



THE RETIRED AVIATION BOATSWAIN'S MATE

You are now a retired Aviation Boatswain's Mate. You performed your Naval Service with distinction, honor and pride. You can always be proud of your accomplishments and the men and women that you had the pleasure to lead. Your AB's were very special to you and each one was unique. You learned to read their faces and you could tell exactly when they needed your guidance and attention. Each of them counted on your advice and knowledge to guide them through the difficult journey of Navy life. Besides your family, leading a team of professional AB's was probably one of the greatest joys of your life. Your efforts and camaraderie made the journey more fun, exciting and rewarding. Your AB's never knew your weaknesses, and like all of us, you were good at hiding them. You were a mentor but you never knew it. Knowing would have made the pressure much harder. Each of us had mentors that nurtured us and paved the way for our successful journey. We carefully and secretly chose the influences they played on us. Most of the influences you had on your fellow AB's will never be apparent to you or were they ever voiced openly. However, your ABs' successes became your successes and their failures became your teaching ground. Getting them to grow from those failures was your greatest challenge. Probably the most rewarding feelings surfaced when you stood back and watch them make the miraculous transition into adulthood. The demands put on you were many and your perseverance and steadfast determination allowed you to meet and overcome each one. You should be comforted by the fact that you did your absolute very best. Only you know where you could have done better. The Aviation Boatswain Mate's reputation for hard work, endless days, rock solid determination and "Can Do" spirit have instilled in you a sense of worth for which there is no substitute. Be comforted in the fact that the AB legacy lives on and that somewhere in it, your contributions made a difference and you truly were a part of United States Naval Aviation History. You are a professional Aviation Boatswain's Mate and you will remain a part of its legendary legacy forever.

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