



# THE IRONMAN—A DOUBLE ENDER’S NEWSLETTER

## Membership Scorebox

Current	68
Past Due	110
Snail Mail Addresses Only	258
Email Address	487
Total Shipmates	3,22q

### 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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## Diary of a Reunion—Portland, Oregon Style

By Gary Hines FTM2, 64-68

I did this several reunions ago and enjoyed remembering the event while writing it so here goes again. This actually starts out on Wednesday and a pre-reunion event. Normally when you think of Portland you think of rain but not this week. We left the hotel at 06:15 for a cruise down the Columbia River from Portland to Astoria. They fed us breakfast, told us about the history of Portland and the river, then fed us lunch, saw some more river, and then fed us wonderful desserts. I guess you can tell where my priorities were. It was a wonderful sunny day on the water. We got back to the hotel at 20:45. It was worth every penny spent.

Stepped out of my room the next morning and there was Willie Avant (HT2) fired up and ready to tell some more sea stories and had brought along some firewater to go with them (2 jars of moonshine). They say it will curl your hair but from the number of bald domes attending that wasn't much of a worry. As the reunion still had not officially started we did an unofficial tour with the Elkins and Borbas to a great restaurant that Tony knew about for lunch and then up to the top of Portland to tour the Pitlock Mansion which has views of the city and Mt. Hood. When we got back to the hotel a lot of other attendees had arrived. It was great to see old friends and make new ones. This was the best attended of any of the reunions. We had a range of sailors from the old plank owners like me all the way to Dan Bernier (EM1) who got off in

1992.

Friday was another do it yourself day and we loaded 2 vehicles and went to the OMSI Science museum and also toured the "Blue Fish" the last diesel/electric submarine built by the United States. Interesting that they make you go through a hatch in the museum before you can go aboard the sub. I guess we looked like we had downed too many Voodoo Donuts. Another wild treat of Portland. After leaving the museum we traveled over to the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center. Amazing what those people went through to get to Oregon. Some of the others went to downtown Portland to tour the sites, outdoor markets etc. The reception back at the hotel that night was great. Good food, open bar and swapping old stories until late. Not me. I faded out about 22:30. Checking the next morning found most of Willie's first jar of moonshine was missing.

Another day of free for all touring. We loaded 7 of us in my van and drove up river to Multnomah Falls. A scenic 609 foot falls with a mile and a half trek to the top. Incredible views of the river and mountains beyond. A sad note from that trip. Jeff Wofford (FTM2) got a call that his father had unexpectedly passed away that morning. We took him back to the hotel to make arrangements to leave. Our thoughts and prayers are with him and his family still as I write this.

The reunion continued that even-

*(Continued on page 6)*

## The President's Page



### Greetings to the USS Reeves Association Family.

The cause for celebration was the absolute success of our recent reunion in Portland, Oregon. This was our best attended reunion to date, and the tempo of things at the reunion was more positive than it has ever been. As you'll read throughout the newsletter, there were a great number of things to do in Portland and our shipmates - and significant others, made sure to take full advantage of not only the area, but also the camaraderie of the Reeves family. From day one it was old home week, as we truly enjoyed seeing everyone again, and you couldn't help but get the sense that our organization has become more of a family than that of just members. We felt as though we were among old friends the entire time, and picked up on stories and conversation from the last reunion. Even our newest members, who were making their first appearance at one of our reunions were impressed that they were so easily welcomed and accepted into the group.

The hotel selection was good. We found the accommodations to be quite comfortable, the meeting

room was very adequate for our needs, and the breakfast bar was excellent. The location allowed easy access to the airport and to mass transit heading into the city. Overall, it was quite a good deal for the money. Mike and Lorri Robertson are to be congratulated on the selection process, as this was by far the best venue we have had. But it didn't take long to see that site selection was only the start of the success process. It was very apparent that a tremendous amount of work went into making this reunion possible, and it became even more noticeable as we went through the week. Everything we were going to need had been thought through, fully planned out, and very well executed. I can only imagine how much energy and time it took to get this right. Everything from the check-in process to the banquet went beautifully and we, as an association, owe Mike and Lorri a huge debt of gratitude for the fine work done. They truly outdid themselves on this one.

We were even able to get a little organization business accomplished in the meantime. The association business meeting went into the record book for being the longest since the 2<sup>nd</sup> reunion in DC. Thankfully, this one wasn't a repeat of that game changing event.

We discussed a number of issues concerning our association, and developed a plan to refine what we are doing. All the good stuff is covered in our Recording Secretary's Report (later in the newsletter), so I won't bore you with details. Bottom line is that the organization is in pretty good health. We discussed a few things we need to do to make it better, and maybe grow our membership. We made a decision to take our next reunion to San Antonio, Texas, in 2016, and I'm sure there'll be plenty to read about that in the next few issues.

