



# Nitro Blast

## A 2010 Sunshine Reunion

Keep the Memories Alive

### Is Jax ready for the USS Nitro?

By Jim Timmons

The classically elegant OMNI Hotel, in downtown Jacksonville, FL has been selected as our reunion headquarters. The OMNI is rated as a "Four Diamond" hotel and has all of the amenities you would expect of such a highly rated property. As part of our selection process, we took into account the location, style of hotel, access to shopping, restaurants, other attractions nearby and overall value for our attendees. The Nitro Association has blocked a group of 25 guestrooms for

Wednesday, 16 June (for early arrivals) and 35 guestrooms for each night - Thursday, Friday and Saturday (17 - 20 June). The association's guestroom rate is \$89.00/night for 2 adults and children 18 years old or younger. Included with the room rate is a full breakfast buffet for two adults per room. Additional discount coupons (age 6-12 buffet pricing is \$6.37, age 13-18 buffet



pricing is \$14.63 tax included) may be purchased. Other breakfast menu choices range from \$6 to \$10.

Our group rate is available for up to 3 days prior to the reunion and 3 days after the reunion. Each person will be responsible for making his or her reservations. Individuals may call the hotel's toll free reservations number at 1-800-843-6664. The OMNI Hotel will be setting up a reservation page on their web site shortly and you will be able to make reservations there as well. As

soon as we know what the URL is, it will be published on the Nitro Association's web site. When placing your reservation for the 2010 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 may cancel your reservations up till 12 PM (noon) the date of arrival.

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

The OMNI Hotel has limited "smoking" guestrooms. If you want to reserve one for the reunion, please do so as soon as possible. Reservations must be received on or before the cutoff date of **5/26/2010**. On the cutoff date, all unreserved rooms will be released back to the hotel for resale. Reservations received after the cutoff date will be accepted on a space and rate available basis.

**HOTEL PARKING:** Even though there is a charge at the OMNI for parking, this charge is more than offset by our guestroom rate, which includes breakfast for two adults.

Special parking arrangements have been made at PROPARK PARKING located on Water Street adjacent to the hotel. Parking is \$10.00 per night with "in and out privileges". For those who wish to move their cars in and out of the ProPark lot during their stay at the hotel, a special parking pass is needed. ***In order to receive this discount, Pro Park must be used and guests must***

### Inside this Edition

October/November 2009  
Volume 12, Issue 2

Editor: Jim Timmons  
Association Membership 320

1 & 2	Jacksonville 2010
2	Remembrances and Trips
2	Crow's Nest
3	Navy Times Article Recaps
4	Reunion Medical Form
4	Association Membership
4 & 5	Guest Columnist
5 & 6	Chaplains Corner
6	A Final Thought

Newsletter of the  
USS Nitro Association  
PO Box 1254  
MISHAWAKA IN 46546-1254

**register at the hotel prior to parking their car.** At that time, the hotel will issue the special parking pass for the guest.

The hotel's parking garage, located right behind Pro Parking, is also available for our group's parking and the charge is \$12/night. **If you choose to park your car in the parking garage, you will not have "in and out privileges".** Valet parking is also available for \$18/night with "in and out" privileges.

**Airport Transportation:** Express Shuttle provides transportation from Jacksonville Airport to hotels in the Jacksonville area and the charge to the OMNI for 1 person is approximately \$32 and for 2 people would be \$15/pp. The shuttle cost goes down the more people you have in the group. We are also considering a possible shuttle run with the Nitro Duty Car (my van) to pick people up from the airport. If you plan on flying into Jacksonville, let me know what your itinerary is as soon as possible.

We have not held our reunion at any OMNI hotel before and I am sure you will find your stay at this upscale hotel memorable.

Our list of activities is still in the works but we will be holding our wreath laying ceremony, association dinner and business meetings as usual. Time and place for the wreath laying is yet to be determined. Among some of the activities under consideration are a., riverboat cruise on the St. John's River, a trip to St. Augustine and a visit to Naval Station Mayport, for possible wreath laying ceremony.

## Reunion Suggestions

The staff at the OMNI Hotel suggests that those who are interested visit their web site:

<http://www.omnihotels.com/SelectGuestProgram.aspx>

and sign up for the OMNI Select Guest card. This program offers additional features for members during their stay at OMNI hotels, such as free in-room WiFi, newspapers and more.

Another suggestion, for those 62 and older, is to obtain a lifetime Senior Pass from National Park Service.

