

# CREW from MARS

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[www.ussmars.com](http://www.ussmars.com)

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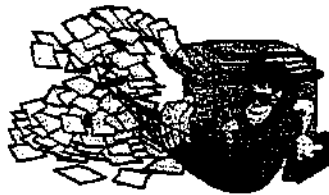
Association of former crew  
members & friends of U.S.S. Mars AFS-1

Newsletter No. 16

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## from the editor's desk

### **M**y Fellow Shipmates



Another MARS REUNION is fast approaching as the Seattle reunion is just four months away. I have mailed out over 120 registration letters to those who have indicated they were interested in attending this reunion. If you are planning to attend and need a registration form, contact me. This reunion could be our largest one to date, so make plans to join the Mars crew in Seattle in September. The reunion schedule is on page 13.

This newsletter contains another 18 pages & it has been a struggle for me to get it ready, as my right hand man, David Reed has not been able to help with this newsletter. I have had these pages spread out on our dining room table for the last two weeks & hopefully everything is in order. We have some nice comments from the crew & news on a home for the ship's bell. The best news is that we have made contact with 93 more former crew members of Mars. Gary Travis (1963-66) has been hard at work making phone calls & we have located 23 more plank owners. Welcome back aboard.

Our Mars website has had some rewarding benefits lately. One example is a letter I received from the wife of a deceased shipmate. A nice story that is on page 11. A very special thank you to Joe Matejcek (1986-91), for providing this free site for us. Joe is still in need of more pictures that can be put on our website.

Contact Joe at [swabby@mindspring.com](mailto:swabby@mindspring.com).

Mars website:.....[www.ussmars.com](http://www.ussmars.com)

Joe has also provided me with space on the site for UPDATES. Visit the site often as I will keep new information posted on this page. As the Seattle Reunion nears, I plan to list those who will be attending the reunion on this page.

I still need to locate a copy of the Mars 1984 cruise book. This is the only book needed to complete the cruise book list.....HELP! I will have 14 books in three ring binders on the Mars history, plus our reunion picture book at the Seattle Reunion.

Question: Does anyone know the weight of the ship's bell on the Mars?

Tentative dates have been selected for the Jacksonville Reunion. October 12-16, 2005. Makes plans for a vacation & a Mars Reunion in Florida, We will be using the Embassy Suites Hotel with rates that should be comparable to Seattle. Captain Paul Anderson (1968-69) & Ray Gillman (1968-70) are working on plans for this reunion.

The USS Sylvania (AKA-44) & (AFS-2) will be holding a reunion in Annapolis, Maryland on September 10-12, 2004. Anyone living in the area from Mars is invited to attend. Contact John Pierce, 11628 V.F.W. Road, Eaton Rapids, MI 48827.

Joe Matejcek, David Reed & myself are looking for back-ups. As of now, there is no one in line to take over these jobs if something were to happen to us. We need volunteers to keep our MARS REUNION organization going for the foreseeable future. Contact us for more information.

The next newsletter will be in October 2004.

Hope to see many of you in Seattle in September.

E.R.J.



## COMMENTS & MEMORIES

First, let me tell you how much I enjoyed receiving the latest Mars Newsletter. It was good to read comments by former shipmates & "old friends", whose names brought back so many good memories.

In October, 1963, I was a 22-year old YN3, who volunteered from my duty station @ EPDOPAC, NAS, North Island, SDiego to serve aboard the soon-to-be-commissioned, USS MARS (AFS-1). I was an eager Sailor, hoping to discover what the Blue Water Navy was all about.

At NAVSTA SDiego, during Pre-Commissioning Training, I was designated the "Legal Yeoman", by the Senior Yeoman, Stan Terry, YN1. I recall the legal classes, loads of paperwork, and the typing of "sea trials" engineering "specs" changes, that YN2 Clarence Cline & I worked on so diligently....cruisin' off SDiego. During the "trials", even before the MARS Bridge was completed, the "sandcrabs" were having difficulties with the PA System, among other systems that needed correcting. (After 2 days at sea....."they finally located us....soakin' in the rays on the HeloDeck). The party was over, & the hard work was ahead.

It was with great sadness that we lost President Kennedy, during Pre-commissioning....it had only been a few months prior to Nov. 22, 1963, that I watched him pass by in his motorcade in downtown Chula Vista...on the way to a speaking engagement at San Diego State. (I still have an 8mm movie tape of that 7 seconds).

There were the months of "outfitting" at the Naval facilities along the West Coast, particularly Long Beach & San Francisco.....Our Plankowners endured a lot of inconveniences at the time....."floating barracks", (including Fire Barges in the Head), climbing over wires & metal, keeping out of the way of civilian workmen....but we all pulled together, every department, & we became the proud residents of a OUTSTANDING Service Force Ship.

There were great times...times of R&R....in Long Beach (does anyone remember Hollywood On The Pike?????)....in SFRAN....in Acapulco, Mexico (I sometimes wonder if that town ever recovered from the MARS visit). We were the only US Ship in the Harbor, at the time.

Over the years, I have often bragged on the MARS & its Crew, recalling the times of continuous UNREP in the Tonkin Gulf, & along its Coast.....trips to SUBIC...the hard work...& yes, the hard play...but the Mars Plankowners were always ready for both. The USS Frank Knox was a fine example of the hard work. The "San Miguel" Baseball Game at the SUBIC Recreation Island was the example of hard play.

My time on the USS MARS was a great experience.....I learned many things, valuable things....that I took back with me to civilian life....I am now almost 63, retired from the State of Virginia & married to a great lady who hails from Georgia. We are now in the process of moving to Arizona in the Fall 2004....& hopefully will attend some MARS Reunions in the future.

A Proud Martian Plankowner Forever!

Lawrence "Larry" Jones (1963-1966)

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Thanks for keeping the MARS alive. I've tried to find the guys that live here in Pennsylvania, with no luck.

The USS San Diego (AFS-6) is sitting in Philly, right near the airport, so I see it often. Enclosed is \$100 for two Mars ball caps, put the rest in the Mars newsletter fund.

Plankowner Jon Cheris MM2 (1963-66)

COMMENTS & MEMORIES (continued)

Received the latest copy of the newsletter – yet another fantastic job my Friend. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate all of the work you go to in producing this document & the annual reunions you manage to provide. You're the epitome of what a Boatswains Mate is supposed to be – a man with the capabilities to take charge & accomplish any job assigned or that you feel to be necessary.

