Starscope
The Official Newsletter of the
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The Alumni Association of the United States Ship Constellation
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Spirit of the Old. Pride of the New! December 2019

U.S.S. Constellation CVACV-64 Association

President: Rafael Rivas
512-419-8187 rivasrafael@att.net

Vice President: Bob Beese
385-763-9963

Secretary/Treasurer: Sidney Rodgers
703-451-4765

Membership Chairman: Stephen Ribak
603-459-8048 steven.ribak@comcast.net

Chaplain: Tommy Best
919-383-7216 rhbest3@gmail.com

Starscope Newsletter Printing and Distribution
Carol Zambroski 804-739-1046

Starscope Editors
Doyle and Jean Gilliam
352-406-7650 jndgilliam@aol.com

Association Historian: Eric Andersen
361-684-6106 e.andersen@sbcpiovel.net

Webmaster: Berl Meyer
502-558-2379 kynature@bellsouth.net

Member at Large: Joey Palermo
281-354-5850 KSEBW@yahoo.com

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If you know of anyone who has a change of address, telephone number, e-mail address, or cell phone, please contact Stephen Ribak at
603-459-8048 or steven.ribak@comast.com
To My Connie Family

To all my brothers and sisters who took the time to write to us and send us e-mails appreciating the 2019 Connie reunion here in El Paso. Let me tell you that keeping within Mexican tradition our goal was to make you feel at home and entertain you. If we were able to accomplish that, we did what is expected of us according to our custom. But, we did not only do it because of our custom and tradition, but because we truly love our Connie family. Nothing is too much for you guys. We wish we could have had more time, but the lack of days and budget restraints kept us at a limit. So much more we would have liked to have done for you. There were still other places we could have gone to, and many more activities. But, who knows, maybe in the near future we can do it again.

Again, thank you so very much for your compliments and wishes, hasta la vista, you all!

~ Elias and Gloria Camacho

Notes from the Editor

I know we all had a wonderful time at the 2019 Connie reunion, and we do thank the Camacho’s for all the work they put into making this reunion memorable!

I want to apologize for the lateness of this issue. Doyle and I have been traveling a lot and have been home only a few days at a time. We are leaving again for a week and I wanted to make sure I was able to get this issue completed and sent to the Starscope distributor before we leave.

I want to let everyone know that the deadline for the March 2020 newsletter will be February 15, 2020. Thank you so much!!!

Wishing all of you’re a Merry Christmas and very Happy New Year!

I am your Flag
(submitted by Eric Andersen)

I was born on June 14, 1777.
I am more than just cloth shaped into a design.
I am the refuge of the World’s oppressed people.
I am the silent sentinel of Freedom.
I am the emblem of the greatest sovereign nation on earth.
I am the inspiration for which American Patriots gave their lives and fortunes.
I have led your sons into battle from Valley Forge to the bloody swamps of Viet Nam.
I walk in silence with each of your Honored Dead, to their final resting place beneath the silent White Crosses, row upon row.
I have flown through Peace and War, Strife and Prosperity, and amidst it all I have been respected.
My Red Stripes...symbolize the blood spilled in defense of this glorious nation.
My White Stripes...signify the burning tears shed by Americans who lost their sons.
My Blue Field...is indicative of God’s heaven under which I fly.
My Stars...clustered together, unity 50 states as one, for God and Country.

“Old Glory” is my nickname, and proudly wave on high.
Honor me, respect me, defend me with your lives and your fortunes
Never let my enemies tear me down from my lofty position, lest I never return.
Keep alight the fires of patriotism, strive earnestly for the spirit of democracy.
Worship Eternal God and keep his commandments, and I shall remain the bulwark of peace and freedom for all mankind.

I am your Flag
USS Constellation Reunion Pictures
(Submitted by Leslie Stessel)

I have finished with the Constellation Reunion pictures from El Paso 2019. If anyone would like to see them before they order, go to my website: http://www.photoreflect.com/store/thumbpage.aspx?bid=05AEB05E

There are also 4 DVD’s of video that I can’t put on this website. There are 5 DV’s total if anyone wants to order them, they can send me a check for $60.00, that includes postage. You can contact me before ordering by e-mail at photobyleslie@sbcglobal.net. Thanks, Leslie

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Interesting USA Trivia

1. 80% of the land in the state of _____ is owned by the US government.
2. 100 acres of _____ are served in the United States every day!
3. The current US flag features 50 stars and was designed by Robert G. Heft. Heft initially created the American flag in _____ as a high school project.
4. _____ served as the nation’s capital city for five years between 1795 and 1790.
5. The United States used 18% of the world’s _____.
6. At the federal level, there is no official _____ in the United States.
7. _____ is among the largest employers in the country. It is believed that 1 out of every 8 Americans have been employed or will be employed there at some point.
8. At 6,640 miles, the US state of _____ has the longest coastline compared to any other state in the country.
9. The internet was a US invention. During this decade, _____ the Department of Defense granted contracts for packet network systems. ARPANET was the first switching network to be developed.
10. The United States has the largest economy in the world. The nation’s economy accounts for about ____% of the world’s nominal GDP.
11. If the state of _____ were a country, it would rank as the 6th largest economy in the world.
12. _____ is the 2nd most populated state in the US. The state is the second largest in the country by land area.
13. Due to its large land area, _____ ranks as the 2nd least densely populated in the country.
14. _____ is the second least populated state in the country.
15. The largest city in Vermont is ________.

