

# Swift Current

The official publication of the  
Swift Boat Sailors Association

II Quarter 2008

Comments & suggestions to-  
[editor@swiftboats.org](mailto:editor@swiftboats.org)

## President's Corner-

### *On This Special Occasion of Memorial Day 2008, We Remember....*

Across America, May 26th held special meaning to all Veterans, young and old. Veterans of World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Gulf War, Afghanistan, and Iraq, spent time reflecting on their days in the military. As Swift Boat Veterans, we not only remember the ultimate sacrifice that our brothers made, but the service to our country that all non-war experienced troops gave as well.

A huge BRAVO ZULU goes out to the Directors of the VUMMF Board. They continue to keep the memory alive of all the Navy and Coast Guard Vietnam Veterans whose names are inscribed on the Memorial Wall at the Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado. This past Memorial Day, a special ceremony was held at the site. Ken McGhee, the Base OinC and SpecWar worked with a family of one of the men listed on the Memorial Wall, LT Stephen MacVean. They wanted to do something special at the Vietnam Unit Memorial, in memory of their loved one on Memorial Day. See Bob Bolger's article for the full story.

Bob Bolger has provided an excellent pictorial essay at the MyFamily web site. I encourage everyone to visit the site. If you wish to have access to this site, please contact SBSA Board Director, Jim Deal at [JamesD8860@aol.com](mailto:JamesD8860@aol.com). BZ Bob for sharing this event with us. In addition, we salute all SBSA members who participated in this honorable tribute, with special gratitude to Neil Geis, Ken and Evie McGhee for bringing the recently defamed wall plates back to their original condition.

We proudly salute the service of two SBSA members who have joined our Honor Crew on their Last Patrol since the First Quarter issue of the Swift Current – James L. Burke, CAPT. USN (Ret.) and James D. Sarver.

The SBSA Board Directors recently met in Jacksonville for the annual Board Director meeting. Plans for the 2008 SBSA Reunion are on track. We visited the hotel and found it well suited for our needs. Gene Hart, Reunion Chairman, along with Team JAX has matters well under control. Look for his comments in this newsletter.

Virgil Erwin has been busy working on the annual Christmas Care Package project for our troops. We're getting an early start this year. With that, our hopes are that we will be able to send appropriate Season's Greetings to those men and women patrolling the inshore waterways in faraway lands. Virgil has more to report in this newsletter.

Special thanks go out to Jerry Sullivan who represented the SBSA in the placing of a wreath at the opening ceremony of the  
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This shot was taken from the bow of PCF-104.

This picture shows a half staffed Old Glory on the VUMM Wall flying over the MIA Table. This picture was taken just before noon on Memorial Day 2008. At noon, we conducted a 21 Veteran Salute ... for each of 21 selected Veterans, we rang the VUMM Memorial Bell, and said: "We remember [rating/rank] [name] [unit]. We remembered shipmates who died in Vietnam and shipmates who survived Viet Nam but have since gone back out on patrol (such as Bob Shirley). In keeping with the VUMM mission to serve as a bridge between generations of combat veterans, we also remembered MA2 Monsoor, a Navy SEAL Medal of Honor earner, who died in Ramadi in 2006. We selected veterans to represent the many warfighting communities etched on the wall ... Swifties, Game-wardens, Mobile Riverine Force, Naval Advisory Group, Aviation, Coast Guard, Corpsmen, Sea Bees, surface ship sailors, explosive ordnance disposal, chaplain (LT Vincent Capodanno, ChC, MoH Earner), etc. Background information for this picture, including a full list of the 21 Veterans, is posted on MyFamily.com under Memorial Day 2008 Part 11.

At the completion of the 21 Veteran Salute, Old Glory was full staffed on the Wall, PCF 104 and CCB 18. PCF 104 was open for general visiting. Many of the individuals (see My Family Memorial Day 2008 Part 12) who attended an 1130 private memorial service at the VUMM for two Naval Advisory Group shipmates (see first two names on 21 Veteran Salute Roster on Part 11) came aboard. Several tear duct moments. I think there was a whole lot of closure going on. A TV Crew from MS/NBC San Diego Channel 7/39, who had covered the 21 Veteran Salute, came aboard, interviewed Neil Geis and respectfully filmed the images in the main cabin of our 50 Swiftie shipmates still on patrol. Local San Diego TV covered the memorial event throughout the afternoon and evening of Memorial Day. We remember.

