

Fall 2008

Published by  
The USS PYRO  
Association

Contacts

Editorial:

Jared Cameron  
3808 Brighton Ct.  
Alexandria, VA 22395  
scuttlebutt@ae-24.org

Membership/Circulation

Doug Wisher  
1022 Winding Way  
Covington, KY 41011  
wisherdj@fuse.net

Money Matters

Tom Sanborn  
114 Long Point Drive  
St. Simons Island, GA 31522  
v8hotrod@bellsouth.net

Web site

www.usspyro.com



# USS PYRO Scuttlebutt

## Reunion 2009

## Plans in place for a Blast in the Desert

"If you want something done fast and done right, put a chief in charge."

HTC Bob Hauge proved that last year in Dubuque and CWO Bob Smith (right) is doing it again with super arrangements and a super deal for the Blast in the Desert reunion, May 13-17, 2009, at the Sands Regency Hotel in Reno.



Pyro-maniacs have two non-negotiable demands for any reunion. Gunner Bob has delivered on both:

First, old tars get their dander up about shelling out \$6 for a brew or \$3 for a Coke in the hospitality room. Thanks to Bob's negotiation skills, we have exclusive use of a hospitality room with *unlimited adult beverages* throughout the reunion, a welcome reception and registration fee — all for the price of \$20. That adds up to about 50 cents a beer for the most prolific Pyro imbibers.

Second, they want a reasonably priced, good quality hotel room. Now, you might have been able to book a suite at the Mark Hopkins for \$20 back when more of us had full heads of hair in 1943 or 1963, but those days are, alas, gone for good. Getting a large hotel room in a full-amenity, full service first class hotel for an average of \$60 a night including tax is both a good deal and a big deal and that's what we have at the Sands.



### In this edition

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Along with the chance to reunite with shipmates, Pyro people want to muster in venues with something to see and do. Reno has shopping, entertainment, gaming and history. The 'main' tour will take us to cowboy country in Virginia City, Carson City and feature a memorial service at the historic Boot Hill Cemetery.

So what are you waiting for? Mark your calendars for May 13-17, 2009, and turn to

pages eight and nine for booking information.

## Membership matters

### Dubuque Memory Book distributed by web, mail

The 2008 USS Pyro Reunion Memory Book was completed and distributed September 11.

All members with e-mail addresses on file were invited to download the file from the association's web site. the link for which appears at the bottom of this article.

Folks who requested a disk by mail were sent one as were reunion attendees who has no listed e-mail address.

Anyone who wants a copy can download it; any association member who can't or doesn't care to download a copy can write to Jared Cameron by snail mail or write president@ae-24.org to order a disk by U.S. mail.

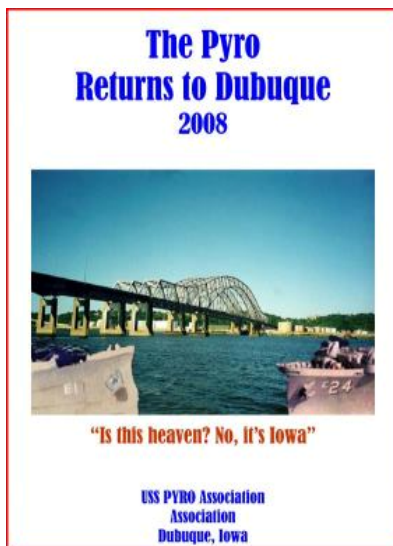
Click on this link to download your copy:

<http://www.usspyro.com/Reunion.htm>

### I have a story you.....

From your PYRO MEMORIES you ask what is blue dycum? While the Pyro was at Portsmouth Ship Yard August 1959 a yard bird, (civilian), from BuShips (named Chet), came aboard with his leather satchel and four foot breaker bar. Chief Manske assigned me to be his helper. We would unbolt the bearing caps on the main steam turbine, then wipe off the oil on the bearing and apply the blueing. I seem to remember that Chet called it Blue Dycum: "high quality, good luster and fluid not like Prussian blue paint." With the caps back on, we would spin the turbine, take off the caps and Chet would take off the high spots on the bearing Babbitt with his Shetland steel scrapers from England. We would do this over and over again until he was satisfied that the bearing surface was uniform without any high spots. I had never used or heard of this type of blueing until I read Tom Sanborn's article.

