



# Nitro Blast

The Newsletter of the  
USS Nitro (AE-2/AE-23)  
Association  
Volume 6, Issue 3  
January 2004  
Editor: Jim Timmons  
Assn. Membership 252

## Week of Eagles (101<sup>ST</sup>. Airborne) *Keep the Memories Alive*

### Highlight of '04 Reunion

This year's reunion will feature a visit to Ft. Campbell, KY, home to the U. S. Army's 101<sup>st</sup>. Airborne Division (*Screaming Eagles*). It is sure to be the highlight of the reunion, as our visit will coincide with the post's "Week of Eagles" celebration. The Screaming Eagles have a long and storied history dating back to World War 1.

Former Nitro Command Chaplain, Deanna Smitha has written a prayer for the wreath laying ceremony, and has suggested a newly released book about the 101<sup>st</sup>. Airborne Division as worthy of reading prior to our visit. The name of the book is *The Cow Spoke French* - The story of Sgt. William True, American Paratrooper in World War II. It is a Merriam Press publication.

During our visit on Saturday, 19 June, we will conduct our wreath laying ceremony, have lunch in one of the post's dining facilities and view an Air Show. The Air Show is the concluding activity of Ft. Campbell's "Week of Eagles". According to the fort's PAO, there will be static displays of aircraft from all of the services, static displays of most of the 101<sup>st</sup>. Airborne Division equipment and a mock air assault.

The motor coach trip to Ft. Campbell will be a day tour leaving the Sheraton Music City Hotel around 8:30AM and returning in late afternoon. Normally the post is closed during this week to tours because the activities are mainly for the soldiers and their families, but they have made an exception for our group. We felt that if it were possible to visit Ft. Campbell, we should not pass up the opportunity to not only pay respects to our fallen shipmates but to also pay respects and show our support for these soldiers who have sacrificed so much during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

If you are interested in this activity, please fill out the sign up sheet attached to this newsletter.

All of our reunion activities will either take place or originate from our 2004 Reunion headquarters at the

Sheraton Music City Hotel, Nashville. If you haven't reserved your room at the Sheraton, you may do so by calling their national reservation center at 800-325-3535 or by contacting the hotel directly at 615-885-2200. More information about the Sheraton Music City may be found on their web site at [www.sheratonmusiccity.com](http://www.sheratonmusiccity.com)

When placing your reservation for the 17 - 20 June 2004 reunion, let the reservation clerk know you want to reserve a room for the **USS Nitro Association Reunion** for "x" number of nights. Your credit card will not be charged until you check out and you have up to 24 hours prior to the date of arrival to cancel your reservations.

Our guestroom rate for the reunion is \$89/night for either a "king" or "double bedded" rooms, and an occupancy of up to four people per room. **Anyone requiring special assistance should inform the hotel when making reservations.**

The special rate for our group will be honored two days prior to and after the reunion (space available). So if there are other sights you would like to see while in Nashville, you might want to consider extending your stay at the Sheraton Music City Hotel.

### 2004 Reunion Itinerary

Here is the balance of the Itinerary for the reunion:

**Thursday:** (Day) Crew member check in – Hospitality Suite. 7PM - Association Annual Business Meeting.

**Friday:** (Day) Tour of Nashville including a luncheon cruise on the riverboat General Andrew Jackson. Evening - Association Dinner, raffle and auction. This year's raffle item will be a statue of the Lone Sailor with Seabag. The statue's value is \$120.

**Saturday:** (Day) Trip to Ft. Campbell (home of the "Screaming Eagles) for the Nitro Association Wreath Laying Ceremony, lunch on the post and Ft. Campbell's Air Show.

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The hospitality room and ship's store will be open most hours we are in port and do not have activities scheduled. At this year's sit-down dinner, you and your guest can choose your own entrée from the choices listed on the activity sheet. No need to worry, we will keep track of your selections and remind you at the reunion.

### Nitro Crew Member Directory Dues Premium

*Update on the shipment of the 2004 Crew Member directory and dues premium.*

Due to the fact that we are receiving a number of new members and have received many address corrections from other crew members, the 2004 directory will be mailed out with the April newsletter. This additional time will allow us to compile the most up-to-date directory of members.

The stainless steel travel mugs, which have been selected as the 2004 dues premium and have been ordered, will be shipped in mid February. You will also find your 2004 membership card inside the mug box.

### Association Ship's Store

**A Reminder:** We still have some copies of the USS Nitro (AE-23) James River videotape. This 1.5 hr. videotape can be purchased for \$ 15.95 (\$12 + \$3.95 S/H). This tape and other items in the ship's store may be viewed on our web site at:

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/nalc820/stores.htm>

A complete selection of Nitro Gear will be available at the Nashville reunion.

### "TAPS"

None for this quarter.

