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Ray Ostrowski, Treasurer – rayrosie@hotmail.com
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YAGRGRAM #81

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view & print this YAGRGRAM in color at <http://www.yagrs.org>

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the association is in sound financial condition. This was Armand's last reunion as treasurer. He was replaced by Ray Ostrowski as the new Treasurer. His address is 123 Barbara Dr. Newburgh, NY 12550, phone 845-566-6243.



Welcome was made by Chairman Lee Doyel. There were two first timers at the reunion.

Although not present, John Regina's posting of the reunions dates in various publications resulted in 8 to 10 new "findees."

Attendance

was down below 100 for the first time. Not sure of the reasons but could be a combination of the move to September, weather concerns, personal medical conditions and normal attrition due to deaths. There were 52 members and 42 spouses/guests for a total of 94. Initially had over 100 registered but cancellations due to the above reasons made it drop below 100.

Secretary Mel Harder was unable to attend this year. He noted that your dues date is **highlighted** in the address on the YAGRGRAM newsletter.

Treasurer Armand Lamarche reported the figures from the Norfolk reunion and the bank status which revealed

Museum Curator Roland Cote was not present but reported the bulkhead painting had been completed with battleship supplied paint at no charge. Eighty dollars was spent for LED lightbulb replacement and framing to mount the AGR Legacy plaque. The museum is financially fine and no additional monies are needed.

Webmaster, Frank Pulaski noted the web site is doing good and the USS Tracer web site is now also located on the YAGRS web site. If other ships want to put their web site on yagrs.org, contact Frank.

Joe Maurer with the YAGR book was not present but still mails the book on request. Lee Doyel noted he has sent the book to the following:

Liberty Ship Jeremiah O'Brien

Liberty Ship John Brown

NORAD

Cold War Museum

USS Massachusetts BB-59

National Navy Air Museum - Pensacola

Library of Congress

Brunswick Library of Liberty Ships.

USAF Museum - Dayton Ohio

Air Defense Radar Museum

Peterson Air & Space Museum - Peterson AFB

He has done this to insure that YAGRS will survive over time. Documents in these type facilities tend to remain long after museums and other physical facilities cease to exist. He will send books to other appropriate repositories as they are found.

Several ship's Coordinators were present and recognized. Lee noted they are an important part of the Association and do a "Yoemans work" in relaying information the members.

Lee noted that the ships store had pretty much run its course and would probably cease to be in the coming months after selling off the present inventory. He reported after over 3 years he finally has patches for all 16 ships plus the 2 RadRon (1&2) patches for a total of 18. They are \$10 each and can be order from Lee. The inventory includes in limited supply of the following: Challenge coins, YAGRS hats, ship hats, ship hat pins (no limit), ship patches, reunion pins (no limit), YAGR coffee cups.

The YAGR Association, AGR Legacy and Sixteen YAGR Ship with Logos photos do not have a limit as they are on file with a local vender and can be ordered at any time.

Lee reported it might be advantageous in the future (time unknown) to combine the Association with another Navy reunion group that was also undergoing attrition of members. He mentioned one group, The Mariners, which is the old Navy seaplane (PBY Catalina) group. He visited them at their reunion in Pensacola in May 2018. They had an attendance of 80. In doing so it would increase the leverage in dealing with hotels on room rates, tours, etc.

Payment policy remains the same. If YAGRS doesn't pay then you don't pay. However if you cancel after payment has been made (usually the tours) we can not get a refund.

Hotel location is usually out of the downtown area due to costs. While some hotels come close to a good room rate, parking continues to be the big factor. They seldom budge on it's cost and in a lot of cases they do not own or control the parking facilities used by the hotel. Also a lot of downtown areas are over run with street people.

The New Orleans (actually Kenner) hotel at the airport was a long way from the French Quarter and downtown. Distance was mitigated by chartering some small busses (at individual cost) in which approximately 1/3 of the attendees took advantage.

As to the move to September. Lee put out a memo over a year ago about it and the rational for doing it via the ships coordinators. Of all the comments received only one objected to the move. May has become very competitive with a lot of other groups, weddings,

graduations, business seminars, higher hotel rates, etc. September proved to be a better environment for us.

Again the Registration form is the controlling document as to what was signed up for, paid for, etc. If there are changes after you make the initial registration, submit an addition registration form noting the changes. That way the Treasurer can keep track of the numbers which relate to costs. If not on that document you are out of luck. I will try to accommodate late requests for addition to tours, etc. but it will be on a stand by basis and the cost may be full price vice a YAGR cost.

