



# THE DASHPOT



Issue 75 Newsletter of the Association of Minemen Fall 2011



## FROM THE PRESIDENT Gary Cleland

**37TH ANNUAL AOM  
REUNION  
POINT LOMA, CA  
OCTOBER 14 - 16, 2011**

Greetings from San Diego. We are now only weeks away from our 37th Association of Minemen reunion. Thanks to superb leadership and attention to detail by Warren Savage our reunion team has planned what I expect to be a SUPER event. The Holiday Inn venue is perfectly situated harbor side with great views of the city and NAS North Island from the 4th floor hospitality room. Planned events poolside will be relaxing as well. Everyone is encouraged to attend if at all possible. I am looking forward to seeing you all.

All AOM members and associates are welcome to attend our 37th Annual Association of Minemen Reunion and be part of a most memorable event. Sign up now, we are finalizing touches for our Reunion in San Diego, CA. I want to thank everyone for their assistance especially the 2011 Association of Minemen Committee, our President, our Directors, as well as all the involved members and friends, for their assistance in our pulling together our Reunion. We are looking forward to our 37th annual Association of Minemen being held from 14 October to 16 October 2011 in San Diego, California at the Holiday Inn San Diego Bayside. This hotel location was selected by the AOM Reunion Committee Team to house our reunion as well as most of our annual meetings, functions and activities. Our 1996, 2003, 2007 and 2009 AOM reunions were also held in San Diego at the Handlery Hotel and Resort and received "WELL DONE" from those in attendance.

Please keep in mind this year the membership will be reconfirming the pro-tem appointments of President and Vice President in the wake of the untimely death of Willie Wilson elected at the last reunion. Also, we need nominations for the expiring terms of Board of Director members Gary Elliot and Bob Reed (hopefully they will agree to another term). Additionally, the Board of Directors is seeking a volunteer to assume the duties of Storekeeper to replace Ron Swart. Keep in mind again this year we will be seeking input for the next west coast reunion location in 2013. Those who may not be in attendance this year feel free to email me your suggestions.

The Holiday Inn San Diego Bayside is located at 4875 North Harbor Drive intersecting Nimitz in San Diego, CA 92106 only one (1) mile from the San Diego International Airport (Lindbergh Field) across from San Diego Bay. The 37th Association of Minemen Reunion is being planned

Again, I look forward to a successful and enjoyable reunion next month. See you there. And may God bless our USA and the honorable Soldiers Sailor and Marine who serve us all.

***Continued on page 3.***

**WINTER DASHPOT  
ARTICLES ARE DUE  
1 DECEMBER 2011**

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## DEDICATED TO SERVING THE U.S. NAVY MINE FORCE

The Dashpot, published quarterly, is the newsletter of the Association of Minemen, a 501-C non profit, non political organization incorporated in the state of South Carolina with the mission of perpetuating knowledge of undersea mine warfare and championing its necessity as one of America's first lines of defense.



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[www.minemen.org](http://www.minemen.org)

and operated by our nucleus team consisting of President Gary Cleland, W. C. Holloway, Jerry Chipman, Jim Miller and Warren Savage as well as other southern California AOM members and associates. We eagerly look forward to this event as one to be truly remembered and surpassing our 35th AOM reunion also held in San Diego.

The team is in the process of putting together activities which include our annual Early Bird, banquet, picnic and auction as well as other endeavors and annual meetings. We are looking forward to making this truly a family oriented function which enhances networking and camaraderie. We are looking at the USS Midway, Naval Station, San Diego Zoo, Sea World, casino sites and other activities.

The Early Bird receptions will be held on Thursday, 13 October at 1200 in Harborview room of the Holiday Inn and Friday 14 October starting at 1000 on the Poolside Deck in the Pool Side Hospitality Room with refreshments available. This will be a great opportunity to greet, meet and mix. There will be maps and handouts available as well as photos from the past. The hospitality room hours will be from 10:00AM to 10:00PM 13 October to 17 October 2011.

The Board of Directors meeting will be held tentatively Saturday morning at 1000 on 15 October at the Holiday Inn. Our General Membership meeting is scheduled to be held also on Saturday, 15 October starting at 1400 at the Holiday Inn. Our Banquet will be held on Saturday, 17 October starting at 1800 at the Holiday Inn.

Our Annual AOM picnic and auction are planned for Sunday, 16 October 2011 starting at 1130 hrs at the Navy Mine Warfare Training Center on base across the street from the Holiday Inn.

We will be using our Dashpot and the AOM website to keep everyone up to date on what is happening. We are looking forward to having a great & meaningful reunion.

To make reservation arrangements with the Holiday Inn San Diego Bayside, 4875 North Harbor Drive in San Diego, San Diego, CA 92106, call 1-619-224-3621 or the Holiday Inn National number at 1-800-662-8899. A FAX is available 619-224-1787. Special Group Rate is available OCT 14 to 17 2011; Room rates are \$109.00 plus 12.5% tax, single or double; ID yourself as "Association of Minemen" to get special rates, cut-off date is 20 September 2011. Check-in time is 4:00 PM and checkout time is 12:00 noon. Hotel parking is free. For your convenience, there is a Holiday Inn Restaurant on site. There is also a Navy Exchange outlet located across the street

as well as ten restaurants in close walking distance.

COMPLIMENTARY provided:

- PARKING
- Twenty Four hour Airport / Amtrak Shuttle service Call Hotel directly for service.
- Shuttle to local shopping and Balboa Park and San Diego Zoo
- Hospitality Suite with coolers, ice, portable bar, display tables (with 20 rented sleeping rooms)
- One hour welcome reception with beer, wine and soft drinks and cold hors d'oeuvres (with 20 rented sleeping rooms)
- Use of TV/DVD/VCR for viewing past events
- Kids 19 and under stay free. Kids 12 and under eat free at Hotel Restaurant with a dining adult.
- Senior discounts offered at Hotel Restaurant featuring home style, affordable cooking

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## FROM THE CHAPLAIN

I recently reported the death of MNM Gerald F. Sevier which came to me six months after his passing. His widow, Presentacion, and his daughter, Michele Sannino, would welcome any condolences and correspondence, even at this late date. Michelle writes:

"Thank you for updating us. My family went to our first pig roast at Jerry's, in the Philippines. His father in law told my sister and I about the Bataan Death March. Jerry saved my father from eating monkey meat on a stick. What I remember of Jerry is all good, he was a great man. I looked up the address, in case anyone (like I) wants to send wishes to his family...you can't do it on the <<http://legacy.com>>link since the services were in January. I know I like when I get random emails telling me about my daddy....stories I don't know, nicknames I've never heard.... Maybe his family would appreciate the same."

Presentacion's address is:  
Presentacion M. Sevier  
211 Earth Street  
Sulphur, LA 70665

Michele Sannino can be reached at [chele.sannino@gmail.com](mailto:chele.sannino@gmail.com).

Also, I would like to express appreciation to all those who have thanked me for continuing to notify members of both the pleasant news and the sad news. All members of the Mine Force are our fellow family members. Those who are able are encouraged to write to the individual or family member who may have experienced an event in their lives that demands condolence or rejoicing.

Derick S. Hartshorn AOM Chaplain

# **SCHOLARSHIP**

## **SCOOP**

*by Swede Carlsen*



The AOM membership should be very proud and gratified as we were able to award twenty-two assistance scholarships in the school year 2011. The awardees' name and school follows below.

ZOE ABBETT  
KYLE APPLETON  
JOSEPH CAVALLO  
TRISTINA CAVALLO  
MARY K. CHAPMAN  
KIMBERLY COTTRELL  
KRISTEN FANELLI  
JOSEPH W. GALLO  
NICOLE LOONAM  
NICOLE MARTINICO  
BRIANA LEO  
MARISA LAJINESS  
VINCENT MONTAGUD  
KYLIE MURRAY  
MELISSA MEYERS  
EMILY R. OLESH  
TYLER PALAGONIA  
MICHAEL PIESCO  
SHANNON SWEENY  
MATHEW TIRAMANI  
GLEN WALLACE  
JACLYN WARDEN

MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN  
MUHLENBERG COLLEGE  
STONEY BROOK MEDICAL COLLEGE  
ADELPHI UNIVERSITY  
CLEMSON UNIVERSITY  
IVY TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
NORTH CAROLINA STATE  
BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY  
WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY  
SIENA UNIVERSITY  
SIENA UNIVERSITY  
QWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH  
FLORENCE-DARLINGTON TECH  
BALL STATE UNIVERSITY  
EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY  
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS  
MERCY COLLEGE  
SUSQUEHANNA UNIVERSITY  
SONOMA STATE  
WINTHROP UNIVERSITY

Congratulations to all awardees!

The AOM membership and friends will have to make generous donations and big bids at this year's picnic auction in order to fill the scholarship locker for 2012.

Hope to see you all in San Diego. Please put on your checklist "lots of money in your wallets and purses" for the scholarship auction.

### **STAND TALL AMERICA**

**"People who enjoy meetings should not be in charge of anything."**

**-- Thomas Sowell**



## FROM THE WEBMASTER

Below are recently changed or added e-mails on the AOM WEB Site. There have been several inquiries about e-mail addresses on the AOM WEB Site that are bouncing. If you are listed on the site please check to see if your address is correct. If changes are required or you wish to be listed on the site e-mail me the information at pdechene@triad.rr.com. Phil DeChene AOM WEB Master.

