



# BIG "E" LEGEND

The Official Newsletter of the USS Enterprise Association

## New Strategic Plan to Guide Association into the Future

By Enterprise Association Public Affairs

On December 1, 2012, our USS Enterprise (CVN 65) was inactivated after 51 years of naval service. With over 12,000 Veterans, families and fans of ENTERPRISE on Pier 12 at Norfolk Naval Station, and tens of thousands more watching live broadcasts world-wide, the Secretary of the Navy announced that CVN-80 would be the 9th ship to bear the name ENTERPRISE.

Within seconds and with tears of joy still drying, the USS Enterprise Association found a new calling... Unite over 200,000 Enterprise Veterans and ensure that the legacy of CVAN/CVN-65 is preserved and delivered to the crew of CVN-80.

In September 2013, the 27th annual Enterprise Association reunion was held in Denver, Colo. During the event, the Association

voted to begin a strategic planning process to plot the course of the Association over the next three years through November 25, 2016, the Association's 30th Anniversary.

The strategic plan, a first for the Association, outlines a new way of thinking, organizing and measuring success for the Enterprise Association that will better meet the desires of Enterprise veterans, their families, and all those that cherish ENTERPRISE.

While this strategic plan is intended to be a fluid, living document that will be updated on an annual basis, five core themes emerge that lay the foundation for years to come:

1) The Enterprise Association will move from a "one-size-fits-all" organization to one that recognizes that all Veterans of Enterprise have unique interests and memories of

**Continued on page 7**

### HIGHLIGHTS

Strategic Plan	1
Pay your Dues Online	1
From the Chairman	2
My Last Visit	3
2013 Reunion Wrap-up	4-5
Member of the Month	6
Membership Update	7
Survey Launched	8

### This Quarter in BIG 'E' HISTORY

- Oct 29, 1976- Enterprise anchored in Hobart, Tasmania, where the crew hosted over 40,000 visitors.
- Nov 2, 1985- While operating SW of San Diego, Enterprise struck a portion of "Bishop Rock".
- Nov 25, 1961- Enterprise was commissioned into service.
- Dec 2, 1965- Enterprise became the first nuclear warship to engage in combat operations when Air Wing 9 launched 118 sorties into Vietnam.

## Paying Your Dues: Members May Now Pay Dues With PayPal

The Association is proud to announce that we have created an account with PayPal to allow you to use a credit card or your PayPal account to pay your annual dues or to make contributions to the Fund.

You can rest assured that this new method is perfectly safe. PayPal is a trusted name in online transactions and is used everyday by online



giants like eBay and small businesses everywhere.

With PayPal paying your dues is as safe as sending a check, but faster and more convenient. Your online payment of dues will allow your money to help the Association instantly, and relieves

our Treasurer of a huge administrative burden.

Visit [www.cvan-cvn-65.org](http://www.cvan-cvn-65.org) for more information.

## From the Chairman...



**Don Thiry**

We had a great time in Denver thanks to our co-hosts, April and Robin Spelman and Shirley and Jim Voorhies. The weather was unseasonably hot but didn't interfere with the many activities they had planned for us. Our week started with a visit to Central

City, Colorado, where the City Council proclaimed our reunion week as "Enterprise Week" in Central City and ended with a great Farewell Banquet with great food and our annual auction and raffle.

Thank you to all for your generous donations towards our raffles and auction. Your generosity allows us to continue to awarding scholarships to our well deserving applicants. This year we awarded two \$1,000 scholarships. We hope we will have many more applicants to review next year. Please encourage your dependents to apply!

Saying thank you doesn't seem like enough to express my appreciation to Bill and Linda Slupe and Rich and Betsy Kehoe for their time, effort and

dedication they put into exhibiting our Memorabilia Room and opening our Association Store each and every reunion. It takes a lot of work and organization to catalog, pack and deliver to our reunion events. I'm sure you appreciate all that they do as much as I do.

