



Station Ship News



DING DING . . . DING DING . . . SHIP'S CREW ARRIVING . . . ABOVE AND BELOW DECKS
IN THE AIR, AT SEA AND IN PORT . . . DING DING . . . DING DING



USS Midway "glides" into port on a blue and placid sea

Most frequently asked question at this point in our reunion planning: *Is it too late to attend the Pensacola reunion now that the deadline has passed?*

No, it's not too late. The deadline has been extended. You can still come, and we'll do our best to sign you up for all the tours/activities, including the banquet dinner. Our policy is to turn no Midway veteran and his family members or guests away from our reunions, and this policy holds true for Pensacola. So by all means, we urge you to come join us in Pensacola.

The best way to make this happen is to call/email our reunion planning company, **Gatherings Plus**, at 417-338-4048/pam@gatheringsplus.com.

They Come Bearing Gifts

In accordance with our bylaws, Article 2: Objectives . . . The purpose of our organization is to "operate as a nonprofit (501(c)(19)) charitable organization, as well as a social organization; encourage members to participate in charitable and social activities."

Well, we stand by our bylaws, because we operate both as a nonprofit organization (raising money for worthy charities) as well as a social organization – that is, we have plenty of fun at our reunions. The money we raise from our fund raising at reunions is donated to two charitable programs sponsored by the USS Midway Museum: the

Education Scholarship Program and the Midway Preservation Endowment Fund.

Jim Hayter, MVA's VP of Reunions, is often seen at our reunions hoisting a large bottle of wine. It's not what you think. Jim is our chief fundraiser, and he's



auctioning it off to the highest bidder.

In order to have plenty of prizes to work with, we ask reunion attendees come bearing gifts from their home states – gifts generally valued under \$20.00, as raffle prizes. (This is not mandatory, just a suggestion.)

The top prize goes to the holder of the winning lottery ticket following the Grand Banquet on Wednesday evening. For the past two reunions, this has been a 10" bronze statue of the Lone Sailor from the U.S. Navy Memorial, and the "Lone Sailor" will again be the top prize this year. We also draw for two American flags flown over USS Midway at the banquet. Two lucky Midway

veterans will win these flags by having their names drawn from a hat, or something similar.

Other fundraising activities include a silent auction, prizes for which have ranged from some of the nicer prizes attendees have brought from home (last year, for example, the hand-carved Big Bear and the Sailor, below) to cut-rate prices for attendees' hotel rooms, using the free rooms MVA gets from the hotel for filling so many rooms. The fun just goes on, and it's all for a very good cause, veterans, families and guests. **For the "inside skinny" on our reunion fundraising activities, contact Jim Hayter: mva41vpr@comcast.net/703-264-0542.**



The Big Bear and the Sailor – silent auction prizes at the 2015 Reunion in San Diego

"Midway Veterans: whether you live on the East Coast or in America's Heartland and have wondered when the USS Midway was going to hold a reunion in your neck of the woods, well, wonder no longer, for here we come. And, oh, by the way, we're gonna have us some fun remembering those days on the Mighty USS Midway!

Pensacola Reunion! Apr. 25-27, 2016. [Register now while there is still time!](#)"



Editor's note: Three of our five Pensacola members – Rodric Hammond, Gregory Schuller, and Robert Ammann – are retired Navy men who live in Pensacola. Following, in their own words, is a "snapshot" of their Navy days.

The Men From Pensacola

Rodric Hammond LCDR/USN Ret.
VAW-115 MMCO
onboard Midway 75-79; 84-86

I began my Naval Career as a Communications Technician at NSA in 1959 and left the service in 1964 (two years reserve). Re-enlisted in 1967 as an Aviation Electronics Tech and worked my way up from E-5 to E7 prior to being stationed in 1975 on the USS Midway with VAW-115 in Air Wing 5. In 1977 I was selected for CWO2, and after "Charm School" here in Pensacola I returned to the same squadron as Maintenance/Material Control Officer (MMCO). Subsequently, early selected for CWO3 and transferred to NAF Atsugi as AIMD MMCO in support of Air Wing 5. Made LTJG (LDO) and later LT before returning to Midway with Fighter Squadron (VF-151).

Rodric "Rod" Hammond ("Mustang Man") served 34 years in the Navy, including two tours of duty on Midway, and retired as a LCDR in 1993. He's lived in Pensacola ever since.

In 1986 I transferred to VC-1 Barber's Pt. Hawaii where I was selected for LCDR and placed in the squadron as Maintenance Officer. Came to Pensacola (NADEP) as FRAG Officer (Fleet Readiness Action Group) in 1989 and retired in 1993.