A reminder that contracts I negotiate are ALL INCLUSIVE. That includes gratuity/tip, etc. costs. You may do additional but it is not required.

Lee also mentioned the need down the road for his relief as he is in his 80s. He is not resigning in the near future but consideration should be considered for his replacement. Probably someone in their 70s so it would mean a long (barring medical, accidents, etc.) tenure. Anyone interested or wants to nominate someone, contact Lee. It would be beneficial for that person (and the Association) if the person selected could spend a reunion planning and execution with Lee prior to his assumption of duties and responsibilities.

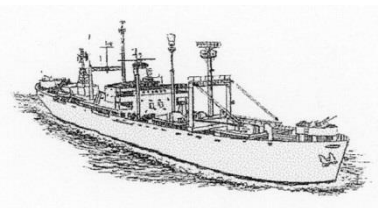
Previously an anonymous benefactor had offered to pay for banquet, tour and hospitality room costs if the reunion was held in Colorado Springs in 2020, the 25th reunion. Lee made a trip to the area in October 2017 to check out the area and provided details in a memo which was included in the registration packet. The group voted to have the 2020 reunion in Colorado Springs.

Brian Forrester talked about the 2019 reunion which is a cruise of ports in the New England/Canada area. Those who registered at the reunion could do so for only a \$25 person deposit (refundable). He furnished details of the cruise and a registration form which is also included in this YAGRGRAM.

The cruise line is Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) and the ship is the Escape.

Cruise leaves from New York City and dates are September 15 - 22, 2019. Ports of call are Portland, ME, Bar Harbor, ME, St John, New Brunswick and Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Since the cruise would probably have low attendance it was decide to vote on the 2021 reunion location so more members could have a say. Buffalo, NY was decided on.



Member Correspondence

please send member correspondence to mel.harder@snet.net

HONORING OUR NAVY VETERANS: from Diane DeRiso - USS Skywatcher



Pat DeRiso (Skywatcher) passed away March 9, 2018. He was buried in a Columbarium at the Dallas-Fort Worth Military Cemetery with full military honors, as per his wishes. Two sailors folded and presented the Flag to me and another sailor played Taps. It was a beautiful service.

Because of his strong feelings regarding the Navy, I wanted to do something for him that he would have been proud of. I had his Navy uniforms all dry cleaned in bags for many years. They were in perfect shape, two Blues and a White. I called the Navy Recruiting District Dallas Center and got a hold of the Master Chief Lance Kitchner. He said that they would love to have the uniforms and put me in contact with the Public Affairs Officer MC3 Nolan Pennington. I sent along a picture of his graduation from Radar School and copies of some paper work in case they wanted to use them.

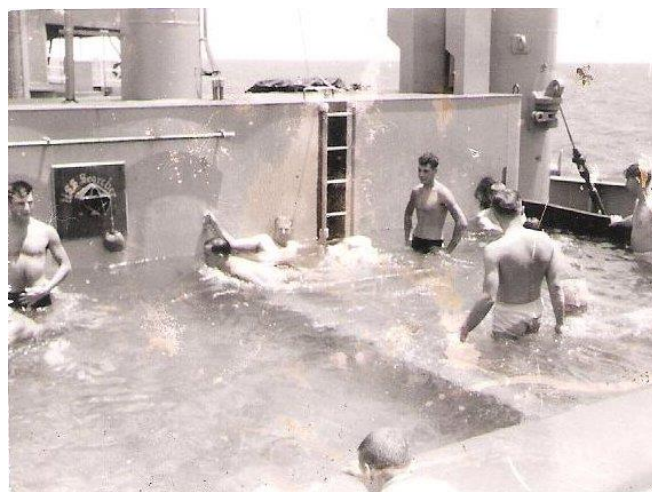
On November 19, 2018 I was invited to see the presentation and what they did for Pat. All the men at the recruiting center were in formation while the Cmdr. Brock Miller gave a brief bio of Pat's time in the Navy. I spoke and told some of the stories Pat had told me. They got a big kick out of the story that he missed his ship after an R & R and had to be high-lined from another ship back to the Skywatcher. I told them how he was in a singing group on ship that entertained all aboard, one of the singers ending up with Dion and the Belmonts. But these guys being so young did not know who Dion and the Belmonts were....all of you should.

I can't say enough about how overwhelmed I was with what they did. It moved me to tears. They said how important it is to remember our Vets. I would like to whole heartedly thank Cmdr. Brock Miller, Master Chief Lance Kitchner and especially Public Affairs Officer MC3 Nolan Pennington, who put in so much time and effort. He put his heart into this display.

from Frank Pulaski, USS Searcher

Mel here is a picture for a YAGRGRAM. The USS Searcher could boast of the only naval vessel that had a swimming pool and here is the proof.

