

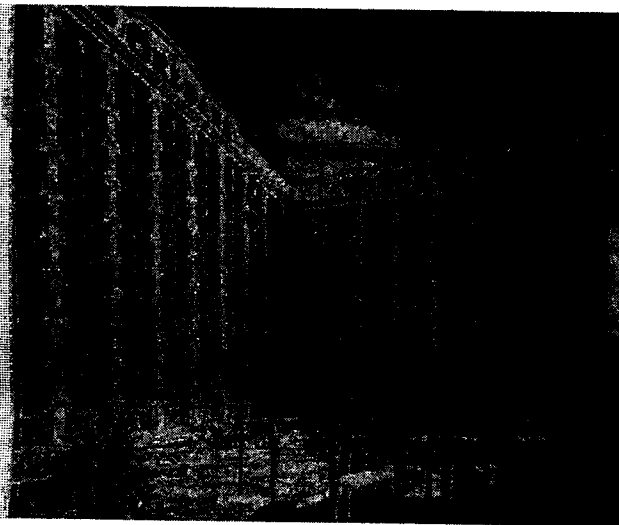


Nitro Blast

The Newsletter of the
USS Nitro (AE-2/AE-23)
Association
Volume 8, Issue 2
Oct/Nov 2005
Editor: Jim Timmons
Assn. Membership 271

"Viva Lost Wages (Las Vegas)" *Keep the Memories Alive*

2006 Reunion Details



Would you like to visit the Eiffel Tower, take a gondola ride or walk across the Brooklyn Bridge? How about watching a volcano erupt or a pirates do battle on the high seas? How about doing it all in one day?

Paris, Venice, Rio, the "Big Easy" and New York City await your visit at the USS Nitro Association's next port of call - Las Vegas! Just about whatever you want to do, you can do in this "fantasy world" town.

We are in the planning stages for our activities but at this point it appears as if you will be able to choose from a number of things to do. Does a visit to the Hoover Dam and a cruise on Lake Mead sound interesting? How about a visit to a real working gold mine, or just taking the day to take in what "The Strip" has to offer? These are just some of the possibilities offered outside of what is available at our hotel.

Ah, you ask, what is available within the hotel! Obviously there is gambling for the adults but how about bowling, arcades, movie theaters and live entertainment on the premises.

We will be staying at The Orleans Hotel and Casino, just off of the strip. **DO NOT PLACE YOUR RESERVATION BEFORE DECEMBER 15th!**

This is a "self-contained" property, which means that you can do almost everything you might want to do - in one location. Check out their web site: www.orleanscasino.com for more information on what is available for both adults and children to do at The Orleans.

The reunion will be from Thursday, 22 June through Sunday, 25 June 2006. The following paragraph covers the reservation process for the reunion. One thing that you must keep in mind about Las Vegas is that the busiest time of the week is Thursday through Sunday. This is when "all the money" comes into town, either for massive conventions or to gamble. In the scheme of things, the USS Nitro Association's visit is a mere ripple on the pond of activity that will be going on in Las Vegas that or any other weekend.

Unless you have thousands of people attending your function, the room rate (on the weekend) will be higher than what we have experienced at other reunion sites. We have done our best to ensure a good rate at a very nice location. **The rates we have obtained, both for the guestrooms and for or meeting and banquet rooms, are based on the fact that our members will fill the block of guestrooms reserved for us.** It is entirely possible that if we do not meet these numbers, our rental fees for the meeting and banquet rooms could go up substantially.

We have reserved a block of rooms (called "petite suites") - 30 for Thursday night and 50 for Friday & Saturday night of the reunion. The special guestroom rates for the reunion are as follows: \$60/night for Thursday night and \$110/night for Friday and Saturday nights. Although the weekend rate is higher than what we have paid in the past, the total amount for the three-day stay is comparable to our other reunion sites and is lower than the normal room rates for the weekend at this hotel. "King" or "Queen double bedded" rooms are available, with occupancy of up to four people per room. Both smoking and non smoking rooms are available as well as

2 NITRO BLAST

handicap rooms. *Anyone requiring special assistance should inform the hotel when making reservations.*

Each person will be responsible for making their reservations and may do so by calling The Orleans Hotel and Casino national reservation center at 800-675-3267. The Orleans should be ready to take our reservations by December 15th, so please wait until that time to place your reservations.

