

USS BRISTOL DD857

VETERANS ASSOCIATION

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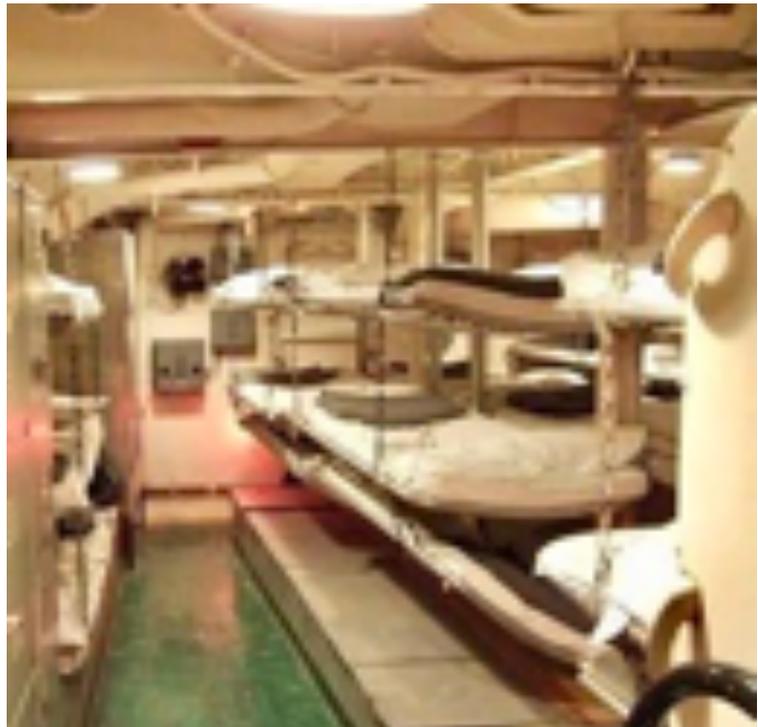
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Happy Christmas!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Remember This?



In Memoriam

Edward A. Murphy

MURPHY - Edward A., 97, of Bethpage, formerly of Glen Cove passed away peacefully on May 20, 2019. Proud Navy Veteran. Beloved husband of the late Rose. Loving father of Lois Burn (Robert), Patricia Donaldson (Edward), Rosemary Johnson (David) and Eileen Carneiro. Cherished grand-father of Jason, Keith, Kelly, Carolyn, Holly, David and Christopher. Adored great-grandfather of 7. Predeceased by his brother Bruce. The family will receive visitors Thursday, 2-4 and 7-9 pm at Arthur F. White Funeral Home, Inc., 234 Broadway, Bethpage. Funeral Mass Friday, 10 am at St. Martin of Tours RC Church, Bethpage. Interment with military honors following at Locust Valley

David C. Nixon, 1924 - 2019



David C. Nixon, age 95, was born on March 22, 1924, in Mound City, MO and passed away on October 12, 2019, in Jacksonville, FL. He entered the Navy in 1943 and proudly served in WWII and the Korean War. In August 1948 he married the love of his life, Margaret Johnston, and together raised three children, Mike Nixon (deceased), Linda Yates and Susan Newman. Dave enjoyed making macrame worms which he has spread worldwide. He has 6 grandchildren, 5 great-grandchildren, and 1 great-great-grandson. Dave and Margaret remained happily married for 65 years until her passing. Dave spent several years volunteering at the Food Bank with his grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held at 2:00 PM on Friday, October 18, 2019, in the chapel of Jacksonville Memory Gardens Funeral Home. Visitation will be from 1:00 until 2:00 PM. Entombment will follow in the Sermon on the Mount Mausoleum. Donations in his honor can be made to Community Hospice or Second Harvest Food Bank.

Shipmates

I am saddened to report the death on Saturday of David Nixon TM3 1947-49.

David (and Daughter Susan) had attended a number of reunions in recent years and he was a favorite of the ladies in attendance as he always brought handmade gifts for them.

He entered the navy in 1943 but was not a plankowner on the Bristol. Rather, he was stationed on another destroyer which was torpedoed in the Mediterranean and after rescue by a British ship he spent two years on Gibraltar with the British navy.

He was a very charming and affable gentleman.

Tony Molnar

Tony

Gary Hults, RD2, 61-65,
sent this letter to our
Treasurer, Tony Molnar.

Thank you and all the
officers who have worked
hard over the years to make
our USS Bristol DD857 Veterans
Association successful.

Without all of you we
never would have been
able to communicate with
our shipmates of the past.

When you are accepted
into heaven we will be
there to greet each and
everyone.

God Bless all of you
and hope to see you in
2020.

Gary Hults

Proud 2nd class Redman
1961-1965

GONE TOO SOON

DAV helps Army veteran leave lasting legacy for family after burn pit cancer battle

By Mary Dever

Seven-year-old Cole McNorrill wore his mother's dog tags and Army uniform to career day at his school in Aiken, S.C. He wants to be a soldier like his mom when he grows up.

But his mother—Ashley McNorrill—will never have the chance to see that dream come true for her little boy. She succumbed to cancer in 2016.

Ashley and husband David had married in 2008. Not long after, they looked to expand their family, but Ashley found herself experiencing unexplained pain and fertility problems.

"Around the summer of 2011, I was beginning to have really severe pains in my belly and on my right side under my rib cage," Ashley said, in an interview before her death. "The pain was so severe I'd curl up in the fetal position while in a hot bath because the pain medicine was not helping at all."

The cause was initially thought to be endometriosis, a relatively common health condition among women that causes uterine tissue to grow outside the uterus. Doctors recommended Ashley undergo a hysterectomy. The McNorrills then pursued adoption as a path to parenthood, and on Dec. 2, 2011, they welcomed their new sons to the world—twin boys, Cole and Fletcher.

"After we brought the boys home, she admitted the cramping was getting really bad," said David. "So we decided she should get the hysterectomy. I told her,



Ashley McNorrill (top right)—pictured here with husband, David, and twin boys, Cole and Fletcher—wasn't diagnosed with appendiceal cancer until it was already at stage 4. Because her particular type of cancer is hard for doctors to detect, it is often terminal for the one in a million people diagnosed with it each year.

"Let's get that done so you can raise these boys."

In February 2012—when the twins were only 2 months old—Ashley went in for a hysterectomy. During the procedure, doctors found evidence of cancer.

"We didn't know exactly what kind it was," said David. "Appendix cancer doesn't spread like other cancers; it peppers the inside of your belly. So we didn't know if it was uterine, ovarian or what."

Ashley was ultimately diagnosed with stage 4 appendiceal cancer, a rare form of the disease occurring in only one or two cases out of 1 million. She joined a support group online, and there she met a Marine Corps veteran who suggested she talk to someone about her exposure to burn pits in Iraq to see if her cancer was service connected.

An Army JAG officer, Ashley deployed to Iraq in January 2005 and was assigned to Camp Victory, in Baghdad.

"There was a burn pit just a few feet across from the

[dining facility], and I remember that oftentimes, while [I was] waiting in line, someone would be manning the burn pit for hours, burning whatever it was they were burning," said Ashley.

In 2014, the McNorrills met with National Service Officer Bryan Kerouac to find out what options were available. It had been two years since Ashley had become ill, and her condition was worsening. With medical bills adding up and their young children requiring care, the family was struggling financially.

"She knew from the very first day we met, she was terminal," said Kerouac. "With two small children and her husband, she knew it. She was driven to do everything she could to make sure that something—some sort of legacy of hers—was left behind."

Kerouac proceeded to piece together Ashley's service claim, pulling together evidence from her deployment to Camp Victory—showing that it was known to have a large burn pit—and helping Ashley educate her doctors on what types of toxins she had been exposed to and how those had led to her diagnosis.

For decades, burn pits were used overseas to dispose of almost all forms of waste on or near American expeditionary bases. They were used extensively, with more than 250 in operation in Afghanistan and Iraq alone. While lawmakers banned military use of burn pits in 2010—except in areas where other options were infeasible—the Department of Veterans Affairs estimates 3.7 million veterans and service members have been exposed to the toxic fumes from burn pits, so far.

"They burn everything—food products, wood, paint, chemicals, human and animal feces, human and animal carcasses, unexploded ordnance—so a lot of toxic chemicals are emitted in the air," said Deputy National Legislative Director for Benefits Shane Liermann.

While the VA acknowledges the risks involved with the exposure to burn pits, they do not currently provide presumption of service connection for any diseases related to exposure. Many veterans who were made ill because of the exposure struggle to provide evidence that links their illnesses to their service.

"First, they have to know about it," said Kerouac. "In Ashley's case, a fellow veteran brought the possibility to her attention; otherwise, she may have never come to me. Then, they've got to research, gather all this evidence, formulate a medical rationale and opinion, present that to a doctor, and have that doctor then write the opinion and hopefully it's the one the veteran needs."

DAV brought the hazards of burn pits to light as far back as 2007 and is now helping craft legislation that would grant concession of exposure for veterans who served in locations known to have used burn pits, making it easier to establish service connection today and presumptive diseases in the future.

"By granting concession of exposure, veterans already have one box checked in the claims process, and it allows them to focus on proving their specific illness is connected to burn pits," said Liermann.

For veterans like Ashley, that means spending less time battling the VA and more time focusing on making lasting memories with loved ones. According to David, he and Ashley

were lucky to have had the help that they did, ultimately receiving her permanent and total VA disability rating before it was too late.

Ashley died March 30, 2016, at 46 years old.

"It's incredibly sad to think of a fairly young woman with a significant future ahead of her and young family to raise being gone so soon," said Washington Headquarters Executive Director Randy Reese. "Sadly, Ashley is one of an estimated 3.7 million veterans who've been exposed to open-air burn pits when the potential health consequences were known. It likely will be years before we fully understand the cost veterans and their families will endure, but that won't stop our pursuit of justice for them."

"One of her biggest concerns was she wanted to make sure the boys were taken care of," David said. "They'll have their tuition paid for college for one thing, [plus additional] state benefits. For her to know that they would be taken care of was tremendous."

"I'll never be whole again," said Ashley before she died. "But it comforts me to know that my boys will be taken care of even after I'm gone." ■

"Sadly, Ashley is one of an estimated 3.7 million veterans who've been exposed to open-air burn pits when the potential health consequences were known."

—Washington Headquarters Executive Director Randy Reese

NEWS for VETERANS

Victory at last for Blue Water Navy Vietnam veterans



The USS *Forrestal* was one of the ships on duty in the waters off the coast of Vietnam. Nicknamed "Firesteel" by some, she may be remembered most for the fire in August 1967 that left 132 crewmen dead, 62 injured, and two missing and presumed dead. (National Archives)

■ After years of fighting for equitable benefits for Navy veterans who served on ships off the coast of Vietnam, H.R. 299—the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2019—was signed into law June 25 by President Trump, requiring the Department of Veterans Affairs to

consider Blue Water Navy veterans eligible to receive benefits based on medical conditions related to Agent Orange.

