



# THE IRONMAN—A DOUBLE ENDER’S NEWSLETTER

## Membership Scorebox

Current	122
Lifetime	24
Deceased	89
Snail Mail Ad- dresses Only	254
Email Address	518
Total Shipmates	4,260

## Eleven Years of the Reeves Association

By Gerry Hines FTM2 64-68

**Dues Notice!**

Please be sure to check your mailing label or email notation. If it doesn't say Current or Life 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.

Looking back over the last eleven years of the Reeves Association has been an interesting exercise for me. Tom Bailey asked me to write up some thoughts to include Providence plus the experiences of the last eight reunions spanning those eleven years. The start of the organization was a bit disjointed as any new group will be with trying to make a division between the DLG and CG sailors. That in my mind was an artificial divide. Reeves was the same ship no matter what its designation. The reorganization that took place in Washington, DC in 2008 with a new slate of officers began a downplaying of that divide which continues to this day. We are all Reeves sailors whether you're a plank owner like me or an Ironman of the later years.

been spread out to a team so no one person has to carry the whole load.

This year's event in Providence saw many members of the core group who attend every reunion. These people can be counted on to show up and lend a hand with whatever needs doing. Filling coolers, moving chairs around, greeting newcomers etc. As we move to different locations around the country we gain new members who have such a good time that they will be at the other end of the country for the next one.

Thursday night saw quite a few checking in and several were new to the reunions and we did our best to make them welcome.

Friday morning we formed a caravan of cars and traveled up to Fall River, MA to Battleship Cove for a tour of the battleship USS Massachusetts, a destroyer, a submarine and a PT boat. They have done a wonderful job of restoration on all of them. Some of the engine and boiler room types got a special below decks tour of the Massachusetts. They had several self-guided tours laid out on the battleship as well as the other ships. At 6 PM we had the official welcome reception in the hos-

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Michael and Lorrie Robertson's years of hard work kept things on a more or less even keel as we continued to grow. The election of Tom Bailey as President put a man with energy and lots of ideas in the mix (With Mary as his all-important XO.). This seems to be why he continues to be elected again and again. Michael's health has deteriorated to a point where he no longer can be involved, but he continues to be interested in our crew. The various jobs of the organization have

*(Continued on page 4)*

## The President’s Page



Greetings to the USS Reeves Association Family

It’s great to be looking back at our very successful 2018 Reunion, which was held two months ago in Providence. I say great to look back, mostly because we spent so much time planning for it, that for many months coming up to the event that its planning bordered on being an obsession. You see, because this was our first try at hosting the Reeves Reunion, we were overly concerned that we had missed something, or that we had not gone far enough down our imaginary check list, or that the wheels were just going to fall off. Turns out we were very relieved when our worst fears did not materialize, and that just maybe our beginners’ luck had saved the day. Thanks to the help of many shipmates, and extended Reeves family, our plan ended up producing one of the better Reeves reunions we have had the pleasure to attend.

There were a few minor miscues, but overall, I think most that attended would have to say that we, as an organization, had a pretty

good environment to enjoy the company of our shipmates. Those few miscues were easily overcome by a group of people who enjoyed each other’s company and were willing to pitch-in to make it work. There were many who stepped up to help in the planning stages of the program, even more that were willing to lend a hand with just about anything that needed to be done in Providence, and the valiant efforts of the few that helped us pack it up on Monday morning will be forever remembered. I should know better than to call out names, because of the inevitability of missing someone, but suffice to say that we are all deeply thankful for the spirit with which every helpful action took place. We all won every time someone lent a hand, and there were plenty of instances to notice. We thank you all..... it could not have been done without you.

Still, I would be completely remiss if I did not single out a few contributors that went beyond the call. That would start with Nancy Elkins, who helped with everything we did.... and then took a thousand pictures. Charlie Suckow for allowing his home to be our New England Warehouse.

