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# SIGHTINGS

Volume 15, Issue 4

December 2009

## Do not wait to finalize plans For San Diego reunion visit

When winter weather closes in on most of the country, it is time to guarantee a few days of warmth and friendship with your fellow USNPAAA members.

How about getting Santa to leave a Reunion XIII reservation for you at the palatial Manchester Grand Hyatt Hotel on San Diego Bay.

The hotel rate is \$159 per day, plus tax, for February 12-14. If you act quickly you can add extra days on either end of your reservation. ***But, January 8 is the cutoff date for this rate. After that the cost is at the hotel's prevailing rate.***

Reunion activities get underway on Friday with registration in the hospitality

suite and the evening Welcome Aboard reception with heavy hors d'oeuvres.

Friday night dinner will be on your own with friends at one of the several convenient local restaurants. As at past reunions, the hospitality suite will be open until midnight, and promises to be a lively gathering place with drinks, snacks and great sea stories.

Saturday morning starts with a continental breakfast followed by a business meeting. This should be followed by presentations from RDML Moynihan and RDML K. J. Braithwaite who will update the crowd on the Active Duty and Reserve public affairs programs.

We are also looking at briefings on the

*Continued on page 2*



*You should enjoy your bay view room in the Hyatt towers! But, we must remind you again that the bargain room rate is only available until January 8. Extra warm days are also available Feb 12-14..*

# View from the Bridge

Dear Members,

This issue of *Sightings* and the items it reports on are good examples of the sense of community that our Association strives to foster.

We are preparing to come together in mid-February in that great Navy city of San Diego for Reunion XIII. It will be a first class event, and I and your Board of Directors truly hope as many members as possible will join us. For those who haven't yet registered, we're making it easy for you by including the form in this issue!

In addition to getting caught up on decades-long friendships and making new ones, Reunion XIII will be an opportunity to hear about the challenges and achievements of today's Navy and how our public affairs community is telling that story. As alumni, we continue to be goodwill ambassadors for the Navy, so it's important to know what's going on today.

At Saturday night's dinner, the Association will present its Distinguished Service Award – recognizing an organization or non-member for exceptional service in the area of public affairs or related fields – and the Captain Thomas Coldwell Award for Significant Achievement, honoring an Association member for significant achievement after service with the Navy. These awards will honor the values and dedication that we as a community hold dear.

While in San Diego many will visit the USS MIDWAY museum ship. In this issue, Association Historian Brent Baker traces the roles that many in our community – including former LTJG Bill Thompson, former ENS Don Dvornik and our late shipmate CAPT Pete Litrenta – have played on MIDWAY.

Also in this issue are stories by Brent on RDML Frank Thorp, based on an oral history interview Brent recently conducted to record Frank's recollections of his tenure as CHINFO and other PAO assignments, and the colorful career of Association plank holder CAPT Bill (Barney) Barnard, who at 95 is perhaps our oldest member. Such stories help preserve the valuable history of our community.

Jim Mitchell reports on RDML Denny Moynihan's first talk as CHINFO to our Washington area members in early November. It was great for our community

to hear how our active/Reserve/civilian team is so effectively engaged on many fronts. There will be more from Admiral Moynihan in San Diego.

As evidenced in this and recent issues of *Sightings*, we try hard to report on the deaths and funeral services of our members. It is important to spread the word on the passing of our friends and shipmates, so that their long and honorable service can be properly recognized.

The sense of our public affairs community evoked by such losses was never more apparent than in the recent service for Tom Coldwell at Fort Myer. Dozens of our members, many with spouses, joined Tom's family and friends in packing the Old Post Chapel on a dismal November day.

Our Chaplain Chris Baumann performed the service; Jim Finkelstein and Jack Garrow delivered remarks both touching and humorous. Admiral Moynihan was in attendance, representing the current generation. Several members remarked how nice it was to see the community so well represented.

When we gather in San Diego, there will surely be plenty of backslapping and sea story telling. But in a broader sense, we'll be enforcing that sense of community that has helped enrich all of our lives.

Correction: In the previous *Sightings*, I noted that the last issue of 2009 would be an on-line version. In the interest of fully promoting Reunion XIII – especially for those who would only see the hard copy product -- we've decided to postpone that until 2010.

*-Jim Noone*

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## *Reunion - continued from page 1*

Navy Public Affairs Support Element and a Hollywood update from the Navy Office of Information West.