Soon we will have our newly designed website up a running. I'm sure you will find it cleaner, easier to find items and more modern. Larry Ragan and Sarah Self-Kyler have put many hours in working on the new site. I'm looking forward to hearing what you think. You can always email me at [donthiry@gmail.com](mailto:donthiry@gmail.com).

Our next annual reunion will be in Iowa and chaired by Mike Butler. More information will follow in future newsletters and will be available on the new website soon.

Marylee and I wish all of you a wonderful holiday season to you and your families.

Until next time,

*Don Thiry*



As the Association grows in scope and membership, we are eager to embrace the talents and interests of our members. Areas we need help:

- **Career Networking-** We're hoping that we can become a place where 'E' veterans can reach out to other 'E' veterans for career advice or job opportunities. Ideas welcome.
- **'E'-storians-** Bill Slupe, our amazing Historian, is looking for ways and ideas for how to share all the memorabilia and sea stories the Association has collected.
- **Joomla-saavy Webpage Designers**

If you'd like to help with these efforts or have other ideas to improve the Association, please send a note to: [enterprise\\_association@yahoo.com](mailto:enterprise_association@yahoo.com).

## Association Leadership

Chairman	Don Thiry	<a href="mailto:donthiry@gmail.com">donthiry@gmail.com</a>
Vice Chairman	Jim Voorhies	<a href="mailto:jamesvco@cs.com">jamesvco@cs.com</a>
Treasurer	Jerry Pearson	<a href="mailto:jerrycvan65@socket.net">jerrycvan65@socket.net</a>
Secretary	Robin Spelman	<a href="mailto:robincspelman@gmail.com">robincspelman@gmail.com</a>
3-Yr Board Member	Harrison Gerstlauer	<a href="mailto:gherst@q.com">gherst@q.com</a>
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1-Yr Board Member	Tom Reed	<a href="mailto:bigetruckertom@yahoo.com">bigetruckertom@yahoo.com</a>
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1st Past Chairman	Bill Newby	<a href="mailto:billnewby@bellsouth.net">billnewby@bellsouth.net</a>
3rd Past Chairman	Don Rasmussen	<a href="mailto:planes17g@gmail.com">planes17g@gmail.com</a>
Newsletter	Art Dumas	<a href="mailto:ddttmom@hotmail.com">ddttmom@hotmail.com</a>
	Sarah Self-Kyler	<a href="mailto:sarah.selfkyler@gmail.com">sarah.selfkyler@gmail.com</a>
Ship's Store	Rich Kehoe	<a href="mailto:cvan65@comcast.net">cvan65@comcast.net</a>
Webmaster	Larry Ragan	<a href="mailto:dpclragan@gmail.com">dpclragan@gmail.com</a>
Membership	Art Dumas	<a href="mailto:ddttmom@hotmail.com">ddttmom@hotmail.com</a>
Historian/Chaplain	Bill Slupe	<a href="mailto:wslupe1@aol.com">wslupe1@aol.com</a>
Scholarship	Jerry Van de Vyver	
By-laws	Don Thiry	
2014 Reunion	Mike Butler	
2015 Reunion	Tom Reed/ Ray Cote	

# SEA STORY: My Last Visit With ENTERPRISE

By Ronald Stutesman, ADJ2, VA-94



On December 1, 2012, the USS Enterprise CVAN/CVN-65 was relieved of duty in a most respectful, honorable, heartwarming ceremony. Seating on pier twelve filled almost the entire 1123 ft. length of Enterprise.

I didn't know quite what to expect as celebrating like

we did on the 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday was inappropriate. This year was somewhat subdued. Everybody was somewhere between sad and overwhelmingly proud to be there for her and each other.

The proceedings commenced with the arrival of dignitaries and brass with the attendant bells. Nineteen guns, for the CNO, rudely awakened some of us, firing from the Big E's own salute guns in the starboard bow catwalk. I remember hanging out by those very guns as an itinerant plane captain and had never heard them fire until now. The Secretary of the Navy declared that there will be another Enterprise, CVN-80. Everybody on the pier cheered at the announcement.

