



## USMMA KP ALUMNI NEW ORLEANS CHAPTER

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### CHAPTER NEWS

On December 5<sup>th</sup>, Rear Admiral James Helis flew to Houston and was their guest speaker for their luncheon. I received many emails from my friends in that chapter thanking me for an excellent selection for superintendent as I was one of three graduates that interviewed him last March. After Houston, Admiral Helis flew to New Orleans where he spent the evening with his sister and brother-in-law, Paul Erickson '70. I received the following email from Houston which sums up the Admiral's visit there.

***"Ron,***

***I think you made a good choice. Very well spoken and dedicated to KP. Q & A after his short presentation ran the gamut from capital improvements, relations with D.C., hurricane Sandy, academics, admissions, license requirements, etc. and he gave intelligent answers to each one. No teleprompter needed."***

At 0630 December 6<sup>th</sup>, I picked the Admiral up from his hotel and along with Captain Don Hoffmann, '61 and Paul Erickson '70, we drove to Port Fourchon to visit a Tidewater DP-2 PSV. Paul is the Chief Mate of the M/V Damon B Bankston (265' x 62' x 25'). This is the vessel that rescued the 115 men from the Deepwater Horizon in April 2010. Paul was on watch when the rig blew. Joining us for the inspection was Lt. Dan LiBrando '06 and Lt (jg) Pat Frain '08 with the USCG who are assigned Port Fourchon. We wish to thank BP for allowing this vessel to remain in port for our inspection. We also wish to thank Tidewater Marine, Inc. for arranging this inspection and the crew of the M/V Damon B Bankston for an outstanding job conducting the tour of this magnificent vessel. Admiral Helis was extremely impressed with the technology and asked many pointed and detailed intelligent questions. There is no doubt he did his homework on DP and gained an invaluable insight into these type vessels.



Paul Erickson '70, Capt. Ron Campana '71, Capt. Don Hoffmann '61, RADM James Helis, Lt.(jg) Pat Frain '08 and Lt. Dan LiBrando '06



Admiral Helis having the Dp-2 explained to him by Paul Erickson '70



Lt. Dan LiBrando '06, Captain Don Hoffmann '61 listening to Paul



DP-2 console



Chief Engineer explaining electrical system to Admiral Helis



Paul Erickson '70 explaining gen sets for thrusters to Capt. Don Hoffmann '61



Lt. Dan LiBrando '06 giving the vessel a thumbs up

After the PSV inspection, Tony Odak, VP for Stone Oil Distributors, Inc. arranged for us to inspect one of his company's ocean going tugs and barges. The M/V Stone Explorer was in the notch of a company oil barge. The only way to get on the tug was to climb down the walls of the barges via the pigeon holes in the side. Admiral Helis did it like a pro.

Admiral Helis getting ready to climb down onto the tug from the ocean barge



If you miss the first step is a long one. Admiral Helis starting his climb down.



Piece of cake for an ex-Army Ranger



One last step



Admiral Helis, Capt. Ron Campana '71, Second Captain of Stone Explorer  
and Capt. Don Hoffmann '61 on bow of tug.

After inspecting the Ocean Tug and being shown the winch system, the new Teflon towing lines that replace wire ropes, the galley and wheelhouse, the Admiral discussed with Captain Boyle the licensing requirements for this vessel. Afterwards, it was time to re-climb the pigeon holes to the deck of the barge.



Almost there



Made it

Afterwards, we departed Port Fourchon and headed to Leeville for lunch at the famous Leeville Seafood Restaurant. Here KP ABS and USCG grads eat lunch on a daily basis when in this area. Then we drove back to New Orleans for the annual social at Lucys' Retired Surfer bar.

From 1600-1930, the KP Alumni partied at Lucys. This year we had a record breaking crowd and all had a great time. Admiral Helis mixed easily and had many one on one conversations with graduates as well as some parents of present midshipmen. Included in that was Mrs. Sawyer from Mississippi who just happens to be the parent of Admiral Helis son's roommate at KP. All enjoyed a great time.























Afterwards, the local Alumni Board hosted the admiral to dinner at Antoine's Restaurant built in 1840. It was also Eastlack's '97 40<sup>th</sup> birthday which was celebrated with bread pudding.



Top row left to right:

Capt. Donald and Carol Lyn Hoffmann '61, Paul Erickson '70, Brett Hubig '00, Capt. Ron and Joanne Campana '71

Bottom row:

Mr. Bob and Barbara Wisnewski '44, Rear Admiral James Helis, Mr. Ed and Giselle Eastlack '97

***(Note who is wearing the new USMMA pocket crests!)***

On December 7<sup>th</sup>, a tour of the International Workboat show was undertaken where Capt. Ron Campana '71, Paul Erickson '70 and Mr. Shane and Linda Nolen '93 guided Admiral Helis around the show. Many fellow KP graduates were seen and stopped to say hello and introduce themselves to Admiral Helis. Mr. James Murphy '73, local MARAD representative, gave the Admiral a great perspective of MARAD dealings in the Gulf and New Orleans.