Effective Jan. 1, 2020, veterans who served offshore of the Republic of Vietnam between Jan. 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, will be presumed

by the VA to have been exposed to Agent Orange.

"DAV is thankful for our partners in Congress who worked in a bipartisan, bicameral manner to finally get this legislation passed," said Washington Headquarters Executive Director Randy Reese. "This is a pivotal victory for Vietnam veterans who have not only suffered for decades from illnesses and diseases linked to exposure to Agent Orange, but who also felt that their service and suffering had long gone unacknowledged by the Department of Veterans Affairs."

Eligible veterans will include those with one or more of the presumptive diseases but whose claims were previously denied. It also includes veterans with new claims. According to Congress and the VA, an estimated 90,000 veterans may fit the criteria.

The new law takes effect Jan. 1, 2020; however, DAV is urging veterans who think they meet the criteria to file a claim as soon as possible. You can find your local DAV service office at dax.org/veterans/find-your-local-office.

VA addresses concerns over new urgent care benefit

■ The VA started the rollout of the VA MISSION Act in June, starting with allowing veterans to use the urgent care benefit, which is offered in addition to the opportunity to receive

care from a VA provider.

After the initial implementation, many questions arose about how to utilize the highly anticipated benefit. In response, the VA highlighted the most frequently asked questions on their blog.

According to the VA, "Veterans may be billed by VA separately for a

copayment when using the urgent care benefit, depending on their assigned priority group and the number of times they use the urgent care benefit in a calendar year. VA will only pay for urgent care if the provider is part of VA's contracted network. Veterans who go to an out-of-network urgent care

provider may be required to pay the full cost of care."

To find an approved urgent care provider, visit va.gov/find-locations. If you arrive at an urgent care network location and have difficulty receiving care, call 866-620-2071 for assistance.

Veterans report being turned away from VA health care

A core mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs is to provide health care to veterans, especially those who have disabilities related to their service. Recently, DAV leaders have heard that some veterans are not even being allowed to apply for VA health care and instead are being turned away by the VA because of their final other than honorable discharge characterizations such as general discharge, other than honorable conditions

A veteran with an **other than honorable discharge** may be eligible for VA health care and benefits like compensation, pension and vocational rehabilitation.

or entry level separation. Each type of characterization has a unique set of circumstances for each discharged veteran, and even if not characterized as honorable service, the characterization that is assigned is not necessarily a ban to receive medical care at the VA or to qualify for other state or federal benefits.

Recognizing that many veterans with other than honorable discharges served in combat or under hardship conditions and may have incurred physical and mental wounds because of that service, Congress and the secretary of veterans affairs expanded access to VA health care for these veterans. According to a 2017 Government Accountability Office report, approximately two-thirds of service members separated for misconduct had been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury or another mental health condition, and government leaders acknowledge that in many instances those conditions contributed to the circumstances that led to the other than honorable discharge.

"We are troubled to hear that the VA might be turning away veterans from getting needed care," said Washington Headquarters Executive Director Randy

Reese. "These veterans may be eligible for some health care services, and at the very least, they have the right to apply and get a decision."

The VA estimates that there are about 500,000 veterans currently living with other than honorable discharges. In part due to the discharge status itself and the prevalence of service-related mental health conditions, other than honorably discharged veterans are at twice the risk of suicide, are more likely to be homeless and face barriers to stable employment. While they can apply to the military review boards for a discharge upgrade, those boards have long wait times and low grant rates.

"Congress gave the VA the independent authority and responsibility to decide whether an individual veteran with an other than honorable discharge should receive access to VA health care and other benefits," said Reese. "We at DAV are working to ensure that no veteran is denied the right simply to apply."

A veteran with an other than honorable discharge may be eligible for VA health care and benefits like compensation, pension and vocational rehabilitation if the VA finds that the veteran's service was honorable for VA purposes. Veterans with other than honorable discharges who are interested in applying for VA benefits have a right to submit an application and receive a written decision. DAV national service officers can help veterans fill out an application and assist them through the VA's character of discharge determination process.

We want to hear from you

DAV, in partnership with the Veterans Legal Clinic of Harvard Law School, is interested in hearing from veterans who have other than honorable discharges and were turned away from receiving health care at the VA. If you are or know such a veteran, please fill out and mail the response card in this magazine. You can also respond by emailing servicepublic@dav.org or by speaking to a DAV national service officer. To find the service officer nearest you, visit DAV.org, hover on the "Veterans" tab and click "Find Your Local Office." ■

‘Mister President, the Navy Will Not Let You Down’

By: [Tom Allen](#)

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From manning quarantine lines to flying reconnaissance missions to preparing for an invasion, the U.S. Navy played instrumental roles during the Cuban Missile Crisis 50 years ago.

On a tense day in October 1962, the USS *Allan M. Sumner* (DD-692) was about 500 miles off the northern shore of Cuba, trailing a Soviet freighter. President John F. Kennedy, after learning that the Soviet Union was sending ballistic missiles to the island nation, had proclaimed a quarantine against ships carrying offensive arms there. The Cuban Missile Crisis had moved from the White House and the Kremlin to the sea, and suddenly the crisis was focused on the *Sumner*.

“I was in the wheelhouse,” Quartermaster Third Class Bob Bourassa remembered. “The freighter was about 1000 yds off our port side.” When the transport failed to respond to an order to stop, Commander William J. Flynn, captain of the *Sumner*, sent a handwritten message down to the radio shack “and after the first message was returned to him, he instructed the guns to be turned toward the freighter.” After a while, Commander Flynn sent down a second message. Before it was answered, “the freighter came to a stop . . . backed down for some time, stopped and then turned around and sailed eastward.”

That was the Navy on the quarantine line—ships ready for action and a

command system that reached from the Pentagon and President Kennedy to destroyer captains and their crews. Before the crisis ended, the Navy would have more than 140 ships in the Caribbean and over 350 combat aircraft at area airfields. ²They were responding to a Cold War confrontation that had begun in September 1960 when the Soviet freighter *Atkarsk* arrived at Nikolaev, the Black Sea port used for exporting weapons and military equipment from the Soviet Union.

The National Security Agency, monitoring Nikolaev radio traffic, tracked the *Atkarsk* and several other cargo ships from the port as each sailed to the same destination: Cuba. ³

Strengthening his bond with Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev was arming the country 90 miles from American shores less than a year after Castro had led a revolution that toppled the U.S.-backed regime of dictator Fulgencio Batista. Eventually the arms transported to Cuba would include nuclear weapons, and the day would come when a wrong move by ships such as the *Sumner* could launch a nuclear war. Not since the Cold War had begun would so much depend on the ships and men of the U.S. Navy.

As the NSA tracked the *Atkarsk*, President Dwight D. Eisenhower responded to the rapidly strengthening Soviet-Cuban alliance by preparing to proclaim a trade embargo of Cuba, barring all exports except medical items and food. ⁴President Eisenhower’s decision came as Cuba was becoming a major issue in the presidential campaign of Vice President Richard M. Nixon and then-Senator Kennedy.

Soon after Kennedy won the election, a new Cuban chapter

opened. The Central Intelligence Agency revealed to the president-elect that covert plans authorized by Eisenhower spanned “a range of possible paramilitary operations” against Castro, including a “combined sea-air assault by trained Cuban exiles coordinated with the guerrilla activity generated on the island”—a U.S.-managed invasion of Cuba. ⁵



Chief of Naval Operations Admiral George Anderson was responsible for planning the naval quarantine of Cuba as well as preparing for a possible invasion of the country. Later Anderson clashed with Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara over the blockade’s enforcement. Naval Institute Photo Archive

On 16–17 April 1961, some 1,400 Cuban exiles, mostly from the Miami area, landed on a swampy shore known as the Bay of Pigs in an amphibious operation doomed from the start. ⁶Khrushchev, angrily reacting to the failed landing, told Kennedy that the Soviet Union would give Castro “all necessary assistance” to defend Cuba and urged the president to refrain from any future attacks to prevent “a conflagration which it will be impossible to cope with.” ⁷

That potential fire began to smolder in the summer of 1962, when the CIA picked up rumors in Miami's Cuban émigré community that Khrushchev was deploying nuclear missiles in Cuba. The agency dismissed the rumors as expatriates' propaganda. But in July 1962, as the seaborne flow of conventional Soviet weapons and military equipment steadily increased, CIA Director John McCone believed that "the buildup was a prelude to the deployment of nuclear missiles." McCone was the successor to Allen Dulles, who had been forced to resign after the Bay of Pigs debacle. According to a CIA assessment of the time, McCone "was virtually alone" in his belief. ⁸

On 29 August, photographs taken by a U-2 spy plane revealed eight surface-to-air missile (SAM) sites under construction. When briefed on the U-2 photographs, McCone said: "They're not putting them in to protect the cane cutters. They're putting them in to blind our reconnaissance eye." ⁹The first shots of the looming crisis were fired on 30 August, when a Cuban patrol vessel fired at an unarmed U.S. S2F Tracker antisubmarine warfare plane flying over international waters. ¹⁰By then there was no doubt that thousands of Red Army soldiers—"technicians," said the Soviets—were pouring onto the island.

The Navy spotted a Soviet-built missile patrol boat off the Cuban port of Mariel, and photographs showed others moored nearby. When told of this, President Kennedy, a PT boat skipper in World War II, sent a memo to Secretary of the Navy Fred Korth: "I would like to get a report on the ability of our destroyers to deal effectively with the new motor torpedo boats of the KOMAR class that the Cubans now possess." ¹¹

On 9 September, a CIA U-2, flown by a Taiwanese pilot, was shot down over China by an SA-2 surface-to-air missile, providing policymakers

with a reminder of how the Soviet SAMs in Cuba endangered U2 overflights. ¹²Consequently the spy plane missions over the island were halted. But, determined to get photographic proof to confirm reports that Soviet medium-range ballistic missiles (MRBMs) had arrived in Cuba, the National Security Council eased restrictions.

And, because the Kennedy administration wanted a military officer at the controls, a CIA U-2 was piloted by Air Force Major Richard S. Heyser when the spy plane took off from Edwards Air Force base in California near midnight on 13 October. Four and a half hours later, at 0731 on Sunday, 14 October, Heyser began his pass across a cloudless Cuba, 72,500 feet below.

