

AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS

# AMMV NEWS

## MAGAZINE



IN PEACE AND WAR



1775

### FALL 2015

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\$4.00



# You Earned Them

**Distinguished  
Service**



**Meritorious  
Service**



**Outstanding  
Achievement**



**Defense  
(Prior to Pearl Harbor)**



**Mariner's  
(Dead or wounded)**



**Prisoner of  
War**



**Mediterranean  
Middle-East  
War Zone**



**Pacific War  
Zone**



**Atlantic War  
Zone**



**World War II  
Victory**



According to Maritime Administration records, more than 12,400 mariners were awarded the Merchant Marine Defense Bar; 143,000 mariners were awarded the Atlantic War Zone Bar; 111,000 Pacific War Zone Bars were distributed; and, 94,000 bars for service in the Mediterranean-Middle East War Zone were presented. In addition, over 2,000 mariners received the Korean Service Bar, and 5,000 were given the Vietnam Service Bar.

All of these recipients of the war zone bars are eligible to obtain the new corresponding medal. The immediate families of deceased mariners are also eligible.

Some mariners who sailed in these wars never applied for the war zone ribbon bars. The Maritime Administration is again accepting original applications for the decorations. Applicants must provide proper documentation of their merchant marine service in order to be considered for the

medals. In general such documentation must include the mariner's full name, "Z" or book number, and copies of voyage discharge certificates.

Inquiries should be directed to:

Office of Sealift Support Maritime Administration, Rm W25-322; Attn: Awards  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Please direct all questions to:

Deveda Midgett  
Vessel Transfer Officer  
Office of Sealift Support  
(202) 366-2354 or (202) 366-2323  
fax: (202) 366-5904; email: mmarinersmedals@dot.gov



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NEWS MAGAZINE

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**NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS**

**American Merchant Marine Veterans**

**Sindy Raymond**

**2722 Maynes Ct.**

**Santa Rosa, CA 95405**

**Phone: (707) 546-6349**

**Cell: (707) 235-6598**

**saaren@sonic.net**

**NATIONAL CORPORATE OFFICE**

**American Merchant Marine Veterans**

**8055 N. Dacca Terrace**

**Dunnellon, FL 34433-5413**

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**EDITORIAL COMMITTEE**

Capt. Chris Edyvean.....President

Sindy Raymond ..... Editor and AMMV Office Administrator

Carole Gutierrez

..... Editorial Committee and Graphic Design Contributor

The editor and publisher of this magazine assume no  
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## AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS

### National Officers

**National President .....** **Capt. Chris Edyvean** *Midwest Chapter*  
P.O. Box 41 – Hurley, WI 54534-0041 – (715) 862-2531 – cjedyvean@hotmail.com

**National Vice President... Morris Harvey** *Ocala Chapter*  
8055 N. Dacca Terrace - Dunnellon, FL 34433-5413 - (352) 564-0267 - morris27@centurylink.net

**National Secretary .....** **Nelson Cauble** *Oregon Chapter*  
2657 Greyfox Dr. – Sutherlin, OR 97479 – (541) 459-7982 – riverbank2@charter.net

**National Treasurer .....** **George Salovich** *Big Sky Mariners Chapter*  
P.O. Box 1746 – Poulson, MT 59860-1746 – (406) 676-0530 – georges@lambros.com

### Regional Vice Presidents

#### Region ONE – FL, PR

**Richard Arcand** *Sarasota-Manatee Chapter*  
5674 Bay Pines Lake Bl. - St. Petersburg, FL 33708-4513 - 727-392-5648 - rearand12@gmail.com

#### Region TWO – AL, DE, GA, KY, MD, MS, NC, SC, TN VA, DC, WV

**George Bruno** *Vulcan Mariners Chapter*  
2131 Highway 130 W. - Shelbyville, TN 37160 - (510) 543-0966 - gibruno@pacbell.net

#### Region THREE - NJ, PA

**Howard Pfeifer (Interim)** *Three Rivers Chapter*  
2592 Cole Rd. - Wexford, PA 15090-7805 - (724) 935-6465 - howdypfeifer@yahoo.com

#### Region FOUR – CT, MA, ME, NH, NY, RI, VT

**J. Fred Rodriguez** *Edwin J. O'Hara Chapter*  
P. O. Box 164 - Staten Island, NY 10301-0164 - caronia010449@yahoo.com

#### Region FIVE – IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI

**Burt Young** *Mo Valley Chapter*  
7200 Van Dorn #318 - Lincoln, NE 68506 - (402) 488-1576 - layneeboz@gmail.com

#### Region SIX – AR, AZ, KS, LA, MO, NM, OK, TX

**Bob Ross (Interim)** *Member-at-Large*  
111 Stroud St. - El Dorado, AK 71730-5353 - (870) 863-4738 - csknight@suddenlink.net

#### Region SEVEN – AK, CO, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY

**Carole Gutierrez** *Oregon Chapter*  
3740 NE 135th Ave. - Portland, OR 97230-2712 - (503) 252-8250 - photosmcg@gmail.com

#### Region EIGHT – AUS, CA, HI

**Larry Starn** *Sacramento Valley Chapter*  
13973 Gas Canyon Dr. - Nevada City, CA 95959-8802 - (530) 265-8340 - lstarn139@comcast.net

### Appointed Officers

**Judge Advocate: .....** **Melvin Tublin** *Member-at-Large*  
(718) 858-4738 – meltublin@aol.com

**Chaplain: .....** **Bob Ross** *Member-at-Large*

**Editor,**

**National Magazine: .....** **Sindy Raymond** *North Bay Mariners Chapter*  
(707) 546-6349 – saaren@sonic.net

**Historian:.....** **vacant**

**Nat'l Public Relations: .....** **A.J. Wichita** *SS Stephen Hopkins Chapter*  
President Emeritus  
(972) 231-5464 – ajwichita@sbcglobal.net

### Standing Committees

**Editorial:.....** **Capt. Chris Edyvean** *Midwest Chapter*  
**Sindy Raymond** *North Bay Mariners Chapter*  
**Carole Gutierrez** *Oregon Chapter*

**Government Affairs:.....** **Morris Harvey** *Ocala Chapter*  
**Charles Mills** *Lone Star Chapter*  
**Melvin Tublin** *Member-at-Large*  
**"Beech" Dale** *Mo Valley Mariners Chapter*

**Veterans Affairs: .....** **vacant**

**Constitution & By-laws:....** **Richard Arcand** *Sarasota-Manatee Chapter*

**Nominating & Credentials:.....** **Richard "Ben" Benjamin** *Member-at-Large*  
(317) 902-1491 – hoosierben@gmail.com

**Membership:.....** **Capt. Chris Edyvean** *Midwest Chapter*  
**Sindy Raymond** *North Bay Mariners Chapter*  
**Patti Scafidi** *Member-at-Large*  
(228) 671-6384 - patti.scafidi@gmail.com

### **2016 National Convention:**

**Co-Chair – Capt. Chris Edyvean** *Midwest Chapter*  
**Co-Chair – Morris Harvey** *Ocala Chapter*  
**Memory Book Sales – Patti Scafidi** *Member-at-Large*  
**Finance Chair – Sindy Raymond** *North Bay Mariners Chapter*  
**Memory Book Design and Production – Carole Gutierrez** *Oregon Chapter*

### **Internet &**

**Social Media: .....** **Capt. Chris Edyvean** *Midwest Chapter*  
**Morris Harvey** *Ocala Chapter*





# National President Capt. Chris Edyvean



## **Western Region Conference**

I was able to attend the AMMV Western Region Conference in late September, and I must state that I was very impressed with the outstanding work done by our Golden Gate and Sacramento Valley Chapters to make this event a reality. The business sessions

were highly organized and professionally conducted and the group was treated to informative guest speakers. In addition, the Sands Regency Hotel provided wonderful meals and top notch support service.

As your National President, this was my first opportunity to get out and meet with the membership. I received a very warm welcome from all of the members and their families in attendance. It was very rewarding to have the chance to not only participate in group meetings, but to sit down and speak one-on-one with many of our members. Thank you all for your hospitality and genuine kindness.

## **Some "Thank You" Notes**

There are many people and organizations that help promote AMMV in different ways and on various levels - and they all have our sincere appreciation. However, I would like to take a moment to formally thank a few people who have made significant efforts towards AMMV causes in recent weeks.

I'm sure many of our members are familiar with Dave Yoho, a nationally known business/training consultant. What many of Mr. Yoho's followers may not know is that he served in the WWII Merchant Marine. It came to light a few months back that Dave's young face was included in a group shot used as a promotional poster for the USMS training facility at Sheepshead Bay. Since learning of this, Dave has become very involved in supporting the needs of our WWII membership base. He has not only made personal donations to be used for mission support activities, but has also successfully rallied to gain contributions from others and is continuing to do so. This work has included the production of promotional videos which convincingly ask for support of our WWII mariners. Last but not least, Dave has joined AMMV as one of our newest members. Thank you Dave!

Secondly, I would like to thank Don and Patti Scafidi for their contributions and efforts with our membership drive. Patti, who has been running our Facebook page since early summer, was officially added to AMMV's Membership Committee on July 25th. She has since been working tirelessly to gain social media followers and to recruit from this base of mostly active mariners. Her husband Don joined the cause by giving away prints of his patriotic painting "We will not fail" to new AMMV members who joined online during a recent membership push. Don has also dedicated much space on his personal website - Don Scafidi Marine Artist - to promote AMMV. In fact, the cover of this News issue features one of Don's fine paintings. Thank you Don and Patti!

## **Membership**

As described above, new Membership Committee member Patti Scafidi and her family have been hard at work in recruiting new members. The official AMMV website is now live with a function that allows prospective members to join online, including payment of dues via PayPal. Over three dozen new members have joined online as of this writing, many of whom were personally assisted by Patti.

In late August we mailed out over 500 letters of membership renewal reminders to past-due Members-at-Large. Apparently this is an obstacle we face each year, but this year was worse than usual. We are considering ideas which will reduce this number next year. One possible improvement would be the ability for AMMV to collect dues payments by credit card over the phone. If you have any ideas, we'd love to hear them.

## **Social Media Update**

The official AMMV Facebook and Twitter sites are going strong. Our volunteer social media staffers (Patti Scafidi and Sheila Sova) have been rapidly gaining followers and interacting with them to promote our causes. I invite all AMMV Chapters to email us pictures of your meetings and local events to share with our social media audience.

## **Monuments, Memorials, & Events**

AMMV is planning on having at least one member in attendance at a Veteran's Day ceremony in Washington, DC in which the Friends of the National WWII Memorial organization have requested that a WWII Merchant Marine veteran be in attendance to lay a wreath. From what we

*(continued on next page)*

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have heard about this event, the Maritime Administrator is slated to be one of the guest speakers.

The National WWII Museum in New Orleans, LA is scheduled to open a WWII Merchant Marine exhibit on December 11th. This initial opening is available by invitation only; AMMV has been in contact with museum coordinators to ensure that we have a few slots reserved for our WWII mariner members.

Members of the John T. Schmidt chapter attended a ceremony on September 11th which unveiled a new WWII Merchant Marine monument in Florence, SC. Chapter CEO Tom Schmidt informed us that this monument was made possible by the Daughters of the American Revolution organization.

Recently, I sent out a proposal to AMMV's Executive Board to vote on releasing the amount of \$805 (held under line item # 309 on the AMMV Balance sheet - WWII War Memorial). The original intent of this money was to be used as a Merchant Marine addition to a national monument. This plan never materialized and the money has been held for several years. My proposal outlined the idea that since this money was originally designated toward a monument, we should release it to AMMV Chapters who are actively in the process of erecting a new WWII MM monument or restoring an existing monument; no mariners are being honored or remembered if this money is sitting in our account. The proposal was passed by the Executive Board and the money will be split evenly between three eligible Chapters.

### **Legislative Issues**

#### **H.R. 563: The Honoring Our WWII Merchant Mariners Act of 2015**

In mid-June, the Pennsylvania Senate adopted S.R. 148 which urges Congress to pass H.R. 563. In July, I authorized a mass mailing to all AMMV members in PA. A full copy of S.R. 148 was included in the mailing, with a letter urging members to contact their representatives to inform them of this Resolution and to persuade them to co-sponsor H.R. 563.

H.R. 563 had built up a good head of steam by mid-summer, partially due to the "Storm the Hill" efforts which were engineered by Morris Harvey, and partially due to our newly established social media platforms and the public outreach initiated by our social media team. However, the momentum died with the Congressional recess period. We have gained just three new co-sponsors since Congress resumed. Also, we still do not have a companion Senate bill. (Co-Sponsors to date: 37)

#### **H.R. 2992: The Merchant Marine of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act**

This new bill was initiated during the production stages of the summer issue of AMMV News. It was formally

introduced by Susan Brooks (R-IN) on July 9th. If enacted, this bill would award the Congressional Gold Medal to the WWII Merchant Marine as a group (not individually). Brooks also signed on as a co-sponsor to H.R. 563 after she personally met with our "Storm the Hill" gang. (Co-sponsors to date: 12)

#### **H.R. 1288: WWII Merchant Mariner Service Act**

Don Horton is the brains behind this bill which simply asks the Secretary of Homeland Security to accept alternative methods for documenting the WWII service of coastwise mariners. Many service records were destroyed, making this bill important to coastwise WWII mariners like Horton. This bill continues to pick up co-sponsors, and a companion Senate bill (S. 1775) has also been introduced. (House Cosponsors to date: 119)

#### **2016 National Convention**

Morris Harvey and I are co-chairs in planning the 2016 National Convention, which we are pleased to announce will be held at the Hilton New Orleans Airport Hotel on March 29th – April 1st. This marks the 30th annual National Convention - a huge milestone for AMMV.

This annual event will be a bit earlier on the calendar than in recent years, and costs are up just a touch. However, we feel that the location of New Orleans has much to offer to our membership base. The culture and history of NOLA make it one of the finer locations in the country to host an important function such as our 30th convention. Planned events at this early stage include a trip to the National WWII Museum and a lunch cruise on the historic paddle-wheeler S.S. Natchez. We sincerely hope that you will consider joining us at the National Convention.

One more related note: The 2016 "Memory Book" advertising form is included in this magazine. The paid ads collected for this commemorative book serve a very important role in supporting the convention. Please ensure your Chapter places an order; personal messages are accepted as well.

#### **S.S. El Faro Incident**

Our maritime community is stunned with the loss of the U.S.-flagged/U.S.-crewed containership S.S. El Faro, which sank in Hurricane Joaquin. The last reported communication from the vessel was a distress signal indicating a loss of propulsion and a 15° list. This is the first major disaster involving a large ocean-going American vessel since the loss of the Marine Electric in 1983.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the families affected by this tragedy.



Captain Chris Edyvean  
AMMV National President

# **PROPOSAL TO AMEND AMMV BY-LAWS: TO ALLOW NATIONAL OFFICERS TO PROCEED WITH ONLINE BANKING:**

**To be considered at the National Convention March 28 – April 2, 2016**

*Submitted by Capt. Chris Edyvean, National President*

## **SECTION 204 – ELECTED NATIONAL OFFICERS – POWERS & DUTIES**

### **A. PRESIDENT**

#### **New (proposed) language:**

Addition: Section 204 (F) details duties of the National President in relation to meeting payment obligations of the organization.

### **E. TREASURER**

#### **Existing language:**

~~2. The National Treasurer shall pay out monies in payment of obligations only on authority given by the National President. All checks shall be signed by the National Treasurer and countersigned by the National President or any Board Member (when necessary). The National Treasurer shall insure valid signatures specimens are on record at all institutions of deposit.~~

#### **New (proposed) language to replace E. (2):**

2. The National Treasurer shall insure valid signatures specimens are on record at all institutions of deposit. Section 204 (F) details duties of the National Treasurer in relation to meeting payment obligations of the organization.

