

# The BEXAR BROWN

Volume 11 Issue 2

January 2005

## OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS BEXAR APA 237



### Items of Special Interest

- Plans are underway for a Bexar plaque to be placed on the Navy Memorial Foundation's Memorial Wall. See how you can help from our cover story.
- Seven new names for our roster are found on page two under Welcome Mat.
- Several letters in Mail Call are from former Bexar sailors who would like to contact old acquaintances. See page three.
- Bob Weiss asks for your help in locating some "orphan" members. See page four.
- Another article for you information on Retiree and Veteran Issues is on pages five and six.

### PLANS FOR BEXAR PLAQUE

Plans are presently underway for our reunion association to place a USS Bexar plaque at the Navy Memorial Foundation's "Memorial Wall" at our next reunion in September 2005 in Washington, DC. The United States Navy Memorial Foundation was founded in 1977 and honors all who served in the sea services and perpetuates their heritage, values, and traditions. By presenting the Bexar plaque, we will be continuing that heritage and tradition, and will be continuing to preserve the Bexar's place in naval history. Information about the memorial wall can be found at:

[www.lonesailor.org](http://www.lonesailor.org)

The plaque design is well underway and should be finalized shortly. Fund raising has already begun. Those of you who attended the Seattle reunion had the opportunity to make contributions/pledges to our Bexar plaque fund. Currently, we have raised \$900.00 in funds and \$1,000.00 in pledges. The total cost of placing a plaque on the main memorial wall is \$2,500.00. We are well within our reach of our goal. You, too, can help in reaching our goal of \$2,500.00 by making a contribution. Your contribution to the U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation for the Bexar plaque fund is tax deductible.

To make a contribution, please make your check

out to: **U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation** and send your check to:

Jon Mullarky  
609 Blenny Lane  
Chester, MD 21619

If you have questions, you can contact:

Jon Mullarky at  
Phone: 410-604-3502  
E-mail:  
[Betelgeux@friend.ly.net](mailto:Betelgeux@friend.ly.net)  
or

Bill Patton at  
Phone: 515-225-7566  
E-mail:  
[wspatton@msn.com](mailto:wspatton@msn.com)

# Not-For-Profit Ship's Store

Through the efforts of some of your shipmates this enterprise has come to fruition. For items indicated, necessary minimum purchases all have been made and sold to obtain these low prices. Now you all may individually order direct.

BUMPER STICKER (4" by 11")



Cost: \$4.00 (includes shipping)  
Check or M/O payable to:  
Photovision, Inc.  
and notated USS BEXAR  
Mail to:  
Photovision, Inc.  
P.O. Box 313  
Riverton, N. J. 08077

EMBROIDERED PATCH (3")



Cost: \$3.25 (includes shipping)  
Check or M/O payable to:  
John Flynn  
And notated USS BEXAR  
Mail to:  
John Flynn  
P.O. Box 23518  
Washington, D.C. 20026



## WELCOME MAT

The following shipmates were located since the last newsletter was published. Welcome Aboard! We hope to see you at the next reunion. You are invited to become an active member of the association. **At the request of your association, we will no longer publish the addresses and phone numbers of the new shipmates.** If you would like to have an address, please contact ML&RS at our address below.

*Rudolfo Lopez  
(1966-67) MMRN M Div*

*Jack Wolfe  
(1952-55) QMSN Nav*

*Clifford Elliott  
(1965-67) SMSN OS Div*

*Douglas Myers*

*Robert Gosman  
(1952-60)*

*Gordon Ashburn  
(1957-59) GMSN 4th Div*

*Carl Loveday  
(1958-62) RMSN; RM3;R; OC Div*

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Hickory, NC 28601*

*828-256-6008 (voice)  
8280256-6559 (fax)*

**Dinamlrs@charterinternet  
karenmlrs@charterinternet.net  
(newsletter e-mail)**

*www.mlrsinc.com (web site)*

*"Our Reunions work So You don't have To"*



## TAPS

The Growl was notified of the following shipmates' deaths since the last newsletter was published. Our deepest sympathy goes to the families and friends of the deceased.