[http://www.nps.gov/fees\\_passes.htm](http://www.nps.gov/fees_passes.htm)

The cost is \$10 and can be used for entry into any national park or monument in the USA by the purchaser and up to 3 additional persons.

This pass will come in handy if we go to St. Augustine to visit some of the national monuments there.

## Crewmember Trips and Remembrances

By Our Association members and relatives

Harold Odette, Nitro Association member and WW2 Navy veteran, from North Carolina recently made a trip to visit the World War II memorial in

Washington, DC as part of the Flight of Honor, sponsored by American Legion Post 8 of Wilmington, NC.

\*\*\*\*\*

Former AE-23 officer Wallace Carey informed me, relative to our Seattle visit to the USS Ingraham (FFG-61), that his brother, Joseph, served on board the WW2 USS Ingraham (DD-444). The DD-444 was involved in a collision with the USS Chemung (AO-30), during escort duty in 1942. There was an explosion and the USS Ingraham was sunk, with only 11 survivors. Unfortunately, Joseph Carey was not one of them.

\*\*\*\*\*

USAF retired Chief Master Sergeant Thomas Morse contacted the Association to let us know his eighty-eight year old father, Roger W. Morse living in Maine, was on board the AE-2 as a Machinist Mate when she made the trip to Recife, Brazil. Both Roger and his son would like to hear from other AE-2 crewmembers. Thomas Morse may be reached at either: [tjmorse1@hotmail.com](mailto:tjmorse1@hotmail.com) or [tjmorse@comcast.net](mailto:tjmorse@comcast.net)

### *The Crow's Nest - News for and about Crewmembers*



The listing(s) are of former USS Nitro (AE-2) or (AE-23) crew members, which we have received since our last posting:

RMSN Donald Mulhern (AE-23); Archie Davis (AE-2) WW2; Ernest J Liguori (AE-23);

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **The Nitro Sage**

**"You know you're a Sailor when . . ."**

*You buy a Dumpster, paint it gray and live in it for 6 months*

*You run all of the piping and wires inside your house on the outside of the walls and label all the piping so you can identify what you just hit your head on.*

*You raise your bed to within 6" of the ceiling.*

### Navy Times Article Recaps

- 1 Two of the USS Pennsylvania's (WW2) 14-inch gun barrels arrive at Military Museum in Boalsberg, PA.
2. JCS Chief Mullen concerned about growing link between Taliban and al-Qaida in Pakistan.
3. Lawmakers assess the possibly increasing the number of active duty military personnel
4. Senate bill S 252, for additional benefits for female vets, and S801, for caregivers of disabled vet, clear VA panel and gains support in House.
5. Congress being pressured to review housing maintenance and allowances, concurrent receipts and reserve retirement.
- 6 Administration's 2010 defense budget calls for an increase in military medical jobs, which would also limit change to civilian billets.
- 7 Navy testing new cold-weather PT gear.
8. GAO reports cite Navy's under-estimation of shipbuilding costs, moving ahead with projects before requirements and key technology are ready as reasons for cost over-runs.
9. USAF budgets \$506M to monitor space junk.
10. 3.4% FY2010 military pay raise passes Congress.
11. House members propose tax breaks for deployed troops.
12. Over one hundred thirty spring '09 E-6 promotions taken back because of quota calculation error.
13. Northrup Grumman Shipbuilding inspector falsifies welding inspection report on 8 subs and a new carrier. Reinspection ordered and inspector fired. Sub Toledo had 21" hull crack.
14. 73,000 Navy, year long, IA (individual augmentee) tours with Army and Marines in Iraq and Afghanistan have been completed. Program expected to continue for at least another 2 to 3 years.
- 15 Navy continues to stress fuel saving measures for ships.
- 16 Military burn pits in Iraq may have adverse medical effects for thousands of personnel. Reviewing alternatives.
17. Army COS's wife speaks out on spousal stress because of multiple combat zone deployments.
18. Navy reviews sea powered electricity for Guam and Diego Garcia.

