

June 2021

Special Points of Interest

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Greg Kelley

1st VP –
Dino Vlahakis

2nd VP –
Bill Klett

Director –
Vic Gulliver

Director –
Nick Niccum

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Floyd Palmer

**Secretary/
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Bob Behrend



VP-2 THE NEPTUNE

A Message from the President

I hope the winter and spring has found you all well and doing okay. It has certainly been a different year. Who would have guessed a year ago that we would still be wearing masks at this time. While there have been more than 575,000 deaths from Covid 19, the only member I am aware of that we have lost is Newt "Steve" Biggers. Fortunately, there are now three vaccines available and I hope all of our members and families, who wish to, have been vaccinated. I was vaccinated at the VA in Houston in February and Sue got hers through a local hospital, also in February. If you have not received the vaccine, I hope you will schedule it soon.

With the summer coming on it is a great time for us, especially in the northern part of the country, to get out and enjoy what we may have been missing in 2020. Time to get our lives back.

While it was unfortunate that we had to cancel our reunion last year and our previous planner decided not to work with us due to our size, we think we have a successful option and plan. Please check out pages 4 and 5 for more information of what is being planned. Don't forget to look at www.beachbumtrolley.com. You will find details on tours and catered meals. There are also photos of the hotel.

While we usually honor our members who have passed in the In Memoriam section, I want also to honor CAPT Bob Wolfe here. He was my boss in VP 2 and played a big role in the success of multiple Oak Harbor reunions. Bob passed in January.

Over the past few newsletters, we have had interesting articles by our members on their VP 2 experiences. Vic Gulliver has provided another one on what it was like to be new in Oak Harbor. We have another article already for December but we want more going forward. Please send us your stories. We want to share them.

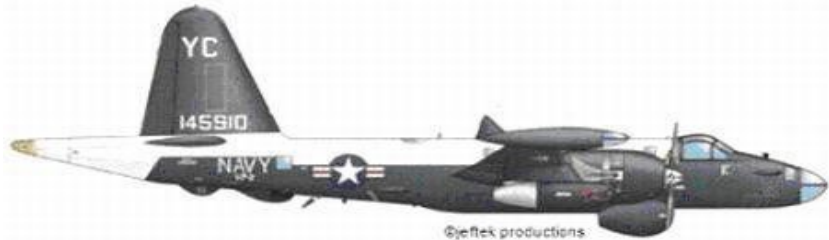
Sue and I wish you all a wonderful summer. Enjoy the time out of doors.

Greg Kelley, President, Patrol Squadron Two Association.

A Good Beginning



Thinking back by Vic Gulliver



After finishing flight school in 1959, I was sent to NAS Memphis to attend the Aviation Electronics Officer school, which lasted for five months and which didn't teach me a whole lot about electronics. As I was nearing completion of that school, I got orders to VP-2 at NAS Whidbey Island. I had to ask around to find out where Whidbey Island was. Then we had to look up Oak Harbor in an encyclopedia at the library. Among other things, the encyclopedia told us that Oak Harbor was a town with a population of 362 people. We probably should have checked to see how old that book was, but we went there expecting small-town living.

We drove into Oak Harbor in late September 1959 and were surprised to see that the town had two motels, not just one as we had been told. My wife, Pat, and our two very young sons (one aged 19 months and one just 2 months old) were tired from the long drive. We found a café somewhere along the main drag, and soon learned that the town didn't have what we would call a restaurant... one with table cloths and menus. The fast food industry hadn't yet come to Oak Harbor either. We did notice that, of all things, Oak Harbor had a drive-in movie theater. We went there once after we got settled in, but a cow kept walking in front of the projector.

I don't know what the population of Oak Harbor was in those days, but the military certainly outnumbered the civilian townspeople. I recall that the town had one small department store, one drug store and one furniture store. Our department store was among several small stores that were fronted with a wooden sidewalk. There must have been a grocery store and some gas stations, but I don't remember where they would have been. We shopped almost exclusively at the Navy Exchange and commissary. If we couldn't find it in the PX, that meant either a long drive to a distant town or ordering from the Sears, Roebuck catalog, which we did often. We didn't have an Officer's Club. There was one floor of the BOQ that was treated as an O'Club, but it really wasn't one.

