

USS WILHOITE

DE-DER 397

APRIL, MAY, AND JUNE, 2023

Newsletter

Wilhoite Shipmates:

Sorry this is late getting to you. I'm just running behind.

I know that October seem far down the line, but I need to get our activities lined up and I have not heard from some of you.

I hope that you are planning on coming to San Diego. We really need a good turnout because we have some decision that are going to have to be made for the USS Wilhoite. If you can't come, please voice your opinion as what you want to see happen to her.

My time is running out, (will be 90 this year) and I don't want to start something and can't finish it. We need help if all want to see the USS Wilhoite stay active.

I know most have health problems, some are in rest homes and I know of one that is in Hospice Care, I think there are some out there that could pitch in and help in some way.

I guess I love this ship as much as Bobby did and I know he was not on her long, but he did love the Wilhoite and the Pacific Ocean. He was a Navy man! I love you all and have enjoyed working with you.

You know I have worked with you all off and on, mostly on, since I first met Connie and John Mauldin in Oklahoma 2003. I've come to know a lot of you and I will miss coming to reunions and doing your newsletters. I sure hope that someone will step up and follow through.

After this newsletter, I will do one more, then I hope someone will step up and take over. I really am looking forward to San Diego. Haven't told my kids that I was going to San Diego because I am afraid they will try and stop me, but they will not know until I have plane reservations made and I'm on my way.

I've put a quiz in and there is 24 questions and you need to answer **20** that is correct according to my records, to receive a Gift Card of \$25.00. I think I know of one person that probably will get them all.

Anyway, good luck in answering them and this will be the last quiz that I will send out. GOD BLESS each and everyone of you and your families and GOD BLESS AMERICA!

"Smooth Sailing"

Liz



DUES PAID FOR 2023

As you can see several have not paid their dues for 2023. This will be the last newsletter if dues/donations have not been received by the next newsletter in July August and September. If you think you have paid for 2023, then please let either Dana or myself know. The 2024 dues is going to be due in September!

Alcorn Michael (2023)
Berry David (2022)
Bunker Rita (2022)
Caldwell Brenda (2023)
Caldwell John (2023)
Candor Raymond (2022)
Cusato Paul (2023)
Dougher Thomas (2022)
Dutchuk John (2023)
Dyson Al (2022)
Frederiksen Geri (2023)
Gennetti Fred (2023)
Gergens Steve (2023)
Hagee Charles (2023)
Hawes Eugene (2022)
Heller Richard (2022)
Horch Linda (2023)
Huff Roland (2023)
Huml Vincent (2023)
Hydro John (2023)
Johnson Robert (2023)
Knight James (2022)
Layton Geoffrey (2022)
Long Leroy (2022)

Markley Ray (2023)
Mauldin Connie (2022)
Morlock Fred (2022)
Morrissey Tom (2025)
Mullin James (2022)
Murphy Obie (2022)
Owens William (2023)
Parker David (2023)
Payne Gary (2023)
Payson David (2023)
Payton Johnny (2023)
Pohl Art (2023)
Rider Elisabeth (2023)
Robinson Lee (2023)
Ruel Donald A. (2023)
Shanahan, Jr John (2023)
Shuck Donald L. (2023)
Silhan Peter (2023)
Smith Raymond (2023)
Syverso Norris (2023)
Thompson Ross (2024)
Throm Larry (2023)
Torriglia Paul (2026)
Valiant Martha (2023)
Yonkofski Ben (2023)

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SHIPMATES NEWS



GO NAVY



JOHN DUTCHUK

I was surprised to get this quilt. It is very nice and I will treasure it as a souvenir of service in the Navy.

What I remember is we went out to sea for 30 days and back in port for 30 days and out again. Stood many watches as we (the ship) bobbed on the DEW Line. Many days we were close by Russian ships. They were monitoring signals from missile launches. We also monitored signals, as we had aboard a civilian with electronic gear.

Met many good friends, but can't remember much (names that is).

