

NAVY NUCLEAR WEAPONS ASSOCIATION

“KEEPERS of the DRAGON”©™

NNWA Bulletin



January 2019



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NNWA Board Members 2018-2019

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Director	Denice Young	405-875-8453	boardmember6@navynucweeps.com

Service Officer: Chuck Weber

Gray Dragon: John Cummings

President's Message

Shipmates,

Greetings from sunny North Florida! After four years as President, Tom Salisbury has declined nomination for another term on the board of directors. The board elected me as your president at the meeting in St. Louis this past September. Tom did a super job during his tenure. I wish to personally thank him for his immense help in the transition. We owe Tom a sincere debt of gratitude. Also leaving the board is Richard Gurule, Director/Asst. Webmaster and Ron Moran, MAA. Ron we will miss the many years of that booming voice.

We welcome a new board member Denice Young as Director. Also Bethany Gray has taken over the Vice President position and Kris Hobbs is now the full time MAA. Thank you for your interest in serving.

Last year's reunion in St. Louis was a huge success. Set up by Military Reunion Planners, but it would not have been a success without the hard work and dedication of John and Maggie Hawkins. Well Done!

This year's reunion will be in Jacksonville, FL, October 7-12 at the Doubletree Riverside. It's going to be blast checking out many of our old stomping grounds. All reunion info will be in the summer bulletin.

I'll be looking forward to seeing you all in Jacksonville!

Bob Fischer
NNWA President



Vice-President's Message

Fellow Members,

I am honored to be your new Vice President and would like to welcome all new board members.

As a reminder to members, per the association Standard Operating Procedures and Pass Down the Line Information document:

It is the Vice President's responsibility to maintain the SOP/PDL document, keeping it accurate and current.

If you have any recommended changes to this document then forward them to a board member for consideration. If approved I will update the SOP/PDL.

Beginning in January 2020 NNWA membership dues will increase to \$15 per year. Members are encouraged to extend their membership by paying for as many years as they like at the old rate of \$10 per year.

There has been a question brought up about the increase in membership dues and why. In the past NNWA annual reunions have been hosted by a member in the area the reunion was being held. The host would do all the arrangements required to set up a successful reunion. They would make sure that all the supplies for the Hospitality Room were purchased and on hand, plus make any supply runs as needed – plus do all the running around to coordinate the reunion activities.

Two years ago we began using a Reunion Planner to set up our reunions as finding a member to volunteer to act as reunion host, set up tours, secure a hotel etc. has become almost impossible.

The Reunion Planner has done a wonderful job for the association but at a cost. A board member is needed to fly to the location of the reunion ahead of time to finalize details with the Reunion Planner and hotel. A day before the reunion two

board members are needed to arrive early, rent a car, obtain supplies, and set up the hospitality room. They pay their own travel costs but the association will cover the cost of their hotel room for the day they have to arrive early. All of this adds costs to putting on these reunions.

Hopefully this explains the reason for the increase in membership dues - to cover said costs.

Looking forward to our next reunion in Jacksonville, Florida!

Happy New Year!
Until next time,
Bethany

Secretary's Message

Fellow Weaponeers,

Thanks to the diligent efforts of a couple of our board members – Richard Gurule and John Hawkins – we have signed up 121 new members over the last four years.

I am asking that these new members consider serving on the Board of Directors to help chart the course for the future of our organization. When we were on active duty, having new personnel rotate into a command brought in fresh ideas and perspectives on how to get things done. Serving on the BOD is like that, new members bring new ideas. Long serving members can step aside and let the “new blood” take over.

How do you get to be a board member? Volunteer yourself to an existing BOD member via email, phone, or in person. Then that member will ensure your name is placed on the elections ballot at the next reunion's Annual Business Meeting. Assuming you are elected the term will be for a two year period. Some people serve only one term – others stay on for ten years. It is up to the individual.

You will likely serve as a Director for at least one year so you can become familiar with the workings of the BOD and the organization. Starting the 2nd year on the board you can express interest in one of the other officer positions. Specific officer positions are filled at the BOD meeting immediately following the Annual Business Meeting by consensus of the BOD members.

Board Members do not have to attend every reunion, we understand that is just not possible so we all cover for each other. Items at the reunion requiring a vote are carried by the majority of the BOD in attendance. We actually conduct most business over the course of the year via email. We do leave each reunion with a “to do” list of items to improve the organization, how it operates, and to make our reunions better.

Hopefully this answers most questions about how to serve the NNWA as a board member. If you have any other questions feel free to ask any of us – we are here to help.