Dave Schultz, who does [hullnumber.com](http://www.hullnumber.com), sent me this link <http://www.hullnumber.com/ALL-HANDS/duty-on-navy-s-sky-watchers>. We have used *Hull Number* as means of advertising our reunions and it has been very beneficial. We have located several new members through *Hull Number*.



from Roland Cote - USS Outpost

Here's a photo of interest regarding the Casablanca flag. This historic flag was flown by the battleship USS Massachusetts during the battle of Casablanca on November 8, 1942. The USS Massachusetts was the flagship of the covering force that was protecting invasion forces landing on the coast of Morocco.



John Hemminger AGR-2 and Roland Cote AGR-10 helped with other battleship volunteers in the construction of this exhibit which is located just forward of the YAGR exhibit.

YAGR Donation
2018 YAGRS donation was presented to Steve Ponte (Director of Operations) aboard the Battleship

Massachusetts. Check was given by Roland Cote (AGR-10). Photo taken by John Hemminger (AGR-2).



Report from the YAGR Ladies - from Pat Reichling

The reunion in New Orleans was wonderful. The dinner show was great!! The WWII museum was very interesting. The dinner cruise on the Natchez Queen up the Mississippi was phenomenal. Great job Lee! Thank you very much for all you do.

Our tradition continues to support veterans in need. The ladies opened their hearts and wallets and we made a donation to the SE LA Veterans Health Care System in the amount of \$620, along with comfort articles such as Pajamas, Tee Shirts, socks, along with some makeup and toiletries for the women veterans. Two representatives of the facility came to say a few words. This facility does a lot of work with veterans suffering from PTSD and addiction. They also minister to homeless veterans. I received an acknowledgement letter today. Any of the ladies who wrote a check that had an address on it will most likely receive the same. We did a good thing ladies!!

Memo from Lee Doyel

The vendor has completed all 16 of the ships patches plus RadRon 1 & 2 patches for a total of 18 patches.

Cost is \$10 each post paid. If interested, send me a snail mail address. Pay on receipt.

When I ship items from the ships store I include an invoice (3x5 card) with the item and price. Also included is a stamped envelope to the Treasurer for payment. Ship store items are paid on receipt. Ships store has pretty much run its course. I am considering using up the present inventory and then close it out. I will put an inventory of what I have in a future newsletter so people will know what is available.

A situation developed at the banquet in New Orleans. During the serving of the main course (meat, chicken, fish) people started changing their preference during the serving. Several told the server that wanted chicken rather than what they had initially selected. I can understand this because the chicken plate looked delicious. However this caused the hotel to run short of prepared chicken plates causing several people who ordered chicken to be served very late. Although they should not have, the staff in trying to please the dinners acquiesced the change of selection. I have to tell the hotel 72 hours before the banquet how many servings of each selection (meat, fish, chicken) have been made. The hotel then prepares that number. Therefore changes at serving causes complications as occurred. Shortage of one selection and overage (waste) of another selection. In the future please do not ask to change your selection at the banquet. Once selected, that's it. In the future I will instruct the banquet staff to ignore any requests for changes.

Another situation also occurred at the loading of the busses. I needed 2 more persons to fill up a bus. When I asked for 2, I



was met with “were a group” reply by two different gatherings. I had to pass by 10 to 15 persons before 2 people came forward. This same thing occurred in Norfolk which caused the last bus to be filled which caused 2 people to have to follow the bus in their car to the base parking lot where they boarded a bus with empty seats. Come on people, group cohesion is fine but can’t you be apart from it for a 30 minute ride. Get real. That is like not wanting to separated from your mother. You group through out the whole reunion. A 30 or 40 minute separation should not be problem. It shows a lack of cooperation to make things run smoothly.

2019 Reunion Cruise - from Brian Forrester, YAGR reunion planner

As you know the 2019 reunion is a cruise in the Northeast onboard the Norwegian cruise ship Escape.

Dates of the cruise are September 15 - 22, 2019. Attached is a registration form and flyer. Full payment for the cruise is due by May 18, 2019. You may register for the cruise at any time up to 20 days (Aug 25, 2019) before the cruise. However if you register after May 18, 2019 you will be required to pay for the cruise in full at time of registration. You can register now and subsequently cancel for unforeseen reasons until May 15, 2019, and be refunded your full deposit. So go ahead and reserve your cabin now while the rates are lower.

