

USS TOPEKA CLG-8

Reunion Association Newsletter

Volume 37, No. 1

March 2025



Officers:

Al Gustafson, Chairman Board of Directors and President;

Arnold Hoel, Vice Chairman and Vice President

Gary Baker, Secretary-Treasurer;

Staff:

Kathy Spatz, Newsletter Editor and Photographer;

Gary Baker, Web Master:

Pat Baker, Ships Store

From Our President

Greetings Shipmates

I hope that this finds you all safe and well. Cathy and I are doing fine and enjoying what has been a good old-fashioned Buffalo winter. Lots of lake effect snow and colder than usual. I have lived here most of my life (78 years) and have avoided buying a snowblower until this winter! Better late than never. With all of the hurricanes, floods and wildfires elsewhere I guess we are lucky to just have snow.

I hope and pray that our shipmates in affected areas have come through OK. I wish them all the best.

I am really looking forward to our Myrtle Beach reunion in September. I have never stayed there but have driven through on many occasions as we have friends nearby. I have always wanted to stay a few days on the beach and now I have my chance.

Pat Baker has once again done an excellent job finding us a super hotel right on the beach with lots to do nearby and some great tours.

The USS North CAROLINA BB-55 is an excellent museum ship so don't miss this tour. It looks like the weather in September should be in the mid-80s.

Thanks Pat. Mark your calendars and make your reservations as soon as possible. If you have not been to a reunion for a while, please come this year. We miss you.

The new riddle is- I am not alive but yet I grow, I need air, yet lack a mouth, yet water will calm me down. What am I?

Here is the answer to the last newsletter riddle:

Riddle- 8549176320 is a large number and unique for two reasons. First, it presents all numerical digits from 0 to 9 without repeating; what is the other reason?

Answer – When the ten numerals are spelled out and expressed as words, the words are in alphabetical order from start to finish (eight, four, five, nine, one, etc.)

As always, special thanks to Kathy Spatz and Pat and Gary Baker for all their hard work on behalf of the association.

Anyone with questions about this year's reunion please feel free to give me a call. If you get my machine, be sure to leave a message, I will get right back to you.

Wishing everyone a safe, healthy and happy Spring and Summer. Hope to see you all at Myrtle Beach.

Fair Winds and Following Seas

Gus

New Members (Since November 2024)

None

Taps

None

Reunion Dates:

September 15th – September 19th, 2025

2025 Myrtle Beach Reunion

Pat Baker is our host for the Myrtle Beach reunion. She has hosted three reunions and assisted a few others in the past and will do her best to make this a memorable reunion. E-mail her at pbaker@usstopekaclg.org or call her at 406-252-4546 for any questions or information.

Beach Cove Resort is conveniently located in North Myrtle Beach, close to all the Grand Strand has to offer. With easy access to Barefoot Landing and other Myrtle Beach area attractions and amusements, this North Myrtle Beach resort is one of the most popular in the area. Featuring all oceanfront suites and condos, guests can enjoy fabulous views of the Atlantic Ocean and all of the familiar comforts of home.

Guests will experience the very best of North Myrtle Beach resorts at Beach Cove Resort. Amenities are plentiful and include three outdoor pools, oceanfront whirlpools, a kiddie pool and a 350-foot lazy river, all surrounded by lush landscaping. Indoor water features allow for relaxation in the whirlpool and pool. Guests also have access to the exclusive Town Center featuring dining, a state-of-the-art arcade and more. Relax and get away from it all at Beach Cove Resort.

We'll be staying at Beach Cove Resort in North Myrtle Beach. Address for the resort is 4800 S Ocean Blvd, North Myrtle Beach, SC 29582

Our accommodation types are Oceanfront Executive Suites or Oceanfront 2 Bedroom Condos.

Room reservation MUST be made by Friday August 12, 2025. After that date the room block is released, and you may not be able to make a reservation.

To make reservations, call 1-888-974-5531. Be sure to mention you want USS Topeka CLG-8 group rate.

If you have to cancel prior to your arrival call Marianne Smith at Beach Cove Resort Sales Office at 1-800-704-3033. Do NOT call her to make reservations, only to cancel the reservation.

Room Rates: (All Rates Include Tax)

	Executive Suite	2 Bedroom Condo
Sep 14-19	\$144.48	\$273.28
Sep 12-13	\$200.48	\$312.48
Sep 19-20	\$200.48	\$312.48

To put it in perspective, the average cost per day for Monday through Friday would be \$155.68 for the Executive Suite rooms and \$281.12 for the 2 Bedroom Condos.

Room price does NOT include breakfast, but it can be added for \$17.13 per person per day, (tax included). Breakfast can either be a breakfast buffet or ordered off the breakfast menu.

The daily parking fee at Beach Cove Resort is waived for our USS Topeka Group.



