

The Invincible

Texas Navy Association Newsletter

Winter 2013



Image: Emil Bunjes

Newly Elected TNA Board Members

Our President



Admiral Bill Turner is a Past Commodore of the Texas Corinthian Yacht Club. After retiring from a career in Banking, Admiral Turner is now an investor and officer in a software company which provides software and services to the medical and law enforcement industries. His non-profit Board experience includes: St. Stephens Episcopal School Houston, Vice President, Trustee, Finance Committee and Technology Committee Chairman. Legacy Land Trust, Chairman. Neuhaus Education Center, Corporate Development Committee. Admiral Turner was the past Vice-President of the Texas Navy Association and has accepted the position as President of the TNA. Many thanks to Admiral Turner for his continued service to the TNA.

Our Vice-President



Admiral John Nicholson is Past Commodore of the Houston Yacht Club and current Chairman of the "Blue Gavel", the organization of all past Commodores of the Houston Yacht Club. He is a Senior Vice-President of Contract Land Staff, LLC, a national provider of consulting services and staffing to the Right of Way Industry. Admiral Nicholson served in the Air Force during the Vietnam era and was honorably discharged with the rank of Captain. Admiral Nicholson has been a board member with the TNA and has accepted the position as Vice-President. Many thanks to Admiral Nicholson for his continued service to the TNA.

Our Secretary



Admiral Thomas B. Taylor is currently an attorney with Bush & Ramirez, PLLC. and a member of the Sam Houston squadron. Admiral Taylor attended Texas Tech University where he received a Bachelor of Business Administration- Industrial Management and attended South Texas College of Law where he received a Doctor of Jurisprudence. Admiral Taylor is a member of the Lakewood Yacht Club where he is a Past Commodore, Board of Directors, and Bylaws Committee Chairman. Admiral Taylor also holds a commission as a Kentucky Colonel awarded by Governor of Kentucky, John Y. Brown. He and his wife Marsha have resided in Houston for 25 years. Many thanks to Admiral Thomas for accepting the responsibility as Secretary of the Texas Navy Association.

Our Treasurer



Admiral deMarque "Mark" Underhill is with the U.S. Coast Guard, Sector Corpus Christi as the Assistant Chief of Enforcement. Admiral Underhill coordinates law enforcement activities of 4 Coast Guard Small Boat stations, 4 Coast Guard Patrol Boats, and interact with Air Operations relating to Sector Law Enforcement activities. He partners with local law enforcement partners. Admiral Underhill attended Columbia Southern University where he received a B.S. in Occupational Health and Safety.

He also attended Excelsior College where he received an Associates in Science.

He resides in Corpus Christi with his wife Sandra. Many thanks to Admiral Underhill for accepting the responsibility as Treasurer of the Texas Navy Association.



Admiral Fount E. McKee attended the University of Houston where he received the following: MS Electrical Engineering, BS Electrical Engineering, BS Mathematics.

In February 1997 Admiral McKee retired from Delta X Corporation, which he founded with two others in 1965. Delta X Corporation designed and manufactured diagnostic and control equipment for the oil production industry. These products used various types of computers and microprocessors. All equipment was designed to operate over a wide temperature range as experienced in the oil field. Also it was necessary to develop various computer programs to support the hardware. This equipment was sold throughout the United States and various foreign countries, primarily, Canada and countries in South America.

Prior to starting Delta X he was employed by Tideland Signal Corporation as Vice-President and Chief Engineer. Tideland Signal Corporation designed and manufactured aids to navigation for offshore oil platforms. Prior to Tideland Signal Corporation he was employed by Lockheed Electronics at NASA as a computer systems designer. During his career he was granted fourteen patents. Admiral McKee lives in Houston with his wife Linda. Thank you Admiral McKee for volunteering to serve on the TNA Board.



Admiral Vince Morvillo attended California State University where he received a BA in Sociology and attended the University of Houston where he received his MBA in accounting, economics and finance.

