



# Nitro Blast

The Newsletter of the  
USS Nitro (AE-2/AE-23)  
Association  
Volume 5, Issue 3  
Dec 02/Jan 03  
Editor: Jim Timmons  
Assn. Membership 224

## Ship's Company – Man the Rail *Keep the Memories Alive*



### Traditions of the Navy 101



Manning the rail when a ship either leaves or comes into a port, renders honors or at commissioning and decommissioning of a ship is a Navy tradition, and is an appropriate command for the USS Nitro's return to its first home port – Davisville, RI. as part of the 2003 Providence reunion.

*“The custom of manning the rail evolved from that of "manning the yards," which dates from the days of sail. In sailing ships men stood evenly spaced on all the yards (the spars holding the sails) and gave three cheers to honor distinguished persons.*

*Today the crew are stationed along the rails and superstructure of a ship when honors are rendered.” –*  
www.chinfo.mil web site



### 2003 Reunion



Reunion activity is well on its way. Attached to this edition of the *Nitro Blast* you will find an activity sheet, which will list all of the official activities for the 2003 reunion and their associated costs. If you are planning on attending this year's reunion in Providence, please fill out the activity sheet and return it and your payment as soon as possible. Several of these activities require down payments and your prompt payment will help us meet these requirements.

Wednesday, 18 June is an “optional “ day for the reunion members who might want to arrive early and take in some other area activities. In addition to the activities listed on the Nitro Reunion Activity sheet (attached to this

newsletter), here are some other activities you might want to consider.

The Pawtucket Red Sox will be playing a home game. A real Russian sub is on display in Providence. Cost \$6.00 adults, kids \$5.00. Golf at the Button Hole Golf Course is \$10.00 for 9 holes and \$15.00 for 18 holes (clubs are available). Please contact Robert Eberlein for details on these activities. Anyone attending these activities will have to furnish their own transportation.

### 2003 – Providence/Davisville, RI

The following is a day by day listing of activities or functions that will make up the 2003 reunion.

**Wednesday** – Optional Day – see activities in previous section of newsletter or activities listed on Nitro Activity sheet.

**Thursday** – AM - Reunion hospitality room set up. Afternoon - crew member check in. Evening – Annual Business meeting. This business meeting will also include **election of officers** for the next two years. Any Nitro Association member, having paid their 2003 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, Secretary and Treasurer will be open for nominations.

**Friday** – Day tour to Battleship Cove (Fall River, MA.) and Newport, RI. Evening –Nitro Association Dinner, raffle and auction (Crowne Plaza Hotel, Warwick, RI)

**Saturday** - Trip to Davisville SeaBee Center for joint SeaBee/Nitro Association Memorial Ceremony, wreath

laying and clam bake. (possible tour of former Davisville and Quonset Point bases).

We are checking into the possibility gaining access to the Davisville Piers where the AE-23 was homeported. Due to the amount of activity at the piers, a decision on this will not be known until shortly before the reunion.

### Wanted - Cruise Stories & Auction Items

An important and fun part of the past couple of reunions has been the introduction of an Association auction. Raffle items can either be donations from companies (such as golf balls, perfume, small bag type coolers, etc.) or individuals. Navy or Nitro related items are always welcome. These items do not have to be expensive, just something that an individual might find meaningful and want to bid on. We will again ask Paul Licker to act as the auctioneer.

As mentioned in previous newsletters, the profits from the raffle and auction are split between additional funding for the Association activities and donations to Navy or military related organizations. Last year we donated over \$300 to the Mt. Soledad War Memorial Wall and Monument in La Jolla, CA.