Twelve minutes after that, he veered eastward to land at McCoy Air Force base (present-day Orlando International Airport), Florida. Two rolls of film were swiftly transferred to an aircraft, which flew them to the Naval Photographic Intelligence center in Suitland, Maryland, where the film was developed and positives made. The next morning, a Navy truck pulled up to a nondescript seven-story building in a run-down Washington neighborhood. Two armed Marines climbed out, and an armed Navy officer and two enlisted men removed a box from the vehicle. They carried it into the building, which had no outer sign that it housed the CIA's National Photographic Interpretation center. ¹³

NPIc photo interpreters leaned for hours over light tables, peering at frames of the U-2 film through magnifying glasses and stereoscopic viewers. They were convinced they were looking at evidence that could prove the Soviet Union had delivered MRBMs to Cuba. Once operational, the missiles would be capable of hitting U.S. cities with nuclear warheads. On the morning of Tuesday, 16 October, CIA officers

presented blowups of the photos to Kennedy and briefed him about the interpreters' findings.

The president sat at the head of a conference table in the cabinet room. As the briefing began, he touched a hidden switch under the table, activating a tape recorder. ¹⁴After CIA officers presented their intelligence briefing, Secretary of State Dean Rusk went through the implications of a Cuba with Soviet missiles and then said, "I do think we have to set in motion a chain of events that will eliminate this base."

This was the beginning of the first meeting of what would be called the excomm, which consisted of members of the National Security Council and other government officials to whom Kennedy turned for advice, including his brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy. (Eventually excomm would become the label for numerous high-level crisis meetings.)

Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara introduced "some possible military alternatives," especially the idea of "an air strike against these installations . . . plus the airfields plus the aircraft . . . plus all potential nuclear storage sites." The word "nuclear" was uttered a dozen more times during the meeting.

McNamara deferred to General Maxwell Taylor, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who outlined potential military actions. After "we have destroyed as many of these offensive weapons as possible," he said, "we should, should prevent any more coming in, which means a naval blockade." ¹⁵

The Navy, in fact, had a contingency plan that had been developed in the wake of the Bay of Pigs disaster. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, believing Cuba would continue to be a potential cold War flashpoint, had directed

Admiral Robert L. Dennison, commander-in-chief of the U.S. Atlantic command, to develop what became OPLAN 312. It laid out three possible moves against Cuba: a strike against a single type of target, such as a SAM site; an attack on all sites of a specific type; and a massive air attack followed by an invasion. ¹⁶ Later revisions of the plan proposed the deployment of about 100,000 troops and hundreds of ships. ¹⁷

Coincidentally, a large U.S. naval force was in the Caribbean for an annual amphibious-landing exercise. Three Marine battalion landing teams were to storm the beach on Vieques Island, east of the Puerto Rican mainland, and wrest it from an imaginary dictator given the not very subtle name “Ortsac” (spell it backward). Antisubmarine-warfare (ASW) exercises also were scheduled, putting more ships and aircraft into the Caribbean. Admiral George W. Anderson, chief of Naval Operations, told all fleet commanders to be ready to order as many ships to sea as possible on a 24-hour notice. The Joint Chiefs ordered the strengthening of air defenses in the southeastern United States, and Air Force bases and shore-based Navy and Marine Corps squadrons prepared for a possible invasion of Cuba. ¹⁸

On Thursday, 18 October, while the Navy was preparing for a blockade or an invasion, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko called on Kennedy, who had publicly warned Khrushchev not to arm Cuba with offensive weapons. Gromyko insisted that Soviet aid to Cuba was defensive and did not threaten the United States. Kennedy, without revealing what the U-2 had discovered, merely reiterated his warning. “The President,” said a CIA officer, “knew what Khrushchev was doing in Cuba, and Soviet officials did not know he knew.” ¹⁹

Friday, 19 October, “was a day of preparation for some form of

military action,” according to Admiral Anderson’s post-crisis report. “At 0830Q [Q designates Eastern Standard Time], a message went out from the Chief of Naval Personnel to District Commandants and the Chief of Naval Air Reserve Training alerting them to the possibility of recalling Reservists. . . . All Navy and Marine Corps aircraft and squadrons not required for air defense, reconnaissance, or ASW surveillance were ordered relocated because of overcrowding at Florida bases.” Anderson ended his day working on the legal and logistical issues involved for a sea blockade of Cuba. ²⁰

By Sunday, 21 October, a blockade proclamation was ready for the president, who would use the document as the basis for a speech about the crisis. During an afternoon meeting, ExComm members went over a draft. Secretary of State Rusk suggested that “blockade” be replaced by “quarantine” because the latter “avoids comparison with the Berlin blockade,” the Soviet attempt in 1948–49 to block Allied access to the divided city. Kennedy agreed. ²¹

Although “blockade” had changed to “quarantine,” Anderson did not change his proposed rules of engagement. A destroyer intercepting a ship approaching the quarantine line was to hoist a signal flag or a blinking light to transmit the international code K (meaning, you are to stop at once) or ON (you are to heave to at once). Each destroyer on the line would have on board a Russian speaker. ²²

Anderson said he would allow Navy ships to enforce the quarantine by firing a warning shot across the bow of a defiant ship, and if that did not work, the ship’s rudder would be disabled, presumably by a well-aimed shot. When Kennedy said the vessel might be unintentionally sunk, Anderson replied that a ship could be disabled and stay afloat. ²³

As the meeting was ending, President Kennedy went out of his way to give special recognition to the man who would be running the quarantine, Anderson. “Well, Admiral, it looks as though this is up to the Navy,” he said.

“Mr. President,” the CNO replied, “the Navy will not let you down.” ²⁴

That same day, the ASW carrier *Essex* (CVS-9) arrived at Guantanamo Naval Base, on Cuba’s southeastern tip, for six weeks of training. The oldest carrier in the Navy, she had been launched in 1942 and soon sailed into the Pacific, where she fought in several battles and survived a kamikaze attack. Overhauled at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, she had departed in September 1962 with up-to-date sonar and electronic countermeasure equipment. She carried two S2F Tracker squadrons and a helicopter squadron.

For some lucky members of her crew, the day after arrival at Gitmo was to have been a liberty day. But their orders had changed. At 0330 on 21 October reveille sounded for a surprised crew, and the *Essex* steamed toward her quarantine station. ²⁵ She was one of 44 ships in Task Force 136, under the operational control of Vice Admiral Alfred G. “Corky” Ward, commander of the 2nd Fleet. Of the ships heading toward Cuba, Ward was told, at least one “had missiles in her hold” and had to be intercepted. ²⁶

Ward arrayed destroyers in a crescent shape that encompassed a swath of ocean 500 miles east of Cuba, athwart the routes used by ships carrying Soviet cargoes. At the northern end of the crescent was the guided-missile cruiser *Canberra* (CAG-2) with two destroyers; at the southern end were the cruiser *Newport News* (CA-148) and two destroyers. The *Essex* and five destroyers backed up the quarantine line. Meanwhile Task

Force 135, built around the carriers *Independence* (CVA-62) and *Enterprise* (CVAN-65) and including 32 ships, took up stations off Cuba's southeastern shore.²⁷ The possibility of an invasion was still high, and Guantanamo would be a likely battleground.

On 22 October, Guantanamo's Navy families were handed notices telling them that "Higher authority has directed the immediate evacuation" of all dependents. The only women allowed to stay were Navy nurses, who might be needed in the darkening future.

"Please do not ask questions or request exceptions," the notice said. "There is no time for that. . . . Get your suitcases and children and wait quietly." They were told to get on buses and leave pets behind. At 1630 that day, four Navy ships transported 2,400 people to the Norfolk Naval Station, where service families took them in.²⁸

As the dependent families were sailing away, ships of the Amphibious Force Atlantic arrived to disembark Marines who had been scheduled to stage the Vieques Island exercise. Other Marines were airlifted in, joining a motley defense force that included Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalions 4 and 7 and Cuban volunteers from the civilian work force.

By now, people beyond Gitmo knew there was some kind of crisis. But newspapers were not getting any reliable information from Kennedy or the tight-lipped members of excomm. Finally, as the Gitmo refugees packed their suitcases, the White House announced that at 1900 the president would make an important statement that would be carried on television and radio.

President Kennedy told about the discovery of the missiles and said he had ordered a quarantine "on all offensive military equipment under

shipment to Cuba." He also said he had ordered the armed forces "to prepare for any eventualities." The 18-minute address ended with a thought that had just entered the minds of millions of Americans: "No one can foresee precisely what course it will take or what costs or casualties will be incurred."²⁹

Officially the quarantine did not begin until the next day, but already Navy ships and aircraft watched for the ships heading for the blockade line. In concert with President Kennedy's quarantine proclamation, the Joint Chiefs ordered U.S. armed forces to DeFCON-3, an increase of readiness beyond normal. The U.S. Strategic Air Command went to DeFCON-2, a state of readiness short of war that put SAC bombers aloft carrying nuclear weapons—a clear sign to the Soviet Union that the United States was not bluffing.³⁰

Meanwhile McNamara requested risky low-level photography, and the Navy got the mission.³¹ Six RF-8A Crusaders from Light Photographic Squadron (VFP) 62—the "Fightin' Photo"—took off from the Key West Naval Air Station. Dropping down to 400 feet, they sped across Cuba, then headed for the Naval Air Station Cecil Field, near Jacksonville, Florida. There, Navy photographer's mates removed film from the Crusaders' cameras for processing and delivery to the NPIC in Washington.

Commander William B. Ecker, who led the mission, was ordered to refuel and continue to Andrews Air Force Base near Washington. A helicopter flew him to the Pentagon, where he was met by Admiral Anderson and General Taylor. They took him directly to the Joint Chiefs of Staff conference room, known as "the Tank." When Ecker apologized for his appearance, General Curtis LeMay, the Air Force chief of staff, said: "God damn it, you've been flying an airplane now haven't you? You ought to sweat and smell. Sit down." Ecker, noting that his flight

over the target area had been shorter than 30 seconds, advised the chiefs to wait for the photographs.³² NPIC interpreters were astonished at the details revealed by the photos, which erased all doubts about the missiles. Kennedy later hung one in his outer office.³³

McNamara's hands-on management, as demonstrated by his call for low-level photography, put him on a collision course with Anderson. Accounts vary about their encounter at the Navy's Flag Plot command center in the Pentagon on 24 October. But what stands as at least a semi-official version comes from an official Joint Staff historian: "McNamara persisted in asking why a destroyer had left the quarantine line." Anderson, aware that secret information was involved, took the Defense secretary aside and "explained that the destroyer was shadowing a submarine." When "McNamara asked what would happen if a Soviet ship refused to stop or resisted boarding, Anderson answered angrily: 'This is none of your goddamn business. We've been doing this since the days of John Paul Jones, and if you'll go back to your quarters, Mr. Secretary, we'll handle this.'"³⁴

As the end of October approached, Khrushchev and Kennedy were nearing agreement on terms for ending the crisis. But aerial photography showed that the Soviets were still constructing missile sites and assembling IL-28 bombers. Then a Soviet surface-to-air missile shot down a U-2, killing its pilot, Air Force Major Rudolph Anderson Jr. Though President Kennedy decided not to retaliate, the NSA wanted proof that the Soviets had done it.