One item we tried to get moving was more member participation in the newsletters. We all have great stories and memories from our haze-gray days that should be shared in the newsletter. We're trying to encourage our shipmates to write those stories down and, as we've offered in the past, we'll help wordsmith them into articles for you. Gerry Hines stepped up to the plate with his front page article on the reunion, and it is greatly appreciated. Send us some stories that would help to fill our pages.

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

//tom

Tom Bailey – BT2 (SW) 84-87

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

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The Iranian Ambassador to the UN had just finished giving a speech and walked out into the lobby of the convention center where he was introduced to a U.S. Marine General. As they talked, the Iranian said, "I have just one question about what I have seen in America."

The General said, "Well, is there anything I can do to help?"

The Iranian whispered, "My son watches this show called Star Trek and in it there is ... Kirk who is Canadian,

Chekhov who is Russian, Scotty who is Scottish, Uhura who is black, and Sulu who is Japanese, ...but there are NO Muslims. My son is very upset and doesn't understand why there aren't any Iranians, Iraqis, Afghans, Egyptians, Palestinians, Saudis, Syrians, or Pakistanis on Star Trek."

The General leaned close to the Iranian Ambassador, and whispered in his ear, "That's because .. it takes place in the future..."

## Mail/eMail/Decklog/Facebook From Our Shipmates —

Mike, we are sorry that we will not be able to attend the reunion this year, however will plan on next year if all goes well.

Do you remember Dave Stites (OSC) who joined Reeves later on (don't know if you had left by then or not)?

I will forward the reunion email you sent to him. Also, do you know anyone who might have an extra copy of the 1975-1976 cruise book? I got sick while in Singapore and was med-evaced to DGar then on to Tripler Army Hospital in early 1976 and never did get my cruise book. Would just like to peruse the book.

Just to fill you in, I left Reeves and spent the night in the hospital in DGar before being sent to Clark AB Hospital where I spent about 4 weeks running tests. Initially, everyone thought I had a stroke but they could not find any evidence of one. I got my strength back after about 3 weeks and they transferred me to Tripler in Hawaii where I spent a week of tests. They then returned me to full duty and I was transferred to Air Test and Evaluation Squadron 4 at Pt. Mugu, CA where I made CWO2 and was reassigned to the Armed Forces Courier Station Subic Bay as the OIC and courier.

In 1985, I had a relapse of the same problem I had in 1976 and was admitted to Balboa Naval Hospital for about 3 weeks for tests. The final conclusion was MS and it is believed that the onset of it happened in 1975/6. Spent the next 3 years doing tests in an outpatient status. Returned to duty and I retired in 1991.

CWO4 Joe Raby (1972-1976)

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Michael,

I was aboard the USS Coontz, and they have the ships deck logs for July 1 which was the occurrence of the PT boats sinkings by the Hancock and Constellation aircraft. The Coontz anchored in DaNang Harbor on July 2

and was there for about 12 hours and we offloaded the 19 North Vietnamese prisoners to an oiler that was out in the harbor and the oiler had a brig aboard for the prisoners to cherish, while the Coontz and USS Rogers slipped out of DaNang, and went to Formosa for R&R.

We had to leave Formosa after a short stay due to one of the crew members coming down with Syphilis of the eyeball, and the ship went from Formosa to Yokosuka Japan for two days. We left Yokosuka and went back to the good Ole US of A.

I am now trying to get the ship listed on the VA's web site of brown water Navy ships exposed to agent Orange Exposure and am now working with the assistance of the VSO of Post 2972 of the VFW in Gibsonville, N.C..

It is like pulling hen's teeth to get anything done with the VA, but they have run into someone like ME who is not taking their crap lying down. I will be going to the National VFW Veterans Service Officer who hides in the Federal Government Building in Winston Salem, N.,C. next week and will attempt to get him to get the brown water Navy ship listing changed to include the ship USS Coontz DLG9 listed on the VA web site, with the instructions from Kathy McClellan at Congressman Howard Cobles office for District 6 of North Carolina.

I will be involved with carrying Howard Coble in my classic car, a 1959 TriPower Impala Convertible in the Veterans Day Parade on November 11 of 2014. I hope to have my maneuvers completed before Howard Coble leaves office on January 2 2015.

My goal is to get the ship listed as being in a brown water environment on July 2 1966 which is DaNang Harbor, and by using the ships deck log prove that the ship was there on July 2 1966 so that I can be recognized by the VA as being exposed to agent orange and receive treatment for Dia-

betes type II that I have had since 1975.

I was an Electronics Tech 2nd class petty officer in the Navy, and I got a job with IBM as a Customer Engineer. I worked on Computers with IBM and was with them 28 years.