I was amazed to find that Captain Nordeen is listed in your latest issue. He was the XO of the USS Midway from 87 to 88, just before taking charge of Mars apparently. I was CMC of Carrier Air Wing Five on board Midway at the time & we initially clashed when Nordeen reported aboard as XO. Midway was in drydock getting blisters attached to her hull below the waterline. These were an ingeniously designed retrofit that was to make the ship ride higher in the water, as Midway had had so much weight added over the years she was sitting awfully low & we were taking water over the bow in heavy seas. As it turned out, the blisters only hastened Midway's retirement, as the blisters made us bob like a cork in any kind of seas. Pilots used to shit their pants as they approached the postage stamp sized deck for a landing, with the deck dancing around, up, down, right, left, & shimmying beneath them.

Nordeen was from the East Coast Navy & he felt he had a mandate to square away all of us WestPac Sailors & bring us into line with the "Real Navy". He ruled with a heavy hand, but eventually he begrudgingly took a liking to me, as I was able to support my requests for the Air Wing with hard & irrefutable facts, where other Chiefs & department heads tended to rely on B.S., guesstimates, & exaggerations when making their cases.

About two years ago, as I was transiting the food court area here on the base at Sasebo, a civilian walked up to me & asked, "Is that you Master Chief?". I turned & didn't recognize him at first, but it was Captain Nordeen, now a high priced consultant with the Navy, here to work with the Ship Repair Facility for a week or so. We sat & laughed over our initial impressions of each other, & the mutual respect we ended up sharing.

Now, while all of that is mildly coincidental – the actual thing that amazed me was his address, as listed in your newsletter. Dumfries, Virginia is a flyspeck on a map of the state of Virginia, but my older daughter & her family live there as well. Rose & I have visited our grandkids there. I have sent Captain Nordeen a letter, & I am attaching a copy of it to this email, not that I feel you really give a s—t about all of this, but I did want you to know that there are an awful lot of ancillary benefits being derived from what you are doing in knitting our Mars family together the way you are.

Jerry Havens (1965-67)

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Just wanted to say thanks for all your efforts & contribute towards expenses. I enjoy the newsletter & hopefully will be in Seattle for this year's reunion.

Ron Manza (1965-67)

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Enclosed is a check to help with the newsletter costs. You are doing a great job.

I wish I could go to Seattle in September, but those are the exact dates of my USS Sphinx reunion which I'm pretty involved in. Coincidentally, it is in Branson. I drove last year, but the year prior, I flew into Springfield & rented a car. I had another reunion in Seattle in 2003, USS Woodpecker – the ship they ordered me to from the Mars. Great town for a reunion. We went to a Mariners baseball game & had lunch at the Space Needle.

Planning to attend the Jacksonville Reunion in 2005.

Bill Petrie (1968-69)

COMMENTS & MEMORIES (continued)

First of all I apologize for the long delay in getting back to you. When you called me last summer I had just gotten home from rehab from the stroke & I was still overwhelmed. I'm happy to say I'm now getting around with just a cane. I've relegated the cursed walker to the garage for some future garage sale. I felt like some ancient geezer from a retirement home with it.

I got a call last week from an ex Mars sailor by the name of Daniel Jones. Turns out he lives here on Whidbey Island, about 2 miles from me. He's coming by for coffee tomorrow afternoon. I'm looking forward to the visit.

Some personal info, not that anyone is that interested. Wife's name is Pam. Celebrated 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary 1 January 2004. We have 4 children, 6 grand kids, another due in early March & 1 great grandson.

I retired from Boeing Co. July 2000. I also put in 24 years in the Naval Reserve, retiring as Captain.

I look forward to meeting you & other shipmates here in Seattle in September. Thank you again for contacting me. It meant a lot. I'm still carrying my Plank Owners certificate signed by Captain Medley. It's a little worn after 40 years.

Phil Weisenburger (1963-65)

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Wanted to write & give you my new address. We are still in Grants Pass, OR, just location change.

Also in regards to the reunion in Seattle, is the USS Sylvania included in the reunion? I'm a plank-owner of the Mars ; 25 October 1963 to 31 August 1964, then transferred to NAS Lemoore, CA. I'm also an ex crew member of the Sylvania. I was aboard her from 24 October 1969 to 31 May 1971. Wasn't on either ship very long, but have bragging rights to both ships.

I was a "CS" & most of the one's I remember most on the Mars are not around.

Will see you in Seattle in September.

Carl Trotter (1963-64)

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Enjoyed receiving the latest MARS newsletter. You are doing a great job with it & the shipmate roster. We do appreciate it.

"MARS TV Star. While doing my usual channel surfing recently, lo & behold I saw someone I knew on a show called Mail Call. He was waxing eloquently about the Viet Nam era coastal & river marine Navy - the Swift boats, Nastys & other river craft we used over there. Seems there is a museum of these craft at NAB Coronado & this former Martian was explaining how it was in those days to the TV audience. Yep, it was none other than our own Everett Jones. I mentioned this to a San Diego retired Captain Ken McGhee, who works with me in the consulting business & also is a mover in this wonderful Viet Nam memorial at Coronado. Ken says that Everett is one of the guiding forces of this tribute to this important but seldom talked about portion of our Navy's contribution to the conflict.

So, Bravo Zulu Everett. I visited the memorial when it was just getting started a few years ago. I recommend a visit if you are in the San Diego area.

I have Seattle on the planning calendar.

Lew Mabie, Martian from 1969-1971

*Sea Stories*

We lost a UH-46A off South Viet Nam. I'll start with that. It was late November in 1967 when the USS Mars & embarked helo det were assigned to salvage the LST USS Clark County which had lost a prop on an uncharted sand bar, breached in the current, stuck a submerged mine boat opening the hull & beached near a place called Duc Pho, 70 or so miles south of Da Nang. The US Army had a tank on the beach to protect the Clark County. US Army helos were visiting the Mars to swap war souvenirs for Navy chow & flight jackets & we were plastering each other with Beat Army/Sink Navy flyers & graffiti since the Army/Navy football game was imminent. Every night the skies were lit up with tracers, flares & Spooky gunships. It wasn't a friendly area. We had a Japanese Naval Supply Corps officer on that cruise gathering information about how to resupply ships at sea. I would give him rides over the beach to see the sights while he would sit on a NATOPS manual on the center console. I think that was the main purpose for the NATOPS manual in the H-46.