Myrtle Beach International Airport (MYR) is about 30 minutes (17 Miles) from Beach Cove Resort.

It is served by seven major airlines: Allegiant, American, Delta, Frontier, Southwest, Spirit, and United. It is also served by three smaller airlines: Avelo, Breeze, and Sun Country.

All major car rental companies are represented at the airport, and Lyft and Uber also serve the airport. There is no shuttle service to or from the resort.

Tour "A" USS North Carolina BB-55

Tuesday September 16



The USS North Carolina (BB-55) is one of American naval history's most iconic and celebrated battleships. Nicknamed "The Showboat," she is now preserved as a museum ship in Wilmington, North Carolina, serving as a monument to the bravery and ingenuity of those who served aboard her.

Tour "B" Brookgreen Gardens

Wednesday September 17

From its inception, Brookgreen has a three-pronged purpose: first, to collect, exhibit, and preserve American figurative sculpture; second, to collect, exhibit, and preserve the plants of the Southeast; and third, to collect, exhibit, and preserve the animals of the Southeast. Collecting and exhibiting, it became the first public sculpture garden in America. Today it is the finest outdoor museum of its type in the world.

Tour "C" Barefoot Queen Dinner Cruise

Wednesday September 17

Barefoot Queen is located at Barefoot Marina in North Myrtle Beach and is a 70 ft. authentic wooden riverboat featuring two heated/cooled interior decks and three outdoor deck spaces to

enjoy fresh air. On board entertainment and narration are also included on each cruise.

As we cruise the Intracoastal Waterway and enjoy the scenery. Beverages and cocktails will be available for purchase. Our dinner will consist of salad, lemon pepper chicken, dijon pork tenderloin, carrots, potatoes, chocolate cake and water/tea.

Tour "D" Murrels Inlet Saltwater Marh

Thursday September 18

We'll explore Murrells Inlet and its beautiful saltwater marsh estuary aboard the 54' pontoon boat *The Explorer*. Enjoy the sight and sounds as we tour the tranquil waters, bird watching and observing the underwater sea life with a naturalist narrator. Enjoy a walk on a beach to search for local treasures and shells. There is a restroom available on the boat

(More information for all tours is available on our website.)

2024 Financial Report

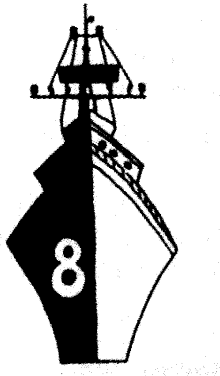
A brief summary of our financial status. The association's finances are looking good. There is quite a bit more money in the Operating account than is needed to fund the day-to-day expenses of the association. With the consent of our president, Al Gustafson, and the board of directors, as we wind down our association over the next few years, the excess will be used to offset the fixed costs of our annual reunions. If you would like a more detailed financial report email Gary Baker at gbaker@usstopekaclg8.org

<u>Account</u>	<u>01/01/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2024</u>
Operating Fund	\$15,428.373	\$14,903.21
Reunion Fund	\$4,547.38	\$4,257.48
<u>Ship's Store</u>	<u>\$2,881.68</u>	<u>\$3,023.17</u>
Total	\$22,857.79	\$22,183.86

USS TOPEKA CLG-8 ASSOCIATION

c/o Gary Baker
20 Heather Drive
Billings, MT 59105

TEMP – RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



NAMES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Chairman, Board of Directors; Al Gustafson, Chairman
Arnold Hoel, Vice Chairman
Jerry Craig, Harold Jackson, Dan Moore, Ray Spatz, Jay Davis

President Al Gustafson, 3668 Bonnie Lane, Hamburg, NY
14075; 716-648-5960; gus127@verizon.net

Vice President: Arnold Hoel, 418 W 229th St., Carson, CA
90745; 310-834-5359; Arnold.hoel@yahoo.com

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Secretary-Treasurer and Webmaster:

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406-252-4546; gbaker@usstopekaclg8.org

Ships Store:

Pat Baker, 20 Heather Drive, Billings, MT 59105
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Ship's Store

The ship's store inventory includes ball caps, lapel pins, jacket patches, coffee cups, and Viet Nam, and 6th and 7th Fleet bumper stickers. Order forms, and images of items, are on the Ship's Store page of our website. The store is managed by Pat Baker. She can be contacted by e-mail at pbaker@usstopekaclg8.org, or call her at 406-252-4546. Orders can be sent to her at 20 Heather Dr, Billings, MT 59105.

Membership and Dues

At the Board of Directors meeting on September 21, 2023, the board elected to cease collecting dues after 2028. Members that have already paid dues through 2028 are considered Lifetime Members. When other members pay dues through 2028, they also will become Lifetime Members.