

Don Grove writing here. So far I have been your voluntary organizational treasurer, and the keeper and updater of the master roster. If anyone would like either of these jobs please speak up - they can be had without much hassle. As to our financial status -- we are in the black, but not by much. The great reunion we had last summer in Bellingham cost us a grand total of \$3,880.79. Prior to this missive being sent out we had \$349.63 left in our bank account. We expect the mass mailing of this letter to all hands on the roster to cost us approximately \$250. This will leave us with less than \$100 in our account - not enough to do another mailing. Therefore, we propose an annual fee for membership in our organization, such organization to be called "**VP-1 P3 Orion Pioneers**" (Acronym = "VP-1 POPS"). For membership in this outfit an annual fee will be required, and will start with calendar year 1998. For 1998 the fee will be \$10. The money received from these membership dues will be deposited in the organizational bank account, and will be used for administrative expenses (photocopying, phone calls, paper, envelopes, stamps, etc.), mass mailings, and any other such expenses as the committee may deem appropriate. **For those who opt not to join our organization, this will be the last mailing you will receive from us.** It is not fair to use our members' money to continue mailing to those who aren't interested, and who don't contribute toward the organization's expenses. Nuff said on that! Please send checks for 1998 dues, (\$10), to me at 2024 Briarwood Dr., Oak Harbor, WA 98277-8546, or to Don Swendsen, 1595 W. McKinnon Dr., Oak Harbor, WA 98277. Anyone who was attached to VP-1 between 1969 and 1974, inclusive, is eligible to be a member of VP-1 POPS. We are discussing the idea of issuing membership cards - this item will be finalized later. For those who sent in the \$5 roster & mailing fee during 1997, updated copies of the roster are available for an additional charge of only \$1. (The roster is ever-changing, as I found out - address changes, phone number changes, new folks located, correcting typos, etc.). For those who haven't remitted the initial \$5 roster/mailing fee, a copy of the latest updated roster may be had by sending \$5. (We currently have the names & addresses of over 350 shipmates who served with VP-1 between 1969 and 1974 - if you know of someone who was in the squadron during this period, and who is not on the roster, please send us their name & address for inclusion on a future listing). Please make all checks out to **VP-1 P3 ORION PIONEERS**.

At the reunion last summer, most who attended were enthusiastic about having another. The consensus of opinion seemed to be to have another get-together in about three years, which would be - you guessed it - the year 2000! Ideas concerning another reunion will be welcomed by this committee. The next reunion doesn't have to be up here in the beautiful Pacific Northwest, either. It could be held anywhere! We don't want to do a replay of last summer's gathering. (Anyone vote for Olongapo?) We have bands of VP-1 POPS at many different locations throughout the country. If perchance some group would like to take the ball and run with it concerning the next reunion, we up here in God's country would gladly handoff and attend as spectators. We have good-sized contingents of VP-1 POPS in the Jacksonville, Florida area; around Memphis, Tennessee; in Hawaii; California; Virginia; and up in Maine around NAS Brunswick. (I was in VP-23 [PB4Y2's - the Navy version of the B-24] at Brunswick back in the early '50s, [Korean War era] - it was right after the squadron moved there in early '52 from Miami where they had been Hurricane Hunters - sounds like a century ago, doesn't it?). We have some folks down in the Pensacola area, too, (Mardy Lewis, "Bandaid" Williams, "Ben" Herr, and Dave Witt are all down in that part of the country). I wouldn't mind seeing that great Naval Aviation Museum at Pensacola. I have heard that they have the old bar from the Cubi Point Officer's Club there! When I was at Pensacola (1954-56) this museum was only an idea in someone's head.

The latest on VP-1 is that they are gearing up for another deployment. It has been almost a year since they returned from the previous one. They recently finished a three-week operation in Alaska involving both Whidbey Island and Barbers Point P3 squadrons, and utilizing numerous operational sites. As in days of old it was 12 on and 12 off, seven days a week, for the maintenance gang, and lots of long flights for the crews. As soon as this evolution was completed, they had their AME (Aviation Maintenance Evaluation), which was passed with flying colors. The squadron recently held a family pre-deployment brief which was kicked-off by Capt. Stan Bozin, ComPatWingTen. Cdr. Rob Winneg, the squadron C.O. (who gave us the fine presentation at the CPO Club brunch last July), spoke to family members and informed them about some of the sites the squadron would be operating from during the upcoming deployment.

My space is used-up so I'm putting away the fire extinguisher that has been standing-by next to my keyboard. Let's hear from you guys with your suggestions for another great reunion. In a few years some of us may no longer be able to attend one of these events, so don't wait till it's too late to get involved! Tempis fugit! Mabuhay -- Groovy.

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