How about a memorial service for a real hero?

By: Mark Pfiefer

We're hearing a lot today about big splashy memorial services. I want a nationwide memorial service for Darrell "Shifty" Powers. Shifty volunteered for the airborne in WWII and served with Easy Company of the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, part of the 101st Airborne.

If you've seen Band of Brothers on HBO or the History Channel, you know Shifty. His character appears in all 10 episodes, and Shifty himself is interviewed in several of them.

I met Shifty in Philadelphia airport several years ago. I didn't know who he was at the time. I just saw an elderly gentleman having trouble reading his ticket. I offered to help, assured him that he was at the right gate, and noticed the "Screaming Eagle", the symbol of the 101st Airborne, on his hat.

Making conversation, I asked him if he'd been in the 101st Airborne or if his son was serving. He said quietly that he was in the 101st. I thanked him for his service, then asked him when he served, and how many jumps he made. Quietly and humbly, he said "Well, I guess I signed up in 1941 or so, and was in until sometime in 1945 . . . " at which point my heart skipped. At that point, again, very humbly, he said "I made the 5 training jumps at Toccoa, and then jumped into Normandy . . . . do you know where Normandy is?" At this point my heart stopped. I told him yes, I know exactly where Normandy was, and I know what D-Day was. At that point he said "I also made a second jump into Holland, into Vechel." I was standing with a genuine war hero . . . . and then I realized that it was June, just after the anniversary of D-Day. I asked Shifty if he was on his way back from France, and he said "Yes. And it's real sad because these days so few of the guys are left, and those that are, lots of them can't make the trip." My heart was in my throat and I didn't know what to say.

I helped Shifty get onto the plane and then realized he was back in Coach, while I was in First Class. I sent the flight attendant back to get him and said that I wanted to switch seats. When Shifty came forward, I got up out of the seat and told him I wanted him to have it, that I'd take his in coach. He said "No, son, you enjoy that seat. Just knowing that there are still some who remember what we did and still care is enough to make an old man very happy." His eyes were filling up as he said it. And mine are brimming up now as I write this. Shifty died on June 17 after fighting cancer. There was no parade. No big event in Staples Center. No wall to wall 24x7 news coverage. No weeping fans on television. And that's not right. Let's give Shifty his own Memorial Service, online, in our own quiet way. Please forward this email to everyone you know. Especially to the veterans. Rest in peace, Shifty.

"A nation without heroes is nothing."

Roberto Clemente
The shipmates listed below are assumed to be deceased. Information comes from shipmates, the V.A. and relatives of the shipmate.

This information is not official. Please advise of any errors or omissions.

Due to the length of the deceased list of shipmates, we are now printing the complete list in the January and July issues and advising of any additional names in the April and October issues. We have not been advised of any one passing since the July newsletter. All known Departed Shipmates are also listed on the Web site.

Did you know that the Navy Chaplain Corps began in 1775? Today's Navy chaplains represent more than 100 faith groups. They provide religious support and counseling services to Sailors and Marines, Coast Guardsmen and Merchant Mariners during war and peacetime operations. Being a Navy chaplain requires the clergy person to take care of people in a specific faith group by performing services. Chaplains can be ministers, pastors, priest, rabbis or imams, but must be ordained and endorsed by their churches to serve in the military's Chaplain Corps. They are assigned to hospitals, ships, the Marine Corps and the Coast Guard. We need to pray for our military chaplains as they minister the gospel to men and women serving our country.

Sometimes I see a military funeral on the news. I found that past naval and military customs are the basis for honors at funerals. The customs and traditions of a military funeral include the following symbols.

"The flag covering the casket symbolizes the deceased member's service in the Armed Forces of the United States.

"Taps are played to mark the beginning of the last, long sleep and to express hope and confidence in the final reveille to come.

"The three volleys tiered are in respect for the deceased member's service to his or her country.

"To imply that at death all persons are equal, the honorary pallbearers are placed in no order of rank.

God has truly blessed us with dedicated men and women that comfort those in times of need with the word of God and the love of Christ.

Enjoy the beauty of God's creation this autumn season.

Chaplain Marvin Watson
(RM-3 - 1960-63)
chaplain@usswhetstone.net

Voluntary Dues

Again, thank you to all shipmates that have sent dues and donations to the Association. Without your support, it would be impossible to publish "The Rolling Stone", maintain the Website and have reunions. Dues are $25.00 a year, are tax deductible, and are strictly voluntary.

Dues are applied for one year (using date of check as beginning point, i.e. 9/01/09 check applies dues until 9/01/10). We recognize that not all are able to support the Association, but we welcome support from whomever is able. Dues received to date for 2009 are listed below. An asterisk designates dues paid for previous year(s). If anyone has paid and your name is not listed, please accept our apology and contact Kay Goble at 6200 Emerald Pines Cir, Ft. Myers, FL 33966 (239)768-1499 or e-mail: sectreas@usswhetstone.net

Please make checks payable to: USS Whetstone Association.

Please use this list as your receipt.

Alleman, G. J.
Alsleben, Keith
Anderson, Robert*
Arata, Sil*
Beebe, Raymond
Bell, Charles*
Bispinger, Neil A.*
Blenkorn, Charles
Bogus, W. C.*
Bommer, David
Boren, Ben
Boswell, Robert G.
Brammer, George
Brenniman, Chris
Breedlove, James
Breuer, Melvin
Brillon, Paul*
Brown, James E.*
Buchanan, Kenneth*
Caffey, Irby R.

