

Hi Everyone!

The first meeting of 2006 for the Gamewardens of Vietnam, Mid Atlantic Chapter, was held on Saturday, February 25th, from 12:00 noon to 3:00 pm, in Halifax, VA. Halifax is just a little North of South Boston down near the North Carolina border and our meeting was held in "Molly's" restaurant on Main Street. Newell Butts, one of the GWVN Mid Atlantic Chapter BoD's, lives near Halifax and did a fine job of handling the arrangements for the meeting. (10) Mid Atlantic Chapter members were in attendance and this was the first meeting that (3) of our members were able to attend.

L to R, back row: Ken Meek, Clarence Cooper, Leonard Paine, Roger Alston, Vaughn Schuler (hiding), Gary Marker & Larry Weatherall

L to R, front row: Jerry Gandy, Richard "Mac" McMurry and Newell Butts

See picture # 1.

The location outside of the Norfolk / Virginia Beach area was selected as an alternative to always having our meetings in the same general location and we're planning to have at least one meeting per year outside the Norfolk / VB area. The thought is to rotate the location of that meeting so members who are outside the immediate Norfolk are able to attend without having to make the long drive. We're open to suggestions for the location of our next "off site" meeting and all recommendations are welcomed!

The first item on the agenda for the meeting was LUNCH! Monte Blackwell, the Mid Atlantic Chapter Chaplin, was unable to attend but we were fortunate to have Roger Alston in attendance and he was kind enough to lead the blessing.

After lunch we moved on to the business portion of the meeting with the following items.

1. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Clarence Cooper reported on the Chapter's efforts toward having a monument dedicated to the "BROWN WATER NAVY" placed at the Tidewater Veterans Memorial Park in Virginia Beach. The monument is completed and the included picture is what it looks like: ("click" on the picture and "drag" the corner out to enlarge it)

See picture # 2.

The dedication will take place on Memorial Day, May 29th, 2006 and Captain Allen ("Wes") Weseleskey, USN (Ret.) has volunteered to be our speaker for the dedication. Details on the time of the dedication and other information will be coming out in the next month or so.

3. "Coop" also talked about the timing for our next meeting which will be on the same weekend as the monument dedication. We've decided to have the Chapter Meeting on Sunday, May 28th, instead of having the Dedication and Meeting on the same day. The thought behind separating the two events is to allow for "flexible time frames" around both events so neither will be affected by having to move on to the other. More details on the timing and location will be out also in the next month or so.

We didn't discuss it during the meeting but on the drive back to Norfolk, Coop, Gary, Jerry and I started talking about the fact that the Chapter has been up and running for a year now and that the Chapter Officers should stand for election at the next meeting. If any of you have some time on your hands and would consider taking on some of the Chapter responsibilities, or taking over some of the leadership positions, we'd welcome the nominations. Please forward them to Coop at: seniorcoop33@aol.com and we'll plan on having Chapter elections at the next meeting. As a reminder, the elected positions are: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Supply Officer.

4. Larry Weatherall reported out on the status of the East Coast GWVN Monument and MK I PBR relocation and re-dedication at NAB Little Creek this coming July.

Three of us were able to meet with our new Point Of Contact at NSWG-4, Lt. Phil Riggs, early in February.

Lt. Riggs took us inside the compound where the Monument and MK I are being stored and we're happy to report that everything is in good shape. The current plan is for both the Monument and MK I to be moved to the new display location sometime in May of this year. The concrete slab that the Monument and MK I will sit on is complete and we are fortunate that the Navy has improved the site by having electrical power pulled out to the new slab. That means that lighting will be available and perhaps we'll be able to fly a flag aboard the MK I. Once we have firm dates on the move, I'll get the word out and we'll begin to organize working parties to get the MK I cleaned up and painted.

Regarding the timing for the re-dedication, I've contacted the current and former Presidents of the UDT/SEAL Assn. and suggested that we have the re-dedication of the Monument and MK I on the same weekend that the annual East Coast UDT/SEAL Reunion is taking place, July 21, 22 & 23, and they are both fully in favor of it. The original dedication of the MK I and relocated Monument took place on the same weekend as the UDT/SEAL Reunion in 2002 and was attended by many members of that organization as well as the active duty members of NSWG-4 and SBU-20. FYI, we are welcomed as Associate Members of the UDT/SEAL Assn. and I can personally attest to the fact that those guys know how to put on a party..... Attending their annual "Capability Exercise" that is held on the Saturday of their reunion is not to be missed! Their web site is: <http://www.udtseal.org/> for anyone interested in finding out more about what they have going on.

