



THE IRONMAN—A DOUBLE ENDER’S NEWSLETTER

Membership Scorebox

Current	56
Lifetime	7
Past Due	126
Snail Mail Ad- dresses Only	263
Email Address	487
Total Shipmates	3,562

Dues Notice!

Please be sure to check your mailing label or email notation.

If it doesn't say Current above your name at the top of the label, you should renew your annual dues. To reach the greatest number of shipmates, we will publish the complete Association newsletter to any valid email or snail mail address. Your dues payments make this possible.

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CAPT Center, Please Call The Quarterdeck

I don’t think that any sailor in any time or any place or any ship on which I ever served ever heard anything like this headline.

The Captain never called the Quarterdeck except to direct the Officer of the Deck to summon either the Executive Officer or a department head to call the Captain—not a happy event. It wasn’t unusual to see a couple of people lined up in the short passageway on the 02 level forward, starboard side.

If there were a line of Lieutenant Commanders (and the occasional Commander) stringing aft on the starboard side, there wasn’t any conversation because everyone was trying to put their stuff in one bag and convincingly arrange their presentation to be a winner. (You had to be there, on the 02 level, when the stress level was max around 1630-1730 especially on Friday.)

But, that was back in the day. Times change, memories change, and back in the day is too far back to remember.

REEVES had gone through many iterations, many changes and many crews by the time CAPT Center arrived onboard to relieve CAPT Chappell in 1987. REEVES had been forward deployed to Yokosuka since 1980 with the USS MIDWAY Battle Group Alfa for seven years.

With her final overhaul and upgrade in Yokosuka in 1982\1983, *Reeves* was further modified into a modern cruiser—as fully armed and complete as a 1980’s cruiser could be. This was the ship that CAPT Center assumed command of in 1987.

Under CAPT Center, REEVES found herself involved with yet another Team Spirit exercise. In May 1987 REEVES was deployed to the Persian Gulf from July to December 1987 where she participated in the first of nine Operation Earnest Will tanker reflagging operations beginning on 23 July. Her primary duty was to escort commercial vessels through the Strait of Hormuz. In March 1988 she was involved again with the Team Spirit exercises.

It was during Operation Earnest Will, under CAPT Center’s careful eye, that REEVES moored a barge aft of the fantail and established a steel beach for a cookout and beer party. The ship was visited by Rear Admiral Harold Bernson, COMMID-EASTFOR, who participated with a brewski and a burger.

Now retired RADM Bill Center is our newest life member and will be attending the San Antonio reunion. He will also be our special speaker at the Sunday evening banquet dinner.

Plan on San Antonio!

The President's Page



Greetings to the Reeves Association Family; Mid-summer in Southern Colorado this year is not a bad thing at all. High temps, low

humidity, occasional thunderstorms, and spectacular sunsets. Perfect! We've been getting out and trying to enjoy it all. I hope your summer is going along just as well.

I spent some time this past weekend thinking about a topic for my newsletter article. This being mid-way through a non-reunion year is still a little too early to get started with my push towards our next reunion, so I had to think about what may be timely and appropriate for August '15. To help with that process, I went back and reviewed all of the articles I've written for the President's Page over the last eight years. Turns out..... its pretty boring stuff to read all at once. Most of the articles, as some may have noticed, started off with some rant about the weather. That's not changed much. The greatest number of the articles focused on getting our shipmates motivated to attend the next reunion, while second place went to discussing what occurred at the reunion just past. I guess the routine will not change dramatically as long as we have reunions to look forward to and reunions to recover-

from...

What was evident throughout the articles was how much we have grown as an organization since our very first reunion in Colorado. While we all considered the 2006 reunion a success from the standpoint that it brought us all together, it did not provide the organization with the structure that it needed to move forward. It was a few years later at the 2008 reunion in Washington DC that a very small group of shipmates (all that were present) were presented with the reality that the association could not be sustained without some serious changes being made. We had a long and serious conversation about what was needed to make it fly, along with some discussions about whether it was worth the effort. That morning saw the re-birth of the association, as several shipmates stepped up and made the commitments necessary to assure the future of the association. The Reeves Association that was re-made that October morning in DC has turned out to be successful. The association was saved by a very small group of shipmates that would not let her go. It has been sustained by a larger number of shipmates that now constitute the core of the association.

