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Quarterly Newsletter
September 2021
Volume IV No.2

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Hinton Memorial Breaks the Streak

**By
Phil G. Garn**

It was exhilarating to see all the enthusiasm and fellowship resulting from the 55th Anniversary gathering in November 2019. That positive energy quickly translated into Boat Guy gatherings around the country, from the Meet in the Middle to the Gulf Coast River Rat Reunion and the San Diego May Ride. Then COVID began to pick off these events one by one. First, the highly anticipated Meet in the Middle was canceled, and the rest followed. We all hoped that by summer, things would open up again. Charlie Philpot (HPU and SBU-13) started getting us excited about the Ray Hinton Memorial Golf Tournament in late November. His dear friend, golfing buddy, and former Navy Leap Frog “Nix” White organized the tournament in honor of their old comrade Ray Hinton. Charlie urged us to get involved saying this would be a worthy cause with a lot of veterans, and we get some good exposure for CCCA. The board agreed, and we began to pitch in.



Setting up on the green right at the start of the first tee at the Chula Vista Municipal Golf Course next to the Pro Shop and entry Tent. Mike Sigsworth had helped Charlie back at the office put together gift bags and all the chairs, tables, tent, banners, and equipment we would need.



Chuck (center) and Mark (right) helping set up the CCCA tent at the first tee. Note the CCCA banners and table throws, as well as Phil and Chuck's masterful knot tying. The zip ties were a significant improvement! Thanks, Mike.

As with any event, there **was a lot of work behind the scenes**. Nix and Charlie did a lot with the Chula Vista Golf Course and several donors and volunteers. Hoehn Motors even donated a brand-new Range Rover for a hole-in-one challenge on the 9th hole. Once CCCA was in, the word went out for local volunteers for the tournament and prep work. Treasurer Mike Sigsworth (SBU-13) worked tirelessly to spread the word. Mike and Charlie put together gift bags with CCCA swag. Those at the 55th will recognize the bright blue bags with our emblems in the photos. They also staged our pop-up tent with new side posts and sheets, CCCA banners, tables, and chairs, as well as the set-up kit (this would be critical). Then Chuck Chaldekis (SBU-12/ST-1), Mark Jensen (SBU-12), and I came to the office the Saturday before and started loading up. We also rehearsed a few of the new assemblies. We weren't sure if it would all fit in Chuck's truck, so I brought mine too. Had I brought my little car, we would have needed my truck. We got it all in Chuck's car.



Our tent has been erected. Phil (left) and Chuck (right) are setting up gift bags in front of the Ray Hinton Memorial Bench on the First T. About to receive some more direction from Samantha on proper bag placement from Samantha and Mark before photographing each foursome or group as they set off.



Proper CCCA placement. The CCCA crew and Ray Hinton's wife Laura posing at "the stating bench." Left to right CCCA members Mark Jansen, Charlie Philpot, Phil Garn, Laura Hinton, Nix White and Chuck Chaldekas.

Chuck and I did not have to get up too early, and I told him my recent white shark attack story. A few blocks away from the entrance, the GPS took us up into the hills on a crazy roundabout; we could have just kept on Bonita Road and made a left at the light. We met up with Charlie, Nix, and Mark, then began unloading.

Armando and the staff could not have been more accommodating. We were able to drive right up to our spot near the First Tee. The assembly went quickly, and the day warmed up fast. After Chuck and I tied a few lubberly lines (so much for underwater knot tying), we started using the zip ties in the kit, and everything came together quickly. We were also thankful for the side panels which screened us from the rising sun and the hole in one ball that overshot the 9th hole just to our north. The final member of our team was Nix's daughter Samantha who would be the official photographer, along with Mark, who helped her get the bugs out of the camera settings. Mike was also prescient enough to give us a second copy of WARBOATS to display on our table.



Another group is getting ready to start. Again, note the placement of the CCCA gift bags. Left to right: Retired Master Chief Dennis Lust, Former Washington Redskin Craig McEwen, Jim Walther, Charlie, and Nix White. Charlie and Nix have since gotten CCCA golf shirts.



Four NSW comrades you might recognize from your service in the Units and Teams.



Some younger NSW comrades who you might recognize.

The foursomes began arriving and checking in with Armando before heading to the 1st Tee for photo ops with Mark and Samantha. Note the gift bags cleverly staged with each foursome/group, great idea Samantha! We talked with many vets, including some young

SWCCs and SEALs. The young SWCC Grant was able to peruse the book while waiting for his turn to sign in. We also got to talk with many old comrades from the Teams who were playing in a later flight. We were surprised to learn from these fellows what a good guy Nix was and was still jumping into sporting events around the country with his private parachute team. We also got to talking about joint projects with them and former Redskin player Craig McEwen (also a golfing buddy of Charlie's), who has helped CCCA with other fundraising projects, including Big & Rich. Chuck and I expeditiously distributed the boxes of gift bags once Samantha had us trained. The groups went off very smoothly, and there was plenty of space between each foursome. Before we knew it, twenty-foursomes were on the course, and we had two bags to spare, whew! Takedown went reasonably well until Chuck, and I tried to put the banners away in their tubes. After really rolling them tightly, we couldn't get them in the PVC tube; then, Mark pulled out the empty tube, which had rolled off to the side. Without other banners packed in, they slid right in. Armando and one of the other course managers said they had enjoyed our participation, were pleased to learn CCCA was a 501(C)(3) and wanted to invite us back for a Memorial Day event in May. We got everything in the truck, gave Mike a call who had just finished up the CCCA meeting back at the office (Yes, the tournament was the same day and time as the monthly CCCA meeting), and headed back. Charlie and Nix were still duffing on the course.



It wasn't all guys! A Lady's foursome plus one, including Laura Hinton.



The groups are all off, gift bags distributed with only two to spare, about time to start taking everything down.

Back at the office, Mike helped us put away our gear, and we told him the zip ties and set up kit was a lifesaver. Charlie called us from the course and said everyone who played had fun, the fundraising had gone very well, and he would have some good numbers for us. We had a quick debrief, gobbling up Chex Mix (also a 55th leftover) at the office.

CCCA received a \$1,000 donation from the Strauss family and a check for over \$2,600 for the Golf tournament. We would follow up with a thank you for the Strauss family and a custom CCCA golf shirt for Nix. This golf event was a super fundraising opportunity and a chance to network with other veterans and organizations. Charlie and Nix are arranging another tournament scheduled for May 23.

A Little Coin Means A Lot

By

Phil G. Garn

Edited by Joseph Zemlin

From lifesaving proof of bona fides to tokens of appreciation, challenge coins have been around in some shape for over 100 years and perhaps much longer going back to the Roman Legions. Though tales vary about their introduction, there are stories during the First and Second World Wars when specially minted challenge coins were used by servicemen to cross from behind enemy lines. Until recently, challenge coins were rare and used as proof of service in particular units, particularly on "the beach," outside the command, especially across generations. It was also a way to get a free drink if an old comrade forgot theirs at a reunion or meeting. Only rarely were they given to someone outside the unit. Naturally, they have become highly sought after by collectors, and some have become extremely valuable. The practice of giving them as small tokens of appreciation or selling them for fundraising has become much more common in the military, law enforcement, and civilian worlds. However, for some both inside and outside the unit, their value is beyond gold.

Soon after establishing the Combatant Craft Crewman Association (CCCA), CCCA began striking challenge coins starting with the "Plank Owner" coins, followed by several new designs by Joe and John Zemlin, including commemorative coins for the 50th and 55th Anniversaries. Mike Sigsworth worked hard with Joe behind the scenes, contacting various vendors to get us high quality and reasonable prices.

We learned that David Burns Jr., a young man with Cerebral Palsy and other complications, was collecting challenge coins and sent him one of ours and some CCCA stickers. We received a heartfelt thank you letter from David's mother, Lisa. It tells the whole story and how a small gesture made a difference for a challenged young man and his family, who also get that we are part of Naval Special Warfare.



David J. & Lisa A. Burns & David J. Burns Jr.
37 Williams St.
Clinton, NY 13323

Hello! My name is Lisa Burns. I am proud to introduce my incredibly strong, cheerful, and persevering son, David J. Burns Jr.

The day David was born was the day my family's life, and the lives of all the people who would eventually meet him, would be enriched beyond measure. After pregnancy complications, David was born two months early with cerebral palsy and other various handicaps.

We were told our son probably wouldn't live past the age of 4. This past December, David celebrated his 31st birthday.

Despite the limitations of his disabilities, we have worked hard to give David a life full of those average, everyday experiences we all tend to take for granted like going out to dinner or running errands, as well as some pretty extraordinary ones like sitting seaside on vacation every year in Maine, or holding the Stanley Cup when it visited our small town of Clinton, New York.

David's physical differences have never made him the exception. What makes David exceptional is his capacity for joy, like when he hears his favorite song "Smile" by Vitamin C, or his ability to inspire you by handling many surgeries with patience and strength. But David's most exceptional quality is the way he can make every person feel important and special because he loves to listen to the sound of your voice. You'll never find a better listener than David.

The challenge coin collection that Mike DeTraglia started for David means more to us than we can ever adequately express. Beyond being a thoughtful gesture, they are pieces of the world that David may never have the chance to see. They are symbols of everything that David is to us—strength, resilience, and purpose.

We are so grateful for this opportunity to share a bit more about David and we are honored to be a part of this community in some small way!

Thank you very much for sending David your challenge coins & adhesive decals. We are proud and honored to have them and will cherish them forever.

Sincerely, Lisa & Dave Burns and David Jr.

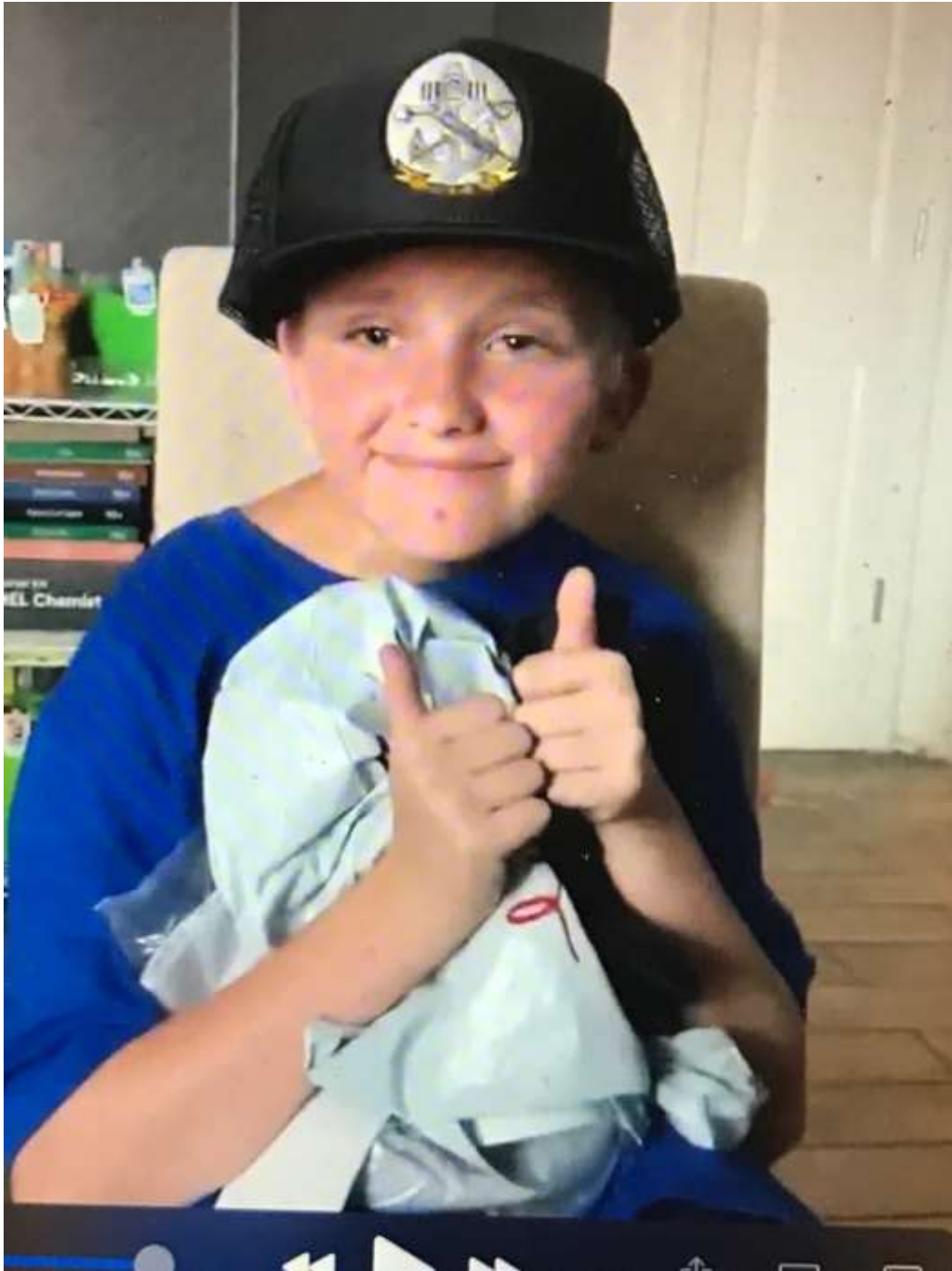


Letter and photo of David Burns Jr. from Lisa Burns regarding the CCCA challenge coins and decals