#### **New (proposed) language – additional section:**

### **F. NATIONAL OFFICERS & METHODS OF ISSUING MONIES/PAYMENTS DUE**

There are two methods in which AMMV will meet its payment obligations. The first method is the longstanding traditional method, in which the National Treasurer shall pay out monies in payment of obligation only on authority given by the National President. If using this payment method, all checks shall be signed by the National Treasurer and countersigned by the National President or any Board Member (when necessary). The second method allows for the National President to directly issue due payments electronically via the use of online banking. If using this payment method, the National Treasurer will be notified by the National President via email with the details of each electronic transaction. The National Vice President shall be copied on such emails.

It is understood that the four elected National Officers have the means to set-up an online profile and to view AMMV's transaction record at any time. On the authority of mutual agreement between the National President and the National Vice President, the National Office Administrator shall have "guest viewing" privileges to access to this online account in order to better perform his/her duties.

It is intended that the use of online banking, which allows for the automatic record keeping of payment transactions, will provide a quick and accurate recall of transactions for use in any audit situation. In addition, the separate email records of the National President, Vice President, and Treasurer would give auditors additional information regarding the processing of online transactions.





# National Vice President Chairman, Government Affairs Committee **Morris Harvey**



As I write this I am realizing that this is the 18<sup>th</sup> Magazine issue that I have written to you as an AMMV officer, excluding the four years that I served as a R-VP.

## **MEMBER CHALLENGE:**

We have had a new AMMV website on-line for several months and we have not received many “Contact

Us” messages from members. There is a full section which allows visitors to become an advocate of Legislative initiatives, such as HR-563. There are sample letters, links to petitions, and links to CapWiz, which permits you to send a letter directly from the CapWiz site. We want all members to become an advocate.

**In this submittal I am presenting a challenge to all members (more than 2,200 strong) to go to the AMMV website [www.ammv.us](http://www.ammv.us) and become an advocate – use the button on the home page or go thru the Government Affairs tab on the bar-menu. In addition, please send us a “Contact Us” note. Let us know that you were there, and include an indication of what action you took. Include your email address and we will send updates on Just recognition and other AMMV business by email. Over the next three months or when the next Magazine issue is published, we will report the results of our challenge. No names will be used in the report without permission.**

## **OUR FIGHT MUST CONTINUE:**

I would be remiss if I did not again encourage you to continue efforts to get your own Congressperson to co-sign HR-563. To be successful, you must develop a high level of determination and be especially persistent, keep calling and sending information. If they promise to call back and do not within a day or two—then call back—follow-up. However, always be friendly.

If you need to update and refine your plan, I refer you to our excellent coverage in prior issues of our National

Magazine—as noted in the challenge above, our AMMV website [www.ammv.us](http://www.ammv.us) is operational - go there for help in contacting your Congressperson.

The fight is not over; as I write this we have 15 months left in this 114<sup>th</sup> session of Congress.

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***“If the freedom of speech is taken away,  
then dumb and silent we may be led,  
like sheep to the slaughter.”***

***~ George Washington***

***“Because if you don’t stand up for the  
stuff you don’t like, when they come  
for the stuff you do like, you’ve already  
lost.”***

***~ Neil Gaiman***

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This is why you must contact your Members of Congress and tell them why you want them to support a particular issue or bill. If you don’t tell them, how will they know? Tell your own story. Explain why it is important to you. Use the freedom of speech we have in our country. Over the years I have noted that the actual existence of our U.S. Flag Merchant Marine is almost completely dependent on the policies and laws of our National Government. For us who believe our Merchant Marine and especially the mariners who make it work are continually taken for granted and their recognition is generally not even considered—we must be forever more diligent than other citizens. Even though we have a Maritime Administration and the President and management always offering great praise on Mariner accomplishments, I do not know of any President, since F.D. Roosevelt, that has supported full benefit recognition by Congress of WWII mariners. If you know of one please educate me.

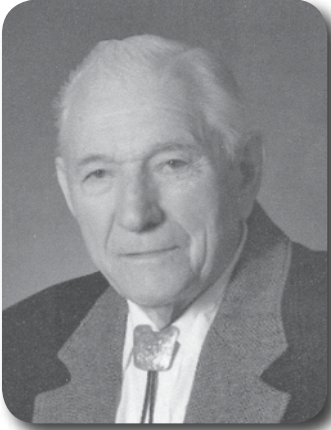
The work effort must continue.

*Morris Harvey*

Morris Harvey, National VP  
Government Affairs Committee Chairman



# National Secretary Nelson Cauble



Dear Fellow Mariners and friends,

Yes, here we are again, and once again it's time to "point with pride" and "view with alarm" the past behind us. I point with pride to the work of our Past president Morris and his officers who have led us through the years. Their dedication to our organization is to be

saluted. Our new President Chris Edyvean has certainly shown his dedication to our efforts and we welcome him and salute him for his leadership.

I am so proud of, and grateful for our wonderful Office Administrator Sindy Raymond. What a treasure we have with her taking care of our business. She is truly one of a kind and I salute her and thank her for all she does for our AMMV. Our magazine is always first class and we thank her for her part in its production. I also salute our Regional VP, Carole Gutierrez, for her hard work and editorial talents for the magazine. Our Southern Oregon Chapter has closed and our Portland Chapter with Carole and Linda Roberts have worked to make our members welcome. Our thanks to those and all others that made it possible.

We also view with alarm the loss of members listed in the last magazine. One of those I am so sorry to hear of recently is our member Don Trimbath. He was a true leader in our organization. Shirley and I have spent time with he and Doris when they lived in California. We had lunch with them one visit, and were sent on our way with good memories, (and with a basket of wonderful cherries, from their tree). A second visit with him came after Doris had died, and we heard the sad news that he was going back "home". He was a true gentleman, a diligent worker for our AMMV, and a good friend.

I thank you all again for your past confidence and support, and give you again my

promise that I will do all I can possibly do to further our program, and repeat to you that my word is my bond, my handshake is as good as a contract and my only purpose will be to do my very best to further the good of our AMMV. My "door" is always open, and once again I will remind you that....

**"Together we have, and together we still can make a difference."**

Sincerely,

*Nelson Cauble*

Nelson Cauble

National Secretary AMMV

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# Editor / AMMV Office Administrator **Sindy Raymond**

## **AN EXCEPTIONAL GUEST EDITOR FOR THIS ISSUE**

Many, many, many THANKS to our Guest Editor for this issue, our own Carole Gutierrez., of the Oregon Chapter.

Since I was a little “under the weather”, when the deadline was looming, Carole stepped up to the wheel and volunteered to be Editor of this issue of the AMMV NEWS. I’m still not sure she knew what she was getting into; but she has done a superlative job and should be proud of it. We have been blessed with her beautiful front, inside front and back cover graphics for some years now, as well as some “in-between” pieces, but she has outdone herself with this Editorial experience. THANKS SO MUCH.

Others stepped up to help, too. Our National President Capt. Chris, who attended the Western Region conference in Reno, took the photographs for the minutes/report article on that; NVP Morris Harvey contributed more than his share in the Just Recognition and government affairs area and Susan Alexander, who does the layout for us, in Texas, has been wonderful about trying to understand and pull together the many parts needed for this publication. Susan has said that, over the years, she has learned to read my mind about what I’m trying to accomplish with each issue. Now she has had her chance to check out Carole’s mind, too.

I think all of these folks deserve a big hand and I very much appreciate their additional work. Thanks to you all – especially from me!! Hopefully, I’ll be back, under full sail, for the next issue.

And speaking of the next issue, PLEASE NOTE: the AMMV By-laws mandate that any proposed changes to the Constitution or By-laws be published at least 60 days prior to the National Convention. Since, as you can see from the information about this years’ convention later in this issue, this years’ convention will be held early, the deadline for any proposals needs to be in this office for publication by January 15, 2016 at the latest.

## **NEW MEMBERS**

Thanks to the new website [www.ammv.us](http://www.ammv.us), where folks can apply for membership and pay their initial dues with a credit card through PayPal, and the “public relations” of Patti Scafidi and others on the Internet, our membership has been increasing steadily. And, I, for one, am certainly happy to be busy processing all these new memberships. Welcome aboard, new members!!!!

We have lost several previously “active” members this quarter and that only reminds us why it is so very important to keep the AMMV an active and beneficial organization; one that will continue to keep WWII Merchant Marine history alive as well as to support the maritime issues of today. We will survive only through an influx of younger, enthusiastic folks who can take over the wheel.



## **30<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL AMMV CONVENTION**

The time and place are set and I, for one, am ready to experience New Orleans and celebrate our 30<sup>th</sup> reunion. Come and join us – make your reservations early. It will be a wonderful occasion with, perhaps, a little business thrown in.

SEE YOU IN N’ORLEANS,

*Sindy Raymond*  
Sindy

## **DUES ARE STILL ACCEPTED.**

*Members-at-Large who have not paid your dues for July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016 please send them NOW. \$32.00 will continue your membership, including this NEWS Magazine. Please send to:*

**AMMV National Office  
2722 Maynes Ct.  
Santa Rosa, CA 95405**





# Editorial Committee & Graphic Design Contributor **Carole Gutierrez**

First I would like to thank all the gracious members who sent condolences to our family following the recent passing of my dear husband, Max. Your kindness and support have been overwhelming and very much appreciated. One member, who recently lost his wife, told me the best way to survive this was to keep busy. Little did he know ...

Our magazine editor and office administrator Sindy Raymond, fell ill just as this issue was about to enter its production stage. Some time ago, we had talked about the need for backup plans for the NEWS should either one of us should be unable to fulfill our responsibilities. Of course, she had already started pulling this issue together and I was happy to step into those considerably large shoes. It is a big job as I found out first hand. We really owe her a debt of gratitude for all her hard work. Although she is a part time employee of AMMV, she volunteers her time putting the NEWS together. She is a skilled writer and editor and it is my pleasure to work with such a pro.



## **The 30th National Convention**

The 2016 National Convention is in the planning stages. Rather than East or West Coast locations as in years past, this year it is more in the center of the country - New Orleans, LA. New Orleans is a large and very important Gulf port city. Innovative things are happening there, including construction of an off-shore deep water port. This is an exciting time to be visiting this great city as it rebuilds after the devastating hurricanes of years past. You can find hotel and convention registration information in this issue.

The big news is the timing. In 2016 the convention is a little more than a month earlier than usual. That means we need to start focusing now on the Memory Book. The deadline is in mid-February, rather than late March. The good news is that prices have not changed from last year. There is an order form in this issue and Patti Scafidi will be contacting chapters and previous advertisers. This project is very important for AMMV and I cannot stress enough that its success depends on your participation. Even if you can't attend the convention, you can show your support by buying space in the Memory Book. We are also accepting biographies from members. As space allows, we will place your story in the Book free of charge. We love pictures and so do our readers. If you send originals to me, I will return them when I am through. These are your treasures and I understand their importance to you and your family and will give them the best of care.

## **Welcome New Members**

It is wonderful to see all the new members. This is exactly what we need to keep AMMV alive and well. It is really exciting and offers a lot of promise to this organization. For the first time in a very, very long time, the number of new members exceed the number who have Crossed the Bar. I am sure these numbers are in large part to our new website, [www.ammv.us](http://www.ammv.us). We are a membership driven organization – our members, YOU, mean everything to us.

## **Just Recognition**

We have had lots of media coverage, both in print, on television and on the web. Just about every cosponsor has written about HR 563 on his or hers website. Some have issued press releases. The real point is that they are lending their names and voices to our cause. Frankly, their voices are much louder than any of ours so having them speak for us is outstanding.

Although I am not a Merchant Mariner, I was married to one. His stories were remarkable. I have learned so much about what you did during World War II and after. Merchant Mariners continue your tradition of bravery and patriotism. During Desert Storm, there was an extreme shortage of U.S. Merchant Marine to man the ships that carried supplies to our fighting men in Kuwait and Iraq. The word went out to the maritime union and academies. And, of course, they responded. One 82 year old man was a Kings Point graduate. He volunteered and served as second mate on a Navy Sealift ship.

When 9-11 happened, Merchant Mariners rushed to the shores to evacuate people from Manhattan. No one asked, they just did what was needed. The true tradition of American Merchant Marines.

*Carole Gutierrez*

CAROLE

*I am honored to serve you.*

# AMMV

## Profit & Loss

July through September 2015

### Ordinary Income/Expense

#### Income

402 · CONTRIBUTIONS	1,646.00
406 · DVD SALES	12.00
410 · CHAPTER DUES	
BSM · BIG SKY MARINERS	125.00
AKG · ALASKA GREATLANDS	288.00
BEE · BEEHIVE MARINERS	150.00
CAC · CACTUS MARINERS	175.00
CEC · CENTRAL CALIFORNIA	475.00
CHC · CHINA COASTERS	350.00
CWM · CARL W. MINOR - CENT. CA. COAST	375.00
DAR · DENNIS ROLAND	2,675.00
DES · DESERT MARINERS	350.00
EMS · EMERALD SEAS	80.00
EOH · EDWIN O'HARA	805.00
GLD · GOLDEN GATE	1,175.00
GUL · GULFSTREAM	1,275.00
HIR · HIGH ROLLERS	425.00
HSE · HIGH SEA ERA	150.00
HSM · HIGH SEAS MARINERS	200.00
HUD · HUDSON VALLEY	725.00
HUM · HUMBOLDT BAY	350.00
JTS · JOHN T. SCHMIDT/PALMETTO	400.00
LON · LONE STAR	425.00
MAC · ROBERT J. MAC ALVANAH	450.00
MAL · MEMBERS AT LARGE	19,132.00
MALW · MEMBER-AT-LARGE - WEBPAGE	1,163.05
MAM · MID AMER. ANCIENT MARINERS	600.00
MCO · MID-COLUMBIA	700.00
MGC · MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST	32.00
MOV · MISSOURI VALLEY	775.00
MPA · MARINERS OF PENNSYLVANIA	275.00
MWE · MID WEST	50.00
NBM · NORTH BAY MARINERS	400.00
NOA · NORTH ATLANTIC	525.00
OCA · OCALA CHAPTER	575.00
OHV · OHIO VALLEY	32.00
OJE · OTTO J. ERNST	150.00
ORE · OREGON	850.00
ORV · OSWEGO RIVER VALLEY	75.00
PEC · PECONIC BAY	400.00
PUG · PUGET SOUND	300.00
ROG · ROGUE VALLEY	225.00
SAC · SACRAMENTO VALLEY	925.00
SAR · SARASOTA-MANATEE	375.00
SSP · SS SAMUEL PARKER	550.00
STH · SS STEPHEN HOPKINS	700.00
SUQ · SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY	375.00
SWF · SOUTHWEST FLORIDA	225.00
THR · THREE RIVERS	775.00

Total 410 · CHAPTER DUES 41,607.05

Total Income 43,265.05

#### Expense

500 · FIXED EXPENSE	
501 · BANK CHARGE	97.00
503 · EQUIP RENTAL	150.00
507 · TELEPHONE	573.31
508 · RENT/OCCUPANCY	900.00
509 · UTILITIES	300.00
511 · SERVICE CHARGES - PAYPAL	46.80
Total 500 · FIXED EXPENSE	2,067.11
522 · RECRUITMENT & SPECIAL MAILING	523.73
528 · JCC CLOSING EXPENSE	219.00

#### 530 · NEWS LETTER

533 · POSTAGE	1,171.97
536 · PRINTING	3,767.10
538 · LAYOUT	1,100.00
539 · EDITORIAL FEE	300.00

Total 530 · NEWS LETTER 6,339.07

#### 540 · DVD EXPENSE

543 · DVD POSTAGE	11.11
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Total 540 · DVD EXPENSE 11.11

#### 550 · PERSONNEL

551 · ADMINISTRATOR	4,650.00
552 · NATIONAL PRESIDENT	511.95

Total 550 · PERSONNEL 5,161.95

#### 560 · OPERATING EXPENSES

564 · OFFICE SUPPLIES	190.04
565 · POSTAGE	552.01
566 · PRINTING	57.42
567 · LICENSES & FEES	70.00

Total 560 · OPERATING EXPENSES 869.47

Total Expense 15,191.44

Net Ordinary Income 28,073.61

Net Income 28,073.61

### Fellow Mariners:

Would the Treasurer of each Chapter please carefully check the amounts that we show as having been received from you in the first quarter of this fiscal year and verify if they are correct. This is the only check we have to make sure monies are properly credited. If there is a difference, please contact Cindy at (707) 546-6349 or saaren@sonic.net.