Anchors Away

John Dutchuk Fire Control Tech 2nd Class



JAMES KNIGHT

Reported to the Wilhoite in Pearl Harbor in October 64. Went on Adak Patrol (early warning) for 30 days, then back to Pearl Harbor. Stayed there for a cleanup and paint job then went to the International Date Line where I became a shell Bick. After returning to Pearl we turned around and went back to Adak in December and we were in a big storm with 50 ft. waves. We lost our gun mount and had a cracked deck 01 level from port to starboard. Limped back to Pearl and went to dry dock. We had a lot of work to do before we were ready for Vietnam.

Left for Vietnam in middle of 65 making stops in Guam, Midway, Philippines and other areas. We went to Vietnam from there. Pulled a pilot out of the water from a shot down plane and also a gunner, his name was Miller GMC 3rd class from the Turner Joy, out of the water.

Not sure if all of this happened on one tour or three out of my three tours to Vietnam. The other tours were in 66 and 67. While in Vietnam in 67 we were involved with the Trawler incident.

We went back to Pearl and I left the ship in 68 for Treasure Island in San Francisco for Discharge.

Went to work for Georgia Pacific Pulp and Paper in Bellingham, Washington in 68 and worked for them for 35 years. Went back to school for Associates Degree in Automotive and Technician. Worked for FWPS Distribution for 15 years.

INTERESTING READ ABOUT ADMIRAL NIMITZ

God & "The 3 Mistakes"

What God did at Pearl Harbor that day is interesting and I never knew this little bit of history.

"Reflections on Pearl Harbor" by Admiral Chester Nimitz.

Sunday, December 7th, 1941--Admiral Chester Nimitz was attending a concert in Washington, DC. He was paged and told there was a phone call for him. When he answered the phone, it was President Franklin Delano Roosevelt calling. He told Admiral Nimitz that he (Nimitz) would now be the Commander of the Pacific Fleet. Admiral Nimitz flew to Hawaii to assume command of the Pacific Fleet.

Nimitz landed at Pearl Harbor on Christmas Eve, 1941. There was such a spirit of despair, dejection and defeat--you would have thought the Japanese had already won the war.

On Christmas Day, 1941, Adm. Nimitz was given a boat tour of the destruction wrought on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese. Big sunken battleships and navy vessels cluttered the waters everywhere you looked.

As the Admiral's tour boat returned to dock, the young helmsman of the boat asked, "Well Admiral, what do you think after seeing all this destruction?" Admiral Nimitz's reply shocked everyone within the sound of his voice. Admiral Nimitz said, "The Japanese made three of the biggest mistakes an attack force could ever make, or God was taking care of America. Which do you think it was?"

Shocked and surprised, the young helmsman asked, "What do mean by saying the Japanese made the three biggest mistakes an attack force ever made?"

Nimitz explained: "Mistake number one:

The Japanese attacked on Sunday morning. Nine out of every ten crewmen of those ships were ashore on leave. If those same ships had been lured to sea and been sunk--we would have lost 38,000 men instead of 3,800.

Mistake number two:

When the Japanese saw all those battleships lined in a row, they got so carried away sinking those battleships, they never once bombed our dry docks opposite those ships. If they had destroyed our dry docks, we would have had to tow every one of those ships to America to be repaired. As it is now, the ships are in shallow water and can be raised. One tug can pull them over to the dry docks, and we can have them repaired and at sea by the time we could have towed them to America. And I already have crews ashore anxious to man those ships.

Admiral Nimitz

Every drop of fuel in the Pacific theater of war is in top of the ground storage tanks five miles away over that hill. One attack plane could have struck those tanks and destroyed our fuel supply. That's why I say the Japanese made three of the biggest mistakes an attack force could make or, God was taking care of America .

Mistake number three:

I've never forgotten what I read in that little book. It is still an inspiration as I reflect upon it. In jest, I might suggest that because Admiral Nimitz was a Texan, born and raised in Fredericksburg, Texas -- he was a born optimist. But any way you look at it--Admiral Nimitz was able to see a silver lining in a situation and circumstance where everyone else saw only despair and defeatism."