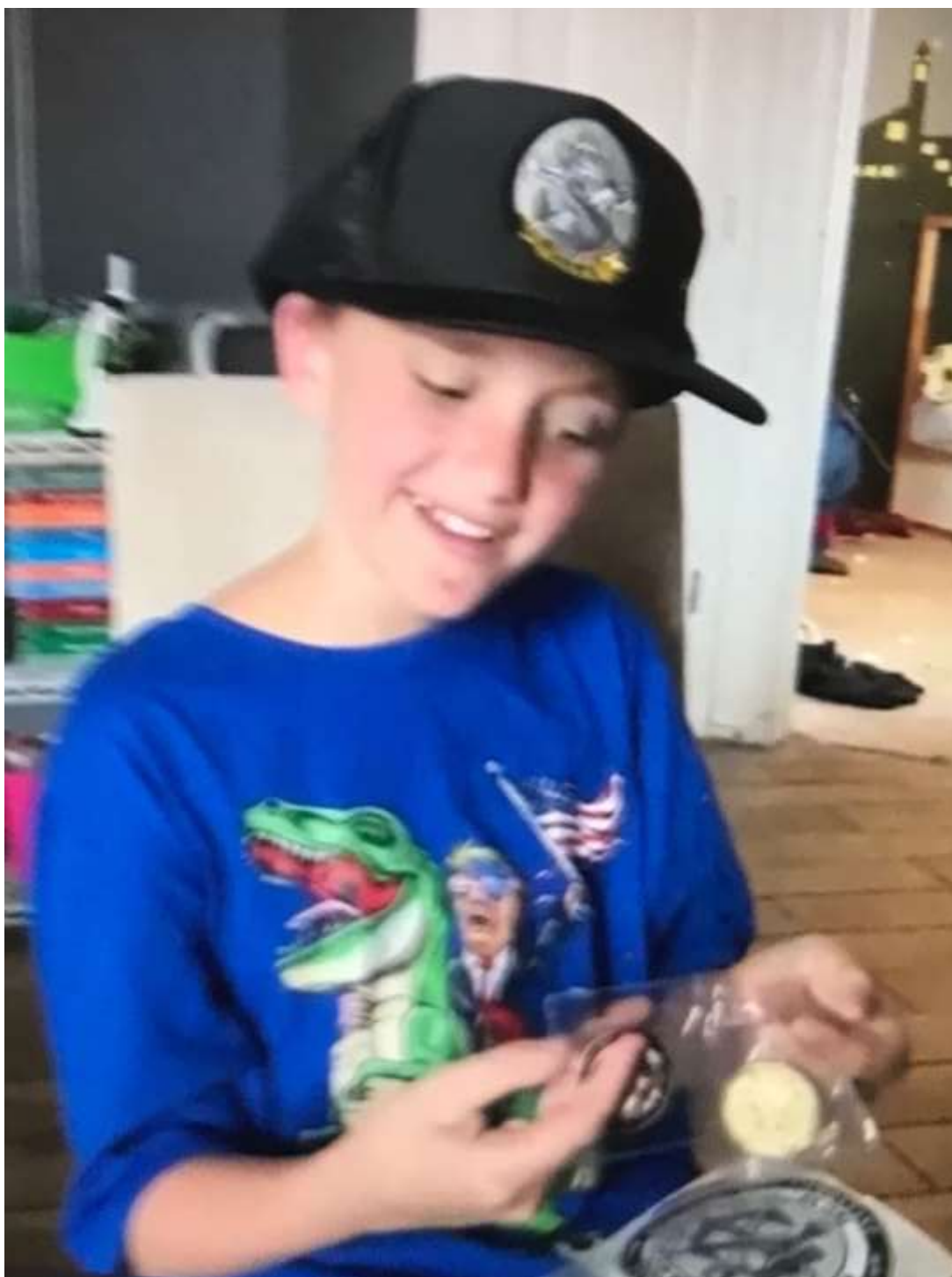
Charlie Philpot's daughter, Diane, told Charlie about one of her friend's son being picked on in Arizona. Charlie also learned the boy, Ayden Barry, was a football fan and arranged for a pro football player from one of their favorite teams to give Ayden a telephone call to offer some words of encouragement. Charlie also asked CCCA if we could send Ayden some Challenge coins. Mike Sigsworth put together a fantastic care package (included a CCCA shirt, hat, stickers, and CCCA challenge coins). Ayden's mother made a video of Ayden opening the care package. The attached stills give you a hint of his genuine surprise, joy, he felt!



Ayden opening the CCCA care package. The genuine joy shines through!



Two thumbs up. Who does this remind you of?



You can see the coins and stickers. Ayden will grow into the hat and shirt.

These small gestures from CCCA went a long way for these two young Americans and were recognized by their families, each experiencing unique challenges.

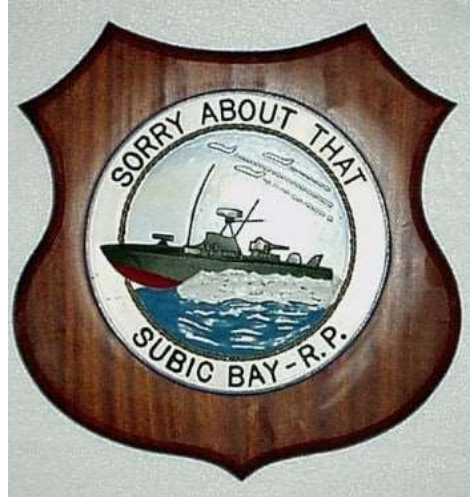
Subic Bay PTF Overhaul Facility

By

Captain John Woody (Ret.)

Photos and Captions by Jim Gray and Phil G. Garn

Edited By Joseph Zemlin



Plaque from Subic Bay Mobile Repair Team

A portion of the Subic Bay shipyard was developed for PTF overhaul. The facility was located at the Navy Base Subic Bay [Republic of the Philippines.] By the time I was assigned to BSU One [Boat Support Unit 1], it was fully operational, with a Lieutenant as OIC [Officer in Charge]. As with all BSU One personal assignments, the OIC was rotated on a six to seven-month change from personnel at BSU, Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado, California. The support facility consisted of two major parts. The first was the Napier Deltic engine facility, and the second was the use of pier space to set the Nasty Class PTFs on for hull dry out and repair. We had several sets of steel boat cradles for shipping hulls back and forth from Viet Nam.



Two Nasty Class PTFs are drying out and receiving additional repair work at MRT, Subic. Note the *USS Alamo* (LSD 33) and large cranes. PTFs and engines would be transported back and forth to Vietnam on LSDs and other amphibious ships

As far as I know, the Napier Deltic facility was established by the engine maker [Napier Deltic.] It was fully operational when I got to MST Da Nang. I believe that Napier manned the facility. BSU/MST engineers did not work on the engines. They removed and installed the engines from the boats. We were getting about 150 hours of operating time from the engines when I arrived at MST Da Nang. The engines and boats were transported to and from DaNang by various Navy ships. By the time I left Da Nang, we were getting about 300 hours per engine.

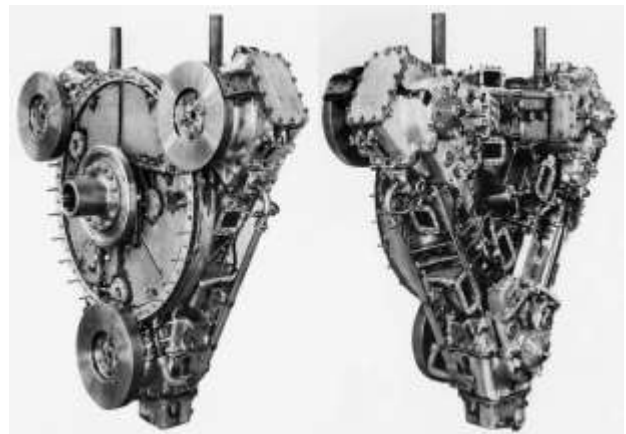
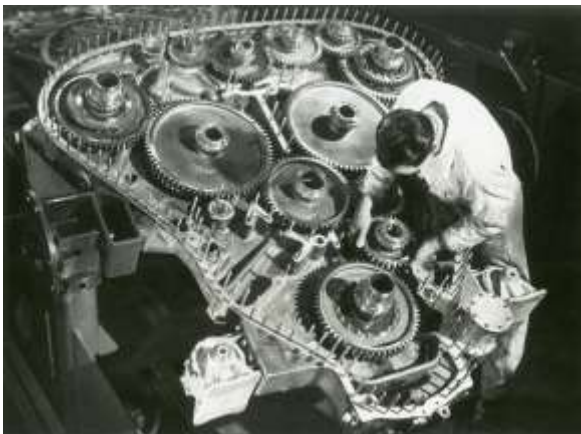
[Notes to readers: World War II gasoline engined PT boats, and later diesel-powered PTFs were every bit as complex as contemporary military aircraft and operated in a more demanding and corrosive environment. Unlike aircraft, which were typically housed in hangars, even most flying boats had beaching gear; PTs rested in saltwater out in the weather. They bounced over the waves for miles and miles, putting significant stress on the boat's structures and internal equipment as

well as the men. Every boat guy knows the faster you go, the harder the water gets. High-performance aircraft piston engines had overhaul schedules between 50 and 500 hours.]



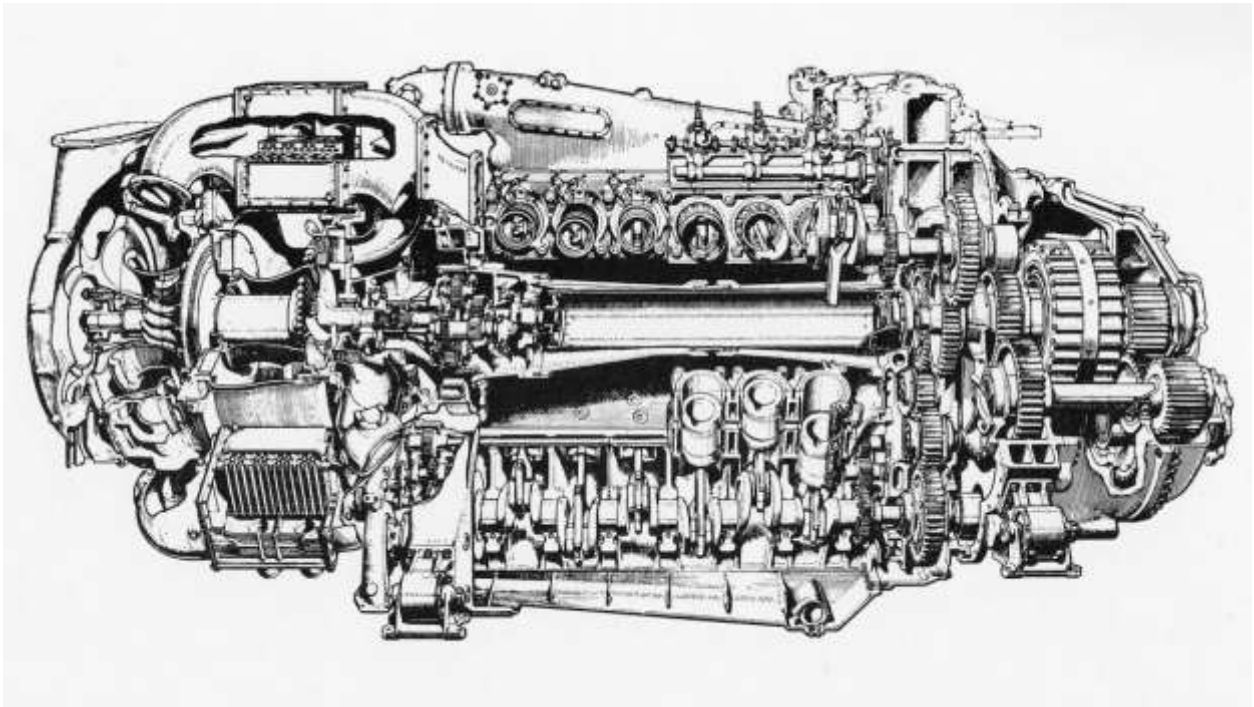
(Left) Insignia for the Napier Deltic Repair Facility. There was an entire shop dedicated to repairing and maintaining the complex Napier Deltic diesel engines at Subic. British contractors and local personnel were rebuilding engines at this facility at a fraction of the cost (roughly 1/3rd) as the same work performed in the United Kingdom.

The Napier engines had three crankshaft units, each connected to pistons that opposed each other in the triangle. Their blocks were manufactured out of aluminum with steel shaft liners. A new engine developed about 3,000 hp. The three crankshafts were connected by gearing on the back of the engine. That gearing then was connected to the clutch assembly. Proper clutch connections were critical to the boat's



Pictured above are the complex components of the Napier Deltic diesel engine. The factory photo at the right shows the size and scale of the engine.

The engines were turbocharged, with that unit mounted on the front of the engine. The main engine exhaust collected and went through the boat hull bottom. This bottom boat exhaust was eighteen inches in diameter. A secondary part of the exhaust went through the stern of the boat hull above water. This exhaust was nine inches in diameter and needed to be cooled by a water flow. This nine-inch exhaust was the main problem in operations because one of the crewmen needed to be on watch all the time to ensure that the water flow kept the exhaust cool.



