



1943 - 1978

# Abnaki Courier

June, 2014

Phone--- 515-210-9780

**Annual dues \$15.00**

E-mail--- Marcemgr@Yahoo.com

If the last line on your address label is not (2014) or greater you may owe some dues. Send dues to:

**Ruiz, Marce ---- 2555 142nd ST ---- Urbandale, IA 50323**

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## Last Call!!!

The 26<sup>th</sup> annual Abnaki Reunion will be in  
**Colorado Springs, Colorado**  
Wednesday August 13 - Sunday 17, 2014

**Your Host**  
(About 1951)@

### The Academy Hotel

8110 N. Academy Blvd.  
Colorado Springs, Colorado  
80920

\$89.00/Day + Tax

Toll Free: 800-766-8524

Fax: 719-598-5965

Remember!

It is your responsibility to  
make your own reservations



Don Fries



Pete Pilgrim

### Widows

Once again all the activities listed in the registration form are free for you (*except the balloon ride*). Our widows are very special to us and contribute a lot to the reunions. This year we had three join us in Charlotte and are hoping for more in Colorado Springs. Please come and bring along family or friends!!!

**For more information e-mail Pete at: [petepilg@aol.com](mailto:petepilg@aol.com) or call 319-393-9104**

**Or**

**Don Fries at: [donwfries@gmail.com](mailto:donwfries@gmail.com) or call 678-525-7925**

This is our hotel



### Room Rate Includes:

FREE Hot Daily Breakfast  
With made to order omelet  
and waffle bar.

**FREE:** HBO Movies,  
Wireless high speed  
internet, Business Center,  
Fitness Center, Local calls  
and RV Parking

Free shuttle to and from the Airport

When landing at the airport just call the hotel and they will come pick you up.

1-800-766-8524

## Plan Of The Week

OK folks, if you haven't already done so, it is time to get on the ball and get your registration in the mail!☺ And... if it is possible, you ought to think seriously about coming early or staying over a few days so you will be able to visit a lot of other great places we were unable to fit into our schedule. Don and I have worked hard to set up what we believe to be a really good program for all of us and... at the very best cost possible. We are hoping you are going to love it. If you are not happy we will buy you all the drinks you want in the hospitality room.

As usual **Wednesday** will be registration day with nothing special scheduled but... if past reunions are good indicators it will be a fun filled day with a lot of fun and fellowship in the hospitality room. ☺

**Thursday** will be the start of a three very busy but fun filled days. First we will take a short bus ride to the **US Air Force Academy** where we will visit the Cadet's Chapel and then on to the visitors center. We plan to be there long enough for everyone to see all the interesting exhibits and the 14-minute movie highlighting the Academy experience. And then, our guide will escort us to a viewing area overlooking some of the buildings and fields and explain some of the various activities. **Note: You probably will not need one but to be on the safe side be sure and have a picture ID with you.**



From the Academy we will take a short bus ride to explore **The Garden of The Gods**. Our first stop will be the Visitor Center where we will enjoy a leisurely lunch on the patio with a view of Pike's Peak as shown here. Enough time will be allowed for everyone to visit the gift shop and then we will head out to explore, with a professional guide, the sights and sounds of one of the most intriguing places on earth.

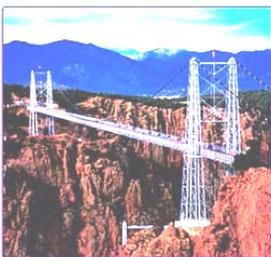


We will return to the hotel in plenty of time for everyone to get a rest and then about 17:30 we will assemble in the hospitality room for the **Official welcome aboard** where we will have food, drink and entertainment☺ After a few words of welcome from Don Fries the program will be turned over to Doris McCraw for a fun filled evening. ☺