*Bob Bolger reports from Coronado*

# Mullen to Troops: Stay Out of Politics



The highest-ranking U.S. military officer has written an unusual open letter to all those in uniform, warning them to stay out of politics as the country approaches a presidential election in which the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan will be a central, and certainly divisive, issue.

"The U.S. military must remain apolitical at all times," wrote Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. "It is and must always be a neutral instrument of the state, no matter which party holds sway."

Mullen's essay appears in the coming issue of Joint Force Quarterly, an official military journal that is distributed widely among the officer corps.

The statement to the armed forces is the first essay for the journal Mullen has written as chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and veteran officers said they could not remember when a similar "all-hands" letter had been issued to remind military personnel to remain outside, if not above, contentious political debate.

The essay can be seen as a reflection of the deep concern among senior officers that the U.S. military, which is paying the highest price in carrying out national security policy, may be drawn into politicking this year.

The war in Iraq already has exceeded the length of World War II and is the longest conflict the United States has fought with an all-volunteer military since the Revolutionary War.

In particular, members of the Joint Chiefs have expressed worries this election year about the influence of retired officers who advise political campaigns, some of whom have publicly called for a change in policy or others who serve as television commentators.

Among the most outspoken were those who joined the so-called generals' revolt in 2006 demanding the resignation of Donald Rumsfeld as defense secretary, as well as former officers who have written books attacking the Bush administration's planning for and execution of the war in Iraq.

While retired officers have full rights to political activism, their colleagues still in uniform fear its effect on those trying to carry out the mission, especially more junior officers and enlisted personnel. Active-duty military personnel are prohibited from taking part in partisan politics.

"As the nation prepares to elect a new president," Mullen wrote, "we would all do well to remember the promises we made: to obey civilian authority, to support and defend the Constitution and to do our duty at all times."

"Keeping our politics private is a good first step," he added. "The only things we should be wearing on our sleeves are our military insignia."

Mullen said he was inspired to write the essay after receiving a constant stream of legitimate, if troubling, questions while visiting U.S. military personnel around the world, including, "What if a Democrat wins?" and, "What will that do to the mission in Iraq?"

"I am not suggesting that military professionals abandon all personal opinions about modern social or political issues," Mullen wrote. "What I am suggesting - indeed, what the nation expects - is that military personnel will, in the execution of the mission assigned to them, put aside their partisan leanings. Political opinions have no place in cockpit or camp or conference room."

He noted that "part of the deal we made when we joined up was to willingly subordinate our individual interests to the greater good of protecting vital national interests."

Mullen took his message directly to the U.S. Navy's newest officers on May 23, when he spoke to the Naval Academy's graduating class. Military personnel are obligated to give their unvarnished, even critical, advice to their civilian leaders, he told the class.

"If it's followed, great," Mullen said. "If it's not, we only have two choices: obey the orders we have been given, carrying them out with the professionalism and loyalty they deserve, or vote with our feet."

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21st Annual Vietnam and All Veterans Reunion. The annual event took place at Wickham Park, in Melbourne, Florida. Look for pictures in this issue.

The Mini-Reunions are alive and well. Bill & Jan Rogers have done it again. They are about to host their 7th Gig Harbor Swift Boat Veteran Mini-Reunion. Look for specific reunion details in this newsletter. Dave Hansen and Barbara hosted a "test" gathering in Glendale, Arizona on May 24th. Seven Swifties enjoyed the camaraderie. They are off to a good start. I salute Bill and Dave for taking the lead in hosting mini-reunions for your area brothers.

The 2008 Texas Mini-Reunion will be held on Saturday, November 1st. Warren Jenny and his lovely wife, Jeanie, will host the event at Rancho Costa-Lotsa, Lago Vista, Texas (west of Austin, on Lake Travis). Look for details in this issue of the Swift Current. Additional reunion details will be posted in the Swift-L, MyFamily, WW04, and in the SBSA web site in the weeks to come.

After visiting the Moving Wall last year in Eaton Rapids, Michigan, Lew Holley set off on a personal mission. He took pictures of the 50 Swifties that make up our Honor Crew. Using photos from Terry Boone's memorial and information from the Virtual Vietnam Vets Wall, he put all the data collected onto a DVD. He has sent out this labor of love to many SBSA members. When asked why he did it, Lew said, "Our fellow brothers deserve to be remembered. I hope I have helped in a small way to keep their memories alive." In dead you have, Lew....BRAVO ZULU!