If I can be of any assistance to you just let me know My cell phone number is 336 380 1147. I can send you my deck logs for July 1 and July 2 1966 If I only had your mailing address.

Hopefully my efforts will assist other members of the crew of USS Coontz while they drank the powdered milk made from shipboard de-salinated water. That water had four times the original strength of the agent orange by being heated up in the process.

BTW, I never knew anything about agent orange until I ran into the discussions on the internet in 2011, and have been involved with the crooks over at the VA. I hope I have been of some assistance for you. Have a nice day.

Don R. Dodson ETR2 from the Coontz.

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I responded:

Don,

Thanks for your detailed email. I agree that getting anything done through the VA is nearly impossible – getting Da Nang ships visits acknowledged as AO exposure is impossible.

The number of survivors from that era who contracted one disease or another is growing smaller and smaller. Pretty soon, Da Nang and the blue water/brown water issue will become a footnote in history.

I've been working with Paul Richmond from the WILLIAM V PRATT to get the REEVES Da Nang issue resolved. Through Paul, I was able to get the enlisted and officer rolls for WESTPAC deployment in June 1966. The 1966 Gunnery Assistant, John Pounder, was able to get copies of the deck logs for early July

*(Continued on page 11)*

## Shipmate Jeff Wofford's Father Passes

Jeff Wofford joined us at the Portland reunion on Friday, 10 October, in time to join us for our reception. On Saturday, he joined with Gerry Hines, Tom Bailey, Kurt Stuvengen and their wives to take the Iron Man's hike to the top of Multnomah Falls in the Columbia Gorge. While at the top of the falls and admiring the view, Jeff received a cell phone call and learned that his father had unexpectedly passed away.

After returning to the hotel, Jeff found that he would not be able to get out of Portland until the next morning. Tom took Jeff out for some lunch (burger & beer). Jeff had already signed up for the dinner cruise on Saturday evening and decided that he'd rather spend the time with his shipmates rather than sitting alone.

Here is the email that Jeff sent recently:

Tom/Michael

I just wanted to drop you guys a note. I wanted to thank you again for how supportive all you guys were at a very difficult time in my life. I honestly can't think of a better group of people to be with when you get that kind of devastating news. It really goes to prove what a unique relationship we have as shipmates. There simply are not words to describe how much I appreciate what you

guys did for me on October 11<sup>th</sup>.

Things are going pretty well. I got home around 3PM on the 12<sup>th</sup> and we had a meeting with the funeral director that evening to start planning everything. That whole week was sort of a blur. We had the receiving on Tuesday night and the memorial service, complete with military honors was on Wednesday afternoon. I conducted the eulogy for my dad. I guess in a lot of ways, it was a way for me to say good bye. That evening my family and I sat by our fire pit and reminisced about my dad. I was pretty quiet. I had a lot of stuff to think through. After about half a bottle of scotch, I came to terms with most things and I have been pretty good ever since. There have been some tough times, but that is to be expected. Last Friday we were going through my dad's computer trying to find out some info on his life insurance and we stumbled upon his obituary. He had written this about a year ago:

*Dr. Ben Wofford weighed anchor yesterday and set sail for regions where time has no meaning. He will watch the earth taking shape, watch the continents jostle for position, and watch the glaciers sculpt the land. He will join the shepherds at the First Noel, listen to the Sermon on the Mount, and will be there at the Passion of Gethsemane. He will sail with*

*Columbus, explore the New World, and join the Sons of Liberty at Boston, Gettysburg, and Bastogne. He will know the joys of childhood again, live where watermelons and peaches and blackberries are always ripe, and swim in his favorite lake. He will join the friends and old folks that have gone on ahead, and on bended knee, give thanks to the One who gave us life and hope and brought us safely home.*

So, I know my dad is ok, he's in a better place. The other thing that I have discovered is how many friends that I have. I have also discovered how many shipmates that I have. Tom, you have no idea how much going out and getting a beer and a burger meant. Going out on the dinner cruise was the best thing that I could have done. Being with my shipmates helped me get through a very difficult moment in time. I always knew that there was something very special about the USS Reeves. I know now, what that was. It is the people that made it special.

I look forward to the next reunion. I hope I get to stay for the whole thing the next time. Until then, you guys will be in my thoughts and prayers.

