

U.S. Coast Guard Academy Class of '53 Newsletter July 2011

About this Newsletter: The Class of '53 Newsletter is published "as soon and as often as we can get around to it". Its purpose is to keep members of our class informed about our classmates' lives and activities, and to occasionally provide some tid-bits of trivia and information.

*Because not all of our classmates are members of the Alumni Association, and not all of our classmates have e-mail, and the deadline for articles for our class notes section in **The Bulletin** is almost two months before it's published, there will be, from time-to-time, duplications and gaps in what is included here, what is sent by e-mail or "snail-mail", and what appears in **The Bulletin**.*

*Send items for **The Bulletin** and this Newsletter to: Wee Smith, 19 Coachman Pike, Ledyard, CT 06339 - Tel./FAX 860-464-8425 or e-mail to jdsbridge@aol.com.*

----- HELP!!

Somehow I managed to screw up the Class of '53 directory information on my computer :(Fortunately, however, I had backed up most of it and I think I have successfully "reconstructed" it.

If any of the information on the attached slip with your information is not correct, please let me know.

THANKS!!

----- '53 2012 Mini-Reunion

San Diego, CA, (April 23-27, 2012)

Paul and Donna Arnold and Bill and Romy Bruinsma have started planning next year's '53 mini-reunion. Enclosed is a letter about it.

By Sept. 15th, please return the enclosed postage-paid reply post card to indicate your *probable* intentions about attending it.

----- Correction to June '53 Newsletter!

Ed and Becky Daniels noted that I had not listed, Frank Young (Glenn and Sally's son) who had graduated from CGA in 1987, in the item about the growth of our "Class of '53 legacy at CGA". I apologize for my "goof".

----- California Beach rentals available

Bill Bruinsma sent an article announcing that the Coronado Naval Base in California now has two-bedroom beachfront cottages available to service retirees for nightly vacation rentals. Cost: \$125/night. For information, reservations, call 619-435-1227.

Misc. Bits, Pieces, and Trivia about our classmates (listed in alphabetical order):

On July 7th, Paul Arnold sent a reminder that it was "exactly 62 years ago that week that the original members of our class first reported to New London!"

Dan Briganti (1216 Whetstone Dr., Arnold, MD 21012). e-mail: dantibrig@toadmail.com.) sent the following recap concerning Sue. "Sue's long recovery from her broken leg in 2009 took another detour when in March, they discovered that the bone had not healed properly. So we found a 'Humpty Dumpty' surgeon who takes on difficult challenges to come up with a new set of procedures. It involved removal of all the hardware that was previously done and a new set installed, with some more advanced techniques. This, her fifth surgery, was done in May and called for her leg to be immobilized for a minimum of 3 months, with no weight bearing. The next step we hope for in August is that she will be sufficiently healed to begin a small amount of weight bearing, and then the actual rehab of the leg will begin. It is expected to be a long process again, which will just take time, patience and perseverance. She is on track for what can be done at this time but soccer will have to wait. She will be in a rehab facility for a few more months before coming back to our home in Arnold. We look forward to being able to travel a bit before too long. She has a strong will to get through all of this, our prayers and good thoughts are welcomed." Cards will be most welcome - they should be sent to the Briganti's home address.

Ed and Roz Cope (1031 North Arroya, Mesa, AZ 85205, e-mail: ltbeam53@yahoo.com) returned home on July 4th from a 15-day Rhine River cruise. Ed said, "Cruise just OK+. Flew into Brussels, bused to Antwerp to board "Viking Sun". Antwerp still a great place. I looked for the gal I fell in love with back in 1950. Of course she would be 82 now and we both would be looking a bit different! We liked the Flemish Belgians. Also stopped in Bruges, a lovely place. Then Amsterdam and windmills; on to 10 stops in Deutschland ... friendlier as we journeyed south, finished in Basil, Switzerland with a side trip to Lucerne (expensive in Switzerland). Flew home on Lufthansa, a 747 across Atlantic to Chicago. First time with them, they sure treated us great."

Good News! On July 15th, Dick and Meris Donnelly (17818 SE 57th Place, Bellevue, WA 98006, e-mail: radcesi@aol.com) flew down to L.A. where he received a good report from his doctors at the UCLA Medical Center who have been treating his mesothelioma! They told Dick that he can drive, play golf and whatever and as much as his "body" will let him do.

In April, Wendell and Yvonne Driggers (1671 Cedar Hollow Way, Reston, VA, 20194, e-mail: yedpurple@aol.com) flew to Dakar, Senegal, where they caught the National Geographic ship, "Explorer" for an 11 day cruise. They visited Segal, Gambia, Cape

Verde Islands, Western Sahara, and the Canary Islands. Flying home from Madrid, their plane was diverted to the Azores for a medical emergency of a passenger. (Note: Wendell didn't say if they were granted any "extra liberty" in the Azores because of the diversion.)

