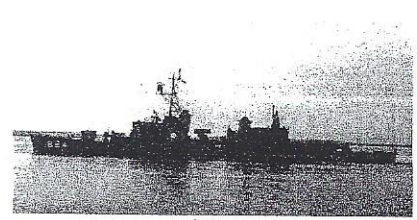


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January 2018

Greetings Shipmates and Associate Members,

I'm happy to say that we had a first at the Dallas reunion. Barb Demilt (Dwight MR3 72-74) became the first associate member to join us for a reunion and she brought a friend Marlene Sullivan. We also had several members of Ted Reminders' family (HT3 70-72), his step daughter Michelle, her husband Scott (Marine Gunnery Sgt) and their children Hailey and Nick. So if you are an associate member or a family member please do come to a reunion or just stop by for a short visit in the evening if your in the area of a reunion.

For those of you that may not have heard the Navy its building a new USS Basilone in Bath, Maine with a hull number DDG122. We have learned that fabrication on the new Basilone started May 22nd. The official keel laying will probably in the fall of 2019 and commissioning in tentatively set for sometime in 2022. Check the websites for more info (more information on websites will be found in the business meeting section). We are tentatively planning to try and be in attendance at these, if possible.

I'd like to thank Frank Stepka for being our host in Dallas. The reunion started on Monday with check in and a welcome dinner. Tuesday we went to Dealey Plaza and the 6th floor museum where Lee Harvey Oswald assassinated President Kennedy. We then went to Pioneer Plaza which had depicted a long horn cattle drive in bronze. If you looked down you could see the brands of various old cattle ranches. Wednesday we went to Cowboy Stadium for a group picture and tour that included the Cowboys locker room and the Cow Girls locker room. Then we went to Rangers Stadium and found out that they're building a new stadium across the street. Frank held a music trivia night with prizes and he announced that he'll be putting on a TV trivia night at the next reunion (surprise Karl). Thursday we went to the Fort Worth Stockyards and toured the cowboy museum and watched a live long horn cattle drive. If you wanted to you could get your picture taken sitting in a long horn steer. We then went to Billy Bob's Texas Roadhouse for lunch, which was excellent. Billy Bob's has been used as a shooting location in several movies. Then we stopped at General Worth Park. Friday we had our memorial service at the Dallas National Cemetery with Edward Alexander and Barb Demilt presenting the wreath while TAPS was played. The business meeting and farewell dinner followed. At the farewell dinner we had 3 rookies (shipmates attending their first reunion) that were

acknowledged Edward Alexander, Tim Delorey and his wife Linda, and Robert Houck and his wife Norma. After the farewell Dinner we had our door prize drawings and the main prize was an autographed picture of the Basilone signed by Roger Staubach and this was won by Geoff Bender.

This past year we lost the following shipmates Bernard Cleary, Jack Ruth, Robert Kinsella, James Blankenship, Ken Hummel, Walter Sparks, Robert Arundel, George Honeycutt, Merial Travis, Paul Kovalorich, Henry Thomas, James Wampler, Clyde Underwood, Jerry Stevenson, Jackie Hoener, Charlie Nelson, Fred Howell, Ralph Bradley, Ted Reminder,, Joseph Hobbs, Wayne Palmer,, Johnnie Kell, John Butcher, Eugene Pattison and John Weye.

This year we also found some shipmates they are James Hebron, David Taylor, George Ippolito, Richard Ratty, Robert Wilbanks, Samuel Wiese, Gerald Padgett, Timothy Deloray, Sharon (Kelley) Barnes (the sister of Charles Kelley that died in the bopiler explosion), Robert Houck, and John Bartonfield.

DUES IS DUE. Dues is still \$25.00 a year or a life membership in \$125.00. Just a reminder that associate members DON'T pay dues. Dues can be mailed to our treasurer Fred Gehrisch at 5640 Whistling Cove Rd. Gainesville, Ga 30504.