Lt Doc Kinsey, LTjg Reid Benton & two crewman were in VH 65 hoisting stuff to the LST, while I was onboard Mars with the other helo. The crash alarm sounded & an announcement came over the IMC that the helo was down. Denny Newman & I raced to the flight deck & launched. We could see VH 65 in the surf heading towards the ships. We could hear snatches of radio conversation coming from them & I kept broadcasting to them to switch to the emergency antenna (the H-46 had an antenna on the belly & the emergency one on the top of the fuselage.) We decided to get the H-46 sling off the Mars to deliver to the LSD nearby which had a crane that might be able to hoist the H-46 onboard their deck. We delivered the sling while the LSD made preparations. Doc & Reid taxied near the LSD, their mikes now hot on UHF but still broken & garbled. They tried to shutdown the helo in the water, but the electric rotor brake didn't come on & a forward rotor blade smacked the water, bent & passed right thru the center of the fuselage. The helo rolled inverted & did a split S to the bottom (90 feet). Cushions & debris floating up out of the aft hatch was the last sight I had of the helo. There was a motor whaleboat near but I swooped in & picked up AE2 Jerry Wright & I think, Doc Kinsey. The boat got the others Reid & Spohn?).

Hot wash up: The engine condition actuator took one engine to idle while they were hovering over the LST. They lost power & slid over to the water beside the LST. They tried to taxi to the beach thru the surf. Water breaking over the ramp with no upper hatch installed caused Doc to reconsider & turn around in the surf & head for the ships. The pilots were almost knee deep in sea water in the cockpit & salt water & electricity don't mix. Divers from HCU-1 in Subic came over. A minesweeper located the helo on the bottom. A strong current ran along that section of the beach & the divers had a tough time. They rigged cables on the helo after 2 days submerged & said the cables cut thru the helo like cheese. They recovered some of the contents of the helo like machine guns, but couldn't raise the helo.

About sunset 3 days after the crash I inquired what a motor whaleboat was doing out in the whitecaps on a stormy sea. I was told it was looking for a couple of divers who'd spent all their air & been swept to sea. Flight Quarters! I found them bobbing along far from the wreck in a terrific rip heading out to sea. The divers could not be coaxed from their empty SCUBA tanks. Absolutely could not! I decided not to risk our crewmen in a stormy sea at sunset. We rescued the divers thru the hellhole with one arm hooked thru the horse collar & they came aboard grinning. It wasn't a pretty rescue but I was hovering VERY close to the water & it worked.

That was the end of BUNO 152495, a helo that I had picked up at the factory in January 1966. It had been a good workhorse. We surveyed a lot of missing detachment stuff on that helo crash. When you added the surveyed-stuff all up it was no wonder the helo crashed.

John C. Cook (1966-68)

Glad to get the latest Mars newsletter you sent me. Here is a little information about me getting to the Mars. In 1963 & while in Class "C" school, Newport, RI, got my orders. Reported to Naval Base Long Beach, CA. After a few weeks got orders to the Mars at National Steel Shipbuilding. Went to pre-com school, worked in the mess hall at the Naval Station San Diego. As you know, we got underway in December 1963 for Long Beach, CA.

In 1966 got orders for the USS Hector AR-7. In 1968 went to another pre-com school for the commissioning of the USS Pyro AE-24. In 1969 got orders for NTC Orlando, FL. In 1970 went to NAS Point Mugu for duty at San Nicolas Island. In 1975, made MSC (E-7) & went to NAS New Orleans, LA. Retired from the service in 1977.

Bobby D. Otts (1963-66)

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### Sasebo, Japan – 2004

My first visit to Sasebo was on board Mars in 1965. Stopping by en-route to servicing the Taiwan Patrol & our ultimate destination of Yankee Station, we topped off our stores from the dedicated warehouses Mars maintained at Sasebo. Going pier side in India Basin, the walk to the main gate was an arduous trek past shipyard buildings & long rows of old brick warehouses. Once out the gate your journey was not yet over, having to walk on & cross the river before reaching the holy grail of Sasebo's bar district. But the trip was always worth making.

How many Martians out there have memories of renting the rowboats along the river & paddling around, whites & dixie cups looking sharp against the dull brown water of the stream, with your best friend of the day smiling at you sweetly from the bow of the boat?

Well, India Basin is still serving the needs of our U. S. Seventh Fleet, home to the four ships of the Amphibious Readiness Group home ported here, along with two mine sweeps & USS Safeguard (ARS-50). USS Essex (LHD-2) is the queen of the waterfront, accompanied by USS Juneau (LPD-10), USS Ft McHenry (LSD-43), & USS Harpers Ferry (LSD-49). Our sweeps are USS Guardian (MCM-5) & USS Patriot (MCM-7).

Actual land area of the base has shrunk drastically over the years, as Sasebo damned near shrank to extinction before home porting of an ARG here in the late 1980's. The fuel farm & ordnance depot was about all that sustained the base for a number of years. In preparation for arrival of the ARG there was a housing boom, as the base acquired an erstwhile useless area of land out in Hario, about sixteen miles from Sasebo proper. That is now the site of the Hario Village Housing area, where better than 80% of our Navy housing is located.



*Mars was home ported in Sasebo from April 1973 to August 1976.*

Home to about 6500 military, civilian, & family members today, Sasebo is a vital link to the ongoing defense of the Western Pacific & Indian Ocean regions of the world. The neon gaudiness of the old bar district has evolved into a respectable, if not somewhat boring, city. The bars our Sailors today are visiting are hardly as flashy as those we once got drunk in, & there is a definite separation of establishments.

The majority of the bars up the alleyways & side streets to the left as you cross Albuquerque Bridge (spanning our wonderful river) are referred to as "Sailor Town", & welcome our American presence. The larger numbers of bars to the right make up "Sake Town", where we are either not welcome, or tolerated with some ambivalence on the part of the owners.

Today's Sailors find the bars to be karaoke establishments, or a place to play darts while they drink their expensive bottles of Sapporo, Asahi, & Kirin beer. A wonderful difference our young white-hats of today enjoy is the fact that respectable young Japanese working women & college students find them attractive, & most have little trouble making friends without having to buy the lady a drink (or many drinks) first.

