

Ding Friends Hao

Monthly Meeting



September 2011

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3rd Pursuit September Meeting Special Presentation By A Crewman Who Was Aboard The U.S.S. Pueblo

Pueblo Crewman Tells 3rd Pursuit Of Being A Prisoner In North Korea

Our speaker for the September meeting was Earl Phares who was a seaman on the U.S.S. Pueblo when it was captured by the North Koreans in January of 1968.

Earl had wanted to go to the Naval Academy to follow family tradition but was not able to because he wore glasses. Although he wanted to follow his father's musi-



U.S.S. Pueblo

cal tradition, he could not decide which school to attend and so he joined the Navy. He did attend music school while in the Navy, but resigned when his father died.

He was then assigned to sea duty. He was assigned to the U.S.S. Pueblo that was then being set up for Naval intelligence purposes, although nominally an "environmental research ship". The Pueblo was 177 feet long and weighed 895 tons fully loaded. He was sent to join the ship in Japan and was sent to the shipyard by a kindly American officer in an officer's car, but was intercepted by a guard who was suspicious. Nevertheless, he reached the dock and proceeded to look for the Pueblo. He finally found it far down the dock berthed outside of a garbage scow.

His duties were deck seaman and he was only on board for three weeks when the Pueblo was met by a N Korean trawler on January 22, 1968 in the waters off N Korea. The next day Pueblo was attacked and captured by the Koreans. Earl's battle station was a fifty caliber machinegun on the bow, but they had failed to provide a key to him for the ammo room so he was not able to en-

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Earl Phares

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gauge the enemy, a fact that probably saved his life. During the attack the ship was hit by a shell and the crew was ordered below. Fortunately Earl went below by a port companionway and was therefore not killed as was a friend who took the starboard route. They worked at burning critical intelligence information and destroying code machines and other critical data. Then came the announcement of "name, rank and serial number only" over the loudspeakers, meaning that they were about to be taken prisoners.

The *Pueblo* was taken to port by the Koreans and the crew taken to a train, still bound and blindfolded to their final destination. There they were beaten and interrogated, especially the intelligence members of the crew. Earl went from 180 to 120 pounds in six weeks on a diet of a turnip, bread and water.

They were then transferred to a new building where they were housed on the second floor while the Korean troops were living on the first floor. They could have escaped but what for: the civilian populace was brainwashed into believing that the Americans were entirely responsible for the horrible conditions in the country and they likely would have been killed. They were given a strict routine of cleaning, exercise, and playtime. There were weekly meetings with the "room daddy".

Political games were played with announcements of release dates that did not come true. The crew had a game of using a "Hawaiian good luck sign" but it was later discovered that the sign, the middle finger, meant something else! That discovery resulted in severe beatings.

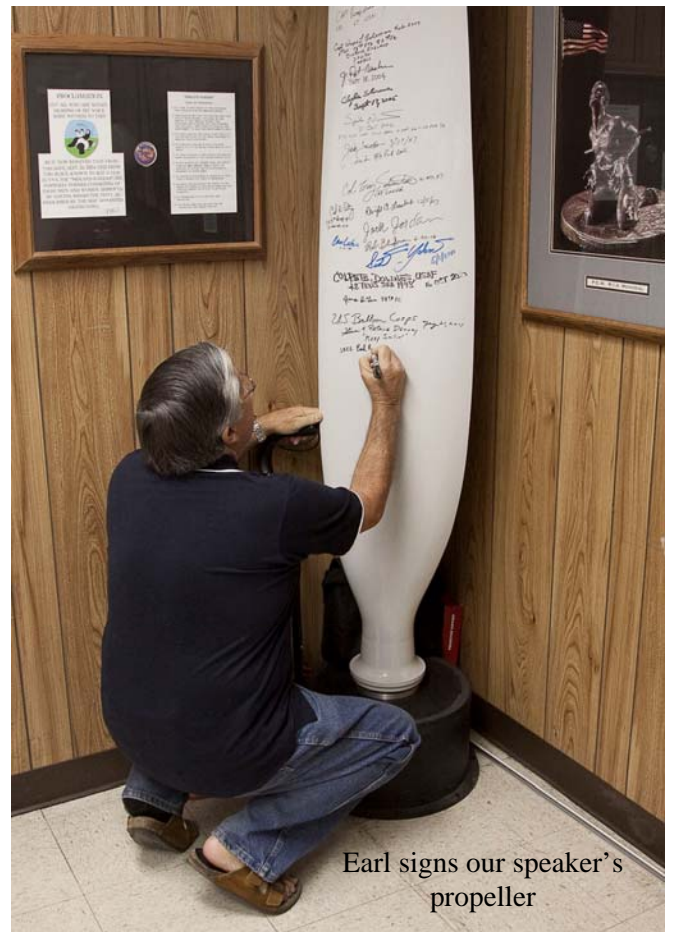
Finally the crew was released after General Woodward signed a document admitting that the ship had