Fumiyo and Kurt Stuvengen for owning the ships store. Janet and Gerry Hines for being there for continually helping in every way they could find. RADM Mark Tidd for allowing himself to be volunteered as the guest speaker for the banquet. Our speaker plans had a last-minute shake-up, so we had to scramble. Mark had no issue with delivering an excellent speech on short notice.

The last group that deserves tons of credit are the ladies that organized and contributed gifts for our banquet door prizes. Once the word went out on the ladies’ network, we had many people step up to make and/or donate a variety of outstanding door prize gifts for all of us to enjoy. Many of wonderful gifts were hand-made, and we gave out a record number of door prizes at the banquet. Our thanks to these generous ladies for their talents and generosity.

And finally, to my lovely wife, Mary, for owning the entire reunion administrative headache that was the key to our success. Mary took over the books just last year and was able to run the entire reunion reservation process before,

*(Continued on page 6)*

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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:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Under 50	\$500
Under 60	\$400
Under 70	\$300
Under 80	\$200
80 or older	\$100

We already have 24 life members.

Emails, Etc.

VA Presumptive AO Diseases Update 26

Hypertension recommended

Mike Beverly  
<mikebeverly99@yahoo.com>

To: TM Bailey

Oct 17 at 4:10 PM

Tom, hope you and Mary got home safely. Just a note to let you know Trudy and I had a great time ... You and Mary did a super job in planning and executing the reunion. Look forward to seeing you next time..

Regards, Mike

New research linking veterans' high blood pressure with wartime exposure to chemical defoliants could dramatically expand federal disability benefits for tens of thousands of Vietnam-era troops. The findings, from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, conclude that "sufficient evidence" exists linking hypertension and related illnesses in veterans to Agent Orange and other defoliants used in Vietnam, Thailand and South Korea in the 1960s and 1970s. They recommend adding the condition to the list of 14 presumptive diseases associated with Agent Orange exposure, a group that includes Hodgkin's Disease, prostate cancer and Parkinson's Disease. That's an upgrade from past research that showed a possible but not conclusive link between the toxic exposures and high blood pressure problems later in life.

direct exposure and clear health links can be nearly impossible for ailing veterans searching for decades-old paper records.

A change in the designation of hypertension by VA could also add significant new costs to the department's disability payout expenses. In 2010, when then Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki expanded the list of presumptive illnesses for Agent Orange exposure to include ischemic heart disease and Parkinson's, the department estimated additional costs of more than \$42 billion over a decade. It's unclear how many veterans suffer from high blood pressure and would be eligible for disability payments if the change is made. In a statement, VA spokesman Curt Cashour said the department "is in the process of evaluating this report and appreciates the work" of the group.

If Veterans Affairs officials follow through with the recommendation, it could open up new or additional disability benefits to thousands of aging veterans who served in those areas and who are now struggling with heart problems. Veterans who struggle with high blood pressure issues are eligible for health care at VA facilities. But the illness is eligible for disability benefits in only select cases. Adding an illness to VA's presumptive list means that veterans applying for disability benefits need not prove that their sickness is directly connected to their time in service. Instead, they only need show that they served in areas where the defoliant was used and that they now suffer from the diseases. That's a significant difference, since proving

Regardless the cost, officials from the Veterans of Foreign Wars are already calling for VA officials to move ahead with adding hypertension to the list. "There is no doubt in anyone's mind that Agent Orange made veterans sick, it made their children sick, and it brought pain and suffering and premature death to many," VFW National Commander B.J. Lawrence said in a statement. "Even though it's been a half century since they were exposed, the results of that exposure is something they continue to live with daily." The new study is available at the National Academies Press website.

[Source: Military.com | Leo Shane III | November 19, 2018 +

New Study — National Academies Press website.  
[https://www.nap.edu/resource/25137/111318\\_VAO\\_2018\\_highlights.pdf](https://www.nap.edu/resource/25137/111318_VAO_2018_highlights.pdf)

## Eleven Years of the Reeves Association (Continued)

*(Continued from page 1)*

pitality room with hors d'oeuvres and an open bar. Several newcomers showed up as walk ins. We found that the hospitality room was a bit small for our numbers so there was a mad scramble for more chairs and another table. That is always a good problem to have as the more the merrier. I usually make a comment about how the sea stories get going but that is a given and almost never stops.

