

PAWCATUCK PILOT

Volume 14 Issue 1

March 2006

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS PAWCATUCK AO-108



Special Points of Interest

- *Dave Willis's report to the Pawcatuck family is our cover story.*
- *See what your Assistant Coordinator has to say. His message is on page two.*
- *Steve Deluca's widow asks for a picture or story about him. See Deck Force page three.*
- *Letters in Deck Force might help bring back some memories for you. See pages three and four.*
- *Page 5 has some very important information about how you will receive the newsletter in the future. Read it carefully and respond as needed.*

WILLIS'S WORDS OF WISDOM

05 March, 2006

Hello Pawcatuck shipmates and family.

Yes it is that time again for another reunion. This will be our 14th and I look forward to seeing all of you in Nashville, TN. We again hope to hit the 100 plus attendance for this year. I hope all of you have had a good year. Yes, many went thru some bad weather last fall and hope those that did come thru with not too much damage.

I would like to correct something from the last newsletter. I had stated that we might get some items from the ship and that we had two shipmates in the area of Norfolk. Those two shipmates are

former Lt. Callaway and Master/Capt. Russell.

Capt. Russell has visited the ship a few times and was able to get a few items from the ship. I do not know at this time what those items are and we will figure out how we will either auction or raffle them off.

We do have a web site and there are a few items on the site. We will be adding as time goes by.

This date of March 5th 2006 the Phoenix area has gone 138 days without rain. So if any of you would like to send some this way, please do.

To date we have lost 7 shipmates and we have gained 9 new shipmates. This is all I really have to

report at this time. Again we hope to see many new shipmates and let us go past the 100 mark again this year.

Just a reminder that we rely strictly on donations to help pay for the newsletter. We need your help. If you would like to contribute, please send to MLRS and on the bottom of the check put for USS PAWCATUCK news letter.

Until we see you all in Nashville on the 30th of April have a super day. Yours

David Willis,

Reunion coordinator for the USS PAWCATUCK AO-108

MCPHERSON'S MESSAGE

14th ANNUAL REUNION TIME

PAWCATUCK FAMILY and SHIPMATES:

By now we all have received our Reunion Reservation Packets, and I hope that all have completed and returned them in order that this year may again be one of our biggest musters yet. As you have noticed, we will be riding the General Jackson Showboat as one of our events. My wife was on this showboat a few years ago, and she said it was very enjoyable.

Dave Willis, our Coordinator, and myself again this year have had many discussions concerning our reunion, and we have some interesting items that you will want to come and bid on, during our auction.

I have titled this year's reunion "A Time for Reflections," as we not only remember those shipmates who have passed on as we do each year, but this year again will be a time for reflection for our ship. Last year we bid farewell to the SMILING INDIAN, and this year she has sailed her last voyage.

As many of us know who come to these reunions each year, we arrive searching for our shipmate who served with us, but in the end, we leave with a renewed thankfulness for new memories as well as old ones. We are truly a family.

As a reminder, please keep your donations coming in to support the Pawcatuck Pilot, our newsletter.

As a reminder, if you have not yet sent in your Reunion Reservation form, please do so.

Looking forward to seeing all.

Mark McPherson
Assistant Reunion Coordinator
USS PAWCATUCK AO-108

2006 PAWCATUCK REUNION

APRIL 30-MAY3

NASHVILLE, TN

HOLIDAY INN SELECT HOTEL

The Pawcatuck Pilot is Published by:
Military Locator & Reunion Service, Inc
PO Drawer 11399
Hickory, NC 28603

828-256-6008 (voice)
828-256-6559 (fax)

E-mail addresses:
Dinamlrs@charterinternet.com
karenmlrs@charterinternet.com

www.mlrsinc.com (web site)

"Our Reunions Work So You Don't Have

Financial Statement

Balance after 12/05 issue **\$433.94**
Funds received since 12/05
\$220.00
Funds available for 03/06 **\$653.94**
Funds used for 03/06 issue
\$439.34
Balance remaining for 06/06 issue
\$214.60

PLEASE CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE \$5.00 TO THE NEWSLETTER. YOUR \$5.00 CAN KEEP IT COMING EACH QUARTER. SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO ML&RS, INC. TO OUR ADDRESS ABOVE.

STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

The PAWCAUCK PILOT is the official publication of the USS PAWCATUCK AO-108 Association. It will be published quarterly in March, June, September, and December, *subject to receiving sufficient funding*. The Newsletter is funded by voluntary contributions from the membership. All members are encouraged to support the voice of the PAWCATUCK. A financial statement appears in each issue of the newsletter.

The newsletter is intended to be a vehicle for the members to express opinions, make suggestions and especially share experiences.

Unless otherwise stated, the views and opinions printed in the newsletter are those of the article's writer, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Association leadership or the Editor of the Newsletter.

All letters and stories submitted will be considered for publication, except unsigned letters will not be published. Letters requesting the writer's name be withheld will be honored, but published on a space available basis. Signed letters with no restrictions will be given priority.

Letters demeaning to another shipmate will not be printed; letters espousing a political position will not be printed.

The editor reserves the right to edit letters to conform to space limitations and grammar.

You are encouraged to actively participate in the newsletter family by submitting your stories and suggestions.

SEE WHO'S GOING TO BE AT THE REUNION!

To keep up with a current list of reunion attendees who are registered for the 2006 reunion, check the website www.mlrsinc.com/pawcatuck weekly. Updates are added on Fridays. Get your registration in before the cut off date of March 27.



WELCOME MAT

The following shipmates have been located recently. Welcome aboard. We hope to see you at the reunion and that you will take an active part in the association. We welcome:

Terry Futrall
10984 Baird Rd
Amherst, OH 44001
440-965-4825

Charles Saul (1960-63)
4702 78 Ct E
Bradenton, FL 34203-7891
941-756-1726

Al Alexander (1968-72) SM3 Ops
48069 Tilch
Macomb, MI 48044
586-247-7640
aljoyalex@comcast.net

Earl Ramey (1956-59) QMC
760 Shawboro Rd
Oshawboro, NC 27973
252-232-6569

Ken Adkins (1970-73) MM2
23252 Woodland Acres Rd
California, MD 20619
301-862-4418

John O'Donnell
(1957-59) 1st Lt/Deck
PO Box 1012
Mount Pleasant, SC 29465
843-884-0753

William Bibb (1966-69) MM2
1577 Old Brook Rd
Charlottesville, VA 22901-1286
434-975-3210



TAPS

The Pawcatuck Pilot has learned of the following deaths since the last newsletter. Our deepest sympathy goes to the widows, families and friends of the deceased. Anyone who knows or learns of a shipmate's death, you are requested to notify the newsletter so that person can be listed in TAPS and also on the Honor Roll at the next reunion.

Raymond DeThomas
(1952-56) SH3/c Supply
Died February 12, 2006

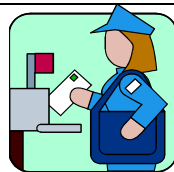
Stephen Deluca
Died July 2002

Frank Boyer
(1951-54) BM3
Died July 30, 2005

John "Jake" Nistelbeck
(1962-64) CSC
Date of death not reported

Leroy Kloss
(1952-53) FN
Died November 8, 2005

Larry Harder
Died February 12, 2005



DECK FORCE

Sirs,

Sorry to inform you that Steve (DeLuca) passed on in July 2002. He had diabetes and needed a kidney and liver transplant together. He was also going blind. We were married 28 years with a daughter. He had 2 daughters and 3 grand-

children by a previous marriage. If anyone has a picture of Steve or a story, please notify me. Thank you.

JoAnn Deluca
10626 96th St
Ozone Park, NY 11417-2132

To Whom It May Concern:

I was not a "Swabby" but a Yardbird (Shipwright) in shop 64 when we were sent on the Pawcatuck to stage the forward peak tank for sandblasting while lowering a 7 foot Georgia green pine plank which weighed 75 pounds. One of my fellow workers dropped it. I was down in the tank to set the planks (for the painters who did the sandblasting). It fell 33 ft, striking me in the collar bone, then bouncing off my right foot. Well, when they got me up on the deck, the civilian doctor (RODMAN) would not come on the ship so your corpsmen gave me first aid. Took work boot off, saw hole in sock where right big toe should be and casually removed the detached piece, put in a napkin and says/asks me if I want to see it. Not me! They took me off in a skiff bucket to the Hawaiian nurse, Mrs. Barroff to Chelsea Naval. It was in the 60s maybe. The Corpsmen will remember me. Tall Pollock, flat on his butt minus a toe!!!