Our reunions from DC forward have been relatively successful. We have travelled around the US in the location rotation selected in DC – that being East, West, and the

middle. This coming reunion in San Antonio has us completing our second lap around the country. The only thing that really changed concerning our reunion plans was the decision to go from meeting every year to every other year. That matter concerned the amount of effort and money it takes to plan a reunion. Once we learned about all that was required, we voted to give our planner a break. Now the every-other year cycle seems to work out for the best.

The only thing we've ever really been lacking in our reunion process is the large number of participants that would make the entire process easier. Sounds funny to say, but the organizations with a large headcount get better deals on everything. So, on this count alone, we struggle for better venues and rates. Maybe someday we'll achieve the mega head-count status, but we doubt it. From what we've seen over the last eight years, our shipmates wouldn't trade our level of family for anything. Hopefully Texas will be a stop that will bring out many local shipmates to enjoy the relaxed atmosphere that has become the Reeves Association. We look forward to welcoming them back to the only remaining piece of the USS Reeves.

Here's wishing you "Fair Winds and Following Seas"

//tom

Tom Bailey (84-87)

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All comments, suggestions, submissions and criticism are welcome. My email is always open...

Life Memberships

At the 2014 reunion in Portland, shipmates voted for a Life Membership. After researching various Associations, it was decided that the US Navy Cruiser Sailor Association's plan was best for the USS Reeves Association. Monies for life membership are placed in an interest-bearing account and not mixed with operating funds. The schedule is simple:

Age	Amount
< 50	\$500
<60	\$400
<70	\$300
<80	\$200
=>80	\$100

We already have seven life members.

Emails, Etc.

Good Morning Mike

Thank you for the Newsletter and all your hard work in keeping the organization moving forward. I'm still shaking my head after reading the Master Chief Charlie article in the 8-1 Newsletter - Priceless. Only in the CPO Mess, what more can I say.

I started picking blueberries this week from the bushes in the backyard but the crop will be sparse this year. It appears that my two figs trees will also have a small yield this summer.

Looking forward to the San Antonio Reunion in 2016. Its been a while since I attended a REEVES reunion.

See's Candy has their Maple Cashew Brittle available for a limited time. A step up from the average peanut brittle. I placed an order for 30 boxes the other day as it makes a great Christmas gift for relatives and friends

Take care and have a great summer Shipmate

Don Carunchio (64-68)

From: Reynaldo Saavedra

Can You explain this - My name is Reynaldo Y. Saavedra. I was assigned to the U.S.S. Reeves in 1984-1985 as an Interior Communications Electrician First Class Petty Officer E-Division. Homeport in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. I am wondering why Wikipedia left out or there was no history of the USS Reeves Operational History in the 1980's regarding deployment in 1984-1985 to the Indian Ocean. Port of call on the way to the Indian Ocean was Su-

bic Bay, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Karachi, Pakistan, Mombasa, Mauritius and Kenya, and a drive by in Somalia. On board was I suspect Civilian Crypto-Analysts. Each one has a Marine Guard assigned. Just think this is in 1984-1985. Go forward today. What is happening now at the present time. The same country the USS Reeves Port of Calls visited in 1984-1985. Is there a connection between the USS Reeves deployment in 1984-1985 and at the present time regarding the situation in the countries the U.S.S Reeves visited with Civilian Crypto-Analyst on-board? Another item. Why was it sunk? To forget what happened. To erase from history of the ships deployment the facts that the USS Reeves spied on this country. On the way to this port of calls USS Reeves was buzzed constantly by Russian planes so the Russian Air Force must have logged it. I am telling it now with no fear because I did not sign any Secrets of Communication Documents to prevent me from telling the facts. Thank you to any one listening to my factual true events

Expecting an answer please.

The only time that REEVES deck logs have been suppressed is during the 1971 cruise to Vietnam. There is some speculation about a mission into Cam Rahn Bay that has been and is still classified. All of the other deck logs are not classified.

The reason that the timeline for the REEVES is abbreviated in areas is the fact that I have had to construct its 30 years of service ever since I launched the website in 2006. Getting any information out of shipmates is like pulling

hen's teeth.