*George Salovich, National Treasurer*

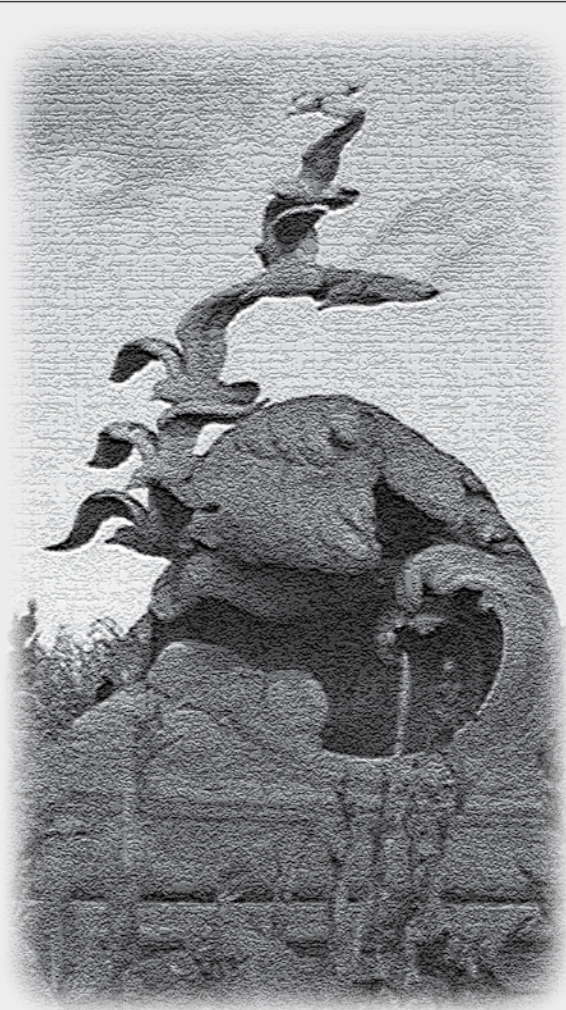
# Welcome Aboard to these New Members of the AMMV

VIRGINIA ADAMS	ST. LOUIS	MO
JEREMY ALLEN	EDWARDSVILLE	PA
JAMES ARMSTRONG	PORT ANGELES	WA
SARA ATKINSON	POWHATAN	VA
TIMOTHY BEAUGARD	ST. LOUIS	MO
JOSEPH E. BECKNER	BROWNSVILLE	TX
EUGENE BEDARD	TEXAS CITY	TX
MICHAEL J. BLATCHFORD	WHITE LAKE	MI
REX E. BOLIN	PORT CHARLOTTE	FL
RICHARD E. BONILLA	POTEAU	OK
DANA M. CELLA	AUBURN	WA
LARRY CERVO	IRONWOOD	MI
KENNETH CHOW	WALNUT CREEK	CA
SHIRLEY COLLINS	MCMURRAY	PA
JOHN COOKE	PICAYUNE	MS
WILLIAM CRAWFORD	BAY SHORE	NY
CURTIS CUMMINS	SUN CITY	AZ
DAVID A. CUNNINGHAM	NORTH FT. MYERS	FL
MARIO A. DESPRES	MENLO PARK	CA
KIM ESTES	CYPRESS	CA
CARMEN EVANS	FOREST	VA
ORDICE A. GALLUPS	CHESAPEAKE BEACH	MD
DALE GIBSON	JACKSON	MS
DAVID GREENHOUSE	PORT ST. LUCIE	FL
HAROLD GREER	DALLAS	TX
BRENDAN GROH	SHEBOYGAN	WI
MARILYN F. HARTMAN	NIAGARA FALLS	NY
MICHELE HATCHER	HEPHZIBAH	GA
JAMES HOBAN	LA CROSSE	WI
SUSAN HOGAN	SPRUCE	MI
CHARLENE HOLT	N. RICHLAND HILLS	TX
CAPT. HENRY JOFFRAY	NEW ORLEANS	LA
SAM JOFFRAY	NEW ORLEANS	LA
GURDEN M. JOHNSON	ELLISVILLE	MS
NEIL E. JONES	LITTLETON	CO
PHILIP KANTZ	WILMINGTON	NC
WESLEY KASKIW	CARTERET	NJ
KELLY KURENS	LONG BEACH	CA

BRENDAN J. LALLY	FORT MYERS	FL
WALTER A. LICHOTA, JR.	KAILUA	HI
TERESA LOVERN	NORTH LITTLE ROCK	AR
JUDY MAGNA	HAWTHORNE	NJ
ANTHONY MAIELLO	YORKTOWN	NY
THOMAS J. MC CABE, JR.	LAGUNA HILLS	CA
TUULI MESSER-BOOKMAN	BENECIA	CA
GLENN MITCHELL	BILOXI	MS
CLEMENT D. MOHR	BEAUMONT	TX
NANCY E. MRAZIK	CHESAPEAKE	VA
TIMOTHY L. MUNSON	SCAPPOOSE	OR
WILLIAM O'BRIEN	EAST ISLIP	NY
ERIK L. OLSON	SANTA ROSA	CA
DAN REDDAN	STATEN ISLAND	NY
DONALD H. REESE	CITRUS SPRINGS	FL
JOHN RESPESS	PORTSMOUTH	VA
DEBORAH ROGOW	SANTA BARBARA	CA
MELVIN B. ROGOW	LOS ANGELES	CA
DAVID B. SAVILLE	HOUSTON	TX
LEE MICHAEL SCAFIDI	NEW ORLEANS	LA
HARRY T. SCHOLER	ORLANDO	FL
CLAUDIA SCHULTZ	CORAL CITY	FL
GEORGE L. SENSIBAR	DACULA	GA
SHELDON SLUSSER	PHILADELPHIA	PA
DAVID J. SINGSTOCK	HAGUE	VA
ROBIN SOVA	OVERLAND PARK	KS
LAURA B. SUDKAMP	FRANKFORT	KY
RONALD L. SUTTON	METAIRIE	LA
ROBERTA L. TAYLOR	POMPTON PLAINS	NJ
MICHAEL J. THOMAS	HOLLYWOOD	FL
ROBERT P. TILLOTSON	TOMS RIVER	NJ
LAURENCE V. WADE	BRADLEY	ME
JEWEL L. WEST	WICHITA FALLS	TX
THOMAS A. WICK	COLLEGE STATION	TX
IMOGENE WIGGINS	KANSAS CITY	MO
THOMAS B. WORSHAM	FINCASTLE	VA
VICKY WORSHAM	SUN CITY CENTER	FL
DAVE YOHO	FAIRFAX	VA



# *In memory of those who have Crossed the Final Bar*



*There are no roses on a sailor's grave,  
No lilies on an ocean wave;  
The only tribute is the seagull's sweeps  
And the teardrops that a sweetheart weeps.*

JAMES H. BAKER

GEORGE BEACH, JR.

HAROLD E. BECKLES

GEORGE BENKO

EARL K. BITTNER

ANDREW N. BONEY

EDWARD R. CLARY

JAMES A. COLLINS, JR.

ROBERT L. CORDA

T. EARL DIFFEE

DONALD B. ENGLAR

CAPT. EDWARD M. EVANS

EDWARD A. FORRESTER

JOHN A. FORSBERG

STEPHEN R. FRANKS

ROBERT S. GATES

WALTER R. HARTMAN, SR.

MYRON HEALMAN

WARREN F. KAYLER

WALTER KOWALEWICH

AMADEO LA TORRE

GILBERT G. LAWS

DONALD R. LEETZ

LAWRENCE LEMELBAUM

EMORY A. MASSMAN, JR.

JOSEPH R. MC LOUGHLIN

CHARLES E. MC MAHEL

FRANK MERRILL

XAVIER F. MILKOWSKI

ZOLLIE T. MITCHELL

HENRY R. NEWTON

FRANCIS "ED" OLAWSKI

PAUL S. PLESNARSKI

DONALD J. PRIEBE

SIDNEY A. RHONEY

RICHARD A. RICE

HERMAN "GERRY" STARNES

ELI SUTKER

DONALD L. TRIMBATH

HAROLD F. WEST

JOHN E. WHITE

DAVID H. WILLIAMS

WALTER K. WOJTASINSKI

JOHN G. WOOD, JR.

To honor a loved one, memorial donations may be made to the American Merchant Marine Veterans organization on the loved one's behalf. This is a tribute to their memory and the dedicated service they gave to their country and to mankind. Thank you for your thoughtful gesture. Donations may be sent to: AMMV, P.O. Box 186, Ferndale, CA 95536-0186.

# NEW BILL RECOGNIZING WWII VETERANS INTRODUCED

Representative Susan W. Brooks (R-IN5) has introduced legislation that would award the Congressional Gold Medal to Merchant Mariners serving during World War II. House Resolution 2992, the “Merchant Marine of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act,” will present the WWII Merchant Marine with the highest civilian award Congress can bestow for their heroic efforts providing critical supplies of war to U.S. troops by sea.

In a press release announcing the legislation, Brooks said “The brave actions of the Merchant Marine during WWII proved instrumental in securing victory for the Allied Powers. These loyal and courageous men put their lives on the line for the cause of freedom, and selflessly answered their nation’s call to duty. Unfortunately, their sacrifice is commonly overlooked, and there are fewer surviving Merchant Mariners every year. It is time for Congress to honor their service before we miss the opportunity to properly recognize these heroes.”

Congresswoman Brooks had met with AMMV’s Indiana Chapter. In her release she talked about member Gene Taylor. Taylor trained at Sheepshead Bay and served primarily in the South Pacific during WWII. “I would like for my grandchildren to realize that I fought for our freedom as

well as any U.S. Service did,” Taylor said.

The announcement also said “During wartime, Merchant Mariners serve as an auxiliary to the Navy and are responsible for the transoceanic transport of military and civilian personnel as well as combat equipment, fuel, food, commodities and raw materials. During World War II, risking their lives to provide the needed supplies for battle, Merchant Mariners bore a higher per-capita casualty rate than any other branch of the U.S.

Armed Forces. In total, hundreds of Mariner ships and thousands of men were lost to enemy combatants during the course of the war.”

Congresswoman Brooks is also a cosponsor of H.R. 563, “Honoring Our WWII Merchant Mariners Act of 2015” introduced by Rep. Janice Hahn (D-CA44). That is the bill we are working so hard to pass. It would provide WWII Merchant Mariners with a one-time \$25,000 benefit.

“I applaud Congresswoman Brooks for introducing legislation to honor these unsung heroes with the Congressional Gold Medal, Hahn said. “I am happy to cosponsor her legislation. I also appreciate her co-sponsorship of H.R. 563, legislation I introduced to give long overdue compensation to the Merchant Marine World War II veterans.”



*Central Indiana Chapter members meet with Congresswoman Susan Brooks at the American Legion Fishers.*

## On the Cover : “Liberty For Britain” by Don Scafidi

**About the artist** – Marine Artist, WWII MM Veteran, Don Scafidi has been involved with ships and the sea all of his life. His life-long affair with the sea is reflected not only in his artwork, but also in his long career in the Maritime industry. A graduate of the United States Merchant Marine Academy, Scafidi sailed for years in all types of steamships, including Liberty and Victory ships. During his maritime career, he owned and operated merchant steamships ... he served later as Maritime Attaché to the U.S. Embassies in Rome and Athens and was a delegate to NATO. He began to paint in his late 50s.

Many seafaring museums have commissioned him, including the Biloxi Seafood Museum, the T.S. Governor

Stone, Then Galveston Historical Museum and the USS *Alabama* Museum in Mobile, AL. On the cover is his compelling homage to liberty ships, “*Liberty For Britain*,” which hangs at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans.

Scafidi’s most famous painting, ‘*We Will Not Fail – A Tribute to American Spirit*’ was donated and hangs at the FDNY Fire academy as an inspiration to cadets and all who visit the academy.

Scafidi makes his home in Diamondhead MS. You can see his work in person at the 30th National Convention’s special tour to the World War II Museum in New Orleans.

In mid-1942, the war was going badly for the Allies. In the Mediterranean Sea area, most of Northern Africa, France, Italy, Yugoslavia and Greece were Axis controlled. The Allies had Gibraltar, the Island of Malta and Egypt. Malta's strategic airfield was key to holding the Mediterranean but food and oil had to get through past German and Italian bombers.

On Malta, convoys were vital to their survival in WWII. The 250,000 Maltese and 20,000 British defenders needed supplies brought in by convoys on a regular basis if they were to survive and provide the Royal Navy with the base it needed.

There were two convoy routes to Malta. One was from the British base at the port of Alexandria in Egypt. The second was from Gibraltar. Both were very dangerous routes as U-boats patrolled the Mediterranean Sea as did Axis aircraft. The fall of Crete in 1941 had provided the Germans with another place to set up airfields. The sea route between Crete and Alexandria was nicknamed 'Bomb Alley' by those who sailed there. When Axis forces retook Libya, the airfields there could also be brought back into play.

In September, 1941 a convoy of 3 ships from Alexandria brought Malta 85,000 tons of supplies. But in February, 1942 another convoy of 3 ships from Alexandria was unsuccessful – no supplies reached Malta. The Axis aerial attacks occurred too far from Malta for the island's small Hurricane air force to be able to help – and aerial support was what the convoys needed. In March a convoy of 3 merchant ships plus 21 covering force ships tried, this time with aerial escorts, they got through 'Bomb Alley' by the following day. However, the aerial escorts only had a limited range. Once the convoy had got through 'Bomb Alley', it had to face an Italian fleet based around the battleship 'Littorio', three cruisers and four destroyers. The convoy's naval escort blanketed the freighters with a smokescreen. They were helped in this by an unexpected gale that made the smokescreen more effective. The Italians were also wary of

the torpedoes carried by the British destroyers. However, in the confusion, the Italians did succeed in splitting the convoy. The freighters were separated but each had a destroyer escort. They were ordered to make to Malta at full speed so that they would arrive at night and under the cover of darkness. However, they arrived at first light on March 23rd just as an air attack on the island was starting. Two of the freighters were sunk – but two did make it into harbor. The crews were given a delirious welcome by the people of Valetta who were in desperate need of the supplies be-

ing carried. One ship was sunk just 20 miles from Malta – the remaining two merchant ships arrived to cheers by the Maltese, only to be sunk in the harbor with only a fraction of their cargo unloaded.

By June, 1942, Malta was desperately short of food and fuel. 2 convoys were sent -one convoy with 6 merchant ships and many escorts left from east of Gibraltar. Simultaneously 11 merchant ships, escorted by 48 others headed west from Alexandria – result 2 supply ships arrived in Malta but no fuel oil got through.

