



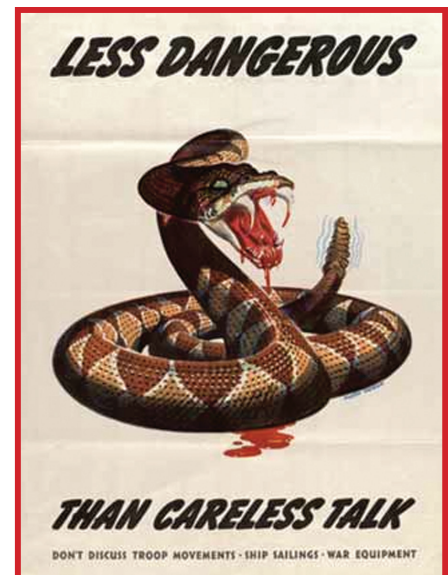
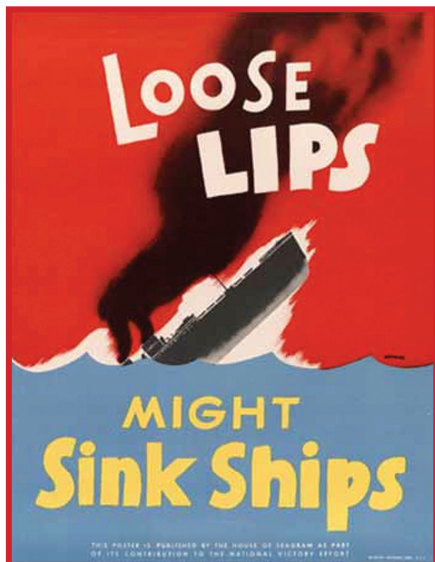
# NEWS MAGAZINE

Official Publication of the American Merchant Marine Veterans



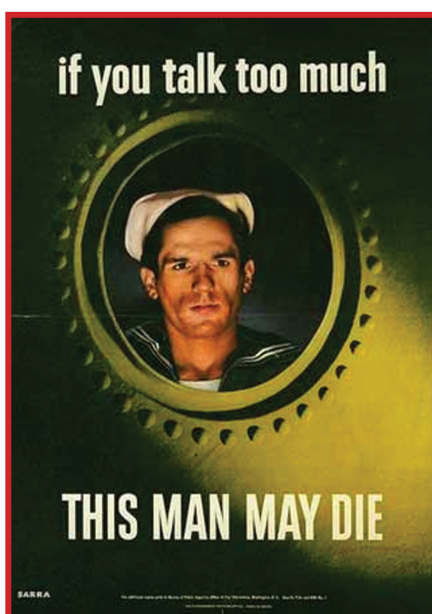
A tanker clears the Sunshine Skyway Bridge over Tampa Bay.





These images were taken from the website [www.usmm.org](http://www.usmm.org). This 700-page plus website could be considered the informational "bible" for U. S. Merchant Mariners on the Internet. It features everything you'd ever want to see from posters to memorabilia to history to updated Just Compensation legislative information to applications for DD-214 Honorable Discharges with instructions to where to buy ships pictures and everything in between.

Check out this valuable website and if you're not on the Net, have someone "surf" it for you. You'll find a great deal of historically important material. Donations to help keep this website going can be sent to T. Horodysky, c/o usmm.org at 27 Westbrook Way, Eugene, OR 97405.







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NEWS MAGAZINE

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The editor and publisher of this magazine assume no  
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# PRESIDENT'S FIRESIDE CHAT

## VETERAN'S DAY

Date: November 11, 2014

Location: PARADE REVIEWING STAND

Question:

"Where's the Merchant Marine flag?"

"The who?....."

"The Merchant Marine flag!....."

"Are you talking about the Coast Guard or the Marine Corps?....."

"No, the guys who sailed ships in WWII....."

"Maybe you mean the Oceanographic Service or Geodetic Survey....."

"No, the merchant seamen who ran the gauntlet to supply our troops....."

"Sorry! I don't know them if they mattered their flag would be here....."

AMMV Members, if you think you matter, do something about it. Just because our bodies are terminal, does not mean our history has to be.

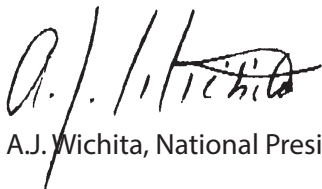
In the last five or six years you have done a terrific job in public relations with Congress. We now have a good chance of passing Just Compensation. Meantime, the combination of hundreds of thousands letters, faxes, emails, calls and news articles have given us recognition with the public we have not seen since the war.

Within our organization, veterans have offered suggestions of opening up membership so our organization can provide representation of our history in the future. Others have fought it because they fear diluting the AMMV would diminish WWII Merchant Marine Veteran standing. Keeping our original name and bringing in those our constitution presently allows would help immensely. Meanwhile, we could be turning over some operational efforts to younger people while we still have enough steam to assist in the transition.

We all know our WWII veteran's numbers will drastically diminish in the next 2 or 3 years. Since I came onboard as President we have added a few hundred new members. The Nelson Caubles continue to bring new members through Just Compensation and those from the Armed Services through our articles in the NAUS magazine. About 150 at last count.. Cindy Raymond has realized 120 renewal applications in the last half of February from her work with previous members. Reports from across the nation have shown increased activity from individuals in our membership drive. Our members have answered the call and we are on the-grow.

The future of your history matters!

Thank you and God bless you all.



A.J. Wichita, National President



**NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

**AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS**

*Serving America in Peace and War*

## NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

My Fellow Mariner Veterans:

As you read this there will be less than a month left before our National Convention in May to be held in Tampa, Florida. At this time I would like to relate to you what has happened to me since I assumed the post of National V.P. President Wichita has for some reason declined to take me into his confidence. Before I left for the mini convention in Branson, Mo., I received a copy of the Constitution and By Laws that he and his secret committee wants us to vote on in May.

Section 208 of our Constitution and By Laws states that any committee will be chaired by our President and he has to make available the names of the committee members to our National Magazine so that the membership know who these persons are. I refer to President Wichita and the secret committee because I was denied the names of these members. I was told that these names would be kept secret until after the National elections.

Under section 208, President Wichita in doing this has violated the Constitution and By Laws that he has sworn to uphold when he took his oath of office. In 21 years that I have been a member of the AMMV this is the first time that I have heard of a secret committee. What is this committee afraid of that we the dues paying membership cannot be told the names until after the elections.

Through my sources I have been able to get the names of some of the committee members which are: President Wichita, Lawrence W. Kerkow, Ph D., Bill Marker NW Regional V.P., Don Trimbath member of the Government Affairs Committee and a candidate for National Vice President in the May elections.

Under Article IV Membership – In the proposed changes to the AMMV Constitution & By Laws you have to be very careful when you read this Article. Go down to E which states that any uniformed U.S. Armed service with a DD 214 is eligible. NOW READ BELOW THIS IN LIGHT ITALICS “Any and all civilians etc. VETERANS this sentence is what will turn our organization into a social club.

From the Editor Sindy Raymond's column where she states that she is personally proud to be a member of the AMMV, I hate to rain on her parade, but under the present day constitution and by-laws you must be a Veteran with an honorabledischargeandaDD-214tobeamember. However, she is eligible to be an Associate Member with no voting rights. The same goes for the 2.5 members who are non veterans. Unless she or the others are family members such as wives, sisters, brothers etc, they then can become Associate Members. If this new constitution is passed, then anyone off the street can join our Organization - until then they are Associate members.

My advice to those of you who have gotten in touch with me is vote “NO” to these proposed changes. Mr. Joe Bracken a former past V.P. has proposed a counter proposal. This is the one I recommend we vote for. Mr. Bracken's proposal should have been printed in the latest issue of the News Magazine. He followed procedure - he sent a copy to Mr Rex Farley who is the committee chairperson for the Constitution and By Laws. He also sent a copy to our editor, Sindy Raymond. For whatever reason this was not printed in the winter issue. Mr. Bracken called Sindy and he was told by her that “His proposal must have gotten lost in the mail”, how convenient.

Since I have been V.P. besides finding out that we have a secret committee I have been subjected to censorship by our President. In May 2008 Capt. Charles Dana Gibson gave a damaging testimony to our Veterans Service Committee. He then wrote an article where he tells how he and his wife while in Washington, D.C. visited the WW II memorial and they got to see our seal alongside the seals of the Armed Forces. In his opinion we should take heart that we are Veterans and that our seal is there at the memorial and that the just compensation that we seek is “Unrealistic Monetary Gains”, these were his exact words. When I read this I was incensed and then and there I wrote a letter to him which many of you have read - wherein I told him that he had dishonored the memory of all the Mariners who died in WW II.

My rebuttal letter was printed in the Gulfstream Log which was sent to all National & Regional Officers and all the Chapters. However, the copy I sent to Sindy Raymond our editor was not printed as per instruction by our President A. J. Wichita GENTLEMEN THIS IS CENSORSHIP and has no place in our organization.

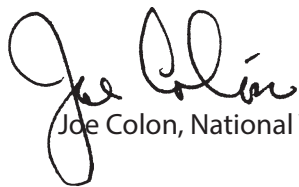
Incidentally, I received a copy of an email which was sent to President Wichita by our National Secretary Mr Nelson Cauble in which he advised our President to not print Joe's letter.

Going back to Joe Bracken's counter proposal which was remailed to our editor I want you all to know that our Constitution says that any proposal for changes must be submitted by January 15th & printed in the News at least 60 days before the National Convention. Remember that Joe Bracken's proposal was lost in the mail – however, the Gulfstream Chapter under instructions from me as National V.P. printed Mr. Bracken's proposal and inserted it in every issue of the Log which we previously said gets mailed throughout the U.S.

So my Veteran Members this is what has been going on for the past 18 months. You have a choice come May – You can vote to stay as a Veterans Organization or you can vote for Pres. Wichita and become a social club.

I am asking you for your vote and I will make this promise – as your President I will uphold the oath of office that I will take. There will be no secret committees, there will be no censorship. We will go back to being what AMMV has always been "An Organization of WW II Merchant Seamen who served their country with honor and were granted the right to be called Veterans.

For God and Country,



Joe Colon, National Vice President

The late Bruce Felknor, author of *The U.S. Merchant Maine at War 1775-1945* and retired executive editor of *Encyclopedia Britannica*, wrote: "The merchant mariners, of course, manned the troopships and freighters and tankers that delivered most of the men and all the supplies and weapons of war across U-boat-filled seas."

The most frequent questions I get from readers of my history page at the merchant marine website ([usmm.org/felknor](http://usmm.org/felknor)) begin like this:

"My father was in the merchant marine in World War II, but he never talked about it. How can I find out what he did?" My best answer is, read this book. Some of the stories are spare, almost taciturn (like Daddy); others are richly detailed. But when you have spent a leisure hour or two sampling its

accounts, tasting its memories, you will have a fine grasp on the world in which he helped to deliver all the goods of war that kept our country free. And on the diversity of the men who shared his risks every time they left port."



By purchasing a copy of our first person accounts written by Merchant Mariners and US Navy Armed Guard from all over the world for your family, friends and neighbors, helps us put our mark on history by informing the reader of the volunteer's true accomplishments.

Books will be on sale at the National Convention for \$25.00 (soft cover) or \$35.00 (hard cover) or on-line: [www.trafford.com](http://www.trafford.com)

Questions -- Contact Al D'Agostino 817.299.0833 or [dag299@tx.rr.com](mailto:dag299@tx.rr.com)



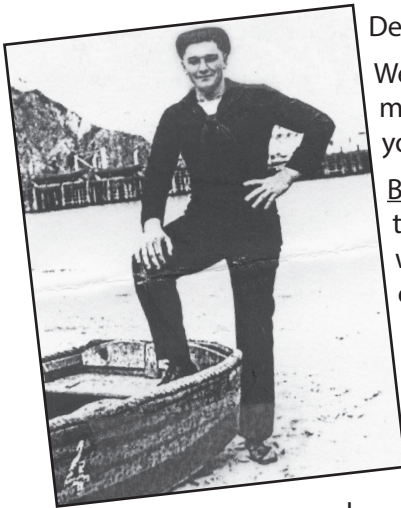


**NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

**AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS**

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## NATIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT



Dear Mariners and Friends:

Well, here I stand with one foot in the boat and one foot on shore waiting for the members at the convention in Tampa to decide if I sign articles for another "trip" as your National Secretary.

**BUT, NOW IT'S TIME!** ... time for all of us to make important decisions regarding the operation of our AMMV. I urge you to consider carefully all the issues that we will be voting on, and make your decisions based on what is the best for the future of our AMMV.

**IT'S TIME!** ... to once again recognize those who have worked so hard this past two years to make this ol' ship float. With A.J. at the helm, we have seen strong leadership and a dedicated, hardworking president, and right down the line to Chapter Presidents and officers who have worked and struggled to keep their chapters going, and to all those that you never see, and never have met but have done an outstanding job. I say Well Done!

**IT'S TIME!** ... to salute the progress we have made in gaining new members for AMMV. In spite of our aging members, we still are recruiting new ones from all across the country. This is due to the hard work of our President A.J., Dr. Larry Kerkow, our fantastic Cindy Raymond, and Perry Adams, and all those who never give up the battle. There are hundreds of others all across our country, far too many to ever name here.

**IT'S TIME!** ... now to look ahead and make the commitment that we will work together in harmony and friendship, leaving the negatives on the shore and let's sail this next two years with calm sailing and good friends at our side.

**IT'S TIME!** ... to recognize our Just Compensation leader Ian Allison and the terrific job he has done and is doing for all of us. Such dedication is hard to find and we salute him for his efforts. We miss Henry VanGemert and welcome as the new co-chairman Gerry Starnes. Let's get behind Ian and Gerry, work harder and push this thing over the top once and for all.

**IT'S TIME!** ... now to head to Tampa, Florida for the convention! Have you made your reservations? I have, and Shirley and I look forward to meeting you, shaking your hand, and being with you including one day aboard the American Victory. Get your reservations in. Let's do it together. Remember, together we can, and together we have made a difference!

Sincerely,

Nelson Cauble, National Secretary



**NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

**AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS**

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## FROM THE EDITOR

This has been a challenging, interesting issue to put together. If interesting means shuddling under my desk waiting for the fireworks to finish, then it was interesting. All of the divergent and differing opinions certainly prove that although our bodies may be aging, sometimes our mental capacities may not age as quickly. The upcoming elections at the AMMV National Convention in Tampa, Florida in May should be as interesting as it gets.

Included in this issue of the Spring AMMV News Magazine is a member's ballot that you need to mark and send to your Chapter CEO as soon as possible. Members-at-Large will find mailing instructions on the ballot. We are facing a major decision in this election as to the future of the American Merchant Marine Veterans organization and that is about membership. Keep in mind that if you want to let the organization and Merchant Marine history die away peacefully, you can always vote no on everything on the ballot. Let's NOT do that and keep the AMMV a viable organization. Remember, EVERY VOTE COUNTS.

And speaking of the National Convention, Morris Harvey, Chairman of the event, reports that the Convention fee is frozen at \$75.00. If you haven't already signed up, you'll find complete information in the back of this issue. I, for one, have my deck shoes packed already for the cruise on the SS American Victory.

Richard Mallett, AMMV National Historian, is compiling a directory of permanent Merchant Marine memorials and is asking everyone to send information on same to him as soon as possible, May 10th, at least. Richard's contact information can be found in the front pages of this issue. Just yesterday, I received a fax from Armand Dupont of Bedford, NH, showing a picture of the memorial he personally paid for at the State of New Hampshire's Veterans Cemetery in Boscowen, NJ. Thank you, Mr. Dupont, and I will certainly be sending the information on to Richard Mallett. Please, everyone, do the same.