Another cutaway drawing is showing the complexity of the entire engine and the turbocharger at the front.

The watch engineer sat at a console forward of the engine compartment to maintain the watch on the engines. He faced the stern of the boat. He had all the gauges concerning oil pressure and temperature and an emergency shut-down capability if something happened to an engine. The engine controls were extended to the bridge where the underway officer controlled the engines. There was sound-powered phone capability between the engineer and officer operating the boat as well. An engineer was also on duty with controls. He looked into the engine compartment via a window.



PTFs in the water undergoing repairs at Subic. If you look closely, you will see a third Osprey Class PTF to the left of the two Nasty's.

I will cover the boat operation a little later, as it is important to the boat. With both engines engaged at idle, the boat traveled at about eight knots. The officer in charge maneuvered the boat by engaging and disengaging the engines at idle. The helmsman kept the twin rudders straight ahead in docking and undocking.



Three PTFs two in the water undergoing maintenance and repair at MRT Subic. Even the aluminum Osprey class required significant maintenance. Note the large exhaust ports in the stern Captain Woody is writing about.

The living quarters in the original boats were removed and additional fuel tanks were installed to give the boats the range they needed to reach from Da Nang to North Vietnam.



USS Duluth (LPD 6) transporting a Nasty Class PTF. This was how the PTF's, and most engines were shuttled between Da Nang and Subic for maintenance.

The PTFs' hulls would soak up six or seven tons of water in six months. They were transported to Subic Bay by LSTs to dry out. Overhauled engines were installed while the boats were being refurbished. This process took about six weeks. This hull soak was important to control, as that six or seven tons of water greatly affected the boat's performance. A dry-hulled boat was fantastic to operate.

The OIC at Subic worked with the shipyard personnel and engine repair group. He also had the additional task of overseeing shipments of other equipment to and from MST Da Nang. We also had several air-shippable steel containers used to send supplies back and forth between MST Da Nang and Subic. These shipping containers were VERY important, in that when they were loaded in Subic and when there was room in them, good Philippine beer was included. The Navy C-130s were used to move these containers back and forth. The spare engines were sometimes also shipped by the C-130s.

The Philippine beer was necessary. When a container got to the airfield in Da Nang, we would open one and give the Marines handling the cargo for us a case or two. We never had any problems with logistics.

The Officer in Subic would also make visits to DaNang. This was to oversee how things were going and to get combat time for pay purposes. These visits were made by C 130 regularly. Now, back to the nine-inch stern exhaust. At least one boat was damaged by lack of watching that exhaust when I was in Da Nang. On a mission to the North, one of the boats caught fire due to lack of notice that water was on the exhausts as they were returning to Da Nang. The Air Force was first dispatched to sink that abandoned PTF. They could not find it. Then Navy Air was sent, and they too could not find it. The Da Nang OIC then dispatched me to find and sink the boat. We went North at night and found the boat. The fire was out, so we tied to the boat and towed it back to Da Nang. Then we loaded it out and sent it to Subic for repair. About ten weeks later, it was returned and placed back in combat.



This photo shows the extent of the maintenance which could be done at MRT Subic. Note the steel cradle; more importantly, the double planked mahogany skin has been removed, revealing the internal framework. Much of the internal machinery, wiring, and piping have been removed. Like their World War 2 counterparts, the PTFs were significantly maintenance-intensive complex machines, and advanced bases could practically rebuild a boat.

The Subic personnel from the shipyard did the hull work and other maintenance when the boats were in the yard for repair. The hulls were made of double-planked mahogany wood.
John Woody

A Special thanks to Dan Withers and WARBOATS for such fantastic contributions.

RIVER RATS GATHERING NEW ORLEANS 2021

Written and Edited By
Joseph Zemlin



Figure 1. RIVER RATS GATHERING NEW ORLEANS 2021

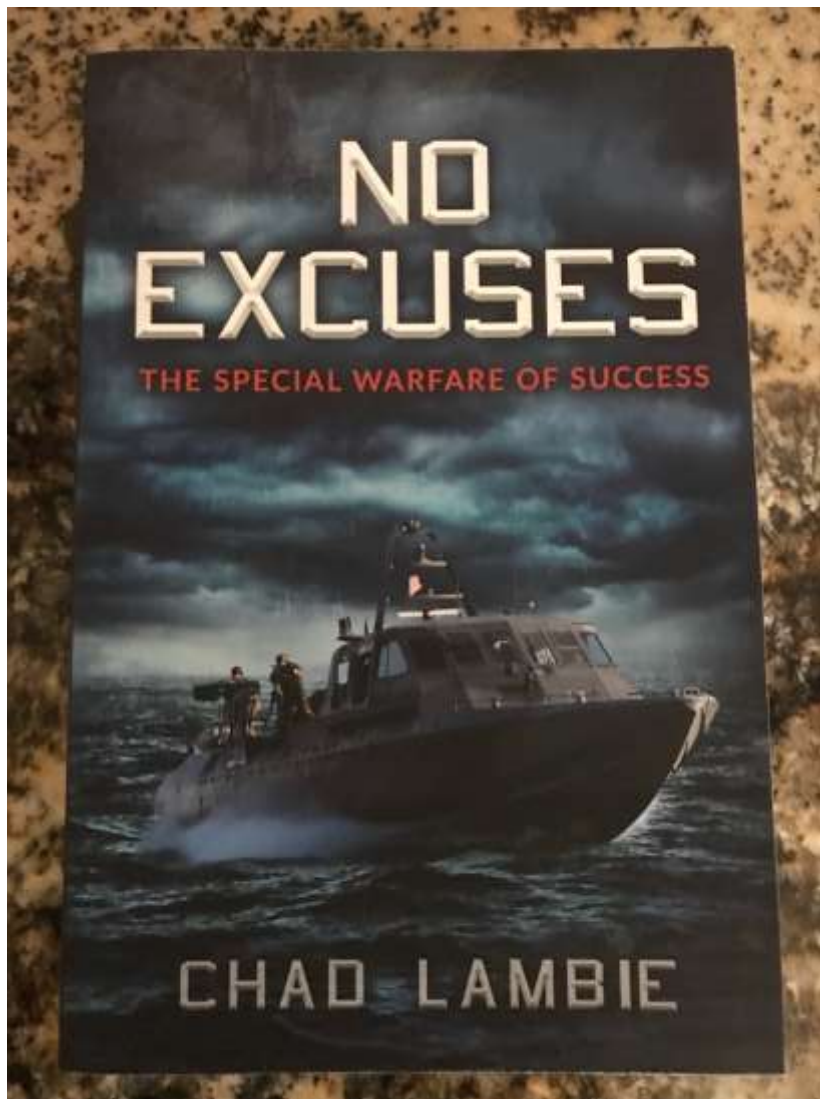
The CCCA is proud to have such a diverse community. This story is long overdue, and I want to thank Bruce Lemmert and the RIVER RATS in New Orleans for coming together for another fantastic gathering. Despite the COVID-19 Pandemic, these hearty folk came together to renew the bonds of brotherhood, family, and friends with amazing food, good drink, and sending some lead downrange!

These folks do it like no others! You can see a host of pictures from the event on the CCCA Webpage under the **EVENTS** tab (**RIVER RAT GATHERING NEW ORLEANS APRIL 2021**).

I had the privilege to attend last year's gathering with my wife Shike (She-key); unfortunately, we could not participate this year due to my federal travel restrictions. The pictures on our website attest to one heck of a time for all attendees.

Bruce and his fellow RIVER RATS have a strong following and come together regularly to do good works and keep the Brotherhood alive. They have a day at the range and come together to have a crab boil at an old farmstead. While some are at the range, others start the preps for what I can only describe as genuine Louisiana hospitality, sharing some cool refreshments, good stories, and unbelievably delicious food.

It was indeed a privilege for the CCCA to be part of this unique community. Our hats are off to them for their commitment to family and friends. Thank you, Bruce, for representing the CCCA and all the DBG's within our community.



“Swim Buddies” and “Nuggets,” A Motivational Book by SWCC Chad Lambie

By

Phil G. Garn

Edited By Joseph Zemlin

At the end of April 2020, my East Coast "Swim Buddy," DGB Ted Walther, sent me an image with the cover art for "No Excuses, The Special Warfare of Success" by Chad Lambie depicting a MK-V on dark seas. Reading the blurb on the back, I was a little concerned for Mr. Lambie as he has a rare syndrome called Cleidocranial Dysplasia/Dysostosis (CCD). From the cover, it looked like he had gone into a coastal unit after the School House, more than a double whammy with all that pounding coastal operators' experience. Pretty quickly, I began looking for the book on Amazon and other book sites without success. I contacted Mr.

Lambie via email. He said, "the book should be published shortly, and I could obtain a copy as soon as it was made available."

The book is highly positive and motivational! The writing is well organized, straightforward, concise, and, most importantly, relatable. Mr. Lambie reinforces his learning points with "Nuggets," which appear in the text and are listed again at the end of the book.

Mr. Lambie has also adapted and expanded the "swim buddies" concept to go beyond what we in Naval Special Warfare traditionally think of as a swim buddy. While the "buddy system" has been around for eons, two people looking out for each other, "swim buddies" is a relatively recent concept. In late 1942, Gunners Mate Second Class John Pitts Spence (America's first frogman) was paired with Lieutenant Jack Hedrick Taylor (the Promethean prototype for modern Sea Air Land commandos) to further test and evaluate Dr. Christian Lambertsen's revolutionary self-contained underwater breathing apparatus (SCUBA) for the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Their pairing would become the first American combat swimming pair term referred to as "swim buddies." The OSS swimmer operatives would put the "Frog" in frogmen transforming the Underwater Demolition Teams with their skills and equipment from amphibious combat engineers working in three feet of water or less into actual underwater swimming teams conducting pre-landing beach reconnaissance and demolition in the summer of 1944.

Additionally, terms including "frogmen," "scuba," and "naked warriors" and the concept of special warfare combatant craft crewmen all originated with the OSS Maritime Unit, the progenitor of today's Naval Special Warfare (NSW)-SWCCs and SEALs. Swim buddies have evolved from an assigned partner in a training evolution into an operational partner in NSW and beyond into a comrade you can count on both during and after Naval service, often cross-generationally. Mr. Lambie expands the concept of a swim buddy into someone you can trust (a parent, sibling, coach, teacher, spouse, etc.).

As the title says, "No Excuses," Mr. Lambie writes clearly about acceptance of responsibility and personal accountability as well as perseverance. You do not always get what you want on the first try, and it usually takes a lot of hard work, which can be eased or assisted with a swim buddy. But hard work is a must!

"Top-Secret" Box Art

By

Phil G. Garn

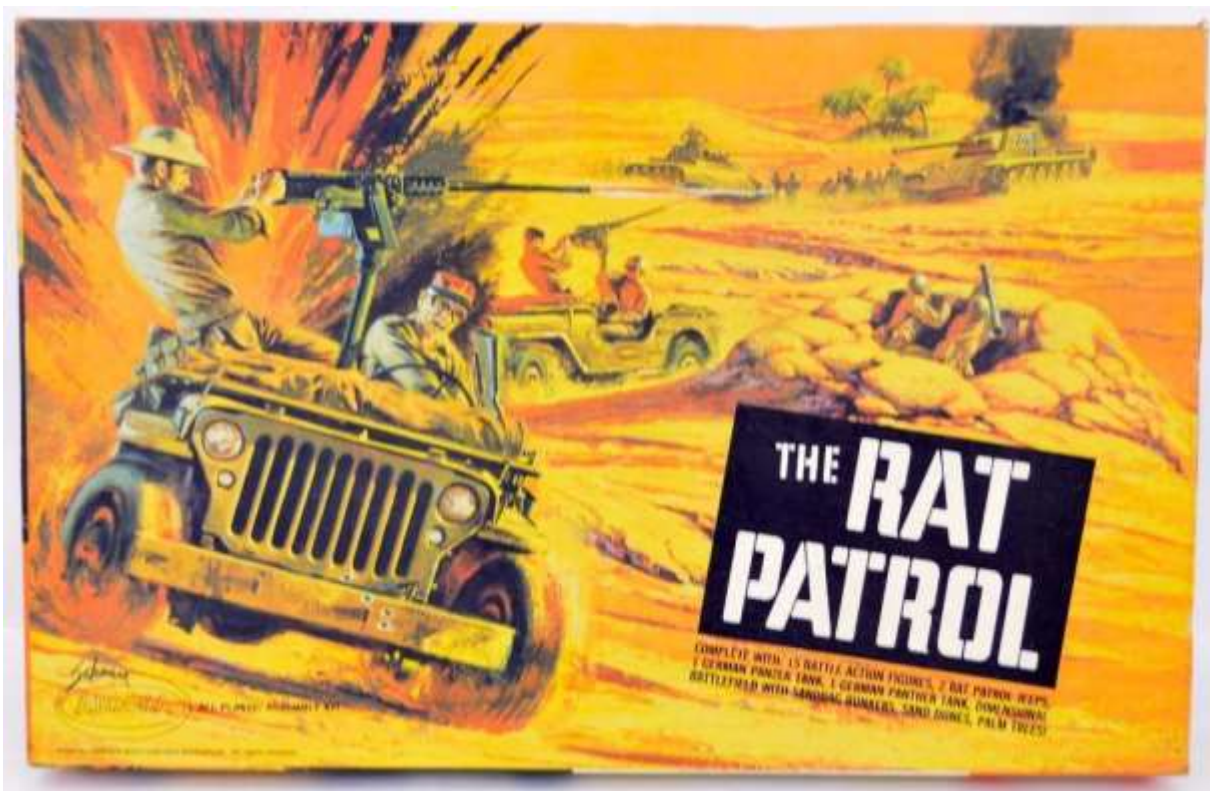
Edited By Joseph Zemlin



Outstanding John Steel Box Art for the massive 1/32 scale Lindberg Line PT-109 plastic model kit. Can't you imagine JFK or your boyhood self-racing out of a hidden jungle lagoon to torpedo a Japanese cruiser in broad daylight! But doesn't your tactical DGB -self cringe at this fanciful suicide run.

