently, but that's no excuse, I know.

The temptation was just too much. I can no longer live with the guilt, and I hope you will accept my sincerest apologies and forgive me.

It won't happen again. Please suggest a fee for usage, and I'll pay you.

Regards, Alan

### 2. FRED'S HEROIC ACT

Fred, feeling insulted and betrayed, grabbed his gun and shot his neighbor dead.

He returned home where he poured himself a stiff drink and sat down on the sofa.

He took out his phone where he noticed that he had a second message from his neighbor.

### 3. ALAN'S SECOND E-MAIL

Hi, Fred.

This is Alan next door, again.

Sorry about the typo in my previous e-mail to you.

I expect that you figured it out anyway and that you noticed that the darned Auto-Correct changed "wi-fi" to "wife"!

Great technology, eh?@#\$\$%&^!

Regards, Alan

## JIM HOEY VISITS BILL & SALLY SAUER IN VIRGINIA BEACH

After having been in the Arlington area to attend the burial ceremony for CAPT Ed Griffing, Jim Hoey visited Bill and Sally Sauer on his drive back to Florida at the end of Jun 2017. They enjoyed a meal together at a restaurant in Virginia Beach.

Prior to this visit, Bill & Sally had visited Jim & Jeanne in Palmetto, Fla. Bill had recommended that they have a meal at a particular restaurant in Bradenton, Fla. Refer to a subsequent article about this latter restaurant.



Jim Hoey  
is on the right.

## A BLUE CREW "FIRST"

Ralph Reeves [MM1(SS), Blue, 1962-1968] provided the following information related to the letter below:

*"Have you seen this before? This was sent to my parents while I was on my first patrol. Note the date: four days after the Thresher sank. Also the same day, April 14, 1963, that the Houston surfaced off of Izmir, Turkey."*

Ralph Reeves

USS SAM HOUSTON (SSBN609)  
Care of Fleet Post Office  
New York, New York

14 April 1963

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Reeves,

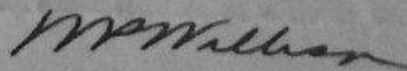
It is pleasant to be able to report to you that your son is participating in a most significant event. As a member of the BLUE CREW, he has the distinction of making the first Fleet Ballistic Missile ("Polaris") Submarine Patrol in the Mediterranean Sea.

This meaningful first Mediterranean Patrol is the third patrol of USS SAM HOUSTON and the second patrol conducted by the Blue Crew.

The presence of SAM HOUSTON in the Mediterranean Sea marks another milestone for Polaris and gives added assurance that the United States is truly dedicated to its mission of preserving peace through deterrence. You have every reason to be proud of your son's contribution to the fulfilment of that mission. Our country is the more secure because he serves it.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,



W.P. WILLIS, Jr.  
Captain, U.S. Navy  
Commanding



**USS SAM HOUSTON PICTURE OBSERVED BY CHANCE IN FLA.**

**Chuck Husted** [MM1(SS), Gold, 1968-1972] noticed the following plaque and picture mounted above the bar at an American Legion Post in Madiera Beach, Fla. while visiting the area on 03 Mar 2017.

The small plates below each item mention "YNC Dick Karol." He was a YN3(SS) with the Gold Crew from 1962-1963.





## USS SAM HOUSTON PICTURE INSTALLED AT ANOTHER RESTAURANT IN FLA.

At the request of the manager of the Mission BBQ Restaurant in Bradenton, Fla., Jim Hoey recently provided a file of a picture of **USS Sam Houston** to be printed and placed on the restaurant's Wall of Remembrance for those in the military and for public servants. Jim will soon provide woven patches of the Ship's Crest and the "41 for Freedom." Other patches are visible along the perimeter of the picture area.

**Kevin O'Donnell** (LCDR, Blue, 1961-1963; Plank Owner and Ship's Doctor) was the originator of that picture. Attendees at the 2016 reunion received a version of the picture, compliments of Kevin. Also, poster-sizes of the picture were installed in the lobby of the reunion's host hotel and at the entrance to our Hospitality Space at the hotel.

The Hoeyes learned of this restaurant chain from Bill and Sally Sauer when they visited the Hoeyes in the spring of 2017. The Mission BBQ Restaurant chain was established in recognition of those who serve the community and the country. The chain combines recognition of these servants with a favorite American pastime—the BBQ. The restaurants conduct a daily salute of the Stars & Stripes at lunchtime. Mission BBQ Restaurants exist in 11 states, and information can be obtained from the web site at <[www.mission-bbq.com](http://www.mission-bbq.com)>. You might want to patronize a restaurant in your area.