Vince was born blind, but far from being defeated by his disability, he learned that blindness could be a catalyst for creativity. Not being able to see as others do forced Vince to approach even commonplace situations in a non-conventional way, literally to see things differently. Applying this way of thinking to other pursuits – replacing sight with vision – has led to extraordinary achievements in business and in his personal life.

Over a long and successful career in venture capital and as a business consultant, he has engineered several business turnarounds and helped many companies increase bottom-line performance.

With no outside financial support, Vince personally built one of the largest yacht sales organizations on the Gulf Coast, taking it to profitability in just two years.

Reflecting on his approach, Vince has developed a practical, step-by-step method to help businesses and individuals redirect their way of thinking. As a motivational speaker to large audiences – and in workshops with small groups and business teams - Vince shows how to see other solutions, break down the barriers and achieve success. Passionately devoted to his sport, his community and to helping others, Vince was 1992's Yachtsman of the Year and received Houston's Good Skipper Award for community service.

Thank you Admiral Morvillo for volunteering to serve on the TNA Board.



Admiral Charles W. Harrison is the past Commander of the Captain Jeremiah Brown Squadron and remains a current member. Admiral Harrison is semi-retired as an adjunct Instructor of Biology at Tarrant County College. He holds a Ph.D. in Phytopathology, a Masters of Education in Biology, Education, Chemistry, B.S. in English and Biology from Sam Houston University. Admiral Harrison also holds

an Associates Degree in nursing and a certificate from St. George's School of Theology. Admiral Harrison is a member of the Order of Lafayette and a Cavaliere in the Savoy Order of Merit. He resides in Fort Worth with his wife Zoe Alexandra who is a Commander in the Texas Navy.

Thank you Admiral Harrison for volunteering to serve on the TNA Board.



Admiral Nicholas D. Ricco is the Managing General Partner for Ricco Family Partners, Ltd. and has been building quality commercial properties since 1972.

He has served as National Director of the Navy League of the United States and of the United

States Sea Cadet Corp., a national youth group in Navy uniforms in schools throughout the country. He was instrumental in bringing crews of Navy and Coast Guard ships to Dallas and honoring them in the annual Veterans' Day Parade and directing the Navy league to provide annual awards for 35 Sailors, Marines, Air Force and Army persons who are designated the "Best" of their units in the State of Texas.

Admiral Ricco was awarded the Distinguish Service Award in 2004 for his services to the Navy and the Navy League of the United States. He is presently serving on the School of Music Advisory Board and the Mayborn Graduate School of Journalism of the University of North Texas and is a past Advisor to the College of Business Advisory Board (COBA). He was awarded the Distinguished Alumni designation by UNT in 2003 and again in 2007.

Admiral Ricco and his wife Ann live in Dallas. He is a current member of the Nimitz Squadron.

Thank you Admiral Ricco for volunteering to serve on the TNA Board.

It is with great pleasure we welcome our new board members who will serve with continuing board members Admiral Jim Tyson, Admiral Diane Dyess and Admiral Richard Dempsey.

New Ships Store Item “Just for Her”



A nice quality jewelry piece she will be proud to wear!



Beautiful Goldtone pin with enamel finish. “TXN” initials down the left side in Swarovski Crystals and another Swarovski Crystal in the middle of the star on the TXN Flag. This pin/pennant is a Pamela Wright Collection pin especially made for the Texas Navy Association. It makes a great gift for our Lady Admirals or the spouse of Admirals. It comes with a jewelry pouch and a Pamela Wright gift box. Size is 2 1/8” wide x 2 1/4” tall.

To order for yourself or for that special someone visit the Ships Store by clicking on the link below.

[TNA Ships Store](#)

A Special Treat for Attendees at the Members Open Meeting in Austin

After the Open Members Meeting on November 4, 2012 held in Austin at the Texas Land Office the attendees were invited to a private tour of the archives vault. As we arrived everyone was required to place purses, bags, etc in a locked cubical as shown by Commander Zoe Harrison in the first photo on the left. The tour guide then took us through a thorough and interesting trip back in time. The documents on display were remarkable and enjoyed very much by our members. Many thanks to Land Commissioner Admiral Jerry Patterson for arranging this tour for us.