Doris McCraw

On Friday morning we will load the bus at the hotel in plenty of time to arrive at the **ROYAL GORGE** for lunch at one of the new cafes (included in the tour). While enjoying our lunch we will listen to a park employee give us a brief history of the area, and then you can get a good look at the bridge, bungee jump, ride the tram, or whatever turns you on.☺ About 2:30 we will load up the bus and head back to the hotel. We should be back at the hotel in plenty of time for a little rest if needed or... maybe a shopping trip around town☺ And... then, once again we will assemble in the hospitality room around 17:30 for some food, drink and fun for all. We are planning a **BLUE MOUNTAIN TACO** and **CHILI** supper, with all the trimmings, made from elk meat provided and prepared by our very own **Mountain Man**, Darrel Plank. Continued inside!



Darrel Plank

# USS Abnaki (ATF96) Reunion Registration Form

*Please complete the following form and return it ASAP to....*

**Fries, Don , 2901 Barbara Ln. , Marietta, GA. 30062**

For more information e-mail: petepilg@aol.com, or phone: 319-393-9104

Or: e-mail: donwfries@gmail.com, Call: 678-525-7925

**Please make check payable to: USS Abnaki Reunion Association**

**To insure your reservation for these activities this form must be returned no later than 7-15-2014**

**All prices include Tax & Tip**

Day	Time	Event	Cost	Time	#	Total
Wednesday	10:00	Registration	\$10.00	X		
Thursday	09:30	Tour #1	\$22.00	X		
	17:30	Welcome Aboard	\$16.00	X		
Friday	10:00	Tour #2	\$32.00	X		
	17.30	Friday Night Bash	\$16.00	X		
Saturday	07:00	Balloon Ride	\$150.00	X		
	17:00	Banquet	\$32.00	X		

There is no registration fee for anyone under eighteen.

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**THE BANQUET WILL BE SERVED BUFFET STYLE**

**Banquet Menu**

**Garden Salad with Various dressings, Hot Rolls with butter, Seasonal Fresh Vegetables, Au Gratin Potatoes, Carved Roast Beef and Turkey, Assorted Sliced Cakes , Iced Tea, Water,**

*Please feel free to bring as many guests as you like including but not limited to Parents, Grandparents, Children, Grand Children, Great Grand Children, Cousins, Uncles/Aunts, Friends, Friend's Friends or relatives. Reunions are for kicking back and relaxing, so bring them on!!! The more the better!*

**Please!!!**

See page #2 for a brief description of these events

Please show you and your guest's name the way you want them to show on the "Name Badges"

Also show your **name, rate and year/years** served aboard Abnaki

*Please type or print*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Use a separate sheet for additional names*



**Don't forget!**

As usual, we will be having our Saturday evening raffle. You really don't want to miss out on this because no telling what kind of TREASURE you might come up with. So ... if you would like to contribute something to be raffled for this worthwhile cause, bring it on!

Remember, everything listed on this page (*Except the balloon ride*) is free for widows. Just fill out the form for everything you want to do and then place a "W" in the "Total Column", and we will take care of it from there! *Don't forget what Miss Piggy said "Don't eat more than you can lift".*

*We'll see you in Colorado Springs!!! ☺*

Ed note: The following article may need a little explanation. I found it tucked away in some old files while looking for something else and do not remember if it had been previously published.. The reason I don't know is that a while back I had computer problems ☹ and lost some files. If it has not been published already my most sincere apologies to Don, and... if it has already been published, it is so good that the rest of us should read it again☺

## **Sinking of the Dredge**

*EM2 Don Lady 1964-1967*

**FROM SHIP'S HISTORY:** "She departed Pearl Harbor with a barge in tow on 4 January 1965 bound for Johnston Island. After delivering the barge she picked up a dredge and headed for Yokosuka, Japan. The dredge sank on the 19th and she was then diverted to Subic Bay in the Philippines."