*Eldon Grater  
(1951-52) BT3  
Died September 9, 2004*

*Capt. Madison Hall, Jr.  
(1953-54)  
Died November 13, 1991*

*William Miller  
(1945-46) EM2/c E Div  
Date of death not reported*

*Dudley Rickwood  
(1949-52) SK3 S-1  
Died 2004*

*James Young  
(1966-68)  
Died September 24, 2004*

*Hollie Elliott  
(1967-69) CDR XO  
Died July 2004*

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Funds available after 10/04 issue  
**\$1961.28**  
Funds received since 10/04 issue  
**\$355.00**  
Total available for 01/05 issue  
**\$2316.28**  
Funds expended for 01/05 issue  
**\$ 155.25**  
**(Mailed to 129 members)**

**Balance remaining for 04/05  
issue \$2161.03**

## THANK YOU NOTES

My wife and I wish to thank all the 2004 reunion attendees; Jim Redding, our Shipmate Representative; along with Lois Nangle, our ML&RS representative, for their kind thoughts in the card they sent. We were unable to attend this year because of some serious health issues involving two of my brothers. Thankfully, they were resolved successfully and all your sentiments were much appreciated. See you all in Baltimore in 2005.

Bob and Fumiko Weiss

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Thanks so much to all our friends and shipmates that sent Bob the Get Well card from Seattle. It has been a rough time, but with all the prayers and get well wishes, he is on the road to recovery and we plan to see you all in Baltimore next fall. Thanks again.

Bob & Helen Askren  
Holton, Kansas

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## MAIL CALL

Shipmates,

Be advised that I spoke via telephone today (7 Oct 2004) with Barbara Grater. Unfortunately the news was not good as she had to tell me that her husband, Eldon, had passed away on September 9th.

He was barely a month shy of his 73rd birthday and passed away at home. He and Barbara were married for some 46 years and had seven children and twelve grandchildren. He had been a long-time member of the Brainerd American Legion Post #255.

Barbara and Eldon attended their first reunion last year in San Antonio and she told me they had a

wonderful time and he got a real joy in reuniting with former Bexar shipmates. I recalled meeting with them and assisting them in getting their group picture from the reunion. Attending that reunion was one of the things he really wanted to do. Shortly after returning from that trip though, his condition got decidedly worse. He suffered from prostate cancer that had metastasized to his spine. I, myself, had recent open prostate surgery and we discussed his condition. For those not familiar with that health issue, Eldon's legacy to us may well be a reminder to have your PSA test done annually, without fail. Eldon had NO SYMPTOMS OR PAIN when he found out, but a borderline reading of 4 changed to an astronomical 1100 only two years later.

Eldon served aboard the Bexar from 1951 to 1952 and was a BT3 in "B" Division.

Should you wish to send Barbara a card with your thoughts, you may send it to: Barbara Grater, 8917 Dal Mar Dr, Brainerd, MN 56401.

Bob Weiss

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Mr. James Redding

I read in a monthly magazine, *Sea Scape*, about the reunion of the crew of the USS Bexar. I served on the Bexar as a boat crew member, but so long ago I can't remember the year. I remember being in the 1st Division and also the boat crew, but other than that, at 78, my memory is not what it once was. To my knowledge, this is the first reunion of any of the ships I served on and I wouldn't have known about the Bexar except my son brought the magazine from Philadelphia and his mother-in-law's home. (His father-in-law just passed away.) His father-in-law served 5 years on the USS Arkansas and was NAVY all the way! I am going to subscribe and maybe I'll continue to get information.

I served on 7 APA's, 5 of which were the Bexar, Renville, Carteret, Fuller and Colusa, the latter which I crewed during her commissioning at San Pedro, California. The other two

escapes my memory!

The Carteret was one of the ships at the Bikini "A-Bomb" Tests. She was condemned as being too "hot" and was eventually towed out of Bikini and shelled until it finally was necessary to be sunk by torpedo.

Except for the Carteret, I completely lost track of all the others. I would appreciate any information you could e-mail me.

Thanks  
Doug Myers, Sr  
32 Ashford Dr  
Cranberry Twp, PA 16066  
724-772-7032  
dougsr@myerscoinc.com

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Hi,

My name is Robert Eugene Gosman and I was born in Trimble County, Kentucky. I was in the USA Navy in 1952-1960 and was on the ship USS Bexar (APA-237) four years in San Diego, CA, and on the USS Tarawa Aircraft Carrier for 2 1/2 years in Great Lakes Training Center 1 1/2 years. I would like to know if any of my buddies out there who are still living would like to write to me or call me. I now live at this address below. I would love to hear from you.

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Eugene Gosman  
44 Hubbard Lane  
Milton, Kentucky 40045  
502-268-3146

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ML&RS, Inc.