Sincerely

FTM2 (and Honorary Snipe) Jeff Wofford (1976-1980)

## Health Care Reform

Tens of millions of Americans without health insurance risk being fined by the IRS as part of the Affordable Care Act, which imposes a tax penalty on those who didn't purchase medical insurance. If you

didn't have health insurance in 2014, and you did not receive an exemption, you'll be fined 1 percent of your yearly household income (above the tax filing threshold, which is about \$10,000 for an

individual) or \$95 per person (\$47.50 per child younger than 18) up to \$285. But tax experts say up to 20 million people are eligible for a waiver. According to Inuit, maker

*(Continued on page 10)*

## Our Next Reunion: San Antonio, Texas

Our shipmates selected San Antonio as our 2016 reunion site. The CVB has been contacted and the internet explored. Here's an article about San Antonio that says a lot:

### Top 5 Things to Do in San Antonio, Texas by Colleen Lanin, The Travel Mama

Here are five San Antonio experiences not to be missed, no matter how long your stay!

#### 1) Explore River Walk

When I asked what we had to see in San Antonio, everyone but everyone suggested [River Walk](#). After wandering along the picturesque paths lined with shops and restaurants aplenty, it's easy to see why this is such a popular choice. Be forewarned that River Walk is not especially stroller or wheelchair accessible. (This meant a lot of stroller lugging for the hubs!)

A Travel Mama from Houston suggested we take a river taxi through the [River Walk Extension](#) to float through raising and lowering locks à la the Panama Canal. Alas, we did not have time to venture to the extension. We did, however, take a [Rio San Antonio Cruise](#) through the main waters of River Walk. The boat tour was a fun little adventure for the kids, while the entertaining commentary about San Antonio by the boat's captain was educational for the adults. I was impressed by how San Antonio has taken such strides to preserve its history and culture over the years, rather than bulldozing over its past like so many other American cities.



#### 2) Try a Paleta Bar

While exploring River Walk, we

asked a couple munching on popsicle-like goodies for directions. This incited my daughter to beg for ice cream. They explained the frozen treats were not ice cream but [Paleta Bars](#), a Mexican frozen fruit dessert on a stick. The duo pointed us up the hill to Bolivar Cafe in La Villita where we could purchase some bars of our own. When locals tell me I need to taste something, I listen! These yummy all-fruit treats (in flavors like coconut, lime, strawberry, or mango) were worth the climb.

After your snack, mosey through [La Villita](#), San Antonio's old town, which is now a charming cluster of galleries and shops.



#### 3) Visit the Alamo

You can't leave San Antonio without a visit to [The Alamo](#), right? While it may not be as graceful as the Eiffel Tower or as awe-inspiring as the Egyptian Pyramids, there is something about visiting a place you've heard of your whole life. I got that sense of, "So *this* is the Alamo!" The Alamo was built originally as a mission and was fortified and used for military purposes over the years. I was surprised to find it smack-dab in the middle of downtown (just a couple of blocks from River Walk). I had pictured it as a lone building in the middle of the desert somewhere.

Walk the Alamo's lovely grounds, toss pennies for luck into a fountain, wander through the compound's three buildings, and read about why we should "Remember the Alamo," all for free!



#### 4) Get Tex-Mex

Every other restaurant in San Antonio seemed to specialize in Mexican cuisine. There were numerous selections along the River Walk to choose from. A famed location that we stumbled upon along the freeway after our evening flight arrival was [The Alamo Café](#). This place was big on atmosphere, with mini rivers running throughout its interior and giant American and Texas flags draped across one wall. The highlight for my five-year-old daughter was watching the ladies in traditional Mexican garb rolling out handmade flour tortillas. They even tossed her some dough to play with!

#### 5) Eat a Big Ol' Steak

I don't eat much red meat but I figured, when in Texas, I should eat like a Texan! I ordered a porterhouse at the upscale, yet rustic [18 Oaks](#) at the brand-spankin' new [JW Marriott San Antonio Hill Country Resort & Spa](#). The restaurant overlooks the resort's gorgeous golf course and smells of wood burning in the hearth. They serve all local, organic grass and oat-fed beef. They may have converted me to a meat-eater. I keep daydreaming about that dang steak.

If you're looking to splurge on a delicious steak dinner slathered in parsley garlic butter, head here! You can choose from six sauces; I sampled the blue cheese and the peppercorn. They were both so heavenly, I can't decide which was better!

## Financials

### FY 2014 Operating End-Year

#### Income

Dues	\$1620
Donations	\$742
Reunions	\$8928
Ship's Store	\$1903
Cost of Goods	-\$1319
Total Income	\$11874

#### Expense

Advertising	\$124
Newsletters	\$1051
Postage/Delivery	\$236
Reunion Expenses	\$7426
Total Expense	\$9266
Net Income	\$2609

### FY 2014 Assets

Total Assets	\$6629
Liabilities	\$0
Net Equity	\$6629

### 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.

## Diary of a Reunion (cont)

ing as most participants went on a dinner cruise on the Columbia. My wife and I stayed back at the reception room and took care of things so Mike and Lorri Robertson could go on the cruise. I can't say enough about all they do for this organization. Without them we probably wouldn't have the Reeves Association. Charles Elkins and I did a little picking and grinning with my guitar and we all left Willie's moonshine alone.