### E-mail – Active Duty

- 05/05/11 - Garrett A. Mooney MN2 (SW); garrett.mooney@navy.mil
- 03/07/11 - Brian A. Rey MN1 (SW); brian.rey@navy.mil
- 08/01/11 - LT John Caporuscio; STO@ddg110.navy.mil; vduben2@yahoo.com
- 07/08/11 - Derum W. Bradley MN1 (SW); Bradley.Derum@cotf.navy.mil

### E-mail – Reservist

- 07/27/11 - Nicholas M. Paci MN2 (SCW); nicholas.paci@nav.mil

### E-mail – Retired

- 07/18/11 - Edmund R. Szczutkowski MN1; szczutkowskie@yahoo.com

### E-mail – Former-Minemen

- 08/11/11 - Steve Mclester MN2; steve@ashevillestainedglass.com
- 07/06/11 - George Preston MN2; zx5tct@cox.net
- 07/01/11 - John Merrell; 1973: JohnMerrell@Merrells.info



## THE MAIL BAG

ASSOCIATION OF Minemen,

Thank you so much for again honoring me with your scholarship. It is greatly appreciated and will be used thoughtfully towards my education to become a physician assistant. I can't wait until I will be able to help people everyday of my life. Again thank you so much for your consideration and assistance.

Sincerely,  
Ashli Murray

Thank you so very much for my scholarship gift to Wurtburg University this fall. I appreciate the assistance so much and it helps me focus on my education and not having to work full time.

Thankyou!  
Jaclyn Warden

8/15/2011

Dear Scholarship Committee,

Thank you again for selecting me as a recipient of your scholarship. I'm very grateful, and I promise to use these funds to better myself throughout my educational journey. May God Bless you!

Sincerely,  
Mary Kendall Chapman

Dear Association of Minemen Scholarship Committee-

Thank you for awarding me the Minemen Scholarship this year. I will be putting all of it towards savings for school in the coming years.

Thanks again and I really appreciate it!

Sincerely,  
Emily Olesh

Thank you so much for choosing me as one of your scholarship winners. That money will be put to good use when I go to Owens Community College. I truly appreciate everything!

Thanks Again!  
- Marisa Lajiness

Bill,

Yesterday, as my group "Los Ultimos" were playing music for the patients and their families at the VA Hospital, in walks Medal of Honor recipient Army Sgt. First Class Leroy A. Petry.

I was honored to shake his high-tech prosthetic hand and to sing "Las Manitas" for him.

B. P. "Joe" Hernandez

ENCLOSED my check for 5 YR RENEWAL and 25 for the Association to use as they wish. Be nice if I'm around that long. Who would ever imagine that I would be in ARKANSAS, HOWEVER A granddaughter makes things happen. Sure would be nice to see some old shipmates, maybe next reunion

Best to ALL

Tommy Hogan



For the good of the game®

**THE FORCE OF THE WAVES IS IN THEIR PERSISTENCE.**

**GILA GURI**



## TAPS

### **MNCM Shelly J. Kelly, USN (Ret.)**

GOOSE CREEK - MNCM Shelly J. Kelly, U.S. Navy (Ret.), 75, of Goose Creek, husband to Yoshie U. Kelly, passed away July 30, 2011. Born in Lynn, AL, he was the son of the late Millard and Ruby Colburn Kelly.

Mr. Kelly retired as a Master Chief Mineman after serving thirty one years. He served in the Korean Conflict and Vietnam and received the Purple Heart and Bronze Star during his service in Vietnam. Mr. Kelly worked at the Naval Weapons Station after his retirement from military duty. He was a lifetime member of the American Legion Post 166, Fleet Reserve Association, Low Country Branch 269, VFW Post 10256, and The Association of Minemen. Mr. Kelly is survived by his wife of forty eight years, Yoshie U. Kelly; one daughter, Naomi Fortner of Hanahan and one grandson, Andrew Brian Fortner. He is also survived by many lifelong friends. The family received friends on Tuesday, August 2, 2011 from 10:00 until 11:00 a.m. in McAlister-Smith Funeral Home, Goose Creek Chapel. The funeral service followed at 11:00 a.m. Burial was in Whispering Pines Memorial Gardens, Moncks Corner.

Donations can be made to the American Cancer Society, 267 Calhoun Street, Charleston, SC 29401. [Published in Charleston Post & Courier on August 1, 2011]

Yoshie may be reached at:  
108 Clay St,  
Goose Creek, SC 29445  
843-797-7099

Master Chief Kelly transferred to the staff of the Supreme Commander on July 30, 2011. A Two Bell was conducted at his Funeral Service.

Loyalty/Protection/Service.  
Larry Cox



### **Richard Curtis Knight, USN (Ret.)**

Richard Curtis Knight of Corvallis, Oregon passed away February 1, 2011 at age 73, with Lung Cancer. He was a resident of Humboldt County for 30 years. His wife Julia preceded him in death in 2003.

Richard was born in Los Angeles, CA on July 5, 1937 to Curtis Knight and Lucille Knight-Sheraske. As a youth, Richard enjoyed scouting and had attained its highest honor as an "Eagle Scout." After graduating from San Dieguito high school in Encinitas, CA in 1955 he joined the U.S. Navy and served his country until he retired in 1974. Later, Richard worked for "Lazio's and Pacific Choice Seafood" for over 25 years before retiring in 2005. Richard loved his family and friends and particularly enjoyed fishing and camping together with them. Richard is survived by four children: son, Mickey Johnston, of Meriden, CT; daughter, Rhonda Greek of Augusta, GA and husband Brad Greek; daughter, Sherrie Warnow of Fortuna, CA and husband Steve Warnow; daughter Cindy Ostlund of Nice, Ca. His eight grandchildren: Jeremy, Barbara, David, Lance, Lisa, Brian, Brittney, Nicholas and Mandy Ostlund who preceded him in death. His four great grandchildren: Shane, Brody, Kimberly, and Simonne, his brother Gene Knight and wife Jan of Leaburg, OR.

There was a celebration of life memorial service at the Marina Yacht Club in Eureka adjacent to the Pacific Choice Seafood Co. on July 9th with Pastor Gene Knight, brother of Richard, officiating the ceremony.



**MNCM Donald Krupczyk, USN (Ret)**

Donald Krupczyk LADSON, SC - Donald Krupczyk, of Ladson, SC, passed away June 12, 2011, at Trident Hospital at 2:37 a.m. A memorial service was held at The Fleet Reserve, Goose Creek, Wednesday, June 15, 2011, at 6 p.m.

Mr. Krupczyk was born December 12, 1932, in Buffalo, NY, the third to Stanley and Mary Krupczyk. He was a retired US Navy Master Chief of 30 years. He retired from Naval Weapon Station. He was a member of Mason Lodge and Fleet Reserve Association. He was married to the late Loretta Frances Krupczyk, who passed away April 3, 1997. In addition to his wife he was preceded in death by his parents, and his brother Richard Krupczyk. Survivors include his children, Timothy Fulcher (Maui, HI), Christopher Krupczyk (Orlando, FL), Margaret Krupczyk Ramage (Richard) (Weldon, IL), Donald Peter Krupczyk (Kim), Eutawville, SC; his siblings, Robert Krupczyk (Helga) (Myrtle Beach, SC) and sister Lorraine Dabney (Dale) (Buffalo, NY) and eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, the family is asking a donation be made to the Leukemia Foundation.

Published in Charleston Post & Courier on June 15, 2011

**The loss of a loved one at any point in our lives is heartbreaking at best and devastating at worst, however, in those quiet moments when we look deep inside ourselves, we somehow instinctively know that the separation is temporary.**



**Marion Edith Strohmetz Newton**

Marion Edith Strohmetz Newton, 82, passed away March 3, 2011. She was born April 14, 1928 in New Jersey and was a long-time resident of Jacksonville, FL. A member of Evangel Temple Assembly of God, she sang in the choir for several years. She was a member of the Eastern Star for 50 years and involved in real estate in the Jacksonville area. Marion was the loving wife of MNCM Ted Newton, USN (Ret.) and the mother of Ronald E. Wilson of Tampa and Joseph E. Wilson, Jr. of Alaska; 10 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held at noon Tuesday, March 8, 2011 at Evangel Temple Assembly of God in Jacksonville, with Pastors Garry and Cecil Wiggins officiating. Interment was in Jacksonville National Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to The Community Hospice Foundation, 4266 Sunbeam Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32257.

Published in the Florida Times-Union on March 6, 2011

Words of Condolence may be directed to Ted at: MNCM Ted Newton, USN (Ret.) 7887 Bristol Bay Lane, W. Jacksonville, FL 32244-6931 (904) 777-5690

*Bill  
just a note to go with  
the clipping. Marion has  
passed away about 10/2/12.  
she was a great lady.  
Hope to see you and  
the old MNCIS water  
from #0038  
Ted Newton*

**MNC Earl “Red” Merrill, USN, EOD (Ret.)**

Hi Phil,  
I was in Maine a few days ago and looked up an old shipmate that I was stationed with in Guam. His name was MNC Earl “Red” Merrill, I talked to a gentleman that knew him and they looked him up in their records. He passed away in Maine (not sure of the date) in 1998. Earl was in the EOD division at the Naval Magazine, while in Guam. I am not sure if he was a member of the AOM or not. I thought you would like to put his name on the death list even if wasn't a member. If you need any more info, let me know and I will try to get it for you.

Have a good retirement!

Dick Martin Crossville, TN



**MNCOM Gerald F. Sevier, USN (Ret.)**

Funeral services for Mr. Gerald F. Sevier, 70, of Sulphur, were held at 2 p.m. Friday, January 28, 2011 in St. Theresa Catholic Church. Father Joe Aquino officiated. Burial followed in Mimosa Pines Cemetery.

Visitation was on Thursday, January 27 from 4 p.m. until 9 p.m. with a Rosary at 7 p.m., and resumed on Friday morning from 8 a.m. until time of procession to the church. Mr. Sevier passed away on Tuesday, January 25, 2011 in a Lake Charles hospital. He is preceded in death by his parents, Russel and Mercedes Sevier; and two brothers, Danny and Chris Sevier.

