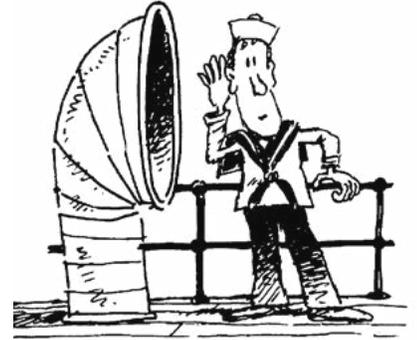


# SCUTTLEBUTT



*Voice of the Patriots Point Volunteers*

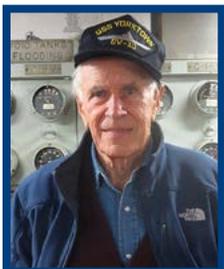


## Arnie Stein Receives his 20-Year Leather Bomber Jacket

At this year's summer luncheon, Arnie Stein received his leather bomber jacket from Thom Ford in recognition of his twenty years of volunteer work with Patriots Point. In addition to that, several volunteers were recognized for landmark periods as volunteers. They are as follows:



**Mark  
Nadobny**  
10 years



**Bill Watkinson**



**Connie Reynolds**



**Butch Bryar**



**Jeff Wilmoth**



**Jim Arcure**



5 years

## Historical Card Found on the USS Yorktown

by Chip Biernbaum

Don Ziglar was a helmsman aboard the *Yorktown* (CV-10) during World War II who returned to the ship to share his war stories. Don began volunteering in 1994 and served as our first head of the volunteers on the vessel. He suffered from congestive heart failure and macular degeneration of his retina. Legally blind, he walked with a cane. But he continued to enlighten visitors until the day he died, when he told North Charleston Elementary School students what it was like to steer the big ship. Don told visitors about a kamikaze attack and a bomb dropped by a Japanese plane that exploded near where he stood and killed one of his buddies. He remembered the sounds of battle being so loud, the captain had to bang on his shoulders to indicate which direction the ship should go. Don passed way at the age of 81 in March 2006.

Volunteer Arnie Stein relates the following: *“I found the card on the same deck the volunteer lounge is on, just past the sleeping quarters, as you go down the ladder to the gallery. Just as I stepped down on the ladder I noticed the card all crumbled up on the deck. When I straightened out the card and saw Don Ziglar’s name on it, I quickly turned around looking for him. I said to myself, ‘My god!*



*His ghost is walking through his ship.”*



Don Ziglar



Don Ziglar

# MAC BURDETTE

“Mac” Burdette will retire June 30 after nine years at the helm of Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum. Mac, the former Mount Pleasant town administrator of 25 years and retired Army Reserve officer, came to the agency at a time when it faced several huge hurdles. Through ambitious advertising campaigns, he oversaw record attendance from a previous record of 297,000 visitors in 1987 to the record-breaking attendance in Fiscal Year 2018 of 329,000 visitors. He also helped to negotiate a 99-year lease to govern future development of 60 acres that will fund the restoration of the aging warships. Board chairman and attorney Ray Chandler called Burdette’s plans to step down “bittersweet.”

*“He has given Patriots Point all of his immense energy and talent,”* he said. *“We have been the beneficiaries of his unparalleled experience in business and government. We wish him every good thing in retirement.”*

When Mac arrived on the scene nine years ago, his grand plans for the museum at the time were perceived as unconventional because they were

unprecedented. As a seasoned product of Clemson University, he came aboard during the rise of the millennial age. This meant making a drastic change in visuals through revamping its marketing platform in order to captivate a modernized audience. Attempting such an adaptation would mean introducing elements of historical attraction never before experienced at the site. *“In my view this is where museums need to be moving. Moving it from the traditional museum where there were static exhibits and you walked up and looked at them, read charts, pictures and then you moved on to the next exhibit.”* Mac continued, *“We have begun the process of making the ‘experience’ here one that is going to be fully interactive and to a great extent immersive.”* Mac believes that under this philosophy the educational, inspirational and the entertainment areas can be best attained. *“That’s what keeps people coming back.”*

*“It has been one of the greatest honors and privileges of my life to have served this great institution that has touched the lives of millions,”* Mac concluded in his letter to the board. *“It has been said before, and often by my sainted grandmother, that ‘a Lady and a Gentleman should know when it’s time to leave the party.’ That time has come.”*



Mac Burdette Cont.

Mac has written a letter to the volunteers. Here it is:

Dear Patriots Point Volunteers,

Reverend Susan Lenard, the preacher at my church, presented a compelling sermon recently explaining that childhood education studies found the earliest words a child learns to say in every culture are varieties of “hello” and “goodbye.”

There is no challenge in life more recurring than greeting the new and bidding farewell to what has been. Saying “goodbye,” and thus, relinquishing what has ended is a landmark occasion, whether it is said on ordinary days or significant ones. Most importantly, we don’t learn if our “hello” and equally our “goodbye” will be the final time we will exchange those words with the other person.

As I leave Patriots Point, I am captured by this rather simple, yet important recognition that this “goodbye” probably holds a great deal of finality. And yet for me, it will never be final, for I will hold my appreciation, respect, and fondness for all of you in my memories forever. To say the least, my “goodbye” to you wonderful volunteers is very difficult and emotional, as it has been with the staff at Patriots Point. But it’s time to move on to the next chapter. Please be assured that I do not take this “goodbye” for granted. You have all made a wonderful difference in my life whether it is from the perspective of your service to this great museum, or if it was the simple pleasure gained from sharing a story or bit of humor with you.

May God grant you and your families good health and fair winds.

May heaven be your motivation and not your destination.

Until we meet again, GOODBYE.

Mac



# Russians Lose a Deep-Sea Submersible

by Chip Biernbaum\*

Many of you have already read in the newspaper or seen on the news that on the 1st of July the Russians had a fire on their nuclear deep-sea sub, the *Losharik* (AS-12), resulting in the loss of 14 sailors. A few others survived. Here is some more information about that vessel.

