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# USS PYRO Scuttlebutt

AE-24

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Association

## Bash in Branson: Heading for a Sell-out

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There's always room for a few more good Pyro-maniacs, but at press time some 66 salts, spouses and family members are on the roster for the 2015 *Bash in Branson* USS Pyro reunion May 13-17.

That means a hopping hospitality room, bursting busses, topped-out tours plus an outstanding opportunity to party with old pals and make new friends with the healthy cadre of first-timers heading to the Ozarks for fun and fellowship in 2014.

Good news, bad news: This excellent turn-out carries one caveat: We've pretty well used up our reserved room allotment at the Inn of the Ozarks, so — if you're a member of what we (somewhat) affectionately call the *Golay-gang*, folks who wait until the deadline plus two days to make travel arrangements — book your hotels and tours now to make sure there's room at the Inn and a seat at standing-room-only events.

## Fallen Friends and Shipmates

Since the last *Scuttlebutt*, our Pyro family has been saddened by the losses of a former XO, a plank holder and a spouse whose recent reunion participation won the hearts of everyone who met her.

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**Capt. Joe Felty**



**Gerson Singer**



**Jeane Stokes**

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## Remembering The Fallen

### Capt. Joseph W.R. Felty USN (Ret.) — ‘Ship-driver’

Joe Felty was born on Nov. 3, 1942 in Canton, Texas to LT and Margaret (Rowland) Felty. Joe, his brother Larry Felty and sister Margaret



Felty lived in Waxahachie where Joe grew up playing football, eventually becoming an All State center. He graduated from Waxahachie High school in 1961 and attended The New Mexico Military Institute before receiving an appointment to the Naval Academy, where he again played football. He graduated in in 1966 .

While serving his country Joe earned his master's degree in communications management. Joe served in the U.S. Navy for 26 years, retiring as a Captain in April of 1992.

When asked what he did in the Navy Capt. Felty would say, “I drove ships.”

He was executive officer on AE-24 from 1979-80. Joe married his best friend, Jane Ann Bruns in 1968.

### *Gerson Singer*

Gerson H. Singer, 74, of York, PA, passed away March 26, 2015. He was born on April 4, 1940 in Harrisburg, PA to the late Herman & Florence (Miller) Singer. He was a 1958 graduate of John Harris High School. Gerson proudly served his country in the U.S. Navy from 1958-1962. He was stationed on the Pyro's AE commissioning crew. After his service, Gerson worked in his parents clothing store in Steelton before going to work for the Commonwealth of PA.

He retired from the Commonwealth with over 25 years of service.

Gerson was a member of the York Chapter of the Elks Club, The American Legion Post 1001 (Harrisburg) and Post 791 (York) and VFW Post 556 (York). He was a long standing member and former President of the Blue Mountain Lions Club. Gerson also volunteered for 17 years with the Susquehanna Township Rescue Fire Company 37. He was an avid Notre Dame fan. He loved dogs. Gerson is survived by his wife Gloria Singer, his 2 sons Robert Singer (Shari) and Steven Singer (Tammy), his daughter Kara Fillman (Greg), his four grandchildren: Breanne, Sarah, Samantha and Zachary and his great granddaughter Syriah.

## Jeane, We Hardly Knew You..

Jeane Stokes, wife of Ken Stokes, was born January 7, 1956 and passed away on Monday, January 26, 2015.



**Jeane Stokes with Myra Eckstine, Bob Hauge, and Mary Ellis at the Washington, DC, reunion.**



**Do you want to stick with the current team — if they're willing to serve another two years? Or is it time for a transfusion of new blood?**

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#### USS PYRO ASSOCIATION

##### Officers

President

[Jared Cameron](#)

First Vice President

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Secretary

[Douglas Wisher](#)

Treasurer

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##### Appointed Officers

Scuttlebutt Editor

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MAA

[Jasper Strunk](#)

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[Kimberly Box](#)

Historian

[Tom Moulton](#)

Nominating

Committee

[Gary Golay](#)

[Jasper Strunk](#)

[Loyd Ellis](#)

# From the President's Desk

**New Blood** If they taught us anything on the Pyro is that no one is indispensable in the Navy. Same goes for the Pyro Association.

It's been 10 — count 'em — 10 years since Rick Tully handed over the association gavel to me at the last Pyro reunion in Branson. Even if I'd gone AWOL on the second day, I'd be out of the brig by now! And, well, the 'President for Life' jokes might just be getting a little strained.

The president (me!) has fulfilled most, perhaps all, of his 'campaign promises, headed off most feuds, put together either personally or through delegation, some pretty good reunions, eventually gets Memory Books done and writes a helluva *Scuttlebutt*. Even if being a Patriot Act-protected president of a major national veterans organization (OK, I made this up...) doesn't do much to protect me from verbal or physical abuse from Da Wife, Angel Otero, Kimberly Box, Albert Duplantis and M&M, it's mostly a fun job. And tho I can't throw back martinis while walking up steep hills and chain smoking as I did a decade ago, I still have a degree of passion for the job and unlimited affection for my shipmates.