Since then I worked part-time with a security firm and then as a volunteer Florida Highway Patrol Auxiliary Captain (9 years) and with the Escambia County Sheriff's department – Parking Enforcement Officer (1 year). Have been working with the Supervisor of Elections since 1994 as a Clerk of my precinct.



I decided to retire in Pensacola as it is really military friendly, both active and retired. Many places give discounts to military members, such as Lowes and Home Depot. On Veteran's Day many restaurants give free

meals to retirees and other establishments honor us in other ways. We have many military-themed attractions to visit, The Aviation Museum, Blue Angels Flight Team, several Air Force bases in Okaloosa County. Locally, NAS Pensacola, Whiting Field and Saufley Field. There is plenty of shopping to go around and historic sites in Pensacola and surrounding locales. Y'all come and see us!

Gregory Schuller, HMC/USN/Ret.
VF-151 Squadron Corpsman
onboard Midway76-78

A long, long time ago.....from a place far, far away, there was a young man from a small rural town in north-west Iowa who entered on a journey that would last some 20 years, unbeknownst to him at that time. That journey began in June of 1975 with boot camp at RTC San Diego, Company #151. Then on to Hospital Corpsman "A" School at Balboa Naval Hospital, San Diego, and "C" school for Aviation Medicine Technician, at NAS Pensacola, Florida. Once the schooling was completed, I received orders to VF-151 as the squadron corpsman, embarked onboard USS Midway! Wow, Japan that is a long way from here! It was a long journey getting there but I made it. As luck would have it, the ship was at sea (go figure). They put a bunch of us on a C-2 and flew us out to the ship. That was definitely a Double "E" ticket ride!

I reported to "my squadron" and was fortunate enough to be assigned to Aviation Medicine as my work center. We did the physical exams, eye glasses, ear plugs, hearing tests, etc. My time on the Midway was by far the best duty station I was assigned – my first ship, first squadron, and probably the BEST liberty ports I've been to in my entire 20-year Navy career. In 1995, I retired from the Navy as an HMC after 20 years of service. My last duty station was at the Naval Aerospace Medical Institute (NAMI), NAS Pensacola, and now I'm back at NAMI working as a civilian as an Aerospace Physical Qualifications Specialist. Can't get enough of the place or the job, I guess.

Pensacola is a great place to vacation, see the sites, eat some great food, and have a good time. The reunion planners have a nice itinerary set up with some great places to eat. McGuire's Pub, for example. The Shepard's pie there is awesome, and where else can you eat lunch and be surrounded by a MILLION-plus one dollar bills? The Blue Angels is an experience you won't want to miss! (The Blues fly right over my office every week doing their practices). What more could you want? The Naval Aviation Museum is outstanding, and you'll want to come back to spend more time. I usually go there at least once a month just to wander around and see if

they've added anything new. They even have a couple flight simulators you can fly in on the 2nd level (there's a fee for that, but it's worth it!). Just across the road from the museum is the lighthouse to the right and Fort Barrancas to the left. The



The Mobile tour and the USS Alabama is a good tour. The USS Alabama isn't the Midway, but it'll bring back those shipboard memories! Wait until you see the size of those guns! **Greg Schuller was a corpsman's corpsman during his 20 years in the Navy, retiring as an HMC, and ending back in Pensacola as a civilian.**

The Pensacola City tour is informative and interesting. Also, Pensacola beach is not

far from the hotel (if you can find the time to make it over that way). With the schedule of events on the itinerary, it'll be hard to see much else unless you are planning on arriving in advance or staying for a few days after the reunion. See you in April, shipmates!

Bob Ammann, Capt. USN/Ret.
CIC Officer, USS Midway
onboard Midway 63-65

There are two events that bring back memories of my time in CIC on Midway. The first was my transfer to the USS John R. Craig (DD-885) along with the late Ron McPhail, RD1, to conduct competitive CIC exercises on the transit to Japan from Subic Bay. We were highlined "down" in a Bosun's chair to the oiler alongside and then "up" to the John R. Craig. Our first thrilling experience on a highline. No surprises.

The sea state en route was rough and I lost track of RD1 Ron McPhail, who claimed that he did not get seasick although sources told me otherwise. The exercises went well and the C.O. asked if we wanted to go back by highline or ride into port. As the well deck of the oiler was underwater we elected to ride into port in Japan. McPhail was never the same.