More Good News! LaVerne Irwin is out of the hospital in Wilmington, NC and is doing very well in her recovery from her *subdural hematoma* (bleeding on the brain). She and Jim are grateful for all the notes and cards and especially prayers from well-wishers. The Irwins are planning to fly home to Chandler, AZ on July 28th.

Ted Smith sent the attached article entitled "U.S. Lawmakers Losing Patience With Coast Guard" from the June 20, 2011 issue of *DefenseNews*. **Ouch!!**

Glenn Young moved in early June to: 719 Maiden Choice Lane, Apt. #HR629, Catonsville, MD 21228, Tel. 401-242-2731 (home); 443-902-2768 (cell). He's keeping his same e-mail address: gsy@ix.netcom.com. Glenn said, "I can accommodate and welcome any classmates that are willing to put up with me."

The '53 Octogenarian Club

According to my records, on December 16th, this year, when Bob Benson turns 80, 94% (68 of 72) of our classmates will be "Octogenarians".

Our oldest classmate is Drury Williford, who will be 84 on Nov. 27.

Our youngest classmate is John Gibbs, who will not be 80 until June 15 next year.

Please correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe these are the ages, names and birth dates (in chronological order) for our classmates who are or who will be 80 or older during 2011:

- 80 - Joe Kelly (1/2/31)
- 82 - Bill Bruinsma (1/11/29)
- 80 - Dave Zurzusi (1/11/31)
- 81 - Rick Cueroni (2/1/30)
- 80 - Roger Madson (2/2/31)
- 81 - Dick Lipson (2/12/30)
- 80 - Ray Stevens (2/14/31)
- 82 - Bill King (2/20/29)
- 80 - Fayette Merritt (2/22/31)
- 80 - Andy Saunders (2/22/31)
- 80 - Bernie Hoyland (2/25/31)
- 80 - Gerry Lipsett (2/28/31)
- 81 - Jim Shelton (3/2/30)
- 80 - Bill Clark (3/4/31)
- 81 - Wade Smith (3/11/30)
- 82 - Bob Schmidt (3/12/29)
- 80 - Ed Nelson (3/17/31)
- 80 - Dick Littlefield (3/25/31)
- 81 - Darrell Babcock (4/9/30)
- 80 - Paul Bouchard (4/10/31)
- 81 - Harry Oldford (4/15/30)
- 80 - Ted Smith (4/17/31)

- 81 - Hank Fisher (4/21/30)
- 82 - Bud Foster (5/14/29)
- 80 - Bill Russell (5/14/30)
- 80 - Dick Donnelly (5/15/30)
- 81 - Clay Hughes (5/18/30)
- 82 - Hap Hazard (5/20/29)
- 82 - Fred Sponholz (5/27/29)
- 82 - Jim Grabb (5/28/29)
- 80 - Ralph Hill (6/1/31)
- 82 - Dan Colussy (6/3/29)
- 82 - Jim Irwin (6/7/29)
- 81 - Bill Reilly (6/8/30)
- 81 - Ed Cope (6/14/30)
- 80 - Hal Olson (6/16/31)
- 80 - Dave Stryffeler (6/16/31)
- 81 - Paul Breed (6/20/30)
- 81 - Wee Smith (6/21/30)
- 83 - Bud Mathiwu (7/1/28)
- 83 - Frank Frauenfelder (7/2/28)
- 80 - Roger Bascom (7/16/31)
- 80 - Al Cousins (7/30/31)
- 81 - Glenn Young (8/5/30)
- 81 - George Everett (8/7/30)
- 80 - Bill Lehr (8/7/31)
- 82 - Ed Farmer (8/10/29)
- 82 - Dave Tredeau (8/21/29)
- 80 - Al Stirling (8/24/31)
- 81 - Don Segee (8/28/30)
- 80 - Kirk Greiner (8/30/31)
- 80 - Roger Holmes (8/31/31)
- 80 - Bill Kohl (9/7/31)
- 81 - Jim Conrad (9/8/30)
- 81 - Keith Schumacher (9/11/30)
- 81 - Roger Mowell (9/14/30)
- 80 - Tom Sing (9/17/30)
- 80 - Walt Matherly (9/19/31)
- 80 - Paul Arnold (9/20/31)
- 80 - Bob Iden (10/5/31)
- 81 - Ted Wojnar (10/21/30)
- 81 - Ken Barrett (10/30/30)
- 80 - Bob West (11/17/30)
- 84 - Drury Williford (11/27/27)
- 82 - Bill Plummer (11/27/29)
- 80 - Roger Britt (12/1/31)
- 80 - Bob Benson (12/16/31)
- 82 - Ed Daniels (12/24/29)

These classmates will not be 80 until 2012:

- 80 - Wendell Driggers (1/8/32)
- 80 - Dan Briganti (2/19/32)
- 80 - Don Garnett (3/27/32)
- 80 - John Gibbs (6/15/32)

A person is not old until regrets take the place of dreams. -- Salada Tea Tag Lines

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, EVERYONE!!!

