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USS BASILONE 824



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December 2007

Greetings Shipmates and Associate Members,

Well another year has come and gone with another reunion under our belts. We have found a few shipmates and lost a few in the last year.

Recently deceased shipmates that we know of are Bobby Wicker 70-74, William Graham 63-68, Charles Mosherose 59-61, John Toguville 55-58, Donald Olsen 57-58, John Harn 70-71, and Robert Gochneaur 49-50.

Newly found shipmates include John Newell 60-62, Ted Reminder 70-72, Robert Papesca 68-70, Mark J. Powers 69-71, Greg Daniels and Robert Bacharach 68-69.

I would like to start out by thanking Ray Jones and his family for a reunion went well and Jerry Moorman for the wonderful tours. We had the usual suspects, some new people at their first reunion and several that had come back after missing a reunion or 2. As usual Monday was check-in day and a welcome dinner. Tuesday we toured the USS Midway and Old Town San Diego. Wednesday we toured around San Diego to places like Balboa Park, Seaport Village, Coronado, Downtown San Diego, The Cabrillo National Monument, and Mission San Diego De Alcada. This is the first of the California missions founded by Father Juniperio Serra and other places of interest. Thursday saw us in Los Angeles where we did the usual things like going by the stars houses, Looking at the stores on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills, going to Grumman's Chinese Theater and checked out some of the famous hand and foot prints. We also went to Ford's Theater where the Academy Awards are staged and saw the Hollywood sign. While there in front of Grumman's and the Ford Theaters we watched them film part of what looked like an action movie called John Hancock. It stars Will Smith and Charlize Theron. While traveling to and from L.A. we saw the Basilone Road sign at Camp Pendleton and we were also on The John Basilone Memorial Highway. Friday we did a 2-hour cruise of the harbor and saw the USS Ronald Reagan, a hospital ship and all the rest of the fleet that was in port. Captain Carmichael, the 2nd C.O. for the Basilone and his wife Gordon were with us. While on the cruise they talked about U.S. Naval aviation history that was made there in San Diego. When Glenn Curtis started training naval aviators and that U. S. Naval aviator #1 was named Theodore Gordon "Spuds" Ellyson. Well it turns out that Captain Carmichaels' wife Gordon is the daughter of U. S. Naval aviator #1. Saturday we had our business meeting, followed by our memorial service, which was held in Little Italy at the Piazza Basilone. The Piazza was dedicated in 2003 and has a bust of John Basilone and a pool/fountain near by as well as the names of the Italian and Portuguese fishing families that settled in the area. After the memorial service we had a picnic lunch at Spanish landing at then we drove around the old Naval Training Center. If you went through Boot Camp there you wouldn't recognize it. We also had the farewell dinner on Saturday. We only had one RVer this year and that was John

Ensminger, hopefully we'll have more next year if the price of gas goes down. Ha!! The missing boxes with the door prizes, reunion bell and sign in book have all been found and returned to me by UPS along with a refund.

The business meeting was held Saturday and we made the following donations \$200.00 to Tin Can Sailors and \$500.00 to the John Basilone Foundation. We authorized the renewal of the domain name and website for another year. We also authorized the necessary money to get Lena Basilone's name into the U. S. Navy Memorial log, Lena was a Marine when she met and married John Basilone. I brought up the fact that if you have type 2 Diabetes and served in Vietnam that you need to check out the VA website. Type 2 Diabetes and several other things are listed as eligible for disability payments. The problem with this is that it didn't say whether you had to be on the ground or just off shore. I imagine that the VA is reviewing these claims on a case-by-case basis but it won't hurt you to check it out for yourself. Les Carte has stepped forward and will host the 2008 reunion in San Antonio, Texas from October 13-19. More information about hotels and tours will be following shortly. Also Geoff Bender has also stepped forward and will be hosting the 2009 reunion in the Chicago area. The association treasurer Frank Crouse says DUES ARE DUE. Dues for 2008 is \$20.00 for one year or you have the option of becoming a life member for \$100.00. Checks should be made out to the USS Basilone Association and mailed to Frank Crouse 3103 Mt. Carmel Rd Upperco, Md 21155.

I hope to see you next year in San Antonio or in Chicago in 2009.

Your Shipmate,



Phil Poplaski

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