President Roosevelt had chosen the right man for the right job. We desperately needed a leader that could see silver linings in the midst of the clouds of dejection, despair and defeat.

There is a reason that our national motto is, "IN GOD WE TRUST".

Why have we forgotten? PRAY FOR OUR COUNTRY! "

Hi Lord, it's me. We are getting older and things are getting bad here. Gas prices are too high, no jobs, and food and heating costs too high. I know some have taken you out of our schools, government and even Christmas, but Lord I'm asking you to come back and re-bless America, we really need you! There are more of us who want you than those who don't Thank you Lord, I Love You.

"Life without God is like an unsharpened pencil - It has no point."

May God Grant You Always.....

A sunbeam to warm you,
A moonbeam to charm you,
A sheltering Angel, so nothing can harm you,
Laughter to cheer you,
Faithful friends near you,
and Whenever you pray, Heaven to hear you."

dock area, this became the subject of one of the most famous photographs of WW II.

An enemy fighter attacking a 97th Bomb Group formation went out of control, probably with a wounded pilot, then continued its crashing descent into the rear of the fuselage of a Flying Fortress named "*All American*", Piloted by Lt. Kendrick R. Bragg, of the 414th Bomb Squadron.

When it struck, the fighter broke apart, but left some pieces in the B-17. The left horizontal stabilizer of the Fortress and left elevator were completely torn away. The two right engines were out and one on the left had a serious oil pump leak. The vertical fin and the rudder had been damaged. The fuselage had been cut almost completely through . . . connected only at two small parts of the frame. And the radios, electrical and oxygen systems were damaged.

There was also a hole in the top that was over 16-feet long and 4 feet wide at its widest; the split in the fuselage went all the way to the top gunner's turret.

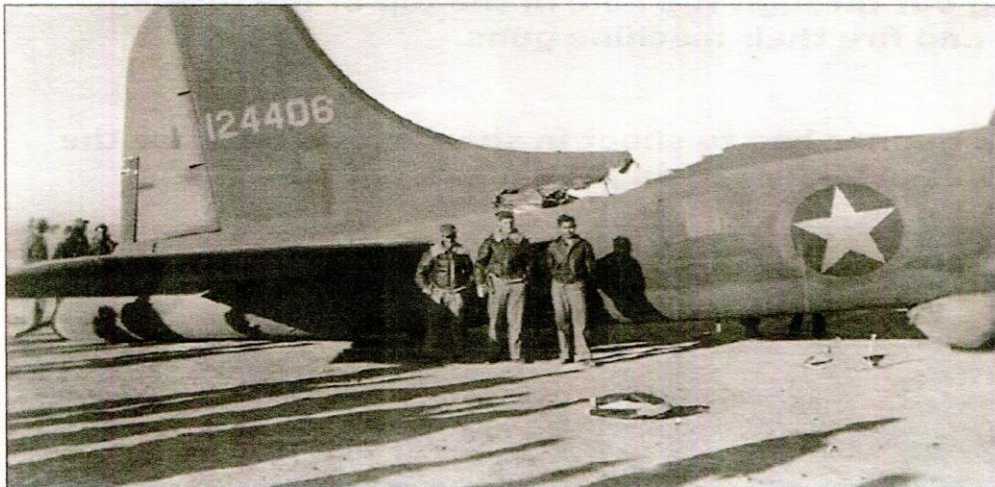


Although the tail actually bounced and swayed in the wind, and twisted when the plane turned. And all the control cables were severed, except one single elevator cable still worked, and the aircraft miraculously still flew!

The tail gunner was trapped because there was no floor connecting the tail to the rest of the plane. The waist

and tail gunners used parts of the German fighter and their own parachute harnesses in an attempt to keep the tail from ripping off and the two sides of the fuselage from splitting apart.

While the crew was trying to keep the bomber from coming apart, the pilot continued on his bomb run and released his bombs over the target.



When the bomb bay doors were opened, the wind turbulence was so great that it blew one of the waist gunners into the broken tail section. It took several minutes and four crew members to pass him ropes from parachutes and haul him back into the forward part of the plane.

