

USS TOPEKA CLG-8

Reunion Association Newsletter

Volume 28, No. 2

July 2017

Officers:

Dan Moore, Chairman, Board of Directors; Dan Moore, President;
Gary Baker, Secretary-Treasurer;
Al Gustafson 2017 Reunion Chairman;
Kathy Spatz, Newsletter Editor; Gary Baker, Web Master;
Pat Baker, Ships Store



FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I write this article, we are half way through June and only three months away from our upcoming reunion in Buffalo. Al and Catherine have a very good one planned for us. Sharon and I are excited about the three tours they have scheduled. OK folks, this possibly may be your last opportunity to tour a CLG. (Little Rock CLG-4) as well as have lunch on the fantail. Sounds like a great day to me.

We're really looking forward to our trip to Niagara Falls. Make sure you bring your passport if you decide to crossover to Canada and see the view from that side. Also bring, at least, a light jacket as the temperatures for late September will average in the high 60's to low 50's at night.

We flyover people tend to think of New York as large and populous. In fact Buffalo is the second largest city in the state behind New York City. NYC has a population of 8.5 million and Buffalo 257,000.

As of this writing we have 56 registered members and guests. I would love to see that number reach a 100. Get your forms and checks to Gary Baker soon. Note he has had a change of address.

Again a reminder to all we have a web-site and Face Book page.

<http://usstopekaclg8.org/> and
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/USS-Topeka-CLG-8-Association/288604944574666>

Best regards to all and hope to see you in Buffalo.

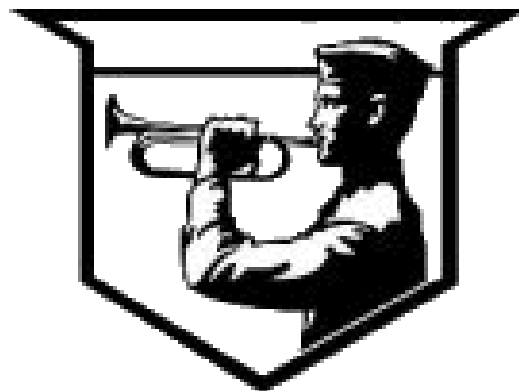
DAN

New Members (Since March 2017)

Robert D. Wagner RD3 60-64
(Posthumous Registration)

Taps

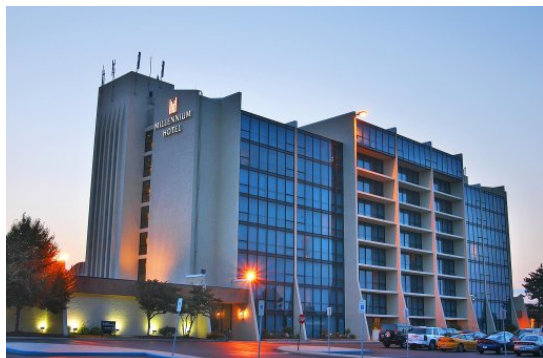
Robert D. Wagner RD3 60-64
Thomas J. Victory SFCS 60-64



USS TOPEKA 28TH ANNUAL REUNION

Reunion Dates:

**Monday, September 18, 2017 through
Thursday, September 21, 2017**



Al (Gus) and Cathy Gustafson are our hosts for the 2017 reunion. They are long-time residents of Buffalo, so have an intimate knowledge of the Buffalo area and its attractions. Gus may be contacted at gus27@verizon.net or 716-648-5960 for any questions or information.

Our hotel is the beautiful newly-renovated Buffalo Millennium Hotel. Room rates are \$117.00 per night for a Deluxe Room, \$127 for a Deluxe Courtyard Room, and \$199 for a Suite. All rooms are subject to a 13.75% tax. Parking at the hotel is complimentary. The group rate will apply for two days before and after the reunion.

Reservations must be made no later than August 4, 2017. After that date the room block will be released and there is no guarantee you will be able to book a room. **Please** make your reservations as soon as you can. We have to let the hotel know 60 days before our arrival date if we can't make our room night commitment. Otherwise we'll be liable for penalties. Reservations can be made by calling the hotel reservation line at 1-800-323-3331. Be sure to ask for the USS Topeka Reunion group rate. The Courtyard and Suite rooms are based on availability, so make reservations for these rooms extremely early.

For early arrivals the hospitality room will be opened Sunday afternoon, September 17, at no extra charge.

Tour "C" Buffalo Naval & Military Park

Wednesday September 20

The Buffalo & Erie County Naval & Military Park is a 501(c) (3) corporation and was formed and incorporated as an educational institution in the state of New York in 1976 from the New York State Board of Regents.