The business meeting started with the election of officers the slate was Phil Poplaski, president, Geoff Bender Vice President, Fred Gehrisch Treasurer, Frank Stepka Historian/Chaplain. The Secretary position is a group function held by the officers as needed for various correspondence. There were no nominations from the floor and the slate was elected. George Christenson was appointed ships' storekeeper. We voted to have a reunion next year and Karl Weber BT2 67-70 and his wife Phyllis stepped up to host the reunion next year in October in the Milwaukee -Racine area. Karl also gave a short report on the weird names on the old website. At present there are no new items in the ships' store but if you're interested in any items you can down load the forms which have all the pertinent information. The old website uss-basilopne-dde-dd-824.org will cease to exist in August or September. Geoff Bender was asked to see what we could do with the old website and our web host told him that so many things were wrong with the site that it would have to be rebuilt. After some discussion it was decided to build a new website rather than spend untold hours going through all the code to see if the old site could be saved. Geoff has created a new website and is the webmaster and the new website address is ussbasilone.org and it is now up and running so take some time to visit it. The Treasurer made his report and proceeded to tell us that after he and I talked to the IRS that we are technically a 509c19 non-profit. This means that any donation made to the association is tax deductible, if I understood Fred correctly.

After some discussion it was voted that we make the following donations.

These are the following donations
The USS Basilone Foundation \$250.00
John Basilone Parade \$100.00
Tin Can Sailors \$100.00

U S Navy Memorial \$100.00

February 5th of this year will be the 45th anniversary of the tragic boiler explosion that killed 7 of our shipmates Charles Herrold, Jim Ruan, Mike Zajzckowski, Gordon Harden, Charles Kelly, David Thimmer and David Rogers. Many of our shipmates that were on board the Basilone when this tragedy occurred are still suffering from PTSD and all are in various stages of recovery and some may never totally recover. Each of you must deal with the tragedy in your own ways. Several of your shipmates Geoff Bender and Frank Stepka have attended reunions over the years and they say it has helped them by coming to a reunion. We have shipmates like Pinky Pinkerton and Jim Elliott that are moderators on the old website and post there as well as being members of the face book group, hopefully this helps them. Sharon (Kelley) Barnes found us while looking for information on her brother Charles Kelley and is now a associate member. Those of us that were snipes (engineers) like myself that stood watches in Bravo 3, the after fire room, did not have to deal with what you all did that day but we felt sorry over the tragedy. If there is some way we can offer you support let us know by any of the usual methods.

Enclosed you will find a form giving some information on possible tours and tentative dates for the upcoming reunion. Dates and tours are subject to change, so check the website ussbasilonne.org We would like to know if you are interested in attending.

Well that's all for this newsletter. Here's to seeing you at the next reunion in the Milwaukee - Racine area this October.

Your Shipmate,

Philip E. Poplaski

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315-457-6847
On Board 69-70 EN2

Wisconsin Reunion

Karl Weber BT2 from 67-70 and his wife Phyllis have volunteered to host this year's 2018 Reunion October 15-19 in the Milwaukee, WI area

Fun week is being planned with some tentative tours being a WWII submarine tour at the Maritime Museum featuring ships and boats of the Great Lakes, Wine tasting, a visit to Miller Brewing EAA Aviation Museum, Case Tractor Museum, a Kringle Bakery, and some good eating. We are also planning a special memorial service at a beautiful location right on the lake. Karl is still working out the details so this is tentative right now but looking good.

If you have been thinking about attending a reunion but haven't so far this would be a good one to attend. Milwaukee is easy to get to from any direction and it looks like the hotel is going to be close to the Milwaukee Airport.

It would be very helpful if you would contact Karl at, karl1310@yahoo.com or send him something by snail mail to 1816 Arcturus ave Racine, WI 53404 if you plan to attend at this time. You can also call him at 608-844-0187. He will be glad to hear from you.

Hope to see you at the reunion