The incident is believed to have occurred off Russia's northern shore in the Barents Sea. The submarine was towed to the Russian North Fleet headquarters in Severomorsk and an investigation is underway. The submarine



## THE LOSHARIK

Project 10831 LOSHARIK	
тип.10831 Лощарик	
Displacement:	1,600t surfaced, 2,100t submerged
Speed:	~15kts (est)
Operating depth:	1,000m (3,300ft)
Length:	~70m
Beam:	~7m
Power plant:	1 x nuclear reactor
Crew:	25

Covert Shores  
www.hisutton.com

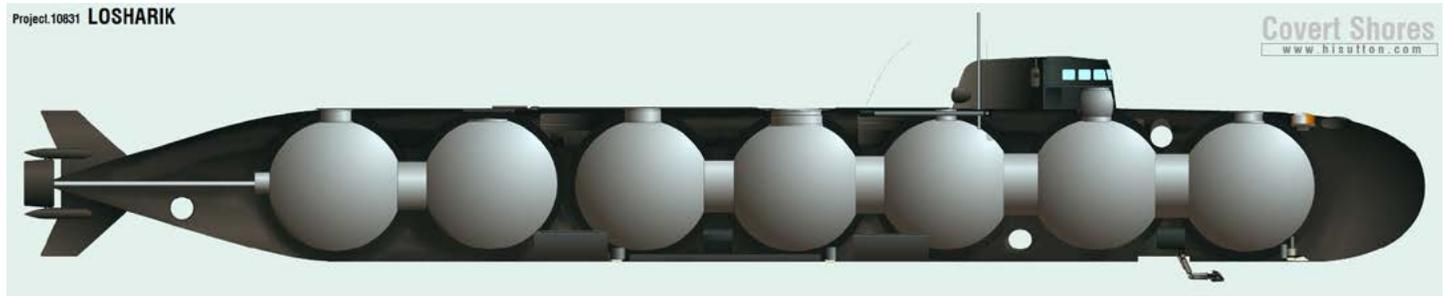


is widely believed to be a key asset for the Russian Main Directorate of Deep-Sea Research, also known as GUGI. GUGI develops and operates a fleet of specialized submarines that Russia uses for deep-sea and Moscow's most covert operations. The organization reports directly to Russian military intelligence — the GRU — rather than the Russian Navy.

*Losharik* is among the most mysterious of the closely guarded fleet. Fielded in the late 1990s, specifics for the nuclear-powered boat are few. It is estimated to carry a crew of about 25 and can dive to thousands of feet below the surface. The about 2000-ton boat can travel slung under the belly of a specially modified Delta III nuclear ballistic missile submarine. The purpose and capabilities of *Losharik* are shrouded in mystery. According to analyst H.I. Sutton, *Losharik* is one of a, “range of special missions boats based at the Russian Navy's Northern Fleet's Olenya Guba base. This base is one of several set up by the Soviets during the Cold War on the inhospitable but strategically important Kola Peninsula [near Finland], far away from civilization.”

The accident comes during the summer operational period for the GUGI boats — workups ahead of a North Atlantic deployments. The deep-sea missions the sub is sent on leads Western military analysts to believe the interior of the sub is actually made up of a series of possibly seven orb-shaped spaces, according to Sutton's *Covert Shores*. The sub's name is derived from a popular Russian cartoon horse that's made out of juggling balls. The use of orb-shaped compartments, while diminishing the amount of space for living quarters, operating equipment and the propulsion unit, makes the sub stronger and able to dive deeper than a traditional submarine hull.

Russian Submersible Cont.

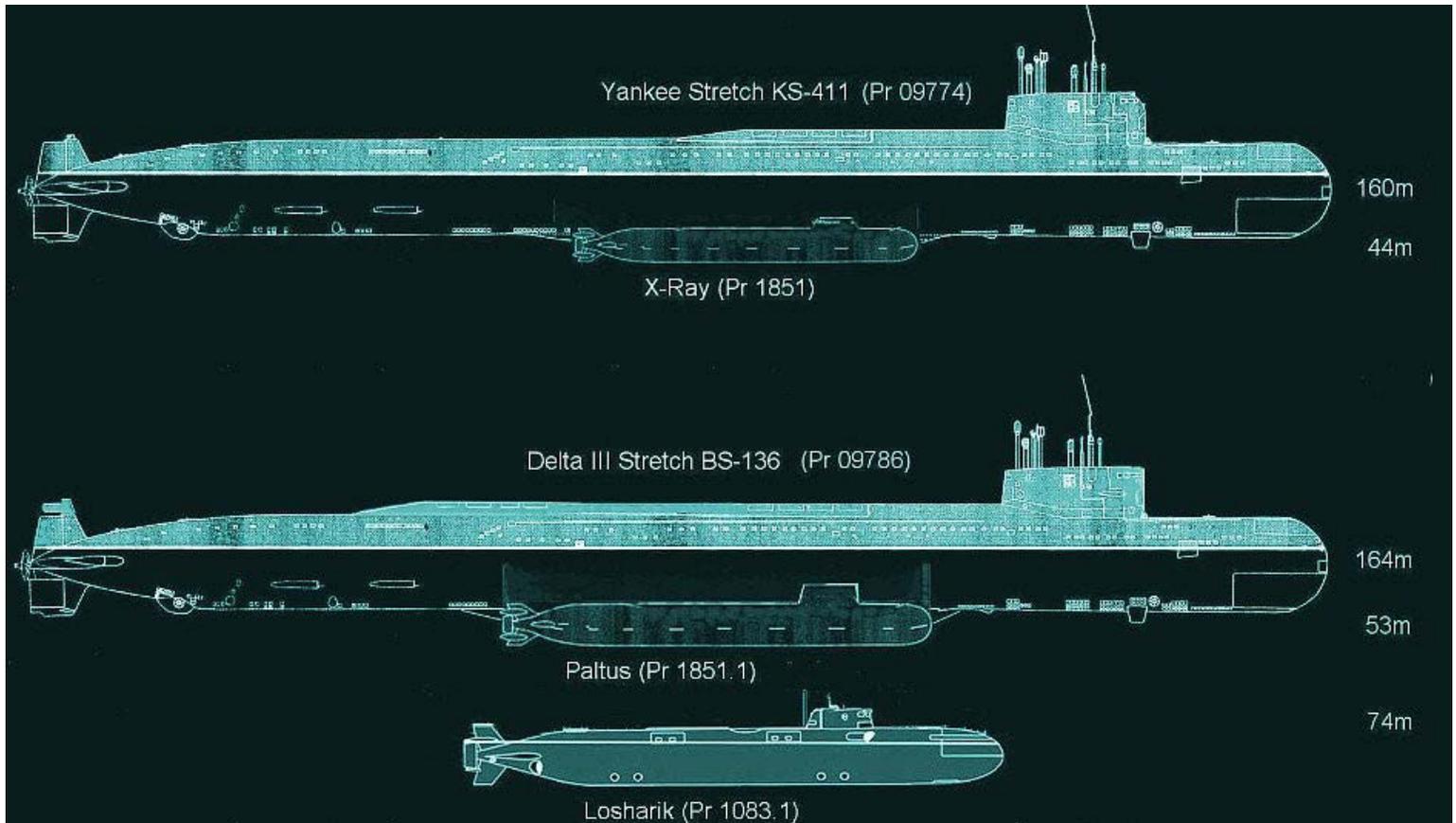


A cutaway rendering of the *Losharik*.