Below are some amenities that you can chose, complimentary, for your cruise:

Amenities: PICK TWO Offer

Ultimate Beverage Package* - 1st and 2nd guests in cabin only

Prepaid Service Charges - 1st and 2nd guests in cabin only

Commitment Ceremony - cabin

Internet Package - per cabin, not per person in cabin

\$50 Per Port Shorex Credit - per cabin, not per person in cabin- max of 4 ports

Dining Package - 1st and 2nd guests in cabin only

20 Photo Package - per cabin, not per person in cabin

Below are links you can click on for more information on the cruise and also for the ship. Also provided is a telephone # for questions you may have for Travel Protection, which is highly recommended

Ship Information for the Norwegian Escape - <https://www.ncl.com/cruise-ship/escape>

Required Travel Documentation - <https://www.ncl.com/freestyle-cruise/cruise-travel-documents>

Register Online / You will need to do this at some point - <https://www.ncl.com/shorex/register>

Travel Protection/Insurance/Information/Cost - <https://www.ncl.com/freestyle-cruise/booksafe>

**** Any questions you need answered regarding, when to purchase, Pre-existing conditions or other health issues, Call NCL’s insurer, Aon Affinity @ 800-722-5672**

NCL Cruise Frequently Asked Questions - <https://www.ncl.com/faq>

Shore Excursion Info - <https://www.ncl.com/shore-excursions>

For other information that is not listed above, go to www.ncl.com or call Brian Forrester @ 480 332 7294 to register.



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Norwegian's Canada & New England cruises offer views of Bar Harbor's granite cliffs, the lighthouses of Maine and the seaside villages of Halifax, and when you top it off with the freedom of Freestyle Cruising®, you've got one picture-perfect cruise.

Freestyle Cruising® in Canada & New England:

- Norwegian's Shore Excursions include options like visiting picturesque Peggy's Cove, Kennebunkport and the Bay of Fundy
- Cruise the peak weeks of September and October
- Enjoy amazing entertainment, a relaxing spa, the best Casino at Sea, shopping and so much more

There's no better time of year to see nature's most spectacular show and also enjoy the camaraderie of your fellow YAGR friends and family Sail along the rugged Eastern Seaboard and see fall's changing colors, picturesque seaside villages, lighthouses and colonial towns.

CALL BRIAN TODAY @ 480 332 7294 while premier space is still available



HOLIDAY CRUISES AND TOURS
480 332 7294
brian@hcttravel.com



7-DAY CANADA & NEW ENGLAND FROM NEW YORK
NORWEGIAN ESCAPE
Sep 15, 2019 - Sep 22, 2019
Inside Staterooms starting from
\$from 859.00*

HOLIDAY CRUISES AND TOURS OF SCOTTSDALE
8502 E VIA DE VENTURA # 110, SCOTTSDALE, AZ 85258
BRIAN - 480 332 7294

YAGRS Cruise Registration Form

2019 Can/New England Reunion Cruise, New York, NY September 15th to 22nd - Norwegian Escape

Please use legal first and last names as they appear on your passport or birth certificate

Passenger #1 _____ Date of Birth _____
Passenger #2 _____ Date of Birth _____
Address _____ Email (Important) _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
Home# _____ Work# _____ Cell# _____

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING

☐ Inside Cabin from \$859 + \$191.76 per person
☐ Oceanview Cabin from \$1099 + \$191.76 per person
☐ Balcony Cabin from \$1249 + \$191.76 per person
☐ Studio Cabin from \$1449 + \$191.76 per person (for single occupancy only)
For Suite or 3rd / 4th persons in a cabin pricing, please call Brian at 480 332 7294

The above fares include all applicable government fees, taxes, onboard meals, onboard nightly entertainment & 2 onboard amenities of your choosing. Fares are cruise only, per person, based on double occupancy are capacity controlled and subject to change/availability. gratuities (unless selected as an amenity), transfers, pre/post hotel accommodations, and transportation costs to and from the ship are not included in the above pricing.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT IT

If purchased within 14 days of initial deposit, receive coverage if pre-existing medical conditions force you to cancel or interrupt your trip. Prices vary depending on age and cruise purchase amount. Call Brian for current rates and coverage

PAYMENT BY CHECK: Please make checks payable to Holiday Cruises and Tours and mail to the address above. If you have any questions, please contact Brian Forrester at 480 332 7294 or email him at brian@hcttravel.com

CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS: (Check Card Type) _____ Amex _____ Visa _____ MC _____ Discover _____

Credit Card Number: _____ Expires _____ Security Code _____

Name as it appears on card _____

Do you want to auto charge final payment to this card? (Circle) YES NO

DEPOSITS: A deposit of \$250 per person is due at time of booking to secure your cabin assignment. Final payment is due by May 1, 2019. For best availability and cabin assignment, please secure your cabin ASAP. Deposits are fully refundable up until the time of final payment.