Caldwell, William
Campbell, Hershel
Carre, Zane
Carson, Cpt. Grant*
Chidester, David
Cickavage, Joseph*
Coakley, Bill*
Coldren, Wayne*
Conover, J. W.
Cox, Millard*
Crawford, F. Slaton
Crowder, Frank
DeWalt, Gary
Dinda, Gerald
Doerr, Gary T.
Dunn, Jim
Durnil, Allen*
Edney, Edward L.
Edwards, Homer
Edwards, Millard
Engelken, Ralph
Eshelman, Thomas
Espointour, Maurice
Finlayson, Leonard
Finnies, Roger
Flowerree, Robert
Fry, Steve
Fulghem, Richard*
Goble, Marion
Good, James R.
Gordon, Eddie*
Green, Kenneth
Gross, Richard*
Grubb, Jack*
Hall, Charles*
Halvorson, G. H.
Hammons, Willis
Harrison, Burlin
Haynes, Earl
Hitt, John W.
Hockema, Ben*
Hoover, Frederick
Hyatt, Ray L.*
Johnson, Merrill*
Jones, Dale H.
Julian, Frank
Kiffman, Helmet*
Kirby, Joe
Kircher, Vincent*
Klebacher, Gene
Leopold, Vincent
Mackall, Terry L.*
Maness, Jack
Matsuyama, James
McClellan, G. A.
McCray, David
McGavock, Bert
McGrew, Joseph R.
McManus, Peter
McNitt, Russell*
McQuillen, Tom*
Meismer, J. C.
Mezzanotti, Paul
Mitchell, Burley*
Moore, Lane

Mulholland, Howard
Nichelson, Joe
Nofke, Henry A.
Ogletree, Ronald*
Oremus, Vern
Pangrass, Sr., William
Patterson, Capt. Peter
Pearson, Ray
Pierce, Charles*
Pilgreen, Vince*
Pineda, Jamie
Pittman, Garnett L.
Polk, James
Posey, Billy
Raynie, Jerry D.*
Reed, George
Reid, James P.
Reinheimer, Theodore
Richey, Albert D.
Richter, Herbert B.*
Rowe, Horace
Sandrock, John
Sandwisch, Larry*
Savala, Manny*
Savoie, Donald
Scott, Ralph V.
Seabough, Raymond*
Seaton, Walter
Shimmell, Thomas*
Shrader, Daniel L.
Skelley, Jr., Daniel
Smith, Clinton*
Smith, Don J.
Stanford, Roy*
Stergeois, James
Stevens, William M.
Stewart, Donald J.
Stief, Bernard
Sylvester, Kim C.
Thomson, John "Jack"
Throener, Larry*
Tucker, George*
Van Guild, David*
Vaughn, Joe
Ward, Everett*
Watson, Marvin*
Weigt, Earl*
White, David*
Wiesemann, Donald
Winslow, Leonard
Wood, Gerald
Wright, Paul*
Yedowitz, Joe*
Young, Robert
Zdolsek, Martin
Larry Lonnon has been working on the reunion since we left Charleston in 2008. The contract for the hotel has been signed, the tour company established and the caterers approved. During our recent visit to Astoria, we met with Larry, the hotel manager, the tour company representatives and the caterer. We established the date for the reunion and discussed tentative trips and events. The reunion will begin on Sunday, September 12, 2010 and we will depart on Thursday, September 16, 2010.

Astoria is a lovely small city on the Columbia River and we think it will be enjoyed by all that attend the reunion. Astoria offers unique shops and restaurants, bicycle paths, a trolley and will give you an opportunity to sit back and relax. There are numerous things to see and do in the area. One such trip consists of the Lewis and Clark Museum, Fort Clatsop, Astoria Column, and the Columbia River Maritime Museum. Another trip offered is the Tillamook Air Museum and Tillamook Cheese factory. Other possibilities are Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum, a guided fishing trip, golf outing, winery and shopping trip. A special evening can be enjoyed at the Astoria Dinner Theater with the melodrama “Shanghaied in Astoria.” There is something that will interest everyone.

The drive to Astoria from Portland is beautiful, whether you choose the drive through the forests or the drive along the Columbia River. Our personal preference was the drive along the Columbia River. In the event you are unable to drive, there is a commuter airline (8 passenger plane) that can be arranged. Another possibility is that we can schedule a coach to pick up people at the Portland airport if there is enough interest. Further details will be forthcoming.

Larry wants to share Astoria with you and is asking all to give Astoria a chance to show what a great place it is. Regardless of the trips, etc., the reunion offers an opportunity to meet with shipmates you have not seen for possibly years or meet up again with those you have met at previous reunions.

We hope you will consider the Astoria reunion in 2010!

Open in May 2004, the Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites is an attractive 78-room riverfront hotel. Spacious, contemporary, elegantly decorated rooms and suites offer a magnificent panoramic view of the mighty Columbia River or hillside city views.

The hotel offers a unique breakfast experience at the Express Start Breakfast Bar featuring fresh fruits, juices, cereals, breads/pastries, yogurts, hard-boiled eggs, freshly baked cinnamon rolls and hot foods. Take an invigorating swim in the indoor heated pool, luxuriate in the whirlpool or recharge your body in the well-equipped fitness room.