Saturday morning we loaded onto a very large bus for the trip down to Mystic, Connecticut to tour the Mystic Seaport. The seaport covers 19 acres of artifacts from the days of sail powered ships. They are reconstructing the Mayflower II, and the lathe they use to turn the masts is amazing. Whaling ships, whale boats and harpooning demonstrations accompanied by sea chanteys kept us fascinated with the days before there were BTs, FTs, ENs, ICs, etc. I for one am glad I didn't serve in those days of hard tack and salted beef. They would leave port on a whal-

ing expedition and could be gone for 2 or more years. Many times never heard from again. That evening we were on our own for dinner so we scattered to various restaurants meeting back at the hospitality room to continue mingling.

Sunday's business meeting covered a lot of ground with reelection of officers, discussion of dues, next reunion location somewhere in the west all of which I am sure others will describe in greater detail.

The banquet was held in a very large ball room with a huge domed ceiling. Nancy Elkins who was snapping pictures all weekend took the individual and group pictures assisted by IC Tech turned Yeoman Charles Elkins. We all raised a glass in toast to Admiral Chang a former captain of the Reeves who passed away last year. The Admiral's wife is now a life member of the Reeves Association. Kurt Stuvengen performed the MIA ceremony as well as the 2 bell memorial for the shipmates we have lost since the last reunion. Retired Rear

Admiral Mark Tidd was drafted in to being our main speaker. He was chaplain on the Reeves 85-87. He did a wonderful job of pulling together a speech on very short notice. He did tell us that all sea stories are true and that parts of them really happened. You have to believe a chaplain. We finished off the banquet with a free raffle of a lot of prizes donated by members. People really stepped up with prizes such as a \$50 gift certificate for Kansas City steaks, handmade quilts, bottles of wine, etc. We then adjourned to the hospitality room to finish off the rest of the liquid refreshment. You know we didn't want any left overs.

Monday morning found some at breakfast, others scrambling to catch a flight or an early start on some long drives home. A lot of "I'll see you in 2 years out west". This brings me to the end of this. The wheels are in motion searching for a new site for 2020. Hopefully we can gather in some more of our wayward sailors for sea stories, a good time and to tip a few.



### Providence Reunion Photos



"Got Snipes" l/r Brad Wilkins, Rick Gilbert, Tom Bailey, Kurt Stuvengen, Gary Webb, Jim Snow, Charlie Suckow



USS Reeves Providence Reunion - Mystic Seaport Tour attendees

## Presidents Letter (Continued)

*(Continued from page 2)*

### 2018 Financials

Checking	\$6,200
Savings	\$4,945

#### 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](mailto: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.

during, and after the reunion. She had her hands full with every aspect of the reunion and made sure everything happened on time, and that every bill got paid. On top of that she had to put up with me while we worked through all the planning. I believe a nomination for saint-hood is in order.

As reunion go, there are always seems to be core group that is the backbone of the organization. Just about “all the usual suspects” were along for Providence. We had a few that had last minute calamities or schedule conflicts that kept them away, but for the most part all the “regulars” were present. We also had more than a few shipmates that were there for their first experience at a Reeves Reunion. Some were from New England, as would be expected, but there were also a few that came from much further away (CA, FL) to be part of the festivities. Our new attendees seemed to fall into the spirit of things quickly, and by Saturday, there were no strangers in the room. Unless, of course, you count the ever-growing group of BTs that got more entertaining as the evening progressed.