### *Operation Pedestal*

In late July, 1942, Governor Gort of Malta wrote to British General Ismay: "As you know we live a hand-to-mouth existence and our future, indeed our fate, depends on the success of the next

convoy. Aviation spirit remains our Achilles' Heel and the Middle East Defence Committee consider it vital that aircraft operating from Malta should attack ships crossing the Mediterranean...If we run out of aviation spirit and can no longer operate fighters, the chances of getting another convoy into Malta will be very doubtful."

The convoy, named Operation Pedestal, in August, 1942, was the final effort to supply Malta before she was forced to surrender. The convoy consisted of 14 merchant ships escorted by 39 warships, including four aircraft carriers – the most ever assembled to escort a convoy. During its duration, the fuel tanker 'Ohio' reached the Grand Harbour. However, losses on this convoy were also high as the aircraft carrier 'Eagle' was lost along with two cruisers and

# AT ALL COSTS - CONVOYS TO MALTA





one destroyer. Nine merchant ships were also destroyed or so sufficiently damaged that they could not continue the journey. 400 men lost their lives. However, the fuel that 'Ohio' carried allowed the island to continue for another three months and 32,000 tons of supplies made it to port. These deliveries allowed the island to survive for another three months and in that time Rommel's power in North Africa declined due to lack of supplies and fuel.

### ***Heroism Beyond the Call of Duty***

Two Merchant Mariners, Frederick August Larsen, Jr. and Francis A. Dales, were later presented with Merchant Marine Distinguished Service Medals, by the President of the United States, for their service during this convoy.

The citation reads: [Their] ship was a freighter [SS Santa Elisa] carrying drums of high-octane gasoline, one of two American ships in a small British convoy to Malta. Orders were to "get through at all costs." Heavily escorted, the convoy moved into the Mediterranean, and before noon of that day the enemy's attack began.

From then on the entire convoy was under constant attack from Axis planes and submarines. Assigned the command of an anti-aircraft gun mounted on the bridge of the SS Santa Elisa, Larsen contributed to the successful defense of his ship for three days. At 4:00 AM

on the morning of the fourth day, torpedo boats succeeded in breaking through and two attacked from opposite sides.

Sneaking in close under the cover of darkness, one opened point blank fire with four .50 caliber machine guns, sweeping the bridge. The other fired a torpedo into the opposite side of the freighter.

The explosion of the torpedo ignited the gasoline cargo and the American ship was in flames. Reluctantly orders were given to abandon her. Two hours later, the survivors were picked up by a British destroyer, which then proceeded to take in tow a tanker that had been bombed and could not maneuver [SS Ohio].

After five hours of constant dive-bombing, the tanker was hit again -- her crew abandoned her -- and the destroyer was forced to cut her loose.

But the cargo she carried was most important to the

defense of Malta, and it had to get through. The rescue destroyer and another destroyer steamed in -- lashed themselves on either side of the stricken tanker -- and dragged her along in a determined attempt to get her to port. The tanker's decks and superstructure had been almost completely wrecked by the incessant bombardment.

Larsen's anxiety to get into the fight caused him to take inventory of her armament. He found an anti-aircraft gun mounted aft the stack which needed only minor repairs to put it into action. The young cadet of his own ship, Francis A. Dales, a British Gunner's mate, and three of his men volunteered to help him. Though the ships were then constantly under attack; they

boarded her, repaired the gun and manned it, with Larsen taking the trainer's position, and the gunner's mate and the cadet alternating as pointers. The shackled ships, inching along and making perfect targets, were assailed by concentrated enemy air power.

All that day, wave after wave of German and Italian bombers dived at them and were beaten off by a heavy barrage. Bombs straddled them, scoring near misses, but no direct hits were made until noon the next day, when the tanker finally received a bomb down her stack which blew out the bottom of her engine room. Though she continued to settle until her

decks were awash, they fought her through until dusk that day brought them under the protection of the hard fighting air force of Malta.

The magnificent courage of this young third officer and cadet-midshipman constitutes a degree of heroism which will be an enduring inspiration to seamen of the United States Merchant Marine everywhere.

*Sindy's note: For a very interesting read and more details about Operation Pedestal, try reading "At all Costs: How a crippled ship and two American Merchant Mariners turned the tide of World War II" by Sam Moses. Available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). And again, many thanks to Toni Horodysky at [www.usmm.org](http://www.usmm.org) for most of this information.*





# SURVIVAL AND CONFUSION AT D-DAY

The SS Clara Barton was a Liberty ship built by the U.S. Maritime Commission and laid down in July, 1942. Named after the founder of the American Red Cross, she was launched on August 25, 1942 and chartered to the Army Transportation Service. She participated in the Normandy Invasion on D-Day and many other trips before being scrapped in 1970. This log records the mayhem that proceeded the D-Day invasion in June, 1944 – 70 years ago.

## RECORDING THE START OF A VOYAGE TO NORMANDY

In a confidential report dated June 11, 1944, Ensign Ralph M. Zink, Commanding officer, Naval Armed Guard reported to the Chief of Naval Operations in Southampton, England and the Cross Channel Operations Commander:

- (a) Type of vessel, Liberty, EC2-S-C1. Cargo and personnel, 550 troops, U.S. Infantry and Field Artillery and train. Owner of vessel, WSA. Chartered to Coastwise, Pacific and Far East Lines.
- (b) Port of departure, Barry Roads, Wales. June 6<sup>th</sup>. Convoyed.  
Port of arrival, Utah Beach, France, June 8<sup>th</sup>. Departed Utah Beach, June 10<sup>th</sup>. Arrived Southampton, June 11<sup>th</sup>.
- (c) Enemy action. At 0200, June 8<sup>th</sup>, while in convoy cross channel, an aerial bomb exploded about 800 yds off the starboard bow. The plane was heard, but not seen. It was not engaged in gunfire. Escort vessels operating on the horizon, both port and starboard, engaged surface targets with 20mm fire and light guns between the hours of 0200 and 0430. At 1100, June 9<sup>th</sup>, concealed enemy guns from the shore began shelling the area in which the vessel was anchored. By 1300, two near-hits exploded on the starboard quarter of a Liberty ship 500 yds from this vessel's port beam, and three shells exploded within 200 yds of the Clara Barton's bow. The vessel moved to a safer anchorage. At about 2030, June 9<sup>th</sup>, the 20mm guns engaged a low-flying aircraft identified by the ROC spotters aboard as a Messerschmitt 109F. No hits were scored. At about 0400 June 10<sup>th</sup>, an unidentified aircraft circled the ship above the clouds and dropped an aerial bomb on the SS Charles Morgan which lay at anchor about 1500 yds off the starboard quarter of this vessel. A direct hit was scored in #5 hold. A few moments later, an aerial bomb exploded about 300 yds off the stern of the Clara Barton. On the morning of June 11<sup>th</sup>, while in convoy to Southampton, escorts engaged surface targets within 2000 yds of the starboard beam sporadically between the hours of 0100 and 0400.
- (d) From Barry Roads to Lands End, Condition III sea watches were maintained. From Lands End to Area Zed, Condition II, and cross channel, Condition I. While in the Utah Beach area, Condition II was maintained during daylight hours, and Condition I during the night. Cross-channel to Southampton, Condition I was re-assumed.
- (e) Unloading delays were as follows: It was impossible to establish the exact location of a Beach Com-





mander from this vessel. Control seemed to shift from one landing craft to another. This resulted in delay in securing barges for unloading. On June 8<sup>th</sup>, the vessel was unable to secure barges after 1800 and thus more than four hours of daylight unloading were lost. The barges were also unwilling to unload a cargo of 5 gallon tins of gasoline and of water. Point blank refusal came from two American and one British unloading barge. Finally, about 2200, June 9<sup>th</sup>, a British barge unloaded the tins in the dark. This was about five hours after the vessel had otherwise been unloaded. The unloading operation might also have been speeded up had more of the heavy vehicles aboard been stowed in #2 and #4 holds where jumbo booms are available. Too many light jeeps were stowed in these holds. Time was lost in removing many light loads with the jumbo booms which operate comparatively slowly. Finally, experienced Army winch operators and stevedores who were supposed to be aboard with the troops were not placed on the vessel. The Merchant crew did most of the unloading, but could have operated more efficiently had additional experienced personnel been assigned to the ship as was originally promised.

(f), (g), (h). Satisfactory

- (i) On the evening of June 9<sup>th</sup>, visibility was poor. It was noted from this vessel that the small amphibious craft in the Utah Beach area opened fire indiscriminately with 20mm guns upon all aircraft sighted. In two instances, seen from aboard this vessel, planes definitely identified as friendly Spitfires by the Royal Observer Corps spotters were fired upon by these small craft. The contagion then spread to two ships in the center of the harbor who opened fire with 20 mms and heavier guns. The Spitfires were fortunately out of effective range and none were seen to be hit. A quicker, more definite system of identification seems to be indicated for the assault area. The amphibious craft apparently need some sort of central control to advise them whether planes are friendly or enemy before they fire. The larger vessels who fired upon friendly aircraft may not have had ROC spotters assigned to them. If all ROC spotters are as capable as the ones assigned to the Clara Barton, they are to be highly recommended. They are able to positively identify aircraft long before they become a threat to the ship should they prove to be hostile and while that are still well out of range. This Gunnery Officer feels that there is still time to effectively open fire once the ROC spotter has made positive identification.

On the morning of June 10<sup>th</sup>, Commodore Meek and his signal staff came aboard. He was to take the Southampton bound convoy in charge upon receiving orders from a control ship. Commodore Meek spent the better part of the day attempting to contact control for his orders. No orders came through. Both the U.S. Navy signalmen and the Commodore's signal staff were on the bridge at all times. Late in the afternoon, a Coast Guard vessel came alongside and stated that the Commodore should have sailed four hour earlier, that he had been sent his orders, and that he had missed his convoy. The vessel finally sailed with another convoy at 2230. Again, a more definite central control seems to be needed. The control ship from which the Commodore unsuccessfully attempted to get his orders lay three cable lengths from the Clara Barton.

*Sindy's note: excerpted from the AMMV Edwin J. O'Hara Chapter newsletter of June, 2014.*

# TORPEDOED IN THE INDIAN OCEAN!

Herman "Hank" Rosen, as a King's Point Cadet, was serving aboard a Liberty ship in the Indian Ocean during WWII. In his memoir, *"Gallant Ship, Brave Men"*, he revisits the experiences of his time as a Cadet. As a Cadet-Midshipman, he was required to submit a classified, detailed report of the enemy action that resulted in the sinking. In 1967, Hank discovered and rescued a file cabinet full of "enemy action reports" that was about to be destroyed by an over-zealous "efficiency expert". Among these reports was his, chronicling his experience of thirty days adrift in an open lifeboat without food or water.

## April 21, 1943 - aboard the SS John Drayton.

She is empty, except for ballast, and riding high in the water. We are proceeding through the Indian Ocean from Bahrain Point to Capetown, South Africa. There is little food aboard, and tempers are short. About noon we are still about 1,000 miles out of Capetown, following a zigzag pattern in the event anything is ahead.

At 6:20pm bow lookouts Morris and an armed guard, report seeing a wake in the water passing from port to starboard, as if a fish or some object passed by. The captain calls Morris to the bridge and asks for detail. The skipper thinks it may have been a torpedo. He instructs the crew to keep a very sharp lookout.

At 7:30pm, the skipper sights a suspicious looking lump, or object, on the portside. He watches it closely and calls attention of the others to it. He is certain that it is a submarine. He tells Lt. Colwin to have the gun stations manned and ready for action. The captain calls the engine room for the best full speed possible. Sparks is notified to stand by for any emergency.

At 8:19pm, the John Dayton is struck by a torpedo on the starboard side, directly in the engine room. A huge flame belched out of the stack. The ship shuddered. The engines stopped, and it became eerily quiet. No submarine was sighted.

The chief engineer rushes below and reports the en-

gines are demolished, and a mass of steam is escaping. He believes engine cadet Jack Stadstad, oiler Clayton Spivey and a wiper, have been killed in the explosion. The master valve is closed. All lights, including emergency lights, are out.

There is no confusion on board. The crew, rapidly and silently, go to their assigned boat stations. Lifeboat #3, on the starboard side, was destroyed by the torpedo and has disappeared.

I walked quickly to my room, grabbed my Bowditch, my diary and a blanket and placed them in my assigned lifeboat, #4.

While the lifeboat complement is still assembling, I rush back to the chart room and take the current chart and the chart case.

I got back to the #4 lifeboat in a moment, but find the boat gone. It has disappeared in the darkness, with only a few men aboard.

The John Drayton, however, is not in immediate danger of sinking. Water in the engine room is at sea level and some water is entering #4 hold.

The crew is anxious to leave, expecting another torpedo or shell fire. Captain Norman orders "ABANDON SHIP!" and #1 and #2 lifeboats are lowered away.

The ship is heading northwest, making port the lee side, remarkably safe, despite the moderate southwesterly gale and high confused seas.

Crowded, #2 lifeboat on the port side is already in the water, getting ready to cast off. I scramble down the landing net, carrying the chart case and chart, when my foot gets caught in the net. Someone in the boat reaches up and frees my foot, and I tumble into #2 boat.

Some seamen are retching over the side. Two, covered with oil, are sprawled in the bottom of the boat. Some men are fully dressed, others are shirtless. The smell of oil is sickening and overwhelming.

There is great anxiety to get away from the ship in expectation of another torpedo, enemy machine gun or shell fire. The boat casts off and we drift away from the ship. The



weather is cold and the seas are high, but because of the oil slick, the waves are not breaking.

We see lifeboat #1 has capsized. The chief is on the overturned boat. We call softly to him to swim over, but he seems paralyzed and doesn't move, as the boat drifts away.

Sparks is on the stern of the ship signaling with a light. We call to him to jump, but he does not leave the ship. I thought for a moment that his heavy brace would not allow him to stay afloat.

About 300 yards ahead, the conning tower of the submarine breaks the water and the submarine surfaces. We get down to the bottom of the lifeboat, expecting a burst of bullets, but there's no sound from the submarine.

Off in the distance, on the starboard side of the John Drayton, another submarine signals by blinker light and the two submarines exchange messages. We are well away from the ship, drifting closer to the first sub. We see the deck gun forward and then both subs open fire, shelling the John Drayton. I count 18 shots but the ship is still afloat.

We continue drifting away, keeping very quiet and low in the boat. The chief mate is at the tiller. The men in the boat are cold, wet, miserable and frightened, huddling together at the bottom of the boat for warmth and protection, afraid to show their heads over the gunwales in expectation of machine gun fire.

The wind and sea are increasing. The night becomes darker as heavy clouds obscure the moon. We are grateful for the darkness as we slip by the submarine.

At dawn, nothing is seen except ocean, no ship, no lifeboats, no rafts, no wreckage. We are alone, a strong gale is blowing, the chief mate estimates the seas at 40 feet and breaking over the gunwales. He is at the tiller looking ill and shivering with the cold and wet.

We count 24 men in the boat. Some had been assigned other boats, but crowded into #2 as the last chance to get away.

We are about 300 miles due east of Durban, South Africa. We decided to sail for the coast, hoping, in the meantime, to be seen by a rescue plane or ship.

The seas were picking up. The gales became stronger with heavy, squally winds. Nick Tobiassen rigs the sea anchor and throws it over the stern to keep us running before the wind. Charlie Kardos is working the bilge pump

and the seas are threatening to swamp the boat. Tobiassen shouts for everyone to lie on the bottom of the boat to keep us from capsizing.

Suddenly, the chief mate, Westover, is gone, over the side, carrying with him a .38 caliber revolver, the only firearm aboard the boat. Tobiassen mans the tiller, while I keep an eye on the sea anchor. I feel Mr. Westover was sick, weak, and tired, and simply could not hold on any longer. The loss of the mate further depresses the spirits in the boat. We had counted on his skill and seamanship to help us pull through.