We host many visiting ships, over the last two years to include USS Abraham Lincoln & USS Kitty Hawk, but Sasebo is not on the standard port call list for the larger vessels, primarily due to our limited base facilities & the scarcity of watering holes & local attractions.

All in all, Sasebo continues to be a great place to live. Not too crowded, scenic, & with a slow enough pace that you don't feel crushed & fatigued by the tempo of operations. This is in huge contrast to Yokosuka, which has grown tremendously over the past fifteen years. Following the closing of the Philippines in the early nineties, Yokosuka grew from around 18,000 people to its present size of nearly 23,000. The base is a zoo with insufficient parking & a crowded sense of urgency that wears you out just transiting from one place to another. I'll put some information on Yokosuka down on paper & pass it along to Everett for use in a future newsletter.

Jerry Havens (1965-67)

*I asked Jerry for some up-dated information on Sasebo & Yokosuka, for our newsletters. I hope all of us who are now "land locked Sailors" will enjoy these base reports in future newsletters. I would like to hear from anyone who can write about Subic Bay, Philippines & Alameda, CA, two bases no longer in use by the U.S. Navy. In fact, why not any base or ship that you would be willing to share information about. Where are some of the many ships that Mars re-supplied over her 30 year USN career?*

*Thank you Jerry, for your excellent report on Sasebo.*

Everett R. Jones

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## Status of the USS Mars (AFS-1)

As of April 2004, the Mars is still moored to a buoy in Pearl Harbor. Unofficial word is that she may be used as a target or sunk as a reef barrier sometime this year if funds become available in the defense budget.

Thanks to the effort of Fred Kierner (1985-87) who put me on the right track for obtaining the needed information on the Mars bell. When official word is received that a ship is to be made ready for disposal, they will remove the ship's Curator items (bell, plaques, etc.) for the Naval Historical Center.

The Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, DC, has a collection of over 135,000 objects representing the history of the United States Navy. These materials are collected & maintained for research, study, & display of the Navy's broad spectrum of operational, technical, & social history.

## The Ship's Bell

We have found a home for the Mars bell. I made contact with Mr. Mac Purvis in Mars, Pa, this past December. Mr. Purvis put me in contact with Sally Trugan who is Vice President of Council in Mars, PA.

MARS, PA would love to have the Mars bell for their museum. We will do the necessary paper work when the bell arrives in the Washington Navy Yard.

Arthur Sweetland (1963-65), a Mars plank owner has volunteered to be our contact person with Mars, PA. With our Mars Reunion funds, I purchased one 18 X 24 lithograph print of the ship & ordered a Mars plaque from Ray Gillman (1968-70).

Arthur has had the ship's picture put into a nice frame & will present the picture & plaque to the town council at a future date. We will have a report from Arthur for the next newsletter.

E.R.J.

Newsletter #16



## USS Mars (AFS-1)

**Commanding Officers**  
Captain Edward A. Brewton  
Captain J. A. Moriarty

**Executive Officer**

**History 1983**  
**Supply Officer**

*T*he New Year 1983 finds Mars moored to the pier in her home port, Alameda, California. Shortly after the holiday period, the crew is busy with the never ending task of loading supplies & training within the departments.

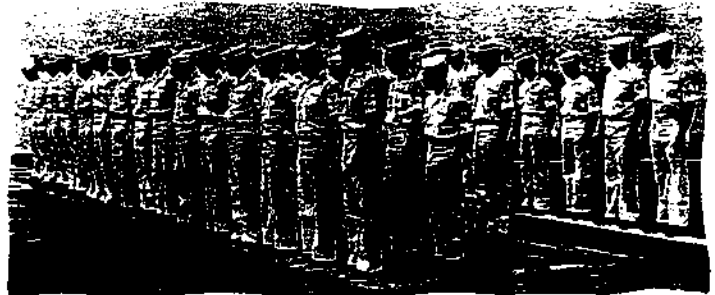
*I*n the middle of March, the ship is underway for Pearl Harbor. Mars arrived in Pearl Harbor on the 28<sup>th</sup>. After a few days of R&R, the ship is underway on April 2 to participate in FLEETEX 83-1, a major exercise conducted in the Northern Pacific. The battle group involved three carriers & some 40 U.S. Navy ships & submarines.

*O*n the 20<sup>th</sup> of April, Mars enter Yokosuka, Japan & commenced her load-out.

*D*uring this time period, Captain J. A. Moriarty reported on board & relived Captain E. A. Brewton as Commanding Officer of Mars. The ship returns to Alameda on May 26.

*I*n August, the first two weeks are spent providing services to Battle Group Echo off the Central American Coast. Returning to Alameda, the next two months are involved with training & preparations for the ships next scheduled deployment.

*O*n November 19<sup>th</sup>, Mars is underway for her Western Pacific/Indian Ocean deployment. She finished out the year in Subic Bay, Philippines, preparing for Battle Group support operations in the Indian Ocean.



**USS Mars (AFS-1)**  
**Commanding Officer**  
Captain J. A. Moriarty

**Executive Officer**  
LCDR James D. Harris

**History 1984**  
**Supply Officer**  
CDR Michael F. Cottrell

*O*n January 10, 1984, Mars gets underway for the North Arabian Sea, arriving in Diego Garcia on February 2. For the next two months Mars supported the Midway Battle Group. After stops in Oman & Thailand, she departs on her last leg of her deployment, arriving in Guam on April 29.

*D*uring the month of April, LCDR James D.

Harris reports on board & assumed the duties of Executive Officer.

*M*ars returns to her home port on May 19. After some time off, the ship makes preparations for her next scheduled overhaul. In June, Mars enters Todd Shipyards in San Francisco. and remains in the yards for the rest of the year.

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# **NEWS of the FLEET**

*for the landlocked sailor*

## Blue Angels 2004 air show schedule

### 'America's Flagship' retires

After 41 years, nine months & 11 days of Naval service, the *USS Constellation (CV-64)* was decommissioned on August 7, 2003 in San Diego.

Since its commissioning, nearly 120 thousand Sailors & Marines have served onboard the *Connie*, including former crew members from Mars. Two former Mars Commanding Officers were also Commanding Officers of the *Constellation*, Captain M. B. Nordeen (1988-89) & Captain M. A. Ostertag (1991-93), Mars last CO.

The *Connie* was towed to the inactive ship's facility in Bremerton, Washington.



