



USS Claude V. Ricketts / (formerly) USS Biddle DDG-5

The Big Nickel #25, March 2021

Newsletter Editor Note

We're looking for a new Newsletter Editor. If anyone is interested in taking on the job, please contact me [here](#).

Dutch: [Raadpleeg de webpagina](#) voor de nieuwsbrief in uw taal.

Germany: Für den Newsletter in Ihrer Sprache, [überprüfen Sie bitte die Webseite](#).

Greece: Για το ενημερωτικό δελτίο στη γλώσσα σας, [ανατρέξτε στην ιστοσελίδα](#).

Italy: Per la newsletter nella tua lingua, [controlla la pagina web](#).

Turkey: Dilinizdeki bülten için [lütfen web sayfasını kontrol edin](#).

2021 DDG-5 Reunion

The 2021 DDG-5 Reunion will be held from Thursday, May 6 through Sunday May 9, 2021 with early check during the afternoon of Wednesday, May 5, 2020. The Reunion is being held at the [Holiday Inn Virginia Beach – Norfolk](#). If you're planning or just thinking about attending the 2021 Reunion, please take time to fill out the online Reunion Survey found on the 2021 Reunion page of [The Big Nickel](#) website. You can find the tentative 2021 Reunion agenda and the 2021 Reunion Registration Form at the end of this newsletter in addition to those found on the 2021 Reunion page on the website.

Hotel room rates have been negotiated and are \$119/night (plus taxes) for either a king with a sofa bed or 2 queens, both nonsmoking. Rates are good for 3 day prior (3 May) to and 3 days post (12 May) official reunion dates. A special button has been placed on the Hotel Reservation Information page on the website to make reservations. As of this newsletter, the reservation form on the hotel site is only good from 6 May to 9 May, though we are seeing if the hotel can rectify this. As a result, if you would like to make reservations to arrive early and/or depart late, please call the hotel direct (1-757.226.9119) and make sure to mention our group code (**DDG**) to receive the group rate.

Since many former DDG-5 shipmates live in and around the Norfolk area, we expect to have a tremendous turnout. An email will be sent out early in 2021 to those living in the area to

remind them of the reunion and to fill out the reunion survey found on the 2021 Reunion page on the website, so make sure to check out the survey results often to see if shipmates you served with will be in attendance. The email list will be based off shipmates who have registered on the website and if their email address is current and up to date. If you know of any shipmates who aren't registered on the site, please let them know about the Reunion and encourage them to register so they can be kept up to date and receive future newsletters.

Executive Director/Vice President/Treasurer



BT2 Glenn Johnson (64 – 68): gjohn11905@gmail.com

Dear Shipmates and Spouses - DDG5 Crew Members Association.

I hope this update concerning our upcoming reunion will clear up any questions you may have concerning this event. YES, we are still planning on having our reunion on May 6-9, with early check in available on Wednesday afternoon, May 5. The site for the reunion is the Virginia Beach - Norfolk Hotel & Convention Center in Norfolk, Virginia. **757-499-4400**. Make sure you let them know that you are with the DDG5 Crew Members Association. I spoke to our coordinator at the hotel and she assures me that the hotel has made several changes and upgrades to assure our safety during this pandemic. She also advised me that they are presently hosting reunions and have not had any problems concerning the COVID pandemic.

If you go on our website, *TheBigNickel.Navy*, you will be able to download a form and information concerning our reunion. Please print the “Reunion Registration” form, fill it out, and send it to me with your totally refundable deposit. The form is attached to the end of this newsletter if you are unable to access it from the [2021 Reunion page](#) on the website. If you still have problems, feel free to call or text me at **813-786-8958** or email me at gjohn11905@gmail.com and I will send you the form. Also be sure to notify [Kirk Neuman](#) if you have issues so he can make sure things are working properly on the website.

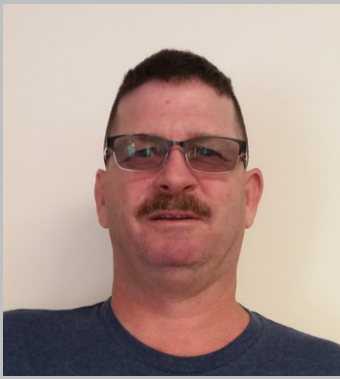
The tour vendors and hotel are expecting me to give them a close estimate of the number of shipmates and spouses that will be partaking in the planed tours etc., so please let me know if you are planning on joining us in Norfolk on May 6-9 for our 2021 DDG5 CMA Reunion.

Best regards to you all!