USPS delivery of the Winter AMMV News was pathetically slow and I can only apologize for something that I had no control over. I may just fire the U.S. Post Office if they do that again for this issue. And please keep information coming to me. My address is P.O. Box 186, Ferndale, CA 95536-0186, phone number (800) 545-4173, fax number (707) 786-4557 and email [saaren@frontiernet.net](mailto:saaren@frontiernet.net).

See you in Tampa,

  
Sindy Raymond, Editor  
AMMV News Magazine

## HELP WANTED

After proudly volunteering for 18 years to serve members of the AMMV as National Treasurer, CAL BERRY hopes you can give him a break at the oars.

Give President A.J. Wichita a call at 972 231 5464 or email him at: [ajwichita@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ajwichita@sbcglobal.net)

(All calls and information confidential)

## CAMAL REPORT from the Webmaster



This month was abundant with AMMV activities including the signing up of two dozen new Members at Large; that's nearly 200 the past 12 months. It's gratifying to me to receive so many support letters from such talented and concerned individuals.

Here is an Early Bulletin circulating among fellow veterans: MYTH: The U.S. Merchant Marine of World War II only operated the ships, while the U.S. Navy Armed Guard manned the guns when the ship was threatened by air or sea!

FACT: The U.S. Maritime Service of WWII was a trained armed force and the vessels were armed warships. Naval Armed Guard and Merchant Mariners worked as a team manning the guns in a life or death fight defending the ships delivering war supplies to the invasion front.

Additional Note: The U.S. Maritime Service Recruiting Poster on file at the National Archives reads "Join the Fighting Men of the U.S. Merchant Marine."

Here is a CAMAL Good News Bulletin: There is a possibility of two new AMMV chapters in the making as a result of CAMAL Pods getting organized locally. Congratulations and Good Luck!

The AMMV Winter 2009 News Magazine was notably well done. I've heard that many MALS from across the nation have received their copies, and the feedback is very good. The News Magazine offers RVPs and Chapters the opportunity to post articles in it to inform other members of activities of their organization. Please treat it as the Official Publication of AMMV and if you wish to participate, you need only to contact the Editor or myself if you have an article/s of common interest to all of us. Contact me anytime with your comments and/or suggestions for items to be included in our March CAMAL Letter.

The proposed Constitution & By-Laws revision appears in the Winter 2009 AMMV News Magazine and among the revisions is a section to acknowledge MALS as an important element of AMMV and another is to recognize with full membership the many ladies who support us by recording meetings, serving as chapter officers and many other tedious tasks they do for the good of AMMV. Full Membership for women, in my opinion, has been neglected far too long and passage of the proposed C&BL at the Tampa National Convention is necessary to correct a long overdue wrong.

The National Convention in Tampa, Florida, May 14-17 2009 is a must-attend AMMV meeting to be on your schedule. See details in the Winter 2009 AMMV News Magazine or contact me or Morris Harvey (morris@xtalwind.net) for additional details. See you there!

The AMMV will conduct an Election of National Officers at the May 2009 National Convention. We will be voting to elect officers for the 2009-2011 term of office. Officer Candidates filed to date are: A.J. Wichita, Incumbent President for reelection; Joe Colon, National Vice President has filed for President; Don Trimbath, Government Affairs Chairman has filed for National Vice President; Nelson Cauble, National Secretary Incumbent, has filed for reelection to the same office. No one has filed to date to fill the National Treasurer's Office. Emeritus Cal Berry has so graciously stayed on until a replacement can be found. Candidate's opinions and positions will be published as they are received.

Do you have a permanent veteran's memorial located in your area which honors U.S. Merchant Mariners? If so, contact me for additional material to have it registered in The U.S. Merchant Marine Directory.

It makes me proud to see the progress AMMV has made these past two years. Many of you have participated and I hope that my small contribution has served for the betterment of the AMMV membership. I am reminded of the old cigarette commercial "You've come a long way, baby."

The Alamo Chapter, National Association for Uniformed Services (NAUS) consisting of nearly 1,000 members in the San Antonio area is looking for a new skipper to take the helm. My name is on a very short list to assume command. I believe that my experience with AMMV would be beneficial to this big brother organization and a final decision will be made after the AMMV National Convention in May. Presently, I'm campaigning for A.J. Wichita to be reelected and the Constitution & By-Laws revisions to be accepted by the membership.

This is the way I see things. If you have any comments about this month's letter you know where to find me. Remember, "You do your best and I'll do the rest."

Sincerely,

Lawrence W. Kerkow, Ph.D.  
AMMV Director of Communication  
& Webmaster



# Why Persistence Pays Off!

by Shirley Cauble



Nelson and Robert Cauble visit the Oregon Fallen War Heroes Memorial

This is the result of months of sticking to your guns to the end. When Nelson and I visited Rogue Valley Chapter some months ago, President Gene Jerrigan was showing the group the newspaper article that showed the drawing of this proposed memorial. It was a beautiful drawing, with six sections for the service branches, but the Merchant Marine was not one of the six. That spot had been given to the National Guard. The reaction of the group was that "we've been screwed again!" We decided to take it up as a challenge and see what we could do.

Our first letter told them that we were sure this was "an oversight and as soon as it was brought to their attention, it would be corrected". Their reply was that we were too late, the plans were approved and all was ready. Our second letter said "it's not too late, all it is right now is a drawing on paper, no ground has been broken and you don't have your grant money yet." From that point, many back and forth letters and replies were sent, with all of our copies going to all parties involved including to the newspaper reporter of the original article (whom, after calling Nelson, printed another article), to the VFW who were co-chairman, to the architect, who opted to stay neutral and to Oregon State Representative Dennis Richardson, chairman of the memorial project. Later, letters were sent to our U. S. Senators and U. S. Representatives.

Rep. Richardson asked then if we might possibly have a list of Oregon casualties of WWII (Hmm, could this have been a trick question that we would reply "Of course not, how would we have that?") to which we replied that we did indeed have such a list and promptly sent it to him. We explained that our list not only included the names of the

80-plus casualties, but their ship, their job on the ship, and the home town and also the Oregon Merchant Marine POWs. We pointed out to him the two names on the list that were lost on the ship Jean Nicolet, and said there was another crewmember of that ship but his name was not on the casualty list, that was the last survivor of the Nicolet, and we suggested that Rep. Richardson call him, as he lives there in Medford. Ask Bill Flury if those two Oregon men lost on that ship are not worthy of being remembered on the memorial.

We fed them much information including the picture of the National WWII memorial clearly showing our emblem along with the others, and asked for an explanation as to why Central Point, Oregon should do less!

After that they asked for a meeting and we drove the two hours to get there and spent another two hours with the two co-chairmen and "fed" them some more information and documents. The first words from Mr. Richardson to Nelson were "I am sorry. We didn't know!" Nelson's reply, "That doesn't surprise me, but what does surprise me is that you would admit it!" From that point they asked questions, we gave answers, and shoved more information at them including a copy of the book "At All Costs". They told us that we had given them a real education and as a result we were included equally with the others with emblem, flag and recognition.

Gene Jerrigan was invited to represent the Merchant Marine at not only the groundbreaking ceremony but the dedication of the monument. Nelson's brother Bob and his wife Janell were with us a few days ago and we took them to see the monument. It is beautiful and we are proud to be there at Central Point. Persistence pays off!

## **Resolution and Proposals to be Considered at the AMMV National Convention, May, 2009 in Tampa, FL**

*Passed by those attending the Dennis A. Roland Chapter meeting held at Midland Park, NJ on 2/24/09 and submitted by Hank Kaminski, President. This Mandate-to-Act is to be considered a request to the AMMV National office.*

### **RESOLUTION:**

Mariners involved in supporting military operations after WWII have never been afforded veterans status. The National office is directed to exert all of its interests and power to propose and support National legislation that recognizes these mariners as veterans on parity with those of the other services.

### **RATIONALE:**

The sacrifice and service of American mariners in support of military operations has been overlooked and unrecognized and needs to be addressed with a strong united front. These newly recognized veterans will serve to swell the ranks of the AMMV and continue our proud traditions and history.

*Presented by Joe Bracken, Past National Vice President, Ocala Chapter. This proposal is to be considered as a counter proposal to the National's proposed changes to the AMMV Constitution and to refer to ARTICLE III – OUR PURPOSE IS. Language changes in bold type.*

### **RESOLUTION:**

D. To publicize the services of the American Merchant Marine Seamen in World War II and gain recognition for the services and sacrifices of Korean, Vietnam **and Mideast Wars as recognized by the Veterans Administration.**

### **RATIONALE:**

National wants to eliminate "Gaining Recognition for Korean and Vietnam Mariners" which has been in our Constitution since it was first introduced in 1987. I propose to keep it intact adding Mideast Wars.

*Presented by Joe Bracken, Past National Vice President, Ocala Chapter. This proposal is to be considered a counter proposal to the National's proposed changes to the AMMV Constitution and to refer to ARTICLE IV: - MEMBERSHIP – ELIGIBILITY. Language changes in bold type.*

ELIGIBILITY – The following persons are eligible for membership in the corporation.

- Applicants must submit proof of service in the American Merchant Marine at any time. Or on any allied countries ships carrying allied cargo in war time.
- Certificate of Discharge from ocean voyages (foreign or coastal) or inland waters.
- Members of U. S. Maritime Service (Active or inactive including Academy Cadets/)
- Members of U. S. Public Health Service who were engaged in the treatment of U. S. mariners.
- Armed Guards serving on U. S. Merchant Marine vessels.
- Members of any uniformed United States Armed Services with a DD For 214
- **Widows of members in good standing.**

### **The following persons are eligible for associate membership in the American Merchant Marine Veterans Corporation**

- **Wives, children, grandchildren and ancestors of members in good standing**
- **Any and all person who have the desire and interest to support the purpose of the American Merchant Marine industry. Associated members shall be held to 20% of the membership.**
- **Honorary membership may be offered to any individual who through the Arts and Science and/or through his or her efforts has furthered the cause of the American Merchant Marine. Such membership must be approved by the Board of Directors. Honorary members pay no dues nor have a vote in membership elections or other matters.**
- **Each member shall pay National dues as prescribed in the By-Laws.**

### **RATIONALE:**

National's version will change us to a social organization. If you meet in federal, state or city's veteran's spaces or veteran's meeting halls, you might be unwelcome. This version with the addition for associate membership will prevent us from being outvoted by nonmariners and keep us as we were originally organized, Merchant Marine veterans. Vietnam and Mideast mariners are the future of our organization.



# Merchant Mariner On Honor Flight

by F.O. "Clarke" Valles  
President/CEO Colorado Chapter, AMMV

The Mission Statement of Honor Flight is: "To fly America's Veterans to Washington, D.C., to visit the memorials dedicated to honor the service and sacrifices of themselves and their friends." Their current priority is for World War II Veterans now and then Korean and Vietnam veterans. The veterans fly absolutely free and the Guardians who escort them pay their own way.

Last year Mr. Jay McMaster, Founder and President of the Rocky Mountain Honor Flight invited us to participate. Only our Bill Bowman and I applied. Bill went on their third flight a couple of months ago and I just returned from the fourth. Bill has told me how he loved it. For me, it was the most heartwarming experience of my entire life.

They hosted a Preflight orientation luncheon for us on October 10, 2009, with Major General Michael Edwards, Commander of the USAF/USA Colorado National Guard and Adjutant General for our state, as the primary speaker. Explaining why World War II was the most significant conflict for us and the entire "free world" he made a very strong case for selecting its veterans as his heroes.

On October 17th we (35 WWII veterans and 15 guardians) assembled at the airport where we were warmly greeted and organized into teams with Guardians. They handled our luggage, pushed our wheelchairs and assisted us through priority security processing.



Rocky Mountain Honor Flight

When we deplaned at Baltimore Washington International (BWI) airport, hundreds of people loudly cheered us and extended their warm hands of appreciation. They gave us a gourmet bag lunch while we waited for our shuttle bus to take us to the local Hilton Hotel. Our accommodations were very comfortable and included two queen size beds per room. We were also given red Rocky Mountain Honor Flight veteran shirts to identify us when we were visiting

the various memorials. Once settled in, we had a wonderful buffet dinner and continued socializing with our group and with other veterans that were there from various other Honor Flight chapters from across the nation.

The next morning we were bussed to Washington, D.C. to first visit the featured National World War II Memorial where we freely wandered around waiting for the arrival of the National Chairman for the Memorial, the Honorable Senator Bob Dole. We were told to meet him at the entrance of the memorial, in front of the Pacific pavilion. I was there along with many others when he arrived and very much to my surprise he came and stood next to me as he smiled for pictures and chatted with the swarming crowd, which I was told, included a total of 324 people with Honor Flight. Could it be that my USMM Veteran Cap attracted him?



Honorable Senator Bob Dole and Clarke Valles

I then seized on the opportunity to thank him and the Battle Monuments Commission for their equal recognition of the U.S. Merchant Marine. He responded that "You weren't included at first, but heck, you guys were in more danger than 90% of the rest of us". General Edwards, who was wearing his cream-colored Rocky Mountain Honor Flight Guardian shirt, accepted my camera for the picture of me with the Senator, who commented "so you've got a General taking our picture. I knew him when he was a 2nd Lieutenant". Also kidding us that Colorado was "once a part of Kansas" he asked "where are the real old guys?" "Right there" I said, pointing to Col. John Thompson, U.S. Army Air Corps (Ret.), who is 96

(continued on next page)



years old, and was a Squadron Commander at Guadalcanal when the Japanese tried to retake it in September of 1942. As I waved to him to come over, the Senator left saying "I'll just walk right over there to see him" and they had a lively conversation while we took more pictures.

I later told Col. Thompson that I had heard a Merchant Ship was intentionally beached during the attack to avoid sinking and asked if he was there then. "Oh yeah," he said, "The Japanese were really after your ships so the Marines wouldn't get the supplies. When I was there I saw that done by three different Merchant Marine ships."

After a hosted box lunch we were bussed to the Marine Corps, Seabees, Lincoln, Korean and Vietnam War Memorials. Also Signers Island, Memorial of the Lone Sailor and the Naval Heritage Center. We did not see any U.S. Merchant Marine Memorials other than at the World War II Memorial. Washington, D.C. is where people go looking for memorials and monuments, and I thought shouldn't we show them that we also were there?

At the dinner banquet that evening, Jim McLaughlin, National President of Honor Flight, told us that his inspiration is that "we the WWII vets, changed the course of history... and saved the whole world from the Axis tyranny." Mr. Matt Reses, who was introduced with an impressive list of legal credentials, cited these and other matters of significance in preserving the "free world". He included the statistics on the awesome number of lives lost which included our Merchant Marine. At the conclusion, Jay apologized to me for not having a rendition of the Armed Forces Medley, which included the Merchant Marine Hymn and jokingly offered that after it's played and we rise to applaud the others, perhaps I could hum ours. When they finished, I instead recited that part of our hymn, which says, "give us the goods and we'll deliver". I then invited all interested to get in touch with the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, N.Y. for a CD, on the occasion of President Bush's Commencement Address on June 19, 2006. This CD includes our Merchant Marine hymn. Their applause almost brought me to tears and I wish all of you could have been there!

If there ever was a group that was treated royally – it was us! They led, explained and helped every step of the way (including the pit stops). Smiles, hugs and laughter were prevalent throughout the trip. Not once did I see or hear any rancor towards me or any other Merchant Marine Veteran. In fact, it was quite the contrary. Every day there were folks who extended their hand to me and wanted to talk about the Merchant Marine in action and of troopship experiences. I also met several Armed Guard and Coast Guard veterans. One of the Guardians asked me for whatever I have that would help explain the role of U.S. Merchant Marine during World War II. I'm going to give her a DVD that I did for the

Veterans History Project.