One of our best decisions in our first days in Oak Harbor was to move into Navy quarters. There was (and still is) a development of what was called Title VIII Housing just outside the main gate at Ault Field. Some people complained that this housing was built during World War II and still remained in use. But, in the long view of things, it was only about 15 years old when we moved in. It served us well. But beyond that, it put us in the midst of some very nice people who welcomed us into the neighborhood. Some of those neighbors were in VP-2 and remained good friends long after we left the squadron. Among our Title VIII neighbors were the Donohues, the Haecklers, the Sengs, the Branscombs, the Ledbetters, the Kletts, the Komms, the Howes and the Pughs.

Over the years, we've lived in big cities and small towns. Small town living is unique in several ways. With no restaurants to speak of, and very little in the way of entertainment, it was natural that we would entertain in our homes. Deep and lasting friendships developed that we didn't find in big-city living. More importantly, with husbands deployed for months on end to places without even phone service back to our homes, the wives depended on one another for support. It was more than just "got a cup of sugar?" support. Good and supportive neighbors provided a safety net and moral support that was invaluable when needed the most.

Just as we were welcomed into the neighborhood, we were also warmly introduced into VP-2. The squadron wives welcomed Pat aboard, and I was completely comfortable taking my place at a desk job and in a flight crew. CDR Johnson was the CO when I checked in. After nearly four years in the squadron, I also witnessed the leadership styles of four other COs: CDR Foster, CDR Pierre, CDR Lanaghan and CDR Kistler. I had never been in the cockpit of a P2V when Max Branscomb took me on my first familiarization flight.

I was originally the product of the college NROTC program. That curriculum taught me a lot about the ship-Navy, but next to nothing about naval aviation or life in a Navy squadron. After three years in the squadron, I had completed my obligated service and could have left the Navy for civilian life. Many of our fellow officers had done just that. In my view, I had a choice of either staying in the Navy to fly or getting out of the Navy to fly. I only had a small-town perspective of what the Navy was all about, but Pat and I both liked what we saw. I have to add that the kind of flying we were doing and the long, arduous deployments we had were a factor in the close bond formed among those in the squadron. Pat and I both agreed that I should go Regular Navy and continue in the squadron. That was the first step to making the Navy a career.

I learned a lot from watching my first five CO's on the job. And working under a number of second-tour LCDRs in the squadron was a good influence on my later years in the Navy. Of course, I also benefitted from the quality and abilities of all the people I served with in VP-2 from flight crews to maintenance shops to ops and admin offices. Throughout my naval career and a short corporate career after that, Pat and I would always remember the faithful and selfless squadron men and wives of VP-2. I can't imagine what other young Navy pilots experienced in their first squadrons, but having a tour in VP-2 at the beginning of my career certainly set me on the right path.



News from a previous scholarship recipient.

Christian Slater was awarded a VP 2 Scholarship at College of the Ozarks last year. He was recently commissioned as a 2nd LT in the Missouri National Guard. Congratulations.



VP 2 Reunion 2022



Unfortunately, we had to cancel the 2020 reunion due to the Covid pandemic. In the December newsletter, we advised you that we were proceeding with plans for an Oak Harbor reunion. But Armed Forces Reunions advised they no longer planned events for organizations as small as ours and there were no other suitable planners. With no members able to take on this role, we looked for other options and discovered that Beach Bum Trolleys in Pensacola offered planning services. Those who attended the Pensacola Reunion in 2010 may remember Beach Bum as the tour operator who took us to the Blue Angels practice and the Naval Air Museum. We sent an email to ask who would plan to attend a Pensacola reunion and received responses that at least 74 people would plan to attend. So, we have a reunion, October 31 to November 4, 2022.

Where will we stay?



We have selected Ashton Inn and Suites as the best hotel to accommodate our group. They are located at 910 North Navy Blvd. They especially host military reunions and understand our needs and wants. For reunions, they offer a hot breakfast in the banquet room. This is included in the room rate. The banquet room is also included in the room rate. They do not have a restaurant but this is where we will have catered meals. There are other restaurants in the area. The hotel has an indoor and outdoor pool and is convenient to Corry Station for retired members.



They do have a bar, essential to most of our group. Entertainment included most evenings. This will also be open for our catered meals that are described later. This is a great opportunity to reconnect with shipmates. There is a lounge in front of the bar.



A plus is the Ready Room. It is located in the Phase II Building where we will have 30 rooms. Under Florida law, Hotels with a bar may not allow outside alcohol. But the Ready room is in a separate building so we will be ready for you.



