

# USS TOPEKA CLG-8

## Reunion Association Newsletter

Volume 28, No. 3

November 2017

### Officers:

Dan Moore, Chairman, Board of Directors; Dan Moore, President;

Gary Baker, Secretary-Treasurer;

Ray and Kathy Spatz 2018 Reunion Coordinators;

Kathy Spatz, Newsletter Editor; Gary Baker, Web Master;

Pat Baker, Ships Store



### New Members (Since July 2017)

Mark Wagemaker FTM1 66-69

Neil Vitense MM3 67-69

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

For only three times a year, these newsletter articles come around fast.

The Buffalo Reunion is now history and was a huge success. Thanks to Gus and Catherine, our exceptional hosts. We had never been to Niagara Falls and it was a sight to remember. The boat trip into the fall was fabulous. The weather was extremely cooperative. Great reunion, period.....

Attendance was up over last year in Sedona. We had a number of new folks joining us this year. That was encouraging and hopefully we'll continue on the upswing for Philadelphia next year. Keep looking for shipmates to invite.

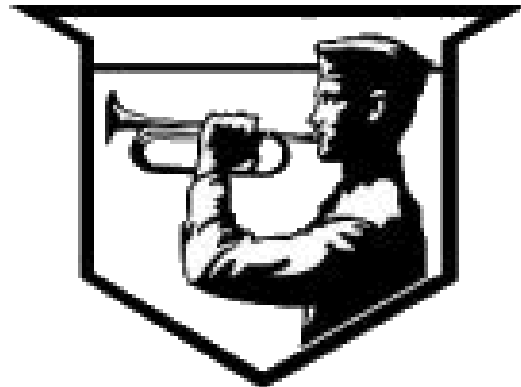
There is a reunion recap on our web page.

A special thanks to all of you who save your extra toiletry items for "The HUGS Project". They have been sorted and already on their way to our troops.

Hoping everyone has a happy holiday season.  
Merry Christmas!!

Dan

Taps  
None





### **Our Terrific Hosts for Buffalo**

Cathy and Al hosted a wonderful and exciting reunion in Buffalo. All who attended have to agree that everything from the hotel, hospitality suite, tours and banquet were amazing.

We enjoyed perfect weather for the entire reunion which contributed to our enjoyment of all the tours.

The day one tour of the Lockport Locks and Brewery were both educational and fun filled.

On day two what an amazing time at Niagara Falls realizing the power of water.

On the third day memories were shared by all the shipmates as we went to Naval Park & USS Little Rock CLG-4.

To our delight and pleasure the Buffalo Millennium Hotel hosted a cocktail reception on Tuesday evening. A first for our reunion!

On Wednesday we all meet for a casual buffet and then to end our time together a more formal banquet was enjoyed by all.

Thanks Cathy and Al for another prize winning reunion.

## **USS TOPEKA 29TH ANNUAL REUNION**

### **Reunion Dates:**

**Monday, August 19, 2018 through  
Thursday, August 23, 2018**

Kathy and Ray Spatz are our hosts for the 2018 reunion. Kathy and Ray may be contacted at [kathleenspatz@gmail.com](mailto:kathleenspatz@gmail.com) or 516-697-8274 for any questions or information.

Our hotel is the beautiful newly-renovated Wyndham Philadelphia Historic District, 400 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106.

The Wyndham is surrounded by all the best that Philadelphia has to offer. The Liberty Bell, National Constitution Center, Independence Hall, Ben Franklin Museum, US Mint and Betsy Ross house are within 1-2 blocks of the hotel. The Wyndham is also within blocks of numerous restaurants, from fine dining to the famous "Philly Cheesesteak".

**Reservations must be made no later than September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018.** 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 **1-877-999-3223**. Be sure to ask for the USS Topeka Reunion group rate. For early arrivals the hospitality room will be opened Sunday afternoon, September 17, at no extra charge.

Indoor garage parking is available adjacent to the hotel at a discounted rate of \$10.00 plus 22.5% city tax per night.

## How to get to Philadelphia

Philadelphia International Airport is just seven miles from Center City. SEPTA's R1 line directly links the airport to Philadelphia's downtown for a fast, hassle-free connection. Philadelphia taxis charge a flat rate of \$25 for travel between Center City and the airport. PHL is served by all major domestic carriers and is a major hub for American Airlines.

Philadelphia is served by Amtrak, which operates rail service along the Northeast Corridor stretching from Boston to Washington, and other major cities in the United States and Canada. Amtrak's 30th Street Station is minutes from the Pennsylvania Convention Center and Center City hotels.