Again – I encourage any member who has not served on the BOD to consider it – it takes members serving on the board to keep our organization running.

We hope to see you all in Jacksonville!
All the Best,
John

Treasurer's Message

As treasurer and keeper of the roster, let me welcome our new and reinstated members since the last newsletter. We have 36 new and reinstated members since the last newsletter. They are:

William Schuster
Dan Plotner
Rodney Creager Jr.
Scott Helton

Rich Cutshall
Billy Blake Earl
James Lee
Dewey Thedford

John Violette
 Gerard W. Ouellette
 Frank Lemezis
 Charles Bunch
 Joe Murphy
 Francis Mattero
 David Beach
 Thomas Hill III
 Dennis Stickley
 Joseph Noll
 Charles Galbreath
 G. Nicholas Stuparich
 Scott Burchard
 Dennis Tonnon

Lorraine Violette
 Norman Wood
 Kenneth Boucher Jr.
 Walter Rae
 William Bailey
 Gary Drechshage
 Ronald Luke
 Jeffery Hartos
 Doug Sprouse
 Benjamin Cassidy
 Johnny St. Clair
 Rod A Reich
 Gary A. Heck

Javier Aguirre
 James Dimond
 James McDermott
 Thornton Morse
 Steve Royer
 Calvin Swanson
 Kenneth Wells
 Robert (Jack) Daniels
 George Grounds
 Jackie Knick
 Thomas Shafer
 James Stevens
 Mike Young
 Philip Edwin
 Patrick Lynch

Robert Bragg
 John Douglas
 Scott Meents
 Frank Perry
 Robert Southard
 Vikdal Lee
 Warren Wuestling
 Arnold Andrijeski
 Robert Pope Jr.
 James Mallery
 Michael Sprague
 Larry Wittsack
 Lester Wright
 Donald Clairment

We now have 845 members listed on the membership roster; 367 members in good standing; 52 life members (spouses of deceased members); 327 past members (members with unpaid dues for three years); 99 members with dues in arrears; and one reciprocal member (NAAV). Past members can be reinstated by sending the \$10.00 reinstatement fee plus \$10.00 for a total of \$20.00. They will then be reinstated as a new member. This policy is because of the cost of mailing newsletters and reunion information.

If you are unsure whether yours dues are up to date and you receive your newsletter by mail, look at the date in the upper right corner of the mailing which shows the month and year to which your dues are paid. If you receive your newsletter electronically, log onto our web site (www.navynewcweeps.com). The dues date will be listed in the date column to the right of your name on the membership roster.

With the dues increasing to \$15.00 a year on January 2020, it is to every body's advantage to pay many years in advance at the current dues rate of \$10.00.

The following members have recently been listed as past members because their dues have been in arrears for three years:

If you know the status of any of these members, please notify the Treasurer or any board member. The current membership roster is posted on our website. Members not on-line can request a hard copy of the roster by calling or writing:

Donald Schultz
 573 Beaulieu Loop
 The Villages, FL 32163
 Phone: 352-259-1403

Please review the roster and notify the Treasurer or any board member of any changes in your status.

Currently, we have \$22,431.64 on deposit with Wells Fargo Bank. When making payment to NNWA, please make checks payable to NNWA Treasurer or Donald Schultz NNWA Treasurer or Donald Schultz. The bank will not accept made out any other way.

Please ensure that when sending money to the NNWA that it is the correct amount. When sending checks back for the difference, only about 50% are cashed which makes the checking account very hard to balance and in some cases the Treasurer has to make up the difference from his personal funds.

Donald K. Schultz
 Treasurer and Keeper of the Roster

Chaplain's Corner

I want to thank all of you for giving me the honor as serving as you Chaplain. I know that we are all of different religious faiths or possibly no religion at all but that is OK as we all share a common bond that not many others have. YOU are special.

As your Chaplain, I want you to know that I am here for you. I know that I may only see most of you at the reunions so if you have anything you would like me to know or talk to you about, please be assured that I am only an email away. I would say phone call but that does not always work for me. (Even with VA hearing aids I do not always hear too well).

What do I want you to contact me for? Well, a number of things. I as well as the rest of the Board want to know when any of our members, as well as non-members, pass away. We want to include them in the Two Bell Ceremony at our Annual Business Meeting. I would like to know when anyone, due to illness, accident or operation, needs any special prayers for themselves, spouse or family members. If there is any time you have something on your mind and just want to run it by someone, I am here.

During the Annual Reunion, I do not normally go on tours and just hang around the hospitality room so again, if you need any special prayer or private talk time, look me up. If anyone would like to have a bible study, we can arrange it. If you would like to teach me a little about you faith, I will listen.