The gale is still blowing and it is impossible to raise a sail. When the wind and sea moderate somewhat, we check our gear and find a mast, sail, cans of pemmican, a cask of water with an enamel cup, flare gun and flares, bilge pump and a hatch secured at the fore end of the boat.

On the third day, the weather improves. A South African PBV seems to be passing, without seeing the lifeboat, then it suddenly wheels and swoops over us, slowing and descending, as if to land. But the seas are too rough and the

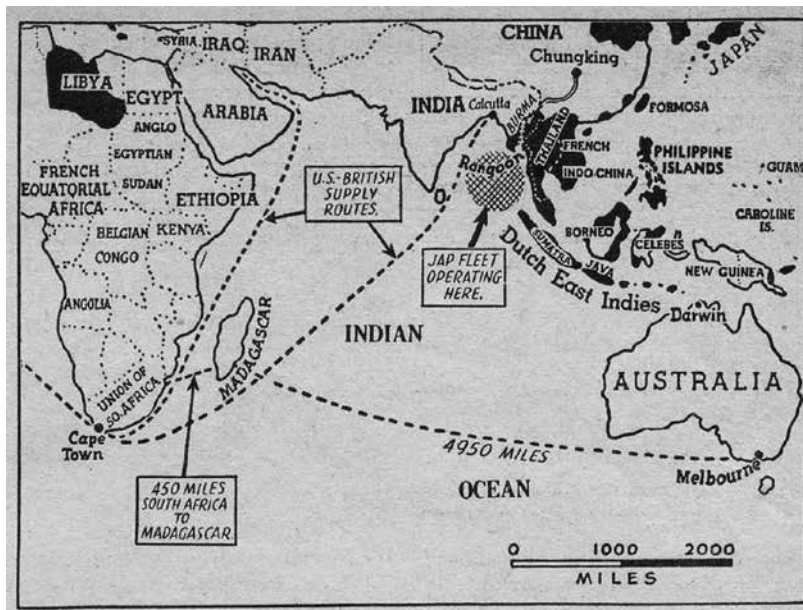
plane flies off. We are sure that we have been seen. Elated and confident that we will soon be rescued, we open the water cask, joyfully, gulp large mouthfuls of waters, and open cans of pemmican and pass them around. There is excitement and happiness in the boat, knowing that our ordeal will soon be over.

The following day, the weather deteriorates. Planes fly overhead but move on. We have not been seen in

the rough sea. Messman Chandler begins raving and shouting, "I have to get out of here!" He stands up in the boat and then plunges over the side and is soon lost in the heavy sea. The weather still does not permit us to rig the sail.

Five days out, Turner, the messman, drops over the side and quickly disappears astern. On the sixth day, we are seen again. The crew is elated. A PBV swoops low and drops two packages into the waves. We are able to retrieve one but the other disappears. On the package is written 'DESTROYER LEAVING DURBAN'. Inside we found eight 12 ounce cans of drinking water, malted milk tablets, chocolate and chewing gum.

*Sindy's comment - To be continued in the next AMMV NEWS Magazine. Watch for 23 days more "adventure".*





# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## AN ADDITIONAL WEST COAST INCIDENT



Dear Sindy:

I would like to add to your story about WWII and the West Coast in the AMMV NEWS Magazine, Spring, 2015 edition. One sinking that wasn't mentioned was the SS Montebello, sunk just off the coast of Cambria, CA (that's our neck of the woods). Our local San Luis Obispo reported on December 22, 2011:

"After 70 years, the broken hull of the Union Oil tanker S.S. Montebello still rests on the sea bottom approximately 6 miles off San Simeon.

"On Dec. 22, 1941, the tanker loaded more than 3 million gallons of Santa Maria crude oil at the Union Oil wharf at Avila. The ship was scheduled to sail to Vancouver, British Columbia, to supply the needs of the West Coast, Alaska and Aleutian Islands defense effort. Fifteen days earlier, the Japanese Empire had attacked U.S. forces at Pearl Harbor without warning. There were reports of Japanese submarines shelling and torpedoing merchant ships along the California coast. The Navy and the West Coast Defense Command officially denied these assaults. No mention of the attacks will be found in the Navy Department's 15-volume "History of United States Naval Operations in World War II," edited by Samuel Eliot Morison.

"Early in the morning of Dec. 23, 1941, the



Montebello was sailing on a northbound course when a Japanese submarine attacked.

"Capt. Olaf W. Eckstrom's retelling of the attack at the Camp San Luis Obispo Army Hospital was written down by E.F. James, deputy collector of customs, Port San Pedro. It can be accessed through the National Archives and Records Services Centers at Laguna Niguel and San Bruno. Eckstrom stated that a roughly 300-foot submarine with a large deck gun was sighted at 5:40 a.m. about a half-mile off his starboard quarterdeck.

"He tried to zigzag to get out of the way but a torpedo struck the Montebello on the starboard side. Entering the hull, it exploded, destroying the deck house, radio room and tanker's superstructure. The Montebello settled forward quickly and sank at 6:45 a.m. A general alarm was sounded, and lifeboats were



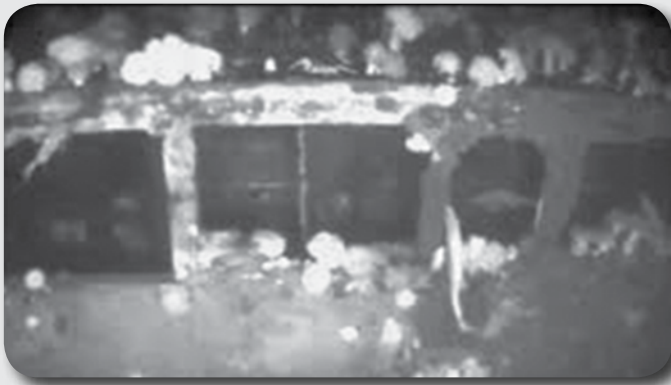
lowered, manned, and pulled away. As it sank amidst the bursts of flames, the lifeboats headed for shore about four miles away.

"The submarine opened fire on the lifeboats with its deck gun, but no one was hit. But Eckstrom's lifeboat was struck, and wrecked as it landed on shore. The other survivors were picked up by the Standard Oil tugboat S.S. Estero Bay and the Alma from Morro Bay.

"The official denials continued throughout the 1950s, even though several newspapers reported the incident with photos of the rescued crew. Government agents in San Francisco were sent out to buy all the copies of the Hearst paper, The San Francisco Call, which had reported the incident. People involved in the rescue, such as Cayucos resident Merle Molinari, a member of the crew of the rescue tugboat Estero Bay, didn't talk about it much, in part for security reasons during the war, and in part afterward because of popular incredulity.

"On Nov. 7, 1996, the research ship S.S. Cavalier,

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



with marine archaeologist Jack Hunter using the submersible craft Delta, located the Montebello's hull under 850 feet of water. Marine specialists will never know for certain about the fate of the more than three million gallons of oil in the tanker's hold. A computer model developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration suggests that the oil seeped out over the years and was swept south by the prevailing currents."

Although rumors have circulated that the oil has dissipated over the year, the people of Cambria still have the headache – when will the ship break apart and spread the oil all over?

*George Hale, CEO, Carl W. Minor Chapter*

## MORE ABOUT "ALASKA, THE FORGOTTEN THEATER"

Dear Editor:

This was not forgotten by those who served in what was detailed in a book entitled "The 1,000 Mile War" which referred to the distance to the USA. I served a year on the USAT William L. Thompson, a sturdy riveted ship, converted to a trooper from former lumber carrier on west coast runs. One of our missions was to take White Russians and Aleuts back to the islands of St. Paul and St. George.

Bad weather and unloading into native boats from our anchorage took 30 days. We were reported missing and presumed lost. When we finally arrived at Dutch Harbor we were greeted with friendly fire by a PBV, which quickly cleared the decks of troops lining the rails. Later investigation turned out that the plane's radioman screwed up and the Armed Guard signalman sent the correct recognition signal.

Most of our duty was to rotate troops along the islands---our nickname was "the Attu Local." My next ship was back to the South Pacific---more Japs, but nice and warm!!!!

*Walter H. Paas, Midwest Chapter*

## A "LOCAL" CONNECTION ABOUT A LONG TRIP

Dear Sindy:

It was so nice to meet you and have a talk with you on the decks of the SS John Brown this past Saturday (May 10th). My daughter Jocelyn and I did so enjoy the day trip on the Brown. For me it brought back so many good memories of my days at sea.

When you said you were from Eureka, CA., I thought back. On March 15, 1945 I was sailing as 2nd Assistant Engineer on a 195 ft. long "tub" – seagoing tug. We sailed to Eureka. It was the only time going to sea that I got seasick with the pitching and rolling.

We waited at the dock in Eureka for it seems more than a week until the seas moderated enough that we could tow a dry dock, built in Eureka, across the bar. We sailed for 44 days to Guam. It was the longest passage that I had ever sailed, but it was a nice trip. Once we just drifted for 3 days while the Chief and First Assistant worried on the mechanical problem and I was working double, which was 8 hours on and 4 off. The name of the tub was SS Pigeon Point. Because it was a small ship, I had to share my room with the 3rd Assistant Engineer. Because of no air conditioning I had a cot on the boat deck to sleep. The weather was fine.

It was at the time of the big battle for Okinawa and the Captain told the shore authorities that the whole crew was infirm so instead of going to Okinawa from Guam, we towed half of a destroyer to Pearl Harbor. Actually, the Captain was the only one incontinent.

When I got off in San Francisco it was two weeks before the Japs surrendered. I flew home to NY. It cost me \$114 and took 24 hours on a DC3. That was the last time I sailed on the Pacific. Until 1950, I sailed most of the time on the North Atlantic.

*Gerald C. Early, Corning, NY*

*Sindy's note: This letter from a 95-year old ex MM makes me appreciate what the U.S. Merchant Mariners did during WWII. I just can't imagine 44 days on a sea-going tug. The dry dock that he is referring to is probably AFDM-3-class medium auxiliary floating dry dock #AFDM-9 (and never named) built for the U.S. Navy at the Chicago Building & Iron Co., Eureka, CA. The dry dock had an overall length of 608 feet, was 124 feet wide and stood 57 feet from the keel to top of the wing walls. Not much is available about it on the Internet except that it is now an artificial reef off the shore between Jacksonville and St. Augustine, FL.*



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# 2015 WESTERN REGIONS CONFERENCE REPORT

The 2015 Western Region Conference was held at the Sands Regency Casino in Reno, NV with Registration on Sunday, September 27<sup>th</sup> from 13:00 to 18:00 in the Hospitality Suite. Following the close of Registration, a cocktail hour with drinks and snacks was held in an Empress Tower suite. This special party was made possible by RVP Larry Starn.

The official conference opened at 09:00 on Monday, September 28<sup>th</sup>. The colors were posted by Golden Gate Chapter President Frank Mendez and Golden Gate Chapter Vice President Christian Yuhas. The Pledge of Allegiance was then recited by all attendees. National Secretary Nelson Cauble performed the invocation. To conclude opening details, a representative of each Chapter in attendance checked-in and reported on the number of their members in attendance. No resolutions or proposals to amend the By-Laws were



*Larry Starn, Sacramento Valley Chapter, AMMV Regional Vice President, Region 8*

brought up by any of the Chapters at this time.

Next, our newly elected National President, Captain Christopher Edyvean, was introduced. Since none of the members in attendance have had a chance to meet Chris, he did a presentation which filled everyone in on his maritime background.

This included slides of some of the more interesting vessels in which he

has served on in his career. Our new President also discussed the role in which the U.S. Merchant Marine played in the Gulf War and Operation Iraqi Freedom/Enduring Freedom, and he talked about the importance of the various programs and laws in place which serve

to ensure the U.S. retains a strong Merchant Marine today and into the future. Finally, Chris spoke of his ideas and goals with AMMV. He assured the members that although the AMMV organization is broadening its interests in many ways, supporting the causes of our WWII era members remains the foremost concern.

Following the morning coffee break, Chris returned to the podium to begin a President's Report which detailed all recent activities since he took office. He discussed our social media efforts while displaying our AMMV Facebook,



*Bob Ulrich, Sacramento Valley Chapter*

Twitter, and website pages on the projection screens. This topic tied in to his membership report, in which he explained how social media progress has helped us gain about three dozen new members of various ages and locations since late July. Another topic was memorials and monuments, in which Chris shared some events that are planned. In return, some of the members reported on vari-



*National President Chris Edyvean and his date, Kim*





ous local events and efforts in this category. Next, Chris informed members of the efforts of Dave Yoho, a nationally known business/training consultant. Dave is a WWII merchant mariner who has been raising significant contributions for AMMV. Finally, Chris revealed the location and dates of the 2016 National Convention, which will be held at the Hilton New Orleans Airport Hotel in New Orleans, LA on March 29<sup>th</sup> through April 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Ladies Luncheon was held on this first day, in which our AMMV ladies were treated to a fine meal served on beautifully decorated tables.

Following the lunch break, Sacramento Valley Vice President Bob Ulrich discussed the need to promote the Merchant Marine song, "Heave Ho". Bob detailed some of his efforts in getting the sheet music out to various bands. Copyright concerns were also addressed.

Next up was our first guest speaker, Captain Tuuli Messer-Bookman. Tuuli is a graduate of Kings Point who is currently a

Professor at the California Maritime Academy. She is also the author of a handful of popular industry publications. Tuuli talked a bit about growing up on the water and about the challenges of working in a male-dominated industry. She followed with a very informative presentation on Marine Salvage. In addition, she was kind enough to donate one of her books to the raffle.

Following the afternoon coffee break, Capt. Chris returned to continue his President's Report. He discussed the active legislation regarding WWII mariners and reported on the status of each bill. Some members were unsure of the provisions of the newest piece of legisla-

tion, H.R. 2992: The Merchant Marine of WWII Congressional Gold Medal Act. If enacted, this would award the Congressional Gold Medal to the WWII Merchant Marine as a group – not individually. It was discussed on how too much focus on this new bill might take away from progress of H.R. 563, which seeks overdue



*Hap Bledsoe and Frank Mendez*

compensation. Chris relayed that AMMV VP and Government Affairs Chairman Morris Harvey is in favor of putting all efforts toward H.R. 563 for this specific reason. He then asked for input from the WWII mariners in attendance as to their thoughts on how the organization as a whole should fight to promote these bills. The



*L to r: Shirley Knight, Crawford Knight, Bob Ross, Cindy Bledsoe, Hap Bledsoe*



*L to r: Harold Wagner, Sacramento Chapter and his wife; Richard Hill*



*L TO R: Robert Cauble, Janell Cauble, Shirley Cauble and Nelson Cauble*

members in attendance voted unanimously to put all organizational efforts into supporting H.R. 563: The Honoring Our WWII Merchant Mariners Act of 2015, which if enacted would provide a lump sum of \$25,000 to all eligible WWII mariners. The membership brought up the fact that we do not yet have a companion Senate bill in place. Also, H.R. 1288: The WWII Merchant Mariner Service Act was discussed. This bill asks the Secretary of Homeland Security to accept alternative methods for documenting the service of WWII coastwise mariners; a companion Senate bill has been introduced. As a final note in the legislation area, Frank Mendez formally inquired as to the status of AMMV's efforts to continue fighting to earn veteran status for Korean and Vietnam era mariners following the denial by the Air Force board charged with overseeing our application. Capt. Chris told the audience that he would sincerely like the organization to continue pursuing this issue but he feels that we are currently lacking the proper resources to do so.

We heard from Sacramento Valley Chapter President Ken Blue

next. Ken took the microphone to recap the story of the WWII Merchant Marine's struggle for recognition. His speech included more than just statistics and history – he also explained and discussed how WWII mariners were delayed recognition in the years immediately following the war. Ken's ac-



*More than a dozen members took advantage of the open mic.*

curate recollection of the unequal treatment of the WWII Merchant Marine was a somber reminder of why the AMMV organization was originally founded. This concluded the business sessions of the first day.