Stephan Taylor recently underwent surgery and will be in the V.A. Hospital in St. Louis for several weeks. Beth Patterson continues to post updates on "Pat's" continuing battle with Melanoma, via the Caring Bridge web site (<http://www.caringbridge.org/cb/viewMyStory.do?method=executeInit>). Let's keep both of these Swifties in our thoughts and prayers. Our hearts go out to the families that are caring for them.

**Jacksonville 2009 is only eleven months away. Start making plans now to insure your participation at the next Swift Boat Sailors Association Reunion.**

In brotherhood,

*Raul Herrera*

## Navy To Revive Fleet for Latin America, Caribbean By Nadine Elsbai, Bloomberg News | April 25, 2008 (without permission)

Washington — The U.S. Navy plans to re-establish its Fourth Fleet, disbanded in 1950, to oversee ships, aircraft, and submarines operating in the Caribbean and Central and South America, a Defense Department statement said.

The current commander of the Naval Special Warfare Command, Rear Admiral Joseph Kernan, will lead the fleet effective July 1, the chief of naval operations, Admiral Gary Roughead, said in a statement. The fleet will be based in Mayport, Fla., coordinating efforts with the U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command, which also is based there.

The U.S. Navy has been planning to build up its forces in the region. Admiral James Stavridis, who oversees military affairs for Latin America, told Congress on March 6 that he backs plans to designate a new fleet, led by a nuclear aircraft carrier, to patrol the waters of the Caribbean and Latin America in support of counter-terrorism operations.

<http://swiftboats.org/shipsstore/catalog.html>

**The Ship's Store now takes Pay-Per for on-line purchases**

## The Seventh Annual Gig Harbor Reunion!

Yes, for the seventh year in a row (can you believe it?) my wife, Jan, and I are inviting as many Swifties and their families as we can fit into our house, deck, garage and lawn to come to our place in Gig Harbor, Washington on the last Saturday in July for a reunion. There is no program or agenda, just a day-long gathering to eat, drink and share old memories. This event continues to get better every year with a mix of old friends we see every year and several new-bees who have never before attended a reunion. We have had over 70 people attend but there is always room for more. So please help us spread the word to those who don't use email or who are otherwise out of touch.

Where: The home of Jan and Bill Rogers, 10909 Sea View Court NW, Gig Harbor, Washington, 98332. Phone: 253-858-3080. Email: [will-rogers@harboret.com](mailto:will-rogers@harboret.com)

Gig Harbor is a scenic community located on the Puget Sound just west of Tacoma. It's across the Tacoma Narrows Bridge approximately 30 miles south of Seattle. I'll send you driving directions if you need them. For information on Gig Harbor and accommodations go to <http://www.gigharbor.com>.

When: Saturday, July 26, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

The last weekend in July is almost guaranteed to be warm and sunny. It's also the start of the big Seafair week in Seattle with the Blue Angels and the hydroplane races on Lake Washington. So it's a great time of year to visit the Northwest if you've ever thought of taking a trip here. The Olympic Peninsula is just a short drive away.

Who: This is for all former Swift Boat sailors and their wives and families. Be sure to bring the wife (or significant other) - they'll have a great time too.

Program: None planned although we're open to suggestions. Just lots of fellowship and eating. There will be a group photo taken at 4:00 p.m.

Cost: \$10 per head at the door to help offset the cost of food and drink.

Transportation: Easy access from Interstate 5. Seatac airport is 20 miles north with a good connecting shuttle service. We also have a boat dock in our neighborhood and several more in Gig Harbor.

Lodging: There are lots of motels and hotels in Gig Harbor and Tacoma. There are several places to park your RV. Gig Harbor has several marinas if you're coming by boat. If you plan to stay in a motel be sure to book your room early. This is Seafair week and rooms may be hard to get by July.

RSVP: Please let us know who's coming (including first names) so that we can accurately buy the food and prepare name tags. And please give me your email address if you have one. Email me at [willrogers@harboret.com](mailto:willrogers@harboret.com) or the postal address above.

## Honoring America's Veterans

The Admiral Roy F. Hoffmann Foundation is now up and running. The web site is-

[www.admhoffmannfoundation.com](http://www.admhoffmannfoundation.com)

The Foundation has awarded \$3,169,432 in grants through June 2008; of that amount 402 awards totaling \$3,117,432 have gone primarily to severely wounded warriors and their families. Grants generally range from \$4,000 to \$12,000 (for the most severely wounded). The average grant is more than \$7,750.

