
USS THOMAS JEFFERSON 618 ASSOCIATION

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www.ssbn618.org

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Letter from the Desk of the Commander

Good Afternoon Shipmates and family, I hope everyone has recovered from their 4th of July holiday experiences and enjoyed the rest of the summer. I find it difficult to understand where the time has gone over the past several months since our last reunion (now over a year). Jim Beauchamp has already set the stage for our next reunion in Jacksonville, FL and I am looking forward to the event as I hope you are as well. I will let Jim address the reunion schedule in his section of this newsletter.

As many of you are aware we are losing and have lost many of the shipmates that started this organization. I bring this up to emphasize that we need shipmates from the later part of life of our ship's history. Attending a reunion can be expensive, especially the travel cost considerations. In the past we required shipmates to be current with their dues or bring their dues up to date to attend the

reunion. This is no longer required as of the last reunion and, we only require dues for the current year to attend. We will be voting during the next reunion to make a permanent change to our association by-laws to reflect this change. One point that I feel is important is input for the location of the next reunion (2018). Typically, there are several locations proposed by attendees and I would like to see proposed locations from any shipmate that finds it impossible to attend so we can consider alternate locations. With the use of the Facebook page and our association webpage there is an opportunity for virtually everyone to be heard, especially if you can round up shipmates in your general area to pitch the location.

After I retired, I really was not much of a joiner but the ability to reach out via the internet has made staying in touch much easier. I missed a number of the past reunions however, I have enjoyed every one that I attended and in several cases after reading the reunion comments, was sorry for the missed ones. The growth of the USSVI has also

increased opportunities for interaction with others in our brotherhood, and the ability to reminisce about the good and the bad with other Dolphin wearers. This can be a real eye opener. I look forward to seeing you at the reunion in Jacksonville, FL in September 2016. If any of you have recommendations to better our Association, do not hesitate to contact me or any of the elected officers.

One of the things that occurred to me as I talked to (some would say BS'd) with shipmates was the diversity of careers they represent. Instead of a boring work history story, like mine, staying until they asked me to leave. We have non NUCs that became engineers in that industry and guys with terrific careers in various police activities. Some retired from the reserves and not the Navy. Sam Cook agreed to draft the first bio and hopefully I can get others to contribute. See his in his section of the newsletter.

From Desk of the Vice Commander:

Shipmates:

The reunion preparations are now in place however, the transition from the Crowne Plaza to the DoubleTree has not been as seamless as we had hoped and by the time this newsletter is release the Hilton organization will have their act together and allow us to start signing up for our rooms. We have a great agenda of things to do for everyone and we tried not to leave anyone out. We have posted this newsletter along with the signup sheet on the TJ website (ssbn618.org) and on the facebook thread to ease the signup process.

We are hoping this reunion will become the reunion that all others will be judged by.

From Desk of the Secretary:

Shipmates:

I hope this newsletter finds all of you in good health and spirits. As, most are probably aware by now, that I have established communication with the USS Thomas Jefferson SSBN 618 Facebook page. I am also maintaining the USS Thomas Jefferson Association website, www.ssbn618.org. I am doing this to the best of my ability however, occasionally, a typo or some other slip up occurs. If you see something that needs correction please bring it to my attention.

I have put together a signup sheet for the next TJ Association Reunion being held in Jacksonville, FL which is included on the last page of this newsletter. I have also posted information about the reunion on the website and the Facebook page. Just think, it's only a little less than a year away. How time flies.

Please check your information on the sailing list and send any corrections to me. Also, always feel free to communicate directly with your current group of elected officers. We are here for you and want to do the best job possible. The Association Officers are:
Ron Whitener-Commander
Jim Beauchamp-Vice Commander
Sam (Sandy) Cook-Secretary
Dan Higgins-Treasurer.

I want to take a moment to remind everyone that the Facebook page for the USS Thomas Jefferson SSBN 618 is not administered by our association but, the folk there have been

gracious enough to allow us to use it and I'm sure we all appreciate that. So far, I have found it to be a great way to dispense information and for shipmates to keep up to date.

I will try my best for you and not to let you down.

From Desk of Treasurer:

I received a check from the outgoing treasurer for \$16630.02 and deposited it in a Navy Federal Credit Union checking account. We have received a gift check for \$100 from a member for the bench. Any other donations for the bench or the scholarship program would be appreciated. Our balance is \$16733.12.

While we have suspended dues until the next reunion in hopes of gaining shipmates coming to the next one, I will accept them if you want to pay them. We lose \$1000.00 a year to the scholarship program (a great investment in our offspring) it won't go forever.