Mr. Sevier retired from the United States Navy after serving his country for 27 years. He was a Mine Warfare Instructor and served as Master Chief in South Carolina. Mr. Sevier was a member of St. Theresa Catholic Church and spent his retirement traveling with his wife, enjoying his family and spoiling his grandchildren.

He is survived by his loving wife, Presentacion Sevier of Carlyss; seven children, Carol Breaux and husband Kevin of Houma, Louisiana, Reni Myers and husband Brent of Carlyss, Rose Cospolich and husband Stephen of Dallas, Texas, Anthony Sevier and wife Christy of St. Louis, Missouri, Rachele May of West Monroe, Lori Gates and husband Joe of Bossier City, Debbie Hardin and husband Jon of Alexandria; eight grandchildren, Aidan and Gillian Myers, Madeline and Isabelle Cospolich, Brandi and Jordan Breaux, Rebecca and Glen May; two great grandchildren, Braxton and Bailey Breaux; god daughter, Victoria Reale; three brothers, David Sevier and wife Sybil of Vidor, Texas, Terry Sevier and wife Lynn of Ragley, and Kembo Sevier of Lake Charles; two sisters, Gail Reale and husband Sebastian of Lake Charles, and Jill Sevier of Pineville, Louisiana.

Published in Southwest Daily News from January 27 to February 3, 2011



Collusion, conspiracy or three seconds before the punchline?



Your turn to smack him or mine?

# **MY STORY, MY SONG**

By LT Joe Hernandez, USN (Ret)

When I graduated from Hollywood High, my brother, Tony, serenaded our table with “Begin the Beguine” and “Granada”.

In 1950, I joined the Navy and was sent to the Naval Ammunition Depot in Hawthorne, Nevada. There, I at last, found the love of my life. I would wed in holy matrimony the former Rosalia Gomez in 1962. My best man was MNSN “Bill” Hullinger.

My enlisted career soared and reached a crescendo at Naval Schools Mine Warfare, Yorktown, VA and Charleston, SC. There I became an instructor and made Chief while serving under CWO R. S. Lattanzi.

I went aboard the USS Bushnell (AS-15) in 1962 for a short time before being commissioned an Ensign and ordered to report to COMINEPAC, Long Beach, CA.

As OIC MOMAT 0301/DMPF, I learned staff work and the importance of mine readiness under CDR J. P. McMahon. I was promoted to LTJG by RADM K. L. Veta and ordered to NAD Oahu, Hawaii.

As OIC MOMAT 0302, I made two deployments. In 1964, we went aboard the USS Ranger (CVA 51) with a load of mines from NAVMAG Subic destined for Haiphong. In 1966, we deployed to NAVMAG Guam with their allowance of mines, also destined for Haiphong. I was relieved by MOMAT 0301.

I left my “hut” in Hawaii as a full LT with my acting Chief, WO Tom Hogan, for Nuclear Weapons Training Center in Key West, Florida. There we met CWO John Loonam.

I went aboard the USS Frontier (AD 25) as Torpedo/ASROC Officer in 1967. In Hawaii, I serenaded COMSUBPAC officers and wives. I put the “Can Do” tender out of commission and left. A year later in the Philippine Islands, I met and briefed the Admiral and CAPT McMahon on some issues at NAVMAG Subic.

I arrived at NAVMAG Subic Bay on July 11, 1968 for duty as Seabee Officer with a highly classified mission. MOMAT 0304 had already been involved in mine prep ops on two carriers in the South China Sea. (See MNCM “Moose” Wheelock’s detailed account on page 62 and 63. U.S. Naval Mines in the Mineman, A History).

I relieved CWO George Russell on 25 Oct 68 as Mines Officer. WO “Sam” English was the OIC of MOMAT 0304 and was preparing for a classified DST 115 operation. The workload for the delivery of kits for the DST MK36 was paramount and there never ever was enough Minemen for all.

When the order came from COMNAVFOR Vietnam, VADM “Elmo” Zumwalt, Jr. on 22 Feb 69, WO English was in from a carrier to see a doctor. It was decided that I would take the team in country. (For team members and details, see page 14, 15 & 16, “The DASHPOT”, Issue 14).

I had to leave Subic for personal reasons and became the ASW Officer at NWS Yorktown in 1969. I was awarded the Navy Achievement Medal by CAPT Madducks and a plaque from the JAYCEES for outstanding work in the community.

I departed Yorktown in 1971 with LCDR Lyal M. Stryker from Naval Mine Engineering Facility, for Charleston where we purchased homes a block apart in the Heights. I would join a cadre of officers and LCDR Stryker became the CO of MOMAG, Charleston.

When this photo was taken, three officers were deployed as OICs at four NAV/EUR mine sites when there were assembly teams deployed from MOMAG, Charleston. I made three deployments and retired 1 Jul 74.

## MY LAST CHAPTER

For years I pined for, among other things, the early loss of a First Class Mineman. Then LCDR Don DeCrona wrote an article in the DASHPOT asking where we were when we mined Haiphong. I couldn't wait to write my "Last Chapter".

I was not there in 1962, but I was the Mines Officer at Charleston where Minemen were deployed halfway around the world to support 7th Fleets Operations on the carriers in the South China Sea. There were four Minemen on each carrier with no Minemen Chiefs or officers. The names of the Minemen, the carriers, the mines and what happened before and after the mining of Haiphong is depicted in the History of the U.S. Mines in Vietnam , page 5, and "The DASHPOT", issue 34.



**Lt Blas de Palma Jose Hernandez, USN (Ret.)**

The full-length picture is me in my troubadour regalia shortly after retirement. I still live in Albuquerque with my wife, Rose, of 59 years. She sews and makes ceramics; I collect Spanish coins and guitars. I enjoy performing for the patients and their families at the VA Hospital with Mariachis. One of my favorite phrases comes from the song "El Rey" that translated means, "It isn't necessary to arrive first, but only to know how to arrive!"

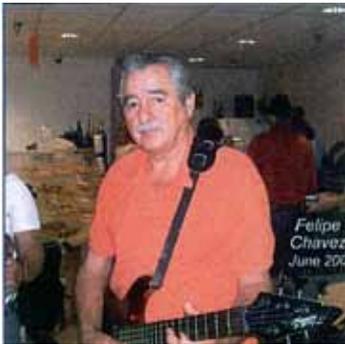
I miss the Navy, but I've travelled enough. I like staying home in New Mexico and playing with my dog "Chico". I'm enchanted with life and love praising my Dios every day and every night.

**I have seen my share of sunrises, sunsets too, and they are impressive, but the grandest of all is the one that occurs after you think the one before was your last.**

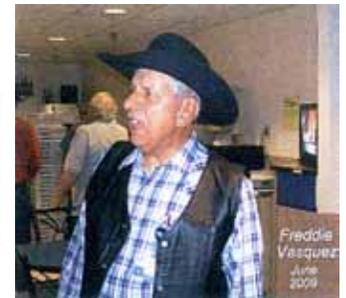
**William Fortner 2011**

# "Los Ultimos"

A Veterans Musical Group - June 2009



These Wonderful Veterans give their time to play beautiful New Mexico Music at the Albuquerque Veterans Admin. Hospital Lobby for the enjoyment of other veterans....



God Bless them All....!!!

Editor's Note: There is giving and there is "still giving". These vets are "still giving."

Photos by:  
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# MINEMAN IN THE SPOTLIGHT

MNCS Tracey Hays has had some interesting deployments recently.

MCPON West visited us at Camp Arifjan and held all-hands with khaki's and blue shirts. Meeting him was one of the high points.



LSC Sayeh Diggs is with me in front of the HUMVEE. We were doing IED avoidance and convoy maneuver training up at Udairi Range, close to the Iraq border. While there, we also did close quarters small arms drills and HUMVEE rollover egress training. Accommodations were sparse; no running water and MRE's at all meal periods. Made for an interesting few days. He eventually got sent to the Marshaling Yard in Afghanistan.



I sent you a pic of me driving one of the 34' SeaArk patrol boats during my '08 deployment. I was attached to NAVELSG (Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group) at KNB (Kuwait Naval Base) but spent a lot of time with the Boat Guys. They took me under their wings and helped me work on my EXW even though I was not eligible for it.



While with them, Curt Schilling visited us and we took him out on one of our boats and one of the Coast Guard Boats. He drove like a girl! Not being a baseball fan, I didn't know who he was and thought he said his name was Kent. Thankfully someone pulled me aside before I made an ass of myself.



During both deployments, I was able to meet Minemen from all over the country. Most are not affiliated with MOMAU's, but I did my best to talk it up. It's hard to convince someone who lives in the midwest to train with us.

**Continued on page 16.**



## **THE CONFEDERATE TORPEDO SERVICE**

**By R. O. Crowley**  
**Formerly Electrician of the Torpedo Division, C. S. N.**  
**(The Century / Volume 56, Issue 2, The Century Company, New York, June 1898)**

### **PART FIVE**

## **Operations at Savannah**

As in the case of Charleston, the torpedo operations at Savannah were without system, and were left entirely to the discretion of the local military authorities.

On March 3, 1863, three ironclads and two mortar-boats advanced up the Ogeechee River to attack Fort McAllister, and bombarded it for a whole day, without any practical results.

During the action the ironclad Montauk came in contact with a mechanical torpedo, which exploded under her bow, but without serious injury.