**NOW, THE REST OF THE STORY:** When awoken at about 3AM to 105db of deep bass rumblings and earthquake equivalent shaking, I, the "snipe" compartment and the rest of the waking ship's compliment realized something was seriously wrong. Indeed, the huge dredge we were towing, it turned out, was sinking. And, even though the ship was ahead flank speed, the Abnaki, I was told later, was actually going astern at 6 - 7 knots.

Adding to the situation, the towing engine was malfunctioning. Instead of releasing cable under the tension...it was reclaiming the cable. Bottom line: we were being pulled backward and likely downward by the sinking dredge and our own gear. Not a good situation. Power was cut to the towing engine. But, merely releasing the drum was not a solution since the cable was securely bolted to the drum.

The Bosun's got to work. First they had to chip decades of paint off the cable's bitter end holding bolts/nuts (huge fasteners) and the monstrous dedicated box wrench after chipping it clear of its brackets. Hey, if it ain't broke, paint it! The "float test" is a similar concept.



Finally, it seemed like an eternity, the Boat's got the cable unbolted: Sledge hammers and lots of sweat. The fantail was cleared and the drum was released. The drum was not designed to rotate that fast...the noise was deafening. You would not have wanted to be on the fantail observing from the 01, when the 6" braided steel cable came off the drum, it just about wiped out everything as it disappeared over the stern in the blink of an eye with the sound of a cracking whip.

Prior to the sinking, Abnaki had been diverted around a typhoon and we of course passed right through it. Doppler radar was still in the future. The bilge lights which had been added to the tow had started to signal the day before, but weather precluded any attempt to investigate. The lights apparently worked. Soon after reaching Subic Bay, the investigation began.

Captain Williams, Mr. Hollis and the other officers looked real polished in their whites as they left for their time at the green table. Long-to-short: a harbor tug had rammed the dredge prior to our taking it in tow at Johnston Island. It had gone unreported and it was enough that a seam had been weakened. The heavy storm seas did the rest. The ship and crew were exonerated.

There had been an omen that this routine tow was not to be routine. Upon leaving Johnston Island, Abnaki barely missed going aground on the rock sea wall and by being rammed by the dredge in tow. Manning the propulsion board, I was horrifyingly surprised when one after another of the 4 main engines went dead. This has a negative effect for a diesel-electric propulsion system.

The ship was about to make a port turn out the channel when all power was lost. No ability to turn...we headed right for the rocks. And, like the cartoons, had that happened, given its momentum, the tow would have rammed us. It turned out that someone had turned off a main fuel valve. This was not a normal condition and so it had not been checked during get ready for sea.

There had been enough fuel in the lines to get the engines lit, warmed up and for Abnaki to get underway. Fortunately, one of the Enginemen discovered the problem and opened the valve. Disaster was averted merely 100 yards from the sea wall. Later, it was learned that an ensign (don't remember the name) that had just come aboard had done the deed.



The ensign had been assigned as supply officer, but had always wanted to be in engineering. He had been observed wandering around the engine rooms playing with various apparatus and equipment. He believed "off" was the normal position of the valve. It was not! This same ensign had to make a four-foot leap to the ship as, with all lines in, we departed Hong Kong for Pearl at the end of our tour. His dash from the cab and leap to the ship was a thing of wonder...must have been good liberty?



### **Important Stuff!**

As usual I have once again sent out some misleading information. Hopefully it will not inconvenience anybody too much. If any of you have made reservations and were quoted room rates more than is listed on the front page, please accept my apologies for not making it clear from the beginning. Anyway, here is the deal! It seems that the hotel has two sections. Although they are connected they have different room rates. One part is called the **Towers** which has several floors with an elevator and is more expensive than the one we listed. The one we listed has two floors with NO elevator. I am told that about the only difference in the rooms is the size of the TV screens and other minor stuff. However, if you would like to stay in the Towers, go for it, but... remember it will cost you about ten bucks a night more!

