



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

The Big Nickel #27, December 2022

Newsletter In MMD Languages

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

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I'm sorry for the lateness of this newsletter. It was supposed to go out last August, but due to circumstances with changing the location of the Reunion from Wilmington, NC to Jacksonville, FL and then trying to arrange a tour and assess tour costs to update the 2023 Reunion Registration form, it's running way late. As a result, I've decided to publish it without the inclusion of the registration form. Once a tour and tour costs have been established, the 2023 Reunion Registration form will be available on the website on the [2023 Reunion page](#) and I will publish a special newsletter with an updated agenda as well as the registration form.

2023 DDG-5 Reunion Planning

At the Crew Meeting on Saturday of the 2021 Reunion, it was voted to hold the 2023 Reunion in Wilmington, North Carolina from Thursday, May 18 to Sunday, May 21. However, after a year of searching and Glenn Johnson and John Cubells visiting Wilmington in search of a suitable host hotel, unsuccessfully, the Executive Council decided to move the 2023 Reunion to Jacksonville, Florida.

The dates of the reunion remain the same. The host hotel will be our old reliable [DoubleTree by Hilton Jacksonville Riverfront](#). Room rates for the reunion are: \$119 for standard rooms, \$139 for riverfront rooms, and \$159 for Junior Suites. The room rates are good for 3 days prior and 3 days after the official dates of the reunion. Also included is complimentary breakfast for up to 2 guests per room. For those driving to the reunion or flying in and then renting a vehicle, self-parking will be complimentary (normally \$16/night).

We also have one complementary Junior Suite for the four official dates of the reunion (May 18 – May 21) and 1 upgrade to a Junior Suite at the standard room rate (\$119) that will be awarded in a drawing on Monday, May 8th for all shipmates who have sent in their registrations for the reunion by May 1st. Winners will be notified by email and via the [Facebook DDG-5 group](#).

The 2023 Reunion registration form can be found at the end of this newsletter. Print that page, fill it out and send it along with your check to Glenn (address on the form). Otherwise, you can go to the website [2023 Reunion page](#), open the registration form there (you will need a PDF reader), either print it and fill it out or fill it out online, print it and then send it along with your check to Glenn, again his address is on the form.

Since our last reunion held in 2018 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Jacksonville Riverfront, they now also provide a free shuttle from the hotel to [San Marco Square](#) and back. San Marco Square is a historic neighborhood in Jacksonville known for its distinctive boutiques and art galleries and full-fledged dining district which has plenty of outdoor cafe seating and diverse options. You will need to download their app and you can find out more about the shuttle here: [Beach Buggy](#).

As of this newsletter, we're thinking about having a day tour of St. Augustine, Florida, the oldest established city in the continental United States on Friday of the reunion. Us old salts will have the option of "volunteering" for a work-detail onboard the USS Orleck DD-866. If you don't think you're up being part of the work detail, you are invited to join the St. Augustine tour instead. Other than a couple of areas, this will be a self-guided tour and you can take your time visiting all the hot spots and other tours available (at additional cost) of St. Augustine. We're also planning to have our Crew Memorial onboard the USS Orleck, moored directly across the river from our hotel, on Saturday and then tour the ship afterwards. Transportation to and from the Orleck will be provided by river taxi.

Our Reunion Dinner and raffle will be held Saturday night from 1800 to 2100. You are asked to bring an item or items for the raffle. Whatever item(s) you bring don't necessarily have to be Navy oriented. After dinner we'll congregate in the meeting room for our final night of reminiscing.

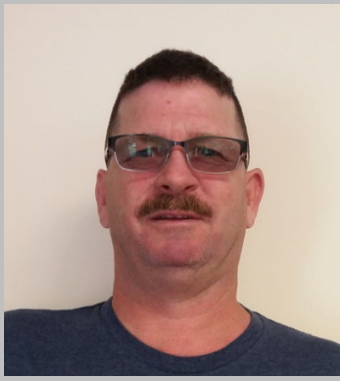
The full (and very preliminary) schedule for the 2023 Reunion can also be found at the end of this newsletter.

Executive Director/Vice President/Treasurer



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

President



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

Shipmates,

I hope this finds you well. The 2023 reunion is coming up quickly. Thursday May 18th is the starting date. We have some exciting events planned. First off there plans for lady's event planned while the men go on a work detail is being worked on, Whether this comes to fruition or not is still to be determined. Jacksonville has finally received a museum ship, the USS Orleck DD-886. The ship is moored across the river from the hotel. As some might remember, it's a few minutes on a water taxi.

The Executive Council apologizes for the location switch from Wilmington, North Carolina. Although it is a beautiful city and the USS North Carolina is an awesome center piece, the costs were just too high. The decision by the Executive Council was to move the reunion to Jacksonville, Florida. Double Tree by Hilton Jacksonville Riverfront has hosted several previous reunions and worked with us to reduce cost while giving the DDG-5 Crewmembers Association some special accommodations.