You may book the hotel room immediately. You will not be charged until you arrive and occupy the room. The room is \$95 plus tax per night and may be reserved by calling 850-455-4561 at any time. Tell them you are with the VP2 reunion 2022 group. The rate is good for three days before and after.

What will you be able to do?



Beach Bum Trolleys has arranged a number of events for us. Included with your registration is a Welcome event at the hotel with a Fish Fry (includes chicken for those who do not eat fish.). The registration also includes the banquet on November 3 and, of course, the Ready Room.



Beach Bum has set up several optional events for us. The first will be on November 1. Those who sign up for this will take a trolley to the Navel Air Station to watch the Blue Angels practice and then continue through the flight line to the Naval Air Museum where we can tour the displays and have lunch at the Cubi Bar and Café.

On November 2, you will have a choice of optional tours. One is the Dolphin Tour. This tour will take you around Pensacola Bay and may allow you to see the Blue Angels practice form over the water. This tour includes lunch.



The second tour is of historic downtown Pensacola. This will take you by many historic sites, including a stop at Veteran's Memorial Park, and ends with lunch at McGuire's Irish Pub

Another optional activity will be a BBQ dinner at the hotel. This will be a wonderful southern dinner with a cash bar.

Thursday will be our business meeting and yet another opportunity to meet with our ship mates.

Details on this part of the reunion, along with registration details and costs for all activities will be available in the December newsletter when you can all sign up. The registration fee should be at or less than that at the last few reunions. To get more information on the tours, meals and the hotel, please visit WWW.beachbumtrolley.com.

Your Executive Board believes this will be a wonderful opportunity for us all to get together again and celebrate the brotherhood. Please plan to join us.

From our MOAA and Hillsdale Scholarship Students



Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Camille Petersen and this letter is to express my thanks to you. The MOAA Scholarship Fund notified me in late November that I have received a Whidbey Patrol Squadron Memorial Designated Scholar Grant for \$500. This scholarship is very helpful to me as I continue my fourth year of studies at the University of Virginia. I am majoring in Public Policy at UVA's Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, and minoring in Spanish. I will graduate in May 2021.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,


Camille Petersen

Mr. Kelley,

My name is Joel Austin, I am a senior economics major at Hillsdale College. I am writing to thank you for your contribution to the Patrol Squadron Two Assoc. Scholarship. Without your generous contribution, I would not have had the opportunity to attend this fine institution and receive this great liberty focused education. I along with my wife and two sons are extremely grateful for your support. Thank you!





Treasurer's Notes

By Bob Behrend

A big thanks to all of you that have kept your dues current, or in many case paid in advance.

If you wish to check your dues status, you can reach me using the contact information below, or log into the Association website at www.patron2.com, select roster from the menu and find your name. The due date for dues payment is listed opposite your name. Dues are \$20 and cover a two year period.

There are a significant number of members who have not kept up with Association dues. As stated above, please check your dues status and start to bring your dues current.

behrendr001@hawaii.rr.com

VP-2 Association
98-1820 P Kaahumanu Street
Pearl City, HI 96782-1882

Dues checks should be made out to VP-2 Association

Please maintain current contact information with the Association. If you have moved or changed some other part of your current contact information, let me know by the email address above, or call 808-455-7670. If you are receiving your newsletter via snail mail and there are two asterisk (* *) next to your dues due date, it means we do not have your current email. If you wish to receive the newsletter via email, please notify me with an updated email.

Chaplain's Corner *by Doug Millar*

Over the past 14 months it seems to me that our country has gone from one of success and optimism to one of fear and anxiety. There are certainly many reasons for this shift, with Covid-19 being near the top. We have also had the rioting and chaos caused by the killing of George Floyd; the election of a new administration which seems bent on moving us at lightning speed to an extreme "left" agenda; the permanent shuttering of thousands of businesses and its effects on all of us; the exposure of a public education system that appears to promote the distrust of America and the exclusion of God and His morality instead of the opposite. These are just some of the things that tend to drag us down. Graham Davey, a supposed expert in anxiety, believes that negative news broadcasts are "likely to make you sadder and more anxious." Does what you read or see in the news everyday upset or depress you? Maybe we would be better off listening to less news.