A t t e n d e e s rounded up for dinner at 18:00 with Ken Blue as the host. The meal was served following a prayer; a cash bar was also available. Ken called Toni Horodysky to the podium and she talked about her website [www.usmm.org](http://www.usmm.org), which has been in existence since 1998; this is the most complete online source of U.S. Merchant Marine history.

Many attendees expressed their joy in having Toni at the Conference. Following dinner, a raffle was held with some very impressive prizes. The night was capped off with Ken Blue and Sally Raanes singing a stunning rendition of "Heave Ho".

Tuesday morning kicked off with Christian Yuhas discussing the state of the modern U.S. merchant fleet. Christian, who serves as the MEBA patrolman in the Port of Oakland, spoke of the challenges, threats, and opportunities that our fleet is dealing with. He answered many questions from attendees.

Capt. Chris then took the podium to discuss the final issue in his President's Report. He has drawn up a proposal to amend the AMMV By-Laws to allow National Officers to proceed with using online banking options when issuing payments as an alternative option to using traditional methods. He discussed this proposal

and passed out a handful of copies to National Officers, RVP's, and Chapter Presidents. The members in attendance unanimously voted to support this proposal, which will be printed in the Fall News magazine to be voted on at the 2016 National Convention.

Next up, we heard from some of our individual members on various topics. Nelson Cauble told of a very positive experience on an Honor Flight. Russell Adams of



*Ken Blue, president, Sacramento Valley Chapter*



the Central California Chapter conveyed a very interesting story on how AMMV members assisted a young lady in finding information on her deceased Great Uncle who was a WWII mariner; this story ended with the Uncle getting a proper burial. Frank Mendez spoke of fundraising efforts for a memorial project in his area.

Our next speaker, Donald Treco, was introduced after the morning coffee break. Donald, with the help of his assistant Natalia Dzyundra, treated us to an intriguing

a while!

The final speaker took the podium after lunch. Katherine Baran of Disabled American Veterans is the DAV Commander, Department of Nevada. She spoke of the DAV organization and offered to render assistance to Merchant Marine veterans. She can be contacted at (775) 846-9514; [katherine.baran@gmail.com](mailto:katherine.baran@gmail.com).



*Sally Raanes, Sacramento Valley and Golden Gate Chapters*



*L to r: Carol Mendez, Margaret Court, Sally Raanes, Nancy Ulrich, Linda Roberts*

ing presentation of the disappearance of Amelia Earhart. His slideshow presentation highlighted many clues to her disappearance and gave the crowd much to ponder. His presentation will surely linger on the minds of attendees for quite

offered an open microphone to any members who desired to speak for any reason. The mic was taken over a dozen times and some members even spoke twice. Most of this activity entailed members telling interesting stories, two of which notably stood out. Sally Raanes spoke very emotionally about the widows and



*Cindy and Hap Bledsoe*

children of deceased mariners; there were several moist eyes in the group. Also, Larry Starn told the story of the sinking of the S.S. *Pan Oceanic Faith*. Larry attended Kings Point with an Engineer that was lost in this tragic sinking.



The Western Region Conference concluded with another fine dinner from the Sands Regency Hotel staff while attendees were looking sharp in formal

dress. More outstanding prizes – included donated \$100 bills – were raffled off. Both RVP Larry Starn and National President Chris Edyvean offered final words to the guests. The Conference ended with everyone standing to sing, "God Bless America".



**Sally and Roy**  
*With us through-out the convention*



- ★

If additional transportation is needed, we will try to accommodate everyone, but it will definitely be more costly.  
(Nothing is cheap in New Orleans any more.)



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**AMMV News Magazine**





# CHAPTER NEWS

## Desert Mariners Chapter

### LOSS OF LONG TIME ACTIVE MEMBER

Our chapter is reporting the loss of our Secretary/Treasurer John Forsberg. John was one of the first members of the American Merchant Marine Veterans organization and was instrumental in persuading the U. S. Coast Guard to release the names and addresses of those who received DD-214s in 1988. He activated a follow up mailing in a massive new membership drive for AMMV.

He worked hard for the AMMV over the years, serving as Secretary/Treasurer for our chapter and National Historian for several years until his health forced him to resign. As National Historian, he devoted an entire room of his home to the AMMV. He was storing the albums of Merchant Marine memorial information collected by former National Historian Richard Mallett, when John's home burned up and all records were considered lost. These precious albums were later found in the wreckage having been protected from the flames, water and chemical by a door which fell across them. They were returned to Cindy at National Office and were later used for production of our Merchant Marine Memorial DVD called "Lest We Forget".

John is sorely missed.

## Golden Gate Chapter

### WORKING ON ANOTHER MEMORIAL

Six years ago, two former Marines and a South Korean restaurateur thought up the idea of building a War Memorial at the Presidio in San Francisco for Korean War Veterans who served in that war. They contacted the Presidio to get them to donate the land; then formed a committee of veterans from all branches of the service, including the Merchant Marine, and named it The Korean War Memorial Foundation. The goal was to raise \$ 3,200,000.00.

On July 11, 2015 a ground breaking ceremony was held at the site. Over 500 people were in attendance including the Consul General of South Korea who presented the President of the foundation a check for \$1,000,000.00, which enabled the foundation to reach its goal. The Memorial is expected to be completed by the end of June 2016.

## Mariners of PA Chapter

### A CUSTOM-MADE REPAIR JOB

*Sindy's note: Chapter newsletters often contain the WWII experiences of their members. Dr. George Hart was featured recently and I think that this excerpt from his story is an interesting tribute to Chinese ingenuity during World War II. A condensed version follows.*

Mid-summer, 1945, my ship, the SS Memnon was loaded with heavy earth moving equipment, destined to help build an airfield from which to "conventionally" bomb Japan. We set sail to the Philippines and after a long layover there and in Okinawa, on August 15<sup>th</sup>, our mission became moot. President Truman had made a decision that ended the war in a different way – two bombs were dropped.

After waiting another couple of weeks, we received orders to sail to Shanghai, China, to give all this heavy earth moving equipment to Chiang Kai-Shek. We were the first western ships into the Yangtze in years. We tied up alongside the riverside docks and made short work of unloading. After refueling, watering and taking on fresh food stores, we were ordered to leave for Bombay (now Mumbai), India.

Unfortunately as we casting off from the dock, the force of the current (no tugs available) caught our bow, pulled it out, and caused our stern to swing into the pier. As we were quite high in the water, all four blades of our prop hit the dock, bending them severely. How were we to get back to "The World"? No drydock was available.

Fortunately, resourceful shipyard workers came with floating platforms with attached staging. Corrugated iron sheets were placed against both sides of each blade in turn. Charcoal fires were built on both sides of each blade and when it was deemed that the blades were hot enough, the coals were dumped into the river and several men with hammers immediately attacked the blades, beating them back into some semblance of the proper shape. A month later when we were finally in drydock back in Brooklyn, the yard said that there was no further repair needed!!!

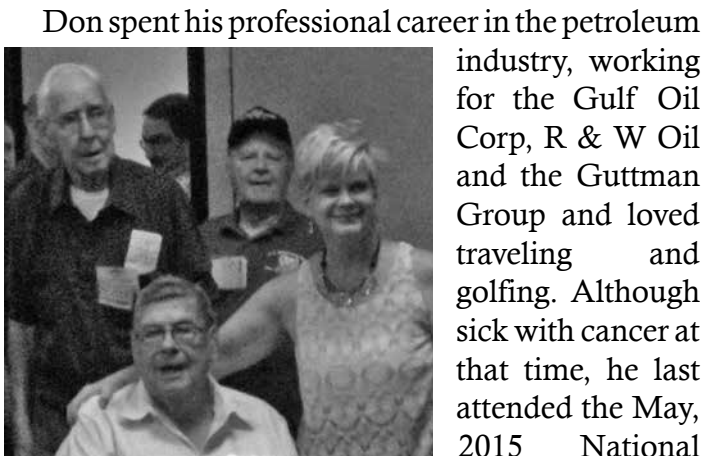


# CHAPTER NEWS

## Mon Valley Chapter

### REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT PASSES

Mon Valley member Donald L. Trimboth passed peacefully on September 19, 2015. Widowed twice, by Martha Makowkai Trimboth and Doris Hall Trimboth, Don is survived by children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



*L to R: Don Trimboth, A.J. Wichita, Nisey Erskine in May, 2015*

Don spent his professional career in the petroleum industry, working for the Gulf Oil Corp, R & W Oil and the Guttman Group and loved traveling and golfing. Although sick with cancer at that time, he last attended the May, 2015 National Convention at MITAGS.

He was very active in the AMMV for years, serving as National Vice President and President of the Mon Valley Chapter. As Region 3 Vice President for the past few years, he actively worked with the Pennsylvania and New Jersey chapters for the sake of AMMV.

May his presence continue to be with us.

## Three Rivers Chapter

### ANOTHER HELPFUL VOLUNTEER

With the demise of Regional Vice President Don Trimboth, Region 3 of the AMMV was left with the need for a replacement. Howard Pfeifer, CEO of Three Rivers Chapter has stepped up to the plate. On an interim basis until official election at the 30<sup>th</sup> National Convention in New Orleans in March, 2016. Howard was happy to volunteer at the request of National President Christopher Edyvean. Howard can be contacted by email at [howdypfeifer@yahoo.com](mailto:howdypfeifer@yahoo.com) or by phone at (724) 941-9537.

## Small Ships Chapter

### A TIRELESS WORKER CROSSES THE FINAL BAR



Almost sixty years ago the Small Ships Section was established in Sydney, Australia. Members, families and supporters of the Small Ships were brought together. For many years Founding President Ern Flint worked tirelessly for the organization. The workload Ern set for himself was immense and the results have afforded an enduring legacy for the Small Ships Section in Australia.

About seven years ago, Ern contacted then National President A.J. Wichita with an inquiry of starting an AMMV chapter Down Under and this done, Ern continued to keep ties with the U.S. Small ship sailors alive.

Ern crossed the Final Bar in July, 2015 and is sorely missed.

## Susquehanna Valley Chapter

### A TRIBUTE TO THE MERCHANT MARINE

On September 11<sup>th</sup>, Susquehanna Valley member Clarence Newcomer was guest of honor at the dedication of a memorial and monument to Merchant Mariners at the Florence, SC, Veterans Park. The ceremony at the Park, sponsored by the Daughters of the American Revolution, included remarks by Clarence and the singing of "Heave Ho".



American Merchant Marine Veterans  
30th National Convention  
March 29 – April 1, 2016  
Hilton New Orleans Airport, NOLA



## COMMEMORATIVE BOOK SPACE - ORDER FORM

We extend an invitation to recognize the contributions of the U.S. Merchant Marine - especially our WWII MM & Navy Armed Guard veterans - by placing an ad in our annual Convention "Memory Book". AMMV Chapters, individuals, maritime organizations, and other groups are urged to participate.

### MEMORY BOOK RATES

*Deadline for submittals is **FEBRUARY 19, 2016***

_____ Full Page (8 in x 10.5 in) @ \$ 100.00	_____ Half Page (8 in x 5.25 in) @ \$ 70.00
_____ 1/4 Page (4 in x 5.25 in) @ \$ 40.00	_____ Business Card @ \$ 20.00
_____ Biographical Story \$0.00	_____ Patriotic Contribution

★ Full page submittals can be printed in color for an additional \$175.00 per page

★ Premium location: (Color only) Back cover, inside front cover or inside back cover.  
Available on a first come, first serve basis. Contact us for additional information.

*All submittals must be camera ready \* No bleeds except back and inside cover \* Original Art – No photo copies please  
Digital copies accepted (PDF Format preferred) \* Email artwork to [photos.mcg@gmail.com](mailto:photos.mcg@gmail.com)*

The AMMV Convention Committee reserves the right to accept /reject any essay for publication and to edit and/limit the word length.

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

Chapter Name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ Send copy of Memory Book to this address:

Paid by: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Space: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ + Color \$ \_\_\_\_\_ + Premium Position \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to AMMV 30th National Convention - 2016

**Mail check (no cash please) and completed form to:**

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2722 Maynes Ct., Santa Rosa, CA 95405

**E-mail digital files to Carole Gutierrez at [photos.mcg@gmail.com](mailto:photos.mcg@gmail.com)**

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

**Patti Scafidi (228) 671-6384 or [patti.scafidi@gmail.com](mailto:patti.scafidi@gmail.com)**  
**Carole Gutierrez (503) 252-8250 or [photos.mcg@gmail.com](mailto:photos.mcg@gmail.com)**





# JUST RECOGNITION

## Success Story - Garnering Support for H.R. 563

Face-to-face contact with your Congressperson really works when trying to get their attention on an issue. This is one man's success story.

Harold Englet, an Oregon chapter member, recently went to Washington, D.C. as part of the Honor Flight program. He was armed with information about H.R. 563 for his representative, Suzanne Bonamici (OR-1), as well as Oregon's other Representatives. His hope was to meet with them.

Most of Oregon's delegation were waiting for the Portland Honor Flight to arrive, so catching up with them was not a problem. He visited two, Bonamici and Peter DeFazio (OR-5) and had contact with them when he returned home.



*Harold Englet and his daughter, Joni Kuhlman, look at a memory book from when Harold was only a teenager. Photo by KATU.*

Bonamici's office called to tell him personally that she was going to cosponsor our bill. DeFazio's people called to say that DeFazio was already a cosponsor. He is not, yet. But a veteran himself, he is cosponsoring H.R. 1299, the so called "Coast-wise Bill."

So DeFazio is a work in progress. It has been a concern for some time that more than one Merchant Mariner bill at a time might confuse Congresspersons. Maybe we were right.

It didn't hurt that the local ABC affiliate, KATU, did a story on the Honor Flight, as they always do when these flights either depart or arrive home. And, for the first time, they featured a Merchant Marine Veteran – Harold Englet.

## Just Recognition Loses Loyal Supporter

Herman G. "Gerry" Starnes Crossed the Bar August 27, 2015 in St. Augustine FL. He was 88 years old.

Gerry was a strong advocate for Just Compensation/ Just Recognition for Merchant Mariners, working tirelessly on the Just Compensation cause with the late Ian T. Allison and on AMMV committees trying to pass legislation that would recognize and compensate Merchant Mariners for lost G.I. Bill benefits following the World War II. He was awarded the AMMV Distinguished Medal for his efforts.

He co-authored a book with Ed Trester called "Torpedoed for Life" telling the real story of the Merchant Marine in WW II and the injustice shown to these veterans by Washington over the years. (The book is available on Amazon.com).

Starnes was a graduate of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, receiving a Bachelor of Science degree. He sailed for seven years on T-2 tankers holding a Chief Engineers License.



*L to r: Ed Trester and Gerry Starnes*



*Herman G. Starnes after reporting to USMMA Basic School at Pass Christian, MS.*



# JUST RECOGNITION

## Congressman Al Green Cosponsors H.R. 563, the Honoring Our WWII Merchant Mariners Act of 2015

On October 8, 2015, Congressman Al Green spoke on the floor of the House of Representatives about his support for H.R. 563, the Honoring Our WWII Merchant Mariners Act of 2015. H.R. 563 is sponsored by Congresswoman Janice Hahn (CA-44). The legislation seeks to correct a significant historic oversight of not justly compensating the U.S. Merchant Marines for their World War II service. During World War II, approximately 243,000 U.S. Merchant Marines served in some capacity during World War II, often stepping into combat roles. They also suffered the highest fatality rate of the armed services—with 1 in 26, approximately 9,500, perishing during the war.