### The Crow's Nest

As the results of our December dues renewal reminders sent out by our treasurer, Bob Peiffer, we have located another former AE-23 crew member who is still on active duty. She is HMC Brenda McFadin who was an HM1 when on board Nitro at the time of decommissioning in 1995. She is currently stationed, along with her husband, at NEPMU-7, Sigonella, Italy.

JANUARY 2004

Loyd Rinehart (AE-2, 42-45) is considering attending this year's reunion in Nashville and would like to hear from some of his former shipmates who might also be attending. You may contact him at 806-294-5471 or through his daughter, Lorita, at [lthomaso@spec-lbk.org](mailto:lthomaso@spec-lbk.org)

### 2005 Reunion Update

We will be closing out the voting for the 2005 reunion as of the April newsletter. If you have not yet voted for the location of the 2005 (South) reunion, please take time to fill out and return the reunion questionnaire on the Nitro Assn. web site. So far the results for the 2005 reunion is as follows:

Bahamas Cruise (Carnival Cruise Lines) 25 votes, New Orleans 6 votes, Jacksonville 5 votes, Norfolk 3

If you have any questions about the cruise, which is leading so far, please contact with Paul Licker via email, [Pesachbenschlomo@aol.com](mailto:Pesachbenschlomo@aol.com) or call him at home in the evening at 321-757-6830.

Those who have voted previously are not eligible to vote again.

### Nitro Membership Update

USS Nitro (AE-2/AE-23) Association membership continues to grow. Our membership roll (cumulative total from '98 to present) now stands at 252. Congratulations to John Bochicchio (61-63) who became the 250<sup>th</sup>. person to join the Nitro Association. The following shipmates (Nitro tour dates) have signed on as members during the month indicated:

**December** – James Schuster (71-74); Daniel McKenna (87-89); Loyd Rinehart (42-45); Larry R. Young III (87-88); George Hanselman (68-70); Dennis Johnston (62-64); Donald Szerencits (70-71)

**January** - John Bochicchio (61-63); James Ledyard (68-71); Barry Bogart (67-68)

Anyone desiring to become a member of the USS NITRO Association may do so by sending a **check made payable to:**

USS NITRO Association  
% Mr. Robert Peiffer  
PO Box 1254  
Mishawaka, Indiana 46546-1254

**2004 Association Dues are \$23.95(including S/H of Assn. Packet).** The packet includes an Association stainless steel travel mug as the dues premium for the 2004 Association dues, quarterly newsletters, membership

certificate (for **new** members only), crew members directory and a laminated membership card.

### ◆◆ ***The Muster List Project*** Update ◆◆

We have received hard copies of the Muster Lists and Diaries for the years: 1959, 1960, 1963, 1965, 1967, 1968 and 1970. An additional contribution to The Muster List Project was received from John Moliere. Thank you, John, for your generous donation to this project. ---

We would still like to obtain the microfilm (\$34/roll from the National Archives) and make hard copies of the Muster Lists for 1962, 66 and 69.

Diaries and Muster Lists for crews from 1971 to decommissioning, as mentioned in earlier newsletters, are not as complete or readily accessible. We continue to take suggestions on how best to obtain these items.

So, if you are interested in ***The Muster List Project***, please make your checks payable (in any amount) to the USS Nitro Association and make a notation about the year(s) to be obtained/copied. If the costs for a particular year's copies are already covered, we will apply the funds to another year or the general fund. The Association will also record, in the archive book, a list of donors and they year they donated

### ✂ ***The Nitro Sage*** ✂

*Only in America.....do we use answering machines to screen calls and then have call waiting so we won't miss a call from someone we didn't want to talk to in the first place.*

*Military wisdom - Don't disregard the following warning:  
"Cluster bombing from B-52s is very, very accurate. The bombs are guaranteed to always hit the ground."*

*- U.S.A.F. Ammo Troop*

### ■ **A Final Thought** ■

The World War Two Memorial will be dedicated to honor the WWII veterans this May in Washington, D.C. and the remaining members of the 508 Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 82nd Airborne will be "going home" to Gainesville, Florida for the last time. Their Association will officially disband where the unit was first organized. Declining numbers due to death and the failing health has taken it's toll.

For those of you who could not attend the reunion in Davisville, RI, the area sure did change. I believe the high point of this visit was the joint wreath ceremony with the Sea Bee Associations and the Nitro group at the former CBC, Davisville. The Color Guard, the small band, the reading of the names and the ringing of the bells were very emotional to say the least.

*Nashville, here we all come!* If all the events come together as planned, we will have a "rebel yell" of a good time. Fort Campbell will be where we will honor our deceased members and view an air show. (Just can't see any reason to jump out of a perfectly good airplane.) Please check you social schedule to see if this event is marked for June 2004.

