



NPCA Officers: President, Mike Bertalan. Vice President, Harland Kirkendall. Special Advisor, Abel Quinones. Secretary, Grover "Mac" McLaughlin. Treasurer, Steven Hill. Editor, John Peters. Asst. Editor. Gil Hough.

MAIL CALL: Greetings fellow Navy Postal Clerks and all non PC's who, when called upon, performed Mail Handling duties for their shipmates. This the third edition of our newsletter for promulgating news of interest to our shipmates. Once again, our newsletter's name is MAIL CALL, relating to one of the more popular announcements made aboard all ships.

---

INDEX:

Page 1 - a. Mail Call - Opening Comments  
Page 2 - NPCA President Comments  
Page 3 - History of the Navy Postal Clerk Rate  
Page 4 - NPCA 2008 Reunion - About Norfolk  
Page 5 - a. Story of PC2 John Spicher b.  
Page 6 - Membership, dues information and NPCA Merchandise

The Navy Postal Clerk Association (NPCA) consists of past and present Navy members of the postal clerk rate, (established in 1960) and their families. Also included and welcome are Marine PC's and anyone who had an association with the Navy Postal Service, Officer or civilian. Once again, our purpose is:

1. To promote & enhance the social welfare of the Navy Postal Clerk community.
2. To conduct programs for charitable and educational purposes.
3. To sponsor or participate in activities of a patriotic nature.
4. To provide social and recreational activities for it's members.
5. To renew friendships with old and new shipmates through reunions to be held every 2 years alternating between the East and West coast areas. (You can find more news of our 2008 reunion on pages 4)

Message from the NPCA President  
PCCM Michael Bertalan, USN (ret)

First I will repeat the bad news for those of you that may not have received the word, the Navy plans to slowly eliminate the Postal Clerk rating and slowly phase it into the Storekeeper rate. As I said in our last newsletter, this makes our Association even more important in keeping the heritage and history of our ratings contribution to the Navy Postal System alive.

I received an e-mail from PCCM Lloyd Smethers, now retired, describing how the Navy Postal System had changed. With the elimination of the PC rate and the changing of the chain of command within the Navy Postal System, Our association will be one of the primary ways to keep our/your memories going and the PC accomplishments alive.

Lloyd went on to explain the new in and outs of directing the Navy Mail System today. We have NEXCOM who serves ACAS. Then we have COMFISC, MPDA & JMPA. Remember how simple it was back when CNO Postal Affairs was in charge of the Navy Postal System with the FPO's providing routing under the Service force Commanders. Is the Navy Postal System with the entire modernization better today - now? Let us hear what YOU think. (L.S.)

Finally, I want to remind everyone this is YOUR Association and where we go from here is up the membership of this great organization.

---

The following is a true story - "The adventures of PCSN Gil Hough."

During Class "A" Postal Clerk School in 1961 and before reporting to Kami Seya Japan, I took my jumpers over to the Seven Seas Locker Club in San Diego to have the PC designator sewn above my Seaman Stripes.

I proudly wore my jumper back to the base only to find the gate guard quite puzzled.

The Petty Officer said to me, "I have never seen that designator before, what is it"? I explained to him that if he looked at it closely, he would know at once.

He could not figure it out. I told him I was a member of the prestigious All Navy Bowling Team, consisting of 10 of us, and the designator depicted a bowling ball and bowling lanes. He thought I was real hot stuff. (Gil)

Page (2)

## 2008 NPCA REUNION

Our 208 Reunion is being organized by Mike Petras and Mike Dwyer. For planning purposes, the reunion is tentatively scheduled for the 3rd week in May. Check in will be on Wed, then Thu., Fri, and Sat, FUN TIMES, with checkout on Sunday. Again this is tentative for YOUR planning purposes; actual dates will be sent early in 2008 when finalized.