Sunday was the business meeting which I am sure others will expand on. The usual band of officers were rail roaded through again and it was decided that the next reunion

in 2016 will be in San Antonio, TX.

The closing banquet was impressive. The KIA/MIA ceremony by Kurt Stuvengen (BT1) was very moving as was the new bell ceremony for those Reeves sailors lost since the last reunion. Eric Wenzel presented a power point presentation on the work his committee is doing working for military veterans benefits. The banquet is always a bitter sweet part of the reunion as the enjoyment of being with old and new friends comes to an end. We hope to see them again and more of you at the next event in San Antonio.

## A Donut Treat

Early on Saturday morning, Tony Borba got out of bed and drove down to VooDoo donuts in Downtown Portland. Earlier in the year, when Tony registered for the reunion, he contacted VooDoo Donuts for a contribution toward our reunion. VooDoo agreed to provide a matching box of donuts. Over time, that grew so that Tony purchased a dozen donuts and VooDoo contributed three more dozen. In addition, they constructed a huge donut center piece shown in the photo below.



This is the VooDoo Donut logo. There are two locations in Portland, one location in Eugene, Oregon, and one in Denver, Colorado.



The center-piece donut provided by VooDoo Donuts on Saturday morning.

The confections were an immediate hit. Those who didn't eat one immediately, wrapped it inside a napkin for a late morning snack. By Sunday morning, there were about four left, and these were quickly claimed. No one wanted to cut into the center piece, so it was passed on to the USS Trout Association for their snack table.

Thanks, Tony, and thanks, VooDoo Donuts, for a great treat!

1960's (\$10) + s/h



1968—Entering Sydney Harbor

1990's (\$10) + s/h



1992—Seattle Sea Fair Festival

Mousepads (\$10) + s/h



### Ship's Store

1970's (\$10) + s/h



1975—Departing Pearl Harbor

Challenge Coins (\$14) + s/h



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



1980's (\$10) + s/h



1985—Enroute Yokosuka from Australia

Reunion ball caps (\$10 each) + s/h

2009—San Diego

2010—Chicago

2012—Charleston

2014—Portland



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



### 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: \$1 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

## 2014 Association Meeting—Minutes

Eric Wenzel, our secretary, compiled minutes from our business meeting on Sunday, 12 October 2014. Those minutes are summarized here:

The business meeting was convened at 1500 by our president, Tom Bailey. After introducing the Association Officers, Tom called upon treasurer, Mike Robertson, to bring us up to date.

The Association is in good financial shape. The biggest expense is the quarterly newsletter. An average of 400 hard copy newsletters are produced annually. Printing and postage costs average \$800 per year.

Another 400 newsletters are sent by email every quarter. Using an online mailing service costs \$54 per year. Maintaining the web site costs \$100 per year.

If 50 shipmates renew annually, income is sufficient to cover expenses. In 2014, there were 66 new and renewed shipmates.

The Association fronts deposits and merchandise purchases for reunions. Income from reunion registrations and tours reimburse advanced funds and pay for hotel expenses. Reunions do not cost the Association anything.

Use of PayPal for dues and ship's store purchases was suggested. At this time, costs are prohibitive for our association size. However, alternative solutions are being explored.

In discussing the next reunion, the Association confirmed that reunions will be held every two years, and that Columbus Day weekend is the preferred time frame. The four day format was also confirmed.

After discussing Branson, New Orleans and San Antonio, the Association selected San Antonio for the 2016 reunion, dates 6 October thru 9 October.

A strong request for periodic articles, memories and photos was requested for the newsletter.

The Association discussed reducing printing and mailing costs for the newsletter. It was decided that members not current in renewing their dues would not receive a printed copy of the newsletter. To this effect, a courtesy postcard will be sent to those shipmates who are not current.

Shipmates discussed the three different accounts on Facebook. In order to merge the accounts, the administrators would have to agree, and that isn't likely to happen.

A discussion of dues and membership fees. It was recommended that the Association institute a Life Membership based on a sliding scale similar to the one used by the VFW. A motion was made to institute Life Membership which was voted upon and passed,

It was also suggested that a discount for early payment of dues be considered. This option will be ex-

plored.

By unanimous voice vote, the positions of President (Tom Bailey), Vice President (Gerry Hines), Secretary (Eric Wenzel), and Treasurer (Mike Robertson) will continue unchanged.

The passing of shipmate Ron Redfield in 2013 left a vacancy in our Member-At-Large position. Gary Hinthorne was nominated for the position which was seconded. After accepting the nomination, Gary was voted into that position.