Our annual Christmas Party which was held at the South Shore Harbour Resort in League City was very successful and loads of fun! Members were greeted with a glass of champagne as they arrived for the cocktail hour. Our guest speaker Professor Upchurch was very informative and generously engaged in conversation with members after his talk. As a favor for the members and guests each place setting held a Challenge Coin. A newly published CD of "The Republic of Texas Navy" was handed out to our members to share with their squadrons, library, and friends. The lucky member or guest who had a star on the back of their program got to take home the beautiful fresh flower arrange on their table. Just like any other successful party there were still a couple of tables of people visiting and enjoying each others company after the lights were turned up and bar closed!



Adm. Blair McCall & Rebecca Thorp



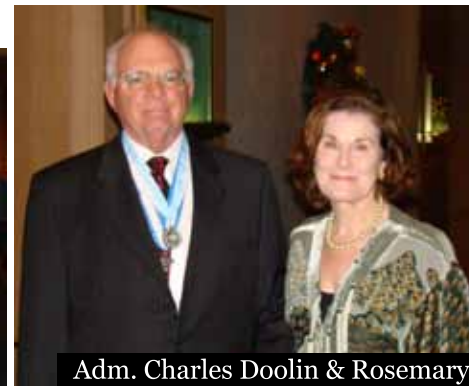
Adm. Doak McBryde & Bernadette



(L) Katharina & Guest Speaker Prof. Michael Upchurch



Adm. Ed Brown & friend Juanita



Adm. Charles Doolin & Rosemary



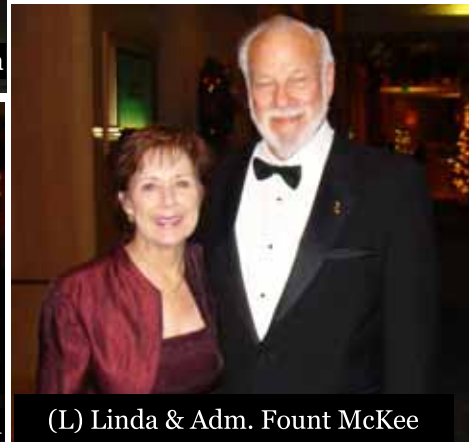
Adm. Charles Harrison & Commnader Zoe Harrison



(L) Adrienne & Adm. Neal Watt



(L) Joan & Adm. Eugene Tulich



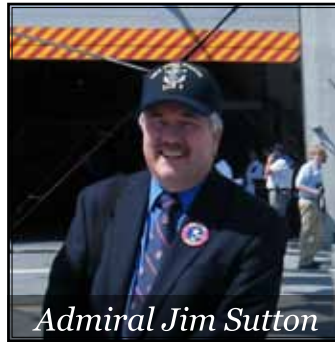
(L) Linda & Adm. Fount McKee



(L) Carol & Adm. John Nicholson

Newest Member of Internet Technology Team

Admiral Jim Sutton is an engineering graduate of LeTourneau University in Longview, TX, class of 1981. Rachel, his wife and Jim celebrated their 25th anniversary this past December, 2012. They have been blessed with four children through the years.



Admiral Jim Sutton

Jim is currently a software engineer at Lockheed Martin on the F/22 program.

Jim's employment at Lockheed/Martin spans 28 years, starting in 1984 when the plant was owned by General Dynamics. He has worked on F-16, Israeli F16, A-12, and F-22 programs, primarily in supportability software design and implementation.

Jim has been a Republican Precinct Chairman since 1990 and attended his first State Republican Convention in 1992. He and his wife, Rachel have not missed a convention since 1992. Jim has served on the State Platform Committee, various District committees and county Party committees.

Jim first ran for elected office in 2003 when he campaigned for, and was elected to the Haltom City Council in a contested race. Jim served for 3 full terms before stepping down from office in May 2009 due to term limits in the city charter. Jim was re-elected back to City Council in May 2010 and is currently serving his fifth term on council. Jim was commissioned as an Admiral in the Texas Navy by Governor for a day Jane Nelson in April 2004.

