



Texas Navy Association News

March 2010 - Addendum to Dues Statements

Texas Navy Educational Committee successful with State Board of Education

The Texas Navy Association Educational Committee, under the leadership of **Adm. Edwin Greiner** (Pearland), reports that it successfully petitioned the Texas State Board of Education for inclusion of Texas Navy history in the 7th grade school history curriculum. The Texas Navy Association advocated inclusion under the TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) standards for Social Studies because TEKS standards result in mandatory inclusion in the 4th and 7th grade Texas history curriculum. The State Board of Education could have decided to (a) reject the request, (b) make inclusion of the Texas Navy history optional, or (c) make inclusion mandatory (TEKS Standards). Adm. Greiner reported that the State Board of Education unanimously voted for TEKS Standard inclusion thereby mandating inclusion of the history of the Texas Navy into the 7th grade school books. A final vote will take place later this year; however, because of the previous vote of the full board, no opposition is expected and final approval is expected. If all goes as it appears it will go, for the first time in recent history (perhaps ever!) the History of the Texas Navy will be taught to our Texas school children and included in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills testing!

Ship's Store to include many new Items

The Ship's Store has been reinstated on the Texas Navy website, and many new items have been added. Further, more are coming - including Ties, Belt Buckles, Challenge Coins, Signature clothing items, and various LOGO items of jewelry. Please visit the Texas Navy website at www.texasnavy.org and click on any of the Ship's Store links. Ordering merchandise is accomplished by either email or phone call, and we are working to have a credit card processing storefront installed so you can complete your transaction on-line.

Two goals have been set for the Ship's Store: (1) Expansion of the awareness of Texas Navy History and the Texas Navy's current existence thru the sale of logo merchandise; and (2) Raise funds to support the TNA's growth and educational projects. Support of your Texas Navy Association and show your Texas Navy pride by making purchases from the Ship's Store!

Texas Navy SCUTTLEBUTT email list grows to over 100 Members

The on-line email "list server" (akin to a bulletin board) known as the **Texas Navy Scuttlebutt** has grown to over 100 users, including all ranks of Texas Navy members. The list is our best way to convey breaking news, as messages posted appear in your email in-basket. If you are not already a member, you are urged to sign up for it at:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Texas_Navy_Scuttlebutt/ or to contact Adm. Dick Brown at ke5r@tx.rr.com and request an invitation. Also, if you have projects, squadron meetings, boating events or other events, be sure to let **Commander Ron Brown** (Houston) know by sending email to: <ron@ronwbrown.com> as he is the keeper of the EVENTS CALENDAR.

Texas Navy Flag Issue Finally Put to Rest

The use of the flag of the 1st Texas Navy, also known as the Hawkins Flag or the company flag of McKinney and Williams, was formally adopted as the Official Flag of the Texas Navy Association at the 1Q2010 Board of Directors Meeting. For many years, this flag has been

thought to be too similar to the current flag of the country of LIBERIA to be flown by ships and boats in the United States. However, a report given by **Adm. Jack Dyess** (Haltom City) has put this issue to rest. The actual appearance of the flags are sufficiently dissimilar as to prevent confusion to those ship masters to whom it would have relevance; and secondly, the very location on a vessel where either the Texas Navy Flag or the Liberian Flag should be flown prevents any confusion.

The Hawkins flag consists of thirteen alternating red and white stripes with the exact same appearance of the United States flag while the Liberian flag has only eleven stripes. Both flags contain a blue field with a single white star. The blue field on the Liberian flag overlaps five of the alternating red and white stripes. It is approximately 45% of the height of the flag and the white star covers approximately 72% of the field. On the other hand, the blue field on the Hawkins flag overlaps seven of the alternating red and white stripes. It is approximately 54% of the height and the white star covers approximately 66% of the blue field. Although both flags consist of a white star on a blue field overlapping alternating red and white stripes, the resulting appearance is significantly different.