### Historic visit to Vietnam

The *USS Vandegrift (FFG-48)* arrived in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam on November 19, 2003. This visit was the first U.S. Navy ship visit since 1973. The *Vandegrift* is home ported in Yokosuka, Japan.

May 15-16	Andrews Air Force Base, MD
May 22-23	Naval Air Station Kingsville, TX
May 26	U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD
May 29-30	Calverton, NY
June 5-6	Myrtle Beach, SC
June 12-13	Bermuda
June 19-20	Oklahoma City
June 26-27	Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska
July 3-4	Traverse City, MI
July 9-10	Pensacola Beach, FL
July 17-18	Rochester, NY
July 24-25	Peoria, IL
July 30/01	Helena, MT
Aug. 7-8	Seattle, WA
Aug. 21-22	Chicago, IL
Aug. 28-29	Niagara Falls, NY
Sept. 4-6	St. Louis, MO
Sept. 11-12	Shearwater, Nova Scotia
Sept. 18-19	Nantucket, Mass.
Sept. 25-26	Naval Air Station Oceana, VA
Oct. 2-3	Salinas, CA
Oct. 9-10	Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe, HI
Oct. 16-17	Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, CA
Oct. 23-24	Naval Air Station New Orleans
Oct. 30-31	Naval Air Station Jacksonville, FL
Nov. 6-7	Key West, FL
Nov. 12-13	Naval Air Station Pensacola, FL

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### USS Midway returns to San Diego

After a twelve year effort, the 59 year old *USS Midway (CV-41)* moored to Navy Pier next to Broadway Ave., in San Diego, on January 11, 2004.

Retired in 1992, the *Midway* was towed from Bremerton, WA, to San Diego & will become the San Diego Aircraft Carrier Museum, the largest museum devoted to carriers & naval aviation.

The planned opening date is sometime in June 2004.

*I drove by the Midway a few days ago. For those from Mars who also served on the USS Midway, your ship has a new coat of paint & is looking sharp.*

E.R.J.

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### Aviation Storekeeper



The AK rating is now history, as those who were AK's have converted to the SK rating. Conversions from AK to SK were automatic as of January 1, 2004.

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### Signalman "A" School graduates last class.

The end has come to one of the oldest ratings in the Navy. The last graduates of Signalman "A" School received their certificates July 15, 2004 at Great Lakes Training Center.

One of the reasons for the disestablishment of the SM rating is due to technological advancements in communication.



*A thank you to E. S. Kaiser (1973-75) for this informatio*



**We Mourn the Passing  
of these Shipmates**

**Francasio P. Cuarenta  
MMC**

**1948-1972**

My father was a retired serviceman who recently passed away. I grew up on military bases in Sasebo & Yokosuka, Japan as well as in Alameda & Treasure Island, California. As with most children, we never learn to appreciate our parents until it is too late. I never took the time to ask my dad about his many adventures at sea.

As I now try to chronicle my dad's life in the military from 1953-1972, I found your website. I was comforted to see his name (Francasio P. Cuarenta) listed as a crewmember from 1968-72. It brought tears to my eyes because this was the only ship I remember him talking about. He was so proud to be part of this crew.

A heartfelt thanks to you & the members of this organization. It brought comfort to a grieving daughter of a former USS Mars crew member.

*Roz Gil*

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**Richard M. Duckett  
MA2  
Plankowner**

**1963-1965**

Richard passed away on January 11, 2004.

**Levin C. Hackett**

**PC1**

**1964-1967**

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**Papu P. Ioramo**

**MS1**

**1992**

Wow, all this time I've been trying to look for something on the USS Mars. You have my father on your list, but you do not have his first name, & that's why I'm writing. His name IORAMO, PAPU. Its sad, because he recently passed away. Feb. 25, 2004. But I'm thankful to you for your website in remembering those sailors on the USS Mars. I still have my "I VISITED MARS" pin.

Thank you again for your site.

*Rosetta Ioramo*

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**From the  
Graphic Desk**



David Reed (1969-70) had to take some time off during this time period. He has insured me that he will be back at this desk soon. Needless to say, I need his help.  
E.R.J.

April 2004

Dear Mr. Jones & Mr. Matejcek:

You do not know me, but because of you my life & that of my son's has been dramatically improved & I wanted to let you know. I wish to thank you for your help. My husband was assigned to the USS Mars when he was in Vietnam. We met shortly after his discharge & he enjoyed relating stories of the time & the people when he was on the ship. Unfortunately, he developed diabetes approximately ten months after we were married & eventually died of the severe complications of the disease. The last two years of his life, he was on life support at our home. I took care of him & our only son as well as worked full time to try to keep everything going. It was a financially devastating time.

After my husband died, I decided I needed to obtain work that would better support myself & my son, & returned to Chapman College to complete my undergraduate & graduate work in psychology. I am now a Marriage & Family Therapist Intern. My son attended an ROP program to become a Certified Nurse Assistant & at seventeen found a full time job at a local convalescent hospital while completing high school. You can imagine that it has been very hard for both of us, working full time & going to school full time.

So, we come to how you affected our lives. While doing my graduate classes, I needed to present a paper in one of my classes relating to the Navy. One of my fellow students listened to my report & later took me aside to tell me that it was possible that I might now be eligible for widow's benefits through my husband's disease & a new law passed by the VA granting benefits to vets & dependents who contracted diabetes after being on Vietnam soil. I had applied for those benefits but was turned down because I could not prove my husband actually

set foot on Vietnam soil. Because of the letter you sent Skip Brennan of the Napa VA office confirming that my husband most probably did set foot on Vietnam soil, I was granted back widow's benefits & also received monthly payments for my college education. My son has been able to return to college with the dependent benefits for monthly full time school & is studying to be a radiologist. The approximately \$19,000.00 received has made a huge impact on both my son's college decisions & mine.

Thank you so much for your time in writing the letter...it made the difference for us. May God bless you, my son & I certainly do!

