

# USS Caliente (AO-53) Association



# PIPELINE

December 2010

## President's message

By Pat Hurton

Norm, Karl and I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving and that the upcoming holiday season will be one of your best yet.

For those of you who weren't able to make it to San Diego you missed a great reunion. We were very fortunate to get a private tour of the USS New Orleans (LPD-18). It is a relatively new amphibious assault ship. Not much has changed from the Caliente regarding going up and down ladders (except a few more decks) and the wireways running all over the place; however, the crew's quarters are a little bit better human engineered than the Cal and the ship was air conditioned. The bridge is quite a bit different. No large helm in the middle and many computer screens. You can program your course and stand by and watch. It is a different Navy than when any of us were in.

It is always great to see family members at the reunion. They are always welcome. I encourage all of you to bring your family members along. They will not be bored and it helps them understand what we did. When they hear some of the sea stories they get a better perspective of the Navy and what it entails to serve. As you all know the Cal went through three wars and we have members from each attend the reunions. There is no way of knowing how long this will be possible and I think it's great for all to get a perspective of three distinctly different types of conflict and hear the stories. There's nothing like getting a broad perspective of anything. This year we were fortunate to have Vivian Pennington's son Dan, his wife Angela, her daughter Carolyn and husband Gary attend. Joe Coia's daughter Connie and niece Leslie attended as well as John Creedon's granddaughter and nephew. I think they all had a good time.

The 2011 reunion will be held in Norfolk, Virginia, at the Marriott Norfolk Waterside. The dates are Sept. 22-25. The room rate will be \$129.00 plus tax and parking is FREE! I won't have the contract fully in place for a couple of weeks so you won't be able to make reservation until then. If you are going to make reservations please ensure that you are talking to the correct hotel, as there are two Marriotts in Norfolk. If you call the hotel and they don't recognize the USS Caliente group you have reached the incorrect hotel. As details of the reunion evolve they will be posted on the Caliente website. The March Pipeline will include the sign-up sheet. Pricing will be similar to last year. If anyone has a connection in Norfolk that can get us a personal tour of an active ship, similar to the USS New Orleans experience, I would appreciate any help I can get in arranging such. There is a canned tour of the base but you never get off the bus. I don't think that would appeal to many of you. Let me know if you have any suggestions you have regarding the reunion. If I don't hear from anyone, I assume the last two reunions were organized satisfactorily and I will proceed down the same path.

As part of the business meeting, we discussed where to hold the 2011 reunion. Following our rotational plan, it should be in area of St. Louis, Kansas City, Denver or Albuquerque. Discussion was held regarding each location and no decision was made. A suggestion was made to investigate the feasibility of having a reunion in Hawaii. It seemed to be supported by the majority of the wives who

were present. I would appreciate your inputs regarding the likelihood of your attendance at any of these sites. If you would rank order the sites it would help greatly.

As you know a lot of groundwork goes into the reunions and the more input we get regarding locations, events etc. the better the reunion. Based on your feedback I hope to narrow the selection to two sites before the March Pipeline comes out. The final selection will be made at the 2011 business meeting in Norfolk by the members present. We get a better discussion regarding site selection if we narrow the choices down ahead of time. The more information/feedback Norm Street and I get, the better the choice will be. Please let Norm or me know what you are thinking. My email is [gigandpat@digitalpath.net](mailto:gigandpat@digitalpath.net) and Norm's email is [normstreet@sbcglobal.net](mailto:normstreet@sbcglobal.net). You can also phone or write if that is more convenient.

Norm and I have been talking to a person in Norfolk who is a Navy wife and makes hats, polo shirts, sweatshirts and dungaree type jackets. The dungaree jackets would cost around \$70.00 in black or denim blue color. To get an idea of the type of item that can be produced please visit the website [www.companycasuals.com](http://www.companycasuals.com). If there is any interest we may be able to get a bulk buy discount. Please let me know if and what you may be interested in and I'll pursue it. You may also deal individually if you so desire. I can provide a Cal patch and/or rocker as necessary.