Maritime tradition requires national flags (in this case the Liberian) to be flown on the stern of vessels while they are in their own territorial waters or underneath the starboard spreader while transiting the territorial waters of another country. These are the only two positions power driven vessels should fly the national flag. Flying the national flag on a vessel in international waters is optional. But, if it is flown, it will be flown on the stern of the vessel. National flags should never be flown underneath the port spreader. Conversely, the Hawkins Flag is considered a "house" flag, i.e., it does not represent any type of political entity, city, state or nation. House flags are always flown underneath the port spreader.

With these two factors in mind, it is highly unlikely that the master, including master/commanders of military vessels, of an ocean going vessel (the only individuals to whom the issue of similarity between the flags has any relevance) would ever confuse the two flags. To the trained eye, the flags are dissimilar in appearance, except at a great distance, and are flown from mutually exclusive positions on a vessel.

A Knight to Remember

The TNA Board of Directors recently finalized the purchase of and rights to eleven original water color Texas Navy paintings from Texas Navy **Admiral Bruce Marshall** (Austin), one of only two living American artists honored with knighthood by European royalty. Actually he's a man of many titles: his home State of Texas created a special title for him: Artist of the 65th Legislature. Our Texas Navy Association gave him another Title: Artist in Residence of the Texas Navy. And the Sons of the Confederate Veterans created still another unique title for Admiral Marshall: National Artist, Confederate States of America. Argosy Magazine and other publications have popularized him as the Rembrandt of the West. Plans are afoot to coordinate a rotating display of these paintings at various historical sites throughout Texas.

Seaport Museum at Galveston

In an on-going collaboration under the leadership of the Galveston Historical Foundation, strategic planning is advancing steadily to restore The Seaport Museum in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike. Texas Navy **Admiral W. Dwayne Jones** (Galveston), the GHF's Executive Director, reports that exhibits will be more engaging and interactive. More and better use of sound technology would give visitors a sense of being in a bustling 19th-20th Century seaport.

Texas Navy License Plates

Adm. Rich Coutermarsh reports that he has put together a plan whereby the Texas Navy Association would have a joint marketing agreement with My Plates, Inc., to create two Texas Department of Motor Vehicles specialty license plates for our organization. Work is currently underway to create and gain TxDOT and TxDMV approval on a Texas Navy Association license plate that the general public can purchase, and a second specialty license plate that will be restricted and reserved for Texas Navy Admiral use only. The Plates will go through a certification process that will include a 10-day public comment period, Texas Department of Public Safety testing, red light camera and visual identification, and other testing requirements. We are optimistic that the specialty plates will pass TxDOT and TxDMV tests with flying colors, and are hoping to have the Texas Navy Association specialty plates available by the end of the second quarter. This project is an excellent public relations and marketing opportunity, and 5% percent of the proceeds from each "non-qualified" (general public) plate sold will go to the Texas Navy Association. Watch the SCUTTLEBUTT for updates on this project!
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Texas_Navy_Scuttlebutt/

The Chester W. Nimitz Squadron elects its new Commander

Admiral Jack Dyess (Haltom City) has been elected by Adm. Chester W. Nimitz Squadron members to be their new Commander. Also elected and/or re-elected are **Rear Admiral Lester R. ("Bob") Smith** (USN, Retired - Dallas) as Vice President; **Adm. D.A. Sharpe** (Ft. Worth) as Executive Officer; **Adm. Carolyn Casterline** (Dallas) as Chaplain; **Adm. Nick Gilliam**, CPA (Dallas) as Treasurer; **Adm. Mark Kelsey** (Ft. Worth) as Communications Officer; **Adm. Colin Creighton** (Dallas) as Information Officer; and **Adm. Mickey Casterline** (Dallas/Rockport/Somewhere at sea) as Operations Officer.

Galveston-Houston Squadron Organizational Committee selected

As there are approximately one-hundred plus Commissioned Admirals residing in the Galveston and Houston area, work has begun to launch at least one, if not two, new Texas Navy Squadrons in the Houston/Galveston area. A Launch committee has been formed, its members: **Admirals Edwin T. Greiner** (Pearland), **Adm. Joseph K. Shook** (Houston), **Adm. R.J. Ritter** (Houston), **Adm. Richard A. Coutermarsh** (Kingwood), **Adm. Richard B. Hatch** (Montgomery), and **Adm. W. Dwayne Jones** (Galveston). Watch the SCUTTLEBUTT for news of meetings.