General Edwards made the trip with us as a Guardian for his father, a World War II veteran and was a tireless helper for ALL of us. What a fine, fine gentleman he is. The same can be said for Jay McMaster and his entire Honor Flight crew. I've never been treated nicer anywhere and I shall never forget them!

When we arrived at the main concourse of the Denver International Airport we were welcomed home to the sound of a bagpipe, cheers, smiles, kisses, handshakes and thanks for a couple of hours. You would have thought we alone won World War II.

To learn about this program phone 1-937-409-8387 or visit the website at [www.honorflight.org](http://www.honorflight.org). This will bring up the official Honor Flight National Headquarters website, where you can also click on the Regional Programs to access your area. Click on Veterans Sign Up and click again on PDF Veterans Application. If you would like to volunteer or donate that is available, too.

Go for it – you've earned it!

### Did We Matter?

*You won't see many crosses for these mariners. They are in the deep, in many oceans, many seas, resting just as gallantly as their brothers in far too many well-kept cemeteries on this planet.*

*Did We Matter? Losing over 871 ships sunk, almost 9,000 warriors, one out of every 29 men lost. The greatest percentage loss of any of the service groups, after delivering over 97% of all the needed supplies to our fighting men.*

*Did We Matter? During the "D" Day invasion over 2,700 merchant ships were involved.*

*First in, last out, trying to fight back with a three-inch deck gun and a couple of twin twenties up forward. Navy gun crews still gave a damn good account of themselves. Good men, all.*

*Man, I think I can swim faster than this old tub can make way.*

*After the war, mariners were still busy transporting all the equipment and supplies still needed for the return and support of our forces. Did We Matter?*

*They are gone now, most of them. The sound of the sea is their battle hymn.*

*Now, with the average age of our mariners being in the late eighties, we are still trying to get recognition, remembrance and respect.*

*As I climb a small hill and look over the great expanse of the sea, a giant voice inside me shouts: We Did Matter!*

*On all the oceans white caps flow;  
You do not see crosses row on row.  
But those who sleep beneath the sea  
Rest in peace, for your country is free.*

Roy Mahan and crew  
High Rollers Chapter

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## To the members of the AMMV:

As President of the AMMV, this is my response to Mr. Colon's "The National Vice President's Report" mailed to various chapters and published in the Spring AMMV News Magazine.

I feel that Mr. Colon has several points that are misleading. One of the purposes of his report is to inform you of a "secret committee" as Mr. Colon refers to it. Originally, I had asked Dr. Kerkow to discuss the verbiage with a law school and then reach out to members across the nation for their input. The work was tedious for the people involved. And whether you agree with everything in the proposals or not they all should be thanked for their sincere efforts.

Mr. Colon evidently believes people are withholding something from him. Over the last 18 months, there has been a working discussion on amendments covering several points. The first effort was to make grammatical changes for better understanding of its tenets. Another is to open up the membership. Suggestions on changes were discussed at all previous conventions, regional and national.

Mr. Colon has stated "I will do everything possible to keep us a viable organization but only as veterans. If that is not possible then we will die out as veterans." Friends, you deserve more after death than a flag and a wreath of flowers for your service. You and the "Fighting Merchant Marine" of WWII need to be remembered and your service honored every patriotic day on the calendar. Someone should be there to salute your service in the Merchant Marine and to raise our flag.

Please see Mr. Bracken's proposals in this issue. He states "National (that must be the president) wants to eliminate gaining recognition for Korean and Vietnam Mariners which has been in our constitution since it was introduced in 1987." This is false. Mr. Colon takes our Editor to task because Mr. Bracken's proposals were not printed in the winter issue of the AMMV News Magazine. They would have been if Mr. Bracken had submitted them before press time.

Sindy Raymond manages the Editor's job without pay and has worked hundreds of hours with our members to help them with the material they present for publication. While taking care of this position she has also volunteered time and effort to locate hundreds of Merchant Marine veterans as members for the AMMV and activists in Just Compensation.

I am a realist and understand some veterans may feel this organization really does not matter after we are gone

and will indeed have to shut down. If we do we will provide a meaningful farewell to the AMMV, for the history we made serving our country, the remarkable efforts we made facing down Congress, for the good times we shared with our shipmates and trust God will meet us on the other side where we can meet once again with our friends.

A.J. Wichita,  
National President  
American Merchant Marine Veterans

## To all concerned:

Regarding Joe Colon's report. He states that I sent an e-mail to A.J. Wichita advising him to not print Joe's letter in the magazine. This is only partially correct. After Mr. Charles Gibson made his disgusting remarks, we were asked by President A. J. not to give Gibson the satisfaction of responding. Gibson had stated in several of his follow-up letters that he would welcome a law suit by our organization. I sent a letter to Frank Dooley that I would not respond to Gibson since I am not an attorney and knew the Frank was extremely capable of presenting our "case" in response. Joe, however, did respond and his letter has been read by him at every opportunity possible and printed all across the country in many of the chapter newsletters. It had, at the time, been read and re-read many times and had become old news 5 months after the Senate hearing. I received a letter from A.J. asking for my opinion as to Joe's request to have his letter printed in the magazine. It would have required a minimum of 3 pages and my answer to the opinion I was asked to give was that I felt the space would be better used for other reports that were new. This was in no way an attempt to censor Joe Colon, and my reasoning was only that it was too long and the news was too old to ask our readers to read again.

Nelson Cauble  
AMMV National Secretary

## To the Membership of AMMV:

The purpose of this letter is to clarify some aspects of the AMMV Constitution and By-Laws.

It clearly states in our Constitution, Article III, Paragraph D: "To publicize the services of the AMMV seamen in World War II and GAIN recognition for the service and sacrifices of Korean and Vietnam War Veterans."

A seaman, regardless of time/length of service, may be a member of the American Merchant Marine Veterans organization. I always believed that an individual who sailed and had a certificate of discharge from any voyage-

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

foreign, coastal, or inland waters-was considered a Merchant Seaman Veteran, regardless of time of service. Article IV, Paragraph A: "Applicants must submit proof of service in the American Merchant Marine, at any time, or on allied ships carrying American cargo in time of war"

The Constitution, in Article IV, Paragraph F, states: "Widows and descendants, children, grandchildren, etc. of members in good standing."

To keep the AMMV as a strictly VETERANS group, you would be denying the above membership in the AMMV because they would not have a DD214 for their service.

It is a known fact that if letters, pictures, etc. are not received by the Editor of the news magazine, they are generally printed in the next issue. This is a rule regardless of position – elected, appointed or any member.

In going over the new proposals by Dr. Kerkow in the By-Laws and Constitution, 83 items are edited revisions, 16 were no changes, and only 6 items are to be changed. This is something that should have been done YEARS ago. This has been often talked about but, as usual, never acted upon.

Our current President of the AMMV, A. J. Wichita, has been much more up-front communicating with all members than any president before him, to my recall, and that goes back to 1992.

The growth of the AMMV membership has shown a great increase under A.J.'s leadership. In conjunction with the Just Compensation Committee and National Organization of Uniformed Services, A. J. Wichita has created widespread recognition of the AMMV. He has been open to suggestions and complaints from all members – not just elected and appointed officers.

I have been Government Affairs Chairman for the last two years. Some of the things I have accomplished for the AMMV include:

Contacting the Editor of the American Legion Magazine and correcting the date of discharge which had been published in their magazine incorrectly;

Put ads in all the union news magazines in an effort to recruit merchant seamen for the AMMV;

Assisted with anything that I was called upon to do. To declare ourselves a "strictly veterans organization", one should realize that many of the present-day members of the AMMV would be excluded.

Let this organization grow because, if not, the light at the end of the tunnel will go out!

Respectfully submitted,

Donald Trimbath

Candidate for National Vice President, AMMV

## Open Letter to the Constitution & By-Laws Committee:

Gentlemen, once again you are to be commended for lending your knowledge and experience towards updating the American Merchant Marine Veterans Constitution and By-Laws.

As you now know, the completed task was published in the AMMV Winter 2009 News Magazine. There has been some resonance circulating among select members who were denied the names of those who contributed in some way to the revision.

It's important that you hear it from me, I honored my pledge to maintain committee names private until after the National Convention. By my doing so you may have avoided unnecessary harassment that goes with political campaigns.

The two years this committee of eleven individuals reviewed, tested and obtained general consensus was not always in private. Information was solicited, offered and suggested from RVP's, Chapters and members from across the nation. Everyone was invited to participate.

Your involvement, expense and contributions are greatly appreciated. I feel confident the General Membership will sanction your decisions in May 2009. From a grateful Committee Chairman, thank you.

Sincerely,

Lawrence W. Kerkow, Ph.D.

AMMV Director of Communication  
& Webmaster

## New Rule for Service-Connection

Patients with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) also known as "Lou Gehrig's disease" should be aware that the VA's new rule establishing ALS as a service-connected disease became effective September 23, 2008. That recognition provides a minimum 30% disability rating, which can be raised as the disease progresses. You can now re-apply for benefits.

While the veterans' ALS registry has been discontinued, those who served and now suffer from the disease can sign up with the Roll Call of Veterans maintained by the ALS Association. This year, a national registry for all U.S. patients, administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention was also created. (Taken from American Legion Magazine.)





# REGION REPORTS

## Northeast Region

Fellow Mariners:

Things have been pretty quiet here in the Northeast. In November we held our annual ceremony at Kingsborough College in Brooklyn, site of the former Sheepshead Bay Maritime Base. We have been assured by the director there that we will be allowed to continue having these services in the future.

While visiting the WWII Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana, I was pleased to see that they had a small Merchant Marine Veterans display. Also, our flag was alongside the other service flags. I have sent the curator the article about Battlin' Pete that was inside the front cover of the last AMMV News Magazine, along with a patch in the hope that it will be added to it. It is a great museum and my visit there brought back a lot of memories of places I have been and things I have seen during my seagoing days.

To all Members at Large in the Connecticut area, National is interested in having a chapter there. Anyone who would like to participate can contact me and I will do all I can to help. Write to Henry Cap, 550 Oak Ave., Bohemia, NY 11716-4905 or preferably by email: hcapnervp@aol.com.

I am looking forward to our Convention in Tampa and meeting all my friends who I have shared good fellowship during the years.

Yours in AMMV,  
Henry Cap  
NERVP

## Northwest Region

### Can The AMMV live on after we die?

Since 1775, our U. S. Merchant Marine has stayed alive. Its existence, however, has a history which looks like our economy with its bullish and bearish peaks and valleys. You all know that story so I won't repeat it here. While our nation's maritime health and its financial health do have a few common threads, there is one huge difference. Economic recessions and depressions often last only three to ten years. Our maritime depression has already taken its toll for sixty-three years. It continues to keep our national security at risk and has hurt our economy by losing hundreds of thousands of jobs, ranging from seamen to shipyards and other sectors of our intermodal transportation system.

Our AMMV, the U. S. Merchant Veterans group and maritime unions are the only three national entities who are both aware and care about the need for re-building our entire

maritime infrastructure. The challenge for our AMMV is, that, due to our life expectancy, in just five to ten years or so, our AMMV, in its present structure will no longer exist, since no fountain of youth has yet been found, what are we to do?

I believe the answer is obvious and imperative. We need to reach out to everyone who cares and understands the importance of our national maritime future and begin to build an organization which will carry on after we are all gone. Either we decide to do this or our legacy will die. Yes, our veteran status is very near and dear to all of us who served. However, nothing we say or do can take away our honorable discharges. Broadening our membership requirements to all who care will not destroy our veteran status. That status is a matter of law, so let us come together, while we are still able and begin to build the means to perpetuate our amazing legacy of maritime service to our great nation for all time to come.

Respectfully yours,  
Bill Marker  
NWRVP

## Tri-State Region

### An open letter to AMMV fellow members:

Dear Shipmates:

In September of 2000 I wrote an article entitled "THE CASE FOR RESTRUCTURING THE AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS." The article began ... WE ARE A DYING BREED, and went on to lay out several suggestions that might be a basis for restructuring our organization. (The article is reprinted on the following page.)

Well, here we are nine years later, fewer in numbers and still without a plan to ensure that the organization will continue to exist after we have passed on. In my proposal I asked only that consideration be given to a plan. Unfortunately, I believe my suggestions fell on deaf ears. Those few who responded opposed the plan for much the same reasons that are being voiced today.

"We are a Veteran's organization." "We can't accept anyone for membership who is not a veteran." "Our name has to include the word veteran or we will not have any possibility of passing Just Compensation or any other beneficial legislation." Gentlemen, fellow members, that is pure, unadulterated BS. There is absolutely no reason that a restructured organization could not represent our interests as veterans.

The past year or two our President, A.J. Wichita, has suggested several changes that would increase membership and hopefully breathe life into a dying organization. His proposals have met with what I consider to be unjust criticism.

I have not attended National Conventions in recent years because of the way meetings were conducted. A lot of shouting and little accomplished. It reminded me of an old time union meeting when the more deliberate and thoughtful member was shouted down by those with a different opinion. I would hope that this year's convention will be different and that careful and deliberate consideration will be given to formulating a plan that will ensure the continuation of the organization after we are gone. If no action is taken at this year's meeting, the 2011 meeting is likely to be held in a Las Vegas telephone booth, if one can be found. I'm certain that you are old enough to remember the size of a telephone booth.

Due to age and health I may not be able to attend this year's convention, but let me assure you that I, as well as the other members from this region, will be interested in what you are able to accomplish. Time is running out and we must attract a broader base of younger people to insure that the veterans of Korea, Vietnam and Iraq will not suffer the same fate that we of WWII did.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinions. I only hope that it is not too late.

Warmest regards to all,

C.E. Bert Hinds, RVP

OKI Tri-State Region

*The following article was published in the National Newsletter nine years ago.  
With chapters disbanding it would seem appropriate that it be reconsidered.*

## **THE CASE FOR RESTRUCTURING THE "AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS"**

**C. E. Bert Hinds**

**OKI Tri-State Regional Vice President**

**We are a dying breed.** -----At most we have five years to set up some kind of organizational structure that will perpetuate the goals and objectives that were envisioned by the founding members of AMMV. At our age I believe that you will agree that time is of the essence. If it is our desire to take such action we must start immediately to make it happen.

This having been said, I think we first have to determine if there is a desire on the part of the membership to see the organization continue to exist after we are gone. I fear that many of our members will not care one way or the other. Why then should we bother? If you are one who feels this way I can understand. We waited forty odd years for recognition of our efforts and in the last few years we have finally gained partial recognition and that may well be enough for you. I seriously doubt that we, of the WWII generation, will see much more in the way of benefits or recognition, but, what of those merchant mariners who have served in Korea, Vietnam and Desert Storm and even more important what of those who will continue to serve our country in peace and, God forbid, another global conflict. Perhaps if those mariners who served so honorably in World War I had taken a stand our generation might well have received better treatment. Each of us will have to determine if we of WWII will take the lead in paving the way for future generations of Mariners. Each year our numbers grow smaller because we do not have a base or programs that attract any but those who served in World War II. Why can't we attract active merchant seamen to join us? Many will tell you that the organization was formed to represent and to secure veterans status for those of us who served in the 40's and this was accomplished, but if we are continue to exist we must restructure in such a way as to attract the guy who is sailing at the present time. What can we do to attract support from the maritime unions and from those employed in the various marine industries? Today we are seeing an increase in shipbuilding and in new US shipping companies. Is it possible for us, by restructuring, to attract a cadre of supporters from these ranks? An organization which will look after the rights of the seaman and support a strong, viable US Flag Merchant Marine. An organization similar to the Navy League.