Charles and Nancy Elkins will continue to serve as co-Chairs for the Publicity Committee, essential for advertising our reunions.

During open discussion, Eric Wenzel pointed out that the USS REEVES (CG-24) ship's bell is available for check-out from the Navy Historical Society for use during reunion activities. This will be pursued for the 2016 San Antonio reunion.

A follow-on discussion ensued for the Brown Water/Blue Water service issues by the Veterans Administration. At this time, the Association has copies of REEVES deck logs that prove that the ship anchored in Danang Harbor on 7 and 8 July 1966. Building a notarized "proof" package with letters of affirmation for DOD is the next step.

The meeting adjourned at 1640.

*(A copy of the complete document is available on the website.)*

## America's War Horse—Sgt. Reckless

The young filly showed great promise every time she ran a race. Many believed she would be a prize winner. But she never got the chance. In June 1950, North Korean troops stormed across the border between South Korea in a surprise attack that changed life on the Korean Peninsula. It also brought the sport of horseracing to a standstill. With no races to run, owning racehorses became a financial liability for their owners. Like many others, she was abandoned at the Seoul racetrack. A young Korean stable boy named Kim Huk Moon took over feeding, watering and grooming her. In October 1952 some U.S. Marines from the 5th Marines' Anti-Tank Company's Recoilless Rifle Platoon discovered the young filly and decided she'd be valuable for carrying supplies into combat. The platoon leader, Lt. Eric Pederson, paid \$250 of his own money to buy her. The only reason Kim sold his beloved horse was so he could buy an artificial leg for his older sister, Chung Soon, who lost her leg in a land mine accident.

Because she would be transporting the Recoilless Rifle into battle, the Marines decided she be named Reckless. During her training, she quickly became a unit mascot and allowed to roam freely through camp. On cold nights she slept in the Marine's tents. She was known to eat anything and everything. Among her favorites were scrambled eggs and pancakes in the morning washed down with a fresh cup of coffee. She also loved sweets of all kind: cakes, cookies, even the hard chocolate bars that came with C-rations. When she got bored she was known to eat blankets, hats, even poker chips. But her bravery under fire and her innate intelligence in numerous battles made her a hero. Learning each supply route after only a couple of trips, she often traveled to deliver supplies to the troops on her own, without benefit of a handler.

One of Reckless' finest hours came during the Battle of Outpost Vegas in March of 1953. This particular battle, according to one writer "was to bring a cannonading and bombing seldom ex-

perienced in warfare ... twenty-eight tons of bombs and hundreds of the largest shells turned the crest of Vegas into a smoking, death-pocked rubble." Reckless was in the middle of all of it. In a single day during the battle, she made 51 trips on her own, carrying over 9,000 pounds of ammunition and walked over 35 miles through open rice paddies ignoring the sounds of battle as artillery exploded around her. When she returned to the ammo dump, she often carried wounded soldiers down the mountain to safety, unload them, get reloaded with ammo, and off she would go back up to the guns and the din of battle. She also provided a shield for several Marines who were trapped trying to make their way up to the front line. Wounded twice, she didn't let that stop or slow her down from carrying out her duties.

She was given the battlefield rank of corporal in 1953, and then a battlefield promotion to sergeant in 1954, several months after the war ended. She also became the first horse in the Marine Corps known to have participated in an amphibious landing. Her military decorations include two Purple Hearts, Good Conduct Medal, Presidential Unit Citation with star, National Defense Service Medal, Korean Service Medal, United Nations Service Medal, Navy Unit Commendation, and Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation, all of which she wore proudly on her red and gold blanket. Sgt. Reckless was a household name in the 1950s earning her media coverage that rivaled attention bestowed on other famous animals, including Lassie and Seabiscuit. Her wartime service record, featured in *The Saturday Evening Post*, and *LIFE* magazine, recognized her as one of America's 100 all-time heroes, alongside George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.

When the war ended in 1953, she was retired and brought to the United States to live out her retirement years at Camp Pendleton. Her popularity continued where she made appearances on television and participated in the United States Marine Corps birthday ball. A horse so heroic during the Ko-

rean War, she was officially promoted to staff sergeant in 1959 by Gen. Randolph M. Pate, the Commandant of the Marine Corps. Seventeen hundred Marines marched in her honor during her promotional ceremony. Sgt. Reckless was well cared for and treated as a VIP during her time at Camp Pendleton where she produced four foals. She developed arthritis in her back as she aged and injured herself on July 13, 1968, by falling into a barbed wire fence. She died under sedation while her wounds were being treated. At the time of her death, she was estimated to be 19 or 20 years old.