At lunch, we expect to hear from a Navy Flag officer from the San Diego area. It's not all business though because Saturday afternoon offers you a chance to be on your own (maybe see the Panda bears). A pre-banquet reception and banquet in the evening will be highlighted with Association awards presentations including the Distinguished Service Award/Tom Coldwell award.

On Sunday morning, there will be a continental breakfast in the hospitality suite and a chance for additional visiting before the program officially ends at noon.

*A handy reservation form is included on page 7.*

# RDML Moynihan outlines his CHINFO Mission

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On the 90th day of his new tenure as Navy Chief of Information, Rear Admiral Dennis J. Moynihan addressed a USNPAAA luncheon audience in Washington on November 5.

In remarks sprinkled liberally with humor, Admiral Moynihan honored the Association: “I think about you as our Board of Directors. We’re walking in your footsteps, I learn a lot from you, and I owe it to you to let you know how we’re doing. USNPAAA is a great group of friends and supporters and I joined August 7.” That was the day he relieved RDML Frank Thorp as the twelfth 1650 to become CHINFO.

## **A Surface Warfare Officer**

He was a Surface Warfare Officer serving at a Navy Recruiting District in 1993, when he decided to change designators and become a PAO. After he applied, he visited with a retired senior Navy PAO to discuss his desire to become a 1650, but was surprised when he was told, “I don’t think you’re going to make it.” Reflecting on this meeting some 90 days after becoming the CHINFO, Moynihan noted that the conversation “makes this a weird moment.”

He then outlined the current issues he faces, including the evolution of the Public Affairs Community, the value of Reservists, the need to find young people for the civilian force, the role of the Navy Public Affairs Support Element, and finding work/life balance for the community.

He regards what is known as the Public Affairs Community as “The Community,” which today encompasses Visual Information, and the enlisted rating of Mass Communications (MC) Specialist. He noted that the MC rating today consists of 1,300 sailors, and that 900 of these have transitioned from the ratings of photographers mate, journalist, lithographer and draftsman.

## **He leads a “Blended Family”**

“I’ve got a ‘blended family,’ we’re all in this communications thing together and we’ve got to reach half-way across the table (to join these specialties).” His focus is on preparing young O-3/O-4s and MCs to deploy, “...so that in ten years from now, when my successor gets a call for help, the community will be ready.”

“The load shouldered by Reservists is incredible,” he said, noting that 42 Reservists are currently deployed

in Iraq/Afghanistan assignments. “Reservists serving in Iraq and Afghanistan have talent and I’m amazed at what they’re doing.” He urged his audience to “Hug a Reservist.”

On the civilian side, he noted that the civilian workforce is getting older, and posed the question, “How do we develop a younger civilian force?” His approach is to hire a couple of interns, “...to get them into the system and give them a foot in the door.”

## **Visit NPASE in Norfolk**

In his discussion of the Navy Public Affairs Support Element (NPASE), he encouraged the audience to visit NPASE in Norfolk. It has advanced public affairs beyond what used to be “a pick-up game,” when public affairs staff were needed for deployment to provide support. “NPASE is a cadre of young PAs who are trained and ready for deployment. We provide war-fighting PAOs to war-fighters.”

Most in the audience who have served in the Navy Office of Information clearly understood Admiral Moynihan’s goal to improve work/life balance. The routinely extended workdays have long been a tradition, reflecting the need to provide communications support to a global force. With a younger generation in the Office, Moynihan said, “We want to set the example – the youngsters need to see the oldsters having fun.”

## **Getting Back to Basics**

He said, “A lot of what I’m trying to do is go back to basics. What I’ve found is that we’re living a little on our heels -- a little reactive. We’ve got to get on the balls of our feet. It’s not resources or people, it’s how we think. I want to spend more time dialing the phone than answering the phone. We’ve gotten away from responding to what’s on the cover of Navy Times, but we can Twitter. Things have been forgotten: we need to cultivate relationships and trust.”

Looking back over how technological developments have affected operations, he noted, “We need to use the same principles and techniques that we applied when the telephone was our main source of contact. Then we got fax machines, then the Web and e-mail, and today, social media.”

*Continued on page 6*



## Recent Sightings

### USS New York Commissioning Lead by Ravitz and McElwreath

On November 7, and during the proceeding week, the entire city of New York was focused on the USS NEW YORK (LPD 21). The ship was constructed with 7 ½ tons of steel from the World Trade Center in her bow. In events leading up to the commissioning, USS NEW YORK was seen worldwide, and was perhaps the most successful Navy event ever in New York. As evidence of that, nearly 100,000 New Yorkers visited the ship during the week.



