



Navy Postal Clerk Association

President: Michael Bertalan
Vice President: Harlan Kirkendall
Senior Advisor: Abel Quinones
Secretary: Grover McLaughlin
Treasurer: Steven Hill

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osted by Gil Hough and Jack Spellman on December 10, 2008

A combined message from your Navy Postal Clerk Association Elected Officers:

To our great membership. The 2010 NPCA reunion will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada sometime in the first two weeks of May. Hope to see you all there. The actual vote came down as follows: Las Vegas (aka lost wages): 26; San Diego: 21; Reno: 5; and Laughlin: 2.

Please keep us up to date with any changes to your address, phone number and or email address. I guess we were spoiled in the Navy because we had a change of address card readily available. We keep a very accurate current paid-up membership spreadsheet. If you would like a copy, we ask that you request it by e-mail if possible due to its length and cost of mailing. You can call or e-mail Gil Hough at (808) 623-9343 or hough@hawaii.rr.com for assistance.

We are interested in any stories of the days gone by that you can provide. However, please don't squeal on any of your old shipmates ha ha!

Abel Quinones and Gil Hough are available to assist you with information regarding VA Service Connected Disabilities. Please let us know if we can be of assistance to you. abelisable@comcast.net or hough@hawaii.rr.com

Our Association would greatly appreciate any news regarding serious health issues of any of our former shipmates/spouses of the Navy Postal Clerk Community.

On behalf of our Association, we wish each and everyone one of you a Happy Holiday Season along with a great New Year (2009)!

Membership news:

Mike and Liz Dwyer will be celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary on December 20, 2008. They plan a month long visit to sunny Hawaii in January 2009 with friends they were stationed with in Hawaii in the late 1950's. Congratulations to you both!

Tom Ernst had a stroke and has been in a hospital/nursing home for almost one year. He says to tell his friends hello and enjoy. You can reach him at (703) 997-1817. He is somewhat hard of hearing so let the phone ring awhile.

Tom Briggs tells us he lives ten minutes from Laughlin and worked in the casinos for 18 years. He must be a high roller!

Bill Vanderslice lives in the Reno area and will most likely attend our Vegas reunion; he misses his old buddies like Mike Dwyer and Abel Q.

Bob Begarly will be attending our 2010 even and will visit his sister in Phoenix before or after. He thinks the combining of the PC's with the SK's rating is a very bad idea. Additionally, he believes doing away with money orders sales on all ships is even a worse idea.

Butch Thornrose wanted to attend our last reunion but things did not work out for him. He retired from the State of Georgia and he told me that he was in charge of excess U.S. Government property that Georgia procured from government surplus; sounds like a perfect job for a retired PCCM. He got rid of his computer after retirement. He wants to stay in touch with his old buddies and would like to see Mike and Liz Dwyer again. He said that Mike Lynes is now living in Aiken, South Carolina.

Our President (Mike Bertalan) recently received his baccalaureate degree from the University of Phoenix; congratulations.

Gil & Susan Hough celebrated their 47th Wedding Anniversary on October 14, 2008. They will be going to Branson, Missouri. Gil is going to scout the place out for a possible future NPCA reunion. He has heard really good things about how well they treat their visiting veterans.

Ron McEntee joined the Navy in March 1952 and served on many ships and shore stations over the years. He served in support of both the Korean and Vietnam wars. He was originally a Gunners Mate but switched to Postal Clerk while assigned to the USS Damato (DDE-871) in Norfolk, Virginia in the early 1960's. Ron retired from the U.S. Navy on October 31, 1973. He then began a second career (you got it) with the U.S. Postal Service and retired again October 31, 1997 with 24 years service.

Ron & Marie McEntee helped us with our reunion in Virginia Beach, they have been in the Norfolk area for about fifty years and in the same house the entire time. Their eldest son (Mike) received an appointment to the United States Naval Academy in June 1974 and graduated in June 1978. He served in/on several ships and left the Navy as a Lieutenant Commander after nine years service to pursue a career with the U.S. Civil Service as an engineering information technologist. Ron and Marie went to his U.S. Navy Academy's thirtieth year reunion recently; must have been really great and we are very proud of your entire family!

Marie raised five great children who have all been very successful. She has been tap dancing for over twenty years with a Norfolk (Lakewood Dance and Music Center) which entertains senior citizens. Stay tuned to see Marie dancing with the stars!!!!!!