Enjoy pet designated guestrooms, ($15.00/per night), river-front green space and lawns for walks and delicious dog treats upon your arrival.

All guestrooms are fully equipped with an impressive array of amenities: Air conditioning, Refrigerator, Microwave, 27 inch TV/DVD Player, Coffeemaker, Hair Dryer, Ironing Board and Iron, High-Speed Internet Access, Direct-Dial Phone with Dataport and Voice Mail, Free Local and 800 Number Access Calls.

There are 15 city-view rooms available which accommodate 1—2 people (2 queen sized beds or king bed) and are priced at $119.00 per night. The remaining 63 rooms which are river-view accommodate 1—4 people and are priced at $139.00 per night. 2-Room Suites which accommodate up to 6 people are available at an additional cost.

When you make reservations, call 888-898-6222 and use the name U.S.S. Whetstone Reunion so you receive the special rate. You may begin making reservations October 1, 2009. Remember there are only 15 rooms available at the $119.00 rate. All individual guestroom reservations must be guaranteed. For guarantee of an individual reservation, the hotel will accept an advance deposit (by cash, certified check, cashier’s check or money order) or acceptable credit card number with valid expiration date at time of reservation.

RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY AUGUST 12, 2010. Otherwise, room rates will revert to normal rates.

MAKE PLANS NOW TO ATTEND THE USS WHETSTONE REUNION IN ASTORIA OREGON. YOU ARE GUARANTEED A GREAT TIME!
Pearl Harbor, Hickam to be Joint Base

HONOLULU -- Pearl Harbor and Hickam Air Force Base next door are due to become a single installation next year as the military strives to become more efficient.

The military said Wednesday that Pentagon, Navy and Air Force officials recently signed an agreement finalizing the long-planned move.

The transition to Pearl Harbor-Hickam is due to begin in January. By October 2010, the bases will be united.

The bases are among 26 installations across the country that are being combined into 12 joint bases. They were singled out for consolidation in 2005 during the military's Base Realignment and Closure process.

In Alaska, Elmendorf Air Force Base is to merge with the Army's Fort Richardson. In Washington state, Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base will join forces.

Naval Station Pearl Harbor commander Capt. Richard W. Kitchens said the military hasn't identified any positions that

(See Pearl Harbor on page 7)
Safety Tip (by David Vydra)

John, This may or may not be something we have already used. But, I recently received it from my brother. As you read this, imagine that you heard a ding, ding, ding, from the teletype printer and that the paper is yellow teletype stock.

EMERGENCY // EMERGENCY // EMERGENCY

P 011503Z NOVEMBER 03 PSN 740648J31 FM COMNAVSURFORCE SAN DIEGO CA//N001// TO COMPHIBPAC SAN DIEGO CA//N35// COMPHIBGRU NAS KEY WEST FL//90// NAS BRUNSWICK ME//60/ NAS KEFLAVIK IC//70// NAS KEFLAVIK IC//50// CINCLANTFLT NORFOLK VA//N11// CINPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI// N1/N21/N11// ALNAVSURFPAC ALNAVSURFLANT VAIRWARCENWPNDIV PT MUGU CA//

311200E/31410E// NAVORDSAFSEC ACT INDIAN HEAD MD//N2// NAVORDSAFSEC ACT ESSOLANT NORFOLK VA//N712A// NAMTRAGRU PENSACOLA FL//2206// USSTRATCOM OFFUTT AFB NE//J416//

BT CLASSIFIED

SUBJ/ SAFE WORK PRACTICES IN POTENTIALLY FLAMMABLE ATMOSPHERES// MSGID/GENADMIN/CNSF/-/MAY//

RMKS/

1. A PETTY OFFICER WAS TREATED AT A MILITARY TREATMENT FACILITY (MTF) AFTER COMPLAINING OF SHORTNESS OF BREATH AFTER WORKING IN AN ENCLOSED WORKSPACE WITH SEVERAL OTHER PERSONNEL. THE DINING FACILITY HAD SERVED A MEXICAN MEAL FOR LUNCH, CAUSING SUSPECTED HIGH METHANE AND SULFITE LEVELS IN THE ATMOSPHERE FROM THE CREW'S FLATULENCE.

2. MANY NAVY PERSONNEL WORK IN FACILITIES AND ON SHIPS WHERE FLATULENCE MAY EXIST, AND, DUE TO MISSION URGENCY, ARE NOT ABLE TO IMMEDIATELY VACATE THE SPACE SHOULD THE AIR BECOME FOUL. THIS MISHAP SERVES AS A STRONG REMINDER THAT THE EXPRESSION OF FLATULENCE CAN BE EXTREMELY DANGEROUS IN THESE AREAS, UNLESS THEY ARE SPECIFICALLY LISTED AS INTRINSICALLY SAFE. THE NAVY HAS DEVELOPED THE FOLLOWING SAFE WORK PRACTICE TO ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM. EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, THE PRACTICE OF EXPELLING FLATULENCE, COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS "FARTING," "BREAKING WIND," OR "PASSING GAS," IS PROHIBITED ABOARD ALL NAVAL SHIPS, BOATS, VEHICLES, AIRCRAFT, AND SHORE INSTALLATIONS.