Plus as Bob Hauge taught me in 2003, you can't get out of any Pyro Association job unless you're able to Shanghai a replacement.

That wouldn't be the least bit difficult: in my opinion, first vice president Billy Eckstine, second vice president Angel Otero, secretary Doug Wisher and treasurer Bill Hogan have served with skill and dedication above and beyond the call of duty. They certainly deserve retention or promotion. And it's not hard to name about 20 other stalwart members who could serve with distinction as president or in any other association billet.

So the question for you, shipmates, is: Do you want to stick with the current team — if they're willing to serve another two years? Or is it time for a transfusion of new blood?

The bylaws give the responsibility for finding suitable and suitably willing candidates for association office to the nomination Committee. If have filled the open slot on that committee with Loyd Ellis, who, despite having been a boatswain's mate in Pyro days, is remarkably good natured, passionate about our association, and always willing to lend a hand when needed. He'll join Jasper Strunk and Gary Golay on that panel.

So if you have an opinion one way or the other — or a burning desire to run for office yourself — get in touch with the nominating committee and let them know what you think.

Otherwise, we'll just have a replay of this:



# Membership Matters

## Things to Discuss at the 2015 Membership meeting

### Scholarships

Depending on the health of the treasury and the number of qualified applicants, one or more USS Pyro scholarships will be awarded by the membership on the recommendation of the Scholarship Committee.

Haven't applied yet? See below:

### Applications now open for 2015 USS Pyro Scholarships

**We don't need no education  
but they do!**



Do you have a child, grandchild or great grandchild heading off to college in 2015?

Are you a USS Pyro vet?

If so, the USS Pyro Association may be able to help with a \$1,000 scholarship.

Based on a program developed by John Wichtrich and Larry Shepline and funded from the association treasury and special contributions from association scholarship 'angels,' two or more Pyro Scholarships will be awarded in 2015.

The 2015 USS PYRO Scholarship application package with all the information you need to apply is here on the USS Pyro website.

Applications for 2015 are due by Friday, May 1, 2015.

### Officers

An odd numbered year means its time to elect officers again. For all you need to know on this, see the touching and eloquent President's Column on Page 3.

Then contact the Nominating Committee to make your views known.

### Reunion 2016

Attendees at the 2015 reunion business meeting will share advice on their ideas for the 2016 gathering. (Per the bylaws, the standing committee will honor that advice as much as possible, but in the end the question becomes whether hotels will give us what we need for a successful reunion.)

Members invariably push for a California venue, which since the San Diego reunion, California has proved difficult because of price issues.

Rejected last year for a central time zone locale, both Long Beach, CA, and Albuquerque, NM, are interested in hosting our group.

Long Beach is a bit on the high end of our price range, not unexpectedly for a seaside location, but with tough negotiations, we can probably make this work.

Albuquerque offers a better deal pricewise, but some, notably Billy Eckstine, whose opinion we all value, is less than enthusiastic about the city as a tourism destination.

If you have a location — preferably in the mountain or pacific time zone, let us know. And if it's your home town you'd like to promote, please check with your favorite hotel or the local tourist board for brochures and an idea of whether the area can compete and desires to compete.

Remember, the main criteria are reasonably priced rooms, permission to bring our own adult beverages into the hospitality room and weekend availability in May (maybe late April in warm climates).

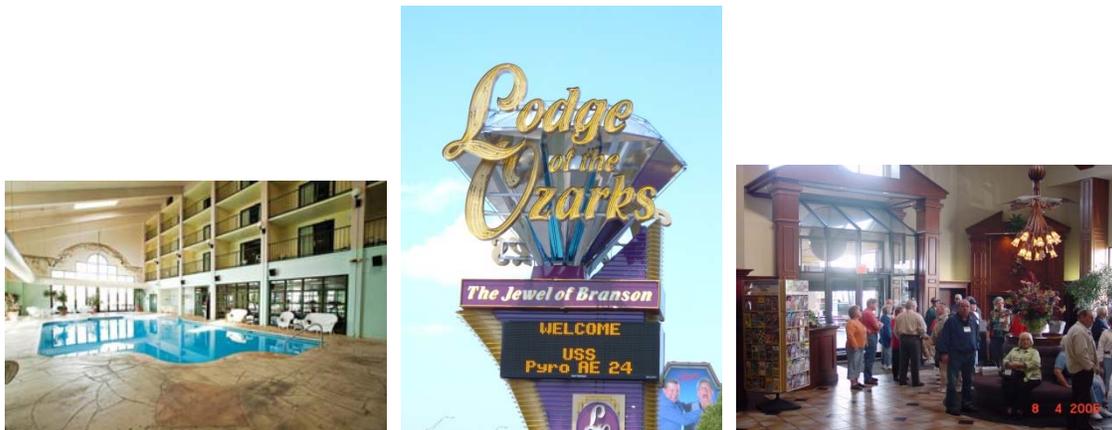
# USS PYRO Reunion 2015

*A Bash in Branson*

Fact Sheet and Schedule

**Dates: May 13-17, 2015**

Headquarters Hotel



## Lodge of the Ozarks

**3431 W. Hwy 76 Branson, Mo 65616**

**Reservations:**

**417-334-7535**

As always, you must call the hotel directly and mention "USS Pyro" to get the Pyro rate.