While the Navy League purports to represent all of the sea services and does include the Merchant Marine as a part of their group, I believe that most of their efforts are on behalf of the Navy, Marine Corps and the Coast Guard. This is not meant to be critical of the Navy League which I believe has been a strong supporter, but presently they do favor those military services. If we are unable to establish a viable organization we might consider an alliance with the Navy League as a Council Member of that organization. On our own, the "American Merchant Marine League" affiliated with them the "American Merchant Marine Council".

Some will argue that this action would make us less of a "veterans" organization and therefore this would not be an appropriate action. I, however, disagree. There is nothing to prevent us, as a restructured group, to continue to fight for the Merchant Marine Veteran but, in addition we will be expanding our areas of interest in order to attract a broader base of membership. At this juncture I don't pretend to have all of the answers as to how we might accomplish all of these goals but time is growing short and I would suggest that this should be an important agenda item at this years national convention.

# IN MEMORIAM

**George Searle** crossed the bar on March 17, 2009. He was a longtime proponent of recognition for Merchant Marine Veterans of World War II.

A native of Elizabeth, New Jersey, Searle, at age 17 and with America embroiled in the Second World War, chose to leave high school to join the Merchant Marine.

He soon found himself in the engine room of a Texaco tanker in the Atlantic, working as a wiper; later he would sail with the Army Transport Service aboard troop ships, both in the Atlantic and the Pacific.

Searle eventually earned a third engineer's license, but his career at sea was cut short in 1950 when he was drafted into the U.S. Army at the outbreak of the Korean War.

Honorably discharged after two years, he returned to New Jersey, where, with the passage of time, he found great success as a businessman, builder and developer. One of his dreams for many years was to convert an old Staten Island ferry into a floating restaurant on the Raritan River in East Brunswick.

While Searle was proud to be a Korean War veteran, he was not content that his wartime Merchant Marine service had not been officially recognized. He launched himself wholeheartedly into the campaign to gain veterans' recognition for the Merchant Mariners of World War II.

Searle joined the American Merchant Marine Veterans organization, rose to several key positions and volunteered literally thousands of hours of his time to this cause.

In 1988, after many years of dedicated work by Searle and his many colleagues, Congress finally authorized Veteran status for the Mariners who served in harm's way during WWII.



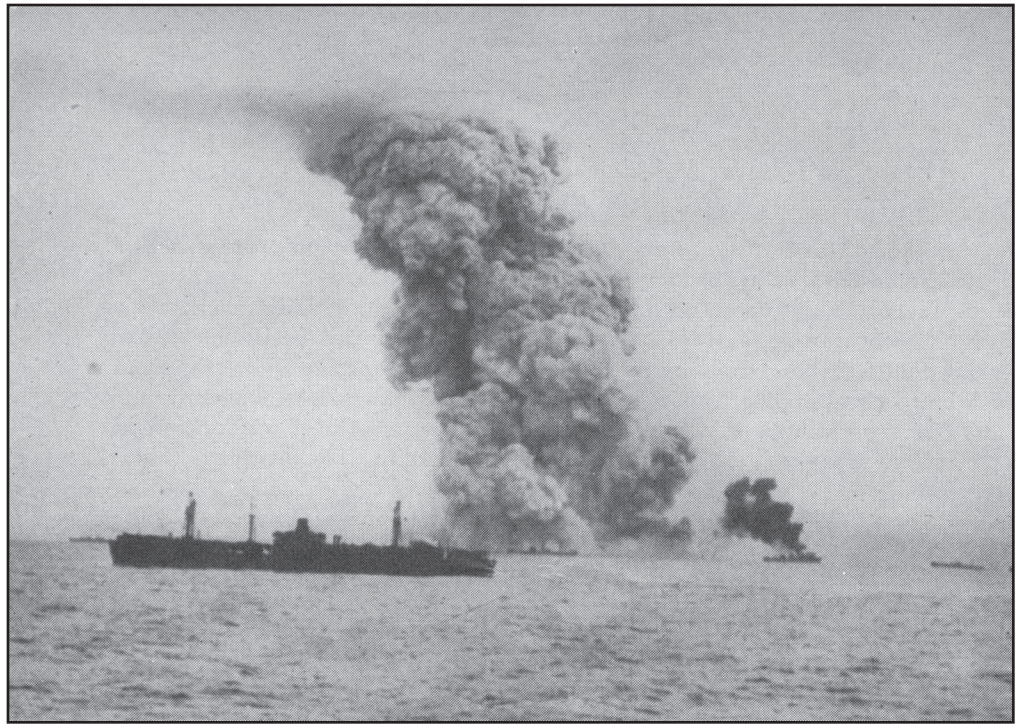
In 1995, Searle successfully ran for National President of the American Merchant Marine Veterans. During his tenure he forged an important relationship with the Navy League of the United States to acknowledge the Merchant Marine as a key component of American sea power.

In 2007 he received an Honorary Doctorate from the U. S. Merchant Marine Academy at King's Point.

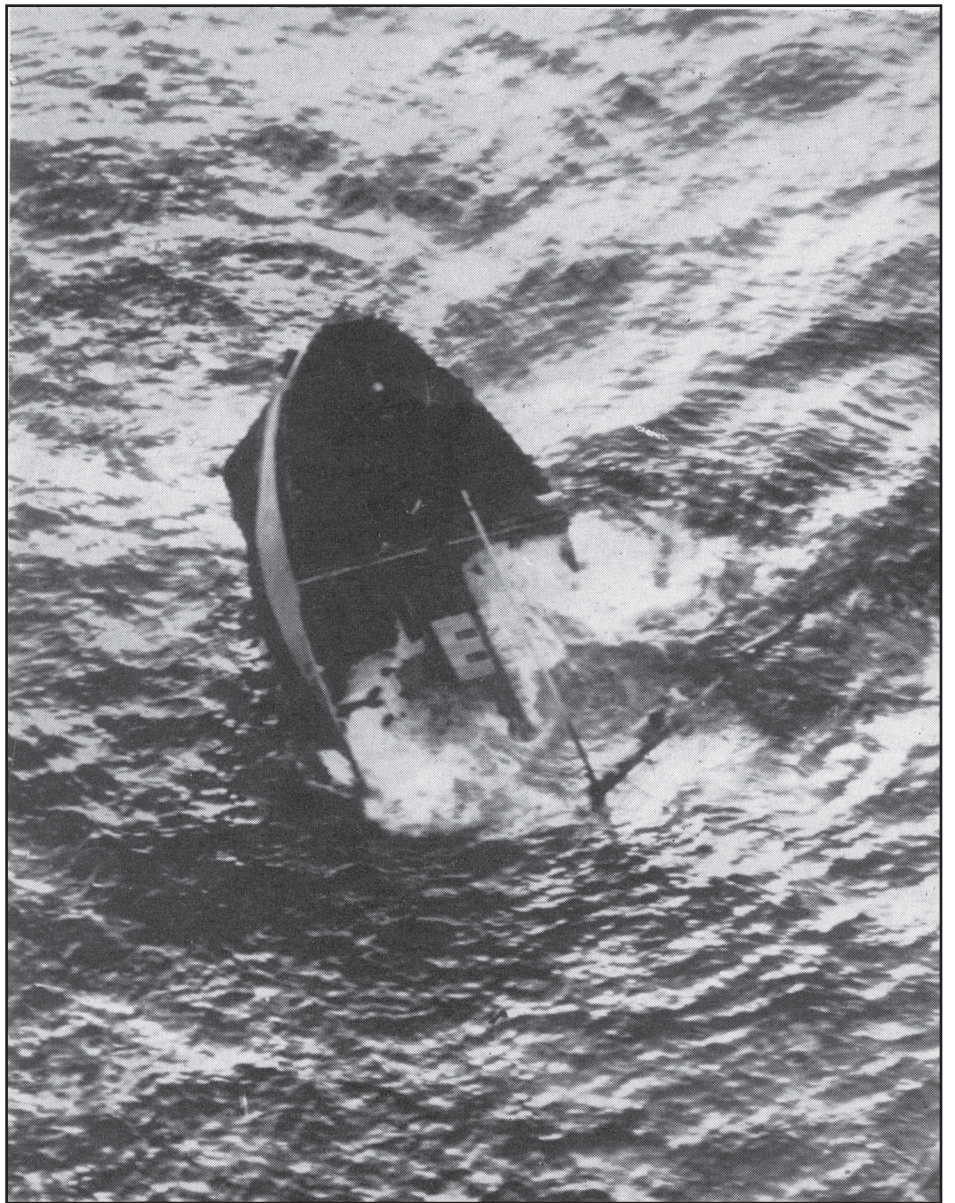
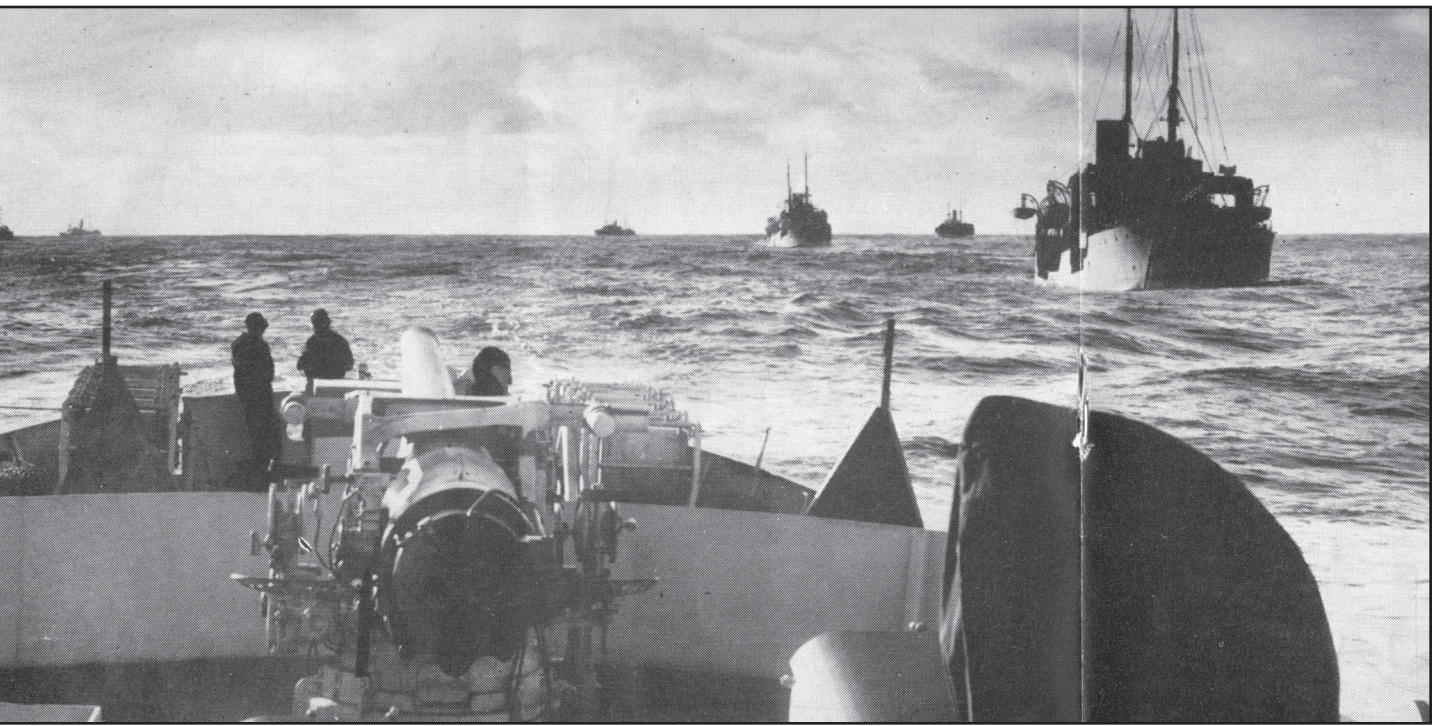
Searle leaves a wife, Irma. No further information was available at press time.



***These images were  
taken from the booklet  
"The SIU At War – True  
Experiences in the War  
at Sea of Members of the  
Seafarers International  
Union" published in  
1944 by the Seafarers  
International Union of  
North America,  
on loan to the AMMV  
News Magazine  
by Walter M. Holm.***









# Welcome Aboard to these New & Returning Members of the AMMV

YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS IMPORTANT TO THE AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS ORGANIZATION.  
WE WANT AMERICA TO KNOW THE PRICE MERCHANT SEAMEN PAID FOR THEIR FREEDOM.