Our ships store has just received new shirts from a new vendor. They are now cheaper (price not quality) and we have a deal for custom embroidery on shirts ordered before May 2023. See Ship Store for info.

We are looking forward to seeing our shipmates. We always have a great time.

Fair Winds and Following Seas,

John Cubells
ET3 85-89

The Amen Corner

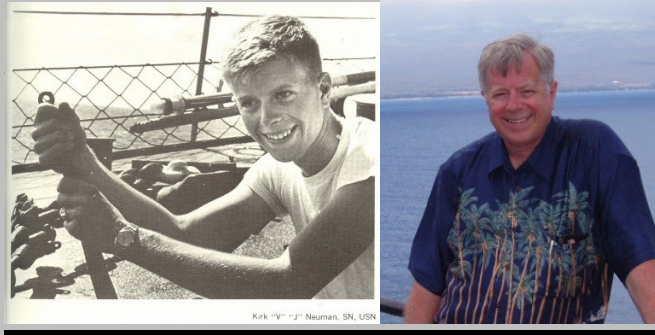
BM3 Wayne Miller (65 – 68): Choicemedtrans@optonline.net

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

- MM1 Stephen Wayne Gosnell (1982(?) - 1985), May 12, 2021. You can view his obituary [here](#)
- EMC Bradley R. Sike (October 1976 To December 1979), April 17, 2022. You can view his obituary [here](#).
- RMSA Freddie A. Hamm (1975 - 1977), August 11, 2022. You can view his obituary [here](#).
- Captain Joseph Francis King (June 25, 1976 - April 7, 1978), August 8, 2022. You can find his obituary [here](#).
- Christa Zapp, wife of FTM2 Wolf Dieter Zapp (FGN July 64 - Dec 65) - April 2022.
- Curtis Richard (Rickey) Mallette (1977 – 1978) – August 20, 2014.
- BTFN Timothy Louis Mallette (1977 – 1978) – October 1, 2022.
- Richard Belsky (USN 1959 – 1962), Uncle of John Cubells – September 14, 2022.
- SM3 Bil Heath (1972 - 1974), November 28, 2022. 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 keep updated a "good email list" from the registration database table by sending out aperiodic emails to all registered email addresses in the current good email list. If I should receive a "bounced" reply, indicating that the email address is not active, I will place that email address in the bad email list, remove it from the good list, and update the bad email list which can be found on the home page of the website by clicking the red button on the right side of the page. You should check this list every so often to see if you're listed. If you are, [contact me](#) ASAP with your updated/changed email address and I'll update the database.

In addition, if you have not yet [registered on the website](#), I would encourage you to do so. 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 working on changing the login process for the website. Since it currently uses portions of software I use for the [Crew Forums](#) and since the Forums haven't been used like I thought they would be and the software I use has now been updated so that it's harder for me to integrate things, I want to make the change. 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 😊. Also fair warning the Beta2.0 site is far from complete (or working) so don't be surprised by what you see.

As of this newsletter, I haven't made much progress since it's pretty complicated and I'm getting lazier as time goes on.

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

Since the last newsletter, John Cubells and I have collaborated on getting shirts and hats embroidered. John has an embroider he uses on Long Island, and we now have setup with them to embroider shirts (denim and polo) and hats (navy ball caps only). As such prices on shirts have been somewhat reduced and long-sleeved shirts (both denim and polo) are now special order only. You can see the new prices on the updated Order Form.

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 (short-sleeved only). 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 and packaging, I have had to increase the shipping costs to \$15 for orders under \$50 and \$20 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, these are small scale. These are available through the Ship's Store for \$20 plus \$10 shipping.

2023 PRELIMINARY Reunion schedule

(This schedule is subject to change)

Wednesday, May 17, 2023

1430 - 2300: Hospitality room, when manned

1430 - 2300: Early check-in, pre-registration, setup

Thursday, May 18, 2023

0800 - 2300: Hospitality room, when manned

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

1800 - 2100: 2023 Reunion Reception

Friday, May 19, 2023

0800 - 2300: Hospitality room, when manned

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

0900 - 1600: Tour and potential work party to the USS Orleck

1900: Pizza Party

Saturday, May 20, 2023

0800 - 2300: Hospitality room, when manned

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

0800 - 0900: Executive Council meeting

0900 - 1100: 2023 Reunion Crew Meeting

1200: Crew Memorial (Place: USS Orleck DD-866)

Crew Liberty

1800 - 2100: 2023 Reunion Dinner (w/raffle)

Sunday, May 21, 2023

0800 - 1200: Hospitality room, when manned

Hospitality room cleanup