Some of you that are getting along in years and prefer a ground level room should call the hotel and tell them. I have been told that they will make every effort to accommodate you. But... no guarantee! ☺



### **In Memory**

E-Mail

I saw the posting for the Abnaki reunion in my American Legion magazine and it brought back old memories of my Uncle Skip Lemanski. He served on the Abnaki back in the 1950s.

He was a great guy and was loved by many young people in Wisconsin. He taught many a youth to ride horses and how to take part in many rodeo events. He is greatly missed. He was the reason I joined the Navy in 1965 and asked to go overseas in the Pacific. (He failed to mention any war.) After 10 years I came home to WI and the first person I went to see was Skip.

He passed away a couple years back so if anyone asked about him, please let them know. He is in a happy place now & can still coil a rope better than anybody. His real name was John Lemanski of Madison Wisconsin.....Thank you.....his oldest nephew....Mike Meier

# One Of Our Own Gets Well Deserved Recognition!

*This article is a slightly modified copy from **The Desert Sun***

*Written by: Sherry Barkas*

*11/30/13*

**NAME:** Charles (Jack) Bowie

**AGE:** 82

**HOMETOWN:** LeRoy, KA

**RESIDENCE:**

Palm Desert, CA

**BRANCH OF SERVICE:**

U.S. Navy

**YEARS SERVED:**

February 1951-June 1971

**RANK:** Chief warrant officer

**FAMILY:**

Wife Bonnie; two sons



*Retired U.S. Navy Chief Warrant Officer Charles Bowie of Palm Desert stands in front of a photo of a PC 1145, the first ship he was assigned to after enlisting in February 1951 that hangs in the office of his home. / Sherry Barkas/The Desert*

In January 1951, at 19 years old, Charles Bowie knew a draft notice would soon be arriving in his mailbox. The Korean War was under way and he didn't want to be in the Army, so he went for his first choice, the U.S. Coast Guard. "But I'm legally color blind," Bowie said, sitting in his office in his Palm Desert home, his walls decorated with framed medals, photos and certificates reflecting more than 20 years in the service. The Coast Guard recruiter told Bowie to give the Navy a try. He did. He went with a buddy and both were accepted and inducted into the U.S. Navy in February 1951, heading for boot camp and then Engineman School, both in San Diego.

"I beat the draft by a week," he said. Though he was born in LeRoy, Kan., Bowie spent most of his youth in California, graduating from high school in Monterey. He was working on diesel engines for General Motors when he enlisted, which proved beneficial in the Navy.

His first tour of duty was as an engineman aboard a PC-1145. The patrol craft's engines were all made by GM, he said. "Before I got off that ship ... I could overhaul one of those generators in two days," he said. For a short time during the Korean War, Bowie's ship was based at Kwajalein and was among a squadron of ships assigned to patrol the area after the U.S. detonated the world's first hydrogen bomb in November 1952. The bomb was dropped from Kwajalein onto Eniwetok atoll in the Pacific.

"We patrolled that area for over three weeks ... chasing out any fishing boats," he said. His ship floated about 20 miles from shore and when it returned to Kwajalein was checked top to bottom for radiation. "We didn't have any," he said.

That wasn't his only exposure to nuclear power and weapons. In 1955, a captain urged him to apply for nuclear power training. He was a petty officer first class at the time. "I told him 'I don't think my rank qualifies for nuclear power,' and he says, 'Yes it does. Here's a letter that just came across my desk.

Jack took and passed the test for warrant officer and was sent to Long Beach, where he worked aboard a repair ship for about five months before he got orders to nuclear power school in Vallejo.

After he finished school, he was stationed aboard the USS Enterprise — the world’s first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier and the eighth in a line of ships named Enterprise. Much of what he did was classified. He recalled an incident when they were bringing a propulsion reactor up and Bowie, the chief reactor auxiliary operator at the time, was called and told there was a problem. “We’re not critical yet, but we’re not doing right,” he was told.