I am also in need of cruise stories for the 2003 Providence Reunion cruise book. These stories are also placed on the web site, after the reunion, so anyone can view and comment on them. Please see the cruise story web page for examples of what we are looking for:

[http://www.ticon.net/~stitch/Uss\\_Nitro/cruisestories.html](http://www.ticon.net/~stitch/Uss_Nitro/cruisestories.html)

### Reunion Publicity Reminder

Again, we would like to get as much publicity about the Nitro's return to Rhode Island as possible, so please submit the following reunion notice to your local newspapers. If you have already done so, thank you very much!! :

The USS Nitro (AE-2/AE-23) Association announces that our 2003 reunion will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Warwick, Rhode Island from June 18 – 22. For more information, contact either:

USS NITRO Association  
Mr. Robert Eberlein  
12215 Ashland St.  
GRANGER IN 46530-9654  
Email at:  
[ebb23@aol.com](mailto:ebb23@aol.com)  
or, visit our website at

USS NITRO Association  
Mr. James Timmons  
S37 W27575 Windsong Ridge  
WAUKESHA WI 53189-6133  
[stitch@ticon.net](mailto:stitch@ticon.net)

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



### USS Nitro (AE-23) Ship's Plaques

We have a limited number (seven) of AE-23 ship's plaque reproductions (a couple different styles) which are made of walnut with a molded centerpiece and will have an engraved nameplate. The engraved plate will include the crew member's name, rate, division or department and tour years on board Nitro. These plaques (approx. 11" x 12 3/4"), with everything included, are an excellent value at \$40 + S/H.

Once these walnut plaques are sold, we will attempt to make additional wood grained plaques available through the ship's store. We will attempt to recreate the plaques in as close to the design available during the mid to late 1960s. Watch the Nitro Association web site for details.

### Nitro Membership Update

USS Nitro (AE-2/AE-23) Association membership continues to grow. Our membership roll now stands at 224. The following shipmates (Nitro tour dates) have signed on as members during the month indicated:

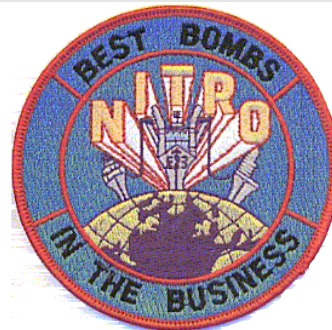
**September 2002** – Jorge Vega (84-87)

**November** - James Hugo (78-80)

**December** – James Caithamer (66-68) USS Suribachi; Tony Keena (88-90); Robert Swafford (72-75)

**January 2003** – Richard VanCise (59-60); Wayne Smith (64-66); David Ferretti (70-73); Paul Nolan (79-81); Thomas Eisenhcher (75-78); David Bowker (89-92); Robert Drake (80-84); Craig Huber (93-95); Wayne Goodrich (89-93);

### The Crow's Nest



There was a Nitro (AE-23) jacket patch on EBAY, with the original jacket design with an outer ring with "Best bombs in the business". Does any one have one of these patches?

Here are some things to think about for this and future reunions.

Next year's reunion will take place in Nashville, TN. and we would like to have a member of the association (preferably who lives in the area) help us in the search for hotels, activities and transportation needs.

We have had a couple requests to have one of our reunions take place on board a cruise ship and are looking for your input. Right now an individual attending a reunion spends about \$450 (room, activities, Assn. Dinner and some other meals) not including any airfare or other transportation costs to attend a reunion. This figure is somewhat skewed because the room rate is the same for either single or two people per room. Room rates on board a cruise ship are usually for double occupancy.

Most likely we would be looking at a 3 or 4 day cruise probably leaving from Florida or the Gulf Coast and would need to find out what ships would fit into our schedule and prices.

If there is anyone who would like to take on either of these projects, please contact any of the Nitro Association officers.

### **USS Nitro (AE-23) & (AE-2) Video Tapes**

We are continuing our assessment of interest in two video tapes that have been given to the USS Nitro Association. We have a black and white videotape of the USS Nitro (AE-2), circa 1929-31 (made from a 16mm. film). The AE-2 tape, which is of significant historical importance because of its rarity, is about 20 minutes in

length. The Ed Case family of Lansdale, PA gave it to the association.