Received my Growl yesterday. Was very disappointed to read the article by Gene Aittala. He apologizes for the timeliness of some of the information. It looks to me that his intent was to make a political statement, not to disseminate information.

I quote from your Statement of Publication, "Letters expousing a political position will not be printed." Did your editor not read this article or was it printed because the Growl

(Continued on page 4)

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has become a political ragg??? No time for rebuttal of course.

George A Nolan  
 IC3 49/52  
 8526 E Via De Los Libros  
 Scottsdale, AZ 85258-3567

Rogers, Jim Bella Vista, AR  
 1946-47, FN, Eng Rm  
 Russell, Webster 1965-66, HM2, H  
 Sanborn, III, H.G. VA, Ens; Deck  
 Schreiber, Ewald Archer City, TX  
 1960-63, EN2, A  
 Seagraves, Conrad Orlando, FL  
 1954-57, QM1. Nav  
 Shepard, Robert Miami, FL  
 Smith, Richard Kenilworth, UT  
 Starr, John Monroe, WA  
 Ed Takes Deceased  
 Wardell, Richard Flora, IL  
 1951-52. PHM3; H

Thanks,  
 Bob

## ATTENTION SHIPMATES

The following is a complete listing of "orphans" that I have culled from our mailing list. They are listings for which we have NO valid contact information and a minimum of information for them. I have engaged in Internet-based searches for all on at least one occasion, but with no positive results. Should anyone recognize any names listed and have ANY information at all, please contact me via e-mail at: [ussbexar@verizon.net](mailto:ussbexar@verizon.net) OR landline at (631) 399-1717 OR at the below indicated address:  
 Robert "Bob" Weiss  
 Volunteer Membership Secretary  
 USS Bexar Association  
 PO Box 303  
 Brookhaven, NY 11719-0303

<u>Name</u>	<u>Other information</u>
Aagulf, David	Pawcatuck, CT
Boyd, John	Lytle, TX 1969
Brammer, Jack	
Brown, W.A.	Monroe, ME
Calona, Bill	Virginia Beach, VA
Campbell, Dr. James	Silverdale, WA 1968-1969
Cleveland, Harold	Dennison, IA MM2
Cracraft, Harold	Queen Valley, AZ 1946-47 BM2, 2nd
Cuttitte, Joe	Deceased
DeForest, Tom	Cubero, NM
Dellinger, Richard	Youngstown, OH
Delulio, Alex	Hickory Hills, IL
Fleming, Bob	Spotsylvania, PA
Hatter, Dale	Yuma, AZ
Land, Ellis	Stanford, KY
Leinow, Steve	San Diego, CA
Lund, Bert	Geneva, IL 1945-46, Nav
Mayberry, Robert	Lakewood, CA
Morse, Russ	Stuart, FL 1954-56
Ormsby, Charlie	Copper Ctr, AK

servicemembers were wounded in theater, some multiple times, accounting for more than 103,200 incidents in which U.S. personnel were wounded.

- 8,176 are listed as Missing In Action (bodies not recovered). This number is subject to change as remains are identified
- 7,140 were POW's, of whom 4,418 returned, 2,701 died in captivity, and 21 refused repatriation.

### VIETNAM WAR ERA

- 9,087,000 military personnel served on active duty during the official Vietnam Era from August 5, 1964 to May 7, 1975.
- 2,709,918 Americans served in uniform in Vietnam
- Vietnam Veterans represented 9.7% of their generation.
- 240 men were awarded the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam Era.
- 58,148 were killed in Vietnam
- 75,000 were severely disabled
- 23,214 were 100% disabled
- 5,283 lost limbs
- 1,081 sustained multiple amputations.
- Of those killed, 61% were younger than 21.
- 11,465 of those killed were younger than 20 years old.
- Of those killed, 17,539 were married.
- Average age of men killed: 23.1 years
- Five men killed in Vietnam were only 16 years old.
- The oldest man killed was 62 years old.
- As of January 15, 2004, there are 1,875 Americans still unaccounted for from the Vietnam War.
- 97% of Vietnam Veterans were honorably discharged.
- 91% of Vietnam Veterans say they are glad they served.