He asked and was told it was about 140 degrees in the compartment — too hot. He knew right away what the problem was. He put on special clothing, gloves and a respirator and crawled inside a hatch to the No. 2 engine where a valve needed to be opened more — about a quarter of a turn. “When I came out of there and I was just exhausted. ... I passed out and they took me to sick bay,” he said.

After 4½ years, he was ready to get off the Enterprise, but the only way to do that was to take duty as either a drill instructor or recruiter. He chose the latter, and spent the next three years stationed in Arizona. From there he was transferred to Seattle and in November 1968, in the midst of the Vietnam War, was sent to Boston for duty aboard the USS Boston. He was among the last to serve on that ship, which was decommissioned in 1969.

An incident aboard it earned Bowie the Navy Achievement Award — one of the highest in the Navy. “We got under way from Boston with one good boiler, one hurting and two of them were down,” he said. “We got to Pearl Harbor and we got the second one going in Pearl. ... We were probably on our second deployment to Vietnam and I was on that cruiser, the engineer of the watch. The phone guy called and said the captain wants to know when you can make full speed and how many boilers,” he recalled. “I didn’t even hesitate and I said about an hour and a half we’ll have four boilers; full speed,” Bowie recalled.

He had to crawl into compartments where the temperature was about 140 degrees to get the other boilers running. Tools had to be kept in ice buckets it was so hot, he said. “I scraped the bearings because nobody knew how to do it and got her running,” Bowie said. Soon after, he was told the captain wanted to see him. He says, “I want to shake your hand. My tour’s almost up ... and we’ve never had four boilers. ”

The USS Boston was positioned off the coast of Vietnam and the Army and Marines would helicopter men onto the ship, where they would rebuild their weapons, he said.

He recalled when a 5-inch gun exploded. He was headed to lunch, walking down a ship passageway when he was passed by a guy coming down the ladder from the bridge, bleeding from his ear. I thought, “Oh man, they’re firing at us” he said. The other guy had been hit by some shrapnel when the barrel exploded, but his injuries weren’t life- threatening.

A few months later Bowie was assigned to the USS Abnaki, the last ship on which he served, retiring in June 1971.



## Punography

*Jokes about German sausage are the wurst* 😊

## A Proclamation!

Hear Ye, Hear Ye, Hear ye, Let it be known throughout the United States, all its territories and protectorates that the Sponsors of this reunion have very strong political beliefs and are therefore not interested in engaging in any conversations pertaining to any of the above while attending this reunion. Therefore, let it be known, by all these present, that engaging in this sort of activities shall be forbidden starting upon arrival in Colorado Springs, and shall be in effect throughout the duration of this reunion, and all subsequent reunions unless revoked by the members, which will require 100% of the attendee's approval. ☺

Violation of this proclamation may result in any or all of the following penalties. 1. Banishment to the back of the bus to seats nearest the Head. 2. Reduced rations including, but not limited to, one half serving of cake, ice cream, etc. 3. Assignment to the **Raffle Ticket Sales Detail** to perform such duties as directed by Lorri Pilgrim or Pat Oldfather.

Those of you that cannot resist political campaigning may obtain permission to engage in said activities providing you are with other consenting adults in the privacy of your room, behind locked and bolted doors with a **Do Not Disturb** sign prominently displayed outside the door. ☺

Sign on the back of a Septic Tank Truck: "**Caution - This Truck is full of Political Promises.**"

USS ABNAKI (ATF-96) Sweatshirts are now available from Art Holstein. Please contact him so he can bring them to the reunion. The cost is **\$30.00 each**. There is an additional charge of \$6.95 if you want it mailed to you. You can contact him at [grandpahol@comcast.net](mailto:grandpahol@comcast.net) or Telephone (847) 872-9043.

