

Navy Nuclear Weapons Association Secretary Report

MINUTES OF 3 OCTOBER 2009 BUSINESS MEETING

Navy Nuclear Weapons Association business meeting was held at The Best Western Dallas Hotel and Conference Center, Dallas Texas. The meeting was called to order at 1000 with all Board Members present, and attended by 38 members in good standing.

The President asked for all present to stand for the opening prayer by Chaplain Lonnie Cucinitti followed by the pledge of allegiance to the American Flag. All present remained standing as Lonnie Cucinitti conducted the 2-Bell ceremony to honor our shipmates who transferred to the Supreme Commander's Staff: GMTC Roy (Oz) Osborne, GMTC Thelbert O. Grantham, CWO3 Edward Luther Jr., GMTC Joel Weaver, GMTCM Raymond Hawkins, GMTC David E. White, GMT1 Eugene Dobson, Dewayne E. Phillips, LCDR Leo G. Nichols, LCDR Roy A. Norman, SKC James H. Hackler, GMTC William (Bill) Potter, GMTC Darrell G. Cook, CWO4 Karl D. Smith and SK2 George Lenz Jr.

The President called for new members to stand and introduce themselves.

The President called for the minutes of last year's general membership meeting to be read.

The minutes of the 2008 business meeting were read by the Secretary.

The President entertained a motion to accept the minutes as read. A motion was made, seconded and vote carried to accept the minutes as read.

The President asked if there was any additional information to report. The Secretary also reported that we had received our Tax-Exempt Status and the letter is available for all to see. We are now officially a 'Tax-Exempt' Organization.

The President called for the Treasurer's Report.

a. The Treasurer passed out copies of the financial report to the membership. The Treasurer stated that there were outstanding bills to pay for this year's reunion.

b. The President asked for a motion to pay all outstanding bills. A motion was made, seconded and approved to pay all outstanding bills.

The President reported on the 2009 Association accomplishments as follows:

1. The NNWA Social Roster has been published. It is in three separate PDF files so they can be e-mailed and for ease in updating. Anyone who would like a copy, send me an email. That way I'm sure to have your correct e-mail address. I will then put you on automatic distribution for all updates.

2. We have identified the 'Gray Dragon'. He is Edward H. Doss. Ed couldn't be here to accept this honor that the NNWA has bestowed on him do to health reasons. However, I have had several phone conversations with him and he has expressed his sincere thanks for this honor.

3. The SOP/PDL has been updated with Change 1. VP Larry Sneide, in charge of updating the document, has spent many hours putting it together and I thank him for his persistence. This document will be reviewed annually after our Reunion and changes made as required.

4. Our membership drive seems to be doing fairly well. This year we gained 39 new members. Everybody should review their cruise books and other documents to see if we can get more new members.

5. The President then asked each board member to give their report:

a. Vice-President's Report.

1. Asked the three new members how they found out about the NNWA. Two out of three got the information from a previous shipmate. He encouraged each member to try to remember old shipmates and possibly get in contact with them to let them know of our organization.

b. Secretary's Report:

1. Please continue to send photos in. We would like our photo roster to have pictures of as many members as possible.

2. If you do not have a NNWA ID card, please let me know and I will forward one to you.

c. Treasurer's Report. No additional input.

d. Service Officer's Report.

1. Acknowledged the presents of new members and old members who had not attended a NNWA reunion in some time. They asked him what a 'Service Officer' was in our organization. He said the name was more appropriately named the 'Veterans Service Officer', whose business is to help veterans obtain earned benefits from the government and how to go about getting them. The only reason 'Service Officers' exist is because the government does not actively seek you out to provided earned benefits. It is essentially Veterans taking care of Veterans. The VA also has 'Veterans Counselors' who are paid by the VA to help you. You don't want to go to a VA councilor, because he will take care of the VA first, the Vet comes second. Items of interest are posted in our newsletters and if it is time sensitive, it will appear on the front page of our website.

2. COLA 2010: Confirmed that there will be not COLA for 2010 and possibility 2011. Medicare Part B Insurance will stay the same as this year, however, new enrollees in Medicare will pay a higher premium.

3. NDAA: The committee seeks increased healthcare funding for TRICARE to cover the \$307 million shortfall due to a DOD underestimate of the TRICARE population by nearly 300,000 and to a DOD forecast of rebates, yet un-received, from the newly approved federal retail pricing guidelines. The difference between the defense authorization bill (NDAA) and the defense appropriations bill can be confusing because both bills are currently under consideration.

4. Health Care Reform: President Obama: 'One thing that reform won't change is veterans' health care,' he said. 'No one is going to take away your benefits. That's the truth' Rep. Steve Buyer (R-IN), expressed concern that 'in its current form, H.R. 3200 could result in bureaucratic determinations that veterans enrolled in the VA health cadre do not meet acceptable coverage standards, exposing them to a new 2.5% punitive individual income tax.