### Navy Times Article Recaps

19. Expanded computer-based training not necessarily good for 'A' and 'C' school graduates. Need more "hands-on, real world" basics.
20. USS Independence (LCS-2) original cost estimate \$297M, now expected to cost over \$704M!
- 21 Warships from 27 countries fighting Somalia pirates.
- 22 Prince Harry visits wounded warriors In Manhattan.
- 23 Amphib fleet size may be cut in future quadrennial funding reviews.
- 24 MM, EN, GSM rating merger, along with EM & GSE rating merger and MR, HT, DM rating merger placed on indefinite hold.
25. Current and former military held on active duty by "Stop-Loss" must file a claim in order to receive additional \$500/month payment.
26. Chinese sub, being tracked by US destroyer, hits towed sonar array
- 27 Former carrier, USS Forrestal, likely to be sunk or scrapped
- 28 Rep. Murtha - personnel cost as a reason for possible future drawdown.
- 29 Navy somewhat relaxes policy where new cammies can be worn.
30. Unemployed turning to military.
- 31 Navy starts installing updated remote-control Bushmasterguns (gattling-type) on surface ships.
32. Navy FFG tests first unmanned helicopter. UAVs deploy next year.
- 33 18 cruisers and destroyers are part of US ballistic missile defense.
34. Commissaries still a good bargain.
- 35 New E-6 and below service uniforms hit NavEx in September.
36. USCG cutter drydock fire under investigation.
37. MCPON plans to make warfare qualifications mandatory for enlisted.
38. "Don't ask, don't tell" change gaining momentum on Capitol Hill.
39. Cruiser Port Royal grounding could cost as much as \$40M to repair.
40. Cracks on two aging F-18s initiates inspections of all planes.
41. Navy may allow simultaneous launch of jets and helos from carriers.
42. Today's enlisted have many of the same gripes as sailors of any era.
43. After 2 years of delay and millions in cost overruns, the hybrid powered USS Makin Island finally arrives at homeport of San Diego

### Navy Times Article Recaps

44. Ammo ship Mount Baker to be inactivated in August 2010
45. College payment glitches in new GI Bill being worked on
46. F-22 funding halted.
47. Navy has awarded 63 Silver Stars since 2001.
48. SEAL's mini sib damaged in fire will not be repaired or replaced.
49. DOD requesting more mental health specialists to work with soldiers prone to suicide.
50. VA disability claims pile up despite faster computer processing
51. Forced-retirement board for Chiefs started September 21.
52. New Navy command - Fleet Cyber Command/10th Fleet started in Oct.
- 53 P-8A Poseidon to replace EA-6B Prowler as Navy Electronic Warfare aircraft in 2013
54. Russia continues naval exercises in Western Hemisphere
55. Congress says health care reform will not affect vet's program.
56. House passes bill for severely wounded veteran caregiver training and pay
58. Tougher rules covering drugs and drinking could end sailors' careers.
59. SecNav visits ships on piracy patrol in Indian Ocean and Central Command forces.
60. First female USCG Vice Commandant retired in August
61. GE lands \$2M, Twentynine Palms, contract for SmartGrid electricity.
- 62 Army uses extreme and adaptive sports as therapy and workouts for injured and returning war vets.
63. Crew of 124 civilian mariners and 11 Navy personnel to man Navy's newest supply ship - Mathew Perry.
64. Sailors and Marines refining tilt-rotor MV-22 Osprey operations during first "all-Osprey" amphib war deployment. No CH-46s as backups.
65. Carrier group Ronald Reagan on 4<sup>th</sup> deployment in four years.
66. Parts of Zumwalt DDG 1000 class being built in seven different states
67. Army highlights officer recruitment ment in latest advertisements.
68. ABC reporter Bob Woodruff, who sustained a severe head wound in Iraq, has formed a foundation which recently gave \$4.5M to 35 nationwide organizations to help wounded troops.

## Medical Forms for Reunion Attendees

By Jim Timmons

I was recently reintroduced to a fact of life after reading an article in one of the reunion-related publications we are subscribed to.

What would happen to any of our reunion attendees who became ill and there was no relative around to take care of him or her? Good question, I thought! Obviously, we would have to try to locate the spouse or closest relative to get permission for either treatment or to take to the hospital to be treated.

Most of our attendees travel with their spouses or significant other, but we do have a number of attendees who travel alone and we also have children or grandchildren attending our reunions. While attempting to contact either the guardian of a minor or the spouse or relative of an adult attending the reunion, it is vital for the Nitro Association to have the necessary paperwork, at hand, in order to proceed with any necessary medical treatment as soon as possible.

Therefore, as of the 2010 reunion in Jacksonville, FL, we will require each attendee to complete and return (along with their activity payment) a signed and dated 2-page authorization for emergency treatment form. This form will ask for such information as: Physician's, Dentist's, parent or guardian addresses and phone numbers; notation of any health concerns; authorization for medication and listing of meds; insurance information and consent for emergency treatment or first aid/comfort care.

The form also includes an "opt out" section, on the second page, for those who do not wish to provide the Nitro Association with any or all of the requested information.

We will also be requesting, from the hotels, a listing of rooms our attendees will be staying in as well as names of physicians and hospitals they may be using in case of an emergency.