Please send check to:  
**Art Holstein**  
**2201 Eshcol Avenue**  
**Zion, Illinois 60099-2355**

According to weather.com the average low temperature during our stay in Colorado Springs is in the middle 50s. You just might need a sweatshirt so maybe you better order one now! ☺



On Saturday before most of us are out of bed those of you who are going for the balloon ride will start the day at daylight somewhere over Colorado Springs, drifting wherever the wind takes you,. This is a chance to see Colorado Springs and the surrounding area like most people will only see in post cards. With **Captain Gary "Burner" Born** (*USS Abnaki 1963-66*) in command you will drift gently above the city and countryside in one of his beautiful balloons.

Burner, or one of his crew, will pick us up at the hotel around five o'clock in the morning. So... for those of us going on the balloon ride, or will be riding along with the chase crew, will have a very early start for the day.



Captain "Burner"  
*Soaring with the eagles*

The average high temperature for August is 82 degrees and the Average low temperature is 56 degrees. At 5 o'clock the temp for the day will probably be at its low point, so... dress accordingly.

People not going on the balloon ride will have an open day until the banquet, which will begin with a cash bar at about 17:30. **It's going to be a great day!**

A Note from the Sponsors

We think that we have put together a program that all of us can enjoy. Even if you have been to this area before we think you will enjoy it even more seeing it with old shipmates and friends. We have tried to include a few new twist that will make it a special time for you and your guest. This should be especially true for the Royal Gorge tour since it was just about all burned to the ground last year. We have been assured that most of it will be restored by the time we arrive. We are glad to report that the bridge itself was only slightly damaged in the fire and has now open for business as usual. As noted on page two we will be having lunch there but since work is still going on there we are unable to tell you what is on the menu, but... rest assured, it will be good!

**FAQ:** what is the uniform of the day? **Answer:** Anything that makes you comfortable! Remember, Abnaki was part of the dungaree navy and nothing has changed that. However it might be a good idea to scrub up and put on a little fu fu juice occasionally. ☺

Just a reminder that everyone is welcome. This is a great way to have a mini reunion along with your shipmates, so... bring along your family and/or friends. Also... for those of you who would like to come but are not sure if you will see anyone you served with please don't worry, you will have a blast anyway. Hint! The best way to make sure that one of your old shipmates will be there is to give him/them a buzz. If you need help finding an old shipmate give me a call. 319-393-9104 or email me at [petepilg@aol.com](mailto:petepilg@aol.com). I will be more than happy to help but no guarantees.

Please let us know if you will be in need of anything special I.E. Diet restrictions, wheel chairs, etc. **Remember!** Time is short so start packing your bags! And... remember, all you have to do is get here, then kick back and enjoy! We will take care of everything else. ☺

***Uniform Supplies***

The following items may be ordered from the Abnaki (*Joe Colombara, Supply Officer*) supply department.

**Allow 60 days for the delivery of orders.** Orders will be delivered to the reunion at the below prices.

If you wish to have your order shipped please see shipping and handling charges below.

**Please indicate size---Small---Medium---Large---Extra Large-----XX Large (All Super Quality)**

**Polo - Shirts**

Color	Logo Colors	Quantity	Size	Cost	Total
Navy Blue	Gold Name, Number, Ship			\$27.00	
Navy Blue	Gold Name, Number, Silver Ship			\$27.00	
White	Navy Blue Name, Number, Ship			\$27.00	

**Note: Add \$2.00 Ea. For XX Large Sizes.**

Sub-Total \_\_\_\_\_

**Caps**

Color	Logo Colors	Quantity	Size	Cost	Total
Navy Blue	Gold Name, Number, Ship		X	\$14.00	
Navy Blue	Gold Name, Number, Silver Ship		X	\$14.00	
White	Navy Blue Name, Number, Ship		X	\$14.00	

If your order exceeds the schedule shown below contact Joe Colombara Sub-Total \_\_\_\_\_

**S & H-Charges.** One shirt, or one shirt and one cap \$7.50. Two Caps \$5.00. One cap \$5.00-Grand Total \_\_\_\_\_

**(Please enclose check with order)**

Please mail or call orders to: Joe Colombara, 720 E. Country Ln, Collinsville, IL. 62234

Phone 618-344-8869 . E-mail..... [joec96@att.net](mailto:joec96@att.net)

Note: Make check payable to Joe Colombara. All profits go directly to the Abnaki Sailors Association.

