JAMES E. PERRY

Jim Perry graduated from Herculaneum High School in 1960. He was vice-president of Student Council and lettered in the sports of football, basketball, and track and field. He enlisted in the United States Navy in September of 1960 and was an Electronics Technician for the next ten years. Jim was promoted to Chief Petty Officer in 1968 and commissioned Ensign in 1970. He earned a four-year Navy scholarship and received a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from the University of New Mexico in 1970. Jim earned a Master of Science in Computer Systems/Management in 1976 from the Naval Postgraduate School. In 1985, he was promoted to Commander. He received a Master of Science in Logistics engineering in 1988.

Jim served in the Navy for more than twenty-eight years. He served in eighteen different duty assignments including a Radar Aircraft Traffic Control Center, a Ground Control Approach Radar Training Unit, two E-2 Airborne Early Warning Squadrons, over three years on the aircraft carrier USS Midway, two years home ported in Japan and nearly one year in the Gulf of Tonkin when he flew over 150 combat missions, Weapon System Manager during fleet introduction of the S-3 aircraft, Project Officer for depot capability development for the F-14 Tomcat, Naval Plant Representative during the difficult years getting the Tomahawk Cruise Missile into early production, and Engineering Officer for the E-2 and C-2 aircraft on the staff of the Commander Naval Air Forces Pacific Fleet. As a Mission Commander in the E-2 Hawkeye aircraft, Jim was responsible for the command and control of naval strike groups in concert with the first major B-52 strikes in Hanoi, Vietnam in December of 1972. This was one of the toughest missions orchestrated by the E-2 involving fighter aircraft, bombers, tankers and electronic warfare aircraft. Jim's impressive leadership of the E-2 crew was instrumental in all the naval aircraft returning successfully to the aircraft carrier.

After retiring from the Navy in January, 1989, Jim worked for various companies, using his expertise in communications programs and aircraft systems. He has been the Site Manager and director of Programs at the Northrop Grumman Sierra Vista, Arizona facility. He has served on the Industry Advisory Board to the Dean of Engineering at the university of Arizona. And late in his career, he was Program Manager of the Hunter Unmanned system, coming out of retirement to work with his team to restore confidence in the unmanned aircraft system.

Jim ultimately retired in 2012. He had purchased a Harley motorcycle while in Iraq in 2004 and joined the American Legion Riders to support their many charity efforts, and the Patriot Guard Riders to honor fallen warriors and veterans asking for escort from airports, funeral homes, or military bases to their funeral and burial sites. It has been an honor supporting both organizations. Jim is also a life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Disabled American Veterans, and is a member of the Military Officers Association of America, and the Tailhook Association, supporting the Navy's carrier aircraft operations.