

## Best Experience While on Active Duty

My best experience in the Navy was all of it. Not long, as a 'kiddie cruiser' from June 1959 - June 1962 at age 21, but it speeded my transition from a naive kid from the Missouri Ozarks to somewhat of an adult by the time I opted for my active duty release to go to college. The Navy, and learning meteorological procedures, revealed to me that even a kid too poor to finish college still could accomplish something.

But my best memories come from the culture and traditions and the human beings that make it work. When I read the latest 'Aerograph', and read of the Navy lingo, the duty assignments good & bad, and the comradeship, I often wish I'd have stayed inside that culture for life.

Since I caught mess hall duty before A School in Lakehurst, I arrived at my only duty station, NAAS Chase Field, Beeville, Texas with not enough time to be assigned elsewhere before my projected discharge date. So, I was a Dry Land Sailor with lots of shore duty! (Thought I was smart until years later when I had to pay my own way to Europe and South America!) Hospitalization and goofing off during A School resulted in my not knowing much about weather observations until I reached the Chase Field Ops building. Thanks to the good on-the-job training by then AG3's Terry Postmus, W. Moore, D. Jackson, and J. Nolan, who showed me how to take the hourly observations, work the circular psychrometric slide rule calculator, then transmit same over the teletype (TTY) machine, I made AG3 and AG2 in the minimum time possible. Even did an occasional flight forecast for those F9 and F11 Navy pilot flight instructors when they didn't want me to wake the Duty Forecaster late at night. I guess the most interesting event was when (Sep 1961) Hurricane Carla smacked into the coast near Corpus Christi and traveled the 50 some miles to our station in Beeville in no time.

Those Chase Field heroes I remember most have always been two men I've seen mentioned in the 'Aerograph' quite a few times, Lt Commander Ralph Wrenn (then Chief Wrenn), and CWO3 Dominic Zizzi who retired from active duty there at Chase Field I believe at the end of 1961. They were firm but fair and great teachers, and I have recalled them often over the years. They respected my excuses but emphasized that any indiscretions should not be repeated; maybe the best way to handle kids moving from high school into a military setting. I tried to remember this later when I worked in management positions.

A couple of years ago, Editor Gary helped me post a 1960 Chase Field group photo. It's in Christmas Photo's Volume 1 (<http://www.navalweather.org/photos/christmascards15.html>) - take a look!

Submitted by xAG2 Robert Devine, USN REL