Your Shipmate,

Glenn Johnson BT2 1964-1968, Executive Director DDG5 Crew Members Association (DDG5 CMA)

President



ET3 John Cubells (85 – 88): 63jcubells@gmail.com

Hope everyone had a healthy & Happy New Year. Stacy has been busy gathering goodies for the silent auction We both are very excited to see our friends from past reunions and hope to see new friends join us to enjoy time spent together with our Shipmates. Let's make this the Best Reunion yet. See you all in Norfolk

The Amen Corner

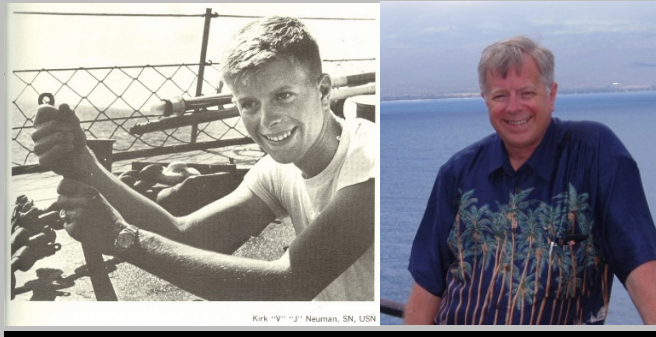
BM3 Wayne Miller (65 – 68): Choicemedtrans@optonline.net

We have received notification of the passing of the following shipmates and family members since the last newsletter:

- [SN Salvatore Fanciulli](#), Italian Navy (1964 - 1965), 2008.
- OS2 Greg Lee Reel (June 1975 - 1978), September 18, 2020. You can view his obituary [here](#).
- [SN Thomas J. Zukowski](#) (May 1962 - November 1964), September 5, 2020. Tom was a Plank Owner for the USS Biddle as well as the USS Claude V. Ricketts. You can view his obituary [here](#).

If you have further information on any of the above or know of any other shipmate who has passed or information about any shipmate in the Taps List, please contact me [here](#).

A Word from the Webmaster



1964

2013

RD2 Kirk "VJ" Neuman (7/64 - 3/68): Captain.Kirk@TheBigNickel.Navy
[TheBigNickel.Navy](#) – [USSClaudeVRicketts.Navy](#)

Shipmate Information Database Update:

I am continuously working on cleaning-up and updating the Crew Registration database and have removed several data entries that weren't consistent or were duplicated across various tables in the database. I am also continuing to put together a "good email list" from the registration database table and the Master Crew List (MCL) database table. The MCL is an Excel spreadsheet of some 700+ shipmates who served on board the DDG-5 that was put together by Carl Slack over the years based on information from various other Navy and veteran websites that DDG-5 shipmates registered on at one time or another. Not all names in the MCL are in the site registration database and not all names in the database are in the MCL.

Because I have been trying to clean up things, I send out an email a few times during the year to see if the email addresses I have in the registration database are good or not. (In fact, I just sent out such an "email test" this past week). If the email address is "bad" I get a "bounced": email indicating the email couldn't be delivered because the email address doesn't exist or some other nefarious reason. As of this newsletter there are 95 shipmates registered on the site that now have bad email addresses. I've added a button to the home port page of the site that lists those shipmates with bad email addresses, and I'd appreciate it if you're reading this, that you would take a few minutes to make sure your name isn't there. If it is, please [contact me](#) with your updated email address and I'll update the database. [Click here to view the list of "bad email" names.](#)

Also, because of this I am asking that you log into the site and check/update your information and/or ensure that your registration information is still there and up to date. Instructions for doing this are on the website home page, accessible by clicking on the red button titled "[How to Check/Update Your Registration Info.](#)"

In addition, if you have not yet [registered on the website](#), I would encourage you to do that. It is easy to do and the information you enter will be kept private except for on board information, which will be displayed in the [DDG-5 Crew Roster](#). If you are already registered and log in to the website, you will be able to email other registered shipmates, via the Crew Roster, as well as being kept up to date on activities for the DDG-5 Crew Members Association. If you have questions or problems registering, please [contact me](#).

I am looking into changing the login process for the website. Since it currently uses portions of software I use for the [Crew Forums](#). Since the Forums haven't been used like I thought they would be and the software I use is now several years out of date, I'm looking at the impact on existing registered users (which you are if you received the newsletter via email). Once I have something worked up, I'll put a link to the new site (which I'm currently calling [Beta2.0.TheBigNickel.Navy](#)) as well as send out an email blast for you to try it out and let me know what you think. Fair warning, the older I get, the slower I get so this will probably take a while so don't hold your breath very long 😊.

Deceased Shipmates:

Since the inception of website, several shipmates who did register on the site have passed on. I've indicated these shipmates on the Crew Roster with a cyan colored background.

Even if a shipmate has not registered on the website, or passed away before its inception, I attempt to maintain a Taps page for both crewmembers and family members of those who served on board during the ship's lifetime. There are several names listed for which I have very limited information. If you see someone in the list that you have information about, please [contact me](#) so I can attempt to update their information.

Family Registration:

The Family Registration page has been on the shelf for quite some time. I'm trying out a few things that aren't quite working yet. It's taking a lot more time than I originally planned on, but I keep coming up with new ideas and implementing them takes time. I still hope to have it available sometime in the future so keep an eye out for it in the Login/Registration box on the Home Port page.

It is my wish with the Family Registration to maintain contact with those family members of deceased shipmates who would like to continue to receive information about the DDG-5 Crew Members Association. This is not to say that family members of living shipmates can't register. They are certainly welcome too if they would like.

