

The USS Constellation CVA/CV-64 Assn - Mini Reunion

The last week of April is a beautiful time of the year, especially in Texas where the mini reunion is held each year. Flowers are in full bloom and leaves are on the trees. Not yet too hot and certainly no longer too cold. Everyone wants to join others in continuing long-time friendships and welcoming newcomers to the group. The reunion is a relaxed 3-day social event mixed with educational visits, shopping, sharing the latest Association news, and enjoying excellent food. Carpooling was our means of transportation to the events, a chance to develop closer friendships, and to actually enjoy getting lost occasionally.

2022’s mini reunion was held at College Station, TX, home of Texas A & M. But College Station has so much more to offer than a visit to the well know educational site. The hosts, Melba and Eric Andersen, scheduled visits to The Museum of the American G.I. (recently written up in “Texas Living”) and to The George H.W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum on the Texas A & M Campus. The men joined the local American Legion for coffee and doughnuts, and to the men’s surprise, a Proclamation of recognition of the reunion from Andrew Nelson, Mayor of Bryan, Texas, was presented to the “Connie” sailors. This event was followed by a drive through the Texas A & M Firefighting Facility which is used for training firemen from anywhere. Thank you, John Kiracofe, for contacting the American Legion and guiding the tour of the Firefighting facility.

FOOD, Glorious Food! The hotel was on University Blvd, close to many excellent restaurants, shopping and Rte 6, the route to other events. Dinner reservations had been made by Melba at Cheddar’s, Fish Daddy’s and Razzoo’s Cajun Café. All the restaurants were ready for us upon our arrival, giving us a separate section, so that we could reminisce and exchange stories boisterously or quietly with friends and acquaintances. Everyone ordered from the menus and paid separate tickets. Not only were the meals prepared promptly and expertly, they were delicious!

Two new members and their wives joined this reunion: Charlie & Maria Hester, and Dave & Joyce Mouton from New Orleans. Maria invited her son, a graduating student at Texas A & M, to dinner at Cheddar’s. We had the pleasure of sitting near him and his family, and were impressed by his desire to join the robust conversation with his parents’ peers. We look forward to getting to know these new participants at the future reunions.

Attendees:

Eric & Melba Andersen, ’22 Mini Reunion Hosts	Joey & Geneva Palermo
Rafael & Martha Rivas, Assn President	John & Sharon Kiracofe
Elias & Gloria Camacho, El Paso Reunion Hosts	Dorsey & Debra Redd
Dennis Chapman	George & Molly Makarias
James Curtis	Gayland & Dinah Rushing
Brent Dammer, III	Richard & Jeanette Swain
Charlie & Maria Hester (new member)	Dave & Joyce Mouton

The 2023 mini reunion will be held in Austin, and in 2024, the mini reunion will be held in Corpus Christi. We hope to see all of you and more members and spouses at both minis, and in Buffalo, NY at the national reunion. Information will be posted on the website ussconstellation.org.

Jeanette Swain