**Bill Peregrin MR2**  
**Water King 1960**



### Oscar the Octopus granted lifetime membership

OK, we all know your snipes — the engineers from the 'black gang' are, well, a little different than sailors who spent their time before the mast breathing fresh sea air rather than engine fumes and laboring in sunlight above deck rather than in the murky bowels of the ship.

Nothing illustrates this point better than the case of Oscar the Octopus, 'the only seven-legged octopus in the Seventh Fleet' that was painted on AE-24's main injection in the 1960's. (One could make the case that a creature with seven legs is a *septipus*, rather than an octopus, but — trust me! — don't try to sell this nicety to snipes. They'll just shake their wrenches at you.)

Tony Case, a MM2 on AE-24 from 1960-62, started this whole fishy affair. The Sanborns, Wishers and that ilk took up the torch. Granted, they're a can-do, if oily lot, and, after extensive research, they tracked down the Pyro Michelangelo, erstwhile MM2 Larry G. Buggeln, an AE-24 plank holder who claims credit/accepts blame for defacing government property by creating Oscar.

A treasurer first and snipe second, former MPA Sanborn made artist Buggeln pay for his association membership — welcome aboard, Larry! — but in an unprecedented fit of largess, he decided to wave dues for Oscar.



That makes ours the only 'squid' association to have a seven-legged octopus as a life member. Take that, Mauna Kea and Nitro!

"I'm glad that the snipes are finally getting the recognition that they deserve — need — want — crave!!" commented Doug Wisher.

"We'll turn your @\$\* power off if you aren't nice to us!"

### ASK INSTEAD WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR ASSOCIATION

If you are receiving the electronic Scuttlebutt without problems, save the association big bucks that can be used for other member benefits by unsubscribing to the printed edition. **It's easy:** Just write Secretary Doug Wisher—wisherdj@fuse.net — and say "unsubscribe print edition."

“The membership chairman is especially important since age and demographics are taking their sad toll...”

## From the president’s desk

By Jared Cameron

**E**xecutive ability has been the matter of much discussion over recent weeks and to prove my presidential prowess in weighty personnel matters, I have an important announcement to make:

Pursuant to the bylaws, with the explicit approval of a majority of the Standing Action Committee and unanimous approval from the trustees, I have appointed Tom Palmer USS Pyro Association second vice president and – on my own massive authority – chairman of the membership committee. Think of it as Tom’s playing Joe Biden to my Obama.

The membership chairman is especially important since age and demographics are taking their sad toll on both our World War II shipmates and, increasingly, on those who sailed on the Pyro in the 1960’s. In order to keep the Pyro memories and traditions alive, we need to reach out to the crews of the 1980’s and 1990’s — and Tom Palmer is just the man to lead that effort.



Sure, Second Vice President Palmer dresses rather oddly, drinks too much, calls other adults ‘dude’ (all three due, no doubt to his ‘Left Coast’ roots and extended pedantic intercourse with youth). On the other hand, said Mr. Palmer is not a snipe and he brings to the post a sunny personality, an almost unbelievable degree of enthusiasm that is most uncommon in the elderly and, most important of all, is -- like the current association officers -- dimwitted enough to volunteer to serve.

After leaving active duty until his retirement last year, Tom was an activities director and teacher in the California public school system. There he developed skills that will no doubt prove invaluable in recruiting a new generation of association members with all the zeal he previously devoted to interviewing members of the Concord High Junior Varsity Topless Beach Volleyball Team.

In both of his new, exalted posts, I am sure Tom will receive all of the respect he enjoyed as the navigator on the Pyro, when he was known as ‘Magellan’ and, alternately, ‘Wrong-way Corrigan.’

Thanks for serving and welcome aboard, Tom!

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**NAG, NAG, NAG.** E-mail is a fast, inexpensive way to stay in touch with shipmates and friends. But e-mail doesn’t work all that well if you change your address and don’t tell your association or if you don’t have e-mail at all. We have a solution to both issues for folks who have an e-mail address and those who don’t: Get a free Pyro e-mail account, yourname@ae-1.org or yourname@ae-24.org. That way, neither rain, snow, sleet nor a changed internet service provider can keep the word from reaching you. Write president@ae-24.org to get your address and the straight skinny on how to use it.