A word from the Storekeeper



RD2 Kirk "VJ" Neuman (64 – 67): Storekeeper@TheBigNickel.Navy

A note for the 2021 Reunion. As of this newsletter, I don't plan on attending the reunion. As a result, I will ship some hats, challenge coins and patches to Glenn Johnson for sale at the reunion. If you would like to have a new shirt for the reunion, please fill out the order form (found on the Ship's Store page of the website) and get it to me ASAP so that I can get your order filled and mailed to you before the reunion. If you would like to pick up your shirt(s) at the hotel, note that on the order form and I'll ship it there.

Please note that because of COVID-19, it's been very hard for me to find an embroiderer who is consistently open and as a result it's been very difficult to get shirts ordered and embroidered. I don't have an on-hand stock of shirts available since it is cost prohibitive for me personally. I would have to pay out of pocket for them to have them in stock. So I have to place an order with my embroider at the time you order and have them do the embroidery when they receive the shirt(s). This can take several weeks to complete which is why I will need at least a month advance notice of your order.

Update about embroider as of this newsletter. I've had to find another embroider since the one I found has also closed, yet again due to the increase in COVID-19 cases in our state. As a result, I can't guarantee delivery of any shirts prior to or during the reunion.

The [DDG-5 ships store](#) is open for business. Items for sale include ships cups, ships hats, ships patches, challenge coins, polo shirts and denim shirts (long and short sleeve). I've implemented a new order form that you can now fill out on-line with buttons at the bottom to save and/or print the form. I've also updated the order form to include the use of credit card purchases. Currently I accept Visa, Mastercard, Discover and American Express.

Due to increases in postal rates, I have had to increase the shipping costs to \$10 for orders under \$50 and \$15 for orders over \$50.

Also, I now take credit cards for orders. You still need to fill out the order form and send that to me (either via email or snail-mail). I haven't gotten to the point of on-line ordering, though I'm dallying with how to do that.

At the 2016 Reunion, I picked up some ship models from the Adams Museum at a discounted cost. Warning, this are small scale. These are available through the Ship's Store for \$20 plus \$10 shipping.

2021 Reunion schedule

(This schedule is subject to change)

Wednesday, May 5, 2021

1430 - 2300: Hospitality room, when manned

1430 - 2300: Check-in, pre-registration, setup

Thursday, May 6, 2021

0800 - 2300: Hospitality room, when manned

0800 - 2300: Check-in, registration and getting reacquainted

1800 - 2100: 2020 Reunion Reception

Friday, May 7, 2021

0800 - 2300: Hospitality room, when manned

0800 - 2300: Check-in and registration (when manned)

0900 - 1600: Bus Tour of Norfolk, Nautica (USS Wisconsin),

Norfolk Harbor Tour

(Crew Memorial to be held during the tour)

1900: Pizza Party

Saturday, May 8, 2021

0800 - 2300: Hospitality room, when manned

0800 - 2300: Check-in and registration (when manned)

0800 - 0900: Executive Council meeting

0900 - 1100: 2020 Reunion Crew Meeting

Crew Liberty

1800 - 2100: 2020 Reunion Dinner (w/raffle)

Sunday, May 9, 2021

0800 - 1200: Hospitality room, when manned

Hospitality room cleanup

2021 DDG-5 Reunion Registration

Holiday Inn Virginia Beach - Norfolk

May 6 – May 9, 2021

Send this form along with your check or credit information no later than April 1, 2021.
After that date, bring the form and payment with you. Also, please fill out the [on-line Reunion Survey](#).

Please print names of attendees as you want them to appear on the name badge:

Crew member name: _____ Years onboard (i.e., 7/64 – 3/68) _____
Spouse/Significant other: _____
Guest(s): _____

Registration includes use of the hospitality room with snacks and non-alcoholic beverages (BYOB for alcoholic beverages), name badges and reunion pin (1st 100 registries).

Crewmember fee	\$55 = _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Check if spouse/significant other is attending	\$40 = _____
Guests	Number attending: _____ X \$55 = _____
Pizza Party	Number attending: _____ X \$10 = _____
Tour	Number attending: _____ X \$100 = _____
Welcome Reception	Number attending: _____ X \$0 = _____
(There is no charge for the reception for the 2020 Reunion other than the cash bar)	
Dinner	Number attending: _____ X \$60 = _____
Additional DDG-5 Crew Members Association Donation	_____
Association Dues	\$10 = \$10

Total registration fee _____

Check if you want to pay a \$20 minimum (non-refundable) deposit now and the balance when you check in at the reunion.

Deposit Amount _____

Reunion registration balance due _____

Name: _____

Address (1): _____

Address (2): _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____

Make check payable to **DDG 5 Crew Members Association**.

Mail to:

DDG-5 2020 Reunion

C/o Glenn Johnson

55 Utina Way

St. Augustine, FL 32084

Make hotel reservations directly with the hotel (757-499-4400) or use the special reservation form on the website.
Make sure to tell them you are with the **DDG-5 Crew Members Association**. See the website for more details.