More information on the specific dates and times will be worked out and communicated as soon as they are available.

5. Gary Marker gave the Treasurers Report on the Chapter financial status and the good news is that the Chapter is in the **\$ - BLACK - \$**. The monument fund has slightly more funds that are needed to cover those costs and minus that expense, we are approx. \$430.00 to the good. A more detailed report will be forthcoming at the next meeting when we are able to include the Ships Store inventory in the report. Coop and Pat Doyle have worked up a way to have small (8x10) framed color copies of the "Firefight" print available and we'll work out the details and have more information available during our next meeting.

6. Pat Doyle was unable to attend the meeting and will work with Gary Marker to include the Ships Store inventory report for the next meeting. Coop took charge of "The Store" in Pat's absence and handled the sale of several shirts before and after the meeting.

7. Jerry Gandy reported out on the visit to the USS J.E. Williams that the CO of the Williams initiated as a result of Ralph Christopher's "River Rats" book signing last December. The meeting was a huge success and (6) members of the Mid Atlantic Chapter were able to meet with the CO, XO and CMDCM for about two hours on 01/30/06. Gary Marker arranged for a framed copy of the "Firefight" print and it was presented to the ship during a small ceremony in the Crews Mess.

See picture # 3.

The XO of the J.E. Williams, LCDR Chris DeGregory, presented a very nice wooden plaque from the Commissioning of the Williams to the Mid Atlantic Chapter and we passed it around during the meeting for all to see. It is a very nice plaque with the dates of the Keel Laying, Christening, Commissioning and an outline of the ship engraved and with the ships coins embedded on once side and the ships emblem engraved on the other. We'll also have it at the next meeting for those who missed it to see.

As a result of our initial visit, the GWVN Mid Atlantic Chapter Membership was invited to the Change Of Command Ceremony for Capt. Vance on February 17th. Jerry Gandy handled the organization of that event and was one of (8) members of the Chapter who represented GWVN during that ceremony. Jerry reports that the new CO is just as interested in continuing the relationship with GWVN as Capt. Vance was and we will continue to maintain contact. Jerry Gandy also presented a new Black Beret to the ship to replace the one that John Woody gave to them during the Commissioning in Charleston. The first beret was sadly "lost at sea" in what was reported to be 60+ knot winds....

8. A reminder about the National GWVN Reunion coming up in Denver, CO, on August 2nd through the 6th was brought up and Roger Alston has reported that he has signed and is planning on attending. All of the details on events, hotels and dates are on the GWVN website at <http://www.tf116.org>.

9. New business item #1: Chapter VESTS were the main new business topic of the meeting. Jerry Gandy

brought his (considerable) collection of fabric (denim, tan cloth and green cloth) and leather vests as examples of what can be done and the consensus from the group was to investigate having green cloth vests with the GWVN Logo embroidered on the back with "Mid Atlantic Chapter" embroidered underneath (instead of Norfolk Chapter). Coop, Jerry and Roger were appointed as members of the "Vest Committee" and we should have more information by the next meeting. The finished product should end up looking something like the following picture (Thanks to Pat Doyle for modeling his vest at the last meeting).

See picture # 4.

10. New business item #2: MK II PBR Models are CURRENTLY available and MK I PBR Models will soon be available through the Ships Store at the GWVN Website of <http://www.tf116.org>. They are selling at the discounted price of \$189.00 each. Roger Alston brought his MK II Boat model to the meeting and it is a fine looking boat, for a MK II that is.... (I'm a MK I guy myself....).

See picture #5.

We had a great time at the meeting and the drive was worth each and every minute of the time it took us to get there and back. I'm also happy to report that we managed to run the gauntlet at Emporia without a ticket!

I hope you're all up for attending our next meeting and the "Brown Water Navy" Memorial dedication coming up in May. I'm looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible at both events as well as the re-dedication of the East Coast GWVN Monument and MK I PBR at Little Creek in July.

V/R,

Larry Weatherall

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President, GWVN Mid Atlantic Chapter