When they tried to do the same for the tail gunner, the tail began flapping so hard that it began to break off. The weight of the gunner was adding some stability to the tail section, so he went back to his position.

The turn back toward England had to be very slow to keep the tail from twisting off. They actually covered almost 70 miles to make the turn home.

The bomber was so badly damaged that it was losing altitude and speed and was soon alone in the sky. For a brief time two more Me-109 German fighters attacked

the "*All American*".

Despite the extensive damage, all of the machine gunners were able to respond to these attacks and soon drove off the fighters.

The two waist gunners stood up with their heads sticking out through the hole in the top of the fuselage to aim and fire their machine guns.

The tail gunner had to shoot in short bursts because the recoil was actually causing the plane to turn.



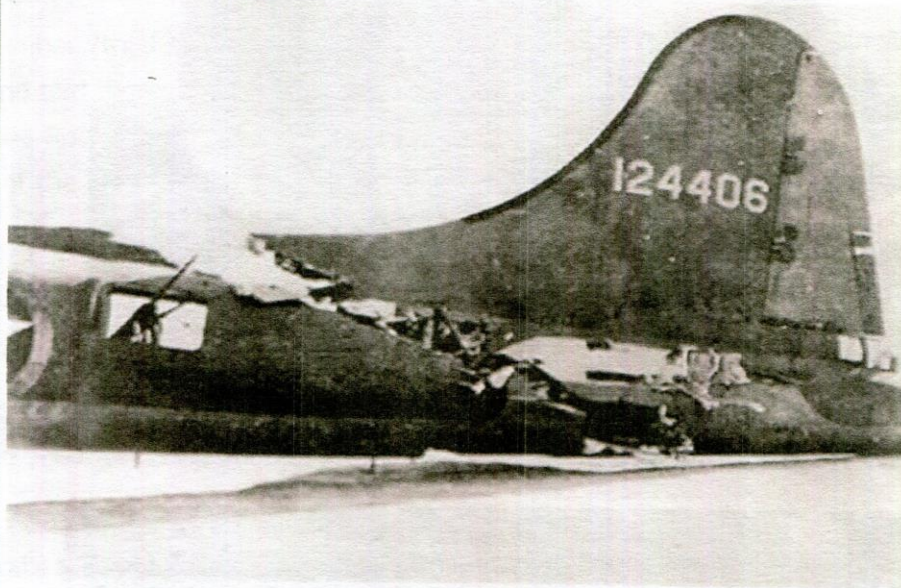
Allied P-51 fighters intercepted the "*All American*" as it crossed over the Channel and took one of the pictures shown.

They also radioed to the base describing that the appendage was waving like a fish tail . . . and that the plane would not make it and to send out boats to rescue the crew when they bailed out.

The fighters stayed with the Fortress, taking hand signals from Lt. Bragg and relaying them to the base.

Lt. Bragg signaled that 5 parachutes and the spare had been "used" so five of the crew could not bail out. He made the decision that if they could not bail out safely, then he would stay with the plane to land it.

Two and a half hours after being hit, the aircraft made its final turn to line up with the runway while it was still over 40 miles away. It descended into an emergency landing and a normal roll-out on its landing gear.



When the ambulance pulled alongside, it was waved off because not a single member of the crew had been injured.