TNA Board scheduled its 2nd Quarter Meeting for May 8, 2010

Continuing its successful strategy of scheduling Board Meetings throughout the State of Texas, this next meeting will be conducted at the Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historical Site, the 1st Quarter Meeting having been at the Houston Yacht Club, on January 23, 2010. Although the city of Galveston remains the official Home Port of the Texas Navy, in order to actively promote and give more visibility to the existence and mission of the Texas Navy and the TNA, the Board decided in 2008 to rotate its meeting sites.

All Texas Navy Association members in good standing are invited to attend general Board of Director Meetings. Due to very limited space at many of the venues, reservations are required. If you would like to attend, please contact TNA President **Adm. Dick Brown** (Dallas) at ke5r@tx.rr.com, or 214-458-4081.

On-going Search for INVINCIBLE

At the 1Q2010 Board of Directors meeting, **Adm. Wayne Gronquist** (Austin), the Chairman of the INVINCIBLE Search Committee, promptly deferred to Committee member **Adm. Will Fisher** (Houston). Adm. Fisher introduced our archaeologist, **Adm. Thomas J. Oertling** (Galveston), who reported on his latest work in our search for the INVINCIBLE. Given the fact that in 25 years of searching we have located many shipwrecks that all proved not to be the INVINCIBLE, Professor Oertling sought additional research, specifically, he secured relevant entries of the engineering log of Lieutenant Baldwin from the Naval Library in Bethesda. Lieutenant Baldwin's engineering log was written in conjunction with the unpublished 1850 Galveston Bay and Galveston Bar chart, which ultimately resulted in a maritime chart of Galveston Bay two or three years later. The relevant pages of the log make reference to "the Schooner." Although "the Schooner" is not named, it is likely to be the INVINCIBLE as we have no other record of a Schooner foundering in the immediate area during this period. In fact, our only solid description of the site of the wreck of the INVINCIBLE is "inside the bar and outside the breakers."

The location of the Schooner is not denoted on Lieutenants Baldwin's working chart, but it appears that bearings were taken from the Schooner to three known landmarks, (1) the cathedral, (2) the wreck of the steamer CUBA, and (3) the lighthouse.

Using see-through drafting paper, Tom and Dr. Samuel E. Marx (Director of the Underwater Archaeology Department at Texas A&M at Galveston) plotted the original bearings in reverse from those three positions and determined that their convergence established the location of Site 110, the site of "the Schooner." With Site 110 now located on the 1850 working chart, the archaeologists were able to transpose the location to a current chart. This new possible site of the INVINCIBLE happens to be on land, Galveston Island having been in-filled on the east end by approximately a mile since the hurricane of 1900.

Honoring Admiral Thiel

Many long time members of the Texas Navy Association will remember **Adm. John Thiel**, who served as the President of the Texas Navy Association for many years. **Adm. Will Fisher** (Houston) reported that while Dr. Thiel ran the Texas Navy Association, he accumulated a treasury of over \$100,000, and for this alone we are all indebted to the former President of our Association. It was the Board's consensus that we should honor Dr. Thiel's accomplishments at the next annual Christmas Party with a presentation to his children, who would be our guests of honor. **Adm. Bill Pickavance** (Galveston) volunteered to visit Dr. Thiel's daughter and determine if the family would be receptive to attending our annual event and receiving such an honor.

News Briefs:

- * **Adm. Michael Bailey** (Brazoria) named as Historian of the Texas Navy Association
- * **Adm. Loyd Addy** has agreed to assist **Adm. Dick Brown** with the Texas Navy Website. His first effort was to take all the history articles from the website, together with the material posted to the SCUTTLEBUTT page by **Adm. Bailey**, and incorporate it into a new indexed section. Check out all the new history postings at: http://www.texasnavy.com/TRIAL_PAGE.htm
- * Dallas opens new Elementary School named after **Adm. Ebby Halliday Acers**.
- * **Adm. R. Bowen Loftin** has been named as the new President of Texas A&M University