

Minutes of the meeting of 14 MAR 2008

1100 – Call to order; Opening prayer, Chaplain Al Guier **DDE 719**; Pledge of Allegiance;
Twenty-one members and one guest present;

Guest speaker was Mr. Phil Hanson **DE 700**, Col. USAR, (Ret.), past state legislator with an impressive resume who gave us a very interesting talk on how the Arizona Legislature works ... or doesn't. Not only was it interesting, but enlightening and, we extend our sincere thanks for his taking time from his busy schedule to speak to us.

John Rusinek **DDR 808** had previously introduced his daughter, Lynda Rusinek, our guest, an ER nurse at the VA Hospital in Phoenix. Lynda brought with her a huge load of items donated, thru her efforts, by her fellow employees to be shipped overseas along with our regular member donations. Lynda advised us she is ready to look after us with TLC if we should ever have occasion to enter her facility. A thank you letter was sent to Mr. Donald Moore, Director, VA Hospital for his assistance in permitting the ER group to help out with items for our troops.

So what did we ship this time? Well, with the aid of Lynda, you broke our record of thirteen boxes in one month by a bunch. This time, nineteen were shipped in two loads, the first being an even dozen followed a couple of days later by seven more. Not bad for a small outfit. In the aggregate bag we shipped: chewing gum, peanuts, popcorn, candy, crackers, cookies, trail mix, instant foods, tea, hot chocolate mix, peanut butter, Kleenex, deodorant, lotion, soap, pens, puzzles, CD's, tooth brushes, razors, lip balm, batteries and female hygiene items, which we guys usually don't think to include.

Thanks to Al Guier, Tom Roell **DD 779**, Ron Tullgren **DDE 499** and the skipper **DE 365**, for chipping in with **\$75.00** to defray the cost of shipping and, a special thanks to **Lynda** and her compatriots for their generosity. A letter was sent to Chief Rockwell who replaced Chief Holland as recipient of our shipment for distribution to the newly arrived troops of PRT Sharana.

Henry Hight **CVE 68**, passed around a medallion he received from the people of Saipan, Tinian and the Northern Mariana Islands, for his participation in the battle for their liberation from Japanese occupation during WW II. The medallion was presented to Henry and other participating sailors during a meeting of the CVE Sailors Association in Gilbert, Arizona on 19 FEB 08. (Henry invited the "skipper" along). It may have been a long time coming, but those folks haven't forgotten the sacrifices our young sailors made during that "war to the death" against a formidable enemy who had the advantage over us in the beginning. Three original "Rosie the Riveters" gave a presentation of their experiences during the war.

It's worth noting here that Henry, as crew of USS Portland **CA 33**, (at sea with our carriers during the Pearl Harbor attack), and USS Kalinin Bay **CVE 68**, (**Taffy III**), was involved, from the beginning of the war, in every major sea battle in the Pacific except Iwo Jima and Okinawa in 1945. He was back home after being wounded during the Battle off Samar Island 25 OCT 44. Kalinin Bay, also badly wounded after receiving several large-caliber gunfire hits and rammed thru the flight deck by a kamikaze, while a second kamikaze, on too shallow an angle, bounced off the flight deck into the water.

Henry is mentioned several times in the book *Sweet Pea at War: A History of the USS Portland* by William Thomas Generous, Jr.

Webman, Mel Kowal **DER 386** took photos of several of our members to be posted to our website, which will make our website much more interesting. It would help considerably if the members would contact the “skipper” with a bio of each for publication. So don’t hesitate to call with any info you think “fit to print.” Modesty would probably preclude our printing stories of any liberties pulled in foreign ports or even domestic ports for that matter. So don’t be shy. Let’s hear from you.

Regrettably, Chief Yeoman Bob Sayers has crossed over the bar; note following page

Del Krause **DDE 847**, won the 50/50 draw and donated his share, \$34.00, to the treasury. Thanks Del, you’re a good guy. Next was a drawing for the book *Fly Boys* by James Bradley author of *Flags of our Fathers* and won by ... you guessed it ... Del Krause. Congrats Del, your generosity paid dividends proving it really pays to be a good guy.

Mea Culpa --- I misplaced my notes of the meeting and do not recall, among other things, who donated the **Fly Boys** book for auction. I truly regret the oversight and will make it up in the next issue. If the loyal member donor will straighten me out I shall, henceforth, attempt to fly right.

Politically speaking: Our second letter to Congressman Mitchell is still unanswered. Apparently he believes naming another ship, an aircraft carrier yet, USS Arizona is a good idea in spite of the wishes of veterans who care about the real USS Arizona. Those members who are his constituents may consider dropping him a line stating an objection to his uninformed proposal. Are veterans being ignored here?

Tom Roell will introduce our guest speaker, a navy recruiter CPO, at the next meeting.

Due to lost notes, I regret any oversights in this newsletter, which indicates we need a yeoman on board who is more alert than this writer.

1200 or thereabouts: Closing prayer: Chaplain Guier: Adjourn.

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