

February 6, 2014, New Smyrna Beach Mini-Reunion SitRep by Bob Osmon

Our Mini-Reunion in New Smyrna Beach is now history, but I believe all of us there will have good memories for a long time to come. The accommodations that Randy McHenry provided at his Springhill Suites were just wonderful, the food by the caterers was just delicious, the trips well organized, and the camaraderie amongst those present was truly heartwarming. Unfortunately, Randy was undergoing eye surgery in Argentina and couldn't be present. But we all had a moment of prayer in his behalf.

The first evening on Tuesday was a cocktail party in the lobby of the hotel. It was a great ice breaker and went on for hours. The next morning most of us went to the Kennedy Space Center. As Viet Nam era vets, we were given free tickets which was a blessing. We spent about 3 hours there taking in many different exhibits. Had dinner at the hotel that evening and were most pleased to have the Mayor of NSB, Fred Cleveland '80, join us for dinner. He gave a rousing pitch for NSB giving us the history of the town and how it started and where it is going.

The next day about half of us went to St. Augustine where we took about a 1 ½ hour trolley ride around the city. The architecture is very Spanish and quite beautiful. And, no, none of us discovered the Fountain of Youth. Darn!! The other half went to the Marine Discovery Center where they boated through the marshes seeing birds and dolphins. It was a little chilly and breezy, but nothing like an open bridge in the North Atlantic on a nasty night, so they survived.

But I believe the highlight of the entire reunion was at dinner on the last night. After a wonderful meal of beef and salmon, Sal Zaccagnino's son Tony read the prophecies from the Lucky Bag that our roomies wrote about us 64 years ago. It was hilarious. Amazing how many classmates DIDN'T go into the field of service that was predicted. Then we took photos of everyone by Service Selection. After that the energy level was so high that no one wanted to leave. Finally, the caterers pushed us out so they could clean up, so we went to the bar where it all went on for another several hours.

How pleased Doug and I were to see that happen. Frankly the primary purpose of this mini gathering was to bring classmates closer together and talk about old times. As our numbers dwindle, the camaraderie between those of us left becomes more and more important. And certainly we all left with a good feeling that we had renewed friendships with old classmates and started good ones with classmates we had never met before.

The list of attendees are as follows: Rich Lang and Sandy Neal; JJ and Nancy Fee; John and Joyce Claman; Bob Osmon; Doug and Dareen Johnson; Bob and Vicky Meck; Peggy Ann Reid; Jim and Fay McConnell; Gary and Annette Lew; Richard Harper and Peggy Spellman; Ray and Vonnie Jones; Jim and Sara Worthington; Pete Bos; Gary and Kathy Cogdell; Clint and Monty Johnson; Dennis and Karen Vied; Al and Barbara Bissell; Buz Ausley; Sal and Alice Zaccagnino; Hank and Theresa Papa; Ron Hinkel and his daughter Heather McNally; Dave Schnegelberger; Karen Inderlied.

I look forward to seeing everyone again at our 65th. God bless, Oz