Visitation was necessarily limited to the three days prior to the ceremony. Crew members were standing by for tours. This old salt's attitude was, with respect, "I sailed in this ship; I don't need no stink'n tour." I brought my wife, two daughters, five grandchildren and a son-in-law to walk the decks of Enterprise with me. Despite losing school-time it was the right decision. They were impressed with the size of the ship and really enjoyed the ladders and compartments, the mess decks and berthing spaces, a ready room and sitting in the Captain's chair on the bridge. The adults did not enjoy the ladders so much. Most importantly they appreciated what Grandpa and his shipmates experienced sailing in Enterprise. We roamed and visited all the good places to see, including the very impressive foc'sle. I explained how crowded the now empty hangar was with all sorts of flying machines, support gear and the liberty boats, Admiral's barge and Captain's gig stored forward.

On the roof I tried to tell how everything was done trying not to be too detailed or boring. A big empty flight deck is, after all, a big empty flight deck; although, I could see the strike aircraft arranged around the perimeter, Skyhawks in the slot, Viggies parked forward of the island and a Fudd patiently turning in front of Flight deck Control.

Stepping onto the flight deck I felt a comforting familiarity as I headed for my airplane, angle parked, facing aft on cat #2 after the recovery, being refueled and waiting for the re-spot. "Where next, Hon?... Hon!!! "

Enterprise has always been impressive with her singular island structure which, after the fire, was refurbished with more space and additional bridge windows that more closely resemble the newer ships. I prefer the original beehive look. This modification took its toll as I had trouble navigating the once simple structure I had known so well, while trying to find vultures row without looking like a lubber in front of the grandchildren. I had some difficulty below but said nothing as I had nothing but 47 years to blame it on. I suddenly remembered the mantra of naval aviation: COMPLACENCY KILLS. Maybe a tour wasn't such a bad idea.

I had a surprise for the kids. While up in the island I found a Quartermaster named Tiffany Odom who agreed to help me hoist my colors. Her gracious reply: "No problem." I had the kids line up against the



The Stutesman Family on the bridgewing of Big E. During their tour the flew their flags from the yardarm.

**Continued on page 6**



## 2013 Reunion – Denver, Colorado



The official 2013 Reunion photo



LCDR Sarah Self-Kyler and LCDR (Ret) John Wester, Plankowner, were the youngest and oldest attending members.



CAPT Bill Hamilton, current CO of Big E, delivered the opening remarks at the banquet via a pre-recorded video.



Florence Muessig, Gary Blackburn, Bob Foley and Linda Slupe all dressed up at the pre-banquet social.



Annual Memorial Ceremony to honor Enterprise Veterans lost in the last year. Remembered at the Memorial Service: Herb Hentshel, John Curley, Jim Dubose and William Slupe, Jr. (Bill's Father).



facebook  
Linked in

We are now online and growing every day.

Check out our new webpage at [www.cvan-cvn-65.org](http://www.cvan-cvn-65.org)  
Or join in the conversation on [Facebook](#) and [Linked-in](#)





Daytime activities included a trip to Frisco, CO, a tour of the Coors Brewery, and golf at the Inverness Resort, while evenings were often spent in the History Room studying old cruisebooks and albums with Shipmates.

BZ goes out to **Bill Slupe**, Historian, for all his hard work setting up and manning the Room year-after-year.



Dinners in town are always a fun way to meet new people and to hear new (and improved) sea stories.

## FEELING LIKE YOU MISSED OUT?

Join us at a future reunion. Our reunions are the heart of the Association, however are a lot of work to make them a success. If you are interested in supporting any of the upcoming reunions, please don't hesitate to reach out to these coordinators and they will most certainly welcome help.

- 2014      Waterloo, IA (Details to following in next quarter's newsletter)  
Coordinator- Mike Butler, [mike.butler052@gmail.com](mailto:mike.butler052@gmail.com)
- 2015      Springfield, MA  
Coordinator- Tom Reed, [bigetruckertom@yahoo.com](mailto:bigetruckertom@yahoo.com)
- 2016      TBD (Idea for a Location- Get your vote in by completing the online survey)

# Give the Gift of Membership

Don't know what to ask for this holiday season? Ask for the gift of an Enterprise Association membership renewal or a donation to the Association General Fund or Enterprise Association Fund, Inc.

