



SIGHTINGS

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See You in Florida

Don't Get Left Out in the Cold— Reunion XI Rooms Going Fast

Rooms are filling fast for Reunion XI, March 25-27, 2007, at the Ponte Vedra Inn and Club in Florida. Although the association will accept reunion registrations until March, late room bookers run the risk of not being able to take advantage of the terrific rates extended to the association.

At press time nearly 50 people have registered for the reunion and each one of them is booked at the inn.

A glance at the resort's web site (www.pvresorts.com) will show that we are getting \$400 ocean front rooms for \$159—the same price as rooms during the last two reunions. That's the good news. The not-so-good news is that the Ponte Vedra Inn could guarantee only a limited number of rooms at that price. So it's first come, first served. After that, attendees may be required to pay a higher price at the inn or seek other nearby accommodations.

Registration involves two actions: First, send the room reservation form (enclosed in the invitation letter) directly to the Ponte Vedra Inn, along with payment for one night's lodging. The inn will send a confirmation. Second, send the reunion registration form along with a check for \$185 per person to USNPAAA, 6119 Larstan Drive, Alexandria, VA 22312.

Everything's Included

The \$185 fee includes all reunion meals and activities.

Reunion XI will follow the successful format established in prior years. The traditional opening reception on Sunday, March 25 gives everyone an opportunity to get reacquainted. Monday opens with a continental breakfast, followed by a brief business meeting.

A draft of the "First Hundred Years" of Navy public affairs history, initially compiled by the late Ed Castillo and recently edited by Brent Baker and George Kolbenschlag, will be distributed to attendees. Part of the program will be a focus on the public affairs lessons of the Vietnam War and how they might apply to the present Iraq War situation.

Monday ends with an Atlantic seaport dinner. The hospitality suite will be open throughout the reunion.



View from the Bridge

As you can imagine, all of the USNPAAA board members and particularly Jim Finkelstein, reunion task force chairman, are focused on the March 25-27, 2007, Reunion XI at Ponte Vedra Inn and Club. If you haven't done so, I urge you to register with both the inn and the USNPAAA as requested in my letter to all members. As the temperatures drop in the upper states, the warm Florida sunshine sounds very nice to me.



The year 2006 was a busy one in Navy public affairs. While more than 10,000 Navy personnel were stationed in the Middle East, we observed the CHINFO change of office as RADM Greg Smith relieved RADM "T" McCreary at the Washington Navy Yard on July 14. The Journalist (JO) and Photographer's Mate (PH) ratings ceased to exist when they merged into the new Mass Communication Specialist (MC) rating effective July 1.

We are an organization of caring and compassionate people, who sadly observed the 2006 passing of seven of our dearest comrades, including: CAPT Jay Coupe, LCDR G. William (Bill) Eibert, CDR Earl R. Greathouse, CDR Joseph McGrath, CAPT Stan Sirmans, CDR Byron (Jug) Varner and JOC Hugh Williams. We miss them all, but know they are at peace.

Some of you have done this already, but we want to encourage members with personal knowledge of passed members, to send any remembrances to Brian Gray, editor of Sightings, graybrian@aol.com or (703) 750-3716, or to membership chairman Tom Coldwell (tcoldwell@nc.rr.com or (919) 234-9606.

On the good news side, we added nine new members in 2006, including: CDR Mark Baker, CAPT Jeffrey D. Gradeck, RADM "T" McCreary, LCDR David Lynn Nunnally, Ms. Donna Grace Schwenter, Mrs. Easter R. Thompson, Mr. Richard L. Thompson, LCDR James C. Wiltraut, Jr. and JO1 Karl J. Zinchak.

As always happens after a new CHINFO comes aboard, there were a lot of active duty senior PAO changes in 2006, led by the change in the Deputy CHIINFO. CAPT Tom Van Leunen relieved CAPT Bruce Cole on Nov. 3. Bruce served as our deputy CHIINFO for the past two years and has shifted to the job of standing up the new CHINFO (OI-8) directorate for Requirements, Assessments, Resources and Policy. Bruce is scheduled to retire next spring. CDR Cate Mueller relieved CAPT Dave Ray as executive assistant to CHINFO last summer.

Your board has been at work mostly on Reunion XI, with a teleconference on Oct. 11 where we received Jeff Zakem's treasurer's report. Jeff reported that the operating funds in Navy Federal Credit Union were \$12,722.12 on Oct. 11, and total USNPAAA endowment funds stood at \$110,261.82. I saluted Jeff for his wise and aggressive investment strategy, which resulted in this very healthy endowment report.

On Nov. 9, Jim and Marcia Nemer organized a Washington-area Navy Public Affairs luncheon, with RADM Frank Thorp as the featured speaker.