5. SBP Withdrawal: Retirees participating in the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) who have a service-connected totally disabling rating by Veterans Affairs may request to stop participating in SRB. This applies to retirees who have held the VA totally disabled rating for at least 10 consecutive years or, if for a lesser period, at least five years from their discharge date or release from active duty.

6. ID Card Numbers: Phase Three, set to begin in 2010, will involve removing Social Security numbers embedded in barcodes. In Jan 2010, retirees with an indefinite expiration date on their card can begin requesting a new card without a printed Social Security number. Family member ID cards will change when the cardholders' cards are renewed. There are more than 1,500 ID card centers worldwide. To find the nearest center, visit the RAPIDS site locator at www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/owa/home. People must present two forms of identification and one must be an unexpired federal or state issued photo ID.

7. Medicare Rates: Most Medicare beneficiaries won't pay higher premiums for Part B medical insurance coverage in 2010. Under current law, Part B premiums cannot rise faster than Social Security annual cost-of-living increases. And the Congressional Budget Office predicts there will be no cost-of-living increases for Social Security recipients 2010 and 2011. But the law doesn't protect all Medicare recipients from elevated health insurance costs. About 75% of people will be protected from the premium increase, according to Juliette Cubanski, a policy analyst at the Kaiser Family Foundation. The remaining 25% of Medicare recipients will face larger than normal premium increases because the costs are spread across a smaller share of beneficiaries. Here is who will have to pay greater Medicare premiums in the near future: Medicaid Recipients, High Income Retirees. Seniors with a modified adjusted gross income above \$85,000 for individuals and \$170,000 for couples in 2009, New Enrollees and Part B users.

8. TRICARE Regional contracts: Transition to new managed-care support contractors for six million Tricare beneficiaries across 30 states has been halted while the Government Accountability Office reviews protests filed by losing bidders.

9. New VA Vet Centers:

American Samoa
Arizona – Mohave and Yuma Counties
California – San Luis Obispo County
Delaware – Sussex County
Florida – Marion, Lake, Collier, Okaloosa and Bay Counties
Georgia – Muscogee and Richmond Counties
Hawaii – Western Oahu
Indiana – St. Joseph County
Louisiana – Rapides Parish
Michigan – Grand Traverse County, also serving Wexford
County
Missouri – Boone County
Montana – Cascade and Flathead Counties
Ohio – Stark County
Oregon – Deschutes County
Pennsylvania – Lancaster County
South Carolina – Horry County
Texas – Jefferson and Taylor Counties
Utah - Washington County
Washington – Walla Walla County, also serving Umatilla
County, Oregon
Wisconsin – LaCrosse County, also serving Monroe County

10. VA Medicare Subvention: Rep Bob Filner (D-CA), chairman of the House Veterans Affairs Committee introduced legislation 28 JUL that would allow VA to bill Medicare for third-party reimbursements of eligible veterans for nonservice-connected medical conditions. Currently, VA is prohibited from billing Medicare for third-party reimbursements for the treatment of enrolled, Medicare-eligible veterans for medical conditions that are unrelated to their military service.

11. SBP – DIC Offset: By voice vote and without debate, the U.S. Senate passed an amendment July 21 that repeals the offset of pay for surviving spouses who are eligible for both military and survivor benefits. This ends the unfair practice of deducting VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation survivor benefits from Military Survivor Benefit Plan annuities. The amendment to the fiscal 2010 National Defense Authorization Act

(S. 1390) was chiefly sponsored by Sen. Bill Nelson (D,FL). About 57,000 survivors, mostly widows, will be affected by the new provision. Most of them will get a monthly benefit of about \$1,100.

12. VA Handbook 2009: The latest edition of the Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents Pamphlet (i.e. handbook) 80-09-01 can be obtained from the Department of Veterans Affairs online or by mail.

13. NEW VA TRICK: 'FAST SETTLEMENT CENTER FOR CLAIMS' offers lump sum settlement check for disability claims in exchange for an agreement not to re-file. DO NOT DO THIS!!!!

e. Historian's Report: A number of new memorabilia displays this year. A tritium fill consol from Los Alamos (from Don Green), a book published in the 1980's limited edition (Tom Trimbul) bought from the internet at considerable cost to him. From Capt Hanson, at our meeting in San Diego, graphite from first nuclear reactor (1942 Stagg Field, University of Chicago). We have also received a lot of input from people's personal files, cruise books, etc. Most now have names associated with them, unlike the old documents that we do not know where they came from.

Mike asked for those present to go through the old cruise books/memorabilia and if you recognize someone, note their name on the page. The history is fast disappearing and we need to note names whenever possible.

If you send photos, please label them (who, what, where, date).

Don Micco put together a very good model collection. They are wearing out and we are trying to get new models made. The membership is invited to take home a model and make a new one (or repair the old one) for our collection. Just let the Historian know that you are taking it and when you will return it.