3. THIS REGULATION APPLIES NOT ONLY TO AUDIBLE FLATULENCE, OR INCIDENTS THAT ARE CLAIMED BY THEIR PERPETRATOR, BUT ALSO TO COVERT EVENTS SUCH AS "DEADLY WHISPERS," "CHEEK SNEAKERS," "AIR DUSTINGS."

4. UNAUTHORIZED EXPULSION OF FLATULENCE IS TO BE PUNISHED UNDER THE UCMJ. "HE WHO SMELT IT DEALT IT" IS CONSIDERED SUFFICIENT BASIS FOR PROSECUTION. "I DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS GOING TO STINK" OR "I ATE AT THE GALLEY" IS NOT TO BE ACCEPTED AS AN EXCUSE FOR FAILURE TO CONTROL ONESELF.

5. COMMANDS ARE INSTRUCTED TO ENSURE KNOWN GAS PRODUCING FOODS ARE AVOIDED AT THE DINING FACILITIES. MEXICAN THEMED MEALS, NAVY OR BAKED BEANS, CHILI, CABBAGE, AND EGG SALAD ARE NO LONGER AUTHORIZED MENU ITEMS.

6. THE LIGHTING OF FLATULENCE WITH ANY TYPE OF OPEN FLAME IS STILL PROHIBITED.

Where were these guys when I was in?

I had some pretty grody bilge diving shoes, but it was best I didn’t wear them out of the Port Fireroom. My lowest rating was always in “Appearance” and my shoes were responsible for most of that rating. Some guys could put a spectacular “spit shine” on a pair of shoes. It was about all I could do to make them black.

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio - Stain resistant, low maintenance boot prototypes will soon be tested by Airmen at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz.

"This boot is expected to be a solution for low-maintenance footwear that upholds a professional military image no matter the environment," said 1st Lt. Ashley Hawkes, the airman battle uniform program manager at the Air Force Uniform Office here.

"The current boot turns black when exposed to chemicals, such as those associated with flightline operations," the lieutenant said.

The prototype selected will be low-maintenance and resistant to staining from harsh chemicals, oils, and fuels. Maintenance is expected to be limited to wiping with a damp cloth.
Letter from a Granddad

Did this letter actually get written and mailed? I don't know, but I definitely know that if it wasn't, it should have been; and millions of times to millions of grandchildren. Sometimes, life just gets tedious.

John is 63 years old and owns his own business. He is a life-long Republican and sees his dream of retiring next year is now all but gone. With the stock market crashing and all the new taxes coming his way, John knows he will be working for a good number more years.

John has a Granddaughter. Ashley is a recent college grad. She drives a late model car, wears all the latest fashions, and also likes going out and eating out a lot. Ashley campaigned hard for Obama, and after he won the election she made sure her Grandfather (and all other Republican family members) received more than an earful on how the world is going to be a much better place now that Obama won the election.

Ashley recently found herself short of cash and cannot pay her bills, again. As she has done many other times in the past, she e-mailed her Grandfather asking for some financial help. Here is his reply:

Sweetheart,

I am replying to your request for more money. Ashley, you know I love you dearly and am sympathetic to your financial plight. Unfortunately, times have changed. With the election of President Obama, your Grandmother and I have had to set forth a bold new economic plan of our own...the 'Ashley Economic Plan'. Let me explain. Your grandmother and I are highly productive, wage-earning tax payers. As you know, we have lived a comfortable life and in return have forgone many things like fancy vacations, luxury cars, etc. We have worked hard and were looking forward to retiring soon. But this plan has changed. Your president is significantly raising our personal and business taxes. He says it is so he can give our hard earned money to other people. Do you know what this means, Ashley? It means less income for us. Less income means we must cut back on many business and personal expenditures. One example is, we were forced to let go of our receptionist today. You know her. She always gave you candy when you visited my office. Did you know she worked for us for the past 18 years? I can't afford her anymore.

That is a taste of the business side... Some personal economic affects of Obama's new taxation policies include none other than you. You know very well that over the years your grandmother and I have given you thousands of dollars in cash, tuition assistance, food, housing, clothing, gifts, etc., etc. By your vote, you have chosen another family over ours for help. Judging from your Email requesting more money, I recommend you call 202-456-1111. That is the direct telephone number for the White House. You yourself repeatedly told me I was foolish voting Republican. You said Mr. Obama is going to be the people's president and is going to help every American live a better life. Based upon everything you have told me and things we heard from him as he campaigned, I am sure Mr. Obama will be happy to send a check or transfer money into your checking account. Have him call me for the transaction and account numbers, which by now I know by heart.

Perhaps you now can understand what I have been saying for all my life: those who vote for the president should consider what the impact of an election will be on the nation as a whole, and not just be concerned with what they can get for themselves (welfare, etc.). What Obama voters don't seem to realize is all of the "government's" money he is 'redistributing' to illegal aliens and non-taxpaying Americans (deemed "less fortunate") comes from tax money collected from income tax-paying families. Remember how you told me, "Only the richest of the rich will be affected"? Guess what, honey? Because of our business, your Grandmother and I are now considered to be the richest of the rich. On paper, it might look that way. But in the real world, we are far from it. But, as you said while campaigning for Obama, some people will have to carry more of the burden so all of America can prosper. You understand what that means, right? It means that raising taxes on productive people results in them having less money. Less money for everything, including granddaughters.

