

Buddy Line



Newsletter of Fraternal Order of Underwater Swimmers School, Key West, Florida

November 2014

Your Stories

In the last issue of the Buddy Line Don Stone wrote "Now, what I hope to start is getting members thinking about their experiences in Key West and how they came to be there, then write them up and send them to the Buddy Line. Together we can fill the Buddy Line with stories."

Erasmus Riojas "Doc Rio" came through with this story from a 1960s Key West Naval Base newspaper.

Swim School Scuba Show Entertains and Instructs

Lessons in laughter as well as scuba technique were the dividend paid to the audience at the Underwater Swimmers School's exhibition at the Naval Station EM pool on Saturday.

Tying instruction and entertainment into one enjoyable package, UWSS instructors and students combined to present a program outlining the history of scuba diving, from man's first attempt to swim up to the latest in technical diving equipment and operations.

Ad-libbing freely from a script written and narrated by Chief Yeoman Dow F. Byers, the UWSS personnel made certain that the combined audience of Sea Cadets, Sea Scouts, dependents and visiting members of the Nation Society of Underwater Swimmers of America had a grand old time as they watched the evolution of scuba diving unfold.

The idea, according to Chief Byers, was to "get away from the typical, dry, purely technical demonstration and let the audience enjoy themselves as they learned. And we had as much fun putting the show on as the audience did seeing it." Byers added.

The show started with an example of what may have happened when the first man chanced to enter the water and discovered, to his surprise, that it was different from land. Step by step, the UWSS instructors and students, among them Air Force, Marine and Naval personnel,

reviewed man's attempts to operate underwater.

Each step was presented as an experiment by some bright inventor, and each experiment required a "volunteer". – and an unwilling one. Instructor after instructor, acting out the part of volunteer, was pushed, pulled or hurled into the pool while the experimenters tried out their inventions. While to the audience it must have seemed a wild reckless affair, in fact the expert instructors were working under the strictest safety precautions.

One by one, the instructors "invented" diving masks and fins, open circuit scuba, the deep sea helmet, semi-closed Mark VI equipment, and closed circuit Emerson apparatus, as narrator Byers explained the significance of each goal.

Instructors participating in the program, and having a high time doing so, included Master Chief Patternmaker, R. N. Hewitt, Senior Chief Gunner's Mate John W. Hobbs, Chief Hospital Corpsman E Riojas, First Class Boatswain's Mate E. K Caltenback, First Class Aviation Machinist Mate J.F. Rabbitt and First Class Equipment Operator A. R. Hale.

Also participating were Lieutenant G. F. Young, Training Officer of the Swim School, and Chief Shipfitter E. A. Cahill, who acted as master of ceremonies and host to the visiting divers. Even 14 year old David Byers, the Chief's son, took a role in the performance.

"It was a ball" Chief Byers summed up, "and we're looking for an opportunity to do the show again."

SAVE THE DATE
FO/UWSS Reunion 2015
Panama City, Florida
May 14-17, 2015

UWSS LOGO ITEMS

All prices include shipping.

Beefy-T t-shirt..... 19.00 ea
white or ash gray, large logo back, small logo pocket
Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL*

Long sleeved t-shirt.....21.00 ea
white or ash gray, large logo on back,
small logo on front (no pocket)
Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL*

Polo shirt 50/50 cotton/poly.....22.00 ea
white or ash gray, small logo on pocket.
Sizes M, L, XL, XXL*

Pique polo all cotton.....24.00 ea
birch gray, embroidered logo left front, (no pocket)
Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL*

Blue denim shirt, short sleeves 31.00 ea
embroidered logo above pocket
Sizes M, L, XL, XXL*

***All shirts size XXL add \$2.00 ea**

Cap – natural with logo 15.00 ea

Baseball cap – blue, embroidered logo.....21.00 ea
Cap 3.00 less if ordered with shirt

All service mug – old logo front, new logo back.. 15.00 ea

Mug – old logo front, UWSS back 10.00 ea

Embroidered Patch7.00 ea

UWSS logo decal – transparent or white2.00 ea

UWSS Plaque – bright brass on blue45.00 ea

UWSS commemorative coin7.00 ea
enameled brass, raised design, 1 5/8 inch diameter

UWSS all-service commemorative coin.....10.00 ea
enameled brass, raised design, 2 inch diameter

Bright LED pocket flashlight, shark rider logo7.00 ea

Key Chain with enameled logo medallion7.00 ea

**Make check to FO/UWSS
Send with order to Don Stone
1440 SW 5th Ave
Boca Raton, FL 33432**

All logo items are pictured on the web site

Secretary/Treasurer's Report

Membership November 2014	253 members
Account Balance August 2014	15,737.44
Dues	+375.00
Logo gear sales	+328.00
Buddy Line printing	-132.83
Postage	-138.20
Web site expense	-37.68
Account Balance November 2014	16,131.73

FO/UWSS Mission

The Fraternal Order of Underwater Swimmers School was formed in order to keep lines of communication open between personnel of the armed forces who were staff or students at the U.S. Naval Underwater Swimmers School Key West, Florida from 1954 to 1973. Family, friends, and others who share an interest in the goals and activities of FO/UWSS are welcomed as associate members.