## **Operations in Mobile**

A great many mechanical torpedoes were planted in Mobile Bay and in the ship-channel, but none were operated by electricity. There was no regular system employed. Some of the torpedoes were merely cans of tin containing a small quantity of powder, with a trigger attachment for exploding them. Others were made of sheet-iron, with a fuse which exploded by pressure, the fuse being protected by a cap of thin brass covered with a solution of beeswax. This latter plan was known as the Rains patent, "invented by Brigadier-General Rains," and was used in various places, both on land and water. Others were made of oaken kegs and barrels, well painted, and arranged to explode by mechanical contact. These barrels were firmly attached to heavy spars anchored at one end, and kept at the proper angle by chains passing through the spars, thus keeping the barrel torpedoes floating about five feet from the surface.

In the early part of August, 1864, Admiral Farragut, commanding the Federal fleet off Mobile, secured the military cooperation of General Canby for attacking and investing the forts in the harbor. On the morning of the 5th of August the fleet, numbering fourteen steamers and four monitors, carrying in all about two hundred guns, and manned by twenty-eight hundred men, made its entrance into Mobile Bay. In the early light of the morning the attacking fleet moved steadily up the main ship-channel, whereupon Fort Morgan opened on them, and was replied to by a gun from the Brooklyn. A moment later the Federal ironclad Tecumseh came in contact with a mechanical torpedo, an explosion followed, and she disappeared almost instantaneously beneath the waves, carrying with her her commander, T. A. M. Craven, and her entire crew, numbering nearly one hundred and twenty men, most of whom were drowned. (3)

No other casualties resulted from torpedoes, and it was a mere chance that the Tecumseh was sunk. No doubt the superincumbent weight of her iron armor carried her to the bottom so quickly, and it is probable that not more than fifty pounds of powder did the mischief.

## Operations on the Yazoo River

Shortly after the fall of the Federals advanced against Yazoo City, Mississippi, both by land and water. Anticipating such an event, a few rude mechanical torpedoes were planted in the Yazoo River, about three miles below the city. They were simply common acid carboys filled with powder and arranged to explode by contact with a trigger. On account of the frequent sudden rise and fall of the river, they required considerable attention to keep them in proper position. Here, again, as had frequently occurred at other points, the destructive force of a given amount of powder had been greatly exaggerated. A carboy would contain about twenty-five pounds of powder, and this quantity is insufficient to do more damage than knock a small hole in the hull of a vessel. On the occasion of the attack there was a sudden rise in the river, and some of the light-draft gunboats passed over the torpedoes safely; but the iron-clad steamer De Kalb, the flag-ship, mounting eight guns, and being of heavier draft, struck the trigger of one of the torpedoes, which exploded under her port bow, knocking a hole in her hull. The pilot, as soon as he felt the shock, ran her toward the shore, and she sank in twelve feet of water, close to the riverbank. No one was injured.

I have already stated that it was the common belief that summary execution would follow the capture of any person engaged in the torpedo service. Judge of my feelings, then, a few days after the capture of Richmond, to see a lieutenant of cavalry, accompanied by two orderlies, present themselves at my residence, with orders from General Terry to conduct me to his headquarters in the Capitol building! The very fact that it had so early been ascertained that I was in that service seemed to indicate prompt measures on the part of the Federals to justify common rumor in their intention to make an example of me. However, I went to the Capitol. I was much surprised, however. After a short conversation, General Terry informed me that I must report to Admiral Porter on his flagship, then lying at the wharf in Richmond. I started immediately, escorted this time by the lieutenant only. On arriving at the wharf, I went aboard the flagship, I think it was the Malvern, and walking into the cabin, found myself in the presence of President Lincoln.

After I had introduced myself, and stated the occasion of my visit, Mr. Lincoln called for Admiral Porter. When he came in, Mr. Lincoln said, "Porter, here is the young man you were expecting." This looked ominous to me. Why had I been expected?

However, in a few minutes we were all three pleasantly engaged in conversation.

Admiral Porter then informed me of his desire that, in company with some of the officers of his squadron, I should go down the river and point out where our torpedoes were located, so that they could be removed. "The war is ended," said he, "and we must clear the river for navigation." I told him there was no danger whatever to be apprehended from the torpedoes planted by the regular torpedo service, because they could be exploded only by electricity, and our galvanic batteries had been destroyed, and the connecting wires torn up and carried away; but that there were doubtless many others, planted under the direction of army officers, which were mechanical in their operation, and as likely to be fatal to friend as to foe, and of the location of these I knew nothing.

The next morning the Unadilla steamed down the river to the various stations where we had planted torpedoes, and took bearings of the positions. In a few days a regularly organized force had removed all the explosives, and all other obstructions to navigation, and the river was once more safe for travel.

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(1) On arriving at Milford depot, on the Fredericksburg Railroad, next day, I found immense numbers of sick and wounded soldiers retreating from Fredericksburg toward Richmond. I boarded the ambulance-train myself, in company with a lieutenant of engineers belonging to General Lee's staff, on his way to the War Department at Richmond, with plans of General Lee's intended route in the event of his being forced from Fredericksburg. When our train arrived at Ashland, we found the village in possession of Colonel Kilpatrick, of the Federal cavalry, who immediately summoned everybody to surrender and get off the train, which was then demolished and the engine run off the track. Here was a predicament, and I thought that the time had perhaps arrived when it would become necessary for me

to show my document signed by Secretary Mallory. But, upon reflection, I concluded to keep as quiet as possible; so I went up to Colonel Kilpatrick, and said: "Colonel, what shall you do with citizens?" "Nothing," said he; "you may stand aside." All right," I replied, and immediately vanished in the background. If he had only known what a nice capture he would have made of my friend the lieutenant, and also the aide-de-camp of the Governor of Virginia, who happened to be on the train with a large amount of money belonging to the State, which he was taking to Richmond! The next day I started for Richmond on foot, the railroad bridges and tracks having been destroyed by the Federals. We found their cavalry all along the route, even up to the very fortifications, which they could easily have entered, with scarcely any resistance.

(2) Hunley was in fact not discovered for more than 140 years.

(3) One can never recount too often the heroism of Captain Craven on this occasion. As the vessel was sinking beneath them, he and the pilot, John Collins, met at the foot of the ladder leading to the top of the turret. Craven drew back, saying, "After you, pilot." "There was nothing after me," said Collins, who was saved. "When I reached the upmost round of the ladder, the vessel seemed to drop from under me." The Tecumseh lies in the channel to this day. EDITOR.

This concludes the series The Confederate Torpedo Service by R.O Crowley.

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### **MNCS Tracey, USNR. Continued from Page 13.**

There was an MN2 Alford from one of the MOMAU's. I can find out who he belongs to and get contact info for you if you are interested. I'm sure he has pics as well, and some good stories.

This is MNCM Glen Niemitalo, who was forward deployed with a Provincial Reconstruction Team, who redeployed through Camp Arifjan, where I was stationed, and showed up in my office. He is in VTU (Voluntary Training Unit) now, but was an extremely active member of NR MOMAU 4 in Albany until his HYT date.



Editor's Note: Senior Chief Tracey is a very active reserve. Senior Chief, congratulations on your adventures. It sure beats training in the trailer doesn't it?

On August 22d, Fort Morgan was bombarded from the land, also by ironclads at sea, and by the fleet inside. Thus Forts Powel, Morgan, and Gaines shared the fate of the Confederate fleet, and the enemy became masters of the bay. On this as on other occasions, the want of engines of sufficient power constituted a main obstacle to the success which the gallantry and skill of the seamen so richly deserved.

The system of torpedoes adopted by us was probably more effective than any other means of naval defense. The destructiveness of these little weapons had long been known, but no successful modes for their application to the destruction of the most powerful vessels of war and ironclads had been devised. It remained for the skill and ingenuity of our officers to bring the use of this terrible instrument to perfection. The success of their efforts is very frankly stated by one of the most distinguished of the enemy's commanders—Admiral Porter.\* He says:

“Most of the Southern seaports fell into our possession with comparative facility; and the difficulty of capturing Charleston, Savannah, Wilmington, and Mobile was in a measure owing to the fact that the approaches to these places were filled with various kinds of torpedoes, laid in groups, and fired by electricity. The introduction of this means of defense on the side of the Confederates was for a time a severe check to our naval forces, for the commanders of squadrons felt it their duty to be careful when dealing with an element of warfare of which they knew so little, and the character and disposition of which it was so difficult to discover. In this system of defense, therefore, the enemy found their greatest security; and, notwithstanding all the efforts of Du Pont and Dahlgren, Charleston, Wilmington, and Savannah remained closed to our forces until near the close of the war.”

In 1862, while General McClellan was in command of the enemy's forces below Richmond, it was observed that they had more than a hundred vessels in the James River, as if they were about to make an advance by that way upon the city. This led to an order placing General G. J. Rains in charge of the sub-

\* See “Torpedo Warfare,” “North American Review,” September-October, 1878.

marine defenses; and, on the James River opposite Drowry's Bluff, the first submarine torpedo was made. The secret of all his future success consisted in the sensitive primer, which is unrivaled by any other means to explode torpedoes or sub-terra shells.

The torpedoes were made of the most ordinary material generally, as, beer-barrels fixed with conical heads, coated within and without with rosin dissolved in coal-tar; some were made of cast-iron, copper, or tin; and glass demijohns were used. There were three essentials to success, viz., the sensitive fuse-primer, a charge of sixty pounds of gunpowder, and actual contact between the torpedo and the bottom of the vessel.