As for what *Losharik* does, it's suspected the Russian government has used the sub's deep-sea diving capability to extend Russia's territorial claims to the sea floor under the Arctic Ocean. In 2012, *Losharik* was part of a large Russian naval exercise in the Arctic, collecting samples to prove the Lomonsov and Mendelejev Ridges on the sea floor are part of the Russian continental shelf. With technological advances and retreating ice packs in the region, Arctic nations are increasingly researching ways to access and extract what scientists believe is an abundance of mineral wealth on the Arctic floor. Only Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Russia and the U.S. – the world's eight Arctic nations – are members of the Arctic Council, which establishes standards for protecting the environment and sustainable development in the region. The council's mandate excludes military security, according to the U.S. Department of State. China is currently intruding into the area as well.

The incident aboard the submarine is the worst Russian submarine accident since the 2008 death of 20 Russian sailors aboard the nuclear powered *Nerpa*. In 2000, the Russian Navy lost 118 sailors due to an accident on the nuclear-powered cruise-missile boat *Kursk*.

\*Excerpted from LaGrone & Werner, U.S. Naval Institute News, 2 & 3 July 2019.



A rendering of *Losharik* relationship with a so-called mother submarine.

# A Salute to our Yorktown Volunteers

## Frances Carnovale

by Fran Carnovale



I was born in 1947 in Brooklyn, NY, in a very Italian neighborhood (Sunday mornings when windows were opened, all you smelled was sauce and meatballs frying!). I attended two years of high school at Bishop McDonald High School in Brooklyn and then we moved to Long Island, where I attended Hyde Park Memorial High School for the last two years, graduating in 1964.

I went to the State University of New York at Fredonia for four years and then graduated with a BA in psychology in 1968. After traveling for three months with friends through Europe (Fodors Europe on \$5 a day was very popular in 1968), I went to work at Nassau County Department of Social Services as a caseworker and simultaneously attended Columbia School of Social

Work part-time. I didn't finish my post-grad at Columbia; classes and exams were canceled after the killings at Kent State. I traveled to Washington, DC, the weekend after Kent State to protest and never completed my masters in social work.

I met my husband, Ray, on the road (after I went to the Woodstock Festival — I can't even begin to describe Woodstock; I was probably the only person there not tripping or doing other drugs!). He had just returned from a tour in Vietnam and we were married in 1971. Like my dad, who landed on Normandy the day after D-Day (the most humbling experience of our life was visiting Normandy beaches last year!), my husband was in the Army, serving in the Chemical Corps in Pleiku, Vietnam. He's bought a brick at a water park for a soldier he bunked with there who was killed. He becomes emotional regarding his experiences and we are very supportive of our military.

We have two have two daughters, both living in NY. One is married with two sons, both involved in altruistic fields. While my kids were growing up, we lived in Baldwin, NY, the same town where my husband grew up. I took a program at Adelphi University and received a degree in their Legal Assistant program. I received my legal assistant certificate in 1982 and worked part time in a law firm on LI until my youngest daughter, Bree, started junior high, then I traveled to New York City and worked full time until I retired a little over three years ago. I was fortunate in being able to stay home while the girls were in school. I was president of both their elementary and high school PTAs. I also volunteered at Nassau County Occupational Therapy, fingerprinting kids entering kindergarten, among other things. Our oldest daughter, Danielle, is an occupational therapist at United Cerebral Palsy on Long Island, NY. She has two boys, Sammy, named after my dad, 14, and Willy, age 13. My other daughter, Bree, runs a program for New York City schools for 2-5 year-old autistic children in Harlem. Bree loves Charleston, but can't afford to take the huge pay cut she would have to take if she moved here.

My husband and I moved to Mt. Pleasant in 1999. Ray works as a project manager at Seabrook Island and, until three years ago, I was in New York City, working as a legal assistant in specialty trusts and estates. We traveled back and forth during this time. My parents were ill and I needed to be near them.

I recently became a member of the Woman's Auxiliary of the American Legion, belong to Snee Farm Garden Club and am treasurer of the East Cooper Woman's Club. I'm a "mahjong maven," which I love playing, and am an avid reader and now traveler.

I love volunteering on the *Yorktown* — walking up to it fills me with such pride and makes me think of my father. He was only 19 yrs old, newly married with a baby and never out of Brooklyn when he was shipped out on a ship like this! How frightening for him and after the war, he would never set foot on even the Staten Island Ferry! My sisters, who are twins, were born while he was overseas and he didn't see them until they were over a year old! Fran became a Patriots Point volunteer in August 2016.