## USS SAM HOUSTON PICTURE INSTALLED AT A RESTAURANT IN FLA.(cont.)

Jim Hoey received the following Thank You Note from the Staff of Mission BBQ Restaurant for his supplying the file for the picture of the boat displayed at the restaurant:



### SPECIAL EDITOR'S NOTE:

I am a bass player who periodically performs with a vocalist-guitarist; we play drug-and-alcohol recovery music. We played at Ashley Addiction Treatment in Havre de Grace, Md. on 17 Sep 2017 for its annual Alumni Reunion. Because I was trying to complete my final proofread of this newsletter before submitting it to **Ray Higgins** [MM1(SS) Gold & Blue, 1965-1970] for his proofread, I brought a hard copy along in case I would have some free time available. After our performance, we headed to a tent for a catered lunch. While en route, I noticed the Army truck pictured at the right with the Mission BBQ inscription—lunch was being catered by Mission BBQ! I was surprised and went to my car to grab my copy of the newsletter. I wanted to show the staff that I have a newsletter article about their restaurant in Bradenton, Fla. They were surprised, and one of the ladies requested that I send a copy of the newsletter article to a person in the corporate staff. I received the e-mail address and will do so.



**MOST IMPORTANT: THE APPEARANCE AND TASTE OF THE FOOD WAS NOTHING LESS THAN SUPERB; IT'S THE BEST THAT I'VE TASTED AT ANY BBQ!** The main items served were brisket, pulled pork, ribs, mac-n-cheese, baked beans, cold slaw, and slider rolls. A variety of their sauces was available.

The closest Mission BBQ to me is located in Baltimore, Md.—72 miles and a 1-hour drive. I foresee meals at that restaurant becoming a ritual for me. I travel I-95 occasionally through Baltimore and will do my best to stop for a meal. But, the quality of the food is so remarkable that this fact, alone, will demand a drive for the sole purpose of enjoying a great meal.

If you like BBQ, you will not find a better restaurant—I guarantee it!

## HALFWAY PARTY—BLUE CREW

Jack Harden produced the following picture while we were at his home after investigating the cleanliness of our granite memorial bench at Patriots Point.



left to right

Pat “Rick” Lyons [STS2(SS), Blue, 1962-1965, [Eternal Patrol](#)]; Jim “Greasy” Green, [MM2(SS), Blue, 1964-1968, [Eternal Patrol](#)]; and unknown.

## A STRANGE OCCURRENCE—IMAGINE THAT!!!!!!

Jim Jonutis [RM1(SS), Gold & SSN, 1979-1981] has a vague memory of an incident in which an officer aboard **USS Sam Houston** was responsible for turning Pearl Harbor green! Below is what he believes happened:

*“Have you heard of the incident where the Sam Houston turned Pearl Harbor fluorescent green? It was after an exercise with surface forces (1980?) using some new device to locate the boat. There was a bladder filled with a dye. Should the device not work, the dye would be used to mark our location. Some dye was left over. I can't remember the junior officer's name who was tasked to drain the bladder, but he tried to use one of the floating buoys that were normally used to get rid of oily bilge water.*

*“Well, those buoys are open bottomed, and the dye turned the entire harbor bright green.*

*“I have never been able to find any mention of that anywhere. I am guessing it may have been in the newsletter at some point, and I missed it . . . , or I imagined the whole thing.”*

I asked Jim if he could provide any more info. He added the following information:

*“I recall that there were some powerful sound amplifiers set up forward in the small room forward of the Sonar and Radio Rooms. I think they were broadcasting a signature of some Russian boat via our sonar, and there were aircraft set up to seek that signature. The dye was used to help them locate us, or maybe that was another experiment altogether. I just can't remember exactly.”*

Well Jim, I have the same problems remembering and/or connecting situations. Does anyone else remember this incident? I suspect that Sonarmen aboard at the time might know something.

**Howard Dobson**



## VENDOR FOR USS SAM HOUSTON T-SHIRTS

Franz “Frank” Powell [YN2(SS), Gold, 1970-1972] stumbled across a vendor who sells screen-printed T-shirts specific for **USS Sam Houston**. While only one version of an imprint is available, various fabrics and colors are available. I purchased one T-shirt of the lowest quality fabric at a total cost of \$28.00 and am highly satisfied. The imprint has a “slightly worn” appearance which seems to be the norm nowadays.

