

# THE COAST GUARD COMBAT VETERANS ASSOCIATION

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You have waited for months for information on the Coast Guard Combat Veterans Association (CGCOMVETS). Thank you for your patience. Starting a new organization where the president, secretary-treasurer and board of directors are scattered coast-to-coast consumes time. However, we have finally forged the bylaws and are ready to get this much-needed association underway.

I consider you part of the CGCOMVETS precommissioning detail. Commissioning will be at our reunion in Reno, Nevada, July 15-17, 1988. A meeting will be held then to approve the bylaws, discuss our future, select the 1990 reunion site (Coast Guard's Bicentennial year) and elect new officers.

## What's this association about?

The U.S. Coast Guard has been shedding their blood, as well as America's foes, in National Defense throughout our nearly 200 year existence. Yet, little recognition, or solace, are given for the sacrifices that its men, its women, and their loved ones have made. Too many people in this country don't know we've fought in wars. They don't know we fought in Vietnam, so how can we expect them to know that we fought in the undeclared war with France in 1798-99. Twenty-two French ships were taken by American naval forces, and of them, 18 were captured by the Coast Guard! The Coast Guard also aided in the capture of two others.

In 1985 and 1986, a group of Coast Guard Vietnam veterans held reunions in Chicago and Reno under the informal title of American S.E.A. Coast Guard Veterans. At the last gathering we decided an organization was needed that welcomes Coast Guard veterans of all military conflicts.

Our bylaw's Preamble states what we are about:

*"Being mindful of the traditions, duties and purposes of the United States Coast Guard, our duty to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States, and believing that through social association and mutual acquaintance we may further perpetuate the memory of our fallen comrades, assist their widows and orphans, assist honorably discharged or retired Coast Guard combat veterans, promote and enhance the image and posture of the United States Coast Guard, therefore, we do associate ourselves together..."*

## Who can join?

a. Active duty members, retired members and honorably discharged former members of the U.S. Coast Guard who served in, or provided direct support to combat situations recognized by an appropriate military award while serving as a member of the United States Coast Guard.

b. The widow or widower of those above shall be considered members and shall be dues free without voting or office privileges.

c. The Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, if not otherwise eligible, shall be recognized as an Honorary member without voting privileges.

d. Associate Membership status to people who are presently in, served in, or retired from, the U.S. Coast Guard, who meet the combat criteria while in the service of another Armed Force (United States or foreign).

Dues-Expenses. Dues are \$10,00 a year. Payable every two years at bi-annual reunion time. Presently we are operating without money. To help reduce out-of-pocket expenses you may wish to pay your dues before July 1988. Twenty dollars now will pay your membership up through July 1990. Send dues to the secretary-treasurer. Make checks payable to CGCOMVETS.

When you correspond with the president or secretary and a reply is appropriate, you can help out by enclosing postage or a stamped self-addressed envelope.

Sharing Knowledge. A number of you have experience in starting and running organizations. Your suggestions to make CGCOMVETS a healthy, active and purposeful concern are welcome.

Logo. Please submit ideas for a CGCOMVETS logo.

Kudos. To Charles Huyler of Somerville, MA for enthusiasm. Chuck has been encouraging interest in CGCOMVETS among veteran's groups and anybody who will listen. However, to his wife's dismay, he is running up big monthly telephone bills in the process. Hang in there, Chuck and thank you for the tenacious support.

To John M. Nelson and the rest of the guys of "Coast Guard S.E.A. Veterans - Mid America." This active Chicago-based group is incorporated and is leading a charge in telling middle America about the Coast Guard. They have been working with the Illinois Vietnam Veterans Memorial committee writing and designing the inscriptions commemorating the U.S. Coast Guard in Vietnam. Keep it up fellows.

Reunion. Details (hotel, expenses, program, etc.) will follow as they become known. The place where we hold the reunion depends upon how many hundreds of us attend. Yes, hundreds!!! I'm optimistic.

We need you to help make the reunion worth everyone's time and expense. If you can assist in any of these areas let us know:

- Entertainment. Finding guest speakers.
- Rounding up door prizes (merchants are a good source).
- Compiling information for and printing Reunion Program.

I'm happy to help start CGCOMVETS and to know you. Feel free to keep in touch. Paul and I enjoy hearing from you.

Sincerely,



William F. Hoover