

VP-2- The Neptune

Volume 1, Issue 18
December 2009

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

First, I'd like to welcome aboard some new members since we published our last newsletter. Member #569 is Bobby McClellan ('63-'67) and wife, Irma, of Pearl, MS. Member #570 is Dave Wissmath ('67-'69) and wife, Carolyn, of Menifee, CA. Member # 571 is Edward Philbrick ('54-'57) and wife, Beverly. We hope to see you all in Pensacola in 2010.

We're looking forward to the reunion in Pensacola next fall. Getting together with our friends from our days in VP-2 is a major reason that we formed the VP-2 Association many years ago. There is a lot of information in this newsletter pertaining to the Pensacola reunion, so read all about it and plan to attend if you can. We look forward to seeing you. The members chose Pensacola as the reunion site for 2010, in part, because we haven't had a reunion there for so many years, but also because it gives many of our members in the eastern half of the country the opportunity to attend a reunion much closer to home.

Beyond the socializing, we do have some business to attend to at the reunion. One item of business is the election of Association officers. Our bylaws indicate that our officers are elected for four-year terms of office. Four of our current Executive Board members (1st V.P. Dino Vlahakis, 2nd V.P. Al Hall, Director Milt Debuhr and Director Jim Welch) will be finishing up their second year in office in 2010. Doug Donohue will complete six years as our Treasurer in 2010. Vic Gulli-

ver will complete his second four-year term as a Director in 2010. The Pensacola reunion will mark my tenth year as the President of the VP-2 Association. I bring this up now so that our Association members can be thinking about placing their names into nomination for either the office of President, Treasurer, or Director. We'll call for nominations in the June 2010 newsletter, but be thinking now about serving the VP-2 Association. Any dues-paying Association member and any Affiliate Member (offspring or widows of members) are eligible to hold offices in the VP-2 Association.

Again this holiday season, our U.S. military men and women are serving all over the globe to protect U.S. interests and to combat our enemies. We should pause to give special thanks to our military service men and women around the world who work to keep our nation safe. Many of them will forego the holidays with their families... and some will be in harm's way. We wish them all a safe and peaceful holiday season.

This is the time of year to remember our loved ones and to offer season's greetings to friends and family alike. Lois and I would both like to extend our best wishes to all Association members for a happy, healthy and joyous Christmas season.

Floyd D. Palmer
Association President



Officers:

- President – Floyd D. Palmer*
- 1st VP – Dino Vlahakis*
- 2nd VP – Al Hall*
- Director – Vic Gulliver*
- Director – Milt DeBuhr*
- Director – Jim Welch*
- Secretary/Treasurer –
Doug Donohue*



VP-2 Reunion - Pensacola ● November 1-5, 2010

By Jim Summitt

HILTON PENSACOLA BEACH GULF FRONT

The Hilton is an outstanding resort facility on the Gulf of Mexico with a beautiful beach and easy access to good restaurants and activities in the Pensacola area. You can go online at www.pensacolabeachgulffront.hilton.com to view the resort's amenities and facilities or http://eatatth2o.com/H2O_group.cfm to view the available menus.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING HOTEL RESERVATIONS

- Hotel reservations are the responsibility of each individual.
- Reservations will be accepted through October 08, 2010 but there are a limited number of rooms available so **MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS EARLY**.
- Reservations can be made by phone 1-866-916-2999 toll free or 1-850-343-6799 commercial. Ask for "Group Reservations".
- Provide the Group Name (VP-2 Reunion) and a 3-letter Group Code (VPR).
- Select a Room:

Sound Side Hotel Room	\$109	
Gulf Front Hotel Room	\$119	• Add 14.05% Tax and SRIA Fees
1 Bedroom Tower Suite	\$159	• Add \$3.00 per day for internet in the hotel room
2 Bedroom Tower Suite	\$209	
3 Bedroom Tower Suite	\$259	

- Provide a one-night room and tax deposit with a check or major credit card.
- A limited number of rooms are blocked for the reunion with arrival on November 1 and departure on Nov. 5, 2010; however, contracted room rates are valid for the weekends before & after the reunion.
- Reservations can be cancelled without penalty until 4:00 P.M. three days prior to arrival.