Well, so much for bull doo doo. Thanks a million to the "Navy OOC" who took care of me!! He wanted to suture it on deck!

Good luck to all the crew of the Good Old 108/Pawcatuck. I'd appreciate a piece of the old lady if at all possible.

Yours respectfully
Al Zakrzewski
Yard Bird Shipwright
Shop 64
Charleston Navy Yard
AKA Boston Naval Shipyard



Left to Right: Jordan, Sandman, Woods, Renfroe, West

These guys all need to be at this next Pawcatuck reunion. West and I (Jordan) are the only ones that have been to a Pawcatuck reunion. They all are on our roster. We were all in supply—Jordan, Sandman, and Renfroe were SH – Barbers and Wood and West were Store Keepers. Is that right, boys? Someone (Mr. Ott or Mr. Hilton) tell us what work these guys really did on the ship. West broke out the food for the cooks. What did he do the rest of the time? Sandman ordered a tape recorder every now and then for some of us. One time he ordered me a pair of clippers. What else did he do? Wood and Renfroe did something other than look cool—I am sure. I know that I worked hard cutting about twenty-five heads of hair a day, five days a week.

Jordan (the working Pawcatuck barber)

FIVE-STAR COMMANDERS

Only 9 men in the history of the U.S. have achieved the rank of "five stars"—4 U.S. Navy, 4 U.S. Army, and 1 U.S. Air Force. They are: Adm. William Leahy, Gen George C. Marshall, Gen Henry H Arnold, Gen Douglas MacArthur, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Gen Omar N Bradley, Adm Ernest J King, Adm Chester Nimitz, and Adm William F "Bull" Halsey .

SPRING/SUMMER 1952 CRUISE JOURNAL USS PAWCATUCK

Continued from earlier issues

The officers and men of the Pawcatuck are to be congratulated on the wonderful safety record during the Med cruise, especially the deck force because of the more hazardous work that has to be performed by that department. The only accident of any consequence to prove injurious to a deck force person was when **Dick Empson** broke his nose a few weeks before sailing for the Med, which necessitated his being in the hospital a few weeks. This, however, was not caused by hazardous work, but resulted when "Empy" and part of the ship met during a little basketball practice on the well deck. Another unfortunate occurrence as a result of basketball was when **Will Woolard** lost a one hundred dollar watch over the side, which made him very sad.

The ambitions and desires heard expressed by navy men out at sea are endless and, believe it or not, do not always concern the distaff side. Of course the ladies always seem to keep themselves foremost in the minds of men, but once in a while the conversation wanders to other things the fellows have left behind or hope for when they get back. **Gene Vail** is a great exponent of the sport of stock car racing. **Chud Fosher** from Coopersville, New York, is desirous of becoming a state policeman when he gets out of the Navy. **Bruce Phelps** from Florence, Alabama, was a pressman from his dad's newspaper, the Florence Times. Without exception, everyone was looking forward to being home, back with the folks to tell them of their experiences and the places that were seen during the trip. **Frank Boyer** who was having a big church wedding upon return to the United States probably didn't have time to do much of that, but the others with nothing quite as time consuming during leave could

be expected to relate to their loved ones gathered about them the high spots of the voyage. **Winfield Rau** took the fastest vehicle and headed in the direction of Baltimore, Maryland, to be with his wife and son. **Hewey Thornsby** made a beeline for North Spring, West Virginia, and so like an open fan, busses, trains, cars and planes scattered Pawcatuckers north, south, east and west for a few days, each to his respective home town. After traveling more than 20,000 miles on the good ship Pawcatuck, what's a few hundred miles? Sailors are noted for fondness of travel, but the traveling they like best is when it's in the direction of home.

Editor's Note: Most of these men named in this piece are on the mailing list, so we'd love to hear what you have to say about those incidents mentioned in this Cruise Book. Please write to us for the next issue. Let's hear Dick Empson's side of the story about the broken nose? Who does Gene Vail pull for in today's stock car racing? Did Chud Fosher become a state policeman? Did Frank Boyer have that big church wedding? Did Bruce Phelps take over his dad's newspaper business? Just how did Will Wollard lose that \$100 watch overboard? Can't wait to learn the answers to those questions!