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**A SERIOUS NOTE.** All of us were saddened by the passing of Bob Mahan, a tribute to whom appears on page six. As much as we would like to, we can’t turn back the forces that take our friends and shipmates from our lives.

What we can do both individually and as a group is to make sure that the loved ones of the departed — wives, significant others, children and grandchildren — know that all of us continue to consider them part of the Pyro family and our association. That’s why I’m using this space to extend a heartfelt invitation to honorary lifetime members Marge Knapp, Connie MacDonald, Betty Gillman and many others to join us at future reunions and remain active in all association activities. That’s what families are for.

b

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**USS PYRO ASSOCIATION**

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**Jasper Strunk**

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**Robert J. Smith**

*Nominating  
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**Gary Golay  
Jasper Strunk**

# PYRO PEOPLE

Updates on shipmates and their families

## Nolans featured in hometown newspaper story **Auburn-Reporter.com**

### Bob and Marian Nolan: Auburn couple rides the good life of adventure

#### Nolans savor their long, sweet journey together

A sense of adventure and a curiosity about people took Bob and Marian Nolan on many trips across the United States and North America.

On two, sometimes three wheels. Nothing like experiencing the open road from the backbone of a Moto Guzzi motorcycle or better yet, a two-seater under the hull of a Morgan Triking replica.

The vintage cyclecar – a fascinating motorcycle-powered machine Bob practically built from scratch – remains in the Nolan garage at their charming West Hill home. It's still licensed, ready to roam. For a pair of Auburn octogenarians, the three-wheeler serves as a reminder of where they have been and how far they have come in a search for wonder, harmony and study.

They traveled the many miles their own way at their own speed, standing out as easy riders clad in leather blues. While Marian has seen much of the country, Bob has visited 49 of the 50 states. "And to this day, I don't know why I missed Maine," he said.

The Nolans also have reached the Yukon Territory six times to visit friends and pan leisurely for gold. They stretched the map and made their way north to Alaska and south to Mexico in retirement. Much of what they learned about themselves they discovered from others. There's nothing like seeing how others live. "I guess I was always curious," Bob said. "Every day is an adventure, an adventure to me."

From the beginning, Marian came along for the ride. "My life has been one event after another," she said without hesitation. "And I have shared it with one terrific guy.

"I have enjoyed a great life, full of happiness, with a great man," she said with a smile. "I can call it a perfect marriage and friendship."

Compatible in many ways, the Nolans – both 81 – have come full circle in their extensive travels and life. A part of Auburn since 1958, the Nolans shared good times and hardships while raising a family and following career footpaths.

Not to mention their dreams.

The Nolans' recipe for happiness and prosperity is simple, really.

"Enjoy life," said Bob, who stays fit and active despite struggling with the effects of Alzheimer's. "And you've got to have a good sense of humor.

"To this day, I hold no grudges and I try to treat everybody right," he said. "Everybody has a different outlook on life, and I have a positive one.

"All I can say is I still enjoy life very much."

#### Coming together

Their life experiences are varied and interesting. They met and married within the same week more than 41 years ago.



**Bob and Marian Nolan with their 'little car,' a two-seater they used to roam the U.S. The Auburn couple has enjoyed a lifetime of travel and experiences.**

Each had two children, a boy and girl, from a previous marriage, and each was willing to start this new chapter in their lives.

From the start, they clicked. "What makes Bob the way that he is? I don't know. I think he was made already," Marian said. Bob, born in Boise, followed his family to Washington at a young age. His father worked on the Grand Coulee Dam in the 1930s. They moved to Roy where Bob attended high school.

At 18, his search for adventure took root. He joined the Navy. He was at boot camp in San Diego in August 1945 when the Enola Gay dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. What ensued was a 25-year career in the service, working as a repairman on ships at ports near and far. The seaman recruit eventually became a lieutenant commander. He served a tour of duty during the Korean War and was deployed for four more during the Vietnam War.

### Bay of antics

At Tonkin Bay in Southeast Asia, Bob was in charge of repairing swift boats for American crews. "Our guys did more damage to those boats than the enemy did," Bob said, shaking his head. One of those guys was a skipper named John F. Kerry, now a U.S. Senator from Massachusetts. Kerry did not impress this "old, worldly sailor."