There were one hundred and twenty-three of these torpedoes placed in Charleston Harbor and Stono River. It was blockaded by thirteen large ships and ironclads, with six or seven storeships, and some twenty other vessels. The position of each one was known, and they could be approached within a half-mile, which made it easy to attack, destroy, or disperse them at night by floating torpedoes, connected together by twos by a rope one hundred and thirty yards long, buoyed up and stretched across the current by two boats, which were to be dropped in ebbing tide, to float down among the vessels. This plan, says General Rains, was opposed by General Gilmer, of the engineer corps, on the ground that "they might float back and destroy our own boat." One was sent down to go in the midst of the fleet, and made its mark. An act of devoted daring was here performed by Commander W. T. Glassell, Confederate States Navy, which claims more than a passing notice. While the enemy was slowly contracting his lines around Charleston, his numerous ships of war kept watch-and-ward outside of the harbor. Our few vessels, almost helpless by their defective engines, could effect little against their powerful opponents. The *New Ironsides*, the pride of their fleet, lay off Morris's Island. This Glassell resolved to attack with a steam-launch carrying a torpedo spar at the bow. With an engineer, pilot, and fireman, he steered for the *Ironsides* under cover of a hazy night. As he approached, he was hailed by the lookout, and the next moment struck the *Ironsides*, explod-

ing the torpedo about fifteen feet from the keel. An immense volume of water was thrown up, covering the little boat, and, pieces of timber falling in the engine, it was rendered entirely unmanageable, so as to deprive Commander Glassell of the means of escape on which he had relied. A rapid fire was concentrated upon him from the deck of the ship, and there remained no chance except to attempt an escape by swimming ashore. To secure liberty to his country, he risked and lost his own, and found, for the indignity to which he was subjected, compensation, inasmuch as the famous *New Ironsides* was long rendered useless to the enemy.

One hundred and one torpedoes were planted in Roanoke River, North Carolina, after a flotilla of twelve vessels had started up to capture Fort Brauch. The torpedoes destroyed six of the vessels and frustrated the attack.

Every avenue to the outworks or to the city of Mobile was guarded by submarine torpedoes, so that it was impossible for any vessel drawing three feet of water to get within effective cannon-range of the defenses. Two ironclads attempted to get near enough to Spanish Fort to take part in the bombardment. They both struck torpedoes, and went to the bottom on Apalachie bar; thenceforward the fleet made no further attempt to encounter the almost certain destruction which they saw awaited any vessel which might attempt to enter the torpedo-guarded waters. But many were sunk when least expecting it. Some went down long after the Confederate forces had evacuated Mobile. The *Tecumseh* was probably sunk, says Major-General D. H. Maury,\* on her own torpedo. While steaming in lead of Farragut's fleet she carried a torpedo affixed to a spar, which projected some twenty feet from her bows; she proposed to use this torpedo against the *Tennessee*, our only formidable ship; but, while passing Fort Morgan, a shot from that fort cut away the stays by which the torpedo was secured; it then doubled under her, and, exploding fairly under the bottom of the ill-fated ship, she careened and sank instantly in ten fathoms of water. Only six or eight of her crew of a hundred or more were saved. The total number of vessels sunk by torpedoes in

\* Southern Historical Society Papers, January, 1877.

210 RISE AND FALL OF THE CONFEDERATE GOVERNMENT.

Mobile Bay was twelve, viz., three ironclads, two tinclads, and seven transports. Fifty-eight vessels were destroyed in Southern waters by torpedoes during the war; these included ironclads and others of no mean celebrity.

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## **QUICKSTRIKE IRE 4-11P**





Thanks to MNC Unit Charleston, SC for the pictures.



## **COMOMAG SAN DIEGO, CA**

**MN1(SW) Sean Hindley**

Hello once again from NMC COMOMAG in sunny San Diego, CA. We have been quite busy since our last Dashpot installment. At any given time this quarter, you could find NMC COMOMAG Staff scattered far and wide in support of Mine Warfare missions around the globe. From Esquimalt, British Columbia to Shreveport, Louisiana and Panama City, Florida to Manama, Bahrain NMC COMOMAG has been providing technical support and subject matter expertise to US and foreign forces.

Mine Warfare made its debut in the Annual International Joint Forces Exercise TRIDENT FURY this past April in Esquimalt, British Columbia. NMC COMOMAG's MNC(SW) Hawes and MN1(SW) Hindley along with NMC Unit Seal Beach's MN1(SW) Nichols were on hand for three weeks from mine plant through mine recovery to provide VEMS support to the Fleet. All three techs provided invaluable training and support to Canadian VEMS personnel. The team was able to build, launch, and recover four US and two Canadian VEMS which will yield valuable signature information to both the US and Canadian forces.

MNC(SW) Sandoval spent a week in the Middle East this April providing exercise planning and asset availability input at the Final Planning Conference for the SHAMAL 11-2 Mine Warfare Exercise that started mid-May in Bahrain. Shortly after MNC(SW) Sandoval's return, MNC(SW) Tetrault

headed right back to the 5th Fleet AOR to provide a month of in-theater support for the duration of SHAMAL 11-2. MNC(SW) Tetrault was embarked onboard USNS Catawba participating in mine lay and recovery events.

In Water Reliability & Evaluation (IRE) testing continued this quarter across the United States with events at Dyess Air Force Base, Barksdale Air Force Base, and Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City. Mr. Ed Simmons and MN1(SW) Flores were on hand to provide IRE support. MN1(SW) Flores went underway onboard mission vessel Lilly Bordelon to observe Mk 65 and Mk 62 mine lays by B-52 and B-1 Squadrons. He was also on hand for the recovery and evaluation of mine case reliability.

NMC COMOMAG personnel not only support the Mine Warfare Community but the local community as well. On April 22nd NMC COMOMAG hosted a Family Day event for all Staff members and their families. The day kicked off with an hour of trash and recyclable collection at Shelter Island, NMC COMOMAG's Adopt-A-Beach location. Following the beach cleanup, staff members and families headed over to Naval Base Point Loma for our Spring B-B-Q and an Easter egg hunt for the kids.

Hails:

MNC(SW) Jon Tetrault reported from Maintenance Det. Bahrain.

MN1(SW) Henry Guerrero reported from LCS-1 Blue Crew.

Mr. Dave Epton reported as N31 Service Mines Branch Head.



Canadian VEMS Techs PO1 Meyer and CPO2 Peterson with US VEMS Techs MN1(SW) Hindley, MNC(SW) Hawes, and MN1(SW) Nichols during TRIDENT FURY 2011



NMC COMOMAG Staff and Family Spring 2011 Picnic

The end of FY11 is upon us, but as you all know, the mine warfare mission never ends. NMC COMOMAG Division has seen plenty of activity this quarter including worldwide exercise support, mine warfare objective missions, Reserve affairs, new arrivals and fond fairwells.

NMC COMOMAG Division continued to add to its subject matter expertise grab bag this quarter. MNC(SW) Tetrault and MNC(SW) Sandoval completed the VEMS afloat and ashore "C" schools at The Mine Warfare Training Center, helping to ensure outstanding service to the NMC Units and to the Fleet. We also had personnel from our Service Mine Department attend the Fleet Ordnance Sentencing course in July, and Ordnance Information System (OIS-R) training in August. Mine Warfare Reservists saw a wealth of positive input from NMC COMOMAG Division in the recent months. MNC(EXW/SW) McQuiddy attended the Operation Support Officer course in Norfolk, VA in order to support the 10 Naval Reserve Mining sites. CDR Harvey, MNCM(SW) Alt, MNC(SW) Sanchez, and MNC(EXW/SW) McQuiddy attended the Naval Reserve Commanding Officer Conference in Fort Worth, TX in July in order to identify training availability and opportunities for future enhanced training and readiness.

NMC COMOMAG Division also traveled far and wide this quarter in order to meet Fleet readiness objectives. Mr. Ed Simmons attended the P-8A Weapons Review in Patuxent River, MD as well as hosting the Sea Mine Target Strength Validation Working Group final IPT meeting and NMAWC Executive Summary here in San Diego. CDR Harvey and MNCM(SW) Alt performed a site visit at Naval Munitions Command East

Asia Division in August to gauge preparedness in meeting MIW mission with regard to operational planning. We also had MN1(SW) Flores attend the King's Bay Limited Objective Experiment to provide training and technical support, and CWO3 Black provide Battle Staff support in August for the UFG Exercise. Additionally, CDR Harvey and Mr. Ed Simmons will be attending the Commander 5th Fleet MIW Symposium. Congratulations to MN1(SW) Sean Hindley, NMC COMOMAG Division Sailor of the Quarter. Until next time, keep up the good work around the NMC Units. The next Quarter is always more exciting than the last!

**Hail:**

IT2(SW) Marlin Wren reporting from USS Lake Erie.

**Fairwell:**

MNC(SW) Bryan Hawes transferred to MCM CREW FEARLESS. MNC(SW) Hawes received the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for his tireless efforts and limitless contributions in ensuring NMC COMOMAG Division mission readiness.



MN1 Hindley receiving his SOQ plaque



## **SEAL BEACH, CA**

**By YN2(AW) Dayna Watson**

Greetings from Naval Munitions Command Underwater Weapons Department in sunny Seal Beach, California!

Underwater Weapons Department had a busy summer!



### **-MISSION UPDATE-**

A two member Mine Assembly Team traveled to Kanehoe Bay, Hawaii and built four assets, pictured above. A one man Mine Assembly Team to Kings Bay, Georgia and assisted in building 14 assets. A trip to Whidbey Island was successful in the building of four assets. Additionally, our department sent 4 Sailors to assist in the recovery of assets on San Clemente Island, California. A job well done by those Sailors!

### **-WELCOME ABOARD-**

We welcomed 8 new members: MNC(SW) Frey, LS1(SW) Algario, MN3 Tupper, MNSN Synder, MNSN Weeks, MNSA Foster, MNSA Meyers and MNSA Cravey.

### **-FAIR WINDS AND FOLLOWING SEAS-**

Underwater Weapons Department said goodbye to MNC(SW) Dorbandt and MN3 Shimonek, we wish them well at their next command!