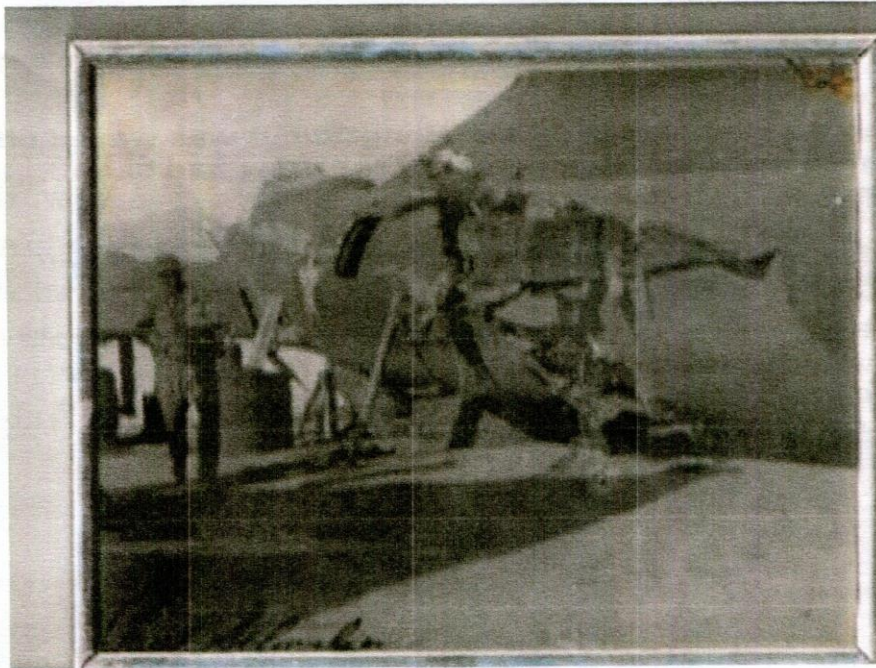
No one could believe that the aircraft could still fly in such a condition.

The Fortress sat placidly until the crew all exited through the door in the fuselage and the tail gunner had climbed down a ladder, at which time the entire rear section of the aircraft collapsed.

Gmail - FW: A RARE MIRACLE FROM WORLD WAR II



This old bird had done its job and brought the entire crew home uninjured.



Please pass this on to someone who will also appreciate this amazing story.

SERVICE TO HUMANITY IS THE BEST WORK OF LIFE

As an adult, I have supported many community-service groups like the Jaycees and Kiwanis International. Credit for more than 30 years of community service must be given to an experience that I had as an engineman aboard the radar picket USS Wilhoite DER-397, in October 1967. The Wilhoite was part of Operation Market Time off the coast of South Vietnam in the vicinity of Qui Nhon. Market Time patrols were designed to prevent the infiltration of ammunition and supplies to the Viet Cong by sea. Our days went slowly on patrol, as we kept busy working in our assigned spaces. standing watches, working on replenishment-at-sea evolutions, and rendezvous with other Market Time units. We also acted as "mother ship" for two navy swift boats, berthing extra crews on board and supplying them with food, water and fuel.

After 30 days of this my shipmates and I were miserable from the monotony and the constant rain. When a chance to break the routine came, I was eager to respond. Fleet headquarters issued a call for volunteers to all Market Time units to provide manpower to clean up a civilian South Vietnamese surgical hospital. I thought, "Hey, here is a chance to get off this tub and really see what this war is all about." I had previously viewed the war vicariously from the safety of our ship off the coast. Here was a chance, I wanted to go ashore and get a sense of reality. I volunteered to be one of a handful of sailors from the Wilhoite.

I awoke about three in the morning anticipating the day's events. It was a damp dark night as we gathered near the stern of the ship to wait for a swift boat to take us ashore. Finally the swift boat arrived to change crews and pick up the six volunteers. The swift boat sped off into the cold dark night toward the harbor at Qui Nhon. It was still dark when we arrived at the base and were directed to the mess hall to eat breakfast. As we walked along, everyone was getting his land legs after 30 days at sea and scanning the guard towers on the perimeter fence. We felt an eerie silence around the base, but could hear cannons - thump, thump, thumping in the distance. This was my first dose of reality after living in the safety of a ship off shore. After finishing breakfast, we embarked on a landing craft to cross a river to the other side of the base. Then we climbed aboard an Army Duce-and-a-Half and proceeded to the main gate into the Vietnamese country side.

The sun was starting to come up and my senses were assaulted by many new reactions to the lush tropics. The air was heavy with many new aromas and numerous new sounds seemed to surround me. I remember the unique growl of the Army truck as it bumped its way toward our destination. After traveling a few miles, we approached the sprawling, single-story hospital.

The once-grand hospital was built during French colonial times, but had fallen into disrepair. The wards were arranged in a large rectangle with windows on the outside and doors facing an interior courtyard. We were awe-struck by the poor condition of the facilities. All of the materials for utilities had been stripped from the buildings and sold for scrap.