Generations have enjoyed building plastic model kits of everything from airplanes, PT boats, submarines, warships, tanks, racing cars, fire engines, stagecoaches, spaceships, custom cars, trucks, trains, movie monsters, dinosaurs, and armored vehicles. Aside from obvious movie or television tie-ins, dynamic paintings typically on the tops of model packaging, "box art," fueled imaginations and sold the kits from the 1950s to today. More than just a static color guide for painting and decal placement, you could see the subject in action: recovering UDT swimmers under fire, shooting down Messerschmitts, MiGs or Zeros, Terrorizing Tokyo, winning at Le Mans, Indianapolis, or on the drag strip or heading out into the uncharted universe. While not as well recognized as Rembrandt or Rockwell, many of the men who did the box art were not only very accomplished artists, but some had exciting careers and unusual access to highly classified operations. Not just X planes or SR-71 Black Birds at

Lockheed's Skunk Works. Here is how Jim Gray and I, both avid plastic modelers, discovered top-secret box art that had been on hobby shop shelves for decades.



Aurora's "Rat Patrol," complete with the jeeps and *more* accurate WWII German tanks than on the show, molded plastic dunes, and palm trees. The television series used American tanks and half-tracks with German crosses painted on the sides. Actor Chris George and his comrades knocked out heavily armored vehicles with .50 cal's and hand grenades each week in prime time. I had this kit and a Rat Patrol lunch box as a kid.



Much better box art and a much more detailed model. Revell's 1/32 scale aircraft were some of the best model kits of their era.

While researching, *WARBOATS, 55 Years of Naval Special Warfare Combatant Craft History*, Jim and I were constantly looking for great military art to illustrate our combatant craft history. Emanuel Luste's "Washington Crossing the Delaware" sure was a charismatic lead for the first chapter, and we located more fantastic and dynamic pieces, most of which we had seen here and there over the decades. I recalled an exhibit of John Steele's Vietnam War art at the San Diego Maritime Museum, and one painting of SEALs being inserted on a dark night from what I thought at the time was a kind of "sketchy" boat, no pun intended. It was not until we were working on Chapter 3 and Jim showed me photos of the first Medium SEAL Support Craft built by SEAL Team 1 men in Vietnam from an LCPL, that I recalled Steel's painting of that one-of-a-kind improvised boat. Though Robert G. Smith's PBR painting "Fire Fight" is one of the most evocative of the Vietnam War, we had to go with Steele's, which is "us" in Naval Special Warfare the lead in for Chapter 3, "Into the Rivers."



Another John Steel painting, SEAL Team 1 men inserting from an LCPL based MSSC. When I first saw this at the San Diego Maritime Museum. I didn't think the boat was accurate.



Well, I stand corrected, as you can see from this photo. The SEAL Team 1 modified this LCPL in Vietnam and sent back to BUS-1 at NAB for more. The BSU-1 men got the boats from “Salvage,” DMRO, improved the SEALs’ design, then manned these boats and the rest of the Naval Special Warfare small craft as part of Mobile Support Teams 2 3 in the rivers and waterways of Vietnam.



As many of you know (particularly Mobile Support Team 1 veterans), Jim and I wanted to circle back around and explore the clandestine maritime operations in depth. From the CIA/Presidential Security Service junks to the MST/Coastal Security Service PTFs with SEAL trained *Biet Hai* sea commandos running out of Da Nang in greater depth. I remembered Don Crawford from SEAL Team 1 had told me his mentor, Barry Enoch, was a SEAL Team One “Plank Owner” and had worked in Da Nang with the CIA on the Nautilus junk operations. I called Don up again and got more details. Chief Sullivan and Doc Raymond deployed to Vietnam from SEAL Team 1, while the rest of the new plank owners were training with the Marines in 1962. When they came back they were very tight lipped about the Da Nang operation.

Barry went over with the first full SEAL Team 1 platoon as an advisor in Da Nang. Barry had helped arm the very slow junks with concealed improvised machine gun mounts and rocket launchers. Barry also recalled that one of the junks would get the drop on a North Vietnamese patrol boat; but after that counter-ambush, the North Vietnamese began using two boat elements, with one boat standing off to cover the other. The junks’ limitations brought about the introduction of the PTFs: bigger boats with more speed, range, load capacity, and firepower for clandestine operations further north of the Demilitarized Zone.

We also learned that a few SEAL Team 2 men from the East Coast were involved in the early Da Nang operations, which surprised us.

Photo above: Nautilus Junk at the pier in Da Nang. As you can see just a very innocuous boat. Built-in the same style as those used in North Vietnam for fishing, they were supposed to blend in and be, well, innocuous. However, they also had diesel engines and concealed weapons. John Woody Collection



You have probably seen this very famous Chip Maury picture of SEAL Team 1's Alpha Platoon. Don Crawford flashing the Hooyah "V" and a big smile is standing next to Chip wearing glasses with the camera around his neck at the right, and Barry is crouching between the two men with a big smile and the shortest hair in front at the right. Barry handpicked a few men during UDT Replacement Activity 42 (now BUD/s) training. They were among the first men who went directly from training into SEAL Teams during Vietnam, including Don Crawford. Don would be awarded a Silver Star for driving an LSSC back to base after a devastating ambush see Chapter 3 in *WARBOATS*.

The more we learned about the early CIA maritime operations, the more they seemed to have been influenced by Milton Caniff's iconic "Terry and the Pirates" comic strip. They were complete with larger-than-life characters and corrupt warlords as opposed to the Office of Strategic Services Maritime Unit just fifteen years earlier. This was because, like the OSS, the Navy's Beach Jumpers, Scouts and Raiders, and PT Boat programs were either decommissioned or intentionally strangled by the Admirals after WWII. Both the CIA and Navy had to completely re-start their special operations/paramilitary/counterinsurgency programs, despite many veterans with combat experience still available for guidance. I got to thinking about finding images of Caniff's exotic junks from either "Terry and the Pirates" or maybe Canniff's later "Steve Canyon." These seemed much more dynamic and dramatic than

the very sedentary and innocuous still photos we had of the Nautilus Program boats, mostly junks pier side in Da Nang. Of course, they were supposed to be innocuous and blend in on their clandestine infiltration and sabotage missions to North Vietnam.

I had some reprints of the old “Terry” and “Steve” strips up in the attic and began paging through, but the junk images just were not quite right either not dynamic enough or having a modern freighter in the panel.



The Panel on the left is from Milton Caniff's *Terry and the Pirates*. Superlative artwork, but not what I was looking for. The same goes for the box art on the Monogram “Command Junk,” excellent art but not that dynamic.

I also remembered building the Monogram 1/48 scale Command Junk as a kid with my dad, who then worked for the CIA supplying non-attributable weapons to the Laotians back in the late 1960s. The Monogram junk model had some Ok box art, but not really what I was after. Then I had a flash of a junk kit engaged in a nighttime battle that I thought was by Lindberg (The Lindberg Line model company). A little internet sleuthing, and there it was, not a Lindberg kit but an Aurora model. What's more, the junk was battling a patrol boat with a red Vietnam People's Navy ensign with a yellow star at close quarters in a Southeast Asian coastal setting with palm trees on the shore. Dang! This is just precisely what Barry Enoch had described and who was the artist, John Steel!



Here it is! A **Top-Secret** CIA operation right before your very eyes and on your Hobby Shop's shelves beginning in 1968. Steel substituted Aurora's model instead of the actual and much smaller Nautilus junks, constructed just like North Vietnamese fishing boats but with diesel engines and hidden armament developed by Barry Enoch. Steel also used a US Coast Guard 82-foot cutter to stand in for the North Vietnamese Swatow gunboat. I wonder who did the box art for the Lindberg 1/82 scale Coast Guard Cutter?

John Steel started as a Coast Guardsman in World War 2 then went to the Marines seeing action on Guadalcanal. He would be one of the Chosun Frozen Marines during Korea. Later in Vietnam with the Marines, he became a combat photographer and war artist with five tours of duty. Steele received the Navy Cross, Bronze Star, and three Purple Hearts. He would paint hundreds of box tops for Aurora, Monogram, Revell and Lindberg, as well as illustrate a wide variety of books and magazines from *Skin Diver* to *Bible S*.



tories.

Pictured above is John Steel himself in his studio with his cover art for a Revell aircraft carrier and other Revell model ship kits.



Here is what the Command Junk kit looks like and the instructions illustrating the hidden gun mounts and extra sprue (or parts tree) molded in tan plastic with these parts. Unlike the actual Nautilus boat, the model kit was of a larger craft with more guns and no rocket launchers.

During the Vietnam War in 1967, Monogram released a series of three contemporary small combatant craft models in 1/48 scale: the Command Junk, PCF Swift Boat, and RAG Boat (River Assault Group). I built all three, well Dad helped (a lot). Back in 1955, Merit released a model of a Chinese junk in a 1/68th scale. The following year, Aurora acquired the molds and released them under the Aurora banner with new box art. To compete with Monogram's 1967 release, Aurora added additional parts, including large (.50 Cal type HMGs) and small (.30

Cal type medium MGs), tarps, and faux deck cargo bundle coverings for the guns. They released their Armed Command Junk under the Aurora banner with new exciting box art by John Steel. He had worked with SEAL Team 1 in the Delta. What Steel did was take Barry Enoch's story and used the Aurora boat as a model for the junk (because that is what you the modeler would be building), and an 82-foot US Coast Guard cutter served as the model for the North Vietnamese Patrol Boat. With many tours in Vietnam on the sea, air, and land, Steel had a good idea of the setting for the background. And there you have it, a **Top-Secret** and then still classified CIA operation right on the cover of a contemporary model kit during the Vietnam War.

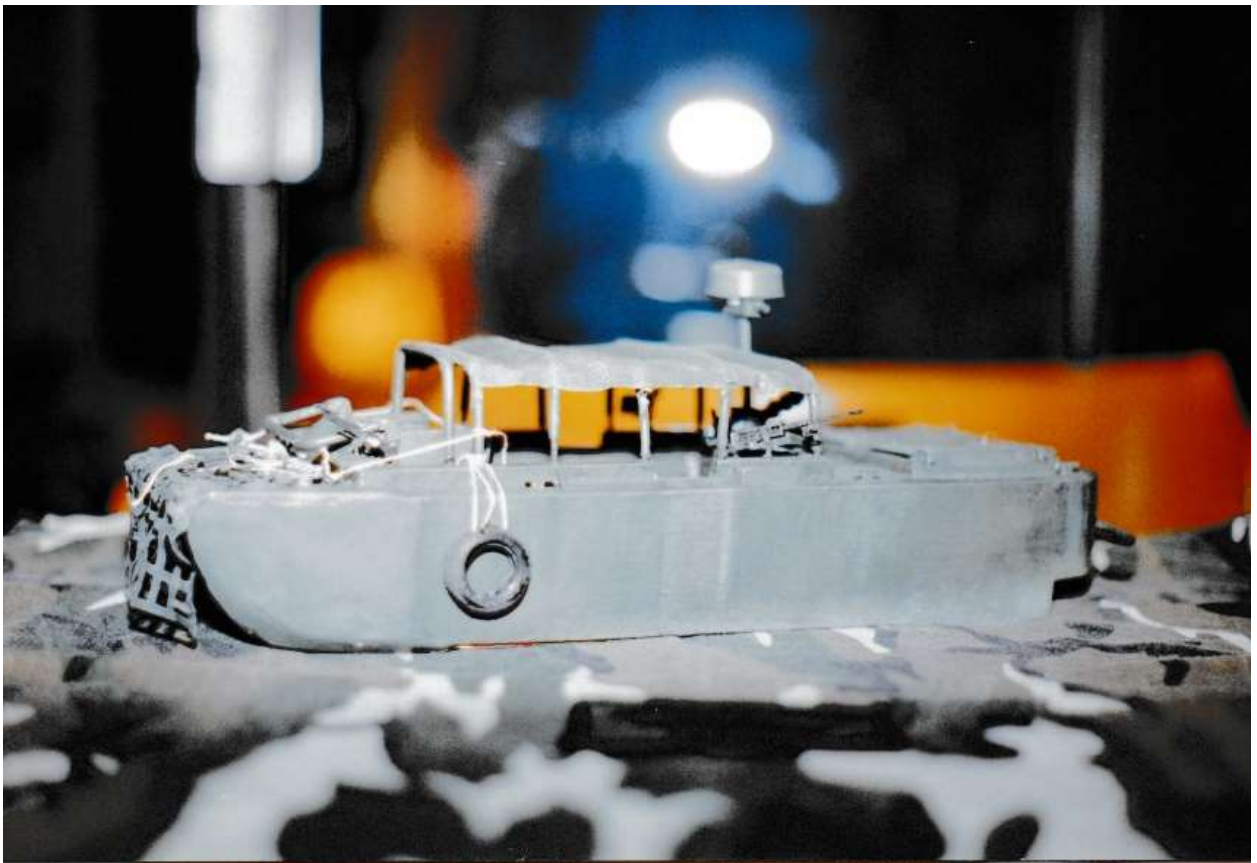
Author's side notes: As I said, I had started building plastic models with my dad in the 1960s and continued from elementary school through college. I stopped making models just before I went into the Navy. When I was the Combatant Craft Division Officer at Special Boat Unit 12 (SBU-12) back in the 1980s, I was tasked with conducting room inspections for the SBU-12 barracks at the Naval Amphibious Base in Coronado soon after reporting aboard. This was the first time I was in charge of inspecting anything since our Kilo Company's juniors' uniforms and rooms at Officer Candidate School in Newport, Rhode Island. In the first room at the barracks, two of the guys had quite a collection of scale models, and I got to talking model building with them. As I moved on, more guys in the unit had pretty neat models in their rooms and larger and more challenging subjects than I had tackled, including the giant 1/32 Lindberg PT 109 Boat kit and the huge 1/8th scale Monogram "Big T" hot rod. These were the guys who were teaching me how to run SWCLs and PBs, so there were no bouncing quarters off racks or white gloves swiping for cleanliness. But as soon as I moved off base, I was building model kits again. For NAB Coronado-based guys, Coronado still had the hobby shop next to the Village Theater back then; it's now a dry cleaners. I even built the 1/32nd ELCO PT Boat with all kinds of aftermarket extras, particularly machine guns and 20mm cannons. Sadly, damaged during our move, it was donated to my nephews (firecrackers and rocks in the creek?) I later met Jim Gray at SBU-13 and am still building models to this day, some of which have been in museums, on public display, and won an award or two. No, it was likely never your best friend in junior high or even a buddy's older brother who had his models on display at your local hobby shops. Guys like Jim Gray and Ted Walther (SBU-20, 24, and 26) had decades of experience and would spend more on paint than on the kit and even more on reference materials. Ted scratch built a ton of dioramas for the UDT/SEAL Museum.