Although so famous in her day, she is mostly forgotten by history. Author and screenwriter Robin Hutton is doing something about that. Upon hearing the horses' story for the first time, she got goose bumps. She is quoted as having said, "When I first heard of her story eight years ago, the first thing that came to my mind was why haven't I heard of this horse before? She should have had at least three movies done on her. But when I Googled her name, there was nothing on her. It was a travesty and I started writing a screenplay and later the book 'Sgt. Reckless America's War Horse.'" The book is due out in August. Documentary filmmaker Victoria Racimo is marketing it to HBO. Racimo's short documentary of Sgt. Reckless was shown at the 2014 Kentucky Derby and together with Hutton they succeeded in having a race named and run in her honor during the 8th race at Kentucky Oaks. Robin Hutton also led the effort to see Sgt. Reckless immortalized in bronze. "I just thought she needed to have a monument so people would forever know who she was," Hutton said.

A statue by sculptor Jocelyn Russell of Sgt. Reckless carrying ammunition shells and other combat equipment was unveiled on Friday, July 26, 2013, in Semper Fidelis Memorial Park at the National Museum of the Marine Corps, one day before the 60th anniversary of the Korean War. There is a lock of her tail hair in the base of the statue.

## VA Patients Comms

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert A. McDonald has directed all Veterans Affairs (VA) healthcare and benefits facilities to continue to hold quarterly town hall events to improve communication with, and hear directly from, Veterans nationwide. This follows the recent completion of town halls at these facilities held between August and the end of September of this year. "Every one of our medical centers and regional benefits offices held town hall meetings around the

country in August and September, but we have more listening to do to better serve Veterans and their families," said Secretary McDonald. "As part of our Road to Veterans Day, VA is taking a hard look at everything we do in order to reorganize the Department around the needs of Veterans. Direct feedback from Veterans, employees and stakeholders is an important component of that Roadmap, and key to improving our services and operations," Secretary McDonald added.

Details of events at each location will be forthcoming from local facilities. Additionally, VA is looking to continue to improve the town hall notification process, making sure we have the benefit of extensive local input. In addition to Veterans and their families, the quarterly meetings are open to Congressional stakeholders, Veterans Service Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations and other community partners. [Source: VA News Release Oct. 08. 2014 ]

## Passed Shipmates

Edward Looney retired Deputy, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, age 67, passed away on October 3, 2014.

Ed served on REEVES from 1966 to 1967 as a BM2. He joined REEVES just before forward deployment to Yokosuka.

After separation from the Navy, he joined the Sheriff's Department on September 19, 1969 and retired from the Homicide Bureau on November 2, 2002. Services were held at Holy Name of Mary Catholic Church, San Dimas, CA on Friday October 10, 2014.

BM2 Ed Looney is listed on the USS Reeves website on the Remembrance Page.

**"If ye break faith - we shall  
not sleep" IRISH  
PROVERB**



## Health Care Reform (cont)

*(Continued from page 4)*

of TurboTax, there are 30 reasons you may be exempt from the tax penalty if you don't have health insurance. These are the top reasons for a tax exemption:

- Affordability. The lowest-priced health insurance available would cost more than 8 percent of your household income.
- Medical expenses. You had medical expenses you couldn't afford to pay in the last 24 months, which resulted in significant debt.
- Cancellation. You had insurance that was canceled, and the other plans were unaffordable.
- Utility shut-off. You received a notice for shut-off from a utility company.
- Difficulty signing up. You had issues signing up through your state or federal marketplace.

There are several other reasons you MAY be exempt from the tax penalty. According to Intuit: Exemptions are also available because of homelessness, incarceration, eviction, foreclosure, bankruptcy, the death of a close family member or an experience with domestic violence. Members of Native American tribes also are not required to

sign up for health insurance. If you are uninsured and want to find out if you could be exempt from the tax penalty, you can in only a few minutes with the 'TurboTax Exemption Check' at <https://turbotax.intuit.com/health-care/exemptions/#!/exemption-home#!/%2Fexemption-home>. You can also find information about tax exemptions at <https://www.healthcare.gov/>.

## 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)

Editor/Publisher RAO Bulletin

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Web Access:

<http://www.veteransresources.org>,

<http://frabr245.org> or

<http://vets4vets.zymichost.com/rao.html>

## Email—continued

1966. Those pages include deck log info for anchoring in Da Nang harbor are attached. These can also be seen at <http://www.usreeves.net/archives.html> Now, we need to get them notarized by the issuing office. And so it goes...

Good luck and please keep me informed about your progress. (BTW, unless you object, I'm putting this in the next issue of the newsletter)

Mike Robertson

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Could you please check to see if my name is on the list of the USS Reeves crew list. I was on board from May '66 to August '68. I have been diagnosed with diabetes, heart disease and terminal fatty liver disease all of which could be a result of agent orange. I am hoping to get some answers soon as I don't know how long I have left.