U.S. Lawmakers Losing Patience With Coast Guard

By CHRISTOPHER P. CAVAS

DefenseNews June 20, 2011

Congressional patience with the U.S. Coast Guard's bureaucracy is wearing thin. Lawmakers are growing increasingly frustrated with the service's inability to provide up-to-date budget and fleet plans and mission studies, and are seeking to compel the completion of a plan to recapitalize the aged icebreaker fleet.

In its late-May markup of the 2012 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funding bill, the House Appropriations Committee repeatedly chided the Coast Guard for an abundance of study and a lack of action, even while adding \$251 million to the administration's budget request, for a total operating budget of \$7.07 billion.

In its accompanying report, the committee withheld \$75 million in appropriations until the service provides Congress with three studies: a revised future-years Capital Investment Plan for 2012 through 2016, reviewed by the Government Accountability Office (GAO); a 2012 second-quarter quarterly acquisition report; and the polar operations high latitude study, described by GAO as the centerpiece to determine the nation's arctic requirements.

House appropriators charged that "the administration and department are delaying the submittal" of the study even while requesting \$5 million for further study of polar needs. "The committee denies the request," the report said, "since the needs are well known and sufficiently documented." The service is given 45 days after the bill becomes law to submit the report.

The report also dinged the service for not formally updating its mission requirements and fleet-mix analysis since 2004.

"The committee finds this protracted delay in updating mission requirements for the Coast Guard's post-Deepwater era to be a major impediment to effective budget planning," the report noted.

Concerns also remain about "the Coast Guard's persistent challenges with its internal financial controls," according to the report. "It is the single largest holder of un-auditable balances in the department."

Appropriators noted that a change in administrative policies and the stretching out of the building program is adding between \$45 million and \$60 million to the price tags for the last three National Security Cutters, the largest ships under construction for the Coast Guard. The committee directs the service to provide a brief on addressing the problems.

The report also noted that the first Fast Response Cutter (FRC), now under construction at Bollinger Marine in Lockport, La., is suffering from structural deficiencies that will delay its delivery, originally scheduled for this spring. The committee cut two cutters from the budget request for six, and directed the service to hold off on expanding the annual FRC request from four to six until the first ship is delivered and has undergone operational test and evaluation.

Following the markup, the DHS funding bill was sent to the Senate on June 6, where it awaits action.

More, Not Less, Funding Needed

One Capitol Hill analyst decried what he said was a Coast Guard tendency to put off hard decisions in preference to further study.

"They're always doing that," the exasperated analyst said. "The No. 1 deflection strategy of the Coast Guard is to say they're in the midst of a study about whatever you just asked about."

"Is the purpose of the study," the analyst asked, "to provide a dodge until you can start another study?"

What the service really needs now, the Capitol Hill analyst said, is to ask for more assets to carry out the vastly expanded set of missions it's been saddled with over the past decade.

"They don't want to be insubordinate; they've been told to support the president's budget," the analyst observed. "But they know they need more, and the way they avoid confrontation is to say, 'We're studying the issue.'"

"What you have is the long-term consequence of a service that we didn't have to invest in for a very long time because their assets were aging in place. And we're now in a place where we need to increase the Coast Guard allocations, but at a time when the government at large is trying to shrink the budget. It becomes hard for any agency to make the case for a budget increase."

The analyst noted that the service is aware its force of ships and aircraft is woefully short of the levels needed to fulfill its missions.

A Coast Guard fleet mix analysis published in April by GAO provided a look at some of those numbers. The study showed that the service needs nine rather than eight National Security Cutters; between 32 and 57 new Off-shore Patrol Cutters, rather than the 25 planned; between 63 and 91 FRCs, rather than the 58 in the current plan.

More aircraft, too, are needed, according to the study: up to 44 new HC-130 Hercules aircraft, rather than 22; between 37 and 65 HC-144A Ocean Sentry maritime patrol aircraft, instead of 36; between 80 and 106 HH-60 helicopters, rather than the 42 in current plans; and from 140 to 223 HH-65 helicopters, compared with 102.

The highest numbers, according to the analyst, are those needed to fully perform the mission. "Everything else represents different, arbitrary levels of constraint."

The study, said the analyst, shows that the Coast Guard is not buying enough assets to carry out its missions, despite the addition of new ships and aircraft.

"Even with the increase in capability," the analyst noted, "they still won't have nearly the capability they need to project themselves." □

Email: ccavas@defensenews.com.