# Volunteer Luncheon, 13 June 2019



Leonard Singleton, Bill Casassa and Thom Ford



Bill Slater and Jerry Bateman



Fred Auld and Louisa Miles Montgomery



Barb Amidon, Arnie Stein and John Goodwin



Chip Biernbaum and Ginny Fields



Susan Kaufman, Bill Caldwell and Lisa Isaacson



Paul Cheverie, Connie Reynolds and Bill Booth



Linda Siler, Robert Newman and Mary Martin

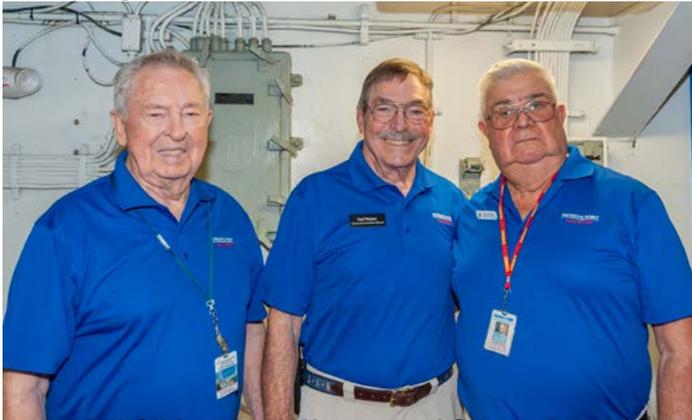
# Volunteer Luncheon, 13 June 2019



Cindy Signorelli, Henrietta Wildeboer and Carlin Stuart



Joe and Diane Zielinski



Bill Gilden, Paul Watters and Stoney Bates



Carl Hercher, Joanne Hann and Tom Valentukonis



Larry and Christine Barron and Ray Ross



Warren Onken and Martin Diamond

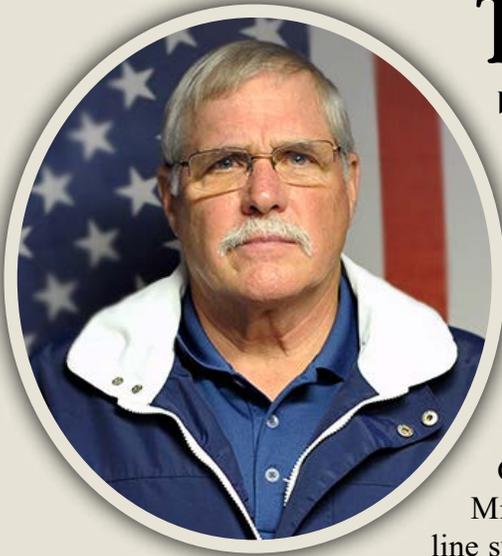


Don Bommarito, Claud Rountree and Rich Mady



Rich Mady and Jack Leber

# A Salute to our Yorktown Volunteers



## Tom Simons

by Tom Simons

I was born in April 1949 in Kansas City, KS. A year later, my parents and I moved to the Chicago area. I graduated from Thornton Township High School, Harvey, IL, in June of 1967. The day after graduating, I enlisted in the US Navy, embarking on a fabulous career in the Navy that would last for a little more than 30 years.

After attending boot camp at Great Lakes Recruit Training Center north of Chicago, IL, I trained as an Aviation Structural Mechanic, Hydraulics (AMH) in Millington, TN. I then was sent to the West Coast to receive training on the F-4 Phantom at Naval Air Station (NAS) Miramar, CA. I served as a plane captain, trouble-shooter and flight-deck line supervisor in VF-21 (Fighter Squadron) on board the USS *Ranger* (CVA-61) from 1968 to 1971.

In 1971, I was selected to join the Navy's Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels, at NAS Pensacola, FL. I served as a Crew Chief on the F-4J Phantom and the A-4F Skyhawk 1971 through 1975. Those were some of the most exciting and rewarding years of my career. During that tour, we visited 45 states and over a dozen foreign countries.

In 1976, I was assigned as an instructor at the Aviation Structural Mechanic (Hydraulics) "A" School, Naval Aviation Technical Training Center (NATTC), Millington, TN, training young sailors and Marines as hydraulic mechanics. In 1977, I was named the Instructor of the Year for the entire Naval Air Technical Training Center Command. I received my Navy Master Training Specialist designation in 1978 and was promoted to Chief Petty Officer (AMHC) in September of that year. Shortly after making Chief, I was selected as a Limited Duty Officer with an aircraft maintenance designation.

In April 1979, I was commissioned as an Ensign and was assigned to VF-151 attached to Carrier Air Wing 5 (CVW-5) on the USS *Midway* (CV-41), home ported in Yokosuka, Japan, as Maintenance Control Officer on the F-4J Phantom.

In 1981, I reported to VT-6 (Training Squadron) at NAS Whiting Field, FL, as a Lieutenant Junior Grade (LTJG) and served as the Maintenance/Material Control Officer on the T-28 Trojan supporting basic pilot training. As a Lieutenant, in 1982, I was assigned to VAW-112 (Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron) NAS Miramar, CA, as the Assistant Maintenance Officer. We were part of Carrier Air Wing Nine (CVW-9) embarked in USS *Ranger* (CV-61) and USS *Constellation* (CV-64).

In 1985, I was assigned to the Naval Aviation Schools Command (NASC) at NAS Pensacola, FL, as an instructor at the Limited Duty Officer/Chief Warrant Officer Indoctrination Course (commonly called "Knife & Fork School") as the lead instructor. I was named the NASC Instructor of the Year in 1987.



# A Salute to our Yorktown Volunteers

Tom Simons Cont.



I completed my tour in Pensacola in 1988, was promoted to Lieutenant Commander and was assigned to the USS *Nimitz* (CVN-68) in Bremerton, WA, where I worked in the Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department (AIMD) as the Production Control Officer and Assistant Department Head. At that time, CVW-9 was assigned to the *Nimitz*. Following two years on the *Nimitz*, I was reassigned to Commander, Carrier Air Wing 9 (CVW-9) at NAS Lemoore, CA, as the Air Wing Maintenance Officer, commonly referred to as the CAGMO. I was responsible for overseeing the aircraft maintenance for nine squadrons and seven different types of aircraft. During that tour, we deployed on the USS *Constellation* (CV-64) and the USS *Nimitz* (CVN-68).

Upon completion of my tour with CVW-9, I served as an Aircraft Readiness Officer for the F/A-18 Hornet as part of the Commander, Strike Fighter Wing Pacific Staff, NAS Lemoore, CA. In 1994, I was afforded the opportunity to become the Officer in Charge of the Strike Fighter Wing Detachment, NAS Fallon, NV, supporting the training of both east- and

west-coast F/A-18 pilot training. My final assignment was as the Maintenance Officer for the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet Fleet Introduction Team, NAS Lemoore, CA. During that tour my staff of maintenance experts and I were the direct liaison between the Navy and the contractors building the Super Hornet concerning all maintenance matters. I retired from the Navy as a Commander in October 1997.

I lived in many locations while I was in the Navy, both in the US and overseas. After my retirement from the Navy, I began a career in property management with Leisure Time Associates, Inc., in Ocean City, MD, as a property manager. I retired from that job in January 2015.

I have been married to my beautiful wife Beverly for over 30 years. We met in Pensacola, FL, and were married in October 1988. Our son James (Jimmy) was born in May 1991; he graduated from the United States Air Force Academy in May 2013. He received his Air Force Pilot Wings in May 2015 at Columbus AFB in Mississippi. He completed his C-17 Globemaster III pilot training in March 2016 and is now a Captain in the USAF and Aircraft Commander, assigned to the 16th Air Mobility Squadron here at the Charleston Air Force Base.