Congratulations on your choice for "change". For future reference, I encourage you to attempt to add up the total value of the gifts and money you've received from us over the years, and compare it to what you expect to get over the next four years from Mr. Obama.

Remember, we love you dearly... but from now on you'll need to call the number referenced above when you need help.

Good luck, sweetheart. Love, Grampa.

PS: How was your recent trip to Jamaica? I have never been there but I hear it is lovely this time of year.

---

A failure to communicate!

As a group of sailors stood in formation on a ship, the Chief said, "All right! All you idiots fall out."

As the rest of the division wandered away, one sailor remained at attention. The Chief walked over until he was eye-to-eye with him, and then raised a single eyebrow. The sailor smiled and said, "Sure was a lot of 'em, huh, Chief?"

Depression

I was so depressed last night thinking about the economy, the wars, Medicare going broke, no retirement credit, my golf game, etc...

I called Lifeline. Got a call center in Pakistan. I told them I was suicidal. They got all excited and asked if I could drive a truck...
WWII Women Pilots to Receive Medals

WASHINGTON -- The first women to fly U.S. military aircraft will be given gold medals to honor their service to the country under a bill signed Wednesday by President Obama.

About 300 of the 1,000 or so women who were members of the World War II-era Women Airforce Service Pilots -- WASPs for short -- are still alive to receive their Congressional Gold Medals. The rest will go to the pilots' families.

Created during World War II, the all-women unit's primary mission was flying non-combat military missions in the United States to free up their male counterparts for combat. They flew virtually every type of U.S. military aircraft that existed at the time.

"The Women Airforce Service Pilots courageously answered their country's call in a time of need while blazing a trail for the brave women who have given and continue to give so much in service to this nation since," Obama said at the bill signing. "Every American should be grateful for their service, and I am honored to sign this bill to finally give them some of the hard-earned recognition they deserve."

Thirty-eight of the WASP pilots died while performing their missions. But it wasn't until 1977 the WASPs were afforded veteran status.

Joining Obama at the signing was Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-Fla., who helped shepherd the bill through Congress, three WASP members -- Elaine Danforth Harmon, Lorraine H. Rodgers and Bernice Falk Haydu -- and five female active duty U.S. Air Force pilots.

10% off at Lowe's Homecenter

The other day while looking at the ad in the newspaper from Lowe's. I noticed they were offering 10% off for active duty military personnel. For once I read the fine print. It said something like Active Duty, retired, service with a honorable discharge, …. Wait! That's me!

I looked through my Navy papers and found a laminated billfold card I had been issued. It was a form DD-217N, and it said I had served honorably from Mar 1960 to Feb 1964.

I took it by the store and asked if this was proof enough? "Sure" they said.

I've used it a couple of times since. I passed this tip on to a friend of mine and he saved $60.00 in one purchase.

I also had been issued a billfold size copy of my DD-214, but it is darn hard to read. They might take that, but they would have to have good eyesight. My friend took his full size DD-214 and it worked.

A dog is truly a man's best friend. If you don't believe it, just try this experiment. Put your dog and your wife in the trunk of the car for an hour. When you open the trunk, who is really happy to see you?

(Pearl Harbor from page 4)

would be cut after the merger.

"Instant budget cuts and elimination of jobs are not the goals of this process," he said in a statement.

Mission readiness will guide the merger, along with supporting service members and their families, he said.

Officials will only start looking for ways to save money once they're sure they're following these guiding principles.

"Colonel Tuck and I, along with our staffs, are going about this very carefully, constantly with the mission in mind," Kitchens said, referring to Col. Giovanni Tuck, the current commander of the 15th Airlift Wing.

Miss Sally Edwards is a highly esteemed third grade teacher at Jacksboro Elementary.

In an effort to prepare her students for the all-important TAKS test, she compiled an exam consisting of 20 questions, which she administered to her class last Tuesday. The exam purposely covered a broad array of topics.

I call your attention to question # 11, which simply read:

LIST, IN ANY ORDER, THE FOUR SEASONS:
1. _______ 2. _______ 3. _______ 4. _______

Now, could you possibly imagine that 67% of the students gave the following answer?
1. DOVE SEASON 2. DEER SEASON 3. DUCK SEASON 4. TURKEY SEASON
John Finn, Hero of Pearl Harbor

Reporting from Pine Valley, Calif. -- In a clear, strong voice, John Finn told the group that gathered to honor him Saturday that he did not understand all the fuss being made about him.

"I can't believe this," Finn told the 500-plus people outside the La Posta Diner. "All I ever was was an old swab jockey. . . . What I did I was being paid for."

What Finn did was take control of a .50-caliber machine gun at the Navy base at Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, and fire at the Japanese attack planes that violent morning that changed the world, Dec. 7, 1941.

Wounded five times, he refused to be evacuated and kept firing at the planes that were strafing the base and its sailors. Watching Finn's courage, other sailors rallied to his side, manning other guns.

For his actions, Finn was awarded the Medal of Honor.

Now he's less than a month from his 100th birthday, making him the nation's oldest Medal of Honor recipient and the only living recipient from the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Several veterans groups and others assembled at the diner Saturday to honor Finn in advance of his July 23 birthday. It was a morning full of commendations, including a proclamation from the San Diego County Board of Supervisors marking Saturday as John Finn Day.