Jim has taught high school level government classes in the local home school community and has served as a board member with several community organizations, including Cottage Theatre in Watauga and NETCACHE. Jim has also served on church boards and as an

election judge and clerk in numerous elections.

Jim has developed websites for several organizations including the Captain Jeremiah Brown Squadron website, NETCACHE, Republican party websites and a family history website providing genealogical research documentation tracing family roots back to the late 1500's in Europe, and his ancestors immigration to America in 1634.

Jim is in charge of our "Members Only" section of the Texas Navy Association website.

Order Your TNA License Plate Today

You can help support the TNA by buying a personalized license plate proudly displaying the Texas Navy Logo. www.myplates.com

Click on: Create a plate

Choose a category: Luxury Series

Select: Texas Navy plate in the "Sponsored Organizations"

What is a "Yonker"?

A sausage-like dish served aboard ship?
A young boy who has gone to sea?
A derisive name for the ship's mate?
A measure of rope length?

Answer on Page 11

Texas Navy Uniform

By: Admiral Malcom Lee Johnson

The uniform was made up by using the old photo of Commodore Moore from the 1836-1837 period, wearing the old style actual "Double Breasted" jacket, with straight rows of buttons. But, by 1838-1839 the pattern of the buttons on the uniform jacket had changed, since the U.S. Navy had changed their uniforms, to include a "Swell" outline of the buttons, instead of the "Straight rows" of buttons, and with "hooks and eyelets" fasteners down the center. The 1836 uniforms were patterned after the earlier U.S. Navy uniforms, and many were "surplus" U.S. Navy uniforms which were purchased by the Texas Navy, and then simply "changed out" the buttons and insignia to fit Texas Navy needs. By the way, Texas "summer uniforms" were made of cotton and nankeen, NOT wool, as the U.S. uniforms were. It was "simply" too hot in Texas in the summertime to wear wool uniforms.



Welcome Aboard Admirals!



(L) Admiral William Pickavance presents **Admiral Ricky Day** his commission certificate at the November 4, 2012 open member meeting in Austin. Welcome aboard Admiral Day!



Receiving his Commission from (L) Admiral William Pickavance is **Admiral Michael Hubmer**. The presentation was also held at the Texas Land Office at the November 4, 2012 member open meeting. Welcome aboard Admiral Hubmer!

Commodore Charles Edward Hawkins

(Fleet Commander, March 1836 - 11 February 1837)

Charles E. Hawkins was one of those swashbucklers who brought color and adventure to the navies of the Western Hemisphere to rival any of those of the Old World. Born in New York in 1802, Hawkins left a life on land at age 16, when he joined the U.S. Navy as a midshipman. He served on board the fabled frigates Constitution, Constellation and Guerriere. After serving along the Atlantic coast, he was transferred to the U.S. West Indies squadron which was commanded by another of the U.S. Navy's bright stars, Commodore David Porter. Commodore Porter, a hero of the War of 1812, was court-martialed in 1825, and resigned to join the Mexican Navy, where he had been offered command of the fleet. Porter began recruiting naval officers to serve Mexico, and one he took with him was the young Midshipman Hawkins. Taking a furlough from the naval service, Hawkins resigned his commission and joined the Mexican Navy. As a Mexican commander, Charles Hawkins spent several adventurous years raiding Spanish shipping in the Gulf of Mexico, particularly around Cuba. He sailed the Gulf in his five-gun brig Hermon, and used the abandoned U.S. naval base at Key West as his center of operations. He was arrested by U.S. authorities for violating the Neutrality Act of 1819, but he was released on bail and quickly sailed back to Veracruz for further orders. Soon, however, fortune turned against him. Mexico's naval funds began to dry up, and a wave of distrust of American officers caused Hawkins to resign his commission and move to Texas, where he became a civilian riverboat captain.