With new payment options using PayPal (also give credit card option), it has never been easier to pay dues or to make a donation.

Donations may be made to the Association (not tax deductible) to support reunion events, admin costs, etc., or to the Enterprise Association Fund, Inc., the tax-deductible arm of the Association. Donations to Fund support the two annual scholarship programs.

For more information, visit [www.cvan-cvn-65.org](http://www.cvan-cvn-65.org).

## My Last Visit... Continued from page 3

bulkhead, told them to hold their right arms out straight from the waist and then draped each arm with a flag. You should have seen their faces as each received their own personal colors. Each in turn walked up to Tiffany who bent their flag to the halyard. They then proceeded to hoist away smartly with the QM's guidance. Proud and happy doesn't begin to describe their experience or mine.

QM Tiffany patiently and reverently folded each flag with their help and presented it to them, whereupon they clutched it to their heart and I saluted each, and told them "this was their flag to love, honor, protect." They were impressed, and I shall always remember, as I hope they will, that wonderful moment. Tiffany shed a tear when I hoist my colors in Honor of Mark and Frank and Tom, my pilots lost in Vietnam while also remembering my Skipper Otto and his wingman Whizzer. I like to think that these flags will be passed on to my grandchildren's grandchildren with the story of how they raised their flags on Enterprise.

When I think of Enterprise I always smile. I think of my ship and her crew, the bigger than life experience of the flight deck and hours sitting in an A-4 cockpit waiting for flight quarters to secure. That I got the chance to visit and bring a family I couldn't imagine having back then is truly an emotionally satisfying experience. The treatment we received by all members of her present crew was heartwarming and reflected the common experience we share. I thank her last Skipper for continuing her honorable tradition of being the first and the finest.

WE ARE THE SHIP...WE ARE LEGEND

## MEMBER OF THE MONTH



James Voorhies

Jim, a long time resident in Central City, CO, recently served as a Co-coordinator of 2013 Denver Reunion in September. During the reunion, Jim was elected as the Vice Chairman of the Association. He has been a member since 2001.

Jim is a dual service Veteran, having served in the US Marine Corps as an infantryman and then enlisting in the US Navy as an Electronics Technician in the Nuclear Power Program. During his time in the Navy, Jim served aboard ENTERPRISE from 1983-1987 in RC Division.

After leaving the Navy, Jim completed a BS degree in Nuclear Engineering Technology and an MS degree in Occupational Safety.

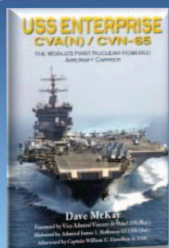
He used his training to further his career in the nuclear safety industry.

His current position as the S.M. Stoller Corporation ESH&Q Deputy Director keeps him travelling throughout the US ensuring many nuclear facilities are operating safely.

Jim is married to Shirley and have a combined family of four adult children and three grandchildren.

### USS Enterprise CVA(N)/CVN 65:

#### The World's First Nuclear Powered Aircraft Carrier



The most comprehensive Enterprise book in print. Nearly 700 pages of history and photos.

Normal Price: \$125 Association Price \$100

This limited time offer expires Dec 31, 2013

<http://www.cvan65assocshipsstore.org>



## Strategic Plan... Continued from page 1

their time on Big E.

2) The Enterprise Association will become a volunteer-driven organization, where all members are encouraged and empowered to build and manage programs and services for fellow members of the Association... Work with members, not for members.

3) The Enterprise Association will seek to improve the value of membership in the Association through the development of corporate partnerships, career counseling services and networking opportunities.

4) The Enterprise Association will seek opportunities to preserve and grow the ENTERPRISE historical archive, and to celebrate the history of ENTERPRISE through outreach, articles, and social media.

5) The Enterprise Association will develop and implement an effective, multi-faceted communication and marketing plan that delivers unified messages that resonate with the target markets and generates interest in becoming a member of the Association.