The other event was the head-to-head competition between USS Midway and USS Kitty Hawk, which fea-

tered airwing exercises and flight deck efficiency. Despite being the smaller deck we beat the "Hawk" hands down. The Midway C.O., Capt. Whitney Wright, "commissioned" a pennant to fly from the yardarm to signify our win. In polite company, WTA stood for "Win Them All." However, the sailors version was "Wax Their Ass." I believe that the Capt. specified the latter.



Bob Ammann, a retired Navy Captain, was a CIC Officer on Midway from 1963-1965. A Naval Aviator who earned his wings in 1955, he is pictured below in his flight suit on the USS Ticonderoga, after his last A4F combat flight in Vietnam.

I settled in Pensacola after the Navy, because my wife and I were looking for a life care retirement community. She had lived here for

several years, so it was logical to check out Pensacola. Besides, being a retired Naval Aviator it offered military support services. We were traveling in our RV at that time and we stopped by Azalea Trace Retirement community for a visit on multiple occasions and decided to sign up, and we have been here for 9 years. Another attraction was the National Naval Aviation Museum where I volunteered for many years working in the library answering questions sent in my email and by walk-in visitors.



One of our favorite restaurants is Jackson's Steak House on Palafox, downtown.

Member of Midway's 1945 Crew Joins MVA

"You can't have a better duty station than the signal bridge!"

by Bill Lovejoy, S1c (SM)



Life aboard the Midway in 1945-46 was much like it is on any carrier – dull routine one minute, excitement and danger the next.

Bill Lovejoy, right, stands with his Midway shipmates on the flight deck amidst amidst a flood of memories and Dauntless Dive Bombers.

The best part: you can't have a better duty station than the signal bridge! You knew what was happening every minute, day and night. Liberty in NYC wasn't hard to take either. Les Brown and his orchestra with a pretty blonde singer named Doris Day. Vaughan Monroe bought a round of drinks for our table at the Commodore Hotel. Ed Sullivan brought his show on board one night for those who didn't have liberty. The best thing that happened to me, though, was being given a ticket to the Broadway show Oklahoma by a black custodian who wouldn't accept payment. I never forgot that. High living for an 18 year-old kid from a small coal town in eastern Ohio.

Operation "Frostbite" took us to the subarctic in March of 1946. The announced purpose of the trip was to test cold weather gear and flight operations under extreme conditions. But the real reason was to get ice for Rear Admiral Cassady's highballs!

President's Report

Shipmates: every one of us has a story and your shipmates like nothing better than to read them! We've managed to publish some of them in our newsletters over time and we've read some of them that were published in the Midway Currents magazine.



But we can't discover them without your deciding that you have something to say that your shipmates will want to read. Take for example our 'down-under' shipmate, Flight Lt. Allen "Tex" Alcock. Although Tex never set foot on the USS Midway,

he reached out to us 3 or 4 years ago with an incredible story that endeared him to us and the ship. Tex was an Australian kid who loved to fly. When the United States was attacked in 1941, Tex answered the call to arms and volunteered for service in the U.S. Navy. Following training in Hawaii and San Diego, he was shipped off to the South Pacific to the USS Enterprise (CV-6) and flew missions against the Japanese until he was injured in a flight deck accident. Tex, who just turned 90, is a lifetime member of both the Midway Veterans Association and the USS Enterprise Veterans Association. And if that's not enough, he's a lifetime member of the USS Midway Museum. You might say he loves his aircraft carriers.

Tex's story is available in video via YouTube if you go to the Midway Veterans website and open up [Midway Videos](#) on the left side of the homepage. If you're a social media aficionado, you can also find the video on YouTube by typing in [I Am Allen "Tex" Alcock](#) in the YouTube search engine without having to go the MVA website. Here's the direct link to Tex's story from YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUfpPh7scJE&feature=youtu.be>

Take a look at some of the other stories available on the MVA website, in the Midway Memories/Ship's History section, and imagine your story nestled in there along with some of the other great stories from your shipmates. It won't happen unless you decide you've got something to say.

Just a month to go until we meet in Pensacola for our 2016 reunion. If you're trying to decide whether or not you want to 'hang out' with your shipmates, give some thought to those guys you haven't seen for a long time and pick up the phone and reserve your place at the banquet table. We'll miss you if you're not there!

Looking forward to seeing you all in Pensacola!