SERVICE TO HUMMANITY (cont)

There was no running water or electricity available. The restrooms were primitive. Nothing could have prepared us for the filth. The grime and grit everywhere was detrimental to proper health care. All of the bloody bandages were disposed of in an open pit. The stench from this area is etched in our memories forever. Everything needed for the clean-up including the water had to be trucked-in. Whenever I enter a hospital today, I am extremely thankful for our modern hospital system.

All of the Vietnamese patients in the hospital were victims of napalm burns. In many cases, if one of the parents was burned, the whole family unit moved to the hospital. Young children seemed to be everywhere. The activity of a beehive surrounded the whole place. The anguish on the victims' faces seemed to permeate the atmosphere. Their exposed skin looked like an eruption of puffy red burns. The image of one man's burns will never leave me. Both of his legs had third-degree burns, and pain was evident to his face. I didn't know what to expect, because this reality was far removed from my experience.

Today's wartime terror may feel common and remote, but seeing the civilian results of military action first-hand placed it in a new context. I vowed to do whatever possible to prevent my loved ones from experiencing this type of trauma.

This was a horrific sight for almost every one of the volunteers. At first we were standoffish, but then our compassionate feelings overcame the horror. As we began our work we could sense the patients' warming attitude toward the American volunteers. We were unable to communicate verbally, but each group's body language bridged the cultural divide. The volunteers set about digging a new disposal pit, rearranging the wards, mopping floors, and washing walls.

I was one of groups working in the wards. Try to imagine housekeeping duties without the use of today's cleaning miracles and you'll get some idea of the task we faced. We had to fill our buckets from the tank trailer and carry them all-the-way to the ward. I can still remember working with an Army issue scrub brush and soap to clean the gritty textured walls. It's amazing to me, what a little soap, water, and scrubbing did in cleaning the years of grime off the walls.

A whole new cosmic energy seemed to come over the entire hospital. What had once felt like a scene from Dante's Inferno began to feel like a healing environment.

Our morning vanished quickly in an effort to create a better environment for those not as fortunate as ourselves. A lunch of bologna sandwiches and Kool-Aid seemed like a feast in these surroundings. We spend lunch time discussing what we were doing in our jobs at the hospital.

SERVICE TO HUMMANITY (cont)

Everyone commented on how this operation made them feel good about service to humanity and how the patients appeared to appreciate our efforts. The New Zealand surgical team who operated the hospital validated our observations.

My energy was renewed, and I went back to work mopping floors in the wards with a new sense of meaning and accomplishment. Instead of swabbing the deck like many other sailors do everyday, I felt I was making a difference in these peoples' existence. Carrying many buckets of water over long distances gave me a new respect for the conveniences we all enjoy in our everyday lives.

The oppressive tropic heat built up in the afternoon, but we labored on at the task at hand. As the afternoon drew to a close, everyone finished up their work. The hospital was a better environment as result of our attempting to create an oasis in the horror of these patients' lives. The surgical team and the patients extended many happy greetings with us upon our departure.

When our group returned to the Wilhoite, we all commented about how our volunteer operation was successful. I had volunteered to get a perspective on our involvement in Vietnam, but I had received a gift. I had gained a new outlook about service to humanity. The outlook planted on this operation has germinated over the years and I am actively involved with community service. I never hesitate to volunteer to provide service to others because it is the best work of life. A volunteer activity 46 years ago has provided a touchstone for my life. As the last line of the Jaycee Creed says, "Service to Humanity is the best work of life."

This article is from Dennis E. Horvath - M Division - 1967-1969

Don't give up the ship!"

Tradition has it that Captain James Lawrence said these heroic words after being mortally wounded in the engagement between his ship, the U.S. Frigate Chesapeake, and HMS Shannon on 1 June 1813. As the wounded Lawrence was carried below, he ordered "Tell the men to fire faster! Don't give up the ship!"