REUNION ITINERARY

- Monday, Nov. 1: Check in; evening welcoming reception.
- Tuesday, Nov. 2: Association business meeting/luncheon; Free PM.
- Wednesday, Nov 3: Aviation Museum; Blue Angel Homecoming; optional sightseeing.
- Thursday, Nov 4: Sightseeing during the day; evening Banquet.
- Friday, Nov 5: Hotel checkout by 11:00 am.

**Available sightseeing activities are still being identified.

SIGN UP FOR REUNION: Use the registration form on the next page or download from the VP-2 website www.patron2.com.

Total Cost: \$140 per person
 \$30 Deposit by 1 April 2010 (non-refundable)
 \$110 Remainder by 1 August 2010
 **Add \$20 late fee after 1 April 2010

Mail your form along with a check payable to
 VP-2 Reunion 2010 to Jim Summitt,
 PO Box 250, Niceville, Florida 32588-0250.

FINAL NOTE: We will again try to put together a slide show covering VP-2 history and previous reunions. Anyone who has pictures to share (must be digitalized), send them along with appropriate annotation to Bob Casey at email address spec439@yahoo.com with a copy to Jim Summitt at email address summittk@cox.net.

VP-2 Reunion - Pensacola ● November 1-5, 2010 2010 Registration Form

- I (we) plan to attend the VP-2 Reunion in Pensacola, November 1-5, 2010.
- I am enclosing a check for a \$30.00 deposit or \$140 per person.

Squadron mate: _____ Years in VP-2 _____ - _____

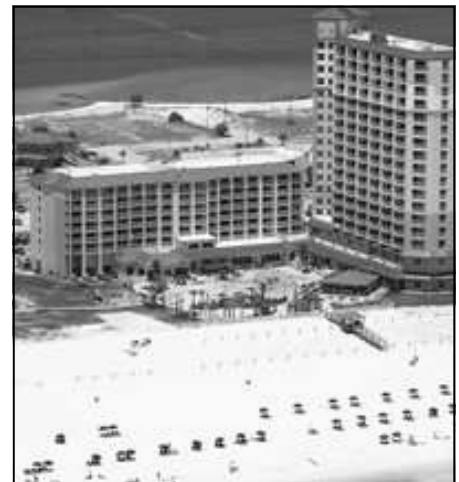
Accompanying Spouse (partner) _____

- I have made reservations at the Hilton Pensacola Beach Gulf Front Hotel.

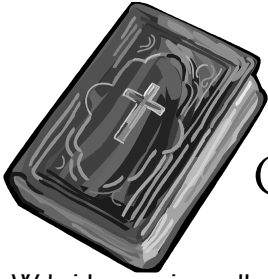
Mail your check, made out to VP-2 Reunion 2010 to:

Jim Summitt
PO Box 250
Niceville, FL 32588-0250

If you have questions, call Jim at (850)729-6945 or email at summittk@cox.net



You can go online at www.pensacolabeachgulffront.hilton.com to view the resort's amenities and facilities.



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

BY DOUG MILLAR

While in college I majored in biology and intended to go on to graduate school for further education. However, by the time I was a senior I had decided to pass on graduate school and go to Navy flight training instead. Near the end of the school year my faculty advisor, Dr. John C. Strickland – the world's leading authority on blue-green algae (How would you like to be remembered for being that?), called me into his office one day and offered to write recommendations for me to get into graduate school. I told him that for the present I had decided to forego grad school and become a Navy pilot. He was somewhat familiar with naval aircraft accident rates at the time and he said something to me that I will never forget. He said, "Doug, if that is what you're gonna do, you'd better have your spiritual bags packed!" That caught me a little off guard, but it was certainly sound advice.

