

# Swift Current

The official publication of  
the Swift Boat Sailors  
Association

4th Qtr 2014

Comments &  
suggestions to-  
[dc.current2@gmail.com](mailto:dc.current2@gmail.com)

## Veteran's Day and Pearl Harbor Day in San Diego

By Dave Bradley

Here are some pictures from Pearl Harbor Day as well as the Vet's Day runs. On Pearl Harbor Day, beneath the port after elevator, we spread a dozen roses when the Pearl Harbor Survivors (there we're five) launched the wreath. Taps was played and we came to attention and rendered salutes. Moving experience.

PCF-816 has operated every weekend with 2 runs a day. The first at 10:30 am and the second at 1 PM. She has also been operated on every holiday. On the holidays we try to get in a third run but on Veteran's Day we did five. We can carry a maximum of 30 (including crew and Narrator). Most runs are in the 12 – 15 range

There are two Captains for the boat. John usually does Saturday runs and Christine handles Sundays. The "deckhands" are females, so on Sundays it's an all female crew and I'd have had any one of them on my crew in country. Narration of the Swift Boat story is usually handled by Bob Bolger, Bob Brown, or myself and sometimes Virg Erwin. We also have a Maritime Museum Docent aboard taking notes and filling in for us if we're not available.



The pics without the Midway are from Veteran's Day, with Bob Bolger and Bob Brown



# President's Corner

## SBSA Reunion

May is fast approaching and the reunion is coming together nicely thanks to the hard work of Mike Solhaug and his helpers. The SBSA Reunion will be held **May 7-10, 2015** at the Sheraton Premiere at Tysons Corner outside Washington D.C. 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: (703) 448-1234 and Hotel Reservations: 888-627-8230.

On a separate note, reservations for the reunion and reunion events are on the SBSA website [www.swiftboats.org](http://www.swiftboats.org). You can download the form from the site and send it to: Military Reunions to Remember, Swift Boat Sailors Assoc. Reunion, 1673 Kilt Street, Virginia Beach, VA 23464

The full agenda for the reunion is included on the registration form. The events include two tours, the first is to the National Air and Space Museum and the second is a visit to Mount Vernon. Both of these tours are set up to be informative and fun, but most importantly a chance for fellowship with other Swifties.

Saturday is set up for a special memorial tour, which will include a visit to PCF 1 at the Washington Navy Yard followed by a memorial service at the US Navy Memorial. Following the memorial service there will be time to visit the other memorials on the Washington Mall and then return to the hotel.

If you live in the area or just want to help please contact Mike Solhaug. I know he can use volunteers. We are about 5 months out, and a reunion requires a lot of volunteers, we can use you all!

Terry Boone the Ship's Store manager has designed a special reunion T-shirt, which you can purchase before the reunion. Just place your order on the registration form and it will be in your packet at the time of your arrival.

## New Website

If you haven't gone on the new website yet please do. Thanks to the hard work of Jeremy Odell and Jim Deal the new website is up and running at [www.swiftboats.org](http://www.swiftboats.org). Hope you enjoy the new site!

## 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.

## PCF 816

Dave Bradley announced that PCF 816 would take part in the December 7 memorial service in San Diego along with the USS Midway. More information on this event is included in this issue of the Swift Current.

## Election of new Board of Directors

During the business meeting we will be electing directors to the board to fill out positions needed for the 2015-2019 terms. If you want to work on the board and are willing to put in the time and effort to keep SBSA moving forward, please run for one of the positions. **YOU ARE NEEDED.** Contact Virg Erwin, he is conducting the election during our business meeting. He can answer your questions and take your name to run for office.

## 2017 Site Selection

Dave Bradley will be presenting several cities, for the 2017 reunion, for your consideration at the business meeting. If you have suggestions please let Dave know your preferences.

These are a few of the activities currently underway; I will keep you updated in each issue of the Swift Current on the progress we are making. Please contact any of the officers with suggestions or concerns; we are interested in doing the right activities, the right way, for our association.