Sincerely,

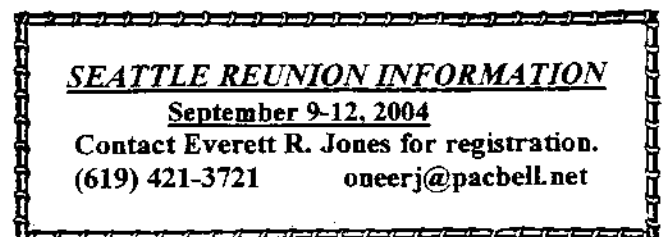
*Sharon Silliven*

*Last year, I was contacted by Skip Brennan after he found our Mars website & seen that Donald A. Silliven SN (1967-69), was listed as a Mars crew member. He wanted to know if it was possible that Donald could of set foot in Vietnam. Donald was on Mars during the USS Clark County salvage operations in November 1967. Knowing that we did furnish some working party's to the Clark County to help off load equipment & ammunition, Donald could have been on one of those details that went on the Clark County.*

*I furnished the dates & the information on the involvement of the Mars to Skip Brennan, which he forwarded to the VA.*

*A nice ending & a very good example why we need to support our Mars website. A SPECIAL THANK YOU, to Joe Matejcek for the Mars website.*

*Everett*



# Statement of Newsletter Account

Expenses:

Printing newsletter #15	\$281.24
Stamps/postage	\$345.84
<u>Envelopes</u>	<u>\$ 47.93</u>
Total expenses .....	\$675.01

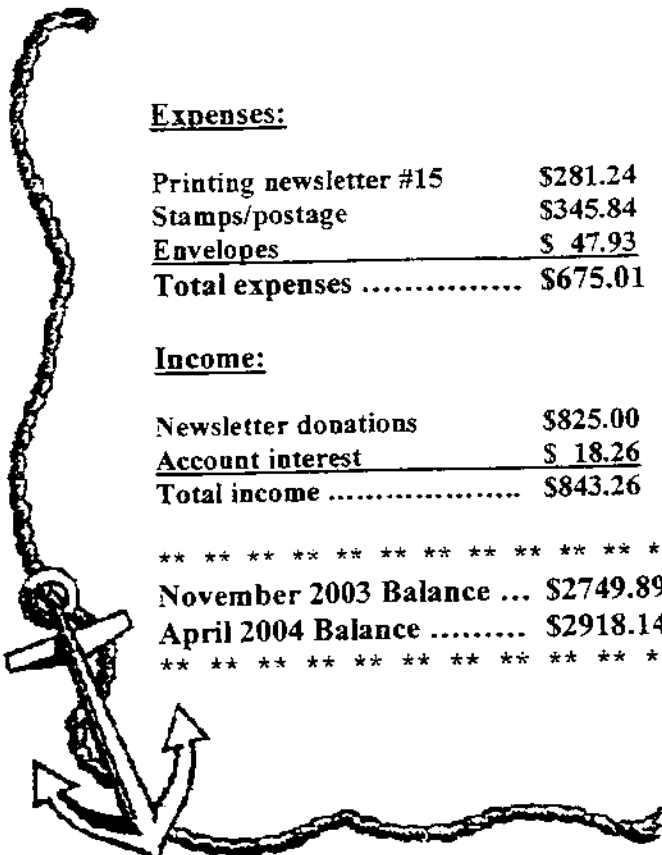
Income:

Newsletter donations	\$825.00
<u>Account interest</u>	<u>\$ 18.26</u>
Total income .....	\$843.26

\*\* \*\* \*

November 2003 Balance ...	\$2749.89
April 2004 Balance .....	\$2918.14

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# Ships Store

Mars lithograph reprint:

Unframed ship picture in color.

8 1/2 X 11 .....	\$3.00
11 X 17 .....	\$6.00
18 X 24 .....	\$45.00

Mars ball cap:

A black cap with yellow lettering & cinder gray ship silhouette. \$12.00.  
These caps are made in the U.S.A.

Mars plaque:

These are hand made reproduction plaques on a wood frame. \$50.00.