A short biography of Sam Cook

I was born raised in New Jersey. I graduated from Bergenfield (NJ) high school in June 1967. After graduation, I joined the United States Navy in December 1967 without anything that resembled a plan. After being sworn in I was assigned to boot camp in Great Lakes, Illinois, company 636 under the tutelage of Chief Electrician Mate Magee. I was extremely fortunate for being one of the tallest men in our group. The tallest six men were chosen as squad leaders and, that came with the prize of not having to stand any night time watches. I had to serve master of arms watches 2 or

3 times during my stay at Great Lakes and during service week I was assigned to the Gedunk. Pretty sweet, huh? My scores were high enough (125) on the GCT/ARI tests where I qualified to attend Polaris Electronics Schools as long as I agreed to extend for 2 more years. Like I mentioned earlier, I didn't have a plan so I extended. After graduating (by the skin of my teeth) from Polaris Electronics Class "A" school, I was given the option of attending Mk 80 or Mk 84 Fire Control Class "C" school. I chose Mk 80 and did remarkably well (by my standards) in that training. After graduating I was assigned to the USS Thomas Jefferson where within 2 weeks of graduating found myself in Holyloch Scotland.

At the time there was a tremendous need for FTBs in the Polaris Submarine Fleet so, I never skipped Submarine School and went immediately to the Jefferson. This city boy found the adjustment to qualifying on the submarine quite challenging considering I didn't know squat about a submarine. All I knew (and not all that well) was my rating of FTB. I came on board with Richard (I am and FTB not a Mess Cook) Simmons as a 3rd class Petty (small and insignificant) Officer. Larry Moxon (FTB LPO) was my mentor and fellow watch stander during my first patrol. I stood all my watches with Larry and Richard stood his watches with Willie Reisinger. All went well for me on my initial patrol where I managed to stay current with all my qualification points and never found myself on the delinquency list. The only unusual occurrence that patrol came when it was decided that Richard and I had to have a one week tour of

performing mess cook duty. I welcomed that with the thought that I wouldn't have to get any qual points during that 1 week assignment and, I volunteered to take the first week of that chore and assumed Richard would be happy taking the second week. Richard didn't take to kindly to the whole idea of mess cooking and kind of messed up my plan. He refused to perform the mess cooking task and pushed the issue to where the Weapons Officer (Mr. Morris) had to get involved. This is the only time I ever saw Mr. Morris get totally bullshit where he told Richard that he would perform the mess cooking duty or he'd see to it that he would shove his 3rd class crow somewhere where he would never find it again and then, told Richard that he would not only do his turn but, he would do my turn too. Believe it or not, I was disappointed because I was really looking forward to letting my brain rest for a week. Now that I'm thinking about my first patrol there was one other, what I would call, strange occurrence. About two thirds the way through the patrol we had a blue nose ceremony. Before that day, I never knew how standing in shin deep water could render you powerless. I remember that as if it only happened yesterday and also digging the cherry out of Montgomery's belly button. Yuck!

My second patrol was highlighted by passing my qualifications board and receiving my dolphins on February 14, 1970. Finally, I felt like I was now part of the crew. It was one of the most important days of my life. I also qualified as Fire Control Supervisor around the same time. This was fantastic. Another important note about my second

patrol was that I took the FTB 2 exam and was passed and rated in May of 1970. Wow, so far things were going pretty good for me. No complaints here. As I sit here writing this I think I could go on forever with my memories aboard the Jefferson but, that isn't the main reason for this literature. So, to make a long story short, I made 1st Class FTB in May of 1972 and left the Navy in September of 1973.

After leaving the Navy, I started a new career working for Automated Industries/Vitro Laboratories in Silverspring, Maryland. Unfortunately, after being there for only 10 months, Vitro lost the contract pertaining to the work I was doing for them however, they said not to worry there was plenty of other work for me to do. Did I believe them? Not a chance. I checked the help wanted ads the following Sunday and found an advertisement looking for people to do the job I was doing at Vitro. I responded to the ad and was hired with a \$150 per month pay increase. That doesn't sound like much by today's standards but, at the time I was only making \$850 per month and that kind of raise was tremendous. I started working for Hydrospace Challenger, a wholly owned subsidiary of E.G.&G. in Rockville, Maryland. I was the 164th employee to work there. The company grew over the years to where there was over 2,500 employees. We also changed our name to Washington Analytical Services Center. After two years of working in the Rockville office, I was asked if I would consider taking a one year temporary duty assignment in Newport, RI. I said sure, why not? I've always been someone who goes through life without a plan.

After being in RI for a year, the company asked if I would stay another year. I agreed and decided maybe I should buy a house there. I'm glad I did because I stayed with the company in RI for the next 14 years until being let go in 1989. This was the first and only setback (so far) in my life. It was like "now what?".

