

# SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers  
By Timothy C. Rizzuto, Executive Director

Destroyer Escort Historical Museum  
USS Slater DE-766  
PO Box 1926  
Albany, NY 12201-1926

Phone (518) 431-1943, Fax 432-1123  
Vol. 15 No. 8, August 2012

I'm going to digress a little this month from the usual "Who did what to whom and who's mad at the Executive Director now." The month of August began with the Albany County Veterans Service Bureau Honor-a-Veteran Day. Each month the Albany County Veterans Service Bureau honors a deceased local veteran. The event was started in 1993 by former Albany County Executive **Mike Breslin**, and the tradition is being carried on by his successor, Army Veteran **Dan McCoy**. At the inspiration of **Paul Czesak**, and County veterans affairs coordinator **Joe Pollocino**, the event was held aboard USS SLATER for the first time. **Dan Goldstein**, one of our former tour guides was the honoree. Monday August 6<sup>th</sup> exceeded anyone's attendance expectations as the Observation Deck filled with dignitaries and attendees, including Congressman **Paul Tonko** and former Congressman **Mike McNulty**. Dan served aboard USS LESLIE B KNOX DE580 in World War II and served as a tour guide aboard SLATER for ten years. He was one of those special tour guides who could personalize the experience for the visitors because of his own DE service. We are grateful that the County chose to honor Dan aboard the SLATER, and look forward to hosting future events.



The Slater Color Guard honors Dan Goldstein.



Joan Goldstein and the Goldstein family with Congressman Paul Tonko, Albany County Executive Dan McCoy and Albany County Veterans Bureau Director Joe Pollocino and other dignitaries.

**Remembering Dan Goldstein got me thinking about some of the other volunteers who should be remembered.** At the beginning of the season two long-time volunteers, **Russ Ferrer** and **Maebelle "Mike" Milian** reported that the ladders had gotten too steep for them and that they could no longer guide tours. We had high hopes that **Les Beauchaine** would be back with us after his bypass surgery, but a leg infection has kept him on the binnacle list and we don't know if he'll be back, along with Annette. Recently, one of our most dependable Thursday tour guides, **Joe Burke**, called in and said he was having problems with vertigo and wouldn't be able to give tours for the rest of the season.

We've been missing Coastie Rich Pavlovic, who took such good care of the twenties for so many years. The fact that Paul Czesak is still in rehab and progressing so slowly has made me reflective. And last month, our favorite climber and my partner on the camels for so many years, Tommy Moore, fell off a roof and fractured his arm, pelvis and several vertebrae. But, he is expected to make a full recovery.



**Dick Smith (USS EVARTS DE5) back in his youth.**

Recently, we had visits from Frank Perrella off THOMAS J. GARY, Charles Miner from USS SARATOGA among other ships, and Dick Smith from EVARTS. Frank was one of our stalwart tour guides back in the early days when we wondered if this thing would stay afloat from month to month. Charles was the volunteer carpenter who saved my butt on the trailer rehab project. And, over a period of about eight years, Dick Smith chipped more paint than anybody before or since. The former teamster, who swore he knew

where Hoffa was buried, served both the crew and management as shop steward, and there were no work stoppages or strikes during his tenure. The big threat he held over my head was, "Timmy, if you give us any more crap, we're going to make you listen to our stories about the Great Depression again." I always remember that day on the wharf in Rensselaer when Dick told me he was no longer able to make the trip twice a week from Fort Edward. There were tears in his eyes. Dick came down on a Thursday and got to sit and chat with two of his old buddies, Bob Dawson and Bill Scharoun. I gave Chris Fedden a call and he and his wife Trudy came down to see Dick. Chris and Dick spent many hours together chipping with the needle guns, and Chris lays claim to being the last of the original chippers still active. Chris is one of those guys, like Leo Baehler and Clark Farnsworth, who doesn't seem to change. We spent a long time talking about the crew he worked with like Dutch Hannmann and Earl Gillette.





**Four World War II vets: Bill Svihovec (USS SLATER) "Mike" Milian (US Navy Nurse Corps) Jack Madden (PT304) and Emmett Landrum (USS BEBAS).**

**The visits by Frank, Charles and Smitty brought to light something else, and a group of volunteers that bear remembering. Dan Goldstein had guided tours aboard SLATER for ten years, until his health would no longer allow him to do it, and then quietly faded from the roster. And that got me thinking about all the others**

who have gone that way. Over the years, astute readers of SIGNALS will have noticed that from year to year some of our more active volunteers seem to drop from the scene. I got thinking about all the people who have served the project so faithfully up until the point where their health no longer allowed them to make the trip to the SLATER, or they moved out of the area, or their lives just changed. Those who seemed to slip out of the picture without any fanfare. Those who cross the bar while they are actively volunteering are usually noted and remembered. But those who cease to come for health or other reasons fade from the pages of this newsletter. **Ray Lammers** of the USS TATUM spent several years cleaning and restoring electrical boxes. I occasionally see Ray at the Hannaford supermarket. **Don Bulger** was an aerographer on the oiler CHIWAWA AO-68 and was critical to the initial radio shack restoration, as was Dick Engler. Mike Muzio, whose bosun's pipe and gravelly voice is still heard daily on our IMC. CDR Roy Gunther, who donated a compass, and was absolutely critical to the initial restoration of the whaleboat before he moved to Florida.