George Kolbenschlag and I are working on a final edit of Ed Castillo's "First 100 Years of Navy Public Affairs (1861 to 1961)" history. We hope to have it done by the reunion to hand out copies. If any members have items they think "must be in such a history"—whether it is an event or story about some unique leader or PAO personality—let George or me know your thoughts.

Finally, I remind all members that they are welcome to send any suggestions for the Reunion XI to Jim Finkelstein (jbf38@earthlink.net or 703-759-5198). I hope to see you all at the reunion in Ponte Vedra, Florida.

All the best,

Brent.

Is Your Endowment Pledge Current?

The president's column notes that the value of the association endowment fund has exceeded \$100,000; that's partly because of favorable market conditions. When the fund was established, the initial goal was to raise \$100,000 *in pledges*. That goal has not been met, although the association is zeroing in on that number. The end of the year is a good time to make your pledge to the fund or to make a gift toward a pledge already started.

Female Sailor Sculpture by Jim Nemer Now Available in Exchanges and Historical Center

A sculpture of a female sailor created by USNPAAA member Jim Nemer now is available in Navy Exchanges and in the Ship's Store at the U.S. Navy Memorial in Washington, D.C.

As Jim relates, "When I was VP for Operations at the U.S. Navy Memorial in Washington, I learned that the Ship's Store (gift shop) had numerous calls for a statue of a female enlisted sailor. That was back in 1997. I had just started taking sculpture classes at The Art League School in Alexandria, Va. Previously, I had taken one course in sculpting when I attended the University of Omaha (now the University of Nebraska at Omaha). In addition to an expressed need, I felt that the women of the Navy deserved their own icon"

Jim did a prototype sculpture of a female sailor and submitted it for consideration by the president of the U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation. After consultation with the MCPON and women in the Navy, he decided to portray the sailor posed using a bos'n pipe. Jim completed the sculpture but, for a number of reasons, did not pursue submission of the completed piece at that time.

"Several years later," he said, "I dusted off the sculpture and again consulted with various women in the Navy and determined that several changes should be made to make the sculpture more marketable and more generic. A major change was to have the sailor saluting instead of using a bos'n pipe.

"I finally had a sculpture that I was comfortable with and thought it would pass muster with the Navy Memorial. In 2005, I met with the president of the organization, RADM Rick Buchanan, USN, (Ret.) and, after discussions, I agreed to license the U. S. Navy Memorial Foundation the rights to reproduce and market the sculpture."

The sculpture is currently available at several Navy Exchanges and at the Navy Memorial as well as online and in the foundation's catalog. Eventually, all Navy Exchanges other Navy-oriented museums and venues will carry the statue.

Jim recently returned from Norfolk, where he signed sculptures of The Female Sailor at the Navy Exchange.

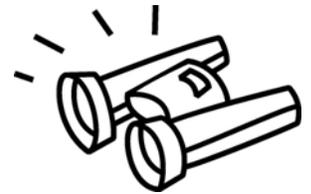
Jim and Marcia recently moved to Lake

Monticello, near Charlottesville, Va., where he has a studio in his new home. Now he plans to do sculptures of male and female Navy officers. Jim is associated with the Art Upstairs Gallery in Charlottesville and has sculptures and paintings exhibited at Rosewood Antiques in Charlottesville.

See the statue on back page.

Recently Sighted

"John Paul Jones: America's First Sea Warrior," by USNPAAA Life member **Joseph Callo** has been selected as the 2006 recipient of the Samuel Eliot Morison Award for excellence in naval literature.



The Morison Award is presented by the Naval Order of the United States to the author "who by his published writings has made a substantial contribution to the preservation of the history and traditions of the United States Navy." The award is named for naval historian RADM Samuel Eliot Morison (1887-1976), who is ranked among the foremost authorities on American history. It is one of the premier awards of the Naval Order of the United States.

Reviewers in the United States and Great Britain have praised the book as "the most carefully researched, most balanced of the biographies of John Paul Jones," "a gracefully written portrait of this extraordinary and complex man," and "a gripping and heroic story straight out of the pages of Homer, told with the confidence of an author who fully understands and admires his subject but never lets that blind him to his shortcomings."

The National Capital Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America presented an award to Sightings Editor **Brian Gray** for his work as editor of Momentum, the official journal of the National Catholic Educational Association. The magazine won first place in the magazine category in the chapter's Thoth awards competition.

The awards are named for Thoth, the Egyptian god of communications.



**Female Sailor Statue (left)
Sculpted by Our Own Jim
Nemer**

**Send your news,
photographs,
anecdotes to:**

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