## Nitro Association 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 320.*** The following shipmates (Nitro tour dates) have signed on as members during the month indicated:

**November:** Walter Gary (72-74)

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

### 2009 Nitro Assn. Dues Classifications

**Regular Association Membership Dues are \$25.00 (including S/H).** The dues packet includes an USS Nitro Association watch cap (will have a silhouette of the USS Nitro (AE-23) and the hull numbers of both the AE-2 and AE-23 directly embroidered on it), quarterly newsletters, membership certificate (for new members only), crewmembers directory and a laminated membership card.

### **Active Duty Membership Dues - FREE**

A new classification of dues for former USS Nitro (AE-23) crewmembers, who are still on active duty, has been created. Former Nitro crewmember, still on active duty, will receive the items described in the regular association membership packet at no charge to them. In order to qualify for this classification of membership, the active duty person will need to supply the Association with a copy of their military ID (to show active status) as well as a copy of their NAVPERS 1070/605 entitled "History of Assignments".

**Associated Membership Dues are \$14.80 (\$12.50 dues + \$2.30 S/H)** This classification of membership is available for spouses and/or children of former or deceased USS Nitro (AE-2/AE-23) crewmembers 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 are not included in this classification**).

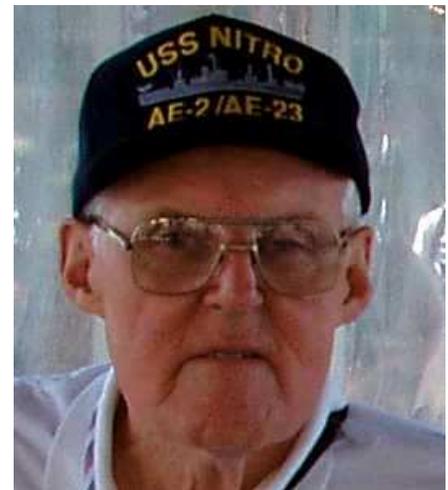
All USS Nitro Association memberships are valid for one calendar year (Jan - Dec.).

## Guest Columnist

Kenneth Marvin  
USS Nitro (AE-2)  
Association Member

I enlisted in the U.S. Navy shortly before I graduated from high school in 1945 and was sworn into the U.S.N.R. in late June. Back then you signed up for the duration of the war plus six months as the minimum time of your enlistment.

Shortly after graduation I reported for active duty and received my basic training at the Naval Training Center, Sampson, New York. The Training Center was located on Seneca Lake near Geneva, New York. World War II ended a few weeks after I started basic



training. Any celebration of the war ending was done on the base. Basic training included marching drills, rifle range, guard duty of your barracks, firefighter training inside of simulated ship compartments, boat training on Lake Seneca, learning Morse code using wigwags of a flag and of course K.P. duty.

After ten weeks of basic training I received orders to report for duty on board the USS Nitro (AE-2) which was anchored at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay and served during the decommissioning of the Nitro at the Portsmouth Naval shipyard. The first crewmember to greet me was George

Livernois, SC1/c, who grew up in my hometown of Woodstock, Conn. I didn't know George, but I knew his younger brother, Joseph, as we were the same age.

I was apprehensive about going aboard an ammunition ship, but was relieved to find out the ammunition had already been removed from the ship. The crewmembers of the section I was assigned to were cordial and made us new members feel welcomed. In the sleeping quarters we slept in chain link bunks. I don't recall the number of bunks; it was at least three bunks high.

During the decommissioning of the Nitro, a large barge was placed along side; I was amazed at the amount of useful items that were thrown away. Such as bed clothing, foul weather gear, tools, miscellaneous items from all areas of the ship not needed or tied down. Growing up during the Depression and World War II we were instructed by our elders to save everything that was useable.

After leaving the Nitro, I served a couple months at the Fargo building in Boston, Mass. waiting for orders for my next assignment which was to report for duty at the Headquarters of the 15<sup>th</sup> Naval District, Balboa, Panama Canal Zone.

It was an interesting trip. I went by train from Boston to the Norfolk R.S. and boarded the USS Crescent City (APA 21). From Norfolk we went to Hamilton, Bermuda and left Navy personnel, then to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and left Navy personnel. On leaving Guantanamo Bay, the ship ran aground which was an interesting experience. From there, the ship went to Cristobal, Panama Canal Zone where I got off and went by train across the canal zone to the 15<sup>th</sup> Naval District Headquarters where I was assigned to yeoman duties in the Headquarters library and where I finished my enlistment. (I was there during the

raining season, and when it rained it poured for about 30 minutes then the sun would come out and dry things up in a very short time). Also, for our liberty, we were able visit Panama City, take guided tours of inland Panama. It reminded me of the old Wild West with men on horseback, branded cattle and no fences. We visited the locks and watched the ships go through. The tides on the Pacific side were 21 feet from high tide to low tide and there was a bay at the Base that was completely dry when it was low tide. You had to go through the Navy base to get to Fort Amador, the Army base.