The history shown at Wikipedia is a copy of the ship's history that I compiled and rewrote a couple of years ago, after I had a pretty good idea of what she had done and where she had gone. In 2014, I added to the history to show REEVES' place Naval ship building history.

The biggest history gaps occur in the 80's when she was homeported in Yokosuka and ran with Battle Group Alfa. I relied almost entirely on the newsletters that were sent home by the command. I have so far been unable to get copies of the Annual Command Summaries and can't afford to get 30 years of deck logs copied by the Archives. When I get those, they will be copied onto the website.

Whatever information the CTs brought aboard was and probably remains highly classified. For the most part, most of the information could be declassified – except that the messages might reveal sources and methods that are still valid today. Thus, we don't talk about any of it.

If you go to <http://ussreeves.net/>, you will see the original history I wrote and/or edited.

I will incorporate the ports of call info into the history where I can in the future.

Regarding the sinking of the ship, after sitting in East Loch at the Inactive Ships Facility in Pearl Harbor, the Navy reclassified most of the DDGs, FFs and CGs releasing them for disposition in 2000. They had all been in mothballs so long that they weren't really usable. Plus, the growing fleet of Burke Class DDGs made these

(Continued on page 4)

BRAC

Pentagon officials won't get congressional permission for a new base closure round next year. But they might be inching closer. Both the House and Senate versions of the 2016 defense authorization bill again prohibit a new base closure round, despite defense leaders' repeated pleas for the infrastructure reduction tool. Lawmakers have called the process too costly financially and in terms of public support, especially given the divisive nature of the 2005 base closing round. However, the House did include language in its draft bill calling for a military wide review of "force-structure plans and infrastructure inventory" that outsiders hope could be the precursor to another base closure round, by providing better justification for the need to shutter some military facilities. "To lose the prohibition on planning or investigating a new BRAC ... that's the first step," Ryan Crotty, deputy director for defense budget analysis at the Center for Strategic and International

Studies, said during a think-tank event on Capitol Hill last week. Supporters of a new base closure round have long argued

that the military's infrastructure footprint needs to shrink as the fighting force draws down in the wake of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Defense Department officials frequently estimate that they have up to 20 percent excess capacity at stateside bases and argue that a new base closing round could produce billions in annual savings. But lawmakers in recent months have publicly criticized that estimate, noting that it relies on studies done before the 2005 base closure round. They worry that another ambitious closure round could leave the military without critical resources — and, in some cases, their own districts with fewer jobs. "What we've had for the last several years are people pulling estimates out of the air," said House Armed Services Chairman Mac Thornberry, R-Texas. "We need to get a better feel for what the real number, the real situation is with our infrastructure."

The new study calls for a review of possible excess infrastructure (including "the Secretary's objective for the reduction of such excess capacity") and an analysis of "certain excess infrastructure to accommodate contin-

gency, mobilization, or surge requirements." Budget experts at the think-tank event last week were nearly unanimous on the need to trim the number of U.S. military bases, but also acknowledged the political problems that come with such plans. Janine Davidson, senior defense fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, called the House plan a modest but important move by lawmakers. "We absolutely have to move forward on our infrastructure issues," she said. "So it is a great step forward that we get to study this now. " That step ahead still leaves a sizable distance before the military would start closing down bases. A conference committee could still strip the provision calling for the report out of the final defense authorization bill. Even if it survives, the measure still won't become law until later this year. The House plan does not specify a timeline for when the report must be finalized, but does call for defense officials to analyze basing needs for the next two decades starting in fiscal 2017. [Source: Military Times | Leo Shane | May 18, 2015 ++]

Email (cont)

Vietnam era ships even more obsolete.

Most of the ships from the Leahy class were sent to the ship breakers for scrap. Some like REEVES were designated as targets for fleet exercises. REEVES was cleaned up so that she wouldn't be an environmental hazard and towed to a point 165 miles, ENE from Brisbane, Australia, in the Coral Sea, west of New Caledonia,



where she was strafed and bombed in a SINKEX exercise by the Australian air force. That was pretty much it, pure and simple.

Everything I have written here can be found at [http://](http://ussreeves.net)

ussreeves.net. Just follow the tabs and hyperlinks. I hope this answers your question. Otherwise... What are the chances that we'll

see you at the 2016 reunion in San Antonio? There will be a number of shipmates from the 80s to 90s period attending.