The foundation is a private charity that does not accept contributions from the general public.

## More New Members!

Gene Hart, Secretary-Treasurer, reports that the following have joined SBSA since Jan. 1, 2008:

Dennis L. Brown – York, NE  
Frederick W. Bruns – Leucida, CA  
Earnest E. Casey - Panama City Beach, FL  
Kent W. Comstock – Kailua, HI  
Tim R. Eichholtz – Spring, TX  
Ronald L. Gillespie – Lynchburg, VA  
Roy J. Giroir - Belle Rose, LA  
Larry D. Jorgensen – Ewing, NE  
John R. Mauldin – Yukon, OK  
Dennis J. O'Leary – Durham, ME  
William T. Ruth – Piedmont, CA  
Spencer L. Sanken – Plymouth, MN  
Thomas A. Shirley – Palo Alto, CA  
Joseph M. Timmons - Staten Island, NY  
Barry L. Whitesell – Greensboro, NC  
Walter M. Wroblowsky – Hypoluxo, FL

The SBSA presently has **645** paid-up members!



**MELBOURNE 2008**  
**Largest Vietnam Vets Gathering**



The SBSA's Jerry "Sully" Sullivan and Steve Gardner place a wreath remembering all of the Swifties "Still On Patrol" during the **Vietnam and All Veterans Reunion** held April 24-27th at Melbourne, FL.

## Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents by the Department of Veterans Affairs

WASHINGTON, March 28 /PRNewswire - USNewswire - A new edition of the popular handbook Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) updates the rates for certain federal payments and outlines a variety of programs and benefits for American veterans.

Most of the nation's 24 million veterans qualify for some VA benefits, which range from health care to burial in a national cemetery. In addition to describing benefits provided by VA, the 2008 edition of the 153-page booklet provides an overview of programs and services for veterans provided by other federal agencies.

Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents includes resources to help veterans access their benefits, with a listing of toll-free phone numbers, Internet addresses and a directory of VA facilities throughout the country. The handbook can be downloaded free from VA's Web site at [http://www.va.gov/OPA/vadocs/current\\_benefits.asp](http://www.va.gov/OPA/vadocs/current_benefits.asp)

The handbook is one of the top selling consumer publications of the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). GPO accepts credit card orders for the publication at 866-512-1800 (toll-free) for a cost of \$5 each to U.S. addresses, or \$67 for bulk orders of 25 copies. It can be ordered by mail from the GPO at Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 979050, St. Louis, MO 63197-9000 (stock #051-000-00233-4) or on line at [www.bookstore.gpo.gov](http://www.bookstore.gpo.gov)

In addition to health-care and burial benefits, veterans may be eligible for programs providing home loan guaranties, educational assistance, training and vocational rehabilitation, income assistance pensions, life insurance and compensation for service-connected illnesses or disabilities. In some cases, survivors of veterans may also be entitled to benefits.

The handbook describes programs for veterans with specific service experiences, such as prisoners of war or those concerned about environmental exposures in Vietnam or in the Gulf War, as well as special benefits for veterans with severe disabilities.

SOURCE U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

## PTSD Causes Early Death From Heart Disease, Study Suggests

ScienceDaily (July 8, 2008) — Vietnam veterans who experienced posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) were twice as likely to die from heart disease as veterans without PTSD, a new Geisinger study finds.

In a study published in the July issue of Psychosomatic Medicine, Geisinger Senior Investigator Joseph Boscarino, PhD, MPH examined the prevalence of heart disease, PTSD and other problems in more than 4,000 Vietnam veterans.

The more severe the PTSD diagnosis, the greater the likelihood of death from heart disease, the study showed.

Vietnam veterans with PTSD—like chronic smokers—are at higher risk of early death from heart disease, Dr. Boscarino concluded. Boscarino equated PTSD to smoking two to three packs of cigarettes per day for more than 20 years.

PTSD causes the body to release stress hormones, which leads to the inflammation and damage to the arteries and cardiovascular system damage. Stress hormones also tend to reduce the amount of inflammation-reducing cortisol in the body—though researchers aren't sure why.

"Increased levels of stress hormones and less cortisol from PTSD are a bad combination," Dr. Boscarino explained. "Basically, PTSD just cooks your arteries in this situation."