A Navy-NSA hybrid, the USS *Oxford* (AGTR-1) was the security agency's first signal intelligence ship—and one of the strangest-looking vessels in the Navy. Three masts, each bearing tiers of antennas, sprouted from a main deck. Square and cylindrical

structures studded the deck. On the fantail was a 16-foot dish-shaped antenna that could bounce microwave signals off the moon to a ground station. The system's signals could not be jammed and defied interception. ³⁵

One of the *Oxford*'s tasks was to sweep the Cuban coast for signals showing that the Soviets had activated the surface-to-air missile systems protecting the ballistic-missile sites. On the day of Major Anderson's death, the *Oxford* flashed a short message: Operators picked up signals from Spoon Rest, the NATO designation for Soviet early warning radar. A helicopter picked up the tape of the signal and sent it on its way to the NSA.

With the quarantine working, on 28 October the Soviets agreed to remove the ballistic missiles. ³⁶ On 20 November, President Kennedy announced: "I have today been informed by chairman Khrushchev that all of the IL-28 bombers in cuba will be withdrawn in thirty days. . . . I have this afternoon instructed the Secretary of Defense to lift our naval quarantine." The United States agreed that it would not invade cuba. ³⁷ eventually details of a secret agreement emerged. They indicated that the United States was dismantling several American air and missile bases in Turkey that had been rendered obsolete by the commitment of Polaris submarines in the region. ³⁸

Since the cold War ended, Soviet-era documents have illuminated the nuclear reality of 1962. We know now that 158 nuclear warheads had arrived in cuba by the time of the crisis. ³⁹ We also know about a final voyage. The freighter *Atkarsk*, which had left Soviet waters in September 1960 bound for cuba and was tracked by the NSA, was back in Cuba during the crisis. And, according to recent revelations, top Kremlin officials ordered the *Atkarsk* to carry the last tactical nuclear warheads out of cuba on 20

November 1962. ⁴⁰ For the Soviets, the crisis was over.

Editor's Note

Our shipmate, Roger Valentine, remembers that Bristol was the last ship to leave the area. He remembers that "Hank the Flank" upgraded "Condition 3" to full General Quarters due to a suspicious freighter not responding to signal flags. Bristol repeated the flag hoists but the ship did not respond. With all guns trained on the "offending" vessel, the cargo ship turned around.

Officially, Bristol was a member of the expeditionary force from 4 Nov - 3 Dec 1962. According to Roger, this event was subsequent to 3 Dec. Bristol had been in Guantanamo Bay Naval Base for repairs to the screws having cracks possibly caused by excessive high speed reversal of torque.

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House Sends Four Bills to Senate for Action

The House of Representatives passed four bills on October 15, 2019. The bipartisan legislation will help homeless veterans with children find transitional housing, help veterans with disabilities access important information from VA's website, and help preserve the legacies of those interred in veterans' cemeteries. A final bill honors two Medal of Honor recipients for their heroic actions during the Vietnam War - by naming the VA community-based outpatient clinic in Odessa, Texas, after them. They are:

- H.R. 95: The Homeless Veterans Families Act.
- H.R. 1199: The VA Website Accessibility Act of 2019.

- H.R. 2334: To designate the Department of Veterans Affairs community based outpatient clinic in Odessa, Texas, as the "Wilson and Young Medal of Honor VA Clinic."
- H.R. 2385: To permit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a grant program to conduct cemetery research and produce educational materials for the Veterans Legacy Program.

All will be forwarded to the Senate for consideration and action.

House Committee on Veterans Affairs Moves Six Bills to Floor

On October 16, 2019, the House Committee on Veterans Affairs (HVAC) held a full committee markup and past six bills to the House floor for consideration. The bills will improve veterans' lives by ensuring GI Bill benefits are protected from predatory for-profit schools, providing legal services for homeless veterans, addressing key high risk areas within VA, improving transparency, and protecting business opportunities for veterans. The six bills are:

- 1) H.R. 561: The Protecting Business Opportunities for Veterans Act of 2019.
- 2) H.R. 3749: The Legal Services for Homeless Veterans Act.
- 3) H.R. 4162: The GI Bill Planning Act of 2019.
- 4) H.R. 4477: The Reducing High Risk to Veterans and Veterans Services Act.
- 5) H.R. 4613: The VA Reporting Transparency Act.
- 6) H.R. 4625: Protect the GI Bill Act.

HVAC officials have asked for swift House floor action.

iRest, You Rest: Virtual yoga nidra sessions to help fight stress



[38](#)



[Posted on Wednesday, October 23, 2019 9:00 am](#) Posted in [Health](#), [VA Medical Centers](#) by [Vantage Point Contributor](#) [38 comments](#) [37k views](#)

Every Thursday evening, Veterans all over the United States meet up to practice yoga. The Veterans spend an hour together, but they never see one another and likely will never even meet. This yoga class requires no travel, no membership or studio, and no special clothing or mat. Veterans perform the weekly yoga nidra session in their own space, on their own bed, couch or favorite chair. These Thursday evening classmates meet over the phone to participate in an hour of yoga nidra that follows the iRest methodology.

Yoga nidra, also called yoga sleep, is an altered state of consciousness in which participants meditate and go into a state on the cusp of the sleep state. Participants must completely relax and rest while the brain remains active and able to hear everything the instructor says, though the person may not be fully aware.

Integrative Restoration (iRest), is a version of yoga nidra developed by Dr. Richard Miller with Walter Reed Army Medical Center and the Department of Defense. It was first used by soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan suffering from PTSD. This meditation method is very helpful for issues like PTSD and anxiety, sleep problems and chronic pain. Data collected from iRest participants indicates the practice improves sleep quality, reduces anxiety, and enhances resiliency in stressful situations.

Guided, weekly sessions

VA's War Related Illness and Injury Study Center (WRIISC), located in Palo Alto, Calif., offers weekly phone meditation sessions. The virtual guided meditation begins Thursday evenings at 5 p.m., Pacific time, and all Veterans are invited to join the class.

"It relaxes my whole mind and body; all stress melts away," said Air Force Veteran Joe Valentino. "A lot of it is sensing your body and quieting your mind. So while I'm meditating, I'll picture my blood stream running through a coffee filter that's filtering out all the bad stuff that I'll throw away when I'm done."

Valentino gets his care from the Southeast Louisiana Veterans Health Care System's medical center in New Orleans. He first learned about yoga nidra and iRest from a flyer his provider gave him.

"I try not to miss a week," Valentino said. "It helps release anxiety, tension, helps me sleep better. I really enjoy it."

No referral, experience, or prescription needed

Veterans can try yoga nidra any Thursday evening of their choice, without referral, prior experience or prescription. They only need a phone, an open mind and a quiet, safe space to meditate.

"This meditation is all about increasing and enhancing your own sense of awareness, your sense of being a whole person that is perfect just as you are," said Louise Mahoney while teaching a weekly class. "We all have everything we need inside of us. We just are not always aware of it, so this meditation helps us to become aware and to allow that awareness to creep into our daily life more often than it did before. So whether you're at work, taking care of your kids, with your significant other, by yourself, you will find a way to remain at ease and to navigate stressful situations."

All Veterans are welcome to attend the weekly live sessions over the phone. Just call 800-767-1750 and type in access code 24953#. Learn more about yoga nidra at www.warrelatedillness.va.gov/WARRELATEDILLNESS/clinical/integrative-health/ca/yoga-nidra-meditation-veteran.pdf.

Veterans who would rather try a prerecorded eight-session series can find it on the WRIISC website at www.warrelatedillness.va.gov/WARRELATEDILLNESS/meditation/default.asp.

The document below was passed to me by a friend who had lost his father-in-law, a retired Navy Captain. It was found in his effects after he passed. (This Captain was not the person who wrote it.) It was a typewritten document, and my best guess is that it was written sometime in the spring of 1939.

The USS Zane DD337 was a 1920's "four stacker" DD which was later converted into a DMS (Destroyer Mine Sweeper).

Zane was present in Pearl Harbor on Dec 7, 1941.

(I've included a photo of the first page of the manuscript as I received it.)

Tin Can Navy

--- by Lieutenant George W Campbell, USN, USS Zane

"Sail ho!" the lookout shouted. "Ship two points on the starboard bow, sir."

"Can you make her out?" the flotilla commander called through the gloom of the destroyer's bridge.

"Yes, sir. It look like a..." The lookout's eyes strained in the darkness. Then he saw the Southern Cross, followed it down to the splotch barely visible against the horizon. "It's a battleship, Commodore. There's one... two... a whole flock of 'em, sir!"

The flotilla commander quickly scanned the sea with his binoculars. "Humph! Battle ships.... That's the enemy... Get this message off to the flotilla," he began. "Enemy battleships on southerly course. Attack with torpedoes."

In less than a minute the radio rooms of twenty-three other destroyers forming the scouting line crackled with the commodore's command.

On every destroyer bridge captains prepared for battle. They called their crews by clanging gongs and howlers that reverberated in living quarters, fire rooms and engine rooms. Husky-throated bos'n mates stood at hatchways and bellowed: "General quarters. All hands hit the deck. Man your battle stations on the double."

Men turned from their bunks, yawned sleepily and then grabbed at pieces of clothing, dressing while they ran. It was discipline; discipline born of high regard for duty.

Like a pack of hungry sharks, the destroyers turned to file in for the attack. Not a single light showed on them or the enemy. Captains half-leaned out of bridge windows watching the phosphorescent wake of the ship ahead to keep position. They were less than 500 yards apart, their sharp bows slashing the tropical sea at thirty knots. Steady nerves and a sure seaman's eye helped.

Choppy Caribbean swells rose to curl aboard the plunging fo'c'sles, half-burying them in gurgling foam. But the destroyers held their course and speed, buided by men whose faces were set, whose eyes were glued to the long, lumbering column of battleships steaming quietly to the south'ard. Such tactics are dangerous at best. But this was training for war and on every bridge the watchword was Vigilance. Vigilance to avoid collision with any

shadowy bulk looming suddenly in the blackness.

In spite of the spray thrown bridge-high, the attacking ships drew nearer to their prey undetected. On bridges and at torpedo tubes men stood silently ready, grimly they fingered the firing keys that would send torpedoes streaking for the targets.