Make checks payable to MARS REUNION.  
1947 Gotham St., Chula Vista, CA 91913

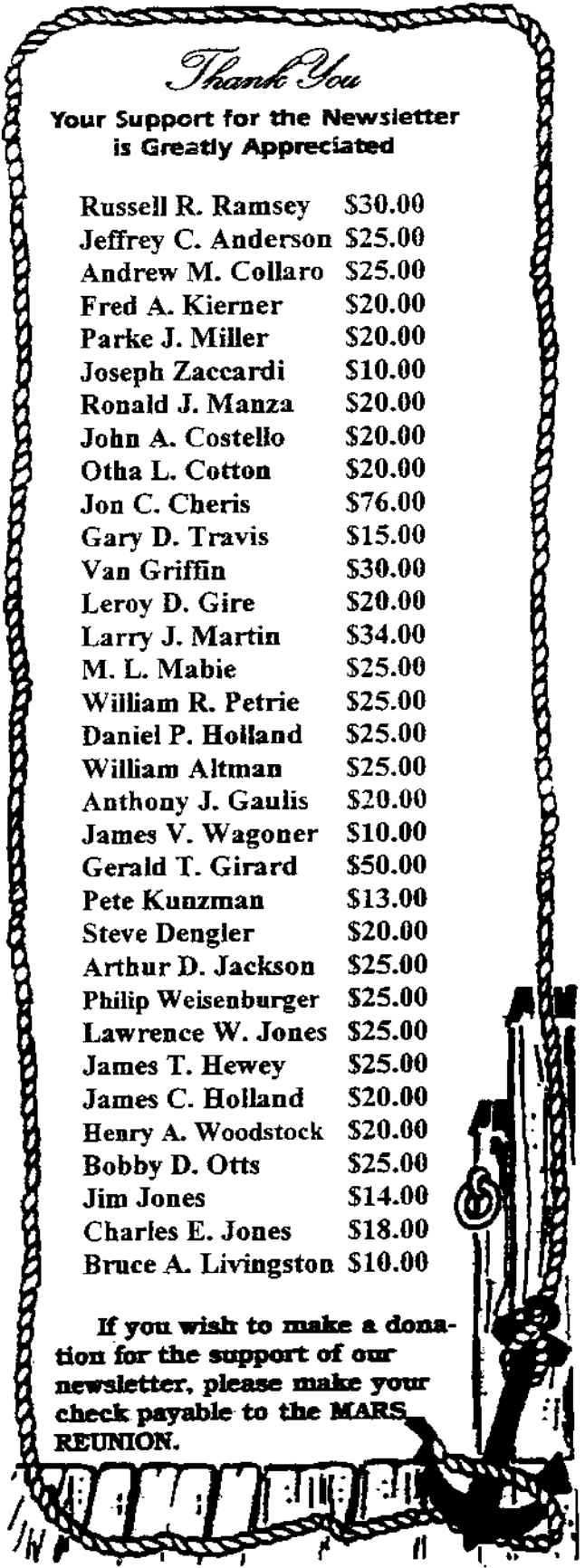
# NEWSLETTER DONATIONS

*Thank You*

Your Support for the Newsletter  
is Greatly Appreciated

Russell R. Ramsey	\$30.00
Jeffrey C. Anderson	\$25.00
Andrew M. Collaro	\$25.00
Fred A. Kierner	\$20.00
Parke J. Miller	\$20.00
Joseph Zaccardi	\$10.00
Ronald J. Manza	\$20.00
John A. Costello	\$20.00
Otha L. Cotton	\$20.00
Jon C. Cheris	\$76.00
Gary D. Travis	\$15.00
Van Griffin	\$30.00
Leroy D. Gire	\$20.00
Larry J. Martin	\$34.00
M. L. Mabie	\$25.00
William R. Petrie	\$25.00
Daniel P. Holland	\$25.00
William Altman	\$25.00
Anthony J. Gaulis	\$20.00
James V. Wagoner	\$10.00
Gerald T. Girard	\$50.00
Pete Kunzman	\$13.00
Steve Dengler	\$20.00
Arthur D. Jackson	\$25.00
Philip Weisenburger	\$25.00
Lawrence W. Jones	\$25.00
James T. Hewey	\$25.00
James C. Holland	\$20.00
Henry A. Woodstock	\$20.00
Bobby D. Otts	\$25.00
Jim Jones	\$14.00
Charles E. Jones	\$18.00
Bruce A. Livingston	\$10.00

If you wish to make a donation for the support of our newsletter, please make your check payable to the **MARS REUNION**.



# REUNION 2004 SEATTLE

*September 9-12*

## **Holiday Inn SeaTac**

17338 International Blvd.

(877) 573-2822 or (206) 248-1000 Hotel #

Group code # (2-USS)

### THURSDAY – September 9

- 1600 Open Mars Hospitality Room.
- 1700 Social gathering for early arrivals.
- 2200 Secure hospitality room.

### FRIDAY – September 10

- 0730 Open Mars Hospitality Room.  
Registration.
- 0830 Board the bus in front of the hotel  
for the city tour & lunch cruise.
- 1100 Board the Royal Argosy at pier 56.
- 1330 Royal Argosy returns to pier 56.
- 1430 Bus returns to the Holiday Inn.

- 1600 ALL HANDS WELCOME RECEPTION  
Hosted by *Mars Reunion* in our Hospitality Room.
- 2400 Secure hospitality room.

### SATURDAY – September 11

- 0800 Open Mars Hospitality Room.
- 0900 Informal business meeting.
- 1000-1700 Open time.
- 1730-1900 Social Hour in our hospitality room.  
*Hosted by Mars Reunion.*
- 1900-2130 Buffet Dinner.
- 2400 Secure hospitality room.

### SUNDAY – September 12

- 0800 Open Mars Hospitality Room.
- 1200 Secure hospitality room.

A seven night Alaskan cruise departs from Vancouver. If interested, contact Dale Ashcraft (859) 581-2803.

**REUNION 2005**  
**OCTOBER 12-16**  
**JACKSONVILLE, FL**

# REUNION 2004 DONATIONS

These donations have been received for the support of the Seattle Reunion.

WE THANK YOU.

Ron Henning	\$113.00
Everett Jones	100.00
Bill Lada	20.00
Daniel Jones	100.00
George Johnson	25.00
Charles Van Orman	29.00
Fred Stith	63.00
Frank Hart	24.00
Frank Kladnick	25.00
Lew Mabie	50.00
Marvin Maria	50.00
Jim Jones	15.00
John Cook	5.00
Charles E. Jones	13.00
William Walters	25.00
Dale Ashcraft	20.00

## Statement of Reunion Account

### Expenses:

Printing/pictures	\$93.83
Envelopes/mailers	25.13
Mars, PA museum	146.33
Reunion 2004 raffle	227.30
Postage/stamps	76.20
<b>Total expenses.....</b>	<b>\$568.79</b>

### Income:

Reunion 2004 donations	\$677.00
Sales – pictures/ball caps	211.00
Account interest	18.26
<b>Total income.....</b>	<b>\$906.26</b>

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November 2003 Balance - - - - -	\$3193.05
April 2004 Balance - - - - -	\$3530.52

