

Shipmate
Upper Midwest Chapter
2015 JAN-FEB Issue

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Monthly All Service Academy breakfasts:

- West side - first Friday - Kip's Authentic Irish Pub, Marriott West, I-394 & US 169. Recent attendees: Carl Gronemann '45, Ray Witter '64, Jim Conn '67, Mark Salmen '73, Chip Sharratt '74, Alex Plechash '75, Chris Bentley '79, Dave Priddy '80, Ken Liss '81, Mark Menzuber '82, Rich Haddad '84, Craig Benson '91, , K. C. Pfluger '92, Ernie Lietzan '01.
- East side - second Friday - The Machine Shed, I-94 & Inwood Ave., Lake Elmo. Recent attendees: Ray Witter '64, Mark Salmen '73, Alex Plechash '75, Bob Christensen '80, Steve Zirkle '81, Dave Ratte '84, Craig Benson '91, Ernie Lietzan '01.

Five Upper Midwest Chapter alumni attended the 'hangar raising' event for AirSpaceMN, a 501c(3) dedicated to bringing aviation-focused STEM learning and the Minnesota Aviation History to the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The event was attended by many dignitaries. Part of the museum project includes bringing the sail from decommissioned SSN 708, USS MINNEAPOLIS/ST PAUL to the Twin Cities to be part of the museum and STEM education efforts in future years.



AirSpaceMN attendees (L to R) Bill Bittman '73, J. R. Olson '90, Mike Langley '75, David Bruns '88, and Alex Plechash '75

Larry Purdy ('68) attended a private black-tie dinner in NYC on November 7, 2014 featuring General John R. Allen '76 (USMC, Retired) and former United States Ambassador Ryan C.

Crocker. General Allen, who worked with Ambassador Crocker in both Iraq (during the surge in 2007-2009) and in Afghanistan (2011-2012), introduced Ambassador Crocker as the dinner's key-note speaker. During his address Ambassador Crocker offered his "lessons learned" over a diplomatic career that spanned four decades. Larry said it was an extraordinary evening highlighted by Ambassador Crocker's candid observations of the challenges senior diplomats and military leaders continue to face in dealing with conflicts around the globe, particularly those in the Middle East. General Allen was recently tapped by the current administration to serve as the "Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter ISIL." Also attending the dinner was Lea Gabrielle [Potts] '97, a former F-18 pilot who recently joined FOX News as a correspondent for Shepard Smith's news program.



Gen. John Allen '76 and Larry Purdy '68



Larry Purdy '68 with Lea Gabrielle [Potts] '97