So, in celebration of the Reeves, we managed to pull off yet another memorable reunion. The success was in large part due to the dedication of many shipmates that are still interested in being part of a fabulous ship. The reunion may

have been planned by Mary and I, but I can assure you that the success of the reunion lies with the Reeves Association Family (shipmates and significant others) who choose to remain part of the Reeves, and will do whatever they can to help ensure the success of our gatherings. No matter how well the event is planned, it’s still the members who make the party worth attending. I am proud to be associated with such dedicated and helpful people, and really look forward to seeing them all at our 2020 reunion. Which, by the way, we’re already working on.

So, we now move on to getting ourselves prepared for the holidays. We hope that all of you have a very Merry Christmas, and a safe and Happy New Year.

Here’s wishing you fair winds and following seas.

//tom

Tom Bailey BT2 (SW) 84-87

# 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

*Mousepads (\$10) + s/h*



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



*Challenge Coins (\$14) + s/h*



*Ball caps (\$12 each) + s/h*

2009—San Diego

2010—Chicago

2012—Charleston



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



## USS Reeves Association – Ship's Store Order Form

Item	Description	Qty	Price	S/H	Total
Photo					
Ball Cap					
Mousepad					
Challenge Coins					
Golf Shirt					
T-Shirt					
				Total	

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

- Photos: \$2 per photo
- Ball caps: \$4 each
- Mousepads: \$2 each
- Challenge Coins: \$3 for 1, \$.50 for each additional coin
- Shirts: \$3 per shirt

<b>Shipping Label</b>
To:
Address:
City, State, ZIP:
Phone:
Email:

Send order to: USS Reeves Association Ship's Store  
c/o Kurt Stuvengen  
410 Spring St  
Orfordville, WI 53576

Home Phone: (608) 879-2269

### Reeves Reunion Banners / for sale

We introduced the all new Reeves Association Banners at the 2018 Providence Reunion. The initial banners were supersized to hang on the walls in the hotel to let the world know that we were in town. Those big banners guys were ordered in the 4’ by 6’ size to fill the hotel walls nicely. Once the first one showed up from the printer, I took one look and knew I just had to have one of these for myself... although maybe sized down a bit. So we went back to the design page and were able to come up with a 2.5’ x 4’ version that would look good hanging on the garage

wall. So, we purchased an armful of them for Providence and they sold like hotcakes. When we were finished in Providence, we only had a couple of banners left, and those have since been sold. So, we went back to the supplier and ordered more for the Christmas rush. The banner is printed on very soft but durable vinyl, with grommets for attaching it wherever the class of a Reeves Banner is truly needed. We have 25 of them in stock, and they’re ready to ship to your favorite shipmate. The cost of the banner is just a small percentage above what it costs us

to bring them to you. While the shipping costs due vary by destination, we’ve averaged the price to simplify things.

The cost is \$44.00 for each banner, which includes shipping and handling.

Send check to Kurt Stuvengen, 410 Spring St., Orfordville, WI. 53576



The banner shown above is framed in wood by one of our shipmates. The banners we are selling do not include the wooden frame

### A Reeves Salute to RADM Chang

As you are all probably aware, former Reeves CO RADM Ming Chang passed away last winter. One of the things that we learned from Mrs. Charlotte Chang (one of our newest Reeves Association Life Members) is that Admiral Chang always enjoyed getting his Reeves “Ironman” Newsletter and would make it a point to sit down to enjoy reading the latest version with a glass of his favorite “Johnny Walker Black” Scotch. In keeping with Admiral Chang’s pass-time of reading the newsletter with a friend, we decided that maybe that very action should be used as a celebration at the reunion. So.... We purchased a bottle of “Johnny Walker Black” and a sleeve of plastic shot-glasses so that all the Reeves shipmates could sip and salute one of our finest COs with one of his cherished traditions. Godspeed, Admiral Chang, we were all proud to have called you our shipmate!



RADM Mark Tidd - Guest Speaker at the Providence Reunion Banquet

Providence Reunion—Banquet Photos—Group Pictures



## VA Blue Water Claims Update 55

### Procopio v. Wilke Could Make Previous Haas Ruling Invalid

On December 7, 2018, the US Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit is scheduled to hear oral arguments in a case called Procopio v. Wilke. Although this case has quietly made its way through the courts, it has the potential to dramatically change the manner in which the US Department of Veterans Affairs addresses service-connected disability benefits claims associated with exposure to Agent Orange.