Dr. Boscarino previously found that people with PTSD had dramatically higher rates of chronic health problems such as psoriasis, arthritis and other inflammatory diseases.

"The science is conclusively showing that if you suffer psychological trauma, it's going to take a toll on your physical health," Dr. Boscarino said. "Getting counseling today is critical to avoiding a related problem tomorrow."

This study excluded patients with a prior history of heart disease and included a national sample of veterans, which is different from prior studies on the topic, Boscarino said.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/07/080707081834.htm> reproduced without permission

*Editor's note: I included this note not to depress anyone or show the inherent "weakness" of Vietnam Combat Vets. It's a warning to take care of yourself so you can attend more reunions and spend more time hanging around your shipmates.*

## Need Some Gear?

Get Yourself Into the SBSA Ship's Store  
On-line and see all the great stuff!  
[swiftboats.org/shipsstore/catalog.html](http://swiftboats.org/shipsstore/catalog.html)



## Navy SEAL Michael A. Monsoor Medal of Honor

April 19, 2008

During Petty Officer Mike Monsoor's funeral here in San Diego, as Mike's coffin was being moved from the hearse to the grave site at Ft Rosecrans National Cemetery, SEALs were lined up on both sides of the pallbearers route forming a column of two's with the coffin moving up the center.

As the Mike's coffin passed, each SEAL, having removed his gold Trident from his uniform, slapped it down embedding the Trident in the wooden coffin; the slaps were audible from across the cemetery; by the time the coffin arrived grave side, it looked as though it had a gold inlay from all the Tridents pinned to it.

At the reception afterwards, the SEALs were easily identified among the other military guests because they had a stack of valor ribbons with pin holes above where their Naval Special Warfare Device or Trident had been.

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CORONADO, Calif. - A Navy SEAL sacrificed his life to save his comrades by throwing himself on top of a grenade Iraqi insurgents tossed into their sniper hide-out, fellow members of the elite force said.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael A. Monsoor had been near the only door to the rooftop structure Sept. 29 when the grenade hit him in the chest and bounced to the floor, said four SEALs who spoke to The Associated Press this week on condition of anonymity because their work requires their identities to remain secret.

"He never took his eye off the grenade, his only movement was down toward it," said a 28-year-old lieutenant who sustained shrapnel wounds to both legs that day. "He undoubtedly saved mine and the other SEALs' lives, and we owe him."

Monsoor, a 25-year-old gunner, was killed in the explosion in Ramadi, west of Baghdad. He was only the second SEAL to die in Iraq since the war began.

Two SEALs next to Monsoor were injured; another who was 10 to 15 feet from the blast was unhurt. The four had been working with Iraqi soldiers providing sniper security while U.S. and Iraqi forces conducted missions in the area.

In an interview at the SEALs' West Coast headquarters in Coronado, four members of the special force remembered "Mikey" as a loyal friend and a quiet, dedicated professional.

"He was just a fun-loving guy," said a 26-year-old petty officer 2nd class who went through the grueling 29-week SEAL training with Monsoor. "Always got something funny to say, always got a little mischievous look on his face."

Other SEALs described the Garden Grove, Calif., native as a modest and humble man who drew strength from his family and his faith. His father and brother are former Marines, said a 31-year-old petty officer 2nd class.

Prior to his death, Monsoor had already demonstrated courage under fire. He has been posthumously awarded the Silver Star for his actions May 9 in Ramadi, when he and another SEAL pulled a team member shot in the leg to safety while bullets pinged off the ground around them.

Monsoor's funeral was held Thursday at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery in San Diego. He has also been submitted for an award for his actions the day he died.

The first Navy SEAL to die in Iraq was Petty Officer 2nd Class Marc A. Lee, 28, who was killed Aug. 2 in a firefight while on patrol against insurgents in Ramadi. Navy spokesman Lt. Taylor Clark said the low number of deaths among SEALs in Iraq is a testament to their training.

Sixteen SEALs have been killed in Afghanistan. Eleven of them died in June 2005 when a helicopter was shot down near the Pakistan border while ferrying reinforcements for troops pursuing al-Qaida militants.

There are about 2,300 of the elite fighters, based in Coronado and Little Creek, Va.

The Navy is trying to boost that number by 500 - a challenge considering more than 75 percent of candidates drop out of training, notorious for "Hell Week," a five-day stint of continual drills by the ocean broken by only four hours sleep total. Monsoor made it through training on his second attempt.