**Documentation: For round-trip sailings (cruises that depart from and return to the same U.S. port), you may sail with a valid passport, proof of citizenship and a valid government-issued photo I.D. (driver's license with a photo), or any other WHTI compliant document. Proof of Citizenship examples include: *State certified U.S. birth certificate - *Original certificate of U.S. naturalization - *Original certificate of U.S. citizenship, US Passport card -Note: Baptismal paper, hospital certificates of birth and Puerto Rico birth certificates issued prior to 7/1/10 are not acceptable.

New YAGR Treasurer

Ray Ostrowski - USS Vigil & USS Lookout

Hi! I am Ray Ostrowski and am replacing Armand as treasurer after his retirement. Please send dues payment to me at the address below.

Ray Ostrowski
123 Barbara Dr.
Newburgh, NY 12550

e-mail: rayrosie@hotmail.com
Phone: 845-565-6243 cell: 845-245-5707

Use the dues payment form below. Make checks out to YAGRS.

Dues Payment Form - dues are \$17/year

Make checks out to YAGRS. Mail to Ray Ostrowski, Treasurer, 123 Barbara Dr., Newburgh NY 12550. Current membership year ends May 31, 2019. Highlighted date on address label is the date your current membership expires. If that date is **5/31/18** or earlier, please update your membership by making a dues payment. Upon dues payment, you will receive an updated membership card and crew list. Please complete the information below and mail to Ray Ostrowski with dues payment.. You may pay for more than one year.

Name: _____ Ship: _____

Address: _____

amount enclosed: _____ Phone: _____ email: _____

ship's coordinators - Ship's coordinators maintain an email list that is used to forward memos from the chair and advance notices of reunion plans to crew members. If you wish to be included, send an email to your ship's coordinator. We still need a coordinator for the USS Picket (AGR-7).

AGR-1 Frank St Mark smarks117@hotmail.com
AGR-2 Ralph Rappuhun rrappuhn@aol.com
AGR-3 Chuck Parker chuckparker@gmail.com
AGR-4 Steve Mierzejewsk stevejackie43@gmail.com
AGR-5 Bob Werstler rdwerst@sbcglobal.net
AGR-6 Lee Doolittle tloedoo@u.washington.edu
AGR-7
AGR-8 Ron Stasiak ronstasiak@rocketmail.com

AGR-9 Frank Mahaffey franknbets@gmail.com
AGR-10 Paul Langenus plangenus@cox.net
AGR-11 George Sleeper gsleeper@roadrunner.com
AGR-12 Jesse Germany jgermany31@gmail.com
AGR-13 Richard Willhite willys55nut@comcast.net
AGR-14 Joe Jackson jacksonj@pldi.net
AGR-15 Lee Doyel mldoyel@cox.net
AGR-16 Frank McNamara ec2sc1@comcast.net

YAGR'S BOOK ORDER - from Joe Maurer, USS Vigil

Cost is \$22.00 each including postage.

No. Ordered _____ Total Amt. Due _____

Name _____

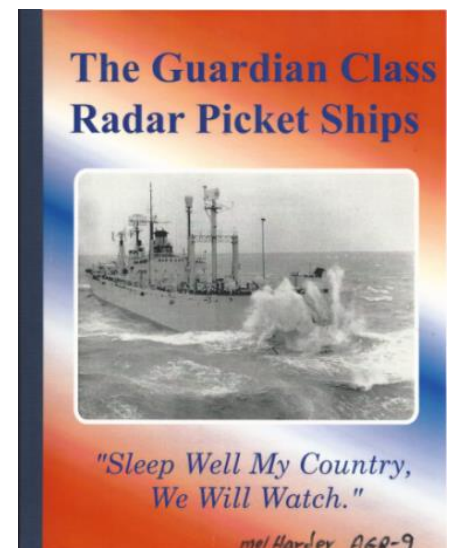
Address _____

Phone _____ email _____

Detach and keep for receipt:

Paid to: Joe Maurer, 2127 S. Bristol Drive, Marblehead, Ohio 43440

E-mail: runinmuck@yahoo.com



New Orleans - 2018

photos by Frank Pulaski and Suzanne Attig