Frustrated with the self-inflicted carnage on the fleet, Bob cut several swift boats loose, including Kerry's, one memorable night. "Then I woke 'em all up and said, 'OK boys, get your own boats,'" Bob said with a grin, satisfied with his antics.

It was during his time in Vietnam that Bob's first wife died suddenly of cancer. He rebounded, met Marian, retired from the service in 1970, and began an odyssey of travel and business stints.

Bob pursued the logging business, then went to work for 10 years as a repairman for his good friend and partner, Don Small, at his family-run oil company in Auburn.

Good with his hands, the self-taught man with the gentle and humble ways was good with customers, too.

"I always believed in doing things right," Bob said. "Don sold oil, I sold service."

Dan Small, son of the company's late patriarch, recalls the resourceful Nolan. "He always had something going on in his garage," he said. That included his love for well-built motorcycles and a restored cyclecar. "There isn't anything he can't build or fix," Marian said. "You turn him lose in the garage right now to do something ... and he remembers how to do it. There are some things you never forget."

Marian raised the kids, worked in stores and restaurants and occupied the seat next to her husband during many years of travel.

Today, she cares for the man who has cared for her all these years.

They were meant for each other – one long-distance traveler to another. "I could not have had a happier life," she said.

Each stays active today. Bob visits friends at the Auburn Senior Activity Center and tinkers in the garage.

A common man, Bob enjoys history and often recites Robert Service's poetry and the Gettysburg Address – to the letter. He often wears black, the "Johnny Cash in him, the man who favors the underdog."

Marian maintains a tidy yard and is taking up piano lessons.

Each is quick to extend a helping hand, share a laugh and offer some wisdom.

"Be positive, be nice," Bob said, "and look to the great things in life."

By **MARK KLAAS** Auburn Reporter Editor August 6, 2008

# Remembering the fallen

## Harold Max Summers

I am informing you of the death of Harold Max Summers (Chief Gunnersmate USN Retired). He passed quietly on June 1, 2008 and has been laid to rest with full honors at the Sacramento Valley VA National Cemetery at Dixon, CA, on June 10, 2008 .

*Robert Kaul (son-in-law)*

## Freddie Willis

(1921-2008)

Freddie Willis, who served on AE-1 in the boiler room during World War II , passed away in September. He was interred in Chico, CA.

**Jim Willis**



**Robert P. Mahan**



**friend and shipmate**

*What can we do but emulate his infectious smile, cheerful attitude, boundless energy and lust for life?*

*Living is, indeed, a skill and Bob Mahan mastered it to an enviable degree.*

Yes, we lost another Twilight Sailor from the AE-1.

According to his dear daughter, Patty Schloss, "The Lord just took him home as it was his time. He was sitting at home watching TV when he put his head back and was gone."

It's difficult to relate to Shipmate's when they transfer to the All Mighty up yonder so unexpectedly.

Bob and I served together on the deck force on the AE-1 during WW II and our relationship survived throughout the years. In fact, at the recent Dubuque reunion, I called on Bob to assist me in picking up the reunion hospitality room goodies and he responded immediately with his transportation, checking in to the Holiday Inn a day earlier than he originally intended.

This constant loss of Twilight Sailors makes one wonder who's next, which may not be considered an appropriate remark to make at one's departure as can, indeed, be cruel.

Our USS Pyro Association hearts and prayers are with Bob, Marge Knapp, his constant companion and Pyro reunion dancing partner, and his children. God's speed Bob! — Bob Hauge



*Shove off Coxswain and take your orders from your bow hook ...*

# PYRO PEOPLE

## Mini reunions

### Hauge and Golays do Minnesota



You can't go home again, but you can have a good time trying – especially if Helen and Gary Golay are your hosts!

That's what Bob Hauge discovered when he headed to the frozen north for a trip to Minneapolis, MN, the hometown that he left in 1942 to join the Navy. His mission was threefold: To take a sentimental journey to the Civilian Conservation Corps camp at Gooseberry State Falls Park where he served in 1941, to attend the USS Talladega (APA 208) reunion, and to enjoy a 'home stay' with the Golays.