(Find Answers on page 6)
When Mark Gatton heard the USS Ling, a World War II submarine, was going to be scrapped in New Jersey if it didn't find a new home, he knew he couldn't let that happen.

"So many historical things just kind of seem to disappear, and when history disappears, nobody learns anything from past mistakes," he said.

Gatton, an Air Force veteran, has always had an interest in submarines. He and his friend, Lewis Palmer, an Army veteran, are now trying to do everything they can to save the Ling and bring it to Louisville permanently.

Together, they founded the Louisville Naval Museum and started raising funds to restore the submarine, with the ultimate goal of docking it on the Ohio River as the centerpiece of a museum to teach people about World War II.

Louisville may seem like an odd place for a maritime museum, but when Gatton heard about the Muskogee War Memorial Park in Oklahoma, home of the USS Batfish, another submarine from the war, he thought, "Why can't we do that?"

At the Muskogee War Memorial Park, visitors can walk inside the submarine and through torpedo rooms and crew cabins. The park also has cannons, missiles, other military artifacts and a monument with plaques dedicated to each submarine the United States lost during World War II.
Brent Trout, executive director of the Oklahoma park, said the park operates off its own revenue, which is about $2 million a year.

"It continues to go up every year," Trout said. "We have anywhere between 30,000 to 40,000 visitors a year. That’s something that’s continually growing."

In cities on the coast like San Francisco and Boston, Maritime museums are almost expected in coastal cities such as San Francisco and Boston, but it’s surprising in cities like Muskogee and Louisville. For this reason, a museum with a World War II submarine so far inland could help with city tourism, Trout said.

With the right construction, such a museum is "a gold mine."
Trout said he’s had groups of 40 to 4,000 sailors gather at the park for ship reunions, which helps tourism around the city.
It’s a long road before the Louisville Naval Museum could be ready for visitors, but Gatton and Palmer are taking it one step at a time. Right now, there’s one goal in sight: saving the USS Ling.

The Ling was donated in 1972 to the Submarine Memorial Association, which was formed with the purpose of saving it from being scrapped. The submarine became the centerpiece of the New Jersey Naval Museum and has been kept at a dock in Hackensack, New Jersey.

Gatton said the Ling has been sitting in river mud since 1973, now at 10 feet deep. Typically, museum ships come out of the water at least once every six years for hull repair, he said. The owners of the land on the riverfront where the Ling is docked sold it for redevelopment in 2007 and told the naval museum it would eventually need to relocate. But the museum closed in 2013 due to flooding and damage from Hurricane Sandy, and the submarine has remained in the Hackensack River.

In 2018, vandals cut locks and opened hatches, causing the submarine to be filled with river water, the North Jersey Record reported. Artifacts that had been inside the submarine, such as uniforms, documents and equipment, were destroyed.

Gatton and Lewis heard about the submarine’s search for a new home in January, and they have about one more year until it has to be moved.
"She has to go, or the city can take it over and just scrap it," he said, "And they’re wanting it gone, like, yesterday."

Gatton and Lewis went to see the vessel for the first time in September after raising funds for travel costs on Go-FundMe. It was full of stagnant river water and covered in mud.
The Navy still owns the ship and gave Gatton and Lewis permission to work on it. The military branch is not contributing any funds to restore the Ling, but Gatton said several sailors from a naval base in Connecticut have volunteered their time.

In recent months, volunteer crews have been working on the boat almost every weekend. Now, it’s pumped dry, a hole has been temporarily patched, and pressure washers have started getting rid of the grime.
American Commercial Barge Line has agreed to tow the Ling from the Gulf of Mexico to Jeffboat, its shipyard in Jeffersonville, Indiana, Gatton said.

A New York barge company said if the Louisville Naval Museum can make the Ling float, it will tow it at least to New York and possibly to the gulf.

The museum hopes to find a spot along the river in southwest Jefferson County to complete restorations. While the Jeffboat property across from Louisville would be ideal for a permanent location, Gatton said the company hasn’t yet decided what it will do with the site.

Gatton and Lewis also are searching for land along the waterfront where the submarine can be displayed along with any other ships they might acquire, though the bank at Louisville’s Waterfront Park is too shallow.

They want to build a dry dock, which can be drained of water to allow ships to be inspected and repaired without having to be lifted onto land. It would be the first dry dock in the country built specifically for museum ships, Gatton said.

Gatton wants the Louisville Naval Museum to be “the Disneyland of submarine museums.” He envisions a trip to the museum like a step back in time to the 1940s: tour guides dressed in period clothing, and cars and buildings that look like they’re from the WWII era. It’s all about learning what life was like on a submarine during World War II. He wants groups like the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts to be able to reserve the submarine for sleepovers. Like the USS Batfish, it could be rented out for parties, reunions and other events.

While the submarine will never again be operational because of Navy regulations, the museum plans to make everything inside the boat functional, including the engines. It’s a large undertaking, and money is a big factor, Gatton said. Estimates of how much it will cost to completely restore the submarine and get it to Louisville range from $5 million to $10 million.

Contact Emma Austin at eaustin@gannett.com and 502-582-4180 or follow on Twitter @emmacaustin. Support strong local journalism by subscribing today: subscribe.courier-journal.com.

Attention to “Interesting USA Trivia” on Page 3

2. pizza 9. 1960’s
3. 1958 10. 25
4. New York City 11. California
5. energy 12. Texas
6. language 13. Wyoming
7. McDonald’s 14. Vermont