### **-NEWCOMERS-**

We have two new fathers at the command: MN2(SW) Ellson and MN2(SW) Carter. Congratulations on your bundle of joy!

### **-ADVANCEMENT-**

With the Chief selections released, we welcomed two new Chief selectees. Congratulations to MNC(Sel) Hoekstra and GMC(Sel) Norford!

### **-INDIVIDUAL AUGMENTEE-**

MN1(SW) Lile returned from her Individual Augmentee from Afghanistan, we were happy to see her come back. We will wish MN1(SW) Mahoney, MN3 Alexander and MN3 Leroy well on their Individual Augmentee to Guantanamo. MNC(Sel) Hoekstra and MN2(SW) Lopez will be leaving us for their Individual Augmentee to Afghanistan shortly.

### **-AWARDS-**

Congratulations to YN1(AW) Davis, YN2(SW/AW) Piper and YNSN Galvis for becoming our Senior Sailor, Junior Sailor and Bluejacket of the Quarter.



## **NMC UNIT CHARLESTON GOOSE CREEK, SC**

**By MNCS(SW) Mike Szostkiewicz and  
MN1(SW) Travis Hutchens**

### **TEAM CHARLESTON WARRIORS**

**“We work hard... so others don't have to!”**



Hello and greetings from the Low Country of South Carolina! First and foremost, our hearts and prayers go out to all those who were affected by Hurricane Irene. For those of us who spent many years in the “South Texas Navy” and had to evacuate too many times to remember, we know that Mother Nature is not always kind. Our

condolences to fellow Navy Munitions Command families at Yorktown, VA, and Earle, NJ.

Secondly, this quarter ushered in a whole new generation of Minemen for the US Navy's largest, busiest and most productive intermediate maintenance activity for service and exercise mines. (We used to just refer to ourselves as a "mine shop" but with the changing of times, so too does our mission.)

Next, "Congratulations!!" to all the new Chief Petty Officer selectees and their families, and especially those who just recently transferred from NMC UNIT CHARLESTON, MNC(SW) [select] Miguel Torres, MNC(SW) [select] Shane Stone, and MNC(SW) [select] Eric Gummersheimer. Bravo Zulu! Glad to see that your leadership at Team Charleston paid off and prepared you for the future!

Continuing to orchestrate a hectic workload schedule supporting the Fleet, we still found time to enjoy a bit of summer. One such event in support of our MWR, was a Chili Cook Off, followed by a cooling down... and whipped cream pies in the face! Some of the popular recipients of the pies included our very own Commanding Officer, CDR Marquis Patton, Deputy Director Mr. Tim Harlan, MNC(SW) Paul Snyder, MNC(SW/AW) John Davis, MN1(SW) Travis Hutchens, and the MO\$\$\$T money was raised by MN1(SW) John Sisson. Congratulations to MN1(SW) Shane Senseney as being voted the "Best Chili!"! Between the food and pies, our MWR team led by MN1(SW) Devin Smith and Vice President MNSN Mike Thompson raised over \$300 toward our holiday party for the command children.

The summer brought record high temperatures giving NMC some great opportunities to continue our excellent community service programs. Of special note we have several Sailors that have initiated and maintain the local elementary school's Munch and Mentor Program (MN2 Harris), the local SPCA Kennel Clean up Club (MN2 Pitts), Habitat for Humanity (MN1 Hutchens), Roadside Beautification (MN1 Hutchens), the City of Charleston's Down Town Garden Park Crew (MN2 Pitts), and our local Family readiness Group has a deal worked out with a local Sonic once a month volunteers work as car hops for tips and 10% of all sales (MN2 Roberts and his wife Paulette Roberts).

Our Mines Department is comprised of separate divisions: Planning (including the Cage), Refurbishment, Exercise and Training (including VEMS and Test Set Maintenance/Repair) and Service Mines. Managing a hectic workload throughout

numerous operating buildings is a task we take seriously. Our Refurb & E/T crews often combine their talents when faced with meeting the needs of the Fleet.

One such example is the refurbishment and re-identification of the returned MK 65 laying mines from the Quickstrike In-water Reliability Evaluation. We are nearing completion of converting 20 laying mines into shop mines, in order to provide much needed training assets to our NMC East Asia Division brothers at Guam, Misawa and Okinawa. All of those units have their Mine Readiness Certification Inspection in the very near future, and these MK 65 shop mines will allow them to ensure their sailors are experienced in mine assembly prior to the COMOMAG inspection team arriving onboard! We would also like to thank Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City In-service Engineering Agent representative Ms. Tina Baxter for her assistance with the conversion of our MK 7 tail sections from service assets to inert training assets. This cooperation and open dialogue further allowed us to meet the Fleet's needs!! Many thanks also go to Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit SIX Detachment Mayport and EODCS Jeff Moleski and EODCS Jonah Toy for their outstanding support in disposing of retrograde from the Quickstrike IRE.

Another example of our crew performing like a well greased plummet, cable and pawl gear on a MK 6 Anchor, is that of our deployable Mine Assembly Teams (MATs). Our first MAT, led by MN2(SW) Jon Reeves with Team Members MNSN Ashlee Knight and MNSN Reggie Martinez, deployed in support of PATROL SQUADRON THIRTY at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, FL. Patrol Squadron THIRTY (VP-30), the "Pro's Nest," is the U.S. Navy's single-site Maritime Patrol Fleet Replacement Squadron (FRS). VP-30's mission is to provide aircraft-specific training for naval aviators, naval flight officers and enlisted aircrewmembers prior to reporting to the fleet. VP-30 is the Navy's largest aviation squadron and the only site conducting Maritime Patrol Fleet Replacement Training. Thanks also go out to the crew of NMC CED Detachment Jacksonville, FL for their outstanding support of our mine assembly. Thanks to Edward Murphy, Scott Merritt, Lewis Reddick, Walter Harris, George Gonzalez, Jeff Williams, Gerald Taccolini, Marty Herring, LT Rodney Ledger, AO3 Anthony Hosselkus and AO2 Alex Zima..

Simultaneously, MAT Three [MNC(SW) Gary Bowman, MN1(SW) Travis Hutchens, MN2 Robin Taylor, MN2(SW) Marshall Collins, MNSN Daniel Rendon and MNSN Franklin Brown] deployed to Barksdale Air Force Base, Bossier City, LA

in support of the 2MUNS/340WEPS bi-annual mine warfare training. Barksdale Air Force Base is headquarters for the 2d Bomb Wing, Eighth Air Force and 917th Wing. The 2d Bomb Wing provides global combat capability and trains all B-52 combat crews. Named after aviation pioneer Lt. E. Hoy Barksdale, the 22,000-acre base once was the world's largest airfield. Barksdale AFB is noteworthy in aviation history for its pioneering efforts in all forms of military transport and flight. It housed many different bombardment groups, Air Force divisions and flight schools. The base rose to prominence during the Cold War, becoming a Strategic Air Command (SAC) base.

Our Test Set Maintenance/Repair division also had their hands full this quarter. MN1(SW) John Pennington and (Welcome Aboard to) MN2(SW) Frank Alvarado were busy fabricating shorting plugs and barrier bags in support of the MK 67 Submarine Launched Mobile Mine demilitarization. MK 73 Gas Generators and MK 46 Batteries received much attention this quarter with future love given to MK 4 Main Mine Assemblies and MK 17 Fuse Ejectors.

Our Service Mines Division was busy with our perpetual workload schedule including leading training of the crew during the MK 65 Mod 3 Quickstrike Fleet Introduction. We were proud to host the Fleet Introduction Assistance Team (FIAT) in mid-July [and YES... it was H-O-T] consisting of representatives of COMOMAG, NSWC Panama City, and Innovative Professional Solutions. Thanks to Mr. Roy Isaacs (NSWC) and thanks to such Mine Warfare legends (retired Minemen) as Mr. Dave Epton (COMOMAG), Mr. Bob Bainbridge, Mr. Leo Smith, Mr. Ollie Collins (IPS). Many accolades were received from the Program Office and other dignitaries for the outstanding enthusiasm, cooperation and teamwork NMC UNIT CHARLESTON demonstrated.

### **Maritime Prepositioning Force:**

One of our myriad of missions here at NMC Unit Charleston is that of the Maritime Prepositioning Force. Here's an excerpt from:  
<http://www.msc.navy.mil/pm3/mpf.asp>

Fifteen Military Sealift Command (MSC) prepositioning ships are especially configured to transport supplies for the U.S. Marine Corps. Known as the Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF), the ships were built or modified beginning in the mid-1980s and are forward-deployed to the western Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. The ships contain nearly everything the Marines need for initial military operations -- from tanks and ammunition to food and water and from fuel to spare parts and engine oil.



The ships are organized into three squadrons: MPS Squadron One, usually located in the Mediterranean Sea and eastern Atlantic; MPS Squadron Two, usually located at Diego Garcia; and MPS Squadron Three, normally in the Guam/Saipan area. In addition to Marine Corps designated ships, MPS squadron staffs also oversee all other prepositioning ships in their geographic operating areas.

Each MPS squadron carries sufficient equipment and supplies to sustain about 15,000 Marine Corps Air Ground Task Force personnel for up to 30 days. Each ship can discharge cargo either pier side or while anchored offshore using lighter age carried aboard. This capability gives the Marine Corps the ability to operate in both developed and underdeveloped areas of the world.

Our civilian counterparts on the MPF and Rail team were heavily involved in the shipping and receipt of nearly 6000 tons of ammunition and supplies from USNS SISLER (T-ARK-311), USNS PFC EUGENE A. OBREGON (T-AK-3006), USNS SGT WILLIAM R. BUTTON (T-AK 3012), USNS POMEROY (T-AKR 316), and USNS 1st LT. BALDOMERO LOPEZ (T-AK-3010). We have ensured that all worldwide ordnance movements have gone smoothly and efficiently.