Just a few of the dioramas Ted Walther built for the UDT/SEAL Museum at Fort Pierce. The painting of the PBR in the display is Robert G. Smith's iconic "Fire Fight." Ironical though BSU-1 men tested the PBR and PCF, they were not reliably available for SEAL operations in the Mekong Delta and prompted the men to make their own boats and bring in MST-2 and MST-3 into the rivers.



This photo is not as clear as I would like, but SEAL Team 2 in a Power Cat SEAL Team Attack Boat (STAB) in a 1/35 scale. This was not a kit but rather a model built from scratch by Ted.



Above: Again, not a kit, but a Medium SEAL Support Craft (MSSC) built from scratch in 1/35 scale by Ted Walther many years ago for the UDT/SEAL Museum. And it's not just the hull but the cargo nets and details that Ted fabricated. More recently, NAM Models announced a resin kit of the MSSC, but I have not located one. I was trying to get a price to show that this isn't your Five & Dime or 70's hobby store kit, and you'd be mowing lawns all summer to pay it off.



Again, more of Ted's scratch-built work, this time a 1/35 scale MK VII MOD 2 Swimmer Delivery Vehicle from UDT Team 22.

Special thanks to Jim Gray, Don Crawford, Ted Walther, and the late Barry Enoch.



I couldn't resist one more dynamic John Steel Painting for Revell's 1/96 scale Higgins PT Boats in a more tactically accurate night attack.

2nd Annual DBG at the PBR

Written and edited by
Joseph Zemlin



Pictured participants of the 2nd Annual DBG at the PBR. Hosted by Kim and John Gerving,

On behalf of our unique community, it is always good to see our families come together to celebrate the friendships and bonds of brotherhood that bind us together. John and Kim Gerving once again opened their home and hosted the 2nd Annual DBG at the PBR Event in Lakeland, FL, in 2021. Fortunately, the Gervings have enough yard space to host this motley crew and their tents, trailers, and RV's.

The event was fun for all and provided much-needed relief for the challenging times. Despite the unpredictable weather, attendees were able to take time from the festivities to gather for a quick group photo.

Coming together is challenging in the best of times. Holding an event while the world is suffering from a pandemic demonstrates the resolve and spirit of the "Can do attitude." Despite the long distances and challenges many faced, having the opportunity to celebrate life, liberty, and our patriotic bonds of brotherhood, many made the trek to Lakeland, FL. Thank you, John, and Kim, for hosting such a fantastic event enjoyed by all! We look forward to your next one!

The Last Ambush for CMC Jimmy Arevalo SWCC

By

Phil G. Garn

Edited by Joseph Zemlin



Don't let the photo fool you. There were more guys here. Jimmy has the "Zig Zag" shirt and hat. See if you can spot some teammates?

Some things were just starting to open from the COVID-19 lockdown at the end of April 2021, and Jimmy Arevalo was headed to dinner with his wife and daughters at the Novo Brazil Brewing restaurant in Chula Vista on Friday afternoon. As the Arevalo family walked into the giant steak house and brewery, Jimmy saw Chuck Clemens (see if you can spot Chuck in the photos), an old SWCC Master Chief and mentor at the bar. Jimmy asked, "Hey, what are you doing here?"

Chuck kept his cool and trusted his Cammie, "Getting a drink; you want one?"

The masked hostess didn't stop leading the family back through the growing crowd to the back of the busy restaurant...

BANG! There he was, right in the middle of about twenty of his old comrades from the Special Boat Units and Teams back by the brewing tanks. Jay's wife Debbie and an old comrade from SBU-12 days worked for weeks planning this surprise retirement celebration. They quietly contacted a host of old teammates to pull a fast one on the legendary "Zig Zag," aka "Secret Asian Man," one of the last 9533 grandfathers if not the last on active duty in Naval Special Warfare.



Jimmy is out in the desert hunting with his pet falcon.

Jimmy's career within the SWCC community is truly outstanding! His many distinguished accomplishments include tracking Abu Sayaff terrorists in the Southern Philippine Archipelago, coordinating combat operations in Afghanistan, and building lasting relationships with allied nations as NAVSCIATT's Command Master Chief. However, his Naval service didn't start there.

Born in the Philippines, Jimmy went to high school and college there, joining ROTC. He was a Provisionary 2nd Lieutenant (P2LT) assigned to the Philippine Army Rangers (AFP) who fought the Muslim uprising in the southern Philippines. His family's advice was, "If you stay, you will end up in a body bag in Mindanao. If you go, you might have a better future." Jimmy applied for a highly competitive program to join the US Navy. There were only a few dozen spots for thousands of applicants each year. After a Bootcamp in the Philippines, Jimmy was off to NTC for a second Bootcamp. His fellow American boots were surprised to see Asian guys with shaved heads, pressed uniforms, and who could march in cadence on day one. His first assignment was the *USS Kinkade* (DD-965), then deployed in the middle of the Indian Ocean. After another flight halfway around the world to Diego Garcia, Jimmy was helloed out to the *USS Samuel Gompers* (AD-37) in his dress whites and had to find the *Kinkade* among the destroyers moored along both sides with lots of misdirection to the chorus of "Fresh Meat, Fresh Meat." He was immediately put on anchor watch, and the hazing continued with "mail buoy" watch... Eventually, a savvy chief saved him after quite some time and got him started on the right path. With a lot of hard work, he would excel, earning his Enlisted Surface Warfare Qualification and enlisted sailor of the month and quarter, among other awards.



Jimmy as a 1st Class on the *USS O'Brien* on deployment before coming over to NSW.

His next duty station was at SIMA (Shore Intermediate Maintenance) at 32nd Street. He met a Chief there who asked the 2nd Class if he would like to join him for PT during lunch. Jimmy was game and ended up going on a long run and doing a “burn-out” PT before running back to work. Though he was hurting, he went out the next day with the Chief. It seemed like every Friday; this Chief was getting award or other. After a while, Jimmy asked the Chief, “Who are you? A SEAL?” The Chief said he wasn’t a SEAL, but he would bring in his photo album and show Jimmy his photos. It turned out the album was filled with pictures of the Chief, who was from SBU-12. He had been on training missions all over the Pacific. Jimmy asked the Chief how he could get to that unit? The Chief told him to ask his Detailer. Of course, the Detailer told him no SBU for you and gave him orders to the *USS O'Brien DD975* in Japan. Not to be deterred, Jimmy took advantage of an early out program during the Clinton administration, then approached a Navy recruiter and told him what he wanted to do. After some negotiation, the Detailer got him to SEAL Team 3 as logistical support for their reserve component. He supported the Team in different capacities to include ammunition runner during their static weapon range training, maintaining outboard motors for their CRRCs, ground parachute retrieval at the Otay Drop Zone, and whatever the Team needed. His hard work did not go unnoticed; one day, the CO pulled him aside and said, “You work harder than the rest of us here. Since you are not a SEAL, you will have to compete with the big Navy for promotion.” Jimmy then mentioned that his real intention is to be with the SBU community as an engineman. His CO replied, “Why didn’t you tell me that from the get-go? I know the Reserve CO, Bob Koerber (you might recognize him in the photos) for the Boat Team; why don’t you put in a chit and route it personally to me on the next drill weekend.” In no time, he was transferred to SBU-12.

As soon as he reported to SBU-12, he worked for (Brian) Eschbaugh and HTCS Alvarado. In no time, he was working on engines with (Robin) McKinney and shadowing Jesse Hobbs (see if you can pick him out of the photos) and others. Chief Alvarado said if you want to do extra ADTs (Additional Duty Training), one month here or two months there, let me know. Jimmy said he was flexible and not so concerned about his civilian job, so he volunteered for ADTs all the time. Jimmy built an excellent reputation with the active component in the IMD department conducting preventive maintenance for all the command's RHIB (rigid-hulled inflatable boat) inventory. Not only was he getting his PQS signed off on by Eschbaugh and McKinney but by the active-duty detachments (active-duty men) as well during his ADTs. Jimmy had so much of his engineering signed off on by the active duty during ADTs that he challenged the RHIB CHENG (Chief Engineer) Board given by the command training department. Having one of the first major qualifications completed, he was able to join the Reserve RHIB Detachment with Rob Ward, Jay Duenas (see if you can spot him), Rob McKinney, Jesse Hobbs, and Eric Bowman (see if you can spot him). He continued to qualify as Chief Engineer on the I-RIB, P-RIB, and 24' Willard and Defender RHIBs. He also contributed to the decommissioning of four SEA SPECTRE MLIII Patrol Boats in Guam, operation of various weapons and tactical radios to include completing the Caterpillar Engine Overhaul Technician school at NAB. He then got his 9533 NEC.



Jimmy, General Webber, Lt Cremins, and Keola Firmin in the Philippines

After the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, Jimmy was formally recalled to active duty to serve at SBU-12. He was one of the few qualified reservists who were “grandfathered” in SWCCs (NEC 5351). On his first Det, he was peeled off from his Team, directed to a special assignment to the main southern island of the Philippines, Mindanao, accompanied by another SWCC of Filipino descent from the Okinawa Detachment, Keola Firmin, and later with

Jeremy “Go-Go” Gomez. They were led by LT(SEAL) John “Johnny Bravo” Cremins, the first NAVSOF unit embedded with the Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines. Here Jimmy Keola and “Go-Go” would be using small craft to scout Abu Sayyaf in the Southern Archipelago and clandestinely chart Santa Cruz, Basilan Islands, and Isabela City. During a site visit by Brigadier General Trebon (SOCPAC Commander), the General asked: “Jimmy, if you will be ME for a day, how do you employ your forces here?” Jimmy replied nervously, “Sir, as you can see, this whole area is surrounded by waters on all fronts. It will be hard for land forces to leapfrog each island. So, in my opinion, it is wise to use maritime craft like what the Special Boat Teams have to support our SF guys to execute their job.” General Trebon looked at him intently and said, “Good answer, keep up the good work men,” shook his and Keola’s hands and left. Jimmy was unsure if he answered the General’s inquiry correctly; his OIC never got a follow-up on it either until they redeployed back to the States.



Pictured above: Smugglers similar to Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines and an outrigger canoe similar to the one Jimmy used for covert reconnaissance.