Closer --- nearer to dead-sure ranges the flotilla commander led his ships. Then, within a few seconds, the large hulks of the battleships changed from blurred splotches to well-defined silhouettes. A little closer... less than a mile... only a few seconds more...

"Fire torpedoes!"

The great moment arrived. Along the port side of each destroyer torpedo tubes in nests of thee were trained out. Sitting on the top of each nest was torpedoman. One of them chuckled as he squinted through his sights. He suddenly remembered that the seat under him was exactly like the one on the corn planter at home. Even the wheel in his hand felt strangely familiar. It turned the torpedo tubes just as it did the old threshing machine.

"Fire one!"

Click! The firing key pressed home --- a skyrocket-sounding swish sent a torpedo leaping from its tube into the sea.

"Fire two... three... 4... 5... 6!"

Twenty-four firing ships. 144 torpedoes churning the murky sea at express-train speed toward eight battleships. The ponderous ships were caught like flies in a spider web. Zigzag as they might, there was always an oncoming torpedo in the way.

Once the destroyers had launched their deadly “fish”, as the bluejackets call them, they threw their helms hard over. Then they heeled dizzily as they turned away, for that is the essence of a torpedo attack. Get in, shoot, and get out with all possible speed.

Just as the fourth ship in the column turned, another craft rose from the night. Totally unexpected, it lay directly in retreating destroyer’s path. It was only a matter of seconds before the destroyer would knife her like a great spear.

The destroyers skipper automatically leaped to the engine-room annunciators. “All engines, emergency full astern!”

In the engine rooms sweating machinists’ mates grabbed the throttles of the singing turbines. They spun the wheels to reverse while men on the bridge braced themselves and waited. The crash seemed inevitable. But a moment later the destroyer shuddered from stem to stern like a horse pulled to its haunches. The stern squatted deeper and deeper into the water. But it was enough. The next instant the bow glided sickeningly through the wake of the spectral ship. And so the destroyer escaped to continue its retreat into the cloak of night – to live another day – to launch another night torpedo attack...

Early this year when about 150 U.S. Navy ships, 600 airplanes and 60,000 officers and enlisted men fought Fleet Problem 20 in the Caribbean, nearly 100 destroyers took part in the battles, launching uncounted night torpedo attacks. For it is in just such tactics that the destroyer proves itself to be an

extremely difficult weapon to combat. There is really no sure defense against these vessels engaged in launching night attacks, except to sight them and sink before they can get in close enough to do any harm. And while it is true that these little hornets of the sea are vulnerable to heavy shellfire, it is too much to expect any force to defend itself 100 per cent against damage by them.

Destroyers play many roles. They are not only most worthy opponents against battleships, light and heavy cruisers and other destroyers, but they are the natural enemies of submarines. Possessing high speed (Modern destroyers are capable of speeds in excess of forty knots) great maneuvering qualities and armed with depth bombs, destroyers make the lives of submarines very short ones. During the World War it was our splendid destroyer force that convoyed troop ships to Europe carrying 2,000,000 soldiers. Without these little ships we could never have gained control of the Atlantic, threatened so long by German U-boats.

For a number of years after the War the United States did not build a single destroyer. We made the old-timers from the war do, but in following that program of economy we now find ourselves outranked by other nations. We have only about fifty modern destroyers, with approximately as many more that are either on the builders’ ways or appropriated for. In view of the indispensable service rendered our country by destroyers in the last war, the time is long past when we

can afford to neglect building up our fleet in this category.

Men of our fleet have nicknamed the modern destroyer a “Gold Plater”. The origin is due to the vessel’s excellent equipment, which is the last word in every respect. But as far as memory goes back destroyers as a whole have been called “Tin Cans”. Just who fathered the term no one is sure. Perhaps it came naturally, from the way the ships are constructed. They are long, narrow of beam and lightly put together. The sides are very thin – and without armor plating of any description – and are fastened to ribs not much thicker than those used in the frame of an automobile.

Guns, fire-control gadgets, boilers and turbines possessing more horsepower than those of a battleship, torpedo tubes and depth charges are crammed in and on the ship. What space is left is given over to officers and the crew. A man serving on board such craft has little more room than a sardine in a tin, so perhaps that has something to do with the nickname. But regardless of its origination, there is one thing of which you may be sure. Destroyer sailors resent hearing anyone but themselves call their vessels “Tin Cans”. They have a pride in the staunch little ships that the heaviest seas can’t break.

Sometime you may be at sea. You’ll wrap yourself in heavy robes and stretch out in a deck chair to enjoy the voyage. While you are munching sweets and taking life easy, you’ll see a mere speck come tearing over the horizon. In a few minutes the speck will grow into a ship.

There'll be a rake to her masts, a bone in her teeth and a saucy way about her that will immediately tell you she is a destroyer. If there is a swell or a chop to the sea, or a high wind, you'll do well to see more of her than her masts and smokestacks. She'll roll and pitch until it will make you sick to watch her. As one oldtimer said to me a long time ago when I asked about destroyer duty: "They're a tough line of boats. Plenty hard. Roll? Why, mister, they even roll in dry dock!"

Since that long-ago conversation I have learned the old-timer exaggerated a bit – but not too much, for destroyers do have a way of rolling. From personal experience I know they roll even in good weather. The least wind, or even a moderate sea on their quarter, will cause them to protest violently by shaking their masts from side to side.

Various stories have been told about terrific rolling. Some old destroyer hands claim to have rolled sixty degrees to a side. That's quite a nip-over. However, there are recorded instances where the ship went to fifty-two degrees. Anything over forty degrees seems like the end of everything, so we won't quibble with lads who swear to sixty or more.

Besides rolling, destroyers have a way of pitching that is a movement all their own. If head seas are encountered, a ship of this class will pitch like a wild horse. Accompanying the tossing will be a quivering motion akin to that of a tuning fork. The fo'c'sle will be under water a greater part of the time. Seas will climb aboard to

break and thunder against the bulkhead of the bridge. And occasionally a particularly vicious wave will outdo all the rest. That happened recently on a trip we made off the Oregon coast.

As we headed north we ran into high winds that whipped the sea into a witch's cauldron. For hours we pounded into the angry froth and held our course. The long, mountain-crested waves were, for the most part, in series of threes. Our ship, the Zane, would struggle up one great crest, slide over and then bury her bow rail-deep in the second one. Each time we plunged under, sheets of water came hurtling to the height of the bridge. Even with the windows closed and metal windshields half-covering them for protection, water managed to slush through and drench the deck. When the distance between waves was long enough we would ride to the crest of the third great wave. But as the watch dragged by the waves came closer together.

Along about daylight I stood at the doorway of the captain's emergency cabin to report weather conditions. Just as I said: "They're breaking a little higher," a nasty one, worse than all the rest, struck with full force. When it broke, a deluge of water leaped completely over the bridge top and fell like a sheet between me and the door. Never was a weather report so vividly illustrated.

What goes one do when a ship rolls and pitches so wildly? The best answer is: Hang on! Emergency life lines are rigged in from the ship's regular rail and all hands pull and slide along as best they can from

one hatch to another, not a few bruises are picked up.

In heavy weather eating becomes quite a problem. Then the ship is laboring in very heavy seas it is impossible to cook. Pots sail across the range and fly out the galley doorway to fetch up against the bulkhead. Then all hands subsist on sandwiches and coffee. But if it is at all possible to keep utensils over a fire we eat at table. However, that doesn't mean that we dine in solid comforts as you would on an ocean liner. There's a great difference.

Wooden sideboards called "Fiddle Boards" cover our table and mark it off into squares. (FOR OFFICERS ONLY, NOT ENLISTED MEN). Within the squares the usual tableware is placed. Your plate might go for a stroll but eventually a slat will stop it. Then, if you are patient, the next roll or pitch, will bring it back to you. It would be the same with our chairs, but we provide for that by securing them to the table legs with a stout piece of manila line. (For enlisted men, one bench is used for 5 or 6 men.) Thus, when you come to be seated, your politeness is limited to stepping table-high and then easing yourself down while the sliding is good.

One question always asked of destroyer sailors is: "Do you get seasick?" The truth is, only in rare instances do men go to sea in destroyers and always evade seasickness. There are men who claim never to have been laid up. They are to be envied, for I have seen the hardest old sale grow green around the gills. Recently a grizzled member of our deck force and I were discussing this question

during some bad weather. Suddenly he broke off the conversation and went to the rail. When he came back he said rather sheepishly, "It's gotta happen to every guy once."

Aside from seasickness, sleeping is the most difficult thing we have to work out. There is really no way to beat the game when the ship is in one of her pitching tantrums. You can try putting a strangle hold on the springs and mattress but after several hours of such maneuvering your strength gives out and then you ride the best way you ca. Mostly it's a bounce.

After one hard night of such pitching I greeted the new day more exhausted than when I turned in. When I mentioned it to our chief machinist's mate he said: "You got nothing on me, sir. It was sure tough in the chief's quarters last night. I spend half the night pounding the rivets up through the overhead."

That is the thing that strikes one about destroyer sailors. No matter how rough the going, they can always see the humorous side, even if they have to turn the joke on themselves.

But with all its attendant hardships, there is something about destroyer life that holds the men in its service. For one thing, the small crew makes for an air of intimacy. Everybody on board knows everybody else. And due to the limited man power (the average crew is 115 men) the great amount of work requires close cooperation. The way of a shirker is short and it isn't long before he is headed elsewhere.

Once a man gets the destroyer fever, it's hard to get him to serve on any If we compare a modern destroyer's tonnage of 1,500 tons and 44,000

other type of ship. One time when we were having some heavy weather, I happened to see the battleship Arizona steaming several miles away. We were pitching as usual while she rode as steady as some great fortesss ashore.

"There goes my first ship," I said.

A thick-chested gunners' mate heard my remark and took it up. "You wouldn't want to be in battleships, would you, sir?" He looks at me reproachfully. "I was in the battlewagons once. Just six months. But that's enough for me. They're too big. Too many guys climbin' over you. You don't know nobody aboard them pig-iron buckets. When I went to the fights one night and cheered the wrong guy. He was off'n another ship, but how was I to know it in all that mob?"

"You said it," piped up a torpedoman. "That's the cream-puff Navy with all the comforts of home. I'll take this dungaree outfit for mine."

Dungarees! That explains a lot. For some reason the men would prefer to wear a dungaree shirt and trousers rather than dress in the conventional blue woolen uniform. And while a destroyer crew doesn't go around dirty, there is a vast difference between the dress of the battleship sailors at sea and that of the little-ship men. The very nature of their service and work requires destroyer sailormen to dress informally – and they enjoy it, often to their skipper's discomfort.