“Those who put their lives on the line to defend this great nation, as well as freedom and democracy abroad, deserve our utmost appreciation,” Congressman Al Green said. “While this legislation does not compensate for the extensive loss of benefits and resources our brave U.S. Merchant Marine Veterans have suffered, it is a step in the right direction toward honoring all those who were instrumental in our World War II victory.”

Despite their contributions, only in 1988, following a class-action lawsuit, were the U.S. Merchant Marines legally recognized as Veterans. The legal designation granted them the right to healthcare at Department of Veterans Affairs’ hospitals and burial flags. However, since they were not eligible for the original benefits under the G.I. Bill, they did not receive college tuition subsidies, home loan guarantees, pensions, or other provisions accorded to the millions who fought during World War II.

While reflecting on the historic injustice and the struggle to rectify it, U.S. Merchant Marine Veteran Morris Harvey from Florida said: “The only way we became Veterans was by going to court.”

“This is important because we feel that we have been

left out of the well-deserved recognition from Congress,” said U.S. Merchant Marine Veteran Charles Mills from Texas. “This bill would make a statement to the country that the Merchant Marines were there.”

H.R. 563, the Honoring Our WWII Merchant Mariners Act of 2015, seeks to address this injustice by specifically

establishing the Merchant Mariner Equity Compensation Fund from which the Secretary of Veterans Affairs is to make one payment of \$25,000 to each individual who, between December 7, 1941, and December 31, 1946, was a member of the U.S. Merchant Marines (including the Army Transport Service and the Naval Transport Service) serving as a crewmember of a vessel that was operated in U.S. waters by the War Shipping Administration or the Office of Defense Transportation and under contract to, or the property of, the United States.

“I am honored that I have the opportunity to champion this cause alongside Congresswoman Janice Hahn,” Congressman Al Green said. “As I see it, one of my primary duties in Congress is to ensure those individuals and their families that

have made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation are shown the appreciation, as well as given all that they have earned from our grateful nation. Just as we would not literally leave our service people behind, we must not leave them and their families behind either after their service has ended.”

“The G.I. Bill compensated those who served in World War II. Unfortunately, those benefits did not extend to the brave Merchant Mariners” said Congresswoman Janice Hahn. “The brave Americans of the Merchant Marine served and risked their lives for this country during the most trying times. It is unfathomable that decades later they still have not been thanked or properly recognized, and I thank Congressman Al Green for his support in my mission to right this wrong.”



# MEDIA NEWS ITEMS COVERING HR-563

In the last issue of this National Magazine, we reported on the Storm The Hill initiative. We reported that “The team has come away with good feelings about the visits that we had.” We were well received by all. It was reported that on June 12th there were 15 co-signers – we are now at 37 co-signers, as of October 7, 2015. Our Social Media team helped immensely in getting the word out. They published our news releases and pictures on Facebook and Twitter, which helped to obtain the surge in co-signers.

To get the word out to the commercial media, Michael Levin, Communications Director for Congresswoman Hahn, sent news releases to local papers and television stations to promote news stories about our StormTheHill initiative. Consequently, we did have several success stories.

I have included samples of the media stories that have been published on the web, TV and in newspapers over the past several months.

– Morris Harvey

## 96-Year-Old Merchant Mariner Works to Correct Historical Oversight



By Garvin Thomas; NBC BayArea KNTV, San Jose, CA

More than 9,000 of Jack Beritzhoff's fellow Merchant Mariners lost their lives in World War II. Beritzhoff believes it about time to honor time.

“I wrote a story about it.”

It is a phrase Jack Beritzhoff says a lot. And when you consid-

er the San Rafael resident, and former Merchant Mariner, is about to celebrate his 97th birthday, that adds up to a lot of stories.

In fact, Beritzhoff compiled many of his favorite one into a book he published in 2012: *Sail Away, Journeys Of A Merchant Seaman*.

Still, there is one story he is most eager to share these days, about an oversight of history he would like to see corrected. “I think it’s an injustice,” said Beritzhoff.

Beritzhoff is referring to the fact members of the Merchant Marine were never included in the GI Bill, signed into law by President Franklin Roosevelt in 1944. The law provided a wide range of financial and educational benefits to returning World War II veterans. The GI Bill covered all members of the military service, but not the Merchant Marine.



President Roosevelt indicated at the time he’d like to see the benefits extended to the mariners, but it never happened. “He died and nobody took up the torch, you might say,” Beritzhoff said.

The Merchant Marine, established even before the United States Navy, is a fleet of commercial ships that, in time of war, are pressed into service delivering supplies to aid the military. Beritzhoff served in the Merchant Marine from 1942 to 1952, participating in both World War II and the Korean War.

While Beritzhoff never came under enemy fire, thousands of his fellow mariners died in WWII.

“They had more casualties percentage wise than any branch in the service,” Beritzhoff said.

Beritzhoff believes it is a disservice that such sacrifices have never been adequately rewarded by the government.

He has recently written an editorial titled “The Sailors The Country Forgot” to bring attention to it.

Beritzhoff is not without his allies in his mission, though. In January 2015 a bill was introduced in the United States House of Representatives that would “grant our surviving WWII Merchant Seamen a modest financial benefit for their bravery and sacrifice.”

At his age, Beritzhoff said, any benefit would be mostly symbolic, but greatly appreciated.

*Published at 1:19 PM PDT on Sep 4, 2015*



## Veteran joined Merchant Marine during World War II to 'help save the country'

By Andy Fillmore, Correspondent; Ocala Star Banner

Published: Sunday, May 5, 2013 at 8:35 p.m.

Elmore "Elmo" Berthelot joined the Merchant Marine at age 16. Just months after signing up, he was on the high seas en route to England and France with troops and critical supplies, vulnerable to enemy attack during World War II.



"I wanted to see the world and help save the country. I saw Big Ben," said Berthelot, 85, in an interview at the Ocala Palms home he shares with his wife of 21 years, Judy Berthelot.

The couple, who met at a dance, have lived at the community since 1994.

"I had to have my mother sign for me to join the Merchant Marine because I was age 16," Berthelot said. "I served on a tanker ship and the Liberty Ship S.S. Silo. We were sitting ducks with no armor and a pop gun on the rear of the ship."

According to Morris Harvey of Dunnellon, national president of the American Merchant Marine Veterans Association, the ships transporting men and material overseas manned by Merchant Mariners during the war typically had 3- and 4-inch guns in the front and rear, or had sawed-up telephone poles set up as fake cannons.

"At least the guns on the Liberty ships discouraged enemy ships from firing on them. It made them instead use torpedoes," Harvey said.

Berthelot said the ships he served on sailed to Europe via the frigid North Atlantic, transporting troops and fuel.

"We carried soldiers in the cargo hold and they were sick a lot. I was also part of a convoy through the English Channel, which included three T-2 tankers full of fuel. The two ships ahead of ours hit mines and exploded," Berthelot said. "We had about 50 men on our ship. The

crews of both other ships were lost in the explosions."

After World War II, Berthelot had a career in electrical work that included wiring lightning rods on bridges and towers as tall as 1,000 feet.

"I wired lightning rods on the chimneys of the Greater New Orleans Bridge, which stood about 525-feet tall and had a little sway," Berthelot said, making a sweeping motion with his arms. "I also helped lay communication cable in the Mississippi River," he said.

Berthelot, who was born Nov. 27, 1927, in Edgard, La., near the Mississippi River, grew up catching river shrimp and crawfish. As a grown man, his co-workers gave him the nickname "Bougalee," tied to his Cajun heritage.

"Whenever there was a difficult job, they would say, 'Let Boug do it,'" he said.

Berthelot was a 60-year member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

In October 2009, he was onboard the Ocala Honor Flight that took veterans to visit the Arlington National Cemetery and World War II and Korean War monuments in Washington.

"The Honor Flight was wonderful. We saw the changing of the guard at Arlington National Cemetery, and the statues of the soldiers at the Korean War memorial looked real," he said.

Judy Berthelot said she has worked for years to secure Veterans Administration benefits for her husband.

Harvey explained that many Merchant Mariners were granted veterans' benefits about four decades after their heroic service.

"In 1988, those who served in the Merchant Marine were given veteran status through the Coast Guard, which served as the military entity to issue a DD-214 (discharge document)," Harvey said.

"We are proud of my dad's service," said Elmo Berthelot's daughter, Daphne Ramirez, of New Orleans.

## Merchant mariners shoot for monetary compensation

By Marketta Davis, pnj.com

Published: July 26, 2015

Local Galleyman Donald Bodin, 92, was a WWII merchant mariner who served four years aboard the oil tanker Texas Sun, supplying gas and fuel to aircraft carriers and battle-ships in the North Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

It was dangerous in war times, Bodin said, but luckily his fleet wasn't harmed. Even still, mariners weren't considered veterans at that time and didn't receive benefits for their service. "We didn't get anything," Bodin said. "But what are you going to do when the government is involved? I was in already and didn't want to throw all my hard work from boot camp away."

Now, 70 years later, a bill in Congress would allot \$25,000 for Bodin and other mariners who served in World War II. It's estimated there are fewer than 5,000 alive today.

The U.S. merchant fleet provided logistic support to the war effort, according to usmm.org, yet they weren't eligible for the benefits enlisted servicemen received under the G.I. Bill because they were considered volunteer civilians not part of the Department of War.

The Honoring Our WWII Merchant Mariners Act would allow the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make a one-time lump payment to each living mariner who served between Dec. 7, 1941, and Dec. 31, 1946.

Of the 243,000 mariners who served in World War II, 9,521 – or one in 26 – were killed, making them the highest rate of casualties of any service in the war.

"We feel slighted," said Morris Harvey of Tampa, outgoing president of the national chapter of the American



*Polly Bodin is photographed with her father Donald Bodin, who served as a galleyman in the Merchant Marines. (Photo: Ben Twingley)*

Merchant Marine Veterans. "In general, we did the same job as the other armed forces members did. We were in the same danger."

Mariners were approved as veterans in 1988 but weren't provided benefits, such as college tuition assistance and VA home loans. While the fight to receive those benefits has been ongoing, a group of WWII merchant mariners, including the AMMV, recently participated in a "storming the Hill" event after they were sponsored by two veterans groups following its annual convention in May. They met with members of Congress and staff to discuss the bill.

The group never had the resources to organize an event like this in the past until the international organizations Master, Mates & Pilots and the Maritime Institute out of Maryland funded the trip to Washington, D.C.

The Honoring Our WWII Merchant Mariners Act was referred to a congressional committee on Jan. 27. There are 34 cosponsors.

"The men and women of the greatest generation who stepped up and volunteered for the merchant marines were recognized as veterans in every sense of the word, and I thank them as I do every veteran for all they have done for our nation," said U.S. Rep. Jeff Miller, R-Chumuckla.

"I pledge to work on their behalf to continue fighting to reform the Department of Veterans Affairs into an organization worthy of those it serves and to end the ongoing mismanagement and lack of accountability that is a terrible disservice to America's veterans."

### WANT MORE INFORMATION?

For more information on H.R. 563: Honoring Our WWII Merchant Mariners Act of 2015, visit [www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/hr563](http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/114/hr563). To send a letter to your congressperson or to sign a petition for the bill, visit <http://capwiz.com/naus/issues/alert/?alertid=64051356> or <http://hahn.house.gov>.



**Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ3)**



**Lois Capps (D-CA24)**



**Jim Costas (D-CA16)**



**Douglas Hunter (R-CA50)**



**Mark DeSaullnier (D-CA11)**



**Sam Farr (D-CA20)**



**Jared Huffman (D-CA2)**



**Ted Lieu (D-CA33)**



**Alan Lowenthal (D-CA47)**



**Adam Schiff (D-CA28)**



**Mark Takano (D-CA41)**



**Joe Courtney (D-CT2)**



**Alcee Hastings (D-FL20)**



**Rich Nugent (R-FL11)**



**Madeleine Bordallo (D-GU0)**



**Tammy Duckworth (D-IL8)**



**Daniel Lipinski (D-IL3)**



**Susan Brooks (R-IN5)**



**Brenda Lawrence (D-MI14)**



**Betty McCollum (D-MN4)**



**Collin Peterson (D-MN7)**



**Ann Kuster (D-NH2)**



**Dina Titus (D-NV1)**



**Dan Donovan (R-NY11)**



**Charles Rangel (D-NY13)**



# Congressional All-Stars



**Janice Hahn  
CA-44**

**Sponsor  
HR 563**

**"Honoring Our  
WWII  
Merchant  
Mariners  
Act of 2015"**

Thank you to these Congress members for supporting World War II Merchant Mariners by cosponsoring HR 563. A Special thanks to Janice Hahn for sponsoring the bill.



AMMV leaders met with Congresswoman Janice Hahn when they were "Storming the Hill" drumming up support for H.R. 563, "Honoring Our WWII Merchant Mariners Act of 2015."

Janice Hahn celebrates National Maritime Day with American Merchant Marine Veterans at a luncheon following the ceremony at the Merchant Marine Memorial in San Pedro, CA.



**Paul Tonko (D-NY20)**



**Joyce Beatty (D-OH3)**



**Marcy Kaptur (D-OH9)**



**Jim Bridenstine (R-OK1)**



**Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR1)**



**Matthew Cartwright (D-PA17)**



**John Duncan, JR. (R-TN2)**



**Al Green (D-TX9)**  
Fall 2015



**Gene Green (D-TX29)**



**Shiela Jackson Lee (D-TX18)**



**James Langevin (D-RI2)**



**McDermott (D-WA7)**  
AMMV News Magazine



# JUST RECOGNITION

## KOREA & VIETNAM

Veteran's status for Korea and Vietnam is still stuck. We were rejected for the second time by the Air Force C/MSRB because their staff judged that we did not have evidence of the service but only claims without documents to support our position that Merchant Mariners were under DOD orders, subject to Military Code of Justice, and on and on.

The following story is very good coverage of the status of the effort to gain veterans status for Merchant Mariners who served in Korea and Vietnam. It is based on an interview with Peter Gannon and others, reported by Julia Satterthwaite, and published by The Oakland Press in Metamora, Michigan.

Gannon is quoted **"We were under Navy contract,**

**had DOD identification cards in case of capture, were fired upon, received hazardous duty pay, had service club privileges, FPO, PX, medical in country and were under Military Code of Justice."** Our Task Force was unable to obtain documentation (Evidence) relating to these categories of information. The late Dr. Larry Kerkow, past Government Affairs Committee Chair, was advised that documents directly related to troop and material movements would still be classified.

**If there is anyone reading this, who has experience obtaining documents from the Federal Government (the DOD) please contact me – we need your help. Morris Harvey, [morris27@centurylink.net](mailto:morris27@centurylink.net) or phone 352-564-0267.**

**Peter Gannon**, 74, of Metamora, was one of 5,000 men who served as a Merchant Marine in Vietnam, with two tours – one in 1969 and another in 1970 – and hopes that he will see the day that all Merchant Marines achieve veteran status.

"I am a Vietnam veteran that doesn't exist, according to the government," Gannon said.

"We were under Navy contract, had DOD identification cards in case of capture, were fired upon, received hazardous duty pay, had service club privileges, FPO, PX, medical in country and were under Military Code of Justice."

The Merchant Marine is the fleet of ships which carries imports and exports during peacetime and becomes a naval auxiliary during wartime to deliver troops and war material, according to the website [www.usmm.org](http://www.usmm.org).

"We carried most of all the military supplies such as ammo, bombs, food, tanks, planes – you name it – even troops on occasion," Gannon said. "More than 55 ships in Vietnam were hit with enemy fire and dozens of seamen killed and wounded in this conflict. Up and down the coast and rivers these ships and tugs moved the material to supply our troops doing the fighting."