The Commissioning Committee was lead by retired USNPAAA members. **RDML Bob Ravitz** was Co-Chairman, and **CAPT Sally McElwreath**, served as the event's Director. *They are pictured above with the ship's Commanding Officer, CDR Curt Jones.*

The committee recruited other USNPAAA members including **RADM Joe Callo**, as senior consulting editor for the commemorative commissioning magazine. **CAPT Chris Boylan** acted as government affairs liaison, and **CAPT Frank Pascual** handled ship decorations.

Also on the committee were retired **JOC Kerry Smith** who was the event's Webmaster, and **Ed Bailey** a retired Chief Photographer. They and other committee members spent nearly four years planning the event.

Others actively involved in planning were **LCDR**

**Collette Murphy** who was recalled to active duty to serve in the NAVINFO office led by **LCDR Suzanna Brugler**. The committee worked closely with that office to generate extensive media and community attention for the event.

The committee raised nearly \$1.4 million in cash and *pro bono* contributions to cover numerous activities during the week. These included a welcome reception, a reception and ship's tour for sponsors and the committee, and the Captain's reception at the New York Yacht Club.

The committee also arranged to fly families of the crew to New York. They stayed in free or discounted hotel rooms and were offered numerous city tours and New York experiences. In addition, the committee sponsored a tour of a 9/11 memorial Tribute Center, and a dinner for 500 in a building overlooking the World Trade Center complex.

Importantly, the money raised will go to a long-term education fund for current and future crew members of USS NEW YORK. The fund is designed to supplement education funds covered by the Navy and will cover books and course materials.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was the guest speaker at the Commissioning. Others included the Governor of New York and the Mayor of New York City. Numerous military officials attended including SECNAV, CNO, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps. Also attending was former **SECNAV Gordon England**, whose wife **Dotty** was the ship's sponsor.

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### Barnard is 95 & going strong

**CAPT William (Barney) J. Barnard**, is 95-years old and a 1994 plank owner and founder of the USNPAAA. He was born on November 26, 1914 and joined the Navy as a Seaman Recruit in April, 1932.

He first served on the amphibious transport ship, USS HENDERSON (AP-1), deployed in the Pacific. He was then assigned to the former Pacific Fleet battleship USS UTAH (BB-31), which had been converted to a mobile target ship (AG-16) in 1931.

The young sailor later graduated from the Aerological School at the blimp naval air station at Lakehurst, New Jersey. He was handling the lines, with other students, below the German blimp HINDENBURG when the airship exploded in 1937.

He then served as an air crewman in a series of assignments in Norfolk, VA, and Coco Solo, Panama. During those assignments he flew in the back seat

of Navy biplanes to record and report weather information.

He graduated from Navy flight school at NAS Pensacola shortly before America entered World War II. After flight school he was assigned to Patrol Squadron 74 (VP-74) a new squadron flying the Martin PBM-44 twin-engine seaplane. He received a wartime direct Ensign commission in April 1942, with the designator 1200.

He flew Atlantic anti-submarine missions from 1942 to 1944, operating out of several air stations including Norfolk, Bermuda, Trinidad, San Juan, and Brazil. He was stationed at NAS Corpus Christi, TX at the end of the war.

Bill's Navy public affairs tours began when he attended DINFOS in 1952. He then served in PIO assignments at COMFAIRPAC at Guam in 1953 and at NAS North Island from 1954-1956. He retired in 1956 at NAS North Island as a Captain.

After the Navy, Bill worked for the California Aeronautics Commission in Sacramento, flying across the U.S. conducting airport site evaluations, and testifying in federal aviation hearings.

In 1965, he was appointed Aviation Director for Sonoma County. He retired a final time in July 1972. He married a former Navy nurse, LT Annette Hobbie in 1954. After retiring in 1972, Bill and Annette settled in Port Orange, Florida. In 2005, they moved to live with their daughter, Julia and her husband in Oregon. Annette passed away in 2007.

His daughter confirms that her father "loves to hear what is going on with everyone." She says that he remains in pretty good shape, and that his mind is totally as sharp as it ever has been.

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## Frank Thorp lands a new job

RDML **Frank Thorp** has a new title, Vice President for Communications and Government Operations for AM General, the South Bend, Indiana based corporation best known for building the civilian Hummer and High Mobility Military Wheeled Vehicle or "Humvee." His office is in Arlington, VA.