## Agent Orange Exposure and Hypertension

If you served in Vietnam, and have any illnesses related to Hypertension, file a claim, or reopen previous claim.. also evidence of an association between exposure to the chemicals of interest and the following health outcomes:

Laryngeal cancer  
Cancer of the lung, bronchus, or trachea  
Prostate cancer  
Multiple myeloma  
AL amyloidosis (category change from *Update 2004*)  
Early-onset transient peripheral neuropathy  
Porphyria cutanea tarda  
Hypertension (category change from *Update 2004*)  
Type 2 diabetes (mellitus)  
Spina bifida in offspring of exposed people

### Data Suggest a Possible Association Between Agent Orange Exposure and Hypertension, But the Evidence Is Limited

WASHINGTON — A new report from the Institute of Medicine finds suggestive but limited evidence that exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides used during the Vietnam War is associated with an increased chance of developing high blood pressure in some veterans. The report is the latest update in a congressionally mandated series by the IOM that reviews every two years the evidence about the health effects of these herbicides and the type of dioxin — TCDD — that contaminated some of them. [http://www.elpasotimes.com/ci\\_9207845](http://www.elpasotimes.com/ci_9207845)

### VA Begins Taking Claims Related To Agent Orange Exposure

By Chris Roberts / El Paso Times - 05/09/2008

Veterans Affairs has started taking claims for hypertension related to Agent Orange exposure, but it will determine at a later date whether the claims will be honored as being military "service-related," according to service organizations who received notices from VA.

A letter from the Texas Veterans Commission to its county service officers indicates that the claims are expected to be approved. The claims won't be actively "worked" until the VA makes its decision.

Requests for comment made to local VA agencies were referred to Washington, D.C. However, after two days, the public affairs office in Washington, D.C., still had no comment.

If the claims are approved, it could mean as much as \$300 a month for Bob Snow, a retired soldier who worked as a forward observer directing artillery fire in the Vietnamese jungles. Snow - who worked with special forces soldiers and Montagnards, a French name for the indigenous people of Vietnam's central highlands - operated in areas sprayed with Agent Orange, a defoliant that knocked down vegetation used as cover by the enemy.

Snow retired in 1982 and was diagnosed with hypertension by the VA in 1983. However, the condition was not considered service related and therefore his disability compensation was limited. If hypertension is connected to Agent Orange claims, it could mean as much as an extra \$300 per month for Snow, which he said will relieve some of the pressure of the rising cost of living.

Jeri Elena Mark worked as a radar mechanic for Hawk missile systems at a base in Vietnam where she watched planes drop Agent Orange on vegetation surrounding the camp, which was being shelled. She had experienced high blood pressure, a symptom of hypertension, during her Army career, usually associated with flashbacks from her Vietnam service.

She retired in 1985, but her exposure is not considered combat-related, so she would get no increase in disability payments. However, her family would receive benefits after her death if the cause is related to hypertension.

## Texas Mini-Reunion Forming Up!

Warren Jenny and his lovely wife, Jeanie, will be hosting the 2008 Texas Mini-Reunion at their property up river from Lake Travis on the Colorado River. It will be a one-day affair, beginning at 10 a.m. and will end no later than 10 p.m.

The plan is one of basic Texas hospitality...“y'all come 'round for a visit.” The theme will also be tied to Veterans Day. Hog dogs, hamburgers and good ole U.S. of A. treats will abound. Ten dollars per person at the gate will get you in.

For those intending to arrive on Friday, we will do our best to post a list of Friday arrivals in the event that there is interest in a dinner gathering that night. Same applies for Sunday breakfast. Warren notes that there are a number of good restaurants in the area for everyone to enjoy.

If flying in, Austin should be your destination. As for hotels, there are three in Cedar Park, about 15 miles from Warren's place: Best Western Cedar Inn; Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites; and, Comfort Inn.

[www.roadsideamerica.com/hotels\\_motels/hotels/us-tx-cedar-park.html](http://www.roadsideamerica.com/hotels_motels/hotels/us-tx-cedar-park.html)

As always, we'd like to get a handle on the head-count as soon as possible. Please let us know if you plan to attend and how many will be in your group. E-mail me at

[raul.herrera@dannenbaum.com](mailto:raul.herrera@dannenbaum.com) or [BeanPCF79@aol.com](mailto:BeanPCF79@aol.com)

Directions to Rancho Costa-Lotsa will be available upon request and will also be posted on the various web site and list-serves. We ask that you bring lawn chairs if possible, and a hearty appetite.

