

Swift Current

The official publication of
the Swift Boat Sailors
Association

3th Qtr 2014

Comments &
suggestions to-
dc.current2@gmail.com

Auxiliary Participation in *USS Zumwalt* Christening

U.S. Navy Captain James A. Kirk and the crew of the *USS Zumwalt* (DDG 1000) invited Joe Muharsky, a member of Flotilla 7-6, to the Mast Stepping Ceremony and formal christening on April 12, 2014 in Bath, Maine. Joe also received a formal invitation to the christening of the ship from Admiral Zumwalt's son Jim and daughters Mouzetta and Ann. The ship is named for the former Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt. As CNO during the Vietnam War from 1970 - 1974, Admiral Zumwalt was responsible for the "Brown water Navy", which was an elite force of Swift Boats that patrolled the waterways in Vietnam. One of the Swift Boat Commanders was his son, Elmo Zumwalt III. Joe Muharsky served on a Swift Boat during this time.

Joe was honored to be part of this very special occasion. He and his family were privileged to sit with the Zumwalt family during the Mast Stepping Ceremony. At the beginning of the ceremony Joe was introduced as a Swift Boat sailor who is now an active member of the

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary. During the ceremony the "coin for 1969" was presented to Joe. He then gave the coin to one of the ship's officers. This tradition began with the ancient Greeks and Romans. During the Mast Stepping Ceremony coins and mementos are put in a box that is then placed at the base of the ship's mast. This becomes a permanent part of the ship that will ensure a safe passage for the crew.

Joe and his wife Donna were asked to march in front of the crew for a half mile down the street, leading the way to the christening. Joe was given the honor of speaking at the Maine Maritime Museum with Larry Berman, author



Aux. Joe Muharsky presenting a gift to Captain James Kirk from the Swift Boat Sailors Association. Photo by Aux. Donna Muharsky.

of *Zumwalt: The Life and Times of Admiral Elmo Russel "Bud" Zumwalt, Jr.* Joe is mentioned in the book.

In 2003 Joe Muharsky had the honor of being the recipient of the first *Admiral Zumwalt Humanitarian Award*. A year later he received the *SAR Team Nine Award*.