By car, the city is just two hours from New York City, 90 minutes from Baltimore, three hours from Washington D.C. and about an hour from Lancaster County, Atlantic City and the New Jersey shore via major highways.

## Possible tours for Philadelphia

### **Independence after hours:**

Enjoy dinner with colonial townspeople, take an exclusive tour of Independence Hall after hours.

### **Independence Seaport Museum:**

An interactive museum exploring Philadelphia's maritime heritage.

### **Museum of the American Revolution**

A new museum that tells the dramatic story of the founding of the United States.

### **Eastern State Penitentiary**

Radical 19<sup>th</sup> century prison designed to create social change.

### **Hop on- Hop off**

Excellent way to see all the sights at your own pace and interest.



## Look who came to Buffalo

Pat & Gary Baker  
Al & Cathy Gustafuson  
Ruth Judge and her "Posse"  
Sharon & Dan Moore  
Kathy & Ray Spatz  
Joan Anderson  
Arlene & Nelson Anderson  
Catherine Aragon & Family  
Sandra & John Atty  
Shanda Baker & David Klem  
Sharon & James Bennet  
Susan & Phil Brooks  
Laura & Chris Caruso  
Ruth & Dudley Cass  
Jerry Craig  
Walter Crane  
Tana & Jay Davis  
Jill & Charlie Deering  
Deborah & Paul Dietz  
Tami Hanson  
Garth Fleetwood  
Susan & Harvey Hershkowitz  
Marion & Arnold Hoel  
Diane & Harold Jackson  
Cyndi & Daniel Johansen  
Pat & Terry Jones  
Sylvia & Dave Kloosterman  
Joan & Cal Ladd  
Gail & Bob MacLean  
Sue & Don McFarland  
Pat & Robert Ohm  
Patricia & Mike Providence  
Kathy & Ron Roop  
Diane & Joe Tutter  
Rita & Jimmy Starr  
Joyce & Paul Stein  
Pat & Gerald Tnner  
Bill Thompson  
Jean Timmons  
Sandi Calabough  
Susie & Mike Wandschneider

## **MEMBERSHIP AND DUES**

Please help keep our association solvent. The only source of income for the operation of the USS Topeka Association is through the generosity of our dues-paying members. Right now there are only 165 members whose dues are current (paid through 2017 and beyond). Please check your dues status on the address page of the newsletter. If it doesn't say 'Dues Paid Thru 2017' (or beyond), you won't receive the 2018 newsletters or the annual Members Directory.

Dues are \$20.00 per year, or \$80.00 for five years. Past dues are forgiven, and any dues received now will be applied to 2018 dues

## **Agent Orange Update**

Not much change since the July newsletter. HR299 (The Blue Water Vietnam Veterans Act of 2017) was introduced to the 115th Congress on January 5, 2017 and it was referred to the House Committee on Veterans Affairs on the same date. It has gained 29 more co-sponsors and currently has 307 co-sponsors. It was sent to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs on January 19, and to date the bill is still in subcommittee with no action.

S422 was introduced to the Senate 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.

## **From CL's to CLG's**

Many of us on the tour to Buffalo Naval Park noticed that there were major differences between our sister ship, USS Little Rock CLG-4, and USS Topeka. Here's why.

Both were originally Cleveland-class light cruisers, and had only minor differences. There were six of the Cleveland-class brought out of mothballs in the late 50's and rebuilt as guided missile cruisers. Three were re-classified as Galveston-class CLG's armed with Talos missiles and included USS Little Rock. Three were re-classified as Providence-class and armed with shorter range Terrier missiles, Topeka being among them.

In each class two were rebuilt as fleet flagships and had one of the forward 6" turrets and the port and starboard 5" mounts removed to make room for accommodations for the fleet admiral and his flag staff. This was the configuration of the USS Littlerock. In the Providence-class, Topeka was the one not configured as a fleet flagship and retained both of her forward 6" turrets and all three 5" mounts.

Thus, Topeka and Little Rock, although both of the same class originally, ended up being very different ships in two different classes.

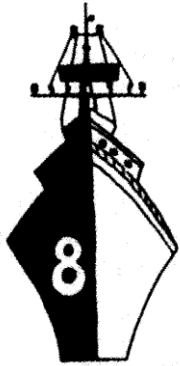




# USS TOPEKA REUNION ASSOCIATION

C/O Gary Baker  
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**TEMP – RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



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## SHIP'S STORE

All clothing items have been discontinued. The store will continue to stock ball caps, lapel pins, jacket patches, and license plate frames.

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