

We are pleased to honor in this newsletter our  
Association President and Shipmate, Paul Overly:



10/15/1951 -  
09/09/1955

## Paul Overly

Born in Greensburg, PA, on June 30, 1933, Paul quit school in 9<sup>th</sup> grade to work in the glass plant. He joined the Navy on October 15, 1951, going to the Great Lakes Boot Camp. He joined his brother, Robert, aboard the USS Des Moines in Norfolk, VA, in February, 1952. Paul began



August 2012

his naval career as a 'deck ape' and then moved on to be a gunners mate striker. Paul (and his brother) toured the Mediterranean for 3½ years, and Paul made 3<sup>rd</sup> Class in 1954. He was discharged from the Navy on September 9, 1955.

After being discharged from the Navy, he met his wife, Norma, and they married on February 9, 1956, had their first child, Edward, and moved to Ohio so that Paul could work at Republic Steel. After having their second child, Brenda, in 1957, he moved his family back to Greensburg and, in 1959, opened a gas station and garage. He sold his successful gas station and garage business in 1965 and began driving truck. During his truck driving career, Paul's son, Tim, was born in 1962, and his daughter, Donna, was born in 1967. Paul retired in 1991 but, for the love of trucks, he still drives truck and, in fact, has driven over 5 million miles to date!

In 1977, Paul, his brother, and four others had a small reunion. Hoping to reunite with other shipmates, Paul advertised in the American Legion magazine that he would be hosting a reunion of the USS Des Moines shipmates the following summer. Approximately 110 shipmates attended the reunion that year, and the reunion has grown ever since. The reunion is a lot of work but, in Paul's words, the USS Des Moines shipmates are "the best Sailors and Marines in the world," and with the help of his family, his best friend, and the Sailors, he gets it done.

Next to his family, Paul considers his Navy life and the USS Des Moines reunions the most important part of his life and, to this end, he says:

*"Thanks to all my Sailor and Marine friends, and God bless."*