Instead of the rustic camp of his youth, Bob discovered that Gooseberry Park is now a modern tourist facility with naturalist programs, interactive exhibits, restrooms, mini-theatre, a gift shop, a fire-lit lobby and paved trails. The only familiar sites – a stone wall and an old stone building from Bob's time — were roped off and scheduled for demolition.

At the reunion, Bob danced the night away with his daughter, Bobbie; granddaughters Gina and Deanna; and the irrepresible Helen Golay. He next joined nephew and honorary Pyro-maniac Dave Hauge for a pilgrimage to his parents' grave, then adjourned to the Golay's 'magnificent hacienda' to enjoy the sights, company and 'extended Margarita hours' for the remainder of his six-day stay.

### Ms. Ruttenberg still has the conn



Former Pyro Navigator Deborah Ruttenberg, who served on AE-24 from 1989 to 1993, rising from ensign to lieutenant, joins Jared Cameron for a summer lunch at the Washington Palm. Now a consultant at the U.S. Department of Energy, Deb never left the seafaring life far behind: She's still in the reserves and lives on a boat at the Washington, D.C. marina.

### Mrs. Sheipline goes to Washington



Karen Sheipline and Susan Scanlan join spouses/AE-24 stalwarts Jared Cameron and Larry Sheipline for dinner at the Occidental in October. The trip marked Karen's successful completion of chemotherapy for bone cancer. The following week, she underwent successful lung surgery to pave the way for a full return to 'waiting on Larry hand and foot.'



**Blast in the Desert**  
**2009 USS Pyro Association reunion**  
**Facts and figures**



**When: May 13-17, 2009**

**Where: The Sands Regency Hotel Casino, Reno Nevada** <http://www.sandsregency.com/home>

"The Sands Regency offers over 800 guestrooms, including the largest standard guestrooms in downtown Reno, and 700 non-smoking rooms. All hotel guests receive valuable food, beverage, and gaming offers...and much more! We have everything you are looking for in a vacation spot! "

**The hotel offers:**

**Gaming** - Terrible's Sands Regency has 600 loose Slots, Video Poker Machines, Table Games, Sports Book, Keno, Bingo and Live Poker.

**Hotel Rooms** - Over 800 spacious rooms in three connecting towers. Largest standard rooms in Reno. Full service 24 hour casino, beauty shop, bike and ski shop, flower and wedding chapel on premises. Free garage and surface parking.

**Entertainment** - There is free live music every friday & saturday night.

**Penthouse Jacuzzi & Health Club** - The penthouse health club is free to all hotel guests.

**Pool** - We have the largest pool complex in downtown Reno.

**Agape Wedding Chapel & Flowers** - A full service wedding chapel and flowers for every occasion.

**Deuce Beauty Salon & Boutique** - A full service salon with unique boutique and gift items.

**Sundance Ski & Board Rentals** - Reno's only downtown ski, snowboard & bike rental.

**Convention & Banquet Center** - 12,000 square feet of meeting space for all your entertainment needs.

**Dining** - A variety of dining choices including Fuzio Universal Bistro & Steaks, Mels Diner, The Buffet, Cabana Café and Arby's.

**Transportation** - Free Airport Shuttle departs from the hotel to the airport every hour, on the half hour (6am – 11pm).

**How to reserve your room at the special Pyro rate:** Call **(1) 866-386-7829**. **USE Group code: USS-513**

**What the hotel costs:** Rooms are \$36 a night for Wednesday and Thursday and \$69 a night for Friday and Saturday. For the full four days of the reunion, that adds up to \$210 for four night's lodging or \$238.35 with tax for a *very reasonable* average per night of less than **\$60**.

**How to sign up:**

- Call the hotel directly to reserve your room
- Fill in the *reunion registration sheet* (next page), add up the damage and send a check to the association treasurer. His address is also on the next page.

**What's the deadline?** Torturing your reunion chairman by waiting until the last minute (Drop dead date: 10 April 2009) is a Pyro tradition, but why not create a new tradition by locking in these great deals now?