Van Odell

President SBSA

## 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



## Swift Boat Sailors Memorial

A Swift Boat Sailors Memorial website and physical exhibit is being developed. For over a year the team of Bob Gnau (PCF 51 & 67), Sue Edwards (founder of Legacies of Swift Boat Sailors) and Bob Bolger (OIC PCF 99) have been working on this project.

The heart of the SBSM is our website that will include such items as:

Film clips, pictures, oral histories, bio of 50 sailors still on patrol, TF 115 accomplishments, educational materials, links to other swift sites, boat and crew information, Swift Boat Articles in back copies of Stars & Stripes. (Any info you would like included, such as photographs, audio clips, videos, etc., please send to Sue Edwards at [sueedwards@live.com](mailto:sueedwards@live.com))

Our exhibit, which will originally be hosted at the Virginia War Memorial in Richmond, Virginia, will include:

A model of a Swift Boat which will be on a base that has the name of the 50 still on patrol, a map where the fifty were killed and the location of swift bases, fact sheets of the Boat, the Crew, the Mission and articles from the Stars & Stripes. It will also include (2) interactive Kiosk's with access to the website. Our plans also include a short film (15 – 20 minute) about Swift Boats.

Your help is now needed to complete this project. Our budget for this project is \$15,000. Donations can be made thru <http://www.gofundme.com/sbsmemorial>, or by check. Checks should be made to the Virginia War Memorial Educational Foundation and sent to VWM c/o Ako Nagahama, 621 S. Belvidere St. Richmond Va. 23220 – 6504. Be sure to put on the memo line: Swift Boat Project.



## Operation Smile (extracted from National Geographic)



Bill Franke (1989)



Mike Solhaug (1989)

Bill Franke, a St. Louis businessman, and Mike Solhaug, a Virginia pediatrician, didn't go to Hanoi in 1989 in search of absolution.

The men—who had served on a swift boat 20 years earlier in the Vietnam War—were among 35 volunteers who signed on with Operation Smile, a nonprofit medical organization that provides free surgery to repair facial deformities for children around the world. During their week in a Hanoi hospital, the men, part of the largest group of Americans to set foot on Vietnamese soil since the fall of Saigon, helped operate on more than a hundred kids with cleft lips and palates, defects that occur when a baby's lip or mouth does not form properly during pregnancy.

In November, 2014, Mike returned to Hanoi in the latest Operation Smile. Bill Franke couldn't make it. Mike performed pre-op and post-op pediatrician duty, but did no operations.

"If this is my last trip, so be it," Mike says. "Because in five years, in ten years, Operation Smile is going to be there; these kids are going to keep getting treated."

### **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.



## New Challenge Coin

Bob Barnett (Cam Ranh Bay, 1966-67) designed a new Swift Boat Veteran's Challenge Coin late last year and advertised them on the MyFamily.com website. He is selling these coins for \$10 each which includes shipping. Anyone interested in purchasing a coin they can contact him at:

[MCPO-Barnett@msn.com](mailto:MCPO-Barnett@msn.com) or at 3657 W. Lantana Hills Place, Tucson, AZ. 85741.

Also, if anyone has questions his cell number is 520-784-3485.

### 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](mailto: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
Gregory Cybulski	Columbus, OH	Sep 2014
Monty Mantonya	Puyallup, WA	Oct 2014

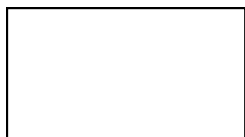
### Change of Address? Need new membership card?

Stay in touch with your shipmates!

Membership card replacement fee \$5.00.

Contact DC Current, Secretary

Email- [dc.current2@gmail.com](mailto:dc.current2@gmail.com)



Swift Boat Sailors Association  
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**Don't Even Think of Moving Without Telling Us!**

**Email - Letter - Telephone - Just DO IT!**

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