## New Members

KEITH ADAMS	SANTA CLARA	CA	JUSTIN OSTRO	LADY LAKE	FL	FREDERICK J. DEVRIES	WAKEFIELD	MA	FRANK MISCavage	WILKES-BARRE	PA
PHILIP L. ANDREWS	CANNON HILL	AUS	ALBERT PENROD	MESA	AZ	PAUL W. DEWITT	SPEEDWAY	IN	EDWARD J. MISLIN	OCEAN VIEW	NJ
DAVID M. BAKER	PEORIA	AZ	HENRY PETERSON	LITTLE ROCK	AR	JACK DHABOLT	WATSONVILLE	CA	DONAD E. MOSS	PINE VALLEY	NY
DEAN E. BEAUMONT	OCEANSIDE	CA	JACK C. POST	AKRON	OH	PAUL P. DICKES	JIM THORPE	PA	GEORGE MOURADIAN	COMMERCE TWP	MI
GAYLEN C. BEERS	PONDERAY	ID	LILA POWELL	SELAH	WA	RAYMOND R. DUDLEY	LAKE ELSINORE	CA	GEORGE P. MOUREA	AURORA	CO
GLADE BEST	MESA	AZ	JAMES RAMSEY	NORTH PORT	FL	JAMES G. DUNAIF	BRONX	NY	MAURICE MOUSSEAU	KINDE	MI
GLENN L. BOND	OGDENSBURG	NJ	PAULINE ROBAS	INDIANAPOLIS	IN	LEONARD DZIEWECZYNSKI	SWANVILLE	MN	MINARD E. ONCKEN	NORTHBROOK	IL
JAMES A. BRETTTELL	TYLER	TX	IAN ROBERTSON	NEW YORK	NY	FREDERICK D. EHEMANN	NEW HOLLAND	PA	RODNEY L. OVERSON	UNION GROVE	WI
GEORGE I. BRUNO	ALAMEDA	CA	MAURICE A. SAVARIA	FAIRHAVEN	MA	ERICK L. ERICKSON	QUINCY	WA	RAYMOND L. PARE	CANAAN	NH
MICHAEL R. BURNS, JR.	PLYMOUTH	MA	STEPHEN L. SAYKO	JACKSONVILLE	NC	CHARLES J. ESTERBY	BRANFORD	CT	MIKE C. PARKERSON	PLACERVILLE	CA
LELAN B. CABLE, JR.	FORT PIERCE	FL	JOHN E. SCHMIDT, JR.	TALLAHASSEE	FL	WENZL EVANS	EUGENE	OR	WESLEY R. PAYNE	TULSA	OK
LEONARD E. CAQUETTE	BLAINE	MN	SEYMOUR M. SHAPIRO	WATCHUNG	NJ	HAROLD FAIN	QUINWOOD	WV	KARL I. PETERS	THOUSAND PALMS	CA
TODD M. CURRY	ALTON	IL	DR. JAMES SHEPPERD	PATTERSON	CA	DAVID P. FLECK	PORT ROYAL	PA	ROBERT E. PETERSON	CHETEK	WI
JAMES W. DAROUSE, JR.	ALBANY	LA	C. ED SHIRLEY	PORT ORANGE	FL	GEORGE J. FOSCHAAR	KIINGMAN	AZ	GENE R. PHILLIPS	AKRON	OH
DICK DAVIDSON	PUNTA GORDA	FL	TIM STORLIE	SANDY	OR	WILLIAM A. FURR	BETHANY	IL	PAUL H. PINSON	AIKEN	SC
DAVID R. DAVIES	CENTENNIAL	CO	PHILIP STRAUSS	GAINESVILLE	FL	ELLIOTT FUSS	VALLEY VILLAGE	CA	JOHN T. POFERL, JR.	BALTIMORE	MD
JOHN DRACKER	NEW YORK	NY	CHARLES L. STROHL	ALLETOWN	PA	EMERY GEHRING	WASECA	MN	EDMOND S. POMON	PROVIDENCE	RI
LOUIS H. EBERT	SLIDELL	LA	RICHARD F. SULLIVAN	OAKS	PA	WILLIAM C. GORDON	SAN FRANCISCO	CA	ALBERT D. POWERS	PROVIDENCE FORGE	VA
ROBERT O. ELLIS	SHELTON	CT	CORY THOMAS	NEW YORK	NY	JOSEPH GREENFIELD	POMPTON PLAINS	NJ	ROBERT M. POZZO	WELLINGTON	FL
G. "DON" ELLWOOD	PENDLETON	IN	HELEN L. THOMPSON	GREENFIELD	IN	PAUL M. HAMMER	BAKERTON	WV	DONALD R. PURCELL	VERO BEACH	FL
JOHN T. FAHEY	PINOLE	CA	A. P. TIMMINS	VANCOUVER	WA	WALTER R. HARTMAN	NIAGARA FALLS	NY	ELWOOD READ	GROVETOWN	GA
FLOYD E. FELTS	EVANS	GA	G. C. UPCHURCH	ANDERSON	IN	PAUL "KELO" HENDERSON	RIDGECREST	CA	GERALD S. REHM	CLEARWATER	FL
MARGARET FILON	LAUREL	MD	NANCY UPCHURCH	ANDERSON	IN	GEORGE E. HERRINGTON	TUSCALOOSA	AL	ANTHONY RICCI	MAMARONECK	NY
SANTOS FLORES	PEARLAND	TX	BERT WALL	SUN LAKES	AZ	JAMES P. HESTER	MT. CARMEL	SC	RONALD A. RONZONE	SACRAMENTO	CA
ROBERT B. GAYLORD	EDMOND	OK	WALLY YOUNGER	MERCER ISLAND	WA	HARRY R. HINSON	ANDALUSIA	AL	BOB ROSS	EL DORADO	AR
WILLIAM GOOD	WASHOUGAL	WA	DAVID ZARNOWSKI	DELRAY BEACH	FL	MARVIN H. HOLCOMBE	MYRTLE BEACH	SC	LEWIS E. ROSS	GARDNERVILLE	NV
WILLIAM J. GORDEN	BROWNWOOD	TX	TERRY C. ZIEGLER	SATELITE BEACH	FL	GEORGE L. HOYT	SOUTHAMPTON	NJ	RALPH T. RUGGIERI	PORTERVILLE	CA
JERRY GRAHAM	SCOTTSDALE	AZ	<b>Returning Members</b>			DANIEL R. HUDON	REMSSEN	NY	ARTHUR J. SANTIOIANNI	CENTERVILLE	OH
GEORGE E. HALE	ATASCADERO	CA	CHARLES M. ABERNATHY	SUFFOLK	VA	JACK W. HUFF	MOBILE	AL	GLENN W. SCHUTT	OAKDALE	CA
HAZEL HEINSE	VANCOUVER	WA	PHILIP M. ALVAREZ	PENSACOLA	FL	ROBERT L. HULL	PUEBLO	CO	EDWARD S. SEAMAN	LOS ALTOS HILLS	CA
RALPH HINDS	ALBANY	OR	WILFRED H. ARCHULETA	OCEANSIDE	CA	WILLIAM H. HUNSUCKER	MOORE	SC	PAUL R. SHANNON	BISMARCK	ND
RICHARD E. HUGHES	KULA	HI	DENNIS AYALA	COUNCIL BLUFFS	IA	FRANK H. HUNT	MATTHEWS	NC	MARGARET A. SHEPPARD	ANDERSONVILLE	GA
ALBERT HYNK	KIMBERLING CITY	MO	LOWELL F. BADER	CARSON CITY	NV	RICHARD M. HUSTY	ANDERSON	SC	HARRY SHROAT, JR.	ORANGEBURG	SC
BOB F. JESSE	PLACIDA	FL	CHARLES R. BARTHOLOMEW	BURLINGTON	IA	CALVIN L. JACOBSON	FAIRFIELD BAY	AR	JAMES SHUMATE	BUD	WV
JOYCE JOHNSON	THE DALLES	OR	WILBUR G. BEAUCHANE	FEEDING HILLS	MA	WILLIAM D. KAERCHER	NORTHVILLE	MI	WILBERT SIMPSON	MASVILLE	SC
ARMAND J. JONCAS	FT. PIERCE	FL	ALVA BENSON	HAYWARD	CA	HARLEY D. KAISER	BACKUS	MN	J.B. SMITH, JR.	GREENVILLE	SC
JOSEPH KAZMIR	NORTH PORT	FL	GEORGE V. BENTZ	ARDEN	NC	ELWYN E. KARAU	KEWANEE	IL	RAYMOND H. SMOYER	DULUTH	MN
RODNEY L. KERKOW	BLOOMINGTON	MN	EARL K. BITTNER	SOMERSET	PA	DONALD B. KELLEY	SPRING HILL	KS	KENNETH R. SNOW, SR.	AMANDA PARK	WA
HAROLD KNIGHT	WOODLAND	WA	J. BRYAN BRASINGTON	FORT MEYERS	FL	JOHN KEPPEL	LAGUNA WOODS	CA	WILLIAM H. STEIN	FOXBORO	WI
WALTER KOWALEWICH	KIMBERLING CITY	MO	ORVILLE L. BROWN	AURORA	IN	RICHARD L. LANNING	LONG BEACH	CA	JAMES TAUGNER	SCHAUMBURG	IL
WALTER LARKEY	EUREKA	CA	CLIFFORD L. BRUMBAUGH	GAINESVILLE	FL	JOHN LAUCKS	CLARKSTON	MI	WALTER J. TAYLOR	HIGHLANDS	NC
WILLIAM LAWRENCE	BRISTOL	RI	FRED CALHOUN	QUEEN CITY	MO	LYNN E. LEAR	BUCHANAN	MI	STANLEY TEN EYCK	MEMPHIS	NY
MICHAEL LIPNICKY	ATLASBURG	PA	WALTER W. CAMPBELL	NORTH KINGSTOWN	RI	ALBERT L. LONG	TIMONIUM	MD	OLIN S. THOMPSON	CAMDEN	SC
DINA LOFTIN	OCALA	FL	MAUEL A. CISNEROS	ALBANY	CA	ROBERT LUCE	AVON LAKE	OH	ROBERT THOMPSON	GREENFIELD	IN
RICHARD R. MARTIN	PUNTA GORDA	FL	FRANCIS X. CLEARY	FLAT ROCK	NC	EDWARD L. LUDWIG	LA PORTE	IN	ARTHUR G. TOPAZIO	BRISTOL	RI
TERESA MASON	PENDLETON	IN	WILLIAM L. CLINE	THOMASVILLE	NC	JOSEPH J. MAGER	LANDSDALE	PA	JAMES J. TURNER	ALEXANDRIA	VA
JOHN T. MATTHEWS	TUCSON	AZ	CLIFTON E. COBB	OLYMPIA	WA	WALTER MARCHINKO	HAMPTON	NH	CHARLES R. URBAN	NEILLSVILLE	WI
DAVID MC CREARY	WESTERVILLE	OH	THOMAS M. COLLING, III	WATERFORD	MI	EDMUND MARCIKOWSKI	EDWARDSVILLE	PA	HARRY M. WAGNER	BOYNTON BEACH	FL
PAUL MC DOWELL	JENSEN BEACH	FL	ANGELO B. CONZACHI	MADISONVILLE	KY	VICTOR MAROTZ	ASHTON	ID	LOUIS E. WAGNER	SANDUSKY	OH
FRANCES H. MC GUIGAN	BETHANY BEACH	DE	DEMPSEY COOP	WILBURTON	OK	ALFRED W. MARTIN	CLEVELAND	GA	RANDALL S. WAGNER	INDEPENDENCE	KY
KATHERINE MCHUGH	IGO	CA	KARL M. COUGHENOUR	HOLLSOPPLE	PA	EARL S. MASK	ANGELTON	TX	VICTOR A. WALTER	NATTHEWS	NC
CORAZON MIJARES	SPRING VALLEY	CA	LOUIS N. COX	SEALY	TX	ALEXANDER MCARTHUR	N. PEMBROKE	MA	JOSEPH W. WALTERS	BRANCHVILLE	SC
JAMES A. MITCHEL	WINDSOR	CA	ROBERT F. CRAIG	DENVER	CO	ROBERT W. MCDANIEL	ALEXANDRIA	LA	RUDOLPH V. WALTERS	COLUMBIA	SC
GILBERT N. NELSON	NEW MILFORD	CT	WILLIAM H. CREECH, JR.	WEST COLUMBIA	SC	CLINTON A. MCMULLEN	MOUNTAIN TOP	PA	CHARLES I. WHEATLEY	PHILADELPHIA	PA
JACK L. NELSON	BIRDSEYE	IN	KENNETH E. DEAL	LAFAYETTE	LA	WALTER D. MEYER	SPRING HILL	FL	JACK D. WILLIAM	CHECOTAH	OK
LLOYD NORMANN	APACHE JUNCTION	AZ	THOMAS R. DELAHUNT	SITKA	AK	GLENN E. MILLER	HICKORY	SC	DARRELL C. WILSON	BUTLER	IN
									GEORGET. WORSHAM	HOPKINSVILLE	KY





# CHAPTER NEWS

## Cascade Mariners Chapter

You have an opportunity to help a boy or girl who wants to go to college but cannot afford the escalating costs. The Service Academies (West Point, Annapolis, Air Force and Coast Guard) have no problem filling their slots but the Maritime Academies do (Kings Point, California Maritime, Maine Maritime Academy, Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Great Lakes Maritime Academy, Texas Maritime Academy, and State University of New York Maritime Academy). Acceptance insures a cost-free education but requires a license upon completion plus several years of service. But, they will have a college degree plus lots of valuable experience. Check the internet for details on admission requirements; Kings Point additionally requires the sponsorship of your U.S. Senator or Congressman. Now is the time to apply!

## Central California Chapter

Ahoy shipmates! The beat goes on and on. We must continue to exhort our representatives to once again support HR23, as they have done during the 110th Congress. To correct an injustice our very own government conspired with the help of the veterans organizations, yes, to deny any benefits to the Merchant Mariners of WWII.

The inside back cover of our National Magazine has an application for NAUS. Please recognize, it is the only veterans organization to back the AMMV in words and lobbying in Washington.

## Dennis A. Roland Chapter

Chapter members attended the Dedication Ceremonies of the World War II Memorial in Trenton, NJ November 11, 2009. It featured speakers Governors Jon S. Corzine and, Brendan T. Byrne, Senators Frank R. Lautenberg and several other distinguished Veterans. The flags of all six

services were raised with DAR member George Goldman raising the Merchant Marine flag.



Photo by Mary O'Connor

## Gulfstream Chapter

At our annual Christmas Luncheon Gulfstream Chapter presented our President, Joe Colon, with the Captain George Milman award. This award was instituted about 10 years ago and awarded to a member who has demonstrated workmanship, integrity and devotion to the causes of the AMMV. We felt that Joe more than deserved this honor and award. It was our pleasure to present it to him. For our entertainment at our luncheon we had the Florida Mimmers who put the icing on our day.

Our membership is building up. We have 3 new members since the New Year with the anticipation that several more applications that have been mailed will be returned to us shortly.

## Mariners of Pennsylvania Chapter



Chapter member Frank Reichart wife and daughter presented him with a quilt showing the seven ships that he sailed on and other interesting Merchant Marine memorabilia. It looks like a wonderful idea.



# CHAPTER NEWS

## Midwest Chapter

With full realization of the passing of members and leaders of the Midwest Chapter over recent years (Frank Dörner, Bruce Felknor, and Frank Nicosia) we want everyone to know that the Midwest Chapter is alive and well and committed to representing the World War II Merchant Marine in the Midwest Region. To this end we have elected a new Secretary, Charles Scott and new Treasurer, Keith Milton. Bob McGaghie who leads our meetings and who turned 90 on January 10, 2009 and Ted Clark remain on the Governing Council.

## Sarasota Manatee Chapter

A great time was had by all on Sunday, January 25th when the 54th annual Ybor City Naval Invasion took place in Ybor channel. The SS American Victory gallantly defended the city, while the invaders, on tugs, fireboats and pleasure craft, attacked the ship with fire hoses and throwing pieces of Cuban bread. The gallant crew aboard the AMVIC retaliated in kind. The battle raged for about an hour and one half before the Alcade, Judge Jack Espinosa, got both sides together on #3 hatch cover and read the peace treaty. After some hee-ing and jawing about the language, both sides signed the treaty. Unfortunately (or fortunately) the peace treaty will expire in one year and the battle will rage on again during Tampa's 2010 Gasparilla Days.

We might add that the defenders were young guests aboard the American Victory who fought bravely (and sometimes foolishly) under the guidance of the AMVIC's crew.

As pointed out earlier, Odyssey Marine Exploration has signed a contract with the American Victory making the AMVIC its source for displaying artifacts in the Tampa Bay area. Odyssey has discovered five different very ancient ships that had sunk. They have just announced that they have discovered another wreck, the HMS Victory in the English Channel. The British Ministry of Defence warned Odyssey that if the find is the British warship HMS Victory, her remains are sovereign immune. This means that no intrusive action may be taken without the express consent of the United Kingdom. Odyssey is negotiating with the MoD over collaborating on the project. They have not yet found or recovered the 100,000 gold coins believed to have been aboard the HMS Victory. Odyssey has said the wreck was found 330 feet beneath the surface. The wreck was found more than 50 miles from where it was thought to have gone down. The 175' sailing ship was separated from the rest of the fleet in a storm and sank October 4, 1744.

Other artifacts discovered by Odyssey should be on display aboard the SS American Victory within the next months.

## Southern Oregon Chapter

Member Ed McMurtry's daughter had this Letter to the Editor printed in the newspaper. We appreciate her support.

### TIME TO RECOGNIZE MERCHANT MARINERS

It is time that we learn of and remember the Merchant Marine veterans of the world wars. These men and women brought food and supplies to our troops all over the world. They also met with death and dangers like the men and women that are now honored from time past and are in recognized armed forces.

The men and women of the recognized armed forces have been given benefits that include health and pay after service to our country.

The Merchant Marines were there when our troops needed ammunition, food, medical supplies, etc. They went into war-torn waters, and some died to get the supplies to our troops. One out of every 26 Merchant Marines died in World War II, which was higher than any of the armed forces. After all, if this were not done, we would have lost the war.

Many more good men and women would have surely died.

If we have now recognized them as veterans, we should also acknowledge that they deserve the same benefits as the other armed forces.

We are now trying to get people out to move our economy here and overseas.

Our Merchant Marines of WWII deserve the pay that they should have been given when recognized not too long ago. But very late.

This Bill S-961 "Belated Merchant Mariner Thank You" has been too long in coming. These men and women will perish from the earth and be forgotten. This must not happen.

We must honor these men and women. It will have been a shame on our country not to do so.