## FACT SHEET

### KOREAN WAR ERA

- Korean War (actual hostilities): June 27, 1950 to July 27, 1953
- Official Korean War Era: June 27, 1950 to Jan. 31, 1955 (The extended period was designated by Congress to define a period of eligibility to include a period of uneasy peace negotiations following hostilities.)
- 6.8 million served on active duty during the Korean War Era, making them veterans of the war, the war era, or both. 997,000 also served during WWII, 347,000 during the Vietnam War and 291,000 during all three wars.
- 1.8 million served in theater during the three-year period of hostilities.
- 4 million served elsewhere in the world during the period of hostilities.
- 36,940 died in theater during the era—33,665 from battle wounds and 3,275 from causes unrelated to battle. Of the 33,665 battle dead, 23,898 were determined Killed In Action, and 2,438 died while prisoners of war.
- 17,320 U.S. Military servicemembers died elsewhere in the world during the Korean War Era.
- More than 92,100 U.S. military

# RETIREE AND VETERAN ISSUES

BY GENE B. AITALA

## COMBAT RELATED SPECIAL COMPENSATION (CRSC) AND CONCURRENT RECEIPT (DISABLED VETERAN TAX):

If you have not already filed for CRSC and feel you may be eligible, file as soon as you can put together all of the necessary documentations. Although there is no dead line for filing for CRSC or Concurrent Receipt, the sooner you file the sooner you may be eligible for payments. Payments will be retroactive to June of 2003 or January of 2004 depending on your VA disability rating.

Concurrent receipt is for Retirees who have a VA disability rating of 50% or more and will be retroactive to January 2004. This will impact approximately 200,000 Military Retirees.

For those Retirees with less than a 50% VA disability rating you may qualify for the CRSC payments. This has the potential to impact 400,000 Retirees. It is possible you may qualify for both CRSC and Concurrent Receipt, but can only receive one or the other. You will be able to choose which is best for you at the time.

Check out the requirements for CRSC and Concurrent Receipt, the rules are complicated.

Retirees who are rated at 100% disabled by the Veterans Administration (VA) will commence receiving their full military retirement and VA disability payments in Jan., 2005. There will be no phase in period for these individuals. This will impact approximately 15,000 Retirees. There is still the question as to those individuals rated 100% disabled by the VA due to individual unemployable (IU), (have an actual VA rating of less than 100%, but because this individual would be unemployable the VA gives this individual a rating of 100%). This would impact approximately 15,000 Retirees I have seen both ways: these 15,000 IU's would be included, and they will not be included in the "no-phase-in-

period." A total of approximately 30,000 retirees fall in this 100% VA disability rating. For more information on this issue you may contact [www.usdr.org](http://www.usdr.org), [www.fra.org](http://www.fra.org) or [www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org).

## BILLS OF INTEREST IN THE SENATE AND CONGRESS:

Bill S. 1379 and H.R. 2823: The American Disabled for Life Commemorative Coin Act. This coin would honor all disabled Veterans. For more information on this issue contact the DAV. Website is: [www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org).

Bill S. 2825 and H.R. 5041: VA health care funding. It is hard to believe in a time of war our elected officials continue to fight over VA health care. For more information on this issue contact the DAV. Website is: [www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org).

Bills H.R. 1779 and 1345: These two bills would provide special incentives to the Reserve community. H.R. 1779 would provide special tax credits to employers who employ Reserve unit members. H.R. 1345 would provide special incentives to the individual Reservist. For more information on this issue contact the DAV. Website is: [www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org).

We must support our Reservist and the Reserve units. Today, our military force is made up of 40% or more of Reserves or National Guard individuals.

## DFAS SAYS, MYPAY USERS MUST ACT TO CONTINUE TO RECEIVING DOCUMENTS:

For all retirees you must act on this issue to continue to receive hard copies via the U.S. mail. You may call 800/321-1080 between 7 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Eastern time or if you have internet access you may log on the <https://mypay.dfas.mil> and select hard copy for each document you prefer to have mailed.

## SECRETARY OF THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION:

You may have already heard the

news about the Secretary of the VA. Secretary Principi will be succeeded by Jim Nicholson. Mr. Nicholson is a decorated Vietnam War Veteran.

Secretary Anthony J. Principi will surely be missed. He has been a steadfast advocate for Veterans over the last four years.

## SURVIVOR BENEFIT PLAN OFFSET AT 65 HAS BEEN REVOKED:

The offset associated with Social Security at age 62 for surviving spouses has been revoked. This was also known as the "WIDOW TAX". There will be a three and one half (3-1/2) year phase in period. Full SBP amounts will be fully restored after March, 2008. For more information on this issue you may contact [www.usdr.org](http://www.usdr.org) or [www.moaa.org](http://www.moaa.org).