Mike Robertson (72-75)

Reunion 2016: San Antonio, Texas

Back at the Portland Reunion in October 2014, our shipmates selected San Antonio as our 2016 reunion site.

In a search of all of San Antonio venues, dealing with the CVB, and a conversation with HotelPlanners for the hotels alongside the River Walk and elsewhere in San Antonio in 2015, only one was able to accommodate us at a reasonable rate in the place we'd really like to be: [El Tropicano River Walk Hotel](#).



El Tropicano Pool

We received six proposals from hotels throughout the San Antonio area: airport, Western Hills, northern suburbs, etc. Many hotels declined to submit a proposal as they couldn't meet our RFP criteria. Room rate was the overriding but unstated reason for disinterest.

Only two River Walk hotels provided a proposal. An in-depth search on the Tivago website was very informative.

Before suggesting San Antonio, we didn't know just how expensive any accommodations along the River Walk would be. It was a very rude awakening. Without exception, daily room rates varied from \$150 to over \$300 per day, even in October, our preferred meeting month. And, as we found out, there is no such thing as complimentary transportation from the airport to

downtown hotels—or complimentary parking on the hotel properties.

In the proposal from El Tropicano, several problems were overcome. The largest was an acceptable daily room rate (\$115). The next was the daily complimentary breakfast. This was followed closely by no charges for the hospitality and banquet rooms, or setup and daily service fees. And lastly, the hotel agreed to participate in our Friday welcoming reception. Basically, the hotel was willing to negotiate.

Since there is so much to do on the River Walk, and the nearby Downtown and Old Town (Mercado) areas, only one day trip is planned—to the National Museum of the Pacific War (Admiral Nimitz Museum) in Fredericksburg. During the visit to Fredericksburg, there will be a memorial service to remember our shipmates who have already passed.



Admiral Nimitz Museum

There will be more information in future issues of the newsletter.

San Antonio tours depart the hotel regularly and cover all sites of interest. The most complete city tours are the all-day Ultimate Trolley Tour and the Grand City Highlights Tour.

As there are no plans for a dinner cruise, evenings are free to explore the many restaurants

throughout the area. As done at past reunions, there will be a Welcome Reception in the Hospitality Room with hosted bar and heavy hors d'oeuvres on Friday evening.



La Villita Restaurants

Thursday and Saturday evenings will be free to explore the culinary delights along the River Walk and in the Mercado.

For those who feel more agile and adventurous, there is the Ultimate San Antonio Segway tour of the downtown tour highlights. That would be a memory worth a million pictures.

Set aside the dates 6 October 2016 through 9 October 2016 to meet with many shipmates at the El Tropicano River Walk Hotel in downtown San Antonio. Many of our 50+ Texan shipmates are already planning a big Texas welcome.



The Alamo

Financials

FY 2015 Operating

Income

Dues	\$2820
Donations	\$225
Reunions	\$0
Ship's Store	\$124
Cost of Goods	\$76
Total Income	\$3098

Expense

Advertising	\$108
Newsletters	\$353
Postage/Delivery	\$117
Reunion Expenses	\$500
Total Expense	\$894
Net Income	\$2204

FY 2015 Assets

Total Assets	\$8606
Liabilities	\$0
Net Equity	\$8606

Charitable/Educational Objectives

The USS Reeves Association is an educational, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization registered with the Internal Revenue Service, FEIN 86-1163983. For that purpose at the 2010 business meeting, it was recommended that future excess funds be used for donations and scholarships as determined at business meetings starting in 2012.

Shift Colors

To receive the Navy's Shift Colors newsletter via email send the following information to Mill_ShiftColors@navy.mil -- First name; Last name; E-mail address; Title (Mr., Mrs., rank, etc.); and Military affiliation (retiree, surviving spouse, veteran, other). There is no longer any funding for hard copies to be printed and mailed. To receive Shift Colors it does not matter whether or not you're retired, active duty, a veteran, a surviving spouse, or just someone who's interested in receiving the newsletter.

A Win At The VA

Hi Mike, good talking to you.

As I stated (*during our phone conversation*), I just received a 10% disability for my Tinnitus. My Advocate, a new one, looked at my medical records for 10 minutes. Then she said your ears are ringing, and I said yes. She said I have Tinnitus. Your medical records show what your hearing was when you entered the service and what it was when you got out. I should have gotten disability the day I got out.