One of the most important reasons for our existence as an organized group is to plan for and participate in biannual reunions, which are held at various locations selected by members' votes.

FO/UWSS Officers

President.....	Bob Holmes
Vice President.....	Gerry Flowers
Secretary/Treasurer.....	Don Stone

The Buddy Line newsletter is published quarterly in February, May, August and November. Buddy Line editors are Don and Art Stone.

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WEBSITE: www.uwss.org

Buddy Line by email

You may prefer receiving the email version of the Buddy Line newsletter. It is delivered to your inbox as a pdf file for Adobe Acrobat Reader.

The benefits to you are faster delivery and **color** photos (when originals are color). The benefits to the FO/UWSS are the savings on printing and postage for the Buddy Line mail out. To receive the Buddy Line by email, send your request to stonefish8@gmail.com.

Dues (\$25.00 for 2 years) are payable in May of odd numbered years. Your paid thru date can be found on your label or in the Buddy Line delivery email. Send check same as for logo orders.

Editors Corner

by Don Stone

A school Christmas card from the 50's



And a wish for a healthy and prosperous 2015 for all!

The Executive Corner

Bob Holmes
Gerry Flowers

Hi everyone

As "time" marches on, I sit here pondering life, the state of the world, the past year and life in general. We always like wish everyone happiness and good health and we mean it. Our health can change in an instant.

Folks, if you are not already aware of it, would like to pass on to you that our President, Bob Holmes had been diagnosed with Lymphoma and at this writing, he will have already gone through two bouts of chemotherapy and getting ready for his third starting Monday the 10th. He will be back in the V.A. hospital in Houston getting five days of 24 / 7 chemotherapy. I believe there are five sessions. He and Janet are moving through this one day at a time while dealing with all of the issues that come along with this type of diagnosis.

Terry and I had the opportunity to visit with Bob and Janet during the first round of treatment at the VA hospital in Houston. Bob and Janet have a huge network of friends and I can see that it will be a full time job for the two of them to keep all of us calm and relaxed during this ordeal. When I spoke with Bob, he gave me permission to share with you that, yes this is lousy, but they are dealing with it. He pointed out that he is as handsome without hair as he is with hair, then asked me if he could call me back as he was out for lunch with friends. He and Janet are positive, the VA is treating him well and Doc Rio is "On Station". Our thoughts and prayers are with you two.



Jerry Pardta turned 83 recently, here's wishing him a Happy but belated 83rd birthday. Judy got Jerry a very interesting gift this year. Here's the

link for the YouTube Birthday present. It is a worthwhile watch.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXIJiYbjhA&index=6&list=UULH3u9iwUZUU9Sxm0pVE2PA>

Starting September 19th, we embarked on a road trip that lasted 33 days covered over 9,000 miles and had us driving through parts of about 14 States. The trip was set in motion by an invite from Aaron Fariior (2015 UWSS Reunion Chair) to attend their 2014, USAF Pararescue Reunion held this year in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I figured it is a short drive, a great opportunity and I was just there on my motorcycle in July. I agreed, paid up and said "See you in September."

I am Marine Corps Pleased that I attended this reunion. First and foremost, we would be in the company of good men and women that we share a common bond with. Secondly, we would have a chance to seek out some of the Pararescue veterans that had attended the Dive School in Key West. Aaron and Doug felt, and I agreed, that if we could find a few of the Pararescue divers that would admit to have been trained at Key West maybe we could sign a few of them up when they were least expecting it.

I asked Aaron and Doug how we would find these men. With a little pre-planning, calling in past reunion experiences, Doug and Aaron narrowed our search down to two specific areas. 1) The Hospitality suite. 2) the area directly around the Hospitality Suite. Those two have a sixth sense as we found them, exactly where he said they would be.

Over the course of the reunion, we had the opportunity to speak to many that attended the Key West Dive School. They all seemed to have the same couple of things in common. Old guys and Divers. Three Swim School grads took the time to fill out the UWSS application and paid the necessary dues immediately. I was pleased to have found the Hospitality Suite.