Recently the Public Affairs Archive's oral history program interviewed Thorp to reflect on his time as a 1650 flag officer at CHINFO. While his uniform is now a civilian suit, he still has that Blue and Gold enthusiasm we are all familiar with, and he still says "Game On" and refers often to "Our Navy."

Asked about what he learned in the transition from

the Navy to the corporate world, he said, "Well, I'm only five or six weeks into it. But, what I will tell you is that I was more marketable than I imagined, based a lot on the reputation of Navy public affairs. I heard over and over, in the interview process, about the strength of Navy public affairs. Clearly the reputation of Navy public affairs worked to my benefit."

He says, "The other thing is that the opportunities that Navy public affairs gave me...jobs I had...are very similar to what I'm doing at this corporation." The admiral adds that he is convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt that, "every day and every year in the Navy was an investment for the future."

Thorp asserts that there is no better investment in someone's time than the jobs and opportunities you get in the Navy. He says we take them for granted, "but you don't get those opportunities out here." He asserts that, "the Navy PA experience is truly an investment in the future."

- Brent Baker

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## *Moynihan- continued from page 3*

At the conclusion of his presentation, Admiral Moynihan introduced **Commander Rick Haupt**, Director of the Navy Office of Community Outreach (NAVCO), located in Millington, TN. CDR Haupt described how the PA community architecture has changed to accommodate outreach, calling the new emphasis, "...traditional community relations tactics, augmented by traditional media and social media."

"NAVCO is engaging Mid-America, where the fleet does not exist, by conducting Navy Week events. We bring fleet assets inland, divers, EOD, SEALs and flag officers, to build Navy awareness in these communities." He noted that NAVCO is targeting the top 100 markets, with 20-24 events a year, with 22 cities targeted for 2010, including St. Louis, Minneapolis, Salt Lake City and Des Moines.

Haupt emphasized the importance of having NAVCO as a "total force" operation that leverages the knowledge that Navy Reservists have of local communities: "...they know the territory." NAVCO is evaluating the effectiveness of these events by conducting measurement of awareness with the support of Gallup, Inc. Haupt indicated he would be asking for help from USNPAAA members to develop contacts in communities. The Navy Week program is available at [www.navyweek.org](http://www.navyweek.org).

- Jim Mitchell

## CDR Russ Bufkins served both The Navy and the Boy Scouts

Commander **Russell L. Bufkins**, of Denton, Texas, passed away on October 26. He was born in Boonville, Indiana, in 1920.

Commissioned an USNR Ensign in 1941, He was assigned to Admiral Halsey's staff in 1942 as a Flag Secretary. During that tour he remembered escorting celebrities and war correspondents, including Jack Dempsey, Gertrude Lawrence, Victor Mature, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., Bobby Riggs, and legendary war correspondent Ernie Pyle. Promoted to Lt. Commander at age 24, he went to Japan on the USS Texas to coordinate post-surrender public affairs activities.

After release from active duty, he completed his education with an AB in 1947, an MA in Journalism in 1951 from Indiana University, and a Doctor of Law degree in 1955 from American University. He taught radio and TV at the University of Miami before being called up for the Korean conflict.

In 1951, he served as Commanding Officer, US Naval Training Center, Colorado Springs, and in 1953 he became director of the Navy Public Affairs Reserve Program at the Pentagon. Promoted to Commander in 1954, he was sent to Naples, Italy to head up contingency planning for NATO Allied Forces, Southern Europe.

From 1959 to 1963, he served in the Book and Magazine section of CHINFO. From 1963-65 he was PAO for the 10th Naval District in Puerto Rico, and from 1965-66 served as PAO for the Great Lakes Naval Training Center in Illinois. In 1966, he was transferred to New York City to start up an office to manage Navy public affairs for 13 states.

After he retired from the Navy in 1967, he joined the Boy Scouts of America as Media Relations Director. In 1979, he was promoted to National Director of Public Relations. A resident of Denton, Texas since 1979, he was active in cultural affairs as a supporter of the various theatre, opera, arts, tennis and community associations.

He is survived by his sons William and Jim of Denton, Texas, his daughter-in-law Samra Bufkins, his sister Ruth Stevens of Boonville, IN and his loving companion Joan Ingoldsby of Denton. He was preceded in death by his wife of 56 years, Dorothy Anne Clewlow Bufkins of Evansville, Indiana.

## USS Midway Museum and Memorial Is a main attraction at Reunion XIII

One of the main attractions at the 2010 Reunion in San Diego is the chance to visit the aircraft carrier USS MIDWAY (CVB-41), now a museum and memorial at the Broadway Pier in downtown San Diego.