His follow-on tour to the southern Philippines was with a RHIB Detachment led by LT(SEAL) Scott Fentress and Chief (SWCC) Dan Corkery. He noticed the new high Op-Tempo that detachments were doing, and he wondered if it has something to do with what he said to the SOCPAC Commander a year before. Together with a MKV detachment, they conducted unilateral “Persistent Presence” operations from the coasts of Zamboanga to the southern tip of Tawi-Tawi Island. This prevented the freedom of movement by the Abu Sayyaf terrorist group from Jolo Island towards nefarious activities in Zamboanga and beyond. Together with the MKV detachment, they spearheaded a proof of concept on the Indigenous Craft Program. The JSOTF-P tested this concept when a request was received from Commodore Jose Velasco AFP, Commander Naval Forces South, for the JSOTF-P to conduct a coastal run along the restricted waters off Malaysia. Their area of interest was a tiny island believed to be harboring Abu Sayaff members. Jimmy’s detachment procured two small outrigger craft, trained on their crude steering, launched, and recovered off the RHIBs and MKVs. Once they felt they were competent, the MKVs loaded the outriggers followed by the RHIBs under cover of darkness well within Malaysian territorial waters. Jimmy and another SWCC wearing indigenous attire, armed only with a pistol and a UHF squad radio, quietly slipped off from the back deck of the MKV. Alone and on their own, they steered the

outrigger, maintaining a strict rpm on the motor to mimic a specific sound that the villagers were accustomed to hearing. They did this several times during the darkest of nights to hide the MKV and RHIBs lurking off a distance as QRF (Quick Reaction Force), holding station with active sensors and night optics. The Boat Guys also exploited a civilian cargo container ship to launch and recover the RHIBs to extend their range. The idea was to conduct a daytime coastal patrol, then rendezvous with the cargo container ship at night, move up to another location, launch and conduct another patrol. After three consecutive weeks of performing these operations, they started to get actual results. The JSOTF-P started intercepting cell phone chatter and SMS messages from the coastal villages telling the Abu Sayyaf terrorists to remain deep in the mountains because over a dozen American fast boats were constantly patrolling the waters at this time. This was a very successful PSYOPs conducted only by two RIBs and two MKVs from the waters of Davao Straits to the southern tip of Tawi-Tawi



Using a cargo ship as a floating sea base, note the CRRC on the RHIB as she is being hoisted aboard.

After his promotion to Chief, he returned this time as the deputy J3 with the JSOTF-P staff. Jimmy managed the day-to-day operation of the Tactical Operation Center. As the Maritime Operational Planner for the deployed Boat Teams, burning ten and sometimes 12-hour shifts, he ensured the seamless operation of all SF Teams, SEALs, and Boat Detachments to include host nation requests for military support. He also spent time building engagements with the NAVSOG unit to foster a common bond. One significant event was when he was invited to a welcome celebration in their camp for a squad of newly minted Filipino SEALs who graduated from their BUDS Training in Cavite. The unit was scheduled to conduct a combined operation with the army and marines the next day on one of the smaller islands suspected of harboring smugglers. This would be the first real-world operation for the new men. If they successfully survived a firefight with the seasoned operators, they would be accepted into the ranks. An age-old rite of passage passed down through generations. Jimmy hugged each one of the men and parted with words of encouragement. The next day while in

the JOC (Joint Operations Center), Jimmy dispatched the MKVs to assist the NAVSOG unit in transporting ambulatory wounded cases of the stricken PHIL-SEAL platoon. Rumors claimed that the ground units lost the element of surprise due to the failure of the Head Quarters to approve the assault on time and resulted in an ambush by the smugglers firing crew-served weapons. Back at the dock, Jimmy counted three PHIL-SEALs KIA; all were new guys. During the funeral, one of the PHIL-SEAL wives clutching her year-old baby and, in tears, approached Jimmy begging for him to do something. She begged him to bring back her husband because they had just recently married, and now her firstborn would grow up not seeing his father, an event that burdened Jimmy for some time.



Jimmy with MKV in the Philippines.

He also orchestrated the diplomatic visit of US Ambassador Kenney, SOCPAC leadership, NSW leadership, the Philippine civilian delegation, and military corps to the southern Philippines. He worked tirelessly with US Secret Service, FBI, Delta Force (PSD- Presidential Security Detail), SEALs, and the elite Philippine National Police Tactical Units. Jimmy also did a whole lot more, as you might imagine.



The Budil Fight is about to begin!

Jimmy coordinated multiple capacity-building engagements with local leaders in Zamboanga and the different units inside the Filipino base to foster friendship. One significant gathering is a local feast called “Budil Fight” or “Food Fight.” This consisted of a very long table that would accommodate many people on both sides. Fresh banana leaves were spread as plates then a heap of steaming rice was poured over the center along the length of the table. On top of the rice were various chunks of meat like chicken, pork, fish, noodles, and vegetables generously spread all over. The final touch was a dousing of heavy stew on top. Both sides of the table were lined with men standing side by side, all hungry, all arms extended while the senior guy at the head of the table recited his blessing; then, with a sharp, loud voice, he yelled FIGHT!!! The whole table exploded with arms digging, shoving foods amongst the many flies that buzzed in. The idea is to out-eat the guy across you or try to steal some of his food to pass it to the guy next to you. This event was under par compared to USDA standards, but everyone had a good time.



Jimmy and fellow SWCCs were doing VBSS training in Bahrain with RHIBs.

After PACOM, he remained with SBT-12 to continue as a RHIB Detachment OIC. He deployed to CENTCOM and served with NSWU-3 in Bahrain. His detachment was tasked to be the maritime Crisis Response Element responsible for the waters of the NAG (Northern Arabian Gulf) up to the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea. They trained various host nation special forces to include members of the Ministry of Interior Special Security Forces, Bahrain Defense Special Forces, the King's Royal Bahraini Special Guards, and the Bahrain Navy. They were also sent to Aden, Yemen, for six consecutive weeks to train the Yemeni Coast Guard and the Yemeni Special Forces in Sanaa. The USEMB-Yemen Chief of Station directed this as a first-ever military to direct military engagement. His detachment had unrestricted access to all the ports in Aden, reported current vulnerability assessment of Yemeni forces. They answered volumes of RFI (requests for information) from all agencies and submitted essential data to the COS (CIA Chief of Station) to analyze.



Jimmy with ball cap in the classroom conducting weapons training in the Middle East.

One interesting event Jimmy experienced while in Yemen was the wedding season which allowed men to marry underage females. This was a culture shock to the detachment but what threw them off were the activities following the ceremony. The entourage proceeded towards the reception site, which was at the hotel where Jimmy's detachment was staying. Distant noises now appeared to be heading towards the hotel, pickup trucks at high speed filled with men hunkered down, hooting and hollering while shooting their Kalashnikov rifles upon the air. Watching this unfold while holed up in their rooms on the top floor, he immediately rallied his men to get ready to fight their way out of there and standby to execute their emergency exfil plan with the *USS Boxer* (LHD-4) that was patrolling off the coast of Yemen. To their surprise, Jimmy got a call from their Yemeni security officer telling them not to worry because it was just a wedding night. Many more of these nights happened during their stay; ultimately, everyone got used to the commotion. Conducting training on the ground was very difficult. The Yemeni Coast Guard ranks operated on a different schedule compared to their US counterparts. Promptness and time management were all dependent on the

“Inshallah” (God Willing) approach. Past lunchtime, everyone secured from training while enjoying chewing “khat” (a local plant that contains natural stimulants much like the coca bush in South America) for the rest of the day. The Yemeni SOF, on the other hand, were handpicked and forbidden to chew Khat. On another occasion, to gain respect and camaraderie from their Yemeni counterparts, they ate breakfast with them as much as possible. Their favorite breakfast was flatbread and ground meat. An old newspaper was laid on the open dirt and in the middle was a soupy mixture of pureed beans mixed with some type of meat squirted on the bread. Everyone squatted around, broke off a piece, dipped, and ate while swatting flies left and right. Lucky enough, everyone had their Hepatitis shots during this deployment.



Jimmy starched and pressed with the Brass in Bahrain.

After this deployment, he went back to Coronado to finish his tour with the Boat Team. Jimmy went back to the Middle East, this time for a 12-month unaccompanied tour with the JSOTF-GCC staff. He was the Country Engagement Officer to the Kingdom of Bahrain. As a Chief, he engaged Partner Nation leadership at the O-5 to O-8 (Commander to Admiral) level and trained over 250 Bahraini SOF operators. Among other duties, Jimmy coordinated and facilitated JCS exercises, JCET events, and approximately 200 key leader engagements. He witnessed firsthand the beginning of the Arab Spring from Libya, Tunisia, and Bahrain. Since he was connected with the office of the Ministry of Interior and the Royal Bahraini Guard Forces, he was handpicked by the NSWU-3 commanding officer to gather daily atmospherics on the street, liaised and advised NCIS, NSW, and the 5th Fleet Commander for possible non-combatant evacuation of all American Citizens in the Kingdom if need be. He also saw the destruction of the “Pearl Monument,” a historic landmark in Bahrain.

In Jimmy's next assignment, he was assigned to the Support Activity in Coronado and managed the Special Operations Troop Department, where all incoming SEALs and SWCCs reported for duty.



Jimmy with MRAP in Afghanistan

After his promotion to Senior Chief, he deployed to Afghanistan with the Regional Task Force- Afghanistan as the senior enlisted advisor. Jimmy was responsible for operations of a 140-man Joint Task Force with disaggregated (read scattered) elements located in some of the most austere locations across Afghanistan supporting USCENTCOM. He experienced over sixty 102 mm finless rocket attacks on their camp, witnessed HVEST IED attacks, Green on Green or Green on Blue attacks. He saw the VBIED (vehicle IED) attack on Camp Salerno as well as the major Taliban attack on Camp Bastion targeting Prince Harry of Great Britain. Jimmy related this was an experience that will haunt him forever.



Jimmy at Camp Salerno aka Forward Operating Base Salerno, Khowst Province, Afghanistan

After Afghanistan, Jimmy redeployed back to Coronado got an assignment to the Operations Department until his promotion to Master Chief. He transferred to Virginia Beach, VA, on an unaccompanied tour under the NSWG4 Acquisition Department. Working alongside engineers and acquisition specialists, he managed the new line of combatant crafts, systems, and next-generation SWCC gear.

His next assignment was to Stennis Space Center in Mississippi to manage the Security Force Assistance school NAVSCIATTS (Naval Small Craft Instruction and Technical Training School) for three and a half years as the CMC (Command Master Chief) while away from his family. This tour allowed him to oversee GO/FO engagements in more than 112 countries showcasing NAVSCIATTS Security Cooperation and Security Force Assistance training capabilities, coordination, and curriculum development with allied SOF partner forces for future interoperability. A fast-paced duty, working with USEMB staff, Security Cooperation Officer for various countries, and traveling visiting a country every month while managing a command consisting of uniformed, government service, and contractor personnel. When he left the command and checked out his rented apartment, his landlord asked if he had ever lived there as it looked the same. Jimmy admitted he had not spent a lot of time there.

Jimmy finished his 30+year naval career with a twilight tour at Special Reconnaissance Team ONE (SRT-1) in Coronado. Sadly, during the COVID lockdown, he could not have a large formal retirement ceremony at SRT-1. However, Debbie and Jay were able to surprise him with several his old comrades.



Jimmy is receiving a few retirement gifts, including the Zig Zag shirt and hat. See who you recognize here.

Jimmy is the embodiment of a true quiet professional. His humility and hard work ethic were several keys to his success and finding mentors, particularly Navy Chiefs, and consistently going above and beyond. An example of this was going overseas to help deployed dets with engineering problems. The dets appreciated his efforts as well as keeping specific issues to himself.

Jimmy now lives in San Diego, CA, catching up with family matters. However, he couldn't have been more gracious and generous, providing CCCA Historians Jim Gray and Phil Garn with multiple interviews and photographs from his carrier in NSW. He plans to ultimately retire to Wyoming, live a simple life, and enjoy the countryside.

Dan Savage's LSSC Story from MST-2, Det Golf 1970-71

**By
Jim Gray**

Edited

**By
Phil Garn and Joseph Zemlin**



**Pictured: Dan Savage of MST-2 Det Golf with the LSSC ashore for repairs.
Note: the 57mm recoilless rifle hit under the lifting pad eye after the firefight.**

It was the morning of February 13, 1971, about 12 or 15 miles south of Can Tho (then the Republic of Vietnam) on the Bassac River. Dan Savage and 3rd Class Engineman Barnes were bringing around their LSSC (Light SEAL Support Craft). At about 1000 hrs., the SEAL Platoon AOIC LT(JG) James "Jim" Young of Victor Platoon (later Commanding Officer of SBU-12 in the 1980s) and another SEAL, Doc Bryant, would be riding along. The SEALs were making last-minute preparations for the trip upriver. Barnes and Savage were standing by the boat. There was a little carnival down at the base of Long Fun. The Sea Bees had a barge that the MST (Mobile Support Team) men tied up alongside used for crane and gravel loads. The MST men had a small transistor radio and listened to AFVN (Armed Forces Vietnam) network waiting for Mr. Young to come down with Doc Bryant. Savage recalled Creedence Clearwater Revival was playing and popular with the men at that time.

The men loaded the guns on the Light (LSSC), including two M-60s, one on port and the other on starboard with a .50 Cal HMG aft as well as a PRC-77 radio next to the coxswain's seat where Savage would drive.

It was a hot, dry morning; for some reason, the men walked up to the ammo bunker and grabbed some more ammo, loading it with about 1,000 rounds of .50 Cal and 3,000 rounds for each M-60. The men also had a couple of M-16 rifles and an M-79 grenade launcher in the boat. Mr. Young carrying an M-16, came down with Doc Bryant and another SEAL, carrying Stoner Mk-63 LMGs. Doc Bryant was the oldest man aboard with about 15 years in the Navy and was currently a 1st Class Corpsman with prior experience with Marine Recon and UDT, the most experienced man at camp. Once onboard, Savage started up the boat, and they headed up a small canal to the Bassac River. Because of the LSSC's small water jet pumps, she took a while to get up "on-step" to begin planning on the water. As they drove past the camp, there were three or four water buffalo in the water, and the tide was really low. The MST men couldn't resist buzzing the water buffalo once the boat was up on step, and the beasts lumbered out of the water, but Savage clipped one on the rump. It jolted the boat but didn't hurt the Buffalo!