Read Admiral Helis asking detailed question to Frank L Beier DP-2 instructor



Shane Nolen '93 guiding Admiral Helis at Show



Capt. Ron Campana '71 and Admiral Helis enjoying the Workboat Show



Dave Garde '80, Maritime TV interviewing Admiral Helis at the Workboat Show



Later that evening the Admiral was the guest of honor on the M/V Creole Queen. We didn't leave the dock due to fog, but that did not stop the crowd from partying. Admiral Helis was presented to the group by Captain Ronald Campana, '71, Chapter President KP NOLA, and SE Regional Vice Chairman of the KPA-CPA and the Admiral gave a short speech. It was simply amazing to see how easily the Admiral won over the crowd.



John Canerot '51, Carol Lyn Hoffman, Nicole Jeane and Estelle Canerot



Julie Fogarty, President LA Parents Assn, Admiral Helis, Peter Meyers, Treasurer USMMA National Parents Assn and Capt. Ron Campana '71, President KP NOLA



Captain John Coxe '74 and William Ryder '51



Tony Odak '96, his date Cathy and Capt. Ron Campana '71



Capt. Don Hoffmann '61 and Ed Eastlack '97





Giselle Eastlack, Yvette Salkeld, Matt Salkeld '96

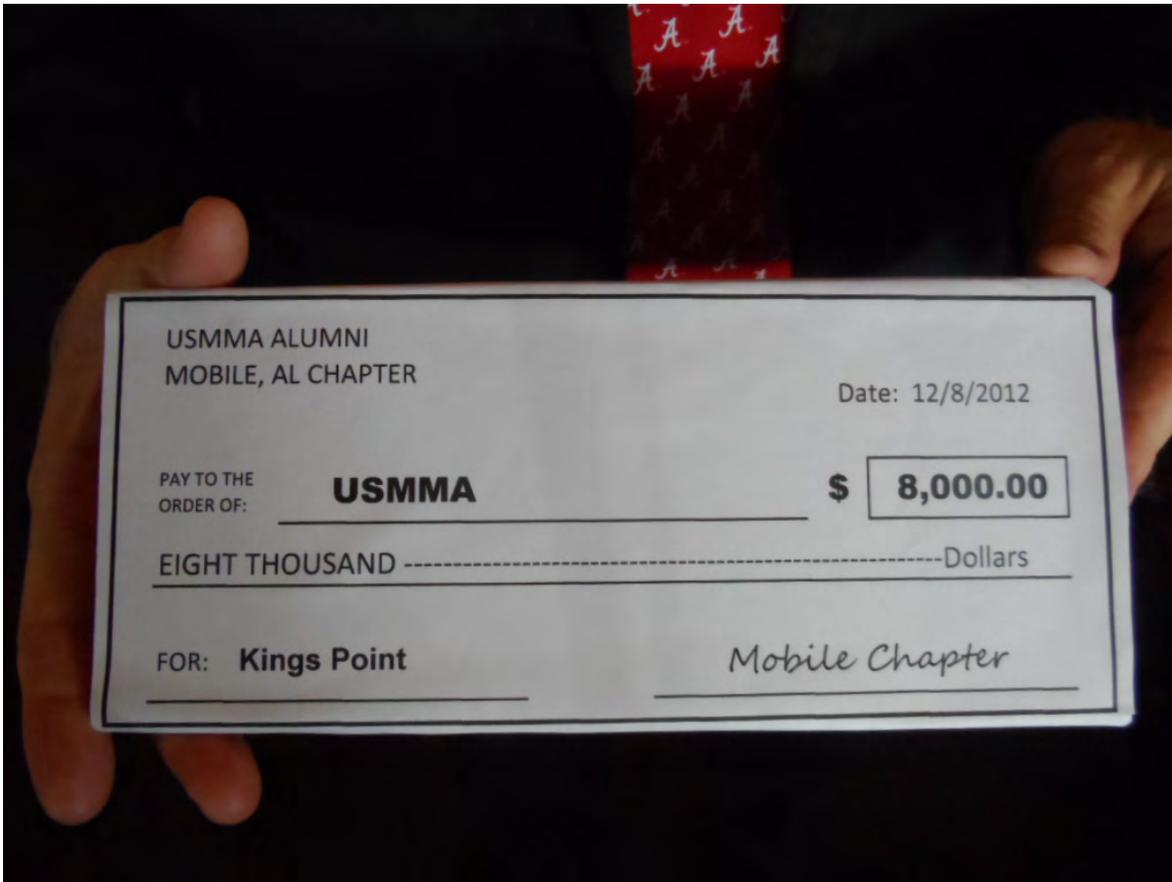


Kathy and Capt. Kevin Stith '96 and Nick and Camille Owen '01

On December 8<sup>th</sup>, we departed for Mobile stopping in Pascagoula, MS to pick up Pat Keene '62, Mississippi Gulf Coast Chapter President and the past president of Ingalls Shipyard. We attended the Mobile Chapter luncheon where the graduates were excited and thrilled to meet and converse with Admiral Helis. During the lunch, Mobile chapter president Shane Nolen '93, presented to Admiral a check for \$8,000 for a donation to the academy from that chapter. Shane challenges all other chapters to join the Mobile Chapter in helping the Superintendent with donations. It was explained to the group that donations can be made directly to the superintendent for the academy and/or midshipmen and be either restricted or unrestricted. In this manner, 100% of the donation goes where the graduate wants it to. For more information on this go to the Academy website [www.usmma.edu](http://www.usmma.edu) and click on "giving".



Admiral James Helis accepting check from Mobile Chapter President Shane Nolen '93



Mobile Chapter's check to superintendent



Admiral Helis answering questions at lunch



Shane Nolen '93 Mobile Chapter President, Rear Admiral James Helis, Capt. Ron Campana '71, Port of New Orleans Chapter President and SE Regional VC KPA-CPA

After lunch and the goodbyes, we headed for Ingalls Shipyard. There we were met by Mr. Richard Schenk, VP Test & Trials. Richard gave us a tour of the Admin building and overall layout of the yard. Then we were guided by a company van to see how a ship is constructed from the raw steel to finished product. To say we were amazed is an understatement. Admiral Helis came away with a much greater appreciation and understanding of the complex process to build a ship and the hard working and dedicated team it takes to accomplish this feat. We take our hats off to Pat Keene '62 for arranging this tour. After departing the yard we headed to Pat's beautiful beachfront home just a short drive east of the yard. Pat explained how his home was destroyed in Katrina and how he rode out the storm in his car in his driveway. I don't think he will elect to ever do that again.