**Pyro Rate:** \$79.00 plus tax, currently 11 percent, includes:

*Breakfast*

*Free parking*

*Wireless Internet*

*Special arrangements for smokers*

The recently redecorated Lodge of the Ozarks rooms feature:

Cable TV, Free HBO, coffee maker, hair dryer

and, of course

A Pyro Reunion hospitality room with soft drinks and adult beverages limited only by your good sense, fear of your spouse's wrath and the terms of your parole...



### Schedule of 2015 Reunion Events

#### *May 13, 2015 Wednesday*

**14:00 Hotel Check-in begins**

**18:00 Reunion Registration/ Welcome Aboard Reception**

#### *May 14, 2015 -- Thursday*

**10:00 – 12 noon Branson Duck Tour**

**20:00 Six – The Show**

#### *May 15, 2015 – Friday*

**09:30 Remembering Fallen Friends and Heroes – Memorial Service at Shrine of the Holy Spirit and visit to the Branson Military Museum**

**19:00 Shoji Tabuchi Show with RT Bus Transportation**

#### *May 16, 2015 – Saturday*

**10:00 – 12:00 USS Pyro Association Membership Meeting.**

**18:30 Awards Banquet – Group photos, cocktails, great dinner and dancing**

#### *May 17, 2015 – Sunday*

**Homeward bound...**

#### **Branson Information Links**

Shrine of the Holy Sprit

<http://www.shrineoftheholyspirit.com/>

Ride The Ducks

<http://branson.ridetheducks.com/home.aspx>

Explore Branson

<http://explorebranson.com/>

Branson Tourism Center

<http://www.bransontourismcenter.com/>

Lodge of the Ozarks

<http://lodgeoftheozarks.com/>

**USS PYRO Association**  
***A Bash in Branson***  
**May 13-17, 2015 -- Lodge of the Ozarks, Branson, MO.**  
**REGISTRATION WORKSHEET**

**Name**

**Spouse/Guest**

**Other Guest(s)**

**Address**

**City**

**State**

**ZIP**

**TEL:**

**Mobile**

**E-mail:**

**REUNION ACTIVITIES**

**Wednesday 13 May 2015**

**18:00 Reunion Registration/ Welcome Aboard Reception. *(All participants in any reunion event must register.)***

\$25.00 per Person

|                   |                     |          |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------|
| Number of Persons | Per person \$ 25.00 | Total \$ |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------|

**Thursday 14 May 2015**

**10:00 Branson Duck Tour**

\$24.00 per person

|                   |                     |          |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------|
| Number of Persons | Per person \$ 25.00 | Total \$ |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------|

**20:00 Six : The Show at Lodge of the Ozarks**

|                   |                     |          |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------|
| Number of Persons | Per person \$ 32.00 | Total \$ |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------|

**Friday 15 May 2015**

**09:30 Remembering the Departed and Branson Military Museum**

\$42.00 per person

|                   |                     |          |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------|
| Number of Persons | Per person \$ 42.00 | Total \$ |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------|

**19:00 Shoji Tabuchi Show with RT Bus Transportation**

|                   |                     |          |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------|
| Number of Persons | Per person \$ 42.00 | Total \$ |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------|

**Saturday 16 May 2015**

**18:30 Awards Banquet – Group photos, cocktail, great dinner and dancing**

\$32.00 per person

|                   |               |          |
|-------------------|---------------|----------|
| Number of Persons | Per person \$ | Total \$ |
|-------------------|---------------|----------|

**Total amount of enclosed check payable to USS Pyro Association \$**

To complete your registration, please mail this form and check to:

**Bill Hogan, Treasurer**  
**PO Box 40**  
**Farmville, VA 23901**

USS PYRO Scuttlebutt

USS PYRO ASSOCIATION  
Douglas Wisher, secretary  
1011 Edgehill Rd.  
Covington, KY 41011

Email:  
wisherdj@fuse.net



\*\*\* THE PRIDE AND TRADITION FOREVER \*\*\*

We're on the Web:  
www.usspyro.com



|                            |              |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| <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:**

**Bill Hogan, Treasurer**  
**PO Box 40**  
**Farmville, VA 23901**