penetrated Korean waters, but with the comment that he was signing it only to secure the release of the crew. Their captivity lasted 335 days! They were released one at a time with a U-2 overhead observing. The *Pueblo* remains in the hands of the N Koreans who continue to use it as a tool of political propaganda.

Earl has since worked as a deputy sheriff, a postman for the USPS and has raised a loving family. He continues to be active in music. We thank Earl for filling us in on the details of this atrocious act by one of our continuing international enemies.

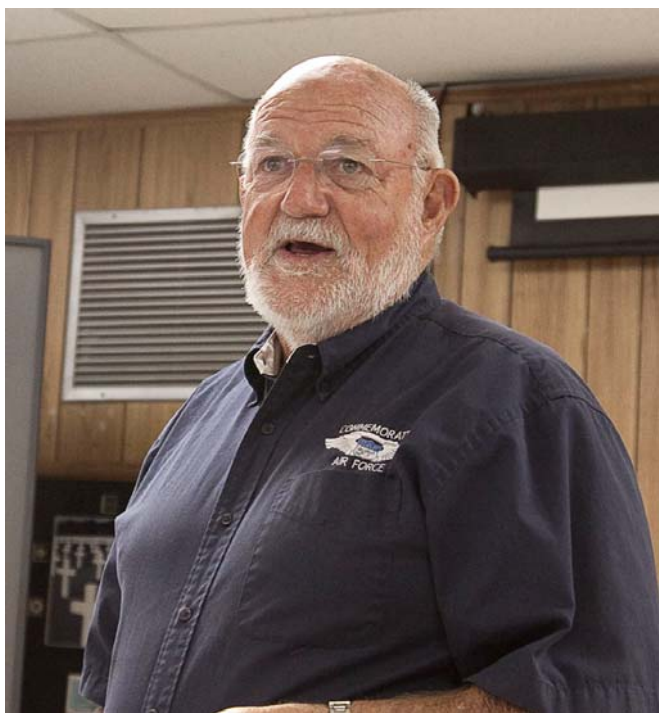


Cliff receives a Pueblo patch from Earl



Earl signs our speaker's propeller

Happy Hour with One Of Our Favorite Barkeeps



Cliff fills us in on the terrific Big Bear Airshow and other events that are in the works.

Our activities at Edwards AFB with the Antonov continue.



Miramar will be having a show on Soviet Aircraft --- the Antonov will be there!





Bud's List

Miramar 9/30-1-2

Midland Raiders 10/4-10

Midland Airshow 10/7-8-9

**Flight Test Nation at
Edwards 10/15**

Los Alamitos WWR 10-23

Nellis AFB Airshow 11/11-13

**Inland Empire Wing
Christmas Party 12/10**

**3rd Pursuit Christmas
Party 12/17**

New Member



Cliff presents new member Doug Latch his membership kit. Doug and his wife Theresito joined us at this month's meeting. We look forward to seeing them in the future.

Presentation Plaque



Bud presents Marine Bob Chapman with a plaque.



Friends of The 3rd Pursuit Squadron

1749 W. 13th St.
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NEXT MONTHLY MEETING

OCTOBER 15TH

Regular 3rd Pursuit Meeting!!!

*Next General Meeting - October 15th @ 5:30
PM. Location: the 3rd Pursuit building on the
airport entrance street next to the Quonset
hut.*

*Meeting Saturday
10-15-2011
Please Note:
Details to follow*

DINNER MENU

TO BE ANNOUNCED