She applied for it. I went to get tested at a disability office for the VA. Now 2 and a half weeks later I got my letter of approval. So, I called the Bend VA Clinic and then went in to get my new card showing disability.

When I was there they told me that my DD 214 had the Service Medal and Campaign medal on it. And stated I should be getting disability for my diabetes So I told him I was a Blue Water Vet I cannot get it. He said both medals should allow me. So, if someone else has some answer for this please let me know.

I have tried to get info of the Ship logs during the 1971 Viet Nam tour and have been unable to get any. Does anyone who was on her during that time have any info? We were close to shore at times .

Thank you

Tony Borba (70-71)

Online Shopping Saving—Jet.com

Jet.com is gunning for Amazon's customers and Costco's members. The new online marketplace, which launched 21 JUL, is trying to combine the best qualities of the two competitors. Marc Lore, Jet.com chief executive, tells CNN Money: "We have an assortment that's vast like Amazon's, and pricing that's similar to a wholesale store and membership." As great as the idea of Jet might sound, though, the Wall Street Journal describes it as "one of the most audacious and costly business experiments in e-commerce history." The company's \$50 membership fee is also the company's only source of profit—"so it will need to do everything it can to lure members from Amazon.com and elsewhere and keep them loyal," the WSJ says. As of 17 JUL, Lore told the WSJ, 100,000 people had signed up for a three-month membership—which is free with no automatic renewal after 90 day

—according to Jet.com.

Success won't come cheaply, though. Jet.com plans to spend roughly \$300 million on an outside merchandise-buying program over the next five years to be able to compete with Amazon's selection. The WSJ explains: This "concierge" service helps Jet create the illusion that it has millions of products for sale while it builds inventory and adds retail partners. When a customer buys a product that isn't available from Jet or its partners, a representative quietly buys it from another site and has it shipped directly to the customer.

Lore says this service will dwindle over time as Jet signs up more partners and offers more inventory. To check out the site go to www.jet.com. [Source: Money-TalksNews | Karla Bowsher | July 21, 2015 ++]

Ship's Store

Ships Photos (\$10) + s/h



1968— Entering Sydney Harbor



1985—Yokosuka from Australia



1975—Departing Pearl Harbor



1992—Seattle Sea Fair Festival

Golf Shirts (\$20) + s/h (2XL/3XL-add \$2)

T-Shirts (\$15) + s/h (2XL/3XL-add \$2)

Mousepads (\$10) + s/h

Ship—DLG 24 Ship—CG 24



Challenge Coins (\$14) + s/h



Ball caps (\$10 each) + s/h

2009—San Diego

2010—Chicago

2012—Charleston

2014—Portland - Sold out



USS Reeves Association – Ship's Store Order Form			
Price	S/H	Total	Description
		Total	

Shipping and handling:

Shipping is via USPS Priority or Fedex. Please add the following for each item to cover the Association's packaging and postage costs:

Photos: \$2 per photo

Ball caps: \$3 each

Mousepads: \$3 each

Challenge Coins: \$2 for 1, \$.50 for each additional coin

Shirts: \$3 per shirt

Shipping Label

To:

Address:

City, State, ZIP:

Phone:

Email:

Send order to: USS Reeves Association
c/o Michael Robertson
15709 N Sycamore St
Mead, WA 99021

Subic Bay Today

Abraham Parungao watched hopefully as three American sailors walked through his souvenir shop full of T-shirts, decorative beer mugs and placards with cheeky slogans. After haggling for a while over a \$5 wood carving, the young men left without buying a thing.

"Before, the Americans had so much money," said Mr. Parungao, 64, in his small stall in front of where the U.S. submarine tender Emory S. Land was tied up for a visit. "These new American sailors are cheap."

The thousands of big-spending sailors have been gone for more than two decades — since the United States turned over the Subic Bay Naval Station to the Philippines in 1992 — but the sprawling former military base still receives regular visits from [U.S. Navy](#) ships.

Today, the Subic Bay Freeport is a special economic zone established to attract job-generating investors with low taxes, duty-free import privileges and streamlined procedures. It has also become a popular tourist destination for Filipinos seeking to enjoy the jungles, the beaches and the American legacy of the former military base.

