



# THE BRIGHT PENNY

January 2011

A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF THE USS BERKELEY (DDG-15) ASSOCIATION

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Hope you all enjoyed a happy Holiday Season, and wish you a happy and healthy 2011. In this issue I'd like to review 2010 highlights and accomplishments, and preview some of the tasks we hope to accomplish in 2011.



2010 was a very good year for the Association and the highlight was our Denver reunion in August. Accomplishments include filling open positions on the Association staff, increasing the number of former shipmates on the master roster, adding more cruise books and a few other features to the web site, and adding ship's logs to the Ship's Store inventory.

Our 2010 reunion in Denver was a huge success and our October newsletter recaps the activities and provides photos of most of the attendees. At our Denver business meeting we nominated cities for the 2012 reunion host city. San Diego, San Francisco, Long Beach, Laughlin, and Phoenix are the choices. Voting for the host city is currently in progress at the web site, and San Diego and San Francisco are in a very close race to be the host city. Voting will end on January 31<sup>st</sup>, so please visit the web site to cast your vote.

Our Association staff is now nearly complete with the addition of Regional Advisors for the Northwest and Southwest sectors, and a Chaplain. Ron Bravo is our Northwest Advisor and Dr. William Perry is the Southwest Advisor and Chaplain. Our lone staff opening is for an ACVA (Adams Class Veterans Association) representative. Anyone interested in the ACVA rep position is encouraged to contact the Association for more information as we are anxious to fill this position. ACVA's main focus is to refurbish and make the Charles F. Adams (DDG-2) a museum ship in Jacksonville, Florida. Since this is the only Adams Class DDG remaining, this effort is very important to those who served aboard these ships.

The number of former shipmates on the

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OSC John (BJ) Bjerke was born in Chicago in 1939, but grew up in a small town on the Fox River, Northwest of Chicago. He left high school in the middle of his senior year and joined the Navy, attended RTC Great Lakes, completed his GED and went directly to the Pacific Fleet.

BJ's first ship was the USS Cavalier (APA-37) in Long Beach, CA. In December 1957, he was transferred to the USS Navarro (APA-215) in the same amphibious squadron as a deck seaman assigned to the Forecastle and Anchor detail.

While deployed to WESTPAC in 1958, Navarro was assigned to Joint Task Force Seven, Operation Hardtack, Enewetok Atoll Atomic Testing Area, Central Pacific. Navarro took part in the last U.S. atmospheric A-bomb tests.

While deployed again in 1959, BJ was transferred to OI Division and became a Radarman striker and then advanced to RD3. In January 1960, Navarro deployed again and following the cruise he was then discharged and assigned to the Active Reserves, which was not to his liking. He returned to active duty and attended RD "B" school in San Francisco and San Diego. After "B" school, he was assigned to the USS McMorris (DE-1036) home ported in San Diego, again as an RD3 and LPO. After completion of the 1961 deployment, BJ was transferred to the USS Beale (DDE-471) in Norfolk, VA. He arrived in February 1962, in the middle of a hurricane while Beale was in overhaul. Again he was assigned duties as LPO, and advanced to RD2 in May.

After overhaul, GITMO and a six week assignment as Sonar School training ship in Key West, FL, Beale rejoined DESRON 28 and USS Randolph (CVS-15) as ASW/TG "A". In September, TG"A" was assigned to intercept and photograph all Eastern Bloc (Communist) ships heading for Cuba. When the quarantine actually started on Oct. 23, 1962, TG"A" had already been on station for a month.

In January 1963, BJ swapped to the USS Canberra (CAG-2), and deployed to the Sixth Fleet. In October, Canberra transited the Panama Canal to its' new home port of San Diego.

In December 1963, BJ was transferred

### In the Spotlight



OSC John Bjerke

to the nucleus crew of the USS Sacramento (AOE-1) in Bremerton, WA as LPO and CIC supervisor. Sacramento was commissioned in March 1964 and deployed to WESTPAC in October, returning home in June 1965.

While returning to CONUS in July 1966, RD1 Bjerke was transferred to the USS Providence (CLG-6) which was Flagship for the Seventh Fleet in Yokosuka, Japan. In February 1967, BJ was sent to Air Intercept Control School FAWTC, San Diego, and then reported to the Berkeley and was aboard for the 1967 and 1968 deployments.

In April 1969, BJ reported to Instructor Training School, Great Lakes, and then went on to Instructor duty at RD "A" School. While at Great Lakes, BJ met and married his wife of 39 years, Judy Libby of Chicago.

In August 1972, BJ reported to the USS John Paul Jones (DDG-32) in Long Beach. Following the 1973 deployment to the Far East, the JPJ was transferred to San Diego as the Naval Station Long Beach was closing. Chief Bjerke again deployed to the Far East with the JPJ in

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Newsletter Distribution: To dues current members via e-mail in pdf form and to non-e-mail members via U.S. Mail.