Beverly and I both enjoy the beach and touring around our great city and learning of its deep and rich history. Beverly is a tour guide at Magnolia Plantation. I also enjoy playing golf, which I am not very good at. Although I have volunteered in the past with the local VFW, American Legion, Optimist International and the Benevolent Order of Elks (BPOE) Lodge in Ocean City, MD, I am currently taking a break from that. I recently completed an 8-year stint as the treasurer of the Blue Angels Alumni Association. I am immersing myself on board *Yorktown* as a volunteer on Tuesdays, a tour guide with the Education/History Department as required and I spend much of my time now with the Flight Academy on board. I became a volunteer at Patriots Point in January 2017.



# A Salute to our Yorktown Volunteers

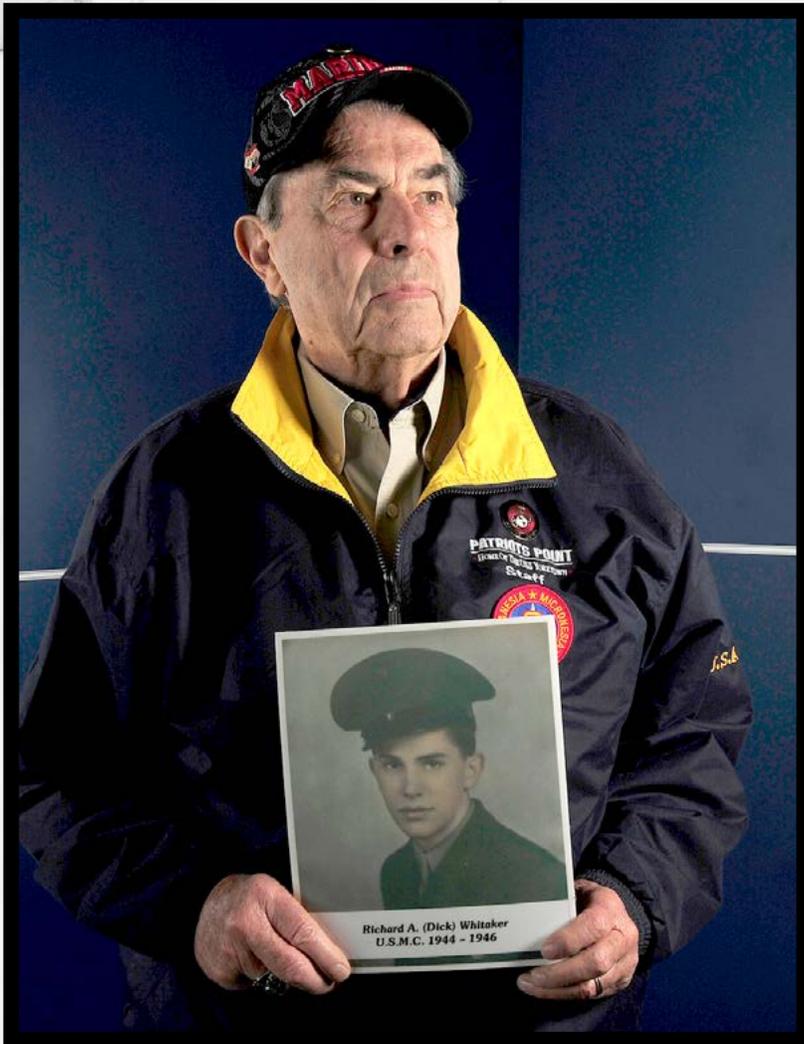
## We Lose Dick Whitaker, our WWII “Marine’s Marine”

by Chip Biernbaum

On April 17th, we lost one of our long-time volunteers, a “Marine’s Marine,” Dick Whitaker, who passed away at the age of 93. Only one week later, on April 24th, his wife, Eileen, also passed away.

Dick was born in Saugerties, NY, in 1926. He graduated from Saugerties High School in June 1944 and entered the Marine Corps the following month. He completed boot camp at Parris Island, SC, and infantry training at Camp Lejeune, NC. From North Carolina, Dick went to San Diego, where he joined the 29th Replacement Draft. He departed the United States bound for Guadalcanal. He was assigned to the 29th Regiment of the newly formed Sixth Marine Division and on March 13, 1945, his 19th birthday, he boarded an attack transport bound for the Japanese-held island of Okinawa.

The 29th Marines went ashore on Okinawa Red Beach 2 on April 1, 1945, and together with three other regiments of the Sixth Division, accomplished their objective of securing the northern portion of the island. In the meantime, the 27th Army division had suffered serious losses in their attempts to break through the heavily defended Shuri-Yonabaru Line and on May 3rd the Sixth Division was ordered south to relieve the Army force. Dick was assigned to the machine gun platoon of Fox Company, 2nd Battalion, 29th Marines. On May 17th, Fox Company was committed to the Sugar Loaf Hill and Horseshoe Ridge areas. In three days his company was reduced from 216 men to 60. Dick was hit by a Japanese sniper late on the 17th and was evacuated to a battalion aid station the following morning. The 29th Marines were relieved by the 4th Marines on



Dick and Eileen at the 2017 Volunteer Dinner Cruise

# A Salute to our Yorktown Volunteers

**Dick Whitaker Cont.**

May 19th and Dick returned to his unit the following day. It was his only time off the line during the 82-day battle that ended June 21, 1945.

The battle for Okinawa was costly. American casualties totaled over 71,000 men with 20,365 killed or missing. The Japanese defense had been built around their 32nd Army Division of more than 110,000 men. Japanese losses totaled at least 110,000 killed. Only 7,000 were captured. Civilian casualties exceeded 150,000.

After Okinawa, the Sixth Division moved to Guam and began training for the invasion of the Japanese home islands, scheduled for November 1945. Preparations halted when the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki forced the unconditional surrender of Japan. Dick stated that he felt President Harry Truman's decision to employ the atomic bombs on Japan not only saved his life, but the lives of countless other American servicemen.

VJ Day was duly celebrated and Dick and the other men of the Sixth Marine Division anticipated their homecoming by Christmas 1945. That dream ended when, in October 1945, the Sixth was sent to Tsingtao, China, to repatriate the Japanese force still occupying the Shantung Peninsula. Six months later Dick returned to the US for discharge. He arrived home on Memorial Day 1946. *"I had been away from Sagerties for 23 months,"* he said, *"and it sure was a great day to arrive home from a war."*

In due course Dick enrolled in Syracuse University and graduated in 1952 with a BS degree in journalism and public relations. Shortly thereafter, he joined the Shell Oil Company. In 1957 he returned to Syracuse University, where he was named Director of Development and Public Relations at Utica College of Syracuse University in Utica. In 1962 he became Director of Development at Kent School, a private boarding school in Kent, CT, where he remained until his retirement in 1989. During his years at Kent, he was a member of the volunteer fire department for 21 years and was a founder of the Kent Squirt ice hockey program, serving as its head coach for 15 years.