When placing your reservation for the 2006 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 72 hours prior to 4 PM (Las Vegas) time on the date of arrival to cancel your reservations. Additional room nights, before or after the reunion, may be made at our reunion weekday rate on an "as available" basis.

As part of their resort fee, the hotel will provide complimentary transportation to and from Coast Casino's other Las Vegas properties, so while we will be staying at an "off the strip" property you will be able to take reach the strip from their Barbary Coast location.

Here is the tentative itinerary for our visit to Las Vegas:
Thursday 6/22 - Afternoon crewmember check-in. 7-10 PM Association business meeting.

Friday 6/23- Possible visit to Nellis Air Force Base for our annual wreath laying ceremony. We will also try to arrange a lunch in one of the base dining facilities and a tour of the AFB. As we have done in the past, one half of the proceeds from our raffle/auction will be donated to a Nellis AFB non-governmental funded assistance program.

Saturday 6/24 - Daytime tour day. A choice of tours to Lake Mead/Hoover Dam; Eldorado Canyon Gold Mine; tour a working brothel (The Resort and Spa at Sheri's Ranch) will be offered. Yes, that's correct you can actually take a very informative tour or a working brothel! This would make for some interesting dinner conversation at the very least. Or you may opt to have a "free day" to see what's new on "The Strip", but remember you have to be back at the hotel in time to get ready for the Association annual dinner.

Saturday night 7 - 11 PM, Association Annual Dinner/raffle and auction.



www.ussnitro.org



Beep, beep, beep! Watch out for the heavy construction as we continue to move and update the new Nitro Association web site. As many of you who are frequent visitors to the web site may already be aware of, we have a new location

"Continuing Service to the Fleet"

OCT/NOV 2005

(URL) for our Association. The new URL www.ussnitro.org is now in operation, thanks to the efforts of Bob Peiffer our webmaster. We have a lot more space in which we can expand existing and add to our content about the USS Nitro (AE-2 and AE-23) and the USS Nitro Class of ammunition ships.



Hurricane Donation



The Gulf Coast of the United States was hit extremely hard by a series of hurricanes this season and the USS Nitro Association made a \$200 donation to the Red Cross for hurricane relief. "Thank you" to all of our military involved in bringing relief and rescue to the stricken area. Our prayers and best wishes are sent to all in the path of these destructive storms.



Military Phone Cards



We have ordered 20 prepaid ATT Exchange calling cards (10 for shore-based personnel and 10 for ship to shore personnel). The cost to the Nitro Association (funds from the raffle/auction) is \$350.00. So far we have had only two requests for cards! Please check with your friends and neighbors to see if they know someone serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Afghanistan or Kuwait. We would like to send some cards to these people before we send the remaining cards to a couple of commands for distribution.



TAPS



None to report this quarter.



Navy Times articles



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

- 1) Navy decommissions cruiser Vincennes after 20 years service. Vincennes was involved in the shooting down of an Iranian airliner in 1988.
- 2) 2nd. largest number of 1st. Class POs become CPOs.
- 3) The military's newest testbed for a future class of "close-in-shore" ships, Sea Fighter, is 262' in length and is manned by multi-tasking sailors from the Navy and Coast Guard. The first full size version of the LCS (Littoral Combat Ship) is scheduled for commissioning in 2007.
- 4) USS Stethem (DDG-63), which Nitro Assn. visited in San Diego, has a new homeport in Yokosuka, Japan.
- 5) Navy entering second phase testing of "performance appraisal system" to replace fitness reports for both enlisted and officers.
- 6) US Naval Academy asked to end prayer before lunch.