Today (early November) everyone is talking about health care reform legislation. It is constantly in the evening news, regularly in the periodicals, and even being discussed on the streets in my little town. By the time you read this article, health care reform may already have been enacted into law; it may still be under discussion in Congress; or it may be a dead issue. I really have no clue as to which it will be.

But how much consideration have we given to our own eternal health care insurance? Christmas is just around the corner and believe it or not, Christmas is all about health care insurance - eternal health care insurance, that is! We like to remember Joseph and Mary; the manger; lowing cattle and shepherds; even wise men. We reflect on baby Jesus - but often we go no further with our thoughts of Christ. To stop the story of Jesus at Christmas is very much like reading the first chapter of an excellent book – and then failing to read any farther, except that the consequences are much more serious. You see, Jesus was born to die, not just to become the focus of our nativity scenes. He came to Earth to be the "Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world." He completed that assignment on a Roman cross on the outskirts of Jerusalem. Then He was raised from the dead and walked this scene for another 40 days where he was recognized by as many as 500 people at one time.

Jesus did indeed become the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. But there is one little catch. In the New Testament book of John, we read in chapter 1, verse 12, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name." This Christmas gift from God has something in common with any other

gift that you may receive this year – it has to be received to be of any use to you.

Have you received this free gift from God? Have you appropriated this eternal health care insurance to your own life? If not, do so today. "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." (Matthew 7:7) Just as Dr. Strickland said to me so many years ago, "Doug, ...you'd better have your spiritual bags packed."

May this be for each of you the most wonderful Christmas ever.

In Memoriam

We have learned of the loss of the following squadron mates since the last newsletter:

CAPT Richard A. Haase (squadron 47-50) (Mar '09)

CDR Forrest C. Borgstedt (squadron 54-56) (Apr 09)

Gary L. Hernkind (squadron late 60s) (Jun 09)

Sharon Rhodes (husband – Tom, squadron 62-65) (July 09)

Fred "Gil" Kachold (squadron 60-63) (Oct 09)

If you know of the passing of any of our former VP-2 Personnel, please advise Doug Donohue by email at:

nvsoar@charter.net



THE VP-2 ASSOCIATION'S CHARITABLE STATUS

BY VIC GULLIVER

The By-Laws of the VP-2 Association indicate that the IRS has granted us status as a War Veterans' Charitable Organization in accordance with Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(19). There is considerable space devoted to charitable organizations in the tax laws. War Veterans' Charitable Organizations are unique among the many sorts of charitable entities allowed by our tax laws. Most tax-exempt charities, including churches and many veterans' groups, are specifically prohibited from participating in political activities such as the lobbying of politicians, voter registration, or the backing and/or public support of particular candidates or political issues.

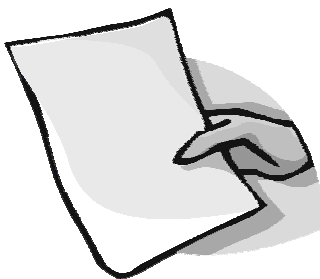
War Veterans' Charitable Organizations do not have such specific prohibitions in the Internal Revenue Code, which intentionally fails to address the subject of prohibited political activity for groups such as ours. Instead, IRS Publication 3386, "Tax Guide for Veterans' Organizations," states that the following activities are specifically allowed by 501(c)(19) charities:

- a. Reviewing proposed legislation that may affect veterans, at both the federal and state levels,
- b. Testifying before a governmental body with respect to such legislation,
- c. Informing members about the proposed legislation.

Any restrictions on political activities by 501(c)(19) War Veterans' Charitable Organizations is notably absent from the tax codes. The codes make no statements either way on allowing or prohibiting the sorts of political activities that are denied to other charities, including other veterans' charities.