Photo Shanty houses along the river between the old base and the local communities in Subic Bay. Credit Jes Aznar for The International Herald Tribune

In line with the Obama administration's greater focus on the Asia-Pacific region, Subic is once again a popular port of call for the U.S. Navy. A subsidiary of a major U.S. defense company is bidding on ship repair and logistical support contracts, and the Philippine Department of National Defense has reserved large portions of the former base for future use by the Philippine military and its allies, principally the United States.

U.S. Navy ships can often be seen in Subic these days, but the seaport that millions of U.S. service members passed through will probably never be

the center of U.S. power in Asia that it once was.

The 678-square-kilometer, or 262-



square-mile, base — about the size of Singapore — played a role in every major U.S. military engagement between 1898 and 1992. In October 1968, at the height of the Vietnam War, it took in 47 U.S. Navy ships in a single day. During the 1991 Gulf war, 70 percent of U.S. naval supplies in that conflict came from Subic, Rear Adm. Thomas Mercer said when the base closed.

"Subic Bay was the service station and supermarket of the fleet," said Gerald Anderson, a retired naval officer and the author of several books on the area.

Today, the Freeport features lively commercial areas and tourist attractions, but it is also studded with evidence of failed investments and the ruins of a decaying military base. New or renovated buildings stand beside an abandoned casino and the foundations of a never-completed South Korean skyscraper.

The U.S. Navy left behind more than 1,800 centrally air-conditioned houses in neighborhoods designed to resemble American suburbs. Some sit empty, while others have been converted into tourist accommodations. Yet others have been leased by the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, the government agency that oversees the Freeport, as private residences with the pitch that Subic offers an American

lifestyle in the middle of the Philippines.

A recent drive down Easy Street in one of the former U.S. Navy housing areas found people living a semblance of the American dream. In front of one house was a monster truck with a custom paint job that looked ready for an American car show. Speedboats and water scooters sat in driveways with children's bikes in the yards. The community has a school, a public swimming pool and ample playgrounds.

Just down the road, at the Royal department store, a Filipino family lined up at the cashier with two cases of Spam, stacks of American breakfast cereals and boxes of Cheez-Its. The children lobbied their parents for American candy bars on display near the cash register.

The scene was probably not much different in 1967, when about 4.2 million military personnel and their dependents purchased more than \$25 million in goods at the same location. At that time, it was one of the largest navy exchanges in the world.

Perhaps nowhere is the contrast between the old and new more vivid than along the polluted river that divides the Freeport from the city of Olongapo. The Olongapo River, given a derogatory nickname inspired by the sewage it held, was once the boundary between the well-appointed U.S. Navy base and the poverty of the Philippines.

During a recent visit, a Filipino couple was discussing in hushed tones which type of Swiss chocolate to buy from the new Marks & Spencer outlet in the high-end shopping mall that now hugs the Freeport side of the river.

A drive deeper into the former base leads to the outskirts of a 4,000-hectare, or 10,000-acre, jungle preserved by the U.S. Navy, and now by the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority,

(Continued on page 10)

Westpac'rs Reunion 2015

The third annual Westpac'rs Reunion was held in Branson MO at the Clarion Hotel, 27-31 May 2015.



Dennis Krumm, Kurt Stuvengen, & Todd Larson

USS Reeves was represented by shipmates: Kurt Stuvengen, Dennis Kumm, Todd Larson, Richard Mooney, Don Longstreet, Garland Davis, Tom Mills and Wendell Gawthorp.



Wendell Gawthorp Dennis Krumm, & Kurt Stuvengen

A hospitality suite which served as the meeting and gathering spot was provided in the hotel's Jungle Room. It was open from 0700 until whenever and was complete with an open bar, drinks and

snacks. There was a sit down, plated and served dinner Saturday Night 30 May 2015 with entertainment after.

Since a sanitary food preparation area and refrigeration are not provided, limited heavier food items were brought in courtesy of individual members at their own expense. Additionally, a Bar B Que grill was provided between the hours of 1100 -1500 for anyone desiring to purchase and cook their own food items.

In an effort to provide as much individual free time as possible, no planned activities were booked; however, individual attendees planned private group activities and anybody that wanted to could join in.