The vendor is web-based only. The web address <<http://ocstee.com/ssbn609>> sends you directly to the Sam Houston T-shirt. What’s great about the imprint on the shirt is that it has the dual hull designator. I was glad to see that because many vendors seem to deal only with SSBN.

Frank’s informing me of this vendor was also timely because I want to locate vendors who can provide T-shirts. We now have one.

I do not intend to stock any kind of T-shirts for sale to members because of a variety of problems.

Don’t be afraid to try this vendor.

*Howard Dobson*



## A SNEAKER WITH A “609” IMPRINT!

Gary King [IC3(SS), Gold, 1966-1970] mentioned that the manufacturer of “New Balance” shoes produces a series of sneakers that have “609” imprinted on their tongues. This situation is purely coincidental; the SHVA was not involved. “Famous Footwear” is a vendor that sells those sneakers under the name that typically includes terminology such as “New Balance Men’s 609 V3 Memory Sole . . . .” If interested, visit a Famous Footwear store or check its web site.

*Howard Dobson*



**PARTY PICTURE WITH SOME CORRECTED NAMES OF INDIVIDUALS**

This picture first appeared in the 1st edition 2016 of "The Raven."



This picture of some type of party of the Gold Crew taken sometime between 1962 and 1965, had some misidentified individuals. At the 2016 reunion, Bill Truslow and Ray Higgins were able to correctly identify some of the individuals.

- |                  |                 |                        |
|------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1 Charlie Taylor | 6 unknown       | 11 James "Matt" Dillon |
| 2 Doug Ball      | 7 Sly [YN3(SS)] | 12 unknown             |
| 3 Gary Gault     | 8 Tony Bray     | 13 unknown             |
| 4 unknown        | 9 unknown       | 14 Billy Truslow       |
| 5 Jim Garner     | 10 Bob Turner   |                        |



## **SOURCE OF SUSTENANCE, SATISFACTION, and SERENITY**

Most of us frequented the Gales Ferry Spirit Shop pictured below that is located about 2 miles from the sub-base gate at Groton. Pat Pecorelli, Jim "Capt. Eddy" Schwind, Howard Boone, and myself lived off base at a trailer park located, I think, in Uncasville. We were regular customers at the liquor store. Because our funds were limited, our purchases were based on quantity rather than quality. Thus, we drank lots of Piels Real Draft Beer and Boone's Farm Apple Wine! Because we were buying the Boone's Farm by the cases, the owner usually kicked in a 13th bottle for free. Needless to say, our hangovers were severe!



Submitted by **Howard Boone**.



**"PLAN OF THE DAY"—GOLD CREW RETURNS FROM PATROL**

DAYS ON PATROL  
57

USS SAM HOUSTON (SSBN609)

DAYS LEFT  
NONE

PLAN OF THE DAY

SUNDAY, 18 AUGUST 1968

0015 Midnight rations  
0200 Movie "Women Times Seven".  
0530 Up all bunks.  
Breakfast: Ship control maneuvering watchstanders eat first.  
0600 Station the maneuvering watch. On watch personnel in Section II having maneuvering watch stations may be relieved by qualified personnel for breakfast.  
0630 Secure breakfast, the mess hall is secured.  
All hands not on maneuvering watch stations, turn to, clean up ship for entering port.  
0730 Topside line handling detail standby in AMR#1 to receive tug.  
0800(about) ETA CLOCH PT. Rendezvous with tug and embark tender monitoring team.  
At this time it is expected that Commodore SHERMAN, members of COMSUBRON 14 staff, Commanding Officer and Executive Officer (BLUE) and other BLUE crew officers will board the ship.  
0845(about) Moor alongside USS SIMON LAKE (AS33)  
-----  
Secure the maneuvering watch, set the regular in-port watch, starboard section. The engineering plant will remain in steaming watch sections as required by the Engineer Officer.  
-----  
Set all clocks ahead one hour to conform with ALFA zone time.  
1130 Noon meal  
-----  
Liberty by permission of department heads will be announced as soon as required ships evolutions are established.  
1730 Evening meal  
1900 Duty section muster in the crews mess hall for instruction  
-----  
Movie at the discretion of the Duty Officer