A copy of the USS Nitro (AE-23) decommissioning ceremony videotape has been obtained from COMLOGRON2, NWS, Earle, NJ. After some editing, this tape will be about an hour in length.

If you are interested in purchasing either or both of these tapes, please let me know either by letter or email. It is anticipated that the ship's store price for these tapes will be about \$10 each plus S/H. ***Do not send any money at this time.*** Delivery time for the video tapes depends upon the interest in them. Please read future newsletters for additional information.

### **The Nitro Sage**

*Did You Know !!!*

*Men can read smaller print than women can; women can hear better.*

*Coca-Cola was originally green.*

*It is impossible to lick your elbow..*



### **A Final Thought**

The 2003 Rhode Island reunion should be a "home coming" for those of us, who were stationed aboard the AE-23 from 1959 to 1975. It will be interesting to see how much the area has changed. Since a large number of the Assn. members are from the New England area, this could be one of the largest attended reunions.

At this time I would thank the following persons for their donations to the USS Nitro Assn.

#### **Nitro Blast Newsletter**

%James Timmons  
S37 W27575 Windsong Ridge  
Waukesha, WI 53189

*Address Service Requested*

John & Beverly Sacks for the POW/MIA flag and the US Navy flag. Chris Basker for one of our pole sets for the flags. Mr. Jim Niedermeyer for a model Naval gun. Ray Chamberlin for the museum quality frame for the "Garfield" the cat cartoon and Mr. Ron Rogers, cartoonist for the South Bend Tribune, for the caricature of the AE-23.

As the events in the Middle East are taking place, let's remember our service personnel, and pray for their safety.

*Fair winds and following seas,*  
Bob Eberlein, President, Nitro Assn.

## 2003 Nitro Reunion Activity Form

(please return as soon as possible with your payment)

Below are activities that will be held during the USS Nitro Association's 2003 Reunion to be held in Providence, RI., **from 18-22 June**. There is a cost associated with each of these activities, so please review this information carefully. For more details, refer to this month's newsletter article and attached Details of Activities sheet.

**Wednesday, 18 June Deep Sea Fishing** – Contact Juan Reyes for details at either 203-874-3797 or email at jure71244@snet.net (Optional)      **Golf outing at Quonset Point** – Contact Jim Timmons for details at either 262-547-3726 or stitch@ticon.net

\*\*\*Attendees will have to provide their own transportation for all Wednesday activities\*\*\*

**Friday: Battleship Cove/Newport tour – Day time tour:** Price includes transportation, admission to Battleship Cove, Fall River, MA., buffet lunch on board the USS Massachusetts (BB59) and an afternoon in downtown Newport for sightseeing, shopping, mansion tours, Narragansett Bay cruises, etc. **Cost: \$ 27.50/person (need 40 people)** (see attached Activity Detail Sheet for particulars)

Cost for Newport activities are not included!!!

### Friday night Association Dinner, Raffle and Auction

The Plated dinner will include:

Two entree plated (sit down) dinner with all the trimmings  
(menu is still in planning stage):

**Dinner Cost:**

**Adults: \$25.00/per person (includes tax and gratuity)**

**Children: \$16.00 (Ages 12 and under)**

**Saturday:** Trip to former U. S. Naval Construction Battalion Center, Davisville, RI for a joint Memorial Service and wreath laying ceremony with the SeaBees. Possible visit to Pier 2 at Davisville, which served as home port for USS Nitro (AE-23) from 1959 to mid 1970s. Lunch (a clambake) at the N. Kingston GC with the SeaBees. After lunch, a possible bus tour of the former Naval Air Station and CB Center. **Cost: \$49.00/per person** (price includes transportation and clambake ONLY – see attached Activity Detail Sheet for particulars)