All of the information we took with us was handed out. all of the "Buddy Line" issues were picked up, the coveted Dive School coins were passed out, two UWSS T-shirts were given away, along with website information and all of the available membership applications were personally

handed to those interested along with a personal invite to attend our 2015 UWSS Reunion in Panama City, Florida. I think that we can safely say, that there are a few dozen UWSS applications that are now safely folded and stuffed in wallets that reside all over America. It is our hope that, they will be found, perused and processed at a later date.

Please keep the dates in May open and plan on attending your reunion in Panama City. At the moment, because of policy changes, those wanting accommodations on the base cannot book a room until thirty days out. Aaron is working to make this as easy as possible and there will be more details as we get closer to the date. Looking forward to seeing everyone.

NOW, I have a story that I would like to share with all of you. It took place on this trip, early one morning at the Navy Lodge on NAS Millington, Memphis, TN. I went down to grab a coffee around 0700 and the only person there was an old Navy Veteran sitting sipping a coffee. I said good morning and introduced myself. He reciprocated, telling me his name was Bill D'Aoust, USN 1936-1959, a retired Navy Chief (E-7), 97 years old heading to a reunion of his ship, he included that it may be the last one. His daughter and adopted daughter were taking him on this journey. Bill currently lives in Bellingham, Washington.

Many of you will remember the movie THE SAND PEBBLES, starring Steve McQueen. Well Bill



was the radioman / engineer and photographer for that vessel. It was a coal powered gunboat, the USS Sacramento, PG-19, known as "The Galloping Ghost of the China Coast".

He was with the gunboat from China, all the way home. Bill joined early and stayed late. What a career. Bill talked and I listened. It was the most interesting LISTEN I have had in years. Bill told us that several years later, a duty station put him in close proximity to a group he knew as the "Underwater Swimmers". Bill did not just hang out with them, he swam and snorkeled with them. Bill's love for the water and his engineering background gave him the skills to actually build tanks using an Oxygen regulator from a B-17 Bomber. To that end, his daughter became the youngest person to ever, at that time, swim and breathe under water. She was five years old. I asked Bill to stay there and I would be right back.

I had a coin in the car, It was the new coin representing all the services with the Light Blue side with the Shark emblem on it. It says, U.S. Naval School,

Underwater Swimmers. Bill was thrilled as he had not heard that term used for over sixty years. I had Colonel Jim Lucas to take this photo as I presented him with the coin.



I will be in touch with Bill in the near future as he lives in Bellingham and his daughters have invited me to come and peruse his photos and history. By the way, Bill was taken of his job as radioman and given orders to go to a base within a base. He told the Colonel and I that all he knew was that he was headed to work on something that he was never allowed to speak the word that named the project. That word.....RADAR. Bill is a very interesting man and he sends his best to all of you.

Gerry Flowers
Vice President, FO/UWSS

I can be reached anytime for questions, comments, help, criticism or direction and would love to hear from you at:
nomad52usmc@gmail.com

Membership Application Fraternal Order of Underwater Swimmers School

Full Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Wife's Name: _____ Buddy Line Newsletter by email _____ or snail mail _____

Branch of Service: _____ Dates of Service: _____

Dates of Class at UWSS: _____ or Associate Membership: _____

Send copy of class picture if you have one. 2 Year Membership \$25.00

Make check payable to FO/UWSS and mail to Don Stone, Treasurer, 1440 SW 5th Ave, Boca Raton, FL 33432

From the mailbox:

The following email was received from:

Giblin, Steven P Mr CIV USSOCOM NAVSOC

I was on your web site and was looking at the memorial page. I believe MMCM (SEAL) Roger Gant was a graduate of the U.S.N. Underwater Swimmer School. I might be wrong.

Roger passed away last January. He was my first platoon chief in the SEAL Teams and was quite the guy. We had a blast together on our deployment and stayed in touch throughout the years. He was a graduate of UDTR Class 40, Little Creek, 1967 and was first assigned to UDT-21

Steve Giblin

Naval Special Warfare Command

Deputy Program Manager, Ranges & Training Areas

Welcome New Members

Dwight Stephen Blazier of Florence, AL
USN 67-93 UWSS 7108

Tom B. Forbes of Bellevue, WA
USNR 65-68 UWSS 6611

John D. Nusbaum of DePere, WI
USAF 65-69 UWSS 6601 6605

Lehman L. Booher of Washoe Valley, NV
USAF UWSS 1963

William Tom Large of Dublin, OH
USAF

Hugh W. Washington of St Augustine, FL
USAF Army USAF 75-2011 Army KW 79

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