A few short-term tasks of the strategic plan include a survey of both members and non-member veterans of ENTERPRISE, improvement of Association communication efforts, and improved member relations.

"It is no secret that we are a salty, slighter older group that may be not be so saavy with modern technology, social media, and the interests of our younger veterans," Don Thiry, Chairman, said with a smile. "That said, we recognize that there is an enormous opportunity to make the Enterprise Association better and more relevant if we find a few passionate young veterans to bring us into the

21<sup>st</sup> century."

It was very clear that all in attendance at the Colorado reunion were passionate about ENTERPRISE and that they cared preserving the legacy and the legends of the ship.

"As one of the younger members of the Association, I see so much love for our ship, and I hope that we can begin to recruit more young members to ensure the stories are preserved and re-told for generations to com," said Robin Spelman, Secretary of the Association and former Big 'E' Command Master Chief.

This 3-year plan is just a stepping stone, explained Thiry. "As our membership grows, we envision more, member-generated sub-committees that unite Veterans from across generations toward a common goal or with a common interest."

One such sub-committee the Association would like to see develop is a History Committee. Currently managed by Bill Slupe, the Historian, the Association has an extensive collection of ENTERPRISE memorabilia that has been donated by Veterans over the years.

"Sadly, I have dozens of totes full of wonderful memories that are only displayed once a year (at the annual reunion)," said Slupe. "I know there are many fellow Veterans that love Big 'E' history as much as I do, and I'd love more than anything to have us all in a room someday to dream up ways to better share and celebrate the history collection we have."

While there is still much to be done in the year ahead, the leadership of the Association is excited to be beginning this new chapter in Enterprise Association history.

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

### CHAIRMAN'S CHALLENGE:

A few of us are in contact with our fellow shipmates. As Membership Chairman, I am offering for each new member that I recruited by you, a donation of \$5.00 to the Scholarship Fund.

The applicant must complete the "referred by" line on their application. We need new members that are younger in age so start recruiting!

-Art Dumas, Membership Chairman

### WELCOME ABOARD TO OUR NEW SHIPMATES:

Thomas Coughlin	1965-1968
Bernard Zurrgriggen	1961-1963
John Wester	1961-1963
Juan Martinez, Jr.	1967-1969
Elvin Propst	1967-1970
Robert Andrews	1974-1975
John Vaclav	1974-1976
Kenneth Taylor	1965-1967 -1969-1970

## Tell Us How We are Doing: Participate in First Association Survey

The Association just kicked off its first ever survey of members and Veterans of USS Enterprise.

The goal of the survey, according to Don Thiry, is to help Association leadership better understand the interests and desires of its current members but to also understand the interests of Enterprise veterans that are not members of the Association.

"During this year's reunion, we took a hard look within and realized that if we want to grow and improve the Association, we need to get to know our members and understand why there are so many veterans of Enterprise are not members," said Don Thiry, Chairman.

It is estimated that over 150,000

veterans served aboard Enterprise in her 52 years of service. Now that the ship is inactive and making preparations for decommissioning, the Enterprise Association is eager to be an organization where veterans can reunite, share sea stories, and preserve the history of the ship while also developing opportunities to give back to veterans and to prepare for the arrival of the ninth ship to be name Enterprise, CVN-80.

The survey focuses on the benefits of Association membership, communication preferences, value and use of dues, reunions, as well as more general demographic information about



To ensure your voice is heard, go to:  
[www.surveymonkey.com/s/JRPGJT9](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JRPGJT9)

The questionnaire should take no more than 10 minutes to complete.

veterans of Enterprise that will help tailor future programs.

"We hope the results of survey will provide a lot of very helpful feedback that we can incorporate into our daily efforts and future plans," said Thiry.

Once the study has been completed, results will be available online.

*All members are encouraged to submit articles, sea stories and photos to the quarterly newsletter. Send input for the next edition to [enterprise\\_association@yahoo.com](mailto:enterprise_association@yahoo.com).*

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