Thank you for your help.

David Holtz (RD3 1965-1968)

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My response:

David,

I have you on a copy of the EDVR roster of crewmembers who deployed to WESTPAC in June 1966 when the ship changed homeports from Long Beach to Yokosuka, Japan. I also have a copy of the deck log for the dates that REEVES anchored in Da Nang harbor (7-8 Jul 1966). I do not have a list of Radarmen who made the trip up to Monkey Mountain. I don't think a list still exists to prove that fact. However, one of the senior RDs, Don Carunchio, aboard the ship at that time is also a member of the Association and has the best memory of those two days.

Another Association member, CAPT Dwight Agnew, was aboard for the Da Nang visit. He was the Weapons Officer at the time, and probably made the trip up Monkey Mountain, too. As the remaining senior Naval officer from that period, I am working on getting his endorsement for our Agent Orange status.

If I can be of further help, please don't hesitate to ask.

Mike Robertson

---

Hello my name is Mark Looney, retired BMC USN.

I have been researching the Reeves. My brother was aboard 65-66. I cannot find him on any of your rosters.

Ed just passed away from a horrible fight with Cancer. It is the type that could have been from Agent orange.

I was wondering if you have any other rosters, that I could check??

any help you can give me would be great.

w/r Mark Looney.

---

My response:

Boats,

You are right, I don't have anything on my rosters about Ed Looney. However, I will be checking with shipmates of that time about your brother's time on board. Can you send me his birth and death dates, rate when he left the Reeves, and place of death. Once I can verify all this information, I will post him on our Remembrance page.

I have to tell you that someone at the Portland reunion heard about Ed's passing and spread the word with those of us from the 60's and 70's.

---

Further response

I have the Enlisted Distribution Verification Report dated 31 Mar 1966. Ed isn't on it. I'm assuming that he was a rated Bos'n when he reported to REEVES and that he would have reported shortly before the ship deployed to WESTPAC in June 1966. If so, Ed would have been onboard when the REEVES spent daylight hours on 7 and 8 July 1966 anchored in Danang Harbor. In itself, that would be sufficient to be exposed to Agent Orange either as an airborne agent or ingested into the ship's evaps

at anchorage.

The purpose of the two day visit was command and control briefings at Monkey Mountain for selected officers and radarmen. If Ed was part of the boat crew that took these people ashore, or was on boat runs for mail and supply, and he set foot on the ground at the landing, then he would definitely qualify for exposure to Agent Orange.

REEVES is not yet included on the list of blue water ships that were exposed to Agent Orange. We are working on this but are running out of live shipmates, especially officers, who can verify our presence in Danang. I have copies of the deck logs that recorded our anchorages inport. But that doesn't seem to be good enough.

Short answer: Yes, Ed was most likely exposed to Agent Orange, and his cancer may well be related. We have lost several shipmates already from cancers related to Agent Orange.

I've attached copies of the deck logs recording our time in Danang.

One more thing... While at our Portland reunion 9-12 October, Wendell Gawthorp (EMCS) spoke by phone with Boats Coward. Boats passed the information about Ed to Wendell, who passed it to the rest of us. There were several of Ed's shipmates at the reunion.

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Several years ago, I received one or two emails or phone calls each year about Agent Orange. Now, they are coming monthly.

We, as an Association, need to help our shipmates. It looks like the DAV should be the best option: Not from what I've heard. If you aren't disabled, DAV won't even talk to you. So maybe we should be working with the VFW.

Regardless, the problem for our shipmates is out of control.

Do the best that you can, shipmate!



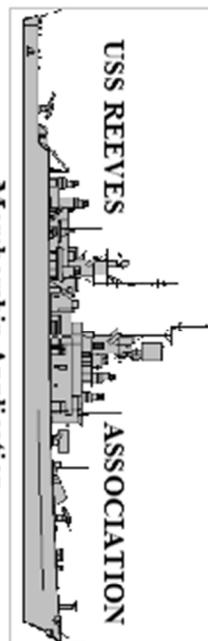
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I served on the USS REEVES (DLG-24/CG-24) as a \_\_\_\_\_ (rate/rank) from 19\_\_\_\_ to 19\_\_\_\_.

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:

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Mail application to:

USS REEVES (DLG-24/CG-24) ASSOCIATION  
 15709 N Sycamore St  
 Mead, WA 99021

For further information call or email Michael Robertson at 509-315-8107, fax 703-740-9161

More details online at: [michael.d.robertson@comcast.net](mailto:michael.d.robertson@comcast.net)  
[USS Reeves Association Website](http://www.ussreeves.net/association.html) (hyperlink)

at <http://www.ussreeves.net/association.html>