As dissent turned into revolution, Hawkins joined General José

Antonio Mexia, who was planning an invasion of the Mexican mainland at the port city of Tampico. During the invasion, Hawkins, now a major, served as Mexia's aide, and took part in the attack on the city. The attack failed, however, and Hawkins escaped certain death by hitching a ride on a passing ship bound for Brazoria. From there, he journeyed to San Felipe, where he met General Sam Houston and offered his services as a navy captain to the revolutionary government. Houston recommended Hawkins to Governor Henry Smith, who in turn recommended him to Texas's agents in New Orleans, Stephen F. Austin, Branch T. Archer, and William H. Wharton. The agents hired Hawkins on the spot, and put him in charge of acquiring and fitting out the eight-gun schooner Independence, formerly the U.S. revenue cutter Ingham. Hawkins greatly distressed the cash-strapped Texas agents with his extravagant expenses, but he fitted the schooner out as his flagship and was soon prowling the Gulf for Mexican shipping as a captain without a commission, which he did not receive until March 12, 1836. At the time of his appointment, President Burnet considered Hawkins to be the senior captain of the squadron, so he was referred to for the rest of his life as Commodore of the Texas Navy.



Artwork courtesy Adm. Bruce Marshall

As Santa Anna's army marched relentlessly from Mexico to the Alamo, Goliad, San Felipe and Harrisburg, Hawkins maintained his base of operations at Matagorda, then removed it to Galveston as the Mexican army closed in. He oversaw the naval defense of Galveston until the Texas victory at San Jacinto on April 21, 1836, then removed his fleet to New Orleans for repairs and recruiting. A strict disciplinarian, Hawkins was known to put ship

captains in irons as quickly as a lowly sailor, and one evening in May 1836, while sailing aboard the warship Brutus, he leveled a cannon and fired it at the Invincible, thinking it might be a Mexican warship lurking in the darkness. He tried to sack Captain William Hurd of the Brutus, but Hurd's crew refused to allow any replacement officers on board, and Hurd remained one of Hawkins' enemies in the service.

After the revolution, Hawkins slowed down his activity, preferring to stay close to port in New Orleans while waiting for the impoverished government to scrape up enough money to pay his men and provision his ships. President Burnet ordered Hawkins to blockade the Mexican port of Matamoros, on the Rio Grande, but the Invincible and Brutus sailed to New York without orders, remaining there until the following spring. The Independence was therefore outnumbered by the newly rebuilt Mexican fleet, and Hawkins was reluctant to leave his safe berth at the mouth of the Mississippi. His flagship wintered in the Crescent City while Hawkins took up residence at a boarding house on Canal Street. In early 1837, Hawkins caught smallpox, and he died on February 11. Commodore Hawkins was buried with full military honors, leaving command of the fleet to Captain George Wheelwright.

Prepared by Admiral Jonathan W. Jordan
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Quiz Answer

A young boy who has gone to sea!

The term "yonker" comes from the word "younger", and refers to the youngest members of a ship's company.

<http://www.funtrivia.com/trivia-quiz/World/Tall-Ships-137911.html>

The Texas Navy Time Line

May 6: Secretary of Navy S. Roads Fisher, aboard the Brutus, receives word from Texas spies that Mexico is building a 22-gun warship in Baltimore.

May 23: Against President Houston's wishes, Secretary Fisher orders Captain H. L. Thompson to take the Invincible and the Brutus down the Mexican coast in retaliation for the capture of the flagship Independence and the Texas ship Julius Caesar. The cruise becomes the longest, most destructive offensive into Mexico Texas will ever mount.

May 31: President Houston vetoes a Congressional resolution to send the Invincible and Brutus to Veracruz to attempt a prisoner exchange for the crew and passengers of the Independence and Julius Caesar. New Orleans' National Intelligence reports the schooner Flash stranded ashore at the west end of Galveston when the ship's captain mistook the San Luis Pass for the entrance to Galveston harbor.

June 8: Privateer Thomas Toby sent into port a captured Mexican brig, and took off in pursuit of two other Mexican ships (it would not capture these vessels).