Oscar Granger, President USS Midway Veterans Association

VP-Reunions' Report

As I write this report we are closing in on less than a month away from the MVA 2016 reunion in Pensacola (PSC16). The current registration numbers tell me that this will be our largest East Coast reunion ever. I chalk that up to great planning and communication. In reality, it's probably because a lot of you want to see Pensacola and the Blue Angles. For whatever reason, the best part of reunions of USS Midway veterans is to pause and remember back to our



younger days when we crewed the hardest working aircraft carrier in the fleet. After a few beverages in the Hospitality Suite, it does not take long for the stories to start flowing. I have noticed that the same story on Day 1 is always much grander on Day 3 of the reunion—and nobody cares.

There are a lot of fun and interesting activities planned for PSC16 that will keep you busy for our three-day gathering in sunny Florida. On the other hand, we always plan for free time to allow you and your family to explore Pensacola on your own, catch-up with old and new friends in the Hospitality Suite, or just kick back and relax at the hotel. At the end of every reunion, we ask attendees to rate how we did in presenting all aspects of this gathering. Please take the time to complete the questionnaire so we can do even better next time.

Words of warning! 1) I will be looking for volunteers of all sizes and shapes while we're enjoying ourselves in Pensacola. At every reunion last-minute things always arise, and willing arms and legs to lend a helping hand are always welcome. The tasks may be large or small, but a hearty "I will be glad to help" is always a good answer. I would also like to start now to form a San Diego 2017 Reunion Planning Committee. I have big plans for our next visit to USS Midway's permanent homeport, and it will be so much easier to present a world-class reunion with a core of dedicated people making it happen. I say this all the time—do not believe those naysayers who tell you to never volunteer. It's fun to watch a plan come together just like it was designed, or at least come close. **2)** At every reunion, we do fundraising, using the gifts you bring to the reunion, to support the USS Midway Museum's education fund and the ship's preservation fund. Yes, we're taking your money, but it's for a good cause, and many, many people walk away with some pretty nice prizes. Bring some extra cash to Pensacola, and who knows, you may collect a raffle or silent auction prize to take home. And remember, shipmates, it's for a good cause.

As always, contact me if you have any reunion questions—Jim "the answer man" Hayter: 703-264-0542, mva41vpr@comcast.net

Jim Hayter, VP-Reunions USS Midway Veterans Association

Sec.-Treas./Newsletter Editor's Report

The Pensacola reunion is just around the corner now, shipmates, and we're anxious to get the show on the road, expecting nothing short of another great reunion. The reunion planning team always plans for success. But it's impossible to plan everything down to a "T." Some of it just happens, as the expression goes. I put it this way: "Expect the unexpected." For example, at our reunion two years ago in San Diego, our reunion hotel literally changed names (franchises) on us overnight. Did that ever leave us scrambling! There's another saying I like that fits this theme: "You don't know what you don't know." So we have to be ready for anything, especially the stuff we don't know, and we will be. There's never a shortage of drama in this business, shipmates! That's what makes it exciting.



One thing I do know as MVA's Secretary-Treasurer: dues are important to our long-term survival, so I'm making every effort to collect dues for fiscal year 2016, because the revenue from dues offsets the costs of writing, producing and mailing this quarterly newsletter, plus helps us pay the many expenses associated with hosting our annual reunions. Help us keep the legacy of our ship and her crew alive, won't you? And don't forget, you get a cool membership card.

If you're not sure you owe for 2016, please contact me. I maintain an up-to-date list of dues-payers and can let you know in a hurry. My email address is minandave@charter.net, and my phone number is (509) 946-0810. And remember, your dues payment is tax deductible for federal income tax purposes. If you're a lifetime member, of course, none of this concerns you.

I urge everyone to take advantage of the USS Midway Museum's offer to grant Midway veterans **free** lifetime individual membership. Complete the form from the link below and mail it to the address at the bottom of the form. Thanks to Jill Hammons, USS Midway Museum's Director of Membership, and her team for making this happen. I'll bring a quantity of these forms to Pensacola, along with applications to join the MVA, and my most current list of 2016 dues-payers. <http://ussmidway.net/midwaymuseumfreeoffer.html>.

Finally, when you see Marnette Voeltz (wife of MVA's "Manny" Voeltz) at the reunion, give her a big smile and square that white hat on your head, sailor, for she has volunteered to be our ship's photographer at the reunion.

We'll also have a local professional photographer and videographer covering the Grand Banquet event on Wednesday night. So remember to get those formal pictures taken with you and your loved ones, with MVA's Three-Ship Banner as the backdrop. You're gonna like the way you look!