**Don Martin (USS SWEARER) from Oregon painting the messdeck benches back in 1999.**

There was **Don Martin** off USS SWEARER who used to come from Oregon in his motor home every year. SLATER wasn't big enough for "**Battleship Mike**" **McEnteggart**, but he's since found a home on his beloved USS IOWA. The old gun gang, **Dave Floyd, Bob Lawrence, Andy Desorboe** and, **Frank Beeler**. The Greek, **Andy Sandalakis**. Tour guides like **Bob Whitney, Herb Marlow** of FORREST SHERMAN, **Bob Donlon, Ed Sakacs, Chuck Marshall, George Longmuir**, and **John D'Anieri** of USS BOUTETOURT. The Army Major who spent several years at our sewing machine before moving to Texas, **Les Yarbrough**.

And, a long list of others including **Red Hume, Gene Cellini, Beth Spain, Claire Oesterreich, Rafael Suarez, Larry LaChance, Steve Hurley, Walt Stolte, Peter Jez, Pat Cancilla, Dennis Nagi, McDonald Smith, Roy Warner, Chuck Longshore, Dave Hamilton, Ken Berg, Jim Hewitt, Chad Johnson, John Whalen, Ernie Friedon, and Wiley Johnson.** I'm sure some have since passed on. And this doesn't count the SOLDESA gang, the out-of-towners who have contributed so much, the interns who move up and on, or the ones I've forgotten, a list that is probably twice as long as this.

**Other than the initial volunteer application, the sign-in book and SIGNALS, there isn't much record of what these people have accomplished.** But I take that back. The record of their accomplishment is the ship itself, recorded in all the pictures and video they have taken, and all the compliments we get in letters, on the internet, and the kind words the visitors have for the crew. All these people have made important contributions to USS SLATER, and they should not be overlooked. **What our volunteers have accomplished, those who are still active and those who are no longer active kind of came to fruition this month in the Times Union "Capital Region Gives" promotion.** The promotion, which runs through the summer, will award cash and in-kind prizes to local nonprofits. To the amazement of everyone aboard, USS SLATER placed in the top three in the education category and we're in a run off with, A Different Way in Reading Center and The Academy for Character Education. Supporters were encouraged to write why their choice should be selected. One of our young visitors, **Isaac Rosen,** sent in this paragraph:

"I vividly remember my first of several trips to the USS Slater. It was in second grade and I can recall an excited buzz going on amongst my classmates about the upcoming trip. We were always very excited to take a field trip of any sort, but this one was an even bigger deal. Especially to the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade boys who, in all their immaturity and craziness, couldn't wait to see a Navy vessel with 'real live guns!' When we got there we were all awed at the boat and at the sheer power it portrayed while merely sitting next to the dock. We were led on a tour in, on, and around the boat, by a very knowledgeable guide who explained different parts of the boat, their functions, and even included background information on individual crew members and on the more personal goings on of the USS Slater. One that I remember particularly well was about the captain's affinity for Tabasco sauce and how no meal would commence without the presence of the tastily spicy topping. I am now 15 years old and nearing my sophomore year of high school, but even after 8 years, I still remember my trip to one of upstate New York's undoubtedly best educational attractions."

**There are a few out of the ordinary events that should be mentioned this month.** On August 4<sup>th</sup> Dick Walker organized our annual Coast Guard Birthday event to commemorate the 222<sup>nd</sup> year since that illustrious organization was founded. We had planned to have a Coast Guard Cutter alongside, but mechanical problems forced a cancellation. Hopefully next year. The Navy Chiefs were back from the Nuclear Power Training Unit in Ballston Spa to celebrate the induction of the new CPO selectees from 2012. Chief **Owen Hooper** brought down about forty CPOs and selects on the weekend of August 18<sup>th</sup>. They spent the day working in the bilges of the aft motor room B-4 cleaning and painting under the main motors as a follow up to the work the enlisted students from the site had been doing during the week.



The bridge deck grating before....