June 10: Warships Invincible and Brutus leave for a two month cruise along the Mexican coast, raiding and burning coastal towns and capturing Mexican merchant vessels. They are ordered out by Secretary of the Navy S. Rhodes Fisher, who joins the expedition, in retaliation for the capture of the flagship Independence and the merchant vessel Julius Caesar. Texas warships Invincible and Brutus continue to cruise the Mexican coast on an offensive ordered by Navy Secretary S. Rhodes Fisher in revenge for the capture of the flagship Independence that spring.

With the consent of the officers of the captured Texas flagship Independence, “Mexico” Thompson, the villain of Anáhuac, assists Commodore George Wheelwright and ship’s surgeon Dr. A. Levy in their escape to Texas. Wheelwright would return to command the Texas Navy, while Thompson would live in Galveston and serve in the Texas Navy.

July 13: Invincible and Brutus land at Cozumel, claiming the island for Texas. According to Invincible’s captain Henry L. Thompson, the landing party “hoisted the Star Spangled Banner at the height of forty five feet with acclamations both from the inhabitants of the island and our small patriotic band,” and the ships fired a salute of 23 guns. The island was held by Texas for only a few days before the ships moved off.

July 16-22: Invincible and Brutus sail down the Mexican coast, to the Island of Contoy, port of Dzilam and other points along the coast, capturing small Mexican vessels and raiding coastal villages.

July 21: A landing party from the Brutus captures the Yucatán port of Telchac. According to the Brutus’ captain, James D. Boylan: “I sent Lieut. Wright on shore to take the town [Telchac] this he soon accomplished the Alcalde making a formal surrender of the town to the Texian Government.” The city is held less than a day, and the ships move on.

July 22: Brutus and Invincible capture the Mexican schooner Union, loaded with logwood.

July 24: Secretary Fisher, Captain Boylan and a landing party from the Brutus are attacked by a Mexican cavalry patrol when they stray too far from their boats. Secretary Fisher draws his pistols and drops one trooper from his saddle, giving the party a chance to dash back to their boats and escape to the Brutus. Because of this “rascally reception,” Captain Thompson orders his squadron to burn coastal

villages for the next several days.

July 25: Texas squadron captures the Mexican merchant ships Adventure and Telegrapho. The Adventure would be burned because it was too slow to keep up with the squadron.

July 26: Captain Thompson issues an ultimatum to the Yucatán city of Sisal: pay the Texians \$25,000 or he will destroy the town. The Mexicans ignore him. The next day he sails into the harbor, fires a couple of shots at the town, and the Mexicans reply with heavy cannon fire. After a couple of hours of bombardment, the Texians sail off.

July 31: Texas squadron captures the Mexican schooner Abispa loaded with cargo off Alacranes Island.

August 3: Texas warship Brutus under Captain James D. Boylan captures the British schooner Eliza Russell, setting off an international incident that results in a quick apology to Her Majesty’s government by President Sam Houston and payment of reparations to the ship’s owner.

August 4: Texas minister to the United States presents U.S. government a formal offer from the Republic of Texas to annex itself to the United States.

August 12: Brutus captures the armed Mexican schooner Correo off the Yucatan coast. The Correo carries information about the whereabouts of the Mexican squadron consisting of the captured Texas flagship Independence and the brigs Terán and Bravo.

August 17: Captain Boylan in the Brutus captures the Mexican schooner Rafaelita, which was reported to be the former Correo Mexicano captured by the Texas privateer San Felipe during the opening shots of the Texas Revolution.



In Memory Of

Admiral Travis Sheffield

Admiral Lane Sealy

Admiral William F. Pleasants

Admiral W.K. Fuller, Jr.

Admiral William Schneider

All Members in the Austin Area

For all TNA Members in the Austin area who are interested in forming a Squadron please contact Admiral Gordon Kelso at Home: (512) 282-4726 or email him at: gkelso@austin.rr.com

Fair Winds and Following Seas!