The VP-2 Association has no designed political agenda. We are organized:

- a. to further comradeship among our Patrol Squadron Two shipmates.
- b. to honor the memory of all military veterans and particularly those who gave their lives in service to their country.
- c. to encourage patriotism, and



2010 CENSUS – IT'S IN OUR HANDS

BY JIM WELCH

Next April 1 is Census Day in the USA and the purpose is to count everyone in our country.

WHY? It's required by the Constitution.

WHAT IS IT USED FOR? The count determines the number of members each State has in the House of Representatives. As the population shifts, some states will lose members and some states will gain members in the House.

Our Federal government uses census statistics in the allocation and distribution of \$400+ Billion each year for ten years. State, county, city, and others use the census statistics for roads, infrastructure, medical centers, schools, planning for new plants and businesses.

The 2010 Census questionnaire is 10 questions, will take 10 minutes to fill out and affect the next 10 years of our lives. While the Census is mandated by the Constitution on the national level, a successful census happens at the local level.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN YOUR CENSUS QUESTIONNAIRE WHEN RECEIVED NEXT MARCH. For additional information, visit www.census.gov/2010census



VP-2 MEMBERSHIP BY BOB CHAMPOUX

In the last quarter, follow-up emails, phone calls and application forms were sent out to five former squadron mates who expressed interest in joining the association. Four of the individuals found us from the website and one was generated by a referral from Luther Massey. All readers are encouraged to send names to Bob Champoux for follow-up.

Dear Whidbey Patrol Squadron Memorial Foundation,

Thank you very much for selecting me as the *Patrol Squadron Two Association Sponsor of the Whidbey Patrol Squadron Memorial Designated Scholar* for the 2009-2010 school year. My name is Alexander Gerges and I am a junior at Pittsburg State University. I am a history and international studies major. I am also a member of the Pittsburg State University ROTC program and I plan to contract with the U.S. Army in the Fall 2009 semester. I spent this past summer studying abroad in Kazakhstan and South Korea. In Kazakhstan I did an internship teaching English at the Semey State Pedagogical Institute.

To pay for these opportunities, as well as a Spring 2009 visit in Vladimir, Russia to one of Pittsburg's sister schools, I have exhausted my funds that were saved from my summer job. Because I am an ROTC cadet, next summer I must go to Fort Lewis, Washington and go through the army's Leader Development and Assessment Course and thus will not have another chance to work. Your scholarship will be extremely helpful this year for paying for my costs of attending this university. Thank you very much.

For a summer job last year I worked in the International Military Student Division at Fort Leavenworth. My job employed me as an office assistant working with military officers from many different countries. I really enjoyed this experience interacting with the international officers and it helped spark my decision to commit to an international studies major.

I want to contract with the U.S. Army because I feel that civic service is an important duty of American citizens and I believe that in times of war that the American military needs as many people as are willing. I am not sure which branch I want to go with; I'm favoring the combat arms such as Armor (tanks) or Artillery, though my ROTC instructors and family seem to believe I would do better as a Foreign Area Officer or in the Military Intelligence branch.

Thank you again for your kindness. I hope that this letter finds you well and that you will believe that I am a deserving candidate of your association.

Respectfully,

Alexander T. Gerges

This letter was written to us by Alexander T. Gerges, who was selected this summer to receive one of our MOAA scholarships.



SHIP'S STORE

*FROM
VIC GULLIVER*

A reminder for some of our newer members... We have a Ship's Store, featured on our www.patron2.com website, with a number of items for sale.

Some of our merchandise items will not be replaced when supplies run out.

We will continue to stock our ball caps, patches and lapel pins/charms. The remainder of the items will be allowed to sell out.

We're down to our last dozen coffee mugs. We still have a few shirts in various unpopular sizes. Those sizes available are shown on the website. We have two ladies golf visors left plus some Zippo lighters and desk calendars.

If there is any item that you want, order it soon before we're sold out.