So, the men continued up the river. This run would take them 30 miles upriver in about 45 minutes. Their objective was an outpost about 12 miles south of the city of Can Tho. There was a lot of sampan traffic as they made their way upriver, often coming close to the small boats. Neither the Mamasans nor Papasans liked that because the LSSCs wake jostled their canoe-like sampans.

When they arrived at the junction of the Bassac and a canal, they were met by an Army Major who had two 105mm howitzers and a much nicer compound than Savage's, including pallets to use as duckboards for walking around on the muddy ground. The men tied up alongside a makeshift dock. The outpost's First Sergeant joined the Major and got into the boat. The SEALs wanted to get the lay of the land and pull an op that the Major had come up with the following evening. Mr. Young and the Major went over the maps and indicated the canals Savage and the SEALs would be traveling on to get to the area the Major was interested in. Additionally, the Major brought along a Vietnamese interpreter as several outposts along the way were manned by Vietnamese that they would have to pass by. As it turned out, the VC were monitoring their radio frequency which would cause problems later in the day.

The men shoved off and went about one or two kilometers up the Bassac north of Can Tho, then took a left on a small canal. They cruised about three or four miles, and the banks changed from thick jungle to a defoliated area. They stopped at an outpost where Mr. Young and the Major got off and talked to the man in charge inside, while Savage and the other men spoke with the remaining five Vietnamese handing off some of their ammunition because the Vietnamese were low on supply. Mr. Young and the Major returned to the "Light," and they got underway again, running up and down the canals to get the lay of the land.

At this point, the Vietnamese interpreter spoke with the Major, who conferred with Mr. Young. One of the outposts appeared to be getting hit hard, and they had two wounded they wanted to evac, but the fire was too heavy for helos (helicopters). They then headed out of the

canal and back onto the Bassac and returned to the Major's "Dead Tree" outpost, named after a big dead tree in the front. They ran the LSSC along the side of the base and back down a canal that was about 150 feet wide, finally turning into an even smaller channel about 40 feet wide. The VC who had been listening to the interpreter knew they were coming and had set up on the banks at a point where two trees grew out of the center of the canal where the LSSC could barely squeeze through. Savage was impressed with his driving, threading the needle at about 45 miles per hour, then everyone on the "Light" started shooting. The boat took a massive jolt, and Savage thought they had hit a submerged log and went sideways. Everyone was shooting at them; small arms rounds were flying everywhere, just overhead.

Savage turned around and asked, "What's everybody shooting at?"

One of the men turned around and said, "We just got hit!"

They had just taken a recoilless rifle round portside right beneath one of the lifting pad eyes used for hoisting the boat out of the water blowing a four-inch hole in the hull. Savage didn't remember hearing it to this day, and the impact was only about three feet from where he was sitting. Savage yelled back to the man on the .50 Cal, "Don't knock any trees down." In his mind, Savage thought this was the only way out; and if they knocked down a tree, they would be trapped. All the rest of the way, the other men were shooting at the VC as Savage drove. Mr. Young was on the port M-60, Doc Bryant on the starboard M-60, and Barnes kneeled beside Savage on the .50 Cal with the other SEAL. The Army Major and First Sergeant were leaning over the sides, shooting their M-16s. So, they shot their way into the outpost to pick up the two wounded Vietnamese men. There was a considerable amount of fire coming into the base, but men did not have any support lined up, and they would be there awhile getting the wounded men into the boat. They quickly got the two men into the boat and placed them down on the deck where Doc Bryant saw them.

Three Army gunships had arrived and were laying down strikes to keep the bad guys' heads down by this time. While still alongside the pier, Savage jumped over the side to check the intakes for the jet pumps to make sure they were clear because all it would take would be a few reeds or something, and the pumps would start to cavitate and slow them down. Savage also didn't think being in the water was such a bad place with rounds flying overhead as he cleared the intakes but could see where the rounds had penetrated the hull. He saw the 57mm round deflected the steel pad eye bracket into the Styrofoam in the lower part of the boat, just missing the fuel tanks. Savage knew he and Barnes were fortunate.

When he got back into the boat, Mr. Young was on the radio attempting to get the Black Ponies (OV-10s) of VAL-4 using his call sign, Snake King 3, for an emergency scramble from Ben Thuy. Within minutes, minutes two OV-10s were orbiting over their area. Snake King was the call sign for the SEALs in serious trouble. The Army Major would direct his 105s as backup support, and they would fire all around the boat. Savage said, "then told us to go, which didn't seem safe with the Black Ponies flying overhead."

The Army major wanted everything coordinated before they reran the gauntlet. It was a gauntlet as they were going back down the canal with the enemy on both sides. In the interim,

the Black Ponies and Army gunships located some of the hot spots and softened up the area before they started their run. Mr. Young told the aircraft what sort of fire the LSSC had taken on the way in, such as .51 Cal (DshK) and many AKs. At this point, Savage just held the "Light" in the middle of the canal for at least an hour. The current was swift, and Savage had to use a little throttle, but the "Light" held station pretty well. Then the man in the command ship said, "GO!"

Savage put the throttles to the wall, and they headed right down the gauntlet. They had a severe problem because of all the weight in the small boat, and she would not come up on step right away, so the best thing was for Savage to fishtail the boat back and forth down the canal. This was a maneuver they used to help get the boat to pop up "on-step." After a couple of hundred yards of jerking the wheel right and left, she rose out of the water.

The bullets from the 60s were firing in front of the boat, and Savage could see the muzzle flashes and branches break off, falling right into the boat. Savage's ears felt like the inside of a 55-gallon drum with someone pounding on the outside. He felt around for some empty brass casings and stuck them in his ears, which helped a little.

As the helos would come in one on each side of the canal, they would be dropping their rockets one after another along the tree line maybe 25 to 35 yards ahead of them and blowing branches and debris in the canal ahead of the boat with a lot falling into the boat and on the bow. This part of the canal was dense with jungle. After the Helos pulled up and made a circle to come around again, the Black Peonies would go in and do the same thing. After the rockets, Savage saw their 7.62mm rounds crisscrossing in the water in front of him. Their splashes would go at least four feet high, and sometimes, he drove right through a splash. They must have been pretty good, as Savage thought it was close air support. He looked around to see what the other guys were doing and noticed the two wounded guys laying on deck kept busy. The hot brass from the M-60's and Stoners was landing on them and burning. "Man, there was a lot of brass that day." The boat was now up "on-step" and ran fast; Savage had to throttle back to 400 RPMs. The boat's design was such the water pumps didn't put much of a load on the engine. It was as if the engine was spinning free when you got a high rpm, and there wasn't much load. Savage had blown up a couple of motors this way, so he knew he didn't want to over-rev the engines. Nevertheless, they were still going about 50 mph down a very narrow canal "on-step."

Those two trees in the middle of the canal were now coming up fast and seemed to lean towards the boat, making getting around them more difficult. Savage swished one way and then swished to the other. It was not quite as perfect as going in, but the boat's end popped up a couple of feet and kept going, which was a successful maneuver. They were now close to the central canal, and the firing was subsiding. The helos had made three firing runs, and the OV-10s had made three or four firing runs. The men in the boat got word from the aircraft that they had taken a lot of fire and been shot up well, so the aircraft was headed back to Binh Thuy.

The original plan was to meet the helos at the Dead Tree outpost and load the wounded into one of the helos, and they would fly them on to Can Tho or Binh Thuy. The LSSC made it

back to Dead Tree Outpost, and the men took stock of each other, checking to make sure no one was wounded and examining the boat. Nothing seemed to be leaking, and no one was injured except the two Vietnamese on the deck. But the boat was a mess; there were about five or six inches of expended brass on the deck and not much ammo left in the guns. They had about 100 to 200 rounds left for the M-60s, six rounds left for the .50 cal, and one M-79 round. The M-16s and Stoners were all empty.

At Dead Tree Outpost, they headed directly to the Hollywood Hootch into its screened porch and the bar. The Army Sergeant passed out the Miller pop tops and once again said, "I told you guys this area was hot." Mr. Young spoke to the Major and turned to us said the men would be taking the wounded to Binh Thuy...they had left Smith at the boat who was cleaning the brass off with the Vietnamese, then they headed up the Bassac Binh Thuy.

When they pulled up at the dock, an Army ambulance was waiting to take off the wounded Vietnamese, and the OV-10 pilots and Gunship crews came over and started telling their side of the story. The airmen said all their aircraft had been hit, and it had been exciting stuff. The pilots took all the SEALs and MST men to the officers' club for drinks, and they had four or five beers. Then it was time to return to Long Fu. The men had re-armed the crew-served weapons and their personal guns.

As they headed back, the tide had changed and pulled the "Light" right onto a mudflat that put them 100 yards from the water. All they could do is wait, and they reflected on the day. Looking down the river, they saw a major airstrike, including an AC-47 gunship, Puff the Magic Dragon, with its long columns of tracers hosing down the bush. It was Savage's first time seeing the gunship's three mini-guns in action. There really must have been a lot of them (VC) to bring in a gunship and all that extra air support. They watched for about a half-hour. After about two hours, there was enough water to get underway and head back.

They knew the MSSC (Medium SEAL Support Craft) was on a night op at their base camp. They tied up around 0200 hours and waited for the other guys to come back from their op. The MSSC made some contact on the island and secured their op about 0530-0600 hours. They (SEALS and MSSC boat crew) had many questions for the LSSC men and SEALs.

The Light had performed well, nothing broke down, and Savage was happy with the boat that day.

Dan Savage's MSSC Story from MST-2, Det Golf 1970-71

By

Jim Gray

Edited

By

Phil Garn and Joseph Zemlin



Left to Right: ETN2 Jim Phoebus; LTJG Bill Bremer; GMG3 Tom Collinson; EN1 Manuel Del Corral; SN Don Roswurm; EM3 Jim Barnes; EM3 Bob Buckman (not shown BM3 Dan Savage) on their MSSC note the mini gun on the stern.

This operation took place in late December 1970, just after Victor Platoon from SEAL Team 1 had taken over from Juliette Platoon during Mobile Support Team 2 (MST 2) Det Golf's tour of duty from 1970 to 1971. Victor Platoon was new "in country" and hadn't pulled too many operations in the area. Dan Savage recalled it was a hot, dry night, and the MST men would be shoving off in their MSSC (Atlantic Research Medium SEAL Support Craft) at about 0100 in the morning.

The SEALs and MST men had just completed their pre-operation briefing at 2000 hours, and the guys were getting their gear ready to go. The mission was to use the MST Det's MSSC, and the men shoved off in a light breeze from their base at Long Fu Island. They planned to head in a northwesterly direction to Dung Island then come down the Northwestern side of the island toward a beach near the ocean to insert the SEALs. The ride was a long one, taking thirty minutes to reach the island's tip and then another hour to an hour and fifteen minutes

down the aisle to the insertion point. Along the way, the men used a starlight scope which gave off a greenish screen color to spot any movement on the beach or in the water, such as the VC crossing in front of the boat during the dead of night. Savage recalled you could easily see sampans or a light burning onshore in the scope's ghostly greenish glow.

The men made small talk, and the SEALs double-checked their gear, making sure they were ready. The boat soon came upon the objective area, and the men discussed some last-minute details. The platoon used a Kit Carson Scout, Trong, and a South Vietnamese interpreter whose name Savage couldn't recall. They slowed the boat way down for the insertion. Lieutenant (junior grade) Bill Bremmer was the MST boat officer, and Seaman Roseworm was the coxswain who eased back on the throttles making the final approach to the landing site by the ocean. The bottom was sandy, rising-up to a beach with dunes then jungle further inland. About 100 yards off the beach, they raised the MSSC's outdrives so they could get a little closer to shore, and the SEALs wouldn't have to walk as far, though they made a little more noise using this technique.

The SEALs exited over the boat's bow, and the MSSC crew began to back off the boat. Savage was manning the starboard M-60, Barns was on the port M-60, Ferris on a .50 cal to port and Del Corral on the starboard .50 cal, and their gunners mate Collinson was on the stern 7.62 mini-gun. After about 300 yards from shore, they swung around to head up the Basac River to give the SEALs some room to operate.

They would have gone a half-mile upriver and just anchored out waiting for the SEALs' signal to return, but a fierce firefight broke out on the beach. The SEALs had made contact and were calling the MST men back for a "hot" extraction. Savage remembered Roseworm turned the boat around and kicked it in the ass, staying on step 80 to 100 yards from the beach when the MSSC was hitting bottom, slowing down at that point. Some SEALs were directly in front of the boat and making their way through the knee-deep water until it was halfway up their thighs. Others were providing cover fire while other SEALs were running full speed toward the boat. Savage said at this point, the side gunners elevated their guns and began firing well over the SEALs' heads to make some noise and throw some confusion into the VC, so they didn't know where or what the boat crew was shooting. Savage said they used this technique because they could not shoot directly into the SEAL's position but keep the VC's heads down.