Shirley Siebens

Toledo

# AMMV MEMBERS' BALLOT

AMMV CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

For the election of National Officers  
and selection of Mandates-To-Act & Resolutions to be  
presented at the 2009 National AMMV Convention

*This is not meant as an official ballot for the National AMMV elections to be held at the Convention in Tampa, FL in May, 2009 but a method for your Chapter delegates to find out exactly what Chapter members feel about these important issues. Please fill out this ballot and return to your Chapter's CEO so they can be forwarded to the Convention delegates for tallying.. Members-at-Large should send their ballots to Tony Arangio, 3402 Jerry Lane, Arlington, TX 76017, to be turned over to the designated Member-at-Large delegate to the National Convention for counting and representation. The complete resolutions and mandate-to-acts are printed in the Winter, 2008-2009 NEWS Magazine and this Spring, 2009 issue. Please study them carefully when voting.*

## **FOR NATIONAL OFFICERS**

### **VOTE FOR ONE:**

President: A. J. Wichita ( )  
President: Joseph Colon ( )

### **VOTE FOR EACH:**

Vice President: Donald Trimbath ( )  
Secretary: Nelson Cauble ( )  
Treasurer: NO CANDIDATE

Write-in vote \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_

## **MANDATES-TO-ACT**

#1 Proposed by Bill Marker, Oregon Chapter, Mandate-to-act to send letter regarding MM flag in National Cemeteries. Yes ( ) No ( )

#2 Proposed by Dennis A. Roland Chapter, Mandate-to-act to have National exert all efforts to support National legislation to recognize mariners after WWII as Veterans. Yes ( ) No ( )

## **RESOLUTIONS regarding membership and other issues.**

#1 Proposed by Valley Forge Reg. mini-convention regarding Board of Directors Meetings.  
Yes ( ) No ( )

#2.. Wholesale rewrite of the Constitution and By-laws by Lawrence Kerkow & committee.  
Yes ( ) No ( )

#3. Proposed by Golden Gate Chapter adding membership of wives of members in good standing.  
Yes ( ) No ( )

#4 Proposed by Joe Bracken, Ocala Chapter, to add Mideast Wars to Veterans in "Our purpose" section.  
Yes ( ) No ( )

#5 Proposed by Joe Bracken, Ocala Chapter, to add widows of members in good standing to those considered full members and to create an associate membership for certain qualified persons.  
Yes ( ) No ( )



# Merchant Marine

*The American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV) was founded to serve the interests of Merchant Marine veterans and recently affiliated with NAUS.*

## The Civilian Warrior

What is a Civilian Warrior? The term, Civilian Warrior, was born during the early days of our country. As a matter of fact, it was a group of Civilian Warriors who captured an English warship at the start of the Revolution. In WWII merchant seamen again became Civilian Warriors. Even before war was declared, the enemy was sinking our merchant ships. In the first year of the war over 300 of our ships were sunk. Our Nation united began building hundreds of new ships to replace those lost and to increase shipping potential for millions of troops and supplies. Each pair of boots landed on the war-front required 17.5 tons of support material.

Our government made deals with shipping companies and unions to man the merchant ships with civilian recruits rather than draft them as the government did for the other services. They sought patriotic civilians too young or too old to draft and anyone able to do a shipboard job, even a few who may have had only one eye or one leg. The recruiters targeted eager 16 and 17 year old kids and men 50 to 70 years of age. Many of the youngsters thought they were joining the Navy or Coast Guard. Training bases for these new recruits were created where they became proficient in shipboard duties. These bases also gave 30 hours of training on loading and firing shipboard armaments to assist the Navy Armed Guard. Thousands of civilian warriors fought and died together with Navy gunners, making the supreme sacrifice and effort to bring critical supplies to our troops and transporting the troops themselves.

250,000 merchant mariners were recruited to bring supplies to our armies and our allies. These Civilian Warriors had to fight off enemy submarine torpedoes, cannon fire, mines, raiders, Stuka dive bombers and ship-threatening foul weather. After the war, they brought home 16,000,000 troops to victory parades;

these troops were rightfully awarded the GI Bill of Rights.

President Roosevelt had declared the Merchant Marine should also receive equal treatment as the casualties they suffered were among the highest of all services. Congress did not make the GI Bill available to the merchant seamen as they were considered by many to be civilians. Dying for the cause as a Civilian Warrior was not enough for Congress.

The Merchant Mariners were finally recognized as veterans in 1988 but that was too late for the original benefits of the GI Bill of Rights. One returning Merchant Marine veteran wrote a letter in 1947 to a service organization to ask for assistance so the 250,000 Merchant Marine veterans could receive the same GI Benefits just given 16,000,000 veterans. The reply dated May 7, 1947 stated:

*"The positions taken by our organization in opposition to extending certain benefits to the Merchant Marine are because our growing concern that should these benefits be extended, there would be other groups making claim for such benefits, and in view of greatly increased cost to the nation, the Congress might see fit to sharply curtail all benefits. We remember the Economy Act of 1933."*

Now, 64-years later, Merchant Mariners of WWII are still fighting for just recognition and equal treatment. If you would like to assist us, please join the American Merchant Marine Veterans and help us remind Congress they will only need to spend a tiny fraction of the original cost on the few, remaining 10,000 WWII Merchant Mariner survivors. They are in their mid 80's and could really use a helping hand. For more information, please email: [riverbank2@charter.net](mailto:riverbank2@charter.net) or call: 541 459 7982.

*A.J. Wichita, National President,  
American Merchant Marine Veterans*





# JUST COMPENSATION

WELCOME ABOARD to HERMAN "GERRY" STARNES as the new Co-Chairman of the Just Compensation Committee. Gerry has worked extremely hard on the legislative activities connected with our House Bill HR23 and Senate Bill S961. He testified before the House VA Committee in May, 2007 and the Senate VA Committee in May, 2008 and has contributed many, many hours to the Just Compensation cause. He has brought on board the Washington, DC lobbyists whom are helping us further our cause. We are optimistic that with help from all, this is OUR YEAR TO WIN Just Compensation!



Gerry Starnes testifying before the Senate Veterans Affairs hearing on behalf of the Just Compensation Bill S.961

## WASHINGTON REPORT — 3/6/09

### NAUS Attends Senate Democratic Steering Committee Meeting

On Wednesday, NAUS President MG Matz and Legislative Director Rick Jones attended a meeting of various military and veterans associations held by the Senate Democratic Steering and Outreach Committee.

General Matz and Rick Jones were impressed at the numbers of senators present who were interested in hearing the agendas and goals of the associations. They included the Chair of the committee Senator Debbie Stabenow (MI) and the following additional Senators: Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (NV), Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Daniel Akaka (HI), Amy Klobuchar (MN), Sheldon Whitehouse (RI), Jack Reed (RI), Richard Durbin (IL), Jeff Merkley (OR), Jean Shaheen (NH), Jon Tester (MT), Roland Burris (IL), Ted Kaufman (DE), Frank Lautenberg (NJ), Tom Udall (NM), Mark Begich (AK), Mark Warner (VA), Chuck Schumer (NY), Patty Murray (WA) and Jim Webb (VA). Additionally attending was Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee Rep. Carl Levin (MI).

When asked for the NAUS areas of concern, President Matz stated that we support the idea of advanced funding for VA healthcare and that we are absolutely opposed to any increases in TRICARE premiums and co-pays for the foreseeable future. Not only have TRICARE eligible beneficiaries absolutely earned these benefits, in these hard economic times many of these same beneficiaries are on fixed incomes and cannot afford any increases. MG Matz emphasized that the current moratorium on increases should be extended for the foreseeable future.

Prior to the start of the meeting MG Matz and Rick Jones had an opportunity to talk to Sen. Daniel Akaka (D-HI), Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman about support for the WWII Merchant Mariners. Additionally after the meeting they had an opportunity to discuss the Merchant Mariner situation with Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) who indicated that she was optimistic there could be progress on this issue this session.

*At the formal request from one of the AMMV chapters, we are printing a letter sent on June 5, 2008 by Frances J. Dooley, Esq., past National President of the AMMV, to Senator Daniel Akaka, Chairman of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, refuting the testimony given at a Hearing before the Senator on May 7, 2008 by Charles Dana Gibson. Perry Adams, National Membership Chairman wrote a similar letter to Senator Akaka on May 17, 2008 which was published in the King's Pointer Magazine in the Summer 2008 edition. Even Mr. Dooley thinks that this letter is past history and he is working on another one that will be published in a near future issue of the NEWS.*

LAW OFFICES

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June 5, 2008

Honorable Daniel K. Akaka  
U.S. Senator, Hawaii  
141 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**RE Testimony of Charles Dana Gibson on May 7, 2008  
U.S. Senate Committee Veterans' Affairs  
Bill S.961**

Dear Senator Akaka:

You may recall that I wrote to you on April 7, 2008, requesting that you, as Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, schedule a Hearing on Senate Bill S.961. I did not know that a Hearing was scheduled for May 7, 2008, nor that Charles Dana Gibson (Gibson) would testify as a witness. I did not receive a reply.

Permit me to reintroduce myself. I am Past National President of the American Merchant Marine Veterans (3 terms), having also served as Judge Advocate. I was also a career mariner from 1943 to 1972. During that time I served in the engine room, starting as an oiler and after attending Officers School. Fort Trumbull, New London, Ct., became a licensed engineer and officer in 1945 and remained at sea through 1946. I worked my way through Seton Hall University and returned to sea in 1949, served aboard ships in the Korean War.

I graduated from Fordham Law School, became a licensed attorney, and returning to the sea I continued my career, rising to the rank of Chief Engineer. I have been awarded the Atlantic and Pacific War Zone Bars, the Combat Bar with Stars, and the Korean and Vietnam War Zone Bars and two medals by the Russian Government for services on the Murmansk run. I was honored to be selected as the "gold shovel" veteran, representing all WWII Merchant Marine Veterans at the dedication of the WWII Memorial in Washington, D.C. Along the way I have familiarized myself with the history of the Merchant Marine during WWII.

There is an Irish adage that, cleaned up, states: "I wish my opponent had written a book." Not only has Gibson written a book, but he has provided 8 pages of sworn testimony, addressing the same subject matter as the book. You will wonder if the same man authored these two writings.

Gibson's book "**MERCHANTMAN? OR SHIP OF WAR,**" published in 1986, 2 years before Mariners received veteran's status, was for the most part accurate. It is also a 180 degree turn from his present position and testimony before the Committee. The book is in the Library of Congress (No. 86-80113). Gibson leaves no doubt but that a **MERCHANTMAN** in WWII was a **SHIP OF WAR**. Gibson's closing words, in the last paragraph on the book are: "the oceangoing merchant marine of World War II was actually 'a part of the United States Armed Forces.'" I supply herewith several pages from Gibson's book for your ready reference, and to support my comments. Gibson presented his testimony against the passage of Senate bill S.961 by subject headings. My comments will address his testimony by utilizing these subjects heading as well.

It is not my intention to record the shoddy treatment of the WWII Merchant Marine Veteran. But Gibson's epiphany from "**miserly**" to "**compassionately**" had to be addressed.

The denial of the benefits of the G.I. Bill is a matter of record. I served my country in WWII and the Korean War; to attend college, I worked on the docks in Hoboken, full time, after WWII; after Korean War service, I worked aboard cargo ships as relieving engineering officer to attend Fordham Law School. But the rejection of any responsibility for the horrific injuries that disabled some mariners was to quote Gibson "**miserly.**"

Like Gibson, I hope that this information has been helpful to you and the Committee.

In fairness to Gibson, he ought to be allowed rebuttal. I await same.

I thank you for any consideration that this letter receives. I am available to you for clarification, if necessary.

Respectfully yours,



FRANCIS J. DOOLEY

FJD:csd

cc: Honorable Bob Filner  
Mr. Charles Dana Gibson  
Capt. Timothy Brown, Pres., IOMMP  
Mr. Mike Sacco, Pres., SIU  
Mr. Ian Allison



## Casualties

Gibson has demeaned the WWII mariner dead by reducing the number of casualties and inflating the amount who served. He has to know that only oceangoing mariners, a singular, different class, were at risk, to the enemy during WWII. It is well to know how one became an oceangoing mariner.

This process was and is controlled by the U.S. Coast Guard. In the 1930's federal legislation made it completely and solely responsible for the U.S. flag merchant mariner whether oceangoing, Great Lakes, river boat or harbor craft. This responsibility included vessel construction, vessel inspection and documenting who and how a person became a mariner. No one could serve as a crew member, to this day, unless his qualifications (from messman to ship's captain) have been okayed by the U.S. Coast Guard. Once qualified, a merchant seamen was given a number preceded by the letter "Z" called appropriately a "**Z number**" which thereafter, forever identified him. The "**Z numbers**" were issued consecutively so that the U.S. Coast Guard knew how many mariners were out there. Then he was issued documents: (1) as a life boatman; (2) for certain positions in the "unlicensed" crew; (3) a "license" if a deck or engineering officer, or radio operator or purser.

These licenses identified the tonnage or horsepower and, the "waters" on which it pertained. The mariner who worked on the Great Lakes, or the inland river tow boats or tug boats was issued documents limiting service to those waters. The documents issued to ocean-going mariners, so stated, and limited service to "any ocean."

Gibson's attempt to separate the "letter of intent" mariners from the "**Z number**" mariners is a distortion. Before the United States Maritime Service established training facilities, a "letter of intent" was about the only way one could become an "unlicensed mariner." This system still exists today. What it means is that the applicant receives a letter from a shipping company stating that this company will give the applicant a job on a ship as a messman or ordinary seamen or wiper and requests that he be issued Seamen's documents. But these applicants were included in the number of ocean-going mariners and given a "**Z number**" which the Coast Guard issued consecutively. Thus, if there were a nearly accurate count of the number of ocean-going mariners in WWII, this number would have to be known to the U.S. Government agency utilizing them: the U.S. Maritime Commission and the War Shipping Administration. The number, 250,000, stated by Adm. Emory S. Land, Administrator of WSA, has to be the valid approximation. At the beginning of every ocean voyage, the entire crew (officers included) signed "articles" in the presence of a U.S. Coast Guard official, titled "Shipping Commissioner," who, saw that all mariners were documented and, at the end of the voyage, "paid-off," ending the "articles." The captain signed on behalf of the ship's owner.

Gibson's attempt to include the number of Great Lakes and river boat mariners along with office workers and longshoremen and U.S. Maritime Service training personnel has to fail.

Someone ought to tell him that S-961 pertains only to the ocean-going mariner. The attempt to include "maritime labor force" (page 3) to jack-up the numbers of mariners really dishonors those who went into harm's way and were killed.

## Pay Issues

Gibson addressed under this heading compensation paid to mariners who were wounded and/or were prisoners of war and/or to the survivors of those killed. His testimony to the Committee (pg 4) is "the undeniable fact is that merchant seamen serving aboard U.S. flag ships, whether employed by the War Shipping Administration or by private operators, were **compassionately protected** in the fiscal sense throughout the entirety of World War II."

To set the record straight, after April 1942, merchant seamen were never employees of "private operators"; all were employees of the United States Maritime Commission (USMC), through either the U.S. Maritime Service (USMS) while in training, or the War Shipping Administration (WSA), at sea.

Gibson's book dealt with "**compassionately protected**" mariners on pages 136 through 146, a reading now recommended to the Committee. He is critical of the Maritime War Emergency Board created by USMC in 1942 which coupled with the Clarification Act deprived the injured and the survivors of the killed of a forum to address a claim of any kind. It became a law unto itself operating through an insurance system controlled from the offices of the Chubb Insurance Group at 99 John Street, New York City as the sole judge of claims for compensation. All injuries, no matter how disabling, and all death claims were capped at \$5,000 maximum if war related. If not war related, there was no compensation of "insurance" because the mariner was an "independent contractor". Gibson wrote (Pg. 144):

"It is clear, then, that the only thing granted merchant seamen which gave relief for war risk deaths, wounds, or injuries was the miserly \$5,000 War Risk Insurance Policy, as extended September 30, 1944. In June of 1947, the Congress retracted that extension."