January is membership month for most association, so if you have not renewed your memberships yet, now is the time to do so. Veteran's groups, ours included, need to "*Keep the Memories Alive*" as long as possible.

A hale and hardy "Job Well Done" to the members of the 508 Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division Association.

*Fair winds and following seas,*  
Bob Eberlein, Founder, USS Nitro Association.

### ≡ **USS Nitro Web Site** ≡

The place for frequent updates on the Nitro reunion, association and other related activities:

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/nalc820/ussnitro.htm>

### **Nitro Blast Newsletter**

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*Address Service Requested*

## Activity Details

**General Andrew Jackson Showboat Cruise & Nashville Bus Tour:** Well folks, it has finally happened. We have run into the "immovable object" - something that we can not get around. The "immovable object" is a set in concrete deadline to sign up for the General Jackson riverboat cruise portion of our Nashville bus tour. Please make note of the deadline for us to receive payment, if you are interested in going on the riverboat cruise, buffet lunch/show and Nashville guided bus tour.

The cost of the General Jackson/Nashville trip will be \$61/per person. We must receive your payment by May 15<sup>th</sup>. in order to guarantee your spot on the General Jackson riverboat. As mentioned on the Activity Form you will be returning to us, we will need to have 40 people for this trip.

While on board the four-deck paddlewheel riverboat, you will enjoy a leisurely two-and-a-half-hour afternoon cruise on the Cumberland River. The delicious lunch buffet will include salad, Southern Style Chicken Breast, Tennessee Style Pulled Pork Smoked BBQ, the Chef's Entree' of the Day with Wildhorse Sweet and Tangy BBQ Sauce, Potatoes and Vegetables, home made cornbread and baked yeast rolls, dessert and beverage. Lunch will be followed by the musical show *Now That's Country*, featuring Tim Watson.

Our bus(es) will leave the Sheraton Music City Hotel mid-morning for our lunch time departure. Upon returning to the General Jackson's dock, we will re-board our bus(es) for a two-hour guided bus tour of Nashville. While on this tour, our guide will point out many of the famous sites and attractions to be found in Nashville, such as the original Grand Ole Opry (Ryman Auditorium), Music Row, Vanderbilt University, the Parthenon and The Hermitage (home of President Andrew Jackson).

**Note:** It may be possible to reserve space for this trip after May 15<sup>th</sup>; however, it will be on a "space available" basis. If we have additional people who want to sign-up after the cutoff date, our tour company will have to check with the General Jackson to see about availability and let us know. If there is space available, we can accept the reservation but you and your guest may not be able to sit with our "reserved" group or may have lunch with the other buffet serving. The General Jackson will have two buffets and shows that day (an early buffet/show and a late buffet/show). If the General Jackson is "sold out", you will be notified. **Again, we must receive your payment for the General Jackson/Nashville trip is May 15<sup>th</sup>.**

**USS Nitro Association Dinner/Raffle/Auction** - This very popular part of the reunion will be held on Friday evening, 18 June in one of the banquet rooms at the Sheraton Music City Hotel. It will commence at approximately 7PM with a "plated" dinner. As indicated on the Activity Form and in the newsletter, you and your guest will be able to select one of three entrees. Dinner will be followed by a photo session (be sure to bring your camera) and raffle/auction and will last until approximately 11PM. We will again have as our auctioneer, the services of Mr. Paul Licker, who has done an outstanding job at the past reunions. Our raffle item this year will be a bronze statue of *The Lone Sailor with Seabag*. The statue has a retail value of \$120.00. Please consider bringing with you an item to have auctioned. It doesn't have to be an expensive item, just something you think would be enjoyed by the people attending the reunion. At past reunions, we have had military and non-military related items, Navy and Nitro specific items for auction. Remember that half of the proceeds (up to \$500) from the raffle/auction will be presented to a designated post fund during our visit to Ft. Campbell, KY on Saturday.

**Trip to Ft. Campbell** - As many of you know, one of the main objectives of the reunion is to hold our wreath laying ceremony either on board a U. S. Naval vessel, at a U. S. Navy shore installation or other military reservation when possible. We have been fortunate enough to have the U. S. Army grant us permission to hold this year's wreath laying ceremony at Ft. Campbell, KY. This military reservation is home to the Army's 101<sup>st</sup>. Airborne Division. We will be visiting the base during the *Screaming Eagles' "WEEK OF EAGLES"* activities. This year's "Week of Eagles" will be especially meaningful because of all the returning troops from Operation Iraqi Freedom. Details of the activities are in the newsletter, so I will only go over the list briefly. Our wreath laying ceremony will be held at 10AM and be followed by lunch in one of the post's dining halls (with the troops). After lunch, we will view an Air Show to be held on the post. This air show will include many static from all of the military branches.