Men of the destroyer fleet take their hats off to no one. Not even submarine sailors rate with them.

horsepower with a battleship's 35,000 tons and 28,000 horsepower

"Sure, subs are tough, I know. I done a hitch on one once. But for real seagoin' and standin' up and takin' it, they can't beat tin cans." It was a sturdy bosun's mate who spoke.

"Yeah, and when we go places, we really go," an idling fireman said. "All the skipper's gotta do is give us the bell. When we put fires under them kettles we can raise enough steam to show our heels to anybody."

In former days the deep-water seamen of our country sailed clipper ships all over the world. It was an era of skillful daring and great speeds. Clipper captains and crews were of sturdy stock and they drove their ships under full sail while other rig took in a reef. Come storm or Davy Jones's locker, the clippers sailed on. In their eventual passing they left a heritage for which we have just cause to be proud. And while we no longer depend on sailing hips I like to think of our destroyer navy as carrying on the great clipper tradidions, for they are worthy ones to keep alive.

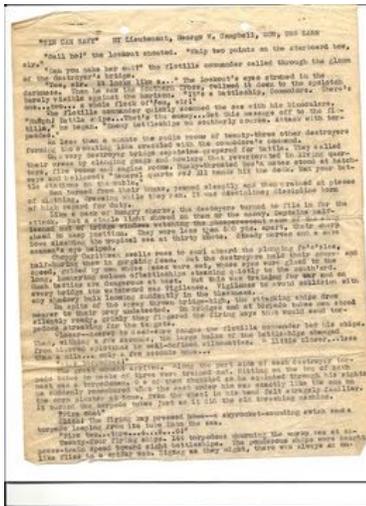
In many respects the clipper ship and a destroyer are similar. The clipper was sharp of bow, long and narrow. Sailing at great speeds, she outran all other ships of her time. Destroyers also have a sharp bow, and with their beam of slightly more than thirty feet and a length of 340 feet or less, they possess a gracefulness the clippers had. But if the clipper was the swallow of her age the modern destroyer is the hornet of our time.

it is understood why the destroyer can breast the seas at forty knots

while battleships lumber along at 21.

But speed is not the destroyer's sole stock in trade. They have a striking power that is respected by all classes of ships. In addition to all the mechanical placed in a destroyer by her builders, she has something else. I can best illustrate it by saying that I once served in the Navy's airship fleet. That duty had it thrills, moments of great action and hours of storm. But now that I am again serving the surface fleet I'm glad I'm in a destroyer. There's something about her - it's her cockiness that I like. Even when I see my men on shore I can always spot them a long way off. There is a cockiness about them, too - a swagger that tells. It's an honest swagger - a gait that comes from going down to the sea in little ships. The next time you are at sea, watch for us. But when we come rolling from under the horizon don't call us "Tin Cans" - that's our privilege!

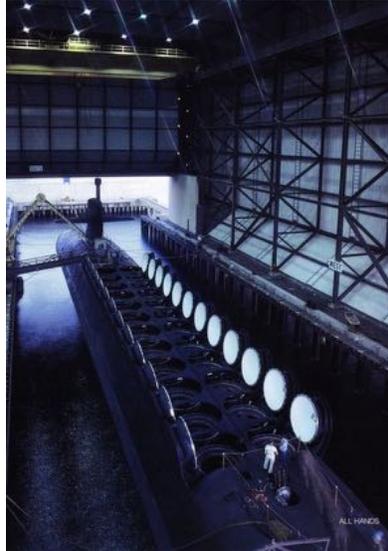
NOTE: The opinions expressed herein are the private opinions of the writer and are not to be construed as expressing or reflecting the opinion of the Navy Department.



But we had depth charges and hedge hogs to do battle. We would have been blown out of the water.... Heck of a lot of fire power



Submitted by Gary Johnson



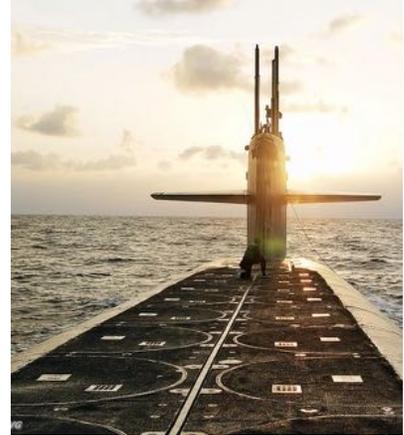
The U.S. Navy has 18 of the most deadly and feared weapons ever created.



Meet the Ohio-class submarine. In naval terms, it makes up the Fleet Ballistic Missile subs (FBMs).



These 18 weapons are also known as "Trident" subs because they're a part of America's "Nuclear Triad".



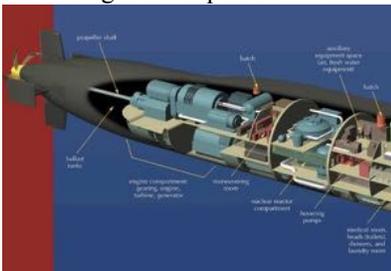
Our subs can also enter fresh water such as our Great Lakes (which already has the US Navy's USS Kentucky SSBN-737 & other smaller Los Angeles-class Attack Subs)



However, there are more logistics to this equation ...



... starting with its power source.



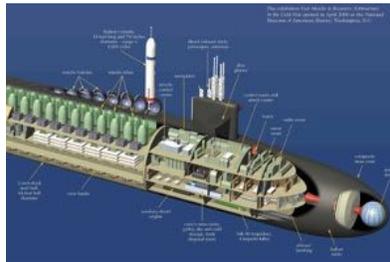
They are powered by an internal S8G PWR nuclear reactor that turns the sub's 2 turbines which drive the rear propeller shaft.



An Ohio-class has unlimited range w/1 exception...it's limited to the vessel's supply of food for the crew.



Other than food, she can produce her own oxygen and water supply for her crew.



It actually moves faster under water than on the surface.



Surfaced – max speed of 14 mph



Submerged – 23 mph, officially, but, unofficially, it's been reported to move up to 29 mph



These subs (w/the exception of re-supply time) are operating underwater year-round.



The Ohio-class along w/our Navy's smaller attack subs are nearly impossible for our adversaries to locate. But they know 1 thing.. 18 Ohio-class subs are lurking somewhere around the world.



The firepower...



For defensive/offensive attack abilities against other subs, all 18 have 4 533mm Mark 48 torpedo tubes.



Mark 48 torpedoes have an effective range (officially) "greater than 5 miles".



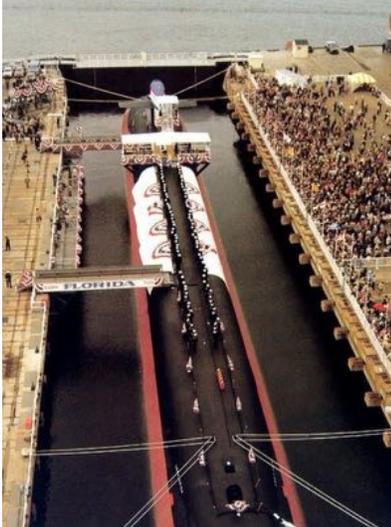
Depending on depth of launch, they travel at speeds up to 63 mph and detonate using a proximity fuse (when the torpedo senses the opponent's sub/ship).



14 of these subs are ballistic missile submarines (SSBN).



And 4 have been converted to guided missile submarines (SSGN).



What can they launch? For reference, a kiloton (kt.) = 220,462,262 lbs. A single kt. is over 220.4 million pounds.



The 8 oldest of 14 SSBN carry the following nuclear armament: 24 Trident I/C4 missiles that cover a range of 4,600 miles.



Each missile has Multiple Independently targetable Reentry Vehicle (MIRV).



MIRVs are capable of being aimed to hit multiple different targets with nuclear warheads.



A single missile carries 8 thermonuclear warheads that can break-off to hit up to 8 targets with 100 kilotons of TNT (total of 800 kt. of TNT).



For perspective, "Fat Man"—the largest of the 2 nukes dropped to end WWII had a total of 21kt of TNT.



The 10 newer SSBNs armament: 24 Trident II/C5 missiles that cover a range of 7,000 mi.

Each Trident II SLBM missile can carry 12 MIRV thermonuclear warheads...these can hit 12 targets w/up to 475 kt. of TNT (total of 5,700 kt. of TNT).



A single missile from these 10 Ohio-class subs: equal to 1,256,634,893,400 pounds of TNT as in -1 trillion 2 hundred 56 million plus lbs. of BOOM.



Upgraded 4 SSGN Guided Missile subs armament: 22 tubes w/7 Tomahawk Cruise Missiles (total 154).



Tomahawks are versatile. They can be equipped with thermonuclear warheads.



In addition, the SSGNs can be used to deliver many other specialized weapons such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs)...& 1 real cool group of weapons.



They can convert 2 of the 22 tubes into swimmer lockout chambers which provide a dry dock shelter for Navy SEALs or Marine special operation scout teams.



In the dry dock tubes, SEALs can prepare to get on their SDV mini subs.



The Ohio-class is our largest submarine.



There you have it, the most feared weapon on Earth!



It's always ready, almost impossible to find, & can deliver SEALs or hit specific targets. And then there's the worst case scenario, nuclear war.



Thing is...



When the bad guys know the 2nd-strike capabilities of the Ohio-class submarine, they're never going to

mess with the United States of America



Thank you to the few who stay under water to provide us with the last line of defense.

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HISTORY OF USS LST-355

To meet the complex needs of amphibious warfare, including the delivery of mechanized equipment and personnel directly to the beachhead, some 79,000 specialized landing craft of all types were mass-produced on both coasts and by many inland yards. Workhorse of the landing craft flotillas, the versatile LST (Landing Ship, Tank) is a barge-shaped ship of shallow draft, self-propelled by Diesel motors. Loaded topside with smaller

craft, their tunnel-like holds packed with tanks, vehicles, guns, or cargo, the LSTs were a vital weapon in the battle of logistics.

The LST-355, along with its sister ship the LST-356, was commissioned as a vessel of the U. S. Fleet in formal ceremonies held at the U. S. Navy Yard, Charleston, South Carolina, on 22 December 1942. A representative of the Commandant, SIXTH Naval District, read the directive authorizing the commissioning of the ship and Lieutenant Norman L. Knipe, Jr., D-V(S), USNR, assumed command as her First Commanding Officer.

The month of January 1943 was spent in outfitting the ship for sea, and on 3 February 1943 the ship sailed for Little Creek, Virginia, where she underwent training in the Chesapeake Bay. The ship proceeded to New York; there on 28 February 1943 she joined the second group of LSTs destined for overseas duty in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations. On March 1943 she proceeded in convoy from New York for North Africa. The convoy touched at Bermuda for four days before proceeding to North Africa, arriving off Oran, Algeria, on 13 April 1943. The ship was further ordered to Arzew where she docked the same day.