*"My wife, Eileen, and I had so often dreamed of owning a cruising sailboat, so we purchased a condo on the Intracoastal Waterway in Oriental, NC, and with in a few months owned a 32-foot Bayfield Cutter,"* Dick said. For the next nine years they cruised the eastern seaboard of Florida and the northern Bahamas. *"We would leave in November and return in April, and our cat, 'Imus,' was always aboard,"* Dick added. *"One of our favorite provisioning stops along the Intracoastal Waterway was the Isle of Palms Marina, so when the time came to 'swallow the anchor,' we sold the boat and the condo and, in 1998, moved to Mt. Pleasant."*

Before their deaths, the Whitakers lived in Dunes West. They have three grown children (Eileen, Scott and Sloane) and several grandchildren. Dick became a volunteer in 2006. *"I enjoy helping our many visitors, and I especially enjoy working with my fellow volunteers at the Information Desk. It took me a few weeks to learn where tour 3 started and also where to go for a bucket of steam, but I think I finally caught on."*

Several years later, Dick wrote a reminiscence of his Okinawa experience for the *Scuttlebutt's* "A Volunteer Remembers" series. Here is what he wrote:

*"I landed on Okinawa on April 1, 1945, and spent the next 82 days living in foxholes, eating rations, fighting dysentery, wearing the same clothes, and going without bathing (except what I could accomplish with a helmet full of water). We ate nothing but C, K and D rations. After I "found" a Colt .45, I slept with a weapon in my hand every night. At dusk we "dug in" in pairs. One man slept while the other man kept watch. In addition, we were in close contact with stubborn, treacherous, suicidal, Japanese defenders 24 hours every day. Anything we did could get us killed, including absolutely nothing. I was wounded while doing absolutely nothing. My Marine rifle company was heavily involved in fighting around Sugar Loaf Hill, Crescent Ridge and Horseshoe Ridge on May 17th, 18th and 19th. On May 17th there were 264 men in Fox Company. On May 19th there were 61 men in Fox Company. The killed and wounded totaled 203. I was one of the men who were WIA and this is how it happened.*

*"In the late afternoon of May 17th, Fox made its first assault on Sugar Loaf [ed.'s addition: "The struggle for the dominance of Sugar Loaf was probably the costliest engagement in the history of the Marine Corps"-historian William Manchester]. As a member of the Second Machine Gun Section, I took part in that attack. My*

# A Salute to our Yorktown Volunteers

## Dick Whitaker Cont.

*MG Section was attached to the Second Rifle Platoon under the command of Lt. Charles Behan. The Japs were well prepared, well dug in, and put up a stubborn defense. We had barely reached the crest of Sugar Loaf when the Japs unleashed their well-rehearsed defense. Their mortars and artillery were zeroed in on us and the defenders were well concealed. We never had a chance. The first man killed was Second Platoon's CO, Lt. Behan. He later received the Navy Cross posthumously. Many men were killed; many men were wounded.*



*“We were not on top of Sugar Loaf for more than 20 minutes when it became obvious that if we tried to hold our positions we would be wiped out. Sgt. Ike Wanamaker gave the order to pick up our dead and wounded and get off the hill. On our way down, my foxhole buddy, John Senterfitt, and I found our assistant machine gunner, Charlie Lewis, who had been hit in the early moments of our assault. Charlie had been hit in the stomach and was losing a great deal of blood. Our group was badly scattered. John and I, along with Lewis, took refuge behind tiny Queen Hill and after giving Charlie some first aid, we*

*stopped an Amtrak and got him aboard. Months later we learned Charlie had survived. Many years later he showed up at a Sixth Division reunion in Albuquerque, NM.*

*“By now it was dusk and John and I knew we had to stay where we were for the night. We found a shallow foxhole on the north slope of Queen Hill and using our entrenching tools we proceeded to make it deeper. When we finished digging, John lay down in the bottom of the hole and lit a cigarette. I stuck my entrenching tool near the edge of our hole, put my feet in the hole and leaned back against the shovel handle to also light a cigarette. When I found my matches were wet, I leaned down to get a light from John. As I bent forward, I steadied myself by grasping the handle of my shovel. At that same instant, a bullet hit the shovel's handle and also my left hand.*

*“To make a long story short, I dove into the hole anticipating a second shot. Obviously, some Jap sniper had been waiting for us to stop moving so he would have a sure kill. John did the best he could bandaging my hand. We hunkered down and kept watch until daybreak. On the 18th, John hailed Pete Peterson, our company corpsman, and Pete sent me back to a Battalion Aid Station to have splinters and bullet pieces removed from my hand. Fortunately the bullet, which was intended for my sternum, hit the entrenching tool handle and partially deflected before hitting my hand. Two days later I rejoined Fox.*

*“As I was reporting my return to the company commander, Lt. Robert Sherer, his runner, Kenneth Ryan, was hit and killed by a Jap sniper. Ryan's radio and rifle were on the ground next to him. The Lieutenant pointed to the radio, looked at me and asked, “Whitaker, can you run that thing?” I said, “No Sir, but I can learn.” From then until the end of the 82-day battle of Okinawa, later on Guam and also in Tsingtao, China, I remained the Fox Company runner. Bob Sherer and I became friends and our friendship has lasted 64 years. We expect to be together at the annual reunion of the Sixth Marine Division in Myrtle Beach this fall.”*

Shortly after Dick began working as a volunteer, he gave a talk to students of the Ashley River Creative Arts School (ARCA), led by their 5th-grade teacher, Mary Beth Durst. He received 67 letters from the students who

# A Salute to our Yorktown Volunteers

**Dick Whitaker Cont.**

attended the talk. An appropriate way to finish this obituary is to share the letter he wrote (in print, not cursive) in response to these letters:

*“Dear Misty, David D., Caroline . . . , Victor, AND Mary Beth Durst,*

*“Your letter and photographs arrived Friday and I was overwhelmed. In my entire lifetime, I have never received sixty-seven letters in one day. Actually, the total was sixty-six — Cody sent two copies of his letter. I was pleased to hear from all of you and really appreciated your thoughtful act.*