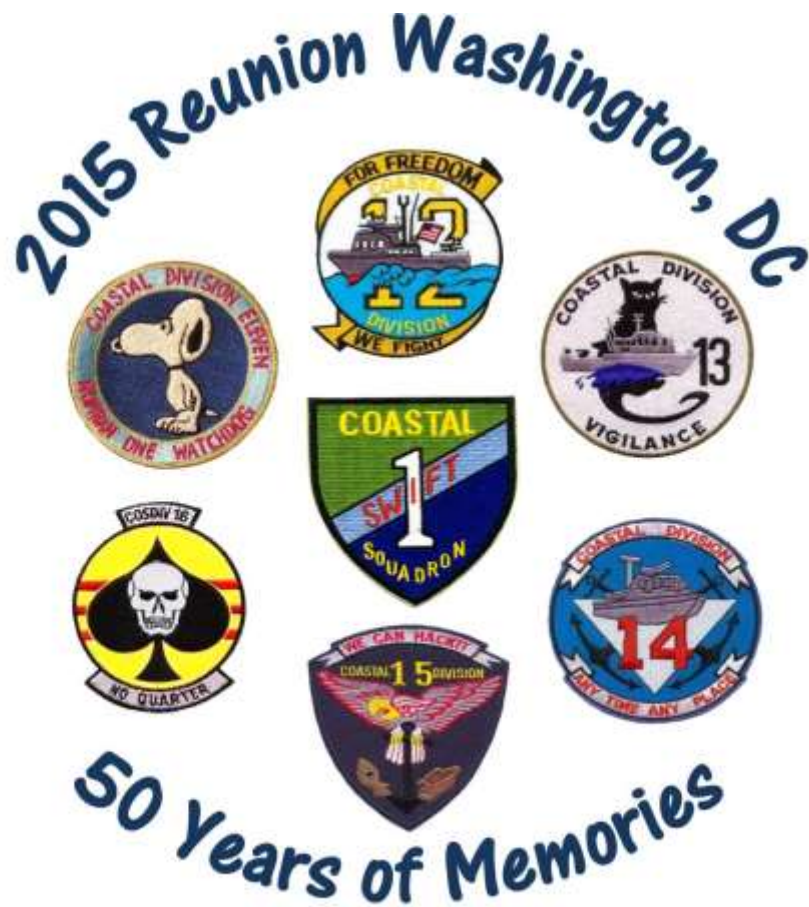
Reunion T Shirt

Shown is the 2015 Reunion T Shirt designed by Joseph Chontos RM2 of PCF 12
You can order one with your reunion registration for \$15

Front Left side



BACK



President's Corner

The 2015 SBSA Reunion will be held **May 7-10, 2015** at the Sheraton Premiere at Tysons Corner outside Washington D.C. This hotel is ideal for reunion activities: Ships Store, Hospitality Suite, and Banquet. It is a great location: near Tysons Corner restaurants and shopping, metro stop to access DC area sights, and much more. You can see more about the hotel at <http://www.sheratontysonscorner.com/>.

The hotel is located at 8661 Leesburg Pike Tysons Corner, VA 22182, and you can reach them by phone at: Phone: (703) 448-1234 and Hotel Reservations: 888-627-8230

We have a special rate for SBSA so be sure to tell them you are attending as an SBSA member.

The committee is still working on the full agenda for the reunion. Some of the reunion highlights:

Thursday, May 7: Welcome reception at the Sheraton Premiere

Friday, May 8: Organized Tours to selected locations of interest, open time for your own sightseeing using the Metro and a time to visit will crewmates.

Saturday, May 9: Special "Memorial Itinerary"; a tour of PCF-1 at the Washington Navy Yard, followed by our traditional memorial service at the US Navy Memorial in Washington, with a finishing stop at The Wall

Sunday, May 10: Banquet

If you live in the area or just want to help, please contact Mike Solhaug. I know he can use volunteers. We are about 8 months out and a reunion requires a lot of volunteers, we can use you all!

Terry Boone the Ship's Store manager is working on a special reunion T-shirt which you will be able to purchase before the reunion. When you order the shirt before the reunion it will be in your packet at the time of registration. The details of the banquet are worked out, a registration sheet will be up on the new website and hard copies will be sent to all members who do not have computer access. Please sign up right away.

New Website

Thanks to the hard work of Jeremy Odell and Jim Deal We would like to formally announce the roll out of our new SBSA website www.swiftboats.org. We have added some new features and will continue to update the site over the course of the summer. Along with the new look and feel here are some highlights of the new site. Membership management online. Members can now pay dues and update profiles online.

Swift Boat Store is online and accepting orders.

Secure Paypal integrations. Members can purchase items from the store, pay dues, or pay reunion fees online with Paypal or credit card.

Event calendar. Reunion details as well as other SBSA events.

SBSA forum on the site. Chat with fellow swift boat members.

The ability to sign up for the reunion on line.

Hope you enjoy the new site!

By Laws and Financial Policy

During the last Board of Directors meeting the By Laws and Financial Policy for our association was approved. The updating of the By Laws and Financial Policy was necessary to comply with the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia where our Association is registered.

These documents will be put on the new website for any member interested to read and review.

The Last Hurrah Cruise

A special event is in the planning stages for the summer of 2016. Virg Erwin is working with the MMSD on the possibility of taking PCF 816 on a cruise up and back the Coast of California. **SBSA members will man the boat. That's right, a chance for one more patrol with your shipmates.**

The initial plans are for crews to take the 816 boat up the coast to a new landing each day. At that point we will meet with the local groups and tell the history of our activities as swift boat sailors and our association with the MMSD. This will be a special event. We will put out more information as we get it in the Swift Current and on the Website.

New Book

Tempest in a Teacup

Doc White is a photographer and Swift Boat veteran from San Diego and has written a piece of fiction about his experience in Vietnam.

Teacups have held the brew that has sustained revolutions, cultivated thought and nurtured friendships for thousands of years. In *Tempest in a Teacup*, they hold all this and more — a long-lost treasure of incalculable wealth — second chances.