I had a great time in St. Louis and am looking forward to Jacksonville. See you there. Hope you had a blessed Holiday Season.

Ed Deitzler
NNWA Chaplain

Historian's Message

Merry Christmas Shipmates!

As promised, Tom Salisbury, Guy Clemons and I went to Center Point IN the Saturday before the reunion to inventory and sort the 22 boxes of memorabilia stored there, and to box almost everything up for shipment. We put what we were keeping in just two boxes, and the rest was for the USS Hornet Museum and a couple other historical sites. As the great bulk of the items were documents, publications, etc., and had all been scanned there was no need to keep them. Along with the other material for the reunions – flags and stands, banners, plaques – this reduced the volume and weight of all our keepsakes to a manageable level. I will get the complete inventory on the web site as soon as possible.

Continuing my conversations with Steven Kasunic, original Manhattan Project member:

At our first sit-down I made the mistake of referring to “Little Boy” and “Fat Man”. “NO!” Steve was quite adamant about this. He said the bombs were NEVER called that on the hill. The names came about in some PR stunt on Tinian Island. In fact, General Groves was very upset when he heard about it, saying that anyone with even a little bit of knowledge of nuclear physics would be able to eventually figure out that the names meant a (relatively) thin gun type weapon and a much bigger implosion device.

So, what were the bombs called? As Steve explained all work had its own code name, and different groups would know the same project by numerous different names. For the bombs a simple ID was used. The gun type weapon used Uranium, element ninety TWO, isotope two three FIVE, and so was called the 25 Project. The Plutonium bomb was likewise called the 49 project.

Steve recalled the tension between the General and all the scientific staff regarding

compartmentalized access. The scientists wanted everyone to hear of problems in weekly gatherings, and get fresh ideas and possible solutions. The General hated this and finally won out. But not until after a long period of resistance. Steve was assigned to the 25 Project, but was loaned out by CDR Parsons on numerous occasions. He was asked to help with the early attempts on implosion, and even designed the first molds for the HE lenses. But it was right at this point that the General pushed through his strict rules, and all assist visits were stopped throughout the lab.

I asked Steve if he ever got to do any traveling. He did, and it all involved the suspension lugs for the bombs. He met Col. Tibbets and several other 509th men on the hill when the problem came up about how to hang the bombs in the plane. They were, in fact, the largest bombs the US dropped during the war, far heavier than any others we used. Tibbets mentioned that the RAF was dropping up to eleven ton bombs from their Lancaster's using a single suspension lug, and they were the people to talk to. So, Steve went to England and visited the Famous "Dam Buster" squadron that dropped the "Tall Boys", and factories to learn how it was done. When he came back he went to the Boeing plant in Kansas that made the 509ths planes, and even out to Wendover, Utah, where the 509th was based. The single lug worked perfectly.

We bounced around from one subject to another. I asked if any thought had ever been given to firing the gun type weapon back toward the tail. He said that had been the subject of quite a bit of discussion, and several scientists preferred it that way. But ballistics was his area of expertise and he pointed out that this would require moving the 5000lb doughnut of Tungsten Carbide surrounding the critical mass back. This would lengthen the whole bomb to get the fins far enough back to stabilize the bomb. The scientists learned not to try to be ballistics engineers. Plus, with the gun pointing forward, even if all the radars, timers and baro switches failed, inertia would do the rest.

And he got to teach the big guys too. Hans Bethe was a world renowned physicist and head of the labs Theoretical Division. He and his crew had determined that a gun type Plutonium weapon was not doable. He came to Steve and said their calculations showed that the current design of firing the 62 pound projectile down a 3" gun barrel into the 84 pound target rings may not work – like the Plutonium gun there was too high a chance of preinitiation. He said they would have to have a longer barrel to get higher velocity, meaning a longer bomb again. Steve showed him that wasn't possible. Bethe said then how about a better propellant, possibly even an explosive. Steve said give me a few minutes, and came up with the solution – turn the two Uranium masses around. Firing a 6" slug of Target Rings (with just a steel plate to cover the hole) down a 6" barrel provided four times the surface area for the propellant to work on, and gave them the added velocity needed. Bethe never questioned his engineering abilities again either.

More about the Manhattan Project next time.
Jay Lindstrom

Service Officer's Message

Chuck Weber serves as the NNWA Service Officer. He regularly posts information regarding veteran's benefits on the NNWA website. Chuck encourages members to contact him with questions and concerns regarding their service related benefits. His email is:

serviceofficer@navynucweps.com