Personal Histories: We put together one for Ed Doss (the Gray Dragon). He has written volumes from 1937 for a period covering 30 years. You need to set and record your career in the Navy (Special Weapons) for future generations. He then discussed 'Area 52', by Lt Lee Boiling (USA). Answer the question: 'What would I tell my kids about my history'. Write to them.

f. Webmaster' Report: We have over 100,000 hits on the website. Also, check the online roster and make sure the information we have about you is up-to-date. It is especially important to have your email address correct as this is how we send out our newsletters. If you see only your name and dues expiration, it is because you have not given us permission to put the other information on the website. We do not publish anything other than your name and dues without your permission.

g. Chaplain's Report: If you find somebody sick or not able to respond to our emails, please let us know so we can show they are not forgotten by the Navy Nuclear Weapons Association.
Bring the oldest photo of you in the Navy to the next reunion.

h. Storekeeper's Report: During the year, we had total sales of \$535.29. Just at this reunion we have done \$949.75. The Blue Shirts will be added to the website for anyone who wants one. There will be an order form included on the website for the shirts. They will be drop shipped directly to the buyer from the vendor. This eliminates having to maintain shirts in our inventory.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The President thanked Lonnie and Sharon Cucinitti and all those who helped for this outstanding reunion. This has been a reunion for the books and the membership gave Lonnie and Sharon a round of applause.

NEW BUSINESS

As the first order of new business the President announced that 5 positions were open on the board and up for election by the Membership. He informed the Membership that, in accordance with the By-Laws, the following Officer positions were also up for election by the new Board during the Board Meeting to follow the general meeting, (Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Historian and Webmaster). He then turned the gavel over to the Nominations and Elections Chairman Chuck Weber to conduct appropriate nominations and elections. Chuck gave a short presentation as to what the Board does all during the year. We are an IRS Registered non-profit tax exempt organization. We have about 100 committee meetings a year (e-mail) and one when Board Members must be present. If you feel like you would like to be on the Board of Directors, please feel free to contact anyone on the Board and tell them of your interest. They will explain the time commitment and the effort that goes into being a Board Member.

Chuck provided an overview of the qualifications and responsibilities of being a Board member. You must be a member in good standing and have email capability. We opened nominations with our June Newsletter being sent to each member. That closed at the end of August and was suspended. There were no responses to that call. . He informed the membership that Larry Sneide, Dave Cobb, Frank Kelly, Mike Snyder and Ray Margeson have agreed to remain on the board if reelected, and I strongly recommended their reelection. The Board of Directors has recommended that the above mentioned 5 members be considered for re-election to the Board for the 2009 – 2011 term. Are there any other nominations for director. Hearing no nominations, the Chair entertained a motion from the floor that we close nominations. The motion was made and seconded. All present voted 'aye'. These 5 nominees accepted. Chairman Weber requested a motion from the floor stipulating the Secretary cast a ballot in favor of each nominee representing the unanimous consent of the Membership. Motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously. The elections were closed.

The 26th annual reunion will be held in Nashville area. The host will be Alex Gabbard. The Board is evaluating this selection now. There will be a tour of Clarksville Base, which will be an all day tour. It will also include Ft Campbell. We do not have the dates or the hotel at this time. When we get the hotel and dates firmed up, we will post it on the website and possibility send out an email to everyone and a special letter to those without email, so that reservations can be made.

The 27th 2011 annual reunion will be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The host will be John O'Malia, providing his health continues to be good. Otherwise, we would need to look for a new host or a new place. As of now, John's health is good.

The 28th 2012 reunion was discussed. It will be held in the central region. The President asked for places where we might hold the next reunion. We are always looking for volunteers to host one of our reunions. Red City, South Dakota was suggested by Sandia Base Class 45. Bill Beard will take the lead on that proposal, if approved. San Antonio was also suggested. Branson, Missouri was suggested also. The Board will look at these locations and make a decision on which one to go to.

The Board of Directors is considering changing the reunion dates to Tuesday thru Sunday (versus Wednesday thru Sunday). The President would like to get a feel of the general membership if they think that is a good idea. It was brought up that about 35 people arrived on Tuesday for this reunion. Nashville will be Tuesday to Sunday because there is so much to do there. Someone asked if Monday thru Saturday might be better for some locations due to

Traffic considerations. It was also suggested that we do it site specific and let the host set the dates. It was decided to keep the date's site specific. Our bylaws require mid September to mid October for our reunion. The Board may offer a bylaws change to give us a little more leeway to set up the reunion.

The Red Shirts the Board was wearing was discussed. The only people wearing red shirts are the Board of Directors. That way, when a person sees a red shirt, he can ask questions about the organization or about the reunion, and the Board Member should be able to help.

The Historian added that the reason we are asking people to identify people in the pictures is to identify as many people in the Navy Nuclear Weapons Program as possible.

There being no other new business, the President asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was made and seconded.

The Chaplain offered the closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25.