At this time fighting was still in progress up the coast toward Tunisia, and Arzew and other ports in the vicinity were subjected to periodic air raids. This was the ship's first combat experience and the first time her guns had actually fired at the enemy. During the last week of April 1943, Captain Knipe volunteered to use the ship in a

beaching operation near Arzew. The ship broached on rocks and was severely damaged. She was towed back to Arzew where she lay dock-side during May, June, and July 1943. During this time she was cannibalized a great deal by repair forces who used mechanical parts from the 355 for repairs on LSTs operating around Tunis and Sicily. The damage she received during the beaching operation near Arzew prevented the ship from participating in the Invasion of Sicily.

On 31 July 1943 LST-355 was towed to Oran, Algeria, where she was placed in the huge French floating dry-dock which had been repaired and put in operation by the Americans. When repairs were completed the ship proceeded to Bizerte, Tunisia, arriving on 3 September 1943 to prepare for combat operations. Lieutenant A. J. Cadaret, USN, was commanding officer of the ship at this time; succeeding Lieutenant Knipe officially while the ship was under repairs at Oran. On 6 September 1943 she sailed as a part of the invasion convoy for Salerno Bay. On the night prior to clearing Bizerte, a large force of German bombers set off an ammunition dump and a gasoline dump near the harbor.

Severe enemy air attacks were encountered while underway for Italy and several vessels were hit. While under repairs at Oran it had been decided to install various anti-aircraft armament on the main deck of the 355; base forces and repair forces filled the main deck with 40MM, 20MM, and .50 calibre weapons. The installation was originally made to provide ack-ack training for amphibious gunners, but the

extra guns came in very handy around Tunisia and Italy.

The ship arrived unscathed in the Bay of Salerno on 9 September 1943, despite a torpedo bomber attack and a daylight aerial attack by German planes using several glider bombs. Soon after daylight on D-Day LST-355, along with 12 other LSTs, was ordered to Red Beach, Safta, "to beach at all costs." Stiff opposition by the Germans had made all our beaches precarious and radio communications to most of the beaches had failed. Shortly after daylight it was observed that the Red Beach was heavily armed with German equipment. LST-355 weighed anchor about 0930 and in company with the other LSTs started in toward the beach from the outer transport area. A destroyer led the column of LSTs toward the beach. While proceeding to the beach German fighters attempted to bomb and strafe the ships. LST-355 was credited with the downing of one enemy plane, which was believed to be an ME109.

As the LSTs arrived within artillery range of the beach, directly North of Agripoli, Italy, German shore batteries and mobile guns promptly opened fire on the LSTs. The destroyer returned the fire but found more targets than she could handle. As a result the USS PHILADELPHIA, a light cruiser, launched her observation planes and moved in to provide additional fire support. Some of the LSTs turned back toward the open sea before reaching the beach, but the LST-355 continued toward the beach under fire with most of the other ships. All the lead ships were proceeding at flank speed and this vessel is believed to have

been the first LST to actually beach with the other LSTs hitting the beach in quick succession.

Despite the flank speed, the flat gradient of the beach prevented this ship from discharging its combat engineers with their equipment, and also the ship lost its stern anchor and cable in the attempt. The majority of the other ships discharged their equipment over pontoons brought in by LSTs such as the LST-356 and 338. All the ships were under heavy enemy fire at this time and hits were being scored by German gunners. Another destroyer had been called in to provide fire support, but German armored equipment could be plainly seen on the hills back of the beach. Tanks rolling off LSTs came off firing and tank battles developed right before the eyes of the LST personnel, Seabee Officers, and men who were handling pontoon gear.

It was at this hectic moment that a German Tiger tank came over the brow of a hill directly in front of the ship. The Gunnery Officer of the 355, Lieutenant (jg) L. A. Wilson, USNR, ordered the bow 40MM – a single mount Army-type gun – to open fire on the tank. The gun crew promptly began to pour HE shells into the body of the tank from maximum range and the tank caught fire and was destroyed. Both the Army and the flag aboard the USS BISCASYNE gave the 355 official credit for destroying the enemy tank. This ship is believed to be one of the few LSTs in the fleet having a destroyed tank to its credit.

The ship then managed to retract from the beach and returned to the transport area where it remained until discharging its equipment on LCTs.

Concentrated air raids were being made by the enemy day and night; the ship's antiaircraft weapons were fully manned at all times. Upon unloading, the ship was ordered to Palermo, Sicily, and then to Bizerte. Enemy air attacks continued through this period and several ships were damaged by mines.

The ship was then ordered to prepare for a trip to the United Kingdom, and sailed on 12 November 1943 from Mers-el-Kebir, Algeria, for Gibraltar and the United Kingdom. She was in company with eleven other LSTs, under the flag of Capt. W. D. Wright, USN, who at that time was aboard the LST-356. At Gibraltar the LSTs joined Convoy MKS 30 for the voyage to the United Kingdom. There were about 85 ships in the convoy with the U. S. LSTs being the largest group of American ships in the convoy. Operational control was British and all the escorts were British or Canadian. After several days out of Gibraltar, an enemy search plane was sighted. He continued to follow the convoy during the daylight hours, and was apparently spotting for submarines.

Several submarine attacks were made during the night; as a result of the attacks one British destroyer was sunk. Anti-submarine aircraft from the Azores furnished support during the several surface battles with enemy submarines. On the fifth day out of Gibraltar while approximately 500 miles off the Bay of Biscay, a force of about 27 German HE177s suddenly attacked the convoy with glider bombs and ordinary high explosives. The American LSTs, steaming at the after end of the

convoy where the major attack was being launched, engaged the enemy planes with their 3-inch guns and other weapons but scored no definite kills. During the two and one-half hour attack on the convoy, one ship was sunk and three damaged by glider or other type bombs. Four to six enemy planes were destroyed either by ack-ack or friendly patrol planes. During the trip the escorts had been increased from about 13 to 37 to provide additional sub and air protection. No LSTs were hit in the attack but a near miss caused minor casualties on one LST.

No more enemy aircraft were encountered in the remainder of the voyage, but submarines continued to be active, and escorts were kept busy fighting off the attackers.

One Canadian corvette engaged a German sub in a surface gun battle in sight of LST-355 and sank the sub after a short engagement. When the convoy arrived off the tip of Southern Ireland, the LSTs were detached from the convoy and sent - with a Canadian anti-aircraft cruiser and five escorts - directly to the South Coast of England. This convoy (MKS 30) later received much publicity in England and the United States. A detailed story was printed in the Bupers Monthly Bulletin with a chart showing the exact location of the convoy when it was taken under attack by the HE177s. Four enemy submarines were known to have been sunk during the voyage and two believed damaged.

The 355 put in at Falmouth, England, on November 1943 and was promptly given duty training anti-aircraft gunners for the coming invasion of France.

During the next six months it remained on the South Coast of England training thousands of amphibious craft gunners. It also participated in Operation Duck around Dartmouth, Devon. Numerous enemy air raids were experienced as the enemy struck at Southern England ports with its Luftwaffe. Enemy planes attacking Plymouth during May 1944 flew in at masthead height over the ship to bomb and strafe the harbor, as well as mine the entrance channel.

The last days of May 1944 was spent loading the ship for the Neptune operation and LST-355 sailed from Falmouth on June 5 1944 with Force "B" for Omaha Beach. It arrived off the beach on D-Day loaded with field artillery, personnel, and equipment (155 MM rifles), but did not discharge until the following day, 7 June 1944. Two boatloads of medical supplies were sent in on 6 June 1944 to Omaha Beach. The ship returned immediately to England and joined the now-famous LST shuttle service across the English Channel. From D-Day to 16 April 1945 when the ship left the United Kingdom for the United States, she had completed 44 trips from England to France. During this time it carried wounded and dead Allied troops and enemy prisoners of war. Two Navy medical officers and one Army doctor, including many enlisted medical aid men, were aboard during the early days of the invasion to give medical attention to casualties.

LST-355 was also part of the railroad shuttle from Southampton Hants, England to Cherbourg, Normandy, France and carried hundreds of U. S. Army railroad cars to France. Special rails were laid in the tank

deck for this work and the cars were loaded and discharged over specially built ramps operated by U. S. Army railroad companies. During this shuttle service every conceivable piece of equipment - from bicycles to the heaviest tanks and road grading equipment - was carried successfully across the Channel to France. During the terrific storm that lashed the Allied beachhead several weeks after the initial landing this vessel was underway from the beachhead area to England, and made the trip intact despite the fact that many LSTs were opening seams in their main deck during the trip.

During the Ardennes breakthrough in December 1944, this vessel was pressed into service as a straight troop carrier for infantry replacements taken directly to France to stop the Nazi Offensive. It continued to operate without the benefit of radar through the worst of the winter in the Channel and is believed to be the last LST in the ETO to receive radar equipment.

On 13 March 1945 Lieutenant Cadaret was relieved of his command by Lieutenant E. L. Rankin, Jr, 149376, USNR(D), at Portland, Dorset, England. The ship was ordered to Falmouth, Cornwall, for availability and there received a radar set. During her availability period orders were received to remove all her deck guns and make the main deck ready to lift an LCT back to the States. This was accomplished in record time and the LCT was lifted at Plymouth, England for its return to the U. S. On 16 April 1945 LST-355 sailed as a part of an LST convoy consisting of 15 LSTs for Norfolk, Virginia, escorted by

three American and three English DDs. Heavy fog was encountered soon after leaving Plymouth, so for three days the entire convoy had to depend on their radar equipment and accurate maneuvering to bring them through safely. Several sub contacts were made and the escorts made depth charge attacks. The British DDs left the convoy near Brest and the remains of the convoy proceeded to the Azores and from there to Norfolk, arriving on 5 May 1945.

After five days in Norfolk the ship sailed as part of a Coastal convoy for New Orleans, arriving there on 23 May 1945 and reporting to Commandant, Eighth Naval District, for a 30-day overhaul and conversion into an ordnance installation ship. All hands were granted 30 days leave, with one half of the officers and crew reporting back to Camp Bradford, Virginia, for reassignment; while new officers and men reported to the ship to replace the crew members who had been transferred. Getting underway from New Orleans LST-355 proceeded to the Todd-Johnson Shipyard at Algiers, Louisiana, where she remained across the Mississippi River from New Orleans until 27 July 1945 when it proceeded to Gulfport, Mississippi, to pick up side carry pontoons. While at New Orleans the LST-355, along with LST-308 and LST-392, was given a ten-ton crane on the main deck, a 40MM dual mount, and full equipment for installing 40MM dual mount guns with Mark 51 directors on ships in the forward area. The ship's company was increased to 10 officers and 127 enlisted men. When the ship sailed from New Orleans it carried approximately

15 million dollars worth of ordnance equipment on board.