**REUNION 2006**  
**Joint AFS Reunion**  
**San Antonio, Texas**

# the Ships Crew



## *A Special Welcome!*

1963-1965	Argo, Timothy J.	SN	—	Desoto, TX
1963-1965	Bergstrom, John W.	AN	2 <sup>nd</sup> Div.	Tualatin, OR
1963-1964	Bookout, Carl R.	MASN	S-1 Div.	Kinsman, IL
1963-1965	Braswell, Cecil L.	QMSN	N Div.	Chico, CA
1963-1966	Conlon, Philip H.	FN	—	West Columbia, SC
1963-1965	Dale, Anthony R.	PN1	X Div.	Tempe, AZ
1963-1965	Feit, Harry H. Jr.	LCDR	Eng/Off	Fairfield, CA
1963-1965	Green, Russell J.	MM2	M Div.	Henderson, NV
1963-1967	Heath, George E.	MM3	M Div.	New Orleans, LA
1963-1967	Holland, James C.	FA	A Div.	Bath Springs, TN
1963-1964	Kulkin, Sheldon T.	SN	—	La Mirada, CA
1963-1966	Jones, Lawrence W.	YN3	X Div.	Stafford, VA
1963-1965	Jump, James F.	MMFN	—	Carlsbad, NM
1963-1965	Kufahl, Loyd V.	LTjg	—	Augusta, KS
1963-1964	Laface, Donald P.	SN	—	Cherry Hill, NJ
1963-1965	Livingston, Bruce A.	SMSN	OC Div.	Arvada, CO
1963-1966	Magathan, Charles L.	FN	A Div.	Emporia, KS
1963-1965	Miller, Parke J. Jr.	SN	2 <sup>nd</sup> Div.	Cloverdale, CA
1963-1965	Odom, Herman E.	CS3	S-3 Div.	Laurel, MS
1963-1966	Olechny, Walter J.	SN	2 <sup>nd</sup> Div.	Tinley Park, IL
1963-1964	Scilagyi, Jerry L.	SA	—	Delano, CA
1963-1964	Simms, Larry	SN	2 <sup>nd</sup> Div.	Sunrise, FL
1963-1964	Woodstock, Henry A.	SN	2 <sup>nd</sup> Div.	Daytona Beach, FL
1964-1966	Eis, Walter M.	SK2	S-2 Div.	Antioch, CA
1964-1965	Humphrey, John A.	SN	1 <sup>st</sup> Div.	Romoland, CA
1965-1969	Benton, Reid	LT	Helo	Madison, AL
1965-1966	Braden, Henry J.	SN	Supply	San Antonio, TX
1966-1968	Campbell, Donald L.	YN2	X Div.	Cypress, CA
1966-1967	Hewey, James T.	SKSN	Supply	Vaden, WA
1966-1967	Lobanoff, David J.	SK3	Supply	Walnut Creek, CA
1967-1970	Zaccardi, Joseph	SH2	S-3 Div.	Fairfax, CA
1969-1970	Bastemeyer, Wendel E.	RD3	OI Div.	Stillwater, OK
1969-1971	Johnson, Russell R. Jr.	EM2	E Div.	Wheelersburg, OH
1970-1971	Taylor, David M.	GMG3	3 <sup>rd</sup> Div.	Louisville, KY
1972-1975	Costello, John A.	YN3	X Div.	Portland, OR
1972-1976	Lang, Ricky G.	SN	—	Clearwater, FL
1974-1975	Verebely, James	HT3	R Div.	Bellevue, NE
1973-1976	Dickerson, Michael	—	—	El Segundo, CA
1973-1976	Green, Daniel A.	SM2	OC Div.	Isanti, MN
1973-1976	Smith, Daryl A.	—	—	Sardinia, OH
1973-1975	Stanford, Joe	SK2	S-2 Div.	Eugene, OR
1975-1977	Ellithorpe, Steve E.	SHSN	S-4 Div.	Calico Park, AR
1975-1977	Gonyaw, Charles	GMGSN	G Div.	Fairfield, CA
1975-1977	Kunzman, Pete	HM3	H Div.	Menomonee Falls, WI
1976-1977	Kimbell, Jimmy R.	YNCS	Admin	Pittsburg, TX
1977-1978	Fantone, David C.	SHSN	S-4 Div.	Grants Pass, OR

# the Ships Crew



## *A Special Welcome!*

1977-1980	Gallegos, Robert E.	SN	—	Albuquerque, NM
1977-1981	James, Robert D.	GMG3	G Div.	Hillsboro, OR
1977-1978	Moore, Daniel M.	SN	—	Topeka, KS
1978-1980	Brooks, Wendell B.	RM3	OC Div.	Arlington, TX
1978-1981	Ford, Robert W.	SK3	Supply	San Diego, CA
1979-1983	Martin, Terry L.	HTFN	R Div.	Gresham, OR
1979-1980	Mueller, Dean L.	MM2	—	Lakeville, MN
1980-1981	Correll, Michael R.	—	—	Sayre, PA
1980-1985	Jordan, Nicholas	MS2	S-3 Div.	El Cajon, CA
1980-1982	King, Victor	MS3	S-3 Div.	Maryville, TN
1981-1984	Anderson, Jeffrey	BT3	B Div.	Castle Valley, UT
1981-1983	Harvey, Mitchell	BT3	B Div.	Jacksonville, FL
1981-1984	Peters, Scott M.	OS3	OI Div.	Dalton, OH
1981-1983	Shaw, Richard	QMSN	Nav.	Monroe, GA
1981-1985	Snyder, Roy E.	IC2	E Div.	Fairmont, WV
1981-1984	Soules, Kenneth	FN	—	Clinton, MI
1982-1986	Cogburn, Wayne R.	SKSN	S-2 Div.	Oklahoma City, OK
1982-1985	Ochoa, Raymond Y.	YN1	Admin	Albuquerque, NM
1982-1985	Smith, Stephen J.	HTFN	R Div.	Ava, MO
1983-1985	Laverty, Jerry	SK2	Supply	Bedford, TX
1983-1986	Thompson, Robert	DPSN	Supply	Pasadena, TX
1983-1986	Turley, Michell J.	LTjg	OC Div.	Federal Way, WA
1984-1988	Cotton, Otha L.	GMG3	G Div.	Vallejo, CA
1984-1988	Gray, Edward	YN3	Admin	Greenacres, FL
1984-1985	Hodge, Montez	MM3	M Div.	W. Ft. Washington, MD
1985-1989	Gibbs, Jeffrey L.	PC1	Admin	FPO AE 09499
1985-1987	Helm, William C.	BTFN	B Div.	Billings, MT
1985-1987	Kierner, Frederick A.	LCDR (SC)	Supply	Hilliard, OH
1985-1986	Stephenson, Robert E.	MM3	M Div.	Gainesville, FL
1986-1989	Heady, Charles W.	BM3	1 <sup>st</sup> Div.	Perry, LA
1986-1988	Jacobs, Timothy	SN	—	Commerce City, CO
1987-1989	Hicks, Glenn T.	BT1	B Div.	Louisa, KY
1987-1992	Hoffman, Thomas E.	CWO2	M Div.	Council Bluffs, IA
1987-1990	Mc Cree, Mack D.	RM3	OC Div.	Jacksonville, FL
1987-1989	Mc Donald, Roger J.	BT3	B Div.	Missoula, MT
1987-1992	Walrod, Troy D. Sr.	DC3	R Div.	Phoenix, AZ
1988-1989	Larson, Craig J.	QM2	Nav.	Stanwood, WA
1988-1992	Marable, William	RM3	OC Div.	Bellevue, WA
1988-1992	Riedle, Michael F.	SM3	OC Div.	Sugarland, TX
1988-1991	Wallace, Richard T.	SKSN	S-2 Div.	Tigard, OR
1989-1991	Divis, Conrad B.	LCDR	XO	Honolulu, HI
1989-1993	Edwards, Kristopher	MM3	Stream	Tracy, CA
1989-1991	Laughlin, Eldridge P.	ETSN	OE Div.	Rayne, LA
1989-1992	Tibolla, Jason	SN	G Div.	Youngstown, OH
1990-1992	Shays, Kevin	EN3	A Div.	Chula Vista, CA
1991-1993	Garner, Thomas R.	YNSN	Admin	Seaside, CA