I know we ask every time, but Norm would like someone to take over the website. Don't worry about taking over as you will get plenty of feedback regarding content etc. Norm wants to focus his efforts on recruiting and, like all of us, needs help. If you are the least bit computer literate (some of our younger members must be better than us senior pensioners) please contact myself or Norm if you can help.

If you haven't paid your dues for 2011 please send them to me.

### **2010 San Diego reunion income/expenses**

Income	\$13,632.00
Expenses	
Disc Jockey	\$500.00
Photographer	\$750.00
Dinner Cruise/USS New Orleans Tour	\$4,675.00
Westin San Diego	\$8,175.00
Total Expenses	\$14,100.00
Income Over/(Under) Expenses	(\$468.00)

### **Welcome aboard to our new members:**

Kevin Anderson, who lives with his wife Kelly in Coral Springs, FL, was an YN3 when he served aboard the Cal from 1970-1972

Austin Barbay, who lives with his wife Elizabeth in Sunshine, LA, was a BM3 when he served aboard the Cal from 1955-1957

David Bingham, who lived with his wife Chris in Olalla, WA, was a CS2, when he served

aboard the Cal from 1971-1972

Joseph, (Jim) Carriere, who lives in Oglesby, IL, as a QM3 when he served aboard the Cal from 1961-1963

Thomas Crouch Sr., who lives with his wife Cheryl in Tucson, AZ., was an SN when he served aboard the Cal from 1961-1963

Juergen Muelder, who lives with his wife Elke in Cameron Park, CA, was an ET2 when he served aboard the Cal from 1957-1959

Dennis Pedersen, who lives with his wife Gwen in Fort Collins, CO, was a LTJG when he served aboard the Cal from 1962-1964

Rosario (Skip) Schembari, who lives with his wife Barbara in LaCañada, CA, was a BM3, when he served aboard the Cal from 1968-1971

**In Memoriam:**

We are sad to note the passing of five former shipmates.

Eddie R. Hayes passed away Sept. 12, 2010, at age 78 in Independence, MO. He served on the CA from 1952 to 1955 as a GM2. Eddie is survived by his wife of 51 years, Nancy; children Kathy (Dennis) Lafaver, Brenda (Brian) Kinkade and Chris (Melissa) Hays; eight grandchildren; sister Lois Adkison; brothers J.R. and Jerry (Linda) Hays.



USS Caliente Association  
President: Pat Hurton  
Vice President: Norm Street  
Secretary: Red Ward  
Pipeline Editor: Karl Seitz



The Pipeline is the official quarterly newsletter of the USS Caliente Association. It is a place to share your memories. Please send them via e-mail to seitzao53@gmail.com or by regular mail to Karl Seitz, 1212 30th St. South, Birmingham, AL 35205-1910.

Masthead picture of USS Caliente (AO-53) used with permission of Dan Davis.

Association dues are \$10 per year due Jan. 1, payable by Jan. 15. Checks should be made out to The USS Caliente Association and mailed to Pat Hurton, 14075 Kelsey Drive, Chico, CA 95973-9262.

Joe Kabacinski passed away Oct. 16, 2010, at age 73 in Bremerton, WA. He served on the Cal from 1971 to 1972 as a BM1. Joe Kab is survived by sister, Gloria Tilly, brothers Larry, Justin, Dwayne, Kenny and Ray Kabacinski, all of Green Bay, WI. Joe enlisted in the Navy in 1954 and retired in 1974. He then drove a cab and bartended in San Diego, CA, until 1980 when he retired to Bremerton.

Philip Maffei passed away Sept. 30, 2010, at age 88 at his home in Concord Township, PA. He served on the Cal from 1943 to 1946 as a MM1. Philip is survived by daughters Janet A. Maffei, Lisa Maffei Hahn and Christina A. Maffei; sister, Dolores Hilferty, brothers Ottavio, Anthony, Joseph and Frank M. Maffei; four grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Lloyd Lester Oliver passed away Sept. 3, 2010 at age 76. Lloyd lived in Indianapolis, IN, and is survived by his wife Dixie Ella. Lloyd served on the Cal from 1951-1955 and was an SK2.