### **Fair Winds and Following Seas:**

As we ushered in a new group of personnel, we piped ashore our Executive Officer, LCDR Mike Mills. Though gone he will never be forgotten as he has come right back to us as one of our Civilian hires working as a Program Analyst. Fair Winds and Following Seas also go out to our Marine Corps Liaison Office OIC: CWO3 Chris Heckenberg who was relieved by CWO3 Shawn Fouchi. Welcome Aboard!

Finally, Fair Winds and Following Seas to MNC(SW) Jerry "Boatswain's Mate" Gerhardt. He leaves some pretty big shoes to fill as he transfers to NMC CED Detachment Bahrain.

### Welcome Aboard:

Our gaggle of new Sailors who have swarmed us with a fresh perspective and an infectious enthusiasm to get out there and build mines:.

MNC(SW) Gary Bowman  
MN2(SW) Frank Alvarado  
MN3 Letwan Rockett  
MN3 Michael Stinson  
MN3 Jared Williamson  
MNSN Jarred Hart  
MNSN Aaron Nickell  
MNSN Carla White  
MNSA Angel Luna  
MNSA David Myers  
MNSA Alejandro Orozco  
MNSA Thomas Roche

### Congratulations:

#### Sailors of the Year (2010):

SSOY: MN1(SW) [MNC Select] Shane Stone  
JSOY: MN2(SW) Justin Tassej  
Blue Jacket of the Year: MN3(SW) [now MN2(SW)] Sergio Rojas

#### Sailors of the Quarter (2ND Quarter 2011):

SSOQ MN1(SW) Carlos Espinosa  
JSOQ LS2(AW) Dennis Novesteras  
Blue Jacket of the Quarter: MNSN Michael Thompson

#### Special "WELCOME HOME!!"

A VERY HEARTY WELCOME HOME goes out to MNCS Tracey Hays (NR MOMAU 3) and MNCS George Kipp (NR MOMAU 4) who recently returned home from deployments in the Middle East. Both Senior Chiefs Hays and Kipp were deployed with the Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group. Tracey spent nine months in Kuwait, while George spent six months in Iraq. Thank you for your service and Welcome Home!!

#### Upcoming Celebrations:

At the time of this writing (September 1st), the month of October is right around the corner, and with it comes a few notable birthdays. First our Navy will celebrate its 236th birthday on 13 October. Secondly, our beloved MINEMAN rating will celebrate its 68th birthday on 12 October. Last year we held a special celebration honoring our Navy and the Mineman rating, with special guest speaker, retired MNMCM William Neiderberger. This year we are planning on a similar ceremony and are looking for a guest speaker!

**IF THERE ARE ANY OLD SALTY MINEMEN HANGING AROUND THE LOW COUNTRY, PLEASE CALL MNCS(SW) MIKE SZOSTKIEWICZ: 843-764-7447, IF YOU'D LIKE TO PUT**

### YOUR NAME IN THE HAT AS THE GUEST OF HONOR!

Final Thought:

Though changes in the Navy's personnel structure keep us all busy it is important to balance our war efforts, fleet wide training, in house training, war stock reserve maintenance, facilities upkeep, professional development, and fleet reserve training with mentoring and developing our next generation. I believe that the Dashpot is a great "nod" at our heritage and background and that all of our sailors, past and present, are enriched greatly by this fine publication so from all of us at NMC Unit Charleston to everyone that helps ensure that the Dashpot happens BRAVO ZULU and keep up the great work!

### HOOYAH! AND SEE YOU NEXT QUARTER!!



Dear God, please let it make a noise so I can tell the Admiral it worked.....



Japanese Officer's Mess and Galley Tinian 1946



## **USS FORCE MSO 445**

In June, 1973, I was an MNCS instructor, at FMWTC, wanting a more challenging and career enhancing job, so I terminated my Shore-Duty in exchange for staff duty at COMINERON ONE, based in GUAM. Tickets to get punched for E9 were instructor duty, MAAG duty, staff duty, and independent duty such as Navy recruiter. I already had the first two requirements and would soon have the third.

I went to work on Guam, 03 July, 1973 & was assigned to the Operations Department as Staff Mine-man. Operation Endsweep was winding down in North Vietnam, so most of the Staff was deployed to Subic or on ships off North Vietnam. Since my wife didn't travel with me, I stayed in the headquarters building at night & read every message-board available concerning the mining and MCM efforts near Haiphong. Because of secrecy concerns the minefield had been planned in Washington, DC, vice using the seasoned minefield planners in Charleston, SC. The short sterilization settings selected required two dangerous re-seedings where at least one A7 aircraft was lost.

Commodore Lindsey, CDR Jim Blandford and others soon returned from their Operation Endsweep deployment. One day, the Commodore commented that it had been a mistake to base the old MSO's in Guam because of the long transits (over 1,000 nautical miles) to the PI, Japan & Korea. In addition, because of the great distances the MSO's needed to carry auxiliary fuel bladders (called blobs) on their fantail. And after arriving, the MSO's needed 2 - 3 days pier-side to recuperate before doing any minesweeping or transiting any further.

Courts martial of the CO, XO, Engineering Officer, and E8 Engineman of the USS Force (MSO 445) that had suffered a disastrous engine room fire (April 1973) resulting in loss of the ship between the PI and Guam were a costly embarrassment for the USN. (Internet: A survivor's report "claimed" that they sat in life-rafts for over 6-hours watching the ship burn and sink.) Survivors I talked to said they were in the life-rafts a little over 4-hours before the burning ship sank. Everyone charged were finally exonerated including Ensign Casmer, the Engineering Officer, who had received a career-dooming letter of reprimand. However, when Casmer appealed the verdict, the letter was quickly purged from his service record.

One day when I turned in mine settings for exercise mines to be used in a Joint MINEX with Thailand, the LT. told me to change the settings so the mines would be easier to sweep. Then he added, "the foreigners like to see flares pop to the surface."

Return of the minesweepers to Guam was an exciting event with the Governor of Guam attending the ceremonies. MSO officers said the NVN had noticed that our minesweepers had not swept for moored mines so rather than admit we hadn't planted any moored minesweeping was performed. GM's said the MSO's guns were required to be masked/covered at all times while off North Vietnam so they were in bad shape back in Guam.

When tasked to write the Command History for 1973, I got excellent inputs from the various departments and summarized dozens of key messages concerning Operation Endsweep and sinking of the USS Force. An atta-boy soon arrived from Washington, DC, after they received our Command History.

It was a sad day, when COMINERON One's remaining MSOs departed for the US Knowing what had happened to the USS Force resulted in fully charged fire-hoses being readily available in every MSO's engine room. Plus, MSO's would not make long transits unaccompanied.

After being promised transfer orders to NAVMAG, Guam, by the MN-detailer, I anxiously waited for my orders to arrive. One day, a gleeful yeoman came bounding into the office waving a piece paper and saying "You're going to NAVMAG." Then he added, "NAVMAG, Subic that is."

Soon afterwards, the MN-detailer canceled my orders to Subic and admitted he had put the wrong UIC on the other orders. I was anxious to start work as the E8 in charge of Mine Production at NAVMAG, Guam.

COMINERON One was decommissioned in June 1974. Navy tradition was to place all of the command's beautifully-shiny, silver service sets (every piece had a serial number) on a table, lock the doors to the building and take down the flag.

Don Jones, MNCM, USN Retired  
Sherwood, TN E-mail: jodo496usn@aol.com

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## ***THE WISDOM OF THE CHIEF***

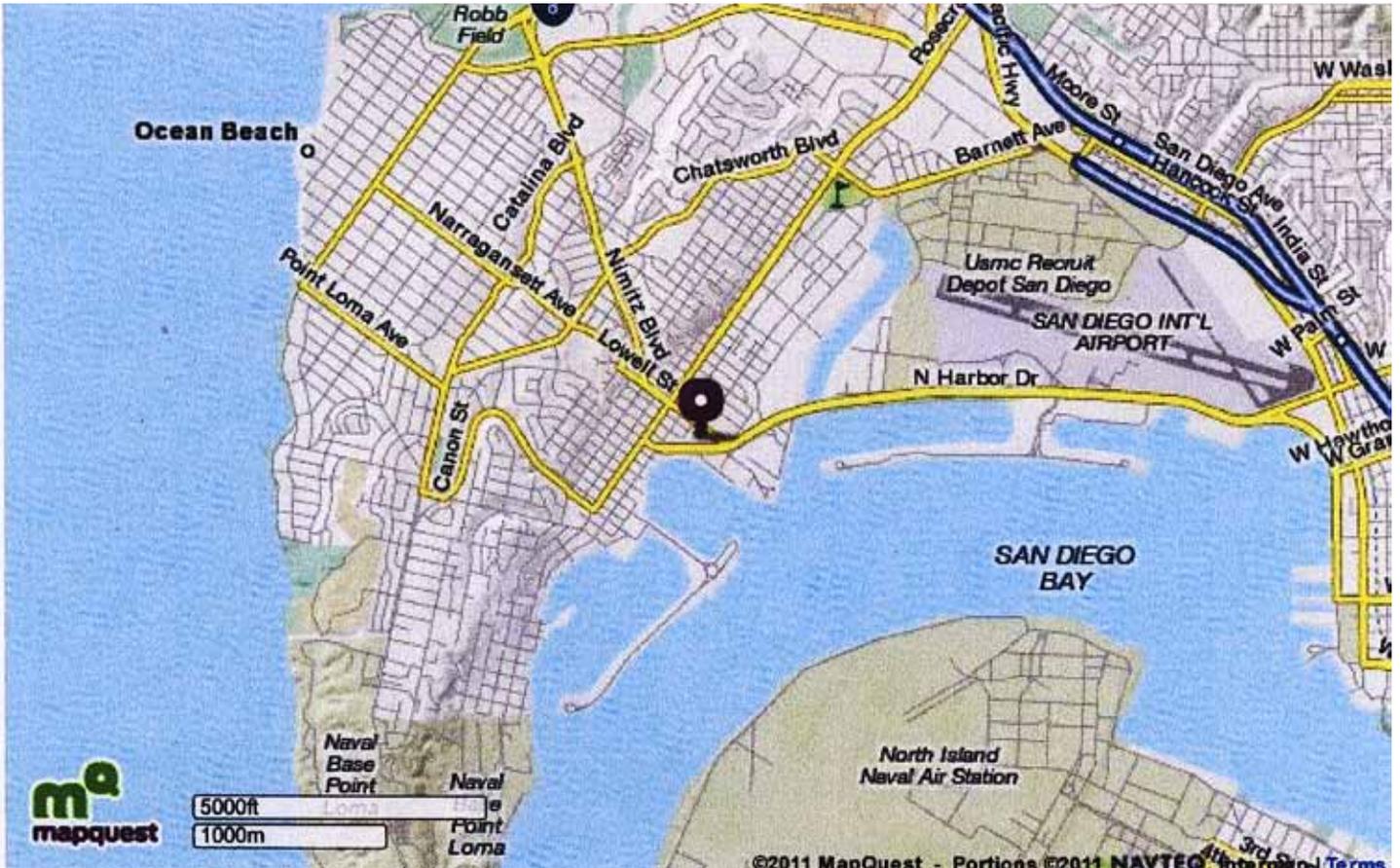
Long ago, on the mystic island of Oahu, a certain Chief was wont to go to Honolulu to the wrestling matches every Wednesday night. He took with him a small, motley gaggle of pollywogs to drive and buy drinks afterward in such elegant dives as the Queen's surf, Forbidden City and Davy Jones' Locker.