OPERATION WIGWAM


Paul Czap informs us that VP-2 participated in Operation Wigwam- an Underwater Nuclear Test- 500 miles off the coast of San Diego in May of 1955. A number of VP-2 flight crews, including his own crew flying SB-12, were exposed to airborne radiation during the test. He believes that those crewmembers may not be aware of their radiation exposure or the levels of radiation they received. Paul has the official report of Operation Wigwam and can email it to anyone who wants further information (czapp@cox.net). You may also Google "Operation Wigwam" to get additional information off the Internet.

Ed Philbrick sent in the document below regarding the same Operation Wigwam nuclear test:

JOINT TASK FORCE 7 TASK GROUP 7.3 Washington 25, D.C.	FF3/7.3/10:re P15 27 July 1955
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From: Commander Task Group 7.3
To: PHILBRICK, Edward L. Jr., 901 69 32, ATAN, USN-U1
Via: Commander, Alaskan Sea Frontier
Subj: Commendatory Service During Operation WIGWAM

1. The underwater atomic test, Operation WIGWAM, in which you participated was conducted in the Pacific during May 1955.
2. The high state of readiness, application of professional skill and efficiency required of each individual in the performance of his duties was reflected in the successful accomplishment of this unique and unprecedented operation.
3. The Task Group Commander takes pleasure in commending you in recognition of your services that contributed to the fulfillment of the mission of the task group, and thus ultimately to the successful completion of the operation.


JOHN SYLVESTER

TREASURER'S NOTES

BY DOUG DONOHUE



Thanks to all those who continue to support the association through their dues and other donations. Association cash expenses are very low, and in-kind donations pick up what would otherwise be significant drains on the treasury.

January 2010 marks the beginning of another biennium when we can reliably (so far) expect a couple of things to occur: The call for dues donations is sent to all of those who still have \$20 to spare in their pockets; and Reunion Planning packets will soon appear in the post. I'm looking forward to seeing Pensacola again.

Please remember to keep your contact information current.

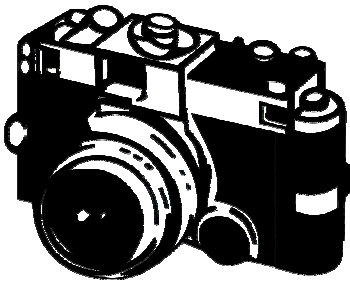
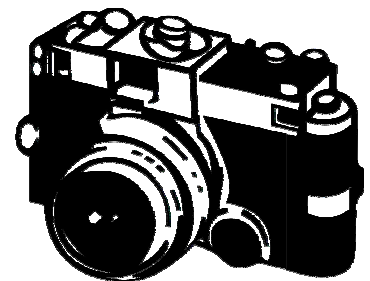


Photo Fun

Dennis O'Leary provided this picture of Joe Ryan, Dennis, and the late Guy Sexton at one of their annual get-togethers at the Mid Atlantic Air Museum in Reading, PA. They used to give paid tours to the public of the P2V-7 on display there.



Dennis also sent in this shot of John Rushin and himself alongside an Air Force P2V at the Georgia Air Force Museum. Dennis and John have mellowed over the years like fine wine.





A NATURAL MISTAKE

BY KEN DEBOER

Some of you may remember or have heard about this little episode that happened in 1965 when VP-2 was deployed to Iwakuni, Japan just when Vietnam was heating up. It was during a time when they were fixing the runway, so the field was closed from 1800 to 0500 every night. Early one morning, our crew was tasked to run down to Okinawa to pick up a Captain who needed to get to a high level command conference.

After being pointedly warned by the Ops officer to be back well before 1800, we took off in beautiful weather, so we made good time down to Naha, Okinawa. We had a wonderful time for a couple of hours down at the gorgeous beach right on the air station. After lunch we went back to the flight line to pick up our Captain for the return flight. However, no Captain. We called everywhere we could think of and waited and waited, but no sign of a Captain. By this time we were anxiously looking at our watches, desperately hoping that he might turn up at the last minute. However, the flight line was nearly deserted except for two Marine captains on R & R. They wanted to hitch a ride to Japan. We said OK, so they pitched their gear into our airplane and, with one last look around, we reluctantly took off.