DID YOU KNOW?

The first losing candidate in a U.S. Presidential election was Thomas Jefferson. He lost to John Adams. George Washington had been unopposed.

The 1st U.S. Marines wore high leather collars to protect their necks from sabers, hence the name "leathernecks."

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information contained in this letter is very important! Please read it very carefully and respond as necessary! **You must respond as indicated in this message to continue receiving information about your reunion through the US Postal mail!**

Big changes are going on here at ML&RS, Inc! They're not going to happen overnight, but the process has begun. As you are certainly aware, rising costs for hotel rooms, meal prices and fuel for autos and tour buses makes for a more expensive reunion! We are doing everything we can to keep our costs to a minimum. However, prices continue to rise, including postage (which has gone up again the first of this year). In an effort to offer you and your fellow attendees the lowest possible cost, we are going to make some changes to the way things have been done in the past. We hope you will work with us to implement these changes as smoothly as possible!

Due to the multitude of requests we have received over the last few years, we are going to now upgrade our web site to include a variety of information pertaining to your reunion. There will be a small web site within our company's web site for each of the reunion groups we work with. The main page for each group will contain basic information about the upcoming reunion, as well as links to several other pages, including but not limited to lists of those who have signed up, the actual registration packet as a web page, a link to the profiles that were previously printed in the Sentimental Journal, newsletters, and after the reunion a link that can be used to order copies of the memory books that will now be included as part of the reunion package. Also, we will not duplicate anything your group already has on their web page. We will do our best to keep personal information secure. Addresses and phone numbers will not be published. Email addresses will only be published with permission.

Beginning with the 2006 reunions, we will be discontinuing our memorabilia sales, including the Sentimental Journal. There are so many web sites out there now where hats, t-shirts, etc can be ordered, and the turn-around time is just a matter of days. When we first started this business, this was not the case. We began offering these items as a service to the reunion groups who didn't know

where else to order items. Due to the increased availability of memorabilia, our sales have declined over the last few years, and it is no longer cost effective for us to continue offering these items. Also, there are a lot of groups who prefer to sell the items themselves as a fund raiser for the association. We certainly do not wish to compete with your association sales!

In place of the Sentimental Journal, we will begin including a 2006 Memory Book as the memorabilia item given away at the reunion. This will replace the note cards, clocks, pens, etc that have been given in the past. However, they will not be given at the reunion, they will be sent to each attendee (who signs up for one of the Option Packages or orders one as part of their Individual Option) following the reunion. The 2006 Memory Book will contain photos from the reunion and "then and now" photos that have been submitted prior to the reunion each year. The very popular profiles will now be accessible from the web site.

Now that the group's web site is up and running we will discontinue the majority of the paper mailings we sent out. Newsletters, Surveys, Introductory Letters and Questionnaires, and the Registration Material will all be available on the web site. Your group's web site is www.mlrsinc.com/pawcatuck. Be sure to visit the site frequently and take advantage of the information that will be/is available there. If your profile is not listed in the Crew Profiles, then be sure to submit yours via www.mlrsinc.com/questionnaire.htm.

We do realize that there are still some people who do not have or do not want internet access. Because of this, we will continue paper mailings to those who let us know they want their info via the postal mail. **You must return the "coupon" at the end of this letter if you wish to continue receiving paper copies of the various materials we send out—newsletters, registration packets, surveys, etc.** If you do not mail in this coupon, we are assuming you have internet access and can obtain all the necessary reunion information off your group's web site.

At some point in the near future, we plan to add on-line registration capabilities to each group's web site. That probably won't happen this year, but I do foresee it happening soon. That is another feature we got a lot of requests for.

As we strive to provide you and your reunion group with the best possible value for your reunion dollar, it is sometimes necessary to change the way some things are done. Our ultimate goal is to offer each and every reunion attendee a great reunion at a reasonable price. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, comments or suggestions!

Respectfully,
Dina Coffey
Office Manager
M L&RS, Inc

Return this coupon if you want to receive all future mailings from us on paper via US Postal Mail:

Reunion Group: _____
(ship or unit name)

Your name: _____

Your mailing address: _____

Your phone number: _____

Return this coupon to:
ML&RS, INC
PO DRAWER 11399
HICKORY, NC 28603