The award winning Clarion Hotel offered a special room rate for the reunion and their amenities were surpassed by no other hotel. Additionally, Clarion offered a shuttle service to and from the following airports:

Branson Airport:
\$10.00 per person.

Springfield/Branson

Airport: \$75.00 per person.

For future reference, shuttle services can be arranged during your room reservation booking or anytime thereafter.

Background

The Asia Sailor website was founded in 2013 by Garland Davis, David Mac McAllister, Kathryn McAllister, Dennis Marshall and Mack Richards with webmaster/hosting services provided by Lee Thayer and registered at the web address, AsiaSailor.com. The first Westpac'rs Reunion was hosted by Kathryn McAllister and David Mac McAllister in April 2013 in Branson, MO and the Asia Sailor Westpac'rs Association was founded as a result of that highly successful affair. The reunion was so successful that it went to an annual event in 2014 and has returned to the veteran friendly Clarion Hotel and Branson Mo each year since.

So, consider the next Asia Sailor or Westpac'rs Reunion, 18-22 May 2016 and join our shipmates and help Kurt to make sure that the USS Reeves is well represented.



Clarion Hotel, Branson, Missouri



This community is for those sailors who were stationed in or pulled liberty in Asia.

Website: <http://www.asiasailor.com>

Subic Bay Today (cont)

(Continued from page 8)

that is one of the last virgin forests on Luzon Island.

During the 1980s, George Soper underwent survival training in the dense rain forest. He and other U.S. marines were paired with local tribesmen who taught them how to find clean water, food and medicine in the forbidding environment. "Nowhere else in the world did you have a U.S. military base with access to a jungle like this," Mr. Soper said.

Today, those same tribesmen teach jungle survival tips to tourists, usually in staged demonstrations that include slapstick comedy routines.

Just past the former jungle training area lies what had been the Cubi Point Naval Air Station, an airstrip that could handle some of the largest military aircraft in the U.S. arsenal. Now ambitiously redesignated the Subic Bay International Airport, it is largely languishing in disuse. During a recent visit, the only aircraft using the airport was a cargo plane delivering dolphins to a nearby ocean park.

Next to the airport are symbols of the once-high hopes for Subic's transformation into a booming commercial area. In 1996, Subic hosted the Fourth

Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Economic Leaders Meeting. In honor of the event, 18 luxury villas were built — one for each head of state visiting the new Freeport.

These days, the villas lie in disrepair. The tennis court is clogged with weeds, and the water in the swimming pool has an off-putting green tint.



Farther inside the former base is the once heavily guarded naval magazine area, which was once home to an estimated 50,000 tons of ordnance. The munitions were stored in more than a hundred bunkers, now abandoned or, in rare instances, repurposed.

In the cool dark confines of one of these former bunkers, now a restaurant known as Bunker Bob's and run by a former U.S. Navy officer,

tourists from a nearby beach area were dining at tables adorned with camouflage-patterned linens. On the menu were pizza and Mexican dishes. Historic maps of Subic and World War II-era posters lined the walls.

There is little consensus, among the thousands of retired U.S. military personnel and Filipinos who live around Subic, as to whether the conversion of the base into a commercial zone can be considered a success.

About 90,000 people work in the Freeport, according to government data. That is nearly double the 46,000 Filipinos employed by all U.S. military bases in the Philippines in 1987, when the bases were in full operation, according to Mr. Anderson, the historian.

But the Freeport has also experienced problems. The Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority has reported losses of about 7 billion pesos, or \$175 million, from its creation in 1992 through 2011. The area has also been investigated repeatedly by Philippine legislators, and criticized by President Benigno S. Aquino III, in connection with large-scale smuggling of oil, vehicles, rice and other commodities.

In addition, many of the jobs in Subic today are low-paying service-sector positions. The jobs created by the U.S. Navy offered high pay, generous benefits and valuable technical training, according to former base employees.

Perlita Felicitas, 58, a resident of Olongapo, said that her father had worked for more than a decade in the U.S. Navy's Ship Repair Facility. Employees in the current shipbuilding and ship repair operations in Subic, she said, make a fraction of what her father earned.

"We were four children and all of us were able to go to college because of the U.S. Navy," she said. "We were sad when they left. There are no opportunities like that anymore."