Again, not like I had a plan I decided to never work for any entity that performed government work and take care of the thing that was the main reason I was let go, lack of education. Even though I had very limited resources at the time I decided to go to college full time to obtain a degree in computer science. I attended Rhode Island College and obtained bachelor degrees in Computer Science and another in Economics. I also was the #1 student of the business department in my Graduating Class and was awarded the John Silva Memorial Award. But, now what? I have two degrees but, New England was still in the midst of a bad recession and there was not many jobs around so, I decide why not go on for a Masters degree. I didn't spend a lot on my undergraduate studies taking full advantage of Pell Grants and some student loans and just kept pushing along in the academic arena. I attended the University of Rhode Island in pursuit of a Masters degree in Economics of Natural Resources. I know, what a bullshit degree but, this was the only life I knew at this time and it seem the only thing I was qualified to do. I was fortunate enough to be funded by the Department of Commerce,, Fisheries Division which meant my tuition was paid along with receiving a stippen

of \$200/week. Not a bad deal. Before completing all my requirements for my advanced degrees in Economics of Natural Resources and Accounting in 1994, I had to determine what was next for me so, I applied and, was accepting into the Phd program for Economics of Natural Resources. Just as I got accepted I received a call from an old buddy that I worked with during my hay days at E.G.&G. offering me an opportunity to work (defense contractor) for him on automated test equipment for the ADCAP torpedo. Swearing that I never would work for the government again, I'm sure you know what I told him. I told him yes, I love to interview for the position. I am broke after not working for the last 5 years and I really need the money. Furthermore, I seemed it was the only thing I was good at (other than playing the accordion and that doesn't pay). I worked for this man for 5 years before being offered a position by the Federal Government.

I worked for the Federal Government (Naval Underseas Warfare Center, Newport, RI (NUWC) after receiving a frontal labodamy (just kidding). I continued to work on automated test equipment for heavyweight and lightweight torpedoes for a couple of years and then worked on the Navy Training Software for Submarine Training. I worked for a program called the Submarine Multi-mission Team Trainer (SMMTT) where I wrote Modeling and Simulation software supporting sites in Groton, CT, Norfolk, VA, Kingsbay, GA, San Diego, CA, Bangor, WA, Pearl Harbor, HI and, wait for it, still waiting?, Perth, Australia. In 2008 I was chosen to represent the Naval Underseas Warfare Center, Newport,

RI to be an on-site representative to the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) (oxymoron). My main task with them was to provide Modeling and Simulation support as well as perform network support for interoperability between the various Intelligence Agencies. This was a super job and the high light of my almost 50 years of government support.

After my year at ONI, I returned to NUWC but, was still funded by the ONI until I retired in May of 2014. I am now enjoying my retirement and working on my golf game and enjoying my family and friends, especially my best friend Brandi, my loyal and trusted dog. She brings so much pleasure to my life.

Now that I started off this autobiographical part of the Newsletter, I hope others will share they story with our shipmates.

USS THOMAS JEFFERSON 618 2016 REUNION APPLICATION
Jacksonville, Florida (Sunday, Sep 25 – Thursday, Sept 29th)

NAME(S) OF PERSON(S) ATTENDING

Attending # X \$10 = \$_____

BANQUET DINNER BUFFET

Dinner # X \$39 = \$_____

- Mixed Green Salad
- Entrée (Selection of 2)
 - Chicken Marsala
 - Sliced Skirt Steak w/ Burgundy Mushroom Sauce
- Vegetable (Selection of 2)
 - Mixed Vegetable Medley
 - Roasted Peppers
- Starch (Selection of 2)
 - Roasted New Bliss Potatoes
 - Black Beans and Rice
- Dessert (Selection of 2)
 - Key Lime Pie
 - Tiramisu
- Coffee, Decaf & Iced Tea
- Drink Prices (Cash Bar)
 - Premium Cocktails @ \$7.50, Call Brand Cocktails @ \$6.50
 - Domestic Beer @ \$4.50, Imported Beer @ \$5.50
 - House Wine, Glass @ \$6.50, Premium Wine, Glass @ \$7.50
 - Soft Drinks, Bottled Water @ \$2.50, Sparkling Water Bottle @ \$3.50

Kings Bay Submarine Base tour (Tuesday)

Attending# X \$69.00 = \$_____

Luncheon Cruise (Wednesday)

Attending# X \$59.00 = \$_____

50/50 RAFFLE

- 6 TICKETS FOR \$5
- 13 TICKETS FOR \$10

OF TICKETS ____ \$_____

*No limit on the number of tickets purchased

TOTAL \$ _____

MAIL FORM & CHECKS TO:

Dan Higgins
509 Papaya Circle
Barefoot Bay, FL 32976

QUESTIONS OR ADDITIONAL INFO

Call or E-Mail
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