The Norfolk area is an exciting place. Just ask Abe Quinones who spent many a happy hour at the NavSta CPO Club. Although the gals he used to court are no longer there, the bar stools he once sat on at the bar (probably with his initial still on them), should be to welcome him back, He remembers how cool it was to be greeted by those who hung out there. He wonders if the old tennis courts by the Officer's Club are still there. He and PCC Turpin had won the Senior Tennis Doubles tournament in Hawaii and had been flown to Norfolk to defend their title.

Abe loved to dance and being under 40, (obviously this was a long, long time ago) he got to know some of the girls very well. He was keenly aware that the rooms where the girls were staying had a back entrance. He says "It was enjoyable spending my \$10 per day per diem on wine, women, song AND women."

\*\*\*\*\*

Founded in 1682, Norfolk is a fun town, where life is celebrated daily by the over 241,000 people who call it home. The city has been undergoing a successful renewal including new office, retail, entertainment and hotel construction. The city's popular logo is an elegant young mermaid which can be spotted through-out the town and symbolizes over 300 years of maritime and Naval history. The city's central location, accessibility, and regional transit system, make getting around lots easier than most cities.

**ATTRactions:** The battleship USS Wisconsin, the National Maritime Center, an interactive science and technology center all dot Norfolk's easily-walked down town waterfront. Other treasures - The Chrysler Museum, Norfolk Botanical Gardens and the Virginia Zoological Park are close by. Among the additional sites, is the world's largest Navy base headquartered in Norfolk.

We hope you will join for a great time as we had in San Antonio and Las Vegas before that. It will be a chance to see old friends, meet new ones, and share a variety of Postal Sea stories which usually includes some embellishment. We hope you will come and join us.

## PC2 John "PC" SPICHER, 1937 - 1967

The story of an American Hero, submitted by PCCM Gil Hough, USN (ret)

John Spicher was born in Pennsylvania in 1937. In 1954, at age 17, John joined the Navy, following both his father and grandfather who had served in the Navy during World War II. John loved the Navy and reenlisted for six more years

On his last tour, he was assigned to the intelligence ship USS Liberty AGTR-5. On June 8th, 1967, while monitoring the 6 day war between Israel and the Arab states. Sailing under old glory, the Liberty came under surprise attack by Israeli aircraft and motor torpedo boats that mistook her for an enemy ship . The attack lasted 75 minutes, in International waters. When the smoke cleared, 34 men were dead and 174 wounded. Among the dead was PC2 John Spicher hit by a rocket on the main deck and died while receiving emergency aid.

It is believed that PC2 Spicher might have been the first PC killed in combat. PC2 Spicher is buried in Arlington National Cemetery, Grave #11362D

---

### A Bit of Navy Postal Clerk History

The Navy Times dated 20 October 1960, nearly 46 years ago, announced those selected for the newly created Postal Clerk (PC) rating; 644 personnel from various ratings switched to become Navy Postal Clerks. This climaxed a long and hectic journey for Navy Postal Personnel.

During World war II, the rate of "Mailman" performed primarily postal duties. The Mailman rate badge was a circled "M" followed with cancellation lines much like the PC rate insignia of today.

After World War II, Mailman was phased into and combined with the new Teleman (TE) rate which now included telecommunications, Registered Publication Issuing Office (RPIO) duties and various other clerical duties.

Then in about 1955, the TE rate was phased out with postal combined with the Yeoman Rate (YN) and telecommunication personnel into Radioman (RM). Once again, postal personnel had to learn a completely new field. Finally, in 1960, after many serious miss-handling of postal matters, the PC Rate was restored. The PC rate has flourished, Mail Service excelled in all phases of its operations. Both at sea, and ashore, outstanding postal & mail services were the norm.

Now, once again, the Powers that Be, have decided to eliminate the PC rate and phase it into various supply rates. Only God knows where we will go from here.