Pat Keene, '62 Mississippi Gulf Coast Chapter President, Rear Admiral James Helis and Richard Schenk VP Ingalls Shipyard.

Finally, as we headed to New Orleans, no trip would be complete without a dinner at Dragos for their famous charbroiled oysters. Admiral Helis, Paul Erickson '70 and Capt. Ron Campana '71 had a quite dinner and reflected on the past three days. Unfortunately, they do not serve shrimp po-boys at dinner. I offered to send one up to him but he declined saying it was the excuse he needed to return to NOLA. And just as no visit is complete without Dragos, the same is true about Café Dumonde and beignets. So we headed to Kenner where we met Joanne Campana for our final goodbyes. We were assured by Admiral Helis that this trip was an outstanding success and offered him a chance for his continuing education and to meet many graduates and parents. I assured the Admiral that we were thrilled with his outreach and we are here to assist

him should he need it 24/7. His success is our success and both our goals is the betterment of the USMMA and spreading the word about KP.

To recap what the Admiral saw from Dec 5-8<sup>th</sup>:

- 1) Lunch with Port of Houston chapter.
- 2) Tour of Port Fourchon and the M/V Damon B Bankston, 265' PSV DP-2 vessel owned by Tidewater Marine and the vessel that rescued the 115 men from the Deepwater Horizon. Paul Erickson '70 is the chief officer and the Admiral brother-in-law.
- 3) Lucy's annual social where the Admiral mixed with parents and grads.
- 4) Private dinner in his honor with local alumni board.
- 5) Tour of workboat Show- simulation of DP technology and presentation by Caterpillar grads on generator high speed engines.
- 6) Creole Queen cocktail/holiday party.
- 7) Trip to Mobile for lunch with that chapter and presentation by Shane Nolen '92, chapter president of that chapter's gift to the USMMA via the superintendent.
- 8) Tour of Ingalls shipyard arranged by Pat Keene '62.
- 9) Final dinner at Dragos and desert at Café Dumonde.

With that our activities for the year come to an end. I want to wish everyone a safe and joyous holiday season and a prosperous new year. And based upon the many emails and verbal comments I received over the past few days, I am thrilled everyone sees what we saw in Admiral Helis when we told MARAD he was the right man for the job. I am pleased to report KP can sleep well and secure in knowing Admiral Helis has the helm and command.

On a personal note I told Admiral Helis about my grandson Kaleb who is 13 and in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and how I am hopeful he will attend KP. If he does get nominated, accepted and completes four years, he would graduate in 2021, my 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The only thing that could possibly make that better is Admiral Helis handing him his diploma as he walks across the stage.

### **ACTA NON VERBA**

Captain Ron Campana 71' President

Board of Directors

USMMA KP New Orleans Alumni Chapter