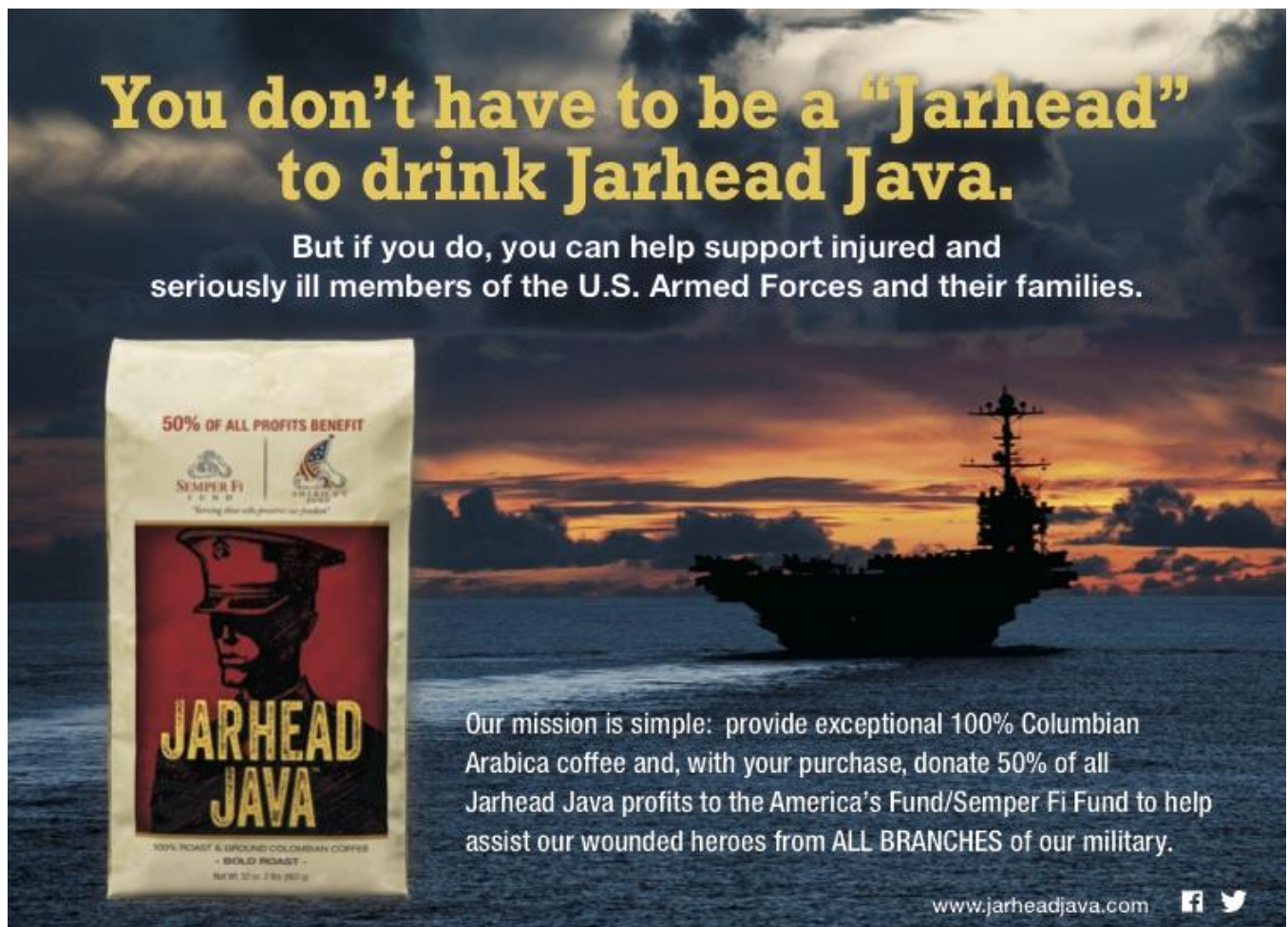
- NOTES: 1. The uniform entering port for all hands is clean, untorn Polaris coveralls and shined shoes. Topside personnel will wear deck shoes, white hats/caps and orange life jackets.
2. All pictures of all types will be down from bulkheads and bunk areas by 0700.
3. Winners in the weight loss contest:  
MT3 IACOVELLI with 31.5 lbs.  
LT THOMAS with 18.7%

Some interesting statistics:  
Total weight lost - 615 lbs.  
Total weight gained - 91 lbs.  
Net weight lost - 524 lbs.