- 7) Ramstein Air Base and the Army's Grafenwoehr complex in Germany to become the central air and land staging and training bases for Europe and Middle East.
- 8) Navy Close-in Weapons System could be used by Army in effort to combat insurgent mortar and rocket attacks.
- 9) Navy continues to crackdown on hazing incidents. Crossing the Equator ceremony to continue, under guidelines.
- 10) Military divorce rates on rise (up 40%) since 2000.
- 11) Physical fitness key to advancement or retention in Navy. COs can recommend dismissal or halt advancements.
- 12) Retired VADM James Stockdale died at age 81.
- 13) Aging Coast Guard fleet of ships and planes are breaking down at record levels. Excellerated tasking post 9/11 main reason.
- 14) Navy to build a Ravine Warfare Squadron (Navy Expeditionary Combat Battalion, 700 member naval infantry - no Marines).
- 15) Admiral Michael Mullen is new CNO. Stresses leadership role CPOs will play in Navy as well as support for decommissioning of USS John F. Kennedy.
- 16) Outgoing PacFleet commander sees alliances with foreign navies in years ahead. Possible realignment of PacFleet ships.
- 17) Navy may require at least an Associates college degree for all sailors starting with SCPOs by 2010.
- 18) Troubled tilt-rotor Osprey could be ready to deploy in 2007.
- 19) The following ratings have been approved for merger: Hospital Corpsman & Dental Techs; Personnelman & Disbursing Clerks; all Helicopter aircrew into aviation warfare systems operator.
- 20) Navy summer recruiting efforts fall short of goal.
- 21) San Francisco city supervisors turn thumbs-down on being homeport of museum battleship Iowa.
- 22) New attack submarine USS Texas to run \$520 million over budget for a total cost of \$2.71 billion.
- 23) Another veteran to possibly face charges of misrepresenting their military service by wearing rank and medals not entitled too.
- 24) Navy investigates collision between destroyers McFaul and Churchill in August and submarine Tennessee's collision with Turkish freighter. Sub CO relieved of command.
- 25) Groton and Portsmouth beat the BRAC axe.
- 26) Navy and Air Force pilots, using infrared, help ground troops to find insurgents at night.
- 27) Sen. McCain to push bill to raise maximum enlistment age to 42.
- 28) Head of Russian Navy fired after mini-sub trapped at bottom of Pacific in September.
- 29) By the end of 2009, all submarine and surface charting will be done with the Electronic Chart Display and Information System - no more paper charts. *Editor's note: (ya, right!).*
- 30) 2006 Defense Authorization Bill held up in Congress.
- 31) Last Spruance-class destroyer (Cushing) is decommissioned.
- 32) Navy medical and security jobs translate to good employment opportunities in civilian life.

USS Nitro (AE-2/AE-23) Association membership continues to grow. ***Our membership roll (cumulative total from '98 to present) now stands at 271.*** The following shipmates (Nitro tour dates) have signed on as members during the month indicated:

August - Owen Rice (62-64); Stephen Dellaira (69-71)

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.



Fun Facts

Arthritis? WD-40 Spray and rub in, kill insect stings tool

Kool aid to clean dishwasher pipes. Just put in the detergent section and run a cycle, it will also clean a toilet.

A Final Thought

The week we observed Veteran's Day my local newspaper ran articles on veterans searching for long lost military friends and then getting together for a reunion. An article on a Corpsman who won the Medal of Honor in the Pacific, and locations where veterans could meet for the observance to honor anyone who served our country in the armed forces.

Seems like only yesterday I was aboard the Nitro AE-23 - a kid just out of high school. Serving in the US Navy really had little impact on me at the time, but now it feels warm inside



Nitro Membership Update



4 NITRO BLAST

when someone comes up to me when they see my association jacket and says thank you for being in the Navy. It's a far cry from the time when Viet Nam was going full guns and the public had no use for those who served on active duty.

From the other officers, myself and our families, all the best to you and your families for the up coming Holiday Season.