*submitted by Raul Herrera*

## Bob Shirley Laid to Rest

Description: SBSA members Warren Jenny, Bob Kreyer, Randy Foster, and Joe Lavoie prepare coffin for journey to cemetery.

9 January 2008 at Restland Funeral Home



### Swifties gather to pay tribute and support the Shirley family

L-R Peter Wright, Warren Jenny, Raul Herrera, Joe Lavoie, Randy Foster, Terry Boone, Bob Bolger, Bob Kreyer, and Vince Feuerborn. Missing is Jerry Henderson.

8 January 2008 at Houston's Restaurant

## What Makes Veterans Special To Each Other *That Outsiders Will Never Understand!*

When a good Veteran leaves the "job" and retires to a better life, many are jealous, some are pleased and others, who may have already retired wonder if they know what they are leaving behind, because we already know.

We know, for example, that after a lifetime of camaraderie that few experience, it will remain as a longing for those past times. We know in the Military life there is a fellowship which lasts long after the uniforms are hung up in the back of the closet. We know even if they throw them away, they will be on them with every step and breath that remains in their life. We also know how the very bearing of the person speaks of what they were and in their heart still is.

These are the burdens of the job. You will still look at people suspiciously, still see what others do not see or choose to ignore and always will look at the rest of the Military world with a respect for what they do; only grown in a lifetime of knowing.

Never think for one moment you are escaping from that life. You are only escaping the "job" and merely being allowed to leave "active" duty.

So what I wish for you is that whenever you ease into retirement, in your heart you never forget for one moment that "Blessed are the Peacemakers for they shall be called children of God," and you are still a member of the greatest fraternity the world has ever known.



### Civilian Friends vs. Veteran Friends

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Get upset if you're too busy to talk to them for a week.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Are glad to see you after years, and will happily carry on the same conversation you were having the last time you met.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Have never seen you cry.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Have cried with you.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Borrow your stuff for a few days then give it back.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Keep your stuff so long they forget it's yours.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Know a few things about you.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Could write a book with direct quotes from you.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Will leave you behind if that's what the crowd is doing.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Will kick the crowds' ass that left you behind.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Are for a while.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Are for life.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Have shared a few experiences...

VETERAN FRIENDS: Have shared a lifetime of experiences no citizen could ever dream of...

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Will take your drink away when they think you've had enough.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Will look at you stumbling all over the place and say, "You better drink the rest of that before you spill it!" Then carry you home safely and put you to bed...

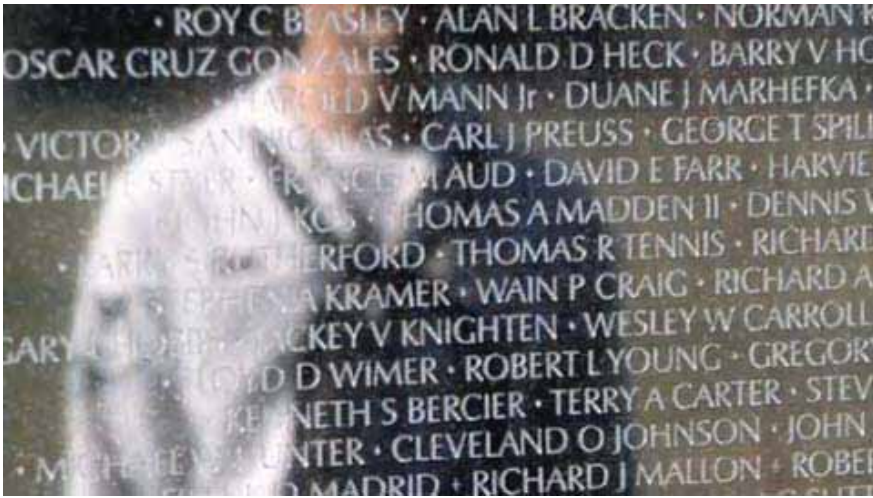
CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Will talk crap to the person who talks crap about you.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Will knock them the hell out OF THEM..... for using your name in vain.

A veteran - whether active duty, retired, or national guard or reserve - is someone who, at one point in their life, wrote a blank check made payable to "The United States of America," for an amount of "up to and including my life."

From one Veteran to another, it's an honor to be in your Company.