Shortly before the Federal Circuit decided the Haas case which dealt with the “boots on the ground” issue, a veteran named Alfred Procopio, Jr., filed a claim seeking service-connected disability benefits for prostate cancer and diabetes mellitus type II with edema arising from herbicide exposure during the Vietnam War. Like Mr. Haas, Mr. Procopio served in the Blue Water Navy in the coastal waters of Vietnam, and it is undisputed that he never set foot on Vietnamese soil. Mr. Procopio focused much of his argument on technical and historical evidence in an attempt to convince VA that, notwithstanding the presumption, he had — in fact — been exposed to Agent Orange by drinking water on the ship while in coastal waters. He also argued that the Federal Circuit’s decision in Haas failed to account for rules that require courts to interpret statutes in a manner that is most favorable to veterans, which is sometimes called the Pro-Veteran Cannon. In particular, Mr. Procopio argued that when deciding whether the

phrase “service in the Republic of Vietnam” was ambiguous, the analysis must be conducted in a manner that is favorable toward the veteran. VA was not convinced by either argument, and denied the claim.

After a series of appeals, Mr. Procopio’s case is now pending in front of the Federal Circuit, which is the same court that issued the decision in Mr. Haas’s case. After VA and Mr. Procopio filed their written arguments, a three judge panel heard the parties’ oral arguments on May 4, 2018. The panel took great interest in both arguments raised by Mr. Procopio, and on the suggestion of the VA’s attorney, the court asked the parties to submit additional written arguments focused on the applicability of the Pro-Veteran Cannon.

After receiving the supplemental written arguments, the court decided to refer the case to an en banc panel — meaning that all of the Federal Circuit’s judges will decide the case, not just a three-judge panel. Since then, additional written arguments in favor of Mr. Procopio’s position have been submitted by almost a dozen veterans advocacy organizations, including the Big Six — Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA), Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), American Legion (AL), and American Veterans (AMVETS), the National Organization of Veterans Advocates

(NOVA), National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP), and the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA). The full panel will hear oral arguments in just a few weeks.

The Federal Circuit’s order for supplemental written arguments, as well as referral of the case to the full court, indicate an interest by at least some of the judges to revisit the court’s decision in the Haas case. If Mr. Procopio prevails, it could mean that Blue Water Navy veterans may become entitled to the same presumptions that benefit other veterans of the Vietnam War. It may also cause veterans and advocates to examine and challenge other policies and regulations that VA has implemented when it determined statutory language to be ambiguous. On the other hand, if VA prevails it may not only adversely affect Blue Water Navy veterans, but could also strengthen the agency’s argument that courts must show it deference when interpreting statutes and implementing policy and regulations. The only thing that is certain is that the stakes are high for both sides.

[Source: NEWS REP  
| Travis James West |  
November 26, 2018 ++]



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Name

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StreetAddress 2

City/State/Zip

Home Phone

Cell Phone

Email Address

I served on the USS REEVES (DLG-24/CG-24) as a \_\_\_\_\_ (rate/rank) from 19 \_\_\_\_ to 19 \_\_\_\_.

Membership in the Association includes the right to vote and hold elective office. It also includes receiving a newsletter, email updates and further privileges as to be determined by the Board of Directors.

Dues Per Year: \$20.00

I also wish to support the goals of the Association which is the building of a membership that will increase interest in bi-annual reunions, as well as the establishment of a newsletter and other means of communicating our activities with all Reeves shipmates. I am making an additional donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

I enclose my check or money order in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_. I am interested in helping the Association grow and become successful. I wish to serve on a committee, provide other assistance or have an interest as follows:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mail application to:

USS REEVES (DLG24/CG-24) ASSOCIATION  
Tom Bailey, President  
1154 S Greenway Ave  
Pueblo West, CO 81007-1745