Larry Prater passed away Aug. 11, 2010, in Modesto, CA, at age 72 after a series of health problems that followed surgery for a broken hip suffered in late July. He served on the Cal from 19 Nov 1956 to 9 Jul 1958 as a seaman. Larry is survived by his wife of 46 years, Lynda; children Kristin and Leigh; six grandchildren and three brothers. He was predeceased by daughter, Laurel. Larry retired from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad in March 1997 after 35 years. In a letter to Norm Street, Lynda wrote that Larry was excited about the USS Calliente Association and Norm's help in finding out what had become of former shipmates.

## **USS Caliente (AO-53) Annual Business Meeting**

Westin San Diego  
September 17, 2010

The meeting was called to order by President Pat Hurton at 9:00 AM. Thirty-two (32) members were present. Some members' wives and family also attended. A quorum was present.

### **Old Business:**

The minutes of the prior meeting were approved.

USS Caliente Plaque: Pat stated that two thousand eighty five dollars (\$2,085) had been collected toward the goal of thirty five hundred dollar (\$3,500) for the Cal plaque to be placed on the "Wall of Remembrance" at the Admiral Nimitz museum in Fredericksburg, Texas. Pat asked for permission to take the balance of the money from the General Fund and get the plaque making process started. A motion to do such was made and seconded. The motion was passed without dissent.

US Navy Memorial Fund: Pat stated that eight hundred four (\$804) dollars had been raised as a donation to the US Navy Memorial. Pat stated that he was waiting for the amount to equal an even one thousand dollars (\$1,000) before donating the money. Pat asked for permission to take the balance of the money from the General Fund and send in a donation. A motion to do such was made and seconded. The motion was passed without dissent.

Treasurer's report: Pat presented the attached treasurer's report showing a balance of fourteen

thousand six hundred twenty seven dollars and twenty seven cents (\$14,627.75). After taking the monies for the plaque and US Navy Memorial the balance will be eleven thousand six hundred twenty seven dollars and seventy five cents (\$11,627.75)

2011 Reunion Site: As approved at the last business meeting the site of the 2011 Reunion will be Norfolk/Virginia Beach, VA. Date yet to be determined.

**New Business:**

2012 Reunion: Pat Hurton recommends that the next reunion be held in either St. Louis, MO, Kansas City, MO, Denver, CO, or Albuquerque, NM. Discussion was then held regarding the various sites. Pat asked for a show of hands regarding each site. Denver received the most votes. Discussion was held regarding persons who couldn't travel to high altitudes due to oxygen requirements. A motion was made to "not hold a reunion at any site over twenty five hundred feet (2,500)". The motion died for lack of a second. A suggestion was made to hold the 2012 reunion in Hawaii. By show of hands this was the most popular site. Pat Hurton stated it would be difficult to arrange a reunion in Hawaii as we have no members that could provide "on site" inputs regarding various aspects of a reunion. J.C. Van Deusen offered to try and contact some acquaintances in Hawaii and to aid investigation of the feasibility. Pat Hurton stated he would gather information regarding each location and present it in the March 2011 Pipeline. No decision was made regarding the 2012 reunion site.

Election of Officers: A motion was made and seconded that the current slate of officers be re-elected. The motion was seconded. The motion was passed without dissent. Karl Seitz agreed to continue be the editor/publisher etc. of the Pipeline for at least another year. Discussion was held regarding the excellent job Karl has done with the Pipeline and it was agreed that he deserves the accolades of all for the outstanding issues he has published.

**Other Business:**

There being no other business to discuss a motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded. The motion was passed without dissent.

The meeting was adjourned.