[Source: International Herald Tribune | Floyd Whaley | April 26, 2013++]



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Valuable News Sources

As I have said before, the semi-monthly RAO Bulletin is an invaluable source of USN/DOD news for this newsletter. I strongly recommend every Veteran subscribe to this informative and timely source:

Lt. James "EMO" Tichacek, USN (Ret)

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COMMISSARY PRIVITIZATION

Lawmakers have taken a first step toward privatizing commissaries, approving legislation that would require a pilot program to test the concept of private companies operating at least five commissaries at large installations. The Senate Armed Services Committee approved the plan 14 MAY as part of its version of the 2016 defense authorization bill. According to the committee, the legislation also requires a report on a plan to privatize the Defense Commissary Agency, entirely or in part, and directs the Government Accountability Office to assess potential costs and benefits of having private companies run the stores.

Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-OK) said he fought hard against the provision in committee and plans to introduce an amendment on the Senate floor to reverse it when the defense bill comes up for consideration by the full chamber. "With all the good in the bill, one of my greatest disappointments was legislation that directs the Department of Defense to privatize military commissaries on a minimum of five major bases and sets into motion the potential for all commissaries to be privatized," Inhofe said in a statement. "It ignores recommendations made by the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission in

January," he said. That commission recommended consolidating some back-office operational functions of commissaries and exchanges, and allowing commissaries to mark up prices on items to help cover some operational costs. Information was not immediately available about whether the Senate committee has agreed to allow commissaries to mark up prices, as requested by DoD, or has agreed to the Pentagon's request to reduce funding for commissaries.

The privatization pilot program would run for two years, and would require a report to the House and Senate Armed Services committees within 180 days after it ended. A committee aide said the test, if included in the final version of the defense bill, could begin as early as July 2016. "This isn't about hurting commissaries or getting rid of the benefit; it's about finding a more efficient and cost-effective way of delivering the benefit," the aide said. As part of the initiative, lawmakers also have asked DoD to evaluate basic pay and subsistence allowances in relation to privatization of the stores, to ensure that service members would not see a decrease in purchasing power, the aide said. DoD officials would determine whether any changes in pay and allowances might be needed to make up for any decrease in savings as a result

of privatization. No similar provision is included in the House version of the annual defense policy bill, which means the commissary privatization provision will have to be discussed later this year when House and Senate lawmakers will meet in a conference committee to reconcile differences in their respective draft bills.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars firmly opposes privatizing military commissaries and the pilot program, said John W. Stroud, the group's national commander. "We want this language stripped from the Senate's version of the defense bill," said Stroud, a retired Air Force first sergeant. "Military commissaries are a key quality-of-life benefit to military service members, their families and to retirees," he said. "You can sometimes find better deals off base, but nowhere near the overall 30 percent savings that commissaries provide." He also said any reduction in customer traffic at the commissary would cause a corresponding reduction in customer traffic at exchange service stores, which would directly affect the exchanges' contributions to a variety of military morale, welfare and recreation programs. [Source: Military Times | Karen Jowers | May 15, 2015 ++]

Agent Orange Web Links

<http://goo.gl/ZJ9fud> - Blue Water Navy Awareness Web site

<http://goo.gl/PWF4WX> - Blue Water Navy Awareness Facebook Page

<http://goo.gl/xbvXk6> - Blue Water Navy Awareness Blog

<http://goo.gl/N9b0wl> - Blue Water Navy Awareness Fund Raiser

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4cGyqxys-nA> - John Wells Speech in Washington DC

<http://www.militaryveteransadvocacy.org/> - Military Veterans Advocacy

<http://bluewaternavy.org/> - Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Association

<http://www.veterans.senate.gov/.../pending-benefits-legislati...> Senate Veterans Affairs Hearing



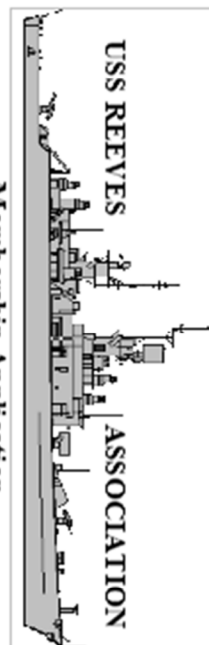
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