Are you struggling with fear and anxiety? The apostle Paul writes in his letter to the Philippians, chapter 4, verse 6, **"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."** This statement was written specifically to those who have put their trust in Christ, not to those who remain as unbelievers. Have you put your trust in Christ and invited him into your life to be your Lord and Savior? If not, my

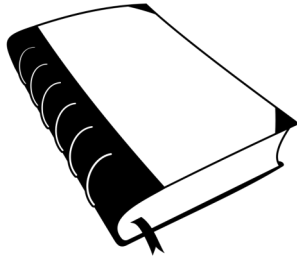
prayer is that you will do so today. He freely offers us forgiveness of our sins; a helper (the Holy Spirit) who will come into each of our lives and help us live a life that is more pleasing to God; a future home with him in his Heaven forever; and a promise never to leave us or forsake us!

For those of us who have trusted him, He says not to be afraid, but to **"Be anxious for nothing..."** He offers us his peace. **"Peace I leave with you... not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful."** John 14:27 May we also remember that when we bring our prayers and requests to him, we do so with thanksgiving – thanksgiving for what he has done and is doing in our lives!

Hopefully, by the time of the next newsletter, we can get rid of these masks and put the Covid experience behind us. As for the rest of our concerns – let's take them to the Lord in prayer!

"O Lord Almighty, happy are those who trust in you." Psalm 84:12

Have a wonderful summer



In Memoriam

We have learned of the loss of the following Association members and non-members since our last newsletter. :

William Barker (Apr 20)

Walter Stock (Dec 20)

Capt. Bob Wolfe (Jan 21)

Newt "Steve" Biggers (Jan 21)

Capt. Harry A. Herman, Jr. (Mar 21)

Stanley Donelson, (Jun 18)

Melvin Nelson, (Jul 17)

Robert Louis Miller (Dec 20)

If you know of the passing of any of our former VP-2 personnel please advise by email Bob Behrend at behrendr001@hawaii.rr.com or Doug Donohue at nvsoar@charter.net



Just for laughs



Today is the oldest you've ever been, yet the youngest you'll ever be, so enjoy this day while it lasts.

I really don't mind getting older, but my body is taking it badly.

As I watch this new generation try to rewrite our history, one thing I am sure of....it will be misspelled and have no punctuation.

It turns out that being an adult is mostly just googling how to do stuff.

The five pounds you wanted to lose is now 15 and you have a better chance of losing your keys — than the 15 pounds.

You miss the days when everything worked with just an "ON" and "OFF" switch.

Do you ever get up in the morning, look in the mirror and think "That can't be accurate"?

Do twins ever realize that at least one of them is unplanned?

Your spouse is counting on you to remember things you don't remember.

What used to be freckles are now liver spots.

I picked up a hitchhiker. He asked if I wasn't afraid he might be a serial killer? I told him the odds of two serial killers being in the same car was extremely unlikely.

VP-2 Association Officers & Appointments

President	Greg Kelley 274 Plantation Rd. Houston, TX 77024 713-419-5799 gregnsue@sbcglobal.net
1st Vice President	Dino Vlahakis 54 Westview Lane, Lebanon, NH 03766 603-448-3729 cg601@comcast.net
2nd Vice President	Bill Klett 9905 Hidden Trail Ct. Fairfax Station, VA 22039 703-569-2715 flyboynmate1960@verizon.net
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Director	Vic Gulliver 1900 Franklin Drive, Glenview, IL 60026 847-296-6907 vicgulliver@comcast.net
Director	Nick Niccum 18821 185th Ave. NE, Woodinville, WA 98077 425-788-9834 nicknaccum@hotmail.com
Director	Floyd D. Palmer 213 Woodhill Ct., Mankato, MN 56001 507-327-6761 floydp@palmerbusservice.com
Website Coordinator	Doug Donohue PO Box 2894, Gardnerville, NV 89410 775-781-3737 nvsoar@charter.net
Association Chaplain	Doug Millar 12515 Maple Street, Leavenworth, WA 98826 509-888-1910 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

**LOOKING TO SHARE
INFORMATION
IN THE
VP 2 NEPTUNE
NEWSLETTER?**



If any of our members would
like to contribute news,
thoughts,
experiences, etc.,

Email:
Greg Kelley
gregnsue@sbcglobal.net



Stay Safe

Patrol Squadron Two Association
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We're on the Web

<http://www.patron2.com/>