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

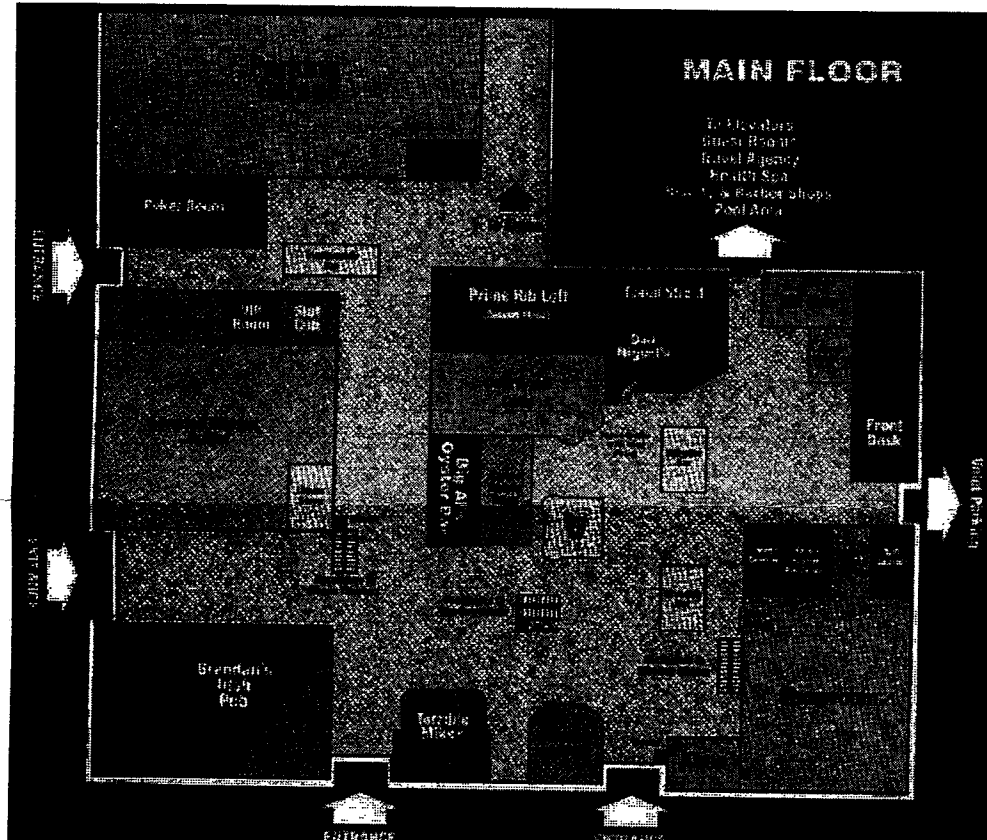
OCT/NOV 2005

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



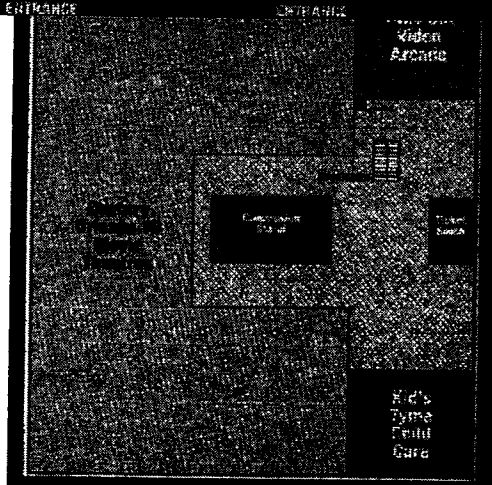
The place for frequent updates on the Nitro reunion, association and other related activities:

<http://www.ussnitro.org>

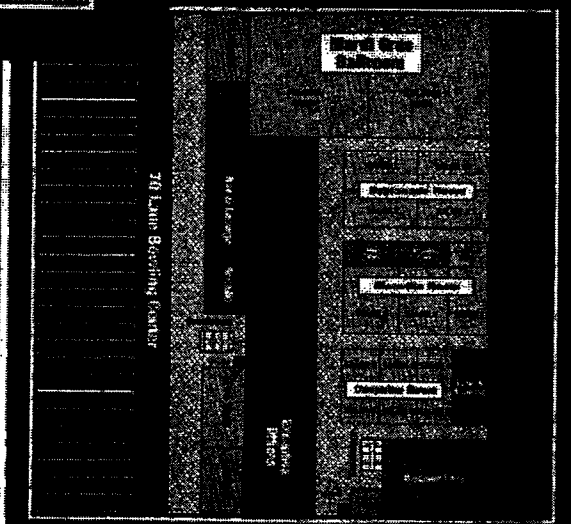


**The Orleans Hotel & Casino
Floor Plan**

Second Floor



**2ND FLOOR - WEST
CHILD CARE • MOVIE THEATERS
VIDEO ARCADE**



**2ND FLOOR - EAST
EXECUTIVE OFFICES • BOWLING
MEETING & BANQUET ROOMS**

"Continuing Service to the Fleet"