Savage got off his M-60 and being one of the larger guys on the boat crew, got up on the forward deck, which was his least favorite place, because he was there to help the SEALs on board, and it was usually during a firefight. He scrambled up and pulled a few SEALs aboard. As soon as they were on board, they began firing their guns right over Savage's head. Savage grabbed a couple more, and the SEALs started working their way into the boat. Once they were all aboard, the ship started backing off the beach, but they were still taking a lot of fire from shore. Savage estimated there were about fifteen separate muzzle flashes from different VC weapons aimed at them. He got back on his M-60 and began returning fire while the SEALs were all leaning over the side, firing their guns.

They swung the boat to port, and all the guns shifted to the starboard side and continued firing on full auto at the VC on the beach. As they straightened out and headed up the Bassac, the

mini gun came into play. Collinson had it set on the maximum firing speed of 6,000 rounds per minute. So, if anybody was left alive after that mass of fire, they should be sending them home on R&R. Savage recalled when the mini gun fired, it was both an incredible and horrific experience. He remembered it had two distinct sounds from when they had taken it out to test fire it, but it would rattle your teeth at either setting. However, it sounded like music when you were in a firefight, though it was firing like a buzzsaw with no insulation for your ears. The MSSC was moving away from the area quickly, and Collinson stopped firing, then they reversed course for the long ride home.

The MST men got to talking with the SEALs. They had just gotten on the beach and patrolled 50 or 60 yards when they heard some noise. Then at the top of the dunes, someone turned on a flashlight. The SEALs immediately opened fire, killing four VC. Searching the bodies, they recovered some documents, but there were more VC in the area, which was when the main firefight occurred.

The ride back seemed to go faster as the men were in high spirits and coming down off their adrenalin highs after the firefight. They were soon horsing around and joking as they rounded the tip of the island. Then the men began gathering up their gear and getting ready to get off the boat because they were only twenty minutes from the port at Long Fu Island. Back at camp, they began cleaning weapons. One of the SEALs who carried an M-60 had expended all his ammunition entirely, then, running in the saltwater, dipped it in to cool it off. After that, the M-60 was frozen solid. By the time they got back to base, and they literally had to hammer the gun apart. But the gunners' mates soon got it working again and ready for the next night.

Another Great Day for CCCA on the Greens

By

Phil G. Garn

Edited by Joseph Zemlin



President Joe Zemlin and Treasurer Mike Sigsworth at the CCCA Tent right behind the First Tee at the Chula Vista Golf Course for the Memorial Day Shoot Out.

During the Ray Hinton Memorial in January, we were invited by Chula Vista Golf Course managers Armando and Linda to participate in the upcoming Memorial Day Shoot out on May 23. The Hinton Memorial was a great success (see article). This second opportunity would provide CCCA with another chance for positive exposure and charitable fundraising on the links.

As with the earlier tournament, there was much behind-the-scenes work by Nix White, Charlie Philpot, and the CCCA Board. Mike Sigsworth posted the flyers on the CCCA sites, and Facebook pages well in advance, then worked with Joe Zemlin and Charlie putting gift bags and prepping the CCCA loadout, pop-up tent, table, chairs, etc. supplies, banners. Joe and Mike also drafted lovely letters of appreciation for both Armando and Linda to present to them. We'd also learned a few things about loadout. Mike sailor proofed the banner containers by putting the matching graphics on the outside so Phil and Chuck wouldn't try to

stuff two banners into one tube. He also added little handles for easy carrying. We utilized a collapsible wagon for easier toting to and from locations. This made transporting supplies much easier.

Rubin Hinojosa donated a signed limited edition HSB print that Mike added to a CCCA gift basket for the raffle at the end of the day.

Early on Sunday morning, Joe, Chuck Chaldekas, Mike, and Charlie met at the office and loaded up the vehicles. Phil met them at the course and began the setup. We had the pole position on the first tee as before. Set up was going exceedingly well until the collapsible cart popped a wheelie on the curb and collapsed, CCCA brochures and cards spilled out onto the green. Thankfully the wind died down, and Phil could gather up all the paperwork and quickly cram them back into their cardboard box.

We were able to have an excellent presentation for Armando and Linda (Golf Course Managers). Joe was able to present the certificates and CCCA challenge coins right before the action. Both Nix and Charlie were wearing their new CCCA golf shirts. White was good for a warm sunny day, representing CCCA. Nix had some time to show us some of his custom clubs, including a driver he received from Tom Watson (very light with a huge head. These were not your father's golf clubs) and an excellent customized putter from UDT/SEAL with a trident on the face. Phil asked Nix if he would bring the Monster golf bag from Tiger Woods, "Oh no!" He did not want that walking away.



Charlie Philpot and Nix White were wearing their CCCA shirts at the shoot-out. Note the golf carts lining up for the scramble.

During some of the downtime, Phil got to talk with Chuck about his Vietnam experiences. You will probably see the story about the big sampan ambush and giant cobra in a future newsletter issue.

Several golfers came over to talk with us and check out the CCCA book “WARBOATS, 55 Years of Combatant Craft History,” primarily veterans. Still, it was a very different start with thirty-foursomes cycling through with individual starts with excellent photo opportunities. We put the CCCA gift bags in the carts then the pairs lined up. It was right out of the “Wacky Races” as carts scrambled in all directions to begin play.



Golf carts lining up for the start of the scramble. Unlike the orderly start of the Roy Hinton tournament with lots of time to chat, cars were going everywhere like “The Wacky Racers.”

Then it was time for the takedown. It went much faster as Phil and Chuck had learned their lessons, and we had Mike and Joe. Joe had another commitment, so the rest of us went back to the office to unload while Charlie and Nix played, managed the raffle, and other duties. Mike has got a system, and we put the equipment back very quickly in the right spots at the office, so Mike did not have to do a lot of extra work.

We netted about 2,800 dollars from the tournament for CCCA. All in all, another fine day on the greens.

CCCA HEADQUARTERS MOVE

Written and Edited By
Joseph Zemlin



Figure 2. Mike Sigsworth, CCCA Treasurer standing proudly in front of the new CCCA HQ

Your New CCCA Headquarters!
275 W. Madison Ave, Ste. A
El Cajon, CA 92020

The CCCA headquarters has moved! I want to thank Mike Sigsworth (our Treasurer) for his dedication and foresight in handling this significant project. Mike informed me that our initial lease term was coming to an end and that there was a possibility of changing building ownership.

Unfortunately, the sale details were beyond our control, and we found ourselves at the mercy of the sales process. Our leasing agents could only tell us that the building was in escrow and the new owners wanted to make some changes. Those changes boiled down to the new owners taking possession of the whole second floor for their organization while moving the remaining tenants to the first floor. Unfortunately, initial proposals for this were sketchy. Somebody suggested that if we stayed, a modification in the first level floor plan would be necessary to accommodate a similar set-up that we currently had. Our counter to this was if we were to move to the first floor before our lease ended, the move's cost would fall unto the new owners. However, months past and there was still no word, two months before our lease was to expire. Then a representative from the new owners wanted to meet with us. Mike and I took the meeting with their CPA and heard him out. As it turned out, his offer was rather blunt. We would be welcome to stay and move to the first floor as earlier offered. However, the remaining cost would be at the current rate, while anything afterward would double in price. As it turned out, there was no wriggle room. It was an either-or offer. We could not see the value in this and told the Agent we would think about it and reply soon. The Executive Board discussed the issue and decided that we could not agree to these terms in good conscience. The building was considerably old and had its known problems and served us

well. However, doubling the cost for poorer spaces that had yet to be built and shared common areas was unacceptable.



Figure 2. Mike Sigsworth in front of new CCCA HQ

Mike had foreseen the difficulties we might face and started looking for alternative locations that we could occupy. Staying in an East County offered the best bang for our buck and proximity to our previous location. Mike discussed various possible locations with me, and we started the process of elimination. Although cost was always at the forefront of our minds, so was the importance of functionality for conducting daily business. Many of the locations were more industrial and had limited access to routine business.

Mike's networking proved to offer our best option. Having people who believe in your mission and trust you as an individual makes all the difference in the world. As it turned out, one of the spaces that we looked at belonged to Mike's family dentist, DDS Renea Wilson. It was a bungalow office space in a three-suite complex, next to her business residence. Upon initial walk-through, the square footage was very similar to our current area. It had three office rooms side by side, separated by sliding glass doors. This space would accommodate a Ship's Store, Operations Office, and Admin Office. It also had a good-sized reception room with reception space behind with storage capability and washer and dryer connections, a large conference room, and small galley area, and a private bathroom. The downside was that it cost more than what we were currently paying; it had plank wood panels with gaps between boards, no carpeting, needed a paint job, tile fixed, etc. We saw potential but knew that we needed to look at more places to be sure. It did have a few additional features that we both found appealing. It had a good security fence recently installed and the extra addition of a good-sized patio off the rear of the building next to the proposed conference room. It also had a parking lot that would be ground level for easy access that the other tenants would not use during our meetings.

Mike and I continued our search and visited multiple other sites. Still, it became clear that none of the spaces could offer all the amenities, and we discussed our findings with EW Johnson, your CCCA Secretary and the third member of the Executive Board. We decided to bring our results to the Board and moved forward with planning the move.

We knew it would be a lot of work, and Mike and I set out to work the plan. Mike arranged the move date and procured professional movers to do most of the heavy lifting. However, before the move, a lot of work needed to be done. Mike and I decided to divide up the tasks where necessary and save money wherever possible. He took on demo and dealing with hardware replacement, lights, etc., while I focused on a complete paint out of all the spaces, and within ten days, we were up and operational for business. We had new carpeting, all wall

gaps filled, a complete paint job, tile floor repaired, new electrical connections, internet, fridge, and patio furniture all put together! All in time for our next meeting allowed us to be out of our old CCCA Headquarters "On Time and On Target."

Mike and I had some additional help from Phil Garn and Charlie Philpot. Thank you both for your added assistance. We put in some long hours over those ten days, and I hated the schedule Mike laid out, but we accomplished the mission on time to not incur any additional fees from our old building! Our new space is fantastic, and you should be very proud to conduct business. I want to thank our organization for having the confidence and trust in us to serve your interests.

Many of you may not realize the work that goes on behind the scenes to keep us operational. I want you to know that no one puts in more time and effort than you to our daily operations! Thank you, Mike, for your unwavering commitment to our organization and its charitable missions. The new space is fantastic!

More Photos will be available on the CCCA Webpage under Headquarters.

Welcome Aboard! First Female SWCC Completes Training in Class 115

By

Phil G. Garn

Edited By Joseph Zemlin



At the Compass Ceremony, the first female to complete SWCC training receives her compass. Note SB rate on her uniform. For operational and personal security, we will not disclose the identity or assignment of the new operator. Navy released photo.

In July 2021, the first female Special Warfare Combat Crewwoman (SWCC) graduated from training at the School House in Coronado, California, with sixteen other class members. She is the first female operator in modern Naval Special Warfare history. This accomplishment is a historic milestone for both her and the Navy. Up till now, no female candidate had completed the grueling training to become a qualified SWCC!



HPU members attending jungle survival training in Panama. Women completed the course and graduated along with their male teammates. Note "USN" on the stocks of the M-16s. Photo courtesy of Charlie Philpot.



They are looking a little more civilized. HPU members receive jungle training certificates in Panama. HPU was the predecessor of Special Boat Unit 26 and crucial to the development of Special Boat Team 22 and NAVSCIATTS. One of their PBRs is in the background. Photo courtesy of Charlie Philpot.

Surprisingly, there were few qualified female operators in the Harbor Patrol Unit (HPU) at the Naval Station Panama before becoming Special Boat Unit 26 in 1986/1987. Boats (PBRs and PCFs) and men with small craft and riverine experience (9533s) were scavenged from the Special Boat Units 11, 13, 22, and 24 in late 1970 so as not to decimate any single unit. Additional personnel were added from the Fleet. After setting up their base, the HPU under Commander Glynn developed a joint defense plan with the Army and began intensive training with the Army Rangers. HPU men and women would go through the Army's Jungle Survival School, earning their Army Jungle Expert Patches and conduct joint operations amphibious operations in the Canal Zone. The primary mission of HPU was escorting high-value targets (ships and submarines) through the Panama Canal. HPU's also began work in the School of the Americas (presently known as NAVSCIATTS, located in Stennis, Mississippi), Mobile Training Team (MTTs), and Foreign Internal Defense Missions (FIDs) in Central and South America. These missions are still carried out to this day by SWCCs in the Special Boat Teams. SBU-26, particularly with the influence of CMC Kelly Webb, who got his start in SBU-26, would be one of the progenitors of today's Riverine Special Boat Team 22 and still very much Jungle Warfare experts.



In recent years, women have been playing an increasing role in Naval Special Warfare, the SBTs, and NAVSCIATTs as technicians and support roles, currently known as "enablers." Many boat guys would be surprised at the number of women now an integrated part of the Teams.

Anyone who has served in any Naval Special Warfare boat unit/team is eligible for full membership into CCCA. With the graduation of the first female SWCC in Class 115, there are again female operators in NSW and the Special Boat Teams protecting America and her interests. A big HOOYAH to all the members of Class 115! Keep on charging!



SWCC Graduation Class 115