Two friends—one Navy SEAL and one Swift Boater—return to their shared war zone on a last mission: to recover a sunken treasure in the hopes of restoring some of what was lost there 25 years ago while reaffirming the rare bond they had all along.

He states in his forward that “writing about Vietnam and my time on Swift Boats brought back sharp, sometimes painful memories. But my most poignant and precious reflections dwell on the friendships forged in war and kept strong over a half a century.”

His web site is oceanmagicphotography.com. The book can be ordered from Amazon. He plans on being at the 2015 reunion and will be honored to sign your copy.

Book Signing:

A special event at this reunion will be a book signing by Admiral Roy Hoffmann. The Admiral will sign the book "This is Latch" by Wey Symmes. "This is Latch" is the story of Rear Admiral Roy Hoffmann's career. Don't miss this event.

When you purchase the book you can have the Admiral write a personal note in the front cover. All proceeds benefit the SBSA.

Honoring the Men of Malta Lost on Swift

The Maritime Museum of San Diego and the Swift Boat Sailors Association conducted a memorial service on Sunday 7 September 2014 to honor five Maltese Swift Boat Sailors and two Maltese Policemen lost aboard Swift Boat P 23 (formally PCF 813) on this anniversary of that tragic event. These men were taking illegal fireworks to be dumped at sea when a massive explosion killed all but one man. Two men were not recovered. The only survivor, a Swift Boat Sailor managed to beach the Swift Boat before it sank.

Mr. Hugh Cassar, Consul General of Malta in Southern California and Mr. Louis J. Vella, Consul General of Malta in Northern California together with 14 Maltese citizens participated in this memorial event. The entire group boarded Swift Boat PCF 816 and sailed to Glorietta Bay next to the US Naval Amphibious Base to lay a wreath on the water. A proclamation was read by Mr. Cassar dedicating this day to honor these seven men who are *Still on Patrol*.

We rang the ship's bell for each man, and seven Maltese individuals took turns and said, "We remember..." and read the name for each man lost in the service of the Republic of Malta:

Bombardier Francis Berg
Private Anthony Farrugia
Police Constable Joseph Hare
Police Sergeant Savior Muscat
Bombardier Joseph Pace
Gunner William Simpson
Private Anthony Vella

Ray Ashley, CEO of the Maritime Museum thanked the Republic of Malta in behalf of the SBSA and the museum for donating PCF 816 so that we may keep these memories alive.

The Maltese flag always flies from the mast of PCF 816 next to the American ensign. We presented two of these Maltese flags to Mr. Vella. He presented one of these flags to the Maltese Maritime Squadron and one to the Maltese Police on 3 October in Valletta, Malta.

We honor the memory of these seven Swift Boat Sailors as we do for our fifty Swift Boat Sailors and they will never be forgotten. Bob Bolger initiated and coordinated this event. His wife Val created the wreath.

Attention All Swift Boat Members:

Board of Director Elections will be held on Saturday morning 9 May during the Business Meeting at the 2015 Reunion in Washington, DC.

If you are interested in serving on the Board or have questions about Board service, please contact Virg Erwin not later than 30 March 2015 at VirgErwin@aol.com or 858 487 6183.

Deceased Swifties 2014

Mickey W. Walker	Hixson, TN	Feb 2014
Odis F. Terry	Hooks, TX	Feb 2014
Everett R. Jones	Bonita, CA	Mar 2014
William D. Rockhiill	Draper, UT	Apr 2014
Ronald F. Tessada	Fresno, CA	May 2014
Lawrence J. Wasikowski	Omaha, NE	May 2014
Larry A. Guffey	Glouster, OH	Jul 2014
Walt Maxam	Tucson, AZ	Aug 2014

Change of Address? Need new membership card?

Stay in touch with your shipmates!

Membership card replacement fee \$5.00.

Contact DC Current, Secretary
Email– dc.current2@gmail.com

Swift Boat Sailors Association
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Christiansted, VI 00820-4279



Don't Even Think of Moving Without Telling Us!

Email - Letter - Telephone - Just DO IT!

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