



Nitro Blast

The Newsletter of the
USS Nitro (AE-2/AE-23)
Association
Volume 7, Issue 4
April/May 2005
Editor: Jim Timmons
Assn. Membership 268

"Make All Spaces Ready for Sea" *Keep the Memories Alive*

Latest Bahamas Update

Ahoy Shipmates & Significant Others

New info: Rob Drake from San Diego, CA., will be a "single" attendee on the cruise. and is looking for a cabin-mate. If there is another "single" attendee who would like to share a cabin, please contact either Rob directly (858-451-2113, email robdrake@bigfoot.com) or Mark Sikes. This would be advantageous for both parties, as it will reduce the cost per person for the cabin.

Here is the final information on the 2005 cruise to the Bahamas. Most of it has been published before, so this is a final reminder.

For those having contacted JetSet Cruise and are arriving in Miami early for the cruise, rooms have been secured at the Holiday Inn at 340 Biscayne Boulevard, Miami FL 33132 for the dates you have specified. The rate will be \$85.00 + tax per room. If you need a rollaway, they charge \$10.00. The hotel has limited parking at \$10.00 per day.

The rooms secured for early arrivals, for the most part, are non-smoking rooms unless you have specified otherwise. If you have any questions about your accommodations at the Holiday Inn, please contact JetSet Cruise as soon as possible. Also, let them know if there are special circumstances that the hotel should be aware of. This "Nitro" rate will good for those wishing to arrive even earlier or stay after the cruise.

Shuttle transport, from the hotel to the ship on Friday, June 24th, has also been obtained. The cost is \$5.00 per person. If you have not yet talked with either Mark or Cathy at JetSet about the shuttle, you need to do so as soon as possible. Contact them at JetSet Cruise (toll free 866-201-2752 or 763-479-6477).

Nitro Association members, guests and family members will be seated for meals as a group. If you would like to be seated at the same table with someone else attending the reunion, or as a family, please contact Mark Sikes or Cathy so arrangements can be made for seating assignments. If no seating arrangements are made, feel free to sit anywhere within our group's dining area

The cruise line has parking available at the pier. The rates are \$12 per day or \$20 per day for oversize vehicles. No reservation is required for parking at either the hotel or the cruise line parking lot.

◆◆ Reunion Meetings ◆◆

Although the nature of this reunion will be somewhat different than those held ashore, we will hold our annual business meeting as usual. This meeting will probably take place on Friday, 24 June after dinner at a space on board ship to be determined

This year's business meeting will also include **election or reelection of officers** for the next two years. Any Nitro Association member, having paid their 2005 dues and who is a member in good standing, is eligible to be elected as an officer of the association.

Positions of President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Trustees 1 & 2 and Master At Arms and will be open for nominations. Current officers of the Nitro Association are: Jim Timmons*, President; Bob Eberlein*, V. President; Robert Peiffer*, Treasurer; Phil Wise*, Secretary; Juan Reyes*, Trustee; Paul Licker*, Trustee and Oscar Santiago*, Master At Arms. An asterisk (*) indicates the individual will run again for the same office. Anyone else desiring to run for office should contact Jim Timmons so your name can be added to the ballot.

We will try to hold this and any other "official" reunion function while underway and the meetings will be as brief as possible so the cruise can be enjoyed to its fullest. Most likely

our annual raffle/auction will take place on Sunday, 26 June, after dinner, at a place on board ship yet to be determined. As in the past, please feel free to bring a Navy or military related item to the auction. Since we will be on board a ship and not have the space we usually do to display items, please keep any auction item you might bring to a reasonable size.

Remember, whatever you win you have to be able to take back on the plane with you.

This year's raffle item will be the latest coffee-table edition of The Naval Historical Foundation's complete history of the Navy. Previous editions of the book entitled "Navy" have been raffle items at past reunions and is a "must have item" for your library.

Nitro returns to Las Vegas in 2006

Mark your calendars for June of 2006. The Nitro Association will return to Las Vegas, Nevada for our annual reunion. 1998 was the last time the reunion was held there. No dates or itinerary has been set yet, but continue to watch the future newsletters and our web site for details.

Las Vegas is a very popular vacation destination and we are expecting to have quite a turnout of former crewmembers and their guests.