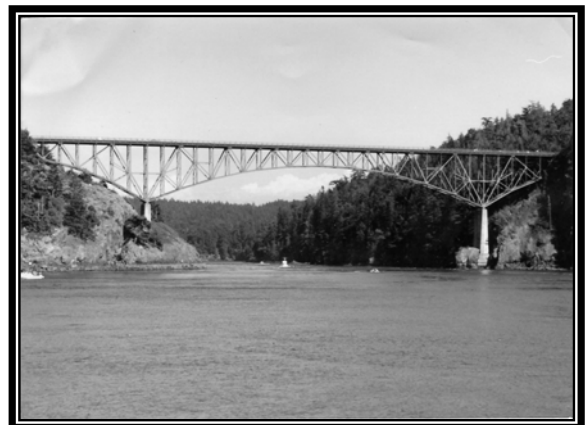
After we got airborne, we checked our navigation and hoped for favorable winds to get us back to Iwakuni before 1800. We were taking no chances and kept the engines near redline, urging every knot out of our old P2. Luckily the weather was still favorable, but the wind was not. About an hour out of Iwakuni, we knew, with a sinking stomach, that we were not going to make it before they started on the runway at 1800. We also had quite limited prospects for an alternate landing site, as our fuel supply and other lack of preparations, made that quite unattractive.

Thinking quickly, Doug Millar (our intrepid pilot) radioed Iwakuni tower to request they delay runway repair for 15 minutes or so as we were returning with two captains. There was a long pause and finally the controller said "wait one, we need to OK that with the Commander." After what seemed like an eternity, they came back and said, to our joy, that we were cleared to land.

As we began our approach, the controller told us that after we landed we should taxi right up to the tower as the brass wanted to greet the Captain. At this information we became sick again, but had no choice but to face the music. After we landed and taxied up to the tower we could see that not only was the brass lined up but they had also rolled out a red carpet. You can imagine our terror as we rolled to a stop and out popped our two marine captains followed by two white faced pilots and a cowed crew.



Do you recognize this photo supplied by Dave and Judy Scharf (57-61)? That is Pioneer Way in Oak Harbor in the mid '50's.



You must recognize this photo from Dave and Judy Scharf (57-61)!

P2V RESTORATION AT NASA FEDERAL FIELD (FORMERLY NAS MOFFETT FIELD)

BY TRACY CRAWFORD- '65-'67

Several months ago I was driving past the old Naval Air Station Moffett Field. I could see from the freeway the familiar outline of a P2 that was on static display in front of the Operations Building. What really caught my eye was that the P2 had our squadron insignia "YC" on the tail. I had to make a quick one-eighty and return to the base to check her out.

As I approached the Ops Building I immediately recognized the aircraft was a P2V-5F model. I had my first flights in a "5" in San Diego with VP31 back in '65. Standing next to her brought back some fond memories of aircrew training at North Island. Much to my dismay, the old girl was in pretty bad shape. Several years' accumulation of dirt and bird droppings covered the props, wing tips and just about every place imaginable. Bird nests were in the wheel wells, wasp nests and spider webs were in the vents and engine nacelles not to mention the corroded paint from nose to tail. The tires still held air so somebody had been keeping an eye on her.

Moffett has a wonderful Naval Aviation Museum open to the public. (Visit www.moffetfieldmuseum.org) So, as long as I was there, I decided to pay a visit and get more information about the P2. Herb Parson, the curator there, told me about a group of ex-Navy guys who were working with NASA to move the P2 to Hangar 3 on the other side of the field to restore her. After several telephone calls, I was able to meet with some of the guys spearheading the restoration effort and offer my help where needed.