*“I was very interested to learn about your favorite colors, your parents, your pets and your school. Catlyn told me about her cat, Mancub. Ashlyn told me the names of her parents (Jeannette & Steven) and her sister (Chasson). Nick told me he liked to hunt and fish and that while he thought ARCA is one of the best schools in the states, he said that he had to be in the right mood to enjoy attending. Many of you commented on how much you appreciated your school and your teachers. One young lady stated that she liked her ‘prunsiable.’ Katie, we need a little work on ‘principal.’*

*“Carly asked if I was a ‘General Sergeant.’ No, Carly, I was an everyday, run-of-the-mill, plain-vanilla Private First Class. Alexius asked if I ever felt like giving up. No, Alexius, the thought of giving up never crossed my mind, although I did wonder if I’d ever get back to my home in Saugerties, NY. Finally, the most interesting question was from Justice, who asked on what side I fought. Justice, I fought on America’s side, the side that won World War II, the side the United States Marines always fight on . . . the winning side.*

*“Many of you said you would like to visit the Yorktown again. You would be most welcome. If you arrive on a Tuesday or a Thursday you’ll probably find me at the Information Desk on the hanger deck. Volunteers usually man that desk. Whoever is there will show you around, make you feel welcome and take good care of you. Most Yorktown volunteers are veterans of the United States military.*

*“In closing, I want to thank you again for you letters and also, on behalf of all of us who work at Patriots Point, thank you for your interest in World War II and especially for spending time with us aboard USS Yorktown.*

*“Semper Fi, PFC Dick Whitaker, 983201, Fox Company, Second Battalion, 29th Marine Regiment, Sixth Marine Divison.”*

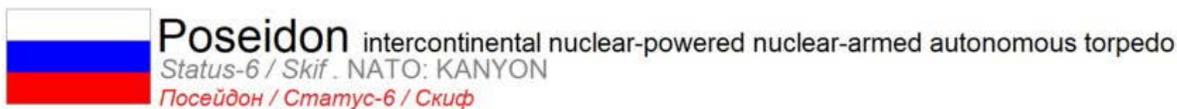
Semper Fi, Dick!



# FLOTSAMI & JETSAMI

Compiled by Chip Biernbaum

- ★ In the Spring 2018 issue of *Scuttlebutt*, I mentioned that Russia is developing a new intercontinental, nuclear-armed, nuclear-powered undersea autonomous torpedo. Here is an update on that story: The weapon is intended primarily for use against ports and coastal cities, with some Russian reports claiming a secondary role of attacking US aircraft carriers. Putin has named the vehicle the “Poseidon.” The Poseidon can operate as deep as 3,300 feet at speeds of more than 50 knots. Some sources report it has a multimegaton warhead, with Russia claiming 200 megatons. While such a large warhead is probably an exaggeration, the potential effectiveness of even smaller warhead deployed in this way would be considerable. The Poseidon would be carried externally by modified Project 949/Oscar SSGNs and another unknown submarine type. Plans are for a prototype of it to be completed by 2019. Subsequent Russian reports cite a force of 30-32 such weapons, with two weapon-carrying submarines to be operational in the Northern Fleet and two in the Pacific Fleet in the near future. The weapon’s potential target list of cities and major ports places it in the category of a “Strategic” weapon, namely capable of striking an enemy’s homeland. However, the weapon’s concept is not addressed in the US-Russian strategic arms treaty, nor in the now-being-discarded Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces agreement. As there is no known US equivalent even under discussion, it appears unlikely that the Russian government would agree to the limitation of such a weapon without a major US concession in another weapon category. The first Poseidon-capable submarine, the *Belgorod*, was scheduled to be launched in March 2019. The boat originally was laid down as an Oscar-II, but has been modified heavily and is officially described by the Russians as an “Arctic-research special mission submarine.”

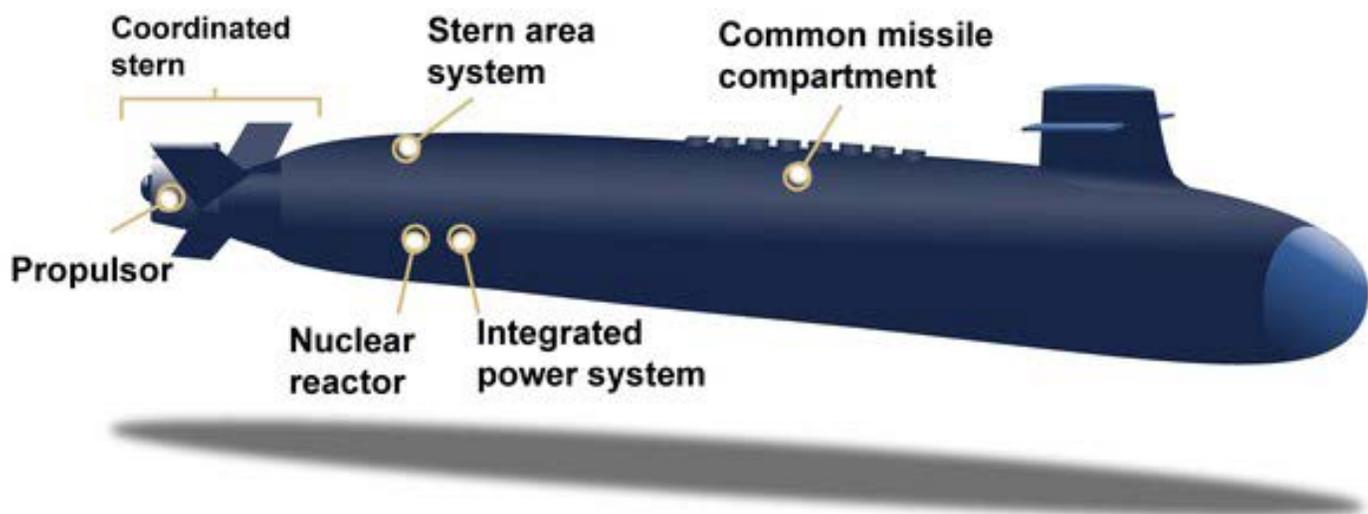


- ★ It was reported by the Congressional Research Service, and revealed by the *United States Naval Institute News* in July 2018, that since 2006 — five years after the start of major combat operations in Afghanistan and three years after the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq — a total of 15,851 active-duty personnel and mobilized reservists have died while serving in the U.S. armed forces. Seventy-two percent of these casualties occurred under circumstances unrelated to war. Twenty-eight percent have died while serving in combat operations, primarily within the territory of Iraq and Afghanistan. Combat operations related to Afghanistan primarily include Enduring Freedom and Freedom’s Sentinel. For Iraq, such operations include Iraqi Freedom, New Dawn and Inherent Resolve.
- ★ The U.S. Navy submarine force is creating an aggressor squadron as one initiative to ensure all subs are combat-ready as the service trains to take on China and Russia, the commander of Naval Submarine Forces, Vice Admiral Charles Richard, said in November 2018, while addressing the Naval Submarine League. The