On the flight back to the states, the plane had to stop at Guantanamo Air Base because of engine trouble. After being repaired, we landed at the Miami, FL. airport and then went to the Opa Locka Naval Air Station for a few days, then received orders to travel by train to Lido Beach, New York where I was discharged.

Kenneth Marvin (AE-2)  
S2c, "A" Division  
USS Nitro (AE-2) 1945

*Editor's Note:* This is the second of several articles to be written by our WW2 association members.

## Chaplain's Corner

*By Chaplain Deanna Smitha*

“Remembering—Memories CAN fade”

On 7 November, I attended our local women vets' semi-annual luncheon and meeting. This was a group brought together over 23 years ago by a group of women across the services to remember, celebrate, chronicle members' service to our country, and for service and fellowship. The vast majority of our folks were WW2 vets, from all branches. Many were not recognized officially by the Federal Government as vets, since women who flew as service pilots and in the Coast Guard as

volunteers lacked much of the recognition and many of the rights accorded to others whose service was at least recognized. I had the privilege to serve as the Association vice-president for a couple of years, and found myself challenged to try keeping up with the energies and activities of these incredible women.

Our group has shrunk over the years as our women have become more frail in health, and have had to move elsewhere to support health issues and receive care from family members. Our meetings (usually centered around Veteran's Day & Armed Forces Day each year) have been a wonderful gathering of spirited vets, who share prior service and current action. Yes, these women have stayed very active in support of current service members, female and male, as well as connecting with other veterans groups to be in service to members in VA Hospitals and clinics in our area.

On Saturday, 7 November, we held our final/sunset meeting, the group no longer able to sustain its life with a significantly diminished membership base. It's extremely sad for me, as I have come to know and deeply appreciate the contributions of these veterans, and the trails that they have blazed for service members now active in our armed forces. Our members have chosen to donate the proceeds of the Association resources to the ongoing efforts of the Women in Military Service for America (WIMSA) Memorial in Arlington, VA (which some of you visited while at Arlington National Cemetery during our NITRO reunion in 2007), AND to the ongoing effort of the Naval Sea Scout squadron in our area, fostering young women and men to have the spirit and training to participate in the future service of our country in the Armed Forces. I'm in total awe of this wonderful group of visionary and dedicated veterans!

Our USS NITRO Association is strong and viable, and with your continued participation and support, it will be so for many years to come. With our dedicated leadership and members, we continue to make a difference in both the memory of distinguished service, and also making a difference to service members NOW in action to defend our nation. While being sad with the passing of one great organization, I am

pleased and happy to be connected and involved with another great organization that brings together fantastic and faithful people to remember and to DO great things in these times. I hope that your experience of connectedness to this Association will continue to be a special and significant part of your ongoing journey, and that you will draw great

satisfaction and joy from your membership here.

May God continue to give us, our leaders and our country the faith and courage to move FORWARD in the days, weeks and months ahead.

*Grace and peace....*

Chaps...

## A Final Thought

Behind me "Mitch Miller and the Gang" are singing holiday songs on the stereo high fi. From the darkened kitchen, I observe the apple trees and the stately old pear tree covered with a white coat of snow as does the backyard. Turning around to go to the living room where my brother and sister are doing their homework on the floor, I see a fresh, crisp tablecloth on the dining table with bowls of fruit and mixed nuts.

The doors to the living room and the hallway to the front door, brightly colored string hold numerous Christmas cards. In the corner, a lighted Christmas tree awaits the

presents that will be placed there on the 24th of December. My parents are reading the newspaper and talking about some far off place called Vietnam.

Then, I realize this was along time ago when this scene had taken place. A time of innocence, a time of little worry. The years have crept by and now my wife and I are the grandparents. Our grandparents, parents, aunts, and uncles and the adults my parents knew as friends are now gone.

At this time of year, some of the major religions will observe the Holidays. Let's remember what the true meaning for these events.

During December, military organizations will be holding their annual membership drives. If your memberships are about to expire, take time to renew.

From the Association officers, our families, have Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year! Hope to see ya all in sunny Florida in June.

***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.