"He looks great, doesn't he?" said Supervisor Dianne Jacob.

John Finn, less than a month from his 100th birthday, is the nation's oldest Medal of Honor recipient and the only living recipient from the 1941 attack, during which he was wounded five times.

The event was organized by Bud Wharton, the La Posta Diner's owner. Finn's son, Joe, worked at the La Posta for several years. Located on Old Highway 80, 50 miles east of San Diego, the diner is a favorite haunt of motorcyclists tooling along Interstate 8.

At Wharton's request, dozens of motorcyclists revved their engines in appreciation of Finn. A plaque honoring Finn from the John B. Squibob Chapter 1853 of the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus, a Western state historical group, was placed at the diner.

Finn, a Los Angeles native, was a chief petty officer and aviation ordnance man on the morning of the attack. He retired as a lieutenant in 1956 and has lived in eastern San Diego County.

He's had a series of honors recently. He stood beside President Obama on March 25 as the president laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery.

A ceremony in Finn's honor was held last week at the Navy facility in Bahrain. And a flag is making its way to Finn after flying above several aircraft carriers.

"He represents all that is good and right with this country," said Navy Capt. Russ Thompson, commanding officer of the El Centro Naval Air Facility, who emceed Saturday's event.

Logic

It was decided by Microsoft during a brilliant brainstorming session that military service would improve the skills and discipline of their finest technician. So off to boot camp he went.

At the rifle range, he was given some instruction, a rifle, and bullets. He fired several shots at the target. The report came from the target area that all attempts had completely missed the target.

The Microsoft tech looked at his rifle and then at the target again. "Hmmm,," he thought, "I'll get to the bottom of this in no time."

He looked at the rifle again, and then at the target again. He pointed his still loaded rifle at the ground in front of him and fired. A cloud of dust kicked up, and a little dimple was left there in the dust.

"Yep, it's working," he concluded.

The technician yelled out to the others at the target end, "The rifle is in working order, and the bullet seems to be leaving this end just fine. The trouble must be on your end!"
The Spud Deck
By Tom Lucas

A while back Everett Ward had a story in the news letter about his time as a mess cook. I know that almost everyone had to serve as a mess cook and each of them had something different to tell. Well this is my story and I’m sticking to it.

First I was in the scullery where all the new guys go first. The potato peeler looked like a washing machine tub. The insides looked like they were covered with the roughest sand paper you have ever seen. Where the agitator would be in a washing machine was a small drum covered with the same stuff the outer drum had in it. To operate it, first cut out all the potato eyes, than you filled the machine about half full of spuds and turned on the water jets, and then the machine. The center drum rotated and the spuds rolled around between it and the tubs outer tub’s inner surface. The water kept the peels washed out the bottom and into the galley drain. The machine didn’t have any brains so you had to keep an eye on the thing or you would wash all your spuds overboard down the drain.

I wasn’t there long before I moved to the salad bar. There were three decks between the 2nd and the 02 decks. Everything had to be carried up three decks on the ladders and through the M & B compartments to reach the mess decks.

The salad bar preparation was in an area called the reefer flats and it was just below the main deck. The hatch leading to it was in the passageway just forward of the machine shop. There were two of us assigned to that area for making salads.

At breakfast we made coffee and put out white milk, orange juice, butter, syrup, apple sauce, and jelly up in the mess area on the 02 deck.

We usually started to work on the noon meal about 10:00am. First we checked the milk in the galley. The two milk dispensers each had two dispenser tubes on it. When we had chocolate we would have one of the tubes deliver that flavor in each of the dispenser units. Then if there was time we carried up some extra milk.

After the milk was in place for lunch we begin the salad preparation. I don't remember what order we used, but we made all kind of stuff. Tossed salad, sliced tomatoes, peanut butter on celery, fruit salad, fresh strawberries, some more stuff and the all time favorite, cottage cheese. Sometimes we would mix things in the cottage cheese like crushed pineapples or peaches. I remember one occasion when we were supposed to fix cottage cheese with chopped green onion stems in it. For some reason we got way behind down there and couldn't find the green onions so we substituted parsley. Let me tell you, the chief was not happy.

Sometimes when we were out at sea for a longer than usual time, we would start to run out of things. It was usually the cottage cheese that vanished first, then the tomatoes, and down the line until the fresh milk was gone. The lettuce and celery usually lasted longer than anything else. At the evening mill it was about the same as at noon except we didn't put out any chocolate milk or cottage cheese.

Once we had a bunch of Army Rangers onboard bound for Nam and the chief decided to cheer them up a bit with hamburgers. Well guess what; it was the salad guys that had to slice up all the onions. The little compartment where we prepared the salads was the size of a small kitchen or about 7’X10’. We cut onions until there weren’t any more tears from our eyes. We were going along pretty good when a chief came down the pas- sageway above the hatch and smelled our onions. He made us come up for a little air, but when we went back down to the salad prep compartment, our eyes had to readjust. It was tears all over again.

I remember one especially long time at sea; I think it was off Nam in 64 when I was not a mess cook and we ran out of almost everything. The galley started serving frozen eggs for breakfast one day and powdered eggs the next. We had sterilized milk, no salad bar, and lots of stuff out of cans.