## STAY IN CONTACT WITH YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Let them know you are a voter and go to the polls for every election. Let them know you keep track of their voting records. Encourage you friends and neighbors to contact their elected officials and to vote.

## VETERAN ORGANIZATIONS:

Join and be active in a Veteran organization. These organizations are there to fight for Retiree/Veteran issues. Let your voice be heard. As a single voice your elected officials may not listen, but as an organization of thousands they may get the picture. So, join up and pitch in. We need all the help we can muster to fight for Veterans issues.

All Veteran organizations have a website. Most of these websites have links to your elected officials. A few websites that I use are; [www.fra.org](http://www.fra.org), [www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org) and [www.usdr.org](http://www.usdr.org).

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There are many others out there, check them out. Most have prepared letters you can just click and send to your elected officials.

**COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICES:**

Most counties have a Veterans affairs office staffed by a knowledgeable person. If you have questions or issues, contact them for first hand information. In many of the county offices they will assist you in filling out the required paper work.

**WITHOUT VETERANS THERE WOULD BE NO UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:**

In the United States, we value **FREEDOM** more than life itself. It seems that too many of our citizens have forgotten the true cost of freedom. Too many Americans have paid the ultimate price for our freedoms. We must not forget the many thousands of **VETERANS** have given the supreme sacrifice (**THEIR LIVES**) for our right to freedom. Remember, without **VETERANS there would be no UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.** We could still be British Subjects or we could be paying homage to the Nazi Swastikas, the flag of the Rising Sun or the Hammer and Sickle.

**DISCALIMER:**

*The information and opinions contained in the article are the views and opinions of the writer and are not to be considered as an official source of information. If you have questions or wish to express your views you can contact me at [www.GBAittala@aol.com](mailto:www.GBAittala@aol.com) or by telephone at 256/773-6283.*

Thank you.  
Gene Aittala, USN Retired

**2005 REUNION NEWS**

Bids are currently being made to find the best possible location and room rates for the up-coming reunion in Washington/Baltimore area. Details will be in the next issue of Bexar Growl.

**U.S. NAVY OATH OF ENLISTMENT**

I, Top Gun, in lieu of going to prison, swear to sign away 4 years of my life to the UNITED STATES NAVY, because I want to hang out with Marines without actually having to BE one of them, because I thought the Air Force was too "corporate," because I didn't want to actually live in dirt like the Army, and because I thought, "Hey, I like to swim... why not?"

I promise to wear clothes that went out of style in 1976 and to have my name stenciled on the butt of every pair of pants I own. I understand that I will be mistaken for the Good Humor Man during summer and for Nazi Waffen SS during the winter.

I will strive to use a different language than the rest of the English speaking world, using words like "deck, bulkhead, cover, geedunk, scuttlebutt, scuttle and head," when I really mean, "floor, wall, hat, candy, water fountain, hole in wall and toilet." I will take great pride in the fact that all Navy acronyms, rank, and insignia, and everything else for that matter, are completely different from the other services and make absolutely no sense whatsoever.

I will muster, whatever that is, at 0700 every morning unless I am buddy-buddy with the Chief, in which case I will show up around 0930.

I vow to hone my coffee cup handling skills to the point that I can stand up in a kayak being tossed around in a typhoon, and still not spill a drop.

I consent to being promoted and subsequently busted at least twice per fiscal year.

I realize that, once selected for Chief, I am required to submit myself to the sick, and quite possibly illegal, whims of my newfound "colleagues." So Help Me Neptune!

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION**

The BEXAR GROWL is the official publication of the USS BEXAR Association. From now on it will be published quarterly in January, April, July, and October, *subject to receiving sufficient funding.* The Newsletter is currently funded by annual subscription of \$5.00 per annum, per member and all other monies raised/donated are added to this fund. 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.

ML&RS, Inc is not responsible for the accuracy of articles submitted for publication. It would be a monumental task to check each story. Therefore, we rely on the submitter to research each article.

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

It should be understood that this newsletter is for the participation in, by and for the enjoyment of all Bexar shipmates. That it is also recognized that many shipmates for reasons of health, distance/travel, etc. are not able to attend reunions and may feel left out is a concern. To address this, we urge these folks, most especially, to write in letters and articles that reflect on memorable experiences/incidents/shipmates. You may be surprised that such may provoke a former shipmate to seek you out, via phone, regular mail or e-mail to reminisce and get reacquainted. That is the main reason for maintaining and disseminating the mailing list... to provide "contact" information. Don't pass up the experience.

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