One night, the revelry was of such quality that the witching hour came and went unnoticed. When the Chief noted the time, he was stricken with grief, as he had only been granted Cinderella Liberty by his wife. At his direction, we hastened to Patty's Chinese Kitchen where he purchased a most impressive array of Chinese delights arranged on a large cardboard tray. We virtually flew to his residence. He bounded from the car with vigor and ran with his tray of goodies to the door, which was locked tight. He rang the bell and moments later a demon appeared at the door and did to him what he did to us daily only she was better at it. He meekly offered her the tray. She immediately dumped it on his head and stomped into the house followed quickly by the Chief dripping noodles as he went. We feared we would never see him on this side of the vale again and departed with great sadness.

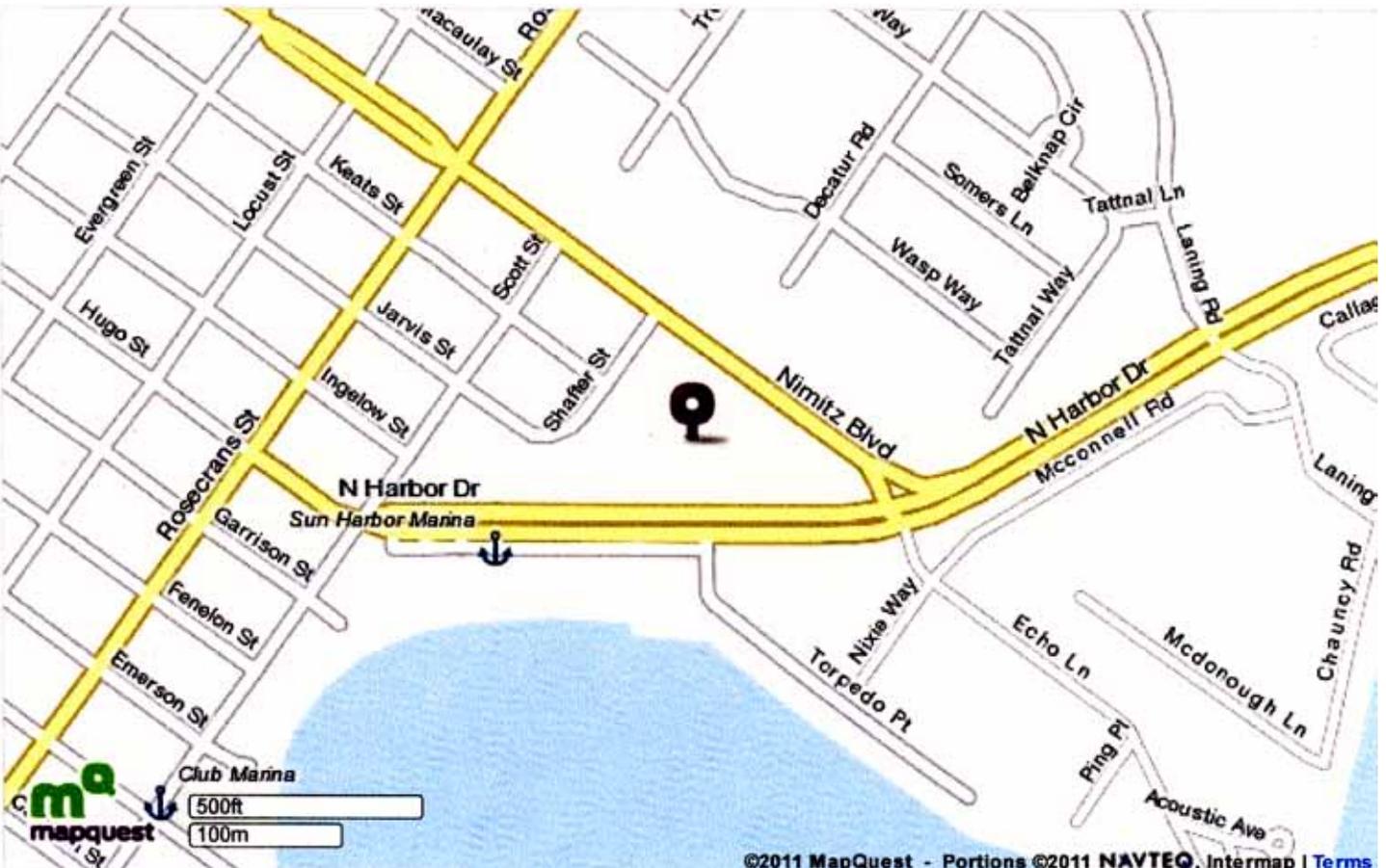
But, lo, the next morning, to our astonishment, he appeared completely unscathed! We inquired about the dumping of the food and he assured us it was a safety ritual he had established years before. We expressed incredulity that he would buy all that food knowing he was going to wear it.

He closed his eyes, collected his thoughts and sagely replied, "Pots and pans are hard and hurt. Chinese food is soft and doesn't bruise."

To this day, I remain in awe of the wisdom of the Chief.



## **HOLIDAY INN SAN DIEGO BAYSIDE LOCATION MAPS**



**ASSOCIATION OF MINEMEN 37th ANNUAL REUNION & MEETING  
 SAN DIEGO, CA  
 AT THE HOLIDAY INN SAN DIEGO BAYSIDE  
 14-16 OCTOBER 2011**

**Association of Minemen,  
 Post Office Box 510519,  
 Punta Gorda, FL 33951**

Please return the reservation form as soon as possible to the address above to expedite your registration for reunion events. Your tickets will be made available at the Early Bird, General Business Meeting, Dinner and Picnic.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ AOM Member # \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

Banquet Buffet: Tossed Green Salad, Tri-Tip Steak, Chicken Breast with a Wild Mushroom Sherry Glaze, Roasted Red Potatoes with Garlic and Herbs, Fresh Seasonal Vegetables, and Carrot Cake.

Dinner Tickets @ \$39.00 ea X \_\_\_\_\_ Tickets = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Includes tax & gratuity).

Picnic Tickets @ \$12.00 ea X \_\_\_\_\_ Tickets = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Picnic Tickets @ \$6.00 ea X \_\_\_\_\_ Tickets = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Age 7 to 12 years \$6.00, under 7 - FREE)

Number of children attending picnic age 6 and under: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Usual picnic fare will be served.)

ANNUAL DUES: @ \$15.00 October 2012 to October 2016 (5 year max.) . . . . \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your label has your paid to date, e.g. October 2012 is your paid to date.  
 (New or reinstatement member add \$5.00 application fee.)

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AOM General Fund: Tax deductible: . . . . . \$ \_\_\_\_\_

AOM Scholarship Donation: Tax Deductible . . . . . \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Checks payable to: Association of Minemen: **TOTAL ENCLOSED:** . . . . . \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**We must guarantee number for dinners not later than morning of: 8 October 2011.  
 There will be NO REFUNDS after 8 OCTOBER 2011.**

Holiday Inn San Diego Bayside Reservations: CALL **1-800-662-8899** or **1-619-224-3621**  
**Cutoff date for AOM GROUP rate reservations is 27 September 2011.**  
 For single/double \$109.00 + 12.5% TAX.

FREE Holiday Inn San Diego Bayside Shuttle: 0830-1700.  
 Call ahead. Routes are to and from SAN DIEGO AIRPORT, ZOO, SEA WORLD, OLD TOWN and  
 other sites by APPOINTMENT!

**Association of Minemen  
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**NEXT ARTICLE DUE DATE IS 1 DEC 2011**

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SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

ELGIBILITY \_\_\_\_\_ APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_

Application fee \$5  
Annual Dues \$15

NOTICE: To maintain membership, dues of \$15.00  
must be paid annually by the month of October.  
The dues expiration date is October in the year  
above your name on your mailing label.

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Association of Minemen  
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Punta Gorda, FL 33951