PC3 Elvis McKay - after the Navy went to work for the Post Office. An unfortunate car accident forced him into early retirement and now works as a Loan Officer. Been married 25 years to wife Cheryl, who he met while both stationed at FMC Yokohama. Lives in Middleburg, Fla. Looks forward to our next reunion and seeing his old buddy David Schwarbenbaer (sp) who also has been married 25 years to his wife who was also a Navy PC when they met .

\*\*\*\*\*

PC3 Louis Munoz is still in Tucson and still sells real estate. Things are a bit slow there now so he took off for Hawaii where we caught him huffing and puffing along a beach. Brags he can still jog while holding a beer in one hand. Sorry he missed the San Antonio reunion but looking forward to being at the Norfolk one.

\*\*\*\*\*

PC1 Hugh McDougal. Served aboard the USS Yorktown among other various duty stations. Had collateral classified duties while a postal clerk but Always made sure, his mail duties came first. Most of his duty stations were aboard ship except for his tour in Germany. Toe operation that kept him from last reunion still bothers him but he is looking forward to attending our next one in Norfolk.

He and wife Linda live in Middlesburg, Fla same as PC3 McKay.

\*\*\*\*\*

Rtd., PCC Joe Martin now works for civil service teaching what was postal clerk duties to PC's, now it is to associated supply rate personnel. Joe is 5 years from retiring from his civilian job. Wanted to thank Lloyd Smethers again for saving his behind years ago. Did not want to say what he had done to be saved from.

\*\*\*\*\*

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Rate \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Wife or Partners Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

If not a PC, Postal Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

### Change of Address

Please notify the NPCA Secretary, Grover :Mac” McGloughlin, of any mailing address change. His address, also shown on Page 6, is:

13079 Feather Ridge Dr. San Antonio, TX 78233

Your cooperation is appreciated.

Membership dues to the Navy Postal Clerk Association, (NPCA) are \$20.00 and due every 2 years. Next Dues should be sent before 31 January 2008 and mailed to: Steven Hill

32265 Via Arias  
Temecula, CA 92592

Also feel free to send any personal information, comments, thoughts, or happenings to John Peters, at the return address on this newsletter. You can also e-mail it to him at: [sportsfanzz@sisna.com](mailto:sportsfanzz@sisna.com). The Association also has two websites at:

<http://www.npcreunion.dreamhost.com/index.php> or  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/navypostalclerks/join>

We keep adding information, photos and stories to these websites so please make use of them.

\*\*\*\*\*

### NPCA Financial Information

2006 Membership Fees, Reunion Dues, Reunion Sale	
Total Inflow .....	\$3,104.49
2006 Expenses including \$950.00 owed Abel Quinones	
Total Outflow.....	-\$4,333.96
Overall Total as of 31 December 2006.....	-\$1,229.47

\*\*\*\*\*

Coffee Mug	\$8.00
Hat	\$15.00 limitede number left
T Shirt	\$10.00

Price for the coin is listed \$ 8.00 for on and \$15.00 for two.  
Platic cases for coin are available for \$1.00  
Bolo Ties of the NPCA Challenge Coin are \$20.00 each (with either the Navy Seal or NPCA side showing)  
To purchase or inquire about the quilts (sizes, prices, availability, etc.), please contact Dick Baber at [rbaber@cox.net](mailto:rbaber@cox.net) or by phone at (620) 669-0218.

Items (excluding quilts) can be purchased by sending a check or money order to  
NPCA  
c/oPCC Grover McLaughlin  
13079 Feather Ridge Drive  
San Antonio, TX 78233  
or call 210-654-8556  
or e-mail [g.mclaughlin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:g.mclaughlin@sbcglobal.net)

In closing, we hope to see you at the 2008 Reunion, should be a lot of fun just like the ones we already had. Your Shipmate PCCM John T. Peters, USN (ret)  
In closing, we hope to see you at the 2008 Reunion, should be a lot of fun just like he ones we already had. Your Shipmate PCCM John T. Peters, USN (ret)