Name of Family Attending \_\_\_\_\_

Number Attending \_\_\_\_\_

(Print First and Last Name)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_, ST \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Activity</b>	<b># Attending</b>		<b>Cost/per person</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Friday: Battleship Cove/Newport trip</b> (transportation, Battleship Cove entrance fee and lunch <b>only</b> included)	_____	x	\$27.50	=	_____
<b>Friday Night Association Dinner</b>	Adults _____	x	\$25.00	=	_____
	Children (Ages 12 & under) _____	x	\$16.00	=	_____
<b>Saturday: Trip to Davisville/Quonset Point</b> (transportation, lunch (clambake))	_____	x	\$49.00	=	_____
			<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$</b>	_____

There may be slight alterations the activity line up  
Please return the bottom portion of this form with your check payable to:

**USS NITRO Association**  
PO Box 1254  
Mishawaka, IN 46546-1254

### Details on Friday Tour and Saturday Memorial Ceremony

**Friday's** tour will include deluxe motor coach transportation from the hotel to Battleship Cove, Fall River, MA and then after lunch on board the USS Massachusetts will continue to Newport, RI for the afternoon.

*Battleship Cove:* Displays at Battleship Cove include the battleship USS Massachusetts (BB-59), destroyer Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. (DD-850) (with which the Nitro has a history – see web site at: [www.ticon.net/~stitch/Uss\\_Nitro/nitrojk.html](http://www.ticon.net/~stitch/Uss_Nitro/nitrojk.html)), the Soviet-built, East German-commissioned missile corvette Hiddensee, World War II submarine USS Lionfish (SS-298), PT boats 796 and 617 and several other static displays. There are several other attractions adjacent to Battleship Cove for attendees to discover. We will also be having a buffet lunch on board BB-59. The buffet will consist of:

- Fresh fruit salad with sherbet (seasonal)
- Sliced turkey sandwich, roast beef sandwich, tuna salad sandwich
- Sweet & sour kielbasa with peppers and onions
- Pasta with marinara sauce, Boston baked beans
- Chunky potato salad, relish tray, potato chips
- Apple pie
- Choice of beverage

After lunch, we will re-board the buses and continue on to Newport.

*Newport, RI:* The buses will drop off passengers at a central downtown point and you will have the remainder of the afternoon to sightsee, visit mansions, take a harbor cruise or shop. We will then re-board the buses and return to the hotel for our Friday evening Association dinner, raffle, auction fun and friendship. We are working on a couple of surprises for the dinner.

#### **Saturday:**

The trip to Davisville Memorial Ceremony, Nitro Association wreath laying ceremony and Clambake includes deluxe motor coach transportation to and from Davisville. The Memorial Ceremony will be a joint service with the Navy SeaBee Vets of America, Island X1, Davisville chapter. Since the Construction Battalion Center at Davisville served as the home port for the USS Nitro (AE-23), we felt it only appropriate that we invite the SeaBee chapter to join us in our “Return to Rhode Island”. They have rescheduled their yearly New England Jamboree to coincide with our 2003 reunion and are expecting a very large turnout.

The Memorial Ceremony will also include the Nitro Association wreath laying. Wreath bearers will be chosen from the AE-2 and AE-23 reunion attendees. We have had a wreath laying ceremony at all of our reunions. The ceremony will include a color guard, chaplain (possibly the SeaBee National Chaplain) and we have contacted the Navy Band North East in hopes to have their Ceremonial Band take part in the festivities.

After the Ceremony is concluded, those who have made reservations will be treated to a Rhode Island style clambake. You might as well plan on having this count as your supper because the clambake menu will consist of: Clam Chowder, Clam Cakes, Steamers, Mussels, Chicken, Fish, Sausage, Potatoes, Corn on Cob, and Lobster. There will be a space limitation of 500 (we are expecting several hundred people to attend) at the former Davisville/Quonset Point Golf Club where the clambake will take place, so **reservations are going to be required and accepted on a “first come – first served” basis.** The sooner the reservations are placed, the better.

This is going to be, for many, a “*once in a lifetime event*” so please think very seriously about attending the Providence reunion. We won’t be back in New England for several years.