*from a veteran friend of the editor*



**Many thanks to Terry Boone for preparing the listing below of Swifties "Still On Patrol" on the Vietnam Wall (and most of the traveling walls around the country). The names are in order as you progress from left to right across the face of The Wall.**

CARL GOODFELLOW	32E-50	ROBERT CROSBY	17W-9
BOBBY CARVER	31E-44	STEPHEN PENTA	19W-20
WILLIAM MURPHY	30E-25	GLEN KEENE	21W-46
DENNIS PUCKET	17E-68	ALBERT FRANSEN	21W-45
GARY FRIEDMANN	16E-58	KENNETH WEST	22W-114
WILLY BAKER	12E-72	ROBERT THOMPSON	24W-56
BRUCE TIMMONS	12E-77	RICHARD STINDL	24W-22
HARRY BROCK	12E-72	DEWEY DECKER	24W-15
KEMPER BILLINGS	11E-126	RICHARD BAUMBERGER	25W-4
ALVIN LEVAN	11E-105	THOMAS HOLLOWAY	27W-64
HUBERT TUCK	11E-88	DONALD DROZ	27W-63
EUGENE SELF	11E-L88	GERALD HORRELL	35W-39
GALE HAYS	11E-L87	JOHN HARTKEMEYER	36W-35
RALEIGH GODLEY	07E-L103	STEVEN LUKE	37W-52
DAYTON RUDISILL	05E-L36	RICHARD WALLACE	39W-39
JACK RODRIGUEZ	05E-L36	STEPHAN VOLTZ	39W-39
THOMAS HILL	05E-L34	PETER BLASKO	39W-36
DAVID BOYLE	05E-L31	DAVID MERRILL	39W-29
JOSEPH JURGELLA	6W-22	RICHARD SIMON	39W-15
LANNY BUROFF	9W-124	JOHN MCDERMOTT	45W-63
FREDERICK SNYDER	10W-59	GERALD POCHEL	45W-38
CRAIG HAINES	13W-23	EDWARD CRUZ	56W-2
MARTIN DOHERTY	15W-23	ANTHONY CHANDLER	56W-1
KENNETH NORTON	17W-48	FRANK BOWMAN	56W-1
RICHARD WISSLER	17W-32	BILLY ARMSTRONG	57W-34



### **"Beached" - OR - "Aground"** **What's In A Word?**

Everyone knows that "Running Aground" in the U. S. Navy *can and will ruin your whole day*. We also know that Swift boat sailors were incredibly talented as well as being among the most daring sailors ever to wear the uniform. Part of the mission was to occasionally "beach" the boat to do something on that stuff that looked a lot like the water but was much, much tougher and could actually be walked upon.

Above are two Swifts both with their hulls touching the dirt/sand. Both show sailors actively engaged in things we all know sailors do. All hands appear to be constructively engaged and not in any way in what could be called panic.

We have it on excellent authority (from an on-scene witness) that one of these war craft is actually aground while one is beached. If you haven't been able to tell which is which, here's a clue:

*Most "beached" craft keep their screws, rudders, and skegs pointing toward the sea, away from more sand/dirt.*



Bob Shirley's incredible website - [www.pcf45.com](http://www.pcf45.com) - is now owned and maintained by the SBSA. It's not only a wonderful tribute to Bob, but is the most complete summary of Swift operations anywhere.



**You Earned It! The SBSA and other vets' groups fought for it!**  
**Now order one or two from your Ship's Store!**

Swift Boat Sailors Association Inc.  
3941 Laurelwood Drive  
Jacksonville, Florida 32257-8926



# Don't Even Think About Not Being In Jacksonville next June 24-28, 2009

## Planning A Visit to See PCF-104 and VUMMF?

If you and friends or family are planning to visit the 104 to show your battle station, those magnificent V-12s, the twin .50s, or the lazarette (- ?) - **REMEMBER THIS!**

**YOU CANNOT GET ONBOARD THE BASE WITHOUT  
EITHER A MILITARY ID OR AN ESCORT.**

Check [www.vummf.org/visit\\_memorial.htm](http://www.vummf.org/visit_memorial.htm) or call Ken McGhee at (619) 464-4047 or email at [kbandeam-cghee@aol.com](mailto:kbandeam-cghee@aol.com)

Neil Geis stands under the flag and flag pole he donated to the Memorial in memory of BMCM Norm McCulloch. The new flag is larger and flies higher than the previous flag.

