



BRIEF

The longer I serve as president of this prestigious organization, I become more aware of the dedication and professionalism of the men and women who are part of the Tailhook Association (THA).

Now that 2015 has closed, we forge ahead in carrier aviation under the leadership of the Air Boss, supported by civilian leaders, industry and Naval Aviators, past and present. A unique aspect of THA is that we work together, one voice, with a unified message. As we look to the future, carrier aviation will continue to be, as it has in the past, a foundational warfighting capability.

From The President

RADM Mike Manazir’s article in this edition sums up best what we bring to the fight today, and more importantly, what we will bring in the future. In addition to future capabilities, it’s equally important to keep in mind that carrier aviation is a capability like no other. Whether in a ready room or surrounded by your friends and colleagues at a Hook reunion, it might appear that we are simply a common part of America’s defense. But, look at carrier aviation from a global perspective and it becomes apparent that no one does what we do; neither to the degree nor to the level of a U.S. aircraft carrier and supporting strike group.

Common among prominent war theorists throughout history is the recognition and acknowledgment of niche capabilities and the difference they make in advantage and victory. Naysayers may argue about vulnerability, but that should not be mistaken for relevance. We are, have been and will be a game changer.

There is no doubt about the carrier strike group — what we do is the reason other countries continue to seek means to build their own carrier fleet.

My intent is not to write an academic article, but to set the stage for Hook ’16. It is no coincidence that our theme for 2016 is to recognize and celebrate THA’s 60th anniversary and to pay tribute to “The role of

the aircraft carrier, past, present and future.” I encourage you to make the commitment to attend, particularly those who haven’t attended in recent years.

In this issue of *The Hook* and the Spring and Summer issues, we will acknowledge the rich and distinguished history of those who have served on board aircraft carriers, from the first U.S. Navy carrier, USS *Langley* (CV-1), to the most recent commissioned aircraft carrier that took the fight to Islamic State militants while on cruise in the Middle East in 2014, USS *George H.W. Bush* (CVN-77).



CAPT Gregory Keithley

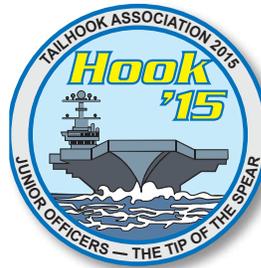
RADM RAMAGE AWARDEES

The recipients of Commander Naval Air Forces RADM J.D. “Jig Dog” Ramage Award for 2014 were the team of *George H.W. Bush* and CVW-8. (**Ed. Note:** See the summer 2015 issue of *The Hook* inside back cover for Ramage Award unit insignia.)

The award is named after one our most distinguished and recently departed Naval Aviators who served with distinction for 36 years in the Navy. His career included U.S. Naval Academy, class of 1939, and sustained superior service from World War II through the Vietnam War. Jig Dog retired in 1975. The Ramage Award was first presented in 2001.

TAILHOOKERS OF THE YEAR FOR 2015

The U.S. Navy and Marine Corps Tailhookers of the Year Award were recognized at the Hook’ 15 banquet. These awards are presented to Navy and Marine Corps leaders who epitomize the character, commitment and core values that represent the rich heritage of THA. Since some of our members did not attend the reunion, I highlight them for you here.



Tailhook Association Vision, Purpose and Objectives

It is the vision of the Tailhook Association to be internationally recognized as the premier organization for support of carrier and other sea-based aviation.

“ ... to foster, encourage, develop, study, and support the aircraft carrier, sea-based aircraft, both fixed and rotary wing and aircrews of the United States of America; and to educate and inform the public in the appropriate role of the aircraft carrier and carrier aviation in the nation’s defense system.”

The objectives of the Tailhook Association in implementing the purposes are:

- Expand the membership base, with continued focus on active duty. Honor the service and sacrifices of all those who are, or have been a part of, carrier-based aviation.
- Educate the public on the importance of carrier and other sea-based aviation and contribute to improved communications among civilian and military communities regarding carrier aviation matters.
- Promote the Tailhook Educational Foundation in its mission of providing higher educational scholarship assistance.
- Provide an interactive forum for fleet aviator thought and opinion on carrier aviation matters, particularly those of junior aviators.

- Contribute to the enhancement of professionalism, camaraderie and morale among carrier and other sea-based aviators.
- Honor and give special recognition to those who have made exceptional contributions to the advancement of carrier-based Naval Aviation.
- Uphold a commitment to the highest standards of professional and personal conduct.

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