Although Chesapeake was forced to surrender, Captain Lawrence's words lived on as a rallying cry during the war. Oliver Hazard Perry honored his dead friend Lawrence when he had the motto sewn onto the private battle flag flown during the Battle of Lake Erie, 10 September 1813.

ROCK 'N ROLL OLDIES QUIZ

1. When did 'Little Suzie' finally wake up?
____ a. The movie's over, it's 2 o'clock
____ b. The movie's over, it's 3 o'clock
____ c. The movie's over, it's 4 o'clock
2. 'Rock Around The Clock' was used in what movie?
____ a. Rebel Without A Cause
____ b. Blackboard Jungle
____ c. The Wild Ones
3. What's missing from a Rock & Roll standpoint? Earth ____?
____ a. Angel
____ b. Mother
____ c. Worm
4. 'I found my thrill...'where?
____ a. Kansas City
____ b. Heartbreak Hotel
____ c. Bluebery Hill
5. 'Please turn on your magic beam , _____ bring me a dream'
____ a. Mr. Sandman
____ b. Earth Angel
____ c. Dream Lover
6. For which label did Elvis Presley first record?
____ a. Atlantaic
____ b. RCA
____ c. Sun
7. He asked, 'Why's everybody always pickin' on me?' Who was he??
____ a. Bad, Bad Leroy Brown
____ b. Charlie Brown
____ c. Buster Brown
8. Bobby Darin's 'Mack The KNife,' the one with the knife, was named:?
____ a. MacHeath
____ b. MacCloud
____ c. MacNamara

ROCK 'N ROLL QUIZ (cont)

9. Name the song with "A-wop bop a-loo bop a-lop bam boom"?
- _____ a. Good Golly, Miss Molly
_____ b. Be-Bop-A-Lula
_____ c. Tutti Frutti
10. Who is generally given credit for originating the term "Rock and Roll"?
- _____ a. Dick Clark
_____ b. Wolfman Jack
_____ c. Alan Freed
11. In 1957, he left the music business to become a preacher?
- _____ a. Little Richard
_____ b. Frankie Lymon
_____ c. Tony Orlando
12. Paul Anka's 'Puppy Love' is written to what star?
- _____ a. Brenda Lee
_____ b. Connie Francis
_____ c. Annette Funicello
13. The Everly Brothers are.....
- _____ a. Pete and Dick
_____ b. Don and Phil
_____ c. Bob and Bill
14. The Big Bopper's real name was:
- _____ a. Jiles P. Richardson
_____ b. Roy Harold Scherer, Jr.
_____ c. Marion Michael Morrison
15. In 1959, Berry Gordy, Jr. started a small record company called:
- _____ a. Decca
_____ b. Cameo
_____ c. Motown
16. Edd Brynes had a hit with "Kookie, Kookie, Lend Me Your Comb? What TV show was he on?
- _____ a. 77 Sunset Strip
_____ b. Hawaiian Eye
_____ c. Surfside Six

ROCK 'N ROLL QUIZ (cont)

17. In 1960 Bobby Darin married?
____ a. Carol Lynley
____ b. Sandra Dee
____ c. Natalie Wood
18. They were a prime time wonder with 'Book Of Love':
____ a. The Penguins
____ b. The Monotones
____ c. The Moonglows
19. The Everly Brothers sang a song called 'Till I _____ You'.
____ a. Loved
____ b. Kissed
____ c. Met
20. Chuck Berry sang "Oh, _____, why can't you be true?"
____ a. Suzie Q
____ b. Peggy Sue
____ c. Maybelline
21. 'Woolly _____'
____ a. Mammouth
____ b. Bully
____ c. Pully
22. 'I'm like a one-eyed cat.....'
____ a. can't go into town no more
____ b. sleepin' on a cold hard floor
____ c. peepin' in a seafood store
23. 'Sometimes I wonder what I'm a gonna do...'
____ a. cause there ain't no answer for a life without booze
____ b. cause there ain't no cure for the summertime blues
____ c. cause my car's gassed up and I'm ready to cruise
24. 'They often call me Speedo, but my real name is'
____ a. Mr. Earl
____ b. Jackie Pearl
____ c. Milton Berle