**Treasurer's report**

Sept. 17, 2010

Category	Income	Expenses	Balance
Opening Balance 9/26/2009			\$12,523.24
Income			
Renewals	\$1,030.00		
New Members	\$370.00		
Donations			
Navy Memorial	\$115.00		
General Fund	\$150.00		
Subtotal Donations	\$265.00		

Interest on CD	\$65.35		
USS Caliente Plaque	\$1,805.00		
Total Income	\$3,535.35		\$16,058.59
Expenses			
Pipeline		\$940.65	
Minneapolis Reunion		\$490.19	
Total Expenses		\$1,430.84	\$14,627.75
Total Balance on Hand 9/17/2010			\$14,627.75
CD	\$4,773.47		
Cash	\$9,854.28	Navy Memorial	\$804.00
Total 09/17/2010	\$14,627.75	Cal Plaque	\$2,085.00
		Funds available	\$11,738.75
		Total Balance	\$14,627.75

## Editor's message

By Karl Seitz

Shipmate Jeff Myers needs help in solving an information problem:

I was on the Caliente from 71 to 72 as a CS3 and sometime during that period we went up the Mekong or Saigong or one of the deltas or rivers to resupply some of the swift boats, but I am having a difficult time trying to get any info without having to put out a lot of cash.

I have an Agent Orange Claim that was denied because of the Haas decision and the fact that I'm Cat 6 and Blue Water Navy. I did my initial claim in Arizona last year but have just now reopened it on Oahu since I am a resident.

The National Archives said that it would cost over \$400 to get the ships logs which I need to prove that the ship was in Vietnam Waters (latitude/longitude, etc.) Is there anyone out there that has any info or any thing I can use for my claim? Or is there any one out there that I can contact that can help me?

I can be reached at my yahoo mail which is [expat.phil2012@yahoo.com](mailto:expat.phil2012@yahoo.com) or [jemaloha2008@yahoo.com](mailto:jemaloha2008@yahoo.com) or [jmyers20@gmail.com](mailto:jmyers20@gmail.com) or by cell 808-271-6107.

Jeff's request (see an update below) is the first time that I became aware that the Caliente had sailed on the interior waterways of Vietnam, although I did subsequently find a reference to the Cal conducting port replenishment operations at An Thoi and Vung Tau, apparently in 1970.

In any case, these operations are of interest for two reasons.

First, they are part of the Caliente's history and readers' memories of what happened during

those events would be most welcome in the pages of the Pipeline. If you have some memories to share, send them to Karl Seitz by one of the methods stated on page 3. Pictures sent via e-mail should have a resolution of at least 300 dpi.

Second, the matter of exposure to Agent Orange and other dangerous chemicals used in Vietnam between Jan. 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, should be of concern to all who served on the Caliente during that period. Veterans who served in Vietnam during this period and are diagnosed with one or more from a list of health conditions — prostate cancer being perhaps the best known — are presumed to have acquired the disease because of that exposure and are entitled to disability payments from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

However, under current VA regulations, which were upheld by a U.S. Court of Appeals in the Haas case mentioned by Jeff, those who served off shore of Vietnam during the designated period are not entitled to the congressionally mandated presumption. While legislation is pending in Congress to expand coverage to so-called “blue water” sailors, no action is likely this year, which means the legislation would have to be re-introduced after a new Congress begins in January.

But blue water sailors can receive disability payments if they can prove they actually set foot in Vietnam, perhaps during supply operations such as Jeff took part in. I have found a recent VA directive that might make such claims easier to prove without involving the National Archives. However, bureaucratic inertia being what it is, any additional help from readers would be most welcome by Jeff.

Since he sent his original request, Jeff has narrowed the period during which he would have been in a Vietnamese interior waterway port to June through August 1972. He has requested deck logs for that period, but still hasn't heard from the VA about reopening his claim.

## **Would like to hear from father's shipmates**

Frank Tortolano sent the following e to Norm Street:

As I was searching for my ship's information I came across the USS Caliente site. My father served on the Caliente from 1945 to 1946 — he lost his battle with pancreatic cancer in 1989 and would have loved this site. If anyone who remembers him would like to e-mail me at [f.tortolano@yahoo.com](mailto:f.tortolano@yahoo.com) it would be great. I served on the USS Chuckawan (AO-100) from 1967 to 1971.

## **Honoring fallen veterans in New Jersey**

Ron and Barbara Hengl came across a CBS News story about then 89-year-old Marvin Hume and his daily sunset ceremony honoring fallen veterans. They wondered how close Cape May, N.J. is to Norfolk, Va., the site of our next reunion.

Seven days a week between Memorial Day and mid-October, Hume raises a casket flag to honor a different service member. The World War II Navy veteran has been conducting his ceremonies before growing crowds for more than 38 years. The flagpole is located on his ocean-side property in Cape May, NJ. The flags, which were presented to the veterans' families after drapping the veterans' caskets at their funerals, have been sent to Hume from across the country.

The CBS story can be found on the Internet at <http://tinyurl.com/325b9qk> (for those unfamiliar with the tiny url service, typing this url and hitting return will send your browser to the actual, much longer, url). Other stories about Hume and his ceremony can be found by using an Internet search engine such as Google.

Cape May is about 200 miles north, north-east of Norfolk on a route that includes a 17-mile, 85-minute ferry crossing of Delaware Bay. A longer route that goes around Delaware Bay is about 320 miles. Both routes use the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel. If you do take the Cape May-Lewes Ferry, it is recommended you call ahead to reserve space for your vehicle.

## Memories

### **An exceptional surgical procedure for war time**

By Nancy M. Greenberg and Jane Bradford

(widows of Ben Greenberg, LTJG, 1943-45, and Paul Bradford, LT, 1943-45)

When the Caliente was in the Pacific during 1943-45, Dr. Paul Bradford performed an appendectomy. However, the real outstanding event was when he performed a circumcision on one of the men. The rest of the crew tried to deter the patient, but he was insistent (no one knows exactly why).

Considering that Paul was a general practitioner in Pennsylvania and had delivered a set of triplets amongst his many other deliveries, this was quite a coup. This act of surgery on board a ship during war time was very exceptional.

### **Shipmate makes long trips to help vets**

By Bob Howard, MMC

1968-1971

This is about a "Shipmate" I met in the USS Caliente Association. Shortly after I was elected to host the San Francisco reunion I went to Pendleton Oregon for some private business. There were two men in the association that lived in Pendleton. I had never met either of them, so I called and arranged to meet both men and their wives at a restaurant for dinner. I met Jim Kuykendadall, his wife Donna and their son. Jim was an MM2 on the Cal from 1946 to 1948. I also met Wes All and his wife Nancy. Wes was a BMSN on the Cal from 1961 to 1965. We had a nice visit.

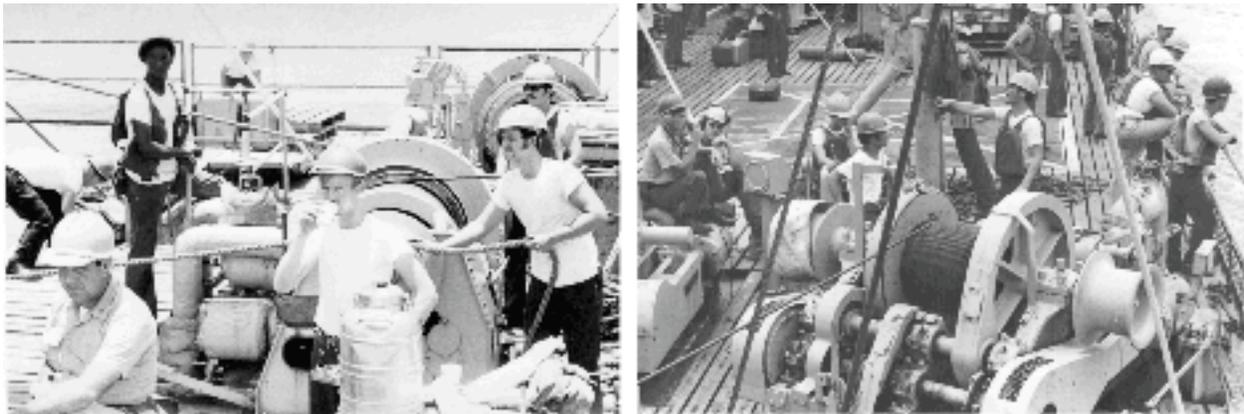
On my next visit to Pendleton, I called Wes to see if they would like to meet for dinner and they invited me to their house for dinner. What I didn't know at the time was that it was Nancy's birthday. When I arrived they told me it was her birthday. Their daughter was there and they treated me like family. Wes was able to attend the San Francisco reunion and I was able to get to know him better.

After Wes left the Navy he drove trucks for 40 years. Tractor trailers and logging trucks. About ten years ago he had to retire on disability. For the past ten years he has volunteered his

time to take local veterans from the Pendleton area to the VA in Portland. That is a 450-mile round trip. He has been doing this two or three times a week. He gets reimbursed for mileage, but there is no pay involved. That is 900 to 1,300 miles a week. Sometimes he buys lunch for the veterans if they are hungry and can't afford it.

Those of you that have met Wes and Nancy at the reunions know that he is a quiet guy and his wife is a sweetheart. I am very proud to call Wesley All a shipmate and friend.

### **On the cargo deck**



More pictures from the box of memorabilia left to the USS Caliente Association by the late Capt. Donald A. McGuiness, skipper of the Cal in 1972 and 1973. Unfortunately, the people in these pictures, apparently taken on the cargo deck during unrep operations, were not identified in the received material. The editor would welcome any identifications that can be made by readers.

## **New members write No mention of the Caliente**

By Austin D. Barbay, BM3  
1955-1957

The Caliente participated in the atomic test in the Pacific Proving Grounds (Operation Red Wing) in 1956 (I was aboard then). The National Association of Atomic Veterans lists ships that were there, but no mention of the Caliente!

## **2010 Reunion attendees**

The following people attended the Reunion in San Diego:

- |                         |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Wesley and Nancy All    | (BMSN, 1961 - 1965) |
| Larry and Ida Baker     | (LTJG, 1957 - 1960) |
| Morris and Joanne Banks | (SM1, 1967 - 1970)  |

Red and Ann Bennett	(FT3, 1961 - 1962)
Jim Bentz	(EN2, 1965 - 1967)
Edwin and Jeanne Birdsall	(GMSN, 1955 - 1957)
Joseph (Jim) Carriere and Dixie Tonozzi	(QM3, 1961 - 1963)
Isidoro and Rita Chavez	(EM3, 1959 - 1962)
Bill and Barb Chisolm	(SN, 1967 - 1968)
Joe Coia, daughter Connie Coia, niece Leslie Blaise	(CS3, 1951 - 1952)
John and Zelda Coleman	(MM3, 1960 - 1964)
John and Diane Creedon, granddaughter, nephew	(QM1, 1943 - 1945)
Ed Fordyce	(PN3, 1960 - 1962)
Marvin and Susan Hardy	(FN, 1960 - 1963)
Ron and Barbara Hengl	(MM3, 1954 - 1957)
Robert and Sherris Howard	(MMC, 1968 - 1971)
Patrick and Charleen Hurton	(SK2, 1964 - 1966)
Robert and Ethel Jackson	(CAPT, 1966 - 1968)
Merle and Billie Kersten	(LT, 1950 - 1952)
Oscar and Lucy Loring	(SH3, 1950 - 1954)
Robert and Susie Matyas	(EM3, 1962 - 1965)
Ervin (Mac) and Connie McCormick	(BT3, 1952 - 1956)
John and Linda McGonigle	(BTC, 1964 - 1966)
Chris and Barbara Mueller	(BM2, 1968 - 1972)
James and June Niquette	(BM3, 1950 - 1954)
Vivian Pennington (widow of R.C.)	(BM1, 1943 - 1945)
son Daniel and Angela Pennington	
daughter Carolyn and Gary Williams	
Greg Perett	(LTJG, 1969 - 1972)
Dan and Karen Ryan	(LTJG, 1964 - 1966)
Bryan and Bonnie Skokan	(LTJG, 1966 - 1968)
Thomas and Barbara Smith	(LTJG, 1964 - 1966)
Jeff and Sue Sturgis	(LTJG, 1970 - 1972)
Carlos and Norma Vallejo	(SN, 1951 - 1955)
JC and Betty Van Deusen	(SFC, 1961 - 1965)
James and Jeanette Yourzek	(MM3, 1960 - 1964)

On the following page is a group picture of those who attended the Reunion in Minneapolis. Readers of the electronic version are reminded that Acrobat Reader allows you to rotate a page on your computer screen for better viewing.