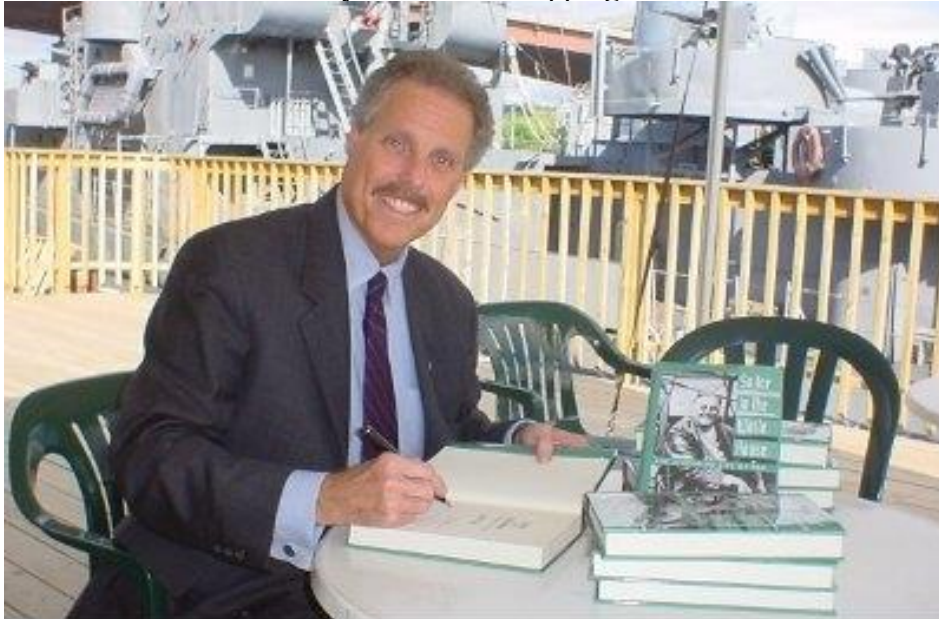


...and after thanks to new volunteer Steve Dull.

**Speaking of luck, have you returned your raffle tickets?** By the time you read this you should have gotten a mysterious envelope full of raffle tickets. There is nothing mysterious about it. The Los Angeles Chapter of DESA is once again holding a raffle to support USS SLATER and help us continue in our efforts to maintain and restore the ship and get her into drydock. **Earl and Ann Johnson** and **Jim and Adi Lamberth** with the rest of the chapter are working hard for the SLATER. You should have received two books of chances. This will give the volunteers \$20 of the supplies they need. Last year volunteers contributed over 15,000 hours of work on SLATER. There are 12 chances in each book. You can sell 10 chances in the book to individuals and put your name on two of the chances. You can sell the whole book for \$10. Or, you can buy one or two books and put your name on all of them. Just send us \$10 per book. The person who sells the \$2,500 winning ticket will receive \$500. You can't all get to SLATER, but this is one way you can support those who are able to do the work. Almost 100% of the work being done is by volunteers.



**We hope you win the \$2,500, or just the \$1,000, but even if you don't, you're still a winner.** Use the small, addressed envelope to mail in your sold ticket stubs and checks. These must be received in the Fund Office by October 15th! **MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO DESA SLATER FUND.** Every dollar raised from this program, less the printing and the prizes will go to SLATER. It's really not a gamble...IT'S A GIFT. For ordering more books or for additional information call 562-429-5353, or write to: DESA SLATER Fund, P O Box 8278, Long Beach, CA 90808. **Due to unavoidable delays, we are forced to move the drawing date for the Raffle to October 15, 2012. Everything else will remain the same.** We hope you will understand and will forgive us for having to make this change. There is no need for us to tell you, because you know how vital the monies raised by this effort are to the continued restoration of Destroyer Escort, USS SLATER. This extended drawing date of October 15, 2012, will ensure that you will receive your tickets in time to participate in the drawing. Maybe the winners can do some early Christmas shopping.



**Our favorite author, DEHM Trustee Bob Cross, is at work on his new book focusing on activities in and around America's East Coast seaports during World War**

**II.** Bob authored *Shepherds of the Sea: Destroyer Escorts in World War II* and *Sailor in the White House: The Seafaring Life of FDR*, both published by the Naval Institute.

**SLATER's favorite author, Albany Port District Commissioner Bob Cross.**

Bob would like to speak with any DE veterans who may have recollections of activities during wartime at America's East Coast seaports, including security measures taken to protect ports during the war, any incidents involving sabotage or other trouble at ports, shipbuilding activities at seaports, and the like. Because so many of you made important contributions to Bob's DE book, he would love to hear your stories on this new topic so they can be included in his book. You may contact Bob by e-mail at [robertcross@hotmail.com](mailto:robertcross@hotmail.com), or by sending your telephone number and other contact information to him in care of the Slater, at P.O. Box 1926, Albany, New York 12201. When contacting Bob, please give him a brief note as to your experiences and recollections, and he will contact you to arrange an interview. Thank you!

**Finally, be thinking about the fall work week aboard the SLATER.** The dates are Sunday October 14<sup>th</sup> through Friday October 19<sup>th</sup>. You don't have to come for the whole time, but any help is welcome. For you Sailors this is a chance to relive your Navy days. If you were never in but you want to experience shipboard life the way the Sailors did, this is your opportunity. Projects will include wrapping up the flying bridge restoration, repainting the 01 level forward, and continuing the preservation work in the aft machinery spaces. The coordinator for the event is "Michigan" Dick Walker. Drop him a note if you plan to attend. From the beginning the volunteers have been the core of our effort and this is your chance to be a part of a great project. We hope to see you aboard!

**See you next month**