

# PAWCATUCK PILOT

Volume 14 Issue 3

December 2006

## OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS PAWCATUCK AO-108



### Special Points of Interest

- *Dave Willis has news from the USS Pawcatuck in his coordinator's column on the cover.*
- *Captain Honour has written a column presenting some personal information as well as some things regarding the reunion. See page two.*
- *Welcome Mat on page two has seven newly located members. Hope they will join us at the reunion.*
- *Mail Call on page three has a letter from H. Trattner who wonders why there aren't more letters from the earlier crew.*
- *The 1952 Cruise Journal continues on page four.*

### WILLIS'S WORDS OF WISDOM

To all Shipmates and Pawcatuck Family members.

Summer is over and fall is here. Except here in Arizona it is still nice and warm. I hope everybody had a nice summer.

On the 13th of October I received this email from Rebecca Robinson who was in charge of taking our ship apart.

I quote, "The Pawcatuck was out of the water on October 7th, 2006. We will be processing metal for about another month. But I can say that she is no longer a ship." I know all shipmates will probably have a tear in their eye but all good things come to an end. We can all say we served on one of the finest oilers of the US Navy and

we can all be proud that we had the satisfaction we contributed to keeping our country safe.

I hope many of you will come to next year's reunion in Jacksonville, Fl. This will be our 15th annual reunion. Many of you who served on the ship from 1966 to 1991 will have many memories coming in and out of Mayport, Fl. So remember all your stories and bring them with you. For those who have pictures, bring them along. I have heard from a few people that the "Sea Turtle" is a great hotel. Good food and that came from Capt. Honour.

Our hope is that all widows and family members would join us next year.

Family members are all part of the Pawcatuck Family. So please come and meet shipmates who served with your dad, uncle, grandpa, husband and if I missed anybody you are all welcome.

I have had an idea for a long time now that I would like to see those who belong to American Legion, FRA, VFW, and other organizations bring your cap to show your pride in your organization. This is up to each shipmate if you would like to do this to show your pride in the group you prefer.

I have contacted the Navy Band in Jacksonville and will try and get them to come and play for our me-

*(Continued on page 2)*

(Continued from page 1)

morial service like we did in Norfolk in 2005. It will depend on whether they are or are not already scheduled some place else.

I will bring some CD's with many pictures of the ship and my trip to see the ship. Donations will be greatly appreciated to help in the cost of making them.

Last a reminder I still have ball caps and total cost is \$15.00. I have two that have USNS PAWCATUCK TAO-108. Anybody that sends me money for those will be first come first served.

That is all for now and look forward to seeing all of you in Jacksonville next April. Remember the 15th to the 18th.

Please remember all our troops that are in harms way. From Jan and I, we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Stay safe.

Yours,  
David Willis, Reunion coordinator  
for the USS PAWCATUCK AO-108  
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Surprise, Arizona 85374-6153  
623-214-9835 Home  
623-628-7662 Cell  
Email [dwshs53@aol.com](mailto:dwshs53@aol.com) and  
[dwshs53@cox.net](mailto:dwshs53@cox.net)

## WANT TO CUT COSTS AT THE REUNION?

Any shipmate planning on coming to the reunion who is not a smoker and coming by themselves and would like to share a room and cut the cost, please notify Dave Willis, Reunion Coordinator, at 623-214-9835 or e-mail me at [dwshs53@aol.com](mailto:dwshs53@aol.com).

To all, have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. See you in Jacksonville.

Yours,  
Dave Willis, reunion coordinator

## A WORD FROM CAPTAIN HONOUR

I regret the delay in response, but I had a serious recent medical problem requiring three operations within the last month. I am on the mend now, but minus one third of my right middle finger, resulting from a bone infection. Doing yard work I was stabbed by a lugustrum branch spur laden with green mold. So I can't give anyone the finger properly anymore. One time I asked the doctor if I would be able to drive home after a visit with him. He said OK, but hold your right hand up. En route I passed an unmarked police car and he promptly pulled me over. I hastened to assure him that I was not giving him the finger, and he replied, "I understand, but I stopped you for doing over 65 in a 55mph zone." I got away with a warning.

With regard to the reunion, there is not enough time in the Reunion schedule to see what can be seen in this area. Ft. Caroline, Ft. Clinch, World Golf Village, NAS Jacksonville, Downtown—the Landings, Maritime Museum, the Navy Sailor statue, the Boardwalk, the River Cruise, World Class Jacksonville Zoo, Metropolitan Park, Kings Bay Submarine Base, and of course Naval Station Mayport. If I am well, I could assist in arranging a tour of Naval Station Mayport where those who were aboard in my command time, '66-68, spent so much time. We could also arrange a tour through Fleet Landing, the predominately Navy retirement village a mile south of Mayport and a golf outing on the fine Windy Harbor course at NS Mayport with a great luncheon at Bogeys 19th Hole. St. Augustine is worth the time—ONCE— but full of tourist trap attractions. My advice is to plan to spend a little more time before or after the present allotted time.