  
J. D. LEONARD, JR.  
Executive Officer

## DRINK COFFEE—HELP WOUNDED MILITARY PERSONNEL

**Beverly Zellmer** (Associate Member and widow of **Werner Friedman** [FTG1(SS), Gold, 1961-1964; Plank Owner; **Eternal Patrol**]) sent me an e-mail concerning a manufacturer that will donate 50% of all profits from sales of a particular brand of coffee to America's Fund/Semper Fi Fund. These funds help those from ALL branches of the military. "*Jarhead Java*" is the brand. It's available for all types of coffee makers including those of the K-cup design. The coffee is available from the manufacturer's web site and from Amazon.com. I checked the military-exchange system web sites for availability, and the coffee is not available. But an accompanying message advised that I check local Exchanges as they might carry the brand. I can't do that, but others might if interested. Refer to the flyer below. The web site of the manufacturer is <[www.jarheadjava.com](http://www.jarheadjava.com)>.



**You don't have to be a "Jarhead" to drink Jarhead Java.**

But if you do, you can help support injured and seriously ill members of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families.



50% OF ALL PROFITS BENEFIT

SEMPER FI FUND  
"Bring the help home to the heroes"

JARHEAD JAVA

100% ROAST & GROUND COLOMBIAN COFFEE  
- BOLD ROAST -  
Net Wt. 12 oz. (340g)

Our mission is simple: provide exceptional 100% Columbian Arabica coffee and, with your purchase, donate 50% of all Jarhead Java profits to the America's Fund/Semper Fi Fund to help assist our wounded heroes from ALL BRANCHES of our military.

[www.jarheadjava.com](http://www.jarheadjava.com)  



## A NEWS-WORTHY ROLL OF TOILET PAPER ?#@~\$+%^&\*!



At first glance, you might think that I am struggling for topics for this newsletter; this is not the case. Also, this is not a roll of toilet paper that I took from the boat! Confused? Well, don't be; I'll explain.

I attended a FAM Tour at Omaha, Neb. at the end of July 2017. During the 2 days of visiting many attractions and having meals at restaurants and hotels in the area, one of the locations visited was Outlook Nebraska, Inc. or ONI. This factory produces various paper products of which toilet paper is one. But, this alone is not what makes the toilet paper or any of its other products noteworthy. What are significant about the roll of toilet paper and all products of this company are:

- About 60% of the production staff is legally blind; many are completely blind.
- Many of these workers operate complex equipment and machinery in the production areas.
- About 98% of the company's sales is with the federal government.
- About 70% of the sales to the federal government is with the Dept. of Defense.

Advances in technology are the means by which these workers can safely and efficiently operate equipment and machinery in the factory. Some of the equipment "talks" to the workers, others provide some type of audible signals to indicate that things are proceeding OK, something needs to be changed/adjusted, or that something is wrong or awry. In other instances, computer monitors are large such their displays are discernible by the workers who are operating the related equipment. I was impressed how those workers were able to work safely and at paces equal to workers without disabilities. ONI went into business in the year 2000.

Toilet paper stock arrives at the factory in rolls that are about 8-feet high and 4-feet in diameter as shown at the right. The rolls weigh between 2000 and 4500 pounds depending upon the specific product. Various processes convert these large rolls into the familiar rolls of toilet paper. The items sold to the Dept. of Defense are various types of toilet paper and paper towels.

If Omaha is chosen as the host city for our 2020 reunion, I will do my best to arrange for a tour of the factory. I am confident that you will be as impressed as I was to witness these workers and their specialized equipment in action. Tours can occur only at specific times on certain days.

*PS: I have been purchasing most of the reunion gifts that I provide to those who attended our reunions from "Delaware Industries for the Blind." I prefer vendors that employ those with disabilities and/or those that employ military veterans or are owned by veterans.*





# REMEMBER

If you have definite plans to attend the 2018 reunion, please reserve your guest room ASAP after receiving the Reunion-Information Packet between late February and mid-March 2018. Doing so might ultimately help those who cannot decide immediately receive the discounted room rate for The Queen Mary before the room reservation deadline.

**DO NOT ATTEMPT TO RESERVE YOUR ROOM YET; WAIT UNTIL YOU RECEIVE THE PACKET.**

Hoping that you can attend the reunion,

*Howard Dobson*