The Buffalo Naval Park takes you inside our nation's military history with incredible tours of vessels, as well as fascinating exhibits and displays including historic documents, uniforms, military gear, photographs and much more. Plan your visit today and explore history like you've never seen it before.

History of the Park

In 1976, in conjunction with the Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency, the Buffalo & Erie County Naval & Military Park applied to the Department of the Navy for a decommissioned naval vessel. The Navy agreed, and in 1977 donated the destroyer USS THE SULLIVANS — designated a National Historic Landmark by the Department of the Interior in 1986 — as well as the Guided Missile Cruiser USS Little Rock, to the City of Buffalo.

The Park opened to the public in 1979 and included a Visitors' Center, constructed with Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency funding. The Park acquired the WWII submarine USS Croaker (SSK-246) in 1988; in 2008, this submarine was added to the National and New York State Registers of Historic Places.

In 2008, with funding from the Empire State Development Corporation, the Naval Park expanded and created an outside exhibit area along with a new museum building and gift shop. Over many years, the Park has obtained artifacts related to all branches of the Armed Forces. The Park's collection today includes three naval vessels, an X-Ron 1 Rotocycle Helicopter, an Army M-41 tank, a Marine M-84 Armored Personnel Carrier, a UH1 "Huey" Helicopter, an Air Force F-101F Voodoo

Fighter Interceptor Jet, a PTF-17 PT Boat, a Navy FJ-4B Fury Jet, and a P-39 Airacobra.

In addition, there are extensive displays including Marine Corps memorabilia, Polish Armed Forces, Vietnam Veterans, models of military vehicles, and Western New York Medal of Honor Recipients.

LSC 9 Commissioning, Buffalo New York

The Buffalo Naval and Military Park has announced that the new USS Little Rock LSC 9 will arrive in Buffalo New York on September 24, 2017 (tentative). The 389 foot Littoral Combat Ship will be Commissioned next to its namesake the USS Little Rock CLG 4. This is the first time that a ship will be commissioned alongside its namesake ship in the Navy's 240 year history. The new class ship is designed for shallow water combat, equipped with a MK 31 Rolling Airframe Missile system and is capable of speeds in excess of 45 knots. The tentative schedule includes arrival on September 24, commissioning on September 30, and sail away on October 1. This a unique opportunity to see and tour the Navy's fastest surface combat ship.

Reunion attendees may wish to extend their stay a few days to see the ship. The dates are tentative as the ship is currently in sea trials. Further information can be found on the USS Little Rock LSC 9 website (usslittlerocklcs.org) or at the Buffalo Naval Park site (buffalonavalpark.org).

Who's Coming to Buffalo?

Arlene & Nelson Anderson
Pat & Gary Baker
Shanda Baker & David Klem
Sharon & James Bennet
Susan & Phil Brooks
Laura & Chris Caruso
Ruth & Dudley Cass
Jerry Craig
Jill & Charlie Deering
Deborah & Paul Dietz
Al & Cathy Gustafuson

Tami Hanson & Gath Fleetwood
Susan & Harvey Hershkowitz
Michael Hight
Marion & Arnold Hoel
Diane & Harold Jackson
Cyndi & Daniel Johansen
Judy & Roger Johnson
Ruth Judge and her "Posse"
Sylvia & Dave Kloosterman
Sharon & Dan Moore
Kathy & Ron Roop
Diane & Joe Rutter
Kathy & Ray Spatz
Tom Stumpf
Pat & Gerald Tanner (and family)
Bill Thompson
Jean Timmons

Agent Orange Update

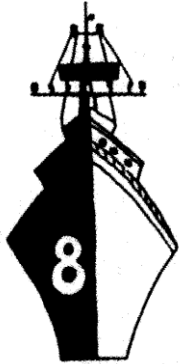
Representative David Valado (R - CA) introduced HR299 (The Blue Water Vietnam Veterans Act of 2017) to the 115th Congress on January 5, 2017 and it was referred to the House Committee on Veterans Affairs on the same date. It currently has 282 co-sponsors. It was sent to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs on January 19, and the subcommittee held hearings on it on April 5. To date the bill is still in subcommittee with no action.

An identical bill, S422, was introduced in the Senate by Kirsten Gillibrand (D - NY) on February 16, 2017, and it was sent to the Committee on Veterans Affairs on the same date. It currently has 42 co-sponsors. To date there has been no action on it by the committee.

I urge all of our members to go to <http://www.congress.gov>, enter HR299 or S422 in the search field and see if your representative or senator is a co-sponsor of this vital bill. If they are not, go to <http://www.gov.congress/members> and find the contact information for your representative or senator and ask them to co-sponsor or support HR299 or S422.