Cheers and look forward to seeing you all God willing.

Captain Honour



## 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:

**Eldon Hansen (1952-56) SN**  
1370 N Madison St  
Fremont, NE 68025  
402-721-0645  
[cbfd18@hotmail.com](mailto:cbfd18@hotmail.com)

**Frank Duffy (1948-52) RM3**  
404 S Warwick Rd  
Magnolia, NJ 08049  
856-783-5946  
[fduffy404@comcast.net](mailto:fduffy404@comcast.net)

**Heinz Garland**  
(1973-75) E4/QM3 Navigation  
4705 Spring Glen Rd  
Jacksonville, FL 32207  
904-962-8510  
[ggbeads57@yahoo.com](mailto:ggbeads57@yahoo.com)

**Bill Emery (1972-74) Lt(jg)**  
5519 Folly Place  
Norcross, GA 30092  
770-446-2249  
[billemary@comcast.net](mailto:billemary@comcast.net)

**Mark Moyer (1989-90) ET3**  
605 St. Cloud Dr  
Antioch, TN 37013  
615-714-4659

**John Duvall (1955-57) SH3**  
4846 Hegrow Dr  
Raleigh, NC 27616  
919-850-0700

**John Hernandez**  
(1970-72) MM2 M Div  
1006 River Acres Dr  
Tecumseh, MI 49286  
734-358-9035  
[skydivejrh@comcast.net](mailto:skydivejrh@comcast.net)



## 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.

**Dean Cooksey**

(1953-55) CS2

Died December 9, 2005

**Edward Doblis**

(1953-55) XO

Date of death not reported

**Russell Dowd**

(9152-55) RD2 O Div

Died July 8, 2006

**Ted Hudson**

Died February 1, 2006

**Guy Manchester**

(1948-54) BMSN

Died December 7, 2005

**Richard Shellenbarger**

(1950-54) MM3 E1 Div

Died September 17, 2006

**Clifford Dreaney**

(1961-65) PN3 Deck/2nd/Ops/X Div

Died August 19, 2006

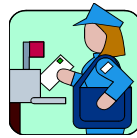
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*"Our Reunions Work So You Don't Have To"*



## DECK FORCE

Hello,

I enjoy getting the Pawcatuck Pilot. It brings back memories.

I served as a reserve in April 1951—August 1952. Great good times.

My wife and I haven't been able to attend any reunions due to other plans made. We love to travel, so we're on the go. Can't make the Jacksonville reunion for we will be on a world cruise till April 30.

My thoughts are with the people who enjoyed the Pawcatuck.

Anyway, I'd like to send my contribution for the great mailings you make. Best to all that love the Pawcatuck, "The Mighty Paw."

Good luck,  
Billy Knowles

To the Pawcatuck Alumni,

The recent issue of the Pawcatuck Pilot contained some interesting items that raised a few questions. I note that many of the entries are from the crew that served aboard her in the mid-late '50s and later. Very few items have appeared regarding the beginning of the ship's career.

The poem, authored by Mrs. Ruby VanDyke, touches on the issue of "when did all this begin," and raises the question as to why there are not more articles of the initial days of the ship, from commissioning, taking it out of the yard, and the first trip down the river to the sea. The age element is very likely a factor, with most of the original crew well into their 70's, and some older. Perhaps their respective memories are fading, or they have become indifferent with the passage of time. There may be other reasons for not recording incidents that we experienced, while a substantial number

of us are growing up aboard the ship.

Whatever the reason(s), it is of interest to me to read the comments of the "younger" ex-crew members.

Sincerely,  
H. Trattner  
Plank Owner, one time QM3

## PERKS OF BEING OVER 50

- Kidnappers are not very interested in you.
- In a hostage situation you're likely to be released first.
- No one expects you to run—anywhere.
- People no longer view you as a hypochondriac.
- There is nothing left to learn the hard way.
- Things you buy now won't wear out.
- You can live without sex, but not your glasses.