I remember "Mid-Rats" too; no one ever woke me up in time to get any before the 00 to 04 watch. On the other hand, when I got off the 20:00 to 00:00 there was nothing left but water with a hint of noodles.

Everett mentioned the spud deck in his piece. Well that thing was out on the 02 deck at the rear of the M & B compartments port side and we called it the Spud Deck. The spuds would come aboard in 100lb burlap bags and then stacked still in the bags in the potato holding bins. The bins were about 4ft high, 3ft wide, and in three sections each about 8ft long. They had little holes in the bin sides, about an inch in diameter and about 6 inches apart. The purpose for the holes and for stacking the whole bags of spuds in the bins was for ventilation. This always worked pretty well until the time we were scheduled for a prolonged trip in Vietnamese waters.

We took on extra potatoes on that trip and to make room for then, the mess cooks had to dispense with the burlap bags so the spuds were poured into the bins loose. The spuds were more compact in that state and air could not circulate through them as it needed to. I don't know how long it took but after a while the M & B division compartment begin to smell funny. At first we couldn't figure it out. There were three portholes opening onto the 02 deck aft, right over the spud deck.

We always took leisure time out there on the 02 deck right in font of the spud bins. After about two days of the unusual smell, someone noticed it was stronger out on the 02 deck. It didn't take us but a short time to figure out; it was the spuds. They had started rotting and the juice was dripping down into the well deck. We notified the Commissary Chief and the next day the mess cooks dumped all the spuds into the deep six. I told the chief that some of the spuds were still good, but he didn't want to take a chance. We were out of spuds until we made port again.

Tom Lucas
MM3
Whetstone Reunion in Minnesota
By: Joyce McQuillen

The first of June of 2009, the Machinist Mates with a few other Whetstone members had a mini navy reunion in Aiken, Mn.

Russ and Kathy McNitt were the host/hostess at their beautiful lake home. Among the guest were Tom & Joyce McQuillen from Omaha, NE, Paul Mezzanotti from San Diego, CA, Jack & Kay Grubb from Columbus, OH, Gary & Catherine DeWalt from Florence, KY, David & Patricia White from Godley, TX, and David Van Guilder & Donna from Duluth, Mn. Marion & Kay Goble and Don & Rose Smith joined us for a day of fishing with a fish dinner that night. Craig McNitt, son of Russ & Kathy, was amazed at all the stories he heard. It gave him a very different perspective on the Viet Nam war and what it was like for the men who served our country during that time. He now understands why these men have a special bond and friendship! We are looking forward to the next reunion next year in Astoria, OR.

"Democracy is two wolves and a lamb voting on what to have for lunch. Liberty is a well-armed lamb contesting the vote!" - Benjamin Franklin
Navy Chiefs - Recollections of a WHITE HAT

For those who never had the honor and privilege of being a Chief, this might shed some light into the "old ways" of leadership... ways that worked and worked well. I know, I was one of those kids and I became one of those "crusty old bastards".

One thing we weren't aware of at the time, but became evident as life wore on, was that we learned true leadership from the finest examples any lad was ever given, Chief Petty Officers. They were crusty old bastards who had done it all and had been forged into men who had been time tested over more years than a lot of us had time on the planet. The ones I remember wore hydraulic oil stained hats with scratched and dinged-up insignia, faded shirts, some with a Bull Durham tag dangling out of their right-hand pocket or a pipe and tobacco reloads in a worn leather pouch in their hip pockets, and a Zippo that had been everywhere. Some of them came with tattoos on their forearms that would force them to keep their cuffs buttoned at a Methodist picnic. Most of them were as tough as a boarding house steak. A quality required to survive the life they lived. They were, and always will be, a breed apart from all other residents of Mother Earth. They took eighteen year old idiots and hammered the stupid bastards into sailors. You knew instinctively it had to be hell on earth to have been born a Chief's kid. GOD should have given all sons born to Chiefs a return option.

A Chief didn't have to command respect. He got it because there was nothing else you could give them. They were God's designat-ed hitters on earth. We had Chiefs with fully loaded Submarine Combat Patrol Pins, and combat air crew wings in my day. . . hard -core bastards who remembered lost mates, and still cursed the cause of their loss. . . and they were expert at choosing descriptive adjectives and nouns, none of which their mothers would have endorsed. At the rare times you saw a Chief topside in dress canvas, you saw rows of hard-earned, worn and faded ribbons over his pocket. "Hey Chief, what's that one and that one?" "Oh hell kid, I can't remember. There was a war on. They gave them to us to keep track of the campaigns." "We didn't get a lot of news out where we were. To be honest, we just took their word for it. Hell son, you couldn't pronounce most of the names of the places we went. They're all depth charge survival geedunk." "Listen kid, ribbons don't make you a Sailor." We knew who the heroes were, and in the final analysis that's all that matters. Many nights, we sat in the after mess deck wrapping ourselves around cups of coffee and listening to their stories. They were light-hearted stories about warm beer shared with their running mates in corrugated metal sheds at resupply depots where the only furniture was a few packing crates and a couple of Coleman lamps. Standing in line at a Honolulu cathouse or spending three hours soaking in a tub in Freemantle, smoking cigars, and getting loaded. It was our his-tory. And we dreamed of being just like them because they were our heroes. When they accepted you as their shipmate, it was the highest honor you would ever receive in your life. At least it was clearly that for me. They were not men given to the prerogatives of their position.