**USS PYRO Association  
2009 Reunion: Blast in the Desert  
May 13-17, 2009 The Sands Regency Hotel Casino Reno, NV  
REGISTRATION WORKSHEET**

**Name**

**Spouse/Guest**

**Address**

**City State ZIP**

**TEL: E-mail**

**REUNION OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES**

**Wednesday 13 May 2009**

- **6:00 PM Welcome Aboard Reception.** Arrive in Reno at your leisure. Log in and get reacquainted with old (and young) shipmates in the hospitality room. Reception and Hospitality Room membership with unlimited **adult refreshments included throughout the reunion.**

**\$20.00 per Person**

Number of Persons @ \$20 Total \$

- Remainder of the evening free to explore Reno's exciting dining, gaming and entertainment

**Thursday 14 May 2009**

- Morning free for exploration, shopping, mischief or relaxing with shipmates in the hospitality room.
- 1:00~4:00 PM **Reno City Tour: All That Glitters:** No visit to Northern Nevada is complete without touring the "other side" of this delightful city. See lavish residential areas, historic highlights and learn some naughty tidbits. Great shopping in local boutiques is included. (Note: Tour requires 30 participants; if fewer than 30 people sign up by the cutoff date, the tour will be canceled.)

**\$33.00 person**

Number of Persons @ \$33 Total \$

**Friday 15 May 2009**

- 9:00 AM ~ 3:00 PM **Carson City/Virginia City Tour and memorial service**  
See the town that "hit it big" in 1859 with the richest discovery of silver and gold ever found. No reproductions here...this is the real thing, so don't forget your camera! Next, a driving tour of Carson City, Nevada's capital, including the city's historic district and admission to the Nevada State Museum, the Carson City Mint. Honor departed comrades in a memorial service at the Old Boot Hill Cemetery in Virginia City. Lunch, memorial service expenses included.

**\$60.00 per person**

Number of Persons @ \$60 Total \$

- Remainder of the day free to explore Reno's exciting dining, gaming and entertainment

**Saturday 16 May 2009**

- 9:00-11:00 AM Association business meeting
- 11:00 AM~ 6:00 PM Free to explore Reno's exciting dining, gaming and entertainment
- 6:00 - 7:00 PM Group/individuals photos; cocktails [Cash Bar],
- 7:00 **Awards Banquet:** Entrée choices: Prime rib or salmon hollandaise
- 8:00 - 11:00 PM **Dancing,** with DJ couple

**\$45 per person**

Number of Persons @ \$45 Total \$

Total Amount of enclosed check payable to USS Pyro Association \$

**Sunday 17 May 2007**

Total up your winnings, saddle up and head home or stay on for a few extra days at special reunion rates.

**To register: Mail this form with appropriate payment to:**

**Tom Sanborn, Treasurer, 114 Long Point Drive, St. Simons Island, GA 31522**

**Or download an electronic fill-in form at [www.USSPYRO.com](http://www.USSPYRO.com) or [www.ae-24.org](http://www.ae-24.org)**

USS PYRO Scuttlebutt

USS PYRO ASSOCIATION  
Douglas Wisher, secretary  
1022 Winding Way  
Covington, KY 41011

Email:  
wisherdj@fuse.net



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<b>Association dues</b>	
<b>Annual:</b>	<b>\$ 20</b>
<b>Lifetime membership</b>	
<b>Age 50 or under</b>	<b>\$250</b>
<b>51 ~ 55</b>	<b>\$200</b>
<b>56 ~ 60</b>	<b>\$175</b>
<b>61 ~ 65</b>	<b>\$150</b>
<b>66 ~ 70</b>	<b>\$125</b>
<b>71 ~ 75</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>76 ~81</b>	<b>\$ 50</b>
<b>82 PLUS</b>	<b>\$ 25</b>

**USS PYRO AE-1 & AE-24 ASSOCIATION**  
Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Rate/rank(s) aboard Pyro: \_\_\_\_\_ Highest USN rate/rank: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates aboard USS PYRO (AE1 or AE 24) \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ Retired USN?

Separated under honorable conditions? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**To join: Send this completed application and a check payable to the USS PYRO Association for either annual dues or the lifetime membership amount appropriate for your age to:**

**Tom Sanborn, Treasurer**  
**USS PYRO Association**  
**114 Long Point Drive**  
**Saint Simons Island, GA 31522**