## Financial Statement

Balance after 06/06 issue

**\$792.27**

Funds received since 06/06

**\$230.00**

Funds available for 12/06

**\$1022.27**

Funds used for 12/06 issue

**\$438.01**

Balance remaining for 03/07 issue

**\$584.26**

**Please continue to contribute \$5.00 for the publication of the newsletter. Send contributions to ML&RS, Inc at the address on the left.**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE: THIS IS THE LAST ISSUE THAT WILL BE MAILED TO ALL ON THE MAILING LIST. IF YOU WISH TO CONTINUE RECEIVING THE NEWSLETTER BY U.S. POSTAL MAIL, YOU MUST RETURN THE COUPON THAT WAS IN ONE OF THE 2 PREVIOUS MAILINGS. OTHERS CAN ACCESS THE NEWSLETTER ON LINE.**

# SPRING/SUMMER 1952 CRUISE JOURNAL

## USS PAWCATUCK

Continued from earlier issues

As the Pawcatuck left "Old Pint Comfort" abeam to port on our way to the Mediterranean a quick census of the Quartermaster Gang would have revealed the following composition: five wheels and five strikers.

The five wheels were: Ralph Penney QM1, who had just recently had the duties of division P.O. thrust upon him after Chief Jamison departed for California and shore duty. Then there was Howard Norris QM1, a new comer to the Paw who was adjusting himself to the Navigator, Lt. Guertin.

Joe Sorrentino and Harlan Quamme both QM2's were pilot and copilot respectively of the flying bridge receiving messages from all sides and running the legs off their strikers James McCronan and Don Dinneen. Compton QM3, with his two assistants, Richard Booker and John Huchla, were the real "Flags" of the gang. At flag hoist exercises Compton was the ace "bender oner" and Booker and Hutch were the ace "up and down haulers." Last but not forgotten was Dewy Rakes who justly deserved the honorary rate of Machinist Mate since most of his time was spent in after steering. This QM gang began to click like well oiled machinery as soon as we joined up with the convoy and is still clicking.

In order to say the crossing of the Atlantic was uneventful, we would have to overlook the tragic occurrences involving the Hobson. However, for the most part routine fueling operations during the day, followed by short nights when we pushed the clocks 1 hour ahead, were the general rule. Then one morning we sighted land and further along the coast—Gibraltar.

After passing through the straits, we began refueling the fleet, under the inquisitive, but friendly, eyes of the British Air Force. Our Mediterra-

nean duty had begun. We had good liberty in the various ports visited. But, we also remember the times we worked hard and long on operations, especially the long drawn out G.Q. during the joint maneuvers with our European Allies in "Operation Beehive II." We remember the night well, fueling in pitch darkness, with only the little red flash lights and luminous helmets visible. The most pleasant part of this operation came after the word "Secure from fueling at sea detail" was passed and we could hit our sacks with heavy eyelids, perhaps not fully realizing the significance of our achievements of that day. Admiral Carney enlightened us however, by issuing the order of the day quoted

*"...wish to express to all hands there in my awareness of and appreciation for the loyal support that they have unfailingly tendered to me, and I extend to each and every officer and man in the command my sincere good wishes for the future.*

*"Since the end of World War II the U.S. Navy has been a powerful force aiding the preservation of peace and fostering good will in Europe. Its officers and men serving here have given a warm and human verification of our nation's expressions of good will, and our ships and planes have eloquently illustrated our avowed intentions to give encouragement and support to those people who are determined to preserve their hard won freedom. Your conduct and your demonstration of technical competence have earned, deservedly, the liking and respect for the people of our allies in Europe. You have thereby rendered a valuable service to your country and to the cause of free men everywhere.*

*"My earliest expressions of ap-*

*preciation, gratitude and best wishes for your future. I wish to add the Navy's highest accolade WELL DONE."*

Admiral Carney

We were thrilled when our gun mount did well at gunnery practice and jeered the gunners mates without let up when the Grand Canyon or the Shenandoah's gun got the target sleeve instead.

Then there was the time when the Pawcatuck was SOPA and we quartermasters, drunk with authority, would announce over the Primary Tactical Circuit, "Scissors, this is Tahiti." Watchstanding for those few days while we were waiting the arrival of the Shenandoah was made especially pleasant with the knowledge that no tactical signals would come over the T.B.S. unexpectedly for we as the O.T.C. would have to be the originator of such signals.

Before our tour of duty was completed we had made five trips into Naples and the Punta Carena light on the Isle of Capri was, with Mt. Vesuvius, our most familiar navigational aid. As we passed Capri abeam the special sea and anchor detail would be set. From a QM's viewpoint, in port watches at Naples were preferable to Golfe Juan, Augusta or Piraeus, simply because of the lesser traffic on the signal bridge. The Adirondack was always an easy SOPA. In the other ports the presence of the bulk of the Sixth Fleet complicated matters, the messages to A.S.P. were without end and required many times the efforts of four or more men to handle the load.

*To be continued in future issues.*