MIDWAY was commissioned in September 1945. She served in the Vietnam War and Operation Desert Storm before being retired in 1992.

Several Navy PAO's and journalists have a special relationship to USS MIDWAY. For example:

LTJG **Bill Thompson** served on MIDWAY from 1949 until 1951. He was initially assigned as an assistant PIO and later cruise book editor. He also served as the ships administrative officer and X division officer and finally as Gunnery Division Officer. But, the highlight of his tour was to qualify as Officer of the Deck underway and as "GQ" OOD.

Some of Bill's 1949 – 1951 shipmates included **Rear Admiral "Jocko" Clark**, who was Commander Seventh Fleet during the Korean War.

Thompson also served under three skippers who were promoted to admiral. They were CAPT **Wallace M. Beakley**, who became Commander SEVENTH Fleet and, CAPT **Kenny Craig**, who also was Commander SEVENTH Fleet. CAPT "**Nappy**" **Kivette**, also was promoted to Rear Admiral.

Others were CDR **Dick Ashworth**, MIDWAY's executive officer, who later became Commander SIXTH Fleet. He also served with CDR **Thomas H. Moorer**, MIDWAY's operations officer, who rose to CNO and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

LTJG **Robert "Dutch" Schultz** later made three stars and commanded the Sixth Fleet, Naval Air Force, and the Pacific Fleet.

LTJG **Allan Shepard** was a naval aviator in MIDWAY's air group. He later became an astronaut and was first man in space.

Another astronaut, LTJG **Wally Schirra**, also served in the ship's air group.

Another PAO who had a personal relationship with MIDWAY is **Don Dvornik**. He reported to the ship straight out of OCS in June 1960.

Another PAO, the late CAPT **Pete Litrenta**, was a key force in bringing the USS MIDWAY to life again as a museum. He served on the USS MIDWAY board of directors. USNPAAA board member **JOCM Joe Ciokon** is the PAO for the USS MIDWAY Museum.

- Brent Baker

**USNPAAA Reunion XIII Registration  
February 12-14, 2010 - San Diego**

**Member and Guest Names:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Member Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail** \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the letter or letters below appropriate to your participation and write your check accordingly for yourself and guest. Prices listed apply only for USNPAAA members. Separate pricing will be established for guests, e.g, active duty non-members.

A. Package Covering all Programs and Events @ \$209 per person  
Number of attendees \_\_\_\_\_ x \$209 Total: \_\_\_\_\_

*Or, Register for these events separately:*

B. Friday Evening, Welcome Aboard Reception @ \$65 p/p  
Number of attendees \_\_\_\_\_ x \$65 Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

C. Saturday, Continental Breakfast, Lunch @ \$70 p/p  
Number of attendees \_\_\_\_\_ x \$70 Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

D. Saturday Evening, Banquet @ \$90 p/p  
Number of attendees \_\_\_\_\_ x \$90 Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Registration Fee Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to USNPAAA and mail with this form  
To USNPAAA, 6119 Larstan Dr., Alexandria, Va 22312**

*Please indicate any special dietary or other special requirements you may have.*

\_\_\_\_\_

Be sure to reserve your rooms at the Manchester Grand Hyatt, Telephone: 619 232-1234, or log on to [www.manchestergrand.hyatt.com](http://www.manchestergrand.hyatt.com). The reservation fee includes the Hospitality Suite, Friday reception, Saturday and Sunday continental breakfasts, and Saturday's lunch and final banquet. To register use Group #G-USNP. Note: There is a cash bar at the Friday reception and Saturday banquet.

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## **More Than 40 Friends ALREADY SIGNED UP for Reunion XIII**

Brent and Malinda Baker, Chris and Anita Baumann, Bill Collins, Chuck Connor, Roger Copeland and Mary Copeland, John Dewey, Mike Doubleday, Don and Susan Dvornik, Ritch and Joan Eich, Jim and Kay Finkelstein, Bill and Anne Gengler, Bill Graves, Paul and Priscila Hanley, George and Vonnie Kolbensschlag, Bobby and Carolyn Lincoln, Mark Neuhart, Jim, Alice and Kathleen Noone, Tom Oxendine, Jerry and Carolyn Pape, Troy Snead, Tom Pinard and Hazel Stearn, Al and Rhonda Shackelford, Tim and Peggy Siggia, Dick and Easter Thompson, Jill and Rick Votaw. (More coming every day!)

Or email Bill at  
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