As in the past, we would like to solicit help in setting up this reunion. So, please contact Jim Timmons if you would be willing to help in locating hotels to visit, a place for our wreath laying ceremony and other activities.



None to report this quarter

Navy Times articles

Here are some excerpts from the past few issues. *The Navy Times*:

(1) X USS Oriskany to be sunk in Gulf of Mexico as part of the reef program for naval vessels. (Some of you might remember the Nitro and Oriskany had a run-in of the coast of Vietnam).

(2) Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, nearly 1 million service members have taken part in the missions in and around Iraq and Afghanistan.

(3) Navy to reduce forces by as many as 20,000 over the next two years by means of tougher re-ups, early outs and

lower recruiting goals. The Navy looks for 95% of their future recruits to have high school or better education.

(4) Due to the nature of changing threats worldwide, Navy of the future most likely to comprise fewer large ships (cruisers, destroyers) and more armed smaller craft and unmanned vehicles.

(5) Possible budget cuts could affect every component of the Navy through 2011. One less Virginia-class SSN, capping of LPD 17 class amphibious ships at nine, deleting of twenty-two Osprey V-22 aircraft and cutting of twenty KC-130J aircraft are some of the proposed areas of budget cuts.

(6) Controversial 360° evals being considered by Navy. This would allow evals of personnel by subordinates, peers and superior officers.

(7) Over 13,000 military personnel and 17 U. S. Navy ships were involved in tsunami relief efforts in SW Asia.

(8) Navy submarine, USS San Francisco, slams into Pacific underwater mountain southeast of Guam, which resulted in one death and many injuries among crew. Incident may have been due to inaccurate charts of area.

(9) Recovering economy could be one factor that hinders military recruiting efforts.

(10) FL lawmakers vow to fight Navy proposal to mothball the carrier John F. Kennedy, homeported in Mayport.

(11) CNO, ADM Verne Clarke, to retire. ADM Michael Mullen likely to become new CNO.

(12) Army continues to go after Navy enlisted and officers, who may be eligible to be separated from the Naval service, with bonuses up to \$20,000.

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 268.*** The following shipmates (Nitro tour dates) have signed on as members during the month indicated:

April - August Trabert (60-61); Dominique Demanet (Belgium)

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

2005 Association Dues are \$23.95 (including S/H of Assn. Packet). The dues packet will include a "60 Years Service to the Fleet" patch as well as two Association license plate frames, quarterly newsletters, membership certificate (for new members only), crewmembers directory and a laminated membership card.

There are also Associated Membership dues available for spouses of former or deceased USS Nitro (AE-2/AE-23) crew members, children of former or deceased crew members or for any former U. S. Navy personnel having an interest in or desire to join the USS Nitro Association. This classification would allow those members to receive a membership certificate & card and 4 quarterly newsletters each year (*dues premiums and crewmember directory will not be included in this classification*). The cost of the Associate Membership will be \$14.00 (\$12.50 dues + \$1.50 S/H) per calendar year.

The Nitro Sage

Reporters interviewing a 104 year-old woman:
"And what do you think is the best thing about being 104?"
the reporter asked. She simply replied, "No peer pressure."

The nice thing about being senile is you can hide your own
Easter Eggs.

A Final Thought

The USS America (CV-66) Association has received word
that the old ship is to be used for "live fire" experiments and

then sent to a watery grave. Part of the Navy's explanation for its decision, regarding the America's final fate, was that she was not "maintained as a donation asset". Since the Nitro has been stripped for replacement parts and artifacts, she falls into the not "maintained as a donation asset". I have written to the CNO to inquire about the James River Reserve Fleet and to see what is to be the final fate of these ships.

Sunscreen - check! Sea legs - check! Dramamine - double check! Soon the "cruise" members will be breathing good old sea air. For some of us, the last time we were to sea was as "haze gray and under way". Well, at least we don't have to worry about missing ship's movement or the sea and anchor detail or manning the rails. I observed that whenever the Nitro left port, greasy spare ribs seem to grace the menu, wonder what's on the menu our first night out?

Update on the new cammy Navy BDU's. I emailed Great Lakes NTC and R/CMD MC Parlier stated "the test is going with positive feedback. We should see and update by the summer."

Please remember our service personnel who man-the-watch in your thoughts and prayers.

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](http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/nalc820/ussnitro.htm)