**Special**

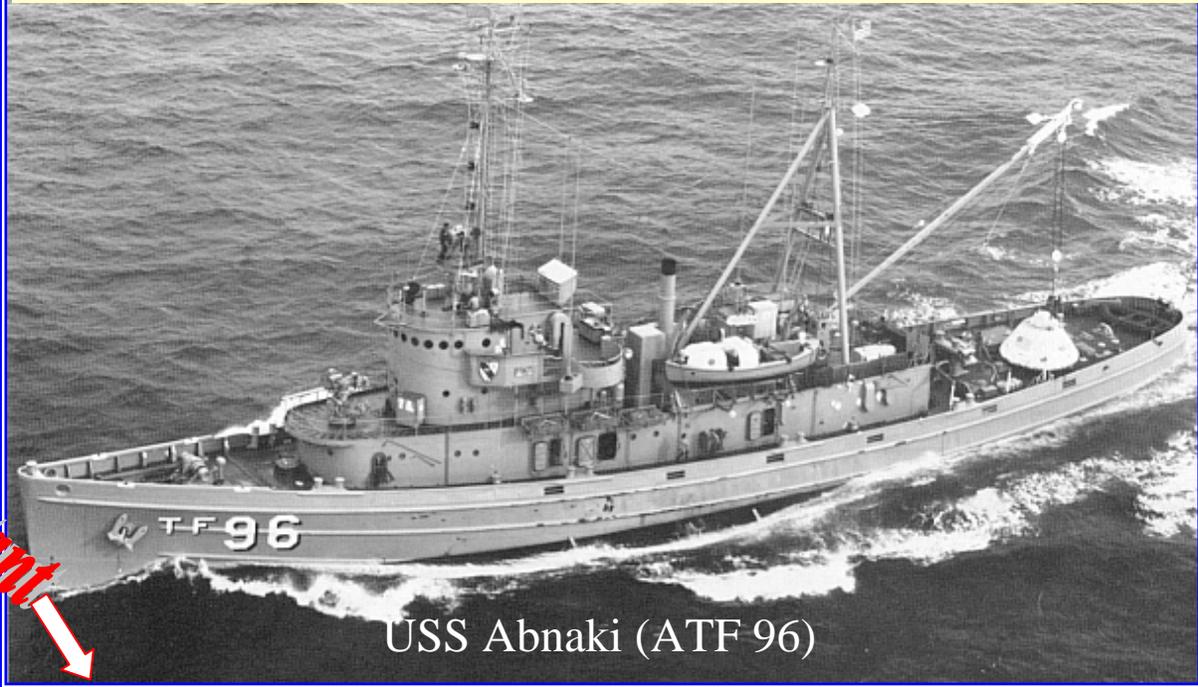
Jackets - light quilted with full embroidery on the back. \$75.00

\$80.00 with your name on right breast (**Includes Shipping**)

**Special Notice**

*Joe's supplier has notified him that he will need a minimum order of four jackets so... please give him a call before ordering jackets.*

*"Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Anyone Who Threatens It"*



**Important** ↓

USS Abnaki (ATF 96)

If the last line on your address label is not (2014) or greater you may owe some dues.  
Send dues (\$15.00) to: Ruiz, Marce ---- 2555 142nd ST ---- Urbandale, IA 50323

B. "Pete" Pilgrim 46-49  
U.S.S. Abnaki (A.T.F. 96)  
4746 "E" Ave. N.E.  
Cedar Rapids IA. 52402