Do you know what a challenge coin is? We have one of our very own thanks to the investment by our very own favorite Senior Advisor or one who is known as Abel Quinones: Here is how to get one and a short story of why they came to be:

NPCA CHALLENGE COIN



Price for the coin is listed \$8.00 for one and \$15.00 for two.

Plastic cases for coin are available for \$1.00

Coins can be purchased by sending a check or money order to NPCA c/o PCC Grover McLaughlin
13079 Feather Ridge Drive, San Antonio, TX 78233
or call 210-654-8556 or e-mail g.mclaughlin@sbcglobal.net

Several years ago Commanders and others decided to bring back the challenge coin to instill a commitment of pride, honor and leadership to their respective units. Now all Flag Officers, Commanding Officers, Medal of Honor recipients, and others have their own coins to present to those that have contributed to their respective organizations. Please review the history of the challenge coin below and buy one now before they are gone forever.

Challenging

The tradition of a challenge is the most common way to ensure that members are carrying their unit's coin. Unfortunately, the rules of a challenge are not always formalized for a unit, and may vary between organizations. This may lead to some controversy when challenges are initiated between members of different organizations. The challenge, which can be held at any time, begins with the challenger drawing his/her coin, and slapping or placing the coin on the table or bar. In noisy environs, continuously rapping the challenge coin on a surface may initiate the challenge. (Accidentally dropping a challenge coin is considered to be a deliberate challenge to all present.) Everyone being challenged must immediately produce the coin for their organization and anyone failing to do so must buy a round of drinks for the challenger and everyone else who has their challenge coin. However, should everyone challenged be able to produce their coin, the challenger must buy a round of drinks for the group. Variant rules may include additions such as the following: If you are able to steal a challenge coin everyone in the group must buy you a drink. During a challenge everyone in the group must buy you a drink if you are the holder of the highest ranking coin. Some units provide strict time limits to respond to a challenge.

**A short feature story about our first Honorary Member
Henry Negishi**

A short story of a Japanese National who served with the Navy/Marine Corps Postal Clerk Community from 1960 until his retirement on June 30, 2001 or a career that spanned over four decades .He is now one of two honorary member of the Navy Postal Clerk Association.

Much to his great fortune, he met a U.S. Navy Commander near his home. The CDR was impressed with young Henry (21 years old) and recommended him for a job at TNPO Yokohama because the 75 year old Administrative Specialist (office manager) was retiring and they could not find a replacement for him. The Japanese Government did not want him to have the job because of his youth as it involved being responsible for 25 other Japanese employees and the official interpreter for both the Navy and Marine Corps Officers in Charge. Fortunately for us, the Commander and the Local National Labor Union prevailed to allow him a two month probationary period and the rest is history. His first two U.S. Navy supervisors were PCC Sam Grubbs and Johnny Burns (both shipmates forever).

In the 1960's the Navy and Army shared the same compound and bulk mail was delivered via barge after being unloaded at North Pier where U.S. civilian ships pulled in. Japanese Labor Union strikes were common in those days and Henry and many others stayed at the Post Office so their pay would not be deducted. The Navy supplied food and other Required items to those who stayed and worked. He and the others had to hide out from the picket groups outside the compound. In those days Japanese railway was used to haul mail to Iwakuni and Sasebo. A U.S. Navy armed guard (that's scary) rode the train to protect the mails.

He indicates that they had forty Navy personnel, ten Marines, and 25 Japanese civilians at North Pier during that period. He said it was very obvious to him that the Navy and Marines did not always agree on the same issues and friction was evident at times (sound familiar).

He took a leave of absence in 1975 to visit the United States to take a test for professional investigator with the hopes of joining the Yokohama Police Department. However, he decided to stay with his career at North Pier but not without exhausting every possible avenue to join the United States Navy.

Henry was promoted to Traffic Manager at age 36 where he served until his retirement in 2001.He never took one day sick leave during his long and illustrious career. He received numerous awards throughout his career. He was presented "The Order of the Vest" from the Airline Postal Advisory Committee and Air Transport Association of the United States; a letter from the President of the United States; and the Commander in Chief, United States Pacific Fleet at his retirement ceremony.

He told me his last Officer in Charge was PCCM Dale Pinchart who still works at Commander Fleet Activities (CFAY) Yokosuka.

He enjoys collecting photographs and ball caps from U.S. Navy ships and other Navy memorabilia. You may contact him at: heroneg@cronos.ocn.net.jp