USS TOPEKA REUNION ASSOCIATION
C/O Gary Baker
20 HEATHER DRIVE
BILLINGS, MT 59105-1702

TEMP – RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



NAMES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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Ray Spatz

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Ships Store
Pat Baker, 20 Heather Drive, Billings, MT 59105
406-252-4546; pbaker@usstopekaclg8.org

SHIP'S STORE

The store has ball caps, lapel pins, jacket patches, and license plate frames. 6th Fleet, 7th Fleet, and Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club bumper stickers have been added to the inventory.

The ship's store is managed by Pat Baker. Her contact information is on the ship's store page of the website and the Names and Telephone Numbers section of the newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

As of July we only have 185 members whose dues are current through 2017 and beyond

Past dues are forgiven, so any dues received now are applied to 2017. Dues are \$20 annually or \$80 for five years.

2017 REUNION REGISTRATION
USS Topeka CLG-8 Association
29th Annual Reunion, Buffalo, NY September 18-21, 2017

Name _____ Number in party _____
 Staying at Buffalo Millennium Hotel? _____
 What nights? Check: Sun ___ Mon ___ Tue ___ Wed ___ Thu ___ Fri ___
 Any Handicap and/or Special Dietary Requirements? _____
 Emergency Contact: Name _____ Phone () _____
 Your E-Mail _____ (Confirmation will be sent by E-mail)
 Name(s) for name tag(s) (Name tags are provided free for first time attendees. For replacement name tags there will be a charge of \$4.00 per tag, payable at the reunion): Initial ___ Replacement ___
 Name 1 _____
 Name 2 _____
 (Older pin-on and clip-on type name tags can be upgraded with magnetic clasps at no charge – contact Gary Baker at the reunion)

Reunion Fee: The Reunion Fee includes the fixed costs of the reunion (e.g. Event liability insurance, banquet guests (Speaker and Color Guard), buffet and banquet bartenders, and the costs of snacks and beverages in the Hospitality Room.

Sunday is the setup day for the hospitality room which will be available in the afternoon and evening for those checking in on/or before Monday. No charge for Sunday.

	Number Attending	Price (Per Person)	Cost
<u>Members and Adult-Guests, All four days</u> (Does Not Include Banquet)	_____	\$76	_____
<u>Members and Adult-Guests, Not all four days</u>			
Monday	_____	\$12	_____
Tuesday	_____	\$12	_____
Wednesday (Includes Buffet)	_____	\$40	_____
Thursday (Does Not Include Banquet)	_____	\$12	_____
<u>Guests (Not already included above) for only the Wednesday Buffet</u>			
Wednesday Buffet:	_____	\$28	_____
<u>Banquet Entrée Choices (Give number for each)</u> (Due to price differences no last minute substitutions will be allowed.)			
Filet of Sirloin	_____	\$38	_____
Scampi Over Angel Hair Pasta	_____	\$38	_____
Chicken Cordon Bleu	_____	\$30	_____
Oriental Vegetarian Stir Fry	_____	\$24	_____

NOTE: Buffet and Banquet prices **Do Not** include tip.
 Please tip what you feel is appropriate for the service you received.

Total Reunion Fee _____

(Continued on Reverse Side)

Topeka 2017 Buffalo Reunion Registration (continued)

<u>Tour</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Cost</u>
“A” Lockport Locks & Brewery Mon (9:00 AM – 4:00 PM) (Lunch Included)	_____	\$65	_____
“B” Niagara Falls Tue (9:00 AM – 3:30 PM) (Lunch Not Included)	_____	\$38	_____
“C” Naval Park & USS Little Rock CLG-4 Wed (9:30 AM – 2:30 PM) (Lunch included)	_____	\$50	_____
	Tour Cost		_____
	Reunion Fee (From First Page)		_____
	Total Cost		_____

Space is limited on all tours due to the size of the buses, so make your plans early.

Deadline for payment and receipt of above costs is August 4 , 2017, but please make your arrangements as soon as possible.

Make checks payable to USS Topeka Association. and mail to:
Gary Baker, 20 Heather Drive, Billings, MT 59105-1702

HOTEL AND RESERVATION INFORMATION

Hotel: Buffalo Millennium Hotel
Address: 2040 Walden Ave, Buffalo, NY 14225 Telephone: 716-681-2400

Our group room rates are \$117/day for a Deluxe room, \$127/day for a Deluxe Courtyard room, and \$199/day for a Suite (Plus room tax of 13.75 %). The group room rates will be honored from Sept 15 thru Sept 23.

Reservations must be made by August 4, 2017. After that date the room block will be released and there is no guarantee you'll be able to book a room.

Hotel reservations can be made by calling the hotel reservation line at 1-800-323-3331. Be sure to ask for USS Topeka Reunion group rate.

If you have problems with reservations (e.g., rates, availability, etc.), call Gary Baker at 406-252-4546, or email him at gbaker@usstopekaclg8.org.