Gannon explains the significance of the Merchant Marine during World War II, which he says had a larger casualty rate at 4 percent or 1 in 25 than those serving in the Marine Corps (3 percent), Army (2 percent), Navy (.9 per-

cent) or Coast Guard (.25 percent). "Without the Merchant Marine, WWII could never have been won – they handled everything to support the front line troops," Gannon said.

"In 1942, the Merchant Marine lost over 600 ships. In June alone, they lost 146 ships that were sunk by the

Germans. The papers in the States, because the government kind of controlled the newspaper, would report maybe 2, 3, 4 ships sunk. They wanted to keep getting volunteers for the Merchant Marine. If you knew that 146 ships were torpedoed in the last month, would you go down and sign your name on that list?"

In 1988, a group of Merchant Mariners who served in WWII after Dec. 7, 1941 sued the government to receive Veteran's benefits and won. However, the Civilian/Military Review Board (C/MSRB) approved only service thru Aug. 15, 1945. It took another eight years to get the C/MSRB to recognize Merchant Mariner service between August 15 and December 31, 1946, the official end of WWII – but these Mariners only received the right to be buried in a National Cemetery, no VA benefits.

National Office Administrator of the American Merchant Mariner Veterans Inc., a non-profit organization, Sindy Raymond, of Santa Rosa, Calif., explains why Merchant Mariners were denied benefits. "I think because the Merchant Mariners were sailing as civilians, but they were basically conscripted by the navy and the army in times of war," Raymond said. "We are putting forth a major effort





# JUST RECOGNITION

to get the later people – Vietnam, Korea and Middle East mariners Veteran's status.”

Gannon was single, living in Buffalo and working at a dead-end job at a manufacturing plant when his buddy Bill suggested he sell his house, store his furniture and come on over to Vietnam to work. Gannon did just that and, with two suitcases in hand and wearing a suit, he boarded a Pan Am flight to Saigon, regretting his wardrobe choice when he landed in the heat and humidity of Vietnam. “I went from October weather in Buffalo to (what felt like) 211 degrees air temperature getting off the plane in Saigon – it hits you like a blast,” Gannon said. “First job I found was for Alaska Barge and Transport – we ran the ocean towing barges. We could go maybe three knots, which is a very slow walk. Did that for my first tour, took my R&R and came back and got a job with Sea Land – you know, the big container ships – and worked on the boats and on the beach as a liaison between boats and the military in Hue City, basically, out of Da Nang a lot and Phu Bai.”

Gannon can't understand why his service doesn't count. “I volunteered my body, my life – everything else,” Gannon said. “I paid my own way over the Vietnam, worked for two tours, came home and I got nothing. The only thing that the government gave us was a ribbon button. Yippee, I might add. Why recognize WW2 men (deservedly so) but not other wartime war zone seamen?”

Gannon is now president of the R.J. Mac Alvanah, Chapter of the American Merchant Marine Veterans. The Chapter is named after a dying Merchant Mariner who “crossed the bar donating a pile of money to the chapter” according to Gannon. The Chapter is in Port Charlotte, Florida where Gannon lives seven months of the year.

Raymond says there are about 50 chapters with a total of about 2,200 members at this point. She can't understand why the Air Force has turned their 86-page application, including 13 indices, to recognize Merchant Mariners from Vietnam and Korea down twice. “They are saying that we are not supplying enough information,” Raymond said. “I read that efforts are going to be stepped up to see what

we can do about this process. The Air Force itself does not recognize Merchant Mariners, whether they're WWII or anybody.”



Executive Secretary to the Department of Defense Civilian/Military Service Review Board Bruce Brown stated that “the burden of proof is on the application” in the second rejection letter, dated Oct. 13, 2013, and provided some tips for what the group might want to include in their next application. “For example, if you have copies of orders or directives from the Korean and Vietnam conflicts

directing the movement of members of the American Merchant Mariners to carry out the missions in support of the United States' war efforts during these times periods that would be helpful,” Brown wrote.

“Moreover, if you have official documents showing that the American Merchant Mariners as a group, as opposed to an individual, were entitled to the use of commissaries, exchanges and membership in military clubs during the time periods of the Korean and Vietnam conflicts that would be helpful to support your application.”

Chairman of the Government Affairs Committee for the American Merchant Marine Veterans Morris Harvey says they have two options moving forward. “We have two choices: 1) continue to try to obtain the type of government (DoD) orders that the C/MSRB staff has demanded. This would require making public record requests. 2) legal action,” Harvey said. “In either case we would need a legal firm to advise and direct us in the choices we need to make.”

Gannon hopes to see all Merchant Mariners receive access to benefits.

“The question remains, why were the Department of Defense and the government so reluctant to give adequate recognition until the mid '80s to these men of the Merchant Marine of WWII, and yet still no recognition to Korea, Vietnam, Gulf War and other conflicts where men volunteered and put their lives in harms way?” Gannon said. “I guess they'll wait until, as they did with WWII guys, we're so old that we are dying off faster than they can move to appreciate what we all did.”



# Maritime news briefs ...

**Lawmakers uphold union rights** – The Missouri House of Representatives in mid-September struck a significant blow in favor of the labor movement by successfully defending Gov. Jay Nixon's veto of a so-called right-to-work (RTW) bill. Nixon vetoed the measure in June, calling it "wrong for workers, wrong for business owners and wrong for Missouri." The state house on Sept. 16 voted on whether to override that veto; it remained intact. "Right to work is a corporate sham designed to weaken our rights, silence our voice, and line the pockets of the rich and powerful," said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumk.

**Cap Ray team nominated for Service for America medals** – A team from the Ready Reserve Force vessel *MV Cape Ray* are finalists for the Prestigious Award 2015 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals People's Choice Award (not to be confused with the television People's Choice Awards). The team included 36 mariners; 60 U.S. Army chemical weapons specialists; Timothy Blades, Chemical Biological Center; and Paul Gilmore, U.S. Maritime Administration. They are being nominated for their historic 233-day mission that destroyed some 600 tons of deadly Syrian chemical weapons in 2014.

**New equipment further improves simulators** – The newly renovated simulators at the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education recently received another

state-of-the-art upgrade, in the form of realistic tugboat control chairs. Both tug bridges were equipped with these chairs, which house controls on the arms of the chairs for authentic muscle memory training. The equipment is specifically designed to replicate azimuthal stern



drive (ASD), Zdrive and tractor tug controls by configuring the chair and bridge to match the real thing.

**Navy League opposes changes to Jones Act for Puerto Rico** – In a letter sent to the leadership of Congress in September, the Navy League of the United States addressed ranking members of the House Armed Services Committee urging them to oppose any changes to the Jones Act in the event any legislation is considered to assist Puerto



Sailors aboard the aircraft carrier *USS Theodore Roosevelt* render honors to the Seafarers International Union-crewed, Military Sealift Command fast combat support ship *USNS Arctic* following a mid-September replenishment at sea in the Arabian Gulf. Members of the SIU Government Services Division sail aboard the *Arctic*. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Joseph Yu)

Rico during its economic crisis. The Navy League set the record straight on false claims by Jones Act opponents that the law and the maritime industry is to blame for the Puerto Rican debt crisis.

**Charleston to be deepest harbor on East Coast** – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has given its final approval for the deepening of South Carolina's Charleston harbor to accommodate post-Panamax container ships. The harbor channel will be deepened to 52 feet and the entrance channel to 54 feet, a move which would make the harbor the East Coast's deepest.

**Maritime Administration warns on Tianjin contamination** The Maritime Administration (MarAd) has issued Advisory regarding possible contamination by hazardous materials due to the explosions that occurred in August in Tianjin, China. It is possible that there is potentially hazardous ash, debris or residue on vessels or cargo. A comprehensive list of chemicals involved is not yet available, but several hazardous chemicals are reported to have been in the main warehouse, including sodium cyanide and calcium carbide.

**Southeast Asia initiates rapid response force to piracy** – Malaysia and Indonesia have formed a joint rapid deployment team to respond to the increasing piracy incidents in the region. The joint force was established in because Southeast Asia has become a hotbed for maritime piracy. The rise in Southeast Asian piracy has also prompted ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) to establish a permanent security presence.

# ★★★★★ DVD Order Form ★★★★★

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For more information, please contact:

Sindy Raymond  
Editor and AMMV Office Administrator  
(707) 786-4554  
saaren@frontiernet.net  
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***Please allow 10 days for delivery!***

**General information—HOTEL Reservations**  
**AMMV 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention – New Orleans, LA - 2016**

Submit by email to [morris27@centurylink.net](mailto:morris27@centurylink.net)

FOR GENERAL INFORMATION CALL: Morris Harvey, 352-564-0267 or e-mail [morris27@centurylink.net](mailto:morris27@centurylink.net)

**NEW THIS YEAR: COVERING OF THE CONVENTION ON OUR NEW INTERNET OUTLETS**

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Check-in: 3:00 pm; Check-out: 12:00 pm; Smoking: Available - A penalty of \$300.00 USD will be charged for smoking in non-smoking guest rooms. Parking: Self parking: (Parking Lot); Valet: Not Available;  
Pets: Service animals allowed: Yes; Pets allowed: No

**The Fine Print: Special medical or physical concerns, please detail needs with hotel check-in personnel at registration time.**

**It would also be helpful to please detail needs request on separate sheet and include with your registration forms.**

**CANCELLATION NOTICE: REFUND REQUESTS ACCEPTED UNTIL MARCH 15, 2016**

**Refunds only by special exception before March 15, 2016. AMMV will charge \$25 for returned checks.**





## Convention Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Affiliation/Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Other \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Convention Fee (AMMV Members who are not Spouse/Companions)

**NO Fee for Spouse or Companion:** ..... \$ 75.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Business Meeting: Opening Ceremony & Morning Business Session (Wednesday, March 30th)

**Food + Beverage Expense:** ..... \$ 30.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

INCLUDES: **Continental Breakfast:** (Chilled Orange & Cranberry Juices; Selection of Breakfast Bakeries; Butter, Preserve and Cream; Cheese, Coffee, Decaffeinated, Hot Imported & Herbal Tea); **AM Break:** (Individual Bags of Trail Mix; Coffee, Decaffeinated Coffee, Hot Imported & Herbal Tea; Assorted Sodas & Bottled Water)

**Jazz with Lunch on the Steamboat NATCHEZ** (Wed, March 30; 1:00 to 5:30 pm)... \$ 60.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Bus transportation; Two Hour Cruise on Mississippi River; Lunch; entertainment; Live narration of historical facts and highlights of the port; Museum quality Steam Engine Room open to visitors; Cocktail and wine options available for purchase on board

**Presidents Reception:** (Wednesday, March 30: 6:30pm Till) ..... \$ 25.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Sliced Turkey Breast, Roast Beef, Honey Ham, and Smoked Pork Loin, Sliced French Bread and Warm Rolls, Regional and Traditional Condiments; Freshly Baked Cookies; Coffee, Decaff Coffee, Hot Imported & Herb Tea; Sodas & Bottled Water + Cash Bar

### Business Meeting: General Session (Thursday, March 31, All Day)

**Food + Beverage Expense:** ..... \$ 70.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

INCLUDES: **Continental Breakfast:** (Chilled Orange & Cranberry Juices; Selection of Breakfast Bakeries; Butter, Preserve and Cream; Cheese, Coffee, Decaffeinated, Hot Imported & Herbal Tea); **AM Break:** (Individual Bags of Trail Mix; Coffee, Decaffeinated Coffee, Hot Imported & Herbal Tea; Assorted Sodas & Bottled Water); **Lunch:** (Mixed Green Salad Served with Ranch & Italian Dressing, Chicken Marsala-Boneless Breast of Chicken Topped with a Marsala Cream Sauce, Roasted New Potatoes, Haricot Vert, Warm Rolls & Butter, New Orleans Bread Pudding With a Warm Vanilla Sauce, Coffee, Decaffeinated and Iced Tea Service; **PM Break:** (Assorted Freshly Baked Cookies, Coffee, Decaffeinated Coffee, Hot Imported & Herbal Tea, Assorted Sodas & Bottled Water.

**Farewell Banquet** (Thursday, March 31) ..... \$ 60.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Banquet meal will be served with a Mixed Green Salad; Couscous Jambalaya; Sautéed Asparagus; & Homemade Apple Pie + Cash Bar.

**Please indicate your preference by placing a mark in the appropriate box.**

- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_ Grilled Chicken Medallions and Sautéed Shrimp with a Chardonnay Sauce.  
☐ \_\_\_\_\_ 10 oz. Rib Eye, Seasoned with Cajun Herbs and Spices, Served with a Natural Au Jus.

**WWII Museum Tour** (Friday, April 1: 8:15am – 4:30pm: **WWII VETS**) ..... \$ 45.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

WWII Vets get free pass for Museum. This fee is for Bus & Box Lunch.

**ALL OTHERS (Non WWII VETS):** ..... \$ 75.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Breakfast (on your own) at Hotel: Includes- Bus Transportation; The WWII museum + Beyond All Boundaries 4-D film - narrated by Tom Hanks + Final Mission: The USS Tang Submarine Experience & Box Lunch.  
 Purchases not included at on-site American Sector Restaurant + Bar + Stage Door Canteen.

**Total Due for Convention Fee, Meals, Event & Tour** ..... = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to AMMV 30<sup>th</sup> National Convention 2016  
**Mail check (No Cash Please) with completed form to:**  
**Sindy Raymond, 2722 Maynes Ct.; Santa Rosa, CA 95405**



## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

*Join the American Merchant Marine Veterans, an effective 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 to strengthen this position. We work to help the cause of American seamen and American seapower.*

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AGE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_ HIGHEST POSITION ATTAINED \_\_\_\_\_

DD214: Do you have one in your possession? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Issued by what service? \_\_\_\_\_

*Please check the appropriate box(es):*

☐ WW II ☐ KOREA ☐ VIET NAM ☐ DESERT STORM ☐ MIDDLE EAST ☐ PEACETIME ☐ NAVY ARMED GUARD

☐ ARE YOU AN ACTIVE U.S. MERCHANT SEAMAN ☐ ACTIVE OR RETIRED MEMBER OF THE U.S. ARMED FORCES

☐ WIFE OF MEMBER ☐ WIDOW OF MEMBER ☐ ASSOCIATE/OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

☐ MARITIME ACADEMY CADET ☐ CHILD/GRANDCHILD/DESCENDANT OF MEMBER

*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, present and future. Enjoy the activities of our organization while rendering a service to our COUNTRY, your FELLOW SEAMEN, and the AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE.*

DUES SCHEDULE: Paid annually covering our fiscal year July 1 thru June 30. Due July 1.

- 1) CHAPTER MEMBER: Membership dues paid through chapter. To locate a chapter locally, contact the National Office as shown below.  
Or 2) MEMBER AT LARGE (Member not associated with a Chapter) – \$32.00 Check enclosed \_\_\_\_\_  
Or 3) ASSOCIATE MEMBER: Children, grandchildren and descendants of members and any and all persons who have the desire and interest to support the purpose of the American Merchant Marine industry. These persons may join as an Associate Chapter Member or as an Associate Member at Large per above schedule.

The AMMV is a not for profit organization, Charter No. 4837 in the state of Florida. The Chapters, located throughout the United States and overseas, operate within the purview of our National Constitution and By-Laws. Active members are represented by the National organization and receive the National News Magazine quarterly. If you live in an area where no Chapter is active, you can request help from our National Office to organize one.

SEND COMPLETED MEMBER-AT-LARGE APPLICATION AND DUES TO:

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# NAUS and the AMMV: Joining Forces on Capitol Hill



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR UNIFORMED SERVICES



The National Association for Uniformed Services® (NAUS) is pleased to have 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.**



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AMMV12

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\*Regular Dues are \$25 for one year, \$65 for three years and \$230 for Life (age 70+)

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