Efforts to persuade the Maritime War Emergency Board administering the "miserly \$5,000" to include lost wages beyond the sinking were unsuccessful. I can provide names, addresses and phone numbers of men who were not compensated from the date their ships were sunk. I also have records of the Maritime War Emergency Board. Sufficient to say, it provided war risk insurance through an unwritten policy providing coverage only for injuries or death actually caused by war. Thus, a seventeen year old boy, on look-out, aboard a ship bound for MURMANSK, RUSSIA who was swept over the side by the seas and died of hypothermia, was not "covered" by the "policy". I served aboard a tanker, SS Arkansas, for 8 months in the Caribbean. Every 3 weeks we were exposed to malaria bearing mosquitoes while navigating the Caripita River. We were not provided quinine or any medication or netting. The chief cook, among others, got malignant malaria and was repatriated to Michigan where he died 2

months later. His widow and children received no compensation. Why? The illness was not caused by the "war", because the "insurance policy" only covered death or injury caused by enemy action. In peace time, the mariner's dependents would have had a civil action.

The Maritime War Emergency Board, according to the "policy" was to pay \$200.00 per month (against the \$5,000.00 limit) if the mariner was "not fit for duty" because of a war injury. Through its employees, designated as "claims adjusters", Chubb had the mariner evaluated monthly at 99 John Street, New York City; he received \$60.00 per month (not \$200.00) because the "policy" was interpreted as "up to \$200.00) and bus fare to and from all points in the United States.

The Maritime War Emergency Board had a vested interest in denying a claim was "war" related: money. The "insurance" money was funded by WSA, so that any payment decreased the fund. Gibson, in his book, was critical of this system, as were a post-war study done by the U.S. Department of Labor, which Gibson quoted (Pg. 139): "... it often drew the line and knowingly (some) people were not taken care of". Gibson testified that mariners whose ships were sunk by enemy action were paid wages until repatriated. I have spoken to dozens of these mariners, all of whom stated that their pay stopped when their ship was sunk. A mariner, Herman "Hank" Rosen, under oath, so testified before the House Veterans Affairs Committee on April 18, 2007. He also wrote a book, detailing his 30 days in a lifeboat with 28 other crew members of whom 5 survived and stating that his pay ended when the ship went down.

The reason pay stopped is found in a Federal Statute: **46 USC 593:**

**§ 593. Termination of wages by loss of vessel; transportation to place of shipment**

In cases where the service of any seaman terminates before the period contemplated in the agreement by reason of the loss or wreck of the vessel, such seaman shall be entitled to wages for the time of service prior to such termination, but not for any further period. Such seaman shall be considered as a destitute seaman and shall be treated and transported to port of shipment as provided in sections 678 and 679 of this title. This section shall apply to fishing and whaling vessels but not to yachts. RS. § 4526; Dec. 21, 1898, c. 28. §§ 3, 26, 30 Stat. 755, 764; Mar. 5, 1934, c. 40, 48 Stat. 395.

**Historical Note**

The Maritime War Emergency Board, when told that the "policy" was to continue the pay of shipwrecked mariners until repatriated, replied that to do so would violate the laws of Congress. It preferred being "miserly" to "compassionately" illegal, arguing that 46 USC 593 had to be repealed by Congress, to permit payment after the loss of a ship.

**Veterans' Status**

Gibson's testimony on this subject is a study in obfuscation

bordering on perjury. He cites, correctly, that the Supreme Court did not decide the veterans' issue and that veterans' status did not occur, "pursuant to the enactment of the "Seamen's Act of 1988." Quite simply there was no Seamen's Act of 1988 ....

But Gibson was untruthful when he testified, under oath, that "there was never any court ruling ... which granted the 1988 veterans' rights to merchant seamen." What makes this representation egregious, is that he was well aware of litigation and of the court's "ruling." He had participated peripherally in carrying out the court's ruling.

For several years WWII merchant seamen had filed applications with the Secretary of the Air Force to be granted veterans' status pursuant to P.L. 95-202. This law permitted the Department of Defense (who designated the Secretary of the Air Force) to grant WWII veterans' status to those, not actually in the armed forces, who nonetheless, met 5 criteria which Gibson correctly states of page 5 of his Testimony.

The mariners applications for veterans' status was always denied by DoD. Finally, three mariners: Ed Schumacher who had been seriously wounded when his ship was torpedoed, Dennis A. Roland, and Stanley Willner whose ship MN Sawokla, was sunk by a raider and who spent 2 years and none months as Japanese POWs, forced to work on the construction of the Burma railroad and the infamous Bridge on the River Kwai, brought a class action suing DoD claiming the denial of veterans' status was an abuse of discretion in interpreting P.L. 95-202.

A Complaint captioned **ED SCHUMACHER et als vs Edward Aldridge Secretary of the Air Force**, was filed in the United States District Court in Washington, D.C. in 1985, docket number 85-2015-LFO and assigned to the Hon. Louis F. Oberdorfer, USDJ.

On July 16, 1987, Judge Oberdorfer signed a **Memorandum and Order** which he finalized by an **Order** on October 14, 1987 finding that the defendant, Edward Aldridge, Secretary of the Air Force's refusal to grant veteran's status to WWII ocean-going mariners (including ATS) was "arbitrary and capricious." He also ordered Aldridge to appear on October 14, 1987 with a timetable for completion of the "reconsideration and filing required by this **Order**."

I am an attorney. I assure you that these are the "**Orders**" responsible for DoD granting veterans' status to WWII mariners pursuant to P.L. 95-202. If you have a doubt, please contact Hon. Joan Zeldon now sitting as a judge in the District of Columbia. As an attorney she represented the plaintiffs in that litigation, or you may also contract Judge Oberdorfer.

Gibson was unhappy that his advice was ignored to proceed with the litigation on the theory that "the ocean-going merchant mariner of WWII was actually "a part of the United States Armed Forces" (page 202). Nonetheless, he managed to have himself named to the Civilian/Military Service Review Board (CMSRB) convened to carry out Judge Oberdorfer's Order because of his Army Transport Service (ATS). But he became anathema to the **Schumacher** plaintiffs because of

what he did. It was in this status that Gibson proposed August 15, 1945 to be the cut-off date before which 6 months sea-time had to be credited. This decision he referenced in his Testimony (page 1) "I am the author of a successful application in the 1980's for Army civilian seamen .... to received veterans' status under Public Law 95-202." You have to know that Judge Oberdorfer's Order also included the "Army civilian seamen."

Gibson never explained how his argument that mariners were "actually a part of the Armed Forces of the United States" was reconciled with the decision of CMSRB to cut-off eligibility on August 15, 1945, (the date that hostilities ceased), rather than December 31, 1946, the final date for veterans' status as a member of the Armed Forces. But he does condemn (page 6) the "Veteran's Enhancement Act" which did extend the veteran's eligibility date for WWII mariners, including ATS mariners, to December 31, 1946 "to members of a civilian group for their employment outside of a period of actual armed conflict" (page 6). He never explained why he downgraded mariners from "a part of the United States Armed Forces" to being "members of a civilian group." As part of the United States Armed Forces mariners' eligibility for veterans' status time would have ended on December 31, 1946. It took an Act of Congress to correct Gibson's "unsuccessful application" and thereby to permit thousands of mariners to become "veterans."

#### **Labor Relationship**

Gibson references a disclaimer supposedly provided by WSA to Maritime Service enrollees in a pamphlet, which allegedly identified a merchant seaman as a "contract worker... even though his employer in some instances, may be the United States." It is submitted that the mariner always was an employee of the United States. A real problem created but not solved by that legalism, is that a contract was being made with men who were not given a written copy of the contract, nor was the legality of entering into a contract with minors, some 16 or 17 years old boys explained.

This WSA pamphlet was not mentioned in his book although it does correctly identify the special status created by

Congress of a merchant mariner being a contract worker cut off from all federal employment benefits. The status of contract worker does not square with the Enlistment Booths or with the uniforms or with the military and gunnery training given to USMS enrollees. In every instance the mariner was an employee of the United States in the ocean-going merchant marine, a fact that Congress acknowledged when it passed the previously cited Clarification Act rejecting mariners as government employees and stating that mariners "should not be considered as officers or employees of the United States," except for treatment by the USPHS or The Social Security Act. This rejection shocked Gibson in 1986 and led to his "miserly \$5,000 War Risk Insurance Policy" comments (pages 143 & 144).

Contrary to his observation, I considered myself part of the armed forces during WWU. But as a teenager at sea fighting a war, the nuances, ambiguities and disenfranchisement, by my government was not communicated to me. Now as an attorney specializing in admiralty law, I conclude that basic seamen's rights, going back hundreds of years were deep-seated during WWII.

The 1946 strike cited by Gibson involved very few ships and was not against WSA vessels. Some ship owners had received vessels, either as replacements for losses, or were purchased which were to be operated in private, peace time trade, carrying commercial cargo. A few of the owners decided to break the labor contracts with the unions, citing the intervention on the war, as terminating labor contracts. They even sought manpower from WSA. These were the ships that had "strikes and work stoppages." No WSA owned or bare boat chartered ships and no military or aid cargo was effected.

#### **Explanation**

Numbers in parenthesis (I) through (7) reference the sworn testimony of Charles Dana Gibson before the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee on May 7, 2008.

Numbers in parenthesis from (136) on ward reference pages from MERCHANTMAN? OR SHIP OF WAR by Charles Dana Gibson.

*I know the effort will not fail; that more and faster ships will be built, manned by trained American seamen, and that they will carry through the open waters of the Seven Seas implements that will help destroy the menace to free peoples everywhere.*

*President Franklin D. Roosevelt, letter to Admiral Emory S. Land on May 22, 1941*



# New Maritime Center Opens

By CHRIS HUNTEMANN  
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

MARTINSBURG - Though the city of Martinsburg is miles away from any ocean, the United States Coast Guard thought it was a perfect location for its National Maritime Center.

The 60,000-square foot facility at Forbes Drive, which houses the U.S. Merchant Mariner Licensing and Documentation Production and the Merchant Mariner Training Course Approval and Oversight Program, was dedicated Thursday.

Capt. David C. Stalfort, the commanding officer for the National Maritime Center, said construction of the facility marks a major milestone in licensing and documentation for mariners, noting that the Coast Guard set a record for June by issuing about 3,200 credentials. Stalfort said the



From left: Capt. David C. Stalfort, National Maritime Center commanding officer; U.S. Coast Guard Rear Adm. Brian M. Salerno; Ancient Merchant Mariner Paul Hammer; Rob Hewell, assistant regional administrator for Mid-Atlantic Regional U.S. General Services Administration for Public Buildings Service; Leslie Staples, communications director for the state Senate Appropriations Committee; and U.S. Coast Guard Rear Adm. James A. Watson IV officially open the National Maritime Center in Martinsburg on Thursday morning. (Journal photo by Ron Agnir)

Coast Guard wants to launch on-line services for mariners, including online application and fee payment services, to help streamline the credential process.

"Right now everything is paper-based," Stalfort said, adding the Coast Guard is also working to provide more locations for mariners to submit applications for credentials.

Stalfort said Martinsburg was picked as the location for the new facility because of the low cost, large labor pool and good IT infrastructure provided by the community.

Rear Adm. James A. Watson, the director of Prevention Policy with the Coast Guard, said his program is responsible for ensuring prevention of disasters on the open water as well as protecting the environment. Watson said the Coast Guard wants to improve its efforts with mariners by providing internet access and call centers. Approximately 210,000 merchant mariners are currently employed aboard vessels in domestic waters and all over the world, he said.

The dedication also included remarks by Robert Hewell, the General Services Administration assistant regional administrator for public buildings service, who said the building is expected to be certified by the U.S. Green Building Council for Leadership in Energy

and Environmental Design, which is a recognition for construction of a high-performance, sustainable building that also conserves energy.

Martinsburg Mayor George Karos, who was at the dedication, said the facility is another sign of growth in the community.

"As the governor used to say, we are open for business and we expedite requests when people need something," Karos said. Construction for the National Maritime Center began in late 2006 and was complete in December 2007.

"This is a good sign for economic development in our community," Karos added.

SEAMAN'S CERTIFICATE APPLICATION  
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD  
RENEWAL FORM (Rev. 10-85)

PERMISSION TO RENEW  
BOOK NO. 4-770 729

PORT OF PHILADELPHIA DATE 10 June, 1946

TYPE OF CERTIFICATE ☐ CONTINUOUS DISCHARGE BOOK ☒ U.S. MERCHANT MARINER'S DOCUMENT SOCIAL SECURITY # [REDACTED]

NAME OF APPLICANT (Last, First, Middle, and First-Please Print)  
HAMMER, MALCOLM PAUL

ADDRESS OF APPLICANT  
617 Highland Ave., Johnstown, Penna.

DATE OF BIRTH (DAY, MONTH, AND YEAR)  
7 May, 1930

PLACE OF BIRTH (CITY, STATE, AND COUNTRY)  
Johnstown, Penna.

HEIGHT  
5 9 1/2

WEIGHT  
140

COLOR  
White

COLOR OF HAIR  
Brown

COLOR OF EYES  
Blue

NAME OF NEXT OF KIN  
Mrs. Anna Hammer

RELATIONSHIP  
Mother

ADDRESS OF NEXT OF KIN  
(same address)

DATE NATURALIZED  
7 May, 1930

CITY OF NATURALIZATION  
Johnstown, Pa.

STATE  
Pa.

IF NATURALIZED THROUGH FATHER, STATE HIS NAME  
PROOF OF CITIZENSHIP SUBMITTED  
Bif. Cert. Dept. Hlth. Bur. VS, Harrisburg, Pa., 5-31-1945, #442041.

IF NOT NATURALIZED, IS DECLARATION OF INTENTION FILED? IF SO, STATE PLACE, DATE, AND FILE NUMBER OF INTENTION PAPERS

IF AN ALIAS, STATE PLACE AND DATE OF PAYMENT OF HEAD TAX

LICENSE OR CERTIFICATE RECORD  
(Transfer all licenses or certificates now in your possession)

DESCRIPTION OF PAPERS	PLACE OF ISSUE	DATE OF ISSUE	NO. OF ISSUE

IF ANY LICENSE OR CERTIFICATE HELD BY YOU HAS EVER BEEN REVOKED OR SUSPENDED, SO STATE, GIVING ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES

SERVICE RECORD  
(Must be certified by official discharger or letters from masters or other authority deemed reliable, for the past 3 years if possible)

NAME OF VESSEL	NATIONALITY	SERVICE	GROSS TONNAGE	RATING OF SEAMAN	DATE OF SHIPMENT	DATE OF DISCHARGE

CERTIFIED TO BE A TRUE COPY

10-5000-2

This article was submitted to the AMMV News Magazine by returning AMMV member Paul Hammer, who, in addition to being pictured in the accompanying photo, has also shared with us a copy of his SEAMAN'S CERTIFICATE APPLICATION from 1946.

## Author in Search of Stories

I have a book contract with a major New York publisher to write a narrative nonfiction history on the key convoy battles in the North Atlantic in the spring of 1943. The book is intended for both devotees of maritime history as well as a new generation of readers who have not been exposed to previous historical accounts.

My goal is to locate a cross-section of survivors and veterans from all pertinent places in that sea fight – merchant crewmen, officers and escort sailors, airmen on land-based patrol aircraft and U-boat crewmen – and tell their stories. My research to date has led me to focus on a handful of convoys that took place on the New York/Halifax – Liverpool route during March-May 1943. These are:

HX229 (dep NYC March 3, arr Liverpool March 23)  
HX229A (dep NYC March 9, arr Liverpool March 26)  
SC122 (dep NYC March 5, arr Liverpool March 24)  
HX231 (dep NYC March 25, arr Liverpool April 10)  
ONS5 (dep Liverpool April 21, arr Halifax May 12)  
SC130 (dep NYC May 11 arr Liverpool May 26)

Here are two lists (primary and secondary) of the American merchantmen and the convoys in which they sailed that I would particularly like to concentrate on. I am specifically looking for surviving crewmen from these ships and convoys who can tell their personal experiences during that critical turning point in the Battle of the Atlantic. If you know anyone from these ships, please forward this to them and send me their contact information.