From Gulfport, Mississippi the LST355 steamed to Galveston, Texas for a brief inspection that resulted in having a new radar antenna installed. On 3 August 1945 the ship sailed from Galveston to Coco Solo, Canal Zone, arriving there on 10 August 1945. Following this date she transited the Panama Canal heading for Pearl Harbor, T. H. On 14 August 1945 word was received of the Japanese surrender.

The ship continued on its original course until it was within five days of Pearl Harbor, when radio orders were received directing her to proceed to San Francisco, California. From San Francisco LST-355 was ordered to Mare Island, Navy Yard, and Vallejo, California for removal of all its ordnance gear. Here she was stripped of all her 40MM dual mount guns including the ten-ton crane and special equipment that had been installed at New Orleans, Navy Yard. The ship's company was reduced to eight officers and 104 enlisted men to serve as a full complement for the LST-355.

On 26 September 1945, 355 sailed for Pearl Harbor, T. H., arriving off Diamond Head on 4 October 1945. Soon after arrival the ship was ordered to Kewlo Basin to load cargo for Japan. Shortly after shoving off for Japan the vessel developed engine trouble and had to be returned to the Navy Yard, Pearl Harbor, for repairs.

By 1 November 1945 USS LST-355 had completed a total of 35,503 miles of steaming since it left Charleston, South Carolina in February 1943.

On 5 November 1945 while at Pearl Harbor, Lieutenant E. L. Rankin, Jr. (D)USNR was relieved of command by Lieutenant John J. Kelley, (D) USNR, who took over as commanding Officer of the LST-355.

Having made an excellent war record with the amphibious force during World War II, the LST-355 was placed out of Commission and disposed of by the War Shipping Administration in March 1946.

This is info regarding the ship my Dad served on. LST 355. As a kid, all I knew was he was in WW2 but never asked him of his service. He died when I was 23. Never took the time to ask him but I left home when I was 17. Graduated on Thursday and joined the Navy on Monday. Never around to ask. I wish I did ask.

His ship, LST 355 was one of few LST's to blow up a German Tiger tank. He had a belt that he took from a dead German. I'm sure it came from the tank as it would have been close and they would want to make sure it was stopped.

His ship also shot down a German plane.

Over a thousand LST's built but only four (4) built with RR tracks. His ship was one of the four.

I had a number of uncles who served. Many in the Navy.

Contributed by Gary Johnston, STG3.....

THIS IS HOW I FELT ON MY FIRST COLON JAMMER ! *Contributed by Charlie Weaver, MM2*

I called my friend, Andy Sable, a gastroenterologist, to make an appointment for a colonoscopy. A few days later, in his office, Andy showed me a color diagram of the colon, a lengthy organ that appears to go all over the place, at one point passing briefly through Minneapolis.

Then Andy explained the colonoscopy procedure to me in a thorough, reassuring and patient manner. I nodded thoughtfully, but I didn't really hear anything he said because my brain was shrieking, HE'S GOING TO STICK A TUBE 17,000 FEET UP YOUR BEHIND!

I left Andy's office with some written instructions, and a prescription for a product called "MoviPrep" which comes in box large enough to hold a microwave oven.

I will discuss Movi Prep in detail later, for now, suffice it to say that we must never allow it to fall in the hands of America's enemies.

I spent the next several days productively sitting around being nervous. I began my preparation.

In accordance with my instructions, I didn't eat any solid food that day; all I had was chicken broth, which is basically water only with less flavor.

Then, in the evening, I took the MoviPrep. You mix two packets of powder together in a one liter plastic jug, then you fill it with luke warm water. (For those unfamiliar with the metric system a liter is about 32 gallons.)

Then you have to drink the whole jug. This takes about an hour, because MoviPrep tastes - and here I am being kind - like a mixture of

goat spit and urinal cleanser, with just a hint of lemon.

The instructions for MoviPrep, clearly written by somebody with a great sense of humor, state that after you drink it, 'a loose watery bowel movement may result.' This is kind of like saying that after you jump off your roof you may experience contact with the ground.

MoviPrep is a nuclear laxative. I don't want to be graphic, here, but have you ever seen the space shuttle launch?

This is pretty much the MoviPrep experience, with you as the shuttle.

There are times when you wish the commode had a seatbelt.

You spent several hours pretty much confined to the bathroom, spurting violently. You eliminate everything. And then, when you figure you must be totally empty, you have to drink another liter of MoviPrep, at which point, as far as I can tell, your bowels travel into the future and start eliminating food that you have not even eaten yet.

After an action-packed evening, I finally got to sleep. The next morning my wife took me to the clinic. I was very nervous. Not only was I worried about the procedure, but I have been experiencing occasional return bouts of MoviPrep spurtage.

I was thinking, "What if I spurt on Andy?" How do you apologize to a friend for something like that?

Flowers would not be enough.

At the clinic I had to sign many forms acknowledging that I understood and totally agreed with whatever the heck the forms said.

Then they led me to a room full of other colonoscopy people, where I went inside a little curtained space and took off my clothes and put on one of those hospital garments

designed by sadist perverts, the kind that when you put it on, makes you feel even more naked than when you are actually naked.

Then a nurse named Edie put a little needle in a vein in my left hand. Ordinarily I would have fainted, but Edie was very good and I was already lying down.

Edie, also told me that some people put vodka in their MovePrep.

At first I was ticked off that I hadn't thought of this, but then I pondered what would happen if you got yourself too tipsy to make it to the bathroom, so you were staggering around in full Fire Hose Mode.

You would have no choice but to burn your house down.

When everything was ready, Edie wheeled me into the procedure room where Andy was waiting with the nurse and an anesthesiologist I did not see the 17,000 foot tube but I knew Andy had it hidden around there somewhere, I was nervous, seriously nervous at this point. Andy had me roll over on my left side, and the anesthesiologist begin hooking something up to the needle in my hand.

There was music playing in the room, and the song was "Dancing Queen" by Abba, I remarked to Andy that, of all the songs that could be playing during this particular procedure, "Dancing Queen" has to be the least appropriate.

"You want me to turn it up" said Andy, from somewhere behind me. "Ha ha," I said. And then it was time, the moment I have been dreading for more than a decade.

If you are squeamish, prepare yourself, because I am going to tell you, in explicit detail, exactly what it was like.

I have no idea. Really. I slept through it. One moment, ABBA was

yelling "Dancing Queen, feel the beat of the tambourine," and the next moment, I was back in the other room, waking up in a very mellow mood.

Andy was looking down at me and asking me how I felt. I felt excellent. I felt even more excellent when Andy told me that it was all over, and that my colon had passed with flying colors.

I have never been prouder of an internal organ.

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Some Interesting Facts About Texas

1. Port Arthur to El Paso : 889 miles. Port Arthur to Chicago: 770 miles
2. Brownsville to Texline (north of Amarillo): 956 miles. Texline to Canada: 960 miles
3. El Paso is closer to California than to Dallas
4. World's first rodeo was in Pecos, Tx July 4, 1883.
5. The Flagship Hotel in Galveston is the only hotel in North America built over water. Destroyed by Hurricane Ike - 2008!
6. The Heisman Trophy was named after John William Heisman who was the first full-time coach at Rice University in Houston, Texas .
7. Brazoria County has more species of birds than any other area in North America.
8. Aransas Wildlife Refuge is the winter home of North America 's only remaining flock of whooping cranes.
9. Jalapeno jelly originated in Lake Jackson in 1978.
10. The worst natural disaster in US history was in 1900, caused by a hurricane in which over 8,000 lives were lost on Galveston Island.
11. The first word spoken from the moon, July 20, 1969, was " Houston ," but the Space Center was actually in Clear Lake City at the time.
12. The King Ranch in South Texas is larger than Rhode Island.

13. Tropical Storm Claudette brought a US rainfall record of 43" in 24 hours in and around Alvin in July of 1979.

14. Texas is the only state to enter the US by TREATY, (known as the Constitution of 1845 by the Republic of Texas to enter the Union) instead of by annexation. This allows the Texas Flag to fly at the same height as the US Flag, and Texas may choose to divide into 5 states.

15. A Live Oak tree near Fulton is estimated to be 1500 years old.

16. Caddo Lake is the only natural lake in the state.

17. Dr Pepper was invented in Waco in 1885. There is no period in Dr Pepper.

18. Texas has had six capital cities: Washington-on-the Brazos, Harrisburg , Galveston , Velasco, West Columbia and Austin .

19. The Capitol Dome in Austin is the only dome in the US which is taller than the Capitol Building in Washington , DC (by 7 feet).

20. The San Jacinto Monument is the tallest free standing monument in the world and it is taller than the Washington Monument .

21. The name ' Texas ' comes from the Hasini Indian word 'tejas' meaning "friends". Tejas is NOT Spanish for Texas .

22. The State Mascot is the Armadillo. An interesting bit of trivia about the armadillo is they always have four babies. They have one egg, which splits into four, and they either have four males or four females.

23. The first domed stadium in the US was the Astrodome in Houston.

24. The Beck family ranch land grant is one days ride by horse (25 miles) in each direction from the headquarters.

25. The name of the XIT ranch in Dalhart Texas stands for "ten in texas". That means 10 counties in Texas!

Contributed by Charlie Weaver

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Oscar Mayer Is Giving Away Bacon Weighted Blankets Just In Time For Cuffing Season

Let's get cozy.



By [Kristin Salaky](#)
Nov 20, 2019

Oscar Mayer

It's about to be cuffing season, AKA the time when it's too cold to go out and find a new person to hook up with, so you settle for the first person you can find. Charming! Sweet! We love romance. But if that doesn't exactly sound like your style, you can always cozy up with some food—and some cozy things that look like food—until winter passes.

You may know Oscar Mayer most from its iconic bologna song and from the roving [Weinermobile](#), but the brand is putting its bacon center stage with this weighted blanket that's covered in a pork print.

The product is called the BAEcon Blanket, because of course it is! It's a 15-pound weighted blanket, which if



you've never tried one, is like magic. People believe weighted [blankets can help relieve anxiety, improve your sleep](#), and just generally make you feel all cozy and warm inside. That last part is just science, my dudes.

If you want to get your hands on your very own weighted BAEcon blanket from Oscar Mayer, you'll have to enter the contest starting today through

Editor's Note:

This article submitted by Marty Walsh. There is another shipmate who lives in Texas, I believe, would agree with this submission.

Happy Christmas!



Christmas 1974. Photo taken in the lobby of, at the time, NY Daily News, 220 E42nd St, NY. Ed Lynch posing with daughter, Teresa.