## Flotsam & Jetsam Cont.

new aggressor squadron fits in with the desire to create more high-end sub-on-sub competitions. Richard said the plan mimics what the naval aviation community has at “Top Gun.” Unlike Top Gun, the squadron won’t have its own submarines dedicated to training the squadron and fighting other submarines in training events. Instead, the squadron will include a yet-to-be-determined number of personnel who would get to work with submarines and sub crews as allowed by operational and training schedules. Richard, calling the new group, *“a cadre that does nothing but emulate red in all of our training and certification exercises. We’re taking a page from naval aviation and we’re establishing an aggressor squadron with a team that will become experts in employing our adversaries’ potential capabilities and then set them up to be able to go head-to-head with our units so that we’re always training against what we think is the highest fidelity simulation I can give them in terms of what they might be able to expect when they go into combat.”*

- ★ All current ballistic-missile submarines (SSBNs) are Ohio-class. Typically five of a total of 14 of them are at sea at any one time. These subs will begin deactivation in 2027, when the new Columbia-class subs begin to enter service. Beginning with USS *Columbia* (SSBN-826), this new class will feature a new reactor designed to last the life of the boat. At a displacement of 20,815 tons submerged, a length of 560 feet and a beam of 43 feet, it will also feature an X-stern with a water-jet propulsor, electric drive and large-aperture bow sonar. It will retain 16 Trident II D5 missiles along with torpedo tubes. Unfortunately, however, in 2018 some significant problems were discovered. Welding cracks were found in the ballistic-missile tubes to be installed on the *Columbia*. They were discovered while the tubes were being prepared for installation on the sub. The welding issue affected 12 tubes manufactured by a subcontractor, which raises questions about the inspection and certification processes at General Dynamics Electric Boat’s submarine division. The Navy dispatched special 12-person teams to conduct inspections of the tubes. Electric Boat acknowledged that it was a “debacle” and was worse than expected. It will cost \$27 million and take a year to complete. Unfortunately, the *Columbia* must begin construction in 2021, be delivered in 2027 and be deployed on her first patrol in 2031. Given that the Navy’s Ohio-class boomers are approaching more than 40 years of service life, they must begin a rapid retirement pace in the late 2020s. Each delay in the deployment of *Columbia* and her kin reduces the number of boomers that the US has on deployment. Construction is planned to begin in 2021, with strategic certification expected in 2026, the first patrol in 2031 and complete replacement of the Ohio-class by 2039.



Source: GAO analysis of of Navy documentation. | GAO-18-158

USS *Columbia*

# A Volunteer Remembers . . . .

**Chip Biernbaum**

This month we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Neil Armstrong's first walk on the moon. I remember that day well. On the day of Armstrong's stepping off the Apollo lander, I had just been drafted into the Army. I had just completed my first year of four years of grad school and had learned only three weeks earlier that I was going to be drafted (this was before the draft lottery). So that morning at 7AM, I got on the bus in front of the draft board office and left to begin basic training at Ft. Dix, NJ. After arriving at Ft. Dix, and receiving a bunch of unappreciated and unrepeatable comments from the DIs, we reported to the barracks we were stay in as new soldiers. It was emphasized to us that we were not to leave the barracks for any reason (they were worried that some of us would take off to Canada or somewhere else to avoid going to Vietnam). However, I realized that later in the evening Neil Armstrong was going to take our species' first steps on the moon. So I went AWOL from the barracks —

I knew, if I got caught, I'd suffer severe consequences, but, after all, watching Neil Armstrong take those first steps on the moon was worth whatever consequences I might suffer. I walked down the street until I came across a large building that had many pay phones for soldiers to use when calling their families. There was a large TV screen there. I sat down and watched Neil Armstrong take those first historic steps on the moon and utter his famous, *"One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."* I returned to the barracks, fortunately uncaught, and resumed my basic training. I went on to military police training at Ft. Gordon, GA, and, after three months of Vietnamese language training at Ft. Bliss, TX, reported to 'Nam.



Astronaut Neil Armstrong



1<sup>st</sup> Step on the Moon

# A Salute to our Yorktown Volunteers



Paul Watters, Warren Onken, Stoney Bates, Bob Deal, Martin Diamond and Bill Caldwell



Mike Fowler and Mike Sgobbo



Alison Hunt (USS Yorktown Foundation) and Bob Deal



Ned and Louisa Miles Montgomery


**PATRIOTS POINT**
  
 Home of the USS YORKTOWN (CV-10)  
 Volunteer Department

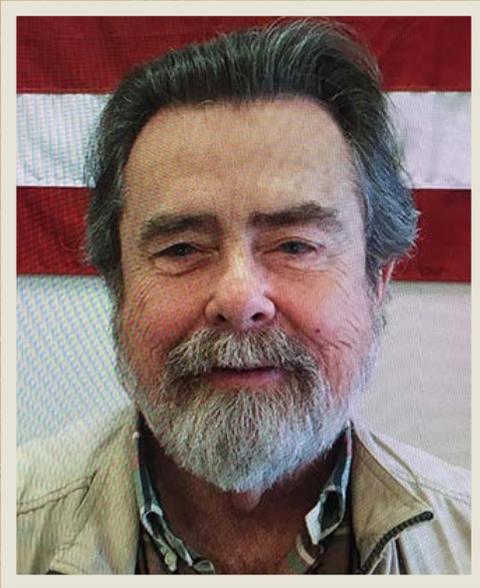
\*\*\* WELCOME NEW VOLUNTEERS \*\*\*



*Randy Garrison*



*Hugh Gordon*



*Ray Munsey*



*Mary Martin*

WALK IN THE STEPS  
 OF  
**HEROES**



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

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 OF  
**HEROES**