### Primary List

Harry Luckenbach HX229  
Irene Du Pont HX229  
James Oglethorpe HX229  
Mathew Luckenbach HX229  
McKeesport SC122 & ONS5  
Stephen C. Foster HX229 (returned to port), HX231  
Sunoil HX229A (returned to port), HX231  
Walter Q. Gresham HX229  
West Madaket ONS5  
West Maximus ONS5  
William Eustis HX229

### Secondary List

A.C. Bedford SC130  
Calmar SC130  
Cartago SC122

Cathlamat SC130  
Daniel Webster HX229  
Daylight SC130  
Dynastic SC130  
E.G. Seubert SC130  
Eastern Guide SC122  
Eli Whitney HX231  
Esso Dover HX231  
Exchester SC130  
Georgian HX231  
Gulf Disc HX229  
Hugh Williamson HX229  
Jean HX229  
Joel R. Poinsett HX231  
Kofreisi HX229  
LST 305 SC122  
LST 365 SC122  
Margaret Lykes HX229  
Mobilgas HX231  
Narbo SC130  
Noah Webster HX231  
Pan Rhode Island HX229  
Pierre Soule HX231  
Pleiades HX231  
Raphael Semmes HX231  
Robert Howe HX229  
Santa Maria HX231  
Thomas Sumpter HX231  
Tulsa HX231  
USS Merak HX231  
Vistula SC122  
West Honaker SC130  
William Muholland HX231  
William Whipple HX231

Any help you could provide to inform your fellow Merchant Marine veterans of this project would be deeply appreciated.

Here is my contact information:

Ed Offley  
Military Reporter  
21200 S. Lakeview Dr.  
Panama City Beach FL 32413-3419  
Email: ed\_offley@yahoo.com  
850-774-6585 cell phone



## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

*Join the American Merchant Marine Veterans, a growing organization of active and retired seamen. Help us gain recognition for what we, the men of the Merchant Marine, have done for our Country in war and peace.*

*We stand for a strong American Merchant Marine and will help launch and support legislation along these lines. We intend to help the cause of American seamen and American seapower.*

*The American Merchant Marine Veterans is a national organization with Chapters throughout the United States. National membership dues are \$20.00 per year, collected by Headquarters or through its Chapters. Chapter dues are determined by the membership of each Chapter.*

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

AGE \_\_\_\_\_ POSITION ABOARD SHIP \_\_\_\_\_

*Were you sailing aboard American Flag Merchant Ships during:*

- ☐ WW I   ☐ WW II   ☐ KOREA   ☐ VIET NAM   ☐ DESERT STORM   ☐ PEACETIME   ☐ NAVY ARMED GUARD  
☐ ARE YOU AN ACTIVE U.S. MERCHANT SEAMAN   ☐ ACTIVE OR RETIRED MEMBER OF THE U.S. ARMED FORCES  
☐ WIDOW OF A DD 214 RECIPIENT   ☐ MARITIME ACADEMY CADET   ☐ OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

If you qualify in one or more of the above categories, you are eligible to join the American Merchant Marine Veterans, Incorporated. Sign on with the American Merchant Marine Veterans and help us with our efforts to improve the quality of life for all Merchant Mariners, past and present. Enjoy the activities of our organization while rendering a service to our COUNTRY, your FELLOW SEAMEN, and the AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE.

We are a not for profit organization, Charter No. 4837 in the state of Florida. The Chapters operate within the preview of our National Constitution and By-Laws. Active members receive the National News Magazine quarterly. If you live in an area where no Chapter is available, you can request help from our National Office to organize one.

**SEND COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:**

**AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS  
P.O. BOX 151205  
CAPE CORAL, FL 33915-1205**





## THE AMMV AND THE AMERICAN VICTORY WELCOME MERCHANT MARINE AND ARMED GUARD VETERANS TO TAMPA, FLORIDA FOR THE **AMMV 23<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION**

We want to welcome you, your family, and friends to join us in FLORIDA. Tampa Bay provides access to Florida Aquarium; Ybor City; Beaches; Bush Gardens; Hard Rock Casino; International Plaza shopping and more. Plan your Florida vacation now to include the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual American Merchant Marine Veterans Convention from May 14 to May 18, 2009. The historic SS American Victory cruise is on Saturday May 16. Our convention committee has negotiated the same special hotel rate from May 10 thru 22nd and the hotel is centrally located just north of downtown Tampa.

We are actively soliciting USN Armed Guard to attend our convention this year. Cal Lloyd has published our registration information in their "Pointer" News Letter. The convention committee is working to make this a memorable event for all.

Registration has become a two page process with tour offered on Page 2. Please complete both forms. Please note the preliminary convention schedule. It includes our National Executive Board of Directors meeting on May 14; three business sessions (two on Friday, May 14 and one on Sunday, May 17).

There is a special pre-convention meeting for the South East region, which will have a program designed with local interests in mind; however, it is an open luncheon and meeting. For the Ladies Luncheon we have scheduled an inspirational speaker, the wife of one of our SE members; after a pleasing Welcome Dinner on Friday night you will be entertained with music and songs from the Frank Sinatra era; the main Banquet entertainment will star a dance and singing troupe performing a USO style tribute. Please note, in addition to the American Victory Historic Cruise, local tours are being planned for before, during, and after the convention. So, you are invited to start planning your vacation in FLORIDA today. Make your reservations NOW.

If you are worried about uncertainty in your medical or other conditions please note that we have a liberal cancellation policy—24 hours before arrival on the hotel rooms and May 1 for in-house Convention events. April 1 is our deadline for tours because of contracting commitments. We will also consider special circumstances.

Sincerely,

Morris Harvey, SE-RVP  
American Merchant Marine Veterans  
23<sup>rd</sup> National Convention Committee Chairman  
352-397-1540  
E-mail: [morris@xtalwind.net](mailto:morris@xtalwind.net)



## PROPOSED SCHEDULE

### WEDNESDAY, May 13

TOUR: Tarpon Springs – requires advanced registration before April 15th  
1:00 pm till . . . . .Registration (Cottonwood & Redwood Rooms)

### THURSDAY, May 14

8:30 am – 11:30 am + pm as needed .Registration (Cottonwood & Redwood Rooms)  
9:00 am – 11:30 am. . . . .Board of Directors  
12:00 – 3:00 pm . . . . .South East Region Luncheon Meeting  
TBD. . . . .Voting Credentials Check-in; Burt Young  
TBD. . . . .Hospitality Room (2nd Floor)  
FAIR/EXHIBITS: (Timberwood Room) Historic Bio recording booth and more  
TOUR: Hard Rock Casino – requires advanced registration before April 15th  
OUTING: International Plaza + Westshore Mall: Food & Shopping (Self Guided; ask Hotel Shuttle)

### FRIDAY, May 15

As needed . . . . .Registration (Cottonwood & Redwood Rooms)  
9:00 am – 11:30 am. . . . .Business Meeting (Opening ceremony with invocation; speakers)  
TBD. . . . .Voting Credentials Check-in: Burt Young  
TBD. . . . .Hospitality Room (2nd Floor)  
12:00 – 1:30 pm . . . . .Ladies Luncheon with speaker  
1:30 pm – 4:30 pm . . . . .Business Meeting (By-Law and other issues requiring vote of members)  
5:30 – 7:00 pm . . . . .President's Welcome Dinner: Open Cash Bar  
7:00 - till . . . . .Dinner & Entertainment (Frank Sinatra era song and music)  
TBD. . . . .Hospitality Room (2nd Floor)  
FAIR/EXHIBITS: (Timberwood Room) Historic Bio recording booth and more  
OUTING: International Plaza + Westshore Mall: Food & Shopping (Self Guided; ask Hotel Shuttle)

### SATURDAY, May 16

7:30 am – 4:00 pm . . . . .American Victory Cruise (requires advanced AMMV registration  
for bus xport + direct phone registration to ship for cruise)  
TBD. . . . .Hospitality Room (2nd Floor)  
TOUR: Florida Aquarium or Tampa Historic Museum – requires advanced registration before April 15th  
OUTING: International Plaza + Westshore mall: Food & Shopping (Self Guided; ask Hotel Shuttle)  
TOUR: Hard Rock Casino – requires prior registration before April 15th

### SUNDAY, May 17

9:00 am – 11:30 am. . . . .Business Meeting (AMMV Election Process)  
5:30 pm – 7:00 pm . . . . .Banquet: Open Cash Bar  
7:00 pm – till . . . . .Dinner & entertainment (USO style singing/dancing tribute)  
TBD. . . . .Hospitality Room (2nd Floor)  
TOUR: Tampa City Tour – requires advanced registration before April 15th  
TOUR: Hard Rock Casino – requires advanced registration before April 15th  
OUTING: International Plaza + Westshore Mall: Food & Shopping (Self Guided; ask Hotel Shuttle)

### MONDAY, May 18

TOUR: Tarpon Springs - requires advanced registration before April 15th  
DEPARTURE: Have a safe and pleasant journey.

v081215NLrt2

## HOTEL & HISTORIC CRUISE INFORMATION



### DOUBLETREE HOTEL TAMPA WESTSHORE

Make reservations directly with Doubletree Hotel

4500 W. Cypress Street; Tampa, Florida 33607

Phone: 813-879-4800 or 800-222-8733

or on-line at personal group page

BE SURE TO SPECIFY AMMV BLOCK RESERVATIONS

### REGISTER EARLY-EARLY-EARLY

ROOM AVAILABILITY IS LIMITED

Cancellation policy: full refund if cancelled at least 24 hours before arrival.

Individuals: Hotel requires valid credit card or \$50.00 deposit to cover incidental expense.

SPECIAL ROOM RATE: \$99.00 plus 12% tax per night - Single/Double/Triple/Quad

(\$5.00 rebate included for the Convention Committee— used to offset expenses)

One King or 2 queen bed layouts available; 15 ADA (9 with roll-in shower)

Free parking; 15% discount in Hotel Cyprus Cafe if charged to room; heated pool;  
free shuttle to/from airport and within two miles (50 restaurants and two malls); Players Lounge Sports Bar

FOR MORE FUN IN THE SUN - \$99 RATE EXTENDS FROM May 10th thru May 22<sup>nd</sup>

.....

### AMERICAN VICTORY MARINERS MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM SHIP AMERICAN VICTORY HISTORIC CRUISE – MAY 16, 2009

Our discounted rate for convention attendees will be \$89.00 (RETAIL RATE (\$125.00))

You must call to get this rate. Cruise reservations will be made directly to the ship by each individual.

Call Tuesday thru Saturday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, and Sunday 12:00 noon to 4:00 pm.

813-228-8766

705 Channelside Drive, Tampa, FL 33602

<http://www.americanvictory.org/>

Cruise down the Hillsborough River, across Tampa bay to the Gulf of Mexico;  
Continental Breakfast; Lunch and snack; ship tours; entertainment; Fly-over and more

SORRY! No handicap access at this time – passengers must be able to navigate stairs.

(PLEASE NOTE: The \$18.00 charge for transportation to and from the ship must be made  
as part of your convention registration—reference the Registration Form)

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## CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Affiliation/Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

PLANNED DATE OF ARRIVAL: \_\_\_\_\_

See separate sheet for Hotel and Victory Cruise reservation information.

<u>CONVENTION FEE:</u> (AMMV only - no charge for spouse/companion)	TOTALS
EARLY BIRD to February 15th: .....\$60.00 x _____	= \$ _____
February 16 to May 14: .....\$75.00 x _____	= \$ _____

SE REGION PRE-CONVENTION: .....\$28.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Thursday May 14th at 12:00 with lunch; program for SE Region but is open session)  
 Buffet: Soup, choice of Salads, Rolls, Dessert, tea & coffee

LADIES LUNCHEON: (Friday Noon May 15) .....\$28.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Choose (# of each): 1) Salad (chicken) \_\_\_\_\_; 2) Cobb Salad (Turkey, Ham, cheese) \_\_\_\_\_  
 3) Hot Dish: Pasta W/Chicken \_\_\_\_\_; All come with Rolls, Beverages & Dessert: NY Cheesecake

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME DINNER: (Friday Evening May 15) .....\$48.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Choose (# of each): Medallions of Beef \_\_\_\_\_; Chicken Marsala \_\_\_\_\_; Pan Seared Salmon \_\_\_\_\_

BANQUET: (Sunday Evening May 17) .....\$48.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Choose (# of each): Roast Prime Rib \_\_\_\_\_; Boursin Chicken \_\_\_\_\_; Grouper W/crab stuffing \_\_\_\_\_

BUS for AMERICAN VICTORY CRUISE: .....\$18.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Bus Transportation only – round trip- All day Saturday May 16th / Call 813-228-8766 to make Cruise reservation)

TOTAL DUE (For this Page 1 of 2): .....\$ \_\_\_\_\_

SPECIAL MEDICAL OR PHYSICAL CONCERNS—please detail needs request on separate sheet.

CANCELLATION NOTICE: REFUNDS ONLY by Special Exception AFTER MAY 1, 2009

SEND COMPLETED FORM WITH CHECK TO:

AMMV; c/o John Reher  
 Box 151205  
 Cape Coral, FL 33915-1205

FOR GENERAL INFORMATION CALL: Morris Harvey, 352-564-0267 or e-mail morris@xtalwind.net

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## JOINING FORCES ON CAPITOL HILL



The National Association for Uniformed Services® (NAUS) is pleased to welcome the American Merchant Marine Veterans as an affiliated organization. NAUS is proud to be the only other veterans organization to strongly support the Belated Thank You legislation on Capitol Hill, and will work hard with you and your leadership at AMMV to enhance the status of our nation's Merchant Marine veterans.

As part of our affiliation agreement, AMMV Members may join the National Association for Uniformed Services® at the steeply reduced dues rate below, and enjoy the benefits belonging to a larger organization can offer. Benefits including a free subscription to the NAUS bimonthly magazine, which will keep you up-to-date on important legislative issues and include special coverage of merchant marine issues in every edition; low group rate health, life, auto and homeowners insurance; travel discounts; a no-fee NAUS Visa card and more.

**Joining NAUS will ensure a stronger voice on Capitol Hill,  
and help carry on the proud legacy of the U.S. Merchant Marine.**

### NAUS Application for Membership

☐ **YES!** I'm an eligible American Merchant Marine Veteran  
**Please enroll me in NAUS today.**

AMMV09

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (mm/dd/yy)

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

If you served in any other Branch of the military, please enter it here: \_\_\_\_\_

Rank/grade: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Special NAUS Dues for AMMV Members

One Year	\$12 *Special Rate!
Three Years	\$33 *Special Rate!
Life Membership (age 70+)	\$55 *Special Rate!

#### Note: Special dues rate only for members of American Merchant Marine Veterans

\*Regular Dues are \$15 for one year, \$37 for three years and \$130 for Life (age 70+)

Membership Term: \_\_\_\_\_ year(s)

Dues: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### DUES PAYMENT INFORMATION

☐ Check or Money Order enclosed (make payable to NAUS) \*PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH\*

☐ Please charge my credit card

Check card used

☐ Visa

☐ Master Card

☐ Discover Card

☐ American Express

Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(as shown on card – please print)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(Required if using credit card)

**Please mail application and payment to:  
NAUS • 5535 Hempstead Way • Springfield, VA 22151**



# AMERICAN VICTORY MARINERS MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM SHIP



AmericanMerchantMarineVeterans  
POST OFFICE BOX 151205  
CAPE CORAL, FL 33915-1205

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