Al Meier

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master roster has increased from 1,085 to 1,122 during 2010. The increase was greater than 37 additions as a few names were transferred from the master roster to the Memorial List during the year. We strongly encourage you to update your contact information through the web site so that we can ensure all contact information is current. Please provide email addresses as they are the quickest and most cost effective way for the Association to deliver newsletters, master rosters and other information to you. All addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses are restricted to our paid membership and are not made available to any other parties.

Three additional cruise books were added to the web site during the past year. The 1967, 1981 and 1989/90 cruise books were the latest to be added, and our plan is to add the 1971, 1984 and 1986/87 cruise books during 2011. Other additions to the web site include a Suggestion Box and two new links (including Mesothelioma Common Questions) under the "Links" page.

New additions to the Ship's Store are Ship's Logs which are the actual hand written logs maintained during the Berkeley's Westpac deployments. CD versions of the logs for the 1964, 1965/66, 1967, 1968 and 1970 cruises are currently in stock, and the 1971 and 1972 logs will be added once they are declassified.

A preview of 2011 tasks includes the commencement of planning for our 2012 reunion, expanding the master roster, adding the final three cruise books to the web site, and hopefully adding additional history and photos to the web site as well. Once we have identified our host city for the 2012 reunion, we will be looking for volunteers in and around that city to join our reunion committee. The announcement should appear on the web site in early February, and we would like to commence with reunion planning soon after.

Our 2011 membership drive is in progress, and we encourage you to renew your membership if you haven't already done so. Paid memberships provide the funding that enables the Association to provide our web site, newsletters and much more to preserve our memories of days aboard the Berkeley. Also, be sure to keep an eye on web site and newsletters for announcements regarding the 2012 reunion, and a chance to see your old shipmates again!



**From the  
Quarterdeck  
By**

*CDR Jim Barrett (Ret)*



**Protecting the family jewels** is a priority for one British company in Cardiff, Wales. They are marketing bomb-blocking boxers as a means of protection against improvised explosive devices in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Called "Blast Boxers" they come in black and yellow and are Kevlar-lined. Not available as standard issue yet, but the company has submitted them to the military for testing. Hmm! Doe's the testing consist of a volunteer wearing them while standing over an IED?

### From the Webmaster

Many of you have probably noticed some of the problems I am having with the Web site. The software used to create the site is thirteen years old and should be replaced with something newer. I am looking for a member with Web creation experience to take over the task of Webmaster to build a new site.

If a volunteer comes forward I will work with you until the new site is up and running. Another factor is my health dictates passing this duty on. Contact me via e-mail at [quarterdeck15@aol.com](mailto:quarterdeck15@aol.com)

### In the Spotlight

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1975, and was assigned as the AAW/ Air Control Ship for the final withdrawal from South Viet Nam.

After returning to CONUS, the JPJ went into overhaul at Long Beach Naval Shipyard. On July 15, 1976, Chief Bjerke retired and was piped ashore in wash khaki and an orange hard hat.

BJ, Judy and their two boys moved back to Northern Illinois where he received an AA degree in Police Science. In 1980, he and the family moved to Marietta, Georgia. In 2001 he retired from the Cobb County Sheriff's Dept. after 21 years of service.

BJ now plays lots of golf and enjoys attending his six grandchildren's sports and school activities which consist of baseball, football, basketball, gymnastics and swimming. Most of all, he enjoys every day of total retirement.

## Berkeley History January

### 40 Years Ago, 1971

**01-11**, Upkeep Long Beach; **11-14**, Type Training; **12-13**, Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI); **14-25**, Upkeep Long Beach; **25-28**, COMPTUEX 1-71; **29-31**, Tender Availability (TAV).

### 30 Years Ago, 1981

**01-11**, Holiday upkeep; **12-23**, READIEX 2-81; **24-29**, Inport San Diego; **30**, Change of Command. CDR J.L. Lockett III relieves CDR K.R. Sydow. **31**, Inport San Diego.

### 20 Years Ago, 1991

**01-06**, Inport San Diego: SupShips Restricted Availability; **07**, Inport San Diego: Fast Cruise; **08**, Inport San Diego: Combat Systems observed (OCSOT); **09-23**, Underway SoCal OpArea: Damage Control Training. All Comers at Sea Exercise, Battle Group Evaluation Exercise; **24-31**, Inport San Diego: Ship's Intermediate Maintenance Activity Restricted Availability.

### 10 Years Ago, 2001

Ex-Berkeley in service with the Hellenic Navy of Greece.

## Future Newsletter mailings

Beginning with the April 2011 issue, newsletters will only be emailed or delivered via the USPS to paid members for the current or past calendar years. Newsletters will still be posted on the Web site the month following publication.