You would find them with their sleeves rolled up, shoulder-to-shoulder with you in a stores loading party. "Hey Chief, no need for you to be out here tossin' crates in the rain, we can get all this crap aboard." "Son, the term 'All hands' means all hands." "Yeah Chief, but you're no damn kid anymore, you old coot." "Horselly, when I'm eighty-five parked in the stove up old bastards' home, I'll still be able to kick your worthless butt from here to fifty feet past the screw guards along with six of your closest friends." And he probably wasn't bullshitting. They trained us. Not only us, but hundreds more just like us. If it wasn't for Chief Petty Officers, there wouldn't be any U.S. Navy. There wasn't any fairy godmother who lived in a hollow tree in the enchanted forest who could wave her magic wand and create a Chief Petty Officer. They were born as hot flakes seamen, and matured like good whiskey in steel hulls over many years. Nothing a nineteen year-old jay-bird could cook up was original to these old saltwater owls. They had seen E-3 jerks come and go for so many years; they could read you like a book. "Son, I know what you are thinking. Just one word of advice. DON'T. It won't be worth it." "Aye, Chief."

Chiefs aren't the kind of guys you thank. Monkeys at the zoo don't spend a lot of time thanking the guy who makes them do tricks for peanuts. Appreciation of what they did, and who they were, comes with long distance retrospect. No young lad takes time to recognize the worth of his leadership. That comes later when you have experienced poor leadership or let's say, when you have the maturity to recognize what leaders should be, you find that Chiefs are the standard by which you measure all others. They had no Academy rings to get scratched up. They butchered the King's English. They had become educated at the other end of an anchor pole or a pipe and tobacco reloads in a worn leather pouch in their hip pockets, and a Zippo that had been everywhere. Some of them came with tattoos on their forearms that would force them to keep their cuffs buttoned at a Methodist picnic. Most of them were as tough as a boarding house steak. A quality required to survive the life they lived. They were, and always will be, a breed apart from all other residents of Mother Earth. They took eighteen year old idiots and hammered the stupid bastards into sailors. You knew instinctively it had to be hell on earth to have been born a Chief's kid. GOD should have given all sons born to Chiefs a return option.

Life fixes it so that by the time a stupid kid grows old enough and smart enough to recognize who he should have thanked along the way, he no longer can. If I could, I would thank my old Chiefs. If you only knew what you succeeded in pounding in this thick skull, you would be amazed. So, thanks you old casehardened unsalvageable son-of-a-bitches. Save me a rack in the berthing compartment." Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass, it's about learning to dance in the rain!

(Submitted by Ron Hnatovic)
To order any Ship’s Store item please contact Marion Goble, 6200 Emerald Pines Circle, Ft. Myers, FL 33966, (239)768-1449 or e-mail: shipstore@usswhetstone.net When submitting an order, please make checks payable to USS Whetstone Association. All jackets and golf shirts are navy blue with gold lettering. T-shirts are navy blue with gold lettering or gray with navy lettering. Hats are navy blue with gold silhouette of ship, white with navy blue silhouette of ship or red with gold silhouette of ship, or camouflage with gold silhouette of ship (red and camouflage hats and DVD of Reunions are new items).

**Items for Sale:**
- Ball Caps (With Silhouette) $20.00
- Cruise Books (57, 61,66,67 & 68) $20.00
- DVD of Reunions (1996-2006) $10.00
- DVD of 2008 Reunion $10.00
- Golf Shirts (S,M,L,XL) $35.00
- T-Shirts (S,M,L,XLG, XXL) $20.00
- Jackets (S,M,L,XLG) $50.00
- Jackets (XXL & XXXL) $52.00
- Mouse pads w/Whetstone Picture $10.00
- Yosemite Sam Patches $ 8.00
- Zippo Knives w/Ship Silhouette $20.00
- Zippo Lighters w/Ship Silhouette $13.00
- Whetstone Pictures on Canvas $25.00

**Note:** All Prices Include Shipping

**This would not have made me happy 50 years ago!**

DoD Advised to Ban Tobacco Gradually

WASHINGTON -- Butt out. But slowly.

That's the counsel of the Institute of Medicine, which has issued a report advising the Defense Department to phase in a military-wide tobacco ban, beginning at the military academies.

The report was requested by the Pentagon and the Department of Veterans Affairs, which asked the Institute of Medicine to identify policies and practices that could lower rates of smoking and help Soldiers and veterans quit.

Tobacco use reduces Soldiers' physical fitness and endurance and is linked to higher rates of absenteeism and lost productivity, the report said.

In 2005, 32 percent of active-duty personnel and 22 percent of veterans were smokers. Rates among active-duty personnel have recently increased -- possibly because of growing tobacco use by deployed troops -- the report said.

"We found that the adverse effects of tobacco use on military readiness, the health of both smokers and non-smokers and the financial cost of the medical care of smoking-related illness in military and veteran populations are a sound basis for moving systematically toward a tobacco-free military," Stuart Bondurant, of the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill and chairman of the committee that wrote the report, said in a statement.

All Pentagon and VA healthcare providers should be able to provide brief counseling and nicotine-replacement therapy to patients, the report said. The VA and Defense Department should develop toll-free "quitlines" to provide military personnel and veterans with counseling on quitting tobacco, the report said.