With under a month until the Pensacola reunion, Midway veterans and their families from all walks of life will soon be converging on this Navy town if there ever was one, bringing with them their dreams and memories. **If you haven't signed up for the reunion, it's not too late to do so, for we've extended the deadline beyond March 24. See you in Pensacola. We'll leave the light on for you!**

Dave Payson, Sec.-Treas., USS Midway Veterans Association



VP-Administration's Report Another reunion is upon us, and all our shipmates will be gathering for the events at hand. This year has been a momentous one for the staff to get everything ready for you to come to Pensacola, FL, and

enjoy uniting with your USS Midway friends.

It has come to my attention that membership and membership retention is key to our success as an association. Not only paying your yearly dues but inviting others to join us if they are qualified are two examples of sustaining growth. I have done some research and have found that many U.S. Naval organizations including ships and squadrons have reunions. The problem is that if one sailor served on a different carrier and then transferred to the USS Midway, 9 times out of 10 they aren't going to join us.

The other thing is planning for future events with a dwindling present population of USS Midway veterans. How we keep ourselves going over the many years to come and not dying out as an organization is crucial. These are hard problems to solve, and it will take a lot of effort to maintain our association in the years to come. We are looking into becoming part of the USS Midway Museum's Alumni to keep our association active. My thoughts are to allow wives and children to become active members in our organization to keep us strong and help keep the reunion spirit going. Unfortunately, my wife and I will not be joining you this year, but we look forward to seeing all of you in San Diego at the 2017 reunion.

Richard Wooster II, VP-Admin., USS Midway Veterans Association

Metal Midway Plaques available for order from the Pin-Ups For Vets store.

<http://pinupsforvets.mybigcommerce.com/uss-midway-metal-sign/>

New Men

The following USS Midway Veterans have joined the proud ranks of the Midway Veterans Association since our last newsletter. *Welcome aboard, Men, for our own special brand of Midway Magic!*

Michael Ward (83-85) - Murrells Inlet, SC

Garold Ferguson (59-63) - Klamath Falls, OR

Raymond "Tiny" Allman (48-51) - Seymour, IN

Howard Bohne (70-73) - North Charleston, SC

Shepard Fagan (80-83) - Melbourne, FL

Michael Cavener (79-81) - Pensacola, FL

Bruce Steele (71-73) - Phoenix, AZ

David Dorn (62-66) - Clackamas, OR

Severiano Ayala (70-72) - Los Angeles, CA

Leonard Price (53-55) - Metairie, LA

Douglas Frantz (85-86) - Frankton, IN

Fred Burr (72-75) - Des Moines, IA

David Rouse (71-74) - Potlatch, ID

Ron Phillips (90-91) San Diego, CA

James Meyer (81-84) - Burnet, TX

Leonard Kesterson (70-73) -Milwaukie, OR

Order Your MVA Memorabilia Here!

Check out MVA's custom line of memorabilia – Nick Danger episodes, vests, challenge coins, decals, patches, lapel pins, CVB & CVA-41 caps – on MVA's website. Follow the link below to browse the only Midway/MVA memorabilia available on the planet. See ordering and purchasing instructions on the site.

<http://ussmidway.net/mvashipsstore.html>

In Memoriam

Shipmate Michael Fracul Jr., 80, passed away on August 6, 2015. Born on October 2, 1936, he is survived by his wife Candy. Mike served his country on USS Midway from from 1954-1955 as an EMFN in E Division. May he rest in peace.

TAPS



"We, who remain to carry on, should not think of our Shipmates as departed from us, but rather as having been transferred to a celestial ship or station, where we hope all of us may be Shipmates again."

USS Midway Veterans Association Web Site

<http://ussmidway.net/home.html>

USS Midway Veterans Association Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/USSMidwayVeteransAssociation>

MVA/ USS Midway Mugs and Steins



Contact **Steve Wallace** if interested, at email swallax@cox.net, or by phone at 480-332-7755

Mug: \$10 Stein: \$15

Personalized information (rate/rank, name) included in the price; shipping is not

(Thanks to SK1 Ron Pope, MVA, for use of the image of his mug (and we're not talking about his pretty face).

**Pensacola 2016 – Bring Your Memories,
Bring Your Dreams . . .**

*A Few of our favorite images from our
2015 reunion in San Diego . . .*



*The people in the three photos above all know how to
have fun at a USS Midway Reunion!*

**The Masthead
USS Midway
Veterans Association**

A quarterly newsletter for USN and USMC Veterans who served aboard the USS Midway, and who are friends eternal.

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