To make a long story short, the P2 has been moved to Hangar 3. We have our own shops to work from and lots of help with support equipment and personnel from the California ANG 129th Air Rescue Wing which deploys a detachment of C130s there.

The P2 is being washed and cleaned from nose to tail. She will be stripped of paint, corrosion problems addressed, and finally, a new paint job. Restoration work is planned for the interior too. This is definitely not an overnight or short term project. It will take many months to complete but worth every penny spent and busted knuckle it takes to finish the job. Donations to help defray the costs are also most welcome.

If any shipmate has a line on P2 parts, you can contact me or the Moffett Air Museum. We are searching all over the country for replacement parts. We have contacted several private aircraft companies that modify P2's for aerial fire-fighting and they have been most helpful. They have given us parts no longer needed to keep their aircraft flying. I suspect there is a bit of "cannibalism"



going on but, of course, we've never heard of such a thing have we?

Special thanks to Navy Veterans Tom Johannsen (Plane Captain), Lou Somontes, Bob Lombardi, Roger Blank and Mike Vickers for all their hard work on the project. A special salute to California ANG 129th Air Rescue Wing personnel: Master Sgt. Craig Crall, Master Sgt. Curt Jergens, Master Sgt. Todd Doyle and many others who have helped us from time to time. Of course none of this could have happened without the approval and cooperation of NASA. Personnel who have been instrumental in helping us: Roy Williams, NASA Administrator, Steve Patterson, NASA daily SPOC, and Randy Hobbs, NASA Flight Line Supervisor.



VP-2 Association Officers *and Appointments*



President	Floyd D. Palmer 213 Woodhill Court, Mankato, MN 56001 800-903-9958, 507-388-2059 (Fax) FloydP@PalmerBusService.com
1st Vice President	Dino Vlahakis 54 Westview Lane, Lebanon, NH 03766 603-448-3729 cgv601@comcast.net
2nd Vice President	Al Hall 414 Manor Village Circle, Midland, TX 79707 432-669-1245 AL414@suddenlink.net
Secretary/Treasurer	Doug Donohue PO Box 2894, Gardnerville, NV 89410 775-265-3861 nvsoar@charter.net
Director/Ship's Store	Vic Gulliver 1900 Franklin Drive, Glenview, IL 60026 847-296-6907 vicgulliver@comcast.net
Director	Milt DeBuhr 171 Humbug Road, Yreka, CA 96097 530-841-0805 miltdebuhr@snowcrest.net
Director	Jim Welch 8601 Terrell Drive, North Richland Hills, TX 76180 817-788-2204 japwelch@sbcglobal.net
Association Chaplain	Doug Millar, 12515 Maple Street, Leavenworth, WA 98826 509-548-3154 dna@dnamillar.com
Association Historian	Skip Forseth, 2319 Brewster, Redwood City, CA 94062 650-365-2806 p2flyer@pacbell.net
Association Parliamentarian	Bob Bender, 197 Mill Pond Drive, Middleville, MI 49333 616-450-6790 bobender@yahoo.com
Membership Chairman	Bob Champoux, 286 145 th Place SE, Bellevue, WA 98007 425-502-9883 rchampoux@comcast.net
2010 Reunion Committee	Harry Herman, 3365 Marcus Pointe Blvd., Pensacola, FL 32505-1898 850-857-4353 harry_herman@bellsouth.net
	James Summitt, P.O. Box 250, Niceville, FL 32588 850-729-6945 summittk@cox.net
Website Director www.patron2.com	Douglas Donohue PO Box 2894, Gardnerville, NV 89410-2894 775-265-3861 nvsoar@charter.net



Looking to Share Information
in the
VP 2 Neptune Newsletter?

If any of our members
would like to contribute
news, thoughts,
experiences, etc.,
please email:
Floyd D. Palmer at:

Floyddp@palmerbusservice.com